

**Training Script for *Happily Ever After in the Big Society*  
Train the Trainer  
A Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council Endeavour  
2011-2012**

**What you will need to run this workshop:**

- Projector or monitor and computer for pdf slide show
- Flip chart or board to write on
- Pens and paper for the participants
- Printed copy of this training script

You will also need the following DVD's

- Walt Disney's *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*, 1937
- Seven Samurai*, Akira Kurosawa, 1954
- Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring*, Peter Jackson, 2001

Optional, for further reading: *The Secret Garden* by Frances Hodgson, 1911, *The Hobbit* and *The Fellowship of the Ring*, *The Lord of the Rings Part 1* by J.R.R. Tolkien (particularly the first two chapters)

[Slide 1]

**Introduction**

In this workshop we are going to address 'Big Society' objectives outlined in the Conservative Manifesto 2010.

For those unfamiliar with the Big Society, it is the Conservative and Liberal Democrat Coalition Government's response to the challenges facing Britain today. They have come together with a driving ambition, to put more power and opportunity in the hands of the people. To help citizens and communities help themselves, transfer power from central to local government, support co-ops, mutuals, charities and social enterprises and build a robust economy.

I will now read a quote from David Cameron's introduction to the Conservative Manifesto 2010:

*"A country is at its best when the bonds between people are strong and when the sense of national purpose is clear. Today the challenges facing Britain are immense. Our economy is overwhelmed by debt, our social fabric is frayed and our political system has betrayed the people. But these problems can be overcome if we pull*

*together and work together. If we remember that we are all in this together.*

*Some politicians say: 'give us your vote and we will sort out all your problems'. We say: real change comes not from government alone. Real change comes when the people are inspired and mobilised, when millions of us are fired up to play a part in the nation's future.*

*Yes, this is ambitious. Yes, it is optimistic. but in the end all the acts of Parliament, all the new measures, all the new policy initiatives, are just politicians' words without you and your involvement."*

The Conservative Manifesto 2010, uses case studies such as the 'free school' programme in Sweden, and New York's achievement in cutting crime by 80 per cent. It also highlights vanguard areas such as the Cumbrian village, Crosby Revensworth with its affordable community housing and a community run pub to exemplify what the Big Society can achieve.

We at Sandwell Metropolitan Council have taken this a step further and for this workshop we will be using fictional case studies to model and explore goals and objectives of the Big Society.

Is it possible to transpose ideas from iconic stories and films into real world applications that will benefit our community? 'Nonsense!' you say. 'Not so fast!' Stories are more than mere entertainment, they inspire and compel us and can offer great insight into human behaviour and morality. We identify with fictional characters and can draw valuable lessons from their experiences.

Business and management teachers have long used fictional characters and stories as compelling references to inspire and educate. Shakespeare is particularly popular for studying leadership through the challenges his characters face. For example, how Richard III's manipulative approach finally isolated him and what made Henry V such a good leader.

Although the Big Society is a new idea, some of the issues it faces have long been inherent in our society. For this workshop, we have selected four iconic stories and films that continue to move and inspire us. Our hope is that they will inform this contemporary grand narrative and provide an engaging framework to draw useful parallels to inspire and motivate people within our community.

Let's start with our first case study.

[Slide 2]

## Walt Disney's Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs, 1937

Although Snow White is a classic fairytale, it deals with adult and current issues for the Big Society, specifically social inclusion for the homeless and disadvantaged.

Snow White is essentially a young person who has become homeless due to a dysfunctional family. She finds herself lost in the forest, tired, hungry and scared after she narrowly escapes from her step-mother, a vain and wicked Queen who has taken over the kingdom after the death of her father.

Homelessness is an important issue in our current society. At any one time, some fifty six thousand people slip through the net, ultimately being let down by the system. If we are to meet the Big Society's intention of being big enough to include even the most disadvantaged, it is vital that we are innovative in how we address this issue. Snow White's reciprocal relationship with the Seven Dwarfs demonstrates an interesting approach.

Going back to the story, in the forest, Snow White discovers a tiny cottage which she enters and finding no one home and the house dusty and untidy, she decides to give it a good clean, hoping the residents may let her stay in return. When the Seven Dwarfs arrive home, they are astonished to discover the house clean and tidy. After finding Snow White lying asleep across their beds, she is asked to leave by Grumpy, however she explains her dilemma and pleads to stay, offering in return to 'keep house', to wash, sew, sweep and cook for them. Despite the risk the Dwarfs face from the evil Queen and her black magic, they decide to let her stay.

I will now play the scene where the Seven Dwarfs arrive home while Snow White is sleeping upstairs:

[Note for trainer: play DVD from 00:28:00 - 00:38:00]

[Slide 3]

### There are three key points which I would like you to consider:

- Snow White took initiative by cleaning the house before the Seven Dwarfs returned home
- Snow White identified that her skills could help the Seven Dwarfs and use this to come to a mutually beneficial agreement
- Key to the successful outcome of this scenario, was the Seven Dwarfs decision to show trust and willingness to reach out and help a disadvantaged person

[Slide 4]

## Exercise One -Role Play: Negotiating a Reciprocal Relationship

For this first exercise, we are going to stage a role-play based on the part of the scene we have just watched, where Snow White is trying to convince the Seven Dwarfs to let her stay.

Firstly, we need to consider the factors that influence the Seven Dwarf's decision:

Positive	Negative	Ethical Dilemma
Snow White has already impressed with her cooking and cleaning and offers to continue to 'keep house', by washing, sewing, sweeping and cooking for them.	Danger of vengeance from the Evil Queen and her black magic.	If the Seven Dwarfs refuse to allow Snow White to stay, she would be all alone in the forest and could be killed by the Evil Queen.
She can cook gooseberry pie, the Dwarf's favourite.	Snow White is a stranger who broke into their home.	
Snow White is beautiful and charming.		

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### Another important aspect is the character traits of the participants:

- **Snow White:** Kind, polite, eager to please and innocent
- **Doc:** Authoritative, compassionate, bumbling and he loves gooseberry pie
- **Grumpy:** Intelligent, skeptical, cynical and he often clashes with Doc

Now for this improvisational role-play scenario, we need three volunteers to play Snow White, Doc and Grumpy using the data we have just looked at as a guide:

[Slide 6]

Starting with:

**GRUMPY:** "We know who we are, ask her who she is and what she is doing here?"

**DOC:** ...

**SNOW WHITE:** ...

Good. That was excellent. Let's discuss the social dynamics and what we have learnt from this.

[Note for trainer: You can repeat this several times with the group]

[Slide 7]

### **Let's stage another role play, this time in a more practical context related to your community:**

Imagine Snow White is presenting a scheme at a council meeting that would provide cheap housing for homeless and disadvantaged people in return for an allotted time spent doing volunteer work in the community. Doc and Grumpy represent the council members responsible for making the decision.

Begin with Snow White introducing her scheme.

Great! We've now seen two different responses to how this concept might apply to a community. How did you feel this role play went and how could Snow White improve her proposal and pitch? Was Grumpy's argument strong enough and how did Doc get on board?

[Note for trainer: You can repeat this several times with the group]

### **Exercise 2**

A new government website links volunteers to people willing to offer a vacant room in exchange for services provided to them and their wider community. Write an advert stipulating your requirements in exchange for:

***"A spacious, bright room available in Edgbaston, 2 minutes from bus stop worth £85 per week, bills included."***

***In return, I am looking for ...***

[Example for trainer: *"A motivated individual trying to improve his/her situation. Willing to volunteer 8 hours per week for community projects and do a minimum of three hours of house work per week in my home."* ]

[Note for trainer: Allow 5 minutes for the group to write their ads]

Now, I would like everyone to read out their ads so that we can discuss them.

### **Exercise 3**

Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs came to a mutually beneficial deal, exchanging skills for shelter. This is a great example of how to cultivate a truly reciprocal society. How could this approach be applied to helping disadvantaged and homeless people within your community, to enable them to become visually active and socially included?

Remember, in the previous exercises we have already looked at cheaper housing for homeless and disadvantaged people, willing to volunteer in the community and a government website linking volunteers to people willing to offer a vacant room. Let's try and think of at least one more scheme together.

[Note for trainer: Write ideas on the board or flip chart and discuss feasibility]

Great! We have now covered Case Study 1. Any questions before we stop for a break?

[Slide 8]

### **Case Study 2: Akira Kurosawa's Seven Samurai**

Welcome back! The next case study is Akira Kurosawa's Seven Samurai. Has anyone seen it?

Set during a time of civil strife and feuding samurai clans, a poor farming village is repeatedly raided by a band of outlaws, its crops pillaged, its men killed and women abducted. The film is about the villagers deciding to make a stand to defend themselves.

Empowering communities to come together to fight crime is a key objective of the Big Society, however, this case study will focus on how the farmers enlisted a team of Ronin, (masterless samurai) to defend the village before the next harvest when the bandits will return. Their struggle offers insight into how we can foster volunteering and social action within our community, which is vital, during this time of austerity, with the increased spending cuts the government has had to make. It is essential to encourage people to work together to make our community better.

Recruiting the samurai is not an easy process. With only a bed and three meals of rice a day to offer in payment, the village elder instructs four farmers to go to the nearby town and find 'hungry samurai', who are prepared to stoop to work for their social inferiors. The farmers are initially unsuccessful, being rudely turned away by proud samurai incensed by their shameful offer.

They witness a samurai called Kambei, voluntarily disgracing his warrior status to save a peasant child. Realising that this act transcends the behaviour of the typical image conscious samurai, the farmers approach Kambei who agrees to help them and is able to recruit a team from the Ronin passing through town.

Another important factor that we will address is how the farmers and samurai manage to overcome social barriers in order to work together, an essential lesson for any community intending to foster the 'we are all in this together' philosophy of the Big Society. Initially, the fearful farmers were all in hiding when the samurai arrive in their village. However, in time, the samurai managed to win the farmers trust and teach them how to fortify their village and to fight and defend themselves.

In the final battle, the bandits are defeated freeing the farmers from fear but leaving only three samurai alive.

**There are three key points which I would like you to consider:**

- The samurai placed compassion and altruism above their status and reputation to help the farmers
- Both groups overcame the fear and resentment they have for each other to work together
- The farmers learnt key skills from the samurai, how to fight and defend their village which would be valuable for their future

**Exercise One:**

The samurai's strict code of rank and honour prevented them from earning their keep by menial work, many out of work, 'Masterless Samurai' (Ronin) became bandits, abusing their fighting skills to become outlaws. To work for farmers and for no more than a few handfuls of rice, is a shameful prospect for a proud samurai. The seven 'exceptional' samurai that decided to help the farmers, exhibit characteristics that contrast with the corrupt, debased version of the samurai code, obsessed with status and material reward.

Can you select the seven positive characteristics below that enabled the samurai to help the farmers?

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Selfless	Image Conscious	Loyal	Immoral
Selfish	Uncompromising	Altruistic	Arrogant
Down to Earth	Noble	Proud	Materialistic
Superior	Courageous	Status Obsessed	Modest

\*Note: The correct answers are shaded in grey

Good! Let's move on to exercise 2.

[Slide 10]

## **Exercise 2**

Kambei has to persuade the other Ronin to risk all and help the farmers for just three meals of rice a day.

Here is a quote by Kambei:

***"As a matter of fact, I'm preparing for a tough war. It will bring us neither money nor fame. Want to join?"***

I will now play a clip of this scene from the film

[Note for trainer: Play DVD from 00:37:30 - 00:37:55]

So, how would you persuade someone to give up every Sunday for a year to volunteer at the local youth centre? Think about what they might gain from volunteering other than money and use this to deliver a persuasive speech to the group.

[Example for trainer: *We need you to volunteer at the local youth centre. There is no pay and we would need to rely on you to be there every Sunday, but you will get the reward of experiencing the impact that you could have on the children's personal development. Helping to improve their physical, mental, and spiritual capacity and watching as they grow and mature as individuals and members of society.*]

Ok, now that you have finished, let's take it in turns to deliver each of your speeches and discuss their effectiveness.

### **Exercise 3**

We are now going to study Kambei as a role model volunteer. We will watch three clips from the film which show his selfless and altruistic behaviour.

#### **Clip 1.**

A samurai's 'top knot' is a key badge of his warrior status, to have it shaved off is a sign of disgrace and demotion from the rank of samurai. In this scene Kambei voluntarily disgraces himself to save a peasants child, by having his head shaved to disguise himself as a monk.

[Note for trainer: Play DVD from 00:14:40 - 00:20:16]

Would anyone like to comment on Kambei's selfless act and what we might draw from it?

#### **Clip 2.**

Although Kambei initially rejected the farmers proposition to protect their village from forty bandits in return for just rice, he soon accepts when he realises that the villagers are eating millet in order to feed him rice.

[Note for trainer: Play DVD from 00:27:43 - 00:28:17]

What can we learn from Kambei's compassion and sensitivity in understanding the farmers sacrifice?

#### **Clip 3.**

Kambei is a great teacher to Katsushiro, the youngest samurai. He keeps a balance between encouraging his pupil and restraining him from the excesses of overeagerness.

[Note for trainer: Play DVD from 00:21:45 - 00:24:33]

Does anyone have any skills they could offer as a mentor?

[Note for trainer: try to encourage each participant to put forward at least one skill]

### **Exercise 4**

Tension and antagonism between the two casts; the farmers and the samurai forms a central theme of the film. In a key moment, the wannabe-samurai Kikuchiyo, originally a farmers son, delivers an intense speech to the other samurai, explaining the reasons behind the fear and resentment the farmers have for them.

Here is a quote from his speech:

***"Farmers are deceitful, cowards, mean...stupid, murderous. You make me laugh...but who made animals of them. You did! You damn samurai...whenever you fight, you burn villages, destroy crops...take away food, rape women, enslave men, kill them if they resist!"***

I will now play you that scene.

[Note for trainer: Play DVD from 01:18:05 - 01:22:30]

[Slide 11]

1.Can you match these historic UK conflicts to the correct cause?

[Note for trainer: Answers below]

- Brixton Riot (1981) - The Afro Caribbean community felt discriminated against by the Metropolitan Police
- Handsworth Race Riots (1981) - Local black British felt resentment at increase of Asian owned businesses
- Miners Strike (1984-5) - The government proposed mine closures and privatisation

2.Well done! Moving on, does discrimination on the basis of gender, ethnicity, race, religion or social status lead to the social exclusion of any groups in your community preventing them from getting involved in the decisions that shape their lives?

[Note for trainer: Discuss with the group for 10min]

## **Exercise 5**

In the final scene, Kamei having watched the farmers happily singing whilst planting rice, free from fear, stands in front of the graves of the four dead samurai and solemnly reflects

***"We've lost yet again. With their land, the farmers are the victors...not us".***

[Note for trainer: Play DVD from 03:06:00 - 03:08:56]

Do you think Kamei's final statement is true? What might the samurai have gained from helping the farmers? What measures could be put into place to prevent volunteers from feeling exploited and disconnected?

[Note for trainer: Discuss for approximately 10 minutes]

Excellent! That's another case study covered! Any questions before we stop for a break?

## **Case Study 3: Mentoring like Gandalf: J.R.R. Tolkien's The Hobbit and The Lord of the Rings**

For case study 3, we are going to look at how to mentor like Gandalf.

The Conservative and Liberal Democrat Coalition Government 'believe in the power of people' and so do we at Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council. Through mentoring and volunteer schemes and working with charities such as CSV, the UK's leading volunteering and training charity, we aim to help even the most disadvantaged local people to achieve their full potential. We also believe that everyone has something to offer everyone.

In a hero's journey, the mentor serves as a guide and teacher; a role model who provides inspiration, training and prepares the protagonist to face the unknown, from *Merlin* to *Arthur*, *Obi-wan Kenobi* to *Luke Skywalker* and the *Good Witch of the North* to *Dorothy*. Mentoring and befriending some of the most vulnerable people in the community can be a big challenge and needs a lot of patience and commitment. Let's have a look at what we can learn from Gandalf, one of fictions great mentors who managed to motivate two reluctant and disadvantaged hero's: *Bilbo* and *Frodo Baggins* to leave their comfort zone at *The Shire* and take on great adventures.

### **Exercise 1**

We are now going to go through five key points that we can learn from Gandalf

[Slide 12]

#### **1. Do your Research:**

When Gandalf saw the negative effect the magic ring had on Bilbo Baggins, he suspected it was the one ring, so went to *Minas Tirith* to learn more about the rings history, rather than assuming that he knew all the answers.

Real world scenario:

You are mentoring a teenager at your local youth club who asks your advice on how to become a journalist. How would you help?  
[Example for trainer: Phone up a local college, newspaper or do online research into the qualifications and experiences needed for this profession, try to find work experience for them]

[Slide 13]

## **2. See Hidden Potential:**

In *The Hobbit*, Gandalf selected Bilbo to be the Dwarfs' burglar; a Hobbit was not the obvious choice but he saw potential in Bilbo, using this call to adventure to motivate and draw out abilities that he was not aware of.

Real world scenario: You think that a young member of the youth club you volunteer at has a natural gift for table tennis. What would you do to encourage him or her?

[Example for trainer: Look up table tennis clubs and arrange a meeting, look up different regional or national table tennis competitions and leagues.]

[Slide 14]

## **3. Knowing when to step back:**

Gandalf left Bilbo and the Dwarfs at the outskirts of *Mirkwood*. If he had continued to accompany them, Bilbo would have been constantly turning to him for guidance and help, preventing him from 'coming of age' after battling the *Spiders of Mirkwood*.

Real world scenario: You have been helping a youth member with their English and creative writing skills. They have been assigned to write a short story by their English teacher. He/she asks for your help to come up with an idea and draft the story. What do you do?

[Example for trainer: You ask him/her to brainstorm their ideas and come up with a topic that they seem genuinely passionate about. This will give them the motivation to be able to develop a draft themselves.]

[Slide 15]

## **4. Knowing When to Step in:**

Gandalf always manages to turn up at the right time when something is happening beyond the abilities of both Bilbo and Frodo. For example, in the *Lord of the Rings*, when the *Balrog* was chasing the fellowship.

Real world scenario: You are a volunteer the youth club football team and have been coaching a young boy on how to control his bad temper. Although he has come a long way, you seen him being provoked during a match. What do you do?

[Example for trainer: Intervene before the situation erupts and take the young boy to one side to calm down]

[Slide 16]

## **5. Handing Over Power and Responsibility:**

When Frodo offered Gandalf the ring he refused, acknowledging that Frodo would be more resilient to its corrupting powers than he was.

Real world scenario: The youth club you volunteer at has been asked to stage a play for the local children's hospital. You know members of the youth club have a range of creative skills. How do you organise this?

[Example for trainer: Let the youth members come up with their own ideas. Then work with them to assign roles that make the most of individual talents, ensuring that everyone feels they have a fair role within the production.]

Great! Let's now move on to exercise 2

[Slide 17]

### **Exercise 2: Wise Words**

In the film *Lord of the Rings: The fellowship of the Ring*, Gandalf delivers a motivating and reassuring speech to Frodo in the Mines of Moria in a moment of despair:

I will now read from the script:

#### **FRODO**

*I wish the ring had never come to me. I wish none of this had happened.*

#### **GANDALF**

*So do all who live to see such times, but that is not for them to decide. All we have to decide is what to do with the time that is given to us. There are other forces at work in this world besides the will of evil. Bilbo was meant to find the ring, in which case you also were meant to have it....and that is an encouraging thought.*

We will now watch this scene from the film

[Note for trainer: Play DVD from 02:02:45 - 02:04:09]

Having watched this, what characteristics do you think Gandalf displayed whilst delivering this speech?

[Examples for trainer: Affectionate, humble, wise, firm and patient]

Now, we are going to use Gandalf as a role model to write a motivational speech.

**Scenario:** You are mentoring an unemployed teenager who has been unable to find work since leaving school.

[Slide 18]

**DILLON**

I have been rejected again for another job, didn't even get an interview. I can't be bothered with this anymore, ill just go on the dole like all my mates.

**MENTOR**

...

[Example for trainer: I understand. These are difficult times Dillon. Many people are struggling to find work during this period of austerity, not just you. Although we cannot choose the times that we live through, we can choose how we act and you must choose to be strong and persistent. If you stay focused and keep trying, you will succeed.]

[Note for trainer: Allow 10 minutes for the group to complete their speech]

Now we are going to take it in turns to deliver your speech and discuss their impact.

Brilliant! That concludes our study of Gandalf. Lets move on to case study 4.

[Slide 19]

**Case Study 4: Frances Hodgson Burnett's *The Secret Garden*, 1911**

This final case study is particularly relevant to the recent 2011 UK riots that saw thousands of young people take to the streets and cause civil disorder by pillaging, burning private property and clashing with police. Riots are caused by disenfranchisement and it is becoming increasingly apparent that large numbers of Britain's youth feel abandoned and disengaged from our society.

In the book *The Secret Garden*, the main protagonist Mary is a sickly foul tempered little girl 'who loves no one and whom no one loves'. It is only when she discovers the key to the secret garden and sets about working there, tending to neglected plants with the help of her maid's brother Dickon, a country boy full of natural wisdom, that her behaviour begins to improve.

Seeing the garden come back to life through her hard work transforms Mary; she becomes healthier, outgoing and kind. She even uses her new found energy and positivity to help Colin the spoilt, sickly and neglected son of Archibald Craven.

It is our responsibility to inspire young people to become civically engaged and *The Secret Garden* is a great example of the need for initiatives that keep young people off the streets and give them the chance to develop the skills they need to be active and responsible citizens.

[Slide 20]

**There are three key points which I would like you to consider:**

- Regenerating the secret garden helps improve Mary's personal development
- Mary learns more than gardening skills, she improves her confidence, communication and social skills, developing maturity, self-discipline and team work
- Having been reformed, Mary acts as a mentor to help Colin through similar problems

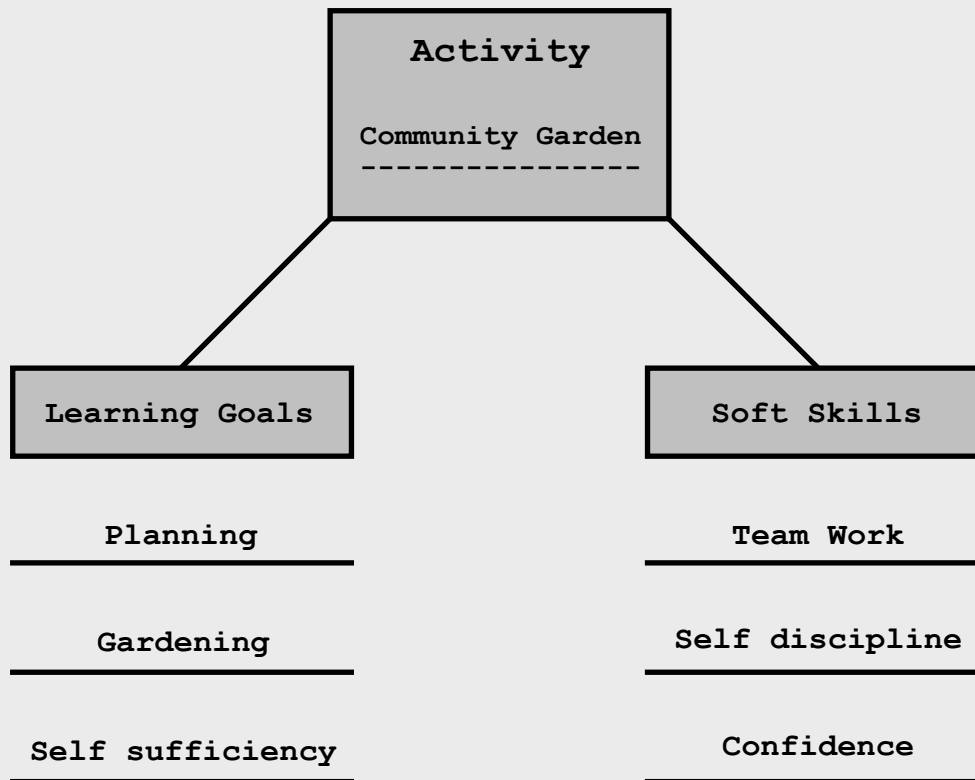
**Exercise 1**

Mary's work tending the neglected plants and the sense of achievement she gets from bringing the secret garden back to life has an extremely positive effect on her personal development. She immediately becomes more engaged with the world and less foul tempered. This demonstrates the benefits that young people can get from engaging with and shaping their communities.

[Slide 21]

Using this diagram, we are now going to develop a local initiative that would inspire and enable young people to become civically engaged, giving them the opportunity to influence and lead.

[Note for trainer: Draw the below diagram onto the board/flip chart and complete with the group. Filled in below is an example for your reference]



Fantastic! Does anyone have any questions before we finish the workshop?

To conclude, I hope the fictional case studies that we looked at have offered an interesting perspective to addressing Big Society objectives and have provided you with some inspiring ideas for making our community better and bigger than ever!

Thank you all for your time and great ideas and the good work that I know you are going to do in Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council