

**IN THIS ISSUE:** Carers Partnership, Youth Voice Postcard Launch, Local Strategic Partnership A G M, Procurement top tips, Third Sector Review, Children & Young Peoples Trust: Task Groups.

# inter-ACTION

THE BI-MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF RCVDA

RCVDA  
**Leading**  
the Way

## Volunteering at the Mela!



Trish & Kate wearing their "Interested in Volunteering" T-shirts.

The weather was kind for a few hours as RCVDA & Middlesbrough VDA Volunteer Support Officers, Trish Waters and Kate Reah together promoted volunteering at the Middlesbrough Mela.

Albert Park was transformed into a kaleidoscope of colour as over 18,000 people turned out to sample a feast of Asian food, music, entertainment and dancing. Unfortunately the British summer intervened around 3.30pm and once again the heavens opened!!

## Launch of the Carers Partnership



The eagerly anticipated launch of the Carers Partnership could not be dampened even by the start of our monsoon season. Full story inside.



Postcards designed by Young People to show that they can "Make a Positive Contribution" See story inside

## Local Strategic Partnership Annual General Meeting

Redcar & Cleveland Local Strategic Partnership's Conference and AGM was held on 6th July 2007 at Bellamy Pavillion. The morning began with Professor Brian Footitt (OBE) Chair of the Partnership outlining some of the work undertaken by the partnership over the previous year. The conference then moved on to focus on inclusion and cohesion with a presentation by Rose Doran from the Government's Improvement and Development Agency (IdeA) on The Community Cohesion Agenda. There was then an opportunity for those present to discuss ways to identify barriers and solutions with regard to the neighbourliness and respect agenda. Paul Taylor (R&CBC) then presented the Annual Performance Review of the LSP which was followed by discussions within groups of some priorities identified for improvement for 2007/2008 .

Allison Agius then gave a presentation on Procurement and the Voluntary Sector and the morning finished with the launch of the new Partnership website, a Sustainable Community Strategy update, and a Local Area Ageement update. The website can be viewed at [www.rclsp.co.uk](http://www.rclsp.co.uk). The Redcar and Cleveland Area Profile is also now available and can be downloaded from [www.redcar-cleveland.gov.uk](http://www.redcar-cleveland.gov.uk)

### Children and Young People's Trust Board

The Children and Young People's Trust Board was launched in December last year and we gave a brief out line of the make up of the Board in our February 2007 issue.

As part of the overall structure of the board five task groups have been formed which each cover the themes of the Every Child Matters agenda.

The membership of these task groups are open and an invitation is extended to attend any of the groups which are relevant to your area of work. Please contact Steve Rushby 01642 771296 if you wish to attend.

The next round of these Task Group meetings will take place on the following dates,

5th September - 9am to 11am - Make a Positive Contribution - Venue: Eston City Learning Centre (CLC)

7th September - 9am to 11am - Stay Safe - Venue: Eston City Learning Centre CLC

10th September - 10am to 12pm - Enjoy and Achieve - Venue: Eston City Learning Centre CLC

10th September - 1pm to 3pm - Be Healthy - Venue: Eston City Learning Centre CLC

12th September - 1pm to 3pm - Achieve Economic Wellbeing - Venue: Redcar and Cleveland House, Conference Room 3 (2nd Floor)

### Youth Voice 2007

On Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> July a group of young people celebrated the launch of a series of postcards aimed at challenging perceptions. In their presentation they told why they had produced the postcards:

*"We are the youth voice steering group and we have come along today to launch the postcards. The reason why we wanted to do the postcards is because we want to change peoples negative views about young people. Two young people from our steering group took photographs at the Youth Voice event in April 2007. They decided on some of the images we have used on the postcards. We then decided on the slogans for the postcards. Now the postcards are all done we are still making a positive contribution because we are now sending our work to people to get the message across that young people can be positive."*

The steering group gave up their time once a fortnight to apply for funding, plan activities and design the publicity to ensure that the Youth Voice event took place. As one of the adults who supported these young people I was impressed by how seriously they took their duties. Their confidence increased over the short time we had to plan this event and on the day they worked to ensure that the 100 young people who attended the event had a good time. They themselves did not have an opportunity to take part in the activities they had arranged as they were too busy making sure the lunch was set out and helping the facilitators whenever it was needed.



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### Trustees and Criminal Records Bureau Checks

Children's charities are no strangers to regulation to ensure that the children they work with are protected. Child protection policies, disclosures to social services and checking all employees with the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) are now automatic; however, ensuring that trustees are also considered appropriate to work with children is not as automatic.

#### The law

Since 2000, there has been a statutory requirement that the trustees of a children's charity are not disqualified from working with children, making it a criminal offence for the members or the directors (trustees) of a children's charity (dependent upon who is responsible for the appointment of trustees) knowingly to: offer a person or retain a person in a position as a trustee of the charity if that person is disqualified from working with children.

#### What is a Children's Charity?

The Charity Commission is currently reviewing its guidance on this area however, this applies to all charities working directly with children and may also apply to those making grants that relate to children, especially those who undertake review visits to charity premises.

The offence itself depends on whether the trustees (or members) offer a position as a trustee or retain as a trustee, a disqualified person. It has been argued that if the question is not asked or if a person has not volunteered the information that the trustees (or members) would not be acting knowingly. However, it has become clear this is not acceptable.

#### What should Children's Charities do?

Prior to appointment of a new trustee of a children's charity, the trustees must:

ask the proposed trustee if they are disqualified from working with children and

if the answer is negative, undertake a check with the Criminal Records Bureau to confirm that this is the case

It is also important that regular checks are undertaken on existing trustees to ensure that any disqualifications are discovered as soon as possible.

Children's charities should consider making an amendment to their constitution to ensure that disqualification from working with children is grounds for the trustee to immediately cease to hold office.

*Source: Governance January 2007*

### Arts Portal

Voluntary Arts England are currently developing an IT portal to increase participation in the arts and crafts and are putting a call out to amateur arts and crafts groups to be part of it by letting them know more about their group. This gives people wishing to join you information about what you do, where you do it, and how they can get involved.

If your amateur art or craft club, group or society would like to have your details included for FREE then download the form below complete it and return it to Jennifer Urwin - [research@vaengland.org.uk](mailto:research@vaengland.org.uk)

download doc file (30k) from <http://www.voluntaryarts.org/uploaded/map5623.doc>

### Up date on website

As reported in the last issue we are currently updating our website to enable us to reflect the changes affecting the sector. It is hoped that this site will be live by the beginning of September

### Community Skills

Community Skills have released their Autumn Programme. Courses include Introduction to Drugs Awareness, NVQ in Youth Work and Eco friendly cleaning – Phone 01642 490409 for more details

## A Date for your Diary

RCVDA will be holding its next members' event on Friday 28 September 2007. The event is being held at Redcar Racecourse and will offer an opportunity to gain an update on the new Charities Act and also look at some ways to avoid the pitfalls of employment law.

The event will also provide an ideal opportunity to network with others and hear about how RCVDA can support its members.

The event is free to members but non member organisations may attend at a small charge, subject to availability.

Further information will be sent out to members in early September. If you are not a member but would like to attend please contact Jill Harris on 01642 440571

## Headliners



Headliners, formerly known as Children's Express is a unique UK-wide news agency producing news, features and comments by young people for everyone. Their mission as an organisation is:

*To inspire children and young people to investigate and challenge the world around them, enhance their personal development and promote their right to be heard as equals.*

Within the project all young people have the right to have their voices heard on an equal platform with adults, and provide them with the power and means to express themselves publicly on issues that affect them.

### Out Reach Programme

Headliners are offering an outreach programme of personal development and learning achieved through journalism.

They are seeking to engage with young people aged 11-19 across the UK who are isolated or at risk of exclusion, those who are disabled or have experienced being in care and young people in minority groups.

Their programme is delivered by a team of professional journalists and youth workers and offers young people the opportunity to develop essential media skills, to research and produce stories for publication, and to further enhance confidence, self-esteem, and transferable skills.

For more information contact Narinder Purba:  
0191 2125810 | 07948711868

Narinder.purba@headliners.org and/or visit their website [www.headliners.org](http://www.headliners.org)

## Learning needs not met, says research

Source: Dan Michel, Third Sector Online, 19 July 2007

Voluntary sector representatives in local strategic and area partnerships do not have access to appropriate training or learning opportunities, research from Navca's Improving Local Partnerships Unit and the Workforce Hub has found.

*Skilling Up for LSPs – research on leadership skills for effective strategic representation* reveals that training is often focused on local structures and policy or local political context instead of negotiation skills or strategic representation.

Kate Housden, manager of the Improving Local Partnerships Unit, said everyone working at a strategic level needed a basic set of skills and that not everyone on that level in the third sector was afforded that opportunity.

"This research sets out core competencies and provides recommendations as to how the learning needs can be addressed," she said.

Mark Freeman of the Workforce Hub said the research raised awareness of the need for learning opportunities in the sector. "We want to try to develop a mechanism for whoever is sitting on a council to be able to reflect the views of the voluntary sector and then feed that information back to the sector," he said. To download a copy of this report go to: <http://www.navca.org.uk/publications/skillingup/>



## Procurement Ten Top Tips

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Below are Top Tips from Allison Agius Procurement and Projects Officer of Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council in relation to “Fit to Bid”

- 1. Read and comply with the tender/request for quotation.**  
*Obvious but you'd be surprised how many the council have returned that cannot be included because they haven't fulfilled the requirement asked for.*
- 2. Answer the question.**  
*If it asks how will you deliver the service, state clearly the actions you will take in order to deliver this service. This calls for the practicalities rather than your past experience. It needs an action plan not your CV.*
- 3. Highlight additional benefits**  
*Include additional benefits you can bring to the contract above and beyond the core services. Cost or quantify them where possible.*
- 4. Time**  
*Give yourself plenty of time to fill it in. Allow it to rest for a day or two if you can and take another look at it with fresh eyes.*
- 5. Approach it step by step.**  
*Rather than trying to tackle the whole exercise in one go break it down into manageable chunks.*
- 6. Ask for help**  
*Get others within your organisation or from supporting organisations to read through the documents and provide you with another opinion.*
- 7. Templates**  
*You don't have to wait for a tender or quotation opportunity to prepare everything. There are a number of documents and policies you can put in place that will help ease the process when an opportunity does come along.*
- 8. Filing System**  
*Keep a good filing system in operation so everything is on hand when you need it. It will make the process much easier.*
- 9. Be clear**  
*About your organisation's strengths, skills and your aims and objectives. Make sure the work you are bidding for fits into your mission statement.*
- 10. Feedback**  
*If you are unsuccessful ask for feedback, make a note of it and use it when putting together the next bid.*

### Appeal for Board Members

New Horizons (Teesside) is a local charity which supports people with mental health problems who live in the community. We wish to recruit some new board members. Experience in business expertise, fundraising and public relations would be useful but is not essential. Board meetings are held monthly on the 1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday evening. To find out more please contact Myra Hanson on 01642 217847 or email myrahanson@newhorizonsteesside.com

### Reports

**NAVCA have produced a number of reports recently which are of specific interest to the Voluntary and Community Sector.**

*Skilling up for LSPs: Research on leadership skills for effective strategic representation.*

*Building effective local VCS infrastructure; the characteristics of successful support for the local voluntary and community sector*

*Why grants are important for a healthy local VCS: A study of four local authorities' policies*

**These can be downloaded from [www.navca.org.uk](http://www.navca.org.uk)**

## Heritage Lottery Fund promises to speed up applications

**The Heritage Lottery Fund has promised a quicker application process, project mentoring and earlier critical decision-making for its cultural projects as part of the consultation in preparation for its next five-year strategic plan.** The distributor said that the additional £90.2m they had to pay towards the 2012 Olympics would not prevent it from supporting projects of all sizes in all regions of the UK. "We have taken the Olympics into consideration and will deal with the loss of funds accordingly," she said. "We will try to lessen the impact on our patrons." The fund will also start asking its applicants to make their projects as green as possible, launch a 'Young Roots' programme to get kids involved in volunteering and create a volunteering awards ceremony that will allow the public to nominate their 'Heritage Heroes'. "We have started to change the way people think about and care for the heritage," said Liz Forgan, chair of the distributor. "It's important we continue to encourage a broad range of people to take an active part in looking after the UK's rich legacy from the past." More information and a copy of the consultation document can be found at [www.hlf.org.uk/future](http://www.hlf.org.uk/future).

## Carers Partnership Launched

On a soggy day in June an audience of 100 made up of carers and professionals from all backgrounds, braved the rain and wind to attend the launch of the Carers Partnership.

They heard Professor Brian Footitt, OBE, chair of the Local Strategic Partnership, welcome the development of a partnership for carers. He spoke of changes in national policy - the drive to give people choice about how and where they wished to be cared for; although a welcome policy change he acknowledged the impact of extra care on family carers – noting that 6 million carers in the UK contribute in excess of £57 billion to the economy. He believed the partnership could and should make a significant difference through effective representation, support for carers, information and signposting, bringing carers and cross sector agencies together. He said 'Caring is everyone's business'

He was followed by four carers talking about how caring had impacted on their lives – they spoke of the rewards caring can bring, but stressed that the carers' role must be recognised and valued, that much more support was needed to support them in their caring role and up to date information is crucial.

Lynn Johnson, Head of Commissioning Adult & Children's Services, highlighted the report released for Carers Week – with key findings that carers are worse off as a result of caring and are twice as likely to report poor health compared with the non-caring population. She said she looked forward to working together to deliver more effective services to meet carers' needs.

The day ended with a lively discussion session - the outcomes from these will inform future meetings. The Partnership programme will be published during August - for more information or to register on the mailing list, please contact Carers Together, 01642 488977.

## "Gaining Experience, Giving Time: Homeless People and Volunteering"

This report looks at the experiences of 24 homeless people who have volunteered. The report explores the impact volunteering has on people's lives, how people accessed volunteering roles, and how people were managed and supported as volunteers. The report's recommendations look at how homeless people can be supported to find appropriate volunteer roles, and how volunteer involving organisations can improve the way they manage volunteers, to create more accessible and sustainable opportunities.

Although it specifically looks at homeless people's experience, the report will be useful for anyone who manages volunteers. The researcher talked to people in detail about how they were selected, trained, supported etc., and there is lots of interesting information about what worked for people and what didn't.

You can read the report at:

[www.osw.org.uk/librarydocs/Gaining\\_Experience\\_Giving\\_Time.pdf](http://www.osw.org.uk/librarydocs/Gaining_Experience_Giving_Time.pdf)

## Government commits £500 million to third sector.

The voluntary and community sector will be supported by an investment of in excess of £500m of government funds over the next three years. This money, unveiled by Prime Minister Gordon Brown, has been announced as part of the recent third sector review.

The report "*The future role of the third sector in social and economic regeneration*", was carried out by the Cabinet Office and the Treasury and sets out a ten year strategy for the Government's vision of placing the sector "at the heart of society". The recently published final report highlights the Government proposals to achieve that aim by focusing on four key areas:

- boosting charities' ability to campaign
- strengthening communities
- transforming public services
- encouraging the development and growth of the social enterprise sector

The review indicates that there are to be "better mechanisms" for funding the sector, including additional pressure on public bodies to make three-year funding settlements standard practice. In an attempt to allow greater sustainability in grant arrangements, a new £50m fund will be created to enable local independent foundations to set up 'community endowments'. In his speech the Prime Minister stated:

*"I heard again and again a plea to remember the value of small grants for small-scale individual or community led projects. So we will build on the £80 million set aside in the last Budget for small-scale grants with an additional £50 million - allocated on a match-funded basis with charitable and corporate donations - for local foundations to invest in endowment funds which will generate income for front-line community organisations and activities for years to come".*

At least £10m of additional cash will be used to support the transfer of public-owned buildings through the existing £30m Community Assets Fund. The announcement of the review confirmed the expected fall in funding for Capacitybuilders, which runs the ChangeUp infrastructure programme. The organisation will receive £88.5m over the three-year period.

Cash already announced was also confirmed, including an additional £65m for the Futurebuilders fund and £117m to support youth volunteering activities.

In his speech, Gordon Brown stressed "Government cannot and must not stifle or control the thousands of organisations and millions of people that make up the sector," the Prime Minister said. "We must create the space and opportunity for it to flourish, we must be good partners when we work together and we must listen and respond."

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## Want to Learn?



On Thursday 31st May, Whale Hill Community Centre launched the newly upgraded ICT suite comprising of the latest in Information Technology including full internet access to 12 PC's and 1 PC with specialised keyboard and screen for use by disabled people.

The computers were provided and installed by Alpha Lan Systems Ltd and the refurbishment of the suite was made possible through funding from Tees Valley Delegated Grants.

By providing a safe and welcoming learning environment and the latest in ICT provision, they hope to attract more residents from the estate into further education and training.

**The facility is also available for hire.**

The new computer suite can be viewed between the hours of **9.00am** and **4.00pm** or, for more information, contact Sue McLoughlin on **01642 468890**.

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## The Last Word

**Read this quickly and be amazed**

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Isn't the human mind amazing!!

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