

# **Evaluation of Reaching Communities in England and Northern Ireland**

Year Two Report

Nicola Hall, ECOTEC Research & Consulting

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in England and Northern Ireland**  
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# Executive Summary

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This report presents the key findings and interim conclusions from the second year of a four year evaluation of the Reaching Communities programmes in England and Northern Ireland. The central aim of the evaluation is: *To assess the effectiveness of projects within the Reaching Communities programmes in England and Northern Ireland in identifying, defining and meeting the needs of the people they aim to benefit.*

## **Identifying need**

Reaching Communities in England and Northern Ireland aims to fund projects that help those most in need including people or groups who are 'hard to reach' or seldom heard, through projects which best meet their communities' needs. The evaluation has found that projects generally identify the needs to be addressed in terms of particular individuals or target groups. Evidence from programme and survey data indicates that the programmes are targeting an incredibly diverse range of target groups. Neither Reaching Communities programme is designed, or intended, to particularly support people with multiple needs yet there is evidence that projects in both programmes are aiming to do so, with many projects describing themselves as taking a holistic approach to a person's problems whichever service need they have. To meet the needs they identify, projects employ a wide range of activities, with seven out of eight delivering more than one. The survey illustrates that common activities include information and advice (15%), education and training (12%) and a range of community empowerment activities (10%).

The programmes maintain a broad focus in terms of the outcomes they seek to address in local communities, with a clear focus being on 'improving people's life chances' (80%) and on 'stronger communities with more active citizens' (76%). Projects are less likely to be aiming to improve their local environment and those that are tend to be shorter projects of one to two years. Projects are addressing at least two outcomes (2.3 on average).

As time progresses, projects are increasingly identifying changes in the needs they set out to address (12%) and also in the services being provided around them (21%). Changes in needs have included increases in demand or needs becoming more acute. Changes in services have included fluctuations in the level of statutory funding and alterations to legislation. Projects are proving flexible: most evolve to meet changing needs (74%).

## **Involving the community**

Community involvement is a requirement for both Reaching Communities programmes. To date, projects in both programmes are generally designed using local knowledge of what is needed (84%) rather than a formal review of local strategy or policy. Around three quarters use research or statistics to design their project (77%), in particular community plans (52%)

and neighbourhood statistics (49%). The trend towards involving the local community – particularly in project planning and project evaluation – was found to have continued in the second year of the evaluation. Where projects can 'go the extra mile' in involving people in project management and delivery there is evidence that this has proved beneficial for projects and those individuals involved.

### **Meeting need**

It is generally still too early to assess the broad impact of the programmes, given the rolling system of funding and the length of many projects of between three to five years. So far where impacts have been identified, they are generally around improving local environments since most of the shorter, completed projects are building or renovation projects. Survey feedback from completed projects in England reveals that projects say they have met the needs they identified (31 of 38 projects) but projects were less confident that they had reached hard to reach groups (21 out of 38 projects) or reduced disadvantage (20 out of 38). A clear area of impact for completed projects was around softer outcomes for beneficiaries including confidence and self esteem.

### **Interim conclusions**

Many projects are dependent on BIG funding, and 70% say that their activities would not have taken place without this support. This suggests that the VCS is reliant on this funding but additionally, the programme is adding value by allowing the VCS to target an incredibly diverse range of target groups. The programmes are also providing services which are perceived to plug gaps (address needs) left by statutory provision, and to benefit those groups who do not wish to access statutory services. There is also evidence that projects are responding successfully to the changing needs of their target groups as they evolve.

Projects are increasingly moving towards more active involvement of the local community and beneficiaries, which is bringing clear benefits in terms of projects' ability to meet local needs. However, most projects could still do more in this regard.

There is evidence from the evaluation that positive impacts have been achieved by projects although to date, these were most likely to be in terms of improvements to the local environment or the achievement of soft outcomes for beneficiaries. For other projects there is a perception that they have met the initial needs they identified but the projects are not at a stage where more robust conclusions can be made about their impact in terms of reducing disadvantage.

More projects need to undertake self-evaluation, which would help them to reflect on achievements and enhance their planning for sustainability. The Big Lottery Fund and ECOTEC can support them to do so.

# 1.0 Introduction

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ECOTEC Research and Consulting Ltd is delighted to present this annual report of the Evaluation of the Reaching Communities Programme in England and Northern Ireland. This report presents the findings from the second year of the evaluation.

## 1.1 About Reaching Communities

The Big Lottery Fund (BIG) is the distributor of National Lottery funding in the UK. Reaching Communities is part of the Big Lottery Fund's current portfolio of programmes. It is designed to meet the needs of communities in England and Northern Ireland. Reaching Communities is operating in England and Northern Ireland between 2005-2010. BIG has a stated undertaking to focus 60-70% of funding on the third sector, and also to provide funding that is demand-led and lightly prescriptive. Reaching Communities encapsulates this approach, and in fact the programme in NI is only open to the third sector.

### 1.1.1 Reaching Communities England

In England, the Reaching Communities programme was launched in December 2005. The England programme focuses on projects that target both geographic communities and communities with specific needs<sup>1</sup>. The programme aims to fund projects that help those most in need including those people or groups who are hard to reach. The programme aims to support those projects which best meet their communities' needs. It also focuses on projects that actively engage with local communities and involve them in the project from start to finish. Projects that complement local plans, strategic programmes or initiatives are also particularly relevant.

Reaching Communities England is aiming to bring about the following outcomes:

- People having better chances in life, including being able to get access to training and development to improve their life skills;
- Strong communities, with more active citizens, working together to tackle their problems;
- Improved rural and urban environments, which communities are better able to access and enjoy; and
- Healthier and more active people and communities.

Reaching Communities England is open to:

<sup>1</sup> Known as communities of interest.

- registered charities;
- voluntary or community groups;
- statutory bodies (including schools);
- charitable or not-for-profit companies; and
- social enterprises<sup>1</sup>.

Reaching Communities England is now in its third year of grant allocation, with a further £60 million being made available in 2008-9. To date, over 1,100 projects have been successful and over £240 million of funds have been awarded. In summer 2008 the decision was taken to extend Reaching Communities for an additional 'bridging' year covering 2009-2010. The budget has not been agreed for this extension as yet. Grants are awarded in a monthly rolling programme of grant-making. The programme is focused on providing capital and revenue grants of between £10,000 and £500,000, including a maximum of £50,000 for capital grants. There is a maximum overall project size of £750,000 with a maximum of £200,000 for the total capital element. Projects from one year in length, and up to five years can be funded. This means the size of grant available is larger than usual and over a time-frame of up to five years. Reaching Communities differs from its predecessors in that it is able to offer funding to existing projects – rather than only new ones – and that it can fund projects for five years. In addition, community involvement is a requirement for projects funded within the England programme.

#### 1.1.2 Reaching Communities Northern Ireland

Reaching Communities Northern Ireland was launched in Northern Ireland in April 2006. Approximately £18 million is being made available between 2006 and 2009. The programme is making grants to voluntary and community led organisations, where beneficiaries and the wider community are involved in all aspects of the project. The programme will fund projects for between three to five years and the minimum and maximum grant sizes are £100k and £500k (the lower limit being significantly higher than in the England programme). Funding is mainly available for revenue funding; capital costs must not exceed 10%.

Reaching Communities Northern Ireland funds projects that aim to achieve one or more of the programme outcomes: all of the priorities under each of the selected outcomes and at least one of the underlying principles, as Table 1.1 illustrates.

<sup>1</sup> Defined as a business that is chiefly run for social objectives, whose profits are reinvested in the business rather than going to shareholders and owners.

**Table 1.1 Northern Ireland programme outcomes, priorities and principles**

<b>Outcomes</b>			
<b>Outcome A</b> People have the opportunity to achieve their full potential	<b>Outcome B</b> People can actively participate in their communities to bring about positive change	<b>Outcome C</b> Community ownership of better and safer rural and urban environments	<b>Outcome D</b> Improved physical and mental health for all people
<b>Related priorities</b>			
<i>Improve essential skills to meet social and economic needs</i>	<i>Increase opportunity for volunteering and engagement within and between communities</i>	<i>Improve community facilities, access and services</i>	<i>Help individuals and communities to develop skills to make healthier lifestyle choices</i>
<i>Increase opportunity for community based learning Build community capacity</i>	<i>Build community and voluntary/statutory partnerships</i>	<i>Increase community involvement in protecting, restoring and sustaining the urban and rural environment</i>	<i>Promote mental health and emotional well-being at individual and community level</i>
<b>Underlying Principles</b>			
Addressing disadvantage and promoting tolerance and social inclusion Contributing to the reduction of poverty			

Source: RCNI Programme Guidance Notes, Sept 2007

The £18 million is being distributed in five discrete tranches over the 2006-2009 period. Four of the five planned tranches of funding have taken place and 36 projects have been awarded funding<sup>1</sup> with a value of around £15 million. The decision will be made on the final tranche of awards in April 2009. As with Reaching Communities England, the programme has been heavily over-subscribed. With a success rate of around 10% this often results in very good projects not being funded. Following a programme review in June 2007, community involvement is a requirement for projects funded within the Northern Ireland programme and projects are required to clearly state why their project is needed, in the context of other services within the local area.

A support and development contract, provided by the Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action (NICVA), is in operation offering assistance to funded Northern Ireland programme projects. Unlike the England programme, the Northern Ireland programme is not being extended for a further year.

<sup>1</sup> 10 in tranche one, 5 in tranche two, 16 in tranche 3 and 5 in tranche 4. All RCNI programme data presented in this report presents all 36 projects; however survey data presents findings from 31 projects since the tranche 4 projects were selected too late to participate in this year's survey.

## 1.2 Background

The Evaluation of Reaching Communities is a four year evaluation taking place between January 2007 and December 2010. The evaluation is being undertaken by ECOTEC Research & Consulting in conjunction with Boyd Consulting in Northern Ireland. The central aim of the evaluation is:

*To assess the effectiveness of projects within the Reaching Communities programmes in England and Northern Ireland in identifying, defining and meeting the needs of the people they aim to benefit.*

The specific objectives of the programme evaluation are:

**Figure 1.1 Evaluation objectives**

Evaluation Objectives
To assess how projects have identified and defined: need, people most in need and hard to reach groups and individuals
To examine how projects have considered local strategies to produce evidence of need
To examine how projects have involved beneficiaries and local communities in identifying their own needs
To consider how beneficiaries and local communities have been involved in project planning and delivery
To assess if projects have met the needs of hard to reach groups and the 'most in need'
To look at the effectiveness of projects and the programme in reducing disadvantage and exclusion
To compare different project approaches to identifying and addressing need in order to reduce disadvantage and exclusion for hard to reach groups and the most in need
To compare the different approaches for addressing need in Northern Ireland and England

## 1.3 Methodology

The methodology for the evaluation involves the following quantitative and qualitative research methods:

- An **evaluation framework** outlines the evaluation questions and key indicators which are being assessed for each. The evaluation framework was designed following consultation with programme stakeholders<sup>1</sup> and initial desk research. It was used to design all research tools.

<sup>1</sup> Feedback from stakeholders was included as a separate section in Annex One of the year one report. The year one report is available at [http://www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/eval\\_rc\\_final\\_yearone.pdf](http://www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/eval_rc_final_yearone.pdf)

- Every year, projects in England and Northern Ireland are invited to complete an **annual survey**<sup>1</sup>. To boost survey responses in both programmes up to three reminders are sent by email or fax to all projects who were invited to participate. In year two the survey took place during November 2008 and in total 196 responses were received (191 from England, representing an 18% response rate and five from Northern Ireland, representing a 16% response rate). These results were added to last year's survey results.<sup>2</sup> This results in an overall base size of 447 responses for the England programme and 11 responses for the Northern Ireland programme giving comparable overall response rates of 41% and 36% respectively<sup>3</sup>.
- The **programme management data** provided by BIG on all projects in England and Northern Ireland was also analysed, collected from application and monitoring data<sup>4</sup>. For the England programme, data received up to 31 December 2008 has been used as the basis for this report. For Northern Ireland data on all projects funded to date including tranches 1-4 has been used.
- Project **case studies** are taking place throughout the evaluation in England and Northern Ireland to reflect the diversity of projects and communities being supported under the programmes. These involve desk research and face-to-face visits, including research with project managers, staff, partners and beneficiaries. In total 58 case study visits will take place, 45 in England and 13 in Northern Ireland, combining a mixture of *snapshot* case studies and *longitudinal* case studies where projects will be visited up to three times. So far, 21 visits have taken place in England and two in Northern Ireland<sup>5</sup>.

Throughout the evaluation, projects are being supported to self-evaluate through an **evaluation toolkit** which is sent to all projects is available at our evaluation **website** ([www.reachingcommunities.org](http://www.reachingcommunities.org)). The website also contains examples of research tools for projects to download and use, and links to further advice and materials. ECOTEC provides self-evaluation support to projects through a series of annual **networking events**,<sup>6</sup> an **email helpline** ([reaching.communities@ecotec.com](mailto:reaching.communities@ecotec.com)) and regular newsletters. Projects that complete a self-evaluation are encouraged to send this to ECOTEC for secondary analysis

<sup>1</sup> Only the 1,080 England projects funded up to end of October 2008 were invited to complete the year two survey. All RCNI programme data presented in this report presents all 36 projects; however survey data presents findings from only 31 projects since the tranche 4 projects were selected too late to participate in this year's survey. Due to the small numbers of projects funded through the Northern Ireland programme there are naturally only small numbers in the survey.

<sup>2</sup> 325 projects responded to the year one survey (319 from the England programme and 6 from the Northern Ireland programme).

<sup>3</sup> For the England programme this gives a confidence interval of  $\pm 3.55$  for any given result at the 95% confidence level.

<sup>4</sup> For the England projects, data received up to 31 December 2008 has been used as the basis for this report. For Northern Ireland data on all projects funded to date including Tranches 1-4 which constitutes 36 projects. Survey data presents findings from 31 projects since the tranche 4 projects were selected too late to participate in this year's survey.

<sup>5</sup> In Northern Ireland the minimum project length is three years therefore snapshot case studies are being weighted towards the end of the evaluation.

<sup>6</sup> The outcomes from the event are available at <http://www.reachingcommunities.org/Events.aspx>

and inclusion in the annual report. Feedback from an analysis of these is included in this report<sup>1</sup>.

For more details on the methodology contact Nicola Hall at ECOTEC (nicola.hall@ecotec.com).

### 1.3.1 Timeline

Reaching Communities will continue to award funding to successful grantees until 2010 in England and through one more tranche in Northern Ireland, with project activity likely to continue for up to five years after the closure of the programmes. The evaluation of both the programmes will continue until December 2010. This report is the second of four annual reports to the Big Lottery Fund drawing on the information collected so far<sup>2</sup>. A further annual report will be presented in December 2009 followed by a final report in December 2010.

### 1.3.2 Presentation of data

This report combines qualitative and quantitative evidence collected by the research. All figures are rounded to the nearest whole %. Figures relating to survey data in some tables and charts may not sum to 100% due to multiple or non-response or rounding. An asterisk (\*) represents a value of less than half a per cent. Responses to the survey from England and Northern Ireland have been analysed together but separate responses for each programme have been presented where this is possible<sup>3</sup>. The full results from the annual survey are available in Annex One. Throughout the report we also make use of programme data provided by the Big Lottery Fund<sup>4</sup>.

We also make use of qualitative feedback from case studies. Where this is the case, it is important to note that qualitative research is designed to explore issues in detail and be illustrative. However it is not statistically representative, and views presented by participants are based on perceptions and opinions and may not always reflect the views of the whole group. Findings from the qualitative and quantitative evidence are presented alongside each other throughout this report, and sources are identified where appropriate.

<sup>1</sup> To date seven self-evaluation reports have been received and analysed.

<sup>2</sup> The year one report is available at [http://www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/eval\\_rc\\_final\\_yearone.pdf](http://www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/eval_rc_final_yearone.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> Due to the small numbers of responses from Northern Ireland results cannot be considered statistically reliable on their own.

<sup>4</sup> Merlin data for England up to 31 December 2008 and for all projects funded to date (in tranches 1-4) of the Northern Ireland programme.

## 1.4 Structure of this report

This remainder of this report contains four main sections which address the evaluation questions outlined above:

- **Section 2** explores how projects have identified and defined need, and how they designed their activities to meet those needs.
- **Section 3** contains a description of how Reaching Communities is involving beneficiaries and the effects and impact of this.
- **Section 4** looks at the impacts of the programmes, assessing whether projects have met the needs they identified.
- **Section 5** provides conclusions and implications.

Annex One contains the marked-up results of the annual survey.

## 2.0 Identifying need

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### 2.1 Introduction

Reaching Communities in England and Northern Ireland aims to fund projects that help those most in need including people or groups who are hard to reach. This section of the report looks at the needs that projects are addressing (Section 2.2), how projects identified those needs (Section 2.3) and what activities are being undertaken to meet the identified needs (Section 2.4).

### 2.2 What needs are being addressed

Reaching Communities England has awarded 1,120 grants to projects amounting to over £244.3 million of funding. In Northern Ireland 36 grants have been awarded with a value of just over £14.9 million<sup>1</sup>.

#### 2.2.1 Outcomes

Both Reaching Communities programmes maintain a broad focus in terms of the types of outcomes they seek to support in local communities. In the England programme, all four of the programme outcomes are being addressed, with environmental outcomes remaining least commonly addressed (see Table 2.1). Four in five projects (80%) are focussing on the outcome 'improving people's life chances' with a further three-quarters addressing 'stronger communities with more active citizens' (76%). These proportions have grown slightly in the past year. As the grant making has continued, a slightly smaller proportion of projects are focussing on 'improved rural and urban environments' (10% compared with 11% last year) and significantly more projects are concentrating on 'healthier and more active communities' (59% compared with 53% twelve months ago). Overall projects are addressing on average 2.3 outcomes each<sup>2</sup>, slightly higher than the 2.1 outcomes being addressed this time last year.

<sup>1</sup> Data up to 31 December 2008. All RCNI programme data presented in this report presents all 36 projects; however survey data presents findings from 31 projects since the tranche 4 projects were selected too late to participate in this year's survey.

<sup>2</sup> Based on 1120 projects addressing 2523 outcomes in total.

**Table 2.1 All project outcomes, Reaching Communities England**

Outcome	Number of projects	%
1. People having better chances in life	893	80
2. Stronger communities, with more active citizens	852	76
3. Improved rural and urban environments	116	10
4. Healthier and more active people and communities	662	59

Source: ECOTEC, based on programme data from Big Lottery Fund (2009)

Projects in the Northern Ireland programme are also well spread across the four programme outcomes and related priorities<sup>1</sup>. As in the England programme, 'rural and urban environments' is least likely to be an outcome for projects (see Table 2.2). In Northern Ireland projects are targeting 2.2 outcomes on average. Overall the majority of projects in tranches one, three and four are targeting two outcomes while the ten projects in tranche two are targeting three of the four outcomes (28%).

**Table 2.2 All project outcomes, Reaching Communities Northern Ireland**

Programme outcome	Number of projects
1. People have the opportunity to achieve their full potential	27
2. Active participation in communities to bring about positive change	22
3. Improved physical and mental health for all people	23
4. Community ownership of better and safer rural and urban environments	7

Source: ECOTEC, based on programme data from Big Lottery Fund (2009)<sup>2</sup>

Projects in Northern Ireland also have to meet one or both of the programme's underlying principles (Table 2.3). Of the 36 Northern Ireland projects nearly all of them (34 of the 36) target the underlying principle to address disadvantage and promote tolerance and social inclusion. In contrast 16 of the 36 projects target the underlying principle to contribute to the reduction of poverty and only two of these projects are solely focusing on this principle.

**Table 2.3 Underlying principles, Reaching Communities Northern Ireland**

Underlying Principle: 1	Underlying Principle: 2	
<i>Addressing Disadvantage and promoting tolerance and social inclusion</i>	<i>Contributing To The Reduction Of Poverty</i>	<i>Both Principles</i>
34 projects	16 projects	14 projects

<sup>1</sup> RCNI projects funded in tranche 1 can meet any of the programme priorities as outlined in Table 1.1; RCNI projects funded in latter tranches have to meet the priorities associated with the programme outcomes.

<sup>2</sup> All RCNI programme data presented in this report presents all 36 projects; however survey data presents findings from 31 projects since the tranche 4 projects were selected too late to participate in this year's survey.

## 2.2.2 Target groups of needs

Reaching Communities England is targeting an incredibly diverse range of target groups and needs, as the evidence from programme data and survey feedback indicates. Projects were asked to define and explain the needs they set out to address. For example if they were targeting 'young people', what was the young people's specific need they were trying to address? As in last year's survey, projects generally defined needs as particular 'individuals or groups' and associated activities to meet those needs. It is not uncommon in social research and among third sector organisations to use such 'groups' or categories to define types of need<sup>1</sup>. Their assumption is that many members of such groups will have needs that are not met by existing structures or provision (implied needs).

Such 'groups' that could be identified as being the 'most in need'<sup>2</sup> might include offenders, those with functional literacy problems, children excluded from school, people with mental health issues, undocumented migrants, Travellers, the homeless, and drug and alcohol abusers.<sup>3</sup>

Programme data held by BIG also classifies the 'target groups' projects set out to meet rather than recording data directly on 'needs'. The BIG programme data for the England programme illustrated in Figure 2.1 below indicates that a wide variety of target groups (with implied needs) are being targeted by the programme. For example 100 projects (9%) are targeting mental health issues and over 60 projects apiece are tackling the needs of homeless people and refugee/asylum seekers. However the list of possible 'groups with needs' is extremely long<sup>4</sup> and the programme is supporting a diverse range of target groups.

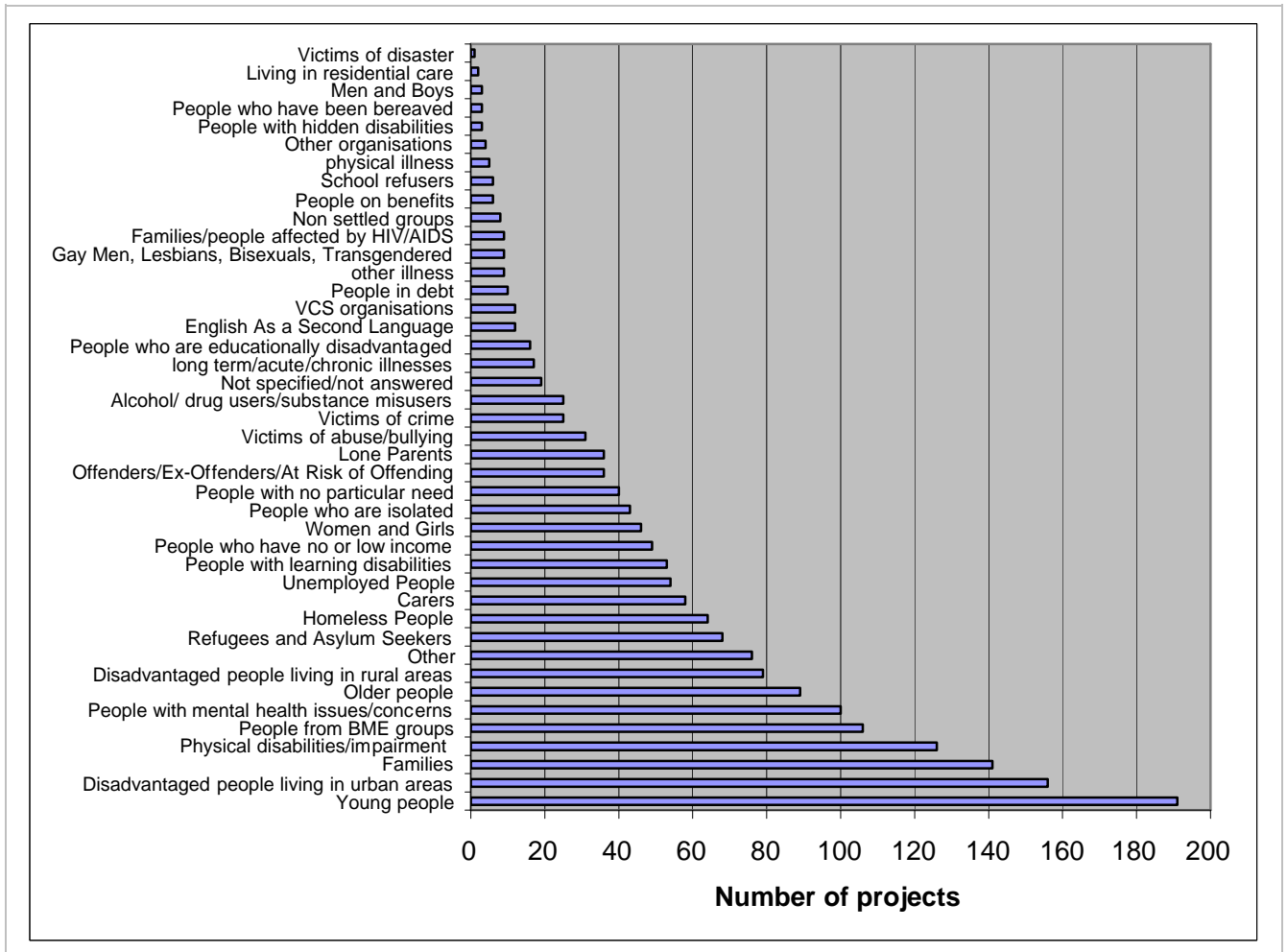
<sup>1</sup> Young Foundation, 2008 *"Deep and persistent exclusion: interrogating the idea of the bottom 2.5% - Thoughts in progress"* and see for example Princes Trust (2004) *"Reaching the Hardest to Reach"* which defines disadvantaged young people as those leaving care, educational underachievers, unemployed, and ex offenders and serving prisoners.

<sup>2</sup> The so-called bottom 2.5%. Young Foundation, 2008 Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Young Foundation, 2008 *"Deep and persistent exclusion: interrogating the idea of the bottom 2.5% - Thoughts in progress"* based on Social Exclusion Unit Task Force definitions of 'deep and persistent exclusion'. Pg 4.

<sup>4</sup> Young Foundation, 2008 Ibid Pg 5.

**Figure 2.1 All target groups, Reaching Communities England**



Source: ECOTEC, based on programme data from Big Lottery Fund (2009)

A limitation of the programme data held by BIG is that it does not detail the evidence submitted by applicants to support the need for their project. For instance, it cannot necessarily be assumed that because projects are targeting particular target groups that these groups have a defined or identified need (particularly in the case of broadly defined target groups such as young people, families, women and girls) and the BIG information provides no detail on what those needs might be. In some cases, it is reasonable to assume that a specific target group has likely 'needs' for example where a specific factor places that group at a disadvantage to others (for example people with a disability, people with mental health problems). However the data still does not indicate precisely what needs those groups might have.

In Northern Ireland, BIG programme data (Table 2.4) illustrates that a similarly broad range of ‘groups’ of people are being targeted, with mental health featuring (3 of 36 projects), along with people with learning disabilities (4 projects) and carers (6 projects)<sup>1</sup>.

**Table 2.4 All target groups, Reaching Communities Northern Ireland**

Target group	Number of projects
Carers	6
People with learning disabilities	4
People with mental health issues/concerns	3
People with a physical illness	3
Risk of offending/offenders/ex-offenders	2
Young people	2
Families	2
Disadvantaged people living in urban areas	2
People with a hearing impairment	2
People who have no or low income	2
Alcohol or drug users	1
People from BME groups	1
Older people	1
Homeless people	1
Not settled groups	1
People who have been bereaved	1
Victims of crime	1
People with no particular need	1
Other	6
Not specified/Not answered	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>44</b>

Need can also be defined *economically* as those with the lowest incomes or those facing poverty. The presumption here is that those who are poorest in society are most likely to have additional or unmet needs<sup>2</sup>. Again, programme data evidence suggests that in England, Reaching Communities is targeting those communities, with disadvantaged people living in urban and rural areas coming second and eighth respectively in the list of groups being targeted. The unemployed and those with low or no income also feature in

<sup>1</sup> All RCNI programme data presented in this report presents all 36 projects; however survey data presents findings from 31 projects since the tranche 4 projects were selected too late to participate in this year's survey.

<sup>2</sup> For example see Joseph Rowntree Foundation (2003) "*Tackling disadvantage: a 20 year enterprise.*"

13<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> place respectively (see Figure 2.1 above). In Northern Ireland 4 of the 36 projects are specifically targeting disadvantaged groups or those with low or no income. It is worth noting that while many of the target groups explicitly mentioned in both programmes are not specifically identified as 'disadvantaged' or 'low income' they are more likely to be economically disadvantaged (for example people with disabilities, or drug or alcohol users).

Survey data also illustrates the wide range of groups being targeted by Reaching Communities in both programmes. Over 50 different groups with 'assumed' needs are identified in projects' responses<sup>1</sup> with projects targeting on average 1.5 groups each and no more than one in seven projects targeting any single group. Survey data indicates two groups emerging strongly: children and young people (19%) and local communities / community relations (14%). But in addition to this a wide range of groups are being targeted including BME groups, parents, carers, gypsy/Travellers and HIV/AIDS sufferers. The assumption in many descriptions is that being within a specific target group implies particular needs.

The survey data also suggests that the programme is targeting some groups where a specific need is not explicitly defined or implied, for example 'young people', 'older people' or 'families'. In these cases the groups being targeted may have specific needs but these are not made explicit by projects in the survey. It is also the case that projects' descriptions are combined with additional factors to provide an overview of need (for example 'young people' with 'drug problems'), but again without being specific about what that need is. Rather smaller numbers of projects are explicit in their survey responses about a 'need' they are addressing as opposed to a target group, and these include:

- Tackling isolation (5%)
- Dealing with substance abuse e.g. alcohol, drugs (2%)
- Improving wellbeing/health (2%)
- Tackling low participation or involvement (1%)
- Increased opportunities/creating opportunities for those without them (1%)
- Addressing lack of skills / skills needs (2 projects)
- Helping people who cannot live independently to do so (1 project).

A further source of information about 'needs' are the project descriptions held in BIG's programme data. Many of these descriptions follow a similar pattern of defining a target group, or groups, and describing activities to target those groups. For example:

<sup>1</sup> Base = 458 projects. A full breakdown is provided at Q8 in Annex One.

*'This project will provide a specialist facility for young adults with mental illness, leaving care, ex hospital patients, leaving education early and young refugees. They would receive help and advice in order to relearn living skills at their own pace in a safe environment and promote social inclusion. The facility will use creative workshops such as pottery to engage the beneficiaries and encourage social interaction whilst also offering one to one help and advice.'* (Reaching Communities England project)<sup>1</sup>

In this randomly selected example, the **needs** of the specific target group [i.e. young adults with mental illness, early education leavers and young refugees] are implied but not explicitly listed. Activities to target those groups are more clearly defined [i.e. advice, skills provision, social support]. The needs of the target groups in this case might be inferred as a need to learn life skills (due to an inability to live independently) and a lack of statutory provision in the local area to provide that sort of intensive or targeted support. The potential for extrapolating more precise needs from the full set of application information held by BIG will be explored further in latter years of the evaluation.

#### 2.2.2.1 *Multiple needs*

Research suggests that the most needy in society will be those suffering from multiple problems or in 'deep exclusion', and therefore it may be worth considering a definition of need that tackles those with multiple (three or more) needs. Such groups of people with entrenched needs, it is suggested, include people with moderate to severe mental health problems, young problem drug users, young offenders, children in care, those lacking numeracy and literacy and 16-18 year olds not in employment, education or training (NEET)<sup>2</sup>. While neither Reaching Communities programme is designed explicitly to target multiple needs, there is evidence that they certainly target some groups that could be defined as such. Programme data for Reaching Communities England indicates that young people, families, and people with physical and mental health issues all feature strongly in the range of needs the programme is addressing. Offenders and drug or substance abuse are also being targeted to a lesser extent and at least one project is explicitly targeting NEETs<sup>3</sup>. Mental health issues are also prominent in those being addressed by the Northern Ireland programme and one project is targeting drug/alcohol users. Survey data for both programmes also confirms that children and families, older people, homeless people, people with learning difficulties, mental health and people with a disability also feature (6-7% each). Children in care is not explicitly specified as a category in the programme data nor mentioned in the survey. While it may be contained to some extent within 'living in

<sup>1</sup> Source: BIG programme data, 2009

<sup>2</sup> Young Foundation, 2008 *"Deep and persistent exclusion: interrogating the idea of the bottom 2.5% - Thoughts in progress"* based on Social Exclusion Unit Task Force definitions of 'deep and persistent exclusion'.

<sup>3</sup> Source: based on survey responses.

residential care' overall this group's needs are less likely to be being addressed through the programmes.

Finally, a useful approach may be to view those in need as lacking particular resources or facing certain barriers in accessing the support, information or care they need<sup>1</sup>. Target groups may have needs because they cannot readily access or negotiate service delivery systems (perhaps due to a lack of communication skills) or because they do not live in close proximity to the services they need (lack of transport). Additionally people may have needs because of barriers to accessing help such as language or cultural barriers, discrimination or a lack of trust in (statutory) organisations. Reaching Communities is certainly tackling needs in all of the above areas. For example projects are helping beneficiaries with language or ICT skills (for example the 'Highway to Opportunities' project in Oldham, which supports Asian women (Bangla and Urdu speakers) with little English, to access vocational information, advice, guidance, ICT tasters and job search activities). Many of the smaller one-year projects are providing transport to enable remote communities to get access to services and the Suffolk Family Carers project is providing outreach support to those who are isolated and cannot access mainstream services. West Belfast's Suicide Awareness and Support Group (SASG) funded through RCNI targets those at risk of suicide and those bereaved by suicide. These are both difficult groups to reach due to the isolation often experienced and the stigma attached to suicide. This is also attested to by formal government support of community interventions relating to suicide, recognising that in these circumstances statutory services are often inappropriate or inadequate. Finally, evidence on involvement of beneficiaries (see Chapter 3) demonstrates that by delivering through voluntary and third sector organisations which are embedded in local communities, the programme may be overcoming fear and mistrust of statutory or public services and reaching those in greatest need.

### 2.2.3 Geographic patterns of need

Within the England programme, the vast majority of projects (88%) are targeted at local level, with less than one in ten focussing at regional level (9%). National scale projects are uncommon, with only 18 projects operating at this scale (see Table 2.5).

**Table 2.5 Meeting needs at varying geographic levels, Reaching Communities England**

	Number of projects	%
National (England-wide)	18	2
Regional level (for example West Midlands, South West)	98	9
Local level (for example a specific town or city)	984	88
Not known	20	2

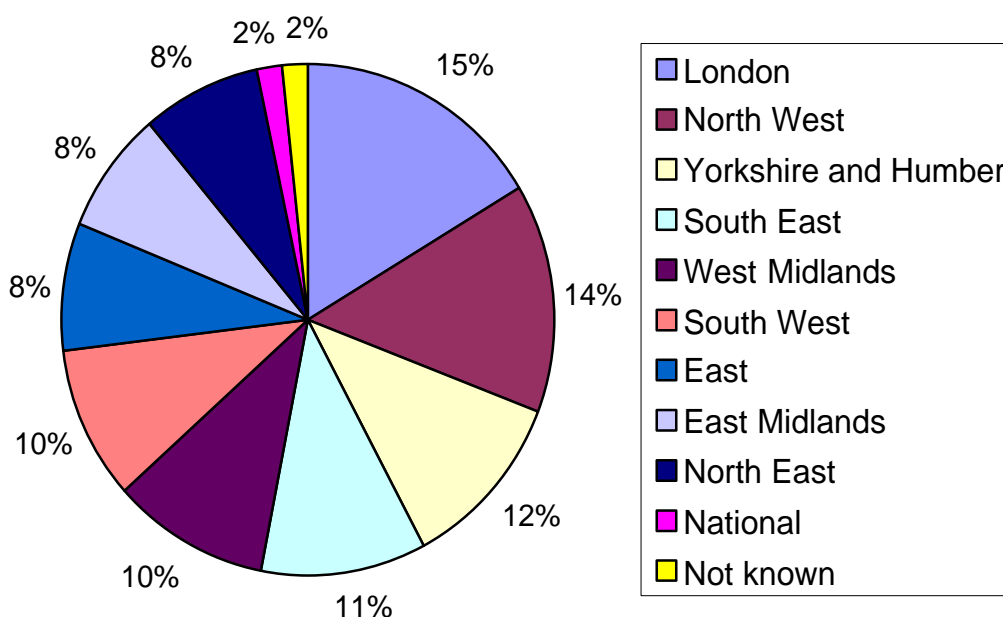
<sup>1</sup> For a full explanation see Young Foundation, 2008 *ibid*.

	Number of projects	%
Total	1120	100

Source: ECOTEC, based on programme data from Big Lottery Fund (2009)

Regionally, Reaching Communities funds in England are evenly spread across the regions, with London and the North West receiving the largest share of funds, and Eastern regions receiving slightly smaller proportions of funding (see Figure 2.2).

**Figure 2.2 Regions identified by projects, Reaching Communities England**



Source: ECOTEC, based on programme data from Big Lottery Fund (2009)

In Northern Ireland the survey results indicate that projects are evenly spread across the council areas, with projects working across an average of 12 council areas<sup>1</sup>. More than three quarters of council areas being targeted (76%) are council areas outside of Belfast Metropolitan area<sup>2</sup>. Survey data for both programmes shows programme funding is broadly spread across rural and urban areas, with two thirds of projects working in urban areas (68%), two in five (40%) working in rural areas and a third are working in urban fringe areas (34%)<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> See survey results in Annex One.

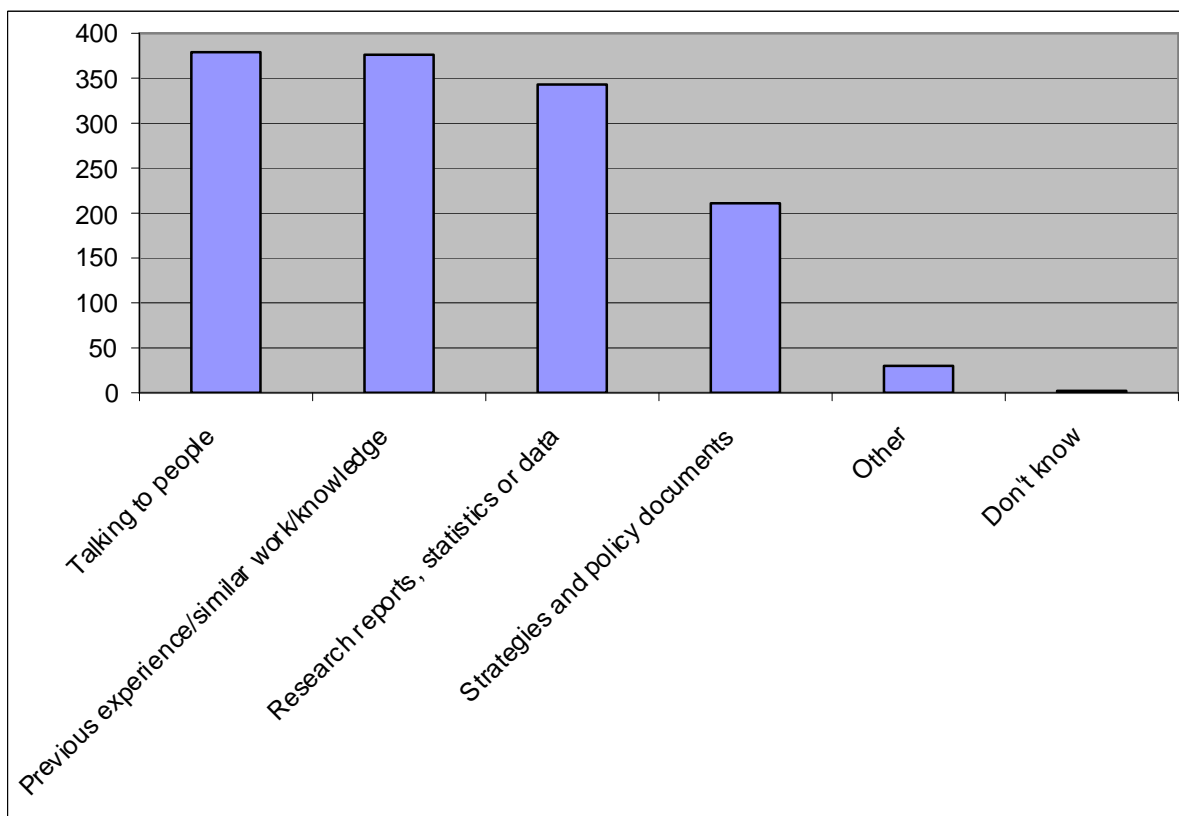
<sup>2</sup> Belfast Metropolitan area covers Belfast, Castlereagh, Carrickfergus, Lisburn, Newtownabbey and North Down.

<sup>3</sup> Base = 451, multiple responses allowed therefore percentages do not sum to 100%.

## 2.3 Identifying the needs

Reaching Communities projects use on average three mechanisms for identifying the needs they set out to address (see Figure 2.3), with the largest proportions relying on 'informal' resources such as local knowledge via 'talking to people' (85%) and 'previous knowledge or experience' (84%) as well as more 'formal' methods such as research or statistics (77%). In Northern Ireland a similar proportion of projects (8 of the 11 projects completing the survey) say they used research or statistics (73%). There is less evidence that projects are aiming to fit their activity strategically within local policy contexts with less than half using 'strategy and policy documents' to help design their project (47%). In Northern Ireland this figure is slightly higher with 6 of the 11 projects responding to the survey saying they used strategies (55%) to help design their project and ensure it shows complementarity with other local plans<sup>1</sup>.

**Figure 2.3 Which did you use to investigate the need for your project?**



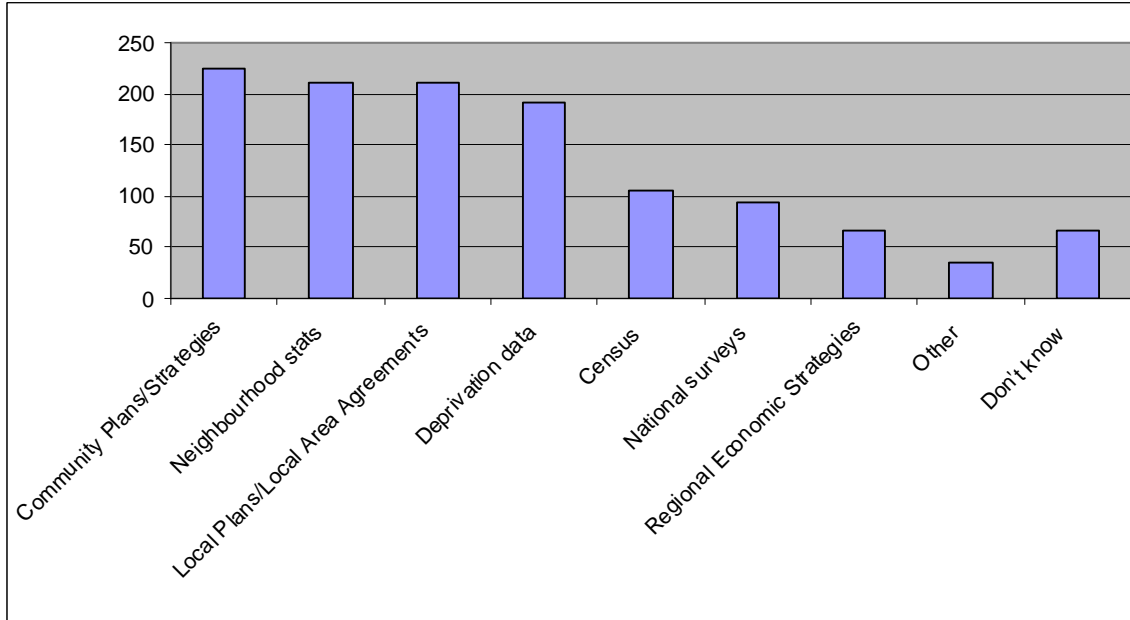
Source: ECOTEC survey 2009, Base all projects, 447

Of those using strategies or research and statistics, the most commonly used sources are unchanged since last year, with local level resources being most popular (including community plans and neighbourhood statistics at 52% and 49% respectively) (Figure 2.4).

<sup>1</sup> Note: two NI projects did not respond to this question.

Deprivation data is also used by approximately two in five projects (44%) to demonstrate need in the local area. Regional strategies are less likely to be referred to (16%), since only a small proportion of projects operate at regional levels (9%).

**Figure 2.4 Which strategies, policies, research or statistics did you use?**



Source: ECOTEC survey 2009, Base all projects using strategies, policies, research or statistics, 431

The case studies illustrate some of the 'informal' means of identifying need employed by projects. York and District Mind, one of the case studies, say they identified a gap locally in services for people with mental illness in the area and applied for Reaching Communities funds to set up a volunteer befriending service to provide emotional and practical support, advocacy and information. Staff feel strongly that the service they are developing is meeting previously unmet needs of local people with mental health needs. So far 16 referrals have been made to the service and three volunteer be-frienders have been trained. The LATCH case study whose 'Hands On' project delivers work experience for homeless people and NEET<sup>1</sup> young people in construction skills used questionnaires in local schools to explore the level of demand for their project.

Overleaf, the Couper's Collection case study (Figure 2.5) illustrates how one community organisation has worked closely with local partners to identify a local need for work experience placements in practical skills.

<sup>1</sup> NEET Not in Education Employment or Training

## **Figure 2.5 Case study: Couper Collection Community Work Experience Project**

**Location: Battersea, London**

### **Summary of project**

The Couper Collection comprises of a group of barges situated on the River Thames, which house Max Couper's art work and run school art projects. Max Couper has 30 years experience of working on barges as an artist and sculptor. The Collection was awarded £364,823 of Reaching Communities funding over 5 years from 2008. This is a new project to provide work experience for unemployed people, offenders and ex-offenders to help renovate a fleet of nine barges into wheelchair friendly, easy access art studios and public exhibition spaces. During the project the beneficiaries develop marine skills such as welding and metalwork, and transferable skills such as painting and carpentry. The length of time the beneficiaries work on the barges varies from a couple of weeks to a few months, so the activities they are involved in vary.

### **Identifying the need**

The Collection had identified that a significant local need was the lack of jobs and work experience opportunities that required, and developed, practical skills. The Collection's trustees were aware of this need as they have a good understanding of local need from links with voluntary groups, prisons, rotary club and chairing local committees. In addition the Collection consulted with other local community leaders such as police and local residents. Historically Battersea was an industrial area but since the closure of factories and yards the retail sector has been the main source of work. Coupled with this there is a high level of unemployment across all ages, and especially among those aged 18 to 24. There were particular needs identified among the long term unemployed who tended to lack relevant skills, confidence and job references. "*The biggest problem is...somebody being able to vouch for them and saying... 'look they're trustworthy'.*"

Prior to the work experience project the Collection ran a pilot to test demand for a larger scale project. During the pilot over 400 local potential beneficiaries were consulted to discover the type of work experience beneficiaries might want. The consultation revealed that the potential beneficiaries did not tend to be inspired by people who were linked to formal 'back to work' initiatives or the criminal justice system. This feedback helped to shape the project.

West Belfast's Suicide Awareness and Support Group (SASG) funded through RCNI used more formal mechanisms to identify the need for its work. In drawing up its 2007-9 strategy, SASG undertook a formal community and statutory consultation to assess local demand and to prioritise services to be delivered. Finally, this was augmented by participation in the Department of Health's implementation body tasked with delivering the NI government's 2006-2011 Suicide Prevention Strategy 'Protect Life'. This allowed SASG to formally gauge relative need in West Belfast and to ensure complementarity and adequate quality assurance of its proposed services.

### 2.3.1 Identifying changes in need

Given the length of Reaching Communities funding of up to five years, it is anticipated that a growing number of projects may experience changes in the needs they are seeking to address or that local circumstances may alter during the course of the project leading to changes in the methods of meeting those needs.

This year one in eight projects (12%) reports seeing a **change in the needs** they set out to address, compared with 3% last year<sup>1</sup>. In many cases this is due to an increase in demand for services or a need to expand the scope of current services (10 projects). For example expansion to include a wider age range, or newly identified groups or to meet the needs of a growing population of local people with particular needs:

*'Following research with the youngsters we provide holidays for, we found that the 25+ age group were suddenly moved into adult services within their hospitals and at the same time deemed too 'old' to enjoy a [youth centre] holiday where they could be with peers going through a similar experience. They became a 'lost tribe' with little or no familiar support. We have [therefore] increased the age range from 14 to 30 (it was previously 14 to 25).'* (Reaching Communities England project for youth cancer patients)<sup>2</sup>

In other cases this is due to a qualitative change in the target groups' need, for example needs becoming more specific or **more acute** (11 projects).

*'There is an increasing trend of minor and some major mental difficulties being experienced by youngsters in our local school. We are meeting more pupils with acute educational needs which are at best being managed rather than attended to.'* (Reaching Communities England project for young people who are excluded from school)<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Base sizes 195 and 325 respectively.

<sup>2</sup> Source: ECOTEC Survey 2009, Q12b

<sup>3</sup> Source: ECOTEC Survey 2009, Q12b

Demographic changes over time also affect local needs (3 projects)<sup>1</sup> for example as people migrate into the area and the local population composition alters, bringing with it new needs.

*'We have identified that migrant workers (mainly Eastern European) are now being joined by older relatives. These are often unable to speak English, and many have severe hearing loss problems. We are seeking ways of overcoming this, through partnership with the East of England Faiths Council and the Catholic Church.'* (Reaching Communities England project working with carers)<sup>2</sup>

The wider economic downturn has affected project activity in the case of one social enterprise which BIG is funding to supply fresh local produce at reasonable prices through a community-run catering service.

*'Increase in 'cost of living', specifically food and the downturn in the economy [is] affecting employment and work'* (Reaching Communities England project working in disadvantaged urban areas)<sup>3</sup>

Of those who have seen a shift in the needs they are addressing, three quarters have already changed or plan to change their project to meet those needs (74%). For example projects have changed the times or frequency of sessions and opened up the eligibility criteria of their project to enable more people to benefit. The remaining quarter do not plan to do so.

*'We found a need through our existing training and employment programme to support individuals into the transition from a young person to an adult. We have therefore introduced a separate training scheme for young people as well as a youth club. We have also extended the activities at the centre socially as we found a great need from our service users for more social activities such as disco's and evening social clubs.'* (Reaching Communities England project targeting adults and children with learning disabilities)<sup>4</sup>

As the programme develops it also is likely that projects experience a change in the **services** provided in the areas where they are delivering. This year around one in five projects (21% or 42 projects) indicate that services have changed locally (this includes one project from Northern Ireland)<sup>5</sup> compared with 5% of projects last year. Some of the local differences include increases or decreases in local authority funding levels for various

<sup>1</sup> Base = 11 projects describing change in needs

<sup>2</sup> Source: ECOTEC Survey 2009, Q12b

<sup>3</sup> Source: ECOTEC Survey 2009, Q12b

<sup>4</sup> Source: ECOTEC Survey 2009, Q12c

<sup>5</sup> Base = 195 projects

services (notably social care and services targeted at gypsy and Traveller populations); introduction or removal of associated services (10 projects each) and responding to legislative changes (6 projects)<sup>1</sup>. Some examples from the survey are shown below, including one where a project is adapting to fill the skills gaps evident in statutory staffing:

*'Recently, the way that family welfare for children in schools is provided by the council has changed. This is new; we don't know what effect it will have on services.'* (Reaching Communities England project working with children from refugee communities)

*'The social services department have found it extremely difficult to attract and maintain the specialist staff required for the blind and partially sighted which means we have had to develop our service to fill the gap.'* (Reaching Communities England project working with blind and partially sighted people)

*'As the district is an area of disadvantage other agencies are beginning to offer similar services especially during school holiday periods such as play schemes provided by Tamworth Borough Council and local sports centres'* (Reaching Communities England project providing out of school care)<sup>2</sup>

This also demonstrates how projects have to renegotiate their offer locally to ensure local needs are consistently met.

## **2.4 Meeting the needs**

This section looks at how projects are meeting the identified needs including: what types of organisations are delivering the activities, what size and length projects are being delivered, and what activities are being undertaken to meet the identified needs.

### **2.4.1 Types of organisation**

Reaching Communities England is supporting a wide range of organisation types. Programme data indicates that while only around 3% of funding is directed towards statutory organisations (including 19 educational institutions and 18 local authorities) the major share is directed towards third or voluntary sector bodies (85%). This includes around a quarter of funded projects which are run by limited companies (27%) which covers a wide range of ventures including community enterprises, credit unions and local branches of national charities (see Table 2.6) as well as a wide range of clubs, societies and

<sup>1</sup> Base = 37 projects identifying how services have changed. NB. The Northern Ireland project did not specify.

<sup>2</sup> Source: ECOTEC Survey 2009

community organisations. Survey results also confirm that a high proportion of funding is being directed to the voluntary sector (91%) and relatively little to the statutory sector (3%)<sup>1</sup>.

**Table 2.6 Organisation type, Reaching Communities England**

Organisation type	Number of projects	%
Company ltd by guarantee/shares	300	27
Charitable Incorporated Organisation	234	21
Community based organisation/group	160	14
Other VCS organisation	192	17
Unincorporated Club/Association	21	2
Friendly/Industrial/Provident Society	19	2
Local Authority/Government	18	2
School	15	1
Charitable Trust/Trust est. by Trust Deed	12	1
Philanthropic/Benevolent	9	1
Public Corporation	1	0
Statutory health body	2	0
Social Enterprise/Community business/CIC	6	1
Further or higher education	4	*
Parish Council	4	*
Religious Organisation	3	*
National/International NGO	2	*
Other Public Sector	1	*
Other Private Sector	1	*
Other	4	*
Not specified	112	10
Total	1120	100

Source: ECOTEC, based on programme data from Big Lottery Fund (2009)

In the Northern Ireland programme all the projects are voluntary sector based<sup>2</sup> (see Table 2.7) with the majority being voluntary and community sector (VCS) organisations (24 organisations) and around a quarter being limited companies of some description, predominantly national charities (9 organisations).

<sup>1</sup> See survey results in Annex One. Base = 459.

<sup>2</sup> Except one project from tranche three that was awaiting re-categorisation by Big Lottery Fund at the time of writing, although it will be from the third sector. All RCNI programme data presented in this report presents all 36 projects. Survey data presents findings from 31 projects since the tranche 4 projects were selected too late to participate in this year's survey.

**Table 2.7 Organisation type, Reaching Communities Northern Ireland**

Organisation type	Number
VCS organisation	24
Company ltd by guarantee/shares	9
Charitable Incorporated Organisation	1
Community based organisation/group	1
Total	35 <sup>1</sup>

Source: ECOTEC, based on programme data from Big Lottery Fund (2009)

The organisations delivering Reaching Communities funded projects in England are generally small organisations, with up to nine full time and nine part time staff (70% each). The range of experience amongst organisations varies with over a third existing for under ten years (38%), a third existing for over 21 years (32%) and the remainder somewhere in-between those ranges. In Northern Ireland the organisation sizes also vary from smaller ones (like the Drumgor Detached Youth Work Project which is a VCS organisation that works with marginalised and ‘at risk’ young people between the ages of 10-18. This project works across two wards and has up to five full time and up to three part time staff.<sup>2</sup> Many other projects are run by much larger organisations. For instance, the largest, The Cedar Foundation, has 139 full and 116 part time staff and is a third sector organisation that offers training and runs programmes for disabled people across Northern Ireland<sup>3</sup>. In Northern Ireland organisations have existed for an average of 24.7 years but this disguises wide differences with organisations having existed in the range of 7 to 67 years.

Projects in the Northern Ireland programme are allowed to deliver their project in partnership, and three of the projects responding to the survey indicated they are lead partners in a partnership delivering a project<sup>4</sup>. Partnerships range from one to more than 20 voluntary sector partners.

#### 2.4.2 Project size and length

The average project size in the England programme is just over £218,000, and grant sizes range from around the £10,000 mark to the uppermost limit of £500,000. Whilst the smallest projects are generally supporting local Parish council or village hall type projects, the largest projects include two grants to women's refuge projects (Preston and Brighton and Hove), a community environmental project and an employment advocacy centre for the whole of Greater Manchester.

<sup>1</sup> One project from tranche three was awaiting re-categorisation by Big Lottery Fund at the time of writing.

<sup>2</sup> See <http://ddywp.org/>

<sup>3</sup> See <http://www.cedar-foundation.org/>

<sup>4</sup> Base = 11 projects.

In the Northern Ireland programme the average grant size is much larger at just over £415,000 per project. This is to be anticipated given the programme funding parameters whereby minimum grant sizes in Northern Ireland, at £100k, are much larger than in the England programme, and projects are funded for a minimum of three years. This means RCNI projects tend to receive greater sums of funding.

Three quarters of projects in the England programme are either three year or five year projects (76% combined) and this pattern has not changed as the programme has developed over the past twelve months (see Figure 2.6).

**Figure 2.6 Length of grants awarded, Reaching Communities England**



Source: ECOTEC, based on programme data from Big Lottery Fund (2009)

In Northern Ireland the majority of projects (17 of the 36) are five-year projects, the remaining projects are split fairly evenly between three-year and four-year projects<sup>1</sup>.

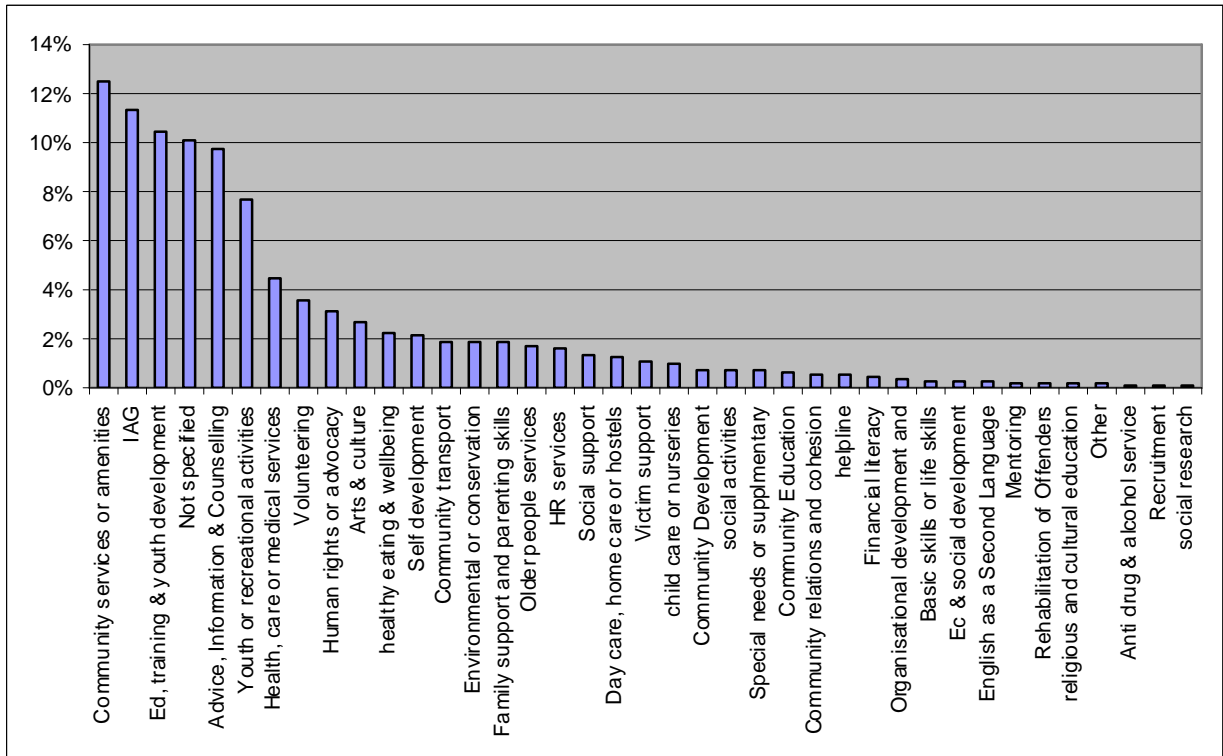
<sup>1</sup> All RCNI programme data presented in this report presents all 36 projects; however survey data presents findings from 31 projects since the tranche 4 projects were selected too late to participate in this year's survey.

### 2.4.3 Project activities

Projects are using an extremely wide range of activities to tackle the identified needs in their local communities. BIG programme data for England illustrates the wide range with no more than one in eight (13%) projects delivering any one activity (see Figure 2.7). More common activities include services including information, advice, guidance and counselling and more practical activities such as youth or recreational activities, community services or amenities and education and training.

There is also some overlap between BIG programme data categories. For example one in five projects are delivering some form of information (21% of all activity if 'IAG' and 'advice, education and counselling' are combined) and a similar but smaller proportion are delivering youth type work (18% if 'education, training and youth development' and 'youth or recreational activities' are combined). While there will clearly be some diversity within those categories (for example a difference between educational versus recreational work with young people) this information clearly reflects the focus of many projects on IAG (Information, Advice and Guidance) activities and on young people (see 2.2.2) and suggests that many projects are being funded via Reaching Communities which might have been signposted to other BIG funding streams that are directed towards these types of activities.

**Figure 2.7 Activities being delivered, Reaching Communities England**



Source: ECOTEC, based on programme data from Big Lottery Fund (2009)

Survey data for England gives more detail on the activities being delivered, with more than 50 different types of activity taking place and no more than one in six projects delivering any single activity (15%).<sup>1</sup> Activities range from advocacy to artwork; languages to life skills; and recycling to respite care. The top five most popular activities are listed below (Table 2.8). On average projects are delivering 1.4 activities each.

**Table 2.8 Most common activities (Top 5), Reaching Communities England**

	Number of projects	%
Information, advice, guidance and signposting	67	15
Education / training / qualifications / skills provision	56	12
Community involvement / empowerment / engage citizens	47	10
Support services	27	6
Volunteering	27	6

Source: ECOTEC survey 2009, Base all projects, 458

This table shows some parallels with BIG programme data. For example information, advice and guidance type activities feature prominently (and have been coded together into one group amounting to 15%) as does education type activity. Support services feature more strongly in the survey sample than in the BIG programme data (6% compared with 1%) although the definition used in the survey sample may be broader than that used in the BIG data.

The diversity of activity is illustrated below:

*'Hampshire Search and Rescue provide skilled volunteers to assist the police in searches for missing vulnerable persons. The grant we received was used to purchase an incident control vehicle and convert it for use as an office space with storage at the rear. The office space can also be used to look after relatives or as in the case of a search last week keeping the missing person warm until an ambulance arrived.'* (Reaching Communities England project)

*'We offer a wide range of services to women who do not widely access health, social care or learning and development opportunities. We assess each woman's needs and develop tailor made packages of support'* (Reaching Communities England project)<sup>2</sup>

*'Streetwise Opera uses music as a tool to help people who have experienced homelessness move forward in their lives and to create positive public awareness about homelessness. Streetwise runs two programmes – a year-round music programme*

<sup>1</sup> See survey results in Annex One. Base = 458.

<sup>2</sup> Source: ECOTEC Survey 2009

*'Streetwise Live' in homeless centres around the country involving weekly singing/drama workshops, theatre trips, small performances and work placements. Building from this regular programme we stage one large, annual production giving participants the chance to work alongside some of the best artists in the world.'* (Reaching Communities England project)<sup>1</sup>

## **Figure 2.8 Case study: Music and Dance Education**

### **Location: West Cornwall**

#### **Summary of project activities**

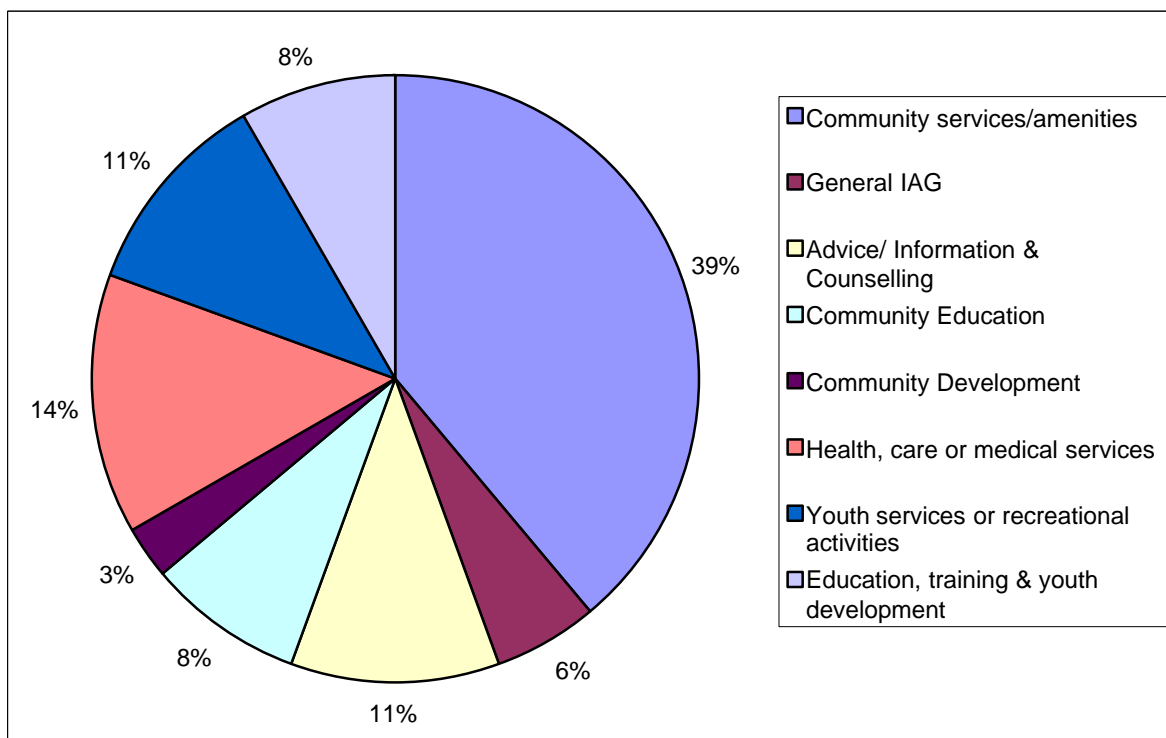
MADET employs arts trained project managers to carry out a range of arts based projects with people of all ages in West Cornwall with the aim of enjoying learning through music, dance and the arts. MADET received £60,509 funds from Reaching Communities to deliver the new Hear Me Too! project which has its roots in an intergenerational project for the Kerrier Healthy Living Centre. Hear Me Too! is piloting a range of models of intervention to bring young and older people together through creative arts activities. MADET has successfully brought young and older people from a range of settings together and has so far delivered 8 projects across West Cornwall. Their projects have brought together primary school children and older people living in care homes, teenagers and older people in a day care centre and older and young people from the same or a neighbouring village working together through music, dance, art and drama. Most projects end with a final performance which includes music, dance, art and drama collaboratively created between the generations. These performances have taken place in schools, care homes and an over 60s club. The projects have taken place in a range of urban and rural settings across Kerrier and Penwith.

In Northern Ireland, programme data also indicates that a wide range of activities are being delivered (see Figure 2.9), again with many projects offering information, advice and guidance and counselling. The majority of projects (39% or 14 projects) are delivering 'community based services or amenities'. This definition covers a wide range of work including befriending, advocacy and social events with groups as diverse as deaf children, people with learning disabilities or mental health issues and lesbian women. One project is working in one specific local community to deliver activities to improve community relations and partnership working and build up a sense of local community (Cross Glebe in Coleraine). There is also one 'community development' project which is aiming to build capacity within voluntary sector organisations working with minority ethnic groups across

<sup>1</sup> Source: ECOTEC Survey 2009

the country (a project being run by Community Technical Aid across the whole of Northern Ireland).

**Figure 2.9 Activities being delivered, Reaching Communities Northern Ireland**



Source: ECOTEC, based on programme data from Big Lottery Fund (2009)<sup>1</sup>

Feedback from the survey indicates that activities in Northern Ireland are very broad including engaging and empowering citizens or community involvement (3 projects), and a range of other activities including support services, health promotion and building tolerance and respect.<sup>2</sup> The Mediation Northern Ireland case study (Figure 2.10) below illustrates some of the activities taking place in Northern Ireland.

## Figure 2.10 Case study: Mediation NI

### Location: Northern Ireland

#### Summary of project activities

Mediation NI (MNI) is an independent social enterprise that aims to develop and promote mediation skills & practice to facilitate conflict resolution and good relations. With the Northern Ireland Assembly about to come back online, peace-building efforts in the region were reinvigorated, and MNI felt that their experience in facilitating social partnership and

<sup>1</sup> All RCNI programme data presented in this report presents all 36 projects; however survey data presents findings from 31 projects since the tranche 4 projects were selected too late to participate in this year's survey.

<sup>2</sup> Base size = 11 projects

their first hand knowledge of local areas could be used to assist communities in re-building their internal cohesion and helping to address divisions in place following 30 years of conflict.

In 2007 MNI originally applied for £337,000 of RCNI funding to be spent over the subsequent five years. After further project development the grant awarded was actually £478k to be spent over the same period. The total project cost will be just over £1m over five years, with the rest of the funding coming from a variety of sources including the NI Community Relations Council, EU Peace Programmes, private foundations and some of the participating local authorities.

The project targets eight local authority areas across NI and is administered through a multi-tiered structure. The project overall is guided by a strategic multi-agency 'Board of Reference', while in each of the eight areas steering groups will be established drawing in representation from elected, statutory, civic and community leadership. Each of these steering groups will in turn broker the population of a 'mediation team' of people who already 'work at the coal face' within their local community, who will be trained up to apply mediative approaches both within their existing roles and within any additional initiatives that the steering group decide to undertake. It is important to note that MNI are only the facilitators and advisors to the steering groups, with the membership taking responsibility for driving the process forward and dictating its local direction. Work has begun in 6 areas with the following 4 step activity taking place:

**Civic Diplomacy** – initial contact with local stakeholders to build agreement for the process to be initiated

**Infra-structure** – establishment of the local steering group, identification of areas for action and identification of potential mediators 'at the coal face'

**Training** – in mediation skills and associated disciplines

**Practice Development** – supporting mediators in putting their skills into practice.

In some cases the innovative and independent nature of the activities has taken a lot of 'getting used to' by the existing establishment and in those cases a great deal more effort has had to be put in at the civic diplomacy stage than originally envisaged.

## 3.0 Involving beneficiaries

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### 3.1 Introduction

The Reaching Communities programmes in England and Northern Ireland aim to support projects which involve communities; it is a requirement for projects in both programmes, and is assessed as part of the application process. This section of the report looks at where and how local communities and beneficiaries have been involved in projects in both programmes, and explore what has worked well and less well in this area.

### 3.2 Involving local communities and beneficiaries

Reaching Communities supports projects which involve beneficiaries and local communities at all stages of a project from the identification of needs, through project planning to delivery, management and evaluation.

#### 3.2.1 Involving local communities in identifying need

Beneficiaries or local communities are involved in identifying the needs to be addressed in just under half of the projects (48%). Just over a quarter of projects across both programmes work with beneficiaries or the local community on equal terms to identify the needs to be addressed (27%) (i.e. giving local people a similar input to the project as project workers) and a further 21% of projects say the needs are entirely decided by local communities. The year two survey findings demonstrate a continuing commitment to listening to the local communities' needs and utilising local experience and knowledge to determine needs, compared with the previous year's survey findings. In Northern Ireland of the five projects who responded to the survey, two projects entirely decided the project's needs, and in another beneficiaries and project staff worked together to identify needs.

However, there continues to be a sizable proportion of projects (37%) that identify needs in a more 'top down' manner, based on the organisations' and staff's past experience in preference to the use of direct beneficiary involvement (see Table 3.1). For example one project in Northern Ireland gave the local community options about what needs could be addressed and the remaining project gave out information about what the project was going to address and did not consult its beneficiaries.

**Table 3.1 How were beneficiaries and local communities involved in identifying their own needs?**

	Number	%
They were not involved at this stage	8	7
We gave them information about the needs the project was setting out to address	21	17
We gave them options for what needs the project could address and they were invited to give feedback	24	20
They worked with the project team on equal terms to contribute their ideas of which needs the project should address	33	27
The needs were entirely decided by beneficiaries and local communities	25	21
Don't know	9	8
Total	120	100

Source: ECOTECH survey 2009, Base all projects, 120

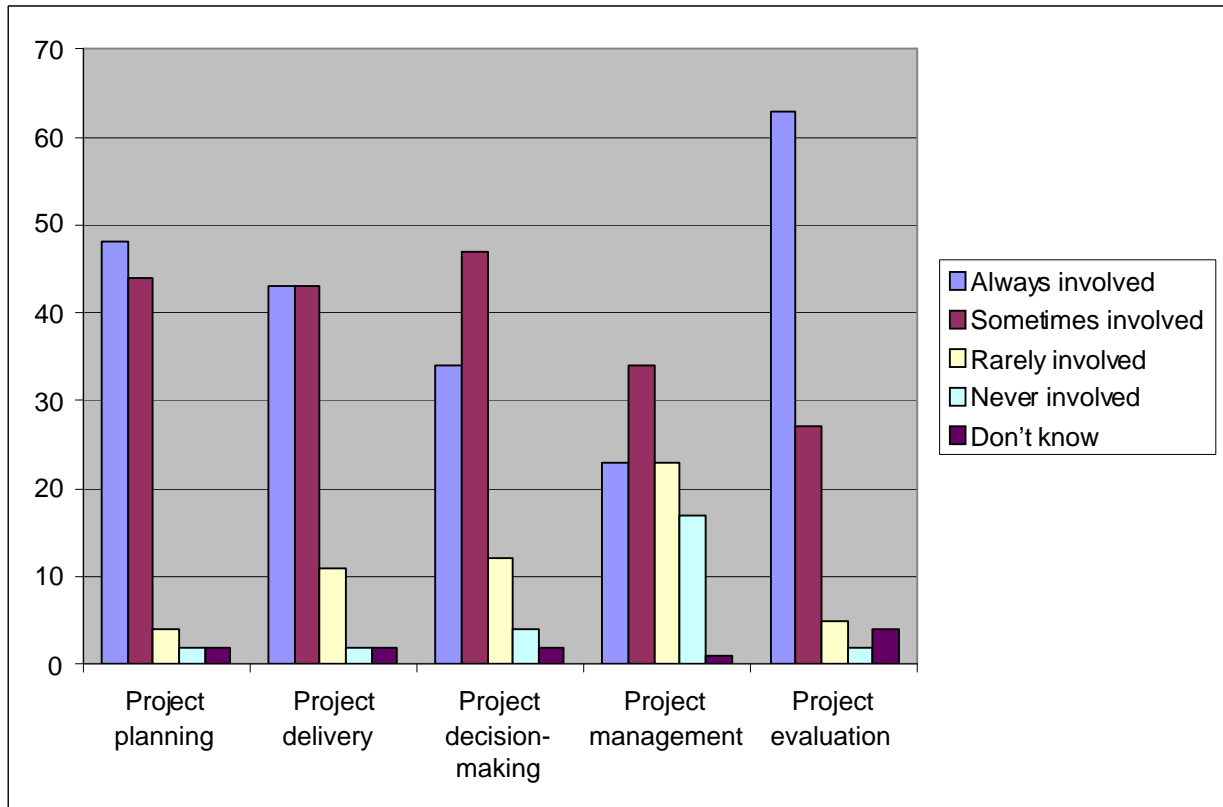
The evaluation reports received from projects highlight the various benefits of involving beneficiaries in identifying their needs. Carrick Leisure Sports Development Team consulted with local young children to find out what they would like to see in terms of sports provision, prior to the project being designed. This involvement resulted in a change to the time of day the activity took place to make it more convenient for the beneficiaries. Another project, MUFFIN, arranged regular one-to-ones with volunteers and discussions with agencies and adapted their project according to individual needs. Beneficiaries were then closely involved in the development of their own individual learning plans. A third project, West and Middle Chinnock Recreational Association asked beneficiaries in the form of a questionnaire what they would like to see at the clubhouse. The Youth Cancer Trust asked beneficiaries their opinions of what they enjoyed the most, what improvements could be made, and what other activities they would like to see being offered at the end of their stay<sup>1</sup>. In all these cases projects report that their project is more able to meet the needs locally as those needs are identified by local people.

### 3.2.2 Involving local communities in project activity

There is also significant involvement from beneficiaries and local communities in project activities once projects are underway (see Figure 3.1).

<sup>1</sup> Source = self-evaluation reports received from projects 2007-9.

**Figure 3.1 How often were/are beneficiaries and local communities involved in the following aspects of your projects?**



Source: ECOTEC survey 2009. Bases vary (163, 162, 163, 162, 161)

Projects are involving the local community and beneficiaries in various aspects of their projects: planning; delivery; decision-making; project management and evaluation. As last year, involvement is high in all project aspects:

- Planning 92% involvement (48% always, 44% sometimes involved)
- Delivery 86% involvement (43% always, 43% sometimes involved)
- Decision-making 81% involvement (34% always, 47% sometimes involved)
- Project management 57% involvement (23% always, 34% sometimes involved)
- Project evaluation 90% involvement (63% always, 27% sometimes involved).

Of the Northern Ireland projects responding three projects have beneficiary / community involvement in all project aspects except project management, which varies between 'always involved' in one project and 'never/rarely involved' in the other two.

Survey feedback highlights the most common areas of involvement in **evaluation** to be through activities such as formal feedback, surveys, questionnaires and interviews (52

projects). In **project management**, beneficiaries and community members are on the board as trustees, and are involved in the management committee (42 projects). Involvement in project **planning** includes the use of user forums and focus groups (25 projects) and meetings (31 projects). Active involvement of beneficiaries and communities in project **delivery** involves recruitment and day to day running of the project in 30 projects. A further 56 projects involve local communities and beneficiaries through more 'informal feedback' including discussions (25) and / or consultations (31).

Overall the year two survey results indicate that projects are making continued efforts to actively involve beneficiaries and communities in project delivery and project planning in addition to the expected participation in project evaluation. This year project management remains the area with least community involvement (see Figure 3.1 above), with just under a quarter of projects (23%) always involving their community in this area, compared with 40% of projects who *rarely* or *never* involve them. Interestingly, although project management is the area with the lowest level of community involvement, there is a good level of further evidence which suggests that those projects involving their communities in this area have found it to be a positive experience. The year two findings continue to indicate the challenges of involving communities in the more strategic management, decision-making and delivery aspects of projects.

Feedback from the case studies shows that in its second year, the 'Fireside' case study project has increased its beneficiary involvement. In its first year the project said they relied on informal beneficiary consultations on an individual and small group basis, to gauge their expectations and perceptions of the programme. Fireside then used this information to shape the function of the volunteer organiser's role. This year the project has seen increased involvement of former users of Fireside with the service due to the volunteer trainee programme. Volunteers have been responsible for designing a personal development programme for service users to train to be volunteers and achieve volunteer placements or roles outside of Fireside. Another case study, St Luke's pre-school has also been actively involving beneficiaries (see Figure 3.2 below).

## **Figure 3.2 Case study: St Luke's Pre-school Garden Project**

### **Location: Rochester, Kent**

#### **Summary of project**

St Luke's pre-school received £19,456 for their new garden project. The pre-school is based in a church hall and the only outdoor space they had was near a main road where the children had to be supervised whilst they played. There is a small wasteland behind the hall and the pre-school wanted a self access space where the children could play safely. The pre-school has created a sensory garden including a mini herb garden, a water feature and a sand pit area. The garden has an ecology theme, complete with ladybird hotels and tadpoles. The main target group are pre-school children and particularly children with autism or a physical disability. Other groups that use the church hall also have access to the garden. This includes church members and the Rainbows and Brownies packs.

The garden helps to improve the local urban environment and helps the pre-school children to be healthy and active.

#### **Involvement**

The pre-school children have been involved since the beginning of the garden project. The garden was explained to the children and they were asked to give ideas for what could be included. Now the garden is open, the pre-school children are involved in developing the garden. For example they help with planting, make ladybird hotels and decorate clay tiles to hang in the garden. The whole process from thinking about ideas for the garden to the finished garden is documented in the Think Talk Garden book which includes before and after pictures, the children's ideas, pictures of the builder and the children planting the garden. The book allows the children to look back on the process and their involvement.

The pre-school has also welcomed the involvement of the other groups that use the church hall as the garden is seen as beneficial to everyone who uses the hall. Staff keep all groups informed of the garden's progress and ask for ideas for developing the garden. In particular, parents of pre-school children are asked to give ideas for developing the garden and lots of suggestions are received; some of which are used, such as the children painting pebbles. Staff feel that generally parents are very supportive of the project including fundraising. Even parents whose children had since started school return for the garden's open day. Support is also received from church members who donate plants, attend the open day and some are now volunteering at the pre-school.

### **3.3 Impact of involvement**

Beneficiary and community involvement continues to provide positive outcomes both for projects and those being involved. The key positive outcomes for projects responding to the survey are that the project is meeting the identified needs more effectively (79% to a large extent) and that the project is improving the confidence of beneficiaries (75% to a large extent). A further three in five (71%) believe their project is more likely to meet its objectives and 63% believe project delivery has improved. Just over half of projects (55%) also believe communities feel empowered as a result of beneficiary involvement. Other positive project outcomes include that the project is more reflective and understanding of actual needs and that, overall, it becomes more inclusive. Positive outcomes in all the areas outlined above were seen in two of the Northern Ireland projects, with the third only noting an improvement in beneficiary confidence (to a large extent).

In addition to increased ownership, improved confidence and empowerment, involvement also contributes to beneficiaries' personal development, reduces their feelings of isolation and improves their health. For individual projects, beneficiary and community involvement also assists with securing other funding and improvements in project management and monitoring.

## 4.0 Meeting the needs

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### 4.1 Introduction

Given the rolling format in which grants are awarded in the Reaching Communities programmes and the length of funding available (of up to five years), to date, for the vast majority of projects in both programmes it is still too early to assess whether the needs they identified have been met and whether they have reached those most in need. All projects in the Northern Ireland programme are running for a minimum of three years. None are yet complete, and so information about impact will be collected in later years of the evaluation, particularly through case study visits<sup>1</sup>. In the England programme to date, of the 1,120 funded projects, around one in twelve had finished at the time of writing (8%). It is therefore a little early to draw conclusions about whether the programmes have successfully addressed unmet needs, or to compare which approaches have been most effective in doing so. This section presents the emerging qualitative and quantitative evidence on these issues. Survey data should be treated with caution given the small numbers of projects in England that are, to date, finished.

### 4.2 Have projects met the needs?

In the England programme to date, of the 1,120 funded projects, only a small proportion have finished at the time of writing. There are 67 one-year projects and 20 two-year projects that are likely to be completed at the time of writing (8%). The majority of these smaller one year projects included building or renovating community buildings (such as the refurbishment, re-roofing or re-wiring of village halls), projects to deliver children's play areas or skate parks and projects to provide minibuss transport. A small number were 'one-off' type projects such as developing a DVD to develop tolerance towards lesbian, gay and bisexual communities and several arts and theatrical projects. The two-year projects nearing completion include an out of hours service for people with a mental illness and a project supporting substance misuse and ex-offenders to help them access voluntary work and build life skills and confidence.

<sup>1</sup> Of the 31 projects funded to date 5 will have finished by the end of this evaluation (i.e. those running for 3 years which started on or before December 2007). One of these is a case study and will be visited again towards the end of the project to gather feedback on impacts. Information on impact to date will be collected from all case studies in NI and England and via the survey at the end of the evaluation.

The survey revealed that overall 38<sup>1</sup> projects responding to the survey are complete, with 12 projects in this year's survey saying they are due to complete by summer 2009<sup>2</sup>.

Completed projects have used a range of evidence sources to assess their project's effectiveness in meeting needs, with many using various forms of evidence rather than a single source. Forms of evidence used include informal feedback from beneficiaries (87% overall), levels of attendance at activities/meetings/events (75% overall) and level of demand for activities or services (67% overall)<sup>3</sup>. A further three in ten (60% overall) had undertaken their own self-evaluation. Just over half reviewed their performance against the programme outcomes (55% overall). While a third of completing projects had used formal feedback from beneficiaries (35%) rather smaller proportions had attempted more complex or costly types of evaluation such as external evaluation (25%) or tracking beneficiaries (10%)<sup>4</sup>.

Completed projects were positive in their belief that they have met the needs they had originally identified; with 31 of the 38 agreeing ('to a large extent') and the majority also saying they had met the programme outcomes they had originally specified (11 of 12 projects)<sup>5</sup>. Over half of the projects (22 of 38) believed that they had met the needs of all their target communities ('to a large extent'), with a further nine projects stating they had 'to some extent' (see Figure 4.1).

<sup>1</sup> Base year one, all projects that will finish by summer 2008 = 24; year two, all projects that will finish by summer 2009 = 14. Total base = 38

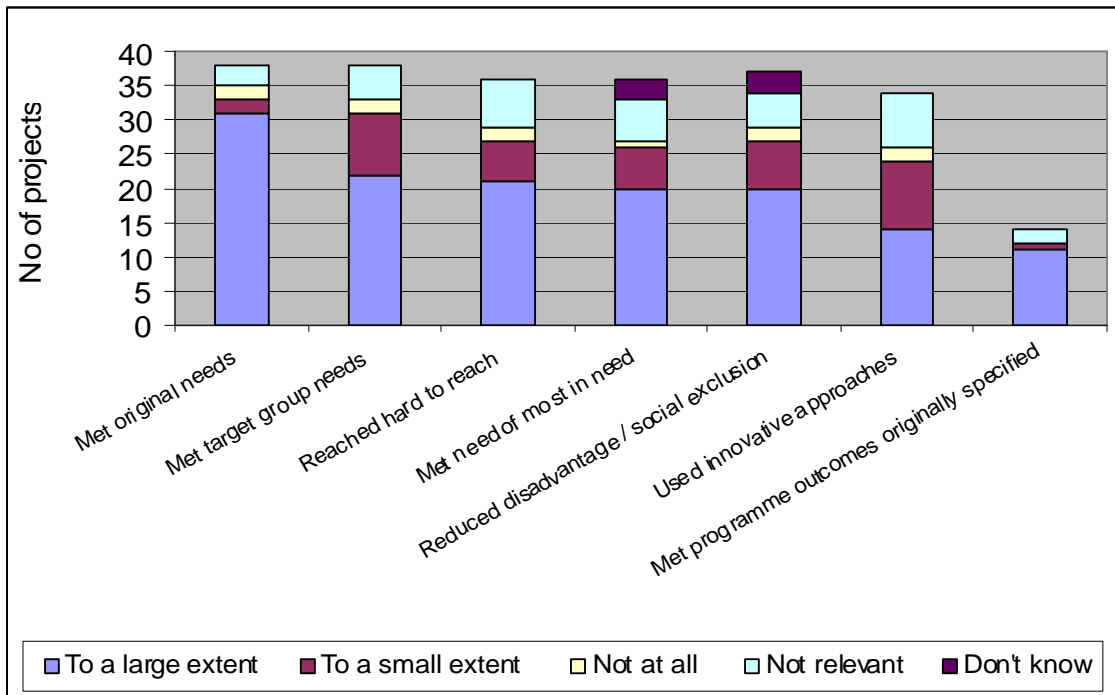
<sup>2</sup> A further 4 projects answered 'do not know'. The year one and year two responses have been combined to provide a figure and commentary on all completed projects. Overall base = 38.

<sup>3</sup> The year one and year two responses have been combined to provide figures and commentary on all completed projects. Base = 38.

<sup>4</sup> Base = 38

<sup>5</sup> This question was not asked in year 1. Base = all projects ending summer 2009 = 14.

**Figure 4.1 To what extent do you feel that your project has achieved the following?**



Source: ECOTEC survey 2009, Base all completing projects, 38 and base 14 for Q7.

A slightly smaller proportion of projects felt they had ‘reached hard to reach groups’ and or ‘reached the most in need’ (21 and 20 of 38 respectively). A similar proportion believed their project had reduced disadvantage and social exclusion (20 of 38 ‘to a large extent’). For each of these three areas, there were - on average - six projects who felt these questions were ‘not relevant’, despite the focus of the Reaching Communities programme on hard to reach communities. This may be because achieving a reduction in disadvantage in a local area is very challenging, first, for projects to define and find evidence for; and second, to attribute to their project given the complexity of funding streams operating in any given area. It is also worth noting that the programme supports improvements to ‘whole’ communities, or geographical areas which projects may not view as being ‘hard to reach’ as they are on the doorstep.

The following case study, Figure 4.2, illustrates ways in which one project targeting homeless individuals, is meeting their beneficiaries’ needs.

## **Figure 4.2 Case study: Bradford Nightstop Project**

**Location: Bradford, West Yorkshire**

### **Summary of project**

Bradford Nightstop (BNS) is a community based organisation primarily working with homeless young people in the Bradford area providing safe overnight accommodation via their host homes and in one room at the Bradford City Centre Project Hostel. BNS was awarded £86,571 of Reaching Communities funding for a 3 year project delivering preventative educational work to young people aged 13 to 25. In the last year BNS has developed its partnership with Bradford Youth Service and youth cafes have referred young people to BNS as well as providing safe places where BNS users can wait before they are placed with a host. The benefit of involving youth cafes is it gives young people a contact which can support them and is believed to help reduce the number of young people who will be referred to BNS in the future.

### **Meeting the Need**

The education sessions being delivered by BNS are designed to make young people think about the reality of homelessness and to discourage them from leaving home without a plan. BNS has received feedback from schools that the sessions make the young people reflect on the issue of homelessness. *"The feedback we've got from teachers is that it just makes the children think."* Local young people are well able to recall the session and could recall the video and its message. BNS have run a poster competition at the special schools they work with to help beneficiaries remember the session. One teacher was surprised by how much of the session the pupils remembered.

Schools were very positive about the presentation of the education sessions which are presented in an accessible manner to help the students engage with the subject and retain the information they are given.

The project helps students focus on thinking of others and helps improve students' self esteem, aspirations and broaden their outlook on life. The project has fully met these needs and students who previously would not get involved in activities have been very enthusiastic about the project and how they could help. One student who used to be very disruptive and disinterested in school really enjoyed the project and her behaviour and achievement has greatly improved. Another young person at a different school was so affected by an education session that he asked his family to be a host for BNS.

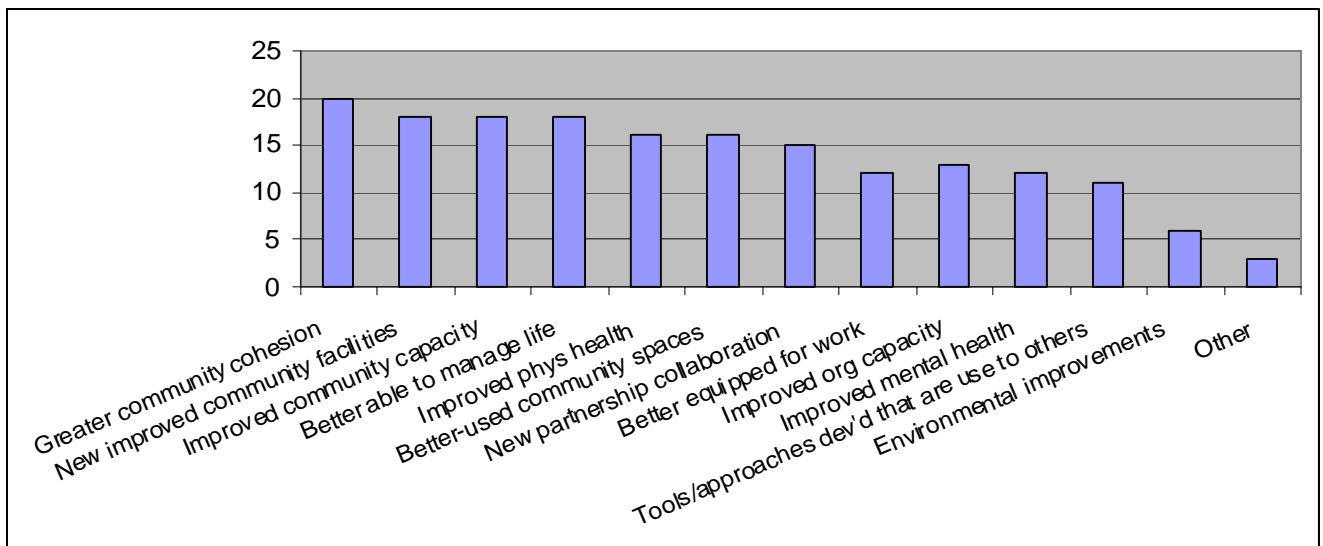
Project staff suggest: "I know it's not all down to Bradford Nightstop as we've put a lot of work in but part of that was doing something ...that wasn't about [the student's] behaviour it was about her looking at other people."

BNS's statistics suggest that the number of referrals they receive from schools where the education worker has visited were lower in 2008 than the previous year. In addition BNS found more young people were aware of their service. However they anticipate seeing a larger impact of the education work in 2009 as the 15 year olds the education worker worked with last year will now be within the BNS target age.

### 4.3 Impact

The diversity in the range of project impacts reflects the breadth of the programme (see Figure 4.3). The most common impacts relate to greater community cohesion (20 of 38 projects), new or improved community facilities (18 projects), beneficiaries better able to manage life (18 projects), and improved community capacity (18 projects). Improvements to community spaces are more likely to be seen as an early impact of the programme given the relative focus of shorter term projects on outcome three and on improving community spaces.

**Figure 4.3 What benefits/impacts have you seen as a result of your project?**



Source: ECOTEC Survey 2009, base all completed projects, 38

Two thirds of the survey respondents across both programmes are also measuring soft outcomes / distance travelled as part of their project (65%)<sup>1</sup>. Of these the most commonly measured aspects are confidence / self-esteem (28%), wellbeing (12%) and project experiences (10%). Three Northern Ireland projects are planning to measure soft outcomes in terms of self-esteem, confidence, awareness of community and a greater feeling of inclusion; one through baseline surveys and end of year comparisons.

There are various examples of positive project impact from the project evaluation reports. The Youth Cancer Trust project is helping beneficiaries to feel more positive about their illness, gain confidence and make new friends through its provision of social activities for young cancer sufferers. They also benefit from being able to have a break in a welcoming environment. Within the 'Making Waves' project, the evaluation report shows that most beneficiaries feel more confident and fitter as a result of their involvement in this water based activity programme.

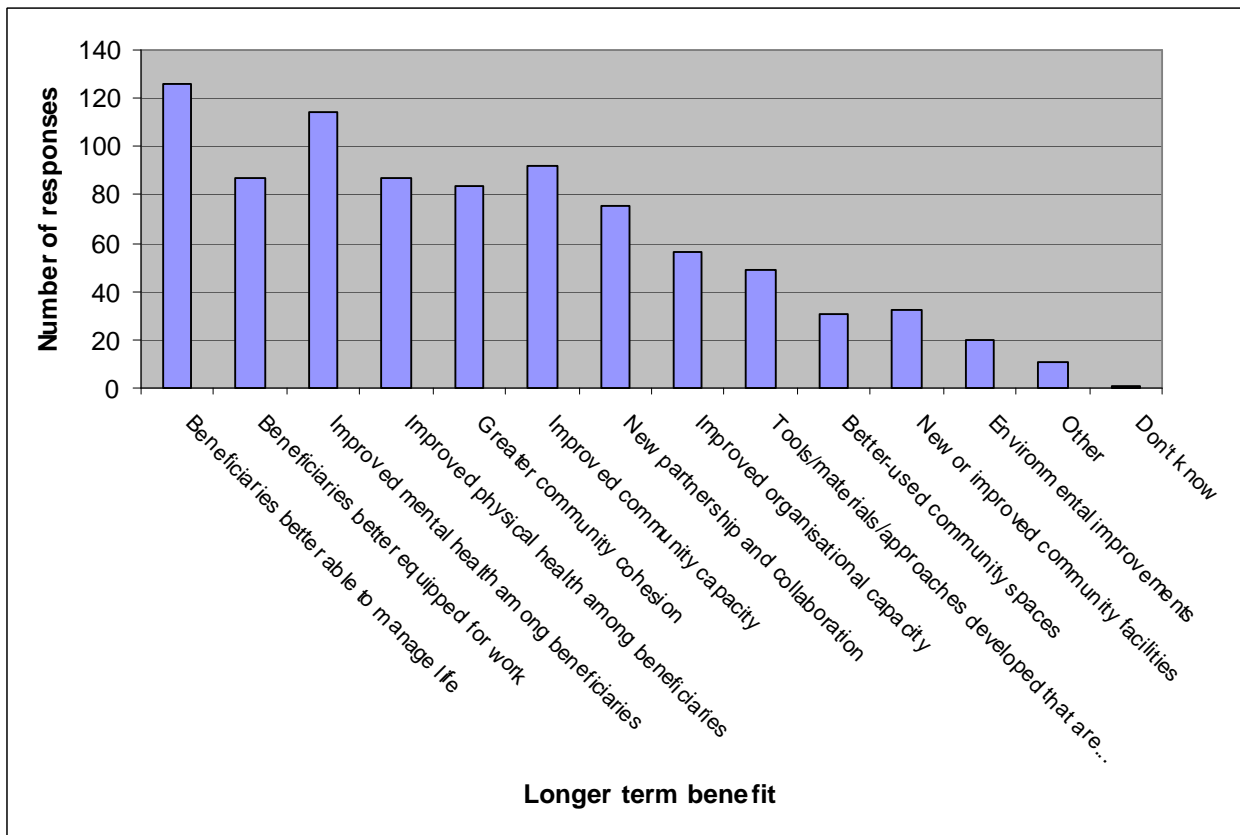
Projects also cite impacts related to softer outcomes. The MUFFIN project refers to the empowerment of individuals and improvements to their self esteem as a result of involvement in the employability based project. Beneficiaries also gained financial benefits when they moved to paid employment. Within the RNID's empowerment project, the volunteers gained in confidence, they felt supported, the project gave them a reason to get out of bed and "*feel able to do things*". The Open Age project provides healthy activities for older people in London (such as ballet, yoga) and has resulted in healthier and more active lives for older people, and improved physical and mental health and sleeping patterns.

#### **4.4 Longer term impacts**

It is expected that the projects may continue to see benefits, or longer term impacts, beyond the life of the funding. Three quarters of projects across both programmes (75%) say they expect to see longer term benefits (see Figure 4.4). Most of the longer lasting impacts that are anticipated, understandably, relate to beneficiaries themselves. These include expectations of a lasting improvement in how well beneficiaries are able to manage life (15% or 126 responses), improved mental health among beneficiaries (13% or 114 responses), improved physical health (10% or 87 responses) and beneficiaries who are better equipped for work (10% or 87 responses). Other, wider-reaching long term and anticipated impacts that could assist with the projects' sustainability include an improvement in community capacity (11% or 92 responses), greater community cohesion (10% or 84 responses) and new partnership and collaboration (9% or 75 responses).

<sup>1</sup> Base = 195

**Figure 4.4** If you are seeing / expecting to see benefits continuing beyond the life of the project, what sort of long-term benefits do you expect to see/are you seeing?



Source: ECOTECH Survey 2009, base 147

#### 4.5 Added value from project activities

Year two survey results suggest that Reaching Communities is supporting activity which is additional to existing provision. Three in five completed projects say that their project would not have taken place without Reaching Communities support (70% or 28 projects) and a further 6 projects indicate that their project may have taken place, although in a reduced form. Additionally, whilst two thirds of projects (66%) expect to continue beyond the life of the Reaching Communities funding, another three in ten projects either did not know or did not answer whether they would continue, at the time of the survey (31%). Those that did describe their planned methods for continuing the project are primarily seeking continuation funding from a range of sources (for example statutory agencies, trusts, charities, central and local government). This suggests that there is potential for sustainability of some projects, whether it be a continuation of current activities or through other, similar community initiatives. A minority of projects are considering ways in which their project could become self-funding. Figure 4.5 illustrates one Reaching Communities project

working with family carers, highlighting the added value of the project and the ways in which it is considering its longer term future.

## **Figure 4.5 Case study: Suffolk Family Carers**

### **Location: Ipswich**

**Summary of project** Suffolk Family Carers (SFC) received £495,848 funding from Reaching Communities over five years. The project is an extension of an existing service which aims to address the difficulties faced by family carers in Suffolk related to accessing carer services and support. The organisation is an independent charity with one permanent centre in Ipswich and five outreach centres in surrounding rural areas. SFC has always served family carers across Suffolk, but feedback suggested that some family carers struggled to travel to the permanent centre at Claydon, just outside Ipswich, and that there was demand for centres closer to family carers' homes. The money provided by Reaching Communities was used to fund outreach centres in rural locations. In the first year five outreach centres were established. In the second year of the project these outreach centres are working well and SFC is now on track to open a sixth outreach centre in early 2009. The outreach centres have continued to provide a range of services and activities on a bi-monthly basis. Due to demand from family carers, four of the centres now deliver an extra half day session every other month, in addition to the day of activities they already deliver on alternate months. The main target groups are still family carers, BME groups, disadvantaged people and people living in rural areas.

In addition to the outreach centres, SFC set up a telephone befriending scheme in the first year. Family carers play a key role in the befriending part of the project, because carers befriend carers. Following feedback from family carers and volunteers as well as project staff's own insight into the project it was felt that the term 'befriending' did not fully communicate the purpose of the project. For instance some family carers felt they did not need a friend and were not aware the service offered more than friendship. The service is now known as 'Talk and Support'.

### **Added value from the project**

Prior to bidding for Reaching Communities funding project staff got in touch with other carer organisations in other regions and discovered that there were no other projects like the outreach project in other parts of the country. Similar to the first year, family carers noted that there was no comparable service before the project and that even where other similar but not identical services were available, SFC provided a more appropriate service. The project team felt this project would not have taken place without Big Lottery funding, and could not be delivered in its current form without further funding at the end of the Reaching

Communities programme. However it is envisaged that the outreach groups might be sustained using local funding with support from SFC such as staff time and premises. It is hoped that this would mean that the Outreach becomes a "community resource". This is still an idea and will be thought through in the final years of the Reaching Communities funding.

There are also some additional outcomes of the project. A handful of current and former family carers continue to be involved in running different activities such as drama and complementary therapies. Some family carers who attend outreach events are members of SFC's advisory group. There have also been other family carers who have now returned to work or are doing voluntary work. Many of the Talk and Support volunteers are former family carers (including some who have been recently bereaved), and Talk and Support has been their first step after caring. The training they received has increased their confidence and provided them with new skills.

#### 4.6 Dissemination

Whilst dissemination is not a required aspect of the Reaching Communities programme, many projects do carry out dissemination activities – although projects' interpretation of the definition and purpose of the dissemination varies between publicity and marketing activities to the sharing of practice. All the projects completing by summer 2009 propose to undertake some form of dissemination activity through media publicity (23 of 38 projects), written reports/evaluation reports (20 projects), website publicity (15 projects) events/workshops (13 projects), distribution of flyers/ brochures (12 projects) and conference presentations (4 projects).

Project evaluation reports highlight the dissemination activity already undertaken by some projects. Carrier Leisure has carried out several dissemination activities including; a newspaper advert for volunteers, and a press release in the local media "West County Live" TV at the launch day of the water based activity programme. The MUFFIN project carried out exhibits at local recycling events. RNID have attended many network events, information events and have given talks to groups. Open Age had a wide advertising base; from posters to articles on websites and leaflets handed out by staff. Most of these dissemination activities appear to focus on reaching beneficiaries to take part in the project, and rather fewer focus on disseminating **learning** from the projects. One of the case studies however, Bradford Nightstop (BNS), has realised that web based marketing is a good way to share learning from their project. Instead of training teachers to deliver education sessions BNS have decided to make their education materials downloadable from their website. The project lead at BNS reported "*...realising we've got world class resources on that website. Schools across the world can use them not just Bradford....we*

*won't just reduce homelessness in Bradford we can reduce homelessness across the board in the UK, well we believe we can if you get the right education to people...so they leave home with a plan."* This will allow BNS to reach schools much further afield than Bradford.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The materials were being developed at the time of the visit and its impact will be discussed at the next visit.

## 5.0 Conclusions and Implications

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### 5.1 Conclusions

Reaching Communities in England and Northern Ireland aims to fund projects that help those most in need including those people or groups who are 'hard to reach', through projects which best meet their communities' needs and are designed in conjunction with local communities. To date, Reaching Communities in England has awarded 1,120 grants to projects amounting to over £244 million of funding. In Northern Ireland 36 grants have been awarded with a value of over £14.9 million. A final tranche of funding will be awarded in Northern Ireland by Spring 2009, while Reaching Communities in England will continue awarding grants into 2010 through a bridging year. In line with last year's findings, a very diverse range of organisations are being supported with the majority (85% in England and all funding in Northern Ireland) being directed to the voluntary and community sector. In addition a fair proportion of limited companies are also being supported (27%), including VCS organisations in the form of community enterprises, credit unions and local branches of larger national charities.

Both programmes maintain a broad focus in terms of the outcomes they seek to address in local communities, with a clear focus being on 'improving people's life chances' (80%) and on 'stronger communities with more active citizens' (76%). Projects are less likely to be aiming to improve their local environment and those that are tend to be shorter projects of one to two years. On average projects are addressing at least two outcomes (2.3 on average). Geographically funding has been well spread across the English regions. In Northern Ireland, a significant proportion is targeted outside of Belfast (76%) or are targeted across the whole region.

Projects generally identify the needs to be addressed in terms of particular individuals or groups and associated activities to meet the implied needs of those groups. It is not uncommon to define needs in this way, with the assumption being that these groups will have needs that are unmet through existing structures or provision. Evidence from programme data and the survey indicates firstly that the programmes are targeting an incredibly diverse range of target groups with no more than one in seven projects targeting any single group<sup>1</sup>. Evidence also suggests that the two programmes are targeting beneficiaries that are regularly identified as being among some of the most disadvantaged groups in society, including those suffering from mental health issues, homeless people and refugee and asylum seekers. Need is also often identified in economic terms and

<sup>1</sup> Based on survey data.

evidence also suggests that disadvantaged areas and groups with low or no income are being targeted. It is also worth noting that while many target groups are not explicitly defined in programme or survey data as low income they are more likely to also be economically disadvantaged (e.g. people with a disability or drug or alcohol users). The data also suggests that the programme is targeting some groups where a specific need is not explicitly defined or implied, for example young people, older people or families. Other projects more specifically aim to target isolation, substance abuse, wellbeing or lack of skills.

Neither Reaching Communities programme is designed, or intended, to particularly support people with multiple needs yet there is evidence that projects in both programmes are aiming to do so, for example through projects working with those who are homeless, or young people who are not in education or training and offenders; many projects describe themselves as taking a holistic approach to a person's problems whichever service need they have. Finally, the programmes are providing services which are designed to plug gaps left by statutory provision and to those groups who do not always wish to access statutory services due to a lack of trust, lack of transport or because statutory services are perceived to be inappropriately delivered. To date, projects in both programmes are generally designed based on local knowledge of what is needed rather than a formal review of local strategy or policy but encouragingly the majority of projects (85%) do 'talk to people' in designing their project and one in five (21%) say the design of the project was entirely beneficiary-led. The trend towards involving the local community – particularly in project planning and project evaluation – continues. Where projects can 'go the extra mile' in involving people in project management and delivery, there is evidence that this has proved beneficial for projects and those individuals involved.

Projects are increasingly identifying changes in the needs they set out to address (12%) and also in the services being provided around them (21%). Changes in needs have included increases in demand or an awareness that needs are becoming more acute. Changes in services have included fluctuations in the level of statutory funding and alterations to legislation. Projects are proving flexible and most realign their project to meet changing needs (74%).

It is still early to assess impact, given the rolling programme of funding and the length of many projects of between 3-5 years. Around 8% in England have completed at the time of writing, and only 5 of the 36 Northern Ireland projects (14%) will be complete by the end of the evaluation period in 2010. So far impacts have generally been around improving local environments since most of the shorter projects that have completed are building or renovation projects. Projects have reached on average 1.6 target groups including many of the most in need groups discussed above (for example disabled groups, homeless people

and substance misuse). A key area of impact for completed projects is around softer outcomes including confidence and self esteem.

## **5.2 Interim conclusions**

### **5.2.1 Implications for the programmes**

Many projects are dependent on funding from the Big Lottery Fund and say they would not have taken place without this support. The evaluators suggest that supporting the voluntary sector to reduce reliance on time-limited ad hoc funding such as this, and exploring more sustainable funding options should be considered as a priority for the Big Lottery Fund.

The regional allocations of funding in England and Northern Ireland remain fairly evenly spread, and most outcomes are being worked towards (though less so the environmental outcome in both programmes). BIG already provide information regarding these two issues to the programme committee on a regular basis, and we recommend continued discussion and monitoring of this distribution throughout the bridging year of the programme, with the opportunity to take appropriate action if required.

BIG have taken steps to encourage projects to involve beneficiaries as there are clear benefits of doing this in terms of the ability of projects to meet the local needs. This is an area where encouraging projects to develop a deeper understanding of this aspect and encouraging more innovative approaches to this would be beneficial. This could focus on sharing examples of where and how beneficiaries have been involved in the management and decision-making processes. This could be encouraged through circulating good practice examples and tools for doing so effectively.

### **5.2.2 Implications for the evaluation**

The evaluation will need to give further consideration to how data on impact is collected in its final two years, given that the majority of projects in both programmes will not have completed by the time the evaluation ends. The evidence of impact will need to be addressed via case studies, particularly in Northern Ireland where sample sizes from survey responses will most likely remain fairly small due to the small numbers of projects being funded. Case study interviews in the latter year of the evaluation will need to address this.

While response rates overall have been good, and several tactics for boosting response have already been employed, there has been a reduction in the year two survey response rates. Further methods for further improving this in year three will now be explored.

Feedback from projects' own self evaluation has been included in this report; however very few projects have submitted such information. Self evaluation is a critical element in a programme of this size and its potential for enabling VCS organisations to gather and reflect on project results for wider application should be mined. Continued and further promotion of the self-evaluation materials available through the Toolkit and Website will be helpful in order to encourage projects to self-evaluate consistently and use more formal and appropriate mechanisms. New ways of encouraging projects to submit this information could be explored.

## **Annex One: Marked up survey results**

## **Marked up survey for year two**

### **Marked-up annual survey responses**

Technical note:

The following results are based on surveys carried out online in 2007 and 2008 with Reaching Communities grantees in the England and Northern Ireland programmes. In year one (2007), there were 325 respondents, of whom 319 were from the England programme and 6 were from the Northern Ireland programme. In year two (2008), there were 196 respondents, of whom 133 were new respondents and 63 were repeat respondents from the year one survey. Of the new respondents, 128 were from the England programme and 5 were from the Northern Ireland programme.

In year one, the survey took place from 1<sup>st</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup> November, and in year two, between 21<sup>st</sup> October and 1<sup>st</sup> December.

In year one, 783 projects were invited to participate in the survey, this included grantees from the England programme (with May 2006 to October 2007 award committee dates) and 10 projects from the first tranche of Northern Ireland funding. In year two, 1,080 projects were invited to participate in the survey, this included grantees from the England programme (with May 2006 to October 2008 award committee dates) and 31 projects from the tranches 1-3 of Northern Ireland funding.

The survey is repeated annually.

Where appropriate, the responses from year one and year two have been combined to give overall results.

All individual results are rounded to the nearest whole percent. Where question results do not sum to 100%, this may be due to multiple responses, computer rounding or the exclusion of 'don't know/not stated' response categories. An asterisk (\*) represents a value of less than one percent, but not zero. 'Tick all that apply' or multiple responses mean that respondents can give more than one answer to a question and results therefore total more than 100%.

Figures are given in % unless the sample is less than 100; in which case figures are given refer to number of respondents.

## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

**1. Please enter your unique project reference number (this is the number beginning RC/ which is stated on all the project documentation from Big Lottery Fund).**

**2. Which part of the programme was your project funded under?**

*(Please tick one only)* (Total base = 459)

	Year one		Year two		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Reaching Communities England	319	98	129	96	448	98
Reaching Communities Northern Ireland	6	2	5	4	11	2
Total	325	100	134	100	459	100

## **YOUR ORGANISATION**

**3. Which, if any, of the following characteristics describes your organisation?**

*(Please tick all that apply)* (Total base = 459. Multiple responses allowed)

	Year one		Year two		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Independent voluntary sector organisation	227	70	101	76	328	72
Local organisation - part of wider national/regional voluntary sector body	46	14	19	14	65	14
Umbrella organisation or network	20	6	5	4	25	5
Statutory organisation	13	4	3	2	16	3
Parish Council	2	1	1	1	3	1
Town Council	1	0	1	1	2	0
Virtual network	1	0	0	0	1	0
None of the above/Other	23	7	9	7	32	7

	Year one		Year two		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Total	333	-	139	-	472	-

**4. Please indicate the following details about your organisation.**

**Number of years your organisation has existed for (Total base = 451)**

	Year one		Year two		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
0-5 years	53	16	19	15	72	16
6-10 years	66	20	33	26	99	22
11-15 years	54	17	23	18	77	17
16-20 years	24	7	13	10	37	8
21 years or more	109	34	38	30	147	32
Don't know	19	6	0	0	19	4
Total	325	100	126	100	451	100

**Number of full time staff your organisation employs (Total base = 444)**

	Year one		Year two		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
0-9	220	68	91	76	311	70
10-19	31	10	9	8	40	9
20-49	19	6	7	6	26	6
50-99	11	3	3	3	14	3
100-249	10	3	4	3	14	3
250 or more	4	1	5	4	9	2
Don't know	30	9	0	0	30	7

	Year one		Year two		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Total	325	100	119	100	444	100

**Number of part time staff your organisation employs (Total base = 444)**

	Year one		Year two		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
0-9	214	66	98	81	312	70
10-19	29	9	10	8	39	9
20-49	31	10	5	4	36	8
50-99	7	2	4	3	11	2
100-249	9	3	2	2	11	2
250 or more	5	2	2	2	7	2
Don't know	30	9	0	0	30	7
Total	325	101	121	100	446	100

**5. Which if any of the following describes the areas you work with?**

*(Tick all that apply)* (Total base = 451. Multiple answers allowed)

	Year one		Year two		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Located in urban areas	219	67	87	70	306	68
Located in rural areas	121	37	61	48	182	40
Located in urban fringe areas	99	30	54	43	153	34

Don't know/not applicable	24	7	12	10	36	29
Total	463	-	214	-	677	-

**6a. [Northern Ireland projects only] Are you part of a partnership delivering a Reaching Communities project? (Please tick one)** (Base all Northern Ireland projects, total = 11)

	Year one number	Year two number	Total number
Yes	2	1	3
No	3	4	7
Not answered	1	0	1
Total	6	5	11

**6b. [Northern Ireland projects only] If yes, please indicate if your organisation is the lead partner or not? (Please tick one)** (Base Northern Ireland projects who are part of a partnership, total = 3)

	Year one number	Year two number	Total Number
Lead partner	2	1	3
Not lead partner	0	0	0
Total	2	1	3

**6c. [Northern Ireland projects only if yes at Q6a] Please indicate how many partners there are in your project partnership in each of the following categories? (Please insert the number of each type of partner)** (Base Northern Ireland projects who are lead partners, total = 3)

	Year one number	Year two number
4 partners, all in voluntary or community sector	1	-
20+ partners in VCS		1

	Year one number	Year two number
1 statutory sector partner		1
Other partners – don't know		1
No reply	1	-

**7. [Ask all Northern Ireland projects only] Which of the following Council areas are your target groups from? (Please tick all that apply) (Base all Northern Ireland projects, total = 11. Multiple answers allowed)**

	Year one number	Year two number	Total number
Antrim Borough Council	3	2	5
Ards Borough Council	2	3	5
Armagh City and District Council	1	3	4
Ballymena Borough Council	1	3	4
Ballymoney Borough Council	2	3	5
Banbridge Borough Council	2	3	5
Belfast City Council	3	3	6
Carrickfergus Borough Council	3	3	6
Castlereagh Borough Council	1	3	4
Coleraine Borough Council	3	3	6
Cookstown District Council	2	3	5
Craigavon Borough Council	1	5	6
Derry City Council	3	3	6
Down District Council	1	4	5
Dungannon and South Tyrone Borough Council	1	4	5
Fermanagh District Council	2	3	5
Larne Borough Council	2	3	5
Limavady Borough Council	2	3	5

	Year one number	Year two number	Total number
Lisburn City Council	2	3	5
Magherafelt District Council	3	2	5
Moyle District Council	1	3	4
Newry and Mourne District Council	1	4	5
Newtownabbey Borough Council	3	3	6
North Down Borough Council	1	4	5
Omagh District Council	2	3	5
Strabane District Council	2	3	5
Other (please specify)	0	1	1 (not specified)
Don't know	0	0	0

## **IDENTIFICATION OF NEED**

**8. Please briefly describe (one or two sentences) the need which your project sets out to address? (200 words max) (Total base = 458 projects, all respondents)**

Target Group	Year one		Year two		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Adults	9	3	7	5	16	3
Anti social behaviour / crime / binge drinking / violence	12	4	2	2	9	2
Asylum seeker / refugees / migrant workers	8	2	4	3	12	3
Bereavement	-	-	2	2	2	*
Black and minority ethnic groups	20	6	3	2	23	5
Blind/visually impaired/partially sighted	4	1	1	1	5	1
Bullying	3	1	-	-	3	1
Carers	18	6	7	5	25	5
Children and families	24	6	11	-	35	7
Children and young people	58	18	24	18	82	19
Deprivation / deprived areas / multiple deprivation	18	6	2	2	20	4
Disability	16	5	12	9	28	6
Domestic violence sufferers/rape victims	14	4	2	2	16	3
Drug / alcohol / substance misuse / addiction	5	1	-	-	5	2
Education and training / qualifications / skills provision	1	*	-	-	1	*
Encourage independence/living independently	1	*	-	-	1	*
Extending existing services	2	*	1	1	2	*
Ex-offenders / prisoners	3	1	1	1	4	1
Financially excluded / debt / low income / unemployed	10	3	8	6	18	4
Gypsy / Traveller communities	2	1	1	1	3	1
HIV / AIDS	2	1	1	1	3	1
Homeless people	24	7	5	4	29	6
Improve wellbeing	9	3	1	1	10	2
Increase opportunities	3	1	-	-	3	1
Isolation	21	6	-	-	21	5
Lack of service provision	1	*	-	-	1	*
Lack of skills / educational underachievement	1	*	-	-	1	*
Learning difficulties and / or disability	21	6	7	5	28	6
Lesbian / gay / bisexual / transgender people	2	1	1	1	3	1
Local community / community relations	46	14	20	15	66	14
Low participation / involvement	3	1	1	2	4	1
Lone parents	-	-	1	1	1	*
Medical condition / genetic disorder/chronic condition	11	3	2	2	13	3
Mental health	17	5	10	8	27	6
Men and boys	-	-	1	1	1	*
NEETS	1	*	-	-	1	*
Older people	21	6	12	2	32	7
Organised crime / violence / torture	2	1	-	-	2	*
Parents and families	6	2	9	7	15	3
Professionals	1	*	-	-	1	*
Rural needs / rural areas	14	4	1	1	14	3

Social enterprises / charities	2	1	2	2	4	1
Stress / depression / anxiety	1	*	-	-	1	*
Sport / physical activity / sport coaching	1	*	-	-	1	*
Social enterprises / charities / organisations	-	-	2	2	2	*
Tackling racism	2	1	-	-	2	*
Teenage mothers	1	0	-	-	1	*
Truancy/excluded from school	2	1	-	-	2	*
Volunteers	4	1	3	2	7	2
Vulnerable/ disadvantaged /excluded/marginalised /hard to reach groups	50	15	20	15	70	15
White groups	1	*	-	-	1	*
Women and girls	16	5	4	2	20	3
Total	506		190		696	

Activity	Year one		Year two		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Access to services	2	1	8	6	10	2
Accommodation/somewhere to stay	5	2	-	-	5	1
Advocacy	10	3	5	4	15	3
Befriending	4	1	1	1	5	1
Building confidence / self esteem	12	4	3	2	15	3
Building tolerance and respect	4	1	3	2	7	2
Childcare	1	*	2	2	3	1
Consultations / one to one sessions	9	3	5	4	14	3
Counselling / emotional support	12	4	7	5	19	4
Creative arts/cultural activity / arts	11	3	4	3	15	3
Crisis service / welfare	1	*	-	-	1	*
Debt advice / accessing benefits	3	1	-	-	3	1
Drug and alcohol treatment / support	1	*	-	-	1	*
Education / training / qualifications / skills provision	39	12	17	13	56	12
Employment support / financial awareness	10	3	3	2	13	3
Encourage community involvement / empowerment / engage citizens	30	9	17	13	47	10
Encourage independence / living independently	11	3	3	2	14	3
Extending existing services	3	1	1	1	4	1
Facilities / spaces	9	3	6	5	15	3
Health promotion / wellbeing	11	3	7	5	18	4
Horticulture / gardening / farming / conservation	7	2	4	3	11	2
Helpline / telephone support / forums / website / email	2	1	1	1	3	1
Improve access to services	18	6	3	2	21	5
Increase opportunities	13	4	4	3	17	4
Information, advice, guidance and signposting	54	17	13	10	67	15
IT training / computer literacy	8	2	4	3	12	3
Language learning	1	*	1	1	2	*
Legal advice	1	*	1	1	2	*
Life skills / social skills	13	4	4	3	17	4
Mentoring / coaching	3	1	-	-	3	1
Mental health	-	-	1	1	1	*
New equipment	3	1	3	2	6	1
One to one sessions / consultation	-	-	1	1	1	*
Outreach	3	1	-	-	3	1
Parenting support / groups	6	2	1	1	7	2
Personal development	6	2	2	2	8	2
Practical help	6	2	5	4	11	2
Promote rights / raise awareness	13	4	4	3	17	4
Recycling	2	1	1	1	3	1
Research / prevention	7	2	1	1	8	2
Respite	7	2	3	2	10	2
Restoration / renovation / refurbishing of community buildings / facilities	8	2	3	2	11	2
Running groups / sessions	12	4	3	2	15	3
Self help	3	1	1	1	4	1
Social activities / social clubs / day trips	17	5	5	4	22	5
Spaces / facilities	1	*	-	-	1	*

Sport / physical activity / sports coaching	13	4	4	3	17	4
Support services	13	4	14	11	27	6
Transport	7	2	1	1	8	2
Volunteering	17	5	10	8	27	6
Youth diversion	2	1	-	-	2	*
Total	454		190		644	

**9. Which of the following did you use to investigate the need for your project? (Please tick all that apply)** (Total base = 447, multiple answers allowed)

	Year one		Year two		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Talking to people	264	81	115	94	379	85
Previous experience/similar work/knowledge	261	80	115	94	376	84
Research reports, statistics or data	237	73	106	87	343	77
Strategies and policy documents	141	43	70	57	211	47
Other	20	6	10	8	30	7
Don't know	1	*	1	1	2	*
Total	924	-	417	-	1341	-

**9a. [Ask only those who used strategies, policies and research/statistics in investigating the need; who ticked options iii and iv at Q9] Which of the following did you use?** (Please tick all that apply) (Total base = 431. Multiple answers allowed)

	Year one		Year two		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Community Plans/Strategies ( <i>i.e. community based</i> )	159	49	66	62	225	52
Neighbourhood statistics	147	45	64	60	211	49
Local Development Plans / Frameworks / Local Area Agreements ( <i>i.e. local authority led</i> )	142	44	68	64	210	48
Indices or measures of deprivation	134	41	58	55	192	44

	Year one		Year two		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Census 2001	70	22	35	33	105	24
National surveys (e.g. household surveys)	64	20	30	28	94	22
Regional Economic Strategies	51	16	16	15	67	16
Other	6	2	30	28	36	8
Don't know	62	19	5	5	67	16
Total	835	-	372	-	1207	-

**10. How were beneficiaries and local communities involved in identifying their own needs? (Please tick one box) (Total base = 445)**

	Year one		Year two		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
They were not involved at this stage	22	7	8	7	30	7
We gave them information about the needs the project was setting out to address	45	14	21	17	66	15
We gave them options for what needs the project could address and they were invited to give feedback	60	18	24	20	84	19
They worked with the project team on equal terms to contribute their ideas of which needs the project should address	78	24	33	27	111	25
The needs were entirely decided by beneficiaries and local communities	60	18	25	21	85	19
Don't know	0	-	9	8	9	2
Sub-Total	265	-	120	-	385	-
No reply	60	18	0	0	60	13
Total	325	100	120	100	445	100

**11. During the life of your project, have there been any changes to services available in the target area which have had/will have an impact on how you will address the needs of your target group? (Please tick one box) (Base all = 195)**

	Number	%
Yes	42	21
No	123	63
Don't know	13	7
No response	17	9
Total	195	100

**11a. If yes, please describe? (200 words max) (Base all describing changes to services = 37)**

	Number	%
Response to changes in statutory provision	10	23
Introduction of new / expanded/improved services	10	23
Partnership with other voluntary groups	3	7
Financial / legislative changes	6	14
Adjustment according to changing need	3	7
Response to improved knowledge / understanding	2	5
Monitoring and adjustment	3	7
Increase in demand	4	9
Demographic / beneficiary changes	2	5
Lack of help elsewhere	1	2
Total	44	100

**12. During the life of your project so far, have there been any changes in the needs of your target groups?** *(Please tick one box)* (Base all = 195) (The Big Lottery Fund accepts that it is possible that the focus of your project might change during your funding. There is no problem with this, as long as the outcomes you are working towards remain the same.)

	Number	%
Yes	23	12
No	146	75
Don't know	7	12
No response	19	10
Total	195	100

**12a. If yes, please describe?** *(200 words max)* (Base all describing a change in target group needs = 21)

	Number
Need for extended / expanded service	6
Increase in demand / number of beneficiaries	4
Demographic changes	3
Change in requirements of target group	5
Target group has a more specific need	1
Issues have become more acute	5
More accessibility needed	2
Change to policy	3
More information/advice to be given	1
Total	29

**12b. If yes, have you changed your project to meet these emerging needs?** *(Please tick one box)* (Base all those who have seen changes in needs at Q12 = 23)

	Number	%
Yes	9	39
Plan to do so	8	35
No	5	22
No response	1	4
Total	23	100

**12c. If yes, please describe?** *(200 words max)* (Base all describing changes to projects to meet the needs = 6)

	Number	%
Additional services	3	27
Adapted services	1	9
Extended service availability	2	18
Sought additional funding	0	0
More contact with beneficiaries	0	0
Additional staff training	1	9
Partnership with other agencies	2	18
Change in need advises other projects	1	9
Greater promotion	1	9
Total	11	100

## **INVOLVEMENT OF BENEFICIARIES**

**13. How often were/are beneficiaries and local communities involved in the following aspects of your project? (Please tick one box for each) Base sizes vary, given below.**

	%	%	%	%	%
	<i>Always involved</i>	<i>Sometimes involved</i>	<i>Rarely involved</i>	<i>Never involved</i>	<i>Don't know</i>
Project planning (Base, 163)	48	44	4	2	2
Project delivery (Base 162)	43	43	11	2	2
Project decision-making (Base 163)	34	47	12	4	2
Project management (Base 162)	23	34	23	17	1
Project evaluation (Base 161)	63	27	5	2	4

**13a. [Ask all those answering all those who answered always/sometimes to Q13] Please briefly describe (one or two sentences) how you are involving beneficiaries e.g. *'They are involved through regular meetings with the community; they are included as members in our management committee; they are involved through a survey'*. (Base all those answering at Q13 always/sometimes = 139)**

	Number**
Formal feedback (this includes evaluations, surveys, questionnaires, interviews)	52
Project Management (i.e. on board as trustees, involvement in management committee)	42
Meetings	31
Informal feedback (including 'discussion')	25

	Number**
Active involvement (beneficiaries involved in delivery, recruitment, day to day running)	30
User forum (including forums, focus groups)	25
Consultation	31
Publications (including newsletters, website etc)	7
Partnership working (continuing contact with beneficiaries through a partner – e.g. a school)	6
Follow up contact (contacted after project)	0
Mentoring	0
Other techniques to be developed	1
Generic involvement	8
Empowerment/ownership	1
Total	228

(\*\* Equates to number of projects doing each activity, please note each project has up to 2 codes allocated)

**14. Please specify what other outcomes have been achieved as a result of involving beneficiaries?** (Please tick one for each) Base sizes vary, indicated below.

	%	%	%	%
	To a large extent	To a small extent	Not at all	Don't know
Our project meets the identified needs more effectively (Base 160)	79	14	1	5
Project delivery has improved (Base 159)	63	28	4	6
Project is more likely to meet its objectives (Base 160)	71	22	1	6
Improvement in confidence for	75	19	1	6

	%	%	%	%
beneficiaries (Base 159)				
Communities feel empowered (Base 159)	55	31	1	13
Other (please specify – see below) (Base 38)	39	11	5	45

**Other, please specify.** (Base all specifying at Q14 = 38)

	Number
More reflective of need	3
Improved project management / monitoring	1
Better understanding of need	1
Reduced isolation	2
Secured other funding	1
Personal development of beneficiaries	5
Health improvement	2
More inclusive	2
Beneficiaries role in running project	3
Increased ownership by beneficiaries	4
Awareness of project	1
Impacts on wider community	1
Beneficiaries opportunity to express need	2
Unable to involve beneficiaries	1
Too early in project	5
In process of involving beneficiaries	1
Total	35

## **SOFT OUTCOMES**

**Soft outcomes from your project are those which cannot easily be directly 'counted' or quantified such as improved levels of community engagement or changes in attitudes of participants.**

**15. Are you measuring soft outcomes and/or distance travelled (e.g. increased confidence, changed feelings about local community) as part of your project?**  
*(Please tick one only) (Base all = 195)*

	Number	%
Yes	127	65
No	11	6
Don't know	12	6
Not applicable	7	4
Not answered	38	19
Total	195	100

**15a. If yes, please describe what you are measuring? (e.g. 'Measuring improvements in confidence of young people through surveys' (200 words max) (Base all measuring soft outcomes = 127)**

	Number	%
Confidence / self esteem	51	28
Wellbeing	22	12
Relationships	4	2
Skills	7	4
Feelings	7	4
Perceptions	4	2
Experiences of project	19	10
Attitudes	9	5
Personal development	8	4
Behaviour	2	1
Independence	4	2
Educational improvement / knowledge gain	1	1
Financial capability	2	1
Employability	2	1
Safety	0	0
Understanding	5	3
Tolerance	2	1
Barriers	0	0
Increased Opportunities	3	2
Empowerment	2	1
Social Skills	8	4
Improved health	6	3
Community engagement	5	3
Ability to access services/information	5	3
"Soft outcomes"	4	2
Long-term benefits	1	1
Total	183	100

**16. Are you/do you plan to track the progress of beneficiaries once they leave your project** (Base all = 195)

*(Please tick one only)*

	Number	%
Yes	61	31
No	35	18
Don't know	34	17
Not applicable	26	13
Not answered	39	20
Total	195	100

**16a. If yes, please describe how you are tracking beneficiaries? (200 words max) (Base all tracking beneficiaries, 52)**

	Number	%
Follow up contact (3, 6, 12 months after finishing project)	13	16
Continuing work with target group	7	8
Tracking / monitoring system in place	15	18
Work with other agencies (i.e. if project linked to a school, follow up carried out by / in connection with the school)	9	11
Feedback on exit	3	4
Dependent on beneficiary	7	8
No beneficiaries left yet	1	1
Ongoing events	4	5
Using a database	1	1
Still developing a system	5	6
Newsletter	9	11
Assist in securing future destination	1	1
Return as volunteers	1	1
Open doors	7	8
Tracker group / sub group	0	0
Monitor people who return to project	0	0
Total	83	100

## **PROJECT SUSTAINABILITY**

**17. Are you seeing/expecting to see benefits continuing beyond the life of the project?**  
(Please tick one only) (Base all = 195)

	Number	%
Yes	147	75
No	1	1
Don't know	8	4
Not answered	39	20
Total	195	100

**17a. If yes, what sort of long-term benefits do you expect to see/are you seeing?** (Please tick all that apply) (Base those answering yes to Q17 = 147. Multiple answers allowed)

	Number	%
Beneficiaries better able to manage life	126	86
Beneficiaries better equipped for work	87	59
Improved mental health among beneficiaries	114	76
Improved physical health among beneficiaries	87	59
Greater community cohesion	84	57
Improved community capacity	92	63
New partnership and collaboration	75	51
Improved organisational capacity	56	38
Tools/materials/approaches developed that are of use to other projects	49	33
Better-used community spaces	31	21
New or improved community facilities	32	22
Environmental improvements	20	14
Other	11	7
Don't know	1	1
Total	865	-

**Q17a) Others, please specify. Coding of others at Q17a. (Base Size = 10)**

	Number	%
Improved access to services	1	5
Improvement to achievement	1	5
Knowledge development	2	10
Improved quality of life	2	10
Empowerment	0	0
Personal development of beneficiaries	4	20
Increased awareness of issues	4	20
Development of key skills	0	0
Sustainability of organisation	1	5
Reduction in crime / fear of crime	1	5
Local communications / community / community events	3	15
Awareness of organisation	1	5
Total	20	100

**18. Are you expecting your project to continue beyond the life of the Reaching Communities funding? (Please tick one only) (Base all = 195)**

	Number	%
Yes	129	66
No	4	2
Don't know	20	10
Not answered	42	21
Total	195	100

**18a. If yes, please describe how you will do this and from where you intend to secure future funding. (200 words max) (Base all answering yes at Q18 = 129)**

Method of continuing effects of project	No.	Where will funding be secured from	No.
Work with other organisations / partnership working	2	Specifically Big Lottery	3
Commission services / enter service agreements	2	Private Trusts / grant giving organisations / charities	6
Self sufficient / sustainability / develop income generation	19	Unitary / Local Authority	4
Funding for individual projects / parts of projects	1	PCTs	2
Generate income and need grant	1	Central Government	7
Need to raise further funding	45	Statutory Sector	7
Not yet decided	12	Multiple (statutory, and trusts)	27
Cut costs (staff, i.e. train up volunteers)	1	Regional public agencies	0
Networking	3	NHS	0
Social enterprise	0	Town Council	2
Appoint staff member for funding	5	Fundraising	0
Promote success of project	1		
Project complete / one off capital spend	5		
Already have funding from other organisations	0		

*Note: For each response potential for one 'how' code and one 'where' code. For each category only one code allocated per answer. The 'how' and 'where' on each row do not relate to the same answer.*

## **PROJECT COMPLETION [Ask England projects only]**

### **19. Is your project due to be completed by summer 2009?**

*(Please tick one only) (Base all England projects = 190)*

	Number	%
Yes	12	6
No	131	70
Don't know	4	8
Not answered	43	23
Total	190	100

## **FOR PROJECTS FINISHING THIS YEAR ONLY**

**If your project is due to be completed by summer 2009, please answer the following questions.**

**20. To what extent do you feel that your project has achieved the following? ?** (Base year one, all projects that will finish by summer 2008 = 24; year two, all projects that will finish by summer 2009 = 14. Total base = 38 *(please select the statement which most applies)*)

**We have met the needs that we originally identified**

	Year one		Year two		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
To a large extent	18	75	13	93	31	82
To a small extent	2	8	0	0	2	5
Not at all	2	8	0	0	2	5
Not relevant	2	8	1	7	3	8
Don't know	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	24	100	14	100	38	100

## Our activities have met the needs of all our target communities

	Year one		Year two		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
To a large extent	15	63	7	50	22	58
To a small extent	4	17	5	36	9	24
Not at all	2	8	0	0	2	5
Not relevant	3	12	2	14	5	13
Don't know	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	24	100	14	100	38	100

## We have reached hard to reach groups

	Year one		Year two		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
To a large extent	13	57	8	62	21	58
To a small extent	3	13	3	23	6	17
Not at all	2	9	0	0	2	5
Not relevant	5	22	2	15	7	19
Don't know	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	23	100	13	100	36	100

## We have met the needs of the 'most in need'

	Year one		Year two		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
To a large extent	12	52	8	62	20	56
To a small extent	4	17	2	15	6	17
Not at all	1	4	0	0	1	3
Not relevant	4	17	2	15	6	17
Don't know	2	9	1	8	3	8
Total	23	100	13	100	36	100

## Our project has reduced disadvantage and social exclusion

	Year one		Year two		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
To a large extent	11	48	9	64	20	54
To a small extent	5	22	2	14	7	19
Not at all	2	9	0	0	2	5
Not relevant	3	13	2	14	5	13
Don't know	2	9	1	7	3	8
Total	23	100	14	100	37	100

## Our project has used innovative approaches / activities

	Year one		Year two		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
To a large extent	9	41	5	42	14	41
To a small extent	6	27	4	33	10	31
Not at all	2	9	0	0	2	6
Not relevant	5	23	3	25	8	23
Don't know	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	22	100	12	100	34	100

**Our project has met the programme outcomes we originally specified** (q asked in year 2 only, base all projects ending summer 2009 = 14)

	Number	%
To a large extent	11	79
To a small extent	1	7
Not at all	0	0
Not relevant	2	14
Don't know	0	0
Total	14	100

**20a. Which groups or types of people mostly benefited from your project? (200 words max) (Base all projects ending in summer 2009 = 14)**

Target group	Number
Black and minority ethnic groups	0
Lesbian/gay/bisexual/transgender people	0
Men and boys	0
Women and girls	0
Faith groups	0
Carers (family carers, carers of terminally ill)	1
Local communities/community relations	2
Deprivation/deprived areas(urban or rural)/multiple deprivation	0
Disability	1
Older people	3
Children and young people	4
Domestic violence sufferers/rape victims	0
Vulnerable/disadvantaged/excluded/marginalised/hard to reach groups	1
Ex-offenders/prisoners	1
Children and families	1
Financially excluded/debt/low income/unemployed	0
Rural needs/rural areas	2
Homeless people	1
Learning difficulties an/or disabilities	0
Truancy/excluded from school	0
Improve wellbeing (mental, physical, health)	0
Isolation	0
IT literacy	0
Lack of service provision	0
Low participation/involvement	0
Medical condition/genetic disorder/chronic condition (not including mental health needs)	0
Mental health	0

Target group	Number
Asylum seekers/refugees/migrant workers	0
Stress/depression/anxiety	0
Organised violence/crime/torture	0
Parents and families	1
Tackling racism	0
Anti-social behaviour/crime/binge drinking/violence	0
Bullying	0
Drug/alcohol/substance misuse/addiction	1
Lack of skills/educational underachievement	0
Bereavement	0
Blind/visual impairment/partially sighted	0
Pregnancy	0
HIV/AIDS	0
Gypsy/Traveller communities	0
Teenage parents	1
Social enterprises/charities/organisations	1
None	2
Total	23

**21. What sources of evidence have you used to assess the extent to which needs have been met?** (Please tick all that apply) (Base year one, all projects that will finish by summer 2008 = 24; year two, all projects that will finish by summer 2009 = 14. Total base = 38 Multiple answers allowed)

	Year one		Year two		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Informal feedback from beneficiaries	21	88	14	87	35	87
Level of attendance	18	75	12	75	30	75
Level of demand for activities	15	63	12	75	27	67

	Year one		Year two		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Self-evaluation	15	63	9	56	24	60
Performance against programme outcomes	13	54	9	56	22	55
Formal feedback from beneficiaries (e.g. responses from beneficiary questionnaire)	10	42	4	25	14	35
Performance against programme milestones	6	25	10	62	16	40
External evaluation	5	21	4	25	9	22
Tracking beneficiaries	2	8	2	12	4	10
Other	2	8	3	19	5	12
Don't know	0	0	1	6	1	2
Total	107	-	80	-	187	-

## 22. What benefits/impacts have you seen as a result of your project?

(Please tick all that apply) (Base year one, all projects that will finish by summer 2008 = 24; year two, all projects that will finish by summer 2009 = 14. Total base = 38, multiple answers allowed)

	Year one		Year two		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Improved physical health among beneficiaries	12	50	4	25	16	40
Improved community capacity	12	50	6	37	18	45
Beneficiaries better able to manage life	11	46	7	44	18	45
Greater community cohesion	11	46	9	56	20	50
Better-used community spaces	10	42	6	37	16	40
New or improved community facilities	10	42	8	50	18	45
Beneficiaries better equipped for	8	33	4	25	12	30

	Year one		Year two		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
work						
Improved organisational capacity	8	33	5	31	13	32
New partnership and collaboration	8	33	7	44	15	37
Improved mental health among beneficiaries	7	29	5	31	12	30
Tools/materials/approaches developed that are of use to other projects	4	17	7	44	11	27
Environmental improvements	3	13	3	19	6	15
Other	1	4	2	12	3	7
Don't know	0	0	1	6	1	2
Total	105	-	74	-	179	-

**23. Which of your activities were most and least effective in meeting the needs you identified?** (Base all projects that will finish by summer 2009 = 43)

Most	Least
Additional worker	Woodcraft workshop
Extension to building	Getting young people to attend
Expansion of recruitment	Health and fitness project
Computer classes, reading group and tai chi	Attracting long term volunteers
Drugs awareness activities and visits	Getting statutory agencies involved
Having a high profile goal	Difficulties with partners delivering participants
The football frenzy group	Only some of facilities are in operation
Projects which involved children	Some groups difficult to engage
Community capacity	Outreach in prisons - low take-up
Peer education programme	Gaining further funding
completing site and installing play equipment	Irregular attendance to table top sales
Mutual help groups	Basketball club - due to issues with a coach and the hoops
Combination of regular programmes and show case opportunities	Informing teenagers of the facility
Facilities that enabled greater social inclusion	Lack of attendance to media course
Training workshops with professionals and delivery of radio station	None identified / all effective - met aims (3)
Children somewhere to play and meet	
Opportunity to volunteer	
Getting to know clients, providing advice and information, support to help independence e.g. ensuring that they have food	
Increased space to provide extra activities	
Events	
Greater community involvement, higher attendance, players returning, coaching opportunities for young people	
Publicising	
Concerts, exhibitions, events, coffee and cake mornings	
Not applicable / Too early to assess (2)	Not applicable / Too early to assess

*\* Table lists all relevant responses - frequency of each = 1 except where indicated*

**24. Do you plan to do any of the following to disseminate the results of your project?**  
*(Please tick all that apply)* (Base year one, all projects that will finish by summer 2008 = 24;  
 year two, all projects that will finish by summer 2009 = 14. Total base = 38. Multiple answers  
 allowed)

	Year one		Year two		Total	
	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Media publicity	15	62	8	50	23	57
Written report / Evaluation report	12	50	8	50	20	50
Distribute flyers/brochures	8	33	4	25	12	30
Publicise through website	8	33	7	44	15	37
Hold an event/workshop	6	25	7	44	13	32
Present at conferences	1	4	3	19	4	10
Other	1	4	1	6	2	5

**25. Would your project have taken place without support from Big Lottery?**

*(Please tick one only)* (Base year one, all projects that will finish by summer 2008 = 24;  
 year two, all projects that will finish by summer 2009 = 14. Total base = 38, total 40)

	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Yes	1	4	0	0	1	2
Yes but in a reduced form	4	17	2	12	6	15
No	16	67	12	75	28	70
Don't know	2	8	2	12	4	10
Not answered	1	4	0	0	1	2
Total	24	100	16	100	40	100

**26. Please describe any good practice relating to how you have met or addressed need, that you have identified through your project. (200 words max) (Base all describing some examples of good practice, 32)**

	Number	%
Management/monitoring	4	13
Communication/communication/empowerment	10	31
Innovative/delivery	2	6
Working in partnership/team working	1	3
Evaluation of need	3	9
Staff/volunteer training organisation	3	9
Embedded in community	3	9
Reintegration/inclusion	1	3
Dissemination	1	3
Costing/time budgets	0	0
Feedback/evaluation	2	6
Membership programme	1	3
Structural improvements	1	3
Total	32	100

***Your responses have been saved. Thank you for your feedback.***