

## Third Sector Strategy for Communities and Local Government – Prince's Trust response to Discussion Paper (Summer 2007)

### The Prince's Trust: A brief introduction

The Prince's Trust is a charity that believes in young people who often don't believe in themselves. We seek out those young people that need our help the most and work with young people who struggle at school, are in or leaving care, are long-term unemployed or have been in trouble with the law. We work with young people aged 14-30 to help them get back into work, education and training.

The Trust delivers a number of core programmes across the UK. For example;

**The Team Programme** is a 12 week personal development programme for 16-25 year olds, the majority unemployed, to develop their confidence, motivation and skills through teamwork in the community. In 2005/6 8,802 took part in the programme in over 300 locations across the UK. 71% of unemployed participants find work or enter full time education or training after completing the programme. Through the Team programme The Trust contributes more than £4.75m to local communities through community projects.

**Community Cash Awards** is a programme, which gives cash awards to young people aged 14 -25 to set up youth led community projects. The Trust gives young people practical guidance to plan, run and manage their projects with on going support and monitoring. 80% of young people find work or enter full time education or training, with 89% developing their skills. Projects include raising awareness of issues, such as gun or knife crime, or projects that improve community facilities such as setting up allotments or youth cafes. 28% of awards go to BME communities who might not otherwise engage in facilitated programmes.

**Get Into Programmes:** these are short courses that develop young people's skills in a specific sector and support them into jobs. Each Get into course is designed according to the sector (e.g. retail, construction, youth work) and is developed with employers. It aims to give young people, who are work-ready but do not have vocational skills, a mixture of practical training and hands on experience, that will enable them to get a job. It also provides them with the opportunity to meet potential employers and support for a six month period as they look for work. 58% move into jobs within 3 months of starting a Get into programme.

The Trusts success is dependent on the strength of its partnerships and we work with a range of statutory, private and voluntary organisations to provide better outcomes for young people.

Many of the young people The Trust works with have complex needs that require a holistic multi-agency support system. One intervention on its own will not necessarily help break the cycle of their circumstances. The Trust actively engages with the multi-agency approach and works with specialist partners such as Rethink, Addaction, Drugscope, Anne Frank Trust and Centrepont.

Although The Trusts work is focussed on supporting young people, its programmes link to a broader range of sectors including regeneration, community safety and social enterprise. This is reflected in strong partnerships which have developed with public sector bodies such as local authorities, Fire and Rescue Services, Police and prisons.

The Prince's Trust therefore has a strong track record in working in partnerships across different sectors. It is this experience which has informed our response to the Third Sector Strategy for Communities and Local Government.

*"Our work with The Prince's Trust is a genuine partnership. By combining PA time with good quality programmes we have achieved a significant reduction in NEETs. I have found programme staff to be very professional, well trained and client centred. The Get Off the Bench programme has quite literally changed young people's lives."*

*Sue Baker, Operations Manager, Connexions Bury*

### **The Prince's Trust response to the Strategy:**

The Prince's Trust welcomes the ambition of the Department to improve relations with the third sector and to create a framework for fairness and consistency.

The third sector is large and diverse and its strength is partly due to this variety and independence. The Department should therefore guard against:

- 1) imposing consistency in a way that might stifle the creativity of the sector
- 2) discouraging the "independence" of many organisations in the sector

Notwithstanding the above, The Trust seeks to support the Department in enabling the third sector, in all its guises, to contribute to vibrant communities and quality public services.

Recent months have seen numerous consultations and reports from different Government Departments about the role and engagement of the third sector. With the establishment of the Office of the Third Sector, The Prince's Trust would like to see more co-ordination of relations and communication (including consultations) through this Office. This would help to build more productive relations and reduce duplication.

### **Responses to specific questions:**

#### **Q1. How effectively do we implement Compact principles?**

The Prince's Trust has had limited direct experience of DCLG's implementation of the Compact. In recent joint work on community integration, the principles of the Compact were upheld.

It is our experience that the implementation of the Compact does vary across government departments. For example, some funding rounds continue to demand unrealistic deadlines for the voluntary sector. It would be helpful if

DCLG could play a strong role in ensuring the consistent application of the Compact as well as leading by example.

Our experience of the Compact more generally is that it creates a strong foundation for Government Departments working with the third sector and The Prince's Trust supports all the core principles. However, it is important to have practical models and guidance to convert the theory into practice.

In 2005, HM Treasury supported Making Partnerships Work, a Prince's Trust report providing case studies and guidance on the mechanics of effective partnership working. This continues to form the basis of all our partnership work. The report is freely available on The Trust website and the models have been adopted by several other organisations, including the MOD in its work with the third sector.

**Q2. In what other ways could we help to improve the effectiveness of engagement with the third sector at the: i) regional and sub-regional levels; and ii) local level?**

1. One of the biggest challenges for third sector organisations is in finding the capacity to engage with local authorities and public bodies. In the Leader Survey (January 2006) 71% of those local authorities responding said that capacity was a key barrier to commissioning services to the third sector. Anything which facilitates, and resources, communication between third sector organisations and commissioners/policy makers will be extremely helpful to the sector. It is particularly important that the sector has meaningful access and a voice on LSP's. Building relationships at this local level is time consuming and competes with staff time on core delivery.
2. An additional challenge for national third sector organisations occurs because they are sometimes disregarded in favour of small local organisations by commissioners. There is a responsibility on the larger charities to avoid "crowding out" smaller ones but the criteria for engagement should be about quality not size. National organisations often have stability and robust quality systems in place.
3. The Prince's Trust seeks to work with small, local voluntary organisations because they are often closer to the young people we want to help. In some cases, The Trust provides "activity" in the form of programmes while local projects or organisations provide the continuity of support. This kind of complementary arrangement is something we are planning to expand. The Prince's Trust has developed a Community Engagement Guide to help staff understand the importance of working with local community organisations and projects. This includes case studies of where The Prince's Trust has successfully worked in partnership with small community organisations, for example, in Marsh Farm in Luton, Shared Road project in Glasgow and the Discovery Centre in Kings Lynn. We can share this experience if it would be helpful to the Department.

4. For some third sector organisations (like The Prince's Trust), the co-ordination of service delivery across more than one local authority area is essential in order to maintain cost effectiveness. Local commissioning threatens to disrupt this economy of scale and therefore the Department could usefully provide a mechanism for third sector bodies to negotiate at a regional or sub-regional (County) level. This might take the form of a regional event to showcase different organisations service "offers" to a group of commissioners or public funders. There are also significant resource implications regarding managing many contracts to different funders; contracts at a regional level would be more desirable and cost effective.
5. Umbrella organisations do provide valuable representation for particular sectors. However, different sized organisations generally need a different type of forum. For example, in the youth sector, The Prince's Trust is a supportive member of NCVYS but while this umbrella organisation provides an excellent co-ordination for national youth organisations, it is less appropriate for local ones. Voluntary Sector North West is an example of an effective umbrella body at a regional level, providing practical advice and a voice for smaller third sector organisations.
6. Larger third sector organisations can provide tried and tested models which can be adapted locally in ways which engage communities in the design to meet local needs. Recently, The Trust has entered into larger contract arrangements with local public funders, for example LEGI, in Blackpool where we are seeking to apply well established national programmes to local needs.

*"The Prince's Trust has invested in the young people in this community. The trust that they have shown motivates people to work harder and breeds respect. This fits with everything we stand for at the Discovery Centre."*

*Jimmy Yallop, Centre Manager, Discovery Centre, King's Lynn*

### **Q3. Would your organisation wish to be considered to become a strategic partner?**

Yes. The Prince's Trust has been considering how it could most effectively support the Governments work to engage the third sector. As a large UK wide organisation we think we are well positioned to be a strategic partner.

An expression of interest has been submitted alongside this consultation response.

### **Q4. Do you agree with our focus on community anchors?**

The Prince's Trust is very supportive of the principle to invest in existing infrastructure rather than create new bodies. Undoubtedly, where a well established organisation has the credibility and capacity to take on the role of community anchor this is a good model. It will be a challenge to identify

organisations which provide both the community “acceptance” and the breadth of experience across the sector. Therefore, it may be necessary to incentivise potential anchor organisations to invest expertise in managing multi-agency groups and resources.

**Q5. Are there good models of regional and sub-regional bodies, local authorities, or LSPs working strategically to support community anchor organisations in conjunction with the local third sector?**

The Prince’s Trust predominantly has links with youth organisations or specialist agencies e.g. offending, education, enterprise and skills. However, we do sometimes work with third sector organisations that offer a more holistic community remit and some of these could be considered as a community anchor, for example Archway in Leeds. The Prince’s Trust is not aware of Archway’s current relationship with the local authority and LSP but given sufficient capacity it would appear to meet the criteria as a potential community anchor.

**Q6. Are there major gaps in our proposals for improving our strategic engagement with the third sector?**

- The Prince’s Trust has extensive experience of working with the private sector and, in some cases, bringing all three sectors together at a local or programme level. For example, our Get Into programme utilises employers in specific sectors such as construction, sport or retail to connect people to real jobs. At another level, one of our largest corporate partnerships includes the FA Premier League, Football Foundation and the PFA, utilising the power of football to engage more young people in education, training and personal development. The inclusion of the private sector in DCLG’s strategy will be critical to ensure integration and sustainability. The Trust will be happy to share more of its experience working with private sector if this is useful to the Department.
- Under these proposals, sustainability will continue to be a challenge for both “anchor” organisations and other third sector organisations. It would be helpful to understand more about how other government initiatives will support this strategy e.g. Future Builders
- The Prince’s Trust makes extensive use of secondments to help create cost effectiveness and to add value to our work. Secondees from the Department to the third sector could help to execute or trial some of the co-ordination work necessary at a national or regional level. Secondments (both to and from Government Departments) are effective in improving knowledge and understanding, and in developing trust.
- It would be helpful to have a clear and consistently applied definition of commissioning across government.

Please don’t hesitate to contact us for more information about any part of this consultation response.