

welcome



Sian Lockwood OBE

## Doing more for less

The first stirrings of spring after a VERY long winter and with them a few glimpses of hope for the future in amongst the many grim news stories about the impact of the public sector cuts. Local and central government colleagues are facing an unprecedented requirement for savings and will have to make enormously difficult decisions. But

in some areas the very severity of this crisis has resulted in imaginative and creative solutions. The level of savings required just cannot be made by doing slightly less of the same and some local government colleagues are beginning to explore radically different approaches which are designed to offer better or as good outcomes for less money.

This willingness to explore radically imaginative solutions has led to growing interest in micro enterprise and Shared Lives. The services delivered by micro entrepreneurs and Shared Lives Carers are rooted in relationships, high quality, highly personalised and offer real choice for people looking for support and services. They help to build social capital and on top of all this are great value for money.

The compelling business case for Shared Lives was firmly established in 2009 with the publication of a piece of research commissioned by Improvement and Efficiency South East. This demonstrated not just the great outcomes delivered in Shared Lives arrangements but also the savings that can be generated by supporting people through Shared Lives rather than in more traditional models of accommodation and care. Some local authorities have been aware for many years of the value of their Shared Lives service and have invested in its development. Many

more are waking up now to the potential that their Shared Lives service has to deliver fantastic outcomes and savings and exploring ways in which they can develop and grow their service.

Evidence for the practical and monetary value of services delivered by micro entrepreneurs has been growing with the spread of micro enterprise support agencies, now established with our support in 15 local authority areas. In Oldham for example (where this model has been established longest) 36 micro enterprises have been successfully established, providing highly personalised support and services for 850 older and disabled people and creating 140 jobs and 40 volunteering opportunities. Services are delivered on a continuum from fully commercial at one end to fully voluntary at the other (with approximately 30-40% of micro enterprises delivered on a voluntary/semi voluntary basis). The cost of even the most commercial services compares well with more

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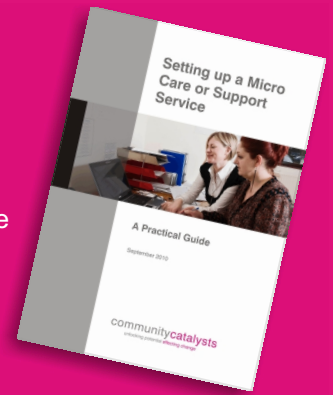
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traditional alternatives and so people in areas with a flourishing local micro market can make their money go much further (vital in these hugely difficult times).

'More for less' is seen by some as a sort of Holy Grail – desperately sought after but forever out of reach. Micro enterprise and Shared Lives are approaches which are tried and tested, practical and bring that Holy Grail within easy reach. Many local authorities already realise this and more are becoming open to the possibilities of this way of working every day. Our aim is simply to ensure that people wherever they live have access to these types of great service!

## Helping organisations & groups respond to the personalisation agenda

- Are you supporting or advising very small organisations or community groups?
- Do they want to develop what they do in response to the personalisation agenda (or more importantly shouldn't they be)?
- Have you been contacted by local people interested in setting up something new?



### Community Catalysts has written a booklet which can help enormously!

A guide to setting up your own local enterprise - giving support, care and choice to the people in your community is a comprehensive **32 page guide** aimed at providers of very small organisations.

The guide is available electronically and costs **only £30 plus VAT**  
To order a copy contact Jill Wighton at Community Catalysts at  
[jill.wighton@communitycatalysts.co.uk](mailto:jill.wighton@communitycatalysts.co.uk)

## Unlocking the creative potential within staff teams

There are some fantastically imaginative providers out there with a real commitment to continually improve outcomes for the people they support. One of these is the charity **Macintyre** and we were delighted to be approached by them last year to do a piece of work to harness the ideas and talents of some of their employees to develop some new local, personal and inclusive supports and experiences for disabled people.

Macintyre piloted this work with a small group of creative staff members, drawn from all levels within the organisation, who were keen to explore entrepreneurial approaches. We started with a two-day workshop which ran at the very beginning of September last year. The first day of the workshop brought together perceptions of the changing requirements of disabled people with the skills and talents of staff members

to generate some imaginative and exciting ideas for enterprise. Day 2 used business approaches and disciplines to refine those ideas and begin to shape new enterprises designed to deliver services that people would really want to buy. Macintyre has gone on to subject these ideas to further testing and are now taking a number forward with the aim of establishing them as enterprises within the organisation.

This was an energising piece of work for all concerned (not least for us at Community Catalysts!). The level of commitment and enthusiasm among people attending the workshop was

inspiring and many of the ideas genuinely exciting. Business disciplines interestingly seemed to inspire rather than crush creativity and all involved valued the realism and practicality of the ideas that emerged as a result.

We have recognised the value of this approach to large providers (voluntary and private sector) and have gone on to offer it more widely.

Do contact us if you want to know more

## STOP PRESS STOP PRESS STOP PRESS

Community Catalysts has become a Community Interest Company

This changes very little in practice but the CIC structure is a better reflection of our purpose. The main difference is an 'asset lock' which requires any surplus income to be spent to benefit the community (in our case the money being gifted to NAAPS to further its work).

# How to Attract More Clients Without Spending More Money

If you're running a service which depends on finding new clients to generate income you need to create a regular flow of new enquiries. When budgets are limited this means making best use of all the marketing assets you already have available.

The aim should always be to play to your strengths and communicate the true value of your services. For most small community based enterprises, a unique combination of skills, talents, and creative ideas represent valuable marketing assets.

One of the most under used assets I've personally observed working alongside dozens of small enterprises is the **unique selling proposition - USP**. This is something you can develop with your team and existing clients without the need for any significant financial investment.

This is a simple yet powerful marketing technique which describes the unique characteristics of your service or organisation. Your USP should communicate what makes you different in your local market.

Here's an example of a USP for a venture offering social activities for people with learning disabilities...

*"The Orange Bear Social Club offers evening and weekend social activities for people with learning disabilities and their families, friends and support workers. People can get involved with the organisation at different levels according to needs and aspirations. We also offer training and income opportunities for people with support needs by helping them run Orange Bear events for community groups, private parties, schools, local companies"*

By developing and communicating a compelling USP you will gain an advantage and significantly increase your chances of finding more clients in a number of different ways:

- **Your service will be clearly understood and valued for the unique set of skills, talents and innovation you bring to the market**
- **You'll become more memorable and make it easier for people to spread the word about your services**
- **You and your team will find it much easier to communicate the benefits of your service consistently and clearly**
- **You'll never be stuck for ideas about what your core message should be when it comes to producing leaflets and marketing materials**
- **Developing a USP will create the right mindset in your organisation for developing a more competitive outlook in tougher economic times**

## 9 Steps to Developing Your USP

Developing your USP can take a little work but will ultimately be a worthwhile investment.

Your USP answers the question, "What makes your service any different, better, or more than anything else on offer in the local area?"

Here's a series of steps which will help you find your USP:

- 1. List the reasons why you started your venture – identifying your motivation, passion and drive will help you to uncover your unique approach**
- 2. What are the reasons why people use your service? (based on client feedback)**
- 3. Identify anything more you could be offering (based on client feedback)**
- 4. If there are people that could be benefitting from your service but are not yet clients, identify the reasons why**
- 5. Do some basic research on your competitors**
- 6. Complete this sentence..."We are the only service that ....."**
- 7. Make a list of all the services and additional benefits you could offer that no one else in your area does**
- 8. Hold a USP 'discovery' session presenting your findings from points 1-7 involving your team, clients and others with an interest in contributing towards the success of your enterprise – identify the most compelling aspects of your offerings**
- 9. Write your USP down – a USP can be one 'stand out' feature of your organisation or can be a series of unique benefits**

Finally, the only rules here are to come up with a USP that clearly communicates your unique offer to future and existing clients. When you're satisfied you've identified the **features of your service which are most important to your clients** you can start communicating your USP and generating more enquiries for your service.

**If you have any questions about developing your USP, business development and marketing challenges send to [info@communitycatalysts.co.uk](mailto:info@communitycatalysts.co.uk)**



**Glen Crosier** has worked in the social care, housing and support sector for 20 years. He has operated his own micro-business since 2003 helping local authorities and enterprising organisations develop and market innovative services and business ideas. He is presently working for **Leicestershire County Council** as **Micro Enterprise Development Manager**

## The Business Case for Shared Lives

Shared Lives is an established and highly successful model, which enables people who need some support to live in a family home within their local community. It is a partnership between a local agency (a Shared Lives Scheme) and local individuals and families (Shared Lives Carers). Shared Lives arrangements have been common in the UK for over 30 years.

Improvement and Efficiency South East recently published the results of a piece of research carried out in partnership with NAAPS UK which demonstrated the quality and value for money of Shared Lives arrangements. Key messages included:

### A High Quality Service

The proportion of Shared Lives Schemes rated as good or excellent by CQC is higher than any other service type

### High Levels of Satisfaction

Because of the high quality and personalised nature of Shared Lives arrangements, the people involved in those arrangements express high levels of satisfaction

### Reduced Costs

The total cost of a Shared Lives arrangement is significantly less than the cost of other types of support service with similar objectives (eg: the potential saving for someone with learning disabilities in a Shared Lives arrangement rather than residential care is £650pw)

The majority of local authorities in England have a Shared Lives Scheme but few are working to their full potential. Many are under resourced, small scale and marginalised and most provide support to only some groups of people or have a limited range of services. Individuals, communities and public bodies lose out where Schemes are limited in the services that they provide and the people that they serve. Many local authorities are now waking up to the potential of their Scheme to deliver real savings and great outcomes for people and are keen to explore ways to develop their service. Community Catalysts draws upon long experience gained with NAAPS and its members, and is already working with a number of local authorities. In Shropshire for example we are working with the Scheme and commissioners to extend the service to other groups including older people, and to extend the range of services offered through the Scheme.

At a time when value needs to be wrung out of every penny of the money spent by local authorities it makes sense to make full use of Shared Lives services and to enable as many people as possible to benefit from Shared Lives arrangements. **NAAPS and Community Catalysts understand the complexities of Shared Lives and are passionate about what it can do for people and communities – so do contact either of our organisations if you want to know more.**

## Confusing care choices in a personalised world?

### The Quality Mark could be the answer

During their many years of working with micro providers, Community Catalysts recognised that there was no system in place for them to demonstrate the high quality of the service they provide.

With the introduction of personal budgets, service users and commissioners also need a method of assessing quality and value, and to make comparisons when making purchasing choices.

To address this problem, Community Catalysts have developed and tested a Quality Mark system, designed to be accessible to as wide a range of providers as possible.

Our comprehensive Quality Mark Manual and wider support package provides all the tools necessary to implement the Quality Mark award system in your area.

For more information on the Quality Mark Manual, and on the support that Community Catalysts can offer contact Jill Wighton at [jill.wighton@communitycatalysts.co.uk](mailto:jill.wighton@communitycatalysts.co.uk)





**Rod Madocks**

**Strategic Commissioning Manager**

## The wider benefits and added value for Strategic Commissioning from the Nottingham City Micro Market Development Project

### Introduction

At the outset of this project, Nottingham City Council had little notion of the extent of the current micro market, or what was required to map and develop the market in response to self directed support.

Working with Community Catalysts, the work has resulted in an intensive surge of new learning for the social care commissioning arm of Nottingham City Council. The project has had a profound effect on our understanding of not only the micro market and how to support it, but also of the wider scale market mapping of what the council needs to do to support the larger self directed care market.

### Market Support

The project has given the council specific learning on the role of the Micro Market Co-ordinator, the connections they need to build, and the flexibility they need within the role. They also need a degree of independence and judgement to manage the range of dilemmas posed by agencies that might be in competition and also which need to work in concert.

### Providers

The project has significantly developed the council's understanding of the multiplicity and range of potential micro providers, how these providers interrelate, and the sort of support they might require. These include the need for centralised information, as well as individualised support, peer networks, feedback methods and regulation requirements.

### Market Systems

The project has had significant impact on how Strategic Commissioning will continue to support, value and gain feedback from providers within the market.

Generally it has helped the council determine how it will support Brokerage and Employment support and to define the "Nottingham offer" for support to the self-directed market. It has helped us map the Putting People First market system in Nottingham when none existed before.

It has helped build the social enterprise and community capacity aspect of micros and to link up with the business development and leisure and sports segments of the council who have not previously been connected to social care commissioning. It has also shown the innate creativity of the market and provider's ability to find solutions to issues they face.

### Vision

The project with its accompanying strengthened linkage to national developments and to the Community Catalyst's DH pilot work on a Quality Mark approach for micro providers has been an opportunity for the council to take on new influences and broaden its visions. It has given us a concrete model of how change can be led by social care commissioning within the transforming landscape of social care.

It has shown the strength and advantage of using stakeholders and partners in a new way to grow vision through innovative policy-making sessions and to generally use the creative resources of personnel to come up with new solutions to the commissioning challenges that face us.

### Legacy

Nottingham City Quality and Commissioning Directorate are planning to create a new Market Management arm in April 2011, with a specific Micro Market Coordinator's post as well as one for Social Enterprises, one for SME and larger providers and one for the Children's Market. This new structure will carry forward and embody much of the learning that has been trail-blazed by this successful project.

To read the full article go to  
[www.communitycatalysts.co.uk](http://www.communitycatalysts.co.uk)

## Sian and Lorna enter the Dragons Den!

On January 28th, Chief Executive Sian Lockwood and Dudley Support Co-ordinator Lorna Reid found themselves pitching in the Dragons Den. But instead of facing

Peter Jones, it was Richard Jones (President of ADASS) they were trying to impress!

The event, organised by the Guardian newspaper, aims to understand and share learning around what works in building community capacity, and to raise its profile as an essential

contribution to the future development of social care.

Eight organisations were invited to pitch to 6 handpicked Dragons, recognised as leaders in their field on how to build communities through micro enterprise.

It was a long day starting at 11am and finishing at 7.30pm. Lorna and Sian met for a much-needed coffee, and then made their way to the Guardian building near Kings Cross.

There were seven other groups pitching - two independent organisations like Community Catalysts and the rest innovative local authority projects. The eight groups were split between two mentors who they had met with beforehand to help develop their pitch, and make sure it was put across as well as it possibly could be. We had Clive Miller from OPM (Office for Public Management) who was fantastically helpful both beforehand and on the day.

Each dragon had ten gold (chocolate) coins which they could use to invest in one or more of the organisations

pitching. Community Catalysts were third on which was great – not too much waiting! There was also a TV feed to the waiting room so participants could get a sense of what going into the Den would be like, and didn't get too nervous.

Our pitch started with Lorna telling a story about one of the enterprises she was supporting in Dudley - she did it fabulously and the Dragons were gripped from the start. Sian completed the pitch, and then it was the Dragons turn to ask questions which were as insightful and challenging as you would expect from such a distinguished group!



The Dragons obviously liked what they heard, because Sian and Lorna were overwhelmed not just with gold coins but with very generous offers of help and support.

Sian summed it up nicely, *"It was a fantastically helpful experience - and the support and help is continuing not just from our Dragons but also from our mentor at OPM."*

Community Catalyst's work with Micro Enterprise development, support and market shaping is already having a hugely positive impact on people and community living, and it is immensely rewarding to get recognition of this work from an esteemed group like the Dragons.

## Inspirational volunteers show entrepreneurialism in Oldham

David Cameron recently launched his "Big Society" drive to empower communities, describing it as his "great passion". There is much scepticism as to whether this is really about people and communities or just a cynical attempt to give moral justification to the biggest public and voluntary sector cuts in a generation. Despite this the PM's view that in the past "the talents and initiative of people had been wasted" rings true with Community Catalysts' work with people in Oldham.

Building on work to support micro enterprise in Oldham a DH funded project is supporting disabled people and those with mental or physical health problems, many of whom use care and support services people to establish their own care and support service. The project has uncovered some inspirational people but many are not taking the 'self employed/small business' route that was anticipated.

Examples of these inspirational service providers include Stephen, a

man with a history of using mental health services, (who told his story in the last edition of Community Catalysts News) and who is now close to running his own enterprise teaching people with disabilities to cook. A social club started by a couple using their personal experiences to bring together people with mental ill health to enable them to make friends and socialise. A service run by an entrepreneur who happens to have Down's syndrome that offers people with a learning disability a chance to dance and become a dance leader themselves in the future.

Despite their obvious differences all these service providers have a few things in common. They are all users or ex-users of social care or health services at the same time as being entrepreneurial, passionate people committed to using their talents to help others. Another thing they have in common is that the barriers and challenges they face to get their service off the ground and to sustain it are huge and without some support and advice they might easily falter.

People may wish to establish a micro enterprise to help others in their community but have little interest in

making money or in engaging in the bureaucracy of business. For some people the impact on their welfare benefits can be a real disincentive to establishing their enterprise on a commercial footing. Some people live with family carers in arrangements that rely on their income as a key part of the wider household income. The welfare and FACs eligibility systems are slow to respond to changes in a person's circumstances or health and do not allow for a smooth transition from welfare to work (and back again if necessary). The financial risk of becoming self employed and losing access to benefits to a person with support needs and their family is huge.

For all of these reasons and more the work in Oldham has led Community Catalysts to coin a new phrase to describe these inspirational people who can't step into the world of work but who are definitely in the driving seat of their enterprise, and are committed to playing their own very real contribution to the 'Big Society'. The entrepreneurial volunteers we have worked with have certainly inspired us to value enterprise in whatever form it comes.

## Innovative people, with an Ace up their sleeve



**Dave and Sarah** live and work in the East Midlands, have a passion for gardening and have skills and experience in delivering care services. They have an imaginative and innovative idea for a new service and are being supported to explore these ideas by Tracy Turner the Micro Service Coordinator in Nottingham City.

**The Ace of Spades Community Gardening Company** is emerging out of Dave and Sarah's combined passions and skills. If it gets off the ground, the service will offer older people and those with a disability or

illness support to engage in gardening and horticultural activities at a pace and level that they feel comfortable with. The service will have the aim of encouraging physical and psychological well-being of its gardeners by helping them to work outdoors, interact with the natural environment and maintain what may have been a lifelong hobby or interest.

Amongst others Dave and Sarah feel that Ace of Spades may be of interest to older

people who used to love to care for their own garden but for reasons of declining health can no longer do so. It might also appeal to carers who wish to maintain their garden, enable the person they care for to participate in an activity that they used to enjoy and give the carer some free time, confident that their family member is being well supported.

The service might also appeal to people who live in a residential care

home and to care home providers. It could enable the care home provider to make better use of their garden maintenance budget whilst providing the people who live in the home with a hobby and a real interest in their surroundings

Getting any new venture off the ground can be challenging and one as imaginative as Ace of Spades that combines an element of care with

*"The service will have the aim of encouraging physical and psychological well-being of its gardeners."*

something as different as gardening is more challenging than most. Tracy

Turner is working closely with Dave and Sarah as part of a partnership project with the City Council partly funded by the East Midlands Joint Improvement Partnership and these challenges and barriers are being explored. Let's hope Dave and Sarah manage to make it work – if they do Ace of Spades will definitely offer its gardeners and customers more for less at a time when that is increasingly attractive.

## Community catalysts for hire!

Excellent speakers and facilitators available for your event

- Are you on the ball with **Big Society**?
- Is **Personalisation** key to you and your customers?
- Does your team need to better understand **Imaginative care and support**?

**Community Catalysts can help!**

If you are looking for someone to deliver a presentation or speech, run a workshop or facilitate an event on these or any related subjects don't hesitate to get in touch.

Community Catalysts are experts in the following areas and our speakers are passionate, experienced and on the ball:

- **Personalisation**
- **Enterprise**
- **Big Society**
- **Imaginative care and support**
- **Unlocking potential**
- **Social capital**
- **Choice**
- **People and community**
- **Homeshare**
- **Shared Lives**
- **Localism**
- **Market shaping**
- **Local enterprise**

To book your speaker, call **Jill Wighton** on **01423 790126** or email her directly at **jill.wighton@communitycatalysts.co.uk**

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