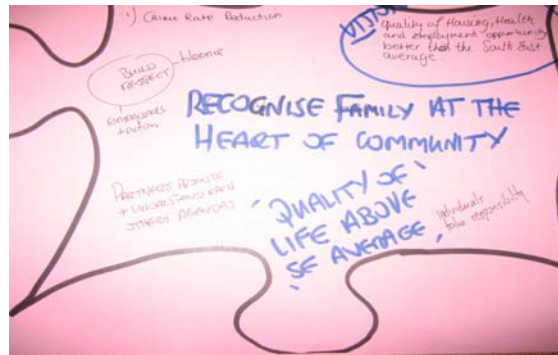




Slough Community Network

## Make Sure You're Heard!

**Make Sure You're Heard Report  
The Launch of Slough Community Network  
Date of Event : 2nd November 2007**



**A day when 45 voluntary and community groups came together to say what their vision is for Slough.**



**Make Sure You're Heard  
The Launch of Slough Community Network  
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## **Summary**

Make Sure You're Heard marked a significant occasion when 65 people from the voluntary and community sector in Slough came together to give their vision for Slough for the next ten years. It also was a super opportunity for Slough's community groups to come together as a network.

This report highlights the thoughts and feelings of the people who came on the day. It brings together the important professional and voluntary experience of people working for 45 of Slough's community groups. Their ideas will be fed into the planning process for the next Local Area Agreement. This is a three year plan for Slough and is the town's most important planning document. The vision that people felt most passionately about put family firmly at the centre of the town's needs.

## **Aims of Slough Community Network**

Slough Community Network is a network of community organisations that will come together to participate in decision making in Slough.

Slough Community Network came alive in response to research carried out as part of the Change Up project and the Additional Support Programme. The research highlighted that the voluntary sector in Slough felt disengaged from decision makers. People who were interviewed as part of the research said that they wanted a place where they could talk to one another.

### **What will it do?**

Slough Community Network aims to provide opportunities for Slough's community and voluntary sector to build partnerships and influence decision taking in Slough.

It will provide a structure for the voluntary and community sector in Slough to build partnerships between one another and with the statutory sector, to communicate with each other and other statutory organisations in Slough.

### **What form will it take?**

Slough Community Network could include networking events like In Good Company, training events and participatory planning workshops that help groups to influence the changes they want to see in Slough. Through a series of events open to community groups throughout Slough, Slough Community Network will provide opportunities for you to come and prioritise what you think is important for Slough.

To launch Slough Community Network, Make Sure You're Heard aimed to bring together the voluntary sector in Slough to say what their vision is for the town for the next 10 years. It would also provide an opportunity for people to meet one another and for people to suggest their hopes for the network in the future.



Speed networking at In Good Company event allowed community groups to meet with each other and people from the statutory sector.



The Community Care Forum provides an opportunity for the voluntary sector to input on issues affecting older people, carers and people with physical and mental health issues.

## **How did the day work?**

The people who came to Make Sure You're Heard split into 7 tables of 10 people on each table. Every table was led by a facilitator trained in Participatory Learning Techniques (PLA). The facilitators welcomed the people on their table and helped them to communicate their ideas by leading them through carefully planned interactive activities.

During the day all the community people were shown a wide collection of images and foods showing the different faces of the town. They were invited to think about what they valued most about Slough and what they would like to see change. After this they were invited to write or draw their vision for the town for the next ten years. They were told to imagine they had a magic wand that they could wave over the town and were given the freedom to come up with anything!

Each group talked about their ideas and ranked them according to what they felt was most important for the town. Somebody from each group then presented the idea they ranked most highly to everybody.

Seven visions were presented. At this point everyone was asked to select the idea they felt most passionately about and move to form a new group with other people who shared their passion. Each new group then worked together to suggest what could be done in practice in the next year to help achieve this vision for Slough.

There was a great buzz throughout the day as people came together in creative conversation to share their thoughts and feelings for Slough.

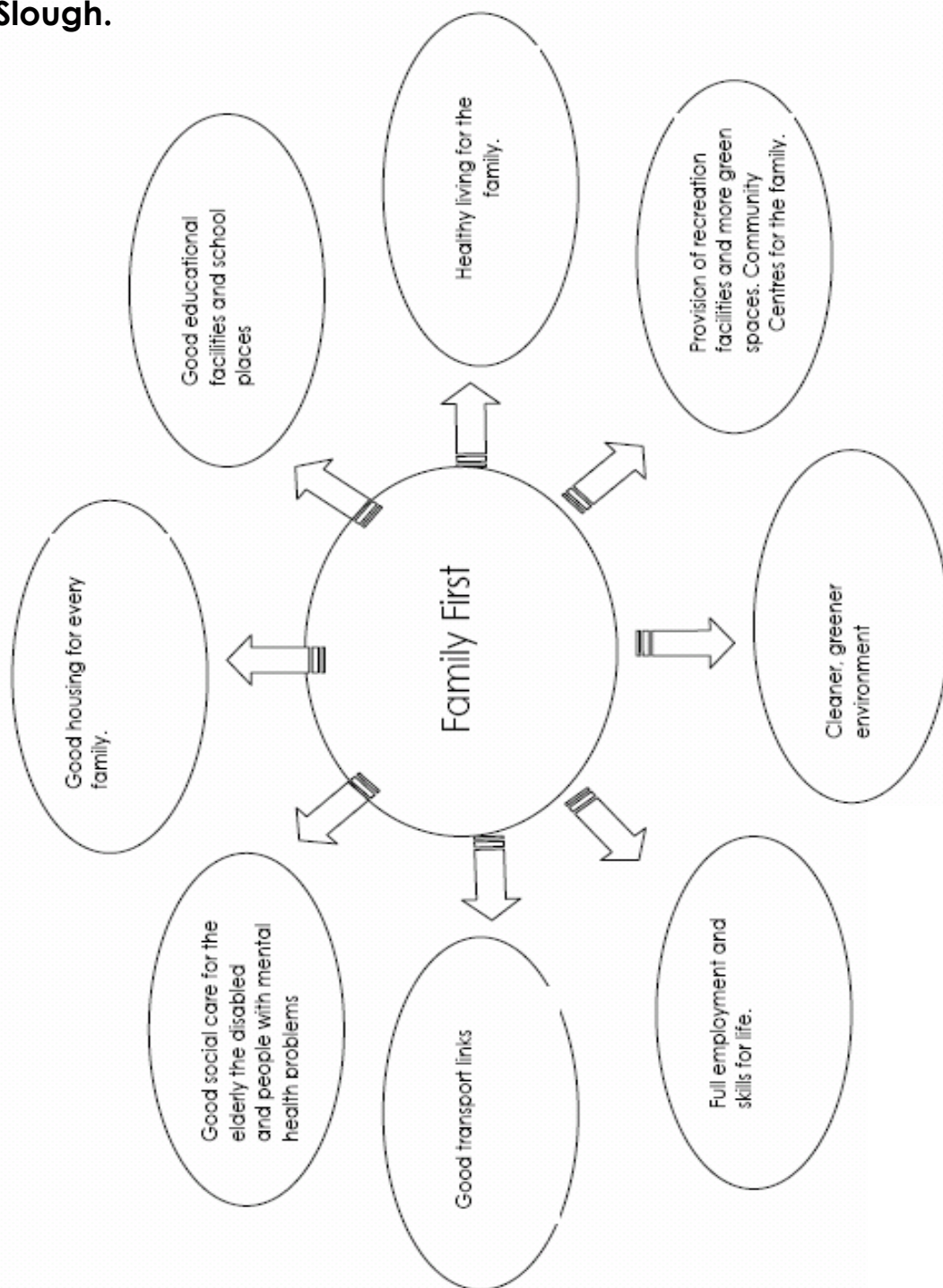


At Make Sure You're Heard groups were invited to write down their vision for Slough for the next 10 years in a piece of jigsaw.

### **What is our vision for Slough?**

The ideas that came from each of the 7 tables overlapped. For an outline of all these visions go to [www.sloughcvs.org.uk](http://www.sloughcvs.org.uk). The vision that people felt most passionately about put family firmly at the centre of the town's needs.

The diagram below shows the different part of your vision for Slough.



## **Family First—The Voluntary and Community Sector Vision for Slough**

We value the cultural diversity in Slough. The foundation of many cultures in Slough is the family. We would like to see a town where services and economic activity supports and encourages family life. We recognise that happy homes make for happy communities. The family is a building block for social mixing in Slough. The family helps to build communities. The family is a focus for emotional support, accommodation and rest and relaxation. This vision for Slough brings together ideas from all of the groups that took part in Make Sure You're Heard.

## **Housing for every family**

It is felt that if people had a safer home environment there would be less drug and alcohol abuse and that better and more pleasant housing would lead to less crime. The provision of quality housing for families would help to build secure home environments that would lead to safer streets.

Our vision is for there to be no homelessness. It is seen that there needs to be more help for refugees and asylum seekers and that housing provision would help them to maintain families together and help to integrate them into society.



You worked in groups with a facilitator.

## Provision of recreation facilities and more green spaces

We would like to see a family based local community centre with lots opportunities for children where families can socialise together. There are studies to show the importance of recreation for all the family. When families enjoy leisure activities together this can have a positive effect on children with behavioural difficulties and reduce stress.

We would like to see more recreation facilities especially for young people. More play centres for children would help young people get involved in their community early on. These would be accessible to a variety of cultures and coordinate safe affordable activities for local children.



You looked at images and ranked what you valued most about Slough. These were posted up around the room.

## **Full employment and skills for life**

We would like to see full employment for local people. The family provides a comfortable base if there is enough financial provision to allow for heating and food on the table. Stability at home is affected by the financial pressure on the family. Stability in the home leads to stability in the workplace and in schools. It is particularly important that jobs are made accessible to newly arrived people so that they can support their families. To make sure that jobs become more accessible we would like to see the development of local skills centres in Slough linked to an annual skills summit and training for local graduates funded by local business linked to local jobs.

## **Good transport links**

A good transport network would allow each family to access schools and their workplace or to go shopping. It is important to provide good transport links within Slough and beyond Slough to provide each family with leisure opportunities, for example to go to the leisure centre or to go for a day out in Windsor Great Park. A good transport network helps families to take time to relax together, improving their quality of life. We would also like to see better transport links to local hospitals.

## **Good social care for the elderly, the disabled and people with mental health problems**

To help families where one or more member of the family is a carer for another member, we would like to see fairer distribution of respite care hours and equipment based on needs. This would be helped by every case being judged as an individual and the service being paid for so that it is free at the point of delivery.

In Slough there are cultures where the extended family means that older people are supported by the families around them. However some older people live on their own and we would like to see improved transport, communication and health care for older people so that it is easier for them to be brought out of isolation and into families or social communities. We would like free bus services for older people and a community bus to take older people to hospital appointments. This vision also includes providing mobile community services. We would also like there to be more activities for older people that bring them together.

### **Actions**

- The findings and recommendations from this report are being fed into Slough Borough Council's planning for the next three years in terms of the Local Area Agreement.
- The results of this process will be fed back to Slough Community Network at their next meeting in 2008.
- We encourage community groups to use the findings of this event to help them plan to meet Slough's community needs. We are always happy to talk to people about the findings. Should you wish to pursue these things further please give us a ring on 01753 524176.
- To continue these discussions we will be having more events for you to take part in.

## **Appendix 1. Purpose of Make Sure You're Heard**

- Groups to identify main concerns for Slough
- To influence the Local Area Agreement
- To inspire community groups to take a lead in local decision

## **Appendix 2. Preparations for the day**

- 18th September—Planning meeting with facilitators
- 16th and 17th October—Participatory Learning Technique training session for facilitators and planning for event
- 1st November—Briefing meeting with facilitators

## **Appendix 3. Questions asked at Make Sure You're Heard**

1. What do you value about Slough and what would you like to change about Slough?
2. What would you like to see in Slough in 10 year's time what is your vision for the town?
3. Which vision do you feel most passionately about?
4. What would you like to see done in the next year towards your vision for Slough?
5. What is your community group doing towards your vision for Slough?
6. What would you like from Slough Community Network?

## Appendix 4. Groups that attended Make Sure You're Heard

0	<b>Group</b>
1	ACSABE
2	Alzheimer's Society
3	BCF
4	Berkshire Somali Community
5	Bhumika Asian Theatre
6	BRA
7	Business in the Community
8	Carers UK
9	Citizens Advice Bureau
10	Cohesion and Development Advisor
11	Community Champions
12	CRUSE
13	East African Youth Group of Slough
14	GKG Collective
15	Golden Eagles FC
16	Hearts in Slough
17	Homestart
18	Kingschurch International
19	Learning Foundation Trust
20	Mari Niketan
21	Network Co-ordinator, Next Step Berkshire
22	Older People's Forum, Carers UK
23	Padstones
24	Papa's land service
25	Parvaaz
26	RNID
27	RNID Typetalk
28	SAWIN Resource Centre
29	Slough Borough Council
30	Slough Business Community Partnership
31	Slough Crossroads
32	Slough Ghana Association
33	Slough Immigration Aid Unit
34	Slough Older People's Forum.
35	Slough Progressive Group
36	Slough Refugee Support
37	Slough SCYS
38	Slough Volunteer Centre
39	Social Enterprise Berkshire
40	SWAN - Stoneham
41	SWIPE (South West Indian People's Enterprise)
42	VCS
43	Volunteer Centre Slough
44	West Cippenham Tenants and Residents Association

## Appendix 5. Activity plan for Make Sure You're Heard

Time	Activity <span style="float: right;">Page 1</span>	Props
9.15	<p>Set up</p> <p>Put out registration packs on registration table. (Carmel and Davina)</p> <p>Put out table for map of Slough with post it notes and pens. (Mary)</p> <p>Put out quiz questions on the tables with pens. (Jes)</p> <p>Prepare foods for tables – put spices in bowls and somosas and Indian sweets</p>	<p>Post it notes Pens, Map of Slough</p> <p>Quiz questionnaires Foods,</p>
9.45	<p>Attendees register and introduction activities and refreshments</p> <p>Attendees given a slip of paper with a number or a word on it that is the answer for the quiz. Everyone is asked to hold onto the piece of paper because they will need it for the quiz during the morning session. (Davina and Jes)</p> <p><b>Introduction activity</b> Attendees asked to write on post it notes what makes them smile in slough and stick the post it on the part of Slough they associate with that . (Mary)</p>	<p>Slips of paper with answers to quiz</p>
10.15	<b>Welcome and Introduction to Slough</b>	

**Appendix 5 Cont. Activity plan for Make Sure You're Heard**

<b>Time</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Page 2</b>
10.20	Icebreaker – Introduction to quiz  Everyone is asked to get up from their seats and go up to people they don't know say hello and ask them their name. They will be holding a slip of paper with a fact about Slough on it. This is the answer to one of your quiz questions. Ask them what their fact is and write down the answer on your quiz sheet. Everyone is told they have 10	Whistle
10.25	Icebreaker – Get to know you quiz.  Participants find out 10 facts about Slough	
	While participants are out of their seats, photos and images, foods and models placed on the tables (Shaheen, Davina, Sara, Mary)	Images of Slough  Foods
10.35	Whistle blown and people asked to take a seat. Answers to quiz given and attendees asked to mark their answers. Attendees are told that there will be a prize draw at the end of the day and prizes given to the first three answers picked out. Quiz answer sheets col-	
10.40	Introduction to table activities (Jonathan)	

Time	Activity <span style="float: right;">Page 3</span>	Props
10.45	<p>Activity – What I value about Slough and what I would like to change about Slough</p> <p>Participants are asked to take a couple of minutes to look around at the objects and images on the tables. Participants are asked to take a post it note with them and make a note of two objects that represent what they value most about Slough and what they would like to change. They may like to pick up one or two of the images that represent their thoughts and bring them back to their table. Everyone returns to tables to discuss their thoughts.</p> <p>Flip chart paper with sunshine and cloud handed out to facilitators at tables. (Sara, Bobbi, Kauser)</p> <p>Note for facilitators (Sally, Mary, Jes, Michael, Shaheen, Davina, Habibah) What do the photos show about Slough? history? From your experience in what would you like to see change in Slough?</p>	<p>Post it notes pens</p> <p>Flip chart paper with sunshine and cloud handed</p> <p>Marker pens</p>
11.30	<p>Activity - Visioning jigsaw- What are Slough's needs? What would you like to see in Slough in 10 year's time?- Everyone writes one idea on a jigsaw piece Rank ideas in terms of urgent and impact- Choose one idea to talk about to everyone and some one to talk passionately about the idea! (Sally, Mary, Jes, Michael, Shaheen, Davina, Habibah)</p>	<p>Jigsaw pieces, pens</p>

Time	Activity	Page 4	Props
12.30	<b>Lunch</b> - people look jigsaw pieces		
1.15	Introduction to the afternoon. Groups return to facilitators standing at points around the room.		
1.25	<b>Presentations</b> Each group given 2 minutes to speak passionately about their idea		
1.45	<b>Move to tables.</b> Everybody chooses which idea they feel most passionately about and move to the table led by that facilitator.		
1.50	<b>Local Area Agreement briefing</b> Each facilitator gives a 5 minute briefing on the Local Area Agreement from script.		LAA information
2.00	<b>Next steps for year ahead</b> In pairs attendees around the table recommend first steps for the next year		
2.10	Facilitators ask somebody to take notes on the feedback to be given.		Paper and
2.30	What is your VCO planning to do towards the vision? Write on a post it Put post its on board with heading 'Make it happen'.		Post it notes and pens
2.50	<b>Move to new tables</b>		
	<b>Discuss Slough Community Network</b> Facilitators summarise aims of Slough Community Network (ask attendees to refer to hand out in welcome pack) and ask participants to think about what they		Rainbow pictures and pens
3.15	<b>Quiz prizes and close</b>		
3.25	<b>Evaluation activities</b> <sub>19</sub>		

## **Appendix 6. What would you like to see change in Slough?**

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### **Economy**

- Not enough jobs for local people
- We need skills and education centres to train people

### **Youth**

- Not enough youth centres
- Not enough places to play for children
- Recreation grounds are not suitable for disabled children
- Young people need more facilities and activities
- More money to Slough families

### **Environment**

- Not enough parks
- Too much rubbish in the streets
- We would like recycling wheelie bins for plastic, paper, tin, glass. There are currently restrictions on recycling.
- Rubbish collection system
- More bins to be provided on the streets

### **Built Environment and housing**

- Flats have spoilt the landscape and community living
- Slough has many landlords that charge different rent
- We need more clean housing
- Need more car parking spaces
- Slough's property prices are unreasonably high
- Security issue in the alley way between the church and Queensmeere
- Brunel Car Park. It is dirty, unsafe, dark expensive and there are no toilets in the bus station
- The subway from Brunel bus station to the town centre is quite dangerous and dark
- Create less pollution, Rubbish dumping/fly tipping and graffiti
- The High Street needs updating
- We should all work together to stop vandalism

## **Appendix 6. What would you like to see change in Slough?**

### **Health**

- High number of Cardiac patients
- Promote healthy eating for Slough residents
- Lack of transport for Wexham hospital appointments

### **Community Safety**

- Drug and drinking is quite an acute problem. This needs to be curtailed through more education and resources.
- Services for people with alcohol problems
- Homelessness

### **Community Activity**

- Isolation
- Each individual in the community needs more support
- Stereotypes within Slough
- Need more elderly clubs in Iwer area where BME community can meet and share their views
- Not enough activities for Asian older people
- Slough elderly people have been completely neglected. Not proper amenities, facilities or transport

### **Infrastructure**

- Traffic
- Free Parking
- High council tax but no action
- We need affordable transport that covers the whole of Slough especially to hospitals
- Late night transport
- Congestion on A4
- Tesco should have a one way system in from the A4 out via back of station to roundabout

## **Appendix 7. What would you like to see done in the next year towards your vision for Slough?**

### **Consultation**

- Regular questionnaires on major issues in the community.
- Collect cases and write to the Council in order to make them aware of the problem.
- Enable consultation on issues relevant to health and welfare.

### **Families**

- Help prevent social isolation
- Place the importance of education on the family and not the individual
- More support in the home to encourage families to stay together and feel proud to be a family
- Activities that involve the family as a unit /a team
- Campaign for carers needs and rights
- Extend the Carers Allowance to over 65s.
- Teach young people about recycling

### **Community Activity**

- Provide a platform for debate and discussion
- To open a group in Slough for Chinese and oriental communities
- Dedicated centre for community groups
- Increase awareness of homelessness prevention and mediation
- Give people the knowledge to help themselves in a practical way or give practical help.
- Introduce a free phone line for accessing information about transport and healthcare.
- Invite local businesses to 'do up' parks and green spaces
- Provide quiet areas linked to hospices
- Provide subsidised taxis
- More mental health awareness with a mental health day centre.

## **Appendix 7 Cont: What would you like to see done in the next year towards your vision for Slough?**

- Community website providing information on what's going on in the community.

### **Built environment**

- Hearts of Slough programme to include more facilities for everyone
- More street lighting to create a safer Slough
- More creative and interesting buildings

### **Employment and skills**

- Get businesses more involved and committed to the people of Slough

### **Young People**

- Involve existing youth groups in more recreation activities
- Identify where youths are and involve them in an educational project linking up with partners, to get ideas, eg from the green party.
- Engage with those 'hanging out' outside of school. Target them and get them really involved. Need core of young people to start it off
- Slough Youth Festival seen as good example of event especially for youth's. Need more such practical events.
- Get to where the youth's are on their home ground
- Close the generation gap – we don't consult them and ask them. Need to ask them what are their barriers, why don't they use existing facilities set up for them.
- Perhaps start in a small area first.

## **Appendix 8: What is your community group doing towards your vision for Slough?**

- **Berkshire Community Foundation** will set up a Slough Community Fund to be launched Feb 08
- **Brahma Kumaris** World Spiritual University is promoting positive change through self awareness
- **Bhumika Asian Theatre** will develop a project for schools and community groups. History of Hindustani music called Saregama developing project from March to June 08.
- **CAB** offers advice to all societal groups and aims to keep people housed through benefits advice. We will aim to work more closely with other groups.
- **Carers UK** supply taxi vouchers and respite for carers and generally try to help them and keep carers informed and up to date.
- **EYAGOS** will aim to strengthen the family by running family activities instead of just activities for individuals.
- **Golden Eagle's Football Club** providing football for children up to 18 keeping the children off the streets.
- **Home Start Slough** is meeting "need" capacity, supporting 250 families in Slough
- **Kings church** will provide guidance on biblical truths
- **Langley Carnival** carrying on raising money for Langely association
- **Lenana Foundation Trust** is putting the family at the heart of the community via encouragement, empowerment, not picking up the pieces but giving help before there is a problem
- **Millennium Volunteers** will push for under 16 volunteers
- **Sikh Community and Youth Services** hold Yoga classes for all ages. and hold religious awareness and netball and football training for adults and young people and form partnerships with the Slough Gurdwara and amateur rowing.

## **Appendix 8 Cont.: What is your community group doing towards your vision for Slough?**

- **Nari Niketan**, Langley has 35 plus members and runs activities for 50 + including yoga, breathing, seated aerobic exercise, music, 50+ physical activities.
- **Slough Community Fund** is providing funding to keep voluntary services going where needed in Slough
- Slough Council for Race Equality is ensuring community cohesion with all groups and advocates for community groups.
- **Slough Crossroads** aims to offer free respite time for carers
- **Slough Ghanaian Society** will create awareness of Ghanaian culture and help the community to train and retrain for jobs in Slough.
- **Slough Museum** will work with Home Start to make activities and opportunities at Slough Museum more inclusive
- **Slough Older People's Forum** acts as a channel of communication between older people and the statutory sector
- **Social Enterprise Berkshire** provide enterprise support to social enterprises and training for groups and individuals.
- **West Cippenham Tenants and Residents Association** will invite housing officers from the council, housing association and send representatives to meetings about housing. Lobby the council for better housing for older people. Get across to the federation and housing associations for low cost housing. Signposting and seminars to protect people from getting their homes repossessed.
- Work with Age Concern to highlight the housing needs of older people, especially those of people who have Alzheimer's or other illnesses. (Group not indicated, possibly Shelter?)

## **Appendix 9: What would you like from Slough Community Network?**

You said you thought it was important to have face to face meetings as well as supporting this with an email network. You also said that you would value the following for Slough Community Network:

- A safe place to share ideas
- Regular forums involving community groups
- Help raise awareness and promote community based events
- Recognition that the 3<sup>rd</sup> sector is an acknowledged and important sector
- Influence statutory organisations
- Get to know what other community groups do
- More training opportunities for volunteers to build skills
- Physical meetings to facilitate communication
- Contact details of attendees
- Virtual networking via email exchange
- Annual umbrella meeting to make sure still connected to network event
- A follow up meeting with results Make Sure You're Heard
- Include BME communities on decision making bodies in Slough
- A newsletter email
- Good opportunities to work with other like minded organisations with the possibility to work together for local funding.
- Central database on website to be funded
- Spokesperson to contact authorities on behalf of the network
- A festival celebrating the achievements of Slough Community Network
- Feedback to members from decision makers

## **What do you value about Slough?**

“There is a heart to provide for children in Slough even though there are limited resources”

“Schools that give young people the opportunity to do things that they won't otherwise do.”

“Upton Court Park is a great facility with great views”

“SCVS are responsive to needs”

“Easy to access London and other parts of the country “

“Slough library “

“Slough health activists”

“Langley Leisure Centre”

“Slough Young People's Centre”

“The many diverse faith communities working side by side in peace”