



Community use of public buildings

Unlocking Assets





Challenge

- Review of libraries 2011 introduced a change of service offer
- Four Library Locals reduced opening to 30 hours per week (compared to 63 hours pw at four Library Plus)
- Two local libraries in north and south closed but within one year two new community libraries opened in the vicinity
- Reduced access at Library Locals to associated facilities such as ICT suites and community rooms.
- Three of these libraries in areas with historically low community engagement and high levels of deprivation
- How to make the asset useful to the community but without cost to Council?



Using ABCD

- Very successful model of ABCD (Asset Based Community Development) within the borough but delivered through community managed building
- Closed library taken over by campaign group and now a thriving community centre
- Wanted to use the ABCD model and apply this to a Council managed building but without the cost of Council staff
- Commissioned community organisation to explore appetite for community use of a Library Local when closed to public and for them to manage this
- Once ABCD established looked at how this could be sustained with minimal resource or capacity from Council or community



Doing it differently

- What do we need?
- A means of managing access to the community room and ensuring usage monitored and safe
- No Council staff involvement
- No requirement for residents to be 'organised' groups with their own policies and procedures
- Flexibility for how the community room used but ensuring it is well used



Solutions

- Steering group of local residents to determine priorities for use and oversee allocation of time
- Local key holders
- A group leader for anyone using the room
- Understanding of what the Council's insurance will and will not cover
- Telling Legal Services 'it's ok'
- Having a very pragmatic Health and Safety team in the Council
- Simple letter of permission from Property Team for Steering Group
- Clear set of procedures for anyone using the room and a simple system of monitoring to ensure that it is happening



Documentation

Document	Council	The Bridge	User Groups
User agreement for community room (Property)	✓	✓	
Key holder agreement (Customer Services)	✓	✓	
Terms and Conditions of Use (Customer Services)	✓		✓
User Group acceptance form		✓	✓
User Group signing in sheet		✓	✓
User Group room use information		✓	✓
Opening and closing procedures		✓	✓
Health and Safety checklist and PEEP		✓	✓