

**communityalliance**

transformation through community anchors

# 2009 membership survey report

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# Supporting the government's vision



*Donnie with the first quilt he created at Mission Hall Quilts, a social enterprise run by The Cresco Trust in Northern Ireland*

The figures in this report have been extrapolated from the 2008 survey responses of 626 community anchors (including some emerging anchors) to illustrate the overall membership. For a full description of our methodology and definition of community anchor organisations see [www.comm-alliance.org](http://www.comm-alliance.org)

Alnwick  
Plymouth  
Alresford  
Hackney Marsh  
Amersham  
Walsall  
Hertfordshire  
Aylesbury  
Bradford  
Hammersmith  
Ealing  
Banchory  
Donnington  
Banstead  
Greenwich West  
Basingstoke  
Downend  
Cosham  
North Birkenhead  
Howden Clough  
Berwick  
Great Yarmouth  
Bicester East  
Greenhithe  
Mersea Island  
Bispham  
Heston  
Blackbird Leys  
North Edinburgh  
Blacon  
Bloxwich  
Paulsgrove  
Bourne Valley  
Dulais Valley  
Brampton  
Lauderdale  
Brumby  
Ensbury Park  
Peat Moors  
Ellesmere Port  
Burngreave  
Podsmead  
Burslem  
Canterbury  
Norwich  
Charlton Down  
Portobello  
Middlesex  
Leatherhead  
Chesham  
Kings Langley  
Pool Hayes

**T**he government wants to put more power into the hands of local people so that they can make decisions about how their communities are run. Recent policies support people in making decisions about what services are provided in their area, how public buildings are run, spending local budgets, and more.

The Community Alliance knows that its members, organisations known as community anchors, are playing a vital role in delivering these policies. They are providing a wide variety of local services, putting assets such as buildings and land into community ownership and enabling people to have a say in how their communities are run. Day in and day out they are supporting the government's belief that neighbourhoods are stronger and have less crime when people are engaged in their communities and empowered to make decisions about the things that happen on their streets.

The annual survey of our members tells us that community anchors are in a strong position to serve the government's agenda because they are contributing significant income, assets, employment and volunteering opportunities to local communities, too.

Eileen Mason, chair of Horndean's Over 55 Club, believes that the key to successful community engagement is listening to what people want.

**“Every six weeks we hold meetings and tell people what we’ve got planned. If not enough people are interested in an activity then we don’t do it. People come because we organise things that they want to do.”**

**H**orndean Community Association is an award winning community anchor in rural Hampshire that has been given a VISIBLE\* award partly in recognition of the work that it does in engaging people in the local community.

Horndean is particularly successful at engaging older people with community activities. It runs numerous activities through its Over 55 Club, a social self help group with over one hundred members, an elders’ club and a University of the Third Age group. They also provide opportunities for older people to engage with younger members of the community. They have a theatrical group where the oldest member is 80 and the youngest is 16 and are currently broadening out their intergenerational work by running a guided reading project in local schools. Working with a well-being officer, older people help pupils to improve their reading while making connections with children in the neighbourhood.

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There are **1,442 community anchors** in the Community Alliance running activities that get people engaged in their communities.

\*VISIBLE – quality standards for multi-purpose community organisations developed by Community Matters. More information at [www.visiblecommunities.org.uk](http://www.visiblecommunities.org.uk)

Chiswell  
Ringwood  
Kingussie  
Finchley  
**Hampshire**



Shiney Row  
Kings Tamerton  
Colebridge  
Alton  
Conisbrough  
Bedhampton  
Covent Garden  
Timperley  
Streetly  
Allens Cross  
Warstock  
Craghead  
Wednesfield  
Glynwr  
Cricklewood  
Cwmfelinfach  
Upper Nithsdale  
Kensal Green  
Glastonbury  
Denton West  
Preston Road  
Ruscote  
Derby  
Llandudno  
Devon  
Little Stanney  
Digbeth  
Beaconhill  
Thelwall  
North Southwark  
Pelsall  
Downswood  
Victoria Dock  
Drayton  
Sanday  
Dunscroft  
Marlborough  
East Ashington  
Cornwall

# Community engagement



East Dulwich  
Durham  
**Lincolnshire**



# Voice and advocacy

Community anchors are very successful at enabling people to have a say in what happens where they live. Frequently their reach and the amount of influence they have outstrips the number of staff they have on their books.

Foresight (North East Lincolnshire) has just six full-time and one part-time member of staff but runs many different services and courses for disabled people, both adults and children. Foresight was set up because disabled people said that their needs were not being met by the existing authorities in the region and listening to people's needs is central to the way that Foresight works. All their work is about giving disabled people a voice. They are leading the local authority's consultation on disability which includes putting a group of people together to look at local access. They are shown the plans for new developments or refurbishments and get to say if the accessibility standards are good enough. Three years ago a local cinema was built and, thanks to Foresight, there is audio description in one of the screens.

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Community Alliance members **employ nearly 8000 staff**, an average of five full-time staff per community anchor.

East Knoyle  
Liverpool  
West Billericay  
Hitchin  
Twickenham  
Braunstone  
Norwich  
North Ormesby  
Ebbw Vale  
Langford Village  
Bradford  
Edinburgh  
Bullbrook  
Ellendune  
South Craven  
Elm Park  
Buckhurst Hill  
Exeter  
Finsbury Park  
South Kilburn  
Ferguslie Park  
Woodingdean  
Fetterangus  
North Barnsley  
Fordingbridge  
Frere Road  
Kings Norton  
Grangetown  
Fitzrovia  
Gannow  
Gerrards Cross  
Talbot View  
Glenboig  
Lonsdale  
Hull  
Selby  
Gorse Hill  
Wareham  
Dalton  
Harbourne



*John Cremen is registered blind and is a volunteer in the Foresight recording studio that provides audio description services.*

**“There are a lot of people sat at home doing nothing but for me everyday of the week is full. If there's something you need then Foresight is there to provide it for you. It's a lifeline for a lot of people.”**

One of the volunteers with the Advice Service, Sally Taylor, is supported by her employer to give something back to her community.

**“My company allows you to apply for flexible working. One of the criteria is ‘community involvement’. They allowed me to reduce my working week to four days. I live in the same street as the Burley Lodge Centre and really wanted to do something which allowed me to help support people from the area.”**



Firthmoor  
Craigend  
Govanhill  
Great Waking  
Bewdley  
Dogsthorpe  
Waterhouses  
Greenstead  
Sefton Park  
West Wight  
Grimethorpe  
Hainault Forest  
West Itchen  
Westway  
Deane  
Woodley  
Aylesham  
Harefield  
Bilston  
Hastings  
Westleigh  
Tiree  
Hatch Warren  
Bradley  
Crystal Palace  
Hayfield  
Birse  
Southwick  
High Green  
New Earswick  
Wokingham  
Horndean  
Eday  
Belmont  
Hoxton  
Hucclecote  
Immingham  
Royston  
Chaulden  
**Leeds**



Isle of Luing  
Highgate  
Hammersmith & Fulham  
Kent

# Community involvement

Over one hundred people each year get involved with their community in north west Leeds thanks to the award winning volunteering scheme run by the Burley Lodge Centre. For the last 25 years, Burley Lodge has been recruiting, training and placing volunteers in suitable projects in the heart of the community. It's a relationship that works well. Burley Lodge is able to respond to the needs of the community while local people get the opportunity to gain skills, improve their confidence and help others. Burley Lodge also relies on volunteers to run the many services it provides, which include room hire, IT classes and courses, business support, and activities for children, young people and families. They are the third largest provider of advice in the city helping people with benefits, bills, legal and housing problems. The Centre runs all of these services using a ratio of around 60 volunteers to 20 members of staff.

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There are over **47,000 volunteers** participating in their neighbourhoods through opportunities provided by Community Alliance members.

Patricia McDonagh sees how a sense of community she recognises from the past is being replicated in Mission Hall today.

**“I used to work in the shirt factories with all sides of the community. All sides of the community come into Mission Hall.”**

**M**ission Hall Quilts is a social enterprise run by The Cresco Trust in Derry / Londonderry, Northern Ireland. The building houses a shop selling everything to do with quilts and quilting and a training room for classes. Running a social enterprise gives The Cresco Trust a valuable asset to help generate an income to fund their work.

From Mission Hall, The Cresco Trust runs an employment, training and peace building programme, focussing on the traditional crafts of the local area, which are patchwork and quilting. Their quilting courses and classes are helping to build bridges within a divided community by bringing people together from across religious, social and class divides and providing them with something in common. Traditionally, quilts also provide the means through which to tell stories and Cresco has found that their classes can provide openings for people to reveal difficult, personal experiences. They train all their tutors in managing difficult conversations and signposting people to sources of support.

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Community Alliance members own **assets worth over £611m** which allows them to provide facilities that are used by local people and groups.

Norden  
North Oxford  
Dagenham  
**Londonderry**



Kings Norton  
Cobridge  
Kiveton Park  
Whitchurch  
Larkhill  
Broxtowe  
Leamington  
Chasewell  
Leigh Park  
Ouseburn  
Leverstock Green  
North Tyneside  
Glendale  
Lewes  
Liss  
Lockleaze  
Gorebridge  
Shaftesbury  
Louth  
Stoke Poges  
Lower Penarth  
Govanhill Baths  
Greenwich  
Twickenham  
Lynemouth  
Maiden Lane  
Writtle  
Luton  
Mainstone  
Maltby  
Ashley Green  
Manchester  
Barton Hill  
Market Rasen  
Heeley  
West Bletchley  
Mayfield  
Ravensthorpe  
Northam

# Bridge building



**“I would never have had the confidence to come into a room and talk to other people without Mission Hall.”** *Patricia McDonagh*

# Neighbourhood renewal

Wordsley  
Melksham  
St Albans  
Bitterne Manor  
Melrose  
Birmingham  
Thornhill  
Micklefield  
Upminster  
Woodcote  
Moreton  
St Werburghs  
Townhill Park  
Totton & Eling  
Moseley  
Walkerburn  
Muirkirk  
Bowes Park  
Mull & Iona  
Woodbank  
Dunstable Hill  
Newhaven  
Windmill Hill  
Newton Abbot  
Wellington Hill  
Beckett Park  
Blackfriars  
North Hull  
Ledbury  
Nythe  
Orchard Park  
Paisley  
Patcham  
Leominster

## Plymouth



Peckham  
Petersfield  
Coin Street  
Pinner  
Pitsea Mount  
Leeds  
Chester Green  
Pontlliw Village  
Lanark  
Oxford



*Millie has had a range of support from The Zone, including from the Icebreak team that works with young people with severe emotional or behavioural problems, and has completed the Life Skills course. She is currently at college.*

**“I was homeless, depressed and very alone. Different people at the Zone listened to me and helped me achieve everything that I’ve done. There’s a big change from when I first came to The Zone and I’m now quite positive.”**

The Zone has been making a significant contribution to neighbourhood renewal in Plymouth for the last 20 years by helping young people with health and housing problems and to tackle low self-esteem. They help an average of 5,000 young people a year and have won awards for their work. They are one of the largest organisations providing these services with a combined annual income of £1.2 million.

One reason The Zone is able to make a strong contribution to neighbourhood renewal is because it offers a broad range of services all under one roof. This means that a young person going into the building is not automatically marked out as someone who needs mental health support or who is addicted to drugs. They might be using those services but they could equally be looking for information about accommodation. The Zone has a good reputation among young people in the region for providing confidential advice they can trust.

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Community Alliance members have a **combined total income of over £423m** that they can use to deliver a wide range of local services tailored to meet the needs of local people.

Milton is just one example of an ex-offender who Action Acton has helped to turn his life around.

**“I’ve had so much help. I go to college now which is something that I never would have thought of doing. The support at Action Acton has given me the motivation to be someone instead of doing crime, getting arrested all the time. I want to improve on my life and for my life to be better.”**

Action Acton is improving the opportunities for people who are disadvantaged in Acton, Ealing and neighbouring west London boroughs. Among other successes, they get 250 to 300 hard to reach people back into employment each year, including young people from Black and minority ethnic communities refugees, lone parents and ex-offenders. Another 400 disadvantaged people gain ESOL and Skills for Life qualifications. In addition Action Acton supports self employment and small businesses and runs Acton street market and the Doughnut Factory, a shared workspace for people running creative businesses.

Action Acton also brokers partnerships with other organisations and statutory agencies. These partnerships provide important contacts with some harder to reach communities as well as giving Action Acton good links to complementary services and sources of funding. Action Acton bring in around £1 million each year to tackle disadvantage in the area it works in.

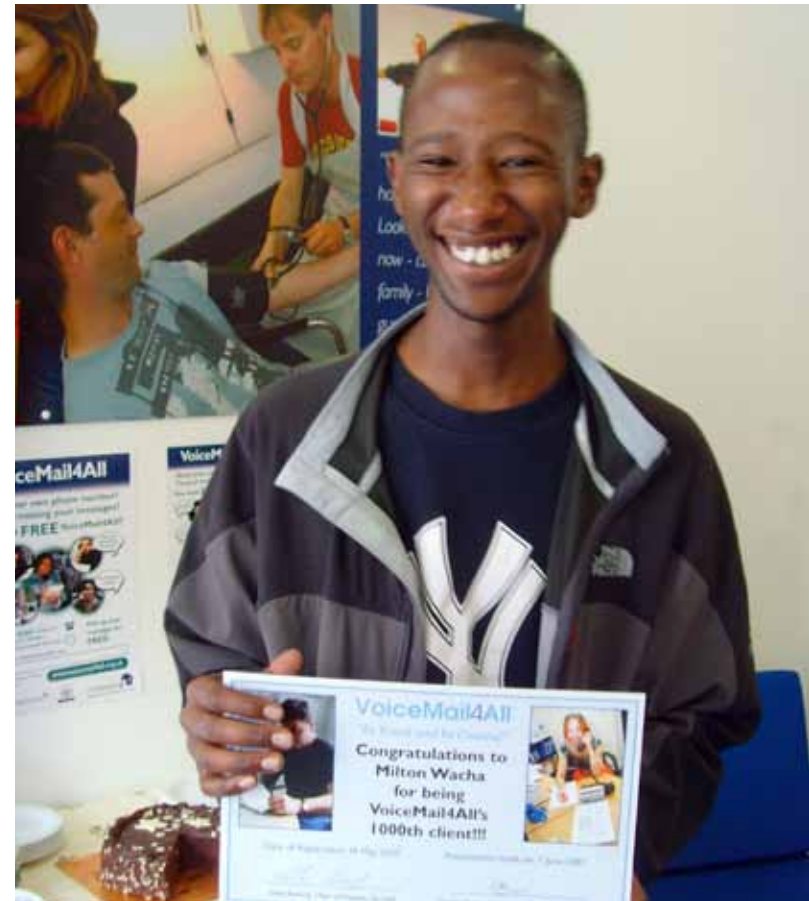
Community Alliance members earn an **income of nearly £183m** by running services and activities that improve opportunities for people in their communities.

- Prestonville
- Wolverhampton
- Quedgeley
- Clayton Brook
- Risborough
- Ryecroft
- Higher Denham
- Goole
- North Doncaster
- Seaton
- Brookside
- Sedgefield
- Lostwithiel
- Shoreditch
- Hexham
- Stoke Hill
- Lunt
- Swffryd
- Langworthy
- Thanet
- Isle of Jura
- Tre Cwm
- Tye Green
- Houghton Green
- Upper Eskdale
- Cardiff
- Paston
- Walkerville
- Prudhoe
- Gorseinon
- Warminster
- Shirehampton
- West Auckland
- Noak Bridge
- South Ruislip
- Eastcote
- Middlesbrough
- West Oxford
- Westmill
- Sefton
- Longtown
- Whitstable
- Spring Bank

**Action**



# Improving opportunities



We would like to thank all the community anchors and the people who use them for allowing their stories and pictures to be used in this publication. A text only version of this publication is available from the Community Alliance website.

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There are organisations known as community anchors throughout England, Scotland and Wales. Community anchors are organisations that sit in the very heart of their communities and are run by local people who know their neighbourhoods inside out. From this knowledge then organise and run a range of accessible, affordable services and facilities that are as diverse as the communities they serve. These services are specifically tailored to meet the needs of the community and make extraordinary differences to local people's lives.

**“When my husband died, I didn’t know what to do. I didn’t know anybody. I really think my life would have ground to a halt without Horndean.”**

*Eileen Mason who now encourages other older people to get involved in their community, too*

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The Community Alliance is a partnership of three leading community sector organisations dedicated to the support and development of community anchor provision across the UK. The partners are bassac (British Association of Settlements and Social Action Centres), Community Matters and the DTA (Development Trusts Association).