



Sustainability of the "Just Us" Change Network by DB

Details about the Just Us Change Network discussed below can be found on the About the Change Networks page of the toolkit.

Can your network be sustained without project activity?

"Yes, definitely. So by the end of the project we will have a session planned which is a conversation café event and a film and that can be taken to a range of audiences. So we've already spoken... At the moment we are aiming at professionals working in the criminal justice in mental health. We can also be taking it to housing teams, young people, maybe to young people who are in offenders' institutions, older aged high school children.... I think that there's lots of different things and for each of these audiences we probably tweak our plan of the event will follow after they watch the film. We can tweak it slightly depending on the audience. But certainly we will have this film as a sort of focus point and events that can go around it (...)"

Reflect on the initial members list from the Change Network application- how has this membership changed and why?

- The Organisation supporting the group, Willow, will certainly remain. Its support is still vital for women to be able to participate.
 - Just Us is obviously the group itself so they will continue.
 - "The court has been brilliant in terms of giving us access to the staff and allowed us to enter the court to film. We have not done that but we are in a close communication just to get the dates set up at the moment and to get all necessary paperwork. As far as it goes after the date, I would hope they would still- they would not need to support us as closely- but I think they would still be willing for us to be partners..."
 - The Forensic medical Examiner "not had much contact with her through this project. But we had not approached her... so I think Jessica would be willing to support the project and she will be definitely invited to our community café event to get more information about what we've been doing. She supported the group in a very initial stage as we were getting set up and signed up as what it was we wanted to do. So I think she would continue hopefully to support the group."
 - The Senior Manager of Housing, criminal justice and homelessness helped at initial stage and offered support. He might help with funding in the future.
 - The Chief Social Worker for the City of Edinburgh works closely with Willow. Also helped at initial stages of setting up the group.
 - Theatre Nemo- helped with filming. They might help in the future with promoting the film and possibly making new films.

There are no new members of the change network but many MPs have been met and talked to about Just Us during various events who got interested in it and asked for being informed about conversation cafés. Also, Just Us made contact with community groups.

Do you have mechanisms that ensure that you can be sustainable? Is your network dependent on any key people?

The main mechanism for sustainability are key roles in the change network such as a chairperson, a vice chairperson, a minutes taker and a treasurer. "Chair person resigned which was difficult but we got a new chair person and a vice chairperson. Obviously, they are very vital... and we have a minute-taker, a treasurer - so these are vitals roles."

However, for sustainability it is necessary to have properly trained people in these roles. Currently, there are such people in these roles on whom the organisation is dependent. "So there are people in these roles right now that been coming to Just Us for a long time and know working of it what it's all about. I suppose if these people withdraw that would be difficult. I suppose we need key people in these key roles."

What are the challenges that your network faces in terms of sustainability?

- Developing skills and training, so there are people who can step in the case of key people withdrawing from Just Us. Also, developing skills is important for Just Us becoming independent from Willow: "Obviously, this is a new group and learning how to work in these roles (i.e., treasurer, chairperson etc.) is new. So there's still a lot of training that needs to be done to ensure that we are sustainable in that sense so people know... so they can independently exist. I suppose Willow are supporting Just Us but in years to come we want to have them at stage where they don't need support from staff in here. And be able to be sustainable in their own right independently".
- Another big challenge is funding: "I suppose getting the funding might be difficult. Getting continuous funding can be difficult especially in the current financial state. I suppose that will be the biggest thing in terms of the future sustainability". "In terms of funding we are... we are not sure about future funding we are focused on finishing this project. We have started to look what funding is available out there. I suppose we are thinking as well about chances that See Me will be able to find small bit funding towards the group being able to continue the work it has been doing."

For the change network, it is important to be able to make change in order to be sustainable. This might be because a change network that makes no impact loses the rationale for its existence: "We do not know how successful our film and conversation cafés are going to be with the audience we are targeting at. We do not know how much change we are going to be able to make. I suppose if we complete this film and we do conversation cafés and we do not have much impact we will have to rethink what it is we are delivering and that could have an impact on sustainability of the group."