

Getting messages across

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The past five years have seen City Parochial Foundation and Trust for London adopting a greater 'public' profile. The purpose has not been self-promotion – as endowed grant-making organisations which do not have to rely on fundraising there would be no benefit – but rather to share good practice, show how initiatives, funding programmes and other work can make a difference. In addition, by illustrating the work of many organisations

Another aspect of making information easily available and the wish to ensure openness as part of good governance has been the establishment of a website for the Foundation and Trust. An important consideration in setting it up was that it should be attractive, easy to use, and give speedy access to information, while avoiding the pitfalls of this technology such as over-complication.

The information is logically and neatly laid out, and the pages load quickly. The Foundation and Trust publications, guidelines and application forms can be easily downloaded, in the latter case in two different formats. An important – albeit unnoticed aspect – has been to develop the main elements of the site around the Foundation's extensive database and internal network to avoid duplication and ensure efficient updating.

Another significant feature is the regular updating of the site with grants that have been made at the latest Committee meetings. This, coupled with the links to funded organisations' websites, means visitors to the site can obtain details of how the grants programmes are being implemented.

All this has been achieved internally by the Foundation's Publications and IT Manager Tina Stiff, demonstrating that it is not necessary to spend large sums and employ expensive consultants to develop an effective website.

which have received grants, it could help encourage others to apply for funding to assist their work.

Former Clerk Tim Cook described it as sharing 'hunches' – gained during field work and monitoring – about the needs of voluntary organisations and how policy and practice might respond to assist them and ensure that the benefits of funding could be maximised.

The approach took the form of special reports on individual funding programmes and initiatives, seminars and meetings to discuss these with voluntary groups and other funders, and events to launch reports and mark the completion of projects.

The first of these centred on the small groups workers scheme. Further reports followed on penal reform, mental health and carers, initiatives started in the previous Quinquennium.

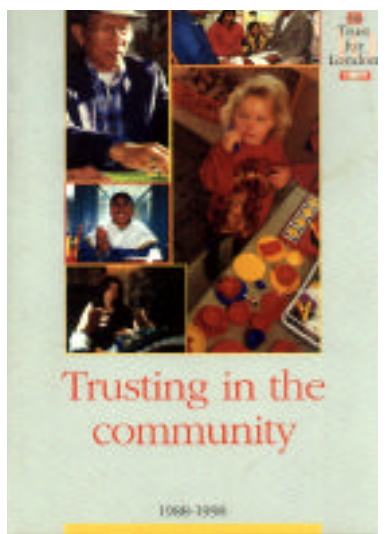
The first major event was a celebration to mark ten years of the existence of Trust for London. This took the form of an evening reception in the City. The effort was made to track down the 184 organisations which had received grants in the Trust's first year in 1988. It turned out that three in four still operated in some form – a higher proportion than anticipated – which indicated clearly that small community groups can survive, thrive and continue to provide services over an extended period.

More than a hundred people from these groups attended the celebration, held on 17 March 1998 in the library of The Guildhall along with many supporters of the Trust. Lord Elton a former Trustee of City Parochial Foundation, who was instrumental in Trust for London's establishment, was the guest speaker. Also present was Sir George Young, MP who was the Minister involved at the time.

The event also saw publication of *Trusting in the Community*, a special report detailing the 10 years.



Lord Elton (left) speaking at Trust for London's 10th Anniversary celebration held in The Guildhall. Many people from the groups funded in the first year attended the event and were presented with certificates marking the event and their role as community organisations by Ms Maggie Baxter (above left), Chairman of the Trust for London Grants Committee.





The Youth Programme report was launched at Ocean in Hackney where youth groups demonstrated their work. Guest speaker was Jon Snow (left), while the event was compered by Jason Harley (right), a member of the Foundation's staff.

