



The Hive
Fence Houses Community Development Project
FACT SHEET
2007-2008

Barnardos Vision and Purpose

Barnardo's vision is that the lives of all children and young people should be free from poverty, abuse and discrimination.

Barnardo's purpose is to help the most vulnerable children and young people transform their lives and fulfil their potential.

Barnardos Strategic Objective:

Moving from good to great making our work with children and young people more effective

Aim: To work in Partnership with the Community of Fence Houses : to identify needs and find ways to enable them to participate in decision making processes which will ensue that services are relevant to their community environment: and to take advantage of education, training, social and employment opportunities thus improving quality of life.

Which will result in the overall vision of: Fence Houses will be a community where people have got the knowledge, skills and abilities to be involved in creating a better future for everybody. There will be a safe, clean inviting environment and will have a community building with local ownership and local management.

Began: January 2005

Projected date for sustainability without Barnardos support: March 2009

Overarching theoretical approach: Community Development

Emerging from practice of what works developed at the Hive (Barnardos), during Northumbria Community Safety project- Reducing the Fear of Crime- 1996 – 2003.

Main Funding: Neighbourhood Renewal Fund **£58,318** (ends March 2008)
Barnardos **£79,602** (Ends March 2008) **Total funding for 2007 £137,920**

Other sources: Gentoo (Aspire),

Outcomes: Overarching Every Child Matters- Stay Safe & Be Healthy

For children, young people and parents and carers to participate in decision making about their community and services they receive

For children and young people parents and parents/carers to be knowledgeable about issues, specifically in relation to drugs, alcohol and volatile substances in order to grow up in a community where they feel safe and where they can live healthy lifestyles.

To have access to safe play facilities/activities, in order for children and young people to feel safe.

For children and young people and parents and cares to grow up in a community which is rich in social capital whereby feels safer

Outputs:

HN24-(Volunteers 35- includes peer mentors) 6 peer mentors **"I think this is a better idea because some people don't have the confidence to talk to people and there is still a stigma around drugs and alcohol"**

"I like having these (1:1) its good we have tasks to do" "I don't feel so guilty now because these (1:1) makes me realise how much we do".

HN17 (2x consultation events) including city wide conference to launch good practice guide.

NRF12 (good practice doc)

Quarterly evaluation and monitoring reports/returns
6 Families supported by peer mentors

HN25 (Agencies involved in Steering Group-9)
"We have a good relationship with Barnardos" (GENTOO)

NRF 11 1 job safeguarded

NRF4 (Training for 50 people) **"This is my very first certificate"**
"E I never thought I would pass its brilliant"

- 2x Fun Days-average of 40 families per day
- 1x physical play area
- 1x external evaluation report
- 10 group's x 1 visit per month
- 6 training courses x 1 ½ days per year
- 1 training course x 10weeks x 13 participants
- 1 x Focus group to start end of year
- 2 x School days
- 1 x CLASP (day time) Volunteers meetings per Month
- 1 x CLASP (Night time) Volunteers meeting per ¼
- 7 x CLASP Volunteer 1:1 Reviews per ¼

Staffing-	CSM-	4 hours
	DCSM	37 hours
	Administrator	16 hours
	Project Worker	37 hours
	Crèche Manager	8 hours
	Child care worker	5 hours
	Domestic	4 hours

Sessions worked weekly:

Name of member of staff	Number of face to face sessions	Hours	Other; management admin. Hours
Marian McGuinness	0	0	4
Audrey Bewick	0	37	0
Jacqueline Nelson	0	37	0
Julie Roberts	0	8	0
Jane Bell	0	5	0

Executive summary of evaluation of 'The Hive' - Fence Houses Community Development Project (Barnardos North East)

1. Overview

Barnardos is a national children's charity which aims to impact upon the lives of children and young people in all their work. Barnardos North East commissioned Sue Robson to carry out an external evaluation of the Fence Houses Community Development Project. The project located in the Fence Houses area of Sunderland, an ex-coalmining area to the south west of the city, is funded by Barnardos and Neighbourhood Renewal Fund. Barnardos has been involved since September 1996. The project known as 'The Hive' is aimed at providing resources, support, activities and learning opportunities for families on a housing estate in Houghton-le-Spring known as 'the Race Course'.

Barnardos' strategic objectives outlined in its national business plan 2007-10 are reflected in its regional corporate plan (North East), and this feeds into the project's Service Plan for 2007/08. The project uses community development approaches and is aimed at making Fence Houses a place where people have got the knowledge, skills and abilities to be involved in creating a better future for everybody, and where there is a safe, clean inviting environment and a community building with local ownership and local management. These aims have been translated into measurable outputs and outcomes to be achieved during the project life period to March 2008.

The aim of the evaluation was to inform the future planning of the project and to influence other agencies' practices and Barnardos regionally and nationally. The evaluation took place over a period of six months, from June 2007 until December 2007. The project was a pilot for the methodology for the evaluation, based up the matrix developed by CENTRIS in a national study to determine the distinctly valuable contribution of the voluntary and community sector and assess the extent to which the contribution of the voluntary and community sector depends on its relationships with different parties. The evaluation process involved negotiations with volunteers, peer mentors, steering group members and staff in the project as well as community groups based in and other agencies working in the Fence Houses area.

As part of this evaluation, a focus group event is proposed to review the findings and recommendations of this report in January 2008.

2. Summary Impacts of the Project

Fence Houses Community Development Project is well on target with all of its anticipated outputs for Neighbourhood Renewal Fund. At three months into the

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Barnardos

BELIEVE IN CHILDREN

NRF funding, 36% of its targets around local people accessing training had been achieved and; 66% of its targets in involving residents in voluntary work.

Outcomes of the project though not mutually exclusive were identified at four levels: individual; community; organisational and policy are:

Individual

- Reaching individuals and groups that other agencies find difficult to reach is an identified strength of Barnardos.
- The peer-mentoring course has led to changes in individuals' self confidence, personal development, career and education aspirations.
- The most striking impact at an individual level is an increased knowledge about drugs issues and a positive transformation in thinking and attitudes.
- Engaging individuals in training and learning is having a wider impact upon the community as people begin to invest their skills and knowledge in the development of their communities.

Community

- The findings of the evaluation correspond with those of the '*Measuring Social Capital Report*' wherein Barnardos is recognised as improving relationships between other agencies and community groups and improved links between community groups.
- Although the local issues are recognised as being historically entrenched in wider political and economic trends, there is much confidence and enthusiasm that Barnardos is in a good position to support communities to find solutions to associated problems.

Organisational

- Barnardos presence in Fence Houses has directly resulted in positive changes in the practices of other agencies and in some cases the more effective delivery of services. However, where there is reluctance for organisations to change their practices by following Barnardos good practice examples, creating a strain on resources as staff members tend to compensate for this.

Policy

- Barnardos staff contribute to policy development through links with other organisations. A report on the experiences of the voluntary and community sector organisations to procurement has been compiled and submitted to the Children's Strategic partnership.

3. Summary Reaction to the project

- Project staff members are actively involved in policy and strategy development through secondment to local authority children's services and participation in voluntary and community sector forum, aimed at influencing social policy as part of Barnardos Service Plan.
- Barnardos personnel clearly identify their practice methods in correspondence with promoting the community development values of equality, social justice, participation, learning and cooperation.

- Several models of good practice were identified as evidence of the project's flexibility in relation to the changing needs and issues identified by local people, the project's community development approach and in the project's ability to reach the excluded members of the community.
- Collaborating agencies commend the dedication of its staff and the effectiveness of Barnardos approach and suggested that with more time, resources and space the Fence Houses Community Development Project could expand its provision and should do more of the same.
- There are suggestions that Barnardos should expand its focus upon supporting individuals to engage with training and learning as a means of restoring the value, worth and confidence of the whole community.
- There is concern that drugs issues have dominated the agenda of the project at the expense of other issues such as isolation from poor transport links, lack of play provision for children and lack of provision for young people are currently key issues facing parents and children.
- More work is required to promote the work of Barnardos and the Community Development Project across the Fence Houses area. Furthermore, work need to be done to develop impact assessment for the project, possibly at a household level.
- Proposals to improve upon the peer mentoring project include more involvement of the CLASP members.
- The peer mentoring project has taken up more time and resources than anticipated. Although it is difficult to evaluate the CLASP project when it has not reached delivery stage, the case study findings emphasise that the purpose of the project was to improve the delivery of other agencies services, rather than to involve Barnardos in the direct delivery of services.
- The purpose, effectiveness and resource implications of the project's steering group are under question and there is suggestion for a forum that links into wider decision making processes.

- There is concern about Barnardos creating dependencies from community groups that could undermine their sustainability. There was a strong sense that the evaluation process should provide an opportunity for reflection for all of those involved in the project to identify future actions, the emphasis for this needs to be organic and rooted in the local communities themselves.

4. Recommendations

Based on this evaluation, it is recommended that Barnardos:

1. Promote and disseminate the good practice in the Fence Houses Project in using community development methods to build social capital through the Good Practice Guide, a City-wide conference and through regional and national networks such as Barnardos, CDX, and the proposed infrastructure communication framework.
2. Strengthen partnership relationships for the provision of training and learning as a means of restoring the value, worth and confidence of the whole community.
3. Develop a marketing and communications strategy to promote the work of Barnardos and the Community Development Project across the Fence Houses area, particularly with local people
4. As part of this evaluation process, continue to develop tools to measure the impact of the project, eventually to gather data at a household level. This may require a joint approach with partner agencies.
5. Further to this evaluation, secure resources to conduct a thorough evaluation and review of the CLASP project to determine its future direction and focus with careful consideration to the resource implications to Barnardos.
6. As part of this evaluation process, involve local groups and volunteers in examining the findings and identifying solutions and strategies for the way forward for the project.
7. Consider a holistic approach by expanding the issue based focus of the project towards the other key concerns of the community.

Furthermore that Barnardos in conjunction with partner agencies:

8. Review the purpose, effectiveness and resource implications of the steering group with consideration to developing a wider forum that links into wider information networks and decision making processes such as the Coalfield Forum and the Local Strategic Partnership.
9. Consider expanding the resources of the Barnardos Project, potentially through investment from partner agencies who are identifying that the project is enhancing their services.
10. Strengthen partnership relationship with agencies in the voluntary and community sector and statutory sector working with children and young people for the purpose of developing the sustainability of community groups.

A copy of the final evaluation report can be obtained from:

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