**WORK PACKAGE 1 – SESSION 6**

**Individual interview with stakeholder P6**

**30th March 2021**

Audio File Name: S6 - IDoService - Individual Interview - Other stakeholders - 30 march

Duration: 00:40:04

**KEY:**

Cannot decipher = (unclear + time code)

Sounds like = [s.l + time code]

**R2: = Researcher (Interviewer in bold)**

P6: = Stakeholder

**R2: Right two or three seconds. Okay, so now I can ask you if you're still concerned to take part in this study, if it's still okay for you?**

P6: Yes, all okay, good.

**R2: Perfect, great. We had for this study, we made I think last month three different focus groups and all of them were very interesting, but I have to say, the one when you were inside was really interesting and I really like this idea about the walk. I have this feeling a walk - it’s walking, trekking or hiking, everything - it’s very famous in the UK, something people really enjoy.**

**P6: Yes.**

**R2: And I like that too [laughter], so a kind of personal interest. But, also, with the current situation with Covid-19 it seems walking with people with dementia, it's quite a perfect activity because it's outside, I have this physical activity, this social contact and also stimulation, so it's really, really great.**

P6: Yes, definitely.

**R2: It was also very interesting to have your point of view because, as you said, you are not an expert in dementia, but you were very right in what you say about autonomy and this kind of thing and empowerment, so it was really great. So I have some specific questions for you about that. For example, in the focus group, participants mentioned that very often people with dementia say: “Okay, what I want is an inclusive activity, I don't need something labeled with ‘dementia activity’ but I just need something or I can go, it's easy of access and it's inclusive,” and I think you mentioned that to say: “Okay, maybe in the future I would like to join two kinds of activities, so my group of people with dementia and another group,” so can you give me your point of view, what you think about that inclusivity and this kind of things.**

P6: Yes, as I said that some people shy away from it. If they've got dementia then some people, especially in the early stages, they're like... I don't want to say or they're probably a bit scared of having the diagnosis, they probably don't understand much about it yet themselves or they don't believe it in a way. It's all part of the process that you go through if you go through any diagnosis like that, I can't imagine what it feels like. It’s, in a way, that grief element of it and I think, especially if you are in the early stages and you're still feeling fine in the majority of your life, go into these specific dementia activities where you've got people who are in their late stages and who are not well with it at all and not coping well. It can be a bit downhearted for the people who have had that early diagnosis and things but in a way, as well, it could probably help with the carers and stuff being there.

With all the walks that we do, as I said to you before, with us not being a specific dementia or specific health organisation, we ask if any health-wise that we're doing is that you have a carer with them - whether that's a family member support network anything like that - to be with them because, obviously, we can't get to know everyone. It depends on the group of people, I reckon, some people as you said will shy away from those dementia activities, whereas some people thrive in them. One thing that we've got now at City of Trees, we're doing a lot of social prescribing and stuff like that and, well, one of the things that I’d like to get involved with is... When we think about dementia, we think about the older people, 70+ or something like that, but then you've also got your younger people. Some people get diagnosed at the age of 50 or something like that and they're still in prime health or things like that.

I think it's just one of those things that we need to be aware of, and it's the same with any illness or mental health illness or anything like that, each case is individual. I think with the walks in Manchester that we're doing now, we're still getting to know people and hopefully as that expands and as we get more walks through, it's going to give us a chance to be like: “Well these people are a lot fitter in their walking abilities,” or they could do some more things, then we can pinpoint them to different parts or different activities that we've got going on or different activities that we know and other organisations around Greater Manchester have got going on as well.

**R2: How many walks do you have currently?**

P6: We’ve got one in Manchester and one in Bolton. At the minute, they're once a month. The ones in Bolton we've been running for nearly two years now and that's in partnership with The Woodland Trust. The Manchester one we've had funding since last July but, obviously, because of Covid and things, we haven't really been able to start up properly. We have started getting momentum now, I think our last walk we had about seven people join us, so that was good, that was a nice little walk we had. That's at Whitworth Park, so it's always going to be at Whitworth Park at the minute, it depends on whether we do get any more funding or anything like that.

**R2: For the funding, is it you or at least City of Trees initiative ideas or is it, I don't know, maybe Age UK calling you and saying: “Okay, I would like to organise a walk,” how is it working for the organisation of that?**

P6: So, in Manchester, I think conversations have been going on for a while and probably before I started, I've been at City of Trees now for about two years, so conversations have been going on for a while. Our director of City of Trees, she's got a [QUALIFICATION IN DEMENTIA], so it's something that she's really passionate about and I think that's why we've started the whole dementia programme. City of Trees have done a lot in the past in Salford and Trafford area and things, but we never really did much in Manchester and we had a really great connection with [A MEMBER OF STAFF] at the Whitworth and that was something, as part of her job role, is that she wanted to try and get a lot more inclusivity into the park. She's been working with people of colour, she's been working with lots of other groups and mental health and dementia is one of those things that she's been keen to work with.

So, when we got the funding last year, it was something that both organisations were really, really happy in getting and it is something that we are looking to roll out across Greater Manchester, really. Then from these walks… We've been getting a lot of emails from Salford Age UK and that was great to know that these walks are being heard about in different areas and things like that. So, Salford Age UK messaged us, first of all it was a few Zoom sessions, but then we did manage to do a walk at Blackleach Country Park just before Christmas. So, I think it's a mixture of our director being super passionate about this area and health and well-being connecting with nature and all of that. Along with we have had some areas of interest, like I said, Age UK Salford contacted us and through that we've been doing some Zoom sessions with them, well, I think we're planning to do some Zoom sessions.

**R2: I had [P1] from Salford in the first focus group, and she talked about City of Trees and said it's really great when you have to organise something.**

P6: Yes.

**R2: It's great to see this partnership, it's a really good thing. Have you a feeling you have more and more, how to say that, demand? People are contacting you more often to organise this kind of work for dementia, maybe mental health in general, do you think it's evolution?**

P6: Yes, because when we did the walk at Blackleach Country Park just before Christmas, there were a few other organisations there, housing associations and lots of other organisations there. There was one... I can't remember what his name is now, but he works around Salford mostly, but he does a lot at Platt Fields Park in Manchester and just a few conversations about whether we could do some walks at Platt Fields. I think the momentum now, after doing that walk and these walks in Manchester, the momentum is definitely increasing.

I also got an email from another housing association who have got a new scheme coming up in Fallowfield and they mentioned that Whitworth Park may be a little bit too far for those residents but then they were hoping again, maybe, if there are any walks nearby. So, again, Platt Fields is one of the big parks that seems to be quite favourable for a lot of people and with the access and stuff, you've got the car park and the paths are really good and things like that. So, from these few emails that we've had, it is one of those things that we would definitely love to develop and, as I said, the momentum is definitely, definitely increasing and with the road map out of lockdown and stuff going on now, I think it's just going to get a lot more demand in the next couple of months, which is great.

**R2: It's really, really great, at least, maybe, with the Covid-19 people realise that contact with nature is very important. So it’s something positive out of this situation. What I found very interesting, also the last time, was when you mentioned the fact, as you said, people with dementia are coming with a carer or friend or relative because it's like that. I think it's really interesting because I had a feeling, maybe if I'm wrong you will say, so maybe in the end it was people with dementia doing the walk and carers speaking together, so they have this activity together but different interest or they have this activity together, but they can meet different people and so it's two activities in parallel (over-speaking 00:12:31)**

P6: Yes, definitely, so usually pre-Covid what we would do is we the session would last about two hours where we'd have a walk for about half-an-hour to an hour depending on the group of people that we have. Then afterwards we'd sit down, have some tea have some coffee some cake or biscuits anything like that and have a chat, and then we'd also have a little craft activity, so whether that would be making bird feeders or just any nature-based activity, you could paint pictures of trees or do some poetry, learn about tree mythology and things like that, anything fun, really. Obviously, because of the Covid thing now, we haven't been able to be sitting inside and with the weather the last couple of months has been a bit cold and gloomy and things, we haven't been doing any activities at all other than just the walking. Which I think people have people have definitely still enjoyed, they've definitely still appreciated it.

I think these activities, it's a chance for everyone to just sit down, we can have a proper chat and, again, with the carers and the family members that are involved, it doesn't offer them 100% respite but it's just that element: “Okay, I don't have to worry too much for the next hour,” or something like that. There are more people, they can have a chat with different carers and friendships can be formed, because we've had that with the Bolton group. One of the ladies there, they used to go to this horticultural dementia group doing some gardening and things and someone else was interested in doing that, so you've got those links and you've got those friendship groups starting to form and I think all of that is just going to be absolutely great for these people just to have that chat, just to have that person where you can speak to people who know the issues that you're going through and things like that. So, even though it is a dementia walk, it's not just the people with dementia that are going to experience the well-being for these walks and things like that. We'd love to get everyone involved, it's just been really great to hear the stories and things that are coming from them.

**R2: I think it's very interesting because, I have to say, in dementia care sometimes at least I don't know in the UK but in France or in Luxembourg we have this idea that respite for the carer it's time alone. So, for example, a person with dementia will have an activity and the carer will stay at home or seeing friends in shopping centre, I don't know. But it's not really working very well, because very often they say: “No, I don't want to let the person I love having an activity, I want to stay with him or her,” and maybe it's a mistake because, for example, with your walks, as you say, they are together, so it's not respite like: “I have time for me,” but they have time because they can meet new people and I suppose being outside also craft activities it's quite mindful, so these kind of things can be very... I think it can be very helpful for people too, so I think it's quite an interesting thing. Do some participants say things about that about the fact it's mindful or it's really something useful for them?**

P6: Yes, I think mindfulness has definitely come up, especially when we've been going on the walks and things, and we try and get people to listen for certain things or to actually look at the colours and have a feel of things and things like that, but yes, mindfulness has definitely come on to that and some of the activities that we do. One of my favourite things to do is doing a sound map. So, you sit in an area and you draw what you hear, that goes down really well.

Yes, as you said, in terms of the whole respite thing, as you said, people may not want to leave their family members or their friends or anything like that. I think a lot of carers and a lot of people who are caring for their relatives they don't tend to have a lot of fun with their relatives or the people that they're caring for and I think these activities provide exactly that. You can learn new skills and we try and have a little theme every month with these walks. So, our next walk that we've got in April, we're gonna be looking at leaves and the leaves that are coming out just before spring and we're going to look at the different shapes. Hopefully then, we can show people the different leaves are different trees and just learning new skills and just being a part of something a little bit different to maybe what they've been used to.

We've got people from all walks of life, some people know a lot about nature and that's why they're doing these walks, but then some other people know nothing about nature and that's, again, why they're doing these walks, they want to feel that connection, they want to learn more and things like that. So, as I said, it's always about the people with dementia and their carers, it's not one or the other, so I think that's where we've done a really good job, in a lot of these walks, in a lot of these areas, it's not just about the one it's about everyone involved.

**R2: Yes, I suppose the fact, as you said, they can learn something and they can have an activity together that is not dementia related because, I suppose, their daily life it's very often dementia, dementia, dementia, so it's some kind of normality, so it's great. How are people coming... for example, I suppose some of them are, for example, in an association in Bolton and they will learn about your work but is it some social prescription or is it their [s.l ID 00:19:20]?**

P6: So, when these walks started off, we did a lot of development work in terms of contacting GP practices and link workers and different organisations, whether that's carers forums or different charities like Alzheimer's Society and places like that, so we contacted a lot of them to try and build up a mailing list, basically. That would be our main source of advertising and it would be if there's any online notice board or anything like that that we could put a poster on or any information like that. We were just searching the internet for any organisations that we could think of really. Then we started not only looking specifically at dementia organisations; we started looking at Macmillan and different organisations in terms of religious groups, different ethnic groups and things like that. So, it may not specifically be a dementia group but there's people in that group that could have dementia or who could have different health issues and stuff like that.

So, it was a bit of a slog to get everything together, but I think we managed really well and, obviously, with the whole Covid stuff going on, we couldn't advertise publicly at one point because there was a bit of an iffy subject around the social gatherings. Even though, as a charity, we were exempt from these social gatherings because it's technically a support group, we still didn't want... a lot of people still don't know that. It hasn't happened to us, at City of Trees, but there's a few organisations who have had reports against them because there was a group of like seven or eight people and even though they were doing some support work groups, they were still reported on and then they've [s.l asked to been 00:21:36] … Which is a shame that people don't know about these things, but yes, it was just one of those things that we weren't really able to publicly advertise them. But last month's walk in, well, March, at the beginning of March, we were able to put it up on our Facebook page and on our website and things, so things are slowly getting better. So, hopefully, we'll be able to reach more people in the next couple of months.

**R2: Yes, that's great. You said, before that, in your activities some of participants they had already a lot of knowledge about nature and these kind of things and others less. So, do you think, because, for example, myself I really like to go outside in the nature, so I'm quite sure when I will be old and maybe if I have dementia, I will be very happy, or even without dementia, to have these kind of activities but is it also some people, I don't know, with not really previous contact with nature, for them maybe it's very new but they enjoy that. So, my question is, do you think it's important to have previous experience with nature to enjoy these kind of walks or it's really accessible and open to everyone?**

P6: Yes, I reckon it's accessible to everyone really, because we get a lot of people who, even if you do enjoy going on walks, you may not really enjoy specific nature things, if you know what I mean? It could just be the long walk that you're interested in and things like that. We get a lot of people who just want to do the walk and more than happy that they don't want to stay afterwards or sometimes we'd get someone to come into the last bit of the walk and then they'll just stay for the activity. So, it's not one of those things where you have to be there for the two hours to do this and to do that. Even if they stay, while the activity is going on, again, it's entirely up to them what they do.

We can offer different activities to do, and we can offer different things, but it is still all down to the individual at the end of the day. As you said, we're just grateful that we can do something for them and whether that's the walk that they're more interested in or whether it's the activity that they're more interested in, the social side of it. I think everyone that we get, they're all so different in what they want to get out of it. So, I think the good thing about these walks is that they can offer all of those different elements.

**R2: Yes, that’s great. In our focus groups, a lot of participants mentioned the participation of minorities, for example, black and Asian minorities, or people with low socio-economical level, it's difficult. So, I don't know if it's... yes, it's a problem, of course, but when you're organising an activity, you are doing what you can, but is it the same for you, is it mainly white people with quite good socio-economical level?**

P6: Yes, I think in terms of the economic side of things, we don’t have those personal chats with people. The walks in Bolton are predominantly white, yes, definitely. Which is quite strange since Bolton is one of the most diverse areas, well, all of Greater Manchester is the same really. Yes, Bolton walks are predominantly white but, because we do them in partnership with The Woodland Trust, they *do* do these diversity walks, but that's not specifically for dementia, that is just a general diversity walk for people of colour to get involved with, with nature-based things and, again, that could be a start then leading up to engaging with a lot more people. Manchester-wise, I think where we are at the Whitworth is right on the border of Rusholme and Moss Side, Hulme, and all those areas that are so incredibly diverse.

And working with [A MEMBER OF STAFF] at the Whitworth, one of her passions is diversity and things, she's done a lot of work in that in the past and she's got a lot of contacts. One of the groups, I think it was the Afro-Caribbean carers forum group or something like that, they got in contact with her and they said they've got a good group of about fifteen people that would love to go on these walks and things. So, right now, it's just hoping that April, May, June, that that all this Covid stuff, some people are still too scared to go outside and things like that. So, hopefully, in the next couple of months we will, again as I said before, build up the momentum but we do have those contacts and they are really interested in Manchester which is absolutely fantastic to hear. It's just a matter now of actually pinpointing a specific date.

So what we've done, because there's such a big group of them or that they've mentioned that there's such a big group of them, that we said: “You choose a day and we'll accommodate you because we want you guys to enjoy this walk, we want you to be involved as much as possible and if it's something that you want to carry on with…” Manchester right now, the walks in Manchester, have been slowly but surely increasing but we would love to get loads and loads of people and there's so many people out there who need these. Especially, as I said, in the area where the Whitworth is, the Whitworth is such a great park for those people. It's in a low economic area, there's a lot of health issues around there in terms of pollution and things like that. That is one of the reasons why we actually chose the Whitworth as well because it's just the perfect park to incorporate everyone.

**R2: That’s great, that’s really, really interesting. Maybe you have some observation about that but sometimes it's difficult for people with dementia… So, we can offer an activity and the problem is not it's dementia related but some people really like to be in big groups and with a lot of people around and for other ones they prefer to have maybe just smaller groups. So, how can you accommodate people with that? Is it possible if some people are maybe, I don't know, more shy or prefer to have their own bubble or these kind of things, do you think it's still possible in your activity, in your walks?**

P6: I think, in terms of that, it is quite difficult to, as I said, to accommodate absolutely everyone with all of their different personality traits and things like that. If some people are shy or anxious around a group of people, like right now, I guess it's not too bad because we are limited numbers, but some of the walks that we've had in Bolton in the past, we've had about 25, 30 people involved. They all get on really well, they all seem really outgoing and extroverted and things like that. But what we tend to do, I reckon, the way that some of these walks are done is we would… Especially if we have enough staff, so especially the Bolton ones, we get two members of staff from The Woodland Trust and then two members of staff from City of Trees, so there's four of us all together, so we could easily split into two groups. That's what we've done in the past in terms of physical ability. So if some people can't walk that far then they'll go off on one group and then if somebody wants a longer walk then they can go join another group.

So, we've done that in terms of physical abilities, but in terms of introverted people, shy, anxious, that's actually something that we've not really come across right now. I guess that could come down to the fact that people who are shy and anxious they won't even sign up to it in the first place. So, that is something that we definitely need to look into and, again, I reckon it is one of those things that are really difficult because, The Woodland Trust and ourselves, we are a charity, and we rely on external funding a lot. We plan these projects ahead, so it is quite difficult, but it is something that we're aware of and we would love to try and do something about that, I think, whether that is doing a few extra walks during the day.

So, at the minute, we do two walks a day which is 11:00 until 12:00 and then 14:00 until 15:00, whether we could put another walk in there, maybe, just for people who are maybe a bit more anxious. Especially with the Manchester walks right now because there's so little people that are coming along to these walks, they can feel comfortable and, maybe, if they're on their own in the walks with myself and one of the other members staff that will be with me, then that might increase their confidence and then that would mean then that they'd be happy being in a bigger group and things like that. So, I think, yes, as I said, it's a difficult one to come around and especially because we do tend to base our work on the physical well-being and the socialising, that is part of the walks, really. Yes, it is something to be aware of, of these people that they may not even be signing up for them.

I think that's one of the things, actually, that the Zoom sessions that we've been doing, have actually been really well, even though some people don't like the technology side of things, but some people have actually thrived a lot better and they're a bit happier in themselves being able to be part of that community but also not having to properly socialise, if you know what I mean? It is socialising, but it's not at the same time, you're in the comfort of your own home, you might be in your pyjamas, you've got a cup of tea or anything like that. I think that's one good thing of what the whole Zoom sessions and stuff have been going on, yes, you’ve got those different sides of people and some people might not want to go out. We've got these Zoom sessions now, which are going to be carrying on for the future, I reckon, I think things like this it's going to keep on going.

**R2: So, yes, exactly it can be something interesting for people maybe less confident or a little bit more shy or they need more time. It’s really a tricky question, it’s why I asked that, but yes a question of socialisation for people, older adults or people with dementia, I will not say they are not social because they are social but not in big groups, it can be very difficult because a lot of activities later or at more on big groups and with the Covid-19 situation, we are really aware of how it's difficult to reach this sufficient amount of social contact, it's really, really great.**

**I have just one last question for you, in a perfect world if you had a lot of money or more opportunities, what do you think could be interesting to the inclusiveness of people with dementia or, I will say, people in general related to work, what would you like to do or to develop or maybe have you seen something abroad or in other places in the UK you would like to have here in Greater Manchester?**

P6: I think in terms of the stuff that I know, in terms of nature-based things, I think one of the things is just to try and figure out why a lot of people aren't getting involved for different reasons. Before starting this job, one of the best things that I was getting involved with was, I did a bat walk. I don't know whether you've been on a bat walk before or you know anything about that but, you get these bat detectors and you've got the different noises coming from different bat species and you can tell what bat it is from these noises. We did a deaf bat walk, so people who are hard of hearing, so instead of the noises that you could hear, there was like the frequency on the iPads, and you could tell the different frequencies from that and I think all of that inclusivity. It was the first thing that I've ever done in terms of inclusivity and looking at why people with certain disabilities and things aren't getting involved or because they can't in some circumstances.

A lot of the work that we do at City of Trees is practical, we do a lot of tree planting in quite rural areas, we're walking up steep hills with loads of tools, we're bending down, we're digging, we're doing all sorts and some people just can't do them. It's luckily now, as mentioned just now, that we've got this social prescribing project going on and, hopefully, we're going to be getting really involved in all of this social prescribing stuff in the next couple of years. We'll be looking at different opportunities for people to get involved. I think in a perfect world there wouldn't need to be any worry about if someone's in a wheelchair then they'd be: “Oh, can I come to this?” or “Is this something that I can do?” Or if someone's visually impaired or hard of hearing or got any mental health issues, a perfect world would be the fact that they don't have to ask if they can come. They know that it'll be suitable for them, they'll know that they'll be able to do what they want to do.

**R2: That’s great, good. I think I have a lot of information, so thanks a lot. Do you have some questions or other things you want to say?**

P6: No, not at the top of my head right now. It’s something that, all of this is great, it’s by chance that we’ve got to do this as [A MEMBER OF STAFF] gave me your contact details and stuff. Yes, it’ll be great to keep in touch in terms of your project and things like that. It all seems absolutely fantastic what you’re doing. Yes, that’s the only thing, it’s just the fact it would be great to keep in touch and we can try and figure out something. As I said, all of this sounds really great, and it’ll be a good way to help each other out.

**R2: Absolutely. Do you think, maybe, when the weather is nice, I can join a walk during summer?**

P6: Yes, definitely, of course you can. The walks in Manchester, what we do is the second Tuesday of every month. So, our next walk is I think the 13th of April, something like that. From then on, it’s the second Tuesday of every month. I can add you onto our mailing list and then you’ll get information about when the walks are going on, I can do that.

**R2: That’s great, good. Of course, I will give you some information I think by emails because our website is not online. I’m really interested and I’m happy we can stay in touch. So, for your participation you can have a £40 voucher or a donation if you prefer, if you want.**

P6: Yes, a donation will be great, a donation will be fine, yes.

**R2: For City of Trees or?**

P6: Yes, go on then, why not [laughter], that’ll be great.

**R2: If you prefer. If it’s okay for you or another place or another charity?**

P6: Would we be able to split it?

**R2: Yes.**

P6: That’s fine, if we put £20 towards City of Trees and then £20 towards any dementia organisation that you guys are involved with, be that Alzheimer’s Society, Together Dementia Support, anything like that or Age UK, anything, whoever you've worked closely with.

**R2: Great, I will do that. So, perfect, I will send you some information and you will have an email, I suppose next week, from Manchester Metropolitan University saying: “Okay, we made a donation.”**

P6: Yes, that’s great, thank you.

**R2: Right, so thanks to you, it was really, really interesting. Hopefully, we’ll see you soon during a walk and we’ll stay in touch.**

P6: Yes, that’ll be great, thank you so much.

**R2: Thanks to you and have a nice day and enjoy this very nice weather.**

P6: Yes, bye, see you.

**R2: Bye.**

**[End of Recording]**