



‘fit as a fiddle’

**North East Region
“50 Ways to Health”**

Year One Evaluation

October 2007 – September 2008



'Fit as a Fiddle' 50 Ways to Health in the North East

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Preface

The 'Fit as a Fiddle' evaluation is intended to be an organic document that sets out over the 5-year period that the project is running; a year on year overview of the development and delivery of the North East – Fifty Ways to Health programme. The first part of this document sets out the need for the programme, what our objective is, how we will address this objective, measure our success and the national and the regional context of the programme. This document will then go on to look at the development and delivery of the programme year by year setting out achievements/successes and what we have learned.

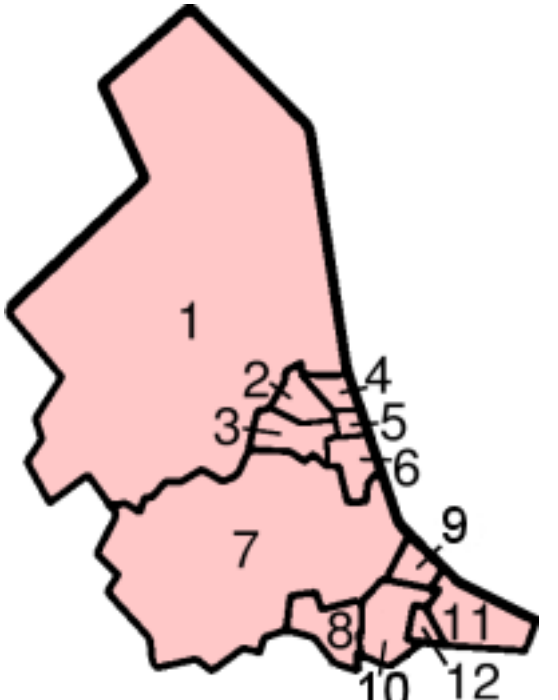
1. Introduction

The 2001 Census indicated that the number of people in the UK who were over age 60 outnumbered those who were under age 16 for the first time. By 2020, it is expected that over a half of the population will be over age 50 (Dean 2004). Health is improving across the population but the incidence of health problems among the oldest is actually increasing (Middleton et al, 2007). As a consequence, both men and women can expect to live longer but can also expect to live longer in poor health. The retirement years have come to be conceptualised in terms of two phases, classified as the third and fourth ages. The third age is typically a period of withdrawal from paid work but older people still enjoy active lives in good health at this stage. The fourth age is marked by an increased risk of health difficulties associated with degenerative ageing and is also accompanied by a decline in social participation and civic engagement (Middleton et al, 2007). Fit as a Fiddle's aim is to work with both the third and fourth ages.

1.1 'Fit as a Fiddle' and North East Region Programme '50 Ways to Health'

In July 2007 Age Concern England (ACE) was awarded £15.1million for the Big Lottery Fund's (BLF) Well Being Fund to deliver the **fit as a fiddle** portfolio across all 9 English regions with organisations from the public, voluntary and community sectors from October 2007 to September 2012. The BLF's Well Being Fund totals £165 million.

Each of the 9 regions has been allocated £1.2 million from the £15.1 million budget to deliver a range of projects in their region. The North East programme is designed to improve the health and wellbeing of people over the age of 50 and encourage them to become vol-

North East of England	Key to Map
	<p>AC Northumberland AC Newcastle AC Gateshead AC North Tyneside AC South Tyneside AC Sunderland AC Durham AC Darlington</p> <p>AC Teesside includes:</p> <p>9. Hartlepool 10. Stockton on Tees 11. Redcar and Cleveland 12. Middlesbrough</p>

unteers to promote healthy lifestyles to their peers; develop proactive networks to share good practice regarding the delivery of different types of physical activity, health information and advice to older people.

1.2 Why do we need 'fit as a fiddle? 50 Ways to Health in the North East'

The North East is at the bottom of the national league table for chronic illness such as heart disease, cancer, and respiratory disease. This often results in premature death. Long term illness is 27% higher in the North East than in the country as a whole. Regrettably, the North East population is also associated with poor diet and physical inactivity. Life expectancy at birth within the North East is amongst the lowest in England and Wales, reflecting both the higher levels of illness and the prevalence of behaviours that cause or contribute to ill health. Key public health challenges include the following...

- Mortality due to circulatory disease and cancer significantly greater than the national average
- Prevalence of obesity among the adult population significantly greater than the national average
- Estimated one in ten people take no physical exercise
- Adult smoking rate significantly greater than the national average
- Significantly high rates of poor mental health
- An ageing population, with 16.5% currently over 65 and this projected to rise to 25% by 2021
- High proportion of the population with long-term limiting illness, reflected in the high numbers of Disability Living Allowance, Incapacity Benefit, Severe Disablement Allowance and carers' payments
- Health inequalities across the region with more acute health difficulties experienced in the areas of highest deprivation and a significant gap between these and the more affluent areas.
- By 2020, over half the adults in the UK will be over 50 years of age.
- "The older you are, the less you participate" (A Vision for 2020, Sport England, 2004).
- Only 17% of men and 13% of women aged 65-74 take sufficient exercise to meet the international guidelines of half an hour's exercise of 'moderate intensity' on at least 5 days a week.
- For those aged 75 and over, this falls to 8% of men and 3% of women.
- The average annual cost to the Health Service of looking after someone aged over 85 is six times that of someone aged between 16 and 44 (The Economist – Oct 2006).
- Inactivity levels in nursing homes are highest, with about 90% of residents not having done a continuous walk of 15 minutes or more in the past month (DH, 2000).
- Crossing a road within the time allowed by controlled traffic lights requires an average walking speed higher than achieved by most 70 year olds.
- Among people older than 65, 12% cannot manage walking outside on their own and 9% cannot manage stairs unaided.
- 25% of women and 7% of men over 70 do not have sufficient leg strength to get out of a chair without using their arms.
- 20% of women and 14% of men over 50 do not have the flexibility to wash their hair comfortably.
- 47% of women aged 70-74 have insufficient leg muscle power to step up onto a bus without using their arms. (Skelton et al 1998)

-'Participation in physical activity':-Sport England reported less than 15% of over 50s in

the North East participate in sport

-'Mid life Health and Employment' *'Critically, the north east continues to suffer chronically high levels of poor health... the challenge is for better joined up activities to improve the health and well being of people 50+'*

1.3 What Older People Think?

The views of older people are highlighted in the independent UK Inquiry into Mental Health and Well-Being in Later Life (Age Concern and the Mental Health Foundation, 2006) and the 'As fit as Butchers' Dogs?' report on healthy lifestyle choice and older people (National Consumer Council and Age Concern, 2006). Both studies directly sought the views of older people and evaluated sample findings on their knowledge, attitudes and preferences regarding the choice of healthy lifestyles.

The enquiry's first report 'Promoting Mental Health and Well-Being in Later Life' revealed there are five main factors that impact on older people's mental health and well-being: discrimination, participation in meaningful activity, relationships, physical health and poverty.

- Older people feel that being able to make contributions to society (and being recognised for them) is good for their mental well-being. Volunteering was identified as a key way of making contributions and participating in society.
- Older people also identify physical activity and maintaining a good diet as the key components of physical health which can have positive impact on their mental well-being.
- The Inquiry report concluded that local-level action will make the most difference and recommended that healthy ageing programmes should be established to encourage older people to take advantage of opportunities for meaningful activity, social interaction and physical activity. Specifically, the Inquiry recommended that such active ageing programmes should promote mental as well as physical health and well-being in their design, delivery and evaluation

The findings from 'As fit as Butchers' Dogs?' report revealed:

- Older people feel that a positive outlook and zest for life is a key factor of health, both in terms of physical and mental well-being.
- Supportive contact with others is critical for both physical and mental health.
- There is a lot of scope for better publicity of facilities that exist and support to provide 'routes' for older people.
- Information about what is available is not reaching all those who would be interested.
- Some groups need more intervention than others, particularly those who present attitudinal barriers.

Fit as a fiddle is designed to address current inequalities in older people's health and well-being. By building on the successful Ageing Well programme, it will empower older people to live more healthy, active and fulfilling lives with the support of their peers and communities.

Objectives

The objective is to improve the physical, nutritional health and mental well-being of older people in the North East, particularly in the most disadvantaged areas and/or areas where older people suffer the greatest health inequalities.

The Fit as a Fiddle programme in the North East comprises of four elements:

- Helping people be more physically active by increasing the number of activity classes and by increasing the number of volunteer tutors (Senior Health Mentors)
- Encouraging people and the wider community to eat more healthily by providing events and sessions which explore nutrition and healthy eating, again led by volunteer tutors where appropriate
- Making people better informed about healthy lifestyles and activities, by disseminating quality information and advice
- Working with local, regional and national partners to share resources and expertise in delivering the programme.

It will be noted, therefore, that for the programme to maximise its potential benefit it is important that it fully engages with older people as volunteer tutors and beneficiaries, and that the programme links with other related plans and programmes in the area.

3. Outcomes:

Outcome 1: Older people being more physically active and involved in the community through increased skills and participation over a 5 year period

Outcome 2: Older people and families eating more healthily over a 5 year period

Outcome 3: Older people having enhanced and improved mental well-being over a 5 year period

3.1 Quantitative Measurement:

Promotion of Activities to Communities and Host Local Information & Start Health Events Involving Older People

Recruit and Train Senior Health Mentors

Senior Health Mentors providing physical activity sessions to older people

3.2 Evaluation Methods:

Analysis of quantitative data

Participant questionnaires/feedback (one to one and focus groups)

Case Study's

4. Background to Regional Programme:

Fifty Ways to Health in the North East 'Fit as a Fiddle' is an exciting and innovative programme of activities and events delivered by the nine Age Concerns across the region to encourage people over the age of 50 and their carers to be physically active and improve their diets and mental health. The nine Age Concerns offer tailored exercise and activity programmes in the community responding to local needs.

A 5 year region wide integrated project that is part of a national initiative that aims to deliver a coordinated approach to improve the physical activity, diet and mental health of older people in local areas currently receiving little or no service. This includes: *mixed exercise of moderate intensity (for example, dancing, walking and swimming); strength and resistance exercise, especially for frail older people (for example chair based exercise); toning and stretching. Health events with fruit smoothie-making and cooking provide older people with the opportunity to try new ways to eat a good diet and feel the improvement this makes to their physical and mental well-being.*

5. Marketing/Publicity/Resource Materials:

Each delivery organisation is implementing its own marketing plan; the quality of the communications across the region has been well linked and targeted often to specific events and partnerships. The Delivery Organisations are raising their profile and awareness of the programme in the community and strengthening their partnerships with other local organisations and services.

Marketing materials have been published within the guidelines of the individual ACO's marketing strategies and the BLF grant acknowledgement guidance. These have included posters detailing specific activities and courses and the ActivAge programme of activities that provides a comprehensive list of all activities and courses on offer to older people within the North East Region.

Older people are able to access information easily regarding services, presentations and literature, posters, leaflets etc following the branding guidelines. The logos, corporate colours etc are adhered to at all times.

Communications with the ACE Fit As A Fiddle Co-coordinator and national team are good, ensuring that guidance and support is requested and given when needed and cascaded throughout the Region through Briefing Papers produced by the North East Regional Coordinator. National publicity is planned through ACE and the region is contributing with a number of news pieces about what is happening in the Region for example AC Gateshead 'Assisted Swimming' for visually impaired people.

Referral protocols are on an open and informal basis with other organisations and Our 'Fifty Ways to Health' programme is widely targeted for individuals to attend by their own volition.

Branding and Logos

Branding and logos, specified by the funders and Age Concern England, have been applied to all literature concerning the FAAF programme including posters, activity registers and evaluation forms. In order to maintain consistency for marketing and advertising a poster template was developed.

YEAR 1 Evaluation October 2007 – September 2008

Introduction:

The FAAF programme began in September 2007 with the nine local Age Concerns across the North East developing the foundations of their projects. From April 2008 at a delivery level the Local Wellbeing Coordinators spent the next six months focused on designing, developing and implementing their projects in the community. The Regional Portfolio Coordinator came into post in July 2008 and was tasked to put in place the systems and procedures necessary to deliver and coordinate a regional project.

1. Programme Management

Positive feedback has been received from the individual Age Concerns relating to the work of the Regional Portfolio Coordinator (RPC) establishing simple working systems and procedures for reporting and ensuring the flow of information between the delivery organisations and the National Team. The RPC has nurtured effective collaboration across the region in the Regional Portfolio Management Group (RPMG) and the Regional Local Well-being Coordinators (LWC) group resulting in the groups creating an effective network to share good practice, ideas and initiatives. Quarterly meetings of the RPMG and the LWC network have been established to ensure strategic, operational and delivery issues are addressed promptly. Regular briefing notes will be circulated to distribute information around the region, this will reduce information overload, the amount of correspondence and provide an information resource. The main problem area is the SNAP data management requirement at this point it is felt by the Region that is not a particularly easy to use tool, nor does it produce any useful management reports at present. It needs also to be noted that the monitoring forms put onto the SNAP system will never match the actual number of participants because on some occasions people do not wish to complete the form or it is inappropriate due to mental capacity to have a person complete the form. A register at every event is kept that reflects true attendance.

2. Programme Model

Eight of the nine Age Concerns across the region are delivering similar programme models however Newcastle Age Concern put forward a proposal to re-focus the programme toward frailer older people and local partnership ownership. This has the working title of 'FAAF Plus'. Newcastle received the agreement from FAAF and Big Lottery to work to the FAAF Plus model in Newcastle on 8th July 2008. The developmental phase of Newcastle's project has required considerable re-modelling, brokerage and negotiation with key partners including; Newcastle City Council, North of Tyne Commissioning Consortium (Newcastle PCT), New Leaf, New Life Public Health Portfolio investment and foundation building. Newcastle's programme provides a pilot project that can inform future developments of the regional activities and is a regional 'flagship' in partnership joined up working.

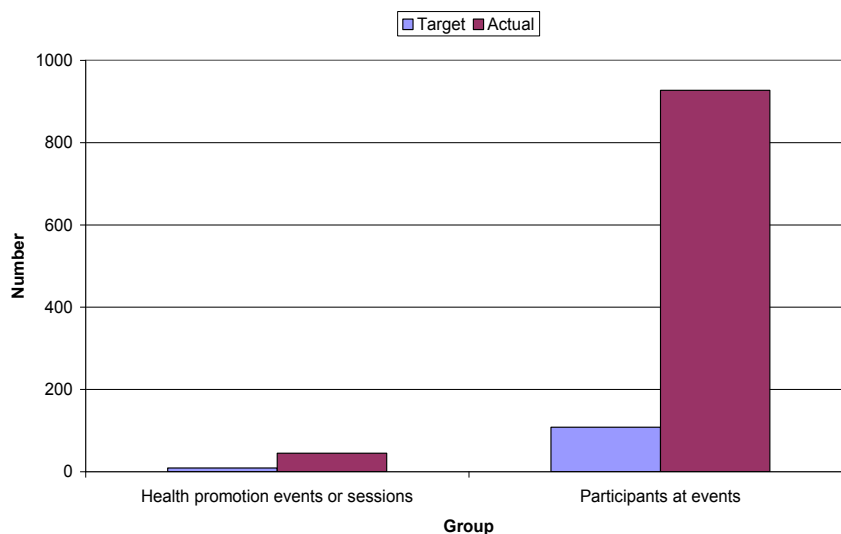
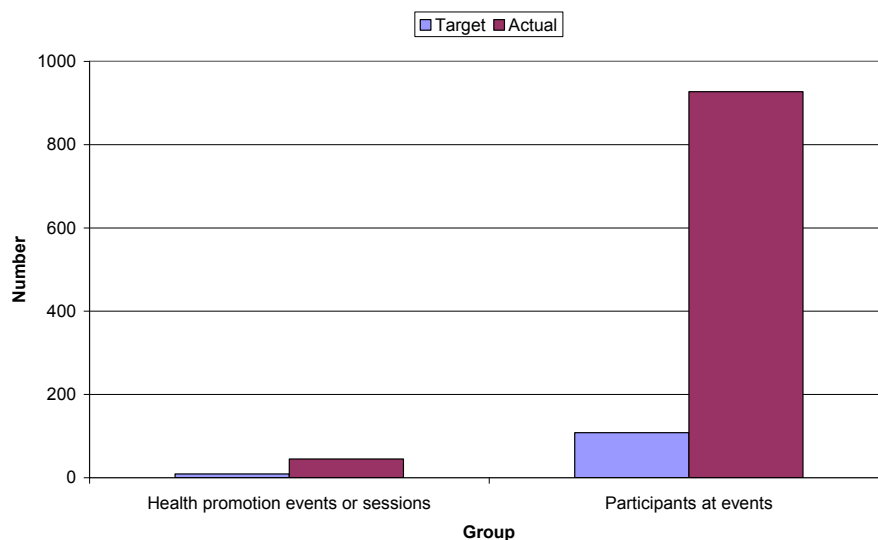
3. Examples of Effective Marketing/Publicity Across the Region:

Darlington Age Concern has commissioned a promotional DVD this is going to be developed and cascaded to the other 8 Age Concerns with all 9 Organisations producing bespoke DVD's for their area to use for marketing and publicity purposes. Gateshead Age Concern developed smoothie and soup recipe leaflets these were shared with the other Age Concerns and this initiative will be cascaded across the region in year 2. An interview was provided for Heyday Magazine (nationally distributed to all Heyday members) with one of Gateshead Age Concerns Physical Activity Motivators (PAMs) in January 2008.

4. Outcomes across the North East Region

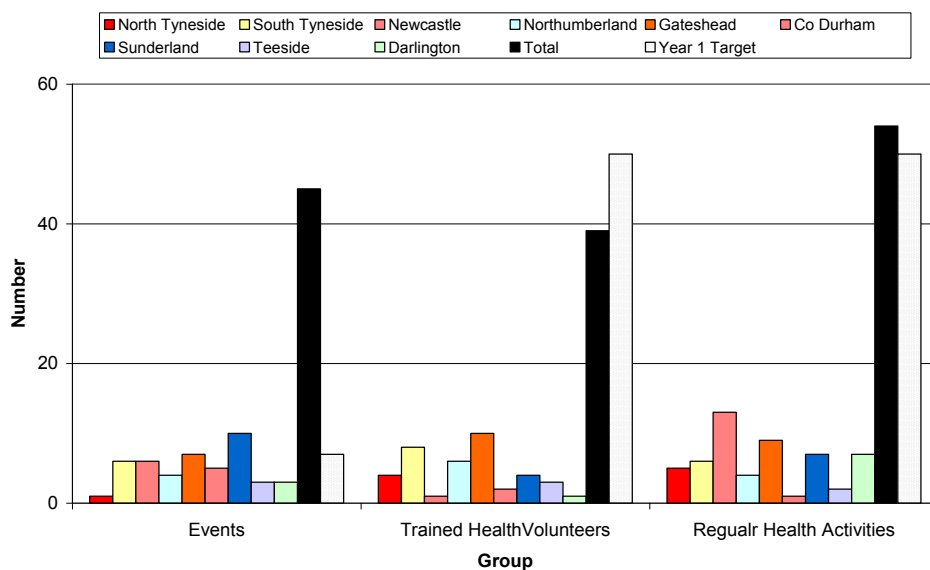
In a 12 month period the North East Region FAAF programme has produced the following outputs.

Activity 10/07 to 9/08	Target	Actual
Health promotion events or sessions	9	45
Number of participants at events	108	927
Number of volunteer tutors (Senior Health Mentors) recruited and trained	50	39
Regular Health Activities	50	54
Total number of participants at health activities	600	572
Total number of participants	758	1,538

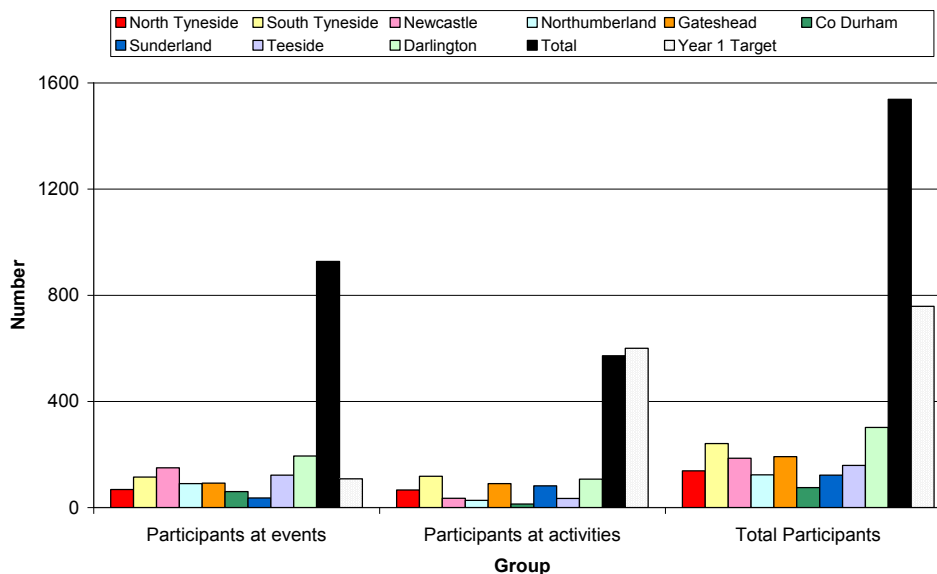


4.1 Individual Achievements:

	A	B	C	D	E	F
Delivery Organisation	Events	Participants	Trained 'Health Volunteers'	Regular Health Activities	Participants	Total Participants (B+C+E)
North Tyneside	1	68	4	5	66	138
South Tyneside	6	115	8	6	118	241
Newcastle	6	150	1	13	35	186
Northumberland	4	90	6	4	27	123
Gateshead	7	92	10	9	90	192
Co. Durham	5	60	2	1	13	75
Sunderland	10	36	4	7	82	122
Teesside	3	122	3	2	34	159
Darlington	3	194	1	7	107	302
TOTAL (Year 1 Target in brackets)	45 (9)	927 (108)	39 (50)	54 (50)	572 (600)	1538 (758)



‘Fit as a Fiddle’ 50 Ways to Health in the North East



5. Finance

At the end of the accounting period due to the late start of the programme there is significant under spend attached to the budget. This was discussed with the National Team and agreed with BLF that under spend could be carried forward into year 2. The individual budget for each ACO was clearly define; revised reporting financial tables have been put in place and a the profiled expenditure for Year 2 across the region has been agreed at the Regional Portfolio Management Group that the budget should be split into four equal parts. Sustainability and charges for activities is an ongoing issue for discussion.

Questionnaire Data Collection—Survey Questionnaire Appendix 2

6.1 Older People Eating a More Healthy Diet (Section A 1-4 of Questionnaire)

Health events across the region covering nutrition, exercise and emotional/mental well-being have been very successful. The region has established the format that works is using participation in all areas, service users being involved in preparing/cooking healthy meals, snacks and drinks, sharing the results with others and being able to take it home; taking part in exercise taster sessions and encouraging a culture of peer support; taking a holistic approach to health including feel good activities that have soft health benefits alongside tackling serious health issues; ensuring the practical elements like the location is accessible; it is in the community and the environment and organisation is welcoming, friendly and inviting. This type of approach has encouraged new people who would not normally engage in group/community activities to tentatively come along to see what is going on and take part. The majority of attendees have said that this type of event has encouraged them to become involved and try something new with other people in a similar position and the numbers of people becoming involved in our activities and maintaining their involvement clearly supports this feedback.

45 people across the region were surveyed using the FAAF monitoring and evaluation questionnaires. The data collected is from one point in time and therefore purely descriptive.

The data shows that the majority (80%+) said the events gave them the opportunity to try something new and they realised that being with their peers lifted their mood and they enjoyed the company; that cooking healthy food from scratch can be easy, fun and satisfying

and they came away with a better understanding of diet that encouraged them to change the way they currently eat; and that exercise can be fun and enjoyable.

The data shows that as a region participants are eating equal amounts of vegetables and fruit each day varying between 3 and 5 portions of each with 20% exceeding this amount.

6.2 Increased Physical Activity (Section A 5-9 of Questionnaire)

The evaluation demonstrates that all round improvement was achieved in participant's lives by beginning or increasing physical activity. An average of 20% of participants has increased the number of hours they are active each week and 80% take more enjoyment from physical activity and have tried new things. An average of 70% of participants reported that they had increased confidence when performing normal everyday tasks; 20% reported weight loss; 50% reported an increase in stamina and strength; improved balance and coordination and almost two thirds of participants reported making more friends and improved relaxation; this establishes the coalescence effect of mental stimulation by being socially active is of enormous benefit.

6.3 The link between Physical and Nutritional Health and Mental Well-being (Section B 10-13 of Questionnaire)

This evaluation clearly demonstrates that all round physical, mental, emotional and quality of life improvements are experienced by individuals beginning or increasing physical activity and taking small steps to improve their nutrition. Substantial evidence shows that exercise therapy can be an effective treatment for depression, as stated by the Mental Health Foundation. The last three years has seen a significant increase in GPs prescribing exercise to people with moderate depression, for example; Age Concern Gateshead's Senior Health Mentor (SHM)/Physical Activity Motivator (PAMs) project assists in delivering prescribed exercise activities for people suffering from many health related illnesses. The 'Fit as a Fiddle' programme is confirming our approach and demonstrating what works best, such as providing access out in the local community; participant led design and delivery; introducing people into an environment where they can achieve a lifestyle change that is beneficial to each individual according to their needs.

6.4 Number of Senior Health Mentors and the benefit to the programme and the individual

In year 1 of the FAAF programme in the region has recruited 39 Senior Health Mentors. Each Senior Health Mentor across the region contributes between 1 to 2.5 hours per week to the programme. In monetary terms calculating this over a six month delivery period based on the national minimum wage of £5.73 per hour; volunteering has contributed between £233.47 and £563.68 per week which equates to between £6,070 and £14,656 for the 26 week period.

Physical Capital: Senior Health Mentors (SHM) involved in the programme come from a wide range of back grounds, the programme has attracted people of all age ranges, a high proportion of the volunteers are female and of white ethnic origin.

Human Capital: The comments from SHM clearly demonstrates the personal benefit they gain through their volunteering involvement of increased self esteem, confidence, increased physical fitness, weight loss, friendship, sense of purpose in summing up an overall sense of well-being.

Economic Capital: The programme has been successful in linking with other organisa-

tions to promote the SHM role for example Age concern Newcastle with the Department of Works and Pensions who have agreed time from within the working week for people to volunteer with the project. This builds individual skills and develops the capacity of the programme.

Age Concern's across the region are well established in the voluntary sector providing a wide range of volunteer opportunities to meet most peoples requirements. They have an excellent reputation for volunteer management that means once a volunteer is recruited the training opportunities; support that is in place ensures the organisation is able to retain volunteers. The ACO's continually look for new way to raise awareness of the benefits of volunteering within the community and with other organisations but history shows that the best form of attracting volunteers is through either recommendation/word of mouth and/or people who have taken part in an event/activity and have experienced the benefits.

7. Comments on Programme from:-

7.1 Senior Health Mentors

The FAAF programme activities in Year 1 have been supported by 39 volunteers, delivering exercise sessions, supporting the running of activity sessions by collecting the register, assisting completing monitoring and evaluation forms and supporting peers in the group. The role of the senior health mentor either as a deliverer or supporter is a vital component to the success of the FAAF activities. Participants feel welcomed by a familiar face and having a peer in the activity class makes people feel at ease.

Recruiting new senior health mentors into the FAAF programme will be a challenge, however it is hoped that through an expanded programme of activities and opportunities, older people, will be drawn towards volunteering and supporting peers in their local community.

7.2 Comments from Senior Health Mentors

<p>From my point of view I enjoy the volunteering, it gets me out and about and meeting very nice people; several of the ladies attending the class have told me how much benefit they get both physically and socially; everyone attending class seems to benefit from the "purpose" of getting out of the house for a specific reason.</p>
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7.3 Comments External Tutors

In order to deliver the fit as a fiddle programme it has been necessary in some instances to employ qualified exercise tutors on a sessional basis.

I found the organisation of the exercise sessions by Age Concern to be of a high standard. The times of the sessions were appropriate to that age group, and the facilities were of a high standard. It was useful to have an assistant to take the register etc. The participants were enthusiastic and very clearly enjoyed taking part. They were disappointed when there was a break for a holiday etc. The sessions were designed to provide progression for the participants. Some of the individuals found the exercises tricky at first, but as their skills developed they were able to tackle more challenging tasks. At all times exercises were safe and effective, and suitable for the client group. Some individuals simply enjoyed being out socialising and moving to the music. The programme impacted in a positive way on the quality of life for the individuals involved. As a Fitness Professional, I am delighted to support the 'Fit as a Fiddle' programme and thoroughly enjoyed delivering it!

8. Partnership Working

Internal and external partnership working is in its infancy for the project but will and is an invaluable element of the programme. What has become clear very quickly internally is the enthusiasm for the programme at all levels and the willingness across the programme to collaborate fully with each other, offer support, share best practice, ideas and resources. This enthusiasm has filtered through to partners across the region and they are keen to support the initiative and become involved in the programme. Because of financial constraints of the programme this is going to become essential in sustaining the programme and activity/service on a long-term basis, that we develop good relationships with our partners to allow us to develop ways of maintaining the opportunities that 'fit as a fiddle' is providing. Regular contact with partners, through involvement in networks and direct communication does assist in the successful building of partnerships. Advertising and promotion of joint services is cost effective and enhances relationships with all involved, this will set the scene for the future. By introducing the FAAF programme into the nine local Strategic Partnerships and their associated sub-groups and older people's groups/forums sets the scene to provide evidence to support and explore the value and necessity of this programme being supported through statutory funding in the future.

9. Summary:

Performance/Outcomes

Our progress towards targets has been very good as demonstrated by our performance figures.

- Number of trained volunteers (39) is slightly below target (50) but overall number of participants (1538) at all types of activity and event greatly exceeds target (758). Extensive, diverse range of local activities underway.
- 45 events against a target of 9: 927 people have attended these events; the target was 108.
- There were 54 regular health activities involving volunteers (target 50) with 572 participants at these activities (target 600).

The 'management milestones' (Numbers 3, 6, 14, 22, 23) have been achieved despite the protracted appointment of a lead agency; a change in the delivery specification for AC Newcastle which delayed agreements being signed; and a constitutional change at AC Durham which also delayed agreements being signed.

The 'delivery milestones' (Numbers 23, 27, 28, 30, 62) have been achieved and exceeded in most cases. Only the number of trained health volunteers needs to be increased in the next year. The achievements are a tribute to the dedication, skill and innovation being shown by the nine delivery organisations. What becomes clear in the Quarterly Monitoring Reports, site visits and local evaluations is that Age Concern Organisations are tailoring the Fit as a Fiddle programme to meet local circumstances and opportunities.

9.2 Unexpected Outcomes

Age Concern has a long tradition and much experience in delivering health related activities and measuring the impact on older people's quality of life and general wellbeing. We seldom have the chance to measure the physical health improvements brought about by our activities, either because we are not able to carry out 'before and after health checks' or because the effects can only be measured over a much longer period than our interaction with the older person. By working in partnership with health professionals at some of the Fit as a Fiddle activities and events we are probably seeing more physical health checks being carried out, and more immediate information and advice being provided to older people in need of health care.

This is illustrated in 'Fit as a Fiddle' events hosted by Age Concern Darlington. AC Darlington held a Happy Healthy Heart Day with Coronary Support Specialist Nurses. AC Darlington workers also encouraged a 'Say No To Salt Day' in Day Care Centres and gave out fruit samples to highlight '5 A Day'. 103 service users were involved, 73 people had their blood pressure checked 23 people filled in a questionnaire stating which future events and FAAF activities they would like to do. Outcomes of the nurses' visits- 1 service user had low blood pressure, 6 high blood pressure- all were given information and advice and urged to visit their GP. 1 Service User who was anxious about whether to have a pace maker fitted or not was given one to one advice, given a pace maker to hold etc and reassured to the extent that they said they would go ahead with the operation.

Qualitative outcomes that are often hidden and immeasurable are so important and the benefits of people being active in their local community and making a positive contribution is a major causative factor to their health, happiness and general well-being. Many participants also expressed that through participation in activities they have built confidence and self-esteem and have renewed enthusiasm and motivation to continue with a healthy lifestyle. Many people have stated that the support, joy and comfort that they receive from their peers have helped them greatly through very difficult periods of their lives. Typical examples of this are bereavement, coping with illnesses such as breast or prostate cancer, feelings of isolation and loneliness.

Soft outcomes such as these are constant; we feel that the achievement is the individual persons and we act solely as the enabler.

10. Conclusion:

10.1 The Way Forward, Sustainability

During year 1 we have established the internal systems and willingness essential for effective collaborative partnership working to delivery bespoke 'fit as a fiddle' programmes across the region. In Year 2 we want to continue the same diverse approach and perhaps increase the interaction between the nine delivery organisations so that we can not only learn from each other but share resources for marketing, training and other things.

The evidence from the evaluation and feedback throughout the year set out in this docu-

ment and in more detail in the nine individual evaluations shows that by taking a holistic approach to people's well-being is the key to a healthier happier community. The less tangible but fundamental soft outcomes that are clearly evident in the evaluation confirms the effectiveness and value of the regions current activity that people really are doing and feeling better as a result of interventions and this indicated that it is more likely that the behaviour/life style changes will be sustained. Partnership working is in the development stage but firm foundations are in place.

Lessons Learned

- Ensure that the contract outcomes are reasonable and achievable
- Ensure the budget profile covers all associated costs
- Ensure that Governance Structures are clear/ Policies, protocols and procedures in place before commencement of the project
- Management/reporting systems/materials; in place before the commencement of the project (QMR, Finance, Evaluation, Audit).
- Data recording systems are fit for purpose and user/report friendly
- Data collection reasonable
- Training materials/programmes in place before commencement of project
- Management and delivery plans well developed/staff in place
- Contracts signed before commencement of project
- Regional Coordination of Fit as a Fiddle has been central to developing partnership working across the North East. This is being carried forward by the Regional Portfolio Management Group. Additionally, the Regional FAAF Coordinator, is employed by ACNT (Age Concern North Tyneside_) on behalf of the region, keeps in regular contact with FAAF projects across all nine Age Concern Organisations. ACNT sees this as crucial to progress of Fit as a Fiddle and agreed to add financial support in Year 1 .

12. Case Studies

Age Concern Darlington: Fred and Jill Alexander

Fred's wife saw a newspaper advert for the Age Concern Darlington Fit as a Fiddle group weight management group. She persuaded Fred to go along with her and as a consequence of attending this group, where diet was the main focus, participants were encouraged to join in with FAAF exercise classes to compliment their diet plans. Both Fred and Jill joined the weekly FAAF gym sessions and they have totally changed their lifestyle, not only has Fred lost weigh, over 2 stones, but his health has improved dramatically!! At his recent (March 08) visit to see the nurse at the asthma clinic his breath test were surprising- both to him and his nurse! Fred's lung capacity had improved greatly from his last reading. The nurse recorded the best ever lung capacity test for Fred and told him' Whatever it is you are doing keep doing it!' Fred has a new lease of life and a spring in his step! He is walking as much as he can and really enjoying activities with his wife and is overall feeling so much better. They are both so pleased they saw the FAAF advertisement and delighted with the results of their involvement.



Age Concern Durham: Joyce Sandra Snell

I am retired, full time carer for my Dad. I am involved with the Salvation Army and have three grown up children. I like swimming and taking part in the curling. I have one grandson and another grandchild on the way. I am diabetic, have high blood pressure and arthritis in all of my joints. I found out about the curling through the every other Tuesday group and thought I would come along and give it a try, it was also an opportunity to have a break from caring for others and a chance to meet new people and have time for myself. It is an ideal location and it is the fellowship with others I enjoy and I can do as much or as little as I want depending on how I feel health wise that day, I feel less stressed. There is nothing I dislike about the activity and would describe my experience as happy, relaxed and excited and I would recommend this activity because I am enjoying it and think they will enjoy it to. It is good there are things going on locally in the town, since I lost my husband I need to be involved in the local community.

Age Concern Gateshead: Sheltered accommodation client (82)

"When I was asked if I would join in an exercise class, I laughed. There was no way that I was going to enjoy exercising, at my age as well, I'm 82! Anyway the Lady came along to meet us and tell us what we would be doing, she also told us that if we felt too tired we could have a break and go along at our own pace. It sounded really good, exercising in your own chair. We all met in the main lounge, and on went the music, songs that brought back some memories. We used squashy balls to exercise our hands, and silky scarves to make patterns in the air. We concentrated on keeping up with each other. We do look forward to our classes, its something different to look forward to"

Age Concern Newcastle: Volunteer Experience Case Study

Julie is one of over 120 Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) employees who have signed up to an employer supported volunteering scheme to help with a variety of Age Concern Newcastle projects. Her involvement has not only enabled older people's services to be sustained during periods of volunteer absence or shortage, but she has also been able to help with a number of health promotion events for older people, enabling them to try out new activities and to receive information on healthy living.

Julie says, "Each time I have been involved, I have really enjoyed myself, finding being with older people both worthwhile and rewarding. Helping as a volunteer reminds me how enjoyable it is to be amongst older people and how much we can all help to make their lives both happier and healthier. It specifically helps me to be more sensitive when dealing with en-

quiries from older people as I better understand their needs and concerns.”

Age Concern North Tyneside

Margaret took early retirement from the job centre to help look after her grandson and spotted an advert in the local press for a keep fit session at the church where she lived and after ringing up to find out what it was all about she went along. “Maureen always greets you and she’s very friendly, in fact I’ve made some good friends and we all go out for a meal at Christmas time and try to arrange days out in the summer as well. Everyone was in the same boat and we all just tried to get along and gel. It helps me keep the weight down and I feel better about myself.

Age Concern Northumberland

George is married man with 4 daughters and five granddaughters, He enjoys spending time with his family, and he always considered himself to be a fairly fit guy who enjoyed walking regularly with his wife.

Two and a half years ago he was in a car accident the impact of the accident left him with serious injuries to his spine leaving him unable to do a lot of daily tasks he would otherwise find easy. He suffered a lot of pain and stiffness and did not imagine he would recover from this and knew he had to do something about it. George heard from a friend that there was a Pilates group for men in a near by town and was curious about it so went along to see if this would help, that was in Sept 2008 and he is still attending the group on a weekly basis. George has found a huge improvement since joining the Pilates particularly through exercises for his back which has improved his strength, core stability, mobility flexibility, posture and mental well being describing it as a “feel good factor” George also said if he does not attend the classes his physical well being would suffer greatly. The Pilates instructor has a lovely manner and personality with the group and George feels that the entire group has benefited in some way or another.

The group share a lot of similarities and he can relate to them. The instructor recognises the abilities of the group and can adapt exercises accordingly George also thinks that the Pilates are fantastic and would do more if time allowed. George is more confident and positive now and is able to do the things he enjoys, like going out walking with his wife and hopes to continue doing a lot more.

Age Concern South Tyneside

Mrs H is 85 and came along to a seated exercise session because it was in the community hall in the street where she lives. She was initially unsure about whether she would be able to join in and what she could do as she is registered blind (has a small amount of sight in one eye) but decided it would get her out the house and among company. Mrs H was talking to the lady sitting next to her, a friend who also lived in the street and asked who else was in the room as she recognised voices but couldn’t see everyone. Her friend informed her who else was present and Mrs H realised that she new most people. She was unsure who the lady sitting on the other side of her was until it was explained that she was in fact her next-door neighbour! It appeared that the two ladies exchange pleasantries and wave to each other all the time but both have very limited sight and had never properly met. Mrs H attended the exercise sessions every week and discovered that she could fully participate and enjoyed it very much. “I’ve always been an active person. I’m 85 and exercise in a chair does me good. I just do my best”

Mrs H was talking to the exercise tutor after the session and told her how much she was struggling to watch her television as she just couldn’t see it anymore. She explained that it was not only the fact that she was missing her favourite programmes by not watching TV she was smoking more than ever through boredom. She recognised this was a bad situa-

tion she needed to do something about. She also explained she didn't feel confident buying a new television as she didn't fully understand the digital switch over and how it would affect her.

What had seemed initially like a relatively small comment about not being able to see her TV was in fact a much larger problem that was having a big impact on her life. Mrs H was referred to the Advice and Information Officer who helped with her queries and also made a further referral to The Sight Service who was able to offer specialised advice on magnified television screens. Several weeks later she reported that she had her new television, felt much happier and was very grateful for all the help and advice received. She continues to attend seated exercise on a weekly basis, along with her neighbour!

Age Concern Sunderland: Jean Kidson

"After my partner died, I felt very low in confidence and self-esteem. It actually got to the point where I barely went out of the house. I decided that I needed to do something, so I went along to Age Concern Sunderland and join the Keep Fit as a Fiddle Group. I was very shy at first, but it didn't take long to make new friends. I really enjoy the course, it's very sociable. My health has improved, I feel fitter and I can continue to do things that I may not have been able to do, such as gardening and housework. It's the regular exercise that is keeping me active. As I said before, I have made new friends in the group, one of whom has encouraged me to attend a local gym, which we go to together. I also find out a lot of health information from others in the group. I'm learning something new all the time. It's great."

Age Concern Teesside

Mrs. A is 59 years old, recently widowed, still in paid employment and supporting her immediate family. Mrs. A was looking for something to occupy her spare time and her daughter felt this would be good for Mrs. A as a distraction from her situation as she was still in the grieving process. Mrs. A and her daughter went shopping to buy materials to make cards. In the shop they met a customer who they got into conversation with and the customer invited Mrs. A to attend a card making session at Age Concern Teesside, the friendship has blossomed from there. After Mrs. A had attended a number of sessions Mrs. A expressed an interest in other activities, the FAAF co-coordinator asked Mrs. A if she would like to become a walk mentor, this she jumped at as she loved to walk. In addition to walking Mrs. A thought this was a great opportunity as she loves to assist in planning and organising and now she even takes a lead in the walks. This has also proven to be great for her confidence as she says on a regular basis she feel that this has turned her life around. Since becoming a mentor Mrs. A has help out in events and taken part in Nintendo Wii sessions and exercise classes, made lots of new friends and built up her self a steam. She is an inspiration to other members and offers support and encouragement with her easy manner and humour.

'Fit as a Fiddle' 50 Ways to Health in the North East



50+ Questionnaire *(Pilot)*

Big Lottery Fund Evaluation

We would like to invite you to participate in an evaluation project. You are not required to participate if you do not wish to, choosing not to take part will not disadvantage you in any way, and you will continue to be able to be involved in this service / project.

Your answers will help to measure the impact of Big Lottery Fund grants which aim to support healthier lifestyles and improve wellbeing. Your feedback will also be used to inform the type of services and activities funded by the Big Lottery Fund to bring benefits to individuals and communities in the future.

Please answer the questionnaire as fully as you can. If you are unable to answer a question, please leave it blank and move onto the next question.

We would like to reassure you that your responses will remain confidential. If you have any questions about this questionnaire, please do not hesitate to ask a project worker or anyone else.

As this is a pilot, there is an opportunity for you to provide any thoughts and feedback on this questionnaire on the last page.

Before we begin, a few administrative questions:

Is this questionnaire being completed:

- At the start of the project/service?
 - During the project/service?
 - On completion of the project/service?
 - Some time after being involved in the project/service?
- If so, please indicate when involvement ended: / /

When did you first become involved in this activity/start using the service?

/ / (please provide a rough date if you are not certain)

Today's date: / /

Please tick one of the below:

- I am the service user filling in the questionnaire myself
- I am a project worker reading out the questions to the service user and filling in their responses.
- I am a carer/guardian completing the questionnaire on behalf of the service user (some questions in Section B may be difficult to answer; please just complete as many as you can)

SECTION A

Firstly, we would like to ask some questions on your eating habits:

1) On average how many portions of FRUIT do you eat a day?

(examples include a handful of grapes, an orange, apple or banana, a glass of fruit juice, or a handful of dried fruits)

_____ per day on average

2) And how many portions of VEGETABLES do you eat a day?

(one portion is a side salad, or 3 heaped tablespoons of vegetables, beans or pulses either raw, cooked, frozen or tinned)

_____ per day on average

3) In a normal week, how often do you eat a meal that has been prepared and cooked from basic ingredients, either by yourself or someone else? For example Shepherd's Pie made starting with raw mince and potatoes? (please circle one answer only)

Never	Less than once a week	Once a week	2-3 times a week	4-6 times a week	Daily
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4) Please indicate how much you agree with the following statements (please tick one box for each statement)

		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
a)	I enjoy putting effort and care into the food I eat.	1	2	3	4	5
b)	I enjoy eating healthy food.	1	2	3	4	5

Next we are interested in physical activity:

5) Please tell us the type and amount of physical activity involved in your work. (please tick one box only)

I am not in employment (e.g. retired, retired for health reasons, unemployed, fulltime carer etc.)	1
I spend most of my time at work sitting (such as in an office)	2
I spend most of my time at work standing or walking. However, my work does not require much intense physical effort (e.g. shop assistant, hairdresser, security guard, childminder, etc.)	3
My work involves definite physical effort including handling of heavy objects and use of tools (e.g. plumber, electrician, carpenter, cleaner, hospital nurse, gardener, postal delivery workers etc.)	4

6) During the last week, how many hours did you spend on each of the following activities? (please tick one box in each row)

	None	Some but less than 1 hour	More than 1 hour, but less than 3 hours	3 hours or more
a) Physical exercise including swimming, jogging, aerobics, golf, social dancing, etc.	1	2	3	4
b) Cycling, including cycling to work and during leisure time	1	2	3	4
c) Walking, including walking to work, shopping, for pleasure, etc.	1	2	3	4
d) Housework / Childcare	1	2	3	4
e) Gardening / DIY	1	2	3	4

7) And in the *past four weeks*, on how many days have you done 30 minutes of physical activity such as brisk walking, cycling, sport, exercise, active recreation, sufficient to cause you to breathe more deeply? Please do not indicate physical activity as part of your job. (please circle one answer only):

0 days	1-3 days	4-6 days	7-12 days	13-19 days	20+ days
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8) Now read the following statements and indicate on the sliding scale the point that best describes your feelings around physical activity (please circle one number only)

I wish I didn't have to do physical activity, but I know it's important for my health	1 2 3 4 5	As well as being important for my health, physical activity is something I enjoy
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9) The following questions ask you to indicate how confident you are at doing a number of activities. On a scale of 1 to 7, with 1 having no confidence at all, and 7 being extremely confident, how confident are you at...

		Please circle one number						
		No confidence ←			→ Extremely confident			
a)	Walking around the house	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
b)	Doing light housekeeping	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
c)	Doing simple shopping	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
d)	Preparing a meal (not requiring heavy or hot objects)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

SECTION B

We would now like to ask some questions about your recent thoughts and feelings:

10) All things considered, how satisfied are you with your life as a whole nowadays? *(please circle one number only)*

Extremely Dissatisfied	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Extremely Satisfied
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11) Below are a number of things people might say that they feel. Please tick the box that best describes how often during the past week each description would have applied to you?

	Never	At least once	On a few days	Most days	Every day
a) You felt happy or contented	1	2	3	4	5
b) You felt depressed	1	2	3	4	5
c) You felt engaged or focused in what you were doing	1	2	3	4	5
d) You felt energised or lively	1	2	3	4	5
e) You felt lonely	1	2	3	4	5
f) You felt everything you did was an effort	1	2	3	4	5
g) Your sleep was restless	1	2	3	4	5

12) Below are some statements about feelings and thoughts. Please tick the box that best describes your experience of each over the *past four weeks*.

	None of the time	Rarely	Some of the time	Often	All of the time
a) I've been feeling optimistic about the future	1	2	3	4	5
b) I've been feeling useful	1	2	3	4	5
c) I've been feeling relaxed	1	2	3	4	5
d) I've been dealing with problems well	1	2	3	4	5
e) I've been thinking clearly	1	2	3	4	5
f) I've been feeling close to other people	1	2	3	4	5
g) I've been able to make up my own mind about things	1	2	3	4	5
h) I've been feeling like a failure	1	2	3	4	5
i) I've felt like I belong to something I would call a community	1	2	3	4	5
j) I've been feeling good about myself	1	2	3	4	5

13) The next question is about your contact with your family and friends. (please tick one box in each row)

Family. Consider the people to whom you are related either by birth or marriage.

How many relatives do you...	None	One	Two or More
a) ...see or hear from at least once a month?			
b) ...feel at ease with that you can talk about private matters?			
c) ...feel close to such that you could call on them for help?			

Friendships. Consider all of your friends, including those who live in your neighbourhood.

How many of your friends do you...	None	One	Two or More
a) ...see or hear from at least once a month?			
b) ...feel at ease with that you can talk about private matters?			
c) ...feel close to such that you could call on them for help?			

Lastly, we would like to ask you some questions about yourself:

14) Are you Male Female

15) What is your date of birth? / /

16) What is your ethnic group?

A White

British Irish Other White:
(please write in)

B Mixed

White and Black Caribbean White and Black African
 White and Asian Any other Mixed background:
 (please write in)

C Asian or Asian British

Indian Pakistani Bangladeshi
 Any other Asian background: (please write in)

D Black or Black British

Caribbean African Other Black:
(please write in)

E Chinese or Other Ethnic group

Chinese Any Other: (please write in)

17) Do you have any long-term illness, health problem or disability which limits your daily activities or the work you do? (include problems due to old age)

No Yes

18) What is your postcode?

That's all! Thank you very much for taking the time to fill in this form. Please use the space below to write down any comments about this form, or write on another sheet of paper if necessary.

This survey has been designed by nef (the new economics foundation) on behalf of BIG. nef is an independent charitable organisation that is working to develop an economy where people and planet matter.

'Fit as a Fiddle' 50 Ways to Health in the North East



fit as a fiddle North East

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