

Looking forward

Over the last year we have looked closely at the services we provide.

We regret that our proposed merger with Volunteer Centre Kensington & Chelsea did not go ahead but we believe we are well positioned to continue providing a strong support service for you – the local voluntary and community sector.

We have listened carefully to what you have told us and the learning from the nine months of merger talks has been invaluable. It has helped us to develop our plans for this year and beyond. There will be some changes to our staff structure, and we will keep you informed as they unfold.

The new Local Action Kensington & Chelsea website, jointly developed with our local partner infrastructure bodies, will act as a gateway to support services in the borough and provide the resources you need to do your work (more on page 11).

In future, our work at the Social Council will be delivered much more closely to where you are, through a pop-up approach across the borough. We want to work alongside you to connect residents to local activity and to contribute and deliver engagement in different ways.



The staff team at the Social Council

We will continue to work in partnership with our members so that we remain a leading voice for the sector. Our campaigning work will be strengthened to encourage more conversations between local residents and the council.

We plan to deliver at least one main summit in the coming year on a topic you help us choose, and we hope that these meetings will allow residents to converse directly with decision makers and raise the issues that matter to all of us. We have also reviewed the way that we run our forums. You

can find out more about our plans on page 7.

We are continuing to look into the feasibility of using the Lighthouse building in Ladbroke Grove as a community hub once it is sold. We hope it will be place where we all can meet and mix, regardless of background and maintain the common bond we have as Londoners living in an ever changing and diverse world.

We look forward to working with you all throughout the coming year. Our plans are outlined in greater detail on pages 6-7.

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KENSINGTON & CHELSEA SOCIAL COUNCIL

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www.kcsc.org.uk

Charity no 1087457
Limited company no. 4146375

**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.

Open Age to run The Second Half Centre

Open Age will be taking over the successful Second Half Centre on 1 April 2014.

The centre, currently run by the Second Half Foundation is located in the St Charles Centre for Health and Wellbeing and offers a wide range of programmes and activities for the 50+ community.

Weekly activities include courses in languages and IT skills, life and job coaching, fitness classes, and cooking and nutrition classes. There is also a café to give people a place to chat before and after classes to connect and make new friends.

The Second Half Foundation will continue to contribute to the running of the centre for the first two years of the partnership, and centre manager Jenny Marshall will continue to oversee daily activities. Open Age currently delivers over 350 weekly activities for older people across community venues, and from January, a number of Open Age activities have moved into Second Half as part of the transition phase.

Open Age were initially involved in developing the Second Half Centre and are now pleased to be leading it into the future.



More info:

www.theseconddhalfcentre.com, www.openage.org.uk

Education charity NOVA raises £10,000 at 30th anniversary auction



Adult education charity NOVA New Opportunities, which works with disadvantaged adults in the borough, marked its 30th anniversary at the end of 2013. A special celebration took place at Café Nova in North Kensington, and featured entertainment by award-winning comedian Rob Broderick, speeches from NOVA users and a charity auction.

Special guests included The Worshipful Mayor of the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, Councillor Charles Williams, and Golborne Ward Councillor Emma Dent Coad.

An incredible £10,000 was raised for the charity, and this has supported NOVA's relocation to a smaller office at 2 Thorpe Close. NOVA will continue to run classes at 2 Thorpe Close and will also provide services in various locations across the Borough.

When it was founded, NOVA provided ICT training to the local community, but over the years it has expanded and now offers information, advice and guidance with literacy, numeracy and pre-entry ESOL classes.

The team at NOVA would like to say a big thank you to all those who came and supported the event.



More info:

www.novanew.org.uk

Public Health Innovation Fund Successes

Congratulations to the following organisations who have each been awarded up to £5,000 to support new public health initiatives in 2014.

- African Women's Care**
Anti-FGM Champions
 Providing training and support to develop a group of anti-FGM champions.
- Corner Nine Arts Project**
From Molecules to Mission Control family project
 Encouraging children and families to develop their creativity and imagination through science-inspired art projects.
- Depression Alliance**
Access to Exercise Programme
 Providing discounted off-peak gym membership vouchers to members of the K&C Employment and Wellbeing Project time bank run by Depression Alliance.
- French African Welfare Association**
Empowering BME Community Leaders
 Equipping leaders with skills to participate and improve involvement in local civic society, neighbourhoods and local democratic structures in RBKC.
- Healthier Life 4 You**
Healthier DivaZ
 Supporting women who are obese and have long term illness to lose weight through African dance and crafts.
- Meanwhile Gardens Community Association**
Get Ready For School
 Supporting pre-school children to become more emotionally, physically and socially ready for their start in school life.
- Release**
Social, Economic and Environmental Evaluation of legal surgery
 Conducting a thorough evaluation of the legal surgery at the North Kensington hub, and recommending improvements.
- The Cara Trust**
Positive about Employment
 Developing their employment support programme for people with HIV.
- WAND UK**
Cancer Awareness Project
 Training volunteers to become Cancer activists who will promote cancer awareness and encourage people to talk about cancer and take positive action for their health.

£1 million to improve World's End and Lots Road

Residents in World's End and Lots Road have an opportunity to decide on how to spend £1 million over ten years to improve their local neighbourhood. The money awarded by the Big Lottery Fund's Big Local has to be spent in accordance with the wishes of local people.

Residents and community organisations are already in the early stages of discussing what improvements they want to see and they are urging more people to get involved.

It is important that as many local people as possible have a say in drawing up the exciting plans. These could include anything from community events, initiatives to support local people and business or in making improvements to the local environment.

A public noticeboard at Chelsea Theatre will be updated with the latest information about Big Local including details of upcoming meetings. You can also join an email mailing list and follow developments on twitter.

More info: welrbiglocal@yahoo.com @welrbiglocal



World's End Estate, Chelsea

THE HOUS

**Housing remains a key issue in Kensington and Chelsea with aff
The borough is amongst the most densely populated in Lond
of the area whilst a disproportionately high number o**

**It was against this backdrop that the Social Council host
November 2013 featuring gues**

Below we detail some of the key points that were made by the speakers,

Professor Anne Power, Head of Housing and Communities at the London School of Economics delivered the keynote speech. She made the following points:

- 1** It does not make sense to demolish and rebuild existing estates. It would be far more cost effective to renovate and modernise existing homes.
- 2** Rebuilding entire estates displaces people and makes it much harder for people to return once the estate has been redeveloped.
- 3** Property developers are interested in maximising profit by primarily developing private accommodation. As a result social housing is reduced and at best replaced by affordable housing.
- 4** Residents who are displaced are unlikely to return. Many end up living elsewhere, but not through choice.
- 5** Research has shown that a social mix, diversity and differing cultures make an area more attractive for both its richer and poorer inhabitants.

- 2** It is important to ensure that Section 106 money is used to develop affordable housing. Greater restrictions should also be placed on land use. Specific areas should be earmarked for specified developments.

- 3** Foreign investment means that people are buying properties in the borough and leaving them empty. It was felt that the council could do more to influence the dubious practices of property sellers when selling public land and advertising properties overseas.

The Council's response

- 1** The Royal Borough are building a new leisure centre and school in the north of the borough and refurbishing Grenfell Tower.
- 2** The borough has also introduced measures to ensure empty homes and second homes no longer receive council tax discounts.
- 3** The council has committed to affordable housing/social housing in new developments and is looking to review the affordable housing policy.

Key points raised by the other panel members - Grahame Hinds (Octavia Housing Association), Chris Brown (Regeneration and Renewal), Councillor James Husband (RBKC) and Michael Bach (KCSC)

- 1** In an area such as Kensington and Chelsea where so many people do have a second home, more could be done to gain some financial advantage for the council and residents. One such way would be to increase council tax payment for those with a second home in the borough.



Professor Anne Power

ING DEBATE

ordability and maintaining the social mix being areas of concern. on and we know many families are being forced to move out f properties are being sold to investors and lie empty.

ed 'A Place Called Home' – a debate on housing policy in t speakers and a panel debate.

panel members and audience of local voluntary sector representatives.

What happens next?

It was clear from the range of issues raised by speakers and the audience, that housing is a broad issue and not all issues can be resolved at a local level.

However, the following ideas were put forward as suggestions as issues that the voluntary and community sector could campaign for.

- 1 That high value land is taxed at a high rate which can then be used to build social housing.
- 2 That the council conduct a review of affordable housing and make sure Section 106 is retained for the building of affordable housing.
- 3 The council should commission an independent review to look at its housing policies, with a view to ensuring everything possible is done to maintain a socially and economically mixed population in the borough.



The panel of housing specialists

CHANGING PRIORITIES FOR SOCIAL HOUSING

A new Council Housing Allocation Scheme is being introduced on 17 February 2014

It introduces a number of changes to how the Council manages the Housing Register and allocates social housing.

The most significant changes are the removal from the Housing Register of residents who do not have sufficient priority for re-housing or who have not resided in the borough for the last three years on a continuous basis.

As a result of these changes, approximately 6500 households on the existing housing list will no longer qualify for the Housing Register.

Since the beginning of 2014 new social housing tenants are no longer being offered lifetime tenancies for Council properties. Instead, they are offered fixed-term tenancies, usually for five years and in exceptional circumstances, two years.

The Council is running drop in sessions at the Town Hall for residents who wish to discuss how the new Allocation Scheme will affect their application for housing.

Advice agencies can also offer support.

More info: Further details of the new Allocation Scheme is available on the Council's website

www.rbkc.gov.uk/housing

Social Council – S

In 2014 the Social Council will be working h
to meet the needs of the local voluntary and

Many of you have contributed your ideas over the last year and helped us define the services we deliver. Over the coming year we will aim to work more flexibly and build closer relationships with you as we deliver a more streamlined service.

Below we outlined a concise summary of our plans. We hope it meets with your approval and would welcome your feedback.

SUPPORTING ORGANISATIONS

Our aim:

Support frontline voluntary and community sector (VCS) organisations to ensure they are better prepared to take advantage of existing and future opportunities

We will do this by:

- Helping organisations to familiarise with commissioners, access tendering opportunities and form partnerships to bid for contracts
- Supporting good governance through our Get on Board project – including in-house support, seminars and trustee recruitment drives
- Providing updates and advice on funding opportunities plus an opportunity to meet funders at our annual Funding Fair.

MENTORING AND LEARNING

Our aim:

Support frontline VCS organisations to develop skills and knowledge with an emphasis on developing leadership in the sector

We will do this by:

- Providing quick guides and online resources on a wide range of topics on our new interactive web portal
- Developing leadership through our local Community Leadership School including a new online learning course
- Providing one to one support and mentoring on organisational development topics such as fundraising, partnership working and measuring impact.

HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Our aim:

Facilitate and develop opportunities for the sector to contribute to local plans to improve health and wellbeing and reduce health inequalities

We will do this by:

- Keeping the sector informed of developments in the health environment, such as the work of Public Health and the Clinical Commissioning Groups
- Maintaining strong collaborative links with local health partners and networks, including those in neighbouring boroughs
- Developing the sector's capacity to access commissioning opportunities in the health and wellbeing field and to influence commissioning processes.

POLICY IN ACTION

Our aim:

Work with the sector to address challenges and opportunities arising from national, regional and local policy

We will do this by:

- Keeping organisations informed of relevant policy developments through the web and e bulletins
- Stimulating the sector to debate policy issues and identify actions at regular forums and seminars
- Working to influence decision makers on policy issues relevant to the local voluntary sector.

TRATEGIC PLAN

ard to deliver the right services and support community sector.

CAMPAIGNING AND LOBBYING

Our aim:

Stimulate local action, supporting organisations and residents to come together to lobby and campaign on matters which promote equality and fairness

We will do this by:

- Working with organisations to collect evidence on poverty in the borough and to lobby on agreed actions
- Being a strategic voice and supporting member organisations to be active campaigners
- Working with supporters to continue to develop a strong local voice for community need.

REPRESENTATION AND VOICE

Our aim:

Strengthen representation to ensure that the needs of the diverse local community are fed into decision making processes and that the VCS develops a stronger voice

We will do this by:

- Supporting elected representatives on strategic boards and advisory groups
- Encouraging new representatives to come forward and providing them with the support they need
- Facilitating feedback mechanisms between representatives and the VCS
- Holding an annual cross sector summit
- Providing strong leadership and acting as a voice for the sector

THE VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS FORUMS IN 2014

This year the Voluntary Organisations Forums (VOFs) hope to deliver more for the sector.

In a recent review of the forums you told us that you valued them and find them very useful, but you also identified areas for improvement.

In response to your feedback we are making a number of changes that we hope will make the forums more efficient, and lead to more effective representation in the borough.

We recognise your time is precious and your resources stretched, therefore the support you receive must be succinct and streamlined, yet effective. So this year we are making the following changes;

- The Main VOFs will be themed, to provide greater focus.
- There will be fewer forums as we will bid farewell the Engaging Communities and Older People's VOFs.

We'd like to thank all those who participated in the review of the VOFs either through the focus groups or our online survey and look forward to receiving your continued feedback and suggestions.

- We will place an emphasis on quality over quantity.
- We will seek to make the forums more engaging by providing more space and stimulation for discussion and debate.

The review also identified the need for stronger third sector voice and representation, so we want to make representation work for the sector in 2014.

Your feedback suggested that the mechanism for representation was too complicated, creating barriers for engagement. To simplify things, representatives will be empowered to raise any issue on behalf of the sector rather than just the field they were elected for. This will make the process more engaging and inclusive.

HELP Counselling

HELP Counselling provides affordable counselling support to local communities from its centre in Notting Hill.

Last year, following the award of an RBKC Innovation Grant, they also established a successful partnership with Urban Bliss in North Kensington to offer counselling and complimentary therapies in the Golborne Ward.

LINK spoke to Service Director Mary Ziemer and Counselling Coordinator Sinead Gannon about HELP's recent expansion and future plans.

How long has the HELP Counselling Centre been going?

We have been providing a counselling service for twenty years but were registered as a charity in 2011. Since then we have seen a 15 per cent year on year growth and currently see about 165 clients per week including 12 at Urban HELP.

Where do your clients find you?

We get a lot of referrals from GPs because we can generally offer counselling quickly. And we also developed partnerships with many local organisations such as housing associations. A lot of people approach us after hearing about our services through friends and family. The service is available to residents of RBKC and other boroughs.

What support do you offer?

We usually start with an initial phone conversation to see if our services will be suitable and to find the right approach. All of our counsellors are in post-graduate study and it's important to find the right approach for the client. We offer an initial programme of six sessions which can lead to longer term support if required. We aim to support people through difficult stages of their life, perhaps helping them deal with change. With our support we hope we can help prevent difficult situations turning into crises.

How do you ensure your services are affordable?

We have a sliding scale of charges. Everybody pays something but we agree a fee with the client based upon their income and circumstances. About half our income comes from our clients but we also fundraise and received an RBKC Innovation Grant last year. Our aim is to become self-sustainable.



Tell us about your partnership with Urban Bliss

Urban Bliss provides complimentary therapy treatments in North Kensington. Our clients had suggested we open another centre in the borough and so we looked for a partner in the Golborne ward. We share a similar ethos in that we want to support mind, body and spirit and so it seemed to make sense to work together. The partnership with Urban Bliss began last April and it has opened up our services to new clients and also opened up new opportunities to work with the private sector.

Are there any other ways to access your services?

We also are working towards offering sessions at the Oremi Day Centre. In the future, we hope to have partnerships with employers too. Currently some workplaces pay for access to our services for their staff. We want to change the perception of counselling. We try to help people see problems as opportunities. Our clients tell us that they like the welcoming atmosphere here and they report positive changes in their lives as a result of counselling. In the words of one client, "My counselling helped me look at the things from a different angle and increased my confidence".

If you would like to find out more about the support HELP Counselling Centre provides, visit www.HELPcounselling.com or call 020 7221 9974

IMPROVING HEALTH

The West London Clinical Commissioning Group (WLCCG) is responsible for community based NHS services and services provided in hospitals across Kensington and Chelsea, Queens Park and Paddington.

Its ambitions are to improve the quality of healthcare and improve the health of local people. During the autumn they engaged the public in helping to set commissioning priorities for 2014/15. It has now announced its intentions for the next financial year. Some of the main priorities include:



Area	Plans for 2014/15
Integrated care and community services <i>This includes social workers, nurses who work in the community, and ensuring patients who are in touch with multiple services have their care co-ordinated.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Integrating care, including co-ordinating care after discharge ● Increasing use of befriending and other support services ● Considering how best to take forward the feedback on interpreting services
Urgent and emergency care <i>Includes services such as A&E, local Urgent Care Centres, the 111 telephone advice line and GP out-of-hours services.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● GP access ● Child Health Hubs to strengthen skills and expertise in general practice.
Primary care <i>This means services available in a GP practice. Could include regular or urgent appointments, as well as services such as blood tests which may be available in a local practice.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A Primary Care strategy is being developed which will cover these areas and look at how WLCCG build capacity and capability in general practice. ● They are also developing a plan for patient education and communication to address how it supports patients with access to services.
Mental health <i>Includes services such as counselling and services for people with dementia, as well as a range of other services which support people with mental health needs.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● There will be a particular focus on improving urgent care assessment. ● Delivering mental health services in the community where appropriate. ● Improving access to mental health services, particularly for BME groups. ● Focusing in more detail on men's mental health and mental health advocacy.

What does this mean for the voluntary sector?

Identifying what services your organisation provides that fit within the strategic intentions will assist in planning for potential opportunities to work with the CCG to co-produce services and/or be a service provider.

The Social Council will continue to work closely with WLCCG to understand where the voluntary and community sector can best support the implementation of the CCG's priorities. Throughout 2014 we will keep you updated on our health work through our Health and Wellbeing forums, our e-bulletins and website as well as joint events with local partners.



Poverty Watch

Last year Poverty Watch enabled the local voluntary and community sector to collect and share evidence on the impact of poverty on local people. By sharing this information with officers and decision makers in the council and NHS, we sought to influence policy and ensure the real human impact was understood by those making difficult decisions.

In 2013, Poverty Watch collated case studies from advice agencies detailing how local people were struggling to cope with benefit cuts and housing costs.



Poverty Watch worked in partnership with advice and advocacy organisations to host events raising awareness of

benefit changes. We also held an event on the impact of welfare reform on disabled people, and encourage residents to feed into a consultation on the council's local housing allocation scheme.

We launched Poverty Watch news – a weekly roundup of poverty related news in the media, and campaigned for the development of a local child poverty strategy.

Our call for the reinstatement of school uniform grants opened up a conversation on the cost of school uniforms in the council. Our work also led to a change in the wording of letters to people interested in claiming Discretionary Housing Payments. We also supported the Health and Wellbeing Board's investigation of the impact of welfare changes on the wellbeing of local residents.

The excellent working relationship established with the council's Revenue and Benefits team also led to the production of a joint welfare reform advice leaflet which was sent out to 19,000 borough residents.

In 2014, we reaffirm our commitment to campaigning on behalf of residents. If you support this work we would encourage you to get involved.

Get in touch to find out more or for the latest news.visit www.kcsc.org.uk/povertywatch

Stop smoking project – coming soon

The Social Council will shortly be launching a programme to train and support voluntary and community organisations to help residents to give up smoking. Delivered in partnership with the **Kick it** stop smoking service the project will last four years and be delivered across the tri-borough area.

The **Kick it** service also has a van that can visit locations in any part of the borough to provide residents with information and support on stopping smoking.



More info: Siobhan
siobhan@kcsc.org.uk.

020 7243 9807

You can also visit the **Kick it** website at www.kick-it.org.uk

Change for Children report



Change for Children

A study of local families in Kensington and Chelsea



REPORT

Change for Children was an 18 month study into the lives of families in some of the less well-off parts of Kensington and Chelsea. The findings can be found in our report, ***Change for Children – A study of local families in Kensington and Chelsea.***

Copies of the report can be requested from KCSC. or downloaded from: www.kcsc.org.uk/news/change-children-report-and-film-launch

Local Action website

The new Local Action website is a gateway to local infrastructure services in Kensington and Chelsea. It is designed to point you to the right resources and service regardless of the support organisation providing it.

Over the coming months we will continue adding information and resources to the site and over the coming months we aim to improve the directory to include more information about the services provided by local organisations.

Local Action was conceived as part of the Transforming Local Infrastructure project, a partnership between the Social Council, Volunteer Centre K&C, CaSH, The Forum and The Kensington and Chelsea Foundation.

LOCAL ACTION
KENSINGTON & CHELSEA

About us Donate **LOGIN SIGN UP**

Enter keywords **Search**

Support Resources News Events & training Jobs/Volunteering Noticeboard Directory

NEED A HELPING HAND?
Our support pages will guide you to the services available from your local voluntary sector support agencies

LATEST UPDATES

NOTICEBOARD LISTING
Voice workshops, meeting facilitation, live entertainment
13th January 2014

NEWS
A new year - a new blog
13th January 2014

NOTICEBOARD LISTING
Brandenburg Choral Festival
10th January 2014

HOW CAN WE HELP YOU TAKE ACTION?

I am an individual and I want to: I am part of an organisation and I want to:

Visit the website at: <http://localactionkc.org.uk/>

What difference did we make?

The 'What Difference Do We Make?' Project supported local voluntary and community organisations with training and development to better understand how to evidence and articulate the impact that their organisations make. It was delivered by PamojaUK on the Social Council's behalf.

The project supported 19 organisations by providing webinars, workshops, seminars and action learning sets to foster the development of good impact practice among participating organisations.

All webinars are available to view on Pamoja's YouTube Site.

More info:

www.youtube.com/user/PamojaUK



UPCOMING EVENTS

Sexual Health & Ageing Conference

Thursday 26 June 2014, Venue tbc

**Do you work in the 'older people' sector?
Do you want to develop expertise and increase
knowledge around sexual health issues?**

**Maybe you work in sexual health and are faced
with an ageing client group.**

This year's Sexual Health Conference will focus on the sexual health needs of older people. It will have two main themes;

- Communication and relationships,
- Ageing with HIV

We are in the early stages of planning and would like your input. We want to know what you want to discuss and need to learn. If you have ideas you would like to suggest please get in touch.

More info: harjit@kcsc.org.uk www.kcsc.org.uk/sexualhealth

St Charles Centre for Health and Wellbeing Open Day

Saturday 8 March 2014, 11am – 4pm,
Exmoor Street, London, W10 6DZ

Have you ever wondered what goes on in St Charles Health and Wellbeing Centre?

Did you know that within St Charles there are heaps of services and activities that actively encourage general health and wellbeing? Community gardens and allotments, an activity centre for older people, a gym and a restaurant are just the beginning of what is available.

Come along to this jam-packed open day, when this fantastic centre will be opening its doors to local residents, and find out more about what is on offer. There will be activities, stalls, and entertainment for all the family, as well as a great showcase of everything that St Charles has to offer.



More info: Barbara Shelton
Barbara@kcsc.org.uk

020 7243 9800

TRAINING

Training for new trustees

Tuesday 4 March

6:15 – 8:30pm, Venue tbc

A free evening training session covering the roles and responsibilities of being a trustee.



MANAGERS SUPPORT GROUP

First Monday lunchtime of
each month, KCSC offices

Peer support group for senior
workers in the local voluntary
and community sector.



POVERTY WATCH

Wednesday 12 March, London Lighthouse

The next meeting of the local observatory that monitors and shares information on poverty and its impact on local residents. Coms and share your stories.

CCG GRANT SHOWCASE

Friday 21 March, Venue tbc

A showcase of successful work to improve health and wellbeing funded through the West London Clinical Commissioning Group.

THE FUTURE OF LONDON LIGHTHOUSE

Mid-March

This meeting will discuss the future of voluntary sector activity at London Lighthouse following the announcement of the successful bidder for the building.

VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS FORUMS – dates for your diaries

Children, Young People and Families

Wednesday 26 February 10am - 12:30pm

Main VOF

Tuesday 11 March 10am - 12 noon

Health and Wellbeing VOF

Thursday 24 April 10am - 12:30pm

**All VOF meetings will take place at
Kensington Town Hall**

Full details of all events can be found at www.kcsc.org.uk. Please confirm dates and times before booking.