

Healthy Community Outreach Session Summary Report

ORGANIZATION	# of Participants	# of Surveys	Group Characteristics	<i>How is Bainbridge currently doing?</i>	<i>How connected do I feel?</i>	<i>How confident am I about the future?</i>
Bethany Adult Group	18	17	Half 65+ Half 45-64; split male/female; None with kids at home. Over half long-timers (20 yrs+) Majority retired.	3.25	3.1	3.3
Directors Forum	12	10	Majority age 45-64 & female. Nearly half with kids. Majority less than 20 yrs on BI. Only one works off Island.	3.7	3.8	3.6
Hank's Book Group	5	5	Most age 45-64. All male. Most long-timers. Split between working on/off Island and retired.	3.4	3.4	3.8
Helpline House Board	15	12	Most age 45-64. Over half female. Half less than 10 yrs on BI. Only 2 work off Island.	3.3	3.75	3.4
HHHS Board	10	7	One 20-44 yrs. Most 45-64. Split male/female – half with kids. Most less than 20 yrs on BI	3.7	4.0	3.7
Interfaith Volunteer Caregivers	14	14	Majority 65+ & female. Mix of old-timers and relative newcomers	3.8	3.8	3.3
Rotary	53	17	Majority age 45-64 & Male. Majority live on BI less than 20 years. Split in working on/off Island & Retired.	3.6	3.4	3.4
Senior Center Board	10	8	All age 65+ and retired.	3.25	4.0	3.25
Susan's House	12	5	Mostly age 45-64, female with kids at home.	4.0	4.2	3.0
VIPS (Visually Impaired)	18	0	Nearly all female, mostly seniors, length or time on BI varied; 3 "off-islanders"			
Misc.	4	4	Misc.	3.3	3.75	3.4
TOTAL	171	99	<i>See Below</i>	3.5	3.6	3.4

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Outreach Participant Characteristics

AGE:	20-44: 8%	45-64: 52%	65 & Over: 40%
GENDER:	Male: 45%	Female: 55%	
CHILDREN AT HOME?	Yes: 25%	No: 75%	
TIME ON BAINBRIDGE ISLAND:	Less than 3 yrs: 7%	3-10 yrs: 29%	11-20 yrs: 29%
	20+ yrs: 30%	don't live on B.I.: 4%	
WORKPLACE:	On Island: 34%	Off Island: 22%	Retired: 35%
	Other: 9%		

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Our Strengths as a Community

Bethany	Opportunities to contribute. Community events: Rotary Auction, 4 th of July, Chinese New Year, Farmers market. Good Schools. Churches. Helpline House
Directors Forum	Caring community tries to take care of those in need. Community events and opportunities to connect. BI Review publishes ways for people to get together and connect in their neighborhoods. Opportunities to contribute and volunteer – including PTOs and non profit organizations.
Hank’s Book Group	High Degree of activism, engagement in community affairs and participation in non-profits. Good community coverage in local paper and TV.
Helpline House Board	Interest, involvement and commitment to health of community are quite high. Diverse array of volunteer opportunities. A core of super-committed community members who work very hard. Friends/neighbors who look in/after each other.
HHHS Board	When a threat is identified, our community rallies around a common cause. Overall we have good intentions. There are small pockets of community. Ample opportunities to participate. Resources in place that demonstrate Bainbridge cares.
IVC	Helpline and other service agencies. IVC & interfaith community efforts. Good coordination among service and cultural organizations. Good schools, Churches. Diverse cultural, civic and recreational opportunities. Sense we are all neighbors on the Island. We rise to the occasion under duress. Accessibility of City Council members.
Rotary	Lot of good service organizations. Good job coordinating services. Caring community that helps in emergencies and time of need. Good school – high in state rankings. Community events. Lots of activities and athletic programs. Economic ability on the Island to address community issues. Ample opportunities to get involved.
Senior Center Board	Friendly community – where people say hello. Extensive informal networking. Many opportunities for involvement, Community dialogue through the newspaper (both good and bad.)
Susan’s House	Excellent schools. Good library, parks, trails. Energetic, generous people. Many moms and retirees who volunteer time to community associations. Many opportunities to add your voice to public dialogue. We have maintained our unique character as an island community – not just a Seattle suburb. Small town feel-large City benefits. Good for many age groups – babies to seniors. Good arts/creative opportunities
VIPs	IVC does a lot. Many options to “belong” & contribute. Many services for those in need.

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Our Challenges/Weaknesses

Bethany Adult Group	Growth makes it harder to connect & decreased neighborhood closeness. Some groups (liveaboards, low income, young families) aren't engaged. Cost of living drives out young adults. Some people are selfish. Some don't care about belonging to a group or community. Lack of time is a factor. Litigious atmosphere. Not enough for kids.
Directors Forum	Teens feel unwanted and unwelcome. Some seniors are falling through the cracks. An assumption of affluence gets in the way. Adults who live and work here tend to connect more easily – harder for commuters. Transportation challenges around the Island for both youth and seniors. Lack of tolerance/snobbery seem to be creeping in.
Hank's Book Group	Community is not "complete" – missing or less visible elements, such as low-income members. We're seen as "exclusive" and this becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy. Too much polarization on issues, lack of compromise or middle ground. Too little ethnic diversity. Not always open to differences or different ideas.
Helpline House Board	Trouble getting things accomplished; compromise seems elusive. 20 & 30 somethings don't feel welcome. Not as much community for teens – some seem to have negative attitudes toward teens. Limited youth programming. Too homogeneous. Socially/economically polarized. Housing too expensive. Lack of 24-hour medical facilities.
HHHS Board	Alienation among some – not knowing how to contribute or what opportunities for connection are available. "Hijacking" of community process. Budget cuts/unmet needs. Don't reach out enough to newcomers.
IVC	Selfishness and self-absorption more prevalent. Islanders can be snobbish and isolated from outside world. Greed in development and property over community interests. Not enough volunteers to cover needs. Commuters have little time. People not always feel comfortable seeking help. High cost of housing prices out middle and low income people.
Rotary	Proving affordable housing and health care for service workers. Dysfunctional City Government. Too much polarization. Need better pedestrian amenities and transportation during day around the Island. Need an all age's community center. No emergency health care. Not enough for youth. High costs pricing out diversity. Becoming too exclusive/wealthy.
Senior Center Board	Engaging newcomers is a short-coming. Our geography encourages distance/isolation. Don't reach out enough to people living along. Some organizations – like Senior Center struggle with adequate facilities. Need to strengthen and "play up" neighborhoods more. Need more sidewalks, more housing options that are affordable, better transportation options, public accessibility to the water, more accessible medical care. Lack of a Master Calendar for community events and a clearinghouse with resources information.

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Susan's House	Sometimes hard for newcomers to break in – especially kids. Takes a certain personality and self-initiative to get involved – what about shy people? Lack of diversity. For people who can't/don't drive, lack of transportation is a big issue. "Rural" life-style/acreage isolates kids and families – especially in crises like major storms or 911.
VIPs	More emergency services/transport are needed. Hard for seniors to meet/mix with younger folks: more intergenerational activities. Need more "hearing" resources – including a hearing support group. More accessible trails, paths and sidewalks. More night time activities at senior center. Need more senior housing integrated with services. More choice of after school activities for youth 13 and older. More family-oriented events/activities. More affordable child care in summer months. Walking groups geared more toward VIPs and elderly.

Notable Quotes:

The "majority" culture is affluent, educated, fairly sophisticated and older. Most of them will find a ready, welcoming, caring community on Bainbridge. People not defined that way, i.e. poorer, less educated, less "connected" and younger, will find fewer options in everything from entertainment choices to health care or housing options.
(Mid-life female on Bainbridge for 11-20 years)

What makes me feel connected? Volunteering where needed, attending public meetings and following the public discourse on the internet and in the media (and voting), using the public facilities of the Island regularly – especially the parks, trails and libraries. Seeing all my neighbors at Safeway or T and C, sharing laughs and tears with great Island friends.
(Midlife female on Bainbridge for 11-20 years)

The spread out nature of our city can dilute and divide a sense of commonweal. As long as we're able to get around pretty easily, it's not so noticeable. But if, and as it gets harder to get from place to place, this could become more challenging. I'm a little concerned too about the growth of expectations for connectedness and opportunities to contribute – as this may get harder to provide as we inevitably grow and develop a more built-up infrastructure of services.

I've lived here a long time (52 years) and I feel as connected as ever in many ways. But certainly some of those lines of connection have changed – some withered and some enhanced. I see the faces of more people I don't know. But I see more

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choices for most services. Opportunities can arrive with changes. But managing change is a tricky business. One can't always know what the outcome may be from a particular set of policies designed to accomplish some civic goal.
(Male, life-long Bainbridge Islander)

I would like to see a shift in emphasis toward a "humane" community – people first, environment next, than buildings and infrastructure – and eco-municipality.
(Midlife female)

My guess is that a large number of Islanders are not inclined to be very much involved in day-to-day activities in the community.
Male, 65 +. Long-time Islander

I am concerned that major support of things like Helpline and Bainbridge Foundation has been, and still is, from the older generation. "Aging in place" may soon end that. I wonder if the younger ones have less ethic for helping neighbors and less willingness to continue this to the extent needed. We desperately need to increase the number of supporters, up the level of neighborliness and put less emphasis on the "toys" that so many seem to view as necessities!
Senior Female, long-time Islander.

I love this Island more than I could have possibly imagined when I moved here. But it is also a very hard place to really break into and feel like you belong.
Female under 45, less than 3 years on Bainbridge Island

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What's Important: Possible Indicators

General: Housing options available/affordable to a broad range of incomes. Diversity: mix of incomes, ages, ethnicity. Functional/non-stalelated, responsive City Government. Attendance at community events (July 4, Rotary Auction, Farmer's Market, etc.) Helpline House statistics. All-age community activity/cultural center. Multi-generational involvement. Availability of sidewalks, safe trail ways for biking and pedestrians. Awareness of program/services available. Rate of volunteerism. Master Community Calendar and clearinghouse for resource information. Guides and walking aides for tourists. Crime statistics – esp. hate crimes, violence, and property damage.

Youth: Availability/use of after-school/evening activities. Community services for teens. Youth-run enterprises (e.g. coffee shop or stores). Non-sports related recognition events. Safe gathering places. Positive community attitudes toward youth. Transportation during day around Island. Drug/Alcohol use/arrest measures. Vocational training programs/opportunities in school. Good peer support, role models. Youth volunteerism/community activism.

Families: Quality of Schools/Academic performance. Availability of quality child care/early childhood education. Involvement with Schools/community. Access to information/services. Divorce rate. Retention of families on Bainbridge. Time parents spend with family. Access to parenting support resources. Family-oriented community events and family-friendly activities. Good transit/bus service. Vaccination rates. Economic “health” of families.

Seniors: Better rehabilitation/care facilities. Effective assistance for aging in place—including assisted living options. More affordable housing options. Senior housing w/services. More adult day care and visiting nurses. Emergency and disaster preparation. Transportation options around Island. Safety. Access/transportation to medical and dental services. Recognition and celebration (such as old-timers picnic.) Urgent medical care. Adequate meeting places. Social, recreational, cultural, political and community support opportunities available/welcoming to seniors. Outreach to address isolation. Walking groups for seniors and visually impaired. Paths, trails and sidewalks.