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THE BI-MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF RCVDA

RCVDA
Leading
the Way

Volunteer Award Winners



Guests gather at Gisborough Hall

Gisborough Hall was the venue for this year's Annual Volunteer Awards. Over 200 people attended the event and we would like to recognize the generosity of all our sponsors including Artenius UK and SABIC UK Petrochemicals who sponsored the venue and afternoon tea. See inside for winners.



Vera & Ping in Redcar High Street

Vera Rises to the Challenge!

As part of Volunteers week all MP's throughout the country were challenged by Volunteer England to take part in voluntary activities within their constituency. Vera Baird QC MP for Redcar volunteered with Shopmobility. Here are her thoughts on the experience:

"I went shopping with Ping Bingham, a wheelchair user, on Friday. I enjoyed Ping's company and hope we can shop together again when my schedule permits. It was an eye-opener. She wanted sun cream, and I could have run up the steps to Boots in a minute from the Esplanade, but we had to go a couple of hundred yards round the block to their High Street entrance. Their shelves are at a good height for a wheelchair user, so she could pick her own cream. Other shops had narrow aisles and high counters. It is vital that wheelchair users are part of the planning of shops, offices, restaurants, pubs and all public places

For me, it was a chance to put myself in the position of a wheelchair user and understand how much harder it is to manage the ordinary things that I do so easily every day. Volunteering is a two-way process. I may have been the one doing the pushing, but Ping's good humour made the trip into an enjoyable outing for us both"

Do you know what a social enterprise is?

In the current funding climate it is important for voluntary and community organisations to look at a variety of ways to raise income. One avenue which you will probably have heard of is social enterprise. But what constitutes a social enterprise? The Department of Trade and Industry definition is:

"A social enterprise is a business with primarily social objectives whose surpluses are principally reinvested for that purpose in the business or in the community, rather than being driven by the need to maximise profit for shareholders and owners. Social enterprises tackle a wide range of social and environmental issues and operate in all parts of the economy.....Social enterprises are diverse.There is no single legal model for social enterprise.

Social Enterprise - a strategy for success DTI, 2004

The Office of the Third Sector has produced a document *Social enterprise action plan: Scaling new heights* which states that social enterprises range from small, community owned village shops to large development trusts. If you think you are already running a social enterprise or are considering setting one up this document is easy to read and includes definitions, case studies and guidance on running a social enterprise.

This document can be downloaded from www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/third_sector/social_enterprise/

Voice4Change England: A new co-ordinated voice for the Black & Minority Ethnic Third Sector

Voice4Change England (V4CE) is a coalition of national and regional organisations which aims to provide a co-ordinated voice for the BME voluntary and community sector.

The aims of Voice4Change England are:

- To provide a co-ordinated national voice for the black and minority ethnic (BME) voluntary and community sector (VCS) which speaks for the interests of the BME sector at local, regional and national levels;
- To develop and maintain close dialogue between the BME sector and Government in order to increase understanding of BME sector issues and to inform the design and delivery of Government policies and strategies which may impact on BME communities;
- To support the development of the BME sector, particularly through strengthening the regional infrastructure.

If you would like to know more about their work or are interested in becoming a member then contact

Bola Adeneye, Voice4Change England Project Administrator on 020-7843 6130 or bola@bteg.co.uk

Website: www.bteg.co.uk/voice4change-england

Procurement Assistance from Redcar and Cleveland Council Or "Are you Fit to Bid"

Allison Agius has been in post for the past six months as Procurement and Project officer at Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council. She has a lead in sustainability and part of her role is to explore the environmental, social and local economy impact of the council's procurement (purchasing) decisions.

One of the key areas Allison has been working on recently is making contact with organisations in the voluntary and community sector to explore the issues the sector has in doing business with the council.

She has offered advice on the procurement procedure to a number of organisations recently and, along with RCVDA, is currently exploring a range of options to assist the sector in the longer term.

This work is in the early stages and Allison is particularly interested in hearing from third sector organisations that either have ideas on how the council could help them, or would like some input from her on their current tendering processes.

She is also interested in developing a better understanding of the voluntary and community sector in the local area and the diverse organisations that make it what it is.

If you think Allison could help or if you have ideas you would like to share to help her please contact her on 01642 771258 or allison_agius@redcar-cleveland.gov.uk

Sector could influence flow of unclaimed assets

Charities have a real opportunity to influence decisions regarding the distribution of unclaimed assets, according to Tom Eccles, secretary of the Commission for Unclaimed Assets, who is urging the sector to participate in the current consultation on the issue.

The joint consultation by HM Treasury and the Cabinet Office lays out the proposed spending priorities for the scheme. It currently focuses on youth services and financial capability and inclusion, with the social investment bank – a proposal favoured by many in the charity sector – taking a back seat. However, Eccles suggests that while the government was lukewarm towards the bank when the consultation document was published, there has since been a shift of opinion.

“There has been an improvement on where they were initially, people quibbled around the edges at first but the difficulties they raised can be resolved. There is enough money in the pot for both youth services and the social investment bank. I recommend that charities respond to the consultation in unequivocal terms as their response will help influence the amount each area receives.”

However, as charities concern themselves with the distribution of the funds, a storm is brewing between the commission and the financial sector over exactly how the unclaimed assets scheme is to be regulated.

With government reluctant to legislate, a system of self-regulation looks set to be implemented. This, combined with the fact that tracking owners of dormant banks has cost implications for the banks and building societies, has led to concerns that they will be unwilling to participate or that transfers could be made fraudulently.

Reassurances from the British Bankers Association and Building Societies Association at a Treasury Select Committee meeting on 5 June did little to quash these fears, and the Commission on Unclaimed Assets emphasised the need for a self-regulator with “teeth”.

“It’s fine to go with self-regulation if we don’t want regulation,” said Sir Ronald Cohen, chair of the commission, at the Select Committee meeting. “But this regulator must have teeth. It’s not enough to appoint a regulator who can make statements but has no power to enforce or investigate in order to make the scheme work.”

The commission is recommending that the regulatory body be given three or four key powers, critically ones that enable it to request an audit on suspicion of incompetent or fraudulent activity. It has also suggested that as well as the power to fine banks found to be operating inappropriately, it should also be able to publish the details, as “public embarrassment and humiliation can be more effective”.

The consultation on the distribution of unclaimed assets is open until 6 August. For more information and to contribute, visit www.hm-treasury.gov.uk

Source Charity News Alert 12th June 2007



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Gift Aid blog

The Gift Aid blog has been set up to create open discussion and information sharing for the charitable sector as it relates to Gift Aid. In particular organisations can share ideas on how to maximise their income from Gift Aid claims.

Those involved with Gift Aid face a number of challenges including recent changes that will have a direct impact on income - and participants are encouraged to comment, respond and challenge opinions posted on the blog. Recent topics under discussion have included effective Gift Aid strategies, and in particular the importance of the wording of your Gift Aid declaration and how to determine what income is eligible for Gift Aid claims.

To view and respond to the latest posts visit:
www.giftaidblog.com

RCVDA's Website Development

As part of this development we would like to hear from any organisation who would like to participate in a new area of the site “Are you Fit to Bid.” This will be of interest to groups who want to bid to deliver public services. Email: karenmc@rcvda.org.uk

Tees Valley Delegated Grants

The new bidding round for 2007 is underway. This year there is both CAPITAL and REVENUE available. Grants range from £5,000 to £25,000

See enclosed flyer for more information

Consultation opportunities – join our email news group

The Department of Communities and Local Government has published a discussion document about how it can improve effective engagement at all levels with the voluntary sector. The Third Sector Strategy for Communities and Local Government, which is available at www.communities.gov.uk is open for consultation until 20th September 2007

Source: Third Sector 13th June 2007

As part of our Information service we are asked to send out documents to the Voluntary and Community Sector for consultation. Often there is a tight deadline to this and obviously if the document is large a cost implication for us. We at RCVDA are developing an email group which we can use to quickly and economically send out these documents to as wide an area as possible. If you are not currently a member of this email group and would like to be simply send an email to karenmc@rcvda.org.uk with the subject **RCVDA email newsgroup** and you will be added. We also use this method of communication for funding advice, training opportunities and other information which falls between publication dates.

A Cautionary Tale

This article appeared in a recent publication and I thought it was worth sharing.

"Recently, one of my charity clients found itself perched precariously on the horns of this dilemma: a dedicated and enthusiastic volunteer offered to realise part of its marketing strategy by creating a new website.

Many hours of unpaid labour resulted in a revitalised online presence that began to attract an increasing number of hits. Unfortunately, one of those hits was by an agency engaged by an international image library to protect its intellectual property.

In creating the website, the volunteer had uploaded images from the internet without making any investigations into their ownership. My client first became aware of this only when a letter from a New York law firm arrived threatening a five-figure legal action for copyright infringement. Suddenly, the free website didn't look so cost-effective."

Volunteering England observes: "The sector is working in a radically different climate from a decade or so ago, which has made risk a subject that all organisations need to consider."

Source: Third Sector 13th June 2007

The article goes on to suggest ways to manage risks particularly involving volunteers. If you need help with any issues regarding volunteer management contact our Volunteer Support Officer, Trish Waters on 01642 440571 or email trish@rcvda.org.uk

Adult Category Winners

Adult Award

Sponsored by Community Skills

Winner **Geraldine Williams and Peter Quantrill** for Grangetown Youth & Community Centre

Volunteer Group Award

Sponsored by Working Links

Winner **Cleveland Ironstone Mining Museum**

Volunteer Fundraiser Award

Sponsored by Redcar & Cleveland Partnership

Winner **Peter Howe BEM**

Community Building Award

Sponsored by TVRCC

Winner **Charlton's Community Centre**

Charity Shop Team

Sponsored by Community Network

Winner: **Children in Distress, Guisborough**

The competition this year was so close the judges felt it was appropriate to make special mention to the following:

Age Concern, Redcar
Michelle Wills, Skinningrove Community Cafe
Jim Whingham, Saltburn Forward, Saltburn Gill
Environmental Group, R & C CEN



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RCVDA Annual Volunteer Awards



“It is one of the most beautiful compensations of this life that no man can seriously help another without helping himself in the process”

This was the theme of the day as over 200 volunteers celebrated their contribution to Redcar & Cleveland at our biggest ever Volunteer Awards Event held on Friday 1st June in the beautiful setting of Gisborough Hall.

Our annual event is thanks to the continued generosity of our 9 sponsors the majority of whom are members of the Redcar & Cleveland Partnership. This year three new sponsors, Working Links, Artenius UK and SABIC UK Petrochemicals have joined the growing number of organisations wanting to show their support for volunteering in Redcar & Cleveland.

Vera Baird MP presented over 400 certificates and our sponsors presented the winning 9 award winners with their trophies. Reflecting on her mornings volunteering as part of the VIP Challenge Vera quoted our theme saying

“Volunteering is a two-way process - I may have been the one doing the pushing, but Ping’s good humour made the trip into an enjoyable outing for us both”

Afternoon tea was served to 210 guests whilst they pondered over a quiz and as part of the day a number of organisations from across Redcar & Cleveland showcased their activities in a “marketplace” setting along the conservatory where guests could network whilst taking in the views of the North Yorkshire moors or walk in the sunshine around the grounds.

A wonderful day was had by all!



Outstanding Achievement winners RCVDA Outstanding Individual Achievement Award



Winner **Peter Grant** The Junction

George Punshon
Commemorative Award for Outstanding Voluntary Group



Winner **Skinningrove Community Cafe**



Youth Winners

Youth Award 16 -18 years

Sponsored by Surestart

Winner **Hanna Weldon**

Youth Award 18 – 21 years

Sponsored by Connexions

Winner **Nicky Crabb**

If any one wants copies of the official photographs taken on the day please contact Trish on 01642 440571 or email trish@rcvda.org.uk

Big Lottery Fund reveals revised funding schedule

The Big Lottery Fund has confirmed that it will “re-profile” £120m of its planned UK programmes over the coming year in order to meet its contribution to funding the 2012 Olympics. The two programmes affected both cater exclusively to voluntary and community organisations. The Young Peoples Fund 2, which was expected to be launched in April this year, will now be launched in two separate rounds, one in December and another next April. The Research Programme will now be launched in October 2007.

In a statement the Big Lottery Fund confirmed the delays but said the cuts did not constitute a cut in funding. Their statement said “Provided lottery income flows as expected, we will be able to make the commitments in 2008/09 or shortly afterwards”.

When asked whether funding delays would cause third sector organisations to lose out, Stephen Dunmore, chief executive of the BLF said: “Our grants are time-limited and not designed to be a continuing source of income. Although the fund is one of the largest sources of income for the sector in the UK, groups cannot rely solely on lottery funding for income”.

Source: Third Sector, 13 June 2007

Warm and Well in Redcar & Cleveland



Jarvis Accommodation Services (JAS), Redcar and Cleveland Borough Councils strategic partner have been working in partnership with the Council and other partners to create a scheme that will assist households in keeping their homes warm affordably.

Warm and Well is a programme for residents of Redcar and Cleveland who may require help with heating and insulation to their homes. The scheme offers benefit checks to householders to try to increase their income, and finds an affordable route for installing measures by making use of available grant and discount schemes.

For more information, please don't hesitate to contact them on 01642 777976, or via e-mail on; warmandwell@redcar-cleveland.gov.uk



In partnership
with

JAS

Providing a warmer Redcar & Cleveland

voluntaryskills.com

'The best place to start for information on voluntary and community sector training and support!'

voluntaryskills.com aims to help promote skills development and career progression in the voluntary and community sector (VCS) of the North East of England by offering free information and advice on training opportunities available throughout the region.

The site currently contains a searchable **Training Database** of **1158 training courses** and **151 training providers**, **News & Events**, **Case Studies**, **Job Profiles**, **Job Vacancies** and **Resources** relevant to skills and training in the sector. To find out more please visit their website at:

www.voluntaryskills.com

Are you smoke-free?



On 1st July 2007 nearly all enclosed and substantially enclosed workplaces (used by more than one person) and public places in England and Wales will become smoke-free. There are a number of provisions that you should be aware of. For example, indoor smoking rooms will no longer be allowed, so all smokers will need to go outside instead. In addition, you will need to display legally required signs at entrances to premises and in company vehicles used by more than one person. It is also advisable to have a written "smoke-free" policy in place.

Employers, managers and those in charge of smoke-free premises and vehicles will need to:

- display 'no-smoking' signs in smoke-free premises and vehicles
- take reasonable steps to ensure that staff, customers/members and visitors are aware that premises and vehicles are legally required to be smoke free
- remove any existing indoor smoking rooms
- ensure that no one smokes in smoke-free premises or vehicles

You may also want to take these supportive measures:

- remove ashtrays from smoke-free areas;
- develop a smoke-free policy in consultation with staff;
- offer staff training to help them understand the new law and what their responsibilities are;
- provide your staff and customers with support to quit smoking.

Employers and premises managers who do not comply with the new smoke-free law will be committing a criminal offence.

The Government has produced an official guide explaining the new law and what you will have to do to comply with it. This guide also includes a sample smoke-free policy. More information on the changes which come into effect on 1st July 2007, including the Government guidance, can be found at: www.smokefreeengland.co.uk

Another useful website is www.gosmokefree.co.uk which has guidance on what is available to help individuals to stop smoking.

If any groups need help sourcing signage contact Karen McGarrity on 01642 440571 or email karenmc@rcvda.org.uk

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Community Facilities meeting



Attendees listen to presentations by Julie Richings and Jason Lowe

The third meeting for groups who manage or use community facilities across the borough took place at Coatham Memorial Hall on Friday 8th June 2007.

The morning began with updates on previous meetings by Val Mitchell, Business Planning & Development Officer with Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council and Jason Lowe, Head of Tenancy Services at Coast & Country Housing. This was followed by a presentation about licencing by Julie Richings, Principal Licensing Officer at Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council. The audience had an opportunity to ask questions on a variety of issues including when a group needs a premises licence and what are the legal requirements required to hold bingo, tombola and raffles.

This was followed by an opportunity to network over tea and scones before Tracy Calvert, Business Planning & Development Officer also with Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council and Andrew McKenna, Principal Environmental Health Officer updated the group on Smoke Free UK. The morning finished with Karen McGarrity, RCVDA introducing the idea of developing an information pack for community buildings and asked the group what information they would like to see in there.

If you would like more information on these meetings please contact Karen McGarrity on 01642 440571 Or email karenmc@rcvda.org.uk



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Lack of funds holds back green offices

Charities wanting to improve the green credentials of their office space do not have the funds or expertise to do so, according to a new report from Every Action Counts.

The survey of 442 voluntary organisations found that 89% would like to make their office 'greener', but 84% said the cost of making changes was holding them back. More than half (61%) also said that a lack of knowledge or signposting was also reducing their ability to improve their eco-standards.

Many organisations already admitted to taking small steps; 74% said they already ensured all computers and lights were switched off when they left the building.

Every Action Counts is now publishing a Green Office Guide to help support charities and voluntary organisations in their attempts to make their offices eco-friendly. For more information visit www.everyactioncounts.org.uk

Source: Charity New 1st June 2007

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