

East Sussex Local Resilience Action Plan

June 2010

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INTRODUCTION

The East Sussex Local Resilience Action Plan (LRAP) is an assessment of the impact of the recession locally on voluntary and community organisations and communities they serve. It presents recommended actions to help the sector deal with the implications of the recession and an increasingly uncertain funding future. The Action Plan can be used with the Local Strategic Partnerships and local authorities as a basis for negotiating additional support. The document will help local representatives argue the case for support in order to help local people deal with the impact of the recession.

East Sussex LRAP is also invaluable to national third sector bodies like NAVCA (National Association for Voluntary and Community Action). By gathering details from the Action Plans that are produced across the country, NAVCA can assess the nationwide impact of the recession and funding situation on the Third Sector and the communities they serve.

SpeakUp Forum has been coordinating the work to gather information about the effects of the recession on voluntary and community organisations since the end of 2008 and has been a key partner at the East Sussex Recession Workforce. This resulted in the Forum leading on the Recession Research and the Local Resilience Action Plan.

SpeakUp Forum is the representative body for Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) organisations in East Sussex. The Forum supports groups at the county level to have a stronger voice and works with the County Council to determine improved outcomes for the Voluntary and Community Sector.

The Voluntary and Community Sector in East Sussex is a vibrant one with about 2000 organisations operating across five districts and boroughs¹. Many organisations are clustered around the two main towns of Eastbourne and Hastings; others are spread across the more rural areas. Organisations range in size from one or two person community groups to large national charities. Organisations are supported by three Councils for Voluntary Services (CVS) – Hastings Voluntary Action, Rother Voluntary Action and 3 VA (Eastbourne, Lewes District and Wealden). East Sussex VCS has got a long history of delivering statutory sector funded services.

It is still too early to assess the full impact of the recession but we can undoubtedly anticipate a reduction in public spending. This puts at risk a level of funding available to organisations that deliver public services. It is therefore of high importance that the VCS starts planning for those changes.

¹ RAISE (April 2005), "Hidden Asset. A report to demonstrate the value of the Voluntary/Community Sector in the South East", RAISE, UK.

DEMOGRAPHIC PICTURE OF EAST SUSSEX AND THE BACKGROUND TO THE RECESSION

Population and Ethnicity

The county of East Sussex is located in the south coast of England and has a population of just over half a million. It comprises a coastal strip that includes its two largest towns, Eastbourne and Hastings (comprising 58% of the total population), and an inland rural weald that includes smaller towns and villages².

East Sussex has the highest levels of very elderly (85 years+) of any county in England and higher than average population of over 50s (43% comparing to national average of 34%). 4.9% of the East Sussex population are from Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) groups which is significantly lower than the average of 11.3% in England³. There has been much less migration from Eastern Europe into East Sussex over the last 5 to 6 years than into the rest of the South East and the UK⁴. Nevertheless it should be recognised that those figures only give a sense of the formal migrant labour workforce and their families, other workers will be engaged in illegal ('black') market work and are not visible in statistics.

Employment and Income

Despite the surrounding prosperity, East Sussex experiences the highest levels of deprivation of all the South East counties with the most significant levels of deprivation concentrated in the coastal towns⁵.

It is clear that any assumptions about East Sussex being a typically affluent part of the South East are wide of the mark. Each of the districts within East Sussex has a median household income lower than the South East as whole. Each of the districts has a higher proportion of people in poverty (living in a household at below 60% of median income) than the South East as whole. Over 50 000 household are living in poverty⁶.

The proportion of the population in East Sussex of working age (55.8%) is lower than the national average (62.1%)⁷. Public sector employment plays a significant part in the predominantly service-based economy, along with financial services and tourism, whilst the majority of private sector employers in East Sussex are small- to medium-sized enterprises. The East Sussex workforce therefore has large numbers of people working in areas that are low paid (tourism, distribution, hotels and restaurants), particularly vulnerable to the ongoing effect of the recession, e.g. construction and particularly vulnerable to the impact of future fiscal restraint at a national level e.g. the public sector.

² ESSP (May 2008) "A snapshot of East Sussex" Lewes, East Sussex, East Sussex County Council.

³ ESSP (May 2008) "A snapshot of East Sussex" Lewes, East Sussex, East Sussex County Council.

⁴ "Financial Inclusion" report by Nick Hopkins for East Sussex Advice Plus, 2010.

⁵ East Sussex in Figures (2009), www.esif.org.uk

⁶ "Financial Inclusion" report by Nick Hopkins for East Sussex Advice Plus, 2010.

⁷ ESSP (May 2008) "A snapshot of East Sussex" Lewes, East Sussex, East Sussex County Council.

This is also reflected in full-time earning being substantially lower in East Sussex than in South East and Great Britain with high part-time employment⁸.

Public sector employment and funding

East Sussex is particularly vulnerable to public sector funding cuts. Over a third of residents are employed by the public sector (33.9% compared to 25.6% for the South East and 27% for Great Britain)⁹. Impact on public sector funding reductions will be felt beyond household level with local economies particularly vulnerable to the reduced spending power of residents.

Voluntary and Community Sector organisations are also heavily reliant on public sector funds and particularly vulnerable to cuts in grant funding. A reduction in public sector funding of the organisations coupled with move towards an increasing trend for commissioning and the rise in demands for services caused by the recession means many organisations are required to increase their capacity at the time when they are highly unlikely to be funded to do so.

SUMMARY OF THE IMPACT OF THE RECESSION

Impact on local communities in East Sussex

Two early key effects of the national economic recession were an increase in unemployment and a fall in house prices. The claimant count for Job Seekers Allowance helps tracking the local impact of the recession. In October 2007 the number of claimants reached its lowest level, with 4,883 claimants in the area. In May 2009 this had reached 10,480, falling back to 10,164 by December 2009. The overall level of JSA claimants obscures the amount of movement on and off this benefit, largely resulting from people moving in and out of work. Between January 2008 and December 2009, there were 42,890 moves off JSA, and 48,123 onto benefit.

Recent unemployment figures have indicated a slight improvement on some measures of the problem, suggesting that many earlier predictions of the employment consequences of the recession might not, in the absence of a double dip recession, come to pass. Two particular aspects of the current recession might explain why more pessimistic predictions seem to have been awry; the response of companies wishing to retain staff has often been to reduce hours (with concomitant falls in pay) or freeze or reduce pay rises rather than to make redundancies¹⁰.

According to local organisations the main effects of the recession on service users and members of the public in East Sussex are inter-related: debt and anxiety. This is in relation to uncertainty over jobs (especially among younger and older people), rising expenses and fuel costs and difficulties in meeting mortgage repayments or rent payments and facing the prospect of repossession and eviction.

⁸ "Financial Inclusion" report by Nick Hopkins for East Sussex Advice Plus, 2010.

⁹ "Financial Inclusion" report by Nick Hopkins for East Sussex Advice Plus, 2010.

¹⁰ "Financial Inclusion" report by Nick Hopkins for East Sussex Advice Plus, 2010.

Impact on local organisations in East Sussex

The main challenges facing third sector organisations in East Sussex are to access sufficient, appropriate funds to meet rising service demands now, and to further develop funding sources and capacity to meet increasing demand, in future.

Many organisations have reported a need to increase capacity from early months of the last year. By April 2009 East Sussex organisations noted substantially increased demand from local people needing services related to debt, employment and housing¹¹. The Citizens' Advice Bureau across East Sussex reported a significant increase in enquiries around welfare benefits and debt advice. Many organisations reported a downturn in available funds, reduced income streams and reductions in legacy income as property values fell and some reported staff reductions¹².

87% of organisations surveyed cite funding as their key challenge for securing the future of their work. Many organisations state that funding is harder to obtain. Writing bids is time-consuming, requires specialist skills and knowledge and is becoming increasingly less successful. At the same time rather than supporting ongoing work that is tried and proven, funders are looking for new projects.

Change in funding criteria has led to some organisations reducing their staff and others cutting back training for volunteers. This is shrinking the geographical area reached by some organisations, especially those working in rural parts of the county, as well as reducing 'opening hours' when services are available to the public. Other concerns are that with funding in higher demand funding organisations often require increasingly close monitoring and evidencing of 'results'. This takes time and is sometimes beyond the capacity of VCO staff.

THE IMPACT OF THE RECESSION ON VCS AND LOCAL COMMUNITY IN EAST SUSSEX

The information drawn together in East Sussex is based on the Recession Research carried out by the Brighton University ("The effects of the recession on Voluntary and Community Sector in East Sussex", January 2010) commissioned by SpeakUp Forum and LRAP Steering Group, funded by ESCC Recession Fund which followed the initial fact finding exercises undertaken by East Sussex CVS Partnership with their member organisations and two initial reports based on information provided by representatives at SpeakUp Forum¹³. The "Financial Inclusion" report by Nick Hopkins for East Sussex Advice Plus (2010) was an invaluable source of information.

¹¹ SpeakUp (April 2009) "Responding to the economic downturn: report to SpeakUp April 2009"

¹² SpeakUp (December 2008) "Economic downturn and its effects: key issues affecting VCS groups and local communities". Paper presented at ESCC Liaison Meeting 11/12/2008 [Item 4] by Adam Chugg on behalf of SpeakUp

¹³ See www.askcasper.org.uk/speakup/recession

The Recession Research largely relied on a survey by detailed questionnaire that was carried out across the sector in October & November 2009. This was supported by input from some key VCS meetings and sector feedback from focus groups at conference in January 2010¹⁴. Responses came from all geographical districts of the county, demonstrating a proportional urban and rural split, and from all but two of the key service areas identified by NAVCA guidelines for Local Resilience Action Plan¹⁵.

Approximately one hundred VCOs in East Sussex have contributed to this study including thirty-eight full questionnaires, other input came from group discussions. All three CVSs (Council for Voluntary Services) in East Sussex took part in the research and responses included feedback from their membership of several hundred organisations. The generation and use of qualitative research data, further underlined the research.

Findings

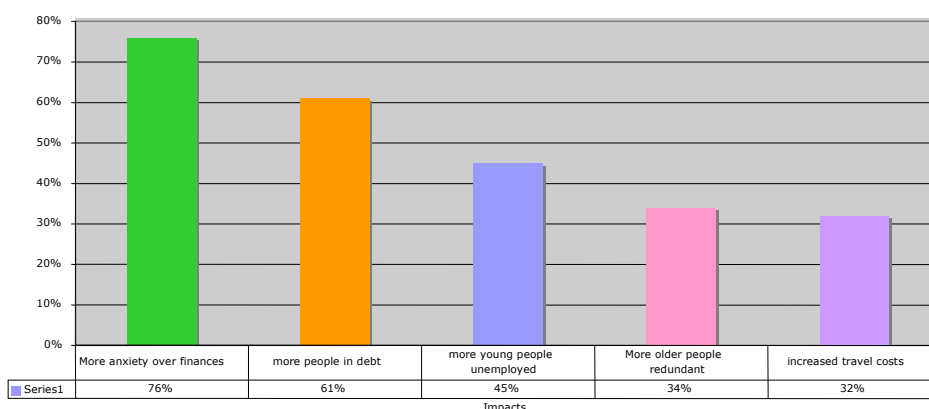
The most evident effects of the recession on services users and members of the public in East Sussex noted by the organisations who took part in the research, are inter-related: debt and anxiety.

- Three quarters (76%) of questionnaire respondents registered increased anxiety amongst service users.
- Over half (61%) indicated there are more people struggling with debt
- Just under half noted an increase in young people out of work
- One third of respondents saw growing numbers of older people being made redundant.
- 32% of respondents noted increased travel costs as impacting on communities; this will particularly affect people on low income and living in rural areas.
- Organisations reported seeing an increase in mental health problems.

¹⁴ The Big Event 2010: Facing the Future. Annual Conference of the East Sussex Voluntary and Community Sector, 22/1/10.

¹⁵Service area responses: childcare & family support; community centres; community transport; debt counselling; domestic violence; housing advice & provision; access to Information and advice; mediation; relationship counselling; substance misuse; support for homeless people; support for refugees; welfare and benefits advice. No response from: Credit Unions and domestic violence.

Figure 1: impact on local communities



Each of these categories indicates substantial impacts on the population as a whole, in combination these effects will impact to an even greater degree on the younger, older and more vulnerable people in the society. Organisations and particularly Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) groups note that there appear to be less tolerance of ‘other,’ people.

“People are becoming restless, irritable and less tolerant to the individuals of a different faith and culture”¹⁶.

Main challenges facing local communities - Anxiety & Debt

In the South East region increased debt remains the main issue currently affecting communities (RAISE, November 2009¹⁷). Organisations in East Sussex note this is causing greater stress for families and that more relationship problems are also on the increase. Faced with economic difficulties, both parents of young children increasingly need to work, which necessitates affordable childcare. This also leaves parents with less time to spend with their children and as a family.

“Anxiety about economic climate and redundancies trigger social unrest, and problems are exacerbated within families where external factors impinge on relationships.”

Problems with debt fuels uncertainty about the future and many organisations have seen an increase in mental health problems, such as depression among their clients. National studies have suggested that as many as 40% of people with debt problems

¹⁶ All quotes, unless stated otherwise, are from respondents who took part in the University of Brighton Recession Research – “The effects of the recession on Voluntary and Community Sector in East Sussex”, January 2010.

¹⁷ RAISE (November 2009) “Economic Climate Survey Results” Briefing sheet 21. UK, RAISE.

experience physical or stress related health difficulties. It is also acknowledged that experience of debt increases the usage of health services¹⁸.

Increasing debt also affects the security of people's housing with some people facing difficulty in meeting mortgage payments, rent payments and the prospects of repossession and eviction. People are experiencing diminishing job security, reduced hours, redundancies and job-loss. These factors are impacting especially on the low-waged, whilst vulnerable people and those who are not in work, are getting further from employment.

“Aside from debt, welfare benefits, employment, the other significant increases we have seen are in advice about relationships, housing, fuel and other consumer issues.”

Younger people are suffering from lack of employment prospects and previous recessions have shown that many careers never recovered from the impact of long term unemployment.

Financial insecurity has led to reduced access to credit whilst the public (and the organisations), face increasing utility and fuel costs. Low interest rates are reducing income from savings and the combination of these effects impact particularly on the elderly. Lower income, combined with rising fuel costs and travel costs, is especially affecting elderly people in rural areas. Organisations note that this group is suffering increasing isolation because family and friends can no longer afford frequent visits. Finally, faced with rising costs of pet care, some members of the public are abandoning or neglecting animals.

Many people living in East Sussex are low earners and they are likely to struggle more with the financial crisis and take longer to recover from it. Low Earners are struggling to repay debts much more than the high earners, 4% as against 2% are falling behind, 13% as against 8% are facing a constant struggle to repay, and 52%, as against 38% are experiencing some problems¹⁹. The main causes of such problems are unexpected bills and lack of cash flow which indicates the stretched nature of many household budgets. Many low earners experience difficulties in accessing credit. Higher proportions of the budgets of lower earners go on food and fuel than those of higher earners, putting the already stretched budgets of this group of people under further pressure. Many find it very difficult to economise further²⁰.

¹⁸ “Financial Inclusion” report by Nick Hopkins for East Sussex Advice Plus, 2010.

¹⁹ “Financial Inclusion” report by Nick Hopkins for East Sussex Advice Plus, 2010.

²⁰ “Financial Inclusion” report by Nick Hopkins for East Sussex Advice Plus, 2010.

Main challenges facing organisations

Increased service demands

By far the most pressing, current challenge cited by two thirds (66%) of the 38 respondents, and echoed in feedback from the group meetings is organisations' capacity to meet changing service demands.

“Resources are not meeting demands”

This compares with 79% of respondents in the South East who said that “demand for services has increased and is at its highest since January [2009]”²¹

Organisations report that more funding is needed to continue responding to community needs in the context of increased service demands. The challenge is also in accessing funding for both project delivery and development and capacity-building work.

Organisations that have services particularly related to the recession, for example the advice agencies offering welfare benefit, debt and housing advice or credit unions offering credit to those on low incomes have been particularly impacted by the increase in service demand. In 2008-2009 Citizens Advice Bureau across East Sussex dealt with 30% increase in enquires. The increase in the number of clients that CABs have been signposting to other agencies has grown 216% that is an extra 3728 people over the year.²² All the advice agencies in the county have seen significant increase in client numbers and despite extending their services are still struggling to meet the demand. Organisations that have scaled up their services to help alleviate the impact of the recession on their clients may be particularly vulnerable as the funding future tightens. Whilst the economy is returning to growth it is worth noting that key implications involving for example risk of repossessions may not yet have been fully experienced by many household vulnerable to it. Therefore the demand for services from advice agencies is predicted to stay high.

Advice agencies point out that supporting clients with more complex needs, e.g. mental health problems related to financial situation have implications on the organisation and its resources. There is more pressure on the staff dealing with more anxious and stressed clients as well as on the services they offer. Organisations need to develop capacity to make sure they can support those clients in crisis.

Funding

In line with current challenges the outstanding concern is funding, with 87% of organisations researched citing this as their key challenge for the securing the future of their work.

Organisations are under pressure to reduce costs and many face reduced income. Some organisations are using up their limited reserves. Half of the organisations (47%)

²¹ RAISE (November 2009) “Economic Climate Survey Results” Briefing sheet 21. UK, RAISE.

²² SpeakUp (April 2009) “Responding to the economic downturn: report to SpeakUp April 2009”

believe that people in the community will be left more vulnerable as a result of the recession and difficulties in obtaining funding for organisations.

“This year income has dropped from £50K to an estimated £8K”

Many groups claim that funding is harder to get and that uncertainty makes planning difficult. Some organisations believe there is increased competition from the private sector as well as more competition within VCS.

“I believe there has been a marked decrease in positive responses to our applications for funding to Grant Making Trusts. The majority of responses have been to say that although we would normally fit their criteria for funding, they are already committed to charities that they already support and others are saying that due to the financial climate they have no funds available at present but we could try again next year.”²³

Although some organisations have reported increased public interest in volunteering, other report that they are struggling to engage volunteers and are having to reduce their service offer. Some organisations have cut the training and placements they offer volunteers in order to save money. At the same time other organisations said they see training volunteers as important element for planning for cutting service costs and for sustaining their work. This creates a complex picture of capacity issues.

Other concerns are that funding is becoming increasingly short-term and is often skewed in favour of innovative work rather than funding ongoing work that is tried and proven. Similarly, with funding in higher demand funders appear to require increasingly close monitoring and evidencing of ‘results’. This takes time and is sometimes beyond the capacity of the existing staff.

“A large amount of our time is taken up with writing bids and these have been far less successful than in past years.”

Many organisations see a growing need to develop income-generating activities and those that have already done this indicate that it offers some protection against uneven funding from grants and other sources.

Many organisations express anxiety regarding their relationship with public sector bodies, particularly in relation to funding and changes in the statutory sector offer and a trend towards increasing commissioning rather than grant funding. This also reflects uncertainty concerning potential cuts in public expenditure. A Local Government Association report written with the NCVO (National Council for Voluntary Organisations) points out that local authorities benefit from the support of the VCS but warns that

²³ Feedback to ESCC from VCS on the economic downturn, December 2008, A.Chugg on behalf of SpeakUp Forum.

“much of what is achievable when working with VCOs hangs on the financial relationship between the two”¹². RAISE (Regional Action and Involvement South East) are adding that “there is an ongoing aspiration for the services that are provided by the Voluntary/Community Sector to be recognised by statutory bodies for the added value that they offer and for alleviating pressure on the public purse”²⁴.

VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY SECTOR RESPONSES, STRATEGIES & ACHIEVEMENTS

One of the many strengths of the VCS is that small organisations, with low hierarchies of management and short chains of communication are often quicker and more responsive to change than the statutory sector. However, many organisations, particularly smaller ones where there are few or no paid staff, lack the time and capacity to carry through more formal processes. Reductions have been focused on cutting costs but in places this has resulted in loss of service capacity.

“We have been adopting a more professional way of working”

“[We have] frozen incremental salary increases; reforecast budgets and reduced costs where feasible; reviewed all operational risk assessments; reviewed all service delivery; taken initiatives in regard to securing longer term funding with statutory funders - with variable success.”

Partnerships and collaboration are seen as crucial and strategies have included working with local, regional and national charities.

Strategies already developed by many groups constitute ongoing opportunities and overwhelmingly organisations citing networking, sharing resources, collaboration and partnerships as their priority.

“We have been focusing on partnership working and developing creative ideas. This has resulted in funding for a three year project recently awarded.”

“We’ve worked more closely with other organisations, submitted countywide bids with a similar charity that covers the other part of the county, expanded [our] training function with the college...”

¹² LGA / NCVO (circa 2009) “Backing communities: local solutions - councils and voluntary and community organisations supporting people through the recession” UK, LGA & NCVO

²⁴ RAISE (November 2009) “Economic Climate Survey Results” Briefing sheet 21. UK, RAISE.

Reviewing funding and finance has resulted for some in increased earned income. Some organisations such as social enterprises who have diversified their funding sources, and in particular those who generate income independently of the public sector funding and contracts report a greater sense of security from the threatened cuts in public spending.

“We already generate a good proportion of our running costs from earned income which gives us more protection against changes in funding, etc. than most charities.”

Improvements to existing work have included obtaining client or user feedback to identify needs and also improve staff morale. Some examples of changes and innovation included re-branding, changing the structure of organisation, running pilot schemes, using more IT based platforms and new systems, offering advertisement opportunities, developing new income generating strands of work (training centre, lectures, publications).

“We have used reserves to develop in infrastructure and extra staff capacity to develop a phone Gateway system - this has enabled us to respond to 76% more enquires than in 2007-2008.”

PRIORITIES FOR LOCAL ACTION

The recommendation to strengthen current provision and help organisations in East Sussex to recover from the recession.

- ❑ **Baseline Data** – establish baseline data, e.g. number, distribution, profile, income patterns etc of VCS organisations in East Sussex, e.g. by using EVA – Economic Value Assessment or NAVCA/Audit Commission profiling Toolkit (2006)
- ❑ **Funding**
 - Review grant making, commissioning and procurement processes to make sure they are fair, open, inclusive and proportionate and campaign and lobby to retain small grants through a variety of forms to support small groups
 - Funding Advise – one-to-one support in identifying streams of funding, writing applications and bidding for funding
- ❑ **Social Impact** – more training and support for groups on measuring social impact for evidencing and funding purposes
- ❑ **Collaboration** – provide more information and direct support to groups covering: forming partnerships and consortia, joint funding, mergers, sharing resources ('back office' functions) etc.
- ❑ **Training**
 - training need analysis support for groups
 - identify financial support for training staff and volunteers and/or low cost training provision
- ❑ **Volunteer support**
 - Promote alternative schemes for volunteers development, e.g. Volunteer Passport
 - Sessions and one-to-one support for groups working with volunteers
 - Support recruitment of volunteers
- ❑ **Partnership working and Compact** - promote examples of good practice in partnership working through East Sussex Compact
- ❑ **Monitoring** - monitor on-going development and effects of the post-recession period and benchmarking against regional and national trends

Table below identifies projects which address some of those actions and potential partners to deliver those where no support exists or needs strengthening.

<i>Recommendation</i>	<i>Progress or Action Plan</i>	<i>Delivery Partner</i>	<i>Funding required</i>	<i>Time scale</i>
Work undertaken				
Baseline Data	EVA (Economic Value Assessment) carried out by all CVSs in East Sussex with its membership.	CVS Partnership	-	End of July – data gathered End of September - EVA report published Updated every 3 years.
Funding - • Funding Advice	Funding Advisors offer one-to-one funding advice to new and existing groups across East Sussex as well as funding training.	CVS Partnership (lead agency HVA)	-	Three year project running until June 2012.
Volunteer Support • One-to-one and session support for groups working with volunteers • Support recruitment of volunteers	East Sussex Volunteering Project is supporting organisations working with or interested in working with volunteers. Support includes: brokerage, good practice development, developing volunteering opportunities, policy response and campaigning, marketing, strategic development of volunteering.	East Sussex Volunteering Project (hosted by 3VA)	-	Three year project running until March 2013.
Partnership working and Compact	Promoting good practice in partnership Working. Compact awareness raising sessions and events.	East Sussex Compact Steering Group.	-	On-going, included in 2010-2011 Work Plan

Recommendation	Progress or Action Plan	Delivery Partner	Funding required	Time scale
Further work needed				
Funding <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review grant making, commissioning and procurement processes and lobby to retain small grants 	<p>First stage - commissioning training for VCS organisations and discussions with commissioners finished at the end of 2009.</p> <p>CVSs and other VCS groups are now exploring with ESCC how to develop the outcomes from this training eg. more specific support for VCS to prepare for commissioning; more opportunities for joint work/training between statutory commissioners and VCS groups to develop stronger partnership approach.</p> <p>Secondly, with anticipated reductions in public spending, engage in dialogue with statutory sector to ensure the negative effects of reductions on community are minimised.</p>	<p>Grant Funding and Commissioning Project Group</p> <p>SpeakUp Forum</p>	-	On-going
Social Impact	<p>Building up on work led by SE2 and East Sussex Social Enterprise Network.</p> <p>Further training sessions for groups on measuring social impact for evidencing and funding purposes across East Sussex.</p> <p>Provide more information about measuring social impact available through CVSs including articles in the Newsletters.</p>	<p>East Sussex Social Enterprise Network</p> <p>ChangeUp Consortium</p>	<p>Funding required for further training sessions.</p> <p>Potential small financial support from</p>	Agenda item at July ChangeUp meeting.

Recommendation	Progress or Action Plan	Delivery Partner	Funding required	Time scale
			SpeakUp Forum.	
Training <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • training needs analysis support for groups • identify financial support for training staff and volunteers and/or low cost training provision 	<p>One-to-one support for groups to carry out training needs analysis.</p> <p>Strategic approach to training needs at VCS as whole.</p>	<p>CVS Partnership</p> <p>East Sussex Learning Consortium</p>	Funding required.	Agenda item at CVS Chief Officers meeting by the end of second quarter of 2010.
Collaboration	<p>Provide more information about collaboration and national support (Bassac)</p> <p>Provide one-to-one group support on different collaboration practices.</p> <p>Explore if any local experiences of collaboration, consortia or merger can be developed into peer support for other VCS groups.</p>	ChangeUp Consortium	Funding required.	Agenda item at July ChangeUp meeting.
Volunteer Support Promote alternative schemes for volunteers development	Further promotion of Volunteer Passport through CVSs Newsletters, local media etc.	<p>Volunteer Passport Project</p> <p>CVS Partnership</p> <p>East Sussex Volunteering Project</p>	Time in kind/additional funding required.	Sustainable funding for volunteer passport needed by April 2011.

<i>Recommendation</i>	<i>Progress or Action Plan</i>	<i>Delivery Partner</i>	<i>Funding required</i>	<i>Time scale</i>
Monitoring	<p>Monitoring on-going development and effects of the post-recession period on local communities and VCS.</p> <p>Benchmarking against regional and national trends.</p>	<p>ChangeUp Consortium</p> <p>Recession Task Force</p> <p>VCS Liaison Meeting</p>	<p>Time in kind/additional funding required.</p>	<p>Agenda item at ESCC VCS Liaison Group meeting, September 2010.</p>

CONCLUSION

The value of the voluntary sector is that it provides so much support to those in greatest need. This Local Resilience Action Plan sets out recommendation for actions to support Voluntary and Community Sector organisations in East Sussex in the post-recession period. The main aims of the recommendations is to increase the resilience of the voluntary and community sector and help groups be in the strongest position to meet the increasing demands for services. Whilst the need for more funding is not an end in itself, it is clearly a priority in enabling organisations to build their capacity and develop their services.

LRAP will be presented and discussed with the senior staff within the County Council to seek their support and involvement in putting the recommendations into action.

Local groups will be able to use information from the Plan to influence their local partners as well as evidence in bidding for funding.

Partnership working within and across the sectors is likely to be an inevitable consequence of the uncertain funding future, and key to weathering it. We commend this report to statutory and voluntary sector partners across East Sussex and hope that it will help to guide them through the challenging times ahead.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Based on Recession Research by Laura Cecil - “The effects of the recession on Voluntary and Community Sector in East Sussex”, University of Brighton, Community University Partnership Programme (CUUP), January 2010.

“Meeting the challenge” (Summary of the Recession Research), January 2010, SpeakUp Forum, written by Sue Shoesmith.

LRAP has been jointly developed by the Steering Group:
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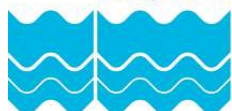
More information available on www.askcasper.org.uk/speakup/recession



University of Brighton

**Community
University
Partnership
Programme**

**East Sussex
County Council**



navca

local focus national voice