



THE IMPACT OF
LONG-TERM ENGAGEMENT
ON EMPOWERMENT &
BEHAVIOUR CHANGE



manor house
development trust

FOREWORD

In this the first in a series of reports on the impact we have achieved, independently verified by social impact experts CAN Invest, Kate Pierpoint shows how our approach to community development has improved locals lives in a range of ways. It provides hard evidence to demonstrate that the small behavioural changes residents have adopted as individuals and collectives have empowered them to consciously take steps to do more for themselves and to live happier more rewarding lives.

Behaviour change is difficult to measure. However this report demonstrates clearly the benefits of our approach at the local level. In a time of austerity and financial challenges, our approach can potentially inform how to relieve pressure on resource-strapped mainstream services and release the untapped wealth already in communities. Our goal is to influence policy-makers to ensure that far from being simply a nice idea, strong, resilient communities are central to solving the many challenges that modern Britain faces and must be a priority across the political agenda.

*Simon Donovan, Chief Executive Officer,
Manor House Development Trust*

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The most striking observation from the research is Manor House Development Trust's ability to maintain people's engagement in activities for long periods of time; in some cases years.

This long-term engagement with people is central to promoting behaviour change, particularly changes to energy consumption and implications for tackling fuel poverty and isolation.

Long-term involvement is also having a significant contribution to people's ability to achieve individual goals and aspirations. In particular, the impressive impact on getting long-term unemployed people into work; and empowering people to take ownership of community activities.

The growth of resident-led community groups and businesses since 2009 is especially significant. It reflects a lasting impact on people and suggests an effective approach to ensuring the legacy of its work. Manor House Development Trust clearly plays a pivotal role as a hub of community activity, being able to offer a wide range of services which respond to local need, as well as connecting people up to other local services.

This report is the first of a series of Impact reports assessing the work of Manor House Development Trust since 2009. This report has been independently assessed by social audit expert CAN Invest. This mini report is taken from a longer report. Find it here: <http://www.mhdt.org.uk/our-impact/>

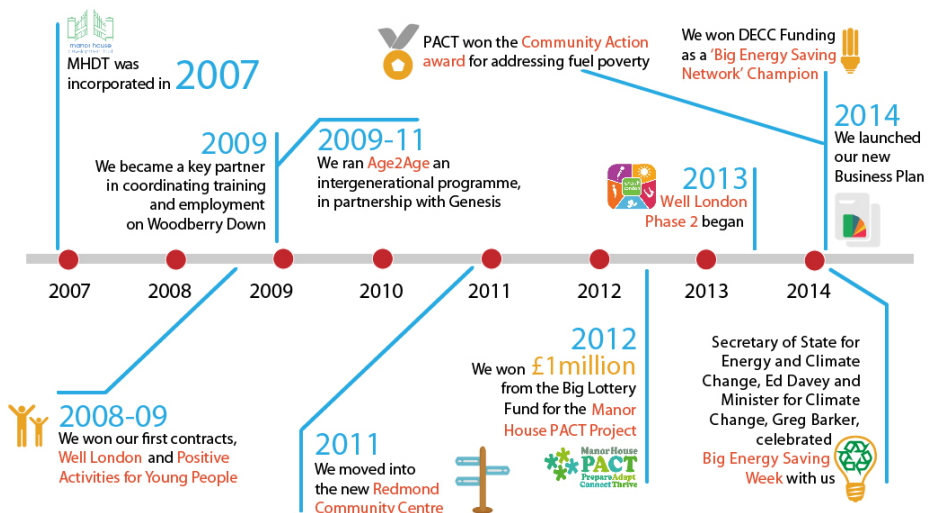
ABOUT US

Manor House Development Trust is a charitable social enterprise based in the London Borough of Hackney. We deliver and help other organisations to deliver community services which are value for money and create lasting benefits. This approach allows the community to lead and determine its own future.

We believe our approach can bring value to other UK communities. Therefore, we are replicating and expanding our work beyond Hackney and influencing decision-makers to adopt our approach.

We are a resident-led organisation, with a resident majority on our Board of Trustees. We are also a registered Social Enterprise Mark holder. We were formed by Hackney Council in 2007 as the lead for community development on the Woodberry Down Regeneration Scheme. Since then we have evolved into a fully independent Charity, delivering successful community development programmes around:

- Health & wellbeing
- Community resilience to climate change (including fuel poverty)
- Tackling long-term unemployment
- Arts & creativity



Some of our Programmes

Manor House PACT

This £1million programme, funded by the Big Lottery Fund aims to build the resilience of the Manor House community to climate change. It runs a number of projects including:

- *PACT Home Visits: Residents receive free advice in their homes on how to save energy and reduce their energy bills.*
- *PACT Meals: Free meals which promote reducing food waste by creating meals from surplus food donated by local shops.*



Well London

Funded by the Big Lottery Fund (which we manage on the Woodberry Down estate), the aim is for people to work together to improve their health and wellbeing. Activities include:

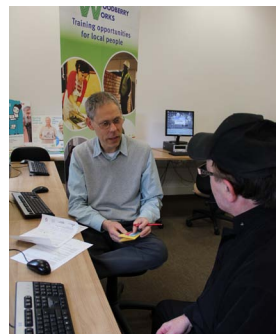
- *Grants Programme: We manage £25,000 of grants for community groups*
- *Health Champions: We train volunteers to become Ambassadors for health and signpost people to local services*



Training, Volunteering & Employment

We receive funding from Genesis Housing Association, London Borough of Hackney and others to coordinate this in Manor House:

- *Community Covenant: This MOD-funded project supports the ex-Armed Forces in East London to integrate into society*
- *Volunteering Programme: We offer ongoing support, training and links to local volunteering opportunities*
- *Woodberry Works Club: Free information, advice and guidance to supporting unemployed people into work*



Introduction

This report investigates the benefits of long-term engagement with people for promoting:

1. behaviour change
2. employment and employability
3. empowerment
4. and the legacy of community services

This study analyses information gathered through a range of sources:

Survey: A survey was sent to everyone who has attended our activities. They were asked questions about what they have experienced as a result. A representative sample of 100 people responded.

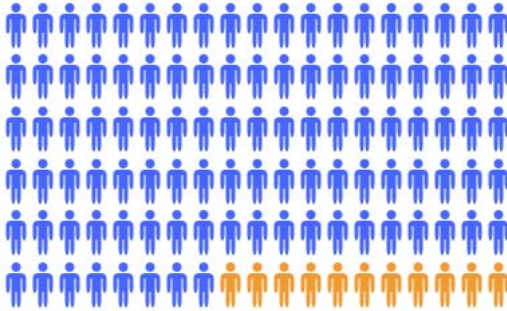
Focus groups: The survey questions were designed based on interviews with 6 focus groups who had attended a range of our activities. The word cloud below shows the most commonly used words to describe their experiences.

Project Evaluations: In this study, 4 of our projects have been evaluated on their ability to achieve these outcomes.

Case studies: 4 case studies investigate individual experiences.



1. Promoting greener and healthier behaviour change



3 or more times Once or twice

Of those who reported their behaviour had changed “a lot” for all 7 types of behaviour change, the proportion of people who attended MHTD activities 3 or more times

The survey asked 100 people to what extent they feel they have changed their behaviours in the following ways:

- Walking more
- Reducing food waste
- Reducing energy use
- Reducing water use
- Recycling more
- Buying more seasonal and locally produced food
- Growing more of their own food
- Eating more healthily

The responses show that of those people who said their behaviour had changed ‘a lot’ as a result of attending one of our activities, 68% have attended more than 6 times. This suggests that the likelihood of people adopting greener and healthier behaviours is drastically increased the longer they attend. In some cases the likelihood of adopting the new behaviour is increased by 60%.

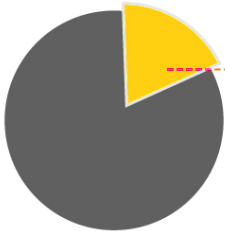
In addition, 30% of those surveyed said they have changed their behaviour ‘a lot’ in all 8 ways. This suggests our activities are effective in tackling many issues at once.

Promoting long-term behaviour change

Long-term engagement is vital to promoting long-term behaviour change. Attendees can receive ongoing support, share experiences with their peers and see the long-term benefits of these changes, which may not be apparent in the short-term.

In the case of the PACT Home Visits scheme (see next page), people are seeing the results of these behaviour changes in the form of large reductions on their energy bills, which may further incentivise people to keep up their new behaviours.

Our impact on empowerment has important implications here, where those who feel empowered by activities, are more likely to stay involved, and therefore are more likely to keep up changes to their behaviour. This relationship can be seen by the 80% of people who said their behaviours had changed, who also said they feel empowered by the fact they made new friends, learned new skills and have an increased sense of belonging.



Our studies show that those who attend one of our activities more than once are

20% more likely to adopt **'GREENER BEHAVIOURS'**

Project 1: PACT Home Visits

(Impact on energy consumption and fuel poverty)



Project Description:

This project has run for 18 months and is delivered in partnership with Groundwork London, as part of the Manor House PACT project.

During a home visit, a trained home energy assessor visits families in their homes to teach them ways to keep warmer and reduce energy bills. The assessor fits energy-saving measures including:

- draught proofing for doors & radiator panels
- low energy light bulbs
- water saving devices

The Home Visits service also looks at individual patterns of energy use to see what changes can be made to reduce energy use. The client then 'pledges' to keep up changes to their behaviour in the future. The Assessor also helps clients to switch their energy provider.



People are saving on average

£179

a year by having
2 Home Visits

Long-term impact

Unlike other similar services, the PACT Home Visits scheme offers a follow-up visit after 3 months.

By offering ongoing support, the scheme is creating long-term benefits which tackle isolation and reduce a person's vulnerability to extreme weather. It does this by:

- helping people to switch their energy suppliers
- teaching people how to use energy more effectively
- installing hard energy-saving measures in the home
- providing support in the home on an ongoing basis
- identifying issues a person faces and referring them onto services to tackle these, like befriending schemes.

Impact on Fuel Poverty

Of those homes which received a visit:

- 10% reported a respiratory illness, potentially as a result of fuel poverty.
- 67% are fuel poor.
- Over 80% are particularly vulnerable to extreme weather due to isolation; or family members who are elderly, young or have a long-term illness.

The vulnerable people this scheme is targeting will continue to help tackle fuel poverty, related illnesses and isolation. This is especially important in Woodberry Down and Seven Sisters wards, where there are relatively high rates of fuel poverty.



94%

of people reported they had stuck to their pledges to reduce their energy use

Hackney and Haringey residents who have saved money through the PACT Home Visits scheme



Doreen Cox saved £283 on her energy bills



Melinda Woolery saved £359 on her energy bills



Steve Ashton saved £238 on his energy bills



Renata Talianova saved £199 on her energy bills

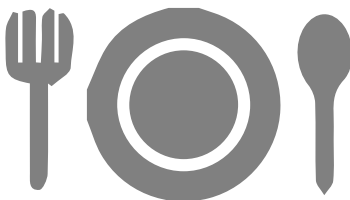
Project 2: PACT Meals (Eating more healthily & reducing food waste)



Project Description:

This project is delivered in partnership with Transition Finsbury Park, as part of the PACT project. When food is thrown away, the carbon that went into growing, harvesting, transporting and cooking it is wasted. PACT Meals aim to reduce food waste, by working with local shopkeepers to source surplus food. Our team of volunteers then prepare a delicious feast free for the community.

Those who attended a PACT Meal more than once are



62%

more likely to reduce their food waste

47%

more likely to eat more healthily as a result

2. Increasing employment levels

Project 3: Woodberry Works Club



Project Description:

This project was delivered in partnership with Genesis Housing Association, as part of Manor House Development Trust's Training and Employment strategy. Woodberry Works Club provided a free Information, Advice and Guidance service to residents, to support people into work. The project ran from 2011 to 2013.

Support included:

- Individual action plans to track progress to gaining work
- Personal development budgets to access various training courses
- CV writing, interview support and jobs fairs

With individual action plans set from the first meeting, the Club focused on how long-term engagement with people could increase people's chances of finding work. The one-to-one sessions allowed for tailored support where progress could be tracked over time.



53% of all unemployed people who attended more than one session with Woodberry Works Club **secured employment** directly as a result

Survey results

Our findings show that 53% of unemployed people who attended Woodberry Works Club multiple times, secured employment as a result. This compares with 20% of the total number of people registered. This suggests that those people who stick with the service are significantly more likely to find work.

Impact on long-term unemployment

We recognise that those who have been unemployed for more than 5 years require ongoing support to tackle any barriers to work.

The project identifies the needs of individuals and provides support and accredited training in response. To date, we have funded:

- Teaching courses
- Working at Heights courses
- Basic IT courses & Numeracy and Literacy courses
- Community Interpreting courses

This tailored approach to signposting people and tracking their progress has led to many success stories. There are examples of local people who have been unemployed for many years, but who have progressed towards finding work. In addition, there are an increasing number of people who are using their new skills to start up new businesses and create new jobs for themselves.

20% of all those who said they were unemployed secured employment as a result of Woodberry Works Club.

53% of all those who said they were unemployed people who attended at least one session with Woodberry Works Club secured employment as a result

15% of all those who said they had been unemployed for more than 5 years secured employment as a result of Woodberry Works Club.

Case study 1: Chantelle Harrison

Chantelle first got in touch with Manor House Development Trust over a year ago. She had been unemployed for more than 3 years and was looking for work in the children's education sector.

Without access to childcare and a gap in her employment record, she was struggling to find work. She registered with Woodberry Works Club, which identified her needs and suggested opportunities to overcome them.

First, she was referred to the Woodberry Down Children's Centre, which offered affordable childcare services. This allowed her to pursue some of our training courses, including Food Hygiene and Literacy/Numeracy.



As her confidence has built, she progressed onto the 'Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector' course. As a result, she gained an NVQ Level 3 and is now qualified to teach.

She is well on her way to achieving her aspiration, using her skills to volunteer with the 'Stay and Play' mother and baby service at the Redmond Community Centre.

"At first I wasn't confident about doing a level 3 course. I had to write 8 essays in 5 weeks! The course really developed my literacy skills as well as my public speaking and presentation skills. I feel this is getting me ready for a proper paid job in the education sector."

3. Empowering people to do something they were not able to do before

During the focus groups, nearly everyone said they had felt 'empowered' in some way, as a result of attending our activities. The term was used to describe a large range of experiences. However, when asked what that feeling had led to, a clear definition of empowerment emerged.

"By increasing my confidence in speaking English, I feel empowered to help my children with their homework"

"By learning new skills, I feel empowered to start up my own business"

"By feeling part of the community more, I feel empowered to influence local decisions"

What all the responses had in common was a feeling that something positive had changed, which had led them to be able to do something they were not able to do before; but had previously aspired to be able to do.

The focus groups also helped us to identify the changes which lead people to feel 'empowered'. These were then used in the survey to measure empowerment. They were:

- a. Gaining more friendships
- b. Increased skills and knowledge
- c. Greater sense of belonging



Those who attended any of our activities more than once are

35%

more likely to make new friends

Case study 2: Thamasin Marsh

Thamasin has developed mobility issues in the last few years. As a result, she had to give up working. Then she took up pottery classes at The Redmond Community Centre. She says it has been incredibly empowering for her to learn how to use her body in a way her disability has stopped her from before.

The Woodberry Works Club booked Thamasin onto a free teacher training course. Since then, she has completed her NVQ Level 3 and combined her new skills to teach people pottery. She gained experience by volunteering at her old class as an assistant. Now, she is setting up her own business in selling her work.



Thamasin is an example of someone whose confidence has grown hugely over time by continuing to attend the pottery classes she loves, whilst also taking advantage of the range of activities we have to offer. She sees the value in her pottery skills. As a result, she has been able to find work again, despite thinking at first this was not possible. She is now taking control of her health to make huge improvements to her quality of life.

"Being able to turn a lump of clay into something you can use is incredibly empowering. It is easy when you are physically disabled to focus on the things you cannot do. Since gaining the teaching qualification, I am now able to use this skill I love to go back to work for the first time to teach others."

Case study 3: Margaret Lewis

Margaret has lived on the Woodberry Down estate for 20 years. It hasn't always been a happy time for her. *"I've had problems on this estate,"* Maggie says. Since then, she has been involved with Manor House Development Trust for 6 years.

This is a selection of our activities she has been involved with:

- The Woodberry Down Community Choir
- The Woodberry Down Community Garden
- The Walking Group
- Knit and Natter
- Flower arranging course
- Self defence course
- DIY happiness course
- Healthy eating courses
- Trained as a Health Champion



Maggie says these activities have had a massive impact on her life. They have made her feel more confident, feel part of her community and more able to make her voice heard.

Maggie has been volunteering for 3 years to run the Lunch Club. This has been her opportunity to give something back to the community and it builds her confidence to do something she is good at. She says without the friends she's made and her new skills, she couldn't have imagined doing it.

*"I volunteer with the over-60s.
If I didn't come to the Redmond Community Centre,
I wouldn't meet other people. Coming to the centre
makes me feel welcome and safe. Coming to these
activities is how I meet me friends,
its my family!"*

Our impact on sustained empowerment

The more a person feels empowered by an activity, the more likely they are to stay involved; and the longer they stay involved the more likely they are to feel empowered. We believe this virtuous circle leads to feelings of 'sustained empowerment'.

The notion of sustained empowerment is felt over a long period of time and is less likely to be affected by a person's negative experiences. This has important implications for what this can enable a person to achieve (and keep achieving) in the long-term.

The case studies of Chantelle, Thamasin and Maggie are people who have been involved with a range of our activities for a long period of time and the long-term benefits this has brought to their lives, including:

- becoming more employable
- improving health issues
- feeling happier
- starting a new business
- running a community group

What the three stories have in common is a desire to improve their lives. They have taken advantage of the opportunities we have to offer, and used them to achieve their personal goals.



4. Ensuring the legacy of our work

A recurring impact which tends to be reported months or years after a person starts engaging with our activities, is the number of people taking over the running of our community activities and services.

There are 6 examples of community activities, which were initially funded through us, which remained active after funding ended:

1. **The Luncheon Club** (run by 5 volunteers for over 5 years)
2. **Knit and Natter** (run by 5 volunteers for 18 months)
3. **The Woodberry Down Community Choir** (run by 10 volunteers for 2 years)
4. **The Woodberry Down Community Garden** (run by 5 volunteers for 5 years)
5. **Closer Neighbours Groups** – which meet to discuss energy issues (at least 3 groups over 18 months)
6. **The Woodberry Down Football team**



Lydia presents her food to a customer at the Lunch Club

Why are people leading these activities?

Most of the volunteers have these characteristics:

- They all meet socially with each other
- They have all been involved with our activities for a significant period of time
- They have all received training related to the community group they help run

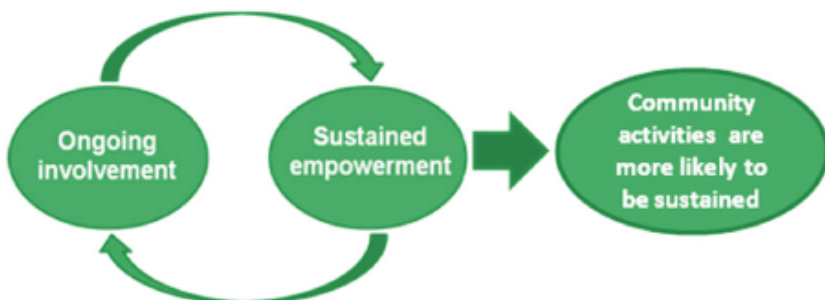
This suggests the importance of opportunities for people to stay involved with the activities they enjoy in the long-term.

Speaking to some of the Health Champions about what has inspired such commitment (see next page) they say it is a combination of:

- free training
- a structured course over a long period of time
- opportunities to use their hobbies and interests
- being able to learn together and make friends
- having access to affordable space to host their groups

This helps to identify what elements of our schemes should be replicated to create this impact again in the future.

We have analysed our Health Champion scheme and 2 case studies to shed more light on how we are achieving this impact...



Project 4: The Health Champions



Project description:

This scheme is part of the Well London programme. Manor House Development Trust has managed Well London in North East Hackney since 2009. The aim is to help residents take control of their health and wellbeing. A major feature is the Health Champions.

The Champions are active members of the community who volunteer to become health ambassadors. They receive training including:

- NVQ Level 2 training in health promotion; first aid; money management; food hygiene and cooking courses

As part of the training, the Champions volunteer with local community groups and organisations.

The Health Champions have proven pivotal to the spread of information across the estate and referrals to health services.

However, as an unexpected outcome, the Champions have assured the legacy of many of the Well London activities, by taking the lead on running them post-funding, including:

- the **Community Choir**
- the **Lunch Club** (running for 5 years and now a catering business)
- the **Woodberry Down Community Garden** (running for 5 years and now a constituted organisation)

We asked some of the Health Champions what has inspired them to stay involved for so long and why they think people are now taking over the community services in their area.

Gloria - a Health Champion who is now employed as our Communications Officer says:
"The training programme required 4 hours of our time every week for a year. This meant we really committed to the project, and being involved with some great activities the estate had not seen before, we didn't want them to end!"

Joelle - on the Board of the Community Garden says:
"I came to the project with a poor diet, low confidence and I never exercised. The course helped me to set goals for my life and that's when I joined the Community Garden. We meet regularly to keep the garden going. I love it because I get to make friends and spend time with my family".

Lydia - who runs the Lunch Club says:
"I love cooking and I have been lucky that Manor House Development Trust has given me a wonderful space in their centre to begin my business. Customers love it here so I get a lot of business. The Trust has given me funding and training which has helped. I can rely on the Trust for support and they believe in what I am doing."

Case study 4: The Lunch Club

The Lunch Club is the longest running community group we have supported. We funded the group to deliver affordable and healthy lunches to elderly people in 2009. Since then, the group has constituted itself and is now our main caterer at the Redmond Community Centre.

By earning an income from providing catering in the centre, the group has been able to pay its staff for the first time; but they still find time to volunteer to provide affordable meals to senior citizens every week.

Some of its staff are our longest serving volunteers. Margaret, Lydia, Geraldine, Elaine and

Therese were all trained under the Well London programme as Health Champions in 2009.

They were placed as volunteers with the Lunch Club and have been doing it ever since. Each of the ladies clearly gains a great deal from volunteering with the Lunch Club, which is why it has survived for so long.

In this case, none of the ladies knew how to run a business, but have sought training and support from us to learn. Most recently they successfully applied to us for funding through the Well London programme to run a Meals on Wheels scheme.





Written by Kate Pierpoint, October 2014

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