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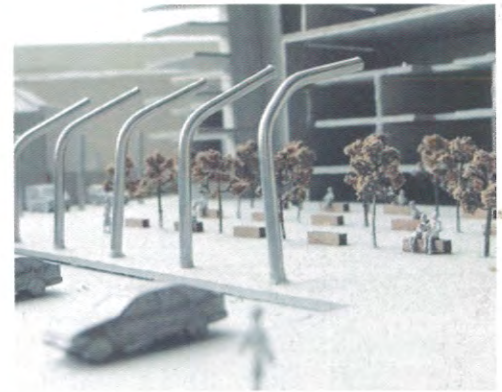
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The newsletter for Hackney's voluntary & community sectors

SPARK

March 2001



a new town centre for Dalston ?

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News in brief

Voluntary/community sector to strengthen role in local regeneration

Together with Bootstraps, Hackney Community Transport, Hackney Community Development and Hackney Action for Racial Equality, HCVS have put in a 1st stage bid for Objective 2 ERDF for a coordinator of a Regeneration Partnership Forum for the voluntary sector. The much-needed forum will help cement the role of the voluntary and community sectors in the many regeneration processes in the borough.

Black Regeneration Forum moves home

The Black Regeneration Forum (BRF) has moved from LVSC to the Council of Ethnic Minority Voluntary Sector Organisations (CEMVO) in Stratford. BRF's main aim is to make regeneration partnerships more responsive to the needs of black and ethnic minority communities. Asher Craig is London Regional Director of CEMVO.

Bayliss to represent voluntary sector on new PCT

Health Minister John Denham has made City & Hackney a Primary Care Trust to be chaired by Jane Wynder (Chair of City & Hackney Community Services NHS Trust), Elizabeth Bayliss (lay member of PCG) has been appointed a PCT non-executive director alongside Fiona Freedland (a local solicitor in clinical negligence). Laura Sharpe will be Chief Executive of the new organisation as well as acting Chief Executive of the Community Trust. Dr David Sloan will be public health consultant to the PCT.

Another start for Hackney

At the end of January 2001, David Blunkett announced that Hackney, along with ten other London boroughs, would be one of the 66 areas invited to develop Sure Start programmes in what will be the fourth wave. The initiatives will build on the existing key principles of parental involvement, early help and joined-up working. For an update on Stamford Hill Sure Start see Education section. Audrey Wilson, Operations Manager is the contact at LB Hackney.

Go green and get cash

New Opportunities Fund announces £125 million of Lottery money for green spaces and sustainable communities programme. Focusing on disadvantage, the fund begins in April 2001 and aims to improve children's playgrounds, green areas for local communities and to help people take care of their environment.

HARE grows

Hackney Action for Racial Equality (HARE) have got money from Bridge House Trust and the Tudor Trust for an ethnic minority community development worker. They will be recruiting in the next couple of months.

Its official - the voluntary sector is stressed!

A recent poll by London Hazards Centre of 600 voluntary organisations in London revealed that 85% identified work stress as their major workplace health and safety issue which is in line with two national occupational health surveys which have revealed that more than 70% of workers face unacceptable levels of stress in their work.

HOPE for mental health sufferers

Shoreditch New Deal Trust to support three mental health projects: Horticultural Therapy a community garden for mental health users; HOPE, a self help group for local people with anxiety and panic issues and; Integration in Hackney Community College, a link worker to support mental health sufferers to attend college.

Drop-in to Renaisi

Renaisi have set up 'capacity building surgeries' open to local community and voluntary groups interested in the Woodberry Down/Stamford Hill SRB 6 Programme every Tuesday morning at the Robin Redmond Resource Centre, 440 Seven Sisters Road from 10am to 1pm. They will also be opening their own doors to anyone from the community interested in regeneration. Sessions are every Monday evening from 5-7pm @ Renaisi, 300 Mare Street, E8 1HE.

Community groups urged to seek new sports fund

The London Region have lottery grants of up to £30,000 available to develop sport at community level, thanks to Sport England's recently launched Active Communities Development Fund (ACDF). The closing date for submission of initial bid forms is 16th March and is targeted at black and ethnic communities; people with disabilities; women and girls; and people on low incomes.

Healthy Regeneration in London

The London Regeneration Network have organised a one-day conference to explore the links between health and regeneration through speakers and case studies. Speakers include representatives from NCVO, Social Action for Health and Waltham Forest & Redbridge SRB's Health Ladder for Social Exclusion. The conference takes place on 26th March @ The Voluntary Sector Resource Centre on Holloway Road. For more details contact Michelle @ LVSC on 020 7700 8107.

New older people's council in Finsbury Park

Better Government for Older People have raised £8,000 for a Guide to Services for Older People and have also raised £5,000 to set up a Council for Older People in Finsbury Park. There is already a Council for Older People in the Hackney area. For more details contact Anna Tatton, BGOP 020-8356-4524.

Neighbourhood renewal

'Reviewing our Neighbourhood: planning for action & Making Regional Networks Work: the Role of the Black Voluntary Sector Regional Networks'. BTEG, Urban Forum and MiNet are holding a one day conference about local neighbourhood renewal strategies. The conference takes place at the GLA building on 19th March from 10-4pm. For details call BTEG on 020 7520 2434.

HCVS is keen to receive your news. If you have any important stories or articles you wish to get published, please contact: Jake on 020 7923 1962 or by email: jake.hcvs@virgin.net

Director's update

LB Hackney Voluntary Sector Review

The Borough is undertaking yet another review of the voluntary sector and developing a strategy for its work with the voluntary sector over the next three years.

A new directorate of Community & Learning consisting of a Director (post to be advertised) and 40 officers is being set up at a cost of £392,000. This will hold all grant funded organisations as well as the organisations previously funded through Customer & Advice Services, Learning & Leisure and some transferred from other directorates.

An officer/member working group is currently working on terms of reference for the review of all allocations including the voluntary sector's participation in the working group.

District Auditors are conducting a review which will be headed by Eric Nesbitt as lead officer.

Deputation to the Council

HCVS led a deputation to the Council's Policy and Finance Committee on 26th February to articulate our concerns about their proposals. These are the issues we covered:

Firstly the frequency with which we are having to defend ourselves against cuts. Every year we have to justify our existence - it is becoming monotonous.

Secondly the lack of consultation and involvement of the voluntary/community sector around these cuts and proposals to re-structure the whole way we are managed.

Thirdly another review is being undertaken when the results of the last one have not been publicised, discussed or acted upon. Also, no discussion has taken place about how the sector is to be involved..

Fourthly, as a major asset to the local economy, we bring funding employment

resources and skills into Hackney and are major contributors to local quality of life. However, we are made to feel like optional extras in regime after regime.

At a time when central government are making great pronouncements about the role of voluntary/community organisations and making new money available, we should be working together locally to create strong structures to implement these strategies. However there is no celebration, on the contrary there is an unearthly hush, a real feeling of confusion and uncertainty

At a time when central government are making great pronouncements about the role of voluntary/community organisations and making new money available, we should be working together locally to create strong structures to implement these strategies

leading to a demoralised sector. Funders too are anxious, confused and hesitant about what is happening in Hackney and some are waiting to see how the council proceeds before making funding decisions.

Here we are in March, not knowing what our allocations are for 2001/2. How are we supposed to operate efficiently and plan our services?

Compact

We have been talking to officers and Council members for over a year now about the development of a compact - a formal partnership agreement based on shared values, mutual independence, respect and a commitment to working together for the benefit of local people. This has been batted about and passed from one person to another. We need a central policy and a commitment to a local compact as soon as possible. **We need systems in place that do not depend on the whims of individuals and hand-picked organisations but are discussed openly with a range of representatives of the sector.** In the absence of such an agreement here we are again in March facing another £600,000 worth of proposed cuts to the sector (£450,000 in Community & Learning, £150,000 in Social Services). All of this was done without consultation, despite having formed panels to review cuts last year in social services, HCVS did not even see a draft of the letter until

groups sent it to us. **Again there are different strategies in different directorates.** These proposals for Community & Learning are taking money from the sector and using for a new structure for the directorate and the delivery of Best Value Reviews. We have just dismantled one Learning & Leisure directorate.

Premises

Premises is another issue that we keep banging on about - however there really does need to be some strategy in place. **Groups are being served notice on their premises as we speak.** Whilst we hear and understand that the council needs to cash in on its assets. We want the Council to understand that we too are a valuable asset to this borough and we need somewhere to sit and work. We want to discuss a strategy around premises with them. All of this will be better served and dealt with via strategic planning and discussion with the sector.

We urge the Council to :

1. With the greatest urgency, sort out funding allocations for April 2001/2
2. Authorise payment of the first quarter's grant to all currently funded groups. This will provide them with minimum short term security while consultation and decision making takes place.
3. Instruct officers and Council members to establish a mechanism and the resources for the development of a Hackney Compact and a voluntary sector forum. This can be used to address such things as:

- the current review of funding taking place including contracts and grants
- a premises strategy for the sector
- new funding streams and their implementation locally
- a funders forum and funding strategy
- decision making processes and consultation
- resolution of any problems/conflicts within the sector

Locality Health Partnership Board for City & Hackney

The Board held its inaugural meeting on February 28th at the Town Hall.

HCVS is one of 5 voluntary sector representatives on the The City & Hackney Health & Social Care Partnership Board. The board will consider and implement strategies to improve health & well being of local people and the health inequalities. The reps are:

Raina Sheridan	Co-Chair Health & Social Care Forum
Mary Cannon	Co-Chair Health & Social Care Forum
Issac Dweben	Chair, BEMWG
Manish Shah	Co-ordinator, BEMWG
A. Antigha	HCVS

The Board will meet 5 times per year and next meets on April 26th 2001. If you wish to discuss the Board or its work, please contact one of the above representatives. Spark will summarize issues covered and decisions made regularly,

Regeneration

Together with Bootstraps, Hackney Community Transport, Hackney Community Development and Hackney Action for Racial Equality, we have put in a 1st stage bid for Objective 2 ERDF for a coordinator of a Regeneration Partnership Forum for the voluntary sector. This work has long needed coordination, support and a strong partnership. Several attempts to organise it have failed because of a lack of resources to do the necessary development work. We have also been asked to lead on a bid for the development of a Black & Bilingual Regeneration Forum (both bids are assessed by the Objective 2 Partnership Board coordinated by Peter Brimson at Renaisi).

CLS Conference

The Steering group continues to meet and has commissioned a mapping survey from HCVS. A conference will be held on April 5th Thursday 9.30 - 1.30 in the Assembly Rooms at Hackney Town Hall to consult on progress and provide an update.

PQASSO

HCVS has attracted funding to complete the PQASSO quality assurance system. We will offer support and training to 100 or so other organisations in Hackney who also want to do it. In addition, we will be offering training days & consultancy support as follow up to a range of organisations who meet the criteria (see section on page 25 for further details).

Healthy Living Centre Bids

The cross-sector steering group supported 3 bids submitted before the closing date in December 2000.

- a) Nightingale Estate based - already through to 2nd stage
- b) Older Peoples bid - led by the Sharp End
- c) Black & Bi-lingual Committees bid - led by BEMWG

In addition there were several other bids submitted independently eg Shoreditch New Deal and the Queensbridge Trust. Apparently 1st stage bids are taking 6 months to assess and 2nd stage applications can take a further 6 months, so it will be some time before any actual developments get underway.

New staff at HCVS

HCVS has employed several new members of staff in the last few months. They are as follows:

Sanusie Sesay	Disability Hackney Coordinator
Ann Ward	Hackney Access Project Development Officer
Jake Ferguson	Publicity & Information Officer
Simon Maty	Finance Officer

New look SPARK

As you may have noticed, SPARK has taken on a new and improved look. We are keen to ensure SPARK is available on a regular basis - almost certainly quarterly. We need your help to make sure it has the most up-to-date voluntary and community sector news & events in particular and welcome your letters and comments for a forthcoming

ing comments page. So, if you have any newsworthy items, please don't hesitate to contact Jake our new Publicity and Information Officer email: jake.hcvs@virgin.net or Tel: 020 7923 1962

New logo and new email address

HCVS and Disability Hackney will have a new logo by the next issue.

We also have a new email address. It is post.hcvs@virgin.net

*Hackney Council for Voluntary Service
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Tel: 020 7923 1962
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*Registered charity: 1069736
Registered limited company: 3365292*



Adiaha Antigha

**Adiaha Antigha
Director, Hackney CVS**

NHS plan puts patients at heart but Hackney may lose independent watchdog

City and Hackney Community Health Council faces closure as a result of the publication of the Health and Social Care Bill in December 2000 which has made it clear that all local Community Health Councils are to be abolished by March 2002. The NHS Plan, which sets out a 10 year framework to modernise England's Health Service and improve patient representation, aims to replace CHCs with four

new local bodies: a Patient Advisory and Liaison Service (PALS) set up and managed by the NHS; a Patients Forum made up of volunteers who will be supported by PALS and based in hospitals; Independent Local Advisory Forums (ILAFs) which will be made up of citizens who will be appointed by the health authority to scrutinise the health authority; and an all-party scrutiny committee

run by the local authority. Voluntary organisations will need to work with ILAFs to advise ELCHA on the appropriate priorities. The Health Service Journal has reported that these groups, which are intended to replace CHCs, will cost five times as much to run and could cost as much as 114m by 2004-05, compared with a current annual cost of 23m for CHCs in England.

City & Hackney Community Health Council, which is made up of 24 volunteers and acts as an independent watchdog for local health services, is seriously concerned about these changes and doesn't believe patients are getting a better deal, particularly as the new replacement committees that are planned will not get any new powers of scrutiny and will be employed by those who they are there to scrutinise. City and Hackney CHC has a history of successful lobbying particularly for women mental health service users and to establish a sickle cell centre in Hackney.



For help and advice about local health care in Hackney or if you would like to campaign against CHCs closure contact City & Hackney Community Health Council, 210 Kingsland Road, London E2 8EB, 020 7739 6308, cityhackney.chc@talk21.com. Wheelchair accessible.

HIV amongst West Africans an ever growing problem

SPARK spoke with Peter Udenweze, Universal HealthCare Organisation Ltd



Peter Udenweze

Whereas HIV/STD information and advice for people from East and Southern Africa has been successful in reducing the amount of risk activity and educating people about the dangers of HIV, people from West African countries have not had the same amount of attention.

Many African HIV organisations are struggling to stay alive as a result of reduced funding and more stringent funding criteria.

There is no talk of salaries for staff working in this sector – not even money for volunteers. Most people running these groups are doing so voluntarily as a result of their commitment to HIV amongst African people. HIV is seen as an African problem. Workers within this sector are losing friends all the time to HIV. The African HIV Forum is made up of 58-60 African organisations in London and meets once a month under the auspices of East London and City Health Authority (ELCHA) to share what they have been doing with regards to health education and also to share ideas & information as well as networking.

SPARK asked Universal HealthCare Ltd whether it believed ELCHA was adequately dealing with the issue of HIV amongst the African population.

'At the beginning the response was positive. They appeared to be sensitive to the problem faced by Africans and encouraged the commissioning of African HIV services through a unit within the HA. That concern diminished after a year because the money that was made available from Central Government had diminished. The overall amount of money that has been available for campaigns has also reduced. The issue of African HIV is no longer a key part of the health authority agenda. This attitude of the institutions is because they are not the sufferers and they haven't lost people from their immediate community. We want to see a more positive attitude from the institutions, from the funders, from the government, from local health authority. This issue has not gone away – the only difference is that the type of clients that are affected has changed, these are the ones that have no voice and therefore the authorities are quiet about it. We want to see an increase in funding.

We also want to see a more positive attitude from charitable organisations such as the Kings Fund, Trust for London, Queens Trust, Agency for Volunteering. There is an issue with larger organisations receiving money from large funders such as The National Lottery in order to disseminate this money to voluntary organisations but what is happening is that the voluntary organisations are not receiving the money.'

Started in 1999, Universal HealthCare Ltd is a qualified team of campaigners specialising in health issues affecting Africans and Caribbeans. It has implemented HIV/STD intervention strategies in Hackney. Peter Udenweze, Universal HealthCare Organisation Ltd, Unit B3, 3 Bradbury Street, Kingsland High Street, London N16 8JN. 020 7503 0094 or 020 7503 0969.

Facts about HIV in Hackney
 - 29% of residents in Hackney diagnosed with HIV and AIDS are Black Africans, 2% are Black Caribbean (another 17% have unknown ethnic origin)
 - 97% of cases of children infected via mother-to-child transmission were from Black African communities (Source: ELCHA, Annual Public Health Report 1998/99)

£25,000 for HAZ advocates

There is still a huge demand for well-trained advocates locally to cope with the increasing workload. To help meet this need the HAZ is providing grants again to voluntary, community and statutory groups to fund accredited training for advocates. £25,000 has been made available during 2001/2.

Thousands of people across East London are set to benefit from a new Interpreting and Advocacy Directory launched in East London & City Health Action Zone in November 2000. The directory contains details of services provided by over 100 voluntary and statutory agencies and covering 54 different languages. The directory is being distributed free to agencies which provide these services and to organisations which supply information to the public such as libraries. It means that people who needed access to interpreting and advocacy services are referred to an appropriate provider more quickly and it speeds up referrals between organisations. It has been designed to enable the easy update of information to accommodate new services and changes in details. Work is underway to develop an electronic version of the Directory so that the information can be accessed online.

Copies of the directory are available from Nina Bartlett, the HAZ Administrator on 020 7655 6611 or email: nina.bartlett@elcha.nhs.uk

The Community Development Team was set up to facilitate community involvement in the HAZ. It is managed by an independent agency based at Social Action for Health (formerly Tower Hamlets Health Strategy Group)

If you would like to get involved in the HAZ or have views about what it should be tackling you can contact one of the Community Development Team on 020 7247 1414.

Role for the voluntary sector in Health Strategy

The City & Hackney Primary Care Group are currently seeking the views of the voluntary sector and other organisations about The City & Hackney Health Improvement Programme. Previously the HImP has concentrated on improving local health services. This year it is aimed at inequalities in health, incorporating wider social, environmental and economic factors, that have a profound affect on the health of people in Hackney. The HImP is only part of the health service planning processes and is linked with other plans such as The Service

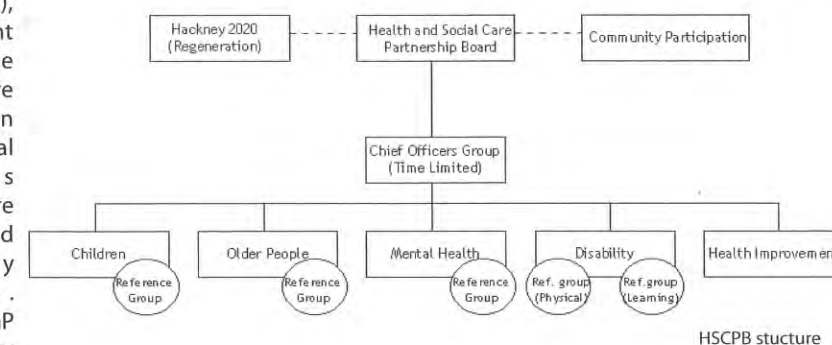
and Financial Framework (SaFF), Joint Investment Plans (JIPs), the Primary Care Investment Plan (PCIP) and local authorities Community Care Plans and Community Strategies. Ultimately the HImP informs how money is spent by the

health authority by setting out high-level priority areas over the next three years. These priorities are fed into the annual Service and Financial Framework (SaFF) which begins in Autumn 2001. Specific funding details for the voluntary sector are contained in the Joint Investment Plan.

This year's HImP includes the same key priority areas as last year as well as the addition of cancer since the publication of the NHS Cancer Plan. There is also a section on reducing inequalities and improving access which is specifically around refugees and asylum seekers and reducing waiting times. The list of priorities is as follows:

- Key priorities
- Primary care
 - Children & Young People
 - Heart Disease, stroke and diabetes
 - Mental health and substance misuse
 - Older people
 - Cancer
- Other priorities
- Learning disability and disabled people
 - Sexual health
 - Tuberculosis

· Reducing inequalities and improving access
 Every health authority in the UK must produce a HImP every year. The HImP describes local health needs and priorities, then sets out how they will be tackled over the next three years. This is the first time a HImP has been produced for City & Hackney. The forthcoming Primary Care Trust will be responsible for health improvement, commissioning health services and providing health services in primary care and the community. The Health & Social Care Partnership Board will be a



partnership of the NHS, local authority and the voluntary sector and will oversee health policies in City and Hackney.

SPARK spoke with Dr David Sloan, consultant for the HImP, about where the voluntary sector could play a role in the HImP programme. "The voluntary sector is important in a number of ways. If we are serious about assessing local needs then we need to talk to local people's representation. The voluntary sector plays an important role in this process." On voluntary sector representation on strategic groups, Dr Sloan added "The voluntary sector has an important role in developing policy....the voluntary sector should use its local intelligence to inform the health authority about where the gaps are". Voluntary sector representation on the HImP strategy group will come from the Health & Social Care Forum.

The health authority is consulting with a number of key local organisations. Anyone wishing to get a copy of the consultation should contact David Sloan, Public Health Lead for City and Hackney, City and Hackney Primary Care Group, Ground Floor, Nurses Home, 14 Kenworthy Road, London E9 5TD david.sloan@elcha.nhs.uk.

The City & Hackney Health & Social Care Forum update by Mesha Kullar

Over the last 6 months the Forum, which is an open arena for discussion about local health and social care strategies, has been working hard to ensure that voluntary groups within City & Hackney have a voice in the new Primary Care Trust Structure. The new structure will combine Health and Social Services by pooling together budgets. Services will be commissioned through a Partnership Board bringing together existing service providers. It has now been confirmed that the Forum will represent the voluntary sector on the City & Hackney Locality

Health & Social Care Partnership Board. We will also represent the voluntary sector on its 5 advisory sub-boards. To ensure that we do this effectively we have looked at our own structure and set up a number of Special Interest Groups: Children and Young People; Physical Disabilities/Learning Difficulties; Older People; Mental Health; Public Health; and Housing. The groups will be scrutinizing proposals and information from the board and ensuring that our members have a say in service planning.

If you would like to be involved then please feel free to come along.

For dates and times of these meetings and any further information on the Forum please contact Mesha Kullar, Development Worker, City and Hackney Health and Social Care Forum, C/O Joint Planning Unit, 3rd Floor, B' Block, St Leonards Primary Care Centre, Nuttall Street, London N1 5LZ. Tel:0207 301 3481, Fax:0207 729 1022, E-mail jpu@elcha.nhs.uk

Prospects for Black and Ethnic Minority Communities - Here and Now !



Spark interviewed Manish Shah from the Black & Ethnic Minority Working Group (BEMWG) about what it was doing in relation to health and social care issues locally within Hackney and The City

BEMWG, which has already established networks that it developed with black and ethnic minority communities, plus those groups that work within the health and social care field. This offers real opportunities for sharing information both ways, though 'NHS speak' doesn't enable meaningful communication between all parties to occur as well as it might. It needs to be remembered that statutory bodies have considerably more resources to provide easily digestible information to community groups than community groups have time and resources to decipher some of the 'NHS or statutory sector speak.' This just highlights an opportunity to build on the good work that already exists so that we can all achieve better results.

SPARK What are you hoping to achieve in the next six months?

BEMWG We are about to look at how we can assist members to build their capacity and sustainability as we have received funding from HAZ to do so. For this initiative to be successful, we're going to first undertake a baseline study to identify members specialist areas of work, skills they possess or lack, strengths and weakness, funding needs, potential areas of expansion, and so on. Seeing where we have reached collectively

Sustainability is an issue that can lead to many benefits for the local community..... an economic 'rippling' effect with phenomenal amounts of money brought into the borough from external funders.

opportunity as the groups have considerable expertise in the areas in which they work. Sharing this learning between groups is an opportunity that should not be missed.

Then in the following year our research will act as a springboard to meaningful action.

SPARK How soon will local groups feel that they will be sustainable in the long term?

BEMWG There are so many issues that need addressing but the main focus of many of our

member organisations is the wonderful services that they provide. Such customer-orientated approaches have been achieved at a price, where staff have not had any time to spend looking at strategic issues or future funding.

Currently many groups that are providing valuable services to local communities have seen their funding reduced dramatically or even have no further funding. This is a crisis that is current and makes long term sustainability look precarious. So this is a crucial issue here and now and maybe it's an opportunity for statutory bodies to show how serious they are about working with local stakeholders and communities.

Sustainability is an issue that can lead to many benefits for the local community. Not just the expansion of services but also equity & quality in service provision. Then there is: the opportunity for learning across the statutory bodies; an economic 'rippling' effect; benefits to the local community; with phenomenal amounts of money brought into the borough from external funders.

There are huge pots of money coming into Hackney from outside, which are not necessarily reaching black ethnic minority communities that are trying to provide services that are needed. BEMWG, along with others, is trying to get the local funders to realise that, although they give a small percentage from their overall budgets [to local groups], this is minuscule in comparison to the broader returns that the local community and borough is able to attract - which enables local communities and groups to better meet local needs.

The future is as bright as the vision that one has, but sometimes people need to look up from their work and look around them. Then they can appreciate the good things that are going on. Maybe many organisations, both voluntary and statutory, do not look around often enough ?

For more information about BEMWG or to join, please contact Manish Shah on 020 7241 2244 during office hours.

The Awakening

SPARK talks with Claudia Jones Organisation (CJO) about the history of the CJO and how it is coping with cuts to its services

Back in 1975, a group of professional black women, namely the Hackney Women's Support Group recognised a distinct gap in local services for Afro-Caribbean women. They set up the CJO in 1982 and simultaneously established the Ackee Housing Project, an organisation to provide medium to long term supportive accommodation for Young Single Black Women aged 17-21- primarily for those leaving care. The organisation's key focus is formal and informal education for the local community, concentrating on women and their children. CJO is often the first point of contact for Afro-Caribbean women and, hence, offers a wide range of skills and advice.

Hazel, the director, started work with CJO in 1984 as a volunteer and in 1986 became a community education worker helping to bring in funds to the organisation. SPARK asked Hazel about what the organisation's main activities had been in the last 5 years. Education for women and their families was still the main priority and that it had been an uphill struggle to keep the organisation going. 'Most of the things, such as learning programmes, supplementary classes and after-school clubs, that the government are now concentrating on, CJO has been focusing on for years.'

Feedback from users suggest that a large proportion of women need and value the services offered by CJO that they would not receive elsewhere. Perhaps one of the most key elements of the organisation's work is its flexibility to be able to respond to the needs of women as and when they present themselves to the organisation. Its value can be seen in the proportion of children that return as adults to use the service time and time again. Men are not excluded. CJO's image in the minds of menfolk has changed from one of confrontation in its early years to a place where African Caribbean men, like women before them, benefit significantly from a number of the services on offer. In fact a significant number of men (and women) use the counselling services that are offered by CJO.

- CJO core functions:
- Education, advocacy and advice
 - Elderly Project
 - Health advice and advocacy
 - Cultural welfare
 - Volunteer network
 - Counselling

Hazel sees this year as a 'turning point' for the organisation. It was a shock to learn of the level and degree of the cuts imposed by the council to the voluntary sector as a whole, but in the true spirit of Claudia Jones herself, CJO says 'it is an awakening...in that we can't be seen to be dependent on the council for money...it has given us the drive and determination to continue'. But, despite their positive outlook, the organisation has had to cut its elderly link worker who met a growing need for services for the older population. CJO now relies heavily on volunteer support for this aspect of its services. Hazel herself has had to significantly reduce the hours she works, alongside her finance, admin and resource workers, and may even have to close for two half days a week. They all, however, continue to commit to a full working week. 'I don't want to lie down and play dead...we are not the sort of people to do that.'

The future looks promising though, with an increasing number of younger people realising their potential with the help of the CJO. The Jack Petchey Foundation has provided some financial assistance for the young peoples' education service alongside church funds. 'We are thinking positively, the community is strong and the cuts have made us more conscious and aware that there are others ways of achieving thingsalthough we do feel the council has used the community for funding bids...money which seems to disappear into pools that we never see again.'

The organisation's long term aims are to be a 'fully fledged resource centre for people in Hackney'. CJO rightly note that there is no one central resource for the African Caribbean population in Hackney, at present. CJO want to maintain a focus on education for young people, particularly in developing skills that benefit the local community - new technology being an obvious key area.

CJO's work and influence is not restricted to Hackney and it surrounding boroughs, however. CJO regularly receive calls from the Caribbean, USA, Canada, South Africa and even Helsinki from people who need advice



Hazel Ellis, Coordinator CJO

or help. Saturday assemblies at CJO are often the place where international guests, such as airline pilots and other professionals share their experiences and successes with young people from Hackney, empowering the next generation like Claudia Jones did all those years ago.

For opening hours contact the CJO office 103 Stoke Newington Road, London N16 8BX. Tel: 020 7241 1646 Fax: 020 7275 0385.



Claudia Jones, 21st February, 1915-24th December, 1964

Born on Trinidad and Tobago, Claudia joined her parents in New York, USA. As a teenager she became active in youth and community activities for Black people. As a journalist and member of the communist party, she was hounded and imprisoned by the intelligence services then deported from the United States in 1955. In the UK, she worked on issues relating to discriminatory laws and the colour bar in employment, housing, etc., police violence against Black people. She helped found the West Indian Gazette in 1958 and the Notting Hill Carnival. Her remains lie in Highgate Cemetery next to those of Karl Marx.

City and Hackney Community Information System goes live!

Paul Barnett from LBH informs us

A new web-based database covering local community organisations, health and council services will be online from April of this year. The database, which began life as the City and Hackney Community Information Database back in 1997, has been integrated with the Council's own system (COMIS) thanks to funding from the Health Action Zone and Primary Care Group. Costs for the development are being shared with the London Borough of Newham who will be launching their own version of this later in the year.

COMIS contains details on over 2,500 not-for-profit and statutory organisations which offer help and support to local people, as well as links to other useful sources of help on the web. The database covers over 600 different subjects including health, social services, advice, housing, environment, education, community groups, arts, leisure, religion and much more... With a wide range of search options people can look for a particular type of organisation or service, email organisations, visit websites, view maps and even add their own details on-line.

NOT ON-LINE?

Don't despair if you haven't got access to the web. A CD Rom version will be produced in



July/August for groups without web access. HCVS will also be looking to find funders for a printed version of the database later on in the year to ensure as many groups as possible can access this information. To view the database check out the website www.hackney.gov.uk/comis at the end of this month.

To ensure your organisation is listed on the database or to find out more then contact Paul Barnett or Peter Coltelli at Community Information Team, Community and Learning (LBH), Christopher Addison House, 72 Wilton Way, London E8 1BJ - tel: 020 8356 3046/3112, fax: 020 8356 2241, email: comis@gw.hackney.gov.uk.

Hackney Bereavement Service

Who is the group for?

- Were you the main support for someone who needed care?
- Has the person you cared for died since?
- Do you live in the London Borough of Hackney?
- Are you 50 years of age or more?

If you can answer yes to these questions this support group can help you. At this time the group will work in English.

What will the group be like?

- The support group will meet on a weekly basis for an agreed time. We hope to have places for 6 to 8 people.
- It will be a safe space to talk, share and listen.
- The common experience will be grieving and the difficult feelings which can arise from this. This process may go on for a long time.

This service is free. It is open to all members of the community regardless of culture, religion, disability, sexuality, or ethnic origin. Contact Val Gorbould at Hackney Bereavement Service, 133 Stoke Newington High Street, London N16 0PH. Tel: 020 7254 9804 Fax: 020 7241 6501.

Hackney Bereavement Service is looking for Management Committee members to join an established voluntary group. The project has been running for 12 years, providing a free, confidential support service for residents in Hackney aged 50 and over. The HBS Management Committee meets six times a year on a mid-week afternoon to discuss and decide policies of the project.

M.A.R.I.F

The Multi-Agency Racial Incidents Forum (MARIF) has been set as a result of the Hackney Borough Crime and Disorder Strategy Group. Its function will be to act as an interface between the voluntary and statutory sector, together with the community, on matters of racial incidents. It consists of senior representatives from the following member agencies:

- the local authority (housing, social services, legal etc)
- the criminal justice agencies (police, crown prosecution service, probation)
- voluntary and community organisations (local race equality councils, victim support, advice agencies)
- other agencies (housing, tenant or resident associations)
- ethnic minority groups

MARIF meets quarterly to encourage and support the development of policies to reduce racial harassment and intimidation.

The Racial Incidents Casework Panel (RICP) was set up to pull together front line services at an operational level. It is administered by the local authority Domestic Violence and Racial Harassment Team and have the authority to coordinate responses to individual cases of racial harassment, support front line service work and report to MARIF with issues arising from casework.

For more details contact: Adrian Howles, MARIF Chair, Community Safety Unit, FREEPOST, LON 18324 London N1 7BR.

Breathing Space

The Breathing Space Project is a challenging initiative to address the mental well-being needs of refugees and asylum seekers both in London and in the regions. They became operational in April 2000, and there is a three year joint development between the Refugee Council and Medical Foundation in partnership with Camelot Foundation.

The Breathing Space Project has three main working areas:

Advocacy and training

- To inform and improve understanding of the mental well-being needs of refugees among target organisations in the voluntary sector and statutory services.
- To deliver effective training programmes to help target organisations to provide high quality mental health services to refugees.

The Bicultural Team

- To take referrals from the Refugee Council and the Medical Foundation to provide an effective casework service to support and assist individual refugees who have mental well-being needs
- To facilitate the capacity building of RCO's who provide mental health services to community members

Research

- To investigate the impact on the mental well-being of refugees as a result of their settling experience in the UK.

As part of their services a valuable awareness-training programme has been set up for organisations who provide services to asylum seekers and refugees. For further information contact: Dr Dieu Donne Hack-Polay, Regional Training Coordinator, Breathing Space, Refugee Council, 3 Bondway, London SW8 1SJ. 020-7840-4351.

H.A.R.E shines

Hackney Action for Racial Equality's Education Project, set up in 1998, has had a significant impact on the education of young people in Hackney in terms of help and support that is offered to children, their parents, and the schools they attend. The project has had phenomenal success - success which can be solely attributed to the project director, Vallin Miller.



as volunteers to assist children in classroom learning.

The approach is holistic - nothing is looked at in isolation. Vallin can deal with any number of issues that affect behaviour such as harassment; whether the housing that the child lives in is healthy; truancy; abuse; and absent fathers. The project stresses that in order to operate efficiently they must operate independently to the school. "My allegiance is to the parents and children in the community. Persuasive but not confrontational. Collaborating but not colluding. Impartial and unbiased". Children involved with the project have benefited hugely in that they have not been excluded from school and have learnt to

From the outset the project recognised that there were a number of pupils in Hackney with learning and behavioural difficulties who had been excluded from school but who could benefit from further support. The education project works with the child and parent/s of the child in a number of ways. Namely: mediation; advocacy; counselling; conciliation; independent educational advice and representation, particularly at educational appeals. The project also recruits parents

'My allegiance is to the parents and children in the community. Persuasive but not confrontational. Collaborating but not colluding. Impartial and unbiased'

respect themselves and others, particularly through the teaching of black history and culture. The project to date maintains a near perfect record of preventing children from being excluded.

When it first started operation the project received over 250 calls from parents and the LEA per quarter. Word of mouth from parents and teachers who used the service created a huge demand for the services that it offered. So much so that it regularly received referrals from outside the borough.

SPARK spoke with Vallin about the project and asked where he got his inspiration. "I am into black and minority ethnic communities...they can ring me anytime. We give them as much advice as possible or refer them on appropriately. We have never turned anyone away. In-school work is a crucial area. It involves identifying children who are at risk of exclusion. The crucial element is liaising with the parents to build trust and respect so that the child gets support within the home... teachers don't have time to speak with the parents."

Unfortunately the project funding (National Lottery) came to a natural end in March 2000 mostly as a result of its own success. However, the tenacity of its project leader and his impact and proven appeal within the LEA, has meant that the LEA have continued the funding for a further 3 years and continue key elements of the project.

Further good news is that Bridge House Trust have agreed in principle to fund a co-caseworker. According to Vallin, their respective key skills as a caseworker will be to have "common sense and empathise with people to give parents unqualified advice...this is why we have been so successful and why people have come back time and time again".

CLS mapping exercise

HCVS have been conducting a mapping exercise for the Community Legal Service Partnership. The CLS Partnership wants to find out more about which voluntary and community groups are currently providing legal information and advice in the borough. By legal information and advice, they mean giving information about rights, entitlements and responsibilities in the areas such as welfare rights, housing, immigration and nationality, employment and taxation, and helping to exercise them effectively.

Questionnaires have been sent to 800 groups (also sent to private sector as well as voluntary sector). Janice at HCVS is developing the database at present. The deadline for return of the questionnaires was 20th February. Once the information has been collated by Janice and Marika Mason, they will write a report. Hackney Community Legal Service Partnership will be holding a conference on Thursday 5th April 2001 in the Assembly Rooms at Hackney Town Hall from 9.30-1pm.

Further information from Janice Norris @ HCVS.

Young families to get new service

The Hackney Young Families Support Service is now open for referrals. It received funding of £596,000 over 3 years from the Department of Health's national Health Action Zone Innovations Fund. The focus of this service is on improving the support and coordination of services for vulnerable teenagers and vulnerable young families in LB Hackney. The team is made up of a Project Manager, Christa Welsh, and three Young Family Support Coordinators, Natalia Dawkins, Tony McKenzie, and Adenike Oyelese. The coordinators will identify and support vulnerable pregnant teenagers and vulnerable young mothers, and their families and provide them with:

- On-going information, advice, and counseling about the various aspects of having and bringing up their child/ren
- Help and guidance to access and use appropriate services
- Encouragement and support to continue or take up education, and training opportunities.

For further information about the service or to make referrals, please contact 020-7254-6251.

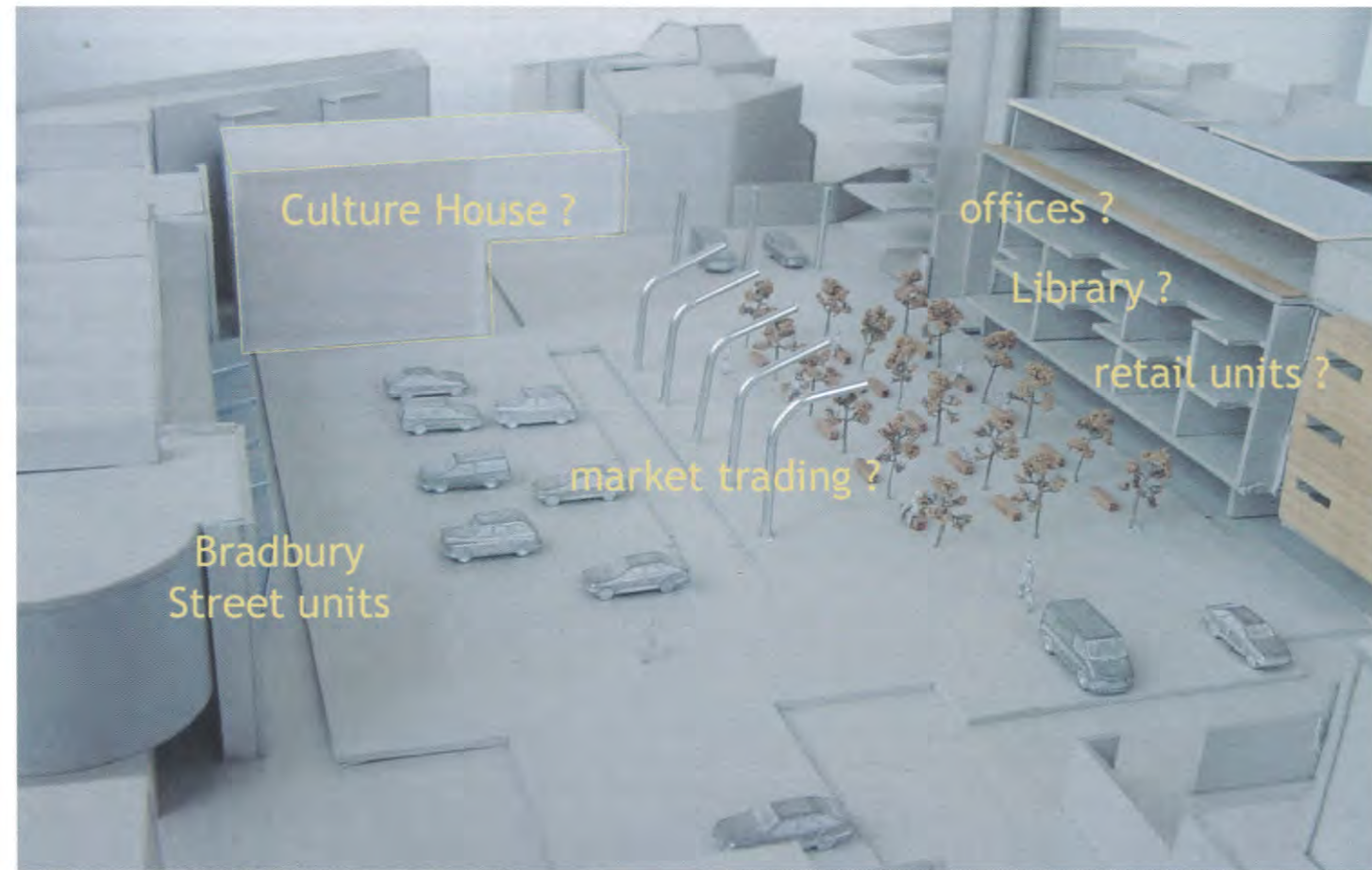
Women unite across Greater London

The Women's Committee was very pleased by the turnout. Refugee and health issues were topics of particular interest to attendees. There is a conference planned for March 8th. Details from Janice Norris @ HCVS.

On 17th January the GLA held a womens meeting. 18 groups attended. HCVS attended this meeting with several women's groups from Hackney.

Voluntary sector takes the lead in regeneration

Adam Hart from Hackney Co-operative Development (HCD) spoke with SPARK about the potential for a new town centre in Dalston's Gillett Street car park



Preliminary model of the development by Hawkins/Brown of Old Street

For some time Hackney Cooperative Development (HCD) has sought to redevelop the buildings in Gillett Street car park, behind Kingsland Road. As part of the LBH Dalston City Challenge SRB bid, HCD have led a cross sector partnership consisting of London Borough Hackney, HCD, Groundwork Trust and McDonald Egan (private sector) to 'create a geographical focal point for the enhancing and enriching of many existing economic and social activities and to provide opportunities for cultural innovation and renewal'. The area that has been developed so far is bounded by Bradbury Street, Boleyn Road, John Campbell Road and Kingsland High Street.

Depending upon whether the bid is successful, the project will move into its third and final phase of development. Phase 3 consists of three elements, with each partner managing and owning the respective parts. The first part will be to redevelop

Stamford Works, owned and managed by McDonald Egan, to provide light industrial and office space, live work and affordable housing, with the possibility of retail or library use.

The second part will be the transformation of the Gillett Street Car Park, managed by LB Hackney, for use as a Town Square, as well as for public amenities, urban sculpture, market trading, cultural events, exhibitions and so on.

Finally the third, and perhaps most community-focused aspect, will be the redevelopment of 11a Gillette Street (currently derelict) into a 'Culture House' where different cultures can share and utilise the building through managed workshops for offices, training, a gallery and a meeting space for local entrepreneurs. This will be translucent building that will illuminated

by natural sunlight. HCD are currently acquiring this space from LB Hackney and will manage it once the project is completed.

Building work is expected to take around three years. Public consultation is expected to take place in the next three months. There are no agreed plans as yet for the respective functions of each aspect of the redevelopment nor the particulars of the design of each site. The architects, Hawkins/Brown, think "the design should be driven what local people say and not purely by the architects' design. It should be a two-way process".

If local voluntary organisations and community groups rise to this challenging redevelopment, there is huge potential to establish a 'cultural hub' that celebrates the local diversity in the Dalston area.

For more information contact HCD at 62 Beechwood Road, London E8 3DY or telephone 020 7254 0205

the design should be driven by what local people say and not purely by the architects' design

Disability Hackney

special pull-out feature



Sanusie Sesay, Coordinator



Ann Ward, Project Worker



Disability Hackney public meeting



Disability Hackney public meeting



Disability Hackney public meeting

In the last Spark issue (July 2000), you were told about the background of Disability Hackney (DH) and Hackney Access Project (HAP). Subsequent to that publication, the two key staff responsible to develop the project were recruited and they are: Sanusie Sesay, the Co-ordinator and Ann Ward the Development Worker. Both staff commenced work in November 2000 and they are based at HCVS.

Sanusie Sesay is a Hackney resident who has been living in the borough for nine years. Through out this period, he has been actively involved in the race and disability movement in the borough. He is one of the founders of some of the existing disability groups in Hackney, including Hackney African and Caribbean Disability Association (HACDA) and Hackney Disability Consortium (HDC). Sanusie sits on the management committee of Hackney Action for Race Equality (HARE) as a vice chair. He works three days a week for Disability Hackney (DH) and two days for City and Islington College as a Learning Assistant.

Since commencing work in November 2000, Sanusie and Ann are vigorously working to develop DH as an umbrella organisation with the aspiration to be independent of HCVS by the end of 2001. That endeavour involves the following:

Developing the Steering Group (SG) into a full flesh management committee (MC) with its own officers. Members of the SG are predominately people with disability participating as individuals or representatives of organisations affiliated to DH. The names of the key officers of the SG are as follows: Chair – Caroline Nelson (Director of Choice in Hackney), Vice Chair – Ron Newman and Numa, Secretary – Peter Allun, from Hackney People First and Treasurer – Erwin Daxer. The SG has also set up two sub committees, finance and personnel.

Membership to the SG is still open; we welcome application from local disability voluntary organisations and individual disabled people to apply for the remaining vacant seats before membership closure.

Application for charitable status has been submitted to the charity commission. We hope this application will be successful and DH will become a registered charity by the end of April this year. We will also be working on producing a logo and letterheads for use by DH and the Access Project in the next few months.

Another key role Disability Hackney is engaged in is mapping up service provision for people with disability in Hackney, with the aim to identify existing services, gaps and areas needed to address. Sanusie has written to 600 organisations in both the voluntary and statutory sectors, asking them to confirm whether they are still in operation. If you are not one of these 600 organisations, please contact the staff at HCVS and tell them who you are and what services you provide for people with disability. We are conscious of, and will take into consideration, the mapping up exercise previously conducted by Joint Investment Planning (JIP).



Involving the Key Stakeholders

It is our intention to involve all the organisations providing services for people with disability in both the voluntary and statutory sector in the affairs of DH. This is the reason why we are recruiting members of our SG from voluntary sector organisations representing people with disability. This is also the reason why we are convening the Disability Special Interest Group, part of the Health and Social Care partnership Board.

Health and Social Care Partnership Board

The Health and Social Care Forum (HSCF) was set up by the Health Authority and Social Services in Hackney with the aspiration to consult with users on how best to spend their money. The forum creates opportunity for voluntary/community groups to work together and promote common interests, both as providers and advocates.

The HSCF is conducting its consultation through 6 Special Interest Groups (SIG) and disability is one of them. Disability Hackney convenes the disability SIG and represents them on the Locality Health and Social Care Partnership Board.

The disability SIG had their first meeting on the 15th February 2001, in which an action plan was drafted. The next meeting is on the 15th April 2001. Disability Hackney is cordially inviting voluntary and community groups working with people with disability to attend that meeting. The SIGs are the only mechanism for voluntary sector organisations to influence policies and planning around health and social care. Therefore, in the best interest of the community we represent, it is important for every voluntary organisation to be involved in the affairs of disability SIG.

The New Deal for Disabled People (NDDP)



The New Deal for Disabled People is a pilot scheme which involves range of initiatives on how best to help people with disability and those with long term illness to find work and training opportunities. This initiative is conducted through the government

Welfare to Work policy. Over the life of this parliament the government is planning to invest £195 million in creating opportunities for unemployed disabled and people with long term illness to move into or remain in employment.

The NDDP is a joint venture between the Department for Employment and Education (DfEE) and the Department of Social Services (DSS). Joining this scheme is entirely voluntary and it is open to people in receipt of Incapacity benefit, Severe Disablement Allowance and Income Support.

The NDDP pilot scheme involves three main elements: Personal Adviser Service, Innovative Scheme, and Information Campaign.

The Personal Adviser Service (PAS) helps disabled people and people with long term illness overcome barriers to employment. The PAS is being piloted in 12 areas, covering well over a quarter of a million people in receipt of incapacity benefits. Half of these pilot areas are run by Employment Services which began operation on the 28th September 1998. The other half are run by a consortium consisting of the private sector, local authority and the voluntary sector. This consortium began operation in April 1999.

Innovative Scheme (IS) provides opportunities to enable people with a disability to find a job or maintain one. The first 12 ISs were set up across the country in 1998.

The Information Campaign helps to create awareness of existing services available to help jobseekers find employment. It also helps to change the attitudes of benefit recipients, employers and the general public towards employment and disability.

The NDDP scheme has been successful in all the areas it was piloted, for that reason the government is pledging to extend the scheme across the country starting from July this year.

In the next Disability Special Interest Group meeting, the NDDP will be part of the agenda. The panel will discuss how best to help disabled people and people with long term illness find employment.

Whatever comes out of this discussion will be reported to the Locality Health and Social Care Partnership Board through Disability Hackney.

For more information about New Deal for Disabled People visit the DfEE website <http://www.dfee.gov.uk/nddp> or the new deal website <http://www.newdeal.gov.uk/english/unempdisabled/>.

Hackney Access Project

Hackney Access Project (HAP), part of Disability Hackney, has been set up by HCVS. My name is Ann Ward and I am the Development Worker for Disability Hackney Access Project. I came into post in November 2000. I came to Hackney from the North East of England where I have worked for two disability organisations working with people with physical or sensory impairments enabling them to access mainstream provision in Education, Training, Employment and Leisure.

The main aims of the HAP are to reach, represent and respond to the needs of disabled people in Hackney. We hope to achieve this by:

- working with local groups identifying needs and breaking down barriers.
- to establish Focus Groups to address issues of concern as identified by local people and other organisations.
- to enable people to achieve their goals and break down barriers there must be structures in place and access in its broadest terms is and must be a high priority.
- to establish and develop a group of people who will become the Access Panel which will have the ability to carry out access audits and give advice on these issues. We will then try to ensure that public buildings, other premises and transport are accessible to all people.

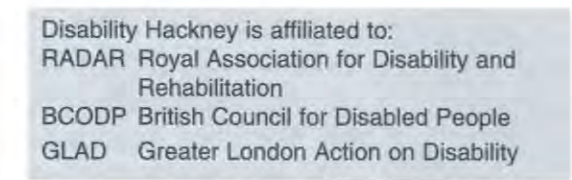
By liaising with service providers, we will ensure that they are aware of and complying to the Disability Discrimination Act - in particular Part 3 Access to Goods, Facilities, Services and Premises.

We will keep you informed through **SPARK** and regular mailouts about what is happening within the

disability movement both nationally and locally. For instance, Disability Hackney and the Access Project are looking at physical and sensory impairment as part of the East London Charter of Access conducted by ELCHA. The key role of the charter will be to increase equality and access to services.

I also deliver Disability Equality Training, which looks at how people with disabilities are stereotyped, and the language that is used as well as the Medical and Social Models of disability.

If you are a disabled person living in the borough and are interested in joining the Access Group, or perhaps you want information about a issue affecting you. Equally, if you are a service provider requiring an Access Audit or advice then please get in touch with me tel: 020 7923 1962.



Summary of public meeting held on 25th January 2001

Disability Hackney convened an important public meeting initiated by LBH Social Services department. Attending the meeting were Carl Blakely (Head of Commissioning), Philip Sharpe (Acting Head of Disability Services), Caroline Nelson (Choice in Hackney), Sanusie Sesay (Disability Hackney), and Ann Ward (Access Project).



Caroline Nelson, from Choice in Hackney, raised some key points:

- people with disabilities, as users of council services, need to be consulted when policies affecting their lives are made, and consultation should take place when policies are initiated
- often the local authority change policies without informing the voluntary sector which causes confusion amongst users.
- one useful mechanism of communication has been through Direct Payments - when people with disabilities are given money directly rather than social services providing the service through an agency.



'Show me the Money' conference at the Queensbridge Centre

new spending Programme and then inform potential bidders that the deadline has already passed. It is likely that the LEPC will wish to take a view on this.

It has been a confusing time for potential bidders, faced with a deadline in advance of clear bidding guidance or decisions about the selection and appraisal mechanisms, or clearly identified targeted Community Economic Development areas. Maps of these areas

have only just been approved by the LEPC. Groups must be sure that they qualify for this targeted support in the Programme.

Please note that this Update has been written when the Objective 2 Programme is still being developed and some of the information may well change.

Contact the ERDF unit @ LVSTC on 020 7249 4441 for up-to-date information.

Money available for community groups, clubs and organisations

HCVS in conjunction with The National Lottery Charities Board & Sports England are running a series of workshops in Hackney on 6th & 8th March 2001. Consultants from the National Lottery and Bridge House Trust will run these workshops using a question by question approach from the beginning to the completion of your application form. This is an excellent new opportunity to access funding for your organisation. Grants of between £500 to £5,000 are now available to help your group to develop/expand and to do many of the things you've always wanted to do.

The money really is available, the application forms are straightforward and if you need help with filling out the form, this is your chance to get assistance! All that we require from you is that you

bring along your project idea and shopping list.

The aim of these workshops is to ensure that groups, who may have been unsuccessful with funding applications in the past, can work with The National Lottery, Sports England and HCVS to put in properly completed application forms.

Groups wishing to attend should ring for application forms (numbers below) before attending the workshop(s). These workshops will take place at The Trinity Centre, Beechwood Road, Dalston E8.

Tuesday 6th March 10am - 1pm
Workshop 1: Awards for All Activities/Projects
Tel: 0845 600 2040 for application pack

Thursday 8th March 10am - 1pm
Workshop 2: Awards for All for Sports
Tel: 0845 764 9649 for application pack

Don't miss this exciting opportunity to access funding for your group.

The Funding Directory

Keeping you up-to-date with the latest funding programmes available for community and voluntary groups from the Charities Information Bureau

The Camelot Foundation

The Camelot Foundation has two priority funding areas: disadvantage; & disability. It runs three funding programmes: The Community Support Programme provides grants of £500-£5,000 to small organisations that spend less than £100k a year and which have less than 1 year's running costs in free reserves. Grants can be made for 1 year for running costs (excluding salaries); volunteer expenses; training; equipment; and projects that improve users quality of life. The disadvantage theme has 7 priorities: Alzheimers disease & other dementias; carers; people leaving care; domestic violence; refugees; rural transport schemes (not the purchase of mini-buses); and projects to help people find work. The disability theme funds organisations where disabled people are in control and are in the majority on the management committee. Where disabled people are not in control, a grant can be made if it will result in control by disabled people. The Charitable Project Programme enters into partnerships with voluntary organisations on innovative approaches to aspects of disability and disadvantage which can be evaluated and the learning disseminated to a wider audience. The Employee Participation Programme matches fundraising by individual Camelot Group employees. Although these are largely pro-active programmes, the charitable projects programme manager is always open to a telephone call to discuss a new idea. For information contact The Camelot Foundation, 1 Derry Street, London W8 5HY Tel: 020 7937 5594 Fax: 020 7937 0574 Minicom: 020 7937 5471 Web-site:

www.camelotplc.com/press/archive/initiatives/foundation.asp

CAF All About Giving - on line

CAF (Charities Aid Foundation) is encouraging charitable organisations to fundraise for free from its All About Giving web-site. So far £1 million has been given to good causes through CAF's web-sites, £700,000 during the first two years and an impressive £300,000 since the launch of All About Giving just four months ago. To be part of All About Giving costs nothing: charities simply sign up to accept donations through CAF's CharityCard and Give As You Earn scheme and, at the same time, add themselves to the extensive online database. Gifts to charity made in this way have grown exponentially: average weekly donations made online through CAF rose from £5,000 to £15,000 between 1999/2000 and this year looks set to rise still further. All About Giving enables donors to identify a particular charity, to learn more about its work and, ultimately, to make a donation. In turn, it allows charities to build close and more fruitful relationships with donors in a large community, or on an individual basis - at the press of a button! Charities can sign up to receive donations online by visiting www.allaboutgiving.org or by calling Tel: 01732 520 016. Charities Aid Foundation, Kings Hill, West Malling, Kent ME19 4TA Tel: 01732 520 031 Fax: 01732 520 001

The Paul Hamlyn Foundation

The Paul Hamlyn Foundation has issued new Guidance Notes, setting out its current priority areas and funding procedures. At the top of the Foundation's agenda in 2001 is addressing inequality and disadvantage, particularly in relation to young people. Support will be concentrated on arts and education projects which tackle these problems. Small Grants - Within these areas of interest, applications are invited for small grants of up to £5,000 to support local schemes and initiatives. Project details form and further information from Imelda McKeon. E-mail: imelda@phf.org.uk

Publishing Training - Applications are also invited for this scheme which offers support to people working in the voluntary sector who wish to improve their publishing skills. It is open to small independent charities and not-for-profit organisations employing no more than eight full-time-equivalent workers, and having total assets of under £100,000. It is particularly aimed at organisations serving those with social, or special, needs. In any one financial year grants of up to £500 per candidate and £2,500 per organisation are available towards the cost of external, or in-house, training. Application forms and further details from Maria Karska at the Paul Hamlyn Foundation. E-mail: Maria@phf.org.uk

New Scheme - The Paul Hamlyn Foundation has launched a new scheme for 2001 - 2003 aimed at improving long term access to books for 'looked after' children and young people and at providing them with opportunities to read for pleasure. The scheme is looking for imaginative projects, which will establish the mechanisms within local authorities to support reading opportunities and improvements to the literacy of young people in care. Preference will be given to collaborative initiatives, which can continue after PHF funding comes to an end. Applicants must have charitable status and be able to demonstrate their commitment to the project by covering at least 25% of the total project costs. Applications will be considered twice yearly. Further details and application forms are available from Susan Blisshen, Education Projects Manager. E-mail: susan@phf.org.uk The Paul Hamlyn Foundation, 18 Queen Anne's Gate, London SW1H 9AA Tel: 020 7227 3500 Fax: 020 7222 0581 E-mail: information@phf.org.uk Web-site: www.phf.org.uk

Gifts In Kind UK becomes In Kind Direct on 15 February 2001

If you knew there were scores of companies that had high quality goods available that would otherwise go to waste, wouldn't you want to know more? Especially if those goods covered a huge range of most charities' requirements from computers and photocopiers through to light bulbs and bars of soap. Now you can obtain the supplies your charity needs - but finds hard to afford - for a fraction of their real worth. You just pay an annual registration fee plus a delivery and handling charge (some subsidised registrations are available). Details from Claire Joof, Gifts in Kind UK/In Kind Direct, PO Box 140, 20 St Mary at Hill, London EC3R 8NA, Tel: 020 7204 5174 Fax: 020 7204 5551 E-mail: infor@inkinddirect.org

Sure Start

Sure Start is a government funded scheme investing £452m in improving children's life chances by March 2002. Sure Start's aim is to work with parents and children to promote the physical, intellectual and social development of pre-school children - particularly those who are disadvantaged - to ensure they are ready to do well when they get to school. Local programmes can: provide services not already available in the area; add value to existing services; give parents clear information about the services available; provide new facilities for delivering services; train existing professionals, new workers and volunteers to deliver Sure Start in ways that are sensitive to local needs; and improve joint working and co-ordination between existing service providers. At local level, Sure Start is run by partnerships including voluntary and community organisations, practitioners from health, local government and education and - very importantly - local parents. Programmes concentrate on specific localities of need. The 4th wave has now opened and partnerships need to register their interest if possible by 28 February and definitely by 2 March 2001. To find out if your area qualifies and who is leading the local consortium for bidding contact the Government Office in your region. To find out more nationally contact Sure Start Unit, Level 2, Caxton House, Tothill Street, London SW1H 9NA Tel: 020 7273 4830 Fax: 020 7273 5182 E-mail: sure.start@dfee.gov.uk Web-site: www.surestart.gov.uk

Volvo Practical Environmental Projects (P.E.P)

Grants up to £1,000 for new or existing projects available for projects involving the active participation of young people. Schools/Community Groups can download forms and details from the web-site. Categories are Biodiversity, Waste Management and Sustainable Technology although others can be considered. The deadline for grant applications has been extended to 9 March 2001. Volvo Practical Environmental Projects, PO Box 397, High Wycombe HPIO OTL Tel: 01628 422474; Fax: 01628 534009 E-mail: vcc4.marpep@memo.volvo.se Web-site: <http://www.volvocars.volvo.co.uk>

CAF Boosts Second Tier Charities

CAF is to make a further round of grants available to Second Tier support groups. Organisations whose role is to support voluntary organisations, rather than to offer direct charitable services themselves, can apply for grants of up to £10,000 from a Fund totalling £60,000. A shift in funding criteria means that those organisations seeking to improve their management, overall effectiveness, or use of resources, are encouraged to apply to CAF's main grants programme. This will free up the new Fund to concentrate on one specific area: research to identify and respond to the needs of the groups that Second Tier organisations are seeking to support. This second round of grantmaking follows the Fund's success in 1999 when, in all, it made seventeen individual donations to Second Tier groups. Grant recipients included activities ranging from mediation services and rural community councils, to resource agencies and voluntary service councils. Those wanting more information and an application form should call the CAF Grants Unit on Tel: 01732520031. The deadlines for applications are 29 March 2001, 9 August 2001 and 4 October 2001. Any groups seeking to maintain or improve their operations can apply to CAF's main grants programme Tel: 01732 520 031 or visit web-site www.cafonline.org/grants-council Charities Aid Foundation, Kings Hill, West Malling, Kent ME19 4TA Tel: 01732 520 031 Fax: 01732 520 001

BBC Children In Need

BBC Children in Need Appeal invites applications for funding for projects that focus on children who are disadvantaged especially because of disability, behavioural/psychological problems, poverty, illness, distress, abuse and neglect. There are two closing dates each year 30 March and 30 November. For summer projects applications need to be submitted by the November closing date. To obtain an application form and guidelines please contact the charity on 020 8576 7788 or you can e-mail at the address below. BBC Children in Need Appeal, PO Box 76, London W3 6FS Tel: 020 8576 7788 Fax: 020 8576 8887 E-mail: pudsey@bbc.co.uk

The Granada Trust

This new trust gives grants to registered charities of £100-£5,000 for: community development; tourism; arts and arts facilities; conservation and environment; education, training and job creation; for children and young adults. Applications in writing (a 2 page letter only) to Mrs H Tautz, Assistant Secretary, The Granada Trust, Stornoway House, 13 Cleveland Row, London SW1A 1GG Tel: 020 7451 6425 Fax: 020 7451 3026 E-mail: htautz@granada.co.uk Deadlines are 31 March, 30 June, 30 September, 31 December.

The Civic Trust Millennium Awards

If you are a volunteer with a local project, group or charity, and you want to increase the social, economic and environmental quality of your community, you could become one of the 40 Civic Trust Millennium Award winners throughout England - a Civic Champion. You will benefit from an exciting new training and development programme run by the Civic Trust with Millennium Commission funding. If you have the motivation, you can apply to join the programme, develop your skills and confidence, and do more for your community. It doesn't matter what kind of education you have had, or whether you are employed, unemployed or not looking for work at all. The programme is free. Anyone aged 21-65 living in England, who has at least six months' experience volunteering for a local group or charity and can make future commitments, can apply. They will pay: training costs and out of pocket expenses and also fund the cost of child care while you are away and any Benefits which you lose as a result of taking part in the programme. They provide facili-

ties to assist people with disabilities and some help to your group to compensate for your absence from your normal volunteer duties. The deadline for applications is 31 March 2001. For application pack contact Civic Trust Millennium Awards: Civic Champions, The Civic Trust, FREEPOST NWW 1370A, Liverpool L1 2ZZ Tel: 0151 709 1969 Fax: 0151 709 2022

BT Community Connections

BT Community Connections is an UK wide awards scheme to e-enable local community projects. Judging panels in Northern Ireland, Wales, Scotland and each of the regions of England will award in total over £1 million of internet ready computers to individuals or groups who wish to make a positive impact in their community. Any group - or indeed individual - that could make a positive difference to its community through the use of this award may apply, e.g. community centres, co-operatives, environmental and disability projects, etc. It couldn't be easier to apply. Simply complete the on line application form, referring to the guidance notes that outline the conditions & rules of the awards scheme. In 200 words, or less, describe how and to what level the award will impact on your local community. Entries are open to the full range of local community groups, embracing church halls, women's institutes, scouts, disability groups etc and also schools, colleges, universities and libraries. Significantly these awards will also be open to individuals who have a worthwhile idea for making a difference within their local community. No more than one award shall be awarded to an individual or group. There are 3 rounds with Initial Applications for Second round Closing Date 6th April 2001 and for Final round 10 August 2001. For application details contact BT Community Connections, 36 King Street, London WC2E 8JS Fax: 020 7759 8501 Email: btcommunityconnections@leaevents.co.uk Web-site: www.btcommunityconnections.com

Home Office Active Community Unit(ACU)

Capital Modernisation Grant Programme 2001-2 All applications must be projects which fit one or more of the following Project Themes i.e. to modernise the infrastructure for volunteering and community involvement by: developing high profile, volunteer agency sites; OR co-locating and integrating volunteer agency services with other local organisations including other voluntary and community organisations; OR modernising delivery of services using integrated information technology. Project grants are available. They expect the greater part of your project proposal to be for capital development activity i.e. modernising delivery of services through, for example, refurbishment of premises, IT hardware and software purchases, web-site construction and IT training development. Local, regional and national voluntary organisations may apply. Joint applications for project grants will be given priority over applications from organisations applying alone; as will those that demonstrate commitment from local statutory funders. They aim to support a wide range of organisations. As a rough guide, bids between £150,000 and £250,000 are more likely to succeed than larger bids. Applications must reach the ACU by 30 April 2001. They strongly recommended that, if you are applying to us for the first time, you discuss your ideas with us before completing the application form. The Grants & Government Funding Policy Team, Active Community Unit, Home Office, Horseferry House (Room 223), Dean Ryle Street, London SW1P 2AW Tel: 020 7217 8565 Fax: 020 7217 8572 Email: public_enquiries.acu@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk Their application form may also be accessed via their web page at: www.homeoffice.gov.uk/acu/acu.htm

The Nationwide Awards for Voluntary Endeavour 'Reward Your Local Heroes'

Nationwide Building Society, in association with the Newspaper Society and NCVO, sponsors annual awards to recognise people who have made an outstanding contribution to their local community particularly through fundraising (or other means of providing assistance) to the causes they support. Award categories are - young people under 18 (individuals), young people under 18 (groups), adults as individuals and adults as groups. Each person or group nominated will receive a certificate and, where possible, their work will be highlighted in the local press. There are Awards for 10 regions covering the UK, with England being

divided into TV areas. A total of 80 regional winners will win an attractive plaque plus £50 worth of dining-out vouchers for individuals and £100 for groups. From those 40 finalists will be chosen and invited to the House of Commons in October to receive gifts of £250 for themselves with a further £500 for their chosen charity or cause. The national winners will be announced on the day and will win gifts of £500, plus a trophy, together with a cheque for £2500 to give to their charity or cause. Closing date is 30 April 2001. Application forms from Community Affairs Department, Nationwide Building Society, Pipers Way, Swindon SN38 2SN Tel: 01793 655064 Fax: 01793 657569

Alexandra Rose Day

Alexandra Rose Day is a national charity that exists to help Charities and voluntary groups to raise funds for their own purposes, and has done so since its foundation in 1912. Its objectives limit it working with 'people-caring' groups operating in the UK. Three opportunities for fundraising are offered each year. Rose Day - a traditional flag day - is held in June and there are Spring and Autumn Raffles. Participating organisations retain 80% of what they collect and the remaining 20% helps to fund the costs. The next raffle day is 10 May 2001 and tickets are now available to those participating. Alexandra Rose Day is happy to add Charities and voluntary groups to its mailing list for advice of future opportunities. Alexandra Rose Day, 2A Ferry Road, Barnes, London SW13 9RX, Tel: 020 8748 4824, Fax: 020 8748 3188 E-mail: enquiries@alexandra-rose-day.freeserve.co.uk

Allen Lane Foundation

The Foundation makes grants for work all over the UK. Trustees only fund work outside London. The Foundation tries to target about 80% of its funds on national, regional or countywide work and about 20% on local projects. Trustees are interested in imaginative or innovative projects and the size of its grants (which are modest) makes start-up funding of smaller projects particularly appropriate. Grants are made for project costs, or core costs. Priorities are: the provision of advice, information and advocacy; community development; employment and training; mediation, conflict resolution and alternatives to violence; research and education aimed at changing public attitudes or policy; or social welfare. The Foundation make grants to organisations whose work the Trustees believe to be unpopular. Priority groups for the Foundation include refugees and asylum-seekers, people from black and ethnic minority communities, those experiencing mental health problems, those experiencing violence or abuse, offenders and ex-offenders, and travellers amongst others. Most grants go to work with these priority groups. Grants generally range from about £250 to £10,000. Grants to local projects are normally less than £2500. Grants are usually single payments but may sometimes be for up to three consecutive years. The next closing date is 18 May 2001. There is no formal application form but before applying it is essential to obtain a copy of the guidelines which give details of exclusions from Heather Swales, Executive Secretary, The Allen Lane Foundation, Suite 4, Parr House, Broadway, Bracknell RG12 1AG Tel: 01344 311866 Fax: 01344 319119 E-mail: enquiries@allenlane.demon.co.uk Web-site: www.allenlane.demon.co.uk

This is a reproduction of the Charities Information Bureau monthly newsletter. If you know of any local funders that groups should know about or you are a local funder who wants to inform the sector then please get in touch with Jake @HCVS on 020 7923 1962.

Genuine opportunities for the disadvantaged or just another government pledge?

SPARK reports on two national strategies, Learning Skills Councils and the Connexions Service

The New Learning and Skills Councils (LSCs) will unify organisations with a role in individual learning and workforce development. They will replace the Training and Enterprise Councils (TECs).

The national LSC will be responsible for planning, funding and improving post-16 learning up. The roles and responsibilities of the LSCs will include: Community and Adult Learning; Further Education; Work-based training for young people; information, advice and guidance on Lifelong Learning for adults and; managing the discretionary funds (the Local Initiatives Fund) to improve local economic regeneration. Inspection of LSCs will be conducted by the Adult Learning Inspectorate and Ofsted.

LSC will come into force from 1st April 2001. There will be 47 local LSCs in England and Wales of which 5 will be in London. East London LSC, which will have the largest budget, includes the boroughs of Hackney, Redbridge, Havering, Barking and Dagenham, Newham, Tower Hamlets, City of London, Bexley, Greenwich and Lewisham. The budget commanded by East London LSC will be around 200 million per year. There will be changes to the way money from the European Social Fund (ESF) will be distributed and it is intended that LSCs will develop 'co-financing' arrangements to match the ESF.

The LSC has a responsibility to include the voluntary and community sector. Steve Crow of London East Training and Enterprise Council says, "it is not about funding institutions but about funding the individual. There will be a team of people in LSC with a responsibility for social exclusion. They will look at how they can build capacity in the voluntary and community sector".

Each LSC will have a voluntary sector board member who in Hackney will be Elizabeth Balgobin [pictured] from Hackney Training and Employment Network (H10). Voluntary groups who lack capacity or who don't have

quality assurance may find difficulty accessing funds and may also be affected by changes to the way organisations such as further education colleges are sub-contracted.

Help for voluntary groups will be available through Partners in Learning

- The Lifelong Learning Partnership (LLP) for The City Hackney and Tower Hamlets. It is a voluntary body set up to pool local resources, identify local need and gaps in provision, and to streamline the local direction in relation to delivery and standards. The membership of this partnership includes: the voluntary and community sector; LEA's, FE colleges, Universities, Careers and Employment Service; Employers and Unions. The partnership is inviting local

voluntary groups to participate in fulfilling its Partnership Plan. The LLP will work with the LSC to widen participation in learning and particularly to develop an understanding of the local needs of post-16 learning. It will be important for voluntary groups to maintain a presence at this level. Ian Ashman, Partnership coordinator says that the LLP 'will be the eyes and ears of the LSC'. The LLP will concentrate particularly on the needs and views of current non-learners within the borough.

As far as funding is concerned, all 1st year money is allocated up to July 2002. The LSC discretionary funding will be an important fund for the voluntary sector to access. By August 2002, Hackney will know how much will be in discretionary funds. Given the level of disadvantage in Hackney, this is likely to be centred on developing basic skills, ESOL and social exclusion.

For more information about how your organisation might be affected by the new LSCs contact Elizabeth

Balgobin @ Hackney Training and Employment Network (H10), Unit 24, Independent Place, The Forum, Shacklewell Lane E8 2HD Tel: 020 7249 7669 Fax: 020 7241 5593 email: h10@teleregion.co.uk

Useful websites

Skills for Life - the national strategy for improving adult literacy and numeracy is



(left to right) Ian Ashman, Partnership Coordinator, David Smith, Chair Partners in Learning, Sarah Brown, Learn Direct, Freda Jacobson, Information, Advice and Guidance Network.

available from DfEE website and as well as Learning and Skills Councils remit letter and background funding documents) <http://www.dfee.gov.uk/post16>.

LSC Board members

Ken Coello - Chairman: Chief Executive, East London Business Alliance
Nicholas Wright: Director, Community Affairs - UBS Warburg
John Stent: Managing Director, Stansted Airport
Pat Passley: Lecturer in Law, Barnet College
Ray Spooner: Managing Director, Camelcrest Ltd
Edward Parker: Principal, Barking College
Graham Lane: Education Local Government Leader, Local Government Association
Jobeda Ali: Mentoring Programme Manager, Tower Hamlets College
Mohammed Ower
Gavin Moore: Deputy Mayor, Lewisham
Sharon Collins: Director of Employment, Learning Skills - Royal National Institute for Deaf People
Elizabeth Balgobin: Director, Hackney Training and Employment Network (H10)
Jan Tallis: Director of Domex, Skillswork Co. Ltd
Dr John Lloyd: National Education and Development Officer, Amalgamated Engineering and Electrical Union
George Kessler: Managing Director, Kesslers Manufacturing

The Connexions Service

Like Learning Skills Councils, the Connexions Service will come in to force in April 2001 and will be a radical re-organisation of the way careers advice and guidance services are provided for 13-19 year olds. The annual national budget will be around £420 million, which is twice as much the current careers service receives so there will be lots of opportunities for new money and ways of spending it. Again this strategy prioritises disadvantaged young people as those most in need of guidance. The new service will be centred around the Connexions Service National Unit, who will decide on funding. Local Connexions Partnerships, who cover the same areas as Learning Skills Councils, will determine where money will be spent locally. Local Management Committees (LMCs) at borough level will bring together local service providers in education and social services. Most of the local decision making and contracting previously undertaken by LMCs will be taken away and given to the Connexions Partnerships.

According to the national strategy, the Connexions Service will be 'delivered primarily through a network of personal advisers linking in with specialist support services and will link with parents and carers and a wide range of partners such as schools, pupil referral units, colleges, youth work organisations, probation services, local community and voluntary organisations, employers, young people themselves, health services, police and social services. The emphasis will be on delivery through partners who know and can work closely with specific groups within the target population.

The East London Connexions Partnership will

access its funds through the Government Office for London. It is yet to be fully decided how it will work and which individuals will be part of it. The National Connexions Unit is currently consulting the 47 national Connexions Partnerships about how funding will be allocated and what monitoring data to use to inform the funding process. Like the local LSC, the Connexions Partnerships will rely heavily on local organisations to make referrals, identify local gaps in service provision and individuals' needs. So if you are any one of the partners identified above it is important that you participate in any local consultation to ensure that all organisations have equal access to the money that is granted to

the East London Partnership. Like any large scale reorganisation of this kind, there is a danger that small voluntary and community organisations that work with young people will not have the same access to contracts and funding streams as larger more established organisations. Voluntary sector representation on the Partnership is yet to be decided and maybe through H10.

The next public meeting in Hackney will be held on 13th March from 3-6pm at 291 Kingsland Road. For further information contact Fiona Paterson 020 7364 4894 or Julia Crickley @ Enterprise Careers on 020 7275 0346.

Sure Start update

Sure Start in Stamford Hill, which is part of the third wave of Sure Start programmes, has submitted its delivery plan. The programme will be up and running by September 2001, with the necessary funds in place by April of this year. Stamford Hill are currently recruiting a programme manager and hope to have someone in post by Spring 2001. The programme will include:

- outreach and home visiting, building on existing services, with an emphasis on meeting the specific cultural needs of the local community;
- community development and capacity building to enable local organisations to deliver
- speech and language therapy and other programmes,
- dental care
- play, learning and childcare including improved playground facilities
- parenting support - training
- health & maternity advocacy for minority ethnic groups
- support for children with special needs including a mobile toy library
- 'help bank' - practical help for families in need

If you reside in the triangle bound by Clapton Common in the North, Stamford Hill in the West and Cazenove Road in the South and you are a local GP, Health Visitor, parent with children under 4, parent to be, or you are involved in parents' groups, play groups, voluntary and community organisations, nurseries and nursery schools, please call Sure Start in Stamford Hill through Melanie Danan at the Interlink Foundation on 020 8802 2469.

Individual Learning Accounts by Kristine Wellington

ILAs are a means of accessing funds to improve the working future of people who are employed full-time, part-time or in self-employment. Individuals aged 18 or over who are prepared to contribute £25 towards the costs of their own learning are currently eligible for up to £150 from FOCUS. The value of an Individual Learning Account can be spent on job training courses, job advice, career guidance and if necessary, childcare to give you time to study.

Since 1998 ILAs have been managed and distributed by Training and Enterprise Councils throughout England. In September, following a government review of management arrangements, this responsibility will transfer to Capita, a national framework promoting ILAs in the form of discounts on course costs with a limited number with £150 learning vouchers attached.

FREE FREE FREE FREE computer training

Everyone who is over 19 years old, whether you are part of an organisation or you are an individual, is entitled to computer training in the main Microsoft Office applications. There are no catches - this is part of the government's Individual Learning Accounts (ILAs) scheme which has 200,000 free courses left across the country, so act quickly to obtain your free training. The courses are designed to equip individuals with the essential IT skills required in today's working environment and the ILA scheme has been running for several years now. It is open to family and friends too so don't be shy and apply today !!

The training offered is for beginners, intermediate and advanced users and covers the following Microsoft applications:

- Word · Excel · Access · Powerpoint · Beginners guide to using the web/internet

All the courses take no longer than a day or afternoon. You will be asked to provide a £25 deposit which is returned to you after you finish the course. The courses are provided by registered Microsoft trainers and would normally cost £175. If you want to take further courses after your free one you will get a 20% discount on the courses cost.

First Contact, which is based in Barking unfortunately, is the training provider assigned to this area. The process is easy. You simply have to telephone First Contact who will send you an application form on which you state which course you would like to attend - the important thing is that you apply as an individual and not as an organisation. However, if you are part of a larger organisation of more than say 8 people, First Contact can arrange to visit you if you all have the same course needs.

For more details get in touch with First Contact, 8th Floor, Crown House, Cambridge Road, Barking ID11 8NW, Tel: 020 8507 8883 Fax: 020 8507 8404 email: sales@firstcontact.co.uk website http://www.firstcontact.co.uk.



Funding for Local and Community Groups to run their own ICT Learning Centre

Microsystem reports on ICT = Information and Communication Technology ie computers, the internet, wap and so on

A year ago a joint funding scheme was launched called the ICT Learning Centres Programme (now called 'UK Online'). The purpose is to help 'disadvantaged' communities set up their own centres where they can have access to the rapidly expanding range of communication technologies that are increasingly being used - by those who can afford them. It is partly a response to the recognition that the economic divide in this country will be further entrenched by what is now referred to as the 'digital divide', and the fact that the government intends to have all services available electronically by 2005.

But the purpose of the centres is NOT that they should be:

- an extension of FE
- about training to tackle the skills shortage
- running repetitive NVQ courses from 9 to 5
- competition between service / training providers

Centres should be a place where members of the community feel free to drop in and use 'ICT' to expand, inform, and even have 'fun'. For instance you might want to:

- send and receive emails from your grandchildren - whether they live just around the corner or half way round the world - because otherwise you never hear from them because they never write letters or phone home
- check your housing benefit calculation on web sites like www.entitledto.co.uk instead of waiting months to hear back from ITnet
- research your family history
- set up and maintain a web site about forthcoming sporting fixtures or other community lead events
- access software to help you promote services you offer the community
- produce artwork for your voluntary group's news sheet or flyers
- keep up to date with developments on the estate where you live or whatever are the priorities in your life. If from this day to day use of these technologies, you then want to find out about training, or more structured learning, then the

centre should have links to local provision and on line learning.

There have already been two rounds of applications and apparently those from London based groups have been less innovative than those from groups in other parts of the country - including pubs! The deadline for round three is 4th May 2001, so if you are part of a community based group or a group that is a community of shared interest or identity, perhaps your community would be the basis for becoming just such an access centre. (After all, many communities already share what technology they have with their users and volunteers.)

The application process, like most others, involves a long form and an understanding from those applying of the usual need to show that you

have / know about financial controls, accountable management and so on. In this instance grants will come from two sources (capital from the DfEE and running costs from NoF) although you only have to complete the one application form.

Full information and the application pack are available from the DfEE site where you can also download the application form in either 'pdf' or 'word' format <http://www.dfee.gov.uk/ukonlinecentres/prospect.htm> or you can telephone: 0845 6022260 (quoting reference ICT LC1).

The Government Office for London (GoL) is assessing London based applications and they are keen to ensure 'transparency' about the process and can let you have copies of briefing notes, the assessment criteria, the scoring criteria, list of successful bids in Round 1 and a list of London based groups who have expressed an interest to apply in Round 2 and 3. The successful applicants for round 2 were due to have been announced by now, but this has been

delayed so that a more senior member of the Government, than the minister in charge, can make the announcement. This will impact on a response made at a GoL briefing in November that if the combined results of the Round 1 and 2 bids showed a low take up by the different minority ethnic communities that are now estimated to be over 20% of the population of London, that there might be an attempt to be more proactive in encouraging such groups to apply.

Telephone 020-7217 3313 or email sburkey.GOL@goregions.gsi.gov.uk

Or you can contact the Hackney Life Long Learning Team who have already arranged one briefing session for Hackney based groups, to find out if they will be arranging any other such meetings for those who were either not aware of the funding programme itself and / or the briefing meeting.



Microsystem is a women's group providing computer services to women's groups and women working in the voluntary and charity sector in London. We have no official connection to the funding programme, but are concerned from our work with community led organisations that they should have the opportunity to have control of when and how they use technology, and that it reflects their own needs, not the 'needs' that others perceive they have, or should have.

Box number 43, 136-138 Kingsland High Street, London E8 2NS Tel: 020-7684 3564 <http://www.gn.apc.org/microsystem> email: microsystem@gn.apc.org

We also maintain an internet directory about women's groups and other groups working for women in London and their services, events, publications, vacancies, etc. <http://www.gn.apc.org/womeninlondon> email: womeninlondon@gn.apc.org

Quality Standards: an insight for community organisations

Kristine Wellington, LVSC reports

Quality standards are increasingly important for voluntary organisations. Increasingly they are used as an indicator of organisations' ability to manage, monitor and market its services.

There have been many seminars and documentary information focused on the principles governing quality standards but not about how it is applied in practice. The organisation support department has been tracking the experience of CVSs and community organisations in order to smooth the quality pathway for new organisations.

Within the voluntary sector there are four key models being used. This broadly speaking reflects segments of the voluntary and community sector:

Practical Quality Assurance Systems for Small Organisations (PQASSO)

Investors in People required by Training Providers (IIP)

Business Excellence Model adapted by National Council Voluntary Organisation

Quality Mark through the Community Legal Service (CLS Quality Mark)

Increasingly some larger national charities are creating their own quality standard. In such cases organisations refer to the approved models for bench marking. (eg CRE, NACVS etc.).

PUSHING PQASSO

In the process of researching the models it appears most community organisations are opting for a Practical Quality Assurance System for Small Organisations, better known as PQASSO. The Charities Evaluation Service (CES) has refined the main standards. There has been much interest in this model as it has been designed for the voluntary sector specifically. CES has pub-

lished a 2nd edition of the standards (October 2000).

PQASSO has achieved such wide recognition within the sector that CES has joined forces with NACVS to introduce quality assurance to small groups through the use of new learning methods such as buddy systems, co-mentoring and structured learning programmes.

CASE STUDY: Barnet

The following is an account of Barnet Voluntary Services Council experience of implementing PQASSO.

Barnet Voluntary Services Council has secured funding from Barnet Council to run a pilot PQASSO scheme. BVSC are currently working with 10 Barnet based groups, which represent the diversity of small, and established community based organisations. Jane Cooper, Small Groups Development Worker researched various CVS based quality assurance initiatives.

The programme

BVS are working with a trainer from the Charities Evaluation Service (CES) who guide the groups through the key aspects of implementing QA over a six-month period.

The groups are making very good progress with understanding and implementing quality assurance within their organisations, one of the main reasons for this is that the programme stipulates that two members of the organisation must participate, one staff and one committee member. This generates a whole organisational commitment and provides a framework for placing quality assurance on the whole staff's agenda. Both time and resources are invisible cost, which must be addressed internally to create the thinking space.

For example, the focus group I joined identified that a centralised administration system pulling all their separate projects together was key to changing the face of their organisation.

SHARED LEARNING - CO-MENTORING

Jane has created an atmosphere based on shared learning. After two sessions participants were engaging in Admin Raids so participants quite naturally exchange practical resources; such as templates, ideas and alternative models.

(Organisational Raids are a practical learning method promoted by the London Regeneration Network).

Here's another example of a QA project

The PQASSO in Bromley Pilot Project is a programme to support 10 voluntary organisations in implementing PQASSO. This programme will be modelled on the one developed by the CES and other CVS, and will involve one two-day training sessions, a PQASSO work pack, quarterly feedback/support services, and ongoing support and advice to organisations.

EXCELLENCE MODEL

The Charities Evaluation Service is working in partnership with the QSTG to create better awareness of the *Excellence Model*. These sessions will take place in the form of starter classes and exchange sessions.

Kristine Wellington is Development Officer for Small Groups and New Learning at London Voluntary Sector Consortium. She can be contacted on 020 7700 8107 x406

HCVS is doing PQASSO and is offering support to other organisations in the Hackney. HCVS will look at a range of local organisations (see page 23).

HCVS offers free quality standards

Marika Mason reports

INTRODUCING QUALITY STEPS

In March 2001 Hackney CVS will be launching the Quality Steps project. This project aims to provide training and support to groups wanting to implement the PQASSO (Practical Quality Assurance System for Small Organisations) quality standard. We are promoting the use of PQASSO because like its name states it is practical and user friendly. PQASSO is a comprehensive quality system that is accessible and cost effective for most community groups and voluntary organisations.

This project involves support for groups over two stages:
Stage 1 – induction briefings and 2-day training courses
Stage 2 – on-site follow-up support and surgery sessions.

PQASSO quality standard is based on self-assessment. The key stakeholders in an organisation determine their performance level. After completing the initial assessment an action plan is devised to plan and implement PQASSO within your organisation.

ADVANTAGES OF USING PQASSO

While there are many quality standards available for organisations to choose, PQASSO offers immediate and long-term benefits, including:-

- Identifying your group's strengths and areas for improvements.
- Improving the quality of the policies, systems and procedures implemented within your organisation.
- Gathering the evidence to show that you are in fact providing a high quality service.
- Contributing to team building amongst staff, management committee members and volunteers.
- Not being too resource intensive in terms of time and money, e.g. the PQASSO workbook costs only £65.
- Action planning, as a key process, makes it easier to incorporate quality assurance into the daily work of the organisation.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS?

Of course, being quality assured at level 1 of PQASSO means that your organisation

fulfils all its legal requirements and responsibilities. PQASSO helps your organisation to get its house in order sorting out its policies, systems and procedures so that the services you provide are of a high quality and meet the needs of your service users. It will also help you to demonstrate to your key stakeholders, including funders, the value of your work. Increasingly community groups and voluntary organisations have to justify their existence and demonstrate their worth in order to obtain the necessary funds to sustain their services. Quality assurance aids that process and gives your group additional clout with which to access resources. We mustn't forget that a better managed organisation results in happier staff and volunteers, more committed management committee members and supportive strategic partners.

HOW TO APPLY

If you would like to learn more about PQASSO and how it might benefit your organisation, please register your interest by contacting Jennifer at Hackney CVS on 0207 923 1962. You may also send her a fax on 0207 275 8577. We will then get in touch with you to discuss your needs.

You will be sent a course booking form to complete by the deadline of April 11th.

In selecting groups to participate on the

first round of this programme we are prioritising the needs of:

- * smaller groups
- * refugee community organisations
- * disability organisations
- * black and bilingual groups
- * youth projects.

Confirmation of your booking will be sent soon after we receive your course booking form.

TRAINING DATES

The first round of training courses will run on the following dates:

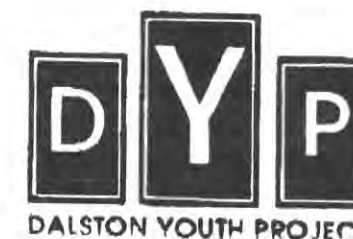
Induction briefings

Tuesday, 24th April 2001
Wednesday, 9th May 2001
Thursday, 14th June 2001

Implementing PQASSO

16th & 17th May 2001
27th & 28th June 2001
17th & 18th July 2001

Follow-up support and surgeries – to be arranged, as required, with pre-assessed groups.



Volunteer mentor

Go make a difference to Young Person's Life

Dalston Youth Project, an award winning mentoring & education project based in Hackney, needs volunteer mentors to work with young people aged 15-18 who are at risk of offending.

We require from you: a 1-year commitment of 2 hours per week, reliability and enthusiasm.

We offer: accredited training, support & supervision, expenses and a chance to make that difference. Do yourself proud

Call now on 020 8525 9696

Down at the Farm

SPARK spent a wonderful winter day down at Hackney City Farm

We met the manager Chris Pounds who talked to us about the origins of the farm and what the farm has to offer.

Hackney City Farm (HCF) is a registered charity and was established in 1984 on some 1.5 acres of land and buildings leased for 90 years from LB Hackney. Originally a brewery, the buildings are substantial and surround a granite yard, while areas that were once roads and buildings are now used for growing and grazing. The farm is a valuable resource, seeking to involve everyone from its culturally diverse inner-city community.

HCF have been successful in receiving funds for an education worker to help develop an educational pack for their schools education programme. They have also been granted money from Shoreditch New Deal to employ a shared volunteer coordinator to support volunteers at the farm. Young people in the Hackney regularly drop-in to the farm to help out and muck out! So much so that HCF encouraged the youngsters

animals are sold as pets. There is also a great garden of herbs, fruit trees, soft bushes and old fashioned flowers, as well as a well stocked vegetable garden.

Alongside its farm activities, HCF offers workshops in pottery, upholstery and runs a cycle workshop run by a local Kosovosan who recycles old bikes and then send them off to Kosova. The community Café serves delicious food that caters for all.

The farm is been used more and more as



Planting beds for wheelchair users



A typical reaction from the hosts!



The yard



Restaurant area

to enter the Haggerston SRB competition and successfully won themselves £1000 (which has been doubled with Agenda 21 monies) to form a youth club based at the farm. They are currently seeking funding from the National Lottery to develop a horticulture project on derelict land on the farm.

The farm has a plentiful supply of live-stock (for viewing only, of course!). You can expect to see sheep, cattle, pigs, chickens, ducks, geese, a prize turkey and his wife, and not to forget lots of chinchillas, rabbits and guinea pigs. The hens produce about 20 eggs a day which are sold to local residents. Other produce from the farm includes manure (lots of it), wool, yarn and some of the smaller

a location by the film and media industry. Some of the animals too are stars in their own right with the guinea pigs famous for appearances in the Channel 4 hit Big Brother and chickens in the movie, Chicken Run, of course. HCF has also been witness to several weddings and receptions.

Hackney City Farm, 1a Goldsmiths Row, London E2 8QA
 Opening hours: Tuesday-Sunday 10am-4.30pm Closed Mondays. Guided tours for schools and groups.

Get your community moving

The Mark Leonard Charitable Trust and the JJ Charitable Trust have provided London Cycling Campaign (LCC) a total of £10,000 so that LCC can kick-start small scale community cycling initiatives. Projects that use the bicycle as a practical tool to tackle an issue that concerns the local community, such as in regeneration or increasing peoples' independence, are likely to get the money. A great example is the Hackney Bike Posse, which trains young people from a local estate youth club to use their bikes for trips across the borough.

LCC can offer a range of services to support and assist your group's project or event.

- We can offer:
- information and advice on project ideas, equipment, training etc.
 - assistance in planning and organising projects and events
 - advice and support from your local London Cycling Campaign group
 - examples of successful projects to inspire and advise
 - help in identifying funding opportunities
 - help in linking up with other groups and organisations
 - our expertise on all things cycling!



London Cycling Campaign on the move

If you have a project idea or want to find out more about the grant criteria or application process, contact Paula Smith, Community Cycling Officer at London Cycling Campaign Unit 228, 30 Great Guildford Street, London SE1 0HS 020 7928 7220 paulas@lcc.org.uk or contact the local Hackney group Douglas Carnall, 7 Navarino Grove, London E8 1AJ 020 7241 1255 douglas@carnall.demon.co.uk.



Raising the profile of your regeneration projects through effective Public Relations

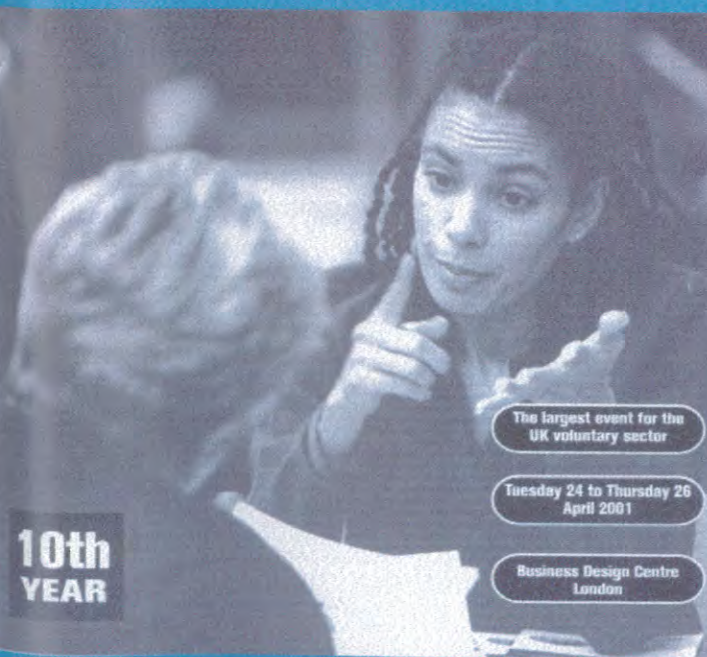
February 21, 23, 28 March 14, 16, 20, 23 April 4, 6, 10, 11

- delegates will gain a clear picture of PR as a management discipline
- you will be taught to identify your organisation's messages, and how to communicate these using various media
- a day of shared learning and practical exercises to help you develop and effectively implement a public relations campaign for your project or programme

Jasqui McKenzie
 Director of Marketing and Communications
 Renaissance
 300 Mare Street
 London E8 1LL
 T: 020 7463 8280
 F: 020 7463 8299
 E: j.mckenzie@renaiss.com

Charityfair 2001

Your guide to events



The largest event for the UK voluntary sector

Tuesday 24 to Thursday 26 April 2001

Business Design Centre London

10th YEAR

Sponsored by The Guardian

NatWest

Organised by

DIRECTORY OF SOCIAL CHANGE
 INFORMATION AND TRAINING FOR THE VOLUNTARY SECTOR

CORE CALLS PARTICIPANTS TO



A festival of arts, mental health and culture - 3 days.
 Thursday 31st May, Friday 1st & Saturday 2nd of June.

at the Union Chapel Islington.

Refugee Women's Association

Free Classes for refugee women

English & Computer

starting on Monday

2 April 2001

Child Care and Travel expenses will be provided.

- ESOL: Pre-NVQ -beginner, elementary, NVQ₁, NVQ₂, and NVQ₃
- Computer: NVQ₁- NVQ₂
- The courses are for 24 weeks
- At different locations in London

Locations and Open Day

will be announced later. Please telephone us to register your name for receiving invitation to the Open Day.

Tel: 0207- 923 2412

Refugee Women's Association Print House 18 Ashwin Street London E8 3DL

in the NEXT ISSUE

The newsletter for Hackney's voluntary & community sectors

SPARK

March 2001

Dealing with information technology

Youth projects and the Connexions Service

Training providers and training provided

New logos for HCVS and Disability Hackney

Developing HCVS as a resource centre

CLS questionnaire results

Access Project and regeneration

HCVS and SPARK welcome your involvement with the stories and features in this magazine. If you would like to write an article, include relevant policy news, place a low-cost advert or add information about your organisation's future events, then please contact Jake @ HCVS on 020 7923 1962 or by email: jake.hcvs@virgin.net

Deadline for next issue is 10th May 2001

Advertise on this page from £40

For details call HCVS 020 7923 1962