THE CARES FAMILY
NORTH LONDON CARES

MANCHESTER CARES

SOUTH LONDON CARES

EAST LONDON CARES

LIVERPOOL CARES
• Reducing loneliness amongst older and younger people alike

• Improving the confidence, connection, belonging, purpose and power of all participants

• Bringing people together to reduce the gaps across social, generational, digital, cultural and attitudinal divides
Love Your Neighbour
Community Fundraising
• 17,500 older and younger people
  • 500,000 interactions
  • 120,000 hours
  • 4,000 social clubs
  • 18,000 hours of one-to-one time
  • 5,000-6,000 people this year
Personal crisis | Public health crisis | Political crisis
Power is in the community

**Action**
- Loneliness
- 3G Social Clubs
- The Multiplier

**Voice**
- Stories
- Media & Videos

**Power**
- Connecting Councils
- Connecting Corporates
An evaluation challenge

How do we square our values-based, community-led approach with the culture and demands of a top-down system?

- **Culture and demography**
  - Bureaucratic funders want loneliness measures and demographic information; that’s not how to build trust
  - Some funders only want you to speak to the people they’re interested in – not inclusive
  - Interviewing older people on the phone creates challenges
  - People become more frail over time making longitudinal studies hard

- **Power**
  - Unethical to run RCTs
  - Who’s asking the questions? Philanthropy; local authorities; academia; California.
Older people
73% say their isolation is reduced
81% feel better connected to other people
77% say relationships with young people have improved
86% are more able to appreciate the world
A majority report feeling happier, closer to community, that they miss other people less, that they have more people to rely on

Younger people
98% have a greater community connection
98% have been able to contribute in new ways
97% are more able to appreciate older people

Both
Closer to another generation
Increased connection and belonging
‘Part of something bigger’
What we did...

✓ **Explore the impact of the programmes on older and younger people** to demonstrate how The Cares Family is meeting its core objectives

✓ **Measure the impact on eleven outcomes** for older and younger people alike.

✓ **Methods:**

  • *Face-to-face and paper surveys* for older neighbours and *online survey* for younger neighbours
  
  • *Phone survey* for older people and *online survey* for younger people in polled group
  
  • *Qualitative interviewing* while surveying
  
  • *Four participatory workshops* (Back to Work visits, Evaluation Tea Party, Podcast Club)
  
  • *Love Your Neighbour podcast*
  
  • *Observations/ethnography* (research diary)
I lost my wife and I got involved with SLC one year after her death. It gave me a chance to get out.

I depend on SLC entirely because I don’t have any contact with anyone. If SLC didn’t exist I would probably be more vulnerable. I would probably withdraw into myself or walk the streets and look at the birds and the squirrels.

I genuinely enjoy spending time with them and getting a different perspective on the world.

I genuinely enjoy spending time with them and getting a different perspective on the world.

An increased connection to self

We laugh a lot. It’s nice hearing younger people’s views compared with an older person. As I say, 99% I’m talking to people more or less my age. Talking to somebody younger feels wonderful.

Sometimes before going to see my older neighbour, I feel tired and wondering if I will have enough energy to see her. But afterwards I feel energized and really happy!

A sense of belonging

I love it. I feel part of a community. I have people I see regularly, and I know will be there, who know who I am.

I met so many people, and all the people going to South London Cares – it’s like a family gathering where everybody respects each other.

Reduced loneliness and isolation

I feel very at home, and like I’ve found a new family away from my birth home.

Improved understanding across intergenerational divides

An increased connection to self

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Key findings

Influencing change...

**Social Clubs**
- Sharing time with others
- Shared laughter and new experiences
- An environment conducive for building connections

**Love Your Neighbour**
- Connections built on laughter, friendship and storytelling
- Bringing the outside world into the home
- Receiving practical and emotional support
Conclusions

The Cares Family model

1. The quality indicators from 2016 are still broadly true
2. The staff approach is essential
3. The model has dual-benefits, but benefits are not symmetrical
4. The way in which people engage with The Cares Family matters to the outcomes they ‘achieve’

Caveats around outcomes and impact

- Some outcomes harder to identify than others
- External factors contribute to how someone experience a specific outcome (e.g. housing issues, bereavement...)
- Some outcomes may be happening anyway and it was hard to see how The Cares Family model explicitly contributed to this

Local differences between North London Cares and South London Cares seem to matter
What’s next?

- Storytelling
- Discussion groups
- Observation and involvement
- Diaries
- Smiley faces
- Respect people’s whole stories/language
- Take pride in subjective rather than objective approach
- A broader funding model