

Big Society Update Issue 5 – July 2011

Welcome to another edition of the Big Society update with all the news from the Big Society Strategy Team in the [Department for Communities and Local Government](#).

Open Public Services White Paper – Making Public Services better for All

The [Open Public Services White Paper](#) was published on 11 July. It sets out plans to shape the way public services are delivered and is calling on anyone with an interest in public-service delivery - including all public sector staff, service providers and members of the public - to come forward with views on how public services can be changed for the better. Speaking at the launch, the Prime Minister said, *“we are as committed to modernising our public services.....This is a job that urgently needs to be done, and we are determined to see it through. Because this is not just about improving our schools and hospitals.....it’s also a vital part of building a bigger, stronger society that is so central to my vision for our country”*. The full speech can be found on the [Number 10 website](#). There will now be a wide-ranging discussion about how to turn the vision for high quality, efficient and modern public services into reality. To see the White Paper in full, and to get involved, please go to: <http://www.openpublicservices.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/>



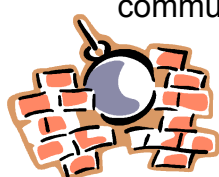
Take Part

The Government has published a range of new ‘How to’ guides to help people who want to get involved in their communities and make a difference. Published on the Number 10 website, there are currently 26 guides divided into 6 categories (*Your Neighbourhood, Public Engagement, Public Services, Community Safety, Giving, Recognising Others*). You will find a definition, details of how to get involved and signposting for further information. To see all the guides in full, go to <http://www.number10.gov.uk/take-part/>



Vanguards – One Year On

On the anniversary of the Prime Minister's launch of Big Society vanguards, Minister for Decentralisation, Greg Clark, announced that any citizen who wants to take social action and find community-led solutions to local needs will receive full support from Whitehall in the form of a dedicated barrier busting service. He said that three vanguard areas, Eden Valley in Cumbria, the Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead and the London Borough of Sutton, had seen some exemplar community initiatives come to fruition. He also said that *“Local communities in the vanguard areas have clearly demonstrated how with some government support they can develop ideas, find solutions to local issues and have a stronger say in how their local services are delivered. The process of working through barriers - both real and perceived - with these communities has highlighted some issues which continue to inform all our work across Government.”* Information on activity in the vanguards over the last year is available here: [Snap Shot of Vanguard activity](#). The Barrier Busting website offers advice and support from civil servants: <http://barrierbusting.communities.gov.uk/>



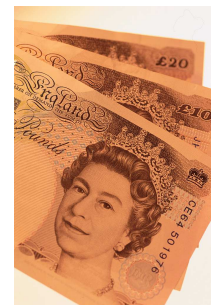
Opportunities for Recognition

Social Change Awards celebrates the passionate individuals and effective organisations committed to making a positive impact on society. This change can come about through the everyday actions of one individual, many people pulling together, a local company that cares about their wider community or the thoughtful investment of resources. The awards are fun, informal and inclusive. The 2011 Nominations are now open. Visit <http://www.socialchangeawards.org.uk>



Funding Opportunities

Please see below some details about funding opportunities that you may find useful. *Please note that DCLG does not endorse specific funding providers and any queries should be directed to the organisations.*



HOME OFFICE LAUNCH £14 MILLION TO EMPOWER COMMUNITIES AND BUILD SAFER NEIGHBOURHOODS

Crime Prevention Minister Baroness Browning has announced two new funds totalling £14 million which are being made available to the voluntary sector to empower communities to take action against crime and antisocial behaviour. As part of the government's ambition to drive up community activism and build safer neighbourhoods, organisations from the voluntary sector across England and Wales are being invited to apply for a share of two new funds to support local areas in tackling the issues that matter most to them. The funds are:

- A £5 million '**Community Action against Crime: Innovation Fund**' – to bring together active citizens and encourage new and creative ways of working within communities to tackle crime, with a further £5 million set aside for 2012-13. Further details of the application process for 2011-12 will be on the Home Office website shortly but please [email](#) for more information; and
- A £4 million '**Choices Fund**' – to support the development of innovative local solutions to reduce substance misuse and offending by young people.

[Nominet Trust](#) provides funding to **community projects in order to increase web access, web safety and how the web can be used to address social problems**. Projects that use tools and good practice that can be replicated are given priority. Funding is for special IT projects, not for core costs or purchasing of equipment. There is no maximum funding amount and the next deadline is 14 September. Read about the areas of focus, selection criteria, FAQs, funding restrictions or apply online. To apply, an eligibility form is completed and then successful applicants will be contacted. For more information, phone 01865 334 000 or email [Nominet Trust](#).

[The Rayne Foundation's](#) social welfare and development grant provides funding to **charities and community groups that improve the quality of life for older people or develop numeracy skills of any age group**. Applications that benefit other disadvantaged groups are welcomed, though the above will be prioritised. Funding can be used for core costs, salaries and capital costs of building projects. The average grant awarded last year was £14,000. Read the guidelines or, to apply, complete a stage one application. For more information, phone 020 7487 9656.

Community projects looking to increase their income from trust funds can purchase a copy of [The Guide to New Trusts](#). Published by [The Directory of Social Change](#), it features **100 newly formed trusts that were registered with the Charity Commission in 2010 and early 2011**. The directory costs £24.95 and lists funding areas and exclusions as well as application details. Call 08450 777 707 for more information.

Big Society in Action

We usually include a case study demonstrating big society in action. For this edition, we have decided to showcase a few case studies from the Faith Sector in a special supplement on how the sector helps to improve the lives of people in their communities. If you have a case study that falls under Social Action, Community Empowerment, or delivery of public services, that you would like us to use in the future, then [do get in touch](#). Enjoy the case studies!

Special Supplement: Big Society in Action – the Faith Sector

[Springfield Project, Birmingham – Children’s Centre](#)

The Springfield project based at St Christopher’s Church, a Church of England church in Birmingham is a Children’s Centre providing care and support to children, young people and families in the deprived area of Springfield, the majority of who are Pakistani Muslims. Birmingham City Council paid for the building costs and the church contributed £120k for greater space to allow for church admin and conference facilities. The church remains responsible for fund-raising for the ongoing delivery costs. The main lessons learnt were keeping the church alongside every step of the way and importantly, maintaining good relations with key stakeholders like the local mosque. Also essential was embarking on a building project from the starting point of known needs and services being provided rather than expecting the “mission” to evolve from the building. The significance of a high degree of ownership by the church fellowship in the day to day volunteering in the services provided and in staff positions has been vital for the protection of the vision and ongoing church-project overlap.



[St Giles, Langford, Chelmsford – Community shop](#)

St. Giles is a Grade II building in a very small parish of some 290 people scattered over quite a wide area. The local school closed in 1924 and the village shop closed in 1986, leaving the village without any facilities. The vision behind the project was to make the church more accessible to people, to provide a service for the village, and to enable parishioners to get to know other people in the community. One of the churchwardens Mrs Allen entered a competition in the ‘**Essex Matters**’ magazine which asked “*What would you do for your community if you had £10,000?*” suggesting extending the use of the church to incorporate a small village shop. She won and two years later and supported by local partners, *Heavenly Supplies* has opened in the church vestry. It is run a non-profit enterprise using volunteers. The project has been a great success in getting people in the village to know each other, and to work together for a common cause.



[Drugline, Redbridge](#)

Drugline, a Redbridge-based project of the Chabad-Lubavitch movement of Chassidic Jews, was originally set up to serve the Jewish community, especially those more Orthodox parts of the Jewish community where hidden drugs problems could take root. Today, Drugline serves the whole Redbridge community of all religions and none, providing its services in Gujarati, Bengali and Urdu as well as English, Hebrew and Yiddish. The project runs a helpline, one-on-one and family counselling services and drugs education. For more information, read [The Big Society and the UK Jewish Community](#)

[St Ethelburga’s Centre for Reconciliation and Peace](#)

St Ethelburga’s is dedicated to enabling people to build relationships across divisions. An important strand of their work is to find effective ways of helping people from different faith backgrounds come together to increase mutual understanding and build relationships across differences of belief and identity. The Tent was created to provide an experimental space to explore new ways of having good conversations about divisive issues. They offer a wide-ranging programme of public and private events in which mixed faith groups explore many different themes - political, social, theological and spiritual.



[St Philip’s Centre, Leicester](#)

St Philip’s Centre, Leicester provides a unique opportunity to learn about relations between faith communities. Women play a central role in holding families and communities together. On Mitzvah Day last November the Centre, together with the League of Jewish Women invited all faith groups to provide practical care and love for victims of domestic violence. Doing a deed of love and kindness is a central expression of faith for all of the faith groups and they all believe in justice and human dignity. Since the event, the project has grown and will run again this autumn. The St Philip’s Centre want to encourage faith groups to continue to work together not just on one-off events but to remove barriers and design services that need in their communities. The new Near Neighbours programme will enable many more such initiatives to happen at the very local neighbourhood level. Over the coming



months and years, Leicester being a city with a great diversity of culture and faiths will see many new initiatives started which seek to build bridges and strengthen local relationships further; and also, like Mitzvah Day, give new expression to the desire to improve local neighbourhoods for all people whether of faith or no faith.

[Repaying the Kindness \(RTK\), Lambeth and Southwark, London](#)

Repaying the Kindness (RTK) is a carers' respite project based in Jamyang Buddhist Centre in South-East London. RTK seeks to honour those who care for a relative or close friend, often at great personal sacrifice. RTK literally seeks to "repay" the kindness that carers freely give every day, by offering relaxing day breaks. The project is open to all carers over eighteen of any faith and none. It runs with a small enthusiastic team of two part time staff and eight volunteers.



[Langar \(Free Kitchen\) – Sikh Temples, Everywhere](#)

The Langar or free kitchen was started by Guru Nanak Dev Ji and continues to this day. These community kitchens run in the name of the Guru and are usually attached to a gurdwara (Sikh Temple) and the meals are served completely free of charge to everyone. The practice of Langar is designed to uphold the principle of equality between all people regardless of religion, caste, colour, creed, age, gender or social status. In addition to the ideals of equality, the tradition expresses the ethics of sharing, community, inclusiveness and oneness. Everyone is welcome to share the Langar; no one is turned away. The food is normally served all day, every day of the year. Each day a family or several families volunteer to provide and prepare the food and there may be several hundred people to serve. Caterers are not allowed. All the preparation, the cooking and the washing-up is done by volunteers and by voluntary helpers.

[Noor Ul Islam Mosque, Leyton, London](#)

This Mosque serves the whole community in various ways. The Mosque participates in and arranges regular trips for its congregants to visit other faiths' places of worship (Christian, Jewish, Hindu, Sikh and Baha'i communities). The Mosque is always open to anybody and has particular events where non-Muslims are encouraged to attend including the annual summer fete where all residents in the local area are sent free invitations and open days twice a year. In addition, there are tea clubs for local residents (Muslim and non-Muslim) over the age of 50, and weekly karate for women (Muslim and non-Muslim). The Mosque is very active on environmental issues, and partakes in the yearly 'Spring Clean' with the local community to paint, tidy and clean up the local area of Waltham Forest and ensures that fitness services such as swimming sessions are held separately for men and women.

Upcoming Events & Resources

Inter Faith Week 2011 takes place from Sunday 20 until Saturday 26 November. The Inter Faith Network for the UK leads on planning for this and further information, and event registration forms, are available from www.interfaithweek.org



Inter Faith Week is a great opportunity to reflect and highlight the themes of Big Society, as Secretary of State Eric Pickles said at the outset of last year's Week: *"Inter Faith Week is the perfect opportunity to celebrate the fantastic pastoral work of faith communities - and also to recognise that it's when they pull together in a shared endeavor that they can make the biggest difference in their community... Collaboration builds stronger understanding and helps people to concentrate on the values they hold in common - without ever losing their unique strengths."* A short illustrated report, *Inter Faith Week 2010 in England*, is now available for download from the Inter Faith Week website at www.interfaithweek.org. It showcases the many types of events which took place across the Week - from local community events to events in schools, colleges, workplaces, chaplaincies and national events, such as the special reception for inter faith activists hosted by Secretary of State Eric Pickles. The report also provides ideas and tips for those planning to run an event in 2011.

[The Faith Based Regeneration Network](#) (FbRN) was established in 2002 and has two aims:

To support faith based organisations working in local community settings and *To link the work and knowledge* of faith based practitioners with policy makers so changes proposed by local or national government can be well informed and therefore realistic.

That's all for now but we would genuinely like to hear your feedback and thoughts, so [send us an email](#) and feel free to forward to colleagues!