



Riverside Community
Health Project

Riverside Community Health Project Business Plan

April 2009 March 2012

Executive Summary

This business plan sets out our strategic objectives and plans for the 3-years, April 2009 to March 2012. It provides the management committee and staff with a written plan that will form the basis of the fundraising strategy for the organisation, and is a strategic document that provides the broad framework for the work of Riverside Community Health Project (Riverside). The staff and management committee will use this document as a framework for the development and delivery of specific activities and projects.

Riverside recognises the impact of inequalities and poverty on the health of the community, and seeks to redress this balance through collective action. It is well established that the overall health of people living in the UK is improving. However, some communities are disadvantaged and are not benefiting as much from this overall improvement. Those who are less well off financially are likely to die younger and spend more of their lives with ill-health than those who come from more affluent communities. Some people are additionally disadvantaged, e.g. lone parents, disabled people, those who do not speak English as a first language.

Riverside will focus its work in the next 3 years (2009 to 2012) on achieving the following strategic objectives:

- *To support children to raise their aspirations, make informed choices, and improve their life chances*
- *To support parents to counter disadvantage*
- *To support women to counter disadvantage and influence decisions that affect them, their families and communities*
- *To support local community organisations to build their capacity to make a positive difference in the lives of individuals and communities*

In addition Riverside will work towards achieving 7 strategic social business objectives that will underpin its work. These are:

1. To be directed by the needs of our community
2. To be strategically placed, in partnership with other agencies to champion health needs of residents
3. To build, support and maintain a core group of staff with the skills, abilities knowledge and enthusiasm to achieve our wider objectives
4. To build and maintain a competent and effective board of Trustees
5. To achieve a financial income mix – public, private and charitable
6. To identify and become established within secure premises that offer longer term stability.
7. To achieve longer term financial sustainability

The business plan will be monitored and evaluated (M&E) by the management committee and the staff through an agreed M&E framework and methodology.

1 Introduction

1.1 Background to Riverside

Riverside Community Health Project (Riverside) is an incorporated charity based in a former library building at the heart of Benwell in Newcastle upon Tyne. Riverside had its origins in an innovatory multi-disciplinary child health project set up in the 1980s that was a response to the growing awareness of links between poverty and ill health. Riverside was established as a charity in 1991 to create a new independent voluntary organisation to extend our community development and support work with local communities. Riverside works with local residents in the Inner West wards of the city using a community development approach to tackle issues that relate to health in the broadest sense.

Riverside has had a sustained presence in the West End of Newcastle for over 25 years. This longevity, consistency of service, and commitment to the area and its people has meant that there is a strong community trust in Riverside and our work.

Riverside serves the West End of Newcastle but most of our work has been concentrated in the inner west – Benwell & Scotswood, Elswick, Fenham, West City and Westgate wards of the city.

The management committee employs a core staff team of thirteen, (April 2009), who deliver a wide range of activities aimed at building the health of the community. We are constantly reviewing our work so that we can ensure we meet the needs of the community and also work alongside the range of projects and initiatives operating in the West End, thereby increasing impact and capacity.

Riverside seeks to maximise opportunities so that we can maintain a leadership position in relation to addressing inequalities in society. We believe that addressing inequalities across the range of factors that affect communities' health is key to building a strong and sustainable community where everyone can meet their potential. As part of this, Riverside undertake to have a strong role in the development of strategy and policy in relation to the health and well being of the community in the West End.

1.2 Charitable Objectives

As a charity Riverside has identified, and works towards the achievement of our charitable and social objectives. These objectives are specified within the memorandum and articles of association as follows:

'To preserve and protect the health of persons in Newcastle particularly by advancing the education of the public in the promotion of health awareness health related issues and health problems'

1.3 Mission Statement

In addition Riverside has agreed a Mission statement that guides all of its work: as follows, that guides all of its work:

'Riverside Community Health Project works according to community development principles to improve the health and well-being of disadvantaged communities by acting with others to ensure appropriate service provision'

2 The Needs of our Community

Riverside works within a defined geographic area of Newcastle City. We work to support the community in the Inner West of Newcastle, and ensure that all of our work is based upon meeting the needs of that community. In particular the needs of families, children and women.

Like many other areas, the Inner West has undergone major changes over the past 25 years and therefore the priority needs of the community have changed and thrown up new challenges over time. There have been significant changes to the housing stock in Benwell, and this has had a direct impact on the population mix, and the resources available to the community

West Benwell and Scotswood in particular have seen huge changes, in that many of the streets have been demolished. Much of the housing stock in West Benwell is now lying empty, and large-scale demolitions have already taken place. The future of the area is still very unclear although it is very likely that a mix of housing will be developed on the large site that has been cleared. There has been a reduction in local authority housing stock, (demolition of South Benwell and Scotswood) and a growing prevalence of private rented accommodation. It remains to be seen what the effects of the recession will be on the development plans.

More recently, the Inner West has provided a home to a growing immigrant including asylum seekers, refugees and migrant workers. It is hard to identify accurate population and geographic statistics for the area. However, Riverside is working with a growing number of refugee and migrant worker families, which reflects the growing refugee and migrant population more generally. Alongside this there is a wide and growing ethnic/cultural mix in the area, and Riverside works with a client base that reflects that mix. In particular we work with clients from the following ethnic/cultural groups: Bangladesh, Pakistan, a wide range of African origins and a growing number from Eastern Europe.

We also have a growing Roma population in the Benwell area and are targeting work with this group in the year 09/10. The Roma community is one of the poorest and most marginalised communities in Europe and their needs have yet to be assessed and addressed as part of the West End community. Riverside is working with other agencies to assess and meet the needs of the Roma community.

As a result of gender discrimination women experience additional disadvantage that affects their health. Riverside is committed to addressing these inequalities in all its work. We recognise the critical role that women in the community have in supporting good health, wellbeing, and confident aspirational families. Women themselves have needs for information, support and guidance. For these reasons Riverside continues to monitor the needs of women themselves, and of the community, through women who use the centre and engage in a range of activities. Women will be a key target group for 2009 to 2012.

3 Strategic Goals and Objectives

Riverside has devised its strategic and specific objectives for the delivery of our work over the period 2009 to 2012 based on the needs identified within the community.

3.1 Strategic Objective 1

To support children to raise their aspirations, make informed choices, and improve their life chances

Riverside will achieve this through:

- Supporting children to influence the provision of services that affect them
- Supporting children to achieve increased confidence
- Supporting children to maximise the opportunities that exist for them or could exist in the future.

3.2 Strategic Objective 2

To support parents to counter disadvantage

Riverside will achieve this through:

- Increasing the capacity of families to take up development opportunities to improve their own health and the well being of their communities
- Developing and/or influence the provision of services that will support parents in their role
- Supporting parents in the community to identify and build on common experiences for acting on and improving their prospects for good health and well being

3.3 Strategic Objective 3

To support women from diverse communities to counter disadvantage and influence decisions that will affect them and their families and communities

Riverside will achieve this through:

- Supporting women to identify common experiences of disadvantage and take action to improve opportunities
- Supporting women to take up development opportunities to improve their own health, and the health and well being of their communities
- Support women to influence the provision of services that affect them

3.4 Strategic Objective 4

To support local community organisations to build their capacity to make a positive difference in the lives of individuals and communities

Riverside will achieve this through:

- Supporting community organisations to secure resources towards achieving their objectives
- Supporting community organisations to access development opportunities to equip them to undertake their work
- Supporting community organisations through participation in, and support of governance of those organisations

In working towards and achieving the above objectives we have agreed four themes that will underpin and cut across all of our work:

- Advancing community cohesion
- Using community development approaches to all our work
- Ensuring organisational excellence in all work
- Gathering and disseminating intelligence/know how about community health needs in

4 Business Objectives

Riverside has recognised that if we are to be successful in the longer term then we must adopt, and work towards a number of key objectives within the framework of being a the West

End social enterprise. We have therefore identified 7 key 'Social Business Objectives' that will support us to achieve our wider charitable and strategic objectives. These social business objectives and activities are set out in this document – see section 9.

5 Governance, Management and Staffing

Riverside is a company Limited by Guarantee with charitable status. There is a Board of Trustee/Directors (the management committee), who provides leadership, scrutiny and accountability for the organisation. The management committee is drawn from the wider community, including project users, and representatives from local agencies. Key objectives and policies have been agreed to ensure that they have the skills and experience to provide effective governance, and the range of experience to ensure that the wider needs of the community are taken into account when planning.

Riverside believes in involving the local community and those who use Riverside in the governance of the organisation. We encourage clients and users to become involved as management committee members/trustees. The management committee is then given support and training so that they can fulfill the responsibilities that governance requires.

Riverside has a Manager who manages the delivery staff team, and a team leader (Financial Manager) who line manages the administration team.

Riverside has developed appropriate management and governance policies, systems and processes that are under constant review in order that improvements can be made and to ensure that all systems and processes are appropriate to the needs of the organisation.

Riverside has introduced the PQASSO quality assurance system as a management performance tool for its work, has achieved level 2 and is working towards level 3. This is to ensure that the organisation operates to a very high standard, and is responsive to the needs of the local community. The quality areas that are being monitored and improved are:

- Planning for quality
- Governance
- Management
- User-centred service
- Staff and volunteers
- Training and development
- Managing money
- Managing resources
- Managing activities
- Networking and partnership
- Monitoring and evaluation results

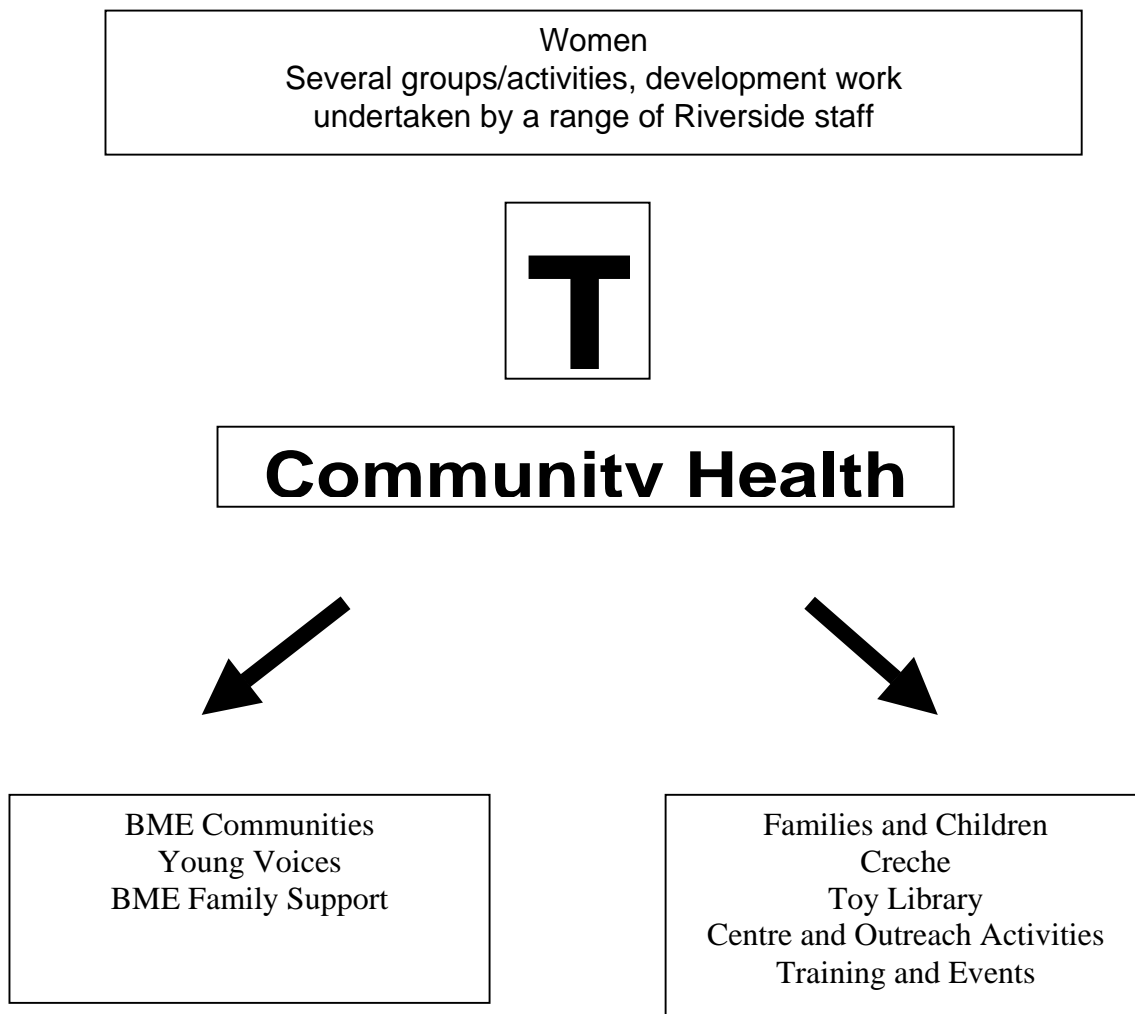
6 Premises and Physical Resources

Riverside is currently based within the old Benwell Library building where we have the basement space with additional offices and meeting space on the top floor. Riverside is in negotiation with Newcastle City Council to secure a 25-year lease to secure appropriate space on a long-term basis for our business. A partnership with Riverside and a local community association (Benwell & Elswick Community Association) will result in shared space between the two organisations.

Riverside will undertake fundraising during the years 2009/12 to refurbish the premises (The Carnegie Building). A business plan, and a feasibility study will be developed to support the ongoing development and sustainability of the Carnegie Building, to ensure that Riverside has suitable space to deliver its services, and to provide space for community activity and development.

7 Activities and Services

Riverside delivers its objectives through 3 primary target groups as follows:



Priority is given to support community groups who work with the above groups of people.

Our methods for delivery are:

- Direct Training
- Facilitated learning
- Offering experiential learning opportunities

Our activities are well established and are monitored on an ongoing basis as part of the overall monitoring and evaluation processes. We deliver through our centre at Atkinson Road and out into the community through schools, community centres and in some cases we take our activities directly to people in their homes. Underpinning our activities is a policy to provide:

- Provision of first step support for the community, on issues of family health and well-being
- Access to resources - space, equipment, crèche, and people
- Information and raised awareness about and access for people to services
- A vehicle through which local voices can be heard and taken into account

7.1 The crèche

Riverside provides a crèche as part of our overall activities. The crèche provision at Riverside offers childcare support and educational development for children, as well as providing a crèche service to support parents and carers to access activities taking part in activities.

Social Business Objectives

Objective 1	Activities	Evidence	Assumptions
<p>To ensure all work and activities to be delivered by Riverside take account of and are designed to meet the identified needs of the community</p>	<p>Regular consultation activities undertaken by Riverside with users and clients.</p> <p>Participation at key events, partnership groups and meetings focussed on identifying and meeting community need and planning for community initiatives and projects</p> <p>Field-level staff will be consulted on a regular basis to elicit the key and current issues they are encountering</p> <p>Reading and analysis of Monitoring and evaluation reports and data from all activities and services</p>	<p>Monitoring and evaluation results will show that people, groups and the wider community feel that needs are being taken into account and being met.</p>	<p>That funds will be available for any wider scale consultations</p>

Objective 2	Activities	Evidence	Assumptions
<p>To be recognised as a champion and key service provider in the West End of Newcastle working to promote health and well being for families, including BME families, children and women,</p>	<p>Promoting the activities and successes of Riverside through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Leaflets ▪ Articles in local media ▪ Contribution to research and consultation ▪ Web site <p>Involvement as a key player in local and citywide strategic partnerships, initiatives and projects focussed on community health, family and child development</p> <p>Producing written records and reports of the experience of delivering our services</p>	<p>An increased number of people and bodies with knowledge of Riverside and its work</p> <p>Increased number of people approaching Riverside to take part in activities</p> <p>Being a member of key partnerships and initiatives</p> <p>Invited to contribute to research and consultations</p>	<p>That sufficient resources are available to undertake this work</p> <p>That the Manager and other staff have sufficient time allocations to give priority to these activities</p>

Objective 3	Activities	Evidence	Assumptions
<p>To build, support and maintain a core group of staff with the skills, abilities, knowledge and enthusiasm to achieve our wider objectives</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular appraisals for Staff • Staff training and development activities • Effective and regular supervision for all staff • Staff training based on the Riverside objectives and direction • Regular staff meetings • Team meetings • Team leaders meetings • Internal communications (to be further developed over the year 2008) • Team leadership skills training 	<p>High levels of staff morale</p> <p>Low level of sickness and other absence</p> <p>Higher levels of competence of staff across all areas</p>	<p>That the resources will be available to provide adequate training – both on the job and externally delivered</p>

Objective 4	Activities	Evidence	Assumptions
<p>Build and maintain a Board of Trustee/Directors (committee members) that have the knowledge, skills and experience to provide a robust framework of leadership, scrutiny and accountability for the organisation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A range of governance policies for ensuring good governance will be adopted, reviewed annually and maintained • A recruitment strategy for board members will be adopted and used to guide all board member recruitment. • Formal induction for all new board members focussed on understanding their roles and responsibilities • Each Board member will receive a copy of the governance manual containing all policies and procedures and copies of key governance documents • An annual board development day with an external facilitator • An annual governance appraisal will be undertaken and the results used to address any weakness or gaps. 	<p>The Board can demonstrate an ability to scrutinise, analyse and comment upon reports and plans</p> <p>The AGM is run efficiently and all returns and reports are submitted on time and having been properly authorised</p> <p>Board members take part in the strategic planning for Riverside</p> <p>Board vacancies are filled within 3 months</p> <p>High levels of Morale, confidence and job satisfaction at Board level</p>	<p>That the Company Secretary and manager will provide all information to the board in a timely manner</p> <p>That the Board will ensure that any issues or matters relating to good governance are highlighted and action taken in a timely manner</p>

Objective 5	Activities	Evidence	Assumptions
<p>To achieve a financial income mix – public, private and charitable</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A fundraising strategy, in line with the business plan, will be agreed as part of the budget and planning process • Funding bids will be made depending upon the work to be carried out. • Efforts will be made to ensure that no one funder contributes more than 60% of overall funding in any one financial year. 	<p>The accounts will show a breakdown of income</p> <p>Application forms and proposals can be scrutinised</p>	<p>That funders are willing and able to support the projects and proposals submitted by Riverside</p>

Objective 6	Activities	Evidence	Assumptions
<p>To identify and become established within secure premises that offer longer term stability</p>	<p>Riverside will manage the Carnegie Building for delivery of its services and for community use</p> <p>Riverside will secure a 25-year agreement for occupancy of the Carnegie building</p> <p>Riverside will ensure a budget line for premises is included in the overall budgets for 2008 and thereafter</p> <p>Riverside will develop a business plan for the Carnegie building</p> <p>A feasibility study and plans for refurbishment will be drawn up for the Carnegie Building.</p>	<p>Business plan for Carnegie Building</p> <p>Plans for Carnegie Building developed</p> <p>Programme for building use, which includes Riverside activity and community use.</p>	<p>That Riverside will secure a tenancy agreement form the Local Authority</p>

Objective 7	Activities	Evidence	Assumptions
<p>To achieve longer term financial sustainability</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Riverside will plan and agree financial plans (income and expenditure budgets and fundraising plans) for 3 years • Funding applications will be longer term (3 years +) rather than short term (1year and less) • Riverside will stay informed of funding opportunities and take advantage of these. 	<p>Financial plans approved by the Board at least two months before the beginning of the financial year.</p> <p>Longer term funding proposals prepared, agreed by the board and submitted</p>	<p>That the funding position for the voluntary sector will continue to offer opportunities for funding</p>

7.2 Planning

On a termly basis, the staff team agrees a programme of activities based on achieving our strategic objectives. The board and staff work within a planning cycle set out in our monitoring and evaluation plan.

8 Social Business Objectives

In order for Riverside to deliver on our charitable objectives it has been agreed that we must set and work towards achieving a range of key social business objectives that will underpin all of our work.

9 Marketing and Promotion

Riverside has a number of different audiences to engage as part of an ongoing programme of promotion and publicity of the organisation's work. These include:

- Local residents
- Partner organizations
- Voluntary and community groups
- Statutory funders
- Charitable funders
- Health and social care professionals

Riverside recognises that there is a fine balance between promotion and raising expectations. As we continue to work with local people we will ensure that every effort is made to minimise the likelihood of raising expectations that cannot be met.

Riverside has the advantage of being a project located within the community enjoying strong links into the Inner West communities via management committee members, users of the center, and links with other agencies working in the West End of the city. Communication is still vital, however, so that local families are aware of the range of support being provided through the different projects operating from under the umbrella of Riverside activity.

This is achieved through:

- Posters and publicity displayed in the Centre
- Projects and networks in the West End of Newcastle
- Users and management committee members
- Referring professionals
- Leaflets and posters in community settings - community centres, GP surgeries, clinics, libraries, play centres and advice centres Website

Liaison between project staff is key, as is advertising in other community venues, to ensure that our centre-based activities are promoted to reach the families who will gain most from participation and involvement. Publicity to reach local people and make them aware of the range of activities is a critical route to engaging with local families and helping them access other services provided by Riverside across the community. We recognise that word of mouth is a vital tool for promoting our work?

Management committee members are often called upon to respond to residents' comments and concerns over Riverside's work. Riverside will support this through distributing new leaflets to all committee members to pass on to parents and other interested groups and individuals and to ensuring committee members receive up to date information on plans for initiatives and activities.

9.1 Funding Bodies

Understanding what community development entails is always more difficult for external agencies than service delivery. As community development is integral to the nature of our work, a brief explanation of what community development entails will be included in all proposals so as to inform potential funders.

Riverside will select from its previous work initiatives and activities that have been instrumental in developments in the West End of the city, and use these to demonstrate the benefits of the organisation's way of working with and alongside local families living in disadvantaged neighbourhoods.

Previous successes and achievements will be used to build a portfolio to 'paint the picture' of Riverside's history and legacy in Newcastle. Mini case studies will bring to life the benefits that are often difficult to quantify when working long-term with local communities.

10 Finance & Funding

Riverside draws its funding from a variety of statutory and charitable sources. Funding for senior staff posts comes from multiple sources including contributions from Newcastle Primary Care trust, Newcastle Social Care Directorate, and West Riverside Sure Start Children's Centre

A summary of projected income and expenditure for the next 3 years has been developed and will be updated on a quarterly basis.

Fundraising is ongoing for additional planned posts and several charitable funders and government programmes have been identified as potential sources to approach for financial support. This fundraising sits alongside a planned programme of grant applications based on a funding forecast of when current grants expire.

A major focus of the fundraising plan for the next three years is to spread the funding base so as to move away from reliance on public funding and to achieve a funding mix of public, charitable and private finance.