



Methodology

North London Cares and South London Cares Evaluation

John Hitchin, Olivia Petie, and Amanda Norrlander

April 2019

Contents

Introduction	3
Outcomes.....	3
Data collection.....	4
Quantitative data	4
Qualitative data	8
Data analysis	10
Quantitative data	10
Qualitative data	11
Appendices	12
Appendix one: Survey questions for desired outcomes	12
Appendix two: Breakdown of polled participants.....	15
Appendix three: Details on sampling approach	17
Appendix four: Details of qualitative methods used	18

Introduction

Renaishi was commissioned at the start of 2018 to undertake an impact evaluation of The Cares Family to help them demonstrate how they are meeting their core objectives. The Cares Family commissioned this work to capture, track and analyse the impact of their work in each of its specific city locations and as a group.

Over the course of 2018 The Cares Family expanded from its original base in north London and south London to Manchester and Liverpool. This first part of Renaishi’s evaluation focussed on the two more established organisations, North London Cares and South London Cares. This evaluation sought to answer the following research questions across these two locations:

1. To what extent are the programmes’ outcomes being achieved for both older and younger neighbours alike?
2. How does The Cares Family model work or not work towards achieving these outcomes?
3. What can we learn about measuring these outcomes in these specific settings, geographies and contexts?

Outcomes

Renaishi previously undertook a piece of work for The Cares Family in 2016, in which we supported them to create a theory of change and identify and articulate their desired outcomes for older and younger neighbours involved, as well as a set of quality indicators related to delivery and experience.

At the start of the 2018 evaluation, we reviewed these desired outcomes with The Cares Family team to identify any new or emerging priorities in their work. These outcomes were then aligned to the three objectives which The Cares Family model aims to achieve, broken down into individual, measurable outcomes:

<i>The Cares Family’s objectives</i>	<i>Desired outcomes</i>
Reduce isolation and loneliness amongst older people and young professionals alike	Reduced isolation
	Reduced loneliness
Improve the connection, confidence, skills, resilience and power of all participants so neighbours can feel part of our	Increased wellbeing
	Increased connection to place
	Increased connection to people

changing cities rather than left behind by them	Increased connection to themselves
	Increased social confidence
	Increased confidence to engage with new things
	Increased sense of power over things affecting their lives
Bring people together to reduce the gaps across social, generational, digital, cultural and attitudinal divides	Improved understanding across divides
	Increased sense of belonging to intergenerational group

Data collection

Quantitative data

Approach

The approach to this evaluative work was guided by a clear set of parameters stipulated by The Cares Family at the outset:

1. Building on The Cares Family and its evaluators’ previous experience of administering surveys, a pre-engagement and post-engagement approach to data collection should be avoided
2. The approach to data collection would need to be accessible enough to The Cares Family’s target population group so that it would yield a large enough sample size
3. The evaluation should generate robust and high-quality data which could be used to understand the impact of the programmes
4. Research participants would need to feel comfortable and at ease in order to answer the survey questions

We therefore developed an approach to evaluating The Cares Family model – bespoke for measuring outcomes through snapshot surveys, enhanced through comparative analysis and triangulation with qualitative research. We created a one-off survey to measure outcomes, which could then be compared to national data where available, and a dataset gathered through polling of a similar demographic group in boroughs in which The Cares Family was not operating at the time. Additionally, through gathering data on the nature of individuals’ involvement, we would be able to cut the final dataset to understand any relationships between outcomes, length of time people were involved with The Cares Family’s activities, as well as the frequency or intensity of their engagement.

Administering the surveys

In previous evaluations, uptake of paper surveys by older neighbours had been limited, and there was significant drop off in uptake of post-engagement surveys when using telephone-based approaches. Renaisi therefore employed an embedded researcher to attend social clubs and visit those involved with The Cares Family's Love Your Neighbour programme in their homes to complete the surveys with older neighbours face to face. This helped people to understand the purpose of the research and what information was needed and why. During these visits, the researcher also established relationships and built rapport with neighbours. This personal approach allowed for more conversational responses, with the researcher capturing the qualitative data alongside the quantitative data.

This approach also allowed for flexibility in the method used for completing the survey – increasing accessibility and meeting the varying communication needs of the older neighbours. Whilst most surveys were therefore completed through a face to face conversation with the researcher, others were completed on a paper copy distributed at social clubs, online, or through a follow up phone call with the researcher.

Based on experience, younger neighbours were considered to be an easier demographic to reach through a more straightforward approach and were therefore surveyed online through SurveyMonkey. The survey link was emailed to younger participants from members of The Cares Family team, with prompts sent during the data collection period.

Survey design

The desired outcomes from The Cares Family's programmes are subjective and are often expressed in different ways by The Cares Family team. There is considerable debate about how to best measure concepts such as loneliness and isolation in delivery settings, and this is amplified where there is need to design approaches to gain both impact and developmental evaluation knowledge. Renaisi's 2016 evaluation of The Cares Family's work revealed the limitations of commonly-used academic surveys which measure loneliness – namely that they are remote, negative and overly long. This was supported by the work of the Campaign to End Loneliness. The Cares Family were very clear that they did not want to repeat that approach. For this evaluation we therefore designed a survey based on a number of key principles:

1. Be sensitive and empathetic to the demographic groups
2. Use positive, authentic language
3. Balance the importance of comparable data with the need to measure a specific set of outcomes in a specific context
4. Create surveys that are accessible and easy to complete

In practice, this meant that the survey included questions from external datasets, bespoke questions tailored to The Cares Family's specific outcomes, and some qualitative questions. Additionally, questions were selected based on their suitability for the target groups. For example, the questions used to

measure loneliness were those recommended by The Campaign to End Loneliness, which have been tested and validated but avoid negative language.

These questions were then amended based on feedback and experiences of respondents to ensure they were suitable for the specific target group. For example, some questions provoked unpleasant emotions and the researcher found this made it difficult to maintain rapport and so an alternative question was used. Many older neighbours reacted negatively to the question, ‘What proportion of your friends have a similar level of education as you?’ and so this was replaced by ‘What proportion of your friends voted the same way as you in the EU referendum?’. The researcher experienced that the new question resonated better with the respondents. Additionally, more detailed text was added to the survey outlining the reasons certain questions were asked, and ‘don’t know’ response options were added to some questions where this was a frequent response.

A full breakdown of the final survey questions used to measure outcomes, and where they were sourced, can be seen in appendix one. The Cares Family also had their own questions for feedback and reporting purposes which were included in the survey for internal use.

Polled data

In addition to collecting quantitative data from within The Cares Family population, we commissioned unique polling to gather response data on the same survey questions and from similar demographic groups to both older and younger neighbours across two similar London boroughs. This was conducted by the market research and polling company NEMS. The two boroughs targeted in the polling were Hackney and Tower Hamlets based on a number of priority criteria set out by The Cares Family. These included numbers of older people and young professionals (and students), plus factors such as deprivation, loneliness and economic, social and cultural change. A target sample was then created based on the population attending The Cares Family’s activities around demographic criteria such as age, gender, and housing status.

For the older polled group, surveys were completed over the telephone. For the younger group, a small number of surveys were completed over the phone when captured naturally through polling for older people. The remaining were completed through an online panel. For a full breakdown of the target sample and the final polled groups including weighting, please see appendix two.

Population and sampling

The following table sets out the population sizes for North London Cares and South London Cares as received at the start of this evaluation. These figures include individuals active at North London Cares and South London Cares during the previous twelve months and for whom complete contact details were held, rounded to the nearest 50.

<i>Neighbours</i>	<i>North London Cares</i>	<i>South London Cares</i>	<i>Total</i>
Older neighbours	1100	950	2050
Younger neighbours	500	900	1400

We sought to use random sampling where possible. For older neighbours, those involved with the Love Your Neighbour programme were randomly sampled so that the embedded researcher could then visit to undertake the survey. For social clubs, random sampling was not deemed appropriate or logistically possible on an individual level; instead a cluster sampling approach was used. For each month a list of the social clubs taking place was randomly sampled to select two to four clubs to visit per week over the course of the five month fieldwork period.

The embedded researcher then visited social clubs in south London from July to October 2018 and in north London from August to November 2018. At these clubs, an exhaustive sample was taken with all older neighbours present invited to take part – recognising that some may not wish to participate in the research. When the embedded researcher could not visit a club, Cares Family staff handed out paper surveys or took neighbours' phone numbers for the researcher to conduct the survey afterwards on the phone. Further details on the sampling approach and challenges encountered can be found in appendix three.

For younger neighbours, we initially randomly sampled the overall population. However, due to a low response rate from the first group, it was felt that this approach would not yield a high enough sample without contacting the entire population. As such, the survey was then sent to the entire population of younger neighbours.

Survey respondents

Through the methods outlined above we gathered survey data from a total of 483 respondents across North London Cares and South London Cares from July to November 2018. The breakdown of these respondents can be seen in the tables below:

<i>Social Clubs</i>	<i>South London Cares</i>	<i>North London Cares</i>	<i>Total</i>
Older neighbours	150	133	283
Younger neighbours	69	86	155
Total	219	219	438

<i>Love Your Neighbour</i>	<i>South London Cares</i>	<i>North London Cares</i>	<i>Total</i>
Older neighbours	9	9	18
Younger neighbours	17	10	27
Total	26	19	45

The polling company additionally gathered data from a total of 682 respondents:

<i>Polled group</i>	<i>Hackney and Tower Hamlets</i>
Older respondents	401
Younger respondents	281
Total	682

Qualitative data

Approach and methods

Ethnography, fieldwork diary and qualitative survey responses

Over the course of the quantitative data collection period, the embedded researcher attended a total of 58 social clubs. At these, the researcher undertook participant observations through an ethnographic approach. The researcher kept a fieldwork diary, noting down observations of the activities and interactions taking place, as well as stories of interactions with the neighbours the researcher met and engaged with. The researcher also made notes throughout the fieldwork period of the methodological approach to record what worked well and what could be improved.

Additionally, 152 out of 301 surveys with older neighbours were carried out face to face or over the phone. These evoked far more detailed responses than the quantitative figure. Additional comment boxes were added into the survey to record these additional comments, capturing qualitative data on the nuances around people's responses and experiences. Similar free text boxes were also added to the younger neighbours' online survey to capture similar data from that group where possible.

Creative and participatory methods

In addition to the qualitative data captured by the embedded researcher, we conducted additional research activities to engage with older neighbours and volunteers on particular themes. In order to make the research activities engaging and insightful, we used a range of creative and participatory methods as an entry point to some of the discussion topics we wanted to cover. This included a paired discussion with those taking part in Love Your Neighbour, hosting participatory group workshops, and drawing on the existing programme of The Cares Family’s activities for research purposes.

Using these methods meant that we were able to avoid accessing only the ‘usual suspects’ for feedback and evaluation activities, and helped to generate interesting discussions amongst participants. A more detailed description of each of the methods used can be found in appendix four.

Through these additional qualitative data gathering activities we engaged a total of 45 neighbours across North London Cares and South London Cares, the breakdown of which can be seen below:

	<i>Qualitative data</i>	<i>Older neighbours</i>	<i>Younger neighbours</i>	<i>Total</i>
North London Cares	Love Your Neighbour	2	2	29
	North London Stories	7	6	
	Back to Work Business Visits	9	3	
South London Cares	Love Your Neighbour	1	1	16
	Evaluation Tea Party	4	3	
	Back to Work Business Visits	5	2	
	Total	28	17	45

Data analysis

Quantitative data

To perform the quantitative analysis, we synthesised data from the surveys of the Love Your Neighbour and Socials Clubs programmes across North London Cares and South London Cares for both older and younger neighbours, with the polling data collected for older and younger respondents. There were four main stages of data analysis we performed on the quantitative data, detailed below.

Data cleaning

Before delving in to the data analysis, it was important to check the quality of the data collected, and clean it where necessary. On inspection of the survey data, the following steps were taken to clean the dataset:

- **Date respondent first had contact with The Cares Family:** Responses to this question were sparse and inconsistent. To fill in the gaps, Renaisi received data from The Cares Family teams on the date of first contact, and matched this data with the survey data.
- **Postcodes:** There were inconsistent responses to postcodes, which were manually cleaned.
- **Country of birth:** Respondents who stated England, Wales, Scotland or Northern Ireland were re-coded to UK.
- **Variables ranked from ‘not at all satisfied’ to ‘very satisfied’:** Responses of ‘0 (not at all satisfied)’ were re-coded to ‘0’.
- **Anonymising data:** Every respondent was given a unique identifier and their names were deleted from the data.

Descriptive statistics

Once the data had been cleaned, the first phase of analysis was the creation of descriptive statistics. Here, we used Microsoft Excel to create summary tables on the number of older and younger neighbours surveyed, as well as key variables such as demographics (gender, age, ethnicity), housing status, length of time living in London, whether they were part of North London Cares or South London Cares, and length of time and type of contact with The Cares Family. This offered simple summaries of the type of participants surveyed.

We also created similar summary statistics for the polled data, for both older and younger respondents.

Analysis of The Cares Family’s outcomes

After an initial review of the descriptive statistics, we analysed the variables that were developed to measure The Cares Family’s outcomes. We started with responses to questions related to The Cares Family’s outcomes, and then used cross tabulations between outcomes variables and demographics to understand what was driving trends. For example, we explored whether there was a relationship

between length of time involved in The Cares Family’s activities or the type of contact people were having with The Cares Family, and the outcomes being delivered.

Throughout this analysis, we analysed our survey data alongside the polled data to understand how respondents who were part of The Cares Family’s activities compared to the polled respondents who were not.

Qualitative data

In addition to the quantitative data, our methods generated a large amount of qualitative data including responses to the surveys, additional notes taken by our embedded researcher, transcripts from the participatory methods, and the fieldwork diary. These were loaded into the qualitative analysis software Nvivo, then coded by demographic information such as whether respondents were older or younger neighbours and part of North London Cares or South London Cares. We then used thematic analysis, coded the data to the different outcomes and created new ‘nodes’ for emerging themes we discovered throughout the analysis process.

The qualitative methods used generated rich and nuanced findings, with neighbours’ personal stories or anecdotes often at the heart. Additionally, much of the observational data focussed on relationships, interactions and things such as tone and body language. This meant the data was complex to analyse solely using a thematic approach and so discourse analysis was also used to offer further insight.

Appendices

Appendix one: Survey questions for desired outcomes

<i>Question</i>	<i>Scale</i>	<i>Desired outcome measured</i>	<i>Reference</i>
I have enough people I feel comfortable asking for help at any time	Agree / Strongly Agree / Neutral / Disagree / Disagree Strongly / Don't know	Loneliness and isolation	The Campaign to End Loneliness Measurement Tool
I am content with my friendships and relationships	Agree / Strongly Agree / Neutral / Disagree / Disagree Strongly / Don't know	Loneliness and isolation	The Campaign to End Loneliness Measurement Tool
My relationships are as satisfying as I would want them to be	Agree / Strongly Agree / Neutral / Disagree / Disagree Strongly / Don't know	Loneliness and isolation	The Campaign to End Loneliness Measurement Tool
I feel connected to people from different social backgrounds and age groups than me	Strongly Disagree / Disagree / Neutral / Agree / Strongly Agree / Don't Know	Increased sense of belonging to intergenerational group	Bespoke question for The Cares Family evaluation
What proportion of your friends are of the same ethnic group as you?	All the same as me / More than half / About a half / Less than half / Don't have any friends / Don't know	Improved understanding across divides	Community Life Survey
What proportion of your friends are of	All the same as me / More than half / About a half / Less	Improved understanding across divides	Community Life Survey

the same religious group as you?	than half / Don't have any friends / Don't know		
What proportion of your friends are of the same age group as you?	All the same as me / More than half / About a half / Less than half / Don't have any friends / Don't know	Improved understanding across divides	Community Life Survey
What proportion of your friends voted the same way as you in the EU referendum?	All the same as me / More than half / About a half / Less than half / Don't have any friends / Don't know	Improved understanding across divides	Bespoke question for The Cares Family evaluation
Overall, how satisfied are you with your life nowadays?	Fill in on the scale wherever you find yourself. Scale: 0 (not at all satisfied) and 10 (completely satisfied).	Increased wellbeing	ONS Personal Wellbeing question, Community Life Survey
How often do you chat to your neighbours, more than to just say hello?	On most days / Once or twice a week / Once or twice a month / Less than once a month / Never / Don't have any neighbours	Increased connection to people	Community Life Survey
Generally, how satisfied are you with the local services and amenities in your local area?	Very satisfied / Fairly satisfied / Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied / Fairly dissatisfied / Very dissatisfied	Increased connection to place	Community Life Survey

To what extent do you agree with the statement: I feel I belong to my neighbourhood?	Very strongly / Fairly strongly / Not very strongly / Not at all strongly	Increased connection to place	Community life survey
I feel that I have enough time and space in my life when I can relax and be myself	Strongly Disagree / Moderately Disagree / Slightly Disagree / Slightly Agree / Moderately Agree / Strongly Agree	Increased connection to themselves	Bespoke question for The Cares Family evaluation
I feel that I have a particular sense of meaning and purpose in my life day to day	Strongly Disagree / Moderately Disagree / Slightly Disagree / Slightly Agree / Moderately Agree / Strongly Agree	Increased connection to themselves	Bespoke question for The Cares Family evaluation
I feel confident to try things which might make me feel out of my comfort zone	Strongly Disagree / Moderately Disagree / Slightly Disagree / Slightly Agree / Moderately Agree / Strongly Agree	Increased confidence to engage with new things	Bespoke question for The Cares Family evaluation
I feel confident starting conversations with new people	Strongly Disagree / Moderately Disagree / Slightly Disagree / Slightly Agree / Moderately Agree / Strongly Agree	Increased social confidence	Bespoke question for The Cares Family evaluation
I feel that I am in control of	Strongly Disagree / Moderately Disagree / Slightly Disagree / Slightly	Increased sense of power over	Bespoke question for The Cares

important factors affecting my life	Agree / Moderately Agree / Strongly Agree	things affecting their lives	Family evaluation
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Appendix two: Breakdown of polled participants

<i>TOTAL</i>	<i>Interviews</i>
Total responses	482
Total older responses	401
Total younger responses	281

<i>OLDER</i>	<i>Sample target</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Interviews done</i>	<i>%</i>
Zone 1 (Hackney)	200	50%	200	50%
Zone 2 (Tower Hamlets)	200	50%	201	50%
Women	276	69%	253	63%
Aged 80+	208	52%	140	35%
Live alone	268	67%	176	44%
Live in social housing	236	59%	180	45%

<i>YOUNGER</i>	<i>Target profile</i>	<i>Interviews done</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Weighted figures</i>
Zone 1 (Hackney)	50%	100	36%	41%
Zone 2 (Tower Hamlets)	50%	131	47%	41%

North London Cares and South London Cares Evaluation – Methodology

Zone 3 & 4	-	50	18%	18%
Women	78%	159	57%	80%
Private renting tenants	60%	105	37%	51%
Live in flat / house share	37%	38	14%	37%
Live with partners	34%	143	51%	34%
In permanent employment	82%	228	81%	85%
Work in the private sector (of those employed)	53%	159	70%	70%

* Red indicates data weighting

Breakdown of response type for younger participants:

Telephone	81
Online	200
<u>Total</u>	<u>281</u>

Appendix three: Details on sampling approach

Social clubs

Three to four social clubs were randomly sampled each week in south London for the month of July. In August, we started sampling one to two clubs per week at North London Cares and then the same number at South London Cares.

In the months that followed, where both clubs were being attended by our embedded researcher at North London Cares and South London Cares simultaneously, we alternated our attendances to ensure that the sampling process stayed as random as possible.

In November, three to five social clubs were sampled every week to ensure we reached a similar number of clubs across North London Cares and South London Cares by the end of the fieldwork period. In some cases, we exhausted the sample (e.g. some clubs in north London especially have the same group of neighbours attending each week) and therefore sampled another club in lieu. A breakdown of the final sampling can be seen below:

	<i>South London Cares</i>		<i>North London Cares</i>	
	Researcher attended club	Staff handed out surveys at club	Researcher attended club	Staff handed out surveys at club
July	10	3		
August	6	3	7	3
September	6	3	4	1
October	4	7	6	5
November			15	2
Total	26	16	32	11
	42 social clubs		43 social clubs	

Love Your Neighbour

Love Your Neighbour matches were sampled from lists provided by The Cares Family staff. Some individuals were omitted from this list where The Cares Family team felt they were unsuitable to visit because of issues such as illnesses or housing difficulties. If a neighbour did not want to take part, they were removed from the list and another was pulled from the sample at random.

Appendix four: Details of qualitative methods used

Love Your Neighbour ‘Storytelling’ project

This part of the evaluation built on the use of paired interviews conducted as part of Renaisi’s previous evaluation of The Cares Family’s model. We used this creative approach to allow the pair to have a more natural, although guided, conversation with one another – sharing their thoughts, experiences, feelings and emotions; and exploring both similarities and differences in these.

This method involved meeting with a Love Your Neighbour pair and providing them with a set of questions and discussion prompts for them to discuss. The researcher took a minimal role, prompting and probing infrequently where necessary. This idea was inspired by initiatives such as [BBC Radio 4’s The Listening Project](#), which was based on the US based [Story Corps](#) who believe that [everyone around you has a story the world needs to hear](#). The Greater London Authority has also recently run a similar project called [The Conversation Booth](#), encouraging Londoners to sit down and share their stories with each other.

This method was selected as it allowed for a more authentic conversation and interaction, allowing us to not only analyse what was said but also to observe and experience the relationship and communication between Love Your Neighbour matches. The conversations were digitally recorded and transcribed for use in data analysis alongside the researcher’s notes.

South London Cares ‘Evaluation Tea Party’ workshop

Modelled by The Cares Family’s social clubs, we hosted a creative and participatory workshop where neighbours were invited to come along and tell us about their experiences of being involved with The Cares Family’s programmes. This workshop had a focus on two main activities:

- **‘Cares collage’** – Participants were split into groups and provided with prompts and collage materials, allowing them to respond through any method they chose – through drawing, collage, or writing.
- **Feedback activities** – These included short interactive activities, which enabled us to gather feedback about The Cares Family and people’s experience of the local area. For example, we used a ‘wishing line’ whereby we hung a piece of string around the room and participants were invited to write their wishes for things that would improve their interaction with The Cares Family’s work or that they would like to be different.

North London Stories

As part of their programme North London Cares runs a monthly podcast club. Younger and older neighbours come together to talk about a particular topic or theme, such as music or memories, and then make short recordings which are made publicly available online in the form of a podcast.

In line with the method used in the ‘Storytelling’ workshop, we worked with this group to draw on their skills and experiences from the podcast club to engage in the evaluation. In the session we explored themes of connection to place, and used this as a starting point for wider conversations about The Cares

Family and the intergenerational aspect of the programme. Each person attending the group was asked to think about what their local area means to them, and to bring an item which represents this which they could then discuss at the podcast club. Researchers from Renaisi then facilitated a group discussion around this theme, as well as smaller group discussions which were recorded as part of their podcast.

‘Back to Work’ business visits

The Cares Family regularly arranges ‘Back to Work’ business visits for older and younger neighbours to learn more about businesses in London together. We hosted two such visits in Renaisi’s offices as a part of our qualitative fieldwork. The workshops had the purpose of informing the neighbours of what Renaisi does as a business and about what the evaluation aimed to achieve, as well as engaging the neighbours as co-researchers in the evaluation. The co-researching activity served as a way to gather data as well as offering a space for participants to provide feedback and reflections on The Cares Family’s work.

To do this a brief overview was given of what social research is, different research methods and how to conduct interviews. Participants were then split into groups of three and were asked to take turns interviewing each other using a list of set questions about The Cares Family as well as a longer list of additional questions they could choose from. The participants took turns being the interviewer, interviewee and notetaker.

After the main activity, we gathered as a group to discuss any common themes or interesting reflections from the interviews, as well as the activity itself. Notes were taken throughout the whole activity and neighbours’ notes were gathered the end of the workshop.