TRACE Interview Peggy 17th Sept 2013

I= Interviewer

P=Participant

I I’m here with Peggy and this is the Age Concern Day Centre

P It’s Newhaven Day Club. Yeah we’re not a centre because we don’t have carers and things like that.

I OK it’s just a club, rather than a centre.

P That’s right

I So we’re interested in understanding people’s social lives and the role of different technologies such as telephones and the Internet in supporting people’s social lives, um, would you mind walking us through a typical day of your life maybe yesterday or the day before or some day last week and what I’m particularly interested in is from the moment you woke up and all the interactions you had with people or with friends or not, so a typical day for you?

P Oh well not an awful lot because I get up, I spose I might phone my friend in Peacehaven and we might have a chat and we might decide to go out to do shopping or we might go out to Eastbourne or somewhere like that for the day.

I Yeah. How do you meet your friend?

P I usually go and fetch her, she lives in Peacehaven so I usually go up and fetch her. Not very often she comes down to me and we go off from home. That would be in the afternoon and usually have something to eat out. But another day of course I’m here at the Day Club and I’m here from 10 till 12 and then again we go and have something to eat and then I probably go home [laughs] and that’s my day finished, because I usually go to sleep in the chair in the afternoon [giggling].

I No I do that as well I can assure you, sleeping in my chair is one of the delights of my day

P That’s the thing, I never used to do

I Oh well the Spanish do it from a very young age…Yeah..Can you remember any people that you might have met during your day, I mean there’s your friend from Peacehaven but do you often bump into people when you walk around the town?

P No not really, oh occasionally I may bump into one or two people I know but it’s not very often these days. I think it depends on the time that we go shopping because I vary it, sometimes I go in the morning and sometimes I go in the afternoon but I do bump into some of the people I know and we stop and have a chat but apart from that no.

I Do you bump into people, mostly do you go in the mornings, do you find more people or does that happen more in the afternoons?

P No not really about the same.

I OK so now we’re interested in different kinds of community engagement. This is a question about community and what your thoughts of community are. So what does community mean to you?

P Well I suppose IT is people getting together as a whole and like this morning here I would say this is - everybody having a cup of tea and a chat and er not that I get the chance

Someone serving tea and coffee: Would you like a cup of tea or coffee? Do you two not want tea and coffee

P No I’ll have a glass of water please.

Someone serving tea and coffee: That’s why I said do you want a glass of water and you said no I want a glass of water

P Yes please Pam. That is my ‘friend’

I Don’t worry we’ll change all the names…So you were telling me about your understanding of community and you feel that this place here you associate with..

P Well of course I’m usually here most of the time [laughs]

I Are you?

P Well I spend quite a bit of time here and when I’m not here I’m working at home because being the treasurer I do the accounts and all that and I do most of that at home which I said it’s fortunate I’m on my own, I can get on with it

I So how long do you spend here?

P Well usually I’m here from 10 to 12, well it varies it maybe 1 o’clock or sometime before I get out and on the Friday, I only come that two days now, I used to do from sometime, mind you when we have a meeting I’m here on Monday, I’m here on Tuesday (thank you Pam) occasionally I have to come in on a Thursday, because we’re having to work down here at the moment because we changed around we haven’t got, we’ve only just appointed a new chairman – he sits out here, he doesn’t come in the office, he sits out here, so I’m on my own in the office and if things happen and he can’t get here and then I come down on the Thursday, then I’m here on Friday and then I’m back again on Sunday for lunch [laughs]

I Oh yes, I’ve been with you on a Sunday. And do you know most of the people here?

P Oh yeah I know all of them

I Oh all of them. Every single one of them.

P Well I’ve been here for 14 years and I’ve been treasurer. You see I used to do voluntary work and I gave it all up and the chairman that was here kept on saying we haven’t got a treasurer and I held out and held out and then one day she said to me (I had to take her to the eye hospital) on the way back she said I’ve got to go into Sainsbury’s and get something for dinner on Friday and take it to the club and I thought ‘oh here we go’. So we came back here and I saw the club and I spoke to one or two and I thought to myself ‘alright then, alright I give in’. If I can do the treasury properly, I’ll do it you see and I did I picked it up. I took one look at it and I said ‘oh my God, the way you are doing this is not correct’ So I then reversed it all round.

I Do you use a computer for all that ?

P I have to do both.

I You have to do both. Before coming here did you do any community activities?

P Voluntary work, I did meals on wheels

I Did you ? Here in Newhaven?

P In Newhaven, yeah, yes I stared doing the wheels on wheels and then the manager in the office said I’ve been told that you’ve done administration and I said to her ‘who told you that?’ I said’ I’ve opened my big mouth again haven’t I’

I Did they rope you in to do that ?

P Yes, yes

I Would you prefer to do that than be?

P I was in the office then doing the meals on wheels on the computer and that was the start of really getting used to a computer

I So that would have been 15 years ago or something like that?

P Yes 15 to 16 years ago. Hm yes I was quite happy to be back in the office because it was quite a job going round. I was at that time I had recently had a replacement hip. I had to take somebody round with me, well I did the driving and they did the running. And then it got to the stage where somebody broke down and I had to go out and take the round over and I thought no. I had to deliver the meals so when they did I went into the office, I was quite happy to go in the office.

I What motivated you to do the meals on wheels to start with?

P Well to start with after I’d had my replacement hip it was 12 weeks before I could drive again and I wasn’t walking very much around and I sat there one day and suddenly thought ‘I can’t stand this place any more, I’ve got to get out’. And I thought we’ll go round to the voluntary service which was in the town then and I went in and they opened with open arms and then when they knew I’d got the car they said well meals on wheels are desperate for drivers so I said fair enough and down there I went. So I didn’t have to sit in 4 walls any more.

I In the area that you live in at the moment do you ever have conversations with people that you don’t know very well?

P No

I So I guess what we’re interested in here is do you have any chance meetings with people? Does that happen very often?

P No not really. It’s a boo **{not sure what this word is??}**

I Is it a big or a small community here do you think?

P Well it’s smallish to a certain extent but I don’t go out in the town at all now because I can’t do the walking and I’ve had one or two accidents in the town. I’ve fallen over several times in the town. I just won’t go out anymore. The pavements, those bricks and that are so uneven I’ve only got to catch my toe in it and I just go flying.

I Then you have another bad arm. OK now we’re on to another question about social relationships, it’s a question about the important relationships in your life. So who would say are the most important people in your life at the moment.

P Well I can only say that the I call her my niece, in actual fact she was my nephew’s partner and he died and she’s more or less, you know, she comes and we chat and we go out

I Is she local?

P No she lives in Hailsham so we speak on the phone or I go over there and she comes over to me. She comes over to me more now days coz I don’t drive too far.

I How often do you speak to her on the phone?

P Oo at the moment she’s just had an operation so I’ve spoken to her frequently

I Pretty well what?

P Every other day

I So that’s a relative

P Coz the trouble is my family are spread out

I Are they? Where are your family?

P I haven’t got any family of my own but my nephew had three children, he’d got two boys and a girl and I do see one of them once a year coz he lives in Lincoln and my other great nephew lives in Hong Kong

I Golly

P and my great niece is in Germany [laughs]

I Distributed, yeah. Do you talk to them much?

P No I don’t, I don’t see them but as I say I see one nephew once a year but I get the information through my niece coz I keep in touch with her

I Ah oh I see so that’s a conduit and what is it about these relationships that make them so important, so your relationship with your niece is quite important to you.

P Well yes it is because she is in actual fact my next of kin

I So there’s a strong sense of family there. How do you think the nature of your relationships has changed over your life time? So the nature of your relationships in general terms have they changed?

P Well I haven’t really got a relationship have I ? They’ve all gone [laughs]

I Is that because people have passed away?

P That’s right yes. Yes unfortunately, my family they were that little bit older than I was you see. I was the baby of the family and there was quite a gap. My sister was thirteen and a half years older and my brother was seventeen years older so we had quite a big gap and ofcourse they being that much older and my parents were that much older so that was it

I So if you wanted to make some new friends what would you do?

P I don’t really know, I’ve never thought about that

I Well it seems like you have friends here

P Yes that’s right

I Right two , three questions left and I’ve a feeling this one might be a bit short but it might not be. It’s about what part technology plays in supporting your social life. So what technologies do you use to keep in contact with other people? And the choices might be telephone, mobile phone, email, Facebook, Skype

P Not really [laughs] I do use the computer but I don’t contact, I do email but at the moment I think I’ve got to get someone to look at it coz it’s no working properly

I Is it not?

P No so I don’t seem to be able to compose, I can compose but then it comes up ‘failed’ and I check it out and I can’t see anything wrong at all and although I’ve had a couple of people look at it and said, ‘you do this and you do that’ and it’s all right

I And did they get it to work?

P Yeah they did. It’s something I’m not doing I think

I So you’re not so sure what it is that you’re not doing

P Anyway I will eventually sort it out

I But I guess you use the phone as you said earlier

P Yeah I use the phone quite a bit. Coz at home we are a limited company at home

I Are you?

P Yeah we’re flats and we’re a limited company. Although we’ve got a management team, we’ve got three directors and I’m one of them but I’m being the there actually on the spot I deal with most of that, the work, anything that has to be done so I’m doing that from home and emails and all sorts. I’m quite busy actually

I It would seem so. And it would seem also that the kind of work you’re doing would require that computer to be working but then you can’t, you’re finding it difficult to use email at the moment. So how do you maintain contact with people in your local community? Is it face to face or phone?

P Yes probably face to face or phone

I So could you walk me through your last time you were on your computer at home and I think again you’ve touched upon this where you’ve tried to get the communication working and you can’t get it working

P I do go on the Internet because when we have the outings here

I What are the outings?

P You know we do six outings a year and they decide where they want to go and then I usually go on the computer and find out how much it’s going to be and all the rest of it

I So you work out things on the computer. Typically where would you go?

P Well out last trip was to Amberley museum

I Oh I know that place, back of Arundel. On a nice summer’s day that would be nice. On a wet autumn day it’s less.

P That’s the only outing we did this year because they’re all getting so old here. We usually do six a year but we only did Amberley coz they can’t do the walking you see.

I Even Amberley is a bit of a walk

P I had a bit of difficulty with that one. Because we only got 16 people so our regular people didn’t have the right coach. So we had a mini coach and the step was so high I nearly didn’t make it.

I If I was living in Newhaven how would I get to hear of this place. If I was just retired and feeling a bit lonely how would I know about this place?

P That is difficult [laughs] because we do get people suddenly appear and say we didn’t know you were here. Well we’ve got no way, we do put leaflets around town in the library and in the doctors but there is nowhere in town that if you put a sign up that really tells you we are here but we’ve been around for 40 years.

I So at the moment they find it where?

P I think they just it’s usually someone says to someone else

I I see word of mouth. Do you have a leaflet in the library?

P Only in the leaflets and I don’t know if there’s any in there at the moment. Have to get some more done.

I Is that something of a concern to this group?

P Yes very much so. Because we have on occasion advertised in the Leader because we were desperate need some young people to help

I Help support the place

P Yeah

I What is your relationship with the Hillcrest Centre as well. Do you work harmoniously together ?

P Well the really seem to work on their own. When we have anything happening here we always advertise it around the town, like we have an autumn fair coming up later and we will put a flyer out all around – it’ll go to Hillcrest, go round the town, Sainsburys and by doing that they know we’re around

I I do see some people here that do go up there

P That’s right they go up for lunch don’t they.

I They filled in our forms. So do you think community is something that can exist online?

P I don’t really know, I suppose there’s a possibility. It all depends on th people you’re contacting really. If you’ve got the same age group that you can talk to I would think that’s a good idea. But apart from that from what I hear about some of the communications they’re not as good as they should be.

I In what way are they not as good?

P Well I think you know when you see on Facebook and Twitter all the things that go on. It’s not something that I will think of joining or doing

I Have you heard of DropBy?

P No

I Well that’s targeted at people who’ve just retired so the idea is to create a friendly place/environment for people to meet each other

P Is that something that you could just put on the computer?

I Yeah, you would go on the Internet and enter their site and then you’d talk to people on that. Do you know what SNS are? well I think you do because you mentioned Facebook and Twitter. Are there any questions that you thought I would ask but I haven’t

P No I can’t think of anything you haven’t gone through there

I What did you think I was going to ask you about?

P Yeah I thought it would be mostly about the computer, that’s what Kate said when I met here