Areas of activity to develop:

volunteering, community influence and the changing relationship

1. Introduction

Dudley’s Our Society work now has a supported research and learning process in relation to the Community Rights proposed in the Localism Bill. The Our Society Planning Group members are keen to develop a related programme of learning and activity in relation to community influence. This would progress ideas discussed at recent Stronger Communities Steering Group meetings, and take forward issues raised at the DCP’s Big Society event in November. It will draw on and add to engaging together activity already underway.

2. Citizenship Typology and responses through Our Society

A citizenship typology developed by Joel Westheimer and Joseph Kahne may be useful in thinking about activities we wish to progress under the Our Society banner. Three types of citizen can be considered, while noting that they are not mutually exclusive; we can move between them at different times in our lives, none are right or wrong, and we can be all 3 types of citizen at the same time!

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<th>Citizenship type</th>
<th>Possible Our Society activities</th>
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| The personally responsible citizen: someone who acts responsibly in their own community - the citizen as a voter and volunteer. | • Promote case studies about volunteers and volunteer involving organisations - celebrating what local people do already  
• Provide social media surgeries to help volunteers and groups to network online  
• Promote community-based activities – link to Dudley Community Information Directory What’s On |
| The participatory citizen: someone who is an active member of the community, organisations and/or political parties. The citizen as an individual within a group(s), actively participates in existing structures, takes up opportunities for participation, including participation in the planning and delivery of services | • Draw together existing work to be in a position to describe and test the barriers people face in taking up opportunities for participation. (Use in it together research, Take Part Pathfinder notes and research, Voice session notes, Voice and echo research, VSN and other network event notes, plus research from wider than Dudley – JRF, Carnegie UK etc.)  
• Develop a way to check that what has been drawn together reflects the issues.  
• Assess awareness of barriers by those promoting opportunities for participation and support people to remove barriers. (This links to Level 1 and Level 2 engaging together training sessions and work with echo.)  
• Support groups and networks to influence service change etc. |
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| **The justice-orientated citizen:** who critically assesses social, political and economic structures which lead to social injustice. The citizen as a critical friend to those in power, participates within group(s), actively challenges unequal relations of power, promotes social solidarity and social justice, both locally and beyond, taking account of the global context | • Create spaces for discussions around the changing relationship between the council/DCP/other public sector bodies and citizens/groups/communities. Consider use of power analysis, see Carnegie UK power project evaluation: Power and Making Change Happen [www.tinyurl.com/carnegiepowerproject](http://www.tinyurl.com/carnegiepowerproject)  
• Link to systems thinking work. |

3. **Key themes to develop activity around**

It may be useful to develop activities around key themes, in response to changing legislation and local transformation. Suggested areas include:

• **Neighbourhood Planning** – work with DMBC Planning Policy Team and link to Community Rights work  
• **Health and Social Care** – in relation to NHS restructure, shift from LINk to Healthwatch and changes to Dudley Health and Wellbeing Partnership  
• **Service Transformation and 2012-13 budgets** with particular reference to Dudley MBC

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