

A man with glasses, wearing a yellow t-shirt and yellow and black safety sleeves, is focused on working on a large, textured, spherical object. He is in a workshop or industrial setting. The background is slightly blurred, showing some equipment and a sign with the text "range of services include".

**PEOPLE
DOING IT FOR
THEMSELVES**

What we did, what we learned
and what needs to happen next

communitycatalysts[®]
unlocking potential effecting change

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SETTING THE SCENE

People who are older or disabled sometimes need care or support to live their lives. The help that people need can overshadow their skills, interests and talents and these can remain unseen and untapped. The money going into support can often be misdirected and deliver poor outcomes. The waste of talent is a tragedy for the individual and impoverishes their communities.

Community Catalysts, supported by the National Lottery Community Fund, developed a project to look at this issue. We wanted to better understand the conditions that enable people to believe in themselves and use their gifts. We want to use this learning to share good ideas and good practice in other areas for other people. We want to influence central and local Government to create the conditions that will enable many more people to make a difference to their own lives and the lives of others. We want to make it easier for people to 'do it for themselves', whilst also challenging the stereotypes and stigma that stand in the way of people using their strengths and living their good life.¹

The project is in two parts, with phase one, the development phase, running from November 2018 to August 2019 and phase two, the delivery phase emerging later if phase one is successful.

In short, we wanted to shine a huge spotlight on the positives. Strengths instead of needs, citizen instead of service user, can instead of can't.

Community Catalysts

This report relates to the first phase, the development phase. It aims to share the key findings, learnings and the stories of 'people doing it for themselves'. It is an important output in its own right, which can be used to inform policy and practice and hopefully inspire people. It will also be used to help develop the second phase of the work, if the project is successful and receives additional funding. The second phase of the work will include testing what we have learned, working closely with influencers, policy makers, local public sector bodies, voluntary and community organisations and local people to create the conditions to help more people do it for themselves.

¹ Community Catalysts is a social enterprise that works across the UK. All our work has a focus on health, care and wellbeing. We try to make sure that people everywhere can get the care and support they need to live their lives their way. We have collaborated with independent research and evaluation organisation, Public Perspectives, to capture learning, share it and inform the second phase of the project.

Policy context

UK health and social care policy and practice over the past 15-20 years has sought to place people at the heart and promote a strength-based culture.

In England the Care Act 2014 strengthens the rights of people who need care and support. It promotes fairer, more personalised care and shifts the focus from providing services to supporting individuals to achieve the outcomes that matter to them. The Act requires local authorities to 'consider the person's own strengths and capabilities, and what support might be available from their wider support network or within the community to help' in considering 'what else other than the provision of care and support might assist the person in meeting the outcomes they want to achieve'

Practitioners will need to work in collaboration with service users, supporting them to do things for themselves, with the aim that they become more than passive recipients of care and support. In order to do this, it is fundamental that practitioners establish and acknowledge the capacity, skills, knowledge, network and potential of both the individual and the local community.

Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE)

The NHS England Long-term Plan 2019 highlights the need to create genuine partnerships between professionals and patients and conversations that help people make the decisions that are right for them. There is a commitment to support people to manage their own health and a focus on personalised care. One element of the personalised care model is 'patient activation' which describes the knowledge, skills and confidence a person has in managing their own health and care.

Personalised care is based on 'what matters' to people and their individual strengths and needs.

In Scotland national health and social care policy has sought to achieve more choice and control for individuals. The Social Care (Self-directed Support) (Scotland) Act 2013 gives people the power to direct the type of care they want and when they want it. The Scottish Government's 2020 Vision is that everyone is able to live longer healthier lives at home with a healthcare system that has a focus on 'prevention, anticipation and supported self-management'.

In Wales the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 gives people control over the support they need and the power to make decisions about their care and support as an equal partner. A Healthier Wales – our plan for health and social care 2019 places a strong emphasis on joined up care and support where people take responsibility for their own health and the health of others.

As part of working together to achieve our future vision, we need people to take more responsibility, not only for their own health and wellbeing, but also for their family and for people they care for, perhaps even for their friends and neighbours.

Our definition of 'people
doing it for themselves'**Older or
disabled people****Who need care
or support to
live their life****Who have
decided to
establish
something new
or lead local
change. For
example set
up their own
enterprise or
group or lead a
campaign**

WHAT WE DID

The first step was to define² what 'people doing it for themselves' means in the context of this project specifically³:

Then we made a start by writing a list of all the people we knew who are 'doing it for themselves' - people running a business or enterprise or group or leading activity or change in their community.

We grew the list by inviting people to get in touch, searching on line, using social media and talking to people we know about people they know. We found 56 individual leaders running enterprises or businesses or groups in their community and another 15 run by groups of people working together. And the list keeps growing. We found people in England, Scotland and Wales; in cities and villages; men and women, of all ages, who live with conditions like dementia or autism or epilepsy; those that define themselves as disabled and others who experience challenges with their physical and/or mental health. These people are doing lots of different activities, from running businesses or social enterprises, acting as advocates or providing practical and emotional support to other people, to being policy and practice influencers on a local and national level.

Everyone is leading something...making a difference to their own life and the lives of others.

Community Catalysts

Then we engaged with over 20 individuals or groups of people that are doing it for themselves. We wanted to learn from them, capture their stories, motivations, experiences and understand the things that help them do it for themselves. We also wanted to understand their achievements and the impact their activity is having on themselves and their communities. Finally, we wanted to understand the challenges and barriers they faced and most importantly, how these have been overcome. All this work was designed to show how people in other areas and other situations can be inspired and enabled to do it for themselves.

As part of this process, we engaged with 10 'strategic leads' - decision makers and commissioners in local areas that support strength-based work and thinkers and influencers on a national level. We wanted to understand the policy context, identify good practice, learn from this and understand how local authorities and others can be supported to encourage people in their area to do it for themselves.

We shared everything we've learned with a co-production group made up of people doing it for themselves and 'strategic leads'. This group worked with us to help develop ideas for the second phase of the project, including the aims, approach and evaluating its success.

The detailed stories of 20 people who are doing it for themselves can be read in the appendix.

² <https://www.communitycatalysts.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/People-doing-for-self-definitions.docx.pdf>

³ https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/570382/Equality_Act_2010-disability_definition.pdf

WHY DOES THIS MATTER?

The impact on people's lives and communities

The achievements and impacts of people doing it for themselves are clear, notable and sometimes inspiring. This includes examples of a positive impact on the individual themselves, their lives and future life opportunities, such as Alexander, who runs his own business to inform and inspire others. He does this by delivering presentations, sharing his story, contributing to person centred planning work called Big Plan run by the Thistle Foundation and doing consultancy work across Scotland:

I am helping other people and changing my world a little bit at a time . . . I have gone from being a frustrated young man to be a successful businessman in a few, not so easy, steps . . . Every couple of days I get a call from someone wanting me to do some work . . . I love my work

Alexander

It also includes examples of people having an impact on the lives of others and their local community, such as Graham, who lost 35 stone and worked with friends to set up a business to help overweight people and people with disabilities to exercise in gyms:

We received this card from one of our clients. She'd been too obese to conceive. We helped her lose weight and she got pregnant. That's why we do it. For stories like that.

Graham

And in some cases, people doing it for themselves are having an impact on the health and social care system, and the policy and practice of health and social care organisations, Local Government and National Government. For example, Willow has worked to change policy and practice around autism:

Things have changed...The Welsh Government are changing their language and engaging more. They are launching a national engagement strategy to connect better with autistic people.

Willow

The impact on people and communities is huge. Strength-based approaches that help people to develop and realise their aspirations, make use of their talents and maximise their potential, enable them to help themselves and those around them. The big question is, what are the conditions that lead to people doing it for themselves and how can we inspire, encourage and support more people to take this path?

PEOPLE DOING IT FOR THEMSELVES

The path most people take



WHAT WE LEARNED

From the development phase we have learned that personal qualities combined with aspiration and inspiration are key. These are about the person, who they are and how they perceive themselves and their future.

We have also learned that once a person sees themselves in a positive way and is inspired to act gaining the right opportunity at the right time combined with the right information and support is important.

We have learned that practical considerations such as flexible care and support, transport and equipment can prevent an older or disabled person from acting on an opportunity and/or can impact on their success.

We learned that people that do it for themselves have very different personal circumstances, are doing different things for different reasons, with challenges diverse and related to circumstances, but they also have a lot in common.

Despite this common ground, evidence suggests there are 2 groups of people who face slightly different issues. These groups are:

- Children and young people who come through the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) process who may need more help at the beginning of this journey - to get inspired, dream and see the opportunities available to them.
- Adults of all ages who are disabled and/or live with mental or physical health conditions who may need more help in the middle and end of this journey - to spot or make opportunities, gain the information they need and overcome barriers.

We have learned about the barriers and challenges people have to overcome and found out how these can affect the probability of someone starting to do it for themselves and/or grow and sustain their activity. Barriers are very personal to each individual, but examples include effective support, funding or other resources, equipment, transport and accessibility.

There are plenty of people who try to knock you down.

Coproduction group member

Ultimately, we have learned that when people do it for themselves it can have a positive impact on their lives, the lives of those around them and their community, and also on local and national policy and practice.

All this learning and the personal experiences and stories of people doing it for themselves are explored below.



GET INSPIRED

Life changing circumstances

Some people that do it for themselves have experienced a life changing situation, which inspired them to do something and try to make a difference. Such as Anna who was unable to pursue her career as a doctor but used her lived experience and knowledge of the health and social care system to advocate for a more person-centred approach to health and social care or Graham, who we were introduced to earlier:

My brother died suddenly and so I decided to try to change my life. After 15 years of being a recluse I decided to have the operation to help me lose weight. I had an 80% chance of not making it through the operation, but I took the risk. Once I got better and started to lose weight, I joined a gym and got a personal trainer. In the end I decided to train as a personal trainer myself to help others and here I am now.

A passion or interest

Many of the people doing it for themselves have a passion that has inspired them, such as Ashley and her passion for baking and animals that led her to make dog biscuits; Charlie and her passion for hair and beauty that led her to set up her own beauty treatment business or Ciaran and his passion for films that led him to set up a film club for autistic people. As Charlie said:

I always enjoyed doing make-up, people loved coming for my massages, because I'm so good.

Personal stories and lived experience

Using personal stories and drawing from lived experience have been both the motivation for starting but also a way of sustaining and growing an activity, by inspiring other people and organisations to support and get involved. This also means people are experts by experience who are well placed to have a positive and meaningful impact. For example, James of Local Social, a Community Interest Company based in Hertfordshire to help connect diverse communities, explains the power of telling stories:

I like to tell my story about myself. It can show how your life can change and give people confidence and ideas about what they can do and how it can help them . . . I go to lots of different places and tell people my story. I like doing this and it helps people. We also get paid for it, which we use to give people free drinks [at Local Social's community café].



DREAMS AND DETERMINATION

Aspirations

At the heart of many of the stories of people doing it for themselves are people that have an aspiration to make the most of their lives as an active, contributing citizen. In all cases, people doing it for themselves had a dream or vision. These aspirations and dreams need to be encouraged. As Ciaran says:

Believe in yourself and never give up on your dreams.

Determination to make a difference using skills and experience

Some people doing it for themselves are determined to make a difference and improve their and others lives, by advocating to improve the health and social care system and using their skills and experience (lived and/or professional). This is often driven by frustration at the current system and identifying a need or gap.

The system doesn't work for me, so I want to change the system.

Coproduction group member

For example, Clenton who is one of three founding Directors of Community Navigator Services, a Community Interest Company (CIC) based in the West Midlands set-up to help people help themselves, and to support organisations change to become more accessible and approachable:

We thought about it for a long time. Somehow it was as if we were constantly seeking permission from those in power. Then we realised if we don't do it nobody is going to do it.

OPPORTUNITY



An opportunity to act

Nearly everyone we spoke to had a dream or view of what might be possible. For some people however it took a clear opportunity for them to start to turn that dream into something tangible. Anna who saw an advert for experts by experience; Carl who was approached by a local community centre; Brenda who was invited by her local doctor to share her experience or Willow who had a huge response to an angry Facebook post. Willow said:

I realised it wasn't just me. It wasn't just my daughter.

For everyone, early opportunities developed connections with other people and momentum which led to more opportunities. Some people have ended up in a place they could never have seen at the start, and in some instances may have avoided if they hadn't been able to get there in small incremental steps.

People or organisations recognising untapped potential and offering an opportunity

In some cases, other people or organisations spotted the potential of people to do it for themselves and supported them on their journey by building capacity, interest and activity through gradual steps. For example, Carl who was asked to become a Trustee of a mental health organisation, became its Chair and has subsequently set-up a community business and Community Interest Company (CIC) to help young people with mental health challenges:

The [Park Lane] Centre Manager approached me and said 'we want a young person on the Board of Directors'. I attended a meeting and the Chair asked me to join. I served as a Director for 2 years and was elected as Chair. Without the support of Park Lane Centre none of this would have happened. My confidence wouldn't have been there. The Centre has been like a family to me. So, by joining, without confidence, there's no group and no support for the young people – it's like a domino effect really.

Local areas creating and supporting a strength-based culture

Several of the examples of people doing it for themselves take place in areas where Local Authorities and/or other local organisations actively support strength-based approaches and create opportunities for people as a result. One such example, was in Gloucestershire, where Vicci was supported by a Local Authority commissioner to set up a user-led organisation for people with physical disabilities - Inclusion Gloucestershire the resulting organisation which Vicci now leads offers support to people of all ages and all disabilities, has 47 staff and provides engagement, quality checking and training and development services.

INFORMATION AND SUPPORT



Supportive local organisations

In almost all cases, people doing it for themselves have been helped in their journey by individuals and organisations, some of which have been commissioned or encouraged to provide support, as outlined earlier and others that have used their own funding to help people do it for themselves. Often this has been at the start to help encourage people, realise their aspirations and unlock their potential. For example, Ashley, who was supported to set-up her dog biscuit enterprise:

We got lots of practical advice and information, particularly from Alyson at Hansel. She really helped us to deal with the insurance side of things. She helped us to figure out how to do the labelling, to choose all the colours, sizes, prices. She helped us get finances to fund the first batch, which were paid for by Hansel. Alyson kept in regular contact with us, and whenever we were stuck with anything, we were always able to contact her.

Ashley's Mum Maureen

OVERCOMING BARRIERS AND MAKING IT POSSIBLE



Despite the positive impacts and drivers for starting, there are numerous barriers and challenges, identified by people doing it for themselves and strategic leads, that make it difficult for people to start, sustain or grow their activities. The following barriers are presented thematically, not necessarily in order of importance.

Lack of expectation and aspiration

Some people doing it for themselves said that disabled children and young people, are not encouraged or supported to develop their aspirations and there are a lack of role models to inspire them. This begins at school, in care services and sometimes in the family and can sometimes extend into adulthood. This means they do not believe they could or should do it for themselves and are not inspired by others to do so. As Kieran who together with Jenny, and Vicky, run a Community Interest Company called Together All Are Able, a campaign and advocacy organisation in the Wirral, said:

I attended a local special school and quickly realised the work I was being given was nowhere near the same level as the people I knew who were at mainstream school. There was zero ambition and zero aspiration for people.

Inconsistent approach between or within local areas and/or lack of progress at a local level to create the conditions

There are several examples of good practice, where local areas are embedding strength-based approaches and actively promoting and supporting people to do it for themselves. However, there are more examples of local areas and local authorities not doing this than doing it and where it does happen approaches vary between local areas and sometimes within local areas, supporting some groups and not others. Similarly, there are issues with sustaining the approach due to changes in policy or personnel. As one strategic lead said:

The thrust of the Care Act was to focus on the wellbeing of the individual and shift power of control, with the concept of helping people make most of their strengths. The potential value of the Care Act has been undermined by a shortage of resources. We've moved backwards from personalisation and people in control, with personal budgets being cut because it is easier than cutting payments to the provider. The thrust of national policy is towards an asset-based approach but no one in government knows how to do it. There are glimmers of interest, great pioneers around the place doing impressive work but the challenge is how to mainstream it.



Support not always available, promoted or joined-up

Although most people doing it for themselves have benefited from the support of individuals and organisations, this is not always the case, or it can sometimes be difficult to access the right support at the right time. Sometimes this is a lack of awareness of the support available or lack of suitable support, or sometimes it is because the support available is ad hoc or not joined-up. For example, when Brenda set-up her first support group to help people with chronic pain she was not aware of the local Community and Voluntary Sector support service. It was two years until she found out about them and now she is a keen advocate of the support they can provide:

The VCS are important because they can help set up the group, provide meeting rooms, raise your profile.

Lack of business or organisational experience and capacity

Some people doing it for themselves said their main challenge was managing an organisation and business, and all that it entails. This affected them at the outset and in particular their confidence and their ability to sustain or grow their activity. As Rob, who set-up a self-help group for people struggling with addiction, which has now turned into a large and successful organisation, said:

I think around paperwork. I think where people struggle is around the CIC forms, the accounts. I mean I've helped 2 or 3 people...mentored really but it's the paperwork side of it...they know what they got to do, they know they can get a community room, they know they can maybe get funding but they know they can't put in for funding without a bank account or being registered as either a community support group or CIC or charity and they need to get money going through that account so they can show accounts. It's the paperwork side, like a business plan, that people have difficulties with.

Lack of start-up and growth funding

Funding, where it is available, is often limited and small. Lack of funding can act as a barrier to get ideas off the ground and in particular to sustain or grow ideas or activities. As Gary, who set-up the UK's first disabled strongman competition, said:

People sometimes just need a small bit of money to try their idea, without big or daunting applications.

For people who run their own trading enterprise public sector procurement can be a challenge with tenders and frameworks seen as too big or too narrow for small enterprises to bid for.



The implications for people on benefits doing it for themselves

Similarly, people need enough money to be able to do it for themselves – for some people there are worries about earning and the impact on benefits and care eligibility. For others there can be pressure to turn voluntary activity into self-employment. ‘Access to Work’ was seen by many people as a positive support, providing funding to cover the cost of the help people need to work. Despite Access to Work being seen as an enabler, people also experienced barriers to using it flexibly in ways that worked well for them.

The limitations of care packages

People who are eligible for state funded care and support face additional challenges. The help people receive is often focussed on personal care tasks such as washing and dressing. Rules around how funded time is used can mean people who want to do it for themselves can’t get the practical support they need to do so. In many cases even if rules allow people to get help to do it for themselves the money available for funded support is insufficient. For example, Anna, who is the Co-chair of the Coalition for Collaborative Care, which works at a local and national level, said she needs help to travel and carry out her role within the Coalition. She does not get any extra hours of support built into her package of social care support funded by her local authority. She said the Department for Work and Pensions are not helpful and can put up barriers and generally, systems are complicated and do not link up well to enable Anna to do what she does:

Through the Coalition I am trying to make a positive difference to health and social care on a national level. On a personal, local level they are the ones that make it difficult!

Practical barriers and lack of accessibility

Some people doing it for themselves talked about practical barriers, such as transport, unsuitable or lack of equipment or lack of accessible venues/spaces. For example, Robert who is involved in several local and national activities and campaigns to give a voice to disabled people, said:

Physical challenges (are one of the biggest barriers) are part of the battle. At conferences you have to ask for them to pay for a comfortable seat or a night at the hotel before the meeting. Sometimes even the NHS say they can’t pay for an overnight stay. Sometimes there are policies that say expenses can only be paid out for public transport, but I can’t just hop on a tube and sometimes I need a taxi.

There is a lack of easy read stuff and the language used in documents can be difficult.

Coproduction group

Some people talked about a lack of accessible information and the challenges this can pose for some individuals who are doing it for themselves



Health and wellness

Several people doing it for themselves also spoke about health and personal challenges around illness, impairment and fluctuating conditions that can affect their energy and wellness and consequently their ability to get involved. For example, Catherine runs a social enterprise working in mental health. One of her aims is to help organisations to be more understanding and create conditions to help people with mental health issues work productively. She cites her own health challenges as a barrier because she tires easily and travel can be difficult.

Difficulties working with the public, health and social care sector and professionals

Some people doing it for themselves said they face discrimination, stereotypes, unconscious bias and lack of professional respect from other people and organisations working in the public, health and social care sector, including funders. This can sometimes result in paid people expecting people with lived experience to give their time for free. Clenton talks about discrimination and respect:

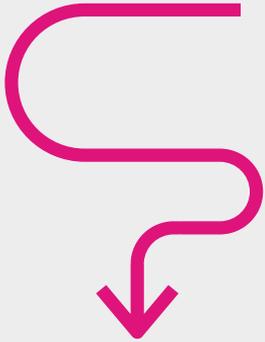
Just because we are disabled it doesn't mean we can't run a successful business. We were constantly trying to break new ground as to how people saw us individually and collectively as a business. That was very hard as you would go into meetings and see people's body language as they thought 'this don't compute'.

People doing it for themselves also talked about other challenges working with the public sector and other organisations in health and social care. This includes public sector churn, where the people that initiated, supported and enabled, move on or changes in priorities and strategies, which mean support and funding is not constant or consistent. It also includes working with some partners and public sector organisations that can only respond to traditional structures and ways of working.

SO HOW CAN WE INSPIRE AND HELP MORE PEOPLE TO DO IT FOR THEMSELVES?

We believe that there are many more people out there that could do it for themselves, they just need the right conditions and a little support to help make it happen or help it grow. For this to happen we need to influence national government and policy and also work in local areas, with and through public sector organisations, decision-makers and practitioners and community and voluntary sector organisations.

This project has identified the following key ingredients to inspire, encourage and support more people to do it for themselves.



GET INSPIRED



DREAMS AND
DETERMINATION



Share stories and identify role models

One way to encourage people to do it for themselves and encourage good practice in local areas is to share the inspirational stories, achievements and impacts of people that have done it for themselves. These stories and storyteller show people what is possible and how they might do something similar. This inspires and encourages people to aspire.

Help people to dream

Some people may need support to develop their dreams and aspirations. For young people conversations about the possible should start at home and at school. Promoting the achievements of people already doing it for themselves and the impact this has on them, their community and society can create helpful role models to influence this change.

Link to personal planning

Many people who need care or support to live their lives have a person-centred plan and/or support plan. Person centred plans are often aspirational but support plans much less so. Work can be undertaken with support planners, social workers, care providers and others on a local level to help them understand the potential for people to do it for themselves. If professionals leading support planning understand the potential for people to lead change in their lives and communities, they are more likely to help people build this into their life and support plans.

PEOPLE DOING IT FOR THEMSELVES

OPPORTUNITY



INFORMATION AND SUPPORT



Create a strength-based culture

Areas that have a strong focus on people's strengths and assets create opportunities for people to lead change and 'do it for themselves'. This includes public sector practitioners, commissioners and decision makers within education, health, social care and housing. It also includes third sector organisations who sometimes need to move away from purely 'helping' culture to make space for the strengths of people with care needs to be used and encouraged.

Seed opportunities

Many of the people already doing it for themselves spoke of an opportunity or offer which helped set them on their path. Work could be undertaken to intentionally seed these opportunities, offering people the chance to lead a new group, start a new enterprise or be at the forefront of an activity.

Build the capacity of initiatives and organisations to encourage and support people to do it for themselves

In most localities there are already individuals and organisations able to provide useful help and support to people with an enterprise idea or interest in setting up a community group or organisation. This includes local voluntary and community sector infrastructure organisations and business development agencies. These organisations and agencies may not have the awareness, remit, capacity or expertise to offer help and support to older or disabled people interested in doing it for themselves, particularly where these people need reasonable adjustments to be made. Similarly, every area has organisations who provide care and support to older or disabled people. These organisations may not have the expertise or inclination to extend what they offer to enable people to do it for themselves. More could be done to help both these types of organisations to build capacity and enable them to better support people to do it for themselves.

Commissioners are "getting it more" but there's still a way to go.

Coproduction group

PEOPLE DOING IT FOR THEMSELVES

INFORMATION AND SUPPORT



OVERCOMING BARRIERS AND MAKING IT POSSIBLE

Build on good practice

Some of the best examples of where people have done it for themselves are where the support is more specialist and expert, provided by organisations that have been commissioned or have a mission to help people do it for themselves, either as a pump-priming project or as an on-going initiative. These organisations provide support to raise aspirations, help people turn their passions and ideas into reality, providing the capacity building, skills, business and legal support to help people to start, grow and sustain their activities. This may be an appropriate way to stimulate people to do it for themselves in a local area and build capacity amongst local people and organisations to sustain this support over time.

Better coordinated information, advice and support

There are many good individuals and organisations out there helping people to do it for themselves. But sometimes this support is ad hoc or provided in isolation, while sometimes people do not realise the support is available. More can be done to promote, sign-post, join-up and help people access the support that is already available.

Mentoring, coaching and networking

Some people doing it for themselves said in addition to helping them or others like them start an activity, they also needed help to manage and grow it. They thought they could benefit from mentoring, coaching and networking with other people doing it for themselves and individuals and organisations that provide support.

Develop tools and networks for sustainable change

There is scope to create a toolkit and develop strong partnerships and networks for change. Working with partners and developing the tools they need to act can help inspire and inform more people to start doing it for themselves.

Funding or income

People doing it for themselves spoke about the difficulties accessing funding to start and grow their activity and funding or income to sustain it. It does not always need to be a lot, but access to funding and/or a clear route to sustainable income could remove a key barrier and accelerate the number and impact of people doing it for themselves.

Funded support packages

Rules around social care funding and personal budgets nationally and locally need to be reviewed. They must go beyond providing personal care and have the flexibility to support an individual's 'whole-life', including support to 'do it for themselves'.

NEXT STEPS

The second phase of this project hopes to inspire and influence change. It will do this by showing what is possible and developing and testing a replicable approach to discover whether these ingredients can help stimulate and support more people to do it for themselves and build the conditions and capacity to sustain this for the future.

We will leave the last word to Sapphire, a photographer who designs and sells cards:

We need more projects [and organisations that help people to do it for themselves], and more groups out there for people with disabilities. At one time, I was like, I don't want to show you, but then someone gave me a push, and said, come on, you've got talent, and in my mind, I would say no, I'm going to get judged. We need more encouragement, because people are always closing doors on us. People are always telling us what we can't do, but we have got talents. But we need someone to give us a wee push.



PEOPLE DOING IT FOR THEMSELVES

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