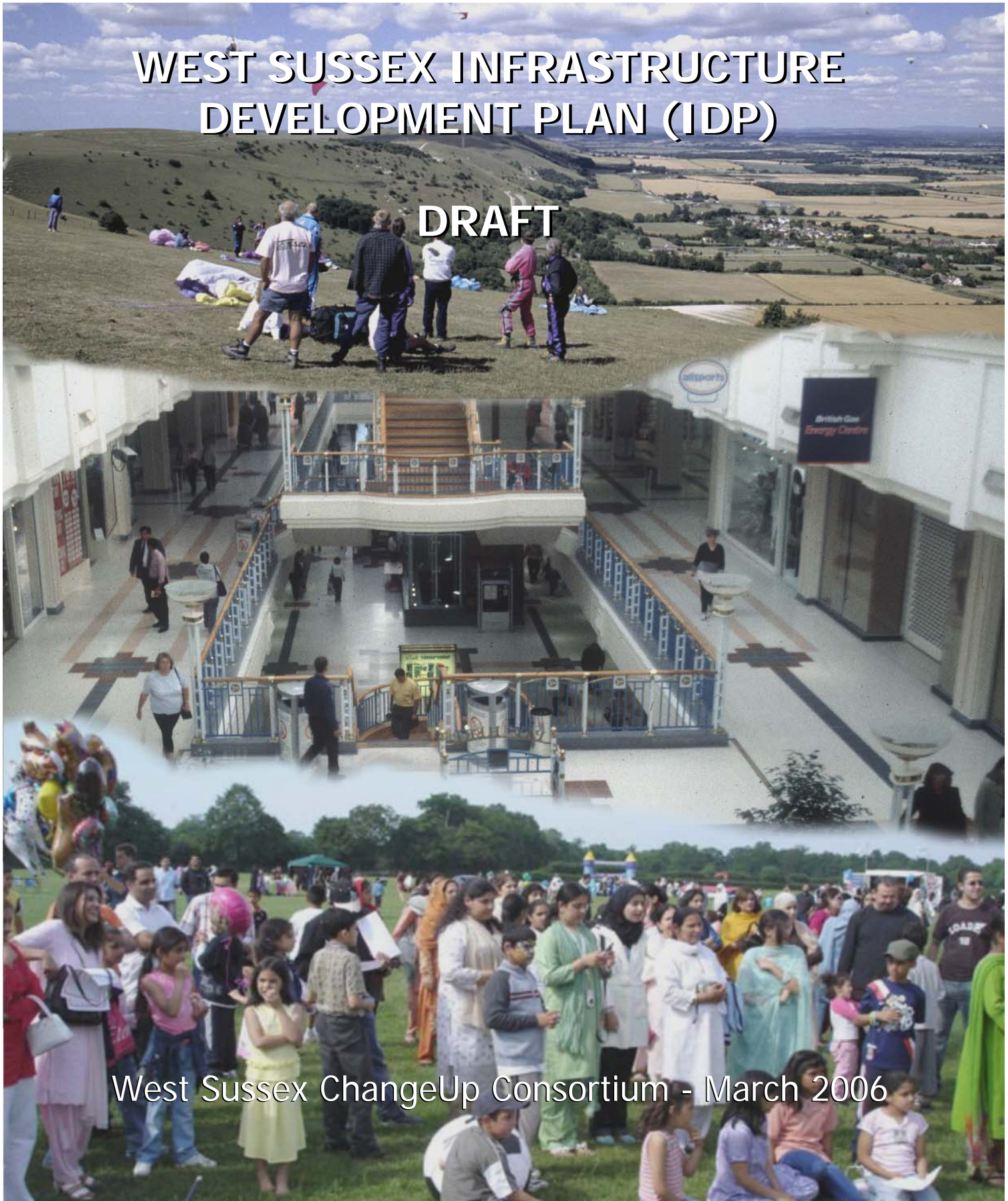


WEST SUSSEX INFRASTRUCTURE
DEVELOPMENT PLAN (IDP)

DRAFT



West Sussex ChangeUp Consortium - March 2006

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Figure 1
Map of West Sussex



1.

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The views and the time given by everyone to the West Sussex ChangeUp programme have proved invaluable to this IDP and to the future of infrastructure services in West Sussex.

Cover photographs

Top	Hang gliding from Devil's Dyke, South Downs, West Sussex <i>Martin O'Neill/WSCC/PPL</i>
Middle	Crawley shopping mall <i>Bill Kocher</i>
Bottom	Fun Day <i>Crawley Ethnic Minority Partnership</i>



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GLOSSARY

Acronyms

ACRE	Action in Rural Communities in England
ASP	Additional Support Programme
EESI	Effective, Efficient, Sustainable, Independent Voluntary and community sector
ICT	Information & Communication Technology
IDP	Infrastructure Development Plan
LAA	Local Area Agreement
LSP	Local Strategic Partnership
VB	Volunteer Bureau
VCO	Voluntary and Community Organisations
VCS	Voluntary and Community Sector
VDA	Volunteer Development Agency
VOLG	Voluntary Organisations Liaison Group
WSSC	West Sussex County Council

Key Terms

Beneficiaries

The people who use or receive the services and activities provided by frontline voluntary and community organisations.

Full Cost Recovery

It simply means securing funding for - or 'recovering' - proportionate overhead costs, as well as the direct costs of projects. Every organisation needs to recover all its costs or it cannot pay its employees, rent office space, offer its products and services or plan for future development and delivery of its services. (Source: National Council for Voluntary Organisations).

Infrastructure

The training, buildings, people, information, advice, development and assistance that is necessary to support frontline voluntary and community organisations. This can be provided by the voluntary and community sector itself, or from statutory and private sector bodies.

Quality

The extent to which a product or service satisfies the expectations of users. Quality is about excellence in the way that the organisation is run, in service delivery and about achieving the very best results.

Quality assurance system

A formal system through which an organisation can implement quality management and encourage improvements, for example, PQASSO.

Quality standard

Represents an agreed level of service or organisational performance that should be met each and every time.

Social Enterprise

Social enterprises are businesses with a social purpose, often working to deliver lasting social and environmental change. They are diverse and include local community enterprises, social firms, and mutual organisations such as co-operatives and large-scale organisations operating nationally or internationally. (Source: Social Enterprise Coalition)

Sustainability

Sustainability is defined as the ability of a voluntary organisation to keep going through: i) security of funding ii) its ability to recruit volunteers and iii) properly to manage itself.

Users

This refers to the frontline voluntary and community organisations that use infrastructure services.

Executive Summary

What is ChangeUp and what is an Infrastructure Development Plan

- ❑ ChangeUp is a national government initiative, which aims to develop a stronger and more sustainable voluntary and community sector, through the development of infrastructure services and facilities.
- ❑ Infrastructure services and facilities are defined as all the information, advice, assistance, training, development support, equipment, people and venues necessary for groups to function.
- ❑ In West Sussex a Consortium of representatives from the statutory and voluntary and community sector have worked together to produce a plan for West Sussex which will improve the infrastructure services to voluntary and community organisations in the county: the Infrastructure Development Plan (IDP).
- ❑ The Consortium puts users of infrastructure services and their evidence based needs at the centre of the IDP.
- ❑ The IDP is a draft and is subject to a three-month consultation, after which it will be amended and adopted as a final report.

A number of areas of work were commissioned to inform the IDP including: the needs of the voluntary and community organisations in rural and in urban areas; additional support needs of marginalized groups; quality standards; workforce development needs; ICT strategic priorities; a sustainability review; a facilities review and projects on volunteering and rural Youth.

The Voluntary and Community Sector in West Sussex

The voluntary and community sector in West Sussex is diverse, dynamic and complex, ranging from the smallest of village or town social gatherings operating on a shoe-string to larger county-wide organisations with much bigger resources. It also includes not only health and social care organisations but those working in other fields such as leisure and recreation and the environment.

The organisations that support these groups include:

- ❑ Village Halls, local Community Associations and Parish Councils
- ❑ 8 local Councils for Voluntary Services
- ❑ 8 organisations providing volunteer recruitment and development
- ❑ County-wide groups such as Action in Rural Sussex, the Voluntary Organisations Liaison Group and the West Sussex Voluntary and Community Sector Forum
- ❑ Specialist support from organisations such as West Sussex Council for Voluntary Youth Services, West Sussex Age Concern, 4Sight, West Sussex Association for the Disabled, West Sussex Carers Network
- ❑ Additional support for faith groups from Sussex Churches Together and to black and minority ethnic groups from Crawley Ethnic Minority Partnership and Sussex Travellers Action Group

The statutory sector also provides infrastructure services, mainly in the form of financial support, but also through the West Sussex County Council Voluntary Sector Liaison Development Officers.

The Needs of Front-line Voluntary and community organisations

- ❑ Financial security
- ❑ Finding and keeping volunteers
- ❑ Appropriate training provision
- ❑ Premises (particularly in the urban areas)
- ❑ Transport (particularly in the rural areas)
- ❑ Support for, and development of, small groups
- ❑ Support for frontline organisations to raise their awareness of the need to engage with hard to reach and marginalized groups to make sure all services and activities are fully inclusive
- ❑ Support for those organisations who work directly with hard to reach and marginalized groups
- ❑ More awareness of the role CVSs and Volunteer Bureaux could play in meeting support needs

Proposals for West Sussex

The Consortium's vision is to extend and improve infrastructure services to frontline voluntary and community organisations to enable them to be stronger and sustainable.

After considering the evidence the Consortium has focused on four main areas of improvement, or strategic objectives:

- ❑ To achieve sustainability of infrastructure services meeting identified needs, as specified by frontline voluntary and community organisations
- ❑ To raise Quality Standards in infrastructure services
- ❑ To ensure targeted support for priority communities, based on evidence of need
- ❑ To improve communication between infrastructure services and between infrastructure services and frontline voluntary and community organisations

Each of these four areas has detailed actions outlined in the IDP Action Plan. High Priority action areas include:

- ❑ Regular and co-ordinated identification of the needs of frontline voluntary and community organisations
- ❑ Secure, long-term funding based on full cost recovery, of voluntary infrastructure services
- ❑ Infrastructure services to clarify roles and boundaries

The factors which influence how successful the IDP is include:

- ❑ Being clear that the purpose is not to improve infrastructure services per se but to strengthen frontline voluntary and community organisations
- ❑ Being clear about what is done and by whom and underpinning this with agreements
- ❑ A move to longer term, secure funding so vital to allow improvements in other areas to take place, as it removes the inefficient use of resources in the continual pursuit of funding

- Ensuring that the IDP consultation is inclusive
- Ensuring the Consortium has the capacity to take the Action Plan forward

It is proposed that the Consortium expands to include all infrastructure providers, establishes a link with the existing West Sussex Voluntary and Community Sector Forum, and the existing Consortium becomes the Management Group of IDP. In the longer term the Management Group may be elected from the Consortium.

Next Steps

This Infrastructure Development Plan is a draft and is subject to a 3-month consultation process during which further explanation of ChangeUp and the IDP will be given. In addition the Consortium will be listening to responses, be they questions raised or suggestions given, about the proposed actions, mechanisms and priorities of the Action Plan. At the end of June amendments will be made and a final IDP adopted.

30/03/06

1. What an Infrastructure Development Plan is for

1.1 What it is

This draft West Sussex Infrastructure Development Plan (IDP) marks the end of a consultation phase that began in 2004 and finishes in June 2006. It also outlines the first steps towards a stronger more sustainable voluntary and community sector in West Sussex, through the development of infrastructure services and facilities to voluntary and community organisations. These infrastructure services and facilities are defined as all the information, advice, assistance, training, development support, equipment, people and venues necessary for groups to function.

1.2 Where it has come from

The voluntary and community sector

Voluntary and community organisations play a significant part in allowing people from all walks of life to come together and volunteer in a wide variety of activities. These activities range from serving lunch to older people in a village, serving on a committee, offering information and advice at their local Citizen Advice Bureau, running a toddler group in town. It also extends to volunteering in some of the larger voluntary organisations, such as Age Concern, which have local branches and county-wide organisations. Of course participation in a voluntary or community group is not solely confined to providing a service for others, it may be about being an active member of a leisure or environment group.

But volunteering and working in these groups can also lead to a greater understanding of the wider voluntary and community sector and its importance to society as a whole. In reality this can be people starting up a small group to help the blind and deaf and running it on next to nothing, protecting the environment by joining a county environmental body, cooking for the Women's Institute weekly market and driving people to hospital (a service that was once provided primarily by the NHS). Even the smallest of these groups will need some funds and volunteers could find themselves involved in the long and often time-consuming search for just a small amount of money to keep a group going. Being part of the voluntary and community sector can also mean being paid to work for a much larger organisation that provides a similar professional service to the statutory sector, such as a Day Centre for people with learning disabilities. There is no one typical voluntary organisation as both this and other research studies have shown.¹

¹ Skills Insight (2005) *Hidden Asset. A report to demonstrate the value of the Voluntary/Community Sector in the South East*. Guildford: Regional Action and Involvement South East

The national policy context

In 2002, as part of a general governmental move towards seeing a greater role for the voluntary sector, the Treasury published a “*Cross-Cutting Review*”² that made a number of recommendations to strengthen support to the voluntary and community sector. We should note that underlying this review was an emphasis on value for money, and the importance of the voluntary and community sector developing their capacity to deliver public services. However, it is important to note that this focus has changed and now ChangeUp covers the whole range of voluntary and community organisations and not just those who deliver public services.³

In 2004, the government’s vision for the voluntary and community sector was described in ChangeUp⁴. The government’s argument is that the current voluntary and community sector infrastructure⁵ supporting frontline organisations

“has strengths that need building on but also key weaknesses that need addressing if it is to provide the support that frontline organisations need.”
(2004, p12)

The long-term aim is that by 2014 the needs of frontline⁶ voluntary organisations would be met by support that is:

- ❑ available nationwide
- ❑ structured for maximum efficiency
- ❑ offering excellent provision
- ❑ which is accessible to all.

1.3 The ChangeUp framework

In order to achieve this aim, the government established a ChangeUp framework, with 6 key areas of support needs. These have to be addressed in order to improve the ability or capacity of the voluntary and community sector to provide services and activities. These areas are:

- ❑ Performance improvement with easy access to support and advice.
- ❑ Developing a highly effective workforce with easy access to training.
- ❑ ICT that is affordable and reliable.
- ❑ Governance with Board Members aware of their roles and responsibilities.
- ❑ Recruiting and developing volunteers with improved volunteer management.
- ❑ Financing Voluntary and Community Services with increased skills in fundraising and contract negotiation.

² HM Treasury. (2002) *The Role of the Voluntary and Community Sector in Service Delivery, a cross cutting review.*

³ *Support services for the voluntary and community sector in West Sussex: a discussion document.* February 2006, West Sussex ChangeUp Consortium Steering Group

⁴ Home Office (2004) *ChangeUp. Capacity Building and Infrastructure Framework for the Voluntary and Community Sector.* London, Home Office Communications Directorate,.

⁵ Organisations whose primary purpose is providing support to the frontline voluntary and community organisations, e.g. Councils for Voluntary Services (CVS).

⁶ Frontline being defined as voluntary and community organisations and groups that work directly with individuals and communities in order to provide services, offer support and campaign for change.

2. Our Starting Point: the voluntary and community sector in West Sussex

This section looks at West Sussex and the voluntary and community sector operating in West Sussex.

2.1 Population characteristics of West Sussex

West Sussex lies on the coast of central southern England and since the 1991 Census the population of West Sussex has increased by 51,324 people to 753,614. The county has a population density of 3.8 people per hectare, but due to its mix of rural and urban areas there are huge variations of this figure ranging from just 1.4 people per hectare in Chichester to 30 people per hectare in Worthing, which has almost eight times the average population density of West Sussex.

The populations of Adur, Arun, Chichester and Worthing Districts are older than those of West Sussex as a whole. Horsham and Mid Sussex have slightly older age structures than England & Wales while Crawley has a younger population than both West Sussex and England & Wales.

97% of the West Sussex population gave their ethnic group as White (more than the proportion for England & Wales at 91%). But again there are wide variations across the county with Crawley falling within the 20% of local authorities in England & Wales with the lowest proportion of White people. As in England & Wales half of the county's non-White population describe themselves as Asian.

In the Health and Disability Domain of the Index of Deprivation 2004 two wards in Worthing, Central and Heene, rank 2181 and 2185 respectively (a rank of 3,248 or below means that the area is within the 10% most deprived in England). A ward in Arun, River, is just over that level at 3727; indeed out of the twenty most deprived wards in West Sussex nine are in the Arun district. Around one-tenth of the West Sussex population are unpaid carers for some amount of time each week. Arun has the highest proportion of people caring for 50 or more hours (21%) and Crawley has the lowest proportion of people in the most time intensive care group at 13%⁷.

2.2 The voluntary and community sector in W Sussex

In West Sussex the focus of community life is often centred on the large villages and small towns that dominate the social geography of the area⁸ and there are very different community histories across the county.

The voluntary and community sector in West Sussex reflects this diversity and is dynamic and complex. There are huge differences among groups ranging from the very smallest of village social gatherings operating on a shoe-string to town based community theatre groups, to much larger county-wide organisations with vast

⁷ All statistics from *Census Bulletin 1,2,3,5*. Compiled by Public Health Observatory, Adur, Arun and Worthing PCT and the *West Sussex Census and Data Atlas* compiled by West Sussex Shared Intelligence Project.

⁸ *Support services* .(2006) 54, p15

resources and robust finances. It would be a mistake to think of this sector as only catering for certain groups and only providing health or social care to people. In fact the voluntary and community sector in West Sussex covers many types of groups including those that deal with the environment, sport, child care, faith groups, disability, animal rescue, arts and crafts and education.

The organisations that support these groups are equally diverse and include:

- Village Halls, local Community Associations and Parish Councils at the most local level in villages and neighbourhoods.
- In both rural and urban areas generic infrastructure support⁹ comes from 8 local Councils for Voluntary Services (CVS) based in:
 - Adur
 - Arun
 - Chichester
 - Crawley
 - East Grinstead
 - Horsham
 - Mid Sussex (South)
 - Worthing
- A number of organisations across West Sussex providing some form of volunteer development and recruitment or a Volunteer Development Agency including:
 - Adur Volunteer Bureau
 - Arun Volunteering Information Points (Littlehampton & Bognor Regis)
 - Chichester & District Volunteer Bureau
 - Crawley Volunteer Bureau
 - Horsham Volunteer Bureau
 - Mid Sussex Volunteering (including Burgess Hill branch, Haywards Heath Outreach Service, East Grinstead branch)
 - Worthing Volunteer Bureau
- County-wide support and representation through the network organisation Voluntary Organisations Liaison Group (VOLG). VOLG administers the West Sussex Voluntary and Community Sector Forum, which brings together frontline voluntary and community organisations across West Sussex.
- Specialist support from organisations such as West Sussex Council for Voluntary Youth Services, West Sussex Age Concern, 4Sight, West Sussex Association for the Disabled, West Sussex Carers Network.
- Additional support for faith groups from Churches Together in Sussex and to black and minority ethnic groups from Crawley Ethnic Minority Partnership (CEMP) and Sussex Travellers Action Group (STAG)
- Support in the rural areas of both East and West Sussex through Action in rural Sussex

⁹ Generic support is defined as general support, development, representation and promotion available to all VCOs

2.3 Other bodies and partnerships

West Sussex also has a wide range of statutory organisations and partnerships. Statutory Organisations include West Sussex County Council, which works closely with the voluntary and community sector in West Sussex through its Voluntary Sector Liaison Development Officers. Other statutory organisations include District and Borough Councils, the National Health Service including PCTs, hospital trusts and ambulance services, the police and criminal justice. There is a range of partnerships, notably the Children's Trust and other partnerships focussing on children and young people, the Better Health Partnerships, and Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships.

Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs) are non-statutory, multi-agency bodies that aim to bring together, at a local level, the different parts of the public, private, community and voluntary sectors. They match local authority boundaries, and in West Sussex are at a District level, i.e. there is a Chichester LSP, an Arun LSP and so on, and each has a Community Strategy.

In addition there is a West Sussex Strategic Partnership, responsible for a county-wide Community Strategy and also responsible for developing, monitoring and managing the Local Area Agreement (LAA). The LAA 2006-2009 was signed before the draft IDP was completed and this will be reflected in the first review of the LAA. Some of the cross-cutting themes of sustainable development, equality and inclusion and community engagement are very relevant to the IDP.

Currently ChangeUp is not high on the agendas of LSPs, but it is expected that LSPs could guide priorities for the voluntary and community sector. These bodies may, therefore, play a significant role in the future of the current voluntary organisations that are part of the infrastructure support to local voluntary and community organisations such as the local CVSSs.

During the development of the IDP a Social Enterprise Network has been set up in West Sussex. The Consortium Steering Group recognises the need to engage with the Network, especially during the forthcoming consultation, so that it is drawn into the ChangeUp framework and informs the final IDP.

2.4 Management of ChangeUp in West Sussex

The Government Office for the South East (GOSE) is in charge of the delivery of ChangeUp. GOSE has set up a Regional Consortium to plan and oversee its delivery. The Consortium has commissioned 20 local organisations, one per Shire County and one per unitary authority area to lead on ChangeUp. It has also identified 5 key messages about how ChangeUp should happen in the South East. These are:

- ❑ Helping frontline voluntary and community organisations - by making their support more effective and efficient
- ❑ Integrating delivery of support services – there needs to be a clear and co-ordinated approach by partners working together in a way that makes sense to frontline organisations.

- Understanding the need for change – but recognising that this is a 10 year programme of reform
- Meeting researched regional needs – the themes of ICT, funding and finances, BME and marginalized groups should all be incorporated into the local Infrastructure Development Plan
- Local control ensuring local benefit - there should be flexibility at the local level through its implementation by its local consortium.

In West Sussex, ChangeUp has been led by Action in rural Sussex (AirS) and at an early stage proposals were published in the strategy document, *The Heart of the Sussex Community*¹⁰.

Since then AirS has remained the lead managing body and a West Sussex ChangeUp Consortium has been set up which includes representatives from among the voluntary and community organisations in West Sussex and all the Statutory Sector agencies. From the Consortium a steering group was set up and details of its membership are given in Appendix 1.

The Consortium has recently published a discussion document, *Support Services for the voluntary and community sector in West Sussex* (February 2006). This outlines key issues for consideration by stakeholders and presents a series of questions, which need to be answered about how infrastructure services should be organised and funded. The original intention was that the answers to these questions would be completed as part of the preparation for the IDP, but due to time constraints, this discussion document is now being issued alongside the draft IDP, so that both documents are considered together during the 3-month consultation process. Some of the questions have been addressed in the draft Action Plan and others remain to be answered.

2.5 Development of the West Sussex IDP

In developing this plan consultation, research and development has been carried out from early 2003¹¹ including:

- i) A partnership business planning exercise amongst infrastructure organisations in West Sussex. This mainly involved provider organisations rather than the users of infrastructure services.

¹⁰ Action in rural Sussex (no date) *The heart of the Sussex Community. Towards a comprehensive and integrated strategy designed to help voluntary and community organisations in Sussex fulfil their potential*. Lewes, East Sussex. Action in rural Sussex.

¹¹ Action in rural Sussex, *ibid*, p7, 4.1.

ii) A series of evening consultation events with rural voluntary and community organisations.

iii) A number of areas of work or, as they are commonly known, workstreams, have been identified by the Consortium to help in the writing of the West Sussex Infrastructure Development Plan. These include:

- ❑ Rural and sub-district infrastructure research
- ❑ Urban infrastructure research
- ❑ Additional Support research including BME organisations, travellers and gypsies, asylum seekers and refugees, faith groups
- ❑ Quality audit
- ❑ Volunteering project
- ❑ Sector promotion & workforce development research
- ❑ ICT strategy:
 - i) Strategic support for infrastructure organisations
 - ii) Joint Information Platform
- ❑ A sustainability review
- ❑ Rural Youth project
- ❑ Facilities Review

Early lessons from i) and ii) showed the issues of concern to be

- ❑ short-term funding on a project basis
- ❑ limits to service level agreements despite growth in number of beneficiaries
- ❑ user organisations do not see a distinction between voluntary infrastructure organisations and public bodies, especially at regional level
- ❑ infrastructure jargon was impenetrable to those working and volunteering in user organisations

The workstreams from iii) have provided further more detailed evidence on these issues and many others specific to West Sussex, which are outlined in the following section.

3. What we have learned

The Regional Consortium at GOSE has asked each ChangeUp Consortium to produce a local Infrastructure Development Plan, which must be based on research of the current needs of frontline voluntary and community organisations.

3.1 The needs of front-line voluntary groups

In West Sussex the ethos has always been to give the smaller frontline voluntary and community organisations a voice in the ChangeUp process and there has been some robust research done with this in mind. The research has focused on both the rural and urban areas of the county (see Appendix 2 for details) and shows what support needs are common and what support needs are specific to each geographical area.

a) Rural areas

In the early consultation events a clear distinction was found between voluntary and community activity that was primarily 'fun' but with a social benefit at its heart and the long term taking of responsibility within the community. However there were deep concerns around legislative pressures, perceived risk of litigation and overwhelming central control and bureaucracy that left local active citizens feeling disillusioned and reluctant to engage.

When asked to score key issues, rural voluntary groups identified 4 priorities:

- ❑ Finding funds and grants
- ❑ Finding and keeping volunteers
- ❑ Getting views across to statutory organisations
- ❑ Provision of information, training and good practice advice¹².

The more recent research in the rural and sub-district areas of West Sussex¹³ support these findings and identified the following key issues;

- ❑ **Transport** – while the familiar concerns around funding, recruiting and retaining volunteers and the burden of regulation were high priorities it was transport, especially in Chichester, that generated the largest quantity of comment.
- ❑ **Funding and sustainability** - voluntary and community organisations of all sizes cite funding problems especially the lack of sustainable longer term funding.
- ❑ **Training provision** – the research study revealed a wide choice of training provided by a variety of providers including parent and national bodies and private contractors. However, it was clear that training was not always provided to frontline voluntary and community organisations in the most appropriate manner.

¹² Action in rural Sussex, ibid, p10

¹³ See Appendix 2 for more details

- ❑ **Recruiting & maintaining volunteers** – recruiting volunteers is a challenge in the rural areas, especially younger volunteers, yet frontline organisations of all sizes were managing to recruit volunteers, but not necessarily from their local Volunteer Bureau.
- ❑ **The burden of bureaucracy** – frequent comments on the burden of rules and regulations, from rural groups and organisations of all sizes indicates that the recent research reaffirms the findings from the early consultation.
- ❑ **Vulnerability of smaller groups** – there is a strong and clear message from the research that the smaller frontline groups need help and support to develop the governance skills demanded by today’s contract culture.

b) Urban areas

The key issues identified from the research commissioned for the urban areas of West Sussex¹⁴ are:

- ❑ The largest single area of need identified by frontline organisations was room hire (63%), next was recruiting and supporting volunteers. The priorities identified by respondents for support were **provision of funding** (60%) and **recruiting and supporting volunteers** (18%).
- ❑ Public sector funding in the urban areas, according to the sample, appears to be focused on the larger organisations with the smaller more reliant on self-generating income. This mirrors findings from the rural areas.
- ❑ Just like the research in the rural areas there appears to be an **issue of perception** about the aims of **Volunteer Bureaux** (VB) with frontline organisations judging VBs on whether or not they successfully recruit volunteers through them. Again just like the rural research front line organisations are also recruiting volunteers through word of mouth and personal contacts.
- ❑ There was a **low engagement** of frontline organisations with needs for support relating to **equalities and diversity**. The report notes that while this might suggest that support is not available, this is not so in two of the urban areas researched. It may therefore be that these issues are simply not being addressed by urban frontline organisations.

c) Communities of interest

A substantial amount of research and mapping using multiple methods has been undertaken on Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) faith groups, asylum seekers/refugees and travellers and gypsy groups¹⁵ by the Additional Support Programme steering group.

¹⁴ See Appendix 2

¹⁵ See Appendix 2

The research is particularly robust in that it recognises the specific research problems around identifying and hence contacting adult refugees, notes and admits the gaps in their findings, yet its emphasis on giving hard to reach groups a voice in the ChangeUp process is exemplary and commendable. For example the research into Travellers concentrated on speaking with Travellers themselves rather than agencies; 98 Travellers were contacted face-to-face far exceeding any similar work done in the locality and almost everywhere else in the country.¹⁶ Readers of this IDP are urged to read the Additional Support Programme's report, as a summary cannot do justice to the detail of the research findings. However, the main observations are:

- ❑ **Housing** – is a prime area of concern for refugees/asylum seekers, travellers and gypsy communities and BME communities. Faith groups, both mainstream and minority, often address housing and homelessness concerns or the effects of them, offering practical support and advice
- ❑ **Language** – BME, gypsies and travellers and refugees and asylum seekers face difficulties with language. There is a significant lack of translation and interpretation facilities throughout the county. It is a significant barrier to accessing services by all non-English speaking communities in West Sussex.
- ❑ **Education** - access to high-quality education is a problem for gypsies and travellers, BME and refugees and asylum seekers. They are often excluded from mainstream education, in the travellers and gypsies case because of their nomadic existence, in the case of refugees and asylum seekers because of their uncertain situation.
- ❑ **Health** – statistically the health of BME populations is below average. This is due not only to an above average incidence of diseases such as diabetes, heart diseases, mental health and HIV but also to barriers of facing access to services often at primary care level. This may be due to cultural and religious reasons or a lack of knowledge of the system.

These are the needs of the beneficiaries, which have implications for the frontline voluntary and community organisations engaging with these communities of interest and providing services to meet the needs. One issue shown up by the research was the importance of community development work that went out to people, rather than static office-based work. Other findings relevant to infrastructure support are:

Capacity building:

There is a very mixed picture as regards capacity to work with these identified groups around the county. There are some existing organisations with a clear community base that could develop their capacity; there are others serving a range of other needs that are well placed also to develop their capacity in this regard. There are some organisations with the potential to address these needs.

¹⁶ Ed: Chris Gaine (2006) *Additional Support Programme. Findings from local research.* p23

Networking, sharing information and integrating provision

There needs to be more networking and information sharing about potentially vulnerable and marginalised groups, and the available provision in different parts of the county, to avoid duplication and prevent confusion in those seeking services

Public information and education.

There are negative attitudes towards asylum seekers and refugees, Travellers and gypsies, Black and minority ethnic people, and religious minorities (especially Muslims). Voluntary and community organisations need a clear lead from local statutory agencies, politicians and the media to combat these negative attitudes.

3.2 Strengths and weaknesses of current provision in West Sussex

Lack of knowledge about ChangeUp

In both the urban and rural areas the results clearly show that frontline needs cannot be neatly categorised by the areas prioritised by ChangeUp such as Performance Improvement, Workforce Development, ICT and Governance. This suggests that the voluntary and community groups and organisations in West Sussex have not identified with the ChangeUp agenda. There is a need to raise awareness of the Government's strategy and to ensure that frontline voluntary and community organisations address the Change Up programme if they are not to remain disadvantaged in the future.

ChangeUp and the voluntary and community sector

However this raising of awareness needs to be tempered by acknowledging that the initial emphasis lying behind ChangeUp was on improving the voluntary and community sector and its support to such an extent that it could take on more delivery of public services. While ChangeUp has moved on to encompass improvements in support to the whole of the sector, large and small, there has been some questioning of government 'interference', rules and regulations and the burden of bureaucracy. Undeniably, many of the smaller groups are proud of their independence and do not want any help at all from anyone including the Councils of Voluntary Service. Indeed the majority of frontline voluntary and community organisations do not want to take on public service delivery and this is confirmed by both the rural and urban research findings. Only very few organisations are currently delivering services under contract and public sector grant aid as a major source of funding is limited to organisations with an income greater than £100,000.

There needs to be an appreciation of how much the voluntary and community sector in West Sussex values its independence and some critical awareness that infrastructure support in the future should not be determined by the level of the sector's public service delivery.

The variety of support available to frontline organisations

In both the urban and rural areas the research identified a wide and varied range of sources from which the voluntary and community organisations had obtained support. Many of the sources of support cited by the respondents were not infrastructure organisations as such but other organisations including local authority

departments (which were perceived in a more positive light in the rural areas of West Sussex).

Nevertheless the research has found that the CVSs are one of the major providers working alongside organisations such as Action in rural Sussex and ACRE in the rural areas. While in the urban areas CVSs work alongside other infrastructure providers such as EESI, Early Years Development Childcare Providers and the Working Together Project.

However the research revealed that each of the CVSs in West Sussex was under funded and under resourced in terms of the National Association of Councils for Voluntary Service recommendations for core service provision. This suggests that if CVSs are to meet the infrastructure support needs of frontline voluntary and community organisations then significant additional resources, both for core services and for developing new services, will need to be put in place.

Lack of knowledge of CVSs and Volunteer Bureaux

The research in both the urban and rural areas also reveals large gaps in knowledge about the local CVS and its role and the Volunteer Bureau and its role. In the rural research study knowledge of the CVS in both the Chichester and Horsham areas was poor and there was some confusion, again, in both Horsham and Chichester, about the relative roles of a Volunteer Bureau and a CVS. There was confusion about the role of the Volunteer Bureau in the urban study as well, with the conclusion that groups do not know about the role of Volunteer Bureau in supporting people back to work and only rate Volunteer Bureau highly if they successfully gain volunteers. Clearly there is a tension between funding requirements to support people back to work and frontline voluntary and community organisations simply wanting to recruit volunteers.

Equalities and diversity

It is clear from the research and mapping done by the Additional Support Programme that there are profound needs for hard to reach and marginalized groups in West Sussex. However, in urban areas there was low engagement of frontline voluntary and community organisations with support relating to equalities and diversity. Furthermore, there are gaps in our knowledge about help and support needed by these marginalized groups in the rural areas.

The Additional Support Programme mapping noted the 2001 Census showed that 'minority faiths' are under-represented in West Sussex compared with the national average; yet three quarters of the Hindus and over half the Muslim community of the county were living in Crawley. This makes these relatively large pockets of the population easier to reach but creates an even greater challenge across the rest of the county¹⁷.

A willingness to work together

Councils for Voluntary Services operate in a competitive funding environment and struggle for their funding from the County and District Councils alongside other voluntary and community organisations. Yet there is a history of close working

¹⁷ (January 2006) Additional Support Programme, Interim report. P7, 4.1

relationships in West Sussex between the voluntary and community sector and the statutory sector. For example in 2001 West Sussex County Council was among the first signatories of the West Sussex Compact, the purpose of which is to improve working arrangements between local government, the health service and other statutory agencies and the voluntary and community sector. A steering group, convened by West Sussex Voluntary Organisations Liaison Group (VOLG), comprising representatives from the County Council, all borough and district councils, health trusts and voluntary and community organisations carried out a review and a revised Compact was launched at the Voluntary Sector Forum in March 2005.

The current co-operative stance taken by the steering group of the West Sussex ChangeUp Consortium with its membership of statutory sector representatives and many different voluntary and community organisations (see Appendix 1) bodes well for the future of ChangeUp and the sustainability of the infrastructure services in West Sussex.

Indeed this collaborative approach was evident in the workshop held for the Consortium to consider the evidence and discuss the priorities for the Infrastructure Development Plan. This evidence and the subsequent discussions informed the development of the Strategic Objectives, which are put forward in the following section.

4. What we would like to see

4.1 Our Vision

The vision of the West Sussex Consortium is one that builds on existing good practice and extends infrastructure services to frontline voluntary and community organisations in an appropriate way. This plan is aspirational in the sense that it provides the framework and direction for future collaboration to produce the infrastructure services required by frontline voluntary and community organisations in West Sussex.

4.2 The importance of the local perspective

The strategic objectives

The role of the Consortium has been to facilitate what the Regional Consortium called *local control ensuring local benefit*. The Consortium has developed the following Strategic Objectives, on the basis of evidence. The West Sussex Strategic Objectives are:

- **To achieve sustainability¹⁸ of the infrastructure services meeting identified needs, as specified by frontline voluntary and community organisations in West Sussex.**
Rationale: Too much time and effort is wasted continually seeking funding or volunteers, both of which are key to the functioning of voluntary and community organisations. Addressing this would make a huge difference and enable VCOs to tackle quality issues and to be more inclusive.
- **To raise Quality Standards in infrastructure services in West Sussex.**
Rationale: Provision of infrastructure services is patchy and of variable standard. Before working with voluntary and community organisations to improve their quality standards and increase their capacity, it is vitally important that infrastructure providers address this themselves.
- **To ensure targeted support for priority communities¹⁹ in West Sussex – based on evidence of need**
Rationale: There is a clear need to bring ‘hard to reach’ communities, and the organisations that serve them, into the mainstream of West Sussex (this is inclusiveness). Infrastructure services need to expand their remit to include these organisations and their beneficiaries²⁰ but they also need to work with the rest of the frontline voluntary and community sector to enable them to be more inclusive in their work.

¹⁸ Sustainability is defined as the ability of a voluntary organisation to keep going through:
i) security of funding ii) its ability to recruit volunteers and iii) to properly manage itself

¹⁹ To include BME, travellers and gypsies, asylum seekers and refugees as well as isolated older people, people with disabilities and all hard to reach groups.

²⁰ Defined as the people in West Sussex receiving the services from the VCOs.

These three objectives are underpinned by a fourth objective:

- ❑ **To improve communication between infrastructure services and between infrastructure services and frontline voluntary and community organisations in West Sussex.**

Rationale: Voluntary and community organisations need to know what support services are on offer and funders need to know that support needs are being met. Thus this objective includes the idea of sector promotion and the application and use of ICT and other technologies.

4.3 External guidance

The criteria for producing the IDP given to the Consortium by the Home Office and Government Office of the South East indicate that the Infrastructure Development Plan should be:

- ❑ Based on expressed need
- ❑ Collaborative [i.e. commitment from all partners, including funders]
- ❑ Realistically costed and sustainable
- ❑ Inclusive
- ❑ In line with national ChangeUp priorities
- ❑ Measurable
- ❑ Quality Assured

This plan is based on expressed need, is collaborative and is inclusive. Following the consultation stage the costings of projects to take the IDP forward will be made, as will arrangements to monitor and evaluate these appropriately.

Although the Strategic Objectives do not follow the 6 national ChangeUP support need areas directly, they are included within the four Objectives set out above, and can be seen in the detailed Action Plan in the following section. Strategic Objective 1 includes financing, volunteers and governance; Strategic Objective 2 covers performance improvement, training and workforce development and governance; and Strategic Objective 4 covers ICT.

Consortia across the country have been encouraged to include 'hard to reach' group within their IDPs. Strategic Objective 3 puts these groups at the centre of the West Sussex IDP.

4.4 What will make this IDP work?

Over and above these external criteria, we have developed our own criteria for ensuring the success of this IDP, building on earlier work in West Sussex²¹ These are:

²¹ Action in rural Sussex. (no date) *The Heart of the Sussex Community. Towards a comprehensive and integrated strategy designed to help voluntary and community organisations in Sussex fulfil their potential*"

- **The Consortium's capacity to take ChangeUp Action Plan forward.**

Working in partnership is always difficult and not simply a question of putting key partners around a table. This last year has seen the Consortium work together to manage the workstreams and to develop this IDP. However this partnership working needs to be supported and developed further to make sure the Plan becomes a reality.

- **Clarity of purpose**

Infrastructure services are a means to an end, that is, to support front-line voluntary and community organisations, and not an end in itself. The needs of these user organisations must be at the centre of this IDP and future investment in infrastructure services. The basis of future development of infrastructure services has to be based on identified need.

- **Clarity of roles and agreements**

Infrastructure organisations need to be clear about what is done and by whom and these services should be underpinned by agreements.

- **Investment in support services**

Investment in terms of finance, time and human resources is crucial to sustain support services to voluntary and community organisations. In particular there must be a move towards longer term and secure funding for essential support services.

- **Making the IDP accessible**

Much of the work done to prepare the IDP has been about gaining the views of the smaller, hard to reach groups who have not given their views before on what support they need. It is important that they are included in the consultation process.

This IDP will endeavour to give these groups a voice in as readable a form as possible. This will be a challenge as much of the language of Changeup is dense and impenetrable. When the Infrastructure Development Plan goes out for consultation (April to June 2006) comments on its readability will be welcomed.

In the light of the above strategic objectives and success criteria, the Consortium has developed a draft Action Plan relevant for West Sussex. This provides a proposed framework for future action. The consultation will ask whether or not you agree with the proposed actions, lead body or mechanisms and priorities. Ideally it should be read in conjunction with the Consortium's discussion document *Support services for the voluntary and community sector in West Sussex*, (2006).

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES and OUTCOMES	PROPOSED ACTION	PROPOSED LEAD/MECHANISM	PROPOSED PRIORITY
	<p>1.2.4 Central information bank on funding sources: promote/amalgamate existing or development of new using electronic & paper forms</p> <p>1.2.5 Develop & co-ordinate a West Sussex funding newsletter</p> <p>1.2.6 Develop access to 1:1 support re: fundraising and organisational development (linked to 2.4)</p>	<p>1.2.4 Consortium Steering Group</p> <p>1.2.5 County-wide voluntary organisation</p> <p>1.2.6 County-wide EESI Project</p>	<p>High</p> <p>High</p> <p>High</p>
<p>1.3 Frontline VCOs accessing volunteering infrastructure services to recruit, manage and retain volunteers</p>	<p>1.3.1 Infrastructure services to clarify role and boundaries</p> <p>1.3.2 Volunteering agencies to develop appropriate models for both rural and urban areas of West Sussex. This would encompass both brokerage and community development</p> <p>1.3.3 Volunteering agencies developing good practice and quality standards including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Improving information on volunteering ❑ Developing volunteering opportunities inc. employee volunteering, supported volunteering for people with special needs ❑ Monitoring economic value of volunteering 	<p>1.3.1 Consortium steering group</p> <p>1.3.2 After 1.3.1</p> <p>1.3.3 After 1.3.1</p>	<p>Very High</p> <p>Medium</p> <p>Medium</p>

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES and OUTCOMES	PROPOSED ACTION	PROPOSED LEAD/MECHANISM	PROPOSED PRIORITY
2. To raise Quality Standards of infrastructure services.			
2.1 Infrastructure services working to common quality standards	2.1.1 Programme of Quality Assurance Assessments. e.g. Facilitated by a short term, full time officer post funded to work with VCS infrastructure organisations to carry out quality assurance assessments alongside support in further developing the policies, procedures and practices required. 2.1.2 Establish peer assessment scheme 2.1.3 Develop a Quality Standards Network	2.1.1 VOLG 2.1.2 VOLG 2.1.3 Co-ordinated by generic infrastructure organisations & including specialist infrastructure organisations	High Medium Low
2.2 Infrastructure service providers being trained to common standards	2.2.1 Audit current standards of training of infrastructure itself i.e. workers, management, trustees and volunteers 2.2.2 Identify, signpost and fund appropriate training courses e.g. joint bursary scheme for infrastructure training 2.2.3 Common and accessible peer support network	2.2.1 VOLG, Learning consortium and CVS training partnership 2.2.2 All LSPs contribute financially, administered by Consortium 2.2.3 VOLG, Learning consortium and CVS training partnership	High Medium Medium
2.3 Infrastructure services delivering high quality training to frontline services	2.3.1 Develop county wide training partnership to decide what type of training should be provided by whom and where. e.g. county/local, accredited and non-accredited training, basic/advanced. 2.3.2 Feasibility of West Sussex website for trainers to post all training opportunities	2.3.1 Learning consortium & CVS training partnership plus link with WSCC Corporate Learning/Care Training Consortium 2.3.2 SCIP	Medium Medium

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES and OUTCOMES	PROPOSED ACTION	PROPOSED LEAD/MECHANISM	PROPOSED PRIORITY
2.4 Develop 1:1 support for small groups in each district	2.4.1 Use EESI model to improve capacity of small groups	2.4.1 County-wide EESI Project	High
2.5 Develop internal capacity of infrastructure providers to deliver services	2.5.1 Explore traditional and non-traditional learning opportunities including shadowing, mentoring, critical friend, secondments, action-learning opportunities [linked to 2.2.1]	2.5.1 Sussex Learning Consortium	Medium
2.6 To ensure that infrastructure providers have premises that are accessible to all	2.6.1 Working towards a base level of physical infrastructure services	2.6.1 Partnership approach through LSPs	Medium
2.7 Infrastructure providers work towards a standard system for information collection from member organisations	2.7.1 Developing common database & information collection methods, at a level appropriate to the size of the organisation	2.7.1 SCIP with the Consortium	Medium
3. Targeted support provided to priority communities (geographical/age/ and of interest) based on evidence of need			
3.1 Infrastructure organisations/services to assess how they reach the wider community	3.1.1 Develop or adapt existing self assessment toolkit	3.1.1 CEMP, with other organisations	High
3.2 Infrastructure services to reach out to priority communities to ensure that services developed are appropriate in terms of type and delivery	3.2.1 Develop and recruit peer support from within the community	3.2.1 CEMP, with other organisations	Medium
3.3 Infrastructure services to encourage frontline VCOs to include priority communities	3.3.1 Raise awareness of self-assessment toolkit 3.3.2 Distribute self-assessment toolkit 3.3.3 Take services to frontline groups and to beneficiaries	3.3.1 & 2 CEMP, with other organisations 3.3.3. All infrastructure service providers	Medium

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES and OUTCOMES	PROPOSED ACTION	PROPOSED LEAD/MECHANISM	PROPOSED PRIORITY
3.4 A wider awareness of importance of transport in bringing together communities in West Sussex	3.4.1 Obtain & review West Sussex Transport strategy 3.4.2 Review the availability and use of local transport provision and schemes and priority communities 3.4.3 Co-ordinated information on minibuses available for voluntary/community groups to hire on a cheap basis locally	3.4.1 WSCC with voluntary and community sector representation 3.4.2 SEEDA, in partnership with WSCC and AirS 3.4.3 WSCC, in partnership with voluntary and community sector	Medium Medium Medium
3.5 Voluntary and community sector developing new ways of working with public and private services	3.5.1 Develop practical solution to transport exclusion e.g. small area based pilot project which combines voluntary, community, statutory, private sector providers and using all of these resources to provide a locally based solution.	3.5.1 WSCC with voluntary and community sector representation	Medium
4. To improve communication between infrastructure services and to frontline VCOs			
4.1 Local infrastructure services confident in the use of ICT with the ability to support frontline VCOs	4.1.1 Develop ICT training	4.1.1 SCIP, West Sussex E-Government, Colleges/Universities	High
4.2 Local infrastructure services clearly communicating within the sector and externally	4.2.1 Develop an overall communications strategy 4.2.2 Develop SCIP Communications Platform 4.2.3 Improve newsletters, and all printed materials 4.2.4 Develop use of ICT, email, interactive websites, E-Bulletins	4.2.1 Consortium Steering Group 4.2.2 SCIP accountable to Consortium Steering Group 4.2.3 & 4 Co-ordinated approach by all infrastructure providers, plus Consortium Steering Group	High Medium Medium Medium
4.3 Frontline VCOs easily able to convey their needs to infrastructure services	4.3.1 Use existing forums and networks 4.3.2 Develop use of ICT, email, interactive websites	4.3.1 & 2 Co-ordinated approach by all infrastructure providers, plus Consortium Steering Group	High Medium
4.4 Infrastructure services providing a voice and acting on behalf of frontline VCOs	4.4.1 Explore imaginative ways to improve understanding between senior officials/elected representatives and frontline VCOs including shadowing/exchanges/mentoring	4.4.1 Co-ordinated by Consortium Steering Group	High

N.B: ICT and information provision is to underpin *all* strategic objectives and projects

6. Governance and future planning

This section looks at the structures and processes to take the West Sussex Infrastructure Development Plan (IDP) forward; it looks at ways to consult the frontline voluntary and community organisations and other key stakeholders such as statutory organisations and funders; it sets out options for new ways of working.

6.1 Immediate tasks for the Consortium steering group

Looking inwards - building capacity within the steering group

One of the first tasks for the Consortium steering group is to look inwards at its own capacity. First of all, the West Sussex Consortium steering group needs to look at the research done by the workstreams and second it should look at its capacity to implement the West Sussex IDP. Some training and development needs to be built into the work of the Consortium over the next few months including, for example, an Away-Day (see Figure 4 – p27) to work on their Vision for the next 10 years and to consider new ways of working in collaboration. This is so that whatever form the Consortium takes in the future it is capable of making appropriate decisions on the future of infrastructure services in West Sussex.

The Consortium also needs to be aware of the risks that might affect the IDP and the implementation of the Action Plan. A risk analysis chart with actions to minimise risks is attached below at Figure 2.

Figure 2 RISK ANALYSIS

Risk	Impact	Actions to minimise risk
Lack of support from voluntary and community sector	Variable – may depend on prior knowledge	Consultation process should include frontline voluntary and community organisations. Communication vital – both promotion of IDP and ChangeUp and listening to responses from the sector
Lack of support from statutory partners	Medium – some are already in support, however others disengaged from process	Consultation process an opportunity to re-engage those who have dropped out; to widen the partnership basis of the Consortium; and a focus for discussions with the LSPs.
Inability to address funding issues	High – especially in the short-term	Priority focus for continuation work and application to Capacity Builders Work on quick win:win e.g. rationalised application process Partnership working with LSPs
Capacity of Consortium to provide leadership	Low	Plans to build capacity of Consortium recognised and built into Plan Recent workshops laid a good foundation Develop at a steady pace – avoid doing too much too quickly

Looking outwards – consultation with the wider community in West Sussex

A major task for the Consortium steering group is to distribute the IDP to as many voluntary and community organisations as possible. However, the research done by the West Sussex Consortium urban and rural workstreams showed that frontline voluntary and community organisations were not entirely engaged with the ChangeUp programme. As a result, the consultation process (see Figure 3) will need to include informing and explaining the IDP to voluntary and community organisations, as well as listening to their views and asking for comments.

Equally, funders, including Councillors, both at the parish, district and county level should have the ChangeUp programme explained and the strategic objectives for ChangeUp in West Sussex set out so that they understand their importance to the voluntary and community sector in West Sussex.

6.2 Towards the Future

The national context

A critically important task for the Consortium steering group is to plan, implement and cost the IDP projects, and take the whole process forward. The national context for this is that on the 22nd March 2005 the Home Secretary announced an additional £70m for the ChangeUp programme for the financial years 2006/2007 and 2007/2008. A new agency, Capacity Builders will co-ordinate the activities of Changeup nationally and take on fund management of this investment, it will be responsible for

- ❑ The overall programme design and management of ChangeUp.
- ❑ Managing contracts and grants offered under ChangeUp and identifying what works.
- ❑ Spreading good practice.
- ❑ Mentoring and supporting organisations that are candidates for ChangeUp funding.
- ❑ Marketing the ChangeUp programme.
- ❑ Ensuring the consistency of the programme, including ensuring that local and regional work is joined up with national activity.

The regional context – the South East Continuation Fund

On 18th October 2005 the Regional Consortium met to agree and confirm to GOSE the details of how this resource should be used in the South East. It was agreed that the continuation fund would be focussed on helping local consortia to stay in place and to ensure that they and the Local Infrastructure Development Plans are 'fit for the purpose' (GOSE) as the Capacity Builders organisations comes in to place in 2006.

Continued on page 26

Figure 3

West Sussex IDP Consultation April - June 2006

Figure 3

The Draft IDP will be submitted to GOSE on 31st March 2006. A 12-week consultation process will take place from Monday 3rd April to Friday 23rd June 2006.

Month	Action	Aim	Lead	Comments
APRIL	Draft a letter to be distributed via newsletters, forums, networks to include statutory organisations and parish councils and halls	To state the aim of the IDP To state the aim of the consultation process	Consortium steering group member	
	A comments form (with key questions)	To bring in comments in a systematic manner	Consultants	Attached to IDP Need a central contact to receive comment forms plus other comments from other fora.
	Promote consultation via newsletters, forums, networks	To raise awareness of the process	Consortium steering group member	
	Post IDP on websites associated with all Consortia steering group members, e.g. WSCC, District Council, PCTs, VOLG, AirS, CVSs and specialist organisations for viewing and downloading	IDP available to groups and individuals with an internet connection	Consortium steering group	
	Print 1000 copies of draft IDP for distribution through Consortia membership organisations	To provide the opportunity for a wide range of VCOs to take part.	Consortium steering group	Costings for 1000 copies B&W and distribution
	Consultation begins	Compact Compliant	Consortium steering group	
	IDP Presentations to take place at existing fora and network meetings. Specific one-off meetings to take place in each District if budget allows	Encourage comments	Consortium steering group	Costings for venue, refreshments for possible one-off meetings Also check that process is Compact Compliant

MAY	IDP Presentations to take place at existing fora and network meetings. Specific one-off meetings to take place if budget allows	Encourage comments	Consortium steering group	As above
EARLY JUNE	IDP Presentations to take place at existing fora and network meetings. Specific one-off meetings to take place if budget allows	Encourage comments	Consortium steering group	As above
23rd June	Consultation ends		Consortium steering group	
End June	Comments collected and amendments begun			
Beginning July	Amended IDP sent to Consortium steering group			
Mid July	IDP signed off by Consortium steering group and other stakeholders and submitted to GOSE	To have a final IDP that has had a wide consultation process	Consortium steering group	Sign-off agreed by all stakeholders including funders

Action in rural Sussex as the managing body on behalf of the West Sussex Consortium steering group therefore applied for £39,797.90 comprising:

1. W Sussex ChangeUp Consortium Budget £25,940.28

Including staff salaries, room hire, meeting costs, postage, attendance costs.

2. W Sussex ChangeUp Consortium Future Projects

Including

- Further development of IDP projects £8,357.62
 - Website £1,500.00
 - Additional Support Programme £4,000.00
- £13,857.62**

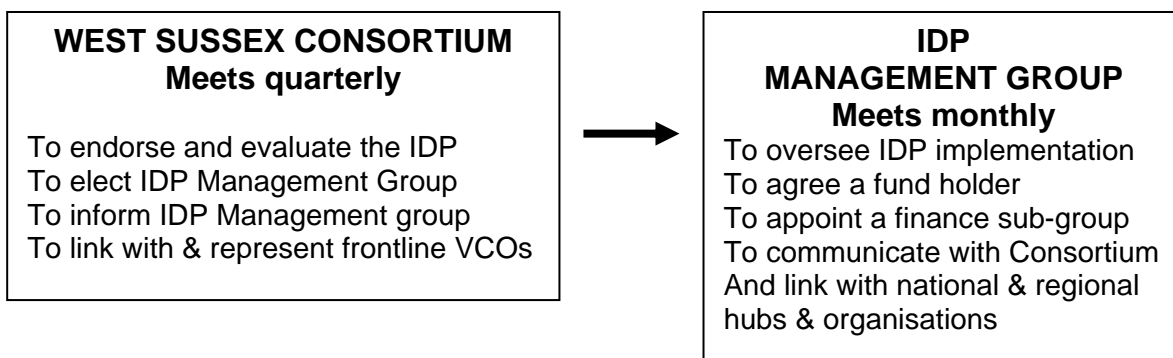
Looking towards Capacity Builders

At the end of the consultation period the Consortium will cost the projects from the IDP Action Plan. The priority will be to look for projects that are realistic, reflect evidence based need and add value to existing infrastructure services. This will be done alongside taking account of the answers to the questions posed by the discussion paper *Support Services (2006)* addressed to strategic partners

The Consortium's future structure

A critically important role for the West Sussex Consortium is to establish the structure and processes to take the Infrastructure Development Plan forward. Frontline voluntary and community organisations currently meet twice a year under the umbrella of the West Sussex Voluntary and Community Sector Forum. This provides the arena in which the Consortium can report progress on the implementation of the IDP and take on board the views of the frontline voluntary and community organisations.

It is suggested that the Consortium meets less often, i.e. quarterly, but includes all infrastructure providers, both generic and specialist, along with statutory and appropriate private sector providers. An IDP management group is elected from this Consortium. For the time being, the current Consortium steering group should become the IDP management group.



6.3 A Work Plan and Timetable for the Consortium steering group

The figure below sets out the timetable of both the external consultative work that needs to be done by the West Sussex Consortium steering group, and the internal work necessary to establish the structures and mechanisms necessary to implement the West Sussex IDP.

Figure 4

Month	EXTERNAL	INTERNAL
April	Consultation (see Figure 3)	i) Review evidence from workstreams ii) Agree continuation projects
May	Consultation	Awayday, half day to work on Vision & half for regular meeting
June	Consultation	Away day, half day to work on Governance structures & half for regular meeting
July	End of consultation but continue dialogue with funders	i) Agree amended IDP following consultation ii) Form new Consortium & IDP Management Group
Autumn 2006		i) Cost IDP projects and submit application to Capacity Builders ii) Begin development of Monitoring & Evaluation framework for IDP Action Plan, related to agreed outcomes, subject to consultation responses to both IDP and discussion paper <i>Support Services</i> iii) Begin discussions about appropriate geographical levels for services

6.4 The task ahead

There is much to do but this draft IDP is a guide and a start to a ten-year programme. It has set out the evidence, the strategic objectives and the actions necessary to develop and provide the essential infrastructure services and support needed by frontline voluntary and community organisations in West Sussex.

30/03/06

APPENDIX 1

West Sussex ChangeUp Consortium steering group - membership

Independent Chairman	Judith Buckland
Action in rural Sussex	Jeremy Leggett Liz Mleli
Burgess Hill Town Council	Judy Pointing
Chichester CVS	Rebecca McGarva
Chichester District Council	Chloe Williams
Crawley CVS	Liz Lamport
Crawley Ethnic Minorities Project	Sharafat Hussein
Faith Forum	Ian Chisnel
Horsham CVS	Nigel Tinkler
Horsham Volunteer Bureau	Heather Walker
ICIS – Information for Life	Gary Hicks
Springboard	Nigel Scott-Dickeson
West Sussex Carers Support	Jane Rosenberg
West Sussex Council of Voluntary Youth Service	Norman Smith
West Sussex County Council	Philip Coleman Stephanie Darragh
West Sussex PCTs	Liz Catchpole
West Sussex Voluntary Organisations Liaison Group	Robert Jones
Worthing CVS	Julia Carrette
YMCA	Janet Stokes

To get in touch with members of the West Sussex ChangeUp Consortium steering group please contact the West Sussex ChangeUp Co-ordinator, Elizabeth Mleli, based at:

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APPENDIX 2

ChangeUp workstream executive summaries

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1. URBAN RESEARCH SUMMARY

Introduction

The aims of the research were to:

- Identify the voluntary and community organisations (frontline organisations) operating in four urban areas of West Sussex: Adur, Arun, Crawley and Worthing
- Identify the infrastructure organisations providing support to these organisations
- Identify the nature of the support currently being provided
- Identify the future infrastructure support needs
- Identify any disparity between what is required and what is provided.
- Provide recommendations of the future provision of infrastructure services in the areas concerned.

Research Findings

Frontline Organisations

The questionnaire identified 26 areas of work. A total of 125 organisations were surveyed and a broad range of provision found. The main areas were Community Work (12%), Older People (7%), Youth Work and Health and Welfare Services (6%).

The organisations surveyed identified a wide range of sources from which they had obtained support. Many of the sources of support cited by the respondents were however not infrastructure organisations as such but other agencies, including local authority departments, where it appears that advice had been sought about specific issues. The largest single areas of support identified were Room Hire (63%), Recruiting and Supporting Volunteers (43%), Training (37%) and Funding (35%).

The priorities identified for future support were Funding (60%) Recruiting and Supporting Volunteers (18%). Significantly Funding was interpreted as being the provision of funding rather than support in obtaining funding. It was clear from the results that the areas prioritized by the survey organizations for future support did not reflect the Performance Improvement, Workforce Development, ICT and Governance priorities of ChangeUp.

Infrastructure Providers

The survey identified that the only significant infrastructure service provider in each of the areas was the local CVS. These provide support services that address all the ChangeUp priorities with the exception of IT support. Countywide infrastructure providers were also identified but, from the survey of frontline organizations, their impact at local level appears to be negligible in terms of direct hands-on provision. The survey revealed that each of the CVSs was under funded and under resourced in terms of the National Association of Councils for Voluntary Service (NACVS) recommendations for core service provision. This implies that if the CVSs are to meet the need for additional service delivery that can be anticipated by the implementation of the ChangeUp programme significant additional resources, both for development and for secure core funding would need to be put in place.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Current Support Provision

The key issues identified from the research are:

- Public sector funding, according to this research sample, appears to be more focused on larger organisations in the urban areas of West Sussex.
- Small and medium organisations in the urban areas are reliant on self-generating income to sustain the service delivery they currently carry out.
- Recruiting and supporting volunteers is a much used and needed area of support. However, there appear to be issues of perception by front line organisations about the aims of the VBs. Frontline expectations about VB service delivery appear in many instances to be limited to obtaining volunteers rather than volunteer development as a whole.
- The perception and expectation of the role of the Volunteer Bureaux (VBS) by frontline organisations need to be addressed in the delivery of service by VBs and CVSs.
- The organisations surveyed identified Funding, in contrast to the rural research, as the area of support provision in the future they would most like to see.
- There was a low engagement of frontline organisations with support services relating to equalities and diversity.

Future Support Provision

The low take up of support provision by frontline organisations in some key ChangeUp areas is a source of concern as it suggests that the organisations are not identifying these as a priority and have not identified with the ChangeUp agenda. There is a need to raise awareness of the Government's strategy and to ensure that frontline organisations address the need for change if they are not to remain disadvantaged in the future.

Support Providers

The CVSs are the only significant infrastructure providers in each of the areas. They have an historical and future role in the provision of infrastructure support to frontline organisations but are currently under-funded and under resourced. The implementation of the ChangeUp agenda implies not only additional service provision but an increasingly sophisticated service provision if it is to respond to an increase in public service delivery by the voluntary and community sector.

Infrastructure funding

The CVSs enjoy good working relations with their local council funders who oversee and take part in management committee activities. The health sector appears to make a very limited contribution to infrastructure support. There is a need for the statutory sector to fully engage with the ChangeUp agenda and address the issue of secure core infrastructure funding.

CHANGEUP IN THE LOCAL CONTEXT

The emphasis in ChangeUp is on improving voluntary and community sector organisations and increasing their involvement in the delivery of public services. However, many frontline voluntary and community organisations do not wish to consider undertaking public service delivery. Only a very few organisations are currently delivering services under contract and public sector grant aid as a major source of funding is limited to organisations with an income greater than £100,000.

The future levels and types of infrastructure support provision will to some degree be determined by the nature and extent of public service delivery envisaged by statutory sector organisations. Based on experience in other authorities it is possible to surmise that this is an area of work currently under active development and debate within the agencies concerned; the outcome of this debate will inform the short to medium term delivery of support.

ISSUES FOR THE INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Funding and sustainability – this research has shown there is major concern for front line and infrastructure organisations alike over sustainable funding.

Partnership working - Networking, sharing resources, joint-working based on existing good practice need to be developed including meaningful engagement with front line organisations.

Perception of existing infrastructure service provision – front line organisations understanding of existing infrastructure provision needs to be improved to ensure access to services for all organisations e.g. role and services of Volunteer Bureaux.

Public sector involvement – Relationships between councils and the frontline voluntary and community sector organisations on the whole seem to be negative. However, the infrastructure providers in this survey seem to have ‘healthy’ relationships with their local councils. They could, therefore, have an important role to play in improving relations and communications between frontline organisations and the public sector.

Quality Assurance – A joined-up approach to quality assurance for frontline organisations should be adopted by infrastructure providers to assist those organisations within urban areas who are willing and anxious to develop as organisations.

Equalities and diversity – urban areas are recognisable by the cultural diversity of the communities that make them up. It is crucial that meaningful work be done to ensure that all communities within the urban areas are involved in the development of the voluntary and community sector; it has a vital role to play in the delivery of services across West Sussex.

Lead contact: Liz Lamport, Chief Officer Crawley CVS

2. RURAL RESEARCH SUMMARY

The aims of the research were to:

- identify voluntary and community organisations operating in the rural localities of West Sussex
- identify what these rural groups want in terms of infrastructure support
- identify the disparity between what is required and what is provided
- develop recommendations as how infrastructure organisations will work in partnership to deliver infrastructure support to rural voluntary and community organisations.

The research involved:

- a postal survey in the Horsham and Chichester Districts of West Sussex
- 18 telephone interviews with respondents
- face to face and telephone interviews with both statutory and voluntary and community sector professionals
- desk research involving scrutiny of national and local documents.

The study was carried out over 10 weeks, beginning in early October 2005 with the development of the sample and questionnaire. It ended with the analysis of data and desk research in mid December.

Results of the postal survey

- 56 Questionnaires from the Chichester area were returned representing a 57% response rate. Seven (13%) were large organisations, 12 (21%) were medium and 30 (54%) small. The majority of the respondent groups serve older people. As with other similar research financial support from the statutory sector correlates to size with self-generated funding diminishing as size increases.
- There is a varied environment of provision to frontline voluntary and community organisations. There are many players providing support to these groups, especially in the field of newsletters and briefings. The view that there is an overabundance of information is similar to other recent research. The sample was asked what should be provided; the response was financial help and/or longer term funding.
- There is a wide range of training being provided by a large number of trainers. Over half the respondents had not attended training because they felt that it was not right for them. Frontline organisations access specialised training from a variety of sources including their own parent bodies. They were asked what training should be provided and the response was that the majority of the requests for training are already provided. Chichester is the preferred place to travel for training. This is different from the experience of the EESI project in the Arun coastal strip. This found that groups in their area prefer to have training in their own areas in the villages and small towns. The preference is for low cost training (£0-£10)

- ❑ The findings indicate that information as to how to access Council grants is easy to find and that applications are relatively easy to understand. The support given to groups in the Chichester District from council officers (from both the County and District Council) is perceived as very useful. Nearly half of respondents (49%) stated that they had support from their Parish Councils, many in the form of financial support.
- ❑ The main challenge for the Chichester voluntary and community organisations is **transport**; accessible and affordable transport was considered to be key to working in the rural areas of Chichester.
- ❑ The results for Horsham were similar to Chichester. However unlike Chichester the main challenges for the Horsham voluntary and community organisations are involving people and recruiting **volunteers**. Transport and funding were also major concerns for many respondents.

Recommendations

The diversity of provision is a positive

The research in the rural areas of West Sussex confirms the government view that a one-size fits all approach (*ChangeUp, Home Office 2004*) will not be sufficient. Indeed the variety of choice available to the voluntary and community organisations in rural West Sussex should be seen as a benefit rather than duplication.

Sustainable funding

The government's vision is that there should be a modern relationship between funders and providers of services (*ChangeUp, Home Office 2004 p13*). There is a clear need for local funders to appreciate the requirement to deliver sustainable core funding to the voluntary sector in West Sussex.

Bureaucracy

The government's vision is that there is a need to simplify and streamline regulatory and reporting requirements (*ChangeUp, Home Office 2004 p13*). There is a clear need to deliver this vision locally so that the small, medium and larger voluntary and community organisations can concentrate more on delivering their local services to the rural areas of West Sussex.

Development of small groups

The Rural Development Worker in Mid Sussex and the EESI project managed by Arunwide CVS are examples of good practice in action. Both the rural development worker in Mid Sussex and the EESI project in Arun have shown that small groups respond to a worker they meet face to face and get to know. These workers provide information, support and training tailored to the specific and differing needs of each small voluntary and community group. **This is a role model for the future.**

Delivery of information

The West Sussex ChangeUp Consortium should review the provision of newsletters and briefings to voluntary and community organisations in West Sussex. Could there

be fewer newsletters? Could there even be one voluntary and community sector newsletter with one distribution list with a page for the local CVS news?

Recruitment of volunteers

The West Sussex ChangeUp Consortium should consider how current models for recruiting volunteers in the rural areas could be complemented and enhanced by new methods of working. Funders should take note of Government expectations of local government's role in supporting the volunteering infrastructure.

Training infrastructure

The West Sussex ChangeUp Consortium should consider a rationalisation of the training infrastructure in West Sussex with

- High level core skills being provided across the county and
- Local training tailored to the specific needs of the small groups.

There needs to be a clearly communicated route for voluntary and community organisations to access appropriate training

A Transport review

Voluntary and community organisations in the rural areas of West Sussex have signalled that community transport is key to their ability to deliver local services to the local community. Consequently, the ChangeUp Consortium should ask for and encourage a review of all community transport across the rural areas of West Sussex.

Lead contact: Rebecca McGarva, Chief Officer Chichester CVS

3. VOLUNTEERING PROJECT SUMMARY

This project aims to identify ways in which change could be made to deliver the Volunteering Core Functions in a more effective and sustainable manner, building on current success and developing high quality services more widely across the county.

A set of proposals compiled by West Sussex Volunteer Development Agencies (VDAs), working together is put forward for consideration by the managing bodies and trustees of West Sussex VDAs and the West Sussex ChangeUp Consortium Steering Group. In order to take forward any agreed proposals there will need to be further time and resources for further research and the development of business plans with sustainable funding strategies.

The Volunteering Infrastructure project considers all aspects of Volunteering namely; Brokerage, Marketing volunteering, Good Practice development, developing Volunteer Opportunities, policy response and campaigning and strategic development of volunteering. These are the Core functions of Volunteer Development Agencies. Volunteering England is the accountable body for the activity of the Hub and the membership body of VDAs.

The project considers the requirements of front-line voluntary and community sector organisations, the role played by other local agencies providing, directly or indirectly volunteering infrastructure services and needs of volunteers, potential volunteers, and the communities they help to strengthen.

The project is not based on a determination to maintain existing organisation structures and operational procedures. It seeks to explore all possibilities within the framework of the local environment and the National Volunteering Strategy, considering work already underway and planned by the Volunteering Hub, initiatives and developments including new standards of accreditation, Volunteer Centre branding, volunteer management programmes, production of a funding model for VDAs later this year and a strategy for Volunteering in England, to be published in March 2007.

The focus of this report is on functions rather than structures and procedures. Currently there is not an over-provision of Volunteer Development Agencies in West Sussex, nor overlaps, each operating within a District Authority area. The ability to provide a full VDA service at this level, reaching all of the rural parts of the county is questionable. Ways of providing the required service to the highest standards possible, based on best practice, are being explored considering different approaches, shared functions and the possibility of new opportunities.

This project is running in parallel with a West Sussex Employee Volunteering (EV) project (funded by Volunteering England) which aims to develop employee volunteering, to consider the feasibility of a countywide scheme and produce proposals. Both Volunteering Infrastructure and Employee Volunteering projects are funded to 31.03.06.

Consideration has been given to the Volunteering infrastructure from the perspective of existing provision, identified need and the potential for change to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of Volunteer Development Agencies, working together.

A set of proposals, relating to VDA Core functions, has been compiled for consideration.

Brokerage

- Volunteer opportunities, common to more than one district, could be registered centrally or by any one VDA with information shared across county. Also sharing of information about projects suitable for employer supported volunteering and group activities.
- Information Points to add outreach resource, particularly in rural areas.
- Location of Volunteer Centres to provide maximum visibility and accessibility across the county.
- With the benefit of collective experience and particular knowledge of local circumstances, to evaluate the relative merits of the different brokerage services offered (drop in arrangements for casual callers, appointments, interviews, telephone and email contact) in order to achieve the most cost effective approach to recruiting more volunteers, while aiming to reach potential volunteers from the wider population.

Employee Volunteering

- West Sussex VDAs working together to form an EV agency with a higher profile than each VDA would command individually.
- Development of standard practices, common publicity material, database of EV projects.
- Professional service developed in accordance with Volunteering England training and guidelines.
- Use of VBase facility to collate information and promote EV opportunities and countywide EV Brokerage service via national Volunteering England website.
- Dedicated EV workers to provide this specialist service across the county, working with Volunteer Centres and having the resources to meet fluctuating demand and spread project opportunities across District/Borough boundaries, in a consistent, measured way.

Marketing volunteering

- Use of a common brand for Volunteer Centres using material supplied by Volunteering England.
- Introducing a county identity for displays and poster material to publicise West Sussex VDAs.
- Use of Volunteer Centre window display and signage, where possible, (as provided by Volunteering England) to help establish the local and national brand. A national promotion campaign is planned to launch the brand image.
- The development of a West Sussex VDA web site with links to Do-It and Volunteering England. Volunteering to be included on all local authority web sites across the county with links to county VDA site and national volunteering websites.

- County VDA strategy on use of Information Points/Booths. Volunteering England is currently piloting the use of information booths in accessible places, such as supermarkets, serving rural areas, This ICT project aims to reach people without home Internet access and to stimulate additional interest.
- VDA collaboration where joint promotions would be appropriate e.g. sporting and other county events. Joint production and use of countywide presentation and promotional material.
- The use of collective press releases for TV/Radio/Newspaper/periodicals.
- Regular local newspaper advertising and articles in Parish magazines to be used where possible.

Good Practice development

- VDAs working together to increase the knowledge base of the volunteering infrastructure. Managers/Staff training to be shared for the benefit of all VDA staff and volunteers and the service users; voluntary organisations, volunteers and potential volunteers.
- Joint approach and mutual support for achieving Volunteering England Quality Mark (Volunteer Centre Accreditation/re-accreditation) possibly through peer mentoring.
- Developing resource facilities to deliver, consistently across West Sussex, up-to-date volunteering information for the benefit of other agencies, voluntary organisations, community groups and individuals.
- Developing across the county standard good practice guidelines for management of volunteers.
- Developing and delivering training on good practice management of Volunteers, working in partnership with other agencies to promote and deliver all training required by the VCS and to develop a strategy for the provision of accredited Volunteer training and accreditation of existing training.
- Promote and facilitate Investing in Volunteers Programme to the point where it becomes recognised as essential and self-sustaining.

Developing volunteer opportunities

- Talks and presentations to countywide groups facing potential barriers to volunteering could be undertaken jointly with appropriate liaison for follow up. This happens occasionally now but without formal representation status and any specific resource.
- VDA representation at a county level involving statutory bodies, for the purpose of identifying community needs and gaps in service provision and to encourage development of volunteer opportunities to help meet these needs and the needs of potential volunteers. This could be established more formally. Good networking arrangements exist at present with representation by informal agreement.
- The role of VDAs in helping to develop volunteer opportunities, at all levels across the county could be strengthened by the development and adoption of good practice management of volunteers guidelines. A stronger and more recognised VDA could be more successful in helping voluntary organisations to recruit and retain volunteers.

The volunteering infrastructure has a unique role in supporting volunteers and the organisations where they volunteer, as well as delivering volunteering initiatives and programmes. West Sussex Volunteer Development Agencies working in partnership with other agencies and as an informal network currently aim to fulfil the core functions at a local level.

To extend the service in an effective and sustainable manner, building on current success and developing high quality services more widely across the county, consideration should be given to more formal joint working arrangements with a co-ordinated approach and a countywide funding strategy.

Lead contact: Heather Walker, Horsham Volunteer Bureau

4. ADDITIONAL SUPPORT PROGRAMME SUMMARY

Research was commissioned from four different sources to gain effective access and better quality data from the four groups identified: asylum seekers and refugees, Travellers, faith groups, Black and minority ethnic people. A recent study focusing upon the Arun District was also integrated into this overall study.

While it is common knowledge that the numbers and diversity of all four groups are increasing, official data on which to support policy development is scarce and where it exists it is not well coordinated.

The word 'community' is mainly avoided in this report. It assumes a level of contact, commonality and action that is not always present. There *are* distinct communities that are identified; there are also large numbers of individuals not currently engaged with others with whom they may share some common interest.

There is some overlap between the four groups surveyed in this report; indeed it is possible for one person to be a member of all four categories. However, the means of reaching them, their levels of community cohesion, and range of needs vary very widely.

Recommendations are listed under the headings of:

Information.

An integrated approach to collating relevant population data would provide many voluntary and statutory agencies with a sound and informed basis for outreach and provision. A continuing cycle of researching qualitative information should be maintained.

Networking, sharing information and integrating provision

More networking and information sharing is necessary about potentially vulnerable and marginalised groups and the available provision in different parts of the county, to avoid duplication and prevent confusion in those seeking services

Use and development of existing services

Where groups may not be accessing specific services, potential barriers to access should be investigated. The provision of language support emerged as an issue in several elements of the research.

Training and awareness

There is some evidence in this report of insensitive treatment from particular services and some indications of good practice. Diversity is clearly here to stay in the county and staff in a huge range of organisations and agencies would benefit from accessible and affordable awareness-raising training and development

Advice and support

There is a very mixed picture of where people from the identified groups go for advice and support. This should be audited and made more coherent and visible to those who need it.

Capacity building

There is a very mixed picture as regards organisations' capacity to work with the identified groups around the county and the different levels of need. There are some existing organisations with a clear community base that could develop this; there are others serving a range of other needs that are also well placed to develop their capacity in this regard; and there are organisations with the potential to address the needs of particular groups.

Public information and education

There are common negative attitudes towards asylum seekers and refugees, Travellers, Black and minority ethnic people, and religious minorities (especially Muslims). Voluntary and community organisations, as well as the people focussed upon in this study, will have a very much harder time without a clear lead from local statutory agencies, politicians, and media.

One specific measure (involving Travellers)

All other measures are effectively diminished for them as long as Travellers have no legal place to stop.

Lead contact: Sharafat Hussein, Crawley Ethnic Minority Partnership

5. WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SUMMARY

1. Develop a strategic and coherent approach to workforce planning and development by: engaging key strategic partners in developing trust, and a shared vision - both locally and across the sub-region and working together to deliver the actions noted in the action-plans, agreeing priorities, responsibilities and time-scales
2. Build capacity across the region for 1:1 tailored organisational and workforce development and advice
3. Identify and address any gaps in provision by ensuring a comprehensive range of flexible and appropriate workforce development opportunities, which build on and extend existing good practice including skills needed to secure and manage contract funding where this is the direction that a VCO wishes to take. Also ensuring a wide choice of approaches to learning (for example shadowing, peer mentoring and action learning sets, as well as more traditional learning methods.
4. Help overcome barriers to learning, especially for part-time staff and volunteers (through promoting the benefits, encouraging management and directors/trustees to facilitate take-up of opportunities, and provision of necessary support including accessibility, childcare and respite provision active and coherent promotion of benefits and opportunities.
5. Drive-up demand for appropriate workforce development, which reflects the development, needs of organisations and individuals, through: active, coherent and joined-up promotion. Also advocating the benefits and identifying likely future needs in an environment which is fast-changing and presenting new opportunities
6. Help secure appropriate and equitable funding for workforce development (in particular through a strategic approach and working together in partnership where appropriate)
7. Continue to promote the need for workforce planning and development with statutory and funding bodies locally, regionally and nationally (links particularly to the 'Sector value and promotion part of this report)

Suggestions for taking-forward the action plans

A small pan-Sussex 'task and finish' group' be established to consider the action plans in the context of current developments (including the IDP), making any changes to the plans considered necessary, prioritising each action, and agreeing responsibilities and timescales for moving forward the actions. In carrying this out resource implications will need to be borne in mind, as will mechanisms for helping ensure communication, engagement and ownership among key players - both strategic and operational.

Membership of such a task and finish group needs to be considered carefully. It is likely to comprise a small number of individuals who are representative of the voluntary community sector and appropriate statutory sector organisations in

terms of geography, area of operation, and seniority. It may be worth considering an independent chair/convenor for this group.

It may be possible to consider action plans as 'templates' for a series of goal-directed fixed-term projects. If this approach were to be adopted, then a small task and finish group on behalf of the sector could itself spearhead each project. Such projects could adopt a 'solutions-focused' approach, which emphasises positive change through "finding out what works and doing more of it", and "stopping what doesn't work". This approach focuses upon the future, that which works, progress, influence, collaboration, application of resources, simplicity and action.

It is important that the results of any implementation are subject to evaluation, both formatively (i.e. aimed at feeding back during activities) and summatively (i.e. aimed at presenting an overall picture of the work done, its effects, benefits and opportunities/needs for further work).

Finally, the importance of carrying out such work in a collaborative, strategic, well planned and joined-up way with excellent communications cannot be stressed too strongly.

Lead contact: Action in rural Sussex, Lewes.

6. ICT RESEARCH REPORT SUMMARY

This report identifies some key issues facing the local infrastructure organisations in taking advantage of Information and Communication technologies (ICT). The focus of the report is on meeting the needs of the local infrastructure organisation and how ICT can help them meet their members' needs more effectively. In doing so, we look at how the technology can support joint working within the infrastructure organisations and in the sector as a whole.

As part of the Government's ChangeUp programme, ICT was identified as a key tool in developing and supporting the community and voluntary sector. Regionally, RAISE has researched the uptake and needs of organisations and the "*Heart of the Sussex Community*" report recognised the need for ICT support to be made available to local voluntary and community organisations.

The introduction and uptake of broadband Internet services over the past 2-3 years has given community and voluntary organisations an opportunity to review their equipment and networking needs. Nearly all staff now have an up-to-date computer with office productivity tools, their own email account and a fast Internet connection on their desktop.

Organisations have become reliant on the technology to carry out virtually all of their work. However this dependence is not always matched by reliable Internet services or robust technical support services. Staff may find it difficult to specify ICT requirements and to find a trusted source of advice. In particular, there is a requirement for help to groups in planning and managing their ICT support.

Organisations are looking for support in using these new tools effectively and in understanding how ICT can best support them. This will mean raising awareness of what can be done, developing an appreciation of the costs and drawbacks, and creating joint solutions to achieve practical solutions across the infrastructure.

Key Findings

- ❑ Local organisations have been able to access funds for equipment and software and have managed the introduction of broadband into their offices.
- ❑ They are now at an early stage of development as networked organisations.
- ❑ There is little formal planning for of the take up of ICT within the local infrastructure and no evidence of sector-wide discussions about the use of IT.
- ❑ It is difficult for smaller organisations with a lower staffing levels and limited capacity to take on new pieces of work or to plan for developments which are not part of their immediate work. Particular support will be needed if these organisations are to participate fully in any developments.
- ❑ The management of contacts and membership information by Councils for Voluntary Services (VCSs) is mixed, as reflected by the various use of different database solutions.

- ❑ Organisations are not collecting and managing their information using common standards
- ❑ There is great potential for support of local and regional networking using IT.
- ❑ This includes the use of online tools for the sharing of information, communications and collaboration beyond the use of one-to-one email.
- ❑ Organisations have identified the use of email newsletters and discussion groups and online systems as a key service development and to support closer working in the sector.

Key Recommendations

- ❑ ICT planning support should be made available to local infrastructure organisations.
- ❑ A programme should be developed to raise awareness of the potential benefits of ICT should undertaken
- ❑ The capacity of local infrastructure organisations will need to be developed in order to take advantage of the emerging developments in ICT.
- ❑ Better coordination between local infrastructure organisations and their partners is required to ensure effective delivery of services to the sector and identify common solutions.
- ❑ A shared communications platform is required to underpin and support developments within the network of local infrastructure organisations and to support their members.
- ❑ Models need to be developed with local infrastructure organisations to provide support to frontline voluntary and community organisations in the sector.

Lead contact: Peter Mason, SCIP

7. QUALITY ASSURANCE WORKSTREAM SUMMARY

Background:

For this workstream, the original proposal (September 05) from VOLG suggested establishing a matching service for peer assessment of quality assurance among VCS infrastructure organisations in West Sussex. The feedback from the meeting was that, at that time, this would be too difficult to do within a short timeframe. What could be expected and would be achievable was an audit of who's doing what, where we're at, what we want to do and what we need to do it.

The Quality Assurance Audit

Questions asked:

1. What quality assurance (QA) system(s) does your org use? & is it part of a national requirement (i.e. NACVS, RCCs)?
2. If your QA has levels, what level is your org at? And when did it achieve that level? If it's a case of a quality mark or not, have you got the quality mark? (i.e. Investors in People) And do you use that quality mark in your publicity materials (i.e. letterhead, leaflet, website)
3. When did you last review your organisation's quality - i.e. policies, procedures, practices? Do you review everything at once or on a rolling programme? i.e. through the year, over 3 years,...
4. What further QA work does your org plan to do, or you want to do over the next year? Is there a particular level or mark that you want to achieve?
5. From question 4, do you believe that your org will do that work & achieve that level/mark? If not, what help would your org/you need in order to achieve it?
6. Do you think peer review/assessment is a useful way forward for your organisation? Or do you have other systems in place? i.e. need a qualified external assessor
7. Can you estimate what it would cost your org (convert time into £ if possible) to achieve the level or mark you would like?

Status:

Emailed 13 infrastructure orgs: 8 responses with answers, 2 responses promising answers

Summary of Responses:

- ❑ Most responding organisations use PQASSO, sometimes because it is required.
- ❑ Investors in People, Community Legal Service are used by an organisation that doesn't use PQASSO, though they are also interested in PQASSO.
- ❑ The 'full membership' process for NACVS was cited as a quality mark.
- ❑ Where an organisation does not have a known quality assurance model it does involve its management committee and stakeholders in quarterly & annual reviews and reports.
- ❑ All respondents welcomed peer review.
- ❑ Staff time and organisational capacity are the barriers to pursuing quality assurance and feature in the resources identified to achieve a targeted level of quality.

Where PQASSO Is Used:

- ❑ Most organisations have achieved level 1 and are either about to achieve level 2 or intend to pursue this during the coming year. One organisation is working towards reaching level 3 in 3 years.
- ❑ No one publicises that they have achieved a level of PQASSO, though one mentions it in reports. In contrast, the organisation that has achieved IIP does publicise it.
- ❑ Usually, review is on-going and linked with other work as it arises, i.e. recruitment, NACVS membership renewal or with Service & Funding Agreement monitoring.

Next Steps:

The Quality Audit Report was presented at the February Change Up Steering Group meeting. Discussion identified a way forward leading up to July 2006. A short term, full time officer post can be funded to work with VCS infrastructure organisations to carry out quality assurance assessments together with support in further developing the policies, procedures and practices required further to improve quality offered. From the audit (above), different levels of priority organisations have been identified.

Lead contact: Robert Jones, Chief Executive, West Sussex Voluntary Organisations Liaison Group (VOLG)

8. CHANGE UP INFRASTRUCTURE YOUTH PROJECT

It was agreed by the West Sussex Change Up Consortium to release £5000 to WSCVYS to improve infrastructure resources for the voluntary youth sector, and to assist WSCVYS in increasing capacity to deliver necessary services to the sector.

The 3-phase project is being developed as follows:

1. The building and maintenance of the new WSCVYS web site for the voluntary youth sector to access vital information to help develop the sector.
2. The building of a comprehensive database of youth groups, agencies and organisations in West Sussex.
3. The production of an Outdoor Pursuits/ Residential brochure to assist the sector in activity choices for their group/organisation.

Current developments in these 3 areas of the project

Each of the 3 phases are progressing well and details follow:

1. The New WSCVYS website has been thoroughly discussed by the WSCVYS Executive and a graphic designer has given samples of a front page for the site. The front page has been posted on the Mid Sussex YMCA site. The website designer has been chosen and is being commissioned to build the site and maintain for 3-5 years. Web space is now being sought and one WSCVYS exec member has a strong contact and is pursuing this. The site will be a one stop shop for the voluntary youth sector, containing information on policy making, Government papers and initiatives, funding guidance, details of West Sussex Children's Trust meetings and developments, and will highlight links to other appropriate sites, e.g. Connexions 'The Hub'. The aim is to have the WSCVYS site fully operational by June 2006.
2. After a series of meetings with Gary Hicks at ICIS, it has been agreed that ICIS will build a database of some 1000-1200 youth groups and services as an information resource for WSCVYS. This will enable greater liaison with the wider sector, increase networking and partnership working, and create a more cohesive infrastructure for the sector. ICIS will deliver this resource as an ICIS extranet service, accessed via a password from the ICIS web site. The database will be searchable by different criteria, including Topic/Service, Location, and Age range. *Topic/ service* will range from e.g. Youth clubs, Bullying, Children's Centres, Information Shops etc. *Age range* will be 5-11 yrs and Over 11's. *Geographical Area* will be both broad i.e. West Sussex Countywide and specific e.g. Burgess Hill, Horsham. The information will consist of organisations, contacts and /or details and hyperlinks to specific web sites. The timeframe for delivery of this database is being finalised.
3. The Outdoor pursuits and Residential Centres brochure is under construction. 2 sample pages have been produced of Broadstone Warren and Blackland Farm. The one centre per page format will carry a picture, details of facilities on offer, contact details and costings for groups. This will provide a user-friendly colour guide for the voluntary youth sector, widening choice of activities for groups, increasing potential for greater youth participation.

Lead contact: Norman Smith, West Sussex Council of Voluntary Youth Service

9. PHYSICAL FACILITIES – RURAL

Background

This is a report of research commissioned by the West Sussex Change Up Consortium to identify the role of village halls and community buildings in rural and peri rural Sussex. It highlights the current status in terms of state of repair, facilities offered and identifies gaps in provision. The report will inform decision makers and service providers, raising awareness of the potential for village halls and community buildings to be an option in service planning. It will also form the basis for future funding bids.

Introduction

Village halls and community buildings dot the landscape of rural and peri rural West Sussex. The halls and buildings vary from small, basic buildings with no more than a tea urn and a few battered trestle tables to large, modern buildings with IT facilities and industrial kitchens. Regardless of their size and scope, these venues act as a focus for village and community life, providing a meeting point for a plethora of activities and, in some cases, serving as an outlet for essential services such as GP, chiropodist and baby clinics that would otherwise be an inconvenient, and sometimes impracticable, car journey away. In other instances, the potential for halls and community centres to serve as venues for essential services has been untapped, and more work needs to be done to explore, at a strategic level, which buildings could be used to host essential services. In the remoter reaches of West Sussex adapting an existing parish room for the health visitor sessions may prove a more realistic option than using dwindling public transport to access facilities in a neighbouring town.

In remote communities that lack essential services and in the absence of a community venue to host such services, the voluntary and community sector would have to step in to fill the gap, whether by providing minibus transport to take people from outlying areas into towns or larger villages to attend GPs' surgeries, health clinics, or by providing peripatetic care to older members of the community.

With this in mind, the current study aims to provide an overall picture of village halls and community buildings in West Sussex: highlighting communities that currently have no village halls and community buildings - particularly those situated in remote villages - and are reliant on the essential services and community activities provided by neighbouring communities. We have also highlighted those communities with dilapidated facilities that need replacing.

By mapping the geographical spread of the buildings, providing a basic assessment of their facilities, and giving a snapshot of their current capital needs, we have devised a series of key "next steps" and strategic recommendations for action in the next three to eight years' period.

Methodology

Action in rural Sussex surveyed 309 halls in West Sussex, including rural, peri rural and urban communities. The survey was conducted by postal questionnaire and telephone survey with representatives of the management committee or village hall and assessed the buildings' basic facilities and their capital needs. Of the 309 surveyed, we received responses from 61%.

We also measured the distance from the village hall or community building to essential services (the nearest GP, Post Office and primary school). See Appendix 4 for further notes on essential services as a component of Indices of Multiple Deprivation.

Based on the survey results and the distance from essential services we have signposted those communities which have no or poor standard community buildings, those which have high capital needs, and those which are distant from essential services. These findings should help planners to prioritise communities of greatest need.

Data Sources

The data sources we used to identify the halls were: West Sussex County Council, Worthing Tourist Information Centre, and Horsham, Mid Sussex, Arun and Adur District Councils.

Our list includes all community centres, church halls and village halls, where known. It does *not* include theatres, cinemas, hotels, restaurants, pubs, sports clubs, leisure centres, private conference centres, schools, British Legion, or other venues.

Strategic Recommendations

- Develop partnerships between Local Authorities, Community and Voluntary Sector, Action in rural Sussex and ACRE's National Village Halls service to work with village halls and community buildings' management committee. Link these partnerships to West Sussex's Social Enterprise Network's programme of activities.
- Direct funding and infrastructure support, through these partnerships, to communities with no or poor village hall/community building facilities, high capital needs, which are distant from essential services. See the individual district/borough sections below for the list of such communities.
- Foster a more structured, systematic, consortium approach to obtaining funding with communities working together to put together large funding bids.
- Conduct site visits with the hall or community building management committees to assess key questions:
 - ⇒ Is the site suitable for expansion or adaptation to host GP surgery, or pharmacy, or shop or other services?
 - ⇒ Does the village hall committee have the expertise and resources to assemble a funding bid or other fundraising?
 - ⇒ Could a number of neighbouring parishes join together for a new build?
- Build the capacity of existing village halls and community buildings' management committees by supporting them to recruit, support and train new members and volunteers, using the professional services of Action in rural Sussex's existing Village Halls Programme. In time, this would lead to more active participation in local community buildings by local people.
- Build on Action in rural Sussex's current study of the basic facilities, capital needs and distance from essential services of 575 village hall and community buildings

across East and West Sussex to develop a detailed database of these venues. Such a database would provide a valuable resource for those providing services to rural and peri rural communities and other stakeholders.

- Support development of higher standards of buildings for public use, via partnerships local authorities, Community and Voluntary Sector, Action in rural Sussex and ACRE's national village halls service. One example would be to fund and support the use of ICT to facilitate public use of these buildings, by creating on-line booking systems.
- Select a village hall or community building that has scope to be a pilot social enterprise model. In the longer term, we would hope to see a number of key village halls being run as successful social enterprises.
- Assess the potential to provide essential services, where these are lacking, through existing village halls and community buildings.

Lead contact: Action in rural Sussex, Lewes.