

What is community organising?

Community organising is about empowering people to fight for changes they want to see.

Community organising facilitates change from below. Unlike advocacy or charity, problems, solutions and tactics are identified collectively by those affected. It aims to help the move towards real, participatory democracy.

By encouraging collective discussion about society and by organising trainings on how to bring about changes identified, community organising provides the tools for progressive, collective action.

Community organising is a way of building broad-based, non-partisan organisations that can sustain change beyond individual campaigns to ensure long-term popular power.



The community organising model was first theorised by Saul Alinsky. In the 1930s, he perceived a generalised feeling of hopelessness among the poor and marginalised residents of the Chicago slum neighbourhood, Back of the Yards, a sentiment increasingly exploited by far-right groups. Working with local churches, unions and tenants associations, Alinsky founded the Neighbourhood Council that was able to take on exploitative businesses and corrupt politicians and is still going today.

Want to get involved? Any questions?

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Leeds Community Organising

We plan to launch Community Organising in Leeds early in 2011 – an alliance of organisations and individuals actively supporting grassroots-based change in the city.

We want it to include faith and cultural communities, residents and tenants' groups, workers organisations and campaigning groups. Community organising training and solidarity actions empower members to bring about change in their areas and beyond. It will draw in more and more people to broaden and strengthen the constituency of those involved in changing Leeds.

Building social links – relational interviews

We want to meet people who know people, people who can help us, people in active groups and people who are interested in community organising. If this is you – **we want to meet you!**

We are also looking for volunteers to help with web design, treasury, marketing and developing the organisation generally.

Community organising groups across the UK have been successful with campaigns devised by their members. London Citizens has spearheaded the living wage campaign and pushed for affordable housing. The newly formed Changemakers in Manchester is rebuilding support for sanctuary for those fleeing persecution. Together Creating Communities in North Wales has set up a nightshelter for the homeless and won local victories on sound pollution, specialist nursing and more room for a member group mosque. We believe Leeds has equally exciting potential.

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