

SMALL SPARKS

Community building programme

2008

Guide for Applicants

Newcastle Learning Disabilities Partnership Board
led by



In partnership with



Newcastle
Community
Empowerment
Network

in⁺Control

Small sparks – briefing

Guide for applicants

Ignite imagination! - Create community!

PROJECTS THAT *ENERGISE* YOUR COMMUNITY

Small Sparks Challenge

Can you think of a positive step you can take, together with others in your area that is fun and also benefits your community? Make sure it involves new people. For example ... how about organising a community treasure hunt, sewing a banner for the local football team, marking walking trails, or a cleanup day for your local area, to name just a few? Whatever you enjoy doing is a great place to start. In the spirit of keeping things simple and informal, we ask that each proposal be submitted on this single sheet of paper.

Small Sparks Purpose

The purpose of Small Sparks is to reach out to people who are not yet involved in community groups or projects. Small Sparks creates small-scale community projects that benefit the neighbourhood and also draw on the personal interests of the organisers.

Small Sparks Match

If you need money, we'll match in cash whatever you donate, **up to** £250 for eligible expenses. Your donations can be money, materials, and/or volunteer labour. If, for example, someone wants to paint a mural and contributes 20 hours labour (valued @ £8 an hour) and a £50 donation of paint from a local shop, this contribution equivalent to £210 will be matched by Small Sparks

Anyone Can Apply

It doesn't matter who you are, what you do, what abilities you have, or how old you are. To be a Small Sparker, you just need to get together with one or more people from your local area or community group and plan a Small Sparks project. Complete your project within two months and be willing to attend an end of year community celebration to share your story with other Small Sparkers.

How Projects are Selected

It's as easy as 1-2-3: You just need to 1) come up with a project idea, 2) write your Small Sparks idea on the attached form, and 3) submit your idea. Proposals are reviewed and selected by 5th May 2008 by representatives from each of the ward areas.

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Here's MY Small Sparks Project!

Contact Name:

Contact Number:

Small Sparks Project Idea: What will you do and where?

Involving New People: What is your plan for identifying and engaging new people in your project?
(Think creatively!)

Community Benefit: How will this benefit your community? What do you want to accomplish?

Catchy Name: What name will you give your project that will attract attention to it?

Money: How much money do you estimate you will need to complete this project? What will you use the money for in general terms?

Match: What type of neighbourhood match do you think you will contribute? (Describe in general terms what volunteer labour, donated materials, or cash you expect to use.)

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YES! I can complete this project in eight weeks and will come to the community celebration to share our Small Sparks project story.

Signature	Name
Address	
Telephone	Email
I learned about Small Sparks from	

Small Sparks in England

The name 'Small Sparks' is borrowed from the successful community development project run by the City of Seattle Department of Neighbourhoods, Involve all Neighbours Project.

Seattle's Small Sparks programme has run successfully for some 5 years and has stimulated numerous community initiatives. Newcastle ran Small Sparks for the first time last year and was very successful in the East and West Ends of the city. This year the focus shifts to North and Central Newcastle – Kenton, Blakelaw and Fawdon wards.

Small Sparks is a tried and tested, low tech community building technique. It's easy to do and doesn't need lots of resources – either money or worker time. Small Sparks is designed to encourage community members, who may not be involved in neighbourhood activity, to use their personal interest and creativity to do a project - something fun and beneficial in the neighbourhood that brings people together. Small Sparks projects are intended to "ignite imagination, create community, and make a difference" in neighbourhoods across the City.

How Small Sparks works

It's simple. The local authority offers individual grants up to £250 on a match-funding basis. People can provide their matching contribution in funding (perhaps got as a donation from a local business), in materials, or volunteer labour

If, for example, someone wants to paint a mural and contributes 20 hours labour (valued @ £8 an hour) and a £50 donation of paint from a local shop, this contribution equivalent to £210 will be matched by Small Sparks.

The purpose of the grants is to

- Enable people to make a visible contribution to their local community.
- Get people who don't know each other together
- Build on what you enjoy
- Involve new people
- Benefit the neighbourhood

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- Spark opportunities for people with learning disabilities to be involved in their community

The benefits can be enormous – offering a concrete step towards disabled people's genuine connection within neighbourhoods.

Members of the community

- can create small projects which are of direct benefit to other ordinary members of the neighbourhood
- are valued for their contribution to the neighbourhood and may be seen as community leaders rather than recipients of services
- discover connections to others and develop meaningful relationships
- create their own meaningful activities outside of organised programmes
- have an increased sense of self-worth as important members of the community

And for neighbourhoods

- Stimulating spin-off activities.
- Making the most of existing neighborhood resources
- Individuals being encouraged to make the most of ideas as well as community groups

Some of previous Small Sparks Projects nationally

- A lady who had learning disabilities loved magazines; she applied for some Small Sparks money to set up a magazine sharing scheme for her local community. People now come to her house to swap magazines and she will take them to other people, she has got lots of new friends.
- Another example is an allotment society who applied for Small Sparks monies for some paving slabs so that people in wheelchairs could access the allotments. There are now a number of people with disabilities who spend time helping at the allotments.

So what happens if you want to apply?

- Think of your idea
- Be sure you can match resources
- If you can - try and see how your idea might help to involve any one with a learning disability living in your area

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- Be sure you have someone who can make things happen (that's probably you if you have had the idea!)
- Fill in the form - or if you need help to fill in the form phone Cal Boal
- See if you get the money!

What happens if you don't know anybody with a learning disability?

It's the ideas that count and we might be able to help you get connected with people anyway

Come on then, what's the catch?

OK, here are the rules

You need to

- Come up with a good community building idea – perhaps with a bit of help
- Give the project a catchy name
- Involve new people in the neighbourhood – not just other disabled people
- Complete the project in 8 weeks
- Make a record – in photos or video and a brief story – we give you a disposable camera if you want!
- Take part in a celebration (this usually isn't a big burden! – most people are quite happy to say how well they do!)

As well as this

- 20 % of the projects must involve people with learning disabilities

Who can apply and how

- Any individual or organisation with an idea for "sparking" involvement in their neighbourhood can be considered for a Small Sparks award of up to £250.00.
- The projects must come from people living in the Kenton , Fawdon and Blakelaw wards
- An Application Form is attached
- Applications will be accepted from Monday 31 March to 21st April
- Successful applicants will be informed by 5 May at the latest – hopefully by 2 May
- The deadline for all projects to be completed is 15 June
- When an application is received and approved, the Small Sparks project is carried out. The project organizer is expected to "tell their story" at a celebration for other organizers and Small Sparks participants. The celebration event will be 9 July