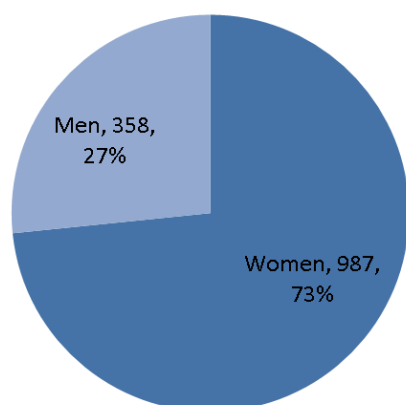


## Evaluation of the County Durham Wellbeing for Life Service

Update May 2016

This update gives a 'snapshot' of the 'one to one' element of the Wellbeing for Life (WFL) service evaluation being conducted by researchers from Durham University. The evaluation runs from September 2015 to February 2017. Here, we report results from our analysis of DCRS data collected between 1<sup>st</sup> June 2015 (when the main evaluation measures – EQ5D<sup>1</sup> and SWEMBWS<sup>2</sup> – were introduced) and 31<sup>st</sup> January 2016.

(i) Fig. 1 Gender of WFL clients



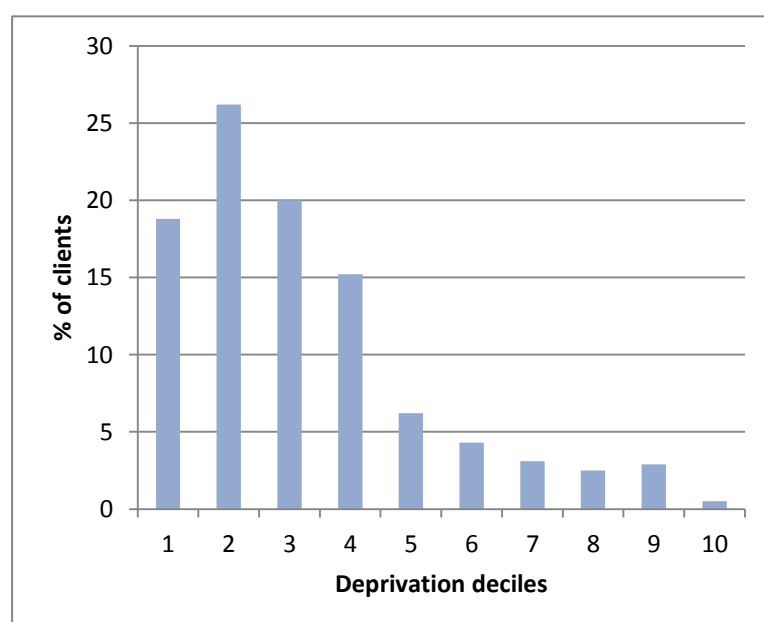
### 1. Client characteristics

A total of **1345** clients accessed the WFL service during the interim evaluation period. They ranged in age from 16 to 88 years, with an average of **47 years** and a good spread across the age range. The ratio of women to men was **3:1** (see fig.1), showing that WFL staff are doing a great job of engaging with women but there is still more work to do to encourage men to access the service. This might involve targeting industrial workplaces and partnering with agencies working mainly with men (e.g. SHAID, services for veterans, etc).

**Four out of five** clients were from the 40% most deprived areas (see fig. 2) suggesting that the WFL service is having more success in engaging with so-called 'hard to reach' groups.

Around **one in three** clients had heard about the service from a WFL health trainer, compared to **one in five** who had been referred or signposted by a health professional and **one in 10** who had heard about it via word of mouth. This indicates that building relationships with communities and also with health care providers is particularly important.

(ii) Fig. 2 Level of deprivation



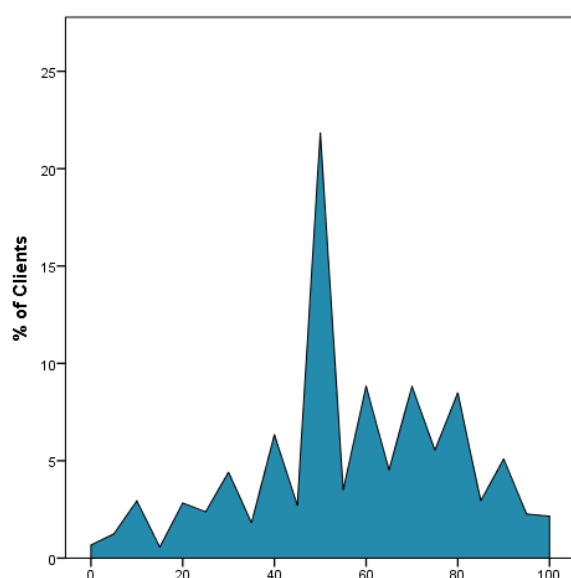
<sup>1</sup> The EuroQol 5 dimensions (EQ5D) is a measure of quality of life that is often used to calculate cost-effectiveness. It includes 5 short questions and a visual scale ('health thermometer'), which has been proven to reliably capture self-rated health status.

<sup>2</sup> The short Warwick Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale (SWEMWBS) is also a well-tested measure. It is used by health trainer services nationally, as well as many other health improvement interventions, to capture improvements in mental wellbeing.

## 2. Baseline measures

A total of **889** clients went on to complete a personal health plan. **Two in five** had sought help for multiple reasons, while **one in five** wanted help with weight loss or weight maintenance. This is in contrast with health trainer services nationally, where almost two-thirds of clients seek advice with diet, and so the WFL service appears to be addressing the clustering of unhealthy behaviours.

(iii) Fig. 3 Self-rated health scores at



Clients' initial confidence levels were relatively high, although the average self-efficacy score was slightly lower than that for health trainer clients nationally (**63 vs. 68**). The average SWEMWBS score was **57** (vs. 55 for health trainer services nationally) and the 'health thermometer' score was also **57** (see fig. 3). The UK average is estimated to be 83, indicating that WFL staff are working with people in relatively poor health.

BMI at baseline ranged from 17 to 62, with an average of **33** (clinically obese). **One in four** clients were current smokers, which is higher than the national and County Durham averages, but lower than expected for the target population. **Half** were non-drinkers, which is surprising given that national statistics indicate that only 21% of adults describe themselves as teetotalers (18% in the North East). We do not know whether these are 'true values' or the result of under-reporting.

## 3. Outcome measures

Of those clients who completed a personal health plan, **224** went on to complete a follow-up assessment. Overall improvements were seen in the following measures: BMI, physical activity, alcohol consumption, self-efficacy, self-rated health, quality of life and mental wellbeing. The biggest changes were seen in those with the worst health; for example, self-rated health improved by **18%** and mental wellbeing improved by **24%** in those with the lowest scores at baseline. These results suggest that the WFL service may be having the biggest impact on those who need it most.

## 4. Next steps

Focus groups are underway with WFL staff and volunteers, and we also intend to distribute a short survey to gather additional feedback. Ten stakeholders who have experience of working alongside the WFL service will be invited to take part in one-to-one interviews. A sample of 36 clients and 12 'non-completers' will be identified and invited to share their views of the service. In August we will repeat our analysis of the DCRS data with a larger sample and add available follow-up data. An interim report will be submitted to the commissioners in September 2016.

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**Wellbeing for Life**  
**A summary review of Volunteering and**  
**Group Intervention elements**  
**2015/2016**

## **Wellbeing for Life**

### **A summary review of Volunteering and Group Intervention strands 2015/2016**

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## 1. Purpose

The purpose of this document is to provide a summary review of the County Durham Wellbeing for Life programme 'Volunteering' and 'Group Intervention' strands, for the period April 2015 to March 2016, with a view to highlighting key successes. It does not represent an evaluation of this work.

## 2. Background

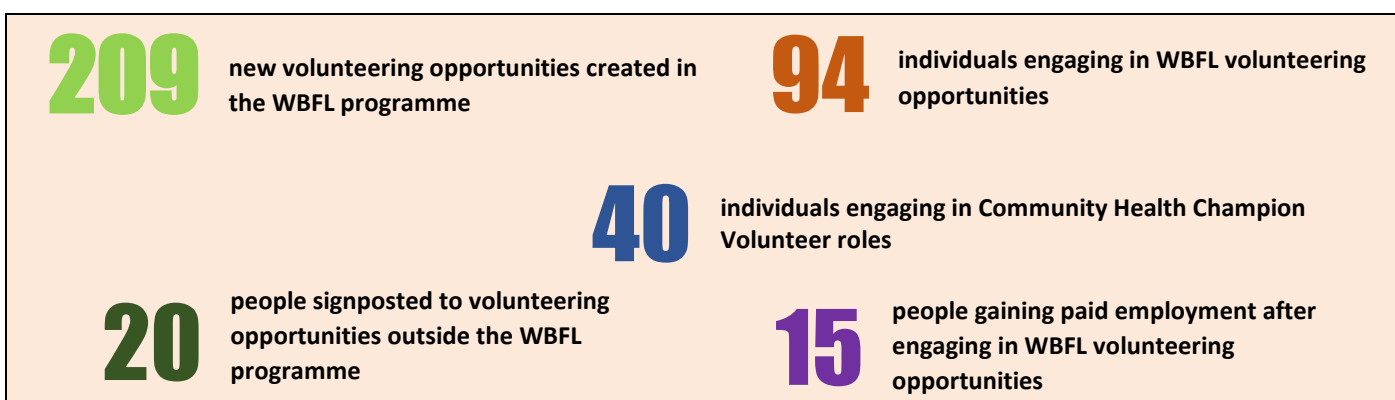
Commissioned in 2014 by Durham County Council Public Health, Wellbeing for Life's holistic approach to promotion of health and wellbeing in targeted areas of County Durham places strong emphasis on co-design and community involvement (*See Appendix One for background information on the Wellbeing for Life programme*). Linked to this, two distinct programme strands help support overall delivery:

- Participant-led **group interventions**, co-produced with service users.
- Programme-based **volunteering** opportunities and volunteer support.

Both strands are led and delivered through Durham County Council Culture and Sport Service (in East and South West Durham), and Leisureworks (in North Durham), with staff deployed within integrated locality-based teams to maximise impact and ensure 'whole programme' co-ordination.

### a. Volunteering

The volunteering strand strongly reflects Wellbeing for Life's integrated approach. Development of a wide range of volunteering roles has created opportunity for anyone interested in volunteering to do so at a level and pace that suits their needs. Since programme delivery commenced, the volunteering strand has consistently over-achieved against contractual targets;



**209 volunteering opportunities have been created (annual target 200)** for local people within the Wellbeing for Life programme, taken up by **94 individuals**, engaging in activities such as community consultation, creation of community development plans, assisting health trainers with one to one visits, and supporting community events and activities. A further **20 people have been signposted into volunteering outside of Wellbeing for Life**, becoming involved with complementary services such as 'Colour Your Life' and the 'Learning Hive' at Catchgate. Links with the 'Volunteer Durham' programme, coordinated by Durham County Council Culture and Sport, and Durham Community Action's Centre for Volunteering have added significant value to this signposting element of the service.

Building on the evidence base underpinning the Health Trainer approach, which demonstrates the value of 'advice from next door', a structured pathway into volunteer 'health trainer' type roles has also been created. Contractually, this option provided space for up to 32 '**Community Health Champions**' (CHC's), offering training, support and mentoring, and enabling suitable volunteers to develop personal skills and to work towards achieving a City & Guilds Level 3 Health Trainer qualification. This equips them to help members of their community to transform their own health and wellbeing.

The CHC route into volunteering has proved extremely popular with **40 volunteers** engaged into CHC roles. Other volunteers who couldn't be accommodated as CHC's have been signposted or supported into alternative community volunteering opportunities.

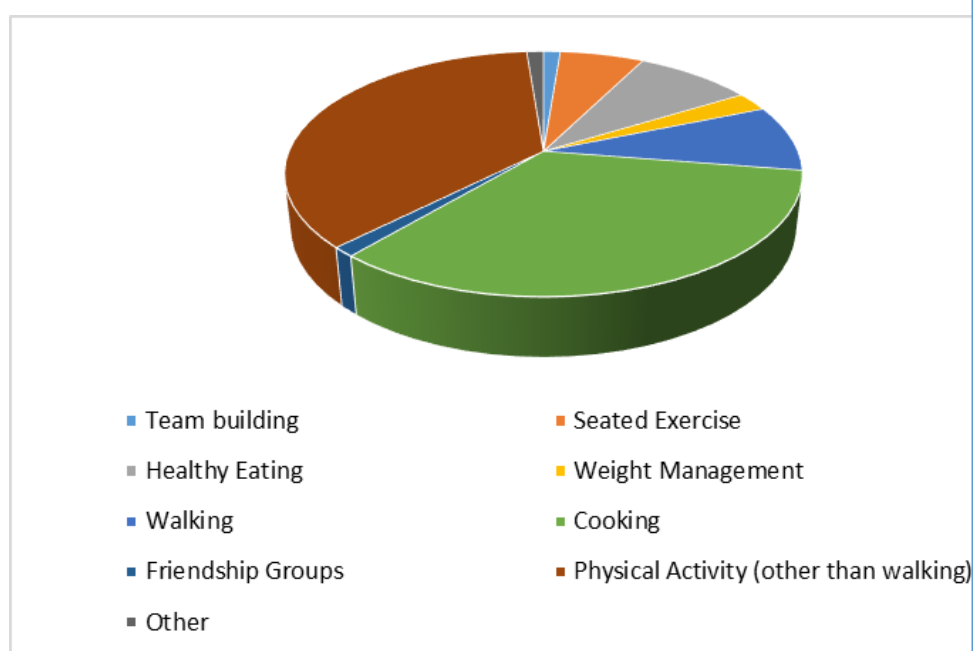
### **b. Group Interventions**

Group interventions have been organised and delivered across the target areas, in response to expressed community need. These have provided a 'menu' of opportunities, including cooking/healthy eating, craft, friendship groups, physical activity, communication and team-building, resilience and weight management programmes (for breakdown see fig. 1, below). A typical session will last for one hour each week, and will run for up to eight weeks.

Responding to group needs, sessions have largely been delivered from community venues, and seek to ensure that those that will benefit most, or who are most marginalised, can attend. Participants in group interventions have undoubtedly benefited from taking part, increasing knowledge, skills and confidence, with evidence of some participants improving fitness and losing weight.

From April 2015 to the end March 2016 **78 (annual target 32) community-based group intervention programmes were delivered** across the Wellbeing for Life target areas. A total of **715 unique participants (annual target 400)** attended these.

Figure 1 – Types of Group Intervention delivered.



#### **Case study**

Angela, 59, was referred into Wellbeing for Life, hoping to lose a little weight. Her ultimate aim was to be accepted for surgery for a knee replacement to improve her long-term general mobility. Angela's motivation was initially low and she lacked confidence, and mobility issues meant she was severely restricted when it came to increasing activity levels.

Angela got involved in a regular group activity programme and was supported by a health trainer outside weekly sessions. She worked on a food diary, and was offered support around increased activity levels, with a sensible and realistic focus on what she could achieve. At the end of the programme Angela had increased fluid and fruit and vegetable intake, reduced fats, salt and sugar intake, increased activity levels, improved knowledge and understanding of her long-term health conditions, and improved her confidence.

Angela reduced her BMI and lost weight. After the programme she went on to lose further weight and reduce her BMI and was accepted for surgery for a knee replacement. This has given her a massive confidence boost and a real focus to become more active.

### **3. Primary Impacts & Benefits**

The Wellbeing for Life service was introduced as an integrated, holistic programme. The Group Interventions and Volunteering strands are key components in supporting overall delivery, and this has been demonstrated as the overall programme has developed. As well as delivering significant benefit at programme level, there has been considerable impact on individuals. Case studies and participation data, together with anecdotal feedback and compliments received (recorded as part of programme delivery monitoring) demonstrate clear benefits, for example:

**Group interventions** have enabled the development of **improved knowledge, understanding and skills around healthy behaviours**, especially in relation to diet/healthy eating/weight management and physical activity;

***Weight Management/Healthy Eating:***

*'Learnt such a lot on fats and sugars'*

*'Sessions have been really informative and we learned a lot about cooking healthily'*

*'The benefits I've gained from all the options for the scheme is relevant information of heart disease, healthy eating and physical activity.'*

***Exercise-based programmes:***

*'Beginning to feel fitter after 4 sessions'*

*'Lost weight and feel good'*

*'Able to move better + back is feeling best it has in years'*

Increased knowledge has also impacted on individuals' ability to self-manage long-term conditions, with some participants reporting, for example, decreased use of statins.

Delivery of the 'Group Intervention' strand by two of the County's primary providers of Cultural and Physical Activities has provided strong and supported exit routes into mainstream programmes e.g. Walk4Life, supporting long term participation and sustained behaviour change.

Many participants have also gone on to access other Wellbeing for Life services, like one-to-one health trainer support, volunteering, or have been signposted into wider support services, such as housing and adult learning. In addition to this, participants have benefited from the **development of new social networks**; they have made new friendships and received informal peer support:

*'The walking has helped all the people on a social level and helping them interact...'*

*'Got a chance to speak to friends and have a laugh while learning new ways to eat healthier'*

*'Fantastic walk with a great social interaction from everyone.....'*

*'It increased my confidence'*

*'I've enjoyed coming every week, meeting people, making friends...'*

**Five activity groups have been sustained** beyond their initial 'supported' period and are now delivered independently of Wellbeing for Life by local communities. It is hoped that this success can be replicated and further improved as the programme develops.

Engagement in **Volunteering** opportunities has enabled people to gain new skills and experiences, and improve personal confidence and self-esteem. Those taking on Community Health Champion roles have gained recognised qualifications and work experience. For some, this has enabled entry into good quality paid employment. In total **15 volunteers have gained work** as a result of engaging with Wellbeing for Life, of which **12 have moved into paid Health Trainer roles**. Given the demographic background of the volunteers (many previously unemployed and all resident within disadvantaged communities), this represents a significant impact.

#### Case Study

*David, from Coxhoe, joined WBFL in August 2015. He's been out of work for around a year and although passionate about volunteering, would love a career in Health and Wellbeing. David is very outgoing and enthusiastic; his glass is always full (not half full) and this positive attitude mirrors the way he communicates with clients, and staff. David often says he feels part of a team and that he is doing some good to benefit individuals that need it.*

*Since joining, David completed several courses and became a Community Health Champion; he is now half way through the Level 3 Health Trainer qualification. David enjoys shadowing Health trainers with 1:1 clients as he finds this experience rewarding, for both the client and for his own personal development. He's also helped out with leaflet drops, health launches and supported awareness campaigns. David is able to work with groups and individuals from all backgrounds and his confidence in doing so is only increasing.*

Both volunteering and group intervention strands align to the principles of the Five Ways to Wellbeing, providing structured opportunities and routes for local people to:

**Connect:** A friendship group established in Dipton has welcomed 15 participants and has provided ukulele, social and physical activity sessions.

**Be Active:** Circuit Fusion has been developed as a regular community programme offer in South Moor enabling residents to exercise every week at affordable rates. This session has been sustained, beyond Wellbeing for Life's direct support, through Leisureworks 'Make Your Move' programme.

**Keep Learning:** In total volunteers have attended over 100 training programmes, including Making Every Contact Count, Motivational Interviewing and RSPH Level 2 training, many gaining recognised accreditation and qualifications.

**Give:** One volunteer has been involved in an exciting initiative in Langley Park, digitising a wealth of mining memorabilia. The process has encouraged other local residents to come forward to engage with a Women's Cree, supporting social cohesion and reducing isolation.

**Take Notice:** Group interventions have included elements of mindfulness, encouraging participants to think about and better engage with their local surroundings and experiences.

Because volunteering and group interventions have been delivered within a wider, co-ordinated and holistic approach, participants have benefited from a very comprehensive range of support which has enabled them to work through and address individual barriers to participation and personal development.

Additional case studies are included in Appendix 3. These provide rich evidence of the impact of participation, as a volunteer, or in group activities, and serve

to further demonstrate the difference that these particular strands of Wellbeing for Life, and the programme as a whole, are making for both individuals and communities.



#### 4. Additional Impact and Benefits

At a programme level Volunteering and Group Interventions have both benefited from and supported the holistic Wellbeing for Life approach. They have served to increase delivery capacity; for example, each Community Health Champion agrees to provide a minimum of two hours' support every week, and volunteers regularly assist at promotional events and at group sessions, which has in turn supported extended Programme reach.

A range of additional benefits have become apparent as services have grown, including:

- The locally-based 'Grass roots' approach generally means that new opportunities developed can be more readily 'knitted' into wider community activity, supporting long term sustainability.
- Signposting individuals to existing 'group activity' provision, either provided by Durham County Council Culture and Sport/Leisureworks or the voluntary and community sector, has limited the need for Wellbeing for Life to set up new activities. This has meant that programme resources can be directed to areas where provision is more limited, as well as helping to grow and sustain existing group activities.
- The Wellbeing for Life Volunteering programme, and the stronger relationships promoted through this, has led to the development of a joint 'Volunteering Pathway', linked to Durham Community Action's Centre for Volunteering (*See Appendix Two*), and to the Volunteering Programme working towards the County Durham Kitemark Certificate for Volunteering.
- Volunteering and Group Intervention strands align with and actively support delivery of local strategic priorities, including the Active Durham framework, 'Start, Stay, and Succeed', and the County Durham Public Mental Health Strategy.
- A major unintended (though not unexpected) benefit for individuals has been the development of new friendships and informal social networks. These bring fundamental benefits and contribute significantly to achieving the improved resilience and positive mental health central to the aims of Wellbeing for Life.

#### **Case Study**

*Lisa, from Blackhill, got involved in Wellbeing for Life by chance when the Volunteer and Skills Co-ordinator went to meet with a close friend of hers. Upon hearing what her friend was signing up to Lisa immediately wanted to sign up too.*

*Lisa is an active member of Colour Your Life, a social prescribing programme delivered in part by Leisureworks, having been referred because of mental health issues from which she has suffered for a number of years. Whilst Colour Your Life did benefit Lisa's mental health she felt she needed something else on which to focus. Wellbeing for Life fitted the bill!*

*Since signing up, Lisa has eagerly accepted any opportunities offered to her. Her biggest challenge and subsequent achievement was the compilation of a wealth of mining memoirs and memorabilia discovered in Langley Park by Durham Community Action's Development Worker, Susan Tron. Susan spoke to the owner of the memorabilia about digitising the memoirs; the question was met with a definitive answer of yes!*

*The Wellbeing for Life Volunteer and Skills Co-ordinator suggested Lisa get involved, given her IT skills and interest in the topic. This project enabled Lisa to discover a meaningful activity where she and colleagues felt valued. Lisa says, 'This project fascinated me from the start and I couldn't wait to get going. The wealth of information that was available was amazing and I wanted to make sure that the public would be able to see what I was lucky enough to see'.*

## 5. Contribution to Strategic Priorities

As a commissioned programme, developed as a response to the County Durham's JSNA, Wellbeing for Life supports local strategic priorities concerned with health and wellbeing, and this holds true for the refreshed Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy for County Durham 2016 – 2019. The Director of Public Health's Annual Report (2016), which focuses on obesity, highlights the value of physical activity interventions delivered through the Wellbeing for Life programme in supporting reduced obesity levels. Improved knowledge and ability to make behavioural changes that reduce reliance on treatments such as statins contribute towards Clinical Commissioning Group priorities. However, the outcomes and benefits from Volunteering and Group Intervention strands of the programme support far wider-reaching local and national strategic objectives. These are highlighted in tables included at appendix 2.

### **Case Study**

*David met with one of the Volunteer Co-ordinators after being introduced through a community worker. He'd been interested in volunteering for some time, but had found it difficult as he is visually impaired. After a discussion to discover David's interests (walking and going to the gym), suitable opportunities were identified with him and he decided to enrol for a Walk Leader course, along with another local volunteer, Andrew.*

*Both thoroughly enjoyed it and together now host small walks on a regular basis. Enjoying his volunteering role, David wanted to do more, so Tow Law's Legacy Gym was approached...Although David can't see, he knows his way around the gym well!. The Volunteer Coordinator worked with David and Andrew every Friday and taught them the basics of Fitness Instructing. As a result of all this, not only was a friendship made, but **the Gym is now open an extra day a week because of their commitment**. David and Andrew are still holding the walking groups and volunteering at the Legacy Gym every Friday.*

## APPENDIX 1

### Background to Wellbeing for Life

The Wellbeing for Life programme was commissioned by Durham County Council Public Health in 2014, in an innovative move away from 'single issue' focused interventions. With contract commencement in October 2014, it brings together five local partners in a unique Consortium arrangement. Drawing on the strengths of each member organisation, County Durham and Darlington Foundation Trust, Durham County Council Culture and Sport, Leisureworks, Durham Community Action and Pioneering Care Partnership deliver the programme, which aims to improve health and wellbeing through greater focus on integration, improving quality and efficiency, addressing the wider determinants of health and focusing on prevention and early intervention. Positive mental health is a core component of the programme.

Delivered across North, East and South West Durham, targeting the areas and communities of interest experiencing greatest health inequalities, Wellbeing for Life acknowledges the significance of wider determinants of health. This means that, alongside offering support to individuals to develop healthy behaviours, the programme actively seeks to improve skills, capacity and resilience at an individual and community level.

## APPENDIX 2 – Volunteering and Group Intervention strands links to local strategy

6.		Delivery Outcome*							
7. Local Strategic Priorities supported:	8. Improved understanding and skills around healthy behaviours	9. Increased physical activity	10. Improved diet and cooking skills	11. Increased levels of self-esteem, confidence and resilience	12. Improved social networks	13. Increased skills and qualifications linked to work	14. Obtaining volunteering experience	15. Obtaining paid employment	
<b>16. Altogether Better - Altogether Healthier: Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy for County Durham 2016 - 2019</b>									
• Reduce health inequalities and early deaths	17. x	18. x	19. x	20.	21.	22.	23.	24.	
• Improve the mental and physical wellbeing of the population	25. x	26. x	27. x	28. x	29. x	30. x	31. x	32. x	
<b>33. Altogether Better – Altogether Wealthier</b>									
• Sustainable Neighbourhoods and Rural Communities	34.	35.	36.	37.	38. x	39. x	40. x	41. x	
• Competitive and Successful People: <i>42. -Re-engage adults with work, moving economically inactive people into the labour market</i> <i>43. -Improve equality of access to employment and services</i>	44.	45.	46.	47.	48.	49. x	50. x	51. x	
<b>52. Durham Dales, Easington and Sedgfield CCG 5 Year Plan - Outcome Priorities:</b>									
• Improving health and preventing ill health in partnership	53. x	54. x	55. x	56. x	57. x	58.	59.	60.	
• Reducing inequalities	61. x	62.	63.	64.	65.	66. x	67. x	68. x	
<b>69. North Durham CCG Clear and Credible Plan - 2012 – 2017 - Strategic Priorities:</b>									
• Strategic Priority	70. x	71. x	72. x	73. x	74. x	75. x	76. x	77. x	

<b>1: Improve the health status of the population</b>										
<b>78. County Durham Public Mental Health Strategy 2013 - 17</b>										
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Objective 1: Improve mental health and wellbeing of individuals through engagement, information, activities, access to services and education.</b></li> </ul>	79.	80.	81.	82. x	83. x	84. x	85. x	86. x		
<b>91. Our Ambition – DCC Culture and Sport’s aspirations and framework:</b>										
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Durham Local</b></li> </ul>	92.	93.	94.	95.	96.	97. x	98. x	99.		
<b>100. County Durham Physical Activity Framework</b>										
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>More people to start, stay &amp; succeed in their endeavours to be more physically active</b></li> </ul>	101.	102. x	103.	104.	105.	106.	107.	108.		
<b>109.</b>										
<b>110. Leisureworks Strategic Priorities</b>										
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Deliver on range of public health objectives</b></li> </ul>	111. x	112. x	113. x	114. x	115. x	116. x	117. x	118. x		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Maximise on the value of being a local independent trust</b></li> </ul>	119. x	120. x	121. x	122. x	123. x	124. x	125. x	126. x		

\*NB outcomes are based on case study information and feedback and have not yet been validated through formal evaluation

## APPENDIX 2: Volunteering and Group Intervention strands links to national strategy

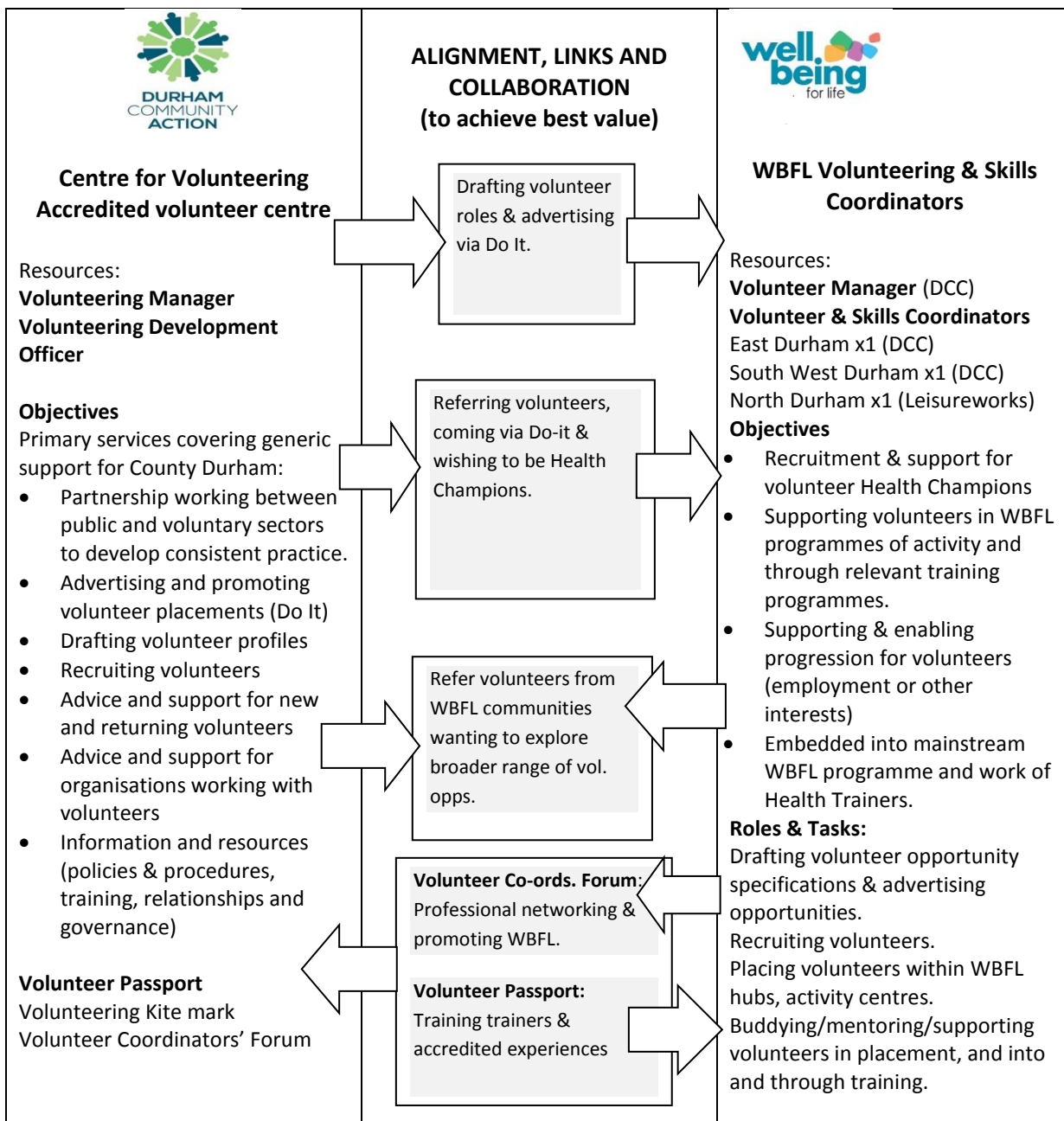
127.		Delivery Outcome*								
128. National Strategic Priorities supported	129. Improved understanding and skills around healthy behaviours	130. Increased levels of physical activity	131. Improved diet and cooking skills	132. Increased levels of self-esteem, confidence and resilience	133. Improved social networks	134. Increased skills and qualifications linked to work	135. Obtaining volunteering experience	136. Obtaining paid employment		
137. NHS 5 Year Forward View (2015)										
• Targeted prevention, empowering patients, creating healthy workplaces	138. x	139. x	140. x	141. x	142. x	143.	144.	145.		
• Engaging people in community volunteering	146.	147.	148.	149.	150.	151.	152. x	153.		
• Recognises significance of employment in improving health	154.	155.	156.	157.	158.	159. x	160. x	161. x		
162. NHS England 2016-17 Business Plan										
• Tackling Obesity and preventing Diabetes	164. x	165. x	166. x	167.	168.	169.	170.	171.		
163.										
172. No Health Without Mental Health (2011)	173.	174.	175.	176. x	177. x	178.	179. x	180.		
181. Start Active Stay Active – Department of Health	182.	183. x	184.	185.	186.	187.	188.	189.		
190. Towards an Active Nation, Sport England's Strategy 2016 – 2021										
• Tackling inactivity	191.	192. x	193.	194.	195.	196.	197.	198.		
• Helping those who are active now to carry on, but at lower cost to the public purse over time	199. x	200. x	201.	202.	203.	204.	205.	206.		
207. Sporting Future - DCMS, 2015 - Priority 6. More people from every background regularly and meaningfully:										
• a) taking part in sport & physical	208.	209. x	210.	211.	212.	213.	214.	215.		

activity											
• b) volunteering	216.	217.	218.	219.	220.	221.	x	222.	x	223.	
<b>224. Everybody Active Every Day – Public Health England – 2014:</b>											
• 1. Active society: creating a social movement	225.	226.	x	227.	228.	229.	230.	231.	232.		
• 2. Moving professionals: activating networks of expertise	233.	234.		235.	236.	237.	238.	239.	x	240.	x
<b>241. Turning the Tide of Inactivity – UK Sport</b>											
• The Activity Sector should focus on engaging and supporting inactive people	242.	243.	x	244.	245.	246.	247.	248.		249.	

\*NB outcomes are based on case study information and feedback and have not yet been validated through formal evaluation

APPENDIX 3

*Volunteering opportunities pathway developed through Wellbeing for Life*





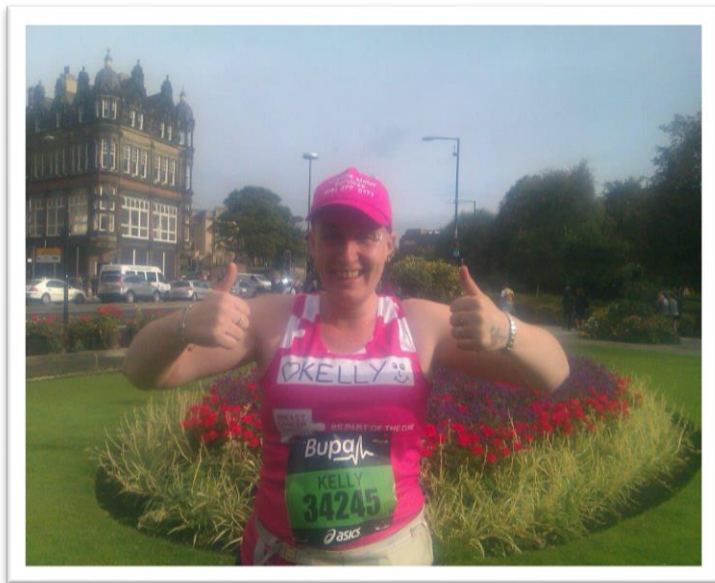
## APPENDIX 4 - ADDITIONAL CASE STUDIES

### A. Volunteers

#### Kelly, Volunteer Community Health Champion- Bowburn

Kelly, aged 35 has lived in Bowburn all of her life and is passionate about the mental, physical and social wellbeing in her community. Kelly left school and went down the path of finding a career in care; she has worked in many nursing homes and in several similar roles.

Kelly has a son that was diagnosed with ASD; it was at this point that Kelly decided that she must do something for herself during the day while her son was at school to make a difference in her community. As well as taking part in several charity fundraisers every year, Kelly decided to volunteer at Bowburn Community Fitness Suite where she recruited many new members and recruited and mentored new Volunteers. With a passion for learning Kelly then went to college and completed her Level 2 Fitness Instructors qualification. Kelly is now half way through her Level 3. In November 2015 Kelly volunteered at Lumiere in Durham as a Festival Maker and at one of the feedback events she approached a WBFL stall and joined the programme in the hope to carry out some volunteering. Kelly enrolled on several training courses and became a Community Health Champion.



Throughout the process Kelly continued volunteering (and still does) at Bowburn Community Fitness Suite and constantly promotes the Wellbeing for Life service. Kelly thoroughly enjoys the training courses provided by Wellbeing for Life as she believes the more knowledgeable she becomes the more the public in Bowburn will make different life choices to improve their wellbeing with the advice she passes on.

Kelly has also enrolled on the Level 3 Health Trainer Qualification and is really enjoying it. She is now helping deliver a 'Healthy Lifestyle' eight week programme and Bowburn Community Centre with the Senior Health Trainer for the SW Durham Hub. Kelly loves being part of the team and is finding this experience to be really beneficial, not just to the clients attending the programme, but for her own personal development and hopes as time goes on she can deliver many more of these courses. Kelly states that "when I have free time, I always want to do something productive as I love to help people and encourage members of the community to feel better in themselves". Kelly is an asset to the service and contributes with the upmost motivation and enthusiasm.

Kelly's goals for the upcoming months are to complete the Level 3 Health trainer Qualification and take part in more shadowing of Health Trainers.

### **Alan, Volunteer Community Health Champion - Horden**

Alan Bennett, aged 50, is local from East Durham, and a born and bred Horden lad. He first came to Healthworks September 22<sup>nd</sup> 2014 via Acuman, a Job Centre community work placement programme for 6 months. His placement was very varied ranging from reception, admin support for different projects, leaflet dropping to serving in the juice works café.

He really enjoyed the work and the people working there and in March 2015 decided to stay on as a NHS Healthworks volunteer, volunteering between 24-30 hours a week as Health Trainer Champion. In this new role he was able to gain further confidence and new skills as he shadowed the Health Trainers, supported events/activities/groups and enrolled on a number of courses (including passing City and Guilds level 3 Health Trainer qualification).



### **Karen, Volunteer Community Health Champion - Catchgate**

Karen, 50 from Catchgate, recently relocated to the area with her son after living in Mid Sussex for many years. She had struggled to connect with people and find new friends since moving to Catchgate and in turn became socially isolated. Karen also struggled to find any work that is suitably matched to both her skills and her family commitments, which added to her social isolation.

Karen began volunteering with the Wellbeing for Life service in July 2016 after being told about the project by the Learning Hive in Catchgate. Karen also accessed one to one sessions with a Health Trainer to improve her own wellbeing in November 2015, as a result of seeing how beneficial these sessions were to other volunteers. *'I really enjoyed working with Ellie (the Health Trainer). She has even made me think about quitting smoking and I am going to sign up to the stop smoking service.'*

Since signing up to the service as a volunteer Karen has accessed many of the training opportunities available and volunteered at many different events, including Wellbeing Promotion and Cancer Awareness events. The volunteering opportunities have also allowed Karen to connect with individuals from the local area and widen her social networks.

The support from volunteers at these events is often invaluable, with a health trainer commenting, *'It's fantastic. It really helps us to have a volunteer present to speak to members of the public and answer any questions they may have. They can also speak to these people about their personal experiences with the service so that is an added bonus.'*

More recently, Wellbeing for Life agreed to take over Karen's mandated volunteer hours from the Job Centre. Karen was very happy at the news, stating *'This is the best news I have had all year. Hopefully this is the start of things going right for a change. I enjoy what wellbeing does and want to pursue it.'*

The Volunteer and Skills Co-ordinator is currently drafting a work programme for Karen, that will allow her to gain a vast amount of experience and enable her to support all of the work that Wellbeing for Life are currently planning across North Durham.

## B. Group Interventions

### Jackie\*

Jackie\* is a 63 year old County Durham resident who has suffered from two mild strokes already. She approached Wellbeing for Life as she wanted information on physical activity and healthy eating and was signposted onto a Healthy Eating group and the Walk4Life programme. Jackie also received one to one advice from a Health Trainer. She found the programme very helpful and, after some initial gentle persuasion, is now attending the Walk4Life sessions every week. As a result of engaging with WBFL Jackie has improved her knowledge of how to eat more healthily and has picked up some tips on making healthier meals for herself and her family. She has also increased her physical activity levels and has even been able to work with her GP to reduce her use of statins. Jackie says. *'The walking has helped all the people on a social level and helping them interact' and 'Jo and Steve's [WBFL delivery staff] professionalism should also be noted...'*

### Tesco Walk

The Walk4life 8-week programme in Consett concluded on 19<sup>th</sup> January 2016 having commenced in mid-November 2015. Tesco were very supportive throughout the programme and provided their community room as a meeting point together with free refreshments every week – something really appreciated by all participants, especially during inclement weather.

The programme was attended by 13 clients with an age range of between 44 and 81. It was well received and continues to date thanks in part to 3 very enthusiastic members who signed up as Wellbeing for Life Volunteer Walk Leaders.



Pictured: Walkers on Genesis Way in Consett

Here is an insight of a few clients who attended the programme:

Husband and Wife **Sondra, 68 and Tony, 69** moved to the Consett area 6 years ago and were eager to find out more about the area and meet new people. Sondra finds getting out in the fresh air helps her mental wellbeing and Tony enjoys keeping fit. They both feel this programme has improved their fitness and have loved being part of a group of like-minded people, where they have gained more knowledge and history of the area. Tony was keen to attend group based exercise activities as well and has been signposted to sessions in his local community. Both are now

keen to become Walk Leaders to keep the programme running and hopefully get into other volunteering opportunities.

**Doreen**, 80 recently lost her husband whom she walked with on a regular basis. As a result her participation reduced until she saw a flyer in her local Tesco promoting the programme and decided to come along. She has met like-minded people and her confidence has improved.

**Marion**, 71 lives on her own and loves keeping fit, attending lots of walking and exercise sessions in the community. She has made lots of good friends over the years by getting involved with these sessions, often enjoying social trips away and holidays with them. She has a great knowledge of Consett and its surrounding areas so will be a great asset to the Walking programme in her capacity as a Volunteer Walk Leader.

**Carole Anne**, 72 only moved to the Consett 3 months ago and knew very little about the area and thought it would be a good idea to come along and join the programme. Her local knowledge has now improved and she really enjoyed meeting new people, socialising and making friends. She is keen to lose some weight and feels she has got fitter by walking regularly. Carole Anne is delighted the programme will continue beyond its initial 8 weeks so she can continue socializing and exercising.

### **Maureen**

Maureen is 72 years old. Other than irritable bowel syndrome she has no medical problems, and sought help from WBFL to improve her fitness and general health. She felt that her IBS and associated trouble with eating certain foods (Maureen has a sugar gluten intolerance) might limit the scope for dietary changes and so initially got involved in a regular physical activity session. This helped her to be more active and she reported an increase in energy, which motivated her to make more changes. Through the group session programme, one to one help from a Health Trainer was organised. The Health Trainer helped Maureen to keep a food diary, which enabled her to identify areas she could change and improve.

Maureen has since begun to eat more regularly and has increased her fibre intake. Maureen says, *'...Continuing to monitor my efforts we discussed how I was feeling. My energy levels had improved greatly and I have continued instigating these suggestions into my daily life. I found the 8 weeks very rewarding, improving my fitness levels and overall health. Many thanks'*

### **Eric**

Eric lives in Tanfield, is 74 years old and is a widower. His GP recommended the Wellbeing for Life programme because of concerns about his weight and blood pressure. Eric decided to change his lifestyle.

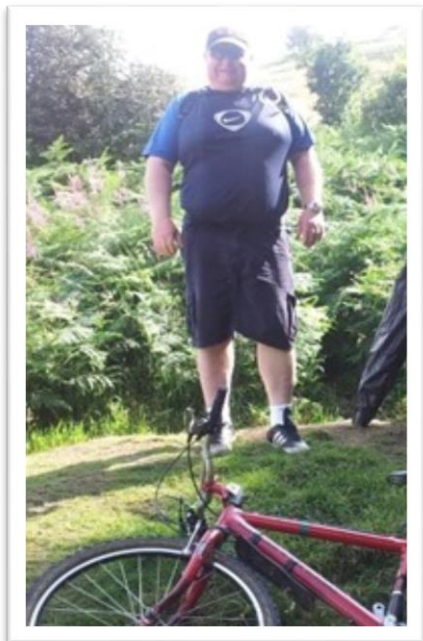
Eric wanted to access group based physical activity sessions, practical cooking and healthy eating. He was also keen on meeting new people and socialising. He subsequently attended Healthy Circuit, Practical Cooking and Healthy Eating courses at Dipton Community Centre.

He now feels more confident in his cooking ability and in preparing healthy meals. His knowledge of fats, sugars and salt in food has also improved. His physical activity participation has also increased – he is exercising at least 5 times per week now and has been signposted to the Just Beat It! diabetes programme. He is also a regular swimmer and group exercise member at The Louisa Centre in Stanley. He has made new friends and is enjoying his new, healthy lifestyle.

### **Mark**

Mark, 53 attended the healthy eating/weight management group sessions at his work place, HMRC in Peterlee; delivered by Mariyeh Tehrani, the Wellbeing Development Officer, with support from volunteers and Health trainers. Mark's aim was to become more active and to lose weight. Due to Mark's role manning the main reception at HMRC he was unable to sit through the full sessions, however this didn't demotivate him. Mark was always the first to arrive and get weighed, followed by discussions on his progress in the previous as well as goals for the following week. Mark used the information from each session to make changes to his daily eating plan and attending the group sessions motivated him to become more active each week. He was monitoring this through his pedometer.

Mark achieved fantastic results within the 8 weeks and was able to lose over 2 stones in weight. In Mark's own words: *"Doing this course was the motivation I needed to help me lose weight. The wellbeing team were very helpful and informative. I became more active and started eating healthy foods. I started off weighing 126.6kg and after 7 weeks weighed 113.5kg so I lost just over 2 stones and feel great. Here is to moving forward and carrying on. Thanks Wellbeing team for all your help."*



Pictured: Mark before and after the intervention

**Gentle Exercise Group- Willington Community Action Centre**

This group had 13 total participants with a variety of health related conditions including arthritis, diabetes, obesity, high blood pressure and high cholesterol. Taking these issues into account, and working with individual preferences, a programme of gentle, chair based exercise sessions was organised, which included exercise to music and dynaband work.

Each participant felt the benefit of the exercises. 'It was a social, enjoyable session that didn't really feel like work' they said. Now that that programme has ended, the group plans to continue to meet every Friday and have a fun session into which they will incorporate chair based activities.

**Metafit – Leeholme/Coundon Welfare Hall**

Through consultation with its users, the committee for Leeholme/Coundon identified a need in the local community for a 'higher level' fitness class and approached the Well Being for Life service help address this. In response, a weekly Metafit programme was arranged, and 15 participants attended. With varying abilities, the sessions were adapted to meet individual requirements so that even those who were less fit could enjoy taking part at a level to suit them. All the participants fed back that they enjoyed the sessions and four participants have since gone on to join a local fitness centre to continue training.

**Practical Cooking - St Catherines, Crook**

Practical Cooking was attended by eight participants; a diverse group, which included one wheelchair user and two people involved in a weight loss programme that came along to learn about healthy, practical cooking.

Each week the group joined in with the preparation and cooking, learning how to cook meals from scratch and how easy it was to prepare and cook simple meals. Each participant was given a copy of the recipe and at the end of the programme a folder with more 'supermeal' recipes from the Change4Life website. Feedback was extremely positive. All participants said they went away with more knowledge and skills, and those with small children said they have since involved the children with the healthy eating recipes and enjoyed making things together.

***\*Not the beneficiary's real name***