

# COMMUNITY GUIDANCE IN SCOTLAND

## BACKGROUND

Careers Scotland has been working with partners from the guidance and learning community to develop a new approach to the development and delivery of guidance in the community.

Careers Scotland's Community Guidance proposals have focussed on working towards the further integration of guidance and learning at a strategic level, whilst maintaining practitioners' active involvement in the process. This has been taken forward in the context of emerging policy in Scotland, and the Scottish Executive's guidance for Community Planning<sup>1</sup> and Community Learning and Development<sup>2</sup>.

The key aim of the Community Guidance strategy proposals, which we consulted on throughout 2002-2003, was to look at how Careers Scotland and the wider guidance community could work together to promote and further the integration of lifelong guidance and lifelong learning. The result of this consultation was the publication of a Community Guidance strategy framework document, which was widely disseminated to partners<sup>3</sup>.

Taking forward Community Guidance developments has provided an opportunity to build on the good practice developed by the Adult Guidance Networks in Scotland prior to April 2002, whilst targeting resources at more clearly identified needs emerging from Community Planning and Community Learning and Development community needs analysis.

## PROGRESS

Careers Scotland has brought together partners from the private, voluntary, FE and HE sectors to plan the most efficient use of resources in the context of coherent Community Guidance strategies. Of the 26 Local Authorities in the Scottish Enterprise area 23 have already agreed Community Guidance Strategies and/or Community Guidance Action Plans (CGAPs). In the remaining areas development of Community Guidance frameworks is progressing well and CGAPs will be finalised shortly. In the Highlands & Islands Enterprise area all 10 localities have Community Guidance Action Plans agreed.

The process of developing these agreements has been both exciting and challenging for all concerned and has involved working with and through a number of existing strategic groups in each area. Community Guidance facilitates the development of linkages between lifelong learning, community learning and economic development initiatives on the ground. Indeed, one of the strengths of the Community Guidance strategies and action plans lies in the commitment of partners to embed guidance within the emerging Community Learning & Development strategies. In many areas partners have come together to celebrate their partnership working at public launches of Community Guidance strategies and action plans. Copies of all published CCGAP documents are being made available on the Careers Scotland web site – [www.careers-scotland.org.uk](http://www.careers-scotland.org.uk) Examples will also be made available on the National Guidance Research Forum web site - [www.guidance-research.org](http://www.guidance-research.org)

Many practitioners across the country are actively involved in the implementation of Community Guidance activities and benefit hugely from the opportunity to participate in a

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<sup>1</sup> Scottish Executive (2004), *The Local Government in Scotland Act 2003, Community Planning: Statutory Guidance*, Scottish Executive St. Andrew's House

<sup>2</sup> Scottish Executive (2004), *Working and learning together to build stronger communities*, Scottish Executive, Edinburgh

<sup>3</sup> Careers Scotland (2004), *Community Guidance: A partnership approach – linking lifelong learning and lifetime guidance*

range of multi-agency initiatives in their area. Community Guidance successfully encourages joint working between agencies, thereby ensuring that there is continuity and coherence in guidance provision, which is targeted at meeting the identified needs of local communities.

An initial review of CGAPs identified the following common themes:

- i. Strategic development of Community Guidance in context of Community Planning and Community Learning & Development
- ii. Capacity building for individuals, organisations and communities
- iii. Joint staff development and training to support capacity building
- iv. Developing provision to meet the needs of specific target groups
- v. Further development of collaborative working between organisations
- vi. Improving access to guidance services (including collaborative marketing and promotion)
- vii. Improving communication and information sharing between partner organisations
- viii. Improving/developing inter-agency referral processes
- ix. Developing/maintaining networks of community guidance and learning providers
- x. Evaluating/monitoring the impact of Community Guidance

## **LINKS TO NATIONAL POLICY DEVELOPMENTS**

The successful implementation of Community Guidance developments will help to demonstrate the role and value of guidance in supporting the development and implementation of public policy – for example, contributing to the Scottish Executive’s priorities for Community Planning<sup>4</sup>; to the economic development agenda outlined in A Smart Successful Scotland<sup>5</sup>; to the Scottish lifelong learning strategy, Life Through Learning: Learning Through Life<sup>6</sup>; and to community development priorities outlined in Working and Learning Together to Build Stronger Communities.

At UK level, the Guidance Council are currently managing a national consultation on the potential for establishing a National Guidance Policy Forum in the UK. This process highlights the need for more joint planning and development of guidance services, at both national and local level. A NGPF would help to reinforce the embryonic Community Guidance developments, as policy makers begin to better understand the significant impact that lifetime guidance has on the success of a raft of Scottish Executive policy priorities. To support the Guidance Council NGPF project, Careers Scotland will organise a number of consultation events. The organisation of these events will be co-ordinated through local Community Guidance partnerships – this is an opportunity for practitioners in Scotland to make their voices heard. These events are scheduled to take place during July and August 2005.

Having a coherent voice and clear leadership for the guidance sector is important. In Scotland we all have an opportunity to ensure that a shared vision for the future of guidance is achieved: in part this can be progressed through the further development of Community Guidance.

## **CAREERS SCOTLAND**

As a national organisation Careers Scotland contributes in many ways to the delivery of guidance in the community. As an all-age provider of career planning services we work to meet the needs of a large and diverse population. Services are delivered through a network of

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<sup>4</sup> Scottish Executive (2004), *The Local Government in Scotland Act 2003, Community Planning: Statutory Guidance*, Scottish Executive St. Andrew’s House

<sup>5</sup> Scottish Executive (2001). *A Smart Successful Scotland: Ambitions for the Enterprise Networks*, Edinburgh: Stationery Office

<sup>6</sup> Scottish Executive (2003), *Life Through Learning: Learning Through Life*, Edinburgh Stationery Office

Careers Scotland centres and our web site, as well as from many partner organisation premises throughout the communities we serve. Careers Advisers and Key Workers provide flexible access to services, which meet the needs of individuals in rural and urban communities alike.

In the Scottish Enterprise area, Careers Scotland funds dedicated staff to support the development and implementation of Community Guidance. In addition, we have successfully attracted ESF funding to support a capacity building project, which expects to deliver front line guidance awareness training to c270 literacies workers and others from the voluntary and community sectors. We are hopeful that in year two of this project these training opportunities will be accredited through the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) and that courses will be made available to a further 500 individuals from a range of organisations across Scotland.

## **FUTURE CHALLENGES**

Building on developments in Community Guidance requires the sustained commitment and involvement of many individuals and organisations from across the guidance and learning community in Scotland. Whilst a great deal has been achieved already there is great potential for further development. To begin with we can look to widen the impact of Community Guidance through the further development and strategic positioning of guidance within Community Planning developments in Scotland.

Community Guidance partnerships can also work more closely on developing processes for evaluating the impact of guidance on the economic and social well being of the communities we serve across Scotland. There is tremendous scope for Community Guidance partnerships to support the development of an evidence-based approach to the delivery of services through the promotion and implementation of reflective practice and action-based research initiatives. Providing evidence, which demonstrates the positive impact of guidance, from a range of organisations, would help to further strengthen the strategic position of guidance in Scotland.

Further information about Community Guidance developments is available from:

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