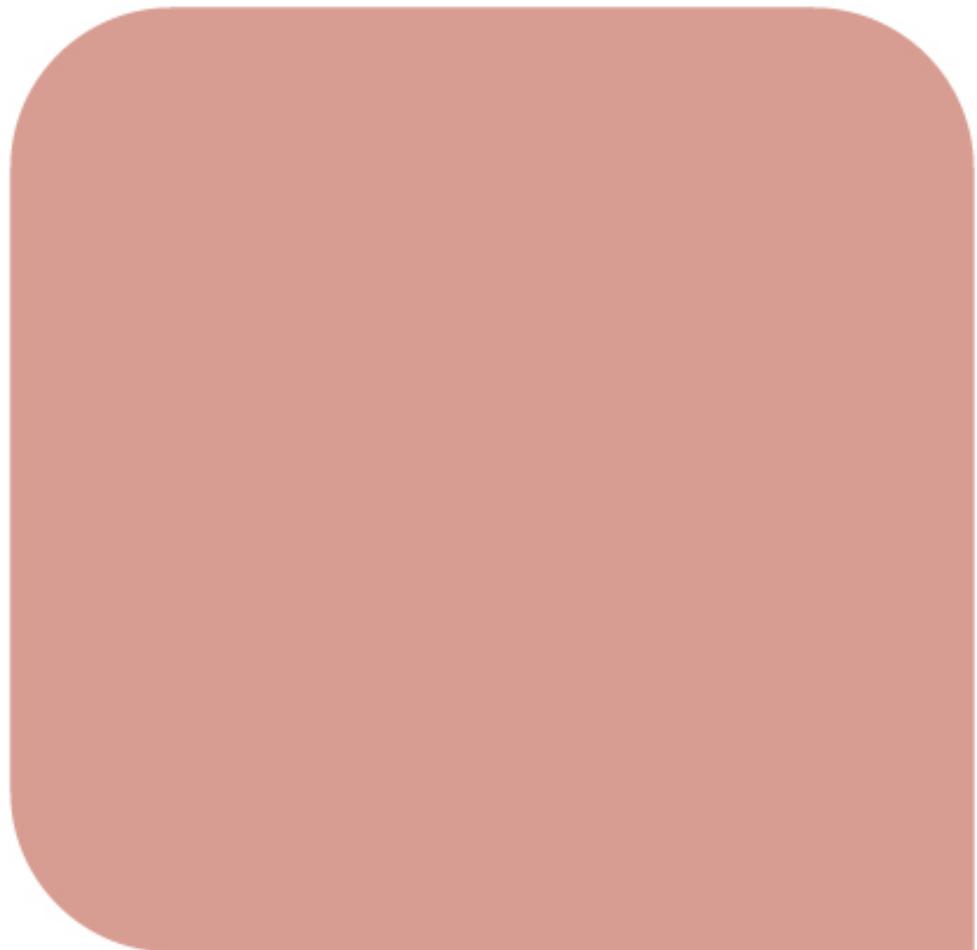




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Bristol City Council and mainstreaming environmental sustainability: a case study in sustainable social care



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First published in Great Britain in December 2011
by the Social Care Institute for Excellence

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The Sustainable Social Care programme encourages commissioners of adult social care to promote sustainable development across the sector, particularly to reduce carbon emissions and adapt to climate change. For further information about the programme and related resources, please visit www.scie.org.uk/adults/sustainablesocialcare/index.asp

This report is available online at www.scie.org.uk

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Acknowledgements and further information

The community engagement work undertaken on behalf of SCIE and reported here would not have been possible without the leadership, generosity and expertise of Bristol's health and social care directorate, especially Kay Russell, Strategic Planning Manager, and Claire Craner-Buckley, Environment Adviser.

We are grateful for the support and insight provided by Matt Prescott (Isostasy), Joyce Lee (LGiU), Nick McAllistair and Amy Richards (Association of Chief Executives of Voluntary Organisations - ACEVO), and Mary Rose Cook (Uscreates).

For further information about Bristol's work to mainstream environmental sustainability, contact Claire Craner-Buckley, Environment Adviser (HSC) on 0117 9224 331 or Claire.craner@bristol.gov.uk

For further information about the Sustainable Social Care programme, including publications and resources, visit www.scie.org.uk/adults/sustainablesocialcare/ or email sustainability@scie.org.uk

Introduction

‘The role of leaders and senior managers is clearly a key factor in creating the right conditions for sustainability initiatives to succeed.’

Evans, Hills and Grimshaw, *Sustainable systems of social care* (SCIE 2010)

The Sustainable Social Care programme encourages local authorities, as commissioners of adult social care services, to promote sustainable development across the sector, particularly to reduce carbon emissions and adapt to climate change. The programme is funded by the Department of Health and delivered by the Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE).

- The aims of the programme are to demonstrate how sustainable development can: help deliver the Government’s vision for adult social care, with capable communities and active citizens
- enable local service improvements, putting strong emphasis on prevention and partnership - with a focus on social, economic and environmental outcomes.

In 2010, SCIE published ‘[Sustainable systems of social care](#)’, commissioned from the Institute for Sustainability, Health and the Environment (ISHE) at the University of the West of England. ISHE’s research uses case studies to identify enablers and barriers to achieving sustainability in social care and considers the distinctive needs of social care compared with other sectors and the NHS. The research also examines the implications of personalisation for sustainability, arguing that community-based service models could contribute to sustainability but more individualistic approaches could risk negative impacts.

In parallel with ISHE’s academic research, SCIE worked with the Local Government Information Unit (LGiU) to convene a local authority learning network for practitioners. Commissioners and councillors from around the country came together to explore such issues as the impact of climate change on social care users, how to adapt services to make them more environmentally sustainable, and how to involve people who use services in making the necessary changes. The report of the network, ‘[Independence, community and environment](#)’, makes the case for people who use services as being environmental leaders themselves.

Bristol City Council was a participant in the learning network and featured as an example of good practice in ISHE’s research. The council has a wide ranging programme of work that considers the environment and sustainability, spanning the work of the council as a whole but also with a specific focus on the contribution that the health and social care directorate (HSC) can make to the overall objectives of the

council. Building on these strong foundations, Bristol collaborated with SCIE, LGiU, the Association of Chief Executives of Voluntary Organisations (ACEVO) and social change agency Uscreates to explore with local residents what environmental sustainability means to them. This was to improve choice and service quality in the context of personalisation. The work took the form of workshops and local community engagement activities in neighbourhoods prioritised by the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA), between December 2010 and August 2011.

This case study provides an overview of Bristol's sustainability objectives, outlining how HSC has taken a key role in improving the overall performance of the council, and summarises the SCIE-led project regarding personalisation and sustainability. Alongside the case study, SCIE has produced '[Sustainable social care and personalisation: a guide for community engagement](#)'. It incorporates a number of downloadable resources, including a presentation introducing the concepts and key issues, and templates to support engagement and workshop activities.

Taking forward sustainability within health and social care: key learning

- Moving the environmental performance agenda forward in health and social care is being assisted by the Sustainable City Group which has undertaken a process of inviting colleagues from the other council directorates to get involved in their work, which also helps their own directorates gain eco-management and audit scheme (EMAS) accreditation¹. Joining this together has been vital.
- A team of environment advisers for most directorates has now been established and is overseen by the Sustainable City Group – this ensures environment is a high priority.
- Practices set up by the council's Environment Team under the EMAS standard have been used to monitor and measure the activities and procedures of HSC, which has allowed sustainability and environmental performance to move up the agenda.
- Understanding the priorities of the HSC team and how sustainability fits within this has been key to progressing performance monitoring around the environment; as has auditing and environmental performance training.
- Sustainability and climate change topics can be used to engage citizens in creative discussion about the future of care, with an emphasis on community and individual resilience. The solutions are often low-cost.

¹ <http://www.bristolpartnership.org/vision-for-bristol> accessed 16-05-2011

The Bristol Partnership and strategic buy-in

'Building resilience in people's lives and their experiences of community is now key to modern social care. It's also the key to adapting to uncertainty such as climate change, and makes this work topical and timely.'

Peter Hay, President, Association of Directors of Adult Social Services

Environmental sustainability is high on the agenda in Bristol and at a very strategic level. The council, along with other public bodies, has ensured that this is carried forward throughout its own work and has set ambitious targets and plans for improving environmental performance, including a 40 per cent cut in carbon emissions by 2020. This will be measured against the 2005 baseline, which was 2,322 kilotonnes of carbon dioxide emissions (combining emissions from energy use in homes, businesses and organisations and local road transport activity).

Bristol has been recognised as an environmental leader, for example as a Green Capital finalist, and is consistently in the top five of the Sustainable Cities Index.

Bristol Partnership

The Bristol Partnership is the Local Strategic Partnership for Bristol. It brings together organisations from business, the public sector and the community in order to achieve positive outcomes for the city. The Partnership developed the '20:20 plan and vision for Bristol'¹ which sets out a ten-year programme to fulfil aspirations for a thriving city: one of the four primary aims is to make 'prosperity sustainable'. Bristol wants to improve the energy efficiency of the city to reduce carbon emissions but also to reduce the amount of money the city spends on energy and so become more resilient to the effects of energy uncertainty. In addition to the carbon reduction targets, Bristol has, therefore, also set targets for reducing energy use:

¹ <http://www.bristolpartnership.org/vision-for-bristol> accessed 16-05-2011

Bristol Energy use and targets²

	Organisations	Homes	Local road transport	Total energy
Baseline - 2005 (GWh)	2,500	3,500	2,000	8,000
Savings achieved by 2007	17%	9%	1%	10%
Savings Target - 2015	20%	20%	15%	20%
Savings Target - 2020	30%	30%	35%	30%
Estimated savings from National Measures	5%	5%	10%	5%
Savings goal for local action	25%	25%	30%	25%

Joint Strategic Needs Assessment

In 2009, Bristol City Council and The Green Capital Momentum Group commissioned 'Building a positive future for Bristol after peak oil³'. It examines the consequences that 'peak oil' would have for Bristol, and considers how the city can become more resilient to an 'oil crunch', identifying new opportunities to develop local energy and make the city more sustainable. The report highlights the need for:

- leadership on preparing for peak oil
- engaged communities
- planning and transport decisions based around local accessibility to essential goods and services
- actions and policies to support a sustainable food system focused on robust local supply chains
- creation of jobs and skills that are relevant in a fossil fuel depleted future.

The '[2010 Bristol joint strategic needs assessment](#) (JSNA)' discusses this research and identifies the need to change services and planning to address these environmental concerns. It also notes the need to ensure that services are prepared for coping with extreme weather events, hotter drier summers and wetter winters, by changing management of energy use in buildings, travel and transport, food production, procurement and models of care. Many of these aspirations form part of the 20:20 Plan.

² Source: Cabinet Report, 25-2-2010 http://www.bristol.gov.uk/ccm/cms-service/stream/asset/?asset_id=34399204&

³ http://www.bristolgreencapital.org/sites/default/files/Peak%20Oil%20Report_0.pdf accessed on 16-05-2011

Practical actions and impact: how sustainability is being taken forward in health and social care

Targets and performance

Bristol City Council uses the EMAS environmental management tool and system to evaluate, manage and improve its environmental performance and achieve its carbon reduction targets. The council has now implemented EMAS across the majority of council services and has used this to ensure legal compliance with the International Standard ISO14001, prevent pollution, and enable continual improvement.

HSC is a key contributor through:

- reducing energy and water consumption
- reducing business mileage
- increasing recycling
- improving procurement and commissioning practice.

The council has appointed an environment adviser within HSC. This role was initially established to assist in obtaining ISO14001 accreditation within the directorate, but now works to ensure accreditation is maintained and also to:

- ensure the profile of environmental awareness is maintained within the directorate by conducting audits across HSC and in a representative spread of care homes for older people, hostels, day centres, offices and services
- ensure environmental impacts identified at audit have been assessed and highlighted in follow-up reports and action plans
- provide assistance and guidance on completing the required eco-impact assessment in Cabinet reports (see below)
- offer advice on sustainability issues in procurement and commissioning.

Audits and action plans

To ensure that environmental awareness is maintained, HSC conducts environmental internal audits regularly across a sample of teams and services. External audits are carried out every six months. These audits involve one-to-one visits with site and service managers in order to discuss and agree the environmental aspects and impacts of the specific site or service provided. The information is collated in an internal audit report template and then uploaded onto an online environmental management system. Managers are encouraged to use the report template to identify issues and problems for themselves. If the auditor finds an area where improvements can be made to achieve best practice against the EMAS

criteria, recommended action will be set out and monitored at the next audit visit. This system ensures a continuous cycle of improvement and maintained performance.

Good practice in action: Redfield Lodge Elderly People's Home internal audit

Overview: Redfield Lodge Elderly People's Home in Bristol provides 24/7 residential care, support and activities for up to 40 elderly people. At the time of audit there were 24 residents in the 40-bed home. Fifty-five staff work at Redfield, who are mostly part-time.

About the building: Redfield Lodge was purpose-built as a care home (Vetchlea) in the 1970s. It was closed in 2007 to undergo a refurbishment programme; residents returned in April 2011. It is of brick construction with a pitched roof and cavity walls. Property Services and the Energy Management Unit advise that high specification roof insulation was included in the refurbishments works (150mm quilt laid between joists and two layers of 150mm quilt laid above roof members). The wall lining to the inside of external walls was Kingspan Insulation Ltd Kooltherm K17, 52.5mm thick. The building has also been fitted with a solar thermal water heating system. It should offset £270 and generate income of £973 from the Renewable Heat Incentive per year. The site does not have a sustainable drainage system.

The audit process: An initial audit was undertaken at Redfield Lodge on 14 April 2011. It consisted of a discussion establishing the relevant 'environmental aspects and impacts' of running the home and completion of a questionnaire detailing environmental performance issues with the home manager. This was followed by a site tour which noted en-suite bedrooms, living spaces, dining room and main kitchen, three resident/visitor kitchens, hairdressing salon, a relaxation/'light' room, laundry, bathrooms (complete with jacuzzi style baths), locked bedding and cleaning storage cupboards, waste management arrangements and boiler room, as well as garden space. An EMAS folder including agreed 'environmental aspects and impacts' was left with the home manager for future reference.

Good practice identified: There are many examples of good practice at Redfield Lodge. The home manager is keen to embrace the sustainability agenda in the day-to-day work of the unit. They are planning to utilise the garden space and to introduce rain water harvesting, as well as to encourage the residents to use their individual and collective garden spaces and an allotment scheme for local residents in due course. They are progressing with setting up of comprehensive recycling systems, which will include food waste - this will represent better practice than using a macerator for food waste.

Already Redfield Lodge is reporting that, due to the high spec building that includes a solar thermal hot water system, individually controlled radiators, high spec roof and wall insulation, the upstairs heating needs only to be on a low level setting to meet service users' needs. Lighting is energy efficient with sensor lighting in storage areas and residents bathrooms. Windows and doors are double glazed. Many taps are on timer switches. There is a cycle rack available for staff and visitors, with showers and lockers for staff.

Actions agreed: A wide ranging list of environmental actions were agreed from this audit that will be monitored and revised over the next six-month period as part of an action plan. These actions include:

- Reduce energy use in the buildings e.g. turn off unwanted lights, turn down heating, dry clothes outside.
- Minimise waste production and increase recycling: e.g. reduce, reuse and recycle wherever possible and engage residents in activities that support this.
- Minimise the impacts of the goods and services that are procured e.g. food, bedding, medication, cleaning materials.
- Reduce water usage: e.g. report water leaks.
- Prevent pollution from hazardous materials.
- Reduce the amount of travel undertaken and aim to travel more sustainably.
- Raise awareness amongst staff groups of the EMAS and environmental performance in their work for the council.
- Ensure they are meeting environmental legal requirements.

Good practice in action:

Outcomes resulting from the audit scheme, Bowmead Elderly People's Home

Outcomes realised: The home manager reports that Bowmead has delivered the following outcomes resulting from their action plan:

- Gardening club: it is now growing a selection of vegetables for residents' use.
- EMAS is now discussed at all team meetings and included in the performance management appraisal system for staff.
- Washing is dried outside in good weather.
- It is reducing their number of bins to encourage recycling and reuse.
- Recycling waste is now removed from residents' rooms.
- All paper used in the photocopier is now recycled.

Eco-impact assessments

Bristol has developed an eco-impact template/checklist and guidance notes for completing assessments for all Cabinet reports. The template asks that report authors consider whether proposals will impact on:

- emission of climate changing gases
- Bristol's vulnerability to the effects of climate change
- consumption of non-renewable resources
- production, recycling or disposal of waste
- the appearance of the city

- pollution of land, water or air
- wildlife and habitats.

Report authors are asked to describe the impact and any mitigation measures that will need to be taken.

Good practice in action: Eco-impact guidance notes

Bristol's Cabinet and Corporate Management Team want the environmental impacts, especially climate change, to be identified and reduced in all key decisions and major projects. Guidance notes have been prepared by the E Performance Co-ordinator for city-wide use.

The guidance on completing the eco-impact assessments asks that report authors:

- describe the proposals and scope the assessment
- gather any baseline data that are relevant/ practicable
- assess the impact
- identify mitigation measures
- consult, if relevant
- revise the proposals to incorporate mitigation
- if relevant, set up monitoring of impacts
- publish when making key decision.

Ideas for mitigation are provided under each impact assessment theme

Climate changing gases

- Minimise the consumption of electricity and gas e.g. thermally efficient buildings.
- Consider the embodied energy in your selection of construction materials.
- Increase the use of renewable energy.
- Reduce the need to travel or making a site easily accessible by public transport.
- Specify fuel efficient or alternative fuelled vehicles.
- Ensure that waste is minimised and sent for recycling rather than landfill.

Bristol's vulnerability to the effects of climate change

- Build away from flood plains, or, if not possible, ensure that flood resilience is part of the design.
- Use sustainable drainage techniques such as permeable paving.
- Recycle rain water.
- Minimise water consumption.
- Design buildings so they are robust.

Consumption of non-renewable resources

- Use renewable materials such as sustainable timber.
- Reduce the quantities of non-renewable materials through design and avoiding excess waste.
- Use recycled materials instead of virgin e.g. recycled paper.

Production, recycling or disposal of waste

- Design the proposal so that creation of waste is minimised.
- Investigate options for re-using materials on-site.
- Segregate waste to enable recycling and re-use.
- Use readily reusable or recyclable materials (and ensure that reuse or recycling takes place).
- Compost biodegradable waste such as food.
- Ensure raw materials are stored carefully to avoid spoilage.

Procurement and commissioning

'The strengthened role of local authorities improving health, through public health and commissioning, is a real opportunity for clinicians to work with councillors and officers to realise the co-benefits for health and the environment of action on climate change.'

Dr Robin Stott and Professor Sue Atkinson CBE, Co-chairs of the Climate and Health Council

Bristol has developed a procurement and commissioning framework (Analyse/Plan/Do/Review) which incorporates sustainability to ensure that it is integral to HSC and other council business. Specifically, the framework requires the following:

1. At the planning stage, environmental advisers should be consulted by commissioners to ensure that:
 - outline environmental reviews are considered as part of the commissioning strategy
 - environmental impacts are addressed in the specification of the contract and service level agreement.
2. At the review stage, environmental measures should be reviewed as part of the impact analysis.

Outcomes and impact

HSC has reported the following headline figures on energy usage and emissions:

	Electricity	Gas/oil			Building CO2	Business mileage		Total CO2
Year	kWh	Gas (weather comp) kWh	Gas + oil (weather comp) kWh	Oil (weather comp) kWh	Tonnes	Miles	Mileage CO2	Buildings CO2
2006/7	3,285,491	7,291,600	10,259,907	2,968,308	3,634	1,563,100	512	4,146
2007/8	3,102,557	5,813,019	8,065,108	2,252,090	3,231	1,279,951	424	3,656
2008/9	2,906,069	6,319,290	8,532,911	2,213,621	3,500	1,198,529	402	3,902
2009/10	2,961,194	5,375,081	7,588,702	2,213,621	3,459	1,237,765	415	3,874

Given that 60 per cent of the total expenditure comes from residential homes, the savings made in energy consumption have considerably reduced costs within the directorate. Electricity, oil and gas represent a significant cost to the directorate, totalling approximately £650,000 in 2009/10. If Bristol corrects the data for the weather, it will expect the average spend to be £595,000 – this compares with £725,000 in 2006/7. Electricity consumption has fallen slightly over four years, saving approximately £30,000 per year. Gas and oil totals vary from year to year due to weather conditions. However, the general trend is down, and represents a saving of approximately £100,000 per year. Similarly, on business mileage, HSC has the second-highest directorate total in the council, costing around £500,000 per year. This has been reduced by approximately 20 per cent over four years, saving over £100,000 per year.

Looking to the future

Social care commissioning

‘Many of the principles used in social care, such as risk assessment, harm reduction, resilience and the importance of early intervention, are equally useful when we think about the environment.’

Bradshaw, Sillett and Walker, ‘Independence, community and environment’ (SCIE 2010)

Bristol is starting to consider how sustainability can be embedded into HSC commissioning practice in particular. A ‘green checklist’ is being developed which sets out environmental and sustainability questions to be put to third parties. This will act as a guide for care service commissioners themselves in the first instance, with the aspiration to move towards environmental advice being offered to people who use services and are individual budget holders.

Good practice in action: Draft ‘green checklist’ to ask third parties

- Does your company/organisation have an environmental or sustainability policy? If YES, please provide a copy.
- Please provide details of any environmental management system (such as ISO 14001 or Eco-Management & Audit Scheme/EMAS) that your organisation has completed or is undertaking.
- Please provide details of any actions taken by your organisation to reduce the environmental impacts of energy management and water usage in the last five years.
- Please provide details of any actions taken by your organisation to reduce the environmental impacts of waste disposal, reuse and recycling in the last five years.
- Please provide details of any actions taken to reduce the environmental impacts of your organisation’s staff travel and delivery of goods in the last five years.
- Please provide details of any actions taken by your organisation to reduce the environmental impacts of your approach to supply chain management in the last five years.
- Have any prohibitions, improvement notices or enforcement orders been used or prosecutions made under environmental law against your organisation in the last five years?

- Are you registered as a waste carrier by the Environment Agency? If YES, please state registration number and expiry date.
- Do you have all the relevant environmental consents, permits and licences associated with the processes carried out by your organisation (give relevant examples). If YES, please state registration number and expiry date.

Personalisation

'If several people receiving community meals in the same street choose different providers this could lead to increased environmental impact and transport costs. However, community-based models of personalisation, such as those that adopt the principles of co-production, localism and timebanking, have great potential to facilitate the development of care and support that is environmentally, economically and socially sustainable.'

Evans, Hills and Grimshaw, 'Sustainable systems of social care' (SCIE 2010)

Personalisation in social care, alongside choice in healthcare, has the potential to transform the ways in which care is planned and delivered. As people who use services become the commissioners of their own care, and increasingly the direct purchasers of services, block contracts and industrial-scale delivery will become things of the past. This presents both opportunities and risks for environmental sustainability, which Bristol City Council has been keen to understand.

In December 2010, the council hosted a workshop with over 40 participants from community groups, care providers, local trusts and foundations, and council staff from a range of Directorates. Led by SCIE and project partners LGiU and ACEVO, the workshop established the level of understanding about sustainability among stakeholders and tested the appetite for further engagement at the local level. In particular, the council wished to explore whether and how personalisation could stimulate the market for more environmentally sustainable care services.

Two neighbourhood areas within Bristol were then selected for focus groups: Lawrence Hill/Easton and Bedminster. Criteria for their selection included their contrasting populations (particularly age and ethnic diversity) and physical character, as well as having been successful test-beds for other community initiatives such as LinkAge⁴. The focus groups were held, respectively, in Easton Community Centre and Windmill Hill City Farm and participants were drawn from local providers and

⁴ <http://www.bristol.gov.uk/node/4682>

community organisations as well as some commissioners and statutory sector providers. Semi-structured discussions probed issues of local importance spanning housing, transport and the public realm as well as care itself. The rationale was that this would help develop a more holistic understanding of needs across the life-course as opposed to a response to ill health or a care need at a particular time.

The most striking finding from the focus groups was that participants were either already familiar with or well able to grasp the concept of sustainable development, but struggled with personalisation. People who use services and their carers may have concerns about service closures or may not realise that they can receive very different kinds of support. The focus groups showed how exploring people's experiences of where they live, the places and activities they enjoy, how they get around, what they like and what they would like to see changed, can open up creative discussions about the future of care. Perhaps more significantly still, the ideas generated through these discussions were often simple and low-cost, and of benefit to the wider community as well. They are likely to promote independent living and care which is community-based.

'We need ways to humanise the community.'

Focus group participant - Bedminster

'Local [service provision] is important as it's a tie to the community.'

Focus group participant - Easton

There was a clear commitment among participants, albeit a self-selected cohort, to ensuring and enjoying a good quality environment suitable for all ages and circumstances. The strongest themes to emerge from the focus groups were those of quality of life, attractiveness and accessibility of the built and natural environment and 'connectivity' between both people and places. Connectivity therefore encompassed social networks and ease of getting around, including accessibility and price of transport, the condition of pavements and parks, and personal safety. It was clear that getting these things right is of fundamental importance to people and that failure to do so exacerbates – or even causes – care needs. The view was repeatedly expressed that people who use services do not want to be 'lumped together' with other people who happen to have a similar care need, but instead want to be part of diverse networks. They also favoured provision that was locally based and staffed by people familiar with the local area.

Good practice in action: [Greater Bedminster toilets and benches map](#)

The Greater Bedminster Older People's Forum was established in 2007. With LinkAge funding for locally-generated projects to improve the lives of older people, the Forum produced a map of 'comfort stops' for anyone taking a walk around Bedminster. The Forum explains the social, economic and environmental benefits of this simple resource for people who might otherwise not venture out of their home, as follows:

'The idea for a toilet and benches map came from a discussion at the Older People's Forum. A national report indicated that some people were trapped in their homes because they were afraid to move too far from their own toilet. Many forum members understood this either from personal experience or through friends and relatives. We felt that people have a right to move about their own community and that simple toilet facilities, somewhere to rest etc, should be easily available. So, we did some research, talked to some people and made the map. Of course, more people walking about is good for health, safety and local shops too.'

The final stage in SCIE's development work was a further workshop to which all focus group participants and a wider range of stakeholders were invited. Facilitated by Uscreates, the workshop shared insights from the focus groups and combined this with activities designed to generate specific ideas and commitments for sustainable approaches to social care in Bristol. Actions arising include plans to co-produce a community asset map, showcasing different groups' perspectives and experience on what Bristol has to offer, as well as partnering with the two local universities and volunteer groups to promote intergenerational skills-sharing. These are now being taken forward in the context of the HSC Transformation Strategy, underpinned by 'social return on investment' principles.

['Sustainable social care and personalisation: a guide for community engagement'](#) is based on this work and is available for local authorities and their partners to use in developing their own community-driven, sustainable approaches to social care.

Bristol City Council and mainstreaming environmental sustainability: a case study in sustainable social care

This case study provides an overview of Bristol City Council's sustainability objectives, outlining how the health and social care directorate has taken a key role in improving the overall performance of the council, and summarises the SCIE-led project regarding personalisation and sustainability.

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