

Metropolitan Borough of
Stockport

Liaison Group on Volunteers



A GUIDE TO SETTING UP . . .

Community Care Schemes



A GUIDE TO SETTING-UP COMMUNITY-CARE SCHEMES

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INTRODUCTION

This booklet is intended as a step by step guide to groups or individual people interested in setting up community-care schemes in their area.

It is the result of initiatives taken by the Liaison Group on Volunteers to promote these schemes in areas of Stockport where they are needed.

It is written for people who have not previously been involved in this type of scheme but who feel it may help to meet certain needs in their local community.

The emphasis throughout will be on helping local residents to develop their own local, self-controlled group.

We acknowledge the help given in the preparation of this booklet by representatives of existing schemes and many other people who have offered their help and advice.

Although the Liaison Group on Volunteers is promoting these schemes the Social Services Division has overall responsibility to provide advice and support to schemes through the local Voluntary Service Officer whose help will be guaranteed to anyone wishing to set up a scheme.

Please contact me if you need further information or advice:

John Luke, (Secretary), L.G.V.,
c/o Social Services Division,
Town Hall,
Stockport SK1 3XE

WHAT IS A COMMUNITY-CARE SCHEME?

A community-care scheme is a means of organising the skills of a local community to provide help and support for its members in need.

Such a scheme enables the community to respond in a positive and practical way to those people, who for a number of reasons require temporary or more permanent help in coping with a variety of situations and to maintain a developing awareness of specific needs in their locality.

This response can be in many ways such as:

- friendly visiting of a lonely person
- provision of transport for handicapped people
- shopping, gardening, decorating for elderly and handicapped people
- practical help in periods of illness
- and many, many more!

HOW DO WE SET UP A SCHEME?

Before you can set up a scheme you will need to consider a number of basic questions:

- who is in need of help and does anyone know about it?
- what similar schemes exist nearby?
- what area should we serve?
- what will the scheme cost?
- how shall we publicise the scheme?
- how do we organise a public meeting?
- how do we recruit volunteers?
- how do we organise the scheme?

This is not intended to be a comprehensive list and there will always be other factors to be taken into consideration in each individual scheme.

Let us look, then, at each of these considerations in turn.

Who is in need of help and does anyone know about it?

Although you may feel there is a need in your area for a scheme it is important that before any further work is done, the need should be recognised by other individuals and groups in the community. There may be opposition to the scheme, of course! It is important to know why!

To get this information it will be necessary to meet other people who could have an interest in the scheme.

As well as taking these steps locally, there are national organisations pleased to offer their help and guidance whether on specific issues or

information from a range of booklets and leaflets they keep in stock. See Appendix A for a list of local and national contacts.

Having got this far, it would be useful to arrange an informal meeting of interested individuals or representatives of local organisations — say six or seven — to take on the preliminary work of information gathering and the groundwork for the first public meeting to launch the proposals for the scheme.

This gathering of people could become the steering-group so that the main tasks involved in these early stages are shared amongst the members of the group and not upon the shoulders of one person.

Members could well come from groups such as churches, community councils, tenants associations and other voluntary groups, social service departments, schools, clinics, police, councillors, information office staff — not forgetting any “unattached” willing individuals!

What similar schemes exist nearby?

It is important to identify any similar schemes which may exist in order to:

- (a) avoid unnecessary duplication of schemes and effort.
- (b) avoid any overlap of certain activities of new scheme with those of existing schemes.

For example, there may already be a gardening scheme in the area, therefore, it may not be appropriate to include that particular activity in the new scheme.

- (c) ensure that even if existing schemes are operating, their boundaries do not leave small isolated areas uncovered.

What areas should we serve?

The members of the steering-group will know the natural boundaries for their community, but do not be over-ambitious in attempting to cover a wider area than your likely resources of volunteers etc. will allow!

It is important to define your boundaries already at this early stage so careful thought is important to avoid later problems.

Allowances should be made for changing circumstances in the area i.e. house-building or demolition, road construction etc.

It will then be possible to give the scheme a title, relating to the area it is to serve.

What will the scheme cost?

Inevitably, some expenses will be incurred, even at this early stage.

Grant-aid may be available from the social services division, but other

local organisations may be willing to help by chipping in a few pounds or they may be able to help in kind rather than cash.

e.g. free use of a church hall for meetings, provision of paper for leaflets, etc. etc.

As the scheme becomes established, ongoing expenditure will be incurred in a number of ways:

- publicity
- stationery
- telephone expenses
- volunteers expenses
- postage
- refreshments for public meetings (a good cuppa wins many friends!)

Indeed, fund-raising may need to be a permanent feature of the schemes' activities. It can also serve other purposes such as encouraging contact with volunteers and publicity.

How shall we publicise the scheme?

Before any publicity is launched it is important to do your basic planning in readiness for the questions you will get from many interested parties about the features of the scheme.

The early publicity will be concerned with notice of the first public meeting. This can be done in the following ways:

- Posters and leaflets in churches, shops, libraries, information centres, pubs, factories, schools, GP's surgeries, clinics, clubs, house-windows etc., etc. In addition, a few lines in the church magazine — or other similar publications can be helpful.
- Newspapers — adverts are very costly, but the paper will usually be prepared to do a feature which will include the details of a meeting. (Don't forget the free newspapers, also!)
- Local Radio — there are usually community-type programmes in which it is possible to announce details of the scheme.
- Letters to key individuals and organisations.

BUT — above all, personal contact and word of mouth is the most effective!

How do we organise a public meeting?

The objective of the public meeting is to involve the widest possible cross-section of the community to inform them of the scheme and its aims, obtain their approval and to recruit volunteers either there and then or subsequently from within organisations represented at the meeting.

An agenda will need to be prepared and a chairman appointed to keep control of the proceedings!

The venue for the meeting should be located as centrally as possible — a church hall will probably be ideal (it may also be free!)

It is useful to check that the meeting will not clash with other local meetings, or for that matter, Coronation Street!

Consideration needs to be given to the seating to ensure that everyone is involved. If it's a small meeting a circle or semi-circle would be ideal.

Ask everyone to introduce themselves as the meeting starts and circulate a piece of paper for everyone to write down their name, address, telephone number and, if appropriate, the organisation they represent.

Try, if possible, not to get too big a hall and to add that extra homely touch, provide a cup of tea and biscuits. It also helps to get people together to talk and share ideas!

It may be helpful to have one or two "guest speakers" say, the Voluntary Service Officer, and maybe someone from an existing scheme.

Once the meeting has approved the proposals, the next — and most important task — is to allow time for volunteers to be recruited.

A date should be fixed for the follow-up meeting to officially launch the scheme and appoint a committee to run it.

Meanwhile the steering-group can assist with the recruitment of volunteers.

How do we recruit volunteers?

Basically, volunteers will be recruited by much the same means used to publicise the public meetings.

It is not possible to place enough emphasis on personal contact, by members of the steering-group being prepared to go and talk to any individual or group remotely interested.

Keep an open mind about the likelihood of help from any group.

Experience suggests that posters and leaflets on their own generally tend to produce little response.

It may be helpful to arrange a coffee-evening or similar function, to bring people together.

The majority of volunteers will come from existing organisations but some individuals may be recruited who are not attached to those

organisations. If there are anxieties about their suitability, the Voluntary Service Officer will advise. Don't forget that young people can make an invaluable contribution but they may need rather more support and supervision than adult volunteers.

Thought needs to be given at this stage to timing all the operations to ensure that no particular aspect of the scheme is delayed, i.e. recruitment of volunteers/acceptance of referrals.

It should be borne in mind that the recruitment of volunteers will need to remain a permanent feature of the scheme.

How do we organise the scheme?

It is advisable to set up some form of support-group or committee to advise and assist with the day to day running of the scheme and to call together representatives of the community from time to time to review the progress of the scheme, stimulate necessary recruitment and make any changes in direction or policy as required. Some members of the steering-group will doubtless be the nucleus of the permanent group!

However, in certain circumstances it may well be possible for a scheme to be run by one individual from a home base, but this alternative can make heavy demands!

The support-group may be a formal committee which meets regularly, or an informal group meeting as and when required, to discuss specific issues. Meetings could be held in members' homes on a rotation basis — provided the group is small enough!

The type of support-group to be formed must be decided, therefore, in the light of local circumstances and the personalities involved.

KEEPING THE SCHEME RUNNING

Having decided upon the means of providing ongoing support to the scheme the following factors will require consideration. This is not intended to be a comprehensive list and other considerations will arise according to the nature of the community.

Sharing of duties

This feature requires early attention so that the responsibilities in mounting and running the scheme are shared by several people. These include:

- chairman
- secretary
- treasurer

These posts are regarded as the basic requirements but as the scheme

progresses — and if volunteers are available, there may be scope for further sharing of work such as:

- jobs assessor
- co-ordinator of volunteers
- press/publicity officer
- transport organisers etc., etc.

Co-ordination

It is vital to ensure that there is always adequate co-ordination so that everyone knows and understands what their role is in the scheme.

It can be carried out either by one individual or by a group of operators.

Information storage

This is the core of the system which must be simple enough to be used by any volunteer acting as a co-ordinator, whilst being comprehensive enough to handle all the information needed by the scheme. It should include such details as:

- (a) Names, addresses, telephone numbers of:
 - organisers
 - volunteers
 - clients
- (b) Skills and particular interests of volunteers
- (c) Availability of volunteers and their own particular voluntary preferences.
- (d) Recording system for receiving requests for help, subsequent allocations of volunteers and the outcome of the response.
- (e) Statutory and voluntary agencies, providing their own particular type of assistance which may be used instead of or to complement the services offered by the scheme.

Although this list sounds a little formidable, it can be contained in little more than two small card-indexes, a day-book and a compile-it-yourself directory.

It is important to remember to treat all information as confidential.

Base for the scheme

The fundamental requirement for any scheme is a telephone. This can be located in the co-ordinators home(s) or in some other local premises. It is important to bear in mind the cost of calls during the peak period.

There are advantages and disadvantages to these two options which need to be carefully considered.

INSURANCE

It is important to have adequate insurance cover for volunteers whilst

they are engaged in the activities of the scheme.

You may wish to make your own arrangements through a broker or directly with an insurance company.

However, an arrangement has been made with Stockport Council's insurers, Municipal & Mutual Insurance Co. Ltd., which takes two forms:

Public Liability Policy

This policy covers claims for damages arising from injury to other persons or damage to property arising from negligence or breach of duty on the part of the members of the group.

Employer's Liability Policy

This provides cover for the group for compensation for injury or disease suffered by a member of the group when the injury arises out of and in the course of their activities for the group.

Exemptions — This policy does NOT cover Playschemes; Playgroup or participation in Carnivals and similar events.

It is thought that the quotations for this cover are very competitive and will provide the basic necessary insurance for Community Care Group activities.

The Voluntary Service Officer will arrange the cover and provide a quotation.

PREPARATION AND SUPPORT FOR VOLUNTEERS

There is always a risk that too much training or preparation for voluntary work can put potential volunteers off — but if training will help, short, informal training courses do exist at Stockport College. (The Voluntary Service Officer has all the details).

However, some form of ongoing support and contact with the volunteers is desirable. This is probably best achieved through periodic meetings of all volunteers on an informal, social basis, with the occasional guest speaker and a regular news-sheet for volunteers and representatives of all local voluntary organisations, because many people do not come to meetings even when invited.

This all helps to keep volunteers "in the picture" and in touch with one another.

WHO WILL BENEFIT FROM THE SCHEME?

Generally, they will be frail, handicapped or lonely people in your local community whose needs are not fully met by existing organisations.

Or, they may be eligible for services from statutory organisations but

unwilling — for many reasons — to accept that form of help.

However, do check that they are not already receiving help which you have been asked to provide!

The following are examples of ways in which the scheme might offer its help:

- Tending gardens
 - Shopping
 - Transport
 - Granny/Grandpa sitting
 - Emergency meals preparation
 - Decorating
 - Visiting
 - Odd jobs
 - Hospital visiting
 - Baby sitting
- and many others!

CONCLUSION

This booklet will have shown that community care schemes vary widely and, therefore, your scheme will have its own particular characteristics related to the needs and resources of your community.

We hope that we have helped you to avoid some of the pitfalls in forming a scheme and stimulated your interest in organising a scheme in your area.

The information contained in the booklet is only an outline and the Voluntary Service Officer will always be available with the backing of the Social Services Division, to assist, support and advise any individual or group of persons interested in setting up a scheme.

see Appendix B to find out where to contact them.

In addition, organisers of existing schemes may be able to assist.

See Appendix C to find out where to contact them.

APPENDIX A

Local people and organisations it may be worth contacting:

Doctor

Health Clinic — health visitor, community nurse

Churches

Schools

Policeman

Postman

Youth Clubs

Milkman

Councillors

VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS:

WRVS — Council for Voluntary Services — Volunteers Job Shop
— Age Concern Stockport — Tenants Group — Citizens Advice
Bureau — Old Peoples Clubs — Womens Institutes — Round
Table — Rotary — Inner Wheel — British Red Cross Society —
St. John Ambulance — Stockport Auxiliary Cripples Help Society

National Organisations:

The Volunteer Centre,
29 Lower Kings Road,
Berkamsted,
Herts.
Tel: 044 27 73311

Age Concern,
Bernard Sunley House,
60 Pitcairn Road,
Mitcham CR4 3LL
Tel: 01-640 5431

APPENDIX B

The Voluntary Service Officers can be contacted at the following offices, according to the area in which you live.

Address & Tel. No.

Localities served

Sun Alliance House,
1 Wellington Road North,
Stockport, SK4 1AJ
Tel: 061-477 3700

The Heatons, Lancashire Hill,
North and South Reddish

Commercial Union House,
Edward Street, Stockport,
SK1 3XY
Tel: 061-477 0811

Brinnington, Cheadle Heath,
Davenport, Edgeley, Gt. Moor,
Offerton

Abney Hall, Cheadle,
Stockport, SK8 2PB
Tel: 061-428 3241

Bramhall, Cheadle, Cheadle
Hulme, Gatley, Heald Green,
Woodford

Adswood Centre,
Garners Lane, Adswood,
Stockport, SK3 8QJ
Tel: 061-456 3066

Adswood, Bridgehall

Council Offices, Marple,
SK6 6BA
Tel: 061-427 7011

Bredbury, Compstall, Hazel Grove,
High Lane, Marple, Romiley,
Woodley

APPENDIX C

The following is a list of existing Community Care Schemes who would be able to offer advice and assistance to the organisers of new schemes:

Gatley Communicare

Mr J.E. Ellis, 20 Highcrest Avenue, Baxter Park, Gatley, Cheadle, Ches.
Tel: 428 2055

High Lane Christian Care

Mrs P.C. Tidy, 23 Russell Avenue, High Lane, Stockport
Tel: 379 4661

Edgeley and Cheadle Heath Communicare

Mr J. Hollyman, 60 St. Lesmo Road, Edgeley, Stockport
Tel: 480 8205

Marple Christian Care

Mr R. Riley, 268 Stockport Road, Rose Hill, Marple, Stockport
Tel: 427 1794

Woodley Community Care Scheme

Mr A. Williamson, 3 Werneth Road, Woodley, Stockport
Tel: 494 9627

Bramhall Christian Communicare

Mrs H.M. Johnson, 9 Robins Close, Bramhall
Tel: 439 1009

Hazel Grove Communicare

Mr C.J. Hawkyard, 10 Kempton Close, Hazel Grove, Stockport
Tel: 483 8715

Romiley Community Care Scheme

Mrs Rosalyn Davies, 6 Leyfield Avenue, Romiley
Tel: 494 8025

Cheadle Hulme Communicare

Mr R.M. Owen, 50 Marlborough Avenue, Cheadle Hulme
Tel: 485 7695

Heald Green Churches Community Care

Mrs E. Nicholson, 16 Syddall Avenue, Heald Green, Cheadle
Tel: 437 1398

or

Mrs R. Hill, "Whardleys", Outwood Road, Heald Green
Tel: 437 3013