

Co-production Case Study



Big Green Book

Transformation Programme: Mental Health/Community

Area: Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire County

Project Lead: Amanda Chambers

2021 - 2023



AT A GLANCE: LESSONS LEARNT

- You will need plenty of time to coproduce effectively and respond to unexpected challenges.
- Be flexible.
- Language is key to working together to progress the project.

“The most effective thing we did was have face to face meetings.”



Laura Armitage

PROJECT AIM

To fill the knowledge gap in local green provision for key health referral personnel.

PROJECT SUMMARY

The content of the Big Green Book (BGB) was coproduced with healthcare teams to ensure it accurately responded to the real issues they encountered when referring patients into community organisations.

We originally envisioned it being an online portal. We quickly learnt that people wanted a physical book that they could look through with a client regardless of age or ability and free from technological constraints.

Unlike other directories, the BGB identifies:

- the level of mental health need the provider caters for;
- group sizes of the sessions;
- the cultural mix of the attendees;
- the languages spoken onsite;
- whether the provider has achieved Trusted Provider status by demonstrating a good understanding of safeguarding, health and safety and insurance, and;
- a key point of contact to make arrangements to attend.

All information was confirmed by the providers themselves to ensure only accurate information was recorded.

The books were produced by the GreenSpace Team at Nottingham Community and Voluntary Service in collaboration with the Live Team at Highbury Hospital to review and translate the mental health levels used.

The books have been distributed across Nottinghamshire and have been used by health professionals to effectively signpost and refer patients into groups that are in their communities and aligned with their interests and needs.



OUTCOME OF THE PROJECT

To date, 2 BGBs have been produced and released for the use of key referrers, such as Social Prescribing Link Workers, and other front line health professionals.

These have been 'placed' with key organisations who have taken on responsibility for continued updates:

- Nottingham Community and Voluntary Service hosts the BGB for Nottingham City on its [website](#).
- Rushcliffe Borough Council's Sports Development Team hosts the BGB for Rushcliffe on their Primary Care Network [website](#).

In areas with the BGB in place, the mental health level descriptors have empowered providers to make more focused and appropriate referrals. They have also appreciated having a common framework on which to base their discussions with social prescribers, prior to a patient attending their setting.

In comparison, in areas without a BGB providers continue to report issues with inappropriate referrals, which is putting undue pressure on service providers.

Key referrers in the Nottingham area who are new to post have been given the BGB as a main tool to carry out their work with their clients. They have reported that it is easy to use and helps to inform clients decisions.

The Rushcliffe BGB was an evolution of the Nottingham City BGB. It lists the addresses of local parks and outdoor spaces, where to find local walks and includes a copy of their Green Ground Map, highlighting key green areas/activities within Rushcliffe, alongside the directory of local providers. It also allows people to self-refer into activities. These changes responded to the specific information gap highlighted in the area.

The concept of level descriptors such as the GreenSpace Mental Health Levels is being explored as a tool for identifying other limiting factors, such as fitness/physical needs and accessibility.

PARTICIPATION TECHNIQUES

- Workshops
- Task and Finish Groups
- Surveys
- Meetings
- Visits with organisations and their participants to develop key relationships and understand what was needed
- Detailed phone conversations.

LESSONS LEARNT

- Language - talking the same language allows for idea sharing and progress.
- Responding to unexpected challenges - these arose during the project and we needed to respond flexibly.
- Time - it took much longer than expected to collect the needed information. We produced 2 BGB's in the time we expected to create 6.
- Don't wait - releasing a first draft of the BGB let providers see its value and motivated them to submit the information we needed.
- Identify your allies - work with them to start with and the others will contribute once they identify the value of the project.
- Be flexible - the initial concept will likely change over the course of co-producing project. That's ok as it will mean the end product will meet the needs of the end user.



Kate Lisle

“Sometimes, the simplest answer is the right one”

