

# Equipping a community by thinking differently about volunteers



To develop an innovative community-based, and volunteer-led project which; empowers citizens to engage with death as a social process; and build community-owned capacity with dying, death and grief

In 8 years, over 800 Hospice Neighbours and associates have successfully supported families in our community, providing practical support and companionship at end of life. To develop beyond this model we adapted an 'Asset Based Community Development' approach to 'support changing knowledge and behaviours towards dying, death and bereavement, and through this to make living and dying the norm.'

To focus on 'what's strong and not what's wrong' (Cormac Russell - Nurture Development) we connected with communities via engagement meetings

Offered light touch coaching to equip local citizens, community groups and businesses to build confidence, resilience and encourage local compassion



## Background

## Aims

## Actions

## Outcomes

## Conclusions

*because you matter*

**St Nicholas Hospice Care**

A Registered Charity No. 287773

Our community 'showed-up' to offer compassion, strengths and gifts.

Storytelling became a tool to learn and share

Links hospice to the heart of the community

Community identified Hospice in a different way, moving from "death, cancer, fear" to "being together, commonality, empowerment"

Improved death literacy



We initially found misconceptions about hospice care coupled with unawareness of a community's role in end of life care. However, with authentic engagement and encouragement, we discovered that communities wish to be more informed and involved.

People belong to communities long before engagement with hospice services. It is important to acknowledge this asset and not disable support by over-professionalising death, loss and grief.

This shift of focus extends our reach to a community who may not normally encounter hospice care.

**Hospice as a behaviour and not a building.**

Volunteer connectors in both clinical and community settings to re-engage people with their own networks of support.



Explored the use of digital platforms