



Winter 2011

CAVOS

consultation pages

2011 - The Census

In the next couple of months you will receive a white envelope through your door, with a giant purple origami C emblazoned upon it. It'll contain a questionnaire best known as the once a decade census! The census counts people and households in England and Wales; it's carried out by the Office for National Statistics.

The Census—March 2011

The census is vitally important for communities and it gives a powerful insight into the lifestyles and needs of all of us - as individuals, families, students and workers. It's all about planning ahead. The census affects all of us in one way or another as decisions about the communities we live in take place all the time.

A census counts everybody, describes society and benefits communities

Whoever you are and wherever you live, the census provides statistics which can help make sure there are enough of the right people around to help you – refuse collectors, paramedics, teachers, bus drivers, and more. So when you open your 2011 Census questionnaire and settle down to complete it, think what it could mean to you. It could:

- ⇒ help identify needs such as access to nursery places, after-school clubs, play schemes, parks and buses
- ⇒ highlight trends in journey times and destinations, identifying areas where roads and public transport could be improved
- ⇒ help local colleges decide what training it could provide to help gain new skills
- ⇒ help with health care and that enough doctors, nurses, pharmacists and dentists are near you
- ⇒ help identify carer's needs so proper provision can be made for respite care and support
- ⇒ help identify where there is insufficient accommodation of the right type
- ⇒ help show a need to provide essential, on-call services, such as ambulances, pharmacists and community nurses, as well as encourage suitable voluntary schemes

Everyone is important

All local councils in England and Wales rely on these statistics to define the needs of their community and help make sure they get enough government funding to serve it. How much they get is directly related to how many and what kind of people the census shows live in their area. Every person not counted can mean £500 less for local authorities to spend on schools, hospitals or roads. Every 1,000 people uncounted can mean up to £500,000 less.

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If you have any queries relating to this newsletter, or would like an article published in the next issue please contact us:

Tel: 01388 811115 Fax: 01388 817772

Email: enquiries@cavos.org.uk www.cavos.org.uk



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Your census answers are confidential and secure

Personal census information is never shared with any other government department, nationally, regionally, or locally. The information collected is kept confidential by ONS and protected by law. Your personal information is protected by lots of layers of security.

Returning your census questionnaire is required by law

The next census is on Sunday 27th March. You need to complete your questionnaire on or around this date so that there can be a snapshot of the population as it stands on one day – to give a consistent picture for the whole country. Completing the census is a legal requirement: the few people who don't complete their census questionnaire may be prosecuted for breaking the law, could face a criminal record and may be fined up to £1,000.

It's straightforward and can be completed online (www.census.gov.uk)

Completing the census is straightforward. Most questions can be answered by simply clicking, or ticking, in a box.

For more information on the 2011 census visit www.census.gov.uk, ring 01329 444 972 or email census.customerservices@ons.gov.uk

National Compact renewal

In previous issues of our Consultation Pages we have informed you of the County Durham Compact and opportunities to consult on a draft form of this document. The County Durham Compact is a statement of principles and practice intended to promote and support partnership working between the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) and statutory bodies. As well as the local County Durham Compact, there is a national version of the Compact which was also being renewed. The draft versions were available for consultation which closed in October. Thanks go to everyone who took part in giving their views.

The renewed Compact (national version) was published in December and is shorter and more focused than the previous agreement and aims to create the right environment for partnership working. It is backed by a robust set of accountability and transparency measures outlined in a new guide which has also recently been published.

The renewed Compact is now available to download from the 'Online Resources' page of the CAVOS website www.cavos.org.uk. Hard copies can also be requested by contacting the CAVOS office on 01388 811115.

For more information on the Compact, visit: www.compactvoice.org.uk/renewal

Supporting a Stronger Civil Society

The infrastructure support consultation **Supporting a Stronger Civil Society: An Office for Civil Society Consultation on Improving Support for Frontline Civil Society Organisations** ended on 6th January 2011.

The Government will now consider the feedback to the consultation.

A summary will be published in 2011 with the overall Government response to the consultation.

CAVOS will keep you informed of any details when they're available.

Healthy Lives, Healthy People

The Public Health White Paper 'Healthy Lives, Healthy People: Our strategy for public health in England' has been launched by the government.

It outlines the government's commitment to protecting the population from serious health threats; helping people live longer, healthier and more fulfilling lives; and improving the health of the poorest, fastest.

Consultation closing date is 8th March 2011.

To take part in the consultation, use the following web address:
<http://tinyurl.com/6j9cmcx>



Area Action Partnerships - forum update

Over the last few months CAVOS has made you aware of the Area Action Partnerships (AAPs) Forums within the area. AAPs are funded by Durham County Council as mechanisms for engaging local people. Each AAP is made up of an Area Forum and an Area Board to identify and tackle issues in the local communities. The purpose of the most recent forums was to identify which topics and issues should be addressed as priorities over the next year and where AAP funds should be focused. The forums also discussed the County Council's potential spending cuts and provided an opportunity to say on where these cuts should be made. As a member of the local community you were invited to attend your local forum.

The majority of the forums were held in late 2010 however some of the scheduled meetings were affected by the weather and a number of events had to be cancelled. The top priorities for each of the AAPs with the CAVOS area (old Sedgefield Borough) are:

Four Together Partnership

1) Job prospects, 2) Children & Young People, 3) Environment

Bishop Auckland & Shildon

4 priority areas were identified at the forum meeting but the AAP Board plans to amalgamate these into 2 key priorities which cover the 4 areas. The 4 priority areas as identified at the forum meeting are: 1) Crime and Community Safety, 2) Activities for Children and Young People, 3) Support to the Voluntary & Community Sector, 4) Unemployment & Job Prospects

East Durham Rural Corridor

1) Support to the Voluntary & Community Sector, 2) Activities for Children & Young People, 3) Employment and job prospects

Great Aycliffe and Middridge Partnership

1) Support to the Voluntary & Community Sector, 2) Employment, job prospects and enterprise, 3) Activities for Children & Young People

Spennymoor

1) Activities for Children & Young People, 2) Town Centre regeneration including jobs & Enterprise

If you would like to know more about the AAPs and how to get involved, contact CAVOS on 01388 811115 or email enquiries@cavos.org.uk

County Durham priorities

In addition to the priority areas identified within each AAP area, a consultation was also undertaken by Durham County Council to identify priority areas for the County as a whole.

Overall results of this countywide consultation gave a clear indication that people in County Durham value certain services more and would prefer to see these services protected. These services include:

1) Winter maintenance, 2) Repairs to roads and pavements, 3) Adult Care Services, 4) Child Protection/Adoption /Fostering, 5) Refuse, 6) Community Safety and Tackling Anti-Social Behaviour, 6) Youth Offending, 7) Youth centres and youth workers, 8) Supporting people

Similarly there was a clear indication that people would like to see the above services receive more funding by cutting other certain services more. These services include;

1) Resources, 2) Policy, Improvement and Scrutiny, 3) Planning, 4) Communications, 5) Members Locality Budgets, 6) Arts, cultural services and museums, 7) AAP area budgets, 8) Home to school/ college transport, 9) Road Safety, 10) Adult education, 11) Connexions, 12) Community Development

The next forum meetings will be held in June and July. CAVOS will keep you informed of exact details nearer the time.



CAVOS Stakeholder Event 2010—feedback & update

On 2nd November 2010, CAVOS held its 3rd annual Stakeholder Event at St Paul's Centre in Spennymoor. As usual, the event focussed on gaining stakeholder views, concerns, issues and general feedback on several key topics that are relevant to the sector at the moment. Thank you everyone who attended the event and input into the discussions.

This year we chose 3 topics around which to focus key questions and open the floor up to discussion. In stead of a workshop style approach, everyone was welcome to participate as part of a larger group and offer their own insight and concerns.

Question 1: Impact assessment & local support

Do you have any examples of the wider impact that CAVOS support has had on your organisation?

We asked this question because we understand that it is extremely important that organisations (including CAVOS) are able to demonstrate the impact that they have on the community rather than just be able to say how many groups/people we support and what we have to offer. By understanding how what we do affects the community, we can better inform future funders of why it is important that they continue to fund our good work.

Some of the examples of feedback received on this question include:

Wider impact that CAVOS has had on organisations:

- ⇒ 'Allowed us to be more sustainable & has given us more fundraising ability'
- ⇒ 'By accessing CAVOS support we can use our own expertise to free staff up to provide more support to families, which is what we exist to do'
- ⇒ 'Given us the skills, knowledge and information to better support the people we work with'
- ⇒ 'Because CAVOS knows the local area so well, they know what groups want and need in the area and they can provide better local advice and support'

Question 2: Big Society

How do you think your organisation can link in with Big Society? How do you think that CAVOS can support you to do this?

Big Society is a very hot topic at the moment and it is raising a great many questions and issues for our sector. In asking this question we wanted to find out more about what everyone knows about Big Society and assess your issues, fears and concerns. We wanted to know more about what you feel your role is in Big Society and whether you feel that you have enough information on what Big Society is.

During this part of the event, the discussions highlighted just how little information has been offered to us regarding the specifics of how Big Society will work in practice for the grassroots voluntary sector.

As a result, we realised how difficult it was to answer this question. We opted instead to delve into some constructive discussion about what people's issues and concerns are regarding Big Society.

Some of the examples of discussion points, concerns and feedback include:

- ⇒ 'There will not be enough volunteers involved and the people who do have the potential for volunteer burnout'.
- ⇒ 'There's a risk of groups changing to be more businesslike'
- ⇒ Will need active promotion for involvement so it's not always the same people. Need to reduce barriers.
- ⇒ 'Groups need to have sufficient capacity & relevant training, skills & knowledge'
- ⇒ The group agreed the idea of the Big Society already takes place with the work the voluntary and community sector carry out

Question 3: The current funding climate & cuts

How are you being affected by funding cuts and the lack of available revenue funding? Do you have any suggestions as to how CAVOS can support you? What other funding issues do you foresee?

CAVOS recognises the ongoing importance of this subject and we want to ensure that we are fully aware of how best we can support you. By finding out exactly what your key issues and concerns are, we can endeavour to provide our services in line with your current needs.

In this context, when we discuss 'revenue funding' we are referring to funding to cover core costs and overheads (money to simply exist).

Some of the examples of feedback received on this question include:

- ⇒ 'Funders are asking for new project applications while current project providers are crying out for revenue in order to actually run projects'
- ⇒ 'The decision makers for funding don't understand the VCS and its needs'
- ⇒ 'We need more community members on funding & decision making panels as these are the people who actually understand community need'
- ⇒ 'There are fewer grants for existing groups & projects. Everyone wants everything new, what about existing?'
- ⇒ 'We need to establish better evidence of need and evidence of impact because of the fiercer funding competition'
- ⇒ 'How many projects can we run in order to get enough management fees to run generally?'
- ⇒ 'Too much time is now spent making links seeking funding & attending meetings'

CAVOS always takes the feedback that we receive very seriously. Each year we implement the feedback we receive from our Stakeholder events into our action plan for the following year. We will inform you throughout 2011 of exactly what we'll be doing to ensure we're working in line with your feedback.

We anticipate that 2011 will see many more issues and concerns being raised especially regarding Big Society and funding issues. We will use the feedback offered from consultations such as our Stakeholder event to form the response that we give to issues that arise throughout the year.

If you were unable to attend our Stakeholder event but would like to offer your feedback and comments, please contact CAVOS on 01388 811115 or email enquiries@cavos.org.uk





Surviving in the Big Society – consultation feedback

Over the past 2 years, CAVOS has promoted a series of surveys called 'Surviving Not Thriving' that have been conducted by VONNE (Voluntary Organisations Network North East).

Since the economic downturn 2 years ago VONNE has been measuring the impact of the recession and the subsequent public sector spending cuts on the North East's Voluntary and Community Sector, through 6-monthly surveys. At times it hasn't made for pretty reading. Running through all of the previous studies was an underlying sense that things would be difficult but the majority of organisations would survive the challenges.

With VONNE's fourth survey, 'Surviving in a Big Society', the evidence is clear that the optimism has been greatly eroded. Organisations are reporting serious difficulties now, with a fragile future in store. The heavy reliance on public sector funding is likely to lead to large scale closures of services, loss of skilled staff and the ultimate closure of some organisations, when the cuts bite over the next few months. This is at a time when demand for services has never been higher. VONNE warns that the most vulnerable in communities are likely to suffer as services are lost.

Survey findings:

Of the 141 organisations who responded:

- 62% have seen a decrease in funding
- Over a third have made staff redundant
- Nearly half are using reserves
- 69% have experienced an increase in demand for their service

The future prospects look bleak for many:

- 64% expect to, or are considering closing a service
- 50% will be, or are considering reducing the number of beneficiaries they support
- 26% may close in the next 12 months

Medium-sized organisations appear to be struggling most:

- 86% are using reserves
- 42% may close their organisation

CAVOS strongly recommends that organisations ensure that they have the right funding and governance structures in place to be in a optimum position to attract funding – if you know exactly what you're doing and you're ready to meet the challenge then you will stand out from the crowd and be more likely to access any funding available. A prime way to do this is to access CAVOS support to improve your governance (the way you manage your organisation), access training and develop your very own organisational file.

County Durham Plan

Durham County Council are currently preparing a new plan for the County, to be known as the *County Durham Plan*. Once prepared it will set out the planning framework and policies for the future development of the county.

Earlier consultation on Core Strategy Issues was held during last summer and CAVOS informed you via our e-bulletins of a more recent consultation that ended in January 2011. Thanks go to everyone who gave their views.

Feedback on the summer consultations is available via the Durham County Council website www.durham.gov.uk on the County Durham Plan Consultation Pages alternatively hard copies can be requested via the Planning Policy Team on 0300 123 7070.

Happiness in the UK, and how to measure it

In an effort to develop new measures of national well-being, the Office for National Statistics (ONS) is consulting with people, organisations and businesses across the UK to find out what matters most in their lives.

The aim is that these new measures will cover the quality of life of people in the UK, environmental and sustainability issues, as well as the economic performance of the country.

To develop better measures of the nation's well-being ONS wants to consult with people, organisations and businesses across the UK as well as central and local government to ask what matters most in people lives and what is important for measuring the nation's well-being.

Some of the aspects that affect national well-being include:

- ⇒ Income and wealth
- ⇒ Job satisfaction and economic security
- ⇒ Ability to have a say on local and national issues
- ⇒ Having good connections with friends and relatives
- ⇒ Present and future conditions of the environment
- ⇒ Crime
- ⇒ Health
- ⇒ Education and training
- ⇒ Personal and cultural activities, including caring and volunteering

If you'd like to put forward your views as part of this consultation, you can download the 'measuring wellbeing in the UK' questions sheet from the Online Resources section of the CAVOS website: www.cavos.org.uk If you do not have access to the internet the you can contact Michelle at CAVOS who will post the question sheet out to you.

Groundwork North East renewable energy survey

As a charity, Groundwork North East works alongside local communities, public bodies, private companies and other voluntary sector organisations to support communities in need.

They have over twenty-five years' experience in delivering bespoke projects that use the environment as a catalyst for building a more sustainable future. Last year alone they delivered almost 500 projects across the region, helping improve the quality of people's lives, their prospects and potential and the places where they work, live and play.

Groundwork are in the process of looking into possible future projects that they could run in the region. Renewable energy' is a very topical subject that they are considering using as the basis for a future project. As part of this, Groundwork is looking to develop a comprehensive picture of community interest in renewable energy across the region. They want to know how much your organisation knows about renewable energy, how you may be affected by it and whether you would like to access more information.

In order to gain as much feedback as possible, an online survey form has been set up. It can only be accessed online at www.surveymonkey.com/s/groundworkrenewableenergy



For more information on Groundwork or to complete this survey if you don't have internet access, contact Joe Turner on **01207 524 841**

How to do business with Durham County Council

Durham County Council have published a document entitled 'How to do Business with Durham County Council'. The document is designed to be an easy to use introduction to tendering for Council contracts to help smaller and medium sized organisations better understand and engage with their commissioning processes.

They are currently looking for comments, ideas and suggestions to make this document more applicable and useful to Voluntary and Community sector organisations. Please download the consultation documents from the 'Online Resources' section of the CAVOS website and have your say! www.cavos.org.uk

Below, you will find a set of questions designed to help organise your response and suggest the areas that you might want to consider when responding. There is also a section at the end for any comments/ideas/areas you feel have not been covered by the questions.

- ⇒ Have you ever used the 'How to do business with DCC' guide? If so, how did you hear about it and how often do you refer to it?
- ⇒ Do you feel that the guide is user-friendly? If so which aspects of the guide were particularly useful? How could the guide be more user-friendly?
- ⇒ What would you like to see explained in the guide? Which areas should be covered?
- ⇒ What is your key barrier to doing business with the council? Do you have any suggestions for how you would like to see this issue taken forward?
- ⇒ Do you feel the guide caters adequately for the Voluntary and Community sector? For example do you feel the guide is for your organisation?
- ⇒ Are you aware of the NEPO portal? Are you confident using it?
- ⇒ Any further comments...?

Responses should be sent to Jamie Thomas, Sustainable Procurement Officer at Durham County Council via email (jamie.thomas@durham.gov.uk) or post (Jamie Thomas, Sustainable Procurement Officer, County Hall, Durham. DH1 5UL). Durham County Council were looking to complete a minor update in January but also a more comprehensive review in April so your reviews are still important.

One Voice Network would greatly appreciate being copied into any response you may make (email: peter@onevoice.co.uk or post Peter Locke, One Voice Network, Park House, Lanchester, County Durham. DH7 0EX) However this is not a requirement.

