



## **Age Well Battersea**

### **Participatory Needs Assessment Overview Katherine Low Settlement**

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**“I'd be lost without Age Well, it has been a lifeline to me!” Member**

The Age Well Battersea (AWB) programme has been recommissioned by Wandsworth Borough Council (WBC) for a further three years, commencing October 1st, 2024. Delivered by the Katherine Low Settlement (KLS), this programme aims to reduce social isolation and promote wellbeing among older residents in Battersea, through a co-produced model informed by an updated Participatory Needs Assessment (PNA). This is a brief overview of the PNA. The updated PNA builds upon the findings of the 2021 assessment and reflects the changing demographics, priorities, and challenges facing older people in the wards of Latchmere, St Mary's Park, and Queenstown

The updated PNA has gathered insights from current and former participants, stakeholders, and community partners, providing a comprehensive understanding of the lived experiences, concerns, and aspirations of Battersea's older population. Key findings include persistent issues such as loneliness, digital exclusion, mental health challenges, and financial stress, as well as strong interest in culturally relevant, intergenerational, and creative activities. Despite barriers, there is evidence of increased engagement and community leadership potential.

AWB's approach reflects a commitment to co-design, inclusivity, and sustained partnerships. This report provides an evidence base for shaping programme priorities and service models aligned with the evolving needs of Battersea's older residents. Several key areas for development were identified.

### **Research Methodology for the Refreshment of the PNA**

To inform the updated version of the PNA, the Age Well Implementation Team adopted a mixed-methods research approach, integrating both qualitative and quantitative methodologies. This approach involved collaboration with project members and volunteers and was designed to ensure inclusivity and depth in the data collected. The key components of the research methodology included

- Review of the Previous PNA
- A comprehensive stakeholder audit
- Semi-structured interviews were conducted with older residents, community leaders, frontline workers, and volunteers.
- Multiple focus groups were held across Battersea including
  - General focus groups exploring key themes and needs of older residents
  - A dedicated focus group with current service users to provide feedback
  - A session with volunteers who lead peer-led initiatives to gather their feedback and insights
- A questionnaire was co-designed with participants to ensure relevance and accessibility. This was distributed to 35 older people living in Battersea to gather additional data on service needs and experiences.

The PNA highlights both the strengths and challenges of the Age Well Battersea (AWB) programme. While the sector continues to face high demand and pressure on services, the findings reaffirm that it remains a space rich in creativity, collaboration and innovation. Members, stakeholders and partners consistently emphasised that meaningful engagement, stronger communication, and co-designed activities are key to reducing loneliness and improving wellbeing for older adults in Battersea.

A clear theme that emerged is the importance of collaborative working. Organisations such as Trinity Hospice, the Battersea Society, St Mary's Church, and the Wandsworth Library and Heritage Service expressed interest in joint approaches—from befriending partnerships and book clubs to themed walks and discussion-based events. These collaborations present significant opportunity to widen participation and enrich programme delivery.

Members also identified areas for improvement. Digital inclusion remains a priority, particularly for carers and housebound individuals who struggle to attend activities in person. Online sessions were popular during lockdown and could strengthen accessibility if reintroduced alongside continued support from Tech Up Battersea.

Another major need is for greater visibility of services. Low awareness continues to be a barrier to participation, suggesting the need for expanded communication channels including social media and printed outreach.

The PNA further highlighted the need to diversify opportunities and appeal across age ranges. People in their 50s and early 60s often do not connect with existing services and would value more age-relevant content, intellectually stimulating sessions and opportunities to explore topics such as health, local issues and memory/history. Culturally relevant programming was also underscored—moving beyond traditional cultural activities toward initiatives rooted in lived experience, community identity and intergenerational dialogue.

### Priority Recommendations

- Strengthen outreach and early intervention to broaden programme reach.
- Expand tailored activities for underrepresented groups, including men and diverse communities.
- Relaunch the AWB steering group to deepen co-production and peer-led delivery.
- Enhance digital inclusion and consider reintroducing online sessions.
- Support pathways from membership to volunteering through low-pressure opportunities.
- Increase intellectually stimulating opportunities such as talks, lectures and themed walks.
- Develop activities that resonate with people aged 50–69.
- Broaden partnerships to increase programme capacity and reduce reliance on peer volunteers.

Findings from the PNA strongly reinforce the value of a responsive, community-led model of support. With sustained focus on collaboration, communication and co-production, Age Well Battersea is well positioned to continue reducing isolation, improving wellbeing and strengthening social connection among older adults across the local community.

For a copy of the full research paper please contact [elders@klsettlement.org.uk](mailto:elders@klsettlement.org.uk)