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Supporting Hackney's Communities

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The Older People's Issue

White Paper: What does this mean for the community in Hackney?

HCVS: Working to ensure every Parent Matters.

Abolition 07: Hackney's plans get support from the top!

HCVS' magazine for Hackney's voluntary & community sector

SPARK

Spring 2007

In this issue:

- commissioning priorities for Hackney
- fight for free ESOL
- abolition 07
- adult learning strategy
- quality test
- faith focus
- meet hackney social action forum
- hackney wick
- plus the latest funding news

inShape:

partnership support works

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hcvs
Supporting Hackney's Communities

SPARK is produced by Hackney Council for Voluntary Service (HCVS), Hackney's leading voluntary and community sector support agency. Our team of experienced and dedicated professionals provide funding, information and training to support over 1,900 local voluntary and community groups across Hackney achieve their aims and objectives. We have set up and support existing networks across Hackney such as Black & Ethnic Minority Arts (BEMA), Disability Hackney, Refugee Community Champions, LEAD – Hackney Learning Network and the Community Empowerment Network. We co-ordinate Youth Futures, a new initiative to tackle gang and gun violence.

Short term funding is damaging: there's no stability, isolated bits of work and uncertainty. You have good professionals who really know the issues, but they're there one minute and next they're gone.

What does Social Action for Health do?

We have a long history in Hackney of focussing on health and social care, but through the community development programme and the advice strategy we're extending this though health is still central. Some of our other projects are:

- **Refugee Outreach Schools Project** run in partnership with the Learning Trust and Hoxton Trust (who do the legal advice)
- **Health Guides Project** where we train local people to become advocates in their mother tongue
- **Self m anagement health programmes**
- Facilitation and development of **Hackney Information and Advice Consortium.**

For more information: Social Action for Health
62 Beechwood Road,
London E8 3DY

☎: 020 7275 2730
✉: joe.walker@safh.org.uk
www.safh.org.uk

Celebrating a decade of action

Volunteer Focus

Celebrating its tenth year, HVA is reaching a major turning point in its history - from April 07 HVA is now solely a Volunteer Centre. In the last five years, 5,000 people have registered with HVA to find voluntary work. Referred through organisations like Hackney Recruitment Partnership, City and Hackney Mind, The Shaw Trust, Working Links, Connexions and local housing associations. People also register with HVA to get work experience.

The celebrations will go off in style at this year's Achievement Awards held during Volunteers Week in June, celebrating the achievements of Hackney volunteers and organisations. HVA members can nominate volunteers or themselves for appreciation and other categories. Help HVA increase awareness and recognition for many of the unsung heroes of Hackney.
☎: **020 7241 4443.**

Better deal for Hackney arts - join BEMA

Exciting times for BEMA, the Black & Ethnic Minority Arts Alliance, with plans for a major combined arts festival and fundraising for paid staff and premises. Already the lead for the Hackney area, BEMA want to become the largest network of active arts organisations in London. Currently without funding, the network is strengthening to develop arts partnerships that will increase funding and commissioning tenders for arts projects and services in Hackney. And help member groups get funds to run independent projects.
Ngoma Bishop ☎: 0207 923 1962 ✉: irchds@aol.com

Promoting Gillett Square...

Volunteers, including HCVS staff, braved the winter cold to take part in Hackney Co-Operative Development's (HCD) photo shoot to promote Gillet Square. The photos will form part of year long poster campaign at Dalston Kingsland station - look out to see if you can spot HCVS staff! Gillett Square is available to be used as a performance space. **Adam Hart, HCD ☎: 020 7254 4829.**

Shoreditch Trust &The Crib

In the last SPARK, we reported on the Crib and their excellent Ofsted report. Michael Pyner from Shoreditch Trust wrote in to clarify that: Shoreditch Trust supported the Crib with funding and that Shoreditch Trust never owned the building and so was not in a position to sell it. In response, Jannette said 'Considering Shoreditch Trust invested heavily in the Crib and the young people of Hoxton, we felt they should have found the young people of Hoxton alternative premises'.

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Spring 2007

With commissioning high on the agenda in Hackney, voluntary and community groups joining up as partnerships stand a better chance of winning tenders. Our feature focuses on inShape, which takes a partnership approach to support for older people. inShape shows just how successful this can be.
We also need funding for SPARK, please let us know your views and complete the survey inside this issue. **Gillian**

contacts

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Liz Hughes, Community Reporter
✉: londonpools@googlemail.com

Advertise in this space

Everyone is welcome to advertise in SPARK - Hackney's voluntary and community sector (VCS) magazine, circulated to over 1,900 organisations in the Borough. To arrange space in SPARK is simple - just contact **Gillian Trevethan** as below.
HCVS members get discounts.
✉: gillian@hcvs.org.uk
☎: 020 7923 1962

A big thank you to everyone who supplied articles and information for this issue.

Refugees & Asylum Seekers News

Hackney's free ESOL campaign is a winner

SPARK spoke to **Ali Aksoy**, (left) Chair of the Hackney Refugee Forum (HRF), on the fight to save free English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) classes. A small victory was gained recently, when the government decided that ESOL will remain free for asylum seekers after six months stay and for low paid migrant workers. A step back from the original announcment that free ESOL classes for adults would end as of August 2007.

This gives force to the Free ESOL campaign led by HRF and University & Colleges Union. Together they have protested outside Parliament and more locally: when over 70 people attended an impromptu English class outside Hackney Town Hall to demand free English classes for everyone. The peaceful protest was replicated across the UK soon after.

Over 100 people went to a public meeting in March, at which guest speaker Kate Ford of the BNUT, suggested that racism was behind the governments' decision. All agreed that there was a contradiction in policy that supports integration but stops free ESOL classes. Demand for ESOL has always been far greater than supply, crushing accusations that minorities do not want to integrate into British society.

HRF has been pivotal in giving much needed support to Hackney's many refugee communities. In over two years since it became constituted, HRF has won £135k of funding. This money is being used to fund Community Champions, people who are researchers and delivering capacity building support. As well as job search training with ESOL, designed to meet specific language needs because teaching English to refugees is complex due to the multitude of languages spoken by refugee communities. ⓘ **Ali**
☎: **020 7923 1962**
✉:**hackneyrefugeeforum@hotmail.co.uk** ■

ESOL on the streets

Job search classes with free childcare

Every Saturday, **International Dance and Music Centre (IDMC)**, hold Job Search Skill Development classes together with HRF. Childcare is provided, so while mothers gain new skills, their children can enjoy drama and folk dancing.

IDMC are holding their fourth Annual Folk Dance competition on Sunday, 27 May from 11 - 7pm. There will be food, drink, dancing and music - everyone is welcome.

ⓘ **Mehmet Karakus on 07957 396065**
✉: **kufad87@yahoo.co.uk** ■

Happy New Year from Centre for Refugees from Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia (VLC)

Mr. Nguyen Van Gac spoke to SPARK about Vietnamese New Year celebrations. "Tet is the name of the our New Year festival, and we make a traditional cake called Bánh Chung or Bánh Tet (below). It's only made at New Year - one cake is offered to the ancestors and then they are offered to everyone. It's a 5,000 year old tradition – the cake is made of sticky rice, beans and meat and cooked for 10 hours in water, wrapped in banana leaf – it's cooked so long that the taste of the banana leaf goes into the cake. The cake brings happiness and health for the next year, the shape symbolises the gods and the earth, we're offering something back for human life. As well as the cake we make offerings of fruit, flowers, watermelon and early blossom. Here you see watermelon everyday outside the shops – in Vietnam it is just for New Year's day.'

ⓘ **Mr Nguyen Van Gac**
☎: **020 7739 3650**
✉: **viccentre@yahoo.co.uk** ■

Youth news

Team work makes the dream work

How will you be remembered? Will it be to organise a free event that brings together young people from across London – in two weeks?

Josh Folkes and Dean Wallace of Hold it Down Productions (HID), a young people led events management company in Hackney did this last month. Over a thousand young people from London peacefully attended a free matinee of the legendary Black Heroes in the Hall of Fame at Hackney Empire. The musical extravaganza remembered important figures in Black history, bringing to life a host of Black men and women and their contribution to history.

Special guests included Diane Abbott MP, Superintendent Leroy Logan of the Metropolitan Police Service and Tim Campbell, who won £100,000 from the reality TV show 'The Apprentice'. Afterwards, Josh and Dean gave away T-Shirts and HMV vouchers to youth who could name black heroes in the show.

Josh and Dean said: "We are happy that even though we had so little time to promote this event the outcome was incredible. So many young people turned up to learn about their role models in the Black Heroes in the Hall of Fame. We'd like to say thank you to our Street Team and the people that helped us get the tickets out across London safely."

Even the Police were impressed, Superintendent Leroy Logan said: "It was partnership at its best, working together in a short time frame of two weeks. Hackney was showing the lead in building the self esteem of African Caribbean young people, in particular young men, who are vulnerable to violent youth affiliations and under achievement in school. Team work makes the dream work."

ⓘ **Josh Folkes and Dean Wallace, HID "To talk to the youth, you need the youth"**
☎: **020 7923 1962**
✉: **josh@hcvs.org.uk**
✉: **dean@hcvs.org.uk** ■

The Crib – back in Business

Following a fire and vandalism in January, The Crib youth project in De Beauvoir, which we reported on in our last SPARK following their excellent Ofsted, is back in business.

Founder Janette Collins said "We still managed to run our talent show "Boroughs United" at the Hackney Empire the following week, thanks to the hard work of the young people and staff. The young people repainted the activity room, and we've had a lot of support from Hackney Youth Service and HCVS in getting back on our feet". ⓘ **The Crib need desks, if you can help, contact Janette Collins:**
☎: **07813 901 751** ■

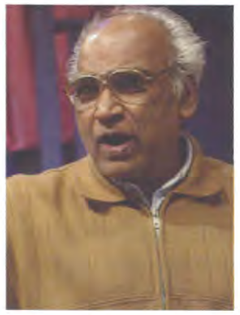
Cityzen Sevens

Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) from Better Homes Partnership have been working with Hackney Play Association (HPA) and CityZEN on a youth involvement project on seven Hackney estates. These are Mother Square, Morningside, Frampton Park, New Kingshold, Woodberry Down, Holly Street and Stoke Newington Estate.

CityZEN trained young people in peer research, who then formed seven youth committees. The committee members worked with HPA to plan and deliver weekly activities based on the research findings. They were also trained in youth work skills and play work. Young people were then employed in delivering some of those activities with HPA. CityZEN has continued to work with the youth forums to develop a role of governance within their housing associations. Most of the RSLs have committed to continuing the project for at least the next year. ⓘ **Shanaz Ali**
✉: **cityzenpeers@hotmail.co.uk**
☎: 07985 199717 ■

Get your name in print

Contrast is a free magazine written by and for young people in Hackney. If you're aged 13 to 19 and interested in writing, editing, design or illustration, come and join the editorial team.
ⓘ **Mustafa**
☎: **020 7359 7825**
✉:**contrast@socialspider.com** ■



One day you'll be old but will you have inShape?

With rising premises costs and a borough with an average age of 33, what's support like for older people in Hackney? In 2004, seven voluntary groups formed inShape Healthy Living Network. SPARK spoke to some of these agencies on the value of this unique voluntary sector partnership for older people.

Jackie Brett

inShape co-ordinator based at The Sharp End

Tell us about inShape?
We are one of the last lottery funded Healthy Living Centres run by a partnership of seven voluntary sector organisations, hosted by The Sharp End. The partners worked on the bid for three years before starting in January 2004 with five years funding.

Each partner has £10,000 to deliver health services in a different patch of Hackney every year. We started in Hackney Wick, then Clapton and the North East, Woodberry Down and from April - South West Hackney.

We deliver services in the target area, and keep going in previous areas. The idea is to get outreach and signposting services going and embed them in the area by working with local small groups - so people's awareness about available services. For example, there's a mobile washing machine repair service by Mobile Repair Service which a lot of people don't know about.

How's inShape developed?
We've grown beyond the basic service delivery model and we're working on joint tendering and developing a strategic plan together. Through this, we'll gain the power to be an equal partner around the table. We feel it's important, older people's services aren't a priority – they didn't get into the original Local Area Agreements. The focus is youth and unemployment.

Give us an example of an inShape service?
For housebound people who find it difficult to know what's out there: we offer subsidised complimentary therapies (Hoxton Health Group), benefits advice (Age Concern), one to one home based exercise (The Sharp End) and home safety checks (Mobile Repair Service).

Is this a unique partnership?
I think so, I go to the Healthy Living network meetings and most partnerships are either based in, or supported by, the local Primary Care Trust (PCT) and have a commissioning type relationship. Ours is purely voluntary sector partnership where all the partners are equal.

What are you working on?
We're good at monitoring but need help with evaluation - it will be very powerful when it's working as we can show the value of what we offer - and it's vital if we're to work for the council tendering process.

What are your strengths?
We're very responsive because we have the freedom to change the use of our funding, we make inter-referrals between partners as people often have many needs, we pay for external services where they're needed, and we represent value for money as we have low management costs. We have high standards, but a diversity of response to people's needs. I don't think one big agency could provide as good a service.

What's good partnership working?
It takes a lot of time and the partners gave us a lot of time. we spent two or three days together, externally facilitated, from which we set a really strong agreement. Every year, we spend a day to celebrate success, review what we could do better and what we want to do next. We have team meetings with everyone working at inShape - this costs money as staff are sessional but it helps sharing good practice and referrals.

What are the issues?
Property – nearly all groups involved are either paying high rents or have insecure accommodation.

What is your vision?
An older people's resource centre and the groups together, with satellites in the patches with a smaller version of services. There's more of a buzz when lots happens in the same place.
ⓘ **See page 9.** >>

1 in 4 pensioners in inner London live in poverty.

1/3 of BME pensioners are living on low incomes, compared with just 1 in 5 white pensioners.

Over 400,000 people aged 50 or over are involved in some kind of voluntary activity in London.

Jean John

Founder of Wayside

Wayside helps black and ethnic minority people suffering mental or physical stress and anything to do with poverty. We hold healthy living programmes followed by fellowship and prayers. We've been here for 17 years. Hard work, but it's been very rewarding.

Working with inShape, we run aerobics and gentle chair exercise classes here and at Median Road, Southwold Road and Homerton Library. We run day trips – this year Weymouth, Stratford on Avon and Leeds Castle – plus healthy cooking classes and health seminars.

The shop is like a drop in centre – not just a charity shop. We don't want to lose that, old people come in to sit, have a cup of tea, sing songs, reminisce, or go for walks in the park. People who are visiting relatives in hospital come in and ask to pray for them, they come from Chats Palace for props and costumes and tramps come for free clothes, shoes and bedding.

We've been at the shop for nine years, our lease finishes next year. We're looking for new premises, at £24k a year - we can't afford to stay. We negotiated it to £17,000 this year. We need to be in this area.

How does inShape help?
inShape really and truly helps a lot. It's hard to raise funds - they help with publicity and application forms. Our users get access to services outside their reach – they go down to the Sharp End and Mobile Repair – and our volunteers have been trained in chair based exercise. Age Concern come here to talk about benefits for people.

I've always had a passion for old people – to come to understand their feelings and their fears, especially about dying or becoming ill. I love being with older people to help them get well and strong and look after themselves and stay living in the community.

Wayside are always happy to receive goods which are sold in the shop to support their programmes. They are looking for new premises in the Chatsworth Road area. ⓘ **See page 9.** >>

Nazima Osman
Director, Asian Women's Advisory Service

We run two weekly sessions with Asian women over 60: one here, one at the Nightingale practice. We offer light chair exercise, self management, and bring in speakers on health, fall prevention etc.

We have one paid worker for each of the five main Asian languages – Bengali, Hindi, Gujerati, Punjabi and Urdu. We run different groups because of language and cultural issues. Some women don't feel confident to get mainstream health advice. Some wear the veil or the hijab, they don't want exercise classes in a mixed atmosphere.

How does inShape work?
We are now linked with, and can use different partners' services - our speakers are free! They also helped us with funding bids.

We work with East London Business Alliance (ELBA): we've had two team challenges where bank workers have redecorated and input to our long term strategy. We're working together for a resource centre.

I'm hoping that inShape can do a partnership bid so we have more funding or that the borough will commission us. ⓘ **See over page.**

Olexandra Stepaniuk
Chief Officer, Age Concern

What's the benefit of inShape to to a bigger organisation like Age Concern?
By joining older people's groups, we can improve our service and reach our long term goals. For example we're working in Woodberry Down to involve older people in regeneration – we brought in The Sharp End to hold an exercise programme. The benefits will be evident in future with commissioning - moving to tender from grant. Commissioners prefer to work with one group: we deliver services together.

What about a resource centre for older people?
Shortly after I came here in May 2005, the development plans for Dalston came out. The value of buildings is more than shelter; the way they function can make something happen or stop. Isolation is massive for elderly people – the poverty of not being in a group, not being engaged, yet the barriers are not physical. Look at what other VCS organisations are doing - there's a plethora of services to improve the lives of old people. Our work gives people such inspiration – it would be great if the lot were under one roof. Old people could come in for lunch, book visits to the occupational therapist, get a flu jab or a carer could drop off the old person while they went shopping. We thought of fixing projectors showing images of people's youth in the Caribbean etc, so they felt comfortable with their culture around them.

We have a mature voluntary sector dealing with older people. Yet I found myself in the middle of a regeneration process which excludes older people and thought why not have benefits for older people here? So Age Concern funded a concept feasibility study with questionnaires and a focus group. Service users and two staff went on a frugal trip to Denmark to see what was supplied there. We consulted widely on our ideas - older people told us they wanted a facility for themselves and they wanted it now. People wanted a well designed building too. ⓘ **See over page.** ■

Profile: Older People's Support Groups

Over 120 older people go to the longstanding **Halkevi Luncheon club**, funded by Hackney Council. Older Kurdish and Turkish people need specialist home care and day to day support, due to language differences.

Centre for Refugees from Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia (VLC) runs Keep Fit and Tai Chi classes for older people. Wed and Sat, 10.30-12.30. followed by the lunch club. They also offer an advice and information service.

inShape
the Healthy Living Partnership for Hackney's over 50s

Age Concern Hackney
22 Dalston Lane, London E8 3AZ
☎: 020 7249 7149
✉: info@ageconcernhackney.org.uk
🖱: www.ageconcernhackney.org.uk

Asian Women's Advisory Service
161 Mare Street, London E8 3RH
☎: 0208 533 5796 / 0208 986 4804
✉: mhawas@tiscali.co.uk

Hoxton Health Group
St. Leonard's Primary Care Centre, Nuttall Street, London N1 5LZ
☎: 020 7683 4289
✉: office@hoxtonhealthgroup.org.uk
🖱: www.hoxtonhealthgroup.org.uk

Mobile Repair Service
2 St Paul's Road, London N1 2QN
☎: 020 7226 8431
✉: services@mobilerepairservice.org.uk
🖱: www.mobilerepairservice.org.uk

Stroke Survivors Project - TLC Care
3rd Floor, 77 East Road London N1 6AH
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🖱: www.tlccare.org.uk

The Sharp End
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🖱: www.inshapeinhackney.org.uk

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☎: 020 8986 7531
✉: Wayside1@btinternet.com
🖱: www.waysidecommunity.org.uk

Profile: Older People's Support Groups

Fighting ageism in Hackney

"If you are over 50 in Camden, Islington, Kensington & Chelsea, Lambeth, Southwark, Wandsworth and Westminster, chances are you can access organisations who offer support with courses or assistance in returning to work. Should you be over 50 and live in Hackney, then the support runs dry."

Wise Owls are concerned about the lack of support to combat ageism in Hackney. Ideally, this situation should be expanded into Hackney. Why should Hackney's older workers be left out of the funding loop… are they any less needy?

Wise Owls support Hackney's older workers back in employment, with CV support, job matching, work experience programme and training. They have found that older workers face long-term unemployment and financial hardship, loss of confidence and an out of date CV. 🖱: www.wiseowls.co.uk

In your interest...

Older People's Special Interest Group (OPSIG) is part of the Health and Social Care Forum.

OPSIG has 53 voluntary and community organisations who work with older people or have an interest in older people's issues. They share information, learning, ideas and provide networking opportunities and representation.

Next meetings:
The Commissioning Strategy
Monday, 18 June 2pm - 4pm
At The Sharp End, 11 Richmond Road E8

A Volunteering plan for older people
Monday, 20 August 2pm - 4pm
At The Sharp End, 11 Richmond Road E8

ⓘ To join OPSIG, call Olexandra Stepaniuk
☎: 020 7249 7149

You're never too old to learn

Over a third of Hackney adults have higher level qualifications, higher than the London average. Yet 27% of adults living here have no qualifications at all. Ahead of Adult Learning Week in May 19 - 25, SPARK spoke to representatives from the Adult Learning Strategy Group set up to co-ordinate adult education provision in Hackney.

What is the Adult Learning Strategy Group?
The Adult Learning Strategy Group was set up to co-ordinate provision in the Borough. It was based on the observation of the Learning and Skills Council that a lot was happening in terms of services for children and young people, and this was an attempt to emulate that for every adult and try and get some cohesion.

Is it the same as the Skills For Life programme?
Skills for Life is about literacy, numeracy and ESOL (English for speakers of other languages) - this is about all adult learning.

Why is the strategy group needed?
Lots of people are doing lots of good things but they're not connected. For example, there are a lot of beginner ESOL classes but nowhere to go for the next stage. The college provides the next step, but community providers often don't. Some courses are not accredited so again progression is difficult. If we know where classes are, we can attach advice and guidance

Trish Smith
Head of Adult Learning Services The Learning Trust

to help people go on to jobs and beyond.

We decided to take a strategic approach, and look at where the gaps were in courses, geography and people being reached. We also decided to look at what our priorities are in Hackney, rather than following those of funders.

Which communities get left out of adult learning?
Orthodox Jewish, African Caribbean, Turkish and Kurdish speaking communities. Also, we found that just as white working class boys are underachieving in school, there is a corresponding gap in adults. ESOL classes have spread widely, but with literacy there is more stigma.

Our target is to look at estates, we have particular estates in mind, so people come down for IT classes and then access other things. We will prioritise work with refugees and asylum seekers. With the new ESOL agenda we will have to find a way locally to support classes as it is not just people coming over here with jobs and wanting ESOL on the side. We will also prioritise older learners.

What can the group offer smaller providers?
We want to tackle the lack of quality assurance (QA) – we will offer help through the strategy group – the Learning Trust can help capacity build the providers. It's a chore but it proves that what we are doing is effective. We do try and minimise the paperwork.

We can also help with setting up training, finding partners for bids (capital and revenue) and finding teaching staff.

What has been difficult in writing the strategy?
Maintaining the consistency of people on the group, and perhaps getting other services on board – though there are successful models working, i.e. in the health service. In terms of getting feedback about what's happening the key partners have been HTEN, the Community College and the Learning Trust.

What has helped?
People have generally been very keen – we have all seen how much there is for children and young people and think there should be the same for adults.

Anything else?
The Adult Learning Strategy Group was set up to champion the cause 'every adult matters'. We want to support as many small organisations as possible to deliver good quality teaching. As a partnership we have a better chance of addressing community issues or concerns so contact us to find out more. >>

ⓘ For more information:

Strategy Group contact:
Oliur Rahman
☎: 0208 820 7073

VCS Contact
James Drummond
☎: 020 7254 1644
✉: james@hten.org

Who is represented on the Adult Community Learning Strategy Group?
Age Concern
ELATT
Hackney Community College
Hackney Council, Olympic Team
HCVS
HTEN
HVA
Job Centre Plus
Learning and Skills Council
Learning for Growth
Lifeline
Shoreditch Trust
The Learning Trust

Time Table

Apr 07: Strategy and plan in place. Project officer appointed

Aug 07: Complete mapping of provision and progression routes for 07/08

Sep & Dec 07, Apr 08: Publication of courses for adults

Oct 07: Gaps in provision identified and actions planned to fill them

Oct – Dec 07: Identify class waiting lists and plan programme to address need

Sep 07 on: Roll-out QA project (dependent on funding)

Jan 08: Community learning champions in place in target communities

Comments from VCS participants in the strategy group

SPARK spoke to some of the key players from the voluntary and community sector (VCS) for there views on the new partnership.

James Drummond, HTEN

We'd like to see a greater involvement of the VCS, particularly grass roots groups, in developing local priorities. Linking the Skills for Life programme and the wider adult learning agenda would help.

There is a lack of quantitative data on groups left out of adult learning and more research is needed. ESOL attracts a cross-section of minority ethnic groups which broadly represents Hackney's ethnic mix, but there is much more demand than there are places. The college reports a huge waiting list, over 1,000 learners.

Childcare is a major barrier to learning, especially for women and single parents. All funders, providers and strategic groups must consider this.

Overall we'd like the message to come out that the VCS can be strategic, as well as involved in delivery and co-ordination.

Joe Billington, ELATT

In particular, the strategy has excellent proposals:

- to enable people to progress from non accredited provision in their communities to other local provision, like ELATT. That means they can progress and pass qualifications
- to ensure that people don't sit on waiting lists for over subscribed courses for months but instead are made aware of other high quality provision locally.

People attending [community sector] run courses benefit from the locality and accessibility provided by a local provider and the quality of accredited provision. The VCS can co-ordinate to provide such routes to learning within community venues and organisations. This is the combination that will make learning work for the community in Hackney as it will enable people to learn in environments in which they are comfortable and make real progress.

Avril McIntyre, Lifeline

The strategy group is a good place for people to come together to share information, make sure we are not duplicating our work and to broker partnerships. HCVS and HTEN pass on information to smaller providers.

It will identify gaps here in skills and education provision and talk to key funders about what they are going to do about it.

Adult Education to me is very much about second chances – where people failed first time or had no chances. We can make sure they get the opportunity now, so people can gain jobs - and better jobs. If we work together there is a much better chance of that happening/ At the same time, we can inform the strategies of the LDA (London Development Agency) and the LSC (Learning and Skills Council). ■

European update

ESF 1.3 Neighbourhood Facilitators project

Discover what the Neighbourhood Facilitator Consortium can do for you!

Specialist consultants meeting the needs of the VCS

Since its conception in August 2005, the ESF 1.3 Neighbourhood Facilitator project developed a core of highly skilled specialist consultants equipped for the needs of the voluntary and community sector (VCS). Going beyond expectations, they have established a consortium of consultants and already won their first tender for Hackney Council. Marie Walker, Project Co-ordinator at HCVS (above) updates SPARK as these brand new VCS consultants get ready to hit the streets of Hackney and raise up the sector.

The ESF 1.3 project was the brainwave of our late Director Adiaha Antigha, who advocated that:

'positive social change requires local community action'.

In achieving this, the project focused on acknowledging the expertise of community workers while enabling their development in fundraising, project management, marketing and public relations, life coaching, and advocacy.

The consultancy training delivered by HCVS was such a success with participants, we are now seeking a level 3 qualification as a core subject in neighbourhood facilitation. Another result, we won the tender for a consultation project with Hackney Council and have been commissioned as part of Hackney's Advice Strategy, 'to contribute to the reduction of poverty and social exclusion by working in partnership to improve public access to quality social welfare information and advice services'. If your organisation requires local solutions, check out our case studies from our new consultants at www.hcvs.org.uk for an insight into the benefits and expertise on your doorstep. ■

Success of ESF 1.3

In 18 months:

78 local people offered training and volunteering

45 VCS groups supported by funding and training

26 community workers given consultancy training for the VCS

5 professional VCS consultants

1 winning consortium

Unlimited potential

Graduation Day

From left, Ibrahim Avcil, Fatima Dupres Griffiths, Michelle Goldberg and Julie Lindo

HCVS held a graduation ceremony for the ESF 1.3 programme. The five successful consultants who have formed a consortium are:

Ibrahim Avcil
Fatima Dupres-Griffiths
Julie Lindo
Kome Owuasu
Joseph Oluka

Clifford Hinkson and Marie Walker present Kome Owuasu, centre, with her certificate

A question of religion

Question time at Nida Trust

Nida Trust was established in London in 2005. The Trust runs projects in education, health and welfare, sports, arts and culture – from teacher training programmes to interfaith events.

Over the last few months, Nida Trust organised a series of Question Time events with speakers from the Muslim, Christian and Jewish communities. Local people can come and talk about issues with religious and community leaders. It's hoped that by sharing ideas and viewpoints, people of different religions will become more tolerant of each other.

SPARK interviewed each of the speakers from the three faith communities, read over the page how they became interested in inter-faith issues, and what they think is the value of these events.

Zubair Bakht
Muslim community representative
Chair of interfaith, Nida Trust

We were part of a working class society in North London, I had friends of every race, and it was the faith that bonded us together, though we are of different faiths. It's the common meeting ground where we all come together, and they are genuine friendships still.

But there was a huge underlying problem – it was the 70s, the time of Quadrophenia and major racism. Asians were picked on more than anyone. Myself and my brothers, we were the first to fight back – I almost went to the wrong side. It was a very deep experience, but this kind of talk and the faith always brought me back to what's real – knowing what is in society is not real. >>

About Inter-Communal Dialogue

The inter-communal dialogue has a "Question Time" format with the idea of getting Muslim, Jewish and Christian representatives to talk on particular themes, the first was 'Do you feel British?", then we moved on to religious freedom and the role of women. This is important to me as it's the first time I've been approached by a Muslim organisation to take part (so often Muslims are pressed into participation). It is important that it is a local initiative and that all three communities participate. I'm very keen to support it.

Maurice Glasmann, Jewish speaker

One of the benefits of Inter-faith dialogue is to see how other faiths see us really, correct some wrong thoughts and get to learn about how other communities are. It's part of a rolling movement – a chance for the audience to ask questions about faiths that they wouldn't normally have asked. For example a Christian lady asked us what we think about the veil and whether it should be allowed.

Zubair Bakht, Muslim speaker

It's great that this is a Muslim initiative - I love that. It's been good to move round venues as at each site we've had a very different audience. It's drawing together people for first time to listen to their neighbours. Scholars and clergy have been doing this for years, now it's reached the people.

Marjorie Brown, Christian speaker

It was a very strong, really unconscious thing to go through. This was Edmonton and Enfield - perhaps it was worse there because we were seen as the invaders. At the time it was a generally very racist environment, I remember even the TV plays – I really didn't like it, and didn't want any part. I found peace talking about our commonality, and I enjoyed it most with someone white, who was not stereotypical – and this helped develop my character, helped make me a person who's not afraid to talk to anyone.

But since 9/11 I don't feel I can speak out in the same way. I feel angry about a lot of issues. I feel if I speak out there might be a threat to myself and my family from the security services. I have made a conscious effort to reach out to other communities. We formed Nida Trust to let the wider community know what we are truly about, not as terrorists or someone foreign.

So we thought firstly Muslims need to stand up against any form of violence except real jihad. Secondly we need to show our character as people – we are a poor community because of the way we came here, we start on the lower rungs, as the Jewish community did - and that translates into how we want to be seen – as the nicest of people. And thirdly we need to integrate. In return we would like some respect. And that's about it.

The essence is to practice what we preach, and leave a trail of people talking well about us. So when there is terrorist talk, we'll have people saying "hold on…". The people of London are so open anyway – even the most conservative can be friendly.

There is a debate in Muslim community – about what is Islamic and what's cultural practice. Some men have become very dominant, taking one jot of Islam to justify this. Anyone can be a Muslim – the only thing is to believe in one God, it's got nothing to do with what you wear. What we mean by Islam is submitting to God's law, decency and caring about your environment. I take my business decisions through a Muslim filter. One of the reasons I wanted this particular business is that I own my own press – I'm thinking how to use this to reach a wider community.

In the first three days after 7/7, there were 68 "faith hate" crimes in London alone.

source: Scotland Yard

Marjorie Brown
Vicar of St Thomas, Clapton Common
Christian Community Representative

I grew up in the 70s in a very Jewish area in Ohio, US. At that time, the suburbs were closed to Jews. So while people who were clever and successful generally moved out of the city centre to the suburbs, the Jewish community stayed in the centre. I was ordained 12 years ago and moved here eight years ago. I was pleased to come here because of the unique character of the area in the middle of one of the largest Charedi communities in Europe. This parish is 50% Orthodox Jews, 20-30% Muslim, and the rest Christian. Many people in church are from the African-Caribbean community, so they will have at least two cultures, and it means the Jewish community is older than the Christian community, which changes the balance.

We've had interfaith conversation on a number of theological topics every couple of months for long time. In wake of 9/11 we stepped up the contact. Because we knew each other, I could walk into the mosque and say how shocked I was – and we put out a joint press release.

While we have lots of links with Orthodox Jews who are less exclusive in their practice, we have no interfaith dialogue with the Charedi community as it's forbidden, and seen as at best a waste of time, and at worst dangerous.

I think the Church of England does have a particular role to play as the state religion. It's there for everybody, a gift. We have a geographical patch – marriages, burials and christenings are there for everyone, and everything in the area is my business, just as it's my business to be available to anybody. We're often recruited as the community voice. I've had some very unusual experiences with this – for example at the moment I'm counselling a Charedi man who couldn't talk to the Rabbi about a particular issue.

Maurice Glasmann
Jewish Community Representative and Academic

I was born in Hackney and went to school here, before going to Cambridge University and now I teach politics at London Metropolitan University in Tower Hamlets. I found that while my Cambridge colleagues were teaching religious tolerance as a theoretical issue that didn't really matter, I was regularly coming up against Jew hating.

Then my great grandparents' graves were desecrated after 9/11. It wasn't like the old National Front thing of smashing three graves and adding a couple of swastikas, this was the systematic destruction of 60 graves.

I tried to find out what was going on. Police suggested that was "local Muslim youth". But when I tried to raise the issue at work one colleague said "Israel/Palestine is a very complicated issue". The thing about my great grandparents is that some were religious, some communist, but none were Zionist (a movement that supports a Jewish nation state based in Israel).

I worked with the chaplain at work – we thought it was essential to establish some form of conversation about faith and traditions when there was so much ignorance about Jews and disconnection of Jews from the East End.

We set up faith and citizenship training, realising that many students had no idea how to organise or keep the pressure on. We teach local faith communities to organise around their area and not be afraid to moralise about their local environment. As well as scriptural reasoning, we look at local issues like the sell off of libraries and swimming pools.

1 in 400 Jews and 1 in 1,700 Muslims are likely to be victims of "faith hate" attacks every year.

source: police force data July-September 06

Telco (The East London Communities Organisation) is our partner in London; together we're building up something through faith communities around the limits of money, the good of the city – and how the power of communities makes you strong.

So I was pleased to accept an invitation to work with Nida Trust and Rabbi Glück, from the Walford Road synagogue who founded the Jewish and Muslim forum. ■

ⓘ More information:

Foezul Ali, Nida Trust
PO Box 52163
London E9 7WQ

✆: 07931 934 116
✉: info@nidatrust.org.uk
🖱: www.nidatrust.org.uk

"Inter-Communal Dialogue was launched by funding from HCVS and the Community Empowerment Network. So far it has been a great success. We've used volunteers from different communities. We want to expand this project but we need funding to become more effective."

Foezul Ali
Nida Trust

Green news

Olympic fight - Manor Garden

Manor Garden Allotments – No to eviction

Hundred year old Manor Garden Allotments lies in the middle of the Olympic Park site. These beautiful, productive vegetable gardens are due to be demolished to make way for a four-week footpath during the 2012 Games despite the land being given to be used "in perpetuity" as gardens by local people by Major Villiers, a friend of Winston Churchill.

In April, the allotment holders won a small victory over the London Development Agency, when the LDA's bid for the land was turned down after they failed to make an alternative location available. The proposed eviction has now moved to July.

www.lifeisland.org ■

London Sustainability Weeks

This year, London Sustainability Weeks are 3 -17 June 2007. There are hundreds of events taking place this year, covering everything from protecting London's wildlife, greening your home or making your business more sustainable.

www.londonsustainabilityweeks.org ■

Smoke free Hackney

From 1, July all pubs, clubs restaurants, cafes, shops, offices, workplaces and nearly all enclosed premises in Hackney will become smokefree by law as part of the Government's Smokefree England legislation. It will be compulsory for businesses and other enclosed premises to display no smoking signs and to enforce the legislation or risk a fine. To assist businesses prepare for the ban, the Council will hold seminars for business leaders, informing them of the law and answering questions. From April, premises throughout the borough will be visited by Council officers.

Councillor Nargis Khan said: "Smoking rates in Hackney are higher than the average for England as a whole, so it's particularly important that we take action to ensure that non-smokers are protected from the dangers of second hand smoke and smokers get the help to quit".

Kate Harris, Senior Environmental Health Officer, Hackney Council
☎: 020 8356 4979 ■

New iDET Equality Kit

Scope has developed and produced a comprehensive and interactive training toolkit for Disability Equality Training (iDET). It's designed for organisations to deliver effective DET to groups of staff and management in short, clearly structured and participative sessions.

✉: accessanddiversity@scope.org.uk ■

International Day of Disabled Persons - Mauritius

Ron Newman, Chairperson of Disability Hackney, updated SPARK about his visit to Mauritius to attend International Day of Disabled Persons.

"I was warmly welcomed to the International Day of Disabled Persons in Mauritus by Hon Minister Mrs Sheliabhai Bappoo. She made it clear that her aim was to have "inclusion for people with disabilities" and Disability Hackney would be essential in achieving this.

Throughout the week I attended many high-profile events at venues largely with little or no disabled access - even in new buildings. At one Special Needs School, I was told that the children's parents have to pay for them to attend an inaccessible school using inaccessible transport.

I see this is a new opportunity for Disability Hackney to be part of a very successful partnership. I hope to have the opportunity to return during 2007 to support the Mauritius Disabled persons in obtaining their Human Rights and above all to have a voice.

What shocked me on my arrival was that very young children have to use standard adult wheelchairs. There is also an urgent need for educational toys. Should any reader be connected to these bodies and can donate, please contact Disability Hackney.

Disability Hackney
☎: 020 7249 7849 ■

Jamboulay Carnival Arts (above) are warming up for Carnival with dance classes for 5 to 19 year olds on Fridays, 6 - 7.30pm at Lea View Community Hall, Springfield Road. Jamboulay comes from the word Camboulay, which refers to the burning of canes during the slavery emancipation period. Jamboulay encourages self-expression through movement, dance and imagination, rooted in Carnival and all its origin.

Rubima
☎: 07958 317012
✉: waldrrub@aol.com ■

Street Drama

Young people can take part in play and dance performances on the real history of slavery, answering questions we have in our minds about the era. Every Thursday from 21 June, 5:30-7:30pm at Hoxton Hall. **Lisa**
☎: 020 7229 9030 ■

Viva Youth

Subscribe now to **Viva Youth**, a free monthly magazine for Turkish and Kurdish youth.

Viva Youth
☎: 020 7249 9983
✉: vivayouth2006@hotmail.com ■

Introducing Haggerston YIP

SPARK spoke to Claire Smith, Project Manager at Haggerston Youth Inclusion Project (YIP) about the work they are doing.

What is a YIP? Youth Inclusion Programmes are estate based projects to fight youth crime and anti-social behaviour in deprived areas. They started as pilot schemes in 2000 by the Youth Justice Board with a core group of 50 young people referred by police, social services and schools.

And the Haggerston YIP? We're a mobile not an estate based YIP, 30 young people are from Haggerston, and others from Hoxton and Holly Street. We began in 2004 and funded by the police for two years. I joined a year later to wind it up or find more funding. We are employed by Crime Concern, a national charity. I spent the first six months building relationships locally and with partners - the project was in decline because word was out it was ending.

Where's your funding from now? £15,000 from Metropolitan Police and £84,000 from Youth Justice Board. Plus money from the Henry Smith and Jack Petchey charities and Hackney's Positive Activities for Young People (PAYP).

What's on at Haggerston YIP

Mon, Wed, Fri @ Haggerston Community Centre: Youth club, one to one support and help into education or employment.

Tue, Fri @ Haggerston Park: Football

Who are the core group? Young people 'at risk' of being excluded from school. They're not all offenders; it's preventative not rehabilitative. Forty are in the core group, ten of the original 50 weren't interested.

What is your target? To reduce offending and truancy by a third.

What are your successes? I'm really proud of the girls group – it feels positive. We respond to what they ask for: smoothie making sessions, talking about substance misuse - particularly alcohol, making valentines cards and salsa lessons.
One of our young people was in a Holly Street gang. He chose to work with one of our staff and got full time work.

We had a football match against Deutsche Bank, Linklaters and UBS. It was good for the boys to meet people working in the City. We won but it was an eye opener for both sides.

Are you open to all young people? Yes, we work with an identified core group and get referrals from young people themselves who can bring their friends.

Are you rewarding bad behaviour? We offer support not rewards. We had one girl who self-identified, now she's back at school. There's no reward, she's just back at school. ■

Tue @ Kingsland Road office:
Young women's group
All sessions run from 5 – 8pm

Haggerston YIP
First Floor, 344 Kingsland Road, London E8 4DA
☎: 020 7241 6857
✉: claire.smith@crimeconcern.org.uk

Gun, gang and knife crime: Will we now all collectively take the problem seriously?

SPARK hears from Gary Francis, (left) Director, Strategic Unit Priorities at HCVS.

With the number of murders due to knife crime exploding across London, we have seen column inches by the thousand with everyone waxing lyrical about the dangers of knife and gun crime, but what are we actually doing to tackle it? Young people have been written into every conceivable action plan created in the last year, but very little money goes directly to them.

Maybe the 'get tough' lobby will prevail, so we can all say it's a police and courts issue? The continued advent of CCTV, ASBOs, parenting orders and the like, merely stigmatise, then criminalise our young people. Not the kind of graduation they had in mind when they started school. Should I quote, or misquote, former Director General of the National Offender Management System Martin Narey, who once said: 'today's excluded child is tomorrow's inmate'.

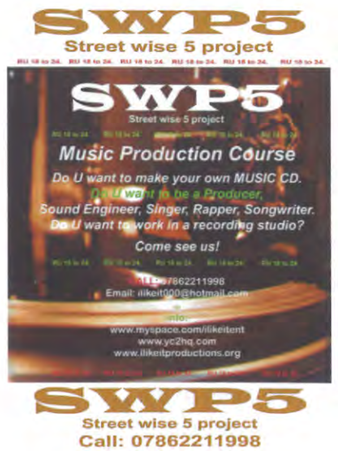
We cannot even begin to solve the problem if half of us dedicated professionals are terrified of going anywhere near young people or even talking to them because we are so afraid of what they might do - never mind say to us. It's time we proffered honesty and not endless promises of action that result in a steering group, an action plan and a painful commissioning or grant giving process. which ends up so rigid it bypasses the point in the first place.

What should we do? First, let's give those young people a name - they, are mainly young Black men and their supporters, let's start here. They are often indifferent and violent because if the world doesn't care about them, why should they care about it, themselves or anyone else. If you've been stripped of your rights, dignity and optimism, one tends to create your own lethal form of it.

Why don't we launch exercises which talk directly to young people? If we do it for parking and recycling for the adult, council tax paying population, then why not for one in five who will be the leaders of tomorrow. Should we be canny enough to realise that's what they will become, legally or otherwise - that choice is ours. To talk to them, let's not stick notices in newspapers which none of them read, but go to the streets where they live. Use young people to talk to other young people. Let's talk to them through pirate radio, illegal maybe, but the Met's Operation Trident take a different view.

What next? Listen to young people who want their issues taken seriously. We do what they say, rather than find the obligatory reasons for why it can't be done. Value for money should not be a reason to shut up shop - not when it costs £1m or so to investigate a murder to conclusion. It means an assault on gang culture; a huge injection of money into education, targeted help with employment, which will need innovation to get around the laws prohibiting positive discrimination (no, not a radical suggestion!). A sustained and sensible approach to policing to reduce community paranoia and increase resilience. All of this needs to be over years and not in the lifetime of a single grant programme as usual. It's a war to reclaim our young people from those streets filled with despair and anger, isn't that worth it?

ⓘ This is your opportunity to comment on issues in Hackney, the VCS, etc.
✉: **gillian@hcvs.org.uk** ■



Strengthening a voice for Hackney parents

Kristine Wellington, HCVS' Children & Families Development Officer (left) shares her work on Hackney Parents Voice Forum with SPARK.

Hackney Parents Voice Forum is funded by London Borough of Hackney to increase the range of parents' views that are considered when planning policies and initiatives that benefit children and young people.

Every Parent Matters

Over the past year, we have met and talked in depth to parents and voluntary and community organisations (VCOs) that support them to find out what their needs, issues and concerns are. We held two Every Parent Matters seminars, which bought together VCOs working on parenting issues. A key message was that we need more co-ordinated parenting courses and less duplication.

We discovered that:
- Parents want to be involved when Hackney Council makes plans about key topics
- VCOs want to form partnerships to put in joint funding bids on projects
- VCOs and parents don't know who does what or where to refer people to for advice and support.

Parents Support Directory

We need to identify VCOs working with children and young people as well as information and support services. We are in contact with 59 active VCOs and know that there are a range of parent support services.

ⓘ If you are interested in being in our directory or you want to know more about our work, contact Kristine at HCVS
✉: **kristine@hcvs.org.uk**

Team Hackney have invited VCOs to tender to provide year long young people's activities - see page 22.

Fun and Games - Every Parent Matters Seminar March 07

Issues for Hackney Parents:

- Lack of **play** space and the importance of quality family play
- Organised **family fun** events to bring communities together
- Low income parents and those who don't speak English feel **isolated** despite local parent support.
- Lack of choice on **education**, how to navigate the school system and the relationship between parents and teachers amongst parents who do and do not speak English.
- The impact from domestic violence on children's emotional well being is a growing concern amongst BME, Refugee and African communities

Plus **Teenage drugs, Healthy eating, the value of money.**

Hackney's teeth trolls

Karius & Baktus is an oral hygiene and healthy eating play for children aged 4 to 8, performed by Little Troll Productions. Little Troll began in July 2005 to make educational theatre for children.
Karius and Baktus or caries and bacteria is an Scandinavian children's tale of two naughty teeth trolls that live inside a tooth cavity in the mouth of a little boy called Jack. It's showing for the first time in the UK thanks to HCVS funding from Local Network Fund (LNF) and Community Investment Programme. Little Troll is endorsed by the British Dental Health Foundation, part of Healthy Activities & Practices with the Preschool Years in Hackney and the Healthy Eating Schools Scheme government campaign. It's a huge success in primary schools and nurseries in Hackney, the NHS in Newham and Sure Start in Barnet. There are ten shows in May at Chats Palace funded by LNF .

ⓘ **Ragga Gudrun**
☎: **0207 254 2571**
✉: **info@littletrollproductions.com** ■

Cool Learning

This is a CD to make learning fun and appealing to primary school age kids. Nominated for best social enterprise in Hackney, the Cool Learning project is exhibiting at Hackney Museum until 16 June and will be holding workshops in June / July.

ⓘ **Owandji**
☎: **020 7502 0764**
✉: **info@coollearning.co.uk** ■

Ngozi Headley-Fulani MA Dakrobi Arts

My name is Ngozi Headley-Fulani and I am involved in a number of projects for the Bicentenary of the Abolition of the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade. In this issue of SPARK, I will be looking at related topics and invite readers to share their views and feelings. The first contribution is from John Prince, an elder from the African Caribbean community who first came to Britain in the 1950s.

I will be looking at issues that are a direct consequence of slavery and colonisation. I will do this by sharing my experiences of life in various African and Caribbean countries, in particular looking at the countries that were once colonized by the British.

I begin with Gambia, which I have visited many times, the most recent being November 2006. Whilst there can be no doubt that Gambia is a beautiful place, the first thing you notice when you arrive is that, despite so-called independence, it is still very colonial.

As we enter into the Bicentenary of the Abolition of the Slave Trade, it is unfortunate to report that very little has changed in many African countries.

I look forward to hearing your thoughts and feelings on the 2007 commemorations, contact Gillian on gillian@hcvs.org.uk
Ngozi Headley-Fulani ■

Inequality in Gambia

Many things disturbed me during my visits to Gambia. First, there is a real problem with paedophiles. No visa is required for Gambia, it's £5 to enter, they easily prey on innocent children and trusting or desperate mothers.

White Europeans still have more rights than Gambians. Indeed the army is in Serrakunda, a place popular with European tourists. Gambians are rarely allowed out in areas where whites frequent, unless they are working. If a tourist complained to the army or police about a Gambian, the consequences are terrible. However, it is rare for a tourist to be held accountable. I did not realise how true this was until my last visit, which I will never forget. I saw paedophiles go unchallenged. A British man had been walking around freely with an African baby girl. There was no sign of her mother. When my colleague and I confronted the man, he disappeared with the child. The staff and army acknowledged that this was a problem in the Gambia. While I recommend a visit to Gambia, I urge people to speak out about the ill treatment of Africans by European tourists and ever-increasing foreign business owners. *Ngozi* ■

Where is Gambia?

A rose amongst two thorns: Ngozi with John Prescott and Tony Blair

Taking Hackney to the top

In January I attended 10 Downing Street to commemorate Abolition 2007. We were thanked for our community work and told of the government's plans to recognise and commemorate this year.

I briefly spoke with Mr Blair and asked him why he never visited the people of Hackney. He responded by asking me to write and invite him and he would be happy to. I suggested that he should have a minute silence to remember those who died in the African holocaust, but it was already too late as the speech had ended and the people were beginning to disperse. *Ngozi* ■

How can you commemorate the end of the Slave Trade?

Apply to the Awards for All programme, which has grants of £300 and £10,000 for projects to commemorate the Bicentenary. Including historical, cultural, educational or artistic and could include events, meetings and performances and educational or heritage projects exploring the slave trade and its legacy.

: www.abolition200.org.uk ■

There are no precise figures for the number of current-day slaves, but the International Labor Organisation estimate there are 8.4 million child slaves.

Bicentenary of the Abolition of the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade 1807 - 2007

On 25 March 1807, the slave trade was abolished in the British colonies. This was not the end of slavery, people could still own other human beings, but it ended the trade from Africa to the British colonies and marked an important step on the path to the total abolition of the Transatlantic Slave Trade and the liberation of those who had been enslaved.

The legacies of the Transatlantic Slave Trade reverberate today in terms of racism and discrimination, as well as the long term impact it's had in both the development and underdevelopment of communities and countries affected by the trade.

Abolition 07 Events

Tues, 15 May 6.30 -10 pm
Seeing Ourselves
Raphael Chikukwa, celebrated Zimbabwean Curator on the artists of Southern Africa.

Wed, 20 June
Pan and Kaiso History + Film
Mangrove Steel Orchestra, Tobago Crusoe, De Alberto, Anselm Sam.

ⓘ **Centerprise**
☎ : **0207 254 9632**

Perceptions

John Prince shares his thoughts on changing perceptions.

On my first day in London, I saw from my first floor window, about twenty commuters queuing at a bus-stop. What was most remarkable, was that they were all dancing. I was amazed. My perceptions of the English, never included a love for dancing. I kept my promise to my mother and promptly wrote her a letter, to inform her of my safe arrival, but I included the spicy news, that the English loved to dance so much, that they even practised while waiting for the bus. Two weeks later, when I began to work at the Lyons Corner Tea Shop, washing dishes in the kitchen (for the grand sum of £8 per week) I found myself waiting in the same bus queue. As the winter cold penetrated my clothes and attacked my bones, I began to do a jig; I too joined the English in the necessary exercise of keeping warm, while waiting in freezing weather at an open bus stop.

I had been deceived by my own perception. What a crucial word in the serious business of communication and relating in a multi-ethnic society. A month later, I was invited to a weekend party and saw close up, that the English at that time (pre Top of the Pops experience) were very poor dancers, with two left feet and with no sense of rhythm.

This problem faces communities like ours in Hackney. The many different communities which make up the wider multi-ethnic mix, have different perceptions of the same experiences which we all share. It is the bigger problem which blocks communication, even when we overtly try to be effective at doing it. We think that we are understood, but we're not. Some years ago one of my more successful students, who happened to be Turkish Cypriot and sixteen years old, saw a glossy magazine sent me by my mother, which graphically portrayed and illustrated the attractions of Antigua, my country of origin, that tourist tropical paradise. She exclaimed in amazement: "Sir, I did not know that you came from a country with beautiful houses and streets and towns. I thought that you all lived in trees in your country. That's what I've always heard."

I was her very well respected teacher who dealt with all her problems and to whom she turned for help at several levels. I learned that we in this very ethnically mixed society, must work at getting to know each other better; to talk and communicate with mutual respect and to remember that your perception is not the only one; most of all to accept that yours could be mistaken. ■

community empowerment network

Fresh Start for HCEN

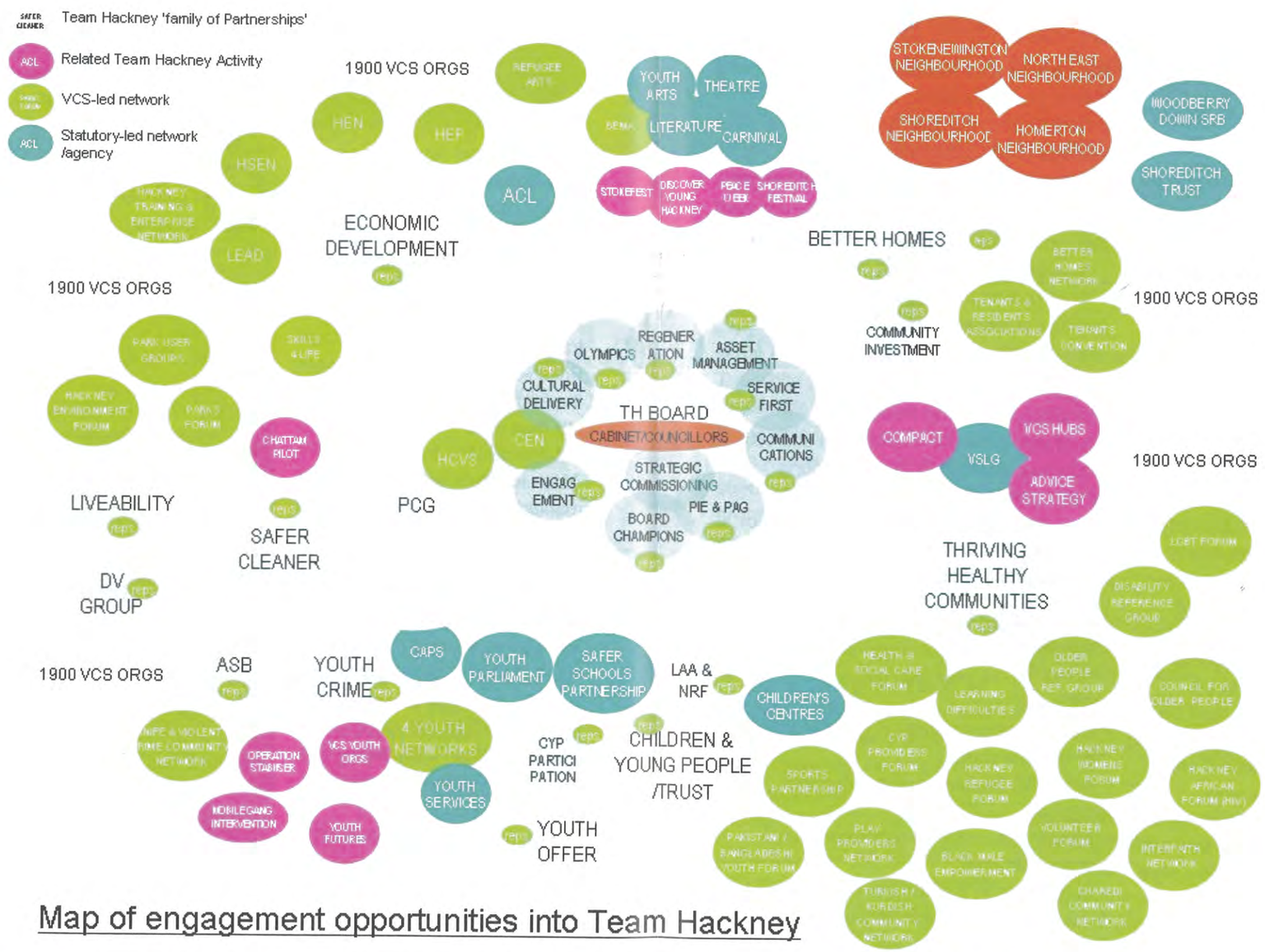
Welcome to the Hackney Community Empowerment Network (CEN) Update. SPARK focuses on how CEN is promoting and supporting the voluntary and community sector (VCS) to take part in Team Hackney.

Making Hackney a better place

CEN is co-coordinating the selection process for the VCS to be represented on Team Hackney. The diagram on the right shows Hackney's VCS networks and how they relate to public sector bodies and Team Hackney.

Team Hackney has been set up to bring together all the major public sector agencies, local businesses and VCS organisations to make the Borough a better place to live, work, study, visit and do business. The aim is to ensure that everyone involved in promoting the social, economic and environmental well being of Hackney is able to work together in a co-ordinated way to improve the quality of life. Team Hackney is directed by a partnership board and five thematic partnership boards and several specialist sub-groups.

CEN recently opened elections for 20 VCS reps to sit on these boards. **The closing date for applications is 8 May.** If you have the drive, commitment and local community understanding to make a difference, please contact Marika Mason. ✉:**marikamason@hotmail.com**



Map of engagement opportunities into Team Hackney

Green light for LAA

The Team Hackney Local Area Agreement 2007-2010 (LAA) was signed off by the Government and came into effect on April 1 this year. It sets out the specific targets and outcomes which determine the new evidence-based strategic commissioning process, focusing on the so-called "Hackney Five": five objectives which together aim to create a ladder of opportunity which will close the gap between Hackney and other boroughs in the country. The five objectives are: tackling educational under-achievement; reducing worklessness for 18-24-year olds; increasing access to low-cost home ownership; reducing the rate of violent crime and criminal gang culture; and reducing health inequalities for children 216.778 and young people.

The five thematic partnerships within Team Hackney have identified their most urgent priorities and Team Hackney is now working closely with the CEN to find ways in which Hackney's VCS can develop commissioning proposals. To this end, the CEN is electing representatives to sit on all the thematic partnership boards, is drawing up a list of people within the VCS who can be consulted on priorities, and is working with Team Hackney to set up consultation and information sharing events. ⓘ **Strategic commissioning**
🖱: **www.teamhackney.org**

Commissioning events

Hackney CEN are hosting a series of pre commissioning events for voluntary and community sector (VCS). To introduce the LAA priorities and how commissioning will work.

The CEN was delighted to run its first event with Team Hackney on 12 March. The event focused on two priority areas for commissioning of Children and Young People's services – activities for young people and addressing teenage pregnancy. With so many grass roots groups working with young people it was no surprise that this was a packed event with over 80 organisations represented.

The event was both an opportunity to hear directly from the commissioners and for the VCS to offer their feedback, raise issues and have queries answered. The commissioners making presentations were Jane Woolley, Strategic Commissioning Manager, Team Hackney, Dara de Burca, Manager, Youth Servcices and Adrian Kelly, Hackney Teenage Pregnancy Co-ordinator.

Some of the key points raised by the VCS were about ensuring that the design of new services involves young people, is culturally sensitive, builds on what is already being delivered on the ground and uses grassroots groups as a way to reach young people. There was general agreement that there was a need to increase the youth offer and make it more consistent in terms of geographical spread, take up by different communities and at different times of the year. Addressing the needs of >>

CEN Delegates

disabled young people through developing more inclusive services was also identified as a high priority. Constructive feedback was also offered about the commissioning process. One suggestion was that there is a need to monitor whether investment intended to reach target communities did reach those communities. It was agreed that the VCS could take part in events to review impact.

A full write up is available at www.hcvs.org.uk CEN and HCVS held a funding and commissioning of Children and Young People's services event on 26 April at Queensbridge Centre. The CEN will be running more events about commissioning with Team Hackney in 2007 to ensure there is a greater two way dialogue between those making decisions about commissioning and the grassroots groups. ⓘ

To be kept informed:
✉: **gillian@hcvs.org.uk** ■

Invitation to Tender announced for activities for young people

Team Hackney with Hackney Council's Youth Service, is looking to commission a programme of constructive activities for young people delivered all year. To include street based youth work to get the 'hard to reach' young people to be engaged. As well as opportunities for young people to explore their interests; engage in informal learning opportunities as a route to returning to employment, education or training; age appropriate peer sexual health and relationship education delivered specifically to youth activity settings, to enable young people to make informed choices.

Proposals can be submitted individually or in partnership with one or more other organisations. Team Hackney will award the contracts for the programme in lots. Bidders can express interest in each of the different lots but must be aware that proposal for each lot will be evaluated and awarded separately.

Submission of Tenders due : 12 noon Friday, 11 May 2007

🖱: www.teamhackney.org ■

CEN research reveals massive loss of funding

Urban Forum research into CENs shows nearly 80% have a drop in funding since the introduction of LAAs. 83% of CENs said their ability to do outreach work had reduced and 81% said small grants to stimulate neighbourhood activity had "stopped or decreased significantly".

🖱:www.urbanforum.org.uk ■

LAA Strategic Commissioning Priorities: Children & Young People

Education: KS1 Reading
- % of pupils achieving level 2+
- % of Turkish/Kurdish/Turkish Cypriot heritage pupils achieving level 2+
- % of Caribbean heritage pupils achieving level 2+

Education: KS3 English Maths & Science
- % of pupils achieving level 5+
- % of Turkish / Kurdish / Turkish Cypriot heritage pupils achieving level 5+
- % of pupils of Caribbean heritage achieving level 5+

Activities for Young People
- % of young people receiving an accredited outcome compared to the % of young people participating in youth work
- % of young people receiving a recorded outcome compared to the % of young people participating in youth work

Teenage Pregnancy
- Rate of teenage conceptions
- No. of 11 -18 year olds getting peer led SRE
- Condom access points opened in the highest rate wards
- % of LAC registered with a condom scheme
- No. of men under 25 registered with a condom scheme
- % increase in the number of under-18 females seen by community based contraceptive / sexual health services

NEETs (Not in education, employment or training)
- % of 16-18 year old NEETs

Childhood Obesity
- % of reception and Year 6 classes sample that are overweight/obese
- % of schools meeting National Healthy Schools Standard
- % annual increase in number of schools with an approved school travel plan
- Participation of children and young people in two hours physical activity per week

White Paper - A winner for the community?

In the last SPARK, we introduced Strong and prosperous communities - The Local Government White Paper. The paper puts forward a wide range of reforms and initiatives to devolve more power to local authorities, to try to engage with local communities and in particular to find a new role for local councillors, who since the cabinet system are seen to have lost a role.

SPARK spoke to a panel of community leaders, MPs and Councillors to see if they think the White Paper really is good news for the voluntary and community sector (VCS) in Hackney. As well as Jonathan McShane about the impact on his role as Labour Councillor for Haggerston.

Local Area Agreements

What the White Paper says:

The white paper reiterates a strong role for the VCS. The formal role is through Local Area Agreements (LAAs) which streamline priorities, as well as giving partners a duty to deliver the identified priorities. Many local authorities, like Hackney, already have LAAs. There is an emphasis on community cohesion.

• LAAs to be prepared by local authorities "in consultation with citizens and communities, the private and third sectors and other local public service providers"

• The LAA "will set out around 35 priorities for improvement for an area.. these priorities will be tailored to meet the needs of each individual area"

• "Local partners – together with the local authority – will be placed under a duty to work towards the targets they agree".

Views of the panel

Andrew Boff: The white paper has some good bits - like the simplification of targets, but everything is centred around the political class. It is exciting for VCS activity and particular types of groups will have more power than they had before.

Yes, it's a partnership, but the council is in the driving seat. They OWN the area. The council should be an agency for certain administrative functions, not the landlords. This is reinforcing that role.

Les Moore: There's a raft of meetings coming up through the next months, over a wide range of topics, through which the VCS will be firstly consulted over the activities that are to be commissioned, which will be followed up by specifically convened meetings at which groups can begin to assemble partnerships and consortia who will be in a position to develop a tender to deliver services and activities that meet the Team Hackney priorities.

The CEN has invested four years of work in developing our structure and we're now one of a handful in the UK to have maintained a quality strategic and operational input into the work of Team Hackney, the LSP (Local Strategic Partnership) through the Local Area Agreement (and formerly through Neighbourhood Renewal).

Community Cohesion

Asked about the emphasis on Community Cohesion, Deputy Mayor, Jamie Carswell pointed us to the 2005 MORI survey of residents, where 83% said that Hackney was a place where people from different backgrounds got on well together.

The panel

Andrew Boff
Conservative Mayoral candidate

Meg Hillier
MP for South Hackney and Shoreditch

The move to three year grant funding

What the White Paper says:

The paper is explicit that its success is dependent on a strong VCS, and for the sector to play a strategic role, voluntary and community groups need more stability. Local authorities are recommended to move to three year funding schemes.

- From the comments we received, this is being achieved by a move away from grant funding towards commissioning. Welcomed by some, while others express concerns about the effect on small groups
- Local authorities will receive government money for three year schemes 2008 – 2011.

Views from the panel

Jamie Carswell: We're trying to move to a three year cycle for commissioning – this is sensible in terms of stability, and local authorities themselves are getting three year funding We believe in a commissioning model for larger services, as this is more transparent on both sides i.e. resources in return for the provision of services. We all have to demonstrate value for money.

Les Moore: Unfortunately, given the fast changing agenda that is presented both through national and local government I would still think that funding for the majority of the groups will be on the scale of 12 months. Groups should also expect short term extensions to contracts. Three year funding will be for strategically placed organisations.

Nargis Khan: Through the consultation process we have agreed to move towards commissioning and this has been welcomed by the VCS. The first phase will be children's and young people's services in 2007/8 and now we're consulting on moving Advice Services to commissioning for 2008/9. With the grant pot that's left, we have a strong message from the voluntary sector to move it in house[1]. We're reviewing how that will go forward and whether it is commissioned will be part of the consultations over the transfer process which we expect to happen for 2008/9.

Current Value of some of Hackney's Grants programmes

	2006/07	2007/08
Main Grants Programme	£1,854,500	£2,115,000
Small Grants Programme	£99,227	£52,364
Holiday Play Schemes	£120,000	£150,000

[1] Editors note: Hackney's Main Grants Programme is currently administered by London Councils (previously known as the ALG).

Community Management and Ownership of Assets

What the White Paper says

- The VCS is encouraged to take on the management and ownership of community assets: "such as a community centre, redundant school building, swimming pool or green space"
- Sets up funds for local authorities to refurbish buildings "to facilitate their transfer to community management or ownership"
- "Communities who wish to take over management or ownership of a local asset will be able to use the Community Call for Action to ensure that their local authority considers their request seriously".
- The government commissioned Quirk review into the transfer of public assets safely to the VCS has just announced that there are 'no substantive barriers' and that 'the benefits of asset outweigh the risks'. The recommendations will be reported in May 2007.

The panel

Mischa Borris

Green Party Councillor

Jamie Carswell

Deputy Mayor of Hackney

Hackney Old Town Hall

Views from the panel

Meg Hillier: I believe in devolving things to the most appropriate level – what is wrong with having facilities run by groups who know better their local area? And perhaps are better at recruiting locally?

For example, if you have a park with a user group who are doing good job, they could conceivably take on ownership. Or a building could be run by a community group and owned by another public body – it gives a lot of scope – look at Haggerston pool for example.

The Quirk consultation looked into how this could be done safely and where the skills and support can come from – a lot of councils are not geared up to help with this. It's a challenge for the third sector – it would take a lot of time and work.

There is unease in some areas of Hackney Council about this.

Les Moore: As Hackney becomes more of a suburb and property prices rise, it's even more important that the VCS attains an asset base because rental prices will go through the roof and we need to plan ahead. Buildings like Hackney Old Town Hall are almost too important to be left to the council to look after. The VCS can lever in investment to lease or purchase property – but this can't happen if the council want to own the land. The success of Gillett Square clearly demonstrates the added value the VCS brings when take on responsibility for managing and developing assets, and contrast that with the failure of Ocean.

The demolition of community and social fabric has gone largely unnoticed. The scale of developments needs to be smaller and local and flexible – to reflect local needs.

Mischa Borris: On transferring assets to community groups - well, it's better than selling them off to the highest bidder. But I am concerned that this seems to be part of the government's current push to get the VCS to run more public services. Hackney (the place) would cease to function if all its community groups ceased functioning, but I do think that core public services should be run by public bodies. If a Council is being responsive to its people, then it should already be working out how the asset can better serve the community... This strikes me as a kind of benign privatisation.

Jamie Carswell: If you get strong management, good governance and a business plan then there is a good case for community management of assets. Hackney has a good track record in this, like the New Kingshold Community Centre – and some less successful examples – where for example there have been allegations of groups managing community centres discriminating against other groups.

Community ownership is more complicated – if you're a small sized management committee of a voluntary organisation even owning a hall is millions of pounds. One of the good long term custodians of public assets is the local authority. We are quite good at that – keeping up the maintenance, getting the cheapest price for gas and electricity and other economies of scale.

There was a time when assets in the council weren't well maintained – in the madness of the 1990s. Since then the council has prioritised finances and is in a different position.

Dalston Theatre

The panel

Nargis Khan

Hackney Council Cabinet member, Community Services

Les Moore

Chair of Community Empowerment Network

Community Call For Action

What the White Paper says:

Community calls for action and stronger scrutiny committees are put forward as a way of re-engaging with the community on local issues and giving local councillors a stronger role in local authority decision making processes. The white paper also encourages the move to locally elected mayors, which Hackney has already made, and makes provision for the setting up of local parish government in areas where these do not exist.

- Local communities will have the ability to ask for a direct response to questions and call for action about local issues through their councillor
- "We want to strengthen the ability of local councillors to speak up for their communities and demand an answer when things go wrong
- "We believe that greater pressure from citizens and communities is essential not only to drive up service standards but also to encourage community cohesion. Healthy political parties at the local level also have an important role to play here"
- Councillors will have small budgets to deal with local priorities
- Community Calls for Action will trigger an Overview and Scrutiny Committee if the councillor is not satisfied with responses.

Views from the panel

Meg Hillier: For example, a local resident can ask how is the refuse collection working and how much does it cost? The Council will have to provide the information, and the justification. It's a chance for the community to be directly saying "What are you doing about this?" And, of course, the answer may not be what people want to hear.

Andrew Boff: The scrutiny committee process means that councillors are only involved after the decision has been made, they used to be involved in the decision making. They are bodies for asking questions, they're good at highlighting issues but have nothing to carry through with.

Les Moore: The concentration of social issues in Hackney means we could have a Community Call for Action every few days. It may not be appropriate given the issues involved. Look at the Dalston Theatre, what happened to that Community Call for Action?

Mischa Borris: The proposal to have Community Calls for Action is interesting but it's far from clear at the moment how they would work in practice. It's a grand name, but councillors - at the behest of their constituents - can already question decisions and raise issues through contact with the Executive or through casework..... A responsive Council should be aware of and responding to community concerns anyway.

Jamie Carswell: Scrutiny Committees are being given more focus and attention. Previously to bring something to attention you had to go through a deputation, this is a fast track. It's an opportunity for the voluntary and community sector to stand up and be counted, to become more visible, and there's far more focus on front line councillors.

It's a change in the national emphasis, more towards neighbourhood groups. It makes formal the role of front line councillors - for example to concentrate a meeting over two or three roads to resolve an issue. What would be different from now? If you've got good councillors, then nothing, because good councillors will be doing that anyway.

This white paper is just a distraction from the fact that councillors have been neutered. They are no longer valued in decision making. This is a sop to those who have been elected and then realise they are only there to make excuses for the short comings of the local authority,

Andrew Boff

The white paper plans to strengthen the role of councillors which some argue has been lost. SPARK spoke to Jonathan McShane (above) – Labour Councillor for Haggerston on what it's like to be a councillor.

When I started I was concerned that not understanding the processes of the council would make it difficult to do things to help people - in fact officers do the process and we concentrate on the issues.

It's very different from how I imagined. The mayor and cabinet run things and make the major decisions. You have to try to influence them and they need to take the backbenchers with them or it would be very uncomfortable. Often the best approach can be to talk informally to cabinet members and officers - it's really about knowing which battles to pick. I see a large part of my role being passing on information to residents and keeping them informed.

Much of what I do is away from the town hall. I thought much more would happen there but as a backbencher you do feel different. I feel I do most of my work in the ward.

Contact with the community

People don't come to surgeries anymore in a lot of areas. I think we have the same caseload as before, but now it comes by email and phone. Some new councillors have only seen two or three people through formal surgeries in the last year. We're experimenting with street stalls and roving surgeries to tackle the problem.

The most common issues that come up are overcrowding – people with large families in small flats – and there's often very little we can do because there aren't many large council properties - and the Shoreditch night-time economy – noise and anti-social behaviour. The population in this part of area are younger, have better access to IT and are often more confident about engaging with councillors.

Council meetings

I think Deputations are the best thing that happen at council meetings - they get people into the public gallery, they're interesting and they give you a chance to find out whats happening in other parts of the Borough. Hopefully the Community Call for Action will be a more effective version of this so they can achieve more.

Scrutiny Commissions

Technically they work well, but there is no history, and it's taking time for them to bed down and be the place where important issues are hammered out. Ideally they should be like government select committees where the ones with very independent chairs, like the transport committee, work very well. At present unless you are the chair, I think they often come quite low down on the list of a councillor's priorities.

It is an issue fitting in being a councillor with doing a full time job. Payment for councillors is controversial but it often allows people who just couldn't afford to do it financially to get involved. ■

What's the difference between the White Paper and the Sustainable Communities Bill?

1. This White Paper is government policy, the Sustainable Communities Bill is a cross-party initiative. Local Government Minister Phil Woolas promised not to block the sustainable communities bill "even if a whip had twisted my arm up my back."

2. While there is overlap, the Sustainable Communities Bill sets out to tackle "ghost town Britain", by giving rights to communities to, for example, hold referendums to decide local issues. The White Paper sets out to move power back to local authorities as community leaders, and sets up structures to encourage greater local participation

3. The Sustainable Communities Bill is further along the parliamentary process – it has passed its second reading and is in committee stage. The White Paper is a series of intentions, still in consultation.

STOP PRESS - Update

Since this article was written, Ed Miliband, Minister of the Third Sector, announced that the Big Lottery Fund will manage a new £30m programme to help VCS group own and run under-used buildings.

ⓘ More about this on page 39.

Hackney Wick looking east to the Olympics

Photography: Peter Marshall 2005

Hackney Wick has been flattened twice in the last 65 years, once by a V2 bomb in 1944 and again in '95 with the blow down of the tower blocks. Hailed as 'new Shoreditch', it's a community divided by a flyover, and about to change again as part of the 2012 Olympics site.

SPARK spoke to voluntary and community groups in Hackney Wick about the area and what the Olympics and funding like REAP could bring.

Terry Stewart, Centre Manager
Hackney Wick Community Centre

What's the history of the building?
It was a slipper baths and a laundry. By the 1990s it was dilapidated and, as part of the Trowbridge regeneration, was turned into a community centre, which has now been going for three years. Initially it was for Trowbridge but now we reach a wider community.

What happens at the community centre?
We have healthier living classes, yoga, tai chi, karate, basketball and football. UXL are based here and the Academy of Sport East London. The venue's used for weddings, christenings etc - tonight we have an all women's party from the Turkish community. There's no youth centre in this area – but there is a mobile youth service which helps alleviate some problems.

Initially we had a problem with one group feeling they owned building, but we stomped on that, by offering a well disciplined, well run centre for young people – and they seemed to welcome that.

What's Hackney Wick like?
It's the new Shoreditch – there are studios for young people working in music and the arts. Hackney Wick's always been at the end of the line, like the poor cousin; it used to look to central Hackney, but is now looking east to the Olympics – now it's coming we have to make the best of it. It won't give us anything, but there will be the opportunity to do stuff locally – there'll be some money around and we'll use it to the best of our ability. Hackney Wick's been blighted for years, but it's changing.

How is the centre funded?
Here we are providing services for the community and we're being charged for it. We should be on minimum or minus rent and Hackney Council should be maintaining the building, given that we are providing services to the community that traditionally and primarily were provided by the council. It would be nice to see a much closer working relationship – though we have started talking to the youth service who are putting 18 hours into youth work here.

The Recreation and Environment Action Programmes (REAP) money should open up a lot of space for young people and for community as a whole. If we get our money it means we can carry on our services late into the evening and make them safer. We're part of a number of joint bids, one is for "Wick Green" – the green space opposite church. We'll have a whole series of events involving local artists, theatre, drama and exhibitions engaging the community and knitting together the community – it's their space, it's the village green.

> People think this is a waste land; it might seem cut off but there is a real community here and there are things happening – the only thing missing is a local pub.

Anything else?
Community development ideas haven't changed much. It's still about empowering the community around what they want, not what someone says they should have.

People think this is a waste land; it might seem cut off but there is a real community here and there are things happening – the only thing missing is a local pub. ⓘ See page 33 >>

Where is Hackney Wick?

> Let's be ready for the Olympics: it's something for this area and a chance to give people a better future.

Abdul Dumbuya, Director
Samuel Thomas, IT Trainer

UXL Centre

What is UXL?
It was set up in 1993 by Hackney Council Economic Development Unit to give basic skills and personal development training to help people into employment. Now we are a charity offering training for 800 students a year based at Hackney Wick Community Centre.

What courses do you provide?
IT, Music, Sound engineering, English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) and literacy. IT is our main area, we run beginners to specialised courses for technicians and engineers.

Do you track the students?
Sometimes, but it's based on funding requirements. For example, from a class of 14 in specialised IT, eight got well paid jobs.

Who funds you?
We have European Structural Fund money through Learning and Skills Council and London Development Agency, and the Learning Trust, Hackney Community College and Tower Hamlets College. In the past we've had funds from Big Lottery, Renaisi and Neighbourhood Renewal Fund.

How many staff are there?
18, but 13 of them are full time.

Is this your only site?
We have a branch in Brooksby's Walk which started last year and we're looking at running courses in other community centres, like Kings Hall.

Why is UXL successful?
We are providing training that equips people for jobs – and we listen to feedback from students and try to improve on the service. Most of our students are referred from previous students. Our waiting list is so long for courses which we can't deliver because we don't have funding.

What about the Olympics?
Let's be ready for the Olympics: it's something for this area and a chance to give people a better future. It should be an opportunity for people to take part in regeneration or get employment.

If local people are not engaged and other people are involved, it will create a tension – so we need programmes that include them. We are working with Youth for Hackney to get young people into sport and education. Some days there will be sporting activities and others, employment training courses, so they have something to fall back on. Also the Olympic Media Centre will be here, our courses could feed people into that. >>

ⓘ For more information:

UXL Centre
80 Eastway, London E9 5JH
☎: 020 8533 6555
✉: info@uxl.org.uk
🖱: www.uxl.org.uk

Roots of Hackney Wick

1800s: Factory life

Hackney Wick grew from a hamlet to a dense Victorian slum as factories came, being close to the city and the River Lea for transport and to dump waste. There were many industries: rubber, dye, iron and chocolate. In 1879 The Times described it as: "a district of 6,000 people who had sunk to the lowest depths". Soon after, St Mary's of Eton mission church, was built.

1960s: The Points

Industrialism continued well into the 1900s. Unlike the rest of Hackney it took place in purpose built factories not converted houses. Slum clearance was slow in Hackney Wick in the 30s but real changes came in World War 2. Priest of St Mary's, Alan Piggot:

"In 1944, a V2 bomb landed to the east of the church flattening the area. It was wasteland and covered in prefab housing 'til the 60s when four great tower blocks called "The Points" were built. The church had sold the vicarage for flats, so the vicar moved to the 17th floor."

...it's changed a lot over the years as the neighbourhood has changed. The lady who runs [the playgroup] has asked if she can set up a Madrassa in the hall, and we've agreed – all our congregation are in favour.

Alan Piggot, Priest-in-Charge
St Mary's of Eton

Why the Eton connection?
After a 19th century bishop preached altruism to boys at Eton College, they decided to establish a mission church in England. Hackney Wick was chosen as it was isolated, filthy and poor. The first priest, an Eton man called William Carter, started from scratch and within 12 years he had built this church.

It was developed as a Trust by Eton until 1964, when funding was commuted into a capital endowment as they were wary of being seen as paternalistic. They are still patrons – I was interviewed by the Vice Provost of Eton and the archdeacon. We'd like to work more with Eton creatively. For example we both have the Olympics as the rowing is happening at Eton Dorney.

What opportunities will the REAP funding bring?
We're seeing it as a challenge. There's the community centre which is a big place struggling to make an impact locally, the social services learning support unit is underused, there's the disused youth club at school which will be the children's centre and Eastway studios. There's places where things can happen, but generally they don't.

The REAP Bid is an opportunity for people to come together, talk and explore –we'd like to have a summer cultural festival.

What is the church project?
It's a development using capital funding from selling the building next door. We'd need to raise half a million pounds ourselves. The project will support itself and the church as well as a café, artist's studios, the church hall for playgroup – and some of our existing work like the Hackney winter night shelter.

We'll be able to offer the community art and heritage as well as the use of the building. At the moment people come in the courtyard and say "Are we allowed in here?" We want to make the building sparkling. It's a Bodley church completely messed around in 1958. We like the idea of having artist's studios here to bring a living presence – we'll be able to have community art projects and house some artwork in the church.

The playgroup is thriving – it's changed a lot over the years as the neighbourhood has changed. The lady who runs it has asked if she can set up a Madrassa in the hall, and we've agreed – all our congregation are in favour. >>

St Mary's at Eton

Georgina Nicholas, Chair
Hackney Wick Community Association

What's Hackney Wick like?
The main problem is that it's geographically divided – there's Trowbridge, then a stretch of abandoned land caused by the flyover before you hit Kenworthy Road and Mabley Street. People on our side aren't aware of what the community centre does – it wouldn't cross their minds to go there.

In terms of social dynamics it's changed a lot. I've lived here since 1986 and saw the blow downs. A lot of older people have moved into low-rise and there's been an influx of new young families. A lot of African families have moved here because it's handy for the Kingsway International Christian Centre (KICC) church. The same as why a lot of Irish people came here earlier because of the big Catholic church in Kenworthy Road.

What do people think of the Olympics coming?
It's controversial, with the allotments – the significant green element here are convinced that they won't return marshes to the original state - and the Travellers issue.

On the other hand there's the development of derelict sites, house prices and jobs for local people. But I think we're in for four or five years of hell in the build up and until it's over because of all the infrastructure building.

A service for the community, decided by the community and controlled by the community.

What will the funding bring?
The centre has small boat – a trent cruiser – we're hoping to run a project with young people to refit and use the boat. Hackney children don't use the water despite being surrounded by miles of canal.

What do you hope for the HWCA?
A service for the community, decided by the community and controlled by the community. We're gradually building to be self sufficient, some things are run by large organisations. But Terry's on a six months rolling contract and we're dependent on him raising the funds. ■

ⓘFor more information:

St Mary's of Eton
Eastway, London E9 5JA
☎: 020 8525 2667
✉: dave_sb1@btinternet.com
🖱: www.stmaryofeton.freeuk.com

Hackney Wick Community Association
The Old Baths 80 Eastway, London, E95JH
☎: 020 8986 1999
✉: h.w.c.a@btconnect.com

Find out more about the Olympics at a Wick 2012 Community Meeting...
Contact Hannah Loizos, Room 135, Hackney Town Hall, Mare Street E8 1EA
☎: 020 8356 3126
✉: olympics@hackney.gov.uk

Roots of Hackney Wick

1990s: Blowdown

Colin continues: "In 1990s the blocks were blown up and Trowbridge estate was created – a bungalow development for the over 55s who had lived in the tower blocks. It was followed by other estates, Buxhall, Leabank, Wick. Very different communities moved in, mixed and very young; many people starting out who often don't put down roots".

Site for Olympic Media Centre

Hackney Wick is one of two wards in Hackney to be part of the Olympic zone, and will house the media centre – which it's planned to turn into business units as part of the legacy. Plus, a multi-storey car park and indoor arenas.

Hackney has £1m from the London Development Agency (LDA) to spend on improving open, green spaces as well as sport and leisure activities in Wick and King's Park wards, which it is offering through a scheme called REAP to organisations in the Hackney Wick and King's Park area.

Training & Development

HCVS - A model of good practice

A key funder's report hailed HCVS' approach to developing voluntary and community organisations (VCOs) as a model of good practice. The report by City Parochial Foundation praised the work of our very own Kishore Kanani, (above) HCVS Senior Development Officer. Kishore was described as 'fantastic, supportive and very focussed' in helping groups sort out the what was needed to achieve their goals.

HCVS training was rated the best - due to our local knowledge and because we are 'more approachable than other organisations. Over the last three month, VCOs attended over 60 Fit for Purpose training courses run by HCVS, Hackney Voluntary Action, Hackney Training & Employment Network and Hackney Marsh Partnership. Brilliant news. If everyone takes what they have learnt back to their organisations - Hackney's VCOs will be well on the way to being fit for the purpose of meeting commissioning requirements and taking part in delivering services in Hackney. See page 25 for more about the future VCS role in Hackney.

ⓘ **Fit for Purpose training**
: **www.hcvs.org.uk** ■

Join us on a journey and get fit in six weeks

This was the challenge by HCVS set to a select few voluntary and community organisations (VCOs). Out of 30 VCOs invited to join Journey to Success (J2S), an intensive pilot training programme, eight recently graduated. J2S takes an unique approach to getting VCOs fit to meet the demands of the commissioning process. We combined our training with direct one-to-one support to really use what they have learnt and make a difference to their organisation. To achieve the goals set, people had to attend a minimum of five training courses, and work in their own time to complete a business plan, a funding application, PQASSO Level 1 and a marketing profile. All of this in just six weeks.

Olus Awobowale, a J2S recruit from Family Concern said: "You guys are doing a great job! I always want those who invest such quality time in me to be fulfilled that they've done something worth their efforts by seeing some good results in me."

ⓘ **Watch out for the next SPARK or check out www.hcvs.org.uk to see who made it!** ■

Travelling light on J2S - One group's PQASSO work!

Want more funding? – Free Fit for Purpose training

ⓘ To book, contact HCVS:
☎: 020 7923 1962
✉: gillian@hcvs.org.uk

PQASSO Awareness:
- Thurs, 10 May, 10am – 2pm
- Tues, 19 June, 10am – 2pm

PQASSO, the Practical Quality Assurance System for Small Organisations is the quality mark for the sector. Find out about how to make your organisation a quality one and improve your chances of funding and tendering for local services. This is a one day course.

Outcomes for Monitoring & Evaluation:
- Wed, 16 May and Wed, 13 June 10 – 4.30pm
- Wed, 27 June, and Wed, 11 July 10 – 4.30pm

After you have received an award or grant, you must submit a report detailing how you have met your planned outcomes. This is an important part of the funding process and knowing how to report well is important for getting future support for your organisation. There are two day courses, you must attend both days.

Ready Steady Go
- Thurs, 24 May and Thurs 7 June, 10.30 – 1.30pm

Get your organisation off to the right start as this two day course returns to HCVS. If you want advice on how to set it up your organisation, sign up now.

Venue for all training: HCVS, 82 Springfield House, 5 Tyssen Street, London E2 8LY.

DOC: developing organisations' capacity

issue 5 - Quality Assurance

KISHORE SAYS: "Why compromise on quality and ruin your chances of funding and tendering success ."

Quality organisations are self-critical and honest, learning-focused and open to change, and driven by continual improvement. They want to offer the best service they can, and want to run themselves in a professional and competent way.

In this issue of *DOC*, HCVS' Kishore Kanani and Kristine Wellington look at available quality systems and how you get help deciding which to use.

Which quality system do I choose?
To become and remain a quality organisation, you may need to set up some internal systems and processes. You can do this yourself, but there are also a number of well-known standards and frameworks that can guide you. In the table below you can see at a glance which approach may be right for you.

Quality systems - At a glance

Type of Quality Standard	Size of organisation	Cost	Demand on staff time	Complexity	Main Focus?
PQASSO	All	Low	Medium	Low	General
Investors in People	All	Medium	Medium	Medium	HR
EFQM Excellence Model	All	Medium	High	Flexible	General
ISO 9000	All	Medium	High	High	Process
Social auditing	All	Medium	Medium	Flexible	General
Quality Mark	All	Low	High	Medium	General
Charter Mark	All	High	Medium	Flexible	Customers
Quality First	Small	Low	Medium	Low	General
Investing in Volunteers	All	Medium	HIgh	Medium	Volunteers

Quality systems - In more depth

Investors in People focuses on the development of staff, trustees and volunteers, linked to an organisation's aims and objectives. Once you feel you meet all 10 indicators of good practice apply to be certificated by external assessors. : **www.investorsinpeople.co.uk**

Quality First was designed by Birmingham Council for Voluntary Service for organisations with no paid staff. You get a workbook that helps you carry out a self-assessment in nine quality areas.
: **www.bvsc.org**

Quality Mark is for organisations providing legal information and advice to the public. There are four levels. Once you think you meet the requirements of the chosen level, you apply for free certification. : **www.legalservices.gov.uk**

Social auditing helps organisations to assess and demonstrate their social, economic and environmental impact. : **www.socialauditnetwork.org.uk**

DOC: developing organisations' capacity

issue 5 - Quality Assurance

The Experts' Choice - PQASSO

The Practical Quality Assurance System for Small Organisations (PQASSO) was designed by Charities Evaluation Services (CES) with small to medium-sized voluntary and community organisations (VCOs) in mind.

It is a self-assessment tool adaptable to organisations of varying types and sizes. Designed as a work pack, it has 12 quality areas covering all aspects of what you do. There is no cost other than buying the workbook. An external certification service is being developed.

Why should you have it?
Every sector has industry standards; PQASSO is viewed by some as the voluntary and community sector's 'industry standard. Developed in 1997, PQASSO is now in its second edition, with a third planned and over 11,000 copies have been purchased.

PQASSO offers a rigorous yet flexible approach to continuous improvement allowing organisations to work at their own pace and at a level appropriate to their developmental stage.

PQASSO and commissioning
Commissioning and the words "Value for money" are often said in the same sentence. At HCVS, we've noticed that those completing the tender document were asked more searching questions about their internal systems, policies and procedures underpinning their work, than details about the intended activity. This highlights the fact that more value is placed on your internal quality control processes.

In some regional authorities, tender applicants have already been asked to fully achieve level one and sometimes level two PQASSO as a requirement for Local Area Agreement bids. A PQASSO framework will help you complete the pre- qualification questionnaire. >>

KRISTINE SAYS:
PQASSO is seen by many funders as the VCS 'industry standard'.

For commissioning, more value is placed on your internal quality control processes, than details about the intended activity

Quality systems - In more depth

The EFQM Excellence Model provides a framework for self-assessment and continuous improvement for all aspects of work. It has nine criteria covering both what you do and what you achieve. There is no cost other than buying the booklet. **www.quality-foundation.co.uk**

ISO 9000 helps organisations achieve user satisfaction by focusing on how things are done. With five sections that describe how to manage processes well. **www.iso.ch**

The Charter Mark is for organisations dealing with the public, including voluntary organisations that receive funding from the public sector. It is designed to help organisations improve their customer service and delivery to users. There are six criteria that describe how to do this. **www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk**

Investing in Volunteers is the quality standard for organisations with volunteers. **www.iiv.org.uk**

DOC: developing organisations' capacity

issue 5 - Quality Assurance

Putting PQASSO in to practice and becoming a quality organisation

What is Hackney CVS role in supporting groups?
HCVS recognises the importance of VCO's achieving PQASSO so they can take part in commissioning and win money to provide key local services. As well as being a nationally recognised self- assessment based quality assurance programme, PQASSO uncovers obvious areas for steady improvement. Once you have registered with the HCVS Development Team, we build this into your organisations' learning plan. You get assistance to look inwardly and gain a higher degree of confidence to manage your programmes.

How much does PQASSO cost and what is best to use?
Most of our groups are using the PQASSO 2nd Edition work pack it's £80.50. There is also a PQASSO CD-ROM at £49.50, we anticipate the first reviews taking place in the first quarter of 2008. Or send off for the demonstration CD Rom for 70p. ⓘ **To purchase or find out more about PQASSO:**
www.ces-vol.org.uk

Buddy Support System
The road to developing quality can be lonely for those without a working group. So some organisations have adopted buddy support approach, to work through priority areas for improvement. If you are interested in good sample documents and templates we have a PQASSO menu of relevant web site links, visit www.hcvs.org.uk The HCVS development team: Zarah, Cliff, Kishore and Kristine offer a PQASSO health check service - see below for more information.

Quality and external accreditation
Whilst PQASSO is valued as a self assessment tool, growing attention has been paid to the need for VCO's to be able to externally demonstrate that the PQASSO level has been achieved convincingly to service users, funders and local commissioners. Over the last two years, CES conducted a consultation and have secured funds to address the need for an externally assessed **PQASSO Quality Mark** for the VCS based on recognised standards.

Peer review approach is due to start in April 2008 and will involve training a pool of peer reviewers from a range of VCOs. Reviewers will come from a range of operational and practitioner job roles, and generally come from organisations with an interest in gaining Quality Mark certification through the service.

ⓘ **If you are interested in becoming a Hackney Peer Reviewer**
✉: **kristine@hcvs.org.uk**

For info on PQASSO and training call HCVS Development Team on 020 7923 1962 or email:

Kristine Wellington
✉: kristine@hcvs.org.uk

Clifford Hinkson
✉: clifford@hcvs.org.uk

Kishore Kanani
✉: kishore@hcvs.org.uk

Zarah Mohoboob
✉: zarah@hcvs.org.uk

HCVS PQASSO Training:

Thursday, 10 May
10am - 2pm

Tuesday, 19 June
10am - 2pm

ⓘ See page 34.

Hackney City Farm gets the People's vote

The People's Millions, run by the Big Lottery, are given to projects winning the most votes from ITV viewers. In November 2006, Hackney City Farm won nearly £50,000 to clean up unused wasteland in Haggerston Park and local estates. SPARK spoke to Brian Lowman, Project Manager for Back to Earth, about how the money will be spent.

Tell us about the People's Millions? We were up against the PDSA and other national charities. We didn't win but we got so many votes that they gave us the money anyway. It means we can expand a project started by Shoreditch Trust to work in local community gardens (Hoxton Trust, St Mary's Secret Garden and the Farm) and venture into the community.
We're gardening on estates – we've started working on Goldsmiths Square - we're working with Apples and Pears adventure playground to improve the site and make more interesting willow hides - and we're working with Haggerston Girls School to add interest to the play area and along the way help the girls learn about plants and herbs.

It's a pilot for the farm's social enterprise arm – landscaping, gardening, maintenance – and working with young unemployed.

City Farm also featured on ITV's Top 10 jobs? People work here because they love it. I've tried being a small cog in big machine in a bank and I didn't like it. I couldn't understand what I was supposed to be doing overall. Here I can see what we have achieved and I like working outside and you meet so many different people of all ages, abilities and backgrounds.

What are the main difficulties you face? Getting people in and retaining them. It's Hackney so we get broken into and vandalised. As we expand, there is more paperwork and more responsibility.

What is your vision? To have the social enterprise running so the farm is more secure, and not reliant on grants. Standing on our own feet with more projects like the bio diesel plant – which turns vegetable oil into diesel to run the van - and developing the farm as an environmental improvement centre with wind turbines and solar panels. With Back to Earth as a charity in its own right – running employment programmes and training.

Anything else? I'd like to say to any young person excluded from education, any young person looking to volunteer with animals in the holidays and just to anyone locally who would like to take part in gardening, to come along and see us. ■

ⓘ For more information:

Hackney City Farm
1a Goldsmiths Row
London E2 8QA
☎: 020 7729 6381
🖱: www.hackneycityfarm.co.uk

People's Millions
Run by the Big Lottery, the deadline for applications is 17 May 2007. To apply:
☎: 0845 4 10 20 30.

Mark of Quality for Deans

Deans London has been awarded The Matrix Standard Quality Mark, partly funded by HCVS. Deans London is a not-for-profit organisation offering guidance, personal development and holistic vocational training that embeds Skills for Life.

Jedidah Enoch-Onchere, Director who led the implementation of the Matrix Standard: 'Working towards the accreditation enabled us to think about how to link together aspects of Information, Advice and Guidance into a coherent 'package' for clients. We've not only improved the way we do things, but staff have an invaluable confidence which opens up more opportunities for the organisation. It's created a genuine culture of quality and an overall organizational approach to Skills for Life training. The standards will help us continue improving the quality of our service delivery and raise our credibility."

Based on Mare Street, Hackney, Deans London provides services to disadvantaged communities and in partnership with community centres and groups.

ⓘ Jedidah Enoch-Onchere
✉:jedidahon@deanslondon.co.uk ■

Elizabeth Adebola, HCVS Senior Grants Officer introduces the latest funding news.

Investing in the community s a success for Hackney

Our Grants Team at HCVS have ust finished awarding the last Community Investment Programme (CIP) small grants to he voluntary and community ector (VCS) in Hackney. In otal, over half a million was warded to 197 VCS projects. This investment has achieved the ollowing:

Funding a VCS workforce of ,463 people including 421 paid orkers

Reached 46,854 local people; his figure represents 23% of he borough's population.

More than half of the project eneficiaries (53%) were hildren and young people.

The CIP is money allocated by eam Hackney, the local artnership dedicated to mproving the quality of life for veryone in the Borough. We hanaged the fund on behalf of he Community Empowerment letwork (CEN). An independent anel assessed each application.

The story doesn't end here, we re working with local hotographer Effie Fotaki to apture the results of the CIP unding in a photographic xhibition later in 2007.

ⓘ Get funding advice call ICVS ☎:020 7923 1962. ■

Big Lottery Fund to manage £30m public buildings fund

In April, Ed Milliband, Minister for the Third Sector, announced that the Big Lottery Fund will manage the new £30m programme so VCS groups can own and run under-used public buildings.

The new Community Assets Fund (CAF) - set up by the Office of the Third Sector (OTS) in the Cabinet Office - will offer grants for refurbishment of local authority buildings, ensuring they are appropriate for community use and for transfer to third sector ownership or management. The ownership of public assets is outlined in the White Paper - see page 25 of SPARK. ■

Funding for small organisations

The Office of the Third Sector will launch an £80m fund to provide small grants to small, community-based third sector organisations. The fund will award the £80m over four years, using local distributors with relevant community knowledge to award specific grants. Futurebuilders programme: The Futurebuilders programme will expand its funding criteria to cover any area of public service delivery. Currently, third sector organisations are only eligible for funding from this programme to deliver services in just five areas (crime, community cohesion, education and learning, health and social care, support for children and young people).

ⓘ Check out:
🖱:**www.hmtreasury.gov.uk/budget/** ■

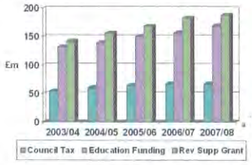
Budget for Hackney

Below are extracts from Mayor of Hackney, Jules Pipe's Consultation on the 2007-08 Budget.

Last year's budget achievements included a fourth year of delivering to budget on balances carried forward, £9.16m council tax collection surplus, 8.97% increase in cash for schools (£11.79m), £8.3m on-going capital investment, on top of £5.7m council tax collection surplus for capital, £6m real growth in spending on services, London Fields Lido opened and a continued investment in roads.

In next year's budget, Pipe promised no service cuts for the fifth consecutive year, £8.9m on-going capital investment, on top of £7.06m council tax collection surplus for capital, 7.98% increase in cash for schools (£11.18m) and £9m available for growth in service expenditure.

Priority Growth Service Areas
Money allocated for services in:
Children in Need - £238k
Youth Services - £433k,
Sport and Young People -£295k
Learning Disability - £205k
Homecare & Direct Payments - £599k
Translation services - £125k
Hackney Service Centre - £80k
Community Cohesion - £50k
Recycling - £168k
Street Wardens - £389k
🖱: **www.hackney.gov.uk** ■



Sources of funding

the funding directory

The information in this directory is produced by Grants Online and fit4funding – The Charities Information Bureau. Sign up for a regular updates on funding from Grants Online at www.grantsonline.org.uk To subscribe visit www.fit4funding.org.uk or email Andrew.Pring@fit4funding.org.uk

Lloyds TSB Foundation –funding levels The Lloyds TSB Foundation for England and Wales has announced its income for 2007 as £26.8 million (£24.8 million in 2006). The Lloyds TSB Foundations make up one of the largest grant-making trusts in the UK and support charities that help disadvantaged people to play a fuller role in the community. Their main grants programmes are designed to address essential community needs and in particular to support small underfunded charities. ⓘ **Get a copy of the guidelines from:**

🖱: www.lloydstsbfoundations.org.uk
☎: 0870 411 1223

Louise Harley, Lloyds TSB Foundation for England & Wales
☎: 020 7398 1705
✉:louise.harley@lloydstsbfoundations.org.uk

CSV Action Earth 2007provides grants of up to £50 to assist groups in carrying out environmental projects. Morrisons are sponsoring the 2007 campaign in England and Wales.

Projects must: Be practical and visual; Have an immediate or lasting benefit to the environment; Involve volunteers (new/existing); Take place between between 1 March and 31 July 2007.

ⓘ **Register your project for this year's Action Earth campaign, in three ways:**
🖱: www.actionearth.org.uk/
☎: 0121 328 7455
✉:naseem@csvenvironment.org.uk

Innovations in Mental Health NESTA, the National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts, has announced the launch of a new initiative to promote innovation in the provision of mental health services. The initiative "Innovations in Mental Health" is a partnership between NESTA and Mental Health Foundation, Mental Health Media, Mind, Rethink and the Sainsbury Centre for Mental Health.

Projects must: use new approaches in mental health, particularly in services and processes but also in new products and technologies. This call for proposals is open to frontline care organisations with experience of mental health issues and applications for funding should focus on one or more of the following areas:

- Innovative projects that are led by service-users or informed by their experience;
- Collaboration between different disciplines (across the arts, science and technology);
- Collaboration across different areas of mental health practice (including mental health professionals, frontline workers, carers and service-users);
- Innovations that respond to the needs of diverse and under-represented groups (e.g. different ages or ethnic groups).

Deadline: 15 June 2007.
🖱:www.nesta.org.uk/programmes

Irish Youth Foundation Grants Organisations in the UK that work to improve the lives of young Irish children are able to apply for funding of between £500 and £25,000 (£5,000 in Northern Ireland).

Deadline: 20 October 2007
🖱: www.iyf.org.uk

Enterprising Solutions Awards 2007 The Social Enterprise Coalition has announced the launch of the Enterprising Solutions Awards 2007. The awards are open to applications from established social enterprises that are original and dynamic. This year the Overall Winner will receive a cash prize of £10,000 and a year's free membership to the Coalition. Three other finalists and the winner of the New Social Enterprise Award will receive £5,000 each.

Deadline: Friday, 1 June 2007
🖱: www.enterprisingsolutions.org

Tenant Empowerment Programme - Right to Manage Grants Under the Housing (Right to Manage) Regulations 1994, Tenant Management Organisations (TMOs) have the right to take over the running of Local Authority housing services (such as collecting rents and service charges and organising repairs and maintenance) from the council. >>

Funding is available for prospective TMOs to undertake a series of research studies to identify the most appropriate course of actions in setting themselves up as a TMO. These studies include options studies / pre-feasibility studies; feasibility studies; and development studies. Limited funding is also available for the use of agencies to provide information and advice to tenants' groups on the various options available under the Tenant Empowerment Programme. **Applications can be made at any time.**

🖱: www.housingcorp.gov.uk/

Funding for Youth Led Media Projects Mediabox is a new fund that offers disadvantaged 13 to 19 year olds the opportunity to develop and produce creative media projects, using film, television, print, radio or online platforms. Three different types of grants to create and distribute youth-led media projects that express young people's ideas and/or views in a creative way, using their preferred media platform.

My Mediabox: £100 - £1,000

Mid Mediabox and Big Mediabox: £1,000 to £80,000.

Deadline: 22 May 2007
🖱: www.media-box.co.uk/

Njoya Foundation Grants Not for profit organisations and schools can apply for grants of between £50 and £500 through the Njoya Foundation. The aim of the Foundation is to support the academic achievements of young males of African and African-Caribbean descent aged 5 – 15 through community based personal development programmes. The Foundation was set up in memory of Christian Njoya Diawara Small, a victim of the terrorist bombings in London on 7 July 2005, is interested in funding projects teaching young people an awareness of business and finance, **Four application deadlines:** 12 May, 12 Aug, 12 Nov and 12 Feb.

🖱: www.njoyafoundation.org.uk/

Comic Relief's Red Nose Programme Comic Relief's largest grant making programme focuses on supporting community based projects that work with young people, older people, people with mental health problems, refugee and asylum seekers and tackling domestic violence and deprivation.
Deadline: 8 June 2007
Grants up to three years and between £15,000 - £40,000.

You can also apply for funding at any time through the small grants programme. Awards £5,000 for projects that support older people, tackle mental health problems and tackle deprivation.
🖱: www.comicrelief.com/ ■

Local Network Fund

The Local Network Find offers grants from £250 - £7000 to small local community / voluntary groups who want to organise or run a project or activity for disadvantaged children & young people aged up to 19 years (or 25 in the case of young people with disabilities).

ⓘ If you have a great idea for a project or activity:
☎: 0845 113 0161
🖱: www.hcvs.org.uk ■

Funding resources

FUNDERFINDER You can book time to view FUNDER FINDER at HCVS, please call Jennifer Rowe on 020 7923 1962 or email jennifer@hcvs.org.uk.

This computer programme assists groups to identify suitable charitable trusts they can apply to. With access to information about over 4,500 funders which make grants to charities and VCS groups.

Your search profile will be matched to funders, and it produces a list of funders which can be saved, exported and printed out. GIN gives details of where to find further information about each funder found, but doesn't provide addresses or policy guidelines - you get this information from the library reference material we have at HCVS. ■

Need a venue for your meeting?

HCVS has conference rooms you can book with PowerPoint projector and OHP for small meetings of 30 people and larger space for seating up to 50 people and, of course, refreshments for your guests.

To check availability, please contact Jennifer on 020 7923 1962 or email: jennifer@hcvs.org.uk

Growing community activists

Each issue SPARK speaks to a key voluntary and community organisation working in Hackney. Here's Joe Walker Project Manager, Community Development Project at Social Action for Health about a new project to get people more active in their neighbourhoods.

What is the Community Development Project?
Funded by City and Hackney Primary Care Trust (CHPCT) and Hackney grants programme, it promotes community engagement amongst marginalised and excluded communities on Holly Street, Clapton Park and two other estates.

We'll be talking with residents to see how they can come together around common issues, like housing benefit and the provision of services. We'll encourage existing groups and networks to share and develop information and resources, and then see how we can offer local people lasting safe spaces to meet and discuss local issues.

Why is this project needed?
There's been a barrier between Hackney Council and local residents. Regeneration didn't include local people they feel decisions were taken over their heads. Also, many refugees and asylum seekers may not know how to access services around health, benefits, and contact their local councillors.

Joe Walker

Does the project rely on volunteers?
Yes, that's how communities work - hundreds of people want to get involved. In the future we'll look at training programmes and how people can be employed as activists for their communities. They will be the agents of change – it doesn't work if you bus in consultants from outside.

What is your background?
I studied International Development and worked for Oxfam and smaller charities, mostly in Southern Africa with street children and people with HIV and Aids. International Development has been around a long time and is advanced in its practices. Community Development here can learn both from its mistakes and the good practice.

When you work in a new community you have to unlearn your ideas and go in fresh, rather than think you know what's to be done and how it needs to develop. It's a fine process of listening to people and developing relationships, it takes time.

I wanted to use my skills and experience to work where I live. I was nervous about making the leap, but we're living in an international borough with people from the countries I've worked in. Social exclusion, poverty, violence, conflict - they're here in Hackney as well as in South Africa and the Congo.

What are the issues?
I'm concerned about commissioning, where organisations compete for tenders rather than funding to provide local services. It could create a multi-tier environment where larger organisations get the work because they understand it. We want to support small groups to form consortiums which can go for that kind of funding.

Short term funding is damaging: there's no stability, isolated bits of work and uncertainty. You have good professionals who really know the issues, but they're there one minute and next they're gone.

We have targets and the expectation is that we can achieve things quickly - ask anyone working on the ground, this is unrealistic.

What would be success?
To work myself out of a job. I'm not doing this to pay the bills, I believe in social justice and working with the grass roots. There's someone in Holly Street or Clapton Park who can do my job representing the needs and viewpoints of the community.