

**Stockport's Community Development Strategy**

**Practitioners Version**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

This Community Development Strategy sets out a clear direction for Community Development in Stockport over the next ten years and gives details of how we are going to work together to realise our vision.

The Strategy outlines the partnership approach that will be adopted including all sectors of the community. This Strategy is an important element in delivering Stockport's Community Strategy and will be reviewed annually at Stockport Partnership.

This Practitioners document is one of four related documents that also include the following:

- Community Development Strategy (Summary version)
- Community Development Case Studies
- Community Development Action Plan 2005-06

We would like to acknowledge the support given to us by Gabriel Chanan from the Community Development Foundation, in the final stages of preparing this Strategy.

We welcome feedback and partnership working on the Strategy and a list of contacts is given on page 7.

**Stockport Community Development Strategic Managers Group**

**August 2006**

# PRACTITIONERS VERSION - EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## 1. Context

The Community Development Strategy outlines the history of community development in Stockport. The Strategy outlines key national, regional and local drivers including the Audit Commission's Best Value Inspection in 2003 and Stockport Partnership's Community Strategy. The Case Studies include many examples of community development, which demonstrate its value both to communities, agencies and elected representatives.

## 2. Stockport's active communities

The examples of community development in Stockport reveal active and engaged individuals and community members, willing to offer their time, resources and energy to build a better quality of life for themselves, their families, their neighbourhoods and their children.

## 3 Stockport Partnership's approach to taking forward community development

Stockport Borough has a long standing and unique partnership between the Primary Care Trust and the Council to support and develop local communities and communities of identity. Over the last decade, community development approaches have been adopted by many agencies in Stockport. In 2005, the Community Development Strategy was adopted by Stockport Local Strategic Partnership as a framework for the whole of the Borough.<sup>1</sup> This Strategy creates a strong infrastructure to take forward community development between the voluntary and community sectors, agencies and elected representatives.

## 4. Three different strands of community development

The Community Development strategy defines community development work and outlines three strands of community development.

- a **Primary or generic community development**, also called building social capital
- b **Purposive community development**, the use of a community development approaches in the delivery of conventional services.
- c **Community development to involve and engage communities** in service monitoring, local democratic structures and governance

## 5. Importance of Primary community development

The Strategy explains the importance of primary community development in creating informal social networks in communities. Primary community development is therefore of great value to individuals, communities and agencies. Historically, agencies have tended to prioritise purposive work because it has been more closely aligned with short-term agency targets but there is an increasing awareness of the longer term importance of enabling communities to initiate their own responses to their needs through primary community development.

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<sup>1</sup> Further details about the membership of the Local Strategic Partnership in Stockport are available at [www.stockport.gov.uk](http://www.stockport.gov.uk), Related Links, Stockport Partnership

## **6. Key role of community development for communities, agencies and elected representatives**

The Strategy outlines how community development can help communities to, for example, have better mental health and lower crime rates, help agencies improve their service delivery to their customers and encourage participation in local governance. A community with good informal social networks is more able to play its part in tackling its own problems constructively.

## **7. The value of the community and voluntary sector**

The Strategy outlines the key role played by the voluntary and community sector and how the sector can be strengthened. The Strategy outlines how some parts of the voluntary and community sector are providing services themselves and how this work can be supported.

## **8. Community Development skills help achieve diversity, social inclusion and community cohesion**

The Community Strategy for Stockport identifies these three themes as highly important in achieving a better quality of life. Community Development, through its work with individuals and groups can help to overcome social exclusion for individuals and communities of interest. Community Development workers can help groups and communities explore challenging issues around community cohesion and come to celebrate diversity.

## **9. Community Development contributes to the achievement of a wide range of cross cutting themes**

The Strategy outlines how Community Development plays an important part in achieving the objectives of many important cross cutting themes in the Community Strategy, such as Community Safety, Neighbourhood Renewal, Public Health, Community Learning, Environmental Health, the Cultural Strategy and work with young people.

## **10. Improving Performance Management and Quality to achieve better quality of life for communities**

The Strategy outlines clearly how quality will be achieved in community development through delivering learning programmes based around accredited training for individual workers, managers and community members. The Strategy offers a performance management regime available for all agencies to use.

## **11. Outcomes of the strategy**

The outcomes linked to the community development strategy benefit individuals, community groups, the organised community and voluntary sector, local agencies and local democratic structures. The key outcomes to be achieved are listed below:

## **Communities are flourishing, trust is widespread and diversity is celebrated**

### **OUTCOMES:**

- 1) more networks and improved self esteem in disadvantaged neighbourhoods
- 2) Better self esteem and social networks in communities of identity
- 3) Easier involvement in community development activities by disadvantaged communities
- 4) Speedier resolution of community issues wherever they are raised
- 5) Improved community cohesion in specific areas
- 6) Lower social exclusion in specific areas

## **Geographical communities and communities of identity play an active and vibrant part in service delivery and governance**

### **OUTCOMES:**

- 1) Communities recognise the impact of their feedback on services
- 2) Improved service delivery to communities by more organisations adopting a community development approach
- 3) Greater community understanding of and involvement in the Local Strategic Partnership and Local Area Agreement
- 4) A stronger voluntary and community sector network better able to support community and voluntary involvement in services and local governance
- 5) Developed capacity of groups to access support for the development of social enterprises

## **Improved quality of life in communities is achieved**

### **OUTCOMES:**

- 1) Local communities actively participating in neighbourhood renewal
- 2) Better health for communities at risk of social exclusion
- 3) Locally based learning developed in disadvantaged communities
- 4) Reduction in fear of crime through community based activities
- 5) Young people feel part of communities; adults feel young people are part of communities

## **Citizens and communities are engaged in creating a healthy and sustainable Stockport**

### **OUTCOMES:**

- 1) Improved health and reduction in health inequalities across the borough
- 2) Better access to knowledge and skills which promote healthy lifestyles
- 3) People feel empowered to address public health issues
- 4) Improved social networks for those marginalised by poor physical / mental health or disability
- 5) Easy /facilitated access to green spaces and leisure activities
- 6) Increased awareness and understanding of actions for sustainable communities

## **Community development support is delivered to the highest standards**

### **OUTCOMES**

- 1) Communities recognise improved effectiveness in the delivery of community development
- 2) Communities experience consistent high quality community development delivered in Stockport
- 3) Improved community consultation, participation and engagement

### **12. Community Development Action Plan 2005 – 6**

These outcomes are being achieved to some degree through the activity outlined in the 2005 – 6 Action Plan.

The Stockport Community Development Strategy sets out the long term generic and some issue-specific objectives, which are given both here in the Practitioners version and in the summary leaflet. The Community Development Strategic Managers Group has decided that the first Action Plan however, needs to start from a variety of points because recent research and ground level experience shows that there is currently a real momentum of community interest to address specific needs

The first Action Plan is therefore structured around twelve areas of known community unmet need, for each of which there are short term process objectives or milestones. How each of these contributes to the Community Development Strategy vision and outcomes is indicated in the Action Plan.

### **13. Community Development Action Plan 2007/8**

The 2007/8 Action Plan will continue to deliver to achieve the Community Development outcomes. Work is taking place in 2006/7 to break the headline outcomes listed above into some specific lower level outcomes which will be presented in a performance management framework with performance measures and milestones.

### **14. Further information/contacts**

To find out more about Community Development in Stockport Council, contact the Community Development Team, The Dialstone Centre, Lisburne Lane, Offerton, Stockport, SK2 7LL. Phone 0161 474 2170/2203 or email [community.devteam@stockport.gov.uk](mailto:community.devteam@stockport.gov.uk)

To find out more about Community Development in Stockport NHS Primary Care Trust, contact Public Health Nursing, The Gallery, Cherry Tree Hospital, Stockport SK2 5HR. Phone 0161 419 4840 or visit website [www.stockportimpact.org.uk](http://www.stockportimpact.org.uk)

For more information about the Voluntary and Community Sector in Stockport contact Stockport Council for Voluntary Services, Russell Morley House, 8 –16 Lower Hillgate, Stockport, SK1 1JE. Phone 0161 477 0246 or email [info@stockport.cvs.co.uk](mailto:info@stockport.cvs.co.uk)

To feedback on the Community Development Strategy, contact Stockport Council's Social Inclusion Unit (Adults & Communities Directorate), 4<sup>th</sup> Floor, Stopford House, Piccadilly, Stockport SK1 3XE. Phone 0161 474 4544 or email [social.inclusion@stockport.gov.uk](mailto:social.inclusion@stockport.gov.uk)

## **SECTION ONE:**

### **CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND**

#### **STOCKPORT PARTNERSHIP AND COMMUNITY STRATEGY**

Stockport is situated in Greater Manchester and borders the Pennine foothills and Cheshire Plains. It has a population of 284,000 and a third of the Borough is green space. Stockport has a well established voluntary and community sector and over 800 groups are registered with Stockport Council for Voluntary services.

The Stockport Partnership is the strategic partnership and brings together voluntary, community, public and private sector organizations to work co-operatively with local communities. The Stockport Partnership co-ordinates the production of the Community Strategy, a working plan designed to shape Stockport over the next 10 years.

Stockport is a Borough of extremes. Some areas fall within the 3% most deprived in the country and some within the 3% most affluent. In addition, there are small pockets of deprivation scattered across the Borough, some of these in close proximity to areas of much greater affluence, giving rise to localised conditions of polarity.

#### **STRATEGIC CONTEXT**

The Stockport Community Development Strategy has a number of key strategic drivers. Nationally the National Strategy for Neighborhood Renewal has ensured that community development has a key role in policy. The NHS Plan cites health services and local authorities as key partners in the delivery of neighbourhood renewal and reducing health inequalities. The Department of Health's response to Donald Acheson's report Tackling Health Inequalities advocates the use of a community development approach in achieving its aims. Central Government endorsed the work of the Standing Conference on Community Development, (now the Community Development Exchange) which created a strategic framework for community development. Regionally, the North West Economic Development Strategy gives community development a key role because of the emphasis on achieving urban renaissance and social inclusion in the region. Locally, the Stockport Partnership is committed to working with all sections of the community to improve the quality of life of Stockport residents and achieve the aims of the Community Strategy. The annual report of the Director of Public Health advocates a community development approach to improving the health of the people of Stockport. The *Profiling Stockport Live* database details areas of deprivation in Stockport and provides evidence both for the Community Development Strategy and the Renewal and Regeneration Strategy.<sup>2</sup> A map showing the regeneration and renewal priorities for Stockport is given in Appendix 1.

#### **HISTORY**

Stockport Borough has a unique and long-standing commitment to community development sustained over many years. Stockport Council for Voluntary Service was founded in 1933 as an umbrella organization for local community and voluntary groups. Stockport Council's Area Committees were established in the 1970s, some of the earliest of their type and aimed to bring local government closer to communities.

During the 1980s, a patch based community development team was established in Stockport Council, covering a range of disadvantaged neighbourhoods. This was closely followed by the creation of a similarly structured community development team within the Primary Care

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<sup>2</sup> For further details of this database and how to register, see <https://profilelive.stockport.gov.uk/home/>

Trust at the beginning of the 1990s. These workers were given the freedom to speak up on behalf of local communities should conflict arise with statutory bodies. Work spanned a range of issues including housing concerns and the needs of young people. Fruit and vegetable co-ops and community cafes were established in Adswold and Lancashire Hill in the mid '90s. The first of four communities based Credit Unions was established in Brinnington by local campaigners in 1989. In 1995, the Anti Poverty strategy was launched with annual updates thereafter.

1998 saw the first of the successful Black History Month celebrations supported by the Libraries service, the Youth service and the Community Development Team. A year later, local black and minority ethnic community members created Nia Kuumba, the Black People's Association. The 1999 Annual Report of the Director of Public Health outlined proposals for the development of a greener environment, linked to better public health and stressing the importance of community spirit. The Healthy Living Centre Initiative was a direct result of this work, combining community development, targeted activities and specific health outcomes in the Reddish and Brinnington areas.

During the first years of the new millennium, many local agencies have used community development approaches including the Police, Registered Social Landlords, Community Safety, Environmental Health and Regeneration. BC2000, which played a lead role in securing the SRB programme in Brinnington, became Brinnington Community First and an independent Trust in 2003. In the same year, Adswold and Bridgehall Community Network took on a pivotal role in the regeneration scheme there. In 2004, the Primary Care Trust created four new community development posts.

## **PRESENT COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COVER**

Details of the existing cover of generic community development workers provided through the Primary Care Trust and Stockport Council can be obtained through contacting the Community Development teams<sup>3</sup> and is mapped against the Renewal Priority areas and communities of interest. An exercise is currently being undertaken to map other services with community development input and also support provided by the voluntary and community sector. It is the intention of the Strategy to update and monitor the mapping as the basis for networking and improved joint working.

## **CONSULTING WITH THE COMMUNITY ON COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

Findings from a number of consultation exercises with the community have contributed to a better understanding of community needs which has in turn contributed to the development of the Community Development Strategy.

### **The first Community Development in Health Visiting Conference 1997**

The first use of community development as an approach to the delivery of health visiting objectives was introduced in Stockport in 1992. The service produced a significant impact on health outcomes in the borough within a relatively short period of time.<sup>4</sup> At a conference held in 1997 to publicize the service local people who were involved in the various health related community development projects, spoke about their experiences. They discussed, with workers from other parts of the country, ways in which the model could be developed, both locally and in other areas.

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<sup>3</sup> Contact details on page 7.

<sup>4</sup> Further information about this research can be obtained by contacting the Community Development Team at the Primary Care Trust. Details on contacting the team can be found on page 7.

## **Health needs Assessment – Homeless People 1998**

This consultation with local people who were homeless demonstrated a demand for more accessible health care and advice and led to the establishment of a new post – Health Advisor to Homeless People, based at the Wellspring Kitchen.

## **Pathways consultancy 2001/2**

Pathways Consultancy undertook an independent research study of community development on behalf of Stockport Council. The study included consultation with over fifty community groups in Stockport and identified the top ten needs of local communities:

- More community workers
- More places to meet and work
- More resources – funding, workers
  - Help in developing better relationships with the council
  - Help with funding bids
- Help with marketing
- More networking opportunities – a network of networks
- Help in recruiting more members or volunteers
- Signposting to other services
- Community Transport

The results guided the work of the Community Development teams within the Council and the Primary Care Trust. Annual reports with details of the work carried out in response to this consultation are available from the community development teams.<sup>5</sup>

## **Diversity and Partnership Conference 2001**

As part of Black History Month Celebrations 2001, a major Diversity and Partnership conference was co-ordinated by the Community Development service. The conference brought nine local and regional black and minority ethnic groups to speak to agencies, other community members, senior management and elected members about their needs and aspirations. The conference resulted in the setting up of the Black and Minority Ethnic network.

## **Mapping Exercises 2003 and 2004**

The Community Development service consulted 15 community groups, which received support from the service to ensure close working with community groups. Consultation with the voluntary and community sector as part of the Local Strategic Partnership in November

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<sup>5</sup> See page 7 for contact details

2004 identified the 'top twelve needs' of community and voluntary groups. The consultation was organised by Stockport Council for Voluntary Service, the Community Development team and the Policy Unit. These top twelve needs were built into the 2005 – 6 Community Development Action Plan.

### **Best Value Review 2002/3**

The Audit commission investigated the work of the Community Development service in 2002/3 as part of the Best Value Review Putting People First. As part of this Review, consultation was undertaken with community groups using the service. The Audit Commission judged the service to be 'good' with 'promising prospects for improvement.' The Audit Commission made a series of recommendations, including that services should: "Make full use of Quality of Life Indicators to inform how (the) outcomes for the community will be measured."

The community involvement measures in the Quality of Life indicators were subsequently tested and refined and are now cross cutting indicators in the Safer and Stronger Communities Fund and in the Local Area Agreement indicators.<sup>6</sup>

### **JOINT PARTNERSHIP WORKING AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY**

During the 1990s, close working developed between services from all sectors delivering community development. In the early 2000s this developed into new partnership working. The Community Development Focus Group, established in 2001 as a multi agency group of staff, acts as a forum for community based practitioners. The Focus Group has over 80 agencies and services on the mailing list and an average attendance of around 16. The Community Development Strategic Managers Group, established in 2002 as a strategic partnership, jointly plans and allocates resources in community development and identifies gaps in provision and reports to the Local Strategic Partnership on an annual basis.<sup>7</sup> As part of the work of these groups and arising out of the Best Value Review in 2002/3 it was agreed to develop this Strategy to guide community development in Stockport. The Stockport Partnership delivers the Community Development Strategy through the Community Development Management Group, which is responsible for monitoring community development progress and reporting to the Partnership annually. In 2005, invitations were sent to all members of the Local Strategic Partnership to ask if they wished to join the Strategic Managers Group, resulting in two additional representatives.

During 2006 the Strategic Managers Group was reviewed to improve the effectiveness of the partnership working and draw together a number of strands of work connected with community development. As a result of this review and the identified need to improve strategic working with the voluntary and community sector, a new partnership structure has been created at a strategic Borough wide level. The Community Development Strategic Managers Group will report to the Stronger Communities Partnership.

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<sup>6</sup> The guidance on the SSCF indicators is published as *Indicators of Strong Communities*, at: [www.neighbourhood.gov.uk/page.asp?id=1567](http://www.neighbourhood.gov.uk/page.asp?id=1567)

<sup>7</sup> Further detail on both the Community Development Focus Group and the Community Development Strategic Managers Group can be obtained by emailing [social\\_inclusion@stockport.gov.uk](mailto:social_inclusion@stockport.gov.uk)

## SECTION TWO:

### COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT: DEFINITIONS, FUNCTIONS AND APPROACHES

#### WHAT IS COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT?

Community Development has existed as an important part of the voluntary and public sectors' work with communities over the past fifty years. It is a way of working which aims to support and resource communities and community activity and to enhance the capacity of communities to address their own issues. Community development has many modes of working and these include:

- Supporting and empowering individuals and groups
- Helping communities express their diverse needs
- Carrying out local needs assessments
- Working to eliminate discrimination and social exclusion
- Building community cohesion
- Involvement in design and development of local public services
- Facilitating the creation of community groups
- Building trust and social capital
- Creating and working with social networks
- Supporting diversity and building respect

The National Occupational Standards define community development as:

'Collectively to bring about social change and justice by working with communities to:

- Identify their needs, opportunities, rights and responsibilities
- Plan, organise and take action
- Evaluate the effectiveness and impact of action

All in ways which challenge oppression and tackle inequalities'<sup>8</sup>

There are many examples in Stockport of a wide variety of community development work, over many years. To illustrate the Community Development Strategy, thirty six case studies covering a wide range of practice have been collected and are available both as an accompanying document and on the Stockport Partnership website.

#### THREE DIFFERENT STRANDS OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT WORK

A key challenge is that the term 'community development' is used very loosely to cover all work with the community without differentiating the different strands.

Community development work can be seen as having three key strands:

- **Primary or generic community development**, also called building social capital
- **Purposive community development**, the use of a community development approaches in the delivery of conventional services.
- **Community development to involve and engage communities** in service monitoring, local democratic structures and governance

Primary community development is a prerequisite for the successful pursuit of the other two elements. Until it is in place it is very difficult for dis-empowered communities to respond to

<sup>8</sup> National Occupational Standards in Community Development works, PAULO, 2003

the other approaches. Putting in place purposive community development or community engagement strategies in dis-empowered communities without primary community development is like trying to run a bus service before a road has been built.

## **WHERE AND WITH WHOM DOES COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT TAKE PLACE?**

Community development has its roots both in social education and in social action and is a response by local services and the voluntary and community sector to the need to improve the health and quality of life within communities. As a result of its broad roots, community development work can take place in a wide variety of settings, including geographical communities, with communities of interest, within public services and within local democratic governance structures.

Resources in Stockport have most often been targeted at disadvantaged communities, often concentrating on particular geographical areas. This trend was reinforced in the 1990s, with the advent of specific government funding for regeneration of disadvantaged neighbourhoods and by a decision taken by Stockport PCT to address the causes of health inequalities that were initially identified in the Black Report. Community development resources have also gone to communities of identity such as women, the black and minority ethnic community, gay and lesbian communities and people with enduring mental health problems. Resource constraints have often meant that community development work cannot take place with all communities of interest at one time.

Using the 2004 Index of Multiple Deprivation, areas in Stockport have been identified which fall within the 20% most deprived in England. These have been ranked into 3 Priority levels with Level 1 being the most deprived. Small pockets of deprivation exist outside these areas but do not show up because they are too small. These have been identified using take-up of benefits and are categorised as Priority 4. The map of Stockport's Renewal Priorities is given as Appendix 1. As a direct result of the partnership between the PCT and Stockport Council, there is now primary community development support available for the most disadvantaged of the population.

Of course, disadvantage is not solely confined to large geographical areas and individuals and groups at risk of social exclusion live in all areas of the Borough. The long-term aim of the Strategy is that all disadvantaged areas of the Borough have access to community development support. Community development is crucial in building a healthy and sustainable Stockport, through helping to create organised communities, which can tackle their own concerns and relate positively with other communities.

There are also vulnerable and communities of identity which are not defined by geographical areas. Community development support is given to some of these groups in Stockport. Work is currently taking place to clarify the evidence base for this work and prioritise vulnerable groups within Stockport.

Community development work is not simply group work; to create effective groups requires commitment to nurturing work with individuals. Workers often need to offer support to individual activists to sustain their morale or support their personal development. The Primary Care Trust's workers generally start work with vulnerable and socially excluded groups and individuals. They help to set up activities, which will build an individual's confidence and self-esteem, as a prelude to community development work with larger numbers of people.

## **PRIMARY COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT: BUILDING SOCIAL CAPITAL**

This approach recognises that active communities can be effective players in solving their own problems. A basic underpinning of primary community development needs to be in place before the other elements of the community development process can be effective. Capacity building within primary community development involves helping individuals to develop the skills and self-confidence required to create active communities. This building of individual self-esteem, combined with the development of social skills which facilitate group working, lies at the heart of the work done by the PCT and is closely linked to the one-to-one work carried out by health visitors. Until people have the confidence to articulate their concerns about local problems, and the skills to work together to tackle these issues, they cannot move forward to effective community work.

Primary community development comes from listening to local people and working with them on whatever issues and problems are currently most important to them; the professional community worker helps the community to explore its concerns and take action. The value of this approach is that it recognises that communities can build themselves if the starting point is their own concerns rather than an external agenda. Self-motivation is the key element in creating a stronger, more active and organised community. In effect, through initiating actions on their own behalf the community develops itself in the process.

This approach has important benefits for communities and the public sector:

1. Primary community development plays a vital role in building 'Social Capital', where networks of people can co-operate in communities to solve common problems. Social capital is defined as the bond between people which holds society together:

"The central premise of social capital is that social networks have value. Social capital refers to the collective value of all social networks (who people know) and the inclinations that arise from these networks to do things for others. "(World Bank)

These networks are instrumental in developing any collaboration for mutual benefit and depend on the creation of communication, trust and solidarity within and between communities. (Community cohesion)

The value of social capital is now demonstrated in a range of literature both nationally and locally.

"Crime is strongly negatively predicated by social capital...the strongest predictor of the murder rate is a low level of social capital. People are generally less pugnacious where social capital is high...There is strong evidence of powerful health effects of social connectedness... ..States where people are more connected to each other are also marked by greater tolerance..."<sup>9</sup>

On a local level, Stockport's Public Health Directorate has a clear vision of the importance of 'community spirit' in reducing ill health and improving quality of life. On a European and global level, community approaches to health improvement are recommended by the World Health Organisation. 'There is a well-established and close connection between social and economic environments, public policies and health outcomes within communities' <sup>10</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Putnam, Robert (2001) 'Social Capital measurement and consequence', *Isuma* (US) 2:1, Spring (ISSN 1492-0611)

<sup>10</sup> See the Verona Initiative –[www.who.dk/tech/inv/VeronaO2.html](http://www.who.dk/tech/inv/VeronaO2.html)

2. For public agencies, networks of increasingly confident and skilled residents can become effective contributors to public problem solving and democratic participation through voluntary self help and through creating a supportive environment in which regeneration initiatives can flourish. Communication between agencies and networks is much easier to achieve when communities are organised into these collaborative networks.

Primary community development is like building the road for all other contacts and collaborations with communities: once the road of community self-organisation is built, other services can access the community more easily. To continue the analogy, the road (organised community) allows the vehicle (mainstream service providers) to make effective progress in reaching communities.

3. For primary community development to be achievable, the community needs access to specialist community workers, a meeting space, finance and a channel to influence decision-makers. In order to ensure that 'community spirit' is strengthened and protected, the work of the range of community development and community-based workers is crucial. It needs to be emphasised that the work of such staff in creating basic bonding and social capital – building the road – is crucial to the success of all other types of community involvement and regeneration.

### **PURPOSIVE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT: SERVICE-FOCUSED**

Where primary Community Development seeks to support both individuals and groups within the community in acquiring the skills to identify and tackle its problems, purposive community development works in two ways. It aims to address problems, as both specific community groups and service providers perceive them. So purposive community development may support a particularly vulnerable population e.g. asylum seekers, people with mental health problems, in acquiring and using the unique skills needed to meet their needs. Equally, it may target the needs of a specific client group e.g. the gay, lesbian and transgender community. In this instance, although Primary Community Development pursues the issues identified by the community, the provider sets up the service, to help improve delivery through working with community partners. Purposive Community Development seeks to involve community members in expanding community-based services. The initial impetus to use a community development approach to improving service delivery can arise from issues that have been identified as a result of primary community development. This approach has three interlinked benefits:

1. the aims and objectives of service-providers can be met in a way which is more responsive to community needs
2. Communities actively understand the service and they are involved in delivery of the work.
3. Voluntary support groups can contribute to the service if this is appropriate

Numerous examples exist of both these types of purposive community development work. Parents in Adswold requested support and information about the skills required to manage challenging behaviour in children. The initial group of parents wanted advice on how to manage the behaviour of troublesome 2 year-olds. However, as word of the success of the project spread, demand developed for advice on managing difficult behaviour in other age groups. The scheme has now expanded to incorporate specific projects, which tackle bullying and improve parent and child bonding.

There is substantial evidence of growth in the use of community development as a tool in the drive to improve self-esteem and social skills in particularly vulnerable population groups e.g.

homeless people. Equally this type of approach has been used to tackle specific health-promotion issues; for example, walking groups are set up by agencies to engage community participants and encourage health-enhancing activities. Community buildings are provided by agencies that seek community involvement in planning the use and management of the facilities and services. The police use community officers to help develop community self-help initiatives to prevent crime including Home Watch schemes. Registered Social Landlords aim to improve an area of social housing and seek to build active residents groups to work in partnership. Libraries seek to build greater use of their facilities by offering opportunities for community education projects. The “Friends of” groups for parks and country parks (discussed in more detail later) make a valuable contribution to our parks and greenspace. The Case Studies included as part of the Community Development Strategy illustrate the wealth of activity taking place with the many different outcomes being achieved.

**COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

The third strand of Community Development is “community engagement” in democratic debate, service planning, monitoring or evaluation. This approach has often been called “participation” or “consultation” and actively seeks to communicate with customers and citizens to seek their views on service provision and local Government.

Stockport Council has had Area Committees since the mid 1970s and recently work has taken place to build the community involvement in these local democratic structures. This important work which encourages neighbourhood governance is currently being considered alongside other neighbourhood working arrangements. The outcome will inform future community development activity.

A wide variety of regeneration initiatives including the Single Regeneration Budget Scheme have sought to involve communities in the regeneration of their area. The local authority and the PCT are working together to consult with people about health inequalities in Brinnington.

Community involvement is a key part of government directives in the development of the Primary Care Trust (PCT). The Patient Participation and Involvement Charter aims to involve service users and carers in decision –making and planning at all levels of the organisation. <sup>11</sup>The PCT Neighbourhood Health IMPACT groups provide a valuable mechanism for community engagement and are increasingly used as such by a number of health and local authority departments. <sup>12</sup>

Good practice in Community Engagement is guided by the Arnstein model,<sup>13</sup> which identifies the varying degrees of community empowerment, which can be facilitated, ranging from basic consultation through to self-determination:

Citizen Control	Degree of citizen power
Delegated power	
Partnership	
Placation	Degree of tokenism
Consultation	
Informing	
Therapy	Non participation

<sup>11</sup> To view the Charter: <http://193.112.136.165/pdf/PPIC charter2.pdf>.

<sup>12</sup> For further information on the Health Impact groups, visit [www.stockportimpact.org.uk](http://www.stockportimpact.org.uk)

<sup>13</sup> Originally published as Arnstein, Sherry, ‘A Ladder of Citizen Participation,’ JAIP, Vol. 35, No. 4, July 1969

Manipulation	
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Arnstein's ladder emphasises that good practice in community engagement requires that consultation exercises should be honest about the level of empowerment offered to communities, for example:

- a) consultation about ideas and plans evolved by statutory bodies
- b) community involvement in the planning process at an early stage
- c) community involvement in monitoring and evaluating services
- d) community involvement in running services

A wide range of consultation and participation methods are essential if we are to achieve a balanced view. It is important to appreciate that a local community is diverse and does not have a single voice nor is there a single method of reaching all elements of the community.

It is important to appreciate that promotion of proper consultation inevitably means the promotion of open debate. It has to be recognised that criticism and dissent do not imply the failure of consultation, nor are they merely side effects of it. They are in fact its lifeblood.

## **SECTION THREE:**

### **COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND THE VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY SECTOR**

The voluntary and community sector are key players in Stockport's Community Development strategy. The Strategy is particularly relevant to this sector in the development of a strong partnership.

#### **COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND THE VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY SECTOR AS STRATEGIC PARTNERS**

The Community Development Strategy aims to see the continued establishment of a strong and representative voluntary and community sector is built in Stockport from the many voluntary and community groups that exist. During the early 2000s, work started to strengthen the involvement of the voluntary and community sector in the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) through the creation of the Voluntary and Community Sector Forum. There is now both a community representative and a voluntary sector representative on the LSP. The Inter Faith Forum also has a representative. During 2005, the Black and Minority Ethnic sector established themselves as an independent voice in Stockport, also with a representative on the Local Strategic Partnership.

As part of the work of the Community Development Strategy, support is offered to the community and voluntary sector representatives on the LSP through Stockport Council for Voluntary Service, the Policy Unit and Community Development support. The Community Development Strategy also supports the growth of the voluntary and community sector through directly addressing the top 12 needs of communities as identified through the LSP voluntary and community sector Forum. These top 12 needs have formed the basis of the 2005 – 6 Community Development Action Plan.

The Community Development Strategy supports the strengthening of the voluntary and community sector in Stockport, particularly as regards to social inclusion, diversity and equal opportunities. A strong and representative voluntary and community sector is crucial to building community cohesion in Stockport.

#### **COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND THE VOLUNTARY SECTOR COMPACT**

The Compact was developed by Stockport CVS working with the voluntary and community sector and Stockport Council and agreed at the Local Strategic Partnership. This is an important document, which lays down the ground rules of working between the voluntary and community sector and statutory agencies. The Compact was reviewed in 2006 in order to improve its effectiveness. It is the intention of the Community Development Strategy to promote the work of the Compact in Stockport, as a basis for joint working between the different sectors.

#### **COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND THE VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY SECTOR AS SERVICE PROVIDERS**

A report by the Treasury on the role of the voluntary and community sector in service delivery outlines a growing role for the community and voluntary sector in this field. This is a new emphasis in the push for community development and the development of social capital.

Services hitherto not provided or only provided by public agencies can now be provided by the voluntary and community sector. They can also be provided by organisations that have

particular specialisms in certain fields such as particular cultural competencies and direct user experience.

There are three main types of service delivery provided by the voluntary and community sector, which should not be confused or treated as a homogenous whole:

- Autonomous public service – provided by community organisations by means of mutual aid, building social capital and advocacy of local need. These may be wholly community-resourced or have some funding support, with light touch accountability
- Specialist services developed by the voluntary and community sector, with significant external funding and moderate accountability
- Statutory public services – devolved to the sector on a full cost recovery basis with full accountability<sup>14</sup>

It is important to ensure that those community groups providing autonomous public service are enabled to do so and not pressurised into providing more than that. It is also important to build the capacity of those voluntary groups who would like to develop more public services. Current work in this area includes support to Brinnington Community First, the Credit Union movement and projects in the Healthy Living Centre Initiative.

The Community Development Strategy will strengthen the capacity of the voluntary and community sector in Stockport, particularly the umbrella organisations, to enable community and groups to be aware of the choices and be able to make them.

Stockport PCT negotiated a contract with CVS to take over support to IMPACT groups in the more affluent parts of the Borough allowing scarce public health community development resources to be focussed on renewal priority areas. Voluntary and community organisations receiving community development support and wishing to provide services or become social enterprises will have access to the appropriate support to enable them to successfully do so.

## **RESOURCES FOR THE VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY SECTOR**

Consultation with community and voluntary groups identified resource needs in terms of buildings, workers and finance as crucial to building and strengthening communities. Whilst agencies in Stockport already offer a range of support to the voluntary and community sector, this could be more effectively delivered by better joint working and by improved support to the voluntary and community sector to access external funding. In the Community Development Strategy improved resource provision is a key area of development. This will be achieved in two ways:

### **Community Development Staffing Resources**

The emphasis in developing this piece of work has concentrated on the two generic teams of the Council and the Primary Care Trust. A range of other services also give support to local communities which can be classified as community development. The Community Development Strategy will improve joint working and offer training and support to both staff and communities.

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<sup>14</sup> Gabriel Channan, Searching for Solid Foundations, Community Involvement and Urban Policy, ODPM 2003, p 57. HM Treasury 2002 The Role of the Voluntary and Community Sector in Service Delivery

**Buildings and grants**

There is a range of grant sources for the voluntary and community sector in Stockport. There is also a range of community buildings and community spaces provided both through the statutory agencies and the voluntary and community sector. The Community Development Strategy will develop resources for the voluntary and community sector through increased joint working, sharing of information and intelligence and the development of skills in fundraising, applying for grants, monitoring and financial management. As it is beneficial for groups to apply for resources independently of the Council, work will be undertaken to support the development of independent organisations such as Trusts, charitable organisations and not for profit organizations.

## **SECTION FOUR: CROSS CUTTING THEMES**

The Strategy outlines how Community Development plays an important part in achieving the objectives of many important cross cutting themes in the Community Strategy, such as Diversity, Community Cohesion, Social Inclusion, Community Safety, Neighbourhood Renewal, Public Health, Community Learning, Environmental Health and work with young people. The 2007-8 Community Development Action Plan will identify targets and outcomes for this work, linking into the outcomes of the Local Area Agreement.

### **(A) COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, EQUALITIES, DIVERSITY AND COHESION**

Diversity and equal opportunities are an essential dimension of community development. There are currently a number of community development workers supporting communities of identity in Stockport, including the Asian community, the Black and Minority Ethnic community, women, the gay and lesbian community, refugees and asylum seekers and the mental health community. A key part of this Strategy will be to ensure that all community development workers have the competencies and skills to promote diversity and equal opportunities and that all communities of identity have appropriate and skilled community development support. Equality and diversity is a key part of the Achieving Better Community Development quality model and of the National Occupational Standards for Community Development.<sup>15</sup> Communities of identity will continue to have primary community development support, resources and workers proportionate to their needs. Every community development worker will be skilled in promoting diversity and equal opportunities and challenging discriminatory practice. This will be achieved through the Community Development Training and Learning Group.

The Community Development Strategy will contribute to the development of cohesive communities in Stockport and demonstrate that community development work can act as a bridge between communities. Work to support community cohesion has always been an important part of Community Development practice in Stockport. Both the PCT and Stockport Council Community Development teams give support to a range of communities of identity and geographical communities. Work is also undertaken to develop cohesive communities through events such as Black History Month celebrations, local community fun events that build intergenerational links and community measures to reduce crime such as Crime Panels. During 2006, outcomes will be developed for these pieces of work in order to demonstrate current effectiveness and set targets for future work.

### **(B) COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL EXCLUSION**

Since 1995, the allocation of community development workers in Stockport has been based on disadvantage and the risk of social exclusion as demonstrated in the Profiling Stockport report. Community development resources have also been targeted at communities of identity, which are thought to be at risk of social exclusion. For example, people who suffer from poor health or disabilities are at an increased risk of social exclusion. Conversely, as already observed those with good social networks live longer and experience better health than those without. Primary community development workers are employed by the PCT aim to tackle social exclusion by facilitating the development of social networks. This may be achieved by working solely to the agenda of those involved or it may include use of health-promoting activities like complementary therapies training, healthy cook and taste sessions, or baby massage.

A major factor in achieving social inclusion is ensuring that people are developing their skills and abilities. Lifelong learning programmes contribute substantially to this. Community

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<sup>15</sup> See the next section on Quality and Performance Management for further details

development resources have also been diverted to specific communities at risk of social exclusion –those with mental health problems, asylum seekers and refugees and black and minority ethnic citizens. Community development has a real role to play in preventing social exclusion, as it works both to empower individuals e.g. building social confidence and self-esteem. Community development also works to empower communities to work with agencies so that the structural causes of social exclusion, such as poverty, can be addressed in a meaningful way. Community support carried out by the Ranger service builds social inclusion of vulnerable individuals and groups.

The Community Development Strategy will improve the effectiveness of support to communities of identity to tackle social exclusion by developing the understanding and knowledge of other agencies in social exclusion risk factors, and ways of working to counter this.

### **(C) COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND EMPOWERMENT**

An empowered and organised community is the main aim of community development, enabling the community to present their diverse needs and concerns more effectively than lone voices.

Empowered communities and public agencies can develop a mutually beneficial partnership to resolve local issues. However, all partners need to be prepared for a challenging process.

“Successful partnerships need to learn the difficult task of negotiating conflict into creative directions to legitimise and create room for diverse agenda. The avoidance of conflict probably means that community views and others have been subordinated to the interests of the dominant parties.”<sup>16</sup>

This reality means that community development has to be embraced in principle by the wider organisations; staff need to be aware of the aims and benefits of community development so that they are open to working in partnership with communities and can recognise how the benefits may outweigh any initial friction.

When the NHS (now the PCT) community development programme was set up in Stockport this was acknowledged and policies adopted to make sure that the worker could speak up on the community’s behalf when there is conflict with public sectors. Ultimately, of course, it is the intention to empower communities so that they have a voice of their own.

The Community Development Strategy will build staff skills and a positive mindset in working with communities. Currently a training programme is being developed for staff in a range of organisations and services, which will explore community development practice and build individual and organisational capacity to effectively enable community development partnerships. It is the intention that more services and agencies in Stockport will understand the value of community development and how community development can improve their service delivery to communities. We will achieve this through joint work, seminars, training events and creating a library of resource materials.

### **(D) COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT & NEIGHBOURHOOD RENEWAL**

The National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal seeks to reduce the gap between advantaged and more disadvantaged parts of the country. It seeks to do this by encouraging and developing a joined up approach to local service delivery in neighbourhoods. Integral to

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<sup>16</sup> Unleashing the Potential, p. 55

the achievement of neighbourhood renewal is the development of an engaged community, with active community groups, who have access to community buildings and space, funding resources and workers and are therefore able to engage in the agenda of improving their neighbourhood.

Neighbourhood Renewal in Stockport has developed in close co-operation with the Community Development services. All Neighbourhood Renewal Initiatives including SRB Four and Five, the Offerton Regeneration Project and Sure Start have included many examples of community development and community engagement.

The formalisation of the links between the Brinnington Community First Trust and Neighbourhood Renewal in Brinnington and the key role of the Adswold and Bridgehall Community Network are examples of the importance of community development in Neighbourhood Renewal in Stockport.

The provision of locally based services, such as Rangers, working to support the community on a range of issues, contributes to neighbourhood renewal. This is achieved through working holistically on reducing crime and the fear of crime, fostering social inclusion, supporting community activities and improving the environment.

The Community Development Strategy will ensure that community development is an integral part of the Neighbourhood Renewal strategy in each Neighbourhood Renewal Priority area, ensuring that communities will have the necessary resources, funding, workers and community space to actively participate in Neighbourhood Renewal and improving the quality of life of their community.

We will achieve this by building on the present joint working between community development and neighbourhood renewal linked to close consultation and partnership with local community groups and developing these links at strategic levels.

## **(E) COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT & SUSTAINABILITY/THE ENVIRONMENT**

Stockport's Community Strategy outlines how sustainable development is a key cross cutting theme in achieving a better quality of life. The Community Development Strategy identifies sustainable development as an integral part of all community development practice. As part of this Strategy therefore, community development will support local people working to create a better local environment, a stronger and more responsible local economy and improved social conditions for all, in ways, which can be sustained without harming other communities or the environment.

The National core competencies for community development are being amended to ensure that community development workers will have the understanding and skills to build sustainability into their work, understanding the relevance of linking social, economic and environmental issues.

Since the early 1990s, The Public Health Community Development work in Stockport has established and developed the close clinical link between a better environment, better public health and the community benefits of a better environment. SMBC Community Development Team supported and developed a Quality of Life group. The Group worked to minimise resource use and to raise awareness of the links between the well being of the community and nature.

The Community Development Strategy will involve a reduction in resources use from a baseline to be established in 2006. This is also to include community buildings. This will be achieved through the work of the Sustainability Group. Through the Training and Learning

Group, the new core competencies for community development which include sustainable development will be introduced into training packages.

## **(F) COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND PARKS AND RECREATION**

Stockport Council recognises that in order for greenspace management to develop and be responsive to the present day and future needs of people, there must be involvement and support from the community. Existing greenspace groups, known as 'Friends' groups, within Stockport have proven that partnerships with such groups releases so much more potential for parks to play a central role in life.

In recognising the importance and benefits of community involvement within greenspace, the Parks and Recreation service has a dedicated team of officers, the Community Development Team, who develop and support greenspace Friends groups. Most greenspace community groups or 'friends' groups in Stockport have set up around a common interest or desire to improve a particular piece of land or habitat.

There are many friends groups throughout the Stockport area and each group is different. Groups take a variety of different roles, ranging from information sharing and participation in practical tasks through to running events and developing major greenspace improvement projects.

The Parks and Recreation Community Development Team work to achieve close community participation and involvement in the use and running of greenspace, demonstrated by number of 'Friends of' and community groups associated with greenspace and the resources raised by communities for greenspace. The team achieve this through supporting 'Friends of' Groups and other community groups; achieving an annual increase in the external funding resources raised; and achieving health and life long learning strategies for greenspace.

The Community Development Strategy will support this work through promoting links between 'Friends of' Groups and other community groups and the promotion of joint working.

## **(F) COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND PUBLIC HEALTH**

The Director of Public Health for Stockport has adopted a two-pronged approach to reducing health inequalities. Initially, the community development workers were appointed to the most disadvantaged parts of the borough. They came from a health visiting background and much of the early work reflected their experience with young families. However, it soon moved on to an agenda developed by the communities which included work with women, drop-ins for young people and a range of initiatives which supported positive mental health.

Approximately two years later, the neighbourhood health strategy project started. Neighbourhood Health strategy co-ordinators collected information from local residents and workers about the key health issues in their communities. They then worked together to identify ways of tackling these problems, supported by a small grants scheme. The structure enabled emerging community activists to rehearse their ideas about ways to improve the quality of life and health status of the community in a relatively non-threatening environment. This was designed to facilitate local decision-making processes about ways in which local problems relating to the wider determinants of health could be addressed.

Through the Community Development Strategy we will continue to seek a reduction in health inequalities in Stockport and to improve the health status of groups at risk of social exclusion. We will achieve this through a co-ordinated approach to both primary and purposive community development in Stockport, including continual development of effective strategic

and operational partnership working. We will demonstrate the value of community development within public health through a variety of means, including presentations, reports and displays.

### **(G) COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND HEALTHY LIVING SCHEMES/NETWORKS**

The purposive Healthy Living programmes and network currently being created in Brinnington and Reddish require an underpinning of a primary community development approach to be successful. Through the Community Development Strategy we will build on the learning to date, explaining to other agencies and community groups the need for an organised community, with functioning community groups, with access to community buildings and space and resources. The Healthy Living Initiative also requires residents to be linked into neighbourhood structures to address other issues in their lives apart from health.

Work is currently taking place to access funding to continue key elements of the Healthy Living Initiative in Brinnington and Reddish, to roll out elements to other disadvantaged areas of Stockport and to integrate the learning from the Healthy Living Centre into neighbourhood renewal initiatives, to enable issues raised through Healthy Living programmes to become part of joint work of other agencies.

Through the Community Development Strategy the work and value of the Healthy Living Centre Initiative will be promoted and joint initiatives with other agencies developed to take forward the issues identified by the community.

### **(H) COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMY SERVICES**

The adoption of a community development approach in Environmental Health from the early 2000s allowed the tackling of environmental public health issues to move beyond enforcement to learning and altered behaviour. The Environmental Health approach seeks to involve and empower, rather than simply enforce. This approach is being extended to other parts of the Environment and Economy Directorate services including waste management strategies and District centre partnerships. At a District Centre level, Regeneration staff seek to build partnerships to involve local stakeholders in improving their areas on a daily basis. This includes local traders both individually and as part of the District Centre Partnerships.

The Community Development Strategy will support the community development approaches being developed within the Environment and Economy Directorate through the continuation of joint strategic working and training and learning.

### **(I) COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND LEARNING**

Learning in its widest possible remit is a key part of community development and involvement. Without access to relevant learning and development opportunities communities cannot grow and change. Locally based learning, based on the needs and aspirations of local communities in local venues and with appropriate teaching, is a key to the development of learning in communities. Since the late 1990s, Stockport has developed this community development approach to learning culminating in a joint project between Continuing Education and Community Development to take forward community based learning in Cherry Tree, Lark Hill and Lancashire Hill. Such learning underpins all aspects of community development and in particular, community engagement and involvement. These locally based learning centres link into other training centres in Stockport.

Through the Community Development Training Group, the Community Development Strategy seeks to ensure that that community based learning will be offered in disadvantaged

communities in Stockport which receive community development support. Community based learning will include courses in community development and also, in targeted areas, access locally based courses on subjects of their choosing, promoted by local learning champions.

#### **(J) COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND COMMUNITY SAFETY**

Fears of crime and crime itself have detrimental effects on community life. High anti social behaviour in an area can prevent communities participating in community activities. Stockport Partnership through the Crime and Disorder Strategy has chosen to tackle this in two ways, both by enforcement and by supporting and developing the community response to crime. Initiatives in Stockport include the development of Homewatch, local groups of residents looking after each other; the development of a community crime panel, where local residents work together to improve safety through projects to reduce crime; the provision of high visibility patrols to reduce the fear of crime; and inclusion projects where the root causes of crime are tackled. This includes building basic self-esteem in individuals at risk of social exclusion and by specific targeted projects aiming at working with children and families to change behaviour. The rolling out of community led crime panels offers the opportunity to involve the community in actively participating in reducing crime and the fear of crime in their own communities.

There is ample evidence that building community spirit helps reduce crime and so primary community development is likely in itself to have a positive impact on reducing crime.

The Community Development Strategy will support the development of community based projects in disadvantaged areas tackling the roots cause of crime and the fear of crime through promoting the value of such approaches and increased joint working between agencies.

#### **(K) COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND SERVICES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE**

Services working for young people in Stockport have identified the importance of community development. Good working relationships exist on various projects and around specific initiatives such as Black History Month. The extension of primary community development carries strong benefits to work with young people through creating a community which can support young people more fully. It is important that young people are seen as citizens not as problems. The idealism of young people can be an important resource for community action. The Community Development Strategy will develop a community development approach across agencies which ensure that young people are supported as members of their own communities. This will be achieved through better understanding and awareness of the needs of young people and how services can be encouraged to meet those needs.

## **SECTION FIVE: QUALITY AND PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT**

### **DEVELOPMENT OF CORE COMPETENCIES IN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

The creation of the National Occupational Standards for Community Development Workers in 1997 enables Community Development workers, managers and Stockport Partnership to be clear about the knowledge, skills and confidence necessary to carry out the complex tasks of community development.<sup>17</sup>

In order to achieve high standards of community development for communities, a Community Development Learning and Training Strategy will be developed and agreed between partners to ensure that all workers in communities will have the opportunity to obtain training in community development, the majority to NVQ2 level.

A government study on community development in 2003 found that 'there is a shortage of people who can authentically lead Community Development teams and networks and negotiate strongly to inject a Community Development perspective into local partnerships and schemes. A generation of people is needed with the vision and skills to organise neighbourhood work, co-ordinate it across localities and guide major authorities and agencies in developing Community Development strategies and relating Community Development to the modernisation and new governance agenda.'<sup>18</sup>

In order to tackle the need to develop management skills in community development, an essential part of the Training and Learning strategy will include management skills and the development of participatory and self-reflective management styles, integrally linked to quality and excellence.

In 2004/5, three pilot courses were delivered by the Stockport Council Community Development Team, rooted in the new framework of National Occupational Standards and Core Competencies in Community Development work:

- (a) Multi-agency taster workshops, based on National Occupational Standards competencies
- (b) Understanding Community Development Unit One (Open College Network) for the Stockport Ranger service
- (c) A taster course for community activists, in partnership with Continuing Education.

As a result of these successful pilots and as part of this Strategy a Community Development Training Group has been established to deliver nationally recognised accredited community development training for activists, workers and managers in Stockport. Partners in the Community Development Training Strategy include Stockport CVS, the Community Development Teams, Continuing Education, Brinnington Community First and the North West (Stockport) Warden Resource Centre. The Strategy will lead to accredited Community Development training and increase the pool of skilled activists and practitioners in the Borough.

The Community Development Group training Group will produce a Training and Learning Strategy in 2006 with the aim of:

- all community development and involvement work in Stockport will be delivered to National Occupational Standards by staff trained in community development core competencies.

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<sup>17</sup> For details of the National Occupational Standards in Community Development, see <http://www.paulo.org.uk/pages/nos.htm>

<sup>18</sup> Chanan, op. cit, p. 88

- All staff with managerial and supervisory responsibility for community development and involvement to have received training in managing community development.

## **QUALITY IN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

A quality standard for community development work - the Achieving Better Community Development Quality Model - is now accepted across the UK as a quality model, designed to enable communities to plan and take action effectively and measure their outcomes. Through the ABCD model, community development seeks to achieve community empowerment in four different dimensions.<sup>19</sup> In Stockport, this model has been supplemented by the European Foundation for Quality Management Model (EFQM), with the Community Development Team awarded the Investors in Excellence Quality Mark, as part of the Social Inclusion Unit.<sup>20</sup>

Stockport Partnership has adopted the following definition of quality in community development:

Quality community development involves the following:

1. 'Personal empowerment', so that the community has the necessary knowledge, skills, confidence, trust and morale to address issues that impact on their lives.
2. 'Positive action' so that the community is inclusive, open to all, respects diversity and promotes social cohesion
3. 'Organised Community', which has the appropriate form of organisation to carry out its activity; this aspect may involve a wide range of community work methods, including needs assessment, visioning, group formation, action planning, resource procurement, evaluation, etc
4. 'Influential community', which participates in decision-making bodies and partnerships, and develops its own services and assets<sup>21</sup>

In order to ensure that quality is an integral part of all community development work in Stockport, a database is being developed to record the progress of community development, which will be extended out to all partners involved, and integrated with wider work on performance indicators and community involvement and engagement. Through the Community Development Learning and Training Strategy, all community development work in Stockport will be delivered to the national quality standard Achieving Better Community Development and managers will incorporate this with the EFQM.

## **MEASURING OUTPUTS AND OUTCOMES OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

The Community Development Strategy aims to improve the measurement of the impact of community development and involvement. This will be achieved in a variety of ways. The Community Development Action Plan allows for outputs and outcomes to be set and measured. The quality of community development will be assessed using the ABCD model.

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<sup>19</sup> For further information, see the Scottish Community Development Centre: [www.scdc.org.uk/abcd\\_index.htm](http://www.scdc.org.uk/abcd_index.htm)

<sup>20</sup> For further details of the European Foundation for Quality Management standard, visit: [www.quality-foundation](http://www.quality-foundation)

<sup>21</sup> Definition of quality based on the ABCD model.

The collection of local performance indicators on community development is crucial. By so doing the achievements of community development can be highlighted. Decisions can also be made about the allocation of resources and targeting of workers and resources.

During 2006 a project is taking place to evaluate current community development outputs and outcomes and agreement on the outputs and outcomes for 2007/8. This is being achieved through a joint project between the Council and the Primary Care Trust and the Policy and Performance Unit, Adults & Communities Directorate, reporting to the Community Development Strategic Managers Group.

## **TIMESCALES AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

One of the conflicts in community development is the difference between communities' time scales and the pressures on agencies to deliver quickly on their own priorities. Community development works from the bottom up and grows in relation to the community's needs. Regeneration or service focused projects often work from top-down, through a business planning framework, (involving planning against objectives, outputs and outcomes that have to be set down at the beginning, and a corresponding budget, which has to be spent within time limits). As a consequence, there is often a mismatch between community and agency priorities and this can be frustrating to planners, politicians and economists, who need to work within a declared timescale. The pressure of time constraints on public service often results either in ignoring community development, being frustrated by it or building token involvement, which involves only a very small section of the community and does little to improve service delivery.

In acknowledging this tension, the Stockport Community Development Strategy proposes a number of solutions. The first is to build the capacity, skills and knowledge of public service officers in community development and its principles. Secondly to build skills in managing community development. Thirdly, to devise community involvement modelled on both business planning and community development objectives. These solutions will be developed during the first three years of the strategy period through close partnership working with the Neighbourhood Renewal Team.

Through annual seminars to review and monitor the Community Development Action Plan, community development will become integrally part of the Business Planning processes in Stockport.

## **IMPLEMENTATION AND REVIEW OF THIS STRATEGY**

The Community Development Strategic Managers Group is charged with overseeing the implementation of the Community Development Strategy and Action Plan.

The Community Development Action Plan will be reviewed by the Community Development Strategic Managers Group and the Community Development Focus Group and a new Action Plan for 2007/8 created.

The results of the review and the new Action Plan will be presented to the Stronger Communities Partnership.

## APPENDIX 1

