



Connecting for Good *Impact Report*

Evaluating the impacts of Connecting for Good

REPORT BY ANTHILL COLLECTIVE / JULY 2024





Connecting for Good ***Impact Report***


Evaluating the impacts of Connecting for Good

REPORT BY ANTHILL COLLECTIVE

JULY 2024

Contents

1. Introduction.	7
1.1. About the report	8
1.2. About Connecting for Good	9
1.3. Methodology	10
2. Findings: what impact has CfG had on key outcomes?	15
2.1. Communities have the power to make change together	16
2.2. People are more connected to their communities	23
2.3. Community members have the skills and confidence to lead	32
2.4. People have a greater sense of belonging	38
2.5. Community-led initiatives are tackling isolation and marginalisation	44
2.6. There is greater collaboration across the system	50
3. Discussion: what can we say about Connecting for Good main goals?	57
3.1. To what extent is Coventry a more inclusive place for isolated and marginalised groups?	58
3.2. To what extent has power been shifted in Coventry to give people greater collective influence?	60
3.3. Where next for Connecting for Good?	62
4. Conclusion	63
4.1 Conclusion: Areas of impact	64
References and Annex A-D	65
References	66
Annex A: Connecting for Good evaluation framework	67
Annex B: Most Significant Change template	69
Annex C: List of diary study questions and prompts	70
Annex D: Connecting for Good member survey	72



**“The people power is out there.
The tools are there to organise
and unite.” CORE GROUP MEMBER**



1. Introduction

Contributor
Name: _____
Title: _____
Organization: _____

1.1. About the report

This report shares learnings from a mixed methods impact evaluation of Connecting for Good, a community organising programme facilitated by Grapevine.

The key questions this review seeks to answer are:

- What change towards key outcomes has happened as a result of the Connecting for Good programme?
 - a. To what extent have community-led initiatives that tackle the root causes of isolation and marginalisation been created?
 - b. To what extent do people feel more connected to their community?
 - c. To what extent do people have a greater sense of belonging?
 - d. To what extent do people have increased leadership skills and confidence?
 - e. To what extent are people more able to come together to make change?
 - f. To what extent are organisations collaborating with each other and people from communities in ways that shift the deeper causes of isolation?

In the next section, chapter two, the report lays out key findings grouped by key outcomes: communities making change together; people feeling more connected to their communities; people having the skills and confidence to lead; people having a greater sense of belonging; tackling root causes of isolation and marginalisation; and a greater sense of collaboration across systems.

Chapter three then discusses findings around the main goals of Connecting for Good, structured into thematic discussions around the extent to which Coventry is a more inclusive place for isolated and marginalised groups; the extent to which power has been shifted in Coventry to give people greater collective influence; and a look-ahead for Connecting for Good. Finally, chapter four outlines our key conclusions.



1.2. About Connecting for Good

Connecting for Good is a social movement working to address isolation and marginalisation across Coventry, empowering the Coventry community to make change through collective action. Using community organising principles, Connecting for Good works to build an ecosystem of community-led initiatives that supports Coventry residents to take action to shift power and tackle the root causes of isolation and marginalisation.

It does this by using community organising to address the root causes of isolation and marginalisation, working with marginalised people across Coventry including people experiencing isolation, poverty and disadvantage. The power of Connecting for Good lies in its unique strengths: empowering the community it works with to lead change which, in turn, makes sure change is led by people with lived experience.

Community organising is described as ‘the process of moving from building power to wielding power’. The Connecting for Good approach involves five key elements:

- **Storytelling:** by bringing their own experience or running public narrative training.
- **Building relationships:** by doing deep listening, holding one-to-ones, and providing coaching.
- **Creating structure:** by supporting the formation of core teams to lead initiatives, hosting house meetings to bring people together, or running collaboration stations to connect community leaders.
- **Developing strategy:** by building constituencies around particular issues or using power mapping and campaign charts to set targets and identify resources.
- **Taking action:** bringing people with positional power together with community leaders, campaigning for change, and supporting community-led initiatives to take action themselves.

Tied to this, Grapevine’s practice is relationship-centred, meaning it starts from the principle that relationships are key to impact. With this comes a core commitment to fostering and attending to the details of relationships in all aspects of their work. This includes building one to one relationships with community members and leaders, connecting community leaders with each other, and leveraging strategic relationships for change with people in positional power.

This report explores the impact that Connecting for Good has had on its participants and on their abilities to lead and tackle the root causes of isolation and marginalisation. It also explores the future of Grapevine and the sustainability of the Connecting for Good model.

1.3. Methodology

The aim of this evaluation was to assess the impact of Connecting for Good, and to look at the future and sustainability of the model. This report presents the findings of the impact evaluation, while future opportunities and sustainability are discussed in a separate review. The methodology for the impact evaluation is outlined below.

The methodology focuses on highlighting the voices and perspectives of participants, using participant stories, voices and experiences to gather learnings. The evaluation used a range of participatory qualitative methods, including diary studies, co-design working and Most Significant Change discussions. Emerging findings from these qualitative analyses were used to inform the design of a survey of CfG members, which provided a quantitative lens for analysis.

Co-designing an evaluation framework and theory framework

A series of three co-design workshops with Connecting for Good participants and staff were used to create a learning and evaluation framework (Annex A), as well as to co-design a theory of change for Connecting for Good (figure 1).

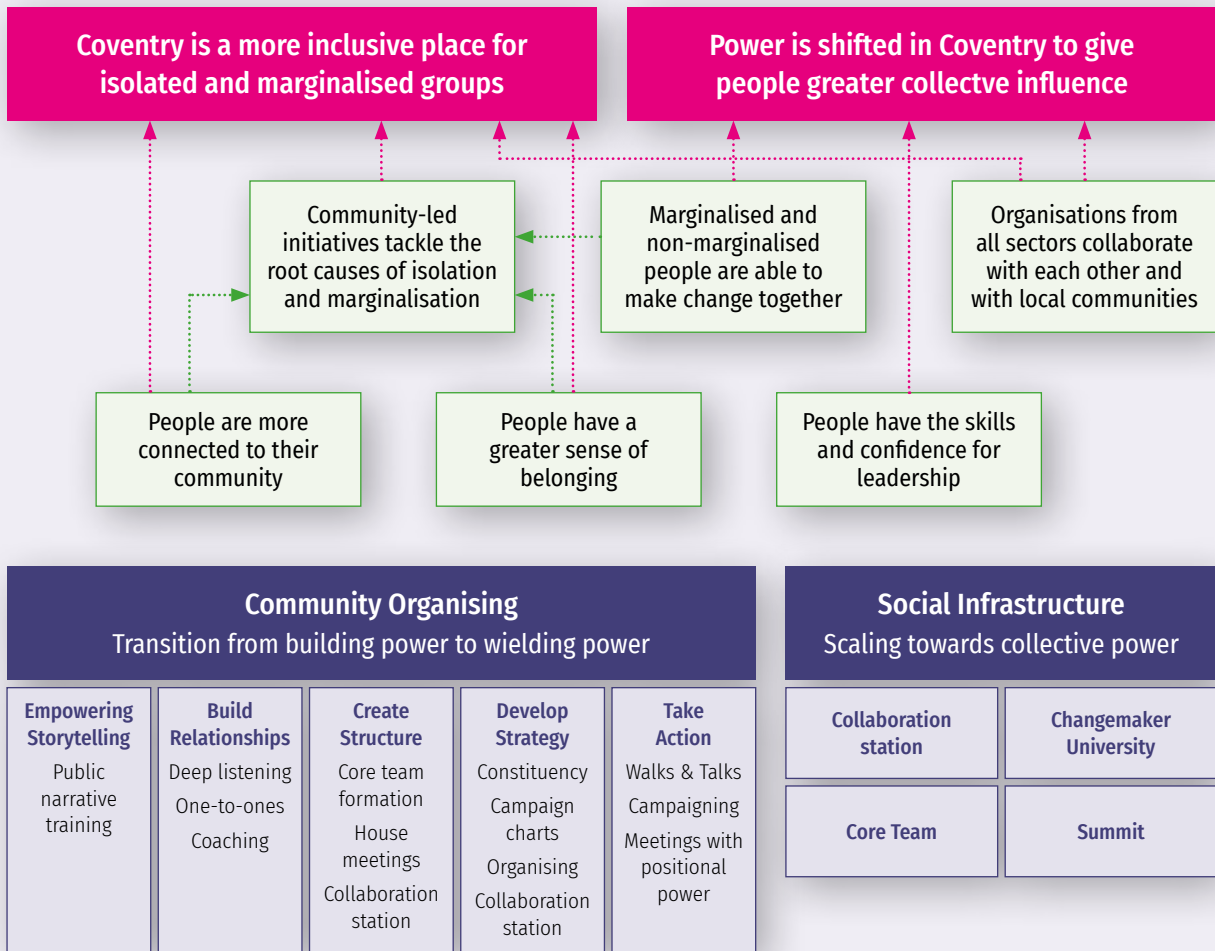
These sessions focused on:

- Reviewing and refining known programme outcomes, and mapping them at the system and programme level;
- Identifying indicators and measures of programme impact, and brainstorming evaluation activities and approaches;
- Reviewing and refining a Connecting for Good Theory of Change and aligning on core elements of an impact evaluation and learning framework.

This participatory approach took place over digitally-hosted sessions that prioritised space for open discussion and participant input, ensuring that participant voices contributed foundationally to the impact framework and planning.

“It completely changed my view of what Coventry has to offer and what I had to offer Coventry. Now I love being here.” - CORE GROUP MEMBER

Figure 1. Connecting for Good’s theory of change



Peer evaluation and Most Significant Change

A core element of this learning and evaluation approach is the use of peer evaluation, in which members of the Connecting for Good community were trained and supported to lead evaluation activities with peers. This helps make the evaluation process more inclusive and accessible, builds capacity in leadership and facilitation skills, and helps distribute power in a way that enables more meaningful participation.

Two Connecting for Good participants were recruited and trained to lead a series of three learning sessions with participant peers. Each session used a mixed methods approach of a focus group-style discussion, in which open learnings were discussed, as well as a more structured Most Significant Change evaluation.

Most Significant Change is an open-ended and participatory research tool that collects stories about change from project participants in their own words - without using predetermined indicators - and asking participants to identify what the most significant change was. Participants’s stories were captured using a Most Significant Change story template to help structure and guide their responses, as well as capture stories in a

consistent and systematic way. Our evaluation used a simplified version of the Most Significant Change (MSC) method, which encourages participants to review stories of impact and decide the most significant impact for each (Davies & Dart 2005). The MSC method is particularly well suited for evaluating complex programmes where there may be a broader range of different potential outcomes. In total, we analysed 22 stories of Most Significant Change (see Annex B for an example MSC template).

Self-led diary study

Over a seven-day period, 10 Connecting for Good participants were delivered a daily prompt for self-led reflection. These prompts were co-designed with the Grapevine team. The diary study questions created a thematic arc over the seven day period, beginning by asking participants to reflect on how participation has impacted the ways they feel, through to an investigation into practical changes they've seen in their lives, impact on their community, and ending on input into the effectiveness and future of the programme.

Participants were encouraged to share a mix of text notes, voice notes, images and videos. As the diary study was self-led, participants were able to respond on their own timeline, and select the response format that best suited their preference each day. Questions and responses were delivered using WhatsApp, avoiding the need for complex tooling, making the process as accessible for participants as possible (see Annex C for list of questions).

Impact survey

A 29 question survey was co-designed with the Grapevine team and sent to 155 Connecting for Good participants (see Annex D). We had 65 respondents, with a participation rate of 42%. Survey response was incentivised with a multi-prize lottery of £300, £150, and £50. Survey questions and themes were informed by emerging findings from peer-led evaluation sessions and diary study responses.

Our survey analysis employed two approaches. First, we analysed and integrated learnings from an existing quantitative survey administered by the Grapevine team, which combined a mix of self-reflective questions alongside an externally validated seven-question survey used to measure mental wellbeing, known as the Short Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing scale (SWEMWBS). This allowed us to take a foundational look at the wellbeing of the Connecting for Good community, as well as gather early learnings from self-reflective questions on the key impact analysis areas of confidence in leadership and participation in community organising.

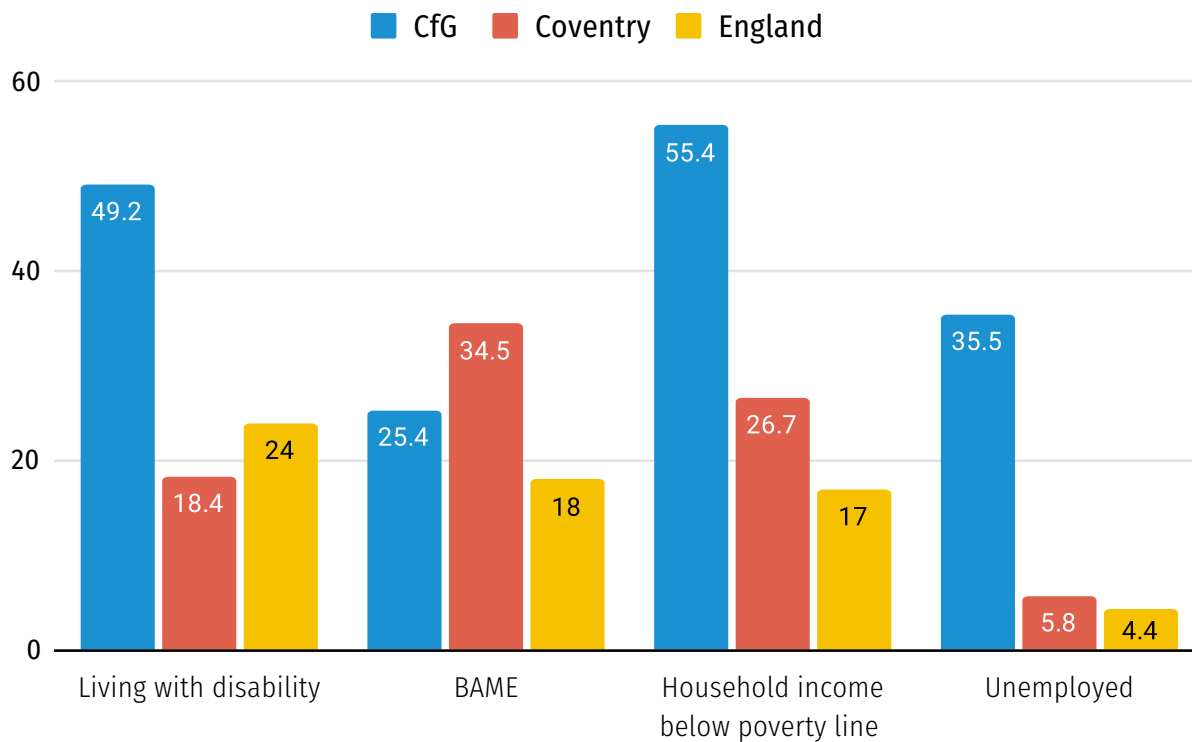
The 29 question impact survey integrated these early learnings. We co-designed questions in two formats: bespoke questions, and questions for comparison against Community Life Survey (CLS) responses. While the timeline of the impact analysis did not support a pre- and post-survey, we were able to use questions from the CLS as key indicators for a range of outcomes. This allowed us to create reasonable comparison groups, using averages from West Midlands for a regional comparison and England for a national one.

We note that this is not a perfect comparison as the demographic profile of the CfG community varies significantly with that of the West Midlands or England (figure 2). Most notably, the CfG community has much higher proportions of people more likely to

experience isolation or marginalisation, such as people with disabilities, people from ethnic minority communities, trans people, people living in poverty and/or unemployed and people aged over 65.

Where possible, we therefore breakdown survey results for people who have a disability or long-term health condition or who are Black, Asian or minority ethnic (BAME). This allows for a more direct comparison between CfG and the national average. It should be noted that as our sample sizes for disabled CfG members (n=31) and BAME CfG members (n=16) are smaller, the margin of error is significantly larger for these comparisons.

Figure 2. Demographic profile of the Connecting for Good community



Qualitative analysis

All qualitative data was analysed using thematic analysis (Braun and Clark 2006), first coded to structure the data and then analysed to generate relevant themes and insights related to key research questions.

Quantitative analysis

Survey responses to questions asking participants to compare experiences since taking part in Connecting for Good were analysed by their general response rate. For key impact area questions, we undertook an additional analysis by the length of time each respondent had been part of Connecting for Good. This allowed us to look at impacts over time by comparing a short-term membership group to a long-term group. Where relevant, we analysed responses by key demographic indicators including race and ethnicity, disability status, employment and household income.

Responses to questions asked in the CLS survey were compared against national response averages, as well as responses from the West Midlands where available. Where appropriate, responses were also compared by key demographic indicators.

Methodology limitations and challenges

Survey design constraints

A lack of an existing baseline, paired with time constraints, meant a pre-post survey design was not possible. We therefore had to ask retrospective questions, asking survey respondents to think back, introducing the possibility of recall bias- where research participants are unable to accurately remember previous events or experiences.

Participant survivorship bias

Influenced by the time limitations of the research project, there is an inherent survivorship bias amongst research participants in that all participants recruited for the study were individuals who were still part of or in contact with the Connecting for Good movement. This creates an inherent bias towards participants with a positive attitude towards the movement and its impacts.

Limitations of a self-led diary study


Using a self-led diary study has strong benefits: it gives participants a private space for self-reflection, allows them to participate on their own timeline, and is less extractive than other research methods. But, the self-led nature inherently makes participation harder to control. Throughout the diary study period participants became busy, or forgot to respond to questions, leading to response delays and, occasionally, missed responses.

Participant volume limitations

The number of diary study research participants was 10, and survey participants were 65. While this is an acceptable number and we were able to generate rich qualitative insights from the data, a higher number of research participants would have increased the confidence in these findings.



CFG offered me a structured framework and the push I needed, to think through the issues coherently and explore solution - CORE GROUP MEMBER



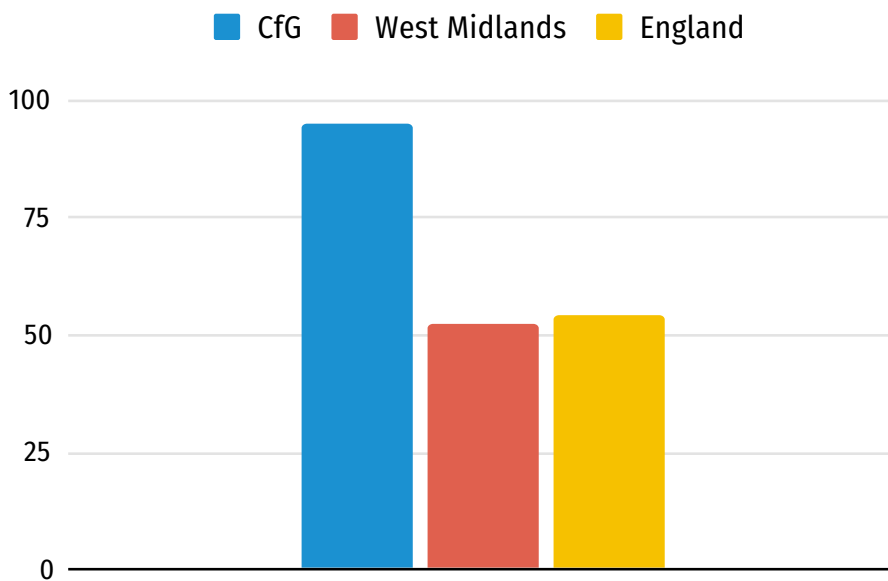
2. Findings: what impact has CfG had on key outcomes?

2.1. Communities have the power to make change together

The increase in the collective power to make change among the Connecting for Good community is among the most striking areas of impact of Connecting for Good, with very strong quantitative and qualitative evidence showing this.

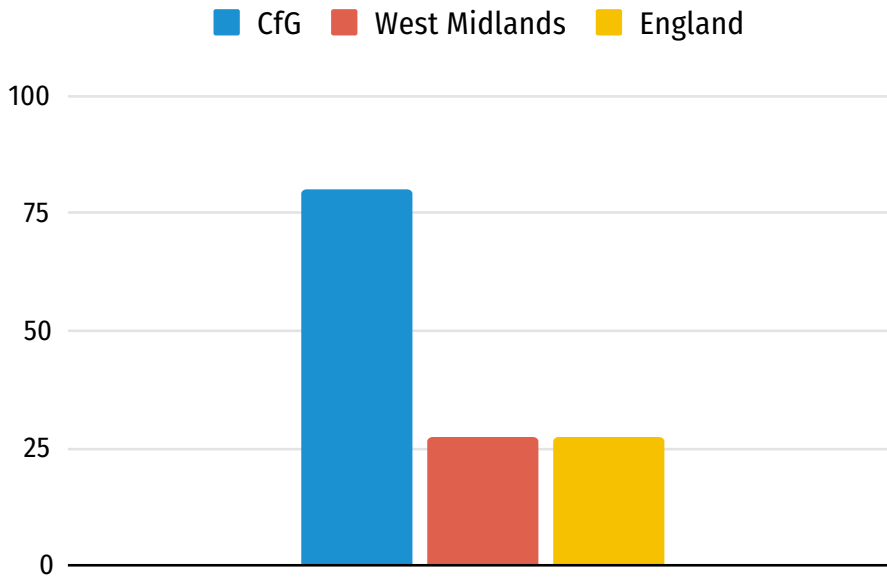
Firstly, CfG members have a significantly stronger sense of collective power to affect change in their communities. Almost every CfG member surveyed - 95% - said it was important for them to feel they can influence decisions affecting their local area (figure 3). This compares to only around one in two for the West Midlands (52%) and England (54%). More impressively, nearly four in every five CfG members (79%) believe that they have the power to influence local decisions (figure 4). This is three times as many people who feel the same way in the West Midlands (27%) or England (27%). Both of these findings are statistically significant.

Figure 3. Proportion of people who feel they can influence local decisions



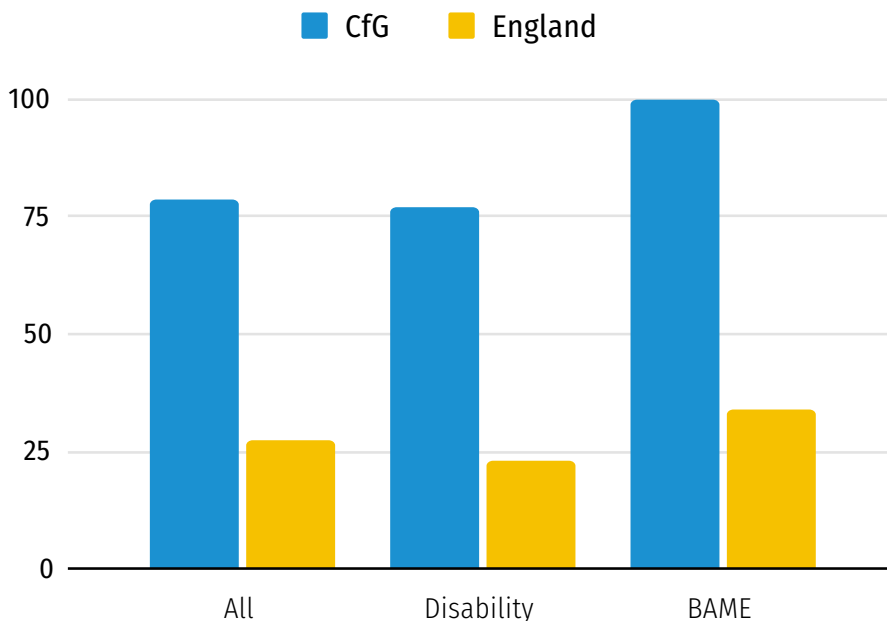
“My involvement made me feel encouraged, connected and empowered to be an initiator in our city.” - Core Group Member

Figure 4. Proportion of people who feel they can influence local decisions



Additionally, the difference between the CfG community and the national average actually grows when we look at two groups that can often face isolation or marginalisation - people with disabilities and ethnically minoritised communities (figure 5). For example, 77% of CfG members who had a disability believe they can influence local decisions, compared to just 23% nationally, while 100% of BAME respondents believed they can, compared to 34% nationally. Note that due to the small sample size of BAME respondents (n = 16), the margin of error is 20%. We believe this shows a very strong and striking difference in the power that CfG members feel they have, compared to the average citizen.

Figure 5. Proportion of people who feel they can influence local decisions, by disability and ethnicity



Secondly, the Connecting for Good community is much more highly engaged in local civic life than is typical. We also see huge, and statistically significant, differences when it comes to social and civic action between Connecting for Good and both the West Midlands and the rest of England (see figure 6).

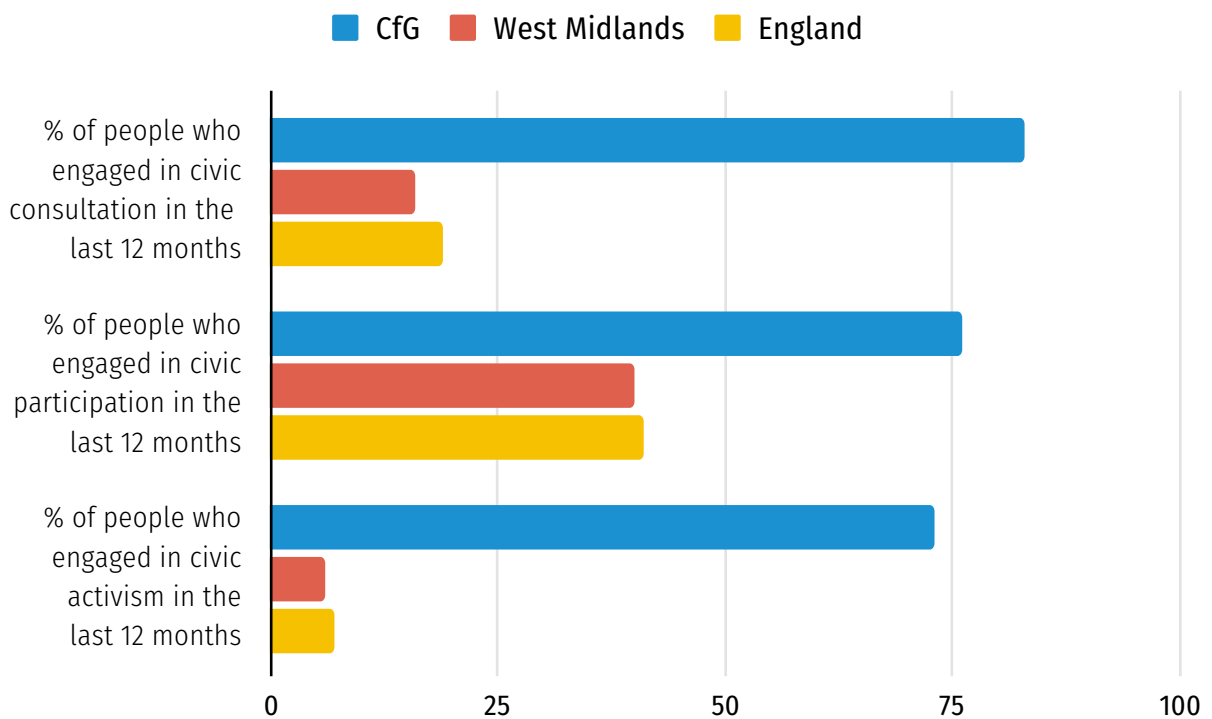
For example, in the last 12 months:

- 73% of CfG members took part in some form of civic activism¹
- 76% engaged in civic participation² activities
- 83% engaged in some form of civic consultation³

This compares to the West Midlands where, in the last 12 months:

- Just 6% of people engaged in civic activism
- 40% engaged in civic participation
- 16% took part in a civic consultation

Figure 6. Comparison of civic action rates between CfG, the West Midlands and England



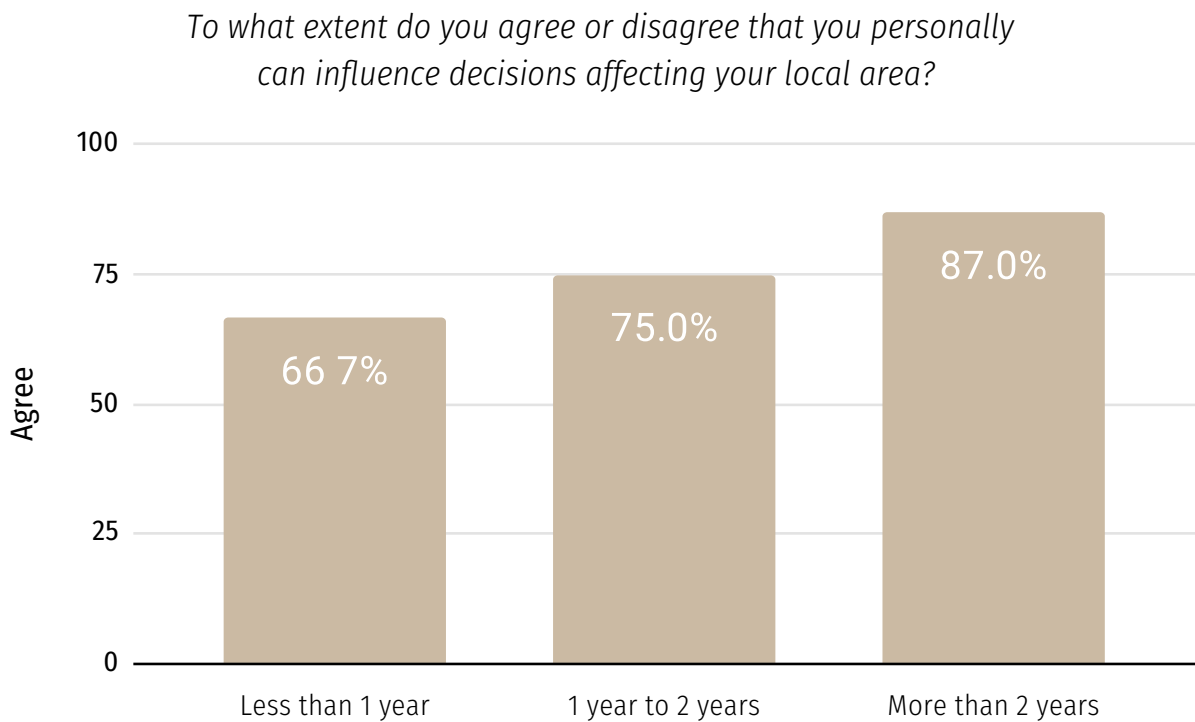
1. Civic activism is defined in the survey as involvement in activities in the local community such as being a local councillor, school governor, volunteer special constable or magistrate. It also includes involvement (in person or online) in decision making groups in the local area, such as a group making decisions about local services, a tenants’ decision making group or a group set up to tackle local crime problems or to regenerate the local area.
 2. Civic participation is defined in the survey as engagement in democratic processes, both in person and online, including contacting a local official (such as a local councillor or MP), signing a petition, or attending a public rally (excludes voting).
 3. Civic consultation is defined as taking part in a consultation about local services or problems in the local area through completing a questionnaire, attending a public meeting or being involved in a face-to-face or online group.

This corresponds to data from Grapevine’s initial survey of 72 people conducted last year, which found:

- 63.9% of survey respondents started something within the last month that benefits their neighbourhood, community or local area, with 29.2% doing this ‘a lot’.
- 69.4% of survey respondents worked within the last month with people and organisations to make positive changes in their neighbourhood, community or local area, with 40.3% doing this ‘a lot’.
- 69.4% of survey respondents built connections and relationships in the last month with groups and people who act in solidarity with their aims, or share the same aims. 34.7% of respondents did not do this ‘a lot’.

Figure 7 below shows that when we break down CfG by how long they have been a member for, we can see a trend of an increasing sense of agency to influence local decisions the longer someone has been part of CfG.


Figure 7. Sense of power to influence local decisions, by time in CfG





Data from evaluation sessions and diary studies also indicate that CfG participants have a strong sense of collective power. We also heard numerous accounts of CfG members getting involved in their community and taking action to help themselves and other people. Indeed, building the power to make change with their groups or communities was one of the most significant impact areas that CfG participants talked about.

Increasing their power to take action with others was their most important impact for five participants (the third highest number of any impact area), while it was mentioned as important by 14 out of 22 participants (the second highest number).


A key change seems to have been a shift in how people think about themselves and their sense of agency or power to make change. We heard many people explicitly talking about feeling empowered or now believing in their ability to make change with others in their group or community.


 *“My involvement made me feel encouraged, connected and empowered to be an initiator in our city, and informed of the potential to work with others to bring about positive change.”*


 *“We have been empowered to see ourselves as a group that can bring change in the community.”*

 *“Connecting for Good made us feel like a team and that our team could do anything! As we grew we were constantly ‘cheered on’ and encouraged to believe in ourselves. We now have a ‘let’s go for it’ attitude which has seen us take part in some crazy, huge and far reaching projects.”*

We were struck by the shock that many people expressed when they realised they were being listened to and having their views valued. This seemed to have a transformative impact on people. They often talked about a particular moment where something switched for them and they were able to see that their voice actually mattered or that together they did have power and were able to make things change.

 *“Being heard and then [having] those professionals actually say ‘you know, we can do better’ or ‘actually there’s this bit of work which might assist raising your group up’. Hearing that from people like academics, the NHS, the police, it was like ‘wow ok.’”*

 *“Instead of feeling powerless, I feel like I have a voice. I can make change and I feel listened to. I feel like I’m helping others too.”*

 *“Understanding that our voice was really valuable and important and to have the confidence to come forward with that voice and that wouldn’t have happened with Grapevine and CfG. So they helped us to be received by the system to be heard and by that we understood that the community, we do have more power.”*

Finally, people spoke about how Connecting for Good had helped them understand they did have power and how they could take action as a group. Specifically, people mentioned the impact of bringing people together or finding like-minded people through Collaboration Station; the coaching from community organisers they received, which gave them encouragement and help break down action into discrete steps; and getting inspiration and confidence by seeing other groups making change.

“It feels really good to know that I am working on something that will have an impact in the community. And one day Coventry will be a safer place as a result of the work that we have done.” CORE GROUP MEMBER

“There was no visible way to make change. I had a sense of not knowing how to start with an idea for change. People felt alone. They knew there were others out there with a shared passion, but how to find them? ... Now, I feel inspired. The people power is out there. The tools are there to organise and unite.”

“I had not realised that we in the area all felt the same so I thought I would investigate... People wanted to connect in my area and I was not alone and this allowed me to connect. Grapevine did a good job connecting similar organisations and giving the opportunity to connect with other groups.”

“To know what other groups were doing with their group and helping us to lead with our objectives. It bettered ourselves and the group and our objectives. The thought of us just being a group of people getting together and talking about how we want to improve Coventry and what it used to be like, we now think of ourselves as a group that can actually invoke change and can actually do it. So that’s invaluable.”

Summary: Connecting for Good has had a clear and significant increase in people’s power to make change together. There is very strong quantitative evidence, with survey data showing very large differences between CfG members and the national average. All survey results are statistically significant, and thus we are very confident this difference is not due to chance. Furthermore, strong qualitative evidence supports this as well, with making change together frequently being mentioned as one of the most important impacts by CfG participants.

CASE STUDY: TOGETHER WE HAVE THE POWER TO MAKE CHANGE

Sara became more involved with Connecting for Good after Grapevine had helped her and other charities campaign to find a new home for her local parenting support group and community cafe. She quickly joined a Connecting for Good group that was working to create the Cov Cares Awards. Cov Cares was a new citywide awards programme and event dedicated to recognising and celebrating businesses, venues and organisations who go that extra mile to foster social connection and belonging to local people.

“It’s a starting point for bringing about change and the idea of Coventry being a place where people care about each other and look out for each other,” explains Sara.

Supported by a Grapevine community organiser, who helped bring people together and break down the work into manageable steps, Sara’s group met every six to eight weeks to plan for the inaugural awards ceremony and work with the judges to choose the winners. And Sara shared how the support from Grapevine had empowered them to make change themselves.

“It wasn’t doing stuff for us, but it was actually... providing a space to help us to understand what we needed to

do and that we weren’t powerless. And I think we all felt powerless. But actually, we were enabled to know that we did [have power] and I think that’s something really powerful.”

The inaugural Cov Cares Awards event was a first of its kind and a huge success, Sara says. In total, there were over 750 entries and 167 nominations across 10 categories, including ‘More Than Just a Bar or Nightclub’, ‘Community Champion’, and ‘Warm Welcome Award’.

“Since the Cov Cares awards last year, this has renewed our hope for Coventry. A sense that together we can bring change to our city. I feel part of a wider community with similar dreams and hopes for Coventry. And that together we can take steps together to make that change happen on a bigger scale.”

Sara explains why, for her, the Cov Cares Awards were so important.

“Because hope is essential and we all need hope in our lives. What that looks like will be different for each of us and that’s absolutely fine. But actually to have hope is such a massive thing both individually but also as a city and a community and to be a city of hope that can dream.”

2.2. People are more connected to their communities

A second key area of impact is the extent to which CfG participants feel more connected to their community. In particular, we found that CfG members have very strong levels of social support. We asked people two key questions from the Community Life Survey that measures people's access to social support networks for help and for socialising. We found that 98% of CfG survey respondents said they have people there for them if they needed help (figure 8), while 97% said they have people they can call on if they wanted to socialise (figure 9).

We then looked at the social support CfG members said they had and compared this to the average for the West Midlands and England. As seen in figure 10, the CfG community has a slightly higher but comparable proportion of people that say they have people they can go to for help or to socialise compared to the West Midlands (96% and 92% respectively) and England (95% and 93%). Both results are within the margin of error so we are reluctant to state this as a definitely a real difference for risk of overclaiming.

Figure 8. Proportion of CfG members who have people there for them, if they need help

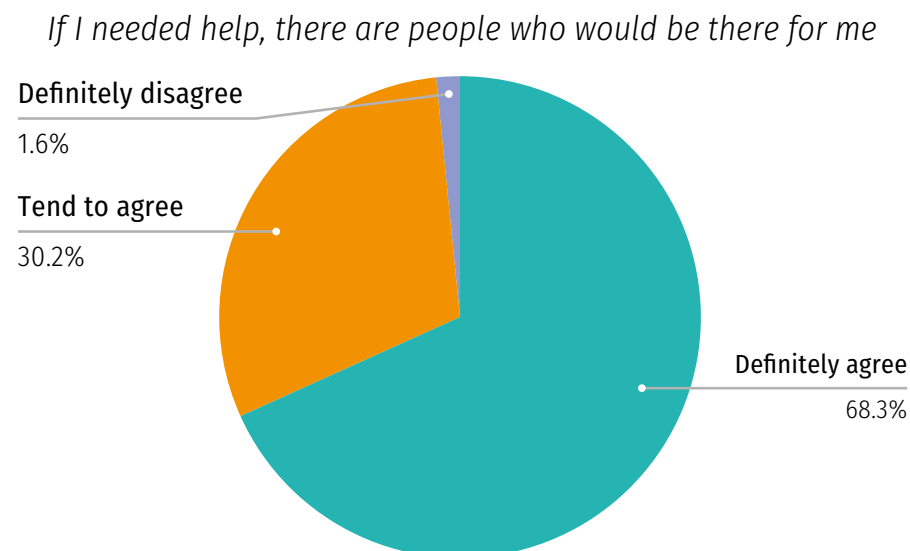


Figure 9. Proportion of CfG members who have people they can call on, if they wanted to socialise

If I wanted company or to socialise, there are people I can call on

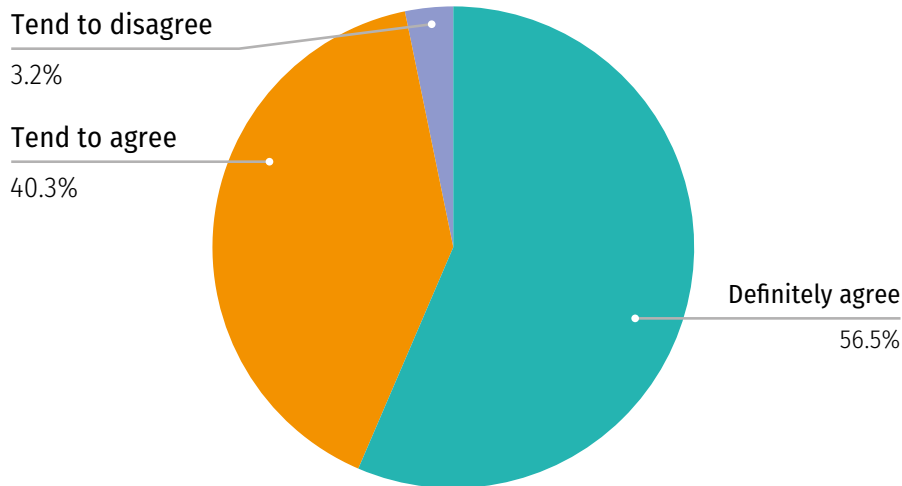
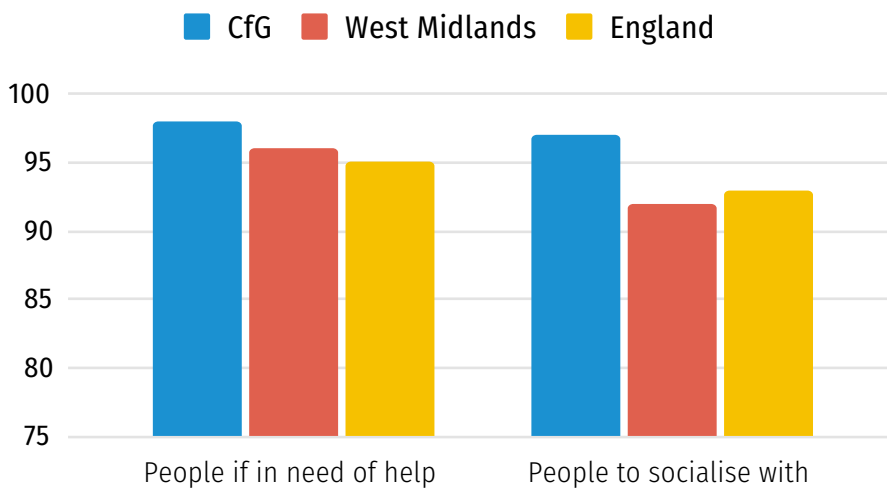


Figure 10. Comparison of CfG members' social support networks with West Midlands and England



Nonetheless, these are certainly encouraging results as they show extremely high proportions of people who feel they have social support around them. We also believe this is noteworthy considering Connecting for Good aims to support isolated and marginalised people, which its demographic profile reflects, and therefore we might expect to see lower scores for social support.

This finding holds when we compare the responses from CfG participants with a disability or long-term health condition or participants who are BAME, with the England average for these groups. Figures 11 and 12 also show slight increases in social support for both groups, compared to the national average, though again these are within the margin of error.



Figure 11. Comparison of CfG members' social support networks (help), by disability and ethnicity

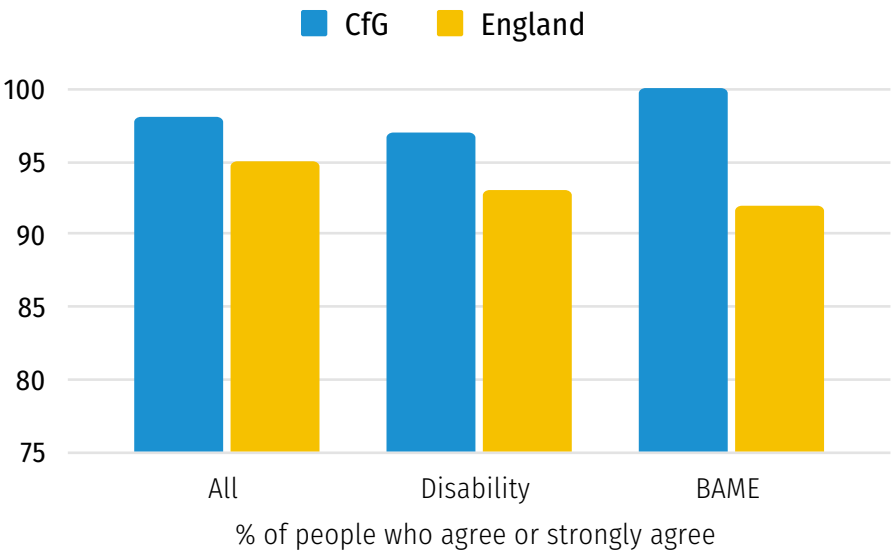
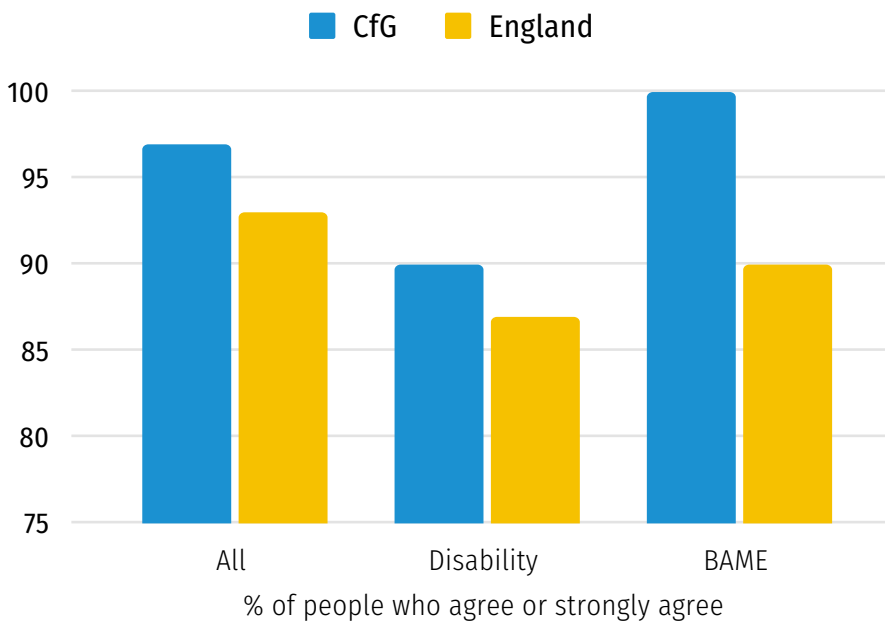


Figure 12. Comparison of CfG members’ social support networks (socialising), by disability and ethnicity



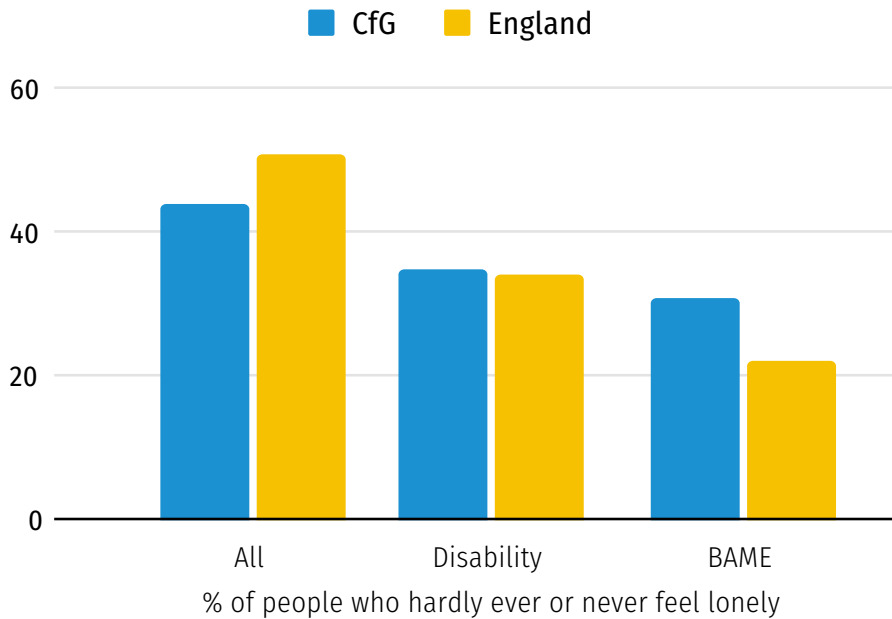
We also surveyed CfG participants about their experiences of loneliness. On average, for both the Community Life Survey’s indirect composite and direct measures of loneliness, CfG members appear slightly more lonely than the West Midlands or national average, while CfG members with a disability or who are BAME appear to be less lonely on average, however these too are within the margins of error (figure 13).

Overall, what we see are social support networks and levels of loneliness that are comparable to the national average. These are arguably higher than we would expect to see for all indicators due to the aims of supporting isolated and marginalised groups,



and suggests that Connecting for Good may have had a positive impact on social support networks. However, from survey results alone, it is difficult to draw too many inferences about any changes attributable, or otherwise, to Connecting for Good.

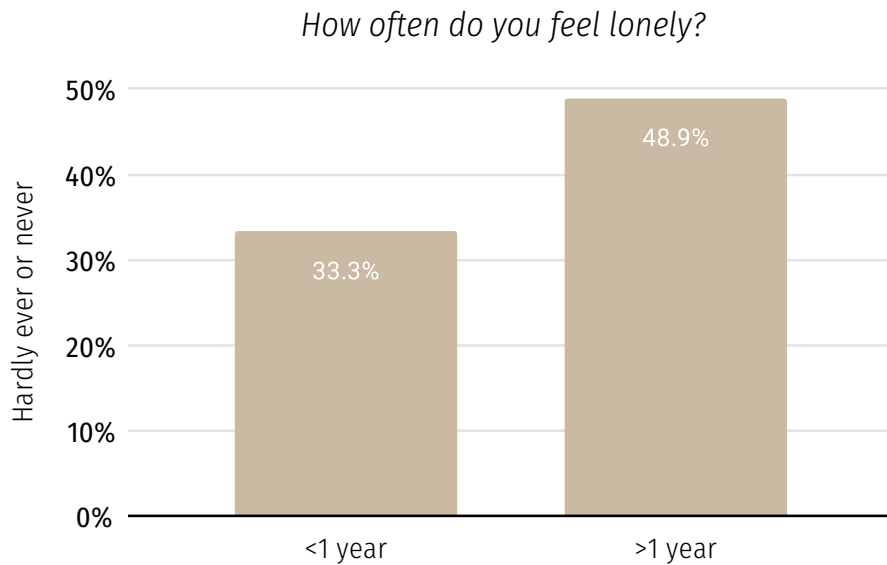
Figure 13. Comparison of CfG members’ levels of loneliness with England average, by disability and ethnicity



However, looking at loneliness based on the length of time someone has been part of CfG provides further evidence that suggests CfG may indeed have a positive impact on how lonely people are. Figure 14 shows that 16% fewer people who joined less than a year ago feel lonely either never or hardly ever, compared with people who joined more than a year ago. This suggests Connecting for Good may reduce people’s loneliness over time and that length of time may be a contributing factor.

There is also strong qualitative evidence from the Most Significant Change method as well as diary study. When we combine the quantitative findings with qualitative findings, we are able to say with greater confidence that Connecting for Good has likely had a significant impact on their social support and how connected people feel to their community.

The most common and significant theme that came through from participants’ responses to the Most Significant method was that CfG members feel more connected to their community and the people within them. Out of 22 people, 16 mentioned having stronger connections to others or feeling closer to their community (the most commonly mentioned impact area), with 6 of those saying that this was the most important impact they had experienced since joining Connecting for Good (the equal highest number).

Figure 14. CfG members' levels of loneliness, by time in CfG

People reported having made more connections with other people and forming stronger networks than before they joined CfG. Many CfG members spoke emotively about how they had made new and lasting friendships.



“It helped me get integrated into the community. Before we started there were less people being involved within their community and were feeling lonely and isolated... We brought communities together, friendships have been made.”



“I joined CFG because I needed a network... that cared about my situation and to not feel so lonely after my mum’s death... The most important change was that I connected with people on a positive level for the first time.”

People also shared that they felt closer to their other people and their community. Support for Connecting for Good was mentioned as a factor, giving people the strength to get out and engage with others or by feeling supported to things they didn’t think they would have been able to do with having the support of others.



“I no longer feel lonely or isolated... Having a community has enabled me to continue to pursue my justice journey and follow it through to trial. Without that I wouldn’t have gone, I know I wouldn’t have gone the whole way. [Thinking about] all the people and this community that I have, that was something that really grounded me.”



“Connecting for Good was the conduit by which I made key connections that helped me to connect tangibly to the community.”





“It’s helped me reach out and understand the community a little better and how we can be a part of it.”

“I feel more connected to Ball Hill. I feel part of a community that is taking action. I feel a greater sense of pride.” - ACTION GROUP MEMBER

 *“CfG has helped me find community in Coventry. It has allowed me to find friendships and create meaningful experiences. I am also better connected to the city. I know more places to go and have a better sense of events that go on. My life is much fuller and happier.”*

Finally, and perhaps unsurprisingly, we saw a strong link between people who developed stronger networks and felt more connected to other people and improvements in their mental health, particularly reduced feelings of loneliness and isolation.

 *“I was going through a difficult mental health period at the time. It helped me get out in the community. Get out and about... [CfG] helped me create [my own] community group. It helped me create new networks.”*

 *“When I first joined Connecting for Good I felt very lost, I felt very disconnected from Coventry and from the community... I felt like I had no friends and I had no purpose. And then I joined Connecting for Good and it completely changed my view of the city. It completely changed my view of what Coventry has to offer and also the people and what I had to offer Coventry. And now I love being here.”*

Summary: members of the Connecting for Good programme have very high levels of social support, despite many having traits that make them more vulnerable to being isolated and marginalised. There is also strong qualitative evidence showing how people build new relationships with others through Connecting for Good. We think that, on the balance of probabilities, Connecting for Good has likely had a positive impact on CfG participants' social connections, particularly those from marginalised groups, ultimately supporting people to be more connected to their community.

CASE STUDY: WE KNOW THERE ARE PEOPLE WHO CARE

As the parents of a trans child, Charlotte and Rob were already passionate about supporting the trans community.

Their personal journey with their child had opened their eyes to the challenges many trans individuals face. In particular, they had seen that many of other trans young people often lacked support in their journey and they wanted to understand how they could better support the community.

Charlotte and Rob joined the Survivor Sanctuary Plus group as a way of extending their support and allyship beyond their own family and connect with the community.

Each month Survivor Sanctuary Plus welcomes members of the trans and queer community, who have been affected by all types of violence. Alongside their peer support group, they have also brought together a core team of people to campaign on trans rights in Coventry, which Charlotte and Rob support.

Charlotte talks about how through the Survivors Sanctuary Plus, they met other trans individuals and supportive parents, which highlighted the importance of allies and supportive family members within the trans community.

“Meeting other trans people through the group has made me aware that ally and supportive parents are really important for the community,” Charlotte shared.

Being part of the Survivor Sanctuary Plus group has had a significant impact on Charlotte and Rob. Firstly, their participation in the group helped them develop a stronger support network and connect with others. For example, Rob shared that by connecting with other parents and members of the trans community, they found people who shared her experiences and challenges, as well as their values and passion.

“As a parent of an LGBT child, it’s been incredibly important to know there are others out there who care about our children and are committed to creating a safe and supportive environment for them,” Rob remarked.

The connections they made gave them a sense of belonging and the assurance that there are others who share her concerns and hopes for the future and how they can get involved in supporting the trans community.

“It’s helped me reach out and understand the community a little better and how we can be a part of it,” Charlotte said.

Listening to others from the community has helped Charlotte and Rob better understand her child's journey and how to be more supportive. Charlotte explains how this has led to meaningful conversations with her child, who is away at university.

“My relationship with my child has deepened even more so because of this. We’ve had some really lovely conversations because I talk to them about the stuff we do and I think they’re really proud and really

pleased we’re trying to be involved in that space and help the community,” Charlotte explained.

Rob agreed, emphasising the importance of being able to connect with others with similar experiences.

“To be able to listen to others from the community really helps, specifically with the LGBT and trans community, having experience of people on similar journeys makes us understand our child even more,” he said.



2.3. Community members have the skills and confidence to lead

Another major impact has been an increase in people's ability to lead. We have seen a clear growth in leadership capacity within the Connecting for Good community, particularly in people's confidence to lead. For example, figure 15 shows that two thirds (67.7%) of CfG members surveyed said their ability to lead had increased since joining CfG, with over a third (37.1%) strongly agreeing it had.

This is supported by data from a survey conducted by Grapevine last year, where an even higher proportion of respondents, 84.6% described themselves as confident in organising people to act on issues or campaigns, with 25% describing themselves as very confident.

Connecting for Good has also been successful at developing leaders from groups that are more likely to experience isolation and marginalisation. Our survey data shows that similar, or slightly higher, proportions of CfG members with a disability (71%), from ethnically minoritised communities (69%), and experiencing poverty (80%) say their ability to lead has increased since taking part in CfG (figure 16).

Figure 15. Improvements in ability to lead: breakdown of survey responses.

Since taking part in a Connecting for Good initiative, my ability to lead has improved, or I've felt an improvement in my belief in my leadership abilities.

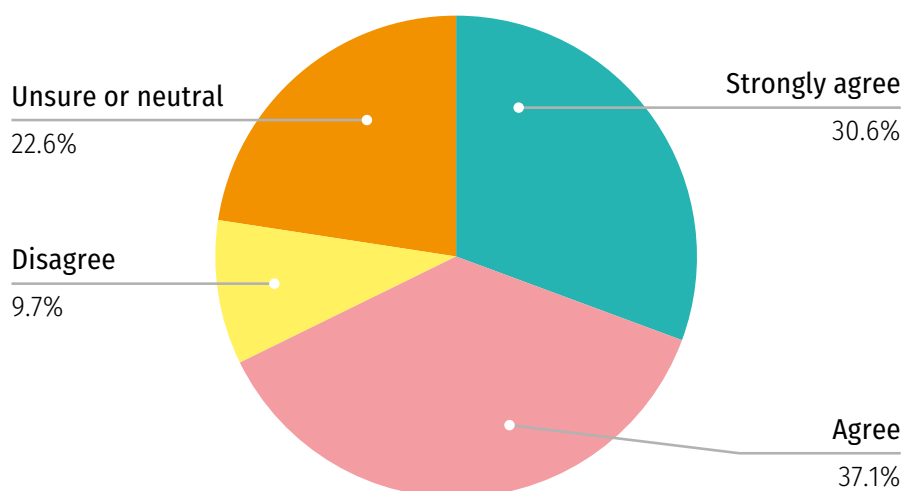
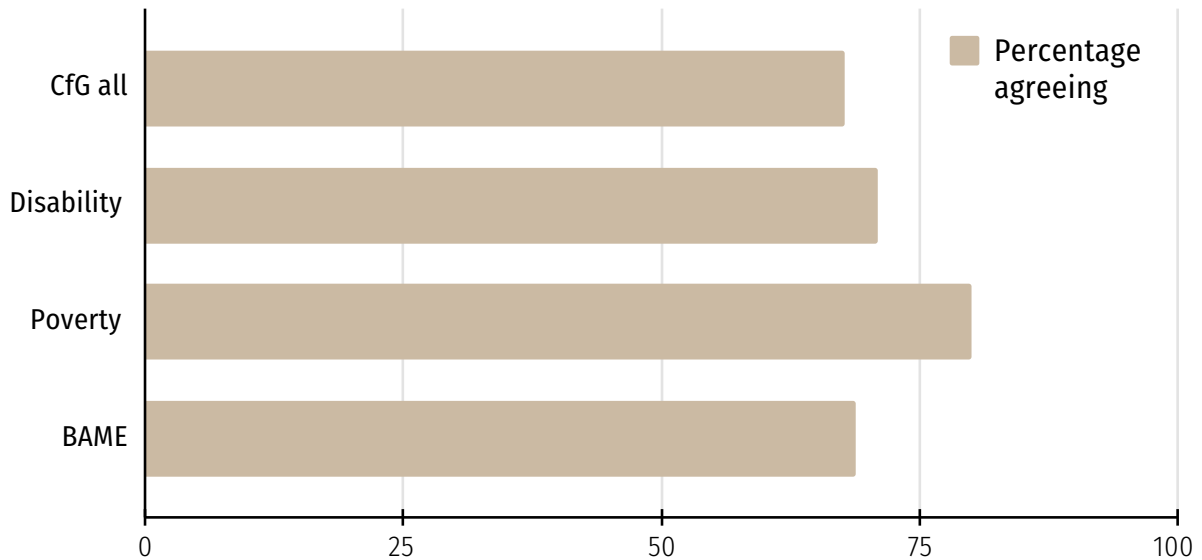


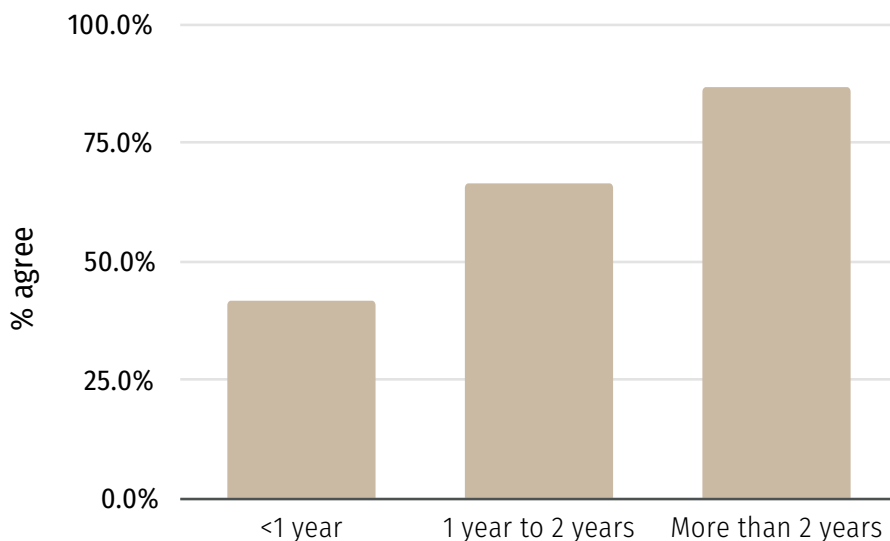
Figure 16. Showing increase in ability to lead, by demographic characteristics

Since taking part in a Connecting for Good initiative, my ability to lead has improved, or I've felt an improvement in my belief in my leadership abilities.




We also observed that the longer someone was a member of CfG, the more likely they were to believe their ability to lead had increased (see figure 17) - with 42% of CfG participants who joined less than a year ago agreeing, while 87% of those who joined more than two years ago agreeing. This was particularly true for people who strongly agreed their leadership ability had improved, with no-one who joined CfG less than a year ago strongly agreeing, 21% of people who had been a member of CfG for between 1 and 2 years, while 59% of those who had been part of CfG for more than 2 years strongly agreed.

Figure 17. Proportion of CfG members who say their ability to lead has improved, by length of time in CfG




Leadership was also one of the strongest themes that came through from the evaluation sessions. It was the most important change for 6 out of the 22 participants who took part in evaluation sessions (the equal highest of any impact area), while it was mentioned as an important change by a total of 13 of out 22.


 *“I became a leader. Getting involved with activities gave me the skills to be able to lead. I didn’t feel I could be a leader before I came to CFG. It gave me confidence to go to other groups and help with them.”*


Similarly, a significant portion of diary study participants referenced improvements in their ability to lead, with many voicing disbelief at their own achievements and leadership with the majority of participants specifically crediting these changes to their work with Connecting for Good.

 *“Never in a month of Sundays did we believe any of us were community leaders!”*

 *“I think my job is all about leading and inspiring others to lead. So I would say, yes, I think I’ve grown a lot as a person in this work...I feel much more capable to lead than I did when I joined Grapevine and I feel very grateful for that.”*

The most common factor that people spoke about was an increase in their confidence, often explicitly linking this to a greater sense of belief in their ability to lead and make change.

 *“I’m much more confident than when I started. I feel very strongly and able to lead and passionate about what I believe in and connected to my core values.”*

 *“My confidence has sky-rocketed through being part of this. I have grown in leadership in unexpected ways. I have found my voice and a hidden dramatic flair. I am coaching people on telling a good story and public speaking, when as a teen I was practically mute!”*

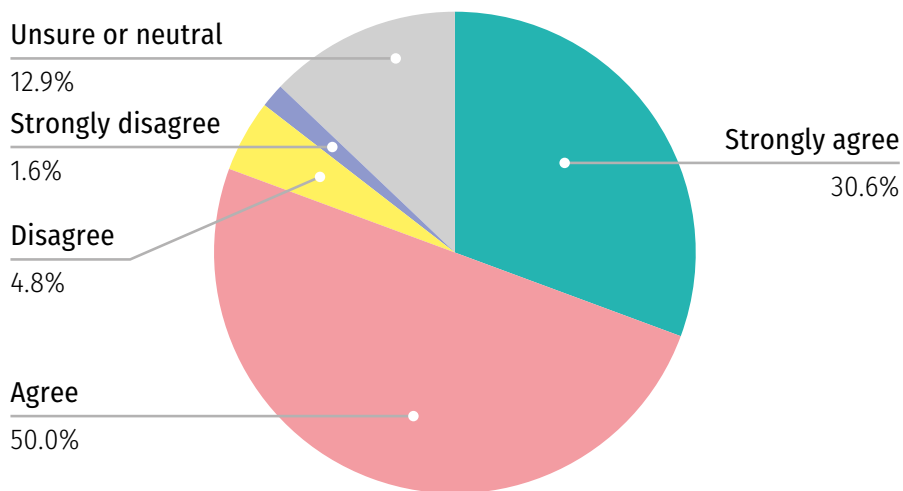
This finding is strongly supported by data from our survey which shows that 81% of CfG members agreed that their confidence had improved since taking part in CfG, with 31% strongly agreeing (see figure 18).

Confidence, particularly in relation to leadership, was also a strong theme in Grapevine’s 2023 survey. In 34 open-text responses, where participants were asked what impact CfG has had on them, an increase in confidence was the top impact area based on frequency. When asked about the primary impacts of Grapevine’s work, 29.4% of responses referenced positive impacts on self-confidence.





Figure 18. Improvements in confidence: breakdown of survey responses.


Since taking part in a Connecting for Good initiative, my confidence has improved.




Another key theme within the context of leadership was personal growth. For example, during evaluation sessions and in diary studies, CfG members also talked about learning how to lead and gaining the skills, tools and ability to be able to make change. Many people spoke about how much they had grown as a person or as a leader, mentioning new skills, abilities they had learned.


 *“I learned a lot about how to lead, as well as how to and how not to make change. Although it’s been slow and frustrating at times, I’ve had real experience of what change really involves.”*


 *“I have just grown massively as a person - skillset, confidence, self belief, knowledge, experience, networks. I’ve met the most amazing people and established a movement... Survivor Sanctuary has grown so much in 18 months and surpassed my expectations. I am a better person because of Connecting For Good, the ecosystem and the team.*

 *“The biggest impact was self-confidence, growth and empowerment and finding other people with a similar passion.”*

 *“It was a vehicle to heal as well as developing more professional skills. To look back a year ago to where I was and my group to where we are now... I don’t think we could have got anywhere without Grapevine.*

Participants often directly attributed these changes to their membership of Connecting for Good or support from Grapevine, citing support including training such as Changemaker University, support and encouragement from Grapevine community organisers, and connections and inspiration gained through Collaboration Stations or contacts from Grapevine.

 *“Changemaker University... was [created] to build up leaders in the community that had strengths to offer, skills to offer, or maybe they had an idea for an initiative... and it was a way of sort of connecting them to each other so they could grow stronger from each other and also giving them skills, language, ideas.”*

 *“The offer of training to help us lead in our objectives, this was very invaluable. CfG has helped us to become better in the group and have aligned objectives.”*

Summary: There is strong evidence that Connecting for Good members have developed the skills and confidence to lead. Over two thirds of CfG members reported increases in their ability to lead. There is particularly strong evidence of an increase in people’s confidence to lead, with 85% of CfG members saying they are more confident leading and 81% being more confident in general. Qualitative data support this conclusion, showing it was one of the most important impacts according to CfG members.

CASE STUDY: I BECAME A LEADER

Sometimes you really do need to fight for your right to party. That was the idea behind New Vibes, an initiative fighting to make the nightlife in Coventry more inclusive, that Jeremy helped to get off the ground.

Jeremy never thought he'd be a leader. But after joining Connecting for Good that's exactly what happened. He was introduced to Connecting for Good by a friend, who had recently joined themselves and thought he might like it. Jeremy had been with Grapevine when he was at college, but hadn't had much contact with them since. He had been feeling a bit left out and a bit before because there weren't many opportunities for people like him to socialise.

"I was really bored... There was a lack of social things to do," he recalled.

While at Connecting for Good, he went to a collaboration station where he met a group of people who wanted to find solutions to tackle the barriers that people who have a disability or chronic illness face when trying to access social life. Together, they started New Vibes, bringing people of different abilities together to tackle isolation and make evenings out more accessible. They've done this by working with venues, like the Nightclub JJ's, to put on inclusive nights, hosting disability friendly events and quizzes, and running DJ groups.

Jeremy, who has a learning disability himself, explains: ***"we set up a DJ group to tackle isolation for people who haven't been able to experience this before... We had regular meet-ups where we organised what we was going to each week to help move the inclusive nightclubs forward."***

Over time, as Jeremy was supported by Grapevine to learn new skills like DJing or leading Zoom sessions, his confidence began to grow. He started getting involved in community activities and even did the Changemaker University course.

"The most important change for me was learning to be more independent and to use new tools. I became a leader. Getting involved with activities gave me the skills to be able to lead. I don't feel I could be a leader before I came to Connecting for Good. It gave me confidence to go to other groups and help with them."

Since the pandemic, New Vibes only hosts online events. But Jeremy now sees himself as a community leader and gets involved with lots of different groups, like a local Creative Kindness group or supporting community engagement in Willenhall.

"It's given me more confidence to try different things. I now busk and go to karaoke. I post videos on TikTok."

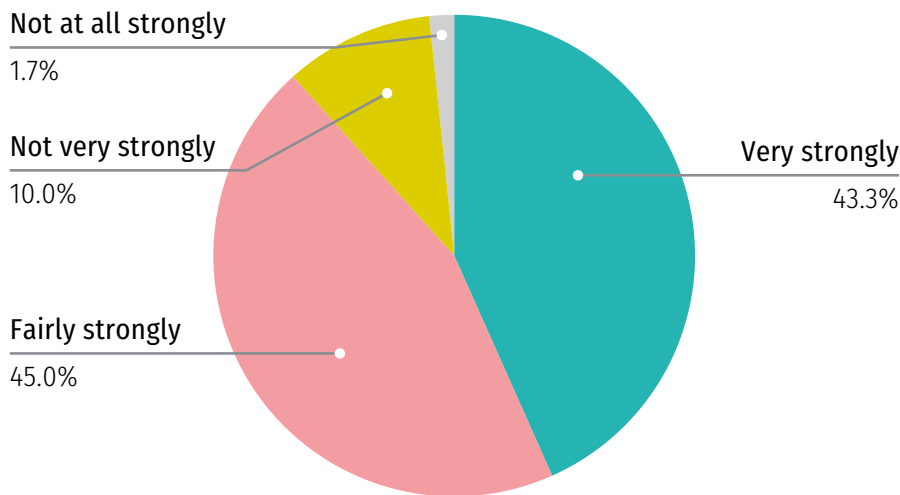
2.4. People have a greater sense of belonging

Members of the Connecting for Good community have a high sense of belonging (see figure 19). Our survey shows that 88% of CfG members said they felt like they belonged to their local community, with 42% saying they strongly felt they belonged.

In fact, they appear to have much higher levels of belonging than others in the West Midlands or England, with just 64% and 65%, respectively, feeling like they belong (see figure 20). These were outside the margin of error, meaning we are confident this is a real difference.

Figure 19. Increase sense of belonging: breakdown of survey responses

How strongly do you feel you belong to your local community?

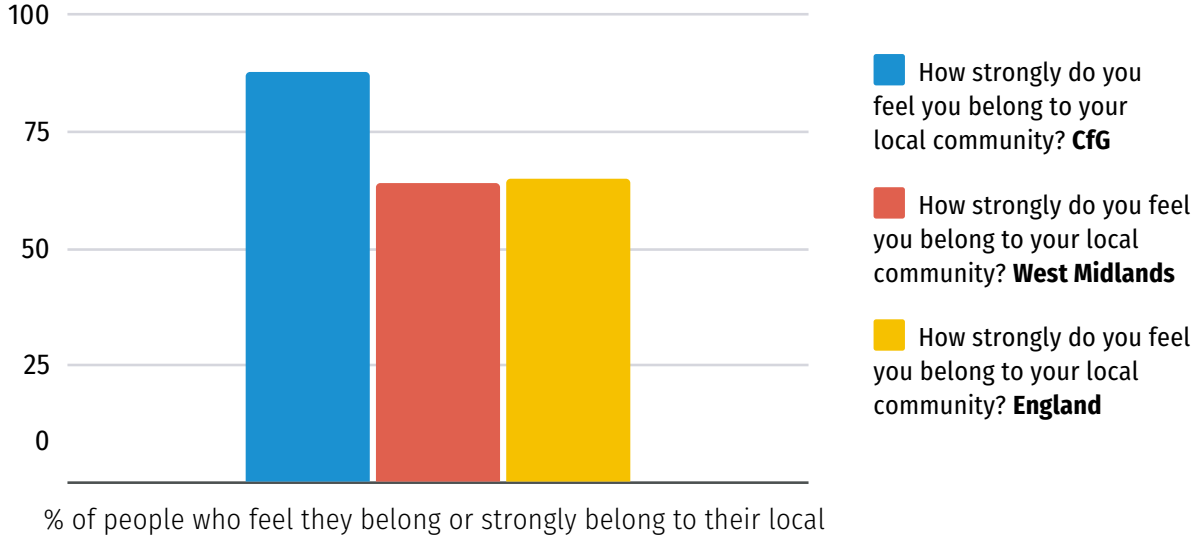


“I was a stranger to the city trying to find connection. Now...I can point out stories, connections, actions on every corner.”

- CORE GROUP MEMBER

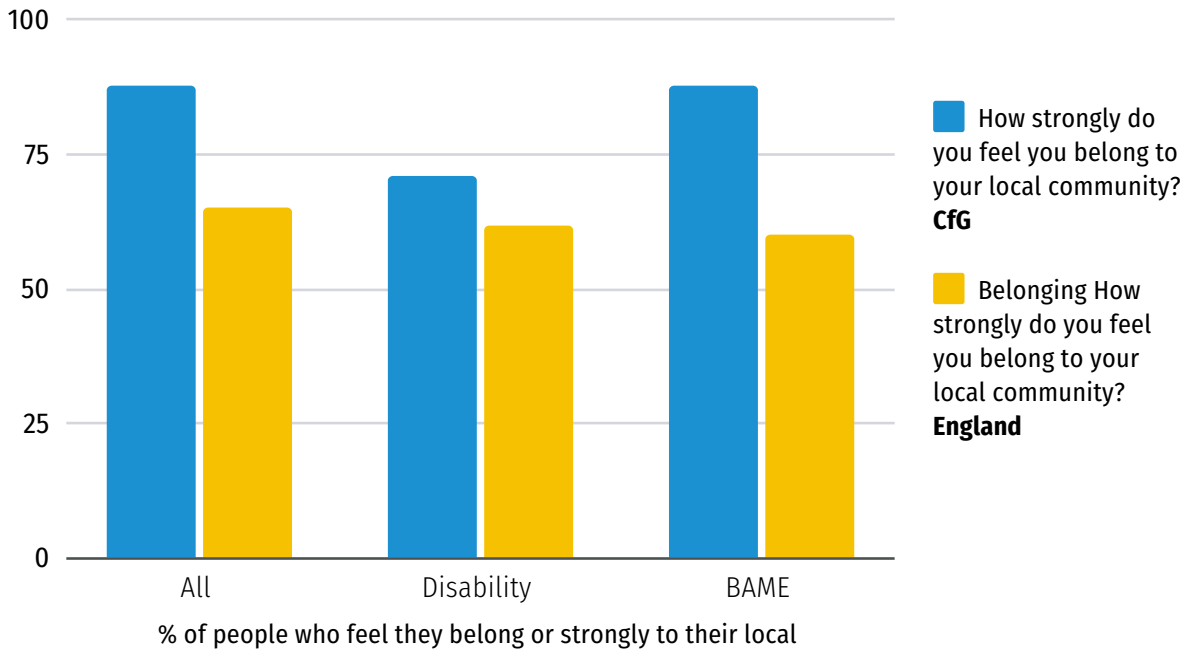


Figure 20. Comparison of sense of belonging among CfG members with West Midlands and England average.



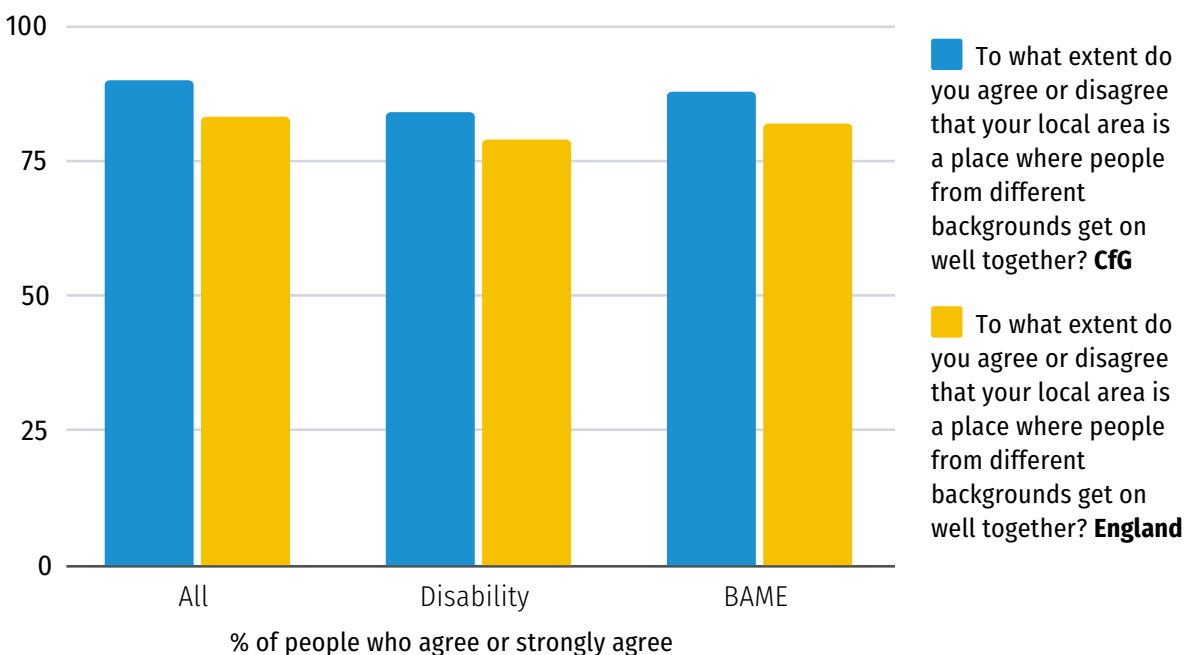
This difference between the national average is also seen, though less pronounced, when comparing groups who are more likely to experience isolation or marginalisation, though is within the margins of error. For example, figure 21 shows that 71% of CfG participants who have a disability or long-term health condition said they felt they belonged, compared to 62% nationally, while 88% of CfG participants with a BAME background say they feel like they belong, compared to only 60% of BAME citizens nationally.

Figure 21. Comparison of sense of belonging among CfG members with England, by disability and ethnicity.



We also see very high positive responses to the community cohesion indicators used in the Community Life Survey (figure 22). The sense of community cohesion also appears to be slightly higher among CfG participants than the national average, though these differences are significantly smaller and are within the margins of error.

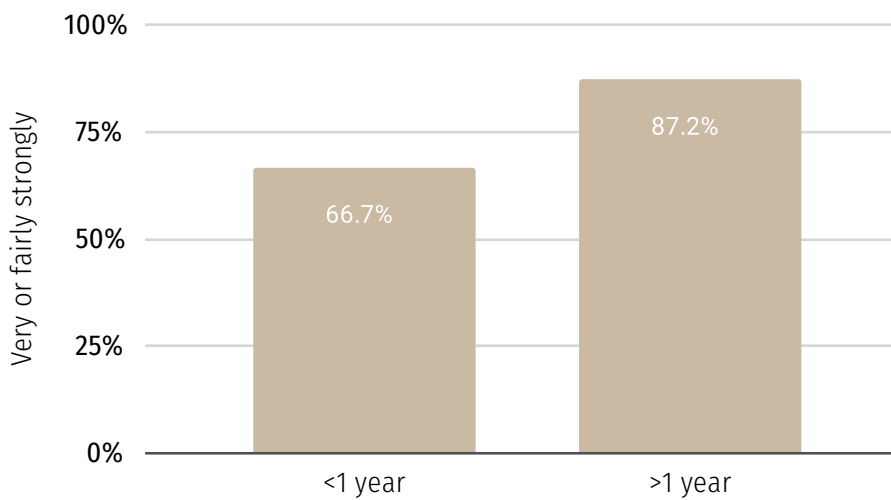
Figure 22. comparison of community cohesion among CfG members with England, by disability and ethnicity



For example, 90% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that their local community is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together. This is 7% higher than both the West Midlands and national average. This drops slightly, but still remains high, for CfG members with a disability at 84%, compared with 79% for the England average. Similarly, 88% of BAME CfG members felt people from different backgrounds get on well together in their community, compared to 82% of BAME residents in England.

We also see that this impact appears to deepen over time. As shown in figure 23, people who have been a member of CfG for more than a year are more likely to feel like they belong to their local community (87%) than people who joined less than a year ago (67%).

Figure 23. Increased sense of belonging, by length of time in CfG





Qualitative evidence supports these findings, with many CfG members talking about how becoming part of a CfG group or initiatives, or the wider CfG community, had given them a greater sense of belonging. It was a common theme that came up during every evaluation session.

When people spoke about how their sense of belonging had increased, we noticed that they often talked about two key things. The first factor people mentioned was being part of a wider community or something bigger than themselves. CfG members spoke about how meeting and building relationships with like-minded people, or people who had shared values, beliefs or experiences, had made them feel part of a community. They spoke about feeling ‘supported’, ‘understood’ or ‘accepted’.




“As a parent of an LGBT child, it’s really important to know there are people out there who are supportive strangers effectively, who are supportive of our child and other children in those positions. To be able to listen to others from the community really helps. So specifically with the LGBT and trans community... having the experience of people on similar journeys makes us understand our child even more.”


 *“As a neurodiverse person who has never really felt like they’ve belonged... the biggest takeaway is that it has made me feel like I belong in Coventry and that I belong to a wider community than just myself.”*

 *“I was a stranger to the city, trying to find connection but not succeeding. Now I am connected to many people all over the city on a meaningful level. I feel it when I walk around, I bump into people, I know stories and history of places, I know the shop owners in the area I work in. I can point out stories, connections, actions on every other corner. This has improved my sense of belonging (as a foreigner) and my mental health as I feel happier.”*

The second key factor we heard when people talking about having a stronger sense of belonging was a sense of purpose or shared endeavour. People would often talk about being part of something bigger or a sense that they were working with others to achieve something.

 *“I feel part of a wider community with similar dreams and hopes for Coventry and that we can take steps to make that change happen.”*

 *“It helped me get integrated into the community. I was feeling like I didn’t have a purpose and it has empowered me.”*

 *“Checking back in with people I’ve connected to these initiatives, it was like seeing a light bulb had been turned on inside the person. They had friends, strength, purpose. Networks have been empowering. In the initiatives I have connected others to I have seen the strength built by belonging to the initiatives...”*

While belonging was mentioned during each evaluation session, it wasn’t among the very top impacts that participants mentioned. In total, 7 out of 22 participants mentioned belonging as an important impact. And just one participant who said that this was the most important impact for them.

Summary: taking these findings together with the strong quantitative survey data gives us a good level of confidence that Connecting for Good has a positive impact on people’s sense of belonging. However, we suggest it is potentially seen as less significant than some other key outcomes, such as leadership development, community connection, or making change together.

CASE STUDY: IT MADE ME FEEL LIKE I BELONG IN COVENTRY

Ben is a young man who describes himself as “a neurodiverse person who has never felt belonging”. One day a couple of years ago, his local GP referred him to a social prescriber, who told him about Connecting for Good. He initially joined an autism support group, which he helped to facilitate.

One evening, Ben went along to one of Connecting for Good’s collaboration station events. There, he met people from a community-led initiative called Survivor Sanctuary, a peer support group for survivors of sexual abuse by survivors and he after hearing about what they were doing, he decided to join.

Through his participation in Connecting for Good, he started to feel like he was making a difference in the community. Slowly, through connecting with people in his community and seeing the lives and perspectives of others, his cynicism started to fade and he began to come out of his shell.

“When I first joined, I saw Coventry more as just a place where I lived. The connections that I’ve made through Connecting for Good and going to

Collaboration Station have worn away that cynicism and I think Grapevine’s allowed me to feel that my voice and input matters,” Ben remembers.

He describes Connecting for Good as a “conduit” through which he developed key connections and friendships that made him feel connected to the community in a tangible way and that his voice really mattered.

“When I think about changes from before, I would say that I would have made some of my most unique and deep and special friendships through Connecting for Good.”

Ben really values the connections and friendships he’s made and the feeling that he is making a difference with people. But most of all, the biggest change for Ben is that he now finally feels like he belongs.

“The most important change for me I would say, as a neurodiverse person who has never really felt like they’ve belonged... the biggest takeaway is that it has made me feel like I belong in Coventry and that I belong to a wider community than just myself.”

2.5. Community-led initiatives are tackling isolation and marginalisation

Connecting for Good has grown 18 community-led initiatives. Some of these have, in turn, grown new groups, such as Creative Kindness, which now support 12 groups across the city, or Survivor Sanctuary, which has developed a sister initiative, Survivor Sanctuary Plus, focused on creating a safe space for the trans and queer community in Coventry. Each initiative varied in their aims, how they worked, and who they worked with. However, the vast majority of initiatives were created to tackle isolation or marginalisation, and are doing so in some form and to differing degrees. Figure 24 provides a list of these, showing whether they are more focused on shifting power within Coventry or on taking social action.

Figure 24. List of community-led Connecting for Good initiatives

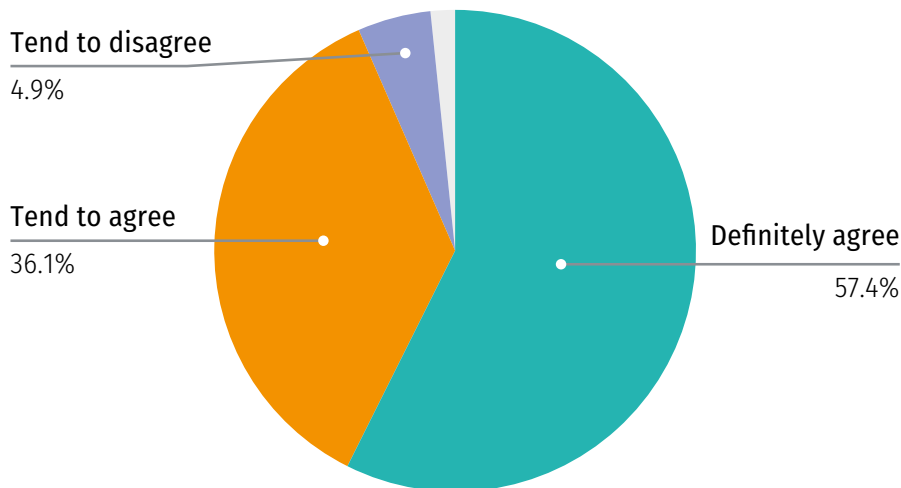
Shifting power	Social action and connection
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Need the Loo ● Ball Hill ● Survivor Sanctuary ● Survivor Sanctuary Plus / Trans Campaign ● Coventry Urban Eden ● Roots in Nature ● Forward Fathers ● Cov Cares 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Creative Kindness ● Metal Heads of Coventry ● Resting Spaces ● New Vibes ● Action Rayz ● The Curious Creatives Club ● Geek Rooms ● Hearsall Litterbusters ● Outspoke ● Mindful Walking Group

To what extent they could be seen as tackling the root causes of isolation and marginalisation is a more subjective question to answer, which is highly dependent on how one conceptualises the root causes and on the way initiatives think about how they are making change. It is clear that nearly all CfG members believe they are tackling the root causes. For example, when asked to what extent their initiatives were tackling the root causes of isolation and marginalisation, an overwhelmingly proportion of CfG members - 94% - agreed they were, with 56% definitely agreeing (figure 25).



Figure 25. Tackling roots causes of isolation and marginalisation: breakdown of survey responses

To what extent do you agree that your group or initiative is tackling the root causes of isolation or marginalisation?



Tackling isolation and marginalisation was also mentioned in each of the three evaluation sessions. While not a major theme, tackling loneliness and isolation in particular was an important impact 6 out of the 22 participants, with 2 people saying it was the most important impact for them.

“We used to have regular meet-ups where we organised what we was going to do each week to help move the inclusive nightclubs forward. We set up a DJ group to tackle isolation for people who haven’t been able to experience this before.”

“Before we started, there were less people being involved within their community and they were feeling lonely and isolated. By creating craft groups in various communities around Coventry... we brought communities together, friendships have been made.”

“The change I’ve seen in people [and] myself with loneliness and isolation. We all have fantastic stories to tell and we deserve the capacity with others to tell them.”

The approach that many initiatives appeared to take to achieve this was by bringing people together and facilitating connections or creating inclusive and safe spaces.

“Creative Kindness now has 12 groups operating in Coventry. Creative Kindness has brought people together to help with their anxiety, depression and feelings of loneliness and isolation.”

“The reason Survivor Sanctuary was created was to provide a safe space for people who have been marginalised... The community it has created also helps tackle isolation by creating a forum and safe space for people to meet.”

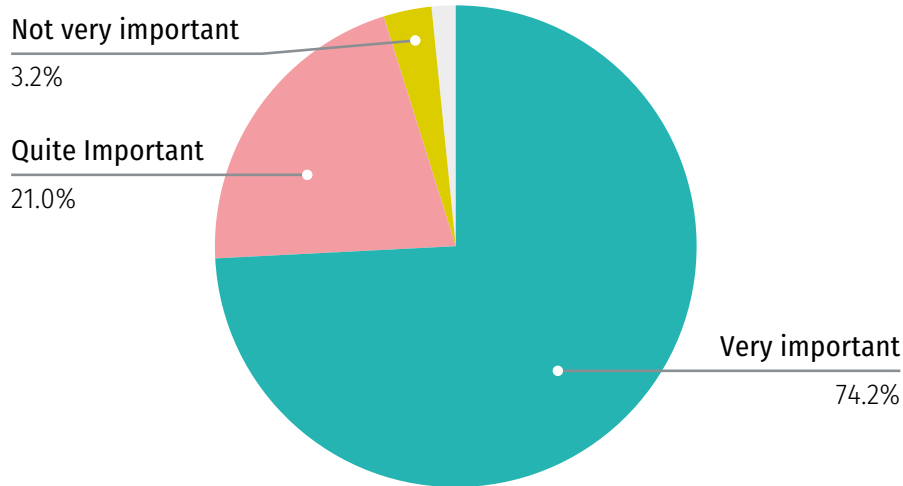
“[Resting Spaces] created the first Restful City in the UK. Before Connecting for Good, I was afraid to come to Coventry City centre because of my asperger’s. Connecting for Good has made it possible to achieve my goals and dreams, not just for me but for other people suffering similar conditions.”

Indeed, as figure 26 shows more than 9 in 10 (95%) CfG thought that relationship building had been important in making change in their local area, with 3 in 4 saying it was very important (74%).

“I’m glad that I have a team to work with to keep each other motivated and remind ourselves of how far we’ve come and where we’re going. - CORE GROUP MEMBER

Figure 26. Building relationships to make change: breakdown of survey responses

How important has relationship building been in your ability to make change in your local area?



Many initiatives were also explicitly trying to shift power and bring people and perspectives that have been marginalised or ignored into the system, helping marginalised voices to be heard and influence decisions affecting them.



“The biggest change I think for me was initially looking at this system where the only answer was ‘you are the enemy’, you know. But getting to the point, with the right information and mentoring from Grapevine, to actually meet these people face to face and rationally give your voice and be heard and then to have those professionals actually say ‘do you know, we can do better’ or ‘actually there’s this bit of work which might assist raising your group up’. Hearing that from people like academics, the NHS, the police, it was like wow ok.”



“I’ve always thought of [the council] as a machine with pressure points that once you hit those pressure points it will be triggered. When I was door knocking around Ball Hill... ‘the council doesn’t care’ was often the response. But if you reframe it as a question of ‘how can I make the machine respond to what I’m saying’ as a group if we combine our voices, we then become the biggest issue the machine has to deal with and then action can come about from that.”

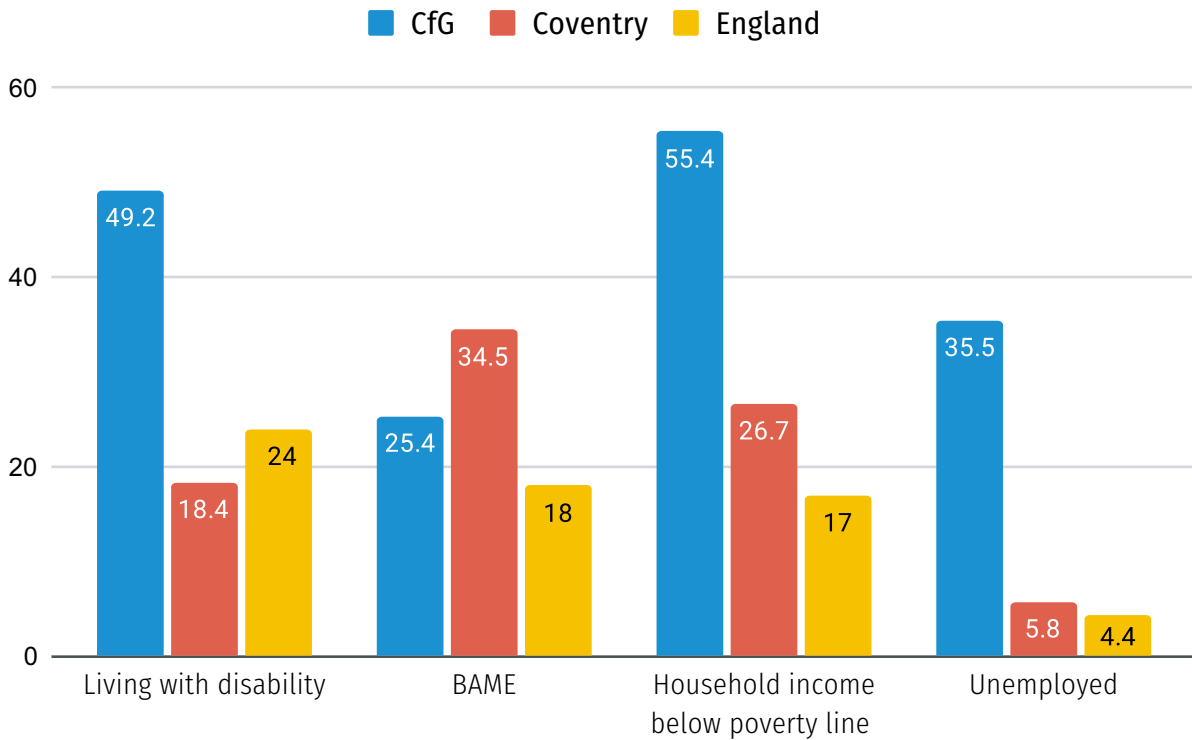


“Having an organisation that works for and is run by allies and those who identify with the LGBTQ+ community makes it really useful to kind of demonstrate that this kind of segregated approach is not always the best approach that is taken.”

Finally, another way to explore this question is to look at the demographic makeup of the Connecting for Good community to get a sense of to what extent are groups who are more

likely to experience isolation or marginalisation part of the community. As figure 27 shows, Connecting for Good has higher proportions of groups that are more likely to be isolated or marginalised than Coventry or England.

Figure 27. Demographic profile of the Connecting for Good community



These include people with a disability or long-term condition, people from ethnically minoritised backgrounds, people living in poverty, and people who are unemployed. This gives further evidence that suggests there are community-led groups tackling isolation and marginalised people, and that these groups involve and are being led by people with direct lived experiences of these issues.

Summary: there is clear evidence that Connecting for Good has supported at least 18 community-led initiatives, the vast majority of which are working towards tackling isolation and marginalisation, and include and are being led by people with lived experience. The vast majority of CfG members also agree that their initiatives are tackling their root causes.

CASE STUDY: WE BROUGHT COMMUNITIES TOGETHER

Carol and Barbara met on a walk around Memorial Park a few years ago. They started talking about loneliness and Carol shared how she was often lonely. Barbara had taken part in Changemaker University, which is when she first heard about Connecting for Good and started attending Collaboration Station. The two of them decided they would go along to the next Collaboration Station and talk about what could be done to tackle loneliness in Coventry.

The discussion attracted many people who cared about loneliness and out of this meeting grew Creative Kindness, a group of people from across Coventry that meets up and makes arts and crafts to promote connection and kindness.

“Creative Kindness has given me a purpose and helped me make new friends. It is helping people overcome their fears, anxieties and has provided a safe and welcoming space,” Barbara says.

A key principle for Creative Kindness is facilitating friendships across all backgrounds. At the same time, they support people to develop and become leaders of new Creative Kindness groups across the cities.

“Before we started there were less people being involved within their community and people were feeling lonely and isolated. We brought

communities together, friendships have been made. It empowered people as it helped leaders’ confidence and in turn we have been able to help other people become leaders and start groups in their own area.”

Carol says that, personally, it’s helped her grow, had a positive impact on her mental health and enhanced her belief in herself. But, she adds, it’s the impact it’s had on others which has been the most important.

“The biggest impact has been the change I’ve seen in people, myself, loneliness and isolation. We all have fantastic stories to tell and we deserve the capacity with others to tell them. It motivated people to find themselves and give people the belief in themselves to lead,” she says.

Creative Kindness has grown from strength to strength. They started off in one library and Carol still remembers when they got given free space in their first library. “This was a huge milestone”, Carol recalls. Now, they’ve got a dozen groups being led by community members all across Coventry.

“Creative Kindness now has 12 groups operating in Coventry. Creative Kindness has brought people together to help with their anxiety, depression and feelings of loneliness and isolation. Our leaders are now friends with each other.”

2.6. There is greater collaboration across the system

A final key intended outcome of Connecting for Good that we evaluated was more collaboration across Coventry between organisations and with people from communities in ways that shift the deeper causes of isolation.

The first indicator we explored was to what extent were the new collaborations that involve people with positional power, such as council officials, councillors, local NHS leads, or the police. Connecting with and collaborating with people in positions of power was an important impact area mentioned in each of the three evaluation sessions, with 4 out of the 22 participants mentioning this and 2 people saying it was the most important impact for them.

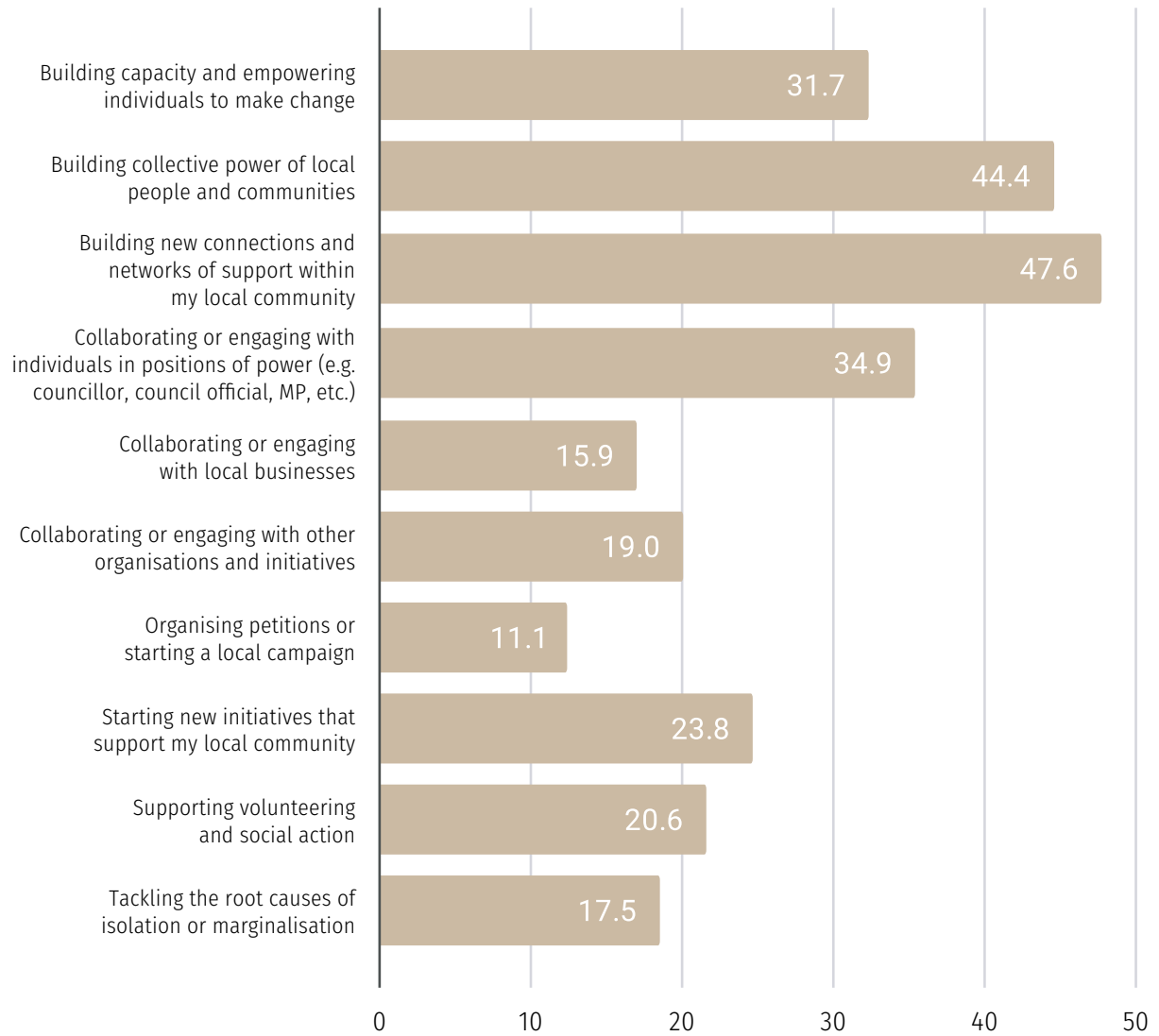
Looking at the 18 CfG initiatives, around 11 or 12 have actively sought partners and collaborations with other organisations in Coventry, whether that was with the council or local businesses. For example, the Cov Cares Awards brought together local business leaders with community organisations to recognise and promote businesses who went the extra mile to foster social connection. Creative Kindness collaborates with libraries across Coventry to run regular groups in their spaces. New Vibes partners with nightclubs to put on inclusive nights out, while Resting Spaces has partnered with businesses and community organisations to create free, quiet spaces in the city centre where people who need a resting space can go.

We also saw examples of CfG initiatives working more directly with or actively engaging people in positional power. These included Coventry Urban Eden, Destination Ball Hill, Forward Fathers, Need the Loo, Roots in Nature, and Survivor Sanctuary and Survivor Sanctuary Plus.

Interestingly, collaborating or engaging with people in positions of power was the third most common way that CfG initiatives tried to make change, with 34% of survey respondents ranking this in their top three, which roughly corresponds to the proportion of initiatives working with people with positional power. Collaborating with other organisations and initiatives was the sixth most common, with 22%, while collaborating with local businesses was the 9th most common with 15% (figure 28).



Figure 28. Top ways CfG initiatives tried to make change



We heard examples of people in positions of power within the system changing their behaviours and views, listening to engage with CfG initiatives where previously they were ignored, and even now seeing them as partners, proactively going to them for input and even asking for advice.



“Currently, we’ve got councillors now saying ‘if you see any issues, cc me in on the emails’ and again this is the pressure points you can press to make things work.”



“The council has come to us to ask for our input and our help to do this for them. And the one that really surprised me and made me proud, to ask ‘could we give them advice?’”



However, there were mixed experiences among CfG initiatives about how successful they had been at getting people with positional power to engage with them. In fact, we heard many examples of where the people with positional power have been the main barrier or blockers to their work and or where initiatives just couldn't get the council to engage with them.

“Coventry City Council are the gatekeepers, I've been trying to do this for three years and some departments seem to be quite supportive of it of late and the gatekeeper that's been difficult, which is one person, one department, is just being very very difficult.”

“The centre, started off supportive but won't signpost. So they see themselves as the professionals and they like to fence us in and label [us]...”

We also heard how engagement with the council for example was very dependent on getting to the right person or progress being made when a person who had previously been a blocker had moved on.

“I think it was having the new employee in the council that really did make a difference. Somebody who's, like, passionate about green spaces in the environment and, like, totally on our side. So that really did make a big difference.”

“The council says ‘we want community groups of people to come and help, but we're not going to let them do it for us'. But now they are letting us do it. And they're opening up more to the idea of it and seeing that it can work.”

This relates to the second area we explored for this outcome, which was to what extent do CfG members understand systems thinking and how power moves are able to act on that knowledge. We found there to be a mixed understanding of systems thinking and their understanding of, and interest in, how power operates amongst the CfG community.

Many people spoke about how their initiatives sought to make change in a way that indicated a highly developed understanding of how power operates locally. In fact, we often were struck by how CfG members talked about power and how they sought to understand the local system and how they could engage with it. The following explanation from a leader from Destination Ball Hill captures this understanding particularly well and shows how they are using their knowledge of the system to make it work for them.



“One of the things we’ve been doing is funnelling complaints. So rather than one person saying ‘I’ve spotted there’s an issue with a drain’, I’m taking responsibility for not or reporting on certain things and I can track them. And because [the council] is a machine that exists in a legal framework, they have responsibilities that are legal and a lot harder to get out of. So, for example, they have a response rate that should be hit, so if you put in a request it should be dealt with in a certain time... As a group, we have one person whose responsibility is to do that, so it can be tracked and traced and then also followed up upon. And then you can see the machine start to work for you. So currently, we’ve got councillors now saying ‘if you see any issues, cc me in on the emails’ and again this is the pressure points you can press to make things work. So part of it is understanding how the system works, not necessarily changing it.”

We think this shows a well developed understanding of how power works and thinking about how they make change within a system among much of the CfG community. Equally, many initiatives seemed less interested in power, and more concerned with creating spaces where people could connect with each other or feel included.



“My proudest moment was when we sat down with the council and there was a noticeable shift in power towards us.” - COMMUNITY LEADER

Interestingly, although most people we spoke to in focus groups would often explicitly mention the ‘system’ they did not necessarily think of what they did as making systemic change. Rather they would often frame what they did as working with the system to make it better.

- *“When we got together, we didn’t think about changing the system. We were more thinking about working with this system and making it easier.”*
- *“Rather than changing the system, a lot of what we’ve been doing is signposting to people how the system works.”*
- *“That’s quite a powerful thing... you know, understanding the system. Who’s responsible for what, who holds the decision maker the power rather than aligning yourself that you’re ready to work alongside them? It’s change from the inside.”*

Summary: Connecting for Good has led to many tangible examples of greater collaboration across Coventry, whether that’s with the council, community organisations or local businesses. Many community-led initiatives, particularly those who are aiming to shift power, have demonstrated a good understanding of power and how to influence the system. There may be opportunities for Connecting for Good to drive more systemic change by creating structures that better connect the community to people with positional power or by bringing the CfG ecosystem together to marshal its collective power to make change on a bigger scale.

CASE STUDY: THE COUNCIL IS ASKING US FOR ADVICE!

Mary is passionate about nature and green issues. She is a member of the core team of Coventry Urban Eden, a collective of local people committed to promoting green spaces in Coventry.

Mary found out about Connecting for Good when Coventry was the UK City of Culture. Mary had been one of Coventry's City Host volunteers and Grapevine had invited all of the volunteers to a session about Connecting for Good. Shortly after this, she joined Coventry Urban Eden.

At the start, it was challenging as the group felt a bit disjointed and it soon became clear that their biggest challenge, and their biggest barrier to change, was the city council. Grapevine helped bring the group together as a core group and supported them to work together more cohesively and strategically.


"It was about being brought close together as a core group because we came together as a group of strangers. We all had the same aims and goals but then we felt a bit disjointed and we lost our way a bit."

In particular, Grapevine helped by putting the team in touch with other groups and the team started to reach out and work more collaboratively with other organisations, including the council.

"Being able to work in collaboration with the council was a huge leap. Connecting for Good helped with providing us with contacts they had, putting us in contact with other groups, using resources they have to help us with training."

Now, instead of blocking the action that Coventry Urban Eden wanted to bring about, the council is working with them and they have started to achieve their goals as a group. In fact, the council now views them as a valuable partner, going to Coventry Urban Eden for their input, advice and help on various issues.

"All of that's important because it's enabled us to start to achieve our objectives as a group, after 12 months of really hard work, and now it's led to the council approaching us!"



**3. Discussion: what
can we say about
Connecting for
Good main goals?**

3.1. To what extent is Coventry a more inclusive place for isolated and marginalised groups?

The first of Connecting for Good's ultimate aims is to make Coventry a more inclusive place for isolated and marginalised groups. This is, of course, a big goal with many actors having some responsibility for its attainment. However, we believe the evidence detailed in this report demonstrates that Connecting for Good has made important progress towards this goal in a number of key areas.

Firstly, and most immediately, Connecting for Good has created a welcoming, inclusive and accessible community and space for isolated and marginalised people. People within the CfG community feel higher levels of belonging and have strong social support networks, despite being more marginalised.



Secondly, the community is not only inclusive of isolated and marginalised groups, but they are empowered to lead change themselves. This is not only important as it builds the community's leadership capacity to make change, but provides the foundations for further and deeper work to shift power more and to bring about more systematic change.

Lastly, we've documented numerous examples of different initiatives tackling isolation and marginalisation, each making a material change to the fabric of Coventry that make it a more inclusive place. Some of these include:

- Establishing a dozen Creative Kindness groups in libraries across Coventry where people can connect and make friendship;
- Creating more resting spaces to make the city centre more accessible;
- Working with venues to put on disability-friendly events and night outs that everyone can enjoy;
- Working with the council and business to increase the amount of publicly accessible toilets;
- Campaigning on the rights for trans people in Coventry;
- Demonstrating new models of community land stewardship;
- Building leadership in Ball Hill that is shifting power to the local community.

These examples, and others, show that Connecting for Good initiatives are already, on their own, creating small, but significant changes and collectively are contributing to making Coventry a more inclusive city. However, there is obviously still a long way to go before Coventry is fully inclusive. And of course, it is not solely the responsibility of Connecting for Good or or completely within its power to change. While it is still early days for Connecting for Good, relatively speaking, systemic or structural change is perhaps one of the final pieces of the puzzle still missing from the picture. CfG initiatives are clearly making important changes individually, but there may be opportunities for stronger connections between initiatives and opportunities to join forces to tackle the more structural causes of isolation and marginalisation.

“Our community organising is giving voice to an unheard and diverse range of people here in Coventry.” - CORE GROUP MEMBER

3.2. To what extent has power been shifted in Coventry to give people greater collective influence?

Shifting power so that people have greater collective influence in Coventry is the second of Connecting for Good's ultimate aims. There are a number of factors that we believe indicate that power has started to shift in Coventry.

Firstly, there is good evidence that there is more collective power as a result of Connecting for Good. There are 18 community-led initiatives led by community leaders. Some are more focused on shifting power than others, but this shows there has been a definite increase in the collective capacity and ability to make change. Four in five people say they have the power to influence decisions affecting their local area, three times higher than other people in the West Midlands, clearly showing that people within CfG believe they have greater collective power.

We've seen good evidence of an increase in leadership capacity within the CfG community, with over two thirds of CfG members stating their ability to lead has improved since joining and rich supporting qualitative data illustrating how Connecting for Good has helped build people's confidence and skills to lead.

And we've seen people with positional power - councillors, council officials, NHS commissioners, the police - engage meaningfully with communities around particular concerns or projects, sometimes for the first time.

But the journey towards shifting power is a big one and there's a lot of road ahead.

There is more to do to grow the scale of the community and the depth of the leadership capacity. In particular, by developing and spreading the snowflake model of distributed leadership, supporting existing community leaders to develop new leaders, and so on, to grow the next branches of the snowflake.

There is more to do to strengthen collaboration with the system and people in positional power so that future collaboration is more widespread, deeper, and more systematic. While there are examples of the system engaging with CfG initiatives, it tended to be more limited and piecemeal. It is also often reliant on relationships with sympathetic and supportive individuals within the system, and therefore vulnerable to inevitable change, rather than based on structures and processes that shift power.

There is more to do to wield power collectively, and at scale. We saw that many initiatives used their collective power to push one bit of the system to do what they wanted, rather than changing the system more fundamentally in ways that shifts power or joining to push for more structural change together.

3. DISCUSSION: WHAT CAN WE SAY ABOUT CONNECTING FOR GOOD MAIN GOALS

A final place to conclude this part of the discussion is a reflection on how much power the CfG community believes they have, and how wielding it more effectively as a collective may lead to even deeper impacts. We saw that a **very** high proportion of people thought both that it was important to feel they can influence local decisions and that they had the power to do so. However, if we dig down to look only at the proportion of people who definitely agreed, we can see another way to look at this. Just over 1 in 2 CfG members (52%) definitely think it's important for them to influence local decisions, but only half of those (25%) definitely thought they could actually influence decisions affecting their local area. It is really important not to understate how significant the difference between CfG members' sense of their power to change things (79%) is to the national average (27%), as it shows how much impact has already been to date. But it also shows how much more impact there is to make too.



3.3. Where next for Connecting for Good?

These goals are big, weighty ambitions that will take time to realise. It is clear from our findings that Connecting for Good has made a strong progress towards achieving them.

Connecting for Good has created a strong foundation, based on an inclusive community, increased leadership and collective power, and community-led initiatives making small but significant changes to shift power and make Coventry more inclusive. We find Connecting for Good is well positioned for the next phase of its journey, which we suggest, should be defined by a shift towards wielding collective power more effectively as a joined up ecosystem and making more systemic change on a bigger scale.

The idea of a journey is underscored by our finding that the more time someone has had in CfG, the deeper the impact - on outcomes including ability to lead, their sense of belonging, the belief in their power to influence local decisions, and their feelings of loneliness. At one level, this is unsurprising, as many of the outcomes such as leadership ability, are things that develop with time. But on another level, it is encouraging as it shows that Connecting for Good is deepening impact and that sustained work is likely to have increased impact.

In this way, it is easier to see how Connecting for Good has laid the building blocks for future impact, and contextualise impact as steps on the way to building collective power and making systemic change at scale.

The impacts we have discussed in the report, and the individual changes each CfG initiative is making, is important because it is a demonstration of not only how to do things and how to build power but because it paints a picture of what could be possible. As one CfG member said:



“It’s about how that can benefit your city and your community. And I think within that is power and it becomes a negotiating tool with those, you know, when it comes to system changes and councils. To say we have a core team, but now we have hundreds, maybe thousands of supporters and look at all the people in our city that are benefiting from the green space, or that are benefiting, you know, like we’re trying to raise the, the trans campaign in the city and stuff. So I think all of those put together are really powerful, in changing that and having the evidence to back it up as well.”

4. Conclusion

Being self
conscious
about your
appearance,
not looking
like what is
perceived as
"normal"
creates low self
confidence and
makes it HARD
to meet new
people. You
feel JUDGED

4.1 Conclusion: Areas of impact

We have found strong quantitative and qualitative evidence for a range of significant impacts for members of the Connecting for Good community.

In particular, there is strong evidence for three primary areas of impact:

- Collective power to make change improved, in particular their belief in their influence local decisions
- People feel more connected to their community.
- There has been a growth in leadership capacity within the community.

These conclusions are all supported by strong evidence from our CfG member survey, including finding significant differences between comparison groups, as well as being strong and consistent themes mentioned by CfG participants across peer-led evaluation sessions and digital diary study.

We also observed evidence to suggest impact on three secondary outcomes has been made:

- People have a greater sense of belonging.
- Community-led organisations are tackling isolation and marginalisation.
- There is greater collaboration across the system, with initiatives engaging people with positional power.

There was strong evidence of impact for these outcomes as well but not to the same extent - with some observed impacts either not as widespread across the CfG community or not seen as important as other outcomes by CfG members.

We conclude that Connecting for Good has made significant progress towards its ultimate goals. Connecting for Good has grown an inclusive community of leaders and an ecosystem of community-led initiatives that have, in their small steps, shifted power and made Coventry a more inclusive place. Connecting for Good has a strong foundation with which to further deepen its leadership capacity, bring leaders together to mobilise the collective power of the ecosystem, and push for more systemic change.

References and Annex A-D

"THERE IS ALWAYS A SMELL OF FUEL AND BURNING, SINCE MOVING TO THE AREA MY LUNG CAPACITY SEEMS TO HAVE GONE DOWN AND HAVE DEVELOPED MORE LABOURED BREATHING"

"TOO MUCH OF OUR AIR WE DON'T BREATHE IT CHO"

I
STAY
INDOORS

"SOME DAYS YOU CAN SEE THE SMOG/HAZE IN THE MORNING."

"I HAVE BREATHING PROBLEMS SO AIR QUALITY IS VERY IMPORTANT TO ME."

"FEEL MORE FUMES FROM THE FAST, OR SITTING IDLE IN TR CHILDREN AND I DON'T OPEN"

TELL US MORE ABOUT
YOUR CONCERNS...

"I HAVE LIVED HERE SINCE 20 GARDEN IS DIRECTLY BEHIND OFFICE ON BALL HILL I HAVE CHILDREN AND I WORRY ABOUT GROWING UP HERE I CAN TOLERATED THE AIR"

References

Braun, V. & Clarke, V. (2006), 'USING THEMATIC ANALYSIS IN PSYCHOLOGY', QUALITATIVE RESEARCH IN PSYCHOLOGY, vol. 3, pp. 77-101.

Coventry City Council (2023), JOINT STRATEGIC NEEDS ASSESSMENT, <https://www.coventry.gov.uk/facts-coventry/joint-strategic-needs-assessment-jsna>.

Davies, R. & Dart, J. (2005), THE 'MOST SIGNIFICANT CHANGE' TECHNIQUE: A GUIDE TO ITS USE, DOI:10.13140/RG.2.1.4305.3606.

Francis-Devine, B. (2024), POVERTY IN THE UK: STATISTICS, HOUSE OF COMMONS LIBRARY: RESEARCH BRIEFING, <https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/sn07096/>.

Francis-Devine, B. & Powell, A (2024), UK LABOUR MARKET STATISTICS, HOUSE OF COMMONS LIBRARY: RESEARCH BRIEFING, <https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/cbp-9366/>.

Kirk-Wade, E. (2023), UK DISABILITY STATISTICS: PREVALENCE AND LIFE EXPERIENCES, HOUSE OF COMMONS LIBRARY: RESEARCH BRIEFING, <https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/cbp-9602/>.

Office for National Statistics (2021), UK CENSUS, <https://www.ons.gov.uk/census>.

UK Government, Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport. (2021). COMMUNITY LIFE SURVEY 2020/21. GOV.UK., <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/community-life-survey-202021>

UK Government, NHS Digital. (2023). HEALTH SURVEY FOR ENGLAND 2021: LONELINESS AND WELLBEING TABLES, <https://digital.nhs.uk/data-and-information/publications/statistical/health-survey-for-england/2021-part-2/health-survey-for-england-2021-data-tables>

Annex A: Connecting for Good evaluation framework

Overview

The evaluation and learning framework sets out what we want to find out (i.e. key research questions and CfG outcomes) during the evaluation, how we will measure this (i.e. key indicators) and how we will find out (i.e. the evaluation design and methodology).

The overall aim of the evaluation is to harness what has been learnt during the CfG programme over the past 3 years, and apply it to generate future impact - and to do this while working closely with CfG participants.

The five key evaluation questions - i.e. what we want to find out - are outlined below, with associated sub-questions:

- What is an effective process for defining meaningful and democratic outcomes and related indicators for a programme that is community-led and focused on systems change?
 - a. To what extent did the co-design process lead to meaningful outcomes and indicators?
 - b. To what extent was the co-design process democratic?
- What change towards key outcomes has happened as a result of the Connecting for Good programme?
 - a. To what extent have community-led initiatives that tackle the root causes of isolation and marginalisation been created?
 - b. To what extent do people feel more connected to their community?
 - c. To what extent do people have a greater sense of belonging?
 - d. To what extent do people have increased leadership skills and confidence?
 - e. To what extent are people more able to come together to make change?
 - f. To what extent are organisations collaborating with each other and people from communities in ways that shift the deeper causes of isolation?
- What is the sustainability and long-term legacy of the programme?
 - a. To what extent are existing initiatives self-sustaining?
 - b. What do we know about what CfG needs to sustain itself long-term (beyond the funding term)?
 - c. What (if anything) is the role of Grapevine within the CfG 'ecosystem'?

- What elements of the CfG model are different to other movement building and system change initiatives?
 - a. What are the key elements of the CfG model and methodology?
 - b. What are common elements of other movement building and system change initiatives and how does CfG differ?
 - c. How can others learn from and apply what has been learnt to inform their work to solve salient and deep-rooted problems, elsewhere?

Summary of approach to answer key evaluation questions

Key evaluation question	Evaluation approach to find out
1. What is an effective process for defining meaningful and democratic outcomes and related indicators for a programme that is community-led and focused on systems change?	Collective reflection and feedback session
2. What change towards key outcomes has happened as a result of the Connecting for Good programme?	Peer-led evaluation session: Most Significant Change method & Focus Group Discussion
	Self-led digital diary study
	Impact / core survey
	Analysis of CfG programme data
3. What is the sustainability and long-term legacy of the programme?	Peer-led evaluation session: Focus Group Discussions
	Self-led digital diary study
	Analysis of CfG programme data
4. What elements of the CfG model and methodology are different to other movement building and system change initiatives?	Co-design sessions
	Desk-based sector mapping
	Stakeholder interviews

See here for the [full version of Connecting for Good's evaluation framework](#).

Annex B: Most Significant Change template

1 Tell us about yourself

a) What is your name	b) When did you join Connecting for Good (CfG)
----------------------	--

2 How did you get involved in CfG?

Please tell us the story of you got involved with Connecting for Good (CfG)

For example, how did you hear about it? Why did you join? Which group or initiative are you part of?

3 Tell us a story about how Connecting for Good has impacted your life

<p>a) What changes have happened as a result of being involved in Connecting for Good?</p> <p>You don't need to write this down, but take a few minutes to just think about all the changes that have happened in the past year as a result of being involved with CfG This could be anything at all!</p>	
<p>b) What was the important change?</p> <p>Think about which of these changes has been the most important to you. Please tell us a story about that change. Think about the following questions: what was the change? What was your situation before the change happened? How do you think that the change happened? What is the situation now? How do you feel?</p>	<p>c) Why is this story important to you?</p> <p>Of all the changes that happened, why was this the most important?</p>

Annex C: List of diary study questions and prompts

Day One

Thank you again for agreeing to take part. Over the next seven days I'll send a short question here, once per day, which you can respond to with a text, voice note, images or videos.

Okay, let's kick off!

Using a text or voice note, tell me about your participation with Connecting for Good. What projects or events have you been involved in? Have you had opportunities to lead? If you have related images or videos you feel comfortable sharing, add them here.

Day Two

Day two! Today, let's think about the ways being part of Connecting for Good has impacted the way you *feel*.

Do you feel that being part of Connecting for Good has changed the way you feel? Maybe about yourself, or about your community? Has it impacted your confidence, or changed any feelings you have about leading things?

Remember, there are never any "right" answers—anything you choose to share is very helpful and greatly appreciated.

Day Three

Day three! Today, let's think about the ways Connecting for Good has made *practical* changes in your life.

Share a text, voice note, image or video describing changes you've seen in your life that you think are related to your connection with Connecting for Good. Does anything in your day-to-day life look different? Have you learned any new skills, or taken on any new opportunities?

Share as much detail as you can. And remember, there are no "wrong" answers!

Day Four

It's day four, thanks for hanging in there 😊

Today, let's think about the impact Connecting for Good has on your community. Does your initiative aim to tackle isolation or marginalisation? If so, how?

Day Five

Thinking about your work with Connecting for Good, use a voice note or text to share who has been involved in your work. Who are your collaborators? Have you been involved with any organisations? How about individuals?

Day Six

Day six, nearly there! Today's question is a nice broad, open question to get you thinking. Remember, there are no wrong answers.

Using a voice note, text or video, describe how you aim to make change in your community. What is your strategy for making change?

Day Seven

It's day seven, our final day! Today's question has two short parts. Both parts think about the role of Grapevine in Connecting for Good.

First, how would you describe the role Grapevine has played in your work with Connecting for Good? What would you like to see more, or see less of?

Then, let's think about whether the Connecting for Good initiatives you've been part of seem "self-sustaining." Do you think they could continue without the support of Grapevine? If so, tell me more about why. If not, what would they need to be successful in the long run?

Remember, there are no wrong answers!



Annex D: Connecting for Good member survey

This survey helps us understand the impact of your work within Connecting for Good, as well as the influence you feel your participation has had on you. This survey should only take 8-10 minutes to complete. All responses will remain strictly anonymous.

If you get stuck or have questions, please reach out to hello@anthill-collective.com.

About your involvement with Connecting for Good

1. Do you consider yourself an active participant in a Connecting for Good initiative, or an initiative led by Grapevine?
 2. Yes, I am an active participant
 - I am not an active participant, but have been in the past*
 - No, I have never been a participant*
 - I'm not sure*
 3. How long have you been part of a Connecting for Good initiative?
 - Less than 3 months*
 - 3 months to 1 year*
 - 1 year to 2 years*
 - More than 2 years*
 - I am not part of a Connecting for Good initiative*
 4. To what extent do you agree that your group or initiative is tackling the root causes of isolation or marginalisation?
 - Definitely agree*
 - Tend to agree*
 - Tend to disagree*
 - Definitely disagree*
 5. To what extent do you agree that you are building connections or relationships with other groups who can act in solidarity with you, or who share the same aims?
 - Definitely agree*
 - Tend to agree*
 - Tend to disagree*
 - Definitely disagree*
 6. How important has relationship building been in your ability to make change in your local area?
 - Very important*
 - Quite important*
 - Not very important*
 - Not at all important*
 - Unsure or neutral*

- 7.** How successful do you feel you've been in making change in your local area?
- Very successful*
 - Somewhat successful*
 - Not very successful*
 - Unsuccessful*
 - Unsure or neutral*
- 8.** What are the main ways you tried to make change in your local area? Select up to 3 that feel most relevant.
- Building capacity and empowering individuals to make change*
 - Building collective power of local people and communities*
 - Building new connections and networks of support within my local community*
 - Collaborating or engaging with individuals in positions of power (e.g. councillor, council official, MP, etc.)*
 - Collaborating or engaging with local businesses*
 - Collaborating or engaging with other organisations and initiatives*
 - Organising petitions Starting a local campaign*
 - Starting new initiatives that support my local community*
 - Supporting volunteering and social action*
 - Tackling the root causes of isolation or marginalisation*
 - Something else [Open text response]*
- 9.** When you think about Connecting for Good as a whole and its ability to make change, which factors feel most important in sustaining it in the future? Choose all that apply.
- Holding to account individuals or organisations in positions of power (e.g. council, NHS, businesses etc.)*
 - Structured connections between Connecting for Good initiatives and changemakers*
 - Having a strong core team across all Connecting for Good initiatives*
 - A clear collective identity for Connecting for Good initiatives*
 - Meeting other change makers through Collaboration Stations*
 - Support to develop collective leadership through Changemaker University*
 - Opportunities to identify and shape collective issues through events such as Walk and Talks and the Connecting for Good Summit*
 - Support for CfG initiatives from a network of community organisers*
 - Something else [Open text response]*
- 10.** Since taking part in a Connecting for Good initiative, my confidence has improved.
- Strongly agree*
 - Agree*
 - Disagree*
 - Strongly disagree*
 - Unsure or neutral*

11. Since taking part in a Connecting for Good initiative, my ability to lead has improved, or I've felt an improvement in my belief in my leadership abilities.

- Strongly agree*
- Agree*
- Disagree*
- Strongly disagree*
- Unsure or neutral*

About your local community

12. How strongly do you feel you belong to your local community?

- Very strongly*
- Fairly strongly*
- Not very strongly*
- Not at all strongly*

13. The next questions refer to your local community. To what extent do you agree or disagree that your local area is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together?

- Definitely agree*
- Tend to agree*
- Tend to disagree*
- Definitely disagree*
- There are too few people in the local area*
- People in this area are all of the same background*

14. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statement: If I needed help, there are people who would be there for me?

- Definitely agree*
- Tend to agree*
- Tend to disagree*
- Definitely disagree*

15. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statement: If I wanted company or to socialise, there are people I can call on?

- Definitely agree*
- Tend to agree*
- Tend to disagree*
- Definitely disagree*

16. How often do you feel that you lack companionship?

- Hardly ever or never*
- Some of the time*
- Often*

17. How often do you feel left out?

- Hardly ever or never*
- Some of the time*
- Often*

18. How often do you feel isolated from others?

- Hardly ever or never*
- Some of the time*
- Often*

19. How often do you feel lonely?

- Often/Always*
- Sometimes*
- Occasionally*
- Hardly ever*
- Never*

20. In the last 12 months, that is since May 2023, have you...? Please select all that apply.

- Contacted a local official such as a local councillor, MP, government official, mayor, or public official working for the local council (Please do not include any contact for personal reasons e.g. housing repairs or contact through work)*
- Attended a public meeting or rally, taken part in a public demonstration or protest*
- Signed a paper petition or an online/e-petition*
- None of these*

21. In the last 12 months, that is since May 2023, have you taken part in a consultation about local services or problems in your local area through any of these ways? Please select all that apply.

- Completing a paper or online questionnaire*
- Attending a public meeting*
- Being involved in a face-to-face or online group*
- None of these*

22. In the last 12 months, that is since May 2023, have you been a member of any of the following decision making groups in your local community? Please select all that apply.

- A group making decisions on local health services*
- A decision making group set up to regenerate the local area*
- A decision making group set up to tackle local crime problems*
- A tenants' group decision making committee*
- A group making decisions on local education services*
- A group making decisions on local services for young people*
- Another group making decisions on services in the local community*
- None of these*

23. To what extent do you agree or disagree that you personally can influence decisions affecting your local area?

- Definitely agree*
- Tend to agree*
- Tend to disagree*
- Definitely disagree*

24. How important is it for you personally to feel that you can influence decisions in your local area?

- Very important*
- Quite important*
- Not very important*
- Not at all important*

About you

These questions are for informational purposes only. Any information shared here will be kept confidential, and will be used only to better understand your responses to this survey.

25. How old are you?

- 16-19*
- 20-24*
- 25-34*
- 35-44*
- 45-54*
- 55-64*
- 65-74*
- Over 75*

26. Which one of the following best describes your ethnic group or background? Please select one option.

- White*
 - i. *White:* English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British
 - ii. *White:* Irish
 - iii. *White:* Gypsy or Irish Traveller
 - iv. *White:* Any other White background
- Mixed*
 - i. Mixed: White and Black Caribbean
 - ii. Mixed: White and Black African
 - iii. Mixed: White and Asian
 - iv. Mixed: Any other mixed/multiple ethnic background
 - v. *Asian or Asian British*
 - vi. *Asian or Asian British:* Indian
 - vii. *Asian or Asian British:* Pakistani

- viii. *Asian or Asian British*: Bangladeshi
 - ix. *Asian or Asian British*: Chinese
 - x. *Asian or Asian British*: Any other Asian background
- Black or Black British*
- xi. *Black or Black British*: African
 - xii. *Black or Black British*: Caribbean
 - xiii. *Black or Black British*: Any other Black/African/Caribbean background (specify)
- Other ethnic group*
- xiv. *Other ethnic group*: Arab
 - xv. *Other ethnic group*: Any other ethnic group (specify)
- 27.** Do you have any physical or mental health conditions or illnesses lasting or expected to last 12 months or more?
- Yes
 - No
- 28.** If you answered yes, do any of your conditions or illnesses reduce your ability to carry out day-to-day activities?
- Yes, a lot
 - Yes, a little
 - Not at all
- 29.** Do you currently have a paid job?
- Yes
 - No
- 30.** Please select the income group which represents your combined household income in the last 12 months, that is since May 2023 from all sources, before any deductions such as income tax or National Insurance? Annual household income:
- Up to £2,599
 - £2,600 up to £5,199
 - £5,200 up to £10,399
 - £10,400 up to £15,599
 - £15,600 up to £20,799
 - £20,800 up to £25,999
 - £26,000 up to £31,199
 - £31,200 up to £36,399
 - £36,400 up to £41,599
 - £41,600 up to £46,799
 - £46,800 up to £51,999 £52,000 up to £74,999
 - £75,000 up to £99,999
 - £100,000 up to £149,999
 - £150,000 or more

- 31.** If you'd like to be entered to win a £300, £150 or £50 reward, please enter the best way to contact you, such as an email address or phone number. There will be one £300, one £150 and one £50 reward. Only reward winners will be notified. Reward winners will be randomly selected.
- 32.** Mandatory question—Please confirm that you consent to your data being used for the following purposes:
- Any personal data such as contact information will only be used to contact you if you win one of the prize rewards, after which point all personal data will be deleted permanently.*
 - All other data collected through this survey will be anonymised and used solely for research purposes.*
 - Grapevine and Anthill Collective, Grapevine's research partner, will collect and share data for the purposes of analysis.*
 - No personal data will be shared with any third party organisation or individual.*
 - [Checkbox: Yes I agree*



Engage Britain

Making our country work for us all

That [engageBritain.org](#) to get involved

PIE

WHO ARE Grapevine?

We are a multi-award winning social action charity that's best at reinventing itself in response to people's needs. We help services, funders and systems find new ways to create deep social change. We're willing to be bold, remove the box and bring edge-based solutions into the middle. Check us out at:

Web: www.grapevinecovandwarks.org

Twitter: www.twitter.com/grapevinecandw

facebook: www.facebook.com/grapevinecovandwarks

Insta: www.instagram.com/grapevinecovandwarks

