Methodology

Engaging men earlier: a guide to service design
Our approach

• We undertook primary research with less well-off men who weren’t at crisis point but who had some risk factors or could potentially be at the beginning of a negative trajectory.

• We carried out workshops with 27 men between the ages of 30 and 59. They were comprised of two age brackets:
  - 15 men aged 30-45
  - 12 men aged 46-59

• Our participants were spread across locations:
  - Rol (5), Scotland (6), England (6), Wales (5), Northern Ireland (5)

• While our interest for this work is primarily driven by persistently high rates of suicide among low-income middle-aged men, we sought insight from this younger group to understand how wellbeing initiatives can appeal as relevant earlier, before a crisis.
Our participants

- A mixture of unemployed and employed people who were earning below the median income and ‘just getting by’ or ‘finding it difficult’ financially.
- A mixture of household set-ups: living alone, living with partner, living with children.
- Each had experienced some ‘risk factors’ in the last 5 years (the majority occurring before Covid-19):
  - Were not working / had experienced job loss
  - Had suffered a downward trajectory in career
  - Had lost touch with friends and family
  - Experienced relationship breakdown
  - Undertook increasing substance misuse
  - Had stopped taking part in activities
  - Suffered worsening of physical health
Our fieldwork – wave 1

- Our field work was undertaken in the form of a series of workshops over video conferencing, owing to social distancing restrictions.
- Through the first wave of workshops, we used persona activities to examine what a 'good life' looked like for our participants.

---

**Dave is 35**

He and his partner have a daughter, but have been living apart for a few months. He has been in and out of work over the past few years – he’s currently picking up some temp work. He’s been feeling a bit low – and has stopped doing the things he previously enjoyed.
Our fieldwork – wave 2

• In the second wave of workshops, we explored what activities and initiatives resonated with the participants and were likely to support their idea of a ‘good life’.

• We tested the effectiveness of already existing services and developed principles of what a good activity looks like.

• Participants discussed effective communications/ engagement strategies and inputted on elements of service design such as tone, frequency, time and location.
Fieldwork flow

Initial briefing call

Session 1
Group video call
(90 mins)

Key topics explored:
- Elements of a ‘good life’
- What needs to happen in order to achieve a ‘good life’
- The types of activities/services that would enable this outcome

Solo activity
(5 mins)

Respondents recorded a video and reflected on the first session

Key topics explored:
- The appeal of existing services
- If you were designing an ideal service/activity, what would it look like?
- How might this be achieved?

Session 2
Group video call
(90 mins)