

**Initial findings from the Barnsley Community and Voluntary  
Network Roadshows researching National Indicator 7  
“Environment for a Thriving Third Sector”  
By Voluntary Action Barnsley**

**Background information**

Following the publication of the results of “the National Survey of Third Sector Organisations”(NSTSO) conducted by the Office of the Third Sector (OTS), Barnsley Council (BMBC) asked Voluntary Action Barnsley to conduct some additional research with Barnsley’s Third Sector organisations (TSO).

Whilst the results of the NSTSO survey are valuable, the research only focused on registered charities and incorporated organisations and it was felt this resulted in a significant number of Barnsley organisations not being surveyed.

The aim of the additional research has been to find out more about the existing relationship between third sector organisations and statutory organizations in Barnsley and how this relationship might be improved. VAB were also keen to find out how it and other infrastructure organisations could improve the delivery of their support services to TSO’s.

**Methodology**

The research was undertaken through a series of four roadshows that were held across the Borough from June 30<sup>th</sup> to July 15<sup>th</sup> 2009. The events which took place in Penistone, Thurnscoe, Barnsley Town Centre and Barugh Green were facilitated by VAB and took place between 5:30pm and 7:30pm. 61 people in total attended the four events. 613 people were invited, giving a 10% sample.

The events were co-ordinated by VAB and other local infrastructure organisations were invited to be involved. South Yorkshire Funding Advice Bureau and Together for Regeneration were both very enthusiastic and were involved throughout the planning process. Their staff also acted as facilitators and scribes.

Representatives from a variety of TSO’s attended the roadshows, including representatives from very small groups (like mother and toddler and craft groups for the elderly), tenant and resident associations, community interest companies, community partnerships and National Charities. (A full list of the organisations represented can be found at Appendix A).

Attendees were grouped into small workshops with a facilitator and scribe and three questions were asked as follows:

- 1. What is your vision for a thriving third sector (in an ideal world what would the voluntary and community sector look like in Barnsley);**
- 2. What is the reality of the current situation? Give positive and negative examples of your existing relationship with statutory agencies;**
- 3. How do we achieve the Vision? What skills/support do you need to achieve the points raised in Q1.**

Following the group discussions each facilitator fed back to the whole group and there was a further opportunity for discussion.

Carol Brady from BMBC/One Barnsley Secretariat attended each event and she closed the proceedings by explaining how the information gathered at the events would be used and how feedback would be given to the participants.

Collated detailed feedback from the workshop groups can be found at Appendix B, C & D. However, a summary of the key themes can be found below.

### **Summary findings of the key themes**

The following four key themes and “communication” as a significant cross cutting issue were identified/raised throughout the roadshow events:

1. Relationship between TSO’s and statutory agencies
2. Relationship between TSO’s and Infrastructure support organizations
3. Funding
4. The value of volunteers
5. Communication –cross cutting issue

A detailed breakdown of these themes and the issues identified can be found below.

#### **1. Relationship between the Third Sector and Statutory agencies**

In many cases there was no relationship at all between TSO’s and the statutory agencies. The evidence suggests that some organisations feel they have a positive relationship with individual BMBC council officers (and to a lesser extent elected members) who are committed and supportive. However the majority of groups highlighted the lack of relationships between the sectors.

The following points were the most consistent themes across the roadshows regarding the relationship between the sectors;

##### **a. Training for statutory agencies**

This lack of relationship highlighted the lack of mutual understanding and one of the strong themes that came through at each event was that the Third Sector needs to be better understood by the public sector. With the success of “How your Town Works” it

was felt that the public sector needed to learn about “How your community works”.

**b. Lack of Communication**

Communication was a cross cutting theme and many people suggested that they wanted to be able to access all the relevant and pertinent information in their own local area. Communication is a two way process and groups were also guilty of not accessing or reading the existing communications. Communication is a theme that will be followed up and explored at later events (see Forward Planning on page 3) as many cited it as a problem, however solutions to how it could be improved were very vague.

**c. Lack of Trust between the sectors**

Another key theme throughout the roadshows was the lack of trust between the sectors. It was felt that the public sector viewed the Third Sector as a threat, an inconvenience or a burden, frequently being disregarded. It was felt that activities were duplicated because the Council did not trust the sector to deliver services.

**d. Contracting**

Contracting was seen as something complicated, and many organisations stated that in order to tender they needed access to information which they could only get from the local authority who were not forthcoming or able to give the relevant information or statistics needed in order to meet tendering requirements.

**e. New Neighbourhoods Framework**

Clarity is required, and soon, as to how the Council’s new Neighbourhoods Framework will translate in practice. This is anticipated as a significant move towards empowering active citizens and providing a springboard for community activism.

**2. Relationship between the Third Sector and Support Services (Infrastructure Organisations)**

In relation to local infrastructure support the feedback from the roadshows told us that:

**a. Lack of awareness of the support available**

There is a general lack of awareness amongst TSO’s about the provision of support available to organisations. Many cited that they did not know that these organisations existed however once they did find them they were praised for their services.

Duplication of effort is seen as an issue, and clarity and focus on the part of infrastructure support agencies needs to be addressed. In a number of recorded exchanges individuals had no understanding of the role of the different infrastructure organisations.

BME groups felt that it was unfair that representatives from BBEMI were often asked by statutory organisations to sit on local boards to represent the whole of the BME community.

An absolute requirement for the future is for infrastructure organisations in Barnsley to work together to provide a seamless service providing development, representational and investment guidance and advice.

#### **b. Communication**

It was evident that groups did not know about the services provided by some of the infrastructure organisations (such as SYFAB) however some of these issues are addressed in point 3a.

Some of the solutions people cited to improve communication such as a central directory of groups and regular networking meetings do already exist however this shows a lack of awareness which VAB must address.

#### **c. Proximity of Infrastructure organisations to BMBC**

Infrastructure organisations, and in particular VAB, were seen as being too "close" to BMBC possibly as a result of current funding arrangements. This is seen as compromising the independence of VAB and their ability to act as an objective advocate for the Third Sector.

### **3. Funding**

As expected, funding remains a key issue for groups. Additionally, we find that organisations are frustrated because of:

#### **a. Complex Funding applications**

Funding applications (to national and regional funding bodies, statutory, charitable or otherwise) were seen to be too complicated, and the expectations placed on Barnsley organisations to know how they fit into a much bigger picture were onerous, when most of the time small groups just want to access a small pot to do something in their area. There was a feeling that they were penalised for their "lack of jargon". Many people stated that they need hands on support to actually fill in funding applications with a mediator who understood all sectors and its terminology.

#### **b. Access to small grants**

Increasingly it is becoming difficult to access comparatively small funding opportunities unburdened with exacting reporting requirements. The majority of groups in Barnsley are small and often only require small pots of money. The Community Chest programme (managed by VAB) was cited on numerous occasions across the Borough as a good example of a small grants programme (it was also led by the community) however this no longer exists.

### **4. The value of Volunteers**

There remains a lack of understanding around the value, role and impact of volunteers.

**a. Employer supported volunteering for statutory officers**

Developing employer supported volunteering programmes was seen as positive and a good way for statutory officers to get involved at grass roots levels.

**b. Retaining Volunteers**

Retaining volunteers remains a problem for many groups and volunteer training, encouragement, incentives, "moving on to work" placements were all cited as positive ways of encouraging people to actively engage in their communities.

**Forward planning**

The above provides only a brief understanding of how people visualise a thriving third sector environment, how they see it now, and some suggestions as to how improvements could be made.

BMBC, together with partner agencies through One Barnsley, is committed to considering in detail the feedback and issues raised through the roadshow events and developing an action/implementation plan to address the key issues identified. The proposed timetable for making this happen is as follows:

**September 2009**

- Thriving Third Sector Group (NI7) (NI 7) Group to consider this report and agree broad recommendations to address the key issues identified.

**October 2009**

- Joint report of VAB and BMBC to be presented to One Barnsley Board meeting in late October 2009. The findings from the Roadshows and other events together with broad recommendations for addressing the key issues/themes will be presented.

**November 2009**

- Hold further workshop events with TSO's to look in detail at potential solutions to some of the key issues eg. communications
- Thriving Third Sector Group (NI7) to develop draft Action Plan to address the issues identified.
- Disseminate the Draft Action Plan to TSO's and partner agencies

**December 2009**

- Finalise Action Plan and circulate to TSO's

**From January 2010**

- Implement Action Plan

**Please note: A full copy of the workshop notes can be provided by VAB on request however it should be noted that this document contains 33 pages.**

## **Appendix A**

### **List of Organisations represented at the Roadshows**

1. Barnsley Arena
2. Barnsley Association of Community Partnerships
3. Barnsley Credit Union
4. Barnsley Older People's Community Forum
5. BMBC
6. Busy Bees
7. Crafty Sew and Sews
8. Creative Food Skills
9. Daisy Chains
10. Dearne Valley Memorial Group
11. Dodworth Crime and Safety Sub Group
12. Friends of Barnsley Cemetery
13. Friends of Hoyland Lowe Stand
14. Greenwood Terrace Conservation Group
15. Home Start
16. Hope House Church
17. Kendray Good Neighbours
18. Lundwood and Monk Bretton Community Partnership
19. MARCO
20. MIND
21. Mothers of Africa
22. Neighbourhood Watch (various)
23. One Voice Advocacy
24. Parent and Carers Forum
25. Penistone Community Partnership
26. Penistone Round Table
27. Penistone Scout Group
28. Penistone Theatre Group
29. Penistone Town Council
30. +Me Positive about Change
31. SAFE@LAST
32. Shafton Parent and Toddler Group
33. Silkstone Community Building
34. Springfield Ladies Group
35. St Johns Stop and Surf
36. Station House Community Association
37. Thurgoland Village Welfare
38. United Village Community Partnership
39. VAB
40. W'boro Crime Safety sub Group
41. Young Diallers

## **Appendix B**

### **Question 1: The Vision for a thriving Third Sector**

#### **Recognition of the Sector**

- It is really important that the Third Sector's contribution is fully recognised by the statutory sector. This is happening more and more in various authorities, but in some cases in Barnsley, I have heard it referred to as "volunteers involved in things", rather than showing the profile of the sector as being professional etc. There are more graduates in the Third Sector than any other sector, and managers and workers tend to have to develop a wide variety of skills to meet the needs of their role, more than in any other sector. Yet it still feels like we are the baby!
- Putting value on services provided by Third Sector
- Local organisations and networks would actually influence policy and strategy
- The sector is valued and enabled
- Recognition from the Local Authority
- Equal treatment for all user groups – value the work of the smaller groups as well as larger organisations
- Equal respect for smaller groups who work with 'hard to reach groups'
- More respect and understanding (both ways) to enable all sectors to work together
- The Third Sector is incredibly innovative and because it has relied on external funding for many of its projects in recent years, it has developed a real outcomes based approach to its work at some levels. This is so useful for Barnsley!

#### **Infrastructure Support**

- Better, coordinated, collaborative infrastructure support
- Regular support
- Dedicated local support
- Support from other related organisations

#### **An organised Third Sector**

- The Third Sector needs to be really clear about its purpose, in terms of overall as a sector and individual organisations. Think it is probably very clear in the organisations, but unsure whether we really all know what the overall purpose of the sector is in comparison to the other sectors. For example, in the past the voluntary sector saw a need and then met the need, e.g. developed schools for education, the youth service and the health service. Now these major needs are met by the statutory services, what is the role of the Third Sector? Probably lots of people have ideas, but perhaps these need to be shared! Suppose what I'm saying is how are we distinctive because if we are not, we will just end up

competing for projects and funding with public and private sector organisations

- A Third Sector that is non-competitive with each other
- The culture of equality is embedded across the sector
- Co-ordination of Vol/com groups Via VAB
- Good practice is shared to the benefit of all
- Some way to organise learning (best practice) from similar projects or groups

### **Funding**

- Funding Coordinator to support in accessing funding (total package right through to assisting with funding application)
- Funding to continue for the third sector
- Funding need to reach grass root organisations and not given to a representative organisation (*BBEMI cited as an example*)
- Longer term projects to prevent short term solutions and not enabling groups to do planning for the future.
- More small grants for community groups
- Give infrastructure groups the money and the authority to make small grants to unconstituted groups.
- Local branches of national organisation i.e. MIND should be able to access funding/support.

### **Contracting**

- Local organisations and networks to be contracted to deliver local services at fair rates for the job
- When a project is commissioned, tenders are put in and the Third Sector has to declare the full cost (full cost recovery) as it has no other way of paying for the project. However, the statutory sector can absorb costs, for example, recruitment costs, office space etc, so look cheaper on paper than Third Sector equivalent projects. This needs to be addressed or the Third Sector will never be able to compete. A practical way to do this would be for all costs to be declared on tenders, including those that can be absorbed. Of course, the council will probably still go for the cheapest!

### **Communication**

- No duplication, better communication, collaboration
- Communication, listening to ALL service users and action on information
- Clear and understandable communication
- One coordinated Third Sector newsletter for the whole of Barnsley to include ALL services and information throughout the Borough.

### **Representation**

- Ability to influence how services are delivered and driven
- Coordinated response to issues identified

### **Increasing Volunteers**

- Volunteering, quantity and quality is an absolute priority
- Matching volunteers/finding volunteers for groups
- Employers given incentives to encourage employees to volunteer

- Individuals feeling involved in the community and not sitting on the sidelines – there is too much talking and not enough action by people. Some people in community complain about things but expect others to do everything for them.
- Support for volunteer and group development
- Volunteer training, encouragement, incentives, moving on to work placements

### **Central Centre**

- Need one central place to get information and signposting. Share assets and have a central community centre for use by any group. With good access to transport.
- Single point of contact for advice and guidance

### **Less duplication**

- More partnership working so we're not all doing same job

### **Training**

- Grants for professional people to come and work in the area
- Having a Voluntary Business Development person to go out to organisations.
- Skilled people to train people

### **Asset transfer**

- BMBC to assist by implementing government policy e.g. asset transfer

### **Misc.**

- Sustainability
- Better access to stats/information to develop better projects
- Improved community development and learning
- Rural infrastructure support
- Rural social enterprise to be real
- Building sustainable communities
- Co-ordinators in each area who link with every group, shared volunteers and finances
- Short term rent, hot desks, etc for smaller groups.

## **Appendix C**

**Question 2: What is the existing relationship between the statutory and third sector (and infrastructure organisations)? Please give positive and negative examples.**

### **Ci Positive Comments**

#### **Infrastructure support**

- Good infrastructure support organisations
- Use Voluntary Action Barnsley to recruit volunteers
- We are applying for charitable status and are impressed by the level of support we have perceived from VAB staff

#### **Relationship with Statutory**

- National Government laying down new laws for local governments to adhere to.
- There are some good supportive community engagement officers
- Seen a change (improvement) in relationships with Statutory Officers over the last 10 years – more positive attitudes in general
- Built many positive relationships with BMBC Staff
- Funding from Local Authority
- Good support from the local Cllr however this is not always the case in other areas.
- Have received help from BMBC re use of venues
- We have been invited to Local authority & PCT Mental Health services to give talks about the services we provide
- Older people's Community Forum have been invited to inspect hospital (valuing and empowering)
- The council have just mainstreamed our Community House
- Support by Parish council, Town council, Area Forum very good, support/funding and political support
- Extra funds are available for services for disabled children
- BMBC discretionary rate relief to assist overheads

#### **Partnership working**

- Kendray is a good example because people were listened to there and they had dedicated support which improved the trust between the sectors. If it can happen there it can happen anywhere.
- Opportunity of working together makes a stronger voice and access to fair funding etc.
- PCT has supported third sector to employ local health trainers directly by third sector
  
- If you phone one organisation, they will generally sign post you to the appropriate organisation.
- VAB resources to enable Third Sector groups to have their say and access resources.
- Information & support from VAB, timely, feel valued

- VAB informative and accommodating
- When the right support organisations is found – groups find a wealth of support and knowledge
- Working together in a network of organisations to share skills, e.g. joint bid for commissioned services – larger organisations supporting smaller ones

### **Volunteers**

- Support of volunteers
- Good, well motivated, dedicated people

### **Misc**

- Group is growing in numbers
- Positive impact on children & families
- No big agenda
- Our club provides members with the opportunity to socialise with their friends, gain knowledge on a wide range of subjects
- Value for money
- BMBC work with VAB
- Independence of the Sector for those people who wouldn't access the other sectors.

### **Cii Negative Comments**

#### **New Neighbourhood framework**

- No consultation on new neighbourhood framework so BMBC is actually opposing the aims of the National Indicator 7
- The structures are devised to negate active citizenship

#### **Infrastructure Support**

- Infrastructure organisations – losing the independent voice as too reliant on funding themselves from the public sector
- Voluntary Action Barnsley needs to raise its profile, support is good but there is a lack of awareness, people do not always know of support available – (worked for 2 years on my own without any support until I heard of Voluntary Action Barnsley)
- Not enough work out in the community by the statutory sector and Voluntary Action Barnsley
- Don't understand what Voluntary Action Barnsley is here for
- Local authority need to recognise changing/evolving BME communities of Barnsley – Not leave the role with one BME org (e.g. BBEMI).
- Funding need to evolve with the changing nature of the BME Communities – not given to BBEMI indefinitely.
- Grass root BME groups tend to support each other better than the bigger BME infrastructure organisations (Again for example BBEMI).
- BBEMI need to evolve and engage better with representative communities.
- If you asked the general (BME) community in Town Centre about BBEMI, you will be lucky to find 1 person who knows the organisation (speak positive experience of BBEMI).

- Northern Refugee Centre and Refugee Council serve the needs of Barnsley BME Communities better than BBEMI.
- Infrastructure organisations don't work together to reach into local communities
- BBEMI disjointed and only interested in funding
- Penistone is out on a limb re: infrastructure support

### **Funding**

- Expectations of funders are too high e.g. 'How does your activity fit into the Local Area Agreement'!
- Much external funding is now going into the Local Authority, via things like LSP's, LAA's etc, so there is less funding available. SYFAB does a good job helping people to access funding so feel this should continue. However, we need to have up to date and accessible policies available from the L.A when we need them to support funding bids. Some colleagues within the sector in Barnsley had great problems trying to access some policies- it turned out that they are being updated, or are not finished, but yet the funding bids are asking that organisations link into these policies.
- Difficulty getting funding, not taken seriously in areas of big players/not able to do things on a large scale but making a big impact on small scale
- Funds are being earmarked for spending without full consultation
- Competitive funding arrangements
- Cannot get funding for paid staff
- Difficulty in getting funding for core costs for organisations which support community projects
- Where do we get funding for continuation of good but not sustainable projects like tourism information centre?
- Driven by what the funder wants not by the needs of the community – applies to many Third sector groups
- Groups do not have support to fill in funding applications, no hands on help with funding applications
- Terminology and language used on funding applications and by professionals is not 'Plain English'
- If a group don't have the resources to find out what's available in terms of funding for groups/expertise and grants which may be utilised we often miss opportunities
- Need to find funding for training courses to be able to compete to deliver services

### **Relationship with Statutory sector/ Recognition of the sector**

- Lack of trust by BMBC
- Had to set up group with minimal support from BMBC despite asking for help
- BMBC have a general lack of awareness about voluntary sector organisations, particularly small groups
- Relationship with BMBC depends on the individual Officer. Some officers work very well with the Third sector, others do not (this can also apply to Departments)
- Officers move on and groups have to start from scratch with another person

- Decisions are not actioned quickly enough, people lose interest
- No set deadlines
- Elected members do not always take responsibility for issues raised (issues are often left with the volunteers to sort out)
- Politics can delay actions and decision making
- There are problems with the process – the link between the council and the community
- Not valued and understood as a sector
- There are tensions between democratic officers and communities. Community activists are not looked at in a positive way by councillors
- The council sit in their ivory towers and more of the officers need to get out into the community
- BMBC do not listen to what local people actually need in their local area
- BMBC are uncaring and unapproachable
- We can't use BMBC resources for example printing etc
- Local communities need help from BMBC, local councillors and the police

### **Contracting**

- How can we compete on a level playing field with statutory agencies for commissioning. They have financial support for training, admin, accommodation, supervision that can be hidden within the larger organisation.
- Why are the statutory agencies trying to rid the borough of all voluntary organisations other than small grass roots organisations. (who really don't have the clout to disagree with council policy)
- Why do the statutory agencies feel the need to control the voluntary sector
- The goal posts change. Organisations were encouraged to put in tenders for projects, which they did and were told that they would choose the best projects and not all would be successful. However, they received so many back, they decided instead to fund more projects than anticipated, but cut down the amount of money to each organisation and yet still expected them to achieve the same outcomes!

### **Duplication**

- Why do statutory authorities try to re-invent (or mainstream) voluntary organisations.
- Why are statutory agencies developing their own volunteer programmes without any reference to existing organisations and why are these organisations being funded before existing provision.

### **Communication**

- No coordinating bodies for disseminating information
- no central information available locally
- Poor communication
- It has potential to be better (communication)
- Need more communication and feedback from statutory sector
- Not always aware of what's going on (events etc)

**Volunteers/Active Citizens**

- Not enough local people involvement, a few volunteers are doing more and more
- Enthusiasm dries up
- It is difficult for a person on the street to make their voice heard
- More words than deeds from community leaders

**Taken for granted**

- Well resourced organisations expect Services from Third Sector organisations for free
- When value for money is demonstrated this should be acknowledged and valued

**Asset Transfer**

- Lots of potential community buildings are empty

**Misc**

- More resources for community support organisations & training volunteers
- Need to get school children on board
- Too many meetings
- Partnership cultural and education differences
- Minority Infrastructure groups are not representative of their communities and also they do not engage with representative communities.
- Strategies for too long a period, we need short goals (smaller chunks) so that service users feel they have achieved something.
- Things don't happen quick enough
- Depending on location i.e. Penistone, Silkstone, Worsbrough depends on available local support provided

## **Appendix D**

### **Question 3: How do we create the vision in q1?**

#### **New neighbourhood framework**

- Community groups should have a voice within the new area forum structure

#### **Relationship between the sectors**

- A hub/network paid worker that brings together groups and funding opportunities within similar areas.
- Need to stop competition, work together, community events to break down barriers, groups work together and refer people to each other
- BMBC need to recognise that groups exist and that they are doing a lot of good work
- Initiatives to make sure volunteer is valued in Job Centre Plus, Local Authority and opportunities are made available
- Mediator who understands what the voluntary sector does, the client base relevant to them and the strategy linked to the community so that VCS can focus on local needs rather than national strategy.
- LA contact/representative who local communities can approach and contact for information/contact names/relevant departments.
- Real partnership working not forced unions
- A Paid facilitator to support the Crime & Safety Sub Group and greater coordination and efficiency of all of the Sub Groups throughout the borough
- Ideally Councillors should be the main contact/conduit in the community
- Greater partnership working
- Develop strong communities – One Barnsley need to do what they say they are going to do

#### **Training for statutory sector**

- Training for statutory sector officers on awareness and working with the Third sector, how communities work, understanding volunteers
- Engage with the vol/com sector to develop trust with each other and with the Local Authority
- Training for statutory sector officers on awareness and working with the Third sector, how communities work, understanding volunteers
- Roll out of 'How your Town Works' training programme. Training on how to work with communities (How your community works), building on the How your Town Works programme. Then bring both parties together

#### **Representation**

- People should be involved at a strategic level and should be part of the decision making structure
- Advocacy – voice
- A way to feed in – effective mechanism to influence policy

## **Communication**

- Better process for communications
- Effective communications between LA, PCT, - public bodies & local communities
- Communication plan – radio, local paper, what’s going on in the 3<sup>rd</sup> sector, forums, workshops
- Communication - comprehensive database, newsletter, email network, a lead worker in each locality (development worker) to disseminate information, Information points in doctors, post officers, churches, etc
- Need to eliminate duplication – improve communication processes
- Use local authority communication channels to promote the Third Sector.
- Need to know actions following meetings/consultation
- Networking event – A 6 monthly event to involve people across the sectors
- Need a local convention and a campaigning body
- 3<sup>rd</sup> sector convention – have structured meetings and the sector needs to be more organised and be noisier together!
- Networking day at The Core for people in the third sector to meet
- More networking within the sector for sharing of knowledge
- Practical help/easy access venue to arrange networking meetings.
- Opportunity to attend networking meetings is really important, but if we have them during the day, this can exclude a lot of Third Sector organisations who are involved in volunteering, whilst holding down full time jobs- they cannot get time off during the day to attend. Even if you put on a meeting at night though, there are issues- in Wakefield, we had an evening meeting and still did not get many attending. I think one of our conclusions was that any meeting needs to have a set purpose where participants know they are going to get something specific from it that benefits their organisation. Otherwise, if information only, can be done by e mail or newsletters
- VAB does a great job of sending information out to Third Sector who are on its mailing list and organising events for us. However, there are still a lot of Third Sector agencies out there who are not on the list, and many people within the sector don't know what other people within the sector are doing. This can lead to duplication of activities and slow things up, for example, at a recent event I met someone from the Sector who was doing financial management for young people in schools. I had already started to do something along these lines and had checked with various people if there was anything around, but no one knew of anything! This could have resulted in duplication and confusion. If we could somehow have a database of all Third Sector organisations with details of what they are involved in, feel this would be really useful. It would mean someone probably employed initially to collate all the information and perhaps someone to update information as required.

## **Contracting/commissioning**

- Training on commissioning/ person to offer practical, one to one, hands on, help through the whole process – not just general training
- Commissioning should recognise added value

- Commissioning process should be fair/transparent
- Good practice was demonstrated in Wakefield, where they put on a series of events for the Third Sector to meet with representatives of the commissioning teams, so that both parties could start to understand more how each other ticks and what are the particular needs of the sector. This was really well-received by organisations in Wakefield and as far as I know led to a good working relationship between the sectors. In another authority, this did not really happen- the authority made the rules and the Third Sector had to fit. Some particular issues were to do with having a level playing ground for commissioning.
- I have seen projects that have been tendered which are completely unrealistic as far as expected outcomes and time issues. The Third Sector who have been involved in outcomes led projects need to be involved at the design level of projects so that they can input right from the start and help tender ideas to be realistic. Also, there needs to be enough time for people within the sector to complete tenders, as usually Third Sector spends their time juggling all the balls in their court just to keep alive, as well as trying to do their projects well- they need enough time to do the tenders. I know this is being addressed in certain authorities, but unsure about Barnsley

### **Funding**

- If this is a serious exercise we want it to translate into the budget plan as acknowledgement for the work of the sector
- Training and support for groups to understand funding application process, how to fit into 'One Barnsley' targets to gain funding
- Access to funding should be made easier
- One to one/someone who knows the organisation to do the funding bids.

### **Training**

- More project development & management skills for community groups to develop ideas to meet needs
- Support for tendering for contracts

### **Volunteering**

- To develop volunteering we should have borough wide projects to involve people
- We need to define "a Volunteer". Lots of people don't realise they are one.
- Support for personal development of volunteers

### **Infrastructure support**

- Infrastructure organisations need to improve support, needs a more coordinated approach
- Better organisational support e.g. support with constitution(s), HR, Training etc.

### **Asset Transfer**

- Transfer empty buildings to community to manage and this will encourage more groups to start up like youth clubs etc

**Misc**

- Greater access to facilities & resources for community organisations to carry out activities and projects
- Build on success already achieved – continuation and accessible local grants
- One-Stop advice surgery (funding, volunteer recruitment, business planning, finance, legal, HR)
- Community Forums
- Smaller bite sized training/one topic/learning lunch/1 hour.
- All sectors need to be trained in customer care