

Measuring impact

Top tips on how to show
the difference your home
improvement services make

A Good Home Network briefing



Introduction

The impact of your service

Being able to show the impact of your service – what it does and how it achieves what it set out to do – is key to demonstrating how you are meeting your service aims and the value of your work. It is also key to being able to secure sustained funding.

This briefing comprises a series of ‘top tips’ to support your impact measurement. It is based on a learning session held at the Good Home Network in-person event in December 2023 and includes contributions and suggestions from members who participated in the session.

What is the Good Home Network?

The Good Home Network is a hub for active learning connecting professionals across England who are exploring ways to improve poor quality homes in their area. The Centre for Ageing Better set up the Good Home Network, in partnership with **Foundations**, to help local authorities ensure people in their communities can live independently, safely and with dignity in their own homes.

Find out more:

Visit ageing-better.org.uk/good-home-network or email goodhomenetwork@ageing-better.org.uk



Measuring impact

Impact is the difference you make as an organisation or service. You are creating impact all the time. It might include improving the lives of local people or reducing the pressure on health and social care services in your area.

It is important to record this impact as measurement and evaluation enable you to show how you are meeting the aims of your service and can demonstrate your achievements to a range of stakeholders, including potential and existing funders. Recording impact can also help your organisation or service to improve by identifying areas of strength or weakness.

Measuring impact can seem daunting at first. However, including simple measures as you plan and develop services, ensuring they are part of your existing processes and taking the time to reflect with your peers, will benefit your service in the long term.

There can be reasons why proper impact measurement is not carried out, even when services and local authorities acknowledge its importance. The box at the side shows some of these barriers and the top tips on the following pages provide some solutions to these barriers.

Barriers to measuring impact

- > Inadequate knowledge of appropriate evaluation methodologies.
- > Resource and capacity constraints on data collection. For example, the lack of capacity to go back and follow up with customers six months after an intervention.
- > Sample sizes from some specialised services not being sufficiently large to enable reliable conclusions to be made.



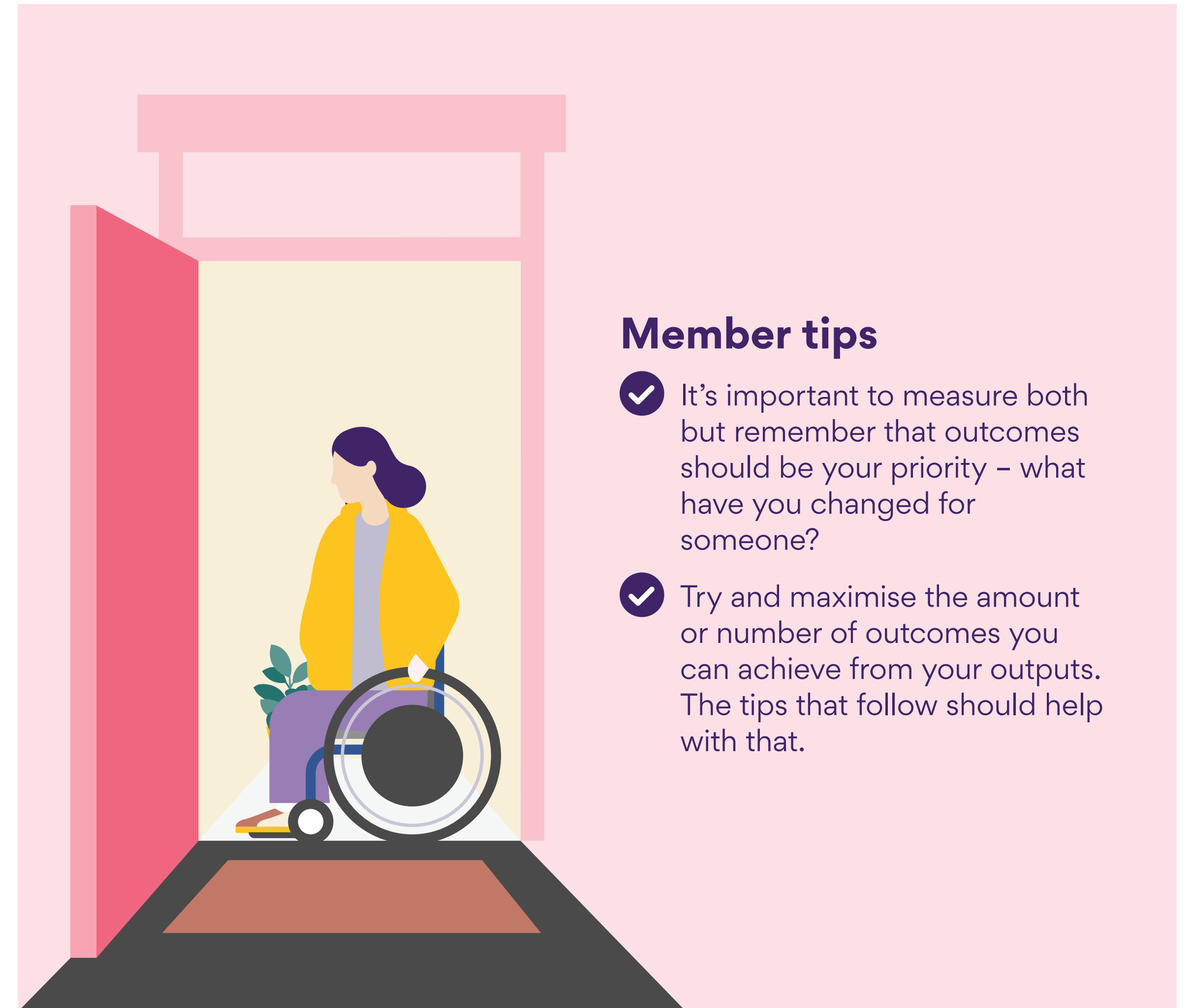
Top tip **1**

Develop outcomes – don't just record outputs

To demonstrate the impact of your service and what it is achieving, you need to measure both outputs and outcomes.

Outputs are what you do or produce. For example, the outputs of your home improvement service might be the number of people your service has reached and the number of adaptations that have been carried out.

Outcomes are the result of this and show the change that has occurred. Your outcome might be the number of clients who have reported improvements in their physical health due to an intervention or the impact on social care through a reduction in the number of hours of day care needed before and after an intervention.



Member tips

- ✓ It's important to measure both but remember that outcomes should be your priority – what have you changed for someone?
- ✓ Try and maximise the amount or number of outcomes you can achieve from your outputs. The tips that follow should help with that.

Top tip **2**

Be clear about what you are trying to do and how you'll get there

The most important thing is to have a clear aim. What is the main goal or outcome you are trying to achieve? It can be helpful to frame this as the problem you're trying to solve. Think about who is most affected by this problem and how your service will help them.

You need to clearly articulate what you are doing and why. To do this, you could consult with others and test out the framing or narrative of what you are trying to do. This will help you to know what you need to measure and increase your confidence in explaining why you collect the data you do and why it is meaningful.

Using a theory of change or logic model approach can also help you consider the wider context and external factors that may affect your work. It can also encourage you to think about measuring possible routes to impact such as changes in awareness, understanding, motivation and behaviour etc. See [further resources](#) for a link to more information on developing a theory of change.

Here is an example of a logic model:



Top tip **3**

Prioritise what to collect

Work with your team to prioritise what data you think you need to collect.

You may want to align with local strategic priorities to optimise future funding and support. For example, does your service prioritise energy efficiency or health initiatives to align with your local authority's current strategic priorities?

Also, consider what will persuade commissioners, especially from health and social care, to invest in housing interventions as a mechanism to achieve their priorities.

Make sure your outcomes represent the needs of all of your audiences. Your measures should be directly related to your outcomes and be realistic – avoid setting yourself up to fail by, for example, suggesting that you will halve A&E attendances among your service users within six months.



Member tips

- ✓ Develop outcomes alongside commissioners as well as in partnership with all the different services involved – this will ensure you are reporting on the things that matter to the people who will be funding your service.
- ✓ Think about who you are presenting your output and outcome data to. Are you looking to win hearts? Or minds? You'll need different approaches and different information – or probably a combination.
- ✓ Use an ethics framework when collecting data and be sure to comply with GDPR (see [further resources](#)).

Top tip **4** Make your data count for you

Seek out opportunities to capitalise on data already being collected to develop a common framework of indicators that can be applied across a range of interventions or partner organisations

Collaborate with local health care providers, social workers, and non-profits when developing your impact frameworks. For example, find out what indicators local health and social care services already collect. Are there any – such as your local JSNA (Joint Strategic Needs Assessment) – that can be used to build the evidence?

Use existing measures – those from validated sources – so that data can be compared. See [further resources](#) for examples that might include:

- Adult Social Care Survey (ASCS)
- Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework (ASCOF)
- Other national or local surveys including Office of National Statistics (ONS) and Census data.



Embed data collection and regular impact reviews to help continuous improvement to services. Build a culture of engagement in impact by celebrating positive impacts, promoting the benefits of reviewing learning together and recognising the value in understanding what might not have worked well.

Make data collection a core part of the work of your service so it can be factored into the set up and delivery right from the start or when a service is being re-contracted. However, it is important to make sure any data collection is both proportionate and straightforward for everyone to carry out.

Member tips

- ✓ Data collection should involve continuous engagement with service users and participants.
- ✓ Using Foundations Case Manager can help to collect data efficiently and effectively.
- ✓ Data analysis and collection should also focus on who is excluded from typical household surveys (often these are minority or at-risk groups). You might need to make extra effort and use different methods to engage people who wouldn't use local authorities' normal feedback mechanisms.
- ✓ Seek out the experts and make relationships with them – they can be a fantastic resource and key ally. In some areas, public health intelligence teams or dedicated data analysts can support the development of impact frameworks as well as helping to identify and source data.

Top tip **5**

Telling the story effectively

Complement your quantitative data with storytelling where possible.

Gather compelling stories and data from the people who use your services to illustrate the impact of improved housing on residents. Use these narratives to advocate for policy changes and sustained or increased funding.

Report your impact effectively.

Finally, it's essential to report your impact effectively. This requires communicating and sharing your impact with stakeholders (including funders) and people that your services are supporting using clear and engaging formats and channels such as infographics, slide-decks and films as well as written reports.



Member tips

- ✓ Sharing the narrative of a person your organisation is supporting (through stories or case studies) can be a powerful way to present data. Collecting stories helps to build a picture that allows people to imagine going through a situation themselves. Numbers alone can't do that.
- ✓ In addition to data on individuals, consider including the wider impact of home improvements or adaptations on siblings, families etc. The social narrative is important and can be compelling.
- ✓ Build in opportunities to gather feedback and don't forget to record unexpected outcomes too.

Further resources

- Adult Social Care Survey (ASCS) digital.nhs.uk/data-and-information/publications/statistical/personal-social-services-adult-social-care-survey/england-2022-23
- Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework (ASCOF) digital.nhs.uk/data-and-information/publications/statistical/adult-social-care-outcomes-framework-ascof
- BRE (2023) The Cost of Ignoring Poor Housing bregroup.com/news/poor-housing-will-cost-over-135-5bn-over-the-next-30-years-without-urgent-action/
- Central Digital & Data Office (2020) Data Ethics Framework gov.uk/government/publications/data-ethics-framework/data-ethics-framework-2020
- Centre for Ageing Better (2023) Good Home Hubs supporting documentation: Building effective home improvement services (pages 13–18 of this [document](#) include example output and outcome measures from Ageing Better’s work with Lincolnshire)
- Centre for Ageing Better (2023) State of Ageing ageing-better.org.uk/homes-state-ageing-2023-4
- DLUHC (2023) English Housing Survey gov.uk/government/collections/english-housing-survey
- Foundations case manager foundations.uk.com/how-we-help/foundations-case-manager/
- NPC Theory of change in ten steps thinknpc.org/resource-hub/ten-steps/
- NHS England (2023) Acute Daily Discharge Situation Report england.nhs.uk/statistics/statistical-work-areas/discharge-delays-acute-data/
- Office for National Statistics Census 2021 ons.gov.uk/census

For more information please visit ageing-better.org.uk/good-home-network or contact goodhomenetwork@ageing-better.org.uk



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Let's make ageing better.



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