

Over the past year, the SIPSE action groups were:

### Exclusion through Disability – a focus on children & young people

#### Aim:

- To improve the life chances of children and young people in the South East who are excluded through disability.

#### Objectives:

- Identify existing networks and approaches to influence these.
- Identify available information, support and good practice and use this for maximum impact, ie production of an awareness raising pack.

There was a strong emphasis within the work of the group to:

- add real value to other activity related to exclusion through disability and not duplicate existing activity
- identify appropriate 'target audiences'
- consult 'users' (children and young people, their parents and carers).

#### Outcome:

- Production & wide dissemination of a resource pack "**Don't leave me out**" that takes an everyday look at the life of the disabled child and family. It identifies the key issues for each area of the child and family's life, and makes recommendations for ways in which services can meet their needs more effectively and so reduce social exclusion.
- The pack contains a report, case studies, useful tools and examples of good practice. It also includes a CD Rom containing a PowerPoint presentation that includes powerful video clips from interviews with disabled children and their parents, drawing on their experiences of exclusion (can also be downloaded from the SIPSE website).

#### Key messages from "Don't leave me out"

- Looks at the barriers and issues faced by disabled children, young people and their families, and has at its heart their genuine views.
- Uses the principles of the 'social model' of disability.

- Aims to stimulate action by strategic planners and decision makers by
    - Raising awareness
    - Encouraging self-evaluation
    - Prompting positive change to policies, plans and service delivery.
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## Older People

### Objectives

- To enhance active citizenship for socially excluded older people.
- To achieve affordable warmth for socially excluded older people ('keeping older people warm').

### Achievements to date

- Held a conference on 23 February 2005 on the implications of population ageing for the South East. The conference provided an opportunity to discuss the issues and look at ways of ensuring that current strategies prepare the region for demographic change over the next twenty years. See [www.sipse-ageing-conference.org.uk](http://www.sipse-ageing-conference.org.uk).
- Produced a consultation document 'South East Tomorrow' to stimulate discussion within the region on the implications of demographic change for the main regional policy areas.
- Used information gathered to write a SIPSE response to the South East Plan regarding older people issues.

From March 2005 to July 2005 the Group will produce a report on the implications of population ageing: 'South East Tomorrow', incorporating comments and feedback from the conference and consultation document. This will encourage "Think Strategically, Act Locally" and will be aimed at strategic planners and decision makers as well as practitioners throughout the South East region.

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## BME Communities and Asylum Seekers

### Aim:

- To enhance / maximise the life chances of socially excluded people from BME communities by promoting equitable access.

### Objectives:

To maximise opportunities available for otherwise socially excluded BME communities, including Asylum Seekers and Travellers, by enhancing access to:

- Generic Public Sector Services
- Support for the development and growth of BME businesses and services
- Positions of influence and leadership.

### Outcomes:

- Produced a Statement of Commitment to Race and its accompanying glossary, which has been endorsed by SIPSE members and member agencies and will be launched in September 2005.
- Held two events - 'Tackling the Barriers to Success and Achievement' - identifying changes necessary in organisations if barriers to success and achievement faced by BME staff are to be removed.
- Gathered data on BME communities (including information on training and support for BME leadership), Asylum Seekers and Travellers.

SIPSE has agreed that the action group could continue its work until March 2006 to focus on:

- Taking the Statement of Commitment forward and ensure accountability of SIPSE members and their agencies. This will be done by: publishing and launching the Statement of Commitment and organising a follow up event to review the work undertaken by signatories.
- Disseminating the findings of the 'Tackling barriers to success and achievement' events.
- Championing the work of other groups/partnerships on refugees and asylum seekers.
- Identifying the added value the group can bring to work with gypsies and travellers.