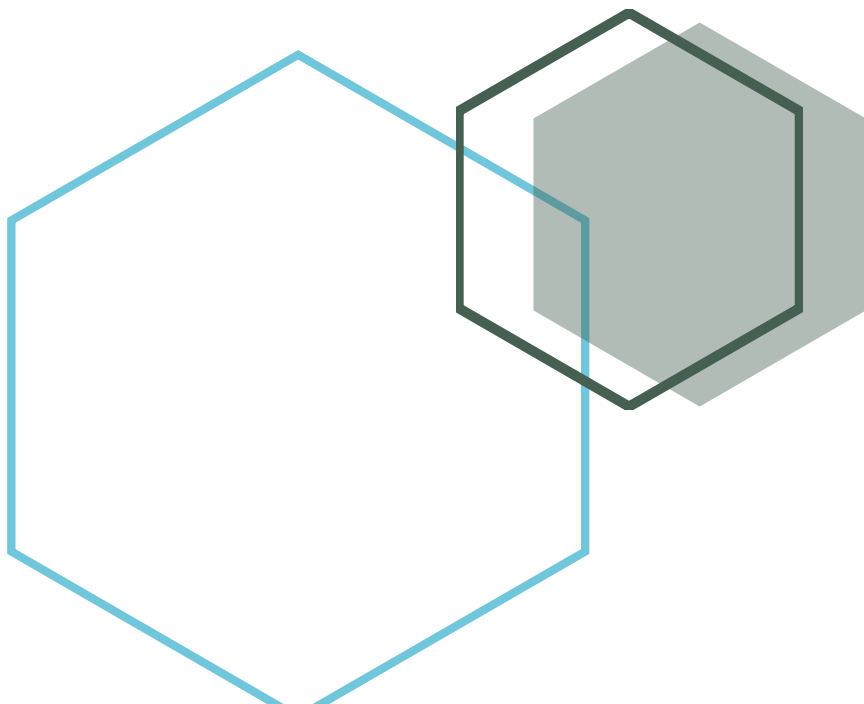




Northamptonshire ACRE

Rural Wellbeing Service Evaluation Report March 2019

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Capidale Evaluation**



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1 Executive Summary

Introduction

Northamptonshire ACRE (NACRE) is an independent charity (no. 1080038) and one of 38 Rural Community Councils working in England, which together make up the ACRE Network. They have been leading local community development across rural Northamptonshire since 1956.

In 2015, NACRE received £287,648 from the Big Lottery Fund (now called National Lottery Community Fund) to deliver their Rural Wellbeing Service until February 2019. The service was set up to challenge growing levels of isolation and loneliness experienced by older people living in rural areas across Northamptonshire by facilitating access to local services. The service consisted of three key activities:

1. Visiting villages across Northamptonshire, using a mobile Rural Information Centre (RIC) to provide advice and information to local residents about the range of services available to them.
2. Making home visits to isolated people needing support but unable to access the RIC.
3. Recruiting and supporting locally-based volunteer Good Neighbours to build the capacity of rural communities to help local people in need.

Evaluation

NACRE commissioned Capidale to conduct a retrospective impact evaluation of the Rural Wellbeing Service, and specifically to capture learning for the future development of the service by answering the following four questions:

1. How has the service impacted isolated older people living in rural communities across Northamptonshire?
2. How have volunteers been involved in delivering the Rural Wellbeing Service?
3. What connections have been made with other organisations and how have these partnerships impacted local communities?
4. What challenges has the Rural Wellbeing Service faced?

Methods

This evaluation is based on a mixed methods approach drawing on both quantitative and qualitative methods for data collection including:

- Basic monitoring information gathered by NACRE, including number of people visiting the RIC

- Case studies of people accessing the Rural Wellbeing Service
- Structured telephone interviews with older people using the service (n=10)
- Semi-structured telephone interviews with key stakeholders (n=12)
- Survey of people supported by volunteer Good Neighbours (n=29)
- Survey of people who haven't received support, to assess local needs (n=29)
- Survey of volunteer Good Neighbours (n=27)
- Survey of voluntary and statutory organisations in Northamptonshire (n=12)

Context, Outputs, Activities and Outcomes

Vulnerable people in rural communities in Northamptonshire have been hit by a 'triple whammy' of:

- The closure of community hubs (Post Offices, libraries and village halls)
- Funding cuts which have forced voluntary and statutory agencies to concentrate services on-line or in larger towns
- A bankrupt County Council resulting in the removal of bus subsidies and the closure of many rural routes

Consultation with local people highlighted a difficulty in accessing services in rural areas, high levels of loneliness and isolation and difficulties for older and disabled people, in particular, to access medical appointments, shopping and social activities.

Between 2015 and 2019, the Rural Wellbeing Service made 227 visits to 88 villages across Northamptonshire, reaching 1,832 people and making an additional 97 home visits for people unable to access the RIC. Over half (55%) the people accessing the service lived alone, 41% had a disability, 45% had poor health and 21% were carers. The majority of people supported were aged between 60 and 70 years, with 28% being aged over 70.

People approached the service for a wide variety of reasons, including support with switching utility providers, home repairs and adaptations, benefits advice and information on social activities. 80% of people accessing the RIC reported that they received useful information and half reported they were better able to cope by making more informed decisions.

However, whilst people felt more informed, and as a result, some felt better supported, the Rural Wellbeing Service Fieldworkers could only make referrals to services, if such services existed. The Fieldworkers themselves did not provide direct support and, in some cases, were unable to identify suitable services to refer people to. In response to this, and a feeling of impotence by local people, there has been a growing demand for establishing Good Neighbour Schemes. The model for these schemes has changed, relying on a group of volunteers, rather than a single volunteer. Four schemes have now been established and a further eight schemes are currently being developed.

Good Neighbour Schemes achieved strong outcomes, including improved wellbeing and reduced levels of isolation.

Conclusions

1. **The service has huge and growing demand** – there is overwhelming need for a continuation service, especially given the crisis at Northamptonshire County Council.
2. **The RIC can work, but visits to community venues and groups are often more effective** – the RIC is large and cumbersome, and it could be difficult to find appropriate places to park in small villages. Running regular surgeries in community halls and visiting local groups reached more people, including tapping local knowledge to identify hard to reach people needing home visits. Costs could be saved and more people reached without the RIC.
3. **Partnership working can take time to build** – early on, some agencies were reluctant to engage, fearing a competitor service. However, over time, partners embraced the service as a way of accessing people in rural areas they couldn't otherwise reach.
4. **Building community capacity through Good Neighbour Schemes offers a breakthrough solution** – at the start of the project individual volunteers were recruited but they could feel unsupported. To address this, the service trialled setting up Good Neighbour Schemes, with a local co-ordinator, Parish Council support and multiple volunteers supporting each other. Good Neighbour Schemes have been found to transform rural communities' capacity to support people in need.

2 Introduction

Northamptonshire ACRE

Northamptonshire ACRE (NACRE) is an independent charity (no. 1080038) and one of 38 Rural Community Councils working in England, which together make up the ACRE Network. They have been leading local community development across rural Northamptonshire since 1956.

NACRE's aim is to be the voice of rural communities in the county, focusing on communities with a population of 10,000 or less. They do not provide direct services, but work alongside rural communities and, in particular, Parish Councils to increase local people's skills and confidence to support each other, encourage rural residents to be active citizens and increase the sustainability of village life.

NACRE has a small team of seven staff members.

Rural Wellbeing Service

In 2015, NACRE received £287,648 from the Big Lottery Fund (now called National Lottery Community Fund) to deliver their Rural Wellbeing Service. The service was established to challenge growing levels of isolation and loneliness experienced by older people living in rural areas of the county. Consultation with local organisations found that many have difficulty delivering their services in rural areas. NACRE developed the Rural Wellbeing Service to co-ordinate services and help isolated older people access them. The service was funded from March 2015 to February 2019.

The service consisted of three key activities:

1. Visiting villages across Northamptonshire, using a mobile Rural Information Centre (RIC) to provide advice and information for local residents about the range of services they could access. The RIC was hired two days a week, 40 weeks a year. Visits were publicised in advance and the RIC parked in a prominent, accessible location.
2. As well as staffing the RIC, two Rural Wellbeing Fieldworkers made home visits to isolated people who needed support but were unable to access the RIC.
3. To build the capacity of rural communities to help local people in need, the two Fieldworkers also recruited and supported locally-based volunteer Good Neighbours, who held information



about services available, provided direct support to isolated people and set up new community activities to reduce social isolation. Volunteers provided help with practical tasks such as accompanying people to appointments or social events, dog walking or pet sitting, errands and food shopping, gardening and basic household tasks such as changing light bulbs. Some also provided befriending.

Planned Outputs and Outcomes

The following target outputs and outcomes are taken from the original funding application (Stage 2) submitted to the Big Lottery Fund.

Outputs

- In total, 480 older people living in rural Northamptonshire will benefit from the service
- The Rural Information Centre (RIC) will visit two clusters of villages each week, offering support / advice, carrying out triage assessments and signposting to appropriate local services
- Over four years, 30 Good Neighbour volunteers will be recruited and trained and each will be allocated to a cluster of (3-4) villages. Volunteers will undertake surveys in villages to better understand local needs and priorities, visit older people, set up new clubs or activities and community engagement events
- The Fieldworkers will secure new partner organisations and hold eight information events across the county

Outcomes

- People over 50 living in Northamptonshire will experience reduced rural and social isolation and improved resilience leading to better community cohesion
- People over 50 living in rural areas of Northamptonshire will report improvements in their physical, mental and financial wellbeing

3 Methodology

In early November 2018, NACRE commissioned Capidale to undertake a retrospective impact evaluation of the Rural Wellbeing Service. Capidale met with Elaine O’Leary, NACRE Chief Executive, on 30th November 2018 to agree the evaluation aims. Following this, Capidale developed the evaluation methodology outlined below.

The agreed research questions for the evaluation were:

1. How has the Rural Well Being Service impacted isolated older people living in rural communities across Northamptonshire?
2. How have volunteers been involved in delivering the Rural Wellbeing Service?
3. What connections have been made with other organisations and how have these partnerships impacted local communities?
4. What challenges has the Rural Well Being Service faced?

Data Collection

Between November 2018 and February 2019, Capidale gathered quantitative and qualitative data about the service using the following methods:

- Collation of existing monitoring data for the Rural Wellbeing Service, including number of visitors to the RIC and feedback forms. Details collected include age, gender, reason for visit and action taken. This information had been collected by NACRE, prior to commissioning the evaluation
- Case studies of people accessing the Rural Wellbeing Service
- Structured telephone interviews with older people accessing the RIC and/or receiving home visits, to assess longer term outcomes of the service (n=10). Interviewees were randomly selected and had all accessed the service during 2018
- Semi-structured telephone interviews with key stakeholders (n=12). These were carried out by Capidale in January and February 2019
- Survey of people supported by volunteer Good Neighbours (n=29)
- Survey of people with additional needs living in isolated rural areas who hadn’t been supported by the Rural Wellbeing Service, to help assess local needs (n=29)

- Survey of volunteer Good Neighbours (n=27)
- An online survey of local voluntary and statutory organisations in Northamptonshire (n=12)

All surveys were designed by Capidale and administered by NACRE staff. Please see Appendices for copies of all survey templates and interview schedules. Please note that all beneficiary names have been changed to protect anonymity.

4 Key Findings

Local context and need for the Service

Vulnerable people in rural communities in Northamptonshire have been hit by a ‘triple whammy’:

- Many essential services have closed in rural areas, in particular Post Offices, libraries and village halls. With these closures, villages have lost their central hub and points of contact and information for residents
- Funding cuts have forced statutory and voluntary agencies to increasingly move services on-line/to call centres and to focus their physical services in larger towns, predominantly Northampton. Many local people feel that decisions are made in Northampton, with little knowledge of what happens in, and problems facing, villages, especially in the south and east of the county which are a long way from any large town
- In February 2018, Northamptonshire County Council declared that severe financial challenges meant it was unable to meet its financial obligations (it was effectively bankrupt). The crisis in funding has resulted in the removal of bus subsidies and the closure of many rural routes

When we asked people about their experiences, responses included:

“Against a backdrop of cuts, the shambles of Northamptonshire County Council beggars belief. 400 people signed a petition in the village against the bus subsidy cut. People feel neglected, especially in rural areas. There are more threats of cuts. People want to take back control. We feel impotent. Really, there’s something here we could regain. We could harness some services, do something off our own backs.”

Good Neighbour Co-ordinator, explaining why they set up a Good Neighbour Scheme

“In light of ongoing pressure regarding cuts in public services (e.g. Police and the current local government re-structure in Northamptonshire), many vulnerable groups in rural areas will be affected, in terms of decreased health and wellbeing and reduced quality of life. Parishes in Corby borough are already experiencing reduced provision around public transport and the local government re-organisation may put other local services under threat over the next 3-5 years. These services are essential for residents who may have no family/community networks within their parish and therefore need an alternative lifeline to reduce isolation and provide them with an opportunity to access services/activities that maintain their health and wellbeing.”

Suzanne Preston, Corby Borough Council

Table 1 The experiences of people needing support in rural Northamptonshire

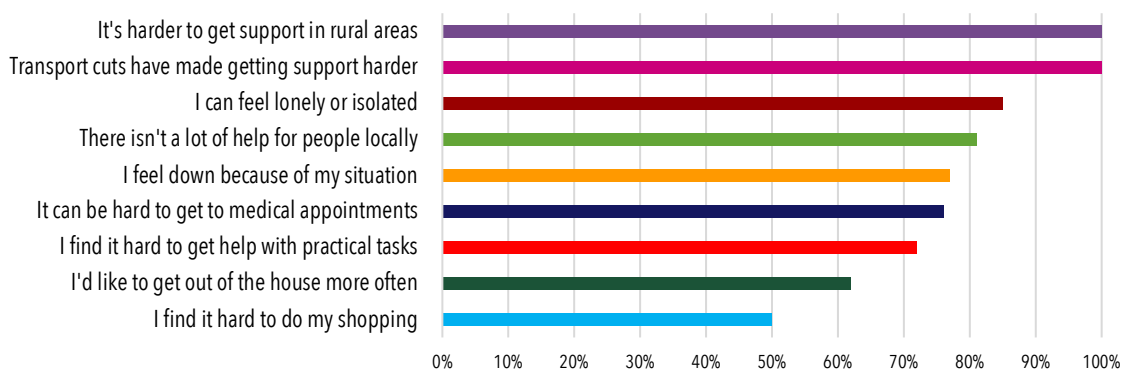


Table 1 above, shows the findings from a survey of 29 people not receiving support from the Rural Wellbeing Service, 59% of whom were aged over 65 years. Of the 29 respondents, 12 lived alone, 3 had a disability, 10 had poor health, 7 were carers and 4 were single parents. 13 of the 29 (over half) said they need help sometimes. The aim of the survey was to assess levels of need for the service. All reported that transport cuts have made getting support harder and 81% felt there wasn't a lot of help for people locally.

Quotes from respondents include:

"Getting someone to do the small jobs around the house and garden can be difficult. I have some minor health problems, mainly my back and gardening can make it worse. There doesn't seem to be anyone local to do small jobs ... Transport can be an issue too..."

"My father lives on his own in a nearby village and it is sometimes difficult to know who I should contact to get support for him. A lot of the voluntary organisations don't come out to villages or if they do it can be very expensive"

"I used to shop in the village but there is only a butchers and a café now, no grocery shopping. I have to get lifts and don't like asking next door to take me."

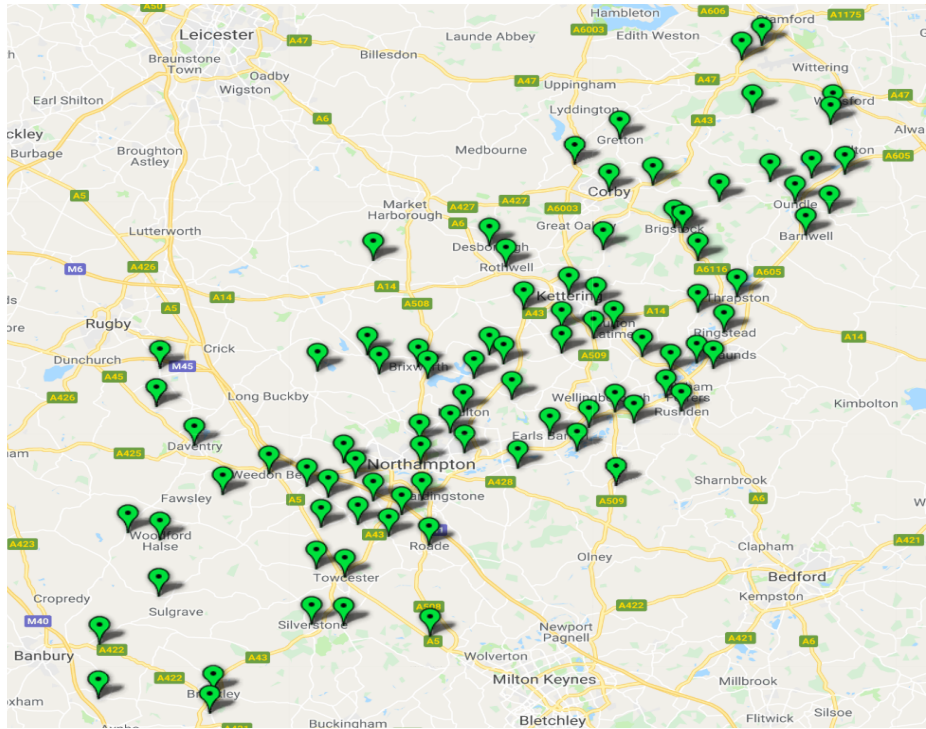
"My husband has cancer and dementia. I cannot leave him alone. I'm scared for the future. I already feel lonely but at least he is with me."

Activities and Outputs

People accessing the service

As of December 2018, the service had made 227 visits to 88 villages in Northamptonshire and the two Fieldworkers had made 97 home visits. The Fieldworkers supported 1,832 people between the start of the service in May 2015 and January 2019. This compares to a target of 480.

The map over page indicates the range of the villages covered by the RIC.



Over half (55%) the people accessing the service lived alone, 41% had a disability, 45% had poor health and 21% were carers. The majority of people supported were aged between 60 and 70 years, with 28% being aged over 70.

Two-thirds of those accessing the service were women (1,234 people), compared to a third of men (598). The higher prevalence of women seeking support is unsurprising and reflects the higher proportion of women generally seeking help for health issues (Men’s Health Forum, 2019)¹. As many of the people accessing the service were widowed, it is also likely to be due to women living longer.

Table 2 shows how these numbers are broken down by gender and year. Please note, not all ages were recorded for people visiting the RIC in 2015 and 2016 and therefore the numbers in table 2 and table 3 do not match.

	Male	Female	Total	%
2015	65	111	176	10%
2016	144	258	402	22%
2017	107	156	263	14%
2018	239	644	883	48%
2019	43	65	108	6%
Total	598	1234	1832	
%	33%	67%		

Table 2 People accessing the Rural Wellbeing Service, by gender

¹ Mens Health Forum, (2019). Available from: <https://www.menshealthforum.org.uk/key-data-understanding-health-and-access-services> [Online]. [Accessed 21 February 2019]

	<50	50+	60+	70+	80+	90+	Total
2015	0	21	53	39	15	4	132
2016	0	59	157	84	20	5	325
2017	20	38	83	95	27	0	263
2018	126	204	382	154	13	4	883
2019	0	18	66	24	0	0	108
Total	146	340	741	396	75	13	1711
%	9%	20%	43%	23%	4%	1%	

Table 3 People accessing the Rural Wellbeing Service, by age

There is large variation in the number of people reached each calendar year. Data collected for 2015 and 2019 did not include a full year (8 months and 1 month respectively). Only 14% of total beneficiaries were reached during 2017. This was due to staff long term sickness and two Fieldworkers leaving the service in early-mid 2017 and being replaced.

A much larger number of people were reached during 2018, this was due to staffing being back to full capacity and to a change in approach. In 2018, Fieldworkers started attending existing local events, including lunch clubs and church groups and running mini surgeries from local libraries and other venues. This change in strategy resulted in greater numbers of people being reached and is explained further on page 21.

Reasons for accessing the service

People approached the Rural Wellbeing Service for a wide variety of reasons focusing on: energy advice (e.g. switching providers); home repairs, including adaptations for people with a disability; financial support, including accessing benefits; carers information; and information on social activities. Further examples of the reasons for accessing the service are highlighted below.





Of the 1,832 people accessing the service, 78% were provided with information and advice about services and activities they could access. 22% were directly referred to other services (see page 21 for the range of services). Following support, 53% of people considered their issue resolved, it was ongoing for 37% and 11% were unsure. When asked how satisfied they were with the service (on a scale of 1-10, with 10 being very satisfied), the average score was 8.42. 53% of people scored the service as 10. 95% of people accessing the service said they would recommend it to friends and family.

97 people received home visits, many of whom had complex and changing needs requiring intensive support, something the Rural Wellbeing Service sometimes struggled to provide, due to capacity.

Case Study – Sylvia In November, 2018, Kay, a Wellbeing Fieldworker and NACRE CEO Elaine, presented the service to the STEPS (early intervention) team at Northamptonshire Adult Social Service. Around 25 team members were present. The presentation generated a number of referrals to the service. One referral was Sylvia, a lady in her nineties who lives in a very rural part of Northamptonshire with no close neighbours, who called the Adult Social Service frequently in distress and was crying on the phone.

Sylvia had previously been in touch with the Wellbeing Service and Kay had visited her 6 months earlier. The initial referral was because Sylvia had fallen and broken her femur and was no longer able to go out regularly. She was increasingly socially isolated as a result. Kay spoke to her and found that Sylvia did have some support with cleaning and shopping, but appeared to have very little social support. Kay arranged support from a telephone befriending service via Age UK Northamptonshire and a free weekly befriending visit from Age UK Warwickshire. She also put Sylvia in touch with Happy at Home in Daventry who could provide socialising at their day centre, once Sylvia was well enough to leave home. Kay kept in touch with Sylvia periodically.

Following the re-referral from Adult Social Services, Kay spoke to Sylvia at length and discovered her brother had recently died and her only surviving relative was her nephew in Lincolnshire (her deceased brother's son). Sylvia was upset regarding her brother's death, but her nephew couldn't visit as he had his father's funeral to organise. Sylvia told Kay that she had had a very difficult and upsetting call with her nephew. This had been the catalyst for Sylvia's low mood and she felt she could no longer ask him for any help, emotional or otherwise. She said she felt she was ready to possibly move to a residential home in town where facilities would be closer but needed help to sell her property.

Kay checked which services were still visiting Sylvia and re-instated those that had lapsed. Kay also suggested Sylvia might think about having someone to go in daily for support but this would be a charged for service via Age UK Warwickshire at £17.50 per hour. Sylvia is considering this. In the meantime, Kay called her periodically.

Kay spoke to the Northamptonshire Adult Social Service worker, who tried to agree a support worker for Sylvia.

Good Neighbour Schemes

The Rural Wellbeing Service initially recruited seven individual Good Neighbour volunteers but feedback was that the role required of them was too large and Fieldworkers struggled to provide the level of support they needed. From April 2017, the Rural Wellbeing Service switched focus from recruiting individual volunteer Good Neighbours to helping villages and rural communities set up, and take ownership of, their own Good Neighbour Schemes. The Schemes have typically involved an organising committee of 4-5 volunteers, one or two voluntary (sometimes paid) co-ordinators and 15-20 local volunteers working together to help villagers in need, organise community activities and provide each other with peer support.

NACRE held two events to promote the Good Neighbour Schemes (November 2017 and October 2018), the first having around 30 attendees and the last one having over 80 attendees.

“We were fired with enthusiasm... there was a buzz in the audience.”

Dr Roger Harrington, Parish Councillor & Chair of Organising Committee, Whittlebury Good Neighbour Scheme, talking about the October 2018 Good Neighbour event

With NACRE’s support, four Good Neighbour Schemes have been established, in Moulton, Crick, Welton and Whittlebury. Bozeat has established a scheme in one area of the village and Middleton Cheney is almost ready to launch a scheme. Seven further schemes are in the process of recruiting volunteers (Kilsby, Cold Ashby, Woodford Halse, Long Buckby, Broughton, Culworth, Aynho). Rothwell Town Council, Kettering and Corby Councils and the villages of Wilbarston and Gretton have all recently requested more information about setting up a Good Neighbour Scheme.

This new approach has engaged over 100 volunteers in supporting local people in need, compared to the initial target of 30, see page 18 for further information.

Whilst successful, the Good Neighbour Schemes have taken time to set up. The Scheme in Crick took two years, although the Co-ordinator reported they could have done this quicker but *“we wanted to get it right and there has been a lot to set up”*. The scheme in Crick developed a number of policies and these are now on their website, which is helping to speed up the process for new schemes. Demand for schemes now seems to be snowballing.

“We have a growing proportion of elderly people in our village and a larger proportion than lots of villages. And a new housing estate has recently been built bringing new people into the village. It doesn’t feel like the sense of community is as strong as it could be, doesn’t have as much community cohesion as some of the smaller villages. Good Neighbour Schemes are about helping each other out, it makes sense, this is what you do.”

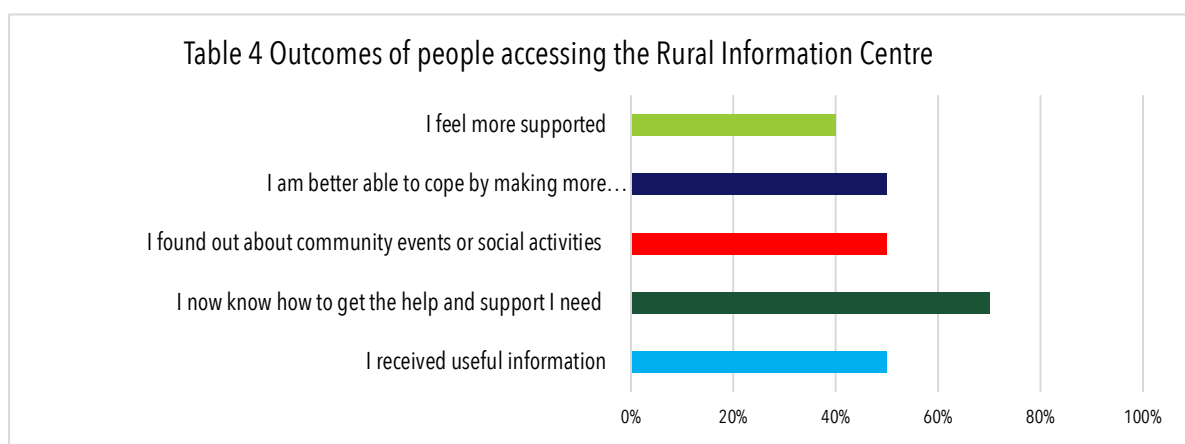
Sue Maguire, Crick Parish Councillor & Chairperson, Crick Good Neighbour Scheme

The schemes are attracting some statutory funding. Daventry District Council was so impressed with the Moulton scheme, that they asked NACRE to help set up further Good Neighbour Schemes across the district. The council designated £15,000 to support villages with costs. In late 2017, South Northamptonshire District Council approached NACRE to set up the two pilot schemes in Whittlebury and Middleton Cheney. They have included Good Neighbour Schemes as one of their four priorities for their Health and Wellbeing Strategy and have asked NACRE to set up a further seven schemes by the end of March 2020.

In addition to supporting the creation of Good Neighbour Schemes, the Rural Wellbeing Service also helped to set up community activities to tackle loneliness and isolation, including a Men’s Club in Brigstock, Chatterbox Club in Easton on Hill and an IT group in Irthlingborough.

How has the Rural Wellbeing Service impacted isolated older people living in rural communities across Northamptonshire?

The biggest benefit of the Rural Information Centre (RIC) has been providing information about services and activities and connecting people to services, in line with the initial objective of providing advice for local residents about the range of services they can access. Feedback from people using the RIC suggests this has worked well.



However, whilst people felt better informed, and as a result, some felt more supported, the Fieldworkers were unable to directly support people if services didn’t exist. As one visitor to the RIC reported:

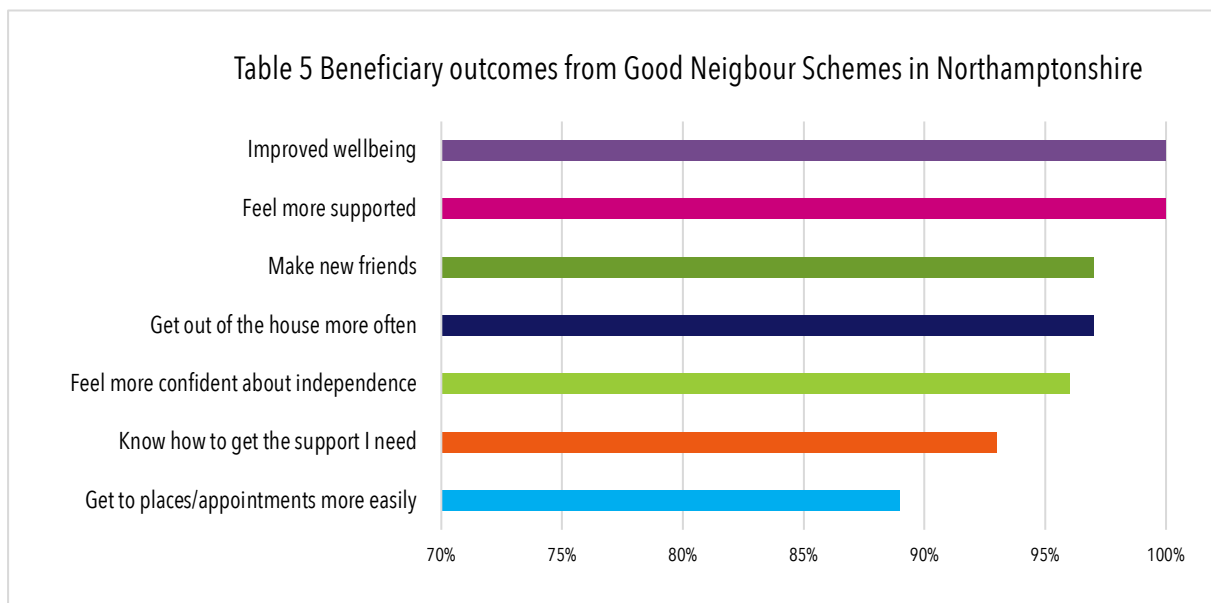
“I feel more informed, but there’s not much they can do to help with the lack of transport.”

Consultation into gaps in local provision, undertaken by Daventry District Council found two priority areas to be services which help people live independently in their own homes for as long as possible and a need to help local older people access local services. NACRE’s Rural Wellbeing Service has undoubtedly helped to fill both these gaps. The RIC has effectively linked local people with local services that can support them and the Good Neighbour Schemes are rapidly gaining momentum in helping local people create their own solutions.

“Lots of services are cutting back or are not available in rural services. Good Neighbour Schemes help to fill these gaps. Local people on the ground have local knowledge. For example, the Moulton Good Neighbour Scheme has strong links with the doctor’s surgery. One of the GPs did some evaluation and found that while the service has been running, there has been a reduction in the number of older people making appointments...sometimes older people book appointments as a way of reducing loneliness.”

Emma Parry, Community Projects Officer, Daventry District Council

Our survey of 29 people supported by a Good Neighbour Schemes showed evidence of strong outcomes being achieved for local people:



All respondents reported improved wellbeing and feeling more supported. 97% reported making new friends. Each Good Neighbour Scheme is different, depending on local needs. For example, the scheme in Moulton chose to focus on reducing loneliness and isolation of older residents through events including weekly board game and cards sessions, coffee club and setting up a village befriending service. 20-30 people regularly attend the games sessions and up to 60 people attend monthly musical memories events. This increased to 80 people at Christmas. The scheme also now uses a mini-bus to bring people from neighbouring Walgrave village to events, if they don't have transport. NACRE's role has been to help the schemes set-up, determine what areas to focus on and learn from the experience of other schemes.

"NACRE have been a godsend, we couldn't have done what we do without them. They're making a huge difference to reducing social isolation."

Emma Parry, Community Projects Officer, Daventry District Council

"I don't feel so lonely knowing that I can call the number and a volunteer would be available to help me if I need anything. And I look forward to John ringing me to chat."

Good Neighbour Scheme beneficiary

"Since I found out about the neighbours scheme, I have had two visits from a lovely volunteer lady who lives in the village and who also took me to my appointment with the consultant at Kettering. I gave her money to cover the petrol but if she hadn't taken me I would have had to take a taxi which would be quite expensive and I do struggle with money. So it really helped me. Having those visits and knowing I can ask for her to visit has really helped to lift my mood. It's wonderful what a difference it can make when you know someone cares."

Good Neighbour Scheme beneficiary

Crick Good Neighbour Scheme chose to focus on providing a single point of contact that people could access for practical support, such as finding a volunteer to help change a light bulb. Good Neighbour Schemes are also seen as benefitting the whole community, not just older people. In response to a survey of community needs, the Crick Co-ordinator reported:

“Overwhelmingly people thought it [the Good Neighbour Scheme] was a good idea. But it wasn’t just older people. Shortly before the consultation, a teenage boy had taken his own life on the railway line so there were a lot of responses about needing activities for teenagers.”

Sue Maguire, Crick Parish Councillor & Chairperson, Crick Good Neighbour Scheme

How have volunteers been involved in delivering the Rural Wellbeing Service?

At first, the Rural Wellbeing Service struggled to recruit individual volunteer Good Neighbours. The service initially recruited seven volunteers and visited a further six potential volunteers but feedback was that the role was too large and there was not enough support from paid staff (the Fieldworkers). The Fieldworkers also reported that they found it difficult to provide the level of support needed by volunteers.

From April 2017, the Wellbeing Service switched its focus from recruiting individual Good Neighbour volunteers to helping villages and rural communities set up, and take ownership of their own Good Neighbour Schemes. Each Scheme typically involves around between 15-30 volunteers in a variety of roles, including establishing and co-ordinating the scheme and providing hands on support to help villagers in need. The RIC has been effective in helping recruit volunteers.

“Mr Brown visited the RIC because he recently retired and wanted to give something back by volunteering. But he didn’t know what he wanted to do. The Wellbeing Service Fieldworkers signposted him to me and he started off being a “satellite friend” co-ordinating ways of help to older people in his village. He’s now looking to establish a Good Neighbour Scheme in the village.”

Rebecca Breakwell, Rural Officer NACRE

The first Good Neighbour Scheme set up in this way was in Moulton, where a paid Co-ordinator (employed by Moulton Parish Council) works alongside the GP surgery. GPs refer people who are isolated and people who might benefit from becoming a volunteer to the Co-ordinator. The process has worked very well, and Moulton now has a team of 20 volunteers providing practical help, befriending and events for isolated villagers. To date, the Good Neighbour Schemes have involved over 100 volunteers, compared to the original target of 30.



Case Study - Maurice and Danny, Moulton Maurice, a former Personnel Director for a shoe company in Northampton, is in his 80s and has lived on his own since his wife died in 2016. He has mobility problems which prevent him from getting out much and has few visitors. He says his niece does her best for him: *“she sees me when she can, but I don’t like to burden her with the way I’m feeling, she has a family of her own.”*

Through the Good Neighbour Scheme, Maurice was introduced to Danny, a Forestry worker in his 30s who lives in the same village, although the two had previously never met. Danny had always wanted to volunteer but didn’t know where to start. He came to a talk by NACRE about the Good Neighbour Schemes and, at the end, asked if he could help. He was put in touch with the local scheme, who asked Danny to visit Maurice, as his late wife’s friends were worried about him.

From the very start they built a rapport. Danny and Maurice now meet once a fortnight, with phone calls in between. Danny is teaching him how to use a computer and Facebook to contact old friends. They both love cricket, Maurice told us: *“Danny surprised me with a visit to the county ground a few months ago, we were only there for a few hours because of my health, but I really enjoyed it and had a lovely day! Having Danny visit me has been life changing. I have something to look forward to now, he is a wonderful young man.”*

For Danny, the experience has been equally positive: *“Maurice and I are now best buddies. I go up most weeks, he’s taught me a lot about the village, and we have a laugh together.”*

The flexibility of volunteering opportunities within Good Neighbour Schemes has worked well and is attractive to volunteers.

“One lady was very keen to volunteer but she was suffering from high levels of anxiety herself and was nervous about taking on a role of responsibility. However, she loves driving and drives a BMW soft-top. She now helps transport older people in her local village who want to go shopping but can’t get there due to cuts in the bus service.”

Rural Wellbeing Service Fieldworker, NACRE

One issue our evaluation identified was a need for more volunteer training, particularly around boundaries. Volunteers also requested training in first aid and manual handling.

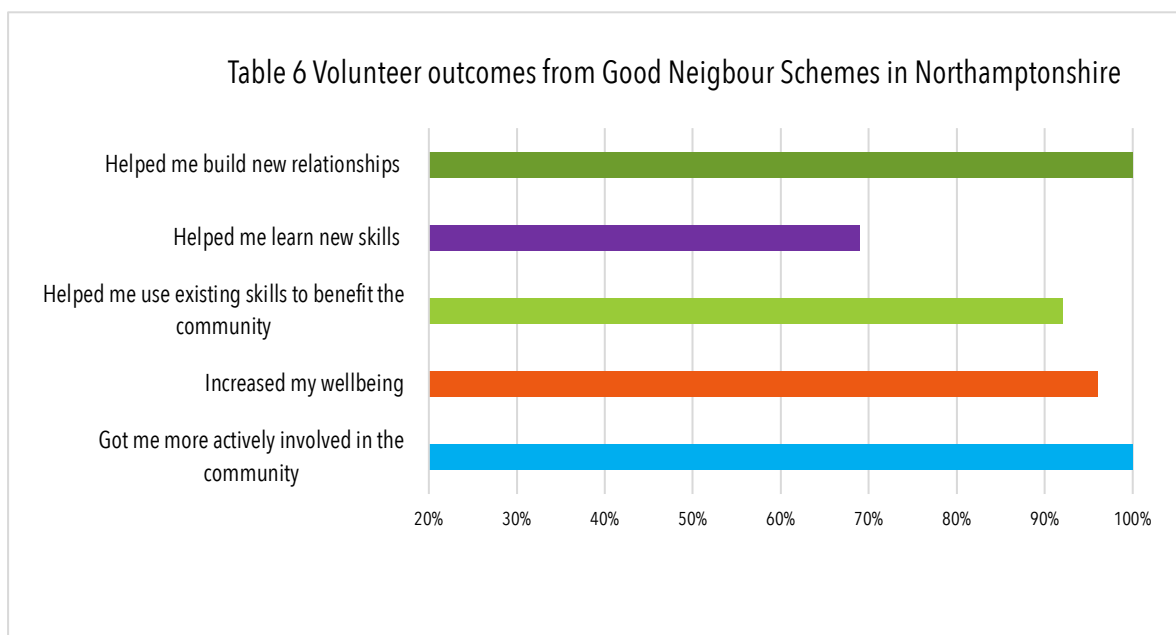
“Sometimes volunteers want to share too much information about their own lives and the older people then start worrying about them.”

Mary Jane Brown, Community Connector, Moulton & Surrounding Area

Local Good Neighbour Schemes reported that NACRE had been very supportive when issues arose. One example was given whereby a volunteer was acting inappropriately and had become quite difficult to manage. NACRE provided detailed guidance, including legal advice on how to proceed.

As part of our evaluation, we undertook a survey of 27 Good Neighbour volunteers involved in delivering or setting up schemes in Crick, Bozeat, Moulton, Welton, Overstone, Whittlebury, Easton on the Hill and Brigstock. Volunteers were asked what impact volunteering has had on their own wellbeing.

As the following chart shows, volunteers have themselves benefitted enormously from volunteering.



The positive benefits of volunteering were reinforced by verbatim comments made in response to our volunteer evaluation survey:

“Being a volunteer, I have made lots of new friends and it has really been a lifesaver for me after my husband left me last year. I love meeting all the people... I don’t know what I would do without it now, my mood is always good as I know I have people on the end of the phone to talk to. It is a real pleasure helping people as they are helping me.”

Good Neighbour Scheme volunteer

“I didn’t think my job as a chef would be any use but there is talk of me telling gentlemen who are widowed how they can cook healthily for themselves. That makes me think that my skills are useful and has helped my confidence.”

Good Neighbour Scheme volunteer

“I have used my skills of project management to lead on establishing a scheme and to seek funding, grants, donations and in-kind help. It has helped with my confidence as once I had learned about the scheme I needed to “sell” it to others to persuade them to get involved. There are lots of reasons not to do something but it’s been good to be positive about something within a village as opposed to complaining about the reduction in services.”

Good Neighbour Scheme volunteer

The benefits of volunteering on volunteers was also noted by partner organisations, for example:

“Having seen the evidence from the work being carried out in Moulton, these type of projects help not only those elderly people, but also improve the health and well-being of the volunteers who have been empowered to help others in their community. This project will increase volunteering opportunities and provide vital social contact in rural areas which continue to have declining statutory provision to help isolated people in isolated communities and encourage more people to volunteer to help other in their community.”

Dave Berry, Chief Officer, Citizens Advice Daventry & District

Volunteer Case Study – Martin A Parish Councillor spoke to Mary-Jane Brown, the Co-ordinator of the Moulton Good Neighbour Scheme, about his friend Martin, who had lots of driving experience and wanted to volunteer as a mini bus driver. When Mary-Jane met Martin, he was very depressed and low in confidence. Mary-Jane arranged for him to attend mini-bus driver training which he thoroughly enjoyed and made good friends with Ken, the other mini-bus driver volunteer. Martin now volunteers regularly as a driver. He is very conscientious when driving the minibus, bringing high visibility vests, informing everyone of safety issues and doing all security checks thoroughly. Martin says how much he enjoys the driving and how much it has improved his wellbeing. According to Mary-Jane *“after a day of driving, he looks so animated and proud to have been of use to the community and part of a team.”*

When asked to provide a score of between 1 (not at all) and 5 (a great deal) about the extent to which they believe the Good Neighbour schemes have benefitted their local community, volunteers scored an average of 4.3 (based on 27 volunteer responses).

What connections have been made with other organisations and how have they impacted local communities?

One of the great successes of the Rural Wellbeing Service has been the extent of partnership working. This has been achieved through building close working relationships with other organisations and attending local networking events. For example, Fieldworkers delivered presentations about the service to a South Northamptonshire & Daventry Neighbourhood Policing event (25 attendees), at the Early Intervention Team at Northamptonshire Adult Social Services (20 attendees) and the Public Service Unit at Kettering Borough Council (28 attendees).

Fieldworkers also regularly attended Health & Wellbeing Forums taking place in each district, run by Northamptonshire County Council and the Older People’s Forum in Daventry.

This effective partnership working did not happen immediately. NACRE staff reported that initially other organisations were suspicious fearing the Rural Wellbeing Service might be a competitor service, rather than complementary. However, partners became very supportive, recognising that the service helped them reach a larger number of people in rural areas, and enabled them to more effectively co-ordinate their work with other organisations providing different services.

“The work of our two organisations dovetails together well. Through the Wellbeing Service, we’ve been linked to other services such as Home Instead and attending a Community Police Officers training. This has led to other opportunities. I’ve been out on the RIC three times and have reached around 200-300 people each time I’ve gone out with the service.”

Graeme Wilson, Northamptonshire Sport

“We have a strong partnership with the Wellbeing Service... if someone talks to us about needing a plumber, we’ll pass them onto the Wellbeing Service, if someone is struggling as a carer, they’ll pass them onto us.”

Jakki Hughes, Northamptonshire Carers

As well as receiving referrals, many organisations accompanied the Fieldworkers on the RIC. These include NHS Healthwatch, Community Law Service, Care and Repair service, DeafConnect, Northamptonshire Carers, Northamptonshire Sport, Home Instead and Olympus, an assisted technology organisation, providing sensors for people with dementia, personal alarms and easy grip kitchen utensils. A particularly popular service accompanying the RIC was an Audiologist, who used the RIC’s running water to clean people’s hearing aids. This was well received by older people who had thought their hearing was deteriorating further, but realised they simply needed a clean.

A quarterly newsletter was sent to partner organisations, Parish Councils, village halls, community groups, GP surgeries and other interested parties with details of the service and how to get involved.

In 2018, in response to not being able to use the RIC during the winter months, Rural Wellbeing Service Fieldworkers started attending existing local events, including lunch clubs (e.g. Orlingbury Lunch Club), church groups and running mini surgeries from local libraries. Events have taken place at venues including Oundle Library, Brixworth Library, Fermyn Woods Country Park, Irchester Country Park and Rushton Lakes Shopping Centre. Fieldworkers have also attended other organisation’s events (eg Companionship Cafes run by Home Instead which 20 older people regularly attend) and organised events themselves and invited other organisations. One of the Wellbeing Fieldworkers attended Home Instead’s dementia training.

Interviewees mentioned a particularly successful food tasting event held in the local Waitrose café. 18-20 local voluntary organisations set up stands, including NACRE. Other organisations included Northamptonshire Carers, Alzheimer’s Society, Age UK, Community Action and the Death Café. Around 150 local people attended.

“By working together, more people attend our events. If a number of organisations pitch up at a village hall, serve teas and coffees and set up stands, it becomes an event. People will leave their home to come out, they’re less likely to do that when it’s only one organisation.”

Jakki Hughes, Northamptonshire Carers

Partner organisations were also very positive about the Good Neighbour Schemes.

Northamptonshire Carers for example said it is common for a carer to live in a different village to the person they care for, e.g. when a son or daughter is caring for elderly parents. They also highlighted situations whereby a couple may be both the cared for and the carer, for example, one might have dementia and the other arthritis. They explained how helpful a Good Neighbour Scheme would be in both situations, to help reduce the pressure on carers.

“Working with the Wellbeing Service has helped us to research what services are currently missing, for example we found there are very few services to help people with dementia access physical activity. As a result, we’ve set up a Memory Walk for people with dementia.”

Graeme Wilson, Northamptonshire Sport

Organisations the Rural Wellbeing Service has worked with, either through referrals or joint events

Daventry District Council
 Cherwell District Council
 Home Instead East Northamptonshire
 Citizens Advice Daventry & District
 AH Secure Computers
 South Northamptonshire & Daventry Neighbourhood Police
 South Northamptonshire Volunteer Bureau
 Nene Valley Community Action
 Northampton Door to Door Service
 Northamptonshire Association For The Blind
 Northamptonshire Sport
 Northamptonshire Carers
 Northamptonshire County Council
 Local Community Transport Schemes (various)
 British Red Cross
 Be Secure Computers
 Healthwatch
 Happy at Home
 Kettering Borough Council
 Daventry Area Community Transport
 Daventry Volunteer Centre
 Golden Years Sunday Lunch Club
 The Disability Resource Centre
 Care & Repair
 Community Law
 Genii Home Care
 Oundle Library
 U3A
 PC Callout
 Older Person Care
 Deafconnect
 National Dementia Helpline
 Adult Social Services
 Olympus Care Services
 South Northamptonshire Council
 Corby Borough Council
 Age UK Northamptonshire

“Between us we reach people who wouldn’t normally access support services. We learn from each other, ensuring vulnerable and otherwise isolated people are able to benefit from bespoke services delivered by specialist providers.”

Sue Dickinson, South Northamptonshire Volunteer Bureau

A survey was completed by 12 local voluntary and statutory organisations, asking their views on the Good Neighbour Scheme, all organisations believed there is a need for such a service and all suggested ways in which they could work together, such as making referrals, making presentations about their work or helping to promote the scheme. The quote below is typical of the responses received.

“I think we could help make the project an even greater success than it already is by introducing other skills & services that people can offer their neighbours through it like accompanying people on a walk/jog as well as providing other opportunities to get people active in their local communities. We could help identify people that already have these skills/qualifications & also provide training to up-skill those who don't, but would like to provide opportunities.”

Graeme Wilson, Northamptonshire Sport

What challenges has the Rural Wellbeing Service faced?

- 1. Staffing & capacity** - one of the key challenges of delivering the service in the first two years was the relatively limited amount of staff time. Initially the project employed one Fieldworker and one Administrator. Visiting villages with the RIC left little time for the Fieldworker to follow-up contacts, make home visits, recruit and support volunteers, meet local groups to promote the service or make contact with new villages. After consultation with the funder, it was agreed to recruit a second Fieldworker earlier than planned, when the Administrator left. Employing two Fieldworkers (each working 28 hours each week) made delivery easier. However, one of the Fieldworkers was absent from work due to illness for a prolonged period during 2017/18 and both Fieldworkers left the Service in early-mid 2018. Progress was slower during the staff recruitment period.

Whilst two Fieldworkers enabled the service to significantly reach more people, feedback from the Fieldworkers was that it was still a struggle to visit all of Northamptonshire's 300 villages. Initially the RIC was visiting villages just one day a week, meaning only two villages each week were reached. Given the large area to cover, some villages were only visited once and others were visited annually, making it difficult to build relationships and track progress.

A change of approach where Fieldworkers instead attended existing community events, as well as increasing partnership work, enabled the service to reach more people. During the peak in summer 2018, the team were visiting villages daily. The initial objective was to visit every village, regardless of size, however, in hindsight the service found that if they targeted the right villages (or small market towns), people would travel from neighbouring areas.

- 2. Difficulty in localising the service to each village** - as the RIC has attempted to cover such a large geographic area, Fieldworkers have not been able to capture very local information on each village, such as the best local window cleaner. As one interviewee reported of the service, *"it is unable to get into the nitty gritty of each village"*. The RIC was also unable to respond to individual village needs, for example the service could not set up a taxi sharing service in response to local bus routes being cut. Good Neighbour Schemes would be (and are) able to provide this very local knowledge and be more responsive to the specific needs of each village.
- 3. The RIC** - has had a mixed response. Some interviewees saw the service as vital, providing a mobile facility in response to the feeling of being cut off, experienced by many people living rurally. The RIC was seen as a village focal point, where people could sit inside and have a cup of tea while they discussed the help they needed.

However, the RIC could also put people off as some thought it looked 'medical', (one interviewee reported it looked like a breast screening mobile unit). The size of the vehicle also presented problems as it physically couldn't access the smallest villages. Whilst the RIC has a low step to allow easier access for people with mobility issues, this often prevented the Fieldworkers

from parking in a central location due to high street curbs. The RIC could not be used in winter, when road conditions are poor. A smaller bus would be more flexible but would provide less visible impact or space for partner organisations.

Advertising the dates that the RIC was attending each village required more administrative work than anticipated, as did contacting Parish Councils to arrange where the RIC could park. However, having these conversations with Parish Councils helped to develop relationships and, as a result, around 15-20 Councils are currently talking to NACRE about help with setting up a Good Neighbour Scheme.

The number of people reached has been much higher since Fieldworkers started attending existing events, without the RIC, often with partners. Staff believe this is the best way forward for the service.

- 4. Difficulty in measuring longer term outcomes** – in line with the original aims of the Rural Wellbeing Service, the majority of the Fieldworkers' time was spent helping older people in isolated villages to access services. They provided advice and information and directly referred to other services. Anecdotally, this has helped to reduce isolation experienced by many older people in rural locations. However, because the Rural Wellbeing Service did not directly deliver services, it was difficult for staff to follow up the longer term outcomes of their work. An example was given of a referral to one organisation which then failed to contact the client.

As part of this evaluation, Fieldworkers telephoned a random sample of 10 clients, to help understand longer term outcomes. However, clients had frequently forgotten about their visit to the RIC, or their situation had changed (in many cases health had deteriorated) and the longer term impact of the initial support has consequently been difficult to measure.

The element of the Rural Wellbeing Service which is undoubtedly resulting in strong outcomes (albeit slowly at first) has been the Good Neighbour Schemes. Strong outcomes are being evidenced with this work, including improved wellbeing and reduced levels of isolation.

5 Conclusions

Over four years of running the service, a great deal has been learned. Four key learning points can be drawn from this research:

1. **The service has huge and growing demand** – austerity, reductions in voluntary organisations’ funding and the crisis in Northamptonshire County Council causing dramatic transport and service cuts means more and more people in rural communities are contacting the service for support. In November 2018 alone, the service had 118 requests for help – a growth of 318% in four years. *There is overwhelming need for a continuation service, especially given the crisis at Northamptonshire County Council.*
2. **The RIC can work, but visits to community venues and groups are often more effective** – the RIC is quite large and cumbersome, and it can be difficult to find appropriate places to park in small villages. Over time, the service has found that running regular surgeries in community halls and visiting local groups reaches more people, including tapping local knowledge to identify hard to reach people needing home visits. *The service can save costs and reach more people without the RIC.*
3. **Partnership working can take time to build** – initially, the service found that some partner agencies were reluctant to engage, fearing the Rural Wellbeing Service as a competitor service. However, over time, partners have embraced the service as a way of accessing people in rural areas needing support they couldn’t otherwise reach. As Northamptonshire Carers puts it: *“[The Rural Wellbeing Service] is a strong partnership... able to promote more than one organisation at the same time, there’s no duplication and it is more effective.”*
4. **Building community capacity through Good Neighbour Schemes offers a breakthrough solution** – initially, the service recruited individual volunteers to provide local support between staff visits, but the role of individual volunteers was large and there wasn’t enough capacity within the team to provide the support required. To address this, in Daventry District, the service trialled setting up Good Neighbour Schemes, with a local co-ordinator and multiple volunteers supporting each other. *Good Neighbour Schemes can transform rural communities’ capacity to support people in need, and there is strong evidence to suggest they should be rolled out in the future.* When local people were consulted about whether there is a need for more Good Neighbour Schemes, 96% said it was a good idea:

“Sounds like exactly what I need.” “I heard about the one in Moulton and it seems a great idea.”
“It would bring a sense of community back, like the old days.”

6 Appendices

1. **Template survey of people who haven't been supported by Good Neighbours**
2. **Template of structured telephone interviews with older people accessing the RIC and/or receiving home visits**
3. **Template survey of people supported by volunteer Good Neighbours**
4. **Template survey of volunteer Good Neighbours**
5. **Interview schedule of interviews with stakeholders**
6. **Interview topic guide for interviews with stakeholders**
7. **List of organisations responding to organisation survey**
8. **Template survey of voluntary and statutory organisations**

Appendix 1 Template survey of people who haven't been supported by Good Neighbours

About you

1. Please tell us which age group you are in:

- 18-30
 31-49
 50-64
 65-74
 75 or above

2. Please tell us which village or parish you live in:

3. Do any of the following apply to you? (tick as many as apply):

- I live alone
 I have a disability
 I have poor health
 I am a carer sometimes
 I am a single parent
 I need support

About the help and support available in your village/community

4. Please tell us how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statements:

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
It is harder to access help and support in rural areas than in towns	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Transport cuts have made it harder to access services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have been affected by bank or post office closures	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I find it difficult to access services using the internet	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I find it hard to use call centres for services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I can find it hard to do my shopping	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
It can be hard to get to medical or other appointments	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
It can be difficult to get advice about support that I might be entitled to – such as benefits or other help	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Sometimes I can feel lonely or isolated	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I would like to get out of the house more	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sometimes I can feel down because of my situation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sometimes I find it hard to get the practical help I need, e.g. with tasks at home or in the garden	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
There is already a lot of help and support for people who need it in my community	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
There are lots of activities available locally for people who are isolated or lonely	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

5. Have ever found it hard to get the support you need? Yes
 No

If yes, please could you tell us a little about it:

About our plans to set up a Good Neighbour scheme

6. We are thinking about setting up a Good Neighbour scheme here. Good Neighbours are local volunteers who work together to make life better, and particularly try to provide a little help and support for local people who need it.

Do you think that is a good idea? Yes No

Please could you tell us why you answered that way:

7. Please can you tell us if you personally might be interested in any of the following activities or support that Good Neighbours might arrange or offer? Tick all that apply

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> More local social activities – e.g coffee mornings/book clubs | <input type="checkbox"/> Gentle exercise classes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Days out – e.g. to markets or the cinema utility bills | <input type="checkbox"/> Help with reducing utility bills |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Talks from specialists on how to access help and support cutting debt | <input type="checkbox"/> Help with benefits or cutting debt |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Practical help at home, like changing lightbulbs etc... | <input type="checkbox"/> Practical help with the garden |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lifts to the shops or help with shopping | <input type="checkbox"/> Lifts to appointments |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Having someone to visit from time to time | |

8. We know some people will want to get involved as volunteers, such as helping organise activities or supporting other people. Might you wish to do that? Yes No

What sort of thing might you be able to do:

9. Is there anything you'd like to add?

Appendix 2 Template of structured telephone interviews with older people accessing the RIC and/or receiving home visits.

Questions

1. Can you remember your reason for talking to the Rural Wellbeing Service last year?

2. What was the outcome of your contact with the Rural Wellbeing Service?

I received the information I needed I was given direct help

I was referred to another organisation

...if so, who were you referred to? _____

3. Please can you tell me which of the following statements reflect your experiences since you contacted the Rural Wellbeing Service.

Statement	Yes	No	Don't know
I received useful information	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I now know how to get the help and support I need	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I feel more supported	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I found out about community events or social activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have attended more community events or social activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

I feel more engaged in my community	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I feel less lonely / isolated	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have been able to access other services, eg befriending, debt advice, bereavement support, cleaning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am better able to cope by making more informed decisions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I feel better in myself (improve wellbeing)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have been better able to manage my finances	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I worry less about money	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My physical health has improved	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have visited my doctor less	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

4. Has your life improved due to your involvement with the Wellbeing Service?

- Yes – it’s improved, at least partly because of the Wellbeing Service
- Yes – it’s improved but not because of the Wellbeing Service
- No - my life hasn’t improved

5. Finally, how would you sum up the difference that the Rural Wellbeing Service has made to your life?

Thank you for helping us!

Some questions about you

1. Have you received any help from the Good Neighbour Scheme in your village, for example by attending events or receiving help from a volunteer? Tick as many as apply.

Attended Events/activities Received help from volunteer(s) No (end survey)

2. Please tell us what help you have received, for example what events or activities you have attended, or what help you have received from volunteers:

3. Please tell us which age group you are in:

18-30 31-49 50-64 65-74 75 or above

4. Please tell us which village or parish you live in:

5. Do any of the following apply to you? (tick as many as apply):

I live alone I have a disability I have poor health
 I am a carer sometimes I am a single parent I need support

Life before you received help from Good Neighbours

6. We'd like to understand how you were feeling **before** you received help from Good Neighbours or attended events we organised. Please could you tell us how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statements:

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I was finding it hard to do tasks around my home	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I was finding it hard to get to places – e.g. appointments and shopping	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I was finding it hard to manage on my money	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I didn't know where to go to get the help I needed	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I sometimes felt lonely	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I didn't get out of the house as often as I liked	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I could go days without seeing anyone	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I was feeling down/at a low ebb	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I wasn't as involved in the community as I wished	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I didn't have as much support as I wanted	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

7. Please could you say in your own words what life was like before you received help from Good Neighbours:

The difference Good Neighbours has made to you

8. Thinking about the difference having the Good Neighbour scheme in your village makes to you, please could you say how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statements. **The Good Neighbour scheme helps me to:**

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Feel more supported	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Know how to get the help and support I need	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Get out of the house more often	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Get to places, shops or appointments more easily	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Feel more confident about living independently	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Feel more engaged in the community	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Feel closer to other people	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Make new friends	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Feel better in myself/improve my wellbeing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Feel more optimistic about life	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Deal with problems better	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

9. Please could you say in your own words the difference Good Neighbours has made to you:

10. Are there any changes you'd like to see to the scheme, or anything else you'd like to add?

Thank you for your help!!

Appendix 4 Template survey of volunteer Good Neighbours

About you

1. Have you been involved in a Good Neighbour scheme in Northamptonshire as a volunteer or a committee member?

- Yes No (if no end survey)

2. Please tell us which Good Neighbours scheme you have been involved in:

3. Please tell us in what way you have been involved:

About the benefit of the Good Neighbour scheme to your community

4. On a scale of 1-5, where 1 is not at all and 5 is a great deal, how much do you think the Good Neighbours scheme has benefitted your community:

- 1 2 3 4 5

Why did you score it that way?

5. Please tell us how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statements:

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
The Good Neighbour scheme has helped to make it easier for local people to get the help/support they need	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The Good Neighbour scheme has helped to strengthen relationships in our community	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The Good Neighbour scheme has helped to identify and support people who are lonely or need help	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The Good Neighbour scheme has made our community a better place to live	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The Good Neighbour scheme has helped reduce the risk of people experiencing a crisis in their health or wellbeing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

How else has your community benefitted:

About the benefit of the Good Neighbour scheme to you personally

6. Thinking about you personally, in what ways would you say your involvement in the Good Neighbour scheme has benefitted you?

7. Please tell us how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statements:

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
The Good Neighbour scheme has got me more actively involved in the community	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The Good Neighbour scheme has increased my wellbeing (made me feel more positive in myself)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The Good Neighbour scheme has helped me use existing skills to the benefit of the community	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The Good Neighbour scheme has helped me to learn new skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The Good Neighbour scheme has helped me to build new relationships with other people	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The Good Neighbour scheme has helped to increase my confidence in resolving issues for myself	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

8. We are thinking about setting up a more Good Neighbour schemes in rural areas of Northamptonshire. Do you think that is a good idea?

Yes No

Why did you answer that way?

9. Is there anything you'd like to add?

Appendix 5 Interview schedule of interviews with stakeholders

Date	Interview participant
18/1/19	Graeme Wilson, Northamptonshire Sport
19/1/19	Kay Giles, Wellbeing Fieldworker, NACRE
19/1/19	Beneficiary of Wellbeing Service, female aged 87 years
23/1/19	Marie Franks, Home Instead
23/1/19	Jessica Gooding, Wellbeing Fieldworker, NACRE
24/1/19	Jakki Hughes, Northamptonshire Carers
24/1/19	Elaine O'Leary, Chief Executive Officer, NACRE
30/1/19	Emma Parry, Community Projects Officer, Daventry District Council
30/1/19	Rebecca Breakwell, Rural Officer, NACRE
31/1/19	Mary Jane Brown, Community Connector, Moulton & Surrounding Area
6/2/19	Sue Maguire, Crick Parish Councillor & Chairperson, Crick Good Neighbour Scheme
7/2/19	Dr Roger Harrington, Parish Councillor & Chair of Organising Committee, Whittlebury Good Neighbour Scheme

Appendix 6 Interview topic guide for interviews with stakeholders

Questions

1. Can you tell me a bit about your role and how you've worked with / alongside the NACRE Wellbeing Service?
2. What do you feel has worked well with the Wellbeing Service?
3. What are the challenges? And what have you learned about these or about what would help address these challenges?
4. In what ways have you seen the service help older people living in Northamptonshire?
5. What changes do you think would make the service more effective?
6. Can you tell me about any experience you've had of the Good Neighbour Scheme?
7. If you had to summarise in one sentence the difference the service has made, what would you say?

Appendix 7 List of organisations responding to organisation survey

- Daventry District Council
- Northamptonshire Carers
- South Northants Volunteer Bureau
- Northamptonshire County Council
- Northamptonshire Sport
- Daventry Area Community Transport (DACT)
- Citizens Advice Daventry & District
- The Disability Resource Centre
- Daventry Volunteer Centre
- Corby Borough Council
- Kettering Borough Council

Appendix 8 Template survey of voluntary and statutory organisations

About our plans

Do you think there is a need for more Good Neighbour schemes in Northamptonshire?

Yes

No

Please tell us why you answered that way:

Your organisation

Thinking about the work your organisation does, do you think Good Neighbour schemes complement or overlap the work you do?

Complements

Overlaps

Why did you answer this way?

Do you think there are ways your organisation could help make our project a success, e.g. making/receiving referrals, giving talks about your work or helping promote the schemes?

Yes No

If yes, how do you think we could work together?
