

Policy briefing: Learning for a change: Why adult learning will make the Big Difference to the Big Society

Introduction

The 'Big Society' idea is in the air. Its strengths, weaknesses, origins and implications are much debated and continue to divide opinion. For some, the concept accelerates previous public service modernisation and, depending on the perspective, is 'smoke and mirrors' to cover funding cuts or 'stealth' centralisation. For others, it is an audacious attempt to reinvigorate (or appropriate) a tradition of community empowerment and social responsibility. NIACE takes the view that while debate about the concept is critical, particularly to shaping what the Big Society can become, its emerging architecture of reforms and programmes needs urgent attention from the learning and skills sector, and coherent and robust responses.

NIACE, the National Institute of Adult Continuing Education, believes adult learning has much to say in answer to the big question posed by the Big Society: 'How do we build a society that protects and values the well being of all its citizens if the state is able to do less to meet our growing and changing needs, and we have to do more?'

We argue that learning is essential to helping us all understand and contribute effectively to get the best from the Big Society and particularly the major changes happening in its name. NIACE proposes that the Big Society needs a bold and far-sighted vision of learning at its heart if we are all to benefit from its possibilities.

This paper represents a first contribution from NIACE to explain **why** learning should be central to the Big Society and **how** it may be developed.

What is the Big Society?

The Big Society is closely associated with the Prime Minister. In his words, its main intention is to achieve a *“huge culture change...where people, in their everyday lives, in their homes, in their neighbourhoods, in their workplaces...don’t always turn to officials, local government or central government for answers to the problems they face... but instead feel both free and powerful enough to help themselves and their own communities.”* Essentially, the Big Society sets out to replace ‘big government’ with a ‘bigger, stronger society’ and achieve a paradigm shift in relations between the citizen and a smaller, more strategic state.

In practice, this is about a great deal more than a bigger role for volunteers and the voluntary and community sector, important though these are. It entails radical reform of public services and the stated intention to move unprecedented amounts of power and responsibility away from national government to those regarded as best placed to find solutions to local needs: elected representatives, front-line public service professionals, families, social entrepreneurs, charities, co-operatives, community groups, and neighbours. The NHS and school reforms, locally elected police and crime commissioners, and open-source planning controls are all part of this bigger picture.

There are three defining goals behind it all: public service reform; community empowerment; and social action. Each of these has a range of associated government-backed reforms and initiatives (see Appendix 1).

Why learning is central to the Big Society

NIACE believes learning is essential if all of us, and not just a relatively few better-informed, better-placed citizens, are to understand the Big Society and make the most of it. We have set out a number of reasons why the Big Society needs learning and is raising demand for more and different skills, knowledge and understanding. There are many more. We look forward to developing the discussion with colleagues across the learning and skills system and beyond.

1. To make sense of the Big Society

Although much has been written and said about the Big Society, evidence suggests many of us remain unsure of the idea. In October last year, while David Cameron announced the defeat of the “*old ways of doing things: the high-spending, all-controlling, heavy-handed state*”, an Ipsos MORI survey for the RSA found significant ambiguity in the public’s mind. A small majority of people thought the Big Society was good in principle but felt it wouldn’t work in practice while greater numbers saw it as an excuse to save money by cutting public services. Public perceptions appear to have shifted little since then. A YouGov poll held in May this year found 62 per cent of us still do not understand it well or at all, only 45 per cent see it as a good idea, and 73 per cent of us think it will not work in practice. A majority regard it as ‘mostly hot air’.

This difference between the view from Number 10 and how many of us see the Big Society should set alarm bells ringing. So, far from being ‘hot air’, the associated reforms are formidable in their scale and the speed. We all need to understand the new deal being forged between us, government (national and local) and our neighbours. As Raymond Williams argued, the need for learning accelerates at times of greatest change so that we can interpret our environment autonomously, adapt to it successfully, and ultimately shape and control it.

2. To bring out the best in the Big Society

Many people recognise there are strong and positive ideas in Big Society thinking. Enabling local people to have a far greater say over the decisions and services that directly affect their quality of life is to be welcomed, along with the presumption that communities have untapped assets and capabilities – rather than endemic problems – which can be used by them to achieve sustainable and innovative solutions and possibilities. The paradigm of bringing everyday knowledge to bear on service design and delivery will be familiar to anyone working with personalised budgeting or

co-production of services. Adult education practitioners will recognise the argument for the centrality of learner-centred and community-led curricular activity. Similarly, the empowered consumer who is more directly engaged with the product and the producer is a growing force to be reckoned with in business; while creative thinkers in local communities developing new services and products are part of the seed bed of ideas feeding local enterprise and stronger economic as well as social growth.

By removing regulatory and other barriers to action and giving citizens the levers to make things happen, the Government is seeking a more permissive and enabling environment for people wanting to make things happen. But greater agency requires more than the increased opportunities and entitlements offered by the reforms. It needs the ability to read, write and increasingly, to work online and to source and use data. It needs knowledge about planning and decision-making processes and the skills to influence them, and it entails the 'know how' to develop networks and coherent groups, and the acumen to manage money, take innovative ideas to market and build fledgling 'mutual' businesses. Without these essential tools, new 'rights' and incentives will remain theoretical and new and increased responsibilities become far harder to discharge.

3. To make sure we can all join in the Big Society

The language of the Big Society resonates with the importance of 'people power' but has little to say, as yet, about how existing disparities in the distribution of power will impact on its ambitions, or be countered so that all communities can participate and benefit. Structural inequalities (arising from social class, income, job status or prospects, age, gender, race, faith and disability) present complex barriers to participation in civil society and the economy, and evidence suggests the current austerity is deepening these for many citizens, particularly those who are financially poorest and dealing with multiple disadvantage. Unprecedented cuts to central Government departments (19 per cent on average) and to local government budgets (7.1 per cent each year over five years) mean that many services, including those for the most vulnerable communities, are at risk, reduced or disappearing.ⁱⁱ At the same time, voluntary and community organisations (VCOs) offering support from within, and for, such communities are losing income estimated at between £3.2 billion and £5.1 billion.ⁱⁱⁱ The Government hopes that, over time this will be offset, at least in part, by inducements and 'nudges' to encourage more public giving^{iv}, radical and transformational new approaches to meeting community and local service needs,^v and the successful transition of some VCOs (supported through £100 million transition funding) from grant dependency to social enterprise and co-operative business models.

Inequalities of income lead to inequalities of power and time. It is harder to engage in local planning processes or earn time credits for volunteering if you are holding down several part-time jobs and/ or substantial caring responsibilities. Similarly, evidence suggests that inequalities in educational opportunities and skills – for both children and adults – have a significantly negative impact on social cohesion and, thereby, levels of civic participation, public trust and a shared belief in the availability of opportunity and reward based on merit (an emerging theme in the Government’s Big Society narrative).^{vi} Recent research indicates that it is not so much the average level of education in a country that matters most for social cohesion but how the skills are distributed – the more unequal this is amongst adults, the higher the rates of civic unrest and the lower the levels of social trust.^{vii}

Ensuring social justice and equality in the Big Society is perhaps its greatest challenge. There is a clear risk that for some communities, supply-side diversification in public services will mean the destabilising and loss of essential support arrangements; and community empowerment through localism will mean different rather than fewer boundaries to their civic participation. Tackling this requires a much clearer debate about the interdependence of the Big Society reforms and economic policy (for example, the impact of both the growth agenda and deficit reduction on employment patterns and prospects, and of deregulated markets on “*stable patterns of association*”^{viii}) and their relationship with learning. We know that learning skills and gaining knowledge increases confidence and self-efficacy. It enhances our capacity to take action and acquire social and economic resources. And it increases access to networks, institutions and organisations that exert power. Learning is not the answer to making sure the Big Society is open to all, but it is essential to the solution.

4. To transform information into knowledge for the Big Society

Greater public scrutiny of government which is at the heart of the Big Society’s decentralising ambitions will be based on the release of unprecedented amounts of information. Citizens, civil society organisations and businesses will be able to request and use many more data sets held by the Government, while transparency on contracts, salaries and staffing will be expected of all public sector bodies. In the view of the Prime Minister: *Because information is power, we are bringing real transparency to Government...who spends your money, what they spend it on, what the results are, where the waste is, what they spend on themselves and their salaries...we’re putting it in your hands. We are putting all that information in your hands, it’s your money – so you should know how it is all being spent.*^{ix}

All this information – local and national – will be released as raw data with the onus on those who access the material to use it meaningfully. But data alone is not

enough. Knowledge, based on evidence, derived through analysis of raw information, will really empower people to make a difference. This requires the skills to locate, extract, collate, analyse and interpret data and to summarise and report on any findings. Not everyone who needs those skills will have them, or have ready access to a means of acquiring them. To take one example, the benefits of increasingly online solutions to opening up data sources will be enjoyed by computer savvy consumers. But comprehensive benefit will depend on complementary skills development to tackle the existing unequal distribution of IT competence, media literacy and Internet access.

5. To build sustainable services and businesses for the Big Society

Public service reform is an obvious policy area where Big Society interests and the economic growth agenda connect. It is also another facet where sufficient appropriate learning and skills are critical to success. Opening up the market to new service providers has major workforce development implications for community groups, front-line public-sector employees, enterprises and local councillors. More outcomes-based commissioning as part of a new procurement environment will stretch the skills of providers and commissioners alike as both negotiate new metrics (including social value). And becoming ‘investment ready’ – whether to scale up or initiate an enterprise – will mean navigating an evolving social investment market with its new products, intermediaries and opportunities.

Public sector employees embarking on a ‘spin out’ enterprise or voluntary sector workers exercising their ‘right to challenge’ must extend their expertise in service design and delivery to understand the merits of different business models and get their chosen vehicle ‘business’ and ‘market ready’. They will need skills to negotiate new relationships and transactions in a market environment as former partners become commercial competitors and erstwhile colleagues are their commissioners. The durability of these new enterprises is critical to both economic and social policy – and to the employment of the individuals concerned. As small businesses they will contribute to local economic growth while their success is key to the stability of local service provision. These skill-needs must connect into the employment and skills infrastructure and should be on the radar of Local Enterprise Partnerships.

How learning can become central to the Big Society

NIACE believes that existing practice across the learning and skills system and beyond has much to offer the complex and varied learning needs of the Big Society. We argue that drawing that experience together into a strong and coherent strand in the Big Society discourse is a necessary next step for the sector and those with a wider interest in the contribution of learning and skills. We also suggest that remaining open to new approaches, partnerships and developing new practice is critical to the sector's capacity to respond to the unfolding consequences of Big Society reforms. We have set out below several areas where adult learning currently contributes to the Big Society agenda and has the potential to do considerably more. Again, these are offered as the first steps in a wider discussion.

1. More learning for active citizenship and social responsibility

NIACE believes learning for active citizenship is central to the Big Society and, in particular, to empowering communities and building a 'culture of responsibility' and social action. It offers people the tools to shape and influence the areas in which they live and work, leading to better, more cost-effective decision making as local knowledge feeds into local government and community activity. Developing learning also builds local partnerships between different interest groups, encouraging them to generate and exchange knowledge through collaboration. Many adult learners share a sense of pride in their area and are often motivated to first engage in learning in order to develop and improve their local neighbourhood. Active citizenship is also fostered by the role adult learning can play in offering a neutral and constructive space for people to meet and develop their thinking. Levels of active citizenship are affected by the accessibility of such spaces and perceptions of who they 'belong' to.

In practice, learning for active citizenship embraces a broad curriculum and diverse approaches to developing and delivering learning. This includes programmes that help learners become aware of their rights and obligations and enable them to take responsibility within their communities and to speak out. Community Learning Champions are a further example of ways of building aspiration and confidence. Participants are able to develop the core knowledge, skills, confidence and understanding to play an effective role in their locality including greater engagement with and impact on public services. Learners who develop English language and speaking and listening skills are also far more able to contribute. The group-working inherent in much learning for active citizenship offers a model for the Big Society objective of individuals and communities coming together to take more responsibility and control. Adult learning can build local capacity to manage planning and regeneration activities, including the skills to articulate a vision and research, prepare and argue a robust case.

2. Connect learning and volunteering

Volunteering and learning are deeply connected and complementary activities. Each is both a route towards, and an outcome of, the other. The Big Society agenda is an opportunity to encourage and build on this reciprocity. Linking adult learning to programmes of voluntary activity means more services and activities can be offered and more diverse communities engaged. It also consolidates the incidental and informal ways in which volunteers gain new skills, knowledge and understanding, and supports their progression into further learning, civic activity or employment.

Encouraging volunteering by example is an important part of Big Society thinking. Members of Business in The Community and large companies such as BT and KPMG have supported the Government's intention to get more professionals from the private sector to use their skills to support charities and voluntary groups. Encouraging employee volunteering is also amongst the recommendations in the 'Every Business Commits' 'deal'. Additionally, as part of the first cross-Government volunteering initiative, the Civil Service has committed to giving 30,000 volunteering days a year.

While this sort of volunteering is important (with potentially additional benefits to policy making from an unprecedented level of 'grass roots' experience across Whitehall), the Big Society concept is linked closely to the Government's priorities around localism. This means voluntary activity also needs to develop from within a locality in order to build sustainable community empowerment. Adult learning is a powerful means of achieving this. For example, informed and trusted intermediaries from local groups and organisations are widely used in further and adult learning to reach potential learners, identify local learning needs and address barriers. Such activity demonstrates time and again that peer-to-peer interventions are highly effective in bringing people into learning as well as encouraging social action and community involvement. A further benefit of involving volunteers is that they often share the same values as those they engage with and therefore trust is established more quickly. The attributes of a good learning intermediary are also the essential qualities for active citizens.

There has been a recent growth of interest in voluntary learning groups and clubs. These take different forms and approaches but many 'self-organised' groups tend to be quite informal. For example, intergenerational learning circles and book clubs offer opportunities for parents, grandparents and other carers to learn together with the children in their care. Some might also offer lectures and talks by group members or external contributors. While there are aspects to self-organised learning that favour those who are already advantaged by good skills and more leisure time, evidence suggests the model also works as a powerful mechanism to encourage learning in more marginalised and disadvantaged areas. It enables participants to

become decision makers and co-designers of their learning and it can engender a real passion for shared and ‘useful’ knowledge. The autonomy and ownership encouraged by such groups is increasingly viewed as a means of securing some sustainability for community-based learning in a difficult funding climate. In a relatively short time, volunteers can take complete responsibility for governance, budget management and the learning ‘programme’.

3. Learners as partners in the creation of services: encourage learning for co-production

Co-creation or co-production is the systematic process of creating new solutions *with* people, not *for* them. By focusing on citizens’ own experiences and resources, co-creation can help identify truly valuable services. The benefits of this way of working include the transfer of power to locality, freeing up front-line workers, diversifying supply and increasing transparency. The learning and skills sector (and particularly those parts that focus on community development learning) has considerable experience of working with learners and local residents to develop learning services. Adult learning approaches also contribute to transforming other services such as health, employment, planning, and regeneration by deepening insights into what motivates and drives people’s behaviour. For example, learning projects with people with long-term health conditions have demonstrated the participants’ potential to contribute to the renewal and re-design of the services they use with the precondition that they have adequate support and training to take on new roles.

Adult learning is a powerful tool for bringing services closer to citizens and particularly, to those who are currently unable to participate in planning processes. One of the challenges in citizen-empowering approaches to public innovation is how to avoid the dominance of ‘professional citizens’ and ensuring others also get heard. By involving citizens in truly open learning networks that allow them to express their experiences and ideas, public service providers will be more able to devolve and improve decision making without denying a voice to more excluded members of a community. The purpose of embedding learning in the process is not to merely ask citizens which ideas they prefer, but to enable them to explore which ideas are likely to work.

4. Adapt learning for the digital age

Digital technology has the potential to be empowering when it is used and supported well. It can give people tools to take responsibility and control that are not available through other, more traditional routes, for example by connecting with unprecedented numbers of like-minded people and developing shared knowledge

and a shared 'voice'. Not surprisingly, Big Society thinking seeks to harness this power, envisaging "*technology helping people to turn the traditional power relationships on their head*"^x. This poses huge challenges and opportunities for learning. Evidence suggests 8.7 million adults in the UK (over a fifth of the population) have never been online. Nearly half are disabled, 39 per cent are over 65, 38 per cent are unemployed and 19 per cent are in families with children.^{xi} Tackling this 'digital divide' must become a central part of the Big Society effort. This entails more than addressing who has access to the web – ensuring we are all connected to the relevant boxes and wires. It is also about what we do when we get there. Learning to use and live with technology raises questions about the values and nature of community and connection, how we own or manage our online identities, and the relationship between online and offline transactions.

Much adult learning already makes good use of the potential of digital technology. Learning interventions commonly use it to enhance activities and provide information about how to start learning. Practitioners are increasingly taking a network approach to learning and giving participants access to digital and social media which can make a huge difference to their sense of personal power. The creation of new networks through adult learning activity, using free and freely available technology, can benefit people's confidence to have a voice, be an active citizen and exercise their right to democratic engagement.

The flows of information and the internal dynamics of adult learning delivered in this way could be crucial to innovating services. To really grasp the potential for better, cheaper services, we need to understand how people work in groups and networks, and how this can influence their behaviour and needs. Adult learning can provide valuable insights into the network contexts in which we live, work and influence each other and enrich how those networks function. After all, the strength of a network is defined not solely by the quantity of connections, but by their quality. Harnessing the 'valuable disruption' that occurs when technology and learning work together will help us achieve the qualities needed for the Big Society: "Vibrant, interactive, community, connected, innovative and up to date."^{xii}

5. Promote learning through and for families

Big Society messages attach considerable and increasing importance to the idea that "*strong families are where children learn to become responsible people*"^{xiii}. Learning families, where diverse forms of informal and formal learning are encouraged, where curiosity, enterprise and creativity are fostered, and social and self awareness are nurtured, belong at the heart of that vision.

Family learning is essential to the growth and support of learning families. It encourages and enables parents and other adult carers to learn together with their

children, and supports their active involvement in their children's learning. Alongside building new skills for themselves, it enables adults to encourage their children's development. Research tells us that investment in mothers' education impacts significantly on cognitive stimulation in the home, while long-term studies show that parents' engagement in activities with their children promotes the intellectual and social development of all concerned^{xiv}. To get the greatest benefit from these experiences, communities and families should be at the centre of Big Society plans to change the way services are delivered to ensure these work with the grain of changing patterns in family life – for example, the increasing number of grandparents taking on the full-time or substantial care of their grandchildren.

The potential contribution of family learning to the Big Society agenda is considerable. It increases health and wellbeing in families, improves aspiration and achievement in children, and supports parents' progression into other learning and employment. It increases parental involvement in schools and voluntary activity, and reduces recidivism among offenders. Along with informal adult learning more widely, family learning is a powerful means of increasing confidence, an underpinning quality for active citizenship and community involvement and for families to actively contribute to their neighbourhoods and shape local services through the opportunities offered by localism and public service reform. Family learning improves communication and relationships not just within the family but also the wider locality, and beyond.

Conclusion

This paper outlines key facets of the complex relationship between adult learning and the Big Society, setting out some elements of the considerable contribution of learning and skills to this agenda. It argues that the role of learning is understated in current analyses, to the detriment of our capacity to engage with the Big Society concept and its underpinning reform programme. It proposes that NIACE should work with partners from inside and outside the learning and skills sector to construct a robust case for the centrality of learning to the Big Society, and take active steps to support its incorporation into emerging debates, programmes and policy development. Readers are invited to comment on the paper and to identify areas for developing the analysis and the best means of taking this work forward.

NIACE is ready to assist parliamentarians of all parties and other public, private and third-sector bodies in civil society in developing or implementing any of the proposals in this briefing.

Please contact: cheryl.turnerr@niace.org.uk, simon.beer@niace.org.uk or alastair.thomson@niace.org.uk in the first instance.

About NIACE

The National Institute of Adult Continuing Education (NIACE) is an independent non-governmental organisation and charity. It is a membership body with corporate and individual members drawn from a range of places where adults learn: in further education colleges, workplaces, local community settings, universities, prisons and in their own homes via technology. The ends to which NIACE activities are directed can be summarised as being to secure more, different and better quality opportunities for adult learners in the UK. It is particularly concerned to advance the interests of those who have benefited least from their initial education and training.

The Patron of NIACE is Her Royal Highness the Princess Royal.

Contact:

NIACE, 20 Princess Road West, Leicester, LE1 6TP, UK

Tel: 0116 204 4200/4201

Fax: 0116 285 4514,

Email: enquiries@niace.org.uk

Web: www.niace.org.uk

APPENDIX

The three Big Society goals and their associated reforms and initiatives

1. Public service reform

The Government wants to break up “*public sector monopoly suppliers*” making it possible for more private and third sector providers to deliver public services. The argument is this will provide better, more responsive and innovative services at less cost to the public purse. Specific steps to support this are:

- *new ‘community right to bid’* so that local people, organised through not-for-profit charities, social enterprises and co-operatives, and working alongside conventional businesses, will be able to bid to run formerly public-sector services;
- *new public-sector workers’ ‘right to provide’* by which employers will be expected to accept suitable proposals from front-line staff who want to take over and run services as mutual (employee-owned) organisations;
- *Pathfinder Programme* of 12 public sector projects to be run as mutuals (known as ‘spin outs’) working with voluntary sector organisations;
- *£10 million* allocated to help the best fledgling ‘spin outs’ reach investment readiness and online support for interested staff;
- *Big Society Bank* being set up as a wholesale bank using money collected from dormant bank accounts (£60 million - £100 million in its first year and £400 million plus over the next few years) to encourage investment in social enterprises, charities and voluntary organisations wanting to run public services and other Big Society ambitions by capitalising social intermediaries and investing in new social finance products such as Social Impact Bonds;
- *Growing the social investment market* to enable ‘spin outs’ and other social ventures to access capital - the Big Society Bank is part of a wider strategy^{xv} that includes tax incentives and a regulatory and legal framework to grow social investment to become a ‘third pillar’ alongside traditional giving (see ‘Giving’ White Paper) and state funds; and
- *Procurement Reform* to ensure small companies, charities and voluntary organisations can compete for Government contracts - including a new single, online portal for public sector contracts worth over £10,000, streamlining procurement processes, and product surgeries to enable smaller enterprises to pitch innovative products and services.

2. Community empowerment

The Government links community empowerment to decentralisation which it regards “*as the biggest thing government can do to build the Big Society*”^{xvi}. This entails devolving power, money and information from the central state to local people and making all parts of government - from local councils to Whitehall departments - more transparent and accountable. The Government has identified six actions essential to decentralisation:

- removing the cost and control of red tape and regulation that restricts local action;
- creating new rights for people to direct the development of their communities;
- ensuring more decisions about how public money is spent and raised can be taken within communities;
- ending public sector monopolies and ensuring a level playing field for all suppliers;
- releasing government information so people know how their money is spent and to what effect; and
- empowering citizens to change their local services through participation, choice and ballot box.

Unprecedented amounts of data about decision-making and public expenditure will be released as a result.

The Decentralisation and Localism Bill currently before Parliament is a key instrument for achieving these changes. The Bill will introduce a:

- *requirement for local authorities* to produce an annual statement of their policy on Chief Officer remuneration and to publish every expenditure item over £500;
- *power to approve or veto council tax rises* for local people;
- *community ‘right to challenge’* local authorities’ service delivery and to express an interest in running services themselves;
- *community ‘right to buy’* listed assets of community value as they come up for disposal;
- *framework for a new, neighbourhood planning system*, the ‘neighbourhood development plan’, and two new planning orders, ‘neighbourhood development orders’ and ‘community right to build’ orders; and a
- *power to instigate referenda* on local issues for local people.

3. Social action

The goal of getting more people, groups and businesses to contribute to society has tended to preoccupy the debate about what is best and most contentious about the Big Society. This is due partly to the impact of funding cuts on voluntary and community organisations and charities which, it is estimated, may lose around £4.5 billion as a result. The Government's intention is to encourage active citizenship and social responsibility through increased volunteering, corporate social responsibility and other philanthropic actions, and stronger civil society organisations and networks. Various steps are being taken to galvanise a wider culture of giving and social action. These include:

- *Community Organisers Programme* funding training and support for a cohort of 5,000 professional 'community organisers' to work with local people, enabling them to start or strengthen their own networks, project, campaigns and group;
- *'Giving' White paper* (June 2011) setting out a range government, third and private sector initiatives to 'nudge' and facilitate giving into becoming a new social norm, including through tax incentives and everyday transactions such as cash machine withdrawals, payroll arrangements and phone applications, and the One Day Challenge that will include a day of volunteering by all Ministers;
- *Big Society Network* co-founded by Lord Wei, the Government's former Big Society adviser, and supported by Cabinet Office secondments, this independent 'group of citizens' promotes projects that encourage local involvement such as the 'Big Lunch', 'Your Square Mile' and participatory budgeting;
- *National Citizen Service* being piloted by The Challenge Network, focusing on 16 year olds to build team work, social responsibility and the experience of social action through projects generated by the participants; and
- *new Government Funds* including Community First (£80 million) which offers funding for community-led projects and resources to build local grant-giving endowment funds; the Social Action Fund (£10 million) which is available to support new models that will significantly impact on giving, such as complementary currencies (time credits, for example); and the Local Infrastructure Fund (£30 million) which will help deliver more effective support for charities and community groups; and
- *Every Business Commits* initiative between the corporate sector (led by Business in The Community) and Government which highlights the latter's view that business has a key role to play in the Big Society alongside the currently more prominent third and public sectors - it aims to raise the contribution of responsible companies across five areas and although all of

these will have significant social impacts, ‘support your community’ is perhaps most relevant in its encouragement to businesses to make employees’ time and skills and other company resources available to their local communities and to promote payroll giving.

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- ⁱⁱ HM Treasury (2010) *Spending Review*. http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/spend_index.htm
- ⁱⁱⁱ New Philanthropy Capital (2010) *Preparing for Cuts – New Philanthropy Capital* as quoted in Barnard, H. (November 2010) *Big Society, Cuts & Consequences: A thinkpiece*, Cass Business School Centre for Charity Effectiveness, p. 13
- ^{iv} Cabinet Office (May 2011) *Giving White Paper*. <http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk>
- ^v For example, the two-year ‘Creative Councils’ programme between NESTA (National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts) and the Local Government Group
- ^{vi} In his most recent speech on the Big Society (Monday 23 May 2011), the Prime Minister spoke of “creating a culture of responsibility”, of “people doing the right thing – by themselves and each other” and of designing “a system that matches effort with reward”. See <http://www.number10.gov.uk/news/speeches-and-transcripts/2011/05/speech-on-the-big-society>.
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- ^{viii} Glasman, M. (June-August 2010), ‘Society not State. The Challenge of the Big Society’, Public Policy Research, p. 62
- ^{ix} David Cameron, speech, Birmingham, 6 October 2010
- ^x David Cameron speech on Big Society May 23rd 2011
- ^{xi} From Race Online website (<http://raceonline2012.org/faqs>) and Office for National Statistics (18 May 2011) ‘Internet Access Quarterly Update 2011 Q1, p.3 (<http://www.statistics.gov.uk/articles/nojournal/internet-access-q1-2011.pdf>)’.
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- ^{xvi} HM Government (2010) *Decentralisation and Localism Bill: an essential guide*, Department for Communities and Local Government, p. 2