

**Brierley Hill Area Committee – 2<sup>nd</sup> October, 2008**

**Report of the Small Groups Development Officer of Dudley Council for Voluntary Service**

**Promotion of the ‘Small Groups Project’**

**Purpose**

1. To introduce and promote the Small Groups Project and Dudley CVS to those who may benefit from the support of the Small Groups Development Officer but who may not know about the support we offer.

**Background**

2. Dudley CVS was established in 1973 to act as an umbrella body for the community and voluntary sector in Dudley. Dudley CVS is a registered charity and Company Limited by Guarantee, non profit making and independent from government.
3. Dudley CVS supports local voluntary and community groups by providing them with a range of practical services, such as meeting and resource rooms, photocopying, ICT equipment and individual group support.
4. Dudley CVS assists local voluntary and community groups in organising their networking activity and in empowering them to take part in partnerships.
5. Dudley CVS represents the local voluntary and community sector in a variety of forums, in order for the sector’s voice to be heard by decision-makers on both local and national levels.
6. The ‘Small Groups Project’ is a Lottery funded project which aims to provide tailored support to small and emerging local and voluntary groups. It began in 2006 when ‘small groups’ were defined as those with an income of up to £5000 per annum. The project is now in its final year and ‘small groups’ are now defined as those with an income of up to £15000 per annum.
7. ‘Small groups’ are entitled to receive free support from the Small Groups Development Officer who:
  - i) provides one-to-one infrastructure and capacity building support;
  - ii) develops and provides relevant and up to date information sheets;
  - iii) supports groups in meeting their funding needs;
  - iv) provides an outreach service throughout the Borough;
  - v) provides training and awareness events appropriate to the needs of small voluntary and community organisations.

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