

# Sustainability Workshop Community Health Organisations Report

1 September 2006  
Glasgow



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The seminar addressed issues around sustainability and supported HLCs to look at the barriers and levers the sustainability of their project and to take the first steps in identifying sustainability approaches. The agreed outcomes for the Glasgow workshop were as follows:

- To raise understanding of sustainability routes and options.
- To develop the capacity to develop a strategic approach to sustainability.
- To provide the opportunity to learn from other participants.

27 delegates attended the Workshop, they included Co-ordinators and board members from Cambuslang & Rutherglen HLI, Chinese HLC, Drumchapel Life HLC, Dundee Healthy Living Initiative, Fas Feallain, Getting Better Together, Flourish House, Good Morning Project Ltd, Gorbals HLN, Health Connect HLC, Live Life Network, Possil & Milton Forum on Disability, Renfrew Community Health and West Lothian Council.

#### Attendee List

Brendan	Rooney	Cambuslang and Rutherglen Community Health Init.	Initiative Director
Jane	Churchill	Cambuslang and Rutherglen Community Health Init.	Assistant Director
Gordon	Bennie	Cambuslang and Rutherglen Community Health Init.	Co-operative Board Member
Archibald	Cumming	Cambuslang and Rutherglen Healthy Living Init.	Board Member
Stephani	Mok	Chinese Healthy Living Centre	Centre Manager
Mona	McKeown	Chinese Healthy Living Centre	Director
Linda	McCartan	Community Health Improvement Partnership Project	Community Health Development Manager
Kenny	MacDonald	Drumchapel L.I.F.E.	Manager
Karen	Latta	Drumchapel L.I.F.E.	Team Member
Beverley	Black	Dundee Healthy Living Initiative	Manager
Sheila	McMahon	Dundee Healthy Living Initiative	Strategy Team Leader
Mary	MacLean	Fas Feallain - Grow Healthy Project	Manager
John	Linn	Flourish House	Manager
Sheila	Robertson	Flourish House	
Stuart	Hunter	Flourish House	
Peter	O'Hagan	Flourish House	
June	Vallance	Getting Better Together	Manager
Nicky	Thompson	Good Morning Project Ltd	Manager
Bob	Purdon	Gorbals Healthy Living Network	Network Manager
Marie	Hedges	Health Connect HLC	Project Co-ordinator
George	Murray	Healthy Valleys Initiative	Business Development Manager
Heather G.	Molloy	Home Connect	Project Co-ordinator
Maggi	Boyd	Live Life Network	Counselling Co-ordinator
Liz	Camerson	Possil and Milton Forum on Disability	Co-ordinator
Kinsley	Matthews	Renfrewshire Community Health	Director
Angela	Moohan	West Lothian Council	Community Health Development Officer - Food Init.

## Presentations

### Setting the Scene

Paul Nelis (Development Officer, HLC Support Programme)

What HLCs offer partnerships: Paul stressed that HLCs and HLIs should be important to CHPs, CPPs and other stakeholders because they offer New ways of working, Community involvement and in some instances community development approaches to health. He stressed that projects are currently delivering on local priorities, making effective use of resources and innovating with new and interesting service delivery models which involve the community. Paul went on to discuss the sustainability issues facing the projects, these are:

- Governance/Accountability
- Big Money!
- Security – length of funding
- Partnerships/Stakeholders
- Evidence – impact
- Changing goal posts
- Business Acumen
- Strategic Drift
- Disempowered

Elsbeth Gracey (CHEX Practice Manager) discussed the statutory structures that HLCs/CHIs have to work with including community learning & Development Strategies, Community Planning Partnerships and Community Health Partnerships. She described the current political climate and the opportunities for the community and voluntary sector to influence and benefit from the current political priorities which promote:

- ❖ Commitment to social justice & equalities
- ❖ Priorities identified by community members
- ❖ Support to reach more excluded people
- ❖ Potential to meet gaps in existing services
- ❖ Potential to delivery non threatening, inclusive services

Elsbeth stressed the importance of projects:

- ❖ Knowing the national guidance on implementation of policies
- ❖ Knowing the decision-making structures
- ❖ Knowing the key people
- ❖ Building an evidence base for the your work
- ❖ Linking outcomes into implementation of local policies
- ❖ Building allies from different sectors
- ❖ Being proactive in your thinking and promotion of work and ideas
- ❖ Being good at networking
- ❖ Using national and local networks for information, resources and contacts
- ❖ Tapping into useful initiatives/resources such Scottish Action Research Fund (SCARF)
- ❖ Building your skills in 'politicking' with integrity

## **What We are Doing Now!**

Delegates were encouraged to think how they are contributing to the sustainability of the project:

### **Funding**

- Trying to get funding from lots of different sources
- Regular meetings with funders
- Interactive web site
- Participate in funding groups to keep the big money flowing in

### **Income generation/Business development**

- Working for longterm contracts
- Sell expertise consultancy
- Contact with local business
- Combining buying power
- Status of the organisation Ltd by guarantee
- Marketing action plan
- SLAs

### **Planning/Evaluation/Monitoring**

- Story gathering, monitoring and evaluation
- More robust evidence collection – measure the impact
- Risk assessment
- 3 yr strategic plan – rewrite with board and staff

### **Relationships**

- Follow up contacts initiated from stakeholder day – follow up ideas for new partnership projects
- Seek expert advice – local regional & national
- Use board – chairperson now Manager of CHP
- Showcasing AGM
- Stakeholder event
- Promote unique community led approach
- Position ourselves correctly with partners

### **Training**

- Staff/Board development & recruitment programme
- Identify appropriate skills within the organisation

### **Services**

- New services, community led
- Review operations - sustainability

**Linda McCartan, (Community Health Development Manager) Community Health Improvement Partnership (CHiP) – East Ayrshire** discussed how her project has gone on to sustainability following Big Lottery Funding. Based within East Ayrshire Culture & Leisure Services, Linda advised the group on the development of the project which is currently receiving funding from the Community Planning Partnership,

Community Health Partnership and NHS Ayrshire and Arran. The project is involved in a number of strategic frameworks including:

#### **Local**

- Community Plan/Joint Health Improvement Plan
- Children's Service Plan
- Cultural Strategy (former Leisure Strategy)
- Social Inclusion Strategy
- Local Health Plan

#### **National**

- Towards a Healthier Scotland,
- Improving Health in Scotland - The Challenge
- CHD/Stroke Strategy
- National Cultural Strategy
- National Physical Activity Strategy
- Scottish Diet Action Plan

One of Linda's key strategies for sustainability was gaining recognition of the work of the project, valuable time was allocated to putting the project forward for various awards:

- Labour and Local Government Best Practice Awards – Best Overall British Project 2004
- Project contributed to the achievement of Scotland's Health at Work Gold Award for East Ayrshire Council and winning the CoSLA Excellence Award for Promoting Health in the Workplace 2001
- Finalist (Great Britain) in the Association of Public Service Excellence Awards (APSE) – Best Community Initiative 2003
- Finalist (Scotland) in the Coalfield Regeneration Trust – Community Project Awards 2004
- Active participation in national academic research initiatives
- Formation of 3 community health forums which are now accessing external funding
- Major impact on the health and wellbeing of East Ayrshire's residents
- Hosted "Health for All" Conference March 2005

While the funding hasn't changed substantially in terms of the amount, Linda finds the project taking on more and more work from the NHS – it'd be interesting to find out how much this is saving the service!

CHiP's vision for continued sustainability is:

- Secured funding from Community Regeneration (formerly East Ayrshire Coalfields Social Inclusion Partnership and Better Neighbourhood Services Fund) and NHS Ayrshire and Arran.
- Continuous improvement and development of services based on monitoring, evaluation, consultation, key local and national drivers.

- Update and launch revamped Chip Van.
- Continue to raise profile of initiatives at a local and national level through research, conferences, workshops and sharing of best practice.

### **Workshop1**

Delegates worked within project teams to establish what sustainability meant to them, and what barriers exist in achieving this. Some of the identified barriers were:

- **Funding**
  - Uneven playing field – continuous accountability, justification – not the same for statutory sector.
  - Resources going to producing evidence (time consuming).
  - Big money.
  - Too busy doing – lack of information – NHS Island. No time to pursue funding.
  - Have to fit with funding ethos if it fits the project or not
  - Competition from other bigger organisation
  - Lack of time for income generation
  - Lack of funding for Health improvement activity
  - Last minute funding awards
  - Everyone's business but no ones responsibility in terms of funding
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- **Staff/organisation**
  - Lack of staff, poor recruitment, poor governance.
  - Have to be more business like – taking energy away from original idea of HLI
  - Always having to strive to be innovative
  - Spreading ourselves too thinly
  - Having to be jack of all trades
- **Timescales**
  - Lack of time to concentrate on sustainability.
- **Strategic issues**
  - Poor planning & Management.
  - No control or influence over the agenda.
  - Too many structures
- **Policy Context**
  - Political/policy change.
  - Uncertainty.
  - Short termism
  - Lack of recognition of what constitutes evidence

Some of the identified levers were:

- **Relationships/activities**
  - Value links that HLCs have with the community.
  - HLCs can hit the ground running
  - Reaching the hard to reach.

- HLCs cross boundaries of lots of different partnerships – cross cutting nature of the work.
- Good relationship with local people
- Innovativeness
- Promoting highlighting success
- Publicity – recognition for our work
- **Staff/organisation**
  - Skills within the team.
  - Demonstrate HLCs/HLIs are achieving national objectives
  - Flexible organisations, needs led
  - Strong board
  - Strategic planning
  - Monitoring information – produce figures & stats
- **Timescales**
  - Lack of time to concentrate on sustainability.
- **Strategic issues/Politics**
  - Election coming up
  - CHEX acting on our behalf
  - Lobbying potential from service users
  - Policy awareness
  - Restructuring
  - Health priorities
- **Drivers for Approach**
  - Comm Led task group – recommendations -useful.
  - CLTG DVD.
  - Growing evidence base
  - BLF National evaluation
  - HLC Champions local & national
  - Political will

## Workshop2

- Presentation from Stephani Mok about a Stakeholders event. Stephani talked about the benefits that her project has gained from their Stakeholder event. The issue of sustainability is now an issue for staff and board members rather than just something the coordinator should be looking into. Some of the tangible benefits include:
  - The project has now formed a sustainability sub group.
  - Stephanie has a list of key contacts from the day to follow up and further discuss the role of the Chinese HLC.
  - There are a number of vol. orgs. Who expressed an interest in joint working, which may add to the sustainability of the project.
  - The project has raised it's profile amongst important stakeholders, who now know what the centre delivers, to who and some of the health issues facing the Chinese community.

## Evaluation

Of the 26 people who attended the event 18 filled in evaluation forms.

- 83% (15) reported that the event raised their understanding of sustainability routes and options.
- 83% (15) reported that the event had enhanced their capacity to develop a strategic approach to sustainability.
- 83% (15) said that the event gave them the opportunity to learn from other participants.



What the delegates said:

Networking with those attending and useful discussion with those doing the presentations.

Networking and informative speakers.

Only present in the afternoon – discussion with others was helpful.

Although delivering different services, we can still share good practice and resources.

Meeting others from HLCs and learning their ideas – dates in diaries.

Excellent overview of sustainability issues.

Will take on board many of the points raised, particularly to developing a comprehensive Business Plan.

Use ideas learned in planning.

Share thoughts and discussions on sustainability issues with other networks and circles.

A number of objectives will be developed with the organisation – prompted by today's workshop.