



## **Barton Healthy New Town – Workshop Wednesday March 15<sup>th</sup> 2017**

Our workshop was commissioned to provide a space for Community Leaders from the current Barton Community and for people who will be living and working in Barton Park to learn more about Mental Health and Wellbeing, to think about actions in relation to participants own wellbeing and to identify actions which can be taken to improve Mental Health and Wellbeing in Barton and Barton Park.

The actual make up of the group of participants on the day of the workshop was slightly different to the original intended audience. All but one of the participants was involved in service delivery either for or on behalf of Statutory Services.

### **Purpose of the workshop**

As work towards developing the Healthy New Town community has taken place, it has been clear that Mental Health is one of the most pressing issues facing Barton. Residents of Barton experience significantly poorer Mental Health outcomes than the rest of Oxford and Oxfordshire and have poorer engagement with services. Due to the level of concern and interest in Mental Health in Barton, Oxfordshire Mind we asked to facilitate workshops to explore how Mental Health and Wellbeing can be addressed in Barton and Barton Park.

### **Format**

The workshop was divided into four parts:

1. Getting to know each other and the impact of person-centred approaches on Mental Health and Wellbeing
2. Mental Health Awareness – learning about common diagnoses and symptoms
3. Five Ways to Wellbeing – An accessible way to improve your own wellbeing and the wellbeing of people you work with or care for.
4. What steps can we take to improve Mental Health and Wellbeing in Barton Healthy New Town?

## Getting to know each other and using a Person-centred approach

The first part of the workshop focussed on getting to know the other people in the room, both to make discussions later in the day easier and also to demonstrate the impact of person-centred approaches in supporting people with their Mental Health and in promoting Wellbeing. We introduced a 'One Page Profile', a widely used means of recording and sharing person-centred information about people, for example for people who use services or staff working with people who need support. The group worked in pairs to answer three questions:

“What do people like and admire about me?”

“What is important **to** me?”

“What support do I need?”

Through answering these questions we were able to illustrate how changing the questions we ask people can have a dramatic effect on our ability to offer effective support, to build relationships and to make sure people know they are valued. This in turn has an impact on Mental Health and Wellbeing.



This photo shows some of the information the group shared during the exercise. Participants agreed that introducing questions of this sort into routine contacts with people receiving services would have a positive effect on our ability to offer the right support to people at the right time.

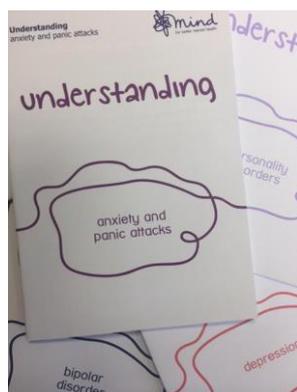
## Mental Health Awareness

The second session was focussed on Mental Health Awareness. We looked in detail at three of the most common Mental Health conditions, Depression, Anxiety and Bi-Polar Disorder.

Working in groups, participants worked through Mind resources detailing the signs and symptoms of these Mental Health conditions and then fed back to the group. The whole group then had the opportunity to ask questions of the facilitators,

drawing on their experience of working with people with these diagnoses and sharing good practice within the group.

Due to a substantial level of interest in the group, the agenda was adjusted in order to allow more time to explore an additional diagnosis, Personality Disorder, as despite this being a less commonly diagnosed condition, it was evident that people with Personality Disorders had a disproportionate amount of contact with services. This is an important learning point from the day and one which might influence future training and support for staff working in statutory services.



### **Five Ways to Wellbeing**

The third session of the workshop introduced and explored the 'Five Ways to Wellbeing', an evidence based way of understanding and improving Wellbeing, both as an individual and when supporting others. In order to explore the 5 Ways to Wellbeing in an accessible and creative way, we used 'Wellbeing Fink Cards', with the groups asking each other questions based on each of the Five Ways to Wellbeing and then using what we learned to identify actions that can be taken by us individually to improve our own wellbeing.

Five Ways to Wellbeing was well received by the group, in particular in relation by participants working with Children and Young People and by those working with the elderly. Through focussing on Wellbeing, rather than Mental Illness, the group felt that there was an opportunity to talk positively about Mental Health, rather than looking at the negative aspects of Mental Illness.

### **Generating Ideas**

The final session of the day was to think creatively about the practical steps we could take in Barton to improve the Mental Health and Wellbeing of the community. Participants put forward suggestions of improvements that could be made – sorting these into two categories:

- Suggestions which required little or no funding

- Suggestions which required additional funding

Participants then voted on their preferred ideas, with the most popular suggestions highlighted in orange on the table below. (As the photo quality is poor on this example, the ideas are listed in the table below)

Ideas which require little or no funding	Ideas which require additional funding
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Create a map of services</b> – in order to ensure that what is currently available is known and well understood by partner services, community leaders and members of the public.</li> <li>• Improve agency knowledge about services – see above.</li> <li>• Share contact details for key agencies – see above.</li> <li>• <b>Incorporate 5 Ways to Wellbeing into Youth Session Plans</b> – The 5 Ways to Wellbeing were agreed to be a highly suitable concept for developing understanding of mental health and wellbeing for the younger age group.</li> <li>• Quiet spaces available for people experiencing anxiety or low mood</li> <li>• Joint funding applications for projects to address needs</li> <li>• Support and encourage more professionals to attend early help assessment training.</li> <li>• <b>Include an activity Calendar in newsletter</b> – This is a simple idea that is easy to achieve. The ‘Hands On News’ publication is ideal for sharing information on what is happening in relation to Mental Health and Wellbeing in Barton. One suggestion was to have a regular wellbeing column or section in the newsletter, which could be fed into by services or people with a positive experience of improving mental health and wellbeing.</li> <li>• Develop the multi-agency Health and Wellbeing partnership</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Mental Health Education in schools from a young age</b> – This can be through training teachers, engaging directly with pupils and parents or through non-school based community groups e.g. football clubs, youth clubs etc. Training options would include Mental Health Awareness, or for a more comprehensive approach, Mental Health First Aid. Additionally, training can be provided in Five Ways to Wellbeing and in specific resources which can be used with Children and Young People.</li> <li>• <b>Train all staff to be able to spot signs of a Mental Health issues</b> – Basic first aid training, for example Mental Health First Aid, can have a dramatic impact in terms of helping people to access support early. When staff are more aware of the early signs of a Mental Health condition, they are more likely to identify a possible problem and suggest seeking support at a point when interventions are at their most effective.</li> <li>• <b>Members of the community trained in supporting people with their Mental Health and Wellbeing</b> – This is a well evidenced, best practice idea based around concepts of Asset Based Community Development (ABCD). A practical example is that people may well disclose mental health issues (or</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish a social media account for all Mental Health Services in Barton – this could take the form of a Facebook Page, Twitter Hashtag e.g. #healthybarton, which all local service providers could use to share information easily.</li> <li>• Regular information on Mental Health and Wellbeing in local newsletter ‘Hands On News’ – See above.</li> <li>• Ensure all open spaces are accessible and free from obstacles to use – a good example given in the group was that all benches on walkways in Barton were facing the town, rather than facing the countryside.</li> </ul>	<p>symptoms which could be indicative of a mental health condition) to people who are not part of statutory services, for example to a shopkeeper, café owner, hairdresser etc. Through developing community awareness of Mental Health conditions and how to respond, people can be directed towards support at an earlier stage. ABCD approaches are particularly helpful in communities where engagement with statutory services is lower.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduce 2-way bus route to improve access to services for people living in Barton – this was highlighted as a practical barrier to people, particularly those with mobility issues, accessing local services.</li> <li>• Targeted drug and alcohol interventions</li> <li>• ‘Greening Activities’, including creating a more pleasant environment, developing walking routes, stimulating community activities e.g. gardening.</li> <li>• <b>‘Incredible Edible Barton’ – community gardening and veg growing initiative!</b> – This was a suggestion of a potential holistic wellbeing project to combine physical activity, community building, cross-generational activity and promoting healthier diet.</li> <li>• <b>Expand Social Prescription Activity</b> – The group were very positive about the impact of social prescribing in Barton, and felt that expansion of this would be very effective in promoting good mental health and wellbeing.</li> <li>• Establish a post of ‘Mental Health</li> </ul>
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community based ideas. Nevertheless, the ideas generated by the group were creative and positive and could have a huge impact.

Particular themes that were widely supported were:

- Sharing information as effectively as possible, through making the best possible use of newsletters, information hubs, communal spaces and
- Education in Mental Health and Wellbeing for children and young people.
- Developing community capacity – helping people to help each other. This is a well-evidenced means of providing really effective support and making improvements to wellbeing. Models of Asset Based Community Development are included within the literature review for further information.
- Emphasising community outdoor activities, especially gardening projects and growing produce.
- Physical Infrastructure. Throughout the discussions there was a recurring theme of the importance of the physical environment and ‘hidden’ barriers to accessing community facilities. Key points raised included developing cross-generational spaces, cycle paths giving safe and straightforward access to schools and to Oxford City and making sure appropriate rest areas were included in green spaces.

It would be ideal to look at these suggestions with members of the community and get their views on what would work best, or if there are additional suggestions which might be popular.

Oxfordshire Mind  
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