



Report to Dundry View Neighbourhood Partnership - 26 March 2012

Author: Jean Erskine

Purpose of report: To inform members of the Dundry View Neighbourhood Partnership about current and future activity in the Hartcliffe and Withywood Community Partnership (HWCP).

Background

1. HWCP was formed in 2001 as a charitable company with a wide range of charitable purposes (“objects”). These objects allowed it to implement a broad regeneration strategy affecting public services, local economic development, health and environmental activity, and community development across Hartcliffe and Withywood. HWCP received significant regeneration funds from central government to address the very high levels of multiple deprivation in the area. Over time, the streams of government funding to HWCP changed, and include Neighbourhood Renewal and Neighbourhood Management funds. The purpose of Neighbourhood Management funds was to enable public services to develop more responsively, to better meet the interests and needs of local people in the most multiply deprived neighbourhoods across the country.
2. More recently, Bristol City Council introduced Neighbourhood Partnerships for all areas of Bristol, and these now lead the work to ensure that public services are responsive to local people (within the constraints faced by those within public service).

HWCP now

3. HWCP is now located in the modern and accessible community building “@symes”. This was built for HWCP using section 106 funding raised by the development of Morrison’s supermarket. HWCP now:

- houses the local public library, and ICT training offered by the City of Bristol College
- is the base for the HWCP community transport project (CATT)
- provides accommodation for a range of activities for local people including an older peoples group, arts group, knitting group, smoking cessation and other health-related work, welfare and consumer advice,
- provides supported office space for a range of voluntary sector tenants who provide important support services to local people including HAWKS and Southern Arc and
- has a range of meeting rooms available for hire

In addition, Bristol City Council contracts with HWCP to facilitate the Dundry View Neighbourhood Partnership. HWCP responsibilities across the Dundry View area include:

- Engaging local people through meetings, fora, sub groups, linking with local groups,
- Updating info and checking websites etc,
- Communicating with local people through WHAM! magazine and press releases for other newsletters etc.,
- Running wellbeing grants and Connecting Communities funding processes and administration/monitoring etc.

HWCP in future

5. The Board (made up mainly of local residents) is now reviewing the charitable objects of HWCP to give a clear focus to its work in future. Some of the original HWCP objects are delivered by other organisations, for example, Hartcliffe and Withywood Venturers works successfully with adult learners and those seeking employment, and the Neighbourhood Partnership itself is the focus of dialogue between local people and public agencies.

However, some of those original objectives remain at the core of HWCP work, for example, “the relief of poverty in such ways as may be thought fit”; and providing “facilities for the public at large and / or those who, by reasons of their youth, age, infirmity or disablement, poverty or social and economic circumstances, have need of such facilities”. Providing free accommodation for South Bristol Advice Service to bring welfare/consumer advice into the heart of the area is an example of how HWCP supports the relief of poverty, and providing community transport across the area to those who cannot use public or other means of transport is an example of how HWCP provides facilities for local people.

Where possible, HWCP is now hearing the views of local groups and individuals about the activities and services to be developed in future. Common themes so far include:

- Tackling poverty and its impacts
- Supporting the further development of local community and voluntary organisations across the area, and facilitating a network or forum of local groups (with a first network meeting @symes on 20th March, where Gemma Dando will give a presentation about the role and work of the Dundry View Neighbourhood Partnership)
- Developing @symes as an information hub where people can access information of all kinds on a face to face basis and by using the on-line library resources
- Bringing together people of different generations, backgrounds, and neighbourhoods to support community cohesion
- Developing events and festivals, more arts activity/opportunities

Over the coming months, the Board will determine which of these (and/or other) themes should form the core of a new Business Plan for HWCP, guiding our development over the coming 5 years or so.

6. In its review, the HWCP Board will also consider its geographic boundary. To date HWCP has drawn its membership from within the original SRB5 boundary, and has some focus on this area. However, the current constitution of HWCP allows it to act in a broader area – which it does already, for example by the provision of community transport which runs across areas of South Bristol, and through facilitating the Dundry View Neighbourhood Partnership itself.

Conclusion

HWCP is now reviewing its current and future role, to be fit for purpose in challenging times. The Board values our work with Bristol City Council in the delivery of the Neighbourhood Partnership as HWCP shares many priorities and interests of the Neighbourhood Partnership; as an independent organisation we hope to access resources to build on and extend activity to achieve these priorities. We also hope to develop work to support local groups and people, so strengthening the voice of local people to the partnership and elsewhere, to the benefit of local communities and services.