Section 9 - *Developing Organisations*

Introduction

This section touches on a number of important topics relating to the way groups organise themselves to meet legal and other requirements.

It starts with an article about the role of community workers in changing the culture of the organisation they work within, in this case a local authority, by using the same skills they would use to get community groups to change their approach.

This is followed by two articles on the most common different organisational structures available to groups wanting to become more formalised and briefly explores their advantages and disadvantages. The next eight contributions are concerned with different policies and procedures that groups may need to develop and some ways to go about this. This is followed by suggestions for making a group's office or organising space as green as possible. Two articles explore the issues relating to food within community projects and the legal issues involved.

The section ends with an two articles on project managing, which explore the role of the Community Development Manager with a case study offering suggestions for how best to organise to deliver a community project.

FCDLs resource pack for the Developing Community Organisations course has handouts, exercises and guidance notes on many aspects of community development support to community groups. It covers helping groups to decide their vision, the organisational structures available to them, making meetings effective, project planning, the planning cycle and operational and strategic planning

In the 2001 Skills Manual there is a lot of material on this topic which is still relevant and up to date, including the sections on Selecting and Recruiting Staff. Understanding VCS Organisations, Limited companies and Workers co-ops and the Project and People Managing sections are also useful. Where legal information has changed then new sections have been written for this new manual.

Contents - *Developing Organisations*

TALK TO THE HAND – THE FACE AIN'T LISTENING! - A LOOK AT 'CORPORATE CAPACITY BUILDING'

We've heard a lot about community capacity building, but what's the point of developing community voice if the people and bodies that largely control the resources and services going into these communities aren't listening, or asking?

As well as working to develop the voice of communities then Community Development Workers have a responsibility to develop the ears and active listening of those who make decisions and hold power. This article outlines some of the efforts of a County Council Community Development Team (CDT) to change the culture and approach within its own authority.

It's intended as a brief illustration rather than a 'how to' guide and is based on the premise that corporate or agency capacity building is fundamentally little different from community capacity building, and every bit as important strategically for community empowerment.

Background

The CDT was established in 2000 to support elected members in the new democratic role required by the 'modernising local government' agenda. It currently consists of 9 full time equivalent Community Development Officer (CDO) posts[1], a Training Officer, 2 Senior CDOs and admin support.

Since its establishment the team has reviewed and refined its role in the light of an ever-changing environment, although its strategic objectives remain constant: improved community governance; improved community capacity; improved partnership working and improved social inclusion.

Capacity building is central to improving the Council's community governance. As with community capacity building, it's about ensuring that the organisation has the necessary understanding, confidence, knowledge and skills, underpinned by appropriate values and supported by effective structures and mechanisms.

The key challenge for the team has been to assist the County Council in changing its culture in order to engage more fully and meaningfully with its communities. It has done this through three principal approaches:

a) Developing the underpinning corporate strategies, policies and values.
b) Developing the understanding, commitment and skills of people within the County Council (Officers and Elected Members)
c) 'Brokering' appropriate structures and mechanisms at the interface between Council and communities

1 Each full-time CDO covers one of the 7 Local Authority Districts within the County and has a 'link' responsibility for a Council Service (Dept), a specific community of interest (eg BME, Faith communities, Travellers & Gypsies), and a number of specific initiatives or projects. Two job-share workers work on issues around people with learning or physical disabilities.

Developing strategies and policies

'Getting closer to communities' is everyone's business in the Council and a key role for the team is to support the Council in ensuring that there is a corporate approach across all Services.

The first significant step towards this was the Community Development Policy and Strategy (CDPS), adopted in 1999 and revised in 2002. This was a key document in establishing the corporate commitment and mandate for new ways of working. It set out the principles and values and was supported by a cross-service action plan.

As in community development the 'process' can be as important as the 'product'. The policy was not taken 'off the shelf' of another authority, but was developed over a long period of time by a cross-service working group chaired by the Cabinet portfolio holder for Community Development. The awareness-raising value of this approach should not be underestimated and many of these members formed the core of the subsequent officer group that developed the next significant policy, the Community Engagement and Consultation Strategy (CECS), adopted early in 2006. Through such processes we hope that people might progress from sceptic, through critical friend to ambassador!

The Community Engagement and Consultation Strategy re-affirmed the principles and strengthened the corporate commitment to involving communities, but it is the comprehensive action plan, reviewed annually, that will determine how well the strategy is implemented.

Through this plan, the various services take responsibility for ensuring that community engagement and consultation are part of their annual service plans and, in this way, become mainstreamed and regularly monitored. The cross-service officer group for the project, now entitled "Durham Listens and Responds," oversees and co-ordinates the processes.

Implementation of the policy is strengthened through other mechanisms. For instance committee papers prepared by officers must include a reference to relevant consultation in the 'implications' appendix (alongside consideration of finance, staffing, equality & diversity etc). "Community Engagement and Consultation" is now also included as one of the four 'cross-cutting issues' that need to be addressed in all Service Plans.

Developing understanding and skills

There is always the danger that policies, strategies and mechanisms of this nature, however worthy, are seen as 'centralist' or 'top-down' instructions imposed on officers. Whilst corporate commitment, mandate and accountability are essential, it's not normally the best way of winning hearts, minds and co-operation.

The CDT therefore undertakes a range of roles to try to ensure that the officers and members can develop their own awareness over time, together with the skills and methods appropriate to their needs. These include:

- Seminars for officers and seminars for Members
- Training courses – for officers and members – initially around ABCD (Achieving Better Community Development model) but now a rolling programme of 2 courses: 'Community Works' (a basic introduction to Community Development) and 'Community Engagement' (on principles and techniques). In the pipeline are: Partnership Working; the Compact (with the Voluntary and Community Sector) and short 'technique' workshopsfor specific engagement and consultation methods.
- Toolkits – to supplement and reinforce (not replace) the training sessions

- Professional advice and practical support to Services, officers and Members on in planning and carrying out work with communities. A 'protocol' has been developed that provides a framework for agreeing with Council Services the outcomes anticipated, methods, costs, target participants, equality and diversity considerations, respective roles of CDT and Service Officers, monitoring etc. This not only clarifies expectations and encourages good practice, but also reinforces the Team's role as 'facilitator' rather than as the team that undertakes the work on behalf of Services.
- Working alongside officers – this approach has been very useful in demonstrating more participative and 'fun' methods of consultation e.g. 'washing-line' exercise, use of Audience Response System (instant electronic voting equipment, as in "Who Wants to be a Millionaire").
- Input into specific Council programmes - eg Urban and Rural Renaissance (environmental improvements), Building Schools for the Future, All our Tomorrows (Older People's services), Day Services Improvement programme (for people with learning difficulties)
- Induction of new staff – all new staff will be made aware of the CDP&S and CECS through reference in the Corporate Induction presentation and this will be supplemented by a leaflet on the team's role in the induction pack.

Structures and mechanisms

Part of the Community Development Officer's role is to help develop, support, or facilitate the Council's involvement in local partnerships, fora and networks. For instance they will help establish local working groups on specific projects (such as redevelopment of a town centre) that bring together local representatives, Council officers and other stakeholders.

As well as encouraging officers and members to reach out more into communities, the CDO will support them through signposting and introducing them to the right people and organisations, and briefing them on local issues. Some have regular meetings with the Director or other Senior Manager who represents the Council on the LSP. They will attend local Member Area Panels to support and brief Members and they will advise Members on the use of their Members' Initiative Fund (a small fund that each Member can use to fund community groups and projects).

"Inreach"

The team spent some time last year reviewing its approach and sharpening its focus on the internal capacity building work. Each CDO now has the lead or 'link' responsibility for certain areas of work.

In addition to having responsibility for a geographic area (based on Local Authority Districts), the CDOs have responsibility for 'reaching into' Service areas or sections within the Authority and establishing and maintaining links. This is a developing role, but it tackles a long-standing issue within the County Council (probably a universal issue) that no-one really knew what the CDT did!

A standard presentation has been developed which is being rolled out as the link CDOs introduce themselves and the work of the team to the various Services and sections. The link is two-way and the CDO brings information on current work within the Services into the team which can then discuss opportunities for improved co-ordination and joint working.

Each CDO also has a link responsibility for a community of interest or 'diversity strand' (BME, Gypsies and Travellers, Faith Groups, LGBT, physical/learning disability etc.) to ensure the Council is able to engage more effectively with these.

Conclusions

It's not been an easy transition for the team and the tensions remain in finding the appropriate balance between the internal and external work, and between its strategic and operational roles. It has meant less opportunity to work directly with community groups, which is why and where we probably all started in Community Development. However, a judgement is needed on how limited resources are used most effectively. There are 9 CDO posts in the County Council and some 18,000 employees, a significant number of whom (be they from Environment, Highways, Planning, Corporate Policy, Treasurers, Children & Young People's or Adult & Community Services etc) could be working more creatively and effectively with communities.

It would be so much better if communities can speak to them directly and they are eager to both listen and respond!

Further Reading

The Grit in the Oyster: Community Development Workers in a modernizing local authority. Sarah Banks and Andrew Orton. Oxford University Press and Community Development Journal 2005.

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DIFFERENT ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURES

Introduction

When a number of people get together and form a group to do something, they soon find they need to agree on ways of working together to be effective. If the group is going to be together for some time and needs to get some funds or to be recognised by other organisations then they need to think about a more formal approach. The group will need to think about what structure they should have.

1. The simplest - The unincorporated association

Usually an unincorporated association consists of a membership which elects a committee. The members attend the AGM. The Committee has day-to-day responsibility for running the organisation. It can have a very simple constitution. Most organisations start out this way. It is also the simplest form of consortium, i.e. where several different groups want to work together on the basis of a memorandum agreeing how they will do so.

Advantages:

- No regulators (such as Companies House) to answer to.
- No need to submit annual accounts to anyone.
- Constitution can be very simple.
- Informal operation.

Disadvantages:

- No separate legal identity. The unincorporated association cannot make a contract or enter into a lease – individuals have to do this on its behalf.
- There is no limited liability. If it goes wrong, the committee members are personally liable for its debts.

2. The Limited company

This would probably be a **Company Limited by Guarantee**. The alternative form of company is a **Company Limited by Shares** which is designed for trading and making a profit, rather than for not-for-profit activities.

A company is governed by the Companies Acts, which specify procedures and duties, and place specific legal responsibility on those people who run the company (the directors). It has a more complicated constitution (called the Memorandum and Articles of Association). It has a separate legal existence and can make a contract or sign a lease. The directors may be elected at an AGM, or they might be appointed by the Articles.

Advantages:

- Limited liability for members and directors. Members never pay more than their "guarantee" (usually £1). Directors only do so if they fail to take proper care (see below).
- The company has a separate legal identity. The acts of the company are not (usually) the acts of the individuals who run it.

- If it goes wrong, the company itself may be wound up, but there is nothing to stop those who ran the company from setting up a new company or companies (provided they have not been disqualified as directors for failing to do things properly before).

Disadvantages:

- Need for formal annual accounts, to be submitted to Companies House.
- More paperwork – a register of members, a formal procedure to adopt to change the constitution, the annual return to Companies House, etc.
- The structure of a company limited by guarantee is not entirely appropriate for a not for profit organisation. In a company limited by shares, the members (the shareholders) own the company, and will direct it in line with their own financial interest. In a company limited by guarantee, it is not always clear what role the members have. In the simplest companies, the directors and the members are the same people.
- Directors' protection from legal liability (limited liability) is not available if they get it wrong (see below).
- The company is liable to pay corporation tax (unless it is a charity). It will often need an accountant to draw up the annual accounts so as to ensure that no tax is payable and Companies House requirements are complied with.

Directors are personally liable if they:

- Commit criminal offences
- Authorise a negligent act as a result of which someone suffers injury or damage
- Carry on trading while the company is insolvent and cannot pay its debts
- (If the company is also a charity) are in breach of trust

3. A Community Interest Company

A CIC is a company (usually but not always a company limited by guarantee) with extra rules. It is intended for not-for-profit organisations and social enterprises with a social / community bias.

In any other kind of company, the assets of the company belong to the members. You can have a guarantee company whose constitution says that its profits are ploughed back into the company – but there is nothing to stop the members changing this and taking the profits for themselves. CICs have an 'asset lock' (like a charity) which means that its assets belong to the company, not the members. It cannot therefore turn itself into a different kind of organisation.
The directors of a CIC can be paid a reasonable amount. The CIC regulator decides whether a CIC fulfils the requirements of a CIC on an annual basis.

Advantages:

- Asset lock – no asset stripping
- Brand name – "Community Interest Company"
- Directors can be paid (unlike a charity)
- Could be a share company and invite investment

Disadvantages:

- Must pass the 'community interest test'
- Must complete an annual community interest report to show the company continues to meet the requirements.

- More paperwork than an ordinary company
- It is a new format which is not entirely familiar to funders/ investors, and may therefore be unattractive.

4. Should we be a charity?

An unincorporated association, or a limited company (but not a CIC) can be a charity as well.
A charity is an organisation all of whose objects are charitable. It does not need to be registered with the Charity Commission to be a charity, but most charities are required to register. It is exempt from most rates and taxes (but not VAT) but in exchange it must follow strict rules laid down by the law and the Charity Commission (CC).

Advantages:

- Exempt from income and corporation tax
- Rate relief on premises
- Brand name – "it's for charity"
- Access to certain funds not available to non-charities

Disadvantages:

- Cannot pay trustees to act as trustees. It may be possible to pay trustees for work done for the charity.
- Trustees always personally liable for breach of trust even if limited company. 'Breach of Trust' means that the trustees have not run the charity properly – they have not acted, as the CC says, "prudently, lawfully and in accordance with the governing document."
- The charity is under the control of a Regulator, namely the CC
- Must submit an annual report and accounts to CC
- Charitable status is a 'one-way street' – once assets become charitable they will always be charitable and the organisation can't just decide to deregister.

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COMMUNITY GROUPS LEGAL STATUS AND STRUCTURE

Introduction
This is only a brief introductory note to the various options – it is important that you find out as much as you can about all the options and weigh up all the pros and cons before choosing a structure that is right for your group. However, the legal form you adopt may be influenced by the requirements of grant making bodies. Some funders may insist that groups are companies limited by guarantee and / or registered charities before they will consider an application.

To be able to open a bank account, apply for funding, develop new projects and initiatives, or make partnerships, you'll need to have agreed what your main aims are, how you'll run your group, and how you'll involve your community. Adopting a recognised structure enables you to start doing all these things. Most community groups are one or more of the following:

- **Unincorporated Association**
- **Company Limited by Guarantee**
- **Registered Charity**

} Or if they are going to employ staff or manage large contracts, a group can be both of these – a charitable company.

(for more details on these organisational forms see the previous article in this section)

Community organisations with different names also use these basic structures:

Development Trusts – sometimes registered as charitable companies limited by guarantee. These are "community-led enterprise organisations, working in towns, cities and rural areas across the UK, combining community-led action with business expertise. Development Trusts aim to bring about social, economic and environmental renewal through community enterprise - by setting up enterprises (social businesses) which encourage self-help and reduce dependency. Common activities include community development, training, property development and management, environmental improvements, business development, building restoration and managed workspace. For more information, see the Development Trust Association Wales www.dtawales.org.uk or www.dta.org.uk for England and www.dtascot.org.uk for Scotland.

Co-operatives – often constituted as Companies Limited by Guarantee (though they can just be unincorporated associations or Industrial and Provident Societies – see below). There is no legal definition of what constitutes a co-operative, and it is probably easier to recognise a co-operative by its working practices than to define one. One definition is - "an autonomous association of persons united voluntarily to meet their common economic, social, and cultural needs and aspirations through a jointly-owned and democratically-controlled enterprise". A co-operative group called the "Wales Co-operative Centre" can explain the advantages of becoming a Co-operative Company Limited by guarantee. If you decide that this is the right option for your group, they will help you to register with Companies House - their service is free of charge. Contact details www.walescoop.com

Industrial & Provident Societies (IPS) – a less common structure, with a governing document known as the 'Rules'. An IPS is an organisation conducting an industry, business or trade, either as a co-operative or for the benefit of the community, and which is registered and regulated by the provisions of the Industrial and Provident Societies Acts, 1965 - 1978. This type of structure is often used by housing associations, credit unions and clubs, and is a halfway house between a registered company and an unincorporated association. It has rules of association in much the same way as an unincorporated association, yet it is an incorporated body with the benefit of limited liability.

Community Interest Company (CIC) - a new type of company for Social Enterprises. CICs can be in three company forms - private company limited by shares, limited by guarantee or public limited company. To ensure that they use their assets and profits for the community interest, CICs will have some special additional features. An organisation cannot be both a CIC and a charity.

Further information

www.dti.gov.uk/cics

creg@companieshouse.gov.uk

www.charity-commission.gov.uk/registration/mgds.asp

www.companieshouse.gov.uk

enquiries@companies-house.gov.uk

www.charity-commission.gov.uk

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GROUPS AND SOME OF THE LEGAL OBLIGATIONS THEY FACE

Introduction

The aim of this section is to ensure that groups are fully aware of some of their key legal obligations. These guidelines were developed as part of the Cydcoed community woodlands project and are applicable to many other situations.

Key points about legal obligations

1. All community groups whatever their size or activity have been initially created to achieve particular purposes. Most people who join these groups do so because of their support for those aims, and would usually prefer to spend their 'group time' helping to achieve them. Consequently, it is not surprising that there is usually little interest in matters concerning the legal status and obligations of the group.

2. It is equally unsurprising that potential funders, local authority partners and others have a keen interest (and often duty) to satisfy themselves that a group whose aims they support and want to fund are legitimate and meet various specific legal obligations. Only then will they hand over money or other resources. In addition, most groups will understand the need to develop and apply policies relating to equal opportunities for their staff, volunteers and users. These are often prescribed by law in any event.

3. We have identified a small number of policy areas which groups should look at. These are:
   - Developing organisational policies
   - Legal status, what are the main options and where to find advice
   - Health & Safety, the basic needs
   - All ability access to meet the law
   - Finance management including Insurance and VAT

Summary
Groups need to be aware of the impact of a range of legislation on their own ability to organise and work towards achieving their objectives. The legislation is mostly aimed at protecting the public, users of services and paid and unpaid workers from discrimination, danger to health and fraud. As such it is not intended to, nor should it become a barrier to groups wishing to serve their community. Groups should see the legislation as supporting the fair and efficient running of their organisation.

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WHY ORGANISATIONAL POLICIES ARE IMPORTANT

Introduction

As organisations develop they need to write and implement a number of policies in order to comply with legislation, for example when employing staff (see the article on this later in this section). There are other reasons for deciding to adopt a wide range of policies:

Policies help to demonstrate effective management

Many funders ask community groups to demonstrate that they are able to manage effectively by asking to see organisational policies, or require that groups make a commitment to working towards the development and implementation of policies. Core policies cover topics such as:

- Equal Opportunities
- Environmental issues
- Health and Safety and Risk Assessments
- Volunteering
- Child Protection / Vulnerable Persons
- Financial management and procedures
- Personnel issues, such as a Recruitment Policy

Policies should be to the point and practical, setting out how your group will deal with these issues and establishing your commitment to best practice. They help to demonstrate that you are accountable and consistent in the way that you work.

Insurance companies may require them

Many insurers are now asking to see copies of Child Protection / Vulnerable Persons and Health and Safety policies before they will consider issuing or renewing public liability policies.

Children's charities are now breaking the law if they don't have a child protection policy.

Policies help with decision-making and reduce risk of things going wrong!

Once these policies are in place, it's easier to manage the work of your group – procedures are set out. They can help to prevent potentially devastating incidents.

How to do it?

Policy development does involve some work, but may save even more time in the longer term. It can be a useful process to talk through and agree on how your group wishes to manage its affairs.
There are many sample policies available, from your local CVS, details from www.navca.org.uk or other local infrastructure organisations, check your local councils web site for contact details. Or from relevant websites such as NCVO www.ncvo-vol.org.uk, Pay and Employment Rights Service PERS www.pers.org.uk, Volunteering Wales www.volunteering-wales.net, Volunteering England www.volunteering.org.uk, Volunteer Development Scotland www.vds.org.uk

One way to develop, or update policies, is to agree on the topics you want to cover, and then a couple of people take on to collect some examples and read through them. They then present them for discussion at a group meeting, or over several meetings. It's important that all policies are thoroughly discussed by your management committee and formally approved and adopted.

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EMPLOYMENT LAW AND GOOD PRACTICE - IN EMPLOYMENT

Introduction

This does not cover issues such as the minimum wage, maximum working hours, etc. These are subject to changes in the law and a responsible employer will get detailed up-to-date advice.

What it does cover is the broad outline of workers' rights and good practice on the part of employers. These are issues which don't change much over the years - but do turn up on an all too regular basis in employment tribunals.

Contracts of Employment

All workers have a contract, whether in writing or not.

- A contract is an agreement between two parties - employer and employee - and can only be varied by mutual agreement.
- If a contract is not in writing, tribunals and courts will decide what was in effect in the contract (implied terms). The more you put in writing, the less is open to interpretation.
- Some terms of a contract are determined by law (e.g. minimum period of notice).
- A contract can include terms that improve on the legal minimum, but cannot offer less than the legal minimum.

Employees are normally entitled to receive, within two months of starting their employment, a written statement of particulars of their employment detailing:

- Names of employer and employee;
- Date employment commenced, and details of any continuous employment;
- Rate of pay;
- Hours of work;
- Holiday arrangements;
- Rules about sickness and sick pay;
- Pension arrangements;
- Job title and employee's duties;
- Place of work, and employer's address;
- Length of notice on both sides;
- Length of contract (for non-permanent jobs);
- Collective agreements affecting the terms and conditions of employment;
- Disciplinary procedure;
- Name of person to whom the worker should apply if dissatisfied with a grievance or disciplinary decision.

Grievance Procedures

Employees have the right to know to whom a grievance should be addressed, and how to apply for it to be dealt with.

You need a grievance procedure that will comply with the minimum legal requirements. This requires a three-step procedure:

1. That the employee puts the grievance in writing;
2. That the employer invites the employee to a meeting to discuss and deal with the grievance, and reports to the employee in writing;
3. That the employee has a right of appeal.

If you do not comply extra compensation can be awarded against you by a tribunal.

You need to consider:

- Who deals with grievances?
- What are the contingency plans if that person is inappropriate, or not available?
- How to avoid conflicts of interest. Is there someone independent who can hear appeals?
- Does the procedure apply only to employees, or to volunteers and committee members as well?
- Appropriate timescales (a grievance should be dealt with as quickly as possible).
- Should there be a right to be represented? Best practice would indicate that the employee should be allowed to be accompanied.

Disciplinary Procedures

You need a disciplinary procedure which complies with the legal minimum. This requires:

- Written notice to the employee of the disciplinary matter, coupled with an invitation to a meeting;
- A meeting at which the disciplinary matter is discussed. The employee is entitled to be represented;
- Written notice to the employee of the decision, with details of the mandatory right of appeal.

Details of the procedure have to be given to the employee in their contract or written statement.

A failure to comply with the statutory procedure as a minimum makes the dismissal automatically unfair. This procedure applies to all dismissals, not just disciplinary ones.

What should a good disciplinary procedure include?

- It should be clear to whom the procedure applies - e.g. employees, volunteers.
- It should be clear who makes the decision at every level.
- It should give some indication of what constitutes misconduct.
- It should be clear that a disciplinary matter requires **investigation** before a disciplinary hearing is held, but nevertheless the matter must be dealt with as quickly as possible with no undue delay.
- The person under investigation has the right to be appropriately represented at a disciplinary hearing, have their case heard and question the evidence.
- At all levels, no-one should be judge in their own cause - i.e. the investigator should not sit on the disciplinary panel. This may not be practicable in very small organisations

This article was written by Martin Jenkins for the 2001 skills manual and has been updated by Alan Robinson, a solicitor specialising in work with voluntary and community sector groups and charities. alan@robinsons-solicitors.com

A PROGRAMME OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BASED ON WOODLANDS

Introduction

Cydcoed is a £16M, 7-year Forestry Commission Wales grant programme funded by the European Union and Welsh Assembly Government from 2001 - 2008. It has funded projects that use woodland for community development. The national policy framework encourages economic development through community empowerment. Targeted at communities deprived in a European context, Cydcoed only funds community groups. Therefore, it gives power as well as money. Many groups lack capacity and their trust in government is low. To operate at this level, Cydcoed has to be simple and flexible, risk aware, not risk averse, and make early formal commitments. The approach appears to work. Most financial and physical targets had been exceeded. Outcomes are woodlands that provide local benefits through community participation ("local development forestry") and powerful community groups able to participate in decisions about their locality.

Our targets were:

- Local participation in 236 woods covering 3331ha.
- New management practices that provide long-term local benefits in 236 woods covering 3168ha.
- 24 new community woods covering 163ha.
- 4 woodland and timber related businesses supported.
- 97 woodland and timber related jobs safeguarded.

Cydcoed is not only about formal woodland improvement or tree planting but encouraging imaginative and pragmatic applications. Cydcoed funded up to 100% of the costs of works including labour costs that contribute directly to the project objectives. In their publicity material they gave some examples of the kind of scheme they had in mind.

- Forestry management works designed to improve the ecological, social, or economic value of woods for local communities, e.g: thinning, conversion to broadleaves, coppicing, woodland related habitat creation.
- Physical access works (including interpretation and amenity works such as installation of shelters and benches as well as path creation) for pedestrians and other recreational users of the forest such as cyclists and horse riders. These works will benefit local communities, either through improving access directly for the local residents or by encouraging visitors from outside the community that will provide local economic benefit. Access works can be within woods or outside woods where they improve access to woodland.
- Works designed to improve cultural access for the local community, e.g: participatory appraisal sessions to decide plans for local woods, artistic works in and associated with local woods, assimilation and presentation of information about local woods of interest to local communities.
- Tree planting and establishment of community woodland on non-agricultural land.
- Training of people working on the project where it is needed to deliver the objectives of the project, i.e: training cannot be an objective in its own right.

- Creation of forest facilities such as forest schools and other woodland based educational facilities, tree nurseries, and forest based recreation facilities where these are directly linked to a geographically defined forest location.
- Support for timber and woodland related businesses where those businesses are directly involved in delivering the Cydcoed project, e.g: consultancy time for technical advice, educational visits for members of the business.
- Boundary works (including hedges) on the boundaries of woods or within woods where they provide environmental and / or amenity improvements of benefit to the community.
- Direct administration of Cydcoed projects up to 10% of total project costs. This is not a standard fee, it must be the actual costs only e.g: time of paid staff, office overhead costs during administration of the project.

NB: all projects must contribute to development of the forest resource in a way that benefits local communities

Cydcoed produced a number of forms and guidance notes:

- An application form;
- Standard completion forms;
- All ability access guidelines ;
- Legal status;
- Model constitution;
- How to value land;
- VAT guidance;
- Insurance and safety guidance;
- Proof of spend and ineligible expenditure;
- Schools project guidance.

All of these are available on www.forestry.gov.uk/Cydcoed

Some of these have been adapted and appear in this section of the Skills Manual.

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ALL ABILITY ACCESS

Introduction

These guidance notes were developed for groups working on Cydcoed community woodland funded projects to encourage disabled access provision wherever possible and to outline the Disability Discrimination Act requirements. Many older and disabled people and families with young children are prevented from using large areas of the countryside because of unnecessary barriers and a lack of good facilities. There are over 8.6 million disabled people in Great Britain. Disabled people are not a homogenous group, and there is a wide diversity of impairment. There is a tendency to focus on the needs of wheelchair users when making decisions about woodland access and facilities, but it is vital to ensure that any approach to accessibility is fully inclusive, and tackles the barriers faced by all disabled people. Older people and families with young children often have specific needs similar to those of some disabled people, for example small children and some older people cannot walk very far or have restricted balance or dexterity.

Disability Discrimination Act 1995

The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) places duties on providers of goods, facilities and services, making it unlawful to treat disabled people less favourably for a reason related to their disability. A service or facility is anything that you do to provide access or assist people in taking access, e.g. a stile or pedestrian gate. We know that the whole countryside cannot be made fully accessible. The aim should be to provide a range of opportunities for everyone as far as possible.

Picnic and BBQ areas.

Design at least some tables and benches with accessibility in mind. Where picnic tables are provided at least one should be fully accessible. There are plenty of good designs around and the main issue is to get things sited in the right place. For example: close to parking areas, on flat firm ground, easily accessible from paths (avoid steps if possible). All year round access is important so if the ground conditions are unsuitable, the access and standing should be surfaced.

Leaflets and Interpretation

Inaccessible information is a significant barrier to people trying to access the outdoors. Expectations of services and facilities are often low because people do not have access to the information they need. Publicise your accessible routes to disabled people. You could think of providing information in a range of formats, for example in large print, Braille or audio. Royal National Institute for the Blind provides a Braille translation service and it is often very easy to produce large print text only versions of information.

- Avoid the use of fonts below 12 point wherever possible and try and have important information in 14 point. Use simple fonts. Use strong contrast and clear rather than pastel colours.

Ensure signs and information boards are readable from a wheelchair and that people with a visual impairment can get close to the sign to read it. Consider producing key information in Braille.

Buildings

Any Cydcoed funded buildings must be accessible to wheelchair users, people with mobility impairments and pushchairs, and take into account the needs of, for example, people who are deaf or blind. The legislative requirements and accompanying design guidance are contained in the Building Regulations, Approved Document M, 2004 edition – Access To and Use of Buildings.

Some examples of what to check for:

- All entrances ramped for wheelchair access
- Doors wide enough to accommodate wheelchairs

- Provision of accessible WC
- Important information available in large print format

Toilets

Where toilets are provided there should be an accessible toilet, this applies to temporary toilets too. The toilet should be a separate, unisex toilet, not one inside either the men's or ladies. This is important if the disabled person requires assistance and has a carer of the opposite sex. For further details on the design and layout of an accessible toilet can be found in the Part M document and the Access Code. The preference is for accessible toilets to be available 24 hrs a day where possible. This can be achieved by fitting a RADAR (Royal Association for Disability and Rehabilitation) lock but leaving the toilet unlocked during normal opening hours. Keys can be ordered from RADAR.

Further Information

Disability Discrimination Act www.legislation.hmso.gov.uk/acts/acts1995/1995050.htm

Disability Discrimination Act Codes of Practice www.drc-gb.org/

Code of Practice on Access and Mobility (on-line reference source on access issues, including countryside environments). www.accesscode.info

Building Regulations Part M 2004, ODPM www.odpm.gov.uk/stellent/groups/odpm_buildreg/documents

divisionhomepage/br0053.hcsp

Fieldfare Trust maintains the Countryside for All guidance – path standards and design, interpretation guidelines etc. - and also provides a consultancy service. www.fieldfare.org.uk

The Sensory Trust provides consultancy and guidance, a regular newsletter and some online case studies relating to design of greenspace and interpretation. They are based at The Eden project. www.sensorytrust.org.uk

The Calvert Trust specialises in outdoor activities for disabled people with three centres at Kielder, Keswick and Exmoor. www.calvert-trust.org.uk

RNIB provide guidance on design of written material and also provide a Braille translation service. 'See it Right' pack. www.rnib.org.uk

RADAR - Royal Association for Disability and Rehabilitation - manages and promotes the national key scheme for accessible toilets. www.radar.org.uk

RADAR 12 City Forum, 250 City Road, London EC1V 8AF
Tel: 020 7250 3222 Fax: 020 7250 0212 Minicom: 020 7250 4119

Break Free is involved in developing and providing information on the outdoors for disabled people www.breakfreeinfo.com

The Centre for Accessible Environments (CAE) is concerned with the practicalities of inclusive design in the built environment. Technical information, reference lists and consultancy services are available from 70 South Lambeth Road London SW8 1RL Tel 020 7840 0125. www.cae.org.uk

Article adapted from material supplied by:
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DELIVERING PROJECTS SAFELY

Introduction

This article is based on the general advice on health and safety management for community groups running a Cydcoed funded project where you will have some form of responsibility for the safety of your own staff, people working on the project, visitors to the project site, and the general public. It is therefore important that you pay attention to the management of health and safety for your project.

Whose responsibility?

Whoever controls (e.g. owns or manages) the site should co-ordinate activities so they do not compromise health and safety and give safety information about the site to whoever commissions the work.

Whoever commissions the work has to ensure that health and safety management is planned before work starts and that the plan is followed during the project.

Before work starts, somebody should plan how health and safety is to be managed during the project and make sure everyone knows what to do.

Somebody should be in charge of health and safety while the work is in progress and make sure that everyone knows what to do.

Anyone working on the project has a responsibility to help manage health and safety and to look after their own health and safety.

The main thing is to make sure that responsibilities and lines of communication are clear.

The Health and Safety Executive help with this by providing guidance on roles and responsibilities in various types of work.

On the next page there is a Framework Table: Health and Safety management of a project:

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Common sense description	Projects that include forestry work	Projects that include construction or demolition	Comments
	It is the HSE's Framework for Managing Health and Safety in Forestry Operations	Construction projects including footpath creation which last more than 30 days and involve 4+ workers and all demolition projects come under the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 1994.	If the constuction or demolition works in the project will last 30 working days or involve more than 500 person days then the local Health and Safety Executive Office must be notified.
Whoever controls the site for the project	Landowner on which work takes place. Co-ordinates the health and safety activities of the overall forest environment. Gather information about hazards on and around work sites and pass to the Manager		If your group is not the owner of the land, make sure that your agreement with the owner sets out clearly who has the Landowner role
Whoever commissions the work	Forestry Works Manager: uses information from the landowner for a risk assessment for work on the site. Selects contractors who meet your specified health and safety measures Liase with landowner Monitor health and safety on site	The organisation commissioning the work; appoints a Planning Supervisor early in the project Gives them project health and safety information. Appoints a Principle Contractor who is competent and resourced; who prepares a health and safety plan before works starts. Keep the health and safety file given to you	In most cases, a person or people in your group will take on these roles if they are competent and adequately resourced. Complex projects may need more than one person or organisation You may wish to appoint agents to act on your group's behalf but they will charge. If you appoint a Client's agent you have to notify the HSE.
Somebody has to plan how health and safety will be managed		Planning Supervisor to co-ordinate H&S aspects of design, pre-tender planning, and collation of a health and safety file. Ensure the HSE is notified of the project, Co-ordinates co-operation between designers. Ensure a pre-tender stage health and safety plan is prepared. Ensure a health and safety file is produced	
Somebody has to be in charge of health and safety management while the work is in progress	Contractor: provider of a forestry service Work with the Manager to meet H&S standards. Select and manage competent sub-contractors to ensure good health and safety practices	Principle contractor in charge of health and safety management, usually the contractor in charge of the work. Carry out or manage health and safety aspects of the work	
Anyone working on the project has a responsibility to help manage health and safety	Sub-contractors; person engaged by a contractor other than by direct employment Co-operate with arrangements for health and safety on site and manage their own health and safety		

GUIDANCE ON INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS FOR COMMUNITYWOODLANDS

Introduction

Insurance is complex and this article can only be a general guide to insurance issues that are most relevant to such projects. You should consult with an insurance broker or company to assess your own insurance needs and identify the most appropriate form of cover.

Public Liability Insurance

Public Liability Insurance is for claims against you by members of the public or other organisations. It is not a legal requirement but funders tend to require that your activities are covered by Public Liability Insurance. Normally, this has to be for at least £5 million per claim. There is scope to reduce this to £2 million if the project is deemed as low risk.

Employers Liability Insurance

Under the Employers' Liability (Compulsory Insurance) Act 1969, most employers are required to insure against liability for injury or disease to their employees arising out of their employment. Employers must be insured for at least £5 million. The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) enforces the law on employers liability insurance and HSE Inspectors can check whether companies have employers liability insurance with an approved insurer for £5 million.

HSE produce a free leaflet, Employers' Liability (Compulsory Insurance) Act 1969 A guide for employers (available at www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/hse40.pdf or contact HSE Infoline: 08701 545500, hseinformationservices@natbrit.com

Even if you only have volunteers you should make sure that they are not acting as employees under contract law, e.g.: if you control when they work or if you pay them more than out of pocket expenses they may be de facto employees. If they are, you may require Employers' Liability insurance. If in doubt, seek professional advice.

Motor Insurance

Motor insurance is compulsory if you have any motor vehicles which travel on the public road. In addition, any employees or volunteers that use their vehicles for work (other than to get to and from home and work) must inform their insurers.

Other types of insurance you can obtain:

- Buildings insurance
- Contents insurance
- Product liability insurance – if you sell goods to the public.
- Trustee indemnity insurance
- Professional indemnity insurance
- Employees' dishonesty (fidelity insurance),
- Business interruption insurance,
- Legal expenses insurance
- e-risk insurance.

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Juliet Wilson

GREENING YOUR OFFICE

Introduction

This article aims to help organisations to take some basic steps to develop greener office practices which will save resources and money for groups and contribute to the wider need of our society to conserve dwindling natural resources.

Green audit

The first step is to conduct an online green audit to establish your current practice. The best place to start is the Friends of the Earth (Scotland) website www.green-office.org.uk which offers a detailed online self completed audit process. Specific advice is then offered to help you to green your office.

Remember that if you save resources you often save money! Some easy ways to make your office greener include:

1. Purchasing

- If buying new products, look for ones that are energy efficient. Modern electrical goods come with an A-E energy efficiency rating (A is the most efficient). Even though energy efficient models may be a little more expensive to buy they are cheaper to run in the long term.
- Where possible, buy products made locally.
- Buy recycled or reclaimed products where possible, including second hand office furniture, reconditioned computer equipment and recycled paper products.
- Make sure your office uses only recycled paper products, for example use recycled manila envelopes as standard, and if you need a smarter envelope, use recycled white.
- Reuse labels for envelopes can be produced with your logo on - an ideal promotional tool!
- Window envelopes are not easily recycled and should be avoided.

2. Recycling

- Recycle used office materials: paper, print cartridges, drink cans etc.
- When replacing office equipment, recycle the old equipment; most areas have voluntary groups that take in old computers, and office furniture, or use freecycle www.freecycle.org
- If sending out a large mailing, use recycled address labels.

3. Save Energy

- Turn off the photocopier at night. A photocopier left on overnight wastes enough energy to make 5300 A4 copies.
- Switch off all electrical appliances when not in use.
- Low energy light bulbs can knock 80% off your lighting bill.
- Only boil as much water as you need at a time

4. Reducing Use of Paper

The internet and email are often heralded as the start of a move towards the paperless office, but many people actually use more paper now that they have internet access! Some ways to reduce paper use:

- Use both sides of paper for photocopying and printing
- Re-use paper that has been used on one side - for rough notes, in the fax machine in-tray and for internal documents.
- Many letters can be replaced by emails - this saves on paper and postage costs.
- Where possible, avoid printing out emails.

A more detailed pack has been prepared under the Every Action Counts project and is on their web site www.everyactioncounts.org.uk

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Further Information

Visit Friends of the Earth Green Office Website:

www.green-office.org.uk

Green Building Store Website for catalogue of green furniture etc

www.greenbuildingstore.co.uk

Green Stationery, Studio One website for environmentally friendly stationery.

www.greenstat.co.uk

Remarkable, for stationery made from recycled tyres, plastic vending cups and other waste materials.

www.remarkable.co.uk

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This article was created from the All Aboard the Green Bus Guide – book 2 of the National Playbus Association

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FOOD FOR COMMUNITY GROUPS

Introduction

This article provides basic information about sourcing and storing food for groups who provide refreshments to staff, volunteers and those using their service; it gives advice to groups who provide a professional catering service, and to individuals who wish to pursue ethical buying.

1. Local Produce

Buying locally produced food supports local farmers and producers, helping to sustain a vibrant local economy, and means that less fuel is used in the transport of the food. Buying from small local traders helps sustain the local economy and vibrant shopping streets. Farmers markets, whole-food shops and some small grocers are the best places to source local food. The Co-op has ethical standards for all its own brand food and drink products. Ethical goods can also be bought from whole-food shops, delicatessens, fair trade outlets and some small grocers. Supermarkets vary in the amount of produce they source locally, so check with your supermarket branch or visit their website.

2. Organic Produce

Up to 1,000 different chemicals have been found in our food, according to government figures, over a third of fruit and vegetables and 40 per cent of cereal products contain pesticide residues. Organic food is produced without artificial chemicals and research suggests it is beneficial to health as well as to the environment. Try SUMA products either from the shops they supply or through direct bulk purchase[1], the Ethical Superstore is also a good source, and as similar firms are opening in different parts of the country all the time it is worth exploring who is supplying your locality. Mainstream supermarkets are increasingly offering organic foods; but there is also evidence some of them are treating suppliers and their products in the same ruthless way they are known to treat non-organic suppliers.

3. Fair Trade

For products that are not available locally (e.g. tea, coffee, chocolate and bananas), choose fair-trade. Fair-trade ensures that the producers are paid a fair price. Often the fair-trade premium on a product is what enables a family to send their children to school. Fair Trade products are now widely available at competitive prices and in packs suitable for conferences and catering.

4. Packaging, storage and serving

- Choose re-usable containers for storage.
- Use recyclable packaging made of paper, metal, glass, cellulose fibres or bio-degradable plastic.
- Use fabric carrier bags.
- Avoid plastics that aren't easily recycled.
- Avoid single-use, disposable packaging.
- Buy loose vegetables.
- Avoid plastics that leach questionable chemicals.
- Avoid plastic cutlery. Use stainless steel utensils.
- Microwave food and drink in oven-proof glass or ceramic dishes with lids.

1 See the example of PAN Stoke food co-op in section 6 on Working Together Effectively

Useful websites:

Goodness Direct for Specialist foods: www.goodnessdirect.co.uk

Innocent Drinks website. The company is ethical and the website is fun. www.innocentdrinks.co.uk

Vegetarian restaurants and whole-food shops website: www.vegetarian-restaurants.net

Friends of the Earth Safer Chemicals Campaign website: www.foe.co.uk/campaigns/safer_chemicals

The ethical superstore website: www.ethicalsuperstore.com

Suma Wholesalers of vegetarian, organic, gluten free and fair trade foods. www.suma.co.uk

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Case Study

CAFÉ PROJECT

Introduction

The Friends of Eastbourne Park are a sub group of the Bank Top Community Partnership. The Friends wanted to attract more people into the park on a regular basis by improving the facilities available. They had the idea of providing a catering facility in a local park by adapting the Bowls Pavilion to accommodate a small kitchen and servery. The facility would open during the summer months using volunteer labour.

They decided to undertake some informal consultation with park users and the local community through discussions as to whether they would use a cafe if one existed in the park, and when they would use it. After receiving a generally positive response they decided to undertake a more detailed feasibility study and drew up a checklist as an "aide-memoire" to ensure they had addressed all the issues, especially the statutory services requirements before embarking on the project.

People to contact to gather information

- Approach the relevant Council department to discuss the project and receive permission to operate a café and to adapt the building
- Approach Environmental Health for registration of Café and advice on servery layout, design, food hygiene, operation etc.
- Approach Building Control for accessibility issues, approval of adaptations, and fire regulations
- Approach Planning and find out if it needs Planning Permission or is it ancillary to current use?
- Approach catering firms for advice on layout, equipment for kitchen and servery
- Draw out initial plan of area and equipment needed
- Get estimates for work including security / alarm from different firms
- Seek quote for insurance – contents and public liability

Funding

Make applications for grants for cost of work to include kitchen layout and crockery, cutlery, tables, chairs, fridge freezer etc.

If successful with grants:

- Organise Food Hygiene training for volunteers
- Contact kitchen installers / builders / joiners and arrange time to begin work
- Arrange insurance
- Purchase white goods, crockery, cutlery, tables, chairs
- Agree opening date and ongoing operating hours
- Advertise through newsletter and in the park
- Contact press – try to get a celebrity to open
- Purchase stock

How to make the project financially sustainable

- List costs of the operation of the cafe eg insurance, training costs of volunteers, electricity, gas, water, cost of materials, purchase price of confectionery etc
- Source goods locally and use recycled equipment
- Agree pricing structure taking care not to undercut local outlets -profit margins
- Arrange promotion of opening hours and special events in the park to increase usage and boost takings
- Calculation of takings needed to reach sustainability; monitor on a regular basis especially at the beginning and to reassess the operation and adjust if targets are not being met
- Speak to customers to seek their views on what is being offered, opening hours, prices being charged etc.

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PROJECT MANAGEMENT

Introduction

Project management is underpinned by three core values that determine the effectiveness of delivery. The common phrase often used to describe these is 'on time, on spec (specification), on budget'.

This is a common phrase in an economically viable business which may not translate so easily to a community development focused project. These projects have many variables and constraints and with no financial profit driven goals to motivate outputs.

The expectation is of a high standard of delivery, and this is often the determining factor of sustaining a project in a volatile funding marketplace. The lynchpin that interweaves and shapes the project success, is the manager. This person has either been given a detailed time-bound project specification or has had to design one that meets the project funding criteria. Already we have tripped and landed into the quagmire of time, spec and budget! It is imperative that the community development manager (CDM) is fully equipped with the necessary skills, knowledge and attitude to carry out this challenging task. The formula then for a highly successful managed project is (ASK ISIT) ASK – what attitude, skills, knowledge do I need and ISIT on time – on spec – on budget?

The Community Development Manager

1. The attitude of a CDM should be one that is open to learning that results in positive changes in values, and this can be measured through an evident increase in self esteem and confidence. This approach allows the CDM to explore the fundamental nature of managing a community development project through building and sustaining constructive relationships. The CDM needs an attitude of positive regard for others that requires trust to delegate responsibilities, thereby demonstrating the trust to 'let go' and know the task will be carried out.

2. The CDM must possess the skills to carry out this work. The required skills are multi-faceted but principally stem from relational-communication. It is important to establish relationships and maintain these through effective communication so they become embedded into the ethos of the community development project. This cannot be over emphasised as quite often projects fail due to breakdown in communication.
One of the key aspects of project's success may lie in building community consortiums that require both individual relationship building and group facilitation. This needs such skills as active listening, critical thinking and reflection, promoting group cohesion through teamwork, leadership, negotiation and mediation. This collaborative working ethos provides a safety net that helps in catching mistakes before they hit the ground and can often be the source of support during the lifespan of the project.

3. A firmly rooted knowledge base is an essential attribute of the CDM. Managing a diverse and complex community project requires local, academic and practice based knowledge.
Local knowledge gives the CDM the advantage of easily networking relevant people, resources and information. Theoretical knowledge provides concepts that help explain purpose and rationale and a good CDM will recognise the importance of contingency plans and will therefore always strive to top up their knowledge.

Project delivery

Having established the underpinning value-base of community projects and the integral role of the CDM, the next logical step is to examine how these are integrated into the project delivery as manageable tasks. The preferred method of this model is to ask the following questions:

Firstly, is it on time?

Community projects are often time-bound within the scope of the funding and therefore strict schedules need to be adhered to. The CDM can introduce techniques such as [1]Gantt Charts and [2]Pert charts that map out the task, the time and resource and budget control. These all help to ensure the project is on time.

Secondly, is it on spec?

The community project management plan must explicitly and coherently state the purpose of the project together with the objectives that determine the realistic goals (outputs). A good governance model such as SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, time-bound) can be used to ensure all the set objectives are being met. This can be used as a helpful checklist to monitor each aspect of the overall plan and can detect any problems with specifications not being met, such as budget overspend or resource allocations not in place at the right time to meet the next objective. An early warning system can save time, money and headaches!

Thirdly, is it on budget?

The project must be economically viable and the CDM has the responsibility to ensure that all aspects of the project are in keeping with the budget variables such as human resource costs, materials, etc. All accounting procedures and policies should be in place to achieve a smooth running system that is simple to manage. When all three questions are asked, the answers provide the necessary feedback that in turn helps the CDM to make modifications and changes to enable the desired outputs.

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1 Gantt charts help plan out the tasks that need to be met with each project see www.mintools.com for further information
2 Pert (Programmes Evaluation & Review Technique) provides a formula for mapping the timescale of the project see www.mintools.com for further information

Case Study

PROJECT MANAGEMENT

Background

This is a Church based outreach project with external funding for part-time staff for 3 years. The project has attracted the funding due to the preliminary work it carried out on a needs analysis of this community. This identified the targeted area as ranking high on the multiple deprivation scale, having a very influential 'paramilitary' group presence in the area and having a high number of crime and anti-social behaviour annoyance incidents recorded by the number of complaints recorded by the local Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI).

Through a [1]research questionnaire carried out with a cross section sample of the community by gender and age, respondents clearly and unanimously stated that 'something needed to be done to address the growing antisocial behaviour predominantly carried out by young teenagers from the area'. There was a strong desire to see that work was urgently undertaken to 'begin bridging the generational gap' that exists.

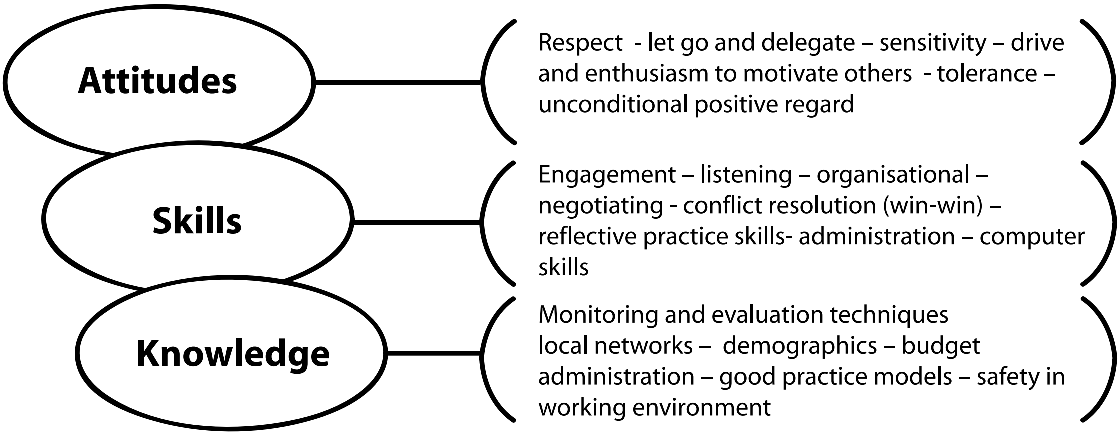
The identified location of most 'incidents' and 'contested space' within the community was the railway station and the subway which runs underneath the tracks, joining two distinct diverse residential areas that have since the 1960's unkindly been dubbed as 'snob hill' above the station, and 'elephants graveyard' below.

The outreach project aims to place experienced workers at a carefully designed meeting point for work with young people during the times they are most physically present - at weekends, late at night stretching into the early hours. Another aspect of the project is to create opportunities for an intergenerational adoption of the railway station, and to introduce a poly tunnel to seed and grow flowers and shrubbery that can be sited at the station.

The co-ordinating group recognised that a project manager was needed to oversee the programmes and that person needed to be robust and courageous to tackle these sensitive and complex issues.

Deciding on the kind of project manager

One of the first tasks we faced was to decide what type of project manager we wanted to employ to bring the project to life and sustain it. We recognised that this was going to be a continuous practice of reflecting and refining throughout the lifespan of the project. We began the process by writing our three key words on a flipchart page and mapped out what each of these aspects might mean in relation to the project.



1 The research was designed by a local volunteer professional researcher from the University of Ulster who also trained a team of local volunteers in how to conduct interviews.

Planning the project

The next task was to address the three key questions: Is it on time? Is it on spec? Is it on budget? The project had a 3 year budget and one of the requirements stipulated by the funding body was that we submit the project's specific targets and timings. To ensure this was efficiently mapped out, we introduced a simple project schedule chart based on a Gantt chart template that listed all the tasks that needed to be carried out each year under clear action headings. These 'tasks' make up the project specification and included the budget tasks with clearly identified target completion times.

As we began writing these up we realised that it was important to ensure that all the necessary tasks were identified so that each aspect of the project could be critically analysed and matched to measurable outputs. It was also crucial to make sure that the budget had spending forecasts to help the project to run smoothly and without financial worry.

The sample project schedule chart shown on the next pages maps the tasks we decided needed to be carried out during the first 6 months, we wrote these down the left hand side and then depicted the target duration and completion dates by coloured boxes.

This helps us to identify whether the tasks (spec) are being carried out and whether the project is on time. We also needed to include a check on our budget so we added our income and expenditure according to its type and forecasted dates.

We thought this would be an excellent way to keep check of our measurable outputs and ease recording and so greatly help with our evaluation process.

We realised there was a gap in our flow of information and we needed to keep track of each specific task, and so we broke these down further into manageable bite size schedules that could be checked on a weekly basis, a sample of this can be found in the second diagram.

By implementing this relatively simple model we are confident our project is on 'time' on 'spec' and on 'budget' which leaves us more time to focus on our primary project aim of building positive relationships.

Tasks	June	July	August	Septem-ber	October	Novem-ber
Identify needs of project						
Needs analysis						
Desk research: statistics						
Population statistics						
Recorded crime/disturbance incidents PSNI statistics						
Questionnaires						
Focus groups						
Design management strategy						
Model of coordinating group/s						
Connectors with key stakeholders						
Establish local networks						
Interconnections between groups						
Building resource planning group						
Holding company – landowners &						
Public property managers						
Marketing managers						
Local representatives						
Project administration managing group						
Advertising marketing policies						
Employment legislation						
Funding administration requirements						
Project budget administration group						
Budget requirements						
Checks and balances						
Accounts recording						
Invoices and requisitions wages process						
Project monitoring & evaluation group						
Carry out bi-monthly monitoring task & year end project evaluation with All stakeholders, (employed staff Coordinators Volunteers, members)						
Budget Income						
Budget Spend						
Marketing						
Advertising						
Recruitment						
Wages						

Building resource planning group to action	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4
Holding company – landowners check service connections				
Portacabin sourcing				
Site meeting				
Letter to company requesting use of land with explanation of project				
Public property managers meet re safety issues; need track safety training				
Marketing managers meeting Getting the right publicity with good advertisements sourcing contacts to free adverts on design logos, leaflets websites. transport				
Local representatives kept informed Posters, leaflet drop, word of mouth,				
Budget Income				
Budget Spend				

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