



Men's Social Group Project Report



Aim: Improve the health & wellbeing of men over 55 and reduce their social isolation.

In November 2017, we established the HNG Older Men's Social Group because men are under-represented as participants in our activities. Men are also traditionally less likely than women to have strong social networks and they are unlikely to admit that they are lonely and typically do not ask for help.

Islington has the highest rates of depression and psychotic disorders and the 5th lowest male healthy life expectancy in London. However, almost all the activities available across north Islington, are either women-only or for both men and women - and many of the activities (e.g. bingo and sewing) are more popular with women than men.

Our Older Men's Projects Worker, who is a qualified counsellor, skillfully facilitates the club and the members of the group are active contributors to the project. They decide which activities are run and what trips are organised, and are supported to invite guest speakers and encouraged to take on volunteer roles within the project. Activities are educational, healthy or just fun, and include board games, darts, dominoes and gardening. The men are encouraged to learn new skills – for example on the request of the men we've invited students from the City & Islington college to run gadget workshops.

We encourage the men to take advantage of other local services, facilities and peer support by accompanying individuals and small groups on visits. We work with others, such as Sadlers Wells' engagement team, to ensure they tailor their outreach service for this hard to reach group.



**The Men's Social Group
Every Wednesday 3pm to 5pm
@ The Old Fire Station
Run by Sahir
All Men over 55 very welcome**



Since joining, as well as playing darts and dominoes, Ian has started learning a new language and has started volunteering & accessing others services at St Lukes Community Centre.

Tom

I started coming to the Men's Social Group about a year ago. I really enjoy it, especially beating everyone at chess.

I've made new friends and I'm having fun. I've noticed that my mood is better when I'm there and not at home alone thinking about bad stuff. This makes a big difference to me.

The gadget and technology workshops were really interesting. In the future I'd like to see cooking or budgeting workshops and counselling.

I've now joined the Bingo Group and I've also become a volunteer gardener with one of my friends from the Men's Group - Ian, with who I've also started going to a Chess Club at another Centre.

It's a great group and really friendly. Lot's of people that come live alone, I'd say. I'd suggest that other men should come for a chat or a coffee. You don't have to get involved in the activities if you don't want to, but you will feel like you are a part of something. It's about having a laugh with the group and enjoying the time with the boys.

THE NUMBERS SINCE NOV '17

**50 Men attended
71 two-hour sessions
3 Trips Out
2 Gadget workshops**

TRIPS OUT

The men's group has had a few trips out. The first took in a powerful dance performance by Shaolin monks at Sadlers Wells Theatre. This was followed by a visit to the Tate Modern to take in art. Two of the men are planning on going again to see more exhibitions.

The Group has also visited another Men's Group at a different Centre and will go and see a Beatles themed show next month.