



you should be linking with in solidarity instead of competing against? Does your community group still find itself without the resources or help that would allow it to do the things you think are needed in your area? Tell your stories, mobilise people and campaign locally for what you want. If your independence is already compromised and being directly oppositional is not possible, there are more subtle ways of using your influence. Insist on an equal relationship with your funder, negotiate and design your own service and monitoring systems.

## ACT TOGETHER

Your arguments will be stronger if you look for allies. Involve your users and colleagues in other organisations and other sectors. Involve concerned people and the press. Link with trade unions and anti-cuts campaigns. Find out what others are facing. If networks don't already exist, the effort to put them in place can be well rewarded and can remind you you're not alone.

## SPEAK UP

'Second tier' support groups or infrastructure organisations, such as councils for voluntary service, need to link meaningfully with their members to make sure their views are represented. They need to make it clear to funders that their representational role is central to their existence and cannot be sacrificed. At national level, federations, membership organisations and trade unions can research and report on threats and damage to the sector and speak plainly about what must change. They can refuse to conspire with policies and practices which threaten independence.

CARTOONS: MORAG MACINNES



'..she's never been the same since they told her to demonstrate her cross cutting network targeting strategy...'

## SUPPORT OUR CAMPAIGNS

NCIA has three linked campaign areas.

### 1. Public services and privatisation

We are gathering people's stories about their experiences, tips on local campaigning, negotiating with commissioners and ways of funding independent action. Contact us for our paper on the effects of privatisation, cuts, 'big society' and localism. Get in touch so we can link you with others speaking up in your local area or field of work.

### 2. Managing for independence

Being well managed in the voluntary and community sector is more than just being efficient in providing services, it is about changing society for the better. We want to promote appropriate management styles for voluntary organisations so they can keep their purpose and soul intact. We want to stop inspiration drying up in the face of heavy handed performance management practices that should never have been adopted. Ask us for our leaflet on this subject and share it with your colleagues or help us to trial our 'independence audit' for organisations.

### 3. Supporting activism

We are seeking ways to support initiatives by people and groups for social change and justice, and to speak out against policies which threaten it. We are working with organisations who use values-based approaches to develop people's skills for collective action. We want to talk to activists about what would help them with their actions and to people who support activists about how they do it. Get in touch if you're doing this or wish that you were!

## Join the action!

If you would like to know more about NCIA and get involved, please have a look at our website: [www.independention.net](http://www.independention.net) (you can sign up to our newsletter there) or contact us at: [info@independention.net](mailto:info@independention.net)