

Summer 2007

# Dialogue

The quarterly magazine of the  
Community and  
Voluntary Sector Forum

A black and white photograph of numerous paper cutouts of human figures holding hands in a circle, symbolizing community and participation. The cutouts are arranged in a line, with some in the foreground and others receding into the background, creating a sense of depth. The background is a blurred, light-colored surface.

## Participation matters

The role of local people in decision making

If you've not been to a Forum event in the past few months, you've really no excuse. Between monthly networking evenings, the quarterly conference, meetings of the various sub-networks and a whole host of support activities available to elected reps, there's not been time to notice the lack of summer! Thanks to everyone who's participated in the events and supported the staff team.

While members benefit from networking at these events, the Forum is gathering intelligence based on members' experience and expertise, which provides essential guidance for elected representatives to help them advocate effectively on behalf of the sector. Reps have also welcomed new induction and training opportunities and the launch of a new resource pack.

Not content with democratic changes locally and nationally, the Forum conducted its own 2007 elections from April-June. We were delighted to welcome the new representatives elected at this year's AGM. The sector is represented on the majority of the strategic partnerships in the city, informing and influencing key decision making in the city.

Political changes are however

important to note.

Locally, we met with new Councillors during their induction period, to introduce the Forum and its role in the Local Strategic Partnership. New conservative leader Councillor Brian Oxley is providing a fresh focus for partnership working in the city.

Nationally meanwhile, we've seen Ed Miliband, former Minister for the Third Sector, promoted to Minister for the Cabinet, retaining responsibility for the Third Sector. Phil Hope takes over as Minister for the Third Sector.

As Prime Minister, Gordon Brown recently unveiled his vision for the third sector, saying voluntary organisations play a critical role in bringing together communities and generating progressive social change and that the government must do more to support the sector. In the final report of the government's third sector review, he promises £515m to the sector between 2008 and 2011 to boost charities' ability to campaign, strengthen communities, transform public services and encourage social enterprise. Watch this space to find out what this means for community and voluntary groups in Brighton and Hove.

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Dialogue is the magazine of the Community and Voluntary Sector Forum. If you would like to contribute to future editions of the magazine or have comments about this one, please contact Katy McGrory on (01273) 234003. The views expressed in Dialogue are not necessarily those of the Forum as a whole. Whilst every effort has been made to ensure information in this issue is accurate, readers should obtain independent confirmation of information they wish to rely on.

# PARTICIPATION MATTERS

**A recent seminar on The Right to be Heard, organised by the Institute of Development Studies and chaired by the Forum prompted Jim Simpson, a local community development consultant to examine the role of local people in public decision making.**

Public sector reform, neighbourhood renewal, patient choice and consultation on place making are examples of public sector initiatives that have at their heart the big question of who decides?

Volunteers, community activists and community groups keep society thriving and flourishing side by side with the public sector. Though communities and citizens are frequently consulted they are less often involved in real decision-making. Traditional practice says elected politicians decide and public servants deliver. Citizens, residents or service users taking part in decisions about what kinds of services are provided, what budgets are spent and how local problems are solved is at the centre of the 'new democracy' agenda.

Local people have very much been the users and choosers of public services. We need to celebrate the fact that public choice over your doctor, your school or your care package has increased with the balance of choice having shifted in the direction of the citizen rather than the service provider. The voluntary and community sector has pioneered choice and diversity in services. However using and choosing are not enough. Citizens and communities need to have the ability to be the makers and shapers directly involved in deciding and designing better services and better solutions to community problems.

In July the new Communities Secretary Hazel Blears announced 10 local spending pilots where local public sector bodies (Councils, Primary Care Trusts, regeneration partnerships) will be obliged to involve local people in participatory budgeting deciding on the allocation of sums of up to £20 million. Councils will need to develop new participatory spaces such as citizen's juries, ballots and new consultative forums. These will need to be put in place alongside Local Strategic Partnerships, Scrutiny Panels and other mechanisms that involve citizens and communities directly in decision-making. Local spending pilots, if successful, will be rolled out across the public sector, as will other ways of devolving democracy.

The Department of Communities Local Spending pilots are one example of how some power is being put on the table and decision-making is being devolved to local communities. This is happening because there is agreement that participation matters. Participation matters because it is about the extent to which public services and government are legitimate, accountable and transparent.

Local people and communities know the needs of their communities better than anyone else, whether they are place communities (neighbourhoods, streets, towns and cities) or interest communities (people with a shared need, want or

interest). Participation matters because it brings together the citizen (as a service user, a resident and a customer) with the many tentacles of government, public services and the voluntary sector who provide services on their behalf.

Representative government is not enough to ensure that good public services and good governance is a certainty across the many activities of local, central and devolved government.

New forms of participation in the delivery of services are now becoming well established such as the Expert Patient Programmes, user lead commissioning of care services and Local Strategic Partnerships. At the same time voter participation in elections is at an all time low and withdrawal from representative democracy is not only a UK problem but also a feature of mature democracies across many countries. In the UK 4 out of 10 people chose not to vote in the last general election and more than 6 out of 10 people do not vote in local elections.

If you were to ask the average government policy-maker or politician the question 'do citizens have the right to participate in decisions about public services?' most would probably say yes. Indeed they may well identify a whole host of benefits from participation. Local councils have cited the fact that consultation and participation lends



robust legitimacy to decisions. It enables public services to respond to local needs. It gives decision-makers and policy-makers unique insights into what citizens think, need and want. Above all it leads to better public services and a richer democracy.

Transport systems that are well-used and efficient, social services that help people to cope, education methods that result in learning and flourishing and health services that lead to improved health seem like obvious desires. But sometimes these desirable outcomes are not achieved. This is partly because citizens and communities are not the people who are making and shaping what or how services are delivered.

Brighton and Hove City Council's own Public Consultation Strategy captures a laudable aim of new democracy through an ambition to (as the policy document describes): 'promote discourse and dialogue as a part of the council's commitment to improving democratic engagement and building community cohesion'.

Discourse, discussion, debate and

sharing information and insights are essential to citizens influencing how public services work and what these service providers actually provide. Most people agree that accountability to citizens is essential but, as the Institute of Development Studies points out from its comparison between the UK and the rest of the world, the terms of consultation and participation are set by public service providers not by citizens. Participation is by invitation only and not as a right to be claimed and exercised.

This contrasts with other parts of the world. For instance Porta Allegre in Brazil created a unique method of determining how health services are provided through participatory budgeting, where public participation in decisions is a right enshrined in law and not an optional extra at the behest of public authorities. As a consequence public health is better and priorities are set by citizens in line with real needs and solutions.

This model has been rolled out across Brazil and is, in fact, cited as an inspiration behind the Communities and Local Government's participatory budgeting pilots. The ladder of participation shows the steps that need to be climbed to enable citizens to be truly 'empowered' (from the International Association of Public Participation 2000). The challenge now is to get public services and government organisations to put power on the table and to move further towards participation being a positive way of developing a new kind of democracy and improving public service performance.

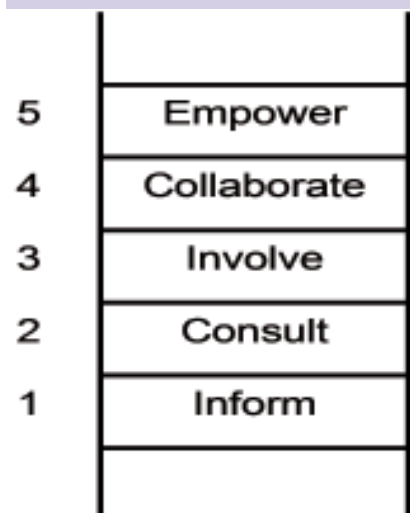
Involving citizens and collaboration between citizens and the different levels of public service delivery will

improve public services, especially where they are not meeting outcomes like safer communities or better public health. In order to do this politicians and policy makers need to embrace the benefits and manage the risks whilst citizens will continue to claim the right for a meaningful say in their neighbourhood, their public services and, ultimately, their own future well-being.

Audio clips from the 'Right to be Heard' seminar including three speakers - John Gaventa (IDS), Marian Barnes (Brighton University) and Sally Hiscock (CVSF) - are podcast at: [www.ids.ac.uk/ids/aboutids/audio-video/brighton\\_festival\\_2007\\_righttoheard.mp3](http://www.ids.ac.uk/ids/aboutids/audio-video/brighton_festival_2007_righttoheard.mp3)

Jim Simpson can be contacted by email at [jimsimpsonconsultancy@ntlworld.com](mailto:jimsimpsonconsultancy@ntlworld.com)

### Ladder of Participation



## Freeing Charities To Campaign Fully

The Advisory Group on Campaigning and the Voluntary Sector, chaired by Helena Kennedy QC, has produced its report. As “the voluntary sector has become the natural home” of much campaigning activity and civic engagement, tackling “the minefield of confusion, obstruction and outdated interpretations of the law” is important to the health of democracy. It urges changes in the Charity Commission’s approach to campaigning by charities as well as amendments to the law.

The advisory group comprised 25 organisations including Greenpeace, Oxfam, RSPCA, NCVO and Acevo.

The report is in Word format, 301kb, on Bates, Wells and Braithwaite web site at

<http://www.bateswells.co.uk/Files/News/CampaigningReport.doc>.

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## Evaluation Resource Pack for Voluntary Sector Organisations

The Paul Hamlyn Foundation, in association with the National Institute of Adult Continuing Education, has produced an easy to use evaluation resource pack for voluntary sector and community organisations.

The pack has been written for front-line workers and volunteers in the voluntary sector to help with evaluating their work. It explains the main aspects of evaluation and project planning and shows how you can collect the evidence you will need to highlight the value of what you do.

It also encourages organisations to involve their clients and partner organisations in planning, recording and assessing what they have done.

If you don't have a lot of experience of evaluation, or would like to find out how your work and evaluation can be made more participatory, the pack will be particularly useful.

To order a copy (price: £12.50 plus £1.25 postage and packing) please email [information@phf.org.uk](mailto:information@phf.org.uk) to request an order form. Or visit [www.phf.org.uk](http://www.phf.org.uk) for further information.

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## In Memory

The Forum was saddened to learn of the death of Neil McArthur, the Branch and Development Manager of Alzheimer’s Society, Brighton Area Branch. He made an outstanding contribution to the sector in taking forward work to support those with dementia and their carers. He will be very much missed.

This year’s ‘Memory Walk’, the Alzheimer’s Society fundraising event, takes place on Sunday 23 September. It starts at Hove Lagoon and ends at the New Madeira Hotel in Marine Parade. Contact The Alzheimer’s Society on (01273) 726266 for more information.

## Portage Volunteer Home Visitors Needed

Portage is a weekly home visiting service for families with a young disabled child.

We are looking for committed volunteers to be Portage Home Visitors in the Brighton & Hove area offering weekly play based and fun teaching activities. Excellent training and supervision are given.

Find out more at the next Introductory Session on the 22nd August.

For an information pack call Ruth on 01273 749085 or email [pp@childsoc.org.uk](mailto:pp@childsoc.org.uk).

Read more about the Portage & Early Support Service at [www.childrensociety.org.uk/portage](http://www.childrensociety.org.uk/portage).

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## Relate Training

Relate in Brighton is running a 3 day Open College Network accredited counselling skills course for people who work in a helping or supportive role and need to learn basic counselling skills to enhance their professional role.

This course is running 19th & 26th Sept and 3rd Oct 2007 (9.30am to 5.30pm) and costs £270.00.

For further details ring Kerry-ann at Relate on 01273 608518 or email [kerryann.willing@brightonrelate.org.uk](mailto:kerryann.willing@brightonrelate.org.uk).

## OFF THE FENCE

In the last ten days I have had the privilege of going to a garden party at Buckingham Palace; we have had the Mayor and representative of the Lord Lieutenant visit the work, I have also talked to the Brighton & Hove chamber of commerce and a lot more businesses are partnering with us, and we have been nominated for the Queens award. This all comes in the week when we celebrated our tenth anniversary.

Ten years ago we started the adventure with a tiny budget today's annual budget is over a third of a million. And yet Off The Fence is still not very well known across the city. So what is Off The Fence?

Off the Fence is a Charity based on Christian values, whose aim is to provide a variety of services to enable people in need to improve their quality of life. *Off The Fence*, is a registered Charity (1108777) founded in 1997 with a vision to help the socially excluded. The charity strives to make a real difference to the lives of the many that are 'at risk' in our community and so often fall through the net of statutory provision. We work in the four areas of homelessness, women at risk, accommodation for vulnerable young people coming out of 24 hour care, and our preventative services aimed at secondary school children through our schools and youth education programmes.

Our aim is to provide practical ways to help people re-build their lives, offer help and support as they face changes and new directions in life and to be there for them when they feel utter hopelessness. We are committed to building long term relationships of trust, consistent

support and encouragement for as long as it is needed. We will always offer a sympathetic ear and help our clients to access specific services, while caring for them as a whole person. We aim to be more than just a service provider.

Our benefits are delivered through street outreach, one to one counselling, advice, information and support and a greatly in demand schools programme. We see on average around 100 vulnerable men, women and young people each week, who are helped to address some of the issues they are facing.

The work of *Off the Fence* has become a regular feature of Brighton & Hove city life over the last 10 years. It is highly regarded both for the quality of work that it performs and the emergency life saving nature of much of the work undertaken. It continues to make a practical impact on many of the hardest to reach sectors of the community.

If you would like to know more please visit our web site, we would love to partner with a lot more project across the City. The first ten years has seen incredible growth and development, our plans for the future are exciting and staggering lets work together to make this City a far better place to live.

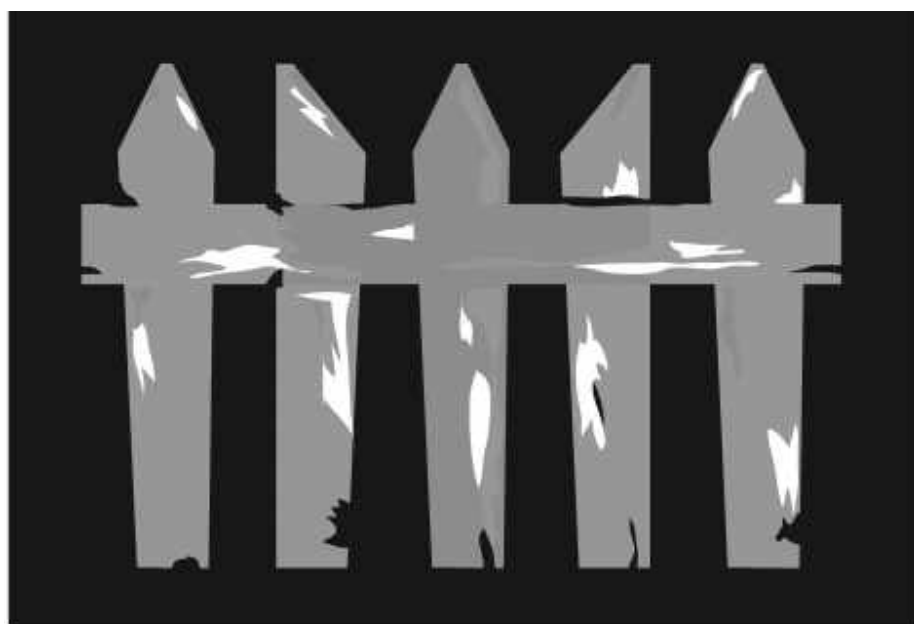
### For more information

**Contact:**

By phone, Paul Young (01273) 733732 or by email [paul.young@offthefence.org.uk](mailto:paul.young@offthefence.org.uk)

**Website:**

[www.offthefence.org.uk](http://www.offthefence.org.uk)



# OFF THE FENCE

## THE FED LEADS NEW ACCESS GUIDE



The FED (Brighton and Hove Federation of Disabled People) is leading on a new project, funded by Brighton and Hove City Council, Disability Equals Business and Sussex Community Foundation (American Express Fund) to deliver a local solution to provide reliable, up-to-date information for disabled people wishing to shop, stay, socialise and enjoy entertainments in the Brighton and Hove area.

Disability is not always visible and the fact that disabled people aren't involved in the whole area of reasonable adjustments speaks reams. In Brighton & Hove this is all set to change. The project will involve disabled people on the front line, actively testing the accessibility and attitude of many organisations around disability.

The project aims to deliver a detailed access guide, working closely with the local authority, business community and the hospitality sector to ensure that the project has cross sector support and develops a partnership approach to delivering a quality information system. The FED will support a group of disabled people to act as the guide's researchers, they will also help

design and steer the development of the website.

Local IT business, IT Academy, will be working closely with the FED to develop the new website and will be providing training and marketing support to our new research and development team.

Keith Beadle of the FED says "This is a really exciting development for disabled people visiting, living and working in the City. We are really keen to ensure that disabled people drive this work, after all disabled people are best placed to judge what is and isn't accessible. We are putting together a training package in order that people can help us gather the best guide information possible."

The 12 week training programme, focused on exploring the social model of disability and building a cohesive research team, is now in place and set to start on the 28th August 2007.

Kirsty MacKenzie, from Disability Equals Business says "We are extremely pleased to be able to support B&H Federation in its provision of services to disabled residents in and visitors to Brighton

and Hove. This is a vibrant city and it needs a vibrant and sustainable organisation of disabled people to ensure that their needs are built into the way it operates at every level. DEB is currently working with public authorities to support them in empowering disabled people and disabled peoples' organisations and this project is a great example of how this can be achieved."

We are currently, in the process of allocating assignments to the current team and are talking to local businesses about our plans. We want to influence the way that people respond and engage with disabled people when they are approached by somebody with an impairment; we believe this site offers the opportunity for a new dialogue and the building of positive relationships. Those participating in the project want to provide support and training to frontline staff wherever this might be helpful or appropriate.

It's not too late to get involved - if you are a disabled person and would like to join our current team of 10 people, then please contact Keith 01273 208934 or email [keith@bhfederation.org.uk](mailto:keith@bhfederation.org.uk)

## FIRST AID FOR LIFE

According to the World Health Organisation over 1 million people die by suicide every year. 10 times this number attempt suicide and 1 in 20 of us will have thoughts of suicide in any one year. Add to this the fact that Brighton and Hove has one of the highest rates of suicide in the country and it is clear this is a subject that needs to be less taboo.

This is why 4 local women have formed a social enterprise, ASIST Communities CIC. The company has been developed to raise awareness and develop and deliver the internationally renowned workshop Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST). ASIST and related workshops have been developed over the last 25 years by a Canadian organisation called Livingworks ([www.livingworks.net](http://www.livingworks.net)).

ASIST teaches a model of suicide first aid and is suitable for anyone regardless of previous experience. The workshop is largely experiential and uses a mix of presentations, discussion and practice. Participants are encouraged to examine their own attitudes to suicide and how these can impact on intervening with a person at risk.

So far courses have been delivered across the city and have received overwhelmingly positive feedback. Participants report feeling more confident and competent and research indicates these skills are retained over time.

'cutting edge, frontline, hands on LIFE-SAVING resource, made highly accessible and instantly applicable. The kind of training that saves lives'.

'It is an excellent course, it really has increased my confidence and has made me think about my own beliefs

and attitudes regarding suicide & self-harm & how this may impact on the way I interact with suicidal people.'

Attendees have come from across the voluntary and statutory sectors and include nurses, social workers, youth workers, advice and advocacy workers, volunteers, mental health service users and the list goes on..!

Courses are held regularly with subsidised places available on all courses. The company also delivers mental health awareness training and has a number of free or low cost workshops available funded by Brighton and Hove Council.

The company is hoping to organise an ASIST Training for Trainers course later in the year.

The directors are also hoping to secure funding for more subsidised community courses and would be

interested in exploring possible partnership funding applications with other voluntary organisations.

For more information or to discuss any of the above please contact Jenny Pickup on 07765 102957 or email [info@asistcommunities.co.uk](mailto:info@asistcommunities.co.uk) or check out the website, [www.asistcommunities.co.uk](http://www.asistcommunities.co.uk).

ASIST Communities is not a crisis support service – if you or someone you know is struggling with thoughts of suicide the following support is available:

Samaritans 24 hour helpline 08457 90 90 90

Papyrus 0870 170 4000 (helpline for anyone concerned about a young person at risk of suicide)



The directors outside the Livingworks office in Calgary, Canada, part of a world wide effort to make our communities suicide safer! From left: Suzie Marriott, Veronica (Livingworks) Jenny Pickup, Chris Brown and Miranda Frost

The Community & Voluntary Sector Forum supports several networks for our member organisations which share particular interests. The networks exchange information & good practice, develop collective points of view and support our representatives on the relevant city partnerships.

If you are interested in joining any of these networks, or finding out more, contact Duncan Blinkhorn on (01273) 234000 or email [duncan@cvsectorforum.org.uk](mailto:duncan@cvsectorforum.org.uk)

### **Children & Young People Network**

This network brings together staff & volunteers from organisations & projects working with children & young people. It supports our representatives on the Children & Young People's Trust Partnership and the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

The Forum's seven elected reps to the Children & Young People's Trust (CYPT) have spend recent months working with the Network to review the sector's engagement with the CYPT to improve the consistency, accountability and effectiveness of representation across the Trust's many groups .

The Trust's Co-ordination Group has been discontinued; the reps have recommended that representation be repositioned to include Healthy & Extended Schools Strategy Group (two elected reps); Communications and Consultation Group (two reps); Workforce Development Partnership (two reps); Preventative Strategy Group (two reps); Children and Young People Overview & Scrutiny Committee (two reps); Strategic Implementation Group CAMHS, (1 additional co-opted rep); Strategic Implementation Group Children with a disability and/or

learning; disability (1 additional co-opted rep). Because this process has just missed the recent round of Forum elections, any new reps will be co-opted and endorsed by the Network. In the coming months the Network will examine the role of the Forum in representation to the nine Healthy & Extended Schools cluster groups that provide a neighbourhood based community perspective to the development of services for children & young people.

### **Next meeting**

Wed 12th September, 7.30 - 9.00pm (as part of CVSF Quarterly Conference 5.30-9.00pm)

### **Community Festivals Network**

This network brings together people involved in putting on community festivals. Its next meeting takes place at the Phoenix Centre, Brighton at 7pm on 25 September.

### **Community Learning Network**

This network has been integrated into the Learning Partnership and the various working groups of that partnership. However, the Community Learning email list will still be run through the Forum, who will be setting up a new 'virtual' network over the coming weeks.

For details contact the Forum's representative to the Learning Partnership, Michelle Pooley on (01273) 234773 or e-mail [michelle@workingtogetherproject.org.uk](mailto:michelle@workingtogetherproject.org.uk).

### **Community Newsletter Network**

Brings together people who produce community newsletters and magazines, to share skills and learn more about newsletter production. The next meeting takes place at the Forum's quarterly conference on 12

September, 7.30 - 9pm. Contact Katy on 234003 or email [katy@cvsectorforum.org.uk](mailto:katy@cvsectorforum.org.uk)

### **Environment Network**

This 'virtual' network brings together Forum member organisations which have a particular interest in working on the sustainable development of Brighton and Hove. The network emerged partly out of a series of meetings about the city's Climate Change Action Plan; it will mainly work through emails. To be added to the virtual network, email [katy@cvsectorforum.org.uk](mailto:katy@cvsectorforum.org.uk)

### **Mental Health Network**

This network brings together volunteers and paid workers from local community and voluntary organisations involved in mental health services. Members are encouraged to share information about activities and may be consulted about public sector services. This Network has been looking at future PCT commissioning arrangements for mental health services delivered in Brighton & Hove by the community & voluntary sector. A working group has been set up to develop proposals which respond to a streamlined commissioning process while ensuring that the diversity and choice for clients associated with the VCS is not undermined.

Two new reps, Jenny Pickup and Sarah Danilly, have been elected to sit on the local NSF Local Implementation Team and will be reporting back to members through this network.

### **Next Meetings**

Thur 6th September, 9.15 - 11.30am (venue tbc); Wed 5th December, 11.30 - 1.00pm (as part of CVSF Quarterly Conference 9.30am-1.00pm)

## ELECTIONS UPDATE

As Gordon Brown takes over the reigns in Westminster, Ed Miliband goes from the Office of the Third Sector to the Cabinet Office and Phil Hope leaves the Department for Education and Skills for the Office of the Third Sector, so the Forum is pleased to announce the results of its elections.

### 2020 COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP

	Ron Bakere	Regency Square Area Society	321310	ronbakere@yahoo.co.uk
	Jannet Cook	Metamorphosis Art Group	694456	jannetcook@yahoo.co.uk
	Geraldine DesMoulins	B&H Federation of Disabled People	208934	geraldine.desmoulins@bhfederation.org.uk
	Doris Ndebele	Black & Minority Ethnic Community Partnership	718002	doris@bmecp.org.uk
	Judy Richards	B&H Black Women's Group	698036	blackwomensgroupbh@tiscali.co.uk
	John Routledge	Trust for Developing Communities	625157	jncr@waitrose.com
	Helen Russell	Co-operative Housing in Brighton and Hove	736966	helen@chibah.co.uk
	Chris Todd	B&H and Sussex Friends of the Earth	553044	chris.todd@zoom.co.uk
Neighbourhood Renewal Group	Barry Hulyer	Trust for Developing Communities	888584	barryhulyer@trustdevcom.org.uk
	Nicole Yann	Hangleton & Knoll Project	235052	nicole.yann@hkproject.org.uk
<b>Public Service Board</b>				
LSP Rep	John Routledge	Trust for Developing Communities	625157	jncr@waitrose.com
Chair of CVSF	Jon Cooper	The Basement, Arts Production South East	234045	jcooper@aimsalliance.org
Support role	Sally Hiscock	CVSF	234044	sally@cvsectorforum.org.uk

### CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

CYPT	Kim Aumann	Amaze	772289	kim@amazebrighton.org.uk
	Carrie Britton	CHOICES for Families of Children with Arthritis	430219	info@kidswitharthritis.org
	Sheena Cameron	Daybreak Family Group Conference	718021	sheena@daybreak-h.fsworld.co.uk
	Naima Noudjem	Mosaic Black and Mixed Parentage Family Group	234017	info@mosaicbrighton.org.uk
	David Standing	Hove YMCA	731724	david.standing@hoveymca.org.uk
Safeguarding CYPT Youth & Connexions	Children Board	TBC		
	David Standing	Hove YMCA	731724	david.standing@hoveymca.org.uk
	Ann Taylor	Youth Focus	764601	info@youthparticipation.org.uk
CYPT Youth & Connexions	Jess Wood	Allsorts Youth Project	721211	info@allsortsyouth.org.uk
	Stuart Johnson	Hove YMCA	731724	stuart.johnson@hoveymca.org.uk

### LEARNING

Learning Partnership	Michelle Pooley	Working Together Project	234773	michelle@workingtogetherproject.org.uk
	Frances Duncan	Whitehawk Inn	682222	fduncan@whinn.org.uk

### HEALTH

Healthy City Partnership	Simon Lewis	City Coast Church	433433	simon@citycoastchurch.co.uk
	Stuart Johnson	Hove YMCA	731724	stuart.johnson@hoveymca.org.uk
MH National Service F LIT	Jenny Pickup	Rethink	236211	jenny.pickup@rethink.org
	Sarah Danily	MIND in Brighton and Hove	722550	sarah.danily@mindcharity.co.uk

### ECONOMIC

EDEB	Barry Hulyer	Trust for Developing Communities	888584	barryhulyer@trustdevcom.org.uk
Economic Part	John Shepherd	Hove YMCA	731724	john.shepherd@hoveymca.org.uk

### EAST BRIGHTON NEW DEAL FOR COMMUNITIES PARTNERSHIP

	Niki Eldridge	Safe & Sorted, Hove YMCA	645900	niki.eldridge@hoveymca.org.uk
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### DIALOGUE 5050 GROUP

	Paul Bramwell	Working Together Project	234733	paul@workingtogetherproject.org.uk
	Sally Hiscock	CVSF	234044	sally@cvsectorforum.org.uk
	Peter Mason	SCIP	234049	peter@scip.org.uk
	Ceri Davies	The Scarman Trust	234014	ceri.davies@thescarmantrust.org
	Michael Creedy	Brighton Peace & Environment Centre	07799653366	michael.creedy@ntlworld.com
	Debbie Charman	The Carers' Centre	234045	debbie.charman@thecarerscentre.org

### CVSF TRUSTEES

Chair	Jon Cooper	The Basement, Arts Production South East	234045	jcooper@aimsalliance.org
	Tim Smith	Grace Eyre Foundation	324041	t.smith@griffithsmith.co.uk
	Rik Child	Furniture Now!	479528	director@furniturenow.org.uk
	Simon Lewis	Citycoast Church	433433	simon@citycoastchurch.co.uk
	Emma Gaskin	Appointee		emma.gaskin@ntlworld.com
	Michael Creedy	Brighton Peace & Environment Centre	07799653366	michael.creedy@ntlworld.com
	Debbie Charman	The Carers' Centre	234045	debbie.charman@thecarerscentre.org
	Emma Osborne	East Communications	606561	emma@eastcommunications.co.uk

## Local Area Agreements

### **Local Area Agreement Update – what are the changes and how will they be implemented?**

Local Area Agreements (LAAs) are three year agreements negotiated between central government and local authorities, which set out what the priorities for the local area are, what improvement targets have to be met and how they will be measured. LAAs are a major reform in the new Local Government Bill set to become legislation later this year.

Brighton & Hove has been an LAA pilot area for the past three years but the new style Agreements are due to be implemented next summer and work needs to start now across the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) membership in order to prepare for the 2008/9 – 2010/11 Agreement.

The exact arrangements for the new LAAs are still being agreed and the details described below may change. Key features of the currently proposed arrangements are as follows:

The LAA will be the only place where central government will agree targets with local authorities and their partners on outcomes delivered by local government on its own or in partnership with others.

LAAs will no longer be about specific funding for specific targets. There will be a new unringfenced area based 'LAA' grant; virtually all area based funding would go through this route.

LAAs will include a set of statutory educational targets (18), up to 35 improvement targets drawn from the national improvement indicator set (of approximately 200 indicators) and a range of locally-agreed targets

drawn from the Community Strategy.

Improvement targets will be based on performance data and information on known risks, progress on meeting targets to implement Sustainable Community Strategies and any other relevant locally relevant performance or needs based information

The new-look LAA will performance manage 200 improvement targets, rather than the 1200 performance indicators currently measured.

Details of the 200 indicators will be released in the Comprehensive Spending Review, due in autumn 2007.

Up to 35 of these 200 will be chosen as specific 'improvement targets' for each LAA. They will be determined by negotiation with central government (through GOSE), based on an analysis of local priorities, current performance information and identified areas of risk. It will be important for Brighton & Hove to enter into those negotiations with a clear understanding of local priorities and robust arguments to support those priorities. There will also be the opportunity to include other indicators as local targets: these will not be reported on to central Government.

It is currently anticipated that LAA negotiations with GOSE will start in autumn 2007, with a draft being prepared by April 2008 with sign-off and delivery against the new LAA from Summer 2008.

The LAA is intended to be a key delivery mechanism for the city's Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS), developed by the LSP to guide its work in reducing inequality for

people living in Brighton & Hove.

The overriding theme for the 2008/9-2010/2011 Local Area Agreement will be the continued effort to reduce inequalities. To support this approach the council, on behalf of the LSP, will undertake a review of current approaches to neighbourhood renewal and reducing inequality. The review outcomes will guide the development of a forward strategy that will inform LAA priorities.

The new LAA arrangements also place a duty on local authorities to consult and involve named partners. It is critical that non-statutory organisations including the CVSF and businesses are part of the process for determining and delivering targets.

For further information about the Local Area Agreement contact:

Richard Butcher Tuset  
Chief Executive's Policy Team  
& Sussex Improvement  
Partnership  
Brighton and Hove City Council,

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For information about the community and voluntary sector and the Local Area Agreement, contact:

Sally Hiscock  
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Brighton and Hove Community  
and Voluntary Sector Forum

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sally@cvsectorforum.org.uk

## CREATING STRONGER COMMUNITIES

***The Forum's Stronger Communities Programme aims to bring together organisations and communities so that they can have a meaningful voice on the 2020 Community Partnership (the city's Local Strategic Partnership), and its wider family of partnerships. By bringing together people who have experience and knowledge of different issues and areas to work together, the community and voluntary sector has a much stronger voice to help improve the city for the benefit of local people.***

The family of partnerships includes the Brighton and Hove Learning Partnership, Strategic Housing Partnership, Healthy City Partnership, Brighton and Hove Economic Partnership, Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership, Sustainability Commission, Arts Commission, Brighton and Hove Children's Trust, Public Service Board and the Economic Development and Enterprise Board.

It is through these partnerships that the city's service providers come together to plan for and achieve improvements. They are where targets are set and measured and where long term changes can be planned and made to happen. The ways in which services are delivered are complex and described as being through the 'family of partnerships', all of which feed into the 2020 Community Partnership.

The community and voluntary sector is represented on most of these partnerships. (A full list of elected representatives is on page 10).

The Forum has reviewed its

representation across the various partnerships, identifying where gaps are and looking at ways in which it can build upon its work.

This year's election procedures were improved and the level of communication between representatives and members is being increased, with regular members briefing meetings and information sheets; mini networking sessions for all elected representatives are now a regular feature of Forum quarterly conferences. A full support programme for representatives is in place, with those people elected invited to a full day's induction session and a two day accredited coaching session.

Throughout the summer, the Stronger Communities Programme will have a presence at a number of events to improve its links to neighbourhood activities. Such activity started at the launch of the new Neighbourhood Action Plans, which took place at Hove Town Hall last month and we will be taking stalls to community festivals and attending neighbourhood forum meetings too.

A neighbourhoods issue conference, "Round Our Way", taking place on 18 September, being organised by The Forum and The Trust For Developing Communities, will provide an opportunity for practical learning and good practice in neighbourhood activism, a crucial element of this year's plan.

Three themed networking events have taken place in the first quarter of the year, with more planned over the coming months.

Distilling the various different perspectives of our members into position statements to promote the views of the community and voluntary sector across the city presents many challenges; it does, however, enable The Forum to have a clear focus on the themes of the 2020 Sustainable Community Strategy in advance of their discussion by the 2020 Community Partnership.

With Climate Change on the 2020's agenda for May, Forum representatives were able to make a clear, confident case for actions based on discussions with members, including environmental experts, and refined further by email.

Safety Nets, the community safety networking event held in June was attended by over 30 people, and came up with a broad range of views and priorities. Work to prioritise them will take place by email over the coming weeks.

Hidden Treasures, the networking evening looking at employment and learning issues, took place just as Dialogue was going to print.

If you would like any more information about Stronger Communities Programme events, please contact Nicola Chanamoto on (01272) 234016 or email [nicola@cvsectorforum.org.uk](mailto:nicola@cvsectorforum.org.uk)

## FORUM POSITION STATEMENTS

### **Climate Change: *Can We Think Global and Act Local?***

Brighton and Hove's Community and Voluntary Sector Forum is agreed that:

- It supports the scientific consensus that climate change is happening

The overarching priority is to:

- reduce resource use, eg cut water use, waste, emissions across all sectors, especially in buildings / transport
- Ensure better recycling – e.g. paper
- Increase sustainable energy use
- Consider the impact of tourism – e.g. use of water and facilities

The Local Strategic Partnership, Public Service Board and family of partnerships need to develop an action focused plan, which tackles the barriers to change, by focusing on the following themes:

- Encouraging practical actions for which individuals/organisations can take responsibility, eg by turning computers off.
- Providing advice, education and information, eg that it is safe to turn the computer off
- Campaigning to raise awareness of the issues eg what will happen if you don't turn the computer off!

### **Safety Nets: *community perceptions of crime & safety and local solutions.***

- Improved communication and information sharing would impact upon perceptions of crime and safety, e.g. telling success stories that show how communities are safer would help reduce the fear of crime.
- Some neighbourhoods continue to experience problems and there are pressure points (for example, racist bullying in schools, difficulties caused by alcohol) which need to be dealt with. And low level anti social behaviour in areas outside of the city centre, such as graffiti and litter could be tackled
- Local Action Teams can provide local solutions, however they are not in all areas and they are under resourced. Their set up and the level of police involvement in them varies across the city.
- Stronger delivery partnerships and structures are needed, for example, statutory sector agencies should think more strategically about how they can attract money into the city to support community and voluntary sector activity in reducing crime.
- Existing structures could be more accountable and engage the community and voluntary sector more effectively, such as through the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership).

**These are summaries of the issues discussed. A full set of notes is available at [www.cvsectorforum.org.uk](http://www.cvsectorforum.org.uk) or on request.**

**STRONGER  
COMMUNITIES  
PROGRAMME**

## ACTION IN NEIGHBOURHOODS

The launch of the new Neighbourhood Action Plans by Brighton and Hove City Council at the end of June demonstrated how, by working together, local communities, councillors and service providers can deliver real improvements to the lives of people living in neighbourhoods which have suffered disadvantage.

The Plans were developed through consultation with communities and services in Neighbourhood Renewal Areas, so that gaps in services could be identified and workable solutions created.

In order to take forward the work of the Plans, Neighbourhood Action Groups have been formed, made up of residents, City Councillors and service providers. The Forum's Stronger Communities Programme has been making links with these Action Groups so that residents, through the action groups and other community organisations, can have their say and stress their priorities for action, at a citywide level.

Sally Hiscock, the Forum's Chief Officer said: "The diverse nature of the community and

voluntary sector of course presents challenges for us in addressing citywide change, but prioritising issues is helpful in ensuring key messages are heard and responded to by other sectors. For those involved in the Neighbourhood Action Plans who would like to see their skills and experience put to wider use in bringing about citywide change, we would love to welcome you on board."

Bevendean, The Bristol Estate, Brunswick & Regency, EB4U, Hangleton, Knoll, Laburnum & Moyne, Hollingdean, Portland Road and Clarendon, Portslade, Queens Park & Craven Vale and Turner have all set out their priorities for 2007-2010.

Strengthening communities and involving people, reducing crime and improving safety, promoting enterprise and learning, promoting resource efficiency and enhancing the environment and improved health and well being are some of the key areas that all the Neighbourhood Action Plans focus on.

Chris Todd, the Vice Chair of the 2020 Community Partnership, and an elected representative of the Community and Voluntary Sector Forum said: "The Neighbourhood Action Plans and the 2020 Community Partnership provide opportunities to strengthen the connections between neighbourhoods and between residents in neighbourhoods, businesses and community and voluntary

organisations. Today's launch reaffirms our shared commitment to change.

We look forward to hearing stories of the successful improvements made as a result of the Neighbourhood Action Plans during this next phase."

Leader of the Council, Councillor Brian Oxley opened the event. He said, "I was very happy to be there to show the Council's support and very pleased that there was such enthusiasm for taking this work forward. It's a credit to everyone involved".

The Neighbourhood Action Plans detail the areas of action to be addressed, the targets against which the actions will be measured, and the organisation which is responsible.

"At the Bevendean Community Conference, residents highlighted their concerns regarding a number of issues. In particular, residents felt the amount of rubbish and fly tipping on the estate was unacceptable and must be addressed".

"From quiet residences to busy shopping areas, the Brunswick and Regency renewal area is one of contrasts".

"The Police are committed to working with the Turner Area Partnership and a recent survey undertaken by them showed that 20% of respondents didn't see crime levels as a major concern for the neighbourhood".



## INDEPENDENCE DAY

### Independence day report shows that local voluntary organisations are still not independent from Councils

While Americans the world over celebrated Independence Day, a survey carried out by Compact Voice, based at the National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO), shows that independence is far from a reality for many voluntary organisations in England. 69% of organisations surveyed said local groups were afraid to campaign in case their funding would be affected.

This is despite voluntary organisations having their own 'declaration of independence', in the form of the Compact, whose first commitment is to 'recognise and support the independence of the sector.

This survey was carried out to coincide with local voluntary sector 'Independence Day', which will now be held every year to call for the independence of the voluntary sector to be strengthened from Councils.

These results are particularly important because over 70% of the voluntary and community sector works at a local level.

Key findings of the survey are:

- 69% of those surveyed said that they fear campaigning will affect their future funding
- 65% of those surveyed said that there are local Councillors on their trustee boards
- 59% of those surveyed said that local public bodies don't even

understand the concept of voluntary sector independence

- 46% of those surveyed said that groups find it a struggle to represent their users and be heard

However, the voluntary sector also has much to do in order to ensure its independence.

Paul Barasi, Local Compact Officer for Compact Voice, said: "While this report shows that many local public bodies are compromising the sector's independence, a significant number of voluntary organisations are not asserting their independence enough.

"Independence is part of the very fabric of the voluntary sector, benefiting public bodies and the people who use their services. It is crucial to local groups making a contribution to communities and public services bodies providing the services that people want."

On safeguarding independence, the Local Compact Voice Chair, Carl Allen, says: "The Compact didn't create the sector's independence, which has always existed. It did place independence first in the government's undertakings. Whilst the Compact's top job is to keep the searchlight on this right, the cost of independence is eternal vigilance."

The Commissioner for the Compact, John Stoker, in his 2007 Local Sector Independence Day message, pinpoints who needs to be vigilant:

"The Sector's Independence is crucial to an active community. The Compact's strong commitment on independence can't be taken for granted because it doesn't happen on autopilot. It takes local groups to safeguard it and public bodies to make it a reality when doing the business with them."

A special independence event was held on 4 July at the National Council for Voluntary Organisations to highlight the issues raised in the report to Councillors and voluntary and community organisations.

Compact Voice called on every area in England to take a practical step towards strengthening the local voluntary and community sector's independence as well as using the day to celebrate campaigning. Speakers included Paul Barasi, Local Compact Voice Officer, Ann Blackmore, Head of Policy at NCVO and David Cutler, Chief Executive of the Baring Foundation.

The independence report is available on NCVO's website [www.ncvo-vol.org.uk](http://www.ncvo-vol.org.uk).

Read the report: Stronger independence, Stronger relationships, Better outcomes (PDF 73KB) at <http://www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/press/releases/?id=5468>.

For more information please contact Siobhan Wakely on 020 7520 2569 or email [Siobhan.wakely@ncvo-vol.org.uk](mailto:Siobhan.wakely@ncvo-vol.org.uk).

# QUARTERLY CONFERENCE

**Feedback from our  
Quarterly  
Conference & AGM  
held on 20 June 2007  
March at Brighthelm**



The Forum’s quarterly conference and Annual General Meeting, ‘How does the garden grow’ took place at Brighthelm on Wednesday 20 June. As well as conducting the formal business of an AGM, approving the accounts and appointing auditors, the first session, ‘The Fruits of Our Labour’ reflected on the activities of the past year and looked at the priorities for the coming year.

A series of mini workshops followed, enabling members to contribute their views on the 2020 Sustainable Community Strategy, which will help form a range of Community and Voluntary Sector Position Statements. There were also two workshops looking at ChangeUp. Climate Change and Crime and Safety have been discussed at networking evenings and the position statements can be seen on page 13.

## Housing

Priority	Issue Identified By CVSF Members	General Comments
★★★★★ ★★★★★ ★★★	Promoting co-operative housing as route to sustainable communities providing sub-market rents and capacity building through tenant management, and which retain social housing stock.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Return to fair rents</li> <li>• More and better quality housing for existing tenants</li> <li>• Reduce number of holiday homes</li> <li>• Decent homes standards are a whitewash (too expensive/inaccessible)</li> <li>• Mixed tenure (social engineering) but works to reduce conflict between different types of people eg addicts, people needing support. If you lump all the needy together they stay needy</li> <li>• Supported housing - there is inadequate support in Brighton and Hove for those with mental health needs</li> <li>• Increasing the supply of affordable housing is a ‘pipe dream’ so reprioritise and reshape the housing agenda, eg shared living, mixed type developments</li> <li>• Low impact housing eg earthship · Make developers socially conscious eg new water mains</li> </ul>
★★★★★ ★★★★★	Increasing the supply of affordable housing to answer demand, especially for those on low incomes.	
★★★★★ ★★★	Promoting Tenant Management Organisations (TMOs) as cost effective way of doing repairs, maintenance and encouraging community development.	
★★★★★ ★★★	Reducing hardship through upholding tenancy rights, safeguarding deposits, developing low cost finance options for deposits, fuel efficiency.	
★★★	Reflecting the current needs of the local population in its diversity through mixed tenure in social housing developments and low cost home ownership.	
★★★	Linking the housing agenda with employment, learning, young people, exclusion and mental health.	
★	Improving advocacy for those presenting as homeless, especially young people.	
	Meeting the Decent Homes Standard in council housing stock; ensuring the private sector stock is decent and well maintained.	
	Implementing the Tenant Compact and local neighbourhood tenant compacts through strong neighbourhood representation	
	Extending the landlord accreditation scheme and improving landlord regulation.	

## Health and Well Being

Priority	Issue Identified By CVSF Members	General Comments
★★★★★ ★★★★★ ★★	Need for specific support and extra resources for particular community of interest groups, eg substance misusers, lone parents, young people, older people, people with mental health issues, LGBT people, black and minority ethnic people, people with HIV/AIDS.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Greater emphasis on preventative measures and the importance of relationships, the community and community groups in contributing to health and wellbeing. More investment in preventative measures eg counselling, physiotherapy, family support groups, carers support, befriending and neighbourhood care schemes.</li> <li>Need for the identification and dissemination of information about community and charitable support groups and their role in improving health and wellbeing.</li> </ul>
★★★★★ ★★★★★ ★★	More investment in preventative measures eg counselling, physio, family support groups, carers support, befriending and neighbourhood care schemes.	
★★★★★ ★★★	Need more neighbourhood GPs, dentists, chemists and adequate transport to get to them.	
★★★	Improved working with health professionals ie community and voluntary sector providers want to be clearly informed about agendas and strategies so they can contribute.	
★★★	Need information about community and charitable support groups and their role in improving health and well being to be identified and distributed.	
★★	People's needs (eg special needs) should be taken into account in holding health promotion events.	
★	Need a clearer cross cutting health strategy; there are too many partnerships.	
★	Some existing statutory sector mental health services would be delivered better through the voluntary sector.	
	Consultation feedback from carers and service users should be better used; the community and voluntary sector can help this and should be resourced.	

## Strengthening communities and involving people

Priority	Issue Identified By CVSF Members	General Comments
★★★★★ ★★	Need for a local representative group in every area to increase decision making power, increase access to council and other funding and make stronger links to strategic partnerships.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Changes in children and young people's services could make citywide work across sectors and localities difficult.</li> <li>There is a lack of funding for general services such as youth work.</li> <li>Funding is more for short term project work and for specialist needs.</li> <li>Induction for all new Forum members would build understanding.</li> <li>There is an issue of accountability in the community and voluntary sector where it can be difficult to criticise or complain when things go wrong.</li> </ul>
★★★★★	More volunteer opportunities and better representation of young people needed.	
★★★★★	Need more good practice and information sharing across neighbourhoods.	
★★★★★	Better access to real resources, workers, funding, meeting spaces and information.	
★★★	Better integration and awareness of communities of interest issues at a neighbourhood level.	
★★	Improved access to and better resourced community buildings.	
★★	Consistency across community development funding and provision – need community development strategy with long term funding strategy and a paid community development worker attached to each neighbourhood.	
★	Lack of choice and access to services is linked to poverty and this needs to remain on the agenda. Need to get statutory agencies to put poverty back on the agenda and not couch it in terms of social exclusion.	

continues

## conference feedback

Priority	Issue Identified By CVSF Members	General Comments
★	Lack of confidence and skills amongst residents; need capacity building training programme in every neighbourhood and for council and other service provider staff.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People who want to get involved don't always know where to start.</li> </ul>
★	Lack of accessible local information and opportunities to publicise and promote ideas, services and facilities in communities.	

## Transport

Priority	Issue Identified By CVSF Members	General Comments
★★★★★ ★★★★★ ★★	Transport hierarchy to be implemented; all road users to abide by the law.	
★★★★★ ★	More visionary infrastructure, use what we have better and more integration.	
★★★★★ ★	More extensive park and ride, heavily subsidised.	
★★★★★	More flexible and affordable car hire,	
★★★★	Improve the quality of bus drivers and driving so people feel safe.	
★★★★	Provide space for bicycles on trains.	
★★★★	Drive at 20mph everywhere.	
★★★	The price of public transport, particularly rail, for people on low incomes is prohibitive.	
★★★	Safer walking routes and a safer physical environment.	
★★	The frequency of buses is inadequate in the evenings and at weekends.	
★★	Taxis should not have privileged status in bus lanes unless environmentally friendly.	
★	Transport services need to make a commitment to reducing carbon emissions; need a reduction strategy.	
★	There is a need for increased community transport provision.	
★	Consult local people when changes are being planned.	
★	Need more provision for cyclists at pedestrian crossings, improved cycle lanes and places to secure bikes.	
★	Problems with parking and congestion need to be addressed.	

## Employment, Skills & The Local Economy

*These sessions fed back their general issues rather than prioritising.*

Issue Identified By CVSF Members	General Comments
Affordable quality childcare to enable access to training & work and in particular support for lone parents.	
Provision of other local complimentary services; there is a need for employment services, job clubs, advice and guidance to be more accessible and not time limited.	
Improve access to learning & training, through covering costs, providing learning support, introductory taster courses, providing special equipment for disabled people, providing more information about courses, perhaps through a fair or directory, assistance in developing study skills, more chances for people to learn in their local communities, 'leaders' or mentors to support learners, provision of community IT facilities with neighbourhood websites.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve school attendance</li> <li>• What about when the school system fails for the individual?</li> <li>• Support for increasing number of children not in school</li> <li>• Acknowledge existing skills &amp; achievements</li> <li>• Accessible, local community training</li> </ul>

Issue Identified By CVSF Members	General Comments
Better activities and support for children and young people, especially safe places out of hours.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transition from school age to adult</li> <li>• Untapped expertise within the CVSF</li> <li>• Modular options for young people</li> <li>• Flexible learning</li> <li>• Psychometric tests available for young people</li> <li>• Guidance selecting right kind of job</li> <li>• Self esteem</li> </ul>
Better support for children and young people making the transition from primary to secondary school or who experience language or learning barriers or who have experienced bullying or who have been excluded.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NEETS (not in employment, education or training) employment support eg partnership between Jobcentre Plus and CVSF</li> <li>• People securing funds for services that already exist</li> <li>• Volunteering targets: long term benefits, outreach, supporting &amp; training volunteers.</li> <li>• CYPT divided into sector hubs in each area.</li> </ul>
Recognition of the community and voluntary sector as a provider of training, learning and workforce development and a key partner in engaging non traditional and excluded learners, with innovative methods of delivering life long learning relevant to work and life.	
The co-ordination and promotion of Brighton and Hove learning opportunities provided by the community and voluntary sector.	
Exploring stronger links between formal and informal learning providers.	
Use of community groups to provide peer support to encourage people to access non-academic courses.	
Auditing the contribution of the community and voluntary sector to the development of adult learning (surveys including what type of provision they would attend).	

## Quality services

*The Quality Service sessions fed back their general issues rather than prioritising.*

- Who decides the definition of quality?
- Quality should be integrated into all of the themes rather than separate
- We want to see bench marking of services and then agreed targets
- What are we aiming for?
- How do we measure the quality of volunteer run groups?
- We would like recognition of resident and community involvement and the quality of it
- Quality is not about ticking boxes but more about the quality of interaction with residents eg in a partnership setting
- We need to value ourselves and get the statutory sector to understand our value
- Quality requires the infrastructure organisations to be funded to be able to run quality assurance systems
- Core funding and full cost recovery are key issues that support quality assurance
- Need to think in a joined up way to provide good quality integrated services in both sectors
- Residents should be supported to be involved
- Lobby for the LAA to have quality assurance built in and funded
- The cheapest service this often compromises quality
- Consortia working should lead to better quality integrated services
- Funders should recognize that time it takes to put systems in place
- Respect the democratic processes of the community and voluntary sector
- We need to look at the quality of community involvement not just services

- Understand the motivation that comes from knowing you are providing a quality service
- Check the quality of participation in services, are decisions being made without involvement, eg the community safety partnership?
- The knowledge that residents have is quantifiable and measurable
- Need support around up skilling the workforce and around human resources
- Look at the motivations for the voluntary sector being involved in quality assurance e.g. funding
- Support the development of more effective management and performance systems and processes



## ChangeUp

### How has the ChangeUp funding been used?

- Capacity Builders funds running costs (including £5k allocated for engagement with targeted groups) of about £34k this year for Consortium support & development, mainly on
- Project manager post (p/t) & admin support
- Meeting & publicity costs
- Contribution to Forum core costs for management
- A two year programme of projects – approx £77k over 2 years (end March 08) funds:
- ‘Better Information’ projects (see projects workshop writeup) i.e. common database, joint infrastructure newsletter, joint infrastructure website.
- ‘Specialist Groups’ engagement with ChangeUp & ChangeUp projects

### How are smaller Groups engaged?

- small budget towards attendance
- specific groups helped through specialist groups funding (above)

### What happens next?

- 20 areas of support to groups identified in the ‘infrastructure development plan’ (by 2014)
- Big lottery BASIS bid to (hopefully) deliver IT training, development of social enterprise, volunteer support

### What has ChangeUp achieved locally?

- Trust has been developed between

- infrastructure organisations
- More joined up working
- Organisations have signed an agreement for better co-ordination and co-operation
- Specific examples include:
- Partnership bids to BASIS
- Common database, newsletter and website

### How does ChangeUp propose to mirror this at community level? Where has it been valuable to the community?

- ChangeUp is there to improve infrastructure rather than work directly with front line delivery or community organisations
- ChangeUp serves as a model for the sector in terms of joined up working
- The process has / will improve the quality of services provided to support the sector
- The projects should have a knock on effect for the community because of the improved access to information, support and advice etc

### Better Information: Support for Groups joint database, website and newsletter.

An important piece of the ChangeUp work is the development of a shared database, providing up to date information and contact details for groups, plus extras such as a calendar.

- The database structure is tried and tested and we know works.
- The difficult bit will be sharing data

with external databases.

A joint newsletter will replace a range of existing newsletters – from the Forum’s Dialogue magazine to the Council’s Fundamental newsletter - and mean that groups can find out the latest in one useful publication. It could become a powerful voice.

- There will be one infrastructure newsletter or magazine which promotes infrastructure services and is hoped will become a useful campaigning too.
- It will be free of charge and produced quarterly, with the first issue due in January 08
- Editorial Board – frontline organisations to be encouraged to be involved
- It will link with the joint website
- It needs a name; all suggestions welcome!
- There will be a central website but other organisations will keep their own sites.
- There will be future opportunities to be involved with feeding back on the website, which must be intuitive.
- As questions are asked online through the joint website, its knowledge base will be built up over time.

## City Employment and Skills Steering Group

The CESSG was formed by the local authority, Learning Skills Council and Dept for Work and Pensions to oversee development of the City Employment and Skills Plan, which will be completed in the Autumn. The Group sits somewhere between the Learning Partnership, the CYPT Board and the Economic Development and Enterprise Board (a hard copy chart depicting this and the various channels of communication / reporting is available on request). It was noted that the remit of the Learning Partnership has meanwhile has affected by the development of the Joint Strategic Commissioning Unit. This Unit was set-up as it was felt that that the Learning Partnership, as made up of learning providers, could not lead on commissioning processes. CVSF requested a seat on the CESSG as it became clear that decisions were being made in the group and agendas set which affect voluntary sector learning providers and the learning provision in the city, without their being representation of the sector. It would be preferable for a learning rep to take up this seat given their expertise and focus, assuming the Group continues and this can be negotiated.

Agenda items at the meeting included a review of the City Employment and Skills Plan development (content and timeline) and an overview of the new European Social Funding programme 2008-2013 (available on request or at <http://www.futureesf-se.org.uk/>). Continuation funding was discussed for the Whitehawk Inn and the Bridge, which risk closure when eb4u funding (including a 12 month extension) comes to an end. It was agreed that more strategic analysis was required to inform the

discussion, e.g. comparative figures for other service providers will help assess value for money, a map of providers for the city would help identify gaps and a strategic discussion around commissioning processes and support for VCS groups to bid for funding would clarify understanding around added value and transparent processes. Only after this did partners feel they could assess whether these two projects should remain a focus for funding and delivery.

## Dialogue 50/50 Group

Membership of the group was discussed and action agreed to fill gaps in statutory representation. Three new CVSF reps were welcomed.

The Fit for Purpose NHS Consultation was discussed. A significant range of consultation activities are underway and the Dialogue 5050 Group will comment on the consultation at its next meeting when participants have read the documentation.

The CRB checking service provided by the Council has been suspended following the member of staff leaving. Impact Initiatives are now registered to provide this service. The Council will review whether it should continue its service in light of this and potential savings could be redirected to Impact or revert back to the community development commissioning fund.

The Consultation Framework, being developed by BHCC, is being further refined with input from the sector, following an unsuccessful launch event in May. A steering group is being set-up, pilot project consultations being identified and good practice guidance being developed. CVSF are involved, along with others.

Work is progressing with the Economic and Social Audit of the Community and Voluntary Sector; the data is being compiled and new questionnaire drafted, for an Autumn/Winter survey. Results are expected early Spring.

Work is progressing with the review of the Compact, which has been formally commissioned by the LSP, to ensure cross-sector cross-partnership ownership of the process and outcomes. Partnership Managers have been asked to review whether the Compact is fit for the purpose of the partnership they facilitate. Feedback is being gathered and comparisons are underway with other Compacts/Codes of Practice to identify good practice from which we could learn.

## Learning Partnership

The Learning partnership has launched its new Adult Learning Strategy 2007-2009, which should be accompanied by a fanfare as it's taken 10 years to be developed! Copies available from the Learning Partnership, 3rd Floor Brighton Town Hall, Bartholomew Square, Brighton, BN1 1JA or [ww.bhlp.org.uk](http://ww.bhlp.org.uk)

In September there will be a new round of South East Regional ESF tenders; the Learning Partnership is trying to discuss a joint approach to related tenders to ensure B&H try to avoid competing bids from local organisations but encourage collaboration. The tenders are due to be released on 11 September with a provisional date of the 13 September between 1pm and 3pm scheduled. If you are an adult learning provider please contact Dan Shelley on 01273 294922

The Learning Partnership is leading the development of an Action for Communities network for Brighton

in Hove. The project is called Laying Foundations and will:

- \*Support the development and production of an Adult Learning portrait for the city.
- \*Develop a robust communication strategy for the group (including web facilities) and related and sustained marketing campaign.
- \*Enhance and develop the consultation methods learning providers use in the city by working with the Neighbourhood Action Groups/equivalents across the city.
- \*Coordinate additional engagement with CVS sector.
- \*Further develop and enhance joint Continuing Professional Development and Quality Assurance/Quality Improvement initiatives across the city. If you would like further information, contact Dan Shelley on (01273) 294922

A briefing for the Local Strategic Partnership Representatives on Joint Planning and Commissioning for Learning and Skills in Brighton & Hove has also been written.

Michelle Pooley, contact (01273) 234773 or email [michelle@workingtogetherproject.org.uk](mailto:michelle@workingtogetherproject.org.uk)

### **Local Safeguarding Children Board and Staying Safe Sub-Group**

The Planning and Review Group (LSCB sub-committee) are discussing the LSCB ratification of CVS child protection policies.

LAC (Looked After Child) Reviews and initial conferences policy and practice have been reviewed and the intention is to move to a more targeted invitation list, by secure email, making it clear whether the professional is being invited due to recent contact with child(ren) or whether it is their professional

expertise that is required. This should improve the attendance of relevant professionals.

A CYPT Preventive Strategy. Strategy Group has been set up with one (non-elected) voluntary sector member to look at where services can have an impact in preventing children and young people from a range of preventable situations including homelessness and involvement with the criminal justice system. The focus is on early intervention, risk management, promoting resilience in families and exploring further the interface between children in need, looked after children and those involved in the criminal justice system. The Strategy Group is in the process of mapping other preventable issues, and may then audit CVS services impact on them. It is not clear how CVS groups can get involved at this stage of the process as there is no mandated CVS rep on the group. Also, it has not been decided if vulnerable adults are to be included in Preventive Strategy remit. This work will be pulled together over the summer.

### **Partnership Managers Group**

This is a monthly meeting of facilitators of the wider family of partnerships and is described as the engine room of the partnership framework - it takes action to address under-performance in the LAA, ideally in partnership with agencies represented on the relevant partnership. At its July meeting it agreed how it would take forward priorities identified by the PSB (see PSB feedback), most of which were delegated to the Learning Partnership. Progress will be reported back to the Public Service Board in November.

The Partnership Managers are engaged in planning for the 2008-11

LAA and were asked to share their top priorities, so that partners can begin to identify opportunities for joint planning and delivery. Co-ordination and co-operation is required in the context of resources being reduced in the LAA, the end of Neighbourhood Renewal funding. Each partnership, including CVSF's Stronger Communities Programme, is required by Nov 07 to develop a business case to form the basis for negotiations in the LAA.

Partnership Managers scoped the item for stock-take at the next PSB, defining what needs to be covered when reviewing 'Employment of disadvantaged groups' and who should speak to this agenda. CVSF will be able to make use of its position statement at these discussions in September

### **Public Service Board**

Following the review of the PSB earlier in the year, its membership has grown to include Chairs and CEOs of PCT/Universities/Hospitals/Job Centre Plus etc and it has adopted a new style of working. Each meeting consists of 2 parts; 1) a core business update, around the LAA and LSP; 2) a stock-take analysing areas of under-performance in the LAA. The stock-take agrees where follow up is required and tasks the Partnership Managers Group with taking this forward. The Partnership Managers Group is a monthly meeting of facilitators of the wider family of partnerships. Described as the engine room of the partnership framework, it takes action to address under-performance in the LAA, ideally in partnership with agencies represented on the relevant partnership. In the business section of the July meeting, the PSB:

- supported the Reducing Inequalities Review being undertaken by BHCC Policy Team. The review will evaluate current

approaches to reducing inequality and develop a strategy to guide future work. CVSF has a seat on the steering group overseeing the review.

- Noted the contents of the 12 month performance management data for the LAA and the submission to GOSE. In a traffic light assessment of the measures in the 06/07 LAA, 36.5% are red, 15% are amber and 47.5% are green. Over coming meetings, the PSB will consider the outcomes at risk in the LAA and agree actions to tackle under performance.
- Approved the process for developing the 2008-2011 LAA, including engagement with CVSF and community representatives. The LAA will be developed between now and November, with negotiations commencing with GOSE in December, the final LAA being agreed in Spring and the LAA going live in June 08.

The stock-take at the meeting focused on school attainment and attendance. Presentations from CYPT staff focused on achievements against targets and review of under-performance. A short discussion identified a number of areas for improvement including

- CYPT and universities to discuss improving teachers' leadership roles in science and maths
- Economic Partnership and CYPT to work together on school/ employer engagement strategies
- Learning Partnership to consider approaches to the new 14-19

### The Forum is funded by



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curriculum and how the other partnerships and universities can support the effective embedding of the new curriculum.

## 2020 Community

### Partnership

(The Local Strategic Partnership)

The LSP met in May with 7 out of 8 CVSF reps in attendance.

- The meeting received updates on delivery against targets in the Local Area Agreement and other projects underway, including the BME participatory needs analysis, the development of Citystats and planning within the Advice Services Strategy Group.
- LSP members formally commissioned the review of the Compact, being led by the Dialogue 50:50 Group. They endorsed a new project to evaluate approaches to reducing inequality in the city. This review will be completed by the end of the year and will develop a comprehensive strategy to guide future work to improve outcomes for neighbourhoods and groups facing disadvantage. CVSF has representation on the steering group overseeing this project and community and voluntary organisations will benefit from this shared learning.
- Substantial feedback was provided via the CVSF Learning Partnership rep in response to the pro-

posed development of a Joint Planning Learning Skills Council / Brighton and Hove City Council Virtual Team. It was felt the proposal takes a narrow view of adult learning and does not recognise the extent to which the sector contributes to learning provision, both as a provider and through the support it provides to learners. Dialogue between CVSF and the LSC identified a lack of clarity on the structures for commissioning, how the Team fits with regional work and where the Learning Partnership fits in the picture. It is hoped some of these issues will be monitored and revisited when the new structure has been in place for 6 months.

- The themed discussion at the LSP focused on climate change. Reps expressed the views of the sector - making use of the position statement developed at the networking evening earlier in May - to ask that the LSP encourages practical action, improves access to advice and information and campaigns to raise awareness of the issues. Other LSP members from the public and private sectors fed into the discussion and a small working group was established, which CVSF rep Chris Todd will join, to draw up an action plan in advance of the next LSP meeting in September.

Brighton & Hove Community & Voluntary Sector



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