

Resourcing Christian Community Action: Parishes and Partnerships

January 2012

Contents

Acknowledgements	iv
Executive Summary	v
1. Background	1
1.1 The context, origins, purpose and scope of the study.	1
1.2 The research methodology	2
1.3 The range of projects examined	2
1.4 Infrastructure organisations	4
1.5 Wider strategies	5
2. Why Christian community action?	6
2.1 Theological rationale	6
2.2 Where does it fit with mission and ministry?	6
2.3 Where does it fit with the idea of the Big Society?	7
2.4 An invitation from secular partners?	8
3. Findings from the research I: About the projects	10
3.1 Origins	10
3.2 Range of activities	11
3.3 Management and leadership	15
3.4 Resources	16
3.5 Volunteers	17
3.6 Measuring success	19
3.7 Success factors	20
3.8 Barriers	25
3.9 Challenges and opportunities	27
4. Findings from the research II: About supporting projects	31
4.1 The importance of higher level support	31
4.2 The role of CUF	32
4.3 Other national bodies	33
4.4 Examples of infrastructure organisations	34
4.5 Wider strategic context	36
5. Conclusions and policy messages	38
5.1 Bringing the threads together	38
5.2 Theological themes	38
5.3 Returning to the idea of the Big Society	39
5.4 Stronger bonds	39
Appendices	
I. Projects	41
• ASPIRE, St. Mary's Church, Slough	42
• Families Matter, Guildford	46
• YPAC, Miles Platting and Ancoats, Manchester	50
• Urban Hope, Islington	54
• Happy at Home, South Tyneside	60
• Heartsease Community Project, Norwich	64
• Nottingham Arimathea Trust	67
• S.A.S., Liverpool	72
• Hereford CHAT	74

• Reading Christian Network	78
• Derby Cathedral	84
• St. Leonard's Centre, Bootle, Merseyside	86
• St. Martin's Centre, Newcastle upon Tyne	91
• St. Augustine's Centre, Halifax	96
• Ascend, South Oxhey, Watford	101
• Christ Church Community Services, Bridlington	105
• St. James' Church, Hemingford Grey	109
• Hull Churches Home from Hospital	113
• Life Expectancy, Wirral	118
• St Luke the Physician Church and Neighbourhood Centre, Longsight, Manchester	122
• Thrive, Stockton-on-Tees	127
• Jubilee Money Advice Service, Oswestry	131
• MUMAS, Gloucester	135
• Coventry Foodbank	137
• FareShare, Leicester	140
• Cumbria Reducing Offending Partnership Trust	142
• Support and Advice for Families of Offenders and Ex-Offenders (SAFE), Burnley, Hyndburn and Pendle	148
• Surrey Appropriate Adult Service (SAAVS)	153
• Routes to Roots, Poole, Dorset	157
• Exeter Churches Housing Action Team (CHAT)	162
• Horsham Matters	166
• Harvest, Exeter	170
• St Paul's Church, Manningham, Bradford	174
• The Feast, Birmingham	178
II. Infrastructure examples	183
• Churches' Trust for Cumbria	184
• Council for Social Responsibility, Portsmouth	185
• East Northants Faith Group	188
• Faith in Our Communities, Durham	190
• Good Neighbours Support Service, Winchester, Guildford and Portsmouth	194
• Kairos Partnership, Hereford	196
• Leeds Christian Community Trust	198
• Together for Regeneration, South Yorkshire	201
• Transformation Cornwall	206
III. Strategies	208
• Youth Strategy for London	209
• Faith in Affordable Housing	213
• Shrinking the Footprint	218
IV. Templates	226
• Questions to ask before embarking on a project	227
• Volunteers: issues to be considered	228
• Policy specific project areas: Asylum Seekers	230
• Social Return on Investment	231
• Steps towards a Community Land Trust	233

V. References	236
VI. Resource Materials	238
VII. National Organisations	240
VIII Sources of funding	249
VIX Glossary	253

Acknowledgements

This extensive study would not have been possible without the contribution of a large number of people. I had very helpful discussions with people from national organisations such as The Children's Society, Church Action on Poverty, Church Urban Fund, English Heritage, Housing Justice and the Mothers' Union and the National Rural Officers of the Church of England and the United Reformed Church at the Arthur Rank Centre. Many diocesan officers with responsibility for social responsibility, church and society, community ministry and rural affairs were extremely co-operative in providing information about projects in their dioceses.

The greatest demands, however, were made on those who told me about infrastructure organisations and diocesan strategies and, especially, the contacts in the local projects. They were all most patient in response to my requests and in giving time for either face-to-face meetings or telephone interviews. I felt privileged to have the experience of hearing about many inspiring projects and witnessing the dedication of those involved. I am most grateful for their interest, candour and generosity.

The members of the steering group, Tim Bissett, Malcolm Brown and Gavin Oldham, gave immense support and valuable insights and Gavin also played a major role in constructing the website. Nonetheless, I accept full responsibility for any errors of fact, omission or interpretation.

Hilary Russell

Resourcing Christian Community Action: Parishes and Partnerships

Executive Summary

This study arose from a motion in General Synod in November 2010 following a debate on the Big Society. Its main purpose was to act as a catalyst in bringing together current best practice in Christian care in local communities with the resources and knowledge base needed to multiply those good works across the country. The aim was to include a wide spectrum of examples covering different policy areas, location and types of activity. Although many of the projects included are in deprived areas, Christian community action is called for in any context to demonstrate care for neighbours and new ways of being and to work for personal, social and structural transformation.

KEY FINDINGS

- The main driver for Christian community action projects is the desire to serve the local community either in response to some immediately perceived problem or following investigation of local needs.
- Local projects encompass an enormously wide variety of activities, express a range of theological themes, including hospitality, presence, liberation, inclusion and justice and represent an immense contribution to the wellbeing of local communities.
- Many projects rely heavily on volunteers whose contribution of time and skills can be equivalent to many thousands of pounds per year even to individual projects.
- Projects increasingly have to be accountable to funders and supporters which makes it important for them to be able to quantify their achievements as well as articulate their qualitative impact.
- Strengths specific to effective faith-based projects include *faith* as their underpinning and motive force, their *integration* with the church for different sorts of support and encouragement, their *local roots* and longstanding presence and their *stress on the whole person* and his or her needs.
- One of the key barriers at present is lack of funding. Uncertainty about future funding and making repeated funding bids can be a massive drain on energy.
- Service changes and the current austerity measures are both a challenge and an opportunity. On the one hand, there are fewer resources to meet a rising tide of need. On the other, there are some openings for new collaborative ways of working.
- Provision for social responsibility is shrinking in some dioceses as a result of financial pressures and yet is a vital source of support essential to unlocking local energies and capacity.

Context of the study

'Big Society' is a concept that emerged after the 2010 General Election. The aim is to move power away from central government and give it to local communities and individuals and achieve a more participative society. In principle, the main strands of the idea should encourage people not only in churches, but in the voluntary and community sector as a whole:

- fostering a culture of voluntarism and philanthropy and promoting social action;
- community empowerment by giving people a greater say in decisions affecting their area and the services;
- developing new forms of public service delivery including the use of charities and social enterprises.

Recognising that the government has expressed interest in partnering voluntary organisations in building local communities, the main purpose of this study was to act as a catalyst in bringing together current best practice in Christian care in local communities with the resources and knowledge base needed to multiply those good works across the country. It is not a comprehensive database. Nor was the purpose to endorse or kite mark specific projects. Rather the objective was to provide an illustrative resource as a *celebration* of the Church's role in 'building better neighbourhoods', as an *encouragement* to others to consider this form of ministry and as a *practical tool* for any thinking of embarking on such a venture. A key underlying question was whether, in the face of public spending cuts, 'Big Society' is facilitating or obstructing what they are trying to do.

Why Christian community action?

"Honour one another and seek the common good" is a recurrent phrase in Anglican liturgy that underlines the inseparability of the personal and the social or political. The common good draws its significance directly from the second great commandment to love our neighbours as ourselves. In answer to the question "who is my neighbour?", Jesus tells the parable of the Good Samaritan. (Luke 10: 29-37) The point is further developed in the story of the sheep and the goats (Matthew 25: 31-45) which identifies service to God as inextricable from service to others: "*whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me as you did it not to one of the least of these, you did it not to me.*" The pursuit of the common good through Christian community action,

therefore, is a direct response to both the two commandments at the heart of the Christian faith.

Three of the *Five Marks of Mission* make clear that the Church's mission includes pastoral care, social action and engagement with the social, economic and political structures that affect people's lives.

- To respond to human need by loving service;
- To seek to transform unjust structures of society;
- To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth.

The Projects

The aim in selecting the projects was to include a wide spectrum of examples covering:

- policy areas ranging from homelessness to foodbanks; employment and training to debt counselling; youth projects to care for the elderly; health to rural isolation;
- rural, urban and suburban locations;
- the use of church buildings for community use;
- different origins;
- different scales of project;
- ones wholly based on volunteering as well as those with paid workers;
- local projects linked with national organisations;
- congregationally-based as well as 'free-standing';
- Church of England, other denominations, ecumenical and interfaith.

The projects are based in many very different locations and deliver a wide range of activities (see below). As well as capturing this variety, the project stories cover: their origins; aspects of their management and leadership; resources; the place of volunteers; how they measure their achievements; the barriers they are encountering, their success factors; and their challenges and opportunities. This summary can only focus on a few of these topics.

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community use of premises • Support/befriending • Women and children's work • Drop-ins • Counselling/information/advice • Financial and in-kind assistance • Emergency accommodation • Food aid • Lunch clubs and cafés • Education and training | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outreach and preventative work • Employability • Personal development • Street Pastors • Community links/cohesion • Networks and forums • Recycling and environmental • Social enterprise • Advocacy and campaigning |
|---|--|

Management and leadership

The projects covered in the study are managed in a variety of ways and have different degrees of independence from the church. Some use the church's charitable status for fund raising. Others are registered charities, charitable companies limited by guarantee or registered community interest companies. Leadership is vital. Many charismatic people are to be found in these projects, whether as initiators or workers, and some organisations owe their existence and continued existence to the determination and personality of particular individuals. But, as in other contexts, leadership is shown in a variety of guises: originating the project, winning support, managing it, sustaining it and, if appropriate, terminating it. Different forms of leadership require different aptitudes. Very often, projects originate with someone or a small group having an idea and they will become the initial driving force, but will then usually need to win other support.

Resources

The project stories indicate wide variation in the need for funds, in the sources of funding and in the combinations of types of funding that different organisations have been able to secure. In addition to grants from charitable trusts, other sources of funding include contracts, income from activities (such as sales of food or rental income) and fund raising activities by supporters. A key advantage of the Church Urban Fund has been its role as first funder as other grant giving trusts are usually less willing to take this sort of risk. A CUF grant, therefore, has often served as an invaluable lever for attracting other funds. In-kind assistance, such as premises or donations of equipment or furniture can also be important. There is a distinction between start-up and running costs and inevitably the growth of the organisation (such as employing staff) and/or expansion of activities bring new resource challenges.

Volunteers

Projects often rely on volunteers for a wide range of tasks: for example, from mentors and befrienders to shop work; administration and reception duties to preparing and distributing food. Trustees and management committee members also need to be counted as volunteers. Calculated on the basis of the minimum wage hourly rate, in one church community centre, the contribution of approximately 50 volunteers amounted to over £300,000 per year. For smaller projects, of course, the amounts were also much smaller though their contribution to the maintenance and effectiveness of the work was just as significant. Managing volunteers is a major responsibility. There has to be awareness of what can and cannot be done by volunteers, the checks and forms of induction and training required and arrangements need to be in place for insurance and for expenses where appropriate.

Measuring success

Although projects have to be accountable, sometimes in terms of quantifiable measures, they are also likely to have success criteria that go beyond targets and outputs. Very often their concern is with the quality of relationships or the less tangible elements of health and well-being. Voluntary organisations, including faith groups, are increasingly being asked to evidence their impact. There are ways of doing this that go further than 'counting outputs' and capture the wider benefits, such as Social Return on Investment (SROI) and Social Auditing. Such approaches can also pick up on the indirect effects of community action, such as a strengthened local church or greater trust across denominations.

Success factors

There is a difference between the way that results and impact are measured and the factors that contribute to effectiveness. The study tried to determine what characterises these projects at their best and, in particular, whether there are features that distinguish

them from other third sector projects. There was evidence that faith not only inspires the vision amongst project initiators but is also a motivating and sustaining force for participants. Links into the wider church are important for practical support and for continuity and the local trust that it can generate. Another key distinguishing feature of church care projects is that their starting point is the individual in front of them whereas a statutory agency is limited by its specific remit.

Supporting projects

A key message emerging from the study was the significance of infrastructure support to projects and therefore several different types of infrastructure organisations were included in the study. It also discusses CUF's support role through workshops, newsletters, case studies, templates and toolkits. In addition, support comes in various forms from diocesan officers: asking appropriate questions when parishes are considering embarking on a project; supplying neighbourhood data or information about potential sources of funding; help with funding applications. However, resources for social responsibility (under whatever name it appears) and related activities are shrinking in some dioceses.

Conclusions and messages

- In some ways, the jury is still out on the Big Society. There seems to be an open invitation to take on a greater community role, but rhetoric is not necessarily matched by reality. This is a time of flux in the lives of many of the communities and projects represented here. The combined effects of the economic downturn and the government's austerity measures mean both increased need particularly among already vulnerable people in already deprived neighbourhoods *and* tighter purse strings amongst potential funders of voluntary organisations, including church groups. The opportunities may be there to become more involved in service delivery but mainly without the resources to enable this to happen.
- The projects described in this study put neighbourliness into practice, but they need support in this from the wider church in terms of prayer, understanding, information, practical assistance and, sometimes, strategic direction. Some projects had encountered negative attitudes inside the church as well as

external barriers. That the Christian mission in the world *"is not just to enable the church to flourish but to promote the flourishing of all people"* remains a message that needs to be driven home.

- There is another role for the wider church and its leaders. At project level, there can be tensions between the pastoral and prophetic roles; between meeting needs and speaking out about the impact of the economy and public policies on vulnerable people and communities. Yet the strong social bonds that these projects are trying to generate have to be embodied in economic and social policies and institutions as well as expressed in inter-personal relationships. The existence of this Christian community action, its presence and sustained service in all parts of society gives the church the experience and authority to be able to speak with integrity in the public arena with and for those who would not otherwise have a voice.

About the study

The study was conducted during the first nine months of 2011 by Professor Hilary Russell, European Institute for Urban Affairs, Liverpool John Moores University. The study combined desk research, a questionnaire and fieldwork.

The full study report includes the following appendices:

- Stories of 34 local projects;
- Descriptions of 9 infrastructure organisations;
- Descriptions of strategic approaches to 3 policy areas;
- Templates;
- References;
- Resource materials;
- National organisations;
- Funding sources;
- Glossary.

All the material is available on-line at the following website address: www.how2help.net

In addition there is a power point presentation (with speakers' notes) intended for use in meetings such as diocesan or deanery synods to combine feedback on the study with an opportunity to showcase local projects.

RESOURCING CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY ACTION: PARISHES AND PARTNERSHIPS

1. Background

1.1 The context, origins, purpose and scope of the study

This study arose from a motion in General Synod in November 2010 following a debate on the Big Society. The background to the proposal was recognition that the coalition government was interested in partnering voluntary organisations in building local communities. Knowing that the Church was already deeply involved in community action, it was timely to demonstrate the many different expressions of local concern and the various ways in which the church partners other organisations.

The main purpose of the study was to act as a catalyst in bringing together current best practice in Christian care in local communities with the resources and knowledge base needed to multiply those good works across the country. Unsurprisingly, many of the projects included are located in deprived areas and/or target problems that are in one way or another associated with material poverty. However, building the kingdom is not confined to certain groups or areas. Christian community action is called for in any context to demonstrate care for neighbours and new ways of being and to work for personal, social and structural transformation.

The aim was to include a wide spectrum of examples covering:

- policy areas ranging from homelessness to foodbanks; employment and training to debt counselling; youth projects to care for the elderly; health to rural isolation;
- rural, urban and suburban locations;
- the use of church buildings for community use;
- different origins;
- different scales of project;
- ones wholly based on volunteering as well as those with paid workers;
- local projects linked with national organisations, such as the [Mothers' Union](#) or [The Children's Society](#);
- congregationally-based as well as 'free-standing';
- Church of England, other denominations, ecumenical and interfaith.

It was not the intention of this study to put together a comprehensive database. It is inevitably a very incomplete snapshot. Some of the projects included are unusual, but others are examples of ones that happen in lots of places. Nor was the purpose to endorse or kite mark specific projects. Rather the objective was to provide an illustrative resource as a *celebration* of the Church's role in 'building better neighbourhoods', as an *encouragement* to others to consider this form of ministry and as a *practical tool* for any thinking of embarking on such a venture. Participants have tried to make the descriptions honest and realistic, indicating:

- that some of the more ambitious initiatives grew from small beginnings and were a long time in germinating;
- that there can be lows as well as highs;
- that outside circumstances, such as the funding climate, can be more or less favourable;
- that things can run their course for a variety of reasons and close without blame being attributable anywhere.

1.2 The research methodology

The study combined desk research, a questionnaire and fieldwork. Desk research using documentary and internet sources continued throughout the study.

The first stage was a letter to Diocesan Social Responsibility Officers and Rural Officers asking for their help in suggesting:

- projects that might be considered for inclusion.
- examples of diocesan or other organisations that foster and/or support churches/groups/individuals involved in Christian social action.

During this preparatory stage, there was consultation with others such as the National Rural Officer, the Chief Executive of the Church Urban Fund, the Project Officer of Faith in Affordable Housing, and an official from English Heritage, who was formerly Policy Officer in the Cathedral and Church Buildings Division.

The second stage entailed following up a sample of local projects. Selecting the sample was done in conjunction with the study Steering Group. A questionnaire set the framework for gathering the project information. This was sent to the project contacts and after that there were different ways of proceeding, with the aim of minimising the burden on respondents:

- a project visit and face-to-face interview; *or*
- a telephone interview; *or*
- the respondent completing the questionnaire, sometimes with a follow-up telephone conversation to gather more detail or get further clarification.

Responses were then changed from the questionnaire format and sent to respondents for checking.

Information on infrastructure projects and organisations was also collected, written up and checked with contacts during the second stage.

1.3 The range of local projects examined

Table 1.1 shows the projects included in the study which represent a sample covering a wide range of policy areas, beneficiary, types of project and locality. The table shows them listed under specific headings to indicate the range. However, it is clear that they could be arranged in different ways and some could just as easily feature under different headings. For example, St Francis Church, the base of the Heartsease Project, could have featured as a church that has been remodelled to increase its community use. Herefordshire CHAT, classed in relation to migrant workers, could have been counted as a homelessness project.

Table 1.1: Projects

Heading	Project	Comments
Use of Church Buildings	St Mary's Church, Slough (Oxford)	An urban church that adapted its church buildings for greater community use.
Different beneficiaries		
Families and children	Families Matter (Guildford)	Trained volunteers befriending vulnerable families.
Young people	YPAC (Manchester)	Various youth projects in a neighbourhood in top 1% most deprived.
	Urban Hope (London)	Youth work in Islington starting with 8 yr olds and developing long term relationships.
Older people	Happy at Home South Tyneside	Offering a befriending service to isolated people in their own homes.

	(Durham)	
	Heartsease Community Project (Norwich)	Ecumenical project providing services for older people.
Asylum seekers	Nottingham Arimathea Trust (Nottingham)	Temporary housing for refused, destitute asylum seekers.
	S.A.S. (Liverpool)	Weekly grants for asylum seekers and funding for emergency accommodation.
Migrant workers	Churches Together in Herefordshire Action Team (CHAT) (Hereford)	Hot meals for migrant workers and rough sleepers.
Different locations		
City/town wide	Reading Christian Network (Oxford)	An ecumenical group that meets weekly to pray for Reading and network across a range of projects including Street Pastors.
	Derby Cathedral (Derby)	Wide engagement with, and support for, activities such as Street Pastors, homelessness work and debt counselling.
Neighbourhoods	St Leonard's Centre, Bootle (Liverpool)	Community activities in a very deprived part of Merseyside including increased use of the church building.
	St Martin's Centre, Byker (Newcastle)	Partnership with a Sure Start Centre enabled rebuilding the church as a combined church, children's centre and community space.
	St Augustine's Centre Halifax (Wakefield)	Community centre in a very ethnically diverse area providing adult education, an advice service and support for refugees and asylum seekers.
	Ascend, South Oxhey, Watford (St Albans)	Education and training services on a deprived housing estate surrounded by much more affluent areas.
	Christ Church, Bridlington (York)	A range of training, family and homeless services in a deprived coastal town.
Rural	St James' Church, Hemingford Grey (Ely)	Post Office in parish centre and mobile PO services to other villages and a Coffee Shop run as separate Community Interest Companies.
Policy themes		
Health & mental health	Hull Churches Home from Hospital (York)	Support and practical help to adults after discharge from hospital, helping to reduce readmission rates.
	Life Expectancy, Wirral (Chester)	Twinning churches in the most and least deprived areas of Wirral to raise awareness of the 11.6 year difference in life expectancy.
	St Luke the Physician Church and Neighbourhood Centre, Longsight (Manchester)	Informal day care including arts activities for people suffering stress and living with long term mental health needs.
Poverty	Thrive, Stockton-on-Tees (Durham)	Church Action on Poverty project initially dealing with people suffering stress because of debt which led to campaigning about doorstep lending practices.
	Jubilee Money Advice Service, Oswestry (Lichfield)	A recently started debt advice service linked with Churches Together in Oswestry and District.
	MUMAS, (Gloucester)	A Mothers' Union project giving money advice to people in debt who have been referred by other agencies or have self referred.
Foodbanks	Coventry Foodbank (Coventry)	Foodbank with several distribution points at churches giving out food parcels to clients

		referred by agencies issuing food vouchers.
	FareShare (Leicester)	Uses surplus food from the food industry to feed about 2,000 disadvantaged people <i>via</i> charitable support groups.
Criminal Justice	Cumbria Reducing Offending Partnership Trust (CROPT) (Carlisle)	Umbrella body for many activities supporting prisoners and ex-offenders linked with Cumbria Probation Trust, Haverigg Prison and National Offenders Management Service.
	Support and Advice for Families of Offenders and Ex-Offenders (SAFE) (Blackburn)	Working with offenders and ex-offenders primarily on health and wellbeing, funded by East Lancashire PCT.
	Surrey Appropriate Adult Service (SAAVS) (Guildford)	Support for young people and vulnerable adults during detention in police custody when there is no other responsible adult available.
Homelessness	Routes to Roots (Salisbury)	Services to homeless people and those at risk of homelessness by Christians of all denominations.
	Exeter Churches Housing Action Team (CHAT) (Exeter)	Providing housing advice and tenancy support plus accommodation and mediation for homeless young people in mid-Devon.
Recycling	Horsham Matters (Chichester)	A furniture recycling scheme supplying anything needed for setting up home, also now developing services for young people.
Environment	Harvest (Exeter)	A city-wide project under the umbrella of Exeter Community Initiatives that encourages people to grow food in their local communities.
Community cohesion	St Paul's Manningham (Bradford)	Taking account of the religious diversity in the area, St Paul's has joined with other local churches and a Muslim charity in 'Sharakat' (Communion) to share their faith and common issues. Other activities have evolved from this.
	The Feast (Birmingham)	A project aiming to help Christian and Muslim young people overcome barriers of fear and prejudice and become peacemakers in their community.

Appendix I presents the stories of each of these projects.

1.4 Infrastructure organisations

The study also looked at, and describes in Appendix II, a number of bodies that provide support to local projects.

Table 1.2: Infrastructure organisations

Heading	Comments
Churches' Trust for Cumbria (Carlisle)	CTfC helps faith communities develop a vision linked to wider community plans helping churches make greater use of their buildings to put them at the hub of the community.
Council for Social Responsibility (Portsmouth)	Various programmes designed to help projects think strategically about the future and move away from dependency on grant funding.
East Northants Faith Group (Peterborough)	A network representing all Christian-based groups to support and promote social action and community development initiatives.
Faith in Our Communities (Durham)	Developed six community development projects in deprived areas and provides capacity building for development workers and management committees.
Good Neighbours Support	Sponsored by three dioceses, it provides information, guidance and

Service, (Winchester, Guildford and Portsmouth)	support to Good Neighbours Groups in Hampshire.
Kairos Partnership (Hereford)	Works with local faith groups to start and develop projects to help their communities.
Leeds Christian Community Trust (Ripon and Leeds)	A 'generic' trust set up to enable projects share resources, it gives grants for projects that fit its criteria and takes on new projects of its own, providing seed funding and support.
Together for Regeneration (Sheffield)	Based in Sheffield Diocesan offices, TfR provides infrastructure support to build the capacity of voluntary, community and faith sectors.
Transformation Cornwall (Truro)	Set up by the Diocese, CUF and the Methodist Church to give infrastructure and capacity building support to church, faith and non-faith groups to respond to poverty in Cornwall

1.5 Wider strategies

The study covers three instances of wider strategic approaches (Appendix III):

- First, the partnership the Diocese of London formed with The Children's Society about five years ago which led to a Youth Strategy for the Diocese.
- Second, the way in which churches can contribute to the development of affordable housing by developing underused or redundant assets. The report points to *Faith in Affordable Housing*, a project and web-based guide managed by Housing Justice. It indicates a couple of diocesan strategies relating to church buildings and land and gives an example of a local scheme using a Community Land Trust.
- Third, the report refers to the *Shrinking the Footprint* climate change campaign and again gives examples of responses at different spatial levels.

1.6 Other appendices

In addition to these descriptions of activity at local and diocesan levels, appended to the report are examples of templates, references to reports, resource materials, national organisations and funding sources and a glossary.

2. Why Christian community action?

2.1 Theological rationale

“The pursuit of the common good is an aspect of personal discipleship but also part of God’s calling to the social and political structures.”¹

“Honour one another and seek the common good” is a recurrent phrase in Anglican liturgy that underlines the inseparability of the personal and the social or political. It has had a particular resonance for some time as we have seen, on the one hand, the growth of individualism and consumerism and, on the other, an increase in polarisation and social fragmentation. The concept of the common good is rooted in an anthropology that not only stresses the unique value of each and every individual human being but also recognises that people are social beings and flourish best in social relationships extending out from the family to community, nation and globally. *“It is because these relationships are perceived to be fragile and undervalued that an emphasis on the common good becomes part of the church’s ‘offer’ to the times in which we live: part of the vision of living well. It is also a reminder to Christians that their mission in the world is not just to enable the church to flourish but to promote the flourishing of all people.”²*

The pursuit of the common good, however, should not be detached from the worshipping and missionary life of the church *“since the good cannot be fully realised apart from Christ, and Christ cannot be fully known outside the community of the faithful”*.³ It can be the case that churches instead become pre-occupied with ‘domestic’ church concerns locally and nationally to the exclusion of this pursuit. Yet the distinctiveness of the Christian faith is in the idea of ‘incarnation’, the complete identification of God through Christ with humanity. Following Christ, therefore, also means living out this truth in relation to the people and communities around us.

The common good draws its significance directly from the second great commandment. *“Master, which is the great commandment in the law? Jesus said unto him, You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, you shall love your neighbour as yourself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.”* (Matthew 22: 36-40) When this is followed up with the question “who is my neighbour?”, Jesus tells the parable of the Good Samaritan. (Luke 10: 29-37) The point is further developed in the story of the sheep and the goats (Matthew 25: 31-45) which identifies service to God as inextricable from service to others: *“whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me as you did it not to one of the least of these, you did it not to me.”* The pursuit of the common good through Christian community action, therefore, is a direct response to both the two commandments at the heart of the Christian faith.

2.2 Where does Christian community action fit with mission and ministry?

Jesus ministered to all aspects of people’s lives. *“It’s not the church of God that has a mission, but the God of mission who has a church.”* Christians are called to do the same. It is a work of transformation: of individuals, of communities and of wider society. Effective mission requires:

¹ Malcolm Brown, “Church of England and the Common Good Today”, p.1. This section draws considerably on this paper.

² Brown p.3

³ Brown p.3

- recognising that faith is active, not passive and is public not private and needs to be lived out in the public sphere
- analysis – examining need and reading the signs of the times.
- recognising social action as a good in itself not [just] as a means to the end of ‘winning souls’.
- partnership – ecumenical, other faiths and none where there is a common concern.

In the 1980s, the Anglican Consultative Council developed the *Five Marks of Mission*:

- To proclaim the good news of the Kingdom;
- To teach, baptise and nurture new believers;
- To respond to human need by loving service;
- To seek to transform unjust structures of society;
- To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth.

From these, it is clear that the Church’s mission includes pastoral care, social action and engagement with the social, economic and political structures that affect people’s lives. William Temple said that “*nine tenths of the work of the Church in the world is done by Christian people fulfilling responsibilities and performing tasks which in themselves are not part of the official system of the Church at all*”.⁴ It is estimated that a quarter of regular churchgoers are involved in voluntary community service outside the church. Churchgoers overall contribute 23.2 million hours voluntary service each month in their local communities outside the church⁵.

Mission is also contextual, shaped by the diversity of times, cultures and places in which it is taking place. In the projects described in this study, it is clear that many have originated as a result of identifying a specific local issue arising from local demographic, social, economic or environmental conditions. This may concern groups that are neglected or excluded (by the church as well as by others), such as asylum seekers or homeless people. Or it may be a matter of recognising gaps in existing provision, for example, for ex-offenders and their families or for people with mental health needs.

2.3 Where does it fit with the idea of the Big Society?

The themes of this study resonate strongly with various debates both inside and outside the church at present. A concept that has emerged since the 2010 General Election is that of ‘The Big Society’. At heart, it is nothing new, though the jargon is constantly evolving. There has been a greater emphasis on social responsibility and civil society for the past two decades. The aim is to move power away from central government and give it to local communities and individuals and to achieve a more participative society. In principle, the main strands of the idea should encourage people not only in churches, but in the voluntary and community sector as a whole:

- fostering a culture of voluntarism and philanthropy and promoting social action;
- community empowerment by giving people a greater say in decisions affecting their area and the services;
- developing new forms of public service delivery including the use of charities and social enterprises.

⁴ William Temple, *Christianity and the Social Order*, Penguin, 1942, p.18

⁵ <http://www.churchofengland.org/about-us/facts-stats.aspx>

A paper given to the Church of England General Synod suggested that *“The strength of the Big Society idea for the church lies in the extent to which it reflects a Christian understanding of being human. A Christian anthropology locates each person within a rich network of relationships and recognises the perpetual tension between our dependency of others and our autonomy. This reflects the nature of God’s relationship with human beings who remain dependent on His grace for all good things whilst retaining the freedom to reject His love. As in so many of Jesus’ parables, God makes Himself known to us in the person of the other – and it is when we ourselves recognise our dependence on others that we understand a little of God’s love for us.”*⁶

To date, although some associated measures have been introduced (the Localism Bill, the Big Society Bank, plans for community organisers throughout the UK), there remains considerable fuzziness about the Big Society and questions about how far it has been wholeheartedly embraced across government. Some commentators fear the Big Society is a smokescreen to hide public spending cuts. Whether or not they are being overly sceptical, it is certainly the case that the implementation or expression of Big Society is bound to be affected by the wider social and economic context.

One instant reaction within churches and the voluntary and community sector as a whole has been to say “we’ve been doing this for years”. A major test for them is whether the Big Society facilitates or obstructs what they are trying to do. The report will look later at what the findings of the research indicate about how the concept is working out in practice.

2.4 An invitation from secular partners?

Communities Minister Andrew Stunell said that faith groups are making a vital contribution to national life, and are integral to creating the Big Society⁷. *“Faith communities make a vital contribution to national life, guiding the moral outlook of many, inspiring great numbers of people to public service, providing succour to those in need. They are helping to bind together local communities and improve relations at a time when the siren call of extremism has never been louder.”*

This acknowledgement continues a trend through the 2000s, witnessed by various academic and policy publications⁸, when there was an increasing focus on role of faith organisations, for example, as partners in regeneration in programmes such as New Deal for Communities and as members of Local Strategic Partnerships.

In March 2010, towards the end of the last term of the Labour Government, the Department for Communities and Local Government produced a short document, [Ensuring a level playing field: funding faith-based organisations to provide publicly funded services](#). It recognised that certain myths sometimes obstruct faith groups in securing fair access to public funding and tendering opportunities as part of the third sector. For example:

“We’re not allowed to give public money to religious organisations.”

⁶ Malcolm Brown, “The Big Society” and the Church of England’, para 48, General Synod 1804

⁷ Speaking at the annual meeting of the Inter Faith Network for the UK, 12th July 2010.

⁸ For example, *Faith and Community*, Local Government Association, 2002; Richard Farnell, Robert Furbey, Stephen Shams Al-Haqq Hills, Marie Macey, Greg Smith, *Faith in Urban Regeneration – Engaging faith communities in urban regeneration* Joseph Rowntree Foundation, April 2003; *Working Together: Co-operation between Government and Faith Communities*, Home Office Faith Communities Unit, February 2004; Robert Furbey, Adam Dinham, Richard Farnell, Doreen Finneron and Guy Wilkinson with Catherine Howarth, Dilwar Hussain and Sharon Palmer, *Faith as Social Capital*, Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 15 March 2006

"Faith-based bodies don't have the necessary expertise or 'clout' to deliver services."

"They will use public money for proselytising or worship."

"They wouldn't want to help people they don't approve of."

"Single group funding has negative implications for community cohesion."

"Faith based groups only work with their own communities."

The paper's purpose was to explode these myths. In each case, the real position is outlined to counter the myth with the aim of showing the eligibility of faith groups, like any other suitably qualified bodies, to be awarded a tender to deliver publicly funded services, or to be given a grant to carry out a project of benefit to the wider community or to their own members or constituency of supporters.

A recent demonstration of governmental willingness to engage with the churches is the Near Neighbours scheme in which the Church Urban Fund has received government funding for work in multi-faith communities (see section 4.2).

3. Findings from the research I: About the projects

3.1 Origins

There were three main drivers for the initiation of projects:

- starting from some perceived problem or need;
- starting from a wish to have more community outreach and to ‘do something’ without having identified what this might be;
- opportunities arising from funds becoming available, invitations by an outside organisation to meet some need or the chance to participate in a regeneration programme.

The first of these was most common, though the issues varied, for example: increased numbers of homeless people on the street; troubled people with mental health issues knocking on the vicarage door after the shift towards ‘care in the community’; the advent of asylum seekers or migrant workers; increased levels of local violence as symptoms of marginalised young people; the closure of the village post office; realising the absence of ways for different faith projects to speak to each other. Once concern was raised, there was usually a period of investigation to ascertain whether there was other evidence to substantiate the perception of need. This could be done through community surveys or consultation with local residents and community groups, consulting with professional bodies working in the particular policy area, and/or referring to statistical data, such as the Census or the Index of Multiple deprivation.

“The research was conducted through consultation with community members, agencies, young people, schools and using statistics of deprivation from wards and the diocese. The statistical material included Census data provided through the Diocese, local statistics from the City Council using the Index of Multiple Deprivation data on issues affecting young people.”⁹

“Much of the evidence we used about the problem was anecdotal, but it was based on the experience of those working in city centre parishes and other refugee and asylum seeker support organisations . . . There was and still is no quantitative local data.”

Another element of local exploration is to check that no-one else is trying to meet the same need in the same way, in which case it may be better to support that group than set up a competing operation.

In some instances, the current project has evolved from previous work. A community cohesion project amongst young people was developed after ten years of work in schools by the Scripture Union in an area of great cultural and religious diversity. This gradually led to a focus on Christian/Muslim relations and gave the scope for research and trialling different means of encounter before the present project emerged.

In other cases, existing work was either replaced or added to because of new circumstances, such as recognition of the need for a foodbank arising out of debt counselling work.

“The community project began over 30 years ago when local clergy got together to see what they could do for the community . . . In recent years we realised that there were many vulnerable older people who were not being helped by the project. A community

⁹ Unless otherwise referenced, the italicised quotes in this report are taken from the project stories in the appendices.

questionnaire helped to confirm this as did statistics of the estate's demography. As the estate was built in 1956, there are many older people . . ."

"The need for this work was first realised by observation and talking to people we met. This was then supplemented using Census and deprivation statistics. Each of our projects has developed as a logical progression from the previous one."

Where parishes were seeking to serve their community but had not decided how, they also very often went through a community consultation process and needs analysis. As well as pinpointing a necessary activity, this sort of approach can help to gauge the church's capacity for addressing need.

"This evidenced a high level of distress and difficulty for people being discharged from hospital who did not meet the recently reduced criteria of statutory support across all ages. As well as uncovering unmet needs, steps were taken to determine the church's ability to meet these needs. The conclusion was that there was enormous capacity in terms of offering time for training and voluntary involvement . . ."

A number of projects began because an unexpected opportunity presented itself. In one case the closure of a charity meant that funds became available. In others, the church was approached by an outside agency: a local authority chief executive looking for better support for vulnerable people in their homes; the Probation Service seeking a wider range of provision for offenders and ex-offenders'; a police force wanting a solution to concerns about managing juvenile criminality in the absence of a concerned parent. These are examples of approaches that led to constructive partnership working, with the important proviso that it was always important to clarify expectations on both sides and spell out the 'terms of engagement'.

Regeneration programmes, too, have provided an opportunity for community action.

"During the period of the Single Regeneration Budget Programme . . . local people began to realise that they needed to do something to help [the estate] become more stable in terms of employment and housing and to give a greater feeling of belonging."

An opportunity came for another church when approached by the local Sure Start about the possibility of developing a family centre with capital funding from Sure Start. The rebuilt church and centre has enabled many more community activities in addition to the children's work.

3.2 Range of activities

This section of the report indicates the wide range of activities encompassed by the project included in the study. It does so not by examining them project by project but by identifying the many strands that they variously include or combine.

□ Making premises available for other organisations and community activities.

Several churches have made their premises more accessible and suitable for community use through creating greater flexibility (such as moveable seating) and introducing new facilities (such as kitchen areas, toilets and audio-visual equipment), all without damaging or restricting the space for worship.

□ Support/Befriending

A number of projects involve befriending. These in turn require varying degrees of skill and expertise. One revolves around supporting vulnerable or isolated families with children who

are referred by other agencies. They may have any of a range of problems such as debt, domestic abuse or parenting difficulties. The role may be simply to spend time chatting with them or it may go beyond this to putting them in touch with other sorts of assistance or helping them access local facilities. Another project, commissioned by the local authority, focuses on visiting frail elderly people in their home. In both instances, a vital prerequisite is matching the befriender and project user, which is done by the paid worker.

“In these initial visits, [the Co-ordinator] carries out a risk assessment prior to involving the volunteer befriender and she may make several visits to gain sufficient understanding to be able to introduce the most suitable befriender.”

“In part, this is a matter of getting the ‘chemistry’ right, but it is also important to use volunteers who live in the same locality and know about the local community. If they come from more geographically and socially distant areas, the ‘reality’ gap can be too great.”

Roles in two criminal justice projects can also come under the heading of befriending. One works with offenders and their families; the other supports people in police custody who have no other responsible adult to accompany them. In yet another project, Mothers’ Union members have befriended and provide practical support for the women users of a church community centre, many of whom are refugees. A health project provides practical and emotional support for 6-8 weeks to people newly discharged from hospital and support for carers. This can range from welfare rights guidance to a sitting service to being taken to social venues.

The youth work projects included in the study stress the need to go beyond providing leisure and other activities for young people. More significant is the development of long-lasting supportive relationships with them and their families and try to journey with them from the ages of 8 or 10 years until they reach their twenties.

“There is a lot of one-to-one work and they operate on an extended family model . . . Activities are then built onto relationships as appropriate.”

□ **Women and children’s work**

Many projects include work with children and might provide parents’ and toddlers’ groups, out-of-school clubs and holiday schemes. Some partner a Sure Start or Children’s Centre and also have nurseries. These activities can be linked with other supportive interventions such as work with parents and carers on how to play with children or with women experiencing domestic violence. One church making its premises available to local groups is given over twice a month to a Child Contact Centre, a place where the children of separated families can enjoy contact with one or both parents in a safe and relaxed environment. One of the youth work projects included has recently given increasing attention to work with young women and with teenage parents.

□ **Drop-ins**

Some church community centres have drop-in sessions intended for people who may need some support but do not want or need a formal service. Drop-ins give them the chance to get together for mutual support, perhaps through craft or sporting activities or just for a chat or a meal. The sessions may prove to be stepping stones for individuals to try other activities and give the opportunity for the centre staff to find out more about services that are required.

□ ***Counselling and information/advice***

A number of projects supply information and advice of different sorts or host advice sessions provided, say, by the Citizens' Advice Bureau. Accommodation, benefit or debt issues are high on the agenda. Some projects specialise in specific issues like housing or debt. Others focus on particular user groups such as asylum seekers or ex-offenders. Many others will serve as information hubs, signposting local services or other sources of help. A mental health project offers more specialist counselling.

□ ***Financial and in-kind assistance***

Relatively few projects are in a position – or would necessarily want – to give out money to clients. However, one or two are able to give small occasional grants. A project supporting asylum seekers gives small cash grants to a very limited number of people (depending on the state of its own funds) and funding for emergency accommodation to a few more as well as meals and food parcels. A deposit guarantee scheme is a different sort of financial help for people not able to raise a deposit for accommodation. Users of the scheme set up a savings plan with the project until their savings reach the level of the deposit.

□ ***Emergency accommodation***

Both housing and asylum seeker organisations sometimes manage properties that can be used by their clients. One housing project provides supported accommodation for vulnerable young people (16/17 year olds) in five 3-bedroomed houses. Other projects provide housing for (often refused) asylum seekers. In one case, two houses are provided rent free by the diocese. One of the church community centres included in the study has good working links with the local authority and housing support groups and can use these links to get accommodation for homeless people.

□ ***Food aid***

A notable development at present is the huge increase in the number of foodbanks being set up in response to evidence of need. One project included in the study began early in 2011 and now provides parcels from five distribution points to 150+ people per week who have been issued with food vouchers by a variety of agencies in the city. Another project, which also utilises good quality surplus food from the food industry, distributes it to charitable support groups for low income, homeless and other vulnerable people. In a year, they gave out the equivalent of 235,000 meals. Other projects include food parcels, community larders or soup runs amongst their other activities, again driven by the number of people encountered who are suffering extreme hardship.

□ ***Lunch clubs and cafés***

The purpose of serving food in church centres is often primarily a social one: to bring in elderly people, for example, to mix with others. For this reason, there are often associated activities from quizzes to tea dances. In other cases, going to the café may be a less intimidating way for someone to enter a centre for the first time to get a feel for it before going on to access other services. In one centre, the café is a way for volunteers from different cultural backgrounds to mix and provide a variety of meals. In a rural area, the development of a coffee shop, as well as being a valuable village amenity, has become the opportunity to support fair trade and ethical suppliers.

□ ***Education and training***

A number of projects include education and training opportunities amongst their activities. In youth work organisations, this might be a matter of starting before the school leaving age and mentoring those at risk of dropping out of education. Organisations focusing on asylum

seekers generally make ESOL (English for speakers of other languages) classes available, either supplying them themselves or hosting other organisations. In community centres, there are frequently courses which are usually demand-led, focusing on subjects people say they want or need, such as such as first aid, food hygiene, cooking, gardening, IT, dressmaking, art, parenting skills and introduction to citizenship. These and other courses are very often delivered in partnership with a local Further Education college.

□ **Employability**

Sometimes the specific purpose of training opportunities is to help people become more employable by imparting new proficiencies and giving them greater self confidence. Courses will then be associated with careers advice and guidance, help with writing a *curriculum vitae* and interview training.

□ **Opportunities for personal development**

In addition to training courses, a wide range of activities give opportunities for personal development. For young people, there are sports and leisure activities, residentials, opportunities for community work and young leaders' programmes. One community centre has health-related activities such as exercise, yoga and healthy eating workshops as well as a longstanding arts project. *"There have been one day festivals like the 'Recovery Festival' which looked at ways people can take control of their lives and celebrating their gifts and achievements."* Scope for volunteering – sometimes within the organisation or a trading arm – is another way of giving valuable experience.

□ **Outreach and preventative work**

Many organisations seek to help minimise the risk of problems recurring, for example, homelessness, misuse of drugs or alcohol or offending. This frequently entails active outreach work, personal support and assisting clients to overcome the barriers they encounter, whether these are physical, emotional or financial. A key factor in all these relationships is that the process is voluntary. One example of preventative work in relation to youth homelessness, which frequently occurs because of family problems, is mediation to enable all parties to deal with disputes. In other areas of youth work, detached work is a necessary first step towards contact with the young people being targeted. In any case, the youth workers take careful note of whether they are failing to reach particular groups. One, for instance, has recently turned more to working with ethnic minority young people.

□ **Street Pastors**

A number of organisations supply volunteers for ecumenical Street Pastor schemes, which operate collaboratively with the police and other statutory agencies to work with people, especially young people, hanging out on the streets or pubs or clubs at night. *"The role is not about preaching heaven and hell, but one of listening, caring and helping - working in an unconditional way."*

□ **Community links**

At least two organisations have undertaken intergenerational work; in one this was around sharing a meal; in another, it was through a reminiscence project. In other projects that come under the heading of 'community cohesion', the focus is on bringing together people of different faiths and cultures for dialogue and joint action.

□ **Networks and forums**

Forums are means of both providing support to specific groups and enabling them to have a voice. For example, members of a Refugee Forum say *"It will give us power to make our voices heard and to understand our rights and enable us to deal with those in authority. It will*

help us to take an active part in the local community, to make new friends and link with other refugee groups.” In another context, a small group of women ex-offenders have been helped to set up a support network for women in similar situations. The youth forum in one of the youth work projects enables users to have a say in the running of the organisation. In yet another, the focus is on bringing people together to pray for the town and develop closer links across a range of local projects.

□ **Recycling and environmental concerns**

Increasing environmental and climate change concerns are leading to more recycling and environmental projects. There is a growing number of eco-congregations as exemplified in the *Shrinking the Footprint* paper in Appendix III. Recycling furniture can provide practical help to people in need, such as single mothers coming out of refuges or other low income individuals or families, and reduce the amount of material going to landfill. Reduction of waste is also one dimension of food distribution projects. Gardening and food growing projects can be a vehicle for community building and skills development as well as having environmental and health benefits.

□ **Social enterprise**

As financial sustainability is a key challenge, a number of organisations are now setting up social enterprises of different sorts for all or some of their activities. In one rural parish, the Post Office now run by the church is already a community interest company (CIC) and the café has also recently been incorporated as a CIC with the potential to earn a surplus that can be returned to the church to support local and international mission charities. Other projects are developing trading arms both to market goods and to undertake work.

□ **Advocacy and campaigning**

Working on the front line to address individual and community issues gives considerable insight into the causes of problems and the impact of public policy. Very often, as a result, organisations are keen to speak out on behalf of their clients. Sometimes this will be as intermediaries with public sector agencies; sometimes to raise awareness to prompt churches to respond; sometimes it will be in wider campaigning. One example included in this study is of a campaign addressing financial exclusion generally and specifically trying to change the practices of doorstep lending agencies.

3.3 Management and leadership

The projects covered in the study are managed in a variety of ways and have different degrees of independence from the church. The range includes projects run by:

- the Parochial Church Council;
- a sub-committee of the PCC;
- the diocese where the staff member is managed by the Diocesan Social Responsibility Officer;
- a steering group with membership from the Department for Social Responsibility;
- a steering group of participating Anglican churches;
- a steering group of representatives of Churches Together;
- a committee of management linked with the Mothers' Union.

In these cases, the projects use the church's charitable status for fund raising. Other projects are:

- registered charities;
- charitable companies limited by guarantee;
- registered community interest companies.

The boards of trustees/directors of these will usually have some link to or cross membership with the sponsoring church(es) as well as other partner organisations. One project comes under an umbrella charity which, although it had its origins in a development agency set up by local churches, no longer has a formal connection.

3.4 Resources

The project stories indicate the wide variation in the need for funds, in the sources of funding and in the combinations of types of funding that different organisations have been able to secure. The following indicates the range of sources.

Nationally:

- CUF Mustard Seed Grants;
- Church and Community Fund;
- City Livery Companies;
- Lloyds TSB;
- Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust
- Beatrice Laing Trust;
- Northern Rock;
- European Social Fund;
- CUF Near Neighbours;
- BBC Children in Need;
- Hadley Trust;
- Henry Smith Charity;
- WREN;
- Macmillan Cancer Support;
- National Offender Management Service;
- Big Lottery Fund..

Locally

- Individual donations;
- Church organisations – e.g. Mothers' Union
- Donations from other churches;
- Registered Social Landlords;
- Public sector grants;
- Church funds;
- Diocesan funds, e.g. Council for Social Aid;
- District Faith Forum;
- Local charities/grant giving trusts;
- Regeneration programmes.

Some projects have used the local Community Foundation to access grants from trusts.

Contracts/service level agreements are another source of revenue from agencies such as local authorities, schools, the youth service or Primary Care Trusts. Some projects, however, have avoided contract arrangements because they do not want to be limited by the agenda of the commissioning bodies.

“A key feature . . . is that it has steered clear of accepting commissions from the local authority or others. Although it does a lot of partnership work, it has retained its independence and flexibility. It is not tied to other people’s targets or output or outcome measures. It can try new things and, if they fail, move on.”

A few projects have had *private sector* help. For example, an ASDA store made an organisation one of its charities and worked with it on fund raising.

Some projects raise *income from activities* through the sale of meals or furniture or generate rental income by letting rooms to user groups or organisations that want to use their premises as a local base for activities such as adult education classes.

In some cases, *supporters have fund raising activities*, such as concerts or cleaning cars or sponsored sleeping out.

Examples of *in-kind assistance* include:

- The rent-free use of premises, either to house the project perhaps particularly during its early stages, or as a direct contribution to the work, for example, making available an unused vicarage for homeless accommodation.
- Donations of equipment or furniture.
- Donations of food from supermarkets.
- One project secured help with health and safety arrangements from a local company as part of its corporate responsibility policy;
- In another, Police provided training, use of offices and hospitality;

There is a distinction between start-up and running costs. At the start, for instance, the projects may only require a room, a dedicated telephone and expenses for volunteers. Some begin in temporary premises. One, for example, worked from a mobile classroom until the new church building was completed. Another that initially used the church hall now has multiple premises because project expansion also brought the need for larger and better equipped premises. A significant transition moment in relation to the scale of resources that projects need to attract comes when they want to employ staff.

Very often, early funding came from CUF. One of its key advantages for projects over the years has been its role as first funder because other grant giving trusts are frequently unwilling to take this sort of risk. A CUF grant, therefore, serves as an invaluable lever for attracting other funds.

Reliance on any sort of external funding brings the risk of late payment. Even though organisations may on paper have sufficient income to cover their outgoings, they can still be brought down by cash flow problems. Few projects have more than a few months' financial security. It can be difficult to attract repeat grants from trusts especially if, as is often the case, the funders are keener to fund innovation than to sustain existing activity. Public sector cuts have already bitten for some organisations and the prospect is that there is further pain to come even though for a minority, the cuts may provide them with an opportunity to move into work hitherto undertaken by mainstream agencies.

3.5 Volunteers

Many projects rely heavily on volunteers. The range of activities includes the following:

- trustees and management committee members often give a considerable amount of time to projects.
- professionals offering their skills and expertise on a *pro bono* basis; e.g. counselling, podiatry, youth leadership, interior design, public relations, web design and accountancy.
- in the case of a church that has no paid administrator but is used by multiple organisations, volunteers take bookings and open and close the building.
- reception duties: 'meeting and greeting'.
- clerical and office duties.
- driving.
- kitchen and front-of-house staff in lunch clubs and coffee shops.
- preparing and distributing food at food outlets and on soup runs.
- gardening.
- house clearances, furniture delivery, DIY and refurbishment of flats.
- shop work.
- IT tutors and IT maintenance.
- provision of classes and leisure activities.
- volunteers as mentors and befrienders to a variety of client groups with varying levels of expertise required.
- acting as 'Appropriate Adults' in the criminal justice system.

- debt counselling.
- event facilitators and organisers.
- youth work.
- street pastors.

Occasionally there are one-off volunteering sessions as in one project: *“some staff from Northern Rock came to help dig gardens. In addition to the practical assistance these outside volunteers gave, this was an opportunity for raising their awareness about conditions in the area”*.

In gathering the project stories, there was an attempt to estimate the cash value of the contribution of volunteers. This was not easy partly because projects do not necessarily compute the amount of time given, even though calculating the worth of volunteer activities, as one project mentioned, can usefully feature in funding bids as evidence of added value to the funder. They also tend not to include trustees in their calculations. Yet in one project, where the trustee time was counted, it amounted to about 2,200 hours over the past year. In some cases, too, the paid staff of a project work additional unpaid hours. Perhaps even more significant was the difficulty of determining the ‘rate for the job’. The rate used was around the hourly rate for the minimum wage (£6), but it was very evident that this fell far below the going rate that would be required for the same tasks to be performed by paid staff.

In a furniture recycling project, “There are now about ten volunteers each day: 6 or 7 in the shop who each work 4.5 hours per day and 3-4 in the warehouse who work about 6 hours per day. Calculated on the basis of £6 per hour, this amounts to voluntary service worth over £200 per day.”

“Say 30 volunteers for 3 hours per week (90 hours), plus my administration team’s time (3 X 16 hours), and including my own (1 X 30 hours). I would estimate around 200 hours per week, which calculated on the basis of minimum wage rates amounts to £1,200 per week. However I wouldn’t estimate the admin team’s time at minimum wage.”

At one extreme, even on the basis of the minimum wage rate, a church community centre estimated the financial value of their approximately 50 volunteers to be about £312,000 p.a. In a village coffee shop, the value was calculated as about £36,000 p.a. The 80 volunteers in a health project give time to the value of at least £56,000 p.a. In a homelessness project, the value was around £30,000 p.a. For smaller projects, of course, the amounts were also much smaller though their contribution to the maintenance and effectiveness of the work was just as significant.

Managing volunteers is a responsibility and, despite their immense value, can be an added burden. It is necessary to accommodate to the time they can give. *“Volunteers are fitting in volunteering around other life demands and so are inconsistent.”* There has to be awareness of what can and cannot be done by volunteers. Different forms of induction and training are required from shadowing experienced people to health and safety training; CRB checks¹⁰ to safeguarding; food and hygiene courses to first aid. Sometimes training is given in-house, especially where it is closely related to the specialist role of the organisation. Sometimes volunteers are also encouraged to access training offered by other agencies and perhaps to go on to gain accreditation, say, in community volunteering. Arrangements need to be in place for insurance and for expenses where appropriate.

¹⁰ Criminal Records Bureau, <http://www.disclosure.gov.uk>,

Volunteering is not a one-way activity. Volunteers frequently feel they gain as much as they give.

“The work is carried out on a foundation of trusting relationships, built across cultural and economic barriers. Volunteers such as lawyers and graphic designers are enabled to get to know members of their community whom they would not otherwise meet, so that they can inspire and learn from those very different from them.”

“The training provided was first rate – I never knew there were so many administrative as well as cultural barriers put in the way of asylum seekers and refugees. On the practical side, working with asylum seekers has been extremely rewarding. Tasks range from helping with English language practice, to going for runs, from assisting with documentation and finding a GP to socialising.”

3.6 Measuring success

Projects have to be accountable to funders and supporters and frequently this will have to be in terms of quantifiable measures. However, within the organisation, they are also likely to have criteria that go beyond targets and outputs. Very often their concern is with the quality of relationships or the less tangible elements of health and well-being. This is illustrated in a number of ways:

- They avoid cherry picking clients and spend considerable time with them. They focus on those with multiple/entrenched needs who may have further to go on a journey towards quantitative outputs.
- It is not just one-way process: many projects enable or have scope for ‘recipients’ to become givers, so it is also shown in the mutuality of the relationships that develop.

This is not to say that it is impossible or always wrong for projects to couch their achievements in terms understood by funders. The survey conducted in the North West¹¹ which looked at the civic role of faith organisations was useful not only for demonstrating the contribution of faith communities to public sector agencies. It also came as a revelation to faith communities themselves because it put what they were doing in the context of wider social and economic developments. It revealed that though they may think they are just ‘doing what comes naturally’, in fact they are also contributing to regeneration or social inclusion or sustainable development. As well as giving a new vocabulary for engaging in dialogue with public agencies, the research gave faith groups themselves new confidence to do so because it showed that if you cut through the jargon on both sides, there are shared goals and faith communities are already out there pursuing these goals whether or not they have previously articulated it in quite this way.

A few examples of the types of outputs and outcomes indicated by projects in this study are:

- The range of groups using the church building.
- The church playing a greater role in the community, shown for example by running a flourishing post office.
- More confident and less isolated clients who have “got their lives back”.
- Clients going on to support others.

¹¹ *Faith in England’s Northwest: the contribution made by faith communities to civil society in the region*, NWDA, 2003

http://www.faithnorthwest.org.uk/assets/files/documents/dec_07/faith_1196766921_contributiontofaithcommunities.pdf

- The engagement of young people and their achievements: on courses; staying in education, training or employment; going on to higher education.
- The number of asylum seekers helped out of destitution; some housed; some given leave to remain.
- The number of homeless off the street and homelessness averted by early intervention.
- Improved relationships between migrant workers and employers.
- The number of people trained: clients, staff and volunteers.
- The number of people going into employment.

A number of projects could cite external recognition of their effectiveness shown in awards or Ofsted inspections.

In addition, there were indications of the community action having indirect benefits:

- A strengthened local church.
- Deeper friendships and trust across denominational divides.
- Greater inter-faith understanding.
- Strengthened community relations between faith or ethnic groups through working together.
- Evidence of changed attitudes: raised awareness and sympathetic understanding of the needs of groups such as the homeless, those in poverty and asylum seekers.

Voluntary organisations, including faith groups, are increasingly being asked to evidence their impact. There are ways of doing this that go beyond 'counting outputs' and capture the wider benefits:

- *Social Return on Investment (SROI)* is a way of measuring and accounting for the value created in projects and services. The methodology is attracting considerable interest from government and from organisations that might fund or commission specific pieces of work. Third sector organisations are starting to adopt it because it can help them give an account of their achievements and attract funding and also because it is a useful tool for understanding how to maximise social impact, improve performance and achieve their goals. In addition to providing data on the numbers of clients and types of interventions, a health project in this study providing aftercare for people on discharge from hospital was able to point to reduced readmission rates, low re-referral rates and cost savings to health partners
- *Social auditing* is another way of measuring the extent to which an organisation lives up to its shared values and objectives. Basic initial questions are: What are you meant to be doing? What are you actually doing? What do you think you are doing? What do other people think you are doing? It is a process of assessing and demonstrating the social, economic and environmental benefits and limitations through systematic and regular monitoring of performance and getting the views of its stakeholders. Stakeholders are those persons or organisations who have an interest in or have invested resources in the organisation and may include employees, clients, volunteers, funders, contractors and local residents.

3.7 Success factors

There is a difference between the way that results and impact are measured and the factors that contribute to effectiveness. The study tried to determine what characterised these projects and, in particular, whether there were features that distinguished them from other third sector projects. As can be seen, some of the following success factors are specific to faith-based organisations. More general ones would certainly be evident in other

organisations and be seen as important by those involved including, for example, Christians working in secular bodies.

□ **Faith**

The significance of the underpinning of faith in these projects often remained implicit even though it was apparent as the motivating force for so many of the people involved. What was also evident but not necessarily articulated was the common acceptance that *“Christians are called to see others and especially others in profound need from the perspective of unflinching, unalterable love.”*¹² However, sometimes there was explicit mention of the importance of *“the stress on the primacy of prayer, but also the inseparability of prayers and social action”*. There could also be consciousness of reliance upon God’s guiding hand:

“Taking the initial steps of faith – not having the plan worked out as fully as one might expect, but being prepared to take risks for the benefit of the local community whatever the final outcome It is without question that the provision of personnel, willing and able to work a few hours a week, is God’s perfect provision and timing.”

□ **Integration with the church**

Many of the projects look to their local church for different sorts of support and encouragement. This can be for practical reasons:

“The integration with the church is also important: a number of members of the PCC are volunteers as well as members of the management committee.”

Church giving – directly or in kind – can be significant. Where church buildings are being used (or the incumbent’s attention seems to be diverted from the congregation), it requires a spirit of generosity and welcome to overcome qualms such as *“Will it represent a takeover? Where will we (the congregation) be in all this?”*

The links can also embody and reinforce the ethos of the project:

“The strong link between Church and Centre exemplifies the extent to which the focus is on the whole person, physical, social and spiritual needs.”

“Ten years ago, there was very much a feel of separation between ‘church’ and ‘centre’. The desire of integration has been a firm and very conscious move led by the clergy . . . this has been realised in the past five years . . .”

“Raising awareness and getting churches on-side is important not least because churches have a real sense of the importance of family life and a vision of what ‘community’ can mean that is often lacking in wider society.”

Also important is the awareness of having prayerful support. One organisation recognised this as another form of volunteering: *“A wider prayer network supports [our] work”*.

The study brought out, too, the importance of being part of a diocese and a national organisation. Research in the North West in 2009 looked at a sample of faith-based organisations and their contribution to social and economic wellbeing. It found that their ability to respond derived partly from their frequently longstanding presence in the area but also from their capacity to tap into wider networks and resources¹³. This dimension is covered in this report in section 4.

¹² Rowan Williams, “Christianity: Public Religion and the Common Good”, a lecture given in Singapore, 12th May 2007.

¹³ *Faith in England’s Northwest: How Faith Communities Contribute to Social and Economic Wellbeing*, NWDA, 2009

□ **Commitment**

“A professionally run project that is also a work of the heart.” Perhaps the theme that recurred most was commitment – the dedication of all those involved with projects: trustees, staff and volunteers *“going the extra mile to make appropriate provision”*.

“Passion, dogged determination and believing in people all characterise the organisation, which is reaching far further than the available staff resources would suggest is possible.”

“The main [success factor] is having the desire and the will to help when there seems to be no hope. This is expressed in the dedication and hard work of both staff and volunteers, including trustees.”

“The commitment of volunteers and staff is crucial and notably the continuity given by the Centre Manager. Her ‘speciality’ is friendship with everyone and this is fundamental to establishing the ethos of the centre.”

“[It] relies entirely on the extraordinary enthusiasm and commitment of our first class volunteers.”

As a Chair of Trustees said in an Annual Report: *“Over the past year I have seen our staff rejoice in and with young people, as well as weep with and for them. I have seen that . . . we have staff who are dedicated enough to respond to crucial needs even if, on some occasions, that takes them way beyond the ‘inconvenient’ and into the wee small hours and time off.”*

Such commitment can entail personal sacrifices:

“Brilliant staff, especially during the initial stages (but the personal costs for our first worker were not insignificant).”

These can extend to those only indirectly involved:

“The volunteers; the Bishop’s patronage; my core team, especially my senior administrator – most of them don’t stop simply because they go home; my wife who has had to undergo a radical lifestyle change to allow me to do this, but remains a constant encourager.”

It also requires stickability: in one case, *“Three years of preparation and setting up the project prior to opening our doors to clients”*.

□ **Leadership**

Leadership has clearly been vital to the projects reviewed in this study. Certainly there are charismatic people to be found in many of the projects, whether as initiators or workers, and some organisations owe their existence and continued existence to the determination and personality of particular individuals. But, as in other contexts, leadership is shown in a variety of guises: originating the project, winning support, managing it, sustaining it and, if appropriate, terminating it. Different forms of leadership require different aptitudes. Very often, projects originate with someone or a small group having an idea and they will become the initial driving force, but will usually need to win other support.

“When I heard about this inequality expressed in this difference [in life expectancy] I was shocked and convicted. I went away and thought if the churches . . . can’t do anything

about this we should be shot. I knew about the inequality, but something about this bare fact expressed the wrongness of what I seemed to be taking for granted.”

“The Self-Supporting Minister was important in driving the vision in the early days of the project and she has provided continuity through changes of incumbent. Similarly the continuity provided by the Senior Youth Worker has been important.”

Clergy frequently provide the main leadership though other calls on their time can make this difficult. Also, projects that are too dependent upon one person can suffer if s/he moves on and there is no-one to take over the reins or insufficient will to ensure the work survives.

Once a management group or trustees are in place, they collectively have a leadership role but when there is also a paid manager, s/he very often takes on much of the day-to-day decision making. Where a group of churches is involved there can be a move towards shared leadership.

“Although the leadership came from the Anglican Church at first, subsequently each denomination involved owns its work. As a group, all are equal and support and serve each other.”

□ **Local roots**

As was noted above, other research has found that the ability of faith groups to respond to local need is underpinned by their rootedness in the area and their particular local knowledge.¹⁴ Similar conclusions can be drawn from this study.

“Longevity – having been there for 16 years. It took 10 years to be accepted and exert influence.”

Even where projects themselves are relatively new, they can benefit from the fact that the church is long rooted in the neighbourhood. It is well known that clergy may be the only professionals actually resident in their parish, which gives them more personal experience of local life. Similarly, one of the youth workers interviewed in this study referred to the advantage of *“Living in the area in a council flat – able to identify with and understand the frustrations of local residents”*. It is an important factor in generating acceptance and trust from local people.

□ **Stress on the personal**

A key feature that distinguishes church (and other voluntary sector) care projects is that their starting point is the individual in front of them. By contrast the interventions of statutory agencies are inevitably compartmentalised and can only focus on certain facets of that person's life.

“The strapline is ‘Success with compassion.’ Everyone is treated as an individual and given support throughout their contact. No-one is ever turned away even though there is a great temptation to at times. We adopt a holistic approach to problems recognising that everyone has multiple problems that all need to be taken into account and addressed.”

“[We] can cross barriers that other agencies with more limited remits cannot and it can deliver help that is more personal to the specific family.”

“There is a lot of emphasis on individual users and their progression, recognising that many people using the Centre have not had many positive choices, so that there is a need to build up their self-esteem and open up new horizons for them.”

¹⁴ *Faith in England's Northwest: How Faith Communities Contribute to Social and Economic Wellbeing*, NWDA, 2009

“Often when they are referred, it is with the message ‘this is what they need’. However, [we] start from what the families themselves say: what is their immediate felt need. Once the relationship is established, a wider range of problems or their underlying causes may emerge.”

“The key factor is probably the caring atmosphere: ‘listening to people’ and being responsive to their needs.”

“The project represents ‘the church doing what it is good at’ – slowing down the process to have time to develop relationships.”

“. . . the key characteristic . . . is that it offers practical and emotional support that is individually tailored to fit the diverse needs of the families concerned.”

“Recognising each of our clients as a valued individual with his or her particular needs.”

This approach requires continuity and long term links with project users such as the socially isolated, the homeless and those with addictive personalities or problems but it is more likely to be effective.

“The more the projects have built up relationships and trust with the client groups, the more we have seen the need to develop services to meet their needs [whereas] often the approach is to deal with the presenting problem and not the cause.”

□ **Working with allies**

A factor that recurred in a number of projects was *“building good links with other organisations.”* In some cases, these were with other churches and faith groups.

“It is vital that the approach is ecumenical (and often inter-faith). It enables far greater impact and makes it easier to work with secular partners.”

Again in this sort of collaboration, there was an emphasis on *“the importance of personal relationships [recognising] the way that new initiatives can grow organically out of them.”*

“Mixing socially and sharing meals as well as having ‘business’ meetings.”

In other instances, the need was underlined for wider partnerships in order to achieve greater effectiveness, recognition and influence.

“Critical to the way of working is the collaborative approach with other organisations including local authorities, voluntary organisations and businesses. This entails reading the context in which we are working and ensuring we fit into it. Sometimes working in this way can be seen to slow things down, but it is more effective in the long run.”

“The main key to effectiveness . . . the emphasis on relationships. This has enabled it to secure a high level of collaboration – lots of informal interrelationships and exchanges of favours with other groups that share its concerns and the chance of opportunistic developments.”

“Close engagement and working relationships with statutory agencies.”

“Engaging with local councillors and council so that they accept that we can work as a team and that the work we do is of value.”

“Working alongside public sector leaders in the town and gaining credibility and therefore influence amongst them.”

One of the unfortunate side effects of public sector cuts apart from the diminution of funding has been that very often previous contacts and partners are no longer on the scene, having taken voluntary severance or been made redundant or moved. Thus the task of forging constructive working relationships has had to start again.

□ **Professionalism**

Many projects stressed the need for standards of professionalism that can enable them to stand comparison with other service providers. Specific aspects were cited:

“Much of the effectiveness of the project depends upon the care and skill required to match befrienders appropriately with families.”

“Dealing with issues promptly.”

“Attention to detail”

“The Centre is successful because we adapt to the changing circumstances of the local community and try to provide what is wanted and needed.”

“Having skilled facilitators and good resource materials was . . . critical to success.”

There was variation in the ways and extent to which projects monitored and evaluated their activities but there were indications that this is becoming a more prominent issue. For some, the driving force is to collect the evidence required by funders, but others see wider value in having the means to assess their effectiveness and steer their future policy and practices.

“Being a small organisation we can be innovative and test new services underpinned by the organisation’s quality and accountability within an evaluative framework.”

Another dimension of the professional approach is in team management. This might be as a guard against a ‘one man band’. It might be to foster greater integration between the project and the church: *“Encouraging church members and community leaders and members to work together.”*

Many projects indicated their rigour in training and managing volunteers, but they also seek to make the experience worthwhile and enjoyable for volunteers and show that their contribution is valued.

“There is an annual service recognising, valuing and showing appreciation for all that they do.”

“We also take care to demonstrate how much we value the time, energy and commitment given by volunteers through getting them together for various events and we are planning a service in [the] Cathedral, followed by a cream tea and the giving of certificates.”

3.8 Barriers

Another area of exploration in the study was the obstacles that the projects encounter.

□ **Funding**

The barrier mentioned in relation to almost all the projects covered was funding. For many, the perpetual uncertainty about future funding and the time and effort required to make funding bids become a constant drain on energy. Various factors make the funding environment much more competitive. Potential funders, such as charitable trusts, are receiving more applications at a time when their investment income has gone down. Some congregations are becoming relatively poorer, which limits their giving. Groups using church

premises are themselves struggling so yields from rental income are affected. Competition for contracts has also increased over recent months with larger organisations having an advantage over smaller ones.

Restricted funding has knock-on effects. It can curtail activities – directly or indirectly because partner organisations have closed or scaled back their activities in the context of public sector cuts. It can hamper projects that need premises either for their own activity or for clients such as homeless people. It can make it impossible to employ paid staff, which would enable the greater deployment of volunteers.

□ **Managing projects**

Some barriers cited in the study were to do with different aspects of running projects. They related in one way or another to capacity. When working at such a local level and when the desire is to be rooted in the local community, it can be difficult to recruit committee members/trustees with the appropriate knowledge and skills. Time and availability are also factors when there is considerable reliance on the involvement of parish clergy. There can also be a shortage of management skills amongst staff. Where they have come into a project in its infancy to perform a specific role, the growth of the project may put new demands on them which they feel are beyond their competence. Recruiting good staff can be challenging although currently the position may ease because of the impact of cuts and redundancies elsewhere.

A major facet of many projects is recruiting and managing volunteers. As has been indicated, volunteers are one of the strengths of such projects. However, it is not always easy to attract high quality volunteers especially ones, such as befrienders, “*who are willing to devote quite a lot of time to an unknown requirement with regard to when a call will be made*”. Once recruited, it can take skill and sensitivity to manage volunteers and avoid issues such as cliqueness or resistance to change.

Another danger that was mentioned is that of losing focus or distinctiveness. Some projects become aware of multiple needs or opportunities and consequently the many different directions they could take. Then the risk is of becoming too diffuse and woolly. In others, any growth brings with it the challenge of retaining organisational integration. The move from grant aid to contracts can similarly challenge the integrity of the organisation. The amount of paper work involved may curtail the time spent with clients. The terms of a contract may be prescriptive in a way that distorts the project’s preferred approach.

□ **Context of activity**

Many of the projects included in the study are based in tough working environments, in which staff may feel isolated emotionally and intellectually. An associated feature of deprived areas is that people sometimes have a poor self image and low aspirations, which makes it harder to effect change. There can be resistance to interventions – whether regeneration, social care, youth work or training and employment measures – not necessarily or solely because these activities are being sponsored by the church but because they are seen to represent ‘authority’.

Geography can be another contextual issue that is challenging in rural areas where access or bringing groups together is more difficult.

□ **Attitudes**

Some projects encounter negative attitudes or assumptions that may come from inside or outside the church. In one or two projects, disappointment was expressed that churches were “*not living up to the social gospel*”. Within some churches, the belief prevails that

“Christian mission begins and ends with evangelism”. A more diluted expression of this was the expectation that the activity being carried out, such as youth work, would result in more young people in the pews. Getting a wider vision across about the church’s social role is challenging.

Externally, potential partners or funders can still be suspicious of a perceived ‘religious’ agenda.

“Agencies that we work will sometimes assume that as a church-based organisation, we have another agenda, that the only reason for our being here is to get people into church on a Sunday.”

More generally, it can be difficult to win the confidence and collaboration of professionals on the ground. In the context of public sector cuts, there can be anxiety about the voluntary sector being brought in to do jobs ‘on the cheap’.

Another obstacle inside and outside churches is people prejudiced against the groups with whom projects are working. For example, there is *“prejudice about refugees and asylum seekers fanned by the tabloid press”*. This can even occur within agencies: *“whilst many police are extremely helpful, we have known instances of them being almost brutally unhelpful”*. Similarly, church members can have very judgmental attitudes towards people in poverty, again often because *“their only window on the world is through the media”* so that there is a need *“to change attitudes and overcome inaccurate preconceptions”*.

3.9 Challenges and opportunities

When asked about the future, project respondents identified a mix of challenges associated keeping the work going and maintaining its integrity and horizon scanning for new opportunities.

□ Sustainability

The prominence of funding as a barrier makes it unsurprising that one of the major challenges that most groups face is sustainability: maintaining their activity and, where relevant, their plant. Sometimes, it is anticipated that this will mean doing *“more with less”*.

□ Partnerships

For some projects, developing partnerships is closely associated with the need for financial security as a route towards being consortium members and winning contracts. For most, it is a key requirement for effective performance as very few will be able to go it entirely alone. Projects need to establish their credibility in delivering their service and demonstrate that they are reliable partners.

□ Capacity

Capacity was cited as an issue in a number of ways. It could appear in relation to the need to identify new trustees/directors or recruit staff and/or volunteers with the right aptitude and expertise or ensure continuity through changes in key personnel. It sometimes related to use of plant.

“Increasing numbers of users put greater demands on the building and use of space.”

However, there are also clearly stages in organisational growth and development that present challenges when more robust management, administrative and marketing systems become necessary. In other words, there is a need to develop roles and functions to support the key mission and purpose of the project. Quite often these will require skills that are not

needed while the project remains very small and which are not the ones brought by the original founders or early workers.

“I am manager, a trustee, the treasurer and also an adviser. Having so many hats has been necessary up to now, but I am praying that people will come along with different gifts and there will come a day when I can let go of some work and pass it to others.”

“Effectively we have a small business whose demand has hopelessly outstripped the structures that its original plan dictated would be required. What happens then is that you get some burn-out and insufficient time to build a new strategy for the larger organisation.”

Another significant step for some projects is to move from being reliant on grant aid/donations either to taking on contracts or setting up a social enterprise.

□ **Making greater use of volunteers**

At a time when the squeeze on funding is heightening the importance of volunteers, several projects were thinking about how to make greater use of them. As well as wanting to recruit more volunteers, they were considering how to increase the diversity of their roles (“developing bigger roles for experienced befrienders, for example, as ambassadors, mentors and contributors to the training programme”) and how to make the experience a more rewarding one for volunteers through additional training and accreditation.

□ **Extending the work**

Given increased funding, many projects are able to identify ways in which they could expand their work. This may be to extend it geographically to cover a wider area or it might be to take on new activities: for example, more outreach and follow up work in a homelessness project. Other openings are arising because of the paucity of provision in some policy areas.

“There are very few resources locally for people with mental health issues or learning difficulties and so there is an opportunity for us to do more.”

□ **Policy and service changes**

Another drive to extending the work comes from the needs and opportunities that exist because other services are being cut and clients are receiving much less support. More people seek help in a time of financial stringency. Needs may also arise, however, because of demographic or other changes. At a time when there are proportionately more older people and they are living longer, there is recognition of the need for more provision for older people.

The effects of austerity measures was a repeated theme.

“The switch from Incapacity Benefit to Job Seeker’s Allowance means that claimants have less money but are frequently still unemployable.”

Eligibility criteria are being narrowed and excluding some who would previously have been helped.

“Constant changes to the asylum system make it harder and harder for people to pursue claims and significantly increase the length of stay of our residents, reducing the number we can help.”

A number of projects recognise the challenge of keeping abreast of policy changes and coping with the fall-out where there is a negative impact on project users. Changes in contract arrangements have affected some projects making financial viability more fragile

and leading to a much more competitive working environment especially for smaller organisations.

Although the government's austerity measures seem to bring opportunities, *"people in churches, as in the rest of the voluntary sector, are becoming more wary of, or rather cynical about, the term 'Big Society' because it seems to amount to them being given more and more responsibilities in the face of dwindling resources"*.

More positively, the introduction of 'personalisation'¹⁵ is particularly significant for the changes it is bringing to adult social care. Individuals receive their own budget and can decide how, who with and where they wish to spend that budget in order to meet their needs and achieve their desired outcomes. Rather than a service-led approach in which individuals have to fit into care and support services that already exist which have been designed and commissioned by others on their behalf, it means tailoring support to people's individual needs and ensuring they can make informed decisions about their care and support. It requires finding new collaborative ways of working (sometimes known as co-production) that support people to engage actively in the design, delivery and evaluation of services and developing local partnerships to co-produce a range of services to give people choice. The initial focus is on social care and support services, but the intention is to embed the principles of personalisation in other public service areas such as health and education.

□ ***Holding the vision***

Struggling with day-to-day survival can make it harder to keep the real purpose of the effort at the forefront of thinking.

"One challenge is to keep the vision in focus so that making money is not the driving force . . . remembering that these are Community Interest Companies here to serve the community and using them as a tangible expression of God's love for the community through the church."

"To ensure the values and ethos central to the organisation remain and we are not diverted through chasing funding opportunities which take us into different directions."

In addition to funding, targets set by funders, if they are not exactly a diversion, can at least deflect attention from other less tangible, goals. There was sometimes consciousness, too, of the need to *"make more space for theological reflection"*.

□ ***Imparting the vision***

On the whole, however, imparting the vision to others is a greater challenge. This might be about the importance of the work: underlining its imperative as well as distinguishing it from more narrowly evangelistic activities.

"To some extent there is a tension between the pressures around the Diocesan Growth Strategy (numerical growth on Sunday mornings) and what we feel called to do in our neighbourhood."

Some projects wanted to gain more active or moral support from local churches for what they were doing. It could be the case that where there was collaboration, it was restricted to churches that have a similar theological outlook, yet there is scope to be more inclusive because others would share their commitment to this area of mission. On the other hand, lack of support could spring from disagreement about whether these were appropriate activities or, as indicated above, because of prejudice about the specific user groups,

¹⁵ Department of Health, (2007) *Putting People First: A shared vision and commitment to the transformation of adult social care.*

whether asylum seekers, homeless, people in poverty or ex-offenders. There was recognition, therefore, of the need for awareness-raising alongside the core project activities.

4. Findings from the research II: About supporting projects

4.1 The importance of higher level support

A key message emerging from the study concerns the significance of infrastructure support to projects. A few of the project stories include comments on support requirements:

- One specifically cites the challenge of *“Making the leap to an organisation with an employee and increased funding to manage. We shall have to consider governance and may have to become a registered charity. We may require support to make this transition.”*
- *“It would be good if there was some co-ordinated help for PCCs wishing to set up businesses or employ staff to save the angst of reinventing the wheel.”*
- *“Having advice available on human resources and payroll support.”*
- *“Being put in touch with and sharing experiences with other church groups working in a similar field.”*
- *“Opportunities to reflect theologically with others and deepen our understanding between faith and our practical work.”*

Others also underlined the importance of support. For this reason, several different types of infrastructure organisations have been included in the study (section 4.4). But support also comes in various forms from diocesan officers. This can be simply in the form of asking appropriate questions when parishes or other groups are thinking about embarking on a project, for instance, about evidence of need for the activity being considered or about capacity to meet that need. It can be supplying neighbourhood data or information about potential sources of funding. It can be help with funding applications.

Once up and running, there is often still an important role. In one example, the leader of a youth work project said:

“The Diocesan Youth Officer is a trustee. The Church and Community Development Officer attends management group meetings and has helped us access funding and sometimes looked over funding applications. More generally, the Diocese has given invaluable Human Resources support in relation to issues such as Child Protection and CRB checks.”

Without outside support in ancillary roles such as this, the leader would scarcely have had time to do her ‘proper’ job.

Organisations also take advantage of strategic support and training from various secular as well as faith-based bodies both locally and nationally. Sometimes this will be on general topics, such as strategic planning, managing volunteers or marketing, using organisations like Councils of Voluntary Service. Sometimes it will be specific to the sphere of activity, such as the Trussell Trust in relation to food banks, Refugee Action and NACCOM, the ‘No Accommodation Network providing accommodation for destitute asylum seeker or the Arthur Rank Centre and Plunkett Foundation on rural issues. For many, too, the Church Urban Fund (CUF) has been a major source of support as well as funding (see 4.2).

In addition to practical support, having connections with national organisations can not only provide opportunities for exchanging information and sharing experience, it can also be good for morale especially when the work seems very much an uphill struggle.

Where work is being done for, or in partnership with, agencies such as the local authority or primary care trust, that body will supply administrative help and support with recruitment of

volunteers, such as CRB checks. One concern is that there is less of this sort of help available as a result of the public spending cuts.

Voluntary sector infrastructure organisations like others in the sector are suffering from the austerity measures, despite their importance in underpinning the 'Big Society'. However, it is also evident from the study that resources for social responsibility (under whatever name it appears) and related activities have already been shrinking in some dioceses. Although the job title may still exist, it is sometimes only an appendage to a full time incumbency or one role amongst many in an individual's wide ranging portfolio.

4.2 The role of CUF

The [Church Urban Fund](#) (CUF) was set up in 1987 following a recommendation in *Faith in the City*. Its role is to support grassroots, faith-based social action in the most deprived neighbourhoods in England. CUF works with local churches to tackle poverty and has awarded over 5,000 grants since its inception totalling £65 million. There is a Diocesan Link Officer in every diocese, who is the first point of contact for information and support, working with CUF to advise and support the grant-making process.

Currently, the CUF Mustard Seed Grant programme aims 'to provide grants of up to £5,000 to enable churches and faith-based organisations to engage in social action, by supporting them to initiate or develop community work'. Projects, which must have charitable purposes, must either be targeting areas within the 10% most deprived in England or an 'intrinsically disadvantaged' group, such as the homeless, people with drug and alcohol problems or refugees and asylum seekers. Although projects do not need to be Anglican ones, there should be a strong link with a faith group. Church involvement can range from ownership to active support, including promotion, fundraising and/or volunteering by the local church community, but it needs to be more than simply being the landlord or having a church member on the management committee. The Grant Criteria and Guidance document states very clearly what the Fund will and will not support.

CUF also provides resources to support the projects it funds through training, workshops and conferences. There are monthly newsletters. *Xchange* supplies information about resources, funding, training and networks to support community and youth workers, project leaders and volunteers. *Together* gives news and updates about CUF's work. The CUF website gives project examples and case studies as well as templates, toolkits, guidance and research reports. An example is the Churches Community Value Toolkit for Church of England Parishes (June 2006) (with versions for Baptist and Methodist churches). Its purpose is to help churches articulate ways in which they contribute to their local community and estimate the financial value of this contribution. Using the toolkit can:

- enable churches to set a baseline so that they can measure change over time.
- provide evidence in support of grant applications.
- provide information to inform discussions with local statutory and voluntary sector organisations in order to raise the profile of the church, underline its credibility as a partner and increase the likelihood of influencing local policies and practices.

CUF is now working with several dioceses to develop 'CUF Locals', that is, joint ventures to support existing networks of activists to work on locally defined priorities. Once these organisations are formed, CUF can supply funds for a community worker to facilitate the work, build collaboration, recruit new activists and get new projects off the ground. Transformation Cornwall is one example.

Currently a major CUF project is [Near Neighbours](#). Its objectives are to aid social interaction by helping people from different faiths get to know and understand each other better and to

support social action by encouraging people of different faiths or no faith to collaborate in initiatives that improve their local neighbourhood. Funded by the government, Near Neighbours is operating in four key diverse and multi-faith areas: the north of England (Bradford, Burnley and Oldham); Leicester; parts of London; and parts of Birmingham. It is providing four types of support:

- Helping the four Centres already working in multi-faith areas.
- Creating a Near Neighbours Fund to help get good local ideas about different groups of people working together off the ground.
- Assisting other inter-faith organisations to extend their work.
- Assisting in work at a neighbourhood level.

4.3 Other national bodies

One of the resources on the CUF website is a *Directory of Ready-to-Go Church Community Projects*, (Church Urban Fund, November 2010). This gives information about a variety of national organisations that can provide tools, support and advice in relation to a range of activities including debt advice, employment and training, foodbanks, homelessness, health care, street life, pregnancy advice and young people:

- Christians Against Poverty
- Community Money Advice (CMA)
- SAFE – Choices Programme
- Spear
- The Trussell Trust
- Parish Nursing Ministries UK
- DePaul Nightstop UK – Emergency Accommodation
- Housing Justice – Winter Night Shelters
- Care Confidential
- Street Angels
- Street Pastors
- Streetspace
- The Lighthouse Group
- Worth Unlimited

The Directory indicates the advantages in partnering with a national organisation to set up a community project:

- Pre-established templates and procedures (including monitoring systems), promotional material and governance structures can reduce the amount of time preparing to get the project off the ground.
- Being able to access the experience, best practice and learning can lead to greater effectiveness.
- The networking and events bringing project workers/church leaders together to share learning and common problems can reduce isolation and the chance of burn-out.
- Management is made easier because project models are established with clear protocols and there is scope for advice and support.

Such a partnership is not the same as becoming a local branch of a national organisation. These projects are owned and run by local churches and so have a high degree of ownership. Consequently they are successful in accessing the enthusiasm, finances, volunteers and prayers of local people.

4.4 Examples of infrastructure organisations

The examples of infrastructure organisations cited in the study arose in different ways and have different functions.

- *Churches Trust for Cumbria* originated because, despite the number of historic church buildings in Cumbria, there was no county Historic Churches Trust. The gap was recognised at a time when it was possible to access funds from the Regional Development Agency and the case for funding could be tied into the role of churches as part of the area's cultural offer and therefore significant to its tourism economy. However, the supportive role of the trust extends much further. It "*recognises and values the contribution that church buildings and church communities make to society in Cumbria, beyond their core purpose as places of worship*" and, therefore, encourages partnership and engagement with local community groups, businesses and public sector organisations.
- *Faith in Our Communities* came about five years ago because, in spite of the extent of its deprivation, the Diocese of Durham was persistently underspending CUF funding. The purpose was to increase capacity in congregations by giving them the skills and confidence to plan new projects and employ workers. It was founded on the principles of Church Related Community Development: in other words, enabling people to create their own change rather than doing it for them.
- *Together for Regeneration* began in 1999 as an initiative of the Diocese of Sheffield and Industrial Mission South Yorkshire. The object was to help churches be involved in the regeneration that was happening extensively in South Yorkshire. It now provides infrastructure support for voluntary, community and faith sector organisations. Although it has proved very adaptable and responsive to changing needs and has been able to take advantage of changing funding opportunities, the current funding climate is more unfavourable than at any time in its history to date.
- *East Northants Faith group* is the working name for the body representing all faith-based groups in the East Northants District Council area. It began five years ago with the purpose of networking, profiling and increasing collaboration across the wide diversity of projects offered by all faith groups. It grew to incorporate all active churches in the area and identified key projects to facilitate, including street pastors, a night shelter and community café, debt counselling, a joint general counselling service and an autism awareness and support project. ENFG has produced resources for groups to use such as policies on equal opportunities, risk assessment and safeguarding and the Faithworks six-point plan for community development.
- *Leeds Christian Community Trust* started in 2003 as a means of several mission initiatives sharing resources instead of each needing to set up its own structure and administrative systems. Since 2003, it has supported over 30 projects engaged in a variety of activities, such as: after-school clubs; youth work; creative arts; work with asylum seekers; networking and promoting links across different ethnic groups; friendship and support groups; training; and anti-poverty work. Management of each project is the responsibility of the dreamer/vision carrier with support from their own reference group. Each project is accountable to LCCT trustees through a link trustee and by reporting through the Support Team. Funded projects are appraised against their agreed development plan. For auditing purposes, member projects' accounts make up a sub-section of the accounts of the whole charity, but the finances of any one project are kept separate from others. The aim is for each project to secure external funding support and eventually become a separate legal entity.
- *The Kairos Partnership* is a charity, supported by the Diocese of Hereford, to work with local faith groups to start and develop projects to help their communities. Kairos works

with any faith-based community group (Christian, Muslim, Jewish or other recognised faith) that needs help to turn an idea into a workable project, or to grow a small project into a bigger one. The company will, if necessary, act as an accountable body for funding, assist in making bids and developing a business plan.

- *Transformation Cornwall* is an ecumenical charity, set up by the Diocese of Truro, the Church Urban Fund and the Methodist Church in Cornwall, as part of the Church Urban Fund's Joint Venture programme with Dioceses around the country. Building on previous work, it was established as a vehicle to provide sustained infrastructure support for church related projects with the purpose of engaging every church and enhancing the capacity of their clergy, leaders, projects and people in addressing poverty. It can work with groups to identify the needs of their community, support them in responding and provide training and capacity building.
- *Infrastructure support in the Diocese of Portsmouth* revolves around moving away from dependency on grant funding. The Council for Social Responsibility (CSR) sees the challenge as how to make the presence of the Anglican Church in most neighbourhoods "a dynamic and sustainable resource for our mission and be a centre of light, hope and belief for all". There are a number of strands. In 2003, the Diocese launched the Kairos process to help parishes think strategically about the future. The diocese went through two cycles of the Kairos process. The first in 2004-05 looked at community engagement and resulted in hundreds of community projects; the second launched in 2008 focused on church buildings and led to many successful building projects that have since been undertaken. The Rapid Parish Development Programme (RPDP), introduced in 2009, succeeded the Kairos Process. Although initially the plan was to work with parishes considering new community facilities, it quickly became evident that there was a danger of more churches being burdened with poorly thought through and delivered (re)development projects. Instead, RPDP starts from first principles with the why, what and how questions for parishes thinking through what they can offer to their local community and more widely. It uses social/business development techniques adapted to help participants think about the potential role of their Church. Another strand of activity is Kaospilots: a programme of leadership developed with the University of Portsmouth, the Kaospilots School in Denmark and others to assist clergy and lay people develop the creative entrepreneurial skills needed for viable and sustainable projects. One current possibility is to turn this activity into a social enterprise to run the programmes and roll them out more widely.
- *Good Neighbours Support Service* has been running since the 1970s. Sponsored by a consortium of three dioceses, Winchester, Guildford and Portsmouth led by the Diocese of Portsmouth, it provides information, guidance, development and support to about 125 Good Neighbours Groups in Hampshire (sometimes called Neighbourcare Groups or Care Groups). These are independent voluntary groups that offer neighbourly help to people in their local communities. They are not faith-based, but probably about 80% of the people involved are church members. GNSS offers support from a local Good Neighbours Groups Adviser, information and resources, networking opportunities and regular training days as well as free insurance, CRB checks and resources and grants. As well as enabling groups to be more effective, GNSS tries to ensure that there are as few barriers to volunteering as possible.

It can be seen that these examples operate at different spatial levels: local authority or county-wide or throughout a diocese or sub-regionally. Most are ecumenical or interfaith. In other words, they recognise that because of the commonalities across faith groups there is greater economy and effectiveness in being inclusive. As well as the services being relevant to all, they can use the diversity to strengthen the way they function. Several have arisen not just from identifying need, but also from spotting opportunities or seeing that the time

was right whether because of the availability of funding and/or potential partners or because they have looked at trends and understood, for example, the increasing scope for social enterprises.

Various common threads run through what these organisations do. They are all designed to help local churches and faith groups maximise their potential in responding to community needs. This can be through strengthening the capacity of organisations and/or relieving them of management and administrative burdens so that they are able to focus on their main mission, especially in their initial phase of development. It can be in increasing their impact by helping towards a more integrated approach to meeting local needs and sharing good practice. As infrastructure bodies, they bring greater awareness of the associated issues when organisations grow and their activities expand, take on paid staff or become incorporated.

4.5 Wider strategic context

Another way in which parishes can be helped to address particular issues or take actions forward is if there is strategic work at national and/or diocesan level. This study includes three examples.

- The Diocese of London began a partnership with [The Children's Society](#) (TCS) in 2005/6 that eventually led to a three year written Youth Strategy for the Diocese for 2008-2011. That strategy is now being updated. A worker from TCS conducted an extensive consultation and the Diocese could also draw on the findings of the Society's 2006 Good Childhood Inquiry to inform the strategy. Since then, training and accreditation have been provided for youth leaders at basic and more advanced levels, support and guidance for them and parishes and other resources have been produced including a self-evaluation tool for churches. Young people have been trained to administer the fund that offers small grants to youth groups and Young Advisers help to train others. The project has also helped CUF to assess youth work funding applications from the Diocese.
- *Faith in Affordable Housing* is a project managed by [Housing Justice](#) that provides a web-based guide to help churches offer their land or property for affordable housing. A Project Co-ordinator can work with churches considering a scheme on a no-fee basis. The paper on affordable housing in this study also gives examples of diocesan approaches: one focusing on large 'time-expired' church buildings and the other on selling or leasing church land. Having the strategy and/or expertise within the diocese helps to simplify the process for local churches. In this policy sphere as in others, recent policy changes mean that it is necessary to keep abreast of potential partners and funding sources for such schemes. Some former funding streams have gone. At present, a Community Land Trust (CLT) is a potential vehicle and the paper gives an example of a local scheme. In addition, there is a template that looks at steps towards a CLT.
- *Shrinking the Footprint*, launched in 2006, is the Church's campaign and programme of action to mitigate climate change. It invited all parishes to carry out an audit of their energy use to establish a benchmark. Having assessed the size of the current carbon footprint, the idea was to roll out initiatives to shrink that footprint. The paper included in this study also refers to 'Grow Zones', a national project for those who want to start a community growing project. Two regional responses to environmental issues are an Environment Group set up jointly by six dioceses in South West England and a North West-wide multi-faith environmental project. There are descriptions of a diocesan strategy and a joint Anglican/Roman Catholic response in another diocese and an example of a congregation meeting the criteria of the Eco-Congregation Award.

In all of these, there is a clear connection between thinking from the national to the local, with the information, expertise and benchmarks that can be provided nationally giving encouragement, ideas and a useful framework for local activities.

5. Conclusions and messages

5.1 Bringing the threads together

This long report has tried to bring together key messages and themes from a study of Christian Community Action. Although designed to be read alone, it relies upon all the associated material in the appendices and it is in these that the reader can find the first hand experience, illuminating stories and inspiring accounts of dedicated service to the church and to local communities.

With no claims to be comprehensive, the study nevertheless illustrates the immense range of community projects taking place. As many respondents testified, here is 'Big Society' in action long before the term was coined. Their stories indicate the barriers they face and their future challenges. They reflect their strengths: the sensitivity to need and the commitment shown in the determination to respond to it. They demonstrate the importance of both the underpinning of faith and the role of the institutional church at all levels, local, diocesan and national.

Lessons emerged about the (potential) strengths of Christian community action projects:

- First, their stress on personal relations. They start from the individual and have a holistic approach, unlike a lot of agencies that have to start from their own agenda.
- Secondly, their staying power. When they have been around a long time, have stuck it out and really know their local community, they have credibility and they inspire trust.
- A third strength comes from acting together – churches and often other faith groups joining to meet needs and allying with others who share their vision and values.
- Lastly, there is the inseparability of prayer and action. This link is always important to keep rooted in faith, but it is also a reminder of a continuing role for those who cannot or can no longer be so active.

5.2 Theological themes

A range of theological themes thread through the sample of projects covered in the study:

- *Caring* featured in nearly all because the motivation came from the fact that people cared about others and the value attached to each and every individual was demonstrated through that care.
- *Hospitality* was another theme that was often present but perhaps seen most strikingly in relation to asylum seekers and refugees.
- *Presence* – being there – was another theological strand. Very often, the church project was the most longstanding one in the community, as others came and went. Years ago, this was expressed by Margaret Simey – a sympathiser but not a church person – based on her experience as a councillor in Liverpool 8. She talked about the church being “*an enduring, faithful presence so that the flux and uncertainty all around could be more bravely confronted*”¹⁶.
- *Liberation* was another theme: people in the projects were often struggling to help those they were working with escape the shackles represented by their different problems, such as poverty, unemployment, homelessness, broken relationships or isolation.
- Yet another strand was *Inclusion*: not just that social inclusion was a goal of some projects, but also that they were not making a strict divide between helper and helped.

¹⁶ Don May and Margaret Simey, *The Servant Church in Granby*, Centre for Urban Studies, University of Liverpool, 1989

Clients sometimes went on to be volunteers; but in any case, staff and volunteers recognised the mutuality involved and how they benefited from relationships. The language of Big Society sometimes suggests there is a divide between the doer and the done to whereas, in Rowan Williams' words, "*we have a robust sense of inter-dependence. A sense that we all, each one of us, we all are who we are because of the neighbour, because of relationship.*"¹⁷

- *Creation* was an obvious theme in relation to some of the environmental and climate change projects, which also extended the vision of interdependence globally and to future generations.
- Finally, *Justice* was a theme among projects speaking out about injustice and inequality. There was also awareness that although there are opportunities to deliver caring service by being commissioned to do so by public agencies, it is important not to become so enmeshed in 'the system' that you lose the capacity to speak truth to power.

5.3 Returning to the idea of Big Society

The impetus for this study came from a debate in General Synod on the Big Society. Early in this report, the statement was made "A major test for them [the churches and the voluntary and community sector] is whether the Big Society facilitates or obstructs what they are trying to do". In some ways, the jury is still out. Insofar as the language of government is friendly towards the role of faith communities, there seems to be an open invitation to take on a greater community role. However, rhetoric is not necessarily matched by reality. This is a time of flux in the lives of many of the communities and projects represented here. The combined effects of the economic downturn and the government's austerity measures mean, on the one hand, a rising tide of need particularly among already vulnerable people in already deprived neighbourhoods and, on the other, tighter purse strings amongst potential funders of voluntary organisations, including church groups. For some, future funding prospects look even more uncertain. The opportunities may be there to become more involved in service delivery but mainly without the resources to enable this to happen.

5.4 Stronger bonds

*"Neighbourliness is the first condition for treating others (and being treated ourselves) as ends not means."*¹⁸

There is no doubt that the projects described in this study represent neighbourliness in action, but one of the key emerging messages is that they need support in this from the wider church in terms of prayer, understanding, information, practical assistance and, sometimes, strategic direction. Some projects had encountered negative attitudes inside the church as well as external barriers. To repeat the statement quoted earlier, there is a need for a reminder that the Christian mission in the world "*is not just to enable the church to flourish but to promote the flourishing of all people*".¹⁹

The report has discussed the role of diocesan officers as well as looking at different types of church-related infrastructure organisations. At a time when the operating environment for projects is becoming more difficult, the need for this higher level support seems more pressing, yet it was also evident from the study that in some dioceses resources for social responsibility are shrinking. Clearly, financial pressures can be pleaded in mitigation for cuts but where those cuts fall also denotes priorities. Very often all the emphasis is put on mission at parish level ("this is where the 'real' work of the church takes place"), possibly

¹⁷ Rowan Williams, 'How should churches respond to the Big Society', July 2010.

¹⁸ Malcolm Brown, "'The Big Society' and the Church of England", para 49, General Synod 1804

¹⁹ Malcolm Brown, "Church of England and the Common Good Today", p.3.

without appreciating the role of diocesan officers, including sector ministers in facilitating that mission.

“A Christian vision of the good society aims to generate the kind of strong social bonds that also appear among the objectives of the Big Society project.”²⁰

There is another role for the wider church and its leaders. At project level, there can be tensions between the pastoral and prophetic roles; between meeting needs and speaking out about the impact of the economy and public policies on vulnerable people and communities. Yet the strong social bonds that these projects are trying to generate need to be embodied in economic and social policies and institutions as well as expressed in interpersonal relationships. The existence of this Christian community action, its presence and sustained service in all parts of society gives the church the experience and authority to be able to speak with integrity in the public arena with and for those who would not otherwise have a voice.

²⁰ Malcolm Brown, ‘The Big Society’ and the Church of England’, para 51, General Synod 1804

Appendix I: Projects

ASPIRE

St Mary's Church, Slough

Introduction

St Mary's Church, Slough, exemplifies how adapting church buildings can open up new opportunities for involving the local community without damaging its worship activities in any way.

St Mary's

St. Mary's is situated right in the centre of Slough, a couple of minutes walk from the shopping centres on Church Street, which is the centre for voluntary organisations in Slough. It is part of the Church of England parish, which derived its name from two historic districts of Slough – Upton, in the East of the parish, with its Saxon church of St Lawrence – and Chalvey, in the West of the parish, with its nineteenth century church of Saint Peter. Saint Mary's Church is located in the centre of the parish of Upton cum Chalvey and serves the town centre of Slough – an area between the M4 to the South, the A4 to the North, Windsor Road to the West and Yew Tree Road to the East. The three Anglican churches – Saint Mary's, Saint Peter's and St Lawrence's – work together as a team ministry, served by three clergy and two parish wardens. Saint Mary's has a particular civic ministry (through civic funerals, an annual service of remembrance, school carol services, or large scale concerts and events). The parish maintains close connections with the Slough community chaplaincy, known as Kingsway Connections and the hospital chaplaincy at the Heatherwood and Wexham Park NHS Trust and the Upton Hospital.

Saint Mary's doesn't just minister to the members of the Sunday congregation. As an Anglican Parish Church, we seek to serve everybody who lives and works within the boundaries of our parish – through our daily worship, weddings and baptisms, our concerts and arts events, or simply by lending a listening ear. Our patron saint, Mary, provides a good pattern for our work. Mary was told that she would be the mother of Jesus. Mary responded to God's call, consented to His will and so made herself ready for God's service when she said: 'Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word.' (Luke, 1.38). We believe that it is in being open to the will of God that we can serve Him in the people who surround us.

A few years ago, the church took out the pews from the back half of the church to create a community space with flexible seating and audio-visual capacity. It has left pews for about 200 and has available stackable chairs for concerts, conferences and large church services to seat another 250 approximately. This clearing of the clutter was later complemented with a kitchen area in the back of church.

Origins

The initial impetus for creating this space came from the then Rector with the church council in the conviction that St. Mary's had something to offer the wider community as a resource for community use irrespective of faith background.

We consulted on the idea through an open day for various local volunteer groups, Slough Borough Council, and others who had either used the building or enquired about possible use. All enquiries were followed up by the co-ordinator and we sent questionnaires to anyone who had used building or had shown interest to ascertain what they would be looking for when hiring and we contacted enquirers who had not booked to discover their reasons for not going ahead; for example, whether it was because of hire costs or car parking or some other factor.

The ASPIRE Project

The ASPIRE project was set up in 2005 to co-ordinate St Mary's church as a resource for the whole community, all day, every day - not just for worship, and not just for Christians. ASPIRE achieves its aims through:

- *Arts projects* - concerts, arts, festivals, performances;
- *Spirituality* - sharing with those of our own faith, of other faiths and of none;
- *Productivity* - community achievement;
- *Interfaith* - fostering dialogue across faith boundaries;
- *Reconciliation* - promoting peace, unity and justice across cultures;
- *Education* - learning, sharing and teaching.

Saint Mary's is available for meetings, conferences, performances and exhibitions. The main building is 3,000 sq ft and seats up to 500. Seating is moveable, allowing complete flexibility of the space. There is a stage area with moveable blocks and lighting, excellent acoustics, microphones and facilities for audio recording. A small meeting room near the stage area can be used as a green room or hired separately for smaller groups.

There is a kitchen area for serving drinks and light snacks. Toilets, including disabled access, are situated between the two areas. There is a loading area at the main entrance to the building. Public car parking is easily available, and private parking can be arranged if needed.

Since ASPIRE's launch, St. Mary's has built up a portfolio of regular users:

- Assemblies of God Church
- Aik Saath
- Alcoholics Anonymous
- Child Contact Centre
- Cookham Choir
- Fenner Festival
- Gospel Crew
- Langley Grammar School
- Lunchtime Concert Platform
- Narcotics Anonymous
- Same Difference Film Festival
- Slough Borough Council Election Office
- Taplow Choirs
- Ulster Youth Jazz Orchestra.

In addition, Citizens' Advice, Slough has sometimes run advice sessions in St Mary's.

Many from the West Indian Community throughout Slough regard St Mary's as their 'Mother Church' and so we host many large pastoral services for them. The church and the vestry are used by local self help groups. Twice a month the whole church is given over to a Child Contact Centre, a place where the children of separated families can enjoy contact with one or both parents and sometimes other family members in a relaxed and safe environment. All groups are flourishing. Coupled with this there is a weekly lunchtime concert for local musicians and from London music colleges. There is also a variety of 'one off' concerts, exhibitions and conferences. At the same time worship is offered on most days of the week and the church is open over the lunch period.

In Slough, we work in close collaboration with the Methodist congregations at Saint Andrew's and Ledger's Road and the Roman Catholic congregation at Saint Ethelbert's. The Society of Friends (the 'Quakers') regularly contribute to our Sunday evening worship. The United Reformed Church provides the home for the Slough City Centre Ministry Team, 'Kingsway Connections'. Saint Mary's is part of Slough Town Centre Churches Together, which brings together Christian churches of all denominations.

Internationally, Saint Mary's and the parish of Upton cum Chalvey are linked in a partnership of prayer with the Lutheran congregation of *Auferstehungskirche* (Church of the Resurrection) and the Roman Catholic Congregation of *Herz Jesu Kirche* (Sacred Heart Church) in Pforzheim, Germany. North of the Black Forest, Pforzheim (like Slough) is a large industrial centre in close proximity to a sprawling metropolis.

Leadership

Leadership has come primarily from the Church Council and incumbents. Initially there was a working group who reported to the Church Council and a paid co-ordinator, but there are no longer sufficient funds for the post.

Resources

Funding for the project has come from historic St Mary's money set aside for ministry and mission; a CUF Mustard Seed grant and from some voluntary sector sources. St Mary's itself has contributed in the form of underwriting some of the organisations that use the church and allowing them to use the premises rent free.

Volunteers are required to take bookings and open, close and prepare the building. Each booking is different. Only opening and closing the building takes a maximum of 1 hour, but for a concert requiring major adjustments to the building 4/5 hours is needed for preparation and dismantling. Keeping the church open takes on average 3 – 4 hours per day, which calculated on the basis of the minimum wage amounts to about £120 per week.

Connections

In addition to the Diocesan and ecumenical links, we work with a variety of the large number of voluntary organisations in Slough. One advantage has been that one of the Church wardens is very involved with the voluntary sector and this has resulted in a lot of interaction and increased use of the building. We have found personal connections to be important. A former curate at St Mary's had a lot of contacts in the arts and again that influenced the profile of users. Many still use the church for artistic endeavour, but now our day-to-day contacts are more grounded in local voluntary bodies.

Outcomes/impact

The range of community use and the close interaction with such a wide variety of groups demonstrate the value of the project. The vast majority of people attending the various groups and concerts are not members of the church community so the church is fulfilling its mission to be here for others throughout the week.

Barriers

Funding is always likely to be a barrier and may restrict the extent to which the church can subsidise certain users in future. The demands of parish share are growing at a time when the largely low-paid congregation is becoming relatively poorer.

Another barrier has been the establishment of various rival facilities in the vicinity since 2005.

Challenges and opportunities

The main challenge is maintaining the plant itself in the current economic climate. Opportunities come from the new needs arising in Slough and the demographic changes taking place within the local community.

Father Andrew Allen

Families Matter Guildford

Introduction

Families Matter is a community project that helps local families who are often quite isolated by carefully matching them to a volunteer befriender who can come alongside and help them in a variety of practical ways. Although Guildford is a relatively affluent area, it does contain areas of deprivation, especially in the north of the borough, which is where Families Matter operates.

Origins

When a charity closed a few years ago, some funds became available in the Guildford Diocese to work with families. Various churches made separate bids to secure funds, but it made sense to have an ecumenical project and work together. In thinking through a potential project, a steering group was formed with the churches that had put in bids, the Department for Social Responsibility (DSR), Guildford Diocese, the local Sure Start Children's Centre and a local charity organisation, Guildford Action for Families (GAF). GAF runs community drop-in sessions and gives parents/carers practical advice and support with problems that they might face in bringing up their children. These representatives confirmed the view of people in the churches that some families' needs were not being fully met. Some agencies were not reaching the neediest families or, where they were, they were not giving sufficiently holistic or intensive help. As a result, a post of Co-ordinator was advertised and filled and Families Matter was launched in March 2009.

How Families Matter works

The project's aim is to support vulnerable or isolated local families with children up to eighteen years old. The chosen means of supporting them is through befriending. Families are referred by a variety of agencies, such as health visitors, school workers, GAF and the Children's Centre. Although the local social services are interested in the work, they are less likely to make referrals and, on the whole, Families Matter can be more effective working with families before they are in any sort of crisis need requiring social service intervention.

Once referred, the first step is for the Co-ordinator to visit. Sometimes she is accompanied by the person who has made the referral but, in any case, she goes through a checklist about the family with whoever has referred them to get a broad picture of their circumstances and needs. In these initial visits, she carries out a risk assessment prior to involving the volunteer befriender and she may make several visits to gain sufficient understanding to be able to introduce the most suitable befriender.

The families referred may have any of a range of problems such as debt, domestic abuse and parenting. Often when they are referred, it is with the message "this is what they need". However, Families Matter starts from what the families themselves say: what is their immediate felt need? Once the relationship is established, a wider range of problems or their underlying causes may emerge.

Befrienders give many sorts of help depending upon the families' needs. Their role goes much further than befriending. It may be helping them to access local facilities such as toddler groups, youth groups and the Children's Centre. It might be giving moral support or simply spending time with them and chatting. It might be putting them in touch with other sorts of help. For example, Families Matter has links with Besom, a cross-church

initiative in Guildford that also recognises that there are many who are vulnerable and in need through situations such as isolation, poverty, ill health, homelessness and domestic violence. Besom enables people to make a difference through practical work such as gardening, decorating and DIY and through giving good quality items, such as furniture, white goods, clothes, kitchen equipment and other household items.

Befrienders will usually see a family every week or two weeks, spending more time with them at the start of the relationship, and they continue to work with them for two years. Part of the value of befriending is its long term nature and some befrienders maintain the friendship even after the formal role has finished. Befrienders, too, will quite often introduce their families to other friends who can become a wider support network.

A critical dimension of the scheme is matching befrienders with the families. In part this is a matter of getting the 'chemistry' right, but it is also important to use volunteers who live in the same locality and know about the local community. If they come from more geographically and socially distant areas, the 'reality gap' can be too great.

Recruitment of volunteers

Befrienders have been recruited – through word of mouth and legwork – from local churches: Church of England, a joint Anglican/shared, Elim Pentecostal, Baptist and more recently Roman Catholic. In speaking about the work to churches, the Co-ordinator will often take an existing volunteer with her so that they can share their experience. Befrienders do not have to have any specific professional experience or qualifications, but some bring relevant experience, either because they have worked with a similar cross section of people in a different capacity, for example, as teacher or nursery nurse, or because they have had some personal experience of the problems the clients are encountering. The key qualification is to have a real passion for helping others. People putting themselves forward have to be assessed in terms of their suitability and have to have CRB checks. The age range is quite wide. They cannot be too young, though some younger people can give other sorts of volunteering help. At the other end of the age range, people over 80 years old are precluded because they would not be covered by insurance.

The volunteers are given a handbook containing relevant information. They receive training in the following areas:

- Safeguarding children and vulnerable adults;
- Boundaries;
- Confidentiality;
- Personal Safety;
- Domestic Abuse.

They also have talks from the local Children's Centre and GAF on their role and what they provide for families.

The organisation

Families Matter is run by the Diocese of Guildford and the part-time Co-ordinator is managed by the Diocesan Social Responsibility Officer. There is a steering group that meets monthly with members drawn from the different churches that have several members participating in the project.

Developing activities

Over the last two years, Families Matter has grown in terms of the number of churches involved. The steering group is also looking now at whether it would be valuable to extend its activities into group work. At present, ideas are still at an early stage of formulation, but external developments suggest potential needs:

- As schools no longer have money ring-fenced for holiday clubs for their children, could churches help to fill the gap?
- The government now wants single mothers to go to work once their last child is at school. Many feel unfitted for work, depressed at the prospect and anxious about their abilities. One possibility would be to set up groups in a couple of churches with a support worker to provide information on, and discuss different aspects of seeking, obtaining and retaining employment.

Resources

In addition to the initial funds from the charity that closed, funding for Families Matter has come from the Bishop of Guildford's Foundation and donations from churches. Churches also give in-kind contributions through allowing the free use of their premises. The Children's Centre also gives the Co-ordinator free desk space.

However, funding is a constant issue. At present, the project has reserves for about six months. Various funding applications are planned.

The non-financial support from local churches and, especially from the DSR, is vital.

Costing the contribution of volunteers

In addition to the time given by the members of the steering group in meetings and providing training, there are about 15 volunteers who each give an average of 2/3 hours per week. Calculated on the basis of the minimum wage, this amounts to £180 per week, though the professional rates for the work would be much higher.

Outcomes

Families Matter has a questionnaire, which is first completed when the family is first referred and then revisited six monthly afterwards.¹ What such monitoring shows is that because families become more confident and are less isolated, they can manage their own lives more competently and often go on to support others.

An outside indication that the project is seen as effective is that Families Matter has been asked to extend to other parts of Guildford. This has so far been resisted because of lack of capacity.

Success factors

- Flexibility: Families Matter can cross barriers that other agencies with more limited remits cannot and it can deliver help that is more personal to the specific family; for example, helping with school uniforms or when the house needs painting.

¹ Some of the indicators included are comparable with those in the Department for Education's 'Family Savings Calculator'. This is a tool to help local authorities to quantify the cost benefits of a family with multiple problems undergoing and successfully completing an intensive intervention under the headings of: Crime/anti-social behaviour; Drug and alcohol services; Education/employment; Health care; Housing; Social care.

Sometimes this is through very spontaneous responses from local churches, such as having a 'whip-round' for a mother whose daughter needed very costly built-up shoes, thus providing a very rapid solution to what could otherwise have become a much more protracted problem.

- Much of the effectiveness of the project depends upon the care and skill required to match befrienders appropriately with families.
- Raising awareness and getting churches on-side is important not least because churches have a real sense of the importance of family life and a vision of what 'community' can mean that is often lacking in wider society.
- Supporting the volunteers and integrating them into the wider project is a means of showing their work is valued. One way of doing this is bringing them together every few months socially and for prayer. This helps them not only to get to know one another, but also to gain better mutual understanding of their respective churches.
- In line managing the Co-ordinator, the SRO treats her as one of his team which gives her access to others' expertise and the wider support that the Diocesan 'family' can offer.

Barriers

Funding is a perpetual problem. More volunteers are also needed especially as some step down from the programme after two years because they are continuing to keep contact informally with their families. Another danger is the possibility of losing focus because there are so many directions that the project could take.

Challenges and opportunities

Funding will continue to be a major challenge. It is evident that the level of need is growing partly because of the cuts faced by statutory agencies. This is both a challenge and an opportunity. At the same time, people in churches, as in the rest of the voluntary sector, are becoming more wary of, or rather cynical about, the term 'Big Society' because it seems to amount to them being given more and more responsibilities in the face of dwindling resources.

Jane Voake

YPAC, Manchester

YPAC

YPAC aims to encourage and support the social integration of marginalized young people aged 10 -19 in Miles Platting and Ancoats in Manchester, enabling them to build their skills and self esteem, increase their aspirations and become responsible community members as a practical expression of God's love for the community. Miles Platting and Ancoats are in the top 1% most deprived neighbourhoods in the country according to the Index of Multiple deprivation. Decades of unemployment and other symptoms of poverty have combined with high levels of alcohol abuse, violence and drug use. These two wards have the lowest secondary school attendance in Manchester and the highest level of young people leaving school with no qualifications.

History

YPAC is the youth project of the Anglican Churches (St Cuthbert's and The Church of the Apostles') in Miles Platting and Ancoats, Manchester. It was founded in 2005 by committed local people in response to consultation with the local community as part of the statutory regeneration process. I was moving to the parish with my husband who was the vicar and we knew the churches needed to find ways of engaging with the community. The original impetus, therefore, came from me offering to research into the needs of young people knowing that it was something recently highlighted in a community consultation.

The research was conducted through consultation with community members, agencies, young people, schools and using statistics of deprivation from wards and diocese. The statistical material included Census data provided through the Diocese, local statistics from Manchester City Council using the Index of Multiple Deprivation data on issues affecting young people.

A small grant from the Diocese of Manchester Parish Mission Fund, followed by a grant from the Church Urban Fund, paid for a worker to consolidate the research done voluntarily, submit further funding proposals and begin pilot projects with young people. At this stage the worker was supported by some young volunteers from the Churches' Brigade Unit.

By January 2007 YPAC had secured major grants from The Big Lottery and BBC Children in Need and employed our first full-time worker to the Transitions Project. A second worker started later that year to develop the generic youth work with older young people.

Activities

Since that time, YPAC has developed into the primary provider of youth work in the Miles Platting and Ancoats area. It now runs a variety of projects for the benefit of local young people. YPAC:

- Provides, with young people's involvement, a range of activities, information support and opportunities for personal development which enable them to enjoy and achieve. On average we offer activities to young people 6 times a week after school, at weekends and during the school holidays. These may be drop-in or project based. Activities have recently included drama, dance, cooking, football, water sports, girls' projects, trapeze, photography, DJ-ing and trips and residential.
- Delivers regular outreach sessions, meeting young people in the community.

- The Transitions Project identifies young people in year 6 who are at risk of dropping out of education and engages them in a 3 year programme of individual support and group work which helps to raise their aspirations and enables them to stay in and benefit from school.
- Provides young people with the opportunity to contribute positively to the community and to the regeneration of their neighbourhood. Young people have helped to run fun-days, cleared the community garden, organised a car wash, interviewed staff, and raised funds for activities.
- Runs an active youth forum – SOLE (Shout Out Loud Everyone). It meets regularly to look at how it can make a difference to YPAC and to the community. Two members are on the YPAC Board of Directors.
- Offers individual support and advice to young people and refers them to specialist agencies if required.

Organisation

After establishing the need and researching the way forward, the steering group, made up of members of the two congregations adopted a constitution and invited professional workers and local agencies to join them as a fully constituted management group. We set up a steering group and did an audit. We brought in professionals and community members to sit on the management group and be part of the development process. I always knew I would be involved for several years and have the necessary expertise and experience.

YPAC has been operating now for 6 years. For the first 4½ years YPAC was legally responsible to the PCC of the Church of the Apostles. In order to recognise and successfully fundraise for the growing work of the project, YPAC decided to become a separate charity, with the two Churches as founding members. The existing management committee became the Board of Directors and we began to operate as a company limited by guarantee and a charity on 1st April 2010.

The staff team comprises the Project Manager (30 hours), an Administrator (18 hours), Senior Youth Worker (35 hours), a Youth Worker (16 hours), Transitions Worker (23 hours), sessional staff each doing 5 hours and a voluntary Volunteer Co-ordinator.

Leadership

. has primarily come from me! But more recently the directors have had training on and involvement in strategy, producing a three year strategy document. We also have a senior youth worker who has been with us for 6 years and has taken on more responsibility over the past couple of years.

Resources

We have the use of the two church buildings in the area and one of them has office space. We also use other community buildings.

At first we needed to raise £120,000 per year. This year's budget is £143,000, although we originally wanted £180,000. In addition to funding from trusts, we have contracts with the City Council Youth Service and schools. Since the inception in 2005, sources of grants have included: CUF, Church and Community Fund, Council for Social Aid, the Local Network Fund, BBC Children in Need, Lloyd's TSB Foundation, the John Davies Trust, The Big Lottery Fund, Manchester Kids (Key 103), Manchester City Council Cash Grants, Youth Capital Fund, Youth Opportunity Fund, the Methodist Church, the Outward Bound Association, Manchester City Council and Connexions. We have very few donations and charges to young people are similarly very limited. We are only financially secure for this

financial year, although we have £60,000 towards the following two years plus some small reserves.

We also needed volunteer time to get started. I did initial pilot work with local young volunteers from the Church's Brigade unit. However the work is not sustainable with volunteers and much of it is too specialised. Now we are trying to use volunteers more but without being dependent on them. At the moment they probably contribute a regular 5 hours per week.

Other support

Manchester Diocese has been supportive in a number of ways. The Diocesan Youth Officer is a trustee. The Church and Community Development Officer attends management group meetings and has helped YPAC access funding and sometimes looked over funding applications. More generally the Diocese has given invaluable HR support in relation to issues such as Child Protection and CRB checks.

In addition, I have accessed strategic support and training from various secular bodies, both Voluntary Youth Manchester and GIO (Growing Independent Organisations) in Manchester and nationally from Porticus UK which gives free training about strategy and marketing.

Outcomes

During the period of the 2009-2010 Annual Report, YPAC has:

- engaged 205 young people in activities and events.
- awarded 108 young people certificate for commitment or progress.
- seen 61 young people achieve recorded outcomes.
- supported 34 young people in the transition from primary to secondary school.
- involved 14 young people in project management through SOLE.
- enrolled 21 young people on ASDAN awards, which offer an imaginative way of developing, recording and certificating young people's personal achievements with gold, silver and bronze awards. Students are required to carry out challenges over 60 or 120 hours and recognise their skill development.
- offered 28 young people one-to-one support.
- helped 49 young people make a positive contribution to the community.

Success factors

A key factor is being locally based and, having been here for 6 years now, we are known and respected and thought to be reliable. We stay with young people from 10 years old to 19 years and the longevity of relationships is particularly important for some. Another significant feature is that this is more than a youth programme. We are part of the community, working within both schools and more widely and we do a lot of family support.

Beyond these factors, it takes enormous drive and commitment to make it work. As the Chair said in the Annual Report: *"Over the past year I have seen our staff rejoice in and with young people, as well as weep with and for them. I have seen that within YPAC we have staff who are dedicated enough to respond to crucial needs even if, on some occasions, that takes them way beyond the 'inconvenient' and into the wee small hours and time off. YPAC is a professionally run project and it is also a work of the heart."*

Barriers

The main difficulty is the uncertainty of funding and the constant need to make bids, which takes time and energy away from doing the real work. Recruiting and keeping good staff to work in this very tough area has been very difficult. The situation may be becoming slightly different now because of cuts and redundancies elsewhere.

Working in a very deprived and isolated area can be hard. The community can be resistant, not because it is a church project but because it seems to represent 'authority'. This is again where staying in the area and becoming known and trusted is so important.

It would also be good to be able to tune in more to good practice elsewhere, but the obstacle is time.

Challenges and opportunities

The main challenge, inevitably, is fundraising just to keep going but also to extend the work. For example, neighbouring schools have asked us to replicate the Transition Project but there is no funding. Another challenge is to find more directors and ones able to take on more responsibility.

Tracey Hemmerdinger (now moved)

<http://www.ypacmanchester.org.uk/>

Urban Hope Islington

Introduction

Urban Hope is the youth project of St Stephen's Church, Canonbury, Islington, which has an electoral roll of 115 and an average Sunday morning attendance of 70. Members of the church are mostly local residents but it is a varied area: some who are very poor live side by side with much wealthier people who bring some resources. Those in the middle income range have largely been squeezed out.

St Stephen's has a strong tradition of lay leadership. "The values guiding our life together are:

- *Diversity and inclusion* - we are a diverse group of people with shared interests and many differences. We think this is special and to be valued, so we aim to welcome, include and involve everyone, investing time and effort in building healthy relationships and desiring unity as the body of Christ.
- *Theological and liturgical breadth* - our worship is informed by many traditions and is, in style, often as diverse as the members of our eclectic community.
- *Practically demonstrated love*, especially for the marginalised. We seek to engage with issues of social justice locally and globally, and build mutually supportive relationships with others engaged in God's mission throughout the world.
- *Risk-taking* and an *openness to explore* new ideas, to dialogue, to reflect theologically, and to use our imaginations creatively. We think this is a good way to grow.
- *Commitment to learning and growing as followers of Jesus*, seeking to develop the fruits and gifts of the Holy Spirit and reach our unique potential as we journey with God and each other, recognising this is not always easy or comfortable, but is life-affirming and good news."

Urban Hope flows from the desire to be actively loving to the community in which we live, especially those in particular need. Islington has the second highest rate of child poverty in London (42%). It is the 4th most deprived borough in London and the 8th most deprived in England. Crime rates are almost double the national average. 1 in 9 children aged 11-16 has a mental health problem, over a third higher than the national average. In Canonbury, small pockets of wealth tend to mask some of the highest levels of deprivation, but 40% of young people are eligible for free school meals. Most people live in flats and over half the child population lives in public sector rented accommodation; of these, 38% live in overcrowded conditions.

Origins of Urban Hope

The church already ran a very successful homelessness/soup kitchen/drop-in project run by a community development worker. This is still going and has expanded. But about 17 years ago it was recognised that there was a need to work with marginalised young people. There was a high level of violence in the area, murders and turf wars between gangs.

The current senior youth worker, who had been working with the YMCA, wanted to move into a church setting in London and had advertised himself in the Church of England newspaper. He was initially recruited to St Stephen's in return for accommodation and pocket money. He has now become the Senior Youth Worker. He was to work with young people outside the church though there was probably an assumption at the time that they would then join the church.

At first, it was primarily stories from the existing community work that underlined the needs of young people. This sort of feedback and listening to local residents has continued to be important; for example, showing the need for work with teenage parents. The emphasis on relationships means that there is less need for more formal consultations. In addition, Urban Hope is well networked into other groups and public services and therefore has access to statistical data about the area, such as Census data and the Indices of Deprivation. There is no statutory youth provision in the area in the area where Urban Hope focuses most of its work.

Urban Hope activities

Urban Hope began 16 years ago. Its aim is to work in partnership with young people to enable their personal development and to work towards transforming the local community into a place full of opportunities and stories of success. The aim is to encourage and support young people to:

- participate in community life
- be employed or in education
- build and maintain positive relationships
- have a strong sense of well-being and self-esteem
- have a reasoned understanding of their values and beliefs
- develop a variety of life-skills
- make informed choices related to their health
- have the skills to find and access support services e.g. health, employment, finance.

Urban Hope seeks to meet the needs of young people by:

- running positive activities;
- creating safe spaces;
- developing life skills;
- initiating purposeful relationships;
- providing personal support and signposting;
- inspiring spirituality;
- promoting hopeful communities;
- offering positive role models.

Urban Hope helps them fight social exclusion and access better opportunities; acts as advocates for them and their families when dealing with social workers, exclusion from school, educational choices or challenges such as teenage pregnancy. It signposts young people to counselling services, arranges work experience placements, and liaises with police and other professionals on their behalf. There is a focus on increasing opportunities for young people from minority ethnic backgrounds, particularly those of African and Turkish heritage.

One priority is enabling young people, as well as families and other residents, to participate in their community. Intergenerational projects and community events help to celebrate life in the local area and promote a shared sense of purpose and belonging.

The work is carried out on a foundation of trusting relationships, built across cultural and economic barriers. Volunteers such as lawyers and graphic designers are enabled to get to know members of their community whom they would not otherwise meet, so that they can inspire and learn from those very different from them. By working with small groups, young people can receive focused attention and actively participate in the running of their project. Relationships with young people are built to last many years.

Most staff youth workers and volunteers live in the community, and have been working with local young people and their families for many years, achieving a track record in excellent community provision.

“Project values and ethos

- *Person centred*: we start with the needs of the young people we have contact with. We are motivated by them and their needs. Although we are informed by community work trends and statutory targets, these are never our starting point.
- *Flexibility and variety* – in recognition of ‘the individual’. Often those who are marginalised cannot be engaged with using a ‘one size fits all’ approach to youth work.
- *Relational*: we prioritise the building of relationships between youth workers and young people above all else. Our experience shows that to prioritise relationship above task and programme facilitates the personal and social development of young people.
- *Safe places*: safety is an important concern of many young people in our community. Young people often feel unsafe in public places, sighting parks, and main roads are places where they feel at risk. We provide young people with safe, warm and friendly place. Our purpose built centre provides an alternative to the street and is where young people are welcomed, encouraged, supported and challenged. It is a place of creativity and learning, exploration and fun.”

The theology is driven by the concept of *Shalom* with the emphasis on connectedness (cf Walter Brueggemann who introduces *shalom* by observing that in the Bible, “all of creation is one, every creature in community with every other, living in harmony and security toward the joy and well-being of every other creature”).

A key feature of Urban Hope is that it has steered clear of accepting commissions from the local authority or others. Although it does a lot of partnership work, it has retained its independence and flexibility. It is not tied to other people’s targets or output or outcome measures. It can try new things and, if they fail, move on.

Continuing development

The project has changed and developed over time. The first five years in particular represented a massive learning experience for the youth worker and the church. At first, they ran an open youth club, but that was ‘disastrous’ and they ran some warehouse style raves. They began to do community profiles, honed skills and developed different ways of working. In 2000, there was a shift from being a Church that employed a youth worker to the formation of a Youth Work Project. They began to build relationships with young people on the street and early on there was detached youth work with 8 and 9 year old boys, playing football with them etc., then creating youth club sessions for them, developing a football team and taking them on visits to the countryside. They have now worked with the same approximately 30 boys for about 10 years, supporting them in many ways and always being on call for them and their families. Through this, they built up relationships with many of the key people in the local community and they as well as church members recognised the value of the work.

They now work with around 300 young people per year, with a core group of 60-80 each week in the 8 – 20 years age group. Some of these young people themselves become volunteers and do a young leaders’ programme.

The primary focus is on relationships between young people and adults. In other words, the work is not driven by activities. There is a lot of one-to-one work and they operate on an extended family model, the hub of which is the ‘living room’, a specially created area of the premises. Activities are then built onto relationships as appropriate. For example, there can

be specialist help given through mentoring if a young person is interested in a particular career. The wide range of volunteers come from interesting backgrounds and become role models. Increasingly there has been work with parents who ask for help. There is also a lot of inter-generational work, focusing less on the extremes of age and more on the middle ground. They run community days, bonfire parties, etc.

Over the past four years, there has been a particular focus on work with young women, recognising that they had been neglected. Now, 51% of project users are girls and a staff member is employed to work with them. In addition, the staff from the local Children's Centre support sessions in Urban Hope.

One of the changes over the years has been in the attitude of church members who have come to understand the work as more than a simplified process of evangelism.

Organisation of Urban Hope

Urban Hope is run by a Management Committee that is a sub-committee of the PCC. It is chaired by the Self-Supporting Minister of St Stephen's. The Committee meets quarterly. Members are encouraged to take an interest in some specific aspect of the project, such as finance, buildings, volunteering. The Senior Youth Worker provides a monthly report to the Committee and the Committee reports annually to the PCC. There are now 2.5 staff members: two youth workers and a part-time social worker for those at risk of harm and young parents.

Urban Hope does not have independent charitable status but uses that of St Stephen's Church. The Self-Supporting Minister was important in driving the vision in the early days of the project and she has provided continuity through changes of incumbent. Similarly the continuity provided by the (now) Senior Youth Worker has been important.

Resources

Much of the early funding came from the CUF: for the first five years when it was a Church youth project and after that when it became Urban Hope.

Costs this year amount to c £100K of which the church donates £15k, a further £15k comes from individual donations and the balance from grant making trusts, including BBC Children in Need, Cripplegate Foundation, a variety of City Livery Companies and CUF. As well as the direct contribution from St Stephen's, Urban Hope benefits from not having to pay rent and having some other potential costs absorbed by the Church.

At present the project is financially secure for the next 12 months.

Volunteers

There has always been a heavy reliance on volunteers, most though not all of them from within the church community. Using the hourly rate of the London Living Wage, it is estimated that volunteers contribute approximately £365 of time per week.

Other support

The relationship with the diocese is through Clair Cook at The Children's Society. Support from Area Bishops has varied depending on the person in office. Ecumenical links are good locally and there are good relations with other churches and faith groups in the area. There is some partnership working with local authority youth workers.

On the whole, probably Urban Hope has contributed to others:

- It has often been used as an example of the Diocesan/The Children's Society Youth Strategy.
- The Senior Youth Worker contributed as a practitioner to *The Faith of Generation Y* and has been used its author Bob Mayo to give talks.
- It takes students from Centre for Youth Ministry and Senior Youth Worker tutors others.

A few years ago there was some involvement with the Committee for Minority Ethnic Anglican Concerns. The Committee paid for the Senior Youth Worker to visit Los Angeles to attend the Urban Youth Work Institute's Annual Conference.

Linked with other projects or organisations

The primary links are with St Stephen's Church and the Diocese/TCS, but the work is consistent with the aims of 'One Canonbury' (neighbourhood management), whose Youth Sub-Group is chaired by Urban Hope's senior youth worker. Urban Hope represents the community on the Canonbury Safer Neighbourhood Panel and have excellent relationships with local youth agencies and Social Services. There are also strong partnerships with Connexions workers at Pulse, City YMCA's sexual health clinic, The Drum, and Islington Young People's Drug and Alcohol Service.

Outcomes/impact

The primary desired outcomes are also the aims of the project:

- positive relations between community members
- young people choosing to have a positive relationship with them
- affecting their lives for the better.

There are some indications of success. Most young people they are in contact with are in education, employment or training (comparing well with wider NEET figures). Some are coming off drugs. Young parents are keeping their children. Some young people have been the first in their family to go to university.

Key success factors

- Being clear about what they can and cannot do, but also being able to signpost other services, such as Connexions, counselling.
- Longevity – having been there for 16 years. It took 10 years to be accepted and exert influence. For example, they 'petitioned, campaigned and badgered' about the local park, which was littered with needles and generally avoided as hazardous, and got it cleaned up and turned round so that it is now a safe place for families.
- Living in the area in a council flat – able to identify with and understand the frustrations of local residents.
- Flexibility – being able to adapt because not tied down to contracts. "You can't practise relationships in a formulaic way."

Main barriers

- Initially, it was church expectations that the work would result in more young people in the pews.
- There has been some resistance to working with them (e.g. by the local authority) or funding them (some grant giving trusts) because of a perceived 'religious' agenda.
- Some local people are still suspicious of them because of this.
- Being confronted by large groups of angry young people.
- Funding – though financially alright at present.

Challenges and opportunities for the future

- How to inform the wider field of youth ministry/youth work: Urban Hope has tried to hold the two (which are distinct) in tension which can evoke suspicion from both sides.
- Recruitment of staff: it is very hard to find good people.
- The major challenge is to meet the enormous needs of local young people.

More generally, it would be good to have 'space' for people like Urban Hope staff to meet and network – possibly a national retreat for urban youth workers.

Ben Bell

Happy at Home

Introduction

Happy at Home is a service aiming to offer isolated people living in South Tyneside a befriending visit in their own home, by someone living nearby. The Project is provided by South Tyneside Council and Churches Together working in partnership.

Origins

Following a presentation of an audit by Churches Together about how church premises were used for the benefit of the wider community, the Chief Executive Officer of South Tyneside Council approached Churches Together and suggested a deal where the local authority could support local churches to maintain their buildings in return for church volunteers undertaking to visit frail, lonely old people living alone. The local authority had previously identified this as a need they could not meet.

The need for the project was identified in three ways:

- We were told there was a need by the CEO of South Tyneside: it was known through the reports of all their 'care workers'.
- We knew that South Tyneside had a larger population of older people than the average for the country and that pointed to a need for the project.
- Church members knew of the need for this kind of project among their own congregations.

I think the need that had been identified by the CEO touched a cord. We launched the project at an event for local clergy/church officers and began recruiting befrienders. We didn't ask ourselves questions about our skills and capacity to undertake this, but I think there was an assumption that this was work that church members were very capable of doing.

How the project works

Happy at Home began five years ago. Its aims are to:

- reduce social isolation;
- help people maintain their independence;
- increase opportunities for social contacts;
- maintain links between elderly people and the wider community;
- increase wellbeing for both the old people and the volunteers.

These aims link with concepts that are of current interest, such as building social capital and Big Society.

The service is available to all adults aged 18 and over who are socially isolated. This could include people with:

- A learning disability;
- A physical disability;
- A mental health problem.

In reality, all the people we support are very elderly, live alone in their home and are without significant family support. Individuals could already be in receipt of other services provided by Adult Services, such as home care or day care.

The people to be visited are 'matched' up with a suitable befriender who will visit on a regular basis. Befrienders are volunteers recruited by Churches Together. They provide company in the person's own home to prevent feelings of loneliness and isolation. For example, they may sit and chat or they take part in some activity such as a game or reading. They are not expected to carry out other tasks. We try to match befrienders with elderly people who live nearby so as to retain a 'good neighbour' ethos.

Previously council officers were responsible for administrative support and matching older people with befrienders and the churches were responsible for recruiting volunteers. Social events were organised by the whole group. Recently arrangements have changed because South Tyneside Council has taken a very large funding cut from government and many posts have been axed. Adult Social Care will continue to identify old people needing a visit and the Council will carry out the CRB checks. Churches Together will be responsible for everything else.

The project is managed by a steering group made up of four members of Churches Together South Tyneside, a volunteer befriender and one council officer. The steering group meets every 2 months. Leadership has come from the steering group supported/advised by officers from the local authority.

The project's development

It has developed slowly. We have worked hard to increase the number of volunteers. There is always a long waiting list of old people wanting a befriender. Some churches responded enthusiastically from the beginning and have been very supportive. Others have become involved as time has passed. Some responded very negatively at the start and have not got involved. Referring to the donations from the local authority, they said they did not want to be 'paid' for doing work that was their Christian duty. Donations have now ceased under the new arrangements, so it will be interesting to see if these churches now get involved.

Resources

Funding was initially required for promotional material that was created by the steering group and produced by the council officers. The local authority gave us funding (linked to culture/wellbeing) for social events. Now we need funding for our worker's salary and expenses, office, travel, training and also for two social events that we organise annually. Costs of CRB checks are met by the council. We have had grants from CUF, Opening Cultural Doors (local authority), Faiths in Action and Grassroots. These have all finished. We are currently grant funded by CUF Mustard Seed, Active at 60 and Christ's Hospital at Sherburn.

We have negotiated a contract with South Tyneside Council to move from grants to a commissioned service. At present we are financially secure for 12 months. The payment for this service will cover 90% of our worker's salary, office costs and expenses.

We used church premises for the initial launch event and continue to use them for two social events a year, for recruitment events for new befrienders and for occasional special events; for example, 'End of Life Care' event with Age UK. Our use of church halls without charge represents giving in kind by the churches concerned.

We recruited approximately ten volunteers to get started. This number has now risen to 28 but we need an additional 20+ volunteers. We have a waiting list of around 25 old people who would benefit from a befriender visit. Calculated on the basis of paying the minimum wage for the time contributed, the financial value of volunteer time amounts to about £750 per month or £9,000 per year.

Non-financial help and support

Churches Together has effective email communication with all local churches, which we use to publicise regular focused appeals for volunteers and for referrals of old people. One supplied a musician for social events.

In the past, the council has given various sorts of help: administration support; advice and information; recruitment support (e.g. CRB checks, references); matching old people and befrienders; help with the social events; armchair exercises by Sports Development; funding advice. In future this help will be much reduced.

At diocesan level, Happy at Home representatives attended 'Valuing Age', a training day organised by Durham Diocese Resource Team. We were also advised and assisted with our Vulnerable Adult Policy by the Diocesan Advisor. Happy at Home also attended 'Valuing Volunteers', an event organised by Faith in Our Communities and financed by CUF.

Future support

Currently, Happy at Home is a project of Churches Together South Tyneside. We will soon be making the leap to an organisation with an employee and increased funding to manage. We shall have to consider governance and may have to become a registered charity. We might require support to make this transition. Advice from CUFX on employment policies etc will be very useful beforehand and at diocesan level, it would be helpful to have advice available when required such as on human resources and to have payroll support. The diocese could also help us with learning/training especially by providing opportunities to reflect theologically with others in order to deepen our understanding of links between faith and our practical work. It would be good to be in touch with other church groups that are working with older people to share experiences

Links with other projects

We have links with Faith in Our Communities projects working with older people; for example: New Dawn Hetton, PLANT Stockton and St Luke's Sunderland. We also have links with other church projects in South Tyneside, such as Churches KEY (for homeless young people) and we work with the Mental Health Chaplain at South Tyneside Hospital. We have strong connections with South Tyneside Council, including the Adult Services and Culture and Well-being Departments.

Outcomes

Independent research has shown that:

- The number of befrienders has slowly and steadily increased. Very few have left the programme, showing a high degree of commitment. They understand their role and find it very satisfying.
- Old people who are beneficiaries have indicated a high degree of satisfaction – they appreciate the friendship, enjoy the social events and feel better - they feel less lonely and isolated. They expressed sense of happiness associated with feeling of genuine intimacy and friendship and gratitude that they had been included in the project.
- Social events have reconnected old people with wider society – this feeling was increased by the attendance of the mayor and mayoress.
- The 'good neighbour' principle is working – the research reported that people mentioned a shared knowledge of local area, similar history and common interests all of which indicate successful matching.

- Volunteers reported increased self esteem, feeling 'good about myself' in helping someone in need, development of real friendships with their befriender and increased confidence in a social context through attendance at social events.

Success factors

- Kindness and caring – high degree of empathy of everyone involved.
- High level of commitment of the steering group and the befrienders.
- Careful matching of befrienders and elderly people.
- Availability and accessibility of advice and support for befrienders when needed.
- Dealing with issues promptly.
- Attention to detail.
- Opportunities to meet others involved in the project at social events, and have fun, enjoy a lovely meal and share experiences.

Barriers

- Lack of capacity among existing committee members to develop new ways of working.
- Negative attitude of some churches.
- Difficulty of recruiting new befrienders.

Challenges for the future include:

- Increasing numbers of old people are asking for a volunteer befriender.
- Recruiting more befrienders
- Employing new worker – induction, setting up supervision, develop work plan.
- Developing a business plan.
- Dealing with the transitional period as some work is transferred from council to the steering group

Opportunities include:

- Using funding to recruit new people as both committee members and befrienders.
- Widening the net of befriender recruitment to involve other faiths, wider community, students.
- Developing new partnerships with other voluntary sector organisations. Involving some of the young people from the Churches' KEY Project in our future work.
- Organising a joint event with the Mental Health Chaplain at the local Hospital.
- Work with the Council's Culture and Well-being staff to offer cultural opportunities to elderly people, such as visits to the local theatre/meal.
- Developing a joint project with Contact the Elderly.
- Seeking new funding; for example, PCT/Wellbeing Project; GPs; personalisation budgets.
- Developing bigger roles for experienced befrienders; for example, as ambassadors, mentors and contributors to the training programme.
- Developing the induction and ongoing training programme using IT.

Bernadette Askins

Heartsease Community project Norwich

Introduction

Heartsease is a post-war housing estate in Norwich within the city boundaries but just outside the outer ring road. St Francis Church sits at the junction of two roads in the residential heart of the estate. St. Francis' buildings are in use throughout the week, and with activities for all ages and diverse interests. The church recently underwent remodelling to make it more comfortable and energy-efficient and to open it up as a place for community groups to make better use of the improved facilities. It is the base for the Heartsease Community Project, an ecumenical project also involving the local Methodist and Baptist Churches that runs a luncheon club and a coffee bar.

Origins of the project

Heartsease Community Project began over 30 years ago when local clergy got together to see what they could do for the community by working together as a joint venture of local churches working to reach out to the community on the Heartsease Estate. In recent years we realised that there were many vulnerable older people in the community who were not being helped by the project. A community questionnaire helped confirm this as did the local statistics of the estate's demography. As the estate was built in 1956, there are many older people as well as a lot of new, younger families. As we already had a good team providing existing services, there was some scope for development here as well as the opportunity to widen interest with the expansion of our activities.

Evolving activities

Since its origin, Heartsease Community Project has run a luncheon club for older and disabled adults and a drop-in coffee bar. The luncheon club happens weekly and has an attendance of over forty people. In the past, there has been a waiting list to attend, though this is not the case at present. The coffee bar also happens once a week. About twelve people attend. They bring and share their own food and chat and/or play games such as cribbage.

At one stage, there was a Listening Ear project with volunteers who attended an Acorn Listening Course. This was allowed to run down as there was little take-up though a listener could still be provided if requested.

The Project hosts a lunch three times a year for local professionals working in the community and this activity moves around the partner churches.

The Heartsease Project is now in a partnership with Age UK, Norwich, which is enabling us to develop new services for older people. Age UK have seconded a development worker one day per week to Heartsease. At present, there is experimentation with additional activities either before or after the luncheon club, such as a quiz or hiring a minibus to go to a tea dance. There have also been some taster sessions in bank holiday weeks (when the luncheon club is closed) to give people the opportunity to try new things and test their popularity.

One example of an activity has been 'remembrance', which has also been the theme of a joint project with the Youth project. Older people have gone into the Church primary school to share their memories with the children. In return, young people have been to help with the luncheon club. It seems likely now that remembrance will be offered as an ongoing activity.

The development worker is also able to do more outreach work to identify people who would benefit from the services offered. He is negotiating relationships with local GPs, which may both lead to more referrals and provide ideas for new forms of provision. Age UK are working with the local authority to set up community service hubs. In effect, the Heartsease Project is becoming one of these.

Organisation

Two years ago, the Heartsease Community Project became a registered charity run by a management committee appointed by three local churches. Each church can appoint two lay members and one clergy, though the two Free Churches are not necessarily taking up all their places at present. There is an annual meeting open to the public.

The main leadership comes from the management committee and its chair, the local Vicar. St Francis' is clearly the most active partner. In part, this is because its buildings are good and centrally situated, so that it tends to be the one used, though in principle there could be lunch clubs at other churches. In part, it may also be that, because the other churches have gathered congregations and their members are widely scattered, they are less rooted in the immediate locality.

Resources

The project is self-sufficient through the sale of meals. St Francis Church premises are used, but there is the potential to use other premises as well. The Church charges rent which is covered by the proceeds from the luncheon club.

The Development Project has been funded by a CUF Mustard Seed Grant. The development worker post (1 day a week) will be taken on by Age UK Norfolk when funding runs out. From time to time, free activities are made available through external funding and there is some capital which can be used for new activities.

Volunteers

All the activities are underpinned by volunteers: the kitchen and front-of-house staff for the luncheon club, the coffee bar co-ordinators and many of the activity leaders. New volunteers receive informal on-site induction. The lead luncheon club staff have all been on a hygiene course.

Many, but not all, of the volunteers are themselves retired. Many, too, have been involved for a very long time. There is now a need to grow volunteers for the extension of activities. Recruitment can be through an appeal; through the local churches; or through Age UK which has a wider catchment area. Although some of the longstanding volunteers are from the Methodist and Baptist Churches, recent recruits have mainly come from St Francis Church.

Calculated on the basis of paying the minimum wage for the time contributed, volunteers contribute at least £250 per week.

Other support and links

There has been little need for external support so far, for example, from the diocese, but this may become necessary as the project develops. The connection with Age UK Norfolk is very important.

Outcomes

There are many stories of lonely and less mobile people who have got their lives back through the project.

Success factors

As well as good food, the project offers friendship and support to clients. It relies on the volunteers both for its effectiveness and its sustainability. As the labour for the luncheon club is all provided free, we are able to charge a modest amount for the meals and still make a profit, which means we are not dependent on external funding. The integration with the Church is also important: a number of members of the PCC are volunteers as well as members of the management committee.

Challenges and opportunities

The challenge is to renew the organisation so that it can respond to greater need. For that, new volunteers will have to be recruited. It can be difficult to move forward to reach new people, to overcome an element of 'cliqueyness' and recruit new volunteers when existing volunteers do not welcome change. Having the Age UK development worker provides the opportunity to progress. Not only will he have time to work with existing groups but his element of detachment might help to enthuse them with a renewed vision. In the current economic climate all services seem to be struggling even those with supposedly ring-fenced budgets. It seems certain, therefore, that there will be new needs and new opportunities to extend our provision for older people.

Revd. Peter Howard

Nottingham Arimathea Trust

Introduction

Nottingham Arimathea Trust (NAT) provides temporary housing for refused, destitute asylum seekers; a safe place in which they can work on further submissions of their asylum claims; and a housing project for single refugees.

- An asylum seeker is a person who flees their homeland, arrives in another country and exercises their legal right to apply for sanctuary (or asylum). Asylum seekers are not allowed to work and have to rely on 'Asylum Support', which is set at either 70% of income support, or £35 a week in supermarket vouchers.
- A refugee is someone who has proved that they would face persecution back home and have had a successful asylum application.
- Refused asylum seekers have had their claim for asylum turned down and been told that they cannot remain in the UK. This does not necessarily mean they were lying or that it is safe for them to go back to their country. Administrative errors, failures in research and a lack of good legal representation all lead to asylum claims being turned down. They remain here simply to try to save their lives. These people have 'chosen' destitution because the circumstances that caused them to flee still exist and/or they fear that their lives will be in danger if they are forced to return to their home countries. Their mental and physical health may already be affected by torture, rape and/or the murder of family and friends and the loss of all their property. Refused asylum seekers receive no state aid or housing support and are only entitled to primary health care.

Origins

NAT was formed within the Diocese of Southwell and Nottingham as a response to the problem of the enforced homelessness and destitution of refused asylum seekers within Nottingham, which became an acute problem around 2004. The Trust was eventually incorporated and became a charity in 2007 and opened its first house in the same year.

Much of the evidence we used about the problem was anecdotal, but it was based on the experience of those working in city centre parishes and other refugee and asylum seeker (RAS) support organisations; for example, Refugee Action and Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Refugee Forum (NNRF).

There was and still is no quantitative local data. Nationally, too, although the Communities and Local Government Department publishes quarterly homelessness statistics, destitute asylum seekers do not appear in these figures even though there are many more of them than of UK homeless. The destitute asylum seeker population is usually invisible. Statistically it does not exist. However, it has been clearly established by several research projects (Refugee Action, *Still Human Still Here* Coalition, Independent Asylum Commission, among others) that enforced destitution is a tool used by the UK Border Agency (UKBA) and its predecessors to force people to return, even though it is impossible for them to do so or they still justifiably fear persecution. We also knew, for example, that in 2006/7, NNRF's Anti-destitution Project was helping up to 50 or 60 refused asylum seekers each week.

Developing activities

We started by housing 3 women and a baby who were refused asylum seekers. We now house 3 women and 9 men in 3 houses. Two of the houses are provided rent free by the diocese – one of those was purchased for us – and one rented on the open

market, all used for refused asylum seekers. Residents are selected strictly on the basis of need and their chance of success, irrespective of their religious affiliation. Most are referred by Refugee Action or NNRF. We ensure that everyone we house has adequate legal representation so they can work toward submitting fresh claims for asylum and, from there, access temporary Asylum Support housing. We help people find medical support, volunteering opportunities and English classes so they can improve their day-to-day lives and develop skills whilst they are working on asylum claims. Everyone moving into Nottingham Arimathea Trust accommodation has the opportunity to work with a volunteer befriender or mentor, someone they can meet with regularly to get to know Nottingham, practise shared interests and English language with or who can help make phone calls to solicitors, support groups, doctors etc.

We later developed a housing project for single refugees when we found that they are often made homeless on gaining Leave to Remain, because there is a very long waiting list for housing for this group. Now, therefore, we have 9 single flats and one 4-bed house for a family of 6 refugees.

Organisation

NAT is a company limited by guarantee and a registered charity. It is managed by a Management Committee made up of trustees plus others with appropriate experience or from partner organisations. We started with a volunteer housing manager; we now employ 1.5 people.

Leadership

Initially, leadership came from clergy and lay ministers of the diocese. At first, all the trustees were from within the diocese. Until recently, all the most active trustees have been retired, but our current chair is a (nominally) part-time lay incumbent of a city centre church. The trustees now represent a much wider segment of the community. Both our workers are non-British Muslims.

Resources

We needed premises, funding and volunteers to get started to cover tasks including housing management, DIY, befriending and administration.

The Trust made applications to several grant giving bodies in order to resource a worker and support mechanisms. Our major donors have been the Church Urban Fund and the Lankelly Chase Foundation. We asked for and received some financial and practical support from churches in the early stages. Trent Vineyard Church gives us a grant for one of our staff. We rent office space in a community centre attached to a church.

We have received in-kind support of various sorts. The Diocese made available empty vicarages for the trust's use. (It would be good to have more.) Other churches and faith groups have given gifts of furniture, but also lent 'muscle' for decorating and refurbishment. Local secular organisations have given items such as white goods and decorating materials.

We are financially secure for about 6 months for unrestricted funding; approximately one year for restricted funding.

Volunteers

We have a well developed volunteer programme. Volunteers are involved in mentoring and befriending, gardening and DIY, office work, moving furniture and, in the last twelve months, refurbishing a block of flats. We would estimate that over the past year,

trustees have given 2,200 hours amounting to approximately £13,200 and other volunteers have given 2,400 hours amounting to £14,400.

A Volunteer has said:

“The training provided by NAT was first rate – I never knew there were so many administrative as well as cultural barriers put in the way of asylum seekers and refugees. On the practical side, working with asylum seekers has been extremely rewarding. Tasks range from helping with English language practice, to going for runs, from assisting with documentation and finding a GP to socialising.”

Partnerships and links to other organisations

We have developed partnerships with mosques and other denominations in Nottingham. As indicated we work closely with Refugee Action and NNRF. We partnered with Green Pastures Housing who purchased the block of flats and lease them back to us. We hope to continue to develop that link. We are also part of NACCOM, the ‘No Accommodation Network’ of agencies providing accommodation for destitute asylum seekers and other migrants. (Currently there are 26 projects in 21 towns and cities across the UK.)

Outcomes

We have housed upwards of 45 refused asylum seekers, of whom at least 25 have been granted Leave to Remain to our knowledge. We are told that lives have changed as a result of our support.

Key success factors

- Brilliant staff, especially during the initial phases (but the personal costs for our first worker were not insignificant).
- Committed trustees and volunteers.
- Faith that the trust could make a difference.
- Hard work!
- Unstinting, generous, committed support from the diocese.
- Our grant making bodies – their generosity and commitment has been a huge support, morally and practically.
- Support from other Refugee and Asylum Seeker organisations locally – they also tell us when we get it right!

Barriers

- Though a relatively minor problem, there can be negative societal attitudes to refugees and asylum seekers. For example, whilst many police are extremely helpful, we have known instances of them being almost brutally unhelpful. One instance was when there was a break-in at one of our AS houses. When the police arrived, they actually tried to arrest the resident who called them, and spent more time investigating his case than they did in catching the offender. There is also the recent example of a Christian-based funder who deemed asylum seekers to be illegal and who would therefore not engage with us.
- Not enough property or money.

Challenges and opportunities

- Constant changes to the asylum system make it harder and harder for people to pursue claims and significantly increase the length of stay of our residents, reducing the number we can help.
- Changes to the benefit system make it harder to support homeless refugees, and reduce surpluses we can make on refugee projects, reducing the liquidity of the AS project.
- Withdrawal of support for refugees in new housing due to cuts in Supporting People.
- Funding difficulties in sister organisations, leading to increased demands on them and less support for our service users: everyone has to do more with less.
- Developing housing support mechanisms to replace those lost.
- Constant funding battles.
- Making greater use of our partnerships, especially locally.
- Partnership with Green Pastures could increase our asylum seeker provision as well as our provision for refugees.
- We could develop mixed asylum seeker/refugee accommodation.
- Develop supported housing models for refugees, which would increase income generation.
- Green Pastures wants to build us something!!

Stories of some of the people that we have housed*

M left her country to find work after her sons and husband died. She became a servant for a wealthy family and moved with them to the UK. Whilst in the UK she met a friend who talked to her about the Bible. She became a Pentecostal Christian, a group persecuted in her home country. She is a valued part of her church community. When her services were no longer required her employers asked her to leave their house. M had no accommodation, no status in the UK and spoke no English. Her first claim for asylum was turned down. She travelled around the country, moving between sympathetic people's houses and spent the days outdoors. She lived in NAT accommodation for 6 months whilst we helped her apply for Asylum Support. She now lives in Derby whilst she waits for a decision on her case. M is 68 years old and suffers from high blood pressure and depression.

N was sponsored by his government to come to the UK for medical treatment that was not available in his country. He was born with disabilities, and his health was deteriorating. N returned home before his treatment was completed as the money from his government ran out. As his health got worse N was forced to leave his job as a computer programmer. He had no family or friends to support him. N came to the UK and claimed asylum because he had no way of supporting himself or gaining the treatment he needed back home. When N's asylum claim was turned down he squatted in a bed-sit previously rented by a friend. It was not furnished and he slept on the floor. Drugs were being dealt downstairs and he was afraid as he had no lock on his door. N stayed with NAT whilst he made a fresh asylum claim. His mental health and self esteem have considerably deteriorated since being in the UK.

T was trafficked to the UK. She was thrown out of the accommodation her trafficker had allocated her when they found out she was pregnant. T had fled a violent relationship in her home country and had no family that she could return to. T's asylum claim was turned down as the Home Office stated she could relocate to an area in her home country away from the people who knew her and wished her harm. T was 21 had little education and no means of supporting herself and her toddler back home. T stayed in NAT accommodation for 7 months whilst her solicitor sought to prove that the support T and her daughter had good grounds to stay in the UK.

T now lives in Asylum Support accommodation in Glasgow whilst she waits for a decision on her case.

**Some details have been omitted or changed slightly to protect their identity.*

Andrew Wilson

<http://www.nottinghamarimathea.org.uk/>

Support for Asylum Seekers

Introduction

Support for Asylum Seekers (S.A.S) is a project of Churches Together in the Merseyside Region (CTMR) which relieves destitution and homelessness among asylum seekers and rejected asylum seekers in Merseyside.

Origins

S.A.S was established in 1996 on the initiative of the Development Workers' Group of Merseyside and Region Churches Ecumenical Assembly (MARCEA – the predecessor to CTMR) to respond to the needs of asylum seekers in Merseyside. It was launched at a consultation meeting in Liverpool 8 for representatives of churches and minority communities at which Chas Raws (then working part-time as North West Regional Development Officer for the United Nations Association), was confirmed as its co-ordinator, charged with appealing for funds from churches and charitable trusts and distributing them to asylum seekers in need who would be identified through churches, immigration lawyers, social workers and community nurses. He was supported in doing this by a steering group answerable to what was then the Department of International Affairs of MARCEA.

In 1995, the Conservative Government was proposing to remove all benefits from asylum seekers. (Until then they were included in the national benefits system.) Although the courts managed to reverse this legislation on the grounds that it could not be the intention of the government of a civilised country to make people destitute (which was indeed their intention), subsequent legislation - driven by the tabloid press, as was the original parliamentary campaign - has steadily worsened the situation of asylum seekers and the latest cuts in benefits and legal have reduced significant numbers to destitution.

The initial consultation was followed by *ad hoc* contact with solicitors, community organisations, social workers, GPs and health workers and particularly with two independent evangelical churches which were already giving practical support to asylum seekers who had joined their congregations.

How S.A.S works

S.A.S has now been operating for fifteen years. It provides weekly grants of £25 for a maximum period of 10 weeks for between 10 and 30 people at any one time and funding for emergency accommodation for a maximum of six months for about 15 people. It also provides meals and food parcels for about 70 people. No specific criteria were applied initially as the referrals were all from experienced professionals. In more recent years, destitution has been the basic criterion, proved by a letter of rejection and notice to quit accommodation provided by the UK Border Agency. All of these activities are managed and administered by another charity, Asylum Link Merseyside, which grew out of a once-a-week afternoon drop-in centre in a church hall. It is now the only open access centre for asylum seekers in Merseyside providing friendship, advice, food and English language teaching as well as hosting regular services from NHS and other agencies and sign-posting to other sources of help. Until recently, it opened all day on weekdays but shortage of funds have forced it to put six of its eight staff on to 4/5ths time working and to close on Fridays. (It also depends on over 80 volunteers.) S.A.S itself only provides the financial resources for the relief grants, accommodation and food.

The constant changes in asylum regulations have continually put new obstacles in the way of asylum seekers. S.A.S funds have helped Asylum Link Merseyside to respond to

these changes but the basic work remains the provision of resources to those without them.

Resources

The main leadership throughout has come from Chas Raws as Co-ordinator who is a very active local Quaker. He works from home and gives his time voluntarily worth, at a very conservative estimate, about £1,000 p.a. The initiative was taken in faith and the Merseyside church leaders all give moral support.

At first, by far the greatest number and largest donations were grants from charitable trusts. The first grant came from the John Moores Foundation, which is still a major contributor. In 2003, the Roman Catholic Archbishop began to give the proceeds of the Lent Alms collection to S.A.S. Now as well as charitable trusts, funds come from a few churches giving one-off donations annually, from groups and from individuals (including 20+ monthly standing orders). Annual income has grown from under £20,000 to over £50,000.

S.A.S is essentially a sinking fund so that what it can do depends entirely on income. It can exist for as long as there is money in the bank! Its minimal overheads are covered by CTMR. In managing the project, there is indirect reliance on the Asylum Link premises and volunteers. ALM's offices for administration, casework and other activities occupy most of a 3/4-storey presbytery rented from the Catholic Archdiocese.

In relation to delivering its services, S.A.S. rents properties for asylum seekers to occupy. For example, it has recently begun to rent most of the parish house at St Michael's RC Church, Horne Street, for accommodation for up to 8 women.

Connections with other organisations

The key partnership, as already indicated, is with Asylum Link. There are also connections with Merseyside Refugee Support Network and Merseyside Network for Change and the Co-ordinator is a trustee of both these organisations. Nationally, belonging to the Quaker Asylum and Refugee Network and the steering group of the Churches' Refugee Network is good for morale.

Outcomes

The outcomes are difficult to quantify. However, up to 2,000 asylum seekers have been helped out of destitution for a limited period and their helpers and advisers have been given a source of support.

Success factors

None of this would have been possible without the energy, commitment and local credibility of the Co-ordinator. Beyond this, the goodwill of individuals both directly as donors and within donor organisations (including churches) has been essential.

One of the main **barriers** is prejudice against asylum seekers fanned by the tabloid press.

Challenges and opportunities

On the one hand, there are signs that fundraising in general is becoming more difficult with the main threat to S.A.S coming from ALM's current difficulties over fundraising; on the other, the global financial crisis and global wars, droughts and famines are leading to increased illegal immigration by desperate people.

Chas Raws

Churches Together in Herefordshire Action Team (CHAT)

Introduction

CHAT is an interdenominational group providing a range of welfare projects in the centre of Hereford. In 2008, lack of work due to inclement weather meant that many seasonal workers in the soft fruit industry were laid off. They gravitated to Hereford and, having no recourse to public funds, began begging in the streets. At the same time there was a high level of adverse publicity in the national tabloid press about the conditions under which it was alleged that migrant seasonal workers were living. This publicity also gave rise to negative attitudes in the local churches toward the employers. These two factors created a less than favourable atmosphere in the city and those villages near the fruit farms. At first, the Bishop of Hereford attempted to ameliorate the situation by offering vouchers for sandwiches and milk, but the demand became heavy and, in many cases, the system was abused by individuals not in need.

How CHAT originated

Various processes followed recognition of this issue. One strategy was for the Anglican Social Responsibility Team (ASRT) to act as the honest broker and to bring together all the individual sectors concerned with the problem. The ASRT commissioned a research paper that was published and its findings informed the subsequent work. Whilst the research was being carried out, different meetings took place organised by the ASRT:

- a consultation with senior community figures such as the Local Authority, Police, Health and Voluntary Sector.
- a meeting with the employers only.
- a meeting with the churches.

These initial meetings chaired by a Bishop operated on a 'Chatham House rules' principle. Subsequent employers-only meetings took place. These were felt to be necessary because so much criticism was focused upon employers at that time. Indeed they proved to be vital in demonstrating the problems of employers and the misunderstandings which had arisen. Meetings of what became the Churches Network providing social, educational and cultural activities for seasonal workers also took place in order to interpret and understand the problems facing employers and develop services to meet the needs of seasonal workers. By 2010, these latter two groups had combined and now meet twice a year. This merged group is also attended by statutory agencies and is the only interdisciplinary liaison group in Herefordshire.

The other initiative was to call a meeting of all the Churches in Hereford and other interested parties from the voluntary and statutory sectors to examine how best to meet the needs of those with no recourse to funding, those who were rough sleepers including the indigenous homeless. As a result, a loose federation of Churches came together to set up what is known as CHAT or 'Churches in Herefordshire Action Team', which is coordinated by ASRT. Although initiated by the Anglican Church, therefore, CHAT is now wholly ecumenical.

The role of CHAT

CHAT provides a range of facilities all run by volunteers:

- 11 hot meal outlets: at least one hot meal per day is provided every day of the week by eight denominations at their premises.
- a Community Larder was started by ASRT, open two hours per week using a voucher system from voluntary and statutory agencies.
- an Emergency Food Parcel Scheme is available for crisis situations for people referred by agencies.

A further development has been the Friday Project that arose as a result of the ASRT monitoring progress and assessing the needs of service users. This project offers training sessions on life skills, personal development and work-related skills.

Management

Each activity is run and managed by the individual church, but the strategic planning and overall management of the total activities is undertaken by the leaders of those churches in a working group that meets regularly co-ordinated by the ASRT. The ASRT look after administrative matters concerning the ongoing development of the work as well as fund raising. Although the leadership came from the Anglican Church at first, subsequently each denomination involved owns its work. As a group, all are equal and support and serve each other.

Resources

Each constituent CHAT member church provides its own resources of skills, volunteers and money. For example, in the Friday Project volunteers with specific skills such as woodwork, IT, cooking, gardening, etc. give of their own time. The Anglican Church provides the co-ordinating resources and limited funding through a Trust Fund.

In relation to premises, each hot food provider uses the premises they own – churches and church halls. The Community larder run by the ASRT operates from a mobile cabin leased at a low rent from the Baptist Church.

An initial start-up fund of £2,000 was offered by a local charity for rent, cupboards and other basic equipment for the Community Larder. A total of £8,000 was raised from a large local charity and national funding was secured to subsidise food and equipment costs of the hot food outlets. There are also donations of both cash and food.

The Friday Project received a total of £5,700 from national resources including a CUF Mustard Seed grant for IT equipment.

At present, there appears to be no major problem with funding, but some grant aid would lessen the strain on constituent members who have to call upon their own church resources to keep going. This applies to all facilities including the Community Larder. No charges are made for services currently, but this has been considered and is a live issue.

The non-financial support of the Diocese, other churches and some secular agencies is also essential. It is the essence of CHAT to be linked in to other organisations.

Volunteers

All the CHAT projects of CHAT are run by volunteers and it is impossible to quantify the number as each provider is responsible for their own project but an indication is that:

- Volunteers cover the 11 hot food outlets providing 4 Breakfasts, 1 Sunday Sandwich Lunch and 6 Evening meals.
- The Community Larder has 15 volunteers with 2 volunteers covering one hour each Tuesday.
- On Thursdays, a local adult group with educational needs cover the Larder. They have support from other volunteers if available, but otherwise they run the Larder themselves.

- The Friday project has a team of some 15 volunteers to meet the programmes as designed. It is held from 10am to 3.30 pm each week and plans are well advanced to commence a Thursday session.

At present, additional voluntary time is required to expand the Food outlets, but funding is also needed – small grants to maintain present services but plans are under discussion proposing the appointment of a social worker to support and develop facilities.

It is difficult to calculate the financial value of volunteer time (e.g. calculated on the basis of paying the minimum wage for the time contributed) because contingencies change, but at a calculated estimate it would be £4,000 to £5,000 each week. All hot food outlets remain open 52 weeks of the year, including all Bank Holidays and all over the two weeks of Christmas and the New Year.

Outcomes

The table below illustrates our methodology for measuring our outcomes and impact.

OUTPUTS	OUTCOMES	IMPACT
Community Larder	Improved relations with social care voluntary agencies. Support to individuals with financial stress	A greater understanding of the churches pastoral role. Research undertaken with clients and agencies Report written
Hot Food Outlets Anglican, Baptist, CLC, Elim, Hope City Churches Salvation Army.	Improved community relationships between ethnic groups Individual relationships established Opportunity for health and welfare support to the homeless and socially isolated	Pastoral opportunities for Church growth through contact with Christian volunteers. Research questionnaire of users of hot food outlets Report written
Engagement with Local authority staff and Voluntary agencies	CHAT and its constituent members recognised as being able to provide sustained, appropriate and economic services	Invitations to contribute and be involved in other appropriate activity by statutory and voluntary bodies.
Migrant and Seasonal Workers Network	Improved relationships with employers Greater understanding of their problems Provision of cultural and social activities for seasonal workers	Improved working conditions. A better quality of life whilst in Herefordshire Opportunities to attend worship. Regular contact with employers

Other new developments have seen the setting up of a Community Larder in Ross-on-Wye and planning for another in Leominster.

CHAT has now been joined by another member church which runs a Debt Counselling service.

Success factors

The continuity provided to the socially isolated, the homeless and those with addictive personalities or problems. The more the projects have built up relationships and trust with the client groups, the more we have seen the need to develop services to meet their

needs. Often the approach is to deal with the presenting problem and not the cause. This is why the Friday project commenced. It was discovered that many of those attending the meals or larder could not cook or their self esteem had reached such a low point that it rendered them incapable of coping. The Friday and now the Thursday project set out to address this. Regular research is undertaken to assess progress and tease out needs which may be considered and practical action applied.

Barriers

No barriers really except some initial scepticism and concern from some statutory agencies that developing our facilities might encourage immigration into Hereford and thus put pressure upon their overstretched services. However research has shown this is not so.

As the project is up and running it is more difficult to raise grant aid. The more we work effectively, the more we expose need.

Challenges and opportunities

CHAT intends to develop strong Church-based co-ordinated services concerned with meeting the basic needs of individuals, but at the same time providing opportunities for them to get back into the mainstream of society by developing self confidence and self esteem.

Tom Gilbert

http://www.hereford.anglican.org/churchgoers/social_action/chat/index.aspx

Reading Christian Network

Introduction

Our vision is to see the communities of Reading transformed by the life, love and power of Jesus Christ.

Reading is situated about 40 miles west of London and is now bidding to gain city status. It is the largest town in the south-east, with an urban population of 213,000. It is the major urban area of the Thames Valley with a catchment of 1.7 million people and 800,000 people living within a 25 minute drive. As an employment and retail centre, Reading serves a large part of the Thames Valley. The Reading Christian Network (RCN), a mainly evangelical and charismatic group, wants to see transformation in *all* of our communities - local areas, different age groups, diverse people-groups, and every sphere of activity in which God's people live out their lives impacted with the Good News of Jesus. This begins with personal transformation as we encounter the living God in our own lives, and overflows to affect the whole created order, bringing blessing to every area of life.

Origins of RCN

The story of RCN began in January 1997 when eight or nine Christian leaders met together in a riverside hotel. They were all concerned to look beyond their narrow denominational boundaries to seek the well-being of Reading as a whole. "There was, in my own mind, a growing awareness that we could never impact a town for God while the different groups of Christians were at loggerheads with one another, refused to recognise each other and were not obeying Christ's command to his disciples, 'to love one another'." At that time, Churches Together in Reading suffered from a lack of leadership and was not supported by Church Leaders. At this meeting, they asked what (more) God might be asking of them.

The immediate result was that Greyfriars Church in the town centre offered its next Bible Week event traditionally held in June each year as a springboard for an activity that they could present together. The group invited Ed Silvano, Director of Harvest Evangelism in California, as guest speaker to talk about how to make a difference in their community. They invited clergy and pastors from every denomination to a day-time conference and moved the venue to a sports complex in nearby Earley to cope with the numbers now expected. Evening sessions were open to the whole church and 1,500 – 2,000 people attended.

At the end of the four-day conference the speaker challenged the lay people there to form prayer clusters in every street to pray for their neighbours and to be a blessing to them. "As pastors and church leaders, a number of us felt that we should lead by example and so invited all those in Christian leadership who wished to attend, to join us for prayer each Wednesday at 8.00 am in Greyfriars Church to pray for an hour for God to intervene in the affairs of Reading." Although there was lots of social action activity going on, this was the first time that church leaders had committed to come together to pray. This weekly meeting for prayer has continued up to the present day. At first, about fifteen people attended, but this has now grown to a regular attendance of 30-40 people, clergy and project leaders.

RCN works alongside Churches Together Reading (CTR). "*CTR represented the widest range and number of churches which is important. On the other hand, this width could limit fast decision making in some areas. RCN's sharper focus gave it strength and speed in some areas. Arguably, they complement each other.*"

Aims and objectives

- To advance the Christian faith;

- To provide or assist in the provision of facilities in the interests of social welfare for recreation or other leisure time occupation for individuals who have need of such facilities by reason of their youth, age, infirmity or disability, financial hardship or social circumstances with the object of improving their conditions of life.
- To relieve the needs of persons who are in need due to age, sickness or financial hardship in such parts of the UK and the world as the trustees may from time to time think fit.

The ethos of RCN

So let your light shine before men that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven (Matthew 5 v 16)

“As we, the body of Christ in Reading, stand together in praise, thanksgiving, worship and intercession, we seek God's blessing on our town and surrounding areas through:

- *Joined-up Leadership* – Building a strong network of leaders in all spheres across the town.
- *Joined-up Strategy* – Planning and the Prophetic in harmony
- *Joined-up Mission* – Personal evangelism, social action, workplace ministry and broader mission all embraced
- *Joined-up 'Ownership'* – Embedded involvement at local church level Seeing our part in the big picture
- *Joined-up Visibility* – Raising the profile of all the good things that church is doing in the eyes of media, politicians, other agencies and wider communities “

Linked churches

In addition to its links with Churches Together in Reading and the Barnabas Fellowship, RCN is linked with the following individual churches:

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| • Brookside Church | • Caversham Baptist Church |
| • Cornwell Community Church | • Greyfriars Church |
| • Lifespring Church | • Reading Community Church |
| • Reading Vineyard Church | • St Agnes and St Paul Church |
| • St Saviours Church | • Shinfield Baptist Church |
| • Thameside Church | • Tyndale Baptist Church |
| • Whiteknights Church | • Wycliffe Church. |

Examples of RCN activities in addition to the weekly prayer meetings include:

- A retreat designed to equip and support leaders at which invited speakers helped them to renew and refresh the vision for serving the town.
- Advertised gatherings open to all.
- Co-ordinated prayer undertaken by intercessors – people with a particular calling and burden to pray for the spiritual transformation of the town.
- Building links with key people in different spheres of influence, such as politics, health, education, community safety, business and local government.

RCN has developed in various ways. First, its membership has not only increased numerically, but also extended to include project leaders, youth leaders and business leaders as well as clergy. From time to time, local leaders are invited for part of the meeting to share their hopes for Reading, after which the group offers to pray for them. For example,

the Mayor, MP, Chief Executive of the Borough Council, Police Chief and Councillors have all attended.

The network of youth leaders, supported financially by RCN, also meets independently to pray once a week and support one another in their ministry both in church youth groups and community outreach projects.

Similarly, arising out of RCN, a group of evangelical Christian business people have grouped together under the banner of 'The Family Business' and they sometimes join RCN on Wednesdays. They have held some mentoring workshops for people in local churches looking to launch a new business. They have also been in touch with the Reading Borough Council Chief Executive to say they are willing to give financial or other support to suggested initiatives.

RCN has become an umbrella organisation for a variety of projects. *"We realised that God was calling us to more challenges and to be more proactive."* The relationships developed through the weekly prayer meetings support day-to-day services in Reading and the surrounding areas. Projects linked with RCN include:

- Reading Street Pastors were launched in February 2009 and commissioned in October that year. RCN employs the project co-ordinator. Reading Churches, the Reading Safer Form under the Borough Council, the local Pubwatch group and the Police are all fully committed to the scheme (see box below).
- Christian Community Action collects good quality second hand furniture and distributes it to people in need for a nominal charge *via* their support centres. Surplus items are sold through their charity shops.
- Mustard Tree Foundation seeks to be a voice for those who have no voice and enable the community to speak for itself. It is an umbrella for several projects including Lighthouse which provides alternative education for excluded pupils, those at risk of exclusion, teenage mothers and school phobics; Parenting classes; Positive Activities for Young People (PAYP); Reading Lifeline, which gives pregnancy advice; Open Door coffee shop; and Rahab, a project designed to offer support and befriending to women involved in the sex industry. A new group, Springboard, is now running, which seeks to help people in Reading to run with their dreams and visions to transform the town. It will support initiatives from across the entire Christian spectrum but ideas must involve people from more than one congregation.
- Churches in Reading Drop-in Centre (CIRDIC) provides support services for homeless people.
- Churches in Reading Women's Centre is a self-help group open to all women. It offers a friendly family atmosphere and a listening ear, with opportunities for women to share skills and support each other.
- Frontline provides debt advice and trains volunteers to give debt counselling.
- Liberia Link was set up in 2009 to support and work with poor communities in Liberia.

RCN is associated with Impact Reading, a network of 25-30 Christian social action organisations in Reading and surrounding areas.

Someone involved in RCN, Impact Reading and The Mustard Tree served as the faith representative on Reading Local Strategic Partnership. This led to about 50 others becoming involved on various committees and panels around the town. It gave an opportunity for both planning and delivery influence. When Reading recently completed its Sustainable Community Strategy, 'breaking the cycle of poverty' featured as the top priority.

There was also the chance to take the lead on thinking through the strategy relating to street workers.

One of the ways of filtering the vision through to local churches has been through DVDs. A national film maker who lives locally had heard about RCN and having attended a meeting was so impressed with the unity expressed that he offered to help by making two DVDs that each showcase four projects. These have been completed and more will follow.

RCN draws a distinction between ministry activities serving people in need freely and unconditionally and the more overt preaching or declaration of beliefs that constitute mission activities

Organisational status

RCN has charitable status and is a company limited by guarantee. It was a major step to formalise arrangements in this way but necessary in order to maximise the potential for fundraising. The Trustees are elected by and accountable to the wider group and oversee the strategic direction of the organisation. Amongst the Trustees are people with expertise in finance, employment and policy matters. In addition, there is a Steering Group which has responsibility for RCN's day-to-day running.

Outcomes

"From meeting to pray together on such a regular basis have sprung deep friendships and trust across the denominational divides. It has resulted in raising funds for a number of different social issues in the town and it is my conviction that the success of the Regenerate programme¹ across the churches in Reading was because there has been ten years of weekly prayer offered up by those in some form of Christian leadership or other and that unity has born fruit."

The Signs of transformation defined by RCN are:

- *churches* loving God, loving each other and growing in numbers and in influence as men, women, youth and children are saved, added and disciplined;
 - *schools* where order and discipline reign so that children and young people can fulfil their potential as they learn;
 - *business life* infused with kingdom principles and standards so that wealth is generated and recycled for the blessing of all not just a few;
 - *crime and corruption* diminishing throughout the community;
 - *social entertainment* based on goodness not empty pleasure-seeking;
 - *politics* built on trust and respect, family life strengthened and supported;
 - *arts and the media* projecting creativity in praise of the creator;
-and so on through all the spheres

Success factors

- The stress on the primacy of prayer, but also the inseparability of prayers and social action.

¹ Regenerate was a joint mission to the town starting in 2006 involving all streams of church life doing evangelism in their own style but also with joint training and events. "What we have found is that unity builds best round joint action, that it needs to give freedom and respect to churches that do things differently, and needs to be gracious to each other, relying on the grace of Christ."

- Faithfulness and persistence.
- The stress on the importance of personal relationships and the way that new initiatives can grow organically out of them.
- Working alongside public sector leaders in the town and gaining credibility and therefore influence amongst them.

Challenges and opportunities

- Appealing to a wider range of (non-evangelical) Christians.
- Making more space for theological reflection.

c/o Greyfriars Church,
Friar Street,
Reading,
RG1 1EH

<http://www.reading-christian-network/>

Street Pastors

The Street Pastors Initiative is an interdenominational Christian response to today's social problems. It is spearheaded by the Ascension Trust.

(<http://www.streetpastors.co.uk/>)

A Street Pastor is a Church member with a concern for society - in particular for young people who feel themselves to be excluded and marginalised - and who is willing to engage people where they are, in terms of their thinking (i.e. their perspective of life) and location (i.e. where they hang out - be it on the streets, in the pubs and clubs or at parties etc). Street Pastors will also be willing to work with fellow activists, church and community leaders, and with agencies and projects, both statutory and voluntary, to look at collaborative ways of working on issues affecting youth, and initiatives that will build trust between them and the Street Pastors.

As the Street Pastor gets to know people in the community he/she will find out their needs are and what can be done to help. A presence of Street Pastors will earn credibility in the community, so that people know that the Church is there for them in a practical way. The role is not about preaching heaven and hell, but one of listening, caring and helping - working in an unconditional way.

To be a Street Pastor you need to be over 18 (no upper age limit), a church member and able to commit to our training programme.

Each Street Pastor team consists of at least three groups of four, each of which will work a minimum of one night a month, usually from 10pm to around 4am.

After 18months, Reading Street Pastors had:

- 55 committed volunteers
- 25 Churches represented
- 12 regular prayer pastors
- Contact with over 6700 people
- Calmed 202 aggressive situations
- Supported 586 vulnerable people
- Picked up 3390 glass bottle
- Dealt with 42 First Aid incidents
- Handed out 282 safety blankets
- Protected 394 feet, providing flip-flops
- Handed out many thousands of lollipops
- Referred 94 people to various organisations

Derby Cathedral

Introduction

One of the Cathedral's seven areas of mission is mission to the poor. There is considerable engagement with, and support for, other organisations. Much of this activity is enabled by:

- having a Canon Pastor with a remit that allows for this wider ministry;
- the covenant between the City Centre Churches. There is a monthly breakfast meeting and even where they are not actively collaborating in specific initiatives, they support one another in prayer;
- having a Justice and Peace Group at the Cathedral;
- the involvement of members of the Cathedral congregation as volunteers.

Activities

The facilities at the Cathedral are limited and therefore not much can be done on the premises, but once a month there is a Sunday lunch comprising members of the congregation and homeless and other vulnerable people. This began about seven years ago and over that time has grown from 10-15 participants to around 40. The 'bring and share' lunch starts immediately after the morning service but there is absolutely no suggestion that coming to the lunch is conditional upon having attended the service. In addition, Derby Housing Aid use the Cathedral free of charge for the annual Homelessness Sunday service.

Wider activities include:

- An ecumenical Street Pastors scheme, run by Derby City Mission. The Cathedral has volunteers, including the Canon Pastor, who act as Street Pastors and contributes £100 per person to the scheme to cover costs such as uniforms. The scheme has been going for 2 - 3 years. It has been influential in producing closer relationships with the City Council and the Police. They are been reassured that it is not an exercise in proselytising and have seen how useful it is when, for example, there are incidents outside nightclubs and the Pastors can help to calm down and care for bystanders.
- The Canon Pastor is a trustee of the Padley Centre which is a longstanding Derby charity working with some of the most socially excluded people in the local area, such as ones who are homeless, have mental health problems or addiction problems or are ex-offenders. The Cathedral supports the Centre with harvest gifts.
- The Cathedral Chapter has occasionally funded a breakfast for homeless people.
- The city centre church, St Peter's organises Derby City Centre Chaplaincy providing chaplains to supermarkets, banks, cinema, department stores and market, recruiting and training volunteers from local churches. Members of the Cathedral are volunteer chaplains.
- Volunteers are also involved in debt counselling with the City Mission and St Peter's linked into Christians Against Poverty.
- The Cathedral is often visited by asylum seekers, many of whom have been given individual support such as being given meals and accompanied to hearings. The Justice and Peace Group provides a network of people to draw on for the relevant assistance.
- The Cathedral vergers available throughout the week are equipped with information so that they can signpost enquirers with social needs to other organisations.

- The Cathedral sends volunteers to the soup run organised by the Baptist Church.
- There is support to the Salvation Army in their work with sex workers: often the contact is made through the soup run that gives a stepping stone to befriending and demonstrating the approachability of the church.
- Once a week on a Saturday afternoon, church members 'Pray on the Streets' in the city centre, that is, they approach people to see if they have prayer requests. Sometimes, people can voice anxieties such as debt and then there is also the opportunity to refer them to organisations that can help them.
- A retired clergyperson who works in a multi-faith way with people with HIV/AIDS, is just starting to be involved at the Cathedral
- The Canon Pastor is on various committees, such as the one that allocates money to homeless charities. Derby has boxes around the city for people to give to the homeless. This is administered in partnership with the City Council.
- In talking with members of the Cathedral who may be housebound or otherwise no longer able to be actively involved in community activity, the Canon Pastor indicates the important role they can play in praying, for example, for people who are homeless, ill or in financial need.

Key success factors

The role of the Canon Pastor is critical: the opportunity she has to work in this way as a chaplain not just to the Cathedral community but to the wider community. It is also vital that the approach is ecumenical (and often inter-faith). It enables a far greater impact and makes it easier to work with secular partners.

A main theme running through all the different initiatives is that of breaking down barriers and suspicion: reconciling and getting people to talk to one another.

Another key factor is the role of volunteers within the life of the Cathedral and in its wider community action. At Derby, the volunteers belong to the Guild of King Edward and there is an annual service recognising, valuing and showing appreciation for all that they do.

Barriers

One of the barriers encountered is people holding entrenched positions. These can take the form of judgemental attitudes towards people in poverty. There may be some slight signs that these are breaking down because of the increasing social need that is currently evident. Or they can be seen in amongst those whose view of Christian mission begins and ends with evangelisation. Again, this standpoint is perhaps less prevalent than it was.

Challenges and opportunities for the future

The main challenge for the future, which can also be seen as an opportunity, is the growing need in the community immediately around the Cathedral and more widely. More specifically, there is awareness of the need to do more in relation both to young people and the elderly.

Canon Elaine Jones

St Leonard's Centre, Bootle

Introduction

Bootle is in the Sefton local authority area. It borders the River Mersey adjoining the north of Liverpool and is one of the most deprived areas of the country. The decline of the docks in the 1960s and 1970s saw a rise in unemployment and a fall in population. St Leonard's is in a super output area (SOA) that is one of the 1% most deprived in the country. Nearly one quarter of the population in the ward is under 16 years old. There are health-related problems such as high levels of smoking and obesity. South Sefton was within the Merseyside Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder area underlining that the locality suffered from housing decline and associated problems, but the funding was discontinued in March 2011.

St Leonard's Church is part of the Bootle Team Ministry. The congregation numbers about thirty two, most of whom grew up locally, with a number who no longer live in the immediate area. The building combines the church and the Centre.

Origins

The Centre's work began in its present form about 10 years ago. The impetus for the current work came when the current Team Rector arrived. He saw the need for more work with the local community because of the extent of deprivation. The hall building was not in a good condition and had a leaking roof, there was no funding in place, and just two small sessions of volunteer based youth work happening. Funding was found to do some interior decorating on condition the roof was fixed and, following a loan from the Diocese, that was done. From this, one of the local Registered Social Landlords (RSL) started to fund increased and regular sessions of youth and community based activities. Bit by bit, in small steps there was an increase in community usage and dramatic improvements to the facilities.

St Leonard's Centre

Regular activities in the Centre include:

- A Parent and Toddler Group once a week, which is run by paid workers, partly with a view to it informally offering parenting skills.
- An Out-of-School Club for 5-11 year olds on three days per week between 4 pm and 6 pm.
- Holiday programmes and trips for young people
- A Community Lunch run twice a month by St Leonard's volunteers.
- Courses such as sign language and cooking for one.
- Tenants and Residents meetings.
- *Older people's activities such as Tea dances.*
- Gardening and entry into the Britain in Bloom Competition for urban estates.

Following severe cuts and reduction in funding in 2011, some activities have had to be curtailed, meaning that most of the Youth Club activity has had to close. The Centre has a sports hall that can be hired by prior arrangement, and local groups are encouraged to use other parts of the building. Sometimes a charge is levied depending on the nature of the group and/or activity.

When Bootle suffered flash floods in July 2010, St Leonard's responded as the nearest community building and was opened as an Emergency Flood Support Centre. This raised its profile with local people and the local authority. The Team Rector attended the regular emergency co-ordinating group, and Community Development worker/Centre Manager was on the committee that allocated flood support funds raised by local appeal.

St Leonard's has taken over running the local Housing Market Renewal (HMR) Forum. Prior to the loss of HMR funding, this led to an innovative project – 'Come Dine with Me' (see box below).

Centre services have evolved over time. The financial climate has altered. This has affected the sale or refurbishment of some of the buildings. There is also added pressure on obtaining new funding as everyone is oversubscribed and sometimes good services have had to go as a result of a failure to find new sources of money. However, the needs of the community have not altered. Arguably they have increased precisely because all services are under pressure.

Partnership working

There are good links locally with Riverside Housing, the local Registered Social Landlord that owns most of housing stock in the area though the end of Housing Market Renewal money makes it uncertain whether the links will continue in their current form. There are also good working relations with the police, who share information about crime and anti-social behaviour in the area, with the local authority and with Sefton Council for Voluntary Services.

Management

St Leonard's is a registered charity and a company limited by guarantee. The object of the charity is the provision of a community centre for the use of the inhabitants of the beneficial area of Bootle. The Board is chaired by the Team Vicar and the trustees/directors are elected annually at the AGM. They are currently meeting monthly because of the financial pressures being experienced. The main leadership has come from the Team Rector and Team Vicars.

Ten years ago there was very much a feel of separation between 'Church' and 'Centre'. The desire of integration has been a firm and very conscious move led by the clergy. With encouragement given to the PCC and Trustees, and the secondment of the Community Development Worker for Bootle Team Ministry as part-time Centre Manager this has been realised in the past five years at St Leonard's. The wider role of the Community Development Worker has been to help rationalise and increase the usage in the Team's nine buildings, reassess what they were used for and whether they were still needed. In addition, the role has been to increase the volunteer base and organise training for volunteers. She also looked at governance at St. Leonard's Community Hall and one of the other buildings in the Team which had a separate charity. The latter has now been wound up.

The role of Community Development Worker has evolved. As well as her secondment as part-time Centre Manager for the Community Hall, she has adapted as work streams have come to an end due to funding cuts, and the role has grown in respect of the support needed for emerging areas of activity. Part of her role is to find funding for any new projects within the team. She also works on a consultancy basis for the Diocese¹ with payment going to Bootle Team to offset her salary.

¹ She delivers 'Discovery' for the Diocese, a course run by Tearfund for parishes to look at how their church fits into the community and how they can reach out to their own neighbourhoods.

As Community Development Worker, she is line managed by the Team Rector and reports to the Team Council every quarter, which is made up of three representatives from each of the three PCC's in the Team Ministry. She attends each of the three PCCs when required to report on pieces of work particular or relevant to that PCC. All the other staff are part-time and numbers have recently reduced from 14 to 8. They are all local people.

Resources

The original funding for the Community Development Worker's post came from CUF and Fairshare Fund for the first three years. The latter, which was accessed through Merseyside Community Foundation, has been renewed until 2012. Various funding pots have been obtained for volunteer training, courses and equipment across the team, such as the Hadley Trust, Community Centre Grant, Riverside Housing Community Chest, the Jamie Carragher Testimonial Fund and Crosby Lions. There has also been support and small grants from the Diocese and the PCC.

An earlier service level agreement for work with 14-16 year olds funded from the Working Neighbourhoods Fund finished when that funding stream was discontinued. Smaller one-off amounts of income have been secured for specific activities, such as the flood support.

The Centre also generates a relatively small amount of funding from rental income, for example, from the Residents' and Tenants' meetings and Brownies and Guides hall hire and there are receipts from Bingo.

Volunteers

Originally there was only a small group of volunteers, but the group has grown. Five sets run the Community Lunch in St. Leonard's. Training has been provided. The good thing to come out of the volunteers, who are mainly members of the congregation, are the projects such as *Come Dine with Me*, where the young people and church members have come together and worked together on a project. This has led to greater understanding and friendships which would not have happened otherwise. Some of the paid staff also come in on a voluntary basis to raise funds to aid current work. Collectively, that equates to about 50 hours a week which, costed on the basis of the minimum wage, amounts to a weekly contribution of about £300.

Outcomes

In general terms, the work in the Centre and the other buildings has enabled more effective engagement with local residents and encouraged church members to look outwards more and recognise that church is not just about a service on a Sunday. It has raised the profile of the Bootle Team with other agencies through their work and what has been achieved. They are respected in the community and highly regarded by the local authority.

Examples of training and capacity building for workers and volunteers over the past six months are:

- 10 attended First Aid training;
- 10 members attended Safeguarding Level 1;
- 15 attended Diversity and Hate Crime Level 1;

- 5 members of staff – all local residents – attained qualification in Health and Social Care Level 3 Youth Work.

In relation to young people, 15 Young Apprentices were encouraged and brought through over a twelve month period. This work with 14-16 year old local young people was in partnership with Sefton CVS and the Working Neighbourhoods Fund.

Success factors include:

- Training for all the staff and volunteers.
- Encouraging church members and community leaders and members to work together.
- Engaging with local councillors and council so that they accept that we can work as a team and that the work we do is of value.

Barriers

“Even now, we sometimes meet suspicion and wrong assumptions, which may say more about individuals than a corporate policy. Agencies that we work with sometimes assume that as a church-based organisation, we have another agenda, that the only reason for our being here is to get people into church on a Sunday.”

Lack of funding is another barrier especially in the current financial climate. The struggle to gain financial sustainability is on-going in a context where it is difficult to realise ways of generating income.

Challenges and opportunities for the future

“The very evident need all round us is a major challenge as is the constant need to find funds. Although the Diocese is supportive, a bit more involvement and understanding regarding financial position of some projects and the services they provide in their local communities. To some extent there is a tension between the pressures around the Diocesan Growth Strategy (numerical growth on Sunday mornings) and what we feel called to do in our neighbourhood.”

St Leonard’s has increased services to the community by increasing usage of the church side of the building. The worship area offers a large versatile space and is used for community lunches and open days run by Riverside Housing. Increasing numbers put new demands on the buildings and use of space.

Debbie King
Community Development Worker

Come Dine with Me

The original idea came when Evolve, the organisation responsible for delivering the government's Housing Market Renewal programme in South Sefton, brought the local community together for an evening, split people into groups and invited them to make pitches for project ideas to a panel. During the evening, the idea of the Come Dine with Me project was born involving St Leonard's in Bootle along with three local Community Centres.

The Centres set the rules (e.g. each group could only spend up to a certain budget, the group should be intergenerational, the order was decided by pulling names out of a hat). Then it followed the format of the Channel 4 "Come Dine with Me" programme. With a team of 10 people (5 young people, 5 older people) each Community Centre cooked a meal and the other teams would be invited along and then everybody would vote on which Centre hosted the best meal. Each meal had a theme and the centres and teams were dressed up accordingly (e.g. Country and Western, Footballers and WAGS, Hollywood). The evenings were a big success.

St Leonards secured match funding from the CUF Mustard Seed fund and was able to share the equipment with the other centres, which increased the sense of co-operation.

The project had several beneficial outcomes:

- *Improved links between young and old:* people met each other who would not otherwise have done. Previously, there had been a feeling that the church and centre were separate and there were tensions between the youth club and church, but through the project, they met one another and got on.
- *Improved relations between community centres:* overcoming territoriality and engendering greater co-operation between the Centres and their staff.
- *Great public relations with the local authority:* councillors were delighted with it because the events ticked all their community cohesion boxes. They invited all the groups to have a meal together at the Town Hall. Groups of young and old, who previously had no interaction, were now sitting together laughing and enjoying each other's company.

Rev Roger Driver, Team Rector: *"This was one of the most satisfying projects I've been involved in 20 years. Often in community work many things feel unfinished. With this, within quite a short period of time, there was lots of energy, excitement and input and you could see results at the end. If you pardon the pun, it left a good taste in everybody's mouth".*

Debbie King, Centre Manager: *It's proof that if you give local people money, they know what to do with it. know how to spend it best and economically and get best value.*

St. Martin's Centre Newcastle upon Tyne

Introduction

St. Martin's Centre is within the Byker ward of Newcastle upon Tyne, an inner city area to the east of Newcastle city centre. It is a multi-agency centre offering a range of services to the communities of Byker and Walker. The new St Martin's was built in 2005/06 on the site of the original St Martin's Church, and is the result of a vision to make better use of the original church building, develop stronger connections with the community and create a "community place" for the whole local community to use. The Centre's area of operation has the lowest weekly household income and the highest number of young people not in education or employment in the Tyne and Wear City Region. It has the highest levels of teenage pregnancy in the country, the highest levels of obesity in the city and high levels of persistent absence from school combined with low levels of attainment.

Origins of St Martin's Centre

St Martin's Church in Byker was founded in 1933 as a daughter church of St Michael and All Angels, Byker. As the fields between Byker and Walker were filled with houses, a red brick parish hall was constructed at the junction between Welbeck Road and Roman Avenue which served as a meeting place for the local community and as a place for worship. St Martin's became a parish in its own right in 1976. Pews were imported and the downstairs kitchen was replaced by a vestry.

By the end of the 1990s, the future of St Martin's was uncertain. Byker had suffered severe population loss and the congregation had fallen in number with very few children and families. The building was not in good shape, but it was still well situated in the local community. Members of the PCC were determined to find a future and in 2000 formed a number of working groups to look at the future of the parish and develop a mission statement.

The Urban Ministry and Theology Project (UMTP) in the East End of Newcastle in the Anglican Diocese of Newcastle had started in 1999. It encompassed community engagement, church development and theological education and training. Individuals within the clergy team led on each of these. The priest responsible for church development worked with St Martin's in their discussions and a consultant advised about wider consultation. When the Christmas card was delivered round the parish as usual, a questionnaire was enclosed asking what local residents thought: "should the church stay?" what sort of issues needed addressing?" Boxes for completed questionnaires were put around post offices and other centres and, although only a fairly small percentage was returned, the exercise gave useful feedback and served to alert people to the possibility of a new centre. Members of the congregation also did some door knocking in the immediate area. The results were assembled into a report in which a very strong emerging theme was children and young people.

There had been many previous connections between the church and the community and St Martin's was approached by the local Sure Start about the possibility of developing a family centre, for which Sure Start could put in £750,000 capital funding. Further consultation took place including focus groups which showed there was a lot of enthusiasm about this idea. This initial guarantee of capital spend was key. It gave the church and Sure Start the leverage to secure further funding up to the total cost of £1.6 million.

During the building work, the congregation of 20-30 transferred to the school. The new building houses a day nursery run by Barnardo's, a Sure Start children's centre, 4 community rooms and St. Martin's Church. The kitchen is ideal for training and cookery groups. The multi-purpose upstairs room can be used for dancing, exercise and keep fit. The restricted size of the site meant that the space had to be used flexibly. The small designated worship area is adjacent to two of the community rooms. Drawing back the partitions between the three gives a total worship area large enough for up to 150 people. A stunning window in the church was designed by an artist working closely with local people.

Forming the Partnership

When St Martin's Centre Partnership was formed, a lot of careful consideration was given to governance arrangements. The idea was to have a partnership with Centre users and with the community. The Partnership is a charitable company. Sure Start, which is run by Barnardo's in that area, could not formally be part of the partnership. Instead, there is a service level agreement and an agreement about how much they contribute to running expenses. One of the Sure Start staff is an adviser at Board meetings.

The church did not want to be controlling. There needed to be considerable preparation as the Centre was being developed including discussion in the PCC and information and comment from the pulpit on Sundays. Initially there was a certain amount of anxiety amongst the congregation about how the arrangements would work. "Would it represent a takeover?" "Where will we (the congregation) be in all this?" The early months after the Centre's completion was a critical period for getting the dynamics of the relationship between Church and Centre worked out. However, because the incumbent left soon after the Centre opened and there was a long interregnum, the two evolved separately for some time with a certain amount of mutual mistrust. Since then, with the arrival of the new incumbent and the appointment of a Chief Officer for the Centre, this has been rectified. All the emphasis has been on building relationships. As a result, there has been a gradual moving together, much greater integration, the development of mutual respect and understanding and greater overlap in involvement in activities. For example, Centre staff help in the Tea Club for pensioners run by one of the congregation and now there is talk about new things to do together, such as a spirituality course.

Activities include

- Nursery in partnership with Barnardo's
- Sure Start Groups
- Work under-5s: work with parents and carers – how to play with children
- After-school club for 8-13s: focus on team work, sharing and communication
- Classroom space for young people at risk of exclusion from school
- Work with older people: tai chi; 'soup and stottie lunch'; tea club
- Drop-in morning when there is Citizens' Advice Bureau, the Carers' Society present and smoking cessation and other health-related activities.
- Hosting the local residents' association, ward committees and the MP surgery
- Hosting the East End Cultural Network
- Local parents' groups
- Freedom Project working with women experiencing domestic violence
- Cookery: Jamie Oliver Ministry of Food with the Probation Service
- ESOL book club
- Hosting the Congolese Church on Sunday afternoons.

In the church, in addition to Brownies and Guides, there is an increasing volume of baptisms, some of which arise because people have attended programmes in the Centre.

St Martin's is also starting to be known as a wedding venue. When funerals take place, it is written into the Centre's terms and conditions that other bookings are moved around to fit.

Evolving activities

There are two ways in which the programme at the Centre develops. First, activities have grown in response as contact with local people has led to greater awareness of specific needs or gaps in services. Secondly, new opportunities have arisen as others have seen the value of the Centre as a drop-in centre base. The Centre has also hosted conferences, such as a European Union Conference on child poverty, one of six in the country, which brought together officials from Brussels, local residents and young people.

Leadership

At the time of the genesis of the scheme, the main leadership came from the then incumbent of St Martin's and his colleague in the UMTP team who facilitated the church meetings and wider community consultation. More recently, the present incumbent and the Chief Officer of the Centre together with the other trustees provide the leadership.

The Centre has 11 paid full and part-time staff (5 fte) plus the nursery staff.

Resources

Most of the Centre's income comes from grants such as: Sure Start, Youth Drop-In Fund, Training Fund, Toddler Toy Fund, After School Club Fund, Educational Welfare Fund, Business Link Funding, Lloyds TSB, Connexions, Northumberland Business Service, the Henry Smith Foundation. There are further contributions from user groups. About 15% of running costs are covered through income for room bookings and fundraising events bring in a small amount of money. There has also been help with Health and Safety arrangements from Gregg's UK as part of Gregg's own Corporate Social Responsibility policy.

All **volunteers** are local; there is a stipulation that they live in NE6. They contribute 25-30 hours per week which, calculated on the basis of the minimum wage, amounts to a contribution worth £180 p.w.

The Centre is financially secure through 2012, but this takes tremendously hard work and a constant search for both trust and statutory funding.

Non-financial resources and links

The Diocese of Newcastle played a big role in the development of the scheme in relation to bringing in the capital funding and also the use of the land. Since then there has been unflinching support from the Archdeacon and the Bishop.

The Urban Ministry and Theology Project has been designated as [Mission Initiative North East](#) (MINE), becoming one of the first Mission Initiatives in the country. The four churches involved work closely together. Students from the Regional Training Partnership also visit the Centre.

There is no longer a Churches Together in Byker and Walker: only Church of England and Roman Catholic churches remain in the area; the Methodist and United Reformed Churches have closed. There is close working with the Roman Catholic priests and some RC Sisters based in the area.

Among local secular organisations, there has been a close relationship with Newcastle Volunteer Centre. For example, some staff from Northern Rock came to help dig gardens. In addition to the practical assistance these outside volunteers gave, this was an opportunity for raising their awareness about conditions in the area.

Outcomes

The primary purpose of the Centre is to fulfil its mission:

“St Martin’s is a place to grow, learn and worship for everyone and is in the heart of the community. We are passionate about believing that every person matters and we are dedicated to help all local people to enjoy happy, healthy and safe lives and to help everyone to reach their full potential.”

This translates into a set of values:

- *“Passionate about people* – we believe in helping people be the best they can be, whether they are staff, volunteers, trustees, local groups, families or individuals.
- *Positive about partnerships* – we invest in partnership working, striving to create new alliances and new opportunities to help us achieve our aims.
- *Be one team* – We are one team under one roof, working towards the aims and objectives of the St Martin’s Centre Partnership.
- *Customer focused* - We put our customers [both internal and external] at the heart of all we delivery.
- *Respect individuality and diversity* – We treat everyone with respect and value diversity and individuality.
- *Open honest and transparent* – We are open and transparent in all our services, operation and activities. We seek feedback on our services, our delivery and our team, reacting positively and seeking continuous improvement.”

One part of putting this into practice means achieving the targets set by each of the major funders relating to outcomes specified in the original bid or service level agreement, such as number of sessions or courses and number of attendees or beneficiaries. Recently the Centre has started to carry out more monitoring through an annual business plan.

Success factors

The key success factors of the Centre revolve around being so focused on what local people need and ‘going the extra mile’ to make appropriate provision. There is a lot of emphasis on individual users and their progression, recognising that many people using the Centre have not had many positive choices, so that there is a need to build up their self-esteem and open up new horizons for them. For example, someone might start by attending a manicure class, for which a crèche is provided, but then go on to a family learning course leading to an adult numeracy qualification.

This requires the Centre staff and trustees to have an open-minded approach: a willingness to try new things but also to review them constantly, abandon anything that is not working and try again. Strong neighbourhood engagement is vital. The range of services, the skills and experience of the staff and the excellent facilities all serve to demonstrate the importance the Centre places on local needs and illustrate the respect felt towards local people. The strong link between Church and Centre exemplifies the extent to which the focus is on the whole person – physical, social and spiritual needs.

Barriers

One of the main challenges in the work is to change perceptions. First, social isolation in the area is a huge issue and some residents have very negative views about themselves and their lack or perceived lack of positive options. They may fail to respond, therefore, because they feel there are too many obstacles in their way that it will be impossible to overcome. Associated with this is a reluctance or fear of moving beyond their own micro neighbourhood. Second, there can be misconceptions about the Centre: an assumption that it is run by the Council, which can deter them from using it.

Challenges and opportunities for the future

Achieving sustainability will continue to be a challenge especially as some funding sources are being cut, such as adult education budgets.

There are various ways in which the work might broaden out. There is scope for developing greater continuity of work with the families of the under-5s who currently use the Centre. The advent of asylum seekers in the area brings both a challenge and an opportunity. The use of story telling may be a way of focusing on community cohesion both across different cultural groups and different generations. More could be done through volunteering, including accrediting the experience of the volunteers.

<http://www.stmartinscentre.org.uk>

St Augustine's Family Centre Halifax

Introduction

St Augustine's Church is based in Park ward, a densely built-up area to the west of the centre of Halifax. In 2001, 55% of the population were from non-white ethnic groups, far above the district average, and the percentage has grown considerably since then. Over 70% of Calderdale's Asian population lived in the ward, two thirds of whom are UK born and 30% Asian born. As well as being an area of great religious and ethnic diversity, where English is the second language for a high proportion of the population, much of the area is in the most deprived 10% nationally on the Index of Multiple Deprivation. The church has a congregation of approximately twenty five, about half of whom are new entrants to Britain. The Victorian church building was demolished in 1972 and services are now held in the St Augustine's school hall. With effect from 1st April 2009, St. Augustine's became part of a united benefice with Christ Church Mount Pellon. The St Augustine's Centre is a multi-activity, church-based voluntary organisation based in two former vicarages.

Origins

The Centre was opened formally in 1989 but for approximately 20 years before this we had a playgroup and provided ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) classes. Not having a church building had prompted the question of how the church could reach out to the local community. Then, through parental involvement in the playgroup, we heard about their problems, such as debt, housing and relationships. This led to us starting up advice sessions.

We have had to take account of, and respond to, the changes in the area. For example, it used to be a predominantly Pakistani neighbourhood, but first asylum seekers and then migrant workers gradually came in.

The spread of activities

More than 600 people per week use St Augustine's Centre and there are over 60 volunteers.

Through the help of the Wakefield Diocese and various funders, **St Augustine's Community Support** has been set up to provide help for asylum seekers, refugees, European Union migrants and to all those resident in the local community who require assistance without prejudice. There are no other refugee organisations in the area and the local authority team focus primarily on housing.

We aim to encourage integration between the various groups. We value and respect all members of the community as individuals and we are open to all. We find that we can have people from countries at war with one another nevertheless sitting round the table and working together. The building offers a warm and welcoming environment for people to access support and advice from friendly workers and volunteers. We aim to help with basic needs and hope to build confidence to encourage participation within the community and to prevent isolation. This is achieved through:

- Weekly Support Groups offering befriending, food, information and direction towards other agencies.
- Adult Education, both on an informal and formal basis, to share skills and to learn new ones.

- Social Activities within the local community which aim to develop better relationships between the host community and those who have moved here from other countries.
- Advice Sessions, covering such areas as education, employment, adapting to the UK culture, citizenship and immigration. Basic legal advice is offered by OISC (Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner) registered workers.

The Support Centre also offers an 'immediate needs and funds' project for people who have become destitute, often as a result of government policies. We join other organisations in campaigning for fairer systems and in standing up for those who feel that they have no voice. For example, there was a sleep-out in the town centre to draw attention to the plight of destitute asylum seekers.

Refugee Forum Calderdale has been set up to represent and empower asylum seekers and refugees. Members say: "It will give us power to make our voices heard and to understand our rights and enable us to deal with those in authority. It will help us to take an active part in the local community, to make new friends and link with other refugee groups. We shall campaign for the right to work for asylum seekers, for an end to child detention and for an end to destitution for the stateless and for those unable to return safely. We shall seek funding for community activities such as story telling, drama, dressmaking, hairdressing, conversation classes and we shall use our collective experience to help others."

There is a **Gardening Group** run by volunteers who do the garden at the Centre but also, through the Refugee Forum now have an allotment and grow fruit and vegetables.

The St Augustine's Development Worker has organised many **creative activities** for asylum seekers who are not allowed to work, such as Indian Dance, a singing group, a samba band and banner making.

Food and Support Drop-In: The Development Worker set up the drop-in point for food and support and has engaged a number of churches and organisations to work in partnership to provide a weekly drop-in at the nearby Ebenezer Chapel each Saturday. The aim of the project is to enable vulnerable people who have a 'chaotic lifestyle' to access a drop-in to obtain a free food parcel and gain support and guidance to enable them to move on from their current situation. The client groups include people who are experiencing homelessness; destitute asylum seekers; people who suffer from substance misuse; others suffering extreme hardship. About one hundred people use it each week. The project supplies food that can be easily stored and necessities such as personal hygiene items necessary for a decent standard of living.

Advice sessions are run once a week in the Support Centre by the Citizens' Advice Bureau. In addition, Calderdale and Kirklees Careers Service hold a drop-in session to help migrant workers and refugees find work, although there are fears about the future funding for this service.

Adult education St Augustine's puts on a lot of short courses that are largely demanded; that is, focusing on subjects that people say they want or need, such as First Aid, food hygiene, cooking, gardening, IT, dressmaking, art, parenting skills and introduction to citizenship. Other courses are ongoing. Maths and English GCSE courses have also been requested and provided through Calderdale College. The ESOL classes provided here by Calderdale College are busier than ever so we are moving from 3 session per week to nine.

Childcare The playgroup continued until 1990. Now we have a validated, Ofsted inspected, nursery for twenty five 3-4 year old children morning and afternoon. We also provide a crèche for people who are taking courses and have a parent and toddler group.

In July 2009, the **Mothers' Union** established a project to befriend and provide practical support for the women who attend the St. Augustine's Centre. MU members put on a light lunch and pass on basic skills such as baking, sewing and knitting and bring all the necessary equipment. "Whatever is needed, there is someone who can supply it!" They now have a small patch of land beside the Centre to be able to grow fruit and vegetables. The Mothers' Union has also supplied sewing and knitting machines for the Refugee Forum's dressmaking group.

Café Wednesday started as a cookery and English class in 2005 teaching people catering skills, developing their spoken and written English and looking at serving healthy meals to the community. Now there is a paid worker and lots of volunteers from different cultural backgrounds producing the food. Over the last four years, the café has catered for many community and private events. Over the next three years, Café Wednesday plans to develop itself as a social enterprise (see Box).

Other groups use the main Centre. For example, the Congolese Church meets here twice weekly. There is a Bible and English group every Monday morning. There is a Saturday session for children to do homework. Two Muslim groups from the Islamic Society of Britain have used the Centre.

A **Samba Band**, which was set up by the Refugee Forum Worker, meets weekly.

Organisational status

St Augustine's became a registered charity in 2009. Several PCC members are trustees together with others who can bring specific expertise, such as the treasurer and a representative from the Health Authority.

There is a Friends of St Augustine's organisation seeking people to help in different ways:

- volunteering – on the front line of helping those who come or working behind the scenes in practical ways.
- giving regularly to sponsor the work – we have set ourselves the specific challenge of finding 100 local people, groups or organisations each year who will become sponsors of the work of the Centre.
- befriending – getting to know individuals or families who use the Centre, perhaps having them for meals.
- praying for those who work at the Centre and all those who come for help.

There are currently five core staff: a Co-ordinator (who has been at the Centre for 40 years) and an Early Years Co-ordinator in the main centre and two part-time Development Workers who job-share (ex-volunteers) and a Refugee Forum Worker in the Support Centre.

Resources

The main Centre – the older Victorian vicarage – is owned by the church. The other one is owned by the Diocese. No rent has been charged for it so far. Some rental income is gained from Calderdale College's use of the room for ESOL classes.

There have been various sources of funding. Some activities are paid for by the agency in question. The nursery receives government funding. The Henry Smith Foundation has given a grant for the Development Worker, (but this runs out shortly). The Joseph Rowntree Trust gave funding for the Refugee Forum. BBC Children in Need funds have been secured over three years for children's holidays. A few Friends of St Augustine's donate each month and sometimes we receive money from Mothers' Union collections. However, probably the major contribution comes through the work of the volunteers.

Other forms of support

There has been considerable support from the Wakefield Diocese, especially the Bishop of Pontefract and the Archdeacon of Halifax. We have also had an active policy of going out to speak about the work of the Centre and raise awareness of the issues we deal with. We go to churches, MU groups and schools.

We have links with various community organisations such as Sure Start, St Augustine's Junior and Infant School, Calderdale College and Park Initiative.

Outcomes

Outcomes and achievements are not measured in any great detail but it is something we are looking at and the Development Worker is about to go on a course about monitoring. We know from people's stories that what we do is effective and appreciated. In addition, there have been some external marks of recognition. The nursery had a 'good' Ofsted. The Centre has twice won the Duke of York's Community Initiative Charter in recognition of the excellence of our work. The main Centre Co-ordinator was given an MBE for her work and the Centre has been awarded the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service (equivalent to an MBE).

Success factors

The key factor is probably the caring atmosphere: 'listening to people' and being responsive to their needs. The Centre is successful because we adapt to the changing circumstances of the local community and try to provide what is wanted and needed. The commitment of volunteers and staff is crucial and notably the continuity given by the Centre Manager. Her 'speciality' is friendship with everyone and this is fundamental to establishing the ethos of the centre.

Barriers

More money needed!

Challenges and opportunities

We want to be here as long as we are needed. This is probably a time when we need to think about forward planning and adopting a more strategic approach to fund raising which, in turn, means we shall have to be more systematic about recording outcomes. It is notable at present that we are getting many more people who are destitute coming into the Centre.

A couple of ventures are on the horizon. We anticipate getting £2,000 from the Rotary Club to set up a 'hosting' project to enable asylum seekers to stay with a family for a couple of nights. Turning Café Wednesday into a social enterprise is also going to be both a challenge and an opportunity.

Café Wednesday plans for a social enterprise

We want to provide healthy, affordable catering for local individuals, groups and organisations, including projects at the St. Augustine's Centre like the social lunch and children's activities.

We also want to develop a new initiative based on a 'garden to plate' project. We shall encourage family growers to sell/exchange their excess in as small quantities as necessary (by the single apple if appropriate!). We will then sell in a market-like situation to the local community or use it in our social enterprise café and catering project. We believe that the Café Wednesday Food Project is a good example of sustainable innovative practice at a grass roots level that could make a real change in people's attitudes and enjoyment of food.

We intend to start small and grow with our experience and market, always listening to the participants and the local community to improve and adapt. We are all passionate about food – both eating it and the need to grow it and we believe that this is an example of a project that could prove to have a lasting impact on the lives of those involved.

<http://www.staugustinescentrehalifax.org.uk/>

Ascend

All Saints Church, South Oxhey

Introduction

Ascend is based in the South Oxhey housing estate in Hertfordshire. Originally a local authority estate, South Oxhey was built after the Second World War mainly to accommodate Londoners bombed out during the war. With a population of about 13,000, South Oxhey is the largest social housing estate in the Three Rivers District Council area. It has proved a largely stable community with some second and third generations still living on the estate, but also with third generation worklessness. Its eligibility for regeneration funding in the past underlined the extent of deprivation. Until recently, the housing was in a very poor state of repair with only about 40% having central heating. Housing associations took over the housing from the Council and had to try to bring the homes up to decent homes standard. Right-to-Buy meant that some of the better houses passed into private hands, but now they tend to be the ones in the worst condition. Now, too, the Council recognises the need to update and improve community facilities. Encircled by trees, South Oxhey is hidden from view from the more affluent areas that surround it. Single roads can separate people whose life chances are poles apart.

Some conditions have improved over the past eight years since the present incumbent arrived through the introduction of anti-social behaviour legislation and increased policing, better housing, improved schools and with the arrival of two Christian doctors. Nevertheless, it can still be said that the estate's appearance is deceptively nice. *"It is the toughest area I've known even though I've worked in some of the most deprived parts of London. People here are the saddest I've ever met."* The estate has also suffered from a very high turnover in staff such as teachers and clergy. The present incumbent is the 10th vicar in 50 years and there is a similar pattern across other denominations. However, she has been at All Saints for 8 years and the Ascend Project Director has held that post for over 10 years.

All Saints Church has an average attendance of 40-50 adults on a Sunday plus children. The congregation is fairly young compared with many with a highish proportion in their 30s, which reflects the demography of the area. Now about 25% of the congregation are Black African and African Caribbean.

Origins of Ascend

During the period of the Single Regeneration Budget programme in South Oxhey, local people began to realise that they needed to do something to help South Oxhey become more stable in terms of employment and housing and to give a greater feeling of belonging. Ascend opened in August 1996 at All Saints Church, South Oxhey, founded by a small group of local people led by the then incumbent. They wanted to counteract the problems of unemployment, social deprivation and learning disabilities.

Ascend services

Ascend welcomes all no matter what their beliefs, background or ethnicity. Ascend's services are available to anyone in the South Oxhey and Three Rivers District. It aims to:

- Provide education and training opportunities to address the Government's 'Skills for Life' agenda.
- Develop clients' information technology skills; give them new proficiencies, improved confidence, self-esteem and increased employability.
- Move people forward by challenging perceived barriers to education and training, providing people with more choice and control over their lives.
- Develop new services and training opportunities to reflect the changing needs of our clients.
- Develop new services and training opportunities for young people aged 16 – 25 years.

Developing services

When it began in 1996, Ascend addressed issues around worklessness and young homeless on the estate. It took over a project for homeless young people aged 16 – 25 years that was also based at the church. This ended about four years ago because the need had diminished and larger organisations - Herts Young Homeless – were dealing with the young people. Over time, Ascend has expanded its initiatives, including those for young people, to reflect the current needs of the community, providing a wider range of courses and working in partnership with a range of other organisations. Ascend offers literacy and numeracy classes, ESOL, IT skills from basic to intermediate, counselling, confidence building classes, classroom assistant training, craft classes, RaW classes (very basic literacy). It also provides careers advice and guidance – CV writing and interview training.

Since Three Rivers District Council made available a piece of land for a peppercorn rent, Ascend has run an allotment project, *Dig Deep*, which offers training and support for vulnerable adults and ex-offenders.

Most recently, a new project, *Step Up*, has opened: a partnership with Herts Mind Network to offer training and support to people with mental health needs.

The Organisation

Ascend is a charitable company limited by guarantee. It has seven trustees appointed by the members of the company plus others on the management board who are recruited by the trustees. Between them, members of the management board have experience in business, government, education and social work. The board meets monthly. The Project Director takes decisions in relation to day-to-day running. She submits a written report to each meeting and all other members of staff submit written reports quarterly and attend meetings to discuss their work and its outcomes.

In addition to the Project Director there are two full-time and three part-time staff: a Guidance Worker, Course Leader, Client Support Worker, Outreach Worker and Administrator. Ascend also uses a part-time consultant for fund-raising and public relations.

Leadership is given by the Trustees, who are very actively involved, and the Project Director. "We work very closely together."

Resources

At the start, Ascend worked from a mobile classroom until the new church building was completed in 2000. The main source of finance came from SRB funding. Now the work is based in the church building and in a building provided by Hertfordshire County Council and Three Rivers District Council. Ascend pays rent for the church and other premises and Ascend pays most of the utility bills for the church building. Conversely, church income pays for the Administrator who is also the facilities manager.

In 2009/10, Ascend's income rose to £230,000. This included the first year of a Big Lottery grant and contract income of £70,000 from various government training authorities. In addition, there were donations from individuals and churches and money from fund-raising events amounting to £36,000. However, contract income has halved this year because contracts are going to larger organisations. The position has been helped this year by the advent of *Step Up*. It is easier to secure funding for a new initiative than it is to gain continuation funding.

There are over 30 **volunteers** giving a minimum of 5 X 37 hours per week, which calculated on the basis of the minimum wage amounts to £187 per week. Their work includes meeting and

greeting clients, giving one-to-one help in classes, counselling, acting as IT tutors, carrying out IT maintenance and a range of administrative tasks.

There is funding until the end of this year. *“We always ensure we have enough for the following term.”*

Non-financial help and support

Ascend has support from churches locally through volunteers and trustees; the Diocesan Social Responsibility Officer is a trustee as is the Chief Executive of CUF. The Bishop of St Albans has become a patron.

“I believe we are doing work that we should be doing and doing it very cost effectively but it is relatively unsupported and certainly it is shameful that the government expects the Third Sector to do all this without funding.”

Links with other organisations

Ascend works closely with Three Rivers District Council, Hertfordshire Adult Learning Service, West Herts College and Herts Mind Network and has teamed up with another local organisation, ‘Farming for All’ for the allotment project.

Ascend has also been an active participant in the Three Rivers Local Strategic Partnership which has led to greater support from public sector agencies.

Outcomes

Since opening in 1996, Ascend has helped over 3,500 clients and helped over 500 young people threatened with homelessness either to find safe accommodation or to return home. In 2009/10,

- Over 4,000 people sought Ascend’s services.
- Of those, about 600 clients moved into either paid or voluntary employment as a direct result of Ascend’s work.
- 500 clients used the Information, Advice and Guidance service.
- 252 certificates were awarded to clients on courses including ICT, Literacy, Numeracy, BBC RaW Class, Speaking with Confidence, Digital Photography, Internet and Email. One student was recognised as ‘Student of the Year’ at West Herts College.
- 8 clients became Ascend’s ‘Learning Champions’ to advocate and promote the work of Ascend.
- Gareth Malone – Ascend’s first patron and Director of South Oxhey’s Community Choir – presented over 200 certificates to the clients at the annual awards evening.

Softer targets, such as building people’s confidence and self esteem, are equally important but harder to measure.

Ascend itself and its staff have also received recognition and numerous awards, such as:

- Re-accreditation by Matrix – the national quality standard for organisations delivering information, advice and guidance.
- Re-accreditation as an Investor in people.
- High Sherriff’s Award in 2009.
- Hertfordshire Business Award 2008 for Business in the Community.

Success factors

Ascend’s strapline is ‘*Success with compassion*’. Everyone is treated as an individual and given support throughout their contact. No-one is ever turned away even though there is a great

temptation to at times. *“We adopt a holistic approach to problems recognising that everyone has multiple problems that all need to be taken into account and addressed.”*

Barriers

Funding is always an issue and an enormous amount of time and energy goes into preparing funding bids. Money from contracts has halved in 2011 because they are going to larger organisations.

It is an isolated context in which to work, both emotionally and intellectually. *“I get involved in the diocese partly as a respite”* even though taking on such extra responsibilities may increase the possibility of burn-out. Involvement in the diocese also provides a platform to raise the profile of deprivation which is a necessary counterbalance to the tendency for richer and poorer communities to have little understanding of one another where their only window on the world is through the media.

Challenges and opportunities

Raising funds is always going to be a challenge as is the nature of the area and community. There is a real issue now about working in consortia where the largest organisation gets the contract and then give out subcontracts. Even when subcontracting happens, agreeing terms and the allocation of work and funding is both challenging and time consuming.

“We can see that the cuts in public expenditure are going to affect us both directly as an organisation in our ability to raise funds and indirectly because needs amongst our client group are going to grow. There are already signs of issues resulting from the impact of recent policy changes. The switch from Incapacity Benefit to Job Seeker’s Allowance means that claimants have less money but are frequently still unemployable. There are concerns that recent improvements on the estate will go into reverse with the cuts in public spending. For example, cuts to the Police brought an immediate rise in crime, though it has levelled off again. Another anxiety is the potential effect of Housing Benefit changes as there could be an exodus from London of people seeking affordable housing with South Oxhey as a first stop in their search.

These can be construed as challenges, but also as opportunities. This is illustrated by the work we have started to do in the mental health sphere. There are very few resources locally for people with mental health issues or learning disabilities and so there is an opportunity for us to do more.”

Canon Pamela Wise
<http://www.ascend.org.uk/>

Christ Church Community Services Bridlington

Background

Christ Church Bridlington seeks to help people to get to know God, and then grow in their calling and discipleship. Clear, practical teaching of Biblical truth is foundational. Christ Church seeks to help the poor, the downtrodden, and the broken-hearted. This is why Christ Church Community Services runs a range of community projects. In the last thirty years, the church has grown and changed significantly. Worship patterns have changed, new congregations have been planted, a network of churches has been established and new ministries begun including Alpha and Pastoral Support.

Christ Church set up Christ Church Community Services (CCS) in 1993. It emerged from mother and toddler groups seeking to help families in Bridlington. A whole raft of different projects gradually developed aiming to stand alongside parents and children. More recently a new aim emerged to help people back into work and to this end, the Key Centre was built and a Practical Skills Team came into being.

Origins

The initial impetus came from our observation of the high levels of deprivation in our town. CCS started in 1993 as a separate charity providing a vehicle for community work by the church in the community but one which was separate for management and accounting purposes which would enable clarity of operation and create a better vehicle for funding applications. The need for this work was first realised by observation and talking to the people we met. This was then supplemented using Census and deprivation statistics. Each of our projects has developed as a logical progression from a previous one. We considered the church's capacity to meet that need in terms of skills and resources. We have always held the view that we cannot expand beyond what our church membership is capable of supporting either financially, prayerfully or practically (although we have pushed the limits a few times!). There has been a gradual development of projects each based on experience gained in previous projects.

The **objectives** of CCS are:

1. To advance the Christian religion through promotion of the gospel of Christ.
2. To provide facilities for recreation or other leisure time occupation in the interest of social welfare for the benefit of the inhabitants of Bridlington and of the towns and villages within the Diocese of York (the area of benefit) with the object of improving the conditions of the life of those persons.
3. To relieve need and relieve poverty in the area of benefit.
4. To advance education in the area of benefit.
5. To promote any charitable purpose for the benefit of inhabitants of the area of benefit.

Activities

CCS runs a wide range of community projects including:

- **The Key Centre** was purpose built in 2006 with the aim of seeking to help young people get into employment. It has a number of rooms available for room hire, including small interview rooms, 3 IT Suites, and a seminar lounge capable of seating 25-60 people. Laptops (with broad band and Wi-Fi wireless connection), data projectors, whiteboards and screens are all included in the rental price.

- *Adult Learning* in the Key Centre gives access to a wide range of courses with easy to follow course materials and support from tutors. Courses, subject to inspection by Ofsted, are also offered in partnership with Humber Learning Consortium.
- *Practical Skills* aims to help people back into the routine of work by having structured supervised activity. The strategy is to provide mentors and opportunities for placements which involve learning on the job with training alongside courses which aim to help personal and skill development. Each person has had the chance to experience a variety of work activities from gardening to painting in church to hard landscaping in the new garden behind the Key Centre. At the beginning of 2007, the Practical Skills Team began to turn this piece of derelict land into a garden with the help of many people contributing their professional skills. Trainees come from a variety of sources: Action4employment, the Probation Service and Doorstep. Volunteers from the church have helped on a supervisory basis. Practical Skills is not primarily about getting the job done, though some excellent work has been carried out. The main task is to help people feel at ease and get used to a work environment. Working with people is also an excellent means of befriending men who would normally have no contact with the Church.
- *Children and family projects* include play activities for babies and toddlers and a project for mums and babies and expectant mothers. Noah's Ark Day Care Nursery is registered for 20 children aged 6 months up to 5 years. The Nursery is held in a purpose built building with an enclosed outside play area with a garden with fruit trees and abundant wildlife. There is a separate outside play area for under 2s. The pre-school provision is open for children 2 to 5 years of age. Todz Shop sells good quality second hand baby clothes, baby equipment and toys for 0-5's.
- *Doorstep* operates as a Drop-In for people with accommodation or benefit issues and is available Mondays, Wednesdays, Thursday and Fridays between 11 and 12 Noon in the Key Centre. It is heavily reliant on the input of capable and reliable volunteers. Many of the sleeping bags, hats and gloves are bought but the Doorstep tub in church also receives a steady flow of donations of clothing and food. Costs are kept as low as possible by sourcing some foodstuffs from the charity Real Aid which acquires end of line products and only charges for transport from Hull but food bags still cost about £2 each. In 2009, there were 532 calls resulting in 15 sleeping bags as well as other clothing and 304 bags of food being given out. By the end of March 2011 we've already had 131 calls and given 10 sleeping bags and 73 bags of food. There are no hostels in the area but good working relationship with both the Council and a Housing Support organisation mean that homeless people get accommodation *via* these links. Coffee and prayer are on offer to all who come and a person can get a bag of food once a week and also information including other places where people can get a meal, such as once a week at Open Doors.
- *Christ Church Open Doors Gospel Fellowship* has a remit to have a place for the homeless to have a meal and hear the Gospel. 'Open Doors' was never intended to be a drop in place, but rather a fellowship. It exists to bring people into the fellowship of the church. It is a place where all are welcome. "*We find people cannot respond to God's love unless they experience it.*" Between 20 - 30 regulars including 10 helpers attend regularly. Some have moved on and are now members of other churches.
- *Christ Church Furniture Store* was set up to give away top quality second hand furniture, including suites, wardrobes, tables and chairs, beds, bookshelves, white goods and televisions, to those in need and to sustain the project by selling what remained. Last year there were donations and deliveries of free furniture, crockery,

cutlery and bedding etc to over 148 homes/families. In addition, over 6,000 collections and deliveries resulting in the movement of a further 173 tonnes of donated goods and sold items. Removals are also offered for a charge: over 110 removals in one year, both within Bridlington and further afield. There were over 50 clearances, ranging from a single item to full house clearances. This activity provides paid employment for 5 people and 15 work experience placements.

Alongside this the Parochial Church Council runs:

- Counselling by trained and accredited counsellors.
- Courses to teach counselling to others.
- An Action team - clearing litter hotspots in the town centre.

Management

CCS is a charitable company limited by guarantee. The CCS Board comprises the vicar, church wardens and up to nine members voted for by the members of the company and whoever the board wishes to co-opt to develop the business of CCS. Membership of the company is only open to members of the PCC, though not all take up the invitation. Their only involvement as members of the company is at the AGM and presentation of accounts.

The main **leadership** has come from the Vicar (and Chairman) and the Projects Director.

Resources for getting started included:

- the church hall;
- funding gained through numerous funding applications;
- the time of about 10 volunteers.

Currently the resources include

- multiple premises – church buildings and additional new build buildings;
- funding through a substantial amount of grant aid, a significant amount from contracts and charges, a modest amount of rental income but only minimal amounts from donations or church giving (though there is giving in kind for the work with homeless people);
- the time of about 50 **volunteers**. The financial value of the volunteer time (calculated on the basis of paying the minimum wage) is approximately £312,000 p.a.

No non-financial support is received from other local or national organisations and there is no perceived need for any. CSS works very closely with Christ Church PCC though the two are separate for management and financial purposes.

We measure our **success** by:

- feedback from clients;
- numbers attending projects;
- feedback from statutory agencies;
- inspections by various outside bodies (Ofsted, etc);
- awards.

The key **success factors** have been

- providing top quality projects.

- highly trained and motivated staff.
- focus on Christian mission.
- close engagement and working relationships with statutory authorities.

The main **barrier** has been money. The availability of funding is always less than the scope of our vision.

The challenges and opportunities for the future

A very significant proportion of our income comes through sub-contracting provision of training contracts from larger training agencies. The 'profit' from this area of work helps sustain the charity as a whole. Recent changes in the way the contracts have been awarded means that currently our training operation is in jeopardy. The challenge is to bring in other training contracts as soon as possible to keep the charity financially viable.

Andy Jefferson

<http://www.christchurchbridlington.com/>

St James Church, Hemingford Grey

Introduction

St James Church, which has a strong evangelical heritage, is part of the Huntingdon and Wisbech Archdeaconry in the west of the Diocese of Ely. Sixty per cent of the congregation live in the village; the others are drawn from St Ives the nearest small town, and from many of the surrounding villages. In 2003, the village post office closed and since then St James' has taken over running the post office and, more recently, opened a community café. The main leadership in these developments came from the Vicar, Revd Peter Cunliffe.

What drove the development of the Post Office?

The closure of the local Post Office in 2003 due to inability to sell the business presented an opportunity for the church to fulfil part of its vision to serve the local community. St James Church, through its administrator and Vicar, approached the PO Rural Development Office about the possibility of creating a PO counter in our Parish Centre building. The lack of a Post Office in the village was an obvious need, especially amongst the older members of the villages. Hemingford Grey and Hemingford Abbots have a combined population of approx. 3,100. We determined to replace the existing business on the basis of a not-for-profit organisation to serve the community.

Post Office

A single counter full-time Post Office opened in November 2003, supported by a small retail business in stationery. The Church administrator had business experience in the pharmaceutical industry and gave his time voluntarily to set up the business and became our first sub-postmaster. The PO helped us recruit an experienced counter assistant; thereafter the administrator trained additional counter assistants all of whom worked part-time.

With the success of the business, the PO approached us to run a mobile PO service to other villages. This began in June 2009. It runs five mornings a week to the village of Over and four afternoons a week to the village of Holme.

Funds were available through a government initiative to carry out the necessary building work for the post office. The team consists of a part-time manager and five part-time assistants/drivers (four female and one male). Salaries are provided through the PO retainer. St James' Church provides the premises rent free and the utilities. After several years when it was difficult to handle the income and separate it from personal income, we established a business registered as St James Church Community Interest Company (see Box below) and the PO income is paid into that.

The development of a coffee shop

Until the Post Office was introduced, the Old School House Café had run in our Parish Centre. This had dwindled in use to only one day a week and was informally run by volunteers. A survey was carried out in the village in August 2007 before the economic crisis to ask 'what should the church be developing next?'. It showed that many people were using the coffee shops in St Ives and would appreciate such a facility on the village. The PCC set up a sub-committee as a Coffee Shop Working Group in October 2007 and in January 2008, a village fundraising brochure was sent out. Between February and May 2008, there was a consultation period for talking with all parish centre users, getting letters of support and preparing grant applications after which a business plan was written. From then, it took until May 2010 to obtain planning permission and a further two months to get building regulation approval for the drawings and start work on site. During this time as well, preparatory work was done, such as making contact with suppliers, getting pricing information and getting catalogues for fixtures and fittings.

People in the community were asked to sponsor the coffee shop and donations were made. Some sponsorship came from a waste recycling organisation, WREN, but the largest proportion of the budget was given by the church members. The initiator of the original Old School House café had a grander vision of a professionally fitted coffee shop of high standards. Those who converted the Parish Centre years ago did not hold the same vision of high standards, but want this to be a place of welcome in the community. The vision for a complete refit was shared by several members of the church and the project driven by our Parish Evangelist (a volunteer lay role in the church). Part of that vision was to provide a familiar contemporary space in which to have different expressions of 'church' that would be used for events outside the normal coffee shop opening hours. Opening hours would provide a natural means of getting to know more of the community already coming to the facility for the PO and other events.

One of the Working Group members worked part-time in another village coffee shop in Cambridgeshire with a similar vision and also had her own retail businesses which she had recently sold. We drew on others' experience in the restaurant trade, the charity sector and accountancy. We invited a Project Manager (recently retired) to manage the project.

Hemingford Garden Room opened in June 2011 providing good quality coffees, teas and soft drinks, simple meals and commissioned good quality homemade cakes. The coffee shop uses ethically traded products. Our chosen coffee company, Kingdom Coffee, source all their coffee and tea from fairtrade and ethical suppliers and give away 10% of their profits to charities. Kingdom will also supply much of our food, drink and consumables. It is a place of welcome, a space to meet, and has free WiFi, magazines and books to relax with, as well as art and gifts for purchase. Children are welcome and we have toys, games, books and colouring sheets to keep them amused. Through the use of our media screens we would like to advertise, celebrate and promote all village clubs and activities.

Hemingford Garden Room is a separate Community Interest Company incorporated in March 2011. Two 'managers' job share a salaried position; all other staff are volunteers from the community. The management team consists of church members who manage the business and mission aspects of the 'coffee shop' which are in an early stage of development. There are several active 30/40 year olds in the church who wish to be involved in the outreach ministry of the coffee shop.

Resources for the coffee shop

We already had the Parish Centre, which is the old school – an adaptable Grade 2 listed building – owned by the church in what would typically be described as 'the church halls'. St James' Church provides free rent, free facilities and utilities to the business. Other sources of development funding were:

Beatrice Laing Trust	£ 1,000.00
WREN	£25,000.00
St James PCC	£35,000.00
Village Fundraising Account	£17,500.00
Large anonymous gift	£50,000.00
Gift aid on large gift	£12,500.00
TOTAL FUNDS AVAILABLE	£141,000.00
Surplus /Contingency	£9,115.000

Now that it is operating, the coffee shop will rely on the income generated through its trade.

St James Church operates on a balanced budget with sufficient funds to cover our costs and pay three months notice to salaried staff should the funds dry up! We budget to carry over a small maintenance fund for the church properties. The Post Office maintains a workable balance and the CIC made its first gift to the church in the last financial year. It is not expected that the Hemingford Garden Room CIC will make a return to the church for at least two years.

Profits will be used to support local and international mission charities. Mission Possible-UK is to be the first beneficiary.

Volunteers

Although all the staff in the Post Office are paid, many hours of volunteer time are regularly given in the coffee shop. There are typically three volunteers on duty from 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday and 9am to 3pm on Saturdays. In addition, there are all the cake makers, who both bake and bring their products to the coffee shop. One of the directors does a weekly shop for produce and ingredients. My best guess is that cooks and server assistants give in excess of 120 hours a week which, costed on the basis of the minimum wage, amounts to £720 per week. We have also had secondary school pupils on work experience and we are working with the local College to provide placements for students undertaking courses in hospitality and catering.

This calculation of the value of volunteering does not include the time and skills given during the development phase of the café when, for example, an interior designer, a PR consultant, a web designer and an accountant were all involved as well as the members of the Working Group.

Other types of support

There has been support from the PO for training in the Post Office, but no technical help regarding the setting up of the business. As the PO took more than 6 years to accept the church as the business operator, this made my personal income situation very difficult. Community Interest Companies provide the best route for this sort of business now, but were not available when we first set up the PO.

Most if not all support for the coffee shop has come from church members. A friend whose firm gives professional personnel support and training gave me general employment support.

It would be good if there were some co-ordinated help for PCCs wishing to set up businesses or employ staff to save the angst of reinventing the wheel.

Outcomes

Running the PO has helped bring the church back into the centre of the life of the village alongside our children's ministries. The turnover in the Post Office has been sufficient to enable us to fulfil our aims of serving the community. The confidence of the Post Office has been demonstrated in asking us to manage other offices and provide mobile services to other villages.

Key success factors

Success factors were God's timing, flexibility with the use of space and the creative use of employed 'ministers':

- Taking the initial steps of faith – not having the plan worked out as fully as one might expect, but being prepared to take risks for the benefit of the local community whatever the final outcome.
- The support of the service from the village and the support of the church to allow the administrator to set up the business.

It is without question that the provision of personnel, willing and able to work a few hours a week, is God's perfect provision and timing. The PO loan was conditional on running the business for a minimum of two years; it now almost 8 years.

The main barrier was getting the vision across to church members. Appeals for funding to the wider Church of England for this type of mission failed because this is not a deprived area.

Challenges and opportunities

One challenge is to keep the vision in focus so that making money is not the driving force for either initiative: remembering that these are Community Interest Companies here to serve the community and using them as a tangible expression of God's love for the community through the church. A more mundane challenge is the retention and recruitment of staff.

Community Interest Companies (CICS)

CICs are limited companies, with special additional features, created for the use of people who want to conduct a business or other activity for community benefit, and not purely for private advantage. This is achieved by a "community interest test" and "asset lock", which ensure that the CIC is established for community purposes and that the assets and profits are dedicated to these purposes. Registration of a company as a CIC has to be approved by the Regulator who also has a continuing monitoring and enforcement role.

Revd Peter Cunliffe

Hull Churches Home from Hospital Service

Introduction

Hull Churches Home from Hospital Service (HCHFHS) caters in various ways for people who might otherwise require hospitalisation or other forms of residential care. It aims:

1. To provide a high quality short-term service to adults during the vulnerable period on discharge from hospital, who reside within the boundaries of Kingston Upon Hull.
2. To provide reassurance, practical support and assistance in rehabilitation for those returning home alone or without support networks locally.
3. To encourage and promote the return to self volition, independence and self confidence through innovative and flexible service provision.

Origins

In 1993, the small Church of St Cuthbert's looked at various ways to outreach to and serve the community. A large questionnaire survey was undertaken, which was followed by needs analysis. The eventual report in 1995 entitled, *The Avenues: Services, Amenities & Crime* looked at services and the use of services for older people, children and young families and young people. This evidenced a high level of distress and difficulty for people being discharged from hospital who did not meet the recently reduced criteria of statutory support across all ages. As well as uncovering unmet needs, steps were taken to determine the church's ability to meet these needs. The conclusion was that there was enormous capacity in terms of offering time for training and voluntary involvement, but no one at that time wanted to be responsible in terms of leadership. The current Chief Executive Officer therefore took a one year employment sabbatical to become a full-time volunteer to drive the project forward.

HCHFHS philosophy

- We believe that every individual should be respected, valued and have dignity.
- We believe that above all people matter: they matter more than bureaucracies and structures and accordingly the whole person is at the heart of our policies.
- We believe that every individual should be encouraged to reach his or her full potential.
- We believe in cooperation and are actively aware that we do not have a monopoly of concern for the good of the community and are pleased to work alongside or in partnership with other agencies.

Activities

HCHFHS has five projects, each concentrates on a specific specialisation as the organisation has responded to and targeted the needs that were identified.

- *Adult Reablement Service* (generic)
This serves all people newly discharged from hospital *via* practical and emotional input for 6-8 weeks. Trained volunteers change anti-embolism stockings; shop, assist with welfare rights and swift access to other services and to additional income for users per annum *via* successful attendance allowance applications (£236,500+). Overall 48% of service users gain further support from other agencies. New carers are supported and informed of services; service users are supported back into social activities to mitigate against isolation.

- *Carers' Support Scheme*
Aims to meet the real needs of carers and thus enable carers to remain healthy and able to continue caring for someone with life-limiting illness. The carer identifies the nature of support required which can range from welfare rights guidance to a sitting service to being taken to social venues. Some have two volunteers to enable them, for example, to go to church. Evidence is increasing that support for carers relieves stress and reduces the need for crisis intervention. Support is offered through bereavement.
- *GP Development Service*
This pioneering service identifies and supports hidden carers through a GP Registration Project. The process is communicated *via* GP staff training. It improves access, communication and information sharing.
- *Families Together Project*
This project gives practical and emotional support through a specialist worker, a trained nursery nurse and volunteers. They provide input to maintain family routines as a parent undertakes chemotherapy, radiotherapy or surgical intervention. Dual sites at HCHFHS and Acute Trust Oncology Building enable rapid access. This project enables parent to maintain difficult treatment programmes aware that childcare issues are manageable due to flexible and trained staff and volunteers. There is also support to bereaved families.
- *TeleHealth (Assistive Technology) Project*
This project introduces home based TeleHealth monitoring equipment and familiarises service users and families with new easy routines in relation to chronic heart failure; chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD); diabetes; and high blood pressure. This enables service users to be part of managing their chronic condition. It increases their quality of life.

Further developments

The initial core Adult Reablement Project to support older people was formed as a safe vehicle facilitating parishioners to befriend those returning to their community at a critical period. This rapidly expanded to a citywide service in partnership with churches across the city, then attracted volunteers of other faiths and no faith. As funding was offered from community and local authority sources, the involvement in further projects gained momentum.

Organisation

The organisation is a registered charity governed by a Declaration of Trust dated July 2000. It has attracted trustees of the highest calibre selected to include appropriate skills and knowledge for managing the charity and knowledge of the social and health sectors across the area of benefit. The vicar of St Cuthbert's and two church members will always have Trustee Board positions. The Bishop of Hull is the Patron of the charity. Kingston upon Hull and East Yorkshire Churches Together also has the right to nominate trustees. Trustees meet about once every two months.

The organisation has benefitted from the current Chief Executive Officer remaining involved since the founding of the project as having a central person taking management responsibility at the core of the services has enabled continuity. There are three full-time and sixteen part-time staff.

Resources

The resources required at first were

- A room.

- A dedicated telephone, for example for hospital/community/GP and client referrals, volunteer training and allocation of service users. (Initially this could be in a domestic property.)
- Funding to cover volunteer reimbursement.
- Volunteer time.
- A leader to ensure systems are in place and to ensure safety.

The current requirements are for premises and funding. Premises are rented to house the professional staff managing the five projects and provide space for the training and supervision of volunteers. We use church buildings across the city to put on training events as near to our volunteers as possible. We use a city convent for large conferences or training events for staff and volunteers together.

Funding has been difficult through the recession with a loss of one third of the grant value from Social Services for the Adult Reablement Service and grant funding for Volunteer Training and Recruitment. However, in increasing our partnerships and relationships, we have recently included the business partners, International Assistive Technology Companies. Although we cannot accept any direct funding, we are able to accept offers of assistance with information to the media from their advertising departments to attract volunteers. The absence of funding for the training and recruitment post impacts considerably on the organisation as volunteers are at the heart of all the projects.

The organisation is currently financially secure for three years. Sources of funding are:

- Contracts with the Primary Care Trust and the local authority.
- Grants from Macmillan Cancer Support and Church Urban Fund (Initially £12,000 over 3 years).
- Various donations.
- Church giving.

Volunteers

The service relies on volunteer input. Volunteers are all CRB checked, trained and supported to a high standard and insured. They are trained *via* accredited workshop programmes (Health and Safety; First Aid and Safeguarding). They then have a fieldwork mini-apprenticeship with clinical mentors for 6-8 weeks and compile their own portfolio of experience. They are requested to give 1-2 hours weekly, giving support in their own geographical area of the city. They are matched to clients and requested to stay with their client for the full 6 weeks service to provide continuity. However after that they can choose whether to continue with a further service user or have a break for a month or so. By maintaining a flexible approach, we support the volunteers to stay happy and stimulated with the work. The quality of training and portfolio evidence, signed off by professional tutors has meant (in the past when fully staffed) 40 plus volunteers moving on into employment or higher education per year.

Calculated on the basis of the minimum wage rate, the value of the time of the 80 volunteers is a minimum of £56,000 per annum.

Other forms of support

The Diocesan Church and Community Officer has been supportive and there have been volunteers from other churches and faith groups. HCHFHS is currently the City Lord Mayor's chosen charity for the year and there have been visits from the Minister of Health and NHS civil servants to share information.

Outcomes

HCHFHS deals with a large number of people through the different projects:

- 1,469 p.a. in the Adult Reablement Service;
- 63 clients p.a. in the Carers' Support Scheme;
- 400 new clients p.a. in the GP Development Scheme;
- 20 families p.a. in Families Together;
- 180 clients p.a. in the Telehealth Project.

As well as monitoring the number of people using the services, feedback is gathered from them about the services and their health outcomes are tracked (up to 1 year post service). Impact is measured and services planned in relation to:

- Reduced readmission rates: from the national average of 36.2% to 11.7% for HCHFHS clients.
- Low re-referral rates: 78% of the Telehealth clients felt less need to see GP or attend outpatient clinics and 90% felt less anxious and many have extended a poor prognosis of months to 3 years plus.
- Cost savings calculated by Health Partners.
- Qualitative data from user satisfaction surveys and quality of life indicators such as reduced anxiety.
- Volunteer surveys.
- Safe vehicle for volunteers from churches and the community to use skills.

At a strategic level, HCHFHS has been included in NHS Tenders as non-negotiable partners for new projects. It has also received awards: the Kings Fund Impact Award and the Queens Award (which is an organisational equivalent to an OBE).

Success factors

One of the key elements from inception has been the policies and procedures originally put in place and then developed to protect both volunteers and service users. Initially volunteers were police checked *via* computer Data Act 72 plus GP letter and two visited referees. The accent has always been on education and information sharing; management and supervision; processes in place to ensure safety whilst lone visiting; and an open door for immediate access to support when a volunteer is anxious regarding any issue/problem. The organisation seeks to know and understand legislation and to minimise to efficient levels any paperwork/monitoring by volunteers. Hopefully this ensures that volunteers feel happy and supported as they give their time and effort with such generosity. Through the mini-apprenticeship mentoring training system, we monitor how volunteers interact with service users and ensure that our values and training regarding respect and care and user empowerment is continually assessed and our training is reflecting our policy documents.

Being a small organisation we can be innovative and test new services underpinned by the organisation's quality and accountability within an evaluative framework. Holding evidence of interventions has been successful when seeking funding.

Barriers

One barrier is politics (with a small 'p') within the Church, local authority politics and NHS. The organisation was initially viewed with suspicion and a degree of hostility despite filling a much needed gap in service. It has taken some years to grow the respect with which the organisation is now held. Interestingly no-one offered the service by nursing staff at ward

level, prior to discharge, has ever refused it. In fact at that level the name, *Hull Churches Home from Hospital Service*, seems to be beneficial.

Another barrier from the perspective of someone with a background in local authority was the unrealistic expectation of a management structure operating at parish level upwards, which is not available (in a formal sense) and the rapid turnover/change of post of the supportive bishop and vicar.

Challenges and opportunities

- To maintain the services seen to be supportive to an aging population.
- To offer a real opportunity to other church communities to take a significant role if requested.
- Strategic direction.
- To ensure the values and ethos central to the organisation remain and we are not diverted through chasing funding opportunities which take us into different directions.

Finally, it would be good if the Church of England nationally would state what is happening beneficially in communities across the UK and concentrate on driving more of these projects forward.

Jean Templeton

Life Expectancy, Wirral

Introduction

The Wirral peninsula is a beautiful yet, in some senses, divided area. Despite pockets of great affluence, it is in the lowest 20% of deprived districts nationally. Life expectancy for those on the River Mersey side of the Wirral is 11.6 years less than those on the River Dee side. This project was developed in response to this situation, with one central aim: *To enable Christian communities to respond to the issues surrounding the unacceptable differentiation in life expectancy on the Wirral.*

The impetus for the project came when the Bishop of Birkenhead heard the statistics about the gap in life expectancy between East and West Wirral through a conversation with the Chief Executive and Leader of Wirral Council. *“When I heard about this inequality expressed in this difference [in life expectancy] I was shocked and convicted. I went away and thought if the churches across the Wirral can’t do anything about this we should be shot. I knew about the inequality, but something about this bare fact expressed the wrongness of what I seemed to be taking for granted.”*

The need was demonstrated by the statistics for life expectancy and the Indices of Deprivation which were taken from the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment. The Wirral is a peninsula set between the rivers Dee, on the west, and Mersey, on the east. According to the Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) 2007, Wirral is the 60th most deprived of the 354 districts in the country. The IMD places 32 of Wirral’s Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) in the lowest 5% in England. According to the Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI) the greatest levels of child deprivation are found in Birkenhead, Tranmere, Bidston and Seacombe.

A number of significant factors contribute to the ‘gap’ in life expectancy between the east and west sides of the Wirral. Deaths from cardiovascular disease are twice as high in the most deprived areas of the borough, compared to the rest of the borough overall. In addition, smoking rates are twice as high in areas of deprivation and mortality from digestive disease (including liver disease and cirrhosis) are almost three times higher in these areas. Rates of emergency admissions to hospitals in deprived wards such as Bidston and Birkenhead are twice as high as those in more affluent wards such as Clatterbridge and Heswall.

The Life Expectancy Project

The Project began in 2009. The chosen method for achieving the aim of enabling Christian communities to respond to the gap in life expectancy across the Wirral was to bring two groups together from different churches – one from a rich and one from a poor area. The two groups were to be guided through a series of discussions in which issues of poverty and life expectancy would be examined. The process would encourage the groups to think about how they could engage with these issues. The project was planned around a five stage model, following a study, action and reflection process:

- *Stage One - Listening to the World*, including examining local statistics and learning about local poverty.
- *Stage Two - Listening to the Word*, discussing Biblical perspectives and thinking about Christian responses.
- *Stage Three - Exploring and Connecting*, sharing views and experiences and discussing how to respond to the issues raised in stages one and two.
- *Stage Four - Responding and Applying*, reflecting together on a possible project or actions that would engage with poverty and life expectancy issues.

- *Stage Five - Sustaining* – including evaluating the pilot project and considering extending the work.

Stages one and two were undertaken by the groups separately over the course of three facilitated sessions. Stages three and four brought the groups together and stage five is ongoing. It was hoped that through the sessions each group would learn more about local deprivation, find out about each other's areas and understand the Biblical imperative for engaging practically with the issues that surround poverty.

At first, a pilot project was established bringing together two Christian communities from either side of the Wirral to work in partnership. They were the Church of the Good Shepherd in Heswall, one of Wirral's most affluent areas, and Christ Church Birkenhead, one of the most deprived. Groups from the two churches each went through a preparatory phase of training, research and study, led by trained facilitators, and then came together to work in a collaborative partnership to consider the issues of quality of life and life expectancy, identify appropriate responses to those issues and to work out how to implement those responses.

It was recognised that a successful and sustainable connection between the two groups would be crucial to the outcomes of the project. This would offer an opportunity to develop a creative relationship with mutual goals and a shared commitment to learning from each other. However, this was also understood to be a complex process with many potential pitfalls. Much thought, therefore, was put into the development of the relationship between the two groups, with a number of recommendations adopted to strengthen and maintain it. These included building 'ownership' of the project within the two groups' wider churches and opportunities within the sessions to strengthen and share group identity through telling local and personal stories.

The Project's evolution

An evaluation of the pilot project concluded that it had been a success and that the model should be replicated more widely. A 'summit' event was held in 2010 to report on the pilot scheme and to receive feedback and suggestions for future development of the work. Over 100 people attended from churches of different denominations across Wirral. A follow up meeting was held later in 2010 for churches and local councillors where feedback and ideas for future direction were gathered. A further Summit is planned for September 2011.

Various resource materials have been created:

- *A resource pack* for facilitators to use with future pairings. The initial process and session content has been modified significantly in response to the evaluation of the pilot and subsequent comments.
- A four page workbook, *Understanding the language of the nature of poverty*, for use by groups or individuals, to consider the nature of the language used and the attitudes held in relation to people who are experiencing poverty.
- *An attitude survey* that can be used at the outset with people involved in the project and again at the end to determine how far there has been any change.
- *A video* to tell others about the project.

The pair of churches involved in the pilot identified short, medium and long term goals to work towards together. Later other churches began the pairing process (St Bridget's, West Kirby, St Oswald's, Bidston, Laird Street Baptist and St Mary's, Upton) and several more are keen to take part in future pairings.

Management

The project is managed by a Steering Group, chaired by the Bishop of Birkenhead and comprising the Joint Director of Public Health, representatives of participating churches, Wirral BESOM Project¹, Forum Housing Association, the Diocese of Chester and lay people from different denominations on both sides of the Wirral. The main leadership came first from the Bishop of Birkenhead and then from the Steering Group.

Resources

Initially there was a need for funding, church premises for the meetings, volunteer time for facilitation and evaluation and support from Public Health in supplying statistics and maps. There is a continuing need for church premises and volunteer time plus funding for the part-time Co-ordinator's salary (14 hours per week).

Funding has included grant aid from CUF and the Diocese, donations from Forum Housing Association and church giving. Financial security is always very short term. *"We go up to the wire, then a bit more appears."*

Non-financial help has come from the Diocese in employing and managing the Co-ordinator; from other churches in providing volunteers and from the Health Service in providing data and other support. The main form of additional support required would be greater financial security.

Volunteers

The two volunteer facilitators involved per pair of churches each give at least 26 hours which, calculated on the basis of the minimum wage, amounts to £312 and other volunteers give time in fundraising and other types of support work as well as on the Steering Group. All these are skilled people who in practice would earn far more than the minimum wage.

Links with other projects or organisations

Locally, there has been a connection with Voluntary Community Action Wirral (VCAW): feedback indicated the lack of communication between churches and between them and the statutory sector and there was a suggestion of starting a database. However VCAW was also in the process of creating a database for all voluntary organisations and therefore Life Expectancy Wirral worked with them to develop the resource and churches were encouraged to send material to them.

There has been consultation with Church Action on Poverty as well as reference made to a booklet produced by the Media Trust, the Society of Editors and the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, for the production of the workbook, *Understanding the language of the nature of poverty*.

The project is involved in a consortium including Catholic Children's Society, Homestart and Tranmere Community Project that has submitted a Lottery bid to work with a certain number of families over five years. If the funding is won (outcome expected in July 2011), the work would include the social determinants of health such as isolation. The Church's contribution would be aspects such as social networking and support groups. The work would also adopt an assets-based approach to poverty drawing on work by Church Action on Poverty.

¹ Local Besoms helps people make a difference by providing a bridge between those who want to give time, money, things or skills and those who are in need and ensuring that what is given is used effectively.

There have been conversations with CUF about the possibility of using this model in London.

Outcomes

There were various outcomes from the partnership between the groups from the two churches including:

- Wider community events in Birkenhead encouraged the local community to engage with support services. For example, the Health Action Team attended an Attic Sale and Summer Fair and gave advice and basic health checks to people they would not otherwise have met.
- A strengthened and supported local church in Birkenhead is better able to deliver responses to life expectancy issues. For example, there are plans for an upgraded church kitchen that can be used to provide cooking courses to young people to address concerns around healthy eating and budgeting.
- People's pre-conceived ideas have been challenged and members of the group from the church in West Wirral, having learned about poverty and gained insights into its realities from the perspective of those living in poverty, became more motivated to continue to participate in the project.

Success factors

The project represents "*the church doing what it is good at*" – slowing down the process to have time to develop relationships. Steps were taken to put people at their ease especially when the churches were brought together. For example, the first joint meeting incorporated having a meal together. Having skilled facilitators and good resource materials was therefore critical to success.

Barriers

The main practical barrier is funding. However, the project has also underlined the need to change attitudes and overcome inaccurate preconceptions about people in poverty. There was some problem in getting wealthier churches to participate. A video has been created to promote Life Expectancy Wirral, which aims to address some of the concerns of church that are apprehensive about taking part.

Challenges and opportunities

Funding will continue to be the major challenge, but there are a number of ways in which the project could develop further:

- having mentors in schools;
- having the equivalent of street pastors in parks;
- doing more work on the asset based approach to sustainable livelihoods.

At present, the Steering Group are awaiting the meeting planned for September 2011, which may elicit other ideas and will help to inform the future management structure of Life Expectancy Wirral.

Wendy Robertson

http://www.chester.anglican.org/page_csr.asp?Page=336

St Luke the Physician Church and Neighbourhood Centre, Longsight, Manchester

Introduction

Longsight is an area south east of Manchester city centre with high levels of unemployment and social and economic deprivation. Built as a combined Church and Neighbourhood Centre, St Luke's has a multi-ethnic congregation including West Indian and Black African members. The Centre has provided informal day care for more than twenty years for people suffering from stress and living with long term mental health needs.

*"St Luke's is such a lovely place, I think because of the variety of people and the different things going on. And we try, as much as possible, to be accepting of people as they are. It's not always easy – we have our moments even between the staff! Sometimes, if you are tired it can be depressing to see just what hard lives some people have. But when you see people slowly emerging from their shell, interacting and gaining confidence, it's very positive and the hard work seems really worthwhile."*¹

Origins

At the time that the incumbent of St Luke's, Revd Peter Clark, began his ministry in Longsight in 1987, the government was trying to move people out of mental hospitals into 'care in the community'. This meant that he had lots of troubled but unsupported people knocking at his door. After consulting over the issue with people working in psychiatric services, social services and local housing, he started a drop-in service run by volunteers from the church for a couple of hours each Thursday. A bit later came a Tuesday session and then a third session on a Saturday. That was just the beginning.

The activities

"People bring carrier bags full of worries and we have to help them sort through and deal with them."

The activities in the Centre have grown organically rather than in a planned way, but there has always been caution about growing too quickly.

Drop-in sessions continued to evolve. A connection was made with the Victoria Park Day Centre and a worker from the Manchester Mental Health and Social Care Trust, based at the Centre started to attend, first the Tuesday and Saturday drop-ins and then a new women-only drop-in session on Mondays for those who wanted an exclusive service or were very nervous. All the drop-ins – women's, sports and social – provide something for people who do not want or need a formal service, but recognise that they need some support. The drop-ins give an opportunity for them to get together for mutual support whether through sporting or craft activities or just getting together for a chat or a meal. Quite often they prove to be a stepping stone for individuals who develop the confidence to try other activities either at St Luke's or elsewhere.

Once a month at the Thursday drop-in, workers from Revive, an organisation based in Salford that supports refugees and people seeking asylum, see clients that are in Longsight. The advent of asylum seekers has led to St Luke's having an ESOL class each week run by a volunteer and here, also, issues such as housing and immigration are uncovered, which

¹ The quoted comments in italics are all taken from *The Heart Starts Here* a book researched and designed by Rae Story comprising interviews with representative members of the St Luke's community, published in 2009 by Slap-Dash Publishing, St Luke's own community publishing project.

can then be dealt with by Revive. There are also regular legal advice sessions during Thursday drop-ins.

St Luke's Treatment Room opened in May 2003, in response to the expressed needs of people attending the drop-ins and those using the Centre as a whole. The aim is to provide affordable complementary therapies. Although there is wide recognition of the contribution such therapies can make to the reduction of stress, they were not widely available in the local area for people on low incomes. After research into other similar projects, a management committee was formed of staff and service users. They wrote a constitution and applied for funding. The first task was to decorate the room, install a new heating system, buy equipment and find suitable therapists. Their existing networks gave them easy access to people with the right skills. A launch party gave taster sessions in all therapies and, after that, the room opened offering 30 sessions a week. It was not long before there were waiting lists for all the therapies and they have since catered for hundreds of users. Service users make a voluntary donation for the subsidised treatments, which include Chinese medicine, massage and reflexology.

In 2004, a qualified counsellor who had heard what was happening offered his services voluntarily. This meant that people could talk through their problems in a safe environment. Eventually they were able to fund the service and employ the counsellor for six hours per week. When funds were running low in 2007, in collaboration with the Scarman Trust, there was a workshop with users to review the project. This fed into a successful bid for continuation funding from CUF and enabled the project to stay open, albeit offering a reduced service. Other health-related activities have been started such as exercise, yoga, tai-ji and healthy eating classes and workshops. In 2003, the Kwan Wai Chinese mental health project (part of the Wai Yin Chinese Women Society) set up a community café in the Centre open over lunch-time prior to the Thursday drop-in and also open to the public. The Café, which has been going for about seven years, is supervised by a manager and staffed by trained volunteers. A podiatry clinic caters for the over 50s once a month and the podiatrist does some home visits and visits a Chinese community centre and a retirement home nearby. There have been one day festivals like the 'Recovery Festival', looking at ways people can take control of their lives and celebrating their gifts and achievements.

The Art Project has been going for over seventeen years. It evolved from an Artist-in-Residence role when, in 1993, Alison Kershaw was invited to work at St Luke's for three years creating work with an emphasis on involving local people with mental health problems. Eighteen years later, she is still working at St Luke's part-time. Other free-lance artists contribute and usually about thirty people per week make use of the facilities. There have been many projects over the years, including people making 'Gegants de Barcelona' puppets to take to a Catalan Festival; individuals compiling books recording their interests or progress; a walking group that recorded their visits in drawings and posters.

Pool Arts is an offshoot of the Art Project. It is a separate organisation, but was co-founded by Alison Kershaw and meets and has its registered office at St Luke's. It aims to create opportunities for artists who may otherwise find themselves isolated or excluded.

"The great thing about St Luke's Art Project is its grounded reality, far from the elite of art, yet itself a radical work of art by its very existence, because it accepts and includes those artists who may find it impossible to thrive elsewhere."

"If someone had ever suggested to me that I would work in a church for all these years, I would have laughed. I'm not in the least religious – but working here has taught me what a community can be."

An **African Elders Lunch Club** has been running twice a week since 1995 and is now run by two volunteers. Women cook traditional African meals and the men sit and play cards and watch TV. At the same time, they can use the Centre to access information about benefits and services available to them. Attendees tend to be mainly men because the ratio of men to women is low, but some women have food delivered. Home visits are a chance to provide other neighbourly services such as shopping, helping people go to their doctor, making telephone calls for them or helping with their bills.

In addition, **other groups** rent space in St Luke's Centre:

- Alcoholics Anonymous meet once a week and Narcotics Anonymous twice a week in the Centre.
- Manchester Sudanese Tree Development Community have an advice centre for refugees but have also run Supplementary Schools. At one stage, they had three: Sudanese, Somali and Ghanaian, but they are currently struggling for funding.
- Capoeira hire space one evening per week for Brazilian arts and dance.
- Twice weekly table tennis clubs run by volunteers.
- A twice weekly slimming and exercise club run by Manchester City Council.

Organisational status

To date, the Centre has been managed under the auspices of the Church. This has recently changed and the Centre has become a charitable company limited by guarantee, partly prompted by the likely retirement of the Rector in two years time. He chairs the trustees who comprise people associated with the Centre and local community organisations. The Centre has reached a significant transition point when questions need to be addressed about developing more formal approaches to administration and fundraising.

For the past ten years, there has been a Centre Manager. This became necessary after the appointment of the incumbent as Area Dean. The main leadership has always come from the Rector, but helped by others who have had a longstanding involvement, such as the leader of the Art Project and the Centre Manager.

Resources

There have been various sources of funding over the years.

- Charitable trusts including CUF, Manchester Council for Social Aid, the Scarman Trust and the Tudor Trust have contributed towards the salary of the Centre Manager and other core costs.
- A major Lottery grant paid for refurbishment and, in particular, fitting out a sufficiently large and high standard kitchen to be used for training people and running the Kwan Wai Café as well as for other groups that require catering.
- Manchester City Council used to pay for a youth worker in the Centre, but withdrew the funding following the recent public sector cuts. The youth worker concerned was retained by the Council but redeployed. However, he has continued at St Luke's as a volunteer. Manchester City Council also used to fund welfare right/debt advice and legal advice sessions. Again the welfare right work has been cut though there are still two legal advice sessions per month.
- Manchester Mental Health Joint Commissioning Team has funded the mental health practitioner for the drop-in sessions although never on a formal contractual basis.
- Help the Aged have given funds towards the costs of the podiatrist. The PCC agreed to forego rent so that the funding stretched further.

- Some Arts Council funding for the Art Project.
- Rental income from lettings.

The post of Centre manager is only secure until the end of 2012; for other strands of work, the future depends on annual requests to the Joint Commissioning Team for continued funding and on applications made to charitable trusts.

Volunteers

Much of the activity in the Centre is only possible because of volunteering. Volunteers have various roles from cooking and cleaning through to counsellors, who if they were paid the rate for the job could probably charge at least £25 per hour. This is in addition to those who have paid positions but give far more time and those who have continued their work at the Centre even though their funding has been withdrawn.

Non-financial help and support

St Luke's Centre has had immeasurable support from the PCC and congregation. There has also been backing from local clergy and from the Diocese, especially staff in the Social Responsibility Department. Nationally, as well as securing CUF funding, staff have attended some CUF training sessions. Over the years, too, there have been strong relationships with a range of secular organisations:

- different parts of Manchester Council, such as Ardwick Regeneration Team, Healthy Ardwick and the local ward co-ordinator;
- Manchester Mental Health Promotion;
- several local voluntary organisations such as Voluntary Action Manchester, Manchester Alliance for Community Care, Growing Independent Organisations (GIO), Revive, Roby Counselling and Manchester Community Central, which provides information and support to build the capacity and sustainability of voluntary and community sector groups.

Outcomes

It is difficult to quantify the impact of St Luke's, but there are many individual stories of the difference it has made to people's lives: keeping them out of hospital, discovering talents they never knew they had, building their confidence and increasing their employability. In the way that it works, it has increased awareness of mental health issues and been a force for social inclusion and community cohesion.

Success factors

A main key to the effectiveness of St Luke's is the emphasis on relationships with partner organisations, with volunteers and with Centre users. This has enabled it to secure a high level of collaboration – lots of informal interrelationships and exchanges of favours with other groups that share its concerns and the chance of opportunistic developments. It has led to strong bonds with people working in the Centre which, when funding has been withdrawn, have inspired their continued involvement as volunteers. Qualities of flexibility and a 'can do' attitude have infused the work of the centre. In relation to users, there is an implicit rule about the importance of mutual respect, but beyond this there are few rules. The Centre is founded on trust, respect, reliability and accessibility, demonstrated by the high proportion of users who first come through word of mouth recommendations.

It is clear that much of its ethos is only possible partly because it is closely integrated with the life of the church. But it also relies on the drive, commitment and continuity provided by the core of people who have stayed with the Centre for so long so that they could really get

to know the area and its residents, build the necessary trust and form long lasting relationships.

Barriers

Money is always going to be a significant obstacle to doing all that they would like to do at the Centre. This is not only a problem that affects them directly. Many of the groups using the centre are currently experiencing budget cuts and seeing some of their activities whittled away.

Another barrier is the sometimes negative attitude towards their work. A lack of appreciation of its value can translate into a certain amount of NIMBY-ism amongst some local people, especially in neighbouring streets where houses have been rebuilt and new occupiers have moved in.

Opportunities and challenges

The main challenge for the future, apart from fund raising, is to get the charitable company up and running and on a stable basis to weather the major change that will occur when the Rector retires.

Roger Howard,
Centre Manager
<http://www.stlukeslongsight.co.uk/>

Thrive

Introduction

Thrive is a project in Stockton-on-Tees, which was set up by Church Action on Poverty (CAP) and is one of its ChangeMakers projects but which is now in the process of becoming an independent, locally-run community organisation. Thrive gives people in poverty the power to change their situation by using a unique combination of two approaches.

- The 'Sustainable Livelihoods' model helps isolated and excluded people to make better use of the assets they have.
- Community organising enables them to take practical, public action for change.

Origins

Thrive came about through a partnership between Church Action on Poverty and Oxfam's UK Poverty programme to explore whether a Sustainable Livelihoods Approach (SLA) could be adapted to the UK context from overseas to tackle poverty. We have been operating since November 2004.

Earlier, a Church Action on Poverty project had worked in Teesside on initiatives such as *Local People, National Voice*. There was a lot of good work done and routes into the local area that could be built on. There were also some links to local churches in the area.

Teesside areas suffer from high unemployment, high levels of debt and social exclusion and a lack of people taking part in decision-making structures. Church Action on Poverty wanted to use innovative approaches to address these issues.

Recently, Thrive has completed major pieces of work focusing on health, wellbeing and financial inclusion as well as the 'Rip-off TV' campaign documented below.

The project's evolution

The work has evolved immensely over time. Thrive ran two rounds of research initially, using the Sustainable Livelihoods Approach. SLA has been used to tackle poverty very successfully in the developing world by the Department for International Development for several years. It draws on the main factors that affecting livelihoods and the typical relationships between these factors. It is both a *framework* that helps in understanding the complexities of poverty and a set of *principles* to guide action to address and overcome poverty. SLA is used to identify the main constraints and opportunities faced by people in poverty, as expressed by themselves, and provides support in addressing the constraints or taking advantage of opportunities. Thrive saw that there were some good elements to the approach that might be transferable to a UK context. These were:

- It is *participatory and people-centred*: people are really involved in understanding and developing solutions. The initiative works *with* people instead of merely consulting them.
- It is *holistic* because poverty isn't only about money, it's about a lot of other challenges too; good health, access to services, a decent lived environment and good social networks and support mechanisms. Taking people as a starting point and looking at their strengths, instead of needs, you can start to highlight the 'gaps' between a household's situation and services at different levels.

Then we became involved with the Gamaliel Foundation from the United States, bringing trainers here to work with us. Gamaliel use Alinsky Faith-Based Community Organising as an approach to transformative ministry. The livelihoods information and projects provided the perfect platform to conduct actions on the issues the research had identified.

A journey from identifying debt problems to campaigning on doorstep lending

Thrive has detailed research on financial exclusion – a problem that blights the lives of poorer households in the area and means that they pay a ‘poverty premium’; through higher charges for utilities and credit, such as doorstep lending and hire-purchase products. Thrive places volunteers, including medical students from Durham University and a former Inland Revenue bailiff and Citizens’ Advice Bureau advisor, in low-income households to mentor and support them and gather detailed research on how people ‘get by’. We found one doorstep lending company to be a particularly prevalent in the area. Customers typically reported that:

- they often received no statements of their account;
- as a result they had no idea how much they owed or over what period;
- if they did receive a statement it was not clear what items they were paying for and when they would own those items and stop paying for them.

Customers were also concerned about the level of interest rates (40-50% annual percentage rate), and about the aggressive behaviour of some doorstep collectors.

One customer, ‘Louise’, a single mum from Thornaby with 3 young boys, earned £30 per week from her job as a dinner lady from which she derived great satisfaction and dignity. However, from her modest earned income, £10 comes back out of her benefits and the other £20 goes into the coin meter on her TV to pay for essential goods. As a result of compound interest on the account, she is paying approximately £1,000 for a reconditioned washing machine for the family.

The community organising training proved to be a catalyst for focusing the local group’s determination and giving them the confidence to campaign for change. They gathered more information about people’s experience of ‘Buy to View’ then Thrive used a range of ways to raise the profile of the issue. Firstly, we supplied the Sunday People with case studies and information exposing the company in the national press. A spoof video, featuring ‘our unhappy customers’ was made to lampoon the situation. We agreed to be filmed by the BBC who were interested in following our story. We got several hundred members of our sister organisation Church Action on Poverty to call and email the firm concerned, outlining our concerns. The result of this activity was an agreement by the firm to meet with our leaders. Four senior managers flew up from Newport, South Wales, to meet with Thrive at Teesside Airport to negotiate change.

Once the issue was raised with them, the firm responded very positively and agreed to come to arrangements with Thrive on the following key areas:

- Statements would be sent to customers regularly.
- Statements would identify clearly what items were still outstanding on loans and the remaining load period.
- Customers would own their goods, no matter what, after 5 years. (Previously customers could have been with the company 20 years and not owned anything.)
- Good customers (which all of Thrive’s customers were) would benefit from tapering interest rates.
- The firm would talk to the staff who were aggressive.

Most importantly, the firm agreed to work with us to try and change financial regulations to ensure that customers using non-prime credit facilities would be able to build up a recognised good credit history which would enable them to access mainstream financial services as one strategy for escaping a cycle of debt.

Thrive is currently brokering meetings in London between five non-prime credit companies, including Provident Financial, the biggest player in the Home Credit Sector, and the Office of Fair Trading. In these meetings, chaired by the Bishop of Ripon and Leeds, we have begun negotiations which could have hugely beneficial repercussions for the hundreds of thousands of customers in the £7.5bn Home Credit sector.

Leadership

The main leadership has been from the project worker and Church Action on Poverty though we have had a dedicated board of trustees and several important local supporters from the local URC Industrial Chaplain and Community Priest to CAP members. The project is currently working with a new board of trustees who are enthusiastic and increasingly taking charge of the project at a local level.

Resources

There were no premises at first, though an office was then secured in a local church. Now we have a shared office in a local Methodist Church. On site there are meeting rooms, a cafe and children's play area to which we are grateful to have access and we contribute towards them.

An initial pot of funding for a full-time worker was raised. Since then the initiative has had to come up with additional projects to run and against which to raise money. Subsequent funding has come from charitable trusts, including the Church Urban Fund, and from the local Primary Care Trust. A service level agreement with the PCT recently finished. We have had a few small donations and we make small charges for training but generally we make a loss on it. The project requires funding for the project worker and on costs.

The project is heavily reliant on a variety of **volunteers**. Around 20 volunteers are involved with the project at various levels and significant amounts of the funding for the project are raised against delivering volunteer-based activities. They give around 30 hours per week, which calculated on the basis of the minimum wage amounts to a contribution of c £180 pw.

We are financially secure for 12 months.

Non-financial help and support

We had some help from the diocese in accessing Church Urban Fund finance and have had lots of help from volunteers from churches in the action research and recruiting for training or meetings and occasionally churches have let us use their premises.

Other voluntary and community sector groups have been supportive, such as the local residents groups, Citizens' Advice Bureaux, Five Lamps organisation and Sure Start. We also have a strong partnership now with Durham University. Nationally, there has been collaboration with Oxfam's UK Poverty Programme, Community Links and lots of other partnership opportunities.

It would be good to have more involvement of the churches locally but this has proven difficult and to have more support at national level on living wage and credit reform.

Outcomes

The project has now been recognised for its work on predatory lending for example as 'Most Inspirational Campaign in the North East' (VONNE May 2011). We've recently forced £400m of lending companies to the table to discuss their practices through our campaigning

work on financial inclusion and we have appeared on BBC “Inside Out” (www.vimeo.com/17332265) documenting this process.

Success factors

- The partnership with Oxfam.
- The innovative use of sustainable livelihoods analysis – getting a different dataset of people’s lived experience as opposed to superficial ‘tick box’/surface scratching consultation.
- The charity’s unique ability to ‘refresh the parts’ other initiatives don’t reach.
- The good fortune and planning to be able to raise money and keep the project going for 6 years: things don’t just happen overnight.
- The training in community organising and mentorship for senior staff from the Gamaliel Foundation.

Barriers

- Funding, limited resources.
- Opposition/initial hostility from key players like local authority.

Challenges and opportunities

The main challenge remains funding. But we also need to build a strong board that can help run the organisation as a truly independent charity

There are many more areas of opportunity to organise around on social justice – living wage, crime, transport, sanctuary . . . and so on!

Greg Brown
www.thrive-stockton.org.uk

Jubilee Money Advice Service, Oswestry

Introduction

Jubilee Money Advice Service (JMAS) is a free debt advice service in Oswestry and District. The project began three years ago when the recession was beginning to strike hard and the television was full of news of the effect of growing debt on different aspects of lives. Then a man from the area killed his wife and child because of an extravagant lifestyle and insurmountable debts. Confirmation for me that I had to try and do something came when I was out on the street giving drinks and biscuits to people who were homeless and others who were just wanting to chat. A gentleman who stopped for a drink was talking about 'how bad things were getting' and said that the majority of people living in the same road where he was a resident, were in debt. This affirmed to me that my increasing thoughts of doing something about this problem were not stupid or pie in the sky, but somehow a possibility.

Getting started

Once I had made up my mind to find out more about what I felt God was saying to me, I went to a wise Church leader and shared with him. He pointed me in the direction of a vicar who ran 'the Haven' on the Market on a Wednesday and who had the same idea of helping those in debt. I quickly found this man and he then sent me to do lots of groundwork to check out the necessity for this service and that we would not be treading on other people's toes. In this period which took about nine months or more, I approached Churches Together in Oswestry and District (CTOD) and also formed a group of like-minded people which initially we called the Committee. I started speaking at different churches, firstly the Quakers and then others followed. This groundwork was all completely new to me. I had never spoken in public before and certainly could not set up a workable Debt Advice Service. BUT..... It started to happen: investigating what organisation to join, writing reports on them to ensure the end decision was true and correct. Meetings of the committee started to take place. Members of CTOD voted to accept us under their umbrella. My direction from day one has been completely directed by God. Thankfully, if I got in a muddle, you could guarantee something or someone would come and point me back on track.

Activities

After a long journey, we opened to clients at the beginning of November 2010. To date, we are working and learning. The local council accepted us very quickly as an organisation that cares for its community. I have already been invited to two council-run meetings representing JMAS. When there was a drugs death recently, I was invited to go in with community police, substance misuse team, council and other agencies to sit under a gazebo in the housing area where drugs are rife. I gave out JMAS leaflets and was able to talk with residents. I pray that these activities may increase as we are invited to join in with community work which is so important in helping to make a difference.

In certain circumstances, we will help the client in their own home. This was not planned, but came about because the council referred a client who has agoraphobia to us. We have now introduced a risk assessment and form for advisers to fill in prior to doing home visits.

JMAS is evolving slowly. I like it that way. I want to see changes for the better and more clients coming along, but I don't look for numbers. My initial plans and expectations for the organisation have already changed. We have trained advisers. They have brought ideas and suggestions that I would have never thought of which have already changed many of our working practices. As we are gaining experience, we are making JMAS much better. I really wonder just how much more we will evolve in the next year. The principle of helping people

to become debt free, to educate and advise will always be there, but it will be good if we can introduce changes to make what we do for the clients even better.

The organisation

We are paid up members of Community Money Advice (CMA)¹ and Advice UK. We have registered with the Office of Fair Trading as required by CMA, drawn up our constitution, obtained charitable status and got trustees on board, taken out Professional Indemnity and put the necessary policies and procedures in place, including CRB checks.

I am Manager, a trustee, the treasurer and also an adviser. Having so many hats has been necessary up until now, but I am praying that people will come along with different gifts and that one day I can let go of some work and pass it to others. Making a firm foundation for the future is my drive at the moment. It can be difficult to find suitable advisers but I continue to interview and enrol more people, and I hope for someone to come along that can help release me from some duties so that I can network and deal with funding and other things which are very important if we are going to find our own premises in the near future.

The main leadership has been myself so far. I am thankful now to have the trustees so that decisions do not have to be just mine anymore. One has started to work with me on funding. I have asked two of the advisers to be supervisors, but neither wants the responsibility. So I will wait for newly trained advisers to arrive and hope in time I can find my supervisors. I am aware that enlarging the team is good and this will happen as soon as possible. Although it is hard, I think we are doing well because we are only nine months down the road.

Resources

To be able to get started we required computers, a printer and enough money to rent office space and a room to interview clients. Thankfully this (£5,000) was given to us by CUF. Without the generosity of this gift, we could not have opened last November. One of the vicars who is a trustee knew about the CUF and it was through his approach to them that we were successful. I thank God for them and their belief in something that was not yet up and running and in people they did not know. This was definitely of God, because they put their trust in us. As far as premises were concerned, the URC Minister who is also a trustee allowed us a very small space in their vestry for the computer at a cost of £60 per month for one morning and one afternoon per week. Next door to the vestry is a building called The Kingswell Centre, we hired a room for one morning and one afternoon per week at a cost of £160 per month.

With the increase in client numbers and additional advisers, the time has come to look for our own premises with office space. Advisers can no longer work in peace to input data and write to creditors, files have to be put on chairs beside us and when more than two advisers are in the office at the same time, concentration is difficult. Also The Kingswell Centre is under threat so we might be forced to move. For the sake of the our clients and advisers, and for JMAS to grow and move forward, funding must be our next priority.

When setting up JMAS, I felt we should not use a Church environment to advise clients. I still believe this. Many may not want to come to a Church building for help. We can take God to the clients just the same. I have used the vestry to interview clients and have brought a trainer from CMA to another Church on other occasions to train advisers. We do not hide

¹ CMA is a Christian charity that is driven by the desire to help people whose lives are being blighted by debt and money problems. It helps churches and other locally based organisations establish high quality, free, face-to-face money advice services.

the fact that we are a Christian organisation, but we want to ensure all clients are comfortable with the environment.

In addition to the initial grant from CUF, we have three regular monthly donations and a number of small organisations have also given gifts of money. Two new grant applications have recently been sent off, but we have not heard back from either one to date. The local churches still don't contribute financially, but part of this is my fault for not pushing this avenue of provision as yet. I still have to learn how to approach Churches for help financially. Writing to the leaders has not brought forth the skills and resources needed. We have had some secular donations since opening and I hope to approach other organisations in the coming months.

I think we probably have more chance of grants from local funding committees than from national bodies. The support or help we need is for premises. If we could find someone who would offer us somewhere to rent at a reasonable cost, this would be a huge answer to JMAS future. The work load, the clients, everything is going well – to have finance stand in the way of helping people would be unthinkable, but the worry is still there.

Volunteers

We have had 17 clients so far and many of these are continuing to have ongoing help – they will have follow ups for as long as the client wishes to continue with help or ongoing advice. We might see each client five times or more depending on the complexity of their debts, during the course of dealing with their financial problems and with the interviews, letter writing and dealing with the whole package, I would estimate each adviser spends an average of 25 hours per client. On the basis of the minimum wage rate at £6 per hour, this would work out at £150 per client. There are four volunteers working regularly at present (with two others in the pipeline) so the probable cost since opening would work out at about £2,550. In addition, some have acted as observers in many interviews to give support, probably amounting to a further 27 hours making the total financial value of volunteer time based on 17 clients over a period of 9 months an estimated £2,712. This does not include the time given by trustees.

Links with other organisations

By being part of CTOD has introduced me to the leaders of at least ten Churches within Oswestry and District, but the reason I applied to be part of it was my hope to see more and more churches working together, so that much more could be done. I wrote newsletters and emailed attachments to each church. I was encouraged by how positive many of the ministers were about a debt advice centre, but there is less evident interest from the congregations. We have advisers from three different churches, but it would be good to enrol more people from other Churches in due time. However, there are signs of the churches working together more and I would like to think JMAS is playing a very small role in this.

CMA gives us amazing support *via* emails, a free telephone help line, visits from the area manager, the online web site, training and much more. We are also linked with Advice UK, a membership network for organisations that give debt advice.

Outcomes

Nine months on, we are still up and running! Seventeen clients does not amount to being inundated and, knowing how bad things are for so many people, I am surprised we haven't had more so far. I have found that people are using online debt advice agencies; for example, I met one person who is paying £50 a month for his finances to be managed online. There are TV advertisements for the National Debt line which is free. Maybe many people like the anonymity of phone services but there is room for all agencies that help

people. I believe we are strengthening our organisation and our pace is right for us at this time. I feel we are doing what we set out to do, but through development, we are changing and I think this will continue to happen. Every client we help, each one who reaches the offer stage and commences manageable payments, is a success. We have a contract for each client. Two people sadly broke the contract. Terminating our help to them was necessary but still leaves feelings of failure. We lost two more clients who have far too many other problems for us to help them at this time, but they know our doors are open to them in the future.

Success factors

- The three years of preparation and setting up the project prior to opening our doors to clients.
- Having a group of trustees that are supportive – we have prayer breakfasts and all believe in the power of prayer.
- Having like-minded Christian advisers who go the extra mile for the clients, and work together as a team and believe that God is the instigator and guide in this project.
- Being accepted by the Council and other agencies.

Barriers

In the beginning we had some opposition, there were people who came along initially who had their own agenda and I had some hurts, but overcoming these hurdles has made me more determined and stronger and also maybe I earned a little respect from the people that really mattered.

Finances are our main problem at this time because of our desperate need for premises and a working environment that is in one place. The amount of time that advisers can give is also difficult when there is a lot to do. That barrier would be lifted if we found our own premises. Then we would allocate different days for different advisers. We could see more people if we were open 4 or 5 days a week, and then it would actually give the advisors a rota so they would not feel they had to work too much.

One difficulty is that most trustees are all priests and so they are extremely busy. When things need doing quickly, I guess my idea of 'quickly' is a little different from theirs.

Challenges and opportunities

The challenges for the future are to:

- reach more people with debt issues.
- increase our finances to enable us to grow.
- afford more training for advisers.
- form more links with other agencies and to work together to help our community.
- find more members as required under our constitution.
- find regular monthly donors so that we could have some additional financial stability.

I believe that, when the time is right, God will provide the opportunities. I don't know what those will be until they come about but, because I have seen miracles already, I am really excited about those future opportunities.

Lizzie Evans

<http://www.jubileemoneyadvice.org.uk>

Gloucester Mothers' Union Money Advice Service

Introduction

Gloucester Mothers' Union Money Advice Service (MUMAS) has been operating since 1992. MUMAS was set up in response to the 1990s' 'Decade of Evangelism' initiative by the Church of England. The Mothers' Union in each diocese was challenged to set up an activity to benefit families in need. Given the financial pressures in economic downturn of the early 1990s, the Gloucester Diocese MU came up with the idea of MUMAS. The need for the work was evident from national indicators of financial difficulty and indebtedness, especially negative equity and property repossessions.

What is MUMAS?

MUMAS consists of a group (currently 10) of Advisers. People wishing to use the service mainly self-refer using our telephone answer phone, which is accessed daily by volunteers, or our e-mail account. In some cases, local Social Service departments refer clients to us. The telephone volunteers pass the enquiring client's details to the co-ordinator, who then contacts the client to establish the nature of the enquiry. The co-ordinator accesses e-mail enquiries himself. If the enquiry is straightforward, the co-ordinator deals with it, but in most cases the details (which are usually quite sketchy at this stage) are passed to one of the advisers, who arranges to see the client in their own home. We do not work out of an office. The case is then dealt with by the adviser according to normal established money advice practice.

Although the service offered and the objectives of the organisation have not changed since MUMAS began, modern communications have played a part in how we operate, especially e-mail and use of internet to get information rather than using exclusively printed media.

MUMAS is run by a Committee of Management, with day to day organisation delegated to the Coordinator. The leadership has come from within the MU.

Resources

The main requirements are funding and volunteer time. Both come from within the church. Our only need for premises is to house our answer phone, which is in the diocesan MU office. The money comes from deaneries and churches. We have current reserves to last several years.

Volunteers

Calculated on the basis of the minimum wage, the value of the volunteers' contribution is around £1,500 pa.

Links

We are members of Advice UK, which is a secular organisation acting as an 'umbrella group' for advice agencies, especially volunteer and community ones.

Outcomes

There have been 979 clients since the inception of the project. Success for a client is to get them to a stable position of having an affordable repayment plan that will get them debt-free in a reasonable time.

Success factors

The key success factor is the ability and dedication of advisers.

Barriers

Barriers are numerous. Sometimes creditors are unreasonable in their demands, but also sometimes clients are not willing or able to accept the discipline of financial stringency to work through to a debt-free position.

Challenges and opportunities

Increasing lack of work for poorly qualified young people is likely to be a significant challenge. The prospect of a long time on benefits is not an attractive one, and the availability of easy credit, which still exists, is likely to tempt many to overspend. Things will also get worse for many people who at present have manageable debts (especially a mortgage), even if they are in work, when interest rates do start to go back up.

Richard Grant

<http://www.gloucestermothersunion.com/GloucesterMUWebsite/MUMAS.htm>

Coventry Central Foodbank

Introduction

Coventry Central Foodbank is part of a national network of over 100 Trussell Trust foodbanks . The project is an ecumenical partnership of (currently) seven city churches that have a passion to meet the mandate of Matthew 25:v 35:

“When I was hungry you fed me, thirsty you gave me a drink, naked you clothed me.”

The project is the distribution of nutritionally balanced food parcels containing foods such as tinned fruit, vegetables, meat and fish as well as pasta, cereal, UHT milk, sauces, tea, long-life juice, sufficient for three days. Volunteers based at church cafés around the city distribute the parcels. The food is supplemented by short dated food from Costco – fresh fruit, vegetables, meat, desserts etc., which are at the end of their shelf ('best before') date. It is a partnership across several churches: Mosaic Church, Holy Trinity Church, Queens Road Baptist Church, the Cathedral, Jesus Centre, St John's Church, Westwood Heath and Vineyard Church.

Origins

I initially set up a debt counselling service in Coventry in May 2010 in partnership with Christians Against Poverty. As we visited clients we began to discover that the financial decisions that our clients were making very often translated into hunger.

Within the Christians Against Poverty process we can take clients into a shop once but beyond that we had no answer as to how to meet these needs – the Christian principles on which the Trussell Trust operate match brilliantly with those of Christians Against Poverty (*“feed the poor, set the captives free”* Luke 4). So we approached the Trussell Trust in late 2010 to see if we could become a partner.

At this point the area representative of the Trussell Trust advised that there were three other churches interested – the Cathedral, Holy Trinity and Queens Road Baptist church. We agreed that our church, Mosaic Church, would take the lead and by December we had already collected over 2.5 tonnes of food and we had a warehouse. By early January we had sorted, racked and weighed the food and trained referral agencies and volunteers. The food parcels were first distributed on the 21st January, 2011.

Assessing need

There was a demographic study of Coventry carried out in 2007 and revised in 2010, which signalled the problem of poverty. At the time, we honestly thought this project would just be a bolt-on to Christians Against Poverty with a low level of demand - well that proved to be wrong in every sense. Although we know that there are 60,000 people in Coventry living on or below the breadline (including 11,000 children) – there's no extrapolation of this that can give any comfort as to the magnitude of food poverty in the city. But let's imagine that 10% of this group are in real deprivation. That's 6,000 people and each of them receives 10kgs in a food parcel and is fed 3 times. That means we need 180 tonnes of food per annum or 3.5 tonnes of food per week to make this work!!

We didn't take any steps in advance to measure the church's capacity to meet that need in terms of skills and resources. If you are mandated to do something by God then He provides the resources to make it happen. This may sound like foolishness in human terms but the reality of dealing with an amazing God is that He does just that. This is nothing short of miracle territory which means that despite the most outrageous volume of demands we haven't failed to supply – and neither has He.

How the Foodbank operates

Clients are assessed and referred to us through a network of agencies around the city including Citizens' Advice Bureau, Social Services and Sure Start Children's Centres who issue food vouchers which can be redeemed at one of the distribution points. On arrival, clients are given a drink and something to eat and, whilst the food parcel is being made up, we have a friendly chat as well, which often leads us to signposting them into another service such as debt counselling.

The project operates with a very large volunteer base of people willing to give a few hours to this regularly. At the moment we have one paid administrator and one van driver.

Now we have five distribution points at churches around the city, with two more joining us in September, and provide parcels to upwards of 150 people per week. They operate for two to three hours at different times through the week.

The project is continuing to grow. Over 1,500 people have been fed in five months. Four partner churches have become seven, and will soon be nine. Distribution points have been established throughout the city. Over 85 referral agencies have been trained and are sending clients.

The main leadership has come from the Board of trustees, the Mosaic Church, a consultation group of church leaders from the partner churches, me as Project Co-ordinator, and the Trussell Trust Area Representative.

Resources

At the start, we required premises – church cafes – to use as distribution points as well as storage space for the food. We had a CUF grant and numerous donations of food and money (for example, from partner churches) and volunteer time was essential.

At present, the current warehouse is far from adequate; accessibility and the potential rent for the premises are the primary issues. It is also only just big enough to deal with current stock levels required to meet current demand. We have been offered a derelict church building by the diocese, but honestly I don't have the capacity at the moment to lead this sort of project.

We have a massive **volunteer** team and they are great. This is the kind of project which many people express a great deal of passion to be involved with. Say 30 volunteers for 3 hours per week (90 hours), plus my administration team's time (3 X 16 hours), and including my own (1 X 30 hours). I would estimate around 200 hours per week, which calculated on the basis of minimum wage rates amounts to £1,200 per week. However I wouldn't estimate the admin team's time at minimum wage.

Nevertheless, the project needs paid staff. Volunteers are fitting in volunteering around other life demands and so are inconsistent. We have only one paid administrator and even she is not fully paid for the work she does, we will need to find funding for around 4 – 5 other roles just to continue this in into 2012. Conservative estimates to make this project really work put funding requirements at between £75,000 – £90,000 per annum.

We are not at all financially secure! That's half the fun and most of the stress.

Non-financial help and support

The Bishop of Coventry is the patron of the Foodbank and Helen McGowan from the Diocese gives guidance and grant funding support. Other churches contribute food donations and volunteers and local secular organisations make donations of food. The Trussell Trust network of food banks have helped us in providing emergency stocks when we got really desperate.

The additional support we would like is large scale grant funding so I can pay my existing administration and distribution teams and get some key managerial roles filled.

Outcomes

We can measure our success in terms of feeding over 2,000 people in six months, distributing over ten tonnes of food. We have also attracted an unprecedented level of local and national press coverage, which is raising awareness of the issues.

Success factors

- The partnership of churches and their leadership;
- The support of the national network;
- The buy-in to the scheme of supermarkets, churches, businesses, scouts and referral agencies;
- The volunteers;
- The Bishop's patronage;
- My core team, especially my senior administrator – most of them don't stop simply because they go home;
- My wife who has had to undergo a radical lifestyle change to allow me to do this, but remains a constant encourager;
- . . . and God without whose favour none of this would be possible.

Main barriers have been:

- Management skills within the team;
- Capacity of the administration team and me;
- Regular and consistent volunteering, though this is improving;
- Regular, consistent supermarket collections;
- Active financial fund raising.

The barriers are also the key **challenges** for the future. Effectively we have a small business whose demand has hopelessly outstripped the structures that its original business plan dictated would be required. What happens then is that you get some burn out and insufficient time to rebuild a new strategy for the larger organisation. Practically our office space is cramped and we are working two to a desk at the moment!! However, in early September, we are joining with the foodbank operated by Coventry City Mission to provide one joined up service to the city.

Summary

Is this project for such a time as this? Has something changed in society that has suddenly given rise to the need for a foodbank? Or could it be simply that we have always lived with 'the poor' but that at certain time during history the church has realised that it is mandated to meet social needs rather than just meet behind closed doors? And yes, the current cuts in the welfare state and the rising cost of food and fuel are helping to push people to a place where they need to resort to third sector support. But since October 2010 there has been a 50% increase in the number of Trussell Trust foodbanks – you have to believe that God is up to something very big and very special. We certainly sense it – every day has at least one 'wow!' moment.

Gavin Kibble

<http://www.mosaicchurch.co.uk/pages/32-coventry-foodbank/content>

FareShare, Leicester

Introduction

FareShare Leicester helps to feed about 2000 of the most seriously disadvantaged people in Leicestershire, using surplus food from the food industry.

Origins

The Project was started in February 2007, by the Director of Social Responsibility for the Diocese of Leicester. It was set up in the knowledge that:

- 4 million people in the UK cannot afford a healthy diet.
- Failed asylum seekers and homeless people in the city desperately needed food.
- The cost of a basket of staple food items is going up all the time and outpacing increases in income.
- One third of all waste going to landfill is from the food sector (approx.17m tonnes p.a.)

The challenge was how to become a delivery partner of FareShare without the funds for staff or premises (<http://www.fareshare.org.uk/>). FareShare takes good quality surplus food from the food industry that is used for those in need, rather than being sent to landfill. All food is within its use-by date and complies with strict hygiene legislation. FareShare has depots all over the country, all of which depend on volunteers to deliver their service.

After a period as a pilot project, FareShare Leicester began on 1st July 2008.

FareShare Leicester activities

Using volunteer drivers and hired vans, food is collected from the FareShare depots in Birmingham, Bristol and North London. Fresh fruit and vegetables are also collected from the nearest depot of Brakes, the catering wholesaler. Local Sainsbury's stores allow the groups to collect surplus food each day.

Food is distributed (free of charge) to charitable support groups that meet the FareShare criteria, regardless of religious or other affiliation, weekly on Mondays to 18 groups, with more on the waiting list. In the last year, FareShare Leicester has distributed almost 100 tonnes of good quality food (equivalent to 235,000 meals), to help feed people who are:

- on low or no wages, especially where children or young people are at risk;
- asylum seekers, failed asylum seekers, refugees;
- homeless, or vulnerably housed;
- vulnerable elderly;
- at risk due to mental health problems, learning difficulties, or HIV/AIDS;
- women and children affected by domestic violence.

FareShare Leicester has received two CUF grants, one national and one local, totalling £7,500 to support the work.

The challenge for the future

At present, FareShare Leicester only operates one day a week and has no premises. The aim is to raise sufficient funds to set up a full time depot to serve Leicester, Leicestershire and the East Midlands, distributing over 300 tonnes of food a year to people living at the margins of society.

Bishop Tim, the Bishop of Leicester said, *“The gap between the rich and the poor in the UK is now wider than in most western countries in the world except the USA. As the poorest families in deprived areas of our city and county struggle to cope with the rise in the cost of living, FareShare Leicester offers vulnerable people practical support and hope”*.

John Willetts

<http://www.leicester.anglican.org/diocese-office/social-responsibility/fareshare-leicester/>

Cumbria Reducing Offending Partnership (CROPT)

Introduction

Cumbria Reducing Offending Partnership (CROPT) is a charitable company limited by guarantee that supports and is involved at varying levels with a group of projects and activities across Cumbria all designed to give community support to offenders and ex-offenders.

Origins

The origins of CROPT go back to 2004, though the journey from the seed of an idea to implementation took quite some time. David Peacock, an Anglican priest, had been appointed Chair of Cumbria Probation Board. When there was a visit by Martin Narey, the Chief Executive of the National Offender Management Service (NOMS), the Chair suggested that there was a need to look at how people in the community engage with offenders and ex-offenders and that the place to start might be the Church. Martin Narey was interested (also having recently spoken with the Archbishop of Canterbury). When this was relayed to the Bishop of Carlisle, he convened a meeting in November 2004 with other interested people, including the Carlisle Diocesan Social Responsibility Officer and an inner city priest from Carlisle as well as representatives of Catholic Caring (now Caritas) and Churches Together in Cumbria.

An inter-denominational group continued to meet every couple of months to look at what else was happening and what further might be done. The Probation Service offered to fund a conference, which happened in September 2005. Between 60 and 70 people involved in some way with offenders attended and a conference report was produced. When the steering group met again, they decided to broaden the base because they realised that others without a church connection were also active in this field and that there were potential allies both in Cumbria and nationally. Representatives of a number of secular charitable agencies were therefore invited to join the steering group. It was also decided to widen the approach to include the only prison in Cumbria, HMP Haverigg, a Category C prison for about 640 men situated in Millom.

The group was still talking in 2006, but by now potential partnerships and further ideas were starting to take shape. The Brathay Trust, with others, designed and found funding for a project (PROSPECTS) aimed at getting offenders into employment and supporting them there. The Ruskin Foundation put project money into working with prisoners at HMP Haverigg to produce a regular prison newsletter, whilst Mothers' Union members taught cookery in the Carlisle Bail Hostel. However, the steering group, which by this time had adopted the title 'Cumbria Reducing Offending Partnership (CROP), were not in a position to apply for funding themselves as the group at the time had no official status. They realised, therefore, that they needed to get charitable status and then secure money for a full-time project worker. Although David Peacock's term of office chairing the Probation Board ended in 2008, he was asked to continue to develop this initiative.

Charitable status was achieved in 2009. CROPT then put in a bid to the Northern Rock Foundation for £100,000. Northern Rock offered half this amount provided CROPT could match it within six months. This was done through funding from the Probation Service, NOMS, the Methodist Church and the Quakers.

The charitable objects of CROPT are:

1. To promote the care, resettlement and rehabilitation of offenders, ex-offenders and those at risk of offending, in particular but without prejudice to the generality, by providing education and training that will enable them to take control of their lives and remain free from offending;
2. To advance the education of the public in the underlying causes of and appropriate responses to offending behaviours.

Activities today

CROPT has become an umbrella body operating at different levels for different activities:

- It gives support to, and sources funding for *Seagull*, the first prison community newspaper, which is produced by prisoners at HMP Haverigg. Published three times a year and delivered to homes in and around Millom, it has a circulation of 7,000 and in 2009 and 2010 it was the Koestler 'Magazine Journalism' award winner.
- It convenes meetings of the 'Friends of Haverigg', a group of volunteers who seek ways of improving life for prisoners and their families at HMP Haverigg.
- It is currently working with the management of HMP Haverigg to look at ways of involving volunteers in the running of the prison shop, a retail outlet which sells a wide range of produce grown on the prison farm, as well as other goods produced by prisoners.
- 'Circles of Support and Accountability' (see Box below) is a national way of working with sex offenders based on a Canadian model, now operating in ten areas of the UK. CROPT was instrumental in setting up the Cumbria Circles and is represented on the management board. Cumbria Circles recruit and train volunteers to work with sex offenders who have served significant sentences. Each Circle is made up of between four and six volunteers and a sex offender known as 'the core member'. The volunteers and core member meet weekly for the first year and then as they jointly deem necessary. Running costs for a single Circle are in the region of £3,000 p.a. A Probation Officer is seconded by Cumbria Probation Trust to Circles for two days per week to train and supervise volunteers and to identify suitable core members. Currently they are working with about six offenders per year.
- The Service User Project led by CROPT in partnership with Cumbria Probation Trust is a one-to-one Buddy Project introducing ex-offenders to employment opportunities, so far involving about 10 people and very successful. It is funded by Achieve North West a consortium of the five North West Probation Trusts, headed by Merseyside Probation Trust, which successfully bid to deliver Round 1 of the NOMS European Social Fund Project "Services to improve the employment prospects of offenders".
- The PROSPECTS project led by The Brathay Trust focuses on employability skills and aims to move ex-offenders into employment.
- Art for Offenders works with offenders and ex-offenders to encourage creative arts activities.
- Scafell Project is a multi-agency project led by Cumbria Probation Trust which works with persistent and prolific offenders to provide Intensive Alternatives to Custody. CROPT has helped with the provision of cookery and gardening classes.
- Cook and Eat, which teaches basic cookery skills, is run by a member of the Mothers' Union at the Bowling Green Bail Hostel in Carlisle.
- Sports activities have also been provided by volunteers from time to time at the Bowling Green Bail Hostel, the most successful of which has been five-a-side football at Carlisle United's training ground. These activities can be difficult to sustain

because of the turnover of people in and out of the hostel. Cumbria Association for Social Support (CASS) have now asked CROPT for volunteers to provide five-a-side football opportunities for offenders and ex-offenders in West Cumbria.

- Women's Project – 'Feel Good Factor': CASS has asked CROPT to work with a small group of women ex-offenders from West Cumbria who are in the process of setting up a support network for women in similar situations. As a result, the CROPT Development Worker is meeting them fortnightly to help them develop, for example, their listening skills.
- A multi-agency consortium in Carlisle is also aiming to address the needs of women ex-offenders and now has a fledgling group. CROPT gave assistance with a 'Pampering Day' for women ex-offenders on International Women's Day and is now working to gain the support of other agencies to which clients can be signposted for different kinds of assistance.
- CROPT has a successful and rapidly developing trading arm that markets garden produce and other goods, selling them through two local churches. This project, run two days per week by a volunteer GP with people from the Bowling Green Hostel, has a large allotment in the middle of a housing estate provided rent free by the local authority. The project has also undertaken coppicing work for Carlisle City Council.
- Work with Armed Service Veterans. A senior manager in the Probation Service saw a gap in provision for service veterans and, as a result, the Probation Trust funded research which showed that there are about 60 ex-soldiers on probation in Cumbria at any one time and others in some sort of trouble. CROPT is now working with Cumbria Alcohol and Drug Advice Service (CADAS) to seek Lottery funding for a project aimed at providing a range of support services for ex-services personnel.. The British Legion is also supportive of this venture.
- Bendrigg Trust: CROPT has secured funding from Countrywide UK to enable offenders referred by the Scafell Project and Barrow Probation to work as volunteers with the Bendrigg Trust, which provides outdoor experience for young people and adults with disabilities.
- The Volunteer Project underpins all the other work. The number of volunteers is growing, but at present there are about 27 active volunteers and a number waiting to be placed. Additionally, in the Women's Group all five volunteers are ex-offenders.

Lessons have been learnt from projects such as PROSPECTS and Art for Offenders about the need to bring activities to where people are. It is too easy to assume that people are either willing or able to travel to distant, unfamiliar locations. It is important to start where clients are in the widest sense – emotionally and psychologically as well as physically – and not to make assumptions about what is best for them but rather obtain enough information about their needs, possibilities and preferences given their frequently chaotic lifestyles.

Leadership

The main leadership has come from the David Peacock, the main instigator, who drove the development of the project and has become Chair of Trustees. More recently the Development Worker has also played a major role.

However, the project was only possible with the enormous support of the Probation Service. Senior management recognised the potential added value of CROPT and the way that it could help the Service meet its targets. It may be significant that the Probation Service grew out of the Church of England Mission to Police Courts and that its original role was to "advise, befriend and guide". In the 2000s, it underwent a major

cultural shift in becoming more centralised and focused on punishment. It may be that CROPT is seen to recapture some of its original values.

Resources

In 2009/10 Cumbria Probation Trust provided assistance to CROPT by way of grant funding and personnel secondment to the value of £32,826 as well as some limited back office services. The other sources of funding are:

- Northern Rock Foundation.
- National Offender Management Service.
- Cumbria Methodist District.
- Religious Society of Friends.
- European Social Fund *via* Achieve Northwest.

Partners

CROPT works in close partnership with a range of organisations The main ones are:

- Cumbria Probation Trust
- HMP Haverigg
- National Offender Management Service
- Cumbria CVS
- Cumbria Mentorpoint
- The Ruskin Foundation
- Cumbria Methodist Church
- Cumbria Society of Friends
- Churches Together in Cumbria
- The Diocese of Carlisle Board for Social Responsibility
- CARITAS
- The Brathay Trust
- CASS
- CADAS.

Outcomes

“CROPT does not do ‘tick boxes’.” However, for some of the contracts, such as the Service User Project, it is necessary to identify outputs to report to funders, such as helping clients produce CVs, undertake mock interviews, obtain real interviews and gain volunteering experience.

Outcome measures of success are more difficult to define and it is important to manage the expectations of funders and volunteers. Re-offending rates are too crude. For example, with prolific offenders it may be more realistic to aim to extend the time between offending rather than expect a complete break; alcoholic offenders may return to alcohol but not re-offend. There needs, too, to be a balance between quantitative and qualitative measures. Nevertheless, CROPT has been concerned to examine its effectiveness. An independent evaluation was carried out after its first year of operation and remains ongoing.

Success factors

Passion, dogged determination and believing in people all characterise the organisation, which is reaching far further than the available (staff) resources would suggest is possible.

Two themes have emerged from the work that are critical to success with this hard-to-reach client group. First, mentoring and befriending are a necessary basis to other

activities. Second, employment, work experience and volunteering opportunities are important for raising self esteem and combating the boredom that can lead to offending behaviour.

Barriers

- “*Funding, funding, funding!*”
- Sometimes CROPT encounters negative attitudes though less than they might have anticipated.
- Gaining the confidence of professionals on the ground can be difficult. There has never been a problem at a strategic level but in the context of cuts, people are concerned about their employment and worry that CROPT might do their job ‘on the cheap’.
- The geography of Cumbria – the distances people need to travel – can make it more difficult to get groups together.
- Support from different denominations has varied and there has been disappointment that some do not seem to “*live up to the social gospel*”.

Challenges and opportunities

Securing extra funding is an immediate challenge, to sustain current activities and to be able to take up new opportunities such as the work with Veterans and to meet requests to work with young offenders. Funding is also being sought to employ a volunteer co-ordinator both to recruit more mentors to work alongside service users and to shape volunteering opportunities for the clients themselves. It is hoped, too, to expand the social enterprise initiatives, for example to extend into carrying out grounds maintenance for hotels and/or market gardening. Another challenge is to create greater awareness across Cumbria of the needs of offenders, ex-offenders and their families, including within the churches.

Helen Storey
<http://www.cropt.org.uk/>

'Circles of Support and Accountability' - are an innovative and successful community contribution to reducing sex offending, working in close partnership with criminal justice agencies. A 'Circle' is a group of Volunteers from a local community which forms a Circle around an offender. In Circles, the sex offender is referred to as the 'Core Member'. Each Circle consists of four to six Volunteers and a Core Member. It aims to provide a supportive social network that also requires the Core Member to take responsibility (be 'accountable') for his/her ongoing risk management. The Circle can also provide support and practical guidance in such things as developing their social skills, finding suitable accommodation or helping the Core Member to find appropriate hobbies and interests. Volunteers are fully informed of the Core Member's past pattern of offending, and whilst helping them to settle into the community, the Volunteers assist them to recognise patterns of thought and behaviour that could lead to their re-offending. Within a Circle, the Core Member can grow in self-esteem and develop healthy adult relationships, maximising his or her chances of successfully re-integrating into the community in a safe and fulfilling way. The Core Member is involved from the beginning, is included in all decision making and, like all other members of the Circle, signs a contract committing him or herself to the Circle and its aims. Each Circle is unique, because it is individually designed around the needs of the Core Member.

Circles work in partnership with Police, Probation, local Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements and other professionals working in the field of child protection. Circles has at its heart the aim of preventing further sexual abuse, working with the objective of no more victims. Circles do this by;

- Helping a Core Member to reintegrate responsibly into the community.
- Acting as a support and safety mechanism for both Core Member and the community.

Six key values of Circles have been identified;

- Safety - We work towards the objective of no more victims.
- Responsibility – Holding individuals and organisations to accountable for their actions.
- Inclusiveness – Managing risk through inclusion not exclusion.
- Community involvement – Recognising the importance of community involvement.
- Growth and learning – Recognising that with necessary support and challenge, people have the ability to grow, learn and change their behaviour.
- Individuality and respect – Treating people with humanity and respect.

S.A.F.E.

Support and Advice for Families of Offenders and Ex-Offenders

SAFE

The SAFE Project supports offenders, ex-offenders and their families. It has been running for just over three years now and is funded by the East Lancashire Primary Care Trust (PCT) which covers the three boroughs of Burnley, Hyndburn and Pendle with a total population of 382,000 residents. SAFE primarily looks at health and wellbeing outcomes, but we will assist with other issues that will help families or individuals move on. The support is provided by project co-ordinators alongside trained, CRB cleared, volunteers recruited from local communities. The aim is to help remove any barriers that may prevent families accessing health care. There is close collaboration with other agencies to help families develop confidence and self esteem.

SAFE is based on the assumption that improving parents' everyday life will have a direct affect on the outcomes for their children. If parents are under less stress, their children will be happier and more likely to attend, and achieve better results at, school. This in turn will have positive benefits for both the schools and wider society.

How SAFE started

The SAFE Project evolved from the Family Days Project that we ran for three years, which was funded by the Home Office to work with offenders inside and outside prison. When that funding was no longer available, we approached other funders and started the SAFE Project which precludes work inside prison but carries out similar work outside prison. In addition to what we had learnt about the need for this work from the Family Days Project, we researched need when putting in the funding bids.

Activities

Anyone can refer families to SAFE. We receive referrals from Wymott Prison, Hindley Prison, Preston Prison, Children's Centres, Schools, Burnley Youth Inclusion Project and the Carers' Centre. Some self-refer as a result of seeing how the project has helped people they know. Involvement with SAFE is entirely voluntary: potential clients can say 'no'. Families value the support from the SAFE Project in part precisely because it is optional. Having the choice is empowering for them. After referral, the Co-ordinator visits the family to carry out an initial assessment on the basis of what the referral has said and what the family wants. This assessment includes:

- carrying out a risk assessment;
- drawing up an action plan;
- getting consent for the data that SAFE will hold and making it clear that the client can have access to this data at any time;
- getting permission to liaise with other agencies;
- explaining how diary notes will be kept;
- going through the volunteer agreement to specify the role of the volunteer and be clear what they may or may not undertake;
- indicating that SAFE will monitor progress and how this is done.

Each family is assigned a volunteer. Usually s/he will have accompanied the Co-ordinator in the initial visit as this helps towards building the subsequent relationship. Sometimes contact lasts as little as six weeks, but there is no time limit. We have worked with some families for as much as 3 years. The main focus is on health and well-being outcomes but we try to adopt a holistic approach and help people with whatever problems they raise, ranging from food parcels, obtaining furniture, difficulties about schooling, housing problems and the need for resettlement.

How the project has developed

In addition to being responsive to the very different needs of different families, the project has developed to meet the Primary Care Trust (PCT) targets and we have tried to take account of the PCT's evolving agenda, such as the SMYL initiative (Save a million years of life) and the Smoke Free Homes Initiative. During the course of the work we have also identified many 'hidden' carers within the families we are supporting. These might be parents with special needs children or people caring for other family members or young carers. We have now secured funding from Lancashire County Council to designate some of the part-time Co-ordinator's time for work with carers.

Another recent development has been starting a coffee morning in a local church in Accrington with a group of families from Hyndburn. This led to some participants attending a health and well-being course put on by Accrington and Rossendale College. They, plus the volunteers and staff who attended, all gained a level 1 qualification in Health and Wellbeing. We have now got very good links with the College and in September, they will be running a level 1 community volunteering course open to the families and to our volunteers to get accreditation.

Organisation

SAFE comes under the Blackburn Diocesan Board of Finance and the management structure of the social responsibility section. The lead officer for social responsibility manages the project and the team which comprises a full-time Team leader, the Co-ordinator who works 2½ days per week (10 hours funded by the PCT and 7 hours by Lancashire County Council) plus the team of trained CRB-cleared volunteers.

As Team Leader, I am responsible for the recruitment, training and management of volunteers. We are very often approached in September or October by students who are on health, social work or criminology-related courses. Other recruits come through Councils of Voluntary Service. Part of the skill of managing the volunteers is getting to know them in order to place them with families in the most appropriate and effective way. In 2010/2011, we had 32 enquiries from potential volunteers of whom 16 have been recruited, trained and CRB checked. In addition to the training we provide within SAFE, we encourage volunteers to access training offered by other agencies. We also take care to demonstrate how much we value the time, energy and commitment given by volunteers through getting them together for various events and we are planning a service in Blackburn Cathedral, followed by a cream tea and the giving of certificates.

Resources

The project is based in the Social Responsibility office within the Cathedral grounds. The accommodation charges were included in the bid to the PCT. The PCT funding covers the basic work with families. Meeting current commitments in relation to the carers required an additional grant from Lancashire County Council. We also secured a Small Sparks grant (through Help Direct, a support and information service in Lancashire) which covers the costs of running the coffee mornings in Accrington.

The PCT was impressed by the efficient running of the project as well as its effectiveness so that, having got further funding from the PCT, we are financially secure for 2 years from April 2011.

The recruitment and training of **volunteers** is an ongoing process, we have a steady stream of people wanting to volunteer for the project but it takes time to train, obtain CRB clearance and place volunteers with families. Volunteers are asked to commit at least 2 hours a week for a six month period. Some volunteers then move onto other things, which is a positive indication that

they have developed and progressed through their experience with us. We would estimate the financial value of volunteer time as about £180 per week or £9,000 per year.

Non-financial help and support

We are able to draw on management support from the diocese in various ways: the DBF oversees the finances, the Board of Education helps in relation to CRB checks and the Child Protection Office can give advice and support when necessary.

Links with other projects or organisations

Our work with families requires considerable collaboration with partner agencies: receiving and making referrals and through working together with particular families, for example, as part of the Common Assessment Framework process in which a multi-disciplinary team of practitioners form a 'team around a child' (TAC) to support a child, young person or family.

Outcomes

The PCT targets for SAFE concern the number of referrals and the number of volunteers. We send quarterly monitoring reports to the PCT. However, in working with families, SAFE uses the Outcomes Star adapted to the PCT well-being target. The Outcomes Star is a tool for supporting and measuring change when working with vulnerable people with the following 'points' of the Star:

- Motivation and taking responsibility;
- Self-care and living skills;
- Managing money;
- Social relationships and networks;
- Drug and alcohol misuse;
- Physical health;
- Emotional health and well-being;
- Meaningful use of time;
- Managing tenancy and accommodation;
- Offending.

These headings are broken down to be specific to the family and monitored at the beginning of the relationship, part way through and at the end.

For the year April 2010 to March 2011, the SAFE Project supported 22 families: 27 adults and 42 children. Examples of what we achieved with the families include:

- *support* in seeking advice on drug and alcohol issues; in completing benefits forms; in registering with a GP; in attending hospital appointments; in meetings in schools.
- *supporting* offenders through the court process; in attending Family Court Hearings.
- *referrals* for smoking cessation, to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, Children's Centres, for family therapy, to Carers' Projects; to the Community Mental Health Team.
- *signposting* families for housing advice resulting in re-housing or repairs to property; information and support to Hyndburn families about jobs available at the large new Tesco store that opened in Accrington.
- *arranging* holidays; visits to pantomimes; distribution of food parcels, Christmas presents and household items.
- *encouraging* families to access training, education and employment and successfully getting some parents onto training courses including Level 1 health and wellbeing; cooking; personal development; basic maths and English; IT.

- SAFE Co-ordinators have been the *lead professionals* with 3 families in the Common Assessment Framework process.

All of these strands of activity are designed to:

- promote their self confidence and enhance families' ability to find their own solutions to their problems.
- encourage families to access health and well-being service and join in activities and groups and reduce their isolation.
- enable better parenting.
- promote community cohesion through using locally recruited volunteer visitors.

Key success factors

As already mentioned, the non-compulsory nature of the relationship is significant for the families, but the key characteristic of SAFE is that it offers practical and emotional support that is individually tailored to fit the diverse needs of the families concerned.

Barriers

The main barriers have been time and funding and because there is not enough of either it is difficult to find the time to promote the project as well as doing all the work with the families and the volunteers. The fact that there is never long term funding is an on going issue as is finding the time to write lengthy funding bids on top of all my other work.

It has been evident recently that some of the projects or organisations to which we might have referred people in the past have either closed or been scaled down.

Challenges and opportunities

The main challenge is to find further funding to continue the work of the SAFE Project and help as many people/families as possible.

There are two ways in which the project might expand if the funding was there. First, we could work within prisons. Secondly, even remaining with our current focus, the potential would be there to move beyond East Lancashire to other areas within the Blackburn Diocese.

Nicola Carroll

http://www.blackburn.anglican.org/more_info.asp?current_id=307

Mrs B lives with her grown up son. She referred herself to the SAFE project after seeing how much it had helped her sister. Mrs B has severe learning difficulties and mental health problems. Married for 20 years, her husband had been asking her to sign forms for loans and other HP agreements, which she had done because she trusted him. She was also in serious debt with household bills and rent arrears and she did not disclose that her husband was living with her. As a result she was charged with benefit fraud and given a 30 weeks sentence suspended for 24 months and 12 months probation supervision.

What the SAFE Project was able to do for Mrs B:

- weekly visits from the Co-ordinator and additional support from two volunteers;
- arrange for her to be assessed to have a carer which resulted in her having twice daily visits from a carer;
- accompany her to a barrister who gave free legal advice and worked with the Co-ordinator to complete the paperwork for her to be declared bankrupt;
- support her through the court process;
- wrote to agencies to which she owed money to explain how the situation was to be resolved;
- applied for Disability Living Allowance – successfully after an appeal;
- contacted the Community Mental health Team when Mrs B had thoughts of suicide;
- supported her in attending hospital for incontinence;
- enabled her to attend a coffee morning which led to her attending various courses and getting a Level 1 qualification in health and wellbeing;
- helped get repairs carried out to her property by the RSL;
- helped her to get furniture and other household items.

When we first met Mrs B, she was very quiet and depressed and failing to take care of herself, partly because she had insufficient clothes and was also very overweight. She is now quite different: confident and chatty and debt free. Now under a dietician and walking daily, she has lost some weight and is taking a pride in her appearance.

Surrey Appropriate Adult Volunteer Service

Introduction

The Surrey Appropriate Adult Volunteer Service (SAAVS) operates across the county of Surrey and supports vulnerable people during the period of their detention in police custody and during the police investigation.

Origins

The initial impetus was a police review of cases indicating a failure of justice and an unwillingness by statutory services to address the issues. Surrey police wished to find a solution to concerns about how to manage juvenile criminality in the absence of a concerned parent. In many cases where no parent or carer was available or interested, the police were unable to proceed with investigations. (The Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 (PACE) called for the role of an Appropriate Adult to be available to all people held in custody who are deemed to be vulnerable.) The Diocese was concerned with issues of justice and the risks of miscarriages of justice involving young and vulnerable people. SAAVS was established following a meeting between senior members of the Diocese of Guildford and the police. The scheme is based on volunteers and the church was seen as having the best resources and experience. This has proved to have been a good judgement although much of the early experience relied on a great deal of goodwill.

The original scoping exercise took place in 1994 and the evidence was considered by a joint committee involving the police, social services and the Diocese. The findings led to a joint approach with funding from the county council secured for three years to establish the scheme. This funding has continued to this day with the scheme now independently managed by the Diocese.

How SAAVS works

An Appropriate Adult is someone who attends a police station to assist and advise a person detained in police custody where there is no parent, guardian social worker or other responsible adult (independent of the police) who can attend to support them. The detained person may be:

- a young person under 17 years of age;
- a vulnerable adult; for example, someone with a learning disability, mentally ill or with serious visual, aural or speech impairment.

An example given in the 2010 Annual Report:

Michael (name changed) is a 49 year old single man who lives with his aged father who suffers from Alzheimer's Disease. He is a sufferer of Asperger's Disorder; he is on medication and, at the time of his arrest, was slightly intoxicated. He is known to self harm. He is on a suspended sentence and a restraining order for causing harassment to Linda, a neighbour. He wanted George, his father, to attend the police station but this was not possible due to the parent's ill-health.

The role of the Appropriate Adult is to:

- look after the detained person's welfare;
- protect the person's rights;
- explain police procedures;
- ensure that important individuals such as relatives/friends are informed about the detention;
- if required a solicitor or a doctor can be called to the police station to assist the vulnerable suspect.

The work is subject to the codes of practice established by PACE. The service operates 24/7 county-wide, serving four custody centres: Reigate, Staines, Guildford and Woking. Four teams of volunteers are on call in shifts throughout the year. SAAVS provides police custody staff with rotas and they contact the available volunteer direct. When a request is made, a volunteer will respond immediately and attend the custody suite. Each case involves meeting the police, examining the custody record and then meeting with the detainee. Various procedures may follow, including identification procedures, interviews, issues regarding bail and/or charge and the volunteer may make representations on the detainee's behalf. On average, a call takes four hours, but on occasion one may extend over a matter of days.

Our role is to be concerned about any vulnerable suspect who is arrested and is for the time being in the care of Surrey Police whilst detained in the custody suite. We are there as independent lay facilitators who can help with communication, understanding the issue and ensuring fairness with the expectation that there will be a just outcome. This is not simple given the complexity of human behaviour and the vagaries of the law.

How the scheme has evolved

At first, the service was only intended to supplement the existing statutory services, but SAAVS is now the only provider of this service in Surrey. When the scheme started in 1994, it was an out-of-hours service only, with social services providing trained social workers during office hours. In 2000, the responsibility for young persons passed to the new Youth Justice Service and within a short time SAAVS was asked to take on a 24 hour response. This total service has been supplied by SAAVS since 2000. In fact, a manager of the Emergency Duty Team has said that there are no longer any social workers in the county who have experience of appropriate adult work.

The organisation

The service is operated by the Guildford Diocese Department for Social responsibility in conjunction with a well supported steering group with membership from the DSR, Surrey Police, the Duty Solicitor Team, Surrey Social Services and Surrey Youth Offending Team as well as the Scheme Manager and elected Volunteer representatives.

As well as the organisations represented on the steering group, SAAVS provides reports to Surrey Youth Justice and the Adult Mental Health Service. We have been inspected by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary/Police.

Resources

The County Council provided initial funding to establish the scheme, together with office space and team management. After a couple of years this responsibility passed to DSR.

SAAVS is now funded by an annual grant from Surrey County Council with some support in kind from Surrey Police. This includes training, use of offices and some provision of hospitality. Church buildings are also used for a range of meetings and training events.

Funding is provided at 6 month intervals. I would expect at least 6 months notice of any intention to discontinue. This is not expected to happen. However, although funding has been adequate for most of the last 16 years, SAAVS has had no increase in funding levels for the last 5 years and this year we are running a deficit for the first time. There is no prospect of any increase in funding and this will present a management challenge.

Volunteers

Most volunteers were found through the offices of the church. Volunteers commit to be available at times that are convenient to them and complement the twenty four hour roster. The duty system is web-based and dedicated to each custody suite allowing police and SAAVS management to access and amend the information at any time. Being 'on duty' means being readily available, but not necessarily sitting at home awaiting calls. New volunteers receive the induction manual and a copy of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act plus training sessions on:

- the role of the Appropriate Adult;
- codes of practice and background legislation;
- police interview techniques;
- procedures at the police station;
- the work of the Duty Solicitor;
- the client group.

In addition, they make a visit to a custody suite and two shadow calls in order to become familiar with the environment and procedure.

There are quarterly meetings as a forum for discussion, updating, training and networking and there is a quarterly newsletter.

Volunteers are entitled to claim travel, telephone and meal expenses as appropriate. They are covered by Personal Accident Insurance.

SAAVS provided a service for 1,100 calls last year at an average time of 4 hours per call. Calculated on the basis of the minimum wage, this amounts to a contribution of about £26,400 per year. However, first, the 'rate for the job' would actually be much higher. Secondly, the service stands ready to respond at immediate notice and this requires approximately 80 volunteers to be on duty across the time line to cover the four different custody suites. The organisation, management, training and recruitment necessary to provide 365 days continuous cover is, therefore, significant.

Outcomes

Over the lifetime of the scheme so far, SAAVS has dealt with over 19,000 calls. The aim is for volunteers to be able to get to the custody centre within 30 minutes and this has been achieved in relation to over 95% of calls.

External recognition has come through a Queen's Award for Voluntary service as well as a Surrey County Council Criminal Justice Award.

Success factors

Being able to provide a unique service which operates 24 hours, is county wide and supports both young people and vulnerable adults relies entirely on the extraordinary enthusiasm and commitment of our first class volunteers.

Barriers

The difficulties involved in providing the service are:

- finding high quality volunteers who are willing to devote quite a lot of time to an unknown requirement with regard to when a call will be made.
- providing an adequate degree of training and then giving each volunteer some practical experience before going live on the scheme.

- providing every volunteer with a process of recruitment, vetting and assessment and to maintain this over time with a tiny amount of administrative support.

Challenges and opportunities

The challenge is to provide more with less when there was no fat in the system. There is also a challenge in finding sufficient committed people with enough time to make their involvement viable especially as there has been an almost total loss of people taking early retirement and they have previously provided the bulk of our volunteers.

Chris Drew
www.saavs.org.uk

Routes to Roots

Introduction

Routes to Roots is Christian Action on Homelessness of Christians of all denominations working together to help meet the needs of homeless and rootless people in Poole, Dorset. It provides services to adults sleeping rough who are aimless, demotivated and lonely, and also those who are at risk of homelessness.

Origins

Routes to Roots became a registered charity in 2002, but Christian action on homelessness in Poole really began long before that. The formal action began with one church in Poole, the 'Vineyard', which had the vision to meet the needs of homeless people where they are, on the streets. They set up the first soup kitchen in Vanguard Street, which is under the flyover bridge and near the train station. Gradually other churches became inspired to do the same, until eventually every night of the week members of churches from all over Poole were providing hot drinks, soup, rolls, and perhaps most important of all, a listening ear.

In 2000, we began to look for somewhere that we could invite the homeless into, to have a little bit of respite from their chaotic lives on the street and a place where we could begin to meet some of their most basic needs. Thanks to Hill Street Baptist Church and, later, Skinner Street United Reformed Church who offered their premises for our drops-ins, we became able to do just that. As we sat and talked with them and listened to their stories, they were no longer strangers to us.

As we began to do more for the homeless we began to understand what their needs were and how much more we needed to do in order to meet those needs. Realising that we would need to raise money in order to meet these needs, we became a registered charity in 2002.

As an organisation, we were frustrated that there was no continuity work with the rough sleepers between the drop-in sessions. In 2003, with the support of the Poole Drug Action Team, we were able to employ a part-time Outreach Worker to work with the rough sleepers. This first Outreach Worker collected statistics for the Drug Outreach Team and signposted the Rough Sleepers to the relevant agencies that they needed to engage with. This work proved successful and by 2005 we were able to raise the funds to employ a full-time Outreach Worker. This allowed us to develop a more proactive and assertive outreach role. Since then, our work has evolved around continuing to meet the needs of the rough sleepers as we become aware of them.

Routes to Roots aims

- To encourage participation rather than dependency,
- To provide a place of security and warmth, where there is immediate social and spiritual support as well as the basic necessities for life; food, clothing, a place to wash and a place to rest,
- To provide opportunities that inspire creativity and alleviates boredom,
- To rebuild self worth and self confidence,
- To find homes for the homeless and to help maintain our clients in them
- To inspire, encourage and equip the people of Poole to respond to the needs of homeless people with compassion, in ways that are creative and liberating.

The main areas of Routes to Roots work are focused on Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (Maslow: 1954) in levels one and two: (1) *Physiological*: sleep, food, water, breathing, excretion, sex, and (2) *Safety*: security of body, employment, the family, morality, health, and property.

Routes to Roots activities

In 2007, Routes to Roots began employing a part-time administrator to support the Trustee Executive Committee and the Outreach Worker in implementing our vision. At the same time, Routes to Roots recognised the importance of follow-up with rough sleepers after they are housed. This led to two developments:

- In 2008, we formed a partnership with Quaker Homeless Action to develop a Befriending Teams Pilot Project designed to assist those who are placed in accommodation to remain in their tenancy. This was launched on Homelessness Sunday 2009 and includes eighteen trained volunteers working in six teams with six former rough sleepers. The pilot project will conclude in February 2011 after which the results will be available nationally to other groups.
- In 2009, we formed a partnership with Bournemouth Churches Housing Association to provide a Poole Outreach and Support Team. In practice, Routes to Roots now employs a full-time Outreach Worker as well as a full time Support Manager, who directly supports those who have been housed or who are at risk of homelessness and provides a very personalised service that identifies what each person needs to accomplish to move forward and to maintain their housing and independent living.

We have come a long way since that first soup run provided by the Vineyard Church, but we do not forget our roots are in the one true Vine, whose compassionate love for the poor, is our inspiration. Our core activities are:

- **Outreach:** Routes to Routes delivers an assertive street outreach service to individuals sleeping rough in the Borough of Poole as part of the Poole Outreach Support Team. This work is in partnership with Bournemouth Churches Housing Association (BCHA). The purpose of this work is to reduce the number of people rough sleeping and to work with partner agencies to provide sustainable housing and support packages for rough sleepers. Specifically, the Outreach Workers support clients on a one-to-one basis by assisting them in resolving the problems that are keeping them on the streets. This work includes agreeing goals and objectives to work toward, helping clients identify appropriate accommodation, assisting them in moving in, and liaising with the BCHA Training Department and other agencies to promote independent living skills. The Outreach Workers can offer up to four weeks support work with clients after they are housed.
- **Prevention and Social Inclusion Work:** We work with those who are currently housed to help minimize the risk of repeated homelessness. The Support Manager
 - seeks out and gives support to those who are in danger of losing their tenancies through whatever means, such as non-payment of top-up fees, etc.
 - encourages and works with clients who are struggling with addictions, so that they do not lose their housing.
 - works with those who might choose to give up their housing because of their isolation and loneliness by encouraging their social participation.

There are also projects that support the core work

- **Twice Weekly Evening Drop-In Sessions** run by volunteers provide a safe environment for people to meet and talk. This is an important time for Routes to Roots volunteers to listen to those who attend, which allows everyone to build trusting relationships.. A hot meal and hot and cold drinks are provided at each session. An Outreach Worker is available to provide signposting or to set up meetings. A volunteer chiropodist provides care at the Friday drop ins. The drop-ins usually attract between 14 to 30 people. The Tuesday evening drop-in is at the Hill Street Baptist Church and the Friday evening drop in is at the Skinner Street United Reformed Church.

- 🍏 *Twice Weekly Afternoon Motivational Drop-In Sessions* run by volunteers provide an environment for creative projects, guidance, and support. Their aim is to help the participants move back into 'normal' society that would include housing and independent living. A sandwich lunch and hot and cold drinks are provided at each session. The Support Manager is available to meet with the participants and arrange further support. As funding has been available, various activities have been offered, such as cooking, pottery, sewing, papier mâché, painting, and sports. These activities have had real value and Routes to Roots would like to develop this work further.
- 🍏 *Brownsea Island Conservation Project* is run in partnership with Dorset Wildlife Trust for one day each week for six weeks annually. It involves at least six clients and two volunteers working together to clear shrubs on the island. This project provides the clients with practical experience and something that they can put on their CV.
- 🍏 *Befriending Teams Project* is designed to assist those placed in accommodation to remain in their tenancy by giving them individual befriending support to become more rooted in the local community.

Governance:

As a registered charity, Routes to Roots is managed by a small Board of Trustees, who have provided the main leadership. The work of Routes to Roots is carried out by the Executive Committee, which is made up of the Trustees, plus two others. The Executive Committee meets monthly and Routes to Roots holds an Annual General Meeting.

Resources

When we began with the soup runs on the street we only needed volunteers and donated food or money to supply the soup and rolls, etc. As we evolved we needed to find premises to hold our drop-ins and more funding to pay for the hire of the church halls. Employing a full-time worker entailed both raising more funding and hiring office space.

In 2007, Routes to Roots identified that its current premises and facilities are not sufficient to fulfil its current work or future plans. In 2009-2010, we completed a feasibility study which ruled out one potential building but clarified more specifically what is needed. The building needs to:

- be in Poole Town centre;
- have room for at least two showers and three toilets;
- have kitchen facilities with an eating area for at least twenty people;
- the building needs to have room for clothes washing facilities,
- have storage area for donated item, such as clothing, bedding, and furniture; *and*
- have room for office and meeting space for Routes to Roots employees.

To raise money for the above, we have set aside some of our money to begin a building fund. We currently have £17,500 in the fund. We also need funding for two more paid employees: a General Manager and a Support Worker. To date, our funding has come from a combination of grant aid, including £5,000 from the Community Fund, donations, church giving and contracts. In 2009/10, the local ASDA store offered to make Routes to Roots one of their charities and to work with us on fund raising. Friends and supporters have raised money through concerts, cleaning cars, sleeping out and many other activities.

Volunteers

In order to provide more motivational activities in our day time drop-ins, we need volunteers who have specific skills. To continue our befriending work, we need volunteer 'befrienders'. Their contribution (calculated on the basis on the minimum wage amounts to about £600 a week

Outcomes

I think we have been successful because once there was no provision for homeless people at all. But nowadays there is food, friendship and support provided through the soup runs and drop-ins 7 days a week which alleviate some of the isolation and boredom which many of our clients experience and our befriending project helps to break the cycle of homelessness. The Outreach Team has gained national acclaim for its good practice and the number of clients who have been helped into accommodation and also received help to get their benefits and medical attention including help and advice on their addictions.

We have highlighted the needs of homeless people in Poole by the talks we have given to churches, schools and other groups and we have also enabled a lot of people to engage in voluntary work in the community. (It would be good to have further recognition of, and publicity about, our work in the Diocese.)

For Poole Borough Council, success seems to be measured by the number of clients they get off the street and into accommodation. Their aim is to have zero rough sleepers in Poole. We don't think that will ever happen. Jesus said, you will always have the poor with you. Of course getting people into housing is our aim too and our Outreach workers have had considerable success in doing that. However, I think for me success is being able to say that amongst the homeless in Poole:

*'The hungry are being fed,
The thirsty are being given something to drink
The naked are clothed
The sick and imprisoned are visited
and the stranger is invited in, to sit and eat with us.*

This is only possible because we have a small army of volunteers.

Success factors

The main success factors have probably been:

- sticking to our original aim and mission.
- the dedication of the people involved.
- recognising each of our clients as a valued individual with his or her own particular needs.
- the emphasis on preventative work to avoid people becoming homeless in the first place or slipping back into homelessness.

Barriers

- Lack of resources especially premises.
- Not having a paid manager .We have many volunteers who are very committed but most of them including myself wear other hats and, although we are passionate about the work we do, we don't always have the relevant skills required for this work. For example, I am not a good manager but I have to manage a lot of what happens in R2R because there is no one else to do it.
- Although working in partnership with BCHA has proved to be very successful in the number of people being housed, the model of Outreach we have to use is very much dictated by Poole Borough Council and restricts us from doing Outreach in the way we would like to. The amount of paper work involved restricts the time spent with clients. Having funding from the council and working with a secular organisation can be challenging.

Challenges and opportunities

The challenge is to acquire funding to employ someone to get the grips not only with the day to day management of R2R, but enable us to realise our dreams for the future and to employ a Christian support worker to fill the gaps in provision in the council-funded Outreach work. Our current aim is also to do provide more follow-up support. Although it is important to keep people in accommodation once they have been housed, there never seems to be enough support for them.

Revd Pat Southgate
Chair of Routes to Roots
www.routestoroots.org/

Exeter Churches Housing Action Team (CHAT)

Introduction

Exeter Churches Housing Action Team (CHAT) aims to deal with housing and homelessness issues in the Mid Devon area. The driving force for the Christians founding CHAT was concern about the large number of people experiencing housing difficulty in Mid Devon. It was started by Sally Chapman who saw that young people in particular could not get housing as they could not afford the deposit. She believed that everybody is entitled to decent, secure and permanent housing – somewhere to call home – and she wanted to help young people get a roof over their heads.

CHAT activities

CHAT began 15 years ago with a Deposit and Rent Guarantee Scheme. At least 80% of our work is on homeless prevention. Much of what we do is a response to the people that come to see us. The Housing Advice department has open surgeries in Tiverton 5-days a week and for half a day in Cullompton and Crediton, the other two major towns in our catchment area.

CHAT works in several key areas:

- *Housing advice* We provide free, impartial and confidential advice on housing problems for tenants and for owner occupiers and we work with those who:
 - may be threatened with homelessness.
 - are living in substandard or overcrowded accommodation.
 - are sleeping rough or on someone's floor.
 - are living in temporary accommodation.
 - are being released from prison, youth offenders' institution, or discharged from hospital without an address.

Advice is available over the phone, in person, and by email, and our advisers can act on a client's behalf and liaise with other agencies where necessary. Drop-in surgeries are available during the week at the CHAT offices in Tiverton, Crediton and Cullompton and by phone during office hours.

- *Deposit Guarantee Scheme* for people not able to raise a deposit for accommodation. Those using the scheme set up a savings plan with CHAT and once their savings reach the level of deposit guaranteed, the money is passed to the landlord and the guarantee cancelled.
- *Tenancy Floating Support* CHAT offers a free outreach service to help people move on with their lives through the provision of specialist and general advice and support dealing with issues such as:
 - Retaining their homes.
 - Making sure all benefits entitlements are applied for.
 - Sorting out financial problems.
 - Completing forms.
 - Applying for grants and loans.
 - Establishing a new home.
 - Finding appropriate services, such as getting back to work or college.
 - Managing anxieties or addictions.

- Dealing with landlords.
- Support and advice at meetings.

Tenancy Support staff can offer short and long term, intensive and intermittent support people who apply themselves or are referred by another organisation. There is usually a waiting list for support which is prioritised according to level of need and service capacity.

- *The Youth Housing Project* is a partnership between CHAT and Westcountry Housing Association (WHA). This project works with homeless vulnerable young people aged between 16 and 17 years by providing supported accommodation and teaching independent living skills to lead productive lives. CHAT manages five 3-bedroom houses in Tiverton. Two young people live in each house. One house is dedicated for use by young mothers and their babies. The accommodation is affordable for young people who are living on benefits while they attend college, undertake voluntary work activities or work full time. A vegetable patch has been created where they can grow their own food.
- *Youth mediation* Most young people become homeless as a result of family problems and most do so before the age of 19 years. Often these problems are due to everyday family circumstances. Mediation gives people the opportunity to deal with disputes and helps those involved to reach an agreement that suits everyone. It is a voluntary process that is confidential and supported by impartial, specially trained mediators who understand that you may be angry, upset, worried or frightened. CHAT's aim is to work with the homeless or those at risk of becoming homeless who feel unable to return home and promote better living relations.

In addition, CHAT does *general charitable work* which includes a furniture scheme, emergency bed and breakfast, bedding, sleeping bags and tents, a food store, meal vouchers and a general hardship fund.

The CHAT organisation

CHAT is a registered charity and company limited by guarantee. Sally Chapman is now our Honorary President. She led CHAT until April 2007. The Trust Board supported her and as CHAT grew, provided more directional leadership. Some of the trustees have been in post from the very beginning, but we have also had seven new trustees, from different communities in Mid Devon, joining us over the past 5 years. CHAT has 13 full or part-time staff.

We operate CHAT on behalf of the churches. We are very aware, however, that the churches of Mid Devon did not come to us 15 years ago and ask us to start this – it was one lady's vision. For the past 18 months we have been trying to bring all the churches into awareness and involvement. We say we want to partner them in their work of sharing Jesus with their community/town/village. "How can we help you?" We also, with the permission of clients, will try to get the local church involved in practical ways with some of our clients and their needs. The CHAT Development Team covers partnership with the churches in Mid Devon, fund raising, grant applications, networking and developing professional contacts. They encourage fund raising events, such as sponsored concerts, sport activities, social events and gifts of dried and canned food for the homeless and those who are experiencing hardship.

Resources

CHAT got started with one volunteer, a small grant and a room in a community building in the town. Until about 2000, the work was largely paid for by charitable donations and some small

grants. Then there was an opportunity to bid for statutory contracts. Two statutory (Supporting People) contracts were awarded to support tenants in their own homes, thus preventing homelessness and the Youth Housing Project. Our five houses in Tiverton are rented from a West Country Housing Association. We rent town centre office premises. Some income is generated by rents. There continue to be voluntary donations and there are sometimes one-off donations for specific items such as office furniture, computer equipment or beds. In 2009/10, there was a grant from Devon Community Foundation for the extension of the Youth Mediation Service to the 13-15 age group. Funding was also received that year from the Hardship Fund managed by the Community Development Foundation on behalf of the Office of the Third Sector within the Cabinet Office.

CHAT turnover is currently around £300,000. At present, we have reserves to keep us running for about 6 months, plus a further smallish surplus. However, the Youth Housing Project and Tenancy Support sections are run on statutory money, which is not guaranteed past March 2012. Part of the current forward planning is to try and raise the giving from Mid Devon so that these sections would not be so dependent upon local government money.

Volunteers

In addition to the trustees, there are about 13 volunteers who help with the charitable side of the work and also work in reception and carry out clerical and other activities. A wider prayer network supports CHAT's work.

Links with other organisations

The work of CHAT relies considerably on receiving referrals from, and making referrals to, other organisations. CHAT has close links with local colleges, Connexions, Social Services, police, local GPs, housing associations, private landlords and Mid Devon District Council.

Outcomes

CHAT has had an impact over the fifteen years of helping people with their housing needs - bringing them hope where there was no hope. In the year April 2010 - March 2011, there were just over 1,000 face to face meetings or telephone enquiries from people needing help and advice. The age range of clients was from teenagers to 70+, but nearly half were under 25 years old. Examples from different facets of the work are:

- There were 189 new Housing Advice clients and 103 returning ones with advice sessions totalling 935.
- Clients with no fixed abode were helped by 68 items from the store of sleeping bags and tents.
- After the Deposit Guarantee Scheme had reached capacity three quarters of the way through the year, the Trustees increased the limits to £15,000 or 30 guarantees, whichever was the higher.
- There were 33 new referrals to Tenancy Support and work with a total of 55 clients through the year.
- 26 referrals to the Youth Housing Project, of whom 20 were housed. In addition, clients undertook many constructive activities, such as The Prince's Trust course, full-time study and moving into employment.
- The Youth Mediation Scheme helped approximately 24 adults and 38 young people. This in turn had an impact on their families and on the wider community, such as the school environment.

Success factors

The main one is having the desire and the will to help when there seems to be no hope. This is expressed in the dedication and hard work of both staff and volunteers, including trustees.

Barriers

Everybody wants to be helped! Finance has been a barrier at times, but the Trustees take the view that Father God will provide for the work He wants us to do. That *does not* mean we sit and wait....we have taken the relevant steps to facilitate the whole project.

Challenges and opportunities

The tough economic climate has brought challenges both in terms of an increasing number of people seeking help and reduced resources to meet that need. The Supporting People contracts have been severely curtailed. We have just employed a fund raiser to supplement the income.

My vision is for a "1000 Club". If we could get 1000 people across Mid Devon giving £10 per month, that would take some of the pressure of the potential loss of statutory funding.

Mac Bridger
Chair

<http://www.chatmid.org/>

Horsham Matters

Origins of Horsham Matters

Horsham is a district in West Sussex. The District Council Chief Executive approached Churches Together in Horsham because he wanted the Council to work more closely with the churches, but it could not work separately with the 29 different churches. Churches Together decided to appoint a development worker. He spotted that three churches had furniture projects which, if combined, could be more effective. This gave birth to Horsham Matters, which is a social enterprise. The original aim was to continue to supply furniture and other household items to people unable to afford them. Selling items to the wider public provides the income to fund our services. Horsham is a generally well-to-do area and an expensive place to live, but we were aware of pockets of deprivation around the town that tend to be hidden by the affluence. We knew from what the churches had already been doing that there was a need for this type of service.

One of the churches that already had a furniture project had also set up a charitable company limited by guarantee, so this was taken over by Horsham Matters in November 2008 and the project started early in 2009.

Activities

All items are donated and we have been astounded by the generosity of local residents. We can supply anything anyone might need for setting up home, from crockery, cutlery and knick-knacks to beds, suites and white goods. At first, the goods were stored in 5 lock-up garages. An early task was to look for premises large enough to use for both the storage and the retail sides of the business. In October 2009, we secured a car showroom/repair centre that was no longer in use, which provided a marvellous amount of space though it was completely filled within six months and we had to get more. To some extent we have been more successful in getting donations and selling goods than in giving them away. A charge is always made if people can afford it and even for the items that are given away, a delivery charge is made.

A condition of the early CUF grant was that there should be some provision for training young people. This has been done through taking on two trainees with no formal qualifications and building a programme for them with the local Further Education College. They volunteer for two months, then are taken on with an informal contract and then more formally for 6 months (possibly soon rising to 8 months) when they are paid the minimum wage and given training. They are linked up with mentors with a view to getting them into permanent jobs and Horsham Matters has also been building relationships with local businesses that might subsequently employ them.

The organisation

Horsham Matters is managed by a Board of trustees/directors from Churches Together and we attempt to make representation as broad as possible. There is a staff team of eight, though no-one is full-time and some work very few hours. As well as the Chief Executive, there is a Youth Services Manager, a Service Development Manager, a Community Relations Manager, a Shop Manager and Warehouse Manager. In addition, we have two young people on work experience.

Resources

Initially, Horsham Matters received two grants of £5,000. One was used to meet set-up costs, for example, for computers. The other grant was used later for warehouse racks. Apart from these grants, we have survived on the basis of donated stock and sales income, with a few small cash donations. We are financially secure for about a year.

We had the premises free of charge for eighteen months, which made a real difference because it would have been difficult to afford a lease at the beginning. Early in 2011, a new landlord took over the premises, which meant we had to start paying. He is also splitting the premises so that we will lose some space and have had to find another warehouse for which we are paying the commercial rate.

We quickly found **volunteers**. A number come the churches, but many do not. One of the trustees had previously run a charity shop and she and another former charity shop manager joined and brought other volunteers with them. There are now about ten volunteers each day: 6 or 7 in the shop who each work 4.5 hours per day and 3-4 in the warehouse who work about 6 hours per day. Calculated on the basis of £6 per hour, this amounts to voluntary service worth over £200 per day.

Developing new services

Horsham Matters has started to run other services beyond its core business:

- 🍏 *Horsham Matters Young Persons' Advocacy* aims to provide free and confidential independent advocacy in Sussex for young people between the ages of 11 and 25, who need support to speak up about specific issues affecting them. We deal with short term, task-focused issues. Our advocates support a young person to speak up about issues that are affecting them or speak on their behalf; represent a young person's interests and feelings; listen to a young person and make sure that others listen too; value a young person's opinions; safeguard young people's rights and wishes. The service is open to anyone between 11 - 25 years old living in and around Horsham. Advocates are matched with young people normally referred by another service, for example, a school, a youth club or Information Shop. Young people can also request an advocate by telephone or email.
- 🍏 *Horsham Children Can Do* is a grants scheme that gives money to groups of children aged between 5 and 13 who want to do something positive in their community. Up to £1,500 is available for each group and should be spent on things that children decide would make most difference to them. To be eligible to apply, all community and voluntary groups must come from Horsham and have a group of children aged 5 to 13 who live in the Horsham area. Throughout the funding process, children are involved in who gets the money and how much. The initiative aims to empower children to plan their own projects and play a central role in the fund application process. Training is given both to the young people administering the grants and those applying for them. The aim is to provide funding for a range of activities and experiences for groups of children who have greater needs and fewer chances. Horsham Children Can Do is a partnership initiative involving Horsham District Council, Novas Scarman, West Sussex Council for Voluntary Youth Services (WSCVYS), Saxon Weald, West Sussex Youth Service and Horsham Matters.
- 🍏 *Youth Support Team*: These are local volunteers who go into parks in early evenings in summer to work with 13-18 year olds, in part acting as detached youth workers but also being similar to the Street Pastors' approach in having uniforms and working closely with the Police. Horsham Matters is the management organisation for this activity, vetting volunteers, arranging training, etc. The District Council provides training free of charge.
- 🍏 *Eliv8* started as a management training course. It has been adapted for 15 year olds at risk of exclusion from school and Horsham Matters is now participating in a partnership of local charities running it locally.
- 🍏 *Horsham Matters Community Fund* distributes sums of between £500 and £10,000 for community projects anywhere within the Horsham District. Projects funded must be for the benefit of vulnerable people, must come from a charitable body/not-for-profit organisation

and must fill a gap in local services. The focus is on projects that can demonstrate how they will work in partnership with other organisations and projects; ones that provide education and or training that leads to an improved life; ones that are short term/high impact and will involve the wider community and boost community cohesion.

Extra support

We have very recently joined the Furniture Re-use Network to get the benefit of their networking and information.

Locally, we would like a wider pool of trustees and to get each of the Churches Together in Horsham to become more actively involved. Although some are very active at present, the support of others is very passive.

Partnership

Horsham Matters works very closely with the District and County Councils, the Citizens' Advice Bureau, the YMCA and with registered social landlords.

Outcomes

The main aim of the project is being fulfilled, which is helping people with furniture, ranging from single mums coming out of refuges to low income families to older people struggling on minimal pensions. It is hard to quantify the benefits this is bringing. Other positive outcomes include:

- employment for young people;
- work experience for volunteers who have gone on to employment;
- the outcomes of the youth work projects;
- the environmental benefits of the reduction in stuff going to landfill and the increase in recycling.

In addition, Horsham Matters can be said to be successful because we are doing all these things and still covering our costs.

Key success factors

Critical to the way of working is the *collaborative approach* with other organisations, including local authorities, voluntary organisations and businesses. This entails reading the context in which we are working and ensuring that we fit into it. Sometimes working in this way can be seen to slow things down, but it is more effective in the long run.

A barrier is our ability to grow at the same time as staying integrated.

Challenges and opportunities for the future

A main challenge is to give more of our goods away, which means ensuring that the message about the service is sufficiently well known.

There are various ways in which there is potential to extend the main business, for example:

- Helping to counter fuel poverty through loft clearance for older people who have the opportunity to have their loft insulated free of charge, but are inhibited because they have so much stored there.
- Bidding to the District Council for the contract for bulky refuse collection.
- Working with a registered social landlord looking at the feasibility of having a volunteer-led service for their older tenants living in homes far too large for their current needs but who

are anxious about moving to a smaller property. We would help them consider their options and, if appropriate, assist them through the process of moving.

- In addition, the local churches are becoming more concerned about homelessness and considering a possible response.

David Sheldon

<http://www.horsham-matters.co.uk/>

Exeter Community Initiatives: Harvest

Introduction

Harvest is a project under the umbrella of Exeter Community Initiatives (ECI) that began in April 2010 and which aims to 'spread the growing bug', building skills and confidence for people to grow their own food.

Harvest beginnings

ECI, formerly known as Exeter Community Umbrella Ltd, was set up in 1993 as a registered charity and company limited by guarantee to provide an umbrella charity for local community projects working in Exeter. At that time, Palace Gate Project (a community and project development agency set up by local churches in 1991) was initiating a number of church-related and other community work initiatives across Exeter that had no proper legal framework or overall structure to which to relate. The Exeter Diocesan Board for Christian Care (a church social action agency) organised a meeting between a group of people representing some of these different initiatives to plan the development of an umbrella organisation. The organisation revised its statement of purpose, aims and priorities and changed its name to Exeter Community Initiatives in 2002 as this better reflected the proactive development role that it plays within Exeter.

ECI looks for gaps in services to the people of Exeter and fills them where possible. Focusing on groups and individuals experiencing disadvantage, there was a perceived need to build community and resilience for a changing future. The Harvest Project is designed to address this, using food growing as a vehicle for community building, confidence building, and skills development, as well as having obvious environmental and health and wellbeing benefits.

What is Harvest?

Harvest is a city-wide project, encouraging people to engage in food-growing activities in their local community. The project encourages greater community involvement through developing relationships and co-ordinating resource and skill-sharing. It mainly targets areas of the city where people are experiencing disadvantage and have limited access to chances to grow food. It aims to build confidence in the participants. Harvest organises events and skill-sharing opportunities related to food and growing, encouraging participants and the wider public to celebrate local food and their own achievements. This is a community-led project and, once established, it is hoped that community members will continue to run and develop the activities.

Harvest encourages people to grow food through:

- Providing 'starter kits' for people with limited space to grow their own Harvest Mini Garden.
- Providing training and ongoing support to new growers.
- Enabling community members to share their skills and knowledge.
- Supporting schools in their food growing activities.
- Identifying sites for community growing.
- Promoting the health and wellbeing, environmental and economic benefits of growing food.

Harvest activities

- *Incredible Edible MiniGardens* are for new growers or those with limited space, with support from volunteer Growing Champions. People who become Incredible Edible Mini Gardeners will be given a starter kit of a container, compost and seeds, plus the support of a local growing champion, a trained volunteer who will be able to offer advice and support to make sure that everything goes well.
- We are very excited to be launching Exeter's (possibly the world's?!) first ever *Permaculture Pub* at the NBI, St David's Hill, Exeter. This is a joint project with Permaculture and Organic Growers of Exeter. Permaculture is a system for living and growing food which mimics nature's processes and uses design principles to get the most out of a growing space. Two local permaculturists introduced a group of volunteers to the design process. The volunteer's story below tells what happened next.

Permaculture Project at the NBI Pub – A volunteer's story

After all our planning, training and design meetings it was time to start work. On a fine April Sunday afternoon we all met in the courtyard garden of the pub. We set about clearing the overgrown areas, emptying and replanting the pots and containers. We put all the plants left over in small containers to be sold inside the bar to raise funds for the project. It was good to see the results when people work for a common purpose. Since then we have been several times to do some more work on the garden, but the best thing is just to come and sit and enjoy the community garden in one of the best and friendliest pubs in the city.

- *St Sidwell's Community Garden Challenge* is a competition to see who can get the most value from their raised bed in the community garden at *St Sidwell's Centre*, a community centre in the heart of Exeter. Inspired by a London grower who produced £750 worth of produce on his balcony, the teams have until the end of September to grow as much as they can using organic methods.
- *Community Growing* – Harvest can support people and groups who want to grow food together in Exeter. If you are an existing community group, or an informal group of friends and neighbours who would like to start a community garden. Harvest can:
 - help identify suitable land, and liaise with owners if necessary.
 - help groups to develop constitutions and work through any legal issues.
 - help you publicise your project and support your fundraising efforts.
 - provide practical support and guidance for getting started.
 - recruit volunteer Growing Champions to provide ongoing support to a group.
- *Cowick Allotment* – a group of volunteers have been busy clearing and planting an allotment plot on Cowick Lane. The plot has been very productive and is providing new gardeners with an opportunity to learn together about growing food on an allotment scale.
- *Guinness Trust Dreamscheme* – Harvest has worked with the Guinness Trust to help 20 children create a community garden on Guinness Lane, Exwick. The garden will provide winter greens, broccoli, garlic, leeks and salad and will be nurtured by the local children, with support from a Harvest Growing Champion.
- *City Fruit Harvest* invites tree owners who can't manage all their own fruit to donate surplus fruit to the project. Scouts will ascertain when the fruit will be ripe, and arrange dates for harvesting. A group of harvesters will go and pick the fruit. The tree owner gets first pick of the harvest. Good quality fruit will be distributed to where it is needed, such as homeless charities, children's centres, refugee support group. Any damaged fruit gets turned into juice, jam, chutney, etc.

- *Seedy Sunday* is an opportunity to swap with other growers seeds, seedlings, plants and produce grown, picked, baked, pickled or preserved and meet other gardeners and share tips.

A developing story

Harvest has developed over time as new ideas have been brought on stream. We evaluate each activity, so ideas evolve as we try things out and refine them. The main leadership come from the parent organisation, Exeter Community Initiatives. Key stakeholders and partners include Exeter City Council, Devon Wildlife Trust and Exeter Wild City (a partnership project of the two former organisations), Exeter College, Exeter Council for Voluntary Service (CVS), local housing associations and Love Local Food, a local food supplier.

Resources

The budget for Harvest's first 3 years was £278,740. Funding came from the Big Lottery Fund's local food fund. This paid for two full time workers who needed office space (available within ECI's premises). The workers immediately set about recruiting volunteers. We have had donations of various resources (seeds, plants, compost, other materials, expertise, etc) from a range of businesses and organisations locally.

We continue to look for bits of funding for specific activities, and there is a shortfall in our budget over the life of the project which we are trying to address. We are permanently on the look-out for more volunteers. Apart from the grant from the Big Lottery Fund, current sources of funding are grants from local councillors plus lots of donations in kind. There has also been non-financial support from some local councillors as well as from various organisations.

Harvest has links with various local food education projects, schools, community centres, youth groups, children's centres and other grassroots community organisations and now a project is being developed in collaboration with Exeter Islamic Centre and Exeter University.

Volunteers

Volunteers have come from a range of organisations, including Exeter Islamic Centre. Harvest currently has over 30 people signed up as volunteers. Some help on a weekly basis; others join in from time to time when extra hands are needed. They get involved in a variety of ways:

- *Growing Champions* are trained volunteers who will offer support to Incredible Edible Mini-Gardeners. It doesn't matter how old or young you are, or how much or how little you know. All you need is a bit of passion for growing food and the willingness to share that passion with new gardeners. We provide two days of free training so that volunteers feel confident about supporting other people and helping them to get growing. The commitment after that is up to the volunteer but, at a minimum, the expectation is that s/he will be prepared to support 5 new growers over the course of a year, maybe as little as a visit and a few phone calls to each grower.
- *Events Volunteers* - Harvest will be organising and attending a range of events throughout the year. We need people to help with all aspects of putting on events, from planning, leafleting, delivering materials to being present on the day, helping with planting workshops, clearing up etc.
- *Drivers* with their own vehicles are always needed for collecting and delivering materials (compost, containers, tools, plants etc). Mileage is paid.

Chestnut Children's Centre – A volunteer's story

At the Chestnut Children's Centre in Wonford I have been working with a group of families developing a piece of land to grow vegetables. It is a great project to be involved with, to take a piece of empty grass and to watch it turn in to a productive growing space. Most of the families have never grown any food before and it's wonderful to see their enthusiasm. It's so fantastic to see the little ones enjoy planting seeds and watering the plants. Hopefully I am passing on my passion for growing things.

Forest School at Countess Wear Primary School – A volunteer's story

In Forest School, I have been helping with year 6. We have been working out in the community doing gardening. Some of the things we have done: laying slabs to make a path; make a compost bin; clearing the borders of weeds; put flowers and bulbs in the borders; making a vegetable patch and growing potatoes, beans, onions, carrots; making bird tables; planting wild flower patches to attract bees, butterflies, etc. In forest school the children grow their own vegetables then they cook what they have grown for snack time. They learn all about nature. They like working in teams and learning new stuff. They like to see the development from sowing the seeds, watching it grow, looking after it then harvesting and eating it. The children enjoy Forest School and working with their hands and they have fun.

Measuring success

It is early days, but we measure all kinds of indicators; for example, how many people get involved, what their feedback is and whether they get involved in other activities. The main indicator of our success will be the parts of the project that continue beyond the funded period of Harvest.

Key success factors so far have been

- engaging people from our target communities;
- building good links with other organisations;
- working collaboratively with other agencies.

The main barriers are time, energy, targeting publicity and balancing seasonal work throughout the year.

Challenges and opportunities for the future

We hope to build on the successes of the first year. We are becoming better known in Exeter, which generates more opportunities to get more people involved in more activities.

Ellie Parker

Andi Tobe

<http://www.eci.org.uk/HarvestHarvest>

St Paul's Church, Manningham

Introduction

The foundation stone of St Paul's Manningham in Bradford, an early English Gothic-style York stone church, was laid on the 5th November 1846. The population of the Parish of Manningham has always been in a constant state of change. These days, we have church members from other parts of Bradford, as well as members from abroad. There are many rented houses and flats in Manningham, so it is not unusual for people to come and join us for a short while before they move on. On the other hand, some of our members have been worshipping here for 70 years or more. When the church was built, Manningham was expanding as people came to work in the mills. The decline in its fortunes echoed those of the rest of Bradford in the 20th century, but the mosaic of cultures, beginning with German Jewish merchants arriving from the 1830s, continued with immigrants from Eastern Europe after World War II followed by Caribbeans, Pakistanis, Indians and Bangladeshis.

The term 'Sharakat' (Communion) in Urdu speaks about the spiritual relationship or close association between faith communities. The term encourages the faith communities to meet and share with one another their intrinsic values on matters that affect the common life of the people in Manningham. Some of the issues faced by our community are poverty and unemployment and their effects which are visible on our streets. How do we address issues such as drugs, alcohol, violence, prostitution and sometimes our own isolation from each other? We are speaking about ourselves, our own people, our own youth and our own children. *Sharakat* (Communion) is an attempt to develop a common agenda: a way forward to make our community better. An initiative of St. Paul's Church, on the one hand, we invite our neighbours of different faiths to discuss and respond together to issues in Manningham and, on the other hand, we share with our neighbours because of our faith, doing our portion of caring for the poor through a Drop-in Café.

Origins of the Sharakat Project

St. Paul's Church acknowledges the religious diversity in Manningham area and has been committed to be in touch with its neighbourhood. Our building has long been used for different community projects in Manningham. In a very special way, St. Paul's had supported the initiative of the Omega project (which has now stopped) in serving those on the street who need love, care and attention. Some of our members in their individual capacities were deeply involved in dealing with issues of poverty, asylum seekers, interfaith relations and ethnic diversity. We built up our relationship with the local community and projects and realised there was a lack of grassroots connectedness and a lack of a proper platform to bring local projects together to speak to each other. The main impetus to initiate the project came from the Vicar of St Paul's in partnership with Baptist and Methodist local congregations and a Muslim Charity.

Activities – (1) Sharakat

First, we meet every second month and have 'Sharakat' (Communion): sharing a meal together and hearing from each other about our faith teachings as we address those common issues that affect adversely the lives of our people, children and youth. It has been done in the form of a talk from a speaker from a particular faith and response made by the members present followed by open discussion and concluding with a meal together. Hence 'Sharakat' is a gathering of people who want to converse seriously with each other and share their intrinsic values from a particular faith perspective. This has enhanced our religious literacy and has built our capacity to work together.

The first Sharakat meeting was in February 2008, which was attended by about 70 people from nearly every faith community. The main speaker was a young Muslim law student who talked about the opportunities and challenges of working together in Manningham. He highlighted the

challenges faced by young people in general and Muslims in particular. He referred to drug-related issues. He stressed the need to engage youth in our society at every level. People from different faith communities responded to what they had heard and showed support for Sharakat (Communion) as a way of promoting dialogue and action to build social capital in Manningham. The need to keep youth at the centre of activities was underlined. The meeting finished with a shared meal.

Subsequent meetings have included, for example:

- the involvement of the Police and a focus on preventing crime;
- input from Bradford District Faiths Forum;
- reports about work with asylum seekers and how churches were uniting with other agencies to make Bradford a city of sanctuary;
- tours of the nineteenth century Reform Synagogue which was fighting closure;
- presentations of new developments and other projects in Manningham;
- reports from representatives of each group about their service to the community;

St Paul's produces a quarterly newsletter, which includes reports of the Sharakat.

Activities (2) – Drop-in Café

St Paul's Drop-in Café provides three course lunches for people who need physical, psychological, social and spiritual nourishment. The priority is to provide a safe and welcoming environment where people are treated with respect, listened to and hopefully feel the love and warmth of God whilst they are there. It is open between 12.30 and 2 pm every Friday for people who are homeless and/or mainly unemployed. Since it first opened in November 2007 with fewer than ten customers, there has been a gradual increase to an average attendance now of about 50 men and women from various national, ethnic and religious backgrounds. The café is fully supported by members of other local churches and people from other faiths. It is managed by a team of Christian members from Westgate Baptist Church, Trinity Methodist Church and St. Paul's Church in Manningham.

Related activities

St Paul's is striving to strengthen Asian Christian ministry. The church hosts Urdu services for Asian Christians. This has led indirectly to "Beddaari" (Revival), a research project led by Canon Dr. Arun John to audit needs within the South Asian Community in Northern England. South Asian Christians, many of whom have been converted from Muslim and Hindu backgrounds, are one of the most neglected of minority ethnic communities in the UK. Their conversion to Christianity caused them to be ostracized by their own people and their white neighbours assume they are Muslims or Hindus. They describe how this has implications in terms of social inclusion, availability of jobs, poverty, self esteem and implications on young people. It can also seem that even the Church has not thought of them as a potential missional partner. Those responsible for converting them to the Christian faith have been more interested in building Christian-Muslim relationships or Christian-Hindu relationships. In areas such as Bradford, local government policies and indeed national policies focus more on the needs of ethnic minorities belonging to other faiths. The South Asian Christian Community, it appears, has become a minority within a minority.

There is a steering group included members of the Urdu speaking congregation, the PCC, ecumenical partners and the Vicar. The research aims to raise the profile of South Asian Christians and to encourage and help them to integrate with the wider Christian community in the UK with more confidence. It will make recommendations for ways of reaching out (especially to young people), building the capacity and confidence of this community and reducing social exclusion

Evolving activities

The agenda of our faith meetings has expanded in various directions, which include networking with different community projects, interfaith engagement and advocacy for peace and goodwill in the community.

One offshoot was the launch of the 'Sadbhavana Sangaatee' (Goodwill Gathering) between St Paul's and Shree Laksmi Narayan Hindu Temple in the Bradford 3 postal district in December 2009. It arose from recognition of the importance of building trust in the city and in our neighbourhoods. 'Sadbhavana Sangaatee' indicates a person who has good feelings towards others. This initiative is the result of a few important meetings facilitated by the Vicar and Director of Bradford District Faiths Forum and Mr. Kashmir Singh Rajput (The Chair of the BDFP) held at the Hindu Cultural Society and Gurdwara Guru Gobind Singh Ji in Bradford. During these meetings, it was observed that there was an urgent need for the major faith communities in Bradford to have goodwill gatherings to avoid the possible future isolation of faith communities from one another; to promote good interfaith relations; to highlight the contribution of different faith communities building the economy of this city; and to increase the understanding between all faith communities and wider society. Some meetings were arranged with the Bishop of Bradford and his Interfaith Advisor in which the Hindu and Sikh Communities in Bradford expressed their concern that the majority faiths and Bradford Council were not giving enough attention to minority faith communities. The meetings looked critically into how to promote the inclusion of all faith communities in decision-making regardless of their size.

Leadership has come from Clergy and Bradford District Faiths Forum. **Partners** who have been actively involved with us are: Westgate Baptist Church, Trinity Methodist Church, Save Mothers Trust (a Muslim Charity), the Hindu Cultural Centre Old Leeds Road, Bradford District Faiths Forum and individual volunteers from different denominations in the Drop in Café. SM Community College, an Islamic Educational Institute established since 2006 designed to cater for the needs of Muslim men and women of all ages, has hosted and participated in Sharakat meetings.

Resources

We use church premises. Funding has come from the Church Urban Fund and Diocesan Social Services, Bradford District Faiths Forum. We need more funding to appoint a co-ordinator. We are financially secure until September 2012.

We are reliant on **volunteers** in the Café and, calculated on the basis of the minimum wage, their contribution amounts to over £3000 p.a.

Non-financial help and support

We have had support nationally from the Church Urban Fund and locally both from some secular organisations and from our partners amongst the faith organisations. We would welcome more support at diocesan level.

Outcomes

Sharakat (Communion) has completed four years of its life and has been widely appreciated by faith communities as well as by Bradford Council and local community projects in Manningham. It remains an effective platform through which local faith communities, community projects, Bradford Council and Bradford District Faiths Forum decipher information about their activities. It continues to draw people together to think, to reflect and to connect with one another and it encourages co-operation and collaboration among faith communities and local community projects. It is able to develop a joint agenda to respond to the common challenges faced by the

community in Manningham. The following important events during the year 2010 were highlights of Sharakat (Communion):

- Sharakat supported Sadbhavana Sangtee (Goodwill Gathering) an initiative of St. Paul's Manningham and Shree Laksmi Narayan Temple in Bradford 3.
- Sharakat (Communion) was used as platform by the Bradford Council to communicate its strategy and seek support from the local community to prevent any possible conflict caused by the English Defence League.
- Sharakat supported the initiative of Save the Mothers Trust in Bradford 6.
- There is every possibility that Sharakat (Communion) model will strengthen community relationships in Lidget Green area.

Success factors

- Drive and commitment.
- Making everyone welcome.
- Bringing faith leaders together.
- Furthering interfaith understanding as well as identifying and acting on issues of common concern.
- Mixing socially and sharing meals as well as having 'business' meetings.

Barriers

Apart from the constant pressure on time and resources, one barrier has been that the local Mosque has not been not regularly involved even though Muslim charities have been.

Challenges and opportunities

Sustainability and capacity are always key challenges. Sharakat (Communion) wants to appoint a coordinator, but we need more funds and we hope to look into the resources this year. An imminent change in incumbent at St Paul's will also present a challenge to sustaining the work and the relationships that have been built up.

<http://www.manningham.bradford.anglican.org/>

The Feast

Introduction

The Feast in Birmingham aims to help young people of faith overcome barriers of fear, prejudice and apathy between religions and cultures, and empower them to be peacemakers and agents of social change in their communities.

Origins

“If the church is going to engage with the world as it is, not just how we remember it to be, then helping young Christians befriend Muslims has to be taken seriously by the church. Whenever we’ve asked Christian teenagers where they learn about Islam they always say either school, friends or the media. They never mention church. Youth Encounter wants to play its part in changing that answer.”

The Feast was set up by Dr Andrew Smith, who had spent more than 10 years researching and exploring ways to help young Christians engage well with their Muslim peers whilst working for Scripture Union. His area of ministry was in Birmingham with its diverse cultural and religious mix. Methods of Christian mission used in white, British schools did not work for the Asian, Muslim young people. Through his work in schools in Birmingham, it became clear that the schools most interested in finding ways to develop collective worship were those with a majority of Muslim pupils. This led to a focus on Christian/Muslim relations. He ran his first event for Christian and Muslim young people in 2000. Under the title *Faith and Young People*, about 50 young people from across Birmingham spent the day getting to know one another, discussing their faith, exploring the similarities and differences between the two faiths and the issue of stereotyping. The aim was to examine how they could live together as people of faith in Britain. Several more events took place over the next ten years and interest grew both amongst young people wanting to participate and adults interested in this way of working. This was the start of Youth Encounter, which runs *Faith and Young People* events bringing together Christian and Muslim young people for dialogue¹ and provides training and resources to help churches equip Christian young people live out their faith confidently and humbly amongst their Muslim friends. The aims of the *Faith and Young People* events are:

- to bring together Christian and Muslim young people (particularly aged 14-19).
- to give those young people a chance to encounter and build friendships with people of a different faith.
- to provide a safe and informal environment where they can explore issues relevant to young people of both faith communities.
- to help them learn how to express their beliefs in constructive and peaceful ways.
- to give them a chance to have their voice heard.
- to model good practice of Christian-Muslim encounter for others to learn from.

Dr Smith developed the approach and strategies through trialling different means of encounter and through research. He conceived the idea of The Feast to advance them. His long term work

¹ The British Council of Churches set out four principles of dialogue which many people have used since and which inform the Faith and Young People events:

- Dialogue begins when people meet each other
- Dialogue depends on mutual understanding and mutual trust
- Dialogue makes it possible to share in service to the community
- Dialogue becomes the medium of authentic witness

with many churches in Birmingham meant he was well able to assess their likely interest in, and support for, this sort of work.

In 2008, he brought Christians from the Sparkhill area together to consider whether to set up a charity that would be an Associate Trust of Scripture Union. Sparkhill is one of the most ethnically diverse communities in Birmingham. After much prayer and discussion, five people agreed to become trustees and work towards setting up a charity and seeking funds. The Feast Trust was formed in the autumn of 2008 and gained charitable status early in 2009.

How the Feast works

At the heart of The Feast is a desire to bring together Christian and Muslim teenagers to build friendships, explore faith and change lives. The way we work is basically to build good relationships with Muslim and Christian young people and then invite them to events where they can meet one another. The relationships with the young people have to be developed in distinctive ways with the two communities as they have different structures and youth programmes here in Birmingham. There are several secondary schools where most pupils are Muslims but none where the majority is Christian. A number of Churches run youth groups for Christians, but very few Mosques run youth groups. Consequently we seek to work with Muslim young people in schools and Christians in churches before bringing them together.

We work through our Schools Workers in three secondary schools, building trust amongst Christian and Muslim young people, and then inviting them to meet up at weekend and holiday programmes. Through these encounters we want to see them explore faith, build friendships and change lives, starting with their own and then those around them. The first Schools Worker was appointed in July 2008 to work with two schools with a majority of Muslim pupils and to network with local churches to meet Christian young people and then to run events bringing both groups together. A gap year worker also joined the organisation at this time. In February 2010, a Project Manager was appointed, who formerly worked for Scripture Union in Australia. This has enabled the work to expand in terms of the number of events and in the autumn of 2010 work started in a third school in the Aston area of Birmingham. A part-time Administrator joined the team to help the Project Manager.

The events we run are totally youth focused. They use good youth work practice and have the interests and needs of the young people at heart. A typical event involves warm-up activities, discussion starters, group work, games and refreshments. We also make sure that the needs of all the young people are catered for, including provision of *halal* food and prayer times for both Christians and Muslims.

The topics we discuss are ones of concern to young people rather than ones that faith leaders, theologians or other adults think they ought to be discussing. In all this we facilitate the young people to share their beliefs, experiences and ideas with one another rather than telling them what they ought to be sharing. The events we run tend to be small in number (typically 20 maximum) and we work hard to make sure there are equal numbers of Muslims and Christians. Over the years we have found that small events have a much bigger impact on the young people than large events. Whilst we could run one event for a hundred young people, running 5 events for 20 will be more effective. Although it is more costly in terms of time and money, this is an investment that we think is worthwhile.

Discussions look at a topic of interest to the young people (e.g. fashion, peer pressure, the environment) and then explore what Islam and Christianity say about that issue. As we do this, we highlight both the similarities and the differences between our two faiths, and encourage the young people to find ways to disagree peacefully. To help the discussions flow and to avoid unhelpful conflict, we have developed guidelines for dialogue that to set a framework for our discussions at every event:

- 1) We will listen to what everyone has to say.
- 2) We will be honest in what we say.
- 3) We will speak positively of our own faith, rather than negatively of other people's.
- 4) We will respect other people's views, even if we disagree with them.
- 5) We will not treat people here as a spokesperson for their faith.
- 6) We will not tell others what they believe, but will let them tell us.
- 7) We will acknowledge similarities and differences between our faiths.
- 8) We will not judge people here by what some people of their faith do.
- 9) We will not try and force people to agree with our views.
- 10) We can ask for a discussion to be stopped if we feel uncomfortable with what is being said.
- 11) We will make an effort to get along with everyone regardless of their faith, gender, race or age.

Following the events we encourage the young people to take the lessons from The Feast out into their everyday lives. This might be by reflecting on the way they treat people at school, inviting friends to future events or by spreading the word through videos or blogs.

New developments

We are now developing the idea of Exchange Events, where we work with a group of Christians from a church and a group of Muslims from one of our schools, and take them to each of their 'home' settings; for example between Kenilworth and Aston.

The organisation

The Feast is a registered charity with five trustees, who serve for three year terms, renewable at the AGM. As an Associate Trust of Scripture Union, trustees must be in agreement with the aims and statement of belief of the Scripture Union.

The first strategic plan covered 2010-2012, but has already become obsolete because the Project has expanded beyond what was originally envisaged. The strategic plan will be revamped, therefore, in the coming autumn.

Leadership

Clearly the original and sustained impetus for The Feast has come from our founder and chair of trustees, Dr Andrew Smith, who is also the Christian youth work representative on the Christian Muslim Forum. He is taking over as the Bishop of Birmingham's Interfaith Adviser and is heading up the [Presence and Engagement Centre](#) in Birmingham. As The Feast's work develops, staff are taking a greater role in setting the direction.

Resources

The Feast is based at the [Springfield Project](#), a Children's Centre connected to St Christopher's Church, Springfield. Our office and meeting space represent a donation in kind from the Springfield Project. Now there is also a new base in Aston at Broadway School called the Safehaven which costs c. £5,000 per year (half-time rent). These are needed for the office work of our staff, but also to provide youth work space for various out-of-school programmes.

Funding was raised before employing the first worker. At present, about £110,000 per year is needed to run the project. Sources of funding are:

- Grant aid represents about 65% made up of grant from lots of different bodies, but the most substantial currently is from CUF as part of the [Near Neighbours](#) programme.
- Donations make up about 25%, but we want to see this increase to 50%. Currently, we have about £16,000 p.a. from supporters in Australia and £9,600 from UK supporters.

- Church giving is largely incorporated into donations, but may be 5%.
- The service level agreement with schools brings in about 10%.

We have a policy of keeping our funding sources diverse, and not accepting any single source of funding that will exceed 25% of our total expenditure. We aim to be in existence for the long term so we are not contemplating funding running out at this stage. We are building a long term income base, as well as a reserves account. This said we are eagerly raising funds as this year has a shortfall of about £15,000.

Volunteers are essential to the project. Initially, the volunteer contribution came largely through the trustees, but in the last financial year we had over 50 volunteers giving more than 1,200 hours, and could not do the work without them. Calculated on the basis of the minimum wage, this amounts to a contribution of £7,200 though for the work they are doing, they could command a much higher hourly rate.

In addition to being linked with church premises at St Christopher's, we may be using churches at the Christian locations like Kenilworth, Redditch, Painswick, and Halesowen for the Exchange Events.

Non-financial help and support

Various Diocesan officers have been extremely helpful: the Youth Co-ordinator, the Regeneration Department staff and the Interfaith Advisor. Other churches or faith groups have also been supportive as have the schools and some local council staff and police officers.

Nationally, the Scripture Union has been able to provide advice and training for trustees and staff, as well as a national framework for The Feast's activities and support for residential activities.

Outcomes

In the past year we have run about 25 youth events and attracted about 150 young people. Of these, 40% have been to more than one event, and the ratio of Christian and Muslim has been almost exactly half. Statistically we have been extremely happy with our ability to find and attract young people.

Even better has been the evidence of how young people have changed. We keep many feedback forms where participants report how they were surprised at what they had learnt through their involvement with The Feast. Then we have been able to find out much more about personal changes as we get to know young people and interview them informally. Changes have included improvements in behaviour, gaining new skills and knowledge, increases in self-confidence and aspiration and reductions in negative feelings about people who are different.

Another indication of effectiveness is the support of the schools. The project is demonstrating through Ofsted its contribution to the schools' work on cohesion and citizenship and evidence of the schools' satisfaction is that it was not necessary to make a detailed case for continuing the initiative.

Success factors

- Our rules of engagement for dialogue as developed by Dr Smith have been invaluable.
- Keeping the groups small has been more effective than large events.

- Our intertwining of good youth work with good interfaith dialogue is extremely important. In fact, a lot of what we do is just really good Christian youth work, with a solid dose of respect for people who are different.

Barriers

- Funding - naturally.
- Volunteers - we really want to increase and expand our volunteer team, especially amongst Muslims.
- Churches - It is still a very hard slog to get churches on board. We are aware that we need to do a lot more work in helping churches and Christian youth leaders to work with us. This area is a difficult one to 'sell' to the average busy youth worker, especially with the huge amount of baggage held across the spectrum of churches around the theme of interfaith. We will be trialling a few new strategies in the next school year.

Challenges and opportunities

As the next staff appointment, we want to secure a Muslim youth worker to help us establish and nurture our connections with the Muslim community beyond the young people and families that we currently find through schools.

We are very excited about the future of our work, and I am looking forward to an autumn of development of our next 3 years of work.

Tim Fawssett
<http://www.thefeast.org.uk/>

Appendix II: Examples of Infrastructure Organisations

Churches Trust for Cumbria

The Churches Trust for Cumbria (CTfC) was created in 2008, supported with funding from the North West Development Agency and the National Churches Trust. Its purpose was to assist the county's faith communities to develop partnerships for a secure future. CTfC's objectives are:

1. To help faith communities develop a vision linked to wider community plans, which puts churches at the hub of the community, with greater use of their buildings for faith-based and other activities.
2. To encourage partnership and community engagement linking local individuals, community groups, businesses and public sector organisations with churches.
3. To maximise the resources available to repair, maintain and develop church buildings in Cumbria; to help ensure those resources are used efficiently; and to target new funding where it will be most effective.
4. To support those responsible for managing churches, particularly through training and sharing of information and best practice.
5. To help churches fulfil their potential as part of Cumbria's cultural offer whilst doing justice to their historic and religious roots; to enhance the experience of visitors to churches; and to increase contributions by visitors towards the upkeep of churches.

Unlike most counties, Cumbria has never had a Historic Churches Trust. CTfC fills that gap, but also takes a new approach to supporting faith communities. This new approach recognises and values the contribution that church buildings and church communities make to society in Cumbria, beyond their core purpose as places of worship. A website provides information for those responsible for maintaining and improving church buildings. The Trust also undertakes consultancy to assist church communities in developing a long term vision for the use of their assets with the support of local people. This has led to one of the most innovative projects undertaken by the Trust: the Church Buildings Strategic Review, which was run as a pilot in two geographical areas – each loosely based on a deanery – involving all Anglican and Methodist sites. It is now being rolled out across the remainder of the county.

CTfC organises and publicises training and events for those caring for church buildings and seeks to develop partnerships with organisations to involve churches in positive economic, environmental and social change in Cumbria. CTfC is a secular organisation able to support all faith communities, but recognises that over 99% of places of worship in Cumbria are Christian.

Directors: Gina Dowding/Nigel Robson, Churches Trust for Cumbria, c/o Church House, West Walls, Carlisle, CA3 8UE. Tel: 07501 469374

www.ctfc.org.uk

Infrastructure Support in the Diocese of Portsmouth

One of the aims in the Diocese of Portsmouth Council for Social Responsibility is as far as possible to move away from dependency on grant funding. It starts from the recognition that the presence of an Anglican church in most neighbourhoods is an incredible legacy and potential asset. The challenge is how to make it *“a dynamic and sustainable resource for our mission and be a centre of light, hope and belief for all? We believe that it is in our local communities where we can see, experience and best understand the extent of change and disadvantage.”*

Kairos Process

In 2003, the Diocese launched the Kairos process to help parishes think strategically about the future. It was conceived as a time of thinking afresh about before drawing up strategic plans for each deanery. *“It aimed to tackle five key issues: the ageing profile of our congregations, the national shortage of stipendiary clergy, the cost of maintaining our buildings, the lack of relevance of the Christian faith to many in our communities and the on-going financial challenges facing many dioceses.”*

Taken from the Greek work meaning ‘an opportune moment for change’, Kairos involved thinking about how to be God’s church in a way that is deeper (more spiritual), broader (more involved in the local community) and leaner (in its structures). There were periods of theological reflection and times for in-depth research into communities to lead towards more strategic thinking. There was also the chance to work in clusters of parishes or across whole deaneries, to ensure that the work of individual parishes complemented each other.

The diocese went through two cycles of the Kairos process, each focusing on one of the original key issues. The first phase looked at community engagement, and took place during 2004-05. Parishes examined the needs of the communities they served and the resources at their disposal and how those could best be deployed to meet the needs. It resulted in hundreds of community projects being kicked off across the diocese, putting the Church back at the heart of local communities, including plans to build low-cost housing on land owned by the Church, train lay people in pastoral visiting, appoint youth and children’s workers, and build extensions to churches. The second phase launched in 2008 focused on church buildings. ‘Buildings’ was an issue that appeared to be universal across virtually all parishes. Many successful building projects have since been undertaken.

Rapid Parish Development Programme

The Rapid Parish Development Programme (RPDP), introduced in 2009, succeeded the Kairos Process. The initial thinking behind it was to work with parishes that were considering developing new community facilities. It quickly became evident that the (re)development of facilities was the least important issue. There was a danger that more churches would be burdened with poorly thought through and delivered (re)development projects. RPDP starts from first principles with the ‘why’, ‘what’ and ‘how’ questions for parishes thinking through what they can offer to their local community and more widely. It uses social/business development techniques adapted to help participants think about the potential role of their Church. Engagement with local people, businesses, schools and community organisations is at the heart of the approach. *“We are ambitious for mission and impact and we want our churches to be successful in a way that is meaningful to them, their context and their community.”*

RPDP was developed by the Council for Social Responsibility (CSR) which is now working with the Church Urban Fund to share the approach nationally. The programme works as a collaboration between selected parishes and the Diocese. It provides an opportunity for parish teams to:

- Develop a positive understanding of the dynamics and opportunities in their community.

- Identify the specific elements that their mission work and/or proposed development will need to include to achieve the desired benefits.
- Present their vision, objectives and ambitions clearly and positively.

Parishes pay a fee to participate in the programme. They are visited by a facilitator prior to starting to get a sense of their issues, context and potential. The programme usually consists of two group workshops, involving three parish teams (a minimum of three – incumbent and two lay members) and a parish presentation. The workshops cover:

- social and cultural challenges facing local churches;
- identifying and engaging with the emerging opportunities in the local area;
- stating clearly the real priorities;
- what is the offer to the local market?
- developing a positive pitch;
- to whom and how will this be sold?
- what do the buildings need to do?
- how can this be resourced to achieve the ambitions set out?

If appropriate, parishes do additional work between workshops engaging with local people to help them identify new opportunities.

An example: St Francis Church, Leigh Park, Havant

Leigh Park is a post-war ‘overspill’ community. We participated in the pilot of the RPDP, which helped to challenge, expand and focus our thinking. When we started, we thought what we wanted was a new hall. Now we realise that we need and can achieve much more: we have come up with a broader, ambitious and inspiring set of ideas. We are organising our emerging plans around the idea of ‘heart of the park’. We have worked with postgraduates and interns from the University Architecture Department (funded by the South East Coastal Communities Project). Whilst originally intended to be at the geographical centre of the community, the town centre was moved after the building of the church had started. The vision now is to fulfil the original vision by using the strengths of the ‘green’ site, provide a community anchor that takes a leading role as the heart of the park and take advantage of our location in relation to the shopping precinct, main schools and other service provision. We have identified groups that we think are under catered for, such as the disabled and young families and we want to provide quality/animating provision.

Our objectives are to:

- improve our offer to Leigh Park as a living local faith-based organisation.
- renew our site and community spaces as a valued high quality local amenity.
- be an environmental exemplar to raise expectations of development in Leigh Park and beyond.

The offer includes:

- flexible spaces for groups, offices, meetings and reopening the crypt as a youth facility.
- improved landscaping opening up space for children’s play, growing food, community events and quiet reflection.

Key emerging learning points include:

- Many parishes lack confidence and morale and are not effectively engaging with their community.
- There is a high level of demand – latent and expressed – for positive change.
- The programme provides useful prompts and tools for understanding the extent and depth of social and cultural change affecting parishes and identifies local dynamics and opportunities.
- Parishes are able to identify priorities for growth and make substantial shifts in their approach, confidence and ‘pitch’.

- The team approach helps to promote parish change and further build a team-based approach.
- In many cases, the proposed (re)development project was unnecessary and would not achieve the objectives. Some parishes abandoned the idea of building altogether, thus saving several million pounds.
- The competencies to develop and deliver (re)development projects are often absent in parishes. Many parishes are being taken advantage of by local contractors.
- All communities have opportunities for parish growth and there are income generation opportunities; for many there is a potential to release assets and generate income and for a virtuous circle of making money from doing good to invest in doing more good.
- The development and mission options worked out have excited and inspired congregations, local communities and stakeholders.

Kaospilots

CSR is working with the University of Portsmouth, the Kaospilots School in Denmark and others to explore and develop a programme of leadership and development. The Kaospilots School has been a social enterprise school for people aged 21-31 years for over 20 years. Kaospilots are people who know how to pilot themselves through the chaos of the world in a sustainable way; enterprising leaders who navigate change for the benefit of themselves and society as a whole and change makers, who take the initiative to start up new activities, projects and businesses.

CSR is running programmes in 2011 and 2012 designed to assist clergy and lay people develop creative entrepreneurial skills to help towards viable and sustainable projects. There is also a proposal now to develop a social enterprise in the Portsmouth Diocese to run Kaospilot programmes and to roll it out more widely.

Future developments that are currently being explored by CSR are:

- *Focusing on fundraising and investment:* larger funding applications to foundations and the lottery to invest in local communities in partnership with parishes *and* innovative ways of generating resources for investing in parish-based social and community initiatives through mechanisms, such as community bonds and asset release.
- *Joint Venture* – a potential collaboration between CSR and the Parity Trust (previously Portsmouth Area Regeneration Trust) to be jointly owned by the two main partners and to deliver parish and community-based development projects and reinvest any profits in local projects.
- *Encouraging enterprise* – supporting the development of parish-based social enterprises by providing match development funds, business advice and training.
- *Developing the Rapid Parish Development Programme* outside the Diocese of Portsmouth by selling it to other dioceses.

Canon Nick Ralph,
Head of Mission and Society and Social Responsibility Adviser
[http://portsmouth.anglican.org/what we do/social justice/](http://portsmouth.anglican.org/what_we_do/social_justice/)

East Northants Faith Group

“Working to see faith at the heart of your community”

Introduction

The East Northants Faith Group (ENFG) is the working name for the body representing all faith based groups in East Northamptonshire District Council area seeking to present issues of faith as they relate to our wider community. At present ENFG represents 70 faith-based groups from all branches of the main line Christian denominations and has a core membership of around 15 participating and supporting church groups. ENFG is affiliated to Faithworks as a national body.

Origins

The ENFG was formed in October 2005 because of a desire both by faith groups and East Northants District Council to have a real and effective faith component and voice involved in the government's Local Strategic Partnership framework. The contact developed to the point that a group of faith based bodies was meeting regularly and having input into the local situation.

Funding then became available from the Welland Partnership to fund a community audit of faith-based activities in the region. During this process, Government 'Change Up' funding became available which enabled the setting up of the Faith Group as a formal group in October 2005 and the employment of a part-time Development Worker.

The vision is to see ENFG develop into an effective and sustainable network to support and promote social action and community development initiatives undertaken by faith-based organisations.

In 2010 ENFG adopted the name East Northants Community Services to cover all the faith sector community services. The purpose of developing this was to:

1. Offer a corporate image for the social action component of the Faith Group.
2. Profile the individual and joint working of all groups within the Faith sector.
3. Increase cooperation and partnership within the wide diversity of projects offered to the community by all faith groups active in our region.
4. Become a faith based network of services united together in purpose as we interact with others in the voluntary or statutory sector or local government.
5. Become together a core group of social services offering the highest standards of service and building on and learning from each other's individual services.

EFNG activities

The work then developed and grew to incorporate all active churches in our region and identify key projects that EFNG could facilitate.

- Street Pastors in East Northants set up in 2008 (now spreading to all areas in the county).
- Rushden Night Shelter established in 2007/08.
- A link with Christians Against Poverty established in 2008/09 saw five local churches adopt and use the money/debt management process and offer training and support course in our region.
- The setting up of the joint churches' counselling service was facilitated in 2009.

- An autism awareness and support project was established in 2010 in conjunction with the Diocese of Peterborough.
- Arising out of the Rushden Night Shelter has now sprung a community café and client support scheme, a supported housing moving on project, a food distribution scheme and a recycling project helping people back into housing.

ENFG has developed a number of resources for groups to use including documents on:

- Equal opportunities and diversity;
- Risk assessment;
- Safeguarding children;
- Faithworks six-point plan for community development.

Impact of ENFG

In 2009, a follow-on 5 year audit survey of faith communities was carried out to assess the impact of the ENFG and to gain greater details from the original survey and to monitor the impact of community endeavours by the faith sector. It showed:

- The 11 respondent churches identified 1,172 volunteering opportunities;
- The estimated value of volunteering across the whole faith sector in the area (on the basis of the minimum wage) was put at £7.3 m per year.
- The 11 churches had a total of 2,894 people making use of their services.
- The main areas of concern were poverty issues (38%); children's/youth provision (18%); family support (10%); school-related issues (8%); health care issues (4%).

The survey indicated that EFNG had brought various benefits. It had:

- given a platform for representation to local government and the wider Voluntary and Community Sector.
- fostered links with other community groups in the district.
- raised the profile of the whole faith sector in the district.
- brought concrete results to congregations.
- benefited unity and the expression of faith across the district.

Revd Mark Lees

<http://www.enfg.org.uk/aboutus.htm>

Faith in Our Communities

Origins of Faith in Our Communities

In 2006, the Annual Report of the Diocese of Durham noted a persistent underspend of Church Urban Fund money within the Diocese despite the extent of deprivation which made it the 5th largest recipient of CUF money. As a result, it was decided to develop a project that would respond to perceived and researched needs and would increase capacity within church congregations by giving them the confidence and skills to plan new projects and employ workers supported by an overall steering group. This project was Faith in Our Communities (FIC).

FIC was founded on the principles of Church Related Community Development focusing on those groups that are marginalised and often adversely affected by others' decisions in order to develop their skills and confidence to participate and support them in creating their own change rather than doing things for them.

Objectives

FIC set out five objectives:

1. Develop six sustainable community development projects in disadvantaged communities within the Durham Diocese.
2. Appoint six local Christian activists as church-related community development workers.
3. Increase awareness of the link between faith and community development and the involvement of church members in these six communities.
4. Share the experience with parishes from the Durham Diocese and the regional churches.
5. Recruit new parishes/Churches Together groups in the second phase of FIC.

The Diocesan Mission Fund funded a part-time Project Development Officer post to be responsible with the Partnership Steering Group for supporting local management committees to recruit and manage trainee Community Development Workers in the six local projects.

All the FIC projects have a strong ecumenical dimension. All work with other local organisations and take care not to duplicate activities and services that are already available.

The projects

- *Shildon Mustard Seed Project* focuses on environmental improvement activities, developing projects with schools as well as adults. Activities include bulb and flower planting, a sunflower competition, the development of a community allotment and a tool library.
- *St Luke's Pavilion* is housed in St Luke's Neighbourhood Trust and focuses on health and well-being including fitness and other classes requested by local people. It has also led other organisations bringing some services to St Luke's, such as Impact Family Services that, as well as becoming more accessible, provide a rental income stream
- *Houghton-le-Spring FACE* focuses on engaging with families and children and encouraging family development and play. It produced a directory of existing activities in the area and, although it developed slowly and not without difficulties, has built up a team of volunteers and is gradually building up activities.
- *Stockton PLANT* (Parents Linking at Newtown Together), in a part of Stockton in the 3% most deprived wards in the country, was established to work with families. Initially the idea was to develop parenting skills but by listening and building relationships with local people, it became evident that a wider supportive role was more appropriate.

- *Stockton HOPE* is based on the large Hardwick estate with problems around exclusion and social isolation particularly affecting older people and single parents. Inter-generational work has created links between older and younger people and between schools and an older people's home and a local care home. Recruiting volunteers, including church members, has enabled HOPE to widen out to a range of other activities.
- *Hetton-le-Hole New Dawn Group* focuses on the church building and its use by people in the community and it has especially focused on new activities for the older person.

What FIC has brought

*"The FIC has been a learning experience for everyone involved: steering group members, church members, community development workers, management committee members and volunteers. No-one had been involved in a project quite like this before. From the start it was recognised that a range of training and learning was necessary to develop the skills of participants, share good practice and allow a space for structured reflection."*¹

FIC activities have included:

- *Management Committee events* to build the capacity of their members and volunteers. Topics included:
 - Developing a Christian ethos;
 - Funding applications;
 - Monitoring and evaluation;
 - Strategic funding;
 - Supervision;
 - Partnership working.
- *Visits to other projects* that were sufficiently structured to encourage reflection on topics such as:
 - the roles played by workers at the projects visited;
 - community development approaches;
 - the involvement of local people in governance.
- *NVQ Community Work Sessions* for the trainee Community Development Workers who, though often experienced community activists, had not previously obtained qualifications. These sessions took them through an NVQ Level 3 Community Development Work accreditation process with ETEC training organisation.
- *Monthly Learning/Training Days for the Community Development Workers* for them to meet, share and reflect on their experiences. Peer support was seen as important in what could sometimes be isolated roles. They explored individual issues in action learning sets.
- *Open Learning Events* brought together over 150 church members, management committee members, Community Development Workers and volunteers for shared reflection and learning. They covered the themes of:
 - Partnership working;
 - The Faith factor;
 - Building hope;
 - Weaving communities.

Success factors

¹ Robert Errington, with Bernadette Askins, Paul Southgate and Jim Robertson (July 2010) *Stepping Out in Faith: A report on the Faith in Our Communities Initiative in the Durham Diocesan Area*, p.17

FIC has met its five original objectives. It has delivered programmes to enable the projects not only to become established but also to be responsive to community needs and able to adapt to changing circumstances. The six Community Development Workers are still in post and have achieved their qualification.

FIC has a number of distinguishing features that have contributed to its effectiveness:

- The first is the importance attached to reflective practice in a variety of situations. *“Reflective practice is one of the key principles of community development and while many community projects recognise its importance, they often find it difficult to identify mechanisms to ensure it is built into practice FIC made sure that structures that prioritised reflection were built into all meetings, whether for workers, management committees or both. This is a striking example of how a faith-based approach can strengthen community development principles.”*²
- Another feature of FIC has been the emphasis on a ‘bottom up’ approach and on projects that help to build both ‘bonding’ and ‘bridging’ social capital: strengthening groups and creating links between groups in different project areas and between projects and other local community and voluntary organisations. Trust is both a pre-requisite and an outcome. Faith groups are widely seen to be significant repositories of social capital and this chimes with current secular concerns to promote greater social cohesion and more participation in social action especially in deprived areas and develop stronger community resilience.
- Structurally, FIC has benefited from a Partnership Steering Group comprising people with a range of valuable experience and networks and representing organisations including the Diocese, the Churches’ Community Work Alliance and the Community Work Assessment Consortium for the North East. There are strong ecumenical links.
- There has been strong support from the Diocese. The Archdeacon who chairs the Partnership Steering Group is a link to the clergy and parishes and opens doors when required. The Diocesan Secretary supports the Project Development Officer and advises her and, through her, the six projects, for example, on contracts and the occasional tricky situation. The Diocesan Human Resource Manager advises on employment issues. A Diocesan Finance Officer acts as treasurer and keeps the accounts. One of the diocesan clergy with specialist expertise led a session on supervising staff. The Director of Ministry has collaborated with the FIC learning programme: jointly planning and leading events for parishes.
- The role of the Project Development Officer has been vital and the way that she has fulfilled the role with great commitment, with an emphasis on nurturing the Community Development Workers and ensuring good communication with everyone involved. Her regular attendance at the six management committee meetings has been important in linking the local groups to both the steering group and the Diocese.

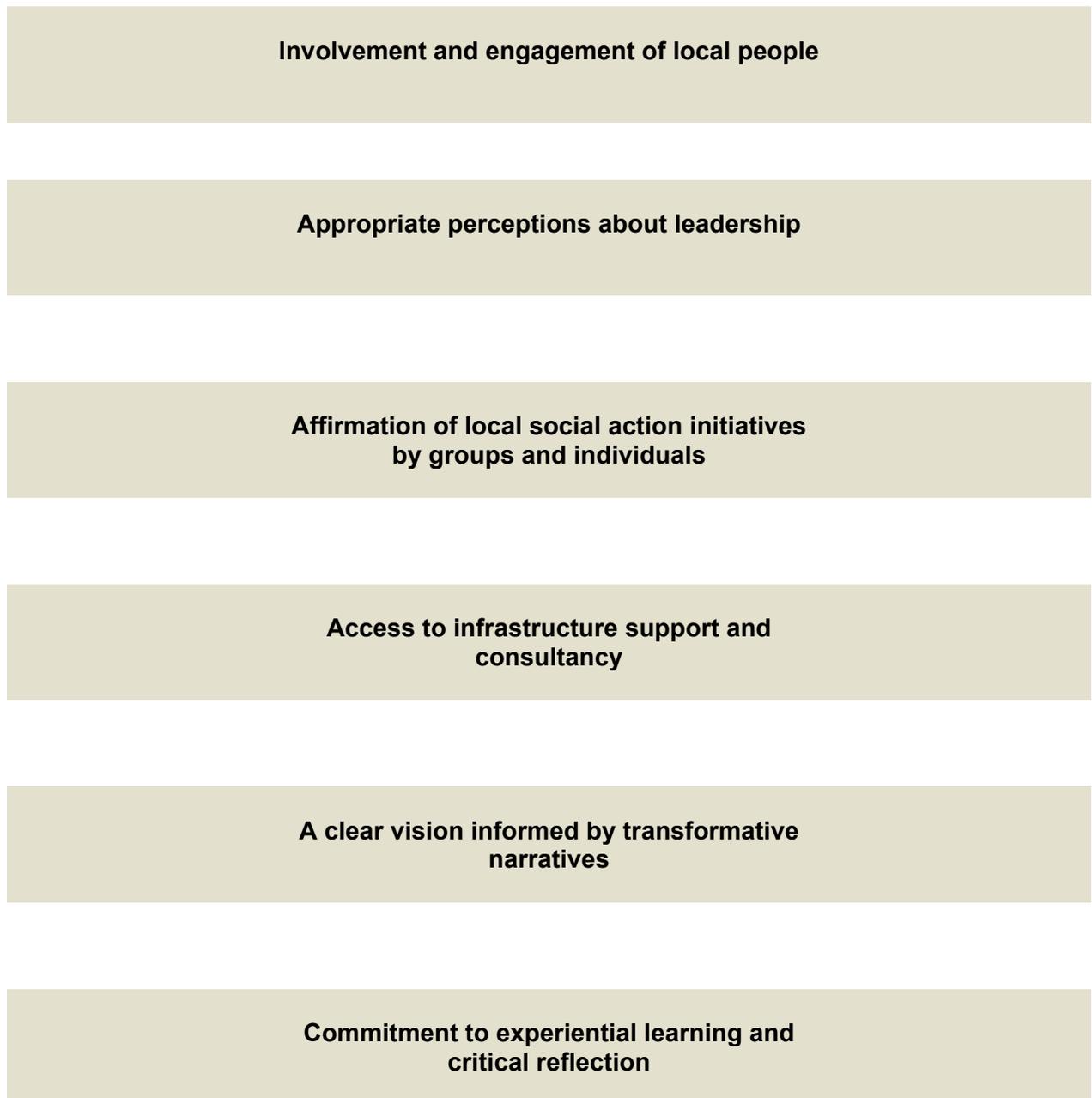
Wider learning

The first few years’ experience of FIC have produced lessons that are potentially transferable. Figure 1³ below sets out building blocks that can provide a framework for other parish and mission developments.

² *Ibid* p.19

³ *Ibid* Appendix 1

Figure 1: Building Blocks for Parish Development: Lessons from the FIC Project



Bernadette Askins

Good Neighbours Support Service

The Good Neighbour Service (GNSS) has been running since the 1970s. It has three elements:

- local volunteers who provide services directly to clients;
- local groups who co-ordinate and assist the volunteers in their work;
- the Good Neighbour Support Service, which provides services that help groups to provide a safe and quality service.

GNSS is sponsored by a consortium of three dioceses, Winchester, Guildford and Portsmouth led by the Diocese of Portsmouth. It provides information, guidance, development and support to about 125 Good Neighbours Groups in Hampshire (sometimes called Neighbourcare Groups or Care Groups). These are independent voluntary groups that offer neighbourly help to people in their local communities. They are not faith-based, but probably about 80% of the people involved are church members. Each group recruits volunteers from within the local community and establishes its own priorities and activities. Although the groups vary in their size and resourcing, all are keenly involved in meeting the needs of people in their local community. Some groups specialise in one activity while others offer a range of services; shopping, visiting, befriending, running lunch clubs, sitting services, collecting prescriptions, driving people to GP and hospital appointments, walking the dog, and minor repairs. An aspect that is growing at present is befriending.

GNSS offers:

- Support from a dedicated local Area Good Neighbours Groups' Adviser;
- Information and Resources;
- Opportunities to meet other Good Neighbours Groups;
- Regular information and training days;
- Insurance offered free of charge, (covers public liability, employee liability, personal accident, loss of money);
- Free checks for volunteers, (where relevant), to protect clients;
- Free publications; Good Neighbours Groups Directory, Volunteer Handbook, publicity and recruitment leaflet;
- Free Resource Pack and Golden Rules checklist;
- Annual grants to small groups as well as start up and special grants;
- Presentations to raise awareness, campaigning and networking with other agencies;
- Help to develop new groups or services;
- A useful website with regular updates: www.goodneighbours.org.uk .

Figure 1 shows the main categories of GNSS activities.

As well as enabling groups to be more effective, GNSS tries to ensure that there are as few barriers to volunteering as possible. The nature of GNSS and the way that it works adds to its effectiveness:

- It is close to the groups and has long experience of group development and relevant issues.
- It has gained the trust not only of the groups but also of local service providers, which means that they have the confidence in the service to refer clients.

- It 'filters' a range of regulatory requirements in a way that is accessible for groups so that they can attain the necessary standards.
- Through its relationship with the dioceses and other stakeholders, it has access to church-based and other volunteers across all communities who are motivated to help others.

Figure 1: GNSS activities

<p style="text-align: center;">Quality Assurance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • providing independent group advice • Targeted working with groups in difficulty • Disseminating best practice 	<p style="text-align: center;">Group Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group start-up • Volunteer and committee recruitment • Training, activities, local group and volunteer networking events
<p style="text-align: center;">Safety and Security</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insurance • Compliance with CRB and other legal requirements • Guidance and training on volunteer and client security issues 	<p style="text-align: center;">Promotion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liaison with referring services • Development of marketing materials • Assistance to groups on marketing

GNSS has a contract from Hampshire County Council and Hampshire Primary Care Trust for running the Service, presently standing at £137,000 p.a. The current estimate is that the Groups carried out approximately 140,000 tasks in a year amounting to over £7 million of work. In part, this is the value of the volunteer effort, but it also captures other savings. An evaluation carried out in 2009 showed that alternative provision of this service would have cost a minimum of nearly £700,000 so that, taking into account the contract fee, it represented savings of c. £600,000. Well over half of the activity was transport to and from outpatient and GP appointments. It is estimated that the service saved £932,000 in the avoidance of missed outpatient appointments.

The evaluation noted that there is significant potential for enlarging the programme, but that any change in organisation should not jeopardise its core principles:

- The volunteering or 'gift' nature of provision is central: greater bureaucratisation would risk alienating volunteers and clients.
- Its very local nature needs to be protected and its coverage of a wide range of communities including small villages and peripheral estates.
- The appropriate facilitative role that GNSS plays in relation to this highly devolved service model.

Canon Nick Ralph,
Head of Mission and Society and Social Responsibility Adviser
Diocese of Portsmouth

http://portsmouth.anglican.org/what_we_do/social_justice/

Kairos Partnership, Hereford

The Kairos Partnership is a charity supported by the Diocese of Hereford but separate from it that works with local faith groups to start and develop projects to help their communities to reduce deprivation which may be due to economic factors, lack of transport or other circumstances. Kairos works with any faith-based community group (Christian, Muslim, Jewish or other recognised faith) that needs help to turn an idea into a workable project, or to grow a small project into a bigger one. The company will, if necessary, act as an accountable body for funding and assist in making bids, developing a business plan etc.

At the moment, most of Kairos's current funding comes through the REACH Programme¹, supported by the Big Lottery and LEADER², which is managed by Herefordshire Voluntary Action and supported by a number of other organisations in Herefordshire. LEADER rules restrict projects to rural areas so the city of Hereford is currently excluded.

As a result of the rurality and low density of population, projects tend to be small to start with, such as setting up a lunch club for the isolated and/or elderly. The Kairos support provides knowhow, training, networking, access to funds and, very importantly, helps to build the confidence of volunteers.

Kairos does not support building projects directly. However Kairos works with the Hereford Diocese Community Funding and Partnership Officer to support the development of community activities within church buildings.

There are lots of community projects already taking place across Herefordshire:

- Messy Church – parents and children doing fun, craft-based things together;
- Lunch clubs for the elderly;
- Hot meals for those on low incomes;
- Welcome Clubs for migrant workers;
- Community Larders giving food parcels to those in crisis;
- Good neighbour schemes, encouraging the able-bodied to look after a vulnerable neighbour;
- Support for a Hip Hop youth group; *and*
- Finding additional community uses for a church hall.

Example: The Point Project in Ledbury

The Elim Church hosts a caravan at the Skate-park each Friday as part of a project to discourage drug dealers, giving free drinks, hot-dogs and a listening ear to the youngsters using the park. They have just received a grant, with help from Kairos, to run a circus-skills weekend for children in the local community as an additional part of their work.

¹ Herefordshire Voluntary Action's REACH is a partnership approach to increasing the level of support provided to voluntary groups in the market towns and villages of the county.

² The LEADER programme runs until 2013 with more than £2.5million of support committed in Herefordshire. LEADER funds Local Action Groups (LAGs) to develop and implement solutions to rural development issues and is driven by the needs of local communities.

The next stage of development is to raise money to distribute small amounts of priming funding – to offer a maximum grant of, say, £1-2,000 per community group. It has become evident that this level of support makes a significant difference and can lead to groups generating their own long term funding either for development or to pass onto other similar sized ventures.

<http://www.kairos-partnership.org/>

Leeds Christian Community Trust

Introduction

“Leeds Christian Community Trust aims to stimulate Christian mission and unity in Leeds. It is particularly aimed at individuals who have dreams and visions of how things might be different and who want to work with others to turn these dreams and visions into reality for the furtherance of the kingdom of God in Leeds.”

Origins

In 2002, several mission initiatives were seeking to become constituted as charitable trusts. They were distinctive in that they drew together partners from different church backgrounds within Leeds. Each one would have needed to set up its own structure, constitution, insurance, accounting and other systems. The idea emerged to develop a ‘generic’ trust that would enable these groups to share resources. Leeds Christian Community Trust (LCCT) came into existence in March 2003 to serve mission in Leeds by the whole church. In 2003, LCCT secured ‘no-strings-attached’ benefactor seed funding for three years to enable mission initiatives to happen.

LCCT values

- *The Kingdom of God* The Trust exists to contribute to the transformation of Leeds via the agency of God’s people, united through Jesus Christ. *“We want to explore what it means for all people and projects supported by the Trust to understand their role in the bigger picture of God’s Kingdom in Leeds, as opposed to concentrating solely on their own projects.”*
- *The Unique Value of Individuals* *“All people inherently deserve respect, and we should strive to understand everyone, celebrating our diversity as a sign of God’s creativity. We value relationships above tasks . . .”*
- *Dreams and Visions* The Trust believes that God has equipped people for specific callings, and that their dreams and visions of community transformation are indicative of this calling. The trustees therefore seek to release people into their dreams as opposed to initiating our own projects and asking others to serve them.
- *Releasing not Controlling* The Trust wants to explore what it means supportively to release each other within a helpful and effective framework, which facilitates the best use of all of our strengths. *“Wherever possible we want to rely on trust and goodwill above bureaucracy and coercion – this could be called a ‘light power footprint’.”*
- *The Unity of the Body* The Trust believes that when God looks at Leeds He only sees one church because He only has one body. *“We seek to avoid competition and duplication by linking people together, especially those with similar dreams and visions, so that they can complement each other.”*

How LCCT works

“Applying to LCCT is not merely about seeking funding, (although funding may be part of the support we give). Applying to LCCT is about beginning a relationship with us, which will look different for everyone we engage with. We like to have discussions around the values of the shape and structure of projects, but we also offer support/signposting in practical areas such as training, mentoring, networking, support, legal and financial structures, book-keeping and accountancy, insurance cover, policy development and employment services. The application path we recommend for you depends largely on your existing structures and your current access to these practical necessities.”

The vision is to enable, encourage and support Christians, working in unity and in mission, to pursue their dreams and visions to make a positive difference in Leeds. LCCT works in two ways:

- It provides grants for projects which fit the Trust's criteria and charitable objects;
- It takes on new projects as its own, providing 'seed' funding, payroll, insurance and administrative and developmental support.

The Trust's criteria for supporting projects are:

- *Mission* – The trust exists to promote and further the mission of God's people towards the transformation of Leeds in obedience to the teachings of Jesus, specifically the Great Commandment (to love God and to love our neighbour as ourselves) and the Great Commission (to make disciples).
- *Unity* – The trust will support people with a commitment to work across Christian congregations/denominations. It will support projects involving more than one church. Projects must not duplicate the work others are already doing in the intended geographical context. LCCT will only support projects in the absence of a better alternative.
- *Leeds* – the Trust will only support projects that operate within the Leeds Metropolitan District.
- *Grass-roots* – Independent or partnership based projects that are the vision of someone 'on the ground' are more likely to be successful than those put forward by someone in an institutional position of authority. Projects that already exist are more likely to be considered if their annual budget is less than £50,000.

Becoming an LCCT project

In order to apply to be a member project, projects will usually be required to have the following in place:

- Some level of market research/needs analysis.
- A first year budget or an idea of how much money is needed and where it will come from.
- A business plan/project vision statement or something written down that explains the ideas and how it is anticipated they will be developed.
- A support group (people who will help oversee the project, be a source of support and reference).
- Any legal checks (e.g. CRBs) and risk assessments.

Track record

Since 2003 over 30 projects have benefited from being part of LCCT. The vast majority of those projects are still part of the Trust, while others have either finished (due to the original dreamer moving onto other things or the project having a limited life span), or stepped out of the trust to become their own legal entities. These projects cover a variety of activities, such as:

- After-school clubs;
- Youth work;
- Creative arts;
- Work with asylum seekers;
- Networking and promoting links across different ethnic groups;
- Friendship and support groups;
- Training;

- Anti-poverty work.

In addition to projects that have become part of the trust, LCCT has made over 100 external grants since 2003 to a wide variety of projects in Leeds. LCCT also has a delegated grants scheme where small pots of money are made available for specific spheres within the city and a small group of people active within those spheres have a pot of money to give to people and projects as they see fit. As at 2010, these delegated grant groupings were Youth, the postcode area of LS11 (Cottingley and Holbeck), and the Arts.

In 2010, approximately 345 regular volunteers help to deliver the projects of the trust. Their contribution in hours was circa 943 hours per week which would equate to an annual cost of around £490,000.

LCCT Structure

LCCT is set up legally as a company limited by guarantee with charitable status. Trustees are from a wide range of denominational and professional backgrounds to ensure that it is an open and approachable resource for the entire Christian community in the city.

It is a seedbed rather than a managing trust. Management of each project is the responsibility of the dreamer/vision carrier with support from their own reference group. Each project is accountable to LCCT trustees through a link trustee and by reporting through the Support Team. Funded projects are appraised against their agreed development plan. For auditing purposes, member projects' accounts make up a sub-section of the accounts of the whole charity but the finances of any one project are kept separate from others. The aim is for each project to secure external funding support and eventually become a separate legal entity.

Leeds Christian Community Trust
www.lcct.org.uk

Together for Regeneration

Context

South Yorkshire's economy was very depressed in the 1990s with the demise of the steel and mining industries and the impact of this on local communities. The consequences were particularly severe in some areas and experienced distinctively in each community according to its situation. This ranged from the very deprived inner estates in Sheffield to bereft mining villages where the main employer had disappeared. On a spiritual level it could also be said that the area was grieving for what it had lost and, although the government at the time was concerned to bring about economic regeneration, the churches and the voluntary sector as a whole were increasingly aware that the social and community side of regeneration was essential to any successful programme. Churches everywhere were struggling to know how to respond.

Together for Regeneration (TfR) began in 1999. It came about as a result of the initiative of the churches including the Diocese of Sheffield and Industrial Mission South Yorkshire to create a project to help churches to be involved in the regeneration of the communities of South Yorkshire.

The organisation

Sheffield Diocesan Board of Finance is the employer and accountable body for TfR. The management/steering group is chaired by an Archdeacon. Other members include the Diocesan Secretary, the Chair of the Methodist District representing the Church Leaders, a senior URC lay woman with very relevant experience and others who bring business-related expertise. It meets every six weeks.

TfR is based in Sheffield Diocesan Church House and its office space and financial services are subsidised. The Methodist District has also put in some funding each year.

Recently, the question of whether TfR should be an independent organisation was considered but initially rejected. Whilst it is felt that there is a value in being embedded in the structures of the Diocese, external funding is increasingly difficult to secure and the partners are again considering the viability of setting TfR up as an independent entity.

Aims of TfR

TfR provides infrastructure support to build the capacity of the voluntary, community and faith sectors through the following aims and objectives:

- To build the confidence, knowledge and skills of local people to enable them to take effective action;
- To support actions that address the needs of those suffering greatest disadvantage;
- To encourage partnership working that delivers effective community regeneration;
- To enable sustainable approaches to community regeneration;
- To develop appropriate structures, governance and resources to enable the delivery of the above aims through continuous improvement.

Organisational values

Faith-based values are central to TfR's work and influence its approach, but these are also values that can be embraced by all its staff, who may be of other faiths or none because they are recruited on the basis of being good at the job.

- Valuing people
- Supporting those in greatest need
- Valuing partnership

- Working with integrity
- Valuing diversity
- Promoting justice
- Adopting a professional approach
- Applying creativity and innovation
- Engaging in effective, efficient and robust delivery.

Beginnings

In the first phase, TfR had a development worker in each Borough to work ecumenically to help local churches think about their buildings, people and communities. They began Regeneration Strategy Groups to bring churches together to engage with the Borough Councils. These were well supported and effective bodies in some areas, but were hard to sustain financially. In the early 2000s, therefore, the formal networking/voice and influence side was dropped and, instead, churches were encouraged to join Community Empowerment Networks.

At this stage, there was an evaluation of the work, which endorsed the approach and found that it was valued by churches and their partners. At the same time, TfR ran up against the difficulty of working solely with local churches. Other groups under the umbrella of churches were also approaching them and it became increasingly obvious that restricting the support to churches was too limiting. The emerging vision for the work put the emphasis on communities:

"To improve the quality of life in communities by enabling local people to take effective action together for regeneration."

A second phase

A new opportunity came after South Yorkshire became eligible in 2000 for European Union Objective 1 funding. TfR was invited to become involved in the local programme, specifically under Priority 4, 'Developing economic opportunities in targeted communities'. TfR then embarked on a second phase, supporting community partnerships: helping local people and organisations to work with statutory agencies to write a community action plan.

This was a phase in which TfR established a strong reputation with local authorities and others in the voluntary sector. They found a way of maintaining the trust of communities and agencies and learnt a lot about conflict resolution and mediation; about getting people to a point where they could work together and manage highly complex programmes, find match funding and deliver effective local projects.

A third phase

The end of the Objective 1 Programme in 2008 brought a transition to a third phase in the life of TfR. The question arose of how to sustain its presence. TfR had become part of the South Yorkshire Change-Up Consortium, which brought together infrastructure organisations providing support and advice to the Third Sector. Following a successful pilot project, TfR applied for core infrastructure funding from the Big Lottery. This was done in partnership with South Yorkshire Funding Advice Bureau, which is also a sub-regional organisation and has a complementary role. Very often groups seeking help would make a first approach in relation to funding, but it would then transpire that they needed other sorts of support. Big Lottery funding was secured first for two posts for work in Barnsley and Doncaster and, in round 2, for another post for Sheffield/Rotherham. TfR also worked alongside Councils of Voluntary Service – sometimes with 'turf wars' at the outset, but subsequently achieving close collaboration and recognition of TfR's expertise in working with small groups, particularly new and emerging groups, groups in crisis and churches.

Through TfR, Sheffield Diocese secured funds from the Government's Capacity Builders' Fund to run an 'Improving Reach' programme. The Government was concerned to involve groups that it saw as hard to reach. This was a 2½ year project for TfR in which it was able to extend the offer of its existing services to other faith groups. TfR worked with a range of other faiths and a number of interfaith groups, providing organisational and project development advice, building bridges between faith based groups and other organisations and contributing to community cohesion. Although 2½ years was not really long enough, it was a period in which much was learnt about taking account of very different needs and adapting working practices to very different cultures. An example of this strand is support for Muslim women from a range of social, ethnic and cultural backgrounds in Sheffield, who were looking to develop a single inclusive voice. TfR helped in developing a constitution and other organisational matters. It was a time, too, when many barriers were overcome and new contacts were made: with Black-led churches, with churches linked with refugee communities and with the Muslim community. It was felt that what TfR could distinctively bring was recognition of the importance of very careful listening in order to understand the needs of these communities, their situations, the barriers they faced and their cultures.

The position today

TfR is continuing to support voluntary, community and faith groups across South Yorkshire and offer specialist support to 'hard to reach' Faith groups. However, funding streams have either finished or are coming to an end and this has meant reducing the staff team. The Diocese is underwriting the work until September and consideration is being given to what will emerge after that. Big Lottery funding for the Barnsley and Doncaster posts has now finished; funding for the Sheffield/Rotherham worker expires in June 2012.

Bidding for other funding continues. For example, TfR is part of a consortium of infrastructure organisations in Rotherham that is bidding to the local authority and PCT which, if successful, would fund a half post in TfR. Other members of the consortium include South Yorkshire Funding Advice, Rural Action Yorkshire, the South Yorkshire Community Foundation and the Rotherham Ethnic Minorities Alliance. The process of building the consortium has been challenging and members will still need to build on their hard earned trust. The amount of money that TfR will get in the first instance was not necessarily worth the time and effort spent. However, it was important to have this sort of strategic approach in relation to funders and suppliers.

TfR has proved a very adaptable and responsive organisation, able to meet changing needs and take advantage of changing funding opportunities. Most of TfR's expenditure goes on salaries and associated staff expenses. At present, there are a lot of one-off meetings with groups often leading to longer term support to a proportion of them. Now, in an attempt to save both time and travel costs, TfR is looking to develop new models for remote support (eg by telephone or internet) even though it is acknowledged that this might undermine one of its key strengths, which is the relationships that can be formed by being alongside people. So far, most services have been free. Other potential future developments, which could cross-subsidise the core mission, might be securing contracts with other local authorities, consultancy and/or selling support to other dioceses.

Outcomes

TfR staff have spent a lot of time thinking through the model of working and, particularly recently, how to provide evidence that it works using, for example, the NCVO *Value of Infrastructure* Programme and a client management system developed by Voluntary Action Sheffield to collect information about the groups with which TfR has worked and the outcomes of their support. It has now developed a framework but is not yet measuring against it. The challenge is evidencing the difference that TfR makes: being able to drill down to demonstrate the outcomes achieved by the groups supported that came as a result of that support. TfR has

also been awarded the Customer First Quality Standard in recognition of their excellence in focusing on the needs of the groups they support.

Success factors

It is possible to identify a number of features that characterise the way TfR works. First:

- *Faith* was the initiating energy and remains at the heart of TfR's mission: it is the driving force and the basis of the project's values. TfR supports local churches and works with people with a wide range of theological standpoints. In addition to interpersonal skills, staff have had to learn a lot about business development. But, irrespective of whether it is actually working *with* churches, TfR sees itself as *being* church in the community.
- Being *part of the Diocese* has given credibility with some other stakeholders as well as stability, but being on the edge has also meant it has kept an outward facing identity.

In the approach to the work:

- The *emphasis on relationships* has been critical and, in part, this means listening well.
- Planning carefully and working in partnership are important features. Sometimes this entails taking a risk about going into partnership and certainly exploring the whole spectrum from informal to formal collaboration.
- *Learning from experience*, for example, about mediation in order to help others resolve conflicts either within their organisations or between them and others. This role has been possible because TfR occupies 'liminal' or threshold space.
- It has been important to be *very focused*. There are lots of possible distractions but throughout the process of adapting and sometimes re-creating themselves, they have had to stay centred. This tension between being responsive to changing circumstances and retaining organisational integrity is also something faced by the groups supported by TfR and, therefore, TfR could help them with this as well.

Factors in relation to running the organisation:

- TfR has had the ability to *generate funding*.
- TfR has had *good recruitment processes* and, although inevitably there has been significant staff turnover since it started in 1999, this has been achieved largely without disruption. The diversity of the team has been a strength and the focus on spotting potential and setting out to enable the staff to develop.

Barriers

- It has been hard to maintain a profile for this type of work within the churches and difficult to be heard because people do not necessarily think of it as mission.
- An associated barrier is about where ownership lies for this type of work within the Diocese and within other churches – where it sits organisationally. Within the Diocese, TfR has been thought of as part of the Board for Faith and Justice, but it does not work in the way people expect Faith and Justice to work. There has been some creative tension around this and it has not been too much of an issue while they could get outside funding, but it could be in future.
- If its work is not understood or seen as relevant to their needs, then churches will not use TfR as well as they could.
- Short term funding is always a barrier and creates other pressures as well as the need to bid for funding repeatedly. It is also necessary to maintain awareness of potential funding opportunities and understand changing funding programmes, which requires skill in matching what TfR can offer to the objectives of funders.

Challenges

- Changing public policies with regard to Civil Society also present opportunities together with “the challenge of staying alive long enough to take advantage of them”. A parallel challenge is to stay on a learning curve – develop and maintain the requisite expertise, for example, at present about commissioning and the personalisation agenda.
- There are currently opportunities for collaboration. Partnership is key for the future. The only alternative to being part of consortia would be to survive on church money, but this is unlikely to be forthcoming at present.
- There could also now be opportunities to engage across diocesan boundaries because everyone is struggling with the same issues.

Iain Cloke

<http://www.tfr.org.uk/>

Transformation Cornwall

Tackling Poverty Together in Cornwall

Introduction

In these challenging and difficult times churches and faith-based groups are well placed to outwork their mission by reaching out to their community, to make themselves relevant and be able to make a greater contribution to the social and spiritual transformation of communities in Cornwall. Transformation Cornwall is an ecumenical charity, set up by the Diocese of Truro, the Church Urban Fund and the Methodist Church in Cornwall, as part of the Church Urban Fund's Joint Venture programme with Dioceses around the country. It was established as a vehicle to provide sustained infrastructure support for church-related projects with the purpose of engaging every church and enhancing the capacity of their clergy, leaders, projects and people in addressing poverty.

Origins

Transformation Cornwall builds on the successful *Believing in Local Action* conference held at Eden in 2008, the ecumenical work of the Church in Community programme and the *Raising Our Game* workshops, which over the last three years have worked with a wide variety of churches and faith-based organisations in the county.

Aims

- To provide an infrastructure and capacity building support organisation which will work with church, faith and non-faith based groups to enable them to respond to tackling issues of poverty, deprivation and marginalisation in their area of Cornwall.
- To help individual churches have a greater and more sustainable impact in tackling poverty in their community – to be relevant to their community, able to respond to identified needs and be sustainable in the long-term.
- To nurture useful, relevant networking and connecting between project practitioners and local statutory services to promote collaboration, maximise resources and develop effective dialogue with other sectors

Organisation

The founding trustees are: Rt Revd Tim Thornton, Bishop of Truro; Andy Turner, Development Director, Church Urban Fund; Revd Steve Wild, Chair of the Methodist District, Cornwall. Transformation Cornwall is based at Diocesan House, in Truro, employs a part-time Development Co-ordinator and, from October, 2 part-time Project Workers, one in east and one in west Cornwall.

Support given by Transformation Cornwall

- Work with groups to identify the needs of their community.
- Supporting organisations to respond to the identified needs.
- Building knowledge, skills and expertise within existing organisations to enable them to grow and develop.
- Capacity building work with people and groups to develop project ideas.
- Consultancy and one-to one support to individual organisations.
- Training/workshops on all aspects of developing organisations, including funding, social enterprise, needs assessments and project development.

- Work with organisations on being sustainable for the long-term, including exploring income generation and social enterprise.
- Building local networks and partnerships to support people and organisations working on the front-line.

Debbie Croucher, Development Co-ordinator

Appendix III: Strategies

Youth Strategy for the Diocese of London Diocese of London and The Children's Society

The project

A partnership starting in 2005/6 between the Diocese of London and The Children's Society (TCS) led to a three year written Youth Strategy in 2008. The Strategy is currently being updated. The role of the Youth Development Project is to work with young people and churches to make the Youth Strategy a reality allowing young people to take an active and positive role in their church and/or community. The philosophy is that young people are best placed to identify what they want and that, given the right level of support and encouragement, they make a substantial and lasting contribution. The Programme Manager reports to a Steering Group that meets quarterly comprising representatives of both the Diocese and TCS.

The origins of the project

Initially the Area Dean for North Camden, through his close links to the John Lyons Charity, secured £30,000 p.a. for three years for a diocesan post in 2005. He had already had contact with The Children's Society and, after some discussion with the Diocesan Community Ministry Adviser who was concerned about the lack of professional advice and support for parishes engaging in youth work, it was decided it would be better to develop a partnership with TCS which would bring some additional resources. The Community Ministry Adviser set up a steering group with TCS and a programme manager was recruited who also worked with the funding unit of TCS to draw in additional funds.

Assessing need

Various means were used to determine need. First, a snapshot was taken across the Diocese to see what youth work was happening, what the gaps were and what was needed. Then there was extensive consultation during 2007:

- meetings in different areas to which everyone involved in youth work was invited;
- questionnaires sent to youth leaders about their needs;
- consultation with young people through a Participation Worker going to a broad range of youth work provision and using activities to elicit their views on issues affecting them and on what a good youth club looks like.
- drawing on the findings of the national Good Childhood Inquiry carried out by TCS in 2006 with the aim of renewing society's understanding of modern childhood. Over 20,000 children from all walks of life including children in prison, children in pupil referral units, children in early-years settings, refugee children, disabled children and many other marginalised groups took part in polls, research and focus groups.

This material was used to draw up a range of indicators and develop recommendations to the Diocese about what the Strategy should contain.

Activities:

- Training and accreditation for youth leaders at basic and more advanced levels. The Project has produced a course on 'Essentials for Working with Young People', (level 2, Open College Network), which has been run in the Diocese.
- Support and guidance for youth leaders and for parishes needing external supervisors or supervision partners.

- Resources such as *Leaps and Bounds*, an interactive toolkit for developing inclusive youth activities, and a youth work self-evaluation tool for churches.
- A youth-led grant-giving scheme *Go for Gold* offers small amounts of money to youth groups. This began as a pilot in Stepney. Twenty young people were trained to administer the grants. The groups applying had to have an adult sponsor for support but the ideas and activity had to come from the young people themselves and they had to keep a diary of their progress. Subsequently, the grant makers visited the projects and gave gold, silver and bronze awards that were given out at an event co-hosted by the Bishop of London.
- A group of Young Advisers – six people from the original board of grant makers – help to train up other young people.
- Networking and sharing ideas through conferences, events, newsletters and *Be Inspired* a booklet giving real life stories to help people engage with young people in their parish.

The Project has helped both CUF and the Bishop of London's Mission Fund to assess youth work funding applications from churches in the Diocese of London. Project staff have also worked with West London YMCA to build greater capacity for training delivery and support.

The evolution of the project

Early activity happened alongside the development of the Strategy. The Participation Worker was only employed for eighteen months. Since then the Young Advisers have been the main means of keeping young people involved. Over time and with the development of more resources, contacts and the reach of the project across the diocese have increased.

TCS was interested in rolling the approach out across other dioceses, particularly because dioceses were tending to lose their youth officer posts, but this was at the time of recession.

Leadership

Leadership has been shared between TCS and the Diocese. The drive of one individual was important as an impetus for initiating the project. Since then, the Programme Manager has clearly had a crucial role helped by the strategic and practical support of members of the Steering Group.

Resources

After the original grant from the John Lyons Charity, further funds were secured from the Morris and Hilda Laing Charitable Trust for a senior youth worker and one year's funding for a participation worker came from CUF in order to help kickstart the project over such a large diocese. TCS still put £50,000 per year into the project.

Success factors

- Key players have been on board from the beginning and leaders such as the Diocesan and Area Bishops and the Archdeacons have been very supportive.
- TCS have put in a lot of resource in addition to finance; for example, support in leveraging more funding and building relationships with funders. Being part of a bigger Children's Partnership team also gave access to other members' support and wisdom.
- High quality staff have been engaged.
- They have been robust in discussions with and advice to parishes and not afraid to challenge them, but this has been coupled with having a very good understanding of the challenges that parishes face.

Lessons have been learnt in relation to approaching funders:

- The importance of having a proper delivery plan: being very clear about what funders will get for their money and the added value you can bring.
- The importance of courtesy: acknowledging cheques; getting reports in on time; reporting against what you have said you would achieve; inviting funders to events; making sure you mention them in reports (having checked that they want to be mentioned).

A more general lesson has been the importance of managing expectations and being realistic, for example, about the quality of data. It has proved very difficult to build up a database that is either comprehensive or completely up to date. The mapping exercise only produced a 46% response rate. There were difficulties of definition and everyone having a common understanding, for instance, about whether 'youth work' does or does not include uniformed organisations. In addition, without constant updating, the material is only ever a snapshot because circumstances change and people move on.

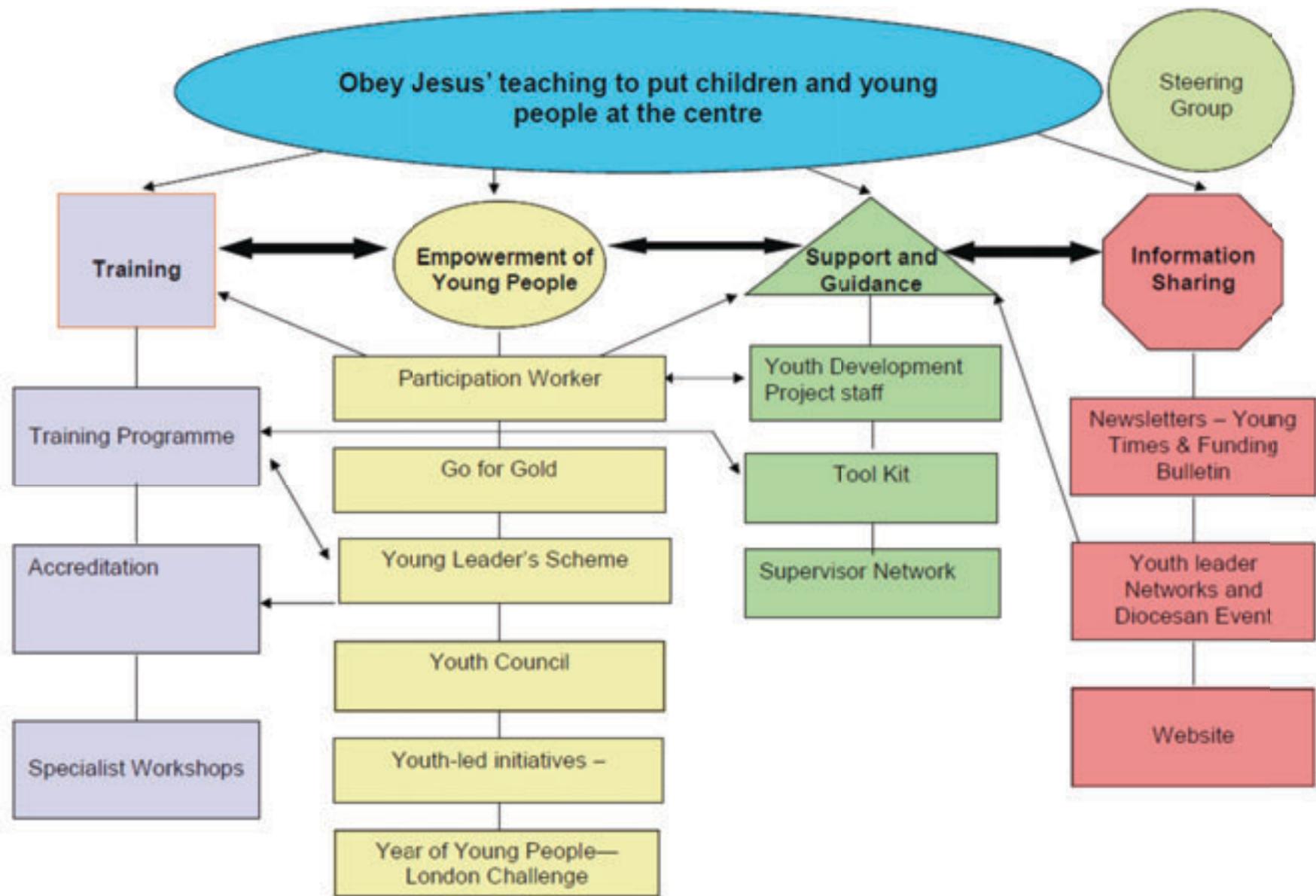
Challenges and opportunities for the future

The main challenge is to ensure that funding continues for the next 3 years and to update the Youth Strategy. TCS and the Diocese are committed to continuing the partnership though TCS is experiencing financial pressures linked with cuts in public expenditure. The Olympic Games in London 2012 provide an opportunity for engaging more young people, working with the person who has been jointly appointed by London and Chelmsford Dioceses to engage people with the Olympics. It will be important to consider the implications of the final report of the Munro Review of Child Protection¹.

Clair Cooke – Programme Manager

<http://www.london.anglican.org/youth-ministry.html>

¹ Department for Education, The Munro Review of Child Protection: Final Report *A child-centred system*, May 2011.



Affordable Housing

Introduction

Various factors contribute to the shortage of affordable housing:

- The escalation of house prices compared with incomes has priced many first time buyers out of the market and hugely increased the cost of renting.
- The housing stock profile in some areas is biased towards semi-detached and detached properties with much more limited availability of smaller and cheaper properties such as terraced houses or flats suiting single people and those on lower incomes.
- The Right-to-Buy introduced in the 1980s shrank the pool of rented accommodation.
- The increase in second home ownership and holiday lets in rural areas and the settlement of 'in-comers' such as commuters and retired people has made it difficult for local young people to remain. This problem is exacerbated where people employed locally are on relatively low incomes.

Affordable housing includes social rented and intermediate housing¹ provided to specified eligible households whose needs are not met by the market. Affordable housing should:

- meet the needs of eligible households including availability at a cost low enough for them to afford, determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices; *and*
- include provisions for the home to be retained for future eligible households; or, if these restrictions are lifted, for any subsidy to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision. (CLG Planning Policy Statement 3, re-issued June 2011)

Faith in Affordable Housing

Churches cannot solve the housing problem, but they can make a significant contribution by developing underused or redundant assets such as glebe land and property. *Faith in Affordable Housing* is a free web-based guide giving practical and technical information to help churches offer their land or property for affordable housing. (<http://www.fiah.org.uk/>) Converting church buildings into affordable housing not only gives the opportunity to provide a much needed resource for the local community, but also brings in an often urgently needed revenue stream to the church. *Faith in Affordable Housing* also has a Project Co-ordinator who works on a no-fee basis with churches that are considering affordable housing, to assist with getting projects up and running and has details of case studies of existing church initiatives. The project is managed by Housing Justice, a national charity that works with churches of all denominations to prevent homelessness and bad housing.

For churches to make provision for affordable housing by unlocking church land or property requires them to strike a balance between meeting social objectives and complying with charity law and maximising investment returns. A letter from the Charity Commission to the Diocesan Property Secretary of the Diocese of Salisbury in 2008 demonstrated that this is possible:

"If a disposal is being made in furtherance of a charity's purposes, the s.36 (9) of the Charities Act 1993 permits it to be made at less than the best price reasonably obtainable. It is also the case that many people would understand that part of the doctrine of Christianity is the

¹ Intermediate affordable housing is housing at prices and rents above those of social rent but below market price or rents. These can include shared equity and other low cost homes for sales, and intermediate rent.

*assistance of poor and needy people and therefore activities towards those ends could be seen as a means of advancing Christianity.*²

Faith in Affordable Housing – Using church land and property for affordable housing: A Practical Guide (February 2009) provides guidance and gives different denominational examples of ways in which churches have been able to reconcile these objectives.

Examples of diocesan approaches: 1. Exeter Diocese

After a review of diocesan assets, Exeter Diocese formed a partnership to address the problem of large 'time-expired' church buildings as well as high community need for affordable housing. 'Time-expired' indicated that the buildings were not fit for purpose and were also beyond economic repair/remodelling. They were, therefore, dragging down the mission of the local church rather than being able to be used as an effective resource for the church and community. The Diocese also drew up a Partnering Charter with the vision of producing "*useable, affordable and deliverable solutions for suitable former Church sites to meet the needs of stakeholders*". One of the partners, Sarsen Housing Association reviewed ten underused, closed or derelict churches in Plymouth, which the diocese considered worth redeveloping into affordable housing, usually with new 'fit-for-purpose' places of worship and community facilities. Most of the churches developed have been in low land value locations. The deal between the diocese and Sarsen involved exchanging old churches on a 125 year lease for newer, purpose-designed smaller ones with space that can be rented out for community activities. Since 2003, 154 homes have been built as a direct result of this partnership with Sarsen. Schemes include:

- St Paul's Church in Efford was completed in 2007. Efford ward was ranked as the seventh most deprived neighbourhood out of 43 in Plymouth and third most deprived in terms of housing. The project, using the old 1960s church site, provided a 40-flat *Extra Care* scheme for older people at affordable rents. There is round the clock care and support as well as communal facilities and gardens. A new library was built into the Extra Care building and the old library site used for the new church.
- St Barnabas Extra Care home opened in 2005. The scheme comprised 32 one and two-bedroom flats for frail elderly people, with on-site care staff. The money the diocese received for the scheme funded the conversion of the church hall into a new worship area. Part of the hall was leased as a doctor's surgery.
- A property in Cumberland Street, Devonport, which already provided the base for a long term community project on the ground floor, was bought from the Diocese by Sarsen, and its upper floors were converted and let as two affordable flats completed in 2007.
- St Michael's Church, Devonport was falling into disrepair and becoming a financial millstone. The diocese leased the land on which the church stood with the neighbouring vicarage to Sarsen Housing Association in return for a new church on the same site and funds to acquire a vicarage elsewhere.
- St Chad's Whitleigh Green was a 1950s church. Sarsen leased the land from the diocese to provide 5 houses for rent, 33 two bedroomed flats – 10 shared ownership and 23 for rent – that opened, together with the new church, in October 2010.

Examples of diocesan approaches: Salisbury Diocese

Salisbury Diocese has been selling or leasing land for affordable housing since the early 1990s. During the 1990s, there were six schemes totalling 52 houses.

² Appendix I of *Faith in Affordable Housing – Using church land and property for affordable housing: A Practical Guide* (February 2009) gives the full text of the letter.

One of these was a *Train and Build* scheme in Bridport, a small market town in Dorset. Bridport had a high incidence of single homeless people who had poor employment prospects and there was a net out-migration of young people. The diocese leased part of the rectory garden to Bournemouth Churches Housing Association for 99 years for the development of eight one-bedroomed flats for local unemployed and homeless 18-24 year olds. The potential occupants helped with the construction supervised by the building contractor and, at the same, time attended college and completed NVQs in their chosen building trade.

Thus the lease of a surplus rectory garden provided a release of capital for the diocese but also a range of other benefits:

Economic:

- Local employment for the young people involved and local people employed by the contractor.
- Formal training for individuals that enhanced their life chances.
- An affordable rent for the individuals concerned.
- Better economic prospects for the local community.

Social:

- Much needed social housing.
- Help to stem the out-migration of young people in search of work/training.
- Bolstered self-esteem of the young people involved.
- Help towards cementing community relations and social cohesion.

Political

- It showed that all the parties involved, including the church, were committed to the idea of alleviating the basic problems that affect rural communities.

A local scheme: Keswick Community Housing Trust – St John’s Housing Scheme

The following is an example of a local scheme using a Community Land Trust (CLT). A CLT is a non-profit, community-based organisation run by volunteers that develops housing or other assets at permanently affordable levels for long-term community benefit. It does this through local ownership and control, reducing the value of the land that the homes are built on and, in the case of shared-equity homes, fixing the resale percentage, thereby enabling occupiers to pay for the use of buildings and services at prices they can afford. The value of land, subsidies, planning gain and other equity benefits are permanently locked in by the CLT who holds the asset in trust for long-term community benefit. <http://www.communitylandtrusts.org.uk/>

In early 2009, Keswick Churches Together conducted a series of ‘exploring our communities’ consultations. A key emerging message was the lack of suitable affordable housing because of the combined effects of high house prices and second homes, low wages in an economy dominated by tourism, the loss of affordable housing through the Right to Buy and the high cost of shared ownership. As a result, a community-led organisation, Keswick Community Housing Trust (KCHT), began meeting in November 2009 and became incorporated in December 2010. Its plan is to develop an 11-unit housing scheme on a section of St John’s Church graveyard.

Also in 2009, a Community Land Trust (CLT) post for Cumbria was created with the officer, Andy Lloyd, based at Cumbria Rural Housing Trust. KCHT have been able to access his support and expertise. The steering group comprised church members, town councillors, a long established local builder and people in housing need. Further research into need was undertaken and the plan builds on the findings of the 2002 Keswick Area Action Plan and the 2007 Allerdale Borough Council Keswick Housing Market Action Plan.

The Trust was established as an Industrial Provident Society with exempt charitable status. This conforms to the definition of a CLT in the Section 79 of the Housing Regeneration Act 2008. Its objects are:

“to carry on for the benefit of the local community of the specified area of Keswick the business of acquiring, holding, developing and leasing land and property for permanently affordable housing and asset based community development and the business of securing the maintenance, improvement and creation of:

- *Amenities for the local community; and*
- *The well-being of those who live and work, or want to live and work, in the local community; and*
- *To enable people to build thriving, inclusive communities through the democratic ownership and stewardship of land and other assets.”*

In delivering its objects, it must seek to acquire and retain interests in land and property within the area of the local community and to manage such ownership actively to:

- Retain asset value for the benefit of the local community and ensure that the assets are not sold or developed except in a manner which the Society’s members thinks benefits the local community;
- Maximise asset value for the benefit of the local community; and
- Recycle any gains made in dealing with the assets for the benefit of the local community.

There are a number of necessary allies in the scheme:

- St John’s Church, which made the site available and facilitating discussions with the Diocese.
- Keswick Town Council, which has provided a small grant towards set-up costs.
- Allerdale Borough Council, which supports LCHT’s inclusion as a potential bidder for housing grant in the Local Investment Plan and is advising on planning and building regulations, allocation policy, linking with the Homes and Communities Agency and support funding.
- Lake District National Park Authority, which is promoting CLT schemes and has given a small grant for set-up costs.
- Derwent and Solway Housing Association, which is providing background advice, including the selection of architects and employer’s agent and housing management.
- Homes and Communities Agency, which is also providing background support and advice and specific advice about the new housing grant prospectus terms and conditions including the bids to the Community Right to Build Fund.
- Cumbria Rural Housing Trust giving support through its CLT officer, who has provided specialist workshops, advice and introductions, and help in developing the business plan.
- Hands-on-Help for Communities’ consultant provided the initial link to the CLT Fund and National CLT Network, produced the business plan template jointly with the CLT officer and advised on key stages of the project.
- Cobbetts – housing specialist solicitors that set up the Trust as an Industrial Provident Society and advised on raising local investment through a bond issue.
- The Tudor Trust, which manages the Technical Assistance Fund of the CLT Fund.

In addition, Keswick Quakers, Borrowdale with Grange Parochial Church Council and Keswick Methodist Church have given financial support.

The CLT approach offers the advantages of:

- Creating strong support for affordable housing within the community.
- Bringing land forward, which may not otherwise come forward – in this case gaining the agreement of the local diocese to sell land to the Trust.

- Ensuring that housing allocations meet local need and that policies are fair and transparent.
- Ensuring perpetuity - where the properties are owned by the community for the long term benefit of local people.

The KCHT scheme is for 11 x 3-bedroom homes:

- 4 rented homes @ 66% of market rent;
- 2 part ownership homes for sale @ 35% of market value;
- 1 part ownership home for sale @ 44% of market value;
- 4 Local Occupancy homes for sale @ 80 to 90% of market value.

The proposed *funding sequence* for the scheme is:

Step 1: A community share issue and donations to raise the money for the site and go towards initial costs.

Step 2: Development finance to build the scheme – potential combinations of:

- National CLT Fund.
- Social and commercial lenders.
- HCA or charitable grant.
- Construction company investment – where a company invests to generate work and is repaid on completion.
- Where local authorities agree to plough back New Homes Bonus into schemes that generate it (grant equivalent to council tax per home, additional for affordable homes).
- Other charitable grants.

Step 3: Most of the borrowing is repaid through sales of Local Occupancy and part ownership homes leaving a residual mortgage serviced by the rented homes.

The Box below shows the headings of the KCHT business plan, giving an indication of the topics that need to be covered in developing such a plan.

<p>KCHT Business Plan headings</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Introduction 2. Community Led Development 3. Keswick Community Housing Trust 4. Stakeholder Support 5. Sustainability Statement 6. Market Background & Housing Need 7. Planning & Funding Context 8. Other Housing Providers 9. The Added Value of CLTs 10. Development Site Details 11. Site Design 12. Scheme Delivery 13. The Scheme & Financial Projections 14. Operational Plan 15. Risk Analysis 16. Perpetuity & Leasehold Enfranchisement <p>Appendices</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> I. Ground Investigation Report II. Financial Tables – Income, expenditure, housing costs III. Keswick Town Council Letter of Support IV. Land Valuation V. LDNP Policy CS18
--

Shrinking the Footprint

National leadership

“The work we must all do for the good of the earth, of the poor and of future generations is work to which we are called from the heart of our faith. It is a practical response to the ‘Micah Challenge’: ‘What does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?’”¹

The Church’s *Shrinking the Footprint* campaign and programme of action to mitigate climate change was launched in 2006. It invited all parish churches to carry out an audit of their energy uses so that a benchmark could be established. Having assessed the size of the current ‘carbon footprint’ of the Church, the idea was to roll out initiatives to shrink that footprint. The target is to achieve a carbon reduction of 80% by 2050 (in line with Government commitments), with an interim target of a 42% reduction by 2020. A dedicated website was set up, which gives suggestions for action and includes examples of good practice.

<http://www.shrinkingthefootprint.cofe.anglican.org>

Church and Earth 2009-2016, the Church of England’s Seven Year Plan on Climate Change and the Environment, was part of the project of the Alliance of Religions and Conservation (ARC) for ‘Seven-Year Plans for Generational Change’ by the world’s major faiths presented to the United Nations Secretary General in advance of the UN Convention on Climate Change, Copenhagen, December 2009. The Plan, commissioned by the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishop of London, was the work of a task group established under *Shrinking the Footprint*. It is divided into three main sections:

- *The basis for environmental action*: the scientific basis for our understanding of climate change, its consequences and those of other causes of environmental depredation plus the moral, biblical and theoretical grounding for Christian responses to these challenges.
- *The environmental record of the Church of England* from 1978 to the present, including resolutions to the Lambeth Conference and General Synod, C of E writings on environmental issues and examples of action at diocesan and parish level.
- *Challenges for future church action* in relation to buildings and assets; governance and partnerships; education and young people; lifestyles; pastoral and community work; media and advocacy; celebration.

A national project: Grow Zones

Grow Zones is a national project supported by the Big Lottery Fund’s *Local Food* scheme (<http://www.growzones.com>). It was started by EarthAbbey, an organisation founded by the Revd Chris Sunderland, a priest in Bristol Diocese. EarthAbbey (www.earthabbey.com) aspires to be a prophetic community inspired by Jesus whose life and mission was to bring about a peace which embraces all creation, acting out a message of radical change and focused on the need to live more in tune with the earth.

Grow Zones was piloted in Bristol. It is a resource for those wanting to start a community growing project. No gardening experience is required, though the facilitator needs some organisational skills. Grow Zones will provide the help and resources needed for the first season. An average size team could be 15–20 people with 8-12 different gardens, but Grow Zones works with bigger and smaller sized teams. The participants will have different skills, experience and garden sizes and different availability over the season.

¹ From the Foreword to the *Church and Earth 2009-2016*, the Church of England’s Seven Year Plan on Climate Change and the Environment, (October 2009) by the Rt Revd Dr Richard Chartres, Bishop of London and Chair of the *Shrinking the Footprint* Campaign.

“In the spring or the autumn a team who live geographically close to one another get together. An easy schedule of Saturday morning visits is arranged to each of the gardens to match what needs doing – creating raised beds, pruning and grafting fruit trees, sowing seeds and sharing seedlings. We do preparatory jobs like seed sowing in the spring and harvesting, preserving and tidying up in the autumn. In exchange for helping each other, we’ll learn about permaculture and growing, and share in a bumper crop of fresh produce and most importantly, have some fun. Together we halve the risk and workload but double the harvest.”

There is a Grow Zones Kit designed to make life for the facilitator easy, which comprises materials for the participants and special resources for the facilitator:

1. *It gets people growing:* Grow Zones gets people growing which, for many, will be their first time. It is designed to encourage reflective practice which means that that learning is shared by the whole group rather than there needing to be one expert or teacher in charge.
2. *It introduces permaculture:* Participants are encouraged to design along permaculture principles if possible which is a great way to overcome some of the challenges facing a new grower.
3. *It is an organisational resource.* The kit provides the resources and the structure to organise the garden designs and the diary of visits. Organising garden designs and a diary of visits for a large group of people (so that each garden has a design, is visited by the team, but that no participant does more than four visits) can be a lengthy task without a structured process to help you do it.
4. *It is a community forming project.* Participants are likely to form friendships and stay in touch through Grow Zones.
5. *It provides insurance cover.* Registered Grow Zones are covered by insurance to give you peace of mind during the group visits.

David Shreeve, the Church of England’s national environment adviser, said:

“Churches and faith groups are ideally placed to establish Grow Zones. Many younger families have the enthusiasm whilst older people often have the gardens which they would welcome some help with and so here’s an excellent way to bring congregations together. Grow Zones not only provide practical opportunities, but can produce a very real sense of community with all ages sharing in a ‘real-life good life’.”

Chris Sunderland said: *“The Grow Zones Kit has been developed to help teams get organised and growing without necessarily having any expert knowledge. At the beginning the project was a way to get people growing their own food but it has proved to be an amazing friendship and community forming project too. It seems easier for people to make friends over shared work.”*

A regional response: 1. South West Diocesan Regional Environment Group

The South West Diocesan Regional Environment Group was set up in 2009 by Truro, Exeter, Bath and Wells, Bristol, Gloucester and Salisbury Dioceses. The purposes of the Group are to:

- Bring together personnel from different diocesan departments across the six dioceses in the south west, to develop common working on the *Shrinking the Footprint* campaign in the region.
- Pursue initiatives in co-operation that individual Dioceses cannot pursue in isolation.
- Encourage each other and share best practice.

- Provide guidance regarding development of policies, plans and initiatives.
- Derive greater influence by joining together to represent the church's interest; for example, campaigning and joint purchasing.

The departments represented are Archdeacons; Cathedrals; DAC; Diocesan Environment Officers; Diocesan Secretaries; Education; Finance; Property; Social Responsibility Officers. The Group reports to the Diocesan Secretaries.

A regional response: 2. Faiths4Change

The original idea for the multi-faith, environmental pilot project, Operation EDEN, came from the Bishop of Liverpool. Developed in partnership with senior members of different denominations and world faiths, the underlying assumptions were that:

- World religions share common ground in their values and commitments to caring for the earth and communities.
- Faith communities are often historically rooted in local neighbourhoods and have considerable resources of land, buildings, people (volunteers and paid staff), expertise and relationships.
- Most faith communities use their resources to provide services to all members of the community.
- Most people care about their community, irrespective of whether or not they have a religious faith.
- Organisations/agencies from all sectors would support partnership action that enabled residents to transform their communities.
- By facilitating action led by faith community partners, activity undertaken could be sustained.

The idea was to have paid workers who could facilitate positive environmental change supported by local people and faith communities working together. Operation EDEN provided free support, advice and training and access to a Development Fund to seed small scale projects with grants of up to £4,000. Projects in the 10% most deprived areas had to secure at least one sixth match funding and in other areas, one third. Projects workers supported them to do this. Between 2004 and 2007, 57 projects were funded. Funding was secured from the Northwest Development Agency (NWDA), the Environment Agency and Merseyside Waste Disposal Authority, totalling of over £500,000 over three years. There were output targets attached to the funding (such as hectares of land remediated or brought back into community use and number of adults trained). The range and reach of the projects far exceeded expectations.

The Eden Project only covered Merseyside, the geographical area of the Diocese of Liverpool. However, the intention was always to test the success of a multi-faith project on Merseyside and, if it worked, roll it out regionally. In 2007, with the support of NWDA, it was retitled Faiths4Change and extended to working with faith communities from across the North West, still focusing on the interlinked areas of climate change, social justice and health and wellbeing. New bases were established in Burnley, Manchester and Preston, all within faith community-owned buildings. Faiths4Change expanded and flourished until Spring 2011 when the abolition of Regional Development Agencies cut off its main source of funding. Between 2008 and 2010, it supported 74 projects which together had over 900 volunteers who put in about 12,000 volunteer hours. F4C invested around £88,000 in projects which attracted a further £124,000 cash match and over £200,000 in kind. In recent times, as a registered charity and social enterprise, F4C has had contracts from bodies such as United Utilities, Merseyside Waste Disposal Agency and the Environment Agency, primarily to work with faith communities in some

of the most disadvantaged areas in the North West. F4C also receives a donation for each individual or faith community that signs up to Ecotricity and uses the income to purchase sustainability kits for parent and toddler groups.

Examples of current projects are:

- *Food4Thought* is a joint project with Asylum Link Merseyside that enables asylum seekers, refugees and local people to socialise, using food as a means to learn about each other, increase health and wellbeing and to enjoy sharing.
- The *Simply Living* project engages parents/guardians on low incomes with babies and pre-school children to promote awareness and behavioural change in relation to energy and water efficiency, food growing and waste disposal habits.
- *Sowing Seeds for Transformation – a Schools Food Growing Programme* was developed in partnership with the Liverpool Diocese Education Team and their Advisory Head Teacher. It is a chargeable service that supports Every Child Matters, Sustainable Schools, Eco Schools and Healthy Schools. Exciting and rewarding for children and staff, it builds confidence for children, supports their learning and promotes exercise and increased nutrition and it involves parents and community members. Services are tailored to meet the needs of each school community. First Steps enables staff to plan and develop a sustainable food growing partnership project with considerable support from Faiths4Change Projects Officer. One-day workshops for the whole school community include ‘Sowing and Planting’, ‘African Bag Gardens’ and ‘Food from Around the World’.
- Sustainability audits for churches (see box below).
- Faiths4Change is currently developing new work with United Utilities in Burnley, an area experiencing water resource issues, to engage with Muslim households and Mosque groups to create a water saving programme.
- Environment Agency funding is directed towards work around flood risk, for example in Rochdale and Bolton.

Having begun as a Diocese of Liverpool initiative, F4C became an independent charity in 2010. It has had to go through a period of retrenchment because of the loss of significant pots of funding, though some of the staff who were made redundant are continuing on a self-employed basis because demand remains.

Faiths4Change Energy and Environmental Audits for Churches

The purpose is to help identify wastage providing a starting point to reduce energy consumption, lower CO2 emissions, and use water more carefully, whilst also thinking about how any waste may be better managed.

“We’ll come and spend a day with you and look at how your building is being used and the heating and lighting, water and waste. You’ll need to provide us with information such as utility bills and meter readings. We’ll provide you with a detailed report based upon the observations made and analysis of information which will highlight areas of good stewardship as well as areas to be addressed to lower your carbon and environmental footprints and your financial costs.

Following on from the audit and report, we’ll continue to analyse your energy consumption so that from start to finish of the process you’ll have a better understanding of how your building is performing and as a consequence you’ll be able to determine if you are burning money or making savings that could be put to good use elsewhere.”

<http://www.faiths4change.org.uk/>

A diocesan response 1: Exeter

Action on the environment began in the 1980s in the area of the Exeter Diocese when the Devon Christian Ecology Group was set up and a Churches Green Action programme began. There is a team to oversee and promote *Shrinking the Footprint*, (StF) focusing on churches and other buildings. Bearing in mind that the three largest contributors to greenhouse gas emissions are power production (mainly electricity), buildings and transport, it was concluded that the StF campaign needed to focus on activities in five areas:

- procurement and supplies;
- property and plant;
- transport and travel;
- personal lifestyles;
- theology and worship.

The Diocese has a ten year Strategy Plan 2010-2011 delegated to the Council for Church and Society, but owned by the Bishop's Council and resourced through the Diocesan Board of Finance.

“There are a number of key challenges which underpin this strategy: climate change, peak oil, energy security, food security. As part of our covenantal relationship with God and the Earth, we need to be working towards a just and sustainable stewardship of the world and its natural resources.”

The vision is to achieve a sustainable future for Exeter Diocese (CofE in Devon) in terms of the environment, financial security, energy security and viability of local communities. Exeter StF is working on all the areas listed in the challenges for future action in *Church and Earth 2009-2016*. The main objectives are to:

- be able to measure the Diocese's annual carbon footprint;
- reduce carbon emissions in the Diocese compared with the 2005-08 average by at least 24% by 2015 and 42% by 2020;
- measure the annual ecological footprint;
- seek to maximise potential financial benefits in the longer term;
- encourage green investment;
- develop renewable energy projects;
- reduce consumption of fossil fuels;
- promote local energy and food sourcing.

The Diocese is responding by different means:

- *Taking action* to achieve the sustainable operation of the Diocese. For example, a programme of insulating parsonages was set up in collaboration with local authorities.
- *Influencing* other organisations within the Diocese to work towards sustainability.
- *Encouraging* individuals to take positive action.
- *Lobbying* external bodies in the church, local and national government and elsewhere to improve the context.

<http://www.exeterstf.org.uk/>

A diocesan response 2: Chichester

Eco Faith is a resource created by Chichester diocese, local councils and the Catholic diocese of Arundel and Brighton. The programme is designed for all faith groups to help them reduce the environmental impact of their faith buildings and also the impact of members on the environment in order to slow down the effects of climate change. There are resources on topics such as climate change, energy efficiency in places of worship and homes, fuel poverty, waste reduction and food as well as theology and the environment.

A local response: St Margaret's Church, Putney Eco-Congregation

'Eco-Congregation' developed from a partnership between the Government funded environmental charity ENCAMS (which runs the Keep Britain Tidy Campaign and the Going for Green brand) and the Environmental Issues Network of Churches Together in Britain and Ireland. It aims to encourage churches to consider environmental issues within a Christian context and enable local churches to make positive contributions in their life and mission.

The Eco-Congregation Award is given to churches that have:

- † Worked through the churches' environmental check-up;
- † Helped the whole congregation to make the link between their Christian faith and environmental concerns (*growing in faith and understanding*);
- † Taken practical action in the church and/or church grounds (*putting God's house in green order*);
- † Had a positive impact on and/or worked with their local or wider community (*changing lives: changing communities*).

Churches must have undertaken one reasonably substantive piece of work or a number of smaller projects in each area. When there is overlap, for example a church involving the local community in improvements to their grounds, the church will be given credit for taking action in both areas.

<http://ew.ecocongregation.org/>

St Margaret's Church, Putney received an Eco-Congregation award in March 2011. The following shows the way St Margaret's meets the criteria for the award.

□ *Made the link between the Christian faith and our environmental concerns*

Our emphasis is on the care of God's Creation rather than Climate Change which is a real ongoing stewardship.

1. Annual Environment Sunday with a special service and promises made by congregation to reduce personal carbon footprint.
2. Regular prayers and hymns remembering the environment and regular mention of environmental matters in sermons.
3. Notice board in Church dedicated to St. Margaret's is Going Greener which is renewed on a fairly regular basis.
4. Bookshop and Library feature environmental books.
5. The Environment Group meets at about six weekly intervals on a Sunday over a Fair Trade breakfast.
6. The Pathfinders (teenagers) and Sunday School regularly consider environmental issues and have tried to put up bird feeders which have been savaged by squirrels!
7. Regular reports and articles in the Parish magazine.
8. Reports to every P.C.C. Meeting.

Future plans:

- Set up an environmental study group with Churches Together in Putney to follow the Methodist Study 'Hope in the Future';
- Hold an annual Environment Sunday with a relevant theme, e.g. water;
- Invite another Environmental preacher;
- Keep assessing our environmental position prayerfully.

□ *Taken practical action in the church and/or church grounds*

1. We have completed an environmental audit.
2. We monitor our energy consumption very regularly and have a new more efficient boiler which operates on a timer and will be serviced regularly.
3. We have insulated the Parish Hall roofs, try to keep the windows clean, have installed low-energy light bulbs and encourage all users to switch off unnecessary lights and not leave items on stand-by.
4. We check all water outlets.
5. We have put a new disabled access plan into effect and have installed a disabled toilet.
6. We have an active recycling scheme where we collect items (stamps, spectacles, mobile phones, cartridges, batteries and light bulbs) in Fair Trade bags at the back of the Church and the Environment Group take them to the appropriate place on a monthly rota. We have joined a scheme run by Christian Aid's partner Redeem whereby Christian Aid will receive about £4 for every old mobile phone and £1 for every recyclable ink cartridge sent to Redeem.
7. We are a Fair Trade Parish (every body drinks F.T. tea or coffee at Church functions). We use crockery rather than paper cups and plates.
8. We maintain our garden which is used as a play area for the nursery school which uses our Hall.
9. We use the website wherever possible and encourage members of the congregation not to print unless necessary (for the last A.P.C.M. we only printed ten sets of papers instead of the usual sixty).
10. Our logo is green!

Future plans and hopes:

- Widen our recycling campaign;
- Put up a rain water butt;
- Erect a cycle shed;
- Put up squirrel proof bird feeders;
- Install a bench so that people can sit and enjoy our garden.

□ ***Had a positive impact on and/or worked with their local or the global community***

1. Articles in Roundabout, the Parish newsletter that goes to every home in the Parish twice a year.
2. We strongly support Christian Aid (many members collect every Christian Aid Week) and actively support 'Send a Cow'.
3. We actively support Churches Together in Putney and have been instrumental in trying to set up an Eco Group within C.T.P.
4. All building users are invited to join in our 'Reduce your footprint' campaign and many of them have made promises on Environment Sundays.
5. We do include environmental issues in our weekly pew sheet (e.g. recycling).
6. We have been in discussion with Wandsworth Borough Council to see how we can support their very active environment campaigns.
7. I have been in touch with the wife of the Bishop of the Amazon to try to open a dialogue on the environmental issues in our countries.
8. I have been to a meeting at St. Andrew's Earlsfield and have offered to join a group working in the area to promote a Christian response to the problems facing our environment.
9. We have a regular Traidcraft stall selling their products.

Future plans:

- Invite Wandsworth Borough Council to have a recycling stall on St. Margaret's Day in June.
- Develop our links with Brazil.
- More articles and green tips in *Roundabout*.
- Join the scheme promoted by the Putney Society to make Putney Park Lane a 'Bee Line'.
- Improve and extend our links with Fair Trade, Christian Aid and the Council.

<http://www.stmargaretsputney.org.uk/>

Appendix IV: Templates

Parish developments: Questions to ask before you start

Why are you thinking of doing anything?	Who is driving the thinking? Is the PCC behind it?
What are you thinking of doing?	How does it fit with other activities in the parish and with your parish development plan?
Have you got evidence of need or usefulness that will convince potential funders and/or partners?	What made you think of this particular type of project? If you have anecdotal evidence, is it backed up by other sorts of information, such as demographic or service data or deprivation statistics?
How do you intend to meet this need?	What sort of service do you intend to provide? Are there any special regulations that need to be taken into account (e.g. child protection)?
What would you need to meet this need?	Premises, people, skills, funding?
What have you got to offer?	How far is what is needed (premises, funding, skills, volunteers, etc) already in place or readily accessible?
Have you checked that no-one else is meeting that need?	Are there organisations in the area that are already providing a similar service?
What do you want to achieve?	What would you see as success?
How would you measure success?	How would you know you are moving in the right direction?
Are there potential partners around?	Are there other churches or faith groups nearby that would want to collaborate? Would what you want to do help or be helped by what some other organisation does?
Are there potential funding sources?	Donations, grant aid, contracts, earned income?
Who will be responsible for it?	

Volunteers: Issues to be considered

Topic	Comments/questions
Defining their role	Why do you need them? How much time will you expect them to give? Are there clear descriptions of the required tasks so that people know what they are volunteering for and you know how to assess potential volunteers?
Volunteer policy	Have you thought out and recorded your policy for using volunteers that can be shared with them setting out your responsibilities to them and theirs to you?
Recruitment	There are innumerable outlets for advertising: which you use will depend on what you are recruiting for and, for example, whether it is to meet a short term emergency or provide a longer term service.
Selection	The process needs to be rigorous and thorough without being so bureaucratic that it puts off or precludes individuals who might otherwise be suitable. Are you clear about the distinction between reasonable and unreasonable restrictions when selecting volunteers? Have you checked about particular restrictions and the screening necessary (Criminal Records Bureau checks), for example, in relation to work with children and vulnerable adults? Restrictions are justified in certain circumstances but it is important to be aware of good practice in equal opportunities. More generally, the clearer the pre-information about what will be expected (written or oral), the more likely it is appropriate people will put themselves forward. Although it does not need to be a very formal process, it is important for both sides to be able to assess the suitability of the individual for the role.
Budget	Have you included the costs of using volunteers in your budget, to cover possible outlay? There may be set-up costs, such as provision of a desk, computer or phone line and there will be running costs such as reimbursing expenses, insurance, training and support and management time.
Management, support and supervision	Management encompasses all the issues mentioned in this note. Support of volunteers requires consideration of their needs. Are there adequate induction arrangements? Do they have someone they can turn to for immediate help or advice? Do they have enough information? Are they thanked and do they feel their contribution is valued? Do they feel involved in wider aspects of the project, in policy making and reflection both on past performance and future directions? The level of supervision will depend upon what they do, how long they have been doing it, how experienced they are. The effectiveness of both support and supervision will be linked with wider policies, internal communications and working practices, including relationships between volunteers and between them and staff and trustees.

Insurance, health and safety	You are legally liable for your volunteers and clients, which means taking out suitable insurance (public liability, employee liability, personal accident and professional indemnity) and being aware of the relevant legislation. Under the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974, you must have a health and safety policy. It should include reference to volunteers and they should have a copy.
Training	Training can be informal or formal and accredited; internal or using outside agencies. It might be a matter of keeping volunteers up to date with what is happening within the project or in the policy context they are working in. It might focus on imparting skills, such as listening or IT skills and, for some, there may be the possibility of volunteers getting NVQs or other qualifications. What is appropriate will depend on the nature of the volunteers, what they are doing and how long term they are.
Expenses	Have you thought through a policy so that volunteers can be treated consistently? For example, when will you pay travel expenses and how are they calculated? Do you provide subsistence to volunteers working a full day? Do they need uniforms or protective clothing? Are they expected to go to conferences or training? The process for claiming expenses needs to be simple and clear and payments should be regular and sometimes in advance for people on low incomes. Beware of making <i>ex gratia</i> payments that could create tax, benefit or national insurance problems.
Provision	The budget section above indicated that volunteers do not usually come without some associated cost. In addition, this note underlines the need to ensure that volunteers are sufficiently well informed and feel confident about their place in the project, how they will be treated and what is expected of them. In some projects, this may require the provision of guidelines, for example, about confidentiality or protection issues. Conversely, volunteers have a right to information as well as safeguards if their own safety might be at risk.
Inclusion	Volunteers need to feel that they are part of the wider team, that they are trusted and their role is appreciated. Demonstrating this may entail more than treating individuals respectfully to, for example, having places for volunteers on the management committee and involving them collectively when there are major decisions to be made.
Calculating their contribution	It is helpful to have evidence for funders of the in kind or cash value of volunteers. This might be calculated on the basis of the minimum wage hourly rate, or the rate for the job of roles such as lawyers, counsellors or drivers, or volunteer time could be computed in terms of full-time equivalent staff. Alongside this quantitative information, there can be commentary on to roles of volunteers (including trustees) and what they bring to the project (enabling greater reach, work with specific client groups, more activities, etc).

Asylum seekers

What is the problem?	An asylum seeker is someone who has entered the UK to claim asylum and registered with the UK Border Agency. If the asylum claim is accepted s/he is given 'leave to remain' and becomes a refugee. A refugee has the same rights and support as other foreign legal residents, including the right to work. An asylum seeker is not allowed to work, but can get some financial support and accommodation. However, if the asylum claim is rejected, most are evicted from their accommodation and their financial support is cut off. In 2008, the Independent Asylum Commission calculated that 283,500 failed asylum seekers were living homeless in the UK.
What is the problem locally?	It can be difficult to obtain hard statistical data on the number of failed asylum seekers, but there may be plenty of anecdotal evidence; for example from city centre churches, from specialist organisations such as Refugee Action or from research projects by bodies such as the Independent Asylum Commission.
Possible responses	<p>Examples of services for asylum seekers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Immigration advice and casework; • Referral to other agencies and solicitors; • General casework – re housing, missed NASS payments, health; • English classes for speakers of other languages (ESOL); • Housing – emergency or longer stay • Destitution services of donated cash, food, clothing, furniture, toiletries; • Access to showers and/or washing machines; • Social support such as healthy eating and cooking events; • Volunteering opportunities giving a meaningful way of passing the time; • Allotments and gardening, which also enable mixing and meeting people.
Examples of faith-based projects focusing on asylum seekers	<p>Nottingham Arimathea Trust formed in 2004 provides:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temporary housing for refused, destitute asylum seekers; • A safe place for working on further submissions of asylum claims; • A housing project for single refugees often made homeless when given 'leave to remain'.
	<p>Support for Asylum Seekers, an ecumenical project in Liverpool, provides grants that go towards accommodation and cash grants for destitute asylum seekers. SAS works closely with another organisation, Asylum Link which although not strictly church-related relies heavily on church premises, donations from churches and church-linked volunteers for its wide range of services.</p>
	<p>Derby Cathedral is often visited by asylum seekers, many of whom are given individual support such as being given meals and accompanied to hearings. The Justice and Peace Group provides a network of people to draw on for the relevant assistance.</p>

Social Return on Investment

Social Return on Investment (SROI) is a way of measuring and accounting for the value created in projects and services. Although relatively new to the UK, the methodology is attracting considerable interest from government and from organisations that might fund of commission specific pieces of work and third sector organisations are starting to adopt it because it can help them give an account of their achievements and attract funding but also because it is a useful tool for understanding how to maximise social impact, improve performance and achieve their goals.

The table below shows the six stages of the SROI process.

The six stages of carrying out an SROI analysis

Stages	Comments
1. Establishing scope and identifying key stakeholders	Setting clear boundaries about what the SROI analysis will cover, who will be involved in the process and how. Stakeholders might include: service users, volunteers, partners and funders.
2. Mapping outcomes	The purpose of developing an impact map (or theory of change) is to show the relationship between inputs, outputs and outcomes. Sometimes stakeholders might identify changes that go beyond the explicit goals of the project. For example, a gardening/ healthy food project may also lead to greater participation in other social activities and avert loneliness.
3. Evidencing outcomes and giving them a value.	To evidence outcomes requires identifying indicators. For example, an indicator of healthier service users might be number of GP visits. Then there can be a financial proxy for the indicator to work out potential savings: in this case the NHS figure for the cost of a GP visit.
4. Establishing impact.	After taking out of the analysis the aspects of change that would have happened anyway or are a result of other factors, the quantity of each outcome is multiplied by the financial proxy to give the total value of the outcome.
5. Calculating the SROI	This stage entails adding up the benefits, taking away any negatives and comparing the result with the investment made. For example, this might show that for a total input (spend) of £10,000, the social return is £15,000 which means that there is £1.50 value for every £1 investment. This is the social return ratio. To make the exercise more robust, it should be accompanied by a sensitivity analysis to check estimates of impact and their financial proxies.
6. Reporting, using and embedding.	The results of the exercise can be sent to funders and used in funding bids and reported to volunteers and service users.

The Office of the Third Sector in the Cabinet Office has produced *Social Return on Investment: an introduction* (2009). This gives the seven principles of SROI that underpin how it should be used:

1. *Involve stakeholders*
Stakeholders should inform what gets measured and how this is measured and valued.

2. *Understand what changes*
Articulate how change is created and evaluate this through evidence gathered, recognising positive and negative changes as well as those that are intended and unintended.
3. *Value the things that matter*
Use financial proxies in order that the value of the outcomes can be recognised.
4. *Only include what is material*
Determine what information and evidence must be included in the accounts to give a true and fair picture, such that stakeholders can draw reasonable conclusions about impact.
5. *Do not over claim*
Organisations should only claim the value that they are responsible for creating.
6. *Be transparent*
Demonstrate the basis on which the analysis may be considered accurate and honest and show that it will be reported to and discussed with stakeholders.
7. *Verify the result.*
Ensure appropriate independent verification of the account.

The SROI Network promotes the use and development of the Social Return on Investment methodology in the UK. It is a membership organisation and a company limited by guarantee. Its objectives are:

- To ensure the principles and standards of SROI are adhered to;
- To develop the methodology;
- To disseminate information on indicators and proxies for use in SROI analyses;
- To train SROI practitioners and provide peer support.

The SROI Network website contains a range of SROI resources including *A guide to Social Return on Investment*, a full description of the principles of SROI and details of SROI training courses: www.thesroinetwork.org.

The SROI Network,
(14) 7th Floor,
Gostins Building,
Hanover Street,
Liverpool,
L1 4LN.
Tel: 0151 703 9229

Steps towards a Community Land Trust (CLT)¹

A CLT is a non-profit, community-based organisation run by volunteers that develops housing or other assets at permanently affordable levels for long-term community benefit. It does this through local ownership and control, reducing the value of the land that the homes are built on and, in the case of shared-equity homes, fixing the resale percentage, thereby enabling occupiers to pay for the use of buildings and services at prices they can afford. The value of land, subsidies, planning gain and other equity benefits are permanently locked in by the CLT who holds the asset in trust for long-term community benefit.

Steps	Comments
Visioning – developing a community plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • defining the problem – a needs survey • building a consensus amongst local stakeholders • assessing whether a CLT is a potential solution • identifying people who can drive the scheme
Forming a steering group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • drawing on local capacity and expertise • determining what outside help will also be needed
Creating the Trust	The legal definition is set out in Section 79 of the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008. (see below) It is necessary to meet this definition to be eligible for funding from the Homes and Communities Agency and the CLT Fund.
The Trust's legal structure	<p>The CLT's legal structure should be designed to enable it to achieve its objectives. Issues to consider include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the CLT's objectives and the powers needed to achieve them. • The geographical area to be served. If large, does it need a two-tier legal structure? • Who will be the members (i.e. owners) of the CLT? How widely will membership be spread? • Who will direct and manage the CLT? How will the board of management be made up? • How will it engage with the community it seeks to serve and how will the community be able to have its say. • The powers of the board to delegate matters to others and to exercise the CLT's powers • Whether it is appropriate to seek charitable status.
Determining the best legal form	<p>The three most common types of legal structures are a Company Limited by Guarantee (CLG), which can be charitable, an Industrial and Provident Society (IPS) and a Community Interest Company (CIC).</p> <p>Points to consider in choosing the form and over which to get advice include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • need to deal charity to charity? • the strength of the asset lock to protect the asset created being sold for purposes other than those for which it was developed. • cost and regulation associated with each form. • charities - tax advantages versus heavy regulation, limitations on activities/need to set up subsidiaries, impact on capacity. • use of cross subsidy? i.e. sale of market housing to fund

	<p>affordable housing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • whether diverse activities would be supported by regulators. • the need to raise investment from the community. • attracting other potential investors.
Charitable objects	<p>Providing housing can serve various charitable purposes, such as relieving need, serving the needs of those who are elderly or disabled, or purposes promoting urban or rural regeneration in areas of social and economic deprivation. The Charity Commission sets out suitable charitable objects for a CLT providing affordable housing. Compliance can be very time consuming and costly.</p>
Continuing community engagement	<p>The membership structure and forming a board is an important part of the community engagement process. The board should both be a means of democratic control and a vehicle to recruit the range of local knowledge and expertise needed to run the organisation.</p>
Governance	<p>Governance arrangements need to set out:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the CLT's Objects (i.e. purpose); • the powers it has to fulfil the Objects; • make up of the membership, their rights and how they apply, retire, resign and/or may be removed and a restriction on them being able to access the CLT's assets; • how general meetings of the CLT are to be convened and held; • make up of the membership of the board, how Board members are to be appointed, retirement provisions and powers to remove a Board member; • the powers granted to the Board, how it is to conduct its business, voting rights and powers to delegate to sub-committees and others; • a rule preventing Board members profiting by their position (this deals with conflicts of interest); • provisions dealing with paid officers of the CLT if applicable; • provisions for annual reports, accounts and the appointment of an auditor; • what happens to the CLT's assets if it were ever to be wound up; • the use of a seal to execute documents as deeds; • how to make changes to the constitution; and (if relevant) powers for the Board to make bye-laws regulating how the CLT is to be run.
Policies	<p>Additional policies needed include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • duties of Board members: fiduciary, statutory and best practice; • avoidance of conflicts of interest; • professional indemnity insurance for Board members; • financial regulations to govern all financial transactions undertaken by the CLT; • allocations, rent setting and other policies for the management of its housing stock; • equalities and diversity policy; • health and safety policy; • other policies which are required by the CLT's regulators (Charity Commission, Tenant Services Authority etc).

Definition of a CLT as set out in Section 79 of the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008

A Community Land Trust is corporate body which:

- (a) is established for the express purpose of furthering the social, economic and environmental interests of a local community by acquiring and managing land and other assets in order
 - i. to provide a benefit to the local community;
 - ii. to ensure that the assets are not sold or developed except in a manner which the trust's members think benefits the local community.
- (b) is established under arrangements which are expressly designed to ensure that:
 - i. any profits from its activities will be used to benefit the local community (otherwise than by being paid directly to members);
 - ii. individuals who live or work in the specified area have the opportunity to become members of the trust (whether or not others can also become members);
 - iii. the members of a trust control it.

The combination of these provisions create an 'asset lock' enabling a CLT to deliver long-term solutions for the community it serves, by ensuring the assets are permanently owned and retained for the community's benefit.

National Community Land Trust Network is the national body for CLTs that promotes and supports the work of CLTs across England. It aims to achieve a growing and flourishing CLT sector. The Network was established in September 2010 and is hosted by, but independent of, the National Housing Federation. It is funded in part by the Department for Communities and Local Government Empowerment Fund, via Carnegie UK Trust. <http://www.communitylandtrusts.org.uk/>

The **Community Land Trust Fund** is a £2m fund to support fledgling Community Land Trust projects by providing:

- funding (administered by the Charities Aid Foundation) where there is a lack of access to risk capital and bank finance: the Investment Fund can support eligible CLTs by providing loans (not grants) – both pre-development finance at the outline concept stage and development finance capital loans to top up finance already secured from banks and other investors.
- expert support for the preparation of development and business plans when the necessary professional and technical skills are not available: the Technical Assistance Fund gives grants of up to £2,500 (administered by the Tudor Trust) for groups to employ consultants for up to five days to assist with working up ideas into a business plan.

¹ The author is grateful for the assistance of Andy Lloyd, CLT Project Officer at Cumbria Rural Housing Trust.

Appendix V: References

Chris Baker and Hannah Skinner, *Faith in Action: The dynamic connection between religious and spiritual capital*, Manchester: William Temple Foundation 2006

Joy Bates & Stella Collishaw, *Faith in Derbyshire*, Derby Diocesan Council for Social Responsibility, 2006

eds. Joy Bates, Stella Collishaw & Richard Jordan, *Faith in Action: A Derbyshire Churches Guide to Community Mission*, Derby Diocesan Council for Social Responsibility, 2008

Church Action on Poverty and Oxfam, *The Sustainable Livelihoods Handbook: An asset based approach to poverty*, 2009.

Church Urban Fund and Church Action on Poverty, *At the Cutting Edge: A survey of the impact of the spending cuts on voluntary groups in the most deprived communities in England*, 2011.

The Effective Christian Presence and Enterprise Project Report, Churches Regional Commission for Yorkshire and the Humber, Yorkshire Forward and Faithworks, 2008

<http://www.crc-online.org.uk/downloads/ECPE%20Main%20report.pdf>

The Effective Christian Presence and Enterprise Project Case Studies, Churches Regional Commission for Yorkshire and the Humber, Yorkshire Forward and Faithworks, 2008

<http://www.crc-online.org.uk/downloads/ECPE%20Case%20studies.pdf>

Department of Communities and Local Government, (2004) *Working Together: Co-operation between Government and Faith Communities*, DCLG.

Department of Communities and Local Government, (2008) *Face to Face and Side by Side: A framework for partnership in our multi-faith society*, DCLG.

Department for Communities and Local Government, (March 2010) *Ensuring a level playing field: funding faith-based organisations to provide publicly funded services*,.

Robert Errington with Bernadette Askins, Paul Southgate & Jim Robertson, *Stepping Out in Faith: A report on the Faith in Our Communities Initiative in the Durham Diocesan Area*, Faith in Our Community, July 2010.

<http://www.durham.anglican.org/userfiles/file/Durham%20Website/News%20and%20Events/Latest%20News/Stepping%20Out%20in%20Faith%20-%20Critical%20Reflections%20and%20Key%20Lessons.pdf>

Irene Eveson, *Faith Matters: Case studies from the Faiths in Action Fund*, Communities and Local Government, Faiths in Action and Community Development Foundation, 2010.

Faith in England's Northwest: the contribution made by faith communities to civil society in the region, NWDA, 2003

Faith in England's Northwest: Economic Impact Assessment, NWDA, 2005

Faith in England's Northwest: How Faith Communities Contribute to Social and Economic Well-being, NWDA, 2009

- Richard Farnell, David Jarvis, Jane Ricketts Hein, Jill Hopkinson & Jeremy Martineau, *Faith in Rural Communities: Contributions of Social Capital to Community Vibrancy*, ACORA Publishing. <http://archive.defra.gov.uk/rural/documents/research/faith-report-full.pdf> October 2006
- Frontier Economics, *Social Return on Investment* Report for the WRVS, March 2011.
- Glendale Alive*, Report for the Rural Mission and Ministry Initiative, William Temple Foundation 2008.
- Jill Hopkinson, Graham Jones and Jeremy Martineau, *Making Connections*, 2010, ACORA Publishing
- David Jarvis, Fran Porter, Hannah Lambie & Kevin Broughton with Richard Farnell, *Building Better Neighbourhoods: The Contribution of Faith Communities to Oxfordshire Life*, Coventry University Applied Research Centre in Sustainable Regeneration (SURGE), 2010
- Sarah Johnsen & Suzanne Fitzpatrick, *The Role of Faith-Based Organisations in the Provision of Services for Homeless People*, Centre for Housing Policy, 2009
<http://www.york.ac.uk/inst/chp/publications/PDF/FBOFinal.pdf>
- Local Government Association (2002) *Faith and Community: A good practice guide for local authorities*, LGA Publications.
- Simon Martin, *Resourcing and Training for the Rural Church: Mapping the experience of contemporary practitioners and churchgoers*. A report from the Rural Life and Faith project of the Arthur Rank Centre, October 2011 www.arthurrankcentre.org.uk
- National Churches Trust, *The National Churches Trust Survey: How the United Kingdom's church buildings are maintained, funded, managed and contribute to their wider communities*, 2011.
- Jane Perry, *Paying over the odds? Real-life experiences of the poverty premium*, Church Action on Poverty, December 2010.
- Kathryn Pritchard, *For the next generation*, a report about church-related family centres prepared for the Church of England Mission and Public Affairs Division, 2011
- Plymouth Faith Action Audit*, Social & Public Policy Research Group, University of Plymouth, Churches Together in Plymouth, nd.
- Kath Smith, *Faith in the North East: Social action by faith communities in the region*, Churches' Regional Commission, 2004
http://www.northeastchurches.org.uk/library/files/5~Faith_Survey_Report.pdf?PHPSESSID=3fe96567f05687fbb3dda504f8fe5911
- West Midlands Enterprise, *Economic Impact Assessment of Faiths in the South East*, South East Faiths England Forum (SEEFF), 2010
- Linda Williams & Froukje Cradock, *Faith Action Audit, Stoke-on-Trent*, Saltbox Christian Centre & Faithworks, nd.
- Linda Williams, *Faith Action Audit: Staffordshire*, The Saltbox Centre, Diocese of Lichfield, 2008

Appendix VI: Resource materials

Chester *It worked for us* – pack of tried and tested ideas for work with older people.
http://www.chester.anglican.org/page_csr.asp?Page=106

1 in 4: Mental health and your church - A resource for church communities, hester Diocese
http://www.chester.anglican.org/dev/docs/social/110505_1in4_mhfparishresource.pdf

Church Urban Fund, *Just Employment: a guide to employing staff in faith-based projects*, produced in partnership with the Dioceses of Chester, Liverpool and Manchester, first produced 2007, updated June 2010.
<http://www.cuf.org.uk/act/resources-projects/just-employment>

Church Urban Fund, *Churches Community Value Toolkit* for Church of England parishes (June 2006) (with versions for Baptist and Methodist churches). Its purpose is to help churches articulate ways in which they contribute to their local community and estimate the financial value of this contribution. Using the toolkit can:

- enable churches to set a baseline so that they can measure change over time.
- provide evidence in support of grant applications.
- provide information to inform discussions with local statutory and voluntary sector organisations in order to raise the profile of the church, underline its credibility as a partner and increase the likelihood of influencing local policies and practices.

<http://www.cuf.org.uk/act/resources-projects/community-value-toolkit>

Citizens' Advice Bureau, *Faithful Advice: a guide for advice services in places of worship*. Produced jointly with the Anglican, Methodist and United Reformed Churches and the Arthur Rank Centre and Church Urban Fund. This provides information about requirements for setting up and running an advice centre. It gives examples in rural and urban locations and provides sample agreements between churches and bureax. www.citizensadvice.org.uk

English Heritage - Setting up a farmers market
http://www.churchcare.co.uk/pdf_view.php?id=169

[Guidelines and Best Practice for the Provision of a Hosted Post Office® Service in Churches and Chapels.](#)

Jill Hopkinson & Anne Richards, *Seeds in Holy Ground: A Workbook for Rural Churches*, ACORA Publishing, 2005
<http://content.yudu.com/Library/A1rgax/SeedsinHolyGroundawo/resources/index.htm>

Housing Justice and CUF, *Shelter in a Pack*, December 2010
<http://www.housingjustice.org.uk/site/publications/hj/Shelters/Shelter%20in%20a%20Pack%20for%20website.pdf>

Housing Justice, *Faith in Affordable Housing* A Practical guide to using church land and property for affordable housing, February 2009 <http://www.fiah.org.uk/>

Presence: A workbook to help promote and sustain an effective Christian presence in villages, The Methodist Church, 2004
<http://content.yudu.com/Library/A1roa9/Presenceaworkbooktoh/resources/index.htm>

Salisbury Diocese Church & Community Audit page at:

<http://moodle.salisbury.anglican.org/course/view.php?id=36>

The contact is Revd Dr Stella Wood – Co-ordinator of Learning for Discipleship at:

stella.wood@salisbury.anglican.org or on 01722 438656

United Reformed Church resource: <http://www.onechurch100uses.org/cms/>

Appendix VII: National organisations

ADVICE SERVICES

AdviceUK is the UK's largest support network for free, independent advice centres. It is a membership network for organisations who give advice. It helps members improve what they do and provides them with a national voice.

6th Floor, 63 St Mary Axe, London, EC3A 8AA
020 7469 5700

<http://www.adviceuk.org.uk/home>

Christians Against Poverty is a national debt counselling organisation that works in partnership with local churches to enable them to provide counselling and support to people struggling with debt.

Jubilee Mill, North Street, Bradford, BD1 4EW.
01274 760 567

info@capmoney.org

www.capuk.org

Community Money Advice is a Christian-based organisation that offers a range of resources and training and other events for those setting up debt advice centres. Having become a charity in 2003, it has helped over ninety churches and other locally based organisations establish high quality, free, face-to-face money advice services.

c/o Illuminate, 18, Wyle Cop, Shrewsbury, Shropshire, SY1 1XB

01743 341929

01743 790909

info@communitymoneyadvice.com

Citizens Advice - As well as running Bureaux, Citizens Advice works with a range of organisations that may be able to offer premises for an outreach service where there is no service otherwise, for example, in rural communities, outer estates or small towns.

Citizens Advice, Myddleton House, 115-123 Pentonville Road, London, N1

<http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/>

ASYLUM SEEKERS AND REFUGEES

NACCOM is the national No Accommodation Network of agencies providing accommodation for destitute asylum seekers and other migrants. Currently there are 26 projects in 21 towns and cities across the UK.

<http://naccom.org/>

Refugee Action is an independent national charity that provides advice and support to asylum seekers and refugees in the UK. It has seven regional offices covering the North West, East Midlands, South West and South Central.

The Old Fire Station, 150 Waterloo Road, London, SE1 8SB.

020 7654 7700 www.refugee-action.org.uk

CAMPAIGNING ORGANISATIONS

Church Action on Poverty (CAP) is a national ecumenical Christian social justice charity, committed to tackling poverty in the UK. CAP works in partnership with churches and with people in poverty themselves to find solutions to poverty, locally, nationally and globally. It also runs grassroots projects in local communities such as Thrive in Stockton-on-Tees and

community organising in Manchester. It produces resources for churches such as the 'Living Ghosts' material which gives ideas about campaigning for and giving practical support to destitute asylum seekers.

Dale House, 35 Dale Street, Manchester M1 2HF.

0161 236 9321

info@church-poverty.org.uk

<http://www.church-poverty.org.uk/>

Citizens UK is an alliance of over 160 member institutions representing faith institutions, universities and schools, trade unions and community groups. It is made up of Citizens MK in Milton Keynes, London Citizens, the East London Communities Organisation (TELCO), South London Citizens, West London Citizens and North London Citizens. It is setting up sponsoring committees nationwide as Citizens UK continues to grow.

<http://www.citizensuk.org/>

CITIZENS for Sanctuary - A Citizen Organising Foundation campaign to secure justice for people fleeing persecution and rebuild public support for sanctuary. In 2006, South London CITIZENS asked twelve impartial Commissioners to conduct an independent, nationwide review of the UK's asylum system. The Independent Asylum Commission spent two years gathering testimony from asylum seekers and the public, taking evidence from experts, and engaging in dialogue with the authorities. The Commission produced over 180 recommendations to safeguard people who seek sanctuary here, while restoring public confidence in the UK's role as a place of sanctuary for those fleeing persecution. CITIZENS for Sanctuary was the campaign to make those recommendations a reality. CITIZENS for Sanctuary also produces toolkits for action and reports.

<http://www.citizensforsanctuary.org.uk/index.html>

CHURCH BUILDINGS

Churchcare is a section of the Church of England that can give advice about developing the potential of church buildings to host community projects. <http://www.churchcare.co.uk/>

The **National Churches Trust** is the only national, independent, non-profit organisation dedicated to promoting and supporting church buildings of historic, architectural and community value across the UK. <http://www.churchcare.co.uk/>

ENVIRONMENTAL ORGANISATIONS

Christian Ecology Link (CEL) is a multi-denominational organisation that offers insights into ecology and the environment to Christian people and churches and offers Christian insights to the Green movement. CEL publishes a magazine, produces resource packs and leaflets and arranges events.

10, Beech Hall Road, Highams Park, London, E4 9NX, UK.

0845 4598460 info@christian-ecology.org.uk www.christian-ecology.org.uk

Shrinking the Footprint is the Church of England's National Environmental Campaign.

Church House, Great Smith Street, London SW1P 3NZ

020 7898 1865

www.shrinkingthefootprint.cofe.anglican.org

Alliance of Religions and Conservation (ARC) is a secular body founded in 1995 by HRH Prince Philip to help the major religions of the world to develop their own environmental

programmes, based on their own core teachings, beliefs and practices, by helping the religions link with key environmental organisations.

ARC, The House, Kelston Park, Bath, BA1 9AE

01225 758 004 <http://www.arcworld.org/>

A Rocha is a Christian conservation organisation working in Europe, the Middle East, Africa, North and South America, and Asia. A Rocha projects are frequently cross-cultural in character, and share a community emphasis, with a focus on science and research, practical conservation and environmental education. Among other things, it produced resources for schools and events and supplies speakers.

13 Avenue Rd, Southall, Middlesex UB1 3BL

0208 574 5935 uk@arocha.org <http://www.arocha.org/>

Eco-Congregation is an A Rocha UK project that helps churches of all denominations to consider environmental issues within a Christian context using toolkits covering different aspects of church life.

Groundwork Sheffield, The Innovation Centre, 217 Portobello, Sheffield, S1 4DP

0114 263 6421 ecocongregation@arocha.org <http://ew.ecocongregation.org/>

Creation Challenge is the Environmental Network of the Baptist Union, Methodist Church and United Reformed Church. It aims to connect church people who are active in environmental matters. It produces an e-mail newsletter focusing on: climate change – and the development of Operation Noah; sharing stories of action by churches – relating to Eco-Congregation; events information. It produces theological and worship resources and programmes for young people.

<http://www.creationchallenge.org.uk/>

Operation Noah encourages churches to increase their awareness and actively campaign to reduce the causes of climate change. It is a Christian organisation which provides leadership, focus and inspiration in response to the growing threat of climate change endangering God's creation. It is informed by the science of climate change, motivated to care for creation by our faith and hope in God, and driven by the desire to transform and enrich our society through radical change in lifestyles and patterns of consumption.

The Grayston Centre, 28 Charles Square, London, N1 6HT

07804059426

campaigns@operationnoah.org; admin@operationnoah.org <http://www.operationnoah.org/>

Environmental Issues Network (EIN) - operates under the umbrella of Churches Together in Britain and Ireland. It aims to raise levels of awareness on issues relating to the environment and sustainability and helps member churches and other organisations explore together their theological understanding of creation and its ethical implications for environmental policy and action.

Churches Together in Britain and Ireland, 39 Eccleston Square, London SW1V 1BX.

0845 680 6851

<http://www.ctbi.org.uk/204>

European Christian Environmental Network aims to share information and experiences in environmental work among widely varied Christian traditions and to encourage a united witness in caring for God's creation. ECEN is the main working instrument of the Conference of European Churches for addressing the need for environmental engagement and responding to climate change.

Conference of European Churches, Rue Joseph II 174, BE-1000 Brussels, Belgium

00 32 2 230 1732 ecen@cec-kek.be <http://www.ecen.org/>

John Ray Initiative (JRI) is an educational charity with a vision to bring together scientific and Christian understandings of the environment in a way that can be widely communicated and lead to effective action. It was formed in 1997 in recognition of the urgent need to respond to the global environmental crisis and the challenges of sustainable development and environmental stewardship.

QW212, Francis Close Hall, University of Gloucestershire, Cheltenham GL50 4AZ.

01242 714842 <http://www.jri.org.uk/>

Transition Network helps communities deal with climate change and shrinking supplies of cheap energy (peak oil).

43 Fore Street, Totnes, TQ9 5HN, UK

05601 531882 <http://www.transitionnetwork.org/>

EMPLOYMENT/TRAINING

SAFE Choices Course SAFE works with those facing barriers including worklessness and depression. It provides courses of two days per week over five weeks each for 8 – 12 participants. The focus can be community, youth or specialist support. SAFE equips local facilitators and provides resources and experienced facilitators.

Unit 304, Solent Business Centre, 343 Millbrook Road West, Southampton, SO15 0HW

0238 070 2222

<http://www.safe.org.uk/>

Spear is a Resurgo Trust employment initiative: an interactive 6 week training course for unemployed and demotivated young people.

Resurgo Trust, St Paul's Centre, Macbeth Street, London, W6 9JJ.

0208 237 8435

<http://spearcourse.org/>

FOOD POVERTY

Trussell Trust is a Christian charity that partners with churches and communities to open new foodbanks nationwide. With over 100 foodbanks currently launched, the goal is for every town to have one. The Trust provides a manual about opening a foodbank and gives initial training for project workers and project support and has a help-line.

St Michael's Community Centre, Salisbury, SP2 9LE

01722 427110

enquiries@trusselltrust.org; <http://www.trusselltrust.org/>

FareShare is a national UK charity supporting communities to relieve food poverty and tackle food waste with 17 locations around the UK. The charity addresses these issues in three ways:

- *Providing quality food* - surplus 'fit for purpose' product from the food and drink industry – to organisations working with disadvantaged people in the community
- *Providing training and education* around the essential life skills of safe food preparation and nutrition, and warehouse employability training through FareShare's *Eat Well Live Well* programme
- Promoting the message that '*No Good Food Should Be Wasted*'

FareShare, Unit H04, Tower Bridge Business Complex, 100 Clements Road, Bermondsey, London SE16 4DG

020 7394 2468

enquiries@fareshare.org.uk

<http://www.fareshare.org.uk/>

GYPSIES AND TRAVELLERS

Church Network for Gypsies and Travellers CNGT is a group of clergy, churches and Christians from across all denominations brought together by their experiences of working among Gypsies and Travellers. The Network was formed in 2006 for mutual support and to learn from one other's experiences and insights, and especially from Gypsy and Traveller brothers and sisters. The group relates to Churches Together in Britain and Ireland. It aims to be a resource to other churches, clergy and Christians and is happy to work with other faith communities. It offers:

- Support to Church leaders and communities faced with confrontation and misunderstanding.
- Experience on how to defuse tension and seek reconciliation.
- Help in listening to the concerns of both settled communities and Gypsies and Travellers.
- Teaching on the history, legal matters, social issues and cultural differences concerning Gypsies and Travellers.
- Talks, study days and presentations for Church groups, leaders and students.

<http://www.cngt.org.uk/>

HEALTH

Parish Nursing Ministries UK recruits and trains registered nurses to build bridges in health ministry from their local churches into the local community. It seeks to develop the theology of health and wellbeing and identify good practice. It works collaboratively with complementary organisations and is multi-denominational.

3 Barnwell Close, Dunchurch, Rugby, CV22 6QH
01788 817292

<http://www.parishnursing.org.uk/>

HOMELESSNESS/HOUSING ORGANISATIONS

DePaul Nightstop UK is an umbrella body for developing new services and support to Nightstop services. Nightstop is the provision of emergency accommodation in the homes of approved volunteers for young homeless people aged between 16 and 25 years.

Resource Centre, Oxford Street, Wehitley Bay, NE26 1AD.
0191 253 6161

<http://www.depaulnightstopuk.org>

Housing Justice is the national voice of Christian action in the field of housing and homelessness. It supports night shelters, drop-ins and hundreds of practical projects nationwide by providing advice and training for churches and other community groups who work with homeless people.

22 - 25 Finsbury Square, London EC2A 1DX
020 7920 6600

info@housingjustice.org.uk

<http://www.housingjustice.org.uk/>

Housing Justice is also the base for **Faith in Affordable Housing**, a free web-based resource, giving practical and technical information to assist churches in providing affordable housing.

<http://www.fiah.org.uk/>

National Community Land Trust Network is the national body for CLTs promotes and supports the work of CLTs across England. It aims to achieve a growing and flourishing CLT sector. The Network was established in September 2010 and is hosted by, but independent of, the National Housing Federation. It is funded in part by the Department for Communities and Local Government Empowerment Fund, via Carnegie UK Trust.

National Community Land Trust Network

c/o National Housing Federation, Lion Court, 25 Procter Street, London, WC1V 6NY

020 7067 1191

clt@housing.org.uk

<http://www.communitylandtrusts.org.uk/>

OLDER PEOPLE

Age UK was created on 1 April 2009 by the merger of Age Concern England and Help the Aged. It has a free national information line on 0800 169 6565. It conducts campaigns on local and national issues relevant to older people. Local branches provide direct services to people in later life, which can include: information, advice and advocacy services; day centres and lunch clubs; home help and 'handyperson' schemes; and IT and other training.

<http://www.ageuk.org.uk/>

ORGANISATIONAL SUPPORT

Locality is a nationwide network of settlements, development trusts, social action centres and community enterprises. It was formed in April 2011 by the merger of the British Association of Settlements and Social Action Centres (BASSAC) and the Development Trusts Association, two leading networks of community owned and led organisations. It helps people to set up locally owned and led organisations and supports existing organisations to work effectively through peer-to-peer exchange of knowledge and best practice on community asset ownership, collaboration, commissioning support, social enterprise, community voice and advocacy. Locality also works to influence government and others at national and local level to build support and investment for the movement.

33 Corsham Street, London N1 6DR

0845 458 8336

info@locality.org.uk

<http://locality.org.uk/>

Social Enterprise UK (formerly Social Enterprise Coalition) is the voice for social enterprise: research, providing information and tools, sharing knowledge, building networks, raising awareness and campaigning to create a business environment where social enterprises can thrive.

Social Enterprise UK, 49 - 51 East Road, London, N1 6AH

020 7793 2323

<http://www.socialenterprise.org.uk/>

POVERTY

Oxfam works on tackling poverty in the UK in five areas: Livelihoods; Labour Rights; Gender; Changing public attitudes to poverty; Cohesion. It aims to:

- develop projects with people living in poverty to improve their lives and show how things can change.
- raise public and politicians' awareness of poverty and its causes, and lobby to bring about change.

01865 473281

ukpoverty@oxfam.org.uk
<http://www.oxfam.org.uk/resources/ukpoverty/>

PREGNANCY ADVICE

Care Confidential provides a web portal for centres that provide information and support for people facing an unplanned pregnancy or trying to come to terms with their experience of abortion, miscarriage or loss of a baby. The portal gives clients access to self-help information, an on-line counselling service and a free-phone helpline.

Clarendon House, 9-11 Church Street, Basingstoke, RG21 7QG

01256 477 300

<http://www.careconfidential.com>

RECYCLING ORGANISATIONS

Furniture Re-Use Network The FRN is the national body which supports, assists and develops charitable re-use organisations across the UK. It does this to reduce poverty by helping households in need access furniture, white goods and other household items at affordable prices. In addition, it supports re-use organisations in providing training and work placement opportunities for people who are socially excluded.

48-54 West Street, St Philips, Bristol, BS2 0BL.

0117 954 3571

info@frn.org.uk

<http://www.frn.org.uk/>

RURAL AND FARMING COMMUNITIES

The Arthur Rank Centre (ARC)

The ARC is the churches' rural resources unit based in Warwickshire. Founded in 1972, it is a partnership between the churches (through Churches Together in England), the Rank Foundation and the Royal Agricultural Society of England. The ARC serves both the spiritual and practical needs of the rural Christian community through a programme of community and social projects, resourcing and training. Its mission is to resource rural churches of all denominations, providing advice, information and consultancy on a wide range of issues including mission and evangelism, community engagement, creative use of church buildings, partnership working, and worship resources. Training courses are provided for those new to rural ministry, in collaborative ministry and for those working in multi-church situations. The ARC is home to the National Rural Officer for the Church of England and the National Rural Officer for the Methodist Church and United Reform Church. The ARC publishes *Country Way* magazine an important and useful resource for rural churches.

The Arthur Rank Centre

Stoneleigh Park

Warwickshire

CV8 2LG

0247 685 3060

www.arthurrankcentre.org.uk

Farm Crisis Network (FCN) provides pastoral and practical support to farming people during periods of anxiety, stress and problems relating to both the farm household and the farm business. FCN is a UK network of groups of volunteers drawn from the farming community and rural churches. FCN volunteers are there to 'walk with' and support farming people and families as they seek to resolve their problems, whatever they may be. There are just over 300 volunteers in county based groups and a team of Coordinators who oversee

the work of the groups. FCN is a Christian organisation and as such, it has a Christian ethos behind everything it does.

FCN Helpline: 0845 367 9990

www.fcn.org.uk

Farming Help brings together three national charities which work to benefit the farming community. Each charity provides different but complementary forms of help and support to meet a wide range of needs. Helpline: 0845 367 9990 The three member charities are:

- **The Addington Fund** – runs a Strategic Rural Housing Scheme for those leaving a non-viable rural business, to allow people to exit their business with dignity and to enable them to remain living in their community.
9 Barford Exchange, Wellesbourne Road, Barford, Warwick, CV35 8AQ.
01926 620135 www.addingtonfund.org.uk
- **Farm Crisis Network** (see above) – FCN provides pastoral and practical support to farming people during periods of anxiety, stress and problems
- **Royal Agricultural Benevolent Institution** – RABI provides financial and practical help to members of the farming community who are facing hardship. RABI supports elderly people and those of any age who are disabled, with regular grants or one-off payments for special items that they are unable to afford themselves. Working farming families who are facing financial difficulties because of illness, bereavement or some other crisis may receive short-term help with their domestic expenses.
RABI, Shaw House, 27 West Way, Oxford, OX2 0QH
01865 724931 info@rabi.org.uk Helpline: 01865 727888 <http://www.rabi.org.uk/>

The Plunkett Foundation helps rural communities through community-ownership and advice, to take control of the issues affecting them. It promotes community-owned enterprises, co-operatives and social enterprises primarily to rural communities. There are currently three main strands of work:

- community-owned village shops – through a specialist support programme and staff team. There are now around 250 community owned shops trading in England, Scotland and Wales.
- rural social and community enterprise development – to help rural communities through community-ownership to take control of the issues affecting them, e.g. co-operative pubs
- community food enterprises – through the Making Local Food Work support programme, to farmers' markets, Country Markets, food co-operatives, community-owned local food shops and other specialist enterprises

The Quadrangle, Woodstock, Oxfordshire, OX20 1LH

01993 810730 info@plunkett.co.uk www.plunkett.co.uk

STREET LIFE

Street Angels and Christian Nightlife Initiative Network: Street Angels work in town centres usually on Friday and Saturday nights to meet the needs they encounter. The Network offers web resources for people thinking of launching a Street Angels scheme.

Fairtrade Café, Crossley Street, Halifax, HX1 1UG.

07725 501465 <http://www.streetangels.org.uk> <http://cninetwork.org.uk>

Street Pastors (Ascension Trust): a para-church organisation working with churches and local agencies to train individuals to serve their community. The aim of Street Pastors is to provide a late night outreach service to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour. Ascension

Trust has a track record of developing partnerships between the church, police and government. It currently operates in 200 areas.

PO Box 3916, London, SE1 1QE

0208 330 2809 <http://streetpastros.org.uk>

YOUTH WORK

ASDAN is a charitable social enterprise with awarding body status, providing courses to more than 6,000 UK and international schools, colleges, youth centres and training providers. ASDAN's programmes and qualifications offer flexible ways to accredit skills for learning, skills for employment and skills for life. <http://www.asdan.org.uk/>

Frontier Youth Trust works with young people at risk. **StreetSpace** is youthwork that starts on the street. It supports local churches in getting projects underway and by providing policies, training and ongoing support.

Office S15b, St George's Community Hub, Great Hampton Row, Newtown, Birmingham, B19 3JG.

07830197160 admin@streetspace.org.uk <http://www.fyt.org.uk>

The Lighthouse Group is a Christian charity that works in partnership with local churches to set up early intervention centres and education centres for young people excluded from school or at risk of exclusion. The centres can support primary or secondary school children and provide help and mentoring on a one-to-one basis.

The Lighthouse Group, National Support Centre, Hope Park, Bradford, BD5 8HH.

0845 508 3242 <http://www.tlg.org.uk>

Worth Unlimited is a Christian Youth Work agency with a vision for local Christians to be equipped to make a contribution to addressing the needs of marginalised and excluded young people throughout the UK as part of the wider Christian mission to the world. Worth Unlimited programmes include informal education programmes; a personal development programme; a mentoring training and support package; a detached youth work programme; work with local churches helping them to work with young people on the margins of society.

Worth Unlimited is part of The Worth Foundation, a charitable company limited by guarantee.

Worth Unlimited National Office, 70 Raglan Road, Smethwick, West Midlands, B66 3ND

0121 555 5621 <http://www.worthunlimited.co.uk>

Appendix VIII: Sources of funding

Below are details of some of the national funding bodies mentioned in the Project stories.

ARC-Addington Fund was set up in 2001 as the Churches' response to Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD), when it distributed grants totalling £10.3 million to over 22,000 applicants. Now in its 10th year, the Fund continues to support viable farming families experiencing financial hardship due to circumstances affecting the business which are completely out of their control. The Fund's Trustees Discretionary Fund (TDF) distributes grants of up to £2,000. In recent years the charity set up a fodder bank in the floods of 2007, and assisted the many businesses affected by the demise of dairy farmers of Britain. It has also helped where animal disease restrictions have a negative effect on the business and in times of personal tragedy. The Charity also run a Strategic Rural Housing Scheme (SRHS) providing homes for families needing to exit or retire from the industry with no other option available to them. To date the Scheme has supported 209 families, and currently owns 41 houses nationally. <http://www.addingtonfund.org.uk/>

BBC Children in Need provides grants to projects in the UK which focus on children and young people who are disadvantaged. It is local to people in all corners of the UK and support small and large organisations which empower children and extend their life choices. The grant programmes are open all year round for applications, with a focus on allocating the money to deserving projects 4 times a year. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/pudsey/grants/>

Beatrice Laing Trust offers financial support to UK registered charities working to advance the Christian faith and relieve poverty in its broadest sense. The Trust favours capital or project funding over revenue funding.

33 Bunns Lane, Mill Hill, London, NW7 2DX.
0208 238 8890

The Besom helps people make a difference. It provides a bridge between those who want to give time, money, things or skills and those who are in need. It ensures what is given is used effectively. The service it provides is free.

<http://www.besom.com/>

The Big Lottery Fund (BIG) is responsible for delivering 46 per cent of all funds raised for good causes (about 13 pence of every pound spent on a Lottery Ticket) by The National Lottery. Since June 2004, BIG has awarded over £3.6bn to projects supporting health, education, environment and charitable purposes. Most of the funding is awarded to voluntary and community sector organisations. Most programmes are tailored specifically to the needs of communities in England, Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland though some programmes that cover the whole UK.

BIG is a non-departmental public body sponsored by the Cabinet Office.

<http://www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/>

William A. Cadbury Charitable Trust has a particular interest in social welfare projects based in Birmingham and the West Midlands, but also considers nationally, projects working with offenders and ex-offenders. <http://www.wa-cadbury.org.uk/>

Church and Community Fund (CCF) encourages the church to engage with their local communities by funding effective and innovative community outreach projects. The CCF awards grants to community projects run by local Anglican Churches in England or other organisations who are working in close partnership with the Church of England on the ground. The CCF was established in 1915. Formerly known as the 'Central Church Fund', it changed its name to 'The

Church and Community Fund' in June 2006 and is now under the trusteeship of the Archbishops' Council (registered charity number 1074857). In 2010 the CCF gave away around £500,000 to projects that sought to equip the church better to connect with their neighbourhood and beyond. Types of projects supported included the salary costs for youth, children's and community workers, the running costs for homeless centres, conversion of church buildings to enable use by the wider community, funding towards street outreach and many more socially engaging initiatives.

<http://www.ccfund.org.uk/>

Church Urban Fund targets the poorest 10% of communities in England and support projects at an early stage, funding 'core costs' like salaries. The Mustard Seed Grant programme aims to provide grants of up to £5,000 to enable churches and faith-based organisations to engage in social action, by supporting them to initiate or develop community work.

enquiries@cuf.org.uk

<http://www.cuf.org.uk/>

The Clothmakers Foundation funds one-off grants for capital costs for UK registered charities with an annual turnover of under £10m. The capital costs include building purchase and renovation, equipment (including IT hardware), and vehicles. Applications for the main grants programme and small grants programme must fall under one of the following areas: Encouragement of young people; Social Inclusion; Elderly; Disability; Visual impairment.

<http://www.clothworkers.co.uk/Grant-Making/Grant-Making.aspx>

Community Foundation Network hosts **Localgiving.com** a website that allows donors to find and give to local charities and community groups, even those too small to be registered charities and therefore excluded from some other online sites and unable to register to claim GiftAid. Localgiving.com is half owned by a charitable foundation and half by the Community Foundation Network and as such is a not-for-profit organisation itself. Having a webpage on the localgiving.com website means that groups can receive donations from people who want to give to their charity and connect with their supporters. Although online donations to charities are growing; some groups may not have the opportunity, the resources or the technology necessary to take advantage of the growth in online giving. Localgiving.com is the solution to this, designed to help breathe new life into local community groups and to transform the way people give to local causes especially by being offered by local Community Foundations which enables it to claim gift aid on the donor's behalf. Any group wishing to appear on Localgiving.com will have to be vetted by its local Community Foundation to confirm it is a genuine charity or community group that operates within the law and in the interests its local community.

www.localgiving.com.

<http://www.communityfoundations.org.uk/>

Fair Share Trust Some parts of the UK missed out on Lottery funding in the past. The Fair Share programme has been helping to change that. Targeted at 77 areas, Fair Share was the first joint programme from the New Opportunities Fund and the Community Fund - now merged as the Big Lottery Fund. The Fair Share Trust is a £50 million trust providing sustained funding in Fair Share Areas until 2013 (2009 in Scotland). The Community Foundation Network (CFN) is the sole UK trustee and has appointed delivery agents in each of the Fair Share areas. The Fair Share Trust programme aims to:

- *Build Capacity and Sustainability* – by involving local communities in decision-making about lottery funding.
- *Build Social Capital* – by building links within and between communities to promote trust and participation.
- *Improve liveability* - by improving the living environment for communities.

<http://www.communityfoundations.org.uk/>

Hadley Trust assists in creating opportunities for people who are disadvantaged as a result of environmental, educational or economic circumstances or physical or other handicap to improve their situation either by direct financial assistance, involvement in project and support work or research into the causes of and means to alleviate hardship.

The Henry Smith Charity is a large grant making charity that makes grants totalling approximately £25 million each year to up to 1,000 organisations and charities throughout the UK for initiatives and projects that address social inequality and economic disadvantage. Priority is given to work with groups experiencing social and/or economic disadvantage, for example, people with disabilities; and work that tackles problems in areas of high deprivation within the bottom third of the National Indices of Deprivation.

<http://www.henrysmithcharity.org.uk/>

Joseph Rowntree Trust makes grants to individuals and to projects seeking the creation of a peaceful world, political equality and social justice. <http://www.jrct.org.uk/>

LankellyChase Foundation works to promote change which will improve the quality of people's lives, focusing particularly on areas of social need to help the most disadvantaged in society to fulfil their potential. <http://www.lankellychase.org.uk>

Lloyds TSB Foundation funds local, regional and national charities working to tackle disadvantage across England and Wales. Seventy percent of the funding is for core costs, and the focus is on supporting underfunded charities that can make a significant difference to the lives of disadvantaged people by helping them to play a fuller role in the community. A strong local presence enables the Foundation to respond directly and promptly to local needs.

<http://www.lloydstsbfoundations.org.uk/Pages/Welcome.aspx>

Nationwide Foundation now has small grants programme open to charities which offer financial and / or housing related support to survivors of domestic abuse and older people (over 50). Projects should tackle one or both of the following issues: Financial exclusion; Housing issues and homelessness. Grants of £500 - £5,000 are available and applications are assessed every two months. Full details are on the website. <http://www.nationwidefoundation.org.uk/grants.asp#a2>

Northern Rock Foundation is an independent charity, which aims to tackle disadvantage and improve quality of life in the North East and Cumbria. It gives grants to organisations which help people who are vulnerable, disadvantaged, homeless, living in poverty or are victims of crime or discrimination. <http://www.nr-foundation.org.uk/>

Plunkett Foundation has developed a range of projects and services which support the development of rural co-operative and social enterprises. The Plunkett Foundation has delivered projects such as Enterprise4Inclusion and Strengthening Rural Communities across the North West which provided seed corn finance and advisory support to facilitate the effective start up and development of rural co-operatives and social enterprises. It works with partners in the East of England to deliver large scale capital grants to social enterprises through the Building Communities Fund to enable them to purchase assets and transform their communities. It provides funding and support for rural communities looking to set up and run a community-owned shop. It works with a range of organisations to deliver capacity building to a broad range of initiatives which reconnect land and people through local food community enterprises through Making Local Food Work.

Rural Community Shops is an activity of the Plunkett Foundation. Many of the community owned shops trading in England, Scotland and Wales have been established through its support. There is

a dedicated Community Retail Team and service to support rural communities wanting to set up and run a community-owned shop, and to also support and advise existing community owned village shops. There is a dedicated website for community shops at www.plunkett.uk.net .
ruralcommunityshops@plunkett.co.uk

Tudor Trust makes grants, and provides other types of support, to voluntary and community groups working in any part of the UK. It particularly wants to help smaller, community-led organisations which work directly with people who are at the margins of society: organisations which support positive changes in people's lives and in their communities. <http://tudortrust.org.uk/>

WREN (Waste Recycling Environmental Limited)is a not-for-profit business that helps benefit the lives of people who live close to landfill sites by awarding grants for community, conservation and heritage projects. <http://www.wren.org.uk/>

Appendix IX: Glossary

Affordable housing is a term that refers to housing which is either for sale or for rent – or a combination of both – at below current market values. Typically, it takes the form of social rented, shared ownership, key worker, outright below market sale or below market rent in the private sector.

Anti-social behaviour covers a wide range of activities that are perceived to blight the quality of community life. An Anti-Social Behaviour Order (ASBO), is a statutory measure (Crime and Disorder Act 1998, S.1) to protect the public against behaviour "that causes or is likely to cause harassment, alarm or distress" to an individual householder or a neighbourhood. It is applicable to anyone over the age of 10. Breach of the order is a criminal offence, with a maximum penalty of five years in prison.

Asset based development A development strategy that recognises that the possession of tangible assets (land, buildings or a dedicated income) is the key to achieving the goals of self-sufficiency, independence and sustainability which underpin community based regeneration organisations.

Asylum seekers are people who have fled their homeland, arrived in another country and exercised their legal right to apply for sanctuary (or asylum). They are not allowed to work and have to rely on 'Asylum Support', which is set at either 70% of income support, or £35 a week in supermarket vouchers. Refused asylum seekers have had their claim for asylum turned down and been told that they cannot remain in the UK. Refused asylum seekers receive no state aid or housing support and are only entitled to primary health care.

Benchmarking is a means to working out how well an organisation is doing by comparing its performance with other similar ones using performance indicators (PIs).

Capacity building is the development of skills and knowledge in local communities, often to allow local people to contribute to social and economic regeneration.

Charities are particular types of voluntary organisation that take a distinctive legal form. Charities must provide benefit to the public. Their aims, purposes or objectives have to be exclusively those which the law recognises as charitable. A registered charity will usually be given a special tax status and benefit from a number of tax exemptions and reliefs. Registered charities have to obey a number of rules and regulations set out in charity law. Those that are registered as companies also have to comply with company law. A registered charity is not allowed to have political objectives or take part in political lobbying (other than in a generally educational sense).

Civil society is defined by the World Bank as referring to the wide range of "non-governmental and not-for-profit organizations that have a presence in public life, expressing the interests and values of their members or others, based on ethical, cultural, political, scientific, religious or philanthropic considerations." It covers, therefore, a wide of array of organisations including community groups, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), charitable organisations and faith-based organisations.

Commissioning is defined as "the cycle of assessing the needs of people in an area, designing and then securing appropriate service" ('Partnership in Public Services', 2006, Cabinet Office). A commissioning cycle includes: strategic needs assessment; deciding

priorities and outcomes; planning and designing services; options appraisal; sourcing; delivery; monitoring and review.

Common Assessment Framework (CAF) is a shared assessment and planning framework for use across all children's services and all local areas in England. It aims to help the early identification of children's additional needs and promote co-ordinated service provision to meet them. It is a standardised approach to conducting an assessment of a child's additional needs and deciding how those needs should be met.

Community business is a trading organisation which is set up, owned and controlled by the local community and which aims to create self supporting employment for local people and also act as a focus for local development. The term community business is often used by social enterprises that focus on local markets and services.

Community cohesion is what must happen in all communities to enable different groups of people to get on well together. A key ingredient is integration; that is, enabling new residents and existing residents to adjust to one another. There can be said to be three bases of an integrated and cohesive community: people from different backgrounds having similar life opportunities; people knowing their rights and responsibilities; people trusting one another and trusting local institutions to act fairly. There are also key ways of living together: a shared future vision and sense of belonging; a focus on what new and existing communities have in common, alongside recognition of the value of diversity; strong and positive relationships between people from different backgrounds.

Community enterprises are organisations trading for social purpose with a community base.

Community Interest Company (CIC) a legal form for social enterprises. Community Interest Companies (CICS) are limited companies, with special additional features, created for the use of people who want to conduct a business or other activity for community benefit, and not purely for private advantage. This is achieved by a "community interest test" and "asset lock", which ensure that the CIC is established for community purposes and the assets and profits are dedicated to these purposes. Registration of a company as a CIC has to be approved by the Regulator who also has a continuing monitoring and enforcement role.

Community Land Trust (CLT) is a non-profit, community-based organisation run by volunteers that develops housing or other assets at permanently affordable levels for long-term community benefit. It does this through local ownership and control, reducing the value of the land that the homes are built on and, in the case of shared-equity homes, fixing the resale percentage, thereby enabling occupiers to pay for the use of buildings and services at prices they can afford. The value of land, subsidies, planning gain and other equity benefits are permanently locked in by the CLT who holds the asset in trust for long-term community benefit.

Company limited by guarantee: a company registered with Companies House with members rather than shareholders; members guarantee a nominal sum for paying liabilities and can also pay a regular membership subscription. Charities, Development Trusts, Social Firms and Community Businesses frequently use this form of incorporation.

Company limited by shares: a company registered with Companies House which is controlled by its shareholders. This form is often used for trading subsidiaries of charities.

Competitive contracting: arrangements for procuring services that involve tendering by more than one potential provider. Tenders are assessed against criteria that assess value for money, quality and cost.

Co-operative: an organisation owned and controlled by its members which is incorporated under the Industrial and Provident Societies Act and regulated by the Financial Services Authority. This is another popular form for social enterprises.

Corporate social responsibility (CSR): A wide ranging set of concepts that relate to businesses conducting their activities responsibly. Factors include environmental impacts, employee and customer health and safety issues, participation in local communities (being a good neighbour), good corporate governance, other social issues and ethical and fair trading.

Credit union: a financial co-operative, which is owned and controlled by its members. Only people who come within the common bond of the credit union can join it and make use of their services. They are a good savings option for members, but also the money saved can be used to make low interest loans. Credit unions are directed and controlled by volunteer Boards of Directors.

Criminal Records Bureau: a number of roles, especially those involving children or vulnerable adults, require a criminal record check. The Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) comes under the Home Office. Criminal Records Bureau website content can now be found on one of three different websites, depending on the audience:

- www.direct.gov.uk/crb - information and access to services for CRB
- www.businesslink.gov.uk/crb - information for registered bodies and other associated businesses and organisations using the CRB service
- www.homeoffice.gov.uk/crb - corporate information and publications for particular interest groups and partners

Development trusts: organisations that are:

- engaged in the economic, environmental and social regeneration of a defined area or community;
- independent and aiming for self sufficiency;
- not for private profit;
- community based and owned; *and*
- actively involved in partnerships between the community, voluntary, private and public sectors.

Equity finance: funds invested in a business in the form of shares. Investors usually have a say in the running of the company and also receive a dividend from profits.

ESOL stands for English for speakers of other languages. ESOL courses include speaking and listening; reading and writing; vocabulary; punctuation and grammar

Extra Care Housing is housing designed for frailer older people and with varying levels of care and support available on site. People who live in Extra Care Housing have their own self contained homes, their own front doors and a legal right to occupy the property. Extra

Care Housing is also known as very sheltered housing, assisted living, or simply as 'housing with care'. It comes in many built forms, including blocks of flats, bungalow estates and retirement villages. It is a popular choice among older people because it can sometimes provide an alternative to a care home.

Fair trade: a term referring to an alternative approach to international trade aiming to encourage sustainable development for excluded and disadvantaged producers.

Fuel poverty: A household is said to be in fuel poverty if it needs to spend more than 10 per cent of its income on fuel to maintain a satisfactory heating regime, which is 21 degrees Celsius for the main living area, and 18 degrees for other occupied rooms.

Homelessness means not having a home, but it does not necessarily mean being roofless or a rough sleeper. It also applies where a person has no right to remain where they are living or if their accommodation is unsuitable, for example because it is overcrowded or its conditions affect the person's health or if s/he is at risk of violence or abuse.

Housing Market Renewal: a programme to renew the housing market in those parts of the North and Midlands where demand for housing is relatively weak and which, as a result, have seen significant decline in population, increased dereliction, poor services and poor social conditions. Its objective was to renew failing or weak housing markets and reconnect them to regional markets. Between 2003 and 2011, some £2.2 billion HMR funding was invested in the programme which also secured more than £1 billion additional investment from public and private partners. The programme was originally envisaged to operate over a ten to fifteen year period but the government has ended it after only eight years, which has left much work unfinished. By 2011, activities in most HMR areas had not reached a scale likely to tip the balance in favour of a normal market response.

Index of Multiple Deprivation measures relative levels of deprivation in small areas of England called Lower Layer Super Output Areas (SOAs). They comprise seven dimensions or domains of deprivation: Income Deprivation, Employment Deprivation, Health Deprivation and Disability, Education Skills and Training Deprivation, Barriers to Housing and Services, Living Environment Deprivation, and Crime. Individual domains can be used in isolation as measures of each specific form of deprivation. They can also be combined, using appropriate weights, into a single overall Index of Multiple Deprivation which can be used to rank every small area in England. Two supplementary indices are Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index and Income Deprivation Affecting Older People Index.

Industrial and Provident Society is a body incorporated under the Industrial and Provident Societies Acts, and includes co-ops, some development trusts and a range of other organisations.

Joint Strategic Needs Assessment: the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 required primary care trusts and local authorities to produce a Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) of the health and wellbeing of their local community to identify the current and future health and wellbeing needs of a local population, inform the local priorities and targets and lead to agreed commissioning priorities to improve outcomes and reduce health inequalities.

Joint venture is when two or more concerns pool their resources and expertise to achieve a particular goal. The risks and rewards of the enterprise are also shared. Joint ventures can be used to strengthen long-term relationships or to collaborate on short-term projects.

LETS is a term that refers to local exchange trading schemes. They are community-based mutual aid networks in which people exchange goods and services without the need for money. They are an organised form of bartering.

Living Wage is an hourly rate, set independently, every year (by the GLA in London). It is calculated according to the cost of living and gives the minimum pay rate required for a worker to provide their family with the essentials of life. In London the current rate is £8.30 per hour. Outside of London the current rate is £7.20.

<http://www.citizensuk.org/campaigns/living-wage-campaign/>

Local Strategic Partnership (LSPs) are non-statutory partnerships, established since 2000 in most local authority areas in England. They are designed to bring together local councils, other public sector agencies, the business sector, and the third sector – voluntary and community organisations. In the later years of the last government, the main task of LSPs in first tier local authorities was developing and implementing a **Local Area Agreement (LAA)**. The Coalition Government has continued to support the broad principles of partnership but has left it to local discretion about their continuance. It abolished LAAs from March 2011, thus removing a substantive set of statutory tasks that LSPs used to undertake. As a result, councils and their partner agencies have been reviewing the role and responsibilities of their local partnerships. Some have been retained with different functions and modified roles; others have been wound up.

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs: Abraham Maslow was an American psychologist. His hierarchy of needs was fully expressed in his 1954 book *Motivation and Personality*. It is usually depicted as a pyramid consisting of five levels: physiological; safety; love/belonging; esteem; self-actualisation. The four lower levels are grouped together as *deficiency needs*, while the top level is termed a *being need*. The basic concept is that the higher needs in this hierarchy only come into focus once all the needs that are lower down in the pyramid are mainly or entirely satisfied.

Matrix Standard is the quality standard for organisations to assess and measure their advice and support services, which ultimately supports individuals in their choice of career.

<http://www.matrixstandard.com/>

Micro-enterprise: a very small business, usually defined as 'a business with fewer than 10 staff'; sometimes defined as 'a business with fewer than 5 staff'. 89% of all UK businesses have fewer than 5 employees. Some social enterprises such as development trusts run programmes to assist Micro-enterprises.

Migrant workers are people who have come from abroad to work in the UK. Migrant workers often work in hotels or restaurants, food processing, fruit picking and shellfish gathering.

Minimum Wage: the National Minimum Wage (NMW) is a minimum amount per hour that most workers in the UK are entitled to be paid. There are different levels of NMW, depending on your age and whether you are an apprentice. The current rates (from 1 October 2011) are: £6.08 - the main rate for workers aged 21 and over; £4.98 - the 18-20 rate; £3.68 - the 16-17

rate for workers above school leaving age but under 18; £2.60 - the apprentice rate, for apprentices under 19 or 19 or over and in the first year of their apprenticeship.

http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/Employment/Employees/TheNationalMinimumWage/DG_10027201

NCVO 'Value of Infrastructure' (VIP) programme has developed impact tools for infrastructure organisations designed to help them to plan, monitor, evidence and communicate the impact of their work. There are tools that relate to each of the four impact levels: on organisations, on the sector, on external agencies and on people.

<http://www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/vip>

National Offender Management Service (NOMS): as an executive agency of the Ministry of Justice, NOMS is responsible for commissioning and delivering adult offender management services in England and Wales, in custody and in the community.

NEET is the term for those young people aged 16 to 18 who are not in education, employment and training.

Non profit or not-for-profit are terms used to describe companies which may well make a surplus, but do not distribute their profits to shareholders, instead using them for social or community benefit or reinvestment in fulfilling their social aims.

Ofsted is the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills. It reports directly to Parliament and is independent and impartial. It inspects and regulates services which care for children and young people, and those providing education and skills for learners of all ages. <http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/>

Outcomes Star is a tool for supporting and measuring change when working with vulnerable people. It is widely used and can be adapted for different client groups. It is available to download and use for free in paper format on condition that no changes are made. <http://www.outcomesstar.org.uk/>

Outputs are measures often stipulated by a funder relating to their targets. They might be counting, for example, the number of people attending a training course, the number of people given advice or the number of pupils taking part in particular activities. They can only give a quantitative picture. Numbers alone reveal little of the quality of what has been achieved. Outputs are different from **impact** or **outcome measures**, which are the changes, benefits or other effects that happen as a result of an organisation's work. They can be wanted or unwanted, expected or unexpected. Examples might be lower unemployment, or improved literacy or health.

Performance indicators (PIs) provide a way of measuring how a service is performing against its objectives.

Personalisation is a social care approach described by the Department of Health as meaning that "every person who receives support, whether provided by statutory services or funded by themselves, will have choice and control over the shape of that support in all care settings". While often associated with direct payments and personal budgets so that service users can choose the services that they receive, personalisation also entails that services

are tailored to the needs of every individual, rather than individuals having to accommodate to a one-size-fits-all range of provision.

Planning gain represents land, buildings or other facilities provided by a developer as part of the conditions for gaining planning consent for a development.

Primary Care Trusts: Primary care is the care provided by people normally seen when someone first has a health problem. These services are managed by the local primary care trust (PCT). PCTs work with local authorities and other agencies that provide health and social care locally to meet local community needs. PCTs control 80% of the NHS budget. They are to be abolished in 2013.

Refugees have proved that they would face persecution back home and have made a successful asylum application.

Regeneration is local development that addresses physical, social, environmental and economic disadvantages in both rural and urban areas. Recent regeneration programmes (now finished) which involved community projects were the Single Regeneration Budget Challenge Fund (SRB) and New Deal for Communities (NDC).

Registered social landlords (RSLs): more commonly referred to as housing associations, but also including trusts and co-operatives, RSLs are independent not-for-profit organisations that provide affordable housing and that are registered with the Homes and Communities Agency.

Right to buy was introduced in the 1980 Housing Act giving council house tenants the right to buy the home they were living in. It has been estimated that between 1980 and 1998, approximately 2 million homes in the UK were sold. Currently, housing association tenants have a right to buy. The Right to Buy rules were changed in 2005. Five years' tenancy is now required for new tenants to qualify and properties purchased after October 2004 can no longer be placed immediately on the open market should the owner decide to sell. Such owners must now approach their previous landlord and offer them 'first refusal'.

Service level agreements are negotiated agreements which define the relationship between two parties: the one buying the service and the provider.

Skills for Life is the national strategy for improving adult literacy, language (ESOL) and numeracy skills introduced in 2001.

Social (or ethical) accounting and social auditing are methods of measuring and reporting an organisational social and ethical performance. An organisation that conducts a social audit makes itself accountable to its stakeholders and commits itself to following the audit's recommendations.

Social business is a term that is sometimes used by social enterprises where there is a small core of members who act in a similar way to trustees. These social businesses often focus on providing an income or employment opportunity for disadvantaged groups, or providing a service to the community.

Social capital is a term used to describe the non-financial resources – such as trust, partnership, shared values – which enable a community to thrive and function more effectively. Different sorts of social capital have been identified: ‘bonding’ (meaning the networks and ties within communities – levels of neighbourliness); ‘bridging’ (networks and ties spanning people who may have less in common: different geographic communities or different communities of interest - ethnic, cultural or faith groups or different generations) and ‘linking’ (formal and informal ties between a community and decision makers or service providers, cutting across both similarity and status, and enabling people to exert influence and reach resources outside their usual circles). In addition, some terms deriving from the idea of social capital seek to identify the role of faith. ‘Faithful capital’ was the theme of *Faithful Cities*, the Report from the Commission on Urban Life and Faith (2006). It can be seen as having two dimensions. ‘Religious capital’ refers to the contribution made by faith groups to local and national life. ‘Spiritual capital’ refers to the resources that individuals can draw on to meet challenges in their lives, not only a moral vision but also a theological identity and worshipping tradition that can help to energise religious capital (see Chris Baker and Hannah Skinner, *Faith in Action: The dynamic connection between religious and spiritual capital*, Manchester: William Temple Foundation 2006).

Social economy: Sometimes also called the ‘third sector’, this part of the economy exists between the private and public sectors and includes social enterprises, voluntary organisations, foundations, trade unions, religious bodies and housing associations.

Social enterprises are businesses driven by a social or environmental purpose, such as creating employment or increasing recycling. The government defines social enterprises as "businesses with primarily social objectives whose surpluses are principally reinvested for that purpose in the business or in the community, rather than being driven by the need to maximise profit for shareholders and owners."

Social entrepreneur is somebody who identifies and brings to life new business opportunities, motivated by public and social good rather than the need for personal profit.

Social exclusion means the exclusion of people or groups from mainstream society and reduction of their life chances for reasons such as poverty, ethnic origin, age, lack of skills, poor health, low income, criminal record or gender.

Social firm: a business created to provide integrated employment and training to people with a disability or other disadvantage in the labour market.

Social inclusion: the ability to access and benefit from the opportunities available to members of society.

Social Return on Investment (SROI) is a way of measuring and accounting for the value created in projects and services. It is a useful tool for understanding how to maximise social impact, improve performance and achieve their goals and giving an account of achievements.

Supporting People is the government programme for funding, planning and monitoring housing related support services to help vulnerable people to live as independently as possible in the community. This could be in their own homes or in hostels, sheltered housing or other specialised supported housing. It provides complementary support for people who may also need personal or medical care. Although Supporting People only funds housing

support, this can be part of a package of differently funded, but co-ordinated support such as debt counselling or life skills training.

Sure Start was a government initiative launched in 1998, which aimed to give children the best possible start in life through improvement of childcare, early education, health and family support, with an emphasis on outreach and community development. The programme was originally intended to support families from pregnancy until children were four years old but it was extended to cover an undefined responsibility up to age fourteen, or sixteen for those with disabilities. The reduction in government funding for early intervention combined with local authority cuts has meant that a large number of Sure Start Children's Centre have closed in the last eighteen months.

Surplus: the profit in many social enterprises is referred to as a surplus, to reflect their "not for profit" status.

Sustainability can refer either to the financial stability of an organisation or to the adoption of environmental policies and practices that minimise its impact on the environment.

Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) is prepared by the Local Strategic Partnership as the set of goals and actions that partners representing the residential, business, statutory want to promote. It should set out the key tasks that the partners in the area need to achieve to improve its well being. It sits above all the other plans and should be based on evidence and consultation. The SCS should act as an umbrella for all other strategies devised for the area.

Sustainable development is the term often used to describe development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Third Sector is another term for the voluntary and community sector (VCS). Organisations share common characteristics: they are non-governmental and value-driven. They also principally reinvest any financial surpluses to further social, environmental or cultural objectives. The term encompasses large and small voluntary and community organisations, charities, social enterprises, cooperatives and mutuals.

Triple bottom line is a term used when an organisation attaches equal importance to social and environmental objectives as to financial objectives (and measures these through social auditing – see above).