

**IN THIS ISSUE:** Talking Trustees Event, Volunteering Practice Advisor, Still Surviving NOT Thriving, Neighbourhood Management, National Compact, Community Sport, Charity Insurance.

# inter-ACTION

THE BI-MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF RCVDA

RCVDA  
**Leading**  
the Way

## Recognition for Redcar & Cleveland Compact



*Jim Wingham accepting the award on behalf of the Compact Refresh Group*

Following a tremendous amount of work by the Compact Refresh Group (led by the then Chair, Jane Reast) the Redcar & Cleveland Compact was approved by the LSP at their November 2009 meeting.

As there had been a great deal of progress and achievement during the year, a submission to the National Commission for the Compact awards in the award category 'Local Compact of the Year' was submitted.

The Redcar & Cleveland Compact was awarded a highly commended certificate, which was presented to Jim Wingham, member of the Refresh Group, at the awards ceremony in London on 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2009.



## DATE FOR YOUR DIARY

RCVDA's Annual Volunteer Award Ceremony will take place at Gisborough Hall on Friday 4<sup>th</sup> June 2010 from 12.30pm – 4.00pm. Categories for this years awards are:

- |                   |                    |                            |
|-------------------|--------------------|----------------------------|
| Youth Volunteer   | Youth Group Award  | Adult Volunteer            |
| Adult Group Award | Community Champion | Partnership Award          |
| Enterprise Award  | Health Champion    | Lifetime Achievement Award |

As always the George Punshon Award for Outstanding Group and the RCVDA Award for Outstanding Individual will be selected by the judges from the nominations. Nomination forms will be available shortly

### “Those who can, do; those who can, do more, volunteer”.

On the surface volunteering seems like the perfect answer to increase the capacity and output of an organisation. But once you look more closely it can seem very daunting. For many people the prospect of drawing up a Volunteer Policy is enough to send shivers down the spine. For others the thought of having to navigate an entire recruitment process in order to take on a volunteer doesn't bear thinking about.

In recent months local Volunteer Centres across the Tees Valley have been devising a way to make life easier for volunteer-involving organisations in the sub- region. Together they have recently appointed a Volunteering Practice Advisor who will be working in Middlesbrough, Redcar & Cleveland, Hartlepool, Stockton and Darlington. The primary role of the Volunteering Practice Advisor will be to train and mentor organisations in good volunteer practice tackling the tough issues that come with setting up and running a volunteer programme.

Areas that will be covered include:

- Recruitment of volunteers
- Volunteer retention
- Effective volunteer management
- Establishing good volunteer practice surgeries
- Building towards good volunteer practice
- Running volunteer forums

Anyone who is interested in using this free service contact Trish Waters at RCVDA on 01642 440571 email [trish@rcvda.org.uk](mailto:trish@rcvda.org.uk).

## NEW FROM RCVDA

### YOUNG PEOPLE ON BOARDS

Do you have or wish to have young people on your board. RCVDA can carry out training with your young people to give them a basic introduction to the charitable sector and their role and responsibilities as a board member. Contact Karen on 01642 440571 or email [karenmc@rcvda.org.uk](mailto:karenmc@rcvda.org.uk) for more information.

### TALKING TRUSTEES EVENT

This event, which will take place on Friday 16<sup>th</sup> April 9.30 – 1.00 at REDC, is for Chairs and one other member of all management committees and registered charities in Redcar and Cleveland. It is an opportunity for trustees to come together to discuss various issues relevant to them as trustees. To book your place contact Ann on 01642 440571 or email [ann@rcvda.org.uk](mailto:ann@rcvda.org.uk)



## Still Surviving NOT Thriving

### The continued impact of the recession on the third sector in North East

The aim of the “Still Surviving?” survey was to update the findings from ‘Surviving NOT Thriving’ (SNT), in order to provide an ongoing picture of the impact of the recession on the region’s third sector. VONNE wanted to ensure that six months on from SNT they were adequately reflecting the needs of the sector in their calls for greater and more targeted support that meets the needs of the third sector in the North East.

105 organisations completed the survey in September and October 2009. Respondents represented a broad cross-section of the sector in the North East, with responses covering each local authority area and providing activities from debt & benefits advice to animal welfare.

#### Impacts

- Over half of organisations (55%) report an actual decrease in funding
- Over two thirds of organisations (69%) have experienced an increased demand for services
- 26% of organisations have already seen a decrease in staff numbers, and 27% of organisations anticipate making staff redundant in the next 12 months
- Over a third of organisations are already operating on their reserves
- One third of organisations expect to close an existing service in the next 12 months
- 10% of organisations anticipate closing down completely within the next 12 months. This jumps to 33% of small organisations.

#### Recommendations

- Public sector bodies, particularly local authorities, to engage third sector organisations at an early stage in the decision making process when considering cuts to funding and public sector services. Any cuts should be kept to a minimum and not be made disproportionate in an effort to maximise efficiency savings targets. The third sector traditionally deals with those who are most marginalised in our society and therefore engagement at an early stage is vital to best manage the impact on those individuals and groups.
- The sector welcomes the funding provided through Real Help for Communities, the Government’s package of support for the sector in the recession. The Treasury, in partnership with OTS, is asked to consider **funding beyond March 2010** and to review the eligibility criteria, based on evidence of uptake, to ensure that it is flexible enough to respond to the needs of the North East region (particularly rural and specialist organisations). The third sector and its representative bodies must maintain the pressure for adequate funding, particularly the **role and legitimacy of grants** for the sector from all funders
- The value of **volunteers** cannot be overstated. **Additional resources** should be urgently sought for the management and support of volunteers in front-line organisations.
- Tight budgets and the rigidity of funding programmes means many organisations are struggling to fund their core costs which are vital in allowing organisations to respond effectively to the pressures of the recession. All Government departments and public sector funders are encouraged to hold “**flexible funds**” which can be used to support core functions of organisations responding to the recession.
- In areas where a significant local employer is at risk of closure, the design, and delivery of targeted support must include local third sector organisations. Third sector organisations will be the first place many people turn to in these areas and they need to be supported accordingly. Third sector and public sector support providers need a better **coordinated response to ensure that appropriate referrals** are made between agencies.
- Trustees need to be aware of their financial responsibilities, including the implications of using reserves to manage financial shortfalls. They should also be supported in their responsibilities to staff (paid and volunteer).
- Very few third sector organisations are large enough to act as lead contractor or prime contractor in million pound plus contracts. We welcome DWP’s plans to introduce a contracts ombudsman for programmes such as Flexible New Deal. However, we stress that **contracts must be robustly monitored** to ensure that where third sector organisations are named as partners in contract winning bids, those arrangements are carried out with third sector organisations being fairly rewarded for their involvement.

Source: VONNE Briefing Note November 2009



## Neighbourhood Management: What is it?

- Service providers and local communities working together at neighbourhood level to improve services and quality of life by joining up local services and making them more responsive to local needs
- Led by someone taking overall responsibility at the neighbourhood level
- Community involvement and leadership
- A systematic approach to tackling local problems through multi-agency working at neighbourhood level

## The Redcar & Cleveland approach to Neighbourhood Management

- **Neighbourhood teams** responsible for delivering clean, green, parks, countryside and resort services, libraries, community development, road safety, highways and playground inspection.
- **Neighbourhood Managers** will champion their areas, ensure service delivery by Council and partners meets local needs, lead on neighbourhood action planning with all partners, listen – alongside their teams – to local people, and facilitate community involvement and partnership working with public, private and voluntary and community organisations, and act as a key link officer for ward members.
- **Neighbourhood Officers** will supervise front-line staff and lead on supporting residents to take part in neighbourhood management process and work alongside voluntary and community organisations to strengthen local communities.
- **Neighbourhood Inspector** role will bring together highways inspection, playgrounds, associated equipment and environmental inspections into one dedicated role, and will be skilled and resourced to undertake a “find and fix” basic repair service for street furniture, minor highways repairs and playground equipment.
- **Neighbourhood workers:** multi-disciplinary teams of clean & green staff, library assistants, and school crossing patrol staff
- **Timescale:** roll-out across Borough by April 2010

## Why is Redcar & Cleveland introducing neighbourhood management?

- To build on the success of area working
- Increase visibility of Council services within neighbourhoods, and improve responsiveness to neighbourhood priorities and community needs
- Provide local people with increased opportunities to influence services and involve local people and community organisations in securing improvements in their neighbourhoods (community action)
- Re-directing Council resources to front-line neighbourhood services
- Make better use of existing resources and secure additional resources through more effective partnership working and joint funding bids
- Narrowing the gap between most disadvantaged and most prosperous neighbourhoods



## Community Sport – Recognition as a Charity

Voluntary sports clubs bring substantial benefits to, and often act as a focal point for, their local communities. They provide a significant number of volunteers, enabling huge numbers of young people to participate in sport on a regular basis. Sports clubs have always known that they are a good cause, but have found it difficult to convince the Charity Commission to allow them to register as charities. Late 2001 saw a change in this approach which was reinforced by the Charities Act 2006. This made the advancement of amateur sport a charitable purpose.

The question for sports club is how worthwhile is it to register as a charity. Over 300 clubs are currently registered charities, compared with over 5,500 Community Amateur Sports Clubs (CASCs). A club has to choose which (if either) status is better for it (they can't be both) – a charity generally enjoys greater financial benefits but has more regulation than a CASC. These benefits include tax breaks, rate relief and the prospect of enhanced fundraising because they are charities.

### What are these financial benefits?

#### Tax

- Any income or gains received by the club will generally be exempt from tax if used for charitable purpose (sometimes using a trading subsidiary)
- Individuals can get income tax relief under Gift Aid donations and if registered as a charity a club can currently obtain a tax rebate of £28.20 for every £100 given.
- Individuals and companies can obtain income tax relief for gifts to the club of quoted shares and land
- Significant value added tax relief is available. For example, VAT need not be charged on one-off fund raising events. Also the cost of constructing new facilities may not attract VAT, with potentially significant savings on for example, a new pavilion.
- Purchases of property by the club for its charitable use are exempt from Stamp Duty Land Tax.

#### Rate relief

- Sports club charities enjoy 80% mandatory rate relief if their sports facilities are used wholly or mainly for charitable purposes: a considerable saving and costs the local authority nothing. Indeed if the LA is already granting the clubs discretionary relief it will save money. This could help it to maintain 20% discretionary relief and still save funds with no rates bill for the club!

### Criteria to be satisfied to register as a charity

Clubs must:

- Have affordable membership and be open to all.
- Be amateur – players cannot be paid to play but can receive expenses. Coaches can be paid.
- Give equal treatment to its less skilful and less competitive players e.g. in relation to coaching and facility use.
- Be prohibited by its constitution from distributing assets to members. On winding up, surplus assets must go to another charity, not club members.

Further information is available on [www.cascinfo.co.uk](http://www.cascinfo.co.uk) which includes a booklet comparing CASC and charity status for clubs. The charity Commission website [www.charitycommission.gov.uk](http://www.charitycommission.gov.uk) has further useful information.

Source: NAVCA Circulation February/March 2010



## Personal Best

Personal Best is a new programme aimed at anyone who is looking to gain experience and learn new skills. The programme is made up of a level 1 course in Event Volunteering and 30 hours of volunteering at local events. Participants should be unemployed or working less than 16 hours. Courses will run locally over a period of 12-15 weeks. Times, dates and locations will be arranged soon. To register an interest contact [joanne.jones@hartlepool.gov.uk](mailto:joanne.jones@hartlepool.gov.uk). Joanne will be setting up a local drop in session where anyone can come along and find out more information

## Trustees and insurance

One of the trustees' key tasks is to manage risk and a lot of effort goes into this. But trustees almost always leave the scope and purchase of insurance to their staff. Here are some questions to ask yourself:

- When did your board last review its risk analysis and disaster plan in the context of its insurance cover and consider if your insurances are appropriate?
- **Insuring volunteers:** Make sure your broker knows how many volunteers you have. If volunteers work under the direction of the charity or its staff, think of them as staff for insurance purposes and get your broker to make sure the insurer does the same; some employers' liability policies still do not cover volunteers
- **Business interruption:** Many charities are often covered for loss of revenue or loss of profits when in fact, should a disaster occur (e.g. the main office burns down), they will often not lose any revenue or profit because of the way the charity is funded. But if there is a disaster, you are very likely to incur significant re-housing costs, so make sure you are covered for "additional expenses" also known as "additional or increased cost of working."
- **How much cover do I need?** Insurance is complex and simply renewing the same cover every year can leave you with gaps in the cover and maybe even leave you underinsured. As a trustee you need to understand an insurance principle called "averaging." If your computers are worth £20,000 and you only insure them for £10,000, and then claim for (say) £1500 when one gets stolen, your insurer is likely to treat it as a £750 claim because of the fact you have underinsured by fifty per cent.

Source: Governance, January 2010



### Volunteer Rights Inquiry

Volunteering England has responded to the concerns that are increasingly being raised by volunteers about their limited rights in law by creating an independent Volunteer Rights Inquiry which will explore these issues in more detail.

The Volunteering website states that it wants to hear from a wide range of people and is especially keen to hear of specific examples and experiences of good and bad practice concerning volunteering as well as more general thoughts and opinions. Volunteering England has a website where you can learn more about this inquiry and find out how to take part if you wish [www.volunteering.org.uk](http://www.volunteering.org.uk)

Source: SocialEconomy Issue No 98



## Refreshed National Compact launched

A refreshed version of the national Compact was launched on 16<sup>th</sup> December 2009. The Compact, an agreement setting out shared commitments and guidelines for effective partnership working between Government and the voluntary and community sector, was originally written in 1998 and has helped to shape the environment within which many organisations work.

Important undertakings set out in the Compact such as 12 week deadlines for consultations, three months notice of the end of funding agreements, involvement in policy decisions, and an affirmation of the independence of voluntary and community organisations, have been fundamental to improving the relationship between voluntary organisations and both national and local government over the last decade.

### How does the refreshed Compact differ from the original?

The refreshed Compact aims to be clearer, shorter and easier to use. It details concrete “Commitments” which show how the underpinning principles should be translated into practical action. These commitments cover three key areas: involvement in policy development; allocating resources; and advancing equality. Accompanying this is the smaller introduction to the Compact, which sets its broader context. These will be followed by issue or audience-specific “Implementation Guides” over the coming months. While the core substance of the Compact has been retained, the format has changed to improve accessibility and to reflect changing legislation. The planned “Implementation Guides” will help partners to apply Compact ways of working in particular settings, outlining case studies and giving guidance in areas such as ensuring equalities issues are addressed. The refreshed Compact is over 100 pages shorter than the original and aims to be more focused and structured in a way that makes it easier to use. It applies to all of the third sector, and not just voluntary and community groups and organisations – for example social enterprises.

The *advancing equalities* section broadens the application of the Compact to the wider equalities agenda, reflecting the current legislative landscape. The section on funding is clearly rooted in the available commissioning framework, and there is now a set of core principles which underpin the Compact.

#### New commitments for Government

Working towards a single safety check for volunteers who are volunteering for more than one cause (19.7)

Funding agreements to ensure that all sub-contractors which work with the voluntary sector have to follow Compact commitments (6.3)

Applying Compact Commitments when distributing European funding (6.4) making payments within ten days of invoices being received (11.2)

Ensuring that all third sector organisations have equal opportunities to access government funding programmes. This includes access to funds to build capacity (19.3)

#### New commitments for the Voluntary Sector

Being clear on who they represent and how their views have been gathered (4.3)

Applying Compact principles when sub-contracting to other voluntary organisations (15.4)

Giving early notice to funders of significant changes in management, financial or other risks (17.4)

For more information on the National Compact Refresh and to download the new document go to [www.compactvoice.org.uk](http://www.compactvoice.org.uk).

Source: NAVCA Circulation, February/March 2010

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The information in the Interaction is published in good faith but RCVDA accepts no responsibility for any inaccuracy in the items.

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