

**Proposal for Development Partnership  
Between Belfast City Council and  
East Belfast Community Development Agency**

**To Develop Work  
within 4 Communities  
in East Belfast**

**Michael Briggs & Sonia Anderson  
January 2008**

## **Introduction**

In 2006 key stakeholders, facilitated by EBCDA, working in the community within the Sydenham area (which has been recognised by the Department of Social Development as an Area at Risk) began the process of developing a partnership to formally identify and address the needs of the area. This resulted in the formation of the Sydenham Working Group, an active amalgam of statutory, community and church organisations from the locality.

The Group sourced funding and commissioned 2 audits – one to look at the needs of the community as a whole and one to look at the needs of young people in the area. In collaboration with an independent facilitator and supported by EBCDA, the group devised and collectively agreed upon an Action Plan as the way forward for the immediate future in the Sydenham area. The Area Action Plan has since been supported by DSD Areas at Risk (AAR) Scheme and will result in, over the next two years, major development work being undertaken by the Working Group (and an AAR funded Support Worker managed by EBCDA) to improve the area, develop services and work towards sustainability.

As a pilot for improvement within an area with weak community infrastructure the work carried out in Sydenham was an excellent model of good practice which could be rolled out in other areas. The process has led to a structured partnership approach to addressing community needs and has opened communication channels between Churches, the Community Group and Statutory Agencies that were previously active in the area, but working independently. There is now a co-ordinated approach to the development of the Sydenham community and an agreed action plan to work within.

As a result discussions have taken place around the prospect of EBCDA, in partnership with BCC, undertaking similar development work in 4 other areas in East Belfast, who are not situated within a Neighbourhood Renewal Area, and which, like Sydenham, have weak community infrastructure.

## **Organisation Background**

EBCDA is a support and networking organisation whose mission is to provide resources, support and capacity building programmes for community groups that are based on partnership, equal opportunities and sustainable outcomes. To fulfil these objectives the organisation has four strategic aims:

- Community Support/Capacity Building – To assess the needs of the community sector and work with other key organisations to draw up programmes, projects, plans and strategies that build capacity.
- Community Resource and Finance Services - To promote good financial management practice in the community sector by offering financial management advice, training services and a community accountancy service. To provide accessible meeting rooms and assistance with photocopying, production of newsheets, leaflets and other administrative support.
- Community Development Education and Training - To encourage, support and facilitate the provision of quality community development education and training opportunities.
- Advocacy - To seek to influence the policies of community, voluntary, government and public agencies so that they recognise the value of adopting a community development approach and that the community sector in East Belfast might benefit from this.

## Proposal Detail

The areas that have been identified, in collaboration with BCC, are:- Ardcar, Bloomfield, Clarawood and Knocknagoney. A number of stakeholders are currently undertaking fragmented community development work within each of these areas but have no existing structures within which needs can be collectively identified or a current action plan with which to address them. EBCDA would facilitate and manage the process in these 4 areas. The work would include:-

- Identifying and bringing together key stakeholders for initial meeting (e.g. active community groups, active statutory agencies, Church leaders, etc in the area)
- Formation of an area Working Group
- One to one interviews with Working Group members
- Completion of an area community needs audit
- Planning sessions, using an independent facilitator, which will enable the Working Group to identify and prioritise needs from the audit findings and draft an area action plan
- Support for the Working Group to investigate possibilities to implement the action plan and ensure sustainability of work undertaken.

EBCDA proposes to undertake this work, funded by BCC, and will manage this process in each of the 4 areas, commission an independent facilitator to complete the audit and planning aspects and support the Working Group throughout the process. We highly recommend using the facilitator with whom we worked during the Sydenham pilot.

## Timescales

We anticipate that the work in each area will take 6 months to complete. We propose staggering the start dates for work over a 15 month period.

April 08 - September 08	Implement & conclude the process within the Ardcarne area
July 08 - December 09	Implement & conclude the process within the Bloomfield area
October 09 - March 09	Implement & conclude the process within the Clarawood area
January 09 - June 09	Implement & conclude the process within the Knocknagoney area.

NB To be amended pending confirmation of programme start date.

## Budget

The costs outlined below are based on the actual costs incurred to implement the pilot process in Sydenham and are therefore exact.

### One area:-

Facilitation Costs	£3,250.00
Community Needs Audit	£1,450.00
Working Group meetings and planning sessions	£1,000.00
Printing of area report and action plan	£1,000.00
Admin Support/Postage/Photocopying	£ 750.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£7,450.00</b>

**TOTAL COST FOR 4 AREAS** **£29,800**

EBCDA will provide management support for the development of the process within the 4 areas as part of their core work in East Belfast.

**BLANK PAGE**