

CASE STUDY 1: Digital Inclusion

Stephen Dodson, Director DC10Plus

Where and what is it

DC10plus was originally founded from ten local authority networks and their partners –all finalists in the 2007 government Digital Challenge competition. The competition, sponsored by the [Department for Communities and Local Government](#) (DCLG) aimed to identify a national showcase for ICT innovation and set a vision required to create a truly digitally enabled society. Digital Challenge provided a unique incentive for local authorities and their partners to work together to provoke innovative thought and discussion on how ICT's potential can be harnessed to impact significantly and positively on local communities. Following on from the [Digital Challenge](#), DC10plus is now a collaborative authority on digital inclusion issues and how they impact at a local level. The DC10plus vision is to be a network for change; helping local authorities and their service delivery partners to empower people and connect communities through technology and innovation. One of the key themes that the network is delivering is

Community Building Capacity.

The vision of the Community Building Capacity (CBC) theme is to create sustainable and cohesive digitally enabled communities which include those currently excluded. The solution involves creating a framework to support exchange of good practice between Community and Voluntary organisations, other partners and Local Authorities fully supported by technology, building local capacity and service access.

The **Norfolk Connect Partnership** is one such project which aims to bring all of the authorities together to share information, knowledge and experience on their efforts to implement e-government; to agree joint projects that offer mutual benefits and opportunities.

Impact:

Building local capacity and service access

Creating an ongoing network of effective practice exchange

Joining up service delivery, customer service,

Joint bids for funding across service sectors.

Service sector,

All services including digital technology , employment, skills etc.

CASE STUDY 2: Supporting Hampshire's Rural Communities: Developing a Rural Delivery Strategy for Hampshire County Council

Des Hobson , Project co-ordinator Hampshire County Council

Where and what is it

Hampshire is situated in the far south of England, roughly half-way between the east and west ends of the South Coast. With a population of over 1,240,000 (2001 census) and covering an area of almost 368,000 hectares (excluding Southampton and Portsmouth), Hampshire is one of the largest non-metropolitan or "shire" counties in England.

With over 85% of Hampshire's land area defined as rural, it is crucial for Hampshire County Council to consider how it can best support its rural communities. Hampshire are currently developing a Rural Delivery Strategy to help meet the needs of rural areas now and in the future. It held a consultation with stakeholder organisations during autumn 2008 and responses were received from nearly 60 organisations and individuals. As part of the consultation process, Hampshire also held a consultation seminar in October 2008, which provided people with an opportunity to discuss key issues around rural service delivery in the county. The responses to the consultation are being reported to the Council's Cabinet in April 2009.

The development of Hampshire's Rural Delivery Strategy is founded in the desire to take effective action on issues of rural deprivation, isolation, poor accessibility, higher costs in service delivery, demographic trends and other key parameters. The Rural Delivery Strategy consultation sought feedback on the issues faced by Hampshire's rural communities and set out the vision and key objectives proposed in responding to them, both directly, and in partnership with other organisations. It also highlighted examples of the initiatives underway in tackling these issues, together with some potential future actions for the County Council.

Potential impact

Rural Proofing service delivery- the process whereby services are examined and modified to ensure that they will not unfairly disadvantage rural areas

Understanding policy impacts - As policies and programmes are developed and implemented, policy makers should seek to understand whether they have a differential impact in rural areas because of differing circumstances and consider how interventions might be adapted to fit such circumstances.

Development of strategic action plan for rural service delivery - Hampshire are seeking to develop a strategic action plan with their partners to improve the delivery of services and investment in rural communities in a way that sustains future prosperity and quality of life in Hampshire. Based on the results of this consultation, the Council will be in a position to identify both long and short term actions to achieve this.

Good practice in community consultation and engagement , particularly on rural service delivery

Future cost savings through joint service provision

Improved quality of service delivery

Improved quality of life for rural communities.

Service sectors

All services delivered within rural communities, within the remit of Hampshire County Council – Health, Education, Transport, Waste.

CASE STUDY 3: HEALTH and well being

Phil Davey, Manager of Barnstaple Poverty Action Group

Where and what is it :

Based in North Devon in the very rural South East of England, Barnstaple Poverty Action Group is a very small charity which was originally set up to provide support and advice for homeless people. It offers free crisis accommodation for homeless people aged 16+. Including free food parcels, and addiction and stress counselling.

A recent partnership has been developed with local General Medical Practitioners (GP's) who have patients suffering from stress. Normally patients would be prescribed medication to treat depression, and other related symptoms, but these can become very addictive leading to longer term dependency. The GP's now refer patients to the Barnstaple Poverty Action group who can provide stress counselling and offer help and support. In the present economic recession GP's are seeing a higher number of patients suffering from debt related stress. This referral means that stress counselling and debt advice can be offered jointly. This avoids the need for long term medication which would not cure the cause, merely alleviate the symptoms.

Impact:

Reduced cost to rural medical practitioners budgets which are heavily constrained

Reduced long term medication dependency

More holistic treatment of the cause not the symptom.

Stress and debt advice provided in place of, or alongside medication.

Patients are given ongoing, hands on support, directly tailored to their personal circumstances- this is not available from a GP

Preventative mental health treatment delivered proactively before the symptoms deteriorate, thus reducing the longer term health service cost of treating a patient with more acute mental and or general health symptoms.

Service sectors

Health, Mental health, Financial (debt advice)

