

resilience + navigate + thrive + funding + success + contribution + resource + recession + skills

# spoke

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

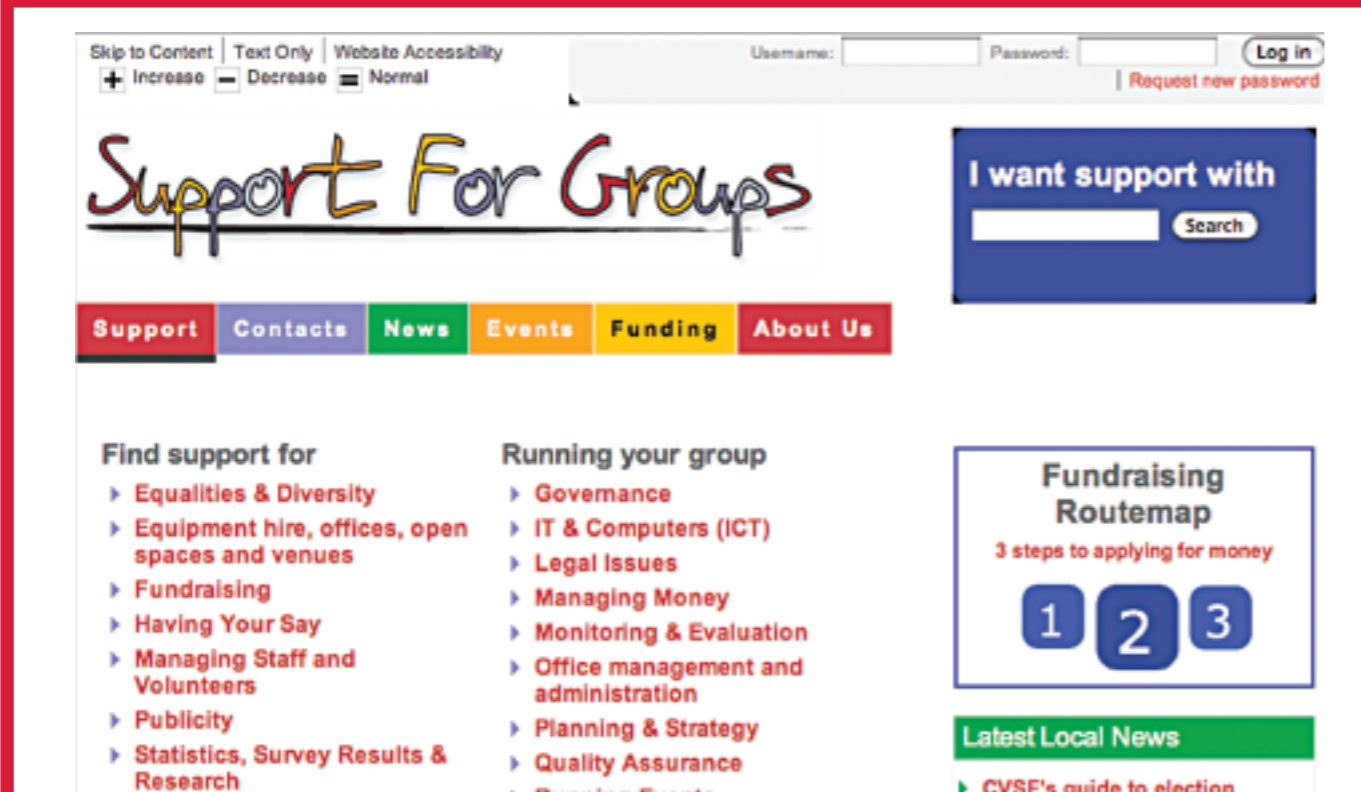
issue 7 summer 2011



responding

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## Editorial

A couple of weeks ago, I watched an old BBC drama, set, and broadcast, in 1997, just before the general election; I was struck not by how different life seems today, but how similar it feels (although in reality I know much has changed). I worked in the voluntary sector then and still remember the sense that we were in for a seismic change; it feels that way now. By the time Spoke has landed, we will probably have more of an idea just how far the plates might have shifted.

This issue looks at how we can, and are, responding to the financial environment; as groups, as a sector and as a city. It aims to help you find ways of managing your organisation through changing and challenging times, looking at the future funding picture, how groups can manage the stresses a recession places on them, and as always, practical tips on how to get the most from limited resources. And although the election is now old news, we hope our Prime Minister for a Day article gives you food for thought.

### 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 CVSF, Brighton Junction, 1a Isetta Square, 35 New England Street, Brighton, BN1 .

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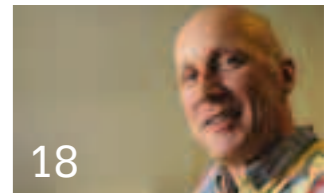
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### spoke Contributors

Paul Bramwell + Dani Ahrens + Linda Naughton + Emma Daniel + Mark Walker + Steve Lawless + Andy Winter

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### Accessibility Statement

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# Third Sector Recovery Action Plan

responding

The Brighton & Hove ChangeUp Consortium and Brighton & Hove City Council (BHCC) have launched a jointly owned recovery action plan for the third sector. **Paul Bramwell** outlines the key priorities and actions described in the plan.

The plan focuses on key areas of support for the third sector and the wider communities that the sector supports, and is based on the findings from the workshops at the “Don’t Get Burnt – in the heat of the recession” conference which took place in June last year.

The plan, which is supported by £80,000 of additional funding from Brighton and Hove City Council, identifies three key priority areas: diversify income and improve financial management; recruit, retain and support paid and unpaid staff; and support to services and communities in most need. The priorities, actions and lead bodies are outlined below.



## Priority 1: Finance

Key Issue: **Diversify income and improve financial management**

Key Actions:

1. Increase fund raising, business planning and financial management support including trading & tendering. Lead: ChangeUp
2. Support third sector involvement in procurement & commissioning including learning on consortia. Lead: ChangeUp/Public Service Board
3. Convene local and regional Funder Forum. Lead: BHCC

## Priority 2: Human Resources

Key Issue: **Recruit, Retain & Support paid and unpaid staff**

Key Actions:

4. Increase support for recruitment and retention of staff and volunteers including peer support for key staff. Lead: ChangeUp
5. Implement city volunteering strategy including council volunteering scheme. Lead: Impetus / BHCC

## Priority 3: Capacity

Key Issue: **Support to services and communities in most need**

Key Actions:

6. Benefit take-up campaign. Lead: BHCC / Advice Services Strategy Group
7. Credit Union campaign. Lead: East Sussex Credit Union / BHCC
8. Increase support to high demand services. Lead: ChangeUp

## Cross Cutting Project

Brighton & Hove City Council is exploring the development of a cross cutting project with partners to support four key actions in this plan:

- Benefits take-up campaign
- Credit Union campaign
- Funding Advice
- Council Volunteering programme

More information about the additional support services will be available as they come online.

*“The plan both recognises and responds to the vital role that the Third Sector plays in supporting the most vulnerable citizens and communities in Brighton and Hove in a recession. In addition, it proposes actions that will help the third sector contribute to the social, environmental and economic health of the city, from which all residents and organisations benefit”*

# Money in Mind:

news



## Look after the pennies...

... and the pounds will look after themselves. This piece of folk wisdom contains more than a grain of truth, but looking after the money in a voluntary or community group is rarely as simple as it sounds.

Kate Chapman is one of the staff team at the Resource Centre, where small groups have found help with managing their money for over twenty years. The Resource Centre is now working in partnership with Impact Initiatives and the Working Together Project to provide free training, advice and support to all small groups in Brighton & Hove, through the Money in Mind project. We asked Kate to describe some of the most common pitfalls for small community group treasurers – and how to avoid them.

### Little and often

Staying on top of the book-keeping is much easier if you get into a routine of entering things up soon after they have happened. If the pile of receipts gets too big, it can become impossible to find the time to sort it all out.

Make sure you have a clear filing system for your bills, receipts and bank statements. Record each transaction in your account book, and check your balance regularly by counting any cash and reconciling your account book with the bank statement every month.

### Money in Mind can help with:

- Free one-to-one support to help you set up an accounts system that meets your needs
- Free training on book-keeping using Excel: Thursdays 15th and 22nd July 2010

### Don't take the world on your shoulders

Being the treasurer doesn't mean you are the only person in the group who ever has to think about money. It certainly doesn't mean you are responsible for raising all the funds!

It's important for groups to discuss finances at every committee meeting, and for the treasurer to be able to supply up-to-date information about how much money there is, where it comes from and what it's being spent on. Everyone on the committee is responsible for spending decisions and should be aware of the general financial picture.

Agreeing a budget for the year means everyone knows how much the group plans to spend on different activities, and the treasurer doesn't have to feel responsible for holding the purse-strings.

### Money in Mind can help with:

- Straightforward written information on the role of the treasurer
- Free training on roles of committee members: Tuesday 13th July 2010
- Tailored, one-to-one support at any time, with budgeting or any other issue

### Ask for help when you need it

Keeping the books can be made much more complicated by receiving a grant, or taking on paid staff for the first time. Sometimes things just get in a muddle and it's too difficult or time-consuming for one person to sort out. Asking someone from outside your group to take a look at the books can help clarify things and give you a clean start for the next year.

### Money in Mind can help with:

- A free examination of accounts service and follow up support

+++ **Getting help from Money in Mind** For full details of which partner in the project can best help you, go to [www.supportforgroups.org.uk/moneyinmind](http://www.supportforgroups.org.uk/moneyinmind) and click on the link for the service you need. The project offers: Written information, One-to-one support, Training courses, Examination of accounts.

Money in Mind project services are available free of charge to any voluntary or community group based in Brighton & Hove and with an annual income below £35,000.

## Bikeworks



Bike for Life is currently running the Bikeworks project, giving unemployed women, over 50s, lone parents and people from the BME community the chance to learn about bike maintenance, how to ride confidently on the road, and how to teach others to ride too.

The course runs for three hours a week for seven or eight weeks, and is free.

+++ There are still some places left; if you are interested, and fit into any of the groups above, please call Nick Marks on 676278.

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

## Award Winning Sussex Interpreting Services



Brighton based Sussex Interpreting Services (SIS) is one of the first Community & Voluntary Sector organisations in the country to secure the new Customer Service Excellence (CSE) standard.

The Government wants public services for all which are efficient, effective, excellent, equitable and empowering – with the citizen always and everywhere at the heart of public service provision. Customer Service Excellence was developed to offer public services a practical tool for driving customer-focused change within their organisation.

The Customer Service Excellence standard tests in great depth those areas that research has indicated are a priority for customers, with particular focus on delivery, timeliness, information, professionalism and staff attitude. Emphasis placed on developing customer insight, understanding the user's experience and robust measurement of service satisfaction

[www.cse.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/homeCSE.do](http://www.cse.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/homeCSE.do)  
[www.sussexinterpreting.org.uk](http://www.sussexinterpreting.org.uk)



## More Scooters for Shopmobility

The Federation of Disabled People's Shopmobility service in Brighton has even more mobility scooters for its customers, thanks to a generous donation from the Sussex Masons who have kindly donated 10 new 'Shoprider' mobility scooters to the service. There's 6 standard size, 2 medium size and 2 very large for the more rounded individual! They're all shiny red 4-wheelers with a 'super smooth ride and an excellent turning circle'.

The Right Worshipful the Mayor of the City of Brighton & Hove, Councillor Ann Norman and her Consort Councillor Ken Norman, joined representatives from the Sussex Masons and Shopmobility staff and volunteers to celebrate this recently at an Open Day to promote the service.

Geraldine DesMoulins, Chief Officer of the Federation of Disabled People said,

"We'd like to thank the Sussex Masons for donating the scooters to our Shopmobility Service, enabling our customers to get out and about in Brighton and Hove easily and in style!"

If anyone would like to try out these new scooters or find out more about Shopmobility, please visit our offices, call us on 01273 323239 or look on our website. The scooters can be used anywhere in Brighton & Hove and we always give full training on scooter use and safety.

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

## Brighton Hove and District Leaseholders

Now has two drop ins a week at the Friends Meeting House. The Thursday drop in is in the evening - 5.30 to 7pm. There is usually a Solicitor there who specialises in Leasehold Issues. Call 01273 705432 to check directions and times etc. The service has been going since 1978 and is entirely financed by memberships of £10 - £30-0p a year.

They recently had a visit from a very elderly lady re-directed by the CAB who could not pay a £2000 bill from the freeholder. She had previously paid £3000-0p to the freeholder. They pointed out she had been overcharged in the first case as legal procedures had been ignored. The £2000 bill is also wrongly billed at present - no legal procedures followed.

Please refer any queries about 'how to pay leasehold bills' to BHDLA. Before worrying about how to pay, they may find they are not even payable.

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

## U-Studios at The Hangleton & Knoll Project



The Hangleton & Knoll Project's urban music project "U-Studios" recently won a national competition run by the 'Youth of Today' an organisation 'here to help young people make a positive difference, starting right now' which aims to highlight some of the great things young people aged 13-19 are doing in their communities.

Mason Parsons and Carla Martin won the chance to visit a top London recording studio for a day and record a new track in a professional setting. They were then interviewed by Edith Bowman alongside some top celebrities such as Craig David, Fugative, Alan Sugar and Kelly Holmes.

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

## New Volunteer Co-ordinator's Forum starts in May

Volunteer Centre Brighton and Hove will be facilitating a new forum for anyone in the city who manages or co-ordinates volunteers. It will be bi-monthly.

The first meeting is May 25 at Friends Meeting House in Ship Street. The forum will run from 10.30 until 12.30 followed by a free lunch and opportunity for further networking. We will discuss the purpose of the forum and content for future meetings.

There will also be a facilitated discussion on confidentiality and boundaries when working with volunteers.

+++ RSVP by email to :  
[penny.baker@volunteercentre.bh-impetus.org](mailto:penny.baker@volunteercentre.bh-impetus.org)

## Grants of up to £2,000 available for children's Projects

The Novas Scarman Group is a UK charity committed to helping people to bring about change in their community in the way that they want.

If you are a project initiated by children aged 5 – 13 who live in Brighton & Hove or a project which benefit children who have greater needs and fewer chances, then you can apply for a Children Can Do grant. Projects which empower children to plan their own activities and play a central role in the funding application process and projects which help children to stay safe, be happy, have fun and do well, make positive change in their community and prepare them for their future will also be considered. We cannot support activities which promote a particular religion or political aim.

Closing dates for applications are Friday 4 June 2010 and Friday 15 October 2010

+++ For more information, please contact Sue Barnes, Development Worker (01273) 234856 or email [sue.barnes@novasscarman.org](mailto:sue.barnes@novasscarman.org)

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

# Free Bespoke Training Advice

news

Just because many of us are working with reduced budgets, the importance of training for staff and volunteers within the voluntary and community sector and social enterprises remains high.

These organisations will now be entitled to a free consultation and training needs analysis thanks to a new regional partnership led by Community Action Hampshire.

The service will provide information and advice and where appropriate will lead to referrals to potential sources of funding for training.

## So what is on offer to voluntary groups and social enterprises?

- Learning and development information and advice through an initial phone call
- An organisational training needs analysis
- A report on your analysis including advice as to where to source the training
- If appropriate, and with consent, a referral can be made to Train to Gain or the Leadership and Management team who may be able to help with funding for some training

“Many voluntary and community groups have staff who do lots of different things in the organisation, so don't have all the skills they need”, says Mark Freeman, from the charity Skills Third Sector. “It is particularly hard for them to access training at the moment, with such high demand for their work and decreasing funding.

“That's why we are really pleased that this project will help organisations identify their training needs and solutions. It will also mean it is easier for them to access any funding that maybe available for training.” For more information please see [www.skills-thirdsector.org.uk](http://www.skills-thirdsector.org.uk)

## Who is delivering?

The service is being provided through the Learning and Development for the Third Sector project, being delivered by Community Action Hampshire and partners (Voluntary Action Within Kent, Oxfordshire Community & Voluntary Action, Working Together Project in Sussex and Surrey Community Action), funded by the Learning and Skills Council and the European Social Fund.



+++ For more information please contact Linda Naughton, Working Together Project : Call 01273 810248 or e-mail [linda@workingtogetherproject.org.uk](mailto:linda@workingtogetherproject.org.uk)

events



## Afternoon tea and office warming for Brighton Junction Friday 21 May, 3.30 – 6.30

CVSF, The Working Together Project and the Friends Centre are delighted to invite you to share an afternoon of lazy jazz and an old fashioned cream tea in their new offices at Brighton Junction. Find out more about the environmental credentials of this unique building by taking Ethical Property's tour, and plot your networks on our living textile artwork '6 degrees of integration'.

Please RSVP to [dan@cvsectorforum.org.uk](mailto:dan@cvsectorforum.org.uk) or telephone 01273 810230

## The New Horizon Wednesday 26 May, 10.00 – 4.30 Valley Social Centre, Whitehawk, Brighton, BN2 5HE

CVSF's one day conference aims to bring third sector groups together to discuss what the outcome of the general election means for the third sector, find out about the city council's transformation agenda, how it plans to become more efficient and better able to meet the needs of the city, harness the sector's passion, experience and ideas for turning the new Sustainable Community Strategy into action. With guest speakers Liz Atkins, Director of Public Policy, National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO) and John Barradell, Brighton and Hove City Council's new Chief Executive.

Full agenda and booking details at [www.cvsectorforum.org.uk/events](http://www.cvsectorforum.org.uk/events)

## A plastic roof raising ceremony!

Saturday and Sunday 12 – 13 June from 10.30

The North Portslade Community Allotment Group has received funding (thanks to BH Food Partnership and Sussex Community Foundation!) to put up a poly tunnel and we thought we'd do it with a bang! We are open to all comers at plot 57 in Mile Oak and there will not just be work to do but refreshments as well. Families welcome! We need lots of volunteer helpers. Saturday and Sunday June 12 and 13 from 10:30am until we fall over.

[www.communigate.co.uk/sussex/npcommunityallotment](http://www.communigate.co.uk/sussex/npcommunityallotment)

## Right Here Brighton and Hove Project Monday 28 June, 3.00 – 6.00 Jubilee Square, Brighton

There will be a free climbing wall, music and fun activities, as well as a chance to meet project staff and volunteers to find out about the Right Here project!

For more info contact [jo.glazebrook@mindcharity.co.uk](mailto:jo.glazebrook@mindcharity.co.uk) or phone 07525 667683

## LINK Annual Event Saturday 24 July

Giving everyone a chance to have their say on health and social care in Brighton and Hove.

More information will be available from our website [www.bhlink.org.uk](http://www.bhlink.org.uk) or by calling 01273 810 235

## Harvest Brighton and Hove Summer courses

Growing in a small space course, Stanmer Park, Friday 14 May, 9.30-1.30, £25/5 Growing on new plot course, Whitehawk Community Food Project, Saturday 15 May, 10-2, £25/5 Container growing course, Cornerstone Community Centre, Hove, Wednesday 2 June 6-9pm, £15/5

More information and booking at: [www.harvest-bh.org.uk](http://www.harvest-bh.org.uk)

## Local Food Week 20-26 September

This year the Brighton & Hove Food Partnership is launching the city's first 'Local Food Week' as part of September's Food Festival. We are encouraging schools, community projects and local residents to organise their own events during this week. Our plans so far include a citywide picnic where residents bring food they have grown or made at home, a food 'debate', plus a grow-your-own competition for local businesses!

skills  
THIRD SECTOR

Skills – Third Sector works to enable people in third sector organisations to have the skills to make an ever growing contribution to their communities.

[www.skills-thirdsector.org.uk](http://www.skills-thirdsector.org.uk)

+f.y.i.

>lsc

Leading learning and skills

The Learning and Skills Council is the organisation that exists to make England better skilled and more competitive. It is responsible for planning and funding high-quality, post-16 education and training with the exception of university degrees. We have a single goal: To improve the skills of England's young people and adults to world-class standards. Our vision is that by 2010, young people and adults in England will have knowledge and skills matching the best in the world and be part of a truly competitive workforce.

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



European Union  
European Social Fund

The European Social Fund (ESF) is funding from the European Union designed to improve the skills of the workforce and help people who are having difficulty finding work. This money is distributed by the Government Office for the South East (GOSE) to the co-financing organisations in the region:

- Learning and Skills Council
- Job Centre Plus
- South East England Development Agency (SEEDA)

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

# The Future of Fundraising: a CVSF briefing

While we may be officially out of recession, the general consensus is that the full impact of the financial downturn on third sector organisations is yet to emerge. Whoever forms the next Government, public funding to the sector is likely to fall dramatically.

# the Future of Fundraising



## Top ten tips

- Consider plans to ensure that your beneficiaries are protected and continue to receive the service that you are there to deliver
- Ask yourself if your organisation is fit for purpose? Identify core functions, eliminate mission creep and rank priorities.
- If your organisation is already involved in public service delivery, be clear what outcomes you deliver and how you provide quantity/quality of services
- Review your reserves, identify potential cashflow problems and have a Plan B for funding shortfalls.
- Remember that public sector bodies may not meet Compact obligations around funding as effectively as they might once have
- Explore collaborative opportunities – from increased partnership working to full scale merger
- Plan for being required to do more on the same or reduced budgets. Establishing what is feasible and how outcomes might be increased could help secure longer term funding.
- Renegotiate existing contracts early if outcomes are at risk of not being met due to the economic climate
- Trustees should examine projections and engage fully in their financial management responsibilities, seeking advice where necessary
- Monitor and engage more closely with local public sector agencies to be alert to opportunities that might arise, such as a change in policy affecting your area of work or increased contract tendering
- A wind up of operations may be unavoidable. Those at risk should confront this possibility earlier rather than later to ensure legal duties and responsibilities are fulfilled.

While national and local budgets are fixed until 2011 under the current Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR), spending cuts are already being implemented in some areas and more are anticipated. Meanwhile, in Brighton and Hove, the City Council is poised to change the way it delivers public services in the city, with a move towards 'intelligent commissioning'.

### The national picture

Projections of public funding cuts vary from zero to as much as 20%. It is difficult to be sure which budgets will be most affected, but with political promises to maintain spending at current levels in health, international development, education and defence, we can be certain that funding cuts will fall heavily on other departments and in turn affect resources available to third sector organisations.

What's more, third sector funding can sometimes be seen as a more flexible or discretionary element to be increased or decreased in response to economic pressures and / or changing policy priorities. Shortfalls in third sector development programmes are therefore widely anticipated in coming years and commissioning opportunities may also decrease. It is too soon to know if the third sector will be deemed less of a priority across Government but structural changes in third sector funding are certain. Organisations budgets are a complex picture of grants, contracts, service level agreements, commissioning and restricted and unrestricted funding.

### The local view

We are fortunate in Brighton and Hove that the City Council is committed to providing a £1.5million third sector grants programme, with three year grants recently confirmed until 2013. Further still the City Council's new Chief Executive John Barradell recently

announced his vision that the Council will stop looking to simply provide services and to start focusing more on residents' needs and the best ways to meet them. More services will be commissioned and potentially fewer directly delivered by the Council. The NHS is also in the process of strengthening its commissioning plans and processes. Although we don't yet know the detail of these plans, there may well be opportunities for organisations wishing to increase their role in public service delivery.

### The heart of the matter

The more reliant an organisation is on public funds, the harder it is going to find the changes ahead. CVSF encourages organisations to make plans. We must all take responsibility for being aware of the context in which we are working and assess need for our projects and activities. The organisations which fare best will be those able to find new ways of working more efficiently, flexibly and who can prove themselves to be part of the solution.

### No rights or wrongs

Brighton and Hove's third sector is diverse and organisations will experience the changing funding climate differently. Organisations understandably also hold different views about the extent to which public service delivery provides an answer or is something that the third sector should engage in: "Commissioning poses a formidable threat to [third sector] independence. Organisations are increasingly pressured into adapting to meet the requirements of commissioners, not the needs of the people who use their services."

"Organisations which can make themselves more attractive to commissioners are more likely to survive"



### CVSF is representing your views

CVSF does not have a view on whether third sector commissioning is good or bad. Our role is to gather the views of the sector and represent these to local public sector bodies. Our Commissioning Position Statement developed in 2009 can be seen at [www.cvsectorforum.org.uk/positionstatements](http://www.cvsectorforum.org.uk/positionstatements). This lets local commissioners and policymakers know what our concerns and priorities are in the current funding climate.

CVSF is arguing for appropriate third sector funding. This means that third sector grants must be safeguarded and commissioning processes should be fair, to allow for third sector involvement where organisations choose to engage in the opportunities available. Contracts must allow for full cost recovery.

Our statutory partners need to identify and implement a consistent approach to monitoring funding for third sector organisations. This should include an indication of the 'type' of funding being provided (eg grant, contract, etc) and the scope and length of that funding (eg delivering specific public services, core costs) Involving and listening to local communities and protecting the quality of services during any political or structural changes are further important messages that we are emphasising.

# Don't Panic!

## – the psychological impact of the recession on charities

By Emma Daniel, ChangeUp Project Manager

The impacts of the recession and various predictions about levels of cuts in public spending have been discussed at length both nationally and locally. Enormous efforts are being made to put services and information at the fingertips of charities to support them through the rough ride of cuts in funding from the public sector.

If support services are going to be of use, we need to understand how charities themselves feel about the current environment and how their ability to accept support and make decisions can be affected. We know individuals who experience stress can make poor decisions; organisations can suffer in the same way.

“At the moment we feel vulnerable and overwhelmed” Vicky Watson, B&H CAB

“We received a grant from the Hardship Fund which will last us up until October but after that it's really quite frightening. Until the general election is over no one knows how big the cuts will be but we know they are coming. It's like a black hole.” Julie O'Hara, Brighton Unemployed Centre – Families Project

These comments reflect the national picture which the Guardian reported in February from a Round Table discussion organised with NAVCA (Can the third sector do more for less?); key issues identified were:

- Uncertain nature of funding cuts and how they will be applied
- Increased demand on services versus knowledge that cuts of 20% or more are looming
- Pressure of achieving the same outcomes for less funding
- Vulnerability – both in terms of losing posts and losing organisations due to cuts
- In limbo waiting for both the results of the election and for more information on what level of cuts are coming and where the cuts will fall.

Common ‘feelings’ within the sector at present (nationally and locally) are described by those working within the sector as: vulnerability; uncertainty; pressure and, fear. The support services available to charities need to recognise and address these feelings and not just produce more of the same; we need to ensure we deal in hearts and minds too in delivering our support and information.

There is a lot happening to support organisations in Brighton and Hove with coping with the impacts of the recession. The ChangeUp Consortium (a partnership of support services

www.supportforgroups.org) has been tasked to deliver on the Ready, Responding and Resilient action plan which will provide even more support to front line charities around fundraising and human resources. We are determined to support you and we recognise that we need to listen to how you feel first!

### What are the risks of ‘panic’ on group decision making?

Organisations which feel vulnerable can get to the point where decision making is adversely affected especially at trustee level. Some typical negative reactions may include:

- ‘Paralysis by analysis’: organisations contemplating change due to reducing income sometimes get stuck in a loop of requesting more and more information in order to work towards a decision. Whilst information is a vital part of good decision making it can be a symptom of lack of confidence and an underlying hope that something external will happen which will force a decision before the group needs to decide.
- ‘Flogging a dead horse’: people working at an operational level can feel pressured to do more of the same in terms of outputs and fundraising methods in spite of the evidence that the way that money will come into the third sector is radically changing.
- ‘Compete, compete, compete’: Competition can be both helpful or harmful to charities and their beneficiaries. It is important that organisations consider their values and mission in competing for funding and ensure they choose ‘helpful’ competition which they believe will lead to improvements in service provision for the end user.
- ‘The urge to merge’: marriages can be made in heaven and one plus one can equal five! But, don't let the ‘Bridget Jones’ complex move you towards unsuitable partners. Always consider how your end users will benefit from the partnership.

### The C word!

I know that charities don't like the c word and by that I mean ‘commercial’ but there are some helpful lessons from the private sector where organisations have responded well to the impacts of the recession. The Ernst Young report ‘What high-performing companies are doing differently’ found that organisations who had flourished through the recession had consistently:

- Sought to develop a broader and deeper view of their opportunities, today and tomorrow.
- Become more innovative in strategy and structure than their competitors, more collaborative with partners and more questioning of themselves and their potential.
- Taken a more holistic and long term approach to their staff and communicated more frequently and transparently to their internal and external stakeholders.
- Broadened their understanding of risk and tightened their processes to mitigate that risk.
- Achieved greater speed in making and executing decisions to take advantage of their changing environment.

One of the phrases which jumps out of the report for me is they believe that these companies who are ‘aggressively seeking new opportunities’ are those who will drive recovery. The language may be different but this reflects the findings of the Guardian Round Table too: “We need to get better at working out where the cuts fall and work together to find ways to fill them” and: “The sector could become more radicalized. It might become smaller but a bit more spiky.”

### Taking control

To thrive through the changing environment, charities of all sizes need to consider how anxiety is affecting their decision making and to try to avoid the obvious pitfalls. To take control of change charities can consider the following actions:

- Focus on mission and values
- Horizon scanning
- Collaborate – but do so where there is a clear benefit for your service users
- Question your performance and potential
- Communicate internally and externally
- Manage risk effectively
- Ensure decision making happens fast enough

Please let the ChangeUp partnership know how you feel and what support you might need to take control this year. We have resources to help you through and we need your thoughts and requests to shape our services.

+++ Emma Daniel can be contacted on [emma@cvsectorforum.org.uk](mailto:emma@cvsectorforum.org.uk) or telephone 07726 308968

## Spoke Survey

## How confident do you feel?

Our Spoke Survey tests the temperature of the sector and enables everyone to voice their concerns and share their ideas about how to face the challenges of changing times.

The recession continues to hit our communities hard and the election does nothing to ease people's concerns about the future. These are uncertain times and many local organisations face challenges as they look ahead.

We are asking five questions and we want to hear from staff, volunteers, trustees and service users about:

- how confident you feel right now
- what are the big challenges?
- how you think you'll tackle them
- what help you need
- your top tips

You can complete the survey by visiting [www.surveymonkey.com/s/spokesurveymay2010](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/spokesurveymay2010)

Results will be posted on the CVSF website and a summary will appear on the next issue of Spoke.

Mark Walker, SCIP

[www.surveymonkey.com/s/spokesurveymay2010](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/spokesurveymay2010)

### Trusts and foundations increase grants in downturn

Large trusts and foundations gave out more money in the period leading up to the start of the recession, despite a decline in their income, according to the Directory Social Change. This directory revealed that the 400 largest trusts in the UK awarded a total of £2.53bn in 2007/08, compared with £2.3bn the previous year. The increase came despite a £126.6m fall in their combined income and about £4bn being wiped off the value of their assets. Much of the increase in grants can be traced to The Wellcome Trust, whose awards increased from £324m to £598m.

### Enterprising Britain 2010

This scheme is open to all organisations working in partnership to create an enterprising place. The "place" can be a town, a city, a parish or a neighbourhood and organisations must demonstrate that enterprise is central to the economic and/or social transformation of the place.

There are five categories of entry: Enterprise Culture; Driving Entrepreneurial Skills; Business Support and Start-up; Global Entrepreneurship; Social Cohesion.

Applicants can apply for one or more of the categories. Regional awards will be announced in July and a national shortlist will be drawn from regional winners. The scheme closes for entries on the 31 May 2010.

For further information see: [www.enterpriseuk.org/get\\_involved/enterprising\\_britain](http://www.enterpriseuk.org/get_involved/enterprising_britain)

### Faith-Based Social Action Prize

A £50,000 Innovation in Faith-Based Social Action Prize will be given to help publicise and reward faith based projects which have not yet received the recognition they deserve. Prizes will be awarded to faith projects who are finding new ways to meet local problems, bring people together and meet the needs of local communities. Projects can nominate themselves, or be nominated by others. Expressions of interest should be sent to [InnovationPrize@communities.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:InnovationPrize@communities.gsi.gov.uk). This prize will be formally opened in the summer.

For further information see: <http://nds.coi.gov.uk/content/Detail.aspx?ReleaseID=412287&NewsAreaID=2>

### Fundraising boost for grassroots sport

A campaign to bring an extra £22 million into grassroots sport over the next five years has just been announced by Sport England and JustGiving. JustGiving for Sports Clubs will help sports club members to raise more money, and claim Gift Aid, using the same award-winning tools as the biggest charities. JustGiving have dropped their subscription fees – worth £180 per year for every Community Amateur Sports Club (CASC) – so clubs can sign up today.

For further information see: [http://charities.justgiving.com/justgiving\\_for\\_sports\\_clubs/](http://charities.justgiving.com/justgiving_for_sports_clubs/)

### Heritage Lottery Fund and Biodiversity

As part of 2010 International Year of Biodiversity, the Heritage Lottery Fund is encouraging organisations to approach it for funding for projects that conserve the UK's natural heritage. The fund has received an increase of £25million due to a rise in Lottery ticket sales, taking the budget to £205m per annum from April 2010. Their guidance outlines what can and cannot be funded in relation to biodiversity projects.

For further information see: [www.hlf.org.uk/HowToApply/furtherresources/Pages/Thinkingaboutbiodiversity.aspx](http://www.hlf.org.uk/HowToApply/furtherresources/Pages/Thinkingaboutbiodiversity.aspx) and [www.hlf.org.uk/Pages/Home.aspx](http://www.hlf.org.uk/Pages/Home.aspx)

### Lloyds TSB Foundation

The Lloyds TSB Foundation has announced an extra £5m income for 2010. Their Community programme focuses on funding core work that helps disadvantaged people to play a fuller role in the community. Themes:

- Improved social and community involvement
- Improved life choices and chances
- Helping people to be heard.

Funding can be used to continue and develop existing community-based work, or to develop the organisation or its services. They provide 1-3 year funding for running costs, including salaries to ensure that charities can maintain and develop their core work/services. Applications can be made at any time.

For further information, see: [www.lloydstsbfoundations.org.uk](http://www.lloydstsbfoundations.org.uk)

+++ Information about funding sources can be seen at [www.supportforgroups.org.uk/funding](http://www.supportforgroups.org.uk/funding)



# If I were Prime Minister...

Spoke magazine asked you what you would do if you woke up one day to find yourself Prime Minister. This is what you said:

## Jan Aram Impetus

As PM my government would save tax payers money, deliver improved social outcomes focusing on causes not consequences and reward ethical investors! How? Develop Social Impact Bonds - private investment into deep-rooted social problems at an early intervention stage. Investors gain from a proportion of the savings made by the government as a result of the reduction in spending on acute services. The third sector gets more funding! Simple.

(For more information on Social Impact Bonds go to: [www.socialfinance.org.uk](http://www.socialfinance.org.uk))

## Susi Maxwell-Stewart

I would stop all wars with all my powers; I would give everyone the same wage regardless of their jobs; I would give everyone a house to live in and make them all the same sustainable, cheap to rent and with a garden with all the amenities so everyone thinks they live in a palace. Everyone would have to grow food and beautiful flowers. Any one who commits less serious crimes would be immediately sent to counselors and therapists - if they reoffend they will be sent to boot camp (even teenagers, if there isn't a good reason for their reoffending); every single parent would have access to a rant room; schools and hospitals will be given a bonus payment to help them sort out the bills from the top management wages and hand outs; there would be a grant for all students that need it; free holidays, travel, food, heating for OAPs to be paid out of politicians handouts; what we save by not having weapons we can rebuild the UK, with the troops and money for defence used for a time for the rebuilding programme.

Everyone should have a course in how to be civil and have manners and be thoughtful; there will be rewards to the community minded. Art, music and entertainment should be accessible for everyone; all councillors should be sent to the third world to learn what poverty is. Appreciation of green environment would be rewarded and highly encouraged including a no traffic hour once a day.

## Emma Daniel ChangeUp

I'd want to make domestic abuse as socially unacceptable as drink/ driving and not wearing a seatbelt. I would want Britain to be world leaders in tackling domestic abuse. Governments have put resources into this issue and have updated legislation recently, as well as training court staff but it still remains a poor relation to other crimes that the public care more about. When asked, the public want burglary, vehicle crime and youth related anti-social behaviour to be the top priorities for criminal justice partnerships. When giving to charities, the public choose animals, health and children but women's aid organisations struggle to find this support, making a real issue for those women not entitled to claim housing benefits, as refuges struggle to find enough unrestricted funding to provide a safe house. One in four women will be a victim of domestic violence in their lifetime - many of these on a number of occasions. One incident of domestic violence is reported to the police every minute....and on average a women will experience 35 incidents of domestic violence before reporting to the police.

I am tired of the continual hill that has to be climbed to get secure resources for services which predominately benefit women: We are half the population and we should consider which party takes their responsibilities to spending, not only on these services, but others like midwifery, seriously!

## Jackie Grigg MACSS

I would like the government to stop using charities to replace public sector funding and services! I'm old school! Although I do acknowledge that a knock on effect of the change over the years is that some charities have introduced new and sometimes better ways of providing services and this in turn has influenced the services that remain in the public sector. Like most people, I'd like to see more long term funding opportunities available, possibly from a central government fund, but central government must acknowledge the independence of the voluntary sector.

## Charlotte Irtelli Brighton and Hove LINK

I would massively reduce tax for those earning under £50k....maybe take some of the extortionate money that is paid to footballers, and give the money to charities, health services, education, and especially raise the wages of front line workers, such as nurses. I would also abolish bonuses that are paid to the bigwigs of banking, and put that money back into the community. More hostels for homeless people etc, bring back 100% mortgages with low interest rates and no deposits for first-time buyers, bring down the price of groceries and energy, and install solar panels for every home and business

## Sally Polanski Community and Voluntary Sector Forum

I would establish a fairer settlement between financial institutions and society. Low-income communities, third sector organisations, and small businesses have for too long suffered from financial institutions not meeting their needs. Egs: up to million people cannot access mainstream credit -often as a result of having no credit history, rather than a bad one - and have no choice but to borrow at interest rates usually from anywhere between 300% to 9,000%. Low-income households spend on average £1,000 more a year for the most essential goods and services, such as gas, electricity and insurance, as a direct result of lacking general banking services such as bank accounts and direct debits.

We need a system that actively encourages financial institutions to engage with low income communities, third sector organisations and small businesses; one that enables them to become financially independent: to build savings and pensions, to have every opportunity to flourish financially and economically. I would put a cap on extortionate lending rates, require banks to re-invest at least 1% of profits to support public benefit and rate financial institutions as to how well they serve all communities and organisations.

# Partnerships and Collaborations

## – what's all the fuss about?

By Steve Lawless, Impetus

The Charity Commission recently carried out a survey of all charities that had gone into liquidation in one year. None of them had considered partnerships or mergers as a way to avoid their demise. Funding has become tighter over the past year. Although the recession is supposed to be over trust funds are still getting a low return on their investments and so have less to donate.

It is an environment that could get worse for us over the next few years as statutory funders seek to make savings and commissioners become more focussed on their core business. Additionally commissioners are seeking efficiencies through developing larger contracts with fewer voluntary organisations. This might all seem academic if it has not affected you yet but there are local third sector organisations that have taken serious hits in the last couple of years because of these issues.

Commissioners are also focussing on effectiveness through outcome commissioning strategies. This can be seen developing locally with the PCTs "World Class Commissioning" and the Councils outcomes focussed "intelligent commissioning". This will provide the sector with threats and opportunities.

For the small and medium sized organisations there is now a serious possibility that national charities, social enterprises, and even commercial social providers will edge us out of the social market, and be under no illusion, it is a market.

So why is collaboration a way of offsetting the recession? The commercial sector has a long history of takeovers and mergers to improve profitability, competitiveness and efficiency. Over the past few years third sector organisations all over the country have been exploring collaborations to improve cost effectiveness and improve competitiveness. In Sheffield a Wellbeing Consortium of over 86 organisations was formed to develop larger bids. Such consortiums can also offer synergies by combining the talents and services of a number of organisations. The Capacity Building Project was an example where three local organisations developed an equal partnership that successfully bid for half a million pounds of Big Lottery Funding over three years. Not only was the bid more competitive the synergies gained from joining up services added real value for front line organisations.

In the commercial world "clusters" of small companies have come together to share costs such as

marketing, distribution and acquisitions achieving the economies of scale that usually only the larger corporates achieve. Locally Community Base was set up during the previous recession to achieve savings by sharing accommodation and service costs. Savings can be achieved in a number of other areas as well such as sharing IT, Human Resources support and bookkeeping.

So what are the barriers? Funding creates a competitive environment and this can erode our values of co-operation and being user led. We also fiercely value our independence. All of this can work against us doing the sensible, and often the ethical, thing. When an organisation is going through a financial crisis it is more likely to become defensive and put the barriers up rather than look around to where it can gain some support through collaboration. There is also the fear that mergers can really be takeovers resulting in a loss of identity and possibly value.

We have seen shot gun weddings in the City in the past that have not worked. All this should not make us blind to the advantages and possibilities. Although merger might be the sensible option this should only be considered at the end of a process of partnership development. Organisations need to harmonise values, methods of working, carry out financial risk assessments and looked at the real opportunities before even considering a merger. For some of us the alternative will be the loss of the whole organisation.

### case study

#### A merger made in heaven?

Age UK was formally launched on 19th April as the new force combining Age Concern and Help the Aged.

Tom Wright, Chief Executive of Age Concern and Help the Aged, said:

I want to build on the success that Age Concern England and Help the Aged have achieved as separate charities over many years and create what I passionately believe will be one of the most powerful and influential new charitable and social enterprise organisations in the UK.

"The challenges that face us are immense: the new charity will have to grapple with enormous social change as societies age worldwide. Working with staff, volunteers, supporters and donors of Age

Concern England and Help the Aged, we will construct together a new charity of which we can all be proud. I want to help fashion an organisation that will have the influence to create change, to deliver flagship services that address the challenges of growing older both in the UK and across the world, and which puts older people at the heart of everything we do.

The new organisations will have a turnover of more than £150 million. In addition to campaigning and influencing, their work will include providing information and advice to over 5 million people, commercial services for over 1.1 million customers and more than 15 million customer transactions through over 500 retail shops. Internationally, they will support a global network for older people in more than 70 countries and will fund pioneering research into all aspects of ageing.

+++ Advice and support in partnership development can be provided by the Performance Development Service. For more information contact Andy Seares, the contact for the PDS: [Andy.Seares@pds.bh-impetus.org](mailto:Andy.Seares@pds.bh-impetus.org), 07846 403008

# Q&A:

# Innovating out of the Recession



Spoke magazine talks to Brighton Housing Trust's Chief Executive, Andy Winter about BHT Enterprises, and what looks on the surface like a curious step for a housing charity to take, their recent acquisition of a PR Company.



Brighton Housing Trust employs almost 250 staff in Brighton, Eastbourne and Hastings. They accommodate over 600 individuals each night in properties they either own or lease, and support over 1,000 people each day through our various support services. In an average year they work with between 10,000 and 12,000 individuals, the majority through their advice centres in Brighton and Eastbourne.

## Q: Why have you set up BHT Enterprises?

**A:** It is quite obvious that any organisation that aims to rely completely on local and national government grants and/or contracts will find the next 5 years really hard going, and many will not survive. BHT has sought to diversify its income streams, and BHT Enterprises Ltd is the vehicle for us to do things that we cannot do as a charity. Many other charities have trading arms, such as Shelter, Age Concern, Sussex Beacon, The Martlets and so on.

## Q: Does 'combating homelessness' remain at the heart of BHT's work?

**A:** Absolutely, it remains one third of our long-standing Mission which is to "combat homelessness, create opportunities and promote change". A more significant development than the creation of BHT Enterprises Ltd was the acquisition of Hastings Community Housing Association that took place at the same time. This has strengthened our finances, not least our balance sheet, as well as widening both the range of the work we do (it has a focus on young homelessness) and the geographical spread of our work. The remit of BHT hasn't changed. The range of service provision to those in housing need has increased.

## Q: There is logic to making use of First Base's kitchen for Dine, and in offering BHT Training to the wider third sector. But it seems quite a leap to go into the PR business. Why has BHT bought Blue Rocket PR?

**A:** BHT itself has not bought Blue Rocket, our trading arm BHT Enterprises has. It has been done to make a statement about our commitment to social enterprise, and as a commercial investment that will make money. All profits from BHT Enterprises Ltd

will be gift aided to BHT and applied to our charitable works. I can imagine many organisations who would love to have free income such as this to help them deliver services.

## Q: It has been reported that BHT paid £95,000 for Blue Rocket. Is that a sensible investment for a housing organisation, especially since it seems to be so far removed from the world of housing?

**A:** You are wide of the mark regarding the figure! A sensible investment? Ask the women who use BHT's Threshold Women's Counselling Service. Anticipated gift aid from Blue Rocket alone would cover the deficit of this service. By diversifying our income streams we are doing what we can to safeguard our core services.

## Q: The staff strikes at BHT last summer were well documented. I understand staff have had their salaries reduced and their terms and conditions altered. Is this true, and if so, why was this decision made?

**A:** Well run organisations will have been preparing for some time for the massive cuts in public finances that are likely following the general election. At BHT we started that process in September 2008. Our forecasts showed that if we did not do something about our costs as well as increasing our income we would have found by 2012 that we were no longer viable. We therefore began implementing a strategy that would ensure that our finances were strengthened in order to protect jobs and services. This strategy included growth through developing new services and the acquisition of other likeminded organisations, the development of social enterprises,

and a review of our costs. Our main costs are salaries. We undertook a market review of salaries and concluded that in some areas we were paying below the market and in most cases above it. We undertook four months of consultation with Unison and individual members of staff. This resulted in significant changes being made to the original proposals. We offered new contracts of employment to all staff. Those who signed were given 12 months salary protection. That period ends in July 2010. Just 4 individuals did not sign and were dismissed. I regret that we lost even four. Our salaries are still amongst the best locally, and we have not experienced any problem with staff turnover or our ability to recruit new, quality members of staff. Had we not done this in a proactive manner, we would not have been able to give 12 months salary protection and we would now be making redundancies, as are several other voluntary organisations locally.

## Q: What is the financial picture for BHT over the coming years?

**A:** We are forecast to make surpluses in each of the five years of our business plan, and we are confident about our ability to weather the financial climate over the next three to five years. We undertook a review in early April on the impact of a theoretical 20% cut in our funding. While services and jobs would certainly be lost, the organisation would survive.

## Q: Are there any other plans in the pipeline for BHT Enterprises?

**A:** We have many plans, some of which will come to fruition, others won't. But we will only develop further social enterprises if they help deliver our Mission of combating homelessness, creating opportunities and promoting change.

### Learning Disability Awareness, BHT Training

Thursday 10th June 2010, Brighton

The complexity of Learning Disability is extensive and there is a lot of confusion and misunderstanding about the term.

This course offers insight into the issues relating to Learning Disabilities including the different named syndromes and the difficulties encountered by many labelled as having a 'Learning Disability'. Attitudes, assumptions and current practice are examined and the course reflects a Person Centered value base.

£105 – full fee; £65 discounted for small providers with a turnover of less than £100,000 or fewer than 10 full time employees. For more information or to book a place, contact the Training Team: training@bht.org.uk or 01273 645401.

BHT Training offers a programme of over 36 training courses aimed at people working in the voluntary sector, focussing primarily on work with vulnerable adults. If you would like a copy of our current programme, please contact the training team on 01273 645401 or email: training@bht.org.uk

### Introduction to Permaculture

Saturday 10 - Sunday 11 July 2010

These courses introduce the basics of Permaculture and show how this approach can be applied. These courses are run regularly. See www.brightonpermaculture.org.uk for more information.

### Creative therapeutic communication with children and young people.

Starts Thursday 16th September 2010 for 12 weeks (excluding 28th October), 4.00pm - 6.30pm

This 12 week post-qualifying course is designed for counsellors who are currently working with children and young people or would like to develop their skills in using the arts and play in a non-interpretive way. The course will focus on understanding how key emotional themes are experienced through the arts and play and in the therapeutic relationship.

The training provides counsellors with the opportunity to develop and strengthen skills in working with

metaphor and image through the experience of using art, clay, puppets, story and the sandtray world. It will further enhance participants' creativity and build confidence in their practice.

The approach is integrative and will build on existing experience as therapeutic practitioners.

Facilitator: Sally Meyer is a Psychotherapist, Supervisor, Trainer and Play Therapist working in private practice, schools and the NHS. She is UKCP Registered and has an MA in Integrative Arts Psychotherapy. Cost £420; venue the Dialogue Centre, 24 Windlesham Road, Brighton, BN1 3AG

For further information and an application pack, please contact Laura Roberts on 01273 320500 or dialogue@sussexcentralymca.org.uk

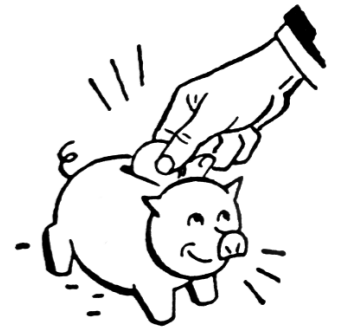
### The Working Together Project Brighton and Hove

#### Short course programme for spring and summer

The short course programme is now available to download from our website www.workingtogetherproject.org.uk and includes courses in fundraising, book keeping, volunteer management, equal opportunities and diversity, communication and committee skills. Courses are free of charge to anyone involved in community groups or voluntary organisations in Brighton and Hove (see terms and conditions). enquiries@workingtogetherproject.org.uk 01273 810248

Small local community groups can also ask WTP for regular or one off workshops to help with anything from making meetings work, to helping communities to identify their priorities, to producing a community newsletter.

We are always developing new courses to respond to your needs in running successful groups and organisations, so please ring to talk through your ongoing training and skills needs. It may also be possible for a development worker to visit you to learn about your group, and to help you identify the support you need.



The Best That You Can Do:

## Spoke's Guide to saving money (or doing things on the cheap)

The million dollar question... or to put it another way, how can our group save money without too much hassle? The good news is there are lots of ways of saving your hard earned resources, lots of ways of reducing your costs and better still, plenty of sources for finding things for free. Make do and mend with Spoke's Guide to Saving Money.

cut out and file

### Something for nothing

**Dropbox** www.dropbox.com

This is a neat tool for people who work with others who are not from their organisation. You can both sign up for Dropbox and share up to 2Gb of files and folders just by dropping things into a folder on your computer – it automatically updates live, or every time you connect to the net. Good for volunteers and small project teams. Free up to 2Gb but pricey if you use it too much.

**OpenOffice** www.openoffice.org

This open source suite offers word processing, spreadsheet and database tools similar to Microsoft Office, but is completely free.

**Wordpress** www.wordpress.com

A great place to build a free website. You can choose whether to include ads and you can download the software it uses and run it on your own server if you ever feel you need extra features.

**Doodle** www.doodle.com

Ever needed to organise a meeting and someone has forgotten their diary? With Doodle you set up possible dates and times and then ask people to say which ones they can do. It can then tell you which is the most popular.

**Event Management** www.eventbrite.com

Need to organise free tickets for an event you're running? Let Eventbrite handle online bookings, email reminders and guestlists. Free to set up an account and free to use if your tickets are free. Pay a fee if you charge for the tickets – but still not as expensive as building your own ticketing systems and taking online payments. May look like overkill for some events but once you've tried it there's no going back!

**Giving World Online** www.givingworldonline.com

A not for profit, free and simple scheme, offering organisations the chance to pass on surplus goods to people in need. Charities can register to: Access quality goods free of charge, search for what your beneficiaries need, maximise your charity's resources.



### Other Free Things

- Free online surveys at [www.surveymonkey.com](http://www.surveymonkey.com).
- Free online word processor, spreadsheets and more [www.google.com/docs](http://www.google.com/docs)
- Free phone calls to other computer users [www.skype.com](http://www.skype.com)
- Free promotion and publicity [www.twitter.com](http://www.twitter.com), [www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com)
- Things you never knew you wanted on Freecycle - [www.freecycle.org](http://www.freecycle.org)
- Skills swapping; See <http://www.brightexchange.org.uk> Brighton's Local Exchange Trading Scheme, a local network of people who trade skills and services and goods on a cashless basis. Email [brightnatclin@mac.com](mailto:brightnatclin@mac.com) or telephone Bob on 01273 571038
- Appeals on local email lists, such as the CVSF list, SCIP list or if you are in Community Base, the Community Base list, are often remarkably fruitful.
- Walk, cycle, or lift share and encourage your colleagues to do the same.

### IT

- Have a look at [www.itforcharities.co.uk](http://www.itforcharities.co.uk) if you are looking for a recycled computers
- Free information about computing for third sector [www.ictchampions.org.uk](http://www.ictchampions.org.uk)
- Open source software - [www.opensourcewindows.org](http://www.opensourcewindows.org)
- Tell your supporters about what you do by using an email marketing service like Mail Chimp, which easy to use and free if you are sending to less than 500 emails. See [www.mailchimp.com](http://www.mailchimp.com).

### Cutting your costs

- Look for recycled, second hand office furniture at Emmaus [www.emmausbrighton.co.uk](http://www.emmausbrighton.co.uk) or Green Works [www.green-works.co.uk](http://www.green-works.co.uk)
- It's worth checking Ebay, [www.ebay.co.uk](http://www.ebay.co.uk)
- Try the Resource Centre for very affordable printing and resources
- Most train fare websites offer return ticket as standard if you are making a return journey. It's worth checking if two single tickets work out cheaper, for example, a 'saver return' ticket from Southampton to

Cardiff over a weekend, costs £35, but two singles for the same trip would save you more than £20 (source, Which magazine).

- Look at recruiting volunteers, interns or work placements to work with you.
- Are there any opportunities for working with local businesses, for example can they provide free goods in exchange for publicity? Contact the Business Community Partnership for ideas and support, 01273 770075 or email [admin@bhbc.org.uk](mailto:admin@bhbc.org.uk)
- Use free or low charge meeting spaces (see Community Base's venue hire database – [www.communitybase.org.uk](http://www.communitybase.org.uk)). Or could you hold meetings at each other's houses?
- Are there any tasks you can take in house, such as IT or payroll, for example?
- Make use of on-line and self directed learning opportunities. Contact the Working Together Project on 01273 810248 or email [enquiries@workingtogetherproject.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@workingtogetherproject.org.uk)
- Haggle before settling for mobile phone contracts (talk to SCIP for tips)
- Check your bank account to see if it charges you; if it does, find one for which doesn't.
- Comparing prices online saves time and money. Use the comparison websites to find the cheapest prices for goods such as books or CDs. Try [www.find-book.co.uk](http://www.find-book.co.uk) or [www.find-cd.co.uk](http://www.find-cd.co.uk). Don't forget to check for delivery charges if you order online, which can sometimes add a fair bit to your bill.

### Cut your bills and save energy

- Don't leave your office equipment, lights, kitchen equipment on standby. According to Ecover, a computer monitor left on standby can cost £30 a year. And Which magazine says televisions left on standby cost UK households £76 million a year in wasted electricity. Plasma TVs consume 50 per cent more energy on average than similar-sized LCD models.
- The Energy Saving Trust is a non-profit organisation that provides free and impartial advice on how to stop wasting energy. More energy saving tips can be found at [www.energysavingtrust.org.uk/Easy-ways-to-stop-wasting-energy/Stop-wasting-energy-and-cut-your-bills](http://www.energysavingtrust.org.uk/Easy-ways-to-stop-wasting-energy/Stop-wasting-energy-and-cut-your-bills)
- You can cut your heating bills by switching energy suppliers. For more information visit [www.switchwithwhich.co.uk](http://www.switchwithwhich.co.uk)