

**Mutual Advantage:**

**Working with Voluntary  
and Community Organisations  
on Learning and Skills**

**Part 2**  
**Case Studies and Resources**

## Acknowledgements

This document was written by EDuce Ltd under contract to Hampshire TEC, as part of a DfEE project funded under the Education and Training Development Agenda

The views expressed are not necessarily those of Hampshire TEC, DfEE or any other Government Department.

Hampshire TEC and the authors would like to thank all those who contributed to the project: partners TECs in Sandwell and Wigan, local voluntary sector participants in each area, and the organisations which provided case study and other illustrative material.

Particular thanks go to members of the project management group; Jacqui Bridges (DfEE), Skinder Hundal (Sandwell TEC), Venika Kingsland (Hampshire TEC), and Elaine Walsh (Wigan CCTE).

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ISBN: 1 84185 442 5

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# Part 2 Case Studies and Resources

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## Key Features

### *Voluntary & Community Sector*

- at least 10,000 voluntary organisations addressing needs across a large and diverse county (disadvantaged urban populations Portsmouth and Southampton, scattered rural deprivation areas and prosperous commuting areas)
- fragmented sector, needing further to develop and articulate common learning agenda
- growing involvement in learning and regeneration, but still on a limited scale

### *TEC Activities*

- wide and diverse range of networks and contacts (eg, funding, advising and seeking views, contracting provision) and initiatives
- corporate strategic and operational focus through role of the Community Partnerships Manager (Partnerships and Projects team) and TEC Equal Opportunities Strategy
- success in promoting take-up of Investors in People and other capacity building activities amongst voluntary organisations

## **background**

Hampshire TEC has been developing relationships with voluntary and community organisations through the work of many of its teams, notably Partnerships and Projects which leads on the TEC Equal Opportunities strategy, regeneration and social exclusion matters. At its Equal Opportunities consultation seminar in 1998, the TEC agreed with consultees on needs to:

- review partnership structures and working methods
- improve communications and promote understanding of TEC role
- promote the business benefits of social inclusion
- explore greater flexibility and innovation in TEC programmes and funding

Scope to pursue these themes has been limited by policy changes and the establishment of the Learning and Skills Council. However, the TEC has pursued elements of these objectives through the Education, Training and Development Agenda (ETDA) project, focusing on the transition to the local Learning and Skills Council (LLSC) for Hampshire and the Isle of Wight.

As part of the ETDA project, workshops were organised to review TEC involvement with the voluntary sector, the opportunities for the sector to engage with the Learning and Skills Council and the European Social Fund (ESF), and ways of improving joint working. Voluntary sector participants were drawn mainly from the 14 councils for voluntary service in the county, with invitations also extended to relevant organisations on the Isle of Wight - to build contacts and relationships for the new LLSC area.

### ***TEC involvement with the voluntary sector***

A workshop exercise to map TEC involvement with the voluntary sector identified a much wider range of activity than expected at the outset and broadened participants'

understanding. It also highlighted the extent to which voluntary and community organisations are involved in learning provision, through links with colleges and local authority adult education (promoting opportunities, providing venues for outreach activities, etc).

The range of involvement covered relationships where the TEC:

- *contracts* with a small number of voluntary organisations as providers of TEC training programmes - any specialist provision through MENCAP (adult basic education), RPS City Training, Shaw Trust
- *advises* voluntary and community organisations and networks on policy developments and funding (eg, Councils for Voluntary service, members of SAVAGE - the sub-regional EU funding network, the Southampton European Network, and individual community/ residents associations)
- *funds* projects (eg, LADDER, Ethnic Pride, PINDA - see below; development of social firms through Southampton Area Co-operative Development Agency; WEA childcare training provision for minority ethnic group) and networks (eg, Hampshire Network on Disability, Third Age Enterprise and Employment National Council)
- *provides services* to voluntary organisations (eg, Investors in People) and community groups (eg, working with the Muslim Council in promoting career choices)
- *seeks feedback* on the needs and views of learners and potential learners through initiatives such as Learning Links and Ethnic Pride
- *involves* voluntary and community organisations as consultees (eg, on the Equal Opportunities strategy) and in the delivery of services (eg, information points for the Link2Learn database of learning opportunities)
- is a *strategic partner* with voluntary sector representatives on strategic partnerships (eg, Southern Learning Partnership; Portsmouth and South East Hampshire Partnership; Gosport Development Trust;

Portsmouth New Deal Joint Delivery Partnership; Hampshire Information, Advice and Guidance partnership)

- is a *project partner* (eg, Portsmouth Area Reinvestment Trust, a community finance initiative; Portsmouth Foyer Employment Access Centre) - in some cases part of the TEC role has been to provide match funding for ESF projects

Ethnic Pride, Portsmouth
<p>Ethnic Pride in Portsmouth works to improve the job prospects within local ethnic minority communities, through improved access to education, training and jobs. It was set up by the Portsmouth Racial Equality Action Group (PREAG), which has close links with the Portsmouth Ethnic Minority Communities Forum. There is a full-time officer who provides individuals with intensive one-to-one support and guidance. Clients are signposted to the most appropriate provision from a menu of options, which includes TEC programmes. The worker liaises with providers on behalf of clients, arranging appointments and negotiating access to provision. She also goes with some clients to appointments with providers and makes home visits where necessary. Providers also approach the project to gain access to the local ethnic minority networks, to discuss issues and to seek advice. Ethnic Pride is funded under the Single Regeneration Budget.</p> <p>Gaining the support and trust of ethnic minority communities has been achieved by sensitivity to the needs of individual ethnic minority communities, liaising closely with their development workers and community leaders, who have provided advice on the most effective approach to take with each group (eg, Bangladeshi, Chinese and Vietnamese). Experience suggests that initiatives such as Modern Apprenticeships or the New Deal are treated with suspicion - often because the initiative is unfamiliar or not clearly understood.</p>

Collaboration with organisations in the broader social economy sector is also increasingly important, notably with housing associations (eg, Portsmouth Housing Association, Swaythling Housing Society), given the key roles that these bodies play in regeneration and community development and the common interest they share with the TEC in helping to build the capacity amongst local residents.

*capacity building projects*

Projects supported by Hampshire TEC which are intended to build capacity in the voluntary sector include:

LADDER
<p>LADDER (Learning and Database Development Education Resource) aims to promote learning within the voluntary and community sector in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight and ensure that training needed is readily accessible, duplication and over-provision is avoided, and gaps are identified and filled. The initial development work was funded by Hampshire TEC, and LADDER has since attracted support from a range of other sources including Whitbread in the Community, Hampshire County Council and Lloyds TSB Foundation. Objectives include promoting new methods of learning and encouraging the <i>sharing</i> of provision across sectors, opening up places, for example, on IT and management training courses run in-house by large local employers.</p> <p>LADDER is developing its web presence with the support of the Hampshire TEC Information and Guidance project. This is being undertaken in conjunction with work on the Link2Learn service (which provides information about learning opportunities across the board and is linked to the national <i>learnirect</i> service). A concern is to ensure that voluntary organisations are able to make full use of the internet in ways that help address their learning needs and those of their service users. The first step is to ensure that all the LADDER board members have the requisite skills.</p>

Investors in People and the Voluntary Sector
<p>Hampshire TEC has targeted voluntary organisations for Investors in People, and set up four 'cluster groups' to help organisations prepare for assessment. The approach follows the "Build a Better Business" programme which involves an initial assessment against the standard, preparation of an Action Plan, participation in a series of half-day workshops, on-site consultancy and an on-line support service. Workshops have included topics such as "Business Direction", "Employees in New Jobs", "Managing Performance" and "Training and Development". Amongst the 18 participating organisations were Councils for Voluntary Service, Portsmouth Foyer and Rosebrook Housing Association. For several it was the first time that board and staff had together addressed organisational development issues.</p> <p>The cluster group approach has encouraged sharing of good practice and a high level of enthusiasm. Organisational benefits have included <i>"making our people more part of the organisation"</i>, training activities better geared to organisational needs, greater capacity to cope with change, improved service quality and greater credibility in the eyes of funders. The TEC has used the European Social Fund to reduce costs to participants.</p> <p>It has also helped to demonstrate how the standard is appropriate to the sector, not just to private businesses. The TEC has taken care to avoid past marketing mistakes, eg, in using the wrong kind of sales messages and consultants who did not understand the nature of the voluntary sector. Though subsidised, the cost of the programme remains a barrier to widening take-up significantly.</p>

## PINDA

PINDA (Portsmouth and South East Hampshire Information Network and Database Access) is a service to enable small and very small voluntary and social economy organisations identify others with common interests and form partnerships, not least to access funding opportunities. It is open to users in Portsmouth and South East Hampshire and is expanding its coverage.

Access to the PINDA database is possible via a variety of paper and electronic formats including e-mail, web site, letter, fax and telephone. The use of a bulletin board allows users to exchange views and seek the experience of others, over time building a community of users.

The project has been funded under the European Social Fund, Hampshire TEC, Portsmouth Housing Association and QuestSure Advance Ltd. It is also supported by Portsmouth City Council and Portsmouth and South East Hampshire Partnership.

The new Learning and Skills Council will be able to foster links between interested organisations in both Hampshire and the Isle of Wight, as the project workshops drew attention to innovative work on the Isle of Wight, notably through Island Volunteers and its sister company, Community Solutions Ltd. Initiatives have included a residential Community Leadership and Development programme and MIDAS (Management Initiative for Distance Accreditation and Support), which combines learning needs assessment, open learning (including online support and video classes) and accreditation in project management. ESF and SRB monies have been used to subsidise business planning and marketing consultancy to voluntary organisations and to support IT training and IIP.

### **opportunities for the voluntary sector**

Two workshops were held for voluntary organisations. The first (with Councils of Voluntary Service - CVSs) provided a briefing on LSC developments and a chance to assess opportunities and implications arising for the sector; the other reviewing the new European Social Fund regime for 2000-2006, good practice in bidding and project delivery and the swapping of project ideas. Key needs and issues emerging included:

- build evidence to demonstrate the scale and significance of the voluntary sector in Hampshire
- tackle fragmentation *within* the sector and develop a better articulated, common agenda on learning
- promote collaboration in developing projects and accessing funding

*"Strategically, we must network more on learning and skills and be able to present a collective view when it matters - not easy given the non-hierarchical nature of the sector."*

*"On bids, we need to gather together, review what we do, be brutally honest and play to our strengths..."*

## Benefits of Collaboration within the Voluntary Sector

Discussion drew out benefits from collaboration, fundamentally about attracting resources and achieving outcomes *which would not otherwise be achieved* - through:

- sharing information about needs and funding opportunities
- providing a more coherent package to improve what's offered to participants and to attract support (including match funding from public agencies)
- sharing skills, experience and resources (including technical skills in bidding, project management and delivery)
- spreading the pain/ burden of project administration
- developing a better understanding of what others are doing
- creating more political clout

Issues for the TEC and, for the future to the LLSC, included:

- the need for better joining up of all the government initiatives affecting the voluntary sector around learning, social inclusion, community planning, active citizenship, and social enterprise - with implications for how the LLSC works with other partners, notably, local authorities and the Small Business Service
- the significance of the sector in economic and social terms, and the need to treat it on a par with other sectors, eg, in preparing the Workforce Development Plan for Hampshire and the Isle of Wight
- the voluntary and community sector is capable and well-placed to make a greater contribution to the learning and skills policy agenda, but is very constrained by existing resources in how much it can afford to do
- voluntary organisations need to be very clear about the nature of their role(s) and how this fits with their individual purpose

Resourcing issues were brought out in reviewing potential voluntary sector roles (see Resource 2). It was acknowledged that there is some limited scope for individual voluntary organisations to do more (eg, as an information channel) on learning and skills, within existing resources and in ways which fit their particular roles (eg, as CVSs). It should not be assumed that voluntary organisations can provide something for nothing, or cheaply 'just because' they are voluntary organisations. More telling contributions would be enabled by additional resources - and in some parts of the county, little is likely to happen without this. And often voluntary organisations are dealing with groups who are harder to reach, harder to serve - and more costly to serve because of their needs.

### **joint working**

A further workshop brought voluntary sector and TEC staff together to review current relationships and consider what needs to be improved in the future, in the Learning and Skills Council context. The "good things" brought out highlighted

the advantages of TEC: voluntary sector collaboration, while the “bad things” illustrated barriers to effective partnership:

Good Things	Bad Things/ Things to Improve
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ learning from each other</li> <li>▪ pooling of resources</li> <li>▪ combining different <i>types</i> of resources – working together to reach harder-to-reach groups of people</li> <li>▪ playing on strengths: different routes to funding, capitalising on the innovative and flexible character of the voluntary sector – and its essential ability to bring people together</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ token or belated voluntary sector involvement</li> <li>▪ unequal say in decision-making</li> <li>▪ targets-driven approaches can work against helping those most in need, or against longer term community development</li> <li>▪ hidden or conflicting organisation agendas</li> <li>▪ insufficient time/ resources</li> <li>▪ time consuming nature of partnership working</li> <li>▪ insufficient understanding of what each other is about/ what each brings to the table</li> <li>▪ short term funding</li> </ul>

Actions identified to improve joint working and the achievement of goals shared by voluntary organisations and the TEC/ LLSC included:

*understanding the sector*

- develop a better, shared understanding of the voluntary and community sector in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight - through research, networking and outreach *relationships and consultation*

- improve communications and understanding – *two-way*
- find better ways of representing the diverse nature/ views within the voluntary sector
- look again at mechanisms for consultation and partnership - how can we ensure a wider range of involvement, including amongst smaller voluntary and community organisations?
- promote the active involvement of the voluntary sector in local Learning Partnerships

*measuring and paying for performance*

- use ways of measuring quality in learning and skills provision which go beyond quantitative targets - focus on intended results rather than shorter term outputs - capture the “distance travelled” by individuals and groups: confidence gained, softer skills, projects developed - not necessarily qualifications outcomes

*resources and capacity building*

- work together to assess and find ways of paying for the costs attached to greater voluntary sector contributions to learning and skills, and harness the potential roles of other agencies (eg, the Small Business Service) in building capacity in the sector
- develop further the current initiatives to build skills and organisational capacity in the voluntary sector and in cross-sector partnership working. Particular needs have been identified regarding project management (especially for partnership projects)
- give higher priority to sharing knowledge and experience, drawing across the new LLSC area of Hampshire and the Isle of Wight - and beyond

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## Key Features

### *Voluntary & Community Sector*

- over 1,500 voluntary and community organisations, with a significant proportion run by ethnic minority groups
- constitutes third largest employment sector in the borough
- Compact with Sandwell Regeneration Partnership/ Sandwell Council to improve public/ voluntary sector relations
- challenge to look at interests across four boroughs with the coming of the Local Learning and Skills Council for the Black Country

### *TEC Activities*

- Community Development programme making full use of SRB, ESF and TEC funds in ways which have improved organisational effectiveness in the voluntary sector and improved TEC performance
- development of black and ethnic minority providers a TEC priority, leading to increased take-up of guidance and training services
- other support measures have included management training and study visits
- TEC activities embedded within framework of Sandwell Civic Partnership

## **regeneration context**

Sandwell has a well-developed framework for regeneration, led by the Sandwell Civic Partnership on which Sandwell TEC, Sandwell Ethnic Minorities Umbrella Forum (SEMUF) and Sandwell Council for Voluntary Organisations (SCVO) are represented. The Sandwell Lifelong Learning Partnership - which the TEC has supported strongly - is one of four thematic partnerships under this umbrella. The latest SRB Round 6 programme, Sandwell Learning Plus aims to increase access to learning through an extensive network of 300 learning centres and 700 access points. and the IT infrastructure to go with these. Voluntary organisations and community centres will provide many of the sites.

Sandwell is host to a large number of area-based regeneration initiatives, including successive rounds of the Single Regeneration Budget (SRB), the Neighbourhood Support Fund and New Deal for Communities (NDC). SCVO reckons that it participates in 64 different partnership groups: very demanding in terms of the time, energy, commitment and knowledge required of a small umbrella organisation.

Engagement of local communities in regeneration work is a major priority across Civic Partnership activities, and capacity building in the voluntary sector and in ethnic minority communities has been a prominent SRB theme (the 2<sup>nd</sup> round programme was dedicated to this end).

The Sandwell Compact was agreed between SCVO, the Council and the Sandwell Regeneration Partnership in November 1999, one of the earliest local Compacts in the country to be agreed. Its focus is primarily on local authority/ voluntary sector relations. Issues arising in implementing the Compact include continuing difficulties for the voluntary sector with short term funding; the need for improved business practices within the sector; and a

greater willingness for parties to accept trade-offs and make changes.

A survey of the voluntary sector in the borough in 1999 found:

### **Mapping the Voluntary Sector in Sandwell 1999 - Key Findings**

#### **from analysis of SCVO database (270 organisations)**

- employment in the sector: 1,027 (55% full-time)

#### **from 96 returned questionnaires**

- 49% organisations employ staff
- 783 volunteers as board members - 31% from ethnic minority groups
- main activities: recreation 35%; childcare 25%; education/ training 22%; health 22%; poverty 17%
- 44% receive some funding from the local authority; 14% health authority; 29% from trusts, National Lottery Charities Board, etc
- performance issues: funding uncertainties; recruitment difficulties linked to low pay and limited career opportunities; weaknesses in equal opportunities practice
- top three training needs identified: fundraising, time management and team building

Relationships between the TEC and the voluntary sector have improved significantly over time, as greater mutual understanding has developed. There had been concerns that the TEC was not very supportive of the sector, while there seemed to the TEC to have been a practice of *"TEC the money and run"* (reflecting an expectation that TECs *should* provide funding for voluntary and community organisations who came forward with requests, no matter how they related to the TEC's business).

### **TEC initiatives**

Sandwell TEC contracts with a number of national voluntary organisations as training providers (eg, NACRO, Rathbone)



and has promoted the involvement of voluntary and community organisations in the local Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) partnership (Sandwell Adult Guidance Network). The active participation of these organisations (eg, Smethwick Pakistani Muslim Association, Bangladeshi Youth Forum, Sandwell Employability) in the initial funding bid to DfEE was important to the success of Network in becoming one of the first areas for such partnerships. It has also ensured that IAG services have reached communities which would not otherwise have benefited, and enhanced the standing of the organisations concerned. Advice and guidance interviews with ethnic minority clients have exceeded targets, as has the number of individuals pursuing NVQs in Guidance. Capacity building took the form of mentoring and coaching, guidance on strategic planning and achievement of Guidance Council standards. Additional resources were provided for Sandwell Employability to support their services to disabled clients (computer hardware and software packages).

*“Our work has brought in a diverse crowd who can contribute...they’ve provided a breath of fresh air for the TEC. And it’s resulted in new collaborations - like the case of a white estate-based organisation working with a Punjabi group.”*

Development of black and ethnic minority training providers is a priority within the TEC business plan and Equal Opportunities Strategy. This is seen as essential in providing positive role models, mentoring and culturally sensitive solutions.

Suppliers have formed a self-help group to address equal opportunities issues. One of their tasks has been to test a self-assessment booklet (funded through the ESF as a capacity building measure) to help them achieve the Training Standards Council standard. More generally the TEC has sought to make it easier for voluntary and community organisations to engage with its work, eg, by reducing some of the documentation requirements. Evidence of success includes increased take-up of Modern Apprenticeships amongst ethnic minority groups (up from 3% to 12%).

Sandwell TEC has supported more general capacity building in the voluntary sector through management training:

Management Training in the Voluntary Sector
Two programmes have been run with TEC support. One, through the Training for All Foundation (TAF), a local agency providing training for the voluntary sector, has helped participants obtain Management NVQs (Levels 3 to 5). This involved workshops focusing on key areas of knowledge and understanding, along with one-to-one coaching and mentoring as participants prepared their learning portfolios for assessment. The programme was very flexible, tailored to participants’ needs, and resulted in a high completion rate. (The providers were chosen by a panel of voluntary sector representatives.) 12 out of 20 participants were from minority ethnic groups.

<p>The other, a management and leadership development programme run by Dale Carnegie Training was also valued by participants though was less well attuned to voluntary sector needs and did not offer accreditation. While strong on personal leadership skills around negotiation, presentation and diplomacy, it was geared to a commercial environment, rather than community politics and tackling social exclusion. The TEC now fully recognises the importance of ensuring that the voluntary sector takes the lead and the responsibility for success or failure in delivering any such programme.</p> <p>Challenges remain in promoting management training within the sector, notably:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ giving the priority in small organisations to carve out the time for training</li> <li>▪ convincing management committees of the value of spending money on staff training</li> </ul>
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Other capacity building initiatives with or involving the voluntary sector have included:

- business support (eg, help with business planning) for the voluntary and community organisations through Business Link Sandwell and Sandwell Enterprise (ERDF funded)
- business advisor training, funding participants from a range of agencies (eg, Sandwell Women’s Enterprise Development Agency, Sandwell Afro-Caribbean Development Agency) on a certificated course run by Durham University Business School
- ‘Site Exchange’ events to spread learning and good practice amongst local organisations involved in learning and regeneration. Organisations host visits by others to share experiences, focused on specific topics. Themes have included disability issues in employment and training and post-16 educational and occupational choices)
- workshops on skills and lifelong learning issues for youth development workers - with the objective of ensuring better linkages and referrals to TEC programmes
- sponsoring a Common Purpose programme, in support of a Civic Partnership commitment. The programme is designed to bring together leaders and potential leaders from different sectors to understand better what makes the area tick and the key issues that need to be faced.

Work with youth organisations to develop project management capabilities has borne fruit, eg, with the Smethwick Bangladeshi Youth Forum which was purchasing a church for conversion, drawing on a range of funding sources. The TEC role was to provide *“the right information, at the right time and the right words”*, and help ensure support amongst other partners. Subsequently, the TEC has helped towards the capital costs of a digital learning centre which has become part of the national network of *learnirect* centres which are intended to help bridge the “digital divide”, opening access to ICT learning for all.

Investors in People and Build a Better Business (designed as a lead-in to IIP for smaller organisations) have been promoted to the voluntary sector by Business Link Sandwell, but take-up has been limited by the level of charges involved.

The TEC has collaborated with the Black Country Housing Association (BCHA), SCVO and TAF in PACE (Practical Award in Community Excellence) which has encouraged the take-up by voluntary organisations of PQASSO and Quality First quality systems. BCHA pursues a wide range of 'community investment' activities, ranging from PACE to backing a repairs business set up by residents groups and managing the Empowerment project. This transnational ESF project has involved training for long term unemployed tenants in community work, communications and computer skills.

These measures have largely been supported under the TEC's Community Development programme, which has brought together SRB, ESF and the TEC's own funds, very significantly extending the scope of what the TEC would otherwise have been able to do. Other activities pursued under this programme have included community mentoring (working with community and voluntary organisations in support of severely disadvantaged ethnic minority young people), promotional literature in ethnic minority languages, and advice on bidding. The TEC has funded SCVO and SEMUF in support of their roles as umbrella organisations for the voluntary sector (£10,000 each pa).

**partnership issues**

A "Voluntary Sector and the Learning and Skills Council" workshop run as part of the ETDA project drew a wide range of representatives of the voluntary sector in Sandwell, along with a few public sector partners. Participants thoroughly reviewed how voluntary and community organisations could relate to the new agenda and identified key steps to improving partnership working.

<b>Voluntary and Community Organisations and the Learning and Skills Council: Key Points</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ the sector has a key role in providing initial learning opportunities, progression routes to further learning and qualifications, and a voice for learners</li> <li>▪ there is great scope to help address poor adult basic skills</li> <li>▪ voluntary organisations recognise the need to improve quality standards, and will work to do this - <i>but</i></li> <li>▪ it is important that the Learning and Skills Council avoids a "one size fits all" approach to quality (which could discriminate against smaller providers)</li> <li>▪ the voluntary and community sector should feature in the local workforce development strategies, as an important employment sector with a scope extending beyond its staffing into significant numbers of potential learners of working age: volunteers and clients</li> </ul>

Involvement with the Sandwell Lifelong Learning Partnership was seen to be crucial, given the Partnership's role in promoting collaboration amongst providers and articulating learner needs - and the fact that there will no longer be a Sandwell-specific agency on learning and skills, with the new local LSC covering the Black Country. The workshop led directly to the creation of a voluntary sector learning and skills group, co-ordinated by SCVO to help prepare for the advent of the LLSC. The TEC have supported the group by providing updates on developments.

A number of concerns were aired by the voluntary sector which related to partnership working more generally, not just on learning and skills:

- the time absorbed in consultations and partnerships
- the lack of a requirement on voluntary sector representatives to network with their peers (which weakens accountability and the potential voluntary sector contribution)
- the need for the voluntary sector itself to ask of involvement in partnerships, "to what end?", "how do we link this involvement to other activities?"
- limited awareness of each others' roles/ contributions
- competition within the sector

More specifically in relation to learning and skills, voluntary and community sector participants considered how they could play a fuller and more effective role in partnership with the new local Learning and Skills Council. They advocated support for capacity building within the sector:

<b>Capacity Building on Learning &amp; Skills: what will help you make a fuller and more effective contribution?</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ better resourced infrastructure (including securing additional resources to cover the costs of participating in partnerships, raising awareness of learning and skills developments, and ensuring fast and effective communications and updating within the sector)</li> <li>▪ improved networking and sharing of knowledge within the sector</li> <li>▪ training needs analysis</li> <li>▪ funding to help cover training costs support for developing quality: meeting organisational standards and those for provision of learning</li> <li>▪ advice and guidance to access funding</li> </ul>

Participants recognised that they needed to ensure that the sector developed a more collective and strategic voice on learning and skills matters. They also felt that wider and better use of ICT could help increase involvement, awareness and participation - while noting ICT is "*not always the answer*" - given the numbers of organisations and people that do not have access.

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*joint working*

Suggestions were also made for how to improve joint working:

- assess where and how greater benefits can be achieved through collaboration - and make sure these are realised
- look at ways of improving how partners work together: ranges from how meetings are managed (more attention to objectives and outcomes would help...), speed of communications, adequate time for consultation, cutting down the use of jargon, etc

*"We need to look hard at issues about well we work in partnership - the downside and the upside...How can we work smarter?"*

- work together to draw in more involvement and representation from grass-roots level
- try to ensure greater equality in partnership working (in the influence different parties have in decision making - rather than a function of the size of budget they control)
- seek opportunities to involve the business sector in the social inclusion agenda and building skills in the voluntary and community sector
- promote collaboration Black Country-wide where there is added value (eg, in relation to dealings with the Black Country Learning and Skills Council)

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## Key Features

### *Voluntary & Community Sector*

- fairly active sector, but with a fragmented and underdeveloped network (almost 1,000 registered groups)
- traditionally dominance of the public sector in the delivery of social welfare services has limited the role of the voluntary sector in the past and conditions how voluntary and public sectors work together
- Compact development under way
- new organisations and structures emerging out of regeneration activities, with growing interest and involvement in lifelong learning
- sector needs to develop capacity to play a fuller role in learning and regeneration

### *TEC Activities*

- operating in a local inter-agency culture where, for many people, partnership is the expected way to do things
- active in progressing the community development agenda for the borough, working with Wigan Council and Wigan and Leigh CVS
- enabling role in support of voluntary and community organisations (eg, assistance in obtaining funding)
- strong top-down commitment to championing partnership with the voluntary sector

## **local review of relationships and joint working**

Participation by Wigan Chamber of Commerce, Training and Enterprise<sup>1</sup> (CCTE) in the ETDA project precipitated a local study, which set out to examine the current interaction between the CCTE and the voluntary and community sector in Wigan and Leigh, and to recommend ways of improving joint working.

Key findings and issues emerging from the project, undertaken by CEDA, included:

- work with the voluntary sector was perceived by CCTE staff to be on the margins of CCTE activity
- relationships are generally good though some “them and us” attitudes persist – *however*,
- over 50% of groups and organisations surveyed had had no contact with the CCTE
- the sector itself lacks the capacity to be more fully involved in learning and regeneration activities
- understanding of community issues and needs is underdeveloped within the CCTE and partner agencies

The CCTE board have endorsed recommendations that a capacity building programme be implemented as a partnership initiative. Aims of this programme include developing project delivery capabilities, strengthening the voluntary sector infrastructure and maximising community involvement in regeneration and wider voluntary sector activity.

Within the CCTE, more needs to be done to promote work with the voluntary and community sector – *“We need to get it into the forefront of people’s minds”* – through staff training, individuals to act as champions, and changes in

<sup>1</sup> The Chamber of Commerce, Training and Enterprise includes Wigan TEC as part of its functions, alongside the Chamber of Commerce and Business Link.

how performance is managed, in ways that support partnership with the sector. More generally, there is a need to share good practice amongst partners, and promote key messages amongst a wider audience.

*“The CCTE must move away from using the voluntary and community sector as a ‘quick fix’ solution to problems on the ground” (CEDA)*

One practical measure to improve understanding within the CCTE may be to develop a skills register, encouraging staff to volunteer and matching their interests and skills to voluntary and community organisation needs

## **community development agenda**

This initiative by the CCTE needs to be seen in the context of wider action by partner agencies on community development across the borough. There is a rapidly evolving agenda, led by Wigan Council and linked to work on the Community Plan. An overarching strategic role is being played by the Leaders Forum, convened by the Council and involving key interests in the borough including the CCTE, Health Authority and CVS. The Forum provides the overall steer for seven strategic partnerships:

Partnership	Themes
Economic Development	Competitive people and businesses
Health and Social Care	Health improvement and high quality services
Community Safety	Crime and disorder, drugs, youth offending
Housing	High quality of environment and housing choice
Education and Lifelong Learning	Raising standards and ensuring everyone is included
Culture	Arts, sports, play, tourism and media
Environment & Development	Transport, development, sustainability

A Community Development Audit has highlighted the extent to which "community development" features in the jobs of many people in the public sector (65 full-time equivalent) - without this being commonly recognised. There are new demands on staff in the Council, CTE and other public agencies: many more jobs require skills in consultation and, broadly speaking, community development. The audit has raised questions around the best use of staff in relation to regeneration needs and whether or not there is a need for a generic community development function which crosses existing service/ departmental boundaries, and embodies core community development values of working *with* local people, *to* their needs, *at* their pace.

Community Networks have been formed in SRB target areas, drawing together local people and professionals, in an effort to harness the voice of the most disadvantaged communities where there is relatively less community activity and feedback on needs. The process has brought different interests together to work on a plan for each area, and find ways of involving more people. These Networks have responsibility for determining SRB expenditure, and the CTE has found itself in a new position of applying to these bodies for funding some of its work in the target areas.

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### ***developing the local Compact***

Work started in 1999 on preparing a Local Compact to act as a protocol for governing relationships between public and voluntary/ community sectors. The underlying aim is to raise the profile and involvement of the latter in *all* partnership working in the borough. Wigan CTE are active participants as part of a broad approach, unlike many other areas where the Compact focus is on relations with the local authority alone. There is a shared view that, *"for the partnership framework to be successful, all partners and all sectors must be effectively engaged and their contributions recognised and valued by others"*.

Progress has been gradual, reflecting the local starting point: lack of previous borough-wide focus on strategic relationships, an under-resourced Council for Voluntary Service, relationships adversely affected by past experiences around funding and contracting, etc. Time has been needed - and will be needed further - to explore shared agendas, develop more of a common language, bring more people from partner organisations on board, and so on. It has been important in these early stages to allow people to air concerns, demands and grievances - but gently ensure that the discussion moves on.

*"You can only start from where people are. And it takes time."*

There are tensions around wishes and priorities, with contested issues where community representatives bring forth immediate wants - which may or may not fit with agency/ partnership priorities and the "bigger picture".

*"We are expecting testing times over the next two to three years, as people discover they have a voice."*

Participants in the Compact process are working through a set of principles ("information", "accountability" and "learning from action") - what do they mean in practice? what actions need to be taken? This is being done for each of the themes where national Compact codes of practice are being introduced (Funding; Consultation; Black and Ethnic Minority Groups; Volunteering; Community Groups). The partners are developing an action plan, with the intent of *"giving people the responsibility to go away and make the changes"*.

Involvement in the Compact and in the new partnership structure has encouraged the CVS to review how it fulfils its representational role. Places on partnerships will now be shared amongst the CVS trustees in addition to the CVS director.

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### ***voluntary sector involvement in learning and skills***

Voluntary organisations are not significant providers of learning opportunities in Wigan, but are participating in the Learning Partnership. Such representation, and other involvement through, eg, learners' forums, will be important in articulating learners' needs (and thus helping to shape LLSC plans). This has led to successful bids for special FE funds for non-accredited learning (FEFC Non-Schedule 2 provision), and for basic skills (Basic Skills Agency funding for training community volunteers as tutors). The Non-Schedule 2 courses cater directly for a wide variety of local groups and tackle a range of requirements, often raised directly by them. Examples include 'computers made easy' for care workers and mental health workers, DIY and welding skills for homeless groups, yoga for Foyer residents.

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### ***other relevant CTE activities***

Other CTE activities include:

- assisting community groups through the Resource Procurement team in accessing funding. The team has handled around 300 approaches by community and voluntary organisations since 1996. They see their task as to share their knowledge and build other's capabilities, but have a very limited resource to make available
- developing community-based ICT Learning Centres. The CTE's policy is to promote community/ voluntary sector involvement, though they recognise the need in many areas to grow the interest and local capacity
- helping the Citizens Advice Bureau to become one of the first organisations in the country achieve accreditation to the national Information, Advice and Guidance standards
- sponsoring a Community Leadership Programme, run by Common Purpose. This brings together potential

leaders from the public, private and voluntary sectors to learn more about the locality and key issues. Bursaries are available to the voluntary sector participants.

- ◆ performance targets operate against pursuing longer term actions which can deliver outcomes through collaboration

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### **partnership issues**

- There are local concerns about the extent to which there is “true” partnership, and the extent to which the Compact will help address an imbalance of power amongst participating interests.
- There are associated calls for change on the part of the public agencies, eg:
  - ◆ making a reality of a philosophy of “working with” not “for” or “on” local communities (as demonstrated by inter-agency working in Atherton – an SRB5 programme)
  - ◆ greater openness and listening
  - ◆ make it easier to participate - helping lay people on partnership bodies feel more comfortable, dealing with practical issues (arranging suitable meeting times; helping to cover childcare, transport costs, etc)
- Other barriers to effective joint working include performance management within public sector organisations where:
  - ◆ individuals and teams tend to work in work in boxes with little recognition of the inter-related contributions they make to the “whole” of regeneration activities
  - ◆ partnership working with the voluntary sector is not supported or given priority in job descriptions and staff appraisal

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### **lessons**

- Within the CCTE, commitment from the Chief Executive has been vital in championing partnership with the voluntary sector.
- It takes time to build relationships and support capacity building, especially in regeneration areas where many of the groups are young. Finding a common language is important.
- Don’t expect too much, too soon – there is more that voluntary sector *could* contribute to the learning and skills agenda, but organisations have to be ready, want to do it, and have the capacity
- It will be important for the LLSC and local partners to help voluntary and community organisations weigh up needs and opportunities in the learning and skills agenda and when and how to act
- Agencies should also be aware that many voluntary organisations do know about the opportunities out there (eg, on learning and regeneration) but don’t pursue them because, eg, they have limited resources (with “no slack at the edges”) and constantly have hard choices to make about what they do and don’t do.
- It is essential that the voluntary and community sector drives its own capacity building agenda (public agencies must avoid telling organisations what they need...).

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# Birmingham Voluntary Sector Quality Development Programme

## Key Features

- quality development programme based on quality frameworks for small voluntary/ community organisations (PQASSO) and very small ones (Quality First)
- led by Birmingham Voluntary Services Council, in partnership with Birmingham and Solihull TEC
- heavily targeted towards minority ethnic groups
- quality improvement and organisational development benefits to over 200 voluntary organisations

## background

The Birmingham Voluntary Sector Quality Development Programme (BVSQDP) is a response to the need for voluntary organisations and community groups to address systematically issues of management and service delivery appropriate to the sector. It was established in 1996 by Birmingham Voluntary Service Council (BVSC) with funding from Birmingham & Solihull TEC.

BVSC were particularly concerned about the ability of local voluntary organisations to respond to growing pressures for “professionalisation” and to tackle predominant short-term horizons, where many organisations are constantly chasing the next source of funds. BVSC wanted to challenge the emergent “contract culture” and “develop a thriving voluntary sector not dependent on the whims of mainstream funders”. It had a particular desire to enable small minority ethnic organisations to access regeneration funding.

The TEC’s interest stemmed from recognition of the key role the sector could play in achieving its own business objectives, the role that quality standards can provide in workforce development, and the economic significance of the sector in economic terms as a major employer. They wanted to see stronger relationships with the sector and capitalise on the sector’s potential for innovation in employment, training and regeneration. The TEC wanted to help voluntary and community organisations meet TEC and other agencies’ funding requirements, and avoid situations where these bodies “twist rules and corrupt themselves” to get to funding.

## funding

The TEC was the first funder in what BVSC describes as a political (strategic) and a practical (operational) partnership. It has provided £200,000 pa over three years, towards the costs of a team of five, and additional funds have been secured from ESF Objective 3 Priority 4 and the SRB4 programme, “Acting for Social Inclusion - Birmingham CAN!” (for which BVSC is accountable body). Part of the TEC funding was for the post of deputy to the head of BVSC, to enable BVSC to play more of a strategic role and develop its own capacity for capacity building in the sector.

## activities

### PQASSO

BVSC originally intended to develop their own quality system for the project but, following a nine month period of consultation with voluntary and community organisations, heard about the newly published *PQASSO* (Practical Quality Assurance System for Small Organisations) standard and decided not to reinvent the wheel. PQASSO - developed by the Charities Evaluation Service (CES) - appealed as an affordable framework for looking at everything you need to be concerned about in running an organisation.

### PQASSO (Practical Quality Assurance System for Small Organisations)

*PQASSO* sets out a series of standards in 16 areas including service provision, staffing, training and development, monitoring and evaluation, and commitment to quality. The system is based on self-assessment – organisations build up a dossier of evidence illustrating how they meet the standards. It helps to identify training needs, establish consistency within organisations and in the services they provide, and can be adapted to all kinds of organisations. It has a “process model” approach (rather than “tick box”), based on the premise that “monitoring should be an integral part of the work of the people doing the job”<sup>1</sup>, providing a framework for a continuous assessment of organisational management and service delivery. A complete cycle of the PQASSO process is expected to take participants about a year.

Needs of voluntary organisations are well-reflected in the design of the framework, eg, in recognising the role of service users in shaping and influencing organisational planning, and focusing on working with volunteers, and the role of management committees.

A revised standard was launched in autumn 2000, embedding, eg, equal opportunities as a requirement throughout the framework, and introducing a review section.

### Phase 1 (early- to mid-1997):

- events to raise awareness of quality issues with voluntary organisations

<sup>1</sup> PQASSO Handbook, CES 1997



*Phase 2 (September 1997):*

- events to recruit organisations on to the PQASSO programme (150 organisations contacted, 70 attending introductory workshops)

*Phase 3 (November 1997 onwards):*

- 106 voluntary organisations participated in PQASSO, making a formal commitment to quality, agreed by all staff, volunteers and management, and appointing a "Quality Champion" to lead implementation
- BVSC has:
  - ◆ provided participators with free copies of the PQASSO standards pack (£50 each)
  - ◆ recruited and trained PQASSO facilitators, who work on a voluntary basis and are matched to organisations that share similar characteristics, eg, gender, ethnicity, geography
  - ◆ provided grants (£1,000 - £3,000) to participating organisations in recognition of the costs of implementation of PQASSO (in terms of staff time, equipment or consultancy support purchased)
  - ◆ arranged quarterly meetings to enable PQASSO participants to network, receive specific training, etc
  - ◆ made available telephone advice and support

The initiative later included a small project, with Birmingham City Council support, to 13 New Deal providers from the voluntary sector to pursue PQASSO.

BVSC obtained a further £52,000 grant in 2000 from underspend on the SRB4 programme, "Acting for Social Inclusion - Birmingham CAN!" to support organisations to pursue Investors in People (IIP). This project takes advantage of the extension of IIP scope to include organisations with no paid staff (the previous minimum was 10 employees).

*Quality First*

The need for a simpler version for community-based groups with no paid staff led to the development, by BVSC and Tony Farley, of a new model, *Quality First*. BVSC was particularly concerned that such groups should have access to support and guidance, enabling them to be actively involved in developing their communities without necessarily becoming employers and managers of funded organisations. Quality First is thus intended as a first step in developing a quality assurance system, able to form the basis for a more advanced system such as PQASSO, IIP or ISO 9000.

<b>Quality First</b>
Quality First is designed as an on-going process, not a standard of attainment, looking at nine quality areas, eg, Equality and Fairness, with the emphasis on "practice" in working in a group, communication, etc, rather than statements. A workbook is used.

<p>It is based on basic principles of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ say what you do</li> <li>▪ do what you say</li> <li>▪ monitor and review progress regularly</li> <li>▪ see improvement as a result</li> </ul>
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It was piloted in Birmingham in 1999 with three community-based organisations which had limited access to funding and support for a variety of reasons, and which wanted guidance in the development of a basic quality system.

**targeting**

The BVSQDP has been heavily targeted at minority ethnic organisations - which nationally have a relatively low level of take-up of quality systems. For nine months, one worker worked on this, talking to voluntary organisations, and consulting with them about quality and quality systems. Success is demonstrated by having over 50% of participating organisations from black and other ethnic minority groups.

More generally, target organisations for the BVSQDP are in deprived communities, with staff and volunteers who are generally poorly educated, without professional backgrounds, and typically reluctant to phone for assistance.

**benefits/ results**

Evaluations (eg, by Marion Bowl and Angus McCabe), feedback from local participants at a national conference in July 1999 (see report by Michelle Nicklin) and from partners have demonstrated significant benefits of BVSQDP. These include:

*for participating organisations*

- The major, widespread benefit was greater organisational self-awareness. Participation acted as a catalyst to discussing - and acting on - needs and issues across all aspects of the organisation.
  - ◆ The Bowl and McCabe study provided evidence that organisations have found PQASSO to be a valuable framework for implementing quality systems, and a spur to organisational change and improved staff development and induction.
 

*"PQASSO has been a useful way of introducing a quality system and is a wonderful exercise in communication within the organisation."*
  - ◆ Quality First has been helpful in encouraging smaller organisations to consider what "quality" really means, from a variety of standpoints, especially that of users. It has helped challenge possible complacency, where people believe that they are doing a good job but not tested users' views

- Bowl and McCabe also confirmed that BVSQDP has successfully reached its target audience – smaller voluntary organisations and community groups working in areas of multiple deprivation
- The degree of success in targeting ethnic minority organisations can be attributed in part to the extent to which the ethnic minority voluntary sector is already well-developed, through the establishment of nine recognised forums for minority ethnic communities, substantial resources devoted within the city to community development work, and to the employment of staff from ethnically diverse backgrounds.

*for the TEC*

- improved working relationships with BVSC and participating voluntary organisations
- increased take-up of TEC services (eg, voluntary organisations progressing to IIP) and stronger Equal Opportunities strategy
- higher priority to identifying and meeting training needs within voluntary organisations, leading to workforce development
- spin-offs include joint thinking on strategy for further capacity building (eg as part of SRB Round 5)
- increased collaboration with the City Council and Health Authority around a shared agenda for community development and capacity building: *“if we equip people with skills, their quality of life improves”*

*for the sector*

- development of new voluntary sector networks – “not just similar organisations talking to similar organisations”
- improved capacity to input to local regeneration initiatives

*for BVSC*

- helped redefine its relationship with small community groups and with black and ethnic minority voluntary sector
- helped develop its capacity to *lead* the SRB4 programme
- raised their profile with clients and funders and improved their credibility
- stimulus to further organisational and staff development: BVSC is now pursuing IIP itself

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**plans**

Future development of these activities will depend on resource availability, and the strategy the new Birmingham LSC adopts. BVSC has identified as part of its strategic plan the need to concentrate on working with and through

umbrella organisations, as the sector is so big. (This is part of a successful ESF bid for 2000/01.)

Implementation of Best Value by Birmingham City Council will provide an impetus to further capacity building. Pursuit of PQASSO has already strengthened organisations in their negotiations with Social Services. This department was initially sceptical, but now recognises that PQASSO organisations are motivated and have developed capability.

BVSC plan to promote and co-ordinate peer assessment within the sector.

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**lessons**

- It has taken three years for the BVSQDP to reach this stage, longer than expected. It has typically taken organisations 24 to 30 months, rather than 18 to 24 months to meet the PQASSO standards. Bowl and McCabe attributed this as mainly due to competing priorities, changes in personnel and the uncertain funding environment faced by smaller voluntary organisations.
- Most progress has been made by organisations with six or more staff, whose management committees have been actively involved in the PQASSO process, and which made use of external consultants.

*“Quality costs - it cannot be achieved on a shoe-string. And organisations must beware that they do not spend too much time on PQASSO, to the detriment of their normal business.”*

- There is significant value in Quality First as a first step for community/ volunteer-based projects who do not have paid staff.
- Active and ongoing recruitment and training is required to build a pool of facilitators (and replace those who have moved on).
- There is a need for a coherent approach by organisations funding and contracting with voluntary organisations. Damage can be done by agencies which take a different approach. For example, the Community Legal Service (CLS) requires a special kitemark for delivery of all aspects of legal aid, but does not provide any financial resources to help support voluntary organisations who need to achieve it if they are to be funded as an approved outlet.
- All funders who want to see quality improvement have to recognise the need to promote quality by selling the benefits. Grants and practical support are crucial.

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Publications available from BVSC:

- "Quality First: Quality Assurance Management for Community Organisations" (workbook) (£25 incl p&p; free to voluntary and community organisations in Birmingham)
- "Committed to Quality: A Review of Birmingham Voluntary Sector Quality Development Programme" (by Marion Bowl, REACHOUT Project and Angus McCabe, Community Research and Training) (June 1999) (£10 incl p&p)
- Conference Report, "Quality First" (by Michelle Nicklin, IOD Ltd) (£10 incl p&p)

### Key Features

- strong TEC strategic focus on working with the voluntary sector over several years, and co-ordinated approach to regeneration and equality strategies
- wide range of activities which have brought skills and employability benefits to local people, attracted resources to the area, and strengthened the TEC's credibility
- significant role for local communities in the development of community ICT learning centres
- capacity building training programme for local activists

### background

Work with the voluntary sector has been a priority for Calderdale and Kirklees TEC since very early in its life, originally in relation to Ethnic Minority Grants and City Challenge. The TEC has stressed the many ways in working with voluntary and community organisations where there can be mutual benefit, building organisational and group effectiveness, helping the TEC achieve its business objectives, and attracting large sums of external funding to the area.

*"We recognise the very important role the sector has to play. They have strengths in certain areas which we lack."*

The TEC adopted a co-ordinated approach to regeneration and equality strategies, through its Education and Training and its Equality Strategy Groups, each chaired by a board member. Representatives from key voluntary and community organisations are invited to contribute to thematic meetings. There is also a cross-TEC Equality Group, whose role is more operational: helping staff understand what the TEC is trying to achieve, communicating equal opportunities messages internally and externally, reporting on performance and providing feedback to the Strategy Group. Staff are members of a range of regeneration working groups under the auspices of Calderdale Forward and the Kirklees Partnership (covering the two local authorities within the TEC area).

The TEC has worked hard, in going out to talk to the people that new projects are expected to help and to relevant voluntary and community groups - and also to seek ways of improving the TEC's equality strategy. In its annual report (1998-99), the TEC defined its role as *"to eliminate discrimination in our products and services and influence others to do the same"*.

### activities

The TEC has been involved in a wide range of projects with the voluntary sector. These have included:

#### *developing voluntary and community organisations*

- partnership with Calderdale Community Foundation where the TEC has complemented grants from the Foundation by supporting activities to develop organisational capabilities, particularly where the organisations are involved in regeneration or learning in some way:
  - ♦ in the first year, the TEC funded a mapping of organisations and needs analysis (highlighting critical needs for, eg, business planning and more organised ways of working)
  - ♦ in the second year, a more comprehensive programme of consultancy support with 15 or 16 organisations
  - ♦ in the third year, a development worker concentrated on those organisations most likely to develop activities which would attract TEC funding
- subsidies for individuals on leadership and management development programmes (eg, bursaries for places on Common Purpose; funding for achievement of Management NVQs through Project 2001)

#### **AI Hikmah (Indian Muslim Welfare Society - IMWS)**

IMWS is a well-established body which represents its members and addresses issues of social deprivation, youth needs, educational disadvantage, social inclusion and promotes good interfaith relations. It has benefited from TEC support through:

- advice on EU bidding, leading to obtaining £0.5m from ERDF to complement £0.5m from City Challenge for the creation of a community development centre
- ESF-funded consultancy support (including capacity building workshops with the Executive Committee and staff, organisational review and business plan)
- funding for a basic skills programme under New Start targeting socially excluded young people

The centre is also host to a number of TEC projects.

#### *community ICT learning*

An important area of strategic development is through collaboration in developing ICT learning centres in the community, of which some will be in community venues. Voluntary organisations are performing promotional/outreach roles; technical support is being provided by FE colleges, with overall strategic support being provided by

the TEC and Kirklees Council. The TEC funded initial development work and bid preparation (covering the first 12 centres).

Voluntary and community organisations are seen as key partners in “bridging the digital divide”, and are playing a leading role. In Kirklees, for example, the funds have been allocated on the basis of circa £100,000 per targeted ward, and groups from three or four wards have been encouraged to form to lead local developments. Two community organisations are facilitating the process (investigating what’s required, how the project will work, who will deliver the training, etc).

#### *community economic development*

The TEC has funded a feasibility study (through CoMPRIIS/Adapt, the EU funding which underpins the Regional Information Society Strategy) for a call centre, to be set up as a community enterprise by Batley Community Development Ltd (the successor body to the Batley City Challenge programme). The plan is to provide training in call centre skills and services for organisations who wish to ensure that non-English speakers are not prevented as customers from taking advantage of call centre services.

#### *equal opportunities*

Projects and activities include:

- Marching Ahead: working with local community organisations to recruit and support minority ethnic individuals into the Modern Apprenticeship programme. This has resulted in 50 more young people employed by local companies and pursuing NVQ level 3 qualifications.
- Positive Opportunities for Ethnic Minorities (POEM), a positive action programme aimed at black graduates, funded through the ESF. This has provided a wage subsidy with placements in various sectors, including voluntary organisations
- Chances, a prevocational positive action project to improve opportunities for disadvantaged ethnic minority young people in accessing work-based training.
- the Leadership Challenge - promoted nationally by the Commission for Racial Equality to encourage organisational leaders take action personally to end racial discrimination. A local approach has been developed involving promotion of equality initiatives and monitoring and reporting commitments.

#### *TEC training programmes*

Community partnerships have been formed to raise the profile of work-based training by informing and enabling young people to choose the right option for them. These involve public and voluntary agencies, community centre management committees, etc.

#### *skills for regeneration*

The TEC has supported training for local activists to give them a better feel for regeneration processes (both

strategic and operational) and an understanding of broader issues. It has been designed to help participants build their confidence and develop informed opinions - and reduce the sense to which people “feel lost in the bureaucracy”. The programme has been provided by Leeds Metropolitan University and LRDP (Local and Regional Development Planning).

Following a successful pilot under the EU LEDA (Local Employment Development Action) programme, further programmes, involving 40 participants, were funded under ESF Objective 3 Priority 4. Topics covered in the course of nine sessions include Understanding the Local Economy, Understanding the Community, Making Partnerships Work, Economic Development Policy, EU and UK programmes, and Monitoring and Evaluation.

Staff development needs within the TEC have been addressed in imaginative ways. For example, staff have been asked, as part of their regular appraisal, if there are local organisations where they would like to spend time, developing relationships, making a particular contribution, and learning about other perspectives and ways of doing things.

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#### ***benefits/ results***

There is a substantial belief within the TEC that “*all these activities help us achieve our vision*”. Substantial value is placed on the extent to which work with the voluntary sector has helped:

- improve the local profile and support for the TEC - “*It’s about our credibility in the wider community*”
- on mainstream programmes, the TEC’s efforts have been rewarded by being placed first or second amongst the Yorkshire and the Humber TECs in achievement of performance measures aimed at people with disabilities and people from ethnic minorities.
- attract substantial funds (“several millions”) into the area
- provide opportunities through access (“feeder”) programmes for individuals to progress to mainstream TEC programmes (most recently, using New Deal resources)

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#### ***plans***

- there is a current focus on transferring responsibilities and sustaining good practice in the transition to the local Learning and Skills Council for West Yorkshire, eg:
  - ◆ a review of Equal Opportunities strategies of the four TECs in the sub-region, to identify good practice relevant to the LLSC
  - ◆ pursuit by the local authorities of business involvement in regeneration (“Business Community Link”, promoting business volunteering)

- the new brief for the Small Business Service on social inclusion is welcomed, as a focus for concern addressing the little “penetration” to date in promoting enterprise in disadvantaged communities. Some SRB projects have had an enterprise dimension (ethnic minority micro business support; team business; consultancy support for arts organisations - for business plans leading to success in securing grant funding) but there is a view that “we can do a lot more”

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### **lessons**

- The need to take a broader view of what is meant by “training and development of individuals”, understanding where learning fits in people’s lives, and how they may be influenced to take up formal and informal learning opportunities.

*“Voluntary and community organisations have a key role to play in this. Don’t just think about your existing provider base.”*

- The pursuit of *mutual* benefit has been a key feature: how can each party help the other achieve its goals? This has required substantial efforts to get to know and work with local organisations and community leaders.
- You have to invest - in funds, in building relationships, in developing and sharing expertise - over the long run, if you are to win confidence and support - and get results.

*“It’s not about short termism... If you want a return on your investment, take a long term view.”*

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### Key Features

- learning centre network including 25+ centres run by voluntary and community organisations
- broker role in facilitating links between centres and pulling collaborative bids together
- promotion of centres run by voluntary and community organisations, with support to take control over all aspects of centre management and service delivery

### background

CITINET is Sheffield's learning centre network, established in 1998. It brings together employers, voluntary and community organisations and the public sector to widen access to learning. It seeks to encourage new ways of learning, new types of location, and new ways for organisations to work together. It has concentrated on co-ordinating the development of the learning centre *infrastructure*, helping to develop learning centre *skills*, and providing *services* to develop the network and make it tick.

The network comprises 75 centres based in communities, public sector venues (college, schools, libraries) and in the workplace (in public and private sectors). A further 10 organisations are considering membership and forty more are on the contacts list. Affiliated centres commit themselves to the aims and objectives of the network and agree to maintain a set of learning centre standards.

Centres may be community access points (which offer information on job and training opportunities; individual assessment and action planning; basic and key skills provision along with on-line learning) or more developed facilities offering enhanced educational guidance and counselling; the accreditation of prior learning; a large menu of learning packages and training opportunities; learning and learner support provided by tutors; and on-site nursery provision. Such centres are likely to act as a central point for other forms of regeneration activity.

In all, CITINET has secured funding of over £800,000 under ESF, ERDF, Skills Challenge and ICT Learning Centres Fund and manages the Ufi learning centre hub for Sheffield. About 35% of this funding has gone to voluntary and community-run centres. There is core funding for CITINET of c £40,000 to pay for the co-ordinating role (1.5 staff).

The founding partners were The Sheffield College, Sheffield City Council and Sheffield Training & Enterprise Council. Alongside other public and private sector partners, a voluntary and community sector perspective is provided by South Yorkshire African-Caribbean Enterprise Centre, Steel Valley Community Partnership and Workers Educational Association.

### activities

One third of the affiliated centres are run by voluntary and community organisations. These are at varying stages of development, eg, from MaTReC (Manor Training and Resource Centre) which has a well-established track record to Low Edge Community Access, new to the field.

CITINET acts as a broker, in helping centres build productive relationships and access funding (eg, by formulating joint bids).

*"We bring together those with the capacity and those who want to build their capacity"*

*"Our intention is to pull people in and not shut them out - we use CITINET standards and bids as a bridge not a wall"*

A recent example was where a bid was submitted covering proposals for 10 centres - seven of which were not already members of CITINET.

The philosophy is also one of enabling community organisations to buy in appropriate provision initially (say during the first two years), meanwhile helping them develop their own capacity to deliver. MaTReC, for example, have developed in this way over a longer period, and have now grown to 19 staff, all recruited locally from volunteers.

The approach to quality standards is one where members sign up to meeting the CITINET standards for learning centres, which define three levels of learning centre (Learning Information Points; Learning Access Centres; Learning Centres). Organisations do not necessarily have to meet the standards in place at the outset. (The standards are available for view at <http://www.citinet.org.uk/docs>.) Several components of the standards relate to facilities and services, which can only be provided by some organisations if they have future success in raising funds. CITINET provides support to these centres in reaching the standards over an appropriate period of time, and works with local networks (e.g. Information, Advice & Guidance partners) to try to build services through the learning centre network.

The CITINET Centres Forum brings members of the Forum together two or three times a year, with a key speaker and



an opportunity to review developments and issues. The forum, like the Steering Group, is supported by an email list for discussion and the circulation of information.

CITINET has also developed an online database of courses and centres, accessible through their website. It is designed so that member centres can input and control their own information. CITINET believes this is important, although it is not always easy to ensure that partners input and update the information.

CITINET has brought about a new affordable and robust ICT network which has connected 16 centres so far. The network is described at:

<http://www.citinet.org.uk/docs/ictp4.ppt> .

CITINET links to the City Learning Centres strand of "Excellence in Cities"<sup>1</sup> and learning centre development under the Single Regeneration Budget. It has been helping SRB partnerships in North Sheffield bring more coherence to their plans and avoid duplication. One current issue is the need to promote electronic communications, which are still underused as a tool for programme and partnership management and community development. A pilot on wireless networking on one estate is underway. CITINET also complements Sheffield Community Information, an ERDF-funded initiative which assists community organisations to develop a presence on the internet, as well as providing PCs and training.

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### benefits/ results

Evidence is building of the extent to which voluntary and community-run centres have been succeeding in engaging new learners and building a loyal clientele. They have also been filling gaps *"where other providers fear to tread"*, or resulting from changes in college priorities and funding. *"There are cases where community organisations are clearly more responsive to their communities - though there are others providers who work well in these areas too."*

Voluntary and community organisations are increasingly making use of the facilities of the centres as a resource; to develop skills of their staff, volunteers, trustees; to promote communications, networking, information amongst users, and more generally making more use of e-mail.

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### plans

- Revisit steering group membership: have we the right mix, given how CITINET has developed since its launch?
- Extend relationships with the wider voluntary and community sector, especially with umbrella bodies (Voluntary Action Sheffield, Council for Voluntary

Service, black and ethnic minority organisations), highlighting how they can be involved.

- Develop the CITINET network on-line, with, eg, newsletter, web pages for each centre, database on sources of funding.
- The network would be strengthened by having its own "community chest", a pot of funding for small grants to enable organisations to dip their toe in the water.

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### lessons

- A big strength is to have built commitment to a shared goal, while maintaining the individuality and ethos of participating organisations.

*"We know it's about growing the audience, not fighting over it."*

- Maintaining focus is essential:
  - ◆ there is a danger of spreading the resource too thinly for co-ordination role, bid preparation, etc - *"chasing money can stop you doing what you want to do"*
  - ◆ we need to ask always, Do we really need to do this? What will be the real benefit? Are others better placed?
- Synergy has been achieved in various ways, eg:
  - ◆ putting forward coherent bids with many partners
  - ◆ achieving economies of scale (eg, in purchase of computer hardware and software)
  - ◆ referring learners within the network - "not everyone can offer the learner everything"
  - ◆ building sufficient critical mass to work as a network and develop the web siteand there is more that could be realised, eg:
  - ◆ sharing the training of technicians and sharing the resource: no one centre has enough need for a full-time technician but all need access to such a resource.

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<sup>1</sup> There is support under the DFEE initiative, Excellence in Cities for schools-based centres aimed at improving education standards and skill levels amongst young people.

### Key Features

- extensive involvement with the voluntary and community sector, especially since 1997
- one-to-one support for new voluntary/ community sector providers who have become mainstream providers
- voluntary sector forum highly valued by the TEC
- highlights importance of a proactive approach to working with the voluntary and community sector

### *background*

Since 1995, North London TEC has developed its Community Economic Development programme in response to local needs and demand for community based-provision of training and enterprise services. Beneficiaries are drawn mainly from ethnic minority communities and other disadvantaged groups for whom mainstream training and support is inaccessible or for which they are ineligible (including lone parents and others with childcare responsibilities, refugees, people with disabilities and young people facing social exclusion).

NLTEC now manages over 50 contracts with voluntary sector suppliers to a value of over £4m, funded from SRB, ESF, New Deal and TEC Work Based Learning programmes. Involvement with the voluntary and community sector is a strategic response to a concern that TEC programmes have concentrated on trainees recruited to jobs, by definition the more employable clients. New ways of meeting needs of those less employable, through pre-vocational training for adults and entry level provision for young people were needed.

### *activities*

#### *supplier development*

In 1997 the TEC Board recognised the need to build organisational capacity in a small number of voluntary sector organisations who could deliver programmes to the required TEC standards. They instigated a change in contracting policy - previously open to all training providers - to provide opportunities for new suppliers from voluntary and community sector.

Pilot contracts were negotiated with four organisations. Subsequently, three were successful in securing further contracts (to a combined value of £0.5m). The TEC provided funding plus one-to-one support for introducing the training programmes and associated assessment. The new providers had little or no knowledge of the administrative approach and methods required, so TEC staff helped in specific areas, notably record-keeping and ESF claims procedures, and the introduction of quality assurance systems to meet TEC standards.

The involvement of these organisations highlighted needs - and demand for - pre-vocational training for adults and life-

skills provision for young people, offering progression into mainstream TEC programmes.

#### *voluntary sector involvement*

A consultative Voluntary Sector Forum brings the community and voluntary sector together with statutory agencies. It is open to all organisations who wish to have a dialogue with the TEC. Not all are training establishments, but they have common interests in employment, skills and regeneration. They want to know about policies, projects, resources, etc, and influence local developments.

The Forum has played an essential role for the TEC; links with community organisations regarded as key to the development and implementation of the TEC Equality Strategy. Without it, TEC would be unable to account to and report back to the local community. Forum participants have been encouraged to review implications and opportunities arising from policy developments, eg, through an awayday in 1999.

The TEC part-funds Voluntary Sector Co-ordinators (with Haringey Race Equality Council and Enfield Voluntary Action) whose role is to encourage networking between community groups and develop a common voice. The TEC has a management role overseeing their work plans.

#### *social inclusion*

The development of relationships with voluntary organisations has underpinned many other aspects of the work of the TEC and its subsidiaries. For example,

- providing a ready base for voluntary and community involvement in the pilot partnership for Connexions
- supporting the Synergy Project which aims to build ethnic and cultural dimensions into mainstream TEC practices (as part of this, the construction industry initiative was advised by local community organisations on how to recruit and train ethnic minorities)

#### *Business Link*

Within the last year, Business Link North London (a TEC subsidiary) recruited a dedicated Business Adviser for work with the voluntary sector. The adviser is building up a client group, and works to an independent steering group drawn from community organisations. So far, there has been unexpected demand from organisations who had planned to develop business operations but who had not taken it

further. The intention is to develop this as part of the activities of the new Small Business Service for London.

#### *Community Business in Enfield*

The TEC is a partner in a Partnership Fund for new Community Businesses launched in October 2000. Other partners have recognised that the TEC had built up a dialogue with the sector, and are building on that experience.

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#### **benefits/ results**

The TEC has had success in reaching harder to reach groups, but feels that there is *“still a way to go”*. Relationships do extend to community organisations, but not to neighbourhood and tenant organisations, because there is no perceived business relationship with them relating directly to the TEC’s remit. Relationships with voluntary and community organisations have also led to more culturally sensitive provision.

All operations and partnership staff within the TEC are engaged with voluntary and community organisations, as increasingly are other staff, including in the Business Link. North London Chamber of Commerce, co-located with the TEC, is developing its voluntary sector membership.

The new voluntary sector providers have appreciated the support of the TEC, contributing to success in delivering TEC programmes and in securing additional contracts, eg, under New Deal. Feedback from the providers indicates that the one-to-one nature of the assistance has been much valued in enabling them to achieve TEC targets and standards - though there have been concerns over contract management, *“different languages, paperwork, and pressure to deliver”*.

*“The TEC support helped us a lot: on fundraising and capacity building, learning about policies, equal opportunities, health and safety, disabilities and so on.”*

Providers also advocated the notion of *“risk capital - a set amount of money to take a chance and give new organisations opportunities to prove themselves”* and the TEC should be more directly *“a consultant that goes in and works with that organisation to build and develop it”*.

Work with the voluntary and community sector has helped draw resources into the area, eg, ESF and National Charities Lottery Board. Some organisations have become more sustainable and are more attractive to other funders. One example is the Ethiopian Refugee Organisation, helped by the TEC to secure support for projects (eg, conferences on employment, a radio station).

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#### **plans**

Current plans include positioning the Voluntary Sector Forum to influence the local Learning and Skills Council. There are concerns that, under the new LSC regime, smaller providers will be at a disadvantage:

*“Smaller providers often need help with the demanding bureaucracy involved in delivering publicly funded training provision, but they do break down barriers for those most at risk of social exclusion. They have the credibility to encourage them to get involved with training, but are in danger of being excluded themselves. New arrangements may squeeze out these providers in favour of college and national provision.” Mike Nixon, CE, NLTEC quoted in NLTEC “Partner Focus” magazine, Winter 1999*

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#### **lessons**

First, get the mechanism right: there must be arrangements for constructive consultation. The initial terms of reference must offer opportunities to both sides; agree the agenda between parties before you can expect to make progress.

- Time is a critical factor:
  - ◆ building strong relationships takes a substantial investment of time.
  - ◆ you have to allow adequate time for effective consultations - short deadlines usually make it very difficult for voluntary and community organisations to consult members and respond.
- You need to care about being inclusive, and avoid alienating potential participants (eg, by not inviting organisations whose main business is not training).
- Resist any tendency to try to control and dictate.
- Make resources available for the capacity building that organisations want and ask for - and not be driven by what you think they need.

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## Pan-London Community Regeneration Consortium (PLCRC)

### Key Features

- training, networking and consultancy for voluntary and community organisations involved in regeneration
- innovative activities include “organisational raids”, structured opportunities for participants to learn from more experienced projects
- successful targeting of membership amongst black and ethnic minority groups
- broader policy role in seeking to influence public and private sector partners

### background

The Pan-London Community Regeneration Consortium seeks to build the capacity and facilitate the involvement of voluntary and community organisations in regeneration partnerships. Set up in 1996, it obtained funding under the Single Regeneration Budget (SRB) rounds 2, 5 and 6, and other sources. SRB funding in the current year is £350,000. The lead body is London Voluntary Services Council (LVSC).

Several London TECs have been involved, though this has tapered off. Their main interest has been in their own areas, with PLCRC “semi-contracted to provide services in their areas”. Focus Central London, North London TEC and London East TEC are active board members. London East TEC funds approx £25,000 pa, and North London TEC funds £5,000 in the current year.

### projects & services

PLCRC provides a range of free capacity building services to local groups interested in developing, or already involved in a regeneration partnership. They target voluntary and community organisations with five or fewer members of staff. Specifically, their target is that 30% of the organisations they work with should be black or ethnic minority groups. They are more than attaining that target.

Their projects and services include:

- information, advice, seminars and support on becoming involved in partnerships
- on-site consultancy for group/ partnership development (of up to four or five days) (*Partnership Initiative Project*) and project management training
- specific support to black and minority ethnic groups and small community groups who are currently under-represented in partnerships:
  - ◆ tailor-made support on-site to individual black or minority ethnic-led organisations involved in regeneration partnerships, and also to umbrella organisations to build their capacity to respond to regeneration policy and funding opportunities
  - ◆ *Black Leadership Programme* (bursary programme, with women especially targeted.)
- access to a network of community and voluntary groups interested in regeneration issues (*Black Regeneration Forum* - see below)
- Raising The Stakes
  - ◆ access to free expert professional advice (up to five days consultancy), through Business in the Community’s London Professional Firms Group (“Pro-Help team”). Inputs may involve, eg, architectural drawings, planning permission, costings for building works, company and charitable registration, property surveys, leases and contracts and financial systems
  - ◆ short programme of seminars, site visits and feedback sessions on asset-based development, run in conjunction with the Development Trust Association
- *Personnel and Employment Support*: telephone and consultancy support to build skills in human resource management for ten voluntary organisations. (Second tier organisations such as Councils for Voluntary Services are targeted, in the expectation that they will perform human resources functions and cascade the training to others)
- *Building Leadership*: buddying/ mutual support (in groups of three)

PLCRC also works with partners in the public and private sectors to encourage higher levels of involvement from the community. The *Cross-Sectoral Development Programme* provides advice and support to public and private sectors in order to help create the conditions, structures and processes which encourage greater levels of community and voluntary sector participation in regeneration initiatives (including with the private sector) via research and seminars (eg, Capacity Building, Youth, Micro-businesses and Regeneration and Health).

Several services have been replaced, as the pattern of needs has changed. These included consultancy for groups interested in developing a local voluntary sector-led partnership and technical assistance to voluntary and community organisations preparing full SRB bids.

One indicator of impact is that at the start of the Single Regeneration Budget, no London bids were led by the voluntary sector. By SRB 6, 43% of all successful SRB bids were voluntary-sector led, and the sector participated 100% in all bids.

PLCRC regards the very nature of its work as high risk – “if we are not working with risky organisations, we are not doing the right work”. They have found that monitoring systems, for example, are a culturally alien concept for many organisations with which they are involved. Longer term, strategic thinking may not be prevalent: some of the groups have formed to campaign on a single issue, while others are preoccupied with where the next set of funds are going to come from.

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**networks and forums**

*London Regeneration Network*

The London Regeneration Network (LRN), also established in 1996, provides a forum for community and voluntary bodies involved in community regeneration, undertaking research and seeking to influence policy development. Membership stands at over 400 organisations. It is open to all, but is targeted at groups and community organisations with less than five paid staff and Black-led organisations.

Current priorities include planning its existence independent of LVSC, researching links between health and regeneration, facilitating the voluntary sector Regeneration Workers Forum, and running a series of carefully structured and facilitated “organisational raids” (site visits providing opportunities for community organisations to learn from one another). LRN also organises conferences, a monthly mailing and quarterly issues of ‘Regenerator’ newsletter. Past themes for seminars have included the role of Registered Social Landlords and women and regeneration. Fees are kept to a minimum and bursaries are available for all events.

<b>Organisational Raids</b>
<p>Many examples of good practice exist among voluntary and community groups all across London, but too often they are unknown to each other. Reading about good practice is never the same as seeing it in action. The ‘Sharing Good Practice’ programme involves ‘Organisational Raids’ - the word ‘raids’ highlights the active nature of the approach, helping people work out how they can improve by finding out directly about relevant good practice in another, more experienced organisation. The method combines action learning and benchmarking techniques to create an experience which is very practical, intense and fun.</p> <p>LRN brings together six to eight people from organisations who want to find out more about a particular area of good practice. A pre-meeting allows all participants to plan the agenda for the Raid. Raiders are encouraged to think about what they want to learn, and how they will transfer the learning to their own workplace. For the Raid itself, raiders spend the day with the host organisation, learning about the good practice in question. The agenda is as agreed at the pre-meeting, while the last hour or so involves practical planning for how the raiders can make best use of what they have learned. A follow-up telephone evaluation three months later is used to assess what Raiders have learned and how well they have been able to incorporate it into their organisation’s practices. Topics for raids have included regenerating community space and community farms.</p> <p><i>Source: “The Regenerator”, March 2000</i></p>

LRN has run the DfEE Community Champions Fund in London with the Scarman Trust. This has provided small grants of £500-2,000 to individuals and small community groups who want to run a project that will benefit their community. 380 applications were received, requesting a total of £630,000. LRN also has plans to introduce a mentoring programme (*Skillshare*).

*Black Regeneration Forum*

The Black Regeneration Forum is another body funded through PLCRC. It acts as a policy body, providing a separate *black* voice on regeneration matters. It is a vehicle for practitioner feedback and advice on services, standards and delivery, raising issues such as the efficacy of the national Index of Deprivation for targeting resources. It also manages the Black Leadership Programme.

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**plans**

Over the remaining two years of the SRB project, the range of projects will be further reduced. The intent is to become more strategic, easing out of the vast majority of the work which deals with delivery on the ground and working more with second tier organisations. PLCRC will seek to influence the Learning and Skills Council in London and potentially act as a supplier. With LRN, there is still a task to promote the need for a community capacity building strategy in London. (LRN published “Capacity Building...The Way Forward” in 1999.)

The level of knowledge on SRB and partnerships is now higher than expected, and PLCRC are reducing the number of introductory events. They are now targeting particular groups, eg, newly founded refugee groups.

Reaching the harder to reach - those smaller organisations/groups which are not part of existing networks or dealing with specific issues not confined to specific localities (eg, refugee groups) - remains a concern. PLCRC feels that the only way is to go out and find them. Therefore, as part of the SRB6 programme, they are recruiting staff for this task. More attention will also be paid to assessing the outcomes of the programme, with the employment of an Evaluation and Development Officer.

PLCRC will take advantage of Action Link London, which it also funds with ESF and BT. It is intended to provide focus on the internet for voluntary sector activity in London. (This is being managed by London Voluntary Service Council).

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**lessons**

- ensure that you are working in partnership with important players in the black voluntary sector. Co-ordinating bodies (such as the Black Training & Enterprise Group and Confederation of Indian Organisations) are key to networks and take-up - as organisations trusted and valued in these communities
- involve people who have an overall view of the London scene - or national outlook - to get a strategic view, to

- complement those with a very localised perspective and sense of their own needs
- the overall programme must be client-led, and the content should never patronise
  - be pro-active in seeking out community- based and voluntary organisations, working with them to identify needs and tailoring support to meet these
  - do not underestimate the task involved in set up the internal systems and mechanisms for a programme such as this. Use the guides produced by the DETR such as the “Handbook of Good Practice in Management Systems”. Setting up and maintaining systems proved to be a major undertaking, and one which was hampered by changes in staff and representation on the project board

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## VOLCAAN (Voluntary and Community Alliance Across Norfolk)

### Key Features

- co-ordinated approach to capacity building across Norfolk, led by Norwich and Norfolk Voluntary Services
- major partnership of 31 voluntary and statutory organisations, involving 23 projects and funded by ESF
- benefits include:
  - ◆ much greater awareness of the significance of the sector amongst public agencies
  - ◆ great increase in scale of networking/ relationships within the sector
  - ◆ increased take-up of training opportunities
  - ◆ progress in developing a local Compact

### *background*

VOLCAAN (Voluntary and Community Alliance Across Norfolk) is intended “to enhance the capacity of voluntary and community organisations so that they become more able to assist unemployed people become more employable and obtain work”. It is led by Norwich and Norfolk Voluntary Services (NVS), and started as a project funded under ESF Objective 3, Priority 4 (with grant of £466,000 over the period January 1999-June 2000). VOLCAAN is now the vehicle for further collaboration on capacity building within the area, linked to the development of the local Compact.

Norfolk and Waveney TEC provided crucial seedcorn funding (£3,000) which helped NVS obtain further funding to get the project off the ground. The TEC also invested staff time (eg, from the Audit Team) and funded a half-time post of Systems Manager, to help ensure smooth administration of what was a complex project.

### *activities*

During the period of ESF support, VOLCAAN involved 23 projects, each promoted by the organisations responsible for implementation. The projects have included:

#### *voluntary sector research & development*

- Voldata database, survey of voluntary and community organisations and assessment of the economic value of the sector
- support for development of Norfolk Compact (launched on 11 October 2000)

#### *training development*

- “Widening Participation” project, which brought together voluntary organisations and learning providers to review needs and develop appropriate provision. New initiatives included:
  - ◆ Initial Education and Vocational Guidance courses, to enable workers make informed referrals to their clients about learning-related matters
  - ◆ promotion of volunteering opportunities

- ◆ conference on the training and education needs of homeless people and those who work with them
- Training Development Service
  - ◆ training digest (“Portfolio”); access to training resources; Training Network conference and Training Fair
  - ◆ training seminars (eg, on the Use of the Internet, Developing a Learning Organisation, Management Committee Roles and Responsibilities, Workplace Communications)
  - ◆ organisational reviews (free)
  - ◆ toolkit for Voluntary Services Co-ordinators employed by NVS (resource pack on topics such as roles of paid workers and management committee members, funding and fundraising, recruiting and managing volunteers)

#### *community development*

- “Community Power”: assistance to ten Community Forums in Norwich to develop local community plans
- information pack publicising voluntary sector involvement in rural regeneration, (produced by Norfolk Rural Community Council) intended to promote ideas and share experience

#### *economic development*

- seminars and study visits on social economy themes
- support for WEETU (Women’s Enterprise, Employment and Training Unit): expanded annual Cyberwomen event and research on family-friendly work practices

### *benefits/ results*

The Voldata project demonstrated the scale of the voluntary and community sector in Norfolk: at least 3,500 organisations and groups, involving at least 50,000 volunteers. The great majority of these organisations are entirely or almost entirely voluntary, though there is a core of relatively large organisations employing at least 2,500 staff between them. (Of the 338 organisations which employ staff, 50% have only one full or part-time employee.) The value of volunteer input is estimated at £10m pa. The survey demonstrated the degree to which voluntary organisations are significant service providers, primarily in health and social care, arts, environment,



heritage, education, information and advice, and community development.

An evaluation by the Community Development Foundation found that VOLCAAN had:

- substantially raised the profile and credibility of the sector in the county, fostering greater understanding on the part of public sector organisations
- improved partnership working and relationships (between public and voluntary sectors, and within the voluntary sector itself)
- illustrated the extent to which voluntary organisations contribute to employability, providing productive work experiences and skill development for unemployed and unwaged people - on a scale not previously appreciated
- highlighted substantial organisational development needs within the sector (eg, business plans, improved budgeting, awareness of employment law)
- increased take-up of training opportunities within the sector (eg, more than doubling take-up on NVS provision) and more generally, raised priority accorded to training

These findings are endorsed by Norfolk and Waveney TEC, who point to concrete benefits in relation to collaboration over new bids, smoother working and duplication avoided. The work of VOLCAAN has also influenced local authorities in developing their strategies for community/ economic development (eg, South Norfolk District Council) and approach to Best Value (Norwich City Council review of grants policy).

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### **plans**

Plans are now being made in a context where there has been a step change in thinking and approach:

*"VOLCAAN epitomised a period of fundamental challenge and development where old attitudes and relationships changed significantly and where ambition and aspirations to achieve more for the people of Norfolk moved into a different league."*  
VOLCAAN News, June 2000

To revert to what went before is not seen as an option. The NVS board has made a commitment to support a higher level of NVS training development activity and support further bids. One, to the National Charities Lotteries Board, concerns developing Continuing Professional Development in the sector, further researching needs, reviewing the availability and relevance of current provision, and the development of a framework offering progression from basic volunteer induction to masters level.

The latest ESF bid has a less ambitious focus than the 1999-2000 project, and is intended to:

- maintain higher level of NVS training development activity (courses, organisational reviews, brokerage role, etc)
- provide a secretariat for Compact development
- concentrate on the NVS core area of Central Norfolk, and give increased priority to previously under-represented groups (eg, disabled, black and minority ethnic people)

NVS has obtained £8,000 from the Norfolk Learning Partnership for strengthening its training brokerage service (database development and laptop) and Norfolk CC Social Services have increased their funding for NVS training provision.

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### **outstanding needs and issues**

- There is a need to encourage many voluntary organisations to look at how they can develop successful income generating activities, rather than always "seeking the magic funding bullet"
- The Economic Development working party set up as part of VOLCAAN (involving voluntary/ community sector organisations and local authority Economic Development Officers) made limited progress on the theme of the role of the voluntary sector, social enterprise and economic development. However, now that the Small Business Service has a brief for social inclusion and enterprise, there may be a new locus for activity.
- As Best Value is progressively implemented across local government, there will be greater needs and opportunities for learning and organisational development in the voluntary sector
- The voluntary sector must continue to work on how others perceive it - "we should no longer be tacked on at the end of the list - there should be a place for us at the table as of right"
  - ◆ action needed includes influencing content of plans, such as the Norfolk Workforce Development Plan and ESF Local Delivery Plan, and ensuring that the SBS promotes services to voluntary organisations
  - ◆ strengthen involvement in the Norfolk Learning Partnership and the more Learning Communities
- It would be worth exploring job shadowing and exchanges between sectors as a means of improving awareness and understanding

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### **lessons**

- CDF suggest that VOLCAAN's success points to the value in providing a programme framework for capacity building "where the funder defines only the overall aim, whilst bidders define specific objectives arising from their own development that can contribute to that aim".
- They also stressed the importance of seed-corn funding to enable the partnership to form and allow the partners to agree the programme in a thorough and inclusive way. "VOLCAAN could not have been constructed

without skilled input into the design, including searching discussions with each of the potential partners before and after acceptance of the bid.”

- Success has come from starting from where organisations are, not imposing solutions on them. VOLCAAN has enabled much better links between better resourced voluntary organisations and smaller

community organisations, with benefits to the latter's skills and capabilities. The key has been to provide a broker role, getting to know their needs, helping them identify courses/ providers *when* they have the need. NVS want to strengthen this by offering a bursary scheme.

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## Contact

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Norfolk and Norwich Voluntary Services  
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NR2 1DN

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fax: 01603 764109  
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web: [www.nvs.org.uk](http://www.nvs.org.uk)



## Resource 1: Developing Voluntary and Community Sector Involvement in LLSC Activities

LLSC Responsibility	Examples of Sector Involvement	Current Involvement in Our Area	Potential Sector Involvement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>identifying learning &amp; skill priorities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>reviews of skill needs in the sector</li> <li>feedback &amp; research on community needs</li> <li>representation on Learning Partnerships</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>agreeing plans &amp; budgets with training providers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>delivery of training programmes &amp; adult education</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>supporting innovative projects</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>community leadership programmes</li> <li>positive action programmes</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>driving up quality &amp; developing the local provider infrastructure</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>working to meet standards for training delivery; information, advice &amp; guidance</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>promoting the demand for skills &amp; learning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>encouraging users to take up learning opportunities - including those whom others find 'hard-to-reach'</li> <li>organisational take-up of IIP</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>widening participation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>outreach projects</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>drawing up local workforce development strategies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>consultation on draft strategy</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>developing learning centres</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>community-led learning centres</li> <li>support in developing ICT centres</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>tackling poor adult basic skills</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>training of volunteer tutors</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>mainstreaming equal opportunities in all local policies &amp; programmes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>capacity building for minority ethnic groups</li> <li>training contracts with organisations dealing with disadvantaged groups</li> <li>targeted promotion to minority ethnic communities</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>integrating activities with regeneration partnerships</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>participation in regeneration partnerships &amp; projects</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>supporting development of information, advice &amp; guidance for adults</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>access points for information, advice and guidance - referrals and use of the internet</li> <li>'barefoot advice workers'</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>local marketing &amp; publicity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>participation in campaigns for learning</li> <li>promotion of learning opportunities for the sector</li> </ul>		

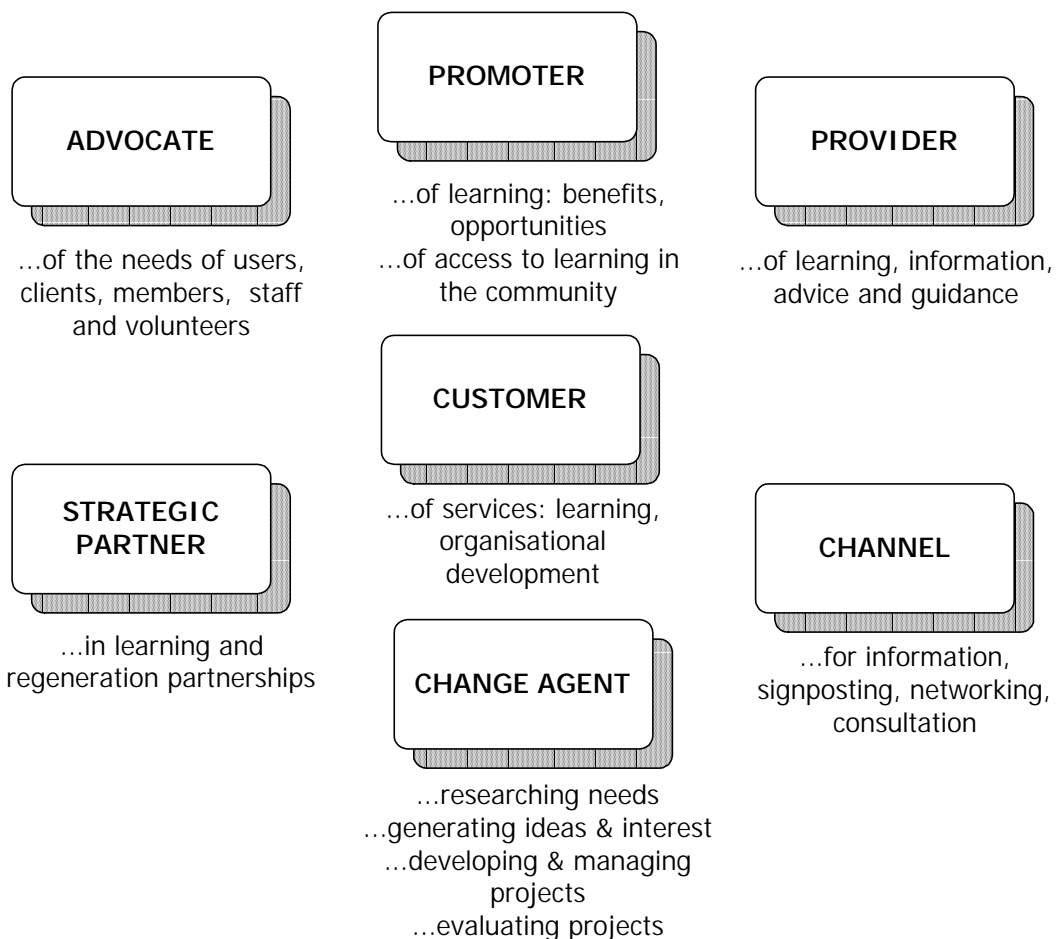
Use the table to review voluntary sector involvement in your area - and how this could be developed in the future. (Examples in column 2 are taken from the DfEE Project.)



# Voluntary and Community Sector Roles in Learning and Skills

You can use this resource to review the roles which voluntary and community organisations may play in relation to

learning, skills and, more broadly, regeneration. Possible roles are set out in the diagram below.



for voluntary and community organisations

Questions to ask may include:

- where do learning and skills fit in relation to our organisation's purpose and strategy?
  - ◆ should we do more as *promoter* of learning opportunities for our users?
  - ◆ do we do enough as an *advocate* of the needs of our clients, and are we approaching the right people in the right forums?
  - ◆ should being a *provider* of learning opportunities be part of our core activities? Or should we simply provide access?
- are there *projects* which we should be developing, or pushing for others to develop, which will benefit our service users and the wider community?

- should we be taking more advantage - as a *customer* - of training and development services in building our organisation?

**Using the table below**, consider which roles are relevant to your organisation. What roles do you play, and what could you play?

What do you need to do more, and/ or better? What will be the benefits?

What will be the implications, for example, for your resources? the commitment you need to make?

What action do you need to take?

ROLE	Do this more/better?	Implications?	Action needed?
<b>ADVOCATE</b> ...of the needs of users, clients, members, staff and volunteers			
<b>PROMOTER</b> ...of learning: benefits, opportunities			
...of access to learning in the community			
<b>PROVIDER</b> ...of learning, information, advice and guidance			
<b>CUSTOMER</b> ...of services: learning, organisational development			
<b>STRATEGIC PARTNER</b> ...in learning and regeneration partnerships			
<b>CHANNEL</b> ...for information, signposting, networking, consultation			
<b>CHANGE AGENT</b> ...researching needs			
...generating ideas & interest			
...developing & managing projects			
...evaluating projects			

**Local Learning and Skills Councils** can use the same table, asking a different set of questions:

- what roles do the voluntary and community organisations play currently?
- what types of voluntary and community organisation fit - or could fit - into each category?
- where would we like to see these roles develop?
- how best can we assist - directly? with other partners?
- what actions will be likeliest to bring the best returns?

**For reference: examples from the project**

ROLE	Examples
<b>ADVOCATE</b> ...of the needs of users, clients, members, staff and volunteers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>representatives on local Learning Partnerships</li> </ul>
<b>PROMOTER</b> ...of learning: benefits, opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CVSs as participants in local learning campaigns</li> <li>promotion of Modern Apprenticeships to minority ethnic communities</li> </ul>
...of access to learning in the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>access to on-line learning facilities</li> <li>access points for information, advice and guidance</li> </ul>
<b>PROVIDER</b> ...of learning, information, advice and guidance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>delivery of training programmes and adult education courses</li> <li>information, advice and guidance workers</li> </ul>
<b>CUSTOMER</b> ...of services: learning, organisational development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>take-up of Investors in People, management standards, Modern Apprenticeships in the care sector</li> </ul>
<b>STRATEGIC PARTNER</b> ...in learning and regeneration partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Civic Partnerships, New Deal for Communities, New Deal Delivery Partnerships, etc</li> </ul>
<b>CHANNEL</b> ...for information, signposting, networking, consultation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>databases on learning opportunities for the voluntary sector</li> <li>brokerage to match needs to provision</li> </ul>
<b>CHANGE AGENT</b> ...researching needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>reviews of skill needs in the sector</li> </ul>
...generating ideas & interest	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>exploring community enterprise ideas</li> <li>promoting interest in setting up local learning centres</li> </ul>
...developing & managing projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>outreach projects</li> </ul>
...evaluating projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>participant feedback</li> </ul>

## Resource 3 : Funding for Organisational Capacity Building

This resource highlights sources of funding and other routes to meeting capacity building needs in the voluntary and community sector.

The information was compiled in November 2000. Please refer to the sites concerned for further details regarding applications, eligibility, etc.

At the end you will find a table which sets out the broad areas of relevance of each source of funding or resource. (The themes are Learning Provision; Training Costs; Organisational Development; Voluntary Sector Development; ICT; Young People; Advisory Services; Social Enterprise; Services Development; and Community Development.)

### **Department for Education and Employment (DfEE)-related**

#### ***Adult and Community Learning Fund***

[www.lifelonglearning.co.uk/aclf/index.htm](http://www.lifelonglearning.co.uk/aclf/index.htm)

[www.niace.org.uk/aclf/default.htm](http://www.niace.org.uk/aclf/default.htm)

Support for community-based organisations to develop and sustain new learning opportunities for adults and to encourage development of partnerships for learning. Aimed especially at people who may have been wary of education in the past or who have not been reached by traditional educational organisations. Grants may cover a range of learning goals and curriculum areas including citizenship, family learning, community activism and basic skills provision.

#### ***Community Champions Fund***

Support for individuals who have shown leadership in stimulating community activity, or who have ideas for encouraging greater community activity; or for small-scale community-inspired projects. Wide range of possible activities may be supported, though not major projects or where other forms of support are available. Targeted at areas where community activity or direct involvement in developing plans for regeneration are still very weak.

Administered via Government Offices for the Regions:

[www.local-regions.detr.gov.uk/go/goindex.htm](http://www.local-regions.detr.gov.uk/go/goindex.htm)

or their agents

#### ***Individual Learning Accounts***

[www.dfee.gov.uk/ila/](http://www.dfee.gov.uk/ila/)

An Individual Learning Account (ILA) is an "account with Government" which enables holders of the account to take up discounts and benefits which reduce the cost of training. While it is aimed at *individuals* rather than organisations, ILAs are important as a subsidised or discounted means of meeting learning needs within the voluntary and community sector.

#### ***Local Learning and Skills Councils***

[www.dfee.gov.uk/post16/](http://www.dfee.gov.uk/post16/)

Local Learning and Skills Councils can make use of their Local Initiative Fund for a range of activities which include, eg: pump-priming of small-scale local projects; adult and community learning; promoting learning; information, advice and guidance; equal opportunity initiatives; and support for local regeneration initiatives. Support for organisations pursuing Investors in People may be provided.

#### ***Neighbourhood Support Fund***

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

Provides resources for community groups and organisations to try out innovative new ideas which are geared to getting young people back into learning and jobs. Available in 40 designated local authority areas only.

#### ***Small Firms Training Loans***

[www.lifelonglearning.dfee.gov.uk/sftl/](http://www.lifelonglearning.dfee.gov.uk/sftl/)

Aimed at small businesses employing no more than 50 people but open to voluntary organisations constituted as limited companies or co-operatives. Offers loans free of interest in the first year, towards up to 90% of the costs of training and related consultancy (including costs of achieving Investors in People). Repayment terms may be between one and seven years. Eligible costs include not only the costs of in-house or external courses but also hiring temporary staff as cover and the salaries of employees acting as trainers.

#### ***UKOnline Learning Centres***

[www.dfee.gov.uk/ukonlinecentres/index1.htm](http://www.dfee.gov.uk/ukonlinecentres/index1.htm)

Funding for learning centres which reach out to and provide state of the art, free at the point of use ICT for adults in disadvantaged communities and small businesses. Capital support available under the Government's Capital Modernisation Fund, complemented by revenue support via Community Access to Lifelong Learning (see below).



### **Voluntary and Community Basic Skills & ESOL Fund**

[www.niace.org.uk/vsf/default.htm](http://www.niace.org.uk/vsf/default.htm)

Pilot programme funding community-led and neighbourhood-based basic skills work, delivered largely by voluntary and community organisations assisted by local quality providers. May cover basic skills or ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) tuition for adults; training in basic skills or ESOL for volunteers, mentors or paid staff; or needs analysis and capacity building for voluntary organisations in basic skills and ESOL.

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### **Department for the Environment, Transport and the Environment (DETR)-related**

#### **Coalfields Regeneration Trust**

[www.coalfields-regen.org.uk/](http://www.coalfields-regen.org.uk/)

Grants available to voluntary and community organisations, local authorities and partnerships for projects which contribute to the Trust's objectives (eg, community facilities and advisory services; community enterprise, environmental improvement, helping people back to work; improving access to education and skills). Available in designated areas only.

#### **Countryside Agency**

[www.countryside.gov.uk/](http://www.countryside.gov.uk/)

The Rural White paper, "Our Countryside: the future" (November 2000) announced

- a) a new Community Service Fund to help communities sustain or re-establish basic village services
- b) funding for community development work in every county to help communities set up new projects to tackle problems of social exclusion

#### **Housing Corporation**

[www.housingcorp.gov.uk/](http://www.housingcorp.gov.uk/)

#### **Community Training and Enabling (CTE) Grants**

A flexible funding framework intended to enable tenants groups (individuals, organisations and communities) to develop their knowledge and skills so that they can build up their capacity to participate fully in decisions which affect them - both housing and broader neighbourhood renewal matters. Support for training and enabling is in the form of pump priming for a maximum of three years, for "bottom up", sustainable projects, and be part of a funding package including other funders.

#### **Innovation and Good Practice**

Distinct from CTE grants (above) in that they are more centred on shorter-term specific outputs. A new strategy and programme which will be phased in from April 2001 will incorporate "Options in Community Housing" and "Effective involvement in regeneration and investment decisions".

### **New Deal for Communities**

[www.regeneration.detr.gov.uk/ndc.htm](http://www.regeneration.detr.gov.uk/ndc.htm)

New Deal for Communities (NDC) targets resources on the most deprived neighbourhoods in the country, helping partnerships and communities overcome barriers to lasting change. 39 areas are currently involved. There is a particular emphasis on engaging and involving the local community from the outset and strengthening this over time. The Urban White Paper, "Delivering an Urban Renaissance" announced additional funding for NDC including support for community involvement at local and neighbourhood level.

#### **Tenant Empowerment Grant Programme**

**National Tenant Training Programme** of short courses run by the Tenant Participation Advisory Service and Priority Estates Project. The **National Tenant Resource Centre** provides residential capacity building courses, covering, eg, committee skills, action plans, negotiating and generally "learning the ropes".

National Tenant Resource Centre:

[www.traffordhall.com/](http://www.traffordhall.com/)

TPAS: [www.tpas.org.uk/](http://www.tpas.org.uk/)

PEP: [www.pep.org.uk/](http://www.pep.org.uk/)

#### **Regional Development Agencies**

RDA contacts:

[www.local-regions.detr.gov.uk/rda/info/contact.htm](http://www.local-regions.detr.gov.uk/rda/info/contact.htm)

#### **Single Regeneration Budget (SRB)**

There may be scope within approved SRB programmes to fund capacity building activities. Round 6 (2000) bids for targeted areas were required to include "plans to create, through capacity building during the lifetime of the scheme, opportunities for new or expanded activities initiated by, or drawing in, members and sections of the community who are not yet active." (Contact local SRB partnerships for information.)

#### **Skills Development Fund**

Regional priorities may include workforce development in the voluntary sector, or otherwise offer scope for projects to build organisational capacity in the sector.

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### **Department of Trade and Industry (DTI)-related**

#### **Small Business Service**

[www.businessadviceonline.org/](http://www.businessadviceonline.org/)

Priorities of the Small Business Service include contributing to social inclusion and economic regeneration in disadvantaged communities through promoting business activity. Local SBS operations (functioning under the Business Link brand) are expected to support social enterprise ("businesses run for a social objective, rather than for the sake of profits distributed to shareholders"). This definition can include voluntary organisations, especially

ones with trading activities. Support may take the form of a range of business development services, including information and advice and access to specialist services (funding, design, etc).

#### **Phoenix Fund**

The Development Fund component of the SBS's Phoenix Fund is designed to encourage innovative ideas to promote and support enterprise in disadvantaged areas and in groups currently under-represented in terms of business ownership. Projects could include "building the capacity of local communities to encourage enterprise through professional training and development" and support for social and community enterprises.

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#### **Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS)-related**

##### ***Awards for All***

[www.culture.gov.uk/lottery/awards\\_for\\_all.html](http://www.culture.gov.uk/lottery/awards_for_all.html)

Small grants (funded from the National Lottery) to help groups do their work better, do different things, to involve more people or new people and to create a lasting benefit for communities. Priority given to groups with an annual income of under £15,000.

##### ***National Lottery Charities Board (NLCB)***

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

##### ***Community Involvement Grant Programme***

Funds projects that help people become involved in activities that improve the quality of life in their community. Special focus on developing voluntary and community organisations, particularly those working with people in greatest need and those who cannot take part in the community for whatever reason; and on projects that help such organisations become more effective and efficient.

##### ***New Opportunities Fund***

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

Funds capacity building as part of specific projects on some of its programmes, where capacity building costs are an essential part of an application, eg, staff and volunteer training costs, membership fees, fundraising support or advice, and community development work.

##### ***Community Access to Lifelong Learning (CALL)***

[www.nof.org.uk/edu/temp.cfm?content=edu\\_1](http://www.nof.org.uk/edu/temp.cfm?content=edu_1)

Aims to encourage more adults into learning, with a particular focus on improving access to learning opportunities through the use of ICT. Provides revenue funding for activities such as training, learning support and guidance and marketing to support access to UKOnline Learning Centres (see above) or to establish community grids for lifelong learning with a particular focus on socially excluded adults and those in disadvantaged communities.

#### **Home Office-related**

##### ***Active Community Grants Programme***

[www.homeoffice.gov.uk/acu/acu.htm](http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/acu/acu.htm)

Strategic grants (towards core organisational costs) and project grants for activity aimed at increased volunteering and community involvement, or supporting the development of active communities (by developing organisational capacity, strengthening partnership with Government, or promoting diversity of people involved in voluntary and community activity).

##### ***Capital Modernisation Grant Programme***

[www.homeoffice.gov.uk/acu/acu.htm](http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/acu/acu.htm)

The programme aims to modernise the infrastructure for volunteering and community involvement by developing high profile, volunteer agency sites; co-locating and integrating volunteer agency services with other local organisations; or modernising delivery of services using integrated IT. Project grants are primarily for 'capital development activity', eg, refurbishment of premises, IT hardware and software purchases, website construction and IT training development

##### ***Community Development Learning Fund***

Available to small community groups to help local people develop skills through access to learning opportunities and peer group support, eg, by enabling them to access support networks, participate in seminars and share ideas.

##### ***Community Resource Fund***

Very small grants (up to £500) to smaller/new community groups to strengthen and support local projects and services. Pilot programme in 30 areas.

##### ***Connecting Communities (Race Equality Grants)***

[www.homeoffice.gov.uk/new\\_indexes/index\\_racial-equality.htm](http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/new_indexes/index_racial-equality.htm)

Aims to give the most disadvantaged minority ethnic communities (including faith communities) and individuals greater access to, and influence over, policy makers and service providers and to effect real change at grass-roots level. Projects funded can include capacity building work, childcare and other support facilities, and building sustainable networks and partnerships. Some seed-corn funding is available.

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#### **European Union**

##### ***European Social Fund (ESF)***

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

Aims to "support adapting and modernising policies and systems for education, training and employment". Grant of

up to 45% eligible project costs; with at least a further 10% (in cash or in kind) required from public sources. Various possibilities for funding capacity building amongst voluntary and community organisations, subject to priorities in regional and local ESF plans and provided that projects lead to labour market integration (especially better jobs/prospects for the most disadvantaged individuals). Capacity building actions may include, eg, training, information, mentoring, study visits, research, guides, small grants and setting up new systems (eg, in support of project management; outreach work).

'Global grants' are being introduced to provide small packages of support direct to small groups and organisations, with less onerous administrative requirements. Allocations are determined regionally for projects which (a) respond to an identified need which cannot be met through mainstream ESF funding; (b) promote enterprise and the social economy; or seek to restore social cohesion.

### **EQUAL**

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

New ESF initiative which promotes new means of combating all forms of discrimination and inequalities in the labour market. It is to be implemented by Development Partnerships (established at geographical or sectoral level), co-operating with counterparts in other EU member states. Themes include facilitating access and return to the labour market, business creation, strengthening the social economy, promoting lifelong learning, helping firms and employees adapt to change, and promoting equal opportunities. Partnership programmes are expected to incorporate a relatively small number of large projects, whilst ensuring the full participation of smaller organisations.

### **European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)**

Funding is limited to the most disadvantaged areas within regions and concentrates primarily on productive investment, infrastructure, local development and the development of SMEs. Provisions for community economic development within regional plans ('programming documents') offer scope for organisational capacity building.

Information by region can be obtained via Government Offices for the Region sites:

[www.local-regions.detr.gov.uk/go/goindex.htm](http://www.local-regions.detr.gov.uk/go/goindex.htm)

### **Rural Enterprise Scheme**

[www.maff.gov.uk/erdp/](http://www.maff.gov.uk/erdp/)

Funded under the EU Rural Development Regulation, for the "adaptation and development of rural areas"; introduced in April 2001. The range of activities includes both business support (eg, for farm diversification, marketing of quality agricultural produce, rural tourism and crafts) and community support ("providing assistance for small-scale

innovative community-based projects which are not covered by other mainstream Government initiatives"). The latter may include "basic services for the rural economy and population" and "renovation and development of villages and protection and conservation of the rural heritage".

### **Leader +**

[www.maff.gov.uk/erdp/](http://www.maff.gov.uk/erdp/)

Aims to involve local communities in developing and testing new approaches to integrated and sustainable development. Intended to focus on small-scale projects within the framework of a local development strategy, and delivered by local partners formed into local action groups. The European Commission suggests four themes: use of knowhow and new technologies to make rural products and services more competitive; improving quality of life in rural areas; adding value to local products; and making best use of natural and cultural resources

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## **Foundations**

Support from charitable foundations includes:

### **Baring Foundation**

[www.baring.foundation.org.uk/](http://www.baring.foundation.org.uk/)

The "Strengthening the Voluntary Sector Programme" is intended to help improve the organisational effectiveness of voluntary organisations. Grants of up to £30,000 are available to national organisations, those in London operating beyond a single borough, those on Merseyside, Devon and Cornwall.

### **Charities Aid Foundation (CAF)**

[www.cafonline.org/grants-council/](http://www.cafonline.org/grants-council/)

The Charities Aid Foundation provides grants from small charities to improve their effectiveness and performance. This may include moving into new areas of activity.

### **CAF Minority Ethnic Fund**

Grants of up to £4,000 to help develop minority groups/organisations with an income of less than £50,000 pa. Expenditure may cover consultancy and training.

### **Church Urban Fund**

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

The Church Urban Fund provides project grants to help specific communities address local regeneration challenges, and small grants (of up to £2,000). Applications may be made by churches, local and regional church groups, faith-based community groups and dioceses. There is also a Development Fund providing grants to encourage dioceses to develop a more focused approach to urban disadvantage.

### **Ethnic Minority Foundation**

[www.emf-cemvo.co.uk/](http://www.emf-cemvo.co.uk/)

The Foundation is developing an Endowment Fund to be used to give grants to ethnic minority voluntary sector organisations and community groups to carry out projects in their communities. Priorities to be addressed include supplementary school activities, mentoring, women's and youth projects, job creation programmes and income generation schemes. Grants will also help community groups attract funds from other funders and employ full-time staff to manage projects.

Millennium Awards (£1,000 - £4,500) are available to ethnic minority volunteers (not organisations) in London who wish to set up and deliver community projects.

### **Lloyds TSB Foundation**

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

The Foundation supports action by local communities to improve the quality of life through actions to meet social and community needs or to enhance learning opportunities. Current priorities include family support, challenging disadvantage and discrimination and promoting the effectiveness of the voluntary sector.

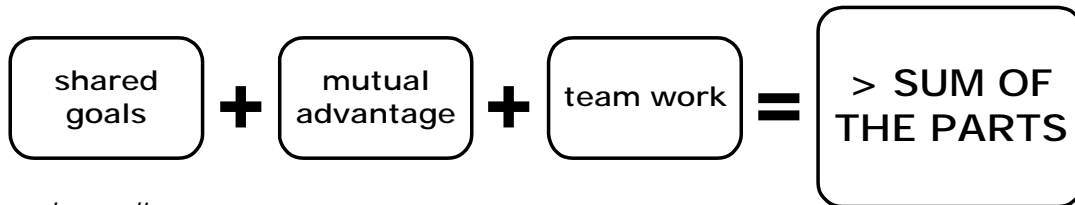
## Funding and Resources Relevant to Organisational Capacity Building

Please note that this table is intended to indicate the main areas of support. Rely on the detail for each source in judging what is most relevant to your plans.

	Learning provision	Training costs	Organisational development	Sector development	ICT	Young people	Advisory services	Social enterprise	Services development	Community development
<b>Source</b>										
Active Community Grants			▲	▲						
Adult & Community Learning Fund	▲									
Awards for All			▲							▲
Baring Foundation			▲	▲						
Capital Modernisation Grant Programme			▲		▲					
Charities Aid Foundation			▲							
Church Urban Fund						▲	▲		▲	▲
Coalfields Regeneration Trust	▲						▲	▲	▲	▲
Community Access to Lifelong Learning	▲				▲					
Community Champions Fund		▲							▲	▲
Community Development Learning Fund	▲									
Community Resource Fund			▲						▲	▲
Connecting Communities			▲	▲						
Countryside Agency									▲	▲
EQUAL	▲					▲	▲	▲		
Ethnic Minority Foundation			▲					▲	▲	
ERDF			▲		▲			▲		
ESF	▲	▲	▲	▲	▲	▲	▲	▲		
Individual Learning Accounts		▲								
Housing Corporation										▲
LEADER +										▲
Lloyds TSB Foundation			▲	▲					▲	▲
Local Learning & Skills Councils	▲	▲	▲							
National Lottery Charities Board			▲	▲						
Neighbourhood Support Fund						▲			▲	▲
New Deal for Communities	▲		▲			▲	▲		▲	▲
New Opportunities Fund					▲					
Rural Enterprise Scheme								▲	▲	▲
Single Regeneration Budget	▲	▲	▲	▲	▲	▲	▲	▲	▲	▲
Skills Development Fund	▲	▲	▲		▲					
Small Business Service			▲					▲		
Small Firms Training Loans		▲								
Tenant Empowerment Grant Programme										▲
UKOnline Learning Centres					▲					
Vol & Comm Basic Skills & ESOL Fund	▲									

This resource was used as part of the project to help participants from voluntary/ community and public sectors review what is needed for successful cross-sector partnership, and identify where improvements are needed. It is relevant to partnerships *within* each sector as well.

The factors behind success in partnerships can be summarised as this combination:



*depending on*

- ◆ trust & openness
- ◆ joint responsibilities/ accountability
- ◆ problem solving
- ◆ learning & continuous improvement

*over the medium-long term*

Remove any one factor, and partnership added value - what is achieved that is greater than the "sum of the parts" - will be diminished.

### CHECKLIST

#### The "Formula"

<b>1) Shared Goals</b>	<b>✓/✗</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is there sufficient common ground and sense of what, together, the parties want to achieve?</li> </ul>	

This does not mean that everyone has to have an identical set of goals. Partnerships are characterised by the coming together of different interests; tensions, and sometimes conflicts of interest are inevitable. Think of these as the grit that helps the oyster form - managed constructively, tensions and even conflicts can be a source of better solutions and outcomes.

<b>2) Mutual Advantage</b>	<b>✓/✗</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is each party clear and confident about the gains of the partnership from their individual perspective?</li> </ul>	

A compelling case for partnership, in terms of the benefits to a particular area or community, is not necessarily enough to ensure commitment from the parties involved. There must be perceptible (or anticipated) benefits, important to each

and commensurate to the scale of contributions made and risks faced by each partner.

These may relate to, eg:

- achieving individual organisational objectives
- attracting resources
- gaining respect and recognition
- satisfying the requirements of funders, donors, members, clients, etc

It is often the case that there are partners around the table who are not certain of their reason for being there, of what they have to offer, and what they can gain.

<b>3) Team Work</b>	<b>✓/✗</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are partnership tasks pursued on the basis of team work, with clearly defined responsibilities and outcomes and the best use of complementary skills and resources?</li> </ul>	

Partnerships are about people and organisations working together towards common goals, not coming together simply to form networks or assemblies with no strong purpose that binds and drives changes and improvements.

Team working requires an assessment of what participants want to achieve, making the most of respective strengths. There may be occasions where doing everything as a team approach is *not* appropriate in conducting a specific task, say where the competence is clearly with one organisation and there is little to gain from spreading involvement. But such activities should be seen as a building block of an overall partnership strategy alongside other tasks which are undertaken jointly.

**Underlying Factors:**

<b>4) Trust &amp; Openness</b>	<b>✓/✗</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>do partners conduct their relationships in an open manner, seeking to build and maintain mutual respect and trust?</li> </ul>	

How parties behave in partnership settings is crucial. Trust can take a long time to build and moments to undermine.

Keys to relationships which build trust are:

- credibility - doing what you say you're going to do
- competence - doing it well
- giving respect and credit to others
- openness
- listening to what others have to say and showing you understand

Ground rules in partnerships can help - such as "no surprises" - avoiding actions which spring issues and problems on fellow partners.

Partnership Behaviours	
Positive	Negative
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>talk of "us"</li> <li>"as a partner"</li> <li>air issues</li> <li>ask &amp; listen</li> <li>plan the future</li> <li>accept responsibility</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>talk of "them"</li> <li>"as a representative"</li> <li>conceal agendas</li> <li>tell</li> <li>go over the past</li> <li>pass the buck</li> </ul>

<b>5) Joint Responsibility &amp; Accountability</b>	<b>✓/✗</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>do partners share responsibility for the success of the partnership and are they accountable to each other for making an effective contribution?</li> </ul>	

Formalised agreements can help - but these should not be used as something with which to bash each other. It helps if partners have shared views of how success will be measured and work through what is required to ensure desired outcomes and quality standards.

<b>6) Problem Solving</b>	<b>✓/✗</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>do partners approach problems constructively to find solutions?</li> </ul>	

In some partnerships, there is a culture of criticism and blame, not one of seeking solutions and mutually beneficial ("win-win") outcomes. The key to progress is often to be rigorous in focusing on the needs of the people you are working for or with - the ultimate beneficiaries of the partnership activities - and not self-interested outcomes.

<b>7) Learning &amp; Continuous Improvement</b>	<b>✓/✗</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>do partners actively seek to learn from their work together, to improve their individual and collective abilities?</li> </ul>	

The process of partnership working matters: get it wrong and the results are less, not more than the sum of the parts. The process is not easy, and conscious effort is needed to learn and improve. The learning may relate to, for example, the needs, motivations and constraints of other partners, finding better ways of undertaking joint projects, or of consulting and involving others. Part of the learning may be about bridging cultural differences - examples provided by the project included:

Learning to Bridge Cultural Differences	
on the part of LLSCs	on the part of voluntary organisations
<i>appreciating</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the diversity and independence of the sector</li> <li>different values and world views</li> <li>resource constraints faced by voluntary organisations</li> <li>how voluntary organisations are funded</li> <li>what's involved in consulting and gaining representative views within the sector</li> </ul>	<i>appreciating</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the reasons behind output and outcome targets</li> <li>government drive for quality and results</li> <li>the nature of LLSC funding streams</li> <li>different values and world views</li> </ul>

<b>8) Over the Medium to Long Term...</b>	<b>✓/✗</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>do partners view their commitment to the partnership as medium to long term?</li> </ul>	

If partnership is not seen as something worth pursuing over the medium to long term, there is not likely to be enough perceived rewards for individual partners to make significant commitments in the shorter term and act in the partnership interest - especially where they may need to make changes in what they do or the way they do it. Good communications and mutual understanding in themselves are not sufficient conditions for successful partnership.

### Contents:

- 1) Regional Networks
- 2) National Organisations, Associations and Resources
- 3) Projects Illustrated in the "Mutual Advantage" Report

*This contacts list was compiled in November 2000.*

### 1) Regional Networks

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#### *voluntary sector - general*

##### **COVER - Community and Voluntary Forum for the Eastern Region**

Centre 4A, Gonville Place, Cambridge CB1 1LY  
tel: 01223 4716826  
e-mail: [office@cover-east.org](mailto:office@cover-east.org)  
[www.cover-east.org](http://www.cover-east.org)

##### **East Midlands Voluntary Sector Forum**

Engage East Midlands, 7 Mansfield Road,  
Nottingham NG1 3FB  
tel: 0115 934 8471  
e-mail: [emvsf@hotmail.com](mailto:emvsf@hotmail.com)

##### **RAISE - Regional Action and Involvement South East**

Berkley House, Cross Lanes, Guildford GU1  
1UN  
tel: 01483 500770  
e-mail: [mail@raise-networks.org.uk](mailto:mail@raise-networks.org.uk)  
[www.raise-networks.org.uk](http://www.raise-networks.org.uk)

##### **Regional Action West Midlands**

4<sup>th</sup> Floor Daimler House, Paradise Circus,  
Queens Way, Birmingham B1 2BJ  
tel: 0121 616 4720  
e-mail: [rawm@rawm.co.uk](mailto:rawm@rawm.co.uk)

##### **South West Regional Voluntary Sector Network**

c/o Community Council of Devon, County Hall,  
Topsham Road, Exeter EX2 4QB  
tel: 01392 382822  
e-mail: [swftwo@ch.devon-cc.gov.uk](mailto:swftwo@ch.devon-cc.gov.uk)

##### **Third Sector Alliance (London)**

London Voluntary Services Council, 356  
Holloway Road, London N7 6PA  
tel: 020 7700 8107  
e-mail: [3sa@lvsc.org.uk](mailto:3sa@lvsc.org.uk)  
[www.lvsc.org.uk](http://www.lvsc.org.uk)

##### **Yorkshire & the Humber Regional Forum for Voluntary & Community Organisations**

3rd Floor, Goodbard House, 15 Infirmary Street,  
Leeds LS1 2JS  
tel: 0113 243 8188  
e-mail: [office@yhregforum.org.uk](mailto:office@yhregforum.org.uk)  
[www.yhregforum.org.uk](http://www.yhregforum.org.uk)

##### **VONNE - Voluntary Sector Network North East**

9th Floor, Cale Cross House, 156 Pilgrim Street,  
Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 6SU  
tel: 0191 233 2000  
e-mail: [vonne@vonne.co.uk](mailto:vonne@vonne.co.uk)  
[www.vonne.co.uk](http://www.vonne.co.uk)

##### **VSNW - Voluntary Sector North West**

St Thomas Centre, Ardwick Green North,  
Manchester M12 6FZ  
tel 0161 273 7451  
e-mail: [lynne.redstone@vsnw.org.uk](mailto:lynne.redstone@vsnw.org.uk)  
[www.netcetera.org.uk/](http://www.netcetera.org.uk/)

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#### *black and minority ethnic voluntary sector*

##### **Forward North West**

Barclay House, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, 35 Whitworth Street,  
West Manchester, M1 5NG  
tel: 0161 906 0020  
e-mail: [Ruhena.begum@progresstrust.com](mailto:Ruhena.begum@progresstrust.com)

##### **Black South West Network**

c/o Black Development Agency Bristol, 5 Russel  
Town Avenue, Redfield, Bristol BS5 9LT  
tel: 0117 939 6645  
e-mail: [ariafussain@bswn.fsnet.co.uk](mailto:ariafussain@bswn.fsnet.co.uk)



**Black Regeneration Network (West Midlands)**

Cheltenham House, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, 14 Temple Street,  
Birmingham B2 5BG  
tel: 0121 616 1881  
e-mail: [Info@brn.org.uk](mailto:Info@brn.org.uk)

**Black and Ethnic Minority Voluntary Forum - KENTÉ**

The Leathermarket Unit, LF2.2 Weston Street,  
London SE1 3HN  
tel: 020 7378 0377  
e-mail: [kente@ukonline.co.uk](mailto:kente@ukonline.co.uk)

*EU Networks***EREN - Eastern Region European Network**

Latton Bush Centre, Southern Way, Harlow,  
Essex CM18 7BL  
tel: 01279 446480  
e-mail: [lesb@cfecs.ndirect.co.uk](mailto:lesb@cfecs.ndirect.co.uk)

**North West Network**

Room 2715, Sunley Tower, Piccadilly Plaza,  
Manchester M1 4BE  
tel: 0161 236 6493  
e-mail: [info@nwnetwork.org.uk](mailto:info@nwnetwork.org.uk)  
[www.nwnetwork.org.uk](http://www.nwnetwork.org.uk)

**CEFET - Central England Forum for Education & Training**

4 Oxford Street, Nottingham NG1 5BH  
tel 01159520290  
e-mail: [info@cefet.demon.co.uk](mailto:info@cefet.demon.co.uk)  
[www.cefet.demon.co.uk](http://www.cefet.demon.co.uk)

**SAVAGE - Southern Association of Voluntary Action Groups for Europe**

121a Winchester Road, Chandlers Ford,  
Hampshire SO53 2GH  
tel 01703 262655  
e-mail: [info@savageeurope.f9.co.uk](mailto:info@savageeurope.f9.co.uk)  
[www.savage-europe.org.uk](http://www.savage-europe.org.uk)

**ESFVON - ESF Voluntary Network**

St Cuthberts House, West Road, Newcastle  
Upon Tyne NE15 7PY  
tel: 0191 274 9886  
e-mail: [info@esfvon.org.uk](mailto:info@esfvon.org.uk)  
[www.esfvon.org.uk](http://www.esfvon.org.uk)

**VONEF - Voluntary Organisations Network for European Funding**

Glyde House, Glydegate, Bradford, West  
Yorkshire BD5 OBO  
tel 01274 742065  
e-mail: [info@vonef.org](mailto:info@vonef.org)

**LVSTC - London Voluntary Sector Training Council**

The Print House, 18 Ashwin Street, London E8  
3DL  
tel: 020 7249 4441  
e-mail: [info@lvstc.org.uk](mailto:info@lvstc.org.uk)  
[www.lvstc.org.uk](http://www.lvstc.org.uk)

**WMEN - West Midlands European Network**

Unit 1, 314 Custard Factory, Gibb Street,  
Digbeth, Birmingham B9 4AA  
tel: 0121 683 8890/8891  
e-mail: [info@wmeuronet.freemove.co.uk](mailto:info@wmeuronet.freemove.co.uk)

*Equality Networks***Equality North West**

Wigan Investment Centre, Waterside Drive,  
Wigan WN3 5BA  
tel: 01942 705506  
e-mail: [info@equality.org.uk](mailto:info@equality.org.uk)  
[www.equality.org.uk](http://www.equality.org.uk)

**Fair Play South East**

29f Station Road Industrial Estate, Southwater,  
Horsham, West Sussex, RH13 7UD  
tel: 01403 738 739  
[www.fairplayse.org.uk](http://www.fairplayse.org.uk)  
e-mail: [info@fairplayse.org.uk](mailto:info@fairplayse.org.uk)

**2) National Organisations, Associations and Resources****ACRE - Action for Communities in Rural England**

*Supports Rural Community Councils in their role  
in rural community development*  
Somerset Court, Somerset Road, Cirencester,  
Gloucestershire GL7 1TW  
tel: 01285 653477  
e-mail: [info@acre.org.uk](mailto:info@acre.org.uk)  
[www.acreinfo.demon.co.uk](http://www.acreinfo.demon.co.uk)

**BASSAC - British Association of Settlements and Social Action Centres**

*National body for neighbourhood development  
agencies and multi-purpose centres committed  
to helping local communities bring about social  
change*  
Winchester House, 11 Cranmer Road, London  
SW9 6EJ  
tel 0207 735 1075  
e-mail: [bassac@mcr1.poptel.org.uk](mailto:bassac@mcr1.poptel.org.uk)

### **CAN - Community Action Network**

*Mutual learning and support network for social entrepreneurs*

The CAN Centre, Mezzanine, Elizabeth House,  
39 York Road, London SE1 7NQ

tel: 020 7401 5310

e-mail: [canhq@can-online.org.uk](mailto:canhq@can-online.org.uk)

[www.can-online.org.uk](http://www.can-online.org.uk)

### **CDF - Community Development Foundation**

*Role to pioneer, study and promote new forms of community development, to inform public policy, professional practice and community initiatives*

60 Highbury Grove, London N5 2AG

tel: 020 7226 5375

e-mail: [admin@cdf.org.uk](mailto:admin@cdf.org.uk)

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

### **CEMVO - Council for Ethnic Minority Voluntary Organisations**

*Seeks to bring increased resources to build capacity within the ethnic minority voluntary sector (operational arm of the Ethnic Minority Foundation)*

Boardman House, 64 The Broadway, Stratford,  
London E15 1NT

tel: 020 8432 0302

e-mail: [mailto:balraj.sandhu@emf-cemvo.co.uk](mailto:mailto:balraj.sandhu@emf-cemvo.co.uk)

[www.emf-cemvo.co.uk/](http://www.emf-cemvo.co.uk/)

### **CIO - Confederation of Indian Organisations**

*Promotes the interests of Asian communities through research, lobbying, projects and organisational capacity building*

5-5a Westminster Bridge Road, London SE1  
7XW

tel: 020 7928 9889

e-mail: [ciopolicyunit@aol.com](mailto:ciopolicyunit@aol.com)

[www.blink.org.uk/organ/cio.htm](http://www.blink.org.uk/organ/cio.htm)

### **Common Purpose**

*Provides educational programmes to foster cross-sector collaboration*

Discovery House, 28-42 Banner Street, London  
EC1Y 8QE

tel 020 7608 8100

e-mail:

[commonpurpose@commonpurpose.org.uk](mailto:commonpurpose@commonpurpose.org.uk)

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

### **Community Foundation Network**

*Provides support for community foundations*

2 Plough Yard, Shoreditch High Street, London  
EC2A 3LP

tel: 020 7422 8611

e-mail: [network@communityfoundations.org.uk](mailto:network@communityfoundations.org.uk)

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

### **Communities online**

*Aims help communities address issues of sustainability, regeneration, social inclusion and healthier economies through the use of information and communications technology*

Brixton Online, Unit 52, Eurolink Business  
Centre, Effra Road, London SW2 1BZ

e-mail: [sue@cwn.org.uk](mailto:sue@cwn.org.uk)

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

### **Community Matters**

*Supports and represents community organisations (typically community associations and multi-purpose community organisations, often using community centres as a base)*

8-9 Upper Street, London N1 0PQ

tel 0207 226 0189

e-mail:

[communitymatters@communitymatters.org.uk](mailto:communitymatters@communitymatters.org.uk)

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

### **Development Trusts Association**

*Network of community-based regeneration trusts*

20 Conduit Place, London, W2 1HS

tel: 020 7706 4951

e-mail: [info@dtta.org.uk](mailto:info@dtta.org.uk)

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

### **Directory of Social Change**

*Independent body helping voluntary and community organisations become more effective by providing practical and affordable information and training*

24 Stevenson Way, London NW1 2DP

tel: 0209 7209 4422

e-mail: [info@dsc.org.uk](mailto:info@dsc.org.uk)

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

### **Making the net work**

*Aims to help people planning to get their organisation or neighbourhood online, or create local technology centres.*

e-mail: [david@makingthenetwork.org](mailto:david@makingthenetwork.org)

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

### **NACVS - National Association of Councils for Voluntary Service**

*Promotes effective local voluntary and community action through our member CVSs, providing them with a range of support services.*

3rd Floor, Arundel Court, 177 Arundel Street,  
Sheffield S1 2NU

tel: 0114 278 6636

e-mail: [nacvs@nacvs.org.uk](mailto:nacvs@nacvs.org.uk)

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

**NAVb - National Association of Volunteer Bureaux**

New Oxford House, 16 Waterloo Street,  
Birmingham B2 5UG  
tel: 0121 633 4555  
e-mail: [information@navb.org.uk](mailto:information@navb.org.uk)  
[www.navb.org.uk](http://www.navb.org.uk)

**NCVO - National Council for Voluntary Organisations**

*Umbrella body for the voluntary sector*  
Regent's Wharf, 8 All Saints Street, London N1  
9RL  
tel: 020 7713 6161  
e-mail: [ncvo@ncvo-vol.org.uk](mailto:ncvo@ncvo-vol.org.uk)  
[www.ncvo-vol.org.uk](http://www.ncvo-vol.org.uk)  
Compact:  
[www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/main/gateway/compact.html](http://www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/main/gateway/compact.html)  
Quality Standards Task Group:  
[www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/main/about/does/qs.html](http://www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/main/about/does/qs.html)

**NIACE - National Institute for Adult and Continuing Education**

*National organisation for adult learning*  
21 De Montfort Street, Leicester LE1 7GE  
tel: 0116 204 4200  
e-mail: [enquiries@niace.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@niace.org.uk)  
[www.niace.org.uk](http://www.niace.org.uk)

**Project 2001**

*Promotes access to qualifications for people who have built up skills and competencies through experience in the voluntary sector, either as volunteers or as paid employees. (Available to voluntary organisations in London and Yorkshire.)*  
RSA, 8 John Adam Street, London WC2N 6EZ  
tel: 0207 451 6833  
e-mail: [2001@rsa-uk.demon.co.uk](mailto:2001@rsa-uk.demon.co.uk)

**Sharing Credit**

*Supports the voluntary and community sectors in accessing accreditation for learning which*

*was already taking place in the sector.*

c/o NOCN, University of Derby Kedleston Road,  
Derby DE22 1GB  
tel: 01332 621352  
e-mail: [scp@derby.ac.uk](mailto:scp@derby.ac.uk)  
[www.derby.ac.uk/scp](http://www.derby.ac.uk/scp)

**Third Age Employment Network**

*Campaigning organisation, working with the media, employers and government to change attitudes and public policies to better opportunities for mature people to continue to learn, work and earn*  
York House, 207-221 Pentonville Road, London N1 9UZ  
tel: 020 7843 1590  
e-mail: [taen@helptheaged.org.uk](mailto:taen@helptheaged.org.uk)  
[www.taen.org.uk/](http://www.taen.org.uk/)

**Urban Forum**

*Umbrella body for community and voluntary groups with interests in urban and regional policy, especially regeneration.*  
4 Dean's Court, St Paul's Churchyard, London EC4V 5AA  
tel: 020 7248 3111  
e-mail: [info@urbanforum.org.uk](mailto:info@urbanforum.org.uk)  
[www.urbanforum.org.uk](http://www.urbanforum.org.uk)

**VSNTO - Voluntary Sector National Training Organisation**

*Addresses strategic issues on staff development and training to improve the effectiveness of the sector*  
Regent's Wharf, 8 All Saints Street, London N1 9RL  
tel: 0171 713 6161  
e-mail: [vsnto@ncvo-vol.org.uk](mailto:vsnto@ncvo-vol.org.uk)  
[www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/main/about/does/vsnto.html](http://www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/main/about/does/vsnto.html)

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**3) "Mutual Advantage": Projects Illustrated in the Report****Birmingham Voluntary Sector Quality Development Programme**

Birmingham Voluntary Services Council  
138 Digbeth, Birmingham B5 6DR  
tel: 0121 678 8808  
e-mail: [helenj@bvsc.org](mailto:helenj@bvsc.org)  
[www.bvsc.org](http://www.bvsc.org)

**CITINET**

Mount Pleasant Community Centre, Sharrow Lane, Sheffield S11 8AE.  
tel: 0114 255 4173/255 3172  
e-mail: [info@citinet.org.uk](mailto:info@citinet.org.uk)  
[www.citinet.org.uk/](http://www.citinet.org.uk/)

**Community Development and Training Partnership**

Trust for Developing Communities, 77 Preston Road, Brighton BN1 4QG  
tel: 01273 383746  
e-mail: [Charlie@cscharity.co.uk](mailto:Charlie@cscharity.co.uk)  
[www.socsci.soton.ac.uk/rtn](http://www.socsci.soton.ac.uk/rtn)

**LADDER**

Community Action Hampshire  
Beaconsfield House, Andover Road, Winchester SO22 6AT  
tel: 01962 854971  
e-mail: [marshkaren@hotmail.com](mailto:marshkaren@hotmail.com)

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

**Merseyside TEC**

3rd Floor, Tithebarn House, Tithebarn Street,  
Liverpool L2 2NZ  
tel: 0151 236 0026  
e-mail: : [info@merseyside-tec.co.uk](mailto:info@merseyside-tec.co.uk)  
[www.merseyside-tec.co.uk/](http://www.merseyside-tec.co.uk/)

**Pan-London Regeneration Consortium**

356 Holloway Road, London N7 6PA  
tel: 020 7700 8120  
e-mail: [plcrc@lvsc.org.uk](mailto:plcrc@lvsc.org.uk)  
[www.lvsc.org.uk/plcrc/index.htm](http://www.lvsc.org.uk/plcrc/index.htm)

**PINDA**

The Quinnell Centre, 2 Kent Street, Portsea,  
Portsmouth PO1 3BS  
tel: 023 9273 0629  
e-mail: [info@pinda.org.uk](mailto:info@pinda.org.uk)  
[www.pinda.org.uk](http://www.pinda.org.uk)

**South Yorkshire Key Fund**

The Round House, Heritage Park, 55 Albert  
Terrace Road, Sheffield S6 3BR  
tel: 0114 281 4173  
e-mail: [kf@sycf.barnsley.org.uk](mailto:kf@sycf.barnsley.org.uk)

**VOLCAAN (Voluntary and Community Alliance Across Norfolk)**

Norfolk and Norwich Voluntary Services  
Charing Cross Centre, 17/19 St John  
Maddermarket, Norwich NR2 1DN  
tel: 01603 614474  
e-mail: [admin@nvs.org.uk](mailto:admin@nvs.org.uk)  
[www.nvs.org.uk](http://www.nvs.org.uk)

**Wales Council for Voluntary Action**

Llys Ifor, Crescent Road, Caerphilly CF8 1XL  
tel: 029 20 431700  
e-mail: [wcva@mcr1.poptel.org.uk](mailto:wcva@mcr1.poptel.org.uk)  
[www.wcva.org.uk](http://www.wcva.org.uk)

**Working Together Learning Together**

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## Acronyms and Abbreviations

<b>ACLF</b>	Adult and Community Learning Fund (DfEE)	<b>EU</b>	European Union
<b>ACRE</b>	Action with Communities in Rural England	<b>FE</b>	Further Education
<b>ACU</b>	Active Communities Unit (Home Office)	<b>ICT</b>	Information and Communications Technology
<b>BitC</b>	Business in the Community	<b>IIP</b>	Investors in People
<b>BME</b>	Black and Minority Ethnic	<b>ILA</b>	Individual Learning Account
<b>BTEG</b>	Black Training and Enterprise Group	<b>ISO</b>	International Standards Organisation
<b>BSA</b>	Basic Skills Agency	<b>LLSC</b>	Local Learning and Skills Council
<b>CAB(x)</b>	Citizens Advice Bureau(x)	<b>LP</b>	Learning Partnership
<b>CAF</b>	Charities Aid Foundation	<b>LSC</b>	Learning and Skills Council
<b>CALL</b>	Community Access to Lifelong Learning (NOF)	<b>LSP</b>	Local Strategic Partnership
<b>CCTE</b>	Chamber of Commerce, Training and Enterprise	<b>NCVO</b>	National Council for Voluntary Organisations
<b>CDF</b>	Community Development Foundation	<b>NDC</b>	New Deal for Communities
<b>CDLF</b>	Community Development Learning Fund (Home Office)	<b>NIACE</b>	National Institute of Adult and Continuing Education
<b>CEMVO</b>	Council of Ethnic Minority Voluntary Sector Organisations	<b>NLCB</b>	National Lottery Charities Board
<b>CPD</b>	Continuing professional development	<b>NOF</b>	New Opportunities Fund
<b>CSV</b>	Community Service Volunteers	<b>NRF</b>	Neighbourhood Renewal Fund
<b>CUF</b>	Church Urban Fund	<b>NSNR</b>	National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal
<b>CVS</b>	Council for Voluntary Service	<b>PACE</b>	Practical Award for Community Excellence
<b>CVYS</b>	Council for Voluntary Youth Services	<b>PLCRC</b>	Pan London Community Regeneration Consortium
<b>DCMS</b>	Department for Culture, Museums and Sport	<b>PQASSO</b>	Practical Quality Assurance System for Small Organisations
<b>DETR</b>	Department of Environment, Transport and the Regions	<b>RCC</b>	Rural Community Council
<b>DfEE</b>	Department for Education and Employment	<b>RDA</b>	Regional Development Agency
<b>DTI</b>	Department of Trade and Industry	<b>REC</b>	Racial Equality Council
<b>EC</b>	European Commission	<b>SBS</b>	Small Business Service
<b>EFQM</b>	European Foundation for Quality Management	<b>SEU</b>	Social Exclusion Unit
<b>ERDF</b>	European Regional Development Fund	<b>SRB</b>	Single Regeneration Budget
<b>ES</b>	Employment Service	<b>TEC</b>	Training and Enterprise Council
<b>ESF</b>	European Social Fund	<b>Ufi</b>	University for Industry
<b>ESOL</b>	English for Speakers of Other Languages	<b>VB/VBx</b>	Volunteer Bureau(x)
<b>ETDA</b>	Education and Training Development Agenda	<b>VSNT0</b>	Voluntary Sector National Training Organisation

## Definitions

### Best Value

The requirement for public bodies to secure continuous improvement in the way they carry out their functions, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness. This requires a process of "Challenge, Compare, Consult and Compete", asking fundamental questions about the purpose of services and the best way to deliver them - including with or through a range of partners or suppliers.

### Capacity building

"Development work that strengthens the ability of community organisations and groups to build their structures, systems, people and skills so that they are better able to define and achieve their objectives and engage in consultation and planning, manage community projects and take part in partnerships and community enterprises.

"It includes aspects of training, organisational and personal development and resource building, organised in a planned and self-conscious manner, reflecting the principles of empowerment and equality" *Skinner (1997) "Building Community Strengths: A Resource Book on Capacity Building" CDF*

### Community capacity building

"Developing the capacity and skills of the members of a community in such a way that they are better able to identify, and help meet, their needs and to participate more fully in society." (*Charities Commission, "The Promotion of Community Capacity Building"*)

For the Charities Commission, it concerns:

opportunities for people to learn through experience which would not otherwise be available to them involving people in collective effort so that they gain confidence in their own abilities and their ability to influence decisions that affect them

(As such, it is broader than the previous definition, which is more specifically related to *organisational capacity*.)

### Community sector

Informal groups or networks formed run by people to pursue common interests or tackle joint problems

### Continuing professional development

Combination of formal off-the-job training and work-based learning which provides the range of learning opportunities for an individual to update and improve their occupational/professional competence over time

### Local development agencies

Term used within the voluntary sector to cover those organisations with a role for developing and supporting

other voluntary and community organisations, or their interests. They may be:

- generalist (Councils for Voluntary Service, Rural Community Councils) (provide a range of services to strengthen and represent the community at the local level and to advance and improve the capability of voluntary action)
- functional (provide a specific service to a range of CV organisations, eg, Volunteer Bureaux)
- specialist (provide a specific service to specific types of CV organisations, eg, Play Associations) + councils for voluntary youth services (CVYSS)

### Local social capital

"Local Social Capital means an intermediary organisation - operating at regional or local level - capable of providing back-up for people who pool their resources with a view to carrying out micro-level projects which promote employment and social cohesion" (*European Commission*)

### Match funding

A requirement by funding agencies that any contributions they make towards programme or project costs should be matched by other funders or by the applicants from their own resources. Some programmes (eg, ESF) allow match funding to take the form of in-kind contributions (notably the value of people's time) as well as financial contributions.

### Social capital

"The social capital of a society includes the institutions, the relationships and values that govern interaction between people and contribute to economic and social development" *OECD (1998)*

### Social economy

European Commission describes common characteristics of entities in the Social Economy:

- their primary purpose is not to obtain a return on capital
- most are run on the basis of "one member, one vote"
- typically flexible and innovative, created to meet changing social and economic circumstances
- many bring people together - most based on voluntary participation, membership and commitment

This broad description covers the voluntary and community sectors as defined here plus co-operatives, mutual societies, and associations run for member rather than public benefit.

### Social entrepreneur

Someone who has the imagination to identify new opportunities and the strengths to bring them to fruition for the public good.

The entrepreneurial *process* involves:

- identifying/ creating an opportunity
- conceiving the plan/ means to realise the opportunity

- marshalling the necessary resources
- realising the opportunity (which requires creating value/benefits for others)

### **Social exclusion**

"a shorthand term for what can happen when people or areas suffer from a combination of linked problems such as unemployment, poor skills, low incomes, poor housing, high crime environments, bad health, poverty and family breakdown." *Social Exclusion Unit (1999)*

Others note that "social exclusion" captures notions of social and economic processes which generate and/ or sustain disadvantage and poverty.

### **Third sector**

Alternative term for "social economy"

### **Voluntary sector**

Organisations meeting the following criteria (*NCVO*):

- **formal** - organisations with a recognisable structure with a constitution or formal set of rules
- independent of government and self-governing
- non-profit distributing
- **voluntarism** to a meaningful degree in terms of contributions of time or money
- **public benefit** - beyond that of the organisation's own membership



