



FACT SHEET 12

Business Support

Local Business Support

Raising support and income from local business is often a new and untried task for voluntary organisations or community groups. However many small groups do have good relationships with individual local businesses and it is this personal contact with them that will make these the easiest to approach. Many local businesses like to help the community where they operate and often get involved according to the personal inclination of managers and owners. Anyone can ask. There are no rules.

What do they fund?

Most local businesses have no formal policy and will help according to the merit of the cause and the personal relationship with those asking for help. They may be able to be very flexible in their giving and be very generous.

How to apply?

There are many ways to approach businesses, but the personal approach is the best. Methods of personal approach in order of preference:

- Making an appointment to see someone in person
- Have a telephone conversation
- Write a personalised letter
- Send a general email

How much?

Local businesses will vary considerably in the amount they can afford to give. They may be more inclined to help in non monetary ways. They might give goods and services (e.g. offer a raffle prize or something that can be auctioned off). They might encourage staff to help, using professional skills. They might allow you to use their equipment e.g. use of minibus or van, photocopier, or premises for an event.

Pros of local business support:

- No bureaucracy just ask
- Can often respond immediately
- You can ask for exactly what you need

Cons

- Depends on personal contacts
- Usually small amounts
- Some causes more popular than others e.g. children's toy appeals do better than work with offenders

Other Business Support

Some larger companies also operate a match funding scheme, whereby if a member of their staff signs up to raise money for a specific charity, then they will match their donation £ for £ (Barclays community match). Other companies or individuals often give to community projects by donating their time in a more professional capacity through specific projects such as ProHelp and/or Business in the Community. Through these programmes local voluntary and community organisations are able to access FREE professional support for a specific time limited piece of work, which they otherwise could not afford to do.

Although local to the area, supermarkets often have to abide by policies imposed at a national level. Although they are able to respond directly to local needs and requests, this is more strategic than other local businesses.

Top Tips:

- Make a list of (local) companies to contact. Note phone numbers and phone them to find out who it is you will want to meet with or how they wish to be approached.
- Be appropriate in what you ask for. Asking for too much shows a lack of understanding of their business. Asking for too little means you have to ask more businesses.
- To find out what businesses operate in your area you can refer to Thompson's and Yellow Pages.
- Better still is to find out who are members of the local philanthropic organisations such as the Rotary Club or Lions. See Websites: www.rotaryclubs.co.uk and www.lions.org.uk
- Your Chamber of Commerce will publish a directory of members with contact details and should be able to give you advice. See Website: www.chamberonline.co.uk

Further Support and Advice is available from Cumbria CVS Locality Offices in:

Barrow: 72-74 Scott Street, Barrow-in-Furness, LA14 1QE. Tel: 01229 823144

Carlisle: 27 Spencer Street, Carlisle, CA1 1BE. Tel: 01228 512513

Eden: 6 Hobson Court, Gillan Way, Penrith, CA11 0DT. Tel: 01768 800350

South Lakeland: Stricklandgate House, 92 Stricklandgate, Kendal, LA9 4PU. Tel: 01539 742627

West Cumbria: Community Resource Centre, 12a Selby Terrace, Maryport, CA15 6NF
Tel: 01900 819191

Visit **Cumbria CVS Website** at: http://www.thirdsectorcumbria.org.uk/support_CumbriaCVS.html

Cumbria CVS Training Course information

Is available on our website: www.thirdsectorcumbria.org.uk/support_cumbriacvs_training.html
Tel: 01900 819191