

To All Community Organisations

Dear Colleague

Community United

<http://www.communityunited.pwp.blueyonder.co.uk/>

Introduction and Contacting Us

Please excuse this intrusion but we wish to introduce you to Community United, the working title for a new organisation that will launch most probably in the early summer of 2006. The mission of Community United is to financially support the crime prevention projects of ALL local community groups.

The organisation is in its initial stages of setting up. As you will appreciate we do not have, as yet, any printed information and it's likely that we will not have anything until the summer of 2006 when Community United will officially launch.

We have, however, gone live with a temporary website that can be accessed via

<http://www.communityunited.pwp.blueyonder.co.uk/>

The website will be updated with major changes and considerably more information on a monthly basis. We therefore suggest you frequently delve into this source of info.

We hope the following text from our website is helpful. If you wish other community colleagues to find out more please either send us their email address or ask them to visit this site, so that we can make contact via the Forum. You can use the website itself to do this or send us an email via the address above.

At this time and until the launch date; the development of Community United will take precedence over any other matter. We do, however, welcome general email comments and observations that will assist us in developing our objectives. Please send all queries etc to this email address:-

communityunited@blueyonder.co.uk

The Sponsor Companies

Those that have read our initial email shot to members will be aware we do not want to go totally public for three very good reasons

Firstly, the founding sponsor companies involved in Community United definitely and quite reasonably do not want to be identified until the launch date. This is to avoid pre-announcement and general press queries which will be inevitable once the media know the commercial backers.

Secondly, they are very aware from private discussions that much damage was done in the recent past by NW members through their correspondence to potential commercial sponsors that were about to become involved in NW, including both Virgin and Lloyds. We believe this has also now resulted in the loss of Motorola and other smaller sponsors.

Thirdly, our research into NW has revealed that there are currently significant structural and procedural problems within NNWA as a result of much unrest in the Southern part of England and the East Midlands where the chair of NNWA resides. These last two points were clearly mentioned in Eric Bishop's (Vice Chair of NNWA) very recent resignation letter sent to many NW members.

So whilst we appreciate that we are creating difficulties for ourselves, we hope you will understand our reticence to disclose those involved and to some extent our plans. Putting it quite frankly we are not prepared to place at risk our development phase which has been a work of passion for the past year.

We have however published a website, an email address and a forum. This was done to provide the opportunity for Community Groups to become involved in our work. This also proves we will do our best to be open and honest. However, we cannot publish all the facts for probably six to eight months (i.e. the Launch Date).

Structure

The organisation will most probably be set up as a Limited Company by Guarantee but it will not be registered as a Charity since it only has "Not for Profit" rather than charitable objectives.

Let Community United reassure you that we have considerable backing for this initiative including two prominent national chairmen who are willing to give their support, one of whom has significant national retail interests. We have also secured very substantial financial resources from several corporate sponsors subject of course to each satisfying the others objectives and method of working. The interest from community groups is in general very considerable, bearing in mind that it is difficult to trace their organisation structure with any assurance of accuracy.

Objectives

Let's be absolutely clear from the outset, Community United is not competing with community groups like yours.

The challenge is quite different and that is to encourage and financially support substantial local demonstration projects that will set new standards of good practice to:-

1. Promote innovative activities by local community groups to fight crime and perhaps more importantly social disorder / antisocial behaviour. The general welfare of local citizens is uppermost in our objectives.
2. Encourage collective responsibility and common purpose through the development of cohesive community groups that will work and promote their projects for the benefit of the population as a whole.
3. Encourage a more open culture of joint working with all sectors of our society including the business community.

Method of Working

We are trying not to get involved in policy issues and will continue to do so despite the fact that we are receiving queries outside of Funding.

Community United also has no interest or agenda to duplicate existing organisations functions. That is certainly not in our interest.

It will, however, not be timid in identifying bad practice in its endeavours to encourage projects that improve social cohesion and standards of integrity that are exemplars to those that are involved in this important work.

It will therefore focus exclusively on local communities and good practice projects, including funding those that may have failed to be supported by central government or other public bodies for reasons of risk or fit with current policy including simply lack of funds.

Funding of Community United

The principal aim is to encourage and support genuinely innovative projects that are potentially reproducible elsewhere. To do this we have sought the support of several of the top FT350 companies that recognise the value of our work for the benefit of its customers and the general well being of its businesses. Examples of this are to be found in high crime areas that are well known to be bad investment areas particularly if the business happens to work in the retail sector.

From the above it is clear that the funding of Community United is to be through the Private Sector exclusively by sponsorship arrangements. We have much support for this at a national level.

Also, there will be no attempt to promote or market products under any circumstances. Our supporters understand their obligations in this respect and the implications if they fail to observe our guidelines.

We are primarily focussing on projects as opposed to core funding issues

Project Funding Practice

So much for the funding of Community United. This section will deal with the funding of Community Projects

Small projects are a potential nightmare to organisations like ours. This means that we must focus on at least medium-sized Community Projects of the order of £50,000 on average. We shall do this by creating an accountable panel of Community Activists and Commercial Sponsors. This panel will act to encourage projects and select those for submission to the sponsors themselves. A sponsor cannot select one person to do both tasks.

The panel approach is similar to that which you will find in the financial services sector. It is in very simple terms a brokerage between the customer and the supplier.

This process will, to all intents and purposes, be transparent to the community project group.

The process for bidding will be straightforward.

In the **first phase** when ideas will be sought, all that will be required is a simple overview of the project and what it aims to do; a process that should take no more than two sides of A4 paper ie a maximum of about 1000 words.

If the project is selected by the panel for a short list, a project manager will be assigned by the CU Funding panel to prepare a more detailed **second phase** assessment covering:-

1. Project Summary
2. Project Objectives
3. Community Problem Analysis
4. Project Methodology/Process
5. Project Team & their Responsibilities
6. Community Accountability
7. Project Performance Measures
8. Costs v Benefits
9. Project Timetable
10. Project Risks
11. Project Manager's Assessment
12. Recommendations/Conclusion

None of this work will require the local project team to prepare Bids. They will however be responsible for assisting in its preparation and ensuring the bid's accuracy. They will also be responsible for signing it off.

If the conclusion is positive the project goes forward to the **third phase** for sponsor companies' approval which would have tentatively been gained during phase 2. One or more sponsor companies could be allowed to sponsor the project to share the risk or broaden the involvement.

Subject to that final stage of approval, project monies will be assigned to the project itself as well as the project manager who was initially assigned to the writing of the bid. This is **phase four**.

The final and **fifth phase** of the process follows the process as outlined above and upon completion of the project an overall assessment will be prepared by the Project Manager

If the project is particularly successful it will be submitted as an open bid for other groups to consider and resubmit as their own.

This might seem a lengthy process but it is better and more logical to implement in bite sized lumps. It will also be driven by the Private Sector that has a more pragmatic approach and you also have the support of a Project Manager.

Funding will be strictly for the benefit of voluntary community groups.

Pre Launch Activity

To start Community United's Launch Plan an offer will be made to consider 6 bids of between £40,000 to £60,000 early in the New Year

The six project areas are to be as follows:-

1. Effective Communications
2. Anti social Behaviour in and around retail developments
3. Anti social Behaviour in residential Communities
4. Young people's involvement in Community Wide Activities
5. Social Inclusion by race and creed
6. Community Emergency Activities particularly for those citizens that have special needs.

Any submission can be from an individual community group or a joint submission by several groups that have decided to unite and pool their efforts.

As before, the process for bidding will be straightforward in the first phase when ideas will be sought. All that will be initially required is a very simple overview of the project and what it aims to do; a process that should take no more than two sides of A4 paper ie a maximum of about 1000 words. The submission date will be 28th February 2006 to give you plenty of time for thought, consultation and preparation.

Up to 40% of the funding may be used to pay temporary employment costs. Capital as opposed to revenue funding will also be possible for special equipment eg radios, cameras, signs etc.

More detailed and helpful guidelines will be issued early in the New Year. In the meantime you may wish to discuss with your community colleagues, a possible submission.

Conclusion

Our challenge is thus to support the innovative project activities of local community groups. In so doing we aim to fight crime and social disorder with a view to supporting the general welfare of local citizens. We will achieve this by promoting common purpose with the business community and by encouraging a more open culture of joint working within all sectors of our society.

Very Sincerely

Community United

communityunited@blueyonder.co.uk

Ps Please feel free to circulate this email amongst other Community Associations etc. Also please register your email address on our web site since we shall send priority information updates to those that do. Also by doing this you will not need to complete any time consuming contact forms detailing your address or phone numbers. Contact will be made entirely by email.