

Annual Report 2016-2017



Strong Communities Powered by People
www.southernbrooks.org.uk

Registered Charity No. 1157061

Trustees

David Bell
Pete Bright
Max Campbell-Jones
Gareth Ellaway
Lucy Hamid
Jules Moore
Margaret Slucutt
Andy Thomas



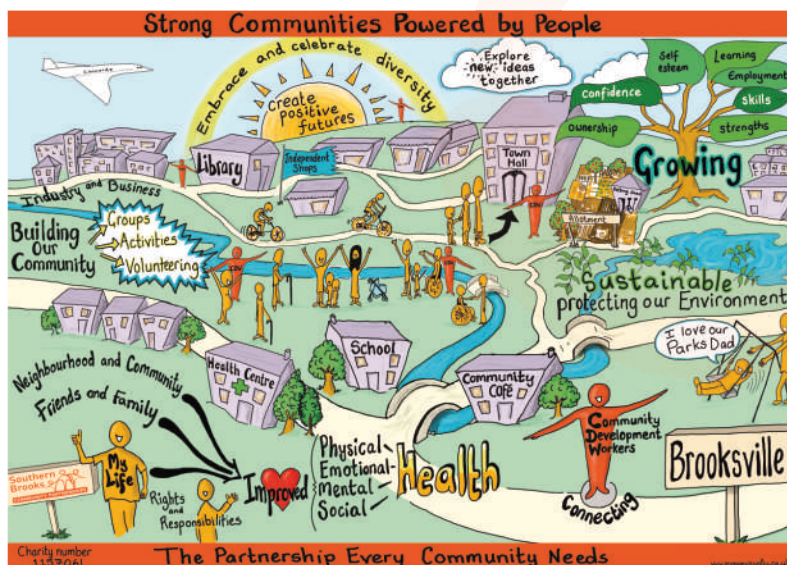
Welcome

Southern Brooks Community Partnerships Annual Report will show the impact of our work throughout South Gloucestershire. The report celebrates the work we achieved in 2016-17. Through stories and evidence we have highlighted how we support people, communities and organisations to work together to build stronger communities.

Our overall aim is that people fulfil their potential in their life, family and neighbourhood and actively contribute to their communities.

Because we...

- Are passionate about helping people to make a difference in their lives, families and neighbourhoods
- Are well established in the heart of the community
- Have the skills and experience to support local co-ordinated community action
- Respond quickly to changing needs
- Work in creative and innovative ways to involve people
- Build skills and networks that create better communities
- Work and learn together to make the best use of limited resources



Director's Report

We continue working with people to help them reach their full potential and actively contribute to their communities.

Our key aims are:

- Building sustainable communities by reducing poverty, loneliness, isolation and improving community cohesion.
- Improving health and wellbeing.
- Improving skills and learning.

Our team is structured as:

- Learning and Development.
- Health and Wellbeing.
- Sustainable Communities.

Our annual report this year will follow the same themes. It will show how we work as an organisation and with our partners in South Gloucestershire.

We've strengthened Southern Brooks Community Partnerships brand by developing our website to make it easier for people to find the information they need.

We created 'Brooksville – Strong Communities Powered by People' postcards, that illustrates a vision of a community where everyone is included and able to thrive.

Our model of community development uses the 'Five Ways to Wellbeing'.



We encourage people to be active in their communities, be connected with each other, take pride in the area, look for ways to include and welcome new people and to take responsibility for things that matter to them.

Partnership working underpins the way we work. The new West of England Works project has been an exciting collaboration led by Weston College, with Southern Brooks as a key provider in South Gloucestershire.

Our 'Friends of Southern Brooks' group supports our charity by volunteering their time and energy to raise funds. We are grateful to them for their commitment which has helped raise much needed funding to support new projects.

New funding from The Esmée Fairbairn Foundation will help us be better at supporting our many volunteers over the next three years.

Thanks to support through Lloyds Bank Foundation For England and Wales, we've been able to look again at our 5 year vision and funding strategy. We are clearer about the difference our work makes. Our new strategy continues to put people who need support at the centre of our work. We've looked at how we can fund the services we provide in different ways and recruited some great new trustees.

We're pleased that the trustees of Community Ignite, a Kingswood based organisation, have agreed to merge with Southern Brooks. We're looking forward to opening our café and community hub at the Park Centre, and building on the great work of Community Ignite.

Julie Close, Director

Trustee Report

Southern Brooks Community Partnerships continue to operate in a challenging funding environment. Restricted funding dropped by £162k against 2016, which in turn led to a reduction in our service expenditure. As an example, there were several funding streams for our Early Intervention Service which ended during the year. Across the whole organisation, full time equivalent headcount dropped by 4 to 22 for the year.

There have however been some extremely positive achievements as well. Funding from the Home Office for the Building a Stronger Britain Programme was secured in December, and will start in April 2017. This is a new initiative for children and young people, supporting the combating of hate crime and prejudice. Although a smaller proportion of our funding, unrestricted income from charitable activities rose by 19% against last year. Finally, the overall deficit on our unrestricted funds (created primarily from the deficit on our pension scheme) was reduced by £23k. These are all important elements in our goal of continuing to provide a sustainably funded organisation that delivers important valued programmes in our community.

*Max Campbell-Jones
Trustee*

Learning Communities

The most significant breakthrough this year was the successful partnership bid, led by Weston College, for the 'Building Better Opportunities' project, which started in January 2017. In South Gloucestershire, this project is called West of England Works, and it's jointly funded by The Big Lottery Fund and European Social Fund. The project aims to remove the barriers to employment, education and training that people face. We are the lead partner for the South Gloucestershire area.

We also continue to run Patchway Youth Centre, with ongoing support from the 'Positive Activities' fund and Patchway Town Council, bringing security to our youth work. Frampton Cotterell Parish Council also support our youth work in their area. We run youth sessions for young people at Patchway Youth Centre, Frampton Cotterell and detached youth work in parks and open spaces. Over the year we've seen an increase in the numbers of young people involved in community activities. In December 2016, we achieved Home Office funding through the 'Building a Stronger Britain Together' programme. This will build on the work we tested at Abbeywood School, which trained children and young people to challenge hate crime and prejudice.

We also secured funding through The Esmee Fairbairn Foundation. The grant will improve the volunteering process and their experience of working with Southern Brooks. This project will start in April 2017, and we are looking forward to reporting on its progress in our next annual report. We continue to successfully manage and run Patchway, Filton & Stokes Volunteer Centre by offering weekly drop-ins across the area. We continue to support local organisations by recruiting volunteers for them.

We continued expanding our accredited training and professional courses that are recognised by the National Awarding Organisation, NOCN. The Community Learning Service funds us to mainly train those with a qualification below Level 2. This year, 53 people attended our six community learning courses. This meant we continued representing the voluntary and community sector in the West of England learning partnership. This partnership supports colleagues from different sectors to work together to achieve high quality community learning for everybody.

Lernaya Cummings



98% of learners passed their Youth Work accredited course



For 25 years we have designed and delivered accredited and unaccredited courses to support people to gain new skills for life and work. Experienced tutors lead our practical courses and teaching is adapted to meet the needs of learners. We also help learners with volunteering opportunities to gain practical experience and exploring possible career paths. We have a very high pass rate of all accredited courses – 98%.

Our courses in 2016-17 covered: Level 2 & 3 Youth Work Practice, Introduction to Youth Work, Stay Calm & Count to 10, Parenting a Child with ADHD, Grown your own Food and Cooking on a Budget.

Our curriculum empowered our learners to gain confidence and new skills which has helped them to make positive choices in their lives and local communities. For example, through our ADHD parenting course, parents can feel better prepared in making sure their child with ADHD has the right support to help them achieve in school and gives them the tools to help their child progress.

Having an experienced team of tutors means we can work with our communities and local businesses to identify and extend our training programme beyond 2016-17.

Alicia's Story

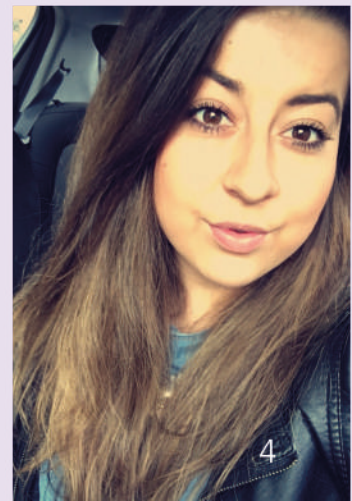
Alicia worked as a support worker for adults with learning difficulties. She completed our 'Introduction to Youth Work' whilst gaining practical experience in our youth centre. She then left her adult support worker job and is now working with young people in their communities.

Alicia said, "The 8-week introduction course gave me a good insight into the purpose of youth work, the meaning of it and the skills you need to have and learn to become a youth worker. This helped me go onto the Level 2 & 3 Youth Work Practice qualification.

The course wasn't all theory, there's lots of practical sessions, such as team building games, communication activities and individual practical exercises. This was great as I'm a hands-on learner and learn better by doing things rather than sitting in a classroom listening and writing. I've done many college courses and the theory wasn't set out in the same way. I found the theory much more relaxed and I enjoyed doing it. Every week we touched on different things and I was intrigued to follow it through until the end.

The tutors were very friendly, always happy to help and answer any questions without making you feel inadequate.

I would recommend this course to anyone looking for career change or to try something new."



Our Patchway & Frampton Cotterell youth clubs offer positive activities, which include sports, arts, crafts and cooking for local young people. We also support their housing, education, family relationships, friendships and mental health issues. We are very proactive around hate crime and anti-social behaviour in the communities. The youth centres are a safe, welcoming place for young people to engage with new activities, meet new people and learn new things which will enhance their life skills.

This year we gave our youth club members in Patchway & Frampton Cotterell volunteering experience at a homeless project called 'Streetlife', in St Pauls, Bristol. They gave out food and supplies while having positive conversations with over one hundred homeless people.

Lydia, a member of the youth club, says of her experience, "it was great to actually see what being homeless is like for the people we helped and I enjoyed making them happy".

Two other youth club members, Jade and Rebecca, commented: "We thought it was going to be a lot scarier than it actually was - it was actually really fun! It was lovely to see how happy we made a man by giving him liquorice as he hadn't had it in years!"

Patchway & Frampton Cotterell Youth Centre members also supported 'Bristol Pride 2016'. Our young people were keen to support the festival by making a selection of fabric banners and posters to express their views and support for LGBTQ+ equality.



Bristol Pride 2016

The project encouraged our young people to start talking about LGBTQ+ issues, including discrimination and hate crime. The artwork was displayed on behalf of the young people at the festival.

Our Youth Centre would not be as successful without our team of volunteers. Some people volunteer to give back to their community or because youth work interests them, but we also offer placements for learners studying our Level 2 & 3 Youth Work course. This helps them gain valuable work experience as well as their qualification. It also gives us extra capacity to welcome and engage young people.

Worked with local younger people



Hate crime appears in our schools as well as on our streets. Young people who are gay, transgender, disabled or from ethnic minorities often face bullying and most people don't realise that this is a hate crime. This is why we launched an Anti-Hate Crime Ambassadors Programme in 2016. We trained young people in years eight, nine and ten to offer peer support to those who are being bullied in their schools. Our Anti-Hate Crime Ambassadors campaigned for their peers rights while supporting and empowering them through this difficult time. We also trained staff and parents

to them to challenge bullying and equality and diversity issues with young people in schools. Our 2017/18 report will showcase this exciting project.



Abbeywood School Students Success

Diya Barot and George Beaven won the South Gloucestershire Council Chair's award for youth volunteering on Thursday 16 March 2017. They also received £100 from the Lord Lieutenant's Special Award. Diya and George became Anti-Hate Crime Ambassadors two years ago when Southern Brooks pioneered the project at Abbeywood Community School. Since then, Diya and George used their training to mentor victims and perpetrators of hate crime in their school. They also supported younger children in becoming Anti-hate Crime Ambassadors. Southern Brooks was thrilled that Diya and George were chosen from amongst the many nominees. The award recognised the positive change they made at Abbeywood School after successfully completing our training.

Southern Brooks Director, Julie Close says, "Our Anti-hate Crime Ambassadors programme will teach young people to recognise and respond appropriately to a hate crime incident. It gives them the skills they need for life, which they can share with their peers, family, friends and future work colleagues."

After the success at Abbeywood School we secured further funding from the Home Office to support more schools across Kingswood, Filton and Patchway with our Anti-hate Crime Ambassadors training, which starts in April 2017.

**BUILDING A STRONGER
BRITAIN TOGETHER**

Southern Brooks runs Patchway, Filton & the Stokes Volunteer Centre and has drop-in sessions weekly in Patchway, Bradley Stoke, Stoke Gifford and Filton. We tailor available volunteering opportunities, information and guidance to every individual. The voluntary opportunities we promote in the local area help reduce loneliness and isolation, improve English skills and support residents in feeling connected and involved in their communities. While many organisations feel the impact of reduced funding, volunteers are needed more than ever to help keep our services fully functioning.

We supported the recruitment of volunteers for Brooks Café, Patchway Youth Centre, Patchway and Filton memory cafes and our Southern Brooks offices. We also helped arrange voluntary placements for other local organisations such as Milestones Trust and the Fold Cafe.

We will be recruiting a Volunteer Co-ordinator funded by The Esmée Fairbairn Foundation. This work supporting our volunteer team will improve the experience of our current volunteers, our recruitment of new volunteers and ensuring their journey is positive.



Case Studies

Friend of Southern Brooks

'Helen felt very isolated as a single parent of a child with disabilities. She started going to Brooks Café and was immediately offered a friendly welcome and a listening ear. Once her son started school Helen decided to volunteer with the Friends of Southern Brooks so that she could reclaim her identity and have some adult company. Through the Friends of Southern Brooks Helen supported various fundraising events and activities for Southern Brooks.'

Health Champion

Chris wanted to improve her confidence and explore future employment. She approached our volunteer centre in Patchway which led to her Health Champion training at Southern Brooks. Chris then implemented Health Champion drop-in sessions at Patchway library, which increased referrals to other community projects. Chris now works part-time as our Volunteer Centre Coordinator for Patchway and The Stokes.





Over 1700 hours of voluntary support to our Brooks Café in Patchway



82 volunteers supported Southern Brooks projects throughout the year



David Bell, Trustee, Southern Brooks

David Bell joined Southern Brooks as a trustee in 2008, and is now our Vice Chairman. David says, "At Southern Brooks, people are at the heart of everything we do. Our volunteers make a positive difference in the lives of local people. As our volunteer, you'll receive our training and support. Southern Brooks has a variety of volunteering opportunities from being a Health Champion, a Wellbeing Buddy, volunteering in our café to being a 'Friends of Southern Brooks' fundraiser."

Friends of Southern Brooks

Friends of Southern Brooks are a passionate team of volunteers working together to support and promote the excellent work being done by Southern Brooks in our communities. They raise awareness and funds to enable this work to continue.

Some of the fundraising activities includes a monthly quiz night at Brooks Café and stalls at local fêtes and festivals.

The funds that they raise goes towards specific projects. In the past they've supported the summer playscheme to buy new toys. This year the fundraising activities are supporting Southern Brooks to buy sensory equipment for children with additional needs.

A Southern Brooks Friend said, "The most rewarding aspect of supporting Southern Brooks, is seeing how the money is used and the difference it makes."



Healthy Communities

Over the year we have seen the emergence of two key themes which have begun to reshape our work: Mental Health and Autism. These are both areas of growth and development for the Health & Well-being Team and this year we have had a particular focus on mental health. South Gloucestershire Council suggest that based on current data, prevalence of all common mental health conditions will continue to increase, with the highest rates seen in Priority Neighbourhoods. In addition to this, we have used our own consultations and feedback from individuals and families who felt isolated by their poor mental health and their experiences accessing statutory services to shape a new service. In April 2016 we introduced a new community-based service supporting the mental health needs of the community. This has quickly become an important source of support with 52 people accessing regular support from weekly well-being groups in the first year. This work forms part of the Well-being College, a wider South Gloucestershire project. Mental health has become a priority area for our work as it can affect anyone, and for some can become a major barrier to positive change, employment and happiness. The work is underpinned by the five ways to well-being and the project fits within the mental health strategy for South Gloucestershire.

Our Family Wise Intervention workers also find that poor mental health impacts on parenting capacity, when this is combined with other issues such as financial stress, unemployment and disability families can find themselves feeling trapped and isolated. The Family Wise team have also noticed an increase in the numbers of families being referred due to having a child with an Autism Spectrum Condition. These are families that are often need specialist parenting support. This has led to us developing parenting resources specifically for families with a child with autism.

It is vital that these families receive timely support as there is a strong link between Autism and poor mental health which can be exacerbated without the correct support. This is an area of support we are aiming to develop over the next year.

Corrina Wood



Yate Family Support

Debbie Woolley

This project was funded through Yate Town Council and has enabled us to work with families living in Yate that do not meet the criteria for our other support services. Our worker has been improving links with community organisations such as the Foodbank and Abbotswood Action Group. She has been working with up to 3 families at any one time and over the period this has equated to 5 families in total. Issues they have faced have been complex and included financial issues, poor mental health and parenting.

The aims of the project were:

- Reduce isolation
- Increase skills
- Increase resilience

The support worker worked closely with our Merlin Well-Being Mentors, and supported them with some of the family work they were involved with.



Patchway Family Support

Ternaya Cummings and Debbie Woolley

This project, funded through Patchway Town Council, has enabled us to work with families living in Patchway that do not meet the criteria for other support services. Issues faced by families included financial stress, disability, parenting and poor mental health. The Support Worker has worked with 6 families during this period. We believe that families form the foundations of our community and that happy healthy families contribute to happy health communities.

The aims of the project were:

- Reduce isolation
- Increase skills
- Increase resilience

The project also ran a Family Activity Programme bringing families together away from the television and other devices to encourage families to strengthen their relationships. This group supported a further eight families. This ran for six weeks.

Aims of the Project:

- reducing the risk of post-natal depression
- providing networking opportunities for parents
- supporting the bonding process between parent and child
- highlighting the importance of play and its role in child development
- giving relevant and appropriate information and advice
- promoting differences and preventing isolation



We supported 186 families

159 of these families lived in Bradley Stoke. The rest of the families came from Little Stoke, Patchway, Stoke Gifford, Frenchay, Filton and Yate and from new housing developments at Charlton Hayes and Cheswick Village. So far, we're the only group exclusively for babies under one.

A wide range of nationalities joined Bouncing Babies, including Japanese, Polish, German, Indian, Malaysian, South African, Australian, Chinese and Hungarian.

Bouncing Babies is a weekly support and activity group for parents / carers and their babies aged one-year and under in Bradley Stoke. Bouncing Babies was originally set up to reduce the high levels of postnatal depression found in Bradley Stoke by local health professionals. There is a need to support isolated mums with their children, particularly during the first 12 months. By meeting other mums they can identify and share their experiences, fears and anxieties. During this time, it's also important that parents and babies form strong bonds to prevent attachment issues in later childhood.

Parent's Feedback

"Love coming to this group while on maternity leave. It's welcoming and very friendly. So good for the under one's with no bigger children running round, and that the group is a drop-in. Miss it now I'm back at work and my baby is too big."

"Really love coming to this group - very welcoming and friendly. Also, nice to meet other mums while your babies can enjoy a trip out and interact with other children. I have been taking my little boy since he was 5 weeks old and he's now 7 months. We love Bouncing Babies."



Family Wise supported 43 families who needed support making steps back into the workplace or had financial issues. All families also had at least one primary school aged child who needed some additional support. This could be help with understanding their emotions, building their confidence or perhaps encouraging them to attend school regularly.

The project aims to:

- improve engagement with education, skills and learning
- engage parents in employment and / or employability support
- improve their financial situation
- reduce barriers to achievement

We do this through one to one work with families, by assessing needs, developing plans and most importantly by building relationships that aim to encourage and empower.

Many of the families benefited from receiving a hamper at Christmas, accessed our counselling service and have attended parenting groups and courses.

Family Case Study

Mum was mainly housebound. She struggled to complete the family shop due to anxiety and depression and the family would survive on mainly dried or tinned food. She was a heavy cannabis user and accrued debts to support her habit. She was reported to the police because of the smell of cannabis and concerns were raised regarding her new partner who had a history of sexual offences. Her child had speech and language delay and he was fairly timid and shy. She didn't take him anywhere to socialise with other children.

We introduced her to walking around the block, then further and further afield, to support her to leave the house. This led to her meeting us elsewhere for support. We provided therapy for her substance misuse, anger management and self-esteem, as well as basic Cognitive Behavioural Therapy. We trained her in family cooking, healthy eating, motivational interviewing, family work, relationship building and parenting skills. We arranged family trips to Weston-super-Mare and Big Pit coal museum. We also introduced her to aqua aerobics.

Our Family Wise mentor programme empowered her to organise social events for her son twice a week. It reduced her substance abuse to zero. She now belongs to a social group and no longer having suicidal thoughts.

Mum says, "Family Support has changed everything really. I wouldn't have done it on my own. I would have been suicidal – it would have got worse and worse."

Dad says, "everything's changed since we had a family worker,. It's been a wonder service – it changed our family. Our child is more supported, he has more of mum's attention, he's not second best, he is happier and more confident."

Our yearly Hamper Appeal supports families in Patchway who may struggle at Christmas. Families receiving our hampers often experience poverty, poor mental health, disability and domestic abuse. Southern Brooks Community Partnerships coordinated the appeal by filling fifty hampers with food, treats and gifts for the most vulnerable people living in our communities. The annual event has been running for eleven years and is supported by businesses, schools, charities, clubs and the community.

This year staff at Direct Line Group on Broad Street, Bristol, held collections for our hampers and the response was overwhelming - our car loads were crammed with goodies. As well as Direct Line's support, Southern Brooks also had support from Holy Trinity Primary School, Bradley Stoke Rotary Club, Incredible Kids, North Bristol Food Bank, Almondsbury Church, Broadmead Baptist Church and from people in the community.

Health and Wellbeing Manager, Corrina Wood said, "I was amazed to see so much when I collected the donations. I imagined only a few boxes, but it took several journeys to collect everything.

Our families were so grateful for Direct Line's incredible support. "



Amy's Story

Single parent Amy lives with her nine-year old daughter who has behavioural difficulties and is undergoing assessments for neurodevelopmental disorders. Amy herself has fibromyalgia (a long-term condition causing pain all over her body) and other health issues that prevent her from working. Amy struggles everyday to manage her own health and her daughter's behaviour, which is often violent. On receiving the hamper an emotional Amy said: 'knowing that people care about us and our situation makes me feel less isolated. I don't think people realise what a difference receiving this gift makes, it reduces stress and gives us an opportunity to do some of the normal things other families do at Christmas.'

Thank you for donating your small items, tinned and long-life products in our Hamper Appeal this Christmas. We work with thirty vulnerable families across South Gloucestershire. Their issues cover a range of issues including: disabilities, domestic violence, mental health and financial hardship. Christmas can be a difficult time. Your donations went towards creating fifty hampers for our local families and individuals who may feel isolated at Christmas.

A huge thank you to the Direct Line Group on Broad Street, Bristol who collected and donated items for our fifty hampers, and even rolled up their sleeves to help us pack the hampers.

We empower individuals, families and communities with our support and local information to address their health and wellbeing. We work with services and organisations in South Gloucestershire to help people tackle their health issues and inequality. Our programmes cover individual and family support, parenting advice, reducing isolation, improving mental health and ensuring that people can access appropriate support for benefit advice and money management.

We supported Merlin residents with their health and wellbeing, tenancy and social inclusion through our one-to-one support. Customers self-referred or were referred by a Merlin employee.



52 Referrals - 7 Self Referrals, 42 by Merlin Housing Staff and 3 from other providers

Charlotte Galling, Community Insight and Investment Officer, Insight and Data Lead, Merlin said, "this is a great example of our partnership and the support you gave to our staff and customers. I just want to take this opportunity to thank you for your partnership with Merlin Housing in the year of 2016-17"

Merlin
www.merlinhs.co.uk

Tina's story

Tina used our Southern Brooks Wellbeing Mentor service, as she was behind in paying her rent and risked losing her home. Tina has a number of medical conditions and suffered from depression, which broke down her marriage.

With our support, Tina tackled her situation. A support worker arranged meetings with Merlin and other providers to discuss her debt. As well as supporting Tina with completing paper work and attending meetings with other agencies, the support worker also arranged weekly counselling for her.

After six-months of support, Tina is no longer in debt to Merlin Housing and was able to stay in her home. Tina can also manage her finances without further support. Tina's mental health largely improved and she is feeling much happier and more in control of her actions.

Adults experiencing mental health difficulties and feeling alone in their community can access our emotional wellbeing groups in Patchway, Filton and Yate. Southern Brooks was successful in bidding for the mental health Everybody's Business grant from South Gloucestershire Council. This grant is funding our new emotional wellbeing project. We're also part of the South Gloucestershire Wellbeing College, which launched in September 2016.

The Wellbeing College offer courses and activities across the county for improving mental health and wellbeing. We initially worked with Coniston Community Association, Battle Against Tranquilizers and the South Gloucestershire Wellbeing College to bring our resources and knowledge together, so we can run our Mental Health and Wellbeing project.

Our funding pays for a trained Mental Health and Wellbeing Co-ordinator who arranges a safe space for people to meet and decide what activities may help their wellbeing. So far we've set up:

- a variety of craft workshops
- community gardening
- a fun bake and share event
- badminton and Tai Chi sessions
- a Mindfulness course

The drop-in service follows NHS evidence based research, which identified the Five Ways to Wellbeing, which are: Being connected / Being active / Being mindful / Giving / Continuing to learn. We hope people will feel content, less alone and gain better knowledge about the wellbeing resources available to them locally.

Beth's Story

Beth is a 49-year old woman who lives alone in Patchway. Merlin Housing referred Beth to our Wellbeing Mentoring Service. Beth was unemployed, struggling with low mood and anxiety and experiencing low self-esteem.

While supporting Beth, her partner had died suddenly, followed shortly by her mother's death within a year. She became "overwhelmed" by grief and coped by isolating herself and drinking excess alcohol. When our project co-ordinator initially met Beth, she was struggling to cope with life. The job centre were encouraging Beth back into work, but Beth described experiencing panic attacks which prevented her from being in social situations, driving her car or using a computer. She stated, "I just want 'me' back again".

With support and encouragement (from a Southern Brooks Wellbeing Mentor and activities arranged through the Wellbeing Programme) Beth joined the Southern Brooks Work Club, which supported Beth to build her confidence in using a PC, writing her CV and applying for jobs. Although anxious about being with groups of people, Beth identified that she would like to try some new activities. She joined some gardening activities at Blakeney Road Community Allotment and also became a regularly member in the Wellbeing Drop-In sessions in Patchway; both activities offered her new friendships, a way of normalising her experiences and enjoying activities, which were meaningful.

Beth's anxiety is now more manageable and her self-worth and confidence have increased, things have improved to the extent that she is now in paid employment and volunteering at a local wildlife sanctuary, and re-starting old hobbies that she used to enjoy. She's still in contact with the friends she met through the Wellbeing Programme.

Individuals using our wellbeing services have experienced changing moods and/or anxiety, which impacts negatively on their self-esteem and social networks. We also work with people who are bereaved and struggling to come to terms with their loss.

We have supported individuals that have come from:

- AWP Recovery Team
- Coniston Community Centre
- Southern Brooks Community Partnerships
- Word of mouth
- Battle Against Tranquilizers
- South Gloucestershire Wellbeing College
- Housing Associations – Merlin and Knightstone
- Health Champions

Following attending our wellbeing groups, participants have gone on to benefit from our family support, volunteering, employment support and other partner services.



Achievements

52 people regularly joined our drop-in sessions and/or activities in 2016/2017.

They reported experiencing the following:

- Living in priority neighbourhoods 65%
- Mental health and substance user/dual diagnosis 16%
- Have caring responsibilities 10%
- Older adults (60+) 25%
- Disabled/long term health conditions 57%

Impact of drop-in and/or activities sessions:

70%

REPORTED DECREASED SOCIAL ISOLATION AND FEELING HAPPIER.

67%

REPORTED IMPROVED LIFE SATISFACTION.

57%

REPORTED FEELING LESS ANXIOUS.

53%

REPORTED AN INCREASE IN WORTHWHILE ACTIVITY.

Building Sustainable Communities

At the heart of all our work is the underlying encouragement, connections and support we give to local organisations and residents in the communities we work with. Our community development work continues to focus on those communities who are most fragile including Patchway, Yate and Filton. Following the merger with Community Ignite, we have now increased our efforts to strengthen the community in Kingswood too.

New communities are increasingly looking for support engaging with their residents, and we are working hard to bring people together in Charlton Hayes and more recently Lyde Green.

In each area we provoke discussion and listen to what is important to the people that live there. We bring partners together in each area to create shared opportunities and plans to move the communities forward. We also run projects and programmes to meet the diverse needs of each community, and support groups across South Gloucestershire who share a similar experience eg people with dementia and their carers. We are building on this work each year, with extensive consultations with the community in 2017-2018.

One success for the year, is that thanks to the combined efforts of our partners activity in Filton, we are so pleased and proud that Filton no longer meets the criteria for the Indices of Multiple Deprivation. We are now in our final year of activity in Filton and looking to both celebrate our success and create a sustainable network of partners who can continue to work together in the coming years.

Our levels of engagement with the public have grown considerably this year. Our Green Spaces project in Patchway has gone from strength to strength and we would like to extend this work into Kingswood. Our health champions scheme has reached out to many more residents than ever before, and the South Gloucestershire Dementia Action Alliance has also achieved a significant increase in the number of dementia friends trained. Our Community hubs and cafes in Patchway and now in Kingswood are still at the heart of everything we do, offering welcoming and safe place for residents and partners to meet and socialise.

Every one of these projects is dependent on our partners' support and we would like to thank them for their engagement this year.

Alice Payne and Katie Donovan-Adekanmbi

Our Patchway Green Spaces project enables community groups, youth centres and residents to make green spaces beautiful and useful. Together we've grown fruit, herbs, vegetables and flowers. Our projects included:

Pocket Park in Arlingham Way - After growing a wildflower corner, the residents celebrated with a BBQ and mural painting as part of the Patchway Festival 2016. A group of residents now look after this new park.

Brooks Cafe Garden - This project started in the summer with children creating a vertical herb garden for the cafe to use in their fresh and delicious local food.

Patchway Youth Centre - Young people grew vegetables including beans, peas, courgettes, radishes and different salads. This gave them the opportunity to enjoy cooking and tasting new things that they had grown.

Blakeney Road Community Allotment - A community group meet every Friday to work together, learn new skills and look after our allotment. Everything grown is shared by the group and socialising is key.

The Parade Community Garden - A group of residents maintained and improved the garden. As well as vegetables and herbs we also planted lots of flowers this year.

Grow Your Own Food Courses at Blakeney Road Community Allotment - Our students learnt to grow their own food step-by-step over six weeks while meeting new people in the community.

Charlton Hayes Raised Beds - In October 2016 a group of residents reinvigorated the planters around Charlton Hayes and moved them to suitable places where they can be enjoyed by everyone.



GOALS Employment and Confidence Course

Tom Llewellyn



We ran our first ever GOALS course. The two-day course empowered eight people to develop new ways of thinking, behaving and coping in a busy employment marketplace. It's part of a larger programme, which post course offers six sessions of coaching. Five participants successfully moved into employment, training or volunteering on completion.

It's funded by both Sovereign and Merlin Housing and it will also take referrals from our 'West of England Works' service. Being unemployed, especially long term, can affect mental health, confidence, and can leave people feeling rejected. Therefore, our GOALS programme mentors people into work and training by identifying their needs and overcoming their barriers to employment.

Southern Brooks is working with local businesses, community groups, schools and churches to become dementia friendly. We offer South Gloucestershire Dementia Action Alliance (SGDAA) membership, so we can share resources and examples for implementing dementia-friendly activities and services across South Gloucestershire. This may involve a school hosting a dementia awareness session, or a church making sure its building is fully usable for people with memory issues.

We launched the SGDAA in January 2015, commissioned by South Gloucestershire Council and the Clinical Commissioning Group. It followed a successful two-year pilot project in Patchway, which was funded by the Prime Minister's Dementia Challenge Fund in 2013/14. The Dementia Alliance supports making all communities dementia aware and inclusive. We look at different cultures to ensure people with dementia are treated fairly and have access to everything they need.

345 new Dementia Friends have attended our information sessions. Our 40-60 minutes sessions gave everyone an understanding about dementia and the small things we can do to make a difference. The sessions were fun, chatty and informative.

For example, she ran a dementia information session for a group of Brownies and their leader in Thornbury. Winsome had a great conversation with a security guard at King Chase Shopping Centre, Kingswood, who thought they should have more information to support people living with dementia. She also gave a talk to German and French visitors in Patchway, they were impressed and wanted something like this in Germany. Winsome also supported training volunteers before they opened memory cafés in South Gloucestershire. The training covered an overview of dementia and its effects, equalities and safeguarding.

We ran a networking meeting in partnership with Brace. 22 people attended from 14 organisations.

Professor Lisney from Brace gave an update on dementia research, and the Barcan and Kirby law firm spoke about being a dementia friendly business.

South Gloucestershire 
Dementia Action Alliance
A friendlier community for all 

Anna Molter's Story

"I'm a senior associate at Barcan+Kirby. After attending a Dementia Friendly workshop, I was so inspired by the efforts of others and the dementia friendly initiative, I thought my firm had to get involved.

I decided to become a Dementia Friend and then a Dementia Friends Champion so I could deliver information sessions to all of our staff. I introduced this initiative to our partners at my firm and they embraced it. Becoming a Dementia Friend is now part of our induction programme for all new staff.

My firm has offices across Bristol and South Gloucestershire, so it is important we show our commitment to the initiative by joining both Dementia Action Alliances. Our firm is working towards being dementia friendly. We've looked at our office space and reception areas to make them as dementia friendly as possible. We've introduced different signage to assist people living with dementia when attending our offices. We've also changed our literature to make it more dementia friendly.

By joining the Dementia Action Alliances we're showing our commitment to the initiative. Our clients and those in our communities can see we're committed to being dementia friendly and that we welcome all clients who attend our offices."

The Precious Time Consortium works across Patchway. It supports community groups for older people to share their resources, fundraise and attract volunteers. The consortium can also support the governance, finances, equal opportunities and safeguarding policies for each community group. The Consortium's support is vital for keeping older people active, connected and independent. It also gives people with dementia a sense of value and acceptance while reducing isolation. There's a Memory Café, a Men in Sheds project, an older peoples' tea party and a Silver Surfers' drop-in and more activities are being identified for older people. Southern Brooks started the consortium and continues supporting the consortium's governance, planning and paperwork.

Between the Precious Time Consortium and our South Gloucestershire Dementia Action Alliance we're creating an age-friendly community in Patchway. Older people can feel safe, supported, connected, stay active and healthy in later life. Local people can contribute and receive support, and services are available for those who need it.

Memory Café attendees said:

"It's the only place I could get my husband to come out to."

"It's so nice to be with other like-minded people."

"I'm usually alone all day so it's nice to have company."

"I am amazed every time they come back and tell us what they've done and how much they've enjoyed it and how much they look forward to coming again. Mum and dad think you are all amazing and so do we."

"It's so nice to see the people with dementia enjoying a trip out with others and it helps us carers to relax for a few hours."

Day Trips

Day trips are important as people with dementia find it hard to leave their home, which can also isolate their carer. The Memory Cafe had a day trip to a local museum, Oakham Treasures. Sue Stengel, chair of the Precious Time Consortium, says, "It was quite magical to see those with dementia remembering things from their childhood and working days. It created a conversation between them and their carers, and brought many smiles and much laughter. We learnt so much from them that day about where they worked, their childhood and younger lives."

Fundraising Success

Staff at Southern Brooks took turns cycling on a stationary bike over two days to fundraise for the Precious Time Consortium. CVS South Gloucestershire kindly created a fundraising page for us. During our two-day stationary bike ride we raised £256!



Health Champions promote healthy lifestyle choices in a voluntary capacity around South Gloucestershire priority neighbourhoods. All Health Champions pass a nationally recognised Level 2 qualification in health improvement, which increases knowledge around correct national health messages; health opportunities and support across South Gloucestershire; and confidence in how to hold a health conversation.

This year we have trained Health Champions in professional environments such as Healthy Living Pharmacies, Libraries, businesses, churches and Housing Associations, as well as community volunteers. We delivered this programme in partnership with Juice C.I.C. and Community Ignite.

Actions took place around:

- Active conversations in Healthy Living Pharmacies
- Promoting health opportunity in libraries; with residents and colleagues in housing associations; within church parishes; and in participating companies
- Health activities at community events and festivals
- Supporting friends and neighbours to understand about available opportunity around health in their community

This year 57 Health Champions actively promoted health and well-being across South Gloucestershire priority neighbourhoods and achieved . Thanks to our volunteer team for making this happen.

- 2255 health conversations were held with individuals
- 1845 signposts to support services around health and well-being,
- 464 of which were support around mental health and emotional well-being

Loren's Story

Loren became a Health Champion to gain the skills and knowledge to helping people gain the support they need. Since starting as a volunteer, Loren has signposted to multiple services across South Gloucestershire. He does this through his social and voluntary networks, as well as at awareness events.

Loren's currently studying a counselling course, and will soon start a BSC in Psychology. He has made plans to co-facilitate Southern Brooks' ADHD course, possibly with the National Autistic Society. Since qualifying as Health Champion, Loren developed as a Mental Health Champion by delivering emotional wellbeing sessions for South Gloucestershire Council.

Loren says the programme satisfies his needs and career path, he also feels supported within his health champion role to help others.



(above) Joanne - Health Champion

In Filton this year, as the lead community charity, we brought together sixteen different partners, including the Town Council and local voluntary and community groups, to identify and work together on priorities around health, accessibility and sustainability. This helped to make sure the benefits of the previous Priority Neighbourhood work continues after the end of March 2018, when Filton will no-longer be a priority neighbourhood.

To hear local residents' views about what was working well in Filton and what could be improved, two network lunch meetings were held, attended by 23 residents. In response to requests, a mental health workshop was part of one of these meetings.

This year we also worked with children at Filton Hill Primary School, running the first pilot Anti-Hate-Crime programme, which was supported by two teenage Anti-hate crime ambassadors from Abbeywood Community School. We then ran an after-school club that was also supported by these volunteers.

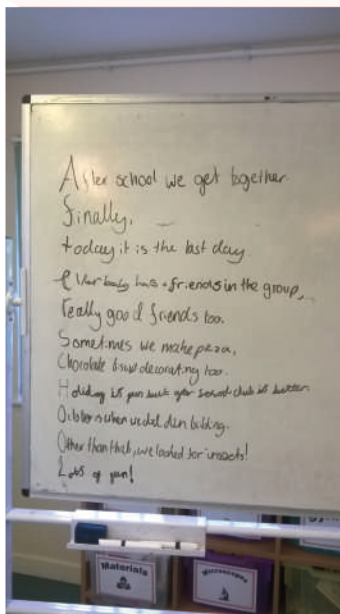
Three local community groups in Filton were also supported, strengthening their governance and sustaining income streams.

Case Study

We're particularly proud of our achievements in schools. Children at Filton Hill Primary School were given an after-school club, so they could pursue many activities and create memories for life. Thirty-four sessions took place with children, aged 6-10, and with a range of needs. The activities included cooking, artwork, music and games.

Two young volunteers from Abbeywood Community School supported the after-school club. These two volunteers also helped facilitate our anti-hate crime programme for children at Filton Hill Primary School.

Head Teacher Kirsten Lemming said about the after-school club "We were really pleased to be offered this opportunity. They offered a range of activities such as art work and cooking, which the children really enjoyed."



Our work with residents and organisations help communities in Patchway and Charlton Hayes reach their full potential. Our Work Clubs and IT sessions consistently attract a large number of residents from various backgrounds. These sessions can open doors to volunteering, training, employment and education for individuals.

Our priority neighbourhood meetings support local people and partners to meet and network. These conversations helped inform our work. Guided by these meeting we then found funding for major projects, such as the 'Patchway Welcomes You' film, Patchway Community Plan, GOALS UK courses and the Patchway Festival Fun Day.

Jo's Story

Jo joined our Work Club with aspirations to gain employment. We worked on Jo's CV, while offering volunteering and confidence building opportunities. Jo volunteered her admin skills in our Southern Brooks office, and supported us by sitting on interview panels. Jo made significant improvements and is now doing further training. Jo says, "Southern Brooks has helped me tremendously by giving me lots of opportunities. I now feel like I have more focus and know where I want to get to go in life."

Family Fun Day - Patchway Festival

Every July, Patchway brings the community together with a community fair, followed by a two week festival. Patchway is becoming more diverse, with over 26 languages spoken in local primary schools. With Charlton Hayes and its 2,500 properties, Patchway is certainly growing. There's large increase of community groups, services and businesses servicing the interests and needs of people in the Patchway area. The festival offers a chance for these services to reach out to the people who need them most. This is why Southern Brooks Community Partnerships worked with Coniston Community Centre to run a Family Fun Day in July 2016.

The main purpose of the Family Fun Day was raising awareness about what's happening in Patchway, identify gaps in services and see how we can improve the community. We circulated consultation cards so that local people could have a say in their community.



Patchway Welcomes You

We're proud that Patchway has many different cultures and ethnic minorities, making Patchway a unique place to live, study and work. However, sadly there are still a high number of hate crimes and incidents related to race in the area. We also know from our work in Patchway that people arriving in Patchway struggle to access the services they need. Southern Brooks wants to bring everyone together, by building trust and a sense of belonging in the community. By working with the community we're creating an online resource called, 'Patchway Welcomes You'. New residents will see this in their welcome packs, newsletters and in sign-up materials from their housing association.

The online resource will be a tool box for getting around Patchway and knowing what you should expect from local services. It includes a film, which is interactive. This means that over time it adapts to the needs of those accessing the resources. For example, you will know how to report a hate crime, access community activities and services and feel safe and connected.

Patchway Community Plan

Vivid Regeneration LLP in Bristol are supporting us and Patchway Town Council in working together to create a Community Plan for Patchway. We are asking Patchway residents what they need in their community and what the priorities should be. The questions cover public transport, outdoor spaces and GP services to anti-social behaviour. We're gathering this information to create our Community Plan for Patchway and Charlton Hayes. The plan will support Southern Brooks, Patchway Town Council, local services and businesses to plan for the future.

Whitfield Tabernacle Consultation

In February 2017, we asked people at Kingswood shopping centre and at The Park Centre, Kingswood about the future of their local Whitfield Tabernacle site. Whitfield Tabernacle was built in 1741 and its building and gardens were used for community activities until 1989. 53 people completed our survey, which is now guiding local councillors, South Gloucestershire council, the landowners and CVS South Gloucestershire in planning the future of Whitfield Tabernacle.

We continued working with Sovereign Housing to support its new residents. We supported Sovereign Housing in designing a survey to gather information from the Charlton Hayes community. The information will help us campaign and set priorities for improvements. It will also feed into a larger community plan for the Patchway area.

We continue facilitating the Charlton Hayes steering group, which includes partners, Bovis Homes, Housing Associations and REACH (which represents Charlton Hayes residents).

Planning and Placemaking Awards

Our partnership work was recognised as being of an extremely high standard in the Planning and Placemaking Awards in June 2016. We entered the Charlton Hayes steering group for the Planning and Placemaking Awards under the Partnership Working category. We were judged for our unique method of bringing a diverse range of partners together to support a new and developing Charlton Hayes community through the Charlton Hayes steering group.

The steering group worked with the developers, the police, fire services, schools, social housing associations, local authorities, churches and local residents.

This way of working with various partners was recognised nationally, which demonstrates that Southern Brooks is forward-thinking in our partnership work with new-build and emerging communities.

The steering group ensured we put Charlton Hayes residents first and that there was clear and quick communication between the various partners. The group achieved:

- a pedestrian path.
- Neighbourhood watch groups.
- running icebreaking community events for newcomers.
- inputting into timeline for a local school.
- having a say on the future of GP practice(s).
- setting aside a community space.
- securing children's activities.





Our Brooks Café at Coniston Community Centre, Patchway, serves great food at affordable prices. We serve a diverse community including carers and children, community groups, different cultures and a range of age groups.

The café supplies catering for meetings and special events and offers party buffets with a varied menu.

We host a popular themed restaurant night on the last Friday of the month, which are always fully booked. We've covered Caribbean, Italian and Chinese food and cultures.

In autumn 2016, we held our annual Halloween party, which included a fancy dress competition. There were lots of games, treats and a free children's buffet. The event created family fun with happy memories.

During December, Brooks Café offers an entire month of Christmas Dinners. Our community can order their pre-Christmas lunch with their work colleagues, friends and family.

Brooks Café also has a second-hand shop filled with donated items. Local people living on a budget may find an affordable solution when buying Christmas and birthday gifts from our second-hand shop. It also creates community cohesion as older children pass down their toys and clothes to younger local children. The income raised supports our café to buy what it needs.

Jan's Story

Jan joined the Brooks Café in 2012. Her role included serving customers and preparing food. Before joining the café Jan had low self-esteem and avoided going out and meeting people. Her confidence, self-esteem and thirst for living life has grown since volunteering at Brooks Café. Jan is now looking for paid work, which will use the skills she achieved at Brooks Café.



Chair's Report – David Bell

It's been an exciting year for Southern Brooks as we have developed our priorities, and have strengthened our position in the last year, with several successful funding bids. These remain difficult financial times in the third sector, but we are optimistic about the future.

We are continuing to expand our successful training programme, and our catering services are expanding with our new and successful café in the Park Centre, High Street, Kingswood. The Brooks Café in Coniston Community Centre, Patchway continues to be a fantastic community asset and is a great success. Remember to support these great cafés.

We started as a Community development organisation, and strengthening communities continues to be at the heart of what we do as we go forward.

Our Anti-hate Crime Ambassadors work is a real gem, with two of our Ambassadors, George and Diya, winning awards for their work including a Gloucestershire County Lord Lieutenant's award.

Our priorities are - Building Sustainable Communities

- Improving community cohesion
- Reducing poverty
- Reducing loneliness and isolation
- Improving health and wellbeing
- Improving skills and learning

This Annual report shows the greatly varied work we do.

Our Board of Trustees has seen some valued trustees leave over the last year, we will greatly miss them. Thankfully we have had a successful recruitment campaign, which recruited several new trustees. I would like to thank our trustees for the great work they do and their support.

I would like to thank all our staff and volunteers, including the Trustees, for all the work they do to make Southern Brooks the successful organisation it is, More importantly, for the positive differences they make in our communities and for people in South Gloucestershire.

David Bell,

With thanks to:

