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Final Report:

Evaluation of “Gig Buddies in a Box”

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Acknowledgements

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Executive summary

- Research in Practice for Adults (RiPFA) conducted an independent evaluation of Stay Up Late's "Gig Buddies in a Box" project, which provides support and guidance to organisations who want to establish a Gig Buddies service in their area. This evaluation involved interviewing representatives from the partner organisations who have taken up this offer of support from Stay Up Late.
- Six organisations who have established their own Gig Buddies service were invited to interview. Of these six, five were interviewed. The interviews took place over the phone. Interviews were guided by an interview script, but allowed the interviewer flexibility for the exploration of the individual service.
- Overall, interviewees reported a positive experience of the support provided to them by Stay Up Late, including admiration for their values, quick responsiveness when they needed assistance, and a flexibility to fit the programme into the new local contexts.
- Many of the interviewees reported challenges in the early stages of setting up the service in their area, including the volume of administrative work required, difficulties in securing funding, and some challenges in balancing the recruitment of volunteers, training, and the referral of participants.
- We conclude that, based on the evidence we have collected, the Gig Buddies in a Box project already appears to be having a positive impact and has been warmly received by the partners involved.
- We make some recommendations for Stay Up Late aimed at continuing successes of the project, and addressing some of the challenges that partners have reported for their benefit and the benefit of future partners; including further promotion of available resources and documents, further supporting the recruitment of volunteers, and assisting partners in demonstrating the impact of their projects.

Introduction

At its core, Gig Buddies, established by the charity Stay Up Late in Sussex, involves pairing people with learning disabilities with volunteers who share similar tastes in music, entertainment, and personal interests, so that they can enjoy a full range of social experiences together.

Over the past few years Stay Up Late has been expanding the reach of the Gig Buddies project nationally and internationally by providing a core model of practice and ongoing support to other organisations who work with people with limited access to cultural events and social activities.

As this 'roll-out' of Gig Buddies has progressed, Stay Up Late has sought additional funding to enable the development of a package for new organisations interested in setting up their own Gig Buddies programme. This 'Gig Buddies in a Box' package is now being used to support organisations in their establishment of Gig Buddies in new areas across the UK and abroad. At the time of writing this report, Gig Buddies had been established in 7 locations, including the original Sussex programme.

The present contents of the Gig Buddies in a Box package include:

- A bespoke website and branding
- A restricted access 'hub' for partners to access resources such as training materials, template policies, forms and guides
- A programme of partner events, such as training and an annual conference
- Ongoing Remote (i.e. phone / email) support

Research in Practice for Adults (RiPfa) were commissioned by Stay Up Late to independently review the process of rolling out Gig Buddies projects into new areas. This evaluation had a specific focus on understanding the process and progress to date of the wider expansion of Gig Buddies and has happened in parallel with a separate outcomes evaluation of Gig Buddies in the Brighton and Hove area, which looked at the impact of the programme on participants and volunteers. This outcomes evaluation is documented in a separate report.

For this evaluation of Gig Buddies in a Box, evidence was collected through a series of interviews with key stakeholders of the various projects nationally and internationally. These were typically the coordinator or strategic lead for the organisation setting up the new Gig Buddies scheme.

Methodology

Contact details for stakeholder organisations involved in all current projects (n = 6) were provided to RiPFA by Stay Up Late. Representatives from each project were invited by email to take part in a telephone interview lasting approximately one hour.

Five telephone interviews were conducted with a total of five stakeholder organisations; four of the interviews involved one stakeholder and one involved two stakeholders from the same project (n = 6 interviewees).

All interviews took place in February 2018. Two RiPFA researchers attended the interviews, one to conduct the interview and the second to transcribe.

The interviews were semi-structured with participants invited to expand on their answers as appropriate. The interview schedule (see *Appendix 1*) contained 18 questions, comprised of questions relating to:

- The participant's role, their organisation, and their Gig Buddies project
- The set-up process for their project
- The information and support provided by Stay Up Late
- The recruitment process for Gig Buddies participants and volunteers
- The successes and / or challenges faced by their project
- Details about their project's impact and any feedback received

All participants were fully briefed and provided their informed consent before the interview began. It was made clear that RiPFA was acting as an independent evaluator and that responses would be anonymised in final transcripts and subsequent reports. Interviews were transcribed and analysed by extracting key themes from the data.

Limitations and considerations:

Due to the small sample size, the variety between local contexts and the organisations, and the methodology selected, there are several limitations to this study, which we acknowledge below. Nonetheless, we consider this approach appropriate for the purpose of this evaluation and having allowed for an in-depth exploration of each service within limited contact with the partner organisations:

- Due to the depth interviewing methods applied in this evaluation, respondents were able to discuss areas specific to their context and not necessarily similar to other interviewees. Therefore, where one interviewee has not discussed an area which was covered in another interview, this is not necessarily an indication that their organisation was not conducting activities in this area, and may simply reflect a difference interview direction.

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- While our sample was small, we spoke to five of the six projects (83%) which are currently running outside of the original Sussex programme. Nevertheless, these results cannot be said to represent all Gig Buddies partners.
- Stakeholders are able to offer an important insight to the impact of their projects on participants, however their views must not be taken to represent the views of the Gig Buddies and volunteers themselves. Further insights informed by this population can be found in the separate outcomes evaluation for the Sussex Gig Buddies programme.
- Interviews involved one or two key contacts from each organisation and their views might not reflect those of other staff and volunteers involved in the project.
- The interviews involved projects which have been established for varying amounts of time and it is possible some of the issues raised by interviewees have now been resolved; furthermore, some interviewees were at too early a stage to comment on outcomes for participants and volunteers.

Results

Respondents

We conducted telephone interviews with 6 people representing **5 organisations** who are rolling out Gig Buddies (83% of the 6 organisations currently running Gig Buddies outside of Sussex). The job titles of participants and the nature of the work conducted by their organisations can be found in **Table 1** and **Table 2** below.

Table 1: Participant's organisations

Nature of organisation	n
Learning disability support	3
Learning disability arts organisation	1
Arts organisation	1
Total	5

Table 2: Participant's job titles

Participant role	n
GB Project Co-ordinator	3
Not stated	2
Participation Officer	1
Total	6

We asked respondents **how long they had been operating a Gig Buddies service**. Projects were in various stages of the set-up process, varying from two projects established over two years ago, to one project which had been running for under six months.

Funding

Where mentioned (n = 3), funding was obtained from **the council**, however two projects had only limited funding and were seeking longer-term options. There was a contrast between the UK and **overseas services**. Overseas, funding appeared more stable, enabling longer-term planning; whereas in the UK, seeking grant and local funding was clearly a key area of focus and potentially difficulty.

Motivation for starting Gig Buddies

The motivations for setting up Gig Buddies in their area were similar across all the projects we spoke to (n = 5), with interviewees wanting to help people to gain **more freedom and control over their**

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own lives, as well as a desire to **reduce isolation** and offer new opportunities and experiences to those that take part.

There was an effort reported across interviews (n = 4) to **reach people not currently receiving support services** and interviewees spoke of promotion from local advertisements and events, TV and radio appearances, to corporate outreach.

Stay Up Late appeared to be held in high regard by the people we spoke to, with their **vision and ethos** consistently praised and the new projects wanting to do the original model justice. One interviewee reported:

“It has been an incredible gift, I am in awe of Stay Up Late.”

There was **excitement** around the projects and an existing appetite for Gig Buddies was described in interviews (n = 3), both internally and within the local population, as well as an **eagerness to roll-out further projects**:

“We learnt quickly that there was an appetite for something that feels different. [...] There was almost too much interest.”

“We have been wanting to get Gig Buddies rolled out for a long time.”

“We have volunteers who have known of Stay Up Late from Brighton and have been waiting for Gig Buddies to come here, we have people who travel in from outside the area to be part of the project.”

Referrals

We asked the interviewees how they typically gained referrals for new participants. The most common referral methods mentioned were:

- **Local social services** (n = 5)
- Self-referrals through **social media** (Facebook in particular) (n = 3)
- Internal referrals through the **partner organisation’s other activities** (club nights, support services) (n = 3)
- The organisation’s **mailing list** (n = 2)
- Self-referrals from **local adverts and posters** and **families** (n = 2)

It was also noted that **Twitter** was primarily used to communicate with other projects and promote events, rather than to communicate with potential Gig Buddies and volunteers. Gig Buddies were reportedly more likely to initiate contact through social media, whereas volunteers came from both

social media and an organisation's website. While some projects reported difficulties recruiting enough volunteers, two of the five projects reported having more volunteers than Gig Buddies.

Setting up

Overall, and understandably, the establishment of the service was a challenging period for most interviewees.

Interviewees mentioned the challenges of setting up a Gig Buddies service and the particularly large amount of work required at the beginning. Interviewees reported huge amounts of paperwork, which at times felt "overwhelming"; however it was acknowledged that the level of work was a necessity of the project.

It is also worth noting that interviewees who worked part-time reflected that they would have liked to have worked full-time hours, particularly at the start. However this was often not possible for the project due to funding restrictions.

"We have downsized the project to fit in with our capabilities [...] We would recommend working more hours while the project is being launched as there is a lot of paperwork involved. [...] The time between the training and launch was a pain – this was due to the hours worked and the time required to set everything up."

"There is an overwhelming amount of stuff. There is lots of paperwork with Gig Buddies in a Box. It took longer than expected but the paperwork is there [in the manual] if necessary. We wouldn't have time to develop all the paperwork ourselves."

"There have been other organisations/locations interested in starting a Gig Buddies group and when we meet them and discuss what is involved they are surprised at how much work it is – it is an involved and intricate process."

Recruiting volunteers

In three of the interviews, it was reported that the **length of time volunteers were required to sign up for** (1 year), was a barrier to recruitment. Projects reported attempts to balance the desire to offer Gig Buddies stability in the pairings and to ensure volunteers are committed to the project, whilst also wanting to ensure the project meets the needs of its volunteers.

"We did have a number interested who, for personal reasons, could not commit to the timeframes we were asking for"

“It is tricky to get volunteers on board for long-term volunteering. We are not just asking for one day, we are asking for considerable time from people [one year]. People are keen on the project and want to be involved. We need to find people who will engage, at the start of the relationship we want people who are committed.”

One project described offering some **flexibility** in this matter, noting that *“there are Gig Buddies and volunteers who will still benefit from having a pairing for just the five months”*. In these circumstances, Gig Buddies were made aware from the outset that the pairing would be for a specified period of time.

A final point regarding recruitment concerns a project **seeking younger volunteers** which did not achieve Stay Up Late’s success in recruiting them.

“Stay Up Late have recruited through lots of local [universities] but we have found the opposite here – students are not interested. [...] It has been difficult to recruit young volunteers around the age of 18. We have some younger Gig Buddies who would like a volunteer their own age but we have found younger people don’t really want to be volunteers.”

Support provided by Stay Up Late

The level of support provided by Stay Up Late was consistently spoken of highly. Interviewees mentioned the provision of **on-going support, regular contact, and frequent social events** which projects used as networking opportunities and also to share information amongst themselves.

Interviewees described on-going support in the form of training (n = 3), admin (n = 1), technical support with the website (n = 1), as well as routine contact with Stay Up Late through phone, email, Skype and, where possible, regular visits.

Some projects noted that it was left to them to initiate contact with Stay Up Late, but that whenever they made contact, Stay Up Late were very responsive and supportive:

“Very responsive. It was good throughout. Stay Up Late are very busy people but super responsive. If someone can’t help they signposted to someone who can. We were very supported”

“I can always get in touch with the team. I was very impressed with their openness, they were very responsive. It feels like they want their project to be a success. I have not raised anything that they have not been able to help me with.”

“If you don’t ask you don’t get. But we can ask them anything. We have a good relationship, we are left to get on with it but Stay Up Late are there if we ask for help.”

A large part of the current Gig Buddies in a Box package is the manual and documents on the extranet; projects spoke highly of this, however the issue was raised that **projects duplicated resources because they were not aware of what would be provided.**

This is perhaps understandable at the current stages of development of the Gig Buddies in a Box programme, and the relatively early stages of the extranet:

“I think it [the online extranet] is an under-used resource – I feel like as a community we can get better at using this. I don’t think Stay Up Late pushed this enough. [...] There was a big manual but I didn’t get this until around 2 months in. I had already started to create my own materials without realising this would be provided – it contained job descriptions, code of conduct, risk assessments etc.”

“It is important that anyone doing Gig Buddies has set-up information from the start – we might have created things already in existence”

Further points were raised in regards to **training**, with one interviewee discussing how beneficial the training was and the importance of it occurring shortly after project workers begin, and another suggesting Stay Up Late consider supporting volunteer training in the future:

“The only thing I would note for the future – our two co-ordinators started and happened to attend the training the month after. I am hoping when we set up other sites, once funding is in, that the training with Stay Up Late will be offered just as soon when these new posts begin due to the wealth of knowledge Stay Up Late have provided.”

“There is a person from the council who has been doing our training – he also helps with the newsletter and meetings. He helps with safeguarding, disability awareness, without him we feel we would have lacked the expertise. We did ask Stay Up Late if they could support training and they did. It is not written into Gig Buddies in a Box – it seems to assume you will manage your own training. It would be good for Gig Buddies to support the training – they did two sessions with our volunteers and it was really handy. Stay Up Late might want to consider writing this into Gig Buddies in a Box.”

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Support between projects

Projects were also appreciative of the **wider Gig Buddies community** as a whole. Interviewees reported supporting each other through sharing stories of successes, providing advice to new projects, promoting each other's events on social media (primarily Twitter) and via networking at the AGM and training events.

“There have also been training days to link us with co-ordinators of the other sites which are doing projects and they have been useful in letting us know what worked well and what didn't.”

“We also had contact with an organisation which had set up Gig Buddies previously, this was hugely helpful for discussions on where to go for volunteers and things like that... it was like a sounding board, really helpful.”

“We have been building relationships with other projects and get the opportunities to meet them at events and get to know them and their projects. We will keep on building relationships – we are all sharing our learning, everyone benefits, we can all help each other.”

Flexibility of the model

One of the most frequently returned to themes across the interviews was **flexibility**. Those who participated in interviews spoke of the flexibility of resources provided by Stay Up Late, the flexibility of Stay Up Late in allowing projects **to adapt the model to fit their locality**, and the flexibility required from individual projects to constantly adapt to Gig Buddy and volunteer feedback.

For example, following feedback, one project adjusted the timings of the Gig Buddies social and another adapted the training programme.

“We asked people how we could support them to attend [the social] in the future and the feedback was that it was the wrong time of day – weekdays initially when people have work or college. It is now on a Sunday and we get a good turn out.”

“[T]raining was originally planned for a whole day, and we have adapted this to take place over half a day in the evening, as this fits in better with our volunteers.”

From the information we gathered in the interviews, it appears that those involved in Gig Buddies are embracing this **freedom to adapt the Gig Buddies approach to the benefit of their project** and those involved in the programme.

Impact on Gig Buddies

For Gig Buddies themselves, impact was reported across areas such as **increased confidence** (n = 3), providing **further opportunities** for activities and **development of social skills** (n = 3) and in one case an individual's participation indirectly led to **paid employment**.

Giving Gig Buddies opportunities to use initiative in areas such as booking concert tickets or ordering themselves a drink at the bar was reported to aid their **independence**. Opportunities to **develop social skills** were also discussed, with one interviewee describing how a Gig Buddy was supported to communicate with their volunteer and to limit the number of messages sent. Projects also described successes in matching those with very specific hobbies and interests.

“Gig Buddies have confidence from doing and learning ... A lot of the fear is perception of the fear – it is not the reality. Once they have that experience a lot of the anxiety drops away.”

“I gave a talk on Gig Buddies [at a local college] and some members of Gig Buddies were on the course - they talked about their experiences. One participant was very shy when we met but she was very talkative in the group, telling everyone about her experiences, I couldn't get her to shut up!”

Interviewees described a **variety of activities undertaken by pairings**, including theatre, comedy and bowling, in addition to gigs. Socials offered another way for Gig Buddies to meet people and the interviews also provide anecdotal evidence that participants are attending social events independently, both with other Gig Buddies and alone, knowing there will be a *“comfortable safe place for people to come and chat”*.

“We have a potential Gig Buddy who, [due to a change in circumstances], was left unable to go to gigs – he is now hoping to find a Gig Buddy. He has been coming to socials and his confidence has improved since the project started.”

“Socials are a great way for people to meet each other. We have two Gig Buddies who come to near enough all our socials. There is one guy who comes on his own and we have seen a real development in his confidence. He is able to come to our socials and know there will be familiar faces and people to talk to. We received an email about how happy and comfortable he felt at our social.”

“There is also our newsletter so participants can communicate about what they are going to, or what they have been to and how it went. We have seen Gig Buddies travelling together so they feel safer going to things themselves before they have been matched.”

Impact on volunteers and the wider community

As well as the benefits reported for Gig Buddy participants, **mutually beneficial relationships** between Gig Buddies and volunteers were also reported:

“Volunteers also keep saying that they too are having their needs met through this – they are also getting a lot out of it. People’s partners, friends might not have the same taste in music – they can go to a concert together but without that love of the music, it doesn’t bring the same joy.”

There were also indications of impact on the **wider local area**, with external organisations consulting Gig Buddies projects and participants to make their own services more accessible and to trial specially-produced resources with people who have learning disabilities.

“It has opened up conversations with local venues about access.”

Two interviewees described supporting local festivals/companies in return for free tickets and promotions. One of these described taking this further and partnering with a corporate organisation to support training to make their services more inclusive, stating that *“this is a powerful way to change attitudes”*. These descriptions showed an awareness outside of specialist organisations of the needs of people with learning disabilities, and **recognition of a platform to consult people with learning disabilities about their services and resources**.

“We also worked with [a large arts project] to provide advice on accessibility and arrange for some people with learning disabilities to try out resources they had created for people with learning disabilities. It was good to be able to do that and we also received some free tickets for [the arts project]!”

Corporate outreach is another way in which some projects are promoting Gig Buddies and bringing about broader change. Through partnerships, projects are able to access the audience of a larger organisation while promoting awareness within the corporate organisation and beyond.

“We have also had meetings with a [major corporate organisation] asking us to help with some training for some of their employees to become more sensitive to people with learning disabilities [...] Previously, we would have to go to them [to offer this training] – now they come to us! It has really helped affect change.”

Evaluation activities

We discussed the evaluation undertaken by projects to date, with some projects describing the use of a feedback questionnaire both for internal purposes (n = 3) and to provide impact evidence to funders (n = 2).

While evaluation activities are being conducted, only one project described collecting baseline data when pairings were matched. It was reported that Stay Up Late provided evaluation resources (n = 3), although one interviewee described creating their own questionnaires to capture local data. No organisations reported any in-depth formal evaluation of outcomes for participants and volunteers; however this may be planned for the future given that many of the projects are still in their early stages.

As the projects develop, it will be important for Stay Up Late to further support the partners in evaluation, to avoid any duplication of efforts, and to look for ways in which organisations can share insights into the impact of their programmes, such as through the **use of common evaluation tools and frameworks**.

Challenges

Challenges reported mostly related to areas outside of the control of Stay Up Late, such as the culture within existing learning disability support services that the partners were working in. One interviewee described how there are entrenched ways of working in some learning disability services in their area and how Gig Buddies is providing **new opportunities for participants to make decisions for themselves**:

“There are ways of presenting choices to people with learning disabilities so that they can understand. When choices are put to a person with a learning disability often they look to their parent or support worker for guidance because they are not used to being given these choices.”

An interviewee described trying to **maintain relationships with support workers** and include them some areas of the project:

“It is also important to be careful not to annoy or disrespect support workers who work in such difficult conditions and cannot be too flexible with their rotas. We try and involve them in the project by asking their views and inviting them to come to socials.”

When asked to reflect on whether there was anything they would do differently, responses varied across projects based on their individual contexts:

- **Volunteers:** Two interviewees discussed **volunteer recruitment**; one wishing they had pushed the volunteer role more, and the other suggesting that in retrospect, the volunteer

numbers do not matter as much as the quality of volunteers. One mentioned the importance of ensuring there wasn't too large a **gap between training volunteers and matching them with a Gig Buddy participant**, in order to avoid the need to retrain the volunteer. This interviewee also noted that volunteers wanted to be paired as soon as they had signed up and the difficulties in getting this timing right.

- One project reported that they would wait until the pairings had been matched to run the **launch event**, which was described as “so big, it took us a while to catch up”.
- Several interviewees discussed the **challenges of securing funding**. One reported they would have tried to secure further funding earlier, and also noted they would like the option to go for grants with Stay Up late, while noting the paperwork involved in bid writing is prohibitive.

[Gig Buddies] takes a while to grow. On reflection, I would love to have funding for over three years.

I would have looked for more funding. There are only so many grants we can go for [...]. We can only afford part-time working but we would like full-time staff working on [Gig Buddies] in the future.

Conclusions

Through interviews with Gig Buddies stakeholders, RiPFA gathered evidence about the experiences of five projects which have established a Gig Buddies service with the support of Stay Up Late. We spoke to representatives from these partners about setting up their projects, the support provided by Stay Up Late, the impact of the projects, and the challenges they have faced.

Overall, the picture presented throughout the interviews was of a flexible model which was having a positive impact on the people involved. In particular, interviewees praised the core values of Stay Up Late and their approach to improving the lives of people with disabilities, the support they had received, and the impact that the programme was having in their locality.

Anecdotally, projects appear to be having positive impacts on the wider community in the early stages of the national expansion of Gig Buddies; such as increasing awareness about accessibility requirements and providing a platform for external organisations to consult people with learning disabilities about their materials or services.

Where challenges were reported, these were largely logistical, related to recruitment and promotion, funding concerns and integrating Gig Buddies with existing support services. The value of the network is a large opportunity here, with several interviewees mentioning the support that other partners had provided, either in person (i.e. at events and training) or remotely (i.e. via Twitter and email). Although communication with Stay Up Late was considered positive, this could potentially be improved by increased signposting to support in the early stages.

The picture of Stay Up Late's package of support that the interviews painted is one of light-touch, flexible, highly responsive assistance, which focuses more on the core values of improving the lives of people with disabilities than with micro-managing the roll-out. This flexibility to local context is important, and as the local projects expand it will be equally important for Stay Up Late and its partners to capture the learnings from the way services are adapting to their local area.

The shared values and flexibility highlighted in the interviews point to a model which focuses on **selecting the right organisations** who want to establish Gig Buddies rather than providing a kit to any organisation who could establish Gig Buddies. From the evidence we have collected in this evaluation, this approach seems to be taking the expansion of Gig Buddies in a positive direction.

Recommendations

- **Fully promote the resources, templates, and documents available:** Given the large workload and pressure that partners, particularly in the early days of set up, Stay Up Late may wish to consider strengthening the support provided in the first year of set-up for new partners; including training coordinators on the use of the extranet, with a detailed run-through of the policies, documents, and templates available. Although many partners may already have their own processes in place, just going through the entire range of resources available may prevent duplication of work down the line. This might be further aided by a

phone call or email when a new partner signs up, listing the resources that will be provided once they have access to the extranet.

- **Continue to encourage networking between partners and sharing of best practice:** The level of support by partners to each other was reflected in interviews. This represents an additional benefit of the national roll-out, and is capacity-strengthening for Stay Up Late. If Stay Up Late can continue to enable organisations to support one another, they will further increase the reach of the project. This may be through additional networking events, Twitter (which was mentioned as a valuable channel of contact), and use of the extranet system.
- **Consider whether there is any room for further flexibility the length of commitment required from for volunteers:** This is particularly with respect for those projects which are struggling to recruit volunteers. Although this cannot be too flexible due to the commitment required to maintain safety in pairings, where there are difficulties in recruiting younger volunteers (for example, in non-university towns), alternative models may be required.
- **Consider the staffing level of new partners and ensure they understand the set-up process:** While the level of paperwork and admin required in the initial stages of the project was acknowledged to be necessary, it was also very challenging, with one project recommending working full-time in the early stages of the process. This is something that could be communicated to projects from the outset, with a suggestion that increased administrative support might be required.
- **Consider adding support for volunteer training to Gig Buddies in a Box:** One interviewee suggested that additional support for training would be valuable. Furthermore, the importance of regular training sessions for new starters was also noted. Stay Up Late may wish to consider an ongoing training programme for volunteers, particularly if the expansion of Gig Buddies continues nationally.
- **Continue to provide support at a strategic level for partners:** In particular areas to consider might be assisting partners with establishing links with large local businesses, universities, and in applying for pots of grant funding. It might also be worth looking into opportunities to apply for larger funding programmes in partnership with the other projects.
- **Supply evaluation resources and support** to all projects and advocate for the collection of baseline data. Particularly, it would be of great value to all Gig Buddies projects for data to be collected routinely, using the same set of tools, and submitted (anonymously) to a central database. This would enable Stay Up Late to see the overall impact of the programme across partners, and also reduce the burden for partners who wish to demonstrate their own impact for monitoring, quality assurance, and funding purposes.

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Appendices:

Appendix 1: Interview schedule

Appendix 1 – Interview schedule

Interview Overview

Area	Script and tick boxes
Purpose of interview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> Research in Practice for Adults is a charity which promotes the use of evidence to improve outcomes for adults, their families and carers. We are conducting an independent evaluation of Gig Buddies, and as part of the evaluation we are looking to gather information regarding the experiences of people who have rolled out Gig Buddies groups in different locations. <input type="radio"/> The information we gather today will be used to write our final report to Stay Up Late, the charity which set up Gig Buddies, however all your answers will be anonymous and we will remove any identifiable information from the report.
Informed consent and ethics	<p>Before we begin, I will talk you through what you can expect in the interview and your rights as a participant.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> We will ask a structured set of questions; however you are free to discuss other issues arising related to the topic. <input type="radio"/> A RiPfA research assistant will be taking notes using a standard template. Your responses will be stored securely by RiPfA and not shared outside of the research team. <input type="radio"/> The interview should take up to an hour however you do not have to participate in these interviews; and if you do agree, you can change your mind at any time and end the interview without any consequences. If you do not want to answer a question you can ask to skip it. <input type="radio"/> We will anonymise all responses in our reporting so that no identifiable comments or information are reported publically or to Stay Up Late, unless you explicitly request that we do so. <input type="radio"/> If you change your mind after the interview, you can request we delete your data. However, once we have written our final report your answers will have been included in overall summary reporting and we will not be able to remove these summaries. <input type="radio"/> You can request further information at any time, before or after the interview, from RiPfA by contacting us by email or telephone. <p>Ask:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> Do you understand your rights as a participant? <input type="radio"/> Are you happy to continue with the interview?
Overview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> During the interview, we will be discussing your motivations for and experience of rolling out Gig Buddies, what support was provided from Stay Up Late, what worked well, and any challenges you faced and any suggestions you might have to improve the process. <p>Ask:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> Are you happy to begin?

Interview Questions

1	Interviewee	Could you briefly tell us about your organisation and your role?
2	Background and intentions	Could you please begin by describing how you got involved with Gig Buddies? <i>[PROMPT: What was your role in setting up Gig Buddies in your area?]</i>
3	Background and intentions	What was the motivation for establishing a Gig Buddies group in your area? <i>[PROMPT: What were you hoping Gig Buddies would bring to those who take part?]</i>
4	Background and intentions	Please could you describe the process you have undertaken to establish a Gig Buddies group? <i>[PROMPT: How far along this journey are you?]</i>
5	Pre-support	What information was provided to you by Stay Up Late when you decided to use the Gig Buddies programme?
6	Pre-support	Did you feel the information was appropriate? <i>[PROMPT: What else could have been provided to make the process easier?]</i>
7	Pre-support	Were you clear about what was necessary to set up Gig Buddies? <i>[PROMPT: How long did the process take you?]</i>
8	Pre-support	How much contact did you have with Stay Up Late while you were setting up Gig Buddies? <i>[PROMPT: Did you feel this amount of contact was enough?]</i> <i>[PROMPT: How did you communicate with Stay Up Late? (Email, phone, text?)]</i> <i>[PROMPT: Could the communication with Stay Up Late have been improved?]</i>
9	Post-support and improvement	Does Stay Up Late provide on-going support around the running of Gig Buddies? <i>[PROMPT: What support?]</i> <i>[PROMPT: Do you feel the level of on-going support is sufficient?]</i> <i>[PROMPT: Do you have someone at Stay Up Late you can contact if you experience any problems?]</i>
10	Referrals	How are people referred into your Gig Buddies programme? <i>[PROMPT: Is there good local awareness?]</i>
11	Volunteer recruitment	How has the process of recruiting volunteers been? <i>[PROMPT: Have you found it easy to recruit and retain volunteers?]</i>

12	Overall experiences	What would you say are your biggest successes with the Gig Buddies programme to date?
13	Overall experiences	Is there anything you would have done differently? What? <i>[PROMPT: Is there anything you wish you had known from the outset about setting up Gig Buddies?]</i>
14	Overall experiences	What were the biggest challenges you faced? <i>[PROMPT: What, if anything, would have helped to overcome those challenges?]</i>
15	Impact	To what extent do you feel that Gig Buddies has achieved what it set out to?
16	Impact	What sort of impact do you feel Gig Buddies has had on the people who have participated? (people with IDs) <i>[PROMPT: Positive/negative impact on wellbeing e.g. increased confidence]</i> <i>[PROMPT: Can you give any examples?]</i>
17	Impact	What sort of feedback have you had from Gig Buddies and volunteers?
18	Anything further?	That is the end of my questions. Is there anything else you would like to tell us which has not been covered?

Closing points

Thanking and next steps	<p>Thank you for taking part in the interview.</p> <p>The final report will be submitted to Stay Up Late by April 2018. It will contain a summary of our findings from these interviews, and might include quotes; However, we will not include any identifiable information in quotes we use and your answers will remain completely anonymous.</p>
Contact information	<p>An email was sent to you yesterday providing our contact details should you want to ask any questions, request further information, or request a copy of the final report. You can also visit RiPFA's website on www.ripfa.org.uk and Gig Buddies on www.gigbuddies.org.uk</p> <p>If you have any concerns following the conversation, please contact the Project Lead, Oli Preston.</p> <p>Ask:</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Would you like to take our contact details again?</p> <p>Oli Preston – Head of Evaluation – oli.preston@rip.org.uk Karen Allen – Research Assistant – karen.allen@rip.org.uk</p>