

# Active at 60 Community Agents

## **Background information:**

With life expectancy increasing and people living longer there is a need for individuals to start preparing for longer lives. Retirement is a pivotal moment and is met with a range of positive and negative emotions, for some it can be the first step towards social isolation and the associated negative outcomes in terms of physical and mental well being.

Research has shown that the habits that people gain and the activities that people get involved with around this time are carried through to later life. Thus, people who are very active tend to remain so, while those who are more isolated and inactive at this stage are at risk of becoming more so as they get older.

## **Aims (brief explanation):**

### **Active at 60 Community Agents**

Active at 60 Community Agents is a £1million initiative to help older people keep active and make the most of their later lives. This money is available for local community groups or organisations within 30 selected areas\* to bid for small grants.

Each local community group within the selected areas will recruit at least one Active at 60 Community Agent who will volunteer their time to help motivate, encourage and organise people within their own communities to become more active, physically, socially and mentally. Active at 60 Community Agents will be from the communities they are helping, and will have the flexibility to design innovative ways of encouraging and inspiring activity to help improve people's later lives.

Through the Active at 60 Community Agent initiative those people who are more at risk of social isolation in their later lives will be supported in becoming more active, independent and positively engaged with society. Active at 60 Community Agents will help people within their communities:

- take the first step in trying something new
- understand the benefits they can get from being more active, engaged and contributing to their communities
- build social contacts to help make being active part of their routine

This project is part of the Government's ambition to build a Big Society in which power is transferred from Whitehall to local communities, and organisations and voluntary groups play a far greater role in their community to decide what works best in their areas.

\*The following areas have been selected on the basis of level of deprivation and age structure, whilst ensuring a broad split across the English regions, encompassing both rural and urban areas:

Liverpool, Middlesbrough, Hackney, Sandwell, Kingston Upon Hull, City of, Nottingham, Bournemouth, Southend-on-Sea, Brighton and Hove, Redcar and Cleveland, Wirral, Doncaster, Cornwall and The Isles of Scilly, East Sussex, Norfolk, Herefordshire, County of, Lincolnshire, Enfield, Knowsley, Blackpool, Manchester, Stoke-on-Trent, Birmingham, Salford, Hartlepool, Tower Hamlets, Wolverhampton, South Tyneside, Rochdale, Sunderland

**Degree of implementation/progress status/current situation:**

The project was launched on the 23 November 2011 by The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) - Minister for Pensions Steve Webb. DWP are working in partnership with the Community Development Foundation (CDF) who will distribute the funds to local area funders who in turn will invite local groups and organisations to bid for a small grant.

Grants will be awarded up to 31.03.11 and local groups have until 31.12.11 to implement activity.

The project will be evaluated to provide evidence to encourage other areas and local communities to engage. An evaluation report is due Spring / Summer 2012.

**Who is responsible for the information (i.e. ministry, organisation, person)?**

The Department for Work and Pensions and the Community Development Foundation.

**Who can be contacted in case of questions? (name, e-mail address)**

For further information or if you know of any local groups or organisations who may be interested in applying for a grant within the 30 areas, please contact CDF by the 1<sup>st</sup> March 2011 on 01223 406 542 and ask for Sam Cauldwell or Saul Pilkington or check their website <http://www.cdf.org.uk/web/guest/active-at-60>

Alternatively the DWP contact is Andy Chiga on 0207 449 7586

**Please provide link or contact for further information:**

<http://www.cdf.org.uk/web/guest/active-at-60>