

Side by side:

a report setting out the Council on Social Action's work on one-to-one



COUNCIL ON SOCIAL ACTION



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The Council on Social Action was set up by the Prime Minister. It brings together innovators from every sector to generate ideas and initiatives through which government and other key stakeholders can catalyse, develop and celebrate social action. We consider 'social action' to include the wide range of ways in which individuals, communities, organisations and businesses can seek through their choices, actions and commitments to address the social issues they care about.

The Prime Minister encouraged us to be bold. We have tried to learn from what has worked in the past and from what hasn't but to not be burdened by old certainties. Sustained progress depends on a positive response from those to whom our recommendations are directly addressed and from those who influence opinion, particularly in the media. We challenge you, as we are challenging ourselves, to be open-minded, and to be bold.

This report is about work in progress. CoSA will be sustaining its interest in one-to-one in the year ahead developing these ideas, supporting where we usefully can, commenting where we think we should and reporting again at the end.

The Council has a small support team equivalent to two full-time posts and 14 members – all extraordinary people with lots of ideas but very busy diaries. We are thus especially grateful to the senior civil servants, the many practitioners and to the corporate, public and third sector partners who have contributed generously and enthusiastically to the development of our thinking and to the swift progress of our practical collaborations in our first year.

This report is the work of the Council on Social Action, and as such it makes recommendations to government and to others in its capacity as an advisory body, independent of government. It is not a government document or a statement of government policy.

Ministerial Forewords



The Prime Minister,
Rt. Hon Gordon Brown MP

I am delighted that the Council on Social Action has undertaken this work to examine what could be done – by government, businesses, schools and communities – to promote a greater focus on one-to-one relationships, as a key way of supporting people and strengthening communities.

Being there – human beings being human, listening, comforting, supporting, mentoring – is the first line of support for the individual in need. Across the country, in every sector and setting, I have seen the power of one-to-one relationships to make a difference to people's lives and help them to solve their own problems. In fact, all our great challenges – drug rehabilitation, teenage vandalism and young offenders, troubled children in and coming out of care, the adult unemployed, the lonely pensioner – have one thing in common: that they need and can benefit from one-to-one care, attention and mentoring.

And so I thank the Council on Social Action for their efforts and hope that their recommendations have a great effect on expanding, improving and promoting one-to-one.

As Albert Schweitzer said: 'In everyone's life, at some time, our inner fire goes out. It is then burst into flame by an encounter with another human being. We should all be thankful for those people who rekindle the inner spirit.'

Gordon Brown



Rt Hon Hazel Blears MP, Secretary of State
for Communities and Local Government

The Council on Social Action is a unique forum bringing innovators from across the third sector and social entrepreneurs into the heart of government. I got to know more about it through the work leading up to my recent White Paper on passing power into the hands of local communities – *Communities in Control: real people, real power*. It quickly became clear that we had a very strong shared agenda.

When children go to a new school, or people are going through a difficult period in their lives, it's the 'one to one' relationships with 'buddies' or mentors that makes all the difference – both to individuals, and through them to their communities. In a similar vein, within my department we have developed the REACH programme which is recruiting young black role models to act as mentors to inspire and motivate other young black men.

So I am delighted that through the Council on Social Action, there is now a real focus on 'one-to-one', and very pleased at its achievements. In my department, we look forward to working with the Council as we turn the ideas in *Communities in Control* into reality.

Hazel Blears



Rt Hon Ed Balls MP, Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families

One-to-one mentoring and relationships are at the heart of our vision in the Children's Plan for this country to be the best place in the world to grow up. Children and young people constantly tell us that having someone to talk to, who can offer advice and help, is one of the most important things in their lives. Many adults already do this to great effect – from the trusted teacher to the volunteer youth worker, but the Council's evidence suggests there is more we can do. I welcome this report and its ambition to give many more children and young people the opportunity to develop relationships with someone they can trust.

I want to see more consideration of high quality one-to-one approaches from all those working to improve the lives of children and young people, so that we can widen the impact of the many existing successful examples already making a difference in our schools and communities. This is not an easy task, but the Council has rightly set a challenge which can only be met through Government and its partners working together in pursuit of a very important goal.

Ed Balls



Kevin Brennan MP, Minister for the Third Sector

The value of one-to-one support is made clear by the Council on Social Action report. Across the piece, from peer mentoring in schools to support for refugees facing barriers to integration, one-to-one support provided by volunteers is a powerful way of enabling people to reach their potential.

The contribution of volunteers providing one-to-one support is vital in building strong communities, bringing people together and empowering people to achieve change. The Government is committed to helping individuals to play an active role in society. We can do this by creating an environment in which volunteering can thrive and the Office of the Third Sector is committed to achieving this.

I welcome the report and look forward to continuing to work with the Council on Social Action on taking this very important work forward.

Kevin Brennan

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Summary

The Council on Social Action began this project with a simple objective: To increase numbers involved in successful, high quality, voluntary one-to-one activity.

One-to-one includes mentoring and befriending and all kinds of transformative relationships where knowledge and experience are shared with another person who is not a family member or close friend. Such relationships can unlock potential in us all, tackle need, build social capital and erode inequality.

We identified three constraints: Money – one-to-one is good value but not cost free. Understanding – potential partners often don't understand mentoring and befriending or appreciate its value, and Volunteers – not a problem everywhere but often a limitation.

These led us to work around six steps which take a positive approach to those barriers identifying the opportunities and realising the potential: Start young, Exploit technology, Develop momentum and build mass, Incentivise and sustain engagement, Invest in growth, Learn and share.

On each one we have worked on a set of practical collaborations and we have advised on other possibilities, more than 40 in total, all listed in Appendix 1.

If we could achieve just half a dozen of the recommendations in this report, what would they be?

1) A task force would bring together sector leaders and communications experts to develop and guide a two year profile raising communications strategy. Not for any individual agency but to build a one-to-one mindset – a shared recognition of one-to-one amongst public service commissioners, independent funders, policy analysts and frontline providers and an understanding that it is an established, effective and mutually beneficial approach to realising potential, tackling need, building social capital and eroding inequality.

- 2) The Social Impact Bond would be piloted and subsequently extended to pay for mentoring and befriending where ever it can be demonstrated that this innovative cross sector financial instrument will yield long term savings and generate significant social benefit. It is an ambitious model but if we can make it work it could transform the financing of early intervention across the service spectrum.
- 3) The Chief Secretary to the Treasury would write to all departments, as part of the next spending review, advising them that, even in these cash strapped times, indeed especially in these cash strapped times, No 10 and the Treasury are likely to look favourably on spending plans which involve one-to-one provision. Every government minister would challenge their department and themselves 'What does one-to-one mean to us and what more can we do?' and the PM would announce a new commitment to employee volunteering in government. The willing citizen is the partner of the enabling state and not an alternative. We need vision and leadership from government as much as we need drive and innovation from the third sector.
- 4) The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) would undertake a dynamic and widespread campaign to ensure, once and for all, the consistent application of existing rules to support volunteering and to remove the barriers previously experienced by benefit claimants. Tackling some issues on the statute book is not the same as tackling them on the ground. We make no apology for raising an issue that has been raised by others many times. Better communications to claimants and especially to Job Centre staff can resolve this problem and would be an effective demonstration of government commitment to the support of social action.

- 5) The board charged with overseeing Public Service Agreement (PSA) 21 'Build more cohesive, empowered and active communities' would champion development of one-to-one across government and recommendations in this paper would form part of their agenda. The Department for Communities and Local Government (CLG) White Paper on empowering communities acknowledged 'strong and supportive individual relationships are at the centre of every successful community'. Our many practical recommendations to government run with the grain of public policy around personalisation of services and the empowerment of communities but CoSA has no power to implement and our advice could easily get lost. CLG own the cross government PSA on building cohesive, empowered and active communities. The development of one-to-one should be central to the PSA strategy and its progress should be driven by this senior, cross departmental board.
- 6) Politicians, policy makers and practitioners would distinguish between personalising and customising. This may seem like a pedantic point but it matters because they can work in opposite directions. A call centre or an online service may customise provision but it doesn't personalise it. Both can be beneficial in specific circumstances but they are not the same. The recommendations in this paper are about personalising, one human being supporting another, because again and again we have seen how effective mentoring and befriending changes lives

These would be our top six but we think all 44 hold together as a coherent package. We have developed or suggested new ways to build support for one-to-one in every sector, to embed the principles in future policies, to measure results and identify and celebrate success and to support practitioners and new strategies for engaging more people, for realising the potential of technology, and for recognising and rewarding the individual effort.

We've thought about change that works from the top down and from the bottom up. We recommend piloting a local funding model similar to that of the Danish Learning Associations and based on a 'right to subsidy' radically redrawing the usual government / third sector relationship. Others ideas are less bold but maybe the most important. How, we asked ourselves, do we generate the long term systemic change in children's services needed to deliver the vision 'someone for everyone throughout our childhood'? Our recommendation on staff training and the 2020 children

and young people's workforce strategy is no dazzling insight but it may have the greatest long term influence

Some of our collaborations – a role for the Open University in the development of mass for instance – are totemic. They are useful in their own right but also an illustration of what might be achieved if the principle is pursued further. Others like the outward facing school network, now already agreed and under development, reach beyond our brief on one-to-one. Where we have learnt more than is specifically helpful to mentoring and befriending we are sharing the learning in a separate publication 'The CoSA Commentary'.

All make some contribution to the top line objective on increasing one-to-one activity – a field in which many flowers bloom. Mentoring and befriending is nothing if not personal and a lot of good work is already undertaken on a small scale. Much would be lost if we tried to industrialise the sector but we do believe that there is great potential for further organic development and that more could be done to nurture new schemes and to create a climate in which effective projects flourish and grow. We conclude with three suggestions that would stretch the vision and take the sector to another level.

Of course we have no powers of enforcement but for every action we have asked ourselves who will take this through to fulfilment and how will we know that they have or at least understand why the idea was unworkable. We have added recommendations about measurement, monitoring and cross-departmental oversight suggesting, for instance that DCSF should embed reference to the development of one-to-one services in their Impact Assessment guidelines for all policy advice.

CoSA is a unique structure with the people and the opportunity to do more than report. That's why we have driven each of our recommendations through to the point where there is, at the very least, a group of partners committed to the next steps. In the case of roughly half, mostly the lower hanging fruit, there is already action underway. We expect to be judged in the year ahead partly on the impact of this activity and especially on our ability to channel the momentum into wider cultural or structural change. If we are able to stimulate a new mindset around the voluntary support of one another, within government and way beyond ... that would be success.



1

Someone to turn to

The shiny centre with the new computers, the trips out, the orders and the punishments; for the fourteen year old struggling with friends, insufficiently supported at home, repeatedly excluded at school, these are not the answer, though they may be part of it. The one essential element that will turn that young man's life around is another human being. Someone to talk to. Someone to listen to. Week after week. Solid as a rock.

It is not only possible for one human being to make a real and lasting difference to another, it is often the only thing that ever does. We need to work together to unleash the energy, the experience and the compassion in every community, school, business and public agency.

The Council on Social Action was established to involve more people in social action and to find new ways of supporting the millions already engaged. To give our work a clear direction the Prime Minister challenged us to imagine a society in which we might all have someone to turn to throughout our childhood years and thereafter in times of crisis or transition. A community where the talents of each contribute to the well being of all, where we might each expect to receive support when we need it and to give it when we can and where such support is common place and second nature.

It is an aspiration with which many can identify; partly perhaps because our own lives have been strengthened and expanded by individual relationships at critical times and partly because it is as a mentor, a good guide for those who follow, that we all, on our best day would most wish to be regarded.

'One-to-one' became the focus of our efforts as we sought to understand where it is done well and how success might be replicated. What are the obstacles and what are the opportunities? We are interested in supporting and extending such activity across the spectrum from universal light touch befriending schemes through to intensive focused mentoring programmes. Both are of proven value in their own right and enhanced performance and profile in one segment will inspire interest and stimulate growth across the range.

CoSA is in a unique position. We meet in Whitehall with the engagement of the Prime Minister and senior Ministers, but our members bring experience from across the sectors. Though specifically tasked to advise the PM and government we recognise that social action by its very nature involves us all. Government alone cannot build and sustain supportive

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communities though its role is fundamental. The willing citizen is a partner of the enabling state, not an alternative. We have therefore endeavoured to progress our work through collaboration; catalysing new activity and sharing, with government and others, practical advice rooted in cross sector experience.

This publication is three things: A short report on our work in this area, a gathering of inspiring examples sharing ideas for others to develop and a call to action. We seek not only incremental growth but, more than that, a shift in attitudes, awareness and ultimately, behaviour exploiting in John Smiths words 'the extraordinary potential of ordinary people'.

We all have a role and an interest in forming and sustaining the sort of individual relationships that are at the heart of successful and happy lives, stable and cohesive communities.

We all need help at some time in our lives. We all have something to give.

We have defined one-to-one as a transformative relationship sharing knowledge and experience with a significant other who is not family or a close friend.

What do we mean by one-to-one?

We have defined one-to-one as a transformative relationship sharing knowledge and experience with a significant other who is not family or a close friend.

One-to-one covers a range of activity from 'universal' befriending programmes such as school buddy schemes pairing every child through to 'intensive' programmes like the St Giles peer mentoring programme matching trained ex-convicts with those who are newly released. Similarly, The Place2Be, match troubled school pupils with trained volunteer counsellors and Leap Confronting Conflict train teenagers as peer-mediators to work with young people at risk of getting involved in gangs. The 'universal' end of the spectrum is light touch. Successful relationships rely more on serendipity than they do on training and preparation and are more about befriending than specialised support. Numbers engaged at the 'intensive' end are smaller, unit costs are higher and the needs are more specific and acute.

The ideas linking the schemes we have considered are that they are voluntary – no payment on either side – and non judgemental. Many are peer-to-peer or near-to-peer and all are about sharing knowledge and experience rather than specialist skills, about demonstrating empathy and ultimately about re-distributing social capital.

The terms mentoring and befriending are sometimes used interchangeably but mentoring usually focuses more on goal setting and operates within a clearly defined timeframe whilst befriending tends to develop more informal and supportive social relationships, often over a longer timeframe.

Befriending is ... "a relationship between two or more individuals which is initiated, supported, and monitored by an agency that has defined one or more parties as likely to benefit. Ideally the relationship is non-judgemental, mutual, purposeful, and there is a commitment over time"
(*'The role and impact of befriending'*, Joseph Rowntree Foundation report, Oct 98).

Mentors are "many things – a positive role model, an adviser, an experienced friend. Somebody from outside a person's immediate circle taking a special interest can make an enormous difference."
(*Excellence in Schools White Paper, 1997*)



Why does it matter?

We have found in all three sectors but particularly in government an entrenched opinion about the availability of evidence. Conventional wisdom contends that there is none. In fact there is a lot but it is almost entirely small-scale, invariably focusing on just one agency, localised and difficult to compare and contrast because every assessment process is different and every agency uses different performance indicators. In consequence the evidence base is still weak and a national, multi-agency study is a necessary next step.

However the data that is available and the powerful anecdotal support together paint a compelling picture demonstrating the value of mentoring and befriending and, in particular, the importance of intervention along the spectrum. We have seen the power of one-to-one across all areas of society with children and young people, recovering mental health service users, refugees, ex-offenders, those in crisis and those in transition. Mentoring is commonplace in the private sector workplace. We must exploit its unique potential to unlock talent and potential everywhere, not just amongst the high achievers on the big corporate graduate training programmes. One-to-one can release potential in us all, it tackles need, it builds networks and social capital and it erodes inequality.

Data that is available and the powerful anecdotal support paints a compelling picture demonstrating the value of mentoring and befriending.

1-2-1 Youth Befriending supported James when he went to live with his father and a young step-mother after being abandoned by his mother. He had lost his home, friends, mother and had to fit in to a new environment. He was an angry young man, bunking-off school and wandering the town and was seen under the influence of alcohol, refusing to co-operate, refusing to pursue his hobbies such as rugby and music with the same enthusiasm as before. He was failing at school and lacked focus. He was matched with a young male befriender. Since seeing his befriender he has finished school, having become a regular attendee. He has renewed his interest in music and plays guitar with his befriender and they discuss and play Warhammer games. He is now working part-time until he is able to take up his foundation course at a local college in January to enter the armed forces. He now has a focus and a career choice.

What is our objective?

Our objective is to increase numbers involved in successful, high quality, voluntary one-to-one activity.

Why now?

“For the child in care, the young family stretched to breaking point, the elderly neighbour entirely alone” the Prime Minister has written “strength and hope and friendship come not from markets and states or incentives and commands but from the human touch”.

One-to-one is of the moment. Public services are being reconfigured to embrace ‘shared responsibility’ and incorporate bespoke support from professionals like expert nurses and classroom mentors.

This paper resonates with some of the thinking and policy development on the personalisation of public services but the phrase has been used



“For the child in care, the young family stretched to breaking point, the elderly neighbour entirely alone, strength and hope and friendship come not from markets and states or incentives and commands but from the human touch.”

Rt. Hon Gordon Brown MP,
Prime Minister

loosely across government and by external commentators. It is important to distinguish between customising services and humanising them. This is not to argue that one is preferable to the other but to note that they are different. Poly clinics, even call centres, may offer a service that will meet individual needs much more quickly, efficiently and flexibly than, for instance, the individual GP operating on their own but the service will be less personal. Later in this paper we develop the point with the comparison between Amazon.com who can source obscure books swiftly and cheaply but without any personal contact and the neighbourhood bookshop where the shopper can browse and seek advice but buy a much more limited range of products.

Our work connects with the reform of public services where real personalisation, the development of the one-to-one contact, is, to use Charles Leadbettters phrase ‘the operating logic’ at the heart of the service and where primacy is given to the quality of the individual interaction at the point of delivery. We are publishing a companion paper ‘Side by Side and the Implications for Public Services’ because, in the course of our work, we have gathered new insights here. Public services are delivered by professionals and this is the critical point of departure from our focus but the roots are the same: the recognition that, at certain points in our lives and particularly in periods of crisis or transition, we all need and benefit from personalised support.

Most importantly government’s work on public service reform and the original challenge to CoSA from the PM demonstrate the clear recognition in Westminster and Whitehall that, as each of the schemes we’ve surveyed illustrate so powerfully, individual change and development happens one person at a time.

The kind of projects we have looked at matter now to all who work on the design of public services because they show a way, perhaps the only way, of generating to scale the real personal support that government and public are expecting them to deliver in the years ahead.

We consider the emergence of ‘Generation C’ and the development of communications technology as a separate section but note here not only the opportunities presented by the technology but also the influence it

The Social Mobility Foundation is a charity offering support to the most talented students from poor backgrounds. The Foundation achieves these objectives by providing sixth form students with internships in top careers, and then providing help with UCAS personal statements and Oxbridge entrance, and offering young professionals as e-mentors in a range of professional and business sectors. The SMF intends to offer these facilities to each of the 3,000 Year 12 students from poor backgrounds, throughout the country, predicted to achieve the required grades.

Josh, who is currently on the programme, says:

“I feel this is an immense opportunity for me to gain work experience. I have always been an excellent student but when I was put into foster care, at the age of 13, this only pushed me to strive for greater things and show that there are people living in bad situations who can actually achieve great things”.

Josh receives EMA, attends a school in one of the country’s most deprived boroughs and will shortly take up a placement with a leading investment bank in London.

exerts on public expectations. We increasingly demand a richer, deeper, one-to-one type experience in almost every aspect of our lives. At the same time we are far more willing to share experience and knowledge than previous generations. The line between the private and the personal and the public and the social has moved and is moving still. This is the insight that has driven the development of e-mentoring but it is even more important than that. The internet sensibility is infecting the real world of physical communities, relationships and services. One-to-one thinking and development must ride that wave.

The internet sensibility is infecting the real world of physical communities, relationships and services. One-to-one thinking and development must ride that wave.

What have we done?

We have consulted practitioners and talked to those in other sectors who work with them, spoken with funders and considered the schemes that have worked and those that haven't in the UK and elsewhere. We have used the network around the Council to explore specific issues in a variety of ways: a group of secondees supported by a cross-sector advisory panel have considered ways of incentivising volunteering, the Mentoring and Befriending Foundation have surveyed their membership, Royal Mail and Allen & Overy have sponsored work by the Doughty Centre on new ideas for generating cross-sector collaboration and Accenture have convened discussions with other businesses on driving engagement through purchasing and procurement. Ministers and officials at the Cabinet Office, Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF), HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC), Department for Business, Enterprise & Regulatory Reform (BERR), Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and Department for Communities and Local Government (CLG), and staff at the LGA have all contributed ideas and experience. We have also worked with a number of voluntary organisations including the volunteering charity v, St Giles Trust,

TimeBank's Time Together mentoring programme aids the successful integration of refugees into the UK. Mentors spend about five hours a month with their mentee; helping them with unfamiliar employment or banking systems, visiting a museum or art gallery, or simply practising English. Mentors and mentees are trained and supported throughout the process. Around 96% of all mentors felt better equipped to dispel negative myths about refugees and 95% of the mentees felt that they had a better understanding of UK society.

"Getting to know Faduma has increased my awareness about the journey of refugees trying to start a new life in the UK. Mentoring Faduma has shown me that refugees are real people with real stories and real lives, by doing something like mentoring their stories become personalised. Faduma has come a long way since I met her. She is a lot more confident now, and on her way to having some qualifications, and of equal importance, she seems to be enjoying life more. Faduma, was a single mum, struggling to make ends meet. I feel I've helped her to lead a happier life, and she has helped me by opening my eyes to other cultures.

Michael, 44, Public Affairs Consultant

I fled the civil war in Somalia in 2003 and now live in London with my son. Before I met Michael I was on the bottom step of a long ladder and I didn't know how to take the next step; I didn't know anything about the UK employment, education or cultural systems. I felt afraid, but Michael helped me to get my confidence back so I felt able to engage with people in the UK and build a life for myself. Integration is a two way street: I've learnt from Michael and he's learnt from me. I hope to start a Masters course in development and I am also looking for work in the development or human rights field. I dream one day of going back to Somalia to put into practice some of the knowledge I have gained."

Faduma, 31, Mother and Student



In general government's role here is to help to develop a climate in which mentoring and befriending will flourish. Marjorie Fry once noted that "you cannot give a child love by act of parliament".

The Mentoring and Befriending Foundation, the Gold Star Group, the Citizenship Foundation, Volunteering England, the National Union of Students, Heart of the City, Chance UK, 1-2-1 Youth Befriending, TimeBank, bassac, Horseshoath, Make Your Mark, Comic Relief and Business in the Community as well as bodies like the Commission on the Future of Volunteering, the Open University, ContinYou, the Doughty Centre, NESTA, the National College for School Leadership and the Specialist Schools and Academies Trust. Business has played a very important role and we have worked with Accenture, Allen & Overy, Royal Mail, Social Finance, the UBS, BDO Stoy Hayward and Hendersons.

Out of this work we have developed a set of ideas which we offer as our 'Advice' to government, our primary purpose, and to other partners. We have been determined to ensure that the advice is practical and supported by the key players in this field. Where it isn't we have not proceeded. Thus around many of the actions we have also assembled a group of collaborators who are already working on the development of the recommendation. On these recommendations we report on the 'Action Underway'.

In general government's role here is to help to develop a climate in which mentoring and befriending will flourish. Marjorie Fry once noted that you cannot give a child love by act of parliament". No government action which approaches the mandatory will work in this territory but much more can be done to share good practice, sustain and cultivate practical structures for supporting provision and inspire engagement. This cannot be about government saying 'we must' or, worse still, 'you must' but rather 'why shouldn't we? And here's how we can help'.

The separate initiatives in this paper will come to fruition at different times, and some will also throw up new ideas. They are each modest, practical contributions to that vision of 'someone for everyone' through out our childhood years and thereafter in times of challenge or transition. Like Alvin Toffler, we believe that it is by 'getting the small things moving in the right direction that we get the big things right'. As activity is stimulated in different places we inspire further understanding and we create the conditions for generating greater commitment. In the final section of the publication we suggest how this work might then be taken to the next level.

What have we learnt?

First there are hundreds of one-to-one programmes in the UK today, mostly local and small scale. We do not need to invent solutions or import them. We need to sustain them and we need to help them to grow and to be replicated.

Repeatedly we heard of three constraints:

- **Money:** a gathering body of evidence suggests that well-run voluntary one-to-one schemes are good value but we know that they are not cost free.
- **Understanding:** partners who might be funders or help in other ways often failed to understand mentoring and befriending or appreciate its value.
- **Volunteers:** not a problem everywhere but where it is the availability of male mentors was most often mentioned. Many organisations invest significant resources in finding volunteers, and would benefit from help with recruitment from employers and membership organisations.

These led us towards work on six steps which take a positive approach to those barriers, identifying the opportunities and exploiting the potential.

- **Start young:** there is potential for growth without significant additional investment at the universal end of the spectrum – e-mentoring, befriending programmes, buddy schemes etc. Growth here is valuable and potentially also a first step towards greater individual engagement and ultimately, collectively, cultural change. Some schools already do mentoring and befriending well establishing early the idea that we all need help at some time in our lives and we all have something to contribute. We have been exploring the target of a one-to-one relationship for every child in education achieved through promoting, replicating, developing and celebrating current practise.
- **Exploit technology:** under 21s – the so called Generation C – understand and expect to co-create. One-to-one is of the moment and social network technology can deliver both scale and a credible experience for this age group and gradually beyond. We suggest that this potential is not necessarily best realised for the purposes of social action and volunteer engagement through the development of new technologies. We have been encouraging the adaptation and adoption of existing applications.
- **Develop momentum and build mass:** we know that across all forms of volunteering and wider civil engagement, member gets member is the most powerful development tool. We grow one-to-one, one by one. We suggest that there are a range of opportunities for moving to mass most quickly by cascading inspiration and practical opportunities through employers, large and small, and through existing movements.

Some schools already do mentoring and befriending well establishing early the idea that we all need help at some time in our lives and we all have something to contribute.

- **Incentivise and sustain engagement:** one-to-one is a fulfilling experience for both parties. It is necessary to communicate the intrinsic value of that experience but not overlook the importance of other inducements and rewards. We know that the initial motivation to engage is often not the same as the reason given for sustaining involvement. We have been looking at new incentives.
- **Invest in growth:** current capacity is more limited and development constrained as we move through the spectrum from universal to intensive. Programmes like 'Tomorrows Citizens' run by Bolton Lads and Girls Club can make a strong business case but growth here requires greater public and private investment. We have collaborated on some new approaches to funding and suggested others.
- **Learn and share the lessons:** for growth to be most effective it must build on lessons learnt and support and apply appropriate procedures for training and for quality control. Tools exist for these purposes but are erratically applied. We suggest ways of promoting the principles and sharing the learning.

Chance UK runs year-long mentoring schemes for children of primary school age with behavioural and emotional problems. It pairs young people with volunteer mentors who help them set and achieve educational, behavioural and personal goals. Changes in children's behaviour and social skills are measured using the Goodman Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ), a standard tool in children's counselling. The SDQ is completed at the beginning and end of the mentoring scheme by the person who referred the child to Chance UK (usually a teacher). The difference in the 'before' and 'after' scores is used as a measure of change. Chance UK sees improvement in SDQ scores for 98% of children. For over half of children, all difficulties are successfully resolved, 82% of teachers felt that the mentored child was more focused and 96% of parents registered improvements in their relationship with their child.

Karl was seven when he was referred to Chance UK. His referral SDQ score was 34 showing an extremely high level of behavioural difficulty. This manifested in his negative behaviours in school, regular outbursts of anger followed by exclusions from school, poor academic achievement and an inability to form positive peer friendships. He was matched with Darren, who worked with him one-to-one, weekly for a one year period. Darren helped Karl learn to control his temper, express his needs and learn to be patient. As he improved on a one-to-one basis it was important that he learnt how to be with other children and still control his temper. Darren and Karl attended sessions with other mentors and children from Chance UK so that Karl could learn to share and work with other children in a safe environment.

At the end of his year of mentoring Karl was confident and was proving to be a positive influence on his peers, had made friends and was doing well academically. His SDQ score dropped to 1 (normal) showing that he had no behavioural difficulty and was functioning well in all areas.



2

Starting young

Of the 483 children at Yeading junior school 78% speak English as a second language. On entry to the school all pupils are assigned a buddy in the same year, children in years 5 and 6 can choose to be trained as Playground Friends spotting and playing with isolated juniors and 15 of the oldest are now Peer Mediators. This involves training in conflict resolution and elements of restorative justice. Working in pairs the mediators have, staff say, been responsible for the successful inclusion of many previously disruptive students. The team are also involved in the selection and training of next years Peer Mediators. These pupil led initiatives require staff commitment but save substantial amounts of time otherwise spent on playground and classroom issues. As a consequence of its catchment area there is constant movement in and out of Yeading but the school perform above the national average in Key Stage 2 tests. The untested progress in emotional intelligence, staff say, is even more remarkable. Children gain confidence and social skills from the one-to-one schemes, eventually taking responsibility for their management and often going on to lead other initiatives.

Children gain confidence and social skills from the one-to-one schemes, eventually taking responsibility for their management and often going on to lead other initiatives.

Yeading Junior School welcomed Angelica who had been bullied at her previous school. A Kosovan national, she spoke very little English, but was supported through the transition by a buddy from a similar background, who was chosen by a teacher, and by one from a more senior year group. She very quickly established roots in the school and made many friends among her own peers and with the two learning mentors and is now finishing her penultimate year, already working to a National Curriculum Level 4a standard (the level expected by the end of primary school). Having successfully been buddied-up with other incoming students she was chosen to be a peer-mediator at the beginning of this academic year. Since then she has set up a well attended friendship club with one of her friends, which provides activities for anyone who wants them and has been a very positive force in the inclusion of other previously disruptive pupils. She has also spoken at the Anti-Bullying Conference at Brunel University about her experiences. She is an articulate and emotionally intelligent girl, who understands and is greatly admired and respected by her peers.

At Columbia Primary School in Tower Hamlets, 41% of children receive free school meals and 68% speak English as a second language. Children in Years 5 and 6 operate lunchtime clubs for young pupils and are trained to run the lunchtime Friendship Squad. *"If someone is lonely or doesn't have anyone to play with, we play with them or find someone for them ...*

“If someone is lonely or doesn't have anyone to play with, we play with them or find someone for them ... We sort out problems if there are fights or arguments. I would never take sides. As a Friendship Squad it's your duty never to take sides.”

Jubir, aged 11

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At Langdon Secondary School in Newham, over 70% speak English as a second language, 14% are refugees and over 50% of children are eligible for free school meals. Peer-mediators are trained by local voluntary organisation Conflict and Change, and resolve low-level playground difficulties, with support from staff.

Befriending and mentoring relationships are part of the culture in these schools. How might we encourage every school to establish low-level pairing relationships and buddy schemes for every child?

We might begin to build the habit from a very young age by assigning a “friend” from the reception class to every new nursery class child. Some schools do this anyway but if it was seen to be as much a part of school life everywhere as assemblies and school dinners and if we called it the same thing everywhere we would start to embed the idea as something we all benefited from and contributed to. Pairings might become more sophisticated as children grow older with potential for the development of the kind of specialist provision delivered by the Yeading peer-mediators. Critically this first step is not primarily about ambitious new provision but about beginning the process of understanding that collaboration is both a part of education and a part of life for us all.

To replicate the success of Yeading and others like it we must recognise, celebrate and reward, formally and informally, the children and the schools that do it best.

CoSA has been working with the Anti-Bullying Alliance and others to identify examples of good practice. We have been exploring with the DCSF ways of elevating the status of the interpersonal skills involved in supporting and befriending and recognizing them alongside the more obvious talents of academic and sporting excellence. Shine Week, the new annual schools talent festival is an appropriate vehicle.

■ **The Action Underway:** Shine Week 2009 will include a strand on mentoring and befriending with clear advice to schools on recognising and rewarding pupils who have achieved through buddying and similar one-to-one relationships.

Since September 2007 all schools have had a duty to ‘promote the well being’ of students, enshrining in statute the long-standing commitment of the best schools to their pupils wider development. Government defines well being in terms of the five Every Child Matters outcomes: Be Healthy; Stay Safe, Enjoy and Achieve, Make a Positive Contribution and Achieve Economic Well Being. Schools are judged against these outcomes in the Ofsted inspections. Strong one-to-one schemes benefit both mentor and mentee thus advancing all five outcomes. Evidence of peer mentoring and befriending demonstrate that schools promote well being particularly in relation to pupils staying safe (reducing bullying) and in making a positive contribution (helping children understand the role they can play in supporting others).

CoSA has been working with the DCSF on the inclusion of mentoring and befriending in their 2009 guidance to schools, promoting pupil well-being.



■ **Our Advice:** DCSF Guidance paper on Schools' role in promoting pupil well-being should include specific reference to mentoring and befriending.

We recognise that teachers have many demands on their time. We have seen effective examples of schools where third sector partners deliver services, businesses help with volunteers and student organisations train and supply mentors but establishing and managing these relationships can be very demanding. We think the issue here goes well beyond the development of mentoring and befriending. The Children's Plan Building Brighter Futures envisages 'a new role for schools at the centre of their communities' and includes a commitment to schools embracing their role in the wider development of young people. Working in partnership is fundamental in delivering the Every Child Matters agenda. Increasingly, many schools are developing strong and sustained partnerships with a range of organisations in order to help young people to become willing citizens and to succeed in higher education and the workplace. But businesses and other organisations working with schools tell us that they find it difficult to gain access and to find the right person. Some have suggested that there may be a mismatch between the appetite of business to engage with schools and schools' capacity to utilise those links. This is not just about the practicalities. It is also about the culture of the school, the style of leadership and the confidence and knowledge required for an outward-facing focus.

CoSA has been exploring ideas for rewarding and supporting outward-facing schools with DCSF, Specialist Schools and Academies Trust (SSAT), National College for School Leadership (NCSL), ContinYou, individual schools and other partners together recommended the establishment of an outward-facing school network as a mechanism for connecting practitioners, sharing ideas and supporting good practice. To give the network real bite we would ultimately like to see Ofsted evaluating outward facing links as part of its school inspections and a dedicated outward facing role in every staffing structure. We discussed an Outward Facing Fellowship, to offer school managers the time and resource to further develop their work on external links.

■ **The Action Underway:** DCSF Ministers responded positively and announced in September 2008 the launch of the Steve Sinnott Fellowship to help schools strengthen their outward-facing links. The Fellowship will help to promote, develop and professionalise the role of external link person. CoSA has been closely involved in shaping the idea, and developing an outward-facing network.

The substantial investment in schools in recent years has lifted standards but inequalities in outcome remain. One-to-one work can help to ensure that resources are accessed, not just by those with the most confidence or knowledge, but also by those with the greatest needs. The government's commitment to one-to-one teaching support for those who need extra help with literacy and numeracy demonstrates understanding of the importance of this approach. We would like to see a similar commitment to the support of one-to-one work in every aspect of school life involving not only the professionals but also parents, external volunteers and, above all, the children themselves supporting one another.

Increasingly, many schools are developing strong and sustained partnerships with a range of organisations in order to help young people to become willing citizens and to succeed in higher education and the workplace.

Working in partnership is fundamental in delivering the Every Child Matters agenda.

There is particular potential around the implementation of new policies – the development of extended schools, the extension of the school leaving age and especially the Children's Plan vision for the 21st Century School.

“Extended schools provide a range of services and activities, often beyond the school day, to help meet the needs of children, their families and the wider community” (DfES, 2005) All schools are expected to provide extended services by 2010.

This agenda recognises that schools have a role to play in supporting pupils' wider social development, and provide a useful mechanism for developing one-to-one programmes in schools. Extended schools have a strong outward-facing focus, working with partners in the voluntary, statutory and business sectors to offer pupils and the local community services which may not otherwise be available. Schools working in this way have been able to establish strong partnerships with third sector organisations to deliver mentoring schemes like Chance UK's programme linking vulnerable 10/11 year olds with volunteer mentors and the BitC Mosaic programme matching business people from the Muslim community with inner-city teenagers.

Educators argue that schools have always sought to support young people's wider well-being, beyond educational attainment, and that the extended school agenda creates a new opportunity for such work. After-school clubs, Saturday schools, holiday activities could achieve more than occupy young people, they could be the arena for helping young people to expand their horizons and cultivate aspiration.

Similarly, the raising of the school leaving age creates an opportunity to offer young people new experiences and the chance to develop enriching one-to-one relationships to support the transition to adulthood.

Most important the commitment in the Children's Plan to develop the vision for the 21st Century School places personalised support at the heart of its approach. This must be about partnership between children – ‘shared responsibility’ in the new government rhetoric – as well as about the relationships between children and school staff. Every child a friend, every child befriended should be a feature of the 21st century school. Every child mentored, every child a peer-mentor might be the next step.

■ **Our Advice:** DCSF ministers should ask the questions of every new policy: How does this play out for the individual child and where are the opportunities for a one-to-one relationship? What is the role for peer support and how might we also engage other willing citizens.

Schools offer one framework for the development of mentoring and befriending but not the only one. It is important to ensure that the initiatives growing out of ‘Aiming High’ (the government strategy for youth engagement) include opportunities for young people to access and develop one-to-one relationships, as a route to developing the social and emotional skills that support both well being and employability.



“Employers are looking for more than just technical skills and knowledge ... They particularly value skills such as communication, team working and problem solving. Job applicants who can demonstrate that they have developed these skills will have a real advantage.”

Lord Digby Jones, former Director-General, Confederation of British Industry.

CoSA has worked with the DCSF to influence the development of their youth leadership programme and to give prominence to one-to-one work facilitating collaboration among the youth leadership organisations involved and introducing business links for the proposed fellowship of young leaders.

The DCSF is not the only part of government that works with young people. There are other departments and independent but related organisations –volunteering charity v, for instance – where there could be, and should be, a one-to-one component in the development of their programmes.

■ **Our Advice:** Principles of one-to-one should be embedded in all programmes across government and related agencies that relate to children and young people including, for example v, the National Institute for Youth Leadership, MyPlace and the Integrated Youth Support Services.

For the policy advice to work on the ground it must be accompanied by appropriate staff training. The development of the 2020 children and young people’s workforce strategy provides a good opportunity to look at how one-to-one approaches could be better supported across the children and young people’s workforce.

■ **Our Advice:** The current work on the development of the 2020 strategy should give prominence to the importance of one-to-one provision.

These are ambitious aspirations that could ultimately deliver the vision – ‘someone for everyone’ – but how do we lift them from the page and set them pulsing through the department? Progress on each of our practical recommendations will be relatively easy to sustain and to monitor but we need a different, strong, structural mechanism to promote the development of a new mindset. The will to embrace these ideas across all children’s services cannot be imposed from outside but must be driven and judged from within.

■ **Our Advice:** DCSF should embed reference to the development of one-to-one services in the Impact Assessment guidelines for all policy advice.



The Place2Be provide trained volunteer counsellors to schools. Ten-year-old Luke was the boy who always sat on his own at lunchtime. He had few friends, was sullen and disruptive in class and frequently arrived at school late, if he turned up at all. Outside school he had begun to hang out with older teenagers and had got involved in destructive activities like fire-setting and vandalism.

Luke couldn't look to his family for support. His mother had her own problems—she suffered from depression and panic attacks and was prone to drink heavily. His sister had been placed in care some years earlier, and his father, who was chronically ill, lived a long way away with a new partner.

It was obvious to Luke's class teacher that he needed help. She referred him to The Place2Be, a charity that provides school-based counselling services to children and their families. Luke began weekly one-on-one sessions with one of the charity's volunteer counsellors which took place in the school's special Place2Be room. Although he was unsure and cautious at first, and missed a few of his early sessions, he soon began to look forward to seeing his counsellor. For the first time in years, he was getting individual attention and having a chance to talk about his worries.

His mother also started to take an interest and came into school twice to meet his counsellor, in contrast to the previous two years when she had not visited once. The counsellor kept in regular touch with Luke's social worker and school staff, so everyone knew how he was doing. His teacher started to see visible improvements: 'Luke began to arrive at school on time every day,' she noted, 'and dropped into The Place2Be on his way to class to announce that he was in. This in itself, seemed to be a source of pride for him.'



Schools and youth organisations provide a structured route for engaging and involving young people in the support of one another. The commitment is harder to sustain as the student leaves school and possibly also relocates into a new community. For the school mentor to sustain engagement in new environments the next steps must be visible and attainable, they must suit busy, flexible life styles and they must feel and be both practical and attractive to a generation that expects to shop, to be entertained, to work and to play at all hours of the day and night. We suggest that new communications technologies will be particularly important here.



Exploiting technology

The 'C' in the current trend watchers phrase 'Generation C' stands for many things (community, creativeness, connectedness, control) but the most important from our perspective is the under 25's ability to form communities easily. They are connected both socially and to the internet. They expect to be involved in the creation of their products and media. They generate content – they photograph on their phone and write blogs. They are comfortable with certain types of complexity. They expect a level of involvement in shaping the products and services they use. They like to be involved. They demonstrate initiative. They constantly communicate. These are the characteristics that have shaped the market for communications technologies. They are also, potentially, the characteristics of a thriving, supportive community. How do we adapt and adopt those technologies for positive social purposes?

CoSA has worked with Make Your Mark, National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts (NESTA), BERR, Office of the Third Sector (OTS) and a range of corporate partners on the development of the UK Catalyst Awards (www.ukcatalystawards.com) to recognise projects which have applied communications technology for a social purpose most effectively, to share their learning and to support growth and replication. Speaking at the first Awards on 24/7/08 the Prime Minister said "We are creating a new generation of activists, campaigners and social entrepreneurs who are showing us just how the newest of technologies can help solve some of the oldest of challenges, building a more just society and better, stronger communities".

The Awards are part of a process of research and development. We need to learn and think more about how mobile phones and simple networks might, for instance, best be used to tackle bullying, reduce the isolation of elders on their own, share experience amongst new parents. And we need to support the trail blazers in their journey to scale.

■ **The Action Underway:** The UK Catalyst Awards have been developed as a process for celebrating, sharing and cultivating the best examples of communications technologies applied for a social purpose.

Can mentoring or befriending really be delivered without eye contact? Two stories helped us understand the different potential:

Amazon.com derive more 10% of their global profits from books which sell less than 100 copies. The local shop is limited for shelf space and

"We are creating a new generation of activists, campaigners and social entrepreneurs who are showing us just how the newest of technologies can help solve some of the oldest of challenges, building a more just society and better, stronger communities."

Horseshmouth research shows that there is a set of issues which young people are keen to share with parents, teachers and close friends and another set that they absolutely do not want to talk about with this group but none the less do want to discuss with someone. They want those conversations to have the characteristics of intimacy *and* of anonymity.

stocks the biggest sellers but warehouse room in cyber space is limitless. Amazon is not personal in the sense that we meet the shopkeeper but it is capable of delivering to our specific requirements. Likewise the local support group offers physical contact but the global networking site matches our needs most precisely with the mentor who can meet them. One is not better than the other, they are different.

Similarly Horseshmouth research shows that there is a set of issues which young people are keen to share with parents, teachers and close friends and another set that they absolutely do not want to talk about with this group but none the less do want to discuss with someone. They want those conversations to have the characteristics of intimacy *and* of anonymity.

The face to face mentor can do some things that the technology can never facilitate but the opposite is also true. We need to build on the work of Catalyst, develop our understanding of the possibilities and extend the thinking with other partners and across government connecting particularly with the agenda on personalisation of public services.

■ **The Action Underway:** CoSA is working with CLG and other partners to bring together the leading mobile phone operators to explore collaborations which would release the potential of the technology for social action.

The emergence of Web 2.0 technology, peer-to-peer networks and user generated content, allow us to learn from each other in a meaningful way and on a scale that was previously unimaginable. Most e-mentoring schemes thus far have been developed as an alternative channel for the traditional mentoring model (longitudinal, deep commitments in an older/younger or institutional/client pairing). They are typically affiliated to institutions, are more formal, and do not create a new model for one-to-one. There are also many online discussion and support forums but hitherto no venue which connects individuals with others who have been through the same experience across a potentially infinite range of issues.

Horseshmouth

"I think something really important that needs to be said about the website is that in real life, people don't expose vulnerabilities at all, you know, you go to work, you have your friends, and no-one gets vulnerable with anybody else, everyone puts a face on. But the thing about Horseshmouth is that everybody's vulnerable. Everybody writes a profile, everybody gives advice, everybody sometimes takes advice, and because of that I think you get to build quite genuine friendships, from the heart."

Jess, Horseshmouth service user

"Now with the social web the power of mentoring can be scaled in a way which can be truly transformational. The ability to reach out to, connect with and support other people on the basis of common experiences will truly be the "killer app" of social networking. Specifically this will allow the isolated, the disadvantaged and the excluded to benefit from access to kind strangers and positive role models in a way and on a scale that simply was never possible before"

MT. Rainey, Chief Executive Horseshmouth

Confident Futures, run by Brightside Trust is an on-line mentoring scheme for young people in care and care leavers, among the most vulnerable groups in modern Britain.

The project has grown out of research showing that young people in care long for support from someone who 'isn't paid to be there'. The project trains mentors from business to support the young person in setting goals, and helps them to navigate between the various education, training and employment options. Through an on-line resource library and using e-mentoring and on-line journaling, the young person has flexible access to their mentor, of particular importance given the high level of mobility and instability faced by young people in care.

Jane is 16 years old, and has just finished school. She didn't take any GCSE's but wants to become a beauty therapist. Using the articles on the Confident Futures resource library, Jane's mentor is able to support her in finding the most suitable route to her chosen career, and has also been able to point out Jane's achievements so far (for example taking part in the nationally recognised ASDAN scheme). Jane would also like to write a CV. The project enables Jane and her mentor to achieve this in small achievable steps.

Horsemouth is 'social networking with a social purpose' designed to 'harness user generated wisdom and goodwill in order to replicate and scale the benefits of mentoring across the barriers of geography, circumstance and opportunity'. It is more than a sophisticated matching service also offering opportunities for accreditation, a time management tool that keeps demands on individual mentors within a predetermined limit, links to advisory services, safety protocols and a 'reputation system' (like eBay) as well as facilitation and management of dialogue.

The technology has huge potential for providing support to other groups too, and Horsemouth is working with UK Online to develop a social network for older people, providing them with access to help and support whilst also providing a meaningful route towards engagement with the social power of web technology. There is scope here for new ways of addressing specific challenges: for example through a dedicated partnership with Women's Aid the site offers one-to-one support to women experiencing domestic violence.

At the universal end of the one-to-one spectrum this technology in general offers huge and timely potential for growth at little additional cost. There is a need for caution. Screening of mentors and moderation of sites is vital as e-mentoring develops but again as Horsemouth have shown this can be done. The Horsemouth site has been developed at considerable public and private expense. There is capacity for the expansion of its core service, limited only by the numbers populating the site, and there is also the opportunity to customise 'front-end' services allowing appropriate partners to direct users to a single resource for, for example, training and employment related one-to-one. Conventional services have a fixed capacity and breakdown when they are overstretched. This one will thrive on mass engagement and get better as it grows. To achieve that critical mass Horsemouth needs big partners capable of delivering large numbers.

CoSA has introduced the opportunity of this unifying social action to the Open University and their internet savvy, energetic but widely disbursed online community of 200,000 students and 400,000 alumni.



- **The Action Underway:** A new, large scale Horseshmouth / Open University collaboration to help populate the site and realise its full potential is currently under development.

If just 10% of the OU network devote two hours a week to e-mentoring they alone will be responsible for the annual gift of six million hours. Suppose the approach could be replicated by employees of government, fans of Manchester United or members of the AA, Unison, or the great faiths? To take engagement in mentoring and befriending to the next level we need to work with other big partners on similar collaborations and so develop mass. Government can set the example.

- **Our Advice:** as part of their employee volunteering programmes, government departments should promote e-mentoring sites like Horseshmouth (www.horseshmouth.co.uk) and the Brightside Trust (www.thebrightsidetrust.org) to their staff.



4

Developing mass

We know that across all forms of civil engagement word of mouth, member-get-member is consistently the most powerful tool for recruitment and development. Viral spread offers an additional dimension to this process but viral campaigns, like 'real' ones, are most effective when word reaches us through people we know and like and identify with. This suggests that we might most effectively drive mass engagement through partnership with existing movements like the Open University.

Mentoring and befriending employs the kind of soft social skills valued by employers. It develops relevant competencies far more than, say, fundraising or painting a community centre and it also involves a formal commitment on a regular basis. It is easy to record and verify the time spent and quantify the total contribution. Thus this opens up different possibilities for incentivising and sustaining engagement.

Big employers may offer the quickest gains. This must include government who cannot encourage other employers without showing a lead. Some government departments have volunteering policies which compare with the best in the private sector. HMRC, for example, have an established record on employee volunteering and we have been discussing with them plans for a volunteering conference and tool kit focusing on employee engagement in one-to-one projects. Other departments should be encouraged to adopt as their goal the standards of the best.

■ **The Action Underway:** The Civil Service Capability Group have set up a working group of volunteering leads across the Civil Service. Their declared aim is for every department to have an effective volunteering policy and they are developing a Best Practice guide to bring departments up to the state of the best.

■ **Our Advice:** A policy and a practical guide are the right place to start but they should be underpinned by a commitment to a fixed amount of employee volunteering time available to every government employee. This would allow for a regular mentoring commitment or might be taken as a block. The PM should announce a new commitment to employee volunteering in government with fixed minimum hours available to every government employee.

Mentoring and befriending employs the kind of soft social skills valued by employers. It develops relevant competencies far more than, say, fundraising or painting a community centre and it also involves a formal commitment on a regular basis.



Corporate engagement might be driven through inspiration and example or through exercising the power of purchasing. The business case for employee volunteering is now widely accepted: “I have no doubt that there is a strong business case. The quantitative data from our annual staff survey speaks for itself but the motivational, personal development and team dynamic benefits have to be seen to be believed. My partners and I support a community volunteering policy that takes staff away from the ‘day job’ because we witness the infectious enthusiasm and new found confidence they bring back to the office with them. The community, the individual and the business wins” says Jeremy Newman, Managing Partner BDO Stoy Hayward.

One-to-one projects are particularly popular. A report by the Blomfield Group – a professional recruitment firm – describes the professional development of employees who have become mentors in its four year partnership with a Camden school .

“We (the mentors) have to do what people in our position don’t always do very much, which is to listen!”

“It makes life here in this firm feel more rounded”

“It acts as a counter-balance to the driven competitive environment in which I normally work, whilst also helping others to get into work”

There is an established case for employers to encourage staff to volunteer. Member-gets-member is the smartest route to market and one-to-one projects offer real value for the employee and the employer as well as the service user. There is a great story here. It needs to be told more often, in more places.

CoSA has run a CSR managers consultation, hosted by Accenture and explored with Business in the Community the potential for partnership around their ‘Talent Map’, a tool for helping employers to upskill their workforce, to find new recruitment opportunities and to foster innovation, productivity and competitiveness. We have worked with BitC to embed one-to-one into the Talent Map, particularly in relation to volunteering as a route to develop talent and skills and to connect the map work on a volunteer recognition scheme for young people.

■ **The Action Underway:** The Talent Map to include an explicit reference to the role of volunteering in recruitment processes.

Importantly this is not just about large businesses. Measured as a proportion of work force or turnover leading SMEs make a considerable contribution, sometimes bigger than that of the more famous names with bigger budgets for self promotion. Engagement here, however is patchy, some do a lot and some very little. Without dedicated CSR specialists in this sector there is a greater need for guidance and practical help. Heart of the City have developed an effective model for engaging 84 small businesses in London.

CoSA has been working with Heart of the City to explore ways and means for establishing similar networks in other business centres across the UK.

- **The Action Underway:** Heart of the City will publish, on November 17th a guide setting out how it has used big business expertise to support and inspire SMEs into starting and developing employee volunteering and other social action programmes.
- **Our Advice:** BERR should use the successful Heart of the City model as a starting point to spark similar networks in other business centres across the UK.

It is clear that employee volunteering on one-to-one programmes yields benefits for all parties. This has led us to an exploration of new models including elements of all the above. We think there is potential for identifying and developing a new approach to corporate social responsibility which we have called ‘Collaborative Commitment’.

CoSA has been building on the inspiration of the International Vaccine Finance Facility where the private sector created a financial mechanism (the bond) to enable the public sector to release its resource (funding for international development) to the third sector who delivered the intervention (in this case childhood immunization). Each partner has used its own unique contribution to release the potential of another – the defining characteristic of the Collaborative Commitment. Supported by Royal Mail and Allen & Overy, Professor David Grayson and colleagues in

Heart of the City offer businesses one-to-one support for social action, with experienced CSR managers offering crucial help to businesses new to working with charities

“I’ve really enjoyed mentoring businesses going through the Heart of the City programme. It makes me stop and reflect about WHY we’ve developed our programme in the way that we have – and that is a very useful exercise in itself,” states Mike Kelly, Director of Corporate Social Responsibility at KPMG, who has mentored three Heart of the City Newcomer businesses since 2005.

“Mike’s support was invaluable,” says one of his mentees, Andy McNally, of Berenberg Bank. “He provided really helpful guidance about how to find and forge an effective partnership with a charity partner, as well as how to structure our programme to maximise engagement in this partnership across our entire workforce. It took us time to get things off the ground but I’m incredibly proud of all we’ve done since joining the Heart of the City Programme. With Mike’s help, we’ve forged partnerships with key charities in both London and in Hamburg and even managed to raise £85,000 for our Partner Charity recently – not bad for a company with 15 employees in the UK.”

Berenberg’s funding supports Kids’ Company’s work with inner-city young people, many of whom have severe emotional, behavioural and social difficulties, resulting from significant experiences of trauma and neglect. The funds raised will help support the running costs of a newly opened home for young boys.





One of government's least regarded assets lies in the reach and potential of its communications.

the Doughty Centre at the Cranfield Business School have been working with us on an examination of the Collaborative Commitment model and its potential as a tool for extending the reach and capacity of traditional CSR.

■ **The Action Underway:** CoSA and The Doughty Centre to publish on November 17th a discussion paper on the potential of Collaborative Commitments.

Sometimes corporates have been criticised for CSR policies which engage with soft issues and ignore the difficult but really important ones.

■ **The Action Underway:** A collaboration with Allen & Overy, the Law Centres Federation and others to pilot the 'collaborative commitment' model in a specific and challenging context. We want to also include the Ministry of Justice and the Legal Services Commission in extending and promoting the quality of one-to-one relationships between legal aid advisers, volunteers, and their clients.

Businesses and other organizations offer a useful framework for driving mass engagement but they are made up of individuals who will each make their own personal decision to commit or not to commit. Thus we have also been thinking about new approaches to incentivising and sustaining individual engagement.

For the individual who is tempted by the idea of volunteering as a mentor there is no obvious first point of contact. MBF is not a volunteer broker and although local agencies like volunteer bureaux and national agencies like Do-It might be useful there is no portal dedicated to this purpose. We are not certain that it would make a difference if there was but we think it is worth experimenting with the idea. TimeBank have agreed to build and run a portal for an initial pilot period of one year with a view to determining whether the mechanism is helpful and if so how it should be developed.

■ **The Action Underway:** TimeBank developing and running an experimental portal for mentoring and befriending volunteers for a one year pilot.

■ **Our Advice:** OTS should support the TimeBank portal by publicising it through their government and third sector networks.

One of government's least regarded assets lies in the reach and potential of its communications. We visit and spend longer than average time on well used government websites, we open letters from the Inland Revenue, we read circulars from the schools of our children, we respond to communications from our GP. A business would exploit these opportunities for cross-selling. Government is not a business but it might still be possible to use some of these existing communications to link to a third sector portal, to share a motivating story, to promote an event or a campaign. The vision of someone for everyone, accompanied by simple ideas and links for action, might be the kind of inclusive message that could be cascaded in this way. The most valuable opportunity to do this is to convert the traffic generated on completion of large volume transactions such as Tax Returns, Car Tax Discs, and Passport

Bump Buddies are helping to reduce infant mortality in east London. Ingrid from Hackney is a mother of two. She volunteers with Bump Buddies, a mentoring project working to reduce infant mortality in a community with some of the highest infant deaths in the country. Ingrid was trained by the Shoreditch Trust, a local regeneration charity, to offer one-to-one support to mothers and pregnant women in antenatal care, maternity services, nutrition and breastfeeding

“I was overwhelmed when [I was told] how many black kids in Hackney don’t reach one year old. I’ve lived in Hackney for the last 16 years and I wasn’t aware of this ... I know a lot of women bringing up their child on their own and not really having the services. I just want to pass on the information to help new mothers with their lives”.

Bump Buddies works in the most disadvantaged areas of Hackney, with a specific focus on Africa, Caribbean and Turkish communities. As part of a local partnership, the project has helped to increase the proportion of pregnant women accessing maternity services, helping Hackney to beat its target by 33%.

applications. Using government resources to promote causes of benefit to the whole community and build civil society has been done before. The successful promotion of GiftAid, at considerable cost to the Treasury, is a helpful precedent.

■ **Our Advice:** The COI should explore the potential for a cross communication strategy exploiting opportunities for the promotion of volunteering and community engagement. In particular they might consider the opportunities for converting traffic from government websites into traffic towards not-for-profit online peer support networks. OTS should determine which third sector organisations should be promoted in this way.

In this section we have explored a variety of approaches to driving volunteer engagement and developing mass. We multiply the gains for individual adopters and we extend the reach by telling the story in a style and place that challenges and inspires others.

CoSA has brought together the leaders – government ministers, practitioners and media – for a CoSA led session at Chain Reaction showcasing the exemplars, launching the new initiatives and extending a challenge: ‘Here’s what’s happening. Here’s what we are doing. What will you do?’

■ **The Action Underway:** A one-to-one event for leaders, practitioners and opinion formers at Chain Reaction on November 17th.

Side by side: a report setting out the Council on Social Action's work on one-to-one



5

Incentivising and sustaining engagement

Unlike some other forms of volunteering it is easy to monitor and record time spent on mentoring and befriending. This opens up possibilities for incentivising and rewarding which would be more difficult with less formal activities. Such incentives should not be the main driver but they can be an important demonstration of support and the kind of encouragement that sustains engagement.

CoSA has been exploring this issue with a group of secondees from different parts of the financial services industry – UBS, BDO Stoy Hayward and Hendersons supported by a cross sector advisory panel including NCVO and HM Treasury. A summary of the main findings from the Incentives group is included in the CoSA Commentary published on November 17th but the headlines of particular relevance to mentoring and befriending include:

- There is an important distinction between incentivising and subsidising. Some incentives may be justifiable on the grounds that they open up new opportunities or engage significant numbers who have never been engaged before. Experience suggests that the benefits of volunteering are caught not taught and that once incentivised to volunteer the commitment remains long after the incentive has fallen away. The group considered for instance Employers NIC holidays for employee time spent volunteering available to small and medium sized employers for the first two years of a volunteer programme.
- Financial incentives are most likely to increase engagement amongst those who are not working or who are in low paid work but the opportunities and obstacles for, for example, people who are long term unemployed and people with disabilities can be very different. Such incentives need to be carefully targeted.
- Council Tax rebates were fiercely debated. Some felt that time donated to local services was in effect a gift in kind and this might be reasonably reflected with some local tax relief. Others worried about cheap labour and the opportunity cost for local authorities. There are some precedents. In Humberside, for example, the Special Constabulary Allowance pilot scheme for paying Specials included offering a reduction in council tax for those living in and serving in the Hull area, equivalent to 50% for joint occupants and 75% for people living on their own, on top of the annual £1,500 retainer.

Experience suggests that the benefits of volunteering are caught not taught and that once incentivised to volunteer the commitment remains long after the incentive has fallen away.

A trial, piloting Council Tax rebates in return for community service on council approved schemes in three local authority areas, may be worth pursuing.

- In kind benefits may be easier to administer and sit more comfortably with the gift relationship at the heart of a successful volunteering programme. Affinity Cards, for instance, allowing volunteers special discounts at participating stores or 'volunteer miles' a little like the school and computer vouchers given to certain supermarket shoppers.
- Incentives for the organisation that is the recipient of the volunteer time may be an alternative route to reward without offering direct personal financial benefit. For instance, as part of its commitment to 'Every Child a reader' might government or a commercial partner gives schools book vouchers for every 5000 hours of volunteer reading support?

The belief that a volunteering record will help to secure a college place, a job or a promotion is one incentive to volunteer particularly for younger people.

This thinking on incentives and disincentives has led us into a broader discussion about motivation to which CoSA will return in year two. There are implications here for all forms of social action – volunteering obviously (of which mentoring and befriending is a part) but also such other activities as campaigning, recycling or ethical purchasing. However the specific work on incentivising volunteering needs to connect with other work in this field.

CoSA has taken this work to Volunteering England who have established six action groups to work on the implementation of the vision of the recent Commission on the Future of Volunteering. The Action Groups are a practical mechanism for progressing our early work on incentives for volunteering.

- **The Action Underway:** This work will be taken forward over the next 12 months under the leadership of the VE Action Groups. CoSA will contribute the support of its network wherever this would be helpful.

The belief that a volunteering record will help to secure a college place, a job or a promotion is one incentive to volunteer particularly for younger people. Many managers say they 'like to see' volunteering on the CV but we haven't been able to identify any big employers or educational



institutions in the UK which include it in their formal selection processes. This contrasts with the US where college places particularly are often dependant on a volunteering record. We've been told that this is because, unlike examination results for instance, there is no 'industry standard' enabling selectors to verify and calibrate the claim. There are several accreditation models, some under discussion, some up and running, for detailed evaluation but these appear too complex for wide spread adoption and without wide spread adoption they will never incentivise engagement.

CoSA has brought together v, Volunteering England, National Union of Students, and private sector partners to gauge and build support for a 'recognition' model rather than an accreditation programme that is easily understood, straightforward to administer and valued by employers and FE/HE sector. This will not displace existing accreditation schemes for those who seek more sophisticated measurement but rather provide a simple, standardised hallmark for mass adoption. The v Impact Award developed by v initially for volunteers on its own schemes has the potential to fulfil this function but will need high level support from key stakeholders to succeed as a universally respected mark of achievement. We have been exploring how we might help to marshal such high level, cross sector support behind a national rollout.

- **The Action Underway:** The rollout of a widely supported volunteer recognition scheme for young people led by v with support from third sector agencies, educational institutions and employers in every sector.

Incentivising and sustaining volunteering is about removing obstacles as well as about creating new inducements.

Confusion within the benefit system has created barriers for unemployed people seeking to volunteer.

Many volunteers and volunteering organisations report that local JobCentre Plus advisers have a poor understanding of the regulations regarding volunteering. Claimants are routinely misinformed about how many hours they can volunteer each week, the expenses they can claim and the implications of volunteering on other benefits.

In January 2008 the DWP produced a clear, accessible leaflet – *Volunteering While Receiving Benefits*. This should have put an end to the confusion, yet the experience of many volunteering organisations is that local Jobcentres and Advisers continue to discourage and even prevent claimants from volunteering.

CoSA has been working with others to address these concerns. We have had discussions with volunteering organisations, DWP officials and the Minister. Volunteering is a powerful route to employment.

We have explored a new protocol between DWP and third sector organisations to support volunteering and to remove the barriers experienced by benefit claimants.

- **Our Advice:** DWP should undertake a dynamic and widespread campaign to ensure consistent application of existing rules to support volunteering and to remove the barriers previously experienced by benefit claimants. This should be coupled with effective training for advisers and managers.

Many volunteers and volunteering organisations report that local JobCentre Plus advisers have a poor understanding of the regulations regarding volunteering. Claimants are routinely misinformed about how many hours they can volunteer each week, the expenses they can claim and the implications of volunteering on other benefits.

For some groups, longer-term volunteering has particular value. Those who have been out work for long periods and those who have never worked would benefit from a longer placement, as a route to building skills and confidence. At present, people claiming Jobseekers Allowance are required to be available for a job interview within 48 hours and able to take up a job offer within a week. These requirements are incompatible with volunteering placement of more than a couple of weeks.

CoSA has raised this issue with the Minister for Work and Pensions who responded decisively, explaining that the government does not accept the case for varying the requirement that JSA claimants should be available for interview within 48 hours and for work within a week.

■ **Our Advice:** Ministers should explore re-framing as training particular full-time volunteering placements for specific groups of long-term unemployed.

Youth Works is a national partnership working with 'at risk' young people. Darren, 17, joined the Youth Works full-time volunteering programme wanting to turn his life around and to help other young people who might be having a hard time. He was also keen on this accredited placement as he had no qualifications and has had a difficult past. He was given an ASBO when he was 15. His mother moved up to Scotland, leaving Darren to fend for himself living in a hostel.

From the start Darren was concerned about how full-time volunteering would affect his benefits. He turned 18 shortly after the first residential and this meant had to deal with a different benefits team. This threw everything into chaos for Darren. The new team seemed suspicious about his volunteering.

Darren did well on the first of three Youth Works residential. He genuinely wanted to gain his qualification and complete the course.

Darren's six month placement in Camden involved working with a group of young people with special needs. He was a natural with the group; his supervisor said of his first day 'we threw him into the deep end but boy could he swim'. For the first month or so Darren was still struggling without benefits. The team tried to support him as much as possible but there were times when Darren missed sessions as he didn't have money for travel.

Nicola, the Youth Works Coordinator, saw Darren about eight weeks after he had started with the project and he was delighted as the money owed to him had finally come through. He understood that his payments were back on track.

When Nicola met Darren four weeks later he was highly anxious. His benefits had been stopped again. The benefits team had not understood that his placement would last six months.

Darren decided not to continue with the programme. Although he agreed that the situation could be sorted out by talking to the benefit office again, he no longer trusted that the situation would be resolved properly or quickly. Darren has had a difficult start in life and perhaps many factors contributed to his decision to end the volunteering and his qualification. However the stresses caused through his benefit problems had a huge part to play. Darren kept saying that they weren't behind him volunteering from day one and that if they had found him the course through their processes rather than him finding it pro-actively things would be different.



Investing in growth

Funding was the key constraint most often identified by practitioners particularly at the intensive end of the spectrum. Schemes like the St Giles Peer Advisers programme, the counsellors for troubled children provided by Place2Be or Time Together, originally funded through the government's Invest to Save programme demonstrate results. New Capital Philanthropy have undertaken some of the most thorough analysis in this field and they believe that the case for long term cost savings is persuasive but not proved. If one-to-one is to underpin a major thrust in public policy there is a need for common metrics and further analysis.

As we already noted many programmes monitor and assess their own data but this is difficult to compare. A much better understanding of the key performance indicators, what is working now and with what impact can only be derived from a wider, multi agency study. We suggest that the new Third Sector Research Centre jointly funded by the Office of the Third Sector, the Economic and Social Research Council and the Barrow Cadbury Trust might consider undertaking such a programme.

■ **Our advice:** The Third Sector Research Centre should undertake a multi-agency evaluation on the impact of mentoring and befriending.

Of course without sustaining and developing existing programmes there will be nothing left to analyse. The business case rests on the argument that an early intervention mentoring or befriending programme can prevent the escalation of a problem that will eventually need to be tackled or contained at much greater expense, In principle this is the same kind of challenge as that addressed by the aforementioned IFFM bond through which more than 50 million children have been immunised in 49 countries since 2005.

CoSA has convened the City Leaders group under the leadership of Peter Wheeler and they have worked with Social Finance and other partners on the development of a domestic Social Impact Bond

If one-to-one is to underpin a major thrust in public policy there is a need for common metrics and further analysis.

Mentoring and befriending ... can demonstrate that prevention and early intervention will yield long term savings for government.

(SIB) which builds on this model and will be a new mechanism for funding prevention and early intervention. The SIB will effectively be a government contract to pay in the future for well defined outcomes thus reducing the intervention risk for government. Payment will only be due when the outcome has been achieved and thus savings have been made. The contract will be used to release private investment to pay now for the provision of services such as those of St Giles.

£50,000 has been committed by the Indigo Trust which is already engaged in grant making around youth offending to part fund the development of a SIB pilot in this area. Initial analysis indicates that youth offending offers potential for a successful pilot in an area of considerable need. Work is underway to develop this further and to engage the Treasury and other government partners.

Open Book based at Goldsmiths College, University of London encourages and supports prisoners, ex-offenders and people with a history of addiction, to access further and higher education. The scheme has produced 27 graduates, the majority ex-offenders who were supported to do access courses and then complete a degree at one of the country's leading universities. The programme is run by ex-offenders, with the outreach and support work undertaken by Open Book graduates and students. *"We can help each other because we've come from the same place as the people we're talking to"* (Joe Baden, co-ordinator.) As well as doing outreach work with prisons, addiction agencies and probation programmes to recruit students, Open Book offers ongoing practical support to enable people with limited experience of formal education to successfully complete a degree course. There are currently over 100 students registered with the project.

■ **The Action underway:** The Social Impact Bond is an ambitious, category shifting idea. It is still under development but we hope it will be piloted in the next half year and subsequently extended to pay for mentoring and befriending where such programmes can demonstrate that prevention and early intervention will yield long term savings for government.

At a local level there is often a lack of clarity and transparency in the commissioning arrangements and the complexities of funding procedures are frequently overwhelming for smaller programmes. These are issues which apply to local third sector provision beyond the field of one-to-one but practitioners in this field perceive themselves to be doubly disadvantaged by funders lack of confidence in the capacity of mentoring and befriending programmes. Peter Collins MBF Chief Executive says "Funders often lack confidence that something they see as "a bit of a chat" can achieve more than a formal process. There is evidence that the bespoke support provided by a mentor or befriender is critical in moving disengaged individuals to a point where they can engage in more formal provision to support their progression ... we need more confidence in this kind of provision and not fall back on funding, for example, a training course that the disengaged individual would not have the confidence or personal support to access."

CoSA has raised these points with ministers and officials in the CLG in the context of their work on the 'Communities in Control' white

paper published in July. Quoting from our discussions the white paper acknowledged that “strong and supportive individual relationships are at the centre of every successful community. Sustaining and developing one-to-one work is important. There are many effective mentoring and befriending schemes in the UK, often small scale and local. We are working closely with CoSA and the Mentoring and Befriending Foundation (MBF) on ways of extending and replicating this work and developing a strategy for extending one-to-one engagement through the delivery of local services.”

Ben Hughes, chief executive of bassac, the national network of multi-purpose community based organizations, explains the importance of this commitment:

“We live in a society where problems, needs and concerns overshadow the people experiencing them. Public services are delivered in silos by increasingly large providers that often fail to meet the real – and unheard – needs of ordinary people. Someone needing more than one service – or a bit of two, or just a helping hand, simply doesn’t fit. The increasingly sophisticated level of consumer understanding needed to navigate this maze of provision, and to feel the benefit as a person rather than a unit, is failing ooo’s every day. Taking a more bespoke approach to supporting individuals – both in tailoring this maze to individual need, and simply being there as a friend, confidant and confidence builder – is what bassac’s members, and those of our Community Alliance partners DTA and Community Matters, are all about. The value of being there to do “nothing in particular, but whatever needed to be done at the moment” (William Beveridge on settlements) is fundamental to offering the simple, flexible support to individuals, often living at the margins of mainstream society that we know can change lives. Associational life is the corner stone of strong civil society; one-to-one is the principle on which associational life depends”.

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Birmingham Settlement has led the Community Facilitators Project since 2003, aiming to reduce tensions between ethnic groups within the community. The project works in areas where high profile conflicts have emerged over recent years. Facilitators are employed to respond to incidents of conflict and to identify ways forward. The strength of the programme is its flexibility; the facilitators are able to offer a tailored response to incidents. This maybe group work, family intervention, multi-agency work or very often, one-to-one support work.

One-to-one work is usually with young people who are disaffected or taking part in anti-social behaviour. The facilitators are members of the local community, often from the very ethnic groups where conflict is occurring. Therefore the young people relate to them and they form supportive and productive relationships. A recent example is of a young man who attended a Bangladeshi youth group carrying an imitation hand gun. A community facilitator liaised with the youth group and then began a mentoring relationship with the young person.

Mentoring relationships have wide-reaching results. Young people have been enabled to join discussion forums to air their views, gain education and training advice and support around drug use. Such one-to-one work is successful because it is independently delivered and because the facilitators are trusted, credible and representative members of the local community.



CLGs commitment to one-to-one isn't just about enabling individuals to tackle their own problems, important and valuable though that is. It also signals the recognition that community petitioning, participatory budgeting, voice, participatory democracy, community planning and all the other community empowerment policies advanced in the white paper build from individual relationships. From here individuals may move on to support others, to play active roles in civil and civic society. We do not see this development as a ladder with elected representatives as the top rung but more like movement through a climbing frame. At different points in our lives we find ourselves in different places. Associational life, however, in all its forms starts with and is held together by one-to-one connections.

An adequately resourced and deeply rooted community sector is thus essential not only to the wellbeing of individuals but also to the strength and cohesion of our communities. The CLG is establishing the £7.5m Community Empowerment Fund to provide stable support for organisations that are making contributions of strategic significance to their goal of empowering local communities. They have identified a series of themes around this objective and are, at the time of writing, consulting on the details of the fund.

■ **Our Advice:** CLG should include organisations in the field of one-to-one as a specific theme for funding through the Community Empowerment Fund.

Bishop Creighton House in Hammersmith has run a mentoring project for young people with learning disabilities for ten years. Mentors are volunteers who receive accredited training.

Young people with learning disabilities often face exclusion and isolation; they may struggle to travel, to communicate, to engage in employment or training or to have an active social life. Their mentors help them to overcome barriers and to live a fuller life. They meet at least once a fortnight and work at whatever pace is appropriate. For example a mentor may take their mentee on a tube journey several times, each time encouraging increased independence, before encouraging a solo attempt. Every relationship encourages the young person to expand their horizons. Support maybe very practical including CV writing or moving house, or more social, for example trips to football matches or work on communication skills.

The one-to-one approach works because the mentor learns to understand the individual support needs of their mentee and the mentee learns to participate in a trusting relationship, often their first outside their family. Mentees have described their mentors as 'reliable, sensitive, considerate, trusted and fun'. One mentee described the best thing about their mentoring as, 'feeling better, more confident about myself'.

Mentors too, notice changes – 'Brian is coming out of his shell and is not as shy. This may be because he has been to places that he thought he would never go to and he is beginning to see a different London and is hungry for more.'

Many of the statutory services that one-to-one agencies need to work with are inevitably local. Transformational growth in this sector is thus dependant on making the 'cornerstone' case effectively to local public service commissioners – local authorities, PCTs, Police / crime prevention

agencies etc and helping them to understand the social, cultural and economic benefits to be derived from ensuring that commissioning is beneficiary, not service provider focused, and that it is person not problem centred. With 93 of England's top tier local authorities (62%) choosing to be judged on one of the two third sector National Indicators published in June this is now a priority for both sectors.

We think this can be tackled from two angles. First by working with the statutory agencies and especially the representative bodies and second by working within the third sector and particularly by engaging the larger voluntary contract holders:

The National Programme for Third Sector Commissioning funded by OTS is currently reaching out to 2000 commissioners. This is more than a start and is warmly welcomed but still more could be done.

CoSA has brought the Local Government Association together with MBF and officials from CLG to develop plans for a "local services strategy" communicating the power and value of one-to-one and supporting its local development.

■ **The Action underway:** MBF, CLG and CoSA are in discussion with local authority chief executives in the LGA Sounding Board and MBF are to present to local policy makers and commissioners at a programme of LGA national training events over the course of the next 12 months.

In time we expect this focus on influence at a national level to cascade out to the regions. Ultimately we think local exemplars are the most effective persuaders. In addition to improving quality of life for vulnerable groups, these programmes can be shown to reduce public expenditure by, for example reducing re-offending (St Giles Trust and Open Book), reducing anti-social behaviour among young people (Chance UK, 121 Befriending, Somerset Lads and Girls, the school programmes) or reducing court costs (the Legal Profession Collaborative Commitment).

■ **Our Advice:** The LGA's Regional Improvement and Efficiency Partnerships and perhaps the Regional Empowerment Partnerships should explore working with MBF to share the lessons on one-to-one at a local level.

The quality and availability of evidence has again been a recurrent theme in these discussions. In part this might be addressed through other actions in this paper but local authorities also have a specific interest in data which relates directly to their PSAs and also have a contribution to make in gathering the evidence.

■ **Our Advice:** Starting with work with children and young people and continuing with a focus on other specific transition points MBF should work with IDEA on the development of an evidence base around mentoring and befriending within the services of, and / or supported by, local authorities.

We think that the larger voluntary agencies also have a part to play. There is considerable evidence to show that the move towards commissioning has disadvantaged smaller agencies and that it is the larger agencies that have captured most of the contracts.

Several cross sector initiatives could address this imbalance including

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There is limited value in training commissioners if there is not a parallel investment in supporting the sector to develop appropriate and effective bids.

the development of new protocols and models for organisations to deliver in collaboration addressing the key issues of motivation (why should we work with others?) and mechanics (how do we do it without compromising our values, purpose or independence?).

Some pioneering thinking by bassac in the field of 'intelligent commissioning' includes the development of a model called SWIM – Sharing without merging. Funding is needed to take the work forward. There is limited value in training commissioners if there is not a parallel investment in supporting the sector to develop appropriate and effective bids. This is about more than standard capacity building. It requires new models. Without them it will continue to be very difficult for the kind of small, very local agencies that are disproportionately represented in this field to win main programme contracts.

■ **Our Advice:** CLG and IDeA would be obvious partners for supporting the bassac work. We would advise them to consider it a priority.

Finally if and when we can be confident that commissioners understand the sector and that the sector is generating good quality bids it may be useful to consider an element of compulsion. This might involve including appropriate commissioning from smaller agencies as one of the criteria in the new local authority Performance Framework.

This work on a local services strategy must also be reflected in best practice at a national level.

■ **Our Advice:** The local services strategy should also be developed and communicated across central government departments and agencies with consideration given to including mentoring and befriending as a practice to be adopted in all procurement/tendering arrangements where those contracts focus on the development of individuals. Examples include DCSF Standards Fund for peer mentoring, LSC contracts to address issues of worklessness, and DWP provision to engage incapacity benefit clients.

Funding is such a critical issue in bringing to scale many small schemes that we consider it worthy of radical new thinking. Adult Learning Associations in Denmark offer an alternative model. Local councils in Denmark are required to provide rooms and facilities to community associations and/or a subsidy towards the rent of such facilities as well as a third of the wage of a teacher or facilitator. All associations bid for the use of local facilities and the municipality is required to accommodate as far as possible. Where state facilities are not available they must pay between 65% and 75% of the cost of hiring elsewhere.

Community associations have a remarkable history in Denmark and are extraordinarily popular. The model is not directly replicable but the principal characteristics might be applied to peer support programmes in the UK. Using the Danish model criteria could be developed for citizen owned and controlled associations requiring local authorities to provide such associations with access to rooms and facilities and, potentially longer term per person subsidies thus overcoming the short comings in the traditional UK funding programmes which are typically short term, insecure and ad hoc.

A funding commitment in which government, local or national, subsidises the local agencies which develop peer support as of right is a paradigm

shift from the conventional government / third sector relationship in this country. We are attracted to this idea because it provides for a new set of rights and responsibilities. If willing citizens take responsibility for the support of one another, not in total of course but in part, they would have a **right** to the support of the state. It is a huge ambition but consistent with the scale of the Prime Ministers aspiration when he challenged the Council to think about a mentoring relationship as both a right and a responsibility of every citizen throughout our lives, at times of crisis or transition.

We think it may be most realistic to pilot this model in health and social care where there are already highly active groups of users whose contribution is well regarded by local statutory providers. The funding would be managed locally but central government would need to give local authorities and Primary Care trusts the models, the permission and the encouragement.

- **Our Advice:** Department of Health should pilot a ‘right to recognition’ for peer support groups in health and social care. Once officially recognized these organizations would have the right to:
 - use Local Authority and PCT facilities for meetings (or cash for private hire)
 - advertise and promote their organisations through the Local Authority and PCT
 - training and development for volunteers and coordinators.

This could pave the way for a new funding model adapting the experience of the Adult Learning Associations in Denmark

Our initiatives in this field over recent months have generated a flurry of activity in several departments. For this interest to be sustained we suggest there is a need for a permanent Whitehall ‘champion’ promoting the understanding and driving the growth of one-to-one across government. There is already a cross departmental group meeting occasionally with the MBF but this is more about project liaison than progressive development.

CLG own the cross-government PSA on *building cohesive, empowered and active communities*. The PSA board is senior and cross-departmental. The development of one-to-one should be central to the PSA strategy.

- **Our Advice:** The PSA board should champion development of one-to-one across government. Recommendations in this paper should form part of their agenda.

Government has invested heavily in the Gold Star group of mentoring and Befriending programmes. These have now been funded for seven years but this funding will end in 2009. Collectively the group is now a unique repository of wisdom and experience. They have developed ideas for a significant increase in the availability of their programmes and others like them through franchising and other forms of partnership across the country. Some of the group have already established such schemes where other organisations are now delivering their mentoring model (e.g. Chance UK are working with NCH in Liverpool, Derry NI, Inverness and Crawley and Bolton Lads and Girls are working with UK Youth in three



areas now and will be reaching a further seven with the same partner in the next three years.)

The group are proposing Gold Star Plus – essentially a five year, national campaign to develop and promote both the extent and the quality of mentoring for children and young people. *“We want to promote one-to-one support for children and young people in order to bring about a cultural shift in both attitudes to children and young people and to volunteering as a way of bringing about change in society. In addition we intend to bring about a cultural shift in how third sector organisations share ideas and spread effective services”.*

It will, the group say ...

- Raise the profile of children's and young people's mentoring and befriending opportunities nationally – we don't feel that this has happened as yet.
- Increase the number of young people accessing mentoring services.
- Increase the number of volunteer mentors across the UK and ensure high level training.
- Develop a generic mentor training programme that all projects should adopt as a basis, with an option to add on project specific elements – this could be accredited.
- Provide for best practice sharing and networking.
- Create a shift in culture within communities around sharing ones own experiences and supporting another individual.
- Improve mentoring and befriending services for children and young people nationally.
- Generate clear evidence of what works through impact measurement.

This would require significant investment, early figures suggest a total cost of around £3.2m over five years, but given the accumulated experience in this group and the impressive records of its members, it would be inconsistent to progress on other fronts and not give serious consideration to this one. Without a continuation of the existing funding beyond March 2009 the sectors leading agencies will all be making service cuts in the next six months. With additional investment they have the knowledge and the expertise to make a step change in both the extent and the standards of mentoring and befriending for children and young people

- **Our Advice:** Ministers and officials should examine ways of taking forward the Gold Star group's proposals.





7

Learning and sharing the lessons

For growth to be worthwhile it must be tied, wherever possible, to appropriate standards. MBF promotes the Approved Provider Standard as a benchmark of effective practice, is developing models of accreditation for practitioners and volunteers, provides opportunities for sharing and developing good practice through its regional team and offers a national training programme. They have developed this work and it must not be reinvented but consideration should be given to MBFs current capacity to meet significantly increased demand and particularly to service the needs of those with few resources of their own. The training, for example, is currently only available at cost. Extending the programme would be an MBF priority for further government investment.

■ **Our Advice:** Government should explore with MBF the possibility of further support for a national training programme.

As training becomes more easily available we should expect all sponsors but particularly local and central government to also be more robust in their expectation that projects will work to the Approved Provider Standards (APS) standards. A number of Departmental funding arrangements have required successful applicants to seek the APS but this has not been the practice of all.

■ **Our Advice:** The Third Sector Champions group should consider processes for ensuring that all government funded mentoring and befriending programmes work to the Approved Provider Standards.

There is a desperate need to share what we know. We have seen wheels laboriously reinvented. Imaginative schemes, particularly in schools, are ripe for replication and should be drawn together and celebrated and promoted in a popular format for practitioners. This need not be expensive. In a different field the brilliantly successful Star Wars publication has promoted patient engagement in acute Mental Health wards with an initial investment of £22k.

CoSA has discussed with CLG the possibility of funding such a publication and talked with Comic Relief who would be interested in exploring the possibility of a series of short films broadcasting the stories from it in the lead up to Red Nose Day 2009

■ **Our Advice:** CLG should invest in the support of a popular publication, in print or online, drawing together, promoting and sharing the learning from varied exemplars in mentoring and befriending.

There is a desperate need to share what we know. We have seen wheels laboriously reinvented. Imaginative schemes, particularly in schools, are ripe for replication and should be drawn together and celebrated and promoted in a popular format for practitioners.

Side by side: a report setting out the Council on Social Action's work on one-to-one



Moving to another level

We believe that our recommendations are individually worthwhile, collectively significant. We think they offer the prospect of serious change. That has been our objective and the basis on which we would expect to be judged. CoSA has neither the resources nor the mandate to implement the recommendations but we will help where ever we can and return regularly to monitor progress. We will report publicly on what has or has not been achieved in 12 months time.

■ **Action Underway:** CoSA is sustaining its regular interest in this topic over the next year supporting where we usefully can, commenting where we think we should and reporting again at the end.

As activity is stimulated on the ground we inspire further understanding and create the conditions for generating greater commitment. Our last set of recommendations exploits that gathering momentum.

The small scale, the diversity and the individuality of many of the projects in this field are the sectors greatest strength but also the roots of its principal weaknesses. As a result schools struggle to develop their own models when established schemes are thriving down the road, commissioners overlook mentoring and befriending in tendering and procurement, independent funders have been slow to recognise value. Some of the largest organisations are known by others on the patch but most have little brand awareness and the sector as a sector has almost no coherent profile outside the committed band of practitioners. Thus each enthusiastic teacher has to make their own case to students, parents and governors, each local project has to sell the idea before they sell their product to commissioners and funders and every CSR lead has to create their own pitch to enthuse managers and colleagues.

The route to sustained growth may apparently be obstructed, as we first discovered by lack of money and by a limited supply of volunteers, but it only will be when the sector successfully addresses the third constraint – inadequate understanding – that it will make the most headway with the first two.

Inclusive, clear and targeted communications are the missing pieces.

This is not about brand control. Every scheme must of course be free to develop and deliver its own priorities in its own style. It is about building a one-to-one mindset – a shared recognition that this is an established,

Inclusive, clear and targeted communications are the missing pieces.

The stretching vision of “someone for everyone” throughout our childhood and thereafter in times of crisis or transition calls for more than random local developments.

effective and mutually beneficial approach to tackling a diverse range of personal challenges and to developing individual potential.

A collective communications strategy might identify three targets: First, those who buy and deliver public sector services. Second, potential funders and supporters, particularly but not exclusively in business. Third, and perhaps a step too far at this stage but ultimately, the wider public.

We are not suggesting glossy ads and big campaigns. We are suggesting work on, for instance:

- A shared lexicon – what is one-to-one? What are the words we use to describe it and what are the differentiators between this and any other approach?
- Key points of principle. What are the big ideas that unite and inspire us in this field?
- Tips and tools for practitioners to use in local communications.
- A strategy for working collectively with partners like the LGA, BitC or the teachers unions not selling ‘my’ product but communicating ‘our’ approach, ‘our’ vision.

Much of this work would build on opportunities which are already in the pipeline – the LGA / MBF local services strategy, for instance, and the Shine Week celebrations. None of it would reinvent or reconfigure the sector. It would raise its profile amongst those whose help is needed to take it to another level.

The plan wouldn't succeed without the support and engagement of the sector leaders – MBF, the Gold Star group and others. Much of the strategic thinking and the materials could be generated in kind.

CoSA has shared this thinking with sector leaders. Rita Clifton chairman of Interbrand, the worlds leading brand consultancy and pioneer of brand valuation has agreed to help plot the steps if there is enthusiasm from the leading practitioners. Ultimately we envisage a cross sector task force bringing together sector leaders and communications experts to develop and guide a two year strategy.

- **Our Advice:** A task force should bring together sector leaders and communications experts to develop and guide a two year profile – raising communications strategy. CoSA can help to convene the cross sector membership but the project should be carried forward by MBF.

In the introduction we noted that government alone cannot build and sustain supportive communities but its role is fundamental. The volunteer mentors, and the organisations they are working with, are partners of the enabling state, not alternatives. In prison after-care, refugee support, help for children at school, indeed every area that we have considered, the independent mentor is working alongside, if not within, public institutions.

The stretching vision of ‘someone for everyone’ throughout our childhood and thereafter in times of crisis or transition calls for more than random local developments. It needs those workers in the statutory services, and the politicians who lead them, to seek out and actively promote opportunities to embrace the one-to-one approach and it needs them to ask questions:

If there are brilliant examples of schools where every child is supported by others a little older, why not everywhere, from nursery to 6th form? If St Giles Trust can reduce the re-offending rate of gang members to 10%, against a norm of 75% for this age-group, at a cost less than the bill for incarcerating a prisoner for just six weeks, how can we reconfigure our budgets to develop this approach? In short, what is the role for one-to-one in tackling disadvantage and realising opportunity in every service area?

This is about more than government on your side. It is about all of us, side by side, receiving support when we need it, giving it when we can. A communications programme can help to build such a mindset and incremental progress on the ground will strengthen the case. But without a public sector approach that actively seeks such cooperation and that is universally enabling, development will always be piecemeal and slow.

Leadership is critical. In part this means practical innovations of the sort that we have covered earlier in this paper. In part it means ministers sharing the aspiration, painting the vision repeatedly and boldly – every child a friend, every child befriended; thereafter someone for everyone at all the times of crisis or transition.

■ **Our Advice:** The Chief Secretary to the Treasury should write to all departments, as part of the Budget/spending review process, advising them that No 10 and the Treasury will look favourably on spending plans which involve one-to-one provision.

And: Every government minister should challenge their department and themselves “What does one-to-one mean to us and what more can we do?”

This is about more than government on your side. It is about all of us, side by side, receiving support when we need it, giving it when we can.

And finally, three things you could do ...

- Log on to Horseshmouth now www.horseshmouth.co.uk
- Talk to others in your organisation or workplace about the potential for low-level pairing. Maybe for starters match the newest and the oldest. We can all learn from one another and it could be the start of something bigger.
- Think about becoming a volunteer on an established mentoring programme in your area. Its challenging but it may be the best thing you've ever done. As a first step check out the new portal at www.timebank.org.uk for more information.



Side by side: a report setting out the Council on Social Action's work on one-to-one

Appendix 1

Summary of Our Advice and The Action Underway

Starting young

Our Advice

- DCSF Guidance paper on Schools' role in promoting pupil well-being should include specific reference to mentoring and befriending.
- The current work on the development of the 2020 children's workforce training strategy should give prominence to the importance of one-to-one provision.
- DCSF should embed reference to the development of one to one services in the Impact Assessment guidelines for all policy advice.
- Principles of one-to-one should be embedded in all programmes across government and related agencies that relate to children and young people.
- DCSF ministers should ask the questions of every new policy: How does this play out for the individual child and where are the opportunities for a one to one relationship? What is the role for peer support and how might we also engage other willing citizens.

And Action Already Underway

- Shine Week 2009 will include a strand on mentoring and befriending with advice to schools on recognising pupils who have achieved through one-to-one programmes.
- The Steve Sinnott Fellowship has been established to help schools strengthen their outward facing links.

Exploiting technology

Our Advice

- Government departments should promote e-mentoring sites to their staff as part of their employee volunteering programmes.

And Action Already Underway

- The UK Catalyst Awards have been established to celebrate, share and cultivate the best examples of communications technologies applied for a social purpose.

- CoSA, CLG and other partners are bringing together the leading mobile phone operators to explore collaborations for promoting social action.
- Open University and Horseshmouth are collaborating to populate the Horseshmouth e-mentoring site.

Developing mass

Our Advice

- The PM should announce a new commitment to employee volunteering in government with fixed minimum hours available to every government employee.
- BERR should use the successful Heart of the City model as a starting point to spark similar networks in other business centres across the UK.
- OTS should support the TimeBank portal by publicising it through their government and third sector networks.
- The COI should develop a cross communications strategy exploiting opportunities for the promotion of community engagement through existing tools. OTS should determine which agencies should be promoted in this way.

And Action Already Underway

- The Civil Service Capability Group are connecting volunteering leads across departments and are working to bring each one up to the level of the best.
- The Talent Map will include an explicit reference to the role of volunteering in recruitment processes.
- Heart of the City are publishing a guide for supporting SMEs in starting and developing employee volunteering and other social action programmes.
- CoSA and The Doughty Centre are publishing a paper on Collaborative Commitments.
- Allen & Overy, the Law Centres Federation and others are piloting a collaborative commitment to promote the quality of one-to-one relationships between legal aid advisers, volunteers, and their clients.
- TimeBank are developing an experimental portal for mentoring and befriending volunteers for a one year pilot.
- A one-to-one event for leaders, practitioners and opinion formers will be run at Chain Reaction.

Incentivising and sustaining

Our Advice

- DWP should campaign to ensure consistent application of existing rules to support volunteering. This should be coupled with effective training for advisors and managers.
- Ministers should explore re-framing as “Training” specific full-time volunteering placements for groups of long-term unemployed.

And Action Already Underway

- CoSA’s work on financial incentives will be taken forward by Volunteering England Action Groups.
- A volunteer recognition scheme for young people led by v will be rolled out with support from third sector agencies, educational institutions and employers in every sector.

Investing in growth

Our Advice

- The Third Sector Research Centre should undertake a multi-agency evaluation on the impact of mentoring and befriending.
- DH should pilot a ‘right to recognition’ for peer support groups in health and social care.
- CLG should include organisations in the field of one-to-one as a specific theme for funding through the Community Empowerment Fund.
- MBF and the ALG’s Regional Improvement and Efficiency Partnerships and should work together on sharing the lessons around one-to-one at a local level.
- MBF should work with IDEA on the development of an evidence base around mentoring and befriending within the services of, and / or supported by, local authorities.
- CLG and IDeA should consider supporting the bassac work on intelligent commissioning.
- The local services strategy should be developed across central government with consideration given to including mentoring and befriending in all procurement/tendering arrangements where those contracts focus on the development of individuals.
- The Empowerment PSA board should champion development of one-to-one across government. Recommendations in this paper should form part of their agenda.
- Ministers and officials should examine ways of taking forward the Gold Star group’s proposals.

And Action Already Underway

- The Social Impact Bond will be piloted and extended to pay for mentoring and befriending where prevention and early intervention will yield long term savings.
- MBF, CLG and CoSA are presenting to local policy makers and commissioners at a programme of LGA national training events

Learning and sharing the lessons

Our Advice

- Government should explore with MBF the possibility of further support for a national training programme.
- The Third Sector Champions group should consider processes for ensuring that all government funded mentoring programmes work to the Approved Provider Standards.
- CLG should invest in the support of a popular publication, in print or online, drawing together, promoting and sharing the learning from varied exemplars in mentoring and befriending.

Moving to another level

Our Advice

- A task force should bring together sector leaders and communications experts to develop and guide a two year profile raising communications strategy.
- The Chief Secretary to the Treasury should write to all departments, as part of the spending review, advising them that No 10 and the Treasury will look favourably on spending plans which involve one-to-one provision.
- And: Every government minister should challenge their department and themselves "What does one-to-one mean to us and what more can we do?"

And Action Already Underway

- CoSA is sustaining its regular interest in this topic over the next year supporting where we usefully can, commenting where we think we should and reporting again at the end.

Council on Social Action Papers

The Council on Social Action has produced a series of papers setting out the CoSA programme.

CoSA Paper No. 1, Willing Citizens

CoSA Paper No. 2, Side by side: a report setting out the Council on Social Action's work on one-to-one

CoSA Paper No. 3, Side by side and the implications for public service

CoSA Paper No. 4, Collaborative Commitments, written by Prof David Grayson, Doughty Centre for Corporate Responsibility on behalf of CoSA

CoSA Paper No. 5, Council on Social Action: Commentary on Year One

All the CoSA papers are available for download from the CoSA website:
www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/social_action.aspx

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