

South Somerset Voluntary & Community Action



January 2010

CONTENTS

Page 2	Hello from the Chairman & Chief Officer
Page 3-5	Sector News
Page 6-7	Legal News
Page 8-9	Training Opportunities
Pages 10-11	Voluntary Sector Development/Core Services
Page 12-14	Funding Opportunities
Page 14-17	Volunteer Centre
Pages 18	Member News
Pages 19	SSVCA Projects
Page 20	SSVCA Contact Details
Page 21	Voluntary Sector Forum

HELLO FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE SAM HEALY

Happy New Year to you all, I truly hope 2010 will be a happy and prosperous year for you individually and for your organisations. Apparently we are now out of the recession, however for the voluntary sector it does not feel that way; many organisations are struggling to meet further demand from clients who have lost their jobs, facing relationship breakdowns, reduction in carer support etc etc. Coupled with the increased demand we are also facing cuts in grants as our statutory partners also face huge financial cuts. To get through we will need to work even more effectively and efficiently than we already do (I can hear your sniggers!) and perhaps look at how we can work in partnership with like minded organisations to save on overhead costs etc. With good timing I am pleased to welcome our new Development Worker Becky Britten, who will be able to work with local groups on how they can save costs, find alternative sources of funding and help with any other needs your organisations may need, please see pages 10 and 11 for more details.

I would like to take this opportunity say a big thank you to Nigel Engert, who has stepped down as our Chairman for all the support he has given me in the last 3 years and welcome Mike Sandells in his place, who I am looking forward to working closely with in delivering our new business plan for the next three years.

Sam Healy

HELLO FROM THE CHAIRMAN MIKE SANDELLS

As Nigel said in the previous newsletter, how time flies. I joined SSVCA (formerly CVS) as a trustee 18 years ago and over that time have seen many changes. Today it is an organisation employing over 70 personnel and delivers services from computer training and reconditioning, transport, volunteer recruitment and more recently developing our role of giving support and guidance to other voluntary organisations in the South Somerset area.

It is certainly a privilege and honour to be accorded the position of Chair of SSVCA. This year I intend to assist Sam and her team to relocate our headquarters to a more public accessible area, hopefully near the town centre and also to assist in creating a much needed Furnicare in the Wincanton Area. Through this newsletter I would like to take this opportunity to thank Nigel Engert for the support and guidance he has given to SSVCA during his term as Chairman and also the trustees who have readily given their time and skills to the organisation.

On the subject of trustees we now have vacancies for two or three more to join the Board, so if you feel you could bring your skills to our organisation and have a few hours a month to spare please contact me or any other trustee.

Finally any Company is only as good as its staff and of course its future is very much in their hands and to this end I would like to say thank you to all our hardworking and loyal employees and volunteers.

Mike Sandells

LOCAL SECTOR NEWS

REVIEW OF THE LOCAL COMPACT

The Somerset Compact is currently under review and in November at the last Voluntary Sector Forum we consulted with participants on what they thought about the compact and how they feel this can be improved to better relations between the voluntary and statutory sectors. Below is a summary conclusion of our consultation, which was sent to the review committee with our recommendations for change. These recommendations were also endorsed from the South Somerset Local Strategic Partnership. A report from the review committee is due out in February.

Conclusion of consultation with South Somerset Voluntary Sector Forum.

It was established that all agreed in principle with the Somerset Compact and supported what it represented, however concerns raised were that there is currently no procedure in place to help resolve issues if or when a problem occurs or a relationship breaks down and that the Somerset Compact needs to raise its profile both in the voluntary and statutory sectors if it is to work and continue working. It was also felt the Compact should be better publicised and it is referred to on literature, in contracts and Service Level Agreements. A concise compliance procedure needs to be devised which both parties can work too, to ensure that the Somerset Compact is a document that is respected by both the voluntary and statutory sector, which recognises both as equal partners working together for the people of Somerset.

SOMERSET NHS

A few of you who deliver health related projects, have asked how the NHS/PCT consider voluntary sector organisations in becoming service providers through their commissioning process, Ben Hewlett from Somerset NHS has confirmed there are two main areas where the NHS engage with the Voluntary Sector, both of which can be accessed via their website. <http://www.somerset.nhs.uk/welcome/commissioning-partnerships/partnerships/voluntary-and-community-sector>

To be considered to become a service provider for NHS Somerset you need to register your interest on their web site. There is a section on the page called “expressing an interest in becoming a service provider”. This is where the NHS would be interested in hearing from voluntary organisations if you feel your organisation could help support them in the delivery of one or more of our key priority areas. The expressions of interest are reviewed regularly and where appropriate you will be contacted for further information or will be invited to a potential provider information event. There is an expression of interest form under this section which you can complete and post in to Somerset NHS. Once received, your details will go onto the database and a form will be sent to appropriate colleagues within NHS Somerset so they are aware of your interest.

The other area of engagement is via their small grants programme, which details can also be found on their webpage.

SECTOR NEWS

CAPACITY BUILDERS

Thanks to funding from Capacity Builders, ViSTA – The Voluntary Sector Training Alliance, is offering a range of free business development support services for Voluntary and Community Sector organisations in Somerset from October 2009. For further information contact Catherine Beedell at ViSTA catherine@vistaproject.org.uk

PLAIN ENGLISH GUIDE TO DATA PROTECTION

A guide to data protection law accredited by the Plain Language Commission has been published by official regulator the Information Commissioner's Office. 'The Guide to Data Protection' gives practical advice to those with day-to-day responsibility for data protection, taking a straightforward look at the principles of the Data Protection Act and helping organisations safeguard personal data. View online or download pdf (602KB) at http://www.ico.gov.uk/for_organisations/data_protection_guide.aspx

EMPLOYMENT STATUS INDICATOR

HM Revenue and Customs online Employment Status Indicator tool enables you to check the employment status of an individual or group of workers - whether they are employed or self-employed for tax, National Insurance contributions or VAT purposes. <http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/calcs/esi.htm>.

CAMPAIGN AGAINST CHANGE IN MUSIC LICENSING

England's umbrella body NCVO is campaigning against the decision that voluntary organisations should pay for a licence when they play recorded music in their own premises, when they had previously been exempt. See 'Dont Stop the Music' campaign pages at <http://preview.tinyurl.com/ylijpwm4> for more information.

NEW TRUSTEE AND GOVERNANCE INFORMATION CENTRE

NCVO has launched its new Trustee and Governance Information Centre, with material ranging from the role of the trustee to changing governing documents and the responsibilities of a board (management committee). For more information please go to: <http://www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/advice-support/trustee-governance>

WORKING WITH LOCAL COUNCILS ON GREEN ISSUES

'Green Up! Five ways of working with your council on sustainability: a practical guide for community and voluntary groups' has been published by the Community Development Foundation. The "plain English" guide explains how community groups can use everything from Local Area Agreements to Sustainable Community Strategies to get their work supported, and explains the jargon often used by local councils. <http://www.cdf.org.uk/web/guest/publication?id=142955>. (Source: Defra Third Sector blog)

SECTOR NEWS

COMPREHENSIVE AREA ASSESSMENT (CAA) REPORTS ON LIFE IN LOCAL AREAS

Oneplace, an interactive website providing information on the outcome of CAA in all top tier local authority areas, was launched on 9 December. CAA is the new way of measuring the performance of councils and other local public bodies, such as the police and fire service, in every area. It focuses on partnerships and outcomes and as such the role of the third sector is extremely important. <http://oneplace.direct.gov.uk>.

The VoluntaryNews web site is at <http://www.VoluntaryNews.org.uk/wp/>.

LEGAL NEWS

MODEL CONSTITUTION FOR VERY SMALL CHARITIES

The Charity Commission issued in October 2009 a model constitution for very small charities which do not own a building or employ people, and whose income is (and is likely to remain, at least for a while) below the registration threshold of £5000. The constitution was developed in association with nine umbrella or support organisations, and is available at www.charitycommission.gov.uk/registration/smallcharity.asp. A charity which reaches £5000 and must register with the Commission, or which wants to register below that level when voluntary registration of excepted charities becomes available, will have to adopt a more detailed governing document.

COMPANIES ACT

Full information about the changes to the Companies Act which happened on 01/10/09, including all the new forms (the old forms are no longer valid) can be found on the Companies House website via <http://tinyurl.com/lkhyme>

THE EQUALITY BILL

(formerly called the Single Equality Bill) was introduced into Parliament in April 2009. It is expected to receive royal assent in spring 2010 and come into force in October 2010, but this could be delayed by a general election. It will replace all the existing equal ops legislation and cover nine **protected characteristics** — age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation (clauses 4-12,16-17). The Bill is intended to simplify the law, sort out the disparities between the different discrimination "strands", extend some existing protections, and introduce new protections.

LEGAL NEWS

VETTING AND BARRING SCHEME

There has been quite a lot of concern raised regarding the Vetting and Barring Scheme and so we have answered some of the key questions raised. However for a comprehensive list of FAQ's and more general information, please visit http://www.crb.homeoffice.gov.uk/faqs/vetting_and_barring_scheme.aspx

What is the Vetting and Barring Scheme?

The Vetting and Barring Scheme aims to prevent unsuitable people from undertaking certain paid or volunteer work with children or vulnerable adults. It will do this by vetting all those who wish to work with vulnerable groups in either regulated activity or controlled activity, and barring those where the information shows they pose a risk of harm.

What is regulated activity?

Regulated activity covers anyone working closely with children or vulnerable adults, either paid or unpaid, not part of a family or personal arrangement, on a frequent or intensive basis. It can include, but is not limited to, any of the following:

- Teaching, training or instruction, care or supervision of children or vulnerable adults.
- Providing advice or guidance for children and vulnerable adults.
- Any form of healthcare treatment or therapy provided to children or vulnerable adults.
- Driving a vehicle that is being used for the specific purpose of conveying children or vulnerable adults.
- Working in a specified place, such as: schools, childcare premises (including nurseries), residential homes for children in care, children's hospitals, children's detention centres, children's centres, adult care homes, and further education institutions.

What is controlled activity?

Controlled activity will bring a person in contact with children or vulnerable adults, or the opportunity to have access to health or social services records for children or vulnerable adults, or educational records for children.

These activities include:

- Frequent or intensive activity that is ancillary to healthcare in hospitals or primary care
- Frequent or intensive ancillary activity in adult social care settings and further education settings
- People working for specified organisations with access to health or social services records.

Who runs the Vetting and Barring Scheme?

The Vetting and Barring Scheme, is being delivered in partnership between the Independent Safeguarding Authority, the Criminal Records Bureau and Access Northern Ireland. The ISA makes the barring decisions and the CRB administers the scheme.

What are the key dates for the Vetting and Barring Scheme?

12 October 2009

This is the Scheme's launch date. From this date it is an offence to work in regulated activity while barred from the following barring lists; POCA, POVA and List 99. It is also an offence to knowingly allowing someone to work in regulated activity while barred.

April 2010

In England and Wales, responsible persons who do not know whether a new entrant or mover into controlled activity is barred from regulated activity will have to apply to the CRB for an enhanced disclosure with a barred list check on that individual

26 July 2010

You may apply for ISA registration from this date if you move into a new role, either paid or voluntary.

1 November 2010

This is the date on which the Scheme becomes mandatory for new workers or those moving position. If you move into regulated activity, paid or voluntary, you must apply for ISA registration before starting in that role.

It will be a criminal offence to work in a regulated activity role without being ISA-registered. Regulated activity providers (RAPs) will have a legal duty to check that potential new employees/volunteers are ISA- registered before allowing them to engage in regulated activity. RAPs that are registered bodies may facilitate ISA registration at recruitment stage, as part of their checks on potential new staff.

1 April 2011

This is the date from which people who are already working in regulated activity and have not moved into a new role with a new RAP may apply for ISA registration. This will happen in phases, usually organised by RAPs, and they will tell people when they should join.

1 January 2014

This is the date from which the Government will recommend that people working in controlled activity should apply for ISA registration.

31 July 2015

This is the final cut-off date by which everyone working in both regulated activity and controlled activity must be ISA-registered (except barred people in controlled activity, who cannot register).

Does the Vetting and Barring Scheme apply to self employed people? If you are self-employed and already working in regulated activity, an umbrella body will be able to advise you on when to apply. A list of umbrella bodies is available from the CRB website at www.crb.gov.uk or AccessNI at www.accessni.gov.uk.

How does a person apply to join the Vetting and Barring Scheme?

The individual must submit an application to the CRB to become ISA-registered.

What are the costs of the Vetting and Barring Scheme?

For individuals undertaking **paid employment**, the registration will incur a one-off fee of **£64**. **Volunteers** will have to apply in the same way as an employee however, will **not be charged** for registering.

Who can I call about the Vetting and Barring Scheme if I have a question?

You can call the VBS Call Centre 0300 123 1111. Operators staffing this Lo-call service will be available to deal with your queries Monday to Friday between 8am and 5.30pm

TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

TRAINING FOR CARERS

- Week 1 – The Carer’s Role & Basic First Aid**
- Week 2 – Benefits Advice & Managing Continence**
- Week 3 – Safer Moving and Handling & Preventing Falls**
- Week 4 – Stress Management & Relaxation Skills**

Each course comprises of 4 mornings of 3 hours each – 10.30am – lunch 1 – 1.30pm
To find out more information or book your place, please contact Jude Glide at St John Ambulance Somerset HQ on 01823-345920, email jude.glide@somerset.sja.org.uk or write to St John Ambulance HQ, St John House, 60 Staplegrove Road, Taunton, TA1 1DH
www.somerset.sja.org.uk

RED CROSS FIRST AID TRAINING FOR PEOPLE WITH LEARNING OR PHYSICAL DISABILITIES

The Red Cross have 200 funded places with the Learning Skills Council to offer over 19 year old's with physical disabilities and/or learning difficulties to learn first aid. We have a flexible and adaptable first aid programme that can be tailored to the needs of the people attending.

We have Centres in Yeovil, Bridgwater and Taunton that are wheelchair accessible or we will come to the people if the venue is suitable.
To book a place or for more information please contact Suzi White on 01823 273712

Many people are deterred at the prospect of pursuing higher education study due to time and/or distance limitations. This is when the option of distance learning can assist your situation. It offers students access to high quality learning; delivered to their letterbox, email, or via virtual learning centres.



With the use of new media technologies such as the internet, this method of distance learning is also known as online learning. Online learning has meant that there is a fast, convenient and inexpensive channel of communication between the student and teacher as well as between students themselves. Students can chat, discuss and build relationships with each other online. They can also discuss topics with their teacher and view lectures online and then discuss them in a forum.

There are lots of providers who now provide courses by distance learning at all sorts of levels and lengths of time. If you think this route would suit you and are interested in finding a course please contact us at ladder4learning and we can help you find a variety of courses to suit your specific needs. For more information please go to: <http://www.ladder4learning.org.uk/resources/learning>

TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

VISTA COURSE PROGRAMME
Full details can be found on
www.vistaproject.org.uk or call us
08453 580372

All about Charities Incorporated Organisations

10/3/10 - Langport
Free to Somerset's Voluntary and Community Sector

Bookkeeping - Level 2

28/01/10 - Shepton Mallet
The course will run on Thursdays 28th Jan, 4th, 11th, 25th Feb, 4th, 11th, 18th, 25th March, 1st, 22nd, 29th April, 6th and 13th May. 10-15 am - 2.00pm
Exam date: Thursday 20th May at the ViSTA Training Room, Langport.

Choosing the Best Legal Structure for your Organisation/Group

25/02/2010 - Taunton Deane or Glastonbury

Emergency First Aid in the Workplace

02/02/2010 - Langport
£80.

Get Skilled – Identify training needs of your organisation

09/02/10 - Langport
Free to Somerset's Voluntary and Community Sector.

Getting the Best from Outlook

05/02/10 - Langport
£50

Getting the Best from the Internet

12/03/10 - Langport
£50

Getting to know Office 2007

05/03/10 - Langport
£50

Gift Aid

10/03/2010 - Yeovil
Free (subject to eligibility) through Capacity Builders

Managing Performance, Capability and Conduct Issues

18/03/10 - Langport
Free (subject to eligibility through ViSTA /Capacity Builders Modernisation Programme or £98

Running Effective Meetings and Minute Taking

30.3.10 - Taunton or Glastonbury
Free to Somerset's Voluntary and Community

**Cascade-Third Sector Support Services-
Lindy Booth & Associates**

To book a course or for further details please
call 01278 455830

Managing Conflict

17/02/10 – Taunton - £129

Managing Performance & Dealing with Poor Performers

24/02/10 – Exeter - £129

An Introduction to Project Management

05/03/10 – Taunton - £129

Working Towards Financial Sustainability

09/03/10 – Taunton - £99

Full Cost Recovery: from theory to practice

16/03/10 – Taunton - £99

Addressing Data Protection

24/03/10 – Taunton - £99

Financial Management Demystified

25/03/10 – Exeter - £99

Strategic Planning for Trustees & Senior Managers

31/03/10 – Exeter - £149 **Masterclass Course**

Essential People Management: Overview

13/04/10 - £129

High Impact Communication Skills

20/04/10 – Taunton - £99

'Mountains and Molehills': Health & Safety made simple!

27/04/10 – Taunton - £99

Full Cost Recovery: from theory to practice

30/04/10 – Exeter - £99

Managing Lone Workers

06/05/10 - Weston-super-Mare - £99

Negotiating Skills for Senior Managers

11/05/10 - Taunton - £129

Managing Performance & Dealing with Poor Performers

25/05/10 - Taunton - £129

VOLUNTARY SECTOR DEVELOPMENT

Hi, my Name is Becky Britten, the new Development Worker at SSVCA, a post funded by the Big Lottery. Considering that I have only been in the job since last October, I've already had the pleasure of meeting and working with a large number of voluntary sector groups. It became obvious, and I hope I was quick enough to recognise, that all groups are 'individual', with differing needs to address and challenges to face.

The main purpose of my role is to meet with, plan and help, South Somerset community groups and charities, to achieve their goals. I have been asked for advice and guidance from issues around fundraising and volunteering through to writing constitutions, policies and contracts.

I can honestly say that the past 4 months have been a huge learning curve for me, and at times extremely challenging; but above all, I would describe my role as extremely rewarding. A fantastic opportunity to work in the 3rd Sector.

If you would like more information or would like me to contact you to discuss any help you or your group would like, then please call me on 01935 475914 or email me beckybritten@ssvca.org.uk

I look forward to hearing from you

Here are some case study examples of the groups and the type of work I have been involved in;

South Somerset Mind User Forum Group exists to give people suffering from, or considered vulnerable to mental ill health, a way of regaining their self confidence, a door to return to the community, leading to a more fulfilled life. Membership is automatic if you access the services of South Somerset Mind. The user forum group play a vital part in the recovery process of their members by helping organise and fund weekly activities; the user forum group also plays an active role at the weekly community access days available through South Somerset Mind. In addition to this, they encourage and help their members to arrange day trips to local places including Christmas shopping trips and daytime meals etc.

I have been working with both **South Somerset Mind** and the **User Forum Group** on the feasibility of bringing the latter under the umbrella body of South Somerset Mind. This potential collaboration will strengthen the group, allowing them to concentrate their efforts and time supporting their members and raising the additional funds required for their much needed and well attended activities.

If you would like to know more about the services offered above then please contact Victoria Salter on 01935 474875, email info@southsomersetmind.co.uk or visit their **NEWLY LAUNCHED** website www.southsomersetmind.co.uk

VOLUNTARY SECTOR DEVELOPMENT

Community Green Fair is the community group who organise and host the annual Green Scythe Fair at the beautiful [Thorney Lakes](#) in South Somerset. The group started in 2001 with the main aim to provide an event which promotes environmental issues through activities, music and culture. The event has grown year on year with 2009's festival attracting in excess of 2000 visitors.

I was first approached by the group to help them with some financial questions they had, and now, beyond that help, I can hopefully get more involved with helping them build on their success with additional future activities.

The next Green Scythe Fair is taking place on the 13th June from 11am till 11pm. Anyone who would like more information, would like to book a stall, get involved as a performer, a scyther or as a volunteer with this very popular event please email them info@greenfair.org.uk or visit their website www.greenfair.org.uk

Somerton Historic Buildings Preservation Trust was set up in August 2009 by a group of residents concerned by the way the heart of the town is running down with empty shops and the potential for significant buildings to fall into dilapidation. Since the trust's launch, support for the group has grown and membership is currently in excess of 140.

The Trusts' first project is to research and plan for the purchase of the Old Town Hall. It is envisaged that this project will benefit the community, bringing residents of the town together and breathing life back into this central and beautiful building.

I have been working with the executive committee and the usage committee since November 09, helping them with their business planning and facilitating discussions. It was also identified that the group could benefit from some business workshops and these are being arranged for February 2010.

*If you are interested in becoming a member of Somerton Historic Building Preservation Trust or you would like more information about their plans and vision, then please contact **Colin Mattingley** on **01458 272331** in the first instance.*

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 OPPORTUNITIES

FUNDING FOR COMMUNITIES

Raising money for community projects, as opposed to funding for specific groups, for example children or animals, can be difficult, but there are a few funds which are specifically for the whole community.

If you need £3000 to £10,000, **Awards for All** is still available and is very much focussed on activities that the whole community can benefit from. The Big Lottery have made the application form simpler and no longer require a referee on the initial application. They fund community groups as well as charities and statutory bodies such as schools and parish councils.

Their funding criteria are stated on their website as follows:

'The Awards for All programme aims to help improve local communities and the lives of people most in need. To do this we want to fund projects that meet one or more of the following outcomes:

- *People have better chances in life - with better access to training and development to improve their life skills.*
- *Stronger communities - with more active citizens working together to tackle their problems.*
- *Improved rural and urban environments - which communities are better able to access and enjoy.*
- *Healthier and more active people and communities.*

The application form is short and simple. Email the completed form and you will find out if you are successful within six weeks."

See www.awardsforall.org.uk/england/summary.html

The **Grassroots Grant** from the Somerset Community Foundation is another source of funding for local projects. Groups can apply for a minimum of £250 up to £5000. This can be a one-off payment or a grant spread over the lifetime of the programme, which finishes in March 2011. Alternatively you can apply for a number of grants that total no more than £5000 in the life of the grant scheme. You cannot, however, hold more than one grassroots grant at any one time. Statutory bodies can not apply, nor can groups with an income of over £30,000 per year.

See www.somersetcf.org.uk/grants.html

If you need a smaller amount of funding and either can not apply, or have been turned down, for the Grassroots Grant you can apply to the **South West Foundation** Small Grants scheme. The Foundation, in partnership with the Esmee Fairbairn Foundation, would like to invest small grants up to £500 in small Community Organisations operating in rural areas, market and coastal towns with the aim of encouraging. and enabling people to take part in their communities.

See www.the-foundation.org.uk

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

Larger amounts of money to alter and repair buildings or build new community centres are more difficult to obtain and communities usually need to think about several sources of funding. One possible source is **The Big Lottery – Reaching Communities Fund** which is available for voluntary and statutory organisations and social enterprises. Their website states:

“During 2009 –2010 BIG Lottery Fund’s Reaching Communities programme will remain open to applications. This is designed to act as a ‘bridge’ between our current funding programmes and our new Open Funding stream which will go live in 2010. The budget for Reaching Communities is £130 million.

Reaching Communities funds projects that help people and communities who are most in need, and can really make a difference. Projects can be new or existing activities, or be the core work of your organisation.

*We want to fund projects that respond to needs identified by communities, and those that fund projects that help those most in need, including those people or groups who are hard to reach. Call our Lottery Funding Helpline on **0845 275 00 00** or go to www.lotteryfunding.org.uk”*

The outcomes that the Big Lottery hopes groups will focus on, when applying for the Reaching Communities fund, are almost identical to those of Awards for All.

Some local areas can obtain funding from the landfill tax credit scheme see **Somerset Aggregates Levy Sustainability Fund** www.somerset.gov.uk or the **Natural England Aggregates Levy Scheme** see www.naturalengland.org.uk

Local communities which want to help keep village shops open can get help from the **Plunkett Foundation** - The Village CORE Programme supports communities of at least 300 people looking to set up and run a community owned rural shop. It provides advisory support along with a £40,000 funding package - a £20,000 grant matched with a £20,000 loan, which must be matched by the equivalent community contributions. www.plunkett.co.uk/whatwedo/core/Core.cfm

Community Spaces, funded by the Big Lottery, gives grants of between £10,000 and £49,999 for community groups to create or improve local spaces including informal sports & multi-use games areas, nature reserves, village greens, church yards etc. See www.community-spaces.org.uk

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

The Well Being of Yeovil Community Association is a registered Charity founded in 1980 by businessmen in Yeovil to support worthy causes, big and small, which benefit those living in Yeovil and the surrounding community.

Originally launched with pledges of financial support from 22 enterprises in the town, the Association is overseen by a Council of all its supporters, assisted by representatives of local statutory bodies. This Council determines policy and approves the annual accounts.

The work of the Association is managed by an Executive Committee appointed by the Council. This Committee meets regularly through the year in January, March, June and September and receives applications for help from voluntary organisations involved in charitable work for the Yeovil Community. Where appropriate, advice is given and contributions made towards capital projects (equipment etc.), but as a matter of Policy does not normally make contributions towards the running costs (revenue expenditure) of these organisations.

The Well Being of Yeovil Community Association welcomes new members and donations from both Industry and the general public.

For more information or to make an application please contact the Association on Tel: 01935 812922, or visit their website on www.yeovilwellbeingcharity.org

The aim of this article is just to give an idea of the range of funds available. There may well be more funds specifically for your area. While we have tried to ensure that this information is as accurate as possible, funding sources and criteria change all the time. For more local funding advice please contact Becky Britten on 01935 475914.



Volunteer Centre
South Somerset

Traditionally December is a quiet time across the regions for volunteering- not so for 2009. Volunteering opportunities, and those seeking volunteering roles continued to grow across the latter end of the year. I think it would be fair to say that each Volunteer Centre has more work than it expected and could use even more help from volunteers.

Part of the Somerset Alliance of Volunteer Centre's work has grown due to the national trend by the government to encourage people into volunteering. This has meant more work for the individual centres as more and more people are being encouraged to try volunteering. Our involvement with DWP has at times been trying but also very rewarding. It has opened up volunteering to people who may not otherwise have accessed our services.

Volunteering roles with organisations also continue to grow as more work is being devolved that was once paid, or came under other banners – such as care in the community. As requirements from health providers grow so will opportunities to work in the caring and befriending fields; particularly as we are in a county of a growing, aging population.

There have also been many staff changes and this has meant a period of unsettlement and re-adjusting across the areas. But this leads to new ideas being brought in and lots of learning and supporting each other across the regions. We have also had/are having the chance to update our procedures and further look at new objectives encouraged by Volunteering England.

The economic downturn has affected us all and will probably continue to do so across the third sector for months if not years, to come. New challenges and ever increasing demands are preparing us for more diverse ways of looking at volunteering. It is also creating more challenges to find funding for the future.



SOMERSET VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR AWARD 2009

In June 2009, Bob Betts was the recipient of the Captain Peter Love Award at the South Somerset Volunteer of the Year Presentations, held at the Ivel Barbarians Rugby Club. This is in recognition for his work with the Night Shelter, Somerset Polish Community Association, Lingo Link and Trash Bash. On the 14 January 2010, award winners from all over Somerset, were invited to attend the Somerset Volunteer of the Year Award 2009, at Somerset County Cricket ground in Taunton.

NEWS ON THE VOLUNTEER RIGHTS INQUIRY

Volunteering England, are taking a strategic lead to create the 'Volunteer Rights Inquiry'. The Inquiry will be a short exploration of the issues and potential solutions around the subject of volunteer rights. It sets out to examine a broad range of issues including, but not limited to, the legal rights of volunteers and to consider potential options for redress, when things go wrong. The organisations taking part can be viewed on the VE website www.volunteering.org.uk, along with more detailed information.

NEW 'ACCESS TO VOLUNTEERING FUND': NEW GRANTS AIM TO GET MORE DISABLED PEOPLE VOLUNTEERING

New grants, helping organisations to enable more disabled people to volunteer, have been available since the 16 November 2009. Organisations can apply for grants between £250 and £5,000, which can be used to help overcome barriers that stop disabled people volunteering; such as a lack of specific equipment, suitable access and/or understanding of disability issues.

These grants are part of the £2 million **Access to Volunteering Fund**, which was developed by the Office of the Third Sector in the Cabinet Office as a pilot scheme in Greater London, the West Midlands and the North West.

The fund operates from the autumn 2009 to spring 2011, over five grant rounds. In addition to supporting disabled volunteers, the pilot will test different ways to apply for funds, such as video applications and face-to-face pitches. The grant is being managed by a consortium comprising Charities Aid Foundation, RNIB and Digital Public. The pilot is being run to explore the feasibility of a wider, national Access to Volunteering Fund, and to remove the barriers to volunteering for disabled people.

Find out how to apply, or to become a member of a local assessment panel, visit www.accesstovolunteering.org or call 03000 123 346.



VOLUNTEERING AND FAITH COMMUNITIES IN ENGLAND.

Six faith-based projects have been selected for grant funding following a Volunteering England research report. The projects, led by diverse organisations, have different objectives, but all aim to improve young people's leadership qualities, and to develop their skills and experience, through volunteering. The participants are: *Shifa Trust, Jewish Volunteering Network, UK Islamic Mission, Multi Faith Derby, the Volunteer Centre Network, Newham and Passion.*

Leaders will come together over the life of the projects in facilitated learning networks. They are also being provided with training and consultancy on 'Impact Assessment' by the Institute for Volunteering Research, who will be supporting them to collect and demonstrate evidence of their successes.

JUSTIN DAVIS SMITH, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OF VOLUNTEERING ENGLAND, EXPLORES THE DEBATE AROUND VOLUNTEERING FOR PROFIT

We all now see the value of encouraging staff in private companies to volunteer in the community. But the idea of the reverse happening – of local citizens volunteering in for profit firms still brings many within our movement out in a cold sweat. Such opposition has solid roots.

One of the basic tenets of volunteering is that it undertaken for the common good rather than for private gain. And there is a justifiable concern that any departure from this principle will play into the hands of unscrupulous employers who will see in volunteering a chance to cut costs (particularly perhaps during a recession) by replacing paid staff with unpaid volunteers. Volunteering is about making the world a better place not helping others to make a profit. It is about altruism and service, not profit and loss and the bottom line on a balance sheet.

At a time when two of the other long held principles of volunteering – that it is free from coercion and not undertaken for financial reward – are also being held up to scrutiny and challenge - it is surely right to dig in our heels and reaffirm the primacy of one of our defining values. The trouble is it is not as simple as that. The old mantra of voluntary/statutory sector good, private sector bad doesn't stand up to scrutiny. For one thing volunteers are already heavily involved in profit-making settings. Of course, the fact that it is currently happening doesn't in itself make it right. And I'm sure there are plenty of examples we could find where volunteers are being exploited by employers in the drive for profit.

Continued overleaf.



But if we look closer at some of the ways in which volunteers are involved in the private sector it becomes harder to stick rigidly to such certainties. And the fact that abuse is taking place in some settings doesn't mean it is inevitable in all. What about the mentor with the Prince's Trust who is aiding the young entrepreneur in her first business venture? Or the example, new to me, which was highlighted at our recent debate on the new immigration and citizenship proposals, of migrants to the UK who provide volunteer support to businesses in their country of origin (the point being made that this hugely important activity might be eroded if migrants feel compelled to volunteer in the UK to fast-track their citizenship application)? Or the members of the volunteer group at the garden I came across on a recent visit with friends, who appeared to be more than happy with the reciprocal nature of the relationship they had entered into – an opportunity to volunteer in a fabulous garden, with training and instruction from experts thrown in – in return for a couple of hours helping out? Yes the garden does have an entrance fee and yes it is owned by a private family, but it didn't seem to me that the basic value of volunteering was being destroyed.

So volunteering already happens in private settings in a myriad of ways which are largely positive. But our need to rethink our blanket opposition to volunteering in the private sector goes beyond our need to acknowledge and recognise the worth of what already exists. Changes taking place in the delivery of public services, particularly in the field of social care, means that a blanket ban on volunteering in the private sector would threaten to harm the lives of millions of people who currently rely on the services of volunteers. Some two thirds of residential care provision for elderly people is now provided by the private sector and the percentage is set to grow as the shift away from the statutory sector gathers pace. Are we to deny those residents who have grown to rely on the friendship of volunteers in statutory or voluntary sector homes access to such support on the grounds that the home is now a profit making concern?

The answer to the dilemma I believe lies, as Steven Howlett suggested in his excellent article in last month's Volunteering, in a loosening up of our obsession with organisational form and a focus instead on the quality of the volunteering experience being offered wherever it takes place. And at a time when organisational forms are becoming increasingly blurred, with for profit, statutory and voluntary sector providers often coming together in the provision of social care and other essential services, such an approach would seem essential if we are to extend and retain the value of volunteering in our communities. This shift would require us to acknowledge that some private sector volunteering is just as legitimate as volunteering in more traditional settings and that bad practice can equally take place in the voluntary and statutory sector.

The key to determining whether or not we should lend our support to a particular volunteering opportunity would not be what sector it is in, but the quality of the volunteering experience on offer. If the opportunity is clearly about cutting costs, with little thought given to the needs and interests of the volunteer, then it would be out, irrespective of the setting.

Conversely if the opportunity has been well thought through, has been structured to allow for the interests of the volunteer to be realised, and is complementary to the work of paid staff in the organisation and emphasises the added value that volunteering can bring and is not about cutting costs, then we should rule it in for all organisations, voluntary, public and private alike.

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.

MEMBERS NEWS

MIGRANT SUPPORT SERVICE

The Migrant Support Service is a new project at South Somerset Mind that will create a link between migrant communities and private/public/voluntary sector organisations in South Somerset, to help manage the transitional impact of migration.

Being in a different country can be quite stressful. The new service will help anyone in the area who is struggling with language barriers, or having difficulty adapting to life in the UK. By offering assistance in a variety of languages, we believe the service will be able to help migrants to feel less isolated and more confident in integrating into their local communities. The Migrant Support Service is funded by the Migration Impacts Fund – which comes from a levy on the normal visa application fee that economic migrants and students coming to the UK pay for. South Somerset Mind is working in partnership with Avon and Somerset Constabulary, South Somerset District Council, Somerset County Council and the Midwest European Communities Association.

Over the coming months we aim to:

- offer a suitable location for a new polish AA group in Yeovil;
- provide access to speak to and meet our support worker (fluent in English, Polish and German);
- encourage people to engage with the local community- advice and support;
- welcome other people to our ongoing activities program at South Somerset Mind, such as walking, pilates, gardening, tai chi, art, etc.

Open access sessions for the migrant communities will be held every Friday morning and every other Saturday from March onwards at the Markwick Centre Dampier Street, Yeovil, BA21 4EN.

Appointments can also be made outside these times.

For more information please telephone 01935 474875 or email lucy.rekawek@southsomersetmind.co.uk.



Yeovil Night Shelter

As the manager of Yeovil night shelter, I was really flattered to be asked to write a column for the SSVCA newsletter. My thinking for the reason that I'd been asked is most likely to be that the shelter has enjoyed a prolonged period of growth over the past two years. Why is this? I really don't think that this is due to anyone individual, nor do I believe that we are any luckier than the next person or organisation. What I do think is that the combined enthusiasm and single vision laid out by the organisation has given all 40+ volunteers the ethos that together we can achieve greatness. We have taken something that previously has been a really taboo subject and in some cases we have been regarded as an unspoken client group, how have we changed? Well we have taken a good look at the work we do and evaluated the impact we have on the community, our competitors and our clients and realised that by getting brutal and chasing for full cost recovery means that we are taken far more seriously by everyone, including councils, funders, and donators.

But this hasn't come about as a matter of course, we have sought advice from many corners of the industry by attending conferences, meetings and by going around asking questions, many times as you know you can be sat in a meeting wondering why you are there, when suddenly a few words said to the right person can change the whole day for you. The help and advice that the SSVCA have given has very much helped the shelter to reshape into the busy organisation it is quickly becoming. From helping with recruitment, HR and vetting appropriate volunteers to business plan writing, Furniture from Furnicare, community transport, computer advice and information of new legislation.

A note to anyone finding it hard at the moment is don't give up, dig in and renew the passion in your industry. Don't use threats of if we don't get we'll give up. To some degree that is what some entrepreneurs want. What you need to say is if we don't get this will cost you more and more and more. By becoming more business minded the voluntary sector can achieve across the board, don't worry that your work isn't always trendy, the fact is your work saves the tax payer thousands and thousands of pounds in real terms.

My final tip is use the SSVCA they are a unique team setup to enhance the volunteer sector and we are really lucky to have their expertise, which trust me is a vast pool of talent, experience and expertise.

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 Sight 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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Sue Barnfield - Scheduler
Sue Rickerby - Scheduler
Karen Smith - Scheduler
Carol Duchscherer- Scheduler
Shirley Bayliss - Scheduler
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IT Resource Centre

Catriona Eagle - Project Manager
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Jo Culliford - IT Re-use and support
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Furnicare Yeovil

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Furnicare Chard

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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 late May 2010. 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 April 2010.

SSVCA DIRECTORS/TRUSTEES

Mike Sandells - Chair & Finance Committee
Nigel Engert - Finance Committee
Brian Maxwell - Legal Advice
Dave Gladding - Finance Committee
Katherine Nolan - Business Planning & Marketing
Sarah Hunt - HR Advice

OBSERVERS

Voluntary Sector
Penny Mitchell - South Street Centre
County Council
Vicky Breeze
SSDC
Ric Pallister
Alan Smith

**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!**

Thursday 25th March 2010
10.00AM TO 1.15PM

Ilchester Town Hall and Community Centre
High Street
Ilchester
Yeovil
Somerset
BA22 8NQ

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

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