



# WestLondon Network

## Community Cohesion

## 2008 Conference Report



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## Introduction

West London Network is a sub-regional network of voluntary sector organisations in the West London Area. Our Steering group (SG) is comprised of 14 organisations including the six CVS of Brent, Ealing, Harrow, Hillingdon, Hounslow and Hammersmith & Fulham, 6 additional borough representatives, and YMCA, Groundwork, REAP, Southall Community Alliance, Outwest, Third Age Foundation.

WLN is staffed by a Development Manager and Networks Development Officer.

## Background & Context

Our topic at this year's conference was "**Community Cohesion**". A cohesive community is one where:

- there is a common vision and a sense of belonging for all communities
- the diversity of people's different backgrounds and circumstances is appreciated and positively valued
- those from different backgrounds have similar life opportunities
- strong and positive relationships are being developed between people from different backgrounds in the workplace, in schools and within neighbourhoods.

The Local Government White Paper has placed more emphasis on local councils to boost community cohesion and a commission on Integration and Cohesion was established in June 2006. The commission, a fixed term advisory body, was set up to consider how local areas can make the most of the benefits delivered by increasing diversity - and also to consider how they can respond to the tensions it can sometimes cause. It was tasked with developing practical approaches to building communities' own capacities to prevent and manage tensions.

Led by Darra Singh, Chief Executive of Ealing Council, the independent advisory body explored how different communities and places in England are getting along. It also looked at what more might be done to bring people together – respecting differences, but developing a shared sense of belonging and purpose.

The conference gave delegates the opportunity to learn more about Community Cohesion, the White Paper, how it will impact on groups at a local level and how community groups can get involved with the Community Cohesion Agenda.

## Opening Session

### Welcome

Clare Scott Booth, Chair of West London Network welcomed the delegates to the 6<sup>th</sup> Annual conference, with this year's theme being Community Cohesion.

She explained that one of the roles of West London Network was to strengthen the voice of the Voluntary and Community Sector in West London. Therefore the theme of today's Conference was Community Cohesion which is about creating a sense of belonging and creating strong and positive relationships - the Voluntary and Community Sector is critical in this.

Clare then introduced Greg Clark, MP, Shadow Minister for Charities, Voluntary Bodies and Social Enterprise. Greg is also the MP for Tunbridge Wells.

### Speaker One: Greg Clark

Greg Clark referred to the Green Paper "Voluntary Action in the twenty first century" this title reflected the fact that it is the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Beveridge report on Voluntary Action. The Green Paper seeks to change Government to be more open to the Voluntary and Community Sector. Greg referred to the term "third sector" as having negative connotations. He felt that recognition of the sector was needed as the idea of 'community' became increasingly complex. It is essential that Central Government understands what is happening in Communities locally .He encouraged delegates to read the Green Paper as it is still at the consultation stage.

The key contents in the Green Paper are as follows.

- ✓ The Sector should be independent of Government
- ✓ A healthy stream of voluntary donations is needed; in the UK only 0.07% of income is given. (In the US average giving is 0.7% of income and it would be helpful to have an accepted norm of 1% of income.)
- ✓ As a token starter all Government employees will be given eight hours a year to volunteer
- ✓ Halting the erosion of grant income, Greg feels that grants are a good thing and that contracts should only be used when there are clear reasons to do so. Grants need to be long term and to include all costs.

- ✓ COMPACT, whilst this is a good idea it is more useful in the breach than the observance. This needs to be brought up to date, beginning with full cost recovery.

## **Speaker Two: Dinah Cox**

Clare introduced the next speaker Dinah Cox, Chief Executive of Race on the Agenda .Dinah has campaigned for many years on social policy issues and the elimination of racial discrimination and was recently awarded the MBE.

Dinah began by asking the audience “which community do you belong to”. She made the point that communities are usually perceived as being other than the norm, e.g. if someone is straight they do not usually define themselves as such. Communities are also defined by where you live. The importance of this is that we can use a sense of isolation to create a community and people can become exclusive or inclusive. The role of the Voluntary and Community Sector is to increase understanding and therefore increase respect.

Dinah feels we can use Equalities and Human Rights legislation to help so that we understand that everyone is “different but equal”. True human rights are based on the FRED principals (freedom, respect, equalities and dignity).

Discrimination still exists. Dinah suggested the following solutions:

- ✓ Talking. This should be followed by
- ✓ Action and projects (in the Voluntary Sector this is particularly beneficial at Grass Roots level ) and
- ✓ Campaigning giving a voice to those who do not have one.

Dinah explained that we need resources to get this done and there is a concern in the Equality Sector about the single issue agenda, which may lead to a decrease in funding for single issue groups.

Clare then invited the audience to ask questions.

## Question and Answer Session

**Question from Kate Goddard**, Manager of the Brent Volunteer Bureau. Kate asked Greg what his views were about the strength of the volunteering infrastructure groups.

**Response:** Greg spoke about 'deserts' of volunteering and that these often occur when there is a low level of employment and can be due to concern over benefits. He suggested the principle of kick starting volunteering in these areas with established organisations such as CSV rather than creating new organisations.

**Question from Nick Farraday**, Friends of the Earth. Their research suggested the level of Government support for the Voluntary Sector at present was less than 1% of GDP. What did the panel feel about this?

**Response:** Greg responded that he believed it was 2% of GDP but this was still too low and that barriers needed to be torn down so that the Voluntary Sector can deliver public services. He extended this to say that Community Groups should know who holds public money and how it is spent in local areas so that they can propose alternative routes.

Dinah commented that some smaller groups can be disadvantaged in the rush to service delivery and this will then exclude the voice role of the voluntary sector. She further commented that some volunteering is not recognised e.g. BMER communities volunteer through their families and this is less formalised.

**Question from Sarah Robinson**, Hammersmith and Fulham Action on Disability. She commented that commissioning is dangerous in that the nature of the Voluntary Sector often means that only large national bodies will be able to deliver services. What did the speakers think of this? She also commented on the problems of short term contracts and lack of continuity. She has a project that only allows two years to solve unemployment for disabled people in West London.

**Response:** Dinah advised that in any local authority area there should be a CVS which can work with Small Groups. However it is difficult and we need to be creative for Small Groups. Sometimes it can be best to work together to achieve

a critical mass. She further commented that the Local Authorities need to be on board and that three out of the six West London local authorities have not chosen relevant national indicators in their LAA that will help the Voluntary and Community Sector.

Greg said that there was no quick fix, the Green Paper shows a long term way to set the right course for the future and there is a tension with small groups. He quoted David Cameron who said that price is not always the best indicator of value. Outcomes are more important in terms of funding infrastructure; CVS do great work and perhaps they should be funded more and do more. He felt we needed to be creative about the 'deserts' that he referred to earlier and that we should consider any organisation already doing work in the area.

Dinah added that funding was needed for less sexy projects e.g. the infrastructure projects. We should not just rely on philanthropy or there may be a class bias towards what is funded in the future.

A spokesman for the Hindu Cultural Association said that Small Groups feel excluded.

## **Morning Workshops**

The conference divided into groups for the workshop sessions. We regret that notes of two of the workshops are unavailable, these are

- Workshop 1: (am) Muslim Communities Network
- Workshop 2:(pm) Engaging with Local Businesses

### **Workshop 2: 2012 – Opportunities in West London**

**Facilitated by:** Helen Mitchell, West London 2012 Officer & Colin Bowen, 2012 Volunteering Legacy Officer, Greater London Volunteering

#### **The Three key points from this workshop were:**

1) There will be a change in culture for many of the organisations and therefore expenses need to be accounted for, e.g. travel costs.

2) To establish a Volunteering London Website

What needs to be on the website?

- ✓ events calendar, including sporting and others
- ✓ resources for organisations working with volunteers
- ✓ guide to quality assurance of the events. This will help people know what events are on and which ones to volunteer for.
- ✓ fantastic legacy

3) Many businesses are going to generate a lot of income from 2012 and we need to ensure that they also support the activities. This can be done by building on good examples that have already been established.

## **Workshop 3: Premises & Sharing Space**

**Facilitated by:** Carol Coventry (Consultant)

The broad remit of this session was to give groups an opportunity to hear about latest developments, future issues and national strategies affecting the Voluntary and Community Sector around *Premises* and to discuss the role *Shared Spaces* could play in making Stronger Communities.

More specifically the workshop was designed to seek answers to four key questions to help West London Network plan its work priorities and to inform sub regional strategy.

### **Key Questions:**

How could groups work in partnership in this area cross borough?

- ✓ How can local groups contribute to “Community Cohesion” and making “Stronger Communities”?
- ✓ What are key issues for delegates?
- ✓ What should be done strategically on a sub regional level?

Carol outlined her recent work with Ealing Resource Centre and West London Network on premises telling the group that her interest in premises issues started as Director of Hillingdon CVS, working in shared rooms at the back of local church premises. Describing the experiences relating to premises issues as a “continuing headache” Carol outlined Hillingdon CVS’s journey, via a period of office sharing with the local Health Authority, to its current base as part a resource centre in a formerly derelict town hall building.

A key issue is that although groups do need somewhere to run their services from, they also have problems working out their requirements. The temptation is to assume that they need their own premises, whereas a more innovative approach can pay dividends.

Delegates contributed their experiences and outlined the problems as follows:

**Cost:** Renting an office is expensive, especially if it is only used for short sessions. This leads to many groups working in very cramped spaces often in a poor state of repair.

Working from home is one approach used to keep costs down, but has the same constraints on expansion as a small office. Working from home can also cause friction with other family members and a feeling of isolation for the worker- the dining room table was described as sometimes being “a very lonely place”. Small groups and new groups in particular, need a meeting/activity space at either no cost or very low cost.

**Problems of sharing space:** In a recent WLN survey 67% of respondents said they would not consider sharing space with other VCS organisations. Problems experienced by delegates related to

Competition for space

- ✓ Equipment/space taken over/misused
- ✓ Confidentiality
- ✓ Noise
- ✓ Domestic Politics (Who is responsible for locking up? Keeping certain areas, e.g. kitchen, tidy?)
- ✓ Bills – costs may not be divided on a pro rata basis
- ✓ Fear of the unknown including legal issues

**How to Share Space:** There are a number of ways of sharing space using a resource centre, co location, sub letting or hot desking. Ealing Resource Centre and Southall Community Alliance were highlighted as practical examples of shared space systems working well.

There are a number of advantages to sharing space:

- ✓ Costs can be reduced for everyone. Rent and utilities bills can be shared and savings can be made by bulk buying office supplies including tea and coffee.
- ✓ Workers do not feel so isolated and can benefit from peer support and the sense of team spirit can form amongst a collection of small organisations in a similar way to that which occurs within a large organisation containing a number of distinct projects.
- ✓ Networking and partnership opportunities are close to hand.

Some of the problems highlighted in the first section can be overcome fairly easily, for instance by putting access codes onto a photocopier to ensure that each group pays only for its own usage. Nevertheless premises issues can be complicated and you cannot rely on peoples’ better nature- there have to be firm rules set from the start!

Groups require additional training to help them deal with the legal issues involved, e.g. setting up a separate limited company if this is required to manage the building, building management and how to secure funding and ensure longer term sustainability.

### **Key Points:**

#### **How could groups work in partnership in this area cross borough?**

- Groups could use their local knowledge to assist in the compilation of a premises database.
- This needs to be available online and show both local and sub-regional availability with a matching service facility eg for hot desk bookings or one off events

#### **How can local groups contribute to “Community Cohesion” and making “Stronger Communities”?**

- When diverse groups share office space and resources they often find that wider partnerships happen organically through “water cooler”/coffee break networking and peer support.

#### **What are key issues for delegates?**

- Groups need support and training in premises issues, to enable them to achieve long term sustainability.
- Groups need to be encouraged to explore all the models to decide which would be best for them rather than making an assumption that they “need an office”
- Groups need to be able to have direct access to a dedicated local authority contact.

Examples were given of difficulties in communication with Local authorities. LA departments do not always appear to be working closely together and sometimes this caused difficulties for the sector. There is a need for property departments to fully understand the effects of decisions on local voluntary and community groups. In one borough it had proved difficult to get support for the refurbishment of a community building. Subsequently the building was vandalised and response to this act was positive with the Scout group and Pensioners’ luncheon club being swiftly re-housed in new premises. This had a very positive effect on local community activity.

### **What should be done strategically on a sub regional level?**

- Political awareness needs to be raised.
- Currently the lack of understanding of conditions faced by the VCS and the difficulties arising from a lack of information is a key issue.
- The local authority may consider a building to be derelict without realising that it is nevertheless the hub for a high level of VCS activities.
- Groups often find it difficult to establish who owns the land or building that they are interested in which may mean that premises remain empty, and then skew statistics by appearing to be derelict and unwanted.
- There have been examples of Local Authorities revaluing the land on which scout huts or other community buildings are built with a resultant increase in rent coupled with associated financial problems, for the groups. Yet politically such young peoples' activities/groups are often cited as a way of achieving a more cohesive community.

### **Workshop 4: Citizenship and the Role of the Voluntary Sector**

**Facilitated by:** Mark Rimmer, Director of Registration and Nationality, London Borough of Brent

- Citizenship ceremonies celebrate new nationality, a pledge to the Queen and nation. The Mayor is the first dignitary who meets the new citizens.
- 170,000 people have been through the British citizenship process. Harrow, Ealing and Brent are in the top three for highest turnover of people going through these ceremonies.
- Citizenship in the UK is a three stage journey. Earned Citizenship is now being introduced. This will introduce three categories of people eligible:
  - People who are highly skilled / skilled
  - Family members
  - People in need of protection
- The journey is changing too. The process will be:
  - Temporary Residence
  - Probationary Citizenship
  - Citizenship / Permanent Residence
- A person seeking to become a British citizen or permanent residence will need to demonstrate that they are joining in the British way of life. This will include:

- Learning English (ESOL will be required)
- Learning and Understanding the UK Structures
- Obeying British Law
- Pay Tax or be Self Sufficient
- Temporary Residence will be given for five years.
- People will be given the option of being able to fast track citizenship status to one year if they take part in volunteer work.

This could be a good opportunity for the six west London boroughs.

**Future of Ceremonies:**

- Involvement in schools, getting kids involved in the ceremony.
- Sponsorship by business, getting more businesses involved in celebrating the change in nationality
- Links with voluntary organisations, opportunities for organisations to be present at the ceremony and to harness the positive enthusiasm of the people at the ceremony in volunteering.
- Regional / sub-regional ceremonies, a welcome to London ceremony has been suggested to the Mayor.

**Group discussion:** The group was asked to consider the strategic direction of citizenship, what the key issues are for delegates, how organisations can work in partnership in this area and across the boroughs.

**Comments:**

- Formalise the network that already exists
- Need to start with education and get into schools earlier, during primary education
- Volunteer Centres can get other groups involved
- Build relationships with the Job Centre
- More resources for Volunteer Centres to be able to develop volunteer placements
- Volunteers need organisations that can support and manage them which may not be possible in a very small voluntary group.
- Sometimes there is a view that volunteers are a free resource but there is a lot of time involved in training and management of the volunteer which the local organisation needs to invest in

- Be wary of the Job Centre Plus model. Voluntary organisations have refused volunteers who they know won't stay around long and are using it as a spring board for employment or forced by the Job Centre to take up volunteering.
- There will need to be support put in place such as ESOL classes
- So many issues around the bureaucracy which prohibits them getting into work
- Smaller set ups for ESOL, maybe through smaller organisations. Bigger organisations keep getting all the funding and this is not effective.
- Use of the media to celebrate citizenship. Shared sense of belonging needs to be celebrated.
- Students feel that Citizenship in school isn't really necessary as there isn't an exam for this subject.
- Need to get more people coming to events and finding out about refugees and asylum seekers and finding out the difference about the status of these groups and getting to know the motivations for people coming to the UK.
- The funding should be directed towards organisations / schemes or projects which are proven effective.
- People need to learn the basics – how to access the services, signposting needed.
- People from the relevant communities could help mentor those groups of people going through the citizenship process.
- More funding is needed for voluntary sector to work with people and less dictating what the services the organisations should be providing. The sector is good at finding solutions.

## Afternoon Workshops

### Workshop 1 (PM): West London Story – Cultural Programme for 2012 & beyond

Facilitated by: Debra King Director, Western Wedge

The aims of the workshop were outlined

- Presenting a distinctive West London Cultural Offer for the London 2012 Cultural Programme
- Developing the 'West London Story' to find and tell its own distinctively different part of London's story
- Delivering maximum creative value to West London's arts sector and communities in 2012 & beyond

Debra King is an independent producer, programmer and project development director. She has extensive knowledge of the arts sector and fifteen year's experience of working in the arts sector and fifteen year's experience of working in arts management at a senior level.

Workshop participants introduced themselves and the organisations they represent. There was an overwhelmingly positive response to becoming involved in the development of the West London Story.

Their motivations and interests included:

- |                                       |                                   |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| ✓ more opportunities for volunteering | ✓ sports and culture volunteering |
| ✓ community involvement               | ✓ disability involvement          |
| ✓ cultural activities programme       | ✓ promote their org               |
| ✓ funding source                      | ✓ event management                |
| ✓ stage events                        | ✓ mental health                   |
|                                       | ✓ refugees                        |

The purpose of consultation is to provide definition of the cultural programme for "Western Wedge" which comprises 8 London boroughs. The programme is to be funded through the Arts Council

Tim Jones has been commissioned to fundraise for the programme and collaborate through film & multi-media to build a creative response to 2012 and beyond. The purpose is to develop social engagement and community cohesion. This will be a gradual process until 2009 which will build into the West London Story.

The workshop generated a plethora of creative ideas from participants with particular note were recognition of the power of stories to create history, myth through imagination.

Participants identified

- ✓ Complexity
- ✓ Intensity
- ✓ Humanity
- ✓ Respect

Dreams and Imagination were dominant themes

**Practical suggestions included:**

- A residency programme to bring to festivals
- Show cases for community arts groups with young people at the centre of the programme. High profile, of new & emerging talent with the links between local – national – international, to be emphasised
- The strength of partnership between community arts organisations and arts professionals to increase the skill base in community arts groups was seen to be key to the success of the programme.
- The role of ambassadors to develop arts and critical debate were seen as important
- Opportunity for community led volunteering for West London to try to gain corporate sponsorship building on existing contacts and Corporate Social Responsibility was seen as crucial to the success of the programme along with volunteering time, talent and technical skills through employee volunteering
- Different cultures: the creative energy can be harnessed and celebrated extra interest and enthusiasm to the cultural Olympiad
- Different culture and background of community arts working together to celebrate London as one community made up of many different cultures
- Cultural Olympiad for people with disabilities to volunteer and the Paralympic movement were seen as part of the friendship at the heart of the Olympian ideal

## **Workshop3 (pm): Action Learning for Managers**

**Facilitated by:** Rachel Fryatt, Director CVS Hounslow

Rachel has spent five years working with Action Learning Sets. Whilst working with the South London Learning Partnership, she was able to put together a number of AL Sets which successfully met on a regular basis to resolve work issues. A set generally comprises 6 people + a facilitator/time-keeper who have no work or personal relationship, the basic ground-rule being confidentiality.

The key skills for Action Learning were provided in note form and discussed prior to forming 3 Action Sets comprising four participants. In each set, one member was chosen to present their problem or issue and there was one timekeeper. Sets worked separately on attempting to use first the appropriate questions and then the action points which would enable the action learning process in the presenter. Rachel circulated the sets as facilitator.

**Set 1 Problem:** This group decided to change the brief and role-played the following situation: a middle aged man in an established relationship wanted children but his partner did not. The man had sought his father's help/advice. The problem was presented by the father.

**Set 2 Problem:** lack of cohesion amongst a large staff, leading to failure of projects.

**Set 3 Problem:** failure to retain volunteers.

Sample questions:

Set 1:

- Who else has your son discussed this with?
- What do you want to achieve for your son?
- Have you had any professional advice?
- Are you expecting too much of yourself in thinking you can solve your son's problem?
- Do you think it's fair of him to expect it of you?

Set 2:

- Do you have team leaders?
- Do you have a project manager?

- Do you have guidance policies?
- Are these overt or covert issues?
- Does this make your life difficult?
- Are you able to bring this out into the open?

Set 3:

- Are you able to refer your clients to other appropriate organisations?
- What incentives do you offer volunteers?
- Do you offer expenses? Free training? Other rewards or recognition?
- Can you identify what volunteers need? What they enjoy doing?
- Do you arrange special events? Fundraising events? Publicity?

**Action Points:**

Set 1: Had given themselves a hard task in that their problem was a) personal and b) fictional. They felt they were at an impasse. Rachel pointed out that in the normal course of events the set would continue to meet at 6 weekly intervals. There would be developments in this apparently 'impossible' situation and in the mind of the presenter as he took on board the possibilities opened up to him by the questioning of the set. Delaying any intervention/interference was the action point ultimately agreed.

Set 2: Issue to be discussed with line manager and raised at staff meeting. A dedicated training day might be needed.

Set 3: Create a special event for recruiting

- Identify/create database of community organisations for referrals
- Match volunteers with training
- Respect and appreciate volunteers and be flexible about their work
- Draft job specs. for volunteers
- Check insurances
- Publicise in libraries, one-stop-shop, local radio, local CVS
- Action set to meet on a regular basis.

The workshop re-assembled to exchange views. They had become aware of the importance of communication and felt the system could be used to tackle work issues. They felt that accessing enough people to make up good sets needs a wide network and it's not always easy to stay with the questioning and avoid giving advice.

### **Rachel explained the system she had operated:**

- All members of S. London Learning Partnership database were circulated
- A 'taster' day was set up
- Five groups were formed, meeting all day once every 6 weeks for 40-50 minute sessions with breaks between.
- The sets created trust and began to understand underlying problems
- The sets only provided the right questions the 'answers' came from those presenting a problem.
- The method is suitable for resolving: working relationships, staff issues, problems with trustees, isolation of managers etc.

### **Workshop 4 (PM) : Involving young people in your organisation**

**Facilitated by:** Davis Williams and Ember Hibbert, involved

**Aim:** to show how to tap into the energy and enthusiasm of young people to support your organisation.

#### **Young people and volunteering**

- Amongst young people, there is a myth that volunteering is boring, and is only for old people. They often think that it is not fun, is inflexible, offers no training, and is not relevant to their passions and skills. They can also find the application procedures complex and off-putting.
- Young people themselves feel stereotyped and demonised; and that they are not listened to or respected. They are often not involved in decision-making.
- Young people's own preferences for being involved in their communities focus on collaborating with adults to initiate and lead volunteering activities. They prefer this to purely being consulted, or to working in isolation from adults.
- It's important to find out from young people what they want to do, and involve them in your steering group or committee.  
Young people learn through the volunteering process.

#### **Youth volunteering in West London**

The new involved team for West London covers the 6 West London boroughs. The team will help organisations to develop new opportunities for, and to involve, young people.

A survey looked at what young people look for in a volunteering placement:

- Someone to coordinate and support the volunteering
- Flexibility (e.g.: around college commitments)
- Accreditation/ awards
- Feeling that what they are doing makes a difference
- Help with out-of-pocket expenses, to remove financial barriers
- Working with professionals, to try out a possible career path

The vteam in West London will:

- Support organisations to recruit and retain young volunteers, including young volunteers from West London's diverse communities. Volunteers will be put forward based on the skills and attributes required for the role.
- Assist with young volunteers' support needs.
- Signpost to organisations that offer CRB checks for volunteers.
- Organise annual awards ceremonies for young volunteers, and offer an award scheme. This will be based on the impact made by the young volunteer, rather than the number of hours they put in (compared to the old Millennium Volunteers scheme).
- Offer ideas on how to appeal to young people by developing clear, interesting and well-supported roles, and through targeted publicity.
- Share good practice between organisations, e.g. facilitate a youth volunteering forum.
- Provide information on relevant legislation, such as legislation relevant to involving under-18s as volunteers.
- Provide training for organisations, based on a needs assessment.

**Group exercise: what training and support do you need to involve young people in your organisation?**

**Training:**

- Legislation around young volunteers
- Risk assessments
- Mentoring skills
- How to facilitate youth-led activity
- How to communicate with young people, adapt language etc
- Induction and training for young volunteers
- Roles for young volunteers

- Involving young service users as volunteers (boundary issues)
- Diversity (within the 16-25 age group)
- Recruitment and selection of young volunteers

**Other support:**

- Networking opportunities – for staff, and for young volunteers
- Signposting to what's already out there, eg careers advice for young people
- Resources, such as meeting space, and computers
- Help with recruiting young volunteers
- Regular communication, through a newsletter
- Good practice guide
- Initial screening, e.g. CRB checks
- Help with applying for funding for volunteer expenses

**Examples of the benefits of involving young volunteers**

- Help with the organisation's image, and positive press coverage
- Services users enjoy contact with young people
- Staff find it motivating
- Volunteers themselves gain confidence and skills

**Group exercise: barriers to involving young people**

- Defining the role in a way that appeals to young people
  - Change the title of the role
  - Have a clear and interesting role
  - Have a clear supervisor, and provide mentoring
  - Provide an induction
  - Ask young people for their input!
  - E.g.: DJ-ing, photography, IT – may all appeal to young people
  - Provide out-of-pocket expenses
  - Establish trust between the volunteer and organisation
- Boring or risky tasks
- Hierarchy in organisations, and organisational culture
- Young people feeling that their involvement is tokenistic
- Communication problems
- Lack of capacity to involve young volunteers

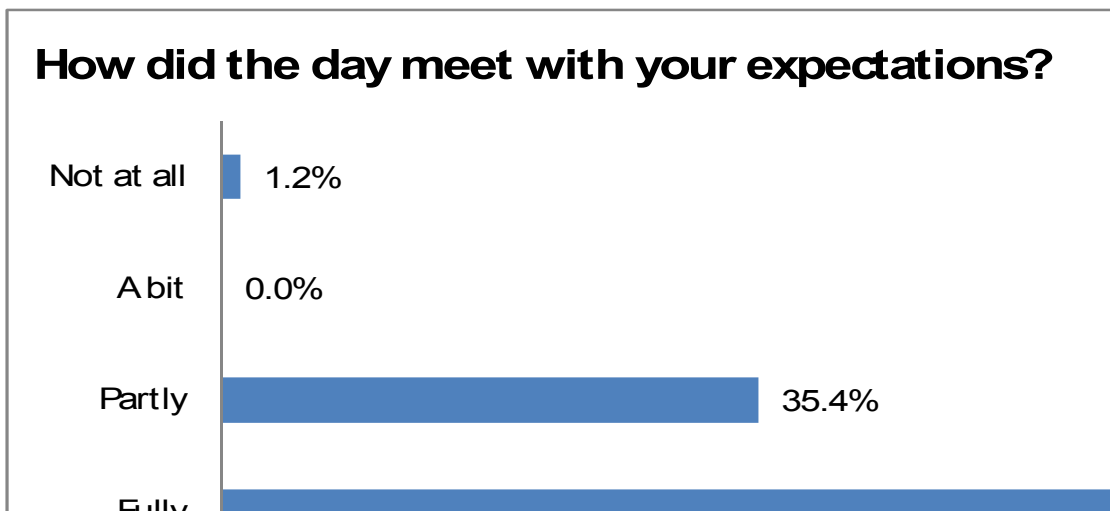
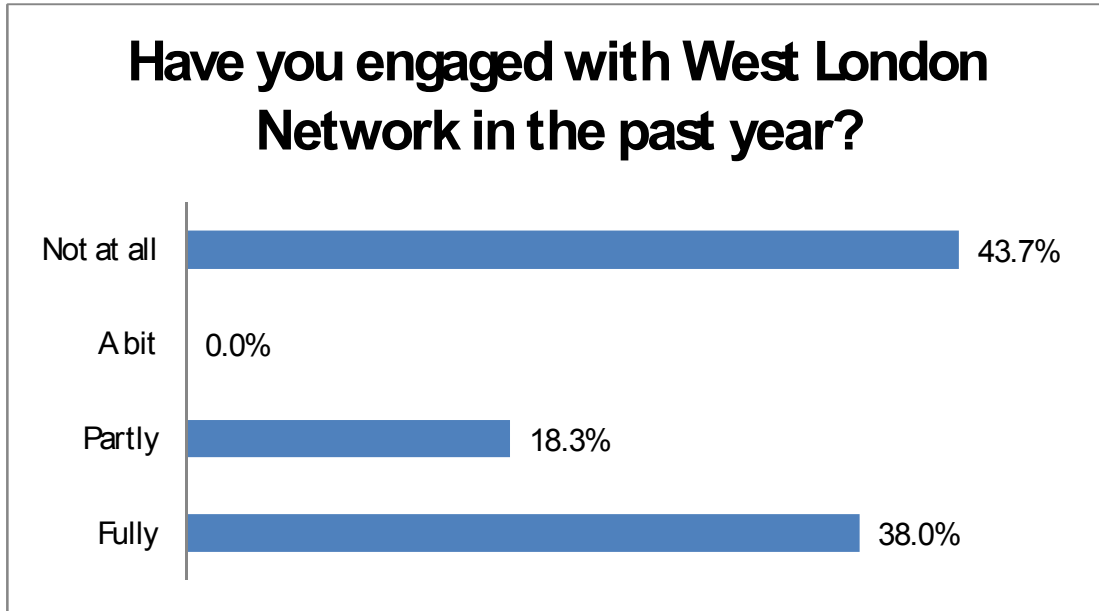
***Volunteering isn't seen as "cool" by young people; so there's no need to give it that label. Just explain clearly what the volunteers are going to be doing.***

## Appendix 1: Evaluation Feedback

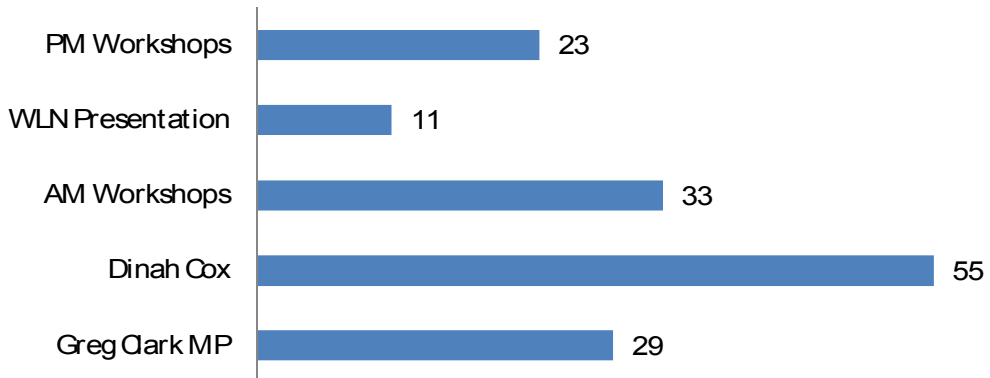
West London Network Conference  
July 2008

Delegate Feedback (Venue)

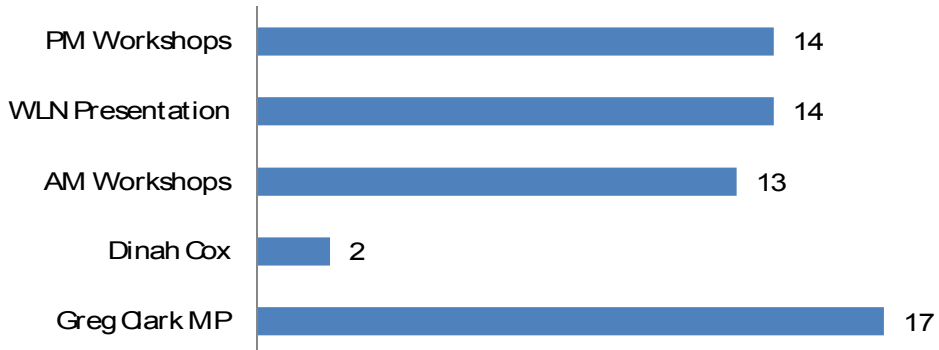
The total number of feedback forms received at the end of the event was 98.



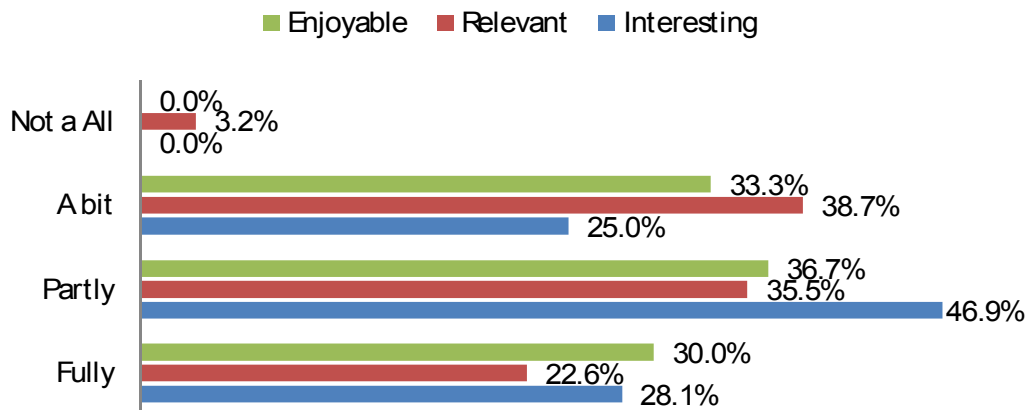
## What did you find most useful?



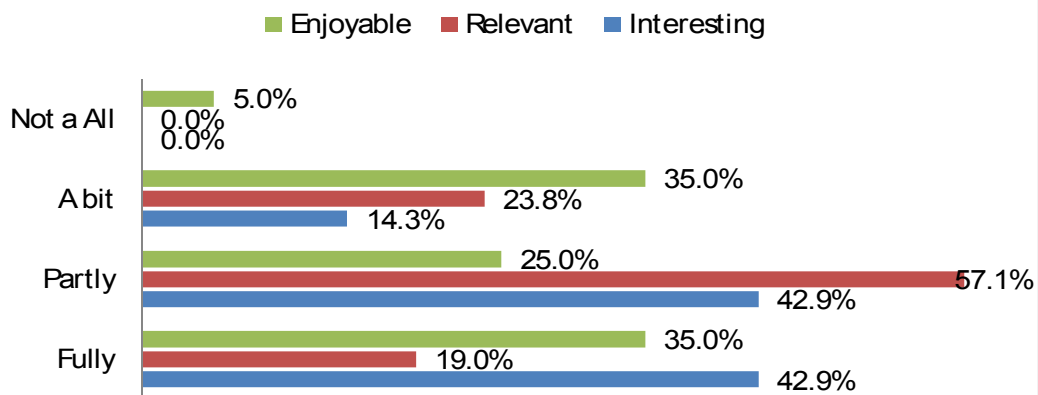
## What did you find least useful?



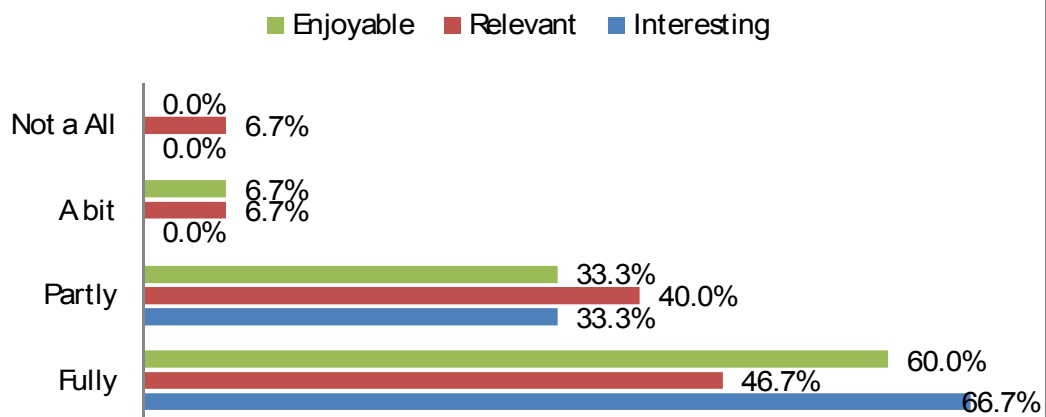
## 2012 - Opportunities in West London



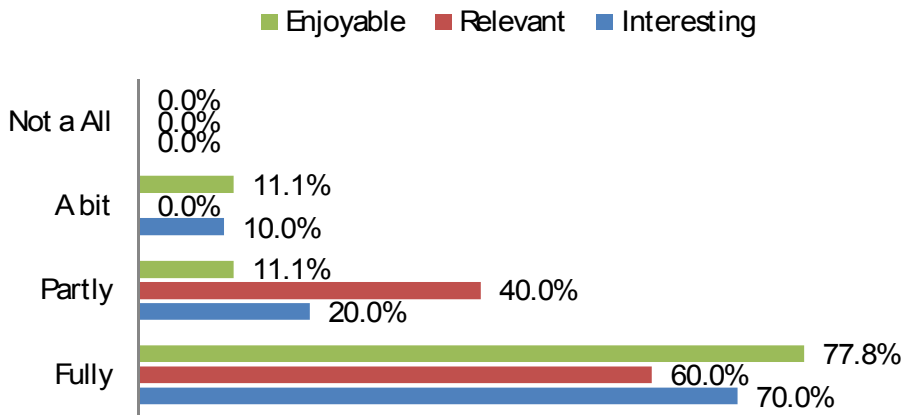
## Muslim Communities Network



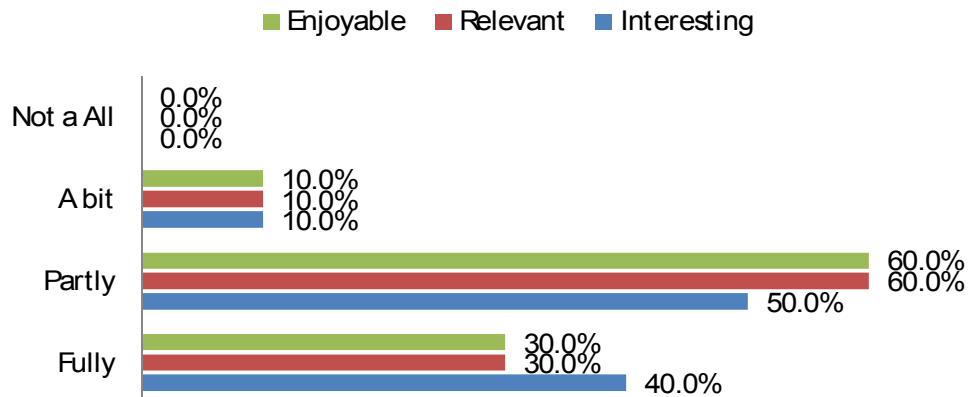
## Citizenship



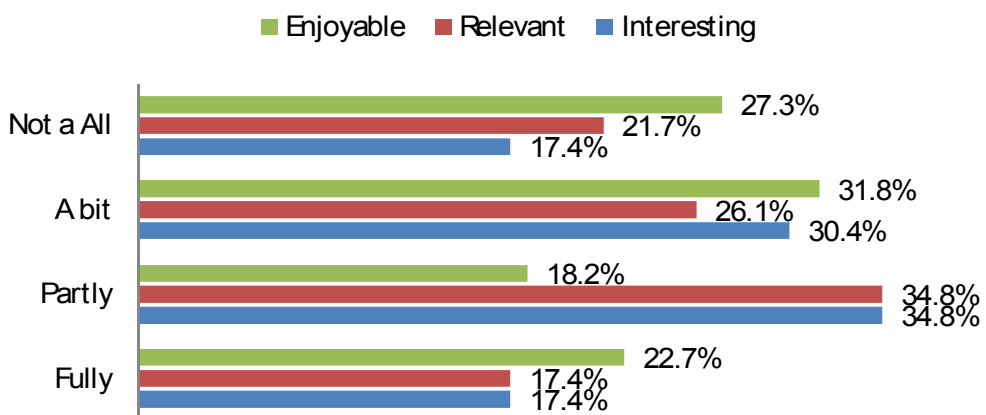
## Premises (Sharing Space)



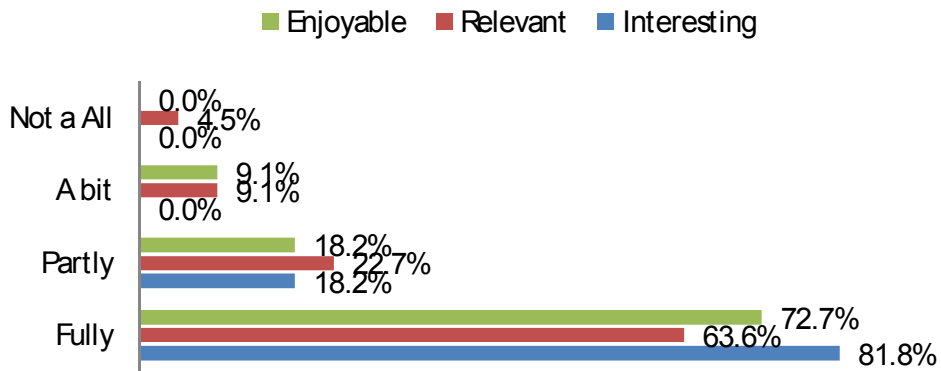
## Action Learning for Busy Managers



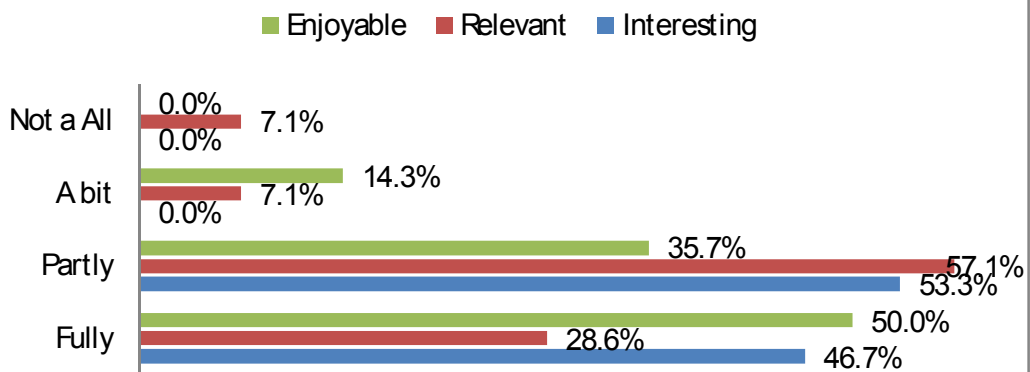
## Engaging with Local Business



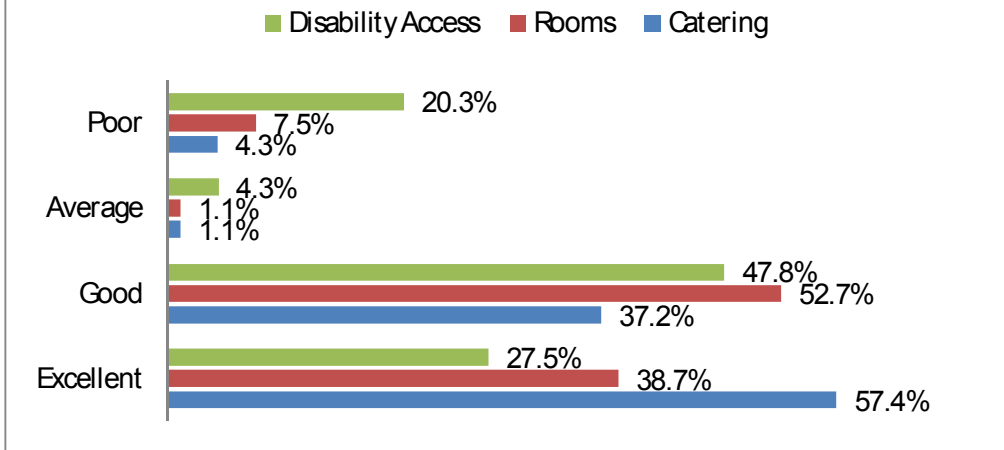
## Involving Young People in Your Organisation



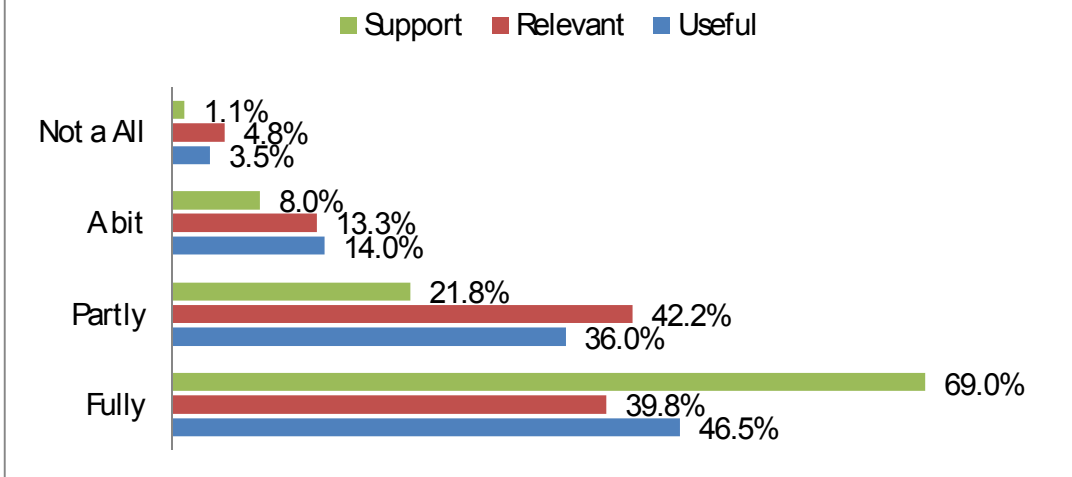
## West London Story - 2012 Cultural Programme



## Your opinion of the venue?



## Your views on the Basis proposal



## **Appendix 2: Conservatives Green Paper on Charities and Volunteering**

Conservative Party Green paper – A stronger Society: Voluntary Action in the 21st Century

Volunteering can be the solution to a lot of problems, but in many other countries in Europe rates of volunteering are higher than in the UK. This report says that the Government needs to change to support it. The paper says that funding is made too hard to get because of all the forms that need to be filled in – and a lot of other government processes just aren't suited to the way that voluntary sector organisations work. It also suggests that by targeting funding towards issues that the government wants to solve, we are stopping charities from doing the things that they are good at.

They suggest making society more flexible, so that people can fit in voluntary action, and to make volunteering, and donating money to charities, simpler and easier. They also suggest changing the ways that charities can get money, for instance by making the National Lottery independent of Government so that it can give money more objectively. These changes would be linked to a newly created Office of Civil Society, which would represent voluntary organisations; and supported by a change to funding so that it can support projects that last for three years at a time.

This isn't going to become law – it is an idea put forward by the Conservative party – so it doesn't spell out exactly how they would make these changes, but it does give a lot of thought to ways that the Government could encourage people to be more generous with their time and money, on a regular basis. For instance, they say they'd like to 'support efforts to establish regular volunteering as a social

norm – leading by example through a volunteer hours scheme for central Government employees.’

The Green Paper ends with twenty promises that the Conservatives pledge to work on if they get into power. These sum up the main points of the idea, and they are:

Part I:

1. Simplify the Gift Aid system to reduce the burden on charities
2. Work with charities to start a debate on whether it is possible to establish a new social norm which says it is normal to give money to charity.
3. Direct support for volunteering through grassroots volunteering organisations
4. Develop more charities in areas where there aren't any at the moment.
5. Support efforts to establish regular volunteering as a social norm.
6. Make it easier to volunteer by making it quicker to get checked out and approved to work with people, and make it clearer that volunteering won't stop you from getting benefits.

Part II:

7. Replace the Big Lottery Fund with a Voluntary Action Lottery Fund dedicated to giving money to voluntary and community organisations
8. Respect the difference between grants and contracts – using contracts, rather than grants, only where there is a clear justification
9. Operate a genuine one-stop funding portal for significant government grants

10. Set up a funding passport scheme so that voluntary organisations can enter their details less often to save time and effort

11. Draw up model grant and contract agreements to make it easier to apply for money

12. Create a network of Social Enterprise Zones to provide incentives for social investment in deprived communities

13. Set up a Social Investment Bank as a wholesaler of 'patient capital' to a wide range of social investment institutions

### Part III:

14. Allow voluntary organisations delivering public services to get part of any profit from investing.

15. Offer multi-year funding terms on contracts and grant agreements

16. Make Government grants dependent on what is achieved, not how it happens

17. Agree and implement a Co-operative Action Plan – allowing co-ops to play a much bigger role in running and owning community assets and services

18. Create a powerful Office for Civil Society at the heart of government to fight for the interests of charities, social enterprises, co-operatives and community groups

19. Ensure that government policy towards the voluntary sector is debated, by a new civil society select committee

20. Enforce an improved version of the Compact on relations between government and the voluntary sector.