

Kindliness and the Sheltered Housing Service in Dorset

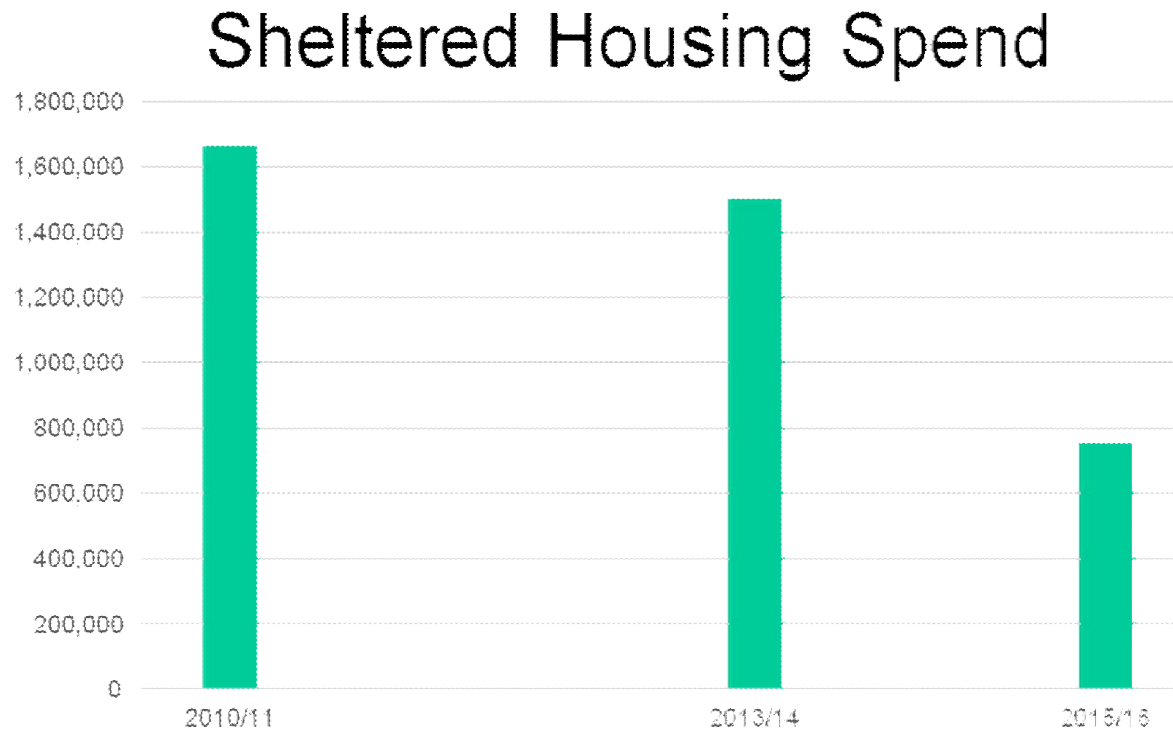
Robin James, Service Development Officer,
Housing and Prevention Team
Adult and Community Services

Introduction



- Sheltered Housing in Dorset
- Kindliness in theory
- Kindliness in practice

Setting the scene...



Setting the scene...



Current sheltered housing service

- 15 providers
- 4484 dwellings
- £737,000
- Two years from April 2016 to March 2018 maybe one year extension

Setting the scene...



Current sheltered housing service

- Individual support to some
- Community Development for all
- £4 per week
- Plus Enhanced Housing Management Service
- But Alarm charges – affordability

Why now...



- Services ending in March 2018 include Sheltered Housing, Floating Support and Social Inclusion services.
- The outcome of the current funding for supported housing services (rent top up) consultation is expected in the spring. It is anticipated that the outcome, especially regarding treatment of sheltered housing, can be considered before a decision needs to be made on future services.

Commissioning intentions...



- However, future commissioning intentions have to be set against a **savings target** of £1m for Housing and Prevention services.
- The team is **keen to protect** non-statutory services as far as it can.

Commissioning intentions...



- Aim to **maximise the reach** of services. To reach those in the greatest need.
- It acknowledges that people presenting with housing support issues often have **wider underlying issues**.
- It can be argued that sheltered housing expenditure does not reach many older people with significant support needs whilst supporting people who do not want to live in sheltered housing.

The future.....?



- Funding for current services is £1.55m. Future funding could be £0.75m.
- Consideration is being given to replacing Sheltered Housing, Floating Support and Social Inclusion services with a **Dorset Integrated Prevention and Support Service (DIPSS)**. This would include a tenure neutral short term floating support service available to older people.

The future.....?



- This service might partner with current landlord providers, community organisations and POPPs.
- A potential service matrix including:
 - DIPSS
 - POPPs – Community workers
 - Landlord services – including enhanced housing management.
 - Kindliness – culture change funding may be available
 - Dorset Accessible Homes Service
 - Community Equipment Service.
 - ‘OK Each Day’ type services
 - Care Navigators – people with eligible needs only

The future.....?



- We are keen to understand:

- how many people currently receive a significant package of support
- how many people would have to move out if the current service was discontinued
- how many people would need a Care Act assessment if the service was discontinued

and have asked providers to start compiling this data

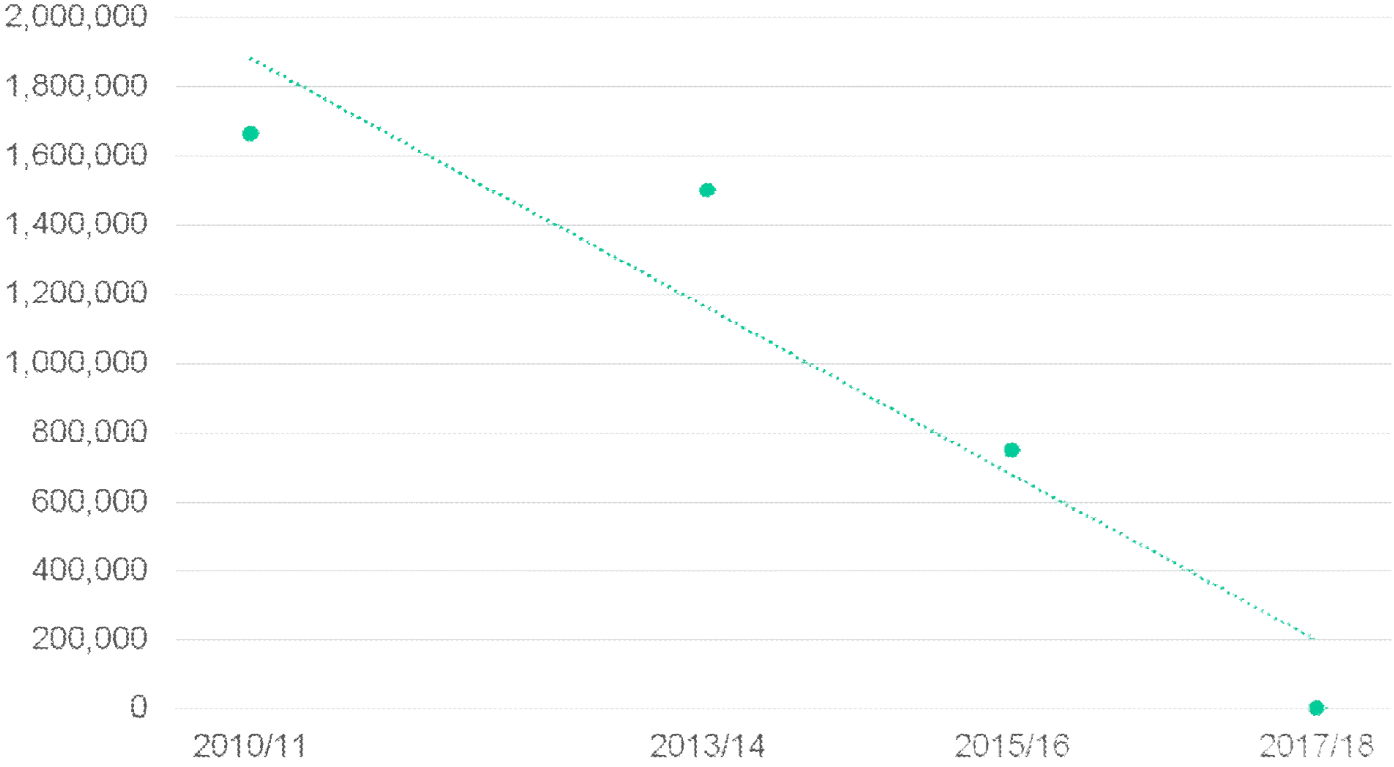
Time is short



- Providers have stressed the need for an early decision in view of the need to liaise with staff and set budgets.
- The current direction of travel is towards ending sheltered housing provision subject to:
 - Consideration of the results of the national supported housing consultation which may re-introduce ring-fenced monies
 - **Mitigation** of impacts are far as reasonable
 - Cabinet approval in July 2017



Sheltered Housing - Projected Spend



Mitigation



- New DIPSS service
- Service User assessment
- Work with landlord to enhance service - 'OK each Day'
- Kindliness – encouraging support provided by residents to residents

Kindliness....



- Based on work carried out in Hebden Bridge and published by Joseph Rowntree Foundation
- Developed in partnership with Bournemouth University

What is Kindliness?



- Kindliness, in essence, is about peer support... a willingness to help
- It is only when people are aware of a need, or ask for help, that this latent potential moves into action
- Kindliness overlaps with neighbourliness - an awareness of the situation of other residents; respect for their privacy; and a readiness to take action if help is needed.

Kindliness – some definitions



kindness, charity, sympathy, humanity,
compassion, friendliness, gentleness,
benevolence, amiability, beneficence,
benignity, kind-heartedness

Kindliness – some definitions



A wide range of terms are used to delineate its features, such as neighbourliness, mutual aid, everyday support or, more colloquially, that ‘little bit of help’.

...an awareness of the situation of other residents; respect for their privacy; and a readiness to take action if help is needed.

Kindliness – some definitions



....low level practical or emotional support, which is not provided through formalised groups or organisations, but between people who are not in a familial relationship.

Kindliness



Kindliness in Dorset aims to **help** landlords **enable** residents to remain independent and valued members of the community.

And it's not just Sheltered Housing....



- Kindliness has implications for the way managers treat staff
- Kindliness has implications for support provided for other vulnerable people
- Cross over with Keyring
- Now working with colleagues commissioning services for other vulnerable people

Kindliness....



Culture change never easy – Wendy will outline ways of starting to make the change and we will have the opportunity to discuss how this might work in practice

For further information please contact:

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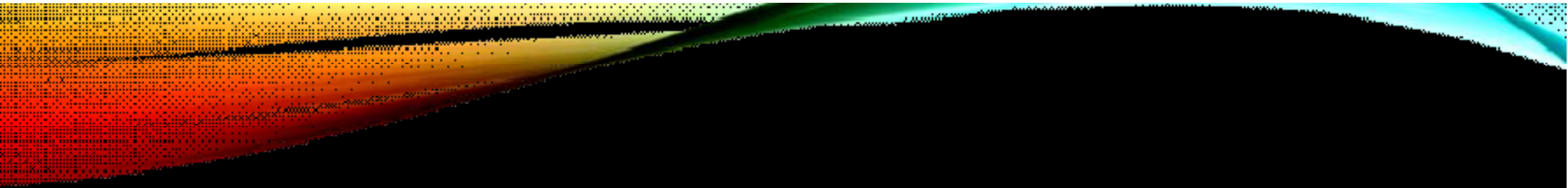




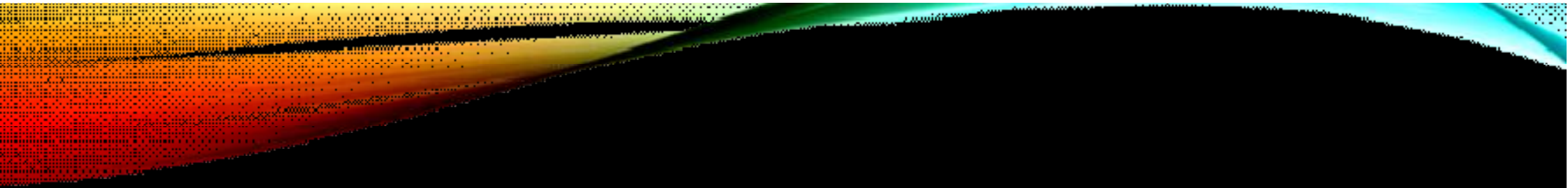
KINDLINESS IN SHELTERED HOUSING

A Dorset Project – Wendy Cutts

Senior Lecturer – Bournemouth University



My name is Wendy Cutts I am a Senior Lecturer in Community Development at Bournemouth University but have worked previously as a qualified social worker and then as Community Projects Manager for Dorset Community Action.




When Robin asked if the university would be interested in a discrete piece of research into Kindliness I was surprised but also intrigued.

I wanted to use an arts methodology to build on our successful Seen but Seldom Heard work which had pioneered performance poetry with young people with disabilities.

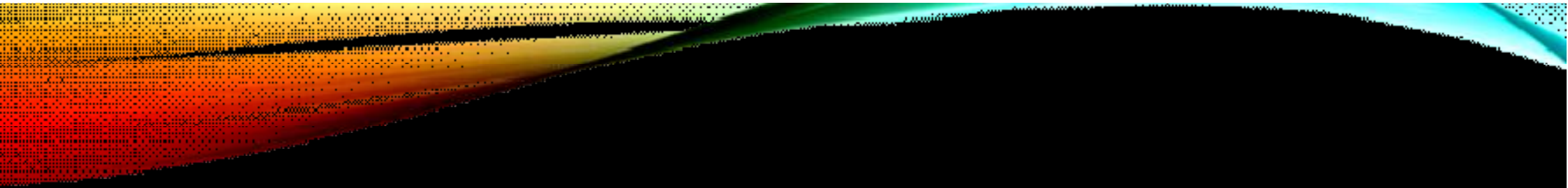
https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=Wq7_qtnjxjg

He reluctantly agreed.....



Having Previously used Forum Theatre at a homelessness conference funded by The Princes a Trust it seemed to be the ideal methodology partner the poetry methodology. Forum Theatre asks that the audience become the Directors of the Stage play and intervene to guide the plot and dialogue. This becomes a forum for discussion and a partnership.

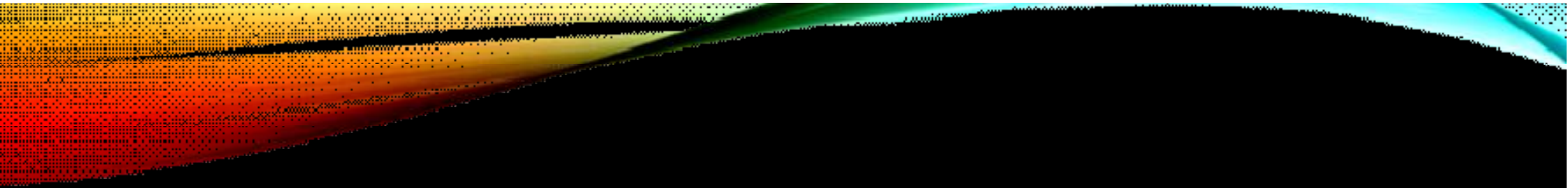
This choice was also supported by the fact that State of Play for whom this method of enquiry had been a specialism had been working locally in Dorset and with the Faculty of Health and Social Studies at the university in the past.



The Poetry workshops were used primarily to identify the meaning of 'kindliness' to residents and staff but in one instance this led to looking at how to facilitate social needs in the climate of Health and Safety fears. This and Safeguarding restraints became a familiar theme.

About 50 definitions of
Kindliness

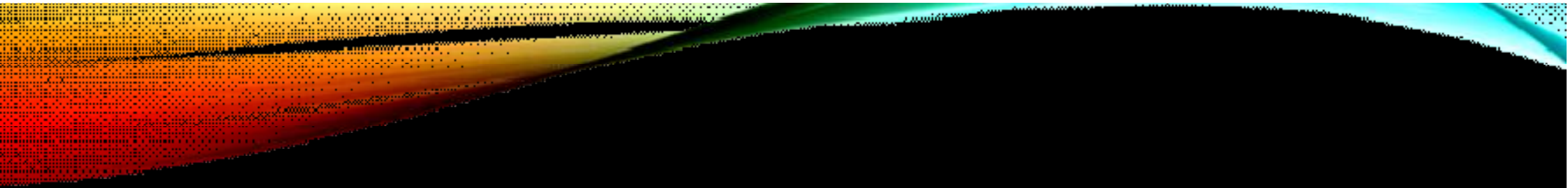




Forum Theatre helped us to identify with residents what instances of kindness were and how we should be striving to be kind.

However we heard of what 'unkindliness' was from one lady.....

In partnership with the resident participants we were able to use the theatre technique to help her with a very difficult emotional problem.

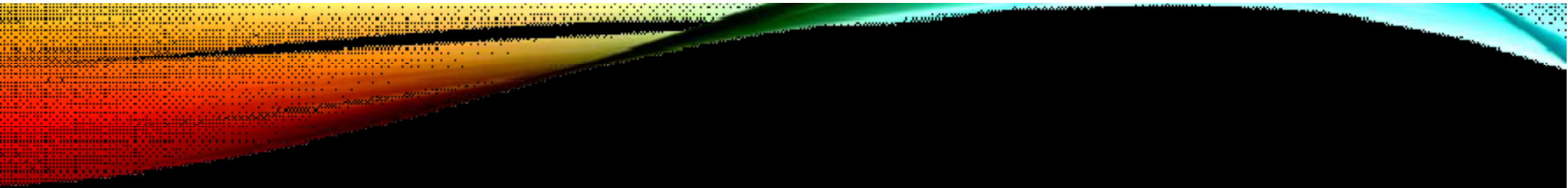


This led us to begin looking at emotional needs and signposting. Her story has been altered slightly for confidential reasons and is used as a resource for forum theatre within the workshops.



We supplemented artistic enquiry with Facilitation of Kindliness workshops with Housing Association staff at several schemes in Dorset.

Housing Association reorganisation meant that we started this part of the research project later than intended and encountered many issues.




Facilitation workshops with Sheltered Housing staff were run by myself and an experienced facilitator living in Dorset who is also working at Schumacher College in Devon.



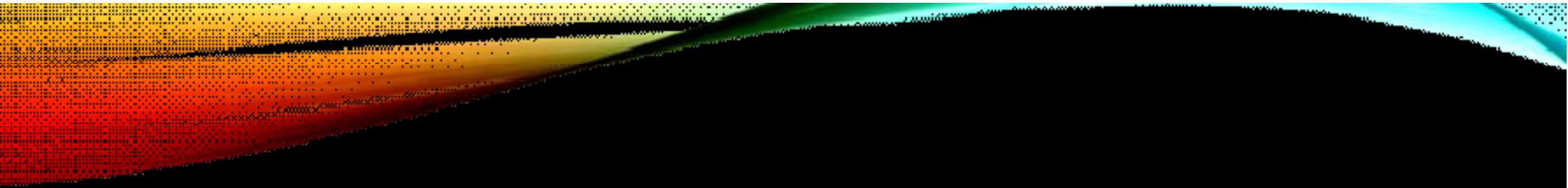
In our facilitation workshops we discovered difficulties around 'change management', organisational culture and the need for kindly treatment of staff. It turned out to be timely as in two instances prevented resignation of staff members.

We also discovered that residents would like to see more young people and were disappointed when we turned up as they thought it would be students coming to the events!



All the workshops identified barriers to 'kindliness' and possible solutions. Some examples of these are:

- Limitations of facilities
- Lack of staff time for community development and facilitation activities/initiatives
- Lack of recognition of emotional problems
- Limited signposting knowledge

- 
- Preciousness over shared facilities e.g. common room/lounge
 - Prejudice and exclusive practices amongst residents
 - Lack of access for members of the public to come into the schemes
 - Lack of knowledge of interest in events and projects/facilities in the local community



Also....

We put Random Acts of Kindness Boxes into the schemes and we found that Random Acts of kindness encourage thought change.

In the autumn of last year at a sell out event at Bridport Arts Centre George Monbiot of the Guardian commended this partnership project and he has kindly as a result endorsed this work within the toolkit

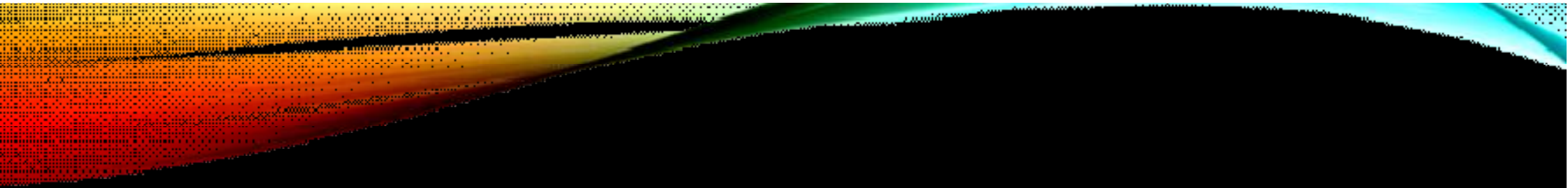


The Kindliness Toolkit

The project has now got to its dissemination stage and we have produced a toolkit for use with landlords and residents in housing schemes.

The aim would be to increase kindliness and mutual co-operation and friendship. It is a type of community development tool and thus has few boundaries when it comes to usage. It lays out, we believe, a clear rationale for developing kindliness and outlines how to identify the facilitators and run the workshops as a result of our trial.

We have tested it out with participants at a local housing conference this month and received a warm response with virtually no criticism. The arts methodologies were particularly well reviewed. So the question is where do we go with it from here?



I think that Dorset County Council
and in particular Robin should be
congratulated on their foresight and
for taking the brave step of using this
innovative methodology.



or in the words of George himself

"It's brilliant to see a local authority working with a university and housing association to use Kindliness as a means of building community and tackling our loneliness epidemic. I strongly believe that the Kindliness initiative's use of poetry and theatre offers creative ways to raise awareness and bring people together. Kindliness is not dead.... The Kindliness Conference can help to unleash it."

George Monbiot, February 2017.