Commissioning case study: Dementia-friendly food project

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A city of contrasts

• **Very compact** – sea on one side and South Downs National Park on the other

• More people live in flats than houses and **housing costs** are similar to London boroughs although wages aren’t

• **Inequalities**: 19 out of 164 areas are in the 10% most deprived in England. 2 of these are the most deprived 1%.

• Deprived areas of the city have a **life expectancy** of up to 10 years less than affluent wards

• Estimated **3046** people with dementia in B&H but **only 57%** of (1797) have actually been **diagnosed**
Brighton & Hove Food Partnership is a hub for information, inspiration and connection around food.

A non-profit organisation that helps people learn to cook, to eat a healthy diet, to grow their own food and to waste less food.

• Work with individuals
• Work with groups
• Work at a strategy and policy level

These are interconnected.
A seat at the table?

- Food Strategy
- Seats on local strategic bodies
- Commissioned work on healthy weight
- Mental health and happiness strategy: involvement in food growing for wellbeing
- Older people & food/ nutrition research
- Or ‘right place, right time?’
Evidence base / application

- Track record of work on food growing and with vulnerable groups
- Evidence about benefits from monitoring and evaluation
- National data, e.g., Growing Health factsheet, examples of dementia gardening activities elsewhere
- Scale/structures to be opportunistic
Outcomes

1. Provide engaging/cognitively stimulating activities to people in early stages of dementia
2. Improve the health and wellbeing of people with dementia
3. Reduce social isolation for people with dementia and their carers
4. Support people with dementia to remain active in the community for longer
5. People with dementia and their carers feel more confident accessing further services
Activities

- Weekly **gardening group** from Feb to November. Each participant joins for six months.
- 5-week **cookery courses**, x3 per year
- High levels of **volunteer** support & trained staff lead
- Input from **professional OT** at assessment & evaluation
- **Carers** included where appropriate/possible
- 3-year contract
- Mild (to moderate) dementia focus
Learning - setup & promotion

- **Time!**
  - To setup
  - To make new contacts
  - To promote
  - To become known...
- **Expert input**
  - Training staff & vols
  - Planning
- **Risk**
  - Planning vs reality?
Learning - delivery

- High support ratios
- Well-supported and trained volunteers
- Time around activities
- Adaptable activities to suit different abilities and speed of working
- Continuity and connection to the space
- Suitable referrals...
- Food!
Learning - evaluation

- Commissioner input
- Other potential funders?
- Most Significant Change
- Three perspectives
  - Participant
  - Their carer
  - Volunteers/ staff
Next steps

• Keep testing ideas
• Increase referrals
• Share learning with other local services for people with dementia
• Implement and improve evaluation process