

REALLITY Proposal and Evaluation

To The London Probation Community in Action Fund



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Raise Everyone's Awareness of Lives Lost In The Youth

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ABOUT REALLITY

Introduction

“Tough on crime, tough on the causes of crime” is a laudable principle that must be underpinned by long term holistic problem solving strategies, balanced with enforcement tactics to make safer communities. However, as the number of teenage murders in London in 2008 runs at approximately three per month and there have been over fifty teenagers murdered in two years, there appears to be greater emphasis placed on enforcement by statutory agencies and less placed on solving the problems in our communities to ultimately prevent crime; especially amongst our young people.

There needs to be a hearts and minds approach to regenerate the thinking of people, especially young people who are increasingly vulnerable to all aspects of knife and gun attacks, in addition to reduce the possibility of the most vulnerable in being victims of such actions and reduce the fear of crime in our neighbourhoods.

REALLITY is a voluntary sector organisation with a vision that encapsulates this hearts and minds approach:

**To see restoration in people’s lives through Social, Educational, Economical,
Developmental or Spiritual well-being (SEEDS) interventions;
that works towards building safer and stronger communities.**

The REALLITY philosophy is outlined in our Mission and Values (appendix A) stating who we are, what we stand for and how we work towards our strategic themes (appendix B).

The three main areas of work will be apparent through sowing SEEDS of purpose into our neighbourhoods and our nation through:

- unique forms of youth outreach using the arts to fully engage the target group (from early teens up to the age of 25 years) to work against dysfunctional lifestyles;
- advising local, regional and central government towards developing more relevant and relatable strategies
- encourage the building of unique, sustainable and effective consortiums, such as the referral agencies that will take part in the SEED (Social, Educational, Economical, Developmental or Spiritual well-being) Zone outlined below or the 'Urban Trinity' (appendix C).

Youth Outreach

Building on the 2006 TRUCE (To Reach Urban Communities Everywhere) outreach programme in the boroughs of Hackney and Waltham Forest (appendix D), during the summer and autumn of 2008 REALLITY has developed a Creative Zone to be a unique artistic and musical hub to generate outreach musical products of excellence with the aim of:

***“Producing purpose driven music for our generation of young people
influenced and affected by crime”.***

The Creative Zone is a training process to develop REALLITY outreach workers and will lead to a series of outreach programmes within the estates, primarily through show cases called '**Hit-and-Pitches**' aimed at the target group starting in 2009.

The SEEDS (Social, Educational, Economical, Developmental or Spiritual well-being) Zone is a one-stop-shop made up of statutory and voluntary agencies brought together for the follow-up meetings, a very short period after a **Hit and Pitch**. The SEEDS Zone will be delivered through a peer-to-peer mentoring approach, within the **7Es** methodology (appendix E), setting progression pathways for individuals to assist in making wiser choices followed by sustainable action, to achieve a better quality of life and to enhance their social mobility. Participants will be referred to statutory and non-statutory partner agencies with a similar focus on regenerating individuals, families and/or communities; **therefore REALLITY will be proactively establishing consortiums with partner agencies that are prospective referral pathways emanating from the SEEDS Zone.**

Advising Local and Central Government

During the autumn of 2008 REALLITY will be developing a Community Communication Model (CCM) in the London Borough of Waltham Forest (LBWF), in partnership with local borough agencies and the Home Office. It will comprise of two 3 hour workshops involving local community influencers, residents and practitioners with the aim to create a synergy between the Home Office and grassroots communities over the true picture of crime and quality of life issues affected by the fear of crime in parts of the borough.

REALLITY hopes to encourage the participation of community influencers by emphasising '**without communication, nothing changes**' and that if they choose to, they could be the ones to mobilise their peers by consensus to make safer and stronger communities.

The CCM will also identify places of natural reasoning where these conversations may take place and how people consciously or unconsciously form an opinion on 'how safe their neighborhood is'. The objective of the CCM:

■ **EFFECTIVE & INNOVATIVE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT TO REDUCE THE FEAR OF CRIME**

BY

■ **Providing places of reasoning for community members and other stakeholders to:**

- **Share ideas**
- **Network across cultural, age , faith and gender gaps**
- **Clarify prevailing questions**
- **Respond with relevant answers**
- **Culminate in agreed actions to make stronger communities**

This provides an opportunity for local people to look at the overarching Home Office objective '**to help people feel secure in their homes and local communities**', in addition to identify what symbolises that for them and what motivates them into action.

The CCM is an innovative approach of demonstrating to the local community, through community influencers, of practical ways in which problems are being solved. Through supported networks of connected and well informed community influencers, REALITY will encourage individuals to buy-in to statutory partner's efforts to tackle local issues in their neighborhoods.

PROPOSAL

One of the key learning points from all of the activities carried out from TRUCE in 2006 to the ongoing programmes being rolled by REALLITY, is the need for intelligence based targeted outreach and engagement with the respective target group, to achieve their active participation in making safer and stronger communities. A key constituent group of people that needs to be targeted to inform the activities of Creative and SEEDS Zones, in addition to the CCM work with the Home Office and LBWF is that of ex-offenders.

It is proposed that REALLITY will carry out an engagement workshop with similar objectives with the CCM above during January 2009 with a group of 20 ex offenders based at the LBWF YMCA. I have an agreement in principle with the essential personnel BASED at the YMCA:

- Director of Welfare Services,
- Probation Support Worker and
- Youth Development Officer

Details of the workshop will be agreed between the REALLITY team and the YMCA personnel highlighted above once the allocated funding has been approved by the London Probation Service; having carried out comprehensive costings for the two CCM workshops carried out over the past few weeks there is no doubt that all of the allocated funds will be fully utilised as highlighted in costing breakdown (appendix F).

LEARNING

Appendix G is the full evaluation of the questionnaires completed with the ex-offender participants, thus capturing the learning from the workshop that in turn informed future REALLITY engagement systems.

Who We Are

REALLITY is a voluntary sector organisation steered by a dynamic Board of Trustees. Each of our Trustees has an impressive and proven track record in developing young people via accredited education and arts programmes for young people up to the age of 25 years, which is our target group for outreach.

Mission -how we get there:

REALLITY's mission is to mobilise and support individuals and groups to focus on:

- Engagement through artistic activities
- Encouraging and increasing individuals aspirations and expectations
- Assisting young people to know their rights and responsibilities through educational programmes
- Instilling hope and building self-esteem
- Reclaiming public spaces by reducing the fear of crime in young people and building confidence in their environment
- Celebrating the value of life
- Reduce inequalities by challenging people in positions of influence

Ultimately we will see lives restored and regenerated as opposed to being alienated and/or destroyed.

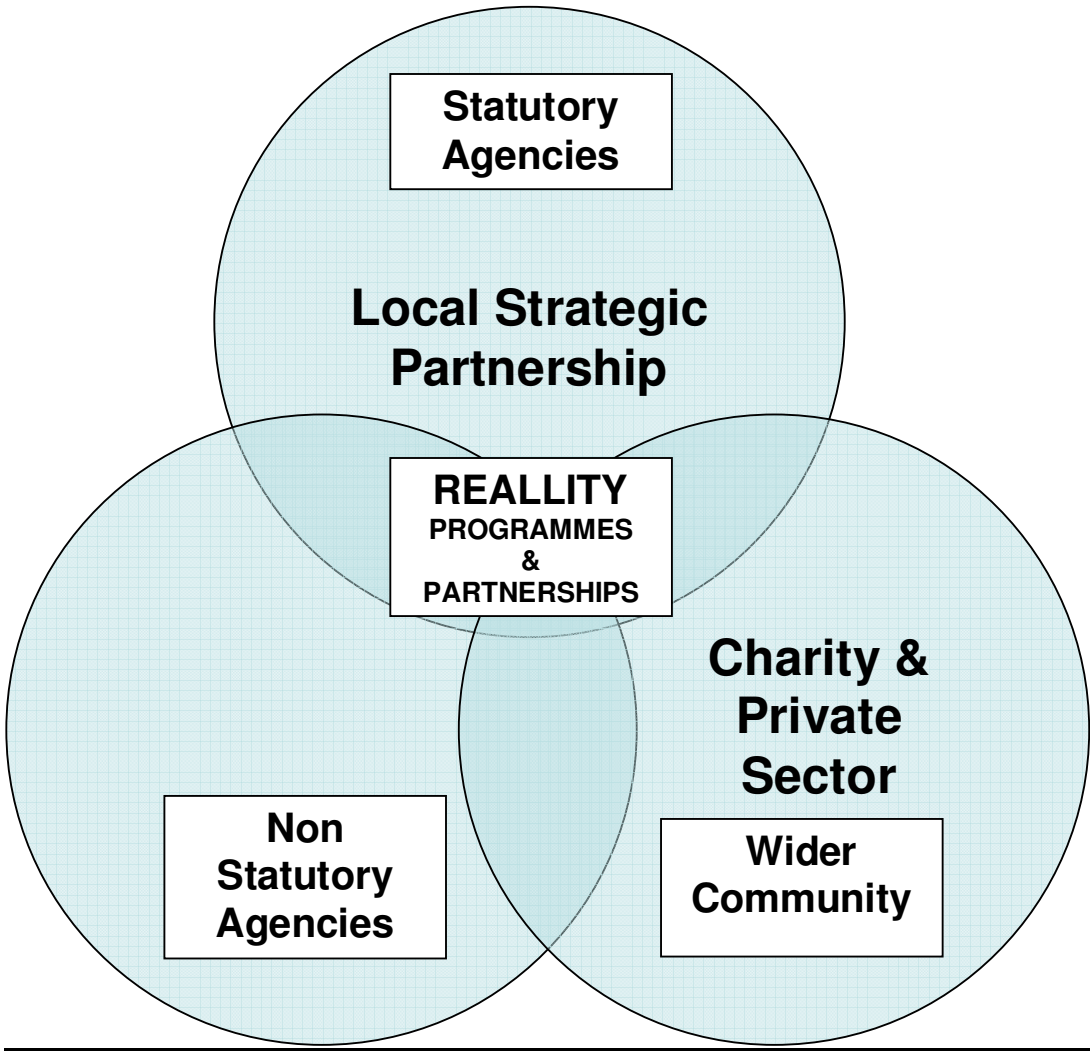
Values - a set of agreed standards:

REALLITY is underpinned by the following standards:

- Based on Christian principles
- Rooted in the community by recognising the needs of the socially excluded and the vulnerable
- Working towards lives being transformed from a life of anti-social behaviour and criminal activity to becoming positive and productive individuals
- A hunger for excellence and settling for nothing less
- Not allowing ourselves to be risk averse and to use wisdom in all that we do
- Openness and accountability in line with the Nolan Principles (appendix A)
Forging partnerships through the 'Urban Trinity'

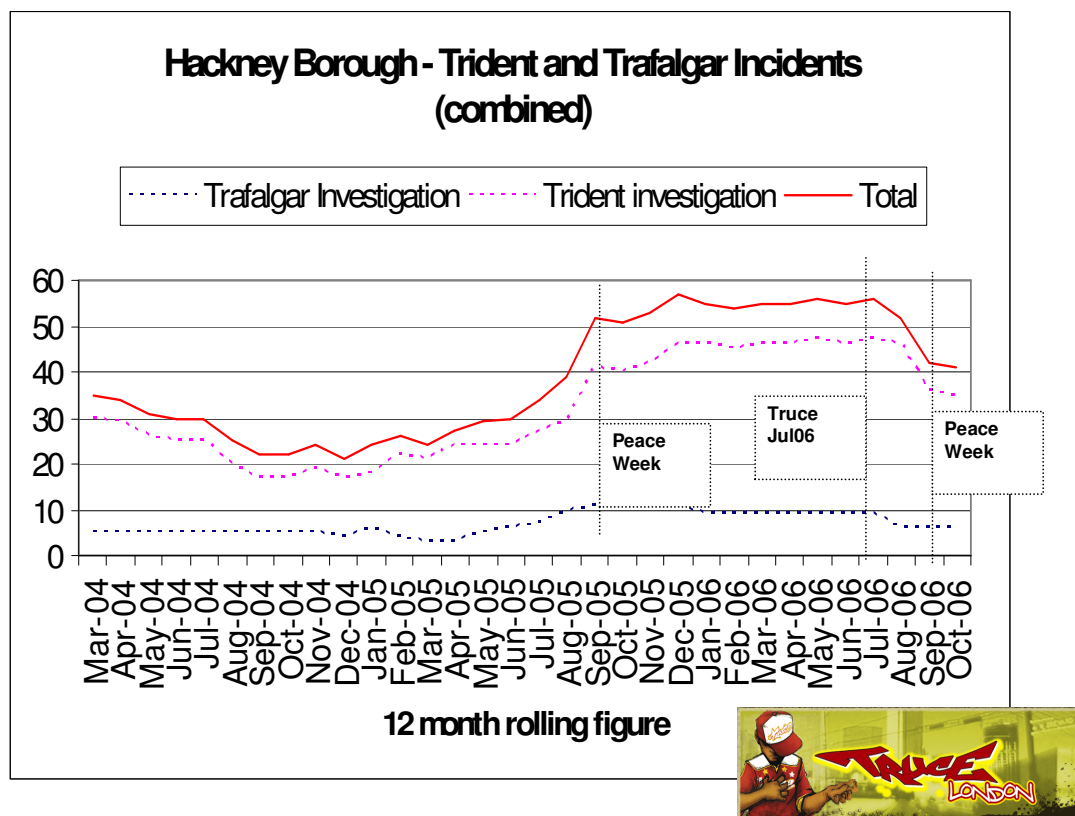
REALLITY Strategic Themes:

- REALLITY will develop and provide accessible high quality community learning and development opportunities, leading towards social action resulting in social change.
- REALLITY is committed to regenerating communities by developing service provision that meets identified gaps in current services and act as a bridge between statutory agencies and the community.
- REALLITY is committed to developing strategic partnerships (locally, regionally, nationally and internationally) working towards reducing crime and anti-social behaviour, plus reducing the fear of crime.
- REALLITY will aim to work in partnership with people at all status levels where appropriate, in the process of developing and supporting community based initiatives, as well as act as a bridge between statutory and non-statutory agencies and the wider community.
- REALLITY will proactively consult with individuals and communities about any planned initiatives to ensure it is a learning process for the community and the other stakeholders.
- REALLITY will ensure that all initiatives it manages and/or supports have suitably robust quality assurance systems that effectively monitor and evaluate the impact and cost effectiveness of services provided.
- REALLITY will proactively and reactively participate as appropriate influence the formulation and implementation of relevant Governmental Policies.



TRUCE (To Reach Urban Communities Everywhere) Outreach results:

- 1800 people responding
- 60% female and 40% male
- 70% were young people under the age of 17years.
- Personal robbery crime reduced by 30% in comparison to the same period last July
- Trident crime down by over 50%
- Repeat offending reduced by over 60% in the first 3 months
- Unprecedented peace meeting between 6 of the main gangs without any form of violence



7E's methodology - each of the 7E's remains collectively dedicated to regenerating the individual.

Engage- through the arts develop a carnival atmosphere in the estates that hold the attention of the audience allowing the message of hope to sink in, long enough for individuals and families to reflect on their current circumstances; thus enhancing civic pride through building self-esteem. This, in turn, assists in developing safer, stronger and more secure communities.

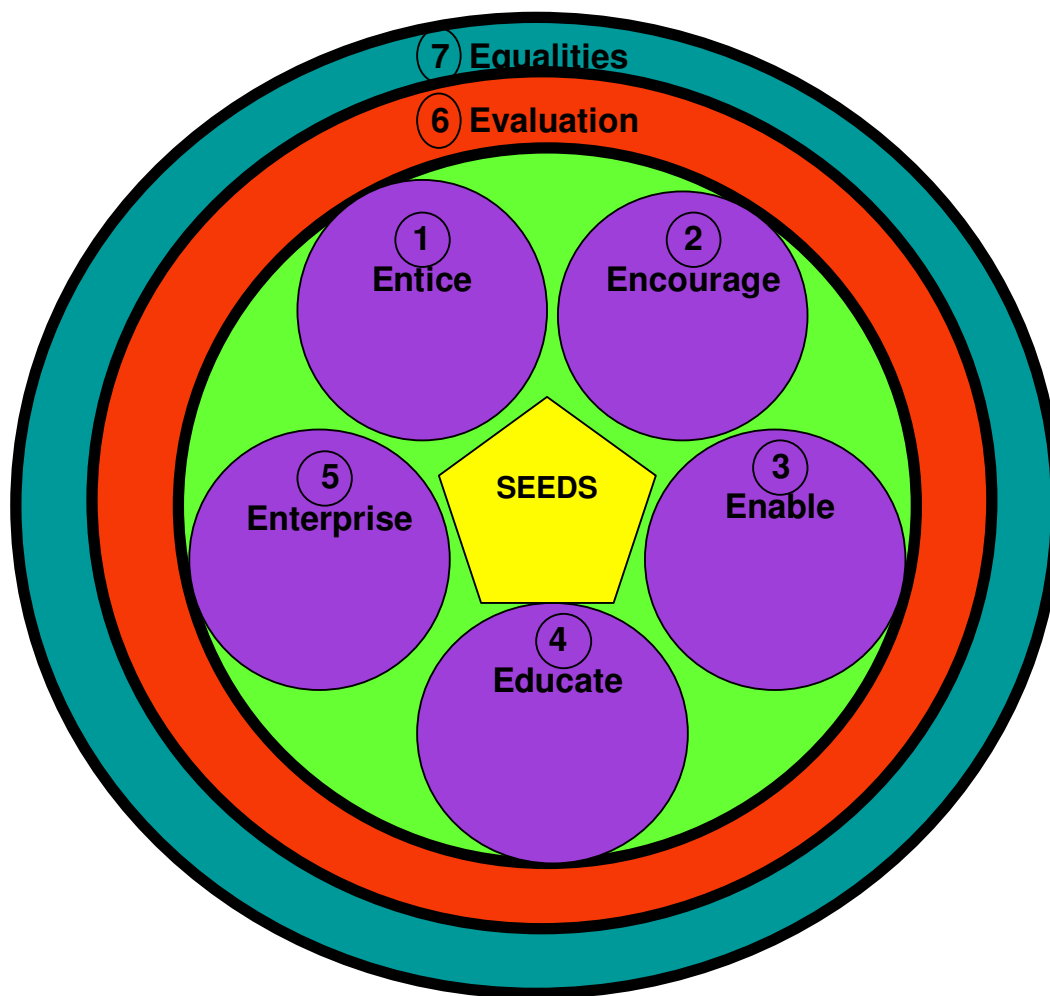
Encourage and Enable- through a strong message of hope from the expert outreach workers and by positive peer-to-peer mentoring it enables an individual to recognise they can change their environment and not become it. Through increased self esteem and an enhanced faith in their own spiritual relationship, REALLITY will emphasise the individual's ability to become the change they wish to see. By nurturing less hardened individuals who are able to subscribe to a strong work ethic, REALLITY will offer individuals more enriching life expectations and higher aspirations, encouraging a mutual respect for themselves and others, thus enhancing civic pride through building self-esteem. This, in turn, assists in developing safer, stronger and more secure communities.

Education and Enterprise- offering a practical series of alternatives. A route out of gang related lifestyles through sustainable activities that will continue to widen horizons and ambitions by channelling young people into accredited educational and entrepreneurship programmes. REALLITY will benchmark these outcomes with similar initiatives.

Evaluate- by capturing data to fully assess the impact of REALLITY on the following subject areas:

- gang related activity including inter and intra gang rivalry incidences between boroughs,
- gang membership,
- gun and knife offences,
- rates of re-offending and number of young people entering the criminal justice system,
- young people exhibiting more productive lifestyles and striving for significance by achieving their true potential,
- reducing truancy / exclusions and improving their academic qualifications,
- domestic violence incidences,
- community confidence and the fear of crime,
- cohesive community partnerships with relevant public sector departments e.g. Home Office, statutory organizations such as Police Safer Neighbourhood Teams (SNTs), in addition to private and voluntary agencies.

Equality- is explicitly shown by **REALLITY** embracing a multi-cultural community regardless of a person's race, age, disability, gender, faith or lifestyle through a strong message of hope; please not the diagrammatic representation below.



Community Communication Model [CCM]

An Engagement Workshop with ex-offenders

Projected Costs

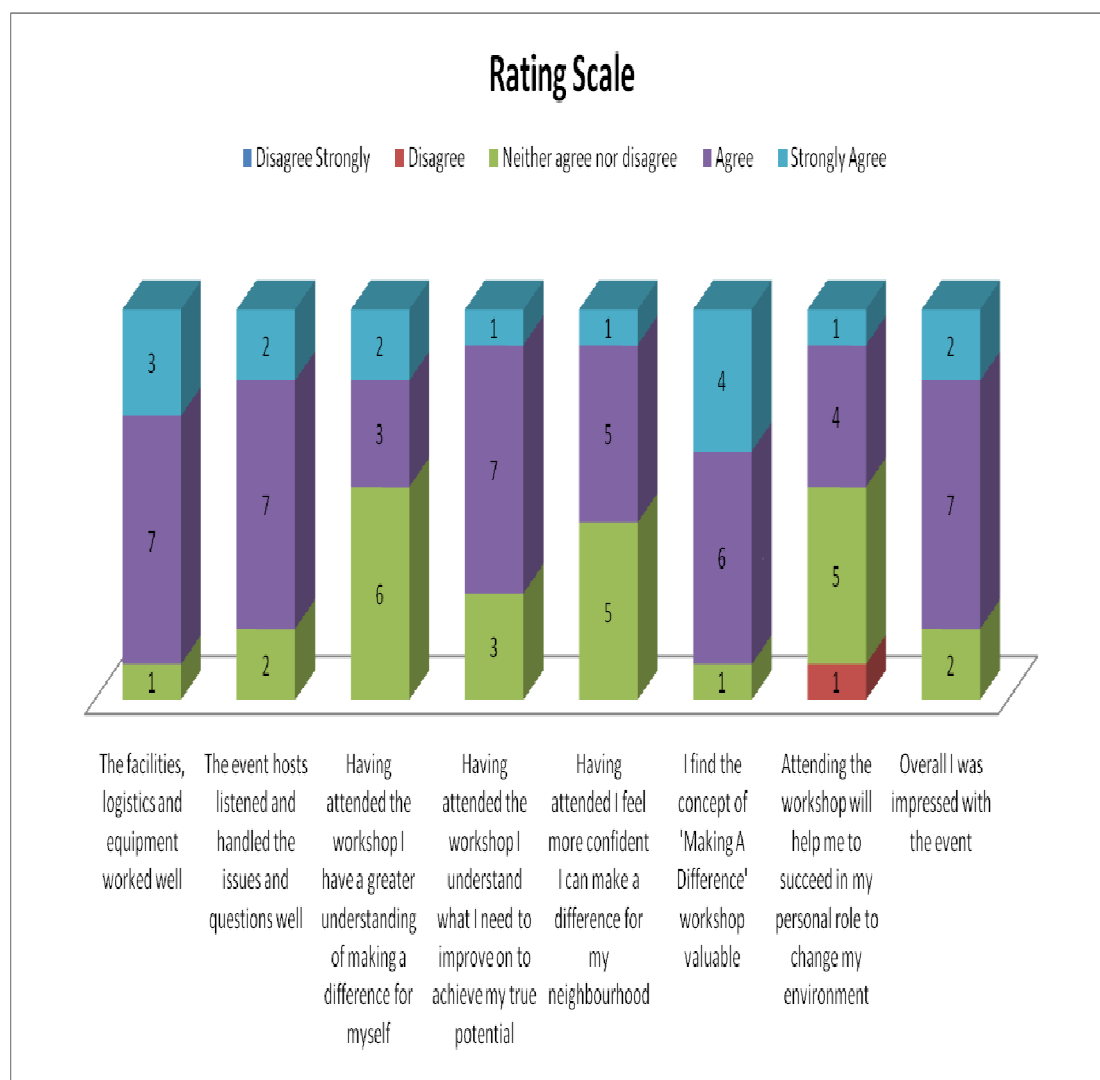
1.	Staffing	£X
	Equivalent to x1 Reality Team member for 10 days @ £100/day x1 Facilitator for the day £500 Additional Facilitation of syndicate/themed groups on the day £500	
2.	Accommodation & Equipment	£X
	Venue Hire Relevant equipment on the day	
3.	Hospitality	£X
	Catering	
4.	Travel	£X
	Ensuring attendance Costs for Staff and Volunteers	
5.	Marketing & Materials	£X
	Branding Trailing Workshop Event Production of relevant merchandise	
6.	Additional Management	£X
	Facilitation of any required meetings in preparation Appraisal Evaluation On-going liaison and management	
		Total £X...

NOTE1 : The above projected costs are approximations based on our first and very successful pilot CCM workshop delivered in partnership with the Home Office. Therefore these figures remain subject to small variation in practice e.g. our growing reputation in the community may afford us a saving in respect of 'venue hire'. We remain open to any further discussions required.

NOTE2 : A full copy of our evaluated report following our pilot CCM Workshop – in partnership with the Home Office – will be available in January 2009.

‘Appendix G

The responses from questionnaires that were completed by participants after the workshop have been collated and the data has been analysed. The participants were initially asked to rate various aspects of the workshops. The results are shown in the graph below.



From the results shown in the graph above, it is clear that the majority of participants **agreed** with the rating statements (purple sections). On the whole, the workshop was viewed as successful and several participants strongly agreed with all of the statements. A good indicator of the workshops being successful is that no one strongly disagreed with any of the statements. However equally, it is clear that there still is room for improvement.

One participant disagreed with the statement: *'Attending the workshop will help me to succeed in my personal role to change my environment'* and no one strongly agreed with either of the statements. *Having attended the workshop I understand what I need to improve on to achieve my true potential'* or *'Having attended the workshop I understand what I need to improve on to achieve my true potential'*. This indicates that more thought needs to be given to allow future workshops to fulfil these. The participants should be personally enriched, enhanced and should leave the workshops being built up and more aware of their potential, abilities and capabilities. In addition, clear steps should be outlined towards the end of the workshop to indicate how they intend to grow and improve in the future both in their personal lives and in their role within the community.

In answer to the question **'What were your key learning points or benefits from participating in today's workshop?'** A range of answers were given. One participant stated food as a benefit and another expressed that they enjoyed the group participation. Key learning points were stated as the following: face reality; a greater awareness; Unity is the community and respect is love; Positive thinking is the key. In particular, it was explicitly stated that the workshop helped to reinforce and remind the participants about key things that they already knew but had forgotten. More importantly it helped two of the participants to really take a look at themselves, their lives and what they want to do to improve in the future. One stated that the workshop has helped him to realise that he needs more self motivation and the another realised that he needs to make decisions to move on and live more positively by taking a look at his life, acknowledging his regrets and mistakes and then taking a positive step forward. Interestingly one of the participants stated that his key learning point was being able to understand other people's points of view. This suggests that having an open forum where participants can discuss various issues helps them to get a greater understanding of life and the struggles they all face collectively. It can also help participants to sympathise with others instead of focusing on their own issues.

The general consensus from the responses given was that the event was enjoyable and a good way to spend the evening, however suggestions were given, that for the future more time should be given to further explore things and also that more people should attend the workshops.

There is also a clear emphasis (in terms of improvements for future workshops) on having more workshops similar to this in the future and also greater contribution within the workshops. One participant wanted to network more and get to know people by name, which complements the above; that by having similar workshops with consistency in terms of the facilitators, organisers and contributing organisations,

a stronger relationship and greater level of trust can be built with the participants, which will help them to open up more and also learn and take in more. Another participant suggested that in future workshops the word 'REALITY' should have a stronger appearance through approaching realism.

One participant stated in the 'Additional Comments' section that he feels the participants should contribute in creating their own workshops, helping the same cause. This shows that the workshop was seen as useful and its purposes worthwhile. In answer to the question **'What things have you pledged to do?'** the following responses were given:

- Learn from ideas, and value the knowledge I received.
- Be more self motivated
- Have more discipline
- Think positive and contribute
- Get knowledge of things around and in me, and then share it
- Conduct a strategic analysis- working with everything I can at anytime
- Racism, Government Politics
- Strategic Alliances
- Money, Plaster Contracts, Apply for funding
- Get more knowledge and share it with everyone
- Positive thinking
- Do your own thing
- Courage-not listening to others
- Discipline

Whilst over half of the participants who completed a questionnaire made a pledge, showing that they want to make an active change, the pledges are very vague and not focused objectives that can be measured. For future workshops there needs to be a push towards pledges that are both realistic and achievable that the participants can actively work towards.

During the small group's sessions, when asked to express and discuss their concerns, the participants wrote down the following:

- Money
- Politics
- Everyday Life
- Not enough amazing grace-Money
- Lack of money-No confidence to do what I want to do (this participant emphasised his frustration by drawing an angry face at the bottom of his comment)
- Black youths-People living at the YMCA
- Women; I save my money when I go to my nanny's house-I pick it up when going to the post-Going to my new school
- Work; The YMCA
- The YMCA
- Shortage of artillery
- Everything
- Life, Work, Family

It is obvious from the responses obtained that there are varying concerns amongst the participants and a running theme is the issue of 'money', or the lack of it. Also interestingly, three participants named the YMCA as a concern for them. This raises many questions that can be further explored in subsequent workshops/sessions.

The discussion above was complemented by the work conducted in group 2's small group session where there was an emphasis on lessons learnt from the participant's past choices. Here the participants discussed the importance of having a clear vision which leads to self control. Also discussed were building determination; maintaining good health; being happy with yourself; peer pressure; unity amongst peers; and handling disappointment.

There was a core collective emphasis on having a positive attitude and self control in order to reach your goals. A driving factor for all was ambition, and it was agreed that it was necessary to be consistent and to have courage to achieve your goals.

Similarly, in group 1's session issues concerning peer pressure, and choices were discussed. There was also an emphasis on learning from experience and being a positive influence as opposed to a negative one. Also discussed was the issue of pride and building and maintaining focus.

Conclusion

The workshop was a success and from the responses given, it obviously made an impact on the participants. From the subsequent pledges it can be seen that the small group sessions made a positive impact on participants, helping their thinking and reasoning on various issues. Nonetheless, there are still improvements that can be made (for future workshops) to boost both the ratings and make more of an impact in the lives of the participants and consequentially the community.