



Ageing in Place-Hackney

BAME community research report

Research and report by Suj Ahmed

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INTRODUCTION

This report is based on BAME community research. It focuses on understanding how BAME-led organisations engage with members from their community and how this might have changed over time. It also explores how individuals from BAME communities use places, organisations and services for social contact and interaction.

The research forms part of a wider programme set up by National Lottery Community Fund, with the aim of developing creative ways for people aged 50 and over to be actively involved in their local communities, helping to combat isolation and loneliness.

METHODOLOGY

The BAME community research project took place between August and September 2019. Face-to-face interviews were conducted with managers of nine Hackney BAME organisations, and twelve individual members from Hackney Cypriot Association and Halkevi Centre in the Dalston ward.

The nine BAME organisations were initially contacted by email to ascertain their interest in taking part in the research survey, and face-to-face interviews were arranged.

Further meetings were held with the two Dalston organisations in order to recruit twelve individuals for interviews. Packs containing project information and social diary logs to record the places they visited each day over a two week period were given to each individual member. The logs were used to jog their memory of the places they visited during the subsequent face-to-face interviews.

Desktop research was carried out to understand the demographics and social history of Dalston ward.

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Small user led community organisations often claim they are used by larger community and statutory organisations to meet last minute consultation and research targets by providing access to their service users. The larger organisation do not respect them or value the time they and their users are asked to give, usually without any financial compensation.

With this in mind, the nine BAME organisations were contacted to gain their consent, and were financially compensated for their time and support in giving face-to-face



interviews. For the two BAME organisations in Dalston providing individual members for interviews, payment was made for facilitating this.

The compensation included payment for the organisations time in recruiting individuals for interviews, providing interpreters, and vouchers to each individual interviewed.

There was concern from some individuals that their logs of places visited could be used by the authorities to scrutinise their benefit payments. They were reassured by the researcher and centre managers that their data would be anonymised and the logs would not be passed onto anyone else.

Over half of the individuals interviewed could not speak English, and therefore were provided a trusted interpreter from the two organisations. Even those who could speak English had an interpreter present, in case they needed interpreter services.

LOCAL CONTEXT

Ward: Dalston

Population (2016): 8,900

Age Band (2013): 0-15 17%. 16-64 76%. 65+ 7%

Ethnicity	Dalston
English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British	41.6
White; Irish	2.7
White; Gypsy or Irish Traveller	0.1
White; Other White	17.4
Mixed/Multiple Ethnic Groups; White and Black Caribbean	1.2
Mixed/Multiple Ethnic Groups; White and Black African	0.9
Mixed/Multiple Ethnic Groups; White and Asian	1.7
Mixed/Multiple Ethnic Groups; Other Mixed	2.4
Asian/Asian British; Indian	1.7
Asian/Asian British; Pakistani	0.6
Asian/Asian British; Bangladeshi	2.4
Asian/Asian British; Chinese	1.8
Asian/Asian British; Other Asian	2.9
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British; African	7.7
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British; Caribbean	7
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British; Other Black	3.6
Other Ethnic Group; Arab	0.9
Other ethnic Group	3.3

Data source: London Borough of Hackney Ward profiles.



The figures hide the real ethnic demographics of the ward as Turkish, Kurdish, Cypriots are classified under Other White. The area is well known to be the centre for Turkish, Kurdish, Cypriots communities in Hackney, with multiple community organisations serving these communities.

OVERVIEW OF SOCIAL HISTORY

Although very small, Dalston hosts the only shopping centre in Hackney and is well known for Ridley Road Market, it is the largest open market in Hackney with half a mile of small shops, fruit and vegetable stalls, fish and meat stalls, as well as fast food outlets selling a variety of ethnic food. Ridley Road Market is the beating heart of the ward and attracts shoppers of all ages and ethnicities from across Hackney, particularly local residents.

Until around ten years ago the area was regarded as a poor area with high levels of crime and very little social life in the evenings. With the opening of the local Dalston Junction station, new building developments, rejuvenation of Kingsland Road to reflect the café culture of neighbouring and very hip Shoreditch, and the middle class restaurant dominated Stoke Newington, the area has been totally transformed into a buzzing hub of cafes, bars and night clubs. Property prices have increased rapidly, forcing out many older communities and attracting younger residents and visitors to the area. But the area still retains a mix of vibrant and diverse communities of young and old, working class and more upwardly mobile younger people, as well as mix of different ethnicities.

The ward has high levels of socioeconomic deprivation. The population of older people in Hackney is smaller than the national average, however levels of deprivation are particularly higher in this group. Deprivation in older people is associated with poor physical and mental health, as well as other risk factors such as social isolation. Dalston Ward has a higher level of income deprivation affecting older people than the borough average, which is higher than the average for London and England.

Dalston, like the rest of Hackney, is one of the most ethnically diverse areas in the country. Dalston has a multi-cultural community, with most communities and their organisations existing side-by-side, often operating in their own silos, but when larger issues affect them they can come together for the greater community good.

41% of residents not born in UK.

14% households with no one who has English as main language



MIGRATION

Post-war migration to the area was primarily from Caribbean community in the 50s and 60s, and later from the Turkish, Kurdish and Cypriot communities. Both sets of communities set up community organisations and eating places. The area has a rich history of radicalism, political activities, and alternative lifestyles. Although some of the migrants have come from areas of conflict there is a real attempt by community organisations to foster cooperation within the communities. There is very little friction between the communities.

HOUSING TENURE

Owned and share ownership 30%

Social rented 30%

Private rented 39.5%

Living rent free 1.5%

Like the rest of Hackney and East London in general Dalston has mixed housing. Council estates side-by-side with expensive period properties.

Dalston has a much higher percentage of over 65s living alone than the Hackney or London averages. This group are more susceptible to isolation, which impacts on their physical and mental health.

EMPLOYMENT

68% of 16-74 year olds employed

6% of households with no adults in employment with dependent children

There is no specific local industry, other than local shops, cafes and restaurant, as well as other consumer shops and Sainsbury's supermarket. With Dalston attracting young professionals and relatively cheap small office space there has been a growth in community enterprises, micro businesses, creative, media and tech start-ups.

GREEN SPACES

There are no parks in Dalston, but the area has a number of small green spaces, public squares and an independent garden and café called the Dalston Eastern Curve Garden which hosts some community events and is open to the local community throughout the week.



TRANSPORT

Dalston is well served for transport with two overground stations. Dalston Junction goes north to south London and Dalston Kingland goes east to west London. Dalston has numerous buses going into central London, Liverpool Street, and London Bridge stations, and link up with areas north of Hackney, such as Tottenham, Waltham Forest, Edmonton Green and Wood Green.

LOCAL PLACES OF INTEREST

Ridley Road Market, established in 1880s is one of Dalston's main features with its traditional and ethnically diverse stalls and small side shops providing fruit, vegetables, fish, meat and spices. Uncovered and spread over half a mile of Ridley Road, it attracts shoppers locally and from other parts of Hackney.

Kingland Shopping Centre, although relatively small it is the largest shopping centre in Hackney. Built in 1980s, it has a hotch poch of around 120 mainly small shops. The centre is rundown and in need of refurbishment.

Rio Cinema, first opened in 1937 and continues to operate as a single screen independent cinema with film festivals showcasing local community films, hosting community events as well as showing mainstream mainly independent films.

The German Hospital, locally known as 'The German', is a group of attractive Victorian red brick buildings that were home to a hospital from 1845-1987. The hospital was initially founded to cater primarily for London's then large German-speaking community. It eventually became an ordinary NHS facility before its facilities were merged and moved to Homerton University Hospital.

Fassett Square, was the inspiration for the BBC soap EastEnders. Originally, there were plans to film the series there, on location. However, Fassett Square (Albert Square) and Ridley Road Market (Walford Market) were rebuilt on the set in Elstree, near Borehamwood, to have a more controlled filming environment.

Arcola Theatre, was founded by a Turkish couple twelve years ago and initially operating from a disused clothing factory. The theatre has gained a reputation as one of the leading small independent theatres in London, producing cutting edge play from writers from different ethnic backgrounds. The theatre moved to bigger premises in the centre of Dalston and is a hub for local creativity and community involvement.

Cafes, bars and clubs, are the new attractions for younger people. The area has an active night life and along with the hip Shoreditch area is the place of choice for young people at weekends. Gillet Square with its bars, jazz club and open square is particularly favoured by young people.





Ridley Road Market



Rio Cinema



Dalston Eastern Curve Garden



BAME-LED ORGANISATIONS IN THE AREA

We interviewed nine BAME organisations. One of the planned organisations North London Muslim Centre, were unwilling to participate due to religious considerations of working with National Lottery funded project due to its association with gambling. They were replaced by Turkish Cypriot Cultural Association. All interviews were conducted face-to-face, eight of them at the premises of the BAME organisations and one at HCVS office.

Organisation	Community	Aims	Staff	Volunteers	Engagement
An Viet Foundation	Vietnamese	To provide welfare and activities for Vietnamese refugees that arrived in Hackney 30 years ago.	6 part-time	14	High. Regular lunch club service and activities for 55+.
Chatsworth Lunch Club	Caribbean	Provide activities and resources for the wellbeing of older people and local community.	2 part-time	5	High. Regular lunch club service and activities 55+.
Hackney Chinese Community Services	Chinese	Welfare, education and wellbeing for Hackney Chinese community.	6 part-time	14	High. Regular lunch club service and activities for 55+.
Hackney Cypriot Association	Turkish, Kurdish, Greek	To serve Turkish and Greek Cypriot community. Encourage harmony and friendship.	4 part-time	12	High. Regular lunch club service and activities for 55+.
Hackney Caribbean Elderly Organisation	Caribbean	Provide social, educational and advocacy activities for older people. Age better, reduce isolation. Provide integrated support for older people in one place.	1 full 4 part-time	10	High. Regular lunch club service and activities for 55+.
Halkevi	Turkish, Kurdish, Alevi	Lunch club catering for Turkish and Kurdish community. Provide advice and information. Hub for community groups.	0	5	High. Regular lunch club service and activities for 55+.
Hotline Meals Service	Orthodox Jewish	To help people in crisis, elderly frail people, and vulnerable people on	5 part-time	175	High. Regular lunch club service and activities for 55+.



		low income.			Plus ready meals service to frail and elderly.
Turkish Cypriot Cultural Association	Turkish Kurdish	A charity which aims to improve the lives of Turkish and Turkish Cypriots through social and educational support and advice services.	0	3	Low at the moment due to lack of funding.
Centre 151	Vietnamese, Laos, Cambodian	To look after Vietnamese, Laos, Cambodian communities. To reduce isolation. Support wellbeing and provide signposting.	4	25	High. Regular lunch club service and activities for 55+.

Interviewees for the organisations were;

An Viet Foundation: Wing Kong Fung
 Chatsworth Lunch Club: Theresa Sam
 Hackney Chinese Community Services: Wai Lam
 Hackney Cypriot Association: Cemile Gokan
 Hackney Caribbean Elderly Organisation: Lullyn Tavares
 Halkevi: Yashar Ismailoglu
 Hotline Meals Service: Mrs Leifer & Mrs Rappaport
 Turkish Cypriot Cultural Association: Gulnur Salih
 Centre 151. Pierre Palluet

ORGANISATIONS WORKING WITH OLDER MEMBERS OF THEIR COMMUNITY

Eight of the organisations interviewed provide a regular lunch club service for over 55s, as well as a variety of health, social and advice activities. Working with older people is central to their aims and operation. As well as providing regular on premises cooked lunches that are ethnically appropriate for the communities they serve, the organisations provide a regular place for older people to meet. They also provide social, and health wellbeing related activities such as;

- Advice sessions
- Computer training
- Dance exercise
- Health awareness talks
- Trips to local areas of interest
- Seaside trips
- Craft making workshops
- Admin/correspondence support



- Exercise class
- Yoga
- Tai Chi
- Signposting
- Befriending
- Kosher ready meals delivery to frail elderly
- Health advocacy service
- Singing class
- Martial arts
- Wellbeing activities
- Dementia memory group
- Bingo
- Games
- Local history tours
- Ethnic cultural projects
- Women specific activities
- Falls prevention sessions
- Diabetes awareness talks
- Sickle Cell support group

All the organisations said they provided services and activities that were identified as being needed by older people in their communities, and there was a need to provide holistic support for the multiple needs of their members. So for most of the organisations, particularly those serving non English speakers, things like admin/correspondence support was crucial for their members to manage day-to-day living, and dealing with bureaucratic statutory organisations, and having an advocate to support them through the labyrinths of bureaucracy. There was no funding for this service and it was provided through the by goodwill of volunteers and staff.

Recently, as part of the Hackney Lunch Clubs Network, many of the organisations have held focus groups in order to influence Hackney Council's Ageing Well strategy, which once completed will have a critical focus on what type of services and how those services are delivered in Hackney for ageing well. Halkevi have also held regular focus groups to influence Hackney's Public Health strategy on nutrition for older people. These BAME organisation are active politically and engage in open meetings and campaigns to support better services for older people in Hackney.

CHANGES TO WAYS OF WORKING

Funding cuts have had a huge impact on the services the BAME organisations can deliver. Many of them struggle to keep going. The organisations still work in traditional ways that they have worked in for many years. Most of the service users are over 65. When change is suggested to the older people they serve, it is usually met with resistance. Older members prefer continuity of places and people they are familiar with.



Virtually all the organisations interviewed said that by far the most effective way of attracting new members was through word of mouth in their communities. They also have referrals from health and social care departments in Hackney Council and local health services, which has good and bad implications. The good are that more older people who need support are helped by the BAME organisations and the service user feels comfortable amongst his/her community. The bad are that some organisations are unable to cope with the high care needs of some referrals.

With the new three year Lunch Clubs Network contract from Hackney Council, the organisations have had reductions in funding but have much more extensive and stringent reporting and extended service delivery requirements. This has meant that the organisations have had to be much better at organising their service delivery as well as compliance with their service level agreements on limited resources.

The big question is how these organisations, and indeed Hackney Council, will provide services for the next generation of older people. Many of the current members of these organisations want the traditional centre based services the organisations have provided for many years. However what will 'new older people' who have been used to engaging online, using social media rather than centre based activities want, and how will they want those services delivered?

BARRIERS FACED WHEN TRYING TO ENGAGE WITH OLDER PEOPLE

Most of the organisations interviewed are well established, and have provided services for older people for many decades and are well known to the communities they serve, often with members having attended lunch clubs and activities for years. Many of the organisations are not attracting the new generation of older people, in their 50s and early 60s. The barriers they have identified are around lack of funding and resources;

- An often repeated barrier by most of the organisations was not having a dedicated and paid outreach worker to go out into the community and recruit new members who may not be aware of the organisation and the services it provides. The interviewees stated that they did not have the capacity or resources to do this without funding being available for this role.
- People with physical or mental disability were often hard to reach and also there is limited capacity within the organisation to cater for them if in any great numbers.
- Lack of accessible transport was a big barrier in being able to provide services for disabled and frail older people.
- Language, which might prevent people from accessing the service.



- Isolation, where people are unaware of the service or lack confidence in engaging with others.
- Poverty might prevent some older people in accessing lunches, activities and outings which have small fees.
- Health issues which prevent some members attending services.
- Inability to provide a wider range of activities for which the organisation does not have resources.
- Organisations unable to support service users with high care needs.
- Lack of funding for extensive publicity material.

The common methods of engagement were through word of mouth, leaflets, newsletter, website. Only one organisation mentioned social media.

WORKING WITH OTHER ORGANISATIONS

The organisations interviewed work with other community as well as statutory organisations, in ad hoc informal partnerships as well as formal contractual partnerships with funding and monitoring compliance arrangements. Some of the other organisations and projects the interviewees worked with are;

- Hackney CVS
- Hackney CCG
- Hackney Council
- Homerton Hospital
- Alzheimer's Society
- Diabetes Centre
- Sickle Cell Centre
- St Leonards Hospital
- Connect Hackney
- Geffrye Museum
- Shoreditch Trust
- GP Surgeries
- Schonfeld Square
- Ezra Umarre
- Biker Cholm
- Step by Step
- Filipino Community Organisation
- Citizen Advice Bureau
- Hands Inc
- King's College University



- District Nurses
- Methodist Church (GB)
- Refugee Forum
- Daymer
- African Community Network
- Hackney Lunch Clubs Network
- Rise Association

The above list is just some of the organisations the respondents have worked with, as well as working with each other on specific projects. The reasons for working with above organisations are varied but generally fall into three categories,

1. Bringing funding/resources to the organisation
2. Improving their services
3. Direct benefit to older people in their organisation.

Some of the stated benefits are;

- Helps with funding
- Service better organised
- More referrals
- Opening up networks and funding
- Raising awareness on specific issues
- Recruiting volunteers
- Reach out to more people in need
- Expand our services
- Increase partnership funding opportunities
- Collaboration in cross referrals
- Helps to improve services for service users and improve user's lives
- Share knowledge
- Mutual support
- Helps with information sharing
- Diversity
- Stronger position when in partnership, especially when dealing with council
- Gives a wider access to services
- Different approaches
- Benefits members and organisation
- Keeps us informed
- Provides training and awareness
- Helps to refer our members to other services
- We learn new things and become part of a wider network
- Meet new people and make new friends
- Learn from each other and find mutual solutions

The activities in partnership working range from formal funded projects like Hackney Lunch Clubs Network, where the organisations are contracted to deliver lunches for



over 55s, provide a variety of wellbeing activities, and participate in network meetings. Working with Hackney council has involved small funding for specific projects for wellbeing of their members, as well as focus groups and consultations such as informing Ageing Well Strategy, Public Health Nutrition Strategy, and National Census trials. Working with Homerton and St Leonards hospitals to raise awareness on health issues such as diabetes, bowel cancer etc. Alzheimer's Society for awareness sessions on Dementia, and memory workshops. Geffrye Museum for workshops on local history. Kings college for research project on Ageing Well. Refugee and African forums for reaching older people in those communities. Connect Hackney for delivering specific commissioned research projects around older people.

Partnership working has been in practice for a long time with these organisations, in some cases many decades. Although there is always a tendency to work in silos and concentrate on day-to-day service delivery, there is recognition amongst all interviewed organisations that partnership working is essential for all the reasons listed above. As well as the direct benefits listed above of partnership working, linking up with other organisations facilitates a togetherness and shared community, particularly around meeting the needs of older people generally and for campaigning.

Statutory organisations like Hackney Council and Hackney CCG, and infrastructure development organisations like Hackney CVS are crucial in facilitating partnership working by setting up networks, providing training, partnership opportunities and commissioning. Helping to support small BAME organisations to develop partnerships.

A barrier to more partnership working is many of these small BAME organisations do not have the time or resources to divert time from core service delivery to explore more partnership opportunities. Where the small organisation enters into individual partnerships with another organisation they tend to be more successful, rather than larger partnership or consortia where roles and responsibilities may not be clearly defined and can present a challenge which may sour relationships.

All the organisations are actively looking to forge partnerships for greater funding opportunities, bringing greater benefit for their members and older people in general, being part of local Hackney community and staying connected. Eight of the interviewed organisations are in formal partnership with Hackney Lunch Clubs Network. All of them have specific individual partnerships with other community and statutory organisations that benefit their organisation and service users.

An Viet Foundation and Hackney Chinese Community Services are in the process of finalising the establishment of an East Asian hub at new premises in Hackney, with considerable financial support from Hackney Council and Mayor of London. Hotline Meals are fundraising to develop larger premises in order to expand their services for the local Jewish community. Hackney Caribbean Elderly Organisation have received a substantial three-year Reaching Communities grant.



KEY FINDINGS: ORGANISATIONS

- Although the BAME organisations interviewed are culturally specific and there is a tendency to be insular and stay within their own community, there is also a tradition of working with other statutory and community organisations.
- All organisations said they valued partnership working to benefit their members and increase the potential for attracting funding.
- The smaller organisations have less skills and resources to fundraise and are trapped in being under resourced.
- Most of the members in the lunch clubs are over 65, with increased health impairments. The clubs find it difficult to attract new members in their fifties. This is an issue that service providers for older people face. The needs and expectations of this age group are very different. The challenge for the lunch clubs is that their current members will age and the clubs may gradually fade away if not enough 'younger older people' are recruited.
- To attract new members, most of the organisations stated that they did not have resources for sustained outreach, marketing budget or funds for providing alternative activities that may be attractive to people in their fifties and early sixties.
- Lunch Clubs Network funding programme expires in December 2021, with the possibility of a two year extension. The eight organisations providing lunch clubs are heavily reliant on that grant to provide services for older people. They are concerned about their ability to continue their services for older people once this round of funding comes to an end.





Centre 151

Chatsworth Road Lunch Club



Chatsworth Road Lunch Club

Chatsworth Road Lunch Club



IMPORTANT SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE FOR OLDER MEMBERS OF BAME COMMUNITY

Context

The twelve older members (nine male, three female) interviewed were from Halkevi Centre which caters for Turkish, Kurdish and Alevi communities, and Hackney Cypriot Association which has members mainly from the Turkish and Greek Cypriot community. Both organisations are located in central Dalston, and were founded by members of their respective communities. Hackney Cypriot Association in 1976 after the political conflict and upheaval in Cyprus. Halkevi Centre in 1984, when there was an increase in migration of Turkish and Kurdish people fleeing political persecution in Turkey.

Most of the members have been attending for many years, on average ranging from 10-30 years. Whilst the two centres are only around 400 yards apart, it didn't seem the members go to both centres regularly. Choosing one or the other of them. However the centre managers do liaise and work with each other on a regular basis.

All twelve interviews were conducted at Hackney Cypriot Association and Halkevi Centres. Six interviews at each. Some interviewees could speak English, but most were conducted through interpreters provided by the centres.

PLACES FOR SOCIAL CONTACT AND INFORMATION

Every single person interviewed stated their key place for contact and information was the respective centre they regularly went to. At both centres some of the members came from the same villages in Cyprus and Turkey. Many of the respondents tended to visit the same places for social contact. Some places mentioned as important for social contact and information are;

- Hackney Cypriot Association
- Halkevi
- Alevi Centre
- Ridley Road Market
- Shoreditch Library
- Allotments



- Turkish baths
- Dalston Eastern Curve Garden
- Friend's shop
- Sister's house
- Haringey Kurdish Centre
- Friend's garage
- Stoke Newington Residential Home
- Friend's shoe shop
- Hospital
- Kingsland Shopping Centre
- Local restaurants
- Britannia Leisure Centre
- Lea Valley Park
- Shacklewell Mosque
- Daughter's house

TYPES OF SOCIAL CAPITAL

Some common themes that emerged from the interviews were that respondents generally kept to a few known and trusted places for social contact and information. In addition to regular attendance at Hackney Cypriot Association and Halkevi, ranging from one day a week to five days a week, many of the respondents visited other cultural centres such as Alevi Centre and Haringey Kurdish Centre to be among their wider cultural group.

Another theme was, regular contact with friends and family through visits to family houses and shops/garage owned by friends. Visiting family was across both genders while visits to friend's shops was by males. As well as going to the cultural centres regularly, these visits to family and friends was on a regular basis and ranked very important for all the respondents.



A general local place that most of the respondents visited regularly was Ridley Road Market, for shopping, meeting up with friends, chatting to stall holders, or to just walk around the market and have a sense of wellbeing.

As well as having culturally specific lunch at the two centres, the attendees get an opportunity to meet other members and friends regularly, go on trips to places of interest and seaside, and engage in cultural activities at festivals and at the centres.

Some comments on visiting Hackney Cypriot Association and Halkevi Centre, and social contact they have there;

“Friendly and satisfying, otherwise wouldn’t have come for so long. She loves other members and is loved in return”.

“Very important. A central part of my life. I get advice and support with appointments”.

“Made new friends. Know more people here than other places”

“Very very important. Everybody very helpful. Have lunch three days a week. Would have been very lonely if I didn’t come to this place”.

“Very important. Keeps me in touch with people and stops me from being lonely”.

“Very important. Meet friends. Get out of the house and do things”.

“A base where I could express myself and support elderly people”.

When the respondents visited the two centres they generally talked about;

- Politics, which was a main topic of conversation with the males interviewed at Halkevi and Hackney Cypriot Association. Mainly about the political situation in Turkey, Kurdish regions and Cyprus, but also politics in UK.
- Issues around health
- Getting advice about a range of things, including legal advice at regular advice sessions and appointments.
- Family issues
- Turkish, Kurdish, and Cypriot cultural activities
- Food
- Weather



- Football
- Social things with friends
- Shopping
- General chat about life

Halkevi have a communal garden and allotment at Lea Valley Park, which is about two miles away from the centre. The members are taken there regularly to do gardening, enjoy the nature park and birdwatching at the designed hides. As well as the types of topics listed above, the conversations are around planting, and types of birds that inhabit the wildlife areas.

One of the respondents goes regularly to her son's allotment to meet him, other family members and other allotment holders, and do gardening. She regarded the allotment as "very important, and good for health and soul".

For males, visiting shops (grocery, shoe, car repair garage) owned by friends or family were a key part of their daily lives. Where they could spend time discussing a host of topics with the owners as well as other friends who visited the shops for socialising or for shopping.

For females, visits to homes of family members was very important, to socialise, discuss family issues and give and receive support.

Visits to hospital and to Britannia Leisure Centre were for health reasons but also acted as supportive structures for them to meet other patients who were referred to the leisure centre by health services, and staff and discuss health issues in a supportive environment.

Some respondents visited the local libraries at Dalston and Shoreditch for books and videos. For one respondent weekly Saturday visits to Shoreditch Library with his grandson were one of the most important things in his life. The visits included, doing workshops and activities, homework help, meeting other parents at the library and socialising with them away from the library.

Most interviewee did not see themselves as strict Muslims and only two of them attended local Mosques regularly. They did not see that as a place to socialise, only for praying.

For the vast majority of the respondent finding information about local events or culturally specific activities was through the two centres, word of mouth and, to some degree, through WhatsApp and Facebook.



RELEVANT CHANGES TO THIS IN RECENT YEARS AND THE IMPACTS

For these communities the changes have not been very significant in terms of their daily lives and social contact. Hackney Cypriot Association and Halkevi Centre have both existed for decades and continue to provide culturally specific lunches and activities for older people. Like other community organisations both of these organisations are frequently faced with funding cuts which can be traumatic for the organisations and for older people who use those centres, but they have managed to survive so far.

Deteriorating health for members of the two centres has a huge impact on the centres and service users, as they require greater care provision with often less resources available to the centres. Which puts a greater strain on the centres to provide high levels of service to all their members.

Although the family structure are still strong within the Turkish, Kurdish and Cypriot communities there is some weakening of these structures because some younger people have less time and inclination to be involved with family life as in previous generations.

Dalston area has undergone extensive change and gentrification over the past five to ten years, but it doesn't have a significant impact on the people interviewed because mainly they go to the centres and to Ridley Road Market. Dalston Library was relocated to a nearby new build and is much bigger with more amenities. The nightclubbing in the area only starts late at night and therefore does not affect the older people.

Most of the respondents continue to do the things they were doing ten, twenty years ago.

INTERVIEWEE DEMOGRAPHICS

Service users at Halkevi are mainly males, and five of the six interviewees were male. Hackney Cypriot Association service users were more mixed in terms of gender, and two of the six interviewees were female.

For Hackney Cypriot Association and Halkevi mobility/disability issues are important as transport for disabled or frail people is getting more difficult to organise and some service user's attendance is affected. Ten of the twelve interviewees defined themselves as disabled with various health issues, but the health issues did not prevent them from attending the two centres. Some of the health issues stated were;

- Arthritis
- Kidney problems
- Diabetes



- High Cholesterol
- Heart condition
- Stomach bleeding
- High blood pressure
- Mental ill health
- Chronic back pain
- Prostrate cancer
- Lung cancer
- Hip operations
- Shoulder issues
- Depression
- Eye problems and operations
- Knee joint
- Punctured ear drum

The demographics of the twelve interviewees was as follows;

GENDER	
Male	9
Female	3
AGE	
50-60	3
60-70	3
70-80	5
Age prefer not to say	1
EMPLOYMENT	
Retired	9
Disabled	2
Unemployed	1
ETHNIC BACKGROUND	
Turkish Cypriot	4
Greek Cypriot	2
Turkish Kurdish	2
Kurdish	4
RELIGION	
Muslim	6
Alevi	2
Christian	1
Greek Orthodox	1
No Religion	2
SEXUAL ORIENTATION	
Heterosexual	12
DISABILITY	
Long standing physical or mental health	10
CARING RESPONSIBILITY	1



USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

All twelve interviewees used the telephone as an essential tool to keep in touch with family, friends, and for contacting service providers. Ten of the twelve used social media to stay connected with people. The use of social media ranged from occasional use to essential everyday use. Some respondents had been using social media for over five years, whilst some had started in the last year.

- Facebook 7 users
- WhatsApp 6 users
- Twitter 1 user
- Messenger 1 user

For some users of social media it was out of curiosity and not very important. For others social media was as important as coming to the two centres. Some of the reasons for using Facebook and WhatsApp and its high importance was;

- Keeping in contact with family in UK, Turkey and Germany
- Staying in contact with mother who is very ill
- To keep in contact with family and share photos
- Just to communicate and discuss politics
- To contact people
- Crucial for community activities
- Strong platform to express my views
- To communicate one-to-one
- Stay connected with friends
- Keeping in contact with friends in Cyprus who I have not seen in decades
- Finding old friends on Facebook
- Important to keep in touch with family and friends to see what they are doing
- Use it every day to talk to family and also long distant to Cyprus and Turkey

For a couple of the social media users it was not very important as they were 'doing other things', 'prefer face to face contact', 'mainly used by children but I look sometimes'.





Halkevi Centre



Halkevi Centre



Hackney Cypriot Association



Hackney Cypriot Association



ANALYSIS OF SOCIAL INTERACTION AND KEY FINDINGS

For the purpose of this report the social interaction of the twelve interviewees can be measured in terms of social capital or bonding capital. Social capital can be described as diverse places and people engaged with, allowing the person to develop bridging ties outside their immediate environment. Bonding capital is the types of interaction people have mostly with the same places and people from the same background as themselves.

From the evidence available to this short research project the social interactions of the interviewees from the Turkish, Kurdish and Cypriot communities were mainly bonding capital with very little social capital or interacting with people outside their cultural community. Frequenting familiar places and interacting with others from their communities and family members. The three most common interactions were;

1. Visiting Hackney Cypriot Association and Halkevi Centre regularly was an essential part of their lives. These are familiar surroundings where they felt safe to meet other people and friends from their communities, have their cultural food and engage in a variety of activities, or just sit and chat. The topics of conversation were varied but the most frequently mentioned were politics and family. The interviewees and service users at Halkevi were mainly males and by far the most important topic for them was politics. At Hackney Cypriot Association the users were more even in terms of gender, with a more varied and had a wider range of conversations.
2. Family visits were also valued highly, keeping in touch, mutual support, and to retain cultural identity. The conversations were more varied because of the safe confidential environment.
3. Social media was used by eighty four percent of the interviewees to stay in contact with family and friends, cultural groups, finding old friends and for general socialising with people they already knew. The interviewees did not use social media to explore interaction with people and activities they did not know to build bridging ties or social capital.

The above three types and places of social interaction were very important for the interviewees, and formed the overwhelming part of their daily lives and interactions.

Much of the social interaction of the interviewees appeared to be governed by their past history and influences. The reason politics ranked so highly amongst interviewees at both centres and particularly at Halkevi is hardly surprising, due to the interviewees having fled war or political persecution, even though it was many decades earlier. These political and cultural conversations the interviewees could



only really have within their cultural group who understand the issues and they can discuss in a safe environment.

Most of the interviewees did not speak English, which is also a major factor in how they interact socially, they stay within their cultural community, where they feel safe and receive the support for their multiple needs. They are often unable or unwilling to venture out of their comfort zones. So retaining their cultural identity and feeling safe is hugely important for these communities.

This to a large extent satisfies the social needs of the individuals and combats isolation for older people, but can be a barrier to bridging ties and building social capital with other communities. This is not specific only to Turkish, Kurdish and Cypriot communities. Other Hackney community groups interviewed for this research also tended to generally interact within their own communities. As stated earlier, Hackney's diverse communities exist separately, side-by-side, usually in harmony, and retaining their cultural identities.

However, the different communities do come together for social interaction when larger non-culturally specific organisations such as Hackney Council, Hackney CVS, Hackney CCG, Age UK East London organise events that bring older people from diverse communities together to participate in events and build social capital. Social capital in Hackney has to be developed consciously and will not automatically happen with the diverse communities of older people. The new, younger, generation of older people may be more open to building social capital with older people from different communities.

Suj Ahmed

Director

Community Advance Project

4 Ringcroft Street, London N7 8ND

Email: community_advance@yahoo.co.uk

Web: www.caplondon.org.uk

