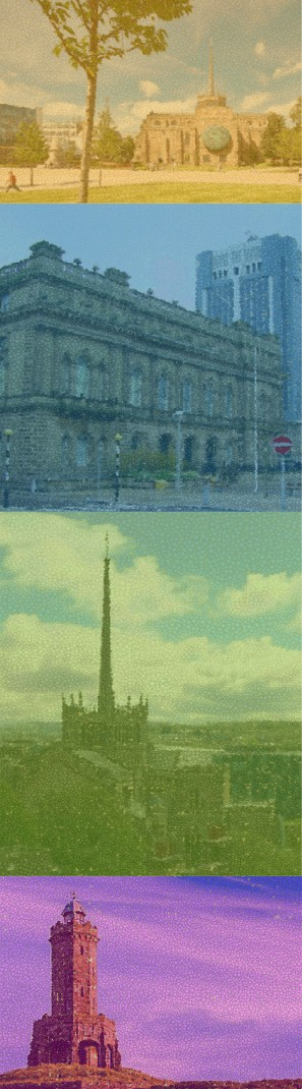**Community CVS & BwD Community Network**
The 6Ps VCFSE Conference

Tuesday 4th June 2024
10:00am to 2:00pm
Blackburn Central Library Town Hall St, Blackburn BB2 1AG

The 6Ps VCFSE Conference

We were delighted to welcome **220** delegates to the Conference and Workshops, with an additional **101** representatives from volunteer-involving organisations present at our Volunteers' Week Street Fair.

The 6Ps VCFSE Conference

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Presentations

Garth Hodgkinson (**CEO** of **Community CVS**) provided an introduction to the BwD Community Network and the "6Ps" concept.

Garth furnished delegates with historical background and the explained how the Network will represent the VCFSE Sector in the future.

You can download the presentation here.

Presentations

Cllr Damian Talbot (**Executive Member - Public Health, Prevention and Wellbeing**) gave a keynote speech entitled **People, Participation and Health**, outlining Council policy and highlighting the benefits of volunteering and voluntarism to the wellbeing of communities.
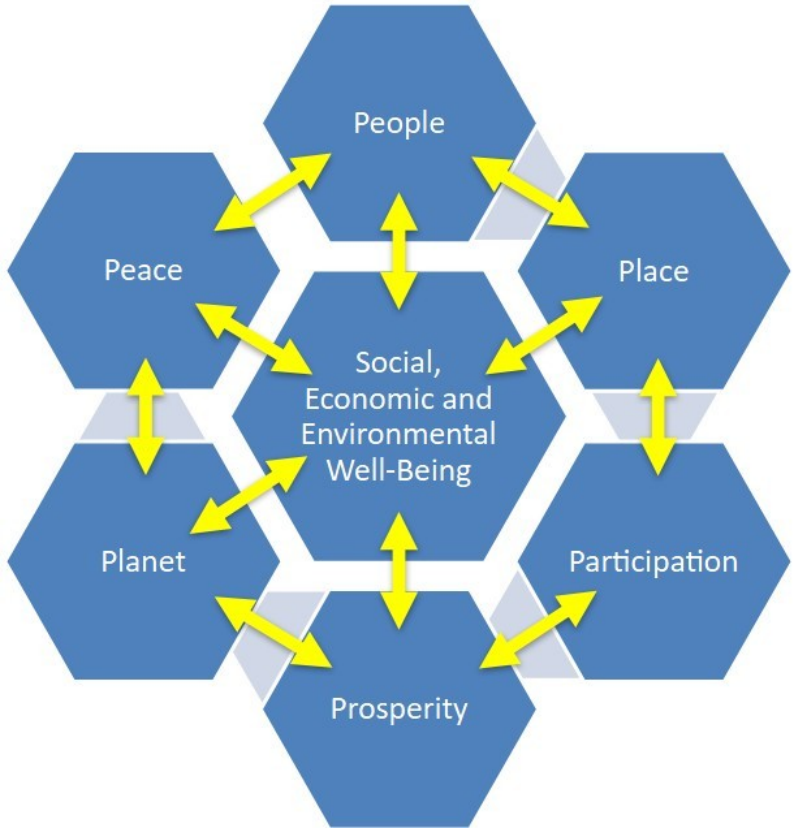
[You can read a transcript here.](#)

Presentations

Martin Kelly (**Deputy Chief Executive, BwDBC**) presented on the Council's keystone policy of **No One Left Behind**.

Martin's presentation outlined the Council's approach to economic growth and highlighted a number of opportunities in the local area.

You can download the presentation here.

What are the 6Ps?

The "**6Ps**" are six factors identified as impacting on the social, economic and environmental well-being of communities in Blackburn with Darwen.

A series of workshops were held during the day, with six focussing on the 6Ps.

Workshops

A series of **eight workshops** were held throughout the course of the 6Ps VCFSE Conference, focussing on different areas and facilitated by members of the BwD Community Network Board and staff from Community CVS.

Workshops

Participation & Equity *24 attendees*	**Peace** *6 attendees*	**People** *16 attendees*	**Place** *16 attendees*
Planet *6 attendees*	**Prosperity** *11 attendees*	**Volunteering** *9 attendees*	**Digital** *12 attendees*

Workshops: Participation & Equity

Workshops: Participation & Equity

- Reduce isolation.
- Share experiences.
- Provide peer support networks.
- SEND provision needs specific to wider issues.
- Address additional barriers with regards to tailoring mental health care for trans people to cater to individual needs.
- Community education and community empowerment.
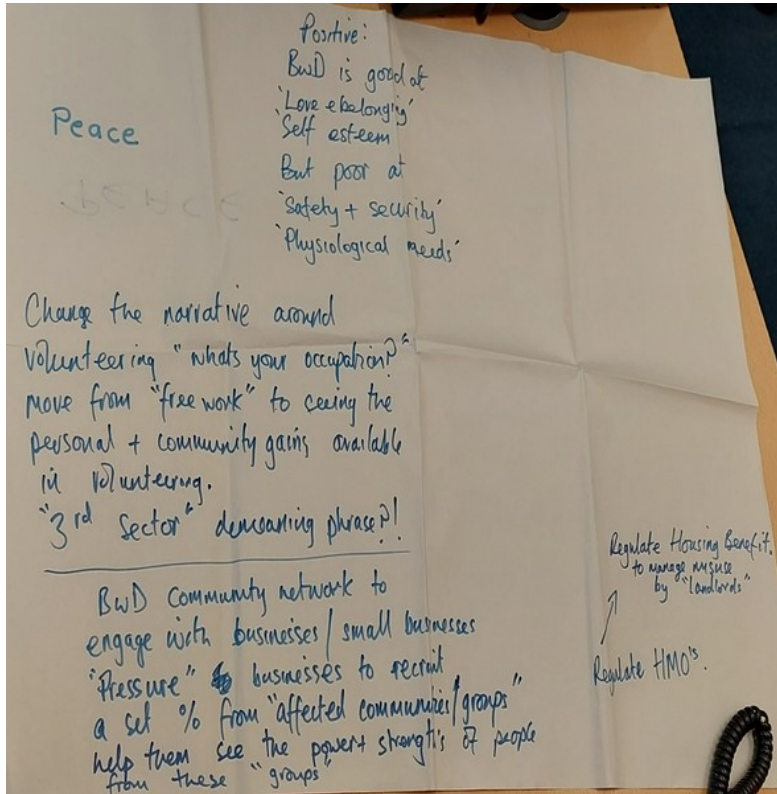- Linking services to provide holistic support.

Workshops: Participation & Equity

- Develop a publicly-available list of local support services available within different neighbourhoods and communities, to be maintained, kept up-to-date and promoted by Community Champions.
- Buddy support schemes to help people take the first step towards full engagement.

Workshops: Peace

Peace

Positive:
BwD is good at
'Love & belonging'
'Self esteem'
But poor at
'Safety + security'
'Physiological needs'

Change the narrative around
Volunteering "whats your occupation?"
move from "free work" to seeing the
personal + community gains available
in volunteering.
"3rd Sector" demeaning phrase?!

BwD community network to
engage with businesses / small businesses
"Pressure" businesses to recruit
a set % from "affected communities/groups"
help them see the power/strengths of people
from these "groups"

Regulate Housing Benefit.
to manage misuse
by "Landlords"

Regulate HMO's.

Workshops: Peace

- BwD is good at 'love & belonging' and 'self esteem,' but poor at 'safety & security' and 'psychological needs.'
- Change the narrative around volunteering: "what's your occupation?" needs to move from "free work" to seeing the personal & community gains available in volunteering.
- Is "third sector" a demeaning phrase?
- BwD Community Network to engage with businesses and lobby them to recruit a set percentage from "affected communities/groups" to help them see the power & strengths of people from these "groups."
- Regulate Housing Benefit/HMOs to manage misuse by "landlords."

Workshops: People

PEOPLE WORKSHOP
How do we add healthy years to life in BwD?
① Role of VCFSE sector
② How do we engage at borough & neighbourhood level

Workshops: People

What is the role of the VCFSE in increasing health and adding healthy years to life in BwD?

- Identify the locations where health is poor, where these communities attend on a regular basis and doing outreach into community settings to build relationships and connections.

- Collective influence - make all contact count, providing key messaging, education, self-help.

- Understanding additional needs within different communities. Providing education and extra support to help surmount these barriers (literacy, digital literacy, digital inclusion, etc.).

- Provide services at reduced cost.

Workshops: People

What is the role of the VCFSE in increasing health and adding healthy years to life in BwD?

- Engage with people in their own chosen locations through, e.g. the use of drop-ins, green spaces, mosques, football.
- Listen and observe - support individual & group aspirations to build confidence & trust.
- Encouraging volunteering and selling the benefits of volunteering for health & wellbeing.

Workshops: People

What is the role of the VCFSE in increasing health and adding healthy years to life in BwD?
- Work with SMEs - encourage them to be part of the community and support them to support their workers and their families.
- Encourage groups to grown their own food.
- Progress reports and updates directed at directors of organisations, as well as encouraging them to share expertise and connect with one another.
- Messaging must be well thought-out and delivered by people who can have an impact within communities.

Workshops: People

How do we engage at borough & neighbourhood level?
- We need to bring different communities together, in which the Community Network can lead by example: we must stand for the whole of BwD not just particular individuals, organisations or places.
- Assign individuals from within the neighbourhood to help build awareness of what's needed by local community, encourage the community to get involved & own issues and co-produce solutions.
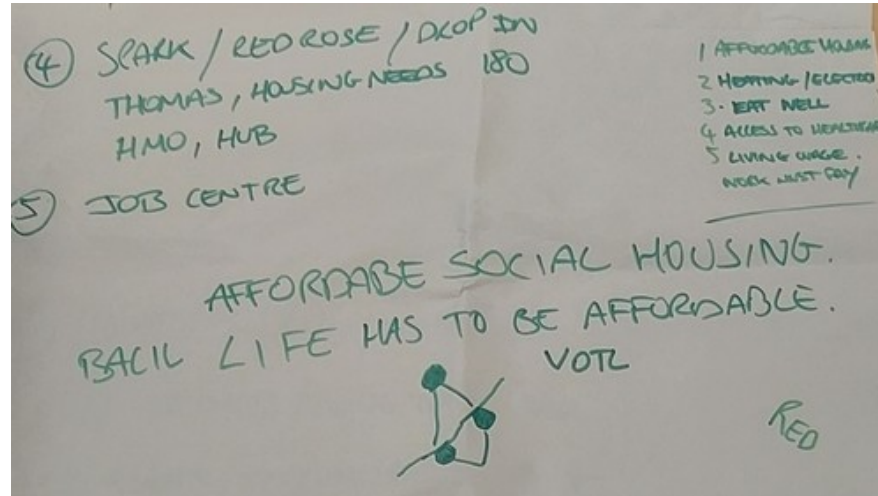
Workshops: People

How do we engage at borough & neighbourhood level?
- Change our behaviour to become more focussed on individuals, their needs and their neighbourhoods and communities.
- Deep engagement through neighbourhoods to find the people who aren't usually engaged with, with a constant presence within these neighbourhoods.
- Develop connections with Primary Care, Family Hubs and other such bodies to facilitate a greater understanding individual needs.
- Use the collective influence of the VCFSE within the Borough.

Workshops: Place

Workshops: Place

- Affordable social housing in BwD for everyone.
- Social tariff for energy - people should be able to heat their homes.
- Working should pay off - nobody should be working and skint!
- Address language and cultural barriers.
- Engage people to get them more active physically.
- One-point access so people can find out about all service in one place.
- Abolish automated services.

Workshops: Place

- No "wrong door" policy - commitment from everyone.
- Peer support, with everyone supporting each other.
- Services investing in volunteering as a way to access training and a way into paid employment.
- Look for the people who are most vulnerable and engage them in conversation.

Workshops: Planet

Workshops: Planet

- BwDBC have a Climate Change Action Plan (available online) which we can use to direct our work in this area.
- Recycling waste, green spaces, grassroots, start smaller in the spaces in the local area.
- Group activity - things that are happening or would be nice to have.
- Culture change - educating people on buying cheaper/loose products, more emphasis on buying local produce/seasonal eating (although produce tends to be cheaper coming from abroad).

Workshops: Planet

- We need to champion and highlight positive action to a much greater extent than is currently the case.
- Provide cooking lessons/recipes & repeat at home for clients using the model piloted in the PASTA Project.
- Digital awareness and litter picking packs to support the activities of groups such as Keep Blackburn Tidy.
- Stop trying to prevent some bids because we don't have the climate to support it.

Next steps:
- Developing a strategy in BwD.

Workshops: Prosperity
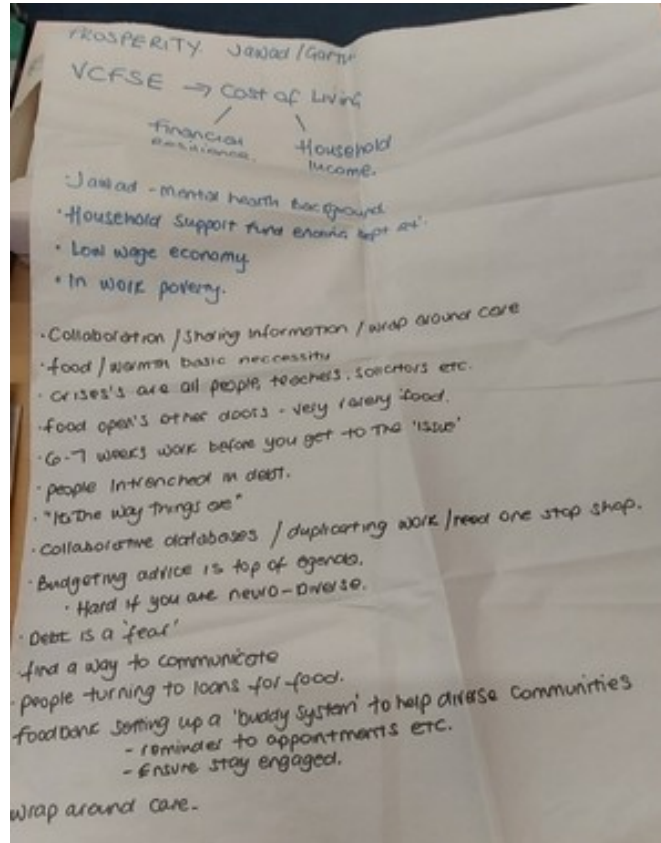
Workshops: Prosperity

- Sadly, we live in a low wage economy with a significant rate of in work poverty.
- Need a one-stop shop and collaborative databases to avoid duplication of work.
- Budgeting advice is much needed, though there are additional barriers (e.g. language, neurodiversity).
- Foodbank setting up a "buddy system" to help diverse communities and make sure people stay engaged.
- Signposting only burns people out, repeating their story time and again whilst achieving little.

Workshops: Prosperity

- Specific actions are needed to help economically-inactive individuals into employment.
- Barriers to people with ASD into employment - what ideas can we do to change the employment process?
- The VCFSE provides brilliant examples of volunteers progressing into paid jobs.
- Young people engaging in volunteering.
- Lots of information is now digital.
- Few people come into town, with many shopping online.
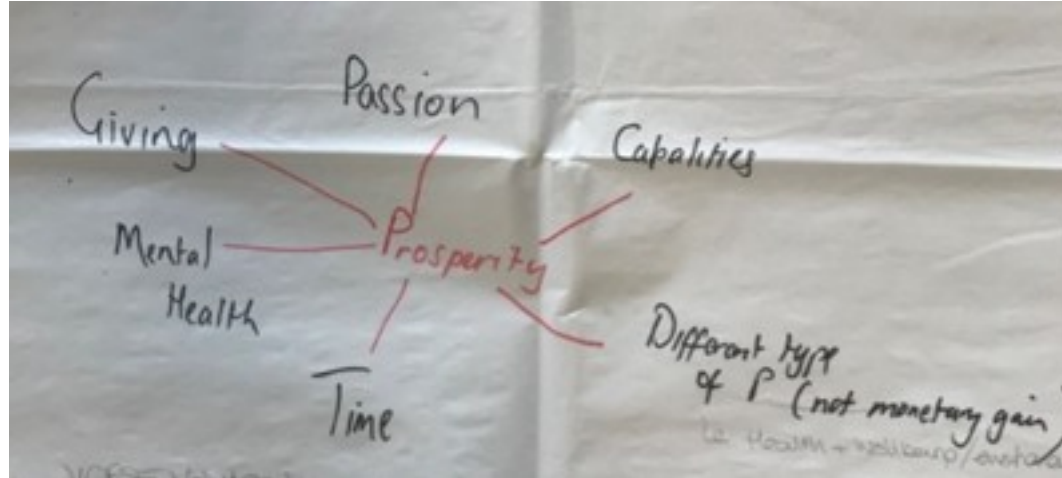
Workshops: Prosperity

Next steps:
- Action Groups.
- Employment Hubs.
- Physical resource/hubs.
- Travel costs.
- Education/training on budgeting.
- Challenge perceptions of seeking out help as a sign of weakness.

Workshops: Volunteering

Giving

Passion

Cabalities

Mental Health

Prosperity

Time

Different type of P (not monetary gain)
i.e. Health + adv group / events etc.

Workshops: Volunteering

- BwD priorities include growth & development of opportunities, e.g. supported internship, for people with learning difficulties and special educational needs.

- Look into creating volunteering opportunities with the public & private sectors.

- Access is a barrier, leading to a lack of experience, when it comes to getting employment.

- Volunteering provides the volunteer with a range of transferable skills.

Workshops: Volunteering

How does volunteering contribute to the prosperity of BwD?
- We are lucky to have a brilliant volunteer workforce doing extremely important work, e.g. Keep Blackburn Tidy.
- Using volunteers' lived experiences to input into service development.
- Volunteering offers a different type of prosperity (not monetary gain), including enhancement of health & wellbeing.
- VCFSE volunteering is not valued by private sector.
- Lack of interaction with private sector.

Workshops: Volunteering

How can the VCFSE Sector help volunteers into employment?
- Create volunteering opportunities in every organisation.
- Enable volunteers to feel valued and a vital part of a team.
- Set examples - mentoring volunteers can support them into employment.
- Making volunteering attractive.

Workshops: Volunteering

How can Community CVS support the VCFSE to help volunteers into employment?

- Provide infrastructure.
- Help with recruitment & retention.
- Meeting VCFSE sector expectations
- Guidance for championing volunteers and volunteering.
- Enhanced engagement with the private sector to source opportunities.
- Monitor the journey of volunteer into employment, collating & providing case studies of good practice.

Workshops: Digital

Workshops: Digital

How to increase uptake of digital skills provision?
- Education for organisations and individuals within the community.
- Improved infrastructure.
- Development of a knowledge base of what's available where.
- Raise awareness through case studies and good news stories.
- Address barriers (e.g. lack of access, language barriers).
- Incentivise learning (possible access to a device upon completing a course).
- Promotion at social events, e.g. at Community Centres.
- Intergenerational skills exchanges and buddy support.

Workshops: Digital

How to encourage organisations to donate unused devices?
- Promote donations as a form of corporate social responsibility.
- Incentivise donations (tax breaks, promotion and advertising, membership).
- Education for organisations to increase confidence with regards to data security aspects of donating used materials.
- Have a dedicated person to collect & take to a central point to be distributed and/or introduce specific drop off points.
- Highlighting carbon reduction impact/skills development/longer term social impact - addressing employability/skills enhancement/reducing isolation/independent living/connectivity.

Workshops: Digital

How to use digital technology to support vulnerable members of society achieve what's important to them?

- Basic training on using apps, messaging and video calls.
- Take into account the ability to set up software in various languages.
- Provide confidence-boosting training for older generations.
- Promote local voice successes relevant to all different groups.
- Gain funding to develop an app in collaboration with a university, with the ability to promote UK-based innovation.
- Source and furnish additional equipment to help people with disabilities remain engaged.
- Ensure a safe environment - Community Centres, sheltered housing, family homes and the like.

Workshops: Digital

**How to make sure everyone has the connectivity they need?**
- Scoping exercise to find the "hidden vulnerable."
- Designated "digital access centres" to be available between 9am & 10pm within communities.
- Develop a map of "good connectivity" locations & access points.
- Invest in community access hubs.
- Shared internet connectivity in areas.
- Promote corporate social responsibility opportunities for businesses sponsoring connectivity within the community.

Volunteers' Week Street Fair

In addition to the 6Ps Conference, we also took the opportunity to celebrate the 40th anniversary of Volunteers' Week and promote volunteering opportunities with local organisations via a Street Fair in King William Street.

Unfortunately, we were betrayed by the inclement weather – but we remain deeply grateful to the organisations who attended.
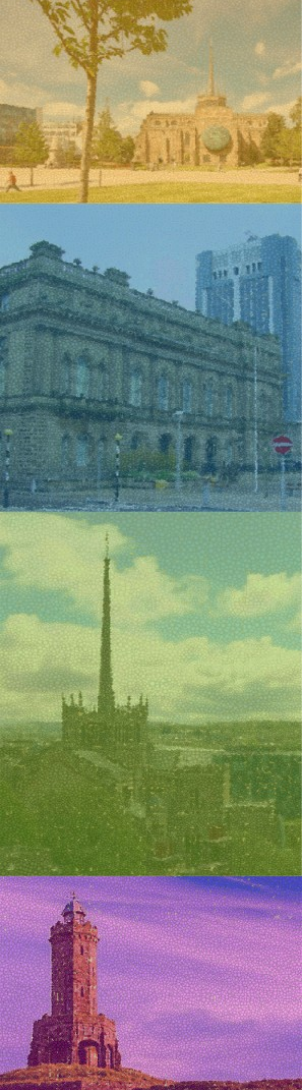
Volunteers' Week Street Fair

Volunteers' Week Street Fair

Volunteers' Week Street Fair

Feedback

At the end of the day, attendees were invited to give their feedback on how they felt the 6Ps VCFSE Conference and Volunteers' Week Street Fair benefitted them and their organisations.

Most of the feedback was good.

The following slides focus particularly on constructive criticism and useful suggestions to take on board in organising future events.

You can read all of the feedback by downloading this document.

Feedback

1. Did The 6Ps Conference meet expectations?

- Many attendees praised the content and the organisation.
- In addition to the weather, the distance between the Conference and the Volunteer Fair was raised.
- Lack of chairs at the street fair - some volunteers in attendance are unable to stand for long periods.
- The Planet workshop did not address "how we reach and engage with deprived communities to tackle climate change."
- The afternoon introduction "became a platform for individuals' opinions and issues, which really should have been addressed separately."
- The opportunity for networking and "making connections in my new role" was praised.

Feedback

2. What was most useful about the event?
- The majority of those giving feedback found the opportunity for networking and learning about other services and orgaisations the most useful part of the event.
- The workshops, presentations and the street fair were also well-received.

Feedback

3. Would you recommend the event to other people?

- Feedback was almost unanimously "yes."
- One useful suggestion was that, in future, the information stands which were part of the street fair would be better inside.
- One delegate suggested that a longer notice period before the event may allow people to attend for the whole day.
- It was also suggested that the event be promoted more widely across all sectors.
- One delegate was "not really clear about who it was aimed at" so was unsure.

Feedback

4. What was least useful about the event?

- One delegate suggested a more compact event, starting earlier and scrapping the post-lunch section, as many delegates left around this time.

- Difficulties with "balancing the stalls and being able to attend workshops" were highlighted.

- The presentations, in particular Martin Kelly's, were mentioned.

- The impromptu question and answer session after Martin's speech should've been better managed, with many good points made which should be addressed at another time. This also led to the afternoon session being delayed.

Feedback

4. What was least useful about the event?
- The management of the street fair on the day was criticised.
- It was suggested that notice of specific opportunities arising from last year's TEAM conference would have been appreciated.
- Combining the conference with Volunteers' Week.
- Criticism of the monitoring of the lunch (or lack thereof).
- Lack of seating at the street fair.
- Absence of Community CVS staff at the street fair during certain periods.

Feedback

4. What was least useful about the event?
- Some critique of the Prosperity workshop suggested that it concentrated more on crisis management and damage inflicted by deprivation, though this was also acknowledged as "practitioners (being) more focussed on the immediate issues than interested in strategic speculation."
- One delegate suggested a "designated networking hour" to replace the marketplace, while another proposed having tables in the corridor for leaflets.

Feedback

5. Any other comments

- Donna, the Community CVS team and the workshop facilitators were praised.
- Many delegates enjoyed the food, and appreciated the catering for different dietary requirements.
- A ten minute window at the end of each workshop to facilitate networking would be useful.
- A more proactive approach from Community CVS and the BwD Community Network to promoting funding opportunities.
- Delegates are keen to be involved in future events and follow up meetings.

Feedback

5. Any other comments

- The need for microphones during presentations and workshops was highlighted.

- Attendees could wear badges indicating the service they are from, so that anyone interested in learning more could pick up a leaflet (if there were tables with leaflets adjacent to the conference area).

- It may be better for people to choose the workshop(s) they wish to attend on the day, rather than booking beforehand (albeit the logistics of this were acknowledged).

- Alternative arrangements for the serving and consumption of food would be better - difficult to eat of one's knee in the Hornby!

Thanks and more information

Thank you to all who attended the Conference and Street Fair.
In particular, we would like to thank the Community Network Board and Community CVS staff and volunteers for their support on the day.
Thank you to our brilliant photographer Clive.
Thank you to Garth, Damian and Martin for their presentations.
And, of course, a huge thank you to Donna Talbot for organising the event.

If you'd like to find out more, please visit our website.