

**Project Guide**

**March 2021**

**Considerations Checklist**

**Projects can be big or small. This has been created to help you think about your idea.**

**Every project will be different and those who lead each project will have different experiences and skills. Bradninch Together offers this checklist, born out of our own experiences. The issues you should consider and plan for are in RED, issues that** **are definitely worth considering are ORANGE and some issues that may add value to a project are GREEN.**

**Not all considerations will apply to every project and as Covid restrictions are relaxed some measures will change or become obsolete.**

**Following on from the checklist below there is further guidance on Design Principles.**

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|  | **COVID 19 Rules and Restrictions; every project will need to comply with the current Government rules and guidance relating to the pandemic.**  Your project planning will need to consider the latest position on;   * Social distancing * Shielding * Enclosed spaces * PPE & sanitising * Test & Trace information * Vaccination status |  |
|  | **Objective & Goals;** have you defined the aim of your project and set milestones which can be evaluated. Can you say what success will look like? How will be project be concluded? |  |
|  | **Leadership;** who will lead the project? How are responsibilities shared? Do you have the skills you need? Is there a risk of burnout in key personnel? |  |
|  | **Safeguarding;** what measures will you taketo identify risks to those delivering your project and those who participate? When you undertake a Safeguarding Risk Assessment, follow it up with a mitigation and safety plan. How can someone identify and report a concern? BradTog has it’s own safeguarding Policy which may assist you in this thinking. |  |
|  | **Equality & Diversity;** what measures will you take to raise awareness that your project is open to all. |  |
|  | **Health & Safety;** what measures will you taketo identify risks to those delivering your project and those who participate? If and when you undertake a Health & Safety Risk Assessment, what will be a mitigation and safety plan? |  |
|  | **Hygiene;** what measures will you taketo identify risks to those delivering your project and those who participate? What will be a mitigation and safety plan? |  |
|  | **Finance;** will your project incur costs or need resources? How will expenses be quantified, managed and covered? Who will be responsible? If applying for funding who will make the application and complete any follow-up requirements? |  |
|  | **Research:** what evidence have you collected to ensure that there will be demand for the idea you are proposing? Can you establish base line data to evaluate progress and to measure when you have reached your goals? |  |
|  | **Sustainability;** what resilience can you build into your project to manage any drop out of volunteers or the maintenance of funds? |  |
|  | **IT;** does the project recognise digital inclusion; the cost of getting online, ability to get online and knowledge of new methods of communication e.g. WhatsApp, Zoom |  |
|  | **Data Protection;** if your project intends to use the details of individuals you will have to comply with the legislation covering the retention of personal details. |  |
|  | **Communication;** keeping your project in front of people will add value and drawn in volunteers and participates. Consider a communication strategy that matches your target audience. For immediacy social media has considerable reach. |  |
|  | **Legality;** is there any legislation that covers your project activities? This may require risk assessments with follow-up migration planning. |  |
|  | **Formality;** informal activities can take on an air of formality, if in an unfamiliar setting or amongst strangers. What steps can be taken to make people feel at ease? |  |
|  | **Loss of confidence;** many people have beenisolated and not been in a social setting for some time. What ‘icebreakers’ can you build into your project to encourage re-engagement? |  |
|  | **Travel;** some people may feel uncomfortable with public transport, how are anticipating people travelling to your project? |  |
|  | **Volunteering:** many new volunteers and members of community groups will return to work or their normal commitments as Covid restrictions ease, is the project sustainable? |  |
|  | **Feedback;** ensure that your leaders and volunteers are the first to hear of news involving your project, make them feel special and connected. Consider a dedicated WhatsApp group or similar messaging service. |  |
|  | **Problem solving;** what arrangements will you make for unforeseen matters that arise e.g. someone wishing to make a complaint. What procedure will be followed? Do you have people with experience that you can call on? |  |

**Design Principles**

**These design principles provide areas for consideration when planning for projects to improve community connection.**

1. **Based on hobbies or shared interest**

Many who are isolated will lack the confidence to engage in unfamiliar activities with unfamiliar people in unfamiliar places. Developing projects based around hobbies or shared interests, from crafting, gardening, reading or cooking to heritage, production of community media, quizzes or music, is important to provide a familiar and safe space through which to re-enter society. To develop projects people will engage with, it is important to:

* **Take a person-centred approach and understand what it is individuals like to do.** The more specific the better – many may like the idea of joining a book group but might have very different views of what sort of book they are willing to read. It is better to start with an understanding of what people want and then finding a way to meet it, rather than starting with an idea of what you want to deliver and finding an audience for it. This is the case even for ideas that have worked in other areas.
* **Help people find the familiar in each other**. People may view themselves as very different but have something in common that helps them find a connection. Understanding someone's individual history might help identify a point of connection. For example, people from very different backgrounds may have a memory of a local place that can be shared with others.
* **Link activities to places people know.** A place people feel comfortable in can reduce anxiety and concern that may occur when meeting new people or trying a new activity. If the location of the activity is going to be new to people, explore whether the activity can be promoted in a more familiar place. For example, local shopkeepers may be able to play a role in getting the message out to people in the community.

1. **Build Community Connection**

Being part of community life in the widest sense can be a great joy. The need to feel connected to one’s own community ranks high on what makes living somewhere worthwhile.

* Allow opportunities to be involved for those who cannot leave the house. For those who are isolated it is important to help them feel that they are not invisible and that they are part of a greater whole. Help people submit ideas and make contributions; even if that is just by publishing a poem or picture on a noticeboard or website.
* Keep people informed. Providing people with information about their neighbourhood can help people feel connected to a place, even if they need to stay home most of the time. At the very least think about what can be done to help people feel someone is looking out for them.me when restrictions are eased. The key is to help people understand what's going on locally so that they feel part of a community, even if they are at the edge of it.

1. **Realistic Goal Setting**

Recognise that your project not be able to address all needs at this time, but that can ease the situation people are in. Be honest with people about what can or cannot be achieved and look for solutions that at least make visible improvements, even if problems cannot be solved entirely.

* **Variety.** This may involve the creation of hybrid-style events, to include both those who are happy to attend in person and those who are unable to attend, but who may be able to be involved in alternative ways, such as digitally or after the fact.
* **Enjoyment.** For any social activity to be successful it needs to be fun, and if a more formal approach needs to be taken along with the use of PPE and regular cleaning this will make some activities too unattractive to succeed.
* **Be honest about what can be achieved**. It is important to ensure realistic goals for workers, volunteers and activists as well as participants in projects. Motivation will be lost if unachievable goals are set.
* **Evaluate**. Before starting your project decide what success will looks like and how it can be measured. Set measurable targets, with levels of achievement at stages during the project life. Ensure there are systems to collect data and personnel responsible for gather information. Feedback results regularly to your volunteers.

1. **Getting the Messaging Right**

* **Language matters.** Communications must be clear, timely and relevant to be useful.
* **Messaging should be truthful but measured**. There is a trade-off between providing information for people to be prepare when considering participating and not scaring them to the point at which they feel unable to do anything.
* I**nformation.** Details provided needs to be specific about what events will be doing, using clear and concise instructions in plain language. If anything will be expected of those participating make sure this is known up front.

**5. Storytelling and Amplification**

Projects will often give rise to ideas and potential beyond their planned outcomes. This can open up opportunities to inspire others by offering examples of taking action and putting principles into practice. There will be lessons learned that can be handed on and potential extensions by others, repeating the project in different settings or adapting and customising it to new ones. It can be easier for these opportunities to be taken up if care is taken when designing the project so as to gather stories, illustrations and understanding as the project progresses. Consider simple forms of evaluation which record outcomes e.g. photo diaries

These materials provide the means with which to celebrate what has been achieved but also present it to others in support of gaining additional benefits and amplification. In this way a projects can have wide and ongoing benefit.

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