



The National Community Development Network



Report of the National Launch Convention

November 2007



Improving support
for a stronger third sector

Report published January 2008 from material produced at the conference, edited by Dr Val Harris and Dave Eatock

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To contact the National Network
John Stevens
equal.voices@ntlworld.com

Regional Contacts

North East
Steve Lancashire
steve.lancashire@etec.org.uk

East
Jen Wingate
JenWingate@eeda.org.uk

Yorkshire & Humber

Val Harris
valharris@phoncoop.coop

South West
Jan Crawley
jcrawley@southwestfoundation.org.uk

North West
Dave Hannay
info@communitynw.org.uk

London
Matthew Scott
matthew@valewisham.org.uk

East Midlands
Gersh Subhra
V.Subhra@derby.ac.uk

South East
John Stevens
equal.voices@ntlworld.com

West Midlands
Phil Ware
philip_ware@birmingham.gov.uk



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Foreword

By John Stevens

I would like to try to set out some of the ideas and reasons for holding this Conference and relate it into a wider context.

The ideas and reasons have their roots in the growth over the last 10 years of the importance of things regional.

Community developers' work with communities to ensure that the issues of social justice, social change, exclusion and disadvantage are recognised, addressed and resourced and even though there is great work going on at a local level, it is still a major role for community development to strive to remove the blockages to both the acceptance of and practice of our work. Getting others to accept the legitimacy of community development is a difficult task and thus it thus it becomes a barrier to try to ensure that the principles and practice of community development become a strategic function within of the development of social, environmental, economic and educational (and other) policy.

To achieve this the Community Development field must take the lead at all levels and have an active part in the development of these policies:

- It must exert an influence
- It must promote and perhaps justify the role of community development

My view is that one of the key areas where this action needs to take place is at a regional level. This is now one of the major places where policy development, implementation and funding allocation is determined and controlled whether it is via Government Offices, Regional Development Agencies, Regional Improvement Partnerships, and Centres of Excellence. Indeed these days' most large public and voluntary sector agencies and organisations have their presence at the regional level.

There are already committed Community Development voices at the national level that are both established and vocal, who were all represented at the conference to show their support for the networks - the Community Development Foundation (CDF), Community Development Exchange (CDX) and the Federation for Community Development Learning (FCDL).

Across the country there are vibrant local, city and sub regional networks that are active and making their views heard regarding their particular areas and issues.

However it is a different picture regionally where the community development presence, capability and contribution is nowhere as strong as it should be.

In my view it is crucial that community development has a presence at the regional table, not just because we think we should be there but because we can demonstrate that community development can contribute and add value to policy and practice. We can also provide the vital link between the national and the local and being regional can express the subtle and not so subtle regional differences. I am aware of the lack of interest and / or belief in regional developments nevertheless it is a fact currently and one which I consider community development needs to act with.

2 years ago a group of colleagues, already involved in regional CD work, came together with an enthusiasm to promote and build up the case for the expansion of Regional Community Development Networks and to look for funding opportunities. One of those funding opportunities may be the Capacity Builders funding process and that is one of the discussion points at this conference. Our thanks to John Marshall at Capacity Builders for committing the funding for today's event.

This Conference is the next step in the onward progress of RCDNs for if they are to be successful, relevant and alive they need the support and ideas of those who will make up their membership, so the ideas and expertise of all participants is needed to support the sustainable and secure growth of RCDNs.

John Stevens

Chair & Co-ordinator of CDSE

The Official Launch of the Network

The agreed aims of the national co-ordinating group of Regional Community Development Networks (RCDN) are to:

- Develop a formal and accountable structure, which is able to think strategically about the best ways to meet the diverse needs of those involved in community development in urban and rural areas.
- Explore ways to support and encourage the Regional Community Development Networks both financially and operationally to be effectively involved in regional initiatives.
- Explore ways that RCDN can co-operate with the national organisations that are concerned with promoting and supporting community development work.
- Critically reflect on structures and practice that work and regional experiences that will contribute to the development of practical models to support community development workers.
- Influence and engage with those responsible for government funding streams and advocate for greater and equitable distribution to community development in the regions.

The National Convention launch was conducted by Jacqui O'Neil from Government Office North West



Jacqui O'Neil cuts the ribbon at the launch

National Community Development Bodies

There are 3 national bodies concerned with community development and they each have a particular role to play. They are all supportive of the development of the National Community Development Network as they recognise how the regional networks can support and enhance their own regional activities.

CDF, CDX and FCDL all attended the launch conference and ran workshops of their current work in relations to the regions.

CDF is a non departmental public body, funded by CDLG¹ to

- Advise national and local government on community development policies
- Research, evaluate and interpret evidence to improve Community Development strategy and practice
- Manage particular government funds to support community groups
- Organise publications, advice and events to support Community Development practitioners
- Link to community development in Europe / International
- Manage the National Empowerment Partnership to link different providers at national and regional level supporting local action

CDX Community Development Exchange is a UK wide membership organisation, receiving core funding from DCLG to support Community Development work.

They are currently involved with

- Developing Community Development Strategies – for national, regional and local

1 Department for Communities and Local Government

government

- Organising Regional CDX Road-shows on the publication Community Development Challenge Report
- Providing information on policy, encouraging practice exchange and networking
- Supporting some local and sub regional Community Development Workers Networks
- Linking in with existing regional Community Development Networks
- Involved in the national Every Action Counts programme to support communities involvement in sustainable development
- A member of the National Empowerment Partnership

FCDL, the Federation for Community Development Learning, is a membership organisation whose primary focus is on all forms of community development learning, including informal learning and more formal training and qualifications.

Its main areas of work is around

- Developing Community Development Work Learning Pathways through designing and writing a range of national CD awards including:
 - National Open College Network Units levels 1- 3
 - City and Guild level 4 Diploma
 - National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) levels 1 - 4
- Supporting and encouraging the England Standards Board for Community Development Education and Training and its work Endorsing Courses and Learning programmes at all levels from foundations level through to Degree and Masters Level studies
- Networking to promote good practice, through general meetings and practice sharing

workshops

- Developing and implementing Quality Frameworks for community development learning through
 - * Promoting the use of the Occupational Standards as the basis for learning
 - * Designing and promoting the Community Development Learning and Qualifications framework
- Every Action Counts programme –the lead for the strand to skill up community development workers and trainers in sustainable development. FCDL are delivering free courses and events across the English Regions for trainers, community development workers and activists. Producing publications, resource packs, and web material to promote good practice. Writing National Open College Network and City and Guilds units
- Improving Reach programme to develop the capacity of Black Minority Ethnic community groups, workers and activists. FCDL are working with 4 regional networks to deliver a pilot programme of outreach work, community exchange visits, training of trainers courses, community work taster sessions, sub regional and regional conferences and mentoring opportunities.
- National Empowerment Partnership work – using project funds to run events and produce guides for employers and for non-CD workers on community development work. Writing up the experiences of BME groups on obstacles they face in partnership working and influencing policy. With the England Standards Board developing a model for an accreditation of practice route, and Somalian Community Health projects to record their work and experiences.

What Is Going On In The regions?

The first workshop explored what regional networks are doing and the issues that they faced.

1. Community workers and activists tend to relate to borough or district wide networks rather than to sub regional or regional initiatives. This local focus may be a result of the demise of county council structures, as the county continues to provide a stronger basis for organising where it exists, more so than the regional level. There are some sub regional networks based around district council networks, although these might be affected by yet more local government re-organisation. A lot of energy is needed to work at a regional level given the sheer size of the regions. It is hard to justify participating in a regional network if it doesn't seem to relate directly to ones own work.
2. There are many networks but few are focused on community development, for example there are networks around regeneration, faith, children and young people. Federations of Tenants and Residents Associations are important in some areas, in others there are Community Empowerment Networks are still functioning although maybe not for much longer. In some rural areas the funding advisors networks contain many Community Development workers, in other areas they are quite separate
3. There are few city wide Black Development Agencies focused solely on community development work, in many regions there were regional networks of BME practitioners but they are not just about community development work
4. Networks are organising in different ways but most use of mix of email, meetings, newsletters, and events such as workshops and conferences. Having a topic for each events gives it legitimacy and allows for networking to take place at the same time. Members choose the topics for a small number of events a year. Examples were of workshops and events on migrant workers, green spaces, community work and health, housing, and faith
5. Most networks are involved in supporting or delivering some community development learning. Networks provide informal learning through using funding opportunities to run conferences and workshops on current policies and topics, such as ChangeUP, Community Development Challenge, and Community Empowerment. Some have produced directories of the range of Community Development training and qualifications in their region and have hosted them on various websites. Sometimes this had been done in conjunction with the local CVS. Sharing information about the different kinds of national qualifications available and linking employers with training providers, has enabled new programmes to be offered within a region. Networks have responded to demands for new areas of training and have worked with the national Community Development body for learning, FCDL, to write awards for health trainers, or have developed regional units, such as Community Development and Faith. There are huge issues about the resourcing of the full costs of curriculum development and delivery, and of the quality of some provision.
6. Some networks have run workshops to promote the national occupational standards and have undertaken pieces of work using the CDW National Occupational Standards (NOS), such as mapping the quality of CDW practice within a city, and exploring the use of NOS in evaluating

LAAs (Local Areas Agreements)²³. Requests for such workshops are beginning to come from the Government Offices.

7. Promoting good practice has been undertaken by collecting case studies to use as the basis for practice sharing events, and running workshops exploring models such as ABCD to see how effective community workers are. A workshop on community development work within the public sector was heavily oversubscribed.
8. There are opportunities for Community Development networks to become more engaged in regional bodies but there is often a lack of resources to follow up on these. Some networks had started to document the impact of community work on higher-level regional strategies and objectives.
9. The issue of independent networks was raised by some discussion groups, who explored the tensions between networks sponsored or supported by local authorities, and the value of networks in providing an opportunity for people to have a voice on issues that affected them.
10. In some regions there was simply a lack of community development training, whilst in others the issue was more about the quality of the provision, with courses being run by people who did not know what community development was, of new providers coming in and offering cut price NVQs which did not provide adequate support to candidates. Regional networks could have a role to play with the England Standards Board to drive up the quality of provision in their regions. The currency and appropriateness of some qualifications such as NOCN or City and Guilds is not recognised by all employers which has led

to an over emphasis on NVQs or for the JNC recognised Youth Work and Community programmes which do not equip people to work within communities as they are very youth work focused.

2 Local area agreements are intended to set out the priorities for a local area agreed between central government and a local area (the local authority and Local Strategic Partnership) and other key partners at the local level. LAAs simplify some central funding, help join up public services more effectively and allow greater flexibility for local solutions to local circumstances.

Current Situation of The Regional Networks

Yorkshire and Humber

The Yorkshire and Humber Community Development network exists primarily as an email group who exchange information about community development work and learning between themselves. We meet 3 times a year as a small group and try to organise workshops and conferences depending on the availability of resources.

A joint bid between the England Standards Board and members of the network succeeded in obtaining Change Up funding in 2006 to map the availability of CD learning in the region and to initiate debates about the role of CDW in supporting the achievement of high-level regional strategic objectives. The project involved running workshops for practitioners in rural and urban areas, an email and telephone survey, and research into regional policies. The outcomes from this project are a report linking CDW to regional objectives, a directory of CDW training opportunities in the region, and a small working group interested in developing CD learning within the region.

Our work tends to fall into 4 areas:

1. Promoting and developing opportunities for community development learning in the region;
2. Raising the profile of community development learning and the urgent need for resources to support a range of programmes we know there is a need for;
3. Sharing good practice between ourselves and with others;
4. Contributing to Regional Inclusion Framework, the Leeds Participation Strategy document and working with Y&H Regional Forum

We are currently engaged in 2 initiatives, we are a member of the developing regional community empowerment consortium representing community development work

and its contribution to the engagement and empowerment agenda, and we are running a number of projects in different parts of the region under the Improving Reach project with FCDL, working with the Network of Northern Travellers, Hull DOC, migrant workers in Scunthorpe, ATL (Asian Trades Link) and BME communities engaged in mental health in Wakefield.

South West

The South West Regional Community Development is co-ordinated by the South West Foundation. The network has its own operating document but is delivered under the auspices of the Foundation. Its main aims are to break the isolation suffered by many Community Development workers, to offer networking opportunities and mutual support, to provide an information resource and to encourage and enable community development training to take place in the region.

Since its launch four years ago the network has undertaken the following activities:

- Established an information network of around 140 community development workers in the region
- Delivered bite-size community development learning in partnership with the Federation for Community Development Learning to over 90 organisations
- Launched the Community Development Challenge report in the region to over 100 attendees
- Undertaken a number of activities around Community Development in the region including seminars with national bodies
- Worked with the Federation for Community Development Learning to deliver Every Action Counts Seminars
- Undertaken research looking at women's involvement in Community Development

- The Community Development network has set up a small regional steering group of organisations that can deliver Community Development Training in the region

The Network is currently involved in the delivery of the Improving Reach Programme with the FCDL. This work has focused on looking at the needs of the Travelling Community in South Hams and delivering Informal Community Development training to this group. The work has also looked at the community Development Training needs of the Migrant workers in Somerset and Cornwall. Training is being delivered through Faithnet South West to Faith Groups and East Cornwall CVS to rural isolated groups linking in to migrant workers.

North East

Community Development North East is network organisation with a contact database of approximately 500 individuals from community groups and organisations. Its purpose has been to assist Community Development practitioners and policy makers from all sectors, paid and unpaid, to work together to develop and promote community development. The idea was developed by a number of agencies and community groups following regional conferences 2002. In the early stages, to get established, CDNE was supported by the local Government Office. Some resources followed through ChangeUp and other government schemes. However, consistent resources to sustain the organisation have not been provided and have limited the potential of the organisation.

CDNE has worked with community groups, local authorities, networks and organisations to:

- Provide a focus for community development practice in the region
- Provide a policy forum to inform strategic decision making
- Provide networking opportunities across the region and across the public, private, voluntary and community sectors
- Raise the profile of community development practice among the mainstream agencies
- Promote and share good practice in community development
- Improve support, training and professional

development opportunities for Community development workers, paid and unpaid

Many of the above aims were met, at least in part, in 2006 -7, by CDNE sponsoring a series of 7 regional events on specific thematic topics: these events attracted the interest of over 500 practitioners and were well received by those who participated.

CDNE is currently working in partnership with Community Work Assessment Consortium for North East England (CWACNEE) consulting practitioners about how best regional infrastructure organisations might support community development. This process will provide information that will guide and shape the future of CDNE. CDNE is currently involved in the Regional Infrastructure Consortium and the regional group developing the work of the National Empowerment Partnership.

South East

This is a short summary of our proposed activities and strategic direction over the next 3 years. Its purpose is to identify some priority issues which are important key drivers for a healthy community development network serving the needs of those in the community field across the South East. Community Development South East's current activities include:-

1. A wide membership, which is cross-sectoral, inclusive and integrated, made up from those who use a community development approach. Sectors covered include colleagues from the CD Worker sector in addition to those from Health, Voluntary Sector, Further & Continuing Education and others.
2. A Regional Steering Group with 2 members from each of the sub-regions + other interested parties, up to 20 people. We hold bi-monthly meetings and maintain the organisational systems to support the network.
3. Building systems for the sharing of both practice and information including:
 - Maintain and improve the CDSE Website as a source of information and means of exchange of information across the region. (www.cdse.org.uk)

- Produce and distribute a regular Update.
- Developing sub regional structures to better localise networking and give opportunities for Network members to input their skills, knowledge expertise and experience to reflect sub-regional and local perspectives. To explore issues locally and then communicate those issues to the region.
- Holding meetings, workshops and conferences to enable all those across the region involved in community development activity the opportunity to meet to discuss Community Development issues in general and develop future CDSE priorities and strategies.
- Encouraging and actively promoting the dissemination of information and policy relating to Community Development issues.

- There has been some involvement with the London Change Up neighbourhoods sub group which has a link into a workforce development pot of money held by LVSC and which ties to a report on CD training / accreditation needs.

This information on the regional networks was contributed by the participants who were either present at the conference or were submitted information to the conference. Details of activities in the other regions may be obtained from the relevant contact listed elsewhere in the report.

4. Promoting, improving and supporting the development of accessible community development training throughout the region.
5. Developing a framework, to offer relevant, strategic advice to regional agencies and Local Authorities on Community Development and how it applies to policies such as Local Area Agreements.
6. Initiating and supporting Community Development work focused on specific disadvantaged communities such as Black and Minority Ethnic Communities, refugees and asylum seekers, rural communities and communities facing rapid growth and change.

London

- Currently there is no recognisable CD co-ordinating body for the London region.
- A joint meeting held in Lewisham with CDX on 1st June 2007 with speakers on the Community Development Challenge, and CD more generally I, where 30-40 people turned up from across London, which has been the start of a database

Priorities For The Regional Networks

Each of the regions represented at the conference held small discussion groups to explore their priorities for the future.

North West

- To create a digest of government policies that relate to CD, or apply to us, such as sustainable development, so people can use it to lobby / influence others to use it to make sure they need us.
- Exchanges, mentoring, explore Can Do Exchange. We can develop case studies to develop, discuss, and provide peer support on practical tools and exercises. To hold concrete discussions around problems, ways of dealing with training – what is offered / needed.
- Policy interpretation. What do we, and our community really need to know?
- Trainers Network. Community Development distance learning, re-learning opportunities.
- Visiting each other in areas to discuss how Community Development workers get things done.
- Develop a loose, diverse structure of: local “town” meetings; sub-regional meetings; regional conferences + think tanks. Sending representatives to national events.
- Raise awareness of local practice issues. Demonstrate the import of community development in all areas and its relevance to all local communities.

North East

- Strong active relations with regional and sub-regional networks are needed to ensure the work and understanding of community development does not get lost – Diversity and Equality Consortium, VCS Learning Consortium mentioned faith organisations
- Gaps in current consultation process

- that need plugging – BME groups and Northumberland area for example
- Importance of active links with Government Office North East (GONE), Regional Development Agency One NorthEast (ONE NE), Association of North East Councils (ANEC) around their agendas
- Need to have clear protocols between regional, sub-regional and local levels
- Need to keep up with rapidly changing policy and practice contexts
- Regional network needs clear roles and make structures sustainable
- Great demand for community development learning, but funding is inconsistent and patchy across the region

South East

1. Core Funding: In order to function effectively and efficiently, the infrastructure of the organisation needs to be resourced. Funding is needed to develop and maintain:
 - The current role of Co-ordinator of 2 days per week.
 - The administrative support providing secure background support.
 - The CDSE Website which has proved useful along with the regular Update process
2. Training: If communities and the individuals within them are to develop social capital and contribute towards socially and economically viable and sustainable communities in the future, then it is vital that there is access to appropriate training and activities to assist in building individual confidence and skill levels and community co-operation. There is a great need to make training available for those who are involved in working with communities as their role is a key to future well-being.

Access to this training is already available and accredited but needs funding to increase availability.

3. Black and Ethnic Minority work: This is an area of work which needs further concentration and currently moves are being taken to develop action. CDSE is coming together with 3 other major initiatives (a Health Service Project in Hampshire and a national Capacity Builders Initiative and the CRE).
4. Development and support of sub regional, area, city-wide and local CD networks to aid the involvement and contribution of frontline workers and activists to the policy and service issues which face their communities; i.e. social, environmental, learning, skills and community policy.
5. Continuation of the contribution by CDSE to regional and national issues and policy development; Social Inclusion, The Community Development Challenge Working Group, The Regional CD Networks Group, Regional Every Voice Counts/ Together We Can activity etc. Contribution towards the key issues across the region contained in The Regional Economic Statement. In the context of Community Development this includes our contribution to the continued building of Social Capital, development of learning opportunities and therefore sustainable and economically inclusive geographical and interest based communities.
6. The strategic contribution of CD; our added value⁴
 - Helping people to see their common concerns
 - Helping people to then work together on those issues and concerns
 - Supporting and nurturing independent community groups and increasing networking between groups
 - Promoting equity and participation
 - Empowering people and organisations
 - Advising and promoting community

perspectives to public authorities

- Facilitating strategic forums to aid bringing community perspectives into the mainstream

Yorkshire & Humber

- We would like to find ways to support the many new workers in post as a result of the various new policies relating to working with communities, these workers tend not to be CD experienced.
- Experienced workers would like more support to help them grapple with new issues affecting the communities they worry with, for example migrant workers in rural areas. Mentoring may be one way to provide such support.
- The region actually has the basic infrastructure (trainers, resource packs, approved centres) to deliver most of the formal training programmes in the national learning and qualifications framework but we lack the money to be able to activate these opportunities.
- We would like to get more energy into the group, who could then contribute to influencing policy and using the opportunities that are open to us. We are dependent on the good will of one or two key people to keep the network going on a voluntary basis and this is not sustainable. We need to find resources to employ people to undertake some of the basic tasks of developing and maintaining the network.

East Midlands

- To develop further the Derby Community Development Work Forum
- To demonstrate the value of community development networking and its benefits to CD workers and others involved with community development
- To expand the network to include Local Authority representation and to be able to develop some partnership working with the Local Authority

⁴ The Community Development Challenge: 2006: Department of Communities and Local Government.

West Midlands

- We would like to develop training for local authorities including new Councillor induction
- Staffordshire Community Development Network needs support to develop
- Shropshire CD workers group needs support to develop
- We would show the benefits to organisations and communities of taking a community development approach
- We need to set out our clear terms of reference

South West

The Regional Community Development network in the South West undertook a survey of its members two years ago and this linked into the recent conference is enabling it to set its priorities for the future. The main priorities for the network to work on:-

- Giving Community Development a voice making it more visible – make sure there is a good rural + urban mix
- To link in to FCDL and ensure that learning opportunities within the region are developed and made accessible
- Support to all workers including statutory workers who have an interest in Community Development
- To campaign on behalf of communities as part of the promotion of social justice in those
- Look at why Community Development work is of value and promote this.
- Make CD values more transferable
- We can campaign – we have nothing to lose – we have no funding

London

- From the June 2007 meeting a smaller group of Community Development got together to explore how they could set up 2-3 meetings a year as a loose London Community Development regional 'space', where news, views etc. can be channelled with a focus on networking, informal peer support, policy discussion and

possible collaboration around Community Development related campaigns and raising the profile of Community Development work across London

- The first of these events will take place at the end of January 2008 where we will hold a day conference, in the morning we will look at the training needs of community developments activists and worse, and in the afternoon listen to speakers about current initiatives that affect community development.
- We are on the London Empowerment steering group which is looking at mapping / getting hold of good practice around empowerment work and to some extent this slips into CD work.

For those regions that were not represented at the conference you can obtain details from the regional contact listed in this report.

Roles That Regional Networks Could Undertake

1. In the workshop discussions there were different opinions on how regional networks could develop and the roles they could take on. Most networks are currently informal networks, working to a common set of terms of reference put forward for the national network group, but without any formal organisational structures. Some participants felt that this was the best way to continue whilst others felt that the networks should become more formal and enter into partnership work with bodies such as the England Standards Board to take on a role of endorsing courses and assessment centres within their region.
2. There was general agreement that the networks should continue to ensure that good practice was encouraged and shared between practitioners in their region, avoiding reinventing wheels and ensuring that people actually understood what community development work was and wasn't. Regional networks should promote and model the Community Development Work NOS. There should be encouragement to share good and bad practice and to pull out the learning from such examples, encouraging reflection and solutions.
3. Networks should have a key role in bringing the community development agenda back to local people, checking out what it is that people actually want.
4. Networks need to create space and opportunities for community development to input into policy discussions and inform others of the value of a community development approach in achieving their objectives. Networks could act as advocates for Community Development to LAs and regional bodies. They need to work at different levels according to issues and should seek out opportunities to positively influence policy and strategy. Networks could identify people with relevant specialisms in their region who could contribute to particular policy areas, e.g. Health, BME, LA policies.
5. Networks could encourage "newish" groups to come and share ideas and become a Point of contact, access information, training, network between communities, groups and statutory bodies.
6. Networks could consider how best to offer training to statutory bodies staff, including managers and councillors.
7. Organising events sub regionally may be a useful way to link the local to the regional. There are a number of sub regional organisations and networks that could help with this.

The typical role of Regional Community Development Networks (RCDN) is to:

- ✓ Facilitate network meetings and opportunities for individuals & groups interested in community development
- ✓ Collate information relating to community development in the region
- ✓ Map existing CD provision and opportunities for CD training
- ✓ Support Community Development themes – in Health, Faith, Housing, rural etc.
- ✓ Undertake practice development research
- ✓ To organise workshops and conferences on current issues affecting communities
- ✓ Influence and deliver on regional policies and targets

Roles A National Network Could Undertake

1. A new national grouping could pull together different interpretations of regional policies, making the link with national and international policies. We need a greater capacity to do this in regions but if the national body could start this, in partnership with the other national Community Development bodies then we would be able to have material to use in our workshops and virtual communities.
2. Making links between RDA's / GOR and the regional networks – providing guidance on the opportunities and ways in that others have found
3. Encouraging learning and sharing of ideas and practice between regions, encouraging intra regional contacts and activities
4. Working with the other national CD bodies to encourage true partnership working with the regional networks, undertaking joint work on mutually agreed areas of interest, putting on events, bringing resources into the regions
5. Seeking places on relevant national working parties and partnerships to promote the value of the work of the networks and the role we can play; challenging rules over funding
6. Providing support to promote good work in Community Development Work, using the NOS, gathering and showcasing case studies
7. Distribute information about funding, and other topics – on web, and through other means
8. Challenging employers especially Local Authorities who are cutting Community Development jobs or downgrading them to admin scales; the national body could collate information and get the issue raised at a national level
9. Partnership work with FCDL/ ESB to raise the standard of existing training programmes in regions
10. Supporting the development of the regional networks, recognising differences in resources available

Conclusion

The conference brought together those involved in community development networks across some of the regions, and showed the commitment of the regional groups to work together, to share their ideas and expertise, and to act collectively on matters of common interest to all regional networks.

The presentations and roundtable discussions highlighted the rich potential for regional community development networks to play a key role in providing support for practitioners and activists to improve their practice. Engagement in regional, and related sub-regional and local networks maximises opportunities for community members to get involved with decision-makers about the future of their communities. It was interesting to hear about the important advocacy role networks play in raising the professional profile of community development. This acknowledged the core skills and knowledge required to undertake effective community development work as outlined in the National Occupational Standards.

The conference discussions also highlighted the fragility of the networks and how their effectiveness is hampered by a lack of adequate and sustained resources.

The conference ended by recognising that much remained to be done to establish and consolidate existing networks at the same time as finding the resources to develop new networks in areas that were less represented. The conference remitted to the National Networks Steering Group the challenge of securing resources for the next stages of development.

Appendix

1. List of participants

First Name	Surname	Organisation	Location
Adam	Conroy	Abacus Access	Manchester
Ramjan	Amin	Brahma Kumaris	Kendal
Mina	Patel	Brahma Kumaris	Manchester
John	Marshall	Capacity Builders	Birmingham
Gabriel	Channan	CDF	London
Shak	Rafiq	CDX	Sheffield
Tanwir	Rauf	CDX	Sheffield
Trisha	Bennett	Community Development South East	Reading
John	Stevens	Community Development South East	Denmore
Michelle	Kavanagh	Community Engagement Service	Bewsey
Dave	Eatock	Community North West	Nelson
Dave	Hannay	Community North West	Nelson
Hilda	Reidy	Community North West	Nelson
Malcolm	Seddon	Community Regeneration Architects	Stockport
Laura	Harris	Mala Partnership	Manchester
Jim	Robertson	CWACNEE / CDNE	Northumberland
Ann	Schofield	CWANCNEE	Newcastle
Steve	Lancashire	CWACNEE / CDNE	Sunderland
Ameen	Hadi	East Salford Neighbourhood Mgemnt Team	Salford
Karen	Andrew	Faiths 4 Change	
Tom	Fyson	Faiths 4 Change	Sheffield
Janice	Marks	FCDL	Sheffield
Suzi	Millar	FCDL	Sheffield
Dean T.	Huggins	FCDL Chair	Newcastle Upon Tyne
Tracey	James	Gov't Office East of England	Cambridge
Jacquie	O'Neill	Gov't Office North West	Manchester
Alex	Williams	Groundwork Humber & Wolds Rural Community Council	Manchester
Bill	Oldridge	Council	Howden
Pam	Smith	Knowsley CVS	Knowsley
Emily	Taylor	Knowsley CVS	Knowsley
Christine	Walsh	Knowsley CVS	Knowsley
Tony	Roberts	NDC Charlestown & Lower Kersal	Salford
Janice	Gowing	North Yorkshire County Council	Northallerton
Soraya	Rigg	Oldham Lifelong Learning	Oldham
Geoff	Phillpotts	Portsmouth Housing Association	Portsmouth
Sarah	Daly	Reading BC	Reading
Maddy	Stean	RoFTRA	Rochdale
Peter	Ball	Salford	Salford
Chris	Trueblood	Salford BC	Salford
Annette	Rimmer	Salford University	Salford
Dhara	Thompson	Sostenga	Bradford
Jan	Crawley	South West Foundation	
Nick	Beddow	Stockport Council CD Team	Stockport
Ola	Spence	Stockport Council CD Team	Stockport

First Name	Surname	Organisation	Location
Scott	Riley	Student Force for Sustainability	
Yasser	Din	Tamworth BC	Tamworth
Peter	Smith	Tamworth BC	Tamworth
Lucy	Collins	TWICS	Southampton
Sarah	Iles	Vista	Langport
James	Hart	Volunteer Centre Dorchester	Dorchester
Val	Harris	Y & H Regional Forum	Shipley
Clarence	Hosein		Bristol

Contact us:

Do you work in the Community Development field?

Are you a Local Network?

Do you want to become part of a wider network of others involved in community development?

It is vital for community development people to come together to develop, influence and promote the greater use of community development at a regional level.....

So, join us and get involved in your Regional Community Development Network

To contact the National Network
John Stevens
equal.voices@ntlworld.com

Regional Contacts

North East
Steve Lancashire
steve.lancashire@etec.org.uk

East
Jen Wingate
JenWingate@eeda.org.uk

Yorkshire & Humber
Val Harris
valharris@phonecoop.coop

South West
Jan Crawley
jcrawley@southwestfoundation.org.uk

North West
Dave Hannay
info@communitynw.org.uk

London
Matthew Scott
matthew@valewisham.org.uk

East Midlands
Gersh Subhra
V.Subhra@derby.ac.uk

South East
John Stevens
equal.voices@ntlworld.com

West Midlands
Phil Ware
philip_ware@birmingham.gov.uk

The National Community Development Network



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