

South Somerset Voluntary & Community Action



May 2009

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HELLO FROM THE CHIEF OFFICER

Hello and welcome to our spring newsletter, like lots of you we are busy preparing our annual accounts and reports for year ending March 2009; this gives us time to reflect on the past year and the work we have delivered. The projects of SSVCA are busy delivering an excellent service to people in need within our communities and I am proud to say all projects are now running sustainably and will be around to continue delivering their vital service for years to come. The board and I are aware of the impact our rise in transport costs, has had to small groups, we receive very little funding for our Yeovil operation and therefore we have to ensure our fares reflect full cost recovery; we are hoping in time fares may reduce if we can cut down our maintenance charges by purchasing newer vehicles, so long as the price of fuel does not rocket again! I just wanted to take this opportunity to say a big thank you to all our staff for their commitment and dedication to their projects and SSVCA.

We have been working hard increasing the services we offer voluntary groups, as you know this newsletter gets sent out 3 times a year and is interspersed with our voluntary sector forums, ensuring we get information out to the sector every 3 months. We provide a range of back office services to groups including payroll, photocopying etc and we are building up our knowledge and resources around finances, governance, training and policy development. So please remember if you are a voluntary organisation or community group operating in South Somerset and you need advice, guidance or support on any aspect of your group, then please call us on 01935 475914, even if we can't help we will direct you to someone who can. Enjoy the Summer and I hope to see you in July at the next forum.

Sam Healy

HELLO FROM THE CHAIRMAN

The Board reached a significant milestone at its January meeting when it decided to meet bi-monthly rather than monthly in future. Trustees think that this will provide sufficient oversight now that SSVCA is on a sound financial footing. The Finance & Resources Committee continues to meet every month.

SSVCA, as a service provider for some of the most vulnerable people living in South Somerset as well as a source of specialist advice and help to the voluntary and community sector in this part of the county, has an especially important role to play at a time of considerable uncertainty in the economy. We are continuing to explore new opportunities for our services as well as playing a very active role in the Somerset Alliance of CVS's (SACVS). Sam, Nick, Mike and I represent SSVCA at the regular joint meetings of trustees and officers of member organisations.

Mike, with assistance from Nick, has also devoted a great deal of time and effort to South Somerset MIND who were in danger of closure. I recently attended a meeting of the Board of Wincanton Community Venture (who manage the Balsam Centre) as an observer. Trustees will continue to develop links with other voluntary organisations in South Somerset who in turn will be invited to send observers to our Board Meetings.

We are very pleased to welcome Sarah Hunt, who lives in Odcombe and has a great deal of experience in human resource management, as our latest trustee.

By the time of our AGM in September I will have been the Chair of SSVCA or its predecessor organisation Yeovil CVS for 4 years so will be handing over to Mike, our Vice Chair. I will remain on the Board and will continue to play an active part in SSVCA. Having helped to create Yeovil CVS back in 1981, it has been enormously rewarding to oversee its transformation into SSVCA 25 years later. I am confident that the next 25 years will be just as exciting and challenging.

Nigel Engert
11/5/09

SECTOR NEWS

BUILDING STRONGER COMMUNITIES TASKFORCE

A new Government taskforce is to spend three months "exploring ways in which private and third sector organisations can work in partnership to help communities tackle new challenges and become stronger together" in innovative but practical ways. <http://preview.tinyurl.com/clem3p>.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES COULD DO A LOT MORE FOR THE SECTOR

The full results of the National Survey of Third Sector Organisations have been published, based on a survey of nearly 50,000 charities, social enterprises and voluntary organisations. This provides the base line for the key performance target (National Indicator seven) to improve the way that local authorities work with the third sector, and asked organisations whether these public bodies helped them succeed.

As the Office of the Third Sector news item states "When third sector organisations are satisfied with their ability to influence local decisions, and have some current contact with local statutory bodies, they give an NI 7 score of 75% (compared to the overall national score of 16%).

When there is dissatisfaction with the ability to influence local decisions and little or no current contact with local statutory bodies, third sector organisations give an NI 7 score of just 3%."

<http://preview.tinyurl.com/dawugq>. The full analysis is at <http://www.nstso.com/analysis/>.

BUSINESS LINK SUPPORT TO SOCIAL ENTERPRISES

Business Link is making use of European Funding to offer a package of support services, specifically tailored to the needs of social enterprises in the South West. Delivered in partnership with RISE, the regional body for social enterprise in the South West and Co-active providers of specialist business support services for social enterprises, the aim is to increase the start-up, growth and development of social enterprise organisations. To find out more about the support on offer, email socialenterprise@businesslinksw.co.uk or phone them on 0845 600 9966 to access the service.

COMMUNITY HALLS ADVISORY SERVICE

The Community Council for Somerset's Village Halls Advisory Service can equally be used by halls and other community buildings within our towns. It offers help on funding improvements to halls, advice on the management issues, legislation compliance and licensing, and community consultation. Contact Eileen Zoers on 01823 331222 or visit www.somersetcc.org.uk

SECTOR NEWS

GIFT AID

HMRC's guidance on all aspects of gift aid is at www.hmrc.gov.uk/charities/gift_aid/basics.htm.

SUPPORT FOR ORGANISATIONS WORKING WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

The NSPCC, in partnership with Children England (formerly National Council of Voluntary Child Care Organisations), is setting up a National Safeguarding Unit for the Third Sector in England which will establish an agreed framework of safeguarding standards for work with children and will promote and support implementation of these standards throughout the sector. Information about the unit is at www.nspcc.org.uk/inform/nsu_wda63026.html.

In March 2009 NSPCC's Safe Communities Project published Safe communities: A toolkit to protect children and young people, which is available in English and bilingually in Bengali, Punjabi, Urdu and Welsh, and is free of charge to voluntary and independent community groups working with children. It can be ordered from NSPCC via tinyurl.com/57574g.

HOW TO GUIDES FROM WORKFORCE HUB

The UK Workforce Hub has produced three new downloadable 'How to' guides, available at <http://www.ukworkforcehub.org.uk/component/content/article/518>

- Survive the recession - alternatives to redundancy.
- 360 Degree Feedback.
- HR software in voluntary and community organisations - a short report.

RESPONDING TO THE THREAT OF A PANDEMIC

Personnel professionals' body CIPD has updated its factsheet giving introductory guidance on the work issues around swine flu, as well as bird flu, and how employers should respond to the threat of a pandemic outbreak.

<http://www.cipd.co.uk/subjects/health/general/birdflu.htm>.

ONLINE DISABILITY ADVICE FOR EVERYDAY LIVING

The Disabled Living Foundation's online guided advice tool about daily living, AskSARA, has been relaunched with a new user friendly design and added features. It aims to help older and disabled people and their families obtain tailored advice about products that can help, <http://www.asksara.org.uk>.

SUPPORTING THE SECTOR THROUGH THE RECESSION

RECOGNISING AND MANAGING INSOLVENCY RISK

Trustees should not only know the indicators of insolvency, but also take active steps to manage the insolvency risk to their charity. Alarm bells should ring when there is pressure from creditors chasing overdue payments, when the charity is having to run down reserves on a regular basis to meet outgoings, where current liabilities are not covered by current assets (bearing in mind that anything in restricted funds may not be available to meet current liabilities), and where expected expenditure exceeds foreseeable income.

For directors of charitable companies, the provisions of the Companies Act 2006 apply. Such trustees not only have the common law duty to act in the best interests of the charity, they must also take care to minimise potential loss to the company's creditors. Trustees who are concerned about the financial prospects of their charity may wish to seek legal or accountancy advice immediately. Trustees may safely incur expenditure on such advice since it may lead to a better realisation of assets. The advisors may guide trustees to an insolvency practitioner (IP) where appropriate. In small charities it can be difficult to secure the services of an IP since there are no assets out of which the IP's expenses can be paid. Trustees in those circumstances may find that they have to take a hands on approach to winding up the charity.

Information may also be obtained from the Insolvency Service website at www.insolvency.gov.uk and the Charity Commission's CC12 Managing financial difficulties and insolvency in charities at www.charitycommission.gov.uk/publications/cc12.asp.

Even if none of these alarm bells are ringing for you, you may wish to consider preventative action as a matter of good governance. As a starting point there are a number of questions you might ask:

- When did your charity last carry out an insolvency risk assessment?
- Is the charity able to pay its debts as and when they fall due?
- Are the assets greater than the charity's liabilities?
- How secure and diverse are the sources of income? Charities dependent on a sole source of income may be particularly vulnerable.
- Are there significant liabilities on the horizon?
- Are there significant fixed costs?
- Do your trustees have sufficient time and skill to devote to running the charity?
- Do your trustees regularly and fully consider financial reports?
- Are financial reports available in advance of meetings?
- Are actual income and expenditure monitored against budgeted income and expenditure?"

SUPPORTING THE SECTOR THROUGH THE RECESSION

AN A TO Z OF RESOURCES TO HELP VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS COPE WITH THE ECONOMIC SITUATION.

ACAS and the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development have jointly published How to manage your workforce in a recession, a short 10-point action plan, at tinyurl.com/d4c9kh. If you can get beyond the cluttered home page, **ACEVO's** recession support website at www.recessionsupport.org.uk includes a useful range of articles and expert guidance on finance, management, career development, and sources of support.

Business Link has an interactive tool on handling potential redundancies at tinyurl.com/d5569k to help employers understand when they can make redundancies, possible alternatives, and the law and good practice in relation to notification and consultation.

CIPD has updated its factsheet on redundancy, via tinyurl.com/3bj62o. **ACAS** has a wide range of information on redundancy and short-time working, at www.acas.org.uk/index.aspx?articleid=1365.

The Charities Aid Foundation now has a confidential financial crisis helpline, which provides a one-off confidential discussion with suggestions for survival. Details are at www.cafonline.org/Default.aspx?page=16919, or ring 0800 980 2000.

The Charity Commission's Managing financial difficulties and insolvency in charities at www.charitycommission.gov.uk/publications/cc12.asp was written in happier times, but provides one of the best starting points for looking objectively at the organisation's financial situation and prospects.

The Charity Finance Directors' Group has a recession watch page, full of useful information including sources of government funding, at www.cfdg.org.uk/cfdg/influencing_recession_watch.asp.

Compact Voice has produced a two-page practical guide on key Compact principles for the economic downturn, at tinyurl.com/d7xcsf.

The Development Trusts Association's Early warning guide at tinyurl.com/c9b5mq is my favourite — more pictures than words, bright and easy to use. As they say, "Just a quick flip through this guide should help you work out whether your organisation is heading for the cliffs or enjoying the walk."

The Institute of Fundraising and Think Consulting Solutions have produced a free fundraising health check, to help organisations assess the impact of the recession on their income and develop fundraising programmes and investment strategies. The health check is online, the organisation does not have to give its name, no details are stored, and a report and recommendations can be printed out. The health check is at www.fundraisinghealthcheck.org.

NAVCA's Responding to a funding cut, via tinyurl.com/c5b654, provides a framework for developing a strategy to campaign against a funding cut.

NCVO has one of the best resource pages, via tinyurl.com/cymxyn. This has advice on surviving the recession and dealing with a financial crisis, as well as useful background to the recession, government action to help the sector, and organisations' experience.

SUPPORTING THE SECTOR THROUGH THE RECESSION

AN A TO Z OF RESOURCES TO HELP VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS COPE WITH THE ECONOMIC SITUATION—CONTINUED.

In the **Office of the Third Sector's** recession action plan Real help for communities: Volunteers, charities and social enterprise, the government confirmed that it is committed to ensuring public sector bodies pay invoices to contractors within 10 days. Voluntary organisations should use this commitment to put pressure on late payers, and should include payment within 10 days as an obligation in all new contracts with public sector bodies. Real help for communities can be accessed via tinyurl.com/chalpx and lists many other government initiatives, including funding schemes.

Dealing with a fundraising crisis is a sensible information sheet, recently updated, from the **South Yorkshire Funding Advice Bureau** at www.syfab.org.uk/infshstp/crisis.pdf.

VolResource, a weekly email newsletter put together by John Howes, contains up to date information about new resources, new sources of funding, new government schemes, new consultations and lots more. I get some of my information from this newsletter, and John gets some of his information from mine so there's a bit of overlap but his goes way beyond the purely legal. Sign up for a free subscription at www.voluntarynews.org.uk/lists.

LEGAL NEWS

H&S RESOURCES

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) website at www.hse.gov.uk contains masses of useful information on all aspects of health and safety law and good practice. Guidance is also available from the Trades Union Congress (TUC), CIPD, and a range of other organisations. Recent new or updated resources include:

Website set up by the Shaw Trust on tackling mental ill health in the workplace, with good practice on supporting workers with mental ill health and creating a healthy workplace, www.tacklementalhealth.org.uk

HSE's Consulting workers on health and safety: A brief guide to the law, www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg232.pdf

HSE's Involving your workers in health and safety: A guide for small businesses, intended primarily for employers who have fewer than 25 employees, www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/web35.pdf

HSE's Work-related stress website, www.hse.gov.uk/stress

CIPD's Stress at work factsheet, tinyurl.com/cvftno

HSE's updated FAQs (frequently asked questions) on use of computers and other display screen equipment, www.hse.gov.uk/msd/dse/faqs.htm

The HSE website includes a range of example risk assessments, including charity shops, food preparation and service, office-based businesses, and village halls (also suitable for small community centres and similar premises). The example risk assessments can be accessed via www.hse.gov.uk/risk/casestudies/index.htm.

LEGAL NEWS

PENSIONS

Under the Pensions Act 2007, the state pension age will rise from 65 to 66 between 2024 and 2026, to 67 between 2034 and 2036, and to 68 between 2044 and 2046; the basic state pension will be linked to earnings (as it used to be) rather than inflation (as it now is); the number of years' contributions needed for a full basic state pension will be reduced to 30 (it is currently 39 for woman and 44 for men); weekly credits will be introduced for carers; from around 2030 the state second pension, which tops up the basic state pension, will become flat-rate; personal pensions will be simplified; a delivery authority will be established to set up a national pensions savings scheme (NPSS) by 2012.

The Pensions Act 2008 will require, from 2012, every employee aged 22 or over who earns between £5,035 and £33,540 and is not in an employer's occupational pension scheme to be automatically enrolled in the national pensions savings scheme and get a personal account unless they opt out.

Employees with earnings less than the qualifying amount can opt in to the scheme. It is expected that employees in the scheme will have to contribute a minimum 4% of their salary, matched by 1% tax relief and a minimum 3% from the employer. The employer's contribution will be phased in, at 1% in 2012, 2% in 2013 and 3% in 2014. Also under the 2008 Act, from 6 April 2009 people who reach state pension age between 6 April 2008 and 5 April 2015 and who already have at least 20 qualifying years on their national insurance record, will be able to pay class 3 national insurance contributions for an additional six qualifying years (in addition to the six years which can already be paid for). This provision is intended primarily for women and carers who have had substantial periods when they were not working and did not make (or were not credited with) NI payments. At present women need 39 qualifying years and men 44 for a full state pension. The amount of the pension is reduced if the person does not have the full number of years. Paying class 3 contributions makes up for the missing years. Information about pensions and pension reform in general is at www.dwp.gov.uk/lifeevent/workage/wa_pensions.asp and www.dwp.gov.uk/pensionsreform. Information about class 3 NI contributions (but not yet about the extended period for paying for them) is at www.hmrc.gov.uk/nic/class3.htm. The Pensions Act 2007 is at www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2007/ukpga_20070022_en_1. The Pensions Act 2008 is at www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/

ACCOUNTING THRESHOLD CHANGES FOR UNINCORPORATED CHARITIES

For financial years ending on or after 1 April 2009, unincorporated charities with annual income no more than £25,000 no longer need to send their annual accounts and report to the Charity Commission, and should not do so unless the Commission requests it.

The threshold above which an unincorporated charity must prepare accrual accounts, rather than having the option to prepare a simpler receipts and payments account instead, is increased from £100,000 to £250,000. The increased thresholds are in the Charities Acts 1992 and 1993 (Substitution of Sums) Order 2009 at www.opsi.gov.uk/si/si2009/uksi_20090508_en_1. Full information about all the financial changes from 1 April 2009 is in CC15b Charity reporting and accounting: The essentials (April 2009) at www.charitycommission.gov.uk/publications/cc15b.asp.

LEGAL NEWS

REPORTING INCIDENTS AT WORK

The HSE web site for RIDDOR, the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations, has been relaunched. This should make life easier for employers and others who are required to report specified workplace incidents. There are options to report online, email, by phone or post. See <http://www.hse.gov.uk/riddor/index.htm>.

PHOTO DRIVING LICENCES

Thousands of motorists are at risk of being fined up to £1000 because they are unwittingly driving without a valid licence. They risk prosecution after failing to spot the extremely small print on their photo card licence which says it automatically expires after 10 years and has to be renewed—even though drivers are licensed to drive until the age of 70.

Just below the driver name on the front of the photo card licence is a series of dates and details each numbered, 4B features a date in tiny writing which is when the licence is valid to.

Motorists who fail to renew their licences in time are allowed to continue driving. But the DVLA says they could be charged with 'failing to surrender their licence', an offence carrying a £1000 fine.

GIFT AID

HM Revenue & Customs has issued a revised gift aid declaration form, showing the dates of the tax year (6 April to 5 April). The form is at www.hmrc.gov.uk/charities/appendix_b1.pdf.

There is no need to ask donors who have already made declarations to change them, but charities and community amateur sports clubs should use the new form (or revise their own form so it follows the recommended wording on the new HMRC form) for new declarations.

Currently, tax on gift aid donations can be recovered for up to six years from the end of the tax year in which the donation was made, but to get transitional relief (the 3p in the £1 supplement for gift aid donations in 2008/09, 2009/10 and 2010/11) the claim must be made within two years from the end of the tax year. The six-year limit for ordinary claims (without transitional relief) will decrease to four years from April 2010.

GUIDES FOR FINANCE

Employee and volunteer taxation made simple and a range of other short "made simple" guides for finance (and non-finance) staff in voluntary organisations - produced by Sayer Vincent accountants in association with Charity Finance Directors Group.

JOB EVALUATION

ACAS guide to help you decide whether job evaluation is right for your organisation as a way of reviewing and setting pay.

www.acas.org.uk/index.aspx?articleid=682

TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

SOMERSET SKILLS & LEARNING—FREE COURSES

SS&L have funding to provide free courses to voluntary and community groups or other organisations working with people who are from disadvantaged groups / residents of deprived wards.

We can offer a range of courses linked to healthy eating, exercise and fitness, IT, family learning, art, alternative therapies, confidence building, volunteer training and team building etc. If you would like to take up this offer or, have a specific course in mind which is not listed, please contact Jenny Perks on 07920211172 to discuss further.

Example courses include:

Healthy Eating

This course develops a knowledge and understanding of healthy eating, through hands on cooking. Learners will learn the importance of healthy eating and learn how changes to their eating habits can make positive changes to their lives. Participants will have the opportunity to make bread, pizza, soup, salad.

Wider family learning based courses

The courses can be tailored to the needs and interests of the group and can include a number of family learning sessions to begin with, followed by a short course for parents. Courses can be based around themes such as positive parenting, confidence and assertiveness, multi-cultural activities, art based activities, cooking and gardening activities.

Alternative Therapies Taster Course

This course covers an introduction to back massage, scalp massage, facial massage, aromatherapy, manicures and hand reflexology.

An Introduction to IT

Beginners IT

This course covers the basic functions of a computer, basic word, using the Internet and E Mail. The course is designed to support the participant in using a computer with increasing confidence.

Team Building

This energetic course provides a hands-on team building activities for your team, volunteers or clients. The tutor has a background of teaching art, running sports centres and facilitating team development, and will work with you to tailor make a programme to cater for your individual team. There are over 50 different activities to choose from and can include a variety of arts and/or sports based activities. The aim of the course is to support the participants to further develop the skills to improve communication, idea sharing and teamwork. Team building courses can include a mix of:

Warm up activities,

Discussion generating activities designed to focus on communication and problem solving

Team Dynamics - A mix of high and low energy activities designed to encourage communication and team co-ordination.

Self-Exploration - Low energy activities focusing on internal reflection.

Art - Team building activities which incorporate artistic options

Sports – A wide range of sports including football, volleyball, baseball and basketball.

Building confidence through Art

This fun and relaxed course aims to provide a taster of a range of creative activities for adults from disadvantaged areas and community groups. Participants have the opportunity to develop new art based skills as well as providing chance for individuals to undertake activities specifically designed to improve levels of confidence, self-esteem, communication and team work. The course can be tailored to the needs of the individual group and can cover elements of creative arts, drama, games and self-exploration. Each learner will be encouraged to explore themselves, address any barriers they feel they have and come up with a decisive action plan to move themselves from their current situation towards future goals.

TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

Networking & Negotiating Skills - Thursday 11th June (Exeter)

Recognising & Dealing with Suspected Abuse - Tuesday 16th June (Taunton)

Successfully Applying for Small Grants – Tuesday 7th July (Taunton)

Building & Leading a Team - Tuesday 14th July (Taunton)

'High Impact' Communication Skills - Tuesday 21st July (Taunton)

All courses run from 9.30am – 4pm at **fully accessible venues**. The **cost** of each course is £99 per person (including lunch). All of Cascade's **trainers** are knowledgeable professionals and highly regarded in their fields of expertise.

Cascade is the Third Sector Support Service run by Lindy Booth, formerly Development Manager at Mind in Taunton & West Somerset. An experienced Third Sector manager, she now works freelance.

For more information please go to: **www.cascadetrainingplus.co.uk**

FREE Residential Training

'BUILDING BLOCKS TO SOCIAL ENTERPRISE'*

At

The Ammerdown Centre, nr Radstock, BA3 5SW

Monday and Tuesday, 22nd and 23rd June 2009

• **SOCIAL ENTERPRISE** is any trading project which seeks to meet social aims. Examples may include a community-run village shop or child-care facility, a timber re-use scheme or even a leisure centre.

The AIM of the training is to support community and voluntary groups to plan and develop their own **SOCIAL ENTERPRISE** activity.

The training is for people who are:

- Members of existing voluntary or community groups
- People who are thinking about setting up a voluntary or community group
- People who have an idea for a project which both generates an income and provides a service to the community

Other examples of **SOCIAL ENTERPRISE** may include out of school clubs, community cafes, food coops, IT businesses, reprographic services etc.

The training will be delivered by professional trainers with experience of community development and social enterprise. We will use a variety of methods including simulation, group work, presentation and individual action planning. There will be opportunity to share ideas and to hear from an existing social enterprise.

For more information and an application form please contact:

Mike Atkinson, Social Enterprise Coordinator, Somerset County Council

Tel: 01823 355611 mob: 0787 966 8736

email: matkinson@somerset.gov.uk

TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

ViSTA are pleased to be able to offer the following funded courses:

Certificate in Community Development (2 Units)

Community Development Work is about social change and social justice. Would you like to learn more about the values, practice and skills for community development work?

Langport: 19th May and continues on June 2nd, 16th and 30th.

This is a nationally accredited qualification through National Open College Network. Please contact us if you miss the start date but would still like to join.



Lantra Award in Volunteer Management

This course is suitable for anybody who manages, supervises or leads volunteers on a daily basis. It is supported by the standard setting body for Volunteer Skills - the UK Workforce Hub.

Taunton: 19th May, 2nd June, 16th June, 23rd June, 7th July and 21st July. If you miss the start date but would still like to join the course..

Planning and Running Community Fundraising Events.

A fabulous accredited course which will give you a step by step guide to organising a fundraising event as well as look at the legal and health & safety aspects.

Running across the county – Please see 100% Somerset page for details.

Introduction to Counselling Skills

We are getting a group together to enable us to run this course. It is ideal for anybody who would like to gain a foundation qualification. Please contact us for more information.

Certificate in Youth Work – Building Relationships

One of the four mandatory units that make up the Certificate in Youth Work, accredited at Level 2 with City and Guilds. We will run the other units in the coming 12 months.

Middlezoy: June 3rd, 10th, 17th, 24th, July 1st, 8th.

All the above courses are free via ThinkSmart funding. To be eligible you should be over 19 and live in Somerset or volunteer/work for an organisation in Somerset with under 250 employees.

The Common Assessment Framework

Free to staff in the Children and Young People's Workforce and essential if you work with Children or Young People

Taunton: 26th May

Westonzoyland: 2nd June.

What is Fundraising Free to Somerset Fundraisers

A one day taster for anybody new to fundraising or anybody who would like to update their skills. Run for us by The Institute of Fundraising.

Bridgwater: 27th May

Raising your Website Profile in Google/Promote your cause Online Each day £98

How easy is it to find your website? These courses will help you market your organization online.

Langport: 27th and 28th May.

Introduction to Benefit £98

Langport: 5th June

Coaching and Mentoring Awards.

If you have an interest in learning and want to develop skills to help you to help others achieve, give us a call.

For more information or to book training please call ViSTA and speak to Laura or Debbie 08453 580372

EVENTS

Have you heard about 100% Somerset?

100% Somerset is a Charities Festival Week co-ordinated by ViSTA, the Somerset Fundraisers Group and the local CVS organisations.



This is a chance for your Community Groups and Charities to get involved with fundraising events under a Somerset banner (100% Somerset). You will benefit from shared publicity, raise the profile of your charity and highlight all the good work that Somerset charities and community groups achieve. All we ask is that you raise money and 100% stays in Somerset.

There is a fundraising pack available which is full of fundraising information and ideas including:

100% charARTy: We are working with Somerset Art Works to link Somerset Charities with Somerset artists. The artists will produce a piece of work inspired by the charity they are linked with. Each work will be displayed during Somerset Arts Week and auctioned at the end of 100% Somerset week. Would you like your charity to be involved?

As part of 100% Somerset, ViSTA is running **free Fundraising Training**. Send your staff and volunteers on the courses and then get them fundraising for you during 100% Somerset.

“Planning and Running Community and Fundraising Events”.

This is a course which runs over 5 days for a morning each day. It covers everything you need to know, from legislation and budgets to event plans, marketing and Health and Safety. It will give you a step by step guide to running a fundraising event

There are various dates across Somerset, but the Yeovil course begins on 3rd June.

For more information about 100% Somerset, 100% charARTy, free training, or to request a fundraising pack please call Laura: 08453 580372 or email laura@vistaproject.org.uk

<http://www.somerseteventplanner.co.uk/>

Here is the link to the website I mentioned today - toolkit for people organising an event.

Carnivals, events and Festivals Tool kit

CORE SERVICES

MORE SUPPORT FOR VOLUNTARY GROUPS IN SOUTH SOMERSET!!

Great News!! I am pleased to announce that we have just secured funding for the next 2 years to recruit a Development Worker for the Voluntary Sector in South Somerset. The Development Worker's role will be to support voluntary organisations and community groups on a one to one basis, providing them with advice on financial sustainability, governance, funding, training and policy development. Watch this space for further developments we will be in touch!!

SOMERSET ALLIANCE OF CVS (SACVS)

We are still continuing our partnership with the other CVS' in Somerset and working hard to raise our capacity to enable us to deliver equitable infrastructure services to all voluntary organisations in Somerset. We now all have a standard database that we work too and in the next few weeks a needs analysis survey will be sent out to over 800 organisations in Somerset, asking groups what they need from a CVS. This will give us a true picture of the needs of the sector in Somerset and enable us to adapt our services to meet those needs.

To find out more please call Sam on 01935 475914.

NEEDS ANALYSIS SURVEY OF THE VOLUNTARY SECTOR IN SOUTH SOMERSET

As mentioned above we are carrying out a needs analysis survey of all groups in South Somerset who are registered on our data base. I would be extremely grateful if you could complete the questionnaire as honestly and fully as possible, if you need any help at all, please call either Sam or Peter on 01935 475914, who will be happy to write down your answers for you.

The details of the survey will enable us to drive forward the work of the new Development Worker and help plan and deliver services that have been identified by you.

OFFICE SERVICES

No access to a PC, photocopier, fax machine, projector, lap top, laminator, digital camera or the Internet? Then call into our offices at Houndstone Business Park, Yeovil. Our service is open to small voluntary & community groups in South Somerset who need support in these areas. To find out charges please call Donna on 01935 475914.

PAYROLL SERVICES

Why have all the worry of NI contributions, PAYE and sick pay, when we can do this for you. For £11 per person per month we can offer voluntary groups a payroll service tailored to your needs. We are happy to deliver the whole service for you, or we can just complete the calculations for you. For more information please call Liz or Donna on 01935 475914.

FUNDING ADVICE SERVICE

SSVCA Funding Advice Service

A grant from Area South of SSDC has enabled us to provide a free funding advice service for six months to local voluntary and community groups. The Funding Advice team consists of two advisers, Anne Lunt and Sue Catlett. They have helped over 30 groups since the service started last November. The types of project for which funding was required was very varied and the FA team were able to suggest the most appropriate funder from a wide range of sources.

According to the needs of the group, one of the team either helped write applications, or read through their applications and made suggestions as appropriate. So far, we have heard that nine groups have been successful in their applications raising in total £20,329. There are still about 20 outstanding applications in the pipeline amounting to over half a million pounds.

In some cases we were able to link groups together to give their applications more weight. Other groups decided not to proceed with their applications at present. In many cases it became evident in discussion with the groups, that they needed to do more background research, and also ensure that they had all the correct policies and procedures in place to meet a funder's criteria, before they were ready to make the grant application.

Sue and Anne have put together a 'Grant Applications Made Easy' toolkit which they used as a basis for a presentation at the Somerton Voluntary Sector forum. They will be holding a dedicated 'Grant Applications Made Easy' workshop on June 22nd from 10.15 to 1pm at the SSDC offices, Brympton Way, Yeovil. Please see the flyer enclosed.

HARD DRIVE WIPING SERVICE

Are you about to dispose of your computer? Are you worried about all the data stored on the hard drive? We will clean the hard drive for you and either dispose of it or return it to you. £10 per hard drive.

Contact Jo at SSVCA on 01935 414034.



Thank you to everyone who sent in nomination forms as part of the 2009 Volunteer of the Year Awards.

We are very grateful to our judges, Phil Chandler - Deputy Mayor, Mark Porter - Senior Manager, National Clubs and Charities Centre, Lloyds TSB and Jacqueline Dean - Deputy Chairman. Their task was not an easy one and they clearly gave a great deal of thought to who should win.



The winners are:

Arthritis Care – Yeovil Branch
Chard Intentional Peer Support Group
The Goodfellowship Club
Yeovil Night Shelter
Somerset Sight Volunteer Visitors, South Somerset Area

We are very much looking forward to presenting them with their awards on Friday 5th June 2009.

VOLUNTEER MANAGER TRAINING FUND CUT BY £1M

A long-awaited fund to provide training for volunteer managers will distribute £1m less than first promised. The Office of the Third Sector said it would provide £3m rather than the £4m promised last year to support and train volunteer managers. The missing £1m will be diverted into the third sector action plan.

The fund, set up in response to Manifesto for Change, a report by the Commission on the Future of Volunteering, will be distributed by infrastructure body Capacitybuilders from the summer. Debbie Usiskin, vice-chair of the Association of Volunteer Managers, said she was unsurprised but disappointed by the funding cut. "The need for specific and effective training is urgent," she said.

An OTS spokesman said: "We make no apology for reviewing our budget. Our work has been refocused to support the sector at this critical time." The fund is part of a £6.6m package of volunteer funds unveiled by the OTS this week. It has set up a £2m, two-year fund for charities aimed at helping disabled people overcome barriers to volunteering; this was also promised in response to Manifesto for Change.

The tender process to run the fund opens this week.

HOW MUCH ARE YOUR VOLUNTEERS WORTH?

We know they are priceless but if you want to know how much your volunteers contribute in terms of economic value the simplest way is to multiply the average hourly wage by the number of hours worked.

You can find average wage information on the Office for National Statistics website.



CHILDCARE AND OTHER CARE COSTS AND NATIONAL MINIMUM WAGE

The [National Minimum Wage Act 1998 s.44](#) says that 'voluntary workers' — volunteers who receive any money or benefit at all — are entitled to minimum wage unless the only money they receive for their volunteering is reimbursement of expenses incurred in carrying out their duties and, in some very specific situations, subsistence payments to cover meals and living expenses; and/or the only benefit in kind they receive from their volunteering is training whose sole or main purpose is to improve the work they do as a volunteer, and subsistence or accommodation reasonable for the work.

This is clearly a very narrow definition but in practice HM Revenue & Customs, who enforce minimum wage, did not treat reimbursement of expenses incurred in order to volunteer as entitling the person to minimum wage. But as part of a review of minimum wage in 2007, the Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform said that reimbursement for such costs, in particular childcare and other care costs, is a benefit and should entitle volunteers who receive it to minimum wage.

Following a campaign by volunteer-using organisations, s.14 of the Employment Act 2008 amended s.44 of the NMWA from 13 January 2009, to make clear that reimbursement of expenses to enable a person to volunteer does not trigger entitlement to minimum wage. This includes travel to the place of volunteering, and childcare and other care costs.

The Employment Act 2008 is at www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2008/ukpga_20080024_en_1.

Increase in volunteering enquiries confirmed

Volunteering England this week highlighted that the number of people looking for opportunities to volunteer has increased in recent months.

In research for the Institute for Volunteering Research on the role of Volunteer Centres in supporting and developing the link between volunteering and increased employability, the overwhelming majority of centres had seen an increase in enquiries in the last six months, and YouthNet, the home of volunteering website do-it.org.uk, saw applications rise by 115% between 2007 and 2008.

News release at <http://preview.tinyurl.com/dnbcr7>

If you have any changes to your contact details or volunteering opportunities please let Leonie know on 01935 414023 or email leoniegirling@ssvca.org.uk so that she can update her details. Many thanks.

SSVCA PROJECTS

FURNICARE

Furnicare is a Furniture Re-use project operating from Yeovil and Chard. The project enables people on low income and charitable groups to purchase good quality furniture, household items and electrical goods at affordable prices. Our service is open to anyone claiming benefit or who earns less than £15,000 per year. If you would like to find out more information or would like to donate unwanted furniture to the scheme please contact:

Yeovil on 01935 433416 Tuesday to Friday between 10.00am and 4.00pm or
Chard on 01460 68221 Monday to Thursday between 10.00am and 4.00pm.



COMMUNITY TRANSPORT

We operate 3 transport schemes in South Somerset, Community Transport (minibus service), Community Cars and Links.

Community Transport provides transport to older, frail and disabled people who are unable to access mainstream services. All of our 11 minibuses are wheelchair accessible. We transport people and groups to a number of places including day care, social groups and hospital and GP appointments. To find out more information please call 01935 477399.

Community Cars recruits over 50 volunteers who using their own cars will transport people unable to access mainstream services but who can use a normal car. The client will pay the driver his/her mileage rate of 40p per mile plus a £2 booking fee to cover the administration cost. For further information please call 01935 411572.

Links is based in Langport and serves the towns of Somerton and Langport and the surrounding villages and hamlets. Links uses smaller vehicles than the minibus scheme due to the small rural lanes, however all the vehicles are wheelchair accessible. This scheme is open to anyone unable to access mainstream services or who does not have a mainstream service in their village or town. For further information please call 01458 250169.

TALKING COMPUTERS

Talking Computers is a Big Lottery funded project that provides training to people who are unable or find it difficult to access mainstream pcs because of a visual impairment, physical impairment or dyslexia.

One to one training is provided to all users in differing software packages identified to meet individual need. Training is carried out at our training suite at Houndstone, Yeovil or at Somerset Association for the Blind based in Taunton. For further information please call 01935 414034.

AFFORDABLE COMPUTERS FOR EVERYONE!!

Our IT re-cycling project can set you up with a re-used PC. With its hard drive wiped of any previous data we can offer you a pc with Windows 98, Windows 2000 or Windows XP (subject to eligibility) from £20. Monitor, keyboard and mouse bundle to go with your pc is £15. For more information call Jo on 01935 414034 Tuesday – Thursday.

SSVCA CONTACT DETAILS

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Liz Stevens - Payroll Administrator
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Leonie Girling - Volunteer Centre Administrator.
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01935 414023.

Community Transport

Sue Scammell - Project Manager
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Sue Barnfield - Administrator
Sue Rickerby - Administrator
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Community Cars

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Karen Smith - Deputy Manager
Carol Duchscherer - Administrator
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IT Resource Centre

Catriona Eagle - Project Manager
Rachel O'Rourke - Administrator
Jo Culliford - IT Re-use and support
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Furnicare Yeovil

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Furnicare Chard

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South Somerset Links

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This newsletter is produced free of charge for the voluntary and community sector and statutory partners, within South Somerset and is circulated to over 500 organisations registered with us. It is written for everyone concerned with voluntary and community organisations - volunteers, committee members, trustees, staff and partners. All sections can be copied and passed around your organisations, so please don't keep it to yourself, there is something for everyone!

We hope you find the newsletter useful and easy to read, however if you would like to make suggestions on how we can improve this format or you would like to be registered on our mailing list please contact Donna on 01935 475914. The next issue will be out in September 2009. If you would like to include any articles or information please send copy to Sam Healy or email at samhealy@ssvca.org.uk by the end of August 2009.

SSVCA DIRECTORS/TRUSTEES

Nigel Engert

Chair & Finance Committee

Mike Sandells

Deputy Chair, Finance Committee & Furnicare

Brian Maxwell

Legal Advice & Community Transport

Dave Gladding

Finance Committee

Chris Watson

Katherine Nolan

Sarah Hunt

OBSERVERS

Voluntary Sector

Penny Mitchell - South Street Centre

County Council

Vicky Breeze

SSDC

Ric Pallister

The main SSVCA office is situated at:

**Units 4/5, Yeovil Small Business Centre,
Houndstone Business Park, Yeovil,
Somerset, BA22 8WA.**

From the ASDA roundabout take the Lufton Way exit following signs for Houndstone Business Park, take the first right into Mead Avenue and follow the road past Screwfix (on your left hand side), turn right into Memorial Road and follow the road round. SSVCA is situated opposite St. John Ambulance.

Articles and information should not be considered full or definitive. The information contained is not a substitute for professional advice and whilst every care has been taken to produce this newsletter, SSVCA accepts no responsibility for any errors that may have occurred.

**DON'T FORGET TO COME ALONG
TO THE NEXT SOUTH SOMERSET
VOLUNTARY SECTOR FORUM!**

Tuesday 21st July 2009

At Yeovil Day Centre, Corner of South Street and
Union Street, Yeovil, BA20 1QE.
(nearest car park, Petters Way)

10.00AM TO 1.15PM

Come along and network with other voluntary and
community organisations, get updated on sector
and legal news affecting you.

Do you provide services for the statutory
authorities, if so find out how to make the change
from grant funding to tendering for contracts. Pick
up tips on how to win your tender and find out how
the statutory agencies now wish to engage with the
Voluntary Sector.

For more information or to book a free space,
please call Donna on 01935 475914