

## Eastbourne Community Network January 2018 meeting at Eastbourne Blind Society

### “Including you ... engaging, involving and working together across our local communities” – Outcomes Report, February 2018

The Eastbourne Community Network event held on 18<sup>th</sup> January 2018 was a meeting of voluntary and community groups working within Eastbourne. It was organised in partnership by 3VA (voluntary Action in Eastbourne, Lewes District and Wealden) and the Locality Link Worker. 25 people attended with 21 organisations represented. The meeting was held at Eastbourne Blind Society.

The event was titled “Including you... Engaging, involving and working together across our local communities”. It focused on exploring the richness of our different and diverse communities, how we can engage and work with each other to grow assets and to enable all to have voice.



### **SPEED NETWORKING**

The morning began with speed networking which remains a really positive component of the Network meetings. Participants suggested that it could be longer as it was a real opportunity to engage with people from other sectors and understand what services are available. It allows for cross fertilisation of ideas and a sense of the assets that are available within Eastbourne. It also provides an ice-breaker which allows people to interact more readily throughout the sessions. The Speed Networking will continue to be utilised and will also be extended at future meetings.

The participants then explored diversity and the barriers that prevent people from engaging with or using services and local assets. After a short break for further networking, Deirdre Dean explained to the participants the work of the Eastbourne Blind Society, which proved enlightening.

## SOLUTIONS

The group then explored solutions to the barriers that were recognized earlier in the session. They sought to find ways that organisations can engage more easily with service users from all backgrounds including how organisations can collaborate with each other to achieve greater impact. Importantly people were asked how they and their organisations would be helping to support the community to help develop inclusivity.



Thoughts on solutions included:

- *Trying to coordinate services for the parent rather than having all services visit. Would consider setting up:*
  - *Communication board*
  - *Hub*
  - *Service Board*
  - *Graffiti Board*
- *Raising awareness of barriers that may prevent people accessing services*
- *Finding ways to overcome them*
- *Promoting the work of 'Organisation' and network with other community / charity groups*
- *Holding more information sessions about what we can offer, targeted at minority groups*
- *Inviting other organisations that support carers to the carers groups that we run*

- *When I'm doing home visits..... ensuring that all of my headed paperwork, ID badges etc. are kept in my bag until I get by / into the client's property. A lot of my clients feel there is a stigma attached to asking for help. They see it as a loss of control and don't want neighbour's to know.*
- *'Matching' groups who can work on reaching particular diverse groups together.*

## FEEDBACK AND EVALUATION

Evidence gathered from talking to participants and from formal feedback indicated that groups continue to strongly welcome the opportunity to come together, to make new connections, share good practice and to explore challenging subjects in a creative way that helps to consolidate thinking and collaborative approaches.

100% of participants who provided formal feedback found the event **'Excellent'** or **'Good/Very useful'**. When asked **'what has the meeting helped you with'**, the feedback showed that 100% felt the session had helped to network with other voluntary groups and to learn and to share; 83% felt that they could understand better how to connect with other groups and people; 82% felt that they had a better understanding of what assets are in our community and how they can be used; 100% felt that they'd learned more about sharing resources with other organisations and had a better understanding of who else to go to for support within the community.

## THE MAP



At each meeting of the Network and other Eastbourne based events that 3VA or Locality Link Worker run, this map is added to by participants so that, as a Network, we are more aware of what exists in our area and what the gaps may be.

After each network (with new, growing information) we will be taking a photograph of our map to continue forming a visual picture of the assets in the town. The map is already showing a wide range of local groups to potentially engage with, share information and practice.



- Outside spaces
- Community Cafés / eating places
- Food and Growing projects
- Outdoor spaces and activities
- Information hubs

### WHAT WE HAVE DISCUSSED AND WHAT THE NEXT STEPS WILL BE

Topic	More information	Discussion highlights	Next Steps: (agreed at the event and / or after)
Networking	People want to continue linking with other participants	<p>People value this because it makes a direct impact on their work: through</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Greater understanding of what's out there</li> <li>• Building understanding of who to go to for support</li> <li>• Determining how resources can be grown</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Summarising connections made and how this develops into actions</li> <li>✓ Longer so the next event will allow for more time for this activity.</li> </ul>
Mapping Activity to visually and geographically determine the community assets	We have kept this as part of our community network activity. It is referred to at each and often completed during the breaks	<p>Two new organisations were mapped</p> <p>Feedback forms indicated that people have less of an understanding of what assets are and how they might be used in the community.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Develop this as a more intensive activity during the next session to focus on the assets already mapped and consider what other assets exist in our community. This will create a more substantial visual image for the network.</li> <li>✓ Photograph the map</li> </ul>

<p>Exploring Diversity ... What is it?</p>	<p>At the previous network meeting attendees had identified groups they felt they weren't so good at reaching :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BME and refugee communities</li> <li>• Young people</li> <li>• Residents living in certain wards e.g. Shinewater</li> <li>• People with EASL and recent arrivals</li> <li>• Local activists, people with ideas</li> <li>• GP's</li> <li>• Schools</li> <li>• Small business and independent retailers</li> </ul>	<p>This Community Network event explored in more detail who these diverse groups are.</p> <p>Participants identified and discussions focused on exploring the richness of our different and diverse communities;</p> <p>Recognised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Often people who are hard to reach and the biggest challenge was language.</li> <li>• Supporting people with complex/life changing conditions who then struggle with the capacity to understand</li> <li>• We need to change our approaches.</li> </ul> <p>Barriers identified included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Language</li> <li>• Perceptions of organisations</li> <li>• Individuals own views (perceptions)</li> <li>• Funding criteria</li> <li>• Individuals ideas of what equality &amp; diversity are</li> <li>• Those through marketing and advertising</li> <li>• That services might not be required at that specific time</li> <li>• Social Stigma</li> <li>• Certain groups whose way of life means they take a while to trust</li> <li>• Location</li> <li>• Ability to read</li> <li>• Ability to understand – can be affected by peoples health/coping mechanism</li> <li>• Not know what is out there to support lack of engagement</li> </ul>	
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<p>Finding Practical Solutions to engaging groups</p>	<p>Taking information from the previous session and drilling down</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is the barrier actual or perceived? (both ways)</li> <li>• Are there underlying issues?</li> <li>• What do you think are the solutions?</li> <li>• Are they within your influence?</li> <li>• How can you do this by your own or can you collaborate?</li> <li>• What/who is already working well? How can you piggy back an event ?</li> <li>• What could be your way in?</li> </ul> <p>What practical solutions and next steps could there be ? (See next column)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Translating by services of key messages in top 4 languages</li> <li>✓ More information about translation service's- what/where and how to access</li> <li>✓ Couple up with people who have ways into particular communities, working collaboratively</li> <li>✓ Signing for deaf and producing things in easier formats for visually impaired people</li> <li>✓ Changing publications into easy read – look at what is out there and consider how you could change your publications</li> <li>✓ Hold an event aimed at BME organisations and individuals to promote a wide range of organisations and services – Possible that funding could be found for this</li> <li>✓ A Need to involve Eastbourne Community Involvement Group</li> <li>✓ 3VA to liaise with ECIG through EBC</li> </ul>

			✓ Capturing information about which organisations have made connections with whom and the actions from these
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## CONCLUSIONS

At each event we evaluate and form a plan from the feedback and activities at the event. The above table informs the next stage of the plan. Actions will be taken forward by 3VA, LLW and the members of the community who attend and are members of the network. Some of the actions may come to fruition in the near future whilst others will take more time or are aspirational for the moment. Using this format we, the Network, have made some real progress over the past year.

## THE NEXT EASTBOURNE COMMUNITY NETWORK MEETING

We look forward to the next Eastbourne Community Network meeting on March 20<sup>th</sup> 2018 from 9.30am to 1.00pm (arrivals for tea, coffee and networking from 9.00am) and will include light lunch for more networking opportunities. We will be reviewing the growth of our community assets with the view of expanding our networks further whilst growing and strengthening links and collaborations across the town.

It will be held at St. Wilfrid's Hospice, 1 Broadwater Way BN22 9PZ. Please note that parking is limited. St. Wilfrid's Hospice is a short walk from Hampden Park railway station The following buses stop a short walk away (at either Sainsbury's or Eastbourne Hospital): 55, 55A, 56, 57 and 58. For more information, please refer to the Stagecoach Timetable.

If you have any queries about this report or the Eastbourne Community Network please email or phone Teri Sayers-Cooper, 3VA, on 07432 678228 or e-mail: [teri@3VA.org.uk](mailto:teri@3VA.org.uk)