SURREY’S BIGGER SOCIETY

A view from the perspective of the Community Foundation for Surrey produced by The Hazelhurst Trust

Jonathan Parsons, ‘No-Brainer’, 2008, oil on linen, 140 x 183 cm
Jonathan Parsons is currently in the process of making a brand new oil painting especially for Guildford Cathedral, entitled Cruciform Vision. The project was inspired by the forthcoming 50th anniversary of the consecration of the Cathedral and the aim is for the painting to be put on permanent display on the area of wall above the doorway to the Cathedral treasury.

A donation from The Hazelhurst Trust has covered the production costs of the work enabling it to be installed in time for the service of consecration in May 2011. Guildford Arts has made a donation to the acquisition fund.

For more information, please visit: www.jonathanparsons.com
This paper presents some views from the perspective of a donor and Trustee to the Community Foundation for Surrey, in keeping with the government’s request for ideas on *Big Society*. The concept of community foundations long preceded the current political debate about devolving power and responsibility out to communities and to individuals. They have their origin in a belief that anyone should have the opportunity to become a philanthropist regardless of their financial means and they rely upon a sense of shared ownership and mutual responsibility within communities.

The purpose of this paper is most of all to look forward and seize the challenge that is being presented to us, identifying the significant role for organisations like the Community Foundation for Surrey at a time of economic change. It is by no means comprehensive but takes some of the key concepts and themes outlined in the Prime Minister’s announcements about Big Society and considers what they may mean in a Surrey context. In particular, it welcomes the promise of ‘a radical shift in power from central government to neighbourhoods’, pointing to ways in which we can strengthen local communities and local leadership. But it also identifies certain difficulties in achieving this, in particular the perception that Surrey is an entirely wealthy county with very little local need.
The Hazelhurst Trust Surrey

The Local Futures Group

Index of Multiple Deprivation: Average of Output Area Scores (2007)

Source Local Knowledge

2 The Local Futures Group
While Surrey occupies bottom place on the Index of Multiple Deprivation at county level, there is a very different picture at a much more local level. Since 2004 the Office of National Statistics has subdivided electoral wards into zones of around 1500 people called ‘Super Output Areas’.

The chart below demonstrates the dramatic difference in IMD scores for zones within the Guildford borough. This same pattern can be seen right around Surrey.

![Index of Multiple Deprivation: Average of Super Output Area Scores (2007)](source: Local Knowledge)

In his launch of the Big Society in July 2010 the Prime Minister identified three key strands to the agenda: social action, public service reform and community empowerment. He also emphasised the three techniques of decentralisation, transparency and finance to deliver on these aims.

There is an important contribution for community foundations in applying these techniques, building upon the work that they already do but also adopting new services and approaches.

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2 The Local Futures Group

2 The Index of Multiple Deprivation is a figure for levels of deprivation in a given area based on the seven indices of education, employment, crime, health, housing, income and living environment.
Surrey was given a significant handicap in public funding formulae in an era of highly centralised government in which funds were determined according to high level statistics. In 2009 the Community Foundation published a report entitled *Hidden Surrey: Why Local Giving is Needed to Strengthen our Communities*[^1]. It highlighted the fact that our local authority receives considerably less in public funding per person for essential services than is received in other counties. Having started already on the back foot, Surrey County Council is now having to reduce its budget even further, following the Comprehensive Spending Review. It is fair to say that long before the change of government in May 2010 our reliance upon civil society and upon non public sources of finance has necessarily been greater than elsewhere because of the limitations of funding.

*Hidden Surrey* also emphasised that our county’s overall affluence conceals areas of high need and deprivation, distorting statistics and diverting funds to areas of more widespread poverty. For example we have the highest car ownership per capita, with around two vehicles per household. Therefore infrastructure, including public transport, is geared to a car owning population, isolating those without access to a vehicle. If general affluence makes it harder for those on low incomes, the *Hidden Surrey* report asked whether we have greater responsibility to use personal and community resources to address local needs.

If the answer to this question was not clear last year, it should have been made obvious by the current constraint on public resources. The Big Society agenda can be seen not simply as a political expedient. It could be interpreted as a genuine attempt to seek out effective solutions to social problems, breaking down social barriers and inviting people to take responsibility for society around them. *Hidden Surrey* argued that, in many cases, bureaucratic interventions are insufficient to define and resolve intractable problems such as teenage pregnancy, youth unemployment and exclusions from school. It provided profiles of pioneering voluntary organisations with detailed understandings of specific problems working at a local level to resolve them. But it also highlighted the precarious, short term nature of grant funding and the threat to smaller voluntary groups of complex tendering processes that may effectively preclude them from local authority funding. This report points to new approaches to funding at a time when there is less to go round and a much sharper focus on return on investment.

One of the aims of Big Society is to open up access to government data to benefit communities. In his speech to launch his agenda David Cameron stated that ‘if we want people to play a bigger part in our society, we need to give them the information’. *Hidden Surrey* demonstrated that a close inspection of official statistics exposed tight pockets of severe deprivation, surrounded by well above average wealth. The experience of the Community Foundation for Surrey during its five years is that many of our residents would willingly support local community groups if only they were made aware of the extent of local need. In Britain we have a wealth of statistical information that shows where quality of life is severely compromised by poor mental health, low employment, low educational attainment, crime and so on. But very often the charities and community groups that are working to address social problems do not have ready access to the hard data that would serve them well.

The chart above shows Child Poverty rates in different parts of Redhill, within the borough of Reigate and Banstead, showing that in one area it is well above the national average but significantly lower in most other areas.

In Canada community foundations make extensive use of official statistics from a variety of sources to report annually on the quality of life in their communities. Each year fifteen Canadian foundations publish a report called *Vital Signs* which measures year on year key indicators such as unemployment rates, the gap between rich and poor and so on. This provides a democratic way of identifying gaps in service provision and holds local authorities to account. But it also provides an evidence base for donors to justify financial support to local causes.
Surrey is one of a group of leading British foundations ready to adopt a similar approach here in the UK. With a track record in presenting evidence through the *Hidden Surrey* report we are in a strong position to lead the way. Like other local authorities, Surrey County Council has a major challenge in rationing funding and choosing between competing demands. We, as a Foundation, are offering to assist local government in making hard choices. We also bring specialised expertise in developing donors and in drawing out private and corporate funding to fulfil local needs.

The great power of the Canadian approach is that it acknowledges that needs vary between different geographic regions and that the priorities of one community will differ from another. During an era of centralised government there was little room for regional variation, hence the bureaucratic approach to the delivery of *Sure Start* Children’s Centres. But with the reduction in public funds there is no better time to assess local priorities, to think locally and to question the way public money is being spent.

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2 The Local Futures Group
The Coalition government acknowledges that voluntary organisations have a significant role to play in delivering social projects and that there is enormous efficiency to be gained by paying them according to the results they achieve. If charities and social enterprises need to demonstrate their impact to be eligible for government funding they first need access to start-up capital. The government is establishing the Big Society Bank as a means of using dormant bank accounts and private investment to help to provide this. In a recent study in Merseyside, respondents identified a significant role for Community Foundations in implementing the aims of the Big Society Bank.

In a report on the case for public sector reform by KPMG entitled ‘Payment for Success’ the authors make the point that ‘politicians compete on how much money is spent on this service or that, rather than what is achieved’. In the meantime, some of the most effective voluntary organisations are so focused upon achieving results that they do not necessarily evaluate and promote their own success. A small local charity called Skillway in Godalming takes children who are at risk of exclusion from school and teaches them vocational skills, increasing their confidence and their eligibility for employment.

The cost of maintaining a young person in a Pupil Referral Unit once they have been excluded is £15,000 whereas the annual cost of a place at Skillway is around £4,000. If only Skillway could be rewarded each time it prevents an exclusion or enables a sixteen year school leaver to obtain employment this charity’s current financial uncertainty would be eased.

One of the challenges for non profit organisations that deliver significant preventative value is in ensuring that they find a place in the new order. Voluntary organisations themselves are not immune to the culture in which success is measured in terms of how much money can be clawed from government coffers.

The introduction of social impact bonds, for example, holds great promise to change this culture by encouraging and rewarding donors whilst delivering effective public services and paying for results. In preparation for such schemes the Community Foundation for Surrey is placing greater focus upon assisting and encouraging the organisations they support to evaluate the preventative value of their work.

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2 Payment for Success by Alan Downey, Paul Kirby and Neil Sherlock, Partners KPMG LLP (UK) June 2010
3 http://www.skillway.org.uk/
Many donors are interested in new forms of social finance that enable them to ‘recycle’ money rather than simply awarding non returnable grants, although there will always be a strong need for traditional grant funding. One good example is The Frederick’s Foundation®, founded by a Surrey entrepreneur Paul Barry-Walsh with its headquarters in Lightwater. This Foundation provides loan finance to people who cannot obtain funding from banks or other sources. Clients include the disabled, long term unemployed and ex-offenders. Loans are typically several thousand pounds and are paid back at the rate of 15%.

The default rate is low and, most significantly, the Foundation provides considerable advice and mentoring to loan recipients through a team of highly experienced volunteers. Donors who may wish to contribute to the fund both ‘recycle’ their money but also benefit from the Community Investment Tax Relief (CITR).

As a Community Foundation, our experience demonstrates that loan finance of this kind could enable community projects to achieve their overall aims. For example we have provided grant funding to programmes such as Opportunities at Sandy Hill over the course of the last four years. Whilst these grants have been indispensable to provide tuition in Information Technology and a range of life skills, the mission is to enable participants to improve their quality of life, in particular through obtaining employment. In most cases they are single mothers with little formal education.

They have plans to start small businesses in fields such as cake-making, gardening and beauty and loans that are designed for their specific circumstances would enable them to become economically active and to improve the quality of life for their families.

Donors who may wish to contribute to the fund both ‘recycle’ their money but also benefit from the Community Investment Tax Relief (CITR).

http://www.fredericksfoundation.org/
Social enterprise\(^9\) is at the heart of a 'deep and serious' reform of public services as part of the Big Society agenda, according to the Prime Minister. While London has been described as the world hub for social enterprise, Surrey is home to some that are held up nationally as models for this organisational form. **Central Surrey Health\(^\text{10}\)**, visited recently by the Minister for the Cabinet Office, has been well publicised as a good example of a mutual company owned and managed by former public sector employees. Another example of a leading local social enterprise is **Peer Productions\(^\text{11}\)**, based in Woking, whose founder Nina Lemon won an UnLtd Young Social Entrepreneur of the Year award. For the last four years her organisation has worked tirelessly to influence young people to make positive choices according to their concept of 'peer education'.

**Peer Productions** continues to reduce its dependence upon grant funding, at present around 40% of the organisation’s income. It seeks corporate sponsors who may choose to fund an individual performance at a local school or contribute to the costs of training an ‘apprentice’ actor. Sponsors are offered, in addition to publicity, the opportunity for staff workshops in presentation techniques and corporate entertainment.

**Peer Productions** also projects increased revenue by taking over the Woking Youth Arts Centre from the local authority. At present it is a tenant of the Council but, if free to operate the centre independently, has identified a number of ways to optimise usage of the facilities both increasing its value as a community resource and increasing revenue. This includes increasing the capacity of its revenue earning youth theatre.

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\(^9\) Social enterprises are businesses driven by a social or environmental purpose. As with all businesses, they compete to deliver goods and services. The difference is that social purpose is at the very heart of what they do, and the profits they make are reinvested towards achieving that purpose. Well known examples of social enterprises include The Big Issue, Jamie Oliver’s restaurant Fifteen, and the fair-trade chocolate company Divine Chocolate. Social Enterprise Coalition

\(^\text{10}\) http://www.centralsurreyhealth.nhs.uk/

\(^\text{11}\) www.peerproductions.co.uk
This example highlights the importance of premises in enabling some organisations to realise a vision of social enterprise. *Hidden Surrey* drew attention to the prohibitively high cost of real estate within the county and the burden this places upon voluntary organisations when funding their core costs.

The invitation by government to transfer public assets for use by communities and by social enterprises is welcome. It offers the means for non profit organisations to develop revenue streams, acknowledging that they have the freedom to access sources of funding that are not available to government and thus to achieve a greater economic and social return.

Another potential means of generating revenue, but also of replicating effective social enterprise models, is to develop social franchises. We have within Surrey excellent organisations that achieve great impact at a very local level. The social entrepreneurs who lead these organisations understand very clearly what works and why it works but have neither the management capacity nor the capital to extend to other areas. If, for example, the formula for *Opportunities* could be used in other areas of deprivation we would have a stronger society.

This framework of social franchising also offers social enterprises the opportunity to generate revenue by applying and charging for their expertise, but without overburdening their management structure.

It is one way in which the local authority could fund the most effective voluntary organisations by investing in this expertise, working in partnership with organisations like the Community Foundation to identify and evaluate them.
Fostering a culture of volunteering is central to Big Society. Community Foundations themselves rely heavily upon highly skilled volunteers for many core activities such as approving grants and formulating donor development and investment strategies. Often they are people who have retired from finance, law, the public sector or are entrepreneurs. Collectively they bring many years of experience and a diversity of professional skills. This gift of time provides community foundations with strength and influence which are far disproportionate to their core operating costs. These gifts are given willingly by companies and individuals who recognise the critical importance of local giving and wish to contribute to the communities in which they spend much of their time.

Some of the oldest branches of the Citizens Advice Bureau are located in Surrey where they have, for over seventy years, provided well trained volunteers to advise people of their rights.

Voluntary effort has always been an essential part of our society but in an era of big government it has often been derided. There are many examples, including those referenced in this paper, where people have taken social action because the state has been unable or unwilling to provide. Hidden Surrey made the point that government needs to be honest about its limits so that we can delineate the role of local philanthropy; the Big Society agenda appears to offer the chance to renegotiate the interface between state intervention and voluntary action.

Loveworks.org, a social action group established in 2008, epitomises the spirit of Big Society. It was founded by a local woman, Linda Sourris, who felt strongly that there must be a way of engaging the people of Reigate in helping people in need and in engendering community spirit. No one asked her to create Loveworks.org. She took the initiative and has since gathered 120 volunteers to her cause. She began by giving out coffee, croissants and promotional leaflets to commuters at Reigate station, borrowed an upstairs room at Caffe Nero to give talks to potential supporters and persuaded shoppers to donate goods to make Christmas gift bags for people in need. Loveworks.org is now providing different forms of support to the homeless, elderly, socially isolated and to children who are struggling at school. Linda would now like to establish a Reigate Fund to continue her much valued work.
The Watts Gallery\textsuperscript{13} in Compton provides a powerful symbol of local philanthropy. G F Watts was one of the most eminent artists of his time but was less well known as a leading philanthropist, committed to ‘art for all’.

In 2011 the Gallery will reopen following a major restoration, providing a resource of great international and historic significance here in Surrey.

This organisation offers very much more than an art collection. In keeping with Watts’ legacy of taking art to the marginalised and excluded, Watts Gallery works with disadvantaged groups including prisoners and young offenders, using art to provide a different experience of the world and to raise self respect.

The Hope Wall Community Art project brings together different views and groups within the community to provide a permanent work of art that celebrates community and Watts’ legacy. With its pioneering social action projects, its capacity to draw in volunteers and its engagement with local people the Watts Gallery could be seen also as a powerful symbol of a big society.

\textsuperscript{13} http://www.wattsgallery.org.uk/
For the last couple of years volunteers have run a mother and toddler group in a community centre at Lower Green in Esher. Contrary to the affluent image of this commuter town, many parents who live in this part of it cannot afford to pay for nursery school or playgroups. Consequently their children are disadvantaged on arrival at school. Although a SureStart Children’s Centre was planned for the area, it is located too far from Lower Green for residents to benefit.

In addition to the mother and toddler group, funds have also been raised for professional Information Technology classes for adults and for the football club. The volunteers are well aware of other needs and services that would greatly improve quality of life. They have taken the initiative to survey local residents so that they are at the heart of any future plans.

Esher divides into four zones of roughly equivalent size. This chart demonstrates that quality of life in one of these zones differs significantly to the other three.
In February 2011 the Community Foundation learned that it has been successful in a funding application to NESTA\textsuperscript{14} (National Endowment for Technology, Science and the Arts) to support the community at Lower Green in Esher.

It was one of seventeen out of six hundred nationally to be awarded by NESTA’s Neighbourhood Challenge programme. It provides an endowment challenge, meaning that funds will be released on condition that donations are raised within the local area. The effectiveness of endowment challenge schemes was clearly demonstrated by the successful Grassroots Endowment Challenge. In this scheme, which was oversubscribed, donors to the Community Foundation had their donations matched by in a 1:2 ratio by government.

An important significance of this NESTA Fund is that the community itself will be involved in defining its own needs, encouraging local people to develop ideas to help them solve the issues they are facing.

The programme will be co-ordinated by a community facilitator with the support of a group of volunteers, residents and supporters which includes the Member of Parliament, members of local churches, a GP and a County Councillor. The overriding objective is to empower the local community, providing the means for people to help themselves and to access the social as well as the financial capital of the area. This initiative provides the foundation for the establishment of an Esher Neighbourhood Fund, an endowment fund for Esher and its surrounding area, to serve the needs not just of Lower Green but of the wider community.

\textsuperscript{14} http://www.nesta.org.uk/areas_of_work/public_services_lab/neighbourhood_challenge

The overriding objective is to empower the local community, providing the means for people to help themselves and to access the social as well as the financial capital of the area.
One of the most effective and inclusive ways of developing philanthropy in Surrey has been the creation of local funds that serve the needs of the immediate town or village in which they have been created. Two years ago a meeting in the village hall in Hambledon\(^\text{16}\) drew a group of people committed to strengthening their local community, spurred on by their success in hanging on to their local village shop now run as a community enterprise. Donations have flowed in and the fund is worth about £65,000 and the various charities, community groups and the local special school St. Dominic’s are being canvassed for their views on funding needs.

Local people have total control over the allocation of funds they themselves have generated in a process that has drawn together long term residents and newcomers to the village. It has not only appealed to a sense of belonging but has, in turn, created belonging. Similar schemes have been developed in other rural villages, in the town of Haslemere and at a borough level in Tandridge.

Despite Surrey’s transient image of commuter towns and a relatively mobile population our experience is that many people are intrigued by the idea of contributing to their own community through supporting local funds.

To some it offers a means of leaving a financial legacy to the place in which they have lived in a way that has not been possible before. Promoting a sense of belonging and its relationship with wellbeing is a priority for the new government as it explores ways of furthering the Big Society concept. For this reason the Office of National Statistics is now gathering data on wellbeing. According to Minister David Willetts “How your income compares with others’ is only part of the story. What really matters is whether you feel that you belong, whether you are able to pursue personal goals in your life, and the strength of your relationships with others”\(^\text{16}\).

Surrey came out on top in a recent study entitled The Power Gap: An Index of Everyday Power in Britain by the think tank Demos\(^\text{17}\). The research ranked each of the 628 constituencies in Britain according to the extent to which their residents have the ability to pursue personal goals in life and power to influence society around them.

The constituency of Guildford occupies first place in this league and all Surrey constituencies ranked high on the list which took account of measures such as education, income, health and freedom from crime. And perhaps this is both the good news and the bad news for Surrey.

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\(^{\text{16}}\) http://www.communityfoundationsurrey.org.uk/hambledon/about.html

\(^{\text{16}}\) “Happiness is not ... an attack on free markets” The Times 26th November 2010

\(^{\text{17}}\) The Power Gap: An index of everyday power in Britain, Daniel Leighton Demos December 2009
Good because it augers well in an era of Big Society for communities that will rely increasingly upon citizens to seize responsibility and control. But, if the logic of the Demos study is applied within Surrey, then it could be argued that it is home to the most powerful and the most powerless and it raises the question of how the dispossessed and marginalised are to be served.

Taking Guildford as a case in point, it is home to people with the highest levels of income, educational attainment, health and life expectancy in the country. Yet there are two zones within the city where people are in the lowest quintile nationally for all of these measures. This means that in certain areas of Guildford people could be considered to have least control over their lives and the lowest wellbeing, according to the Demos calculations. The same is true for numerous other pockets of deprivation in Surrey. Those on the ground who are trying to improve the quality of life for people in these areas cite lack of trust, family breakdown and social isolation as key factors in the poor mental and physical health prevalent in these areas.

This chart compares the education scores of two adjacent areas of Guildford. The score measures a variety of education outcomes including academic qualifications, secondary school absence, proportion staying on after age 16 and proportion not entering higher education. A high score indicates low levels of education and conversely the very low scores for many of these zones indicate the highest levels nationally.
While David Cameron wants to create a society in which people are ‘free and powerful enough to help themselves and their own communities’, there is a particular challenge where there are such significant disparities in income and wellbeing. The people in greatest need of support are precisely the ones who lack a sense of control over their lives and the ‘everyday power’ described by Demos. There is a question also of where they can belong if they feel excluded from the norms around them.

Those who have developed community groups in areas of deprivation are very clear that services and activities must be delivered close to where people live. But in a county where statutory funding is thinly stretched and the pockets of deprivation may only amount to several hundred households, or less, they often remain overlooked.

Recognising the hidden nature of need the Community Foundation for Surrey has established a Hidden Surrey Fund to create a pool of funding specifically for areas that are low on social and financial capital and may have few donors. The Fund was the focus for an Eagle radio week long feature, highlighting the work of local charities and community groups and inviting people to contribute donations. It emulates the high profile Dispossessed Fund launched by the Evening Standard in July 2010 in partnership with the Community Foundation Network which, within the first few weeks, far exceeded its target of £1 million. Donors in London have responded to the idea of a ‘tale of two cities’. A similar uptake in Surrey, with its ‘tale of two counties’ would be a welcome step towards meeting the current shortfall in grant funding, hence the great significance of the Neighbourhood Challenge programme in Esher.
This chart shows that child poverty is high in the electoral ward of Stanwell North, in the borough of Spelthorne. The demography of this area is somewhat different to the remainder of Surrey, with a higher proportion of businesses and a lower number of donor funds. With its proximity to Greater London it shares many of the problems that characterise London such as drug and gun crime and is in great need of donor investment.

Another important initiative soon to be launched in Surrey is Localgiving.com19 established and funded by the technology entrepreneur Marcelle Speller. This online system will enable people to search for charities and community groups in their locality, according to their own chosen interests and themes.

But it will also allow the groups themselves to create their own web pages on the Localgiving site so that they can present their own case for funding. The system is designed to enable people with little technology expertise to use the power of the internet and social media to raise funds. Localgiving is itself a social enterprise established by a technology entrepreneur who recognised that smaller local causes are often eclipsed by large scale fund-raising appeals. It offers a significant step in giving people the power to help themselves and their communities.

The system is designed to enable people with little technology expertise to use the power of the internet and social media to raise funds.

18 http://www.communityfoundations.org.uk/media_centre/news/#81
19 http://localgiving.com/
WHAT CAN THE COMMUNITY FOUNDATION FOR SURREY DO?

> We have a significant role, independent of government, business and individual charities, to present evidence in an impartial and objective way. The statistics shown in this report simply scratch the surface of data that is publicly available that demonstrates the extent of need and the disparities in quality of life in Surrey.

> We will continue to build our endowment, now over £4 million and our immediate impact grant funds. In parallel we will explore emerging opportunities for social finance, in particular schemes that enable donors to recycle money and provide a clear measurable return on investment.

> We will continue to work with local charities and community groups to provide not only financial support but also advice and guidance on how they can fund their work and, where feasible, develop their own revenue streams. In particular, we are capitalising upon the entrepreneurial experience within our Trustees to further the development of social enterprise in Surrey.

> We will continue to help social entrepreneurs to make social and financial capital available to the areas of greatest need and deprivation in Surrey, increasing the means by which people can share in the social norms around them and help themselves.

> We will promote community foundation innovations, such as community funds, as a way to realize the potential of Big Society. We will raise the profile of local philanthropy to advance the concept of charity franchising which both accelerates the spread of innovation and reduces cost.

> Community Foundations have pioneered a number of practices that already illustrate Big Society, that can be developed, franchised and brought to scale. They are also positioned to be important drivers in community-driven models for social problem solving and, as such, sit at the heart of Big Society.

WHAT CAN GOVERNMENT DO?

> Government needs to be honest about what it can and cannot do. The challenge of developing local philanthropy in Britain is made harder by the ambiguity about where statutory services and funding start and stop.

> In Surrey where public funding is in any case highly limited, and continues to reduce, our local authority needs to take advantage of the help, cost efficiency and specialisation of voluntary organisations, including the Community Foundation.

> In keeping with the Merseyside commentary on Big Society, many charities and community groups are hampered by red tape and unnecessarily onerous regulations. They welcome the removal of obstacles to volunteering and social action, including the rationalisation of CRB checks.

> Where sound business plans are presented to request the transfer of public assets for use by community groups and social enterprises there is much that local government can do to welcome and facilitate this process. We hope that the transfer of Woking Youth Arts Centre to Peer Productions will serve as a valuable model for further transfers of this kind.

> The development of community philanthropy and local giving requires continuous culture change; government’s help in offering incentives such as challenge endowment programmes would provide enormous leverage.
Most of all government needs to ensure that the rhetoric of Big Society translates into genuine community empowerment, not more central bureaucracy. According a Sunday Times journalist “bureaucracies have a nasty habit of saving themselves”; there is real concern already that this is precisely what is happening because a culture of localism is at odds with bureaucratic interests.

WHAT CAN COMPANIES DO?
> Gifts in kind, in particular making available premises and professional expertise, can significantly ease the burden of core operating costs. The Community Foundation has benefited greatly from the gift of office accommodation from The Wates Group, Clyde and Co and now Smith and Williamson.

> There are many opportunities for corporate sponsorship. To small charities the donation of a few thousand pounds can fund an adolescent through vocational training for an academic year making a dramatic difference to the life chances of that young person.

> There is much that companies can do to encourage volunteering. In Toronto, for example, employees of SAP help children from deprived households with their homework in after school clubs based in schools. This kind of donation would be of enormous benefit to small organisations such as Let’s Read, GASP, Skillway and many more.

> We encourage companies to take account of the needs on their immediate doorstep, not least because they rely upon a local environment which is appealing to employees, has low levels of crime and so on. Although Surrey provides the location for European headquarters, their Corporate Social Responsibility does not necessarily include local giving because the extent of need is far less apparent that it is, for example, in the North East.

WHAT CAN INDIVIDUALS DO?
> According to Sunday Times journalist Eleanor Mills ‘The whole point of big society is to get more of us involved, to make us use the democratic levers we too often take for granted to improve our communities’. This coincides entirely with our view as a Community Foundation.

> The development of local funds in towns and villages around Surrey provides the opportunity for individuals, regardless of financial means, to contribute time or money to their immediate community. But it also ensures that funds that are generated locally are not diverted elsewhere and that local priorities are determined by local people.

> The mechanism for contributing assets to local communities provides the opportunity not only for financial donations but also the gift of legacies, property and shares.

> Community Foundations in other parts of the country have set an excellent example by enabling people who feel that they do not need their winter fuel allowance to donate to those who do. Given the disparities in income and quality of life within Surrey there must be significant opportunities for similar schemes here.

> With its excellent schools and beautiful landscape Surrey is home to many wealthy people who may be willing to give away some of their wealth but have not necessarily considered local giving. The Community Foundation provides the opportunity to establish a ‘virtual charity’ in which the donors have control over the way in which their money is spent. In addition, they do not have to worry about the administrative effort of registering with the Charities Commission.
CONCLUSION

This paper was prompted by a sense that Big Society ought to present a significant opportunity for fundamental reform but that there is much misunderstanding about what it actually means. For Community Foundations it ought to provide the context in which we can pursue a ‘bottom up’ approach to defining need, to focus upon and promote what works and to unlock new sources of funding. It should be a new era for local giving and for community philanthropy and offer a much better return on investment for donors.

But, in the current panic about budget cuts, there is real concern that bureaucracies are indeed saving themselves at the expense of non profit organisations and that localism will fall down at the hurdle of local government. This would not only fuel misunderstanding but would prevent the most significant opportunity for reform in decades.