

# Bellshill Local Area Partnership Third Sector Update Report

**From:** Colin MacFarlane (Third Sector Representative)  
**To:** Bellshill Local Area Partnership Members  
**Date:** Activity to December 2014 included in report

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## 1.0. THIRD SECTOR WITHIN COMMUNITY PLANNING ACTIVITY UPDATES

### 1.1. Bellshill Area Get Involved in Local Community Planning Event ⇨

Voluntary Action North Lanarkshire and North Lanarkshire Council jointly facilitated a Bellshill Area Get Involved in Local Community Planning: The Voluntary Sector Making a Contribution Event on Monday 27 October 2014 at Michael Sherry Memorial Centre, Holytown. The Event was attended by 29 delegates, mostly consisting of third sector organisations and volunteers, with a small number of Community Planning Partners also in attendance.

The purpose of the Event was to provide an opportunity for the local third sector to discuss local issues and identify opportunities for the third sector to make a contribution to the Bellshill Local Area Team Action Plan on an ongoing basis. A number of issues, opportunities and priorities were identified at the Event, with a summary report currently being finalised for feeding back to participants in January 2015. Voluntary Action North Lanarkshire and North Lanarkshire Council plan to work together over the coming period to facilitate action planning from the feedback received from third sector delegates.

### 1.2. Third Sector Community Planning Improvement Programme Update ⇨

Significant progress was made during October-December 2014 with delivery of a Third Sector Community Planning Improvement Programme in North Lanarkshire, with a range of events and self-assessment activities facilitated to support the advancement of the local third sector's connectivity, involvement and effectiveness within North Lanarkshire Partnership.

Community Planning Partners and the wider third sector have actively participated in a Self-Assessment Journey, led by Voluntary Action North Lanarkshire, The Improvement Service and Voluntary Action Scotland, to consider the third sector's participation in North Lanarkshire Partnership, exploring what connectivity exists and works well, and what could be improved.

The Self-Assessment Journey concluded in December 2014, and has resulted in a number of improvement areas being identified by Community Planning Partners and third sector delegates. Six top priority improvement areas have been agreed with a framework outlined for how each improvement area will be actioned. A draft Improvement Plan will be presented to North Lanarkshire Partnership Board on Wednesday 18 February 2015, with a final Improvement Plan scheduled to be in place by Tuesday 31 March 2015. The Improvement Plan is designed to be a North Lanarkshire Partnership owned document from which activity can commence from Wednesday 1 April 2015 onwards. The final Improvement Plan will be available ahead of the Bellshill Local Area Partnership meeting of April 2015.

### 1.3. Bellshill Local Area Partnership Third Sector Representative from 2015-17 ⇨

As reported at the October 2014 Bellshill Local Area Partnership meeting, Voluntary Action North Lanarkshire (on behalf of North Lanarkshire Voluntary Sector Partnership Group) will facilitate a nomination and ballot process to appoint a Third Sector Representative to the Bellshill Local Area Partnership for the 2015-17 representative cycle during January-March 2015. It is anticipated that the newly appointed Third Sector Representative will attend the April 2015 Local Area Partnership meeting.

## **2.0. LOCAL THIRD SECTOR ACTIVITY UPDATE**

### **2.1. Overview of the Local Third Sector's Contribution to the RCOP Change Plan ⇨**

A representative of Orbiston Neighbourhood Centre is scheduled attend the Bellshill Local Area Partnership meeting of Thursday 15 January 2015 to provide a summary overview of the Bellshill third sector's contribution to the four-year Reshaping Care for Older People Change Plan. Orbiston Neighbourhood Centre is the Bellshill lead organisation in a North Lanarkshire Third Sector Locality Partnership Development Programme for Reshaping Care for Older People delivery.

Voluntary Action North Lanarkshire is currently working with key partners to prepare the local third sector for active participation in the Health and Social Care Integration agenda from 2015. Meanwhile, the third sector's highly successful contribution to the Change Plan in North Lanarkshire continues to be a source of interest to national partners, with a case study recently requested by and submitted to the National Community Planning Group as part of a 'deep dive' study on community engagement and co-production in Scotland.

### **2.2. Bellshill Volunteer Scoops Two RBS Finding Scotland's Real Heroes Awards ⇨**

Bellshill volunteer Margaret Gibb swept the board at the glittering RBS Finding Scotland's Real Heroes Awards, which was broadcast live on STV on Tuesday 14 October 2014.

Margaret's tireless work to develop and establish playgroup services across the West of Scotland was profiled as she won the Community Champion of the Year Award and the evening's blue-ribbon Real Hero of the Year Award.

Scottish actress and singer Clare Grogan had visited Margaret to find out more about her contribution to the community, discovering that Margaret's volunteering started almost 40 years ago when she helped form the North Road Playscheme to service the needs of children and families in the Bellshill area. Margaret's interest grew and she played a key role in establishing several more playschemes, before she worked with the local authority to develop a West of Scotland Playscheme Advisory Forum.

"This all started with a housing estate with 400 houses and the children had nowhere to go", Margaret recalled. "I chapped doors until I found a hall and children who started at three are now bringing in their own children. It's smashing. I was about 25 when I got involved and I had no idea that it would develop the way it has. I have been involved in the development of over 300 playschemes across the West of Scotland."

Margaret's achievements are all the more amazing considering her ongoing selfless commitment to helping others during her own battles against cancer. There is no doubt that Margaret is one of Scotland's real unsung heroes. Her efforts have resulted in decades of play, fun and learning for countless children. Caileigh Mitchell, a fellow playgroup volunteer, summed up how those Margaret helps feel about her: "Margaret is such a caring, lovely woman. She has been like a gran to me and I can tell her everything. We just love her to bits!"

Tremendous acknowledgement also goes to Bellshill recycling social enterprise Yooz, who were nominated as a category finalist for the Environmental Project of the Year Award at the RBS Finding Scotland's Real Heroes Awards.

### **2.3. Third Sector Employability Network Activity ⇨**

North Lanarkshire Third Sector Employability Network is currently developing a third sector position paper on employability to accompany the new North Lanarkshire Employability Strategy. This position paper will highlight where the third sector is currently engaged in employability activity and supports, and the potential for future positive and valuable employability contributions from the third sector.