

**PILMENY DEVELOPMENT PROJECT OLDER PEOPLE'S SERVICES PROJECT**  
**ANNUAL REPORT 2020/21**

**Background:** PDP developed North East Edinburgh LOOP Community Navigator Project between 2014-2019. At the end of the project funding period, PDP had identified additional gaps in services for older people in North East Edinburgh.

To address this unmet need, PDP developed its **Older People Services Project** which began in April 2019. The **vision** for Pilmeny Development Project Older People's Services Project (OPSP) is to deliver a service that will prevent deterioration in health and wellbeing and reduce the overall impact of social isolation and loneliness experienced by older people, through preventative engagement in their local community.

Margaretann Farquharson and Mary O Connell are employed (job-share) 17.5 hours each per week = 35 hours, with management support provided by Pilmeny Development Project (PDP).



**In light of COVID-19**, PDP completely reconfigure its services, initially to cope with emergency support needs of the most vulnerable older people who were socially isolating or shielding. PDP continues to provide an Alternative Service Provision for older people, carers and their families in line with the Scottish Government Restrictions. From March till the present due to COVID-19 we had to reconfigure our service and develop Alternative Service Provisions for our older people.

We are now offering a range of alternative service provision during COVID-19 for local older people including:

1. Food Provision
2. Telephone Befriending
3. Practical Support
4. Information provision
5. Newsletter
6. Activity Packs
7. Social distancing meetings
8. Digital inclusion
9. Virtual Groups

**Older People and Carers PDP Risk Register**

During the reporting period, PDP received **54 new referrals**. 46 of these new referrals were crisis/ high risk new older people which were added to the risk register.

During the reporting period 59 older people/ carers were identified to be at crisis/ high risk, with the many moving to medium/ low. At the end of Mar21, PDP revisited its risk register to identify older people/ carers who could need extra support (18 people identified as high/ medium risk) and will receive prioritisation.

**Referral Sources:**

Housing Association : 14  
 Family/ Friend : 9  
 NE Locality Community Navigator : 5  
 Voluntary Organisation: 5  
 Police Scotland : 4  
 Post diagnosis Dementia Support : 4  
 Sheltered Accommodation : 3  
 NHS: 3  
 OT/ Physio - NE Locality Hub : 3  
 Self- referral : 2  
 Counsellor: 1  
 Social Work : 1

**What initial support was needed?  
 \* 46/54 referrals were med/ high risk**

Crisis Support - Food and Emotional Support via Telephone Call	22
Crisis Support: Telephone Befriending to support Mental Health (suicide/ anxiety/ dementia)	16
Crisis Support - Food	8
Telephone Befriending to alleviate loneliness	3
Information Provision	3
Mental Health Support	1
Practical Support	1

**Status of referrals as of March21**

Weekly Telephone Calls	19	<b>Continued Support: 38</b>
Ad hoc contact	13	
Weekly Support - Prescription collection, Food deliveries	1	
Weekly Support - Info provision	4	
Digital Support	1	
Completed	8	<b>Completed: 11</b>
Referral Inappropriate - signposted to other service	3	
Deceased / Moved to care home	4	No service:
Referral – No response	1	5

**Stats of Service Users**

- **Gender** – 49% Men, 51% Women
- **Carers** – 38 service users are carers
- 91% of service users **live alone**
- 6 Service Users have disclosed they are part of the **LGBTQ** Community
- **BME:** 26 Service Users (Eastern European, Asian, African – mainly through the Multicultural Workshops)

<b>Age Range</b>	
90+	5%
80-89	30%
70-74	42%
60-69	18%
50-59	5%

## Volunteers

Volunteers have underpinned all of PDP's work during Covid-19. Many of the PDP OP service volunteers are older and many were self-isolating/shielding. Some of the self-isolating older volunteers became Telephone Befrienders, while others became recipients of the PDP Alternative Service. By Mar21, PDP **had 62 covid-19 response volunteers**.

As restrictions evolved so has PDP alternative service, and hence its volunteer roles. During lockdown; volunteers were needed to help with crisis food deliveries, pharmacy collection and telephone befriending. As restriction lifted, a more blended service was provided to older people and carers; telephone befrienders could socially-distance meet with older folk, one-to-one computer lessons (social distancing/ remote) could be provided and virtual groups could happen. PDP had identified 6 new volunteer roles which responded to the needs of older people during COVID-19: 1) Emergency Food Deliveries 2) Practical support 3) Telephone befriending 4) Information support/ Newsletter 5) Social distancing volunteers and 6) Digital Inclusion volunteers.

During the reporting period, volunteers have given **1,939.5 volunteer hours**. **114 training opportunities** were taken up by volunteers and approx **350 support and supervision** sessions took place.

## PDP Older People Services

### **1. Emergency Food Provision**

Provision of emergency foodboxes and ready meals (**596 deliveries**) to over 60 socially isolated older people in Leith, who are unable to go out and have no one to help. PDP also referred older people to a local foodbank, when an emergency foodbox/ ready meal was unavailable. As many older people are unable to go to the foodbank themselves (poor mobility/ no transport/ self-isolating), PDP volunteers collected the food parcels from the foodbank and delivery to the older person home.

#### **Food Provision Case Study**

Ms A, 85yrs old, has no family and lives alone in a 12-storey block in Leith. She is suffering from a range of long term health conditions, including mobility, hearing issues, diabetes and high blood pressure. She was self isolating during COVID-19. It was not recommended to use lifts in multi storey blocks during COVID-19 and tenants were asked to use the stairs. She was extremely stressed and worried about not being able to manage the stairs and not being able to get out to access or buy food. She is on a low income and is digitally excluded. We organised a weekly food box delivery by a volunteer, a weekly telephone befriending phone call from a PDP volunteer and she received PDP newsletters, which were posted out to her.

*"I received food packages for the last three weeks and it was a huge relief as it meant I could stay at home and I did not feel so alone"*

*“Dear friends, your beautiful box arrived yesterday full of so many varied and useful things. I shall have much pleasure using enjoying the. The greatest thing is the gift itself. Knowing the kind thoughts and good wishes you send at this ‘time’ is much appreciated. Thank you all”*

*“A short note to say thank you all for the food you sent to me. I was quite overwhelmed by such generosity, it’s not something that I have ever had before, and it was so lovely to feel someone cares. You all must be very busy doing the wonderful job that you do. I cannot get out at all unless someone takes me and all this dreadful lockdown - it has been more than seven weeks since I had some reviving fresh air but everyone is have the same problem. I can only pray for a time when it will be over and that in the near future we will all be more caring to each other. Again thank you so very, very much. May God bless all of you.”*

## **2. Telephone Befriending**

PDP volunteers and staff made **5,643 ‘Social/ welfare Contact’ calls to 132 local older people**, to address social isolation and loneliness.

We recognised as restrictions continued to stay in place, with little news other than about COVID, the Telephone Befriending conversations could become stale and focus on the negative news. To rectify this we developed quizzes, activities pack and afternoon teas parties for Telephone Befrienders and Befriendees to do over the phone together. The idea behind this was that the Telephone Befriender and Befriendees have something different to talk about and have some fun.

*“The weekly call gives me an incentive and link to normality”.*

*“Delighted to receive my surprise prize yesterday or the day before. Thank you very much!  
We both enjoy the quizzes”*

## **3. Practical Support**

Volunteers have been recruited from PDP & LTB to assist with daily practical tasks for older people who are unable to go out and have no one to help.

These tasks included gardening, pharmacy prescription, shopping, etc. PDP older people received practical help from PDP volunteers/ LTB members **94 times**.

## **4. Information Provision**

**369** Older People were provided with **470** pieces of info about services/ opp available during COVID-19. PDP OPS made **157 referrals** on behalf of PDP Older People. These include:

- Health e.g. Mental Health Assessment Team, Bladder & Bowel Nursing Team, Stroke Nurse, Podiatrist, Falls prevention, reduce sugar level, mental health, flu jabs
- Housing e.g. Edindex, ESPC, Chai, EHAP
- Financial e.g. Money Advice shop, Grapevine, Pension Credit re TV license
- Bereavement e.g. acorn, cruise, Richmond Hope

- Sensory loss e.g. Audiology help with hearing aid batteries, Guide dog association helping walking guide dog for blind person who was shielding
- Carers e.g. Care for Carers
- Food e.g. Meals on Wheels

#### **Acorn Bereavement Support**

Man (80s, suffers from depression) is supported by PDP with weekly phone calls and food parcels. During COVID-19 the man's brother passed away. The man was not only grieving but was also extremely upset that he was unable to attend his brother's funeral. PDP Development Worker felt the man needed bereavement counselling. The Development Worker first checked with Cruise Bereavement Phoneline, but they were busy and the caller would need to leave a number for the phoneline to return the call. The Development Worker felt the man would not have the motivation to do this. Instead the Development Worker contacted Acorn (provided group bereavement peer support). Through discussion with Acorn they were able to provide telephone support for the man during the most difficult period of grieving.

#### **5. Newsletter**

PDP create, printed and distributed 8 Newsletters and 2 Letters (2,576 copies) to 325 older people. The newsletters contained articles on safety and health issues, crossword, home based activity ideas, handy tips, jokes, etc. Many of our older folk in Leith don't have smart phones and are not online so it is really hard for them to get information or feel in touch.

*"Lots of Information and useful telephone numbers. Also liked the Jokes!"*

*"I used to love doing the quizzes in the paper but had stopped! I have enjoyed the newsletter and it has restarted my love of quizzes again! Thank you"*

#### **6. Activity Packs, gifts and Afternoon Teas – PDP volunteers have helped research, create and delivered **1,068 activity packs/ gifts/ afternoon teas** to **243 local older people**. These have included:**

- 200 individualized Christmas gifts to local older people, most who live alone and/or have little/ no family
- afternoon teas for telephone befrienders/ ees to have together over the phone
- Activity packs to celebrate St Andrew's day and International women's day.

*"Your mail always brings a smile, I refer to St Andrews Day leaflet. Made me smile as I have used the "old words" when I was young. I am now 91 – but brought back memories. Brilliant! Thoroughly enjoyed the activity pack and can't praise enough!"*

*"Thank you so much for the lovely surprise of afternoon tea. It was lovely and a nice treat at these exceptional circumstances".*

## 7. Social Distance Meetings

When restrictions allowed, PDP organised the safe meeting of Telephone Befriendeds/ers to meet outside. During the reporting period, **40 socially distance outside meetings** took place with 19 Older People. All volunteers were provided with volunteer kits (hand sanitiser, masks, wipes, lanyards, etc) and all meetings were risk assessed by the Development Workers.

*“It was so lovely to put a face to the voice I have been hearing over the last few months.  
Thank you to PDP and my befriender for all your help”*

## 8. Digital Connecting Project

Between Oct20-Mar21, PDP piloted our PDP Digital Connecting Project, which seeks to address the digital divide, social isolation and loneliness of older people in Leith, exacerbated by COVID-19, by increasing their digital literacy. PDP will

- organise digital learning and support sessions (1:1 and group) in line with COVID-19 coming out of lockdown regulations,
- develop large print/visual information suitable for older people who are not familiar with new technology and
- seek to develop a sustainable community based volunteer IT learning, help and support skills sharing network.

PDP has a computer library (laptops/ tablets/ wifi) which we will give/lend to local older people, and then match them with volunteers to encourage them to engage digitally. During the reporting period, **42 digital lessons** took place for 86 participants. We have also created and printed digital information booklets, and are seeking feedback from participants.

PDP Digital Connecting Project will be a key development of 2021/22, in which we aim to develop a sustainable project through volunteers and partnership working.

## 9. Virtual Groups

During lockdown, PDP Groups were unable to meet in person. Between Sept20-Mar21 we were able to offer virtual groups to PDP older people and members of the wider community. Through the offerings the Digital Connecting Project more PDP older people were able to engage in our virtual groups. **134 older people attended 67 virtual groups** (565 attendees). These have included:

- Coffee Mornings
- PDP AGM
- NEECAG (North East Edinburgh Care Action Group) AGMs (Portobello & Leith)
- Active Enquiry Reimagining the Future Workshops

- International Women’s Day Celebration
- And many more.....

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

Monitoring and Evaluation information has been gathered to evidence project outcomes. It must be noted that some of the usual methods employed, such as focus groups, were not feasible due to COVID-19 restrictions, while some outcomes were more about sustaining, rather than improving due to the impact of COVID-19. Monitoring and Evaluation methods we used included:

- No of Older People/ Referrals
- No of telephone calls, food deliveries/ practical support/ activity packs/ newsletters/ social distance meeting/ virtual groups/ digital lessons
- Feedback from other agencies, staff, other professionals, families, carers and wider community networks
- Case studies, quotes and stories
- PDP OP Services also did a Telephone Questionnaire with 30 service users
- PDP Volunteers also completed a Google Poll on how they found PDP Training Session

#### **30 older people responded to PDP Telephone Questionnaire**

- 30/30 strongly agree/ agreed I feel less isolated during COVID-19 because of PDP
- 30/30 strongly agree/ agreed I feel I am still connected to PDP and my peers
- 30/30 strongly agree/ agreed By receiving the food parcels, I was eating more healthy
- 30/30 strongly agree/ agreed I knew who to call on if I needed information, help or support
- 30/30 strongly agree/ agreed I feel supported to cope with the “ups and downs” of everyday life
- 30/30 strongly agree/ agreed I received Mental stimulus and Emotional support

#### **PDP Volunteer Training Session – Jan/Feb2021**

##### **12 participants, 8 completed GooglePoll**

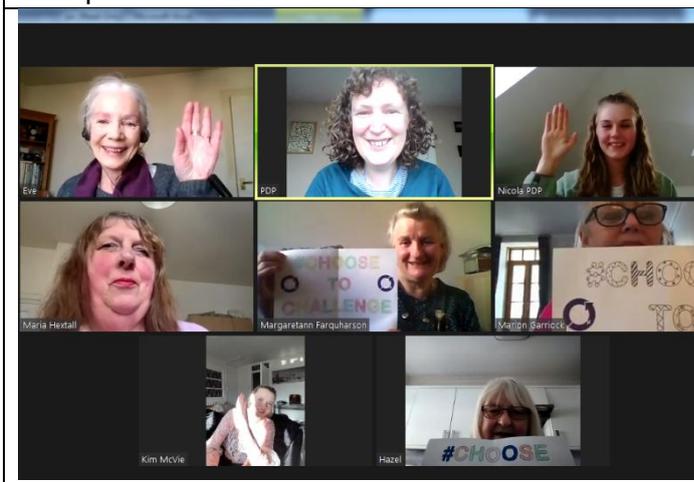
- 8/8 strongly agreed/ agreed with - I have a better knowledge of the work of Pilmeny Development Project
- 8/8 strongly agreed/ agreed with - The session helped me understand the role of a volunteer
- 8/8 strongly agreed/ agreed with - The session helped me understand the role of a volunteer
- 8/8 strongly agreed/ agreed with - I feel I would be supported by the PDP team
- 8/8 strongly agreed/ agreed with - I feel I have a better understanding of confidentiality and boundaries

Overall Score of Volunteer Induction Sessions (average): **9.75/10**

## Conclusion

The last year has had many challenges, but PDP Older People's Services were able to build on their existing infrastructure and strong relationships, to adapt quickly and develop alternative services which addressed the needs and wants of the local older people. COVID-19 only further highlighted the need of PDP OP Service to support those who are socially isolated, lonely, live alone and/or on low incomes.

A special thanks much got to PDP Older People Volunteers who shown commitment, care and support every week to PDP, local older people and the wider community. **THANK YOU!**

		
<p>PDP volunteers are using various modes of transport</p>	<p>Food Parcels Delivered to local Older People</p>	
		
<p>International Women's Day Virtual Celebration</p>		<p>Social Distance Meet-Up</p>
		
<p>Winner of Quiz</p>	<p>PDP Volunteer Induction Session</p>	

