

Have you considered promoting your project via...?

- Local radio stations (e.g. Babbers show on Ujima Radio, BBC Radio Bristol) and TV stations.
- Local newspapers and magazines (e.g. Bristol Evening Post, Fishponds Voice, Bishopston Voice, Bristol Older People's Forum). Even better if the article is written by an older person themselves. Consider the print size for these articles to make sure they can be read easily.
- Social media (e.g. Facebook, Twitter). Facebook enables you to pay for an advert specifically targeting a certain client group (e.g. over 50s within one neighbourhood).
- Your project's website, if you have one.
- Your project's mailing list, if you have one. You could also ask relevant local organisations if you can include an announcement in their e-newsletters or via their social media pages (e.g. Bristol Older People's Forum, LinkAge).
- Posters or leaflets in: libraries, GP surgeries, community centres, cafes, supported housing blocks, lunch clubs, opticians, dentists, leisure centres, takeaway shops, betting shops, local pubs, places of worship, bus stops, veterinary surgeries, supermarkets, Post Office, newsagents, hospital waiting areas etc.
- Asking local charity shops to hand out your leaflet.
- Leaflets through doors in a street/area with a high proportion of older people. These could be distributed by volunteers. When creating leaflets, consider the level of detail you want to provide (extra information may spark interest but also runs the risk of being too overwhelming).
- Your local third sector support agency (e.g. Voscur)
- Through BAB's other projects (e.g. Community Navigators, Community Development)

You could also try...

- Delivering taster sessions or information sessions to those who express an interest to make sure they understand what the project involves before they

commit. This could include showing them photos or video footage of previous activities within the project. This also helps to reassure those with anxiety around participating in a new activity. Holding these sessions at different times/on different days increases the range of people who are able to attend.

- Reaching target communities through a person or organisation who already has a relationship with these groups. This may help with both access and trust.
- Speaking to support workers or community navigators to make them aware of the project so they can mention it to their clients.
- Making a short announcement about your project to a group which already exists (e.g. a coffee morning, a class for older people etc.). Remember to hand out leaflets to make sure they remember the details.
- Identify key bus stops near streets/areas with a higher proportion of older people. Wait at these bus stops and talk to older people face-to-face. A similar approach can be applied to benches in shopping centres.
- Go along to a specific location in the community (e.g. a local hub) and have face-to-face conversations about the project with people who come in.

Think about the language used!

Some people may not identify with terms such as 'old' or 'older' (although some will be completely fine with these!). Similarly, those who carry out caring responsibilities may not perceive themselves to be a 'carer'. Language around mental health can also sometimes create barriers (e.g. due to culturally specific differences, complex medical terms etc.); framing it as emotional ill health (e.g. stress, low mood) may be more accessible for some.

The terms 'lonely' and 'isolated' can themselves be off putting, as there is a heavy stigma attached to these labels. Moreover, people who are lonely may resist support because they do not want to become part of 'the system' or be a 'service user'.

When advertising your project, make any restrictions clear (e.g. if it is only available to residents of a certain geographical area) so that you avoid having to turn people away who express interest.

If the project will be held in multiple languages, it is useful to advertise in these languages too. However if the project will only be held in English then it can be misleading for the promotional materials to contain multiple languages.

Tips and tricks for reaching the most isolated and lonely individuals...

- Certain individuals in the community might be aware of older people who are lonely or isolated, and might be able to point you in the right direction. Take a look at the local area and identify as many businesses/services as you can which might be used by older people who are socially isolated (those offering home visits or home delivery services are a good place to start!). This could include: community nurses, religious leaders, home adaptations companies, post deliverers, police community support officers, housing associations, caretakers, pharmacies, barbers, hairdressers, newsagents, chiropractor, charity shops, scout/guide groups or Neighbourhood Watch. Be aware that some of these services may be reluctant to help!
- Ask the local Post Office if you can speak to older people about your project when they come in or if you can set up an information stand.
- If you are knocking on doors, think about the way you introduce yourself. Formal introductions emphasising which organisation you are from may be reassuring for some older people, yet intimidating for others. If you are not from the local area yourself, you may want to bring somebody along with you who can introduce themselves as a local resident in a more informal approachable way.

Remember – being based in one geographical area does not necessarily mean your project will attract people from this area

Despite living nearby, local residents may perceive certain facilities as 'not for them'. Similarly, people may travel from other neighbourhoods to attend a project somewhere else. The concept of 'local' means different things to different people. If you wish to attract local residents, try promoting it to a handful of local older people who you know will attend, and then asking them to bring others along with them from the local area.