

Professional and consultancy work

Summary of Consultancy, Professional and Service Development work undertaken by the Centre for Social Action in the UK

Survey of Leicester

This is a partnership between CSA the City Council and the University of Leicester to develop a survey of Leicester, which reflects the City Council's wider approach to economic renewal and social development. The CSA is supporting a more participatory approach where research professionals work alongside members of a community to define issues, make sense of data, and appraise and act on the results. The project will be trialling and modifying the technical approaches to gathering and representing data through community engagement, making sure that the process is accessible to local residents.

NYA Young Researchers Network

The National Youth Agency (NYA) commissioned the Centre to explore the development of a network of projects working with young researchers to share skills and experience, work on common research themes and participate in training, which they are now incorporating into their action plan for the development of a network. The Centre interviewed potential members of the network concerning their views on the nature and role of such a group and drew up a specification.

NIACE: Action Research on e-learning

A Centre staff member is part of a steering group working with the National Institute of Adult Continuing Education as part of their Action Research Projects in Adult and Community Learning. The steering group offers advice and support to the project which is funding 14 action research projects in community based e-learning.

Leicester City Council: Community Cohesion and Social Capital

A Centre staff member worked with the Policy and Performance team of Leicester City Council to devise an evaluation and assessment framework for their Community Cohesion Strategy. Through the involvement of policy makers and practitioners a cohesion framework and a survey was developed. This might be used at different levels - from a city wide strategic level to a community level. (2006)

YouthBank

A member of the CSA team worked with a group of young people from YouthBanks across the UK to help them develop the skills and capacity to undertake an evaluation of a selection Youth Banks. Through a series of training residentials the young people found out about evaluation, information collection methods, ethical issues and planned their evaluation tools. They interviewed and ran group sessions with young people and staff and produced both a DVD of their findings and also a booklet of guidance for young people to be able to self evaluate their YouthBank. 2004

Derby Primary Care Trust

The Centre for Social Care Studies, De Montfort University, was involved in this project, lead by which comprises the evaluation of the Healthy Living Centre based in Derby PCT. It involved the research and production of an evaluation toolkit, its piloting, analysis of results and production of a report. A researcher from the Centre for Social Action provided 3 days' consultancy. (2003-4)

Nottingham City Council - Streets Ahead

Research project aiming to find out the views and opinions of young people who do not currently use the youth service. The Streets Ahead Project recruited 10 young people to act as researchers, who were trained and supported by Centre staff to collect information from 503 young people aged 13-19 about how they spent their spare-time and their knowledge of the Connexions Service. The research was funded by the Connexions Service (2002)

Sure Start – Osmaston and Allenton

The Centre was commissioned to deliver a programme of facilitated team building training sessions and a two-year qualitative, service user led evaluation of the Sure Start Service in Osmaston and Allerton in Derby. (2001/3)

Fox Hollies Youth Safe Haven

The Centre was commissioned to carry out a six - week social action training course, with follow-up consultancy, for community members in the Fox Hollies Ward of Birmingham. The West Midlands Police were sponsoring a three-year multi-agency project to tackle youth anti-social behaviour in the area and the training was designed to enable community members to carry out an initial youth consultation and be fully involved in the subsequent programme. (2002)

Crime Concern London Youth Participation Programme

The Centre was commissioned to provide consultancy, development and training over a 12 - week period to the Crime Concern Youth Participation programme. There are eight projects in London working with Breaking the Barriers clients, young people aged between 16-25 who are at risk of offending. The consultancy involved providing advice, support and guidance to project staff on all aspects of project delivery, co-ordinating the Youth Participation network and providing social action training where necessary. (2002)

Birmingham Foster Carers Association

CSA has worked with BFCA to develop the services they offer to their membership to improve the quality of foster care in Birmingham. This work with BFCA has focussed on developing peer support services for carers run and managed by foster carers and the development of a foster care resource centre.(2001/2)

Birmingham Foster Carers Association

The Centre worked with foster carers to advise, support and train foster carers as researchers to carry out research for themselves on different aspects of service improvement. The CSA provided ongoing support and supervision during the research process. BFCA carried out a consultation with their members on issues and

needs for service improvement and a research project on contact between birth parents and foster children. (1999 - 2001)

Birmingham Foster Carers Association

BFCA provides support services to foster carers in Birmingham and works closely with the local authority. Consultancy services from CSA enabled BFCA to negotiate improvements to the pay and working conditions for foster carers and their children. The consultancy has focussed on organisational development, changing the organisation to meet the new demands of partnership working with the local authority to improve services to looked after children. (1997 - 2002)

The Children's Society - Article 12 Research Work

The Children Society's Larch Project in Bradford and Leeds aims to enable young people to participate in the regeneration of their neighbourhoods. The Centre has provided some sessions about evaluation for the young people involved so they can undertake an evaluation of what they have done. (2001)

Early Consultancy and Professional/Service Development Work Braunstone Youth Workers Forum

The Centre was awarded a £5,000 contract for a 14 week project starting in January 1999 to work with young people and the Youth Workers' Forum on the Braunstone estates in Leicester with the aim of: consulting with young people to define how they relate to issues of crime and anti-social behaviour, to facilitate the active involvement of young people, and to provide a sustainable model for the development of youth involvement in Braunstone estates, to help develop a youth crime prevention strategy. (1999)

Wycliffe Community Education

Following on from the work that the Centre did for the Braunstone Youth Workers Forum, the Centre was asked to work alongside youth work professionals in the area to help establish the "Key Fund". This would be controlled, administered and allocated by local young people. This project offered support and advice to the workers and young people involved. (1999)

Barnet Voluntary Service Council

A consultation with member agencies and the local community focussing on the services, facilities and building needs of the voluntary sector in the London Borough of Barnet. Worked in partnership with Hawkins Brown Architects who were advising on appropriate architectural solutions arising from the consultation. (1998)

NACRO, Essex

The Centre was commissioned by NACRO to undertake a £10,000 contract to work with tenants in their housing projects in Essex. This was undertaken during a four month period from September to December. The work involved setting up weekly meetings with young people in the housing projects in three towns to enable them to analyse their issues, problems and concerns and develop action plans. This culminated in meetings between all the projects and a Tenant Development Conference which included presentations from all the tenants involved in the pilot project. (1998)

Sutton Council for Voluntary Service (CVS)

A contract to undertake a consultation with three disability organisations in the London Borough of Sutton on the issue of working together more effectively. (1997/8)

Nottingham Hostels Liaison Group

This is a multi-agency project (Health, Social Services and the voluntary sector) to support young homeless women with children. The Centre for Social Action provided consultancy to the workers who run a group for the women. (1997/1998)

Guinness Trust Housing Association

A contract to work with the Guinness Trust on three housing estates in Derbyshire, Coventry and Trowbridge to enable young people to make their views and needs known to decision-makers. The funding was provided by the Housing Corporation. The Centre researchers involved everyone on the estates in a consultation process, carried out detached and group work with young people and developed a range of

responses that addressed their issues, problems and concerns. A good practice guide was produced from this project. (1997/8)

Brent Council Community Safety Unit

A contract to work with Brent Council Community Safety Unit on a community consultation on crime and community safety in South Kilburn. This aimed to present community members' perceptions and fears about crime in the area following a consultation; to examine the roles of the agencies involved in responding to crime; to measure the effectiveness of the proposals of the Brent Council "Anti- Crime " package and to present the Council with detailed anti- crime proposals. (1997)

The Children's Society

Consultancy to Children's Society employees to assist production of an evaluation report on existing services for careleavers in Southern Derbyshire and make recommendations for future developments. Young people, foster carers, field and residential care workers and managers have all been involved. (1997)

London Borough of Sutton

Review of Day Services for Disabled People aged 18 - 75. A consultation with disabled people about what day services would meet their needs. The final report included recommendations for action. (1996)

Derby City Challenge/Derby PRIDE Health Steering Group

Study of the health and related social needs of the City Challenge area of inner Derby. The process of the study was geared towards generating ideas among members of this multi ethnic community about developments needed to improve the health and well- being of the residents and to provide a framework for resident-led action. (1994).