



One

East Midlands

Getting voices heard,  
shaping change

**celebrating**  
the work of our members

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



## Our Members

Welcome to the first anniversary brochure of One East Midlands' Members.

We wanted to showcase some of the work that our members carry out and to give people a flavour of the impact this work has on communities across the East Midlands.



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**The Peak Rural Women's Network** feeds into the Grassroots Network giving the socially excluded a route to debate and influence policy and decision making.



5/6

**The Suicide Awareness Training Project** runs across most of the East Midlands with participation from the Rural Community Councils, delivering training in the work place.



7/8

**Voice for the VCS** gives the third sector in Derbyshire a voice in order to participate effectively in Local Strategic Partnerships and the Local Area Agreement.



9/10

Based in Nottingham, **Co-operative Community Action Ltd** is a social enterprise specialising in community focus development, outreach support and mental health services serving the black and minority ethnic community and the wider local community.

We hope that you will be inspired by these stories and we hope that the brochure gives you an insight into the work that One East Midlands aims to support and develop.

## Membership 2008 - 2009

At the end of 2008 we launched the One East Midlands' Membership Services Scheme. Membership is open to voluntary and community sector infrastructure organisations, third sector bodies and other agencies working in partnership with the third sector throughout the East Midlands.

Full membership is open to third sector infrastructure organisations; full members are entitled to influence the management of One EM by voting at the annual meeting and for Board Members. We now have 291 members, of which 133 are full members.

Our members carry out a vast range of activities with the frontline community and voluntary groups they serve. Some of our members offer generalist support services across a geographic community whilst others provide specialist support to defined community groups; and some offer a mix of generalist and specialist support.

## Member benefits

Being a member of One EM offers a range of services and ensures that you are engaged in what happens at a regional level. Membership gives you access to up-to-date information on news, events and policy changes. It allows you access to the members only area of the website; allowing you to network with other organisations and access useful resources. Our members can participate in debate and influence policy through our policy forums. Our members have a say and tell us what services they want at a range of consultation events. Members attend all One EM events for free.

## What members want

When we launched the scheme we asked existing members what they wanted One EM membership to provide and as our membership base has grown, we have continued to ask that question. Over the last year, members have emphasised the need to actively engage people in choosing policy areas and ensure that any policy work undertaken is relevant and makes an impact. Members want One EM to support joint working and share information.

## Grassroots Network

The idea of having a grass roots network has two origins; firstly, CEFET (Co-ordinating European Funding for the East Midlands Third Sector) used to run local social capital projects in the region which gave small grants to very small grass roots community organisations. Secondly, the regional network aimed to provide a path for local networks to think about the 'bigger picture' i.e. policy issues that affect them at a less local level. By collecting all the various local networks, there is a regional focus which provides a channel for those voices to be heard. People can come together to talk about shared experience, to collaborate and learn lessons from each other at a local level. The network is an opportunity to exchange ideas and exchange information.

## Connecting local action to European policy

CEFET did some research with the European Anti Poverty Network about whether people in excluded communities wanted their voice to be heard in policy; the answer was 'yes'. The European Anti Poverty Network works to make the voices of people who have suffered from exclusion or poverty be heard. Policy discussion includes national issues like benefit levels, problems accessing benefits and the inflexibility of the benefit system. The network enables those involved to draw a connection to national policy opportunities and to identify how European level policy connects right down to the local level.

The Grassroots Network creates a space for sharing experiences at a local level. This includes addressing support needs and potential for positive action. A key aspect is campaigning at the local level to talk about people's attitudes to poverty. There is a need to get more exposure so that people understand what communities can do themselves and the massive difference that makes. There is a lot of work going on at community level that is not appreciated.

## Peak Rural Women's Network

Judith Higgins was involved in the earlier project on local social capital run by CEFET. The project empowered local people to identify local needs and gaps. The project was important for individuals as many of the people involved had skills but had never had the opportunity to share and develop them. It also improved individual's self esteem and made them feel valued. Judith contacted local people who were part of the original project in Derbyshire. The Grassroots Network supported and funded a meeting and as a result the Peak Rural Women's Network was set up.

"There needs to be grass roots opportunities, to give people an understanding of how they can be heard."

Judith Higgins, Volunteer

## Thinking ahead

2010 is the European Year Against Poverty and Social Exclusion and this provides a great opportunity for the Grassroots Network to get more exposure for people who are excluded and to enable them to tell their story in a more influential way. The goal is to keep the Grassroots Network running while there is a specific window of influence about telling stories and there is actually money to do that. In the longer run the aim is to affect the policy so that it is seen as an important part of an overall strategy around inclusion.



# networks




“We wanted to enable a networking forum which would also offer opportunities for individuals to influence decision making.”

Clare Caves,  
Co-ordinator for Grassroots Network Development, CEFET

“There are many different approaches to overcoming the problems of social inclusion; this project brought people together in order to creatively build connections and social capital.”

Laurie Moran,  
Chief Executive, CEFET

A man with glasses and a blue shirt is shown in profile, holding a folder and a stethoscope. He is looking towards the right. The background is a plain wall with some electrical outlets.

"Suicide prevention is not solely a health issue; it is a community issue. Although many who die will be viewed as being mentally ill, a lot of the background factors will be about normal life stresses and pressures."

**Keith Waters,**  
Suicide Prevention Lead for the East Midlands

# training

## Reducing the Stigma of Suicide

### Suicide Awareness Partnership Training

#### Background

In 2001 there was a noticeable increase in the levels of stress and depression within farming and rural communities. As a response the Rural Community Council (Leicestershire & Rutland) set up a rural stress helpline. There was also a befriending scheme where volunteers visited farmers to help them through periods of crisis. Following the success of the scheme the RRC (Leicestershire & Rutland) developed general suicide awareness training funded by the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and Leicester City Primary Care Trust.

The training course was targeted at individuals who were likely to come into contact with people vulnerable to suicide whether they worked in mental health, public, private or third sector bodies.

"Many people work in areas that have not had suicide awareness training and are not equipped to deal with such a situation."

Keith Waters,  
Suicide Prevention Lead for the East Midlands

#### East Midlands Suicide Prevention Strategy

Back in 2002, the national suicide prevention strategy was launched. One of the key goals is to promote mental health in the wider population particularly with regards to suicide prevention. In the East Midlands a suicide prevention manager was appointed to help deliver the key messages and drivers. A key part of Keith Water's role is to develop a suicide prevention strategy group in each County which is likely to consist of agencies from health, social care, the voluntary sector, as well as involving service users; to mould each area's own suicide prevention strategy.



#### Regional collaboration

RRC (Leicestershire & Rutland) in collaboration with the rural equivalent bodies in Northamptonshire, Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire received Big Lottery Reaching Communities Funding to roll out a Regional Suicide Prevention Project. Mike Wilbur, based in Leicestershire, co-ordinates and supports the workers based in the other areas.

The project is two-fold; firstly, it is a continuation of the half day suicide awareness training sessions. The second part of the project is short, half hour presentations in the work place. As many think suicide is 'nothing to do with me or my organisation', there is a need to 'knock on the door' and; do a general, brief suicide awareness talk. There is an opportunity for questions and participants get a resource pack which signposts how to help. The session encourages people to take a positive step to try and help. The project plans to deliver sessions in doctor's surgeries, with staff in schools and with regiments in the Territorial Army.

#### Challenges and goals

The overriding aim of the project is to breakdown the stigma around suicide in society. The training gets people talking about suicide and that takes away a huge obstacle to those that might want help. The project creates an environment where people are more readily receptive and able to talk if someone is suffering from stress or depression. The training gives participants the tools to acknowledge that someone is in difficulty, to address the issue by listening and signposting on to proper services. The project will become a focal point for information and signposting on suicide, self harm and stress through web based information.

If you are interested in further information on this work or you would like to get involved contact **Mike Wilbur**, email: [mwilbur@ruralcc.org.uk](mailto:mwilbur@ruralcc.org.uk). Mike is based at RRC (Leicestershire & Rutland) which aims to help those who live and work in rural Leicestershire & Rutland.

A woman with long dark hair and glasses is speaking at a presentation. She is wearing a red top and a black cardigan. She has a name tag that reads "Claire Thomber Voice for the VCS". She is holding a stack of papers and a pen. In the background, a screen displays the text "Community Collaboration?" and "voice" in large orange letters. There are also logos for "Rural Action Derbyshire" and "DERBYSHIRE RURAL COMMUNITY CO" visible on the screen.

**voice**

“The Voice for the VCS Project is about increasing understanding of Local Area Agreements and Local Strategic Partnerships amongst frontline community groups - how they relate to the VCS and how the VCS relate to them.”

Claire Thomber, Voice for the VCS Project Officer



## Voice for the VCS

The Voice for the VCS Project, supported by Big Lottery, aims to build the capacity of frontline third sector organisations to participate effectively in Local Strategic Partnerships and the Local Area Agreement (LAA).

### **It does this by:**

- *Providing free training opportunities to raise awareness of the LAA and the benefits of being more involved.*
- *Co-ordinating county wide VCS Forums to create a space for two way dialogue between sectors.*
- *Managing VCS communication mechanisms around the LAA by keeping a website up to date and producing a bi-monthly bulletin.*
- *Advocating on behalf of the sector to raise awareness of the VCS contribution to representational partnerships.*

The project is supported by 3D, the third sector infrastructure consortium for Derbyshire which brings together third sector support agencies from across the county.

## Supporting voices

As the Project Officer, Claire Thornber delivers 'Voice for the VCS' with the support of 3D. She works with and on behalf of Derbyshire's infrastructure agencies providing them with a resource for their members to access. Part of her role involves working with frontline organisations one to one to give them a greater understanding of the LAA and help them identify how their work contributes both directly and indirectly to the National Indicators. This enables them to better demonstrate the added value they provide.

Claire recently led a session at the Amber Trust's management and staff away day. This helped them to understand not only how their various activities support multi-agency partnerships to deliver against some of Derbyshire's top priorities but also why it is so important to be able to evidence how they support delivery. Claire was able to support them through a process which highlighted that while NI 142 (vulnerable people are supported to maintain independent living) was their 'bread and butter', they supported delivery of a further 6 different indicators, making a massive contribution to the work of the Derbyshire Partnership Forum.

"The consortium works well - people come together to work in partnership for the benefit of frontline organisations."

**Kerrie Fletcher, Manager,  
Third Sector Support for Derbyshire (3D)**

Kerrie Fletcher is the manager of 3D, the infrastructure consortium for Derbyshire which brings together voluntary sector support organisations. One of the projects that 3D is currently undertaking is the Voice project, managed by Claire, c.thornber@derbysrcc.org.uk

## National Indicators (NI)

These are performance indicators set by the Department for Communities and Local Government. Each Local Area Agreement (LAA) has up to 35 National Indicators plus 17 statutory education/early years targets. A local strategic partnership (LSP) can add in further local indicators, either from the national set or devised locally to reflect local circumstances. VCS activity has an impact on many of the NIs but of particular relevance to the sector are NI 6 to increase 'participation in regular volunteering' and NI 7 to improve the 'environment for a thriving third sector'.



## Working in Partnership

Voice co-ordinated an event to enable frontline organisations to talk directly to local strategic decision makers about what contributes to a thriving third sector. Approximately 50 VCS representatives met with Derbyshire Partnership Forum's Culture Board, which has the responsibility for delivering against NI 7. After much discussion, a working group met and developed an action plan incorporating all the comments from the event. This was then taken back to the VCS for consultation and has since been approved by the Culture Board. A steering group made up of third and public sector partners will now take the plan forward and report back to 'the frontline' via the Voice for the VCS Project.

# development

in conversation with >  
**Marva Daley-Lewis**  
Director of CCA



### **Why set up a support service?**

I became disillusioned as a front line worker, I was seeing people in tears, working with people who were suffering and there was nothing I could do about it. I thought that we could change things. We asked community leaders and the general community: "If we were to start an organisation, what would you be looking for?" It took about 2 years and then in 2000 we registered, applied for funding from the European Regional Development Fund and Co-operative Community Action (CCA) was born.

### **What kind of services does CCA offer?**

CCA is a social enterprise specialising in community focus development, outreach support and mental health services. We currently deliver various programmes that are tapping into the needs of the community: we work in BME health as we find, statistically, in this area that there are people that don't access doctors, don't have a dentist, or go to the opticians.

We also have a counselling programme that is oversubscribed. We tap into various different issues like poverty and domestic violence; all different issues that are in the community.

We help refugees as they move from the status of asylum seeker to refugee, to find accommodation, to find schools.

Our training room is where we provide many embedded learning programmes including ESOL and training for trainers.

People who have come from developing communities who do not get social security are natural entrepreneurs and have to be pretty creative about how they bring income into their homes to support their families. We have a social enterprise programme where we offer accreditation and support them to work through a business plan.

We must impress upon people the importance of finding work, both socially and economically. If a working person can provide for their families, pay their rent without tapping into social security, then they can have pride and a place in their community. We support people into work and meet with employers to make sure it happens.

### **Which communities & community groups do you work with?**

CCA are not affiliated to one person, we are affiliated to everyone. We look at the community as a whole - really delicate people within the community - we address the issues that affect them and what their needs are.

### **Do you enjoy your work?**

For me it's about seeing somebody who comes into the organisation that you have picked up from hospital and has been suffering from domestic violence and probably six weeks after working with them, you see them smile or they come into class and have a debate. It's about welcoming people as they come through door; you give them a cup of tea and make a couple of calls to social security and their cheque is in the post and they can pay their bill and buy their food. We are empowering people and supporting people through their worst days.

### **Can you tell me about your achievements and goals?**

We have really humane, positive, warm, caring staff. Behind every organisation the driving force is the staff and you have to have the right people on board. They need to have empathy, they have to care and it's most important that they need to be professional.

There are so many different issues in the community so we have to be focused. We are constantly going for contracts and funding so that we can address the different social issues that we have. We are striving to build a platform so our organisation can live on when we have retired and gone, somebody else can take forward the same ethos as we do and continue to do the same work. In any society there is always a deprived section and within that you need to be able to support those that are less able to support themselves.

My grandmother said that first you have to have a dream, then you have to believe the dream, then you own that dream, then you need to activate the dream and see what you are made of. I believe that we are fighters. We are looking at how we can develop ourselves to be self-sustaining.

Social Enterprises are businesses that trade goods and services and use the majority of their profits for social and environmental goals. The idea behind social enterprise is simple. Whereas for some businesses, owner profits and shareholder value are the top priorities, social enterprises, long-term benefits consumers and communities are the major consideration.





One East Midlands is a registered charity, working with the voluntary and community sector and wider third sector.

One East Midlands brings together organisations that support voluntary and community groups across the region to influence and shape policy, improve services and provide a single point of contact at a regional level for all stakeholders.

One East Midlands is accountable to its members: voluntary and community organisations, frontline groups, public and private sector agencies. Through its membership, the sector is able to influence One East Midlands' work and ensure that the organisation does what it sets out to do.



For more information on our membership scheme visit [www.oneeastmidlands.org.uk](http://www.oneeastmidlands.org.uk)

or call 0115 934 8471 (general enquires)

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