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THE BI-MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF RCVDA

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Atonement fever hits Redcar!!

The clock was turned back to the 1940's on Redcar Promenade and Beach to celebrate the screening of the film Atonement which features scenes which were filmed on the beach last summer.

On a lovely sunny day visitors could take part in a tea dance, enjoy food army style and get a first view of the new public art which is to the left of the cinema.

Joanne Hodgson, Arts Development Officer for Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council joined in the spirit by dressing up in uniform (in Navy in the centre picture). Also in the picture is Lewis Robinson the sculptor and in the background is Joe Wright director of the film.

Calling all Youth Involving Voluntary Organisations.

- Does your organisation support or run activities for young people?
- Are you aware of all the current youth related documentation and initiatives i.e. Children and Young Peoples' Plan, Extended Schools, Youth Offer, Participation, Thematic groups.
- Are you aware of Key fund – Youth Achievement Awards?
- Would your organisation benefit from learning about training available regarding child safety
- Would you like the opportunity to be consulted on issues relating to children and young people

If you would like to be included in a Voluntary Youth Involving Forum please contact Karen McGarrity on 01642 440571 or email karenmc@rcvda.org.uk.

Information gap for volunteers

Almost 80 per cent of volunteers are not interviewed or given descriptions of their roles before they start, according to a new study commissioned by the Office of the Third Sector.

The survey, which was carried out by the National Centre for Social Research and the Institute for Volunteering Research, says that only 7 per cent of volunteers have all their expenses reimbursed

Debbie Usiskin, co-founder of the Association of Volunteer Managers, said: "Volunteers need to know what they are there for and should always be reimbursed expenses. Some organisations seem to think the whole thing is free."

A spokeswoman for youth volunteering charity v said: "With the Government encouraging young people to get involved in civic life, it is vital to ensure financial barriers to volunteering are removed."

The survey shows that education, religion and sport are the most popular causes to volunteer for and most volunteers are involved in finance or charity events.

Other findings include

- 79 per cent of volunteers do not receive any training
- 51 per cent do not know volunteering can lead to qualifications
- 77 per cent do not get any expenses reimbursed
- 82 per cent have not been subject to Criminal Records Bureau checks.

Volunteering Project for Health and Social Care

The above project was launched in July 2007 and is spread across nine regions of England. The overall aim of this new project focuses upon the creation of fully inclusive, meaningful and supported volunteering opportunities for disabled people within the Health and Social Care Sector.

The over-arching aims of the project are:

- To increase the number of disabled people volunteering in the Health and Social Care sector
- To improve the range of fully inclusive and meaningful roles in the sector
- To promote Inclusive Volunteering through sector-specific training
- To collect a bank of 'Good Practice' case studies from VSM's and disabled volunteers
- To challenge the 'helper' / 'helped' distinction by focusing on ability rather than disability
- To enable disabled volunteers to be empowered by their involvement in shaping and designing their volunteering placements
- To continue lobbying of Government for an 'Access to Volunteering' Fund

For further information please contact –

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Charity News

Charities delivering public services

Nearly 4,000 charities responded to the Charity Commission's survey about delivering public services. The results of the survey are included in "*Stand and deliver: The future for charities delivering public services*"

The findings have significant implications for charities undertaking this kind of work. They found that over 60% of charities with an annual income of £500k or above were delivering public services but that only 12% of all charities undertaking public services were paid the full costs involved all of the time. In contrast, only 8% of charities with an income below £10,000 (which make up almost two thirds of the Register) were delivering public services.

The Charity Commission hopes that the evidence in "*Stand and Deliver*" will generate more work, both by the sector and government, to ensure that the environment for charities delivering public services respects their independence, mission and financial sustainability.

The Commission has always been neutral about whether charities should deliver public services or not, and it really is a decision for trustees. However, the evidence in the report underlines the need for trustees to carefully agree their charity's approach to public service delivery, including its approach to charging.

New guidance

To help charities considering taking on public service delivery, the Charity Commission has published updated guidance "*Charities and Public Service Delivery: An introduction and overview*" (CC37) which details the issues charities need to consider before taking this work on. These publications are available from www.charity-commission.gov.uk under 'Publications' or by calling Charity Commission Direct on 0845 300 0218.

Endorsing high standards in charities

Charities that champion best practice in their quality standards should be applauded and charities who meet best practice criteria can now apply for Charity Commission endorsement of their quality standards.

Age Concern and YMCA England joined Community Foundation Network as the first charities with Commission-endorsed quality standards, including areas such as accountable governance structures, conflicts of interest policies and managing staff and volunteers.

The Charity Commission will now consider for endorsement the quality standards developed by umbrella charities for their members who meet the criteria for good practice laid down in their publication *The Hallmarks of an Effective Charity* (CC60).

This new accolade for good-practice charities forms part of their wider partnership strategy which was launched in January. It can be found on the charity commission website under 'Strategies, Plans and Reports.'

Source: Charity Commission News

Hub Update

In 2004 the Government set up a number of national-level organisations that would advise the sector on finance, volunteering, workforce, performance, governance and information technology. Some of these hubs were more successful than others. An independent inquiry into the hubs suggested that there was a need for change. A review confirmed that the hubs model had been discredited and was no longer saleable.

First suggestions for replacements were for four "national support services" this was not popular as they were seen as thinly disguised hubs.

The latest suggestion is for nine support services with Capacitybuilders themselves deciding what is to be done and commissioning services directly. The current hubs are funded until early next year and there is a lot of pressure to set up the new support services in time.

Plain English guide to the Charities Act 2006

The Office of the Third Sector and the Charity Commission have produced this guide which explains the main points of the new Act and how it will affect charities.

Order from:

www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk

RCVDA Website

Our new look website is now live. We would welcome any suggestions for information you would like included on the site.

We will be continuing to develop it over the next few months. The address is www.rcvda.org.uk

National minimum wage

The national minimum wage will increase again from 1st October 2007. The new rates will be as follows:

- Adult rate (workers aged 22 and over) will increase from £5.35 to **£5.52**
- Development rate for 18 – 21 year olds will increase from £4.45 to **£4.60**
- Development rate for 16 – 17 year olds will increase from £3.30 to **£3.40**

For further information go to www.berr.gov.uk/employment

ACIE Training opportunities

ACIE (The Association of Charity Independent Examiners) are running half day updates on ***The Charities Act, the Companies Act and Independent Examinations***

These will be held at:

Manchester Tuesday 18th September 2007
York Thursday 15th November 2007

Time: 1.30 pm to 4.30 pm

Cost: £50 per person which includes notes and tea/coffee/biscuits

The update will cover:

- Changing thresholds and eligibility criteria
- IE and charitable companies
- Charitable Incorporated Organisations (CIO's)
- Implementation timetables

For bookings and enquires contact:

ACIE, Bentley Resource Centre, High Street,
Bentley, Doncaster, DN5 0AA

Tel : 01302 828338
Email: info@acie.org.uk
Fax: 01302 872973
Web: www.acie.org.uk

Key points from the Institute of Fundraising's code "Fundraising from grant-making trusts"

Source: Third Sector

- Fundraisers should clearly state why grants are needed and how the money they request will fit into the overall missions of their charities.
- Charities should identify trusts that give grants to the types of project they want funding for, as well as the trusts' fields of interest, the geographical areas that they are concerned with and the typical size of the grants they offer.
- Charities must adhere to trusts' rules about how they can be approached. If a trust does not specifically disallow charities from contacting it, it is acceptable for organisations to get in touch with trustees to find out how best to apply for funding. Charities can also contact trusts to seek information about projects and their eligibility.
- Applications must not mislead trusts into believing that their grants will be used only for particular projects when that is not the case.
- Trusts ought to be kept fully informed about the progress of those projects they have funded, and all reporting guidelines should be followed and clarified with the trusts.
- Reporting guidelines and requirements should be clear and closely followed.
- Reporting information should be brief. Fuller reports at the end of the grant periods should cover the extent to which objectives are met.

To download a full copy of the Codes of fundraising practice visit www.institute-of-fundraising.org.uk/bestpractice/thecodes/codeoffundraisingpractice/



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Demystifying the Pre Qualification Questionnaire (PQQ) Tips from Redcar & Cleveland Procurement Department

1. Tender Process

A PQQ is a pre qualification questionnaire. It enables the contract manager to ascertain who is fit to tender.

It is sent out prior to the tender specification in order to ensure that the potential provider meets the necessary requirements of the council.

There are a number of questionnaires that make up the PQQ depending on what the contract is for and its value including:

- The Health and Safety Questionnaire
- The Equality and Diversity Questionnaire
- Insurance
- Finance
- Environmental
- Business Continuity
- Business Questionnaire

2. Quotation Process

With a quotation there is no PQQ as there is no pre qualification stage.

Instead necessary questionnaires are issued along with the quotation brief.

When requesting a quotation the council will issue:

- The Health and Safety Questionnaire
- The Equality and Diversity Questionnaire

The other questionnaires are discretionary at quotation level.

As the Health and Safety and the Equality and Diversity Policy are essential it is highly recommended that these are put in place prior to tendering or quoting.

For further information contact:

Debra Thorne, Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council

Telephone No: 01642 771256

Email: debra_thorne@redcar-cleveland.gov.uk

SKiLD's autumn 2007 Learning programme launched

SKiLD's October and November programme has been launched, and contains a wide range of training and learning activities especially designed for people whose work involves giving hands-on support to voluntary and community groups.

The booking form is downloadable from www.ukworkforcehub.org.uk/Downloadfile.asp?file=80_16200705094810_23.doc

For more information about SKiLD, visit www.skild.org.uk, or email skild@navca.org.uk.

Trustee CRB checks

Trustees of organisations wishing to register as charities will no longer have to provide proof to the Charity Commission that they have passed Criminal Records Bureau checks.

The Charity Commission board felt that the current system of asking trustees to send the original copy of their CRB check was "disproportionate to the level of risk". Trustees will instead be asked to sign declarations confirming that checks have been carried out. This change will affect charities working with children, young people or vulnerable adults. The change will take place from late September - early October.

For more information see www.charity-commission.gov.uk

Source: NCVS

Investing in volunteers toolkit

This free online toolkit is designed to help prepare volunteer involving organisations for Investing in Volunteers (iV), which is the UK quality standard for volunteer management. The standard is based on ten indicators and a number of practices within each indicator. Each practice asks organisations for evidence (in whatever form) to prove that you are doing what you say you're doing. However, you can complete the toolkit without signing up to iV.

There are 19 short learning modules using case studies, quizzes and assessments within seven sections:

- What is quality
- liV and other standards
- What is self assessment
- Forward planning
- understanding iV
- what is evidence
- benefits, barriers and solutions

For more information go to: www.iiv.investinginvolunteers.org.uk

Source: NCVS

Hear by Right Workshops *Helping You Map & Plan the Participation of Children & Young People*

Participation Works are holding a series of Hear by Right participation workshops across the country.

Places are limited to one per organisation and are free to Voluntary, Community and other Third Sector organisations. The charge for statutory organisations is £85.00.

These workshops are designed to provide information about using the Hear by Right standards framework to draw up a map of current participation of children and young people in your organisation and how to create an agreed strategic plan for improvement.

This event will be useful to anyone who is seeking funding for youth activities as funders' are looking for evidence that young people are involved in the planning and development of projects.

The dates for the closest venues are:

York	Wednesday 28 th November 2007
Middlesbrough	Tuesday 4 th December 2007
South Tyneside	Thursday 26 th February 2008

Booking forms can be downloaded from www.participationworks.org.uk

For more information about the workshops e-mail Jake Manning at jakem@nya.org.uk, or call on 0116 242 7443.

For more information about Hear by Right visit www.nya.org.uk/hearbyright.

For more information about Participation Works visit www.participationworks.org.uk.

Importance of Grant funding

Minister for the third sector Phil Hope has acknowledged the importance of grant funding to allow third sector organisations to maintain independence and perform innovative work.

Hope was responding to the launch of *Sustaining Grants*, a new pamphlet which outlines the role of grants in allowing the continuing work of smaller voluntary and community organisations. The pamphlet includes 11 case studies highlighting organisations which relied on grant funding, of which Hope said: "I agree 100% that the role of grants made it all possible, allowing groups to take risks, innovate and act, offering organisations independence."

The DSC's chief executive Debra Allcock Tyler said: "The reality on the ground is that local authorities are taking a drastic and dangerous shift away from grants towards contract funding. What we need is for the Office of the Third Sector to act as a sector champion in protecting the grant portion of local authority budgets."

The pamphlet "Sustaining Grants" can be downloaded from both NAVCA's and the DSC's websites. Visit www.navca.org.uk or www.dsc.org.uk

Source: Charity Times

How Trustee Boards can plan for future change.

Trustees have to learn how to manage their response to a changing environment, rather than assume there is nothing they can do. Organisations that don't address future changes could face an unstable future.

It is important for the success of organisations that they do not become too insular or blinkered and that they are constantly aware of the current social climate. One way to help anticipate and plan for the future is to carry out a strategic analysis of the future environment (SAFE)

Taking some three simple steps will lead to:

- Clearer and more relevant organisational goals
- Better quality decisions
- A more secure future

Step 1: Generate

Think creatively, preferably as a group, about the external forces or trends (drivers) that will influence your organisation in the future. This can be easier if you start with some categories of change: political, economic, social, technological, legal, and environmental (a PESTLE analysis). The categories matter less than spending time thinking broadly, to produce a list of possible drivers to take forward.

Step 2: Organise

You now ask three questions about each driver;

- How big an impact will it have on us
- What opportunities does it present to us
- how likely is this driver

Combining the answers to these questions helps you identify the drivers that are both more likely and will have a bigger impact. At this stage, it's helpful to answer in some detail "what will this driver actually mean for us?"

Step 3: Respond

Finally, ask "what should we actually do about this?"

For each driver there will be a number of response options. Identify and consider at least two options, not just the first one you think of. Types of response include:

- Improve – do current work better (e.g. new technology)
- Innovate – do different things (e.g. new service)
- Improvise – manage risks (e.g. exit strategy)

Decide between responses by considering their costs and benefits and the organisation's ability and capacity to respond.

The final task is to ensure this work affects how your organisation acts and behaves. Update your strategy to include the key findings from your SAFE and the responses you have agreed. Then, as ever, make sure you plan and communicate who will do what and regularly review progress.

For further information see "*Looking Out: How to analyse your organisation's external environment*" available from www.performancehub.org.uk

Source: Richard Piper, Performance Hub, Governance

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Working with deaf and hard of hearing volunteers

The Royal National Institute for the Deaf has published information about working with deaf and hard of hearing volunteers.

The guide states that one in seven people in the UK is deaf or hard of hearing and not all of them wear a hearing aid or use sign language, which means that many volunteer-involving organisations may have deaf or hard of hearing volunteers without realising it.

The guidance includes:

- Communication tips
- Types of communication support
- Equipment
- Deaf blindness
- Recruiting, interviewing, supporting and training deaf or hard of hearing volunteers

For more information see www.rnid.org.uk

Justice First: working with people in the Tees Valley who are seeking asylum

Justice First is a newly formed charity working with people in the Tees Valley who are seeking asylum. They help those whose appeals have been rejected to re-engage with the legal system. They also provide humanitarian aid for those who do not, at present, qualify for support from the state.

For more information or to make a donation contact John Rogers on 01642 601122 or email justice-first@btconnect.com

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Q. I'm not clear about what constitutes a 'conflict of interest' – can you explain?

A. Charities exist to benefit the public, not their trustees and it's very important that trustees actively avoid putting themselves in a position where their personal interests, or benefit, conflict with the duty to act in the best interests of their charity.

While usually this is fairly straightforward, such as not using charity property for personal gain, there may be instances where it's less clear-cut, such as a trustee's firm undertaking work for the charity. A well-considered policy to manage conflicts of interest for your charity is important here, and the Charity Commission has a number of publications to help.

Good starting points are *A Guide to Conflicts of Interest for Charity Trustees* under 'Guidance for Charities' on the Website, www.charity-commission.gov.uk and *Payment of Charity Trustees* (CC11).

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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