

Windsor and Maidenhead Big Society Event 2

Summary from 26th March 2011



28th March 2011

Introduction



On 26th March 2011 RBWM ran its second Big Society Day, taking over Windsor Girls' School and welcoming around 70 exhibitors and over 100 residents in to share and discuss community activity in the Royal Borough. There were several objectives to the event:

- To progress the discussion about Big Society in RBWM, moving away from the policy agenda itself and focusing on community activity and involvement in RBWM
- To inform residents about the work being undertaken and how they could get involved
- A networking opportunity for the council projects and voluntary sector organisations exhibiting

During the day a number of stalls asked attendees to register their thoughts and ideas about various aspects of Big Society in RBWM: The Ideas Wall, the RBWM project tables, and the 'temperature check' on entrance and exit. This pack brings together the comments shared in these venues.

The findings are presented as 'You said...' to help RBWM focus on identifying actions in response. If a third event is held, this will make it easier to use a 'you said... we did' format.

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Project tables

Carebank

There were not many comments about Carebank, which is a more complex project and has not yet fully launched

- Enormous potential for the 'virtual currency' market, which is worth \$1b in the US – definitely a massive growth area – go for it!
- How do we check the volunteers? If we are endorsing and facilitating their work, the council needs to make sure they are reliable, safe and credible

See section 4 for more feedback about Carebank.

More say for parishes



'More say for parishes' gained the most comments out of the projects. It was generally felt to be a good idea but there were issues raised about funding, what would be devolved, cultural change to make parishes more effective and representation for people not in a parish areas

- PROW – may be worse if parishes take over ownership (ramblers etc); wide ownership gives a balanced view and decision-making
- We don't know who/what covers non-parish areas
- To provide better or cheaper service it's a good idea
- Create parish for central Windsor – planning issues dealt with by local people would help St Anne's Road
- Can parishes try things on a pilot basis (option for the public to 'try before they buy'?)
- What are the risks to parishes of getting it wrong? Grass cutting might not be a problem but planning appeals would be a different matter
- Would one town forum/town council for Windsor or Maidenhead (i.e. the areas that don't have parishes) be too big?
- Objected to location for a new zebra crossing – want more consultation on locations to make it a two-way conversation

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More say for parishes



- Would be helpful to have a list/map of parishes
- What we can do – we already do! (Bisham Parish)
- How do areas with no parish get involved?
- I don't have any issues with my parish services
- How do you get economies of scale and sound procurement if services are devolved?
- Why don't you decrease council tax and increase the parish precept rather than devolve services piecemeal?
- This is rubbish. It doesn't work.
- Big advocate of parish councils. They need lots of support/training etc – lack of communication between LA and parish councils. Everybody expects services to be done by LA, they don't want responsibility for it.
- Can parishes have more say but keep the support of RMWN: e.g. planning/enforcement, working with designated planning officers to they develop a relationship with and understanding of parishes

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More say for parishes

Big Society
Day

- Should have a two-way communication/discussion on the net for parish councils – people could have their say and community feeling would be known
- Very good idea
- Excellent idea – All Saint's Avenue: devolve grass-cutting and litter; install litter bins; focussed street cleaning and better grass-cutting, most residents do their own anyway
- I don't live in a parish – I'm sure this idea of devolution would help

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Night-time economy

Big Society
Day

The night-time economy seemed to be an issue about which some people are still sceptical

- Localise the '[unreadable – sector] must pay' levy
- Local money raised by levy used to improve local environments
- Reduce night-time lighting (environment)
- What is the value of the night-time economy?

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Adopt-a-street

Big Society
Day

This is a more established project and there were comments given rather than suggestions

- Street cleansing should happen **after** waste collection
- When picking up litter wonders if some people think she's an ASBO!
- Two residents who were friends do all Gally's Road
- Resident notices litter because walks rather than driving

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Ways into volunteering

Big Society
Day

This was another popular project table – many respondents identified ways for RBWM to work with other projects and organisations, especially with the WMVA

- Excellent project – could link in very well with our community-based first aid learning project
- Excellent projects with young people – YOT, FIT etc
- Employers need to be more supportive and allow flexi-time etc for volunteering – otherwise people can only volunteer at evenings and weekends when there isn't that much to do
- What's the difference between ways into volunteering and WMVA?
- Is this not what the volunteer centre do?
- How is this different to what WMVA has been doing for 13 years in RBWM? We already do recruitment of volunteers very well and engage local businesses
- Feels this is about bringing it to other people's attention

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Ways into volunteering

Big Society Day

- A lady felt strongly and enquired what do the government think we have been doing (works for CAB and has been secretary for 20 years)
- Voluntary sector majority women – more men should be involved, we need men as role models
- Worry government may try to replace money
- A little confused – is this not the role of WMVA? Should this be an opportunity for RBWM and WMVA to work together and have a shared website?
- Something to get for empathy and social engagement
- Filled gap between retirement/unemployment – not enough for young people
- An annual event to link all local organisations and website and email for news

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Volunteering incentives

Big Society Day

Volunteering incentives received a mixed reception, with some people supporting, some people disagreeing with the idea of rewards for volunteering, and some people in favour of incentives but not feeling that those on offer would motivate them

- Parking-for-points – not Nectar or Re-cycle bank points but points that can be used for local things like parking
- Nectar points are more likely to motivate than nothing – get something to contribute and help when money is tight
- Making a positive contribution enriches community spirit and participation – having an incentive is an added bonus
- Free meal (voucher) if you are working for a full or half-day
- Needs to be convenient, positive encouragement, not take me away from my own local area/community and benefit local area so I can see the impact
- Issue is with getting men to volunteer – would they be motivated by Nectar points? Probably not. People who are interested in volunteering probably already volunteer

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Volunteering incentives

Big Society
Day

- Peer pressure and following what (the rest of the) family do – do they volunteer? Regarding Nectar points – have people actually used their Re-cycle bank points? If not would they use Nectar points? Are they meaningful?
- Need to be flexible so can give as much or as little as is required or convenient for volunteer
- Volunteering should be voluntary: people shouldn't need incentives. This might lead to the wrong people volunteering for the wrong reasons
- How do charities pay for the incentives?

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Museum volunteering

Big Society
Day

People had ideas for what the museum could display.

- Era theme (early modern, Victorian, C20) – dressing up, featured local residents e.g. Wren
- More educational activity
- Feature themes – Thames, Eton, Helmet & Shako [?], local artists/images
- Images of the Royal Borough – local photographers, poetry, paintings

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Participatory budgeting

Big Society Day

People liked participatory budgeting and thought it should be extended, although people needed to be informed when they took part

- Participatory Budgeting (PB) needs to be bold to be meaningful. It needs to change the shape and ethos of public services, not be a “tick box” exercise
- More background about the projects needed to enable people to vote in a more informed way
- V. good idea, looking forward to the consultation
- PB is a positive step, it should be expanded
- Feedback v. important
- Use PB for more of the council's budget

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Renewable energy

Big Society Day

A range of ideas were given for renewable energy, although many would require significant work and may not be worth doing on a local scale

- Council should look at acting as an “angel investor”
- The council should be zero carbon
- Use rubbish burnt to produce power as in Sweden
- Think this is the way ahead
- Why doesn't the council have electric cars/vans? Should include the Mayor's car!
- Windsor Girl Guides: replacement campsite to use ground heat to keep building warm in winter and cool in summer
- Being involved in the process/engagement
- Sceptical: doesn't believe global warming is a fact
- Biomass heating
- Not visually intrusive
- Geothermal – obtain heat from the ground
- Capital investment question
- Sound idea, congratulations

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Renewable energy

Big Society
Day

- The council should incentivise local businesses to invest in renewable energy
- Waste disposal units in every home
- Small scale biomass/compost heating
- Boulton Lock - need water turbine for new local developments

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Transparency

Big Society
Day

People were keen for transparency to be opened up further, especially expenditure and political decision-making

- Support policy with facts not opinions
- Public notices being more accessible; will the post-improvements to Clarence Road roundabout result in less traffic congestion?
- Who funded the Big Society event and how much?
- Honesty and transparency go together
- At the moment the council chooses what to publish and what to be transparent about. Real transparency is about making everything public unless there are reasons for it not to be. There also needs to be transparency of political decision-making
- Advertise in the local press about how the council is spending money
- Address how information can better be provided to people without access to the internet
- Improve publication of public consultation information

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2 Ideas Wall

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Social action

Thoughts on social action included the role of the council and ensuring that volunteers are supported and encouraged

- Professional volunteers skills match
- Petrol fund to help volunteers with expenses
- Systems of reward for volunteers
- Use examples of what has been accomplished and is in the pipeline to encourage people to get involved
- Match skills to volunteer opportunities so people know what they could do [another attendee later added that WMVA do this]
- Support to be independent of council – the council can stimulate rather than run
- Support for small charities (info, consultancy, infrastructure)
- Encourage people to look after the environment immediately around their homes (e.g. litter)
- Sustainable volunteer supply – young people and schools
- Educate children in school about littering and get them to help clear up

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Opening up public services

Big Society Day

Opening up public services received few comments, suggesting that either people do not really understand this concept well or there is little appetite to deliver services in RBWM

- Support for young people, e.g. training in ICT and work with community groups (e.g. sports clubs), better placed to deliver real projects and meaningful activities as opposed to learning the theory (e.g. young people managing club databases)
- RBWM shouldn't duplicate if third sector can deliver a service – should support
- Keep democratic accountability
- Ideas to help kids become more confident

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Community empowerment

Big Society Day

Community empowerment received wide-ranging ideas including more engagement with organisations and public

- Feedback on ideas and actions proposed (RBWM website and local council paper)
- More events like this
- Don't make assumptions about what people think are issues
- Young people can play a huge part, they have great ideas
- Different venues for future events with greater footfall (e.g. town centre, station, leisure centre)
- Use art, create models of communities to generate discussion
- More power for Housing Associations
- Ensure democratic oversight (RBWM/parishes) of community groups
- Community empowerment takes time to build trust
- Positively engage with parish and town councils, building on local networks

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Community empowerment

Big Society
Day

- Listen to communities and give support when asked
- Create situations where everyone has a chance to speak

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Other comments and ideas

Big Society
Day

*Other comments were
about particular issues
and services*

- Put litter bins in places where people throw litter
- Force building/development to be green (e.g. solar panels)
- Particular litter issue in Hanover Way, Dedworth
- More salt and grit boxes in non-town-centre locations
- Shovels to go with grit and salt!
- Things like recycling are public duties – shouldn't be bonus-oriented
- Instead of events have a street stall to catch a new audience
- How can we expand library provision – it's not a device to cut provision
- Ask for specific help, not in a general way, e.g. library help
- Run this event as a permanent 'shop' in Nicholson centre, plenty of empty shops

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Other comments and ideas



- Volunteers and employers
 - Are volunteers interviewed to same policy as prospective employees?
 - Do volunteers have the same rights as paid employees, e.g. can they raise grievances?
 - Are volunteers subject to the same performance management processes as employees? Can they be disciplined?

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Comments about the day



There were a number of comments about encouraging attendance at events like Big Society Day, around choice of venue, assisting transport to the event, and communication/marketing

- Venue needs to be on a good bus route or near a station
- Have a stall at the Rotary Fair (25th June)
- Advertise event in supermarkets and GPs and put on a minibus to bring people
- More people could have got here if there were a car share service from the town centre for people who can't come long distances
- Need footfall! Next time use a venue such as the Desborough Suite
- Lots of time, effort and money spent – no public here to see it. Better advertising or no public interest!
- Better public communications about the event and this work

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Temperature Check

Big Society Day

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Responses

Big Society Day

There was an encouraging increase in the number of people planning to participate more at the end of the event

	Start	End	Change
I feel positive about my community and will participate more	19 (24%)	27 (47%)	+23%
I feel positive about my community and will continue to participate	38 (48%)	19 (33%)	-15%
I feel positive but face obstacles	20 (25%)	9 (16%)	-9%
I feel indifferent about my community and may or may not participate	1 (1%)	2 (4%)	+3%
I feel negative about my community and wouldn't participate	1 (1%)	0	-1%
Responses	79	57	

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4 CareBank

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How would you use CareBank credits?

People appear generally happy to get some recognition for their volunteering activities – in particular people who volunteer more often are keener to exchange credits for a reward. People also want to be able to use credits flexibly: e.g. saving them for the future or using credits in different ways.

A range of additional exercises and consultations have been run with the people of RBWM focusing on **setting up and rolling out a CareBank**, where people can earn credits from their community activities which can then be used for to access rewards or support from other volunteers, assisted by the Department for Communities and Local Government.

During the Big Society day the CareBank project team ran a **shoebox exercise** to understand how people who do and do not volunteer would use credits.

	Blue Never volunteer	Turquoise Volunteer several times a year	Pink Volunteer several times a month	Green Volunteer several times a week
Exchanging for a reward			6	2
I don't want a credit	1		1	1
Donate to others			2	3
Don't know			1	
Store for future use		1	3	1
Use in several ways	2	1	2	2

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Interviews



Organisations had a mixed reaction to CareBank and were concerned about the impact it might have on their volunteers on and how they are able to provide services by need. Many were occupied with dealing with funding issues.

The CareBank team followed up with several of the organisations which expressed an interest during the day and held longer and more in-depth interviews with representatives to understand how CareBank could benefit them. Organisations included Age Concern, Brayswick Heath Nurseries, and King George VI Day Centre.

Common themes

- The larger charity was against CareBank. The smaller ones supported it.
- All were concerned that CareBank might divert volunteers away from need in order to meet a CareBank credit owner a priority.
- Many volunteers came through the borough volunteering charity. There was concern that the CareBank process might undermine established ways of volunteering.
- For the smaller charities, funding was more of an issue than volunteering.
- The smaller charities had significant skills as social entrepreneurs.

Individual themes

- One charity was concerned over its financial survival as a similar charity in a nearby borough was being wound up after withdrawal of borough funding. It had expertise in finding funding but a source of difficulty was that some local wealthy people would not talk to them and preferred giving to national charities to reduce the problem of the number begging contacts/letters.
- The financial health of the day centre was based on a single legacy. This was now not enough for survival.
- The larger charity was a key player in volunteering for low level care to the elderly. The person was strongly against CareBank as it might affect their volunteers and care managers.

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Maidenhead Independence Day 21st March



A number of people were consulted individually at the Maidenhead Independence Day event on March 21st. Interview notes are on the following slides and this slide summarises some key themes and comments.

- Most people said they would be interested in using the CareBank scheme, including those who do not currently volunteer. People who would not use the scheme often object to the idea of rewards for volunteering
- People expressed lack of time or not wishing to make a long-term commitment to volunteering as why they might not use
- Older people tended to be more interested in the scheme, with younger people more interested in being incentivised
- Security and safety were a key concern shared by many people: CareBank volunteers would need to be properly checked and identified before people would feel comfortable working with them
- People felt there should be more and wider information so more people could learn about CareBank
- CareBank needs to be better integrated with existing volunteering organisations – danger that they would 'unfairly compete' as able to offer incentives

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Maidenhead Independence Day 21st March



Female aged 50-59

Reward system is insulting for what volunteers do. Shows how tight things are even if you take an award.

I do not volunteer currently. I have two children with special needs (one has schizophrenia). I do not receive assistance from a volunteer.

I would not consider using the CareBank scheme. Fabulous for 16 year old - volunteering ethos missing in young people - could raise awareness of volunteering. Volunteering has a social benefit – many local people go to the pub, cafe, this will give them a carrot, fun. Good for people who feel lonely or sad. Needs sense of fun.

However, if someone is unemployed, they need more help. Vulnerable people get something they would not have because they do not have any help, but people volunteering need more than a credit, they need proper financial help.

Male aged 70-79

I am a volunteer – run Slough Senior Citizens Group.

I do not receive assistance from a volunteer currently.

I would consider using the CareBank scheme.

Great project. Hold more open days to encourage people to take part.

People do not like to give personal details for CRB checks – varies from individual to individual.

Male aged 70-79

I am not a volunteer.

I do not receive assistance from a volunteer.

A very good idea. I live in a two-bedroom house. Difficult getting around and doing ordinary housework. Hoovering hard now. Point system is excellent. Gives psychological appreciation.

Need to see volunteer's identity card. Always cautious anyway.

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RBWM Big Society Event - Feedback Summary 32

Maidenhead Independence Day 21st March



Organisations had a mixed reaction to CareBank and were concerned about the impact it might have on their volunteers on and how they are able to provide services by need. Many were occupied with dealing with funding issues.

Male aged 30-39

I currently volunteer with Air Rifles organisation.

I do not receive assistance from a volunteer.

I would look into using the CareBank scheme.

Incentives: I volunteer because I want to. Had a few spare hours. Join air rifle competition now.

If there is an added benefit, why not? Would volunteer without added benefit. Different – i.e. credit new. Makes you think of volunteering in a different way. Could give computer sessions in library as incentive – free hour with someone to show you how to use it. There shouldn't be any financial incentives.

Concerns: People may think they can volunteer and get something back. If I was 70 and knew someone was coming, I would want to know that person had been vetted and CRB-checked. For elderly important to know they will be safe, that person coming to house/garden is a good person.

OK for GP recommend scheme. How many people would want to do it? If you are depressed, lonely, volunteering gives you worth. Get more out of it.

Female aged 30-39

I do not volunteer currently.

I do not receive assistance from a volunteer.

I would consider using the CareBank Scheme.

Incentives: Promote social benefits. Need to encourage vulnerable people to go out and socialise.

Concerns: Time, family commitments which may arise later on. Good for GPs to recommend scheme. Those working with children should get a CRB check. Could promote introductory meetings between volunteer and beneficiary so they feel comfortable with each other.

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RBWM Big Society Event - Feedback Summary 33

Maidenhead Independence Day 21st March



Organisations had a mixed reaction to CareBank and were concerned about the impact it might have on their volunteers on and how they are able to provide services by need. Many were occupied with dealing with funding issues.

TRIBAL

Female aged 40-49

I volunteer currently with Battersea Dogs Home.
I do not receive assistance from a volunteer.
I would consider using the CareBank scheme for my mum.

Incentives: A good idea.

Concerns: Need time to volunteer. Should not assume someone can volunteer. I have a long-term illness, I am on benefits. Can't help my mum or afford petrol. My twin-brother also has a long-term illness.

Female aged 70-79

I volunteer currently.
I do not receive assistance from a volunteer.
I would consider using the CareBank scheme.
Incentives: Sounds like a very good idea. Idea of incentive / reward very good.

Concerns: Very elderly concerned they would be put in a vulnerable position. Want people to be carefully screened. GPs should recommend scheme.

Male aged 20-29

I do not volunteer currently. Have in the past – busy now!
I do not receive assistance from a volunteer.
Incentives: Did care work in the past. I am a classroom support worker and residential worker. More advertising is key, more marketing. Incentives should include cinema, leisure.

Concerns: I live in Reading – but drive. Distance an issue. A carer was sued for getting ventilator wrong. Then did it again! Training is key. CRB check definitely required to check criminal record. If 1:1 work need CRB check. If working in garden and not with person – OK. A safeguard for person receiving help.

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Maidenhead Independence Day 21st March



Organisations had a mixed reaction to CareBank and were concerned about the impact it might have on their volunteers on and how they are able to provide services by need. Many were occupied with dealing with funding issues.

TRIBAL

Male aged 40-49

I do not volunteer. I am the general manager of a local volunteering organisation.
I do not receive assistance from a volunteer. My organisation gives out money.
Crowded market-place today. Very confusing – what is going on here. There is no clear message, no joined-up working between local agencies. Just look at what is going on here today – your CareBank stall is set up at one end of the room operating in its own bubble, while the local volunteering agency is set up and operating at the other end of the room in its own bubble: O-----O.

Where is the link? Where is the dialogue? Why isn't there a joint stall?

I did not want to come today - would have been better off handing out leaflets on the street to draw people in.

I received an email from the Council **telling** me to cascade information about CareBank to my colleagues and volunteers. However, I was worried about putting it out because I do not want to lose my volunteers. There will be an overlap – we are all desperate volunteers. Therefore slightly apprehensive. Might work well. Will you use one of my existing volunteers? Will you get someone from CareBank with a credit? I do not want to upset existing volunteers who are not getting anything.

The whole thing is being steam-rolled through without DCLG understanding that we are not starting from ground zero here. Volunteering has been around a long time. However, the sector, locally, is being talked to as though it has never done this before. Long history already.....

Where will the money come from to run social enterprise?

Not happy to do away with CRB checks.

"Big Society" raised profile of volunteering. Credits are a slippery slope – many already volunteering for a number of hours. There are some people who only ever take or only ever receive help. To sell volunteering on the back of a credit system is off-putting. Most people do it because they want to – some claim expenses, some don't even do this.

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RBWM Big Society Event - Feedback Summary 35

Maidenhead Independence Day 21st March



Organisations had a mixed reaction to CareBank and were concerned about the impact it might have on their volunteers on and how they are able to provide services by need. Many were occupied with dealing with funding issues.

TRIBAL

Female aged under 15

I do not volunteer and do not receive assistance from a volunteer.

I would consider using the CareBank scheme.

Incentives: Shopping – gym membership.

Concerns: Only need CRB check if you work with children. Not every single job!

Male aged 16-19

I currently volunteer.

I do not receive assistance from a volunteer.

I would consider using Carebank. Like to support – beneficial.

I volunteer out of the goodness of my heart. I have volunteered for a year now, get my own rewards out of it, see person mature, get to know about learning difficulties. Trying to get club started up myself. I will be a staff member there.

Male aged 30-39

I do not volunteer.

I do not receive assistance from a volunteer.

I would consider using the CareBank scheme.

Female aged 70-79

I volunteer for my church.

I do not receive assistance from a volunteer.

I would consider using the CareBank Scheme possibly, if I need to.

A good idea. Heard about it already, taken aback to know what to suggest.

Concerns: Security! Who is coming to help me. Do I know that person? Only comfortable (with people) I know. Could swap with friends. Don't waste GP's time re: on recommendations.

Others are better qualified.

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RBWM Big Society Event - Feedback Summary 36

Maidenhead Independence Day 21st March



Organisations had a mixed reaction to CareBank and were concerned about the impact it might have on their volunteers on and how they are able to provide services by need. Many were occupied with dealing with funding issues.

TRIBAL

Female aged 80+

Too old to volunteer.

I do not receive help from a volunteer.

I would think about using CareBank – need gardening help.

Incentives: Ask staff at day centre in Cookham for ideas.

Concerns: Need to think about this. Need to have security check – especially for older people. GP can recommend scheme.

Female aged 60-69

I have given blood in the past – many times.

I do not receive help from a volunteer.

Incentives: When you have time you will consider a **short** stint as a volunteer, a one-off.

Problem with volunteering is that this can almost be an election to go back to work if the commitment is too great. So, if it appears short-term this is more palatable. Volunteer needs to feel s/he can dip in and dip out. People have commitments. Time is an issue.

Male aged 50-59

I do not volunteer – injured – have three cracked ribs.

Very good idea – choice between struggling and having help – would prefer help.

Security-conscious. This is more important for 60+ because they are vulnerable, and those who are younger than that.

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RBWM Big Society Event - Feedback Summary 37

Maidenhead Independence Day 21st March



Organisations had a mixed reaction to CareBank and were concerned about the impact it might have on their volunteers on and how they are able to provide services by need. Many were occupied with dealing with funding issues.

Female aged 40-49

I am not a volunteer.

I do not receive help from a volunteer.

I would consider using the CareBank scheme.

I am on OT – work in the community – we rely on volunteers to help with shopping. You need to make sure you link up with voluntary organisations. Churches undertake voluntary work – are these volunteers CRB-checked?

Incentives: Give information on use of credits. A list to choose from – so people can make a choice. Know how much each credit is worth....

Concerns: I have a toddler, no access to babysitters. Vulnerable adults need a CRB check in this day and age. Good for GPs to recommend the scheme. Will volunteers be willing to take on different jobs, different issues such as changing the cat litter?

Male aged 60-69

I am not a volunteer and I do not receive help from a volunteer.

I would consider using the CareBank scheme.

I work in mental health – support worker. I am interested in encouraging my service-users to volunteer, to help their integration into mainstream society.

Incentive: Young person could donate credit to their family so they feel they are being helped directly.

Concerns: Good idea in principle but to think you can solve as a nation our credit/social problems by conjuring up a bank of volunteers is a myth.

Young people are frustrated – creates social problems.

Credit and goodness of heart OK. Really believe in exchanging societies – a day-dream.

CRB checks will become more and more common. Seen as invasive. Make it simple.

Loneliness is a major cause of unhappiness. Need to promote this – sense of purpose.

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Summary



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Summary – Key findings



- Overall the push to move the discussion on from 'Big Society' as a national and/or theoretical policy agenda worked well, with discussion sparked about a range of specific projects and ideas in the RBWM community
- The temperature check exercise suggests that people generally found the event positive and encouraging of participation
- Some of the Big Society projects are more popular: devolution to parishes, participatory budgeting and transparency garnered more comments and discussion and were welcomed
- Some of the other projects appeared to be more controversial, such as volunteering incentives
- Ideas for renewable energy and museum volunteering were more likely to be practical than discussing the issue, which positively suggests that people are engaging with making things happen
- It is important to people that existing efforts and organisations promoting community involvement are respected, involved and supported
- A number of people had particular local issues to focus on, especially around traffic and litter
- The event was less well-attended than the previous ones and some exhibitors perceived this as an effect of the venue and/or the advertising: this needs to be carefully managed for future events as organisations will not attend if they feel it is limited exposure and benefit for them

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Recommendations for future events



- For future engagement exercises, we would recommend that RBWM continue focus on local projects and priorities, moving away from the central Big Society policy, working with residents and stakeholders to demonstrating what Big Society and localism actually means in practice.
- RBWM to explore its role as a catalyst and enabling authority, and where it can begin to step back from support such engagements (and even some services). The transition from current role/scenarios to future preferred scenarios would need careful management.
- As some of the Big Society projects are more popular, there may be value in exploiting social media (e.g. facebook pages) to enable ongoing consultation and interaction with residents and other stakeholders.
- The event was less well-attended than the previous events, mainly due to the venue. Future events should be located nearer to areas of high footfall (e.g. Maidenhead Town Centre or Desborough Suite, Windsor Leisure Centre, Ascot Town Centre).
- Other types of engagement (e.g. quick and easy to complete surveys, video interviews, external ideas walls etc) should be planned to take the message to and reach the wider populous/harder to reach stakeholders as, despite their value, there could be criticism that the two previous events would only be attended by individuals who are already engaged.

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