

## Getting There With Grassroots Grants



On Tuesday 16 March 60 members of community and voluntary groups in Kirklees, funded through Grassroots Grants, met to discuss their projects; share their experiences and hopes for the future.

Held at Thornhill Lees Community Centre, a locally-led hub for community activity, the event was soon buzzing with people getting together and networking over an early supper.

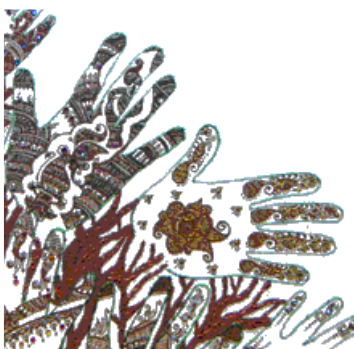
The event was organised by the Community Foundation for Calderdale who have been managing the Grassroots Grants programme in Kirklees with support from Voluntary Action Kirklees. Shaukat Hafez, the Chair of the Grassroots Grants Kirklees Panel introduced the event and praised the efforts of people who volunteer for the benefit of their local community, creating a richness and diversity of opportunity locally.



Sir John Harman, Chairman of the embryonic One Community Foundation, spoke briefly about the new initiative to create a community foundation for Kirklees. The One Community Foundation is dedicated to raising money to support communities in Kirklees in the years ahead.

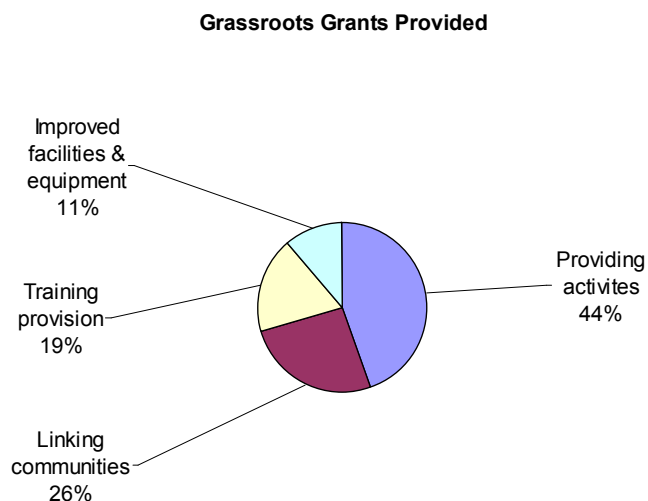
All the groups attending had received funding for projects from the Grassroots Grants programme and were there to share their experiences with others at this special event celebrating success and providing a forum to voice hopes, dreams and fears for the future.

*"...it was good to meet people from different groups and organisations..."*



## Grassroots Grants Projects

The real work of the evening began with discussion about Grassroots Grants projects. Groups discussed their successes and the obstacles overcome. Groups felt that their projects had successfully brought communities together, reducing isolation and promoting community cohesion.



What did they think about the event?

*"Very good. Informative and a good opportunity to meet like minded people and share ideas"*

*"Friendly and I do think we have achieved a great deal from the discussion."*

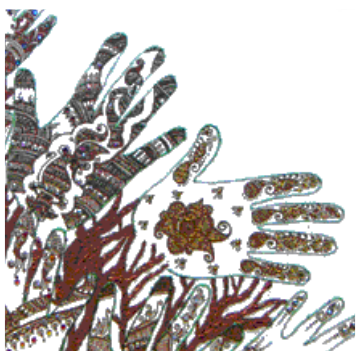
Community groups face many problems in their efforts to support local communities and the vast majority of groups at the event reported that finding funding and resources and making their group sustainable, were their greatest challenges.

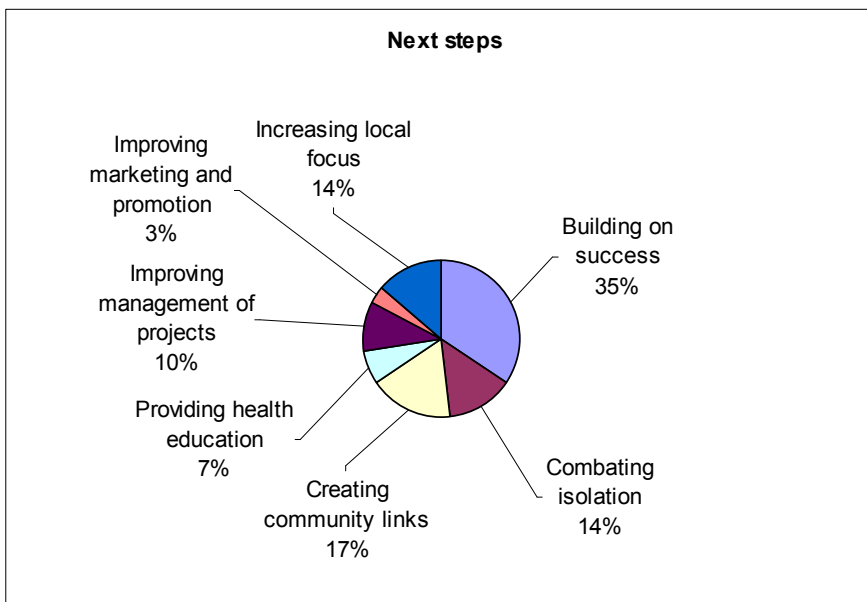
What was best about the event?

*"Meeting other people with a passion for making things happen in their communities"*



*"Information sharing with other groups. It was also good to evaluate your own group's successes, problems, community benefits and future plans."*





All the people attending were determined that their efforts would continue and had enthusiastic plans for the future. Some planned to improve the way in which they manage their groups and many felt that the grant that they had received had provided a springboard from which to leap to further success in the future.

The event was a marvellous testimony of the power of small grants to local community and voluntary groups. At the end of the evening people were left with a feeling of optimism and of belonging to a sector making a real difference.

Grassroots Grants is now in its final year has enabled many great achievements in local communities. The programme has been managed nationally by the Community Development Foundation.

*"... we need more events like this to help us find out how others get on".*

