

60th Anniversary



cornwall rural community council



social inclusion

conference report



20 October 2006

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DISCLAIMER

The views expressed in this report are those of the individual participants and should not be taken to represent the official view of, or be endorsed by, Cornwall Rural Community Council.

INTRODUCTION

People can become excluded from society because they are different, either because of their appearance, their beliefs, their lifestyle or their health. They may also become excluded because they form a group that are unable to take part in what society views as normal daily activity, for example groups such as the disabled, the unemployed, the homeless and the young. People that are excluded are often the ones that are not able to voice their opinions or needs, because of a lack of confidence or because they have difficulties in finding those people that will listen and help them.

The focus of CRCC's work on Social Inclusion has been on carers, mental health issues, Black and Minority Ethnic groups, the development of a Poverty Forum and work with young people. Alongside specific projects for carers and people with mental health issues, CRCC has a dedicated Social Inclusion project, which has helped numerous groups and individuals throughout Cornwall over the past few years. The project has the following aims:

- to support and work with young peoples' projects addressing issues of social exclusion
- to give a voice to and empower the rurally socially excluded
- to assist and support Black and Minority Ethnic communities
- to encourage service providers to provide equitable access to services
- to influence positive change to local and national policies and strategies.

The purpose of the Conference was to highlight examples of best practice in dealing with Social Inclusion and provide an opportunity to network with colleagues with similar interests in the South West and share best practice.

There are many elements to Social Inclusion in today's rural communities and through the workshops and 'marketplace' at the Conference, practitioners from different disciplines were able to interact.

The Conference was also a celebration of CRCC's 60th Anniversary and enabled the CRCC to showcase a few examples of the best of recent work.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S INTRODUCTION

Mark Richardson welcomed attendees to the Conference and explained some of the long term challenges likely to bring about a very different future; ageing population, climate change, global competition, peak oil energy crisis and the more immediate challenges such as migrant workers. Mr Richardson also outlined the new opportunities and stressed the strengths of peripherality as well as weaknesses.

Mr Richardson stated that communities had two currencies – 'bonding' and 'bridging'. Bonding spoke for itself but 'bridging' was where organisations such as CRCC came in. Rural community councils and colleagues from the sector acted as 'bridgers'. These organisations were independent, neutral, had hopefully earned respect and brought people together from different backgrounds/sectors. That 'cross-fertilisation' was the theme for the day.



WORKSHOPS

1. The effects a caring role has on young people – hosted by Dawn Maddern and Millie Lindfield, Cornwall Young Carers Project.

The workshop was designed to give an overview of the work of the Young Carers Project; how the young people can become socially isolated through their caring roles and how the project can help to effect change and enable them to be accepted within their peer groups.

The workshop included an overview/history of the project and provided an opportunity for those attending to identify what the affects of caring were on young people.

A young carer delivered his own life story and talked about how the project had given him the opportunity to join in activities with his own peer group, which has seen his confidence and self esteem grow, to the extent that he is talking about his experiences to all age groups at his school.

The workshops were well attended and held everyone's attention during each session.

2. Cornish Issues – hosted by Peter Burton (CRCC) and Stephen Horscroft (Cornwall County Council)

The purpose of the workshop was to consider whether, as a group, the Cornish suffer any discrimination or disadvantage at the hands of the non-Cornish. This might include job opportunities, housing, exclusion from decision making processes that affect them etc. Two workshops of half an hour's duration were run and, collectively, these addressed the following questions:

- We need to try and define who the Cornish are.....is it a question of race, lineage, self identity, cultural influence (and, if so, what constitutes Cornish culture)?

Responses were wide ranging, with several claiming it was a matter of feeling a passion, or sharing an affinity, for Cornwall. It would seem that the question is a difficult one to answer in a multi-cultural, mobile society where identities and a sense of having roots can become blurred and multi layered. There is certainly a wide spectrum of self-identification ranging from those who lay claim to a Cornish/Celtic ancestry and those recent in-migrants that claim their passion for and affinity with Cornwall makes them Cornish. Perhaps the truth lies somewhere in-between. Surely there has to be some sense of having roots in the place and growing up amongst and naturally absorbing Cornish cultural influences (Cornish slang, for example)?

- What evidence is there that the Cornish (however we might define them) experience discrimination? Are delegates aware of any examples? Can this be considered racial? How are the Cornish portrayed e.g. the stereotyping in TV programmes set in Cornwall – Wycliffe, Doc Martin, Wild West etc? Is this acceptable?

There were some strongly expressed views here with delegates variously claiming that TV portrayals were “insulting” to the Cornish, or that they were “embarrassing” and promulgated a “misconception” of Cornish life, although one delegate advised to take it all with a pinch of salt, given that very little TV is “real” anyway.

Has the time come to promote positive Cornish role models? This was the view of one delegate who cited the achievements of the Cornish over the years, for example during the industrial revolution.

- Are Cornish views ignored in decision making processes that shape Cornwall's future? Do regional bodies like the RDA or programmes like Objective One take into account Cornish perspectives when planning major developments (e.g. CPR regeneration)?

There was a fair degree of support for this view, although the group did not attempt to address it in great depth. Some claimed that urban solutions were often applied to Cornwall without reference to Cornish distinctiveness and that this was not always appropriate or desirable. As far as Objective One was concerned, a couple of delegates felt that the money was top-down and had not reached the "roots". Given that the Cornish are represented mainly in manual or non-professional occupations, there is a suggestion here that they are not only excluded from the decision making processes, but also from any benefits.

- What issues do the Cornish face in the housing market? Is it simply a matter of market forces and are the Cornish suffering social exclusion as a result? What is the impact of this on the Cornish?

It was agreed that social problems are created by housing imbalances and that there is a need to have a variety of housing stock. It was also recognised that wages in Cornwall were unable to compete with up country buyers and that wealthy in-migrants and second home owners had created a real difficulty in the housing market, particularly for first time buyers. Interestingly, one delegate suggested that the difficulties experienced by the Cornish in this and other areas cemented a sense of Cornish solidarity.

- What opportunities for career progression are there for the Cornish? Is it negative and lacking in ambition to wish to remain in Cornwall? Why do new jobs in the public and voluntary sector seem to be filled by non-Cornish applicants? Is discrimination at work here? Are the Cornish under-represented amongst the professional/managerial group and, if so, why?



There was a range of opinion on this. It was suggested that a lack of job opportunities has led to a loss of young people who might have otherwise applied for these type of jobs (although relevant experience is almost always a requirement and that to travel to gain other experiences was a good idea generally, regardless of where you were from - this, at least, was one view put forward). The topic of the Combined University for Cornwall came up as part of a solution, although it was counter-argued that there was no guarantee that this would retain bright young people in Cornwall who might still leave to gain experience elsewhere.

CONCLUSIONS - It was apparent that for both groups the answers often tended to be about problems affecting Cornwall rather than problems affecting the Cornish. Perhaps this was due to the perspective of the delegates (who were, in the main, non-Cornish born) and how that led to their engagement with the questions. It would be interesting to run the workshop again with a group of indigenous Cornish participants and see if different perspectives emerged.

3. Cornwall Diversity Toolkit – hosted by Daniel Woods, DW Associates.

The Cornwall Diversity Toolkit has been produced by the Cornwall Infrastructure Partnership (CIP) for all organisations in Cornwall. It forms a full set of resources that organisations in Cornwall can use in their pursuit of equality and diversity development and, hence, their pursuit of business excellence.

The purpose of Toolkit is to provide comprehensive support to organisations to consider and include equality and diversity within all organisational activities. This includes dealings both with their own staff, any volunteers and with their external clients/customers and suppliers.

It has been specifically produced for use by organisations in Cornwall and therefore includes specific information and guidance, relevant to the Cornish context. Overall, the Toolkit forms a comprehensive set of materials and guidance that organisations can effectively use in their pursuit of excellence through equality and diversity.

Daniel Woods, author of the Toolkit, explained that it included the following elements:

- Chapters 1, 2 and 3 - Definitions and Benefits. An introduction to the concept of, and the benefits to organisations of, equality and diversity. Also covering the subject of how attitudes and perceptions impact upon the successful development of a robust agenda for equality and diversity.



- Chapter 4 - Legislation. An overview of current UK legislation, giving key guidance on its impact for organisations.
- Chapter 5 - The Cornish Context. The broader issues for equality and diversity within the Cornish context, providing key information and guidance to organisations in the County.
- Chapter 6 - The Cornwall Diversity Toolkit Organisational Assessment Model. Full details of the Cornwall Diversity Toolkit Organisational Assessment Model and how to use it.
- Chapter 7 - Examples of Good Practice. Examples of how the practices of other organisations have enabled them to benefit from sound equality and diversity approaches.
- Chapter 8 - Contact Organisations in Cornwall. Specific information on the organisations in Cornwall who can provide help, assistance and guidance in the broad area of equality and diversity. Also covering details of how to access national organisations.
- Chapter 9 - Frequently Asked Questions. Answers to some of the more frequently asked questions in relation to equality and diversity.

4. Engaging young people in community development using digital media – hosted by Paul Green (CRCC) & Krystyna Zdan-Michajlowicz.

The Social Inclusion Project, over the past three years, has worked with 25 projects involving young people making their own films. Some are issue based, i.e. mental health, racism, anti-social behaviour and drug use. These films can be used to help service providers improve their provision and influence relevant policies and strategies. Some films assist the project development process, i.e. encouraging young people to engage in the work of the project group and also to support the project funding applications.

Films can be used to assist the community planning process. Young people can express their views or their needs, on such things as places to go and things to do. These films can be fed into village plans, parish plans and town plans. Young people can also be involved in the community development process by: being involved in project meetings and meetings with statutory agencies and service providers, and also by consultation using video booths.

Krystyna is an independent film maker and community development facilitator. She has worked in partnership with young people and community groups in Cornwall for the past 8 years and has built up a good reputation for engaging young people who are difficult to reach. Working with artists and musicians, she has built a model that reaches out to these young people and provides them with a platform to express their feelings. Multi-Media Arts Documentation was set up in March 2001 to bring digital media technology to young people in the North Cornwall area. By using digital media, music and drama M-MAD have been able to help young people look at themselves, their environment and the communities where they live, producing a finished film that they are proud of.

A film was shown called “How not to speak to young people”. The film was produced by a group of young people from Southend through the National Youth Agency and outlined the many ways that young people have been treated by adults when they are being consulted with. The workshop participants were able to recognise some of the attitudes put forward by the young people in the film.

The discussion following the film “what did the film show us?” brought up several ideas:

- How not to do it
- Confused perception of young people by older people and vice versa
- There should be an emphasis on adults to listen
- Adults feel that they should know the answers and control the development
- Language is a problem – jargon and understanding what words mean
- Confusion around meaning
- There needs to be appropriate and clear language when talking to young people
- Problems when adults raise expectations and don't carry these through
- Shock from some participants to see the problems
- That young people perceive it is all about ticking boxes
- The barriers between young and old people have a lot to do with lack of communication

Krystyna then presented a selection of short films showing young people developing films about their communities. This was then followed by a series of suggestions on ways to engage with young people with short film comments from Vonny Carter who was 16 when the clips were filmed and had spent time working with M-MAD on various consultation projects.

“Young people look at life differently, we may have forgotten what it is like to view life from the perspective of a young person, or we may feel that the perspective has changed beyond recognition. Talking and listening to young people's views could provide different ideas, as well as new ways of addressing old problems. Young people have access to information about world events through television and the internet, many know more about what is going on in a global sense (what is happening Australia through the soap operas they watch) than they do about local issues. It is important that we encourage our young people to engage with their community, help them learn what is going on around them and provide them with the means to influence and develop their future.”

The Challenges:

- Getting young people involved
- Young people and committees
- Listening to young people
- Getting real information

How can we engage:

- Be innovative
- Be open
- Be creative
- Value their skills
- Avoid stereotyping young people
- Choose an appropriate environment
- Provide them with the means to do it themselves
- Decide what to do with the finished product

Ways to engage:

- Through the creative arts
- Through sport
- Through local interest groups
- Through local secondary schools.

Using a variety of methods:

- Discussion groups
- Questionnaires
- Projects.

Project Steps:

- Essential resources: venue and equipment
- Making records of events
- Gathering and motivating the young people
- Planning the project
- Executing the project
- Making a presentation
- Putting it all onto CD (documents and films).

Health & Safety Issues:

When working with young people and children we have to ensure their safety by law. There are a few precautions we have to put into place before the project begins.

- Child Protection Policy
- Criminal Record Checks - Enhanced Disclosure
- Code of Behaviour
- Contract



5. The isolation and racism facing black and minority ethnic people in rural areas – hosted by Jay Talbot (Community Council of Devon) and Ossie Glover (Fata He).

FATA HE is a West African word which means 'Inclusion' and was established in 2001 to redress social and economic inequalities relating to Black and Minority Ethnic (B&ME) individuals, families and groups within the city of Plymouth. Since becoming incorporated as a Limited Company (Social Enterprise) in 2003, Fata He has become an umbrella organisation for other B&ME individuals and groups, and works closely with other local, sub-regional and regional organisations.

As the recognised sub-regional B&ME infrastructure hub for Devon, Cornwall, Plymouth and Torbay, Fata He with its partner B&ME organisations represents the B&ME Home Office funded Change Up infrastructure body in this sub region. Fata He received a small amount of funding in 2005 from the Change Up Early Spend programme to develop its capacity to take up position as lead B&ME organisation for the sub region. The Wolseley Community Economic Development Trust (WCEDT) is the accountable body for Fata He and manages the Change Up funding.

The role of Fata He as lead B&ME sub regional infrastructure hub is to:

- Work closely with mainstream organisations to develop best practice and act in a supporting and advisory capacity in improving service access and provision for its excluded beneficiaries
- Provide organisational development support to B&ME voluntary, community and business sector groups to help them grow and nurture their long term development
- Develop a range of specialist provision through 4 sub regional locally based Forums and a sub regional representative Forum which meets the needs of B&ME people throughout the sub regional area.

Fata He plan to develop their services to fill identified gaps in the market. In essence they will develop a niche market of specialist services to add value to existing provision in the sub region. In order to make Fata He sustainable in the longer term, strands of delivery will be developed under four key areas:

- B&ME Capacity Building
- B&ME Social Enterprise Development
- Asset Management
- Consultancy and Training



In addition to the above and as previously highlighted they will develop, support and facilitate a sub regional infrastructure representative B&ME hub through the establishment of four local B&ME Forums in which Fata He will facilitate the exchange of information, provide networking and development opportunities for individuals and the Forum as a whole.

The following points were made:

- Isolation and racism - what's specific to rural situations?
- Fear of being rebuffed might prevent some efforts to overcome barriers;
- The Cornish dimension to ethnicity;
- Diversity within B&ME population itself can add to isolation;
- Racism, are the drivers ignorance or fear?
- The need to get beyond terminology;
- The importance of school & pre-school work;
- The challenge is to raise consciousness.

6. 'Experts by experience', the work of the Cornwall Mental Health Forums – hosted by Trevor Moses, Mental Health Co-ordinator, CRCC.

The workshop presented information on all the CRCC Mental Health Projects, addressing Social Inclusion. An open forum for questions followed the presentation. The questions raised focussed on ways of addressing stigma and more detail on some of the specific projects.

GUEST SPEAKERS

Sheila Johns – 'Count Me In', the work of Cornwall Poverty Forum

Sheila Johns introduced herself as one of the founder members of the Cornwall Independent Poverty Forum, as a Trade Union Representative. She explained she was standing in for Rev Andrew Yates who was unable to attend. She called her theme 'Count Me In', in relation to so many people who were excluded from everyday activities, from information, travel, fuel poverty, and health etc.

The Poverty Forum had held its first hearing at St Austell in 1996. These hearings took the form of 6/7 guests who were invited to listen to people, whose voice was not normally heard, explaining how they coped on low wages, with poor housing and poor health care. At the end of the day Sir John Banham said he had never been so moved.

The Poverty Forum has taken on the mantle of offering a helping hand to people in trouble, with members accompanying people to officials etc. The Forum has found this pays dividends as the word is out that they mean to get as much help for people as they are entitled and to stand by them until the problems are resolved, instilling confidence in them that they are part of society and have talents that are needed.

Housing and its cost is one of the areas with most problems. Landlords do not realise that 'you cannot eat the view' as many people are faced with the choice of paying the rent or eating. So many people in our beautiful County watch from the sidelines, and that is one of the aims of the Forum – to include them in all that we do.

Sheila concluded by explaining that she felt honoured to have met so many wonderful people during her 10 years with the Forum, and to work with a Committee that was so devoted to helping their fellow man, not through financial means but with love and understanding.

Ossie Glover – The work of Fata He

Ossie Glover is the founder member and Chief Executive of Fata He B&ME Development. In May 2003, Fata He became the first black-led social enterprise with both social and community objectives to gain Limited Company status in Plymouth. The organisation works to represent many Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) groups including the Gypsy and Traveller community. Ossie was until recently the chair of the Plymouth Anti-Racism Taskforce, which was tasked with eradicating racism in the City. He has also chaired the Home Office funded Plymouth Community Cohesion Facilitation Programme. Ossie has also assisted young projects, including the Plymouth Talented People's Project and Plymouth Urban Living Sound Enterprise. He spoke of Fata He's recent involvement in Cornwall through the Government's Change Up programme. (For further details see Workshop 6).

PERFORMANCES

During the conference two performances were given based around the Social Inclusion theme – one by Swamp Circus and a rap by Chanza Kepembwa.

Swamp Circus

Swamp Circus started as a collective of travelling acrobats, clowns and ecologists in the 80s. Always working with the local community, the company has designed projects widely in the UK and in over 20 countries worldwide. The charity is focussed on the health of young people, particularly those in most need, and designs training projects involving yoga, acrobatics, balance, co-ordination, dance music and circus skills. They believe that circus offers a creative path to physical and mental health, boosting self-confidence and opening doors to other life opportunities. The group performed a piece choreographed specifically for the Conference.

Chanza Kepembwa

Rapping for social justice, Chanza Kepembwa, is a 23 year old song writer and rap artist from St Ives in Cornwall. He has studied media at Middlesex and Plymouth Universities. Chanza has been involved in the voluntary sector since childhood, taking part in an intergenerational reminiscence project that was featured on Channel 4. Using his rap to break down the barriers between the old and the young, his lyrics aim to promote tolerance and understanding and greater awareness of the needs of the poor. Chanza performed a rap written for the Conference.

FILMS BY YOUNG PEOPLE

The following films, made by young people, were shown during the day:

- St Neot So Not – young people of the village expressing their views and needs

- Camborne Skatepark – a skating event involving awareness raising of young people issues
- Bude Rap – young people commenting on anti-social behaviour issues in Bude, in the form of a rap
- Grandma’s Trip to Bude – a film made from an intergenerational project with young people interviewing older people about their experiences of Bude in the 1930s.

MARKETPLACE

The Marketplace provided an opportunity to network and share best practice with a wide variety of organisations working within the field of social inclusion. The following stalls appeared at the conference:

- | | |
|--|-------------------------------|
| ■ Cornwall Community Foundation | ■ Community Assisted Projects |
| ■ CRCC’s community planning team | ■ M-MAD |
| ■ CRCC’s community buildings service | ■ Bishops Forum |
| ■ Community Council of Somerset | ■ Fata He |
| ■ East Cornwall Council for Voluntary Service / Interlink | ■ Wild |
| ■ ‘Hear our Voice’ young peoples’ mental health project | ■ Fusion |
| ■ Carrick / Restormel Interlink (Cornwall Centre for Volunteers) | ■ Princes Trust |
| ■ CRCC’s YP2 and Allplay children and young peoples’ projects | ■ Inclusion Cornwall |
| | ■ Disability Cornwall |
| | ■ Cornwall Poverty Forum |
| | ■ Dorset Community Action |
| | ■ Community Council of Devon |

AWARDS

Two sets of awards were presented during the course of the day:

- Calor Village of the Year. Awards were presented to Bob Mynett & Liz Moore for Constantine Village – Best Village Award and to Ivor Nicholls and Ann Helliwell for Kingsand/ Cawsand – Community Life Award.
- Cornwall Young Carers. The following young carers received their certificates of achievement:
 - Chris Mitchell – Silver Award.
 - Ian Gradwell and Lee Mitchell – Bronze Award.





INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

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