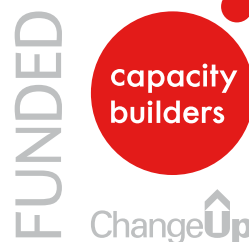


# Developing the infrastructure for Community Development Learning and Qualifications in London Additional Material



Research commissioned by:  
*London Work Force Development sub group of the London Regional  
Consortium for Change Up*



**Central London CVS Network**  
Camden, Islington, Kensington & Chelsea, Lambeth, Southwark, Wandsworth, Westminster



# Contents

| <b>Content</b>   | <b>Page</b> |
|--|-------------|
| Community workers survey summaries   | 1           |
| Summary of the survey information gathered from STAN members on their community development work learning needs      | 8           |
| Scarman Trust London Region - Report into the Community Development learning needs of Can Doers, January 2008        | 12          |
| Conference Report on Community Development Work Learning and Qualifications held in the morning of 31st January 2008 | 16          |
| Community Development LEarning and Qualifications Framework  | 23          |
| Suggestions for developing the infrastructure for community development work learning in London                      | 24          |
| CD training and learning – summary based on details in other reports   | 26          |
| Activities at regional, sub regional and local levels  | 28          |
| Submission to the regional change up plan - Community Development in London  | 29          |

# Community workers survey summaries

This summary report is based on the information collected by community workers who completed the survey form sent out through various networks and bodies such as the Community development forum in London, FCDL and CDX.

**1. The respondents.** 27 people completed the questionnaire; 21 described themselves as experienced community workers, 3 said they were inexperienced and 3 did not answer the question, from their other answers it is likely that they are experienced workers. This is likely to reflect the networks through which the survey was distributed by the London CD forum, the community engagement networks, and the national Community development body CDX. A separate piece of research aimed to gather information from community activists.

**2. Their job titles.** The range of job titles is wide ranging, and from the descriptions of the roles they undertake several are not involved in community development per se, some may be using a community development work approach to their job, others are obviously working with community groups but not in a community development role or using that approach.

| <b>Community workers</b>  | <b>Coordinators and managers</b>  | <b>Consultants and advisors</b>   |
|---|---|---|
| Community worker<br>CD worker – mental Health<br>CD worker<br>Mental health promotion coordinator, lead African and Caribbean communities / CDW | Community development coordinator<br>Community development co-ord<br>Community Development Manager<br>Director of programmes<br>Programme manager<br>Project administrator manager (in progress)<br>Assistant coordinator | Community consultant.<br>Consultant advisor.<br>Self employed trainer consultant.<br>Freelance, independent, research and activism and relations between public agencies and communities.<br>Freelance project advice and guidance<br>Freelance |
| <b>Project workers</b>  | <b>Training</b>   | <b>Employment</b>   |
| Project worker<br>Project worker<br>LAA Project Officer   | Coach (AC accredited) and training supervisor   | Work placement co-ordinator   |
| <b>Volunteers and activists</b>   | <b>Other and mixed roles</b>  |   |
| Volunteer<br>Creative writer and teacher of Swahili language in the community   | Outreach caseworker, assistant project worker<br>General secretary<br>General secretary   |   |

### 3. Their employers

| Statutory   | Voluntary   | Community  | Private / self employed  | Not yet classified Help needed!           |
|---|---|--|--|---|
| New Cross Gate NDC<br>Sutton and Merton NHS primary care trust<br>Agency placement with Islington Social Services<br>Neighbourhood Development and research project | 4 corners<br>London Coaching CIC<br>Empower 2 Excel – volunteer<br>Barnardos<br>Barnardos<br>The children's society<br>Amicus Horizon<br>Housing Group<br>Redbridge CVS<br>Lewisham<br>Ethnic Minority Partnership<br>HCVS<br>Currently Scarman | African community<br>Croydon Asian Women's organisation (unpaid)<br>Croydon Asian Women's organisation | Self employed / voluntary<br>Self employed under Living Systems Research and several community groups in SE London<br>Self employed designer, photographer/ events steward and Scarman Trust<br>Self employed<br>Self employed | SLAM<br>Jiwe Rock Foundation<br>FINFUTURE |

### 4. The key community development work roles that they are undertaking

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Developing working relationships with communities and organisations              | 23 |
| Encouraging people to work together and learn from each other                    | 24 |
| Working with people in communities to plan for change and take collective action | 24 |
| Support community groups to develop and use frameworks for evaluation            | 15 |
| Develop community organisations, structures and resources                        | 21 |

Most people were working across a number of the key roles, in different combinations. The area of activity that least people said they were involved in was evaluation.

The others activities that they reported doing, included:

- Exploring opportunities and options with groups and action planning (described by one as coaching based on introspection and meditative techniques)
- Encouraging community groups to save resources, save energy, travel wisely, look after their area and recycle
- Work with agencies to support voluntary groups in the development and management of their work / organisation and support them to work cooperatively with the wider community
- Facilitating the empowerment of local groups and individuals
- Support individuals, ideas, liaison and finance advisor
- Undertaking research
- Working with parishes in the CoE Diocese of London providing advice, guidance and support regarding community youth work; influence understanding and practice in youth engagement programmes
- Creating social and organisational infrastructure for residents communication systems, and for effective interactions between neighbourhoods and public agencies
- Encouraging statutory projects to take a CD approach while getting community groups to do

their job better

- Administration, community marketing and promotion
- Consulting groups about services; pushing BME issues in statutory sector services; research

The majority of these can be located within the key roles of community development work and provide illustrations of how these are contextualised,

## 5. Formal Community Work Training

13 people stated that they had undertaken formal Community Development training and 14 had not. However what they were counting as formal CD training was quite wide ranging and much of it was not specific to community development work.

- Youth and Community Work Certificate 1984 YMCA
- Community Youth Work Cert Bulmershe / Reading
- Goldsmiths National Youth Bureau certificate
- Postgraduate Certificate of Special Study in Health Promotion Theory and Practice, which includes a workshop on Community Development (accredited by University of Westminster)
- Community champions accredited training
- ILEA
- Financial management, budgeting, project management, mentoring
- Funding strategies and bid writing for VCOs (OCN 3)
- Trained as Deacon in socio-managing Stuttgart Academy; advice and guidance award SKEIN, basic skills awareness for frontline workers OCN
- Diploma in cross cultural studies; all nations Christian college
- Food and hygiene; bookkeeping; lifelong teaching; first aid

## 6. Other qualifications that people held.

This produced a wider ranging and eclectic list, which I have roughly grouped into:

BA (hons) Education and Community Studies

Psychology with philosophy

BA (hons) English;

BCS / BA Psychology/ criminology

MA in Modern History

Accreditation as a coach (association for coaching)

Certificate in training from Goldsmiths

Certificate in training practice CIPD; delivering learning to adults (City and Guilds) NVQ assessors

Professional trainers certificate; 7302 introduction to learning;

Training for trainers

Careers guidance

JobClub tutor; institute of IT; training ESOL; Certificate in Education; occupational psychology;

psychometric testing

Filmmaking

BA textile design

Theology

Upper and lower diploma in Law – Institute of legal executives

MA PPE, management and groups work courses

Secretarial –medial secretary’s diploma;  
Accounting and finance  
Postgraduate diploma in Human Resource Management  
MSC voluntary sector organisation  
Postgraduate certificate in management  
Advanced health and safety  
Health promotion diploma

ONC in electrical Engineering as Apprentice at Rolls Royce Area Engines,  
Computer science – BSC (hons)  
Qualified air stewardess, air ticketing sales clerk  
Health and residential care

## **7. Involvement with any informal CDW learning**

The vast majority of respondents had undertaken some informal learning; conferences and workshops were the most attended, with mentoring the least used.

The range of topics included

Research and peer interviewing;  
Funding and financial skills; funder-finder; fundraising;  
Developing a third sector  
Keeping children safe; Parenting workshops UK  
Health and safety; health improvement  
Capacity building, developing policy, group work skills; advising on governance; strategic skills training;  
advising on constitutions; supporting change in local arrangements  
Part time youth workers  
Church and poverty conference  
Linking Pathways conf; CD learning event; ABCD using NOS; reflective practice; evaluation  
Training for the non-trainer

And the organisations providing these that were mentioned - LVSTC, LVSC, CVS, Scarman, Red Ocre, VAW, VAC, Myers Briggs, Southwark PCT

## **8. Respondents own professional development needs.**

Respondents were evenly divided between those who wanted to gain a qualification and those who did not (12 for each option). Very few felt they needed a qualification for their employment but a number were interested in postgraduate qualifications and others mentioned level 3 and higher-level qualifications. Some people wanted a work-based programme with others wanting something that would validate their many years experience as a community worker.

The vast majority of people wanted opportunities to learn on the job and through informal learning, particularly workshops. There was a high demand for mentoring, with requests for different focus for the mentoring – with individuals within the same discipline, and for groups to mentor each other, and for mentoring backed up with some kind of training. The importance of having space to share ideas and discuss with others came through strongly. The demise of the systems available under ILEA to support youth and community work staff was noted.

Some of the topics that people wanted to cover included

Robust evidence of best practice and application  
Welfare and social policy, research and evaluation, working collectively  
New skills development

Cooperation over campaigns

Interested in things which help to develop a distinct CD identity and resist co-option by government agendas; things like complexity theory can help us see in new ways and not in the limited way encouraged by a focus on outcomes and targets

CDW learning on research and evaluation of various CD;

Reflective practice;

Community cohesion;

Values and principles

Advice and advocacy

Networking with hard to reach communities and consulting with them

IT learning

## **9. Respondents were asked about other areas they would like to gain a qualification in, or learn more about in<sup>1</sup>?**

We used the main headings from the Development Workers Competency Framework so that we could compare with the needs of other workers being contacted by the STAN survey:

|  |    |
|--|----|
| i. Governance of organisations             | 11 |
| ii. Managing people                        | 10 |
| iii. Funding and financial management      | 13 |
| iv. Organisational development             | 13 |
| v. Training and learning                   | 9  |
| vi. Community buildings and asset transfer | 11 |
| vii. Quality systems                       | 9  |

Some of the other more generic topics suggested were:

Policy influencing

- Equality and diversity training
- Assessors qualification
- Non managerial supervision
- Climate Change issues addressed at a local level.
- Partnership working – or get others into doing it properly
- Ways to bring people together; how to get people working together/ enjoying/ celebrating culture – events/ radical networking ideas
- Working towards sustainability, organisationally, environmentally and socially

A pertinent comment was that all 'this work requires a mass of 'technical skills' in Community Development, but is actually seen by outside agencies (Local Authorities and Housing Associations for example) as a job for the Environment Department, Parks and Cemeteries etc.'

## **10. Respondents were asked what training and learning the people they work with might like access to**

The topics were:

- Better understanding of what CDW is – values, principles, practice; The nature of community development and how it can help residents who are community activists
- Skills for working with groups; working collectively, appropriate governance; genuine participation; nature of community dynamics and group dynamics; people skills in meetings, initiating projects, handling conflicts; organisational and managerial skills for community

<sup>1</sup> These are common areas of voluntary sector training

groups; managing people; community cohesion; working in groups/ committees, project planning

- How to communicate across and within services; dealing with the public sector and voluntary sector agencies from a community perspective; capacity building their organisation and tailoring their services to tenders from the statutory sector
- Community buildings and asset transfer
- Community empowerment, particularly for residents of Registered Social Landlords; confidence boosting skills as well as motivational skills to jumpstart and reach out their targets
- How to keep themselves sustainable amongst all the work; funding strategies / business planning; fundraising; Basic skills, financial management; keeping their organisations afloat; managing resources
- Power of networking; partnership working
- Logistic hoops of accessing buildings,
- Understanding local politics, awareness and understanding of responsibility in general and the individual ability to be independent in the societal context; sensitivity and awareness for there current reality, their options and their challenges ...
- The necessary tools to perform change
- How to get beyond racist barriers

The approaches suggested were:

- NVQ; certificates; diplomas
- Access to NVQ assessment centres where they could get support and help to build up an accredited portfolio;
- Opportunities for informal CDW learning
- Level 2,3, 4 or above; external courses
- People need personal support and short courses
- No special qualifications but help in learning:
- A flexible CDW qualification available at different levels and accessible via courses or a distance learning approach
- Tasters
- They are all young people 18-25, their needs are wide ranging; accredited training for community
- Probably not qualifications, but training in governance,

### **11. Respondents were asked if they thought that other people in their organisation would need access to any CDW learning and training**

- Management awareness of what CDW is and how it contributes to health targets, its role in health promotion and public and patient involvement
- Better understanding of what CDW is – values, principles, practice
- The nature of community development and its role in strengthening communities, as a separate though complementary activity to community engagement in delivering public services
- Managing time and CD work training
- Briefing sessions about the political progresses and the impact on their daily live. Because: any decision made is only as good as the quality that had lead to this decision
- Understanding governance of other organisations, eg corporates, Local Authorities

- The dynamics of communities, and how workers can best relate to community groups, community activists and volunteers.
- The implications of the valid but totally different cultures and purposes of community infrastructure and public sector infrastructure; valuing how it enhances community relationships, design and delivery of services
- Partnership working
- How to run a charity effectively; IT; fund-raising; financial management

A few suggestions about qualifications were made; they tended to be for the higher-level qualifications, one commented that they have had real problems trying to get people qualified in their organisation, as there is a lack of attractive opportunities for people to train on the job in London. Others felt that short courses would be more useful with a caveat that how and where training takes place is just as important as content as most people work and do not want to / cannot attend training in central London.

## **12. Where, and at what level, the necessary infrastructure should be developed**

### a) PAN London level

Half of the respondents felt that there were roles that should be undertaken at this level; they included:

- Lists of trainers and assessors
- Training of trainers and assessors
- A directory of what is available in the city
- CPD (continuous professional development) units
- NVQ centre

### b) Sub regional level

Half of respondents felt that infrastructure should not be developed at this level, some felt that it would be better London wide, others noted that sub regions are not recognised by people, others that it would still involve travelling too far. Of those who expressed some support for developments at this level there was some interest in sub regionally training networks, in the training of assessors and trainers, and in the longer-term to develop a network of training centres, which could start with developing one or two pilots

### c) Borough level

Again respondents were fairly split on this. Of those who did not favour developments at this level they cited that boroughs would use it as a way of meeting their needs and setting their own priorities rather than the needs of CD workers and activists, there was a feeling that it needed to be independent of this. Others felt that there would not be enough workers to make any training viable, or that it was already happening in an informal way so there were no additional needs to meet.

Those who thought that this might be useful felt that it would be easier to determine how training is implemented within communities; it would be easier for local people to attend the sessions. Even if training was undertaken at this level there was still a need for occasional training at regional level to be able to network across a wider range of people and ideas.

## **13. Other needs that need to be addressed to make access to learning and training a reality for people**

The need for people to know what was available, how to access it and how to get funds to cover costs was key. Short courses on transferable skills could be delivered during work time; longer courses at weekends over several months would help accommodate carer responsibilities. Support with child care and travel costs. One to one support, flexibility, and distance learning options are needed.

# Summary of the survey information gathered from STAN members on their community development work learning needs

A survey questionnaire was circulated to all members of STAN within London. 12 responses were received.

## The job titles of respondents

|   |                                  |  |
|---|----------------------------------|--|
| Organisation Development Officer<br>Head of Organisational Development<br>Development Officer<br>Funding Information and Advice Officer<br>Development Worker | Director/CEO/consultant          | Community Development Officer<br>Community Development Worker<br>Community Development Officer |
| Project Worker  | Training and Information Officer | Community Engagement   |

## They were based in the following boroughs:

Harrow / Ealing / Brent  
 Hackney and Tower Hamlets; Tower Hamlets  
 Waltham Forest x 2  
 Kensington and Chelsea  
 Bromley  
 Epping Forest, Essex  
 Bromley  
 Islington (London wide)  
 Brent  
 Newham

## 1. Respondents were asked what areas they provided advice and information on in their job:

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Governance   | 10 |
| Funding and financial management                                     | 10 |
| Organisational development   | 10 |
| Training and learning  | 7  |
| Managing people  | 5  |
| Quality systems  | 5  |
| Community buildings and asset transfer                               | 3  |
| Other : ICT; Monitoring and evaluation; project management; planning |    |

## **2. Respondents were asked if they had access to the training they need to do their job**

4 said yes and 8 said no.

The topics they wanted training on included:

- The main aspects of being a development worker; a broad overview of all the areas an advisor has to cover
- Specific technical advice on legal issues (someone to refer cases to)
- How to advise re personnel issues, eg. Contracts and maternity leave
- Governance, legal structures, charity law
- ICT, project management,
- Child protection; enhanced CRBs for under 18s
- Public sector policymaking
- All areas of community development training are needed, including supervision

## **3. Respondents were asked if they had undertaken any formal CD training.**

Three said yes, 9 said no, and the example given was the YMCA certificate in youth and community work. One commented that beyond doing a taster their employer (a charity) wouldn't let them progress because of the cost.

4. Respondents were asked if they had undertaken any formal training related to their work

Half said yes and gave these examples

- CIPD Certificate in Training Practice,
- City and Guilds Delivering Learning to Adults,
- NVQ A1 Assessors Award (Community Development Work)
- Training the Play Work Trainer (C and G)
- NVQ level 3 – Management Certificate in Fundraising
- 4 day Advising Groups on Funding course (Fit4Funding)

Others mentioned attending lots of day and short courses, which did not lead to any accreditation.

## **5. Respondents were asked if they had undertaken any informal community development work learning**

9 said yes, 2 said no, 1 did not reply.

Few of the examples given are actually related to community development work but to the more general development worker role:

- Funder finder course, fundraising (DSC),
- Keeping Children Safe (various including Barnardos, CPAS),
- Health and Safety (various, Barnardos, Tower hamlets),
- Churches and poverty conference,
- Myers Briggs training,
- Advising on governance, Advising on constitutions, capacity building
- Strategic skills training,

Several mentioned STAN events, SKiLD and NCVO training sessions

Those most related to community development appear to be:

- Group work skills courses,
- Linking pathways conference, Community Development Learning event,

- How to Achieve Better Community Development Work using NOS, reflective practice
- Attending a local community development workers group

## **6. Respondents were asked what areas of community development training and learning they needed**

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Developing working relationships with communities and groups               | 8  |
| Encouraging people to work together and learn from each other              | 10 |
| Working with community groups to make plans to bring about change          | 10 |
| Working with community groups to implement their plans                     | 9  |
| Working with groups to develop and use frameworks for evaluation           | 7  |
| Develop community organisations, suitable structures and ways of working   | 8  |
| Supporting groups to decide on the resources they need and how to get them | 9  |

**7. The best way for them to gain this** was through more formal learning (8), through courses an distance learning and others (7) wanted informal learning through visits, buddying, workshops and mentoring

## **8. Respondents were asked to think about what community development learning the people they supported would find useful**

The suggested topics contain a mixture of understanding of community development work and the standard focus on governance and funding issues

- Better understanding of what CDW is – values, principles, practice. The definition of CDW
- Skills for working with groups
- Planning and evaluation
- Confidence building and empowerment
- Project management; governance
- Fundraising, budgeting and financial management

The type of provision that was felt to be needed should be:

- Cheap, local, short, effective support with follow up
- Accessible NVQ assessment centre where they could get support and help to build up an accredited portfolio, opportunities for informal CDW learning locally
- Recognised accredited training, with ongoing support and update information on what is available to people in a unified way

## **9. Respondents were asked about the community development learning and training needs of others in their organisation**

- Flexible resources that will not affect the time they need to work but still obtain learning and training that contributes to the work that they do
- Formal CDW qualifications
- Developing working relationships with communities and groups, encouraging people to work together and learn from each other, working with community groups to bring about change, working with community groups to implement their plans
- The ability to manage staff undertaking CD roles
- Gathering, digesting and circulating information and all governance and management structures for charities
- Train the trainer

## **10. Respondents were asked to consider where CD learning infrastructure would be best developed**

a) Pan London:

Action learning sets.

Training of assessors, trainers,

NVQ assessment centres,

N/OCN centres,

Continuous and professional development CPD units,

Long and short programmes.

Accredited courses

Mentoring (getting community activists to visit similar projects)

b) Sub regionally:

The lists was very similar to that for the Pan London, with the addition of course development groups and Short courses.

c) Borough

Mentoring,

NVQ assessment centers,

N/OCN centers,

CPD units,

Training of trainers and assessors (a slimmed down version)

Accredited courses

1-2-1 or small group training (eg 'running your own community group')

Informal training

Access to trainers to deliver good quality, affordable, locally based training

## **11. Respondents were asked what was needed to support community development learning?**

- Repeat sessions for those who miss them due to other commitments
- Cost to participants
- Location and accessibility, central location for training
- Follow-up support
- Quality
- Variety
- Accreditation
- Time; short courses
- Clarity re what candidates will get out of the course,
- Relevance to roles, clarity about level/previous experience or knowledge needed,

Adapted from STAN research undertaken by Gemma Cousins

# Scarman Trust London Region

## Report into the Community Development learning needs of Can Doers January 2008

### Introduction

This report is comprised of three strands: a consultation session with Can Doers, feedback from the learning logs of an OCN accredited Community Work Skills course, and a needs analysis conducted for Can Doers who received a Community Champions award in 2007.

**Note; throughout this report, the individuals supported by the Scarman Trust London region and who received a Community Champions award are referred to as Can Doers**

### 1. Can Doers community development consultation session- 14/12/07

For this session we asked for feedback on 5 central questions mirroring the document written by the workforce development group.

1) What does Community development mean to you?

- Expansion of opportunity / providing opportunity
- Widening experience
- Giving a formality / structure to support the work people are already doing
- Merging theory and practice
- Enhancing people's quality of life
- Increasing an individual awareness of their environment

2) What could be done to support community development?

- The most crucial aspect is that there is a local ( eg borough) structure to support this in the form of a hub. Some CVS do this but not others.
- The support and funding structures should be less bureaucratic and less output and target driven. They should be more encouraging and enthusiastic to individuals.
- Longer-term funding. Short term funding is not conducive to community development as it creates instability
- Adopt the Scarman approach- empowering. Encouraging – can do
- Regular check ins to see how people are doing
- Learning and training support
- The approach we would like to see is; "What do you want to do?", not "this is what we want you to do"- followed by "how can we help you?"
- Most funder organisations like to control everything- they will not let go and they lack trust. The emphasis on bureaucracy and monitoring seems to indicate that the focus is on failure.
- Stop using jargon imposed from above which no-one understands
- The problem is that a lot of organisations sell their knowledge- you need a business plan because they know business plans
- Organisations should listen more and advise less- only when its clearly needed
- The formulaic and bureaucratic approach of a lot of funding organisations misses the " spice"- has a recipe but is missing out on the special flavour,
- It is important that there is an emphasis on two way development- so that learning goes ways-

organisations learn from activists / can doers and not just one way.

### 3) What roles do you play in your community?

- Organising projects and activities but also doing the dirty work- clearing up and washing up!
- Strategic direction
- Leadership
- Counselling
- Being a role model
- Networking
- Supporting / motivating / encouraging
- Being on committee's
- Communicating what's going on
- Being an interpreter
- Professional development worker
- Entertainer
- Facilitating / training
- Giving information and advice
- Referring individuals and groups onto relevant bodies
- Participating in local council structures
- Financial accounting
- Spokesperson/ advocate
- Marketing/ advertising
- Fundraising

#### Comments;

The interesting thing which arose from this discussion was the wide-ranging individuals felt that they played; often they felt that they were carrying the whole burden themselves; not just organising the projects but also doing the donkey work- the washing and clearing up. We grouped the above roles in to the following categories

- Disseminating information
- Advocate
- Capacity building
- Motivator/coach
- Counsellor/ support
- Official representation
- Leader/ spokesperson
- Advisor- information and guidance
- Project development
- Administrator

### 4) What are the learning and training needs of Can Doers?

- Capacity building for organisational development
- Legal training- eg relevant legislation, insurance
- Vocational training- ie for those working as advisors or those working with young people
- Communication skills
- Community work in context- sociological awareness
- Dissemination of basic standards of community development
- Concepts of citizenship
- How to get resources
- How to participate in official structures

Comments- the participants particularly stressed the importance of having the relevant legal information to underpin work. They also stressed that the learning about the context to local community work might only be appropriate or of interest to some Can Doers. What also arose from this discussion was that because of the time intensive nature of the various community activities being undertaken, what the Can Doers mostly required was support and encouragement for their project.

In this sense it was clear that Can Doers didn't necessarily differentiate community development support and capacity building support. The impression was that what activists required was a one stop shop, with a range of support provided, with capacity building and community development learning built in. The crucial element, though which cuts across both these areas was that they required a friendly and encouraging approach from the "professionals" they encountered.

5) What are the ways in which Can Doers want to learn?

- Shadowing and mentoring
- Any centre should make provision for one to one support for vital encouragement
- Any centre should also provide a decent information and referrals centre for additional resources, relevant organisations
- Accreditation where appropriate- the really important thing is that people are acknowledged for what they do
- There have to be real incentives for people to commit to any sort of formal learning
- The emphasis should be on the process of community work rather than the technical aspect
- Needs to be responsive to what people actually ask for

## **2. Community Work skills course**

10 Can Doers completed an OCN accredited Community Work Skills course facilitated by Community Matters in 2007. The following points emerged from the learning logs of the participants about supporting community development.

- Defending and promoting people's rights
- Being able to effectively represent one's own community
- Setting up processes to enable local people to participate
- Finding ways in which to get local people's voices heard
- Ensuring equality of participation
- Proper management of community projects
- Getting communities a voice
- Addressing feelings of powerlessness particularly when it comes to dealing with local council
- Importance of collective action
- Bringing different groups together to break down prejudice
- Setting rules and principles which groups should stick to
- Addressing issues of sustainability; also holistic change.. environmental, economic, longer-term thinking.
- Fostering values
- Networking groups together to increase influence, power and voice.

## **3. 2007 needs analysis**

This was a survey carried out to diagnose the support needs of Can Doers awarded in 2007. We had 151 respondents.

- 44 indicated that they needed support with ICT – 29%
- 16 indicated that they needed support with governance – 11% (though we weren't sure retrospectively whether governance was widely understood terminology)
- 43 indicated that they needed support with developing office functions- 28%
- 112 indicated that they needed support with developing further funding- 74%
- 25 indicated that they needed support with legal issues- 17%
- 77 indicated that they would like more networking opportunities with fellow community champions- 51%

**Comments;** in carrying out a survey of this nature, what we find is that people always tend to identify hard skills in terms of what they need. But if the survey was to probe further, into the how rather than just the what, can doers often identify issues around leadership, motivating people and understanding the context and “ways in” to initiatives, e.g. statutory initiatives organised locally or regionally.

# Conference Report

on Community Development Work Learning and Qualifications held in the morning of 31st January 2008

The Community Development Learning and Qualifications framework was introduced and given out. Round table discussions were then held on each part of the framework to find out what would be most useful for the different groups of people involved in community development work, in London.

## INFORMAL LEARNING

A range of informal ways to learn was recorded on the flip chart sheets.

1. Networking is essential for all involved in community development work. Local CDW networking groups are valuable for swapping notes and sharing information. The more people who join the greater influence they can have. Funded provision was needed to enable networking to happen.

2. Workshops could be held on such topics as:

- Lobbying and campaigning
- Each new government initiative and how it relates, or could relate to, community development principles and practice
- Cultural competence skills
- The different perspectives of community development
- Project management cycle
- Log frame
- Monitoring and evaluation
- Community participation
- Assertiveness

3. Action learning sets for community development practitioners involved in a similar field, e.g. Lesbian Gay Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT).

4. Visits between projects and services

5. Mentoring is needed, to enable the sharing of experience and discussion on key policy / practice issues – learning from experience is key. Mentoring with workplace exchanges would be useful. Mentoring and shadowing opportunities for less experienced workers to learn from others is important.

For experienced workers it was described as the best way but not the only way to learn.

It could give less experienced community development practitioners a better understanding, ensuring that they are better informed on the issues in community development

For activists and residents informal learning should be the first stage towards the CD movement and knowledge as it can provide information and peer support. It could help with assessing the needs of community activists.

## TASTER SESSIONS

Some topics for taster sessions were offered:

- The vision, definition and shared understanding of CDW
- Facilitation skills
- Engaging with policy makers and influencing skills

- Communication skills and public speaking
- Catching up with ever changing policy and practice contexts

The usefulness of such subject specialist workshops and seminars for the different groups involved in community development was described as:

- For experienced community development workers they were seen as crucial to staying up to date, they could introduce new ideas eg blogging, distance learning, and provide opportunities for sharing experiences of practice and failures. They provided opportunities for community development workers to update on policy issues, to explore different ways of addressing community cohesion, and to be critical/ self-critical.
- For inexperienced CD workers they could use taster sessions to share aspects of the job with more experienced people, and to engage in semi structures discussions. Sessions on how to empower minority communities that are deprived would be useful for those new to CD work. Tasters provide opportunities for new CD workers to start on their pathways. They could offer an introduction to procedures, policies, regulations and then they could build on these taster sessions to support their skills progression.
- Taster sessions would help Housing (tenant participation) workers understand how their work relates to CD and could include their active tenants.
- Taster sessions are needed for new CD staff, local residents, council officers and members especially at borough level, for example within the new neighbourhood management in Barking and Dagenham, which would give CD a higher profile in the authority.
- For activists, short introductory courses could provide opportunities for personal development. Activists need an agenda that is tailored to their needs, and which suit their community needs.
- ½ or 1 day taster sessions are needed for anyone employed in public and voluntary sectors who work on community engagement, involvement and participation. Such sessions would also be appropriate for community activists / residents. These sessions need to introduce the CD approach ie the need to work in and with communities and their own territory supporting them to strengthen their communities as a prerequisite for effective community engagement etc.

One comment suggested that the title of taster was inappropriate and should be changed to 'an introduction to' or 'basics of'. Another queried how attending such sessions could be used in APL. Taster sessions should have a follow-up aspect and not just one off, with an assessment being made of the impact they had. To make them accessible to small organisations they would need to be supported by funding and bursaries.

## **NATIONAL OR REGIONAL OCN UNITS AND AWARDS**

The list of all the mandatory and optional units are in the leaflet about the learning and qualifications framework.

The value of these units and/ or awards were described as:

- For experienced CD workers they are probably valuable for self-improvement as often the qualification itself is not so important. The module structure can be very helpful and would ensure they could keep up to date on new areas of specialisation. Additions could be made so that there were specific courses on dealing with mental health for hard to reach communities.
- For inexperienced CD workers they can provide a good introduction, as they are accessible and part time, and they provide choices. Others saw them as essential as they would give a better understanding of the various areas of interest and specialisation paths. They may be good for young people and those without formal learning as they could build confidence and motivation, which would lead to increased self-esteem and an appetite for learning, and

then they could fast track onto other areas. The problem was that they are not widely recognised.

- There were different views about their value for residents, some thought that they all should have level 1 as general knowledge, that they were useful, while others thought they would not be interested. There was a concern that a little knowledge might be a dangerous thing which was countered by the comment 'only if people think it's a lot of knowledge!'

The issue of how to convert skills and experience to this kind of qualification was raised.

### **CITY AND GUILDS LEVEL 4 DIPLOMA**

This is a new qualification, approved in 2007 and only slowly are centres deciding they want to offer this award, and we do not know of any in London at this stage. The details of the course structure and modules are in the Learning and Qualifications leaflet. There were many questions recorded about this new award.

- Where would you go to get one?
- How does it compare with other qualification options?
- What is the progression from NOCN level 3 – or any others?
- What recognition is there for the qualification by employers eg is it put into person specs and by community partnerships eg guidance, policy and procedures, selecting or electing reps?
- Is entry easy to City and Guilds for people with experience but no qualifications?
- How do you obtain qualification to reflect your vast experiences of community work?

The likely value of this award for the different groups was described as follows:

- For experienced CD workers, it provided opportunities for developing skills and knowledge in working with BME communities, tackling institutional discrimination, and on strategic work, such as lobbying. It was seen as probably the most valuable as it relates to practice, and it might more secure employment without taking 3 years for an HE qualifications. It is appropriate as the knowledge is already there to be built upon, it would bring about improvement not just in skills but also in effective management, policies enforcement and efficient and update strategic movements and partnerships.
- For the inexperienced CD worker it could offer a good starter qualification, which would help improve practice. City and Guilds qualifications are often valued by employers. Some felt it might be too high to achieve although there may be exceptional cases. Less experienced people need to understand how community development works and how it works on a local level before embarking on it.
- Some saw it as appropriate for experienced activists, if they had the time to devote to it the benefits could be immense, but most felt it was not really appropriate.

### **FOUNDATION AND HONOURS DEGREES**

Foundation degrees take 2 years full time to achieve and honours degrees take 3 years full time to achieve; foundation degrees are often offered on a part time basis over 3-4 years and involve practice in the workplace. Foundation degrees are relatively new but an increasing number of Universities are providing them as the Government is encouraging them.

There were a number of questions about these qualifications:

- What are the routes into this level of qualification?
- How flexible would this be for workers who have other commitments?
- Would there be any financial support / benefits; who covers the cost of these?

- Will employers in voluntary sector and local authority provide paid day release to enable workers to take these opportunities (could this work like Turning Point in Lewisham)?
- How do you know what is available and what is of good quality / worth the investment

There was a concern that they need to be relevant to the real world as well as academic.

- They are very appropriate for experienced CD workers to ensure that all their experiences are backed up with certification, they can offer an alternative route, may lead to earning more money. Their modular process enables on going learning later or at another place.
- Foundation degrees provide the introduction needed by less experienced CD workers, although theory based they can be used to build real life experience. There was an assumption that younger people are more familiar with this route more than older people.
- For activists and residents foundation degrees might not be appropriate because of the time needed to be devoted to such degrees, they would benefit more from taster sessions. Such opportunities may not be on their radar, so they would need basic information about their content and their advantage.

## **POSTGRADUATE QUALIFICATIONS**

These can include postgraduate certificates, diplomas, masters and doctorates

- For those new to CD work they can provide a competitive course, which is flexible in the sense that it can be bolted onto your own history, be it 20 years experience in Community development work or 2 years and a master in social policy. For people with qualifications in others fields they could be useful for equipping them with professional skills of influencing policy and working at strategic level, and for on the job career development.
- It offers a route for people coming in with other experience and qualifications as well as for experienced workers who have tons of experience but no recognised qualifications. It provides access to resources on good practice and can offer APL for those with work experience in CD. It could offer recognition of previous learning skills and help to revitalise forgotten skills and abilities and be part of CPD.
- Some experienced CD workers were looking for postgraduate training on project management/ programmes and management cycles rather than CD qualifications. Others wanted a flexible route to PhD based on research, which was affordable and would gain employer support
- They are great for equipping CD workers with knowledge to comment academically / theoretically on the sector and influencing policy but are Phds the best route for developing practical skills though? Or is it just that they are more prestigious?

Others commented that they have to be flexible in terms of access eg childcare, working hours and experience. Cost was a big factor with people asking how can the resources be provided. It would be important to know what is possible and to understand what benefit accrues.

## **NATIONAL VOCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS**

NVQs are gained on the basis of demonstrating competence in your workplace, which can include your community group. There does not have to be any link to courses. CDW NVQs are currently available at levels two (for activists involved in one group), three (for experienced community workers working across groups), four (for experienced workers with some strategic responsibilities and also management of people. Some of the comments about NVQs suggested that their structure and levels were not widely understood.

NVQs are gained on the basis of demonstrating competence in the workplace, which can include the community group. There does not have to be any link to courses. Community development work NVQs are currently available at levels two (for activists involved in one group), three (for experienced

community workers working across groups), four (for experienced workers with some strategic responsibilities and also management of people. Some of the comments about NVQs suggested that their structure and levels were not widely understood.

Experienced community development workers who want something to formalise knowledge and link their work to a wider context, can do this through the NVQ process that's flexible and can fit around commitments. It could provide experienced workers with an opportunity to gain a recognized qualification.

There was no agreement about their value for activists or residents, with some saying there was no need, while others felt it offered them a career progression as NVQs are useful as a piece of paper for employers. There are some activists, especially young people, who would be interested in getting NVQs for the work they do in communities where as the counter argument was put that they didn't think many would be interested as informal training is the basic need.

There were some questions and concerns about NVQs

- Will employers provide day release? Will they recognise them as part of the single status job evaluations
- They must be adaptable and funded available to make them accessible to small charities / grassroots organisations
- All community development workers and activists need to know about policies and practice and agendas and they won't necessarily get these through NVQ

## **REGIONAL, SUB REGIONAL AND BOROUGH LEVELS**

The next part of the workshop explored what infrastructure should be created, and what training and qualification should be delivered at the different levels

### **REGIONAL**

#### **Functions**

- Ensure quality provision of training and qualifications
- Funding – talking to key funders such as Learning Skills Council; others with a pan-London remit such as GLA, LDA, Health bodies including Strategic Health Authorities
- Co-ordination of provision and seek to fill gaps
- Maintain list of assessors and trainers
- Train the Trainers courses
- Training of assessors
- Accreditation scheme
- Recognition of accreditations between different providers
- Action learning sets
- Accredited courses leading to qualifications
- Tasters sessions
- CD careers advice
- Model developed and disseminated
- Funding for development workers for communities of interest and identity to link up existing groups, share learning, ensure the articulate voices that exist are heard at organisational / policy levels

#### **Structure**

- Need a lead agency e.g. FCDL, LVSC, CDX (CDF?) all national organisations
- Need to develop a steering group
- Practitioner advisory group with resources to meet 2 x year in open space events to set the agenda

- GOL must be convinced at the strategic level to fund this
- Mayor and GLA needs to understand to help set policy
- Consider ChangeUp, National Empowerment Partnership London as levers to get this started
- LVSC to take lead as a hub – being an advocate, linking people up and signposting

## Issues

It is important that it support everyone – activists as well as workers

## SUB REGIONAL

### Functions

- To contact the Learning Skills Council, PCTs and strategic health authorities for funding; to seek funding provision for specific needs
- Organise the delivery of training - N/OCN centres; Training trainers; Action learning sets; Taster sessions
- Community development careers advice
- A focal point for community development work information; produce newsletters
- Diverse priorities tailored to meet the needs in this area / sub region

### Structure

- Sub regional centres for CDW; a network of sub regional community resource centres
- Local resource centres run by a conglomerate of 2<sup>nd</sup> tier orgs
- An accountable body who should have a democratic mandate
- Can we use the forum at Greenwich as a good model?

## Issues

There is weak co-ordination at present, can we operate on 3 levels, neighbouring boroughs may be more useful; could by pass this level. They are not useful sub divisions and could be set to change, again.

## BOROUGH

### Functions

- Delivery of CD training - accredited courses nationally recognised; entry level – taster sessions, bespoke training
- Action learning sets,
- Convening network of practitioners; CD network forums across all sectors; link to regional practitioners advisory groups
- NVQ assessment centres
- Lists of training available
- Community development work careers advisors
- Working locally, proactive, linking to sub regions and across London
- Lobbying; examining policies / initiatives feed back to region

### Structure

- Delivery of CD training through VCS organisations / FE colleges
- Community anchors as local hubs
- Key people CVS; LA; PCT or community based organisation – local CD forum/ network (Lewisham, Southwark – examples).
- Need to locally fund in partnership with London regional bodies
- Use CVS's for IAG
- Local venues or virtual /alternative learning space
- Support local sub contractors / partners

## Issues

- Some boroughs can develop networks and try to influence providers; others in less sympathetic localities really need the regional side to be developed.
- We need a stronger VCS voice in boroughs / on LSPs, so that LSPs recognise the value of, and are prepared to fund development work.
- Can we work with the private sector as potential funding sources (Planning Gain section 106).
- Community and Culture – community development workers seem to be missing
- Spatial areas not councils
- The needs vary widely between boroughs in the same sub region
- Borough wide VCS training to be more focused, delivering community needs assessments, to ensure the sustainability of local community anchors
- To influence curriculum at regional and local
- Communities of interest and identity need to be remembered
- The levels need to link up but not merge
- Employers need community development awareness training
- The range of employers of community development workers, or people undertaking some community development work

## Respondents came from:

### Voluntary Sector

Housing Associations

Training Initiatives and networks

The Children's Society

Fair Share

The Scarman Trust

TPAS

London Tenants Federation

Groom Shaftesbury

Community Centres

FTM London

Voluntary Centre

Interlink Foundation

HAVCO – community link project

Community Development Trust

Barnados

Diocese of London

Faith Forum

Churches

Aston – Mansfield CIU

CVS

London Advice Services Alliance

Planning Aid for London

WEA

London Civic forum

### Statutory Sector

Agenda 21 environmental forum

Local Authorities

SW London Health Trust; Mental Health Trust

BME community Care Forum

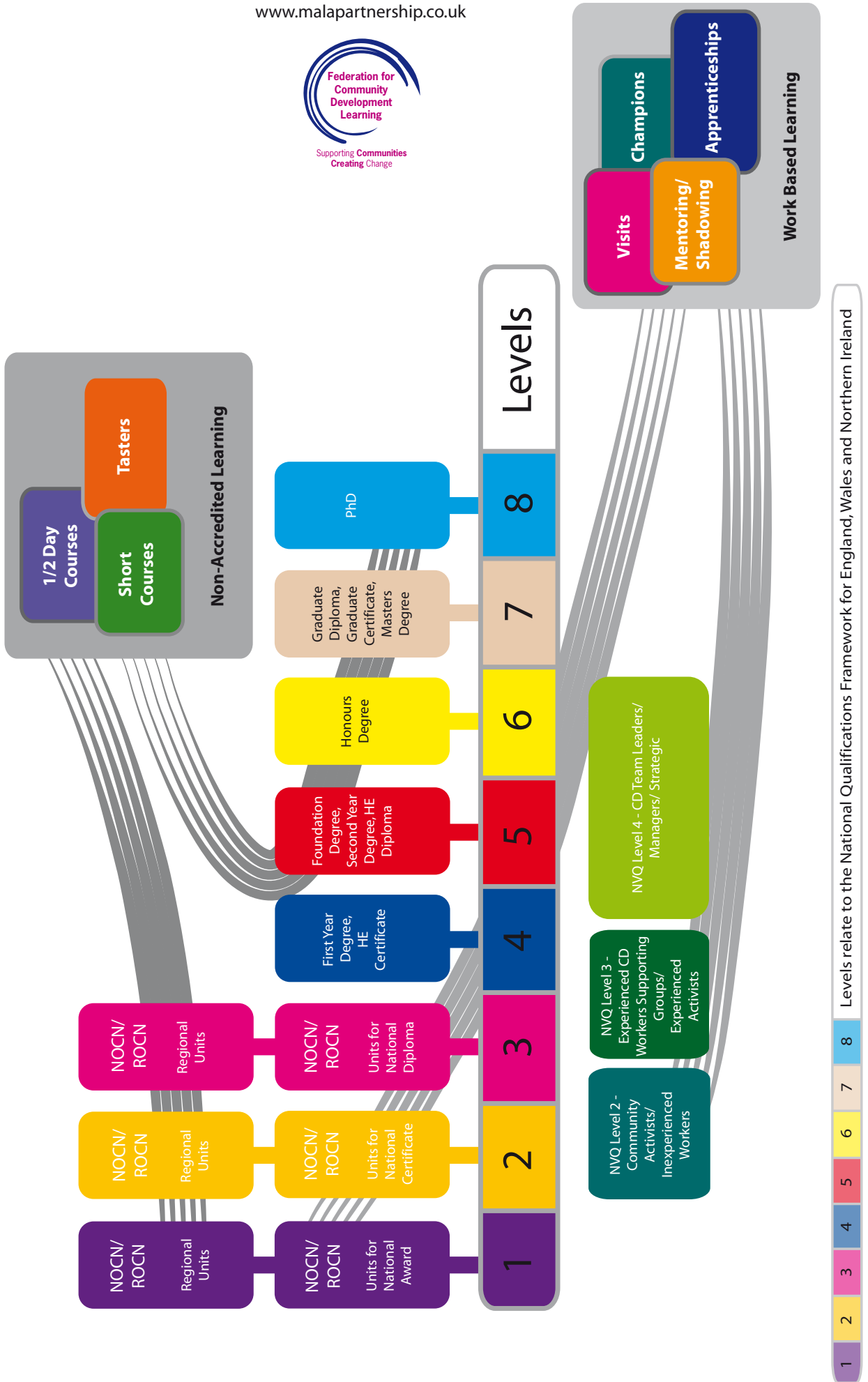
Community Regeneration Project

# Community Development Work Learning and Qualifications Framework

Concept and design by Mala Partnership 2006  
www.malpartnership.co.uk



## Framework



# Suggestions for developing the infrastructure for community development work learning in London

The research and discussions to date have suggested a number of different approaches that could be adopted. They are not necessarily mutually exclusive as we could develop a programme for the short and longer term.

The aim of this piece of work was to take forward the report into Community Development Learning produced in 2006. An executive summary and the full report are available on both the FCDL and England Standards Board web sites.

The original idea of this research was to determine the feasibility of an assessment centre for community development work for London; what it might look like, its functions and roles; the kinds of programmes it would need to deliver, and how it could become sustainable. As the research has progressed so different ideas and opportunities have emerged.

There are several different ways that we can think about developing the range of CD learning and training in London, for example

1. We could take each of the different aspects of the learning and qualifications framework, determine a priority order and explore in turn how they could be developed in London
2. We could create a strategic plan for CD learning across London, which would spell out what needs to be in place at the Pan London level, sub regionally (if we agree such a term is useful), and at a local / borough level. Such a document could show why CDW is relevant to all government policies, why London wide and other bodies should support it and make resources available. This would need to be discussed with the CD network for London who intend to run quarterly conferences on relevant topics for CD workers.
3. We could start with the existing provision, at the different levels and the different kinds of learning / training, and ensure it is promoted more widely and effectively so people know what is available. This is being started with the updating of the lists of provision, which Civic Forum will host on their web site. We would need to ensure that such provision was quality provision before we fully supported it.
4. We could look at existing providers / institutions – particularly in the HE field, and explore with them how to open up some of their programmes as CPD (Continuous Professional Development) modules. We know that some Universities endorsed by England Standards Board are willing to do this, or are already doing this.
5. We could look at existing providers / institutions who are approved centres for particular awarding bodies eg NOCN, City and Guilds and see if they could add community development programmes, awards and vocational qualifications to their portfolio. They would have the necessary systems in place to satisfy the various educational inspection regimes and may be able to access LSC or other funding. We would need to ensure that they were able to offer quality community development programmes before we could fully support them.

6. We could work with the existing and developing voluntary sector training consortium at regional and sub regional level to explore how community development could sit alongside their other programmes for support to community and voluntary workers and groups; this would raise the issue of community development work cutting across sectors, and how would workers from these statutory sectors fit in and get access to training
7. We could explore the potential for growing a pilot community work assessment centre in one area / sub region, or serving adjacent boroughs / natural groupings of areas. Offering accredited programmes using public funds requires substantial investment in developing systems and structures to record and report to the educational regulatory bodies and funders
8. Meeting the needs of those involved with communities of interest and identity may require a Pan London solution, to ensure safety, the numbers to make any provision viable etc
9. We could explore ways of establishing a partnership or centre which could offer recognition / awards by accreditation a persons prior experience and their reflective learning from it. Currently work is being undertaken on a draft model for such centres.
10. We can work with awarding bodies to explore how to promote their awards, ensure quality and share good practice amongst their approved centres

I am sure that there are other ways to meet the needs being expressed in the results of different surveys undertaken within this piece of research, which have been circulated to all those coming to the workshop.

# CD training and learning – summary based on details in other reports

Black = CD survey Blue = STAN survey Purples = Scarman report

| Type of learning | Community workers  | Development workers   | Activists   | Managers / colleagues   |
|------------------|--|---|---|---|
| Informal CD      | <p>Partnership working – or get others into doing it properly</p> <p>Ways to bring people together; how to get people working together/ enjoying/ celebrating culture – events/ radical networking ideas</p> <p>Robust evidence of best practice and application</p> <p>Welfare and social policy, research and evaluation, working collectively</p> <p>CDW learning on research and evaluation of various CD</p> <p>Reflective practice</p> <p>Community cohesion</p> <p>Values and principles</p> <p>Advice and advocacy</p> <p>Networking / consulting with hard to reach communities</p> | <p>All areas of community development training are needed, including supervision</p> <p>Developing working relationships with communities / groups</p> <p>Encouraging people to work together and learn from each other</p> <p>Working with community groups to make plans to bring about change</p> <p>Working with community groups to implement their plans</p> <p>Working with groups to develop and use frameworks for evaluation</p> <p>Develop comm. orgs, suitable structures &amp; ways of working</p> <p>Supporting groups to decide on the resources they need and how to get them</p> | <p>Community empowerment, for residents of RSLs;</p> <p>confidence boosting / motivational skills</p> <p>How to keep themselves sustainable amongst all the work; funding strategies / business planning; fundraising; Basic skills, financial management; Keeping their orgs afloat; managing resources</p> <p>Better understanding of what CDW is – values, principles, practice. The definition of CDW</p> <p>Skills for working with groups</p> <p>Planning and evaluation</p> <p>Confidence building and empowerment</p> <p>Project management; governance</p> <p>Fundraising, budgeting and financial management</p> <p>Community work in context- sociological awareness</p> <p>Dissemination of basic standards of community development</p> <p>How to participate in official structures</p> | <p>Better understanding of what CDW is – values, principles, practice</p> <p>Skills for working with groups; working collectively, appropriate governance</p> <p>genuine participation</p> <p>nature of community dynamics and group dynamics</p> <p>People skills in meetings, initiating projects, handling conflicts</p> <p>Organisational &amp; managerial skills for community groups</p> <p>managing people</p> <p>community cohesion</p> <p>working in groups/ committees, project planning</p> <p>How to communicate across and within services</p> <p>Community buildings and asset transfer</p> <p>Power of networking; partnership working</p> <p>Developing working relationships with communities and groups, encouraging people to work together and learn from each other, working with community groups to bring about change, working with community groups to implement their plans</p> <p>The ability to manage staff undertaking CD roles</p> |

| Type of learning                                 | Community workers  | Development workers   | Activists   | Managers / colleagues             |
|--|--|---|---|-----------------------------------|
| Formal CD  | Level 3, post graduate units CPD, work based, accreditation of experience  |   |   |                                   |
| Formal non CD                                    | Assessors qualification  |   |   | <a href="#">Train the trainer</a> |
| Capacity building / voluntary sector development | <p>Funding and financial management<br/>Organisational development<br/>Governance<br/>Community buildings and asset transfer<br/>Managing people</p> <p>Training and learning</p> <p>Quality systems</p> <p>Community buildings and asset transfer</p> <p>ICT</p> <p>Monitoring and evaluation</p> <p>Project management; planning</p> <p>The main aspects of being a development worker; a broad overview of all the areas an advisor has to cover</p> <p>Specific technical advice on legal issues (someone to refer cases to)</p> <p>How to advise re personnel issues, eg. Contracts and maternity leave</p> <p>Governance, legal structures, charity law</p> <p>ICT, project management,</p> <p>Child protection; enhanced CRBs for under 18s</p> <p>Public sector policymaking</p> | <p>Capacity building for organisational development</p> <p>Legal training- eg relevant legislation, insurance</p> <p>Vocational training- ie for those working as advisors or those working with young people</p> <p>Communication skills</p> <p>Concepts of citizenship</p> <p>How to get resources</p> <p>support with ICT</p> <p>support with governance</p> <p>support with developing office functions</p> <p>support with developing further funding</p> <p>more networking opportunities with fellow community champions</p> | <p>Dealing with the public sector &amp; voluntary sector agencies from a community perspective</p> <p>Capacity building their organisation and tailoring their services to tenders from the statutory sector</p> <p>Gathering, digesting and circulating information and all governance and management structures for charities</p> |                                   |

# Activities at regional, sub regional and local levels

## Regional / Pan London

- Statement of relevance of CDW to regional policies and to national agendas of empowerment, engagement
- Make links with key regional bodies GOL, Mayors Office, London Empowerment Consortium to seek resources to support work at this level
- Make links with key funders of learning - Learning Skills Council, Greater London Authority, London Development Agency, EDF
- Make links with employers who might want training – Health bodies, Voluntary Sector, consortia of LAs
- Make links with others concerned with learning and training infrastructure and delivery, London Voluntary Sector Training Group (LVSTG), BTEG, universities
- Co-ordinate directories / lists of training available, trainers, assessors
- Seek to find ways to cover gaps in learning and training infrastructure, NVQ, NOCN centres
- Delivery of trainers courses
- Development of accreditation system
- Delivery of training and networking opportunities for communities of identity and interest
- Organise practitioner advisory group

## Sub regional

- Statements of relevance of CDW to sub- regional policies and to agendas of empowerment, engagement, renewal, sustainable communities
- Make links with potential funders for development and delivery of training eg LSC sub regional partnerships, PCTs, health authorities
- Seek recognition of Learning and qualifications framework; identifying gaps
- Sub regional training networks; training of trainers and assessors
- Organise delivery of training
- Organise guidance for people on what training to undertake
- A focal point for information on CD learning / training
- Development of specialist programmes to meet needs in sub region
- Sub regional resource centre

## Local / borough

- Statement of relevance of CDW to empowerment, engagement, renewal, sustainability and other policies / agendas; explaining what CD is, what it can offer to employers, LAs etc
- Making links with LSPs, LAAs, borough priorities
- Examining policies, feeding comments upwards to sub regions and regional bodies
- Cross sector linking of key bodies, networks, partnerships
- Seek recognition of Learning and Qualifications framework;
- Equality and diversity issues, ensuring access for marginalised groups
- Delivery of training – accredited and nationally recognised as well as entry level
- NVQ centres
- Delivery of taster sessions and for sessions for particular groups
- Organisation of action learning sets
- Convening practitioner networks
- Advice and guidance
- Organising of mentoring programmes
- Introduction to training for trainers

# Submission to the regional change up plan - Community Development in London

National Government has outlined working definitions for both community empowerment and community engagement within the joint Department for Communities & Local Government and Local Government Association's published Action Plan<sup>2</sup>.

**"Community empowerment"** is the giving of confidence, skills and power to communities to shape and influence what public bodies do for or with them"

**"Community engagement"** is the process whereby public bodies reach out to communities to create empowerment opportunities.

**Community development** supports communities to collectively identify their needs and decide how best to achieve their aims

The Governments' Action Plan takes forward a shared community empowerment agenda and sets out the steps being taken, working across government and in partnership with others, towards three key outcomes:

1. Greater participation, collective action and engagement in democracy
2. Changes in attitude towards community empowerment
3. Improved performance of public services and quality of life

Many of the national government policies require community engagement and empowerment, for example:

- Strong and prosperous communities The Local Government White Paper, 2006
- Community empowerment The Local Government White Paper; Public Service Agreement 21; Action plan for Community Empowerment; Performance Framework for LAs; partnership working; LSPs, LAAs.
- Community involvement
- Community engagement
- Local government modernisation
- Strengthening communities, Sustainable communities, Social capital
- Transforming public services
- Community involvement in health
- Role of Third Sector in social and economic regeneration, asset transfer
- District community development strategies
- Civic renewal and active citizenship
- Community and social cohesion

Community Development has an essential role to play in ensuring that communities and community groups are able to contribute to these agendas. (ref to Firm Foundations Home Office 2004; CD Challenge Report DCLG 2007, An Action Plan for Community Empowerment: Building on Success, DCLG, October 2007).

Community Development is a cross sector profession, and includes practitioners employed by the Thirds Sector (including RSLs) and by public bodies (including Locals Authorities and PCTs) to support community groups. It includes residents active in their local community.

2 <sup>2</sup> "An Action Plan for Community Empowerment: Building on Success – DCLG – October 2007 [www.communities.gov.uk/communities/communityempowerment/actionplan](http://www.communities.gov.uk/communities/communityempowerment/actionplan)

Development workers in local infrastructure organisations need to develop some of the skills and knowledge associated with community development in order to reach out and support the more marginalised and excluded community groups (Mainstreaming Diversity report for Change Up 2005).

Current work being undertaken in London by the ChangeUp Neighbourhoods sub-group has shown that there is a need to develop a strategic approach to the following:

A. Promoting an understanding of community development:

- What it is
- its importance / value in meeting regional, sub regional and borough objectives,

B. Ensuring that all practitioners and activists have access to the appropriate training programmes as set out in the community development national learning and qualifications framework (this can be found on [www.fcdl.org.uk](http://www.fcdl.org.uk))

Detailed work has been started on both of these areas, identifying the following:

1. There is no one organisation which has a pan-London Community Development remit.
2. There are further education establishments and independent training providers who are already providing Community Development training at various levels and which are interested in working to develop a more co-ordinated approach to CD learning
3. Both paid Community Development Workers and unpaid community activists would welcome a more co-ordinated approach to community development learning.
4. There is a need for a central information source on community development learning opportunities in London
5. There are a number of assessment centres in London which would be interested in developing as assessment centres for Community Development

The Community Development sub-group recommends:

- The development of a Community Development Strategy for London which would include a CD Learning Strategy
- Support to further develop the pan-London Community Development Network
- The development of a steering Group concerned with Community Development learning with a remit to expand the delivery of learning and qualifications across London, working with awarding bodies, educational institutions and training providers
- Maintaining and developing links with the national bodies concerned with Community Development
- Partnership working to develop new ways to support different ways of skills up the existing community development workforce, through mentoring, accreditation of experience, policy workshops, working with employers

Resources required:

In order to successfully deliver the above, there is a need for a small team:

- Community Development Policy Officer: this post would take forward the strategy work around developing a pan-London Strategy, and promoting an understanding of community development work at regional level, and supporting those who have a sub-regional or borough remit. They would work with regional public and 3<sup>rd</sup> sector agencies including GOL, the Mayors Office, the LDA, London Civic Forum, and the London sub-regional CVS Networks..
- Community Development Learning Officer: This post would have responsibility for taking forward the community development learning work, taking advantage of the opportunities to work with awarding bodies such as NOCN, and providers of qualifications such

as Universities who offer the full range of CD degrees and NVQ assessment centres, to expand opportunities for people in London to have access to appropriate CD training. They would bring together a consortium of training providers to promote existing opportunities and to develop new provision in boroughs where there is currently gaps. They would undertake strategic work with funders to release resources to support learning within the VCS. They would develop and publicise the training directory currently being out together by the current project and FCDL with funding from the London Community Empowerment Consortium. They would co-ordinate training for trainers of community development work courses.

- Admin post: this post would be responsible for providing administrative support to the two officers, and work with them to deliver a series of events organised at regional, sub regional and borough level to demonstrate the value of CDW and to provide people with the skills/ knowledge to engage communities in these key policy areas that affect them.
- Resources to support events and activities to take forward these agendas in partnership with others

Evidence gathered to support this:

In addition to all the government papers and Acts we have available:

The Report on Change up Project 2006

Working papers from current project (2007-8)<sup>3</sup>

Learning and Qualifications needs of CD workers

Learning and Qualifications needs of local infrastructure development workers

Views of community activists on their support needs

Conference report on community development and learning in London Jan 2008

Working papers on strategic approaches to community development work and learning at regional, sub regional and borough level.

Dr V Harris  
For the steering group  
June 2008

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<sup>3</sup> A full report will be available in April 2008