

Notes on the Meeting to discuss Housing Provision in Greater Manchester for Physically Handicapped People held on 19 November 1981 at North British Housing Association Ltd, Quay Street, Manchester.

Present: Peter Norman, Irwell Valley Housing Association (in the Chair)  
Bill Finlay  
Zena Homewood, Community Service Volunteers  
Joe Simpson, Community Service Volunteers  
Andy Kelmanson, Community Service Volunteers  
Roy Southern, Manchester IYDP Central Committee/Mchr AHA (T)  
John Bellingall, Social Services Department, Manchester  
Chris Withnall, Institute of Housing  
Sheila Hadfield, Housing Department, Oldham M D Council  
Nigel Smith, Spastics Society NW Region  
Ken Lumb, Union of Physically Impaired  
Roger Arkell, North British Housing Association  
Dorothy Whitaker, GM CVS  
June Maelzer, Manchester IYDP Committee  
Don Simpson, G M Association of Chief Housing Officers  
Ann Miller, ARMS  
Jennifer Graham, GM CVS

Apologies Bob Lewis, Social Services Department, Stockport  
Bernard Gosschalk, Housing Centre Trust  
Judith Gray, Manchester Area Health Authority (T)  
Margaret Bone, THAD

1. Minutes of Previous Meeting

Action

Nigel Smith said he was disappointed that the apology he made regarding his notes on the 'Alternatives to Residential Care Conference' was not recorded. He said he wished it to be put on record that these notes had originally been prepared for internal circulation, and consequently contained remarks for the guidance of those arranging future conferences. One of these referred to Stephen Burton in a manner which, out of context, sounded patronising. He wished to apologise to all people with disabilities for this, and hoped that the remark would be accepted in the spirit intended.

With this correction the notes of the meeting were accepted.

The Chairman said the group should decide whether they would do something other than talk or resolve to stop meeting.

The group had been requested at the last meeting to put forward ideas for possible projects and two of these were circulated but another had been received via a telephone message from Bernard Gosschalk. Briefly the proposals were:

2.1 Bernard Gosschalk said the Housing Centre Trust usually organise a meeting in the Spring around a specific project. He thinks the Housing Centre Trust would be prepared to help the group organise a meeting/conference on a theme related to 'Housing for the Severely Physically Handicapped'. If this offer was accepted by the group it would tie in well with the suggestion, submitted by Roy Southern, of a seminar/conference for senior people involved in running the statutory services concerned with housing and care provision for physically handicapped people.

2.2 CSV were asking the group to support a proposal for a CSV Main-line Worker to promote the use of CSV Volunteers in Housing Support Schemes for disabled people.

2.3 Ken Lumb suggested a feasibility study for a Fokus Scheme essentially to explore ways in which a scheme might be funded and organised and also to demonstrate practicability of the scheme.

3. Seminar/Conference

If a seminar is run care must be taken with the organisation. Points to note:

3.1 People who are interested in this field tend to get together anyway but people who do not think this is an area of concern will not attend. We must therefore be sure all the relevant people attend and put before them some of the latest thinking with the intention of getting some sort of commitment from them.

3.2 Voluntary organisations should be invited.

3.3 It would be difficult to organise a Fokus Scheme for one district because there might not be enough clients from any one area to meet a scheme of this type and so any scheme would have to take disabled people from other districts in Greater Manchester.

3.4 Should prospective clients be identified before any decision about possible schemes be taken.

3.5 Don Simpson and Chris Withnall had raised some of these issues at the Institute of Housing Meeting and the response was not favourable - members had been told they should build more houses for disabled people but when these houses were completed no disabled people could be found to live in them. Don Simpson therefore felt the prospective clients should be identified first.

3.6 It was agreed that the group would go ahead with the idea of a seminar given that the Housing Trust was prepared to organise it and Bernard Gosschalk should be given support and help from some members of the group.

DW to  
convene  
meeting

3.7 A comment from the Project '81 paper which was given at the Naideax Conference was stated - that disabled people do not have the right to choose where to live.

3.8 Housing Departments have a residential care list but not a care support list because this is filtered off. Many people will not ask the Housing Departments for houses because care support is not available. There is a definite gap between care provision and housing provision and if people concerned with Housing and Social Services could be brought together something might be achieved.

3.9 It was also suggested that we might invite senior medical practitioners to the seminar/conference and approach the problem from two sides as it were. Area Health Authorities were asking for new institutions and if it was shown that more agreeable housing could be provided for many disabled people cheaper than institutional care and thus relieve the pressure on institutions another ally might be made.

3.10 The problem of identifying potential clients still remained. At present it was impossible to extract names from council housing lists because of the way the lists were compiled. Also many disabled people do not realise the alternatives which exist and so are not demanding the type of accommodation they would prefer.

3.11 If the seminar was presented wrongly it could be harmful to the cause. In the present economic climate people would have to be convinced that housing disabled people in the community would be cheaper than institutional care and if a particular project were proposed the finances could be drawn up and discussed.

3.12 It was agreed it would be worth taking up Bernard Gosschalk's suggestion at what we expect to be little or no cost to the group, with one or two reservations and that two or three members of the group get together to discuss proposals and circulate the outcome of their meeting.

4. Suggested Feasibility Study for Fokus Scheme

4.1 Ken felt such a feasibility study could be used to look at the project's already in existence and find where they had gone wrong and the problems experienced. The study could investigate problems of identification of people who might be possible clients.

4.2 The fact that adapting existing housing takes a long time as would setting up a special scheme made obvious the fact that the group was taking on a long term commitment.

4.3 If the feasibility study was used to identify a location in a local authority the group could attempt to put a project up for funding.

4.4 Would the best approach be to take certain models out to people and record their reactions with the ultimate idea of producing a paper with a positive attitude towards special housing/care provision for disabled people. It was suggested that a video might be produced rather than a paper and use it to dispel the fears and reservations of both professionals and disabled people. Programmes had already been produced on various schemes and if pieces of these could be used it would cut down both expenses and production time. Cost was an unknown amount but it was generally agreed that £1 000 could be raised by the group. Content and production would have to be considered carefully. It was suggested that Nigel Evans who is Chairman of the One to One Scheme and directed the TV documentary 'The Silent Minority', might be prepared to give someone help with the theoretical concept. He does have his own company, Evans Productions, and therefore might not be prepared to give his services free of charge and if this is the case perhaps he could suggest someone else. The Workers Film Association based in Trafford was proposed as a possible source of help and information.

4.5 It was decided finally that a preliminary meeting be arranged by Dorothy to discuss production of the video and technical problems. Some of the following DW Ken Lumb, June Maelzer, Anne Miller and possibly consult Ken Davies who had himself gone through the battle of finding suitable housing and care facilities to enable him and his wife to live independently, will join in the meeting. This group could decide on the contents of the video but certain ideas were put forward:

4.5.1 Various different types of housing and support facilities should be features.

4.5.2 Material already in existence which was suitable could be used but if necessary new material could be produced.

4.5.3 The fact that less care support time than was initially envisaged was necessary once disabled people became accustomed to living alone.

4.5.4 A similar idea to that used by Social Services Children's Fostering Campaign might be used. Disabled people could be asked to write down who they were and what they wanted.

4.5.5 It should be kept in mind that the video would be used to educate disabled people about the different housing/care schemes available at present and to stimulate interest and discussion.

4.5.6 The film should be aimed primarily at disabled people and would be shown in Young Disabled Units and institutions.

4.6 Planning and production time on both the conference and video were important but the video should be completed before the conference.

5. Community Service Volunteers

5.1 Papers were circulated to the meeting explaining how the CSV One to One scheme operated and giving rough costings. Initially one worker co-ordinated the scheme throughout the UK but now this has increased to three. The number of people who participate in the scheme is limited by the number of co-ordinators since each co-ordinator is responsible for a maximum of 40 volunteers at any time. The volunteers are drawn from all over the UK and were processed in London.

5.2 CSV wish to get funding for a co-ordinators post for the Greater Manchester area. Volunteers would still be drawn from the central office in London but some research might be done into the possibility of recruiting volunteers in this area. The One to One Scheme is labour intensive because it is important for the co-ordinator to know both the client and volunteer and the support he gives during the first month a volunteer is in post is critical. This would be the first local office in the country.

5.3 CSV now charge a placement fee of £40 per month per volunteer which means that the position is more secure for both the volunteer and the client. However some departments of Social Services are unwilling to pay this placement fee and CSV feel Area Health Authorities as well as Social Services Departments should share this cost.

5.4 Recently, CSV have installed a computer which will be used to match volunteers to clients and as this method of processing relevant information continued to develop so the methods used to match volunteers to clients will develop.

5.5 The problem of finding funding for the Local Officer's post was discussed and it was suggested that CEP might be used. It was pointed out that MSC funding was temporary and it was risky using it to set up what one hoped would be a long term project. Additionally to qualify for a CEP funded post anyone over the age of 25 must have been unemployed for 12 months and if under the age of 25 they must have been unemployed for 6 or more months.

5.6 Some costs which had been prepared for a CSV conference in Birmingham were circulated and the cost per volunteer inclusive of all costs was £145. A client with two CSVs would therefore incur a maximum cost of £390 per month. The group asked if precise figures could be compiled for them and they also asked for a paper giving more precise proposals, stating exactly what benefits the proposed Greater Manchester Scheme would provide and what the costs would be. The CSV representatives agreed to do this.

CSV

5.7 The Chairman pointed out that if the group did decide to support the CSV proposal they have no funds and no corporate identity.

5.8 Nigel Smith suggested that CSV might consider approaching the Spastics Society for funds.

6. Summary

6.1 Decision to go ahead with investigation and possibly production of a video film to demonstrate the various housing/care schemes available for disabled people. Dorothy to arrange meeting and produce brief outline of video for next meeting.

DW

6.2 Contact Bernard Gosschalk and say we have decided to take up his offer of organising a seminar next year. Bring brief outline of seminar to next meeting.

DW

6.3 CSV to bring back firm proposals for the post of co-ordinator for Greater Manchester to the group. CSV

7. Date of Next Meeting

Wednesday 20 January at 10.30 am at North British Housing Association Ltd, Quay Street, Manchester.