



BRADFORD & DISTRICT COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT NETWORK LTD

ANNUAL REPORT 2021

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

My name is Pam James and I am extremely pleased to say CNet has survived and indeed thrived in many ways, despite the difficulties and uncertainties all of us have faced over this last year. CEO Javed Khan has led his team through these months so CNet is still achieving great work amongst the communities of Bradford and District, making the Board of Trustees and myself extremely proud of all they have done whilst working from home, often alone workwise but with children also at home making it not at all easy for working circumstances.

Plans were made and put in place and met, keeping the organisation in shape and achieving them; still working as a team but virtually, they have all been amazing and the Board has marvelled at the successes achieved. You will get to know how many and how amazing that is as you read this Annual Report and the details of the projects, old and new.

I firmly believe CNet has overcome many of the affects that COVID-19 has had on all organisations and their work, meeting the needs of many people and organisations and moving ahead into the coming year with confidence for a thriving 2022.

COVID-19 has taught everyone a great deal; there will be changes as to how we work from now on, some obvious as good, others perhaps more difficult to accept, but we will learn more as we go along, accepting change and making more of them maybe but always thinking of CNet's future and its contribution to the needs of this city.

May I also thank all the members of the Board for their support throughout the last year, Zooming together for meetings, missing face to face discussions and decision making, but always giving their support to the staff and also what their personal needs may be at any one time. May I say again on behalf of myself and these stalwart volunteers a huge thankyou to Javed and every member of staff for their dedication and support to keep CNet not only alive, but moving into the next year with a positive outlook for its future.

Here's to the year ahead, continuing the success by working together as a team. Thank you for your support too.

Pam James





CEO'S REPORT

This year's report is difficult in the sense that everything has changed. The way we work, the way we engage, the way we interact, the whole ethics of work has been completely turned on its head. The reason for this? COVID-19.

At the start of this financial year we, like everyone else, were in lockdown, which meant that our way of working had to adapt to a new lifestyle the pandemic created for us. All the staff, like many other businesses and organisations, had to work in a new environment from home. For many this brought new challenges, the obvious around digital accessibility and know-how. We entered a new world of meeting on Zoom, Teams, Webex, etc. An alien world to a lot of people, however necessity demanded we had to adopt and take on new skills and knowledge at pace. In terms of work at CNet, we had to put a number of projects on hold, particularly those with a focus on public and community engagement, as we were no longer able to do face-to-face work and meet people inside or outside.

One of the first things that CNet and the rest of the VCS were involved in was the mobilisation of more joined-up working with the Council, CCGs, and other services, to ensure that we were able to pool resources, information and communication, to inform the wider public of the risks and support around COVID-19. In terms of staff we are fortunate to have a diverse group of multi-skilled individuals who were able to deploy and support the District wide initiative towards addressing a coordinated response to COVID-19.

The CNet team offered support to communities throughout the year in a number of ways. The Assembly Coordinator was seconded to the role of Volunteer Coordinator for Bradford West, with two other CNet staff members also supporting this work. We helped to develop and maintain the database of volunteers, and sourced appropriate people for a range of tasks including shopping, sewing, food distribution/packing, befriending, and driving. The combined effort of all involved was a credit to our partners, volunteers, and communities.

We were also involved in the Anti-Poverty Events Group (APEG), working alongside the Credit Union, Bradford Council, Carers' Resource, and Artworks. Our work focussed mainly on digital and financial inclusion, poverty, inequality, loan sharks, and online fraud.

CNet facilitates the Bradford District Assembly. The Chair, Vice Chair, and members of the Assembly Steering Group have worked closely and tirelessly with the council and health partners throughout the pandemic, and continue to do so.

We were one of a virtual team of cross-sector VCS organisations working closely with the CCG, NHS, and Bradford Council to maximise reach into communities, sharing on a daily basis accurate and timely information and guidance around COVID-19 key messages, such as lockdown guidelines, 'Stay Home Stay Safe', 'Hands, Face and Space', and vaccine information roll outs.

CNet manages the partners' central VCSE COVID-19 Hub Facebook page, a central point for groups to access current information and updates on all things Covid related. This is updated on a daily basis. We also supported Bradford District and Craven CGG in June 2020, producing a series of COVID-19 film clips filmed by our members in Urdu, Punjabi, Gujarati, Bangladeshi Sylheti, Polish, and Hungarian, stressing that whilst lockdown was over, the pandemic was not and how to keep safe by following the guidelines.

From May 2020 CNet were one of several VCSE delivery partners for the Test and Trace community engagement strand of work led by Community Action Bradford and District. We shared messages about Test and Trace (and other COVID-19 related issues, i.e. lockdown guidelines, Covid vaccine rollout) and disseminated information to CNet programme boards, forums, partnerships, and the wider community.

Since the onset of the pandemic we have had regular contact with both professional members and also individuals who have forwarded film clips and social media messages which have been circulating in their respective communities. Sometimes people have been unsure who to trust, who to listen to, and what is accurate and inaccurate information.

COVID-19 insight is collected, and this information is shared with both NHS and Bradford Council to help shape and develop appropriate responses. Alongside our partners, CNet have played an essential role in sharing up to date and accurate information to our communities during these unprecedented times.

The staff at CNet have worked diligently and have gone out of their way on many occasions to deliver the commissioned projects. They faced many difficulties delivering the projects and overcame these challenges with their initiative. The Board have continually supported the staff through this difficult time with regular meetings via Zoom, and continue to do so. As you will see from this report we have successfully delivered on a number of different projects and initiatives achieving our objectives and outcomes, exceeding expectations on many occasions. The world and the way we work has changed and going forward we will face new challenges that we will face head on, continuing to work diligently with our partners, stakeholders, community, and the people of the District to ensure that we are able to offer the best possible service we can.

Javed Khan



FINANCIAL REPORT

Finance Review 2020-21

In my report last year, I ended by suggesting that the pursuit of economy, efficiency and effectiveness might be the drivers that would benefit organisations who work in our sector; by this I meant that the better managed organisations would have the best chance of survival and growth in trying times. The circumstances in which we have operated during the last twelve months since then have not changed my opinion.

Funders relinquished their traditional areas of support and directed their resources to the immediate effects of COVID-19, which did not lie within the spheres of operation of many existing organisations. Lockdowns led to reductions in trading activities which previously underpinned core costs, or in the ability of our beneficiaries to participate in many of our activities. Beneficiaries' needs changed and their income reduced, social life became a shadow of itself.

Against this background, I read of many people urging organisations to think outside the box, but often a lot of the most effective work during the pandemic was done by organisations that didn't have a box to think outside of. In much the same way as many of our existing charities and voluntary organisations originally started, people saw a need and found out ways of addressing it by doing simple things, collecting and cooking food and distributing it, forming a group who kept in contact with people in need and helped them with their practical problems, and in many other ways. It reminded me of the many stories I'd heard in my childhood of how communities had come together during war time and helped each other.

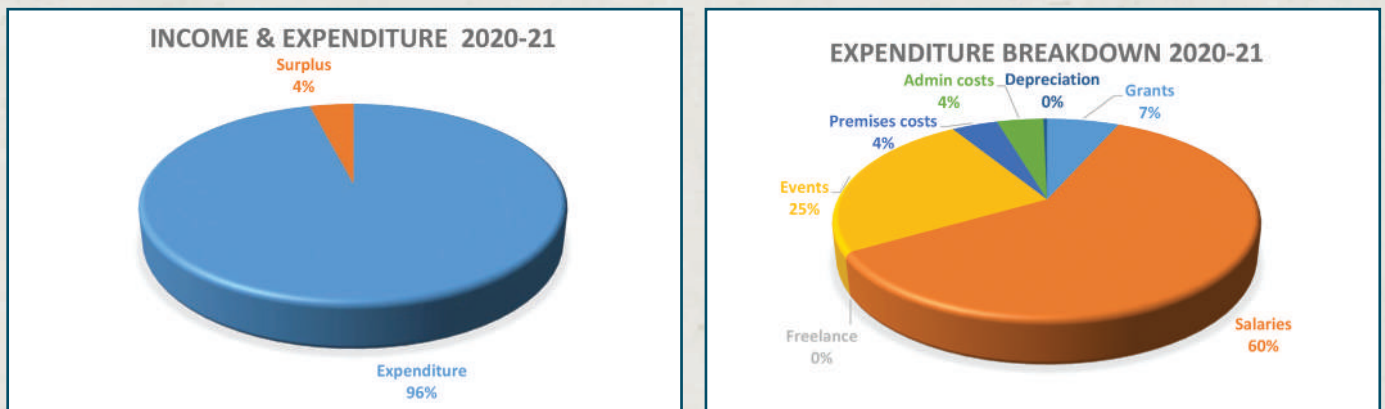
When our organisations were formed, we were told we had to have a constitution. An important part of this was to specify our activities, say to whom they would be delivered and where, especially if we wanted to be registered as charities. Model constitutions were provided to help us in this task. What was actually happening was that we were defining the box inside which we could work and we were warned of penalties if we worked outside it. Over the past twenty years I have been advising potential organisations to be aware of the restrictions imposed by too narrowly defining spheres of activity by not adding a few words to say we would work primarily with a certain cohort of people or within a certain geographical area, but also in similar circumstances elsewhere or with other people who demonstrated similar needs.



This gives the organisation leeway to change its course of direction when and if circumstances and needs change, to be able to attract funding in non-traditional areas and avoid failure and to continue to provide public benefits, albeit not those necessarily uppermost in the minds of the founders of the organisation. The constitution of CNet is wide ranging and that is why the organisation is working on projects which would have not been considered in its early days and is probably the reason why it is one of the few remaining Community Empowerment Networks still in existence, and thriving, in the UK.

Financial Review

The statement of financial affairs shows total income of £499,359, a decrease of 23% on the previous year, and total expenditure of £479,409, a decrease of 20%, resulting in a surplus of £19,950. This is lower than 2020 and is principally due to the different mix of funding opportunities available during the pandemic and their individual contributions to our core costs. The trustees continue to seek to sustain the financial position of the organisation by attracting funding from non-traditional funders to offset the reduction in funding from central and local government, whilst maintaining its stated purposes and objectives.



Reserves Policy

In accordance with the Charity Commission Guidance, the trustees have considered the reserve needs of the charity and have established a policy whereby unrestricted funds neither committed nor invested in fixed assets (free unrestricted reserves) should equate to three months of total expenditure (excluding grants paid) plus statutory redundancy and notice period costs at 31 March 2021, free unrestricted current reserves totalled £267,869. After deducting the costs of statutory redundancy and notice costs (£147,837), the remaining reserves represent 3.2 months (2020 – 2.5 months) of total expenditure (excluding grants paid) for the year. The trustees will continue to seek to maintain the achievement of the policy target.

Peter Bloom

Treasurer

July 2021

BRADFORD CENTRAL COMMUNITY LED LOCAL DEVELOPMENT

2020/21 has been a very challenging time period for the delivery partners and potential project sponsors. Consequently, the CLLD programme has also seen its fair share of challenges in terms of developing projects and availability of potential applicant organisations with appropriate project delivery infrastructure.

Bradford Central CLLD Programme consisted of five separate major project areas known as 'Activity'. Potential project ideas that can be developed under each Activity were set out within the Local Development Strategy (LDS) at the start of the programme. It is a complex funding programme requiring joint collaboration between many different partners/stakeholders.

CNet is one of the delivery partners on the programme, with responsibility for appraisal and monitoring. One potential large project under Activity 1 was close to being rolled out around the time period when the pandemic became a major obstacle to progress. A considerable amount of time and energy had been invested to resolve issues which the accountable body identified as barriers to the progression of the project.

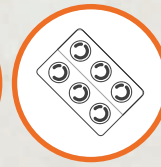
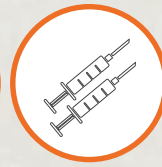
Whilst the Local Advisory Group (LAG) board was in agreement with most of the issues raised by the accountable body, it did not share the same sentiment in relation to their position that in the end the applicant had not proposed an ERDF funding compliant and viable project. The applicant had submitted all relevant information and evidence to satisfy the requirement and is awaiting a final decision from the accountable body.

Shortly before the lockdown applications were invited for potential project(s) under Activity 2. There was a single application which failed during the appraisal stage. The cumulative effects of these issues led to severe constraints on the timescale of the programme as a whole.

Discussions were underway between the accountable body, Department for Work and Pensions, and the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government regarding how best to deal with this.



Project YouTurn



Project YouTurn is programme designed to address the drug issues in the BD7 area of Bradford. The project has been in development since September 2019 and officially commenced in September 2020. During this time period extensive research was undertaken including a review of initiatives and best practice across the country and a mapping exercise to understand services available and work being done to tackle illegal drug use and dealing. Connections were made with organisations and stakeholders to establish investment and ownership from the outset. The programme is funded by the Local Trust through the Big Local initiative.

What is the project about?

- Creating awareness on the dangers of drug misuse and dealing drugs
- Supporting people with loved ones affected by drugs
- Promoting information in various languages to help people understand the effects of drugs
- Developing and funding diversionary activities for young people
- Promoting existing drug and alcohol services that can provide support
- Engaging and communicating with the local communities to better understand the support required

What are we doing?

Project YouTurn are working with key organisations such as the Council's Drug Services, The Bridge Project, West Yorkshire Police, the Youth Service along with community groups and local community centres. We are taking a co-ordinated and partnership approach to help improve the situation in the BD7 area. The plan is to work together to provide more activities for young people to deter them from crime, increase drug education within the communities, and most importantly guide people affected by drugs to relevant support services that is currently available.

Our work up till March 2021:

- Established social media including Facebook and Twitter
- A drugs survey to better understand the bigger picture in BD7
- Partnership working with Bradford Metropolitan District Council's Drug Services
- Delivered drug awareness training to staff at community centres, junior football clubs, Board groups and other organisations
- Created and distributed a 30 page drugs information booklet in English and Urdu to every single household covered by our funding in BD7
- Delivered three stakeholder meetings to keep the relevant parties engaged with the project with a potential to work together
- Partnership working with West Yorkshire Police on a Child Criminal Exploitation campaign
- Organised training by West Yorkshire Police on Child Criminal Exploitation training for community groups
- Funded Radio Mac, a national radio station based in BD7, to run a programme over the year on Community Matters with some substantial sessions on drugs, addiction and support.

Project YouTurn will have delivered drug education to up to 1000 children and young people within a year. The drug awareness training will continue to be rolled out wider to include more community groups and organisations in and around the BD7 area.



Bradford District Assembly

The Bradford District Assembly (BDA) was established in 2009 and is an unincorporated organisation i.e. has no legal status and does not have a bank account. It is funded by Bradford Council and facilitated by CNet who provide secretariat and developmental support.

The Assembly provides an interface between the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) and the public sector, primarily Bradford Council's key strategic partnerships and the Bradford & Craven Clinical Commissioning Group. The work of the Assembly is overseen by the Assembly Steering Group (ASG), which has members from each of the BDA forums, plus specialist advisors. The main aim is to enable the VCS to play a full and equal role in the development of local policy and strategy, and to ensure fair inclusion in service planning, design and delivery. The Assembly Forums and chairs during 2020/21 were as follows:

- Equalities Forum – Co-Chairs: Penny Wangari-Jones, Mark Nicholson
- Health & Care Forum – Co-Chairs: Helen Davey, Helen Speight
- Community Economic Forum – Chair: Nasim Qureshi
- Safer Communities Forum – Co-Chairs: Yasmin Khan, Jon Royle
- Bradford Environment Forum – Chair: Carlton Smith

Since the start of the pandemic, the Assembly Steering Group has worked in collaboration with partners from the VCS, Bradford Council and local NHS health services. The Assembly Chair, Kim Shutler, worked tirelessly with colleagues across the district to support our communities. We are all extremely grateful and thankful for the efforts of each and every person who contributed, particularly our army of volunteers.

The Assembly Forums continued to meet via Zoom and 750 people participated in various meetings and events, many of which were focused on the impact of the pandemic. Here are some examples of the topics and themes:

- Reducing Inequalities in Communities (RIC) programme
- NHS winter pressures
- West Yorkshire devolution
- Bradford District's Economic Strategy and recovery
- Hate crime
- Equality and Diversity within Public Services
- Green Spaces and Community Gardens
- West Yorkshire Climate Emergency

For more information and details of how to get involved, please visit our website

www.cnet.org.uk/bradford-district-assembly/about-the-assembly



Roma Strategy

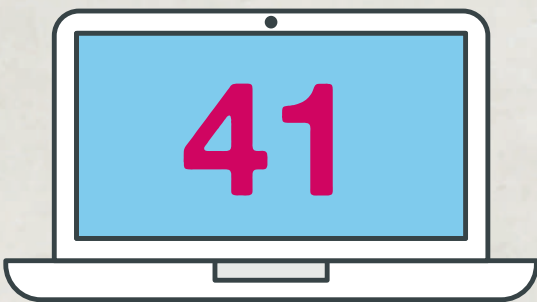
This project began in January 2020 for 12 months and was funded through Stronger Communities Together as one of five national 'Integration Areas'. The vision for the programme is of a place where everyone feels that they belong. The project involved working specifically with statutory public bodies (Council, Health, CCGs, Police, Fire and Rescue Service) and gaining a commitment from senior leaders to engage effectively with the local Roma Community to help change the way services are delivered to better respond and meet the needs of the Roma.

Once the Project Lead, Anthony Clipsom and Administrator, Jenny Pratt were appointed, contact was made with statutory organisations (Council, Health, Police, Fire and Rescue) and organisations in the voluntary sector to establish named individuals who could work together on a joint delivery plan and input into a Roma strategy. Local and Regional mapping and research of existing provision and intelligence was gathered and contact with Roma practitioners as possible engagement workers for project work was established.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic the project was partially paused, however a Roma Strategy Advisory email group was formed and started to meet through Zoom. During this time, we used intelligence and contacts to support the Roma community during the COVID-19 crisis, linking with other organisations including the police.

Roma engagement workers and partners we had worked with previously were asked to find out how the Roma communities were coping with Covid19 and lockdown restrictions. CNet became the lead on gathering information and developed strong relationships with other organisations within the Roma Strategy Advisory Group. We supported Public Health Bradford, Bradford & District CCG, Safer Communities, and Welcome to Bradford to include CEE and Roma on their relative websites and co-ordinated the sourcing and sharing of COVID-19 video messages in CEE languages.

Ultimately the draft Roma Strategy report will be submitted to the Advisory Group and relative strategic bodies including Stronger Communities, Bradford Council with recommendations and a launch of the Strategy once approved.



**INDIVIDUALS ENGAGED
IN STRATEGY
WORKING GROUP**



**ORGANISATIONS
ENGAGED WITH**



**ROMA PEOPLE
ENGAGED**

JU:MP Grants

CNet was commissioned to administer the grant awards programme for Join Us Move Play (JU:MP). The JU:MP project focused on improving the health and wellbeing of children aged 5 – 14 and their families living in the North Bradford area through physical activity.

The COVID-19 pandemic brought a halt to project delivery during 2020/2021 for many groups and with the closure of schools it meant children were left doing none or very little physical activity. Working together, JU:MP and CNet introduced smaller £1500 grant awards for organisations to support activities in bubbles and virtual activities to keep children and their families active during the lockdowns. During the year nearly £10,000 was distributed to seven community groups to support physical activity.



Mental Health Grants

In September 2020 CNet was commissioned to run a grants programme for the Bradford Council Public Health Team focusing on improving the mental health of Bradford Citizens. The scheme funds new or emerging areas of work tailored towards adults aged 18 and over. The aim was to support projects that reflect the key priorities relating to mental health of the Bradford Council Plan and Mental Wellbeing in Bradford District and Craven Strategy 2016-2021.

Fast Track grants of up to £2000 were available for community groups/organisations. From December 2020 to March 2021, seven Fast Track grants totalling £12,775 were distributed to groups across the district.



Community Conversations



This project started in January 2020 for 12 months and was funded through Stronger Communities Together, Bradford Council. Bradford is one of five national 'Integration Areas' the vision for the programme was of a place where everyone feels that they belong, are understood, feel safe and are able to fully participate in the opportunities the District offers. Community Conversations was to work specifically in two areas in each constituency, 10 in all, bringing together residents from different backgrounds no matter what their religion, gender, sexuality, ethnicity, or social class. Key to this was working with Ward Officers to identify the areas where there is a cohesion/integration issue, and use the Community Readiness Model (CRM) as the tool to identify the level of readiness to change, thereby informing the type/level of integration activity required.

Meetings with ward officers were arranged to establish the areas within each constituency and the specific issues we were to work with. Training on CRM took place. The areas identified were Bradford East – Ravenscliffe and Canterbury, Bradford West – Manningham and Clayton, Bradford South – Buttershaw and Great Horton, Shipley – Westroyd and Bingley, and Keighley – Highfield and Braithwaite.

Due to the impact of COVID-19 and the restrictions on contact between households, the project was paused from late March 2020. In October 2020 we were asked to put together a plan on how we could deliver the project given the restrictions. The outputs were modified slightly so that we would be using CRM in just one area in each constituency and the ABCD approach in the other area. Interviews and engagement activities were planned and we were given one year in total to undertake complete the project.



Engaged with over 100 residents across the district

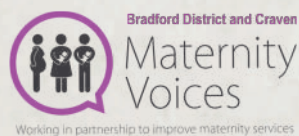


Interviewed 31 professionals



Ran 5 co-designed workshops via Zoom attended by 29 professionals and residents.

Engaging People Project



This project is commissioned by Bradford District and Craven Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG). The Engaging People Project (EPP) is funded as a partnership including Hale, Bradford Talking Media (BTM) and Healthwatch Bradford & District. CNet leads on both the Women's Health Network and Bradford District and Craven Maternity Voices Partnership.

The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and lockdown on the 23rd of March 2020 saw us move all our engagement activities, forums and partnership work across to virtual platforms. During what has been a very challenging year we have seen an increase in numbers of meetings being organised, attendance and membership for both the Women's Health Network and Bradford District and Craven Maternity Voices Partnership. We have developed a number of innovative collaborative projects with health services, voluntary sector partners, and wider service providers:

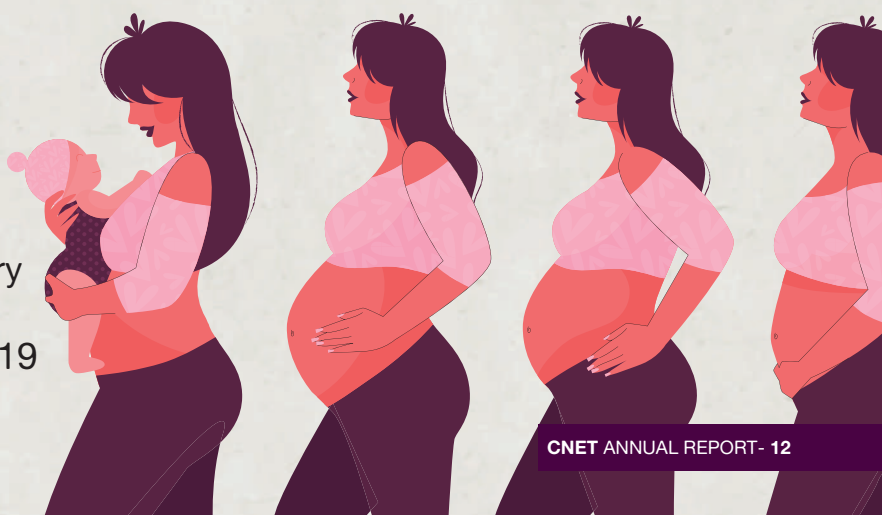
- IWD Event 2021 #Choose To Challenge
- Womens Health Research Project with Birmingham City University
- Two Maternity 15 Steps Reviews at Bradford Royal Infirmary covering Antenatal Clinics & Day Unit, Assessment Centre, Waiting Area and the Labour Ward.
- Co-produced with BRI a series of BAME Maternity Film Clips on: attending antenatal appointments, vitamin D, and partners support during pregnancy. Filmed in various languages (Arabic, Eritrean, Urdu, Punjabi etc.) by local parents, these have been shared across various national and local social media platforms including BBC Facebook.
- We have co-produced two maternity surveys with over 150 respondees, the first a maternity carer's user's evaluation gathering women's experiences during the pandemic and a second around breastfeeding during the pandemic. These have helped shape and influence service delivery.

We have representation on various strategic partnership boards at both local and regional levels:

- Local Maternity Systems (LMS)
- Every Baby Matters
- Act As One Better Births
- Outstanding Maternity Programme – BTHFT
- Breastfeeding Network
- Bevan Starting Well Steering Group
- Birmingham City University Womens Health Steering Group

12 meetings/events held,
289 attendees via Zoom

Alongside our EPP partners we have also played an active role in supporting the NHS, Bradford Council and Voluntary Sector partners in gathering insight and sharing information on the COVID-19 pandemic.



Diversity Insight

The Diversity Insight Project was funded by Give Bradford. The key objective was to understand VCS organisations in terms of how their staff, board and volunteers are reflective of the communities they serve. To this end, a survey was designed via Survey Monkey and was widely marketed to VCS organisations who were encouraged to participate by illustrating the following benefits:

- Understanding how our organisations are reflective or otherwise helps us to focus future recruitment to communities we need to better represent
- Better represented communities lead to better insight
- A more representative membership gives a stronger mandate when campaigning on key issues
- Mapping the issues and development needs of organisations helps infrastructure organisations to source, resource and target future support and training needs where it is needed. It will also give data intelligence to wider work being carried out by public sector partners
- Quite simply better insight leads to better decisions for all of us

In total we received 100 returns which given the constraints and effects of COVID-19 we are impressed with. Services are under a great deal of pressure with increased demands, funding uncertainties, staff problems, volunteer illness etc., so we appreciate all the people who took the time to share information with us.

Finally, we carried out an analysis of the data, a summary of the key findings can be found on the CNet website under the heading Projects Delivered. From the analysis we are able to determine which communities are most/least represented as well as priorities for future training and development needs.



Community Safety Consultation

CNet was commissioned by Bradford Council to undertake the community consultation required by The Crime and Disorder (Formulation and Implementation of Strategy) Regulations 2007. The Regulation requires each local government area to compile annual strategic assessment plans to assist the district Community Safety Partnership in terms of planning and reviewing their plans.

The primary objective of this consultation was to identify communities and neighbourhoods that often fall through the net, the seldom heard communities, with a focus on issues of community safety that have long-term damaging impacts on these communities. In compliance with the government guidelines around COVID-19, the consultations were carried out both online and face-to-face.

The consultation focused on different types of crimes, such as drugs, burglary, anti-social use of vehicles, forms of violence, and personal safety, etc., which the communities felt most affected their lives. Consultation focus groups included refugee and asylum seeker communities, LGBTQ+, social housing estates, women, inner-city neighbourhoods, and homeless groups. Participation was an essential component of this consultation and as a result the questions which were used to initiate discussion were very much themed around prompting discussion rather than a Q&A session.

Findings have been collated separately for each group and submitted to Bradford Council for analysis. The work of this consultation has significant relevance for the formulation of strategies to ensure community safety as a wider subject. It will also influence considerations when multi-agency works are being planned to combat fears of crime and to promote community safety.

CNet has been accredited with achieving far beyond the requirements of the consultation specification scopes in its strategy, management, and the delivery of the consultation.





BRADFORD & DISTRICT COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT NETWORK LTD

ENTERPRISE HUB, 114 - 116 MANNINGHAM LANE, BRADFORD BD8 7JF

TEL: 01274 305045 • EMAIL: CONTACT@CNET.ORG.UK



Local Trust | Big Local



AVAILABLE IN LARGE PRINT ON REQUEST