

Friends of Troopers Hill win Green Flag Award



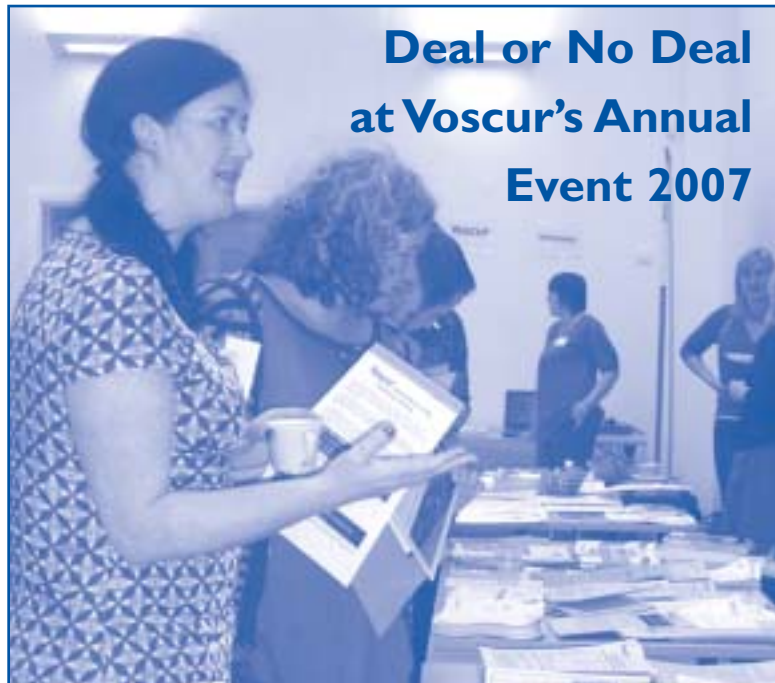
Voscur Rep new Chair of Bristol Partnership

The funding mix: Why grants are necessary for the sector

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Neighbourhood Partnerships Pullout inside

Deal or No Deal at Voscur's Annual Event 2007



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Voscur

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The Voscur Newsletter is available on disc, in either Word or pdf form. Please contact the office if you would like to receive your newsletter on disc. It is also available online as a pdf at www.voscur.org/publications

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The Voscur Annual Event

Delivering Public Services - Deal or No Deal?

The voluntary, community and social enterprise (vcse) sector is distinctive and can play an effective role in delivering public services, was the broad conclusion at Voscur's recent Annual Event. There was consensus that the sector does understand and respond innovatively and flexibly to the needs of communities.

Alison Hopkins of the National Consumer Council, presented findings from her authoritative report of service users experiences of the vcse sector's delivery of certain types of public services.

Some key points from her report are:

- The sector is excellent at providing employment advice and placement services and particularly good at providing information, listening and responding, providing a human touch, plugging gaps and tailoring services to meet individuals' holistic needs. It was seen as distinctly better than the private and public sector at providing this type of service.
- The vcse sector compared favourably to the public sector in terms of home care provision, especially in terms of bending the rules to assist users and being people focused. However, the vcse sector was rated lower than the private sector.
- In terms of social housing the vcse sector was seen as slightly better than the public sector, though users tended to rate these services much less highly than the other services.

Alison recommended that the public sector needed to commission more "intelligently", through understanding better the strengths and weaknesses of the vcse sector.

In response, **Helen Ball, Bristol City Council's Head of Policy, Performance and Equalities**, praised the added value that the vcse sector can bring through its innate concern about the individual.

Fran Harrison, Manager at Fairbridge West (which delivers public services under contract) spoke about the need for commissioners to pay the full cost for the work, to

agree manageable data monitoring requirements and to be helpful if the organisation is having difficulties, rather than letting it struggle.

Nigel Newton-Sawyerr spoke about Voscur's role in the C3 partnership and about the performance improvement tools and learning opportunities that have been developed to enable groups to be more competitive, confident and credible.

Clare Hall, Voscur's Chair, emphasised the dilemma that the vcse sector is best at being close to the community and filling gaps that other sectors cannot fill, and therefore bidding for public sector contracts may take the sector away from what it's good at.

In response to a range of questions from the audience, Helen Ball spoke about the opportunity to influence commissioning through Bristol Partnership meetings. She hoped in future that there would be a Council website that enabled potential bidders to see the range of opportunities on offer and decide for themselves which were relevant to them. Another common view from the event was that support services like C3 need to be available to enable groups to be ready to bid for contracts.

Alison Hopkins urged us to "push at the open door" and as long as independence isn't at risk, deal!



Alison Hopkins and Clare Hall

Blears hints at new petition powers for residents

Hazel Blears, Secretary of State for Communities & Local Government, has announced that she wants to consult on a new duty for councils to respond to petitions from residents and other groups. Speaking at the Development Trust Association (DTA) annual conference she said that the new powers would be similar to the 'Community Call for Action' contained within the local government bill, which gives councillors powers to raise issues on behalf of their constituents.

Residents and community groups regularly use petitions to raise issues to the attention of local councillors. In 2005, Bristol City Council launched an online e-petition facility

where people can create or sign a petition via the council website. Since its launch thousands of residents have used the online e-petition service.

Blears also announced the establishment of a 'community empowerment partnership' charged with improving the quality and co-ordination of community involvement across England. The Community Development Foundation will lead the partnership.

Find out more about the Community Development Foundation at www.niace.org.uk and e-petitions at www.bristol.gov.uk/epetition

Save the Community Champions Fund

The Community Champions Fund has supported literally thousands of individuals across the country to get exciting and creative new projects off the ground in their communities.

Supported by the Department for Education and Skills (as was), this fund will end in March 2008, and there are no plans to replace it.

The Scarman Trust is campaigning to save this unique programme. Community Champions have done extraordinary things, building positive community activities from the grass-roots and reaching literally thousands of people.

Please sign the petition to Save Community Champions (on the Number 10 website) - and encourage as many others as possible to do so.

<http://petitions.pm.gov.uk/save-champions>

Goodbye to Faith

Faith Davey, The Care Forum's Chief Executive, is taking her considerable skill and passion for the sector to the regional level as she takes up her new post of South West Regional Manager for Age Concern England this month.

Faith joined The Care Forum in 1999 and since then has worked hard to extend its reach and raise its profile. The Care Forum's voluntary sector team has gone from strength to strength under Faith's leadership, and the Care Forum now runs a variety of networks for voluntary and community sector organisations working in mental health, Children and Young People and Older People. The Care Forum's members are seen as key stakeholders and contributors to the planning, delivery and improvement of health and well-being services.

Voscur works closely with the Care Forum in the ChangeUp Consortium, particularly to support Children and Young People and Older People's groups and we will certainly miss Faith's clarity in debate and discussion. Goodbye and good luck Faith.

The Bristol Partnership & Faith Communities

The next meeting of the Bristol Partnership is on Thursday 13 December 2007, 1pm at The Council House, College Green, Bristol.

The focus will be on the theme of 'Faith Communities'.

Bristol Partnership meetings are open to anyone with an interest in this subject.

For full details of the December Bristol Partnership meeting visit www.bristolpartnership.org/diary or call 0117 922 2540.

Did you know it's Compact Week?



Compact Week is 1-8 November 2007. The Compact is the agreement between government and the voluntary, community & social enterprise (vcse) sector to improve their relationship for mutual advantage and community gain.

The Compact steering group have been working on reviewing and updating the Compact. This document is currently being finalised and will go out for consultation this month.

The steering group is also separately reviewing the Compact Funding and Procurement guidance to make sure that it reflects current concerns in the sector and changes in policy.

Since the original guidance was published, several reports relating to commissioning of vcse organisations have been published, and we are keen to ensure that recommendations from these are incorporated into our local guidance.

'The Future Role of the Third Sector in Social and Economic Regeneration - Final Report', published by the Cabinet Office and the Treasury in July 2007, states that at a national level "some aspects of the Compact and its Codes were being overtaken by recent developments in policy and practice – in funding, procurement, equalities and other areas. The time is right to refresh the Compact and its Codes, with the aim of bringing the documents fully up to date while preserving unchanged, and reaffirming the core principles of the Compact".

The Audit Commission report 'Hearts and minds: commissioning from the voluntary sector' also published in July, talked about intelligent commissioning and made the following recommendations:

Local public bodies should:

- Engage local voluntary organisations in service planning, to benefit from their knowledge of clients.
- Engage voluntary organisations in designing commissioning processes that encourage a diverse supply base.

Voluntary organisations should:

- Improve their understanding of their costs and submit high-quality, fully costed bids for service delivery contracts that address commissioners' service objectives.
- Evaluate their own value for money and use that evaluation to make the case for service delivery through the voluntary sector to local public bodies.

As part of the local Compact review, Voscur will write to commissioners of services within the local authority and across the Bristol Partnership to ask them how they involve vcse organisations in designing and commissioning services. We also want to know what steps public agencies are taking to ensure that there is a level playing field when commissioning services from our sector.

Voscur has also been working with Compact partners to amend and update the Full Cost Recovery section of the guidance.

The Compact steering group will be meeting at the beginning of November to review our findings, bring them all together and then ask for your views. There will be a three-month consultation period.

Useful reports:

Partnership in Public Services

www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/third_sector/public_services

Strong and Prosperous Communities

www.communities.gov.uk/publications/localgovernment

Third Sector Review

www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/third_sector/third_sector_review

'Hearts and minds: commissioning from the voluntary sector'

www.audit-commission.gov.uk

The future role for the third sector in social and economic regeneration

The Government has been examining the role of third sector organisations in society - The Third Sector Review. This has included the largest consultation the Government has ever carried out with third sector organisations. The results are set out in detail in **'The future role for the third sector in social and economic regeneration: final report'**.

This strategy builds on previous work and sets out how the Government will help to develop and support a wider range of third sector activities, particularly community action and campaigning. It will also focus more on investing in the long-term future of the third sector's work and on improving local partnerships.

The Review recognises the role for community organisations in bringing people together and providing essential local services, and commits the Government to working to build relationships between local authorities and local organisations.

To support this there are several new funding announcements for local groups:

- A new £80 million in small grants to community groups, through local

grant funders, to allow people and groups to make a difference in their local areas.

- A £30 million programme to give communities the resources to develop community-owned buildings.
- An investment of £50 million in endowments for community foundations to make sure that they can provide grants in the future for community groups.
- Resources to help community organisations support themselves in the future by developing assets or bringing in income.

The Review acknowledges the vital role that some organisations play in designing and delivering public services. It also recognises the need to invest in training for the people that pay for and arrange public services so they are better able to engage local groups in design and delivery. There will also be an extra £65 million for the FutureBuilders Fund, which provides loans and grants to organisations looking to deliver public services in all areas.

The Review sets out how the Government will invest in raising awareness of the social enterprise

business model. It will also work to improve the business support that is available for people who want to start and develop social enterprises and look at ways of improving social enterprises' access to finance. The Office of the Third Sector will work with Government departments to investigate how social enterprise business models can improve how they carry out policies, and the outcomes from them.

The Review indicates that the Government wants to improve the environment that all third sector organisations work in. It will work to improve financial relationships between organisations and all parts of Government, including promoting three-year periods of funding where possible. It will also invest over £80 million in Capacitybuilders, to support organisations that help frontline groups. It will develop a strategy to boost the skills of people working and volunteering in the third sector.

Read 'The future role for the third sector in social and economic regeneration: final report' at:

www.cabinetoffice.go.uk/third_sector/third_sector_review

New Voscur Members



Envolve began life as 'Bath Environment Centre' in 1994 by a small group of local people who wanted to do something positive to address environmental issues in Bath. Envolve has been leading the way in the region, pioneering new approaches to help people find more sustainable ways to live and work.

It now runs a range of projects across South West England encouraging more sustainable communities, in partnership with schools, businesses, community groups and individuals.

- Envolve Business - our business team delivers specialist consultancy to inspire and enable businesses to become more sustainable.
- Envolve Education - we work in schools, colleges, universities and the wider community to promote knowledge and understanding of the relationships between people and the planet.
- Envolve Community - we work with individuals and groups enabling them to make a significant and lasting difference to their community and environment.

Envolve, South Vaults, Green Park Station, Bath, BA1 1JB.

Tel: 01225 787910,
email: office@envolve.org.uk

www.envolve.org.uk

The British Empire & Commonwealth Museum

Housed in a magnificent building (Grade 1 listed) built by Isambard Kingdom Brunel, this award-winning national Museum charts the rise and fall of the largest empire the world has ever known. The Museum represents the first serious attempt in the UK to present a publicly accessible history of the British empire and to examine its impact on Britain and the world today.

A major Heritage Lottery Funded exhibition 'Breaking the Chains' currently occupies the entire top floor of the Museum, commemorating the 200th anniversary of the abolition of the slave trade. This widely acclaimed exhibition presents the history and legacies of this brutal trade using powerful and modern techniques.

Both the permanent galleries and Breaking the Chains are included with the single admission price. All full paying visitors also qualify for a free Annual Pass which allows unlimited return visits for a whole year, allowing visitors to take in exhibitions and a varied events programme at their own pace.

For further information call 0117 925 4980 or visit www.empiremuseum.co.uk



Building Better Communities

The Easton Community Centre is a fantastic space offering rest, recreation and regeneration to one of Bristol's most lively and innovative communities. Toc H, a community-based charity, striving to eliminate social exclusion and promoting the importance of bringing all sectors of society together, manages the centre. The centre is home to some of Bristol's leading organisations, similarly tackling social issues that limit community cohesion.

The winter brings an exciting time for the centre as Toc H facilitates innovative project work, including mentoring schemes, youth activity programmes and a variety of accredited courses for the young and old, directed through consultation with the community. This is an ideal time to get involved with the various up and coming events, as well as ongoing art, dance, theatre and sport centred projects.

For more information please either phone 0117 954 1409 or call in to Easton Community Centre on Kilburn Street, Easton, Bristol, BS5 6AW



Putting your Plans into Action



Have you ever felt overwhelmed at the prospect of putting your project's plans into action? So much to do, so little time.

If this sounds familiar, then you may wish to try a very simple and engaging method of group action planning called **Participative Gantt Charting**.

Gantt charting is a process intended to involve a group of between 3 and 8 people in developing an action plan which identifies a clear timescale for actions and who will do what. It ensures that staff and volunteers have a sense of ownership of the plan, which means that they will have a greater interest in ensuring that the plan is implemented.

It may be that your team has lots of ideas that will improve your project. However, the action plan can only include specific and achievable actions, so the first step is to identify a specific action, or actions, for each idea for improvement.

Once you have identified actions for each idea, write each action on a separate piece of paper, in no more than five words, then stick them all onto a blank wall.

Everyone can then look at the wall to see if there are any overlaps and logical connections between actions, and group the pieces of paper together.

The next task is to prioritise which actions are going into the plan. Each person takes 10 or so sticky dots and places them on the specific action(s) that they see as being the most important. The actions with the most dots on at the end of the exercise are the priority actions.

The next step is to schedule the actions using a Gantt chart. Firstly, mark out the Gantt chart on a large space of wall. You do this by:

- Arranging the titles of each set of actions in a vertical axis on the left hand side of the wall.
- Writing the names of the forthcoming months on pieces of paper and arranging them in a horizontal axis along the top of the wall space.

Then start to discuss each in turn to identify when each action should be completed. This will depend on other work the organisation has planned. The timing of each action might depend on when other actions can be completed too.

Once the timescale has been agreed use a different coloured piece of paper to identify which participant will be responsible for taking each set of actions forward. Sometimes participants will take on a specific action but if possible try to encourage responsibility for sets of actions.

Once the Gantt chart has been completed, it is important to discuss how the plan will be implemented:

- Who will convert the plan on the wall into an electronic document?
- Who will be responsible for each piece of work?
- How will progress be monitored and communicated?

Download more information on action planning and Gantt charts at www.c3partnership.org/toolkit/action-planning

New Funding Related Resources

Funding Health Check – A diagnostic tool to help you assess the strengths and weaknesses of your organisation in terms of fundraising strategy and practice, along with a skills audit to help you and your staff assess their individual skills development needs.

Fundraising Toolkit - A set of concise guides on fundraising including general overviews and tips and more specific guidance on developing a Fundraising strategy, writing effective funding proposals and using a Full Cost Recovery approach and more.

All these tools can be downloaded at www.voscur.org/funding/tools

Voscur has recently purchased up to the minute copies of a number of **essential fundraising books**, which can be used in our library during working hours. This includes the entire Fundraising Series produced by the Directory of Social Change and the Institute of Fundraising as well as guides to Major Trusts, Local Trusts, Company Giving and many more.

If you would like to come in and use these books, please phone the Voscur office on 0117 909 9949.

Funding update from Quartet

The Local Network Fund and the Global Grants programmes are completed for the year and closed to applications. The Express, Bank of Ireland and other rolling funds will continue as normal. However, there has been a high demand on the funds in the Express programme this year, so do contact us to before applying so that we can advise you on your best options.

We are awaiting announcements on what will be happening with Government funding next year

and investigating the possibility of distributing a number of potential Government funds. To keep up to date with what is happening sign up to our monthly enews at www.quartetcf.org.uk

Alice Meason, Quartet Community Foundation

Tel: 0117 989 7700



Full Cost Recovery

Voscur is working with Bristol City Council to assist them in developing a user-friendly and consistent model of Full Cost Recovery which is recognised and acceptable to both the voluntary, community & social enterprise sector and the City Council.

We're also working on a consultative process to determine appropriate costs and means of allocation in grants and commissioning arrangements with the City Council.

For further information contact Sabrina Lee, Voscur's Funding Advisor on 0117 909 9949 or email: sabrina@voscur.org

Dates for your diary

- **Finance Workers and Treasurers Forum meeting on Full Cost Recovery**, 7 November 2007 (10am-1pm), at Children's Scrapstore, Sevier Street, St Werburghs, Bristol.
- **Fundraising from Trusts**, 14 November 2007 (see page 12)
- **Proposal Development**, 28 November 2007 (see page 12)
- **Advanced/Strategic Fundraising**, 9 January 2008, at The Withywood Centre, Queens Road, Bristol, BS13 8QA
- **Making a Winning Application** to the BIG Lottery, 28 January 2008, Children's Scrapstore, Sevier Street, St Werburghs, Bristol, BS2 9LB

The Funding mix: why we need grant funding

Many voluntary, community & social enterprise (vcse) sector organisations are facing a 'funding crisis'. This has been fuelled by a reduction in grant funding from local authorities, the health service, central government and the European Union, matched by non-statutory trust and foundations and the Big Lottery being massively oversubscribed.

In June 2007, the National Association for Voluntary and Community Action (NAVCA) published a report to outline and emphasise the importance of grant funding for the vcse sector and provide evidence for local authorities to maintain and increase grant funding.

While there is a great deal of inconsistency among local authorities in their approach and scale of grant funding, most (if not all) have made some commitment to continuation of grant funding. Furthermore, most are carrying out work on procurement to prevent barriers to the vcse sector in public service delivery.

However, local authorities face some significant challenges to grant funding including implementing the principle of Full Cost Recovery, due largely to confusion and inconsistency over the distinction between what is purchased and what is funded. This is made more complex by Service Level Agreements (SLAs), which often have

higher levels of service requirements or targets than the funding offered.

Treasury guidance to funders suggests that SLAs should be phased out in favour of grants and contracts. However, not all organisations can take part in the competitive tendering process because many offer services which are unique to their community, or are not financially secure enough to take on the risks involved.

Procurement processes are far from being at a stage where they present a level playing field for the vcse sector.

There is concern that phasing out SLAs, and the grant-funding relationships that are linked to them, and transferring these to contractual service budgets would make the vcse sector vulnerable to change in the public sector priorities. The independence of the sector and the flexibility to respond to community needs could be lost if significant sources of grant funding dry up.

“Grant aid is an essential part of the local funding mix for community organisations and remains essential to thriving communities”

Kevin Curley, Chief Executive of NAVCA, June 2007

Grant funding is crucial as a means to support an active vcse sector. Without grant funding many organisations, especially those run by volunteers, are likely to fold thus limiting a valid and cost effective means of accessing communities and encouraging engagement.

In their leadership role, local authorities must give due consideration to the ways their funding practice impacts on the vcse sector. A vibrant local vcse sector is best achieved through mixed financial arrangements with the sector including giving, investment and purchasing services.

For more information and to read the full report: Why are Grants so Important for a Healthy Local VCS (June 2007) visit www.navca.org.uk or request a copy from Sabrina Lee, Voscur, tel: 0117 909 9949.

Voscur's Fundraising Training:

- Fundraising from Trusts
- Funders Fair
- Funding Proposal Development
- Developing a Fundraising Strategy
- Making a Winning Application to the Big Lottery

More details on page 12 & 13

Voscur's Autumn Training Programme

Voscur's Training Programme continues to respond to the training needs of the sector. Of the 476 participants that attended Voscur training in 2006/07:

- 97% said that they would attend Voscur training again
- 96% felt that the training was useful or extremely useful in their day-to-day work.

To book onto the training go to www.voscur.org/training and fill in the online booking form. Or contact Denise Martin on 0117 909 9949 if you would like a paper booking form. Voscur training is very popular – so book soon!

For more details on Voscur training, and information on bursary places, contact Sophie Bayley on 0117 909 9949 or email: sophieb@voscur.org

Why Can't Equalities Communities Reach Us?

Thurs 8 November (9.30am - 3.30pm)
CEED, Wilder Street, St Paul's, Bristol, BS2 8QU
Trainers: Ruth Pitter & Sophie Bayley - Voscur
Full Members £50 / Associate Members £70 /
Non-members £125

Struggling to get other communities involved in the activity of your organisation? This session will provide you with information, ideas and tools and assist you in moving your organisation forward to becoming more inclusive.

Fundraising from Trusts

Weds 14 November (9.30am - 3.30pm)
The Withywood Centre, Queens Road, Bristol, BS13 8QA
Trainer: Vicky Harrison - Independent Consultant
Full Members £50 / Associate Members £70 /
Non-members £125

Raising money from trusts can often seem daunting. This course will provide you with the skills you need to make your application successful.

Effective Leadership - new!

Tues 20 November (9.30am - 3.30pm)
Barton Hill Settlement, Ducie Road, Bristol, BS5 0AX
Trainer: Caroline Cook - Phoenix Associates
Full Members £50 / Associate Members £70 /
Non-members £125

This session is for anyone in a leadership role in their organisation. The day will include:

- The difference between management and leadership.
- Understanding your leadership style and how this impacts on others.
- Proactive leadership and what that means you actually have to do.

Involving your Service Users

Tues 27 November (10am - 1pm)
The Black Development Agency, Russell Town Avenue, Redfield, Bristol, BS5 9LT
Trainer: Nigel Newton Sawyerr - Voscur
Full Members £30 / Associate Members £50 /
Non-members £75

Involving service users in service development, as volunteers or management committee members could greatly improve your organisation's effectiveness. Among other things this session will cover:

- Pros and cons of user involvement.
- Methods of user involvement - current and future.
- How we invite/recruit/enable users to be involved.

Proposal Development – new!

Weds 28 November (10am - 4pm)
 Children's Scrapstore, The Proving House, Sevier Street, St Werburghs, Bristol, BS2 9LB
 Trainer: Sabrina Lee – Voscur
 Full Members £50 / Associate £70 / Non-members £125

This session will assist participants to improve skills and confidence in developing effective project funding proposals. The day will include detailed analysis and practical application of the proposal development process and components of funding proposals.

Funders Fair

Weds 5 December (10am - 4pm)
 Southville Centre, Beaufey Road, Southville, Bristol, BS3 1QG
 Facilitator: Sabrina Lee – Voscur
 Full Members £20 / Associate £30 / Non-members £50

This full-day event will include talks from major grants giving organisations from the statutory sector, trusts and foundations and the corporate sector. This will give you the opportunity to learn more about new grant programmes, discuss specific projects with funders and find appropriate funders for your cause.

Basic Computing Skills - new!

Thurs 29 November (9.30am - 3.30pm)
 St Werburghs Community Centre, Horley Road, Bristol, BS2 9TJ
 Trainer: Sean Kenny – Voscur
 Full Members £50 / Associate Members £70 / Non-members £125

Have you taken on a role that means you need to know how to use computers but don't know where to start? This basic course will help you if you are using computers for the first time or you need a refresher. It will cover Microsoft Office; Word/Excel; email; using the internet; question and answer clinic.

Developing a Fundraising Strategy

Weds 9 January 2008 (9.30am - 3.30pm)
 The Withywood Centre, Queen's Road, Bristol, BS13 8QA
 Trainer: Vicky Harrison - Independent Consultant
 Full Members £50 / Associate Members £70 / Non-members £125

The course will help you to:

- Learn about the link between the fundraising strategy and your business plan.
- Develop ideas about what to include in a fundraising policy.
- Learn to set priorities for funding using a framework.
- Learn how to chart and manage a number of funding streams.
- Look at funding streams and income generation methods most appropriate for your group.

Developing Effective Publicity - new!

Tues 4 December (9.30am - 3.30pm)
 The Gatehouse Centre, Hareclive Road, Bristol, BS13 9JN
 Trainer: Vicky Harrison - Independent Consultant
 Full Members £50 / Associate Members £70 / Non-members £125

Developing effective publicity is one of those things that are expected of us in the voluntary sector, but we don't always have the skills. The session will cover:

- Discuss what we mean by marketing and identify what you need to market.
- Creating messages to meet the needs of different audiences.
- A structured approach to putting together adverts using marketing principles.

Making a Winning Application to the Big Lottery Fund

Mon 28 January 2008 (9.30am - 4.30pm)
 Children's Scrapstore, Sevier Street, St Werburghs, Bristol, BS2 9LB
 Facilitator: Sabrina Lee (Voscur)
 Full Members £20 / Associate Members £30 / Non-members £50

This one-day session will give you up-to-date information on Big Lottery Fund programmes and equip you with skills to make a winning application to the Big Lottery's demand-led programmes.

FREE Learning for people living and working in Neighbourhood Renewal areas

The Neighbourhood Renewal Learning Plan (NRLP) is here to help anyone living or working in Neighbourhood Renewal (NR) areas to enhance the skills and knowledge they need to be part of improving their neighbourhood.

- We can pay some expenses, such as transport and childcare.
- You will receive a certificate of attendance for each course.
- Residents will be given priority, on a first come, first served basis.
- Please book as soon as possible to secure a place.
- All the events are free and will include food!

What Does Representing your Community mean?

Thurs 1 November (9.30am - 3.30pm)
CEED, Ujima House, Wilder Street, Bristol, BS2 8QU
Trainer: Susan Lawrence (Independent Consultant)

This one day course will take you through what community representation and consultation is, how to do it effectively, how to ensure information flows well between all groups/parties and how to have good clear boundaries that look after you and your community.

How is your Group Getting on?

Tues 6 November (9.30am - 3.30pm)
The Gatehouse Centre, Hareclive Road, Bristol, BS13 9JN
Trainers: Subitha Baghirathan & Hannah Parker (Voscur)

This session is for local groups, such as Task Groups or Theme Groups, and will give you ways to:

- Look back on the highs and lows of your group.
- Think about the impact you are having and how to improve things.
- Plan for the future.

Demystifying the Planning Process

Weds 7 November (5.45pm - 9pm)
The Southville Centre, Beaulley Road, Bristol, BS3 1QG
Trainer: Sue Webber (Planning Aid)

If you want to know more about how building growth is 'planned' in your area, come to this session. It will cover:

- How development is managed and controlled.
- How Bristol City Council is planning for growth in the next 20 years.
- Ways you can influence decisions.

How are They Doing it in Cardiff?

Mon 12 November (9.30am - 5.30pm)
Facilitator: Hannah Parker (Voscur)

This coach trip will take you to Butetown Cardiff, to visit the exciting Communities First project. Communities First has a strong emphasis on community involvement, with agencies and local people working together.

Create More Time in Your Life!

Thurs 15 November (10am - 4pm)
Easton Business Centre, Felix Road, Bristol, BS5 0HE
Trainers: Hannah Parker & Sophie Bayley (Voscur)

Do you want to have more time in the day? Do you want to be able to say 'No'? Do you want to be better at prioritising what you do? If so, this day is for you!

Setting Up a Group

Weds 21 November (9.30am - 12.30pm),
The Greenway Centre, Doncaster Road, Bristol,
BS10 5PY

Trainer: Vicky Harrison (Independent Consultant)

This course is for anyone who is running, or has an idea to set up a small group. It will help you:

- Identify what your group is about and what it's trying to achieve.
- Identify all the practical issues involved in running the group.
- Learn ways of managing money.
- Think about how to publicise the group.

Speak Up!

Thurs 22 November (9.30am - 3.30pm)
The Park, Daventry Road, Knowle, Bristol, BS4 1QD

Trainers: Peter Hunter and David Johnson
(International performance poets and Radio 4 playwrights)

Public speaking and presentation skills day. This is a day for anyone who may be called upon to speak or represent their group in public and feels nervous or lacking the skills for the task.

How to Deal with Difficult Behaviour and Situations

Thurs 6 December (10am - 4pm)
The Witherwood Centre, Queens Rd, Bristol,
BS13 9JN

Trainer: Amanda Radox (Community Resolve)

This one-day course will provide you with the tools to deal with conflict in meetings, at home and in your community. You will also develop a greater understanding of your own personal reaction to conflict situations.

For more information or to book onto any of the NRLP sessions, please contact Hannah Parker or Rebekah Hacker at Voscur, tel: 0117 909 9949, email: hannah@voscur.org or rebekah@voscur.org or book online www.voscur.org/training

Neighbourhood Renewal Areas: St Pauls, Easton & Lawrence Hill, Barton Hill, Lawrence Weston, Lockleaze, Southmead, Knowle West, Hartcliffe & Witherwood, Parts of: The Dings, St Judes, St Agnes, Dove Street, and Crow Lane, Henbury.

FREE Places for Residents on other courses!

We are able to offer a financial contribution of up to £75 per person to help you attend other courses (including non-Voscur courses).

Courses do need to be relevant to your involvement in Neighbourhood Renewal and Neighbourhood Management.

Contact Hannah Parker for further information.

Tel: 0117 909 9949 or email: hannah@voscur.org



Friends of Troopers Hill

Troopers Hill is one of two sites in Bristol to win a prestigious Green Flag Award in 2007/08. Green Flags are a means of recognising and rewarding the best green spaces in the country. We caught up with the Friends of Troopers Hill to find out more about their recent success and what else they've been getting up to.

Why and when did you start up?

The friends group started in November 2003. Our aim was to care for the Hill; get Bristol City Council to take their responsibility for the hill seriously; and to encourage public ownership of the space. Sally Oldfield - Bristol Parks' Local Nature Reserves Officer was very supportive and helped us set up the group.

What do you do and what services do you offer?

Troopers Hill Local Nature Reserve is owned by Bristol City Council and managed by Bristol Parks in partnership with The Friends of Troopers Hill – we provide a friendly community focus for people who care about Troopers Hill.

Discussions at Friends of Troopers Hill meetings, work parties and social events are always generating ideas.

We hold regular work parties - on the 1st Saturday of each month. 10am to mid-day, and anyone can come along. Our work parties on Troopers Hill are a fun way of helping maintain the environment of the site for everyone's benefit. Work parties finish with a chat over a cold drink, coffee or tea and biscuits. We supply gloves and tools but please wear long sleeves and suitable footwear.



What is your group up to at the moment?

We're running a photo competition at the moment. You can send your photographs either as an electronic image to friends@troopers-hill.org.uk, or as print or slide by post to Susan at 3 Corkers Hill, Bristol, BS5 8DT. All entries need to be received by 1st December 2007.

If people are in need of inspiration then just go for a walk on the hill - it is a great place to take photos, the colours and shadows are always changing. There will be three categories: under 12 years old, 12—16 years old and over 16. The winners will be announced at our AGM on 11 December, when we hope to show as many entries as we can.

What have been your recent successes?

Winning the Green Flag Award has been a great team effort with everyone working together to bring real improvements to the hill and the way it is managed. The management plan that the group drew up was recognised as being a good plan by the Council and so they suggested that Troopers Hill be put forward for the Green Flag. It took a lot of work to apply for the award. Strong involvement of the local community is a major factor in the assessment of Green Flag sites so everyone involved with Friends of Troopers Hill has played their part and should be proud of this achievement.

Do you belong to any partnerships, and what do those partnerships do?

The Friends of Troopers Hill are members of the Parks Forum along with many other community groups throughout the City who have an interest in parks and green spaces. The Forum has been particularly involved with the Parks and Green Space Strategy and has recently



written (with the support of the Friends of Troopers Hill) to object to the planned development on part of Castle Park.

How can people get involved with Friends of Troopers Hill?

We hold meetings every six weeks or so to discuss ideas for events and works to be done on the hill and to pass on any news or information. Although we have an agenda and our Chair tries to keep some sort of order, the meetings are very informal and light hearted.

We would be very pleased to see anyone who has an interest in the hill, its history or its wildlife. The next meetings are on Thursday 15 November and Tuesday 11 December (AGM). Meetings are 7.15- 9.00pm at Wesley Memorial Church Hall, Bryants Hill, Bristol. For more information, dates and directions to our meetings visit www.troopers-hill.org.uk

What do you get out of being a member of Voscur?

We've found looking at the events that are publicised through Voscur have helped us find things we've been able use for our own events. I attended one event that Voscur had publicised and met a storyteller who then took part in a Troopers Hill event.

How can people get in contact with you?

Email: friends@troopers-hill.org.uk

Phone: Susan on 0117 947 5037

Write to: Friends of Troopers Hill, 3 Corkers Hill, St George, Bristol, BS5 8DT

www.troopers-hill.org.uk

www.flickr.com/groups/troopers-hill



Flying the flag for parks and green spaces

The Green Flag Award is the national standard for parks and green spaces in England and Wales. In Bristol two sites have been awarded Green Flag Awards this year – The Downs and Troopers Hill.

Tell me more about the Green Flag Award

The award scheme began in 1996 as a means of recognising and rewarding the best green spaces in the country. It was also seen as a way of encouraging others to achieve the same high environmental standards, creating a benchmark of excellence in recreational green areas. Winning a Green Flag Award brings excellent publicity. Both the media and the public are becoming increasingly aware that a site flying a Green Flag is a high quality green space.

How often are Green Flag Awards given out?

Awards are given on an annual basis and winners must apply each year to renew their Green Flag status. The number of applicants is increasing year after year.

What is so good about Green Flag Awards?

There has recently been much discussion about the declining quality of our city parks and lack of focus upon rural green spaces. Many places that were run-down and neglected just a few years ago are now shining examples of outstanding green space management, and this shows the way forward. The Green Flag Award Scheme is the impetus to an ever-increasing improvement in the quality of our parks and green spaces.

Who can get enter the Green Flag Awards?

The Green Flag Award is open to any freely accessible park or green space, which includes parks, cemeteries, allotments, woodlands, nature reserves, open spaces and formal gardens.

Applications must be made by the organisation that manages the park or green space but community groups and individuals interested in the Award should encourage the management to apply.

What are the judges looking for to award a Green Flag Award?

Judges recognise that every green space has its own unique character and this is reflected in the assessment process.

All sites receive a personal visit from a highly experienced judge who will assess suitability for an award. Judging is conducted on a points system and any entry that reaches the benchmark standard is eligible to fly a prestigious Green Flag.

How can I find out more about the Green Flag Awards?

Visit www.greenflagaward.org.uk

To find out more about working towards a Green Flag award for your local park or green space contact your local Community Park Manager at Bristol Parks on 0117 922 3719, Monday to Friday 8.30am - 5pm (4.30pm Friday) or email: bristolparks@bristol.gov.uk



Transition Bristol – gearing up for power down

Can you imagine Bristol after oil? Fossil fuels have become a crucial ingredient in every part of our lives. They are literally in the clothes we wear, and in the food we eat. It's not just our cars - our houses and our jobs depend on fossil fuels to keep them going! Communities all over the world have come to realise that peak oil and climate change are among the most serious issues facing us today.

Transition Bristol is a voluntary & community project that wants to help Bristol find some answers to these questions. We don't know what the answers are yet, but we do know that solutions imposed from outside communities will not only be less effective, but also less interesting! They need to be practical answers; they need to work for all of us, not just some; and they need to be fun, creative and positive! We think that Bristol needs its own answers, and maybe each of the different communities or 'villages' of Bristol need their own answers too.

We started with a small group of people in someone's front room in Whitehall. Inspired by other Transition projects and with a lot of time and energy from incredibly dedicated volunteers, we are forming a network

of 'villages' who are starting to explore what Bristol might look like without oil.

The aim is to create an Energy Descent Action Plan, mapping the steps towards a low-energy city that is vibrant, sustainable and resilient. We have had talks from some inspiring speakers, including Rob Hopkins, who has really been the inspiration for the Transition movement across the UK, and Chris Johnston, who talked to us about looking at oil as an addiction and how we can wean ourselves off it. In the coming months, we will be hosting a lot of talks and workshops on everything from learning how to darn socks to international climate change politics.

But we are not expecting experts to solve this for us. Instead, we are

asking everyone to start on their own doorstep. If there is a village group forming in the part of the city that you live, then we can put you in touch with them. If not, there are lots of creative ways you can start exploring the future with your friends and neighbours. This could be an exciting opportunity to create the city we really want to live in.

To get involved, visit www.transitionbristol.org or e-mail team@transitioncitybristol.org to find your local transition group!

Transition Bristol has received funding from The Scarman Trust's Community Champions Fund, Wessex Water and The Triodos Bank.

Tom Beale, Transition Bristol



What are CICs and CIOs?

What's happening to our sector? Discussion continues as to whether we are the 'third' sector or not (who's in first place? you may ask). There are National Occupational Standards to guide and support our trustees. Now we also have two new types of organisational structure to get to grips with.

Charitable Incorporated Organisations (CIOs) and Community Interest Companies (CICs) provide alternative structures for voluntary, community and social enterprise (vcse) organisations.

Community Interest Companies (CICs)

A CIC is the oldest new kid on the block - it was introduced as a new legal form in the Companies Act 2004. Since then, over 1,000 organisations have become CICs. A CIC is a business that trades with a social purpose for public benefit, thus fits the ethos of social enterprises.

This structure is well suited to social enterprises or income generating activities, such as recycling, childcare, community transport. A CIC can trade like any other business, apply for loans, and pays commercial rates of interest. It can pay its directors (trustees) and pay dividends to shareholders. A charity can convert to a CIC and vice versa, but a CIC cannot actually be a charity even if its aims are charitable, thus is not eligible for any of the tax relief given to charities.

Some vcse organisations have chosen to set up CICs for their income generating activities, to keep these separate from activities they rely solely on funding to run. Similarly, a vcse organisation could set up a CIC for activities that would bring in income, but perhaps do not entirely fit in with

the organisation's main purpose. For example, Bwerani, an anti-racist and inclusive play, toy and resource library based in St Paul's, often has to turn down requests to sell their resources, rather than loan them, which is integral to the ethos of the project. Setting up a CIC to sell resources, then streaming profit back into the parent charity by Gift Aid, could be a workable option for them.

For vcse organisations who are currently Companies Limited by Guarantee, the dual registration process of becoming a CIC will be familiar. A CIC must register with Companies House and with the CIC Regulator, who operates a "light touch" supervision.

Charitable Incorporated Organisations (CIOs)

CIOs are still a glint in their parents' eyes, they should be open to use from 2008. Registration as a CIO will only be needed in one place - the Charity Commission. For vcse organisations who are charitable trusts or unincorporated associations, registering as a CIO will give the organisation a legal standing and will limit the potential liability of trustees and members if anything goes wrong. In a CIO, members have a limited liability (a nominal sum of £1, for example) and the dual role of trustee/director, which exists in Companies Limited by Guarantee, is removed. The definite regulations and details about CIOs are still being debated. However, it does feel exciting to have a new structure being developed specifically for our sector.

Also see: www.governancehub.org.uk

A Wealth of ICT Knowledge at your Fingertips

This month we're highlighting the range of publications from the ICT Hub funded by ChangeUp. They've been busy collating the good practice and knowledge acquired by all the leading voluntary sector IT projects and have produced a range of booklets covering everything from accessibility to funding, with case studies and step by step guides to advise and inspire you.

The 74 page **Guide to Managing ICT in the Voluntary and Community Sector** has comprehensive, easy to follow directions on analysing your current situation, considering ways to improve, planning to develop and fund those improvements and the unseen costs and pitfalls that you might come across along the way.

New Media Case Studies is a series of interesting stories about how different organisations have launched and run innovative projects using the latest online tools to create an impact on their working practices, engage

their service users and promote their activities among a wider audience. One example is Mind Blogging (www.mindblogging.co.uk). They have created an online community of blogs, giving a voice to people with mental health issues. The anonymous nature of the project allows people to come forward without having to identify themselves. It provides a 'safe space' for people to positively express, first hand, their experiences and concerns and in so doing, provide support and encouragement to others. Bloggers can talk about what they want, when they want and this was never more obvious than during Christmas when the online community really proved its worth. If you've ever wondered what RSS is and how to use it or what goes on in 'Second Life' then this publication is for you.

There is an **Accessibility Pack** with CD ROM packed full of ideas for making your information more accessible. The accompanying book has 10 top tips for improving the

accessibility of your office machines as well as easy, free and quick tips like downloading and installing word prediction software LetMeType (www.clasohm.com/lmt/en/) and using the inbuilt accessibility features of a standard desktop such as Screen magnifiers and text resizing.

A 6 page **Signposting Guide** gives you an off-line map of all the useful resources to be found on the ICT Hub website in one place, instead of surfing around different pages looking for resources you might need, you can look it up and go straight there.

All the books are available for download from the Voscur website www.voscur.org/ictpublications in pdf format, or to read in the Voscur library.

If you would like your own copy please drop Sean a line at seank@voscur.org or call 0117 909 9949 and we can order them for you.

ICT News

Sales of Windows XP pre-installed PCs rather than Windows Vista have been extended by Microsoft to July 2008 (they were going to stop in January) because of demand from organisations & businesses who probably do not want to have an upgraded Operating System forced upon them.



The Good, the Bad and the Rest - News from the Regeneration Group

There have been some interesting developments over the summer months regarding regeneration in Bristol.

The meeting in July discussed Neighbourhood Management in Bristol (particularly in the context of a return to a Labour administration at the City Council). The purpose of the workshop was:

- To make recommendations about the future of Neighbourhood Management in Bristol from 1st April 2008.
- To reflect on the delivery of Neighbourhood Management to date and draw out lessons learnt.
- To give participants an overview of the practical implementation of Neighbourhood Management and its impact on communities.

Participation amongst those who attended certainly was not lacking but I'm not too sure if it remained focused on the above and there's the danger of asking people what they actually want! What is certain is that the efforts of those who attended were not wasted as the information gathered will be utilised to inform the evaluation of Neighbourhood Management in Bristol. The information also fed into the main Bristol Partnership meeting in September 2007, when it considered the future of Neighbourhood Governance.

The **September Regeneration Group** meeting was a mix of good and bad news:

Good News - as the Objective 2 Neighbourhood Action Plan draws to a close the Group celebrated how well Bristol has performed (and still is) in achieving the Action Plan targets across all three of the funded Measures.

Bad News – there is no immediate future successor programme to allow further development of the Action Plan or to address the further needs and wants of the area.

Good News - the funded projects have spent (or have committed to spend) nearly 100% of the funding available for Bristol.

Bad News – despite over-programming, Council officers are predicting an overall project under-spend and the Government Office for the South West (GOSW) will not allow a reallocation of funds within the Action Plan at this stage. This will result in £66,000 of uncommitted funds being returned to GOSW as well as a likely return of any known or future project under-spends (which are then likely to be spent elsewhere in the region). The danger of celebrating success in terms of percentages rather than in terms of outcomes is that you could overlook that in excess of £250,000 could be handed back that could have made a real difference to people in Bristol's most disadvantaged areas. I couldn't help wondering how those members of community based organisations in the Objective 2 area who had been turned down for funding because there had been an over commitment of funds, or their project had not been of a high enough priority, would feel now if they hear that over a quarter of a million pounds (no matter how small a percentage of the total funding available) was heading out of Bristol. I know that I have the 'benefit of hindsight' card to play, but the advice over a sustained period of time has been to further over commit funding in case some projects under spent or under achieved so as to avoid this kind of situation. I hope that if there is a next time, then the Regeneration Group (to include myself) is collectively able to prevent a repeat.

Good News – following the original draft presentation in November 2006, the long awaited revised Regeneration Framework was tabled at the August 2007 meeting .

Bad(ish) News – I'm still not too clear as to what the framework sets out to achieve. I feel it is something to do with attempting to attract non-traditional funding into Bristol and also to set a scene for regeneration in order that other

plans can run with the implementation. Then again, it may be a genuine attempt to try to ensure that things are more joined up in order to avoid the bit by bit small neighbourhood approach which has perhaps happened in recent years, as we chase the central government grant funding streams.

Bad News – As from September, the Neighbourhood Renewal programme was heading for a £200,000 under spend.

Good News – Rather than waiting for the sixth month monitoring returns, the funds are being made available for distribution amongst existing capital projects city-wide and also for ‘topping up’ small grants allocations in each of the Neighbourhood Renewal areas. If you think that you may have a worthwhile cause I urge you to make contact with your local Neighbourhood Renewal Team.

Ian Steele, Voscur Rep to the Regeneration Group



Voscur Reps Simon Bale & Ian Steele at Voscur's recent Annual Event

What next for Neighbourhood Renewal Projects?

The Delivery Groups for the Bristol Partnership have been looking at the projects that will be affected by the end of Neighbourhood Renewal (NR) in order to prioritise which interventions will be continued if there is any additional NR money after March 2008. A workshop will take place in November with Delivery Group members and representatives from the NR neighbourhoods. Voscur reps will be attending the workshop and want to hear your views.

- Are you funded by Neighbourhood Renewal?
- Have you been involved in any of the discussions about which NR projects might get mainstream or future NR funding?
- What do you think the priorities for deciding future NR funded projects should be?

Let us know your views, email Matthew Symonds on matthew@voscur.org or call 0117 909 9949.

Handy Tools, Good Practice Guides and Interesting Publications

Below are some handy equalities tools, good practice guides and recent publications on a range of subjects including: accessibility; language; health & safety for disabled people; gypsies & travellers; improving support to Black & Minority Ethnic organisations; and tackling homophobic hate crime.

Language and Translation

The web offers a number of translation sites and tools such as free online translation, text and website translation in several European and Asian languages, a desktop translation tool for subscription, online dictionaries, and information on other translation resources:

Omniglot: www.omniglot.com

SDL International: www.freetranslation.com

PROMT: www.online-translator.com

WorldLingo: <http://digbig.com/4tqjr>

Freelang.net: www.freelang.net

Freepint: www.freepint.com

Standards in Accessibility

How are you ensuring that disabled people can access effective information and advice about your services? Accessibility Standards have been written and updated in response to consultation by SAIF (Scottish Accessible Information Forum) to assist you in this. 'Making E-communication Accessible' is a downloadable publication outlining best practice standards for websites, email and electronic documents.

www.saifscotland.org.uk/publications

How Inclusive are you?

Voluntary Arts Network has produced a checklist for organisations designed to help increase the range of people who participate in your group.

www.voluntaryarts.org/uploaded/map6080.pdf

Health and safety for disabled people

The Health and Safety Executive has new material on health and safety for disabled people at work, including issues around risk assessment, at

www.hse.gov.uk/disability/index.htm. For an Easy to Read guide, produced with the Disability Rights Commission see www.hse.gov.uk/disability/easyread.pdf

Guide to Tackling Hate Crime: Homophobic Hate Crime

This guide focuses on homophobic hate crime, detailing the problems associated with it and solutions to tackling it. The guide is for anyone who might deal with or come across homophobic hate crime incidents in the course of their work, with examples of tackling homophobic hate crime from prevention and early intervention through enforcement, investigation, prosecution and resolution.

www.crimereduction.gov.uk/sexual028.pdf

Whose Board? Whose Agenda? Including Disabled and Deaf People in your management committees

This briefing is a short 'rough' guide to including Disabled and Deaf People on your board, management committee or advisory group.

www.vaengland.org.uk/uploaded/map6081.pdf

Gypsies and Travellers and the equalities debate

Gypsies and Travellers have been described as one of the most marginalised minorities in society and also suffer from high levels of prejudice. A survey by Stonewall found them to be one of the most reviled groups in society. The Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) has published a report by campaigners highlighting the possible implications for Gypsies and Travellers in light of the Discrimination Law Review. www.irr.org.uk

CRE Formal Investigation into Regeneration

The investigation finds significant inconsistency in the approach to race equality within regeneration. Despite some good practice among certain sectors like Housing, other agencies focused on economic development and physical regeneration are still unlikely to see race equality as relevant to their work. www.equalityhumanrights.com

Improving support services to BME organisations

Research by the Performance Hub's Performance and Race Equality Project, has found evidence of 'widespread breakdown in communication' between Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) organisations and bodies set up to support the voluntary sector. The Hub is calling on BME organisations to engage more with sector support agencies and wants support organisations to make their services more relevant and accessible to BME groups.

www.performancehub.org.uk

Learning Needs for BME Workers Research

The Federation for Community Development Learning has published the findings of research conducted for the Workforce Development Hub on the training and learning needed to support Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) workers, paid and unpaid, in the voluntary and community sector. The survey found there are still major gaps in provision, monitoring and funding for BME skills development. www.fcdl.org.uk/projects

New Commission for Equality and Human Rights

Commission for Equality and Human Rights (CEHR) came into being on 1 October 2007. It is a statutory body which has taken over responsibility for championing equalities and eliminating discrimination under the Equality Act 2006. It replaces the Commission for Racial Equality, the Equal Opportunities Commission and the Disability Rights Commission. The South West Regional office is based at 2 Rivergate, Temple Quay, Bristol, tel: 0117 900 1765.

The Commission is the independent advocate for equality and human rights in Britain. It will enforce equality legislation on age, disability, gender, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation or transgender status and encourage compliance with the Human Rights Act 1998. It will also give advice and guidance to businesses, the voluntary and public sectors and to individuals.

The website www.equalityhumanrights.com carries dedicated sections with up-to-date information on disability, gender and race, as well as separate sections on age, sexual orientation, religion and belief, and human rights.

Before the three former commissions merged they published several important reports including 'The Gender Agenda – the Unfinished Revolution'; 'Disability agenda – Creating an Alternative Future'; and 'A lot done, A lot more to do – the CRE's vision for an integrated Britain'. These can be found on the CEHR website.

In Bristol, the Race Equality and Human Rights Service is housed at the Black Development Agency (BDA), briefing events will be taking place giving updates on the service.

Contact the BDA on 0119 939 6645 email:

info@blackdeva.org.uk

Voscur Rep is New Chair of the Bristol Partnership



Simon Bale (right) at the Community Cohesion Conference 2007

In his first report since being elected as the new chair of the Bristol Partnership, Voscur rep **Simon Bale** sets out his priorities for the partnership:

“It is a great honour to have been elected chair of the Bristol Partnership (BP), and I am extremely grateful to everyone who has supported me in achieving this position. It is also a daunting prospect. Not because I have doubts about whether I can take up the role effectively. If I had doubts I would not have stood and I am confident that, with the backing of everyone at Voscur, of the BP management team and everyone else who supports the partnership, I can guide the next phase of the

Partnership's growth. The daunting feeling comes from the opportunity my election represents for us all - the opportunity to change.

Since its creation in 2001, the Bristol Partnership has been led continuously by the leader of Bristol City Council. I am the first non-public sector chair and I am very pleased to be able to represent the voluntary, community & social enterprise (vcse) sector in this capacity. The change in chair mirrors the changes within the partnership as a whole. For example, since March Partnership meetings have been organised as mini-conferences, focusing around particular aspects of the Community Strategy such as Social Enterprise, the next twenty

years and, Neighbourhood Governance. These have been open to all who wish to attend and have become more and more useful with each meeting. At the most recent conference more than one hundred people gathered at the Council House to explore how we develop neighbourhood governance across the city; working 'cross-sector'; and recognising and celebrating our diversity. The outcomes of the event will be used to inform the Partnership's recommendations to the City Council as it begins to set up Neighbourhood Partnerships across the city. This openness and striving for relevance is essential for the success and growth of the Bristol Partnership.

It is vital that we appreciate what this new way of working means. The Bristol Partnership is fundamentally there for the benefit of the whole of Bristol. Our vision is nothing other than ensuring that the people who live and work in the city have the highest possible quality of life. Until now, with the council chairing it, the Partnership has (understandably) at times seemed like it is simply an arm of the local authority. Certainly the City Council supports and funds the Partnership in many significant ways and this support

is welcomed and valued. However, ultimately the Council does not run the Partnership and the change of chair helps make this clear. The Council have now wisely stood back from the chairing role and sent a strong message to everyone in the city - it is our city and we all have a role in its growth and sustainability, all sectors, all people.

As a vscse sector chair, I don't want to replace the dominance of the council with dominance from the vsce sector,

and I will endeavour to engage with all partners to continue to build a diverse, accountable and representative group of people and organisations who want to get involved. The Partnership is working on a revision of the Community Strategy. The new version will be renamed the 'Sustainable Community Strategy', and I believe it is a significant renaming, but only if we are able to recognise and make real the positive change that sustainability can bring about. For me

this is about standing alongside all partners, tackling the many challenges together.

As chair, I believe that I should be accountable and available as much as possible. If you have any further questions about the work of the Partnership, please get in touch".

Simon Bale, Voscur Rep and Chair of the Bristol Partnership.

Email: simon@ccisr.org.uk
tel: 0117 955 7430.

Voscur Reps Election Result

Following the election held during September and October, David Maggs has been elected as the Voscur rep to the Safer Bristol Partnership.

The election result was very close. Thanks to Steve Mills, Alex Raikes and Hen Wilkinson who also stood. Hen Wilkinson, who came second in the vote, will support David Maggs representing the Voscur members on Safer Bristol work.

In the other Voscur reps positions up for re-election this year, the following people were nominated unopposed:

Tony Gosling - Bristol Cultural Development Partnership (BCDP)

Paul Hazelden - Housing Strategy Group (HSG)

Alex Raikes - Equalities Action Group (EAG)

Mike Timmins - Environment Delivery Group (EDG)

Simon Bale - Bristol Partnership (BP)



David Maggs

For details of all the Voscur reps visit www.voscur.org/representation or call Matthew Symonds on 0117 909 9949.

Youth Matters

The Youth Matters has 4 themes:

- Things to do and places to go.
- Information, advice and guidance.
- Reforming targeted support services.
- Making a contribution.

Nationally, Youth Matters aims to ensure that young people will have more choice and influence over services and facilities that are available to them. They will be encouraged to volunteer and contribute to their local community.

Information, advice and guidance services for young people will be more flexible and accessible. For young people experiencing difficulties there will be better-targeted support, coordinated by a lead professional. Youth Matters inextricably links Young People's Services, Connexions and other youth support.

Positive Activities

Under the Education and Inspections Act 2006, local authorities such as Bristol now have a duty to secure access for young people in their area to sufficient positive leisure time activities (the 'youth offer'). This includes a specific duty to secure access to sufficient youth work activities and related facilities. Local authorities also need to ask young people their views about current positive activities and take those into account when planning future provision. Finally, local authorities must consider the expediency of commissioning or facilitating other providers – such as those in the voluntary sector- to offer positive activities so that all young people can access activities. When implementing their new duty, local authorities are expected to work over time with partner agencies to secure national standards for the local youth offer.

These National Standards include:

- Access to two hours per week of sporting activity including formal and informal team and individual sports, outdoor and adventurous sports, and other physical activities such as aerobics and dance.
- Access to two hours per week of other constructive activities in clubs, youth groups and classes.
- Opportunities to make a positive contribution to their community through volunteering, including leading action, campaigning and fundraising.
- A range of safe and enjoyable places in which to spend time.
- A wide range of other recreational, cultural, sporting and enriching experiences.

What is Happening for Youth Matters in Bristol?

In Bristol, the Youth Opportunity Fund and Youth Capital Fund can be applied for by young people - allowing them control over the sort of activities they would like to have funded. This funding has just been secured for another three years. The closing date for the next round is 7 November 2007.

Also, more young people are needed for the panel that considers the Youth Opportunity and Capital Fund applications. Interested young people should contact Zaena Barnard at zaena.barnard@bristol.gov.uk

Bristol is working towards an 'integrated youth offer' and Bristol's **youth matters leadership group**, which has met regularly since October '06 has developed work regionally and locally and aims to bring coherence to the services currently offered by a broad range of agencies including Connexions, Young People's Services, some welfare services, extended schools, care and after services, teenage pregnancy services and the voluntary

in Bristol

and community sector.

Bristol's young people are known to travel around the region for social and educational lives and so Connexions (which has been a local authority controlled company since September 2007), will be working across the four unitary authorities. Bristol's position in the sub region is a key feature in thinking about this both in terms of young people travelling for their education and of Bristol as a cultural centre for young people.

Following the locally based road shows, 'Things to do, Places to go' a young people led design group has been established for promoting positive activities developments.

In Bristol the priorities for young people have been identified as:

- increase achievement,
- reduce exclusion and increase attendance,
- reduce teenage pregnancy, and
- in the broader inclusion agenda to engage more young people in activities with positive social outcomes.

Bristol's Children and young People's Services response to Youth Matters has been to 'focus on outcomes ahead of structures' in response to the six key underpinning principles of Youth Matters:

- Make services more responsive to what young people and their parents want.
- Balance greater opportunities and support with promoting young people's responsibilities.
- Make services for young people more integrated efficient and effective.
- Improve outcomes for all young people, while narrowing the gap between those who do well and

those who do not.

- Involve a wide range of organisations in order to increase choice and secure the best outcomes.
- Build on the best of what is currently provided to provide better and more personalised intensive support for each young person who has serious problems or gets into trouble.

Views are sought in response to the following questions:

Integrated Youth Support provides Bristol with an opportunity to move from 'Find and Fix' to 'Predict and Prevent'

- What can we do to really improve outcomes for young people?
- How do we use positive activities and richness of culture in Bristol to impact on achievement?
- How do we support young people to belong to communities?
- What do we get through integration that we don't have now?
- How do we make real difference where disadvantage exists?

Send your views to youthmatters@bristol.gov.uk by 30 November 2007.

Making a difference in the community

Lifeskills helps children and adults with learning difficulties and older people learn about safety in a fun and practical way, specifically in the home, on the road or during leisure time. They were one of the 25 organisations that took part in the two Volunteer Recruitment Fairs held by Volunteering Bristol during September.

Lifeskills needed to recruit several new volunteers to help in their Learning for Living 'village' in The CREATE Centre, and found that the Fair at the Southville Centre a perfect way to reach the local people they were seeking. With 30 enquiries and probably seven strong candidates, they hope to have a good pool of volunteers again.

Visiting the other Volunteering Fair in Easton the previous week, was the newly appointed project manager at the Young People's charity Baggator - Cecile Jagoo. She was seeking seven volunteers for her organisation, so immediately signed up with Volunteering Bristol to advertise the opportunities.

Baggator works in some of the most socially disadvantaged areas of Bristol to provide programmes of informal

education, skills training and leisure activities for young people up to 25 years of age.

Their programmes aim to inspire those taking part to discover their potential, to find personal fulfilment and make positive contributions to society at large.

Among the volunteering opportunities they have are helping with parent liaison, co-ordinating supplementary schooling sessions and youth mentoring. For full details about these and all volunteering opportunities contact Volunteering Bristol on 0117 989 7733 or email:

info@bristolvolunteers.org.uk



left: Looking for inspiration. Young people taking part in a Graffiti Workshop; right: Groups of young people from Easton visit Cornwall as part of Baggator's Action Learning programme.

Bristol young people's volunteering network

A network of 19 organisations are working together to develop volunteering opportunities for Young People (aged 13 – 25), so they can make a difference to themselves and their communities.

Led by Young Bristol, and with members drawn from across the city, the network aims to improve the quality and quantity of volunteering opportunities available to young people, and to increase the support available for young people who want to volunteer.

The network will also support organisations to increase their capacity to involve young people as volunteers and so

enhance the volunteers' skills development, experience and participation in the community.

The network wants to increase its membership and is very keen to hear from any organisations that are involved with, and committed to, developing volunteering for Young People in Bristol. It meets bi-monthly, generally in a city centre location, to update each other and co-ordinate its work.

If you would like to find out more about becoming a member then please contact Ben Silvey at Young Bristol on 0117 953 7921 or email: bs@youngbristol.com

Advertisements



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www.ndcbristol.co.uk

FIND OUT ALL THE LATEST NEWS
FROM THE NEW DEAL
FOR COMMUNITIES AREA
IN BARTON HILL, LAWRENCE HILL,
REDFIELD AND THE DINGS

JOIN OUR NEW ONLINE FORUM!

Caring at Christmas runs the 24 hour emergency shelter over the Christmas week. We rely on donations and volunteers to keep the shelter open. This year the shelter will be open from 3pm 24th until 10am 31st December.

We provide 50 beds, showers, 3 meals a day, services and entertainments in a safe and supportive atmosphere for people who would otherwise have nowhere else to go at this time of year.

We need volunteers to come and help with cooking, cleaning and socialising with our guests. We ask that you work a minimum of one shift over the week. We also need volunteers in the run up to Christmas to help in the office, sorting donations and with fundraising.

To find out more about how you can help by volunteering or donating, please come along to our **Open Morning on Saturday 17th November, 10am – 1pm** at the shelter on Little Bishop Street, St. Pauls, Bristol, BS2 9JF.

**FFI please contact Sian on 0117 924 4444 or
info@caringatchristmas.org.uk or visit
www.caringatchristmas.org.uk**

Superb Office Space to rent at the Kingswood Foundation

A ground floor office space of 1,500 sq ft will become available in early 2008.

The offices are part of the Kingswood Foundation Estate.

Set in landscape gardens with a café on site. Offering disabled access and free parking.

Our Victorian building houses 20 other local and national charities.

We are situated 4 miles from Bristol City Centre in the heart of Kingswood.

Rental discounts are available for charities, with a further 10% discount for charities working with children or young people.

**For further information contact Chris Jackson on 0117 9477948 or
email: cjackson@kfl.org.uk**



2007-08 Training Programme

All courses run from 9.30am - 4.30pm at accessible venues in Bristol

Managing Teams

8th Nov	Monitoring & evaluation
29th & 30th Nov	Bullying in the workplace
10th & 11th Dec	How do I manage? – Management essentials * £235 + VAT
24th Jan 2008	Appraisals
29th & 30th Apr	Supervision skills
24th & 25th Sept and 15th Oct 2008	Project management (3 day course, £280 +VAT)

People skills

6th & 7th Nov	Brief solution focussed therapy
16th Jan 2008	Service user involvement
6th & 7th Feb 2008	Motivational interviewing
17th March 2008	Difficult & aggressive behaviour
1st & 2nd April 2008	Key working & support planning
8th May 2008	Effective communication
June 2008	Working with diversity
June 2008	Groupwork skills

Training & presentation

1st Nov	Presentation & public speaking skills
5th & 6th March 2008	Training for trainers
June 2008	Trainers' toolkit

Specialist knowledge and skills

13th Nov	Mental health awareness
4th & 5th Dec	Dual diagnosis
23rd Jan 2008	Introduction to drugs work
26th Feb 2008	Introduction to personality disorders
June 2008	Young people - mental health & emotional support needs

We also run a specialist drug & alcohol training programme

One Day Courses £110 + VAT
Two Day Courses £195 + VAT

Fees include training pack, home-cooked lunch and refreshments. Full course outlines on request



For further details and booking forms, please contact Steve Graham at:

The Training Exchange
Easton Business Centre BRISTOL BS5 0HE. Tel/Fax 0117 941 5859
admin@trainingexchange.org.uk www.trainingexchange.org.uk