

THE WELLSPRING DEVELOPMENT PLAN, JUNE 2008

INTRODUCTION

“Independence is not linked to the physical or intellectual capacity to care for one self without assistance, independence is created by having assistance when and how one requires it”

Julia Twigg, Changing Role of Social Care

The Wellspring is a resource centre for homeless and disadvantaged people in Stockport. The Wellspring is open everyday of the year and provides free food and drinks, free clothing and free shower facilities. In addition it offers a range of additional free services including health and housing referrals, counselling, confidence building and other short training courses.

As a Registered Charity (No. 1088776) The Wellspring is in a unique and exclusive position to offer support to the homeless and disadvantaged people of Stockport. Over the last five years the centre has grown from a basic ‘soup kitchen’, run almost completely by Volunteers, to now employing two staff, over 170 volunteers and plans to move into a new purpose built flagship resource centre. The past five years has seen a period of accelerated growth for The Wellspring with the introduction of a new membership system; zero tolerance policies on anti-social activity; funding for a PCT Nurse and surgery; links to every housing provider in Stockport; educational courses and other social activities for the 3,000 registered members.

The Wellspring is one of just fourteen charities in the UK to be awarded a grant from The Church Urban Fund Faithful Enterprise Scheme. The main aim of the scheme is to make Charities less dependant on grant funding by providing income via a Social Enterprise Model. In the case of The Wellspring the grant has been used to develop a business plan for the Charity. The business plan will explore the potential for the development of Social Enterprises at The Wellspring and will include both ‘Member Enterprises’ and ‘The Wellspring Enterprises’, usage of the new purpose built resource centre, staff development and long term financial planning.

This document sets out the thinking, vision and long terms goals for The Wellspring over the next five year period. The Development Plan forms the basis for the business plan.

KEY AIMS

The core objective is to “keep people in their tenancies”. This will be achieved by offering External Support Services, Debt Prevention Activities and Consultancy Services (non centre based) built on a “prevention rather than cure” methodology. The existing ‘Care Services’ will continue and increase in a new flagship centre.

KEY OBJECTIVES

In five years The Wellspring will:

- Provide a flagship centre and FREE services to Homeless and Disadvantaged People in the Stockport area. The services will include Debt Prevention Toolkits for the ‘At Risk’ audience, Care Services and external Support Services and referrals for the existing membership base
- Increase the size of the Staff Portfolio (to 8 paid staff) and the resources available to them
- Create 6 residential units
- Implement a Development Programme for Volunteers, Management and the Support Workers (Paid Staff) to include ‘Running a Social Enterprise’
- Broaden the membership base, delivery and referral programmes to reflect a male, female and family audience

KEY DIFFERENTIATION

The key differentiation of The Wellspring is ‘exclusivity’. No one else provides the FREE range of services to homeless people in the Stockport area. The nearest comparable centre is situated 8 miles away in Manchester. This centre also charges for the use of services by homeless people whilst The Wellspring remains free.

THE NEED

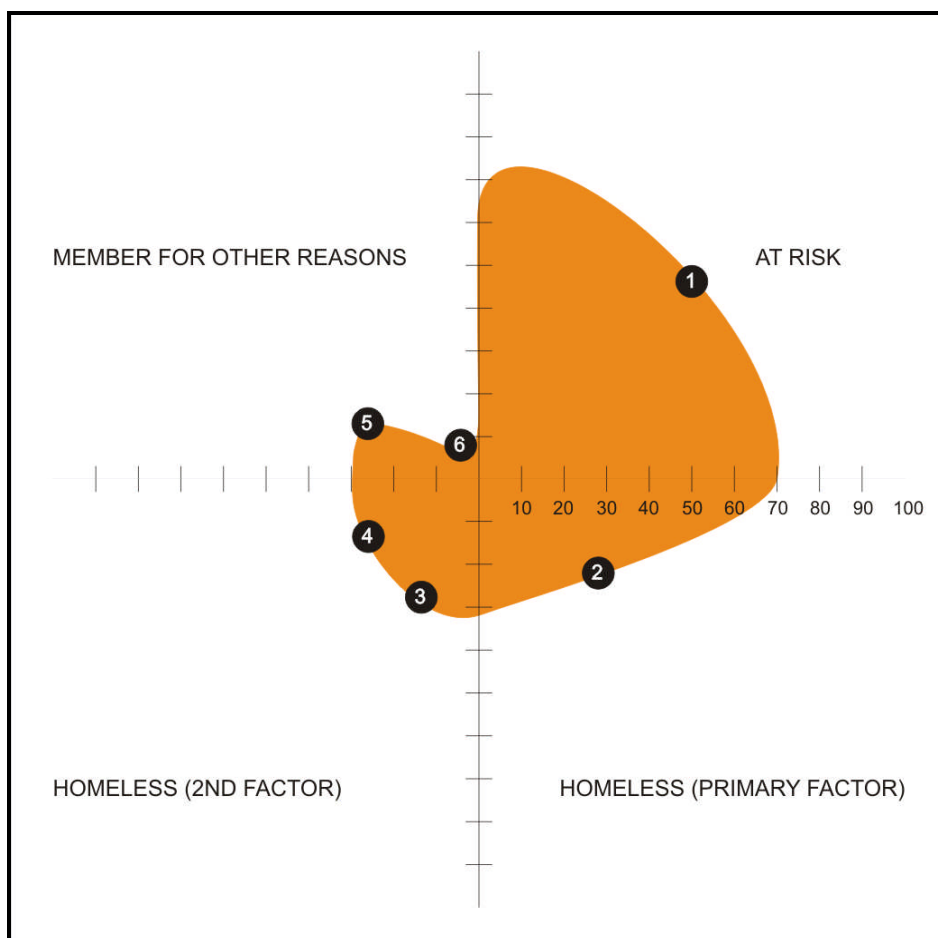
The principal need identified is the need for “support to overcome problems brought on by financial debt”. The “prevention rather than cure” method chosen to achieve this need also highlights a number of more detailed secondary needs:

- The need for security and reliability
- The need for increased skills and pathways into employment
- The need for independence and increased opportunity
- The need for support in basic needs such as food, health and shelter

AUDIENCE PROFILE

The Audience Profile within The Wellspring (‘Homeless People’ and ‘Disadvantaged People at Risk’) consists of 6 distinct categories. These categories are ranked in order of importance with ‘1’ being the highest and ‘6’ the lowest. The categories are:

1. At Risk of Homelessness Due to Financial Debt, Employability or Skills
2. Homeless Due to Financial Debt, Employability or Skill Factors
3. Homeless Due to Addiction, Crime or Other Anti-social Factors
4. Homeless Due to Health, Abuse or Relationship Breakdown Factors. (This category includes Families and Young People)
5. Member Due to Social Reasons
6. Member Due to Choosing to be Homeless



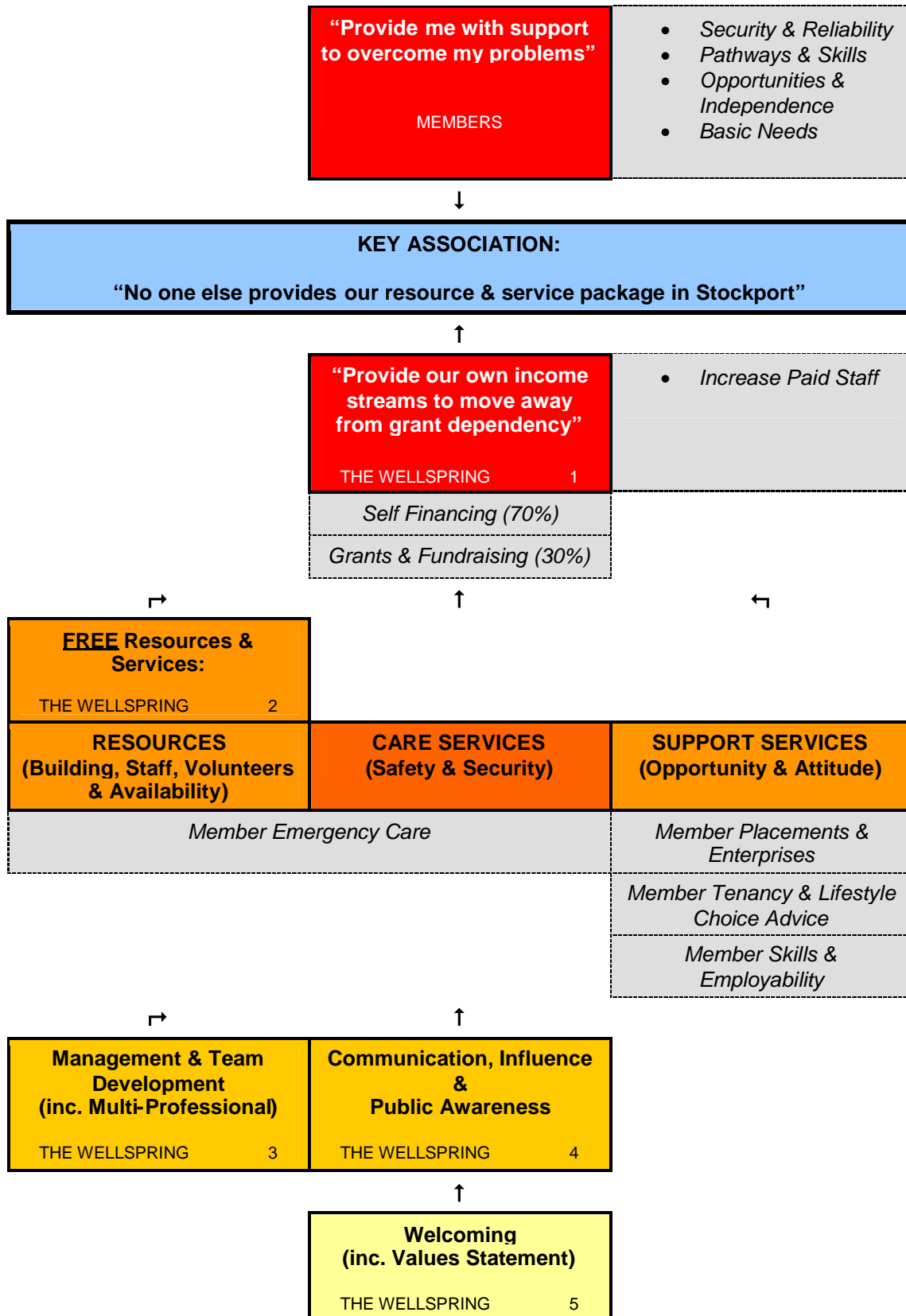
The diagram is designed to show the complexity of the membership base. For example if you were to ask 100 members of The Wellspring if they fell into the first category, 70 of them would say “yes”. If you were then to ask the same group of 100 if they fell into the second category, 30 of them would say “yes”. However the 30 may include members who said “yes” to the first category.

From the mapping exercise (that produced the diagram) it is clear that the majority of the 3,000 registered members of The Wellspring fall into the first category of ‘At Risk of Homelessness Due to Financial Debt, Employability or Skills’. Therefore the majority of resources and services should be directed at members who are ‘At Risk of Homelessness Due to Financial Debt, Employability or Skills’. However it was noted that whilst members may fall into the ‘At Risk’ group at first they may quickly become more vulnerable and move to the second category due to exposure to and exploitation by other homeless people. This is particularly important for female members. Indicators for audience reach (for preventing homelessness) therefore includes targeting potential new members, who are currently in debt, have low or no qualifications and/or no savings.

Choosing the ‘At Risk Due to Financial Debt, Employability or Skills’ Group generates a list of Secondary Linked Profiles. These are:

- Landlords (both Council and Private)
- Credit Providers and Credit Unions
- Tenant Associations

THE BRAND MAP



DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES (5 – 10 YEARS)

THE WELLSPRING DO1: 'FINANCING & INCOME STREAMS'

- Establish another named fund aimed at 'preventing debt and increasing employability or skills' to replace the 'Building Fund' (once the building is complete). Alongside this fund identify the potential for the use of these reserves to create a further income stream
- Undertake 2 major high quality fundraising events to raise at least £10,000 annually (November - March)
- Undertake a 'Team Learning Programme' to develop further understanding of the Social Enterprise model for The Wellspring and any potential resistance to selling
- Identify market potential, set up and charge for consultancy services to include a chargeable placement service and referral service (placements could be both in The Wellspring and for Members out of the Wellspring and linked to Member Enterprises). The service could also include advising on 'security issues relating to homeless people'
- Review the policy and protocols for working with external partners (not to decrease the joint work programmes but rather to share benefits fairly)
- Maintain a ratio of 70% Self Financing/Donations and 30% Grant Funding (the ratio for self financing is currently 60% – 70% over the two year period of the accounts)

THE WELLSPRING DO2: 'RESOURCES & SERVICES'

- Core objective to "keep people in their tenancies". External Support Services and Consultancy (non centre based) should therefore "prevent rather than cure"
- Undertake the move to new premises and the ongoing management of the new building. The new building will be a flagship centre for FREE access to Care Services such as:
 - Basic Care (including food)
 - Referral Services
 - Educational and Enterprise Services
 - Debt Prevention Toolkits
- Identify the potential for 6 residential flats or units (estimated cost of £375,000 in association with a housing provider)
- Deliver services or referrals for Male, Female and Young People (Bowery NY Model)
- Create a staff portfolio of 8 paid staff and 150 - 250 volunteers with the first step for a third paid worker. The long term aim will be for 2 – 3 paid staff to come from a member or volunteer 'Home-grown Training Programme'. This programme will be started in the third year of the Business Plan

THE WELLSPRING DO3: 'MANAGEMENT & TEAM DEVELOPMENT'

- Carry out a 3 year Training Needs and Skills Analysis for Volunteers, Management and the Support Workers (Paid Staff)
- Undertake a Development Programme ('Home-grown') for Volunteers to cover:
 - Basic Food Hygiene and First Aid
 - Experiencing the Organisation
 - Sector specific skills (including Advice & Guidance)
 - Overcoming a fear of the client group/relationship building
- Undertake a Development Programme for the Management Team to cover:
 - Running a Social Enterprise
 - Experiencing the Organisation
 - Shaping the Organisation
 - Sector Specific Skills
 - Leadership and Listening

- Hold a team leader meeting every month and a team celebration annually (linked to fundraising activities)
- Manage the natural 'issues' within both new and established Teams. This will include:
 - Mentoring
 - Annual Review of Objectives
 - 'Testing of Services' and Management Effectiveness

THE WELLSPRING DO4: 'COMMUNICATION & INFLUENCE'

- Review and implement the existing 'Communications Strategy'. The review of the strategy should include:
 - Time commitment to implement the strategy
 - Skills required to implement the strategy
 - Opportunities for communication
 - Scalability of financing and goodwill
 - What is the direct benefit to members?
 - 'Prevention rather than cure'
- Implement the strategy to reach the following audience (not exclusive):
 - Funders
 - Other Services
 - The Public
 - Local Government
 - Public at risk of homelessness due to debt

THE WELLSPRING DO5: 'VALUES STATEMENT'

- Establish a 'Values Statement' to include:
 - Welcoming
 - Non judgemental
 - Anti-authority
 - Employability and skills activity: Peer and experiential activity
 - Social activity: "company and friends"
 - Secure and reliable activity: "meeting basic needs such as food and shelter"

MANAGEMENT, RISK AND GROWTH STRATEGY

Due to time constraints this exercise will be undertaken during the Business Planning phase. However a number of key rules have been identified:

- Shared Goals across Multi-Professional Teams
- Shared Power across Multi-Professional Teams
- Broad knowledge and skills across Multi-Professional Teams, delivered with a cohesive and transparent approach
- Effective consultation, user participation and a clear understanding of the audience and the social purpose of The Wellspring
- Profitable, secure and solid financial base but based on people

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In creating this Development Plan we have undertaken seven Development Meetings (including mapping and team review exercises) and have researched, reviewed or referenced the following:

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