



# LINK



THE VOICE OF THE VOLUNTARY SECTOR

# Combating Poverty Locally

**The desire to close the inequality gap and reduce poverty in Kensington and Chelsea is an aim we all share. Views on how best to do it may differ, but it is widely acknowledged that our task is made harder by the recession and the government's emergency budget is likely to have consequences locally.**

The cuts in benefit entitlements, the public sector pay freeze and the increase in VAT announced in the budget will have a big impact on the income of the poorest households. Reduced spending by government departments is also likely to have an adverse effect on vital local services. Whilst some measures like the raising of the income tax threshold and the child element of the tax credit will benefit low paid workers it is probable that more people will be sucked into the poverty trap.

Given these circumstances, the Government's pledge to endorse Labour's target of ending child poverty in the UK by 2020 is encouraging.

The recent Poverty and Inequality lecture we hosted with Professor John Hills highlighted the impact low income has on a range of factors like educational achievement, employment prospects and health. Professor Hills argued that this cycle of poverty, low achievement and low aspirations was harder to break the longer it continued. Levels of inequality multiply throughout our lifetimes.

To highlight some of the local issues we have produced a Poverty Profile for Kensington and Chelsea based on the 2009 London Poverty Profile that was published by the City Parochial



Attendees at FundingFair reading our This Is Us report. You can view more event photo's on pages 4-5.

Foundation. We hope this can stimulate some debate on ways that we can carry forward our work on combating poverty and inequality.

We need to know what you think the key local issues are? Do you support the London Living Wage? Should we keep free school uniforms? Does the Wedge Card help to boost the local economy? Should some services be cut to fund others?

Let us know what you think and pledge to do your bit to build a more equal society in Kensington and Chelsea.

More info:

[www.kcsc.org.uk/poverty](http://www.kcsc.org.uk/poverty)

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### Kensington & Chelsea Social Council (KCSC)

works to support locally focused voluntary and community organisations serving local residents.

The views expressed in Link are not necessarily those of KCSC.

## A WORD FROM OUR CHIEF EXECUTIVE

**The full extent of the spending cuts may not have been clear to all before the emergency budget but in Kensington and Chelsea we were warned that local budgets would be reduced a year ago. In some way this extra time has been of benefit to help us prepare and we hope our good set of relationships will help ease a path into the future for our work.**



Mary Gardiner

work even more collaboratively and to develop joint bids. This maintains our presence, our values and our spirit, and we must guard against becoming too competitive as the changes externally impact on us all.

We are often told it's best to look for the opportunities in any given situation and need to consider how we can use the new ideas that are emerging for our benefit. At the Social Council we often prepare guidelines and policy papers to help you do this but sometimes maybe it would be better if we offered practical help and support instead?

Our work needs to reflect the changing circumstances in which we operate and we will be asking you what you think of us, our current role and our future role in September. Our new three year plan will be launched at our AGM in November and will reflect this thinking and consultation.

We always bear in mind that we are here to help improve the lives of residents. We are happy to hear your views on how we can best do this. So tell us if you think we need to refocus to help you develop the voice of your communities.

Let us know if you think we could use the funds we receive to support your organisations, to develop your knowledge and skills and to deliver the services your communities demand in a different way.

You, our members, working hard and delivering great services, reaching out and bringing together our various communities are part of what we could call our own local version of the "Big Society". We believe this work builds and sustains cohesive societies and this must be recognised if the ideal of 'Big Society' is to be realised. The work that is carried out at grassroots level to encourage well being, tackle racism, intergenerational work to bridge the age divide and the many diversionary activities that offer an alternative to crime and anti-social behaviour are just some examples.

We are pleased that in the last few years we have been able to support a number of organisations in our borough to

## MBE's for two local sector workers!

We are pleased to announce that **Iris Apablaza** of NOVA New Opportunities and **Souad Talsi** of Al-Hasaniya Moroccan Women's Project have been named in this year's Queen's Birthday Honours List.

**Iris** has been at NOVA for over 25 years helping provide pre-employment training to local communities and **Souad**, was a founder of Al Hasaniya in 1985, she has helped support the British Moroccan community in London ever since.

# BIG SOCIETY

## Soundbite or Substance?

**The idea of 'Big Society' was launched in the run up to the general election and with the new coalition Government now in place it will be a key feature that helps direct future policy in Whitehall.**

With much of the finer detail yet to be put in place, questions about what Big Society really means and what its implications are for the voluntary and community sector has been the topic of much discussion.

The Conservative Party argue that 'Big Society' can empower communities and help them come together to tackle local issues. In the 'Building Big Society' paper they point clearly towards a greater emphasis on localism. They claim they, "want every adult in the country to be an active member of an active neighbourhood group."

Whether this will form the basis of a future policy initiative or remain a mere aspiration remains to be seen but the Conservatives have been clear in explaining their reasoning behind it.

It is seen as a response to what was perceived as Labour's top-down bureaucratic approach to government. The Conservatives argue that this style of rule has helped foster greater apathy and has had a negatively impacted upon communities and people's willingness to participate as active and socially responsible citizens.

So what does it all mean for the voluntary and community sector in Kensington and Chelsea? If greater powers for communities to help shape local area development are granted and organisations are able to bid to deliver local statutory services where those services are failing will this change the nature of the voluntary and community sector?

Will plans to encourage greater direct civic engagement enhance the role of the voluntary and community sector or possibly detract from its role as the voice of communities and the complement to state intervention?

How will the concept of an army of 5,000 community organisers, funded and trained to lead

and act as a "catalyst" for community action sit alongside the work done by existing voluntary and community sector development workers?

These are questions that will find answers in time but we already know that local activism and shared social responsibility can be fostered and facilitated by the voluntary and community sector.

There is space within Big Society for the voluntary and community sector to play an important role. If people are to find their voice and participate in society as active citizens then the sector is the natural vehicle through which they can be engaged. For example, if the Government's desire to see people have a greater say over local planning is to be realised then who better to explain the issues and to strengthen community input than the local sector?

5,000 community organisers, if they are to succeed in their role, must be embedded in existing communities and work closely with

the existing representatives of those communities.

Over the next 5 years the sector is likely to be offered more opportunities to deliver commissioned services as traditional grants decrease but the new Government will place greater emphasis on the voluntary and community sector generating its own income and reducing its reliance on the state.

In the years ahead the sector will undergo significant change. The Big Society idea will need to be embraced. We are now challenged with making it work locally. Whilst its practical implementation remains somewhat unclear it offers us the chance to influence its direction it is one we should not pass up.

***"If greater powers for communities to help shape local area development are granted and organisations are able to bid to deliver local statutory services where those services are failing will this change the nature of the voluntary and community sector?"***

More info:

Angela Spence

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# Preparing for the

**Budget cuts averaging 25% across all areas of government with the exception of the NHS and overseas development aid were announced in the new ruling coalition's emergency budget on 22nd June.**

It remains to be seen how these will be implemented by individual departments but it is clear that they will have far reaching implications for the work of voluntary and community sector organisations.

These cuts in central government budgets are in addition to savings of 6% already made at a local level by the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea through its Corporate Services Voluntary Sector Grants allocation for 2010 – 2011. At the time that these reductions were announced it was made clear that they were just the first stage in a rolling programme of grant reductions and cuts as the council sought to make efficiency and budgetary savings to balance its books.

Given the current climate of belt tightening it is essential that voluntary and community organisations consider how the cuts will impact on them and take the time to prepare for the changes that may lie ahead. Here we list our top tips to help you:

- 1 Ensure you retain a strong focus on your mission, this will help ensure you don't lose focus as you steer your organisation through what could be difficult times.
- 2 Engage with your service users and beneficiaries about any changes you make, their input will help you make the right decisions.
- 3 Be clear which of your activities are your top priorities. Then if you do have to cut something it may be easier to decide what goes.
- 4 Consider the possibility of working more closely with other organisations. You may for example, want to develop joint funding applications or share resources to cut costs.
- 5 Consider ways you can reduce costs – for example, through cutting back on refreshments or stationary or by comparing the prices of your regular suppliers to those of their competitors.
- 6 Take time to understand the external environment and its impact on your organisation. This will help you position yourself to be able to respond well to changes.
- 7 Think about ways you can diversify your income streams so you are not too overly reliant on one funding source.



Organisations were looking to the future at our annual Funding FAIR event with our voluntary sector colleagues from CAVSA H

## Help us measure of the impact of the recession on completing

Empirical evidence from 'The Big Squeeze' London shows that more people are suffering unemployment and that people from black and minority ethnic groups are adapting their services to meet the needs of their communities.

Last year we produced an action plan for the local sector on dealing with the recession in London.

Later this year we will produce a follow up report on the impact of the recession on the local sector.

Go online to complete our short survey:

# challenges ahead



air event at Kensington Town Hall. This year we jointly hosted the Mammersmith and Fulham and attracted over 160 visitors<sup>1</sup>

## Impact of the recession locally by our survey

' survey on the impact of the recession in from mental health problems, there is greater minority ethnic communities are worst affected. voluntary and community organisations growing need regardless of funding.

cal sector and also highlighted recommendations in the recent 'This is Us' report.

rt based upon the survey responses we receive.

[www.kcsc.org.uk/recession-watch](http://www.kcsc.org.uk/recession-watch)

- 8 Be aware that staff may be feeling anxious about possible funding cuts. Ensure your organisation communicates well, giving transparent and consistent messages about what you know is happening.
- 9 Try not to be afraid of change and think of how your organisation can embrace it. Be flexible.
- 10 Make sure you have good financial systems in place to help you keep a close eye on income and expenditure.
- 11 Review your business plan and mid and long term strategies. Put in place a contingency plan that you can use in the event of a reduction in funding.
- 12 Ensure that you have good systems in place for measuring the impact of the work so that you can show that your work is delivering results.

## RESOURCES

### CASH Online

CASH provides information and support on money management and financial matters to organisations in Kensington and Chelsea.

More info:

[www.cash-online.org.uk](http://www.cash-online.org.uk)

### National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO)

NCVO have a range of resources for coping in the recession on their website.

More info:

[www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/advice-support/recession-resources](http://www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/advice-support/recession-resources)

### Cuts Watch

ACEVO, the voluntary sector Chief Executives body have launched this brand new website to monitor government spending cuts and their likely impact on voluntary and community organisations.

More info:

[www.cutswatch.org.uk](http://www.cutswatch.org.uk)

### Third Sector Foresight

This website look at trends and developments in the external environment that effect the voluntary sector.

More info:

[www.3s4.org.uk](http://www.3s4.org.uk)

### Big Squeeze Phase 2

London Voluntary Service Council have produced a report on Phase 2 of their Big Squeeze consultation which examines the impact of the recession on London's voluntary sector.

More info:

[www.lvsc.org.uk/Templates/information.asp?Nodeld=100050](http://www.lvsc.org.uk/Templates/information.asp?Nodeld=100050)

# Reaching out

This edition of LINK highlights two new developments in community outreach...

## Health trainers



Health trainers reach out to people who are in circumstances that put them at a greater risk of poor health; they work with clients on a one-to-one basis to assess their health and lifestyle risks, and then facilitate behaviour change and provide motivation and practical support.

Westway Development Trust recently won the NHS contact to deliver this service, which has now employed six local people to act as health trainers.

*More info:* Amy Stephenson  
Westway Development Trust  
astephenson@westway.org

**020 8962 5720**  
[www.kcsc.org.uk/health](http://www.kcsc.org.uk/health)  
[www.westway.org](http://www.westway.org)

## Wayfinders



This project recruits and trains local volunteer 'wayfinders' to go out and find people and direct them to appropriate services. They work in a variety of settings, such as GP surgeries and community centres. Age Concern K&C / Sixty Plus currently runs this service for older people, and if successful it may be rolled out more widely in the future. Look out for their new website, to be launched in July.

*More info:* Redi Kowa  
Age Concern K&C inc. Sixty Plus

**020 8969 9105**  
redi.kowa@ackc.org.uk

## Poly-what?

Despite a U-Turn by the new coalition Government on polyclinics or 'polysystems' and the 'Healthcare for London' programme, NHS Kensington & Chelsea is pressing ahead with the two primary care developments – St Charles Community Hospital and Earl's Court Health Centre. These will still both become 'hubs' bringing together a range of services working much more closely with community and voluntary sector services, although the term 'polysystem' is now likely to be dropped.

The Social Council is therefore continuing to develop a Community Health Consortium, and we are about to set up a limited company that will be owned by local voluntary organisations, and will be able to bid for public-sector contracts on behalf of its members. Keep an eye on our website for how to be involved, and please contact Lev to be on our email list.

*More info:* Lev Pedro  
lev@kcsc.org.uk

**020 7243 9809**  
[www.kcsc.org.uk/healthconsortium](http://www.kcsc.org.uk/healthconsortium)

## 'End of Life' care

NHS Kensington & Chelsea would like to work with local organisations in implementing its 'End of Life Care' strategy, which many local organisations and residents were involved in developing in 2008.

'End of Life Care' is defined as the last year of life and the stage where further treatment can no longer prevent the disease from progressing, however, symptoms and other problems can still be treated in other ways to make each day as comfortable as possible.

The term 'End of Life' has a lot of different meanings to different people, and so local health service managers are keen to work closely with community organisations so that they can get the right messages and information out to people.

Please get in touch with NHS Kensington & Chelsea if you'd like to find out more.

*More info:* Jemma Curry  
NHS Kensington & Chelsea

**020 8962 4820**  
jemma.curry@kc-pct.nhs.uk

## Training Opportunities

### Mental Health Awareness

Would you like to develop your knowledge and skills in mental health? The 4Minds project is offering free two-day courses in July, September and November, for any staff, volunteers or service users of community organisations that have an interest in this area.

The 4Minds Project works to promote positive steps to mental well-being within Black and Minority Ethnic Minority (BME) communities in Kensington and Chelsea.

*More info:* Shabana Siddique  
4Minds Project

**020 7373 9113**  
[www.4mindsproject.org.uk](http://www.4mindsproject.org.uk)

### Motivational Interviewing

Motivational interviewing is a very popular approach to working with clients or patients, and is about motivating people to make small behaviour changes. We ran a course for sexual health organisations in 2009, and the participants found it extremely useful for their day-to-day work. NHS Kensington & Chelsea is planning more 2-day courses in the Autumn, and the Social Council is planning a further course for sexual health organisations.

*More info:* Holly Connell  
NHS Kensington & Chelsea

**020 8962 4639**  
[holly.connell@kc-pct.nhs.uk](mailto:holly.connell@kc-pct.nhs.uk)

# Voluntary Organisations Forum Review

The Voluntary Organisations Forums afford attendees the opportunity to meet decision makers and influence policy decisions.

They enable participants to get news and expert views from a range of speakers, find out about funding opportunities, training and resources. Attendees can share information and knowledge, and network with individuals and organisations from across the Borough.

Three quarterly thematic forums feed back to a Main VOF. This meeting in turn carries forward the views of the voluntary and community sector to the Kensington & Chelsea Partnership, the strategic group for the borough. All meetings are open to voluntary and community sector organisations.

The VOF meetings are coordinated by the Social Council and we are keen to encourage the widest possible participation.

The Community, Equality and Inclusivity Partnership (CEIP), together with the Social Council are currently undertaking a review of the Forums to assess their reach, effectiveness and future direction.

The review will continue over the next two months, and be carried out via informal focus group meetings with a wide range of voluntary and community organisations.

If you regularly attend, we want to know what you get out of the meetings and if you don't we want to know what the barriers are in order to learn how to better engage you.

If you are interested in being a part of this process please get in touch. Details of upcoming VOF meetings are at the foot of this page.

More info: [debi@kcsc.org.uk](mailto:debi@kcsc.org.uk)

020 72430 9808

## Election to the Borough Voluntary Organisations Advisory Group (BVOAG)

Do you work with substance misusers? Could you represent your own and other organisations on a partnership group made up of Councillors and voluntary & community sector representatives?

The Social Council is seeking to elect a substance misuser voluntary sector representative to sit on the BVOAG which meets once a quarter.

If you would like more information, or if you

are interested in standing for election, please get in touch.

The closing date for nominations is 18 August 2010. Elections will take place at the Main VOF meeting on Wednesday 8 September 2010.

More info: [debi@kcsc.org.uk](mailto:debi@kcsc.org.uk)

020 72430 9808

## Appointment of Deputy Chair, Engaging Communities VOF

**The Social Council would like to welcome Afaf Taher, as newly appointed Deputy Chair of the Engaging Communities VOF.**

Afaf was involved in the voluntary sector in Westminster for over ten years during which time she showed particular interest and support for her local Law Centre. As a Link Worker, her legal background and language skills enable her to refer residents for assistance with housing, immigration, welfare rights or legal problems to appropriate support and advice networks.

The Engaging Communities VOF focuses on such issues as community cohesion, safety and sustainability. It is open to all voluntary and community organisations working in Kensington and Chelsea, with an interest in issues that affect communities.



## DIARY DATES

Wednesday 21 July	10.00am to 12.00pm	Engaging Communities VOF
Monday 26 July	3.00pm to 5.00pm	Older People's VOF
Wednesday 8 September	9.45am to 1.00pm	Main VOF
Wednesday 29 September	10.00am to 12.30pm	Children, Young People & Families VOF

Information on all meetings, including venue details, minutes and agendas, can be found on our website at [www.kcsc.org.uk/vof](http://www.kcsc.org.uk/vof)

**In the third of our interviews to mark our 50 years celebrations we spoke to Jennifer Ware who has been involved in the voluntary sector in Earl's Court for nearly 40 years.**

**Can you outline your involvement in the sector in Earl's Court?**

I initially got involved in 1972 when I became a trustee of the Chelsea Social Council having been introduced to the organisation through a friend. I also founded the Earl's Court Square Residents Association with my husband and from that the Earl's Court Neighbourhood Association which later transmogrified to the Earl's Court Society.

I was also involved with Response from the early days in 1975 when the newspaper first went onto the streets. Also the Community Language Centre, which started with volunteers visiting immigrant women at home to teach them English, and I helped save and then expand St Cuthberts Centre.

**What were the main needs in the early days?**

There were a lot of homeless families and many asylum seekers living in temporary accommodation and also there were problems with prostitution and drugs. There was and still is a great deal of poverty.

**When you look back what are the main changes you have seen in the local sector?**

There used to be many voluntary organisations in Earl's Court but now most of them have gone. Mainly because property values in the area have gone up so it's hard to find affordable premises. Also a lack of funding has made it difficult for organisations to survive, and I think there has been a perception that Earl's Court doesn't need voluntary organisations now.

**Has the relationship with government changed over the years?**

Government support has come and gone in waves with new initiatives which you would have to adapt to. Also the relationship has become more bureaucratic.

Some organisations died because they didn't have the capacity to deal with this. Before it was easier for young organisations to set up and for things to happen, fundraising was simpler and you could concentrate more on delivering the outputs because you were spending less time measuring them. Though less measuring was necessary, there are two sides to that coin.

Also there's pressure now for groups to work in partnership. Partnerships can work well when they happen naturally but not when they don't. And there's an urge for groups to get bigger all the time, to merge but sometimes the actual outputs on the ground diminish.

**How would you like to see the sector developing in the future?**

I want it to grow again in this area and I want to see more provision for youth and families and also for all those with other mother tongues.



Jennifer Ware

**To read more interviews with people who have played a role in the history of our local sector and to view a photo montage of local images spanning recent decades, that were contributed by local organisations, visit the Social Council website.**

**[www.kcsc.org.uk/50years](http://www.kcsc.org.uk/50years)**

**VOLUNTARY AND STATUTORY PARTNERS COME TOGETHER TO DEVELOP A BOROUGH WIDE VOLUNTEERING STRATEGY**

Members of the Community, Equality and Inclusivity sub partnership of Kensington and Chelsea Partnership are developing a Volunteering Strategy which will be launched in September 2010. Following agreement by the Kensington and Chelsea Partnership of the draft objectives and

commitments, the partnership aims to consult with organisations that can provide evidence of good practice, innovative ways of promoting and encouraging volunteering and what support is needed to help organisations provide better support to volunteers.

To read the Objectives and Commitments and to respond to the consultation please email

[angela.chaudhry@rbkc.gov.uk](mailto:angela.chaudhry@rbkc.gov.uk)

**50 YEARS OF SOCIAL ACTIVISM 1960-2010**