



OVERVIEW

Good practice dissemination activity
by GoldStar projects



Introduction

This paper provides a brief overview of different good practice dissemination activities being undertaken by the 24 'First Round' GoldStar projects. It is based on original dissemination plans contained in GoldStar Project Application Forms and updated feedback from a number of GoldStar projects.

Because of the dynamic nature of this process, while this paper illustrates the very wide range of dissemination activity currently being undertaken, it will need to be updated over time to reflect changing circumstances and activities being undertaken by different projects.

A number of different approaches to good practice dissemination are outlined in this report, these are:



1. Good practice training workshops, sessions or events
2. Good practice workshops on a more ad hoc basis
3. Training/good practice accessed via e learning or other electronic media
4. Good practice manuals, resource packs, guides or toolkits
5. Bespoke websites
6. Developing close working relationships with key partner organisations or stakeholders
7. Appointment of a key worker or co-ordinator responsible for developing and/or implementing improved good practice dissemination
8. Local or regional forums to exchange good practice
9. Existing local, regional, national and international networks
10. Mechanisms for sharing good practice internally
11. Local and regional newsletters
12. Signposting
13. Research activities
14. Hands on' capacity building and good practice development work
15. Other approaches

Information on each of the 24 GoldStar projects can also be found on the GoldStar website

www.goldstar.org.uk

Approach 1. Good practice training workshops, sessions or events

Some GoldStar projects have detailed plans to implement **good practice training workshops, sessions or events** to encourage other volunteering organisations to adopt different aspects of good practice. For example:

1 **Bolton Lads and Girls Club** highlighted plans to provide an effective package of training workshops and support opportunities to other organisations already involved in mentoring and befriending and those interested in exploring how to set up a new programme. The organisation plans to offer their own accredited programme of training to organisations that may need support with mentor preparation and training, particularly new or smaller projects. This will be provided on or off site, with the organisations internal assessment process offered to ensure that participants have access to the Mentoring Skills Qualification.

1 **Chance UK** indicated they will offer training through the Home Office and the Mentoring & Befriending Foundation, Timebank and Volunteering England and a range of other organisations in relation to using the media to recruit mentors, targeted mentor recruitment, selecting & matching mentors, Approved Provider Standard (APS) and starting an early intervention mentoring programme.

1 **Volunteer Centre Sutton** offer organisations good practice guidance and have recruited volunteer trainers for dissemination training.

1 **Wai Yin** plan to deliver three training workshops to introduce a good practice toolkit being developed and explore best practice, with a further three focused on quality standards.

1 **Richmond CVS WinG** project set out plans to provide training events for local voluntary, community and public organisations to support the implementation of a Good Practice Guide that has been developed. Part of the purpose of these events will be to encourage the development of

peer support networks between agencies to embed the learning from the Guide and ensure ongoing sustainability of this work.

1 **Thirsk, Sowerby and District Community Care Association** plan to put together annual subsidised training packages for organisations and volunteers within the area to be delivered in a variety of ways, depending upon the needs of groups and volunteers involved, including formal training sessions, workshops, network discussion focus groups and one to one or group support sessions for small community groups.

1 **Hull CVS** runs an 'Introduction to Volunteering' course raising awareness amongst potentially excluded volunteers of good practice in involving them in volunteering. Several talks and presentations have also been given to organisations to promote all inclusive volunteering and also best practice in the recruitment and retention of volunteers.

1 **Gateshead Access Panel** set out plans to add to their success and reputation in Disability Equality Training which has been developed with and by disabled volunteers and workers and is presented by disabled service users / volunteers to public authorities, voluntary organisations and the private sector. The aim of these best practice training sessions is to provide a level playing field for disabled volunteers whilst not being paternalistic in approach, thereby providing a non disabling environment for people with impairments or medical conditions, including those with complex needs. The aim of the training will be to allow participants to look at their own organisations attitudes and practices in terms of disabled volunteers.

Approach 2. Good practice workshops on a more ad hoc basis

Other GoldStar projects have highlighted previous or continuing involvement in **good practice workshops on a more ad hoc basis**. For example:

1 The Communities United Project (CUP)

delivered a workshop at the Regional Forums AGM on the subject of volunteering as part of the “celebrating voluntary action” theme of the day.

Approach 3. Training/good practice accessed via e learning or other electronic media

In addition to conventional delivery of training through workshops or events a number of GoldStar organisations have identified plans to enable **training/good practice to be accessed via e learning or other electronic media**:

1 **Bolton Lads and Girls Club** indicate that their training programmes could be accessed through e-based learning, or through CD ROM, to enable organisations not located in the North West to have access to the information. Plans include development of a “How to establish an effective community based mentoring programme” CD ROM with helpful hints, training ideas and sample forms such as application forms, screening procedures etc, with the opportunity for organisations or individuals to then contact the team for more help and /or support.

1 **The Communities United Project** highlight plans to work with the local volunteer bureau to produce a DVD that tells the story of how CUP works with, engages and supports volunteers and how that supports local communities. The project plans to work with the bureau jointly on this and launch the DVD towards the end of the project.

1 **Richmond CVS WinG** project set out plans to contain all relevant recruitment, training and support resources produced by the project, including promotional resources; media release templates; training session outlines; learning resources for volunteers; feedback forms; sample agenda for Forum or support meetings, on a CD ROM. It is envisaged that this will be available for organisations wishing to deliver aspects of the project to ensure access to high quality resources and reduce the impact on staff time to develop and implement their own versions of WinG’s materials. WinG also plan to develop a DVD, showcasing the successful delivery of the WinG project in audio-visual form, including recruitment events, training sessions, and Forum meetings.

Approach 4. Good practice manuals, resource packs, guides or toolkits

A number of other GoldStar organisations have also set out plans to develop **good practice manuals, resource packs, guides or toolkits**. These organisations include:

1 **Gateshead Access Panel** plan to develop a best practice training manual, which will be made available nationally, including through the organisation's own website.

1 **Kensington and Chelsea Volunteer Centre** plan to produce and distribute a good practice resource pack, drawing on existing best practice guides, new lessons learnt during the ongoing development of the project and providing information on local resources. This will be made available on-line.

1 **Wai Yin** plan to develop a toolkit for adapting the policies / procedures and documents used at Wai Yin for use by others. This is currently in progress through the Wai Yin Volunteer working group.

1 **Win G** has developed a 'Good Practice Guide', printed and audio publication with information, resources and practical tips for voluntary, community and public bodies wishing to engage with WinG's target volunteers as community decision-makers. This includes an analysis of the barriers faced by socially excluded groups to becoming involved in governance volunteer roles, and the benefits to organisations of pursuing the diversity agenda. It is due to be launched on the 21st September 2006.

1 **The Junction** set out plans to develop good practice guides during this year, (ensuring that the information is available and accessible to all e.g. Braille, other languages, large print etc) relating to recruitment, management & retention of volunteers. The need for guides on other best practice issues will be identified via forums/networks.

1 **Thirsk, Sowerby and District** plan to develop a good practice toolkit in CD format, which provides templates for Induction Packs, Volunteer Policies, etc, which groups can utilise and adapt to their particular needs. These packs will be offered at cost to most organisations and will be supplied free of charge to small organisations involving less than 20 volunteers.

1 **Home-Start Leeds** highlight the development and dissemination of a DIY Mentor Training Pack.

1 **Barnardos** have developed a 'Clued Up' training pack designed by young people, as part of GoldStar programme.

Approach 5. Bespoke websites

Development, or further development of **bespoke websites** is clearly identified as an important vehicle for disseminating good practice. Such developments that are planned or underway include:

1 **Bolton Lads and Girls Club** plans to link their own website more closely to other GoldStar projects and the Mentoring and Befriending Foundation website.

1 **Manchester Event Volunteers** website www.vsquare.org.uk is due to be launched shortly. It is planned that this will be widely promoted in Manchester and Greater Manchester regeneration areas to reach target voluntary and community groups. The range of services provided will include supported website and database development and access to a wide range of downloadable materials that can be customised, including a volunteer toolkit and marketing materials.

1 **Princes Trust East Lancashire** set out plans for the development of a specific web page for the East Lancashire Community Programme available through the Prince's Trust website of www.princes-trust.org.uk. This will communicate good practice, successes, case studies and key dates for training and events. The Regional team has recently recruited a Communications Co-ordinator who will be responsible for this development. A regional web page will also be developed to include key information for Volunteers and Mentors. It is envisaged that this project will have a key role in promoting and sharing best practice.

1 **Volunteer Centre Sutton** Work has begun on making the VC Sutton website more accessible and updating Good Practice information held on the website.

1 **WinG** plan to develop an online toolkit of resources (including case studies of volunteers,

analysis reports on volunteer feedback, access to template database and learning resources). This will be supported by e-forum systems for projects using the resources to share experiences, and receive ongoing advice and support from the WinG team. It is envisaged that this resource will be monitored and developed to meet the needs of website users, based on the development of the WinG project and feedback received.

1 **121 Youth Befriending** set out plans for bespoke website development to include accessible policy, procedure, publications and updated information available to other services nationally, ensuring appropriate links with other relevant websites. Inclusion of Open Learning training on the website is also included as part of these developments.

1 **Sport Volunteering North West (SVNW)** plan to share and promote learning and good practice by developing a website, with links to partners' websites.

1 **Thirsk, Sowerby and District Community Care Association** set out plans to develop and expand their website to include a good practice section and offer links to other support agencies.

1 All of **Chance UKs** brochures can now be downloaded from their website

Thirsk, Sowerby and District Community Care Association also have plans to develop further the current Resource Library, updating reference materials and examples of good practice. This includes implementation of mechanisms for making these resources more accessible.

Approach 6. Developing close working relationships with key partner organisations or stakeholders

The importance of **developing close working relationships with key partner organisations or stakeholders** in order to enhance the effectiveness of good practice dissemination is highlighted by a number of GoldStar projects. For example:

1 **Bolton Lads and Girls Club** have already worked closely on some events such as the European Mentoring Conference at which they presented a best practice workshop, and at the National Conference in March of 2006, but recognise there is scope for more work at a local, regional and national level. The organisations portfolio for the APS award is already used by Mentoring & Befriending Foundation as an example of best practice, and this portfolio includes all the organisations' systems, procedures and policies.

1 **Chance UK** intends to apply for beacon status from the Mentoring & Befriending Foundation to enable further promotion of best practice across the UK.

1 **Can Footsteps** have agreed to work closely with the Mentoring & Befriending Foundation to promote the benefits of APS status, and to do so by using the organisation's recently completed procedure manual. The organisation points out that their procedure manual, although project specific, can easily be made generic and allows easy analysis of existing procedures and equally, identifies those areas where good practice is not being employed.

1 **Princes Trust East Lancashire** Programme Manager has been regularly attending the Mentoring and Befriending Foundation Practitioner Group, sharing good practice amongst other projects within the North West

Region.

1 **Manchester Event Volunteers** is working closely with Volunteering England facilitators to create a cross-sector network of 'learning loops' for volunteer managers to help them think and talk about work-related issues, develop management skills, and build partnerships with peers across the voluntary, statutory and corporate sectors.

1 **WinG** is both a quality-accredited member and grant recipient of Volunteering England. The organisation's work has been featured in previous editions of "Volunteering" magazine.

Approach 7. Appointment of a key worker or co-ordinator responsible for developing and/or implementing improved good practice dissemination

The appointment of a key worker or co-ordinator responsible for developing and/or implementing improved good practice dissemination processes is considered particularly important by a wide range of GoldStar organisations. For example:

1 **Bolton Lads and Girls Club** have invested 50% of the Volunteer Co-ordinator's role in the spreading of good practice.

1 **Gateshead Access Panel** would like to employ a Development worker to work with volunteers to design and promote 'Good Practice in Recruitment, Management and Retention of Disabled Volunteers' training sessions to voluntary organisations and some statutory agencies.

1 Part of the role of the Volunteer Champion (funded by GoldStar) within **Home-Start Leeds** is to promote good practice dissemination.

1 **Princes Trust East Lancashire** recently created a new post of a full time volunteer co-ordinator specifically to take the GoldStar strategy forward. The post holder started his position on 29 August 2006 and will be responsible for the development of good practice dissemination.

1 **Wai Yin** has recruited a Volunteer Coordinator.

1 **The Junction** set out plans to advertise via local media for a Volunteering Good Practice Promotion Worker (14hrs per week).

Approach 8. Local or regional forums to exchange good practice

Some GoldStar projects have developed, are planning to develop, or further develop **local or regional forums to exchange good practice**. Examples of these include:

1 **Home-Start Leeds**, which highlights the expansion of the InvolveMENT steering group to 10 - 12 organisations. This is a local forum established to promote good practice around volunteer mentoring. The organisation is promoting participation in InvolveMENT networks amongst Leeds Initiative Partnerships and Local District Partnerships.

1 **Kensington and Chelsea Volunteer Centre** set out plans to develop a local network of organisations with expertise in areas relating to additional support needs to encourage sharing of knowledge and best practice, and more joined-up promotion of relevant training or services. The Volunteer Centre also set out plans to build on its current work leading a regional network of supported volunteering workers. The group, with representatives from over 15 Volunteer Centres, uses bi-monthly meetings, an email list and virtual document / discussion forum to share experiences and best practice and to discuss and review shared issues.

1 **Manchester Event Volunteers** set out plans to create a forum for volunteer coordinators to discuss issues and exchange information with one another.

1 **Somerset Youth Volunteering** have, since December 2005, been developing a partnership with 'Childline, South West in order to hold a number of 'Peer Supporters Forums and Resource Fairs to bring together young peer supporters from within educational

establishments, voluntary youth organisations and statutory services from across the South West, for a good practices exchange day. The main event will take place on October 11th, with the objective of enabling both Y4Y trained and Childline trained mentors to talk to other mentors from other areas of the South West, in order to share their good practice and their own personal experiences and ideas. Based on feedback already received, these events will form the core of a rolling program of further events

1 **Sports Volunteering North West** plan to hold an open forum at least annually where all volunteers working in sport and recreation will be encouraged to attend. This will provide the opportunity to share good practice and also seek feedback from active volunteers in the region in order to further develop the programme.

Approach 9. Existing local, regional, national and international networks

The further development and use of a wide range of **existing local, regional, national and in some cases international networks** is also highlighted as a critical aspect of good practice dissemination. For example:

1 **Age Concern Gateshead** is involved in exchange of good practice through a number of local and regional forums including Age Concern North East Volunteering Forum, where Volunteer Co-ordinators from the nine Age Concerns in the North East discuss issues, explore good practice and explore ways of working together. The organisation is also involved with the Gateshead Volunteering Forum.

1 Among other forums, **Multiple Choice** is a member of the steering group known as Involve, which promotes volunteering across Leeds. The organisation has been and continues to be active in participating in events that introduce the idea of volunteering across the communities of Leeds. These events are continually evaluated and updated to ensure that good practice is disseminated.

1 **Cheetham Hill Advice Centre** highlight the potential for sharing good practice more widely through membership of GMCVO (the Greater Manchester Centre for Voluntary Organisation) and through membership of Advice UK (the Federation of Information and Advice Centres).

With respect to the use of international networks, the:

1 **Renewal Refugee and Migrant Project (RAMP)** has been involved in dissemination of good practice in relation to mentoring refugees/migrants within Europe by taking part in national and international conferences; leading workshops organised by Mentoring Europe, Mentoring and Befriending Foundation, Volunteering England, the Home Office and University of East London in co-operation with the University of Hamburg.

In the case of GoldStar **organisations that are part of a wider regional or national network**, improving the use of these networks to spread good practice has been highlighted by some organisations. For example:

1 **Barnardo's**, "The Party", which is a distinct North East activity, plans to disseminate learning across Barnardo's nationally and to involve the young volunteers themselves in doing this.

Existing and developing links with other GoldStar projects are also highlighted as an important element of the overall good practice dissemination process.

Approach 10. Mechanisms for sharing good practice internally

The importance of developing **appropriate mechanisms for sharing good practice** internally within GoldStar projects has also been highlighted. For example:

1 **Multiple Choice** has highlighted the importance of its newly developed internal mechanism where current volunteers peer mentor new volunteers and help with inductions to ensure the knowledge and experience gained by older volunteers is used to its full potential and good practice is shared and implemented.

Approach 11. Local and regional newsletters

The development of **local and regional newsletters** is currently in place, or planned by a number of GoldStar organisations, including:

1 **Barnardo's**, plan to develop a regional newsletter for young volunteers that would be accessible to other organisations. It is envisaged that this could be distributed on the Internet, or as part of a local newspaper, through schools and other local volunteer centres, faith groups and community groups.

1 **Princes Trust East Lancashire** E-mail a newsletter on a quarterly basis to volunteers and key organisations.

1 **The Volunteer Centre Sutton** produce a Good Practice Newsletter issued to 400 groups and made available on the website.

1 **Thirsk, Sowerby and District Community Care Association** produce a Quarterly Newsletter, providing guidance articles on specific areas, information on training, information about support that the organisation can provide, information and updates about current trends in volunteering services and local and national initiatives.

1 **Win G** plan to go a step further through implementation of a national media strategy, producing outline media releases for different audiences, and developing an information resource bank of key information to enable rapid responses to media requests, and maximise the effectiveness of the organisations strategy, by gaining national coverage for WinG's good practice.

Approach 12. Signposting

Effective **signposting** is another mechanism particular GoldStar projects have focused upon to improve other organisations' access to good practice advice and support. For example:

1 **Manchester Event Volunteers** have adopted a policy of signposting organisations to existing support networks such as Volunteer England.

1 **Chance UK**, as a specialist mentoring service, signposts to appropriate organisations who can help advise on mentoring with other age groups and other special needs. The organisation points out that through the GoldStar mentoring meetings, GoldStar mentoring projects know each other's services well and through the Mentoring and Befriending Foundation know of a wide range of specialist services. Chance UK intends to compile a list of best practice mentoring programmes in order to make more effective referrals. Chance UK also stresses the importance of developing effective referral mechanisms to their own organisation to improve access to good practice support/advice that they can offer themselves. The organisation points out that The Home Office, Treasury, Mentoring & Befriending Foundation, NCVO and a range of other organisations refer organisations onto them for training and support in good practice. It is therefore important that these organisations are more aware of the services Chance UK provides and what best practice can be accessed. Chance UK intends to outline their services and areas of expertise for effective referrals from other organisations.

Approach 13. Research activities

In order to understand the good practice support needs of different volunteering organisations and/or the networks that need to be engaged with to achieve effective good practice dissemination, a wide range of **research activities** are planned or have been completed by GoldStar organisations, including:

1 **Kensington and Chelsea Volunteer Centre** who set out plans to research and network within disability and volunteering organisations to ensure their own network is up to date on a full range of relevant issues, new developments, events and publications.

1 **Manchester Event Volunteers** developed a questionnaire and piloted this with 10 voluntary and community groups that were nominated by local regeneration teams, in order to identify the level of support and range of services that voluntary organisations would like to access. Where possible, meetings were held with the volunteer coordinators of the organisations to ensure that detailed and accurate feedback was provided. This process helped to inform the range of service provision and confirmed that the most practical and efficient method to reach as many organisations as possible was to develop a bespoke website.

1 **Hull CVS** developed a training needs analysis questionnaire, which was circulated to 200+ voluntary sector organisations. The closing date for returning the questionnaire is 15th September 2006. The findings from this will inform Hull CVS of the best way to deliver structured training programmes on good practice issues to volunteer involving organisations.

1 **Princes Trust East Lancashire** are planning to map key web sites, in order to communicate the organisation's work and widen the potential to share good practice and share experiences with other organisations.

1 **The Junction** set out plans to undertake a mapping exercise during 2006 to identify existing structures for disseminating good practice.

Approach 14. 'Hands on' capacity building and good practice development work

A wide range of 'hands on' capacity building and good practice development work is underway or planned by different GoldStar projects. This includes:

1 **Volunteer Centre Westminster** plans for training the Centre's own volunteers in best practice for other organisations, so that as the first point of contact in the Centre's reception area, they can offer a small amount of support to organisations going through the Centre's registration process or using the recruitment service. The Centre indicates a requirement of organisations to undergo a self assessment process prior to their more in depth engagement with the Centre. Where appropriate this process will involve a visit from the project worker. The Centre indicates that the experience of the past three years has highlighted how important this approach can be for organisations to ensure that they prepare proper role descriptions for their volunteers and are not simply sending in an advert for a role where there is no further supporting information/strategy in place for when volunteers actually arrive. The Centre emphasise how early support is critical in identifying issues, support needs and highlighting examples of good practice to organisations early on.

1 **Bolton Lads and Girls Club** set out plans to offer advice surgeries once a month for organisations to book time to come and meet the project team, see the organisation's 'fantastic' building and spend some time discussing the project and how they might benefit from hearing about the project's experiences. It is envisaged that organisations and individuals will book an allotted time slot and will prepare what they want to get from the session by having already received information about the project.

1 **Chance UK** has approached a number of organisations across the UK who have mentoring programmes or intend to set up mentoring programmes and offered help and assistance. The organisation has set up a long term partnership arrangement with NCH for early intervention mentoring schemes with 5-11 year olds' behavioural difficulties. As a result of this partnership, Chance UK is opening three new programmes in Liverpool, Inverness and Derry. All the 'Breaking the Cycle' projects for work with drug using parents will be offered advice, training and support to set up early intervention mentoring programmes with children of drug using parents in line with the work that has been already started with Addiction Derby. Chance also set out plans to target Youth Offending Teams, Youth Inclusion and Support Panels across the UK to promote early intervention mentoring as a good way of preventing crime, in order to help these programmes with the setting up of best practice mentoring organisations and provide them with training, support, and policies and procedures.

1 **Home-Start Leeds** set out plans to provide mentoring support for organisations setting up and in the early stages of developing peer mentoring programmes.

1 **Cheetham Hill Advice Centre** point out their strategy is not to set themselves up as experts in volunteering, but to be a working example of how a volunteer project can be successful, and to share that experience by attracting and working alongside other, similar organisations that wish to develop volunteer projects.

The strategy is to provide intensive support to a small number of organisations. The organisation is seeking to “get alongside” other organisations, particularly those that are struggling in the recruitment and/or retention of volunteers and to assist them in capacity building by both a) developing their volunteers and b) developing their volunteering policies, practices and systems. The organisation’s strategy is not “one size fits all” but to tailor the sharing of good practice to best meet the needs of each individual organisation, through various tools including:

- 1) Conducting a needs analysis of each organisation
- 2) Training events for common needs.
- 3) Signposting to help with fundraising.
- 4) Providing induction days at Cheetham Hill Advice Centre for other organisations to see how a volunteer project can work in action.
- 5) Providing direct support to other organisations, for example in setting up a volunteer recruitment process.
- 6) Providing direct support to other organisation’s volunteers.
- 7) Arranging volunteer placements both ways.

Between April and September 2006, the Centre worked with four local advice and other organisations

1 **Kensington & Chelsea Volunteer Centre**

Supported Needs Project has consistently provided guidance, training and information on issues related to disability, the DDA, inclusive volunteer management and accessibility to local organisations. The GoldStar grant offered the opportunity to take a more proactive approach to this area of the project’s work, including:

- 1) Capacity building work with individual workers or organisations through individual meetings, action planning and signposting towards further support or training.

- 2) Individual meetings with new workers on projects in Greater London or where organisations are planning work in this area to share experience; meetings with existing workers to brainstorm new ideas for project activities.

1 **Wai Yin** provides support visits and trouble shooting sessions to selected organisations. Fifteen visits are planned between August 2006 and September 2007.

1 **Thirsk, Sowerby and District Community Care Association** set out plans to actively support smaller marginalised groups and offer to work directly with them to facilitate their development of good practice policies and procedures.

1 **Somerset Youth Volunteering** highlighted how the organisation is now moving away from delivering face-to-face work with the larger groups of young mentors, (although will carry on working with the harder to reach individuals groups) and recruiting network partners and within those partner organisations, develop the roles of assigned ‘link-workers’.

These workers are key staff who already work within the different organisations and educational establishments that are committed to working with Somerset Youth Volunteering, and who can be trained to take a managerial role in the delivery of both Youth 4 Youth training, and offer day to day support of both mentors and mentees. The system is reported as working well with the 15 groups who have so far agreed to join what will become the ‘Youth 4 Youth Mentoring Hub’. By joining, the organisations will get extensive support from Somerset Youth Volunteering, accreditation for their young people, and networking opportunities with all the other organisations that are joining. They will also work under Somerset Youth Volunteering A.P.S. approved systems.



Approach 15. Other approaches

In addition to the other activities, GoldStar projects participate in a wide range of events organised by others at which the work they are involved with has been disseminated, including participation in the GoldStar regional conferences held in 2006. A number of GoldStar projects are also planning their own dissemination events in conjunction with other projects.