

Community Base participant group meeting 24th April 2008

The meeting was attended by Annette (Community Base), Colin (Community Base), Eli (Carr-Gomm), Emily (Community and Voluntary Sector Forum), Michelle (Gender Trust), Sarah (Brighton and Hove Volunteers and trustee) and Paul (NHS Support Federation and Community Base trustee).

1 Apologies

Colin said that there was no need to send apologies to participant group meetings as they were informal meetings with no requirement that groups attend.

2 Open day

Colin reported that the open day had been a great success with lots of people meeting each other, visitors and quiz entrants and it had resulted in a double page spread in the Argus. Emily said it was a shame it had happened in the easter holidays as that prevented some people from being in their offices. Sarah said her office had been inundated with people from Community Base and the general public.

3 Car park gate

Annette said that somebody had used the emergency release rather than their access card to leave through the car park and this had meant that the gate had been out of action until it was reset. Annette also said that we now had spare parts for the gate to make future repairs much quicker.

Emily suggested that a sign be put up by the emergency release break glass box saying use in emergency only. Annette said that the box already carried the lettering emergency door release.

4 Community Interest Companies

Emily said that Duncan has asked her to mention his email to the Community Base email group about the possibility of Community Interest Companies (CICs) licencing space at Community Base as they were a new kind of entity. Michelle asked how CICs were different to social enterprises and Emily said that social enterprises had volunteer management committees.

Colin said that Duncan's email on this matter would be tabled at the next board meeting. Colin said that the Community Base had always been a home for community or voluntary organisations rather than for-profit companies, government bodies or statutory agencies and there was a long waiting list of such organisations wanting to move in.

Michelle said there was a difference between not for profit and not currently making a profit! Emily said that policy should give clear guidance and not have hidden criteria that CICs are not allowed at Community Base.

5 Space for smaller groups

Emily suggested that small groups should be allowed to share space in offices licenced to larger organisations. Eli said that there could be issues with data protection, confidentiality and conflict between organisations' differing ways of working.

Colin said that in the past shared desk space had been offered with no take up and when groups had shared space it had proved difficult to manage. Colin said that as the issue had been raised at the participant group meeting he would ask for the board's views at its next meeting.

6 Window cleaning

Michelle asked if the Community Base windows were ever cleaned. Annette said that all external windows were cleaned every three months and the ground floor shopfront windows were cleaned fortnightly. Michelle said the dirt might be on the inside then!

7 Director's leave

Colin said that he would be on extended leave from mid-May to mid-July with Annette acting as director and hosting participant group meeting in May and June.