

spoke

the magazine for the community + voluntary sector in brighton + hove

issue 3 autumn 2008



voice

Involved in a community group or voluntary sector organisation in Brighton & Hove?

The screenshot shows the homepage of the Support for Groups website. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for Support, Contacts, News, Events, and About Us. Below this is a search bar. The main content area features a large, colorful logo for 'Support For Groups' and a sub-header 'Supporting community groups and voluntary organisations in Brighton & Hove'. The page is divided into several sections: a main welcome message, a search box, a 'Browse the support available' section with two columns of links, and a 'Latest Local News' section on the right with three news items.

Welcome to Support for Groups | Support for Groups
http://www.supportforgroups.org.uk/

Welcome to Support for Gr...
Skip to Content | Text Only | Website Accessibility
Username: Password: **Log in**
[Create new account](#) [Request new password](#)

Support For Groups

Supporting community groups and voluntary organisations in Brighton & Hove

Support | **Contacts** | **News** | **Events** | **About Us** | **Search**

Welcome to Support for Groups

Your portal to the support, information and services available to your group, to help you to achieve more.

Search for support

Search

Browse the support available

- ▶ **Equalities & Diversity**
- ▶ **Equipment hire, offices, open spaces and venues**
- ▶ **Fundraising**
- ▶ **Having Your Say**
- ▶ **Managing Staff and Volunteers**
- ▶ **Publicity**
- ▶ **Statistics, Survey Results & Research**
- ▶ **Training**
- ▶ **Working With Others**

- Running your group**
 - ▶ **Governance**
 - ▶ **IT & Computers (ICT)**
 - ▶ **Legal Issues**
 - ▶ **Managing Money**
 - ▶ **Monitoring & Evaluation**
 - ▶ **Office management and administration**
 - ▶ **Planning & Strategy**
 - ▶ **Quality Assurance**
 - ▶ **Running Events**
 - ▶ **Setting up a group**

Latest Local News

- ▶ **Get volunteering at your local Green Flag Award park**
14/05/2008
There are plenty of volunteering opportunities available at Green Flag Award-winning parks and green spaces across the country. [MORE >](#)
- ▶ **CALL TO FIND UK CHARITY HERO**
13/05/2008
The search is on for the £30,000 winner of Gordon Brown's 'Nobel Prize of the Charity World' The Beacon Fellowship Charitable Trust has tod... [MORE >](#)
- ▶ **Examining human rights in Britain**
13/05/2008
An inquiry by the Equality and Human Rights Commission to find out how human rights work in Britain is gathering evidence.
- ▶ **Fair play for children**
13/05/2008
The government's 'Fair Play: A consultation on the play strategy' proposes to make public space more child-friendly.

visit www.supportforgroups.org.uk

Your portal to the support, information and services available to your group, to help you to achieve more.



in this issue

spoke issue 3 + resource + events + sustain + benefit + co-operate + environment +



Welcome to the autumn issue of Spoke, the magazine for and about the community and voluntary sector in Brighton and Hove.

The theme this time is 'voice'. For most community groups, charities or social enterprises, bringing about change is an important part of their work. Lobbying, PR campaigns, representation or direct action are some of the methods used by seasoned campaigners to raise awareness and make their voices heard.

In a fast paced world, technology has become a necessary piece of kit, so we look at how it can be used easily and inexpensively to broaden our reach. The Best That You Can Do, our good practice guide, provides other tried and tested tips and ideas on how to get a message across. And we report on some local success stories.

A short reader survey is included which we ask you to complete. As a new publication, we want to know if you like what we are doing and if so, which bits you like best. We'd also like to hear your ideas to help us improve. We hope you will take a few minutes to answer our questions; we will try and put your thoughts into action for the next issue.

Katy McGrory
Editor.

Spoke is a 'better information' project of the Brighton and Hove ChangeUp Consortium. It is jointly owned by infrastructure organisations in the city, and has been developed by an Editorial Board. The accountable body for the Brighton and Hove ChangeUp Consortium is the CVSF.

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spoke Contributors

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Accessibility Statement

This publication has been designed with findability, accessibility and usability in mind, so we hope you can find, access and use the information you need. We encourage you to feed back your views about accessibility. If you require this publication in an alternative format and/ or language please contact us to discuss your needs. This publication is available to download from the Support for Groups website: www.supportforgroups.org.uk

training

Training news

The Working Together Project will be running a new season of training this autumn. Aimed at anyone from the voluntary and community sector, full course details will be publicised online at the end of September.

Visit their website for more details: www.workingtogetherproject.org.uk If you can't wait until then, phone (01273) 234773 for more details, or email enquiries@workingtogetherproject.org.uk

trustees wanted

Longstanding local charity, Brighton & Hove LGBT Switchboard is seeking trustees to provide strategic direction. Specific roles vacant are Fundraising Coordinator, IT Coordinator, Pride Coordinator.

Applications particularly welcome from women and people who identify as trans, who are currently under represented.

For more information contact either Andrew Thompson, Lead Trustee lead.trustee@switchboard.org.uk, phone 07976 374160 or email Natalie Woods, Services and Development Manager, brighton.manager@switchboard.org.uk www.switchboard.org.uk/brighton

activity

Adventure Unlimited are launching new activities aimed at individuals including adult groups. All activities will be staffed by AU's qualified instructors and profits used to supplement provision for disadvantaged children and young people. Transport from the centre of Brighton is included.

Bushcraft: learn skills including shelter building, fire making, identifying and preparing wild foods, cordage, tool making, survival priorities and more. 5 day weekend progressive course taking place in October, £260 including overnight challenge.

Family taster session: 28th September, £45 adults, £25 children. Family discounts available.

Kayaking: suitable for complete beginners and improvers without formal skills. Adult only sessions as well as family and children's. Various dates available, starting 5th October, £50 for adults.

Outdoor Climbing: regular sessions for people new to outdoor climbing teaching the basic skills and safety precautions for climbing on sandstone. Various dates, £45pp.

818 Club now open for new members! Adventurous activities club for children aged 8-18 with and without special needs. Discount available for those in receipt of working tax credit, job seekers allowance or income support.

For more information go to www.aultd.org, email info@aultd.org or telephone (01273) 681058.

children's can do

Grants available for children's projects

The Novas Scarman Group is a UK charity committed to helping people bring about change in their community. We support thousands of remarkable people with a 'Can Do' attitude, who, in turn, mobilise thousands of others to bring about positive change in their own communities.

In Brighton and Hove, the Novas Scarman Group runs the Children Can Do programme giving support to new or small community groups, by offering grants, practical help and advice, access to training, networking and information. Grants of up to £3000 are available to projects initiated by children aged 5 – 13 who live in Brighton & Hove. Projects which benefit children who have greater needs and fewer chances can also apply.

We normally accept applications for projects run by small, local, community groups with an annual income of less than £25,000. However, we also consider applications from larger, local, community groups for completely new and innovative projects that do not require more than 50% costs and encourage different children to get involved.

Projects which help children stay safe, be happy, have fun and do well, make positive changes in their community and prepare them for their future can also apply.

We cannot support activities which promote a particular religion or political aim. A development worker will come out to meet with the children and adults in your group to help plan the project and prepare the funding application. A panel of children and young people will make the final decisions about which groups are funded and how much they receive.

Closing dates for applications are Friday 17 October 2008 and Friday 6 February 2009. (Groups must arrange a meeting with a development worker at least 2 weeks before the closing date).

For more information, please contact Sue Barnes, Development Worker on (01273) 234856 or email sue.barnes@thescarmantrust.org or see www.novasscarman.org/community-development/south-east/



Sussex is rich with community groups who bring people together to improve quality of life or address disadvantage.

Yet many groups struggle to raise funds, while most public giving goes to large national charities.



Sussex Community Foundation was created by local people to support local communities.

They make it easy for companies or individuals to donate money to local causes and ensure donations go where funds are really needed and will make a difference. They also make it easy for community groups to apply for funds.

Sussex Community Foundation is part of the Community Foundation Network which manages permanent funds of £140 million and awards £70 million in grants every year to thousands of community groups. Community Foundations are the fifth largest funder of charities and the fastest growing philanthropic movement in the UK.

They are now operating two funding streams: General Grants and a new Grassroots Grants programme.

General Grants are for up to £5000 for community projects in Brighton and Hove, East and West Sussex run by not-for-profit organisations. Funding panels are held four times a year, with the next panel sitting on 31 October.

Grassroot Grants, administered by SCF, is a government programme to encourage community groups to flourish. Grants of up to £5000 will be awarded and panels will meet every 6 weeks. Applicants will be informed within 10 working days of the deadline.

The next deadline for Grassroots Grants is 9 October. Groups need to have been active for a year or more and have a set of rules and a turnover of less than £20,000.

There will also be a fast track grant for up to £900 which will be awarded on a rolling basis and applicants will be informed within 10 working days of submitting a completed application whether or not they have been successful.

Grassroots Grants

The Detail

Grassroots Grants is a three-year scheme to March 2011, aimed at very small local community groups. Sussex Community Foundation holds budgets for Brighton & Hove, East and West Sussex.

Who can apply?

Not for profit, voluntary or community groups who:

- Have been active in their local community for a year or more
- Have an average income over three years of less than £20,000 per year, taken as an average turnover for the last 3 financial years (or over the life of the group if less than three years old).
- Work for the benefit of their local community
- Are led by volunteers
- Have a written set of rules or constitution

Size of Grant

- Applications can be made for between £250 and £5,000. Groups can apply more than once until they have received a maximum of £5,000 in total.
- Download a Grassroots application form and grant guidelines or request a pack from our office on (01273) 403980 or info@sussexgiving.org.uk.
- The closing date following for the second round of grants will be 9th October 2008.

Sussex Community Foundation
210 High Street
Lewes
East Sussex
BN7 2NS

Phone (01273) 403980 or email
info@sussexgiving.org.uk

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

A new constitution and a new way of making decisions for Brighton and Hove City Council

In May 2008, Brighton & Hove City Council introduced a new Constitution and with it, a new way of making decisions - the leader and cabinet system. Councillor Mary Mears was elected as the new Leader of the Council at the Annual Council meeting on 15 May 2008.

Leader and cabinet is the system of governance used by the vast majority of councils across Great Britain. The Leader is elected by the whole council and he/she can then appoint a cabinet of up to nine councillors who will be in charge of different areas of the council's work, eg children's services, finance, housing, etc. Executive decisions are taken at cabinet meetings or by individual cabinet members at cabinet member meetings. The new constitution replaces the old system where decisions were taken in cross-party committees.

The changes were forced upon the Council as part of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007. Brighton & Hove City councillors were unanimously against the changes and would have preferred to keep the committee system.

All executive powers rest with the leader although these can be delegated to other councillors or senior officers. Budget setting and non-executive powers remain with the full council and its so-called 'quasi-judicial' committees (such as Planning, Licensing, Standards, Audit, etc).

The cabinet operates as the main executive decision making body for the Council, particularly in relation to overall policy direction and resource use. The Executive is the cabinet and the leader. They can exercise their decision-making collectively, in cabinet meetings, at a committee of the cabinet or individually as Cabinet Members.

New overview and scrutiny committees are tasked with holding the Executive to account and scrutinising certain external bodies in the city. They will also now be involved in policy making rather than focusing primarily on 'after the event' scrutiny of decisions that have already been taken. Due to the significant new powers vested in the Executive, overview and scrutiny in the new system takes on a much more significant role than with the old committee system, and will be the primary focus for most 'backbench' members.

The new constitution includes a commitment to openness and involvement.

Residents will be entitled, as now, to ask questions, submit petitions or present deputations to full council. In the new system they are also able to submit questions, present petitions via a councillor or present a deputation to the cabinet or a cabinet member meeting.

In addition, the new Forward Plan will give a period of up to four months to allow councillors and the public time to look at some proposals in more detail. Unlike in a lot of other local authorities, all executive decision making meetings are open to the public.

Who are the Cabinet members and what are their responsibilities?

Leader of the Council
Councillor Mary Mears

Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Children & Young People
Councillor Vanessa Brown

Cabinet Member for Housing
Councillor Maria Caulfield

Cabinet Member for Central Services
Councillor Ayas Fallon-Khan

Cabinet Member for Enterprise, Employment & Major Projects
Councillor Ted Kemble

Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care & Health
Councillor Ken Norman

Cabinet Member for Community Affairs, Inclusion & Internal Relations
Councillor Dee Simson

Cabinet Member for Culture, Recreation & Tourism
Councillor David Smith

Cabinet Member for Environment
Councillor Geoffrey Theobald O.B.E.

Cabinet Member for Finance
Councillor Jan Young

See www.brighton-hove.gov.uk for more information. Alternatively, contact Mark Wall, Head of Democratic Services, Brighton & Hove City Council mark.wall@brighton-hove.gov.uk



Explore Larchwood Community Café, Waldron Avenue, Coldean.

Saturday 13 September, 11.00am:

“Take The Coyote And Run – North American Indian Stories”. With international storyteller Richard Cupidi.

Adults and accompanied children 7+ are welcome to attend. Come along and let your imagination have a great day out.

Tuesday 23 September, 11.00am

Coffee morning for local people, featuring digital photography display by local photographer Barry Kent. High-definition images of local nature in all its glory plus recent Coldean festival images.

Saturday 27 September, 2.00pm

Autumn Fair. Stalls £5 for hire. Coldean’s very own community café is also open on Monday afternoons from 2pm-4.30pm. Reasonably priced food and drinks and a friendly atmosphere in a semi-rural neighbourhood that is one of the city’s best-kept secrets. For more information call Steve on (01273) 676416.

Pirates and Princesses Fun Day

28th Sept from 12-4 at Stoneham Park, Hove. Lots for kids to do, fancy dress competition, beer tent, inflatables, pirate show. It’s run in partnership between Poets Corner Cultural Society and the Lions. More information from Joanna Martindale, email joanna@martindale.org.uk

LINK Launch and Elections!

2-4 pm and again 5.30-7.30 pm, Wednesday, 22 October 2008, Jubilee Library, Brighton. All welcome

The Brighton and Hove LINK (Local Involvement Network) is a new local, powerful, independent network of people and organisations, which gives residents and groups a stronger voice on health and social care issues.

Come along to find out more, take part in workshops and have your say.

Free, healthy snacks will be provided.

For further details contact the LINK by phone on (01273) 234782 or email link@cvsf.org.uk www.cvsectorforum.org.uk/link

Trust For Developing Communities AGM

The Trust for Developing Communities is holding an Annual General Meeting on the evening of Thursday 6th November 2008 in the Hanover Room, at Brighthelm Church and Community Centre, North Road, Brighton.

The formal business of the meeting will be followed by reports from the Trust staff about their work across the city. There will opportunities to network with other voluntary and statutory organizations from the Brighton and Hove area, and learn more about the work of the Trust.

If you would like to receive a formal invitation and papers, please send your postal address to Katharine Trevelyan at katharinetrevelyan@trustdevcom.org.uk or call (01273) 262220.

The Older People's Day

The Older People's Day at Hove Town Hall on Thursday 13th November is organised jointly by The Older People' Council and The Pensioners' Forum. This popular event of activities, information stalls, debate and free lunch provides an enjoyable day for older people across the City. Results of the postal ballot of members to the Pensioners' Forum Management Committee will be announced at the AGM which takes place at this event.

More information is available from Jo Tulloch, Pensioners' Forum & 60+ Action, (01273) 229004 or email jo.tulloch@pf.bh-impetus.org

Impact Initiatives' 30th Anniversary

Wednesday 22nd October 2.30 — 4.30pm

Help build knowledge of Impact over the years. Have your say, tell your story and share our birthday cake.

We will be having an event including our 43 existing members on Wednesday 22 October from 2.30 – 4.30pm at Impact Initiatives Offices, Brighthelm.

For more information, contact Rachel Nahum, Communications Officer, Impact Initiatives, on (01273) 821914 or email rachel.nahum@impact-initiatives.org.uk

+++ www.supportforgroups.org.uk/event

Campaigning, computers, the web

Many community groups enable like-minded people to work towards a common goal. So how can technology make our campaigns more successful? **Mark Walker from SCIP investigates**

Getting rid of speed bumps, compensation for victims of chemical spills, raising awareness of medical conditions and preventing further suffering. Whatever the cause, computers and the internet have dramatically changed the way we campaign; printers and photocopiers now spew out propaganda instead of cranking a Roneo machine. So how can technology make our campaigns more successful?

Ten years ago most people hadn't seen a website. But the current hype about sites like Second Life and Facebook can give the impression everyone is online all the time. The reality is that the basic principles of campaigning remain the same: research, clear messages, one voice, endless letter writing, emailing, press releases, demonstrations, direct action and publicity stunts. So how can computers help?

Email

Email is useful for activists to share important documents and debate key points. Regular updates can keep a wide group of supporters involved and encouraged to contribute ideas and effort.

Email is an important lobbying tool. Politicians, journalists, business people and community leaders can be contacted and kept up to date. You may communicate one-to-one, identify key issues and build support, or you may coordinate a petition and email campaign to demonstrate a strength of feeling. It costs no more to send email round the corner than across the world.

Websites

Where once we relied on books, leaflets and newsletters, we can now go online to look for information, ideas, volunteers, supporters, opinions or inspiration on any topic under the sun. And unlike most traditional broadcast media, we can use the web to reach the world, telling our side of the story, spreading our message and bringing people together through a central resource.

We may make specialist resources freely available for people to download and use themselves, or post news, updates or case studies to bring a campaign to life.

Networks: Facebook, discussion forums, Twitter

The standard website may be updated regularly, but new-fangled sites like Facebook can create an active network of people that changes and grows organically. Known as social media, social networking or Web 2.0, it includes blogs, wikis and interactive websites such as Flickr.

Lots of charities and community activists are already hearing the call and creating highly successful campaigns which are invisible to the uninitiated and may be overtaking campaigns that rely on more traditional techniques.

Email forums

Email discussion forums, such as the SCIP and CVSF lists are well-established and popular ways of making announcements and requests for help, or information-sharing. Your message goes to everyone currently subscribed and you can see replies and post comments as discussions continue.

Text messaging

With more mobile phone contracts in the UK than people, texting offers a unique way of keeping in touch. A small core of people can keep up to date between meetings, or sms can reach large numbers of people when you want them to act straight away, such as demonstrations or surprise events.

Video

Video is great for story-telling, showing what's really happening and capturing the words and images from the people in the middle of a situation rather than hearing from 'experts' or bureaucrats explaining their decisions.

Youtube has become part of our culture so quickly it's easy to forget how difficult it used to be to share videos, even having the equipment needed to make a film in the first place. Now videos from mobile phones can be as powerful in some campaigns as the highly polished productions they're countering.



Websites, mobile phones and networking sites such as Facebook can attract supporters quickly and cheaply.

What are the advantages?

- **Scale:** draw in more people and spread the word more widely.
- **Cost:** sending 250 emails vs printing and posting 250 newsletters.
- **Targeting:** lobby key people directly through email and websites.
- **Accessibility:** some people prefer email and the web to attending meetings, or want to be able to access information and updates at their convenience.
- **Security:** some campaigns need anonymity.
- **Timely:** use email and websites for rapid updates to policies or calls to action on fast-moving issues.
- **Preferences:** supporters may prefer new ways of communicating, especially as Facebook and its ilk challenge the use of email amongst young people.
- **Community:** learn from other people's experiences and build alliances with people facing the same issues.

What next?

If you are involved in campaigning you will know that you need to continually refresh and revise tactics, whilst staying firmly focused on your objectives. Email, websites and other technologies are already proven as successful ingredients in effective campaigns. Mobilising support by every available means may make the difference between success and failure.

You need to weigh up the pros and cons of diving into the latest new ideas against the time it will take to make them work for you.

But you also need to be wary of waiting too long and seeing other campaigns getting their message across ahead of yours.

A longer version of this article is on the Support for Groups website at www.supportforgroups.org.uk and on www.scip.org.uk/campaigning. Mark Walker is a Project Manager at SCIP and ICT Champion for the community & voluntary sector in south east England. Read his blog at www.seictchampion.org.uk.

And the disadvantages?

- **Wrong solution:** new technology is no substitute for choosing the right campaign to fit the cause. A well timed call to The Argus newsdesk can generate a lot more coverage than an email to someone whose address has changed.
- **Irrelevant:** new gadgets, websites and jargon can divert attention from good planning and effective communications.
- **Wrong skills:** Being a dab hand at Facebook is no more qualification for leading a campaign than having the loudest voice.
- **Accessibility:** Many people may have used websites or email but the majority still do not have regular access at home, or may be prevented from using it for personal use when at work.
- **Bandwagon:** Just because everyone else is using it doesn't mean you should.

Five things to try:

1. Join the Brighton & Hove Issues Forum at forums.e-democracy.org/groups/bh
2. Join the SCIP list at www.scip.org.uk/sciplist
3. Be inspired by winners of the recent UK Catalyst Awards for Community use of Social Technology including a virtual world for people with disabilities at www.ukcatalystawards.com
4. Set up a free website for your campaign at www.wordpress.com
5. Visit www.statistics.gov.uk/neighbourhood to find useful data about your area

Representing ten years

As the Community and Voluntary Sector Forum celebrates its tenth anniversary, Katy McGrory looks at its history.

The Spice Girls were ‘spicing up our lives’, the Full Monty packed cinemas and Chelsea won the FA Cup; it was 1997 and times were about to change. Possibly the biggest change was the end of eighteen years of Conservative government, when new Labour were elected and brought with them ideas about joined up thinking and regeneration.

The country was experiencing pockets of high levels of deprivation, and Brighton and Hove were no exception, with areas in both towns which the new government hoped to bring change to. Locally, the then Regeneration Partnership received new money to set up a ‘Partnership Development Project’ to help community and voluntary sector organisations put their regeneration ideas into practice.

At this time, the local voluntary sector was supported by a more traditional Council for Voluntary Service (CVS), who provided a range of services, including information and training to support groups. One of the things these groups wanted was a forum so that they could work together, as well as a platform from which to be fairly represented at a strategic level in relationships with the Council and the Health Authority. A successful bid by the CVS to the National Lottery Charities Board to develop a forum with a remit to “develop effective participation of the voluntary and community sector in regeneration initiatives in Brighton and Hove” meant the seed for the Voluntary Sector Forum, with its roots in regeneration and with a close link to the local council, was planted.

Over 100 organisations attended the first forum meeting, and a Business Management Group was elected to guide it through its development. While The Forum strove for independence, the CVS was in difficulty and the following year ceased trading. Partly because of the financial difficulties caused by the demise of the CVS, and partly because of the wider political situation, The Forum found itself in a difficult position, with some supporters suggesting they took on the mantle of the CVS and others disagreeing; a sense of unease was undoubtedly felt throughout the sector.

In March 2000, a turbulent year on from its first official meeting, (during which time Brighton and Hove was awarded City status), the fledgling CVSF was offered two seats on the Regeneration Partnership. Coupled with successful funding bids and the establishment of its legal structures, this gave the Forum a solid foundation from which to build.

Since then, the Forum has attracted over 550 members, negotiated seats on an increasing number of strategic partnerships in Brighton and Hove and developed a set of working protocols for all partners to adhere to (The Compact). Ten years on with 55 representative seats on 26 strategic city wide boards, the organisation has been influential in setting priorities in a range of citywide plans.

Its original guiding ethos, that ‘collective action is more influential than a series of single voices’ is still the basis of all its work, from the networks to events, from sharing information sharing to strategic representation. While much around it has changed, its original aims remain as relevant today as they did ten years ago.

“The CVSF is one of the brightest jewels in a crown of many gems. It has achieved such a lot in 10 years, and as a result the voluntary and community sector has a strong voice at the highest levels of local decision making. Congratulations and thanks to everyone who has been involved.”

[Thea Allison](#)

[The Business Community Partnership.](#)

“Third sector representation at a citywide level is particularly strong in Brighton and Hove thanks to the persistence, integrity and high standards of expectation set by the CVSF. Where it is involved, decision making in the city is strengthened for the benefit of all.”

[Martin Campbell](#)

[Brighton and Hove City Teaching Primary Care Trust.](#)

'Like a notebook and pencil' may not be the first thing that springs to mind when thinking about a radio station, but for Brighton and Hove's community station, RadioReverb 97.2FM, that is precisely how they would like to be thought of; a resource to be used.

Launched eighteen months ago, RadioReverb broadcasts 60 different community made programmes a week to a potential audience of 200,000 people.

And according to Reverb's Karen Cass, a director of the station, it provides an invaluable opportunity for community groups and charities to get their message across to a wide audience. With shows about the community, arts, shows for older people and other communities of interest, there are several ways of using the station to do exactly this.

While many groups will be familiar with radio, having been interviewed in the studio or on the telephone, RadioReverb's approach is focused on enabling groups to produce their own programmes or short features. It is even possible to learn how to use the studio for live shows.

Some training is essential but it can be organised easily, and RadioReverb, who are well aware of the financial limitations groups face, try to be as accommodating as they can so that the station remains accessible.

So what will it cost? Not as much as you might think. For example, a basic training session would take two days, and if five people commit to it, it works out at about £100 per person. (Studio hire would be £100, and with two days training at £200 per day, that adds up to £500).

Programme makers do need their own equipment, but this doesn't need to be prohibitively expensive (a recorder can be bought for £70 and a good microphone for £100) to give broadcast quality results, or hired from RadioReverb for a small fee.

Jaynie Ralph says; "When I started making shows, it used to take up to 5 hours and now takes me 1 or 2 hours to select music, research and organise guests and collect interesting content for the show. The more experience I had of doing it, the less time it took".

If a full, one hour show is too daunting, there is the option of making 'short form' radio, essentially short, five minute announcements, for which you are the sponsor.

Once the show has been recorded, it's loaded into a computer and edited using software which can be downloaded free of charge, the finished show is copied onto a CD and left at the station, where they will load it into their system and take care of the rest. RadioReverb charges a sliding scale of administration fees to all broadcasters to help cover its costs.

To find out more, RadioReverb can be contacted at 170 North Street, Brighton, BN1 1EA. Telephone (01273) 323040. For general enquiries email office@radioreverb.com or visit www.radioreverb.com



RadioReverb is a new type of resource for the city, which is an incredibly powerful and effective tool for reaching people, communicating, developing the skills of the individual and yes, even having fun!

Karen Cass, Station Director

Hollingbury Wins!

A local campaign for safer streets is a success for local residents.

Thanks to local people taking action, Hollingbury now have their new traffic island on Carden Hill, built at the best crossing place for all residents.

Two traffic islands were planned on Carden Hill for pedestrians to safely cross the road to the recently built Medical Centre behind Carden School.

The islands were to provide a safe route across a dangerous road. However, most local people had not seen the road plans, only those for the building.

Supported by the Trust for Developing Communities (TDC), Hollingbury Under 5s Network (HU5N) searched for the plans and made sure they were shown to local residents and services.

Linda Saltwell, a Community Development Worker with TDC, said "Local people were concerned to find that one of the traffic islands was to be built at the bottom of a steep path with steps at each end".

Ena Ashmore, a local resident and member of HU5N said, "The path is unsuitable for anyone: parents with buggies, people with disabilities, older people and young children."

A local campaign group known as Hollingbury United Mums For Road Improvement (HUMFRI) was formed, which worked with the TDC to highlight the problem to all the local groups.

The newly forming Hollingbury Local Action Team lent its support too, with Inspector Steve Curry from Brighton and Hove Police looking at road safety and Matt Easteal from the the City Council's Environment Improvement Team contacting planners.

Supported by a TDC trainee, Ellen Robinson, HUMFRI collected 400 signatures of support in one week. The new local newsletter team, formed after being trained as a group by Working Together Project and SCIP ('Hollingbury Hello') and who get their newsletter printed by the Resource Centre, focused on the issue and spread the word.



Photo courtesy of Hollingbury Hello. Copyright Hollingbury Newsletter Group (G.Crees) June 2008.

Council Road Safety Officer, Len Holloway and the Primary Care Trust Commissioner of the new Health Centre, Chris Naylor met with HU5N to discuss ways forward. Councillor Pidgeon took the petition to committee. The community development workers worked hard to bring Brighton and Hove City Council, The Primary Care Trust and builders Ashley House Plc together to solve the problem and move the crossing.

Ellen said "This is community development in action. We couldn't have achieved this without the previous 2 years of development work in Hollingbury.

Gina Crees from HUMFRI said, "We are delighted! Now we can get our children safely to school." The group will continue to campaign for road safety improvements in Hollingbury.

Hollingbury Newsletter group also have a website which compliments their newsletter and can be seen at www.hollingbury.info/local/index.php

Brighton and Hove has a large number of local community newsletters, which are a good place to find out about local campaigns.

A list of many of them can be found online at www.cvsectorforum.org.uk/newsletters

Michelle Pooley is from The Brighton and Hove Working Together Project.

On The Campaign Trail

There are hundreds of campaign groups all vying for attention; only the best will be noticed. So how can community organisations make sure their voices are heard first?

Know what you want

Be very clear about your goals, and clear about the changes you are trying to achieve before starting to campaign. It can be useful to see if compromise can be used as a negotiating tool at any stage of your campaign, and look at what your fall back position might be.

Who does what?

Be clear about who is responsible for doing what. Is there a chain of command for making decisions and does everyone involved know what it is and how to contact the right people?

New Shoes

Get into the shoes of the people who you are aiming your campaign at. Think of what barriers they may face when making their decision; if you can do that you might also be able to give them a solution.

No Change Yet?

Look at the reasons why change hasn't already happened. Try and understand what systems may be involved, especially if they involve committees or legislation, for example. If you can get your head around them, it might give you the insight you need to work around them.

Have killer facts

A set of accurate facts and statistics, with their sources, cannot be ignored. As the campaigner, you are probably an expert in your area.

Do Your Homework

Carry out thorough research. Make sure all the research, including that which supports your killer facts, is accurate and up to date. Surveys and case studies as well as academic research are important elements of a campaign.

Make a Plan

Plan each stage of your campaign thoroughly. Check any dates you might be thinking about using and make sure they don't clash with other things – unless you want them to, that is.

Find Allies

Find allies. Create a network of people looking to change the same thing or build coalitions with like minded people. Encourage grass roots support or use the media to help spread your messages.

Think and Then Think Again

Find new ways of getting your message across. Easier said than done, but if there's a different way of doing something, try it.

Meet and Greet

Get the people who make decisions together in the room. Your research should help you to identify who has the real balance of power in your situation. Invite them to meet with you before you go public with your campaign. The meeting should represent your campaign group; ideally there will be more than one of you, but not so many as to appear threatening. Take the subject of your case study with you if you can, and don't forget your killer facts; it's very hard to argue with someone's personal story!

Don't Go Public Too Soon.

Tempting as it may be, it is better to have built relationships and exhausted all the other avenues open to you before investing your time and energy in mounting a more public campaign.

Nose to the Grindstone

Be prepared to keep grinding on. Campaigning is hard work, there is no doubt about that. To keep your issue in the limelight means investing huge amounts of time and energy, making it feel fresh and new at each stage.

Lots of resources are available to help you plan and execute a campaign, and they are listed in Spoke's Guide to Campaigning, which you can see on pages 14 and 15 of this issue.

Representation in practice?

Two community activists share experiences of representing the concerns, views and priorities of the sector on a cross sector working group tasked with developing a Community Engagement Framework for the city.

Naima Noudjem, Director of Mosaic, Children and Young People representative and CVSF trustee, and Helen Russell, CHIBAH and 2020 Community Partnership representative took time to talk to us.

What made you decide to stand for the working group?

Naima: My intuition that Black, Asian & Mixed Parentage & BME representation would be necessary, as well as enjoying representing the third sector. I also thought that it would be an opportunity to meet key people from statutory agencies, and share knowledge about community engagement protocols and issues.

Helen: Three reasons: to ensure the CVSF was fully and diversely represented; to be able to input from the housing co-op side, which is my key area of interest. We have direct experience of engagement, both as volunteers working together, and in dealing with local and national government. We have learned one has to be very persistent and able to deal with putting a lot of hard work in, often for no return. And perhaps curiosity, can the strategy achieve its aims?

What has been positive about being involved in the group and the process of developing the framework?

Naima: Three things: the willingness to cover as much ground as possible by the City Council support team, the resources available to make it happen and the opportunity to broaden my knowledge of community engagement.

Helen: Having the opportunity to bang on about listening skills. Also, the chance to bring a different perspective into the debate: co-ops have a great deal of experience in collective decision making, which we feel is essential not only in running a housing co-op, but is key to engagement – listening fairly to each other enables the most effective solutions to be discovered.

What could have been done differently, or what could be learnt from the process?

Naima: It's difficult to say as it is my first experience as a rep for a process like this, but knowing about things like statutory duties would have been useful. I think the central learning points are that voluntary and community sector organisations were engaged, so the third sector voice was heard, but also that more time is needed to manage the process!

Helen: Top of my wish list would have been more time for us, as a group of people involved in solving a problem, to engage more directly with each other about the barriers to engagement: when the 'top' meets the 'bottom' (the grass roots) there is a steep learning curve on both sides.

How has this process compared with others you've been involved in?

Naima: It's difficult to compare a statutory led piece of consultation against a process led by a voluntary or community organisation. The first is led by the legal duties placed on statutory organisations, where the voluntary sector one is service user led.

Helen: Generally, these working groups are improving, in that participants are getting used to listening to each other. Four years ago, groups such as this were stiff and unapproachable. We are relaxing a little! (I did like the imaginative exercises we were set!)

Do you have any other thoughts to share?

Naima: There is a need for more transparency about why the Community Engagement Framework Working Group was set up and the aim of the Framework to groups and individuals being consulted. But overall, the process was informative and I look forward to contributing to the key document going to the 2020 Community Partnership.

Helen: I'm not too optimistic. We are entering a phase of hardship and depleting resources (on a different scale to that encountered in the usual programme cuts and failure to mainstream successful projects). It's probably a bit late in the day for real community engagement to happen, as government will no doubt crack down as fuel shortages and climate change bite. If we could continue to work together and understand we are all in the same boat, maybe we could succeed. Time will tell.

For more information about the Community Engagement Framework, tsewww.2020community.org/cef

Spoke's Guide to Campaigning

Getting Started

Community and Voluntary groups are often the first to see the need and speak up for positive change in their communities. With enough support, a few dedicated volunteers really can change things for the better. Whether it's gathering signatures on a petition, getting your story in the paper, mobilising support by email or holding an old-fashioned demonstration, there are many ways to get your point across.

The Resource Centre, in Tilbury Place, has a range of practical resources to make that task a little easier.

Gathering Support

Just as there are different reasons to form a group, there are different types of group you could set up. It's worth thinking about what kind of group you imagine it will be, as this may affect the order you do things in.

For example, if you need to respond quickly to a proposal from the council that will affect your area, the first thing you'll need to do is get as many people as possible together, so that they can all contribute their ideas and energy.

Though you may do these things in a different order depending on the type of group you are setting up, most new groups will need to:

- Hold an initial meeting
- Agree the aims of the group
- Write a constitution
- Open a bank account
- Decide who will do what

Getting the argument right

For any campaign, knowing how to say what you want clearly and effectively is the key to success.

A briefing sheet is useful for any campaign. It is a statement of your aims with supporting facts and information to back up your case.

You can use it:

- As the basis for your campaign leaflets.
- To help you write press releases or letters.
- To give you the facts at your fingertips when giving media interviews.
- As background information for anyone who wants to support or find out more about your campaign.

Your briefing sheet should be one or two sides of A4 paper, and typed up so it can be read easily. Use a fairly large size of lettering (if you are using a computer, 14 point text will allow most people to read it, even if they have a slight visual impairment), and allow plenty of space between the lines.

Spreading the Word

Publicity is important for any campaign. Radio, television, newspapers and magazines are all important media who may want to feature your story. Before you approach them it's worth doing some research to see what sorts of angles they put on the stories they broadcast. You should also think about why you want media coverage and what your angle is going to be. Do you want to let people know that you exist, do you want to persuade people to attend an event, do you want to advertise a service or to influence decisions? And how will you make your story stand out from the thousands of others received each day by the press?

Angles that make headlines

- Human interest
- Surveys and reports
- Anniversaries and special days
- Controversy
- A local angle on a national story

See www.cvsectorforum.org.uk/mediaguide for more tips on working with the media.

The Resource Centre has information sheets about the local media:

Media contacts: phone numbers and email addresses for local newspapers, magazines, TV and radio stations. The list is updated every three months.

Radio interviews: valuable tips from local community activists to help you stay calm on air.

Find them at www.resourcecentre.org.uk.

Writing a press release

This is the most important way of trying to get coverage in the press. They will either be 'proactive' eg giving advance notice of a new campaign, report or event, or 'reactive', responding to something which has already happened, eg to cuts to funding or a new government initiative.

About a quarter of media stories come from press releases. But about 80% of press releases sent end up in the bin! If your press release is ignored, it's either considered to be a non-story or you are not sending it to the right people. But keep in mind that there will always be times when there are too many stories for yours to be printed, or when a major story breaks which takes up lots of news space. If your story wasn't used and you aren't sure why, it's always worth trying to find out why.

Get it right!

Writing a press release requires work and care to make sure your message is clear, concise and easy to read. If possible, it should cover no more than one side of A4 paper. The most important news should be in the first paragraph with further information laid out in decreasing order of importance. An editor will always cut a news release from the bottom up.

The Five Ws

All press releases must contain the five Ws:

- WHO:** Spoke Magazine
- WHEN:** today (12 September 2008)
- WHAT:** launches an invaluable guide to campaigning
- WHERE:** in Brighton and Hove
- WHY:** to help readers get the most from their campaign efforts

Some Don'ts!

- Never use jargon
- Never use flowery, descriptive language
- Never make ten points when you could make one
- Never assume that the journalist will know what you are talking about
- Never generalise

Speaking for yourself

However many column inches you manage to get for your cause, sometimes there is no substitute for publishing your own information leaflets, posters or newsletters.

The Resource Centre has three digital copyprinters, which are the cheapest way to produce many copies of your publicity materials. The printers are linked to the Centre's computer network, so you can design your artwork at the Centre, send it in by email, or bring it in on paper, which ever suits you best.

As well as printing, you can cut, fold, collate, staple, bind, or laminate your information using the Resource Centre's equipment.

The tools for the job

At campaign meetings and events, the right equipment can make things run much more smoothly. The Resource Centre has a range of useful items for hire at very low cost.

- Badge making machines – badges can be both a great fundraiser and a good conversation starter
- Collection tins
- Folding tables – ideal for leaflet stalls
- Megaphones
- PA systems
- Clickers – for counting the number of supporters at a meeting or demonstration
- Projectors and screens
- Exhibition boards

Further information can be found on the Resource Centre's website, www.resourcecentre.org.uk. The Centre is at 6 Tilbury Place, Brighton, BN2 0GY, open from 9am to 4pm, Tuesday to Friday. The building is wheelchair accessible with an induction loop available. If you have other access needs, please let us know and we will do our best to help. Contact the staff by phone on (01273) 606160 or email info@resourcecentre.org.uk

Further resources about publicity can be found on the Support for Groups website at www.supportforgroups.org.uk/support/category/8.