



***An integrated approach
to Health and Wellbeing***

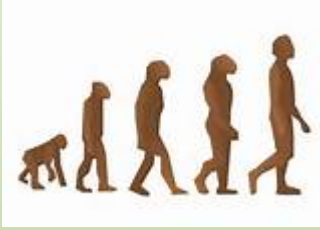


A LITTLE BIT OF HISTORY

- HHEAG was set up nearly 25 years ago following a health authority initiated survey.
- Residents were asked their views about living in the area and how it affected their health and wellbeing.
- The subsequent report was presented to local people at a community meeting, where a steering group was formed to set up a community based organisation.
- This organisation would initiate action on emerging health and environmental need.
- The Health Authority and Avon CC financially supported the organisation in the early days and in various guises have done, to some extent, ever since
- Initially the problems tackled included poor housing quality & asthma, litter & dumping, vandalism and depression.
- HHEAG is now a registered charity - and
- Today our activities cover the range seen on the next slide



Why make it so complicated?



in part its **EVOLUTION**

- Started with support from the then Avon Health Authority & Council.
- Responded to the primary concerns of local people – mental health, physical health, low incomes, quality of the environment, activities for children.
- Low income levels led to founding of Food for All cooperative.
- Physical Health/quality of environment led to walking group
- Mental health self-help groups led (by a winding route) to Positive Minds
- Working with children resulted in the links with health visitors who were alerted to the high levels of anaemia in small children
- They then approached us to offer cookery courses for parents – these began in 1997
- Parents attending cookery courses then said how nice it would be if they could also grow some of the lovely vegetables used.
- From this grew the Community Garden project



but also **Strength in Diversity**

- Life is a complicated entanglement of events, actions, experiences and emotions
- Consequently coping and dealing with life often requires holistic or integrated responses
- The foundations of HHEAG has enabled the development of a broad base of professionally led services. Each service is not only an access point for a client but a link to other potential areas of support, development and opportunity.
- These connections integrate and add strength to the services HHEAG can offer.

Give me an example with food growing

- As I explained earlier, our food growing project developed from the suggestions of cooking participants.
- The growing doesn't stand alone, without a market. It 'sells' to the community kitchen and the Food for All co-operative (shop & outreach stalls).
- Volunteers also have a gift in kind when available .
- This ensures that high quality, low cost produce is literally 'fed back' into a low income community. But that's not all:
 - It contributes to skills development, improved knowledge and health, new friendships, deeper pockets, increased wellbeing
- Oh – and of course we compost all the waste generated in the kitchen and shop, to ensure the fertility of the garden soil is maintained.
- *So try to think of a growing project ++. Add the cooking, eating together, sharing ideas, creating a community. Think about selling some produce to bring in a little income – advertise and sell to your local community*



Keeping the plant alive

- Plants need a variety of resources to help them grow and survive. Air, water, sunlight, soil. Similarly HHEAG needs a complicated mixture of resources to sustain it:



- » Volunteers/residents – the energy source (sun) of the 3rd Sector
- » Local infrastructure, organisations and networks – the soil in which we are rooted
- » Funding/resources – nutrients drawn from a variety of sources to grow and develop the work

Feeding the Plant



FUNDING

- If we're being honest, without money we can't even begin to do high quality, meaningful work.
- Just like the 'strength in diversity' we talked about earlier, diversity is needed in sources of funding.
- Relying on one or two funders is not the ideal option. It makes an organisation too vulnerable to an ever changing and unknowable economic environment. Just think of the past 6 – 7 years

This event is primarily concerned with sourcing funding from health services so lets look at the pros and cons

Feeding the Plant (2)



Pros

- Being funded from health service sources is certainly an endorsement of the value and quality of your project.
- It can therefore be used as an advertisement or calling card for promoting your project, increasing referrals, getting other supporters & funders, etc.
- Potentially you will be able to collaborate with (& hopefully get funding from), Health Authorities (including mental health), Local Authority Public Health. Also, perhaps some specialist service providers, e.g. people living with dementia, head or spinal injuries, learning disabilities, etc.
- You are also likely to have access to the advice and guidance of other professionals and perhaps work with them on campaigns of significance to your community – e.g. levels of dementia, drug and alcohol dependency, isolation, depression.

However here are some cons

- You will certainly have to jump through many hoops to ensure you meet Health Service baseline standards
- You will need to keep excellent records and reach agreed outputs and outcomes – or clearly explain the causes of any problems. Remember health services are closely monitored. It's in their culture and they will expect the same of you.

ENERGY

Money is essential, but it won't go far or grow a strong, vibrant and forward looking organisation without the:

- The backing of the local community
- The commitment of volunteers
- Qualified and dedicated staff

SOIL



- Rooting ourselves in the local community is where we gain our stability.
- Too many times new initiatives and organisations will parachute in to an area without doing the proper groundwork first.
- They may have great ideas but unless they understand the local community; its dynamics, infrastructure, organisations and networks, then they are unlikely to flourish
- As was hinted at earlier – Evolution not revolution

COMMUNICATION



- Successfully securing funding from the health services is one thing – maintaining it in the long term is another.
- HHEAG has somehow managed it for nearly 25 years and we hope this is due to the quality of our work.
- However, it is likely that the maintenance of good communications with our funders has also played a role. This includes:
 - Good personal relationships with officers
 - Regular, clear and on time reports, statistics, etc.
 - Early reporting of any potential problems/open to discussion about solutions
 - External acknowledgement of the role played by the funder
 - Clear (& appropriate) communications with the local community and in the promotion of the organisation

EVALUATION



How do we examine the fruits of our labour & make sure the harvest was a good a full one?

The outputs mentioned earlier will be a key part of your evaluation, but it's more than just figures.

Any evaluation needs to clearly 'tell the full story':

- Clients, service users, volunteers perceptions and achievements
- All external and internal influences which have affected the project, especially unplanned and unexpected occurrences (good & bad)
- Your plans to deal with problems encountered or changes anticipated
- Your plans for development, change, etc.

EVALUATION (cont.)



HHEAG has:

- developed a fairly comprehensive range of entrance and exit forms for clients & service users
- Similarly it also has a procedure for volunteers when they start, six-monthly reviews and an exit questionnaire when they leave
- We also encourage regular planning meetings with volunteers and service users, to ensure they can see that their ideas are taken into account and a key part of the project development
- 6-monthly staff reviews, where issues relating to their project can be discussed

We always take into account people's literacy levels and will find ways to obtain the information required in a sensitive and appropriate manner

Piecing all this information gathered together with the statistics collected, should be the basis for an informative and useful evaluation

In addition to the above information collection we have also had developed a SROI model for our use. I am happy to talk about such models with anyone who is interested.