

The Active Billing Project

Final Project Evaluation Report

February 2018

1. Background

The Active Billing Project (The ABC Project) was funded by the Northamptonshire Community and developed jointly by Bellinge Community House and Northamptonshire Sport. The funding award contract was for an initial 12 month period from December 2016, which was then extended for an additional 2 months to be completed by the end of February 2018.

The project was designed to engage least active populations living in the areas of Bellinge, Ecton Brook and Billing; collectively known as the Parish of Billing in Northampton.

The Parish of Billing and in particular the ward of Bellinge was selected for this project due to its high levels of social and health deprivation (*Northamptonshire County Council: Demography Needs Assessment 2014*). The area falls within the top 1% of most deprived Lower Super Output Area's in England. Local insight also suggested that there was a lack of sport and physical activity provision in the area particularly for women and girls. Accessibility was one of the biggest barriers, due to low car ownership and financial constraints. Communication was another barrier due to the high proportion of BME groups who are non-English speaking.

2. Project Aims

The ambition of the project was to engage with the whole community living in the Billing Ward, but specifically target those disadvantaged groups living in Bellinge and Ecton Brook and more specifically those who are inactive from the following groups: women and girls, older people, disabled people and those from black and ethnic minority backgrounds.

The project aims therefore were:

- To deliver a low cost programme of taster sessions and regular weekly activities and which are accessible and fully inclusive to the community.
- To identify and recruit volunteer 'Community Champions' who would help engage with the local community by promoting the project via flyers and 'Word of Mouth', encouraging local people to participate in the activities.
- To build capacity and up-skill the local community by identifying and developing a workforce of 'Local Activators' from the community and providing them with training, one to one support and mentors with the long term aim of sustaining the activities and maintaining participation in the area.

The project also wanted to test what helps create a shift in attitude towards sport and physical activity, and explore the motivations of those participants who are initially inactive, become active as a result of the project.

3. Methodology

The project was managed jointly by Bellinge Community House Manager and Northamptonshire Sport using the following approach:

3.1 A Multi-Agency Approach

To engage a wide range of other partners, services and organisations working in the locality to promote and help with the delivery of the project.

3.2 Insight

To inform decisions about activities, timings, days, costs and facilities, we made a concerted effort to consult with the community to ensure the activities were in demand, accessible and the programme itself was co-designed with the residents themselves. Two methods were used for this:

- **Resident's survey** – this survey was circulated via Bellinge Community House and 26 local residents completed it. 16 different activities were noted on the forms with Zumba, weight management and seated exercise proving the most popular. Nine residents expressed an interest in learning more about the project and becoming an activator, three of which progressed onto becoming Community Activators or Champions.
- **Resident's Community Fun Day** – This was a more informal opportunity for local residents to come and try activities that could possibly be included within the project and provide the opportunity for project managers to talk with the community about what they would like to see taking place. 228 people attended the day, taking part in activities including football, basketball, dodgeball and fitness and dance classes.

3.3 Activate the Community

To deploy a trained workforce of coaches, leaders and instructors (both voluntary and paid) to deliver a range of activities. Skills, knowledge and personal attributes in engaging with an inactive target audience and disadvantaged community were all pre-requisites of the selection process. Co-design of the programme with the community was key in determining the type of activities offered as well as other considerations such as timing, cost and other potential barriers.

3.4 Recruit Volunteer Community Champions

To utilise local knowledge and build capacity in the local area through the recruitment of local volunteer 'Community Champions'. The champions recruited would have the following attributes; good communicators, influential, respected in the community and have the skills and confidence to be potential leaders. They would also have the following roles; helping with the coordination and day to day running of the activities (e.g.: meet & greet the participants, collection of the session fees etc.) as well as help promote the activities in the local community through word of mouth, distributing flyers and putting posters in local businesses and community areas.

3.5 Recruit Local Activators

To identify and recruit local people who demonstrate they have the right qualities or express an interest in becoming a 'Local Activators'. These activators would eventually take on the responsibility for leading the activities.

These activators were recruited through two main methods:

- Open recruitment through adverts and 'word of mouth' from within the community
- Participants identified from the activity sessions.

The activators recruited were provided with free training (including transport costs) and mentoring support to help them assist and then eventually lead the activities.

4. Project Outcomes

4.1 Partner Engagement

The project has been successful in obtaining local stakeholder buy-in. The main delivery partner, Bellinge Community House, which is a local charity has played a pivotal role in acting as the main gatekeeper for disseminating information and engaging with the community and local stakeholders and services operating in the area.

The project is a regular agenda item on the Bellinge Multi-Agency Project Group, which is attended by a range of partners already providing services in the area, but with a remit of Community Development and Safety (e.g.: Northampton Borough Council Community Development, the Police, Fire Service, Parish Councillors, Neighbourhood Warden, Northampton Partnership Homes etc.). The ABC project has been received with real enthusiasm due to the positive impact it will have peoples wellbeing.

4.2 Community Champions and Local Activators

4.2.1 Recruitment:

A total of 8 'Community Champions' and 'Local Activators' were recruited through three main methods:

- Local knowledge and proactive recruitment through stakeholders. Four local activators were identified and recruited through this method.
- Participants taking part in the activities who demonstrate they have the right qualities, enthusiasm and interest to become a Local Leader. Three local activators were identified and recruited through this method.
- A poster campaign within the locality via Job Centre Plus, community events, community centres, church magazines and Facebook promotion. One local activator was recruited through this method.

The project received 12 expressions of interest from local people interested in becoming Community Champions when the project first started. However when the interested parties were contacted there was a reluctance and general apathy to get involved. Several new Community Champions applied since April and initial conversations and inductions were conducted but again these relationships failed to come to fruition in terms of volunteering hours.

4.2.2 Up-Skilling & Deployment:

Jogging: A Leader from the Jog Northants programme was recruited to initiate a jogging group in the area by running a beginners course. The leader was identified as having the ideal soft skills, personality and attributes to engage this type of inactive community. The group was given its own identity 'Billing Joggers' in all publicity material. A 'Local Leader' with an interest in running and identified through BCH, was recruited and supported with a Personal Development Plan. The local leader was funded through the project to attend the Leadership in Running Fitness course (LiRF through England Athletics) in December 2016 and was then mentored by a Jog Northants Leader for 4 weeks at a regular jogging group in Wellingborough to gain some practical experience of how to lead a jogging group. The local leader then attended the last two sessions of Billing Joggers start up sessions to support the Jog Northants Leader to familiarise herself with the role and the group. The local leader then took over reins of Billing Joggers at the beginning of March 2017.

A second local leader was recruited through their attendance at the jogging group after expressing an interest in supporting others to become active. After initially supporting the delivery of the group, the second leader was qualified in her LiRF course in June 2017 in Nottingham for which the project was able to support with course and transport fees. The second leader began officially assisting Billing Joggers at the end of June and went on to set up an improvers session to offer progression to those who had already completed their beginners 12 weeks and 5km in distance.

A third and final Jog Leader was recruited via the Jog Northants co-ordinator in partnership with a Northamptonshire Sport Healthy Schools Officer. This Leader was already a keen runner and involved in a self-initiated local group but was keen to grow her skills and get involved in the project. The third Jog Leader received funding to achieve her Leadership in Running Fitness course in October 2017. This course helped her to consolidate her knowledge and she began volunteering with the group in January 2018.

On the recruitment of our final leader, the initial Jog Leader who helped set up the group decided to discontinue her volunteering hours with the group due to personal issues. We were disappointed to lose the skills and personality this leader brought to the group but are aware that this would be a possibility when working with volunteers.

Zumba: One local leader recruited undertook the Sports Leaders UK Community Sports Leaders award at the beginning of 2017. She expressed an interest in further developing her leadership skills as a route into employment and was assisted to complete an application form for a local bursary by Bellinge Community House. The leader was successful in her application which enabled her to gain her Basic Level 1 Zumba qualification in September. This Community Champion, as a result was then able to assist with the morning Zumba sessions took place at Bellinge Community Centre.

With her increased confidence aided by the completion of the Sports Leaders course and the attainment of the Zumba qualification, she is now also supporting the delivery of the Seated Exercise classes which takes place regularly at Bellinge Community House and is intending to complete an additional qualification to allow her to deliver this in the near future.

Walking: A local leader with an interest in walking and an existing member of the Ramblers Association was identified by a project partner, Northampton Leisure Trust (NLT). The local leader was encouraged to go on the 'Walking for Health Walk Leader training', which was facilitated locally. He was supported in developing two new Health Walks in the area based from Bellinge Community House, which started January 2017.

After two months of leading the walk the local leader identified another potential leader from within the group who was interested taking on additional responsibility within the group. She attended the Walking for Health Leader Training on 22nd June 2017 and so now helps to lead or back mark the groups. Two community champions have been recruited to meet and greet the participants and organise the refreshments after the walk.

Unfortunately due to health issues, the second walk leader began to struggle to fulfil her volunteering role with the group and so a third (and potentially fourth) walk leader has been identified to complete the next Walk Leader training which is likely to take place in September 2018. In the meantime, the group will be supported informally by both of these enthusiastic walkers.

4.3 Activities Delivered and Sustained

Jogging Groups: Two groups have been developed; a 12 week beginners group and an ongoing improvers group to offer a progression opportunity for those that have completed the beginners sessions. This activity began as a free opportunity but a voluntary £1 donation has been requested since January 2018. The funds collected will be used to subsidise race entrance fees for members of the Billing Joggers, subsidise the cost of running vests and various equipment required i.e. running lights, high visibility bands and first aid supplies. Since November 2016, 55 sessions have been delivered involving a total of 57 participants. Sessions continue to take place on a weekly basis on a Monday evening with an average attendance of 15. This activity will continue post project end.

Walking Groups: A short walk (30 minutes) and a longer walk (45 -60 minutes) have been set up to accommodate for both those new to walking and those that have been attending for a little longer. They have been running weekly walks on a Monday morning since January 2017 totally free of charge which has been possible as the leaders work as volunteers. A total of 30 participants, mainly older people have been actively engaged in the health walk on a regular basis since it started. The walks get an average of 6 to 11 people attending each week with as many staying behind after the walk for a sociable cup of tea or coffee. This session will continue post project end.

Chair Based Activity: A chair based activity session was established on Tuesday afternoons in June 2017, led by a Northampton Yoga tutor. This was one of the activities that scored highly in the community consultation survey, and had previously taken place in the area only to come to an end when previous funding ran out. To date, the session has been well attended with a regular attendance of 8-10 (18 people in total since the session began) including both elderly and disabled participants who have struggled to find any activity locally that is suitable for their restricted mobility needs. This activity was offered at a cost of £2.50 per person which was proposed as an 'acceptable' cost by the local community but still one that could maintain the sustainability of the session post end of project. With the generated numbers from this group, the session was

reviewed in January 2018 and a sustainability plan implemented to maintain the sessions for an agreed period as attendance fees still did not cover the costs of the tutor and the venue. The session will be reviewed June 2018 by which time we hope for a volunteer to be qualified to lead this session and enable it to continue at the current cost.

Core De Force: A Core De Force class was set up, taking place at Bipin Community Centre and led by an existing volunteer on Monday evenings from October 2017. This martial arts inspired exercise class was well received although attendance numbers have fluctuated greatly from 26 right down to 4. This could be attributed to several cancellations of the class due to tutor personal issues. Sustainability of the session was reviewed in January 2018 and a sustainability plan created. Venue hire costs have been highlighted as a barrier to continuing as the community venue were looking to increase their costs but we are planning for the session to continue at an alternative, less expensive venue (St Andrews CEVA).

New Years' Programme: Due to an extension in the funding dates, we were able to take advantage of the New Years' 'bug' and launch three new activities for 6 weeks to assess whether they could also be sustained.

Fitstart: This outdoor beginner's fitness class began running as part of the New Years' Programme on Tuesday evenings from 7-8pm on one of the green spaces in Great Billing. Sessions were led by a local fitness enthusiast and attained regular attendance figures of 15 participants. This session has been so popular, it has become sustainable (attendance costs or £2.50 pp cover tutor and venue fees) and the tutor is now being supported to set up another session on a weekend morning also.

Zumba: Whilst we have once before attempted to offer a Zumba activity option, we wanted to try a different time and day as the initial insight we gathered indicated that this was a very popular choice. Therefore, a session was set up on Wednesday mornings from 9.15-10am to fit in with the school run. Whilst this session gained regular numbers of 6, it was unfortunately not enough to cover the cost of the tutor and the venue and this option came to an end mid-February 2018.

Yoga: Referring back to our initial insight, Yoga also scored highly in terms of activity preference and a Yoga class was organised, led by a local Billing tutor to take place on Thursday evenings from 7-8pm. Charged at £2.50 per session, this group attained numbers of 28 in its first week! Numbers did drop after the introductory phase down to a more sustainable 18 per week which once again was enough to enable the activity to continue. This activity took place at the Bipin Community Centre but with the drastic increase in venue fees (of £35 per hour which is unrealistic for a community project) a new venue was sought slightly out of the community at Standens Barn. This session will however continue at a site that is still very accessible and at a more realistic cost than that offered elsewhere.

4.4 Participants / Throughput

A total of 98 participants took part in the activities at the Residents Community Fun Day Event. The tables below provide a breakdown of the participants involved in each of the regular weekly activities.

	Jogging	Walking	Seated Exercise	Core De Force	Total
Number of Local Leaders recruited/trained/deployed	3	2	2	1	8
Number of activity sessions delivered	55	52	30	17	154
Total Number of participants	56	30	17	21	124
- Male Participants	11	7	6	1	25
- Female Participants	45	23	11	20	99
- Disabled	1	6	13	3	23
- Under 18yrs	12	1	0	1	14
- 19 - 25yrs	9	0	1	0	10
- 26 - 40yrs	10	2	1	19	32
- 41 - 59yrs	13	3	1	1	18
- 60plus	12	24	14	0	50

New Years' Programme

	Fitstart	Zumba	Yoga	Total
Number of Local Leaders recruited/trained/deployed	1	1	1	3
Number of activity sessions delivered	6	6	6	18
Total Number of participants	23	6	31	60
- Male Participants	4	0	0	4
- Female Participants	19	6	31	56
- Disabled	0	0	6	6
- Under 18yrs	2	0	0	2
- 19 - 25yrs	5	0	3	8
- 26 - 40yrs	14	6	8	22
- 41 - 59yrs	2	0	8	10
- 60plus	-	0	12	12

Total number of participants involved in the project = **282**

5. Delivery against target groups

5.1 Women and Girls

A majority of the participants attracted to take part in the activities have been female (85%) which can be contributed to the type of activities that we have chosen to run with this target group in mind. The activity types run were dictated by the initial consultation with the community and we are pleased that this initial insight was accurate. Particularly successful for this group has been the Yoga session with 100% of attendees being female.

5.2 Older People

Decisions made around choice of activities and timings have allowed us to attract those in the 60+ age group – in particular for the Health Walks and the Seated Exercise. 77% of the Health Walking group have been in the 60+ age group owing to the timing and the opportunity to attend the Community House following the session for refreshments and to socialise. Insight confirmed by the feedback received from the group put 'making friends' high on their list of motivations for becoming involved which is important learning for future projects with this age group.

5.3 Disabled Groups

19% of the participants of the ABC project declared a disability which is reflective of the Northamptonshire population (19.8% have a limiting illness or disability). We are pleased that we have been able to engage this group within the project activities, especially as it is this group that has reported the greatest health benefits from being involved (as recorded anecdotally as well as within the feedback forms). The activities that have been most successful with people with disabilities have been Health Walks and Seated Exercise which was expected.

5.4 Black and Minority Ethnic Groups

The BME community has been the hardest to engage within this project which was unexpected. Our original data showed that there were higher than population average numbers of people within this group within the parish of Billing which was narrowed down to eastern European groups specifically. 10% of attendees were from BME groups who largely attended the Yoga sessions (and we suspect this was due to the nationality of the tutor who was polish). Whether our initial insight was inaccurate in terms of numbers living within the Billing area or whether the activities run/times/days did not suit this population group, we are not sure.

6 Successes

6.1 The setting up of local activities that are sustainable

The setting up of any activity in this area has proved to be a huge success as following the initial consultation with residents as to the activities they would like to see locally, we have had much less engagement with them. As you will see below, despite offering activities that were highly requested by many members of the community, we failed to attract any residents to some of the actual sessions when established.

Therefore the activities that have been set up and continue to run are being seen as a real reason for celebration. Throughout their duration, we have still had to offer interventions to ensure that numbers continue to remain sustainable with focus groups around what people are enjoying about the sessions and what would discourage them from coming in the future.

The sustainability of these activities has always been at the forefront of our planning and therefore the delivery of sessions by volunteers has been welcomed. Because of this, the Health Walks and Jogging group will remain sustainable as long as the volunteers are happy to continue giving their time. In terms of the other activities, sustainability meetings accompanied by strategic forward planning has allowed us to maintain 6 of the 7 activities that were delivered.

6.2 The recruitment of local activators

This was an ambitious project where a model of recruitment had been tried and tested with previous programmes, however not within this specific community environment. Therefore the recruitment of activators locally and from within the sessions is considered a huge success, especially as several of the leaders could be considered inactive before the project began.

6.3 Engagement of the local area partners to create positive change

The successes in setting up local activities has also brought other positive activities into the area with the Community House embarking on a new gardening project soon after the ABC project

began. This project now, due to the hard work of centre volunteers has won two awards: Gold for Bellinge in Bloom and more recently for 'Northampton in Bloom – Bellinge Gets Better'.

7 Challenges

7.1 Access to the local supply of facilities

The local Community Centre in Bellinge is hired to outside groups and organisations every evening, and due to cost and the type of activities provided, these groups and bookings bring no real benefit to the local community. Daytime usage is used by a local pre-school. They use one room, but due to staffing levels and safeguarding of the children and accessing the toilet the other room is not used by any other hirers. Consequently, the project group met with the trust that hires the facility to change the hire agreement with the pre-school. This resulted in access to one room during the day as the pre-school have had to increase their staffing levels, as well as access to the centre on Monday evenings.

Meetings were conducted with two of the local schools, both of which seemed positive. One primary was keen to support the project but since trying to book facilities (via Amey) the project encountered further barriers of being unable to use their equipment (netball posts) and specifically requested areas i.e. the 3G pitch for Walking Football. The other local primary school, again were keen to support the project and embed the 'active lifestyle' mentality within their school and the families, however they were in the process of reviewing their letting procedures to assess whether they are able to open up their facilities in the evening times slots we are requesting.

Renovation on a 'community' venue was completed towards the end of the autumn 2017 which we had hoped would have a very positive impact in terms of access to local facilities for activities. Unfortunately following our New Year's programme of 6 weeks, this facility has become far less accessible (especially for the local community) with new venue rates being raised to £35 per hour. This price structure, we fear will prevent the venue being used by local people for the good of the community and it will become yet another site that's potential will be maximised upon by people outside of the Billing area which is disappointing.

7.2 General apathy within the community

Insight was seen as an integral tool in engaging the community, gathering information from them, and engaging them within the co-design of the programme. Whilst efforts were made to gather this data through surveys and speaking with community members at the Community Fun Day, there was still a general apathy with local residents to get involved in the activities they had asked for. A feeling that activity 'was not for them' was a common 'excuse'.

7.3 Suspected benefits culture preventing activation

This consensus of apathy was exacerbated by additional concerns that a reliance on benefits was breeding an unhealthy culture of not wanting to risk PIP payments by taking part in public activity sessions. Without a change in benefit law to encourage people currently claiming Personal Independent Payments to get involved in activity to promote positive health and wellbeing, it is unlikely that this culture will be broken down by the presence of an activity programme alone.

7.4 The challenge of recruiting under-represented groups as activators

Ongoing support was planned for Activators and Champions from the outset of the programme, although the vulnerability of some of the people that we were going to work with in this

community wasn't necessarily taken into consideration with regards to time and resource. As some of those recruited have been more vulnerable, it has created a challenge in terms of the extent of support and time required above and beyond what was initially expected.

7.5 Recruitment of Community Champions and Activators

Many more people completed applications forms and expressed an interest in becoming Community Activators and Champions than actually started volunteering. This presented a challenge in terms of time expense in inducting people, completing paperwork etc. that then did not contribute support to the project. The reason given for this was usually that they didn't understand the scope of the project before wanting to get involved, or they didn't think this opportunity was for them.

7.6 Unsuccessful Activities:

Three activities programmed to take place in the area were not successful despite being requested by the local community. For all three activities cost to take part in activities have been kept to a minimum (free - £2).

- **Healthy Lifestyle Programme** - A 12 week weight management/ physical activity programme was promoted to engage the female audience. A high percentage of participant's who completed the community consultation survey requested weight management. There were two attempts to recruit enough participants to make the programme viable, but with little success.
- **Zumba** – This was the most popular activity in the community consultation survey. There were 3 attempts to run a Zumba session at the community centre on a Monday evening, but unfortunately attendance remained at 0.
*We have since relaunched this activity at a different time and as part of the New Years' Programme. We have attained attendance numbers of 6, but unfortunately this number did not allow the activity to become financially viable beyond the 6 week trial period.
- **Nordic Walking Taster Session & Learn2 Course** – An online booking system was used but no one was recruited.

8 The Learning

- A trusted and respected professional such as the BCH Manager is crucial in gaining any trust and engagement with these types of disadvantaged communities. They provide the local insight into the dynamics and behaviours of the local community and provide access to a network of other agencies working in the area that have provided valuable support to the project.
- People from the area are caught in the poverty trap and those that are benefit reliant will not do anything to jeopardise that. For many crisis management is day-to-day routine and the priority. It has therefore become increasingly evident that Personal Independence Payments (PIP) may be breeding an unhealthy culture the area, with suspicions of fraudulent PIP claims, therefore participating in any form of sport and physical activity is likely to jeopardise these claims.
- Fear of injury, disability, lack of skills, confidence and self-esteem often prevent people from taking part. People also think the activities are not for them or their 'type'. Therefore, implementing behaviour change strategies in these communities is a long process. There is no quick fix solution and changing the mind-set of these communities will take time. For those living this sedentary lifestyle, it tends to be a habit that has been learnt and accepted as the 'norm' over their lifetime.

- The EAST theory (Easy, Attractive, Social and Timely) should be used in programming all opportunities, but is not always practical, feasible and easy to apply at community level when there are other restrictions, such limited access to facilities.
- Local advocates from the area are needed to help promote the opportunities. This helps to create a 'social-norm' that local people can and are being active and can get involved.
- Social media is the best way of reaching the younger people (aged 16-25) in this group. However, word of mouth and traditional ways of marketing proved to be more effective when engaging with the older generations. We also found that leaflet distribution outside the school sites during the morning school run did help gain many participants for the New Year activities.
- Engaging the community in co-design and co-production of the activities helps to improve community engagement and recruitment.
- Clear, concise messaging should be used in the marketing using words that resonate with the audience.
- Avoid the use of the word 'coach' as evokes negative imagery.
- Many people within the lowest socio-economic areas often have a 'story' behind their motivation which acts to them as a driver as opposed to a barrier.
- Employability skills and making a living out of activating/coaching is one of the main motivators for these groups for getting involved in leading activities.
- Funding to access leadership courses is crucial as well as provide funding to cover transport expenses.

9 Case Studies

9.1 Sophie's Story

Sophie is a young mother of an 8 year old and also the guardian for her 15 year old sister. She became involved with Bellinge Community House 2 years ago and when the opportunity to take part in the Active Billing Project arose, Sophie was really keen to be able to offer something back to her community, despite not being particularly active herself.

Sophie has to travel more than 40 minutes on public transport every day to take her daughter to Ecton Brook Primary school and so offering her time during school time fitted in with her schedule perfectly. Whilst she had never led activity before, she was a member of the PTA at her daughter's school and wanted to make a difference.

Sophie expressed an interest and was recruited as a Health Walk Leader in May 2017 to support the growing numbers of the group in terms of making them feel welcome as well as from a safety perspective. She undertook her Health Walk Leader training in June 2017 and after leading two walks of her own under supervision was qualified to lead. Sophie began supporting the sessions every week, even during school holidays when there was no additional need to travel the distance to the community house.

When asked why she volunteers she commented:

'I really like the people that I meet doing this role and it makes me feel really good giving back to the community'.

Following each health walk, Sophie now comes back to the Community House and makes tea and coffee for all the walkers and spends time talking to them and making them feel welcome in the group. As many that attend are retired (and often live alone), Sophie is integral to providing these people with a friendly face and conversation that some may lack from their everyday lives.

Sophie is a dedicated volunteer to the project and to Bellinge Community House and plans to continue giving her time beyond the initial scope of the project. She is enjoying the additional physical activity she gets from walking and has been encouraged to walk more with her daughter at other times during the week also.

9.2 Brenda's Story

Brenda is a widow who has lived in the Billing area for more than 20 years. She suffered a stroke several years ago which drastically affected her mobility which she has been struggling to regain since, but has a very positive attitude to her recovery. She does admit that she had to overcome confidence barriers to attend her first Health Walk session in January 2018 after learning about the project from the Bellinge Community House Facebook page (where her grand-child currently attends the Youth Group).

Brenda is now a regular walker who has found that she is getting fitter (and faster) every week. As a result of becoming more involved with the Community House, she now also attends the Seated Exercise class that takes place on Tuesday and regularly brings her Son-in-Law who suffers from long term mobility issues. She commented:

'When I first started [Seated Exercise], I could only get my arm up to here (moves shoulder) but now I can reach all the way up here (gesticulates much higher)'

Brenda has quickly become a valued member of the groups and the charity community and often stays behind after the sessions for a cup of tea and a chat.

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