

Session Notes: Involving People in Social Action

Speakers / panel members-

Emily Beardsmore (British Youth Council), Hazel Blears (Sec of State for Communities and Local Government), Trishna Shah (Charity Focus), Jane Tewson (Pilotlight, Comic Relief, Time Bank), Gib Bulloch (Accenture).

This session look at how we get people involved in social action? How do we keep them involved?

Transcript:

Hazel Blears MP: Politics plays an important role in changing communities. See the government agenda: '[Communities in Control](#)' and Community Builders funding. Local Authorities must respond to petitions. Energy and belief are key factors.



Questions for Hazel:

Q: How are resources going to be available for the above?

A: Agencies encouraged to work together and pool resources.

Q: How do young people get involved in politics?

A: Keep your ideals, take up internships and get involved locally.



Jane Tewson - In Australia 100,000 people sleep rough and there is the highest suicide rate in the world. Pilotlight fights injustice, sparks social change, provides facilities for people to meet and understand each other. Disconnection is the problem- people need to be heard.

Elders not the elderly! Take a look at the '[Dying to Know](#)' project.

Gib Bulloch - Accenture Development Partnerships is now five years old. Accenture volunteers halve their salaries to work on the project, making it sustainable, and work focuses on technology to aid the development ability of individuals to affect change. "Once one commits, providence begins to play a part"



Accenture Development Partnerships has the biggest NGOs working with biggest corporates. 'Consider changing the organisations you work



Trishna Shah – CharityFocus.org is a grassroots approach, and a backlash to dot.com age. CharityFocus.org is a Web based kindness portal.

Values-

- Does not fundraise- gives services for free 'gift economy'.
- Volunteer run
- Focus on small things- joy is in the journey, 'daily good' one inspirational quote sent by email.
- Technology has been the key to their success.

Questions for Panel:

Q: Cambodia does loads for local people- why not business? UK businesses?

A: Start something yourself.

Q: Altruism and greed- can we mix them to bring benefit?

A: Make a difference is more important than making a fortune and need enlightened self interest. Get up.org- citizens online campaigning organisations.

Q: Why do people commit to change when voting for TV shows- how can we make this work for important issues?

A: 'Make Poverty History' – fun and accessible and successful.

Q: How can the panel help with struggling not for profit organisations?

A: If people are allowed to speak for themselves it inspires others to act

A: Maybe small orgs should come together. Use volunteers and technology

Q: If difficult economic times is there progress in what businesses can do from social action? Is CSR going to be cut?

A: If CSR is dislocated from the main business it will be the first to be cut.

Balance of financial and social efficiency is important.



Are there too many charities? Straw poll.

The three headlines from this session:

Can we have greed and altruism? General response- yes

How to harness people's interest, if Big Brother can do it why not social action?

Disconnection is the problem- people need to be heard

More information:

[Department of Local Government and Communities](#)

[British Youth Council](#)

[Accenture Development Partnerships](#)

[Pilotlight](#)

[CharityFocus.org](#)