



Together We Can 2

Progress Report – Year 1 (Jul 21-Jun 22)

Prepared for National Lottery
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Together We Can! is funded and supported by:

Local Trust

Big Local



Overview and Contents

Click to navigate to that section

Together We Can 2
Introducing our work

Summer 2022

TWC2 Progress Report - Year 1

3

TWC2 – Year 1
The story of our project this year

Summer 2022

TWC2 Progress Report - Year 1

14

Towards a flourishing community
Understanding the difference we're making

Summer 2022

TWC2 Progress Report - Year 1

18

What we're learning
And how we're responding

Summer 2022

TWC2 Progress Report - Year 1

46

What comes next
How we're changing

Summer 2022

TWC2 Progress Report - Year 1

52

Finance Update
What we've spent this year

Summer 2022

TWC2 Progress Report - Year 1

57

Together We Can 2

Introducing our work

Our Vision

TogetherWeCan2 is a long-term, neighbourhood-wide, intergenerational community-building programme – further developing the 4½ years of the first phase of TogetherWeCan! (which started in January 2017), lasting until June 2026.

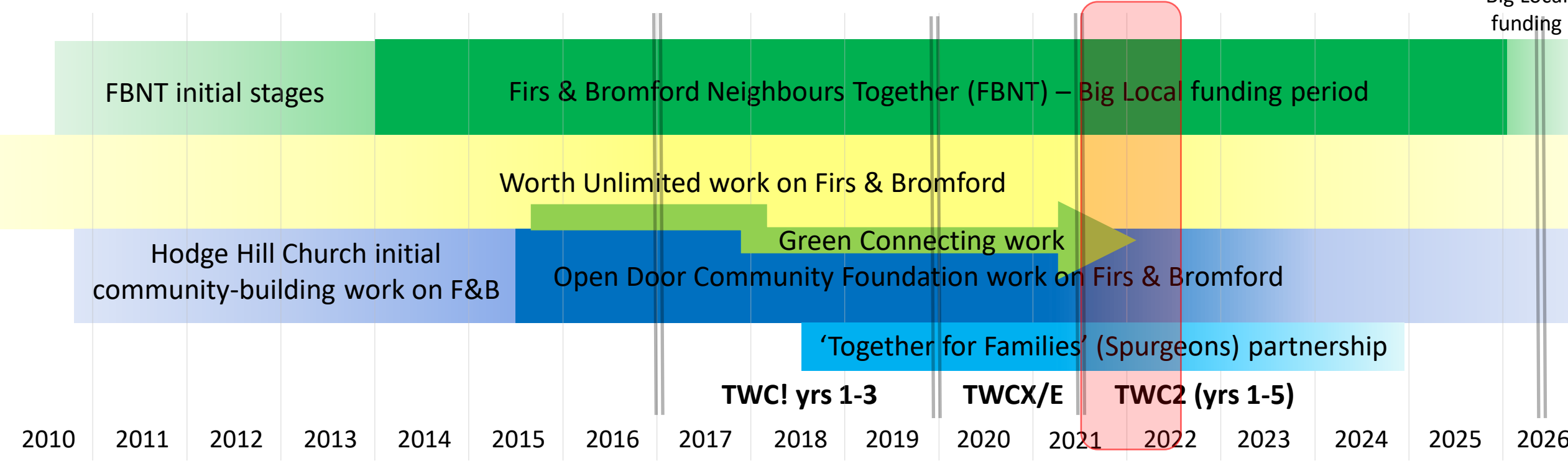
Our vision and direction of travel is shaped by the ‘legacy statement’ of Firs & Bromford Neighbours Together (the residents’ group overseeing the area’s Big Local funding):

We wish to develop our community into a place of creativity and compassion, where all feel welcome, all feel connected, all feel they belong and all feel that they can flourish

Team reflection: this is a high goal and only partly under our control. But we still strive to work towards this aspiration for our community.

Project timeline

End of
Big Local
funding



Responding to COVID-19

TWC2 began, in July 2021, within the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. This year we have had to grapple with the initial challenge of moving from 'crisis' into a phase of reconnection and rebuilding, aiming towards both 'recovering' much of what had been grown here pre-COVID, and 'discovering' new forms of post-COVID community life.

Our approach seeks to pay attention both to the continuities in our community before and after COVID, but also to the serious, lasting impacts of COVID on our wider society and economy, our neighbourhood, our work here, and on those (both paid staff and active neighbours) who have been involved in leading and contributing to it.



What makes TWC! distinctive

TWC2 is not about providing particular projects or services for our neighbourhood.

Instead, at the heart of our approach is the work of being alongside neighbours to enable them to go on a journey of involvement, discovery and growth as they connect with others in their local area and participate in doing things together.

Our hope is that as they share their passions, gifts and skills with others, our neighbours will begin to grow in confidence and wider learning, in turn becoming better able to enable others to participate in community life.

We have sometimes called this our 'pathway' and it names our key 'neighbour outcomes'.

All of this then contributes to the ongoing development of a CONNECTED community, as neighbour involvement in community-building, place-making and story-sharing grows. It also builds RESILIENCE in individuals, groups and the neighbourhood as a whole, through growing confidence, skills, connections, spaces and resources.

TWC2 Neighbour Outcomes

- Neighbours are more **CONNECTED** together within the neighbourhood
- 'Entry points' enable neighbours to feel **WELCOME**
- There are places, groups and activities where neighbours to feel they **BELONG**, can get involved, and can discover and **SHARE** the things they care about (passions), know about (knowledge) and can do (skills)
- There are opportunities for neighbours to 'go deeper': to reflect, **LEARN** and develop as active and resilient participants in their neighbourhood
- Some neighbours are enabled to grow into **ENABLING** roles in the neighbourhood (and its places, groups and activities), including connecting, inviting and leading

TWC! – Pathway 2.0

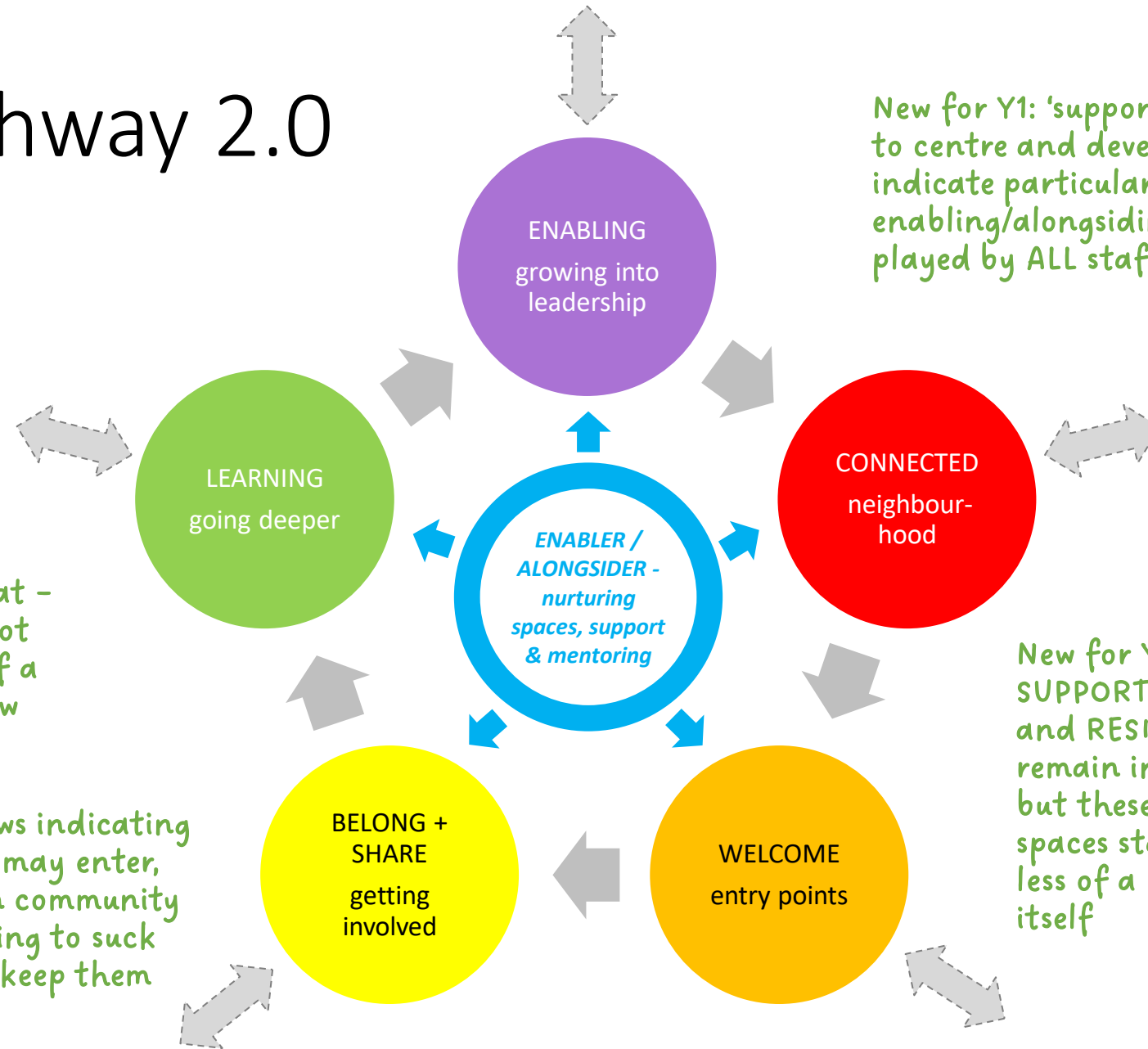
New for Y1: more explicit recognition that these are the opportunities we seek to create across all workstreams – being neighbour-led in what the actual activity is and how it is carried out (doing BY and WITH, rather than FOR or To)

New for Y1: circular format – community life is often not linear and can be more of a spiral (too complex to show here!)

New for Y1: arrows indicating that neighbours may enter, leave and re-join community – ‘we’re not looking to suck everyone in and keep them here forever!’

New for Y1: ‘support’ moved to centre and developed to indicate particular enabling/alongsiding role played by ALL staff

New for Y1: developing SUPPORT within community and RESILIENT neighbours remain intended outcomes, but these are a function of spaces staff help to develop, less of a specific staff role in itself



Our 4+ Workstreams

This engagement between neighbours takes place across a wide range of activities – organised into 4+ workstreams:

The first, **Placemaking + Street/Youth Connecting**, describes our central focus on creating spaces where neighbours can come together and connections can be made.

This is accompanied by three workstreams which focus on ‘doing stuff together’ – creating regular places of welcome & encounter, participation & mutual support through developing **Food Security & Growing**, encouraging **Wellbeing & Creativity**, developing a local network of (& signposting wider for) accessible source of **Support**.

Activities across these four areas are supported by two additional workstreams developing spaces, relationships and practices of **Learning & Reflection**, **Mentoring & Ideas** development and supporting neighbours in the ongoing work of **Vision-shaping**, **Communication and Story-sharing**, within the neighbourhood and with the wider world.

All of our workstreams include activities that are ADULT-focused and INTERGENERATIONAL activities that bring young people and adults together across the generations.

In addition, we acknowledge that YOUNG PEOPLE often need distinct and separate ways of encounter, support and nurturing.

Through our holistic youth work ‘pathways’, we journey with local young people from first contact, through holiday activities, youth clubs and drop-ins, mentoring, small group work & family support, to neighbourhood-focused social action, ‘change makers’ programmes and social enterprises – so that local young people are working alongside adult neighbours to connect and lead in our community.

During Year 1 we have clarified and stream-lined our workstreams – making TWC2 easier to understand and communicate to others and improving team collaboration (see ‘TWC2-on 1 page’ below).

TWC2 – on one page!

Workstream	Paul (+Clare)	Cath	Dan (+Stewart)	Lucy	Flo (+Janey)	Ria
Placemaking + Street/Youth-Connecting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Street-Connecting Events – Street and other Community Supporting Heritage/Village	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community Gardens / Planting Spaces Heritage Centre/ Village Hub Supporting PoW/ YSA//Groups./Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Detached (face-face, play-based and online) Youth Social Action Holiday/Community Events Hub/Gear Up Heritage Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pop-Up Library PoW at Pantry Supporting events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inter-generational Events (Ambridge) Detached (spontaneous) Community Events	Supporting events
Food – Security and Growing	Supporting groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community Food Growing [also via HopeGrow /Groups] Supporting Pantry	Supporting groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Food Support (to end 21)/TW Cook HH Pantry (Wed set-up, Thurs open) 	Food Support to YP Supporting Groups Pantry	Family Support (see below)
Well-being / Creativity	Supporting groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gardening Support (HomeGrow) / Mother Gardens Supporting events	Supporting groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Womens/Mens Creativity/FAB Arts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tues Swim Sessions Listen Threads Creative Arts Workshops - Overlap with Support Groups 	Connecting/Activity Packs (see below)
Support and Safe+Well Hub	Community Safeguarding (course/session) Supporting groups	Supporting PoW	Supporting 1-2-1 and groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open Door PoW (Tues) 1-2-1 support and signposting Pantry - PoW/ signposting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Girls Groups (Tues Y8+, Thurs Y5-7) 1-2-1 support (schools and community, plus spontaneous) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Connecting (inc activity packs) Family Support – groups and individuals
+ Learning, Mentoring and Ideas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supporting Groups and New Things Volunteer Dev, Mentoring/Coaching Learning Programme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Green Team Gardeniser 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth Connector Team Young Leaders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Volunteer Development – Pantry, OD 	Youth Connector Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Volunteer Development
+ Story-sharing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support/Co-ordination 	Story-sharing cuts across all work streams / staff			KEY:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lead Role (report/budget resp) Support role (or main activity reported elsewhere)

Our Team

The role of paid staff within this developing work is significant and will change over the course of TWC2.

Activity and leadership, knowledge and skills, will be increasingly in the hands of neighbours, and existing paid staff will be increasingly stepping back into 'alongsiding' roles, which will 'taper off' over the next few years. We recognise that some paid roles will remain useful within the ongoing neighbourhood work beyond TWC2, and we are offering some locally recruited traineeships to better enable those paid roles to be filled by local people.

During Year 1, our core team of Paul (Street Connector), Cath (Green Connector), Lucy (Community Support and Development), Dan (Youth Connector) and Flo (Youth Support and Development) were joined by Clare (Street Connector Trainee).

Our initial attempt to recruit a Green Connector Trainee was not successful – we will be re-advertising this post over Summer 2022.

Working alongside the core team were Ria (Family Support), Jane (Youth Enterprise Development) and Stewart (Enterprise Mentor/Detached Play).

The team were supported by our admin assistant, Gemma, alongside Al (Open Door), Matt (Worth Unlimited) and Jane P (external support with evaluation and reporting).



Our Theory of Change

As part of FBNT's 'legacy', then, TWC2 is making a significant contribution to positive, lasting change in our neighbourhood ('community outcomes'), including:

- Places, groups, activities and networks to which neighbours feel they BELONG and can contribute to
- A web of local, accessible sources of SUPPORT for when life is hard, including neighbour-led groups and activities, and access to specialist support offered by other voluntary and statutory organisations
- Positive and lasting PARTNERSHIPS between local institutions and other (voluntary and statutory) organisations, to unlock and grow assets for community life
- Established and trusted spaces, relationships and embedded practices through which neighbours can REFLECT, LEARN and DEVELOP as active and resilient participants in their neighbourhood

Together, these contribute to a positive development in a local CULTURE of connecting, mutual support, story-sharing and place-making. Within this developing local culture, there is an increasingly embedded pool of knowledge, experience, wisdom and vision, which is held, shared, added to and passed on, across generations of neighbours.

It is this vibrant, strong and connected community life which we hope will move us towards our overall goal – as set out in our Theory of Change (next page).

The 'theory' presented here is not always how staff communicate their work to different audiences (neighbours or potential funders). This reflects the need to adapt presentation to suit the audience, but also, sometimes to "take them [the listener] on a journey" towards understanding an asset-based, neighbour-led approach if this is new or not natural for them.

This potential of a gap (or tension) between 'theory' and 'reality' is something we seek to continually explore and bridge through our team reflective practice sessions.

Goal

Firs & Bromford is a community of creativity and compassion, where all feel welcome, all feel connected, all feel they belong and all feel that they can flourish

Neighbour Outcomes

Neighbours are more CONNECTED to other neighbours

Neighbours are more able to SHARE their passions, gifts and skills

Neighbours are more RESILIENT in the face of pressures & shocks

Neighbours are LEARNING new things which help them flourish within their community

Neighbours are more able to ENABLE the participation of others

Community Outcomes

Local institutions and organisations PARTNER to unlock and grow assets for community life

There are local places, groups & networks to which neighbours feel they BELONG and can contribute to

There are local, accessible sources of SUPPORT for neighbours in crisis

There is an embedded local CULTURE of connecting, mutual support, story-sharing & place-making

There are spaces where neighbours can REFLECT, LEARN & DEVELOP as active & resilient participants in their neighbourhood

Activities

Connecting, signposting & supported 'ways in'

Entry Points

Getting Involved

Going Deeper

Growing Leadership

Community-building, place-making & story-sharing

Staff and Volunteers as Enablers/Alongsiders - nurturing spaces, support & mentoring

Place-making/Connecting/Events

Food and Growing

Creative / Well-being

Support/Signposting

Learning, Mentoring and Ideas

NB. every workstream includes holistic 'pathways' for young people and for adults – and intergenerational activities

TWC2 – Year 1

The story of our project this year

2021-22: Lockdown, Re-connection and Recovery

Our original planning of activities for Year 1 of TWC2 took place at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. Given the massive ongoing uncertainty created by COVID-19 our original plans were provisional both in their detail and in their timing. We acknowledged the need to be flexible about mode of delivery, as well as dividing our intended activity plans into 'crisis', 'reconnection or 'recovery/discovery' phases.

As it turned out, activities across each workstream needed to react differently to the uncertainties and demands of COVID-19:

Some activities were able to proceed relatively unaffected, others have taken more time to re-establish and rebuild. In other cases, new or different activities have arisen in response to local developments and initiative from our neighbours.

During Year 1 we also recognised we needed to simplify our plans, in order to make them easier to navigate, communicate and monitor.

What follows are the highlights of the story of this first year of our TWC2 funding – July 2021 through to June 2022 – for each workstream, told in words of staff and neighbours.



Afternoon Tea - Intergenerational YSA



Creative sessions with young people



New planters with green team and YSA



street events run by locals with their own budgets



Neighbour led Jubilee Street Parties

Placemaking + Street/ Youth Connecting

street connecting in the rain



Safe spaces for young people to flourish

community events



street connectors back out on the street



annual community rituals - Xmas events



Volunteer Week Thank you's



Street Connecting

Our TWC 'Street-connecting' involves a team of neighbours contacting other local residents through doorstep and open-air conversations, encouraging and enabling them to connect with each other and participate in activities with their neighbours. As we came out of Lockdown, we identified the importance of listening to our neighbours, focusing on what we had learned over the Pandemic about our community, ourselves and what we need to pay attention to going into the future. Street connecting is essential to that task – ensuring that we continually “widen the circles”, drawing new people into conversation.

At the start of Year 1, the priority was to re-establish and nurture the Street Connecting team, building each other's confidence to reconnect with the community. Over the year, the regular Street Connector team has varied between 7-10 members, with 2 new members joining. The team restarted regular street-connecting sessions (3-4 times each month) from April 2021, onwards resulting in over 70 recorded conversations.

In Jan 2022 we welcomed our new Street Connector trainee. A local resident who has been actively involved in TWC! for some time, Clare provides additional support 'connecting the connectors' in our street-connecting and events teams, including helping our street-connectors to establish a presence at our Open Door Place of Welcome.

Youth Connecting

Our detached youth work connects with local young people 'in their own spaces' out in the community or online, building initial relationships which give over time give young people opportunities to connect together with other young people and their adult neighbours.

Our youth connecting continues to be a significant means of 'first contact' with local young people. In recognition of this we have increased the number of regular detached youth work sessions, from 4-6 sessions each month at the start of the year to 15 sessions per month by the end of Year 1. This included starting play-based sessions in an open space in the community, as well as continuing our successful online gaming sessions (until March 22). As a result, we've recorded contact with over 200 young people this year.

During the year, our attention was also drawn to the importance of 'spontaneous' detached connecting, in which relationships are build and developed with young people in 'ordinary' community settings rather than in intentional detached youthwork sessions.

Detached youth connecting requires specific training and expertise and so is usually more worker led. However, we continue to develop plans to nurture and grow the Youth Connector Team, building their capacity and understanding, working towards an accredited youth work course which we hope to launch in Sept 2022.



Street & Community Events



Street and Community Events

Prior to the pandemic, our growing annual rhythm of micro-local Street Events and larger Community Events were central to our ongoing efforts to connect across the community.

Street events come as close to people's doorstep as possible – minimising the barriers, especially for people with physical mobility or social anxiety challenges – and create naturally intergenerational, inter-ethnic spaces, which are more diverse in age and ethnicity than any of our regular spaces.

During the pandemic, as and when restrictions allowed, outdoor, small-scale street events provided a perfect way for neighbours to reconnect. Street events are often cited as the first point of contact for people who have gone on to engage more regularly with other activities. As such, building micro-engagement over time, feeds attendees into other groups and activities as well as growing the number and diversity of local connectors/leaders.

During August 2021, we supported 5 street-events, attended by a total of 216 neighbours (71 adults and 145 children).

Occasional events were held in October and January, as restrictions and weather allowed.

In June 2022, we developed our approach to street-events by offering support (in person and financial) to neighbours who wished to run their own street event to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. This resulted in 15 amazing events, with total attendance over 700 (285 adults, 420 children).

Another key feature of TWC is our support of larger scale community events, which during Year 1 have included Christmas, Easter, Mothers Day and Big Iftar events. We continue to work with Firs and Bromford Neighbours Together to plan and execute these community events, ensuring that, as far as possible, neighbours are in the lead.



Neighbour led streetwatch



Groups and activities



Theatre Group



Pie Events for new groups and ideas



walking group

Events with local partners and Institutions



Groups and Activities

We have continued to support the development of neighbour-led groups and activities, both one-off and ongoing.

These have included:

- ❖ Streetwatch
- ❖ Theatre Group [inter-generational]
- ❖ Book Group
- ❖ Creative Writing Group
- ❖ Knowing Me, Knowing You (inter-cultural story sharing)
- ❖ Walking Group
- ❖ Wednesday Evening 'Safe Space' [young people]
- ❖ Friday Evening Youth Club [young people]

"I've never really noticed what goes on around the community or seen it advertised but since I've been attending I've seen and heard about many different activities and events all in locally that I could join" Core Volunteer Feedback

Community Venues

The importance of local places for neighbours to come together, meet and host activities has been a key emerging theme throughout TogetherWeCan!. Sustainable, welcoming, neighbour-led community spaces continue to be central to our vision for a legacy from our work:

- Work Unlimited continue to run The Hub and associated Gear-Up cycle-maintenance business, modelling this ethos.
- Installation of our Pantry in Hodge Hill church, just across the road from the Firs and Bromford estate, has brought challenges but also helped to broaden the range of social spaces available to the community.
- We also continue to support neighbours and other local venues to develop their 'offer' and connectedness within the local 'ecology', including connecting with potential resources and partner agencies.

Youth Social Action

Youth social action projects connect young people with adults to maintain, develop and creatively use local venues and green spaces.

During Year 1, we have continued to work with local schools to engage young people in social action activities in our neighbourhood.

Over the past year, over 300 young people have participated in our Youth Social Action. Feedback from young people indicated positive impacts regarding connections, skills and resilience.

Ambridge House Teas

A real highlight of this year has been the return of our Ambridge House Tea parties. Originally initiated from an idea suggested by one of our young people, the Teas involve young people hosting a tea party for senior residents of Ambridge House.

4 teas were held between Apr-Jun 2022, each involving around 10-20 adult guests and 3-6 young people, supported by 6-7 staff/volunteers.

It has been great to see how the teas have developed over the year, with young people becoming more confident as hosts and with their interaction with adult guests. The truly intergenerational nature of these events is a joy, with mutual benefits for adults and young people



young people working alongside the green team



Green Team Raised beds around loocal area



School Youth Social Action and a visit from the MP - Young people litter picking



Green placemaking



young people working with a local sheltered housing scheme alongside the green team and neighbours



Community Gardens and Green Spaces

Over the last few years, we have become increasingly aware of the importance of community gardens and other green spaces around the area, in providing opportunities for neighbours to connect with nature and each other.

We currently support 4 community gardens – Hodge Hill Church, Ambridge House, Tame Valley School and outside the Hub – involving local residents in gardening activities, as restrictions allowed (inc supporting training) and identifying emerging spots for future gardens.

In total, our Green Connector Cath has supported 65 community gardening sessions over Year 1. Numbers of neighbours participating in gardening sessions have grown steadily over the year, to around 10-15 per session in 2022.

A particular highlight of the year was a group of young people and adults working together on the planters outside of the Hub. Although only a relatively small group, this gave a real sense of pride and ownership to the young people.

The planters look great and have already started providing fresh flowers and salad vegetables.



Food - Security and Growing



Hodge Hill Pantry (funded by HS2)

Your Local Pantry in Hodge Hill launched in April 2021 – a partnership between Open Door Community Foundation/TogetherWeCan! and Hodge Hill Church.

The Your Local Pantry model recognises the challenges of food security in the community and the importance of people having access to good quality and affordable food. But also, just as importantly the importance of access to community, friendship, and support. For a small weekly subscription of £4, members of the Hodge Hill Pantry are able to purchase a weekly food shop including fresh fruit and vegetables and family favourites to stock up the cupboard and fridge. They act as a neighbourhood hub, serving as a springboard to other initiatives, ideas and opportunities.

Year 1 of TWC!2 has been a period of transition and ‘settling in’, slowly building a solidity to our Pantry project. Our volunteers have worked hard to hold on to the welcoming environment with which we launched the project, while needing to continue to minimise COVID infection risks, especially through the winter months. It has been particularly great to see relationships building between the volunteer team and the regular shoppers, and some of the latter becoming more actively involved in the project.

In our first year (April 21 to Mar 22), 193 members joined the Pantry meaning that 590 individuals (322 adults and 268 children) had the opportunity to access Pantry provision. Rate of membership slowed in the second 6 months but has settled at around 8 new members each month. Between Oct 21 to Mar 22 we have averaged 23 shops per week, with an average of 48 members using the pantry at least once a month (representing approx. 94 adults and 58 children). In total, 89 members accessed Pantry provision at least once during the period, representing 141 adults and 113 children.

We have a growing team of active and committed volunteers, currently standing at 22 in total, with around 15 present each week (across the two days of the project’s operation). Our volunteers tell us that what they love best about the Pantry is “meeting people” and “working altogether as part of a team”. Volunteers enjoy getting to know the other volunteers and those who come to shop, valuing the opportunity to chat to people in a relaxed fashion and “start to get to know each other’s stories”. We have also been going through a significant period of team development, working hard to find the best ways for communication and decision-making within the team, to ensure that this next phase builds on firm foundations. We have also been awarded a Level 5 Food Hygiene certificate (April 2022).



YP selling their good at a market stall

YP embracing pride month and general welcomeness



Well-being / Creativity



Swimming well-being group



mentoring sessions in schools

During 2021-22, activities in our Well-being and Creativity workstream have included:

Men's Brunch

From Feb 21 we were able to support a monthly Men's Brunch to start on a Wednesday morning. This a 'spin-off' from the Pantry (building on a pre-COVID activity), drawing in pantry members in active roles. Numbers attending Men's Brunch have built steadily, with 27 men engaging, at some point, so far in 2022.

FAB Arts and Creativity

FAB Arts is a general umbrella term for a number of arts and creativity initiatives supported by TWC!, seeking to build on the power of creativity for establishing community connection and supporting well-being. Current groups include FAB Book Club, MOJO writing group, FAB Arts Café.

Some of our arts and creativity projects are inter-generational. There have also been additional opportunities for young people to get involved in creative projects including music workshops and Listen Threads creative social enterprise (co-funded by Worth Unlimited).

Well-being sessions

Our wider well-being work, including Women's Group, has been slower to rebuild following the end of the pandemic. However, there are encouraging signs including a new well-being swimming group for young women.

Gardening

As well as creating community spaces and connecting neighbours with nature, gardening has proven mental and physical health benefits. We have continued to develop a thriving community garden in the centre of the Pantry site, sharing plants, seeds and produce with Pantry shoppers, and offering a space to engage with gardening and learn some 'green skills' (7 sessions with 10-20 Pantry members).

In addition, we've been able to offer gardening sessions to 4 groups of local primary school pupils, with positive feedback from school staff regarding the impact on the pupils learning regarding themselves, the local community and the environment.



Job days



taking young people to college open days



Open Door support group and place of welcome



Support and Safe+Well

Spaces for young girls



young people building relationships with elderly residents.



Safe & Well – Support and Signposting

Neighbours sometimes need help to deal with the challenges life throws at us and to overcome the barriers that prevent them from being active participants in the local community.

Part of the role of our Community Support & Development Worker (Lucy) and our Youth Support & Development Worker (Flo) is to ‘develop a community-wide, collaborative approach to 1-to-1 barrier removing support’ for adults, young people, and families together’. This support encompasses drop-in groups (for adults and young people), the family support provided by our Together for Families worker, Ria, as well as staff working 1-to-1 with neighbours.

Open Door Drop-In (Place of Welcome)

Places of Welcome are a growing network of local community groups providing their neighbourhoods with places where all people feel safe to connect, belong and contribute. Once COVID-restrictions allowed, we were pleased to be able to re-establish our Open Door drop-in session at The Hub, alongside working towards Hodge Hill Pantry becoming a second ‘place of welcome’.

“When you are older and looking at life on your own for the first time it is difficult to go to new places or meet with new people. Belonging to the theatre group has enabled these things to happen and being part of The Pantry has consolidated this” Core Volunteer

Open Door offers hospitality and a listening ear. It also allows neighbours to connect with multiple forms of practical support, from using computers and accessing the internet, to help writing CVs and applying for jobs, to support and advice (through our partnership with Birmingham Community Law Centre) about benefits entitlements and challenging unfair decisions.

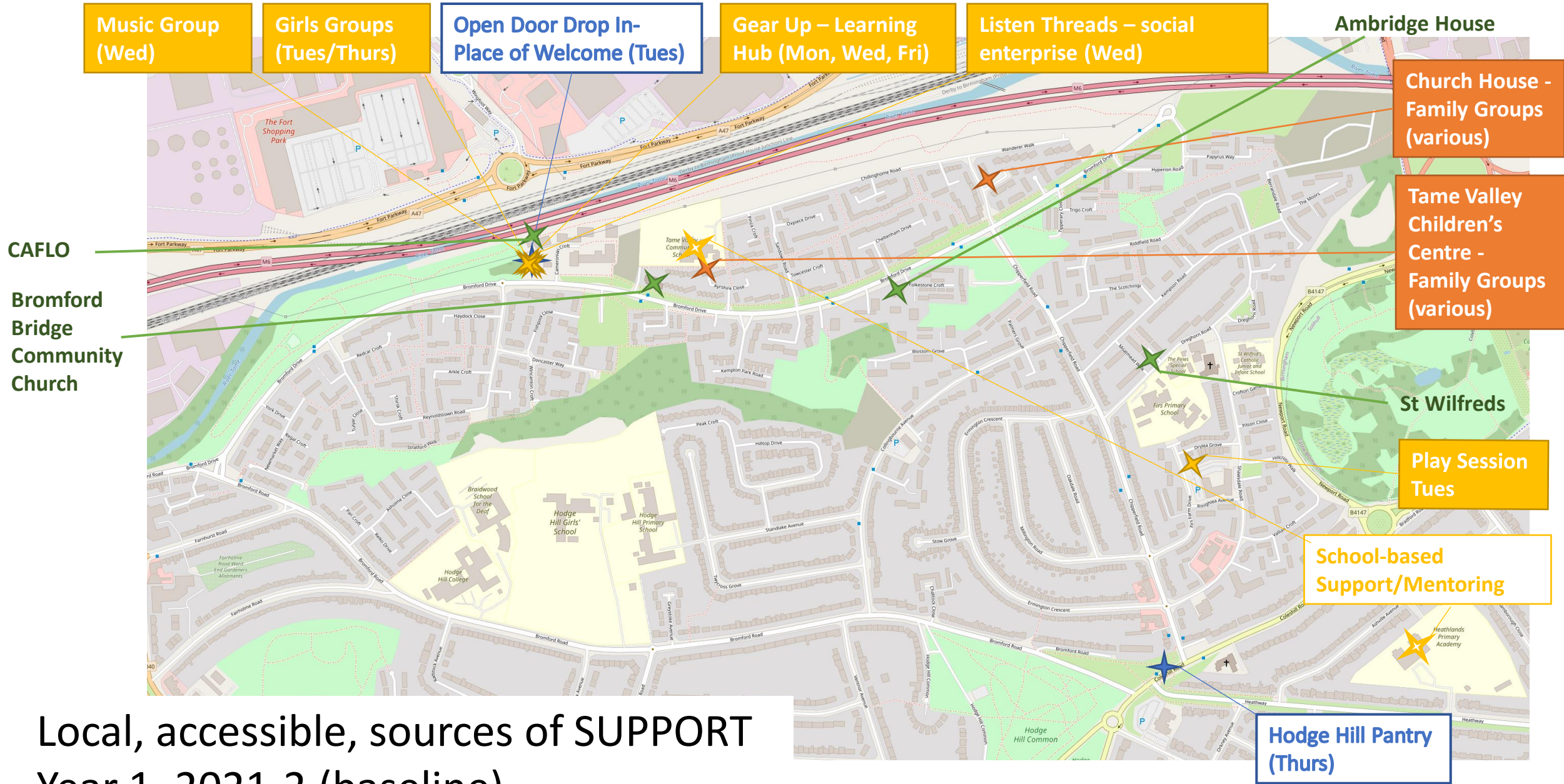
Initially opening outside the Hub, taking advantage of the extra space and fresh air, before moving to an inside/outside ‘hybrid’ model, **Open Door has welcomed 10-15 neighbours each week, engaging a total of 131 neighbours over Year 1.**

Open Door is supported by **a core team of 5-6 volunteers each week.** This, along with the thriving Pantry team, means we have succeeded in our aim of **at least 50% new regular participants involved and shaping the spaces.** A highlight of Year 1 has been young people, who we connected with through our youth programme, stepping up to help with the catering at the Open Door Place of Welcome.

Girls Groups

During 2021-22, we ran **two regular support groups for girls**, one for school years 5-7 and one for Year 8 and up). Numbers attending these groups have reduced over the year, owing to a range of external factors. We are reviewing these activities over the summer.

“[TWC has created] more things for young people like the street sport sessions and music sessions, doing more and made friends as part of the youth places of welcome” Core Volunteer



Local, accessible, sources of SUPPORT
 Year 1, 2021-2 (baseline)



Young leaders stepping in to cook for place of welcome



Pantry Team



Place of welcome thank you for the volunteers

Men's Breakfast



1-2-1 support and signposting

In keeping with our distinctive approach (p7), we see staff provision of 'barrier-removing support as a relatively limited form of support, alongside a much wider and more sustainable peer support that comes through neighbour-to-neighbour connections at street level, and in the experience of belonging that comes with getting involved in local groups and activities.

However, it has become clear that many of our neighbours face crises which require specialist support or intervention and that too many of them struggle to access appropriate support.

Over Year 1 (Jun 21-22):

- our TWC2 Adult Support Worker, Lucy, supported 137 households, involving 464 separate interactions (support conversations, phone calls or support with form filling etc)
- Alongside this, Flo, our youth support worker, supported an additional 41 young people in the community, 6 of which involved wider family support – some support involves weekly contact sessions over an extended period, others are more short-term or focused on particular outcome (e.g. college applications or supporting online learning)
- Our youth team (Flo, Dan and Janey) also work with 2 local schools, providing education-setting based support to around 44 young people over Year 1. The team have also supported 7 work experience placements during Year 1.
- In partnership with Spurgeons, Ria, our TWC Families worker has also offered 1-2-1 and group-based activities to families with young babies and pre-school children



Story Sharing



Values session and Strength finders sessions

Learning, Mentoring and Ideas + Story-sharing



Changemakers



Unsung Heroes Awards eveing



Communiy First Aid



Learning, Mentoring and Ideas

New for TWC2, our Learning Programme meets an identified need for specific training and personal development for our neighbours, to support their engagement in community.

Underpinned by an Asset-Based-Community Development approach, the Learning Programme seeks to unearth and nurture the gifts, talents and passion of local people, helping them to discover the 'why' of their personal involvement with community and to learn while doing (plan-do-review).

The Learning Programme is being designed to promote development of individuals' personal and social skills, alongside specific training to support development of new ideas and activities.

During Year 1, the Learning Programme has been developed and piloted with TWC staff and core volunteers.

17 neighbours, alongside 11 TWC staff, have participated in a range of training, including:

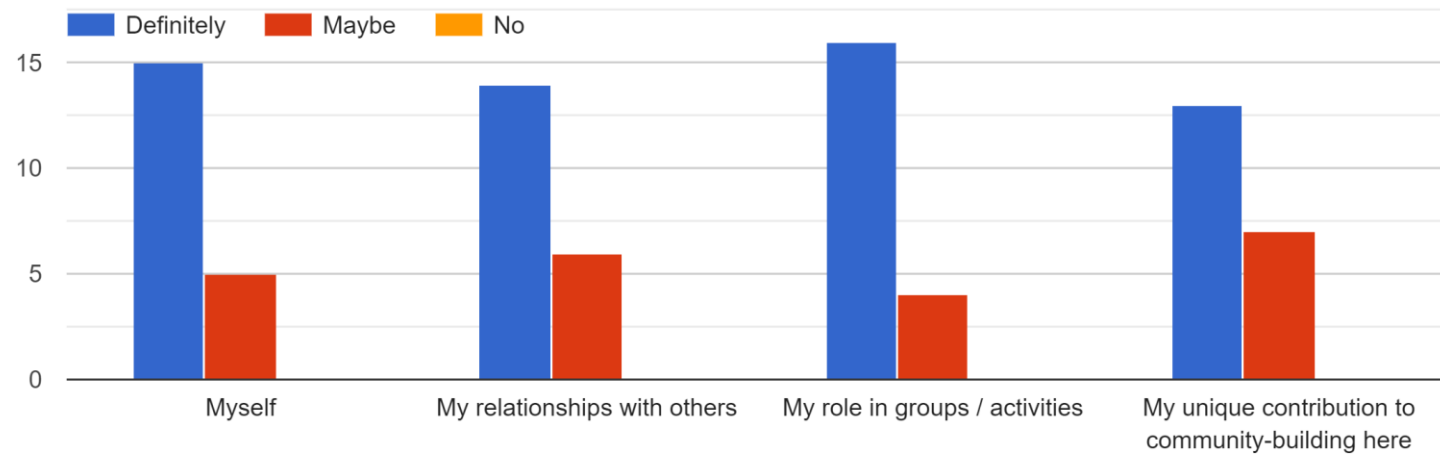
- Conflict resolution (7 attendees)
- Strength-finders (23 attendees)
- Community Safeguarding (20 attendees)

Volunteers have also been offered first-aid and other role-related training, as individuals and teams.

In addition to the coaching and mentoring role fulfilled by all TWC staff with their own volunteer teams, Paul (our Street Connector Mentor) has provided support to neighbours to develop and run their own groups and activities (see p21).

Feedback from our volunteers indicates the difference this made for them (see overleaf)

As a result of being part of TWC!, I have learnt more about

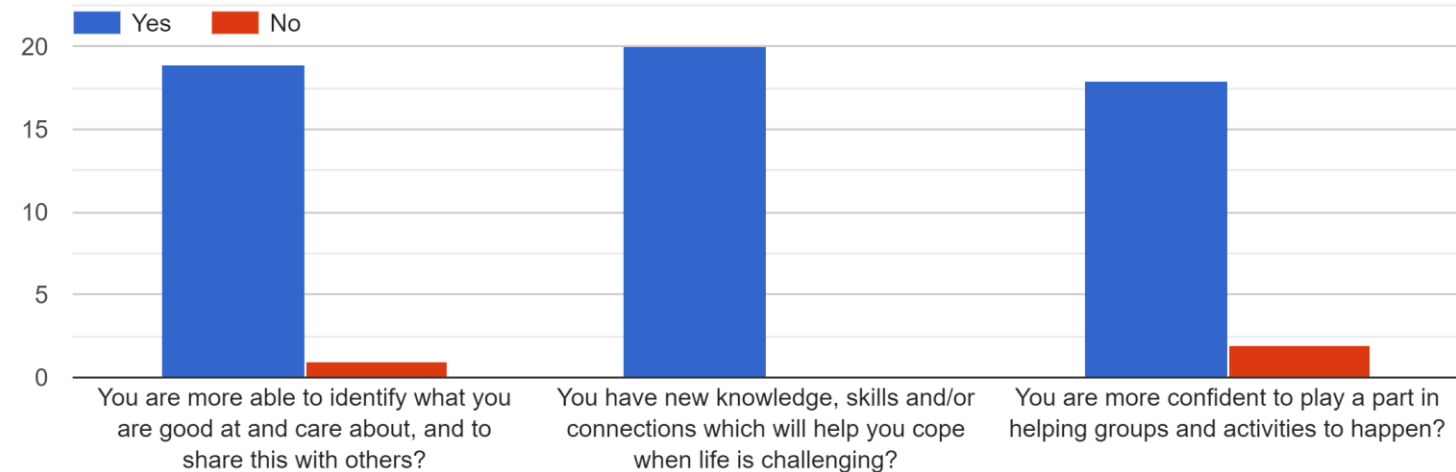


"It has made me more confident to open a conversation with strangers and to look for their unique gifts and skills. It has also given me the confidence to make suggestions to neighbours re future street events."
Core Volunteer

"I am more confident and now been able to gain paid employment whilst still being able to volunteer." Core Volunteer

"It's been a great experience in which I've learnt new things and met new people. It's helped with my confidence and allows me to grow and help others." Core Volunteer

As a result of that learning, do you feel



Vision-shaping, Communication and Story-sharing

Creating spaces to hear, share and celebrate the stories of neighbours, of groups, and of our growing and developing community, remains a central aspect of our work. This story-sharing is central to the wider and longer-term work of developing and shaping the vision for our community among our neighbours.

Much of this work is set within the groups and activities described in other workstreams (e.g. Knowing Me, Knowing You project) but is held together and shared more widely through this overarching workstream and occasional, more intentional, projects and events. We are also continuing to work out story telling opportunities, locally (e.g. the FBNT newsletter) and with the wider world, through our Street Connector Blog and participating in wider conferences, training and workshops.

In March 2022, we were delighted to support an **Unsung Heroes event** – celebrating our Covid Heroes & our community story. The event was attended by over 100 local people, including 20 neighbours who acted as hosts.

“Having moved here from somewhere where I had lived for over 30 years being a part of TWC has really helped me to settle in and feel at home in FAB. I was worried that I would feel disconnected for a long time but I feel I have made some genuine friends and neighbours and see FAB as home already.....

Being new here obviously I have had a lot of opportunities to do things with neighbours but also looking through the newcomers lens I have witnessed the changes as things have begun to open up again. There has been a lot of reconnecting and the big events have been well attended and it's been great to see people reconnecting or connecting for the first time.” Core Volunteer

Towards a flourishing community

Understanding the difference we're making

Understanding the difference we're making

One year into our 5 year TWC journey, we are starting to see early signs of the difference we are making, in terms of our community and neighbour outcomes.

We are actively working on framework for better understanding and evidencing the developing changes in our community.

In the meantime, this section shares the emerging picture in terms of:

1. Partnerships with (and between) other local groups and organisations
2. What our core volunteers, including young people involved in Youth Social Action and our Gardening After School activities (and their teachers), are telling us about the impact of being involved in the project

1. Local Partnerships

TWC2 is itself a partnership between 3 locally embedded organisations:

- Worth Unlimited - a national youth and community organisation have been based in the Firs & Bromford (in 'the Hub') since 2010. WUBS has a long track record here as an established, trusted youth work organisation, staffed by local people.
- Open Door Community Foundation - developing further the pioneering locally rooted community-building work of Hodge Hill Church
- Firs & Bromford Neighbours Together – board of local residents, administering the Big Local funding, developing a community vision, and overseeing various ongoing community events and activities.

Since September 2018, TWC! has also included the 'Together for Families' partnership with Tame Valley Children's Centre (run by Spurgeons), focused on local families with under 5s.

All partners have staff/volunteers who live in the neighbourhood, participating as members of the local community as well as in their appointed responsibilities.

Being locally rooted gives us a strong base to develop partnerships with other local institutions and organisations and to encourage/support them to partner with each other. During Year 1, we have come to recognise and name the importance of this element of our work – not just seeking to make a difference in our own strength, but through connecting and unlocking community assets through other local institutions/organisations working more closely together.

Many of our successful local partnerships were with local schools. As well as our mentoring work in schools, school engagement has included gardening sessions in and outside of school hours and Youth Social Action. We've mapped these into a baseline, against which we can record developing partnerships over the 5 year project (see next page)

Example of YSA – Heathlands Litter-picking

60 pupils from Heathlands Primary Academy joined an intergenerational litter-picking activity. Teachers reported that the pupils enjoyed *"engaging with their local community, understanding that they are able to have an impact and improve the area; working together and getting to know local people"*.

This taste of wider community engagement gave pupils *"understanding more about their community, realising that young people have a role to play. skills such as teamwork and communication and meeting people that might otherwise not engage with"*.

Teachers confirmed that this learning provided pupils with engagement across our range of TWC outcomes.

Local institutions and organisations PARTNER to unlock and grow assets for community life.

Pillars

Compass Support

Hodge Hill Arts

Birmingham City Council

West Midlands Police - PCSO's

Heathlands Academy - Mentoring, Social action

Tame Valley Academy - mentoring, social action

The Pioneer Group

Firs and Bromford Neighbours Together

StreetWatch

Hodge Hill Church

Hive college

Forward thinking Birmingham - Mental Health Support

Violence Reduction Unit - VRU

Ambridge House - Afternoon Tea's

Birmingham Law

Spurgeons

Flexible Learning Centre - School support for alternative provision

Safe Spaces for Young People

BNI - Business Network

Bromford Bridge Church - Costica

Jhoots Chemists



Youth led local environment campaign



National Trust and other local organisations visited Pantry



Young people finding a passion for all things green

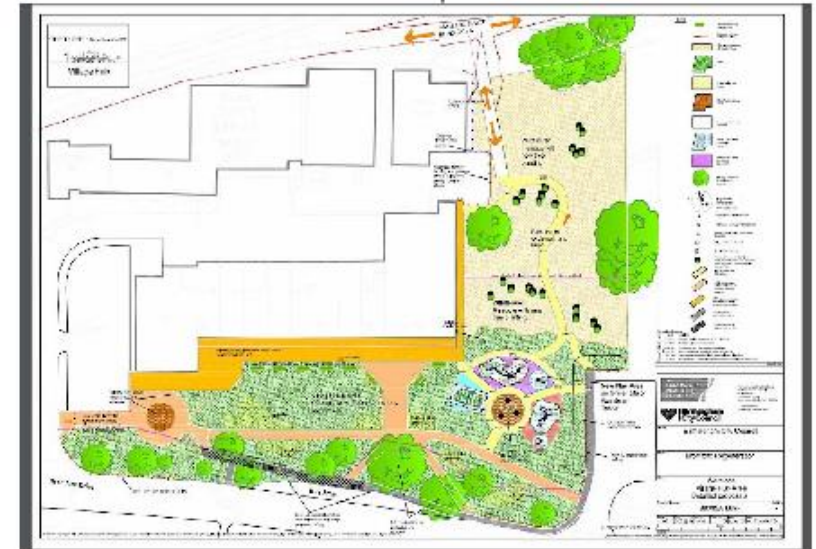
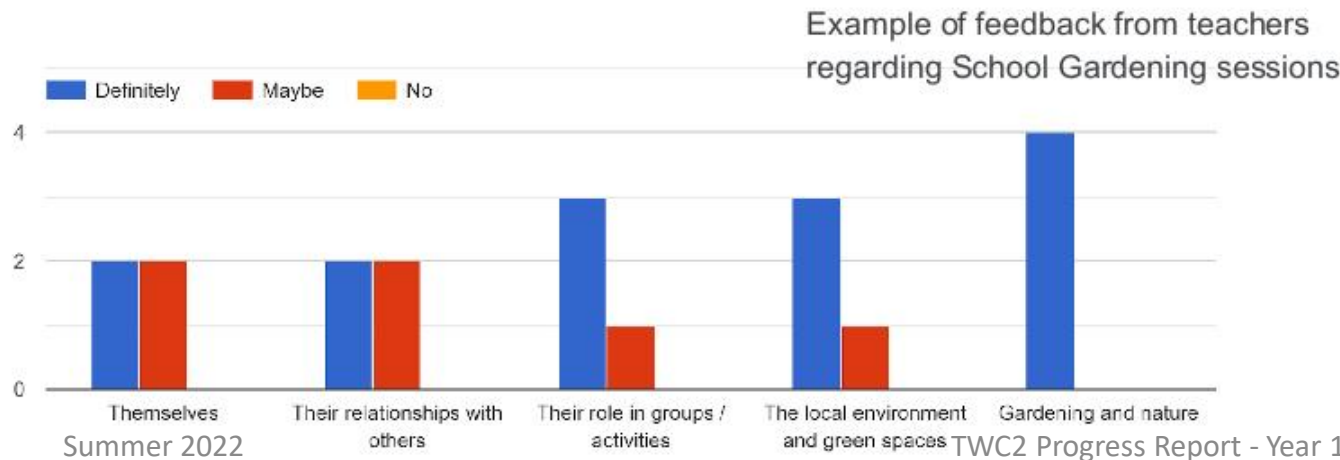


Forest school with Green Team

Local institutions and partnerships

We continue to work with local partners to support the development of the Village Green and Heritage Centre projects, campaign for improvements in local park, support the development of nature corridors.

As a result of being part of this activity, pupils have learnt more about



2. Impact of involvement on our core volunteers

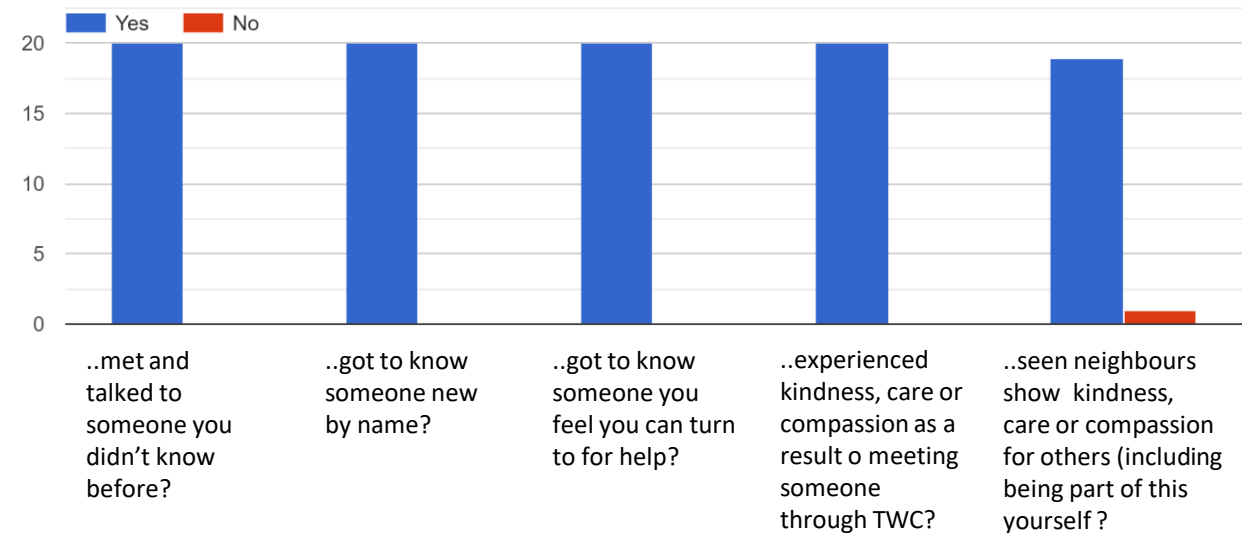
We asked our core volunteers – people who have been intensively involved in one or more activities as a registered volunteer – for their feedback.

Of the 20 responses, 13 had been involved with TWC for 3+ years (that is before COVID-19), 2 had got involved during the pandemic and 5 were new (less than 1 year). Responses spanned the full range of our work, including connectors, events, Pantry and other groups/activities.

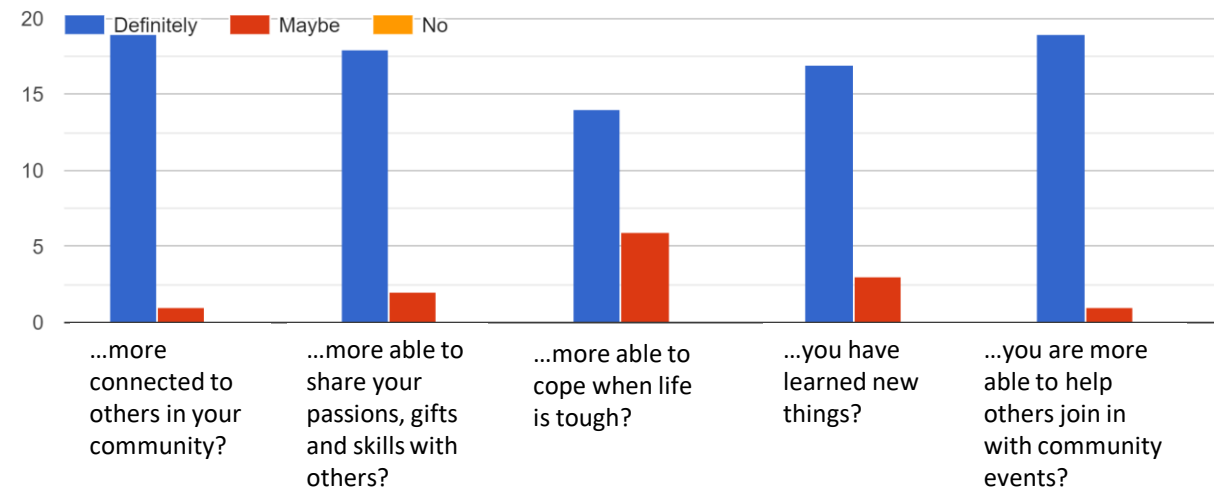
Although only a small number, the responses show that our core outcomes resonate strongly with volunteers' experience.

The difference being part of TWC has made for these key individuals is shown in the difference they report that TWC has made for them personally (next page)

Since you got involved, have you



As a result of being involved in TWC, do you feel



What difference has being part of TWC groups/projects made for you, personally?

It has got me **involved** in more community activities/events that I wouldn't have taken part in before.

Being **involved** with a vast number of people

Sense of **belonging**, a community that is family ,

It has given me the **opportunity** to have fun. I feel **part of the community**.

I feel satisfied that I am **playing my part** in my community

It has helped me more **aware** of services with my community such as Children's groups, pantry, The Hub etc and has helped me feel more **connected** to those within my community.

Its being able to **be part of a** large group of people from **all different types of backgrounds and views**

Its in its name 'Together We Can' TWC **achieve** anything we put our minds to, **making new friends** and being part of a thriving community has improved my **mental health**.

Has made me want to be more **involved** in community events

helped me to feel more **confident**, made **new friends**, given me more of a **purpose** in my community.

It's been a great experience in which I've **learnt new things** and **met new people**. It's helped with my **confidence** and **allows me to grow and help others**.

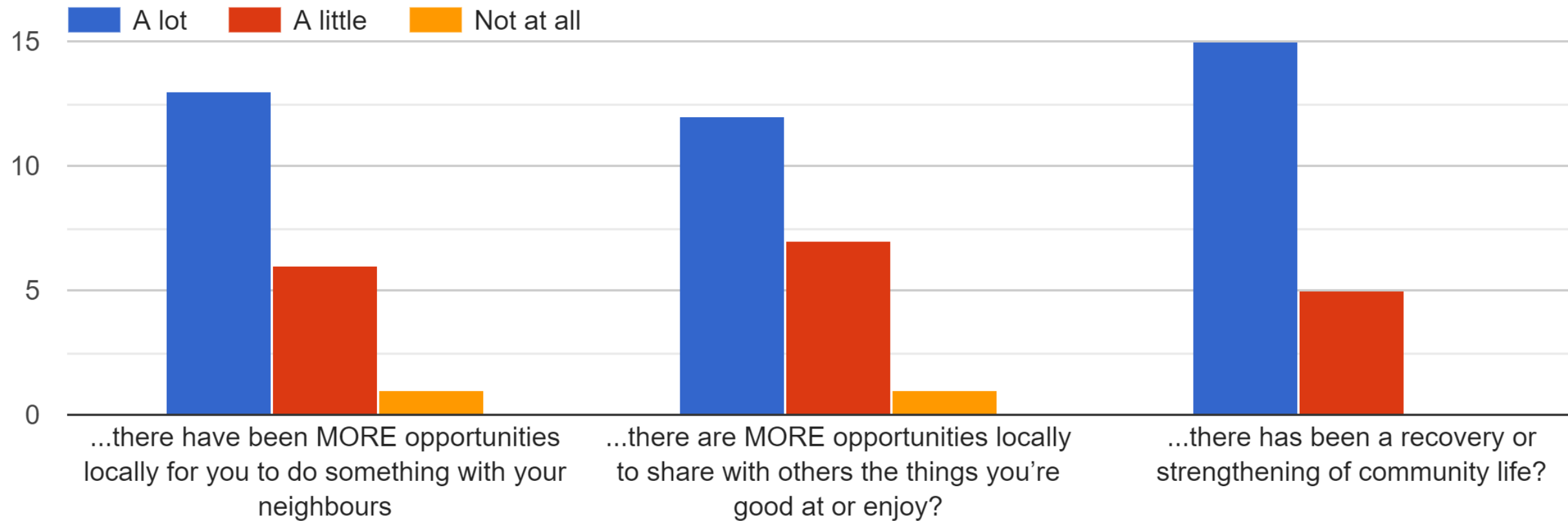
It has made me more **confident** to **open a conversation with strangers** and to look for their unique gifts and skills. It has also given me the confidence to **make suggestions** to neighbours re future street events.

It helps me to overcome my **social anxiety**. Also to **encourage** other people in my community who may be suffer with **mental health** & feel they cant get out or offer any skills. Its rewarding **showing kindness & love** to those who are isolated & see their confidence grow.

Team work, seeing people **come together**, seeing neighbours doing things together like the jubilee makes me feel good. it has made me feel more **confident** and like I **have a voice**.

It has helped me develop my **confidence** and **listening skills**.

Over the past year (that is since summer 2021), do you think/feel



What we're learning

And how we're responding

Learning and Reflection

Our main learning point from the early part of Year 1 concerned how to work together effectively as a growing and dispersed team, this included:

- A regular pattern of monthly team meetings – alternating between
 - Activity Meetings – focusing on task planning and collaboration
 - Reflection Circles – shared reflective practice regarding what we're noticing and learning, discussing together how to take this forward to shape our work in the future
- Re-establishing presence at Hub and in other spaces – as COVID restrictions allow; allowing team to be informally present to each other and neighbours
- Re-establishing and developing volunteer teams – including spaces for team development, reflection and feedback (see image)

Further learning presented in this section covers:

1. What our volunteers are telling us about how we can continue to improve TWC2 and the difference we make in our community.
2. Development of our understanding and articulation of the key 'alongsiding' role played by staff – a predominant focus of Reflection sessions in latter part of Year 1 and key for our work going forward.
3. Findings from a Young People Diversity study conducted for Worth Unlimited (Autumn 2021)

Learning 1 - What our volunteers are telling us...

Feedback from our volunteers was set out in the section above, but we also asked: “What might we do together to continue to improve TWC2 and/or make a difference in our community?”

Widen the Circles

More volunteers

We could help bring in a wider range of people and try to see if we are able to get more people involved and see new faces

Continue branching out from the usual people who get involved and getting to know new people. This has already started but we mustn't stand still.

That's possibly something to ask those who aren't particularly involved or who don't come to events?

Opportunities to 'come together'

More opportunities for team and neighbours to come "together"

More community get together for all

To really listen to each other and encourage our communities to come together and create community spirit.

Improve communication

Improve methods of communicating in open and also in more confidential ways.

More opportunities for training/support

More help for people suffering with mental health issues following Covid. Maybe looking at alternative approaches for support.

young leader training, play leader training, getting more people involved as its made a big difference to me.

Team - Support and Care

Stay positive and be mindful of our own needs and mental health. We are a strong team, taking time to be together as volunteers to bond.

To make sure TWC is always supported

Work as a team and always stay positive for each other

Keep on supporting TWC

Keep up with the good work that you are doing already

Not much more can do really seems good enough already!

Learning 2 - 'Alongside'

'Alongside' is the term we use to refer to a key aspect of our role as paid staff members.

In reflecting on the role, we've identified that alongside involves four key roles/tasks:

- looking for gifts, skills & talents
- holding space(s)
- supporting / mentoring
- helping manage risks

Our hope is that our learning concerning 'alongside' will be one of the unique contributions our project may make to understanding of the practical application of Asset-Based Community Development,

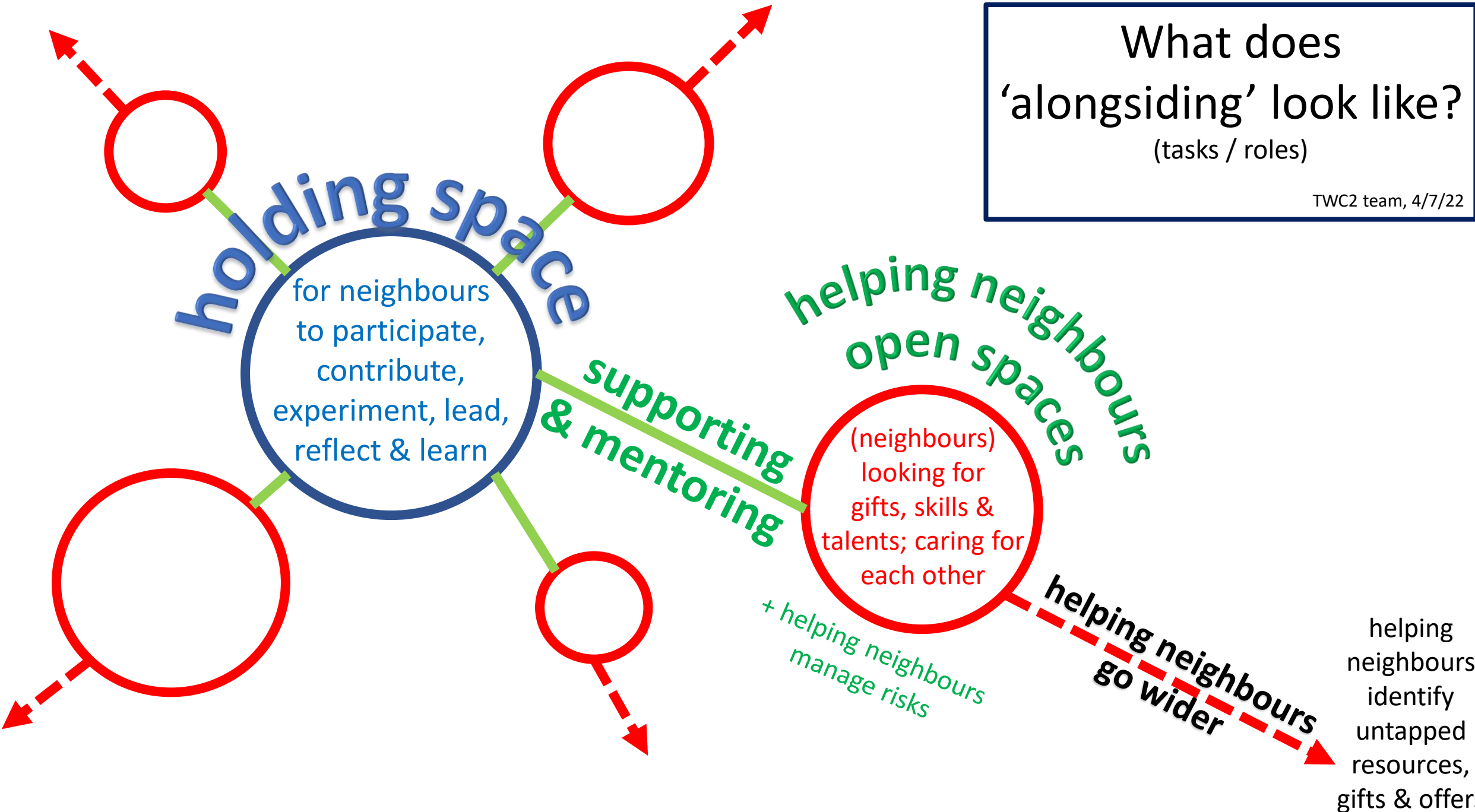
The following page sets out our developing conceptualization of the 'alongside role' – in diagrammatic form.

Our work developing thinking in this area is not finished and will develop as our project develops. Some additional thoughts/questions include:

- 'looking for gifts, skills & talents' – the primary work of 'connectors' (but also an ongoing part of the 'alongside' role, emphasised more at some times – e.g. at the beginning – than others)
- need for wisdom – what's needed changes/evolves over time, and varies with each person/group
- where does barrier-removal, everyday youth work delivery, etc., fit in? 'alongside' isn't everything we do!

What does
'alongsiding' look like?
(tasks / roles)

TWC2 team, 4/7/22



Learning 3 - 'Young People Diversity Study'

In Autumn 2021, Worth Unlimited conducted a national Diversity study, based on the demographic characteristics of young people collected via the sign-up process.

Our data reflects young people registered with Worth Unlimited Birmingham and Solihull branch, which includes but extends beyond Firs and Bromford. It nevertheless gives a useful insight into the reach of our work in the area.

Understanding the demographic characteristics of the adults we work with is more complex. This will be a focus of our development/evaluation work in Year 2.

In summary:

- Our young people are ethnically diverse – 37% White, 30% Black (inc Black African), 16% another ethnic group (including 'Asian') with a further 17% reporting a mixed/multiple identity. This appears to be more diverse than the local area (57% White) but this may reflect recent demographic change.
- At that point in time, our young people (across the WU branch) contained more boys than girls (70%:27%)
- Rates for sexual orientation (where asked) and disability are in line with national data
- 30% of our young people identified as Christian, 30% as Muslim and 40% with no religion – this potentially reflects the changing demographics of the local area (national statistics showing a lower proportion of Muslims and 'No religion' are for adults for 2011)

What comes next

How we're changing

Next Steps

TWC2's model is built on the assumption of ongoing change: as our community changes and grows, so does our contribution to that community. Most particularly, and unlike most organisations, we are committed to a journey towards being less needed in this neighbourhood – because the activity, the capacity, the skills and wisdom of this work will be increasingly in the hands and heads of local residents.

Here we share:

- (1) some of the priorities for the next year identified by individual staff members;
- (2) some of our key 'high level' priorities for the next year;
- (3) some of the more-or-less 'knotty' practical issues we know we need to address in the next year.

Staff Reflections (Awayday Jul 22)

Year 2 - Hopes, Dreams and Priorities



Strategic priorities

- Closer **integration between TWC & FBNT** (developing vision / approach, communication, learning, etc)
- Further rebuilding & developing a local network of sustainable **groups, activities & Places of Welcome** → more diverse, more intergenerational, more neighbour-led
- Developing the voice, contribution & leadership of **young people** across all areas of community life
- Deciding how as a community we provide **crisis support** (esp in context of deepening national 'cost of living' crisis), and how this relates to / fits in with TWC's community-building work
- Embedding new **patterns of learning & coaching/mentoring** → growing the cohort & diversity of community leaders & connectors
- Staff continuing to make the **shift from delivery towards 'alongsiding'** – and noticing the limits / resistances to this

Practical goals

- Further developing function of the **TWC Coordination Group** + its relationship with the 3 partner organisations (FBNT, WU, ODCF)
- Establishing new patterns of communication & coordination between **TWC & FBNT**
- Clarifying TWC's role in supporting the implementation of **FBNT's Village Vision**
- Clarifying the configuration of funding, staffing & contexts for any **crisis support** work delivered under TWC's 'umbrella'
- Developing our tools for **registering** participants, **monitoring** diversity and evidencing the difference we're making ('**outcomes**')
- Developing plans for recruiting & developing further **local trainees** (green / street / youth connectors)
- Proactive planning for **staff tapering / reduction** to be as positive as possible for both project & staff

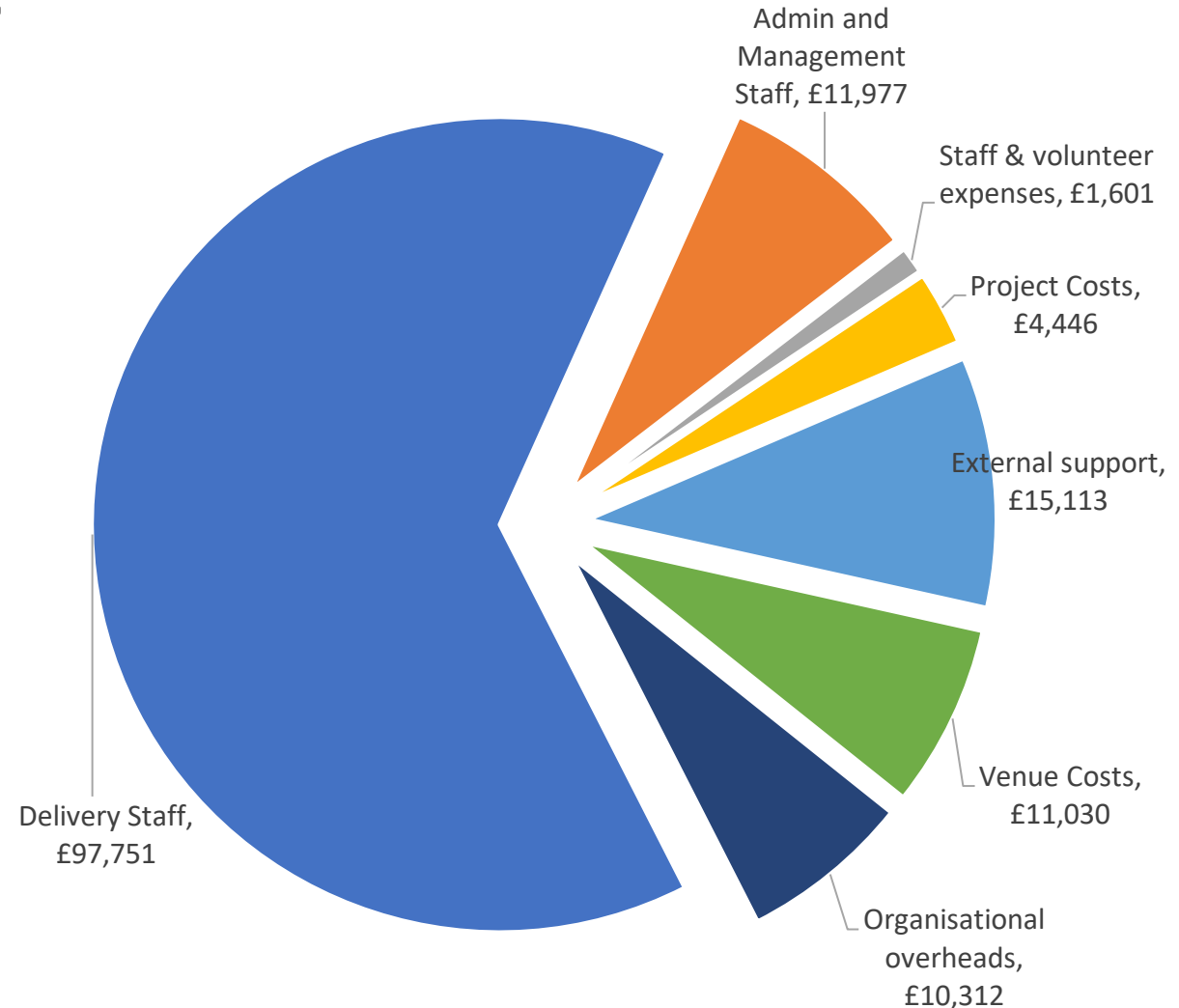
Finance Update

What we've spent this year

What we've spent this year

Generally, our spending has been on track for the year.

- Our payroll has been slightly less than anticipated because we have received match funding from elsewhere.
- There are two “specific projects” (£6,000) which have been rolled over into Year 2.
- We spent significantly less than expected on our Learning Programme costs, with some aspects being run internally, some gifted in kind and some rolled over into Year 2.
- We needed more money for management and oversight costs than anticipated due to staffing changes and re-arrangement of our leadership team. In particular, we have greatly benefitted from additional time from our External Evaluation and Reflection partner, Jane Perry.
- We have an overall underspend of £15,139 which will be carried forward into Year 2, either as rolled over costs or adding to our contingency.
- Increasing energy costs are of particular concern to us going forward.



(A full finance report is attached as an appendix)

Together We Can 2 Budget vs Actual - Year 1 (NLCF and FBNT Funding only)		BUDGET		ACTUAL		
		July 2021 to June 2022		Total		
SALARY	Street Connector Mentor (FT)	£	28,494	£	23,304	
	Community Support & Development Worker (FT)	£	16,351	£	14,861	
	Street Connector Trainee	£	2,994	£	3,455	
	Youth Connector Development Worker & Branch Leader (FT)	£	26,937	£	28,035	
	Youth Support & Development Worker (FT)	£	28,900	£	28,096	
	Admin support (PT)	£	3,775	£	3,119	
	SUBTOTAL			£ 107,450		£ 100,870
PROJECT COSTS	Work Streams:					
	Adult Places of Welcome (Lucy)	£	1,500	£	623	
	Street Connecting (Paul)	£	1,500	£	-	
	Youth Places of Welcome (Dan)	£	1,500	£	2,322	
	Specific Projects:					
	Mental health support & capacity-building (commissioned)	£	5,000	£	-	
	Safe & Well Hub (resource development & training sessions)	£	1,000	£	-	
	Learning Programme (ODCF - Paul):					
	Learning - resource development & training sessions	£	1,000	£	1,501	
	Learning, coaching & ideas incubation (external training)	£	3,000	£	-	
	Learning, coaching & ideas incubation (trips & residential)	£	3,000	£	-	
	Story-sharing Hub (equipment/setup & ongoing resources)	£	3,000	£	-	
SUBTOTAL			£ 20,500		£ 4,446	22%
OTHER REVENUE	External Support:					
	External evaluation support (Jane Perry)	£	6,500	£	12,863	
	External Coach/Consultant (Jo Bagby)	£	3,000	£	2,250	
	Evaluation, reporting & celebrating	£	1,250	£	-	
	Management Costs:					
	Staff & volunteer training, development & wellbeing	£	2,000	£	255	
	Staff & volunteer travel, mobile phones & other expenses	£	2,200	£	1,346	
	Line management (WU)	£	4,000	£	6,000	
	Line management (ODCF)	£	2,000	£	2,000	
	Financial management (WU)	£	4,000	£	7,200	
	Management & oversight review (year 1)	£	-	£	-	
	Project management (NB. potential for new role)	£	858	£	858	
	Venue & Overheads:					
	Venue costs - rent (the Hub)	£	8,000	£	7,600	
	Venue costs - utilities (the Hub)	£	3,500	£	3,430	
	Insurance, legal fees, etc (WU)	£	1,000	£	960	
	Insurance, legal fees, etc (ODCF)	£	2,000	£	2,152	
Contingency (pay rises, etc.)	£	3,000	£	-		
SUBTOTAL			£ 43,308		£ 46,914	108%
TOTAL EXPENDITURE			£ 171,258		£ 152,229	89%
INCOME						
Firs and Bromford Neighbours Together				£	42,408	
The National Lottery Community Fund				£	124,960	
TOTAL INCOME					£ 167,368	
Carried forward to Year 2					£ 15,139	