



# The role of the third sector in helping communities in Cumbria recover from the November 2009 floods

Kirstine Riding

[kirstiner@cumbriacvs.org.uk](mailto:kirstiner@cumbriacvs.org.uk)

[www.cumbriacvs.org.uk](http://www.cumbriacvs.org.uk) – Community Recovery page

01768 800350



## ***Practical***

- ***“third sector brought the common sense factor to the proceedings”***

## ***Flexible***

- ***..”at the time being flexible and responsive – doing what people needed and were asking for”***

## ***Supportive***

- ***“I had the time to give up to listen to people and comfort them”***



# Methodology

- Supportive steering group – third sector and statutory partners
- Questionnaire sent to 128 third sector organisations and community groups. Return rate of 45%.
- 3 organisations inputted into the research, without completing the questionnaire.
- 5 focus groups were arranged – Age UK West Cumbria
- 25 rural parish councils were written to and 8 feedback sheets were received.
- Personal reflections



# The first 12 months of recovery

## Practical

- Clear role dictated by Charitable status
- Voluntary and community groups working in partnership with larger infrastructure support organisations, Third Sector and Statutory
- Focussed effort on flood recovery centres
- Personnel to support the emergency services
- Handling donated goods



# Support after the first anniversary

## Practical

- Support third sector organisations additional services for longer term recovery
- Flood Action Groups
- Northern Flood Action Group
- Improved partnership working and public profile



# The first 12 months of recovery

## Flexible

- Support not time limited
- Partnership working and transfer queries
- Local flood recovery partnership
- Third sector recovery group
- Funding – blanket, short, medium and long term
- Immobilise volunteer resources



# Support after the first anniversary

## Flexible

- Cumbria Recovery Fund repeat funding to continue additional services if need existed
- Big Lottery Fund – Age UK Derwent and Greta communities and Cumbria Flood Recovery and Community Resilience programme



# 2009 clear up – Which Cumbrian town?





# The first 12 months of recovery

## Supportive

- Attended flood emergency and recovery centres
- Churches Together - venues, Street Angels and flood office
- Funding – blanket, short, medium and long term
- Cumbria Recovery Fund



# Support after the first anniversary

## Supportive

- Trauma still there when it rains heavily
- Normality? Can it?
- Continued informal support needed
- Importance of town-scape
- Services still being provided – funding increased temporarily or additional funding to extend and enhance services



## Barriers?

- Not all communities told the same story
- Data protection
- Leaflets, leaflets, leaflets
- Simplify communication
- Co-ordinating volunteer resources – planned and unplanned
- Lack of clear leadership and accountability at recovery centres
- Capture local knowledge



# Maximising third sector involvement

## Practical

- Support for Flood Action Groups – purpose, governance, business planning, funding
- Are they achieving their overall purpose
- Rural parishes treated equally
- Simplify communication – CCC flood bulletins
- Public Service Information Points (PSIP)



# Maximising third sector involvement

## Practical

- Protocol to define lines of accountability and leadership at emergency reception and recovery centres
- Cumbria Emergency Assistance Centre Plan, Cumbria Resilience Unit part of CCC
- Clarity on data protection
- Local knowledge



# Maximising third sector involvement

## Flexible

- Co-ordination of volunteers to pick up and deploy all voluntary offers of help
- Local level – designed to capture medium and long term support available
- Lead organisation to take responsibility that can work at a local and a county wide level
- Capture work of;
  - Impact Furniture Service in handling donated goods
  - Churches Together Street Angels



# Maximising third sector involvement

## Flexible

- Consistency of blanket funding
- Means tested available in short, medium and long term
- Protocol amongst funders



# Maximising third sector involvement

## Supportive

- Recognition of importance of third sector in providing emotional support
- Individuals personal responsibility – Environment Agency Flood Warnings
- Mainstream support services to recognise trauma still exists
- Informal community support
- Media attention

