

networkfareham Board Meeting
Tuesday 8 September 2009

Item 5 Briefing Paper
Hill Park Project update

INTRODUCTION

- 1 The Hill Park Project Steering Group has been commissioned by **networkfareham's** Board to investigate underlying reasons for small pockets of deprivation in Fareham, and in particular the Hill Park area, and to potentially identify ways in which **networkfareham** can make a difference.

PROGRESS

- 2 Since the last Board meeting in June the Hill Park Project Steering Group has met twice to oversee progress being made regarding mapping services in the area and gathering statistical information. Membership of the steering group now comprises:

Name	Organisation
Councillor John Bryant	Hampshire County Council ward member for Fareham Town
Reverend Philip Cochrane	Vicar, St Columba Church
Councillor Peter Davies	Fareham Borough Council ward member for Fareham North West.
Sergeant Sam Hockley	Hampshire Constabulary
Paul O'Beirne	Chief Executive, Community Action Fareham
Geoff Phillpotts	Community Regeneration Manager, Portsmouth Housing Association

3 As part of this ongoing research, Phil Rayner and Jo Hamilton have now met with the following stakeholders who work in the Hill Park Project area:

- Learning and Skills Council
- Portsmouth Housing Association
- Oak Meadow Children's Centre
- St Columba Church
- Fareham Job Centre Plus
- Henry Cort Community College
- Fareham Locality Team
- Connexions
- Fareham College
- Recreation and Leisure, Hampshire County Council
- Community Development Team, Fareham Borough Council
- Housing Department, Fareham Borough Council

There are several stakeholders still to be seen.

4 On the 24th June, several members of the steering group visited the Turnaround Project in Andover, Test Valley. The Turnaround Project is a multi-agency approach aimed at reducing levels of inequality in the Alamein Ward and increasing the level of resident involvement and participation in community matters.

One of the main outcomes of the project has been the 'Askalot' shop which is a drop-in facility for residents to be signposted to services, access computers and the internet and take part in learning or play opportunities.

The need to involve the community in potential solutions was a key lesson learned from the Turnaround Project.

5 Statistical data continues to be collected and a summary of evidence gathered so far is attached as **Appendix A**. It has been difficult to drill down to postcode level for the project area for evidence regarding adult learning and health.

6 On the 16th July, a mini-conference was held at Henry Cort Community College for stakeholders from the area to come together and discuss the issues from their own particular perspectives and to identify potential solutions. 32 people attended the mini-conference from a wide range of statutory and voluntary and community partners. The feedback was extremely positive and it generated great enthusiasm for the project. A summary of some of the ideas generated at the event is attached as **Appendix B**.

NEXT STAGES

- 7 From consulting with stakeholders and visiting the Turnaround Project, it is now seen as essential that the next stage in the Project involves consulting with and involving the community in the Hill Park Project area. A community research proposal is attached as **Appendix C** which outlines a suggested approach from Learning Links who would manage the process.

Learning Links is a Hampshire based regional social enterprise and educational charity that delivers a range of services to empower people and, in doing so, to promote greater social cohesion and active communities.

The aim of the proposal is to support the Hill Park project by raising awareness of what informal and formal learning, volunteering and work opportunities are available; encouraging more people to participate and bridging gaps by bringing people and opportunities together. The project will recruit 12 community champions and 8 researchers and train them to conduct research that will identify existing provision and barriers, raise aspirations, support a 'can do' approach and promote opportunities in the area. The target is to engage 240 disengaged individuals from the community who would directly benefit from the advice and support of the community champions. A further 200 residents would be engaged through a community survey.

A brief timeline for the project is:

September 2009 – recruitment for part time coordinator to be based within the Hill Park community. Ideally this person would be a member of the community itself.

October – December 2009 – coordinator to recruit 20 community based staff/volunteers for champion and researcher roles.

January 2010 – induction and training of champions and researchers.

February 2010 – engagement with community begins.

April 2010 – community led DVD developed and forum event for champions/researchers to evaluate feedback and prioritise issues to research.

April 2010 – community surveys undertaken for six weeks.

July 2010 – dissemination event to present findings and screen DVD

August 2010 – coordinator to ensure partners and community plan next steps, champion networks are stable and sustainable and that all recruits receive advice on learning progression opportunities.

September 2010 – two evaluation reports produced, one outlining the research findings and the second measuring the impact of the community learning champions on the community.

September 2010 – 10 case studies produced covering the experiences of two community learning champions, two community researchers and six beneficiaries from hard to reach groups.

The benefits of this approach are:

- 20 members of the community receive 40 hours of accredited training leading to a Level 1/Level 2 qualification as appropriate.
- The research is conducted by members of the community themselves.
- 240 hard to reach individuals directly benefit from advice and support.
- Community champions will embed a positive culture in the community to increase the take up of learning and employment opportunities beyond the project's lifespan.
- Opportunity for those trained on the project to gain employment.

The total cost of the proposal is £28,723 but there is opportunity to reduce this cost by around £5,000 by partners matching resources such as office space and IT equipment for a project coordinator. The LSP currently has a total of £13,000 available for the project. A further £5,000 will become available in April 2010. The LSP also has the opportunity to bid to Hampshire County Council for a further £4,750 and to Progress through Partnerships for a further £6,000. It is very unlikely these bids would be unsuccessful as this money has already been pre-allocated for use by **networkfareham**.

- 8 The steering group will continue to map services in the area and also now to research further funding opportunities.
- 9 One of the requests from the mini-conference was that a second event should be held after the community research to discuss and follow up the issues raised.
- 10 The redevelopment of the St Columba Church site offers a real opportunity to assist the project and could potentially become the site of a drop-in community facility. The steering group would very much like partners to support this redevelopment scheme.
- 11 The steering group also requests that partner organisations within **networkfareham** make the Hill Park Project an organisational priority within their organisations to help facilitate the project and any potential match-funding or resources.

RECOMMENDATION

- 12 The Hill Park Project Steering Group recommends that:
- The Board continues to give high priority to the project as an LSP but that also individual organisations give the project high priority within their own corporate plans.
 - The Board agrees to use the current funds of £13,000 (and the £5,000 which will become available in April 2010) to support the proposed community research project attached as **Appendix C**.
 - The Board agrees to bid to Hampshire County Council for a further £4,750 and to Progress through Partnerships for a further £6,000 to support the project.
 - The Board agrees to support a second mini-conference for stakeholders within the project area.
 - The Board supports the redevelopment of the St Columba site which will support community engagement within the area.

STATISTICAL EVIDENCE

- Hill Park ranks in the highest deprivation category in the Education Indices of Multiple Deprivation for both educational attainment and skills. Its **rank for skills places it in the top 3% most deprived areas in the country**. However this is based on 2001 census data so up-to-date research is needed.
- 2001 census data paints a picture of an area with **47% social housing**, a relative high proportion of young people, with higher unemployment than the rest of Fareham.
- In 2001 **46.1% of the working age population in Hill Park had no qualifications** compared to 29.25% across the whole of Fareham NW Ward.
- In 2007-2008 **24.1% of pupils who live within the Hill Park area achieved 5 GCSE's A-C incl. English and Maths** compared to 53.4% in Fareham overall.
- In 2007-2008 there was an **11.53% pupil absence rate from secondary schools in Hill Park** compared to 7.32% across the rest of Fareham.
- In summer 2008 **21.6% of pupils from the Hill Park project area were eligible for free school meals** compared to 5.13% across Fareham overall.
- In August 2008 **18.83% of the Hill Park area working age population was claiming key out of work benefits** compared to 5.24% across Fareham as a whole.
- In November 2008 **85.05 per 1000 16+ population in Hill Park were claiming incapacity benefit**. This is significantly higher than other super output areas in Fareham NW ward and compares to 33.43 per 1000 16+ population across Fareham as a whole.
- Out of 131 **NEET (not in education, employment or training)** 16-18 year olds across Fareham Borough, **27** are from Hill Park
- In 2008 **54.7% of 16-18 year olds in Hill Park participated in education and training** compared to 73% across Fareham Borough

COMMENTS FROM MINI-CONFERENCE

What are the issues?

- Lack of community centre – a place to meet/belong
- Fragmented resources
- Lack of advice re services delivered locally
- Advocacy for the area is limited
- Sense of place/pride
- Lost children – not engaged
- 16-18 year olds need positive role models and mentors
- Youth off streets, provision for primary age
- Identify the NEET (not in education, employment or training) children in primary school
- Smaller youth groups instead of one large one
- Lack of out of school facilities
- Dysfunctional relationships
- Low aspirations
- How to motivate families to engage with learning opportunities
- Absence of basic life skills
- Lack of adult learners
- Negative attitudes towards education and learning
- Some people need social skills before beginning target qualification
- No motivation to achieve a better standard of living
- Lack of aspirations from children and parents
- Absence of parenting skills/mentoring
- Benefit society is deemed acceptable
- Fear of losing benefits by going back to work, coming off incapacity benefit
- Circle of low skills leading to poor employment leading to low income leading to social and health problems leading to lack of aspirations leading to low skills...
- Poor ground maintenance
- Social housing – varied quality
- Overcrowded housing
- Rising crime
- Lack of police engagement at primary school age
- Mental health issues e.g. depression
- High level of SEN (special education needs) due to families/relationships
- Poor dental health

Potential solutions

- One stop shop
- Developing champions within the community
- Survey residents
- Community centre
- Mobile library
- Employ a Neighbourhood Development Officer to take forward the project
- Forum for practitioners in the area
- Free life skill taster sessions
- communicate
- Consistency and coordination of funding
- Overcoming insularity with better transport links
- Better communication with residents
- Skills sharing within the community through community champions

Proposal to Fareham Borough Council (Networkfareham) for the training and support of Community Researchers and Community Champions within Hill Park.



Abigail Withey, Business Development Manager, Learning Links (Southern) Ltd

3rd August 2009

Confirmation of brief

In response to positive feedback received at Hill Park Project conference held in July and attended by representatives of many projects and agencies working in the locality, Learning Links has been invited to put forward a proposal to apply their proven model of developing Community Researchers and Community Champions in order to engage community members, train a number of people who live and work in the area in order to undertake awareness raising, signposting and research activities, and develop a sustainable network of these people to continue their activities and support within the community after the completion of the project.

Aim

The aim of this proposal is to support the Hill Park project by raising awareness of what informal and formal learning, volunteering and work opportunities are available; encouraging more people to participate and bridging gaps by bringing people and opportunities together. Community Champions will engage the community in considering their needs and available opportunities, and identify any perceived barriers or gaps e.g. transport, childcare, local learning or job opportunities. Community Researchers will survey the community, generate solutions and make recommendations to project partners, providers, informal groups and the community. Learning Links has the ability and reach to provide Hill Park with an effective and trained network of Community Champions and Community Researchers to achieve these aims. These networks will be sustainable through the recruitment of people who can continue to carry out these roles locally through existing jobs or volunteering. Researchers and Champions will consist of a range of community members, both employed and volunteering, who will have complementary skills sets. Dissemination will be achieved through event/s planned in collaboration with the community, and can include the development of media materials such as a DVD to capture community responses. We aim for our activity to improve the local support infrastructure by empowering the community and individuals to feel comfortable and confident in exploring what's available and contributing to shaping existing and new service provision.

Objectives

Recruit 12 Champions and 8 Researchers through targeted campaigns and outreach, and train them to be able to conduct research, identify existing provision and barriers, raise aspirations, support a 'can do' approach and promote opportunities in the community.

Champions comprising of strategic frontline staff and volunteers in the community, through engaging with 240 disengaged individuals from hard to reach groups, will raise awareness

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and promote different types of opportunities; identify mechanisms to bring people with the same or similar aims together; overcome barriers to enable activity and progression to take place e.g. bringing together resources and individuals; inspire and motivate people to participate in opportunities and embed the cultures of championing and aspiration within communities.

These Champions will increase the engagement in informal and formal learning, preparing for volunteering and work activities for those groups and individuals who have not traditionally participated. The Coordinator will carry out a follow up exercise with a randomly selected 10% of the 240 people engaged by the Champions to measure the impact of the Champions' involvement on increased participation.

The Project Coordinator, working with Champions and Partners, will produce a range of promotional materials including leaflets to provide Champions with a selection of publicity with which to promote the campaign and reach individuals in the community.

Researchers will gather up to date, accurate information on local engagement and accessing of services in order to secure improvements in people accessing and sustaining opportunities. Working with the Coordinator they will develop a research questionnaire and conduct research with 200 individuals which may include availability of opportunities in any medium or location; barriers that restrict people from accessing these opportunities; gaps in available services and how people want to access services and opportunities.

The responses will be fed back to the coordinators to collate and analyse data and then work with a professional evaluator to produce research findings and the impact report.

Proposed Activity & Timeline

In September recruitment will commence for a part time coordinator to be based within the Hill Park community. Alongside tutors, the coordinator will receive 2 days training on the technique and methodology for the research and championing. During the Autumn the Coordinator will liaise with partners and draw up an action plan for recruiting Champions and Researchers via networks, the community and the local media. The Coordinator will then recruit 20 community based staff and volunteers for Champion and Researcher roles, ready to start training in the New Year. In January the Coordinator will carry out induction and begin training, consisting of 2 x 20 hour courses delivered in Hill Park, 1 for Researchers and 1 for Champions. Both courses will equip the participants to fulfil their roles in the community and enable Champions to begin engagement in February. Champions will continue to work in the community and to diversify and select specialist subjects from a menu of Returning to Learning and Work, Health, and Green (Lifestyle) units. The Coordinator will design leaflets to support awareness campaigns and design and create a web space for Champions gathering information on community perceptions of engaging in informal and formal learning, local community activities, returning to work and provision of services, spaces and resources available.

Researchers will learn methodology approaches and undertake a mini research project to embed research skills. In April work will begin on a community led DVD and a forum event will be held for Champions and Researchers to evaluate feedback and agree on the most valuable areas and issues to research. Researchers will also design questionnaires for the community research. In April the forum will be followed by community surveys being

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undertaken by both Community Researchers and Community Champions over a period of 6 weeks. By June Researchers will be able to work with a professional researcher to evaluate and prepare reports, offering recommendations for improvements to services, raising aspirations, engaging new learners etc. In July dissemination event/s will be held to present findings and the video can be screened locally. Partners, Providers, the community and other interested parties will be invited to respond through workshop activity, and agree actions for the future. Partners and community members will be encouraged to contribute to and agree next steps for future developments, for example offering a free monthly location for Champions to continue to meet and network. Coordinator to network in August to ensure next steps are being taken, Champion networks are stable and all recruits receive Information Advice and Guidance on progression opportunities.

Outcomes

Project outcomes will include:

- 1) 12 people trained as Community Champions and embedding a positive culture in the community to increase the take up of learning and employment opportunities beyond the project's lifespan.
- 2) 8 people trained as Community Researchers to conduct research into opportunities available to the local community and to become an ongoing resource for organisations, such as Local Authorities, FE Colleges, Housing Associations and Private Sector Business to assess meeting community needs.
- 3) Each Champion to engage with at least 20 individuals in the community to promote, inspire and motivate people to engage with the Hill Park Project with a minimum number of 240 community members benefitting.
- 4) Conduct research with 200 community members in Hill Park to gather information about local perceptions, needs and barriers to participating and progressing.
- 5) Production of material including leaflets promoting the project and highlighting the benefits of accessing services, support, activities and other opportunities. The development of a community led DVD to demonstrate the findings of relevant, local and specific research.
- 6) Through the follow up of a randomly selected 10% of the 240 community members engaged by Community Champions, we will have measured the impact of the project in relation to the take up of informal and formal learning opportunities, accessed or prepared for volunteering or employment.
- 7) Two evaluation reports. The first report will be produced from the research carried out by the Community Researchers and will be made available to all partners and those providing services or opportunities. The second report will be an evaluation to measure the impact of the Community Learning Champions on the community.
- 8) 10 case studies covering experiences of:

2 x Community Learning Champions; 2 x Community Researchers; 6 beneficiaries from hard to reach groups.

Costings

	Description	Amount	Match funding
Publicity costs	Promotional leaflets x 500 @ £100 Printing of 200 questionnaires @ £50 Evaluation mail out and return x 24 @ £168 Delegate packs for dissemination event @ £300 Production of DVD @ £500	£1118	
Support for participants	Volunteer expenses @ £1370 Learners support e.g. childcare, LSA, travel, subsistence & incidentals @ £680 Refreshments for Forum event – lunch for 20 @ £60. For 100 people at Dissemination event £300.	£2410	
Equipment	Laptop for coordinator @ £800 Mobile phone x 12 months @ £240 Copying 30 DVDs @ £30	£1070	
Learning resources	£15 per learner @ £300	£300	
Premises	Training venue 2 x 20 hour courses, £15 per hour @ £300 Venue for Forum event £15 x 5 hours @ £75 Venue for dissemination event £40 per hour for 4 hours @ £160	£535	
Teaching staff costs	Project training/briefing for coordinator and 2 tutors x 2 days @ £600 Paid tutor training		

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	allowance @ £240 Tutors x 20 hour course x 2 @ £1117 Estimated 5 hours LSA support @ £88 Accreditation and certification costs @ £900	£2945	
Coordinator costs	Coordinator £29250 pro rata for 16 hours per week for 12 months £12649	£12649	Volunteer time: 520 hours training 180 hours event attendance 780 hours contact time with beneficiaries Valued £10 per hour @ £14800 Other organisation staff time: 30 hours attending networking meetings 120 hours attending dissemination event and workshop Valued £25 per hour @ £3750
Staff travel	12 months x £25 per month @ £300	£300	
Admin & office costs	Office costs with overheads x 12 months @ £3000 Course design, quality assurance, data entry, curriculum support and review @ £650	£3650	
Management costs	Recruitment, HR, finance, general administration, business development support, ICT support, web space monitoring, insurance x 12 months @ £3726	£3746	
TOTALS		£28723	£18550

Innovation

Community Research and Community Champion activity supports and involves its own beneficiaries in driving forward aspirations and generates attitudes and behaviours which can be easily passed on during and beyond the projects lifespan.

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It is an activity that doesn't have to remain within the geographical boundaries as defined by its funding but can be duplicated and 'tweaked' to fit other areas. It has been designed to be spread by formal and informal dissemination methods, including local networks, partners, word of mouth and sharing of skills, approaches, findings and good practice.

The outcomes reflect the desire to develop more than just another network to support people and communities: it is about embedding a culture within communities enabling individuals to share their experiences and inspire their friends, neighbours and colleagues to take up new opportunities. The Community Champions will be equipped with a range of tools and skills to reach people and given access to web space to share ideas, resources and information. The subject areas for research will be decided by the Champions as opposed to Government Bodies or Service Providers who may have a different agenda. This innovative bottom up approach will help to clearly identify community needs and ensure that Champions and community members take ownership of the results.

Monitoring & Evaluation

To monitor that we reach our target numbers of Champions and Researchers all those recruited will complete project enrolment and registration forms which will capture personal data including ethnicity and disability. Completion of training will be evidenced by National Open College Certificates, most likely at a Level 2.

Champions will record all interactions with individuals in the community, capturing name, contact number and postcode and feed back to the coordinator on a regular basis any opportunities for progression they can support in.

Researchers will complete questionnaires and return completed forms to the project coordinator.

In order to monitor that objectives are met the coordinator will:

monitor and record numbers and types of Champions and Researchers recruited;

monitor and record the number and types of interaction Champions are engaging in with the community and ensure all reach their target of individuals;

oversee production of the research questionnaire;

monitor, record and collate questionnaires and ensure all are completed on time;

keep a project diary to support the evaluation process;

carry out a randomly selected 10% survey of people engaged with by the Champions to measure the impact of the project on increased participation;

work with the evaluator to produce the research report;

ensure promotional materials are strategically placed and available in the community.

The final evaluation report will be produced by Spirit Research and Evaluation who will use all the records and surveys detailed above, the coordinator's project diary, feedback and

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interviews with individuals and partners to complete the report and identify both soft and hard outcomes.

Both the research report and final evaluation report will be shared with partners and the community through dissemination events.

Equality & Diversity

Learning Links are very committed to the promotion of diversity and equalities of opportunities and have developed specific expertise over 10 years in ensuring accessibility for individuals and groups for whom access to services can be most challenging.

This includes being selective about our partners and ensuring their practices are consistent with those articulated by Learning Links, as set out in our equality and diversity policies, as well as their own policies being in place and visibility applied throughout their practice and service delivery.

All promotion, recruitment and beneficiary contact throughout the project will be undertaken using appropriate methods and resources, for example allowing for translation, support for hard of hearing and the visually impaired to be able to access the project. A carefully targeted communications strategy will be put in place by the coordinator in order to attract and engage a balanced representation of the community as Champions, Researchers and second tier beneficiaries.

Within the guidelines of our Health & Safety policy and applying current legislation Learning Links shall ensure all risk assessment and required checks, including venue assessment and CRB checks, are carried out by all partners on this project through agreed practice. Learning Links's own Health & Safety Manager will inform on all related matters and will support all project partners and staff by raising awareness, understanding, application and changes to legislation and producing a health & safety plan covering all project activity.

Contingency

The project relies on the support of other partners to release staff and volunteers for training and networking events in order to reach our target of 12 Champions and 8 Researchers. If the initial recruitment drive is unsuccessful we will run an additional course and offer incentives.

Researchers may struggle to engage with community members to conduct community research and so can offer participants a prize draw for all who complete a research questionnaire. Vouchers can be offered to the 10% involved in providing feedback for the evaluation exercise to ensure sufficient returns are made. *Please note not included in costings.*

Health & Safety - training will include Health & Safety and safe lone working practices and coordinators will identify suitable locations and events for research to be conducted.

Staff turnover - Learning Links has a number of experienced and qualified project coordinators who can fulfil this role.

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Turnover of Champions - each Champion has a target of 20 people to engage with over the period which means that if we fail to retain all 40 Champions the remainder will be able to pick up the extra numbers.

Exit Strategy and sustainability beyond lifespan of funding

The Champions model is designed to be sustainable as through training a mixture of volunteers and frontline staff to pass the message on, we are able to change attitudes and inspire changed behaviour in the community long after the project is completed.

Sustainability is achieved by ensuring the network of Champions are equipped with skills that they can continue to apply and cascade to support peers, clients, work colleagues, family etc. We can involve communities and individuals through consultation to establish a genuine and inspiring culture developed at the heart of the community - by the community for the community.

Significant added value is the opportunity for those trained on this project to gain employment as Learning Links aims to raise awareness of how Community Research and Community Champions can be engaged by partners such as Local Authorities, Housing Authorities, local businesses etc. to investigate and meet the needs of communities. Research completed will be used to shape future provision of service provision and opportunities within Learning Links and will be made available to other Service Providers.