

Methodology

Engaging men earlier: a
guide to service design

SAMARITANS



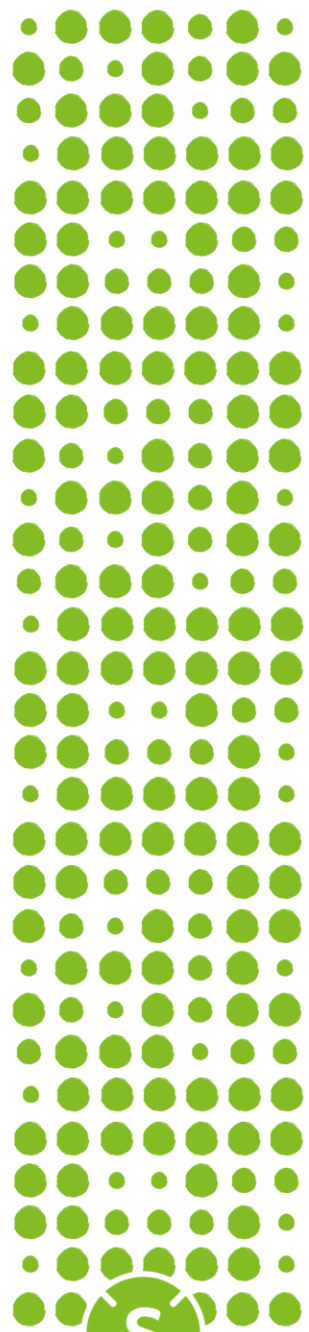
Our approach

- 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.

Sports team / clubs (e.g. football, darts, cycling)	Gym / fitness group (e.g. <u>crossfit</u> , bootcamp)	Community volunteering (e.g. event stewarding, baking, gardening)	Band / music group (e.g. open mic, choir, jamming sessions, music lessons)
Activism (e.g. trade union / political group)	Practical / creative (e.g. life drawing, repair cafes, painting, woodwork)	Nights out (e.g. cinema, karaoke, pubs, gigs)	Parents group (e.g. dads get togethers, play dates)
Work related (e.g. business networking, upskilling, job clubs, training)	Coaching (e.g. life coaching, mentoring, group sessions)	Outdoors activities (e.g. nature group, orienteering, scouts / army reserves)	Special interest groups (e.g. photography, motorbiking, fish keeping, birdwatching, gaming)
Specialist support (e.g. mental health support, relationship support, addiction)	Social group (e.g. men's group, walking club, quiz team, religious group)		



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.

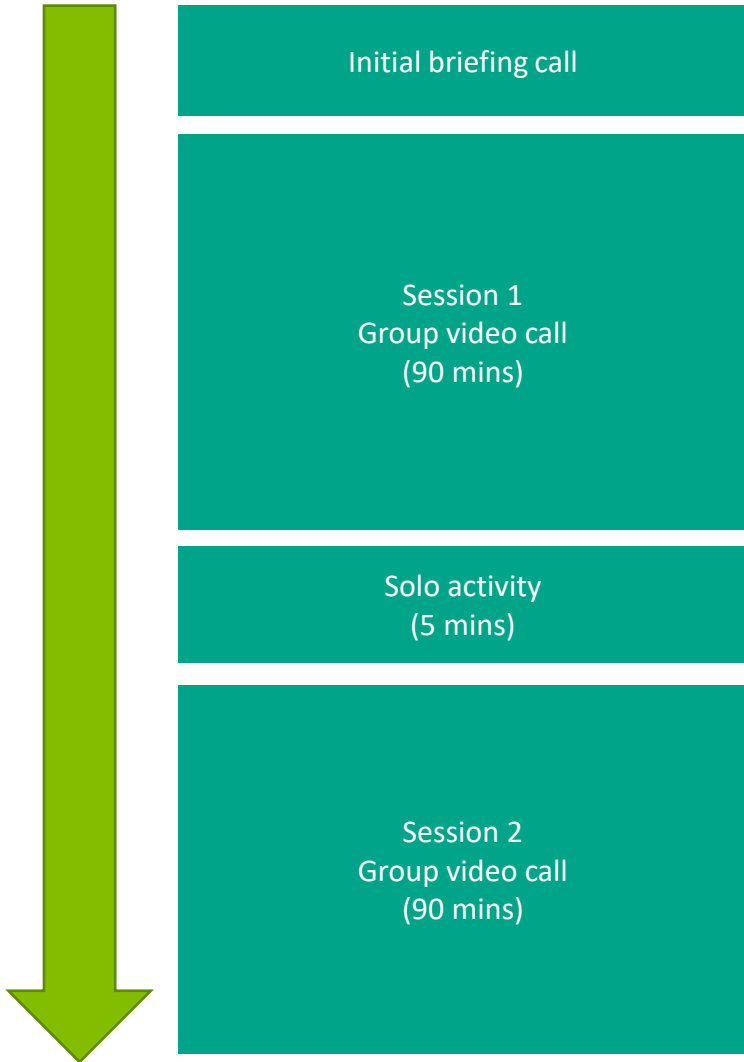


If you were designing an activity / service, how could this be achieved?

PEOPLE Who's involved? What are they like?	TIME / DURATION / FREQUENCY When? How often? How long for?	PROCESS What happens?
PLACE Where does it happen? Digital?	PROP What objects / resources are used?	COMMS How communicated? Language used?



Fieldwork flow



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

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?

