

Evaluation of the CBP (Capacity Building Project)

Evaluation of a three year programme of training and one-to-one support services for third sector organisations



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Preface

This document evaluates the effectiveness of a group of service providers who are helping third sector organisations (TSOs) to sustain, manage and develop their work in the community. Together the three service providers - Impetus, Working Together (WTP) and The Business Community Partnership (BCP) - support several hundred TSO's. This report first gives an evaluation of the various interventions that the service providers have made and, secondly, provides 12 case studies of organisations who have received support services. The cases give a broad insight into supporting third sector organisations and a series of interesting stories about how intervention with professional support can help the third sector to develop, thrive and flourish.

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1) Summary of the Findings:

- a) Value of the Capacity Building Project's service:
TSO's valued training, advice and 1-to-1 support enormously. They identified progress with development, change, up-skilling and sustainability at both an organisational and an individual level.
- b) Organisational capacity building:
Organisations have been helped to achieve on several fronts. Examples of achievements include: acquiring new funding, new contracts and new 'business'; operational or financial re-organisation; improving staff capacity (paid staff, volunteers and trustees); improving staff skills; learning to deliver new or more complex services; and general professionalisation of organisations.
- c) Personal learning programmes:
Staff in the sector have devised and completed their own training programmes. This has been made possible through a rich training programme mostly provided by Working Together, backed up by one-to-one support and advice in specialist areas like volunteering and business planning.
- d) Distance travelled:
Capacity Building Project training and support work enabled organisation to make many step-changes and improvements and sometimes with fairly low-level support input. For instance one organisation re-organised its finances, services package and management system essentially through participation in a few short courses. Another was able to re-shape a complex, volunteer-run service through one-to-one sessions and a day course.
- e) A better equipped, larger and more diverse third sector:
The CBP has contributed to a healthier and more able sector as have other elements of infrastructure support in the City.

2) Recommendations:

There are a number of support services that TSO's would like to see improved in the future – that is improving some of the services already in place as well as providing new services and activities. Some of the suggestions will be beyond the remit of the CBP yet within the remit of the infrastructure organisations to action. Some of these services could be provided by referral into the open market, provided directly by infrastructure organisations, or engineered by them.

The third sector in the City needs:

- a) A knowledge bank –
i.e. better access to learning/training materials; common policies; information sheets; and general knowledge for management and organisational development. Plenty of this is available but use of it and cascading of it from those that have to those that do not is often conditional or rationed. It would be far more efficient and effective for these resources to be banked on websites with easy access provided for TSOs.
- b) Intervention with crisis management especially when it comes to funding:
This can vary from the resource intensive experience of the Bridge through to the less intensive training based approach used by Adventure Unlimited.
- c) Better access to human resources advice and consultancy and financial services:
Most organisations cannot access these services unless they are shared or bought in.
A larger organisation with these skills and capacities might be interested in providing this to others in the sector.
- d) Better funding information - this is one of the higher priorities:
Regular updates and basic information and sign-posting is lacking in the city.
- e) Better funding advice:
Brief and well-informed advice to TSO's is not easy to find and TSO's have to rely on favours and informal advice from more experienced organisations or personnel.
- f) Mentoring services in different forms:
There are many first-time managers and development workers as well as more experienced staff who want and need brief and regular mentoring.
- g) More networking and well planned network sessions:
These were valued by many and well planned networking and peer learning is not so resource intensive to provide as some other support services. Networks create opportunities for joint working, learning and collaboration and work well where there are common experiences, knowledge topics and services provision.
- h) Partnering training:

Partnership and joint working is talked about a lot. Learning about the practicalities of it would be valued by some TSOs. This will become more vital as the cuts agenda and the Big Society agenda together will accelerate joint working, joint contract or grant bidding and mergers.

- i) More advanced and intermediate training courses such as in supervision:
Training that is regularly on offer is well-used, highly valued and the content of it is well deployed in the sector. Most of it is at a relatively introductory level. Many of the subjects on offer also need training inputs at more advanced levels.
- j) Volunteering – support, recruitment, role definition and supervision of volunteers:
There is a lot of potential in this. In the current economic climate potential volunteer input is plentiful whilst funding streams are rapidly becoming more scarce. There is a widely held view that new volunteering roles, plus increasing the range of people involved as volunteers, could add capacity to the sector.
- k) Better spot use (free at the point of use) and purchase of professional services through brokerage/referral:
For instance there is no list/website of professional services and consultants that are third sector competent. Organisations would find this very useful. TSOs not only find it difficult to locate advice and support but also the sector inefficiently passes around referrals between organisations rather than incentivising all services providers to put their contact details in one place. Making the market work better would improve access to support for TSOs. This could answer the sector's need for a 'team of experts' on hand to help.
- l) Active facilitation of potential mergers:
The need for some organisations to come together will be inevitable in the current and future economic climate. It would be better for the sector to plan and manage this where it can rather than attempt to pick up the pieces when funding crises hit.

3) Introduction

The Capacity Building Project (CBP) is a partnership between three service providers formed in order to increase the scope and scale of support to third sector organisations (TSOs) in Brighton and Hove. The three organisations are:

- **Working Together Project (WTP)** which provides a wide range of training and learning courses and programmes for third sector staff, volunteers and trustees
- **BCP (The Business Community Partnership)** which brokers support from businesses for the third sector and helps develop networks and professional support for voluntary organisations and social enterprises
- **Impetus** which runs services that support volunteering including the **Volunteer Development Project** and runs the **PDS (Performance Development Service)** which provides one-to-one professional advice support and consultancy for TSOs.

The Capacity Building Project (CPB) is a partnership between these three organisations that enabled them to achieve a 3 year grant from Big Lottery's BASIS programme in order to provide additional courses, workshops, one-to-one professional support and support from business. All three organisations have a long track record of providing infrastructure support services. Therefore they are recognised as Working Together, BCP and Impetus by TSOs.

The CBP ran from October 2007 to September 2010. This report provides a qualitative evaluation and series of 12 case study 'stories' that shows how TSOs were supported and how effective they found support from Working Together, BCP and the Volunteer Development Programme (VDP) and Performance Development Service (PDS) at Impetus.

This is a qualitative evaluation and presentation of case studies and not a quantitative evaluation or monitoring report. Elsewhere the CBP has reported programme monitoring data to the funder and between the three partners. All funded output targets were achieved over the three year programme as well as some additional un-planned outputs.

The paragraph below describes the general aim of the CBP and is taken from one of the partner's other evaluation reports.

"As well as delivering better integrated services, the project aims to support the voluntary and community sector to build their capacity, develop their workforce, diversify their income streams, and to bid for and deliver work in the new public sector contracting environment. This is part of the Brighton & Hove Change-Up Infrastructure Development Plan."

What is Capacity Building?

The National Audit office evaluation of the big Change Up programme in 2008¹ produces a neat summary of capacity building in the third sector. This provides a useful marker against which the Capacity Building Project might judge its effectiveness.

“Capacity is a measure of an organisation’s capability and potential to apply appropriate skills and resources to accomplish its goals and satisfy its stakeholders’ expectations.

High capacity organisations have:

Strong leadership, professional expertise, and good physical resources so as to deliver the range, volume and quality of services consistent with their mission; and the potential to extend the reach or variety of their services.

Low capacity organisations may be limited by:

Weak management and governance structures; a lack of management, financial or business skills; and a lack of physical assets needed to support core activities.

Capacity building refers to activities that help organisations to develop skills and resources so that they can achieve their objectives and serve their stakeholders more effectively.

Public and private sector organisations fund this development from their own resources (including debt and equity financing in the private sector).

Third sector organisations, particularly smaller ones, are less able to do so as:

Many do not generate surpluses to invest in this area; there is limited access to investment financing; and donors generally prefer to pay for projects which deliver visible results, rather than fund ‘behind-the-scenes’ activities.”

¹ Extract from “Building the Capacity of the Third Sector” National Audit Office, Feb 2009

4. Methodology

Overall this evaluation tested whether or not recipients of support services rated the effectiveness of what they received and whether it made a difference to their capacity.

Methods used:

- 1) Semi-structured interviews were held with key staff amongst the three organisations to explore the CPB activities and determine in what ways they felt that the work was effective
- 2) With key staff, a sample of case studies was devised that reflected the breadth of organisation type, size and activity as well as reflecting the breath of services provided by the three CBP partners.
- 3) Semi structured interviews were completed with 10 case study organisations with an additional 2 provided by BCP. Interview format is shown in full at Appendix one.
- 4) Full case studies were written up to demonstrate how infrastructure support services influence the activities and general health of TSOs, as well as showing how effective they feel infrastructure support is and what they feel needs to be retained and additionally provided.
- 5) Quick meta-evaluation of evaluation sheets, forms and reports from training courses, network session and organisational advice sessions (supplied by services providers)

5. Findings from Case Studies

The effectiveness of infrastructure was tested through a series of questions put to the sample, case-study organisations. The organisations, their activities and the support they have received from the CBP is summarised below. Under each case organisation entry are summary findings from the organisation in relation to the effectiveness of support services they have received from CBP.

Case Study TSOs (Third Sector Organisation)	TSO's activities	Support service/s received by TSO from infrastructure organisation
1. Adventure Unlimited	Outdoor activities, youth work, leadership training	WTP short courses; volunteer management training
Summary Findings: Training courses and wide expertise from diverse trainers and experts supported an overhaul of the organisation. It massively supported the organisation – “we could not have done this without WTP”		
2. Bridge Community Education Centre (Funding and Governance)	Adult education courses, work preparation support, local community cafe	Impetus's 1-to-1 funding contact bidding and governance consultancy plus mentoring
Summary Findings: The Bridge had had a high level of support on a one-to-one basis. This has paid off in averting a crisis and likely closure; hooking in funding and contracts and recruiting trustees		
3. Bridge Community Education Centre (volunteering)	As above plus a new volunteering project	Impetus's 1-to-1 volunteering management support; WTP short courses
Summary Findings: Recruiting and managing a group of volunteers for an array of different tasks is a complicated business – sometime more so than employing a team of paid staff. The volunteer development project supported The Bridge with the right mix of training, expertise, one-to-one follow up time and advice. This helped it more than double its team and have the capacity to manage a large team of 40 plus volunteer staff.		

Case Study TSOs (Third Sector Organisation)	TSO's activities	Support service/s received by TSO from infrastructure organisation
4. Brighton Housing Trust	Housing support services, day centre, short term accommodation, housing/benefit advice, training courses	Impetus's 1-to-1 volunteering management support; WTP short courses
Summary Findings: It is not just small and medium-sized third sector organisations that need help with capacity building large ones need it too. All kinds of organisations also need quick and short training at an intermediate and advanced level – especially on inter-personal and organisational management topics.		
5. Brighton and Hove Child Contact Centre	Child contact and family support for families affected by separation and breakdown	Impetus's 1-to-1 volunteering management support; WTP short courses
Summary Findings: “Our volunteer staff provide a highly skilled and sensitive family support service. They are doing much more challenging jobs than they used to do. We have really benefited from training for our staff and our organisation”		
6. Care Coops	Support services and social enterprises with people with mental health concerns and learning disabilities	Impetus for accessing 1-to-1 human resources support
Summary Findings: “We hugely valued having human resources management support and the sector really needs this kind of short but essential professional advice and support”. Care Coops is very keen on partnership delivered projects and services as well as working with partners to share services that otherwise individual organisations might not have access to.		
7. City Coast Trust	Pre-school, lunch club, street feeding project, youth group, community and church space; community development projects	Impetus's 1-to-1 volunteering management support; WTP short courses
Summary Findings: City Coast showed how essential management, organisation and people skills were learned by key people and then cascaded		

Case Study TSOs (Third Sector Organisation)	TSO's activities	Support service/s received by TSO from infrastructure organisation
<p>across the organisation (which involved several hundred people one way or another). “whatever support organisations provide for the third sector in the future our top three things would be skills in working with volunteers; practical partnering with other organisations and people; and fundraising information and methods”</p>		
8. Emmaus Community	Community for ex-homeless people, recycling, re-use and cafe facility	BCP's Pro-help brokerage
<p>Summary Findings: Emmaus provided an example of what a group of professional creative people can do pro-bono. A creative team of four designers and a wood re-cycling expert helped Emmaus's companions to transform an unused area into a space that inspires people about the charity's work.</p>		
9. Grassroots Training CIC	Training programmes for communities in positive mental health and suicide prevention	BCP's Pro-help brokerage and social enterprise network; WTP courses
<p>Summary Findings: “Business planning, public relations and general business like skills were bespoke and individualised to our needs”. This helped Grassroots to re-focus what it was doing and double its turnover each year. Technical advice was essential and made the difference between success and failure especially when the organisation had received poor and misleading professional advice before.</p>		
10. Moulsecoomb Neighbourhood Trust	Pre-school, mobile children's facility, out of school activities	BCP's Pro-help brokerage
<p>Summary Findings: MNT got access to professional mentoring as well as HR based legal advice. MNT's manager said that “I would not have been able to perform my role as well without the support and advice I've had access to. Our HR procedures would not be up to date and the Trust could have been subject to legal claims”</p>		

Case Study TSOs (Third Sector Organisation)	TSO's activities	Support service/s received by TSO from infrastructure organisation
11. RISE, Refuge, Information Support and Education	Refuge and support services for women who have suffered domestic abuse, helpline and day services	WTP courses; Impetus's for supporting a partnership with other women's services; BCP's Pro-help brokerage
<p>Summary Findings: Working Together training provides the training department for key skills amongst RISE staff as it does for many other organisations. RISE is very impressed with the volunteer development on offer too and would like to see some additional external support provided for volunteers.</p>		
12. SCIP, Sussex Community Internet Project	IT training, IT support service, website-building	Impetus for access to HR and business strategy advice; WTP courses
<p>Summary Findings: "We need small inputs of professional support just when it is needed and we were pleased with having got this when we were re-organising our staff roles". SCIPs top three support services would be brokerage – that is sign-posting to trusted professional services; funding advice on sources of funds; and funding advice on how to deal with funders.</p>		

6. Conclusions

High quality, highly rated and diverse support services:

The paramount conclusion from the Capacity Building Project evaluation is that TSOs highly rate all the services, courses, advice and support from Working Together, Impetus and BCP. TSOs valued very highly the quality of support; the diversity of knowledge and skills topics which they could get training in; and the extent to which support services helped them to flourish, achieve and sustain their services and facilities. This conclusion is drawn from the interviews, internal feedback from staff, volunteers and trustees in the 12 case organisations and from meta-analysis of monitoring and evaluation previously done by service providers. Quality is robustly assured through the processes the service providers have in place and through effective and transparent joint working between partners.

There are gaps to be filled and improvements to be made as always, however the evidence shows that support services have made a real difference to TSO's - their staff, their volunteers and their beneficiaries.

Provision of a diverse set of support services has led to a bigger and better third sector in the City:

Support available to TSOs from infrastructure organisations in the City has become more diverse and varied over a period of some years, as has support on offer from the private sector. 'Support services' as a catch all term includes:

- Training Courses – one day/session, or two day/sessions on many topics
- Networking – participation in many different networks that suit particular types of organisation, area of knowledge or other common bond
- Consultancy – one-to-one support from experts on specific subjects in order to help solve specific problems or complete bespoke projects
- Professional services – such as book-keeping and accountancy, human resources advice, legal services, mentoring, community and voluntary sector specific advice, printing and design, brokerage

The above are provided by several infrastructure organisations and a range of companies and consultants. In addition several larger TSO's sell certain specific services to the sector such as training and financial administration. As the depth and breadth of support on offer to TSOs has developed and grown, particularly over the past 10 years, so has the size of the sector and the diversity of what it does. This is no co-incidence. Better support from CBP partners and from other support services has developed the sector to be larger, more diverse and more agile than in most comparably sized cities or districts. An excerpt from the City's third sector audit below gives some data on the scale of the third sector.

Very prudent estimates on the size of the sector² show that the City has:

² Data taken from Taking Account: a Social and Economic Audit of the Voluntary and Community Sector 2008

- **1,600 plus voluntary and community organisations.** They range from small self help groups to large, corporate organisations.
- **19,200 voluntary positions** and **8,000 staff**
- Enormous **inward investment** as well as creating social and economic good. Nearly half the income to third sector organisations (43%) comes from grants and nearly two-thirds of this (62%) comes from outside of the city
- Generates approximately **£96 million a year to the local economy** (on prudent estimates)

Value for Money:

The CBP as a whole has met its outputs in full over its three years of work according to its own reporting. It has reached its target audience and delivered within its budgeted resources. Also it is highly valued by its audience and has created some unintended value. For instance a well used Volunteer Good Practice Guide; a number of organisations who have been saved from folding; and a number of key workers and managers creating their own whole learning and development programmes are positive and unintended consequences. It was not possible to evaluate value for money in full within the confines of this evaluation nor was it part of the brief other than from the data gathered from case study organisations.

In the future the co-ordinators need to assess the value for money of some support activities as against others. This needs to take into account the cost of the input factored against the planned outcome for the organisation that is being helped. This kind of value for money approach using cost to benefit comparisons has not been carried out as yet on infrastructure support and would provide useful evidence for planning and contract bidding purposes.

Advertising and promoting Support Services:

As one interviewee said about the CBP's services "they do what it says on the tin". Generally TSOs understand what is on offer and they generally understand, as far as they need to, what each organisation does. In the cases of BCP's 'Pro-help' and Impetus's Performance Development Service what is on offer, who is on offer, how much is free, and how much needs to be paid for is not always clear to TSOs.

Working in partnership:

The CBP involves three partner organisations. As far as TSOs are concerned the services received are from the well known organisational 'brands' of Working Together, Impetus and BCP as, presumably, the CBP project originally intended. Working in partnership has been valuable from the TSO point of view particularly in the volunteer development (Impetus) and the training areas (Working Together) where training and 1-to-1 support came together. Obviously good working relationships between partners enabled the project to be conceived and the funding to be won in this first place.

Putting learning, advice and support into practice:

Evidence from the evaluation showed that all the organisations receiving training, advice, support information or referrals were putting what they had learned into practice with favourable results for the capacity and capabilities of the organisations. For instance City Coast Trust has put in place a new system of management and supervision that it has been able to cascade and the Bridge has employed a new cadre of volunteers to deliver higher level services.

Overall effectiveness in capacity building:

The CBP has successfully built capacity amongst the many dozens of third sector organisations that it has worked with. Using the National Audit Office definitions of capacity building outlined in the introduction, the CBP has developed strong leadership, and professional expertise in the third sector. Also it has enabled TSOs to overcome the limitations of weak management, governance, financial or business skills.

7) Case Studies in Full

The case studies below provide a stand-alone set of stories of third sector activities and how they are being helped to develop themselves by infrastructure organisations.

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Case Study Organisation:

1. Adventure Unlimited

Adventure Unlimited (AU) runs adventurous activities, leadership training and many projects for children, young people and adults. AU provides all kinds of courses and group sessions over 9 separate projects. It is working with nearly 8500 participants in a year.

Services Used

AU has used:

- Training course briefing sessions on financial management and on negotiation skills
- Volunteers co-ordinators training
- Confidence building courses

Learning and Support Needs

AU was in a very parlous financial state of affairs. A new chief executive had to get hold of this potential crisis very strategically and quickly in order to avoid the organisation folding altogether. She was supported with short courses and briefing sessions in order to focus on finances, contract/grant agreements and proposal and on some re-organisation of the charity.

Putting Learning into Practice

The training and learning support had to be better than what you could get straight out of a book and it as far as AU was concerned it most certainly was.

“The learning and support was a massive help to us at a crucial time. We needed to show confidence to the outside world and the team internally also had to feel confident about our future at a time of making big changes. The courses were really helpful confidence builders. The training helped the organisation skill-up strategically enabling us to identify what we needed to do to turn the organisation around”

Change and development

AU changed substantially - it had to in order to survive and prosper and keep this unique brand of training, youth work and adventurous learning opportunities alive.

“We put in place better management systems. We changed the organisation’s strategy and moved in a new direction as well as changing legal structures having

explored different options. We also adopted a volunteer policy. As a result we are a more professional service with better organisation. We could not have done this without the support that we have had”

AU had been able to turn itself around, identify loss making activities and concentrate instead on those activities that can sustain themselves.

Best Support Methods and Gaps to be Filled

The fact that Working Together can provide the variety of trainers and expertise that it does has been massively valuable to AU.

In addition to the courses and support currently on offer AU's top three support service and activities that need to be provided and expanded would be:

- A mentoring service
- A network for Directors of third sector organisations to exchange learning, information and expertise
- Regular first aid and manual handling training especially for volunteers

Evaluation of the CBP (Capacity Building Project)

Case Study Organisation:

2. The Bridge Community Education Centre - Funding and Governance

The Bridge is a vibrant community education centre based in Moulsecoomb. The Bridge team is passionate about providing people, their families and their communities with an opportunity to reach their full potential through a wide range of experiences. These experiences include courses; information, advice and guidance about learning choices; personal development; career planning; and volunteering.

The Bridge has had financial ups and downs and it has needed help with applying for funding, contacts and commissions. Also it has needed help with governance and management support to strengthen its leadership and build future plans.

Services Used

The Bridge has used

- Impetus's Performance Development Service for funding/contract bid support, building up the board of trustees, and for support in staff recruitment
- Impetus for mentoring the Bridge's Manager
- Other services (such as volunteering support and Working Together courses detailed in a separate case study)

Learning and Support Needs

The Bridge needed support in bidding for funds at a time when their main funding source had come to an end. Following successful bidding for core funding the organisation needed to learn how to promote and project its benefits to potential funders and how to develop its futures plans and strategies. It wanted to continuously develop its work in training and learning in the community and develop advice, information and a community cafe.

"We were at a very difficult time when our main funding had run out. Impetus helped us get £50,000 to go towards our core costs. We really needed this to redevelop our business plan and put it in place. Following this we were able to bid for bigger contracts which I am really pleased to say that we won. Andy (from Impetus) is an ideas man and he is very good at putting people together"

Putting Learning into Practice

The Bridge certainly learned about the related topics of leadership, management and business planning (which of course brings with it fund and contract bidding skills). The Bridge has received a lot of support from Impetus in particular and as a result has had a good deal of success; firstly in surviving and secondly in expanding and developing its services and projects for the local community.

Change and development

The Bridge has changed and developed its structure and strengthened its board and its management team. The organisation now has greater capacity and capability to deliver services.

“We have had Impetus attending our Board meeting as an observer and this has helped us to develop a cohesive structure for the organisation. We have new expertise available to us now too which is a great help. Impetus also helped us with some of our staff recruitment and getting roles and responsibilities clear. This was a great help.”

The Bridge continues to put on dozens of local courses and events for people in a very economically disadvantaged area. It provides diverse courses from piano, pottery and arts to literacy, numeracy, web design and working with children. It also provides access to information and advice (on issues such as benefits and debt, parenting support and issues) back to work courses and help with applying for jobs. It has also developed its volunteering programme more recently in its history. The organisation runs a very broad and complementary collection of services and activities on a localised basis. This has been made more possible through inputs of expert advice and consultancy in order to strengthen the capacity and capability of the organisation as well as enable it to win contracts and funds.

Best Support Methods and Gaps to be Filled

Our top three support services to organisations like us would be:

- *Networking and connecting people* – we need people to do some of this for us. Even if there are good network meeting we couldn't possible attend them all.
- *Structured funding support and funding advice* – we need someone to get to know us and provide support with funding bids and advice on funding sources. There needs to be good quality funding information digested for the sector.
- *A team of experts* – a team of people who are looking out for your organisation and opportunities for it.

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Case Study Organisation:

3. The Bridge Community Education Centre - Volunteering

The Bridge is a vibrant community education centre based in Moulsecoomb. The Bridge team is passionate about providing people, their families and their communities with an opportunity to reach their full potential through a wide range of experiences. These experiences include courses; information, advice and guidance about learning choices; personal development; career planning; and volunteering.

The Bridge wanted to create a substantial volunteer programme and expand opportunities for people to volunteer in many different activities and occupations.

Services Used

The Bridge used the Volunteer Development Project intensively through using the 'Investing in Volunteers' self appraisal tool and one-to-one help with establishing an expanded volunteer scheme. Also the Bridge was helped with establishing a social networking presence via a volunteer project put together by Impetus.

The Bridge was also helped with funding advice and governance support too (see separate case example). The organisation used Working Together for 6 day courses.

"Working Together Project.....we would give them 9 out of 10 on quality of service."

Learning and Support Needs

"We needed to link up with other people doing similar things to us in terms of the recruitment, development, roles and performance of volunteers. Also we needed to sort through all the complex policies and procedures involved in engaging volunteers in low and high skilled activities. We needed to learn about monitoring and evaluation too. The day courses gave us a framework for thinking about our work and our organisation as well as highlighting gaps."

Putting Learning into Practice

The Bridge has directly implemented the activities needed for implementing a large volunteer scheme. The Involving Volunteers process was implemented in full.

"Taking part in the volunteer development programme and its network enabled us to shape policy and structure, advertise more widely, and link in with other services and services providers"

Change and development

The Bridge now has over 45 active volunteers involved in learning support, employment support training, tutoring and outreach. The volunteer programme has

more than doubled in size with far more opportunities for people to volunteer, work and learn. Volunteers look after reception duty, administration and provide learning support to individuals. Their activities are also essential to staffing and running the community café, preparing food and serving.

Volunteers give and receive help through the Bridge's 'Gateway Services' - for instance taking part in group-work to improve job-finding skills and confidence building or assertiveness courses.

"Our whole volunteer programme has had an overhaul. This has benefited us and it services as a model and package that could be used elsewhere"

Best Support Methods and Gaps to be Filled

Having direct support and contact at the end of the phone was absolutely essential. The collaborative and sharing nature of the volunteer support forum provides far better services and support in the city than the competitive approach that we are often forced to take. This is complemented by an on-line group.

We need more up to date and frequent funding information to enable us all to be better at identifying funding streams. Also we need more help with monitoring systems and impact assessment at a higher level.

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Case Study Organisation:

4. Brighton Housing Trust

Brighton Housing Trust (BHT) provides a full range of social care, housing, housing advice, employment support and training services across Brighton and Hove. BHT runs various hostels, a day centre (First Base), a counselling and support service for women (Threshold), employment and training (Firm Foundations), and a training service. Also BHT has recently taken on an ethical PR company (Blue Rocket Group) in a partnership. It is one of the larger third-sector organisations in Brighton and Hove employing about 250 people.

Services Used

BHT's staff have used Working Together's training courses substantially. This has included introduction to managing staff, time management, managing difficult people and difficult situations and fundraising. Also BHT has used the Volunteer Development Project and staff have completed the Introduction to Managing Volunteers course. BHT has received one-to-one support and advice on volunteer management and development.

Learning and Support Needs

The organisation has an ongoing need to develop its people and projects as well as develop staff into new roles. Also BHT is reviewing its use of and relationship with volunteers.

Putting Learning into Practice

The organisation has had its capacity and capability developed through training programmes and the staff certainly think that both the training and the volunteering support is 'brilliant'.

"Introduction to volunteering was excellent and inspiring. The tutor was relaxed and very well organised. Also we find Working Together to be an excellent service, well organised and with excellent training materials, publicity and administration.

Our staff put the learning into practice from day courses in their day-to-day work as well as reflecting and learning with one another. Some of the learning is confirming that we are on the right track and some it provides a new foundation or introduction"

Change and development

"We are now able to put in place a whole volunteer programme and we are really pleased that the development worker for volunteering has said she can come back and check out our policies, procedures and development programme".

Best Support Methods and Gaps to be Filled

Both the Working Together and the Volunteer Development Project courses and support have been brilliant and they need to continually be provided. Some more advanced level training and learning would be good as most of the training is at an introductory or foundation level. Also some training and support that follows up on implementation would be useful. This could be done through peer learning or action learning formats.

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Case Study Organisation:

5. Brighton and Hove Child Contact Centre

The Centre provides a safe, friendly and neutral place where children of separated families can spend time with one or both parents and sometimes other family members. The Centre is run by volunteers and a part-time co-ordinator. The centre is a child-centred environment providing toys, games and facilities that reflect the diverse needs of children affected by family breakdown. The Centre is in the Salvation Army's Brighton Congress Hall.

As the Centre's work has progressed the profile of centre users has become, on average, families with higher needs. Families with very troubled backgrounds and issues such as domestic violence and substance misuse benefit from the centre's lovely space, local service and diverse staff team.

Services Used

Brighton and Hove's Child Contact Centre has used:

- Working Together Courses especially 'working with difficult situations and people', and the 'volunteers co-ordinators' course
- Volunteer Development Project support with recruitment, supervision, induction and management approaches to working with volunteers

Learning and Support Needs

The Centre is entirely dependent on volunteers. Sessions supporting families have to run and volunteers are working at a demanding level with high needs individuals and fragile relationships at play. So the role of volunteers is critical to the centre's work. The centre needed to review and improve how it worked with volunteers as well as recruit additional volunteers from diverse backgrounds.

Putting Learning into Practice

Once the co-ordinator had completed volunteer management training, and reviewed the system for recruiting and supporting volunteers new recruitment and induction was put into place.

"It was really helpful to go through what we do and how we recruit people. This helped us get our package right and develop a new team of volunteers to run our service"

Also the co-ordinator was helped through the Working Together Courses:

"The 'dealing with difficult situations and people' course was a really insightful and sensitive piece of training. It enabled you to work on and deploy your own abilities and resources. Working Together's courses are practical and tangible in helping you

to develop yourself and your work. It is a great opportunity to exchange ideas and learn from each other”

Change and development

The Centre has greatly improved its capacity. It used to have a smaller group of 5 or 6 excellent volunteers. Now it has a team of 20. They are from far more diverse backgrounds and experience. The Centre feels that having different and diverse volunteers is essential to providing the service and to learning from one another and giving mutual support.

Best Support Methods and Gaps to be Filled

Our top three support services to organisations like us would be:

- *Staff supervision/volunteers supervision* - to help the individual as well as help people to learn from each other's different methods and contexts of volunteer work
- *Personal Development* - lots of third sector workers are in isolating and demanding roles and short inputs of personal development is good for our skills and our own support networks
- *Ongoing refreshing of information about safeguarding issues* - this is always useful for us

Evaluation of the CBP (Capacity Building Project)

Case Study Organisation:

6. Care Co-ops

Care Co-ops offers a range of services to learning disabled adults, adults with mental health support needs and people returning to the labour market. These include: 'Life Opportunities' – group activities plus employment and training support; a 'floating' housing support service; a catering and retail project that also includes the 'Nourish Café'; and a community farm. The range of activities the Care Coops runs with and for services users is many and varied from art and craft, computing, writing and performance through to social businesses in food production and catering. Care Coops supports people's therapeutic needs through social activities and through meeting employment, housing and learning needs.

Services Used

Care Co-ops has used Impetus's Performance Development Service to access human resources advice and consultancy. In addition to this the organisation's staff have completed various Working Together courses.

Separately Care Co-ops works on many partnership initiatives and projects with Impetus and BCP as summarised below:

Partnership projects with BCP -

Development of a possible new social enterprise centre; a social enterprise strategy for the City; developing a 'menu' for social enterprise development and measurement through the Better Project.

Partnership project with Impetus -

The Learning Disability Together Network; developing the South-East Wellbeing Consortium; exploring shared premises and back office functions.

"Working in partnership has been excellent and we find our partners to be excellent colleagues. There are so many things that need partnership and joint working. We can do more by working together and bring many more talents to the table. One organisation can do these things on their own especially as we are so busy running our own services and projects."

Learning and Support Needs

Care Co-ops finds it challenging to have any kind of devoted human resources function yet it has a sizeable staff team. This is the case for many third sector organisations, medium or small in size, who generally cannot invest in HR expertise. Care Co-ops needed to examine its HR systems and structures including checking compliance with employment law and good custom and practice. Care Co-ops is a 'two ticks' symbol holder which demonstrates its commitment to dealing with disability issues in employment.

In addition to Care Co-ops using HR expertise Care Co-ops staff also go on Working Together courses that the organisation could not otherwise afford to provide this kind of training from another provider or from in house resources.

“We think that the service providers in the City (like Working Together, Impetus and The Business Community Partnership) provide a good service to the third sector. It does what it says on the tin. It is the right kind of structural support and very professionally delivered. In addition we would like to see more services provided especially in the legal and human resources areas. These are more efficiently and effectively provided on a shared or joint basis.”

Putting Learning into Practice

With help from an HR adviser Care Co-ops reviewed its system and made some improvement. They would like to have had more HR advisory time available and it was not possible to conclude all the work required.

Change and development

Care co-ops was able to make some improvements to its HR systems and was reassured that its employment practices and procedures were sound. It was able to identify ongoing work to be done in the future.

Best Support Methods and Gaps to be Filled

Our top support services to organisations like us would be:

- *HR advice and support* – we need this for us and the sector where dedicated HR staff posts are so rarely affordable. This could include chunks of HR advisory time and recruiting to a list of providers who understand our business
- *Legal advice* – including on employment law, contacts and TUPE. This might be identifying or recruiting legal providers and negotiating better prices with them. We are stuck with providers quoting as much as £500 per hour. Surely the sector can get good deals from competent local providers. This will be an ever greater need for organisations looking to take on contracts from the public sector or have their own service providing contracts for clients/groups of clients. Also more of this might be need with a growth in collaborations and mergers in the third sector.

Evaluation of the CBP (Capacity Building Project)

Case Study Organisation:

7. City Coast Trust

City Coast Trust runs projects and services by the community for the community involving many volunteers and activists – 50 to 60 volunteers are regularly involved with running projects. City Coast Trust's activities include: an over 50s lunch club, a parent and toddler group and pre-school group, parent support, a youth group, and a charity shop with a drop-in located in an isolated community. Also they run "First House" which is a 'street feeding' and housing support service and is a partnership between three churches. City Coast has helped develop other community projects including "Digging for Dignity" a community gardening and training project. The Trust helps communities, volunteers and activists to run projects based on clear and identified needs.

Services Used

City Coast Trust has used:

- Working Together Courses especially facilitation skills, motivating and supporting volunteers, working with difficult situations and people, and committee/trustee briefing sessions
- Volunteer Development Project support with establishing a volunteer policy and a system of supervision and support for volunteers. The Project has helped support staff in giving the best to volunteers and getting the most from them for community benefit.

Learning and Support Needs

City Coast Trust needed to build the skills of a group of staff to enable the organisation to be more effective at engaging people and helping them run things themselves as well as cascading skills across a large and diverse workforce.

"Facilitation, group-skills and supervision is critical to our kind of work where we provide lots of activities and services and we need people to learn how to run things through the process of supporting others."

Putting Learning into Practice

The training and support that City Coast's project leader received enabled her to run meetings and groups better and enable people to improve their skills and raise their game. These methods and skills were cascaded across the organisation and its activities and services in an organised, deliberate and consistent way.

Change and development

"People's confidence has improved. Staff and volunteers can now set up and run a meeting and do things that they could not do before. People are more productive,

more professional and they have better and more consistent practice. We have stepped up a level in what we do internally, with the community and for the community. Now people are starting to move beyond the things that they know and volunteer to do new things that they have not experienced before. That has developed our capacity and capability as an organisation. What Working Together and Impetus have done for us has been brilliant and we would really like to say thank you for helping us. We have developed ourselves and our organisation and that is really good. We really need them to continue with the real nitty gritty training that they provide”

Best Support Methods and Gaps to be Filled

Our top three support services to organisations like us would be:

- *Working With Volunteers* - enabling us to learn and improve a range of skills that get the most out of people
- *Partnering* - practical training and support in how to run partnership projects and services. We know that these can be more effective and enable the community to do things and tap into talents and skills.
- *Fund-raising* - we need up to date information on sources, criteria for application and funder's policy. It is better that one service provides this rather than all of us having to do the same research and investigation.

Other information about City Coast Trust:

- Running First House on a Saturday night has been and remains challenging. It is difficult work on the streets working with people at risk and can be challenging to working safely. In view of this the project had to stop for a period and has now re-launched itself. The service is run between City Coast Church, St. Peters Church and Gloucester Road Baptist Church. Partnership makes the service viable, more possible to deliver safely and effectively as well as giving the service a better pool of talents and skills to call upon.
- Their charity shop has proved to be a runaway success with some unexpected benefits: a) the charity shop raises some money for the trust as originally intended b) it provides cheap goods that people want on their door step c) it provides a great training and skills opportunity for the 10 volunteers who run it. They say they never would have done this kind of work were it not in their community and for their community d) the shop has ended up becoming a local, informal support and community network with people popping in, having coffees and getting to know each other. It is a point of meeting and focus in an isolated community with few resources and amenities.

“We would love to see one of these in every community. It has so many benefits for local people

City Coast Trust is having to plug gaps in public sector provision before the public sector cuts have been put in place. Their pre-school had 20 additional families come and join due to the closure of another Sue Start pre-school

Evaluation of the CBP (Capacity Building Project)

*Case Study Organisation*³:

8. Emmaus Sussex

Professional relationship lays the foundations for a successful pro-bono relationship

A unique collaboration between Brighton-based professionals and a local homeless charity offers an insight into how a successful pro-bono relationship can work. The ambitious plan, to create a new attraction at Emmaus' Portslade base is an excellent example of how third sector organisations and professionals can work together for mutual benefit and is just one of the projects that has been facilitated thanks to The Business Community Partnership's (BCP) Pro**Help** network in Brighton & Hove.

The Emmaus project came to life when Simon Bottrell of 7 Creative, an ethical communication and creative agency, was shown around the charity's Portslade facility in late 2008. Whilst talking with Emmaus' business manager Joel Lewis, discussions turned to the remains of an old oak tree which had recently had its canopy removed. The tree is at the heart of the Emmaus community and a great location which looks out over Portslade. *"It's a beautiful spot,"* explains Simon, *"and when Joel mentioned he wanted to do something with it the creative in me kicked into gear and the project was born."* That project would involve the transformation of this unused area into a space which inspires and educates people about the charity's work, but also to provide an area for contemplation and debate for the Emmaus community. The project quickly grew and in the spirit of collaboration Simon helped to build a group of professionals that would lend their support to Emmaus on a pro-bono basis. That group included the Brighton and Hove Wood Recycling Project, Claire Potter (Claire Potter Design), the designer and television presenter Oliver Heath (HeathDesign), Richard Wolfstrome (Wolfstrome Design) and BCP.

Simon, recognises the value of pro-bono work, but like many professionals despite his desire to support the third sector he knew that this type of work came with its own

³ This Case Study authored by BCP (The Business Community Partnership)

challenges: *“In the past myself and other members of the group had found pro-bono work can be like a thread that once pulled it's almost impossible to find the end of.”* However with the support of BCP's Pro**Help** this project was different. *“From the outset the aims and objectives of the project were clear and all parties clearly understood what would be expected of them at each stage. This meant that Emmaus knew exactly what our level of commitment was and we were able to ensure that the time we would spend on the project was capped. This has developed as the project has progressed and stage by stage all of the parties have worked together to ensure that everyone is comfortable with their involvement. With these clear boundaries, objectives and expectations in place the relationship has been more professional than pro-bono which has made it more comfortable for everyone involved.”*

It's something echoed by Joel and Emmaus: *“The project has worked fantastically well from our perspective and what started out as a few casual conversations quickly became an established professional relationship where everyone knew what was expected of them. The support of the group has also been invaluable. Without them this project would have been completed on a minor scale, but thanks to their involvement we've got something to really shout about.”* In fact, given the nature and the scale of the project Emmaus realised there would be a cost involved with its completion, a potentially difficult bridge to cross in most pro-bono projects but something that was made easier by the professional relationships that had been developed. *“It was made clear from the very first meeting that the individuals involved would give their expertise and support at no cost. However, the group recognised that a number of professional services (such as planning application and drawings) would need to be funded and so payment needed to be discussed so no one was out of pocket.”*

As well as bringing local businesses and third sector organisations together to make a valuable contribution to their community, BCP's Pro**Help** network also offers advice, guidance and support to ensure both parties benefit from the activity and manage their time and resources effectively. This meant the project offered tangible benefits for everyone involved as Joel says: *“as the business manager it's my responsibility to ensure that we are constantly raising our profile and part of that is making contacts within the local community. Sometimes it can be hard to reach out*

to businesses and professionals so the relationships that have been built through this project are invaluable to us. Working as part of the group has also opened us up to new processes and new ways of thinking; overall it's been a great experience and one which we're keen to replicate in the future."

Simon feels the same and believes that alongside a real sense of achievement, supporting the project has had notable business benefits too. *"Through the project I've been able to build relationships that I may not have been able to make in a traditional cash project and the people that I've worked with through the group are contacts that I'm sure I'll return to working with again in the future."*

Pro**Help** offers local businesses the opportunity to make a real difference to the success of community organisations that have big plans and limited resources. By offering 'in-kind' practical advice and support, they can advance the vital contribution those organisations make to the local community and help them to achieve sustainability in the long term. Nationally, Pro**Help** is the largest provider of free professional support to local communities through a network of over 1,000 businesses. Annually members provide £6m worth of 'in kind' support to the community. The The Business Community Partnership brings partnership expertise and local knowledge to enhance the Pro**Help** programme in Brighton and Hove.

For more information about:

BCP's Pro**Help** network visit www.bhbcp.org.uk, email kate@bhbcp.org.uk or call 01273 770075.

BCP's More Than Profit Network for Social Enterprise <http://www.bhbcp.org.uk/services/more-than-profit/> or email morethanprofit@bhbcp.org.uk or call 01273 770075.

Evaluation of the CBP (Capacity Building Project)

Case Study Organisation:

9. Grassroots Training CIC

Grassroots Training is a social enterprise that provides training for professionals, communities and volunteers in positive mental health and suicide prevention. It has taken three years to develop the organisation as a social enterprise to a point where it has a positive and fruitful future.

The training models and processes that Grassroots applies are more inclusive community based approaches to positive mental health and illness prevention. The course that they run “Safe Talk” and “Assist” are based on people in communities and social networks having the skills to recognise mental health issues and support needs and to intervene appropriately and effectively to help the person.

Services Used

Grassroots training have used:

- Working Together Courses
- One-off courses such as PR skills with Blue Rocket
- One-to-one business planning support through The Business Community Partnership’s ‘ProHelp’ service
- Participating in the ‘Pro-Help’ social enterprise and business network

Learning and Support Needs

Grassroots Training had to develop its social business and its several ‘offers’ that it was making to commissioners of training. In turn it also needed to develop an appropriate organisational structure to facilitate this. It had been badly advised in the past to develop as a charity organisation when a community interest company was a better option. It was also advised to seek out grants where pursuing contracts and commissions was a better notion. The organisation hit crunch point and faced possible closure with finances having run dry.

Putting Learning into Practice

The business planning, finance and public relations advice that Grassroots has received was very appropriate to its needs. On the strength of sound marketing and PR advice and one-to-one support the organisation has re-fashioned itself into a business focussed social enterprise. It has doubled its turnover each year for three years.

“The advisory sessions felt very bespoke and individualised to our needs as an organisation. It was really helpful two way thinking. We have the people skills - what we needed was the business skills and we were very pleased with what we got. It was inspiring and motivating and enabled us to develop our business plan. We felt

much more confident in promoting our package to many different audiences. We would have folded had we not had this help”

Change and development

Grassroots has developed its package of training products and increased its business. This includes a training-the-trainer module, mentoring new trainers and policy development in positive mental health. More practice communities and local people can benefit from Grassroots’ cascade model of skills and knowledge where people in day-to-day life are empowered to enable community mental health and well being rather than always being reliant upon professional diagnosis.

The organisation is now looking further afield to new commissioners and a wider geographical area and is much more confident in selling the benefits of its work.

Best Support Methods and Gaps to be Filled

The fact that the support package involved a mixture of different activities was particularly helpful to Grassroots CIC. These were:

- one-to-one advice
- training
- and participation in a network

BCP valued the free specialist business advice it brokered at £1225 worth of in kind support.

“We would also like to see more policy development and services support directed towards social enterprises. Also a project that helped us work with a benchmark colleague or buddy elsewhere would be useful”

Other Information about Grassroots Training

- They have an intern working with them on how to demonstrate social return on investment (SROI)
- They are looking to developing clients in the private sector as PCT commissioners further afield
- They are using balanced scorecard
- Their finance worker has trained in providing triple bottom line evidence
- They are a Mindful employer and have this kite-mark

Evaluation of the CBP (Capacity Building Project)

Case Study Organisation⁴:

10. MNT, Moulsecoomb Neighbourhood Trust

The Moulsecoomb Neighbourhood Trust was started in 1983 by a group of local residents and professionals who worked together to send families in need on holiday. The project was successful and in the years since the holiday is still the organisation's longest running project. Outside of the holiday project The Trust has been involved in a wide range of activity since it came into existence. But for most of the past decade it has focused primarily on childcare projects and provides both an Ofsted registered and a mobile crèche service as well as out of schools activities projects.

Like many small charities and social entrepreneurs through **ProHelp** Moulsecoomb Neighbourhood Trust has been able to access support and professional advice that would not be typically available to them. Janine Enefer the Trust's manager said: *"All of the assistance that has been given by ProHelp has been invaluable. Small charities such as ours do not have a large pool of expertise to call on within our team and management often have to be a Jack of All Trades which is an un-realistic expectation. We also don't have the financial resources to buy in this kind of expert help so ProHelp provides us with an ideal opportunity to access the support we need."*

Through **ProHelp** Moulsecoomb Neighbourhood Trust accessed expert advice and guidance in employment law, legal advice on social enterprise and professional HR input, as well as professional mentoring. The support was invaluable and helped The Trust to address some very distinctive issues. Janine says: *"At the time I was not receiving any personal supervision in my role as manager of the Trust so through ProHelp I was able to seek out professional assistance in the form of a mentor who has helped me think through some difficult situations and provide impartial advice that has helped me to develop workable solutions. On a practical level, advice on HR and employment law has helped as our organisation has grown after a period of redundancy. More specifically the advice has helped in ensuring we have been*

⁴ This Case Study authored by BCP (The Business Community Partnership)

legally covered when one of our crèches became an in-house operation after our hosts could no longer afford the service. “

So how has the support helped? Janine is full of praise for the assistance she’s received from Pro**Help** and is in no doubt of its benefits both personally and for the Trust as a whole. She said: *“On a personal level I would not have been able to perform my role as well as I have without the support and advice I’ve had access to. Our HR procedures would not be up to date and the Trust could have been subject to legal claims that would more than likely have led us to close one or more of our projects if not folded altogether had such an event occurred; so the help really has been invaluable and has enabled us to continue to make a difference to people’s lives.”*

As well as providing access to professional input the Pro**Help** network also helps to ensure the relationship runs as smoothly as possible for the benefit of both the charity and the businesses involved, something that was apparent to Janine in the support which she received: *“Pro**Help** has done all the leg work between us and the professionals. Sourcing and matching with our requirements, setting up meetings, hosting events and workshops in their meeting rooms and putting on networking events all of the highest calibre. I cannot praise the network enough. I have found them to be resourceful, helpful, accommodating and professional at the same time as being friendly and approachable. They understand the voluntary sector well but are also comfortable with the business sector too.”*

Pro**Help** offers local businesses the opportunity to make a real difference to the success of community organisations that have big plans and limited resources. By offering ‘in-kind’ practical advice and support, they can support the vital contribution those organisations make to the local community and help them to achieve sustainability in the long term. Nationally, Pro**Help** is the largest provider of free professional support to local communities through a network of over 1,000 businesses. Annually members provide £6m worth of ‘in kind’ support to the community. The The Business Community Partnership brings partnership expertise and local knowledge to enhance the Pro**Help** programme in Brighton and Hove.

For more information about BCP’s Pro**Help** network visit www.bhbcp.org.uk or call 01273 770075.

Evaluation of the CBP (Capacity Building Project)

Case Study Organisation:

11. RISE, Refuge, information, support and education

RISE provides a residential refuge for women who have suffered domestic violence alongside resettlement support, a helpline, support to survivors of domestic abuse, community outreach to women at risk and peer support. RISE also supports children and young people and runs prevention programmes through schools and play therapy.

Services Used

RISE have used:

- Working Together Courses on a regular basis including supervision skills, working with difficult people and mentoring
- Performance Development Service to help facilitate a women's services partnership project (in a partnership with other third sector organisations)
- The Business Community Partnership for accessing chief executive coaching and finding facilitation for a team building session

Learning and Support Needs

RISE, like many third sector organisations, nurtures many of its workers into becoming supervisors and managers. Staff have to deal with many complex and high risk issues on a day to day basis plus help others to deal with these things too. Supervision skills are essential to this as is training in the subject.

“Supervision is key for us. We have used other training providers as well as Working Together that are quite expensive. Working Together's courses are relevant, targeted at us and local colleagues and they know what the stresses and challenges are in our sector. They have a specialist knowledge and commitment to our sector. All of our management team have done at least one Working Together course and really benefitted from it”

Putting Learning into Practice

RISE staff use the supervision approaches in day-to-day supervision of staff and in staff development across their range of services units.

Change and development

RISE has survived financial hardships. The organisation would not be able to access training were it not free or low cost. It has successfully developed new services including a partnership project that works with women offenders. RISE maintains a diverse range of ways to combat domestic abuse from prevention through to intervention.

Best Support Methods and Gaps to be Filled

Support from infrastructure agencies helps maintain the skills and knowledge of the organisation, women's services and the third sector as a whole. Training locally has been very beneficial with the additional bonus of staff being able to learn about other organisations and the skills, approaches and methods they deploy.

RISE would like to see a multi-agency approach to plugging a gap in the City in diversity training. Also they would like to see training and support for volunteers developed covering topics such as confidence and self-esteem building, participation in groups and meetings and user involvement. This needs to be done across the sector especially for organisations that don't have the resources for training and developing volunteers internally.

Evaluation of the CBP (Capacity Building Project)

Case Study Organisation:

12. SCIP, Sussex Community Internet Project

SCIP provides a range of information technology services to the third sector including maintenance, training, web-design and community information. It runs various IT based projects and training programmes. The organisation employs 8 staff and has regular volunteers (currently a team of 4). SCIP has gone through various stages of development and growth. Akin to many other third sector organisations SCIP needs expert advice from time to time as it cannot afford to buy in business support staff in areas such as human resources or contract management.

Services Used

SCIP has used:

- Impetus's Performance Development Service - for human resources advice and business strategy advice
- Working Together Courses on a few occasions - for instance on Time Management

SCIP also works in partnership with many third sector service-providers in supporting third sector organisations.

Learning and Support Needs

SCIP was successfully running a series of projects and services that had evolved over time. What it needed to do was to organise its work programme and staff differently.

“SCIP had a structural deficit. It was a conglomeration of 5 separate departments of one! We needed to formalise ourselves and get a professional structure in place. Impetus fixed us up with an HR adviser and subsidised some of the costs. One thing that was so useful was having someone we could turn to who could make us a recommendation. It would have taken us such a long time to find anyone and in any case they might not have been right for our needs.”

SCIP used an HR adviser to devise contracts of employment, terms and conditions, job descriptions and person specifications. They really valued the fact that the adviser understood the third sector and the marketplace that SCIP operates in.

Putting Learning into Practice

SCIP put into place a new HR system which had the added benefit of simplifying the whole work programme of the organisation.

Change and development

Now the work programme of the organisation is simpler and clearer enabling the staff team to more professionally provide a diverse range of services as well as run specific development and training projects for the third sector and public sector organisations.

As a result of professional input and focussed management SCIP is now:

- More systematic in work flow and task management
- More standardised in how it completes tasks and projects
- Compliant to a high standard of HR procedure and contract management

Best Support Methods and Gaps to be Filled

“Often organisations like us just might need half an hour from time to time with an expert for instance to check out an HR issue or a funding/contract compliance issue. We don’t need the full business strategy or a whole project put in place just some sensible advice to make sure we are on the right track”.

Our top three support services would be:

- *Advice and sign-posting* to a range of professional support services
- *Funding advice - on funding sources*, there is loads out there but it is fragmented
- *Funding advice – how to deal with funders*, this can be very complex and you can waste a lot of time on it. We just need people to check out what are the best way of dealing with funding and contract requirements.

Other Information about SCIP

- They have 3 interns working with them as well as a retiree all on a regular basis
- They have various clients in the public sector as well as the third sector such as the Museums Service

Appendix 1 – Questionnaire used for semi-structured interviews

Semi-structured interview questions, capacity building project evaluation summer 2010

BCP, WTP, Impetus’s Volunteer Centre and Impetus’s PDS have been providing support services in partnership under the banner of the ‘capacity building project’.

A short evaluation of this work is being done to inform what support services best help organisations and individuals to develop, flourish or survive.

Briefly describe in a nutshell what you and your organisation do:

- 1) Which services have you used and when:

PROVIDER	SERVICE	TIME When and how much	RATING Your overall rating on a scale of 1 to 10 A) for you personally and B) for your organisation or service
Working Together Project			
Impetus Performance Development Service			
Impetus Volunteer Development Project			
The Business Community Partnership			

- 2)
 - a) What was your learning or support need at the time?
 - b) Why did you choose to use this service/s?
 - c) Did the service fulfil your learning or support need at the time?

- 3) What did you do with the learning/support once you had received it How did you put the learning or advice into practice (personally and organisationally)

- 4) What has changed, developed or improved for you or the organisation since you received the training/support?
- 5) To what extent do you put these changes down to training, support, advice or knowledge you acquired from the services provider/s
- 6) How effective was the service at helping you or your organisation make changes?
- 7) What other general comments would you make about how the service/training has helped you (or not)?
- 8) What do you feel are the most effective and efficient ways that infrastructure organisations can support third sector organisations? (e.g. training topics; one-to-one support; topic-specific advice; information; coaching)