



ECONOMIC & SOCIAL AUDIT OF THE COMMUNITY AND VOLUNTARY SECTOR IN BRIGHTON AND HOVE

Research and report by NORTH HARBOUR CONSULTING LIMITED for the BRIGHTON & HOVE DIALOGUE 50/50 GROUP

THE AUDIT

The economic and social audit of the community and voluntary sector in Brighton and Hove is part of the Brighton and Hove Community Empowerment programme funded by the Neighbourhood Renewal Unit. The audit was commissioned by the Brighton and Hove Dialogue 50/50 Group and undertaken by a team of researchers from North Harbour Consulting Limited. It aims to look at the community and voluntary sector's social and economic activities 'in the round', and to place these activities in a meaningful context by relating them to Brighton and Hove's demographic, economic and social indicators. It also compares the information about the city's community and voluntary sector with information about the community and voluntary sector in Southampton.

The audit involved a postal survey of community and voluntary organisations working in Brighton and Hove, and case studies designed to illustrate the social and economic contribution made by a range of different organisations working in the sector. The case studies and comparative information draw on desktop research and semi-structured interviews.

The project was directed by a steering group whose members were:

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Bruce Nairne – Brighton and Hove City Council

Jude Tyrie – Brighton and Hove City Council

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Micky Richards – Brighton and Hove Community and Voluntary Sector Forum

Paul Bramwell – Brighton and Hove Community and Voluntary Sector Forum (Chair)

Peter Mason – Brighton and Hove Community and Voluntary Sector Forum

SURVEY STATISTICS

The contact details of 1,524 community and voluntary organisations known to have been in existence in Brighton and Hove within the past five years were obtained from mailing lists operated by the Community and Voluntary Sector Forum, Working Together Project, Christian Action Network, Brighton and Hove City Council, and Brighton and Hove City Primary Care Trust. 134 organisations were removed from the list because they did not fall within the definition of 'community and voluntary organisations' adopted for the audit. 1,390 questionnaires were sent by post to the remaining organisations. The mailing was undertaken by the Community and Voluntary Sector Forum. 47 questionnaires were returned by the Post Office as 'unknown at this address', leaving an active mailing list of 1,343 organisations.

237 completed questionnaires were returned by the end of the survey period - a response rate of 17.6%. The response from the 362 Community and Voluntary Sector Forum members was higher. 158 of them returned questionnaires - a response rate of 43.6%

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The authors would like to thank the individuals and organisations that responded to our requests for information through the survey and interviews. We are also grateful to the project steering group and the team based at the Community and Voluntary Sector Forum for their advice and support; to Brighton and Hove City Council, Portsmouth City Council and Southampton City Council for providing information about the community and voluntary sectors in their areas; to Portsmouth Council of Voluntary Service for information about the sector; and to Southampton Voluntary Services for allowing us to quote from their survey of the community and voluntary sector carried out in 2000.

Salma Ahmed, Steve Holloway, John Palmer and Lynn Watson

North Harbour Consulting Limited

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FOREWORD

It's been a long time coming but it's here! The first ever audit of the community and voluntary sector in Brighton & Hove – a historic moment! The idea of an audit was first talked about at the very first Community & Voluntary Sector Forum conference in March 1999, because people wanted some kind of research that would demonstrate both the monetary and social value, as well as the size of the sector in the city.

Forum members were becoming increasingly frustrated at being unable to justify to statutory sector organisations, the importance of the sector, the wealth of skills, knowledge and experience that is harnessed within the sector, the ability of the sector to work with the most disadvantaged people, and therefore the need for the sector to be acknowledged, resourced and worked with as equal partners. This document provides that vital evidence – so please use it.

Ironically, through the process of developing both the Brighton and Hove Compact and the Audit, relationships between the representatives of the two sectors on the Dialogue 50/50 Group have improved beyond belief. This is not to say that there are not disagreements and debate, but that there is a recognition that we need to move forward together, and we can't do that if we are entrenched in disputes. So thank you to all of the representatives for their patience and input, *North Harbour Consulting Limited* for undertaking the research, and most of all to the organisations who mustered the will to complete the audit questionnaire, or who were interviewed for the case studies – thank you!

Paul Bramwell,
Chair,
Dialogue 50/50 Group

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The economic and social audit of the community and voluntary sector in Brighton and Hove was commissioned by the Brighton and Hove Dialogue 50/50 Group and undertaken by a team of researchers from North Harbour Consulting Limited. It aims to look at the community and voluntary sector's social and economic activities 'in the round', and to relate them to Brighton and Hove's demographic, economic and social trends. The audit will provide a foundation for the development of more comprehensive information about the community and voluntary sector, and a better understanding of its role in the city. The key findings are summarised below.

THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL CONTRIBUTION OF THE COMMUNITY AND VOLUNTARY SECTOR IN BRIGHTON AND HOVE

It is estimated that there are between 1,400 and 1,500 community and voluntary organisations in Brighton and Hove. This is around six organisations for every 1,000 residents. Half of the organisations that responded to the audit have charitable status, a third are unincorporated groups with a constitution, and one in ten are informal associations, clubs and self-help groups.

The main activities in which the two hundred and thirty seven community and voluntary organisations that responded to the audit are involved are: employment, training and education; providing advice and information; advocacy, counselling and rehabilitation; community development; and 'other activities', some of which involve special interests. Two thirds of these organisations said that they work on a citywide basis; the remainder work in particular neighbourhoods.

Around one in six respondents to the audit works with children or families, and a further one in twenty organisations works with young people. One in five organisations works with the social groups to which adult social services are targeted - people with mental health needs, people with physical and sensory disabilities, people with learning disabilities, alcohol and substance misusers, and vulnerable single homeless people.

964,600 people have used services and taken part in activities provided by the organisations that took part in the audit in the past year. This is equivalent to almost four times the city's population.

More than 10,000 people are involved in the organisations that responded to the audit. 1,750 people are involved as members of management committees; 6,300 people are involved as volunteers; and 2,200 are involved as paid employees. This is equivalent to one in every twenty adults aged between 16 and 75 living in the city. It is also comparable with the number of people employed in the manufacturing industry, hotels and catering and public administration in Brighton and Hove.

In total, management committee members and other volunteers give 37,800 hours of voluntary effort each week. This adds up to a staggering 1.9 million hours of voluntary effort in a year. The in-kind value of their voluntary contribution to the community and voluntary organisations that responded to the audit is around £17.6 million per annum. This represents a large subsidy that is not reflected in the sector's official turnover figures.

If the in-kind value of volunteering is added to employee costs in the organisations that responded to the audit, the total monetary value of the work undertaken by management committee members, other volunteers and employees is £29 million each year.

The turnover reported by the community and voluntary organisations that responded to the audit was £22.9 million in their most recent financial year. If the in-kind value of volunteering is added to turnover, the total is £40.6 million. The Gross Value Added to the local economy (similar to GDP) using government conversion ratios is £20.7 million. For comparison, this is about half of the GDP generated by the engineering and 'other manufacturing' sectors in Brighton and Hove's economy.

22% of the funding reported by the organisations that took part in the audit came from either Brighton and Hove City Council or

Brighton and Hove City Primary Care Trust; 27% came from central government programmes and funds, or the European Commission; 14% came from the Lottery and charitable sources; 2% came from business sponsorship; and the remaining 35% was self-generated through fundraising.

85% of all expenditure is activity-related, with employee costs as the largest item of expenditure (£11.4 million, or 58% of all expenditure). 15% of all expenditure is related to core costs.

Merely to cite the financial figures is to look at only part of the picture, however. The community and voluntary sector is being asked to contribute to Brighton and Hove's social and economic development in a number of different ways. The sector is a resource that is drawn upon by individuals, communities, statutory authorities and their agencies, and on occasions by the private sector, to assist them in meeting their own needs. It is an employer of volunteers and paid workers at a level that places it on a par with other significant sectors of the local economy. Its labour force is well qualified, and a large majority of community and voluntary organisations that responded to the audit undertake training for their volunteers and employees.

The community and voluntary sector gives people an opportunity to develop new and usable skills through mentoring and volunteering, although perhaps even more could be achieved in this area of the sector's work. It is making a major contribution towards tackling poor health, poor housing, crime, poor educational attainment, poverty and the welfare needs of vulnerable people. It also plays an important role in recreation and leisure activity, culture and the arts. The sector helps to foster community spirit and 'active citizenship' through its activities and services, its fund-raising and promotional campaigns, its use of volunteers, and the altruism that underlies much of its work.

OTHER KEY FINDINGS

Equalities issues

- Compared with the gender balance within the general population in Brighton and Hove, men are slightly over-represented on management committees, whilst women are significantly over-represented among volunteers and employees.
- Black and minority ethnic people are significantly under-represented among committee members, other volunteers and employees compared with the general population in Brighton and Hove.
- 6% of management committee members, 2% of other volunteers and 2% of employees have a disability.
- 7% of management committee members, 2% of other volunteers and 3% of employees are recorded as Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual or Transgender people.
- The 'don't know' and 'non-response' rate for the questions relating to equalities issues is high, indicating that many community and voluntary sector organisations in Brighton and Hove that responded to the audit questionnaire do not collect this information about their committee members, other volunteers and employees.

More about Volunteers

- Almost three quarters of committee members and 57% of other volunteers are aged between 25 and 59; one quarter of each is aged 60 or over. There are very few people aged under 25 on management committees, but 16% of other volunteers are aged under 25.
- 7% of management committee members are devoting almost their entire week (i.e. more than 30 hours) to the organisation that they help to govern. 16% give between half a day and four days a week. The remaining 77% give up to half a day each week to their organisation.
- 17% of other volunteers give between half a day and one day a week of their time. The majority (79%) give half a day or less.
- Members of management committees are involved in three main areas of work – management, service delivery and back-up administration.

- Other volunteers perform a wider range of work, with provision of personal services to members and service users the most frequently mentioned (one in three of volunteers). Others tasks undertaken include fund-raising and working in charity shops (15%), provision of advice and information (13%), administrative and clerical back-up (8%) and 'other activities' that might include cleaning, serving food, and driving.
- Almost three quarters of all management committee members in organisations that took part in the audit are educated to degree level or equivalent. That is two and a half times the proportion of graduates found in Brighton and Hove's general population, which itself has a higher level of graduates than the regional average.
- Almost three quarters of other volunteers are educated either to degree level or to A-level or equivalent. In either case, this is nearly double the proportion found in Brighton and Hove's general population.
- A relatively small proportion of management committee members (2%) and other volunteers (7%) have no qualifications at all when compared with the citywide average (22%).
- Management committee members figure prominently in leadership, general management, people management and project management skills. They score well in intuitive, problem solving or decision-making skills. They also appear to have quite high levels of administrative and basic IT skills.
- Volunteers in Brighton and Hove have high levels of intuitive, problem-solving or decision-making skills, basic IT skills and customer service skills. They also score well in leadership and administrative skills.

More about employees

- The age profile of employees in the organisations that took part in the audit is different from that of committees and volunteers, and of the city's population as a whole. Among community and voluntary sector employees, there is a large preponderance of people in the 25 to 59 age group, far more than in Brighton and Hove's general population. There are smaller proportions of people aged under 25 and over 60 than in the general population. This suggests that people aged under 25 and over 60 are more likely to be volunteers than employees - possibly students and retired people. For people aged between 25 and 59, working for the sector may be a career choice.
- Part time working is very much more common in the community and voluntary sector in Brighton and Hove than in the city's economy generally. Even allowing for the high proportion of women in the sector's work force, the level of part-time working is higher than for women employees in the city generally.
- Just under one in five employees is involved in 'higher level management duties' similar to chief officer or departmental head posts. A similar proportion is involved in 'associate professional activities' that might include giving advice. Slightly smaller proportions – about one in six – are involved in 'professional duties' such as counselling or accountancy, provision of 'personal services' such as childcare, sport and leisure activities, and administrative and clerical work.
- The proportion of graduate employees working in the organisations that responded to the audit is sixty percent higher than in the general population. The proportion of employees educated to Level 3 (A-level and equivalent) is also well above that found in the general population. Even so, the proportion of graduate employees is lower than the proportion of graduates found among management committee members.
- The skills found among employees are broadly similar to those found among management committee members with people management, problem solving and decision-making, customer service, administration and basic IT skills to the fore.
- The picture that emerges from these results is of a predominantly female work force that is well educated with a range of skills, and with a high proportion working part-time.

Quality issues

- Eighty-five percent of the organisations that responded to the Brighton and Hove audit questionnaire said that they undertake some form of training for their committees, volunteers and employees. Most (65%) combine 'training on the job' with training from community and voluntary sector providers and events (54%). One quarter use private training providers,

while only 15% use colleges of further and higher education.

- Almost two thirds of the organisations that responded to the Brighton and Hove audit questionnaire set targets for their work. For those who set targets, the most common methods of monitoring performance are counting the numbers of people and organisations who use the service, and registering feedback from beneficiaries and users.
- Monitoring is also undertaken through formal supervision of employees and volunteers; monitoring of key performance indicators against benchmarks that relate to business planning targets; annual service evaluations and performance review; and external evaluation by accreditation bodies and funders.
- Almost one third of the organisations responding to the audit have adopted a quality standard.

ICT and premises

- Three quarters of all the community and voluntary organisations that responded to the Brighton and Hove audit said that they have at least one computer, with almost half of them having between one and four computers. Three quarters of them also have access to the Internet.
- A substantial number of the organisations that do not own computers and cannot gain access to the Internet that way are able to do so by using home computers owned by committee members and volunteers.
- Almost one in five of the organisations that took part in the audit use a member's home as their base. A quarter of the organisations hire premises as and when they need them, and there is some overlap between this group and the group that use members' homes.
- 42% of the organisations rent or lease their premises, with similar numbers renting on short leases of less than three years, or on longer leases of three years or more.
- About 14% of the organisations that responded to the audit own their own premises. Of these, one third are buying a property on a mortgage, and the remaining two thirds own the property outright. The value of these assets may be considerable.

Safeguarding the environment

- More than half of the organisations responding to the audit are involved in recycling goods and products. Around one third either encourage volunteers and employees to use sustainable transport (public transport or cycling), buy environmentally friendly products, or buy fair trade or organic products.
- Relatively few Brighton and Hove community and voluntary organisations (13%) have an environmental management policy, and only one respondent to the audit has an environmental management certificate.
- Other steps being taken to protect the environment included ethical investments, planting trees from seed to supply local conservation groups, promoting wildlife, buying energy efficient equipment, undertaking environmental audits, and monitoring the local environment and habitats.

THE COMMUNITY AND VOLUNTARY SECTOR IN ACTION: QUALITY, COST AND VALUE

The Dialogue 50/50 Group commissioned a small number of case studies as part of the audit to demonstrate the economic and social contribution that individual community and voluntary organisations are making in Brighton and Hove. The four activities that are the focus for the case studies are: day services for people with learning disabilities, preventive mental health services, community learning services, and services working with Black and minority ethnic communities. The general findings of these

studies were as follows.

- ➔ The services deal with very practical issues – obtaining a disabled adaptation to the bathroom to keep an elderly person at home; arranging for someone from the bus company to speak to people with learning disabilities who had experienced problems when travelling by bus.
- ➔ Volunteers play a central part in the activities of a majority of the organisations that were studied – indeed, many of them have no employees and all their services are provided by volunteers.
- ➔ A significant aspect of the ‘added value’ provided by these organisations lies in their ability to assist people to engage in mainstream activities, overcoming problems of language and culture, reducing social isolation and bridging the gap between specialist provision and normal, everyday life.
- ➔ Much of the work is preventive. These organisations argue that the nature and style of their services mean that they are able to help people at an early stage, and deal effectively with relatively minor problems. The cost savings here are to agencies such as housing providers, education and childcare authorities, as well as mental health, primary care and social care agencies.
- ➔ Most of the services obtain feedback from service users about the services that they receive. However there is little evidence that these organisations have developed more sophisticated measures of ‘quality’ and ‘value’. With regard to the monitoring of outcomes and cost-effectiveness, managers and volunteers stress that a huge amount of time is spent in obtaining the funding to continue their services and accounting to existing funding bodies, each of which asks for different kinds of information.

COMPARISONS WITH SOUTHAMPTON

The Audit also compared the characteristics of the community and voluntary sector in Brighton and Hove with the characteristics of the community and voluntary sector in Southampton, a city with some similarities, but also some differences.

- ➔ There appears to be a higher proportion of community and voluntary organisations engaged in ‘social care’ in Southampton than in Brighton and Hove.
- ➔ The number of hours contributed by committee members and other volunteers in Brighton and Hove was almost three times higher than was reported from a comparable number of organisations in a Southampton survey.
- ➔ More organisations in Brighton and Hove provide training for their committees, volunteers and employees, but more of the training that is provided in Southampton is accredited.

BACKGROUND TO THE AUDIT

COMMISSIONING

1. Brighton and Hove is a thriving city that has managed to blend its traditional role as a seaside town with a successful economy and a thriving community spirit. The city has a population of just under 250,000 people ¹, and a high level of participation in community and voluntary activity. ²
2. Previous research into Brighton and Hove's community and voluntary sector has tended to focus on particular issues. There has been a significant gap in the information about the community and voluntary sector as a whole, and in particular, the contribution that it makes to the city's life. Earlier in 2003, the Dialogue 50/50 Group ³ acting on behalf of all the signatories to the Brighton and Hove Compact, decided to fill this information gap by carrying out a social and economic audit of the community and voluntary sector in the city. The financial support of the Brighton and Hove Community Empowerment Programme funded by the Neighbourhood Renewal Unit is gratefully acknowledged. North Harbour Consulting Limited was commissioned in April 2003 to undertake the research.

THE DEFINITION OF 'COMMUNITY AND VOLUNTARY SECTOR'

3. The definition of the 'community and voluntary sector' adopted by the Dialogue 50/50 Group as the basis for the research is as follows:

"Community and voluntary organisations are independent bodies with self-governing structures and a wholly or predominantly voluntary governing body. They do not distribute profits to shareholders, and are run for the benefit of others in the community. Some, although not all, are registered charities or companies limited by guarantee. Community and voluntary organisations are accountable to their members and service users, and more generally to the people they serve or represent. They are also accountable to their funding bodies for how they spend their money. Community and voluntary organisations have paid employees, volunteers or a mixture of both."

4. Excluded from the research are organisations set up by public statute, companies that trade for profit, political parties, universities, training and enterprise companies, trade unions, commercial or professional associations, grant-maintained schools, NHS Trusts and similar bodies.

1 2001 Census

2 Brighton and Hove Regeneration Partnership (2000), Promoting Social Inclusion: Single Regeneration Budget Round 6 Bid

3 The Dialogue 50/50 Group brings together elected representatives from the Brighton and Hove Community and Voluntary Sector Forum, Brighton and Hove City Council, Brighton and Hove City Primary Care Trust, Brighton and Sussex University Hospitals Trust, South Downs Health NHS Trust, Sussex Learning & Skills Council and Sussex Police to discuss strategic issues that affect the statutory and community and voluntary sectors in Brighton and Hove.

WHY INFORMATION ABOUT THE VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY SECTOR IS IMPORTANT

5. There is a growing recognition of the contribution made by community and voluntary organisations to society at large and to local communities in particular⁴. Active citizenship and the renewal of local democracy are being fostered as core aims of government policy. Community and voluntary organisations are being encouraged to see themselves as service providers in partnership with the public sector. The community and voluntary sector is also being invited to participate as an equal alongside government and the private sector in fields as diverse as tackling social exclusion, economic and social regeneration, local strategic partnerships and community planning, modernising health and social care, promoting lifelong learning, creating safer communities, tackling crime and supporting vulnerable people in the community. Local compacts are delivering a more open and transparent working relationship between the statutory sector and voluntary organisations and communities.

6. Recent work undertaken for H M Treasury's cross-cutting review of the community and voluntary sector⁵ helps to explain why the sector's contribution is seen as being so important. Voluntary organisations are described⁶ as being cost-effective, innovative, flexible and pioneering. However, there is debate about how issues like service quality and cost-effectiveness can be tested and quantified. This issue is addressed in more detail in the final sections of the report.

7. The cross-cutting review suggests that community and voluntary organisations may have comparative advantages over both statutory and private sector organisations in certain situations. It argues that there are inherent structural characteristics of organisations within the public, private and community and voluntary sectors. These characteristics predispose each sector to respond more or less sensitively to 'states of disadvantage' experienced by service users. Community and voluntary organisations may have a comparative advantage over agencies in other sectors in some areas of disadvantage and social exclusion because of their particular structures. These structures enable them to demonstrate more easily a range of specialised skills, experience, flexibility and responsiveness needed to deliver services effectively.⁷

8. Community and voluntary organisations may also add value in another sense because they are able to incorporate the time and effort of volunteers into their work, and support it financially through fund-raising and the reinvestment of surpluses.

9. However, there is a general perception, reflected in the Treasury's cross-cutting review as well as in a number of other governmental and independent studies, that not enough is known about the details of the community and voluntary sector's activities and funding. Both the coverage and quality of information needs to be improved in order to inform judgements about the benefits of community and voluntary sector activity. More comprehensive and up-to-date information about the community and voluntary sector would also help to achieve:

- better promotion of their own work by community and voluntary organisations;
- easier and quicker dissemination of targeted information by statutory bodies to local networks;
- facilitation of joint working and the development of statutory/voluntary sector partnerships;
- the ability to identify gaps in provision, and the need for new initiatives;
- the availability of information for those advocating for marginal groups, and those making the case for better targeting of funding and resources;
- help in developing capacity and skills within local communities;
- more effective communication and public consultation;
- help in promoting volunteering opportunities and facilitating better access to patient/carer/user groups;
- the availability of information as a tool in local and regional strategic development planning, and in support of Local Strategic Partnerships.

4 See, for example, Private Action, Public Benefit - A review of charities and the wider not-for-profit sector, Strategy Unit, Cabinet Office, September 2002

5 H M Treasury (2002) The Role of the Community and Voluntary Sector in Service Delivery: A Cross-Cutting Review

6 Wolfenden Committee (1978) The Future of Voluntary Organisations, Croom Helm, London quoted in H M Treasury (2002), op. cit

7 H M Treasury (2002), op. cit.

WHAT INFORMATION IS CURRENTLY AVAILABLE?

Brighton and Hove's community and voluntary sector

10. Information about the community and voluntary sector in Brighton and Hove is held by a number of organisations. Whilst acknowledging that there are other sources of information, the three most robust sources identified by the steering group on which to base the audit were held by the Community and Voluntary Sector Forum, the Working Together Project and the City Council. The Community and Voluntary Sector Forum list is active and up to date. The good response rate to this audit from Forum members reflects this. The information held on other mailing lists may not all be up to date, and the response rate from these lists has suffered accordingly.

11. There is widespread interest in being able to communicate with groups, projects and organisations at all levels across the city and find out more about what they are doing. The gaps in information about the community and voluntary sector are a hindrance to these aims, but Brighton and Hove is not alone in facing these difficulties. As part of the audit a brief study has been undertaken of the information about community and voluntary sector organisations that is available in two other south-coast cities which are in some ways comparable to Brighton and Hove - Portsmouth and Southampton.

Portsmouth's community and voluntary sector

12. Portsmouth Council of Community Service ('PCCS') and Portsmouth City Council believe that there may be as many as 1,000 community and voluntary organisations in existence in Portsmouth. They have contact information for about six hundred and fifty of them. Following a Best Value Review of the city council's support for the sector in 2000, PCCS and the city council agreed to combine their efforts to put information about community and voluntary organisations onto a database held within the city council chief executive's office. The database will contain a range of information about community and voluntary organisations that are active in Portsmouth. So far, information has been collected from about three hundred groups and organisations, but no results have yet been made public. Therefore it has not been possible to compare information from Portsmouth with information from the Brighton and Hove audit as originally intended. It is acknowledged by all parties in Portsmouth that the lack of information about the sector is a major drawback to all aspects of social and economic planning and the commissioning of services in the city.

Southampton's community and voluntary sector

13. The picture is not very different in Southampton. Neither Southampton City Council nor Southampton Voluntary Services ('SVS') have comprehensive information about the community and voluntary sector. Within the city council, information about the sector is held at departmental and area team level and there is no corporate database similar to the one that is being established in Portsmouth. A review of the council's information needs is currently under way and there is some interest in the creation of a citywide database of information about the community and voluntary sector.

14. Southampton Voluntary Services ('SVS') is the organisation that knows most about the sector at the present time. SVS undertook a mapping exercise in June 2000 to collect information about the socio-economic contribution the local community and voluntary sector is making in the city and beyond. More than six hundred questionnaires were sent to the organisations whose contact details were known. More than two hundred questionnaires were returned, giving a response rate of 33%. Some of the key findings from the SVS 2000 survey are used in this report for comparison with the findings from the Brighton and Hove economic and social audit of the community and voluntary sector carried out in 2003.

Other relevant research

15. A study of councils of voluntary service and their local authority partners across Hampshire and the Isle of Wight⁸ found that of thirty five different organisations studied:

- every organisation holds some information about the community and voluntary organisations that operate in their area;
- the information varies in scope, quality, the way it is held and the way that it is used, and often has less extensive coverage of community groups than of voluntary organisations;
- some organisations hold contact details only, but even this limited information may not be complete;
- many organisations acknowledged that the way information has been collected in the past is not systematic, and that there are gaps in coverage.

16. The Hampshire and Isle of Wight study concludes that information about the community and voluntary sector is fragmented and often out-of-date. It provides an unreliable basis for communicating with the community and voluntary sector, and for involving the sector in consultation and community planning activities.

Implications for Brighton and Hove

17. The experience of conducting an audit of community and voluntary organisations in Brighton and Hove suggests that the situation there is not very different from that which exists in Portsmouth, Southampton and the rest of Hampshire and the Isle of Wight. However, a note of caution is appropriate here.

18. The number of organisations in the community and voluntary sector is not static, and precision about numbers is therefore very difficult to achieve. While there is a 'superstructure' of formally constituted, activist and publicly-funded community and voluntary organisations in Brighton and Hove, Portsmouth and Southampton, there are many more small and often informal groups that do not apply for funds, do not attend meetings, and get on with their interests in their own way. Groups come and go. Some come into existence to deal with a particular issue and wind up when the issue is resolved. Some depend heavily on the personal energy and commitment of individual activists and enthusiasts. If the individual running a group retires or moves away, the group may go through a period of dormancy until someone else becomes active, or it may wind up completely. It is very hard to keep track of these changes.

19. Making contact with every organisation and group is therefore difficult. Efforts have been made to compile mailing lists and membership databases in a number of areas, and to conduct audits such as this one. However, databases are rarely complete and up to date. In particular, it is the small, informally constituted community and voluntary organisations that are most likely to be unrepresented in mailing lists and surveys.

20. There is also a further point to take into account. Until recently, most councils of voluntary service have acted as umbrella organisations for the voluntary sector, and for service providers in particular. They have not seen it as a particular priority to attract community groups and associations into membership. Community groups in their turn have not seen it as being particularly relevant to their activities to join their local council of voluntary service. The need to develop an infrastructure to support the representation of community as well as voluntary organisations in local strategic partnerships is leading councils of voluntary service to take a broader approach. Brighton and Hove's Community and Voluntary Sector Forum is a model that is now being copied in Portsmouth and other places.

The initiative taken by the Dialogue 50/50 Group on behalf of the Brighton and Hove Compact signatories in commissioning the audit is therefore an important step forward. The audit will provide a foundation for the development of more comprehensive information about the community and voluntary sector, and a better understanding of its role in the city.

⁸ North Harbour Consulting Limited (April 2003) Mapping the Voluntary and Community Sector across Hampshire and the Isle of Wight: Feasibility Study, available from Community Action Hampshire. This study is entering a second phase where a sub-regional database of community and voluntary organisations active across Hampshire and the Isle of Wight is being planned with the involvement of fourteen councils of community service.

THE AUDIT

basic statistics

THE SIZE OF THE COMMUNITY AND VOLUNTARY SECTOR IN BRIGHTON & HOVE

22. Taking the broadest definition, current estimates are that there are between 1,400 and 1,500 community and voluntary organisations, groups and projects in Brighton and Hove. For comparison, there are believed to be approximately 1,000 community and voluntary organisations in the two other large south-coast cities of Portsmouth and Southampton. When the relative population sizes of the three cities are taken into account, Brighton and Hove has the highest proportion of community and voluntary organisations per head of population with around six organisations per 1,000 residents. Portsmouth is just behind with just over five organisations per 1,000 residents, while Southampton has fewer than five organisations per 1,000 residents.

LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL STATUS

23. The audit of community and voluntary organisations in Brighton and Hove provides interesting information about the structure of the sector. Half of the organisations that responded to the audit are charities, while another third are community associations with a written constitution. Table 1 shows the different types of organisation that responded to the audit questionnaire.

Table 1: *Types of organisation in the community and voluntary sector in Brighton and Hove*

	Brighton & Hove
Informal associations, clubs and self-help groups	11.0%
Community organisations with a constitution	32.5%
Registered charities and charitable trusts	23.7%
Companies limited by guarantee on charitable rules	27.2%
Registered social landlords	1.8%
Other	3.9%

(Source: Brighton and Hove Dialogue 50/50 Audit questionnaire, 2003)

ACTIVITIES

24. The main activities in which community and voluntary organisations in Brighton and Hove are involved are employment, training and education, advice and information, advocacy, counselling and rehabilitation, community development and equal opportunities, and 'other activities', some of which involve special interests.

Table 2: Main areas of activity – comparison between the community and voluntary sectors in Brighton and Hove and Southampton

	Brighton & Hove	Southampton
Advice and information, Human Rights, legal advice	14.5%	18.7%
Advocacy, counselling and rehabilitation	8.1%	13.6%
Arts and media	4.4%	3.9%
Child care	3.5%	2.9%
Community development, race relations, equal opportunities	10.5%	7.9%
Community safety	2.0%	2.4%
Community and voluntary sector support	5.8%	9.7%
Cultural and faith-based activities	3.9%	2.0%
Economic development	0.6%	0.8%
Employment, training and education	26.6%	11.2%
Environment and conservation	4.4%	2.5%
Health and social care / social welfare	6.13%	13.1%
Housing	2.0%	3.2%
International relations	0.6%	1.4%
Lobbying and campaigning	4.4%	0%
Research and development	1.5%	0%
Sports and exercise	3.8%	4.6%
Transport	1.0%	1.5%
Other	8.6%	0.7%

(Source: Brighton and Hove Dialogue 50/50 Audit questionnaire, 2003, Southampton Voluntary Services survey, 2000)

25. A comparison with Southampton's community and voluntary sector is interesting. An even higher proportion of organisations in Southampton than in Brighton and Hove is involved in providing advice and information, advocacy, counselling and rehabilitation, community and voluntary sector support, and health and social care.⁹

26. The differences between Brighton and Hove, and Southampton, may reflect real differences in the structure of the community and voluntary sector in the two cities. However, they could also reflect differences in the membership of the Brighton and Hove Community Sector Forum, and Southampton Voluntary Services, given that some councils of voluntary service tend to have a higher proportion of voluntary sector service providers and a lower proportion of community groups in membership.

⁹ The definitions used in the Southampton and Brighton and Hove surveys were different and comparison on this and other questions is only possible by merging some of the Brighton and Hove or Southampton indicators. The basis on which the two surveys asked this question was also different. The Brighton and Hove audit questionnaire asked organisations to say what was their single main area of activity, and also to name up to three secondary areas of activity. The Southampton survey asked organisation to say which areas of work they were involved in without any limitation on the number of areas they could specify.

LENGTH OF SERVICE

27. Almost one third of all the organisations that responded to the audit were formed more than twenty years ago. 23% were formed between ten and twenty years ago, and 34% were formed between three and ten years ago. The remaining 13% have been formed within the last three years. This shows that the sector is not static. It is possible that the number of start-ups is offset by organisations and groups becoming dormant or winding up. However, the audit has not attempted to assess the number of community and voluntary organisations that close.

THE GEOGRAPHICAL FOCUS OF THE SECTOR'S WORK

28. Two thirds of the organisations that responded to the audit say that they operate on a citywide basis. The remainder work in a particular neighbourhood or neighbourhoods.

WHO BENEFITS FROM THE SECTOR'S WORK?

29. Almost twenty percent of the Brighton and Hove community and voluntary sector organisations responding to the audit questionnaire said that their services are available to all sections of the community. Around one in six respondents to the Brighton and Hove audit works with children or families – the comparable figure in Southampton is one in five organisations. One in twenty organisations in Brighton and Hove compared with one in ten organisations in Southampton works with young people.

30. Demographics may have something to do with these variations. Brighton and Hove has fewer children under sixteen ¹⁰ than Southampton, and significantly below the regional average. Single parents also form a lower proportion of all households in Brighton and Hove than the regional average, but are above the national average in Southampton. The fact that Southampton has a higher proportion of its community and voluntary organisations working with families, children and young people may therefore arise from differences in patterns of need.

31. One in five community and voluntary organisations responding to the Brighton and Hove audit work with one of the social groups to which adult social services are targeted - people with mental health needs, people with physical and sensory disabilities, people with learning disabilities, alcohol and substance misusers, and vulnerable single homeless people. In Southampton the figure is one in four. Once again, this may reflect a real structural difference between the two cities, or it may reflect the differences in the membership of the community and voluntary sector umbrella organisations.

Table 3: Who benefits? – comparison between the community and voluntary sectors in Brighton and Hove and Southampton

	Brighton & Hove	Southampton
All sections of the community	18.4%	Question not asked
All the people in a specific neighbourhood	7.4%	1.7%
Alcohol and substance misusers	2.0%	3.6%
Black and Minority Ethnic people	2.7%	4.3%
Carers	1.8%	4.4%
Children	8.0%	8.5%
Community and voluntary organisations	7.6%	Question not asked
Families and parents, Lone parents, People with marital problems	7.6%	12.2%
Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender people	2.7%	2.3%
Homeless people	2.3%	2.5%
People on low income ¹¹	Question not asked	3.7%
People with a learning disability	3.1%	3.5%
Men	1.4%	Question not asked
People with mental health problems	3.5%	4.5%
People with a specific health problem, AIDS & HIV, Hospital patients ⁹	Question not asked	6.1%
Offenders and ex-offenders ⁹	0%	3.0%
Older people	4.9%	7.2%
People with physical and sensory disabilities	4.5%	4.5%
Refugees and asylum seekers	2.5%	1.2%
Travellers and migrants ⁹	0%	0.7%
The unemployed	2.3%	4.1%
Victims of crime and abuse	0.8%	2.3%
Women	4.3%	1.2%
Young people	5.7%	11.7%
Other including special interest groups	6.6%	6.7%

(Source: Brighton and Hove Dialogue 50/50 Audit questionnaire, 2003, Southampton Voluntary Services survey, 2000)

HOW MANY PEOPLE ARE SERVED BY THE SECTOR?

32. If the responses to the Brighton and Hove audit questionnaire are added together, 964,600 people have used services or taken part in activities organised by the community and voluntary sector organisations that responded to the questionnaire in the twelve months prior to the audit. That is equivalent to four times the City's population. 7,800 organisations have also used community and voluntary sector services and taken part in its activities. This is a cumulative count of people and organisations 'passing through the door'. The figures will include regular users of services as well as double counting within and between organisations. The figures therefore give an indication of the level of activity across the sector and not of the number of separate individuals and organisations who are served.

¹¹ People on low income, and people with specific health problems including AIDS and HIV were not separately identified in the Brighton and Hove audit questionnaire, but between them accounted for one in ten Southampton organisations. Organisations in Brighton and Hove that work with offenders and ex-offenders, travellers and migrants did not respond to the audit questionnaire.

33. 60% of the organisations that responded said that this represents an increased level of activity compared with twelve months ago. 24% said that it represents a similar level of activity. 40% of the organisations that gave the number of users and participants said that their figures were based on accurate records. The remaining 60% said they were estimates.

34. These figures suggest that a significant proportion of the city's population has been affected in some way by the sector's activities in the past year.

HOW MANY PEOPLE ARE INVOLVED IN THE SECTOR?

35. More than 10,000 people ¹² are involved in running and supporting the two hundred and thirty seven organisations that responded to the Brighton and Hove audit:

- 1,750 people are involved as members of management committees;
- 6,300 people are involved as volunteers; and
- 2,200 are involved as paid employees.

This is equivalent to one in every twenty adults aged between 16 and 75 living in the city.

36. To put this into perspective, the number of people involved with the community and voluntary sector in Brighton and Hove is more than the number of Brighton and Hove residents employed in some other sectors of the economy including manufacturing industry, hotels and catering, construction, public administration and defence. ¹³ It is about the same number as are employed in transport and communication, the local NHS and the financial services sector.

37. The figures for Southampton are comparable. The 2000 survey found 1,200 management committee members, 4,900 other volunteers, and 1,900 paid employees - a total of 8,000 people – were employed in the two hundred organisations that responded to the SVS survey. That is also about one in every twenty adults aged between 16 and 75 living in the city.

¹² Once again, there is a possibility of double counting here as some individuals will be involved in more than one organisation, and may also be involved in different capacities with different organisations.

¹³ 2001 Census

VOLUNTEERING

THE AGE PROFILE OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS AND VOLUNTEERS

35. Table 4 shows the age profile of members of management committees¹⁴ and other volunteers working in Brighton and Hove's community and voluntary sector organisations as reflected in responses to the audit. The table compares this profile with the age profile of the adult population in Brighton and Hove as a whole.

Table 4: Age profile of committee members and volunteers involved with the community and voluntary sector in Brighton and Hove

	Brighton & Hove community & voluntary sector	Brighton & Hove adult population aged over 16
Management Committees		
Under 25	3%	16%
25 to 59	71%	61%
60 or over	26%	24%
Other Volunteers		
Under 25	16%	16%
25 to 59	75%	61%
60 or over	28%	24%

(Sources: Brighton and Hove Dialogue 50/50 Audit questionnaire, 2003; 2001 Census)

36. In Brighton and Hove, young people are under-represented on management committees compared with their proportion in the general population. People aged between 25 and 59 are over-represented, while a similar proportion of those aged 60 or over is on management committees as in the general population. The profile of volunteers on the other hand is very close to the age profile of the general population. The figures suggest that all age groups in Brighton and Hove have a significant involvement as volunteers in the community and voluntary sector.

EQUALITIES ISSUES

37. The Brighton and Hove audit questionnaire also asked questions about the gender, ethnicity, disability and sexual orientation of management committee members and volunteers. The Southampton survey only asked questions about the gender of management committees and volunteers. The results of the two surveys and a comparison with Brighton and Hove's population generally, are shown in Table 5 (overleaf).

38. Compared with the gender balance within the general population, men are slightly over-represented on management committees in Brighton and Hove, and Southampton. Women are significantly over-represented among volunteers. This imbalance is even more noticeable in Brighton and Hove than in Southampton. The common perception that women predominate in the community and voluntary sector is supported by these figures.

¹⁴ Members of management committees and boards of directors overseeing the work of community and voluntary organisations are unpaid and give their time on a voluntary basis as do other volunteers.

Table 5: Other characteristics of people involved with the community and voluntary sector – comparison between the community and voluntary sectors in Brighton and Hove and Southampton

	Brighton & Hove community & voluntary sector		Brighton & Hove adult population aged over 16	Southampton community & voluntary sector	
	<u>Management committees</u>	<u>Other volunteers</u>		<u>Management committees</u>	<u>Other volunteers</u>
<u>Gender</u>					
Men	51%	36%	47%	51%	39%
Women	49%	64%	53%	49%	61%
<u>Other Equalities Issues</u>				Questions not asked	
Black and Minority Ethnic people ¹⁵	5%	5%	7%		
People with a disability	6%	2%	18% ¹⁶		
Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual or Transgender people	7%	2%	no information		

(Sources: Brighton and Hove Dialogue 50/50 Audit questionnaire, 2003; 2001 Census; Southampton Voluntary Services survey 2000)

39. Black and minority ethnic people are under-represented among committee members and other volunteers compared with the general population in Brighton and Hove.

40. There is no information on which to compare the proportion of people with disabilities volunteering or employed in the community and voluntary sector. The 2001 Census figure for people with a life-long limiting illness is given as a proxy but has a broader definition that captures a higher proportion of the population.

41. Similarly, there is no reliable information on the proportion of Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual or Transgender people in the population as a whole with which to compare the audit figures.

42. Thirteen organisations (6%) responding to the Brighton and Hove audit said that they had no information about the characteristics of their committee members, and sixty-five organisations (28%) said that they had no information about their volunteers. Monitoring of these characteristics is possibly an area that more organisations in the sector need to address.

FULL-TIME OR PART-TIME VOLUNTEERING

43. In Brighton and Hove, one in fourteen management committee members volunteer for their organisation on a full-time basis - that is, they give more than 30 hours each per week. 16% give between half a day and four days a week. The remainder give up to half a day each week to their organisation.

44. In total, management committee members and volunteers in Brighton and Hove give 37,800 hours of voluntary effort each week. That is a staggering 1.9 million hours of voluntary effort each year, and is more than three times the number of hours reported in the Southampton survey.

15 The term 'Black and minority ethnic people' is defined using 2001 Census categories as follows: Irish, White and Black Caribbean, White and Black African, Other Mixed, Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Other Asian, Caribbean, African, Other Black, Chinese and Other Ethnic Groups.

16 The 2001 Census provides information about people of all ages with a life-long limiting illness. This measure includes physical disability plus long-term illness. There is no separate figure for the adult population aged over 16, nor of disability taken by itself.

Table 6: Number of hours worked by committee members, volunteers and employees (% and number)

	Brighton & Hove community & voluntary sector – % in each time band	Estimated number of hours per week worked in each time band
Management Committees		
Full time (30+ hours per week)	2.7%	3,650 hrs
Part-time (16 - 29 hours per week)	3%	1,200 hrs
Part-time (10 - 15 hours per week)	3%	700 hrs
Part-time (5 - 9 hours per week)	10%	200 hrs
Part-time (less than 5 hours per week)	77%	4,050 hrs
TOTAL NOTIONAL HOURS PER WEEK (committee members)		9,800 hrs
Other Volunteers		
Full time (30+ hours per week)	1%	1900 hrs
Part-time (16 - 29 hours per week)	1%	1450 hrs
Part-time (10 - 15 hours per week)	2%	1550 hrs
Part-time (5 - 9 hours per week)	17%	8550 hrs
Part-time (less than 5 hours per week)	79%	14,550 hrs
TOTAL NOTIONAL HOURS PER WEEK (volunteers)		28,000 hrs
TOTAL NOTIONAL HOURS PER WEEK (committee members & volunteers)		37,800 hrs

(Sources: Brighton and Hove Dialogue 50/50 Audit questionnaire, 2003)

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE AND VOLUNTEER ACTIVITY

48. There is a fairly clear division of responsibilities between management committee members and other volunteers in Brighton and Hove. For committee members, responses to the audit questionnaire show that there are three main areas of work – management, service delivery and back-up administration. Three in every five committee members undertake some higher management and professional activities. One in every five committee members has some personal contact with members and service users, or undertakes administrative and clerical tasks.

49. The audit results also show that the work of other volunteers in Brighton and Hove is spread among a wide range of activity with provision of personal services to members and users the most frequently mentioned (one in three of volunteers). Other activities include fund-raising and working in charity shops (15%), provision of advice and information (13%), administrative and clerical back-up (8%) and 'other activities' that might include cleaning, serving food, and driving.

QUALIFICATIONS

50. A high proportion of Brighton and Hove's population compared with the regional average is educated to degree level or above – 28.7% compared with 20% across the south east region.¹⁷ For comparison, the proportion of graduates in Southampton is lower than the regional average (17.6%) in spite of the fact that it is also a university town.

51. At the other end of the educational attainment ladder, a lower proportion of the population than the national average has no qualifications at all¹⁸ in Brighton and Hove, and Southampton. In Brighton and Hove 22.1% have no qualifications; in Southampton 26.5% have no qualifications. The national average is 29.1%.

17 2001 Census

18 2001 Census

52. Table 7 shows the qualifications of committee members and volunteers working for those community and voluntary sector organisations in Brighton and Hove that responded to the audit questionnaire.

53. Almost three quarters of all management committee members in Brighton and Hove are educated to degree level or equivalent. That is two and a half times the proportion of graduates found in the general population. Almost the same proportion of volunteers is educated either to degree level or to A-level or equivalent. In each case this is nearly double the proportion found in the general population. A relatively small proportion of management committee members and volunteers have no qualifications at all when compared with the city-wide average. This may suggest that there is more that the sector could do to bring people without qualifications into volunteering as a means of giving them training and experience.

Table 7: Management committee and volunteers – qualifications

	Brighton & Hove Management Committee Members	Brighton & Hove Volunteers	Brighton & Hove general population aged 16 - 74
Level 1 – GCSE / O-level grades D-G, CSE (below grade 1), NVQ1, BTEC Foundation, Other RSA	3.5%	9.8%	13.5%
Level 2 - Five O-levels, Five GCSE grades A-C, NVQ2, BTEC First, GNVQ Intermediate, City and Guilds Craft, RSE Diploma	5.8%	9.0%	17.8%
Level 3 - GNVQ Advanced, City and Guilds Advanced, BTEC, NVQ level 3, RSA Advanced or equivalent, A-levels	10.5%	27.3%	12.5%
Level 4 or higher - Degree, Post-graduate degree, HND/HNC, NVQ level 4/5, Dip HE, Teaching/nursing qualifications, or equivalent	71.3%	43.1%	28.7%
Other qualifications	6.8%	4.0%	5.4%
No formal qualifications	2.1%	6.8%	22.1%

(Source: Brighton and Hove Dialogue 50/50 Audit questionnaire, 2003; 2001 Census)

Table 8: Management committee and volunteers – skills

	Brighton & Hove Management Committee Members	Brighton & Hove Volunteers
Administrative skills (e.g. clerical and secretarial)	12.2	8.6
Advanced IT skills (e.g. system administrators, programmers)	3.4	2.6
Basic IT skills (e.g. word processing, use of internet)	17.2	27.1
Customer service skills (e.g. shop workers, front-line service delivery)	4.8	15.3
Initiative, problem-solving or decision-making skills	11.0	20.9
High level financial skills (e.g. accountancy)	3.3	1.3
Leadership skills	11.2	8.3
Managerial skills	10.0	3.0
Marketing skills	3.5	1.7
Other financial skills (e.g. book-keeping)	4.7	2.5
People management skills	9.9	4.4
Project management skills	8.0	3.1
Technical trade skills (e.g. building and construction trades)	1.0	1.0

(Source: Brighton and Hove Dialogue 50/50 Audit questionnaire, 2003)

SKILLS

54. Not all of the organisations that responded to the Brighton and Hove audit questionnaire had sufficiently detailed information about the qualifications of committee members and volunteers to be able to answer the question on qualifications. The audit questionnaire therefore allows a second analysis based on the types of skill which committee members and volunteers were perceived to have. Table 8 shows the results.

55. There are parallels with the analysis of activities undertaken by committee members and volunteers in Brighton and Hove. Management committee members figure prominently in leadership, general management, people management and project management. They score well in intuitive, problem solving or decision-making skills. They also appear to have quite high levels of administrative and basic IT skills.

56. Volunteers in Brighton and Hove have high levels of intuitive, problem-solving or decision-making skills, basic IT skills and customer service skills. They also score well in leadership and administrative skills.

57. In both cases there is a blend of managerial and organising skills with the skills needed to get on with the job in hand.

THE VALUE OF VOLUNTARY WORK

58. A background study for H M Treasury's cross-cutting review of the community and voluntary sector suggests¹⁹ that volunteering and community activity have social, economic and environmental value in terms of providing services and amenities, saving costs and preventing waste even where there is no monetary exchange. There may also be economic outputs in terms of jobs, training and services. The review looked at a number of ways of valuing volunteering, and the results of voluntary and community endeavour. One conclusion was that volunteers provide services worth between twice and eight times the cost of the volunteer. The study finally concluded that, over and above this general measure, it was impossible to find a reliable financial measure of the value to society, the organisation or the volunteer him or herself of voluntary effort. The study goes on to conclude that, in the absence of such measures, there appears to be no alternative to the use of wage rates as a proxy for the value of the work carried out.

59. The European Social Fund guidance for UK applicants, 2003, suggests a series of allowances for the in-kind value of voluntary work. Four allowances are given: 'project managers' time is valued at £13.85 per hour; 'project co-ordinators' are valued at £10.85 per hour; 'project researchers' are valued at £10.85 per hour; and 'project administrators' are valued at £7.75 per hour.

60. Given the high levels of qualification and the managerial nature of much of the management committee activity identified in the Brighton and Hove audit, it seems appropriate to apply the rate for project managers to the voluntary time given by committee members. Using this measure the annual value of the voluntary contribution made by committee members in Brighton and Hove is £6.79 million.

61. Brighton and Hove's volunteers undertake a range of activities but face to face contact with service users, fund-raising and administration predominate. It would be appropriate to use the Social Fund rate for project administrators to measure the value of their contribution. Using this measure, the annual value of voluntary effort excluding the time put in by committee members is £10.85 million.

62. If the Social Fund measures for the value of in-kind voluntary time are used in this way, the total value of the volunteer input from management committee members and other volunteers in Brighton and Hove that were identified in the responses to the audit questionnaire is £17.64 million each year.

19 Active Community Unit (2000) Volunteering and community activity today: material assembled for the Active Community Cross-cutting Review 1999-2000, Home Office

EMPLOYMENT IN THE COMMUNITY AND VOLUNTARY SECTOR

THE AGE PROFILE OF THE LABOUR FORCE

Table 9: Age profile of employees in the community and voluntary sector

	Brighton & Hove community & voluntary sector	Brighton & Hove adult population aged over 16
Under 25	10%	16%
25 to 59	86%	61%
60 or over	4%	24%

(Sources: Brighton and Hove Dialogue 50/50 Audit questionnaire, 2003; 2001 Census)

63. The age profile of community and voluntary sector employees in Brighton and Hove is different from that of committees and volunteers, and of the city's population as a whole as shown by the 2001 Census. Among employees, there is a large preponderance of people in the 25 to 59 age group, with fewer aged under 25. There is a very small proportion of people aged 60 and over.

64. Assuming that the responses to the audit questionnaire are representative of the community and voluntary sector as a whole, this suggests that people aged under twenty-five and over sixty are more likely to be volunteers than employees in Brighton and Hove's community and voluntary sector. For people aged between twenty-five and fifty-nine, working for the sector may be a career choice, or the result of other factors such as flexible working arrangements that are appropriate for women, rather than something they do early or late-on in their careers.

EQUALITIES ISSUES

65. Three-quarters of all paid employees in the organisations that responded to the Brighton and Hove audit questionnaire are women. The proportion of women employees is significantly higher than in the city's general population (53%)²⁰, higher than among management committee members (49%) and higher than among other volunteers (64%).

66. Four percent of employees in community and voluntary sector organisations responding to the Brighton and Hove audit are from Black and minority ethnic backgrounds. This is relatively low compared with the proportion of Black and minority ethnic people in the city's general population (7%)²¹.

67. Similarly, fewer than two percent of employees in Brighton and Hove have a disability. This is a lower proportion than among management committee members, but about the same as the proportion among volunteers.

68. Three percent of Brighton and Hove's community and voluntary sector employees are identified in the audit as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual or Transgender.

69. The 'don't know' and 'non-response' rate for the Black and minority ethnic, disabled and Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender categories is high, indicating that many community and voluntary sector organisations in Brighton and Hove that responded to the audit questionnaire do not collect this information about their employees.

FULL-TIME OR PART-TIME EMPLOYMENT

70. The audit results show that the proportion of community and voluntary sector employees working part time is very much higher than the general level in Brighton and Hove (Table 10). Even allowing for the high proportion of women in the sector's work-force, the level of part-time working is higher than for women employees in Brighton and Hove's economy generally. There are two possible explanations for this. It is possible that there is greater flexibility in working hours and 'family-friendly' employment practices in the community and voluntary sector. However, it is also undoubtedly true, in Brighton and Hove as elsewhere, that levels of funding dictate levels of staffing. If the funding for a post will not pay for it to be filled on a full-time basis, then it is filled on a part-time basis.

Table 10: *Full-time and part-time working in the community and voluntary sector*

	Brighton & Hove community and voluntary sector	Brighton & Hove adult population aged 16 - 74 in employment	Brighton & Hove female population aged 16 - 74 in employment
Under 16 hours per week	21%	5%	14%
16 - 29 (30 ²²) hours per week	35%	9%	27%
Full time (30 or more hours each week)	44%	86%	59%

(Sources: Brighton and Hove Dialogue 50/50 Audit questionnaire; 2003; 2001 Census)

ACTIVITIES

71. The audit results suggest that there is a more even spread of activities among employees in Brighton and Hove's community and voluntary sector than among either management committee members or other volunteers. Just under one in five employees is involved in 'higher level management duties' similar to chief officer or departmental head posts. A similar proportion is involved in 'associate professional activities' that might include giving advice. Slightly smaller proportions - about one in six - are involved in 'professional duties' such as counselling or accountancy, provision of 'personal services' such as child care, sport and leisure activities, and administrative and clerical work.

72. There appears to be some interchange between management committees and employees with senior managerial functions, and between employees and volunteers in areas such as advice and information, provision of personal services, and administration. Certainly so far as volunteers are concerned this suggests that they are used alongside or in place of employees in service delivery and administration. If so, this clearly has a downward effect on operational and administrative costs.

21 2001 Census

22 The 2001 Census used the category 16 - 30 hours per week)

QUALIFICATIONS

73. The proportion of graduates in Brighton and Hove's community and voluntary sector labour force is sixty percent higher than in the general population if the results of the audit are representative of the sector as a whole. The proportion of employees educated to Level 3 (A-level and equivalent) is also well above that found in the general population (Table 11). Even so, the proportion of graduate employees is below the proportion of graduates found among management committee members (71%). The picture that is beginning to emerge is of a predominantly female work-force that is well educated, with a high proportion working part-time.

Table 11: *Qualifications in the community and voluntary sector labour-force*

	Brighton & Hove community & voluntary sector	Brighton & Hove adult population aged 16 - 74
Level 1 – GCSE / O-level grades D-G, CSE (below grade 1), NVQ1, BTEC Foundation, Other RSA	9%	14%
Level 2 - Five O-levels, Five GCSE grades A-C, NVQ2, BTEC First, GNVQ Intermediate, City and Guilds Craft, RSE Diploma	14%	18%
Level 3 - GNVQ Advanced, City and Guilds Advanced, BTEC, NVQ level 3, RSA Advanced or equivalent, A-levels	22%	13%
Level 4 or higher - Degree, Post-graduate degree, HND/HNC, NVQ level 4/5, Dip HE, Teaching/nursing qualifications, or equivalent	49%	29%
Other qualifications	3%	5%
No formal qualifications	2%	22%

(Source: Brighton and Hove Dialogue 50/50 Audit questionnaire, 2003; 2001 Census)

SKILLS

In Brighton and Hove, the skills found among community and voluntary sector employees are broadly similar to those found among management committee members with people management, problem solving and decision-making, customer service, administration and basic IT skills to the fore. However, unlike the skill profile of management committees, the proportion of paid employees with leadership and managerial skills is lower.

QUALITY STANDARDS

TRAINING

75. Eighty-five percent of the organisations that responded to the Brighton and Hove audit questionnaire said that they undertake some form of training for their committees, volunteers and employees. Most (65%) combine 'training on the job' with training from community and voluntary sector providers and events (54%). One quarter use private training providers, while only 15% use colleges of further and higher education.

76. These results compare favourably with the findings of the Southampton Voluntary Services audit carried out in 2000. In Southampton, approximately 50% of the organisations that responded carry out some form of training for management committees, volunteers and employees. 15% provided all their training in-house, but unlike organisations in Brighton and Hove 41% of training in Southampton was accredited.

SETTING TARGETS AND MONITORING OUTCOMES

77. Almost two thirds of the organisations that responded to the Brighton and Hove audit questionnaire set targets for their work. The remainder do not. Setting targets is a useful exercise in organisations that deliver services or specific benefits to service users or the community. However, for some organisations – special interest groups run on a purely voluntary basis, for example – setting targets may have little relevance. Bearing this in mind, the proportion of organisations setting targets for themselves appears to be quite high.

78. For those who set targets, counting the numbers of people and organisations who use the service combined with registering feedback from beneficiaries and users are the most frequent forms of monitoring. Monitoring is also undertaken through formal supervision of employees and volunteers. Among other methods of monitoring reported were the following:

- monitoring of key performance indicators against benchmarks that relate to business planning targets;
- 'hits' (i.e. responses) on an interactive web-site;
- success in tournaments and competitions for sporting organisations;
- annual service evaluations and performance review;
- external evaluation by accreditation bodies and funders.

79. Only 9% of the organisations in Brighton and Hove that set targets said that they do not carry out formal monitoring.

QUALITY STANDARDS

80. Of those organisations that responded to the Brighton and Hove audit questionnaire, two in every seven organisations (29%) have adopted a quality standard. This is slightly lower than in Southampton where one in three organisations have adopted a quality standard. One in five Brighton and Hove organisations does not think this is relevant to their organisation, and around half do not have a quality standard.

81. The Brighton and Hove audit revealed a wide range of quality and accreditation systems that have been adopted. These are listed below, with the number of organisations that said they subscribe to each system in brackets:

- CIF (Continuous Improvement Framework) (1);
- Community Legal Service Quality Mark (General Specialist Advice) (4);
- Community Mark (1);
- Guidance and Advice Board Standard (1);
- Investors in People (6);
- Matrix Standard (2);
- National Care Standards Commission (3);
- National Mentoring Network (1);
- OFSTED (2);
- PQASSO (7);
- Quads (1);
- Quality Mark (1);
- Quilt (2);
- Volunteer Development England Quality Mark (1);
- Standards laid down for local branches of national organisations (e.g. NACABx, Age Concern, Mind) (9).

82. The only quality standard referenced in the Southampton survey was Investors in People. Fourteen organisations in Southampton (15%) had been accredited by or were working towards the IIP standard.

INFORMATION & COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY, ENVIRONMENT AND PREMISES

ACCESS TO COMPUTERS

82. Three quarters of all the community and voluntary organisations that responded to the Brighton and Hove audit questionnaire said that they have at least one computer, with almost half of them having between one and four computers (Table 12). One quarter do not own a computer themselves, but many of the organisations that do not own a computer said that they have access to computing through members of management committees and volunteers who have computers at home.

83. Three quarters of the organisations that responded to the Brighton and Hove audit also said that they have access to the Internet. In some cases, where the organisation concerned does not own a computer, the organisation is nevertheless able to gain access to the Internet on home computers owned by committee members or volunteers.

Table 12: *Access to computers in the community and voluntary sector*

	Brighton & Hove community & voluntary sector
No computers	27%
Between one and four computers	46%
Between five and nine computers	16%
Between ten and nineteen computers	5%
Twenty or more computers	6%

(Sources: Brighton and Hove Dialogue 50/50 Audit questionnaire, 2003)

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

84. More than half of the organisations responding to the Brighton and Hove audit questionnaire are involved in recycling goods and products. Around one third either encourage volunteers and employees to use sustainable transport (public transport or cycling), buy environmentally friendly products, or buy fair trade or organic products.

85. Relatively few Brighton and Hove community and voluntary organisations (13%) have an environmental management policy, and only one respondent to the audit has an environmental management certificate.

86. Comments received from Brighton and Hove organisations that take other steps to protect the environment included ethical investments, planting trees from seed to supply local conservation groups, promoting wildlife, buying energy efficient equipment, undertaking environmental audits, and monitoring the local environment and habitats.

OWNERSHIP AND USE OF PREMISES

88. There is considerable variation in the way that community and voluntary organisations in Brighton and Hove own and use premises. Very few have no premises at all, but almost one in five use a member's home as their base. A quarter of the organisations hire premises as and when they need them, and there is some overlap between this group and the group that use members' homes. 9% of the organisations mainly use a member's home but also hire premises when they need them. 6% use premises owned by another organisation that are provided for them free of charge.

89. Forty-two percent of the organisations in Brighton and Hove rent or lease their premises, with similar numbers renting on short leases of less than three years, or on longer leases of three years or more.

90. About fourteen percent of all the organisations that responded to the Brighton and Hove audit own their own premises. Of these, one third are buying a property on a mortgage, and the remaining two thirds own the property outright. The cumulative value of these capital assets was not investigated in the audit, but may amount to a significant portfolio of property.

FINANCE AND FUNDING

INCOME DISTRIBUTION

91. There is a very wide range of organisational income distribution described in the Brighton and Hove audit returns (Table 13a). This response is compared with information about income distribution obtained in the Southampton 2000 survey (Table 13b).

Table 13a: Annual income – Percentage of organisations in each income band – Brighton and Hove

Brighton & Hove community & voluntary sector	No income	£0-£4,999 per annum	£5,000-£24,999	£25,000-£149,999	More than £150,000	No Information / Don't know
	5%	30%	15%	24%	22%	5%

(Sources: Brighton and Hove Dialogue 50/50 Audit questionnaire, 2003)

Table 13b: Annual income – Percentage of organisations in each income band – Southampton

Southampton community & voluntary organisations	Under £100	£101-£1,000	£1,001 to £10,000	£10,001 to £100,000	More than £100,000
	4%	20%	22%	34%	20%

(Source: Southampton Voluntary Services survey, 2000)

92. Although the income bands used in the two surveys are different, the income profile of community and voluntary sector organisations in Brighton and Hove appears to be broadly similar. One in twenty Brighton and Hove organisations, and slightly fewer Southampton organisations either have no income or a very small income. At the other end of the scale, one in five Brighton and Hove organisations has an income over £150,000 per annum, compared with a similar proportion with an income over £100,000 per annum in Southampton.

93. The audit of Brighton and Hove community and voluntary organisations provides additional information about the income distribution for different types of organisation (Table 14). Unincorporated organisations (informal bodies and groups with a written constitution) in the city tend to have very little income. On the other hand, Brighton and Hove community and voluntary organisations with a higher income tend to be incorporated bodies – charities, companies or registered social landlords.

94. What is perhaps surprising and possibly of concern is that a small number of unincorporated bodies in Brighton and Hove have an income of more than £50,000 per annum, and in one case more than £500,000. In unincorporated organisations, individual officers and committee members can be personally liable for any default or mismanagement. There are good arguments why unincorporated bodies should seek some form of incorporation before they begin to take on major commitments, including financial commitments.

Table 14: Annual income by type of organisation in Brighton and Hove – percentage of each type in each income category

	No income	£0-£4,999 per annum	£5,000-£24,999	£25,000-£149,999	More than £150,000	No Information / Don't know
Informal self-help or special interest group	10%	80%	5%	5%	–	–
Community organisation with a constitution	10%	56%	14%	8%	3%	9%
Registered charity	2%	10%	27%	39%	18%	4%
Registered as both a charity and a company limited by guarantee	2%	4%	8%	29%	57%	–
Registered social landlord	–	–	33%	–	67%	–
Other	–	10%	10%	48%	24%	10%

(Sources: Brighton and Hove Dialogue 50/50 Audit questionnaire, 2003)

THE BRIGHTON AND HOVE COMMUNITY AND VOLUNTARY SECTOR'S TOTAL ANNUAL INCOME

95. The total income from all sources reported by the community and voluntary organisations that responded to the Brighton and Hove audit questionnaire was £22.9 million in their most recent financial year (Table 15). Approximately half of all funding comes from statutory and European Community sources; fourteen percent comes from charitable sources; two percent from business sponsorship; and more than a third is self-generated through fund-raising.

96. Local authority and primary care trust funding to the organisations that responded to the audit questionnaire is substantial in its own right, and is also a factor in leveraging in funds from other statutory and non-statutory sources.

97. The audit responses on funding need to be set in the context of the total amounts of funding coming into the community and voluntary sector from governmental sources. Brighton and Hove City Council's indicative budget for discretionary grants in the period 2004-2007 is just under £1.5 million per annum, (this does not include funding for the Brighton Festival). Partnership funding from the Brighton and Hove City Primary Care Trust is also around £1.5 million per annum. Social care and community healthcare budgets are pooled in Brighton and Hove, and joint funding amounts to £6.5 million in the current year. When the Single Regeneration Budget, European Social Fund Global Grants, Children's Fund and Section 106 monies are added, the total for locally administered funding to the community and voluntary sector in Brighton and Hove is £11.135 million²³.

98. The responses to the audit questionnaire appear to account for a substantial part of the governmental funding coming into the sector. Even allowing for the possibility that some central and local government funds are not included in this total, this suggests that many of the community and voluntary organisations that did not respond to the audit do not receive significant amounts of statutory funding.

²³ Figures provided by Brighton and Hove City Council. There may be other budgets for education, recreation and leisure, and other services, and other central government programmes from which community and voluntary sector organisations are funded that are not included in this analysis.

Table 15: Annual income reported by community and voluntary organisations responding to the audit, by source – 2002/2003

	Total amount from each source	Percentage of total sector income from each source
Brighton and Hove City Council and Brighton and Hove City PCT	£4,965,450	21.7%
Central government-funded local programmes and direct central government funding	£5,382,000	23.5%
National and regional funding for the arts	£388,100	1.7%
European Union	£491,550	2.1%
Sub-total: governmental and EU sources	£11, 227,100	49.0%
Community Fund and other National Lottery funding	£1,962,000	8.6%
Charitable Trusts	£1,158,750	5.1%
Funding from business	£471,750	2.1%
Sub-total: non-governmental funding	£3,592,500	15.7%
Self-generated and other income	£8,103,000	35.3%
TOTAL INCOME FROM ALL SOURCES	£22,922,600	

(Sources: Brighton and Hove Dialogue 50/50 Audit questionnaire, 2003; 2001 Census)

99. Another way of looking at this picture of the funding reported by organisations that responded to the audit questionnaire is that for every £1 of city council and city PCT combined funding that they declared, a further £1.26 is raised from central government or European Community sources; £0.72p is raised from charitable sources or business sponsorship; £1.63 is self generated; and £3.62 in total is raised from all non-city council and non-city PCT sources.

100. One of the most significant findings from this part of the Brighton and Hove audit is the very high level of the sector's income that is self-generated (35%). Self-generated income is income from membership fees, charges, bank interest and fund-raising. One quarter of all the organisations that responded to the audit operate on the basis of self-generated income alone. Only 17% of organisation rely entirely on external sources - local and central government, the NHS, charities and business sponsorship. The remainder - 59% are funded from a mixture of self-generated income and funds from other bodies.

NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS AND EMPLOYEES IN ORGANISATIONS WITH DIFFERENT LEVELS OF INCOME

101. There is a common assumption that the number of volunteers and employees in community and voluntary organisations in Brighton and Hove as elsewhere is proportional to their income. As income rises, it is suggested, the number of volunteers falls and the number of employees increases.

102. The Brighton and Hove audit figures do not bear out this assumption. The average number of volunteers working with community and voluntary organisations in Brighton and Hove tends to increase with income. So, too, does the number of employees, but the effect of any increase is staggered. Community and voluntary organisations in Brighton and Hove with a turnover of less than £150,000 annum have very few employees but significant numbers of volunteers. Above £150,000 the number of employees increases rapidly, but the number of volunteers also increases, albeit more slowly.

Table 16: Average number of committee members, volunteers and employees by income band in community and voluntary organisations in Brighton and Hove

	No income	£0-£4,999 per annum	£5,000-£24,999	£25,000-£149,999	More than £150,000
Average number of committee members plus volunteers per organisation	8	13	31	47	53
Average number of employees per organisation	0	0.5	2	5	37

(Source: Brighton and Hove Dialogue 50/50 Audit questionnaire, 2003)

WHERE THE MONEY GOES

103. The audit asked for information about the levels and types of expenditure²⁴ committed by community and voluntary organisations in Brighton and Hove (Table 17). The question was answered by approximately fifty percent of the community and voluntary sector organisations that responded to the audit overall, but the total expenditure reported accounts for 87% of the total income reported. This suggests strongly that the question on patterns of expenditure was answered mainly by better-resourced organisations. These will tend to be the larger organisation with employees, and employee costs are a very significant proportion of the total costs reported.

104. Responses to the audit questionnaire show that employee costs predominate (58% of all expenditure). 85% of all expenditure is activity-related, and 15% is related to core costs. This is close to the rule of thumb of that is used by many community and voluntary sector organisations to validate the proportion of core costs in their total budgeted expenditure.

Table 17: Brighton and Hove community and voluntary organisations – expenditure profile in the most recently completed financial year

Expenditure Heading	Total amount spent on each heading	Percentage of total sector expenditure on each heading	Average expenditure on each heading
Volunteers' expenses and training	£226,200	1%	£4,267
Employees' salaries, on-costs, training, line management	£11,440,300	58%	£141,238
Other activity-related costs (e.g. transport)	£3,122,750	16%	£46,608
Core costs including mortgage and rent payments, audit, insurance, central management charges and other overheads	£3,063,000	15%	£30,939
Other significant costs	£1,708,550	9%	£38,831
TOTAL EXPENDITURE REPORTED	£19,560,800		

(Source: Brighton and Hove Dialogue 50/50 Audit questionnaire, 2003)

24 This question had the lowest response rate of any with around fifty percent of replies. This gives more than one hundred responses, sufficient to give a general indication of where the money goes.

THE COMMUNITY AND VOLUNTARY SECTOR IN ACTION: QUALITY, COST AND VALUE

105. The introduction to this report referred to recent government reviews of the role of the community and voluntary sector. Some of this work has suggested that the community and voluntary sector is characterised as being cost-effective, innovative, flexible and pioneering²⁵. Even if this is true as a general principle, there are important questions about how these attributes can be demonstrated in concrete terms through evaluation and costing of the community and voluntary sector's work generally, and in relation to the work of individual community and voluntary sector organisations. All of those with an interest in the community and voluntary sector need to be able to evaluate how effectively organisations in the sector are working. Funders, in particular, need hard evidence on which to base their decisions about whether to grant-aid particular activities, and whether services to be provided under some form of contract should be commissioned from community and voluntary organisations as opposed to other providers.

106. With public and charitable funds increasingly stretched, such decisions are not based on sentiment but on a hard appraisal of the business case for investing in one service or activity over another. The issues here cluster around the relationship between costs, the quality and effectiveness of service provision, and the value of the service to the funder and to the wider community.

107. Costs might be purely monetary costs, or they may include issues of economy and efficiency, and the wider social and economic costs of proceeding in a certain way. The issue of value is harder to define. It could be approached purely as a multiplier of the monetary value of voluntary effort as suggested in the Treasury's cross-cutting review, or through an assessment of the quality and effectiveness of services, or through assessment of the wider social and economic gains. These are all issues that organisations in the statutory sector are required to take into account in the procurement and delivery of public services. The methodology that has emerged to overcome the difficulties associated with quantifying cost, quality and value in public services is 'best value'.

108. In commissioning the economic and social audit of the community and voluntary sector in Brighton and Hove, the Dialogue 50/50 Group decided to explore these issues of cost, quality and value. They commissioned a small number of case studies to sample some of the activities that community and voluntary organisations in Brighton and Hove are engaged in, to assess the economic and social contribution made by individual organisations. The four activities that are the focus for the case studies are: day services for people with learning disabilities, preventive mental health services, community learning services, and services working with Black and minority ethnic communities. The findings and conclusions are set out below.

25 H M Treasury (2002) op. cit

THE REAL COSTS OF DELIVERING A LEARNING DISABILITY SERVICE

109. This case study explores the role of community and voluntary organisations working with people with learning disabilities and the contribution they make to the provision of services and support to this group in Brighton and Hove. The three services selected for the case study are: Brighton and Hove Speak Out (citizen advocacy); Carousel (integrated arts projects); and the Grace Eyre Foundation (educational and skills development).

110. Brighton and Hove Speak Out brings together people with learning disabilities and volunteer advocates as one-to-one partnerships. The partnerships are directed at helping people with learning disabilities to develop their self-confidence and social skills through supporting them to express their views and make their own decisions. Speak Out also supports people with learning disabilities who are members of the Partnership Board charged with implementing plans outlined in the Valuing People strategy. The participants with learning disabilities include people in a wide range of social circumstances and some are highly isolated when they come to the service. They may need to develop a network of social contacts or to gain access to specific services. The service currently has three part-time members of staff and around forty volunteer advocates. Funding (£40,000 this year) comes from Brighton and Hove City Primary Care Trust.

111. Carousel is an arts organisation that works with mixed groups of people with and without learning disabilities. It uses the arts as a medium for helping people to learn skills and develop their self-esteem, as well as to explore and extend their creative abilities. There is a seasonal programme of projects and for each project, two artistic directors generally work with a freelance artist, four to eight volunteers and around fifteen project participants. The projects are located in venues such as galleries, arts centres and theatres, although local services can also commission Carousel to work in a specialist setting, such as a day centre. The service works with more than thirty volunteers per year and trains ten new people annually. It has an annual income of £230,000 and is funded from local, national and European sources.

112. The Grace Eyre Foundation is based in two main day centres and offers education and skills training, with a dual emphasis on vocational and life/social skills. Most of the service users have mild to moderate learning disabilities and around fifty of them also attend local colleges. Service managers would like to develop their work in more socially integrated locations and are seeking to set up a café-gallery project with exhibition and performance space. The funding operates on an individual 'spot' purchasing basis and comes from the local authorities where people originated. This means that the Foundation has to deal with up to twenty local authorities at any one time. There are numerous quantitative targets that are required to fit in with national policy and guidance - for example, on the proportion of staff with a National Vocational Qualification.

113. The major 'added value' obtained from these services lies in their ability to assist people to engage in mainstream activities and to bridge the gap between specialist provision and normal, everyday life. Each of the organisations has positioned itself in this way, although all work in different areas of activity and promote different kinds of opportunities. Advocacy, self-advocacy, assertiveness training and the development of communications skills are very much to the fore. They see the social benefits both in terms of empowering individuals with learning disabilities and challenging long held stereotypes. These stereotypes include those that have dominated many traditional services and led to specialised and largely segregated provision.

114. The services deal with very practical issues. Speak Out, for example, arranged for a representative of the bus company to talk to a group who had experienced problems when travelling by bus, or who were perhaps too intimidated to do so. This kind of approach is unlikely to be adopted by a statutory service and yet it can be extremely useful in helping people to achieve and maintain independence. Gains in social skills and self-confidence can reduce people's reliance on formal services, although it is acknowledged that structural and attitudinal barriers are real and persistent (for example, lack of suitable housing and associated support which would allow adults to move out of the family home). The effects of advocacy may also be to make people more critical and demanding of services, which can drive improvements and make services more useful and relevant.

115. Volunteers play a central part in the activities of two of the three case study organisations. They are not difficult to recruit and there appears to be a wider pool of potential volunteers seeking similar opportunities. There is likely to be a particular attraction in activities that promote social and creative opportunities, as the volunteer can also obtain much of the benefit. The cost of the volunteers is low in relation to the positive contribution they make in ensuring the viability of the projects concerned.

Carousel costs the training of a volunteer at between £1,000 and £1,500 and pays expenses of £5 per session. They currently have thirty-four people applying for six places, which has happened without any specific advertising. Speak Out advertises twice a year and receives between forty and sixty applicants, which it reduces to a training group of twelve.

116. The three organisations appraise their services through obtaining regular feedback from service users. Speak Out has also recently commissioned an external evaluation, which highlighted the enormous value and distinctiveness of the advocacy service to the partners with learning disabilities. Feedback from those on the Partnership Board also indicates that they are greatly empowered by their involvement. Carousel, with its complex funding, has to carry out extensive monitoring of its activities for funding bodies, but this does not include estimates or projections of economic benefits. At Grace Eyre, a central concern is that its work, and that of other organisations, can only go so far in helping people to establish more independent lives. The implication here is that the benefits gained can be lost in the longer term, if people are unable to move into real employment or find independent accommodation.

THE VALUE OF A PREVENTIVE MENTAL HEALTH SERVICE

117. This case study examines how community and voluntary organisations in the field of mental health define, assess and demonstrate their social and economic contribution, particularly in regard to services with a strong emphasis on prevention. The three services included in the case study are: MIND in Brighton and Hove (information and advice service); Brighton Housing Trust (mental health team for homeless people); and Threshold (counselling and drop-in services for women).

118. MIND's information and advice service is designed on an outreach model, with regular sessions based in a range of settings. These include: GP surgeries, a drop-in centre; an older person's resource centre, a psychiatric unit, and a centre for unemployed families. The service has a manager and four information and advice workers. It employs volunteers for the hospital-based sessions, but not in other locations. The use of volunteers is seen as too difficult to manage due to limited scope for supervision and support. Different elements of the service are funded from different sources (e.g. Community Legal Services for the sessions in the GP surgery for homeless people). A substantial but unquantified proportion of users are known to have no contact with specialist mental health services.

119. The mental health team within Brighton Housing Trust focuses on people with severe mental health problems and rough sleepers. Three-quarters have dual mental health and substance misuse problems. The work of the team is carried out in dispersed locations, again on a regular sessional basis. The settings include: day centres for homeless people; and the offices of the Big Issue. They also do early shifts with the rough sleepers' team and evening work with St John Ambulance. There are four staff posts, which are variously funded by Brighton and Hove City Council, Brighton and Hove City PCT and Brighton Housing Trust. It does not use volunteers. The work with individuals is mainly short term and the team is able to offer a relatively high level of support, including support for those in crisis.

120. Threshold's services for women in Brighton and Hove centre on free or low cost counselling and drop-in sessions. The services aim to reach women who find it difficult to gain access to mental health support for practical, financial, cultural or other reasons. Counselling is offered both in the central office base and in outreach locations. Drop-in services are run seven times a week in various community facilities such as family centres. Both services have a manager and there is also a volunteer co-ordinator and a crèche co-ordinator. The counsellors are paid on a sessional basis and there are paid workers and volunteers to run each drop-in session. The number of volunteers is currently fifteen and this is expected to rise to twenty in the near future. The service is funded from multiple sources, including the Community Fund and Strategic Grants (Lottery), New Deal for Communities (eb4U), the City Primary Care Trust and Brighton and Hove City Council.

121. The three organisations define their contribution largely in terms of the social benefits to individuals and local communities. They highlight the following points. The outreach model challenges the stigma of mental illness by locating services in familiar and mainstream venues within local communities. The model also promotes informality and encourages self-referrals from people who are mistrustful of formal services, or who feel they are not 'ill' enough. Outreach services can operate alongside statutory provision, providing a bridge for those who may need more intensive psychiatric and related services. The use of volunteers helps to raise awareness and reduce fear of mental illness, particularly where volunteers and users are from the same communities. Overall, these services can help people to negotiate with 'the system' and understand what formal mental health services they are entitled to and what rights they have under mental health or community care legislation.

122. With regard to the actual or projected cost savings, MIND and Threshold argue that the nature and style of their services mean that they are able to 'pick up' people at an early stage in developing symptoms of mental illness and also to deal effectively with relatively minor mental health problems, which nevertheless have a major effect on people's capacity to cope with the practicalities of daily life. The cost savings here are to agencies such as housing providers and education and childcare authorities, as well as mental health, primary care and social care agencies. In the case of the mental health team for homeless people, major areas of cost saving are seen to be in the avoidance of acute hospital admission and reduced level of visits to accident and emergency departments. The actual extent of cost savings has not been measured or quantified.

123. With regard to the monitoring of outcomes and cost-effectiveness, service managers stress that a huge amount of management time is spent in obtaining the funding to continue their services and accounting to existing funding bodies, each of which asks for different kinds of information. All the services obtain feedback from service users and carry out qualitative analysis, although this is difficult with very short-term users. For example, Threshold uses a method of counselling evaluation devised at the University of Leeds. Beyond this, they lack the time, capacity and financial resources to develop or employ refined methods to demonstrate the value of their services in economic terms. In addition, there is a certain degree of scepticism about the extent to which this is possible, or indeed necessary, when the social benefits are strongly evident in user comment and continuing high levels of participation and demand.

124. All three services work closely with the statutory sector and with other agencies in the voluntary sector. A strong impression is conveyed of them working 'alongside' but not 'within' the formal mental health system. They have a distinct niche and a strongly defined role in the areas of information, advice, advocacy and counselling which could not be filled by services associated directly with statutory agencies. In addition, the Threshold service is able to attract non-traditional volunteers, including former service users, through its informal and accessible style and its practical approach (for example, providing a crèche). This not only allows the services to run at low cost, but also has the benefit of empowering volunteers and, indirectly, raising awareness of mental health problems and services in local communities.

QUALITY MEASURES AND VALUE FOR MONEY INDICATORS USED BY COMMUNITY-BASED LEARNING SERVICES IN THE FIELD OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY

125. This case study explores the way in which three organisations involved in the provision of community-based learning are thinking about issues of quality and value for money in their work. The three organisations included in the case study all provide training in information and communications technology ('ICT'). They are the Poets Corner Residents Society, the Hangleton and Knoll Project, and the Whitehawk Inn Training Centre.

126. Poets Corner Residents Society is a recently-formed community association in the central Hove wards of Wish and Westbourne, set up to tackle issues of concern to the local community. The society is involved in a number of activities including: information and advice; a multi-cultural group that aims to break down racial and cultural barriers; protection of the character and amenities of the Poets Corner area; and provision of ICT training. The ICT training is described by the society as 'entry-level', and is not externally accredited. It was set up to offer local people of all ages the opportunity to learn computing and Internet skills. All the trainers are volunteers. There are fifty adult learners enrolled in classes at present, and two hundred and seventy learners have received training since the project started three years ago.

127. The Hangleton & Knoll Project was formed twenty years ago in the western suburbs of Hove. In more recent years the project has also managed community projects in Portslade and Hollingdean. There is severe socio-economic deprivation in these areas with significant problems in housing, education, health, employment and crime. The project provides a wide range of services to these communities including: detached youth work; community development; the Audioactive project that provides training to young people in the production of contemporary popular music; and HaKIT (Hangleton & Knoll IT Centre) which has two ICT training suites based in local community centres. HaKIT aims to offer free basic training in ICT, either through formal CLAIT courses that are run under contract with the Workers Educational Association – an accredited training

provider – or through informal individual and group work with no qualification at the end. Since HaKIT training programmes began in September 2002 there have been more than six hundred visits by users to both community centres and twenty-six users have achieved the CLAIT qualification - the OCR 1 Certificate for IT users.

128. The Whitehawk Inn Training Centre is unlike the other two organisations visited as it is not located within a more broadly based community development project but specialises in community-based learning in the ICT field. The centre is located in the Marine ward of east Brighton, one of the ten most deprived wards in England and Wales with very high levels of poverty and deprivation, and low levels of educational attainment. The centre's main aim is to provide basic IT training to local residents aged over nineteen years with substantial support that helps the individual who may have no formal qualifications to focus on learning. It offers learners a wide range of IT courses and computing facilities. Courses are run by qualified trainers, supported by twenty volunteers who are mainly former learners gaining additional experience through assisting others. There have been 2,876 registered service users since the centre opened in July 1999. In the past twelve months, the centre delivered 1,351 courses and had 500 Internet café users. Of the 1,351 training courses delivered, 220 were accredited training courses. The total number of people passing through the centre during this period was around 1,140, of whom more than 730 were from Marine ward, meaning that around two thirds were local users.

129. Although the organisational context in which they operate is different, the three organisations have some similarities in their approach. All three organisations:

- ➔ set targets for the number of learners to be recruited or have targets provided for them by external bodies;
- ➔ assess new learners for basic numeracy and literacy, and if they have needs in these areas learners are referred on to other organisations;
- ➔ ask new learners to fill in evaluation sheets when they start a course, indicating their training needs and goals, with this information being used subsequently to monitor progress during and satisfaction at the end of the course;
- ➔ undertake some form of statistical monitoring, but to varying degrees of detail ranging from a simple count of the numbers entering and completing courses, information about the personal characteristics of learners on their courses, to profiles of the learners who have been involved in each course.

130. So far as Poets Corner Residents Society and the Hangleton and Knoll Project are concerned, these statistics are sufficient to allow a simple calculation of unit cost (i.e. the cost per learner), but more formal value for money assessment is not undertaken at present due to lack of time and resources. Whitehawk Inn has needed to develop comprehensive information databases in order to satisfy the monitoring requirements of its funders and partners, and this information is used to profile course results and assess value for money in the form required by the Learning and Skills Council and its accredited bodies. The evidence is that as the demands from funders for more comprehensive statistical monitoring increase, the administrative costs also rise and this is not always recognised in funding. This is a disincentive for smaller organisations with fewer financial resources.

131. There are real benefits that flow from the work of the organisations visited for this case study. In different ways, each of them is:

- helping to combat social isolation by bringing individuals into a community setting;
- bringing people who have previously had bad experience of or failed within formal education back into a learning situation;
- helping learners to access information and services for themselves, or with the assistance of the project;
- building learners' self-confidence, as well as developing new skills and some learners become less dependent on statutory services as a consequence;
- enabling some learners to progress into further training, volunteering or paid employment.

132. Each of these organisations could be said to be at different stages when it comes to assessing the quality and value for money of their work. Current methods of assessment combine statistical record-keeping (counts, profiles and ratios of learners and their completion of courses they start) with feedback from learners on whether or not their training needs have been met. The organisations can all report on the characteristics and satisfaction levels of the people engaged in learning programmes, and in some cases they have information about how the individual progresses after training. What they cannot yet do is say with any precision what the long-term value of community-based training is for the individuals who take part, or for the communities in which it takes place.

THE VALUE AND IMPACT OF SERVICES WORKING WITH BLACK AND MINORITY ETHNIC COMMUNITIES

133. This case study explores the way in which four Black and minority ethnic-led community and voluntary organisations are working to provide a varied range of services to Black and minority ethnic communities. For the case study, visits were arranged to two organisations that provide services to particular Black and minority ethnic communities - Brighton and Hove Chinese Society, and the Sudanese and Arabic-speaking Elderly Association; an organisation providing services to children and parents in mixed-parentage families - MOSAIC; and an organisation that aims to provide multi-cultural resources to other Black and minority ethnic organisations - the Black and Minority Ethnic Community Partnership.

134. The Brighton and Hove Chinese Society is a relatively new organisation formed in 2002 to bring the community together, give it an identity, and encourage exchange with Brighton's other communities. The society currently has 200 members, and is managed by eleven committee members and eighteen volunteers. It has no paid employees. Many Chinese elders do not speak or read English. They find it difficult to integrate with English people and access mainstream services. Students coming from China to study in Brighton find communication and settling in difficult. Many second generation Chinese children and young people do not speak Cantonese or Mandarin, are finding it difficult to communicate with their elders, and are not aware of their cultural and social heritage. The society runs a range of activities designed to meet these needs. They include cultural events, advice and information, support and advocacy for Chinese elders and other vulnerable members of the community, and English language classes for volunteers and members.

135. The Sudanese and Arabic-speaking Elderly Association was formed in 1993 as 'The Sudanese Elderly Group'. The society has forty-five members. It is run by seven committee members and seven volunteers, with no paid employees. Many of its members came to Brighton and Hove as refugees. They had to face the upheaval of leaving relatives and friends behind, and adapting to new customs, culture, food and language. Some elders within the community suffer from ill health or disabilities, which has further limited their opportunities. The association offers a number of services that include: advice and information, advocacy and welfare rights casework, interpreting and translations, regular meetings, outings and social events. Much of the work that the society undertakes involves solving members' practical everyday problems - for example, advocating for a disabled adaptation for an elder's bathroom so that he could remain at home with his wife. The association does not have premises of its own, thus meetings and activities take place at other venues. The association is planning to move its activities into Age Concern's new centre. Although the group uses subsidised community transport, about half the society's income is spent on transport. Mainly for that reason, it is only possible to bring members together for social gatherings every two weeks even though volunteers also act as drivers. The aim is to bring members together on at least a weekly basis.

136. MOSAIC is a community organisation set up by parents of Black and mixed parentage children to provide mutual support and information. Over the years the group has evolved into a professional organisation that aims to create safe, supportive, anti-racist, culturally diverse environments for its members and their children. The group provides a number of services and activities for its members and draws in around 2,000 service users each year. The activities include: 'Bring A Dish', a monthly cultural gathering of between eighty and one hundred parents and children from different ethnic backgrounds; information services; educational advocacy helping members and others to deal with school admissions, school exclusions, racism and bullying; a library and resource room; a parenting course; and an under-five group. MOSAIC has more than five hundred members who are drawn from service users, volunteers and supporters. It has a thirty-strong volunteer programme enabling personal development and drawing on the many skills within its community to deliver its services. It is the only known group in the Brighton and Hove area working with children from mixed-parentage families.

137. The Black and Minority Ethnic Partnership ('BMECP') was founded in 2001 with the aim of establishing a multi-cultural resource centre catering for the needs of Black and minority ethnic people including refugees and asylum seekers. After a promising start in which premises and funding for the resource centre were identified, the group suffered a setback when planning permission was refused. Since then the group has been working with officers of the city council to identify alternative premises. In spite of these setbacks, the group is active in other areas of work. It is advising new BME community organisations on setting up and funding. It is completing a project with MIND in Brighton and Hove to develop a mental health project for Black and minority ethnic people. It is also collaborating with Sussex IT Centre on an IT training programme for BME people.

138. Two of the organisations included in the case study - the Brighton and Hove Chinese Society and the Sudanese and Arabic-speaking Elderly Association - are small organisations run entirely by volunteers. The services that they provide are valued by their members, and their activities help to form a focus for their community. They are both involved in tackling the social isolation experienced by elders and others in their communities that result from language difficulties, cultural barriers and a lack of knowledge of the services that are available to them. The Sudanese and Arabic-speaking Elderly Association, which is the more experienced of the two organisations, provides information, advice, advocacy and support to elders that is empowering to the individuals concerned, and preventative so far as statutory health and care services are concerned. However, the capacity of both organisations is limited by the number of volunteers that they can attract, by the acknowledged need to train committee members and volunteers so that they are effective, and by the amount of time committee members can spend on fund-raising.

139. The impact of MOSAIC's work is considerable. It is a larger, well-established organisation with paid staff supported by volunteers. Not only is it the only organisation of its type working with mixed parentage families in the area, but it has expertise in dealing with child welfare in mixed parentage families, and in dealing with the education system, that is valued by its members and drawn on by a number of statutory and voluntary organisations.

140. In the absence of a resource centre, BMECP's contribution so far has been to act as a forum, bringing together people from different communities in a very short space of time. It was the lead agency for consultation with Black and minority ethnic organisations for the SRB5 participation programme. BMECP members also participate in the Community and Voluntary Sector Forum and the Community Partnership. Collaboration of this kind is becoming more common as BMECP is often approached to support the initiatives of other organisations.

141. The value of the work undertaken by the four organisations is that it provides services for people from Black and minority ethnic communities that may not always be available in an appropriate cultural framework from mainstream organisations. The question arises of how statutory services would cope if these organisations did not exist, as frequently they have neither the staff resources, nor the knowledge of language and culture, to provide appropriate services in the same way.

142. In conclusion, these groups are tackling social and cultural isolation, solving practical every-day problems, but also advocating best practice for statutory service providers in the way that culturally sensitive services can be delivered. In the process, they are empowering Black and minority ethnic people by helping them with language difficulties, giving them information about services and their rights and responsibilities, acting as advocates when individuals and families need additional support, and providing opportunities for social and cultural interaction. Each organisation in its own way is breaking down social barriers, and working towards an inclusive society.

THE COMMUNITY AND VOLUNTARY SECTOR'S ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL CONTRIBUTION IN BRIGHTON AND HOVE

143. Organisations within the community and voluntary sector often tend to see their contribution to their communities in terms of social benefit, and the improvements that they help to bring to the quality of life. An assessment of the economic contribution that the sector makes is less often commented upon, but was a major aim of the audit.

144. Generally speaking, the community and voluntary sector's workforce is unusual in that a significant proportion of the people involved are management committee members and volunteers who give their time free of charge. This is certainly true in Brighton and Hove. The audit has established that management committee members and volunteers out-number employees, are well qualified, and that the annual in-kind value of their contribution to the community and voluntary organisations that responded to the audit questionnaire is around £17.6 million.

145. The global value of the people working for the community and voluntary organisations that responded to the Brighton and Hove audit – management committee members, volunteers and employees – is £29 million each year if employees' salaries and the in-kind value of volunteering are taken into account. The in-kind contribution from management committees and volunteers of £17.6 million represents a large subsidy that is not reflected in the sector's official turnover figures. Without this subsidy, either the sector's activities would be more limited, or someone – service users, statutory funders, the private sector or the general public – would have to pay the difference.

146. The annual turnover of the organisations that responded to the Brighton and Hove audit is around £23 million. If the value of volunteering is added to this, the total is £40.6 million. National Statistics – the government's statistical office – has developed standard ratios for converting turnover into Gross Value Added ('GVA')²⁶. Using this ratio, the GVA of the community and voluntary organisations that responded to the audit questionnaire is £20.7 million.

147. For comparison, and discounting the effects of taxes and subsidies, the Gross Domestic Product²⁷ of the local economy as a whole in Brighton and Hove was about £3 billion in 1999²⁸ (the last year for which figures are available). The engineering and 'other manufacturing' sectors each have a current (2003) GDP of between £50 million and £60 million. The public service sector in Brighton and Hove has a current GDP of £587 million. The comparative figures show that the community and voluntary sector in Brighton and Hove makes a small but not insignificant contribution to the wider local economy.

148. Merely to cite the financial figures is to look at only part of the picture, however. The community and voluntary sector is being asked to contribute to Brighton and Hove's social and economic development in other ways. While the sector may be a junior partner in mainstream economic development, it nevertheless has a role to play in helping to create the conditions in which public and private investment take place, and in which jobs are created.

26 Gross Value Added (GVA) measures the contribution to the economy of each individual producer, industry or sector in the UK.

27 Gross Domestic Product is the standard measure of the total value of the economy. The formula for linking GVA with GDP is: GVA plus taxes minus subsidies = GDP. There are one hundred and twenty-three separate 'industries' listed in National Statistics calculations of GVA to turnover. Following consultation with the Economic Development Unit in Brighton and Hove City Council, the most appropriate ratio is considered to be 'Other Service Activities' which is given a turnover to GVA ratio of 0.51 for the financial year ending on 31 March 1999 - the most recent year for which the figures are available.

28 Brighton and Hove Regeneration Partnership (2002), Brighton & Hove Regeneration Strategy

149. The audit of the community and voluntary sector in Brighton and Hove shows that it is contributing to social and economic development in the city in many ways that support the Brighton and Hove regeneration strategy and the economic planning that underpins it. The community and voluntary sector is a resource that is drawn upon by individuals, communities, statutory authorities and their agencies, and on occasions by the private sector to assist them in meeting their own needs.

150. The sector is an employer of volunteers and paid workers on a level that places it on a par with other significant sectors of the local economy – for example, manufacturing industry, hotels and catering and public administration. Its labour force is well qualified, and a large majority of community and voluntary organisations in Brighton and Hove undertake training for their volunteers and employees. The community and voluntary sector gives people an opportunity to develop new and usable skills through mentoring and volunteering, although perhaps even more could be achieved in this area of the sector's work.

151. Finally, the sector helps to foster community spirit and 'active citizenship' through its activities and services, its fund-raising and promotional campaigns, its use of volunteers, and the altruism that underlies much of its work. Benefits of voluntary action undertaken by community and voluntary organisations include the promotion of social inclusion, greater cohesion between different communities and interests, and a major contribution towards tackling poor health and the welfare needs of vulnerable people, poor housing, crime, poor educational attainment and poverty.

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL AUDIT OF THE COMMUNITY AND VOLUNTARY SECTOR IN BRIGHTON AND HOVE

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