



# BRIEFING

## **Developing Capacity: Next Steps for Change Up**

In March 2005 the Home Office's Active Community Unit published 'Developing Capacity: Next Steps for ChangeUp'. This is a follow-up to the original document published in June 2004. The 2004 document is the government's cross-departmental "capacity building framework for the voluntary and community sector" and covers 10 years until 2014. The framework aims to clarify the processes and organisational structure (infrastructure), mainly amongst and within normally larger voluntary organisations, and to make sure that they are providing the services that smaller groups really need. This is intended to help everyone see how services link up and there should be less confusion as organisations offering the same services as each other may not do so as much. Delivery, further development and monitoring of the programme is being organised now at local, regional and national level. Government committed £80 million to the support the framework.

The next steps as outlined in the new document include an additional £70 million for April 2006 to April 2008. Since the release of the first document last year some concerns have been raised about difficulties in delivering on the framework. They include lack of community and voluntary sector ownership of delivery; clear ways in which the programme will be joined-up; too many different funding routes; not enough clarity about how a commitment to diversity will be delivered effectively for marginalized communities; and a lack of information to help share learning and best practice.

In response to these a new group called '*Capacity Builders*' will be set up. It is intended to be voluntary and community "sector-led capacity building agency" at 'arm's-length' from government. The agency is due to be operational by April 2006 at the latest and from then on will:

- make all new funding decisions
- manage all existing national ChangeUp funding contracts
- have overall responsibility for ChangeUp, including marketing, programme design and management
- take ownership of fund management, including performance management of contracts and grants under ChangeUp
- make sure ChangeUp is joined-up and co-ordinated

- possibly have a role in brokering agreements, ensuring best value for the voluntary and community sectors
- mainstream diversity issues into ChangeUp
- make sure real time action learning takes place
- make sure that longer term evaluation of activities is implemented
- ensure the spreading of good practice in capacity building
- be a commissioning body that may occasionally deliver services itself
- work with other cross-government programmes that involve strengthening the community and voluntary sectors
- possibly take responsibility for other capacity building funding streams

The *Capacity Builders* board will be “chosen on the basis of expertise – possibly with [voluntary and community] sector experience, particularly including frontline experience, but also some with broader expertise.” The will be appointed “by a panel which includes representation from the [voluntary and community] sector. The document states that “ministers will confirm these appointments”, however a timeframe is not given. “The board will agree with the Government a rolling two year investment plan and strategic objectives.”

Another group called the ‘*Infrastructure National Partnership*’ (INP) will also be set up to advise *Capacity Builders*. The INP will include “significant representation from local infrastructure organisations” and will advise on capacity building generally as well as ChangeUp issues.

The full document can be viewed in pdf format at [www.activecommunities.homeoffice.gov.uk](http://www.activecommunities.homeoffice.gov.uk)

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