

# A Fair Place

## Developing your community, with equal access to services for everyone

**Our Vision:** Develop communities with a strong sense of local pride and identity.

Strong communities, where people have pride in where they live and help others, provide the foundation on which we can build our future. We have already supported a number of community initiatives – but there is still much we need to do. As service providers we have not got all the answers. That's why we would welcome the views of Bassetlaw people on what our communities need to be stronger. We want to encourage people to become active citizens - investing their own talents and time in their communities. The Social & Community Development Sub-Group will take on this exciting and challenging brief through a variety of new ways.

### Our Goals:

- ▶ Ensure that everyone has equal access to services
- ▶ Ensure the availability of high quality, affordable housing
- ▶ Involve young people more in issues which affect them
- ▶ Make it easier for people to enjoy leisure activities
- ▶ Work closely with communities to tackle deprivation and its causes
- ▶ Reduce homelessness
- ▶ Design attractive buildings and landscapes which enhance our quality of life
- ▶ To promote the success of our market towns

### Our Progress: Key Achievements 2005

#### Debt Advice Training

An important objective for the LSP is the provision of debt advice services in the Bassetlaw district. Personal debt is unfortunately a growing problem, which in the long term can only be resolved through a joint strategy of awareness raising, money education, debt management & counselling services and economic growth resulting in an increased standard of living.

As part of this strategy Nottinghamshire Rural Community Council, Bassetlaw Citizens Advice Bureau and Bassetlaw District Council decided to run an initial debt awareness-training course.

Following pilot sessions carried out in September 2003, the aim of the course is to help local workers identify at an early stage personal debt problems and to encourage referrals to debt advisors. The 3-hour course has 5 objectives, namely:

1. Better understanding of the cause of debt.
2. Better understanding of who could be affected.
3. Awareness of the possible indicators of indebtedness.
4. Understand the basic principles of debt management.
5. Greater knowledge of where people can get help.

Fourteen workers from the Bassetlaw area attended the session run by the CAB on the 15<sup>th</sup> December and worked through a number of group exercises that explored the above objectives.

Feedback from the course participants was good and showed the need for a revision of one part of the course to meet the one of the objectives. All the other objectives were met and the participants enjoyed the style of facilitation of the course.

It is planned to run the course again and to deliver it in other districts of the county.

**For more information contact Stephen Saddington at Bassetlaw CAB on [director@bassetlawcab.org.uk](mailto:director@bassetlawcab.org.uk), or Jonathan Dawson on 01909 533269 or email [jonathan.dawson@bassetlaw.gov.uk](mailto:jonathan.dawson@bassetlaw.gov.uk)**

## Year of the Volunteer 2005

**2005 is the Year of the Volunteer, a year-long celebration of the amazing work volunteers do and a call to action to get more and more of us volunteering.**

Early in 2004, Chancellor Gordon Brown designated 2005 as the Year of the Volunteer. The Home Office, as the government department with responsibility for encouraging active citizenship, worked in partnership with two well-established volunteering organisations [Volunteering England](#) and [CSV](#) to co-ordinate the Year.

### Aims of the Year

The Years' main aims were to:

- ▶ Increase the number of volunteers, particularly individuals from marginalised groups and young people
- ▶ Open up more volunteering opportunities in the public and voluntary sector
- ▶ Raise the profile of the work volunteers are doing nationwide
- ▶ Thank volunteers everywhere for their time and commitment

### Volunteer Organisations and the Year

All volunteer organisations were encouraged to participate in and benefit from the Year of the Volunteer 2005, as a chance to:

- ▶ increase engagement by providing opportunities for the public to volunteer,
- ▶ to increase awareness of volunteering in general, and
- ▶ increasing awareness of existing organisations specifically, by branding existing work under the Year of the Volunteer banner.

As volunteering is a key part of the day-to-day work of BCVS, it was felt more appropriate to let them carry out specific events targeted at the programme. An event was held in Worksop Market Place on the 7<sup>th</sup> June. In total 27 organisations took part, with a wide variety of issues covered including conservation, arts and social welfare. There was a lot of interest from the public with very positive feedback.

A second Volunteer Fair will be held in June 2006 at Retford Library. The week-long programme will include a series of exhibitions on a number of themes, and live events.

If you are a member of a volunteer organisation and would like to get involved in the Year of the Volunteer campaign, go to [Volunteer organisations and the Year of the Volunteer](#)



**Worksop Volunteer Fair, Worksop Market Place, June 2005**

**For more information go to the following websites: [www.volunteeringengland.org.uk](http://www.volunteeringengland.org.uk) and [www.cvs.org.uk](http://www.cvs.org.uk)  
Or contact BCVS on 01909 476118 or go to [www.bcvs.org.uk](http://www.bcvs.org.uk)**

## Supporting Local Community Groups

One of the key functions of the group is to act as an Information Network for officers working with community groups, and other agencies involved with community development and providing support to local groups. The group will provide letters of support to local projects where the outcomes of the project meet the goals of the Sub-Group. In addition where possible we can signpost residents involved in projects as to where funding may be available and agencies they could contact to assist them with their project.

One example of a project supported by the group this year includes Mattersey Thorpe Tenants and Residents Association (TRA). We endorsed their bid for funding for a partnership project with Mattersey Football Club. The purpose of the project – to provide a community building/sports facilities – will be of a great benefit to the local community.

Proposed activities which could be catered for in the new building include:

- ▶ Youth Club
- ▶ Adult Education classes
- ▶ Community social events catering for all age groups – allowing people to meet socially thereby combating isolation which can be experienced in rural areas either through geography, age, disability or other social factors.

The project is a testament to the ongoing community development support provided within the District and supports 4 Goals of the Social & Community Development Sub-Group of Bassetlaw Local Strategic Partnership:

- ▶ Ensure that everyone has equal access to services
- ▶ Involve young people more in issues which affect them
- ▶ Make it easier for people to enjoy leisure activities
- ▶ Work closely with communities to tackle deprivation and its causes

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### New 'Help Points' increase access to services

Bassetlaw District Council has created a network of videoconferencing suites (known as Help Points) across its mainly rural 250 square miles area. Under its acronym **BISCUIT** (Bassetlaw Information Services Communicating Using IT), the initiative grew out of the council's plan to improve services with communities outside the towns of Retford and Worksop.



'Our priority as a council has always been how we reach out our services to all these areas,' says Head of Customer Services, Steve Brown. 'There are several pockets of deprivation and in many cases the rural nature of the area can make that worse. This is especially true of those dependent on public transport. Our challenge is to get out there and provide the services – but placing council employees into the communities would be expensive.'

Videoconferencing was the ideal solution. 'Not everyone is comfortable using the Internet. We wanted to present a halfway-house solution, where you are still able to see someone face to face but are using technology to improve delivery.'

The project identified the following outputs/milestones to be achieved by the end of 2004. The actual outputs demonstrate the very real impact of this project.

BISCUIT Outcomes	Target	Actual
Number of Videoconferencing Sites Established	6	11
Number of users	2,000 (2003) 6,000 (2004)	7,600
Number of staff trained	20	72
Number of Surgeries	12	15
External Funding	None set	£306,000

One of the key outcomes of the project is that:

- ▶ No resident to be more than three miles away from a Help Point by the end of 2005

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## Key Targets

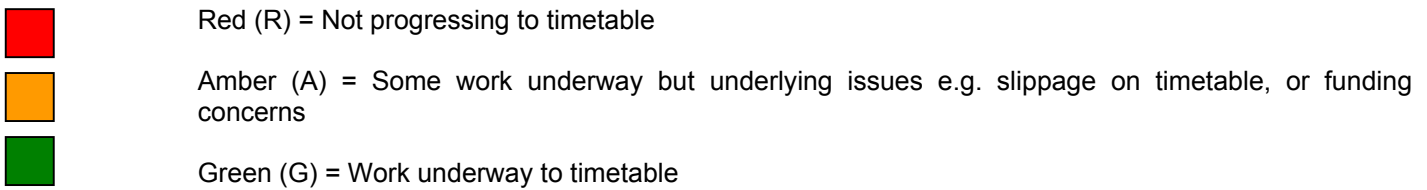
The table below outlines the five key targets agreed by the Sub-Group, as outlined in the Community Strategy Summary, that will be used to measure outcomes of the projects supported by the group. These are monitored closely throughout the year and reported on annually.

Our long-term goal... to reduce the number of Bassetlaw wards that are amongst the most deprived in the country (measured by the National Index of Deprivation - IMD)

BLSP Indicator	Definition	Lead Contact	Method of Measurement	2003/2004 Performance	2004/2005 Performance
S & CD 1	To reduce the number of Bassetlaw wards that are amongst the most deprived in the country (measured by the National Index of Deprivation)	BDC (IMD 2004)	(1) National Index of Deprivation – 10% and 25% most deprived wards  <b>Baseline</b> (IMD 2000) 10% = 4 wards 25% = 7 wards	IMD 2004 <sup>37</sup> 10% = 7 SOAs 20% = 21 SOAs	IMD 2004 <sup>37</sup> 10% = 7 SOAs 20% = 21 SOAs
S & CD 2	Raise the number of homes which meet the basic 'Healthy Homes' standard <sup>10</sup>	BDC (Environment & Health Service – Housing BV62)	(1) BV62 – Proportion of unfit private sector dwellings made fit or demolished as a direct result of action by the local authority  <b>Baseline</b> (2002/2003) = 3%	3.13%	2.93%
S & CD 3	Bring one third of all Council accommodation to the 'Decent Homes' standard by 2004 and all of it by 2010	BDC (Environment & Health Service – Housing BV184a and b)	(1) BV184a – Proportion of local authority homes that were non-decent at 1 April <sup>47</sup>  (2) BV184b – Percentage change in proportion of non-decent local authority homes between 1 April and 1 April <sup>47</sup>  <b>Baseline</b> (2002/2003) = (1) 24.03% (1966) at 1 April 2002 (2) –116.94% <sup>48</sup> between 1 April 2002 and 1 April 2003	(1) 53.82% (4265) at 1 April 2003  (2) 16.91% between 1 April 2003 and 1 April 2004	(1) 46.77% at 1 April 2004  (2) 19.80% between 1 April 2004 and 1 April 2005
S & CD 4	Increase the percentage of people satisfied with the area as a place to live	BDC (Policy & Performance Service)	(1) Citizen's Panel Survey/ QoL 18  <b>Baseline</b> = 70% (Citizen's Panel Survey October 2002)	78% <sup>14</sup>	78% <sup>14</sup>
S & CD 5	To decide 100% of homelessness applications within 33 working days	BDC (Environment & Health Service – Housing Local G)	(1) Local G  <b>Baseline</b> (2002/2003) = 99.47%	100%	96.97%

## Social & Community Development Action Plan – Our Performance

The charts below indicate how the Social & Community Development Sub-Group is performing against the 'Actions' within their Action Plan. The key for the charts is as follows:

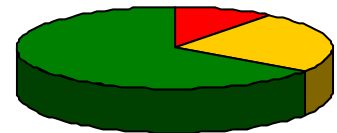


This 'traffic light' system was piloted by the Health Sub-Group in October 2003 and January 2004. This was then rolled out to all the Sub-Groups for April 2004, and included in the Interim Report May 2004.

In October 2005, a new reporting mechanism was introduced for reporting Sub-Group progress at Board meetings. One element included was the introduction of the table shown below for October's performance, which provides additional information as to how the Action Plan has been progressed.

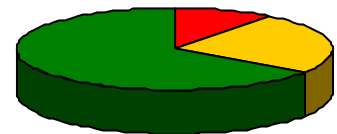
### January 2005

R = 3 (10.34%)  
A = 7 (24.12%)  
G = 19 (65.52%)



### April 2005

R = 3 (10.34%)  
A = 7 (24.12%)  
G = 19 (65.52%)



### July 2005

R = 3 (10.34%)  
A = 7 (24.12%)  
G = 19 (65.52%)



### October 2005

For this period the Action Plan was undergoing a review across all the 8 Goals, therefore it is not possible to report performance using the traffic light system.

Total Number of Actions	Number of Actions completed and removed	Number of Actions amended	Number of new Actions added
TBC (as at October 05)	Action Plan currently under review	Action Plan currently under review	Action Plan currently under review