



## About Disability Equality North West

Disability Equality North West (DENW) is a Disabled People's Organisation (DPO) that started in 1996. The organisation is run and controlled by disabled people and aims to further the human rights of disabled people across the North West. DENW has over 4000 individual members and is the only user led organisation for disabled people in Preston. DENW provides a number of user-led services based on local community need. Currently 100% of trustees, 85% of staff and 90% of volunteers are disabled people. DENW offer a number of user led services,

projects and events which seek to provide peer support and independent living information & advice; Typically these are isolated disabled people in the community who don't have access to social care, family or friend network.

The Developing from the Negatives (DfN) project is a three year BIG lottery funded programme (2015 -2018) aiming to raise awareness about and tackle disability hate crime in Preston by promoting reporting structures, delivering training, facilitating a peer to peer network and offering both practical and emotional support.

## About the evaluator

The evaluation has been conducted by Stephen Lee Hodgkins. Stephen is a researcher, author, community worker and graphic facilitator, specialising in disability inclusion and community work. He has a PhD from the University of Northampton in social psychology and disability studies. In 2000 he set up a disabled person's organisation in Tower Hamlets. From 2008-11 he directed the Disability LIB £4m National Lottery funded capacity building programme to 200 disabled people's organisations across the UK.

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## Summary

This report provides an evaluation of the first year of the Developing from the Negatives (DfN) project. Overall the project has been extremely successful and effective in its work on tackling the issue of disability hate crime. The project has met the majority of its outcomes and indicators and is well set to meet future targets in the next two years.

The following highlights a number of key achievements to date.

- Increased knowledge and awareness relating to disability hate crime, reporting structures and supportive resources by disabled people.
- Greater profile of disability hate crime and in general issues facing disabled people in Preston within public understanding, with significant media coverage of DfN.
- Increased hate crime reports by 88%<sup>1</sup> and made improvements to police engagement, through DfN facilitating communication between victims reporting and the police interface.
- Disabled people receiving practical solutions to address hate crimes and incidents such as suggestion regarding online safety and blocking nuisance calls.
- A 'know your Criminal Justice Service' training event, facilitated by DfN in partnership with the CJS was reported as being extremely useful for participants to understand in greater detail responses and protections available to disabled people when they report.
- Volunteers report a positive experience of being involved in work relating to tackling the issue of disability hate crime.
- Stakeholders from partner organisations report greater understanding of issues facing disabled people, such as how to provide access in appropriate ways.

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<sup>1</sup> During 2014/15 disability hate crime work was supported at DENW through existing resources and supported 8 people to report hate crimes. In year one of the DfN project the organisation recorded 67 disability hate crime reports.

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## Introduction

This report provides the first year evaluation of the Developing from the Negatives project (DfN) hosted at DENW and funded through the BIG lottery fund. Broadly DfN aims to tackle disability hate crime by increasing awareness and support structures. This includes enabling people to come forward and talk about it, to understand how and where it can be reported and to become more aware of, and possibly engaged with useful community resources.

Through this the project has five key outcomes;

1. Disabled people will have significantly improved mental health;
2. Disabled people will be more resilient and have better chances in life as active citizens;
3. Disabled people will have gained improved skills and knowledge to achieve their own personal goals;
4. Disabled people will be more confident to engage with their local community thereby contributing to making it a stronger community.
5. DENW will have increased its capabilities, acquired relevant supporting tools and deliver outcomes more effectively and sustainably to beneficiaries.

Overall the evaluation finds DfN to have successfully achieved on the majority of its first year targets and is exceeding on a number of related indicators. Feedback from disabled people using the service and engaging in activities is extremely positive, with individuals citing receiving both practical and emotional support. Stakeholders, from community partner organisations and agencies report benefits from collaborative working with the project.

The following section details the method and approach of this evaluation, that is to explore the progress of the project and its outcomes within the first year.

Drawing on a range of project documentation, interviews with beneficiaries and information gathered from stakeholders the evaluation identifies a number of achievements, challenges and learning points relating to the delivery of the project.

These are then presented with each related outcome and the indicators associated with them. From this a number of actions are identified as next steps that build on learning points arising from the project delivery to date and if enacted will help to refine and enhance aspects of future delivery.





## **Method and evaluation approach**

This evaluation explores the first year activities and progress of the DfN project funded by the BIG lottery fund. Using a range of project materials and interviews with stakeholders and beneficiaries the evaluation focuses on progress against the delivery plan in terms of the project outcomes and indicators.

The evaluation specifically explored the achievements, challenges, learning and implications of these for the next steps of the project. Project documentation reviewed included the original proposal and work plans, monthly and trustee reports, event evaluations, publicity and the client data recording system.

Interviews were conducted with five project beneficiaries using open ended questions with prompts relating to the individual's experiences of the project and their personal reflections concerning achievements, challenges and learning points.

An evaluation session was held with fifteen stakeholders, including clients, volunteers, staff and representatives from the police, local authority, and community organisations. The session asked participants to feedback and reflect on questions relating specifically to the five outcomes and indicators.

The evaluator reviewed the material collected in terms of progress made against the outcomes and indicators drawing on monitoring records and data and direct feedback from stakeholders and a sample of beneficiaries. The following section then presents an evaluation of each of the five outcomes and their related indicators.

## **Progress, feedback and future action**

Using the material gathered this section explores each of the five outcomes and indicators and provides comment for each in terms of i) progress relating to the original plan ii) feedback from beneficiaries and stakeholders, and iii) future actions.

### **Outcome 1 - Disabled people will have significantly improved mental health.**

#### **i) Progress**

Relating to this outcome, the first change indicator 'disabled people will report feeling happier and having better coping strategies' reports to have engaged on a one to one basis with 67 people affected by disability hate crimes and incidents. There is evidence of the project providing both practical and emotional support, and people reporting to the team feeling more positive as a result. This includes making reports to the police, offering practical advice and guidance to help address issues, such as how to block nuisance callers and providing safe spaces for people to share experiences with peers. The figure of 67 people exceeds the original target of 40 in year one, and is noted as reflecting local need and has been managed with current project resources. This represents an 88% increasing in reporting. As during 2014/15 disability hate crime work was supported at DENW through existing resources and supported 8 people to report hate crimes.

The second change indicator 'disabled people will be more confident in their community' reports that 121 disabled people have attended peer support sessions where they have been able to gather information about local resources available to them to address/avoid hate crimes, share experiences and obtain peer support. The figure of





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121 people, is within an acceptable yearly limit in relation to the overall goal of 320 people by the end of the project.

Overall while progress against the plan has been achieved to a satisfactory level in terms of the change indicators, it is noted that the measuring of 'happiness', 'coping strategies' and 'confidence' has been challenging to record through one to one sessions due to the intense nature of the support needed to be offered. To improve the accuracy of this, the project plans to ask people who have received support specific questions relating to these measures outside of the one to one sessions during the next year so as to improve / clarify monitoring on this issue.

## ii) Feedback

From the interviews and stakeholder sessions a number of key issues were raised. Overall the impact of the project was reported as positive, with the benefits of the improved knowledge of hate crime, formal support and guidance and peer support sessions being emphasised.

***'having somewhere to report hate crime, and to go for support makes people feel better in themselves' DfN stakeholder.***

Several interviewees reported the positive impact of being able to explore practical solutions to address hate crimes and incidents such as suggestion regarding online safety and blocking nuisance calls.

***'I got some practical advice that helped stopped the situation' DfN interviewee.***

Improvements to police engagement were also reported by the way the project had been able to facilitate communication between victims reporting and the police interface. This highlighted how the work of DfN relates to preventative strategies, such police 'early work on disability hate crimes and incidents' and could fit into this in the future. However, possible changes to police staffing structures were also mentioned as having negative potential to impact on current relationships between DfN clients and police reporting structures.

### iii) Future actions

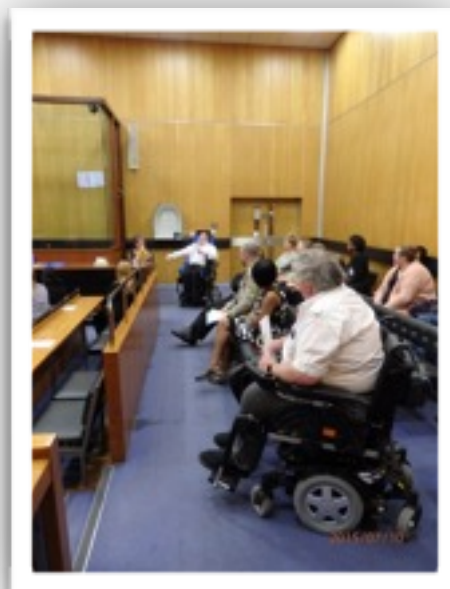
- Undertake specific monitoring activity with clients receiving one to one and peer support to gather data on reports of 'happiness', 'coping strategies' and 'confidence' away from session work, through specific questions by survey or interview.
- Explore relationship of DfN to police 'early work on disability hate crime' strategies to ensure legacy and sustainability of project work.
- Monitor possible staffing changes within police reporting structures and impact on DfN client work, escalating risk where appropriate.

## **Outcome 2 - Disabled people will be more resilient and have better chances in life as active citizens**

### i) Progress

There has been considerable progress reported in terms of the first change indicator here 'Disabled people will have increased knowledge and confidence to report hate crimes and incidents'. In addition to the 67 people making use of the reporting resources at DfN, 301 disabled people have received training sessions regarding hate crime reporting and community safety. This is reported within trustee and monthly reports as occurring in a wide range of community settings. Evaluation forms collected from the training sessions show self reports from participants as learning and increasing knowledge from the sessions about hate crime and what to do about it.

Relating to the second change indicator 'Disabled people will have better knowledge of their local community assets' a total of 132 disabled people have attended sessions



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focused on understanding community resources. Specific session content includes online safety and a 'know your criminal justice day' that was specifically aimed at giving disabled people an understanding of how the Criminal Justice System works. A report for this session evidences and gives further details, including photos of the content and outcomes of this event (see appendices) which were positively evaluated by participants and requests for follow up sessions made to staff.

## ii) Feedback

Within both the reporting structures at DfN and the local police it is noted that while disability hate crimes and incidents have increased since the start of DfN, stakeholders note an under reporting of disability hate crimes compared to other categories. This is suggested to relate to the low levels of awareness relating to the sessions.

***'More awareness is needed around what disability hate crime looks like, i.e. what is a friend? What is exploitation?' DfN stakeholder.***

Both stakeholders and interviewees suggested the need to continue the publicity, outreach work and specific examples of what disability hate crime looks like to help people understand when it happens to them. This was suggested to help highlight the issue and reporting structures across voluntary, community and faith organisations, and should be done via online platforms and in diverse community locations to increase reach.

***'the 'know your CJS' day was really useful. The role play sessions really helped me to understand how it all works' DfN interviewee.***

A specific training event, facilitated by DfN in partnership with the CJS was reported as being extremely useful for participants to understand in greater detail responses and protections available to disabled people when they report.

### iii) Future actions

- Continue publicity, across voluntary, community and faith organisations, including schools via online platforms and in diverse community locations to maximise access to hate crime information. Developing monitoring of publicity to track effectiveness of messages and format.
- Based on the success and feedback of the 'know your CJS' event, plan further sessions that develop the content to include additional areas, such as the prison and probation services.

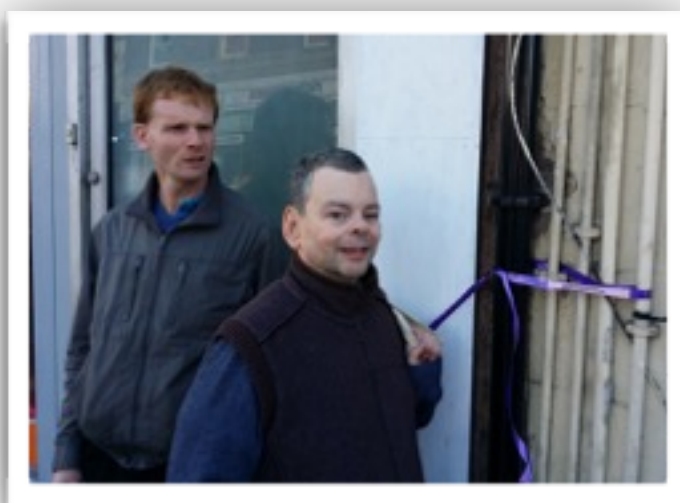
## **Outcome 3 - Disabled people will gain improved skills and knowledge to achieve their own personal goals**

### i) Progress

The project shows considerable work relating to the first change indicator 'disabled people will have increased knowledge about volunteering'. Within the hate crime awareness sessions a section is included on volunteering opportunities, and a number of people attending the support sessions have been engaged as volunteers to help deliver aspects of the project. A specific 'step into volunteering' course has been run at DENW that supports people to prepare for and understand the requirements of a volunteering role.

Monitoring records show that 318 disabled people have received information regarding volunteer opportunities from the project. Also, within the trustee reports a case study is mentioned where a disabled person attended the DfN support sessions, was supported to access some support from a local well being service and then returned to volunteer at DfN.

For the change indicator two 'people in local communities will have increased awareness and understanding of the needs of disabled people' there has been considerable activity. This includes three formal disability



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awareness sessions reaching 67 people. Feedback for these sessions commented on the value of understanding access issues for disabled people and in particular communication needs. In addition to the training DfN has raised profile of disabled peoples issues to the wider community by engaging in initiatives such as hate crime week in October 2015. A particular success is reported regarding a 'purple ribbon tree' where participants were encouraged to contribute messages about hate crime. From this further, positive messages were placed around the town in places where negative graffiti had been seen.

The third change indicator relating to this outcome, 'disabled people will be trained in digital photography and mapping of community assets' has not started yet but is planned to occur in years two and three. This was mentioned within the previous monitoring report.

## ii) Feedback

From the stakeholder session, partner organisations working with DfN reported benefits relating to understanding more about what other community support was available for disabled people. This related to both impairment specific support, such as Headway for people with head injuries and at home support to maintain independent living.

***'through DfN we are more aware of other organisations that can provide specific support, we now have more knowledge of where to go for help'. DfN stakeholder.***

Similarly, stakeholders from partner organisations report benefits relating to understand the issue of providing access in appropriate ways.

***'Ensuring that people with learning difficulties are communicated with appropriately, i.e. reducing jargon, using plain language'. DfN stakeholder.***

Significantly the training that DfN delivers is peer led and involves disabled people with direct experience and understanding of disability hate crime. Although there had been some non peer training delivered at the beginning of the project whilst the team were being inducted, now all the DfN training

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involves disabled people in its delivery. This was noted by stakeholders as being very useful to ensure an 'in your shoes' perspective. By disabled people either receiving the range of training and as volunteers this also provided opportunities to develop skills, such as confidence, public speaking and training event delivery. Connected to this is also how disabled peoples' lived experience is valued and utilised as a resource that can be shared with others.

### iii) Future actions

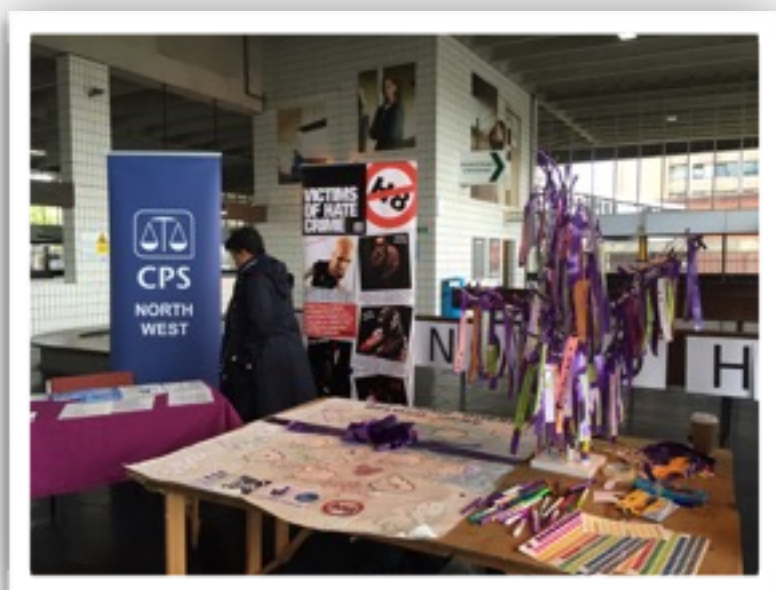
- Plan the digital photography and community mapping sessions to occur in years two and three to ensure the target of 90 people is achieved.

## **Outcome 4 - Disabled people will be more confident to engage with their local community thereby contributing to making it a stronger community.**

### i) Progress

The first change indicator 'disabled people will be more involved in regular volunteering activity' has a target of seventy five people over the three years. So far there have been twelve volunteer places taken up plus a further ten going through the recruitment process and four more recent expressions of interest. The organisation is confident that it will meet this target. Volunteers go through a thorough recruitment, induction and on going support process by the organisation to ensure the experience is positive, productive and meaningful.

The second change indicator 'disabled people





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will have greater knowledge of their local community assets' connects with other outcomes and indicators and has a target of reaching 320 people. So far monitoring information records 132 disabled people have attended sessions that include raising awareness of community resources available.

## ii) Feedback

Overall the volunteers interviewed for this evaluation who work on the DfN project report a positive experience and being involved in a range of activities, such as managing the reception, facilitating training sessions, fundraising, supporting events etc. DENW reports an increase in the number of requests for volunteer opportunities since the DfN project started.

***'Hate crime work is something that people want to get involved in'***  
**DfN stakeholder.**

The importance of ensuring volunteers have defined roles, skills are matched appropriately and access requirements are met was mentioned by several stakeholders and DfN has processes in place to support this. Also, in order to continue to be able to offer volunteers a range of beneficial roles the stakeholders raised the issue of DfN being able to create volunteer opportunities outside of DENW. This in turn would help build knowledge of volunteers of local community assets.

There has also been some absence within the DfN volunteer support team that has had a minor impact on the project, although no outcomes have been affected to date as workload has been shared by other staff and volunteers. However, there is a concern that if this continues it may have an impact on delivery. Therefore the organisation is monitoring this and will make alternative plans if necessary.

## iii) Future actions

- Explore a way of creating volunteer opportunities for disabled people that come to DfN that is outside of DENW to ensure a greater range of development opportunities is available to those looking to gain skills and experience through volunteering.

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- Continue to monitor absence within the DfN volunteer support team and implement alternative plan if necessary to alleviate impact on outcomes.

**Outcome 5 - The organisation will have increased its capabilities (knowledge/skills/confidence), acquired relevant supporting tools where / if appropriate and used these newly developed capabilities to deliver outcomes more effectively and sustainable to beneficiaries.**

#### i) Progress

There are two change indicators relating to year one of the project. The first is to have conducted a strengths review, which explored capacity issues across the organisation to deliver outcomes and provided some training and support. A key issue highlighted here was the importance of being led by disabled people and ensuring those that have lived experiences of disability and hate crime are enabled to draw on and share these experiences in safe and empowering ways. This appears to give DENW and DfN a unique and valuable set of resources within the community that other organisations see as a local expertise.

The second change indicator is about drawing on expert skills and tools to help develop profile and capacity. This has been achieved in part by bringing in specific training and support from the Disability Hate Crime Network. In turn this has enabled DfN to achieve a high profile within the community as the go to organisation regarding disability hate crime. Consequently there has been considerable media coverage, including tv and radio. Also, other areas working on hate crime have drawn on the work of DfN and are duplicating its model. Further work over the project life will explore capacity issues and highlight benefits relating to effectiveness and sustainability

#### ii) Feedback

While DENW has had involvement in disability hate crime issues for a considerable time the funding for the DfN project has enable a greater profile and reach both locally and nationally. Stakeholders report that more people are aware of hate crime and how to report as well as other agencies such as the police and CJS understanding the specific value DENW can bring. This is

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partly relating to the leadership and role modelling that is embedded in the DfN approach. That is by ensuring disabled people with experience of hate crime lead and show by example the impact, challenge and solutions relating to it.

***‘At DfN disabled people can use their lived experiences and knowledge of hate crime to help others’. DfN stakeholder.***

Being led by disabled people has enabled DENW and DfN to achieve a valuable and unique profile within the community and has highlighted the wider value within the community and responses to hate crime. This contributes to DENWs unique selling point and partners understanding and valuing its expertise, and thus need for sustainability and investment.

### iii) Future actions

- Conduct internal review of impact of DfN in terms effectiveness and sustainability on DENW with staff, volunteers and trustees. This should have a particular focus on how to profile and utilise the lived experience of disabled people in a way the ensure DENW and DfN are shown to have a unique role in the community and responses to hate crime.



## **Recommendations**

This section reiterates in summary the list of actions mentioned above. These are based on information gathered during the evaluation, including from the range of materials and documents, interviews and issues identified at the stakeholder session. These are organised under three headings relating to i) the DfN project, and adjustments to delivery over the next two years, ii) DENW as host organisation and iii) the external context and partnerships.

### ***DfN project***

- Develop and undertake specific monitoring exercise to gather client self reports of 'happiness', 'coping strategies' and 'confidence'.
- Plan the digital photography and community mapping sessions to occur in years two and three to ensure the target of 90 people is achieved.
- Continue publicity, across community and in diverse locations to maximise access to hate crime information.

### ***DENW***

- Explore a way of creating volunteer opportunities for disabled people that come to DfN that is outside of DENW.
- Continue to monitor absence within the DfN volunteer support team and implement alternative plan if necessary to alleviate impact on outcomes.
- Conduct internal review of impact of DfN in terms of effectiveness and sustainability on DENW with staff, volunteers and trustees.

### ***Partnerships***

- Explore relationship of DfN to police 'early work on disability hate crime' strategies to ensure legacy and sustainability of project work.

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- Monitor possible staffing changes within police reporting structures and impact on DfN client work, escalating risk where appropriate.
- Plan further sessions similar to the 'know your CJS' event with partner organisations, that develop the content to include additional areas, such as the prison and probation services.



## Conclusion

This evaluation has explored the progress, feedback and future actions relating to the DfN project funded by the BIG lottery fund and based at DENW. Using a range of project materials as detailed in the appendices and a number of interviews with stakeholders and beneficiaries the evaluation considered the delivery plan in terms of the project outcomes and indicators.

From this a number of achievements, challenges, learning points and implications were noted that informed the development of some future actions that will help build on the successes to date and respond to local delivery need. This include some minor adjustments to aspects of the monitoring processes relating to relative and subjective experiential concepts, i.e. happiness etc. As well as reviewing aspects of training content to build on successes and exploring future opportunities such as through the Police's early work programme.

Individuals that have used the service report the benefits of having somewhere to go and be able to discuss issues and get both practical and emotional support. This includes both being able to formally report issues as well as seeking practical support, such as in one case of an individual being supported to block nuisance callers on a mobile phone.

The involvement of disabled people with lived experience of hate crime being able to reclaim and utilise these experiences as resources within a training and support context has proved very valuable. Notably local stakeholders, including the police recognise the value of DfN, based at DENW as being well placed and more able to sensitively respond to disabled people wanting to discuss and/or report hate crime.

Overall the project is progressing well and has achieved a considerable amount within its first year. There is clear evidence to suggest the project has achieved well across its outcomes and indicators, in particular DfN has considerably increased understanding and knowledge about hate crime and support and responses to it.

Significantly the number of disabled people coming to the project to report and/or seek support around disability hate crimes has dramatically increased. In this way the project is proving successful in terms of the overall aim and has a clear idea and focus, now one year in as to how it might tweak and



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adjust aspects of the plan in order to maintain and build on its successful  
delivery during the duration of the project.

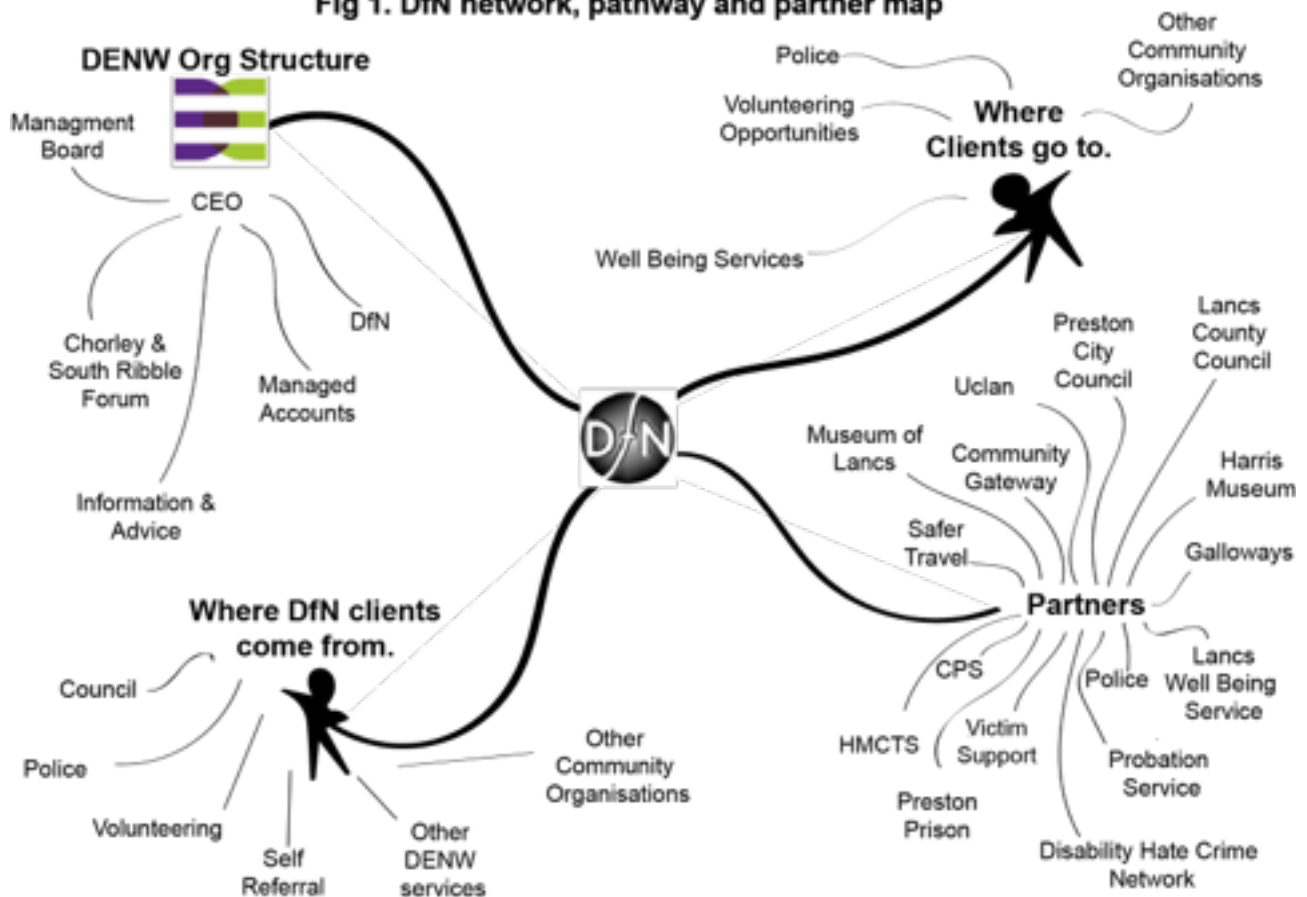


## Appendices

The following materials and project documents were reviewed as part of the evaluation.

- Beneficiaries interviews (audio).
- BIG lottery fund DfN application form
- DfN hate crime awareness training event evaluation reports
- DfN project workplans, quarter 1, 2, 3, 4.
- DfN monthly reports.
- Fig 1. DfN Network, Pathway and Partner Map.
- Know your CJS day report.
- Hate crime awareness week 2015 report.
- Stakeholder session notes (flip chart notes and audio).
- Trustee report November 2015.
- Volunteer celebration event 2015 report.
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Fig 1. DfN network, pathway and partner map



## Contact details

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