Shortlisted nominations

Showcasing excellent partnerships:
The best of Compact working from the last 12 months
Introduction

The shortlisted nominations for this year’s Compact Awards are shining examples of what successful partnerships can accomplish. By showing what is possible, despite the challenging times confronting us all, they set a benchmark that others can, and should, aspire to.

This year’s field is one of the most impressive I have seen to date. Judging each of the seven categories was therefore both a pleasure and a challenge for this year’s panel.

From community led approaches to health and social care, to working groups that bring together public and voluntary sector expertise, the examples in this document display a diverse range of successful partnerships and outcomes guided by Compact principles. They all show that when communities are put first, real tangible benefits can be delivered.

The theme of this year’s Compact Week is ‘Working together in a new commissioning landscape’ so we were particularly pleased to see several nominations that celebrate partnerships between the voluntary sector, Clinical Commissioning Groups and Police and Crime Commissioners. As more traditional commissioning structures are replaced by these ‘new commissioners’, equitable partnerships built on Compact principles will become increasingly important for ensuring the voluntary sector’s expertise is fully utilised and its voice properly heard. Celebrating promising practice is key to achieving this.

Importantly, these case studies serve as a timely reminder that the Compact is very much alive and well, and that its principles continue to underpin effective relationships for the benefit of both sectors, and ultimately, society.

Along with the Compact Voice team I would like to extend my thanks to everyone that took the time to submit a nomination for this year’s awards. The Compact Voice team will be working with everyone involved to ensure their story is heard over the coming months and we look forward to celebrating everybody’s achievements at this year’s awards ceremony.

Peter Holbrook CBE
Chair of Compact Voice
Contents

Compact Advancing Equality Award

Shortlist:
1. Redbridge Faith Forum 6
2. Healthwatch Essex Learning Disability Ambassadors 8
3. HENCEL Deaf Inclusion project 10
4. HMRC Support for British Sign Languages Customers project 12
5. Merton Voluntary Service Council Supported Volunteering Programme 14
6. DCLG Women’s Empowerment Fund 16

Compact Engagement Award

Shortlist:
1. Redbridge TB Partnership 18
2. DCLG Neighbourhood Planning team 20
3. Kent Jobcentre Plus 22
4. Sussex Youth Commission 24
5. Healthwatch Merton 26
6. Tower Hamlets Community Intelligence Bursary 28

Compact Impact Award

Shortlist:
1. North Yorkshire Innovation Fund 30
2. North Tyneside Making Every Adult Matter 32
3. Leeds Rehab and Recovery mental health service 34
4. Hastings Without Walls 36
### Compact Innovation Award

**Shortlist:**

| 1. Leeds Mental Health Sharepoint project | 38  |
| 2. Redbridge Fit for Fun                  | 40  |
| 3. Redbridge Autism Ambassadors and RAAR projects | 42  |
| 4. Essex 555 project                      | 44  |
| 5. Merton Pro-active GP Pilot             | 46  |
| 6. VCSE Stockton-on-Tees Health Initiatives | 48  |

### Compact Leadership Award

**Shortlist:**

| 1. John Dwyer, Cheshire PCC               | 50  |
| 2. Councillor Simon Wales, London Borough of Sutton | 52  |
| 3. South Gloucestershire Compact Implementation Group | 54  |

### Local Compact Partnership Award

**Shortlist:**

| 1. Sefton New Realities Steering Group    | 56  |
| 2. County Durham Voluntary and Community Sector Working Group | 58  |
| 3. Universal Support Delivered Locally pilot project team | 60  |
| 4. Warrington Third Sector Partnership    | 63  |
Redbridge Faith Forum

Overview

The Redbridge Dementia Plan 2014-17 highlighted the need to ensure a more integrated and community-based approach to support people with dementia and their carers. Redbridge Faith Forum (RFF) supported a key focus in the Plan to address equality issues and stigma associated with this condition, including within some Faith communities - raising awareness, improving access to information and creating supportive communities, through workshops, Dementia Friend training and info sharing.

RFF is a member of the Redbridge Dementia Partnership involving a range of statutory, voluntary, community sector stakeholders, including service users and carers. Four multiagency Workstreams including 'Community Development and Awareness' are implementing the Action Plan. Through this work, RFF made contact with local agencies providing practical support to people with dementia and their carers.

RFF became aware of the stigma and shame existing around dementia within some faith communities through their Women’s Interfaith Workshops. RFF were funded by Adult Social Services to help tackle this issue by working in partnership with Alzheimer’s Society to organise a series of Dementia Awareness Workshops in a range of Faith venues, which were open to all faiths (and no faith).

The RFF 'Towards Dementia Friendly Faith Communities' Project included five workshops (September 2014 to February 2015) which took place in the following faith venues: Christian, Hindu, Jewish, Muslim, Sikh. 146 people of different faiths attended, providing a multi-faith presence at each venue. The sessions were led by a qualified Alzheimer’s Society Trainer. All participants were encouraged to become Dementia Friends or Champions, ensuring a more sustainable network of support within communities.

An information sharing event was arranged in March 2015 to showcase the work of local partners, answer questions, offer information, guidance and support. RFF also promoted a play entitled “Dementia’s Journey” produced by the 'EKTA Project’, a local charity caring for Asian Elders with dementia. The play is performed in both English and Hindi and addresses the lack of awareness existing in some Asian communities.
Impact

- Improved understanding of dementia and how communities/neighbourhoods can support people living with dementia and their carers.
- Greater knowledge and understanding of types of dementia evidenced in event evaluation forms.
- All participants (146) became Dementia Friends as a result of the learning experience at the workshops.
- To date, two have undertaken training as Dementia Champions enabling them to work within their communities to both raise awareness of dementia and make their places of worship more dementia friendly. Their names were added to the Redbridge Dementia Partnership Register of Dementia Champions. RFF is contacting individual faith communities to ascertain if additional Champions have been trained and are willing to be added to the Register.
- Increased understanding /signposting opportunities for the voluntary sector as evidenced by feedback confirming the events had been a good networking opportunity.
- More voluntary groups are holding similar workshops to continue to roll out the training.
- The first performance of 'Dementia’s Journey' in Redbridge, hosted by a Church was very well attended by people of all faiths.
- At the request of RFF, the Chief Officer of Redbridge CCG attended a Redbridge CVS Network Meeting to speak about developments in Dementia Care.
- Ongoing work & future developments – RFF is working with RDP reps to update the Redbridge Dementia Information Pack.
- Contributing to consultation on the Alzheimer’s Society draft “Making Churches Dementia Friendly”.
- Developing further sessions with Redbridge Concern for Mental Health on mental health and faith communities.

Pictured: Some of the audience at the Hindu Centre Dementia Awareness Session held February 2015
Healthwatch Essex Learning Disability Ambassadors

Overview

In partnership with Learning Disability organisations, Healthwatch Essex has created an LD focused ambassador volunteer role. Healthwatch Essex has provided training and ongoing support to these Ambassadors, who are ‘eyes and ears’ within the community and liaise with organisations across the statutory and voluntary sectors to promote health messages within the learning disability communities and to bring the ‘lived experience’ of people with learning disabilities to commissioners and service providers.

Healthwatch Essex has recruited, trained and support sixteen Ambassadors who have Learning Disabilities. These Ambassadors with Learning Disabilities play a key role in promoting and increasing the volume of Learning Disability Health Checks across Essex.

Healthwatch Essex gathers evidence of what it means to be a user of health and social care in Essex by collecting people’s ‘Lived Experience’ and use this insight to help improve services so people who use health and social care services, and their experience, are at the heart of NHS and social care services.

Together with NHS England, the project develops partnership working with people with Learning Disabilities to improve health provision for Learning Disabled communities. The project aims to increase the uptake of Learning Disability Health Checks and promote wellbeing within this community.

The CIPOLD report and the recently announced National review of deaths of people with learning disabilities found that people with a learning disability generally have poorer health and a shorter lifespan than the general population. In Essex, we know that a large proportion of people are not taking up their annual health checks.

This project supports Principle 5 of the national Compact as activity is designed to understand the needs of a commonly disadvantaged group by actively seeking the views of service users and clients. Taking these views into account, including assessing impact, when designing and implementing policies, programmes and services, and uses the Essex Compact as a measure of quality – for example ensuring that its volunteering policy is Compact Compliant.
Impact

Ambassadors with Learning Disabilities are now playing a key role in promoting and increasing the volume of Learning Disability Health Checks across Essex with an ambition of increasing from current levels to 70% by 2018. Work this year has increased uptake by around 20%.

Sixteen Ambassadors are now trained in how to begin conversations with their friends and peers about their lives and how they should take health care seriously, including getting their free annual health check.

With Ambassadors, Healthwatch Essex also created a film, showing the experiences of health and social care of people with Learning Disabilities, designed to raise awareness of the difficulties people with learning disabilities face when accessing services with NHS and Social Care personnel.

As a result of Ambassadors work in raising awareness, Healthwatch Essex sponsored the first Essex Learning Disability Health Day on 12th June. The programme was designed to ensure as many partners get to talk and promote their work. It was designed to be a fun and informative event – voluntary sector organisations such as Essex Coalition of Disabled People and Mencap attended to share information about how to stay healthy when you have a Learning Disability, and delegates had the chance to try out activities like boccia and curling provided by Active Essex.

Ambassadors are now a recognised part of a new Essex-wide multi-agency Learning Disabilities Health Checks Working Group - to increase and maintain the uptake of the Learning Disability Health Checks working directly with commissioners to influence service design.
HENCEL Deaf Inclusion project

Overview

The Deaf Inclusion Project saw 12 Local Healthwatch across North, Central and East London working in partnership with The British Deaf Association and NHS Health Education England to improve deaf inclusion in their work and increase the involvement of London’s deaf community in the improvement of health and social care services across the capital.

Deaf people’s health is poorer than the general population and they are more at risk of preventable ill-health. In response to an investigation by The London Assembly Health Committee, 12 Local Healthwatch, the BDA and NHS Health Education North, Central and East London (HENCEL) worked together to support NHS Trusts in improving access for deaf service users and meeting their requirements of the NHS England Accessible Information Standard, The Equality Delivery System (EDS2) and duties under the Equalities Act.

A key part of the project was recruiting and supporting volunteers from the deaf community in London and training them to be Authorised Representatives and mystery shoppers. The British Deaf Association (BDA) was a key partner in the outreach, helping recruit the volunteers.

Once trained, the volunteers conducted Enter and View Visits looking at deaf access and pathways through 3 London Emergency Departments; Queen’s Hospital Romford, University College London and Newham Hospital.

A conference organised by partners in May 2015 was attended by 68 representatives from NHS Trusts, CCGs, local authorities, voluntary sector providers and members of the deaf community; the project raised awareness of the barriers faced by deaf patients and service users. The conference helped partners share the findings from the Enter and View Visits and good practice identified through the project, and enabled a constructive dialogue between deaf residents, service providers and commissioners.

Six short films with British Sign Language (BSL) signers, audio and subtitles were produced through the project, some targeted at staff training in the NHS and sharing good practice.
Impact

For a six month project, the collaborative approach has already had a big impact on NHS and local authority services.

- Bart’s Health NHS Trust are addressing the weaknesses in deaf access at Queen’s Hospital Romford and as Whipps Cross Hospital was identified by deaf delegates as having very poor deaf access at the conference, Trust Directors are feeding recommendations from the project into the hospital’s improvement plan.
- Redbridge Council have approached Healthwatch Redbridge for assistance in improving deaf access across all areas of activity.
- University College Hospital is using the Enter and View Report to feed into the rebuild of the Emergency Department to improve deaf access.
- Haringey Council have engaged the deaf volunteers to help improve access and use their stories and experiences for staff training and development.
- The short film featuring good practice in deaf access across health and social care services is being used as a staff training tool in the trusts involved in the project.
- Local Healthwatch in the sub-region have a pool of trained deaf volunteers engaged in their work, as they are a seldom heard part of the community.

The partnership has been so successful, HENCEL are investing further funds to continue the collaboration and broaden its focus to other disability groups. This will ensure more trusts meet their duties under the Equalities Act.
Compact Advancing Equality Award

HMRC Support for British Sign Languages Customers project

Overview

In 2014 HMRC closed its Enquiry Centre network to move to a telephony based model. This left Deaf customers who rely on British Sign Language (BSL) with difficulties contacting HMRC. We provided an online channel to book a face to face appointment with an interpreter but we wanted to do more.

In collaboration with Royal Association for Deaf people (RAD), HMRC is piloting an innovative package of targeted support to ensure Deaf customers can access services and information in real time, using BSL. HMRC is the first major government department to provide a dedicated BSL channel. “Their flexible approach means an improved offer, for Deaf people everywhere in Britain” (RAD).

The project has three elements:

- A co-branded website with BSL videos containing information about a variety of HMRC products. Written text versions are pitched to be easily understood by the Deaf community, linking to key HMRC products on Gov.UK. Easy to navigate and where possible, pictorial and visual. The website also provides access to the service elements.

- An advocacy & advice service where customers can book a webcam appointment to discuss, in BSL, their HMRC issues with an adviser, who is also Deaf. The adviser is able to resolve many issues but has a fast track link to specialist teams in HMRC when specific advice or action is needed. The service is ideal for customers who lack confidence to deal with HMRC themselves, or where they have complex issues.

- A Video Relay Service (VRS) for customers who wish to discuss issues directly with HMRC. The customer can book a same day webcam appointment with a BSL interpreter, who then contacts the HMRC contact centre by phone. A real time, three way conversation takes place between the customer and HMRC to resolve the customer’s issue.

RAD provided Deaf awareness sessions to help staff communicate effectively on the phone and in writing.

An attendee said ‘It was really lively and interactive. I never realised how strong and proud Deaf culture is. It was brilliant to see and will be a massive help for those taking calls. It blew me away and I learned so much from it!’
Impact

For Customers:
BSL customers don’t have the expense and disruption of traveling to face to face appointments. They can contact HMRC from their own home, as a hearing customer would, at a convenient time to fit with their other commitments. They have the support of a trusted third sector organisation when dealing with what can be a faceless Government department, which has historically not been considered Deaf friendly. They have access to material in an appropriate format, recognising that their needs are the same as anyone else’s. They are no longer reliant upon friends/family/third parties to help them, but have independence when interacting with HMRC.

For HMRC:
There are around 80k BSL users, all of whom will touch HMRC systems at some point in their lives. HMRC recognises it may have alienated Deaf customers by not recognising their needs fully. This project will bring inclusivity and with that, increased compliance. A one hour face to face appointment costs the public purse on average £250 whereas the VRS call costs £70. HMRC expects to save £540k per annum on an anticipated 3000 calls. We are utilising our enhanced Deaf awareness when designing products (digitally by default), making them easier to understand for all whom written English is not their first language, or for people with cognitive difficulties who have a lower reading age. We shared RAD training material to improve service across the board for our Deaf customers.

We will share insights with the wider Civil Service through our pilot evaluation.

Pictured: A Deaf Awareness session delivered by the Royal Association for Deaf People
Overview

Merton Voluntary Service Council Supported Volunteering Programme, is a partnership between London Borough of Merton Adult Social Care’s Ageing Well Preventative Programme, MVSC and the NHS and Mental Health Trust. It also works closely with the Job Centre Plus, LBM’s Employment team, the Cricket Green School and Centre Court Shopping Centre, Wimbledon. It offers targeted support and assistance to adults suffering from enduring mental health problems and/or learning, physical or sensory impairments to engage in volunteering.

MVSC Supported Volunteering Programme (SVP) has been supporting adults with mental health problems or learning disabilities to volunteer for 12 years.

MVSC believes that everybody should be able to volunteer. However, we recognise that vulnerable and marginalised individuals often need extra support to reap the significant social and health benefits that volunteering can offer.

Research has shown that active and regular involvement in volunteering can prevent dependency on intervention of health and social services and delay or reduce the need for council funded social care, by increasing resilience and connectedness, providing people with an additional support network and enhancing their sense of belonging and contribution to their community.

SVP acts as part of a multidisciplinary support team and early intervention system. It works with Community Mental Health Teams, LBM Employment Team, Learning Disability Service, Job Centre Plus, Cricket Green School and other agencies to identify people who need support.

The SVP provides a connection between individuals and their communities, supporting people to build networks and make the most of their skills in order to stay independent for longer. Volunteers become motivated to make positive changes to other areas of their life, such as new volunteering opportunities, hobbies and interests, or paid employment.

Recent SVP initiatives include the peer-led Avanti Club, for people with mental health issues, meeting every Monday evening; and Fayre and Square employability shop, in partnership with Centre Court Shopping Centre, which provides retail and customer service placements to young adults with learning disabilities and other support needs.
Impact

In 2014/15, the Supported Volunteering Programme enabled 142 people with mental health issues or learning disabilities to volunteer with Merton organisations and make a positive contribution to their community.

Our Volunteer Impact Assessment tools demonstrate that after a 3-month period of volunteering, all participants met LBM’s Ageing Well Preventative goals of reduced levels of dependency and increased levels of resilience, positive activities, mental wellbeing and contribution to their communities.

New roles, including the Avanti Peer Support roles within MVSC, have been developed in close collaboration with our partner organisations, aiming to make them more accessible for volunteers with mental health issues and other support needs (eg. ECOLOCAL, Social Enterprise Press, Foodbank, Scope Mitcham, British Heart Foundation, New Horizon Community Centre, Merton Libraries, Focus-4-1, Merton CIL).

Our employability shop Fayre and Square provided placements to 20 adults with learning disabilities or Mental Health issues, with 8 participants moving on to paid employment (Asda, Bodyshop, Fulham FC, Campus Group Catering and Marks and Spencer); 1 into accredited training; 4 into work experience positions at Asda and The Entertainer; 7 into further volunteering.

Closer working relationships have been developed with existing and new referral organisations and creative ways of working together have been implemented. We have regular case meetings with the Recovery and Employment Specialist team at the Wilson, with Community Mental Health staff, and other mental health support workers to discuss progress in order to provide the best possible service for the supported volunteers and prevent people from “going off the radar”.

Pictured: Launch of Avanti Club for adults with mental health issues
Compact Advancing Equality Award

DCLG Women’s Empowerment Fund

Overview

The Women’s Empowerment Fund awarded up to £20,000 to 14 small voluntary and community groups to help empower women so they were better able to challenge behaviours that could lead to child sexual exploitation. The fund was targeted at organisations that worked with particularly hard-to-reach black and ethnic minority women and an emphasis on the projects sharing their best practice and learning with the wider voluntary and community sector.

The Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) supports the development of strong communities with excellent public services. Incidents of child sexual exploitation, like those that came to light in Rotherham, affects and damages all communities. Recent research shows particular problems in reporting and challenging child sexual exploitation where cultural notions of honour and shame are involved. This can be a particular problem for Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) women.

To design an effective response we met women’s groups in Rotherham to ask what they felt would help make communities stronger in challenging child sexual exploitation. Guided by their experience we focussed our policy response on how to empower the most disenfranchised women, discussing a range of approaches with 12 small voluntary community groups (VCS) experienced with different BAME communities.

Following this consultation we decided the best approach was to set up the Women’s Empowerment Fund, total value of £250,000 asking for projects that: empower women; help them become community leaders in tackling child sexual exploitation; and that would share best practice. The prospectus was designed with Government Equalities Office (GEO) and Office for Civil Society. We also asked GEO to publicise the fund at local level to ensure small VCS groups were aware.

We received 611 applications. Following a rigorous sift we are funding 14 projects who are delivering different training programmes, developing training materials for use by other VCS groups, running awareness raising roadshows and reaching a wide range of hard-to-reach women.
Impact

The project is due to end in March 2016 but there has already been an impact. We have brought the 14 projects together in a workshop to develop best practice monitoring and evaluation for the fund; share DCLG guidance on communicating about their projects and learn from them how they communicate within their communities and communicate with hard-to-reach women.

As a result of the workshop we have set up a shared Linked In account with the 14 projects so they can share information and best practice as the projects are developed and deliver. These projects are already developing their own bottom-up network. Other Women’s groups are asking if they can join this network.

We estimate that upon completion the Women’s Empowerment Fund will reach between 900 – 1,500 women across England giving them the tools, knowledge and confidence to keep children safe from child sexual abuse, to tackle behaviours that could lead to such abuse, raise awareness including about the risks of cultures of denial that can occur in certain communities.

The best practice learning and case studies these projects are already gathering will be shared electronically, free to other VCS groups. The department now has details of over 600 organisations with expertise in tackling domestic violence against women, tackling child sexual abuse and working with the most disenfranchised women in society. This is a rich resource that we can consult on future policy work to build more cohesive communities.
Redbridge TB Partnership

Overview

Raising TB awareness in vulnerable Redbridge communities through a team of local people (recruited from at-risk communities) trained as Health Buddies, supported by a cross-sector TB partnership. The Buddies deliver culturally and linguistically appropriate information on this highly stigmatised and misunderstood condition.

In 2013 Public Health Redbridge commissioned RedbridgeCVS to implement a TB Awareness Project to be overseen by Redbridge TB Partnership, a collaboration between London Borough of Redbridge (Public Health and Housing), RedbridgeCVS, Barking Havering and Redbridge University Hospitals NHS Trust, Redbridge Clinical Commissioning Group, TB Alert (national charity), TB patients, Public Health England, Positive East (HIV), the Welcome Centre (homeless) and Redbridge Integrated Drugs & Alcohol Service. The Partnership feeds local experience into national TB forums and vice versa. It also has its own work plan based on community feedback.

The Redbridge TB Awareness Project and TB Partnership aim to:

- Raise awareness of TB symptoms amongst high risk communities
- Reduce the high prevalence of TB in Redbridge
- Support TB prevention, early diagnosis and treatment through joint working

To offset potential resistance to discussing TB, faith and community leaders were given training. RedbridgeCVS appointed a TB Awareness Project Coordinator and recruited, trained and employed local Health Buddies as casual workers. Health Buddies deliver culturally appropriate TB awareness sessions tailored around communities' usual venue and availability – Monday to Sunday; morning, afternoon or evening, in Hindi, Urdu, Punjabi, Gujarati, Bengali, Tamil, French, Pashto, Ndebele, Lingala and English. Sessions are backed by leaflets in English and community languages. Whilst Health Buddies and the groups they visit are drawn from communities at risk, resources stick to key messages without pinpointing particular communities so as not to foster blame.

Following a successful 6 month pilot, the contract was extended for 3 years until March 2017.
Impact

From October 2013 to June 2015, the TB Awareness Project met or exceeded all its targets:

- 16 local people trained as Health Buddies, building community capacity
- 140 TB awareness sessions held
- 3,595 people made TB aware, 74% from at risk communities
- 19 direct referrals to GPs or the Chest Clinic of people identifying with TB symptoms
- Additional awareness raised through a live community radio discussion, YouTube, Twitter, websites, local press and voluntary sector communication networks
- 9 TB Partnership meetings held

As a result of issues raised at TB Partnership meetings:

- Public Health Redbridge distributed leaflets to all GPs, pharmacies and dental practices
- Redbridge Clinical Commissioning Group offered GPs refresher online training devised by TB Alert
- Multi-agency protocol being developed for those with no recourse to public funds
- Bespoke TB lessons delivered to Redbridge College students
- Health Buddy role extended to HIV and Diabetes Management

Other achievements include:

- Cited in Public Health England's Chief Executive’s June 2015 Friday Message
- Involvement in South London CVS Partnership and NHS South East Commissioning Support Unit’s Improving the Health of Isolated Groups Masterclass (2015), used to train NHS staff
- National recognition by Department of Health for Excellence in Health and Wellbeing (2014)
- Included in Supporting the Education and Empowerment of Patients and Carers (SEEPAC) case studies in 2014
- Enquiries from other boroughs about replicating the Redbridge model
- During the life of the project, there has been a reduction of Redbridge’s TB rate from 55 per 100,000 population in 2012 to 53 per 100,000 in 2014
DCLG Neighbourhood Planning team

Overview

DCLG’s Neighbourhood Planning & Community Right to Build support programmes for 2015 are supporting over 1600 communities to shape the development of their areas by deciding where new homes, shops and offices should be built and what green spaces should be protected. The support offer has been continuously improved through collaborative working with our partner organisations, Locality & RTPI, and communities themselves, to ensure the support will help communities complete the plan-making process as quickly as possible, and to inspire more communities to take up their rights.

Neighbourhood Planning can be a complex and lengthy process for communities so we have implemented sophisticated, responsive and innovative programmes to deliver the most effective support to the 1600 communities who have started the process and inspire further communities. The programmes embed an ethos of flexibility and continuous improvement based on feedback from customers. The key innovative features of the programmes are:

- Highly collaboratively working with communities and a wide consortium of 12 expert partners led by Locality (a charity) so experts across the development sector to be called upon as required on a call-off basis;
- A flexible £7m funding pot which offers grants and funds technical support from over 40 pre-agreed technical support packages. We have already expanded the range of packages to reflect feedback from increasingly diverse groups, saving them time and costs;
- A user friendly phone and web advice service with online chat, plus a database of over 100 new toolkits, inspirational case studies and guides to help groups. We have already introduced a sophisticated search engine responding to feedback to help groups find the right support;
- We constantly monitor the issues raised through the programme’s advice service, diagnostic processes, and champions network to tailor our suite of tools (including video podcasts, theme-based newsletters, case studies, and technical toolkits), allowing us to react quickly to new issues arising; and
- We funded a series of 40 local workshops, run by communities themselves, to champion neighbourhood planning and inspire other communities to start.
Impact

The 2015 programmes have been highly successful, reflecting close collaboration and engagement with communities. Since February, the number of groups embarking on neighbourhood planning has increased from 1350 to over 1600.

Over 812 expressions of interest for support have been received in the first 6 months, of which nearly 400 of these were from ‘priority’ areas facing more complex issues such as urban areas, high growth areas, business areas and deprived areas.

400 grants have been approved worth over £2.3m and we have awarded 69 packages worth over £600k to communities for technical support to complete more complex parts of their Neighbourhood Plans, saving each community significant time and costs of independently commissioning this work.

Our advice service has had 1,134 calls and the website has had over 4,800 hits on the neighbourhood planning and community buildings pages with Neighbourhood Planning receiving the highest volume of enquiries.

The technical toolkits and guidance notes have been particularly successful – with pages viewed and toolkits downloaded over 15,000 times between 1 March and 10 September. These were commissioned to directly respond to the priorities raised by members of the neighbourhood planning community including our champion’s network.

We analysed the Local Planning Authority areas where a local mobilisation workshop event was held and we found there has been 59% more take up of neighbourhood planning in these areas than nationally. Given that the workshops were mostly held in areas of low take up, this a particularly good result.
Compact Engagement Award

Kent Jobcentre Plus

Overview

Kent JCP with partners is leading a pioneering approach to local service delivery through a series of multi-agency partnerships operating in the most deprived areas of Kent. Each partnership is unique, designed locally by JCP/partners including many VCSE/public sector organisations. Collectively they share a common purpose and innovative features, notably ‘Street Weeks’ taking services to areas of greatest need. Engagement of public/VCSE organisations, communities and service users is at the heart of the approach evidenced by high volumes of previously disengaged customers accessing services and the strength and depth of the partnerships.

Kent JCP is leading/actively involved in several multi-agency/ward-focussed partnerships. Two strong illustrative examples are: JCP leading Swale Bridge Partnership co-located within Sheerness JCP and Margate Task Force (MTF) where JCP is a key delivery partner.

The shared aim is to empower socially disadvantaged residents to turn their lives around by collaboratively tackling social issues - health inequalities, worklessness, debt, fuel poverty, poor education/truancy, crime, anti-social behaviour, domestic violence, substance misuse, poor housing etc.; by engaging communities; and focussed on Kent’s most deprived wards and streets.

‘Street Weeks’ is a highly visible feature in both partnership examples – on a street-by-street basis a public/VCSE sector team intensively engages residents, pools resources, and collectively tackles issues and provides fast-access to services.

Data-sharing features strongly – pre-‘street week’, partners share intelligence and survey residents; all data is mapped producing street-level profiles assessing unmet need, underlying concerns, and service demand.

Integrated working enables case-conferencing for families/individuals with complex needs to better diagnose, identify support, and solve problems.

Neighbourhood Responsibility Panels, developed by MTF, is a dynamic one-stop joint-assessment process – attending a panel individuals engage with a collective of organisations to discuss concerns, and immediately access wide-ranging services.
JCP staff work alongside VCSE/other partners daily within partnership areas, in Swale Bridge Partnership co-located in a JCP-based multi-agency hub.

Co-location gives JCP customers ready access to additional on-site services: Turning Point - delivering treatment services from a clinical room; NHS health trainers support for claimants with physical/mental ill-health; CAB Financial Capability workshops for claimants experiencing debt/money management/budgeting problems and to prepare for Universal Credit.

**Impact**

Numerous VCSE organisations work with JCP/other statutory bodies within the partnerships, including CAB, Turning Point, Swale Action to End Domestic Abuse, Shaw Trust, A Better Cliftonville residents group, The Green Doctor, Thanet Community Networks.

This collaborative, hands-on approach has delivered strong results, in terms of households engaged, referrals to VCSE organisations, and people helped into training, volunteering and employment, contributing to reduced claimant counts (e.g. -35% in Cliftonville West; -46% in Margate Central).

It has generated multiple positive outcomes for all participating organisations and residents, inspiring hope and ever increasing levels of community participation. Street Weeks has enabled identification of individuals and families facing multi-disadvantage and tailored support, supporting Social Justice by tackling root causes of poverty to deliver real and sustained change.

Benefits include relationships and trust built between agencies and the community, describing MTF as ‘our Task Force’ a testament to the positive impact of enhanced engagement.

Partnerships have received many endorsements: ‘practical initiatives like ‘Street Weeks’ are innovative in that they proactively seek out unmet need’ (Ending Gangs and Youth Violence Peer Review.)

Kent’s partnership approach has attracted considerable national interest having potential for wider application, and been shared with other Departments, areas, and policy makers. ‘Street Weeks’ has already been applied in other locations, and with Home Office support, Neighbourhood Responsibility panels have been adapted to deliver within local schools, re-branded ‘Family Support Panels’ to allows the team to work alongside teaching staff and governors to provide support for children and families. DCLG Innovation Funding has been secured by MTF to enable further expansion.
Sussex Youth Commission

Overview

Sussex Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC), Katy Bourne, has set up a Sussex Youth Commission (SYC) to enable young people from across Sussex to have a voice on policing and crime. The SYC works in partnership with the PCC, police and partner agencies to turn their research and recommendations into meaningful and realistic outcomes.

The SYC is made up of a group of young people from differing background from across Sussex including victims of crime and young offenders. They are drawn from schools, universities and voluntary organisations who work with marginalized young people in our community. They have undertaken research this year by having conversations with their peers and with some groups of young people who often find it difficult to engage with the police. We also link with a significant number of voluntary organisations to access many marginalised groups of young people in our community to get as many different perspectives as possible on policing in Sussex.

The views are gathered by partnering with voluntary organisations who facilitate workshops with those of various faith groups, ethnicities and the LGBT community. These views are then used by the SYC to create recommendations to present back to the PCC, the police and key partners and to turn these into meaningful outcomes. It’s a great opportunity to ensure young people’s voices are heard when considering police priorities in Sussex. The recommendations cover chosen priority areas; Drug and alcohol abuse, Hate crime, Relationship with the Police, Supporting Young offenders, Cyber-bulling and online harassment.

The current cohort of Youth Commission members are due to make recommendations to the PCC, Sussex Police and various partner agencies. They will be presented on the 23 September at a conference of 170 attendees. Once recommendations are presented, attendees will discuss how as partners, they can help implement a meaningful outcome. We have already made connections with the ‘Prevent’ team who work on radicalisation. The SYC will be working with them to discuss how radicalisation can be prevented in Sussex from a young person’s perspective.
Impact

One recommendation that has been implemented, following the SYC pilot project last year, is the establishment of the Independent Advisory Group. The role of this group is to support, challenge and inform the work of the PCC and the police. The group does this through peer research and engagement, scrutiny and observation, and by putting forward practical recommendations for change. This was set up with the intention of creating an arena in which young people and Sussex Police can have honest and frank discussions to inform future policing, such as Stop and Search and of night time economy policing. Feedback to senior officers on night time economy policing has informed officer deployment tactics and interaction with young people.

The SYC is also working with Victim’s Services in Sussex on a Hate Crime App which is currently in development. This app will provide an accessible portal for victims of hate crime, particularly young people to report hate incidents and crime as these are so often unreported. This is particularly crucial for the large LGBT community in Brighton and Hove, who are often reluctant to report this to police.

This project has not only had a large impact on policing and community safety in Sussex, but has developed the young people who have been a part of it to become vehicles for change in their community. We are very proud that two young people have been so inspired by the work of the group that they have become Special Constables.

Pictured: Olivia, a Youth Commission member, working with a group of homeless young people at Chichester Foyer.
Healthwatch Merton

Overview

Healthwatch Merton is the local consumer champion for the children, young people and adults of Merton working to help them get the best out of local health and social care services. Whether it's improving services today or helping shape them for tomorrow, Merton Healthwatch actively seeks views from all sections of the community, especially from those who can struggle to be heard.

Healthwatch Merton is here to give local people a real voice that truly influences the direction, delivery and improvement of local Health and Social Care services. We have worked hard to develop strong, transparent relationships and partnerships with organisations and groups covering health and social care locally. This includes the Voluntary Sector, Social Services, Public Health, Merton Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), NHS Trusts and more.

Since July 2013 we have worked with over 60 local voluntary and faith groups and heard the voices of over 1700 people through our engagement, outreach and research work, feeding directly into the local Health and Social Care agenda.

We have been part of more than 16 specific service improvements, developments or review programmes in partnership with the Local Authority, Merton CCG and the Voluntary Sector bringing the public direct to service providers and maximising influence.

We ensure a balanced work programme alongside responding to statutory and other initiatives by developing a series of annual work streams. Each year, two specific work streams are locally directed. These are decided on and influenced by the people of Merton using the feedback and intelligence we gathered over the preceding twelve months. A categorised list is produced and further engagement and research with the public helps us to narrow this down to two specific areas. Our locally directed work streams for 2015/16 are Older People and Urgent Care Services.
Impact

Healthwatch Merton prides itself on bringing people together and working in partnership to achieve the best we can for our residents. The following is a snapshot of our varied work and achievements:

**Mental Health Futures** - *Type: Event* - We brought together Mental Health organisations locally who offer advice and support to people in order to raise the profile and awareness of Mental Health provision available directly to the public. Over 60 people attend and representatives from eight uniquely different voluntary/charity organisations

**GPs** - *Type: Research* – This was identified as a focus area by our residents. We surveyed and spoke to over 200 patients and produced a report detailing the ideas and potential solutions for service improvement. This directly informed the Merton Clinical Commissioning Group’s improvement strategy for GP services.

**Healthy High streets** - *Type: Partnership (Public Health)* - 192 people from one of the most deprived parts of Merton participated and shared their views on their local High Street. Public Health Merton used this to give a formal response to the local Statement of Licensing Policy based on what people felt and wanted to see in their town centre to improve the local health economy.

**Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHs)** - *Type: Partnership* (Merton Clinical Commissioning Group and London Borough of Merton) – Focus groups and 1-to-1 interviews were planned and carried out with parents, carers and users of the CAMHS service. All the feedback and findings directly influenced the service redesign strategy for CAMHS in Merton.
Overview

The Community Intelligence Bursary (CIB) is a grant programme jointly funded by Tower Hamlets Healthwatch and Tower Hamlets Clinical Commissioning Group and supported by THCVS and Public Health. The aim of the bursary was to ensure that the needs and views of the local community, particularly those seldom heard, directly impacted on how services were designed, commissioned and delivered in the borough.

Further to discussions at the voluntary sector health and wellbeing forum, it was recognised that statutory health partners were struggling to effectively engage with the local community (particularly marginalised groups). The CIB was offered as a solution to this challenge.

A small grant panel was formed consisting of THCVS, Healthwatch, the CCG and Public Health to co-ordinate the bursary programme.

Voluntary sector organisations were given the opportunity to apply for small research grants (up to £5k) to gather community feedback on CCG and local authority commissioning priorities which included: older people, carers, children and young people, GP practices, dual diagnosis, cancer services, integrated care, the eastern European community and any other unidentified needs.

Seventeen organisations were successful and were trained to professionally conduct research by our partner organisations Citizens UK and Queen Mary University.

The individual reports were combined into a community intelligence report outlining cross cutting themes including:

- Acknowledgement that the voluntary and community sector is often the preferred provider of health and social care services.
- Funding cuts are having an impact on local voluntary sector infrastructure, putting existing community services at risk. The impact is likely to be felt most by older people.
- Issues around awareness of and accessibility of services are recurring themes in Tower Hamlets given its cultural diversity.
- Unemployment for working age men is cited as a major contributory factor to mental health problems.
A stakeholder event was held on 8th September 2015 attended by 130 people. We invited the voluntary sector, residents and statutory health partners to discuss the initial findings and make further recommendations.

**Impact**

Recommendations from the report will:

- Feed into the local authorities Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and the CCGs commissioning intentions
- Feed into the boroughs Health and Wellbeing Strategy refresh
- Inform the work of the wider voluntary sector and Healthwatch

The bursary programme is a significant piece of collaborative work which demonstrates effective cross sector partnership work in line with 2012 health and social care reforms and Compact principles. It has been welcomed as an innovative bottom up solution to gathering community intelligence and provided an opportunity for partners to align their priorities and share information more strategically to avoid duplication.

As a result of commissioning the voluntary sector (who work closest with the community) to conduct the research, partners received detailed high quality feedback from ‘hard to reach’ groups, which will inform future commissioning intentions.

The programme was cost efficient; for less than £50k a shared intelligence resource was produced which engaged over 2000 people over a period of two months.

Community researchers formed a peer support network in the borough. Contact information was exchanged between community researchers who may not have otherwise met had it not been for the bursary programme.

The programme provided capacity building support. The community researchers were accredited with a certificate from Queen Mary University on community research methods. Many applicants had not conducted research in the past so this was a great learning opportunity for them.
North Yorkshire Innovation Fund

Overview

Your Consortium is a voluntary sector contract management organisation run by the sector, for the sector. It co-designed a project with North Yorkshire County Council aimed at supporting the transformation of Health and Adult Social Care in the County. The CCG has joined the partnership, and the outcomes over the first three quarters have been remarkable.

Your Consortium and North Yorkshire County Council’s Health and Adult Services Directorate co-designed the Innovation Fund, which aims to support the transformation of Health and Adult Social Care in North Yorkshire.

The council is faced with significant challenges, where savings have to be found. Through the Innovation Fund the voluntary and community sector (VCS) has an opportunity to develop services that enable individuals to become less reliant on NYCC services, by providing early intervention and prevention and reducing the need for referral to statutory agencies. The Fund aims to:

- Support the VCS to deliver outcome-focused services with demonstrable impact in communities;
- Provide high quality services that demonstrate value for money, in line with the Council’s priorities

It has provided £450,000 to enable 32 organisations to deliver a wide range of interventions addressing three main themes:

- Reducing loneliness and isolation
- Preventing falls
- Supporting people to remain in their own homes

A fourth theme, preventing winter deaths and reducing fuel poverty, is available for groups working in the Airedale, Wharfedale and Craven Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) area, with an investment from the CCG of £48,000.

Impact

So far, 1069 vulnerable people have received support from the fund. The quarter three reports shows that most beneficiaries are aged 60 and over. However, 13 projects focus on the 16-29 year olds, demonstrating the need to
address issues within this younger age range. 62% of beneficiaries have a health condition.

Engagement with employed beneficiaries continues to be an unexpected outcome. The percentage of employed individuals accessing with the fund has increased. The number of participants registered as employed part or full time has remained the same, but there has been a 2% increase in self-employed people. The overall percentage of unemployed individuals accessing projects has decreased, however this equates to 248 beneficiaries.

Evaluation has shown that the methods used by partners are affectively reaching the desired target groups within North Yorkshire.

- 36% require support to live in their own home
- 62% have a health condition
- 32% have experienced a fall
- 26% have been admitted to the hospital within the last 12 months
- 14% have only one risk factor, with 47% stating between two and four; 39% have five or more.

Dementia, mental ill-health and physical conditions such as arthritis and mobility issues are the most common conditions.

Satisfaction levels are extremely high, indicating that the pragmatic and flexible approach to local delivery has resulted in a positive beneficiary experience.
North Tyneside Making Every Adult Matter

Overview

The MEAM (Making Every Adult Matter) service works with chronically excluded people who, due to chaotic lifestyles and multiple need, have difficulty accessing services and are often excluded from services because of past or current behaviour or risks. They tend to use expensive emergency and crisis services rather than having effective contact with planned services. The work was implemented as a pilot initially, but has now been integrated into mainstream services.

The Council and a range of partners have collaboratively developed a robust integrated service for people with multiple needs who often fail to meet inclusion criteria or whose previous behaviour or lack of engagement deems them ineligible for services. Typical needs include homelessness, substance misuse, offending, mental ill health, family breakdown and chaotic lifestyles. Multi-faceted need heightens vulnerability. The service supports these people in a productive way, addressing the negative cyclical nature of their lives.

A co-ordination approach is used with customers. A Co-ordinator is funded by the Council and strategic and operational panels comprising of a wide range of partners from statutory and voluntary sectors operate the service.

Operational panels meet fortnightly to discuss cases, share information to minimise risk, agree actions and support tailored to the individual. This approach blends services with appropriate skills to meet need and share risk and responsibility in a multi-agency way. The risk of an incident occurring due to lack of information sharing is minimised, an issue often highlighted in Serious Case Reviews. The strategic board highlights gaps in services that then feed into commissioning plans and also facilitates services “flexing” from usual operating practice where needed to meet individuals’ needs in the most appropriate way.

The operational panel includes a wide range of partners from statutory and voluntary sectors, and involvement of CVS partners at both operational and strategic level has allowed the service to develop flexible approaches that react more responsively to this group of customers.
Impact

- 31 clients engaged with MEAM in 2014/15. Many were described as ‘chaotic’ at initial engagement point and had achieved an increased level of stability following this engagement. The service is described as the main vehicle for enabling these people to access services.
- Further 46 people supported with brief interventions.
- An average per person 44% reduction in risk scoring using a recognised tool following MEAM intervention.
- 330% increase in the number of people accessing supported accommodation.
- 114% increase in the number of people accessing floating support.
- Reduction in arrests across the cohort from 137 in the year prior to MEAM to 84 post intervention (estimated cost saving of £88,404).
- Agencies have a greater understanding of the needs of customers, and a greater understanding of their respective roles and responsibilities.
- Greater partnership working, including between service providers who previously competed for business. Understanding how they could complement each other’s services to meet the needs of individuals has really strengthened this aspect.
- Greater confidence to work with more challenging clients, knowing that the work has the backing of a multi-professional team and that an individual agency always has a place to discuss concerns and issues to seek alternative solutions. Agencies have become less risk averse.
- Agencies willing to flex away from usual operating models where needed to provide tailored support, and joint working on cases between separate agencies to match up the optimal skill set and resource.
- Optimal use of existing local resources.
Leeds Rehab and Recovery mental health service

Overview

Leeds’ new ‘Rehabilitation and Recovery’ service is a joint venture established as a result of partnership working between voluntary sector providers, Community Links, Leeds Mind and Touchstone and Leeds and York Partnership Foundation Trust LYPFT with a vision to transform in-patient mental health rehabilitation services in the area.

Leeds’ new and innovative Rehabilitation and Recovery (R&R) mental health service has been designed and delivered through a partnership between Leeds’ NHS Mental Health Trust (LYPFT) and voluntary sector mental health organisations; Community Links, Leeds Mind and Touchstone.

The ‘R&R’ service is delivered through an integrated and multi-disciplinary team of mental health professionals employed by the four key partner organisations. The R&R service consists of a pathway through stepped intensity residential care to rehabilitation in the community, delivered through a Recovery Centre; a hub providing support to people for up to 6 months in the community.

The R&R service was developed as a result of a shared vision for the transformation of mental health services in the area. The service was redesigned and restructured, utilising the skills and expertise of the cross sector partners.

The partnership focussed on:

- An improved service culture focussing on recovery and rehabilitation in the community, by bringing new cultures and challenging practices.
- Promoting service user and carer engagement; putting service users at the heart of the service
- Evidence based practice
- Collaborative training strategies, sharing knowledge and clinical skills; bridging the gap between NHS inpatient and community voluntary sector providers
- Improved outcomes for service users and improved service user experience
Impact

Over the last 12 months the integrated team has enabled professionals from different backgrounds to develop an understanding of each other’s perspective, skills and experience and how this impacts on service delivery. The project has also provided a platform for testing and evaluating this new approach to service delivery.

A key focus for the transformation has been on providing more rehabilitation support in the community. By sharing knowledge and good practice, the team as a whole has broadened their collective awareness of accommodation & community resources impacting successfully on:

- Increased access of alternative community services & resources in Leeds, therefore providing service users with increased options & greater choice.
- Shorter inpatient admissions with the confidence that service users are discharged into appropriate accommodation with effective support packages.

Providing a seamless pathway and supported transition back into the community and independent living. The service is currently being evaluated & there are further plans to review the impact of the new service model and to evaluate the partnership working. This includes metrics evaluations which help us compare and contrast the previous structure to the new one.

Early statistics show an improvement in a number of areas in comparison to the previous year:

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<th>Category</th>
<th>March 2014 – August 2014</th>
<th>March 2015 – August 2015</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Care co-ordinator contact during in-patient stay</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>574</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discharges in Rehab &amp; Recovery Services</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean length of stay (days)</td>
<td>540</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition we have commissioned a partnership culture impact questionnaire exploring the culture within the service; in particular the impact and understanding of the partnerships. Results of these will be published in November 2015.
Hastings Without Walls

Overview

Hastings Jobcentre Plus and educational charity Education Futures Trust worked together to identify creative ways to help Employment Support Allowance claimants with mental ill-health move closer to the labour market, undertake volunteering, and utilise mainstream support. They introduced ‘Without Walls’ – an innovative conservation-based course with survival element, delivered collaboratively with other public/VCSE sector partners, which has been successful in engaging and developing life skills and participants’ aspirations, preparing them for life and the world of work, whilst bringing added environmental benefits.

Through consultation with ESA customers suffering mental ill-health, it became apparent that something very different was needed to engage those suffering depression, anxiety and significant mental health problems, to develop self-confidence, motivation and transferable skills to return to work. EFT’s experience of working with excluded teenagers in an outdoor environment inspired the idea of adapting best practice established there into a new, creative initiative to meet the needs of people with ill-health.

The result was ‘Without Walls’ - a conservation course with survival element, incorporating completion of the John Muir Discovery Award in Conservation, an outdoor learning accreditation certificate. This unique programme, tailored to meet individual needs, has proven effective at engaging those with entrenched problems and preparing them for life and work.

Participants undertake a ‘survival’ course of hands-on outdoor sessions involving conservation, land improvement, design, maintenance and gardening; commitment and resilience is rewarded using an attendance ‘raffle’, with tickets awarded for sessions attended entered into a ‘prize draw’. Prizes have an outdoor focus, including pieces of equipment participants have learned to use during the course.

JCP and EFT have been creative in resourcing this non-mainstream initiative, with partners contributing in cash or kind according to resources available. DWP provided funding, made referrals, and supported participants in close liaison with the tutor; Hastings Borough Council Park Rangers provided conversation opportunities, expert advice, knowledge, and tools; John Muir Trust provided accreditation, log books, award certificates, and leader training; East Hastings Sea Angling Association gave use of their facilities.
Impact

55% of initial cohort now in paid employment, often outdoor based.

Others with increased confidence are pursuing volunteering following the course, tutors having helped overcome any barriers with regards to making contacts and application processes.

Benefits to participants are illustrated in the many endorsements received, describing impacts on them that have been life changing:

- Gained vocational skills e.g. horticulture;
- Gained transferable skills through shelter building, making fires etc.;
- Fitter and healthier through physical activity;
- Broadened life experiences;
- Worked within a team, including teaching and sharing expertise;
- Improved communication skills;
- Built trusting relationships;
- Increased awareness, enthusiasm and practical skills for conserving the environment.

The success of the project enabled EFT to strengthen links with other partners and offer wider volunteering opportunities, and increased community awareness of conservation, volunteering, and the work of John Muir Trust.

Carole Dixon, CEO of EFT sums up the project's success:

“EFT is proud of its innovative ‘Without Walls’ programme and extremely grateful to DWP for enabling us to work in partnership with them to deliver this provision.
Not only do participants benefit from access to familiar outdoor spaces, but their conservation work is also of value to the local community.

To see the development and growth of the participants from week 1 to the end of the course has been a privilege and, although their future paths may not be smooth, they have gained an understanding of both themselves and the world around them that will enable them to live more fruitful lives, including taking steps towards employment.”
Leeds Mental Health Sharepoint project

Overview

The Leeds Mental Health Sharepoint Project involves joint working between seven local third sector organisations, the Leeds third sector mental health body Volition, Leeds City Council and Leeds and York Partnership NHS Foundation Trust to improve the exchange of information in the referral of people from acute mental health wards into supported accommodation.

A Mental Health Hospital Discharge Protocol was established in 2010 in partnership between Leeds City Council, Leeds and York Partnership NHS Foundation Trust (LYPFT) and third sector organisations to improve the discharge of patients into housing related support services for people with mental health problems. Services are commissioned by Leeds City Council and Leeds NHS North CCG.

In 2013 Community Links established an Accommodation Gateway to manage assessments and referrals employing a team of assessment staff. Any referrals into these services were matched to patients identified at Accommodation Gateway meetings.

Information Governance risks of transferring paper copies of confidential patient information from the ward and problems of the current meeting arrangements were identified in early 2014 and initial discussions took place to identify solutions.

Joint meetings were held during 2014 between Leeds City Council, Leeds and York Partnership NHS Foundation Trust (LYPFT), third sector provider organisations (Community Links, Leeds Mind, St Anne’s Community Services, Touchstone, Age UK, Catholic Care, Leeds Housing Concern) and Volition (the third sector mental health infrastructure body in Leeds) to identify a solution.

A web based solution was introduced on 1st July 2015, designed and hosted by Leeds City Council and assisted by a small amount of funding from Volition allowing the patient record to be uploaded securely from the hospital ward to the website (Sharepoint) enabling all partners immediate access to information reducing delays in the accommodation Gateway.
Impact

Since introducing Sharepoint the immediate risks of information governance have been eliminated by use of electronic transfer of information rather than post or faxing paper copies of patient risk assessments.

Third sector organisations have all been provided with training and secure electronic log-on equipment to access the website and information stored on the site – this has reduced delays in receiving referrals for vacancies in services. Initial assessments made on the hospital ward by the Gateway Co-ordinators and the accompanying risk assessment document can be instantly uploaded securely, and an email message alert sent to the receiving organisation.

This information can be assessed and an appointment made the same day by the support provider to see the patient and potentially offer a place in a service. Previously this took at least two or three days depending on the method of transferring information from the ward to the support provider.

The seven third sector organisations have all given positive feedback to the wider benefits of using the system in order to share information and develop improved links. One example being Leeds City Council Housing Options staff accessing the site to provide timely advice and assistance to support planned moves on to independent living for people in the commissioned services.

Overall the project has helped build partnership and joint working between the third sector mental health providers in Leeds and colleagues in Leeds City Council and NHS to bring improved outcomes for clients.
Compact Innovation Award

Redbridge Fit for Fun

Overview

Fit for Fun delivers free exercise classes to community groups (particularly those who do not undertake other regular fitness activities) allowing them to choose their own activities, venues and times. We have delivered the service via 300 local voluntary groups, reaching over 3,000 individuals, and our work with groups to find ways to continue the sessions when the funding ceases means that we currently have a continuation rate of over 90%.

Fit for Fun provides community groups with free 20 week exercise programmes of their own choice, in their own settings, with people with whom they feel safe and comfortable. We offer 20 x 1 hour sessions in a range of activities, matching groups with vetted and qualified instructors who tailor the sessions to meet particular needs. Sessions offered include Bhangra dancing, kick-boxing, chair-based exercise, line dancing and yoga.

We target people who would not normally engage in any type of health-focused physical activity, such as taking part in organised sport or using gyms. After the 20 week period, we work with groups to sustain the physical activity once the funded input has ceased. Around 90% of groups continue to exercise together once the funded period ends. This provides a huge contribution to local public health through keeping people fit and active.

Partnership working is key to success. Originally conceived in partnership by Redbridge PCT and RedbridgeCVS, it is now funded by the Council’s Public Health department. RedbridgeCVS uses its links with community groups to identify participant groups. GP practices support the work, including referring and identifying groups who could benefit from the service. Redbridge Council has helped us to train some participants to become trainers. They also fund our access to Grants Online, which has helped us to make successful funding bids to groups wishing to continue to buy-in a trainer. We have also worked in a range of ways to help groups continue to exercise together without funded input.

Impact

Fit for Fun is a simple concept – bringing together groups of people who already know each other or share a common interest, but who are unlikely to take part in any regular physical activity in gyms or classes etc. By targeting existing community groups whose members are generally inactive we are able to have a
major impact on their overall health and wellbeing. We work with groups including those for people with mental health problems, physical disabilities, older people, the homeless, the isolated or lonely, young people, and people of all backgrounds and ethnicities.

Participants take part because they feel comfortable and in a safe environment. The programme puts great emphasis on ensuring participants enjoy themselves at the same time as improving their fitness levels. 20 weeks gives people time to get into the habit of exercising and start to see real benefits to their health and wellbeing.

Impacts have been far wider than originally anticipated. Our monitoring has reported benefits relating to: mobility; improvement in ailments; improved mental wellbeing; reductions in social isolation; new friendships being made; greater social cohesion; and providing an important stepping stone toward independence for those with mental health conditions.

To date the project has worked with over 3,000 individuals in around 300 groups. Around 90% of the groups who undertook their funded 20 week sessions 8 years ago (when the project first started) have continued to undertake regular exercise sessions as a result of the initial Fit for Fun input.

Pictured: Redbridge Stroke Club - Chair Based Exercise
Redbridge Autism Ambassadors and RAAR projects

Overview

Our Autism Ambassadors and RAAR projects are designed and delivered by young people with autism to raise autism awareness and improve accessibility to buildings and services in Redbridge for autistic people. Our projects have been funded by London Borough of Redbridge for the past two years and have been successful through developing partnerships in the community, designing new innovative activities and providing solutions resulting in positive outcomes for everyone involved with our schemes.

The Autism Ambassadors (AA’s) project delivers innovative and interactive autism awareness training sessions followed by a question and answer session to look at removing the barriers which prevent people with autism accessing local services, clubs and provisions.

The Redbridge Autism Awareness Roadshow (RAAR) project is managed by a person with autism who has created an accessibility audit survey to look at how local services can become more accessible not only to people with autism but those with other disabilities and non-disabled people. The survey focuses on looking at how the barriers to utilising local opportunities can be removed and how more disabled people can access services in their community, through companies and providers making reasonable adjustments.

The AA’s and RAAR work closely with local schools and colleges, the council and other organisations to recruit young people with autism living in Redbridge to become involved, trained and engaged in the projects. The projects use a variety of communication methods to ensure participants are able to take an active part in delivering autism awareness sessions or assisting in completing access visits and compiling evaluation reports to improve services and increase opportunities available to disabled people living in Redbridge and the surrounding area. Our projects deliver unique autism awareness training sessions that are impacting real changes to how individuals understand autism and how they can make long term embedded procedural changes to make services more accessible and open for local residents and visitors to Redbridge.

Impact

These projects have enabled over fifty people with autism to enhance their social and communication skills by becoming Ambassadors and created three paid employment roles for local disabled people. Young people have learnt new
skills, gained confidence to deliver presentations to raise autism awareness and enjoyed travel training as they learn to move safely around their community. The projects have delivered over 150 sessions to over 4000 individuals. Sessions have been held at Job Centres where adjustments including changing entrances, reception areas, providing training and general information have enabled more disabled people to look for work. We have also worked with Local Authority, health and voluntary sector settings in order to help these services implement areas of the Autism Strategy.

The Ambassadors have worked with schools and colleges to increase the understanding of autism and help reduce incidents of bullying. RAAR has worked with shops, banks and leisure services to look at access issues and raise autism awareness. The AA’s and RAAR are working with Transport for London in 2015 to meet with managers, drivers, trainers, internal staff, security, inspectors and engineers to look at ways to encourage more people with autism to utilise public transport in the capital.

AA’s and RAAR’s vision is to make Redbridge the first Autism friendly zone in England through raising autism awareness and access to buildings, services and opportunities for autistic people.

Many of the suggested reasonable adjustments have been implemented and will not only benefit people with autism but also the wider community including families with young children, senior citizens and disabled people with other impairments.
Essex 555 project

Overview

At a secret location in Essex, the 555 Project hosted a meeting that began to change the way lived experience is regarded by those responsible for services.

The findings from the 555 project were taken to a secret meeting with commissioners and providers of mental health services in Essex where five people, from five focus groups, had five minutes to tell their story to those present, face-to-face, explaining the impact that the service has had on them through their own eyes.

In February 2014, Healthwatch Essex filmed its Mental Health ‘sofa’ film on the back of the national ‘Time to Change’ campaign. The film was launched in March 2014 and was widely recognised and credited as being a powerful lived experience film giving voice to service users.

A theme emerging from this work was a perception held by service users and carers that people at the very top of the NHS and social care – people who were responsible for commissioning and providing services – never spoke to service users, and probably never met together, which was why services never seemed to be truly joined up.

In addition to an online survey the 555 Project ran five project groups across Essex engaging with 33 mental health service users and carers to listen to the voices of Essex Mental Health services users and carers to discover people’s lived experience of mental health services in Essex, engaging with people outside of the main towns that are often the focus for most engagement activities to give opportunities to those who live further away from event venues and may not have been listened to in the past.

On the 7th October 2014, five people from these focus groups shared their stories face-to-face with around 30 of the county’s top decision-makers at a meeting held at the Secret Nuclear Bunker, Kelvedon Hatch. It was the first time that these commissioners and providers had come together to listen and learn from people’s lived experiences in this way.

Impact

The meeting had a simple aim: to change the way that lived experience is regarded and used by those responsible for mental health services. In addition,
Healthwatch Essex and ECDP aimed to demonstrate to those on film and participants in the 555 project that their voices were heard.

The people who participated in the 555 Project had a vast range of experience in terms of mental health, in the services that they had accessed, and also in the way that they felt about their journey and the support and services that they had received. The 555 Project and the powerful experience that participants shared allowed us to capture, share and voice the lived experience of a small sample of people who have used mental health services in Essex.

Feedback from the event was overwhelmingly positive. In addition to expressions and commitments from commissioners and providers to address the question of service user voice, several audience members expressed regret that health and social care services had 'let down' the five mental health service users and participants.

A report, which included key recommendations, was published and disseminated widely to stakeholders, and given a high profile launch on World Mental Health Day. Both the event and report received considerable media attention.

A number of positive and tangible actions have arisen as a result of this partnership, working with organisations joining together to review how services are commissioned and delivered whilst keeping the lived experience of their users at the heart of this.
Compact Innovation Award

Merton Pro-active GP Pilot

Overview

Merton’s Proactive GP Pilot project is an innovative project working within existing resources to embed prevention in GP practices and tackle health inequalities within hard to reach at risk communities. The project links GP practices to Community Health Champions who screen group members for early diagnosis of long-term conditions in the more deprived east of Merton involving a partnership of the Council, Merton Clinical Commissioning Group, GP practices in East Merton and the voluntary sector Health Champions.

The Proactive GP Pilot is a creative approach to tackling health inequalities. Working within existing resources through a cross-sector partnership, it uses innovative engagement with Health Champions in east Merton, where residents suffer higher levels of long-term conditions, initially targeting smoking and Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease or COPD. Developed with Public Health and partners, it includes:

- Merton Voluntary Services Council – works with community groups to identify and support community health champions
- Merton Clinical Commissioning Group – provides expertise and support to GP practices through its GP Clinical Director for Keeping Healthy and Well

LBM Public Health provided a literature review of best practice, support to design of initiative and monitoring data.

The scheme creates a co-ordinated pathway for prevention and early detection by joining together GPs, the Council’s Public Health team and the voluntary sector. Health Champions, trained, volunteer members of community groups representing residents in east Merton have regular contact with their members who they encourage to take up healthier lifestyles and preventive screening opportunities such as NHS Health Checks.

Community Health Champions are trained to use a screening tool for COPD and to refer patients identified at risk to their GP who will carry out a COPD assessment. GP practices refer known smokers to an embedded smoking cessation service provided on site. Participating GP practices share results and experience among themselves to improve early detection and management of COPD. A kite mark scheme and an annual award given by the Merton Health and Wellbeing Board are under development.
Impact

The GP Proactive Pilot is designed to create new ways of working, delivering a cross sector partnership between GPs, public health and the voluntary sector supported by both the Council and the CCG. It has:

- Brought GPs together in a network for a continuous review of performance and potential improvements
- Successfully embedded prevention in GP practices in the more deprived east of Merton as all participating practices now have on-site smoking cessation services
- Created robust links between community health champions and GP practices.

The Community Health Champion component of the pilot identifies representatives of local community groups to encourage members of their groups to participate in healthy lifestyles and to take up prevention services. Each of the more than 25 volunteers received Royal Society of Public Health NVQ 2 level training and a My Health Guide (an adult equivalent of the red book), which sets out all the information needed to provide advice, as well as opportunities for group members to commit to a specific goal. This component targets the difficulties GPs may experience in reaching some patients, thus addressing the significant variations in detecting long-term conditions between GP practices and the resulting health inequalities. In the longer term, it is hoped to reduce A&E attendances for conditions that should be managed by GPs in a community setting.

A robust evaluation is being designed for the pilot, and if effective, it can be expanded to other prevention initiatives and long-term conditions.
VCSE Stockton-on-Tees Health Initiatives

Overview

VCSE Health Initiatives: Since 2014, Catalyst, the infrastructure organisation for Stockton-on-Tees, has led a VCSE Programme to meet health outcomes using social prescribing and the strength of relationships the sector has. This followed on from a successful pilot delivered by Synergy VCS Consortium in 2013-14. In total over £1m of funds from the local authority and CCG have been used to commission innovative projects that have been externally evaluated by Teesside University. This has led to access to mainstream commissioning opportunities for successful projects.

In 2013 the newly formed Hartlepool & Stockton Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) committed £300,000 and a series of challenges to the voluntary, community & social enterprise sector (VCSE) to use social prescribing based on the strength of the relationships they have to achieve clear health outcomes. The funds and commissioning process were managed by the VCSE under the auspices of the Health & Wellbeing Board. This resulted in 13 projects being commissioned to run for around 6 months each as experiments or pilots to demonstrate the value of the VCSE in meeting health outcomes.

In 2014 the programme was extended; £333,000 of funds from the CCG was augmented by £300,000 from Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council Public Health (SPH). Following the first year’s programme it was identified that a formal evaluation of each project and the programme as a whole should take place – Teesside University were commissioned to do this. 17 VCSE projects were commissioned including one that had showed exceptional success in 2013-14 and needed to be developed further, especially as it was compliant with the emerging Better Care Fund outcomes.

In 2015, the CCG has committed a further £400,000 with support from SPH for some specific pieces of work. 10 projects have been commissioned and four from previous years have achieved mainstream status. The whole programme continues to be evaluated by Teesside University and is managed by the VCSE by Catalyst.

Impact

Relationships: the impact of this approach between the VCSE, CCG and Public Health has led to an open and honest appraisal of where each sector’s strength lies and how best to exploit them. The VCSE has learned that services must be
forensically designed to meet the priority health outcomes of public sector funders. The CCG and Public Health that the VCSE can reach people and communities in different ways that also meets their outcomes. These relationships have led to other projects including planning for Better Care Fund and becoming one of nine demonstrator sites for NHS England’s Integrated Personal Commissioning Programme.

Return on Investment: the evaluation by Teesside University shows social return on investment across the programme is of great value with some projects showing a value of over £7 for every £1 spent – the average being around £2.50. The evaluation demonstrated a contribution to the health economy by savings to mainstream NHS services.

Improvement to health: it is a fairly obvious thing to state but the achievements above mean that a large number of individuals, often in deprived and isolated communities, are now living healthier lives thanks to the interventions made by the VCSE. This is especially true for those at risk of hospital admission or being isolated on discharge from hospital.

Strategic leadership: Catalyst is also now trusted to lead on other developments wider than the health agenda demonstrating that all main partners in Stockton-on-Tees celebrate our relationships in the true spirit of Compact.
Compact Leadership Award

John Dwyer, Cheshire PCC

Overview

The Police & Crime Commissioner for Cheshire, John Dwyer and his commitment to developing a Compact way of working with the VCS in Cheshire, to enable the sector to play a role in helping to make Cheshire safer.

Since November 2012, the Police and Crime Commissioner for Cheshire John Dwyer has committed to working with the voluntary and community sector across Cheshire. Building on “In Safe Hands”, produced by four local infrastructure Voluntary Community Sector and Voluntary Association Organisations (VCS/VA) on behalf of the Cheshire Safer Future Communities Network, the Commissioner has developed good relationships with the local sector. His leadership and commitment to the long term sustainability of the sector is demonstrated by the following:

Development of a Compact agreement between the Commissioner and the Cheshire VCS, ensuring that the local sector is enabled to play a key role.

Commissioning the VCS/VA to actively engage the local voluntary sector to provide capacity building support to help organisations respond to commissioning opportunities.

Support local communities with investment of £1,775,516 into the sector through a Crime Prevention Fund small grants scheme, supporting innovative activity at the grass-roots level, a number of Participatory Budgeting schemes across Cheshire as well as grants and contracts with local voluntary sector organisations.

The Commissioner supports the use of the Star Standard, a locally developed and specifically designed for the sector quality measure, and advocates VCS developed tools such as GRIPP to assist organisations to professionalise.

Included in contractual and grant terms are the requirements to recognise and work to increase social value, and to work with volunteers where possible, e.g. the RASASC Sexual Violence Aftercare contract, and the Commissioning team work with providers to develop outcomes monitoring enabling them to meet funding requirements.
Impact

The Compact will help to:

- Improve engagement and communication between both parties and recognise the role that the third sector can play in reaching people and communities that might not always have a voice
- Allow the third sector an opportunity to influence and shape the commissioning plans, strategies and intentions of the Commissioner
- Promote a greater understanding of the contribution that the third sector can make and to help the sector understand more about the work of the Commissioner
- Increase opportunities for the third sector to play a part in meeting the challenges that Cheshire faces
- Improve services by identifying and addressing community needs and gaps in provision
- Work together to make best use of resources and improve the effectiveness of services.

Each grant or contract awarded by the Commissioner is subject to monitoring and evaluation and key to increasing social value. The diverse range of projects show excellent outcomes as services to victims improve and crime and antisocial behaviour continues to fall across Cheshire.

The ‘Change the Grange’ Participatory Budget project was undertaken in a challenging area, 17% of the population involved in developing projects, which have increased community activity, improving the health and wellbeing of the residents. Data shows that there has been a reduction in crime and ASB. A further four programmes are scheduled for this year.

Investment has enabled the voluntary sector providers to develop their organisations by using quality assurance tools and a greater understanding of ‘commissioning for outcomes’.
Compact Leadership Award

Councillor Simon Wales, London Borough of Sutton

Overview

We are nominating Cllr Simon Wales, Deputy Leader and Lead Member for the Voluntary Sector. Cllr Wales has demonstrated significant leadership on the partnership working of the council and the voluntary sector, embodying the principles of the Compact. Under his leadership we have won both the Local Partnership Compact Award in 2013 and the Impact Award in 2014.

- Chair of our quarterly Compact group since 2012 which has representatives from all Council Directorates and the voluntary sector.
- In 2011/2012, the introduction of the new Sutton Community Fund (£100kpa) and Neighbourhood Grants (£30kpa). Both of which have been retained in full despite pressures on local government funding.
- Chair of the Community Fund panel since 2011.
- Oversaw the refresh and redevelopment of our Compact in 2012, which demonstrated the strength of the public/voluntary sector partnership and won the 2013 Local Partnership Award.
- In 2013, led the Sutton Compact review of the capacity building needs of the voluntary sector in Sutton leading to a new four year Infrastructure Support and Capacity Building Fund (worth £342,000 a year). This work won the 2014 Impact Award.
- Championed the development of a Capacity Building Framework (and chaired the working group) through which the Council funded a range of support for the voluntary sector e.g. a programme of marketing support, a project to identify back-office savings, and a new Transformation Fund for 2014/15 (£130,000) and 2015/16 (£70,000) to enable VCOs to build capacity and pilot new ways of working and generating income.
- Led a joint project between the Council and the voluntary sector to develop a local framework to measure social value in the commissioning process (shortlisted for a Compact Award in 2014).
- Championed the Social Enterprise Network, a joint Council/Voluntary Sector initiative, supporting social enterprises.
- Championed the transfer of council buildings to the voluntary sector, two buildings are now being transferred as a result.
Impact

Under the leadership of Cllr Wales, we have achieved the following:

- The Community Fund has distributed 64 grants to VCOs worth £370,412.
- The Neighbourhood Grants distributed £90k of funding to 135 groups supporting our smallest neighbourhood groups deliver community activities.
- The Transformation Fund distributed £200k of funding over 2 years to support innovation to 28 VCOs.
- A refreshed and revised Compact with signatories from across the public and voluntary sector.
- A jointly agreed Capacity Building Framework for the VCS which:
  - Trained 13 people to develop a marketing strategy and five VCOs to develop a bespoke marketing strategy
  - Secured back-office savings of £4744
  - Developed a crowd-funding project for local VCOs
  - Implemented a Trustee development programme
  - Initiated the development of a new local giving model.
- A jointly agreed Infrastructure Support & Capacity Building Fund operating for four years from April 2015.
- A joint Council/Voluntary sector project to develop a local social value framework for commissioning which trained 130 council and voluntary sector staff.
- Secured a Social Enterprise Place Award for Sutton.
- A commitment from the Council to make a building available to the voluntary sector to develop as a hub, along with some financial support, which has led to successful first stage HLF application. An agreement to transfer another building to the EcoLocal charity.
- Extensive feedback from the VCS through the Compact meetings, which has led to improvements in the local commissioning process and the e-tender portal used locally.
South Gloucestershire Compact Implementation Group

Overview

Building on momentum generated following receiving the Partnership Award in 2012, the South Gloucestershire Compact Implementation Group’s work to embed Compact Principles has continued to go from strength to strength. The Compact has become central to supporting partnership working in the area, with the refreshed Compact adopted by the Local Strategic Partnership in July 2014. Our Disputes Resolution Process is well used by both Commissioners and the VCSE, and we use the learning from the disputes we have overseen to continue to strengthen work together.

The Compact Implementation Group (CIG) provides leadership driving the embedding of Compact principles; supporting the development of best practice across and between sectors; and managing the Disputes Resolution Process. Reporting to the Chief Officers Group and LSP annually, CIG Membership includes Senior Officers from Avon Fire and Rescue Service; Avon Local Council Association; Avon and Somerset Police; South Gloucestershire Clinical Commissioning Group; South Gloucestershire Council with cross department representation; Town and Parish Councils Forum and The Office of Avon and Somerset Police Crime Commissioner and the VCSE.

Originally developed in 2004, refreshed in 2010, ‘Getting it Right Together’ - The South Gloucestershire Compact was revised and adopted by the LSP in July 2014, it acts as a clear reference to underpin partnership working for the benefit of residents and communities.

The LSP, refreshed Compact, representation and involvement of the local VCSE on partnership bodies, demonstrate the long term commitment all agencies have made to continue to improve working relationships across sectors.

The Compact contributes to greater equality in the relationship between partners who vary in terms of size, sophistication and influence and advocates a way of working for the sectors to promote collaboration and improve relationships, enabling difficult conversations by providing a framework to follow.

The Compact’s clearly defined Disputes Resolution process administered by CVS South Gloucestershire is well used by both VCSE organisations and public sector commissioners. Disputes are overseen by the Chair of the Compact
Implementation Group provided by Avon Fire and Rescue Service (until June 2015).

**Impact**

The impact of the Leadership shown across sectors to work together and implement change, is demonstrated through:

- The VCSE Leaders Board Theory of Change, supporting collaboration, recognising ‘co-opetition’, aspiring to co-produce local services working with SGC Directors.
- Inward investment by the VCSE.
- Public sector broadly maintaining investment in the VCSE over the last four years.

The clearly defined Disputes Resolution Process implemented by the CIG, is welcomed by both VCSE and the public Sector. Colleagues are able to speak to the CVS Chief Officer confidentially about their concerns, deciding whether they wish to use the process to help to resolve them. Formal disputes have been submitted both by VCSE organisations and by public sector bodies.

In November 2014, a review of all Disputes was facilitated and chaired by CIG Town and Parish Council Forum representative, the learning has been used to improve partnership working and had the following impact:

- Closer alignment between SGC Commissioning and Procurement Strategy and the Compact
- Advice issued to Commissioners and VCSE ‘It’s the simple things!’ including action points to be sent through following a meeting to check understanding
- Clarity on grant application processes; joining up or agreement to join up in future across department and public body commissioning process
- A reduction in the number of Disputes saving capacity for VCSE and public sectors

To further enhance sector relationships ‘safe space’ workshops will be launched at Annual VCSE conference; to foster greater awareness, understanding; focusing on sustainability, full cost recovery and reserves, monitoring and evaluation process.
Sefton New Realities Steering Group

Overview

The Council and representatives of the VCF sectors in Sefton have come together to change radically how the Local Authority and VCF organisations interact with each other.

They have produced “New Realities”, a “can do” collaborative agreement and have designed ways of “re-imagining” local relationships to ensure more equal and more productive partnerships will develop between the local authority and local communities across the whole Borough of Sefton.

Following an unreasonable request from the LA for a payment to allow a roundabout to be used by a local group to commemorate the anniversary of the beginning of the First World War, the Deputy CEO of the LA asked representatives of VCF groups if this situation occurred regularly.

A joint development group was established in August 2014, facilitated by Sefton CVS, to explore how changes could be made to avoid such situations recurring and explore new approaches to working more productively and innovatively with both commissioned and local community action groups. The group committed to developing a framework using an action learning approach to encourage new thinking and practice from which the “New Realities” document was developed and consulted upon in the New Year 2015.

The Development group is taking forward a programme of actions to promote and champion New Realities, through highlighting achievements and exemplars of good practice, identifying where improvements are needed and promoting remedial action.

Members of the development group will be an Ambassador to support the championing of New Realities principles to all front line LA staff, and all managers at all strategic levels.

New Realities is being championed by the Cabinet Member for Communities and the document was adopted by the Council following VCF sector consultation. There will be a press launch due in September 2015. Sefton CVS is holding a full day’s conference ‘New Realities in Action’ for 100 delegates with workshops, key notes and social media tools to promote innovation locally.
Impact

Sefton Council has integrated this initiative into their “One Council” change programme. “New Realities” is promoted to employees via the Council Intranet page and regular Team meetings at all levels.

Examples of the impact of New Realities:

- Community markets have been introduced with an emphasis on supporting local businesses and community groups giving them an opportunity to promote themselves. The Council provided funds to purchase stalls for the newly formed “Sefton Community Markets” CIC and also ensured that they did not have to pay for a Public amenities licence to trade on the high streets across the borough.
- Increases in advertising costs have inflated the cost of implementing road closures (TRO’s). This increase has impacted the viability of Community organisations to deliver events. Using the new realities principle, a solution of applying for TRO’s in bulk by organisations, with a one off affordable fee was implemented.
- Joint communication programme using a web platform established to generate case studies and learning to encourage good practice replication between the Council and VCF sector.
- New Realities principles included by the Council’s Chief Executive in the recruitment process for the Senior Executive Director appointments.
- The Council is now streamlining the current myriad of contracts and grants issued to organisations from all depts. across the whole Council, The aim is to create a more streamlined and consistent approach to commissioning with increased involvement of organisations within service design with the emphasis on social value.

“Sefton has always had a vibrant and innovative VCF sector. However the New Realities approach has in my view taken this to a new level. A genuine collaborative approach built on mutual trust and respect, delivering real change in how we work together for the benefit of our communities.”
Margaret (CEO Sefton MBC)
County Durham Voluntary and Community Sector Working Group

Overview

The County Durham Voluntary and Community Sector Working Group brings together public sector partners with representatives of the VCS to enhance partnership working and drive forward the delivery of the VCS Strategy for County Durham based on a shared vision:

‘As partners together we want County Durham to be a place where a diverse voluntary and community sector thrives, where everyone works together to realise the aspirations of individuals and communities to improve quality of life’.

The VCS Working Group is now in its fourth year of operation. It initially came together in 2012 following the renewal of the Local Compact. Its membership and remit have evolved to respond to the challenges faced by all partners.

The group is chaired by Durham County Council’s Assistant Chief Executive. Membership includes seven representatives from the VCS who are linked to the thematic partnerships of the County Durham Partnership; three council cabinet portfolio holders; four public sector partners (Police, Fire, CCG, PCC); and senior council officers from Partnerships and Community Engagement, Commissioning, and Public Health.

Recently the group has been focussing on four key areas:

- Volunteering - developing a consistent approach to volunteering to hold together the best of what everyone is doing across the county in a more coordinated way.
- Procurement - understanding how the council and public sector partners can procure services from the VCS to best effect and how to strengthen the ability of VCS partners to demonstrate their impact and social value in order to win public contracts.
- Grant support and funding - how to maximise opportunities for local groups to access funding opportunities and for them to be supported in making successful applications.
- Intelligence and preparing for the future - understanding the state and the changing nature of the sector and developing mechanisms for the VCS to put forward ideas for more effective ways of working.
Impact

By adhering to the principles of the Compact knowledge has improved, understanding increased and productive working relationships have developed.

Volunteering:

- Easier route to volunteering opportunities for individuals, and support for groups recruiting volunteers, provided through a developing Centre for Volunteering and Social Enterprise.
- Improved confidence in the quality of the volunteering experience has been enabled through the Volunteer Coordinators Forum and development of a County Durham Kite Mark.

Procurement:

- Sustainable Procurement & Social Value Policy Statement developed.
- VCS have early indication of commissioning intentions through a Market Position Statement, VCS Market Engagement events and soft-market testing.
- Increase in the number of consortia bids from the VCS.
- Despite overall reductions in the council’s procurement spend the proportion of spend with the third sector has actually increased.

Grant Support and Funding:

- Significant grant funding to the VCS from the Council, to aid sustainability, has been reviewed. Value for money has been recognised and a greater emphasis has been placed on outcomes. As a result some changes have been made and funding has been maintained.
- Increase in the amount of external funding to match VCS projects funded by our Area Action Partnerships and local councillors’ Neighbourhood budgets.

Intelligence and Preparing for the future: The VCS Representatives on the Working Group have enabled better partnership working within the VCS by the formation of the Better Together Forum which brings together senior representatives of larger or specialist VCS organisations with a countywide remit to share best practice and look for new opportunities to collaborate.
Universal Support Delivered Locally pilot project team

Overview

JCP established a ‘Universal Support Delivered Locally’ pilot project team, forming a VCSE, JCP and Local Authority delivery partnership to trial support services to help benefit recipients prepare for the advent of Universal Credit and the greater control it will allow over their lives.

The multi-disciplinary project team is co-located within three South London JCPs of Lambeth, Lewisham and Southwark, and draws on the expertise and specialisms of each of the pilot partners, with Triage provided by a combined partnership team.

This ground breaking partnership has enabled development of an innovative, cost-effective service that will move claimants towards employment, self-sufficiency and greater financial independence.

Introduction of Universal Credit will enable JCP customers to take greater control over their lives and ease their transition into work, however some will need help to manage this change. JCP Universal Support Delivered Locally (USDL) pilots aim to assess the level of need and trial methods of assessment, referral and provision of support.

Local demographics indicates high need for support, the pilot area, being within the top 45 most-deprived local authority areas in the country, with 78,000 on working-age benefits. The Tri-borough pilot is testing a new model of delivering USDL services through a cross-sector partnership between JCP, VCSE providers (Citizens’ Advice Bureau with local Credit Unions, SHP and Thames Reach) and three local authorities.

The multi-disciplinary project team combines expertise of each pilot partner and is co-located within three South London JCPs. Customers enter a triage service, which identifies them having no needs, transitional, or high needs in one of four categories (financial, digital, housing and employment). They are signposted to the services best able to meet identified needs.

Services are delivered by our VCSE and local authority partners as follows:

- Financial Inclusion (SHP and CAB)
- Digital Inclusion (extension of ‘digi-buddies’ digital up-skilling service run by Thames Reach)
- Housing Advice (Local Authorities)
- General Employment Support (Tomorrow’s People & Tri-borough community budget pilot)
- Triage (co-located JCP, VCSE and Local Authority team).

The partnership approach adopted has enabled expertise and knowledge of local VCSEs to be utilised to address these challenges.

Collectively pilot partners have developed a well-targeted effective service capable of meeting diverse customer needs within a context of continued efficiency savings.

**Impact**

This innovative project has enabled us to:

- Establish and test new ways of partnership working between JCP, local VCSE providers and three local authorities
- Develop a triage process that maximises the chance of identifying a customer’s UC transition support needs
- Test the commissioning and delivery of innovative new services to develop financial resilience and digital capability
- Transformation of local service delivery by promoting cross-borough working and the integration of USDL and community budget services
- Create a unique service that truly encapsulates localism by tailoring services to local needs
- Utilise the skills, expertise and local knowledge of staff across all partners to truly make a difference to local people
- 3622 people have been referred to the trial and 2389 triaged, enabling direction to services that may not otherwise have been accessed, in preparation for UC.

Wider benefits include:

- Strengthened relationships between participating organisations, improving local service delivery
- In Southwark the local CAB will continue to have a presence in local JCPs beyond the end of the pilot and deliver development sessions for work coaches on locally available VCSE provision
- Establishment of a frontline workers’ forum, involving VCSE, JCP and local authority staff
- The team worked collaboratively to develop a solution to sensitive issues around data sharing that can now inform future DWP work with local partners.
This high profile successful pilot has generated considerable interest from stakeholders in learning from and up-scaling the work, and hosted ministerial and policy team visits.

Learning will feed into the DWP’s roll out of agreements around support services for live environments, and influence the role of VCSEs and local authorities within these.

In order to support this, the project has been designed to produce a robust evidence base able to inform future policy development.

Lessons learned from the pilot will also feed directly into future initiatives at the local level e.g. a Southwark local triage system based the project’s work informing the next phase of the tri-borough community budget pilot.
Local Compact Partnership Award

Warrington Third Sector Partnership

Overview

This nomination is for the partnership arrangement between Warrington Borough Council and Warrington Voluntary Action which demonstrates commitment and support to the third sector in Warrington.

In 2007, Warrington Borough Council commissioned a review which looked at the relationship between themselves and the third sector in Warrington. Recommendations were made to improve this relationship which included employing a Third Sector Partnership Development Officer (TSPDO), jointly managed by the council and the infrastructure organisation (but employed by the council) to co-ordinate the Third Sector Network Hub. The Network Hub brings together sub-sector representatives from across the sector that channel issues to and from the Warrington Partnership and Health & Wellbeing Board.

This relationship has gone from strength to strength and the TSPDO is now co-located at Warrington Voluntary Action, co-ordinating a number of strategic meetings such as the Third Sector Policy Group, chaired by the Executive Member for Leisure, Culture and Community which focuses on the Localism agenda, the Compact Implementation Group, chaired by the Chief Officer for WVA which focuses on the implementation of the Local Compact and the Commissioning Sub Group which has an action plan to improve the council’s commissioning process with the third sector in Warrington.

This clear commitment from the council ensures that the third sector is involved in the design and delivery of policies, programmes and public services and the Network Hub is seen as a clear consultative forum for any engagement with the third sector in Warrington. This partnership commitment from the council recognises the importance of a strong, diverse and independent voluntary and community sector in Warrington and they have pledged to continue this support in their strategies.

Impact

The impact of this partnership work has included the development of a commissioning checklist for council contract and commissioning staff which incorporates the principles of the Local Compact.

Forward commissioning intentions have been advertised on the council website ensuring that third sector organisations are able to plan effectively and the
council is considering recommendations for a locally developed third sector quality assurance standard which came about as a result of partnership working between members of the Commissioning Sub Group who felt that although the third sector provide excellent services and value for money, they needed to be able to demonstrate this more effectively. A trial over the last six months using another local quality assurance standard has enabled the TSPDO to pull this piece of work together and make recommendations based on this trial. Once developed this quality assurance will enable third sector organisations to run their organisations effectively and efficiently whilst providing the council with an assurance that an organisation is competent and compliant whilst also enabling them to incorporate social value into the marking process.

The Local Compact was refreshed in November 2014 and is now a ‘living’ document that can be updated as required to ensure it is relevant. The new version includes examples and case studies of how the Local Compact can be used in practice, making it much more accessible and user friendly.
About Compact Voice

Compact Voice works to ensure that strong, effective partnerships are at the heart of all relationships between the voluntary sector and government - locally and nationally.

We support the use of the Compact through influencing, sharing positive examples and providing expertise to ensure that communities benefit from the most effective and diverse public services.

We provide training, support, advice, and information about better working in partnership to both sectors nationally and locally, represent the voluntary and community sector’s interests to government, and champion the principles of the Compact.

Compact Voice would like to thank the 2015 judging panel:

- Asheem Singh, ACEVO
- Ryan Letheren, Cabinet Office
- Paul Winyard, Compact Voice

Please note that the nominations contained in this booklet are presented in the format they were submitted, so terminology may vary.

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