

Dorset Partnership for Older People Project

The Most Significant Change

Outcome Stories

Title: “Stroke Club Chef”

This story relates to a member of the Dorchester Social Stroke Club, a social group for stroke sufferers which was funded through POPP in August 07. This member joined the club in October 07, and his story was reported as part of the monitoring return for Apr-Sept 08.

“This member, pre-stroke, ran a successful restaurant in Spain. He still loves cooking – with one hand – and has invented some gadgets to help him prepare food.

He has prepared a meal for 20+ members and often provides cake and savouries for meetings and fund raising events. His determination not to allow his disability to prevent him cooking is amazing.

He is full of ideas – usually associated with food – and has now joined the club committee. He is also a volunteer benefits adviser for Age Concern. We are privileged to have him as a member and hope he gets as much benefit from membership as we do.”

Why this story/change was felt to be significant by the people who proposed it:

It illustrates a POPP funded project that is enabling an older person to contribute, and be valued for their interests, abilities, skills and experience, rather than their needs.

Why this story/change was felt to be significant by those who voted for it:

- It's about people getting together, getting out, being motivated. People can socialise without having money – this is about having the guts to do something with your skills, pass them on
- The story looked at the individual – recognised the individual rather than needs
- This story challenges stereotypes

Title: "George & Joyce"

George was the full time carer for his wife Joyce. Joyce had suffered a stroke about three years ago and had lost the ability to communicate using speech. George was living with dementia and struggling to cope with the demands of his caring role. Due to their obvious difficulties they did not feel comfortable attending social events together, something that they had cherished doing together in the past.

George learnt of the Singing for The Brain sessions run by the local branch of the Alzheimer's Society through the Community Mental Health Team based in Bridport (a project funded & supported by POPP). They attended the sessions together and found enormous comfort through being able to participate in a group activity. As the weeks progressed Joyce found that her ability to communicate with George was improving. At the end of one of the sessions George, bursting with pride, announced to the group that Joyce had spoken to him again for the first time in three years. They were both crying with delight.

Sadly, George died recently, leaving Joyce on her own. However, because of the new friends that Joyce had made through this group and the knowledge that was available to her she was able to continue living independently.

Joyce continues to attend the singing sessions and has been able to continue independent living through the help and support generated within the local community by this project. Joyce has told me that she is very grateful for the time that she had with her husband at these singing sessions. She is convinced that the singing and social interaction in the group helped her to recover her power of speech and improve her overall quality of life, despite her recent tragic loss.

Why this story/change was felt to be significant by those who voted for it:

- To have been able to bring that person back...
- The thought that George was able to hear Joyce speak, and communicate with her that way before he died
- This is about enabling someone to stay in their community, even at a very traumatic time.
- Joyce was able to return to a community, and an increased quality of life - What would have happened if Joyce hadn't come to Singing for the Brain? – stayed at home / isolated / Wayfinder would be telling a different story / someone would have decided she 'had to move into a home'?
- Ongoing support available, from the group
- Story that illustrates significance of the whole project – any projects that open up social opportunities, communities that are then able to help support themselves
- "It was the one story that made me cry, so I had to vote for it"

Title: “Wayfinders part of the community”

A woman approached me at a monthly meeting I attend (initially funded by POPP) to see if it were possible for me to help a neighbour of hers. I gave her my details to pass on to her neighbour who duly called me.

I arranged to carry out a home visit to the clients, who are a couple in their 80s. The husband had had a number of operations and the wife is now looking after him. However, I believe he fell on his first visit home from hospital and didn't make it through the door and was taken back into hospital.

Wife was very distressed about invoices received relating to care of her husband after his release from hospital. After much confusion and a number of phone calls it was agreed with the authorities that the amount owing could be paid off monthly over a period of time.

The wife required a wheelchair to take her husband out. She had sorted this out with a company but couldn't remember who it was with and wondered where the wheelchair was. After several phone calls I found the correct contact and wheelchair was delivered within the week.

Husband very weak and only able to shuffle very slowly with the aid of frame. Unable to use bath but to my knowledge nobody had picked up on this. Contacted Dorset Direct to arrange a general home assessment with emphasis on the bathroom changing to shower room.

Also asked for a member of the Telecare team to conduct a visit with a view to putting heat detectors in the kitchen and water detectors in the bathroom. The wife would be in the middle of doing something and her husband would call and she would forget that she had left the cooker on or tap running.

I also arranged for a home safety check with the DFRS and a full benefits check for the couple via the local Dept of Work and Pensions.

Informed the clients of the blister pack available for their medicine from the local Boots chemist.

I called Dorset Direct recently to see how things were progressing and it appears that things have been stopped as the man has been taken into hospital again and it unlikely to be going back home.

There is a lot more work to be done but these were the main issues on my initial visit.

Why this story was felt to be significant by the people who proposed it:

I meet many older people who are struggling, worrying about money and don't know how to cope – most don't know about attendance allowance or other kinds of help available.

Having this extra income makes such a difference to people.

Never assume that, even if there are members of the family living nearby, that they are going to offer help.

What might have happened? Man never having a proper wash? Flooding? Fire?

Why this story/change was felt to be significant by those who voted for it:

- Multiple outcomes
- This couple became more in control of 'what happens'.
- Often the small things that can make a difference.
- Brings in importance of having someone with a wider knowledge in the community, signposting. There are lots of people [agencies] out there able to do different things – need to signpost, trust each other to get on and do what we do
- This illustrates the key benefit of how POPP is organised into clusters – getting info on a local basis, responding to local need.
- One size doesn't fit all – this story demonstrates a gateway that people are comfortable going through – there are a lot of gateways that people are not as comfortable with.
- The person is seen as an individual from the start, not a 'client group'

(Since this story was shared earlier in September, we have learnt that the husband passed away.)

Title: “Reminiscence Groups in Residential Homes”

A woman moved into a residential home in St Leonards – although activities were available there, they did not have a reminiscence activity where residents could share their experiences.

2 POPP Wayfinders and a POPP Community Leader had a meeting and the idea was born – January 2009.

A number of residential homes were contacted, they thought it a great idea. One of the homes did have an in house group, but thought if it could be run by outsiders it would be a further stimulus for the residents. The project was put to WRVS who were very interested and felt they could provide volunteers.

Weymouth Hospital (who run a reminiscent box scheme) were contacted to get costing, availability, delivery and timing.

Following various meetings a proposal was forwarded for funding to POPP.

Training of volunteers went ahead.

Reminiscence Clubs launched 29th July 09.

Residential Homes at present using this service: Ashley Heath, St Ives, St Leonards, 3 Legged Cross & West Moors. Future projects to include St Leonards hospital (talks with Matron ongoing)

Why this story/change was felt to be significant by those who voted for it:

- “Benefit to residents who have little access to conversation & stimulation”
- Residents are “no longer forgotten” by people outside the home. “Stimulation”.
- Engages with “a forgotten part of society in a very imaginative & creative way”
- “Significantly lifts the mood of people attending”
- “A great idea for bringing people together
- “Promotes friendship and common interests”

Title: “Lunch Club for Sturminster Marshall”

This story relates to a lunch club initiated by a POPP Community Leader and set up with POPP support.

The need for a Lunch Club in Sturminster Marshall had been identified in the Parish Plan.

Two local women wanted to cook for the club.

Originally it was estimated that around 30 people would use the club – the club now caters for over 50 people!

Speakers were organised to attend the club. One such speaker was a Police Community Safety Officer. A woman who attended this talk had been robbed; she was reassured by the the PCSO's visit, and made to feel safer.

Why this story/change was felt to be significant by those who voted for it:

- “Shows the real reasons behind a luncheon club”
- “More than just a luncheon club”
- Because the woman “felt secure”
- “Because it has become more than originally intended, reaching a wider audience”
- “Exceeded expectation in numbers. Helped to involve community police within members”
- Illustrates how “one project improves the lives of lots of people”

Title: “Mrs P & NeighbourCar”

This story relates to a scheme initiated by a POPP Community Leader and set up with POPP support.

This story is about an 89 year old lady, a registered client of West Moors NeighbourCar.

On Sunday 9th August Linda, a volunteer driver, arrived to take Mrs P. to Church.

When she failed to get an answer she went round to the Coordinator who lived nearby for advice and assistance. They went back together to the client's bungalow, having also alerted the Secretary who followed. They found both doors unlocked and when they went in they found the elderly lady lying on the floor unable to get up. She didn't know why she had fallen.

Her meal of the previous day was still cooking! The fish in the oven was burnt to a crisp and the saucepan on the stove was black and the contents unrecognizable.

The paramedics arrived and decided the lady should be admitted to hospital for investigation and to attend to the injuries to her face.

Mrs P is very aware that had it not been for NeighbourCar she could have died where she lay and her bungalow including the other half of the semi could have caught fire.

She is now being issued with a personal alarm and another elderly lady will, it is hoped, phone regularly to check on her health and wellbeing.

Too little but, fortunately, not too late.

West Moors NeighbourCar intends to look into the feasibility of persuading the more isolated and vulnerable clients to invest in personal alarms.

As POPP leader I am in consultation with Dr Anne Hayden (ISECCA) with a view to setting up a telephone befriending service. This will not be run by the NeighbourCar Committee, but by WRVS.

Why this story/change was felt to be significant by those who voted for it:

- “Benefit to housebound and those with limited mobility, and people who are lonely – enables them to get out”
- “A much needed service for isolated, non car drivers”
- “Because it was the first of such schemes initiated through POPP and has led to other similar schemes, with more to follow”

N.b. This story was felt to be the most impactful, out of a number of stories relating to transport schemes set up through POPP. These transport schemes, collectively, were felt to have been the Most Significant Change.

Title: “Jane’s Journey”

This story is written by the Chairman of the Shaftesbury and Villages 50+ Forum, which was set up with support from POPP.

“Since becoming involved with the Forum eighteen months ago, my opinion of, and attitude to older people and ageing has changed radically.

Having spent my life in the financial and hi-tech sectors, my contact with older people was limited to those in my own family.

The 50+ Forum and Dorset Association of Senior Forums has introduced me to so many individual older people as individuals with multi-faceted personalities; rather than as a faceless, slightly frightening and definitely alien group.

This is a problem within our society – where we tend to attach labels which infer monolithic characteristics.

As Jackie Allen of Dorset Age Partnership says, older people are NOT sweet, fluffy and kind. They aren’t grumpy and miserable. In common with people of any age, they are simply PEOPLE.

I have learned not to assume anything – but instead I expect to be surprised and awed by what people in their 60’s, 70’s, 80’s and 90’s can achieve.

Society needs the unique perspective, wisdom and connection with our social history that older people can offer.

In Shaftesbury, where nearly 30% of our adult population is over the age of 60, intergenerational exchange and understanding is probably our greatest challenge. We also have to ensure that people can remain independent for as long as they can.

To conclude, I now feel responsible for improving older people’s quality of life in this area. I will continue to raise older people’s issues at the highest level nationally, and hope to have an influence in the next Government.”

Why this story/change was felt to be significant by those who voted for it:

- “Contribution of people, of all ages”
- “Discovered an awareness of the potential of older people and their strengths. Will be able to make an enormous contribution to the welfare of an older generation”
- “It's not always the obvious people who change”
- “It challenges stereotyped images. We need to challenge stereotypes, to focus on people's contributions & skills. This links with the whole ethos of POPP”
- “There are lots of misconceptions about older people. We must all take time to understand one another... for someone to change their thinking, understand someone else's wisdom – this is important, and I hope that in time more and more people will catch on and see older people's worth.”

Title: “Carer’s Tale”

As a Wayfinder in Purbeck covering 26 rural locations, we attend on a regular basis the Country Market in Wool. Here people buy fresh produce and homemade jams, preserves and pickles. There are handicrafts too, as well as eggs and plants.

Most times we were there, a gentleman in his 80's would come in towards the end to see if there were any cakes left for sale. He was always in a hurry, saying that he only had a little time to spare as he was employing a carer for his wife so that he could do some shopping. We tried to chat to him, gave him our cards, and he always retorted that he knew all there was about benefits, he had read everything from cover to cover, that there was nothing we could tell him.

After a little while we decided to run a surgery on a Tuesday morning at the Hall, so that if anyone wanted to see us on a more private basis then we were available.

We saw quite a few people, and then suddenly our gentleman turned up.

Gradually, over a number of weeks, he told his story. His wife was very disabled and could do nothing for herself – he attended to her care, personal and otherwise.

Over a period of time we persuaded him to speak to his doctor, to approach Social Services for help, that it was ok to do so and that he wasn't being disloyal to her by doing so.

We also contacted Anchor Staying Put. As a result she was allowed the full rate of Attendance Allowance, carers helped with her care and she was given sitting hours so that he had some free time from time to time. Adaptations were made to their home so that it became easier for him to take her out of the house into the car.

He admitted that he had come to the end of his tether and was beginning to think the only way out was to commit suicide.

Why this story/change was felt to be significant by those who voted for it:

- “Men I believe are reluctant to ask for help, and in this instance by having courage he helped his wife, their environment, and his own wellbeing”
- “Trust, and timely intervention probably saved a life – it takes a lot to admit you need help, and this story shows the importance of being able to go back several times, building trust”
- “The fact that this man knew that the Wayfinders were there was the key to helping him – the constant presence of the Wayfinder”
- “This is the 1 story about a man!”
- “Carers are the unsung heroes, underpaid and overstretched”
- “because of the man’s desperation – it’s not very often we are able to help the most desperate people, this was special”
- “Knowing (from previous experience) how long it can take to build up this trust”
- “Information now available to everyone, which leads to, in this case at least, a happy carer and a proud Wayfinder.”

Title: "A reason to get up in the morning"

This story relates to a woman who became involved, as a volunteer, with a coffee morning that was initiated and supported by a POPP Community Leader.

The woman had only been in the area for 4 years – one day she called into the Church Room for stamps, and decided to volunteer to help with coffee mornings. She is now also involved with computer mentoring, books and Youth Club.

She says "I have met and spoken to more people in 4 months than in 4 years. Walking on the trail way I can now say hello to people whose names I know, and it's great to meet fellow volunteers and beneficiaries when out shopping.

I invited 4 ladies from U3A computer group, who needed some extra help on the internet. They are all now signed up with broadband and emailing family and friends. It's important for us to keep a secure record of their email address and password, as they often forget their notebooks.

One of them, an 86 year old woman living on her own, rang to ask me a question. I thought she had probably had a stroke and I was able, through her sent mail, to contact her daughter in Bath. She is making a slow recovery and still coming for her computer sessions.

I was allowed to attend A&B courses a second time, to encourage a young man who helps at the Youth Club to come, and also to meet more mentors from other groups. I was invited to visit the St Leonards group, and was able to get lots of help and ideas from them. They only have 1 laptop, and I suggested they contact POPP.

Organised 6 sessions for those wanting to learn more about their cameras (a group of 8 people), and running tea and biscuits week next week. Encouraged a recently widowed villager to come on to coffee morning rota. Advertised for unwanted computers to be donated for those who are currently unemployed and can't afford their own.

I'm busier now than before I retired, but this has given me a reason to get up in the morning again"

This woman has completed training for Child Protection and First Aid, and is taking responsibility for monitoring and updating the Church Room First Aid box.

Why this story/change was felt to be significant by the people who proposed it:

This continuing story demonstrates how creating opportunities for a community enables involvement, giving purpose and sense of identity and belonging for individuals and the community. It is always evolving.

Why this story/change was felt to be significant by those who voted for it:

- “It crossed a wide range of generations. Intergenerational associations / friendships show a future for older people. Old and young learn from each other.”
- “Works on so many levels, and although about one person, others are drawn in”
- “Multiple outcomes”
- “Shows how one thing leads to another – a holistic change”
- “Benefits to older people as a volunteer, and also to those using the services and developments this person has initiated. This is about motivating people’s interest in their community and creating an opportunity for them to be involved. This is about older people supporting their community. It’s about involvement and contribution and feeling part of something – and increasing self worth.”

Title: “Mary and the memory café”

Mary, 70, has dementia, and formerly spent all day at home while her husband was out at work.

She now attends the fortnightly memory café (set up with part funding from POPP), where she has met friends, and met with POPP Wayfinders.

Through the Wayfinders she has obtained extra income and details of activities.

Through the partner agencies she also had home improvements.

Why this story/change was felt to be significant by those who voted for it:

- “Because to be lonely and confused is the worst thing in the world”
- “Memory loss is becoming more common, or being recognised more. It’s important to have places that people can go to – that are recognised as ok to go to, not being hidden”
- “It could happen to all of us”
- “Simple example of a POPP funded project changing a whole family’s life by helping one person”
- Some voters were also influenced by their own experience of visiting the memory café: “the venue was so peaceful and welcoming” “other memory cafes have not been so nice – cold, radio playing in the background etc”

Selection of Outcome Stories from POPP monitoring, Apr-Sept 08

(where names are given, they have been changed)

1

Project: Milborne St Andrews Drop in Centre – weekly drop in centre, for information and to promote IT skills – instigated/supported by POPP Community Leader, and was awarded £1,500 POPP funding in November 2007

Story relates to: A female volunteer

The Story:

“Andrea and her husband came forward as volunteers right at the start. They have been able to use their self- taught IT skills to help and enthuse others and have gained great satisfaction from this.

Recently Andrea had a hip-replacement operation and says that being useful and needed by the group encouraged her recovery.”

Why we thought this story is particularly significant:

Shows the role that contributing and feeling part of a community can play in speeding recovery.

2

Project: Charlton Marshall Community Internet Access – project providing learning opportunities to older people and access to computer services - instigated/supported by POPP Community Leader, and awarded £2,000 POPP funding in March 2008

Stories relate to: 3 different (male and female, regular and occasional) beneficiaries of this project

The Stories:

[when asked what difference has been made for these people]

“Able to use the broadband connection to download articles about parish administration. Also to chat to other users when at session. Benefit both to the individual and to the wider community from information delivered. ”

“Downloaded a knitting pattern to make items for a charity.

Enabled the beneficiary to do her knitting – a physical and mental stimulus”

*“Regularly attends for coffee and a chat. Used internet to look up gardening info.
Helped with*

1) social interaction/reduced isolation – the lady lives on her own

2) Gardening – encouraged/enabled her to go on with this activity – encouraging fitness, activity, mental stimulation”

Why we thought these stories are particularly significant:

Illustrate the range of benefits that enabling access to the internet can bring for older people. Other such benefits identified through the Evaluation have included accessing health information (“so you’re not just relying on what your GP tells you”) and finding online bank accounts with better rates of interest, as well as being able to keep in touch with family, grandchildren etc.

These stories illustrate how the dominance of computer technology in today’s world can effectively discriminate against people who are unable to access email / internet – and therefore the importance of projects that seek to address this.

3

Project: POPP Community Leadership Programme

Story relates to: A walking group set up by local people as a spin off from other activities facilitated by a Community Leader. This project didn’t receive any other POPP funding.

The Story:

“A local 65 year old had completed a pathfinder coarse and volunteered to start a walking group for older people in the village. She attended the lunch club to promote the idea and a group meets monthly, do warm up exercises and walk for an hour along the trail way and foot paths locally, routes depending on the ability of the group. Tongues exercising as well! One elderly widow who never goes out alone said, “I have lived in the village for 40years and have never been up across the top of the village and really enjoyed the views.”

Why we thought this story was particularly significant:

Illustrates the impact (including for someone who was at risk of isolation) of a project that didn’t require extra funding to set up

4

Project: POPP Wayfinder Programme

Story relates to: a Wayfinder client

The Story:

"A client had asked for our help as his wife was severely disabled and he felt very depressed and trapped. Over a period of time he was persuaded to get help from Pension Service, Social Services and a number of other agencies. This made a big difference to his life and he was very appreciative of our help. At one point he had felt that the only way out was suicide, but getting help made him feel less isolated"

Why we thought this story was particularly significant:

Demonstrates the value of the Wayfinder service in providing a starting point for accessing a number of different services, which made a dramatic difference for this carer.

5

Project: Information & advice outreach service, Age Concern North Dorset – £19,000 of POPP funding (in May 2007) contributed towards provision of this service

Stories relate to: 3 different beneficiaries

The Stories:

"After having worked with Mr A to get his due financial entitlements for the last nine months and involving his nearest job centre and MP he eventually received £143 per week Pension Guarantee Credit plus 9 months back entitlement.

(Total £13,156)

There was a delay by DWP who completely mishandled this case"

"After having been referred by a Wayfinder, Mrs B was able to claim Pension Guarantee Credit, Council Tax benefit, Housing benefit and an exemption of health costs (total £2,882)"

"Mr and Mrs C – who were unaware that they would be entitled to any benefit, are now in receipt of pensions savings credit backdated for a year, council tax benefit and help with health costs. (Total £6,859.84)"

Why we thought these stories are particularly significant:

They highlight the very tangible and significant financial benefits that people had missed out on until this service supported them to overcome necessary challenges and claim them. The second story also illustrates the linkage between Wayfinders and POPP funded projects.

6

Project: North Dorset Disability Information Service (NorDDIS), received £4,200 of POPP funding in April 2008, to provide computer training for their volunteers, to help increase the efficiency of volunteers in delivering information / outreach services

Story relates to: a 58 year old client of this project

The Story:

"This lady had to give up work because of her increasing pain from her disability. A member of her family directed her to us after information from a Wayfinder. With NorDDIS help she filled in a claim for disability living allowance. She was granted high mobility and high care. With the back dated payment she was able to put down a deposit on a mobility scooter and used the monthly payment to pay for it. As she lives in a rural area it has been invaluable to her. She was housebound and the scooter has made so much difference to her life."

Why we thought this story was particularly significant:

Again, this demonstrates both the value of this kind of project, and the role played by a POPP Wayfinder in bringing about a highly successful outcome for a client who was previously housebound

7

Project: Riverside Club, Wimborne – weekly social club (Brendoncare) – awarded £1,950 POPP funding in Oct 07

Story relates to: a woman who first joined as a member and is now helping out

The Story:

"One lady has been living alone since she lost her husband. They had moved here from away, and before they had any time to make friends, her husband died.

For two years she was looking for something to join that would give her some fulfilment, but nothing fitted the bill until she came to the Riverside Club where she quickly made friends. She told me that even shopping in Wimborne is more pleasurable than before because she often bumps into people from the Club. Friendships have deepened and she sometimes goes for a coffee with her new friends.

This enjoys the club so much that she now helps every week buying and selling cards in the Club and is responsible for sending birthday cards to all of the members to help them feel that they are important members of the Club."

Why we thought this story is particularly significant:

Shows the valuable role played by this kind of club in a scenario (move in / bereavement) that is commonly found in Dorset. The benefits have expanded beyond the immediate enjoyment of the club, making a noticeable difference to her everyday life.

8

Project: Dorchester Social Stroke Club - Social Group for stroke sufferers - awarded £1,410 POPP funding in Aug 07

Story relates to: Member / Beneficiary (since Oct 07)

The Story:

"This member, pre-stroke, ran a successful restaurant in Spain. He still loves cooking – with one hand – and has invented some gadgets to help him prepare food.

He has prepared a meal for 20+ members and often provides cake and savouries for meetings and fund raising events. His determination not to allow his disability to prevent him cooking is amazing.

He is full of ideas – usually associated with food – and has now joined the club committee. He is also a volunteer benefits adviser for Age Concern. We are privileged to have him as a member and hope he gets as much benefit from membership as we do."

Why we thought this story is particularly significant:

It illustrates a POPP funded project that is enabling an older person to contribute, and be valued for their interests, abilities, skills and experience, rather than their needs. (We hope to follow up to find out more information regarding the difference this had made for him)

9

Project: LACE – 'Treat' and support group for breast cancer sufferers, based in Cranborne, awarded £1,120 of POPP funds in January 2008

Stories relate to: 2 different beneficiaries of this group

The Stories:

“Person A had not gone anywhere socially since her cancer surgery (4 years ago). She has said she was far too self-conscious about wearing a breast form and just stayed in. Coming to the group has given her knowledgeable friends with whom she can discuss this. She has listened and has purchased a contact breast form, with which I am helping her and has also gone to discuss a reconstruction with her consultant. This decision is one she wants to share with the group and has yet to make her mind up.

The diagnosis is felt by Person A to have taken too long. She therefore has quite a bit of resentment built up against the personnel involved in her treatment and aftercare. She is also a smoker and feels this may influence the medical decision about the proposed operation”

“Person B has visibly ‘blossomed’ as she has attended the group. A success story as she has gained in confidence and has really taken charge of her life! However, we are going to lose her, because she has decided that, having had the support, she now wants to put everything behind her and just get on with her life. Everyone must find their own way to deal with cancer and she wants to do it this way. We will miss her, but it is a very positive step for her to take. She is going to get a new job and move on, but the group will be there for her if she needs it. She has developed two strong friendships which will continue after she leaves. She has said that without the group she would have struggled to come to terms with what has happened to her.”

Why we thought these stories are particularly significant:

Shows the role this kind of group can play in providing a social outlet, increasing confidence and supporting people to make informed decisions about sensitive / important matters – especially if they may feel discriminated against within other parts of the system.

10

Project: Morecombelake luncheon club – monthly lunch club, awarded £920 of POPP funds in February 2008

Story relates to: member of the luncheon club

The Story:

“An almost blind, older lady now has monthly contact with a group of people of similar age and interests. At the age of over 80 she is expanding her group of friends and acquaintances and looks forward to her monthly lunch”

Why we thought this story is particularly significant:

Illustrates relatively small, straightforward project leading to the inclusion of a potentially isolated person in a rural area. This inclusion is not limited by her identified 'needs' (e.g. joining a group for visually impaired people), but by expanding her wider, everyday support network.

11

Project: POPP Local Evaluation Programme

Story relates to: A Volunteer Local Evaluator, involved in delivering the evaluation since Nov 06

The Story:

"I didn't really know what to expect when I started, but the gains have been very significant, both personally and professionally – and also in terms of pure enjoyment!"

Personal:

- Satisfaction in contributing and sense of achievement
- Recognition as an individual
- Personal Development – self esteem and confidence (e.g. in public speaking)
- Improved local knowledge e.g. available resources & services (helpful both to self and others)
- Increased network of friends, and shared interests (e.g. meeting for music making and a shared lunch [with one of the other LEs])

Involvement helps generally to give both structure and value to one's life as an older person, and enables me to retain more 'voice' and role in the wider world, as well as doing something really worthwhile both with, and for, others.

Professional:

- Good use made of existing skills / knowledge / experience gained over many years
- Continued skills development (e.g. interview technique)
- Involvement in wider strategic work (including through steering group)
- Transferability of existing skills into new areas (re older people)
- Access to gaining new knowledge via seminars, conferences etc
- Contact with many new colleagues in POPP, partner agencies, universities etc

Development from voluntary work into opportunities for freelance employment."

Why we thought this story was particularly significant:

Broad range of positive impacts (from social benefits to employment opportunities) experienced through core involvement in POPP programme. Also illustrates how POPP has enabled the professional skills and experience of this older person to be used and valued.

12

Project: POPP Wayfinder Programme

Story relates to: a Wayfinder who has now left the programme

The Story (from part of a letter):

"...I guess I am a statistic, in that I am one of the few that have gone on from the Wayfinder project to find other employment. I wouldn't have gone for the job at Careline if it hadn't been for the project, I didn't even know what Careline was until we had our information days. It stood me in good stead at my interview with the knowledge I had gained from being a Wayfinder.

I have not only gained in my confidence through the project but have made some very good friends, not only from the Purbecks but from other areas, who I see regularly. ..."

Why we thought this story was particularly significant:

Again this illustrates clear benefits for people involved in the delivery of POPP