

Community Development Commissioning 2009-10 Summary of Quarters 1 and 2 Monitoring Information (April-September 2009)

1 Background and Context

- 1.1 Community development work is commissioned in 13 neighbourhoods across the city, with capacity to provide some generic support on a city-wide basis. This programme is managed via the Trust for Developing Communities, with the Hangleton and Knoll Project and Serendipity Enterprising Solutions (a local Community Interest Company) as partners.

The Brighton and Hove Community Development Commissioning Strategy defines community development as "...a range of practices dedicated to increasing the strength and effectiveness of community life, improving local conditions – especially for people in disadvantaged situations – and enabling people to participate in public decision-making and to achieve greater long-term control over their circumstances." (Source: Community Development Foundation 2003)

2 Summary of impact

Over the first 6 months of this year, community development workers (CDWs) have reported the following (see Appendix 1 for a full list of output figures):

- **643** residents and service providers currently attending local representative neighbourhood forums (including local action teams, community forums, neighbourhood action groups), deciding local priorities and seeing action
- **1615** residents involved in managing and attending local community groups (e.g. parent and toddler groups, festival groups, family outings groups, newsletter groups)
- **140** community groups worked with so far this year
- **30** new groups started or newly worked with
- Support to these groups to achieve sustainability/independence has bought **£85,000** in extra funds straight to local community groups.

Community development work continues to provide infrastructure within neighbourhoods that enables increased resident involvement, engagement and empowerment. This is achieved by improving local communication (newsletters and websites), strengthening and improving local centres and buildings and most importantly by bringing people together to share concerns and help them to take action on their priorities.

- 2.1 Community development work supports and strengthens local representative neighbourhood forums (action groups, community associations, local action teams etc) to play a greater part in issues affecting the neighbourhood. They are run by resident committees and allow direct access to service providers and councillors where residents can help set agendas to address issues they have within their neighbourhood. This increases the number of **people who feel they can influence decision-making in their locality**. Forums also provide the structure which enables residents to oversee the distribution of health money (from the PCT) and are solely responsible and accountable for the way in which this money is spent. Residents also influence and decide upon key police priorities in Local Action Teams and oversee community safety initiatives.

Through specific neighbourhood projects, such as a park redevelopment, residents have been supported to be directly involved in making decisions about site plans and equipment and have also led consultation processes in the area. Residents are now more prepared to become involved in local decision making from an early stage and want to have a say on proposed improvements, as well as how consultation processes can be most effective for them.

Members of groups have been encouraged to become part of city-wide structures to further represent the views of their neighbourhood.

- 2.2 Community development work is providing flexible support to key infrastructure groups within neighbourhoods (such as community hall committees) to continue operating through difficult times such as when key committee members leave. Advice and mentoring has been given on a group and individual basis. This supports an **environment for a thriving third sector**. Fundraising support has brought in significant amounts of money to the community sector, helping groups to become sustainable. Projects which provide reliable income for estates have also been supported, including the set up of social enterprises.
- 2.3 Community development work has **increased participation in regular volunteering** because all community groups have regular volunteer participation. People volunteer as members of resident committees and run groups and activities, for example, delivering community newsletters, a volunteer driver for a swimming group, interpreters, fruit and veg coops and weekly lunch clubs. Volunteers run local events, for example, health events and festivals, which have attracted many people to volunteer for the first time. Members of city-wide structures are volunteers, for example the chair of Bevendean LAT has become chair of the Stronger Neighbourhoods Group (a city-wide partnership). Community centres are largely facilitated through volunteers. These volunteering opportunities within neighbourhoods have led to

community members gaining paid employment. CDWs create opportunities for people to volunteer and participate on all levels and support this involvement with relevant training and tailored support. Residents who do not fit the typical profile are supported to volunteer, thereby increasing confidence and skills where it is most needed

2.4 A variety of **local communication and involvement mechanisms** continue to be supported by CDWs. Importantly, this is done in partnership with both third sector training providers and the university. Training in running meetings, setting up community websites and newsletter training with IT skills are examples of how communication has been supported and individuals skilled up. This has led to the creation of many local newsletters (an estate wide newsletter being a first for Whitehawk for many years). There are currently 10 community websites being developed or maintained by volunteers. At Moulsecoomb Local Action Team there is a good news and events slot in which a resident collects information to post on the Argus website (this included training on 'being a community correspondent for the Argus'). Notice boards are maintained in housing blocks and around communities. Neighbourhood forums act as a conduit for relevant information. This all leads to increased participation and increased satisfaction with opportunities to engage.

Where there are gaps of local involvement mechanisms, these have been identified and are starting to be addressed; starting with what infrastructure already exists and can be strengthened.

2.5 Within neighbourhoods, approaches that aim to increase the number of residents involved in community activity (such as door knocking, informal activities and open events), are focused on engaging with seldom heard and isolated residents. This has increased the amount of **people who feel they can get on with others from different backgrounds** and contributes to cohesion work. Where the need has been identified in particular neighbourhoods, multi-cultural activities are organised such as swimming, exercising, sharing food and going on trips. Community Festivals and conferences enable people of all ages and backgrounds to get together, with BME stalls and food often being provided by BME groups. Many community festivals have become well established celebrations of community involvement and cohesion. Youth clubs and other community groups ensure opportunities for cultural mix. In 2 neighbourhoods, Probation's Unpaid Work Team is bringing together offenders and residents with impressive working relationships developing. A number of residents have 'adopted' some of the individuals serving their sentence in the community.

Innovative approaches have been adopted to engage with communities that have been traditionally hard to reach. For example, developing relationships with traders from different backgrounds through the setting up of a traders association has made links with

Chinese, Polish, Turkish and Indian communities in Portslade. This has led to increased involvement in local representative groups. A multi-cultural event in Hangleton and Knoll attracted 50 BME residents some of which had never before accessed any community based events or activities. Some of these residents have now gone on to access other community groups and forums and therefore feel they can influence decision making in their locality.

3 Challenges

3.1 The need for a practitioners meeting has been identified in several areas, in addition to neighbourhood forum meetings in order to help keep these meetings resident focussed. As a critical part to their work, CDWs have been proactive in making this happen. Whilst time intensive, successful outcomes mean it continues to be prioritised.

3.2 Community development work needs to be able to be flexible and respond to need as it arises within communities. Despite limited resources, support is made available at times to suit residents and not dictated by specific working hours or days. There is always an on-going need for training for community groups, especially new committee members.

3.3 Where targeted interventions are short term within neighbourhoods, having a neighbourhood forum can mean that the community might be able to support the longer term impact of the project. For example, Participle's work in Moulsecoomb is being considered by the Local Action Team. This is helped because CDW relationships with local people are ongoing and non-issue reliant.

3.4 There is a constant need to look at communication between all parties interested in / responsible for work in a specific location. There is a need for regular updates of who is doing what and where. This was raised as an issue at the recent Community Workers Conference around information sharing in a neighbourhood setting.

3.5 It is particularly challenging trying to move a small decision-making group on to become a larger more inclusive and sustainable group when a few residents are being openly hostile. Different approaches are needed to encourage positive participation by all.

3.6 It is generally difficult to involve people from 'super output areas' where people feel they are transient and not expecting to stay very long - whether this is a reality or not. In Hollingbury there are flats that are only a few hundred yards from the community centre with an under 5's play group, park and play area, yet many people do not use them. The CDW recognised this and facilitated a partnership with the Playbus which has been a successful resource there and a useful tool for further engagement.

- 3.7 It is recognised that while working in partnership with council departments, there is occasional mismatch of expectations between communities and service providers. While this pressure remains as something to resolve, partnership working can often be very positive.
- 3.8 Where there is part time community development work in an area with a large population, work needs to be highly focussed and targeted to be effective and this is skilled work. There is always on-going resource issues - not enough resources to meet identified needs.
- 3.9 One aspect of the citywide work is to work with community and voluntary sector organisations in neighbourhoods where there is no dedicated community development work. Issues tend to be long term and complex and ones that many other organisations have already tried to solve. It also often requires paid external support (solicitors, auditors) for which there is no funding. Funding this activity remains challenging.

4 Specific Outcomes and Examples

Work is commissioned under the following high-level outcomes with one example of progress for each neighbourhood area. More detailed information is available from individual neighbourhood work plans and monitoring:

- **Representative neighbourhood groups supported towards independence (impacts on National Indicators 4, 6 and 7)**

A detailed household survey on the **Bristol Estate** has contacted 75% of households and shown a very diverse population with many residents having multiple needs. The Bristol Estate Community Association (BECA) was promoted and it is hoped that this will bring new people into volunteering and to take decision-making responsibility. This will also help to turn negative criticism into constructive consensual action. The survey has had a significant impact on the BECA committee by broadening their perspective and understanding about the estate and helped them understand their role as representatives of the views and needs of all residents on the estate. 65% of people surveyed feel they can influence decisions in their locality, compared to 50% in September 2006 and compared to 27.6% for Brighton and Hove.

The **Portslade** Community Forum has increased in membership and is playing an important part in supporting other local groups through allocation of Healthy Neighbourhoods Funding (PCT money) and better communication and information sharing. The forum has been supported to hold 4 public meetings as well as a consultation event around Shoreham Harbour redevelopment. The Forum website is up

and running and website training is ongoing. Committee skills and newsletter training has happened with members and the Forum is being supported to form a mini action plan for the area at their AGM in January.

- **Delivery and development of Neighbourhood Plans supported (NI 4)**

In **Bevendean**, a mini action plan around health has been produced, particularly prioritising the needs of older people not currently engaged in community activity. A survey of older people was completed, which aimed to understand the barriers to engagement. Many different methods were employed which will enable the provision of activities that residents want as well as giving valuable information on planning future services/facilities focused for isolated older people. This has led to attendance of 8 highly isolated older people at the Over 60's group.

In **Coldean**, the annual 'Coldean Community Conference' is the vehicle used for action planning with residents and service providers, consulting 51 people in September on their plans and ideas for the area through active participation in the conference. Priority areas were identified by residents and action plans for each area developed to address needs and gaps in services. These will be implemented with the community and a conference report will further highlight priorities and ways forward.

In **Woodingdean**, a main priority of the Neighbourhood Action Plan was the provision of a locally based community development worker for the area. The Trust for Developing Communities has now created a 24 hour a week post, to start on 1st October and has negotiated a local office base at the Woodingdean Youth Centre. A funding application has also been prepared to ensure the sustainability of this post.

- **Neighbourhood community representatives feel they have greater skills, confidence and knowledge to address their own needs and the needs of their community (NI 6 and 7)**

In **Hollingdean**, the skate park group have been supported in the process of achieving their aim of building a new skate park. Their expectations were managed in terms of how quickly they thought they could achieve their aim and the process of applying for external funding and showing 'evidence of need' through consultation was explained. The group understood that they needed to be inclusive and were involved in writing the funding bid and producing a consultation survey regarding the design. Whilst the process may have started off being frustrating for the group they have grown in understanding of the complexities of the project and been open to inclusive ways of working.

The Vallance IT project in **Portland Road and Clarendon** has 6 over 70 year old residents volunteering as IT support workers who open the IT centre weekly. Drop-ins are very popular locally with residents. Additional training was organised for the volunteers in Newsletter skills, which culminated in a newsletter being produced. The future plan is to constitute this group so it can be independent and sustain beyond the initial one year funding that was obtained for this specific project. BHCC Adult Learning also added confidence building sessions onto training sessions.

In **Queens Park and Craven Vale**, intergenerational work has taken place that aimed to be open to all. It was advertised through leaflets, word of mouth, door knocking and talking about it at groups. This led to people not usually involved accessing local activity and using their local centre. The nature of the simple craft based activity appealed to a spectrum of ages and abilities and opened up the doors to them finding out about other local activities and the CDW being able to give information and refer in a friendly, informal way. Participants fed back that they really would like more opportunities to get involved. Individual support was given to several participants who needed encouragement to join in and overcome their lack of confidence. This group met the identified local need for people trying to overcome isolation and/or mental health problems by being highly supported, very local and informal.

In **Hangleton** a 'Community Chat Room' is held each week by the CDW, which enables residents to meet with the worker to discuss issues. Recently, the CDW was visited by a resident who had been living in the area for over 20 years and who felt very excluded. This resident presents quite difficult behaviour and struggles to accept the views of others. They were keen to attend the Hangleton Park Meeting and the Chat Room environment allowed the CDW to discuss in more depth the various issues important to her with regards to the park. This made her feel comfortable to attend the meeting and participate in discussions with other interested parties. The Chat Room format ensures meetings are accessible to all members of the community.

- **Activities, projects and groups that reflect local priorities developed and supported to work towards independence (NI 4 and 7)**

In north **Whitehawk**, the tenants association requested CDW support to review its activities, which has generated some good local interest. A number of sub-groups have been formed to support their desired activities with these being led by residents not previously involved in the local community. Open resident meetings are held in addition to their committee meetings to ensure there is a vehicle for the contribution of all their members. A first edition of their own mini-newsletter has been produced.

In **Hollingbury**, the Hollingbury Active Parents for Park Improvements group has worked incredibly hard since finding out they had Playbuilder funding to go ahead with some of their plans for Carden Park. They formed a committee at the end of April and chose a new Chair. They have a bank account and have worked on plans for the park with the Council and a play equipment company. The group planned and delivered extensive consultation events in the area including a hugely successful event at the community centre/park. Over 250 forms, pictures and designs came back from consultation events and these were extrapolated by the group. This group has been awarded an additional £40,000 funding from Veolia in addition to Playbuilder funding to allow the Park to undergo the developments the wider community has indicated are required.

- **Engage with individuals and communities who are seldom heard within neighbourhoods (NI 4 and 7)**

The **Moulsecoomb** Bangladeshi Women's Group have been supported to access public women-only swimming sessions at St Luke's pool. This support has consisted of subsidised swimming, free transport and worker support. Over the past six months, through partnership with the Sports Worker in the Healthy Living Centre, swimming sessions have been opened up to women from other backgrounds. There is now a group of about 20 women who access sessions. One woman has volunteered to drive the minibus each week and support women while at the pool. This has made the sessions much more sustainable and the group continues to attract new members from different backgrounds.

The **Brunswick and Regency** Neighbourhood Action Group (NAG) held an open day event which attracted members of BME groups and people from a variety of different backgrounds. This was an important and positive starting point for broader work and has enabled the NAG to look at ways of reaching hard to reach groups in what is a very large, transient and diverse neighbourhood. Good relationships have been forged with the local police teams and the major residents associations. This along with the use of the website and e-bulletin enables the work of the NAG to be promoted to the wider population and encourage more people to participate in its work.

The **Inclusive Communities Project in Hangleton and Knoll** has engaged with women from BME communities who are hard to reach because of cultural and language differences. Through engaging with these women an enormous need for suitable social and health related activities has been identified. The multi-cultural coffee morning group is run by women from BME backgrounds and they are identifying the needs and working to meet them. Healthwalks, swimming and exercise classes are examples of this. The group will need on-going community

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development support as they move towards sustainability. Full meetings need two interpreters (Arabic and Bangladeshi) and a crèche which is costly but ways of minimising costs are being investigated.

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Appendix 1

Output figures for all areas for the time period April 09 to end September 2009

Output	Description	Bevendean	Bristol Estate	B&R	City-Wide	Coldean	H&K (incl Inclusive)	Hollingbury	Hollingdean	Moulsecocomb	PR&C	Portslade	QP&CV	Whitehawk	Woodingdean	Grand TOTAL
CD 1 Numbers of people managing and attending local community groups	Records to be kept of details of all people involved in each group worked with	182	99	42	100	56	309	82	58	218	64	167	137	65	36	1615
CD 1.1 Numbers of new people recruited to/involvement with groups	Records to be kept up to date of people involved in groups and new members to be monitored	13	8	6	38	18	80	9	9	100	20	54	87	26	0	468
CD 1.2 Numbers of people from BME communities involved in community groups	Monitoring to be taken from records of membership of groups	1	12	8	1	0	81	4	7	28	7	23	12	4	0	188
CD 2 Numbers of people involved in LRG's (Local Representative	Records to be kept of all community members involved in LRG's	149	52	15	8	8	75	0	31	38	48	128	68	7	16	643

Groups) Forums etc																	
CD 2.1 Numbers of new people involved in LRG's	Records kept up to date with of new members being monitored	4	1	3	0	0	15	0	0	15	3	50	2	2	0	95	
CD 3 Numbers of community members involved in strategic partnership groups	Records kept of all community members involved in LPB's	1	2	1	4	4	2	3	5	6	4	6	2	3	0	43	
CD 3.1 Numbers of new people involved in strategic partnership groups	Records kept up to date with new members being monitored	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	4	6	2	2	2	0	0	19	
CD 4 Numbers of community groups worked with	List to be compiled at beginning of year	15	10	11	3	6	20	8	9	7	9	14	12	12	4	140	
CD 4.1 Numbers of new community groups started or newly worked with	list to be kept up to date for monitoring	2	5	1	0	0	1	1	3	5	2	4	2	4	0	30	
CD 4.2 Numbers of local BME groups worked	Monitoring to be taken from lists of community groups	0	2	1	0	0	3	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	9	

with in community																	
CD 4.3 Numbers of community groups gaining 'independence' from worker	List to be kept up to date for monitoring - 'independence' being point at which group agrees worker no longer attends regularly	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	2
CD 5 Numbers of communication methods supported	No's of households communicated with by way of : mass mail-outs, community newspapers etc	9	6	4	0	2	8	9	4	4	10	7	2	4	0	58	
CD 6 Numbers of 'open' community events held	Records of community events; Public Meetings, consultation events, festivals and fun days etc	4	9	2	1	15	56	14	9	11	8	11	5	0	1	157	
CD 6.1 Numbers of service providers involved in 'open' community events	Records kept of all requests and contacts from local service providers – and nature of request	2	34	10	34	44	18	24	10	26	9	68	2	0	0	281	
CD 8 Numbers of 'positive'	Records/cutting s kept of	2	6	1	0	2	6	0	0	4	2	4	3	0	0	30	

press articles about a neighbourhood and its community groups	newspaper articles (not community newspapers)															
CD 9 Numbers of 'funding applications' local groups are supported to make	Records (and copies) of funding bids that worker supported	4	10	5	0	2	7	2	3	18	2	11	4	8	1	77
CD 9.1 Numbers of community groups funding bids that are successful (that worker supported)	Records kept of all responses	3	8	5	0	2	4	1	1	15	1	11	0	2	0	53
CD 9.2 Amount in £'s that funding bids and other activities have brought into the local community	Records kept of amounts of funding brought in through worker involvement	551 1	181 50	375 0	0	902	243 0	921	373 8	963 4	200	349 00	350 0	160 0	0	85,236

CD 9.3 Amount of £'s 'IN KIND' brought in through worker involvement with local groups	Records kept of 'IN KIND; gifts, e.g.; furniture, printing costs, free food, equipment etc (only for amounts above £100	448	440 00	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	370 0	0	0	140 0	360 64	0	84,612
CD 10 Number of groups sign posted to CVSF for membership	Record kept of groups communicated with re: SCIP/CVSF events/publicity Records kept of how/where groups attending CVSF/SCP events/publicity	2	0	1	0	1	1	4	0	0	18	11	2	0	0	40	