



Monthly News Round-Up Providing Key Information for the Third Sector

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KEY NEWS & POLICY DEVELOPMENT

Charity Commission research shows increased public confidence in charities

Newly published research has shown a small increase in public confidence in charities between 2005 and 2008. The mean score of public confidence in charities has increased from 6.3 to 6.6 over the last three years. 96% of respondents agreed that it is important for charities to tell the public how they spend their money and 90% agreed that it is important for charities to explain their work in an annual report. In addition, people checking whether a charity is genuine prior to donating has increased from 32 to 42%. [Read the full report.](#)

Voluntary Action in the 21st Century – Conservative Party Green Paper

Conservative leader David Cameron has launched a Green Paper which highlights the importance of the third sector and sets out ways to encourage it as a force for social progress. Section 3.7 states "Wherever possible frontline voluntary organisations should be resourced and empowered to commission the support they need from Councils for Voluntary Service and other providers". Other proposals which have been welcomed are the creation of an Office of Civil Society, simplification of gift aid and support for longer term strategic funding. The shadow Third Sector Minister Greg Clark will be speaking at NAVCA's September conference. Third Sector lists the 'top 20' pledges at <http://www.thirdsector.co.uk/News/813637/>, and The Guardian gives quick overview at <http://www.guardian.co.uk/society/2008/jun/04/voluntarysector.davidcamer> For more visit www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/conservativesgreenpaper.

Towards a strategy to support volunteering in health and social care

Health Secretary Alan Johnson has launched a six-month consultation to improve support for volunteers in the NHS, social care and third sector. The consultation closes on 30 September. <http://www.dh.gov.uk>

New commission on future of sector funding

A new commission to look at the state of funding for the whole of the third sector after 2010 has been announced by umbrella body, NCVO. The new Funding Commission will look at concerns such as volatility and planning for uncertainty over the next 10 years. The Commission is expected to be up and running in early 2009.

Invitation to apply to become an Action and Learning Site 2009-10

The Department of Health has established a project to address the recommendations in 'Improving the Life Chances of Disabled People' (2005) that by 2010 each locality should have a user-led organisation modeled on existing Centres for Independent Living. The involvement of disabled people, carers, and other support users is central to the project. A second round of the User-led Organisations Development Fund will be available for user-led organisations to deliver Action and Learning Sites. These will develop ways of meeting the Life Chances recommendations, and share their learning with other organisations across the country. Closing date for applications is 28 July.

<http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/socialcare/socialcarereform/userledorganisations>

Developing leadership networking

NCVO is setting up a network which will bring together emerging leaders of civil society to share ideas and information. The first step for 'Leadership 20:20' is assembling a core group of about fifteen such people to help shape the network's development, creating networking opportunities both online and offline. More at <http://www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/whatwedo/leadershipservices/?id=8974>.

Challenges and thoughts for the third sector

Matthew Taylor, chief executive of the RSA, raises some strong points in 'Questions for the third sector', a short article for Society Guardian, covering performance and accountability, mission, independence and engagement. <http://www.guardian.co.uk/society/2008/jun/04/voluntarysector>.

Charity leaders confidence falls

This latest Charity Forecast survey report indicates that charity leaders' overall confidence in the future has dropped since the first survey report in March. The report gives you an inside view on prospects for the voluntary sector and is an invaluable tool for your strategic planning. Supported by Chantrey Vellacott DFK. Free for NCVO Members (£100 for non-members).

For more and to download visit www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/charityforecastsurvey2.

Capacity building programme for social enterprise

A Capacitybuilders Social Enterprise Programme was announced by third sector minister Phil Hope at the Capacitybuilders conference this week.

Some six million pounds will be distributed over the next three years, working with social enterprise networks and other local partners, such as Regional Development Agencies, in each English region to identify the best ways to meet local needs. It will be spent on areas such as new mentoring schemes, more accredited advisers and work to develop emerging markets.

Office of Third Sector News item, which includes information on awards under the Improving Reach programme too, at <http://ma.gnolia.com/bolab>,

Capacitybuilders with more details of the programme at

<http://ma.gnolia.com/pawayoxuz>.

WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP

Partnership working in public service delivery: two sides of the story

Newly published by NCVO's Public Service Delivery Network, two related case studies that focus on partnership working in public service delivery. See two sides of the story.

DISC – Developing Initiatives Supporting Communities case study offers the perspective of the organisation that formed a consortium of 12 to deliver housing support.

Lancashire County Council – Supporting People case study offers the perspective of the local authority, discussing the approach they took to develop a tendering system that enabled partnership working.

<http://www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/WorkArea/linkit.aspx?LinkIdIdentifier=id&ItemID=2102>

Local Compact Voice

Local Compact Voice offers free representation and support on your Local Compact, access to the know-how of over 400 members across England, and the chance for online discussion whenever you want. To join, email

paul.barasi@ncvo-vol.org.uk and to keep your local public partners in the loop, invite them to join the Friends of Local Compact Voice at

<http://friendslcv.ning.com>.

Compact Voice is asking both local infrastructure organisations and individual organisations to ask their trustee boards to take this pledge:

We will

- Give voice to the needs of communities and those we represent
- Campaign fearlessly and responsibly for our causes
- Uphold our independence by using our Compact, resisting external interference, and being mission focused. <http://www.thecompact.org.uk>

Meeting local councillors

Julia Phillips, Chief Officer of CVS Stratford-on-Avon District, was invited to address newly-elected district councillors shortly after the local elections. The meeting was hosted by senior council staff responsible for social inclusion policies and was part of the Compact relationship at district level. She provided a summary of the role and purpose of the CVS/VC (using NAVCA's resources) and spoke about some of the key activities CVS Stratford undertakes within the district. juliap@stratfordcvs.org.uk

Chink in state and charity links

'The Guardian' of 4 June had a report on the findings of NAVCA's recent survey of member chief officers, in particular the finding that less than half of those surveyed find their local Compact a valuable tool for sustaining or improving their relationships with local statutory organisations.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/society/2008/jun/04/voluntarysector1> and
<http://www.navca.org.uk/news/keyissues.htm>

Training for commissioners

Phil Hope, Minister for the Third Sector, has launched a series of regional training sessions to help commissioners of public services work in partnership with the third sector. The sessions are part of a four-year National Programme for Third Sector Commissioning. NAVCA members will be giving presentations on local infrastructure organisations at every session.

<http://www.idea.gov.uk/idk/core/page.do?pagelId=6583598>

The Local Government Charity Toolkit

The Charity Commission has published a free online reference manual designed to help local authorities work with charities. The toolkit explains the legal and fiscal framework within which charities must operate and is intended to be a guide for local authority officers and councillors.

<http://www.charitycommission.gov.uk/enhancingcharities/toolindex.asp>

Justice Ministry's sector strategy published

The Ministry of Justice has published its Third Sector Strategy, setting out how it will engage with the third sector to deliver better public services and improve policy through effective partnerships. This follows consultation on the draft, which closed in March. The strategy is built around four heads: Enabling voice and campaigning, Strengthening communities, Transforming public services and Encouraging social enterprise. Download 'Third Sector Strategy - Improving policies and securing better public services through effective partnerships', or read the news release, via <http://www.justice.gov.uk/publications/third-sector-strategy.htm>.

Do you work in partnership?

Collaborative working – also known as joint or partnership working – covers a whole range of ways that two or more organisations can work together. Sign up to a free Collaborative Working newsletter which includes the latest news and developments, case studies, events and resources to help you successfully work in partnership. For more visit www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/cwu.

LEGAL MATTERS

Online filing for 2008 open

The Charity Commission's online service is now accepting Annual Returns / Updates for financial years ending in 2008 (assuming that the period has completed, of course). You need to have registered for a password first <http://www.charitycommission.gov.uk/common/Onlineservices.asp>.

Charity Thresholds

Charities with an annual income below £25,000 will no longer have to submit their annual accounts to the Charity Commission under plans approved by the regulator. The threshold is currently £10,000. However, the commission intends to introduce random checks for those below the £25,000 threshold. A number of commission members shared concerns expressed by some consultation respondents (including NAVCA) that raising the threshold risked promoting slack governance and undermining public confidence in small charities. A proposal to raise the threshold for preparing an annual report to £25,000 (which NAVCA campaigned against) was rejected. <http://digbig.com/4wyxj> or <http://www.charitycommission.gov.uk>

Updated guidance on trustee expenses and payments

The Charity Commission has updated its guidance 'Trustee expenses and payments' (CC11, at <http://www.charitycommission.gov.uk/publications/cc11.asp>), in light of the Charities Act 2006 changes which allow charity trustees to be paid for providing goods and services. It gives answers on such questions as

- * when trustees can be paid for supplying goods and services
- * what to do about accountability and management of conflicts of interest
- * when it might be appropriate to pay a trustee for their trusteeship; and
- * what does and does not count as reasonable expenses.

Reporting serious incidents to the Charity Commission

Guidance for trustees on reporting serious incidents has also been revised by the Charity Commission. It contains important information on when and how to report serious incidents within a charity and the legal requirements placed upon trustees, and also clarifies what the Commission considers to be serious or significant. <http://www.charitycommission.gov.uk/investigations/rsi.asp>.

Guidance on discipline and grievance

The employment relations body Acas has now issued draft guidance to accompany its new Code of Practice on discipline and grievance. The code has been revised to reflect changes being made to workplace dispute resolution due to upcoming employment law, and has also been streamlined to 12 pages. The guidance is more detailed and somewhat longer. While this is only draft, the importance of the Code is such that it is worth taking into account. <http://www.acas.org.uk/index.aspx?articleid=2080>.

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Safe communities: a toolkit to protect children and young people

'Safe communities: a toolkit to protect children and young people', produced by the NSPCC will be distributed free of charge to all NAVCA members. It will provide support and guidance for community groups around safeguarding. Further information is included in the June/July edition of Circulation or can be accessed via <http://www.nspcc.org.uk/toolkit>.

Resources for youth

Two revamped web sites with a youth focus. The British Youth Council is at <http://www.byc.org.uk>, with a Resources Centre including various How To's (in pdf format) on running a youth organisation, including being a trustee, at http://www.byc.org.uk/view.php?parent_id=154&content_id=293. The National Youth Agency's Information Centre is at <http://www.nya.org.uk/information/100320/informationcentre/>. Recently published in NYA's Youth Action and Engagement series is 'Building intergenerational relationships', with five case studies in a range of settings - download (pdf 872KB) from <http://www.nya.org.uk/youthactionandengagement>.

UK Children's Commissioners' Report to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child

The UK's four children's commissioners have published a joint report about children's rights in the UK. The report highlights 18 areas of concern including child poverty, inequalities experienced by children, the youth justice system, the treatment of asylum-seeking children, increasing rates of depression, mental health problems and fear of crime. <http://www.11million.org.uk>

Safeguarding

Four third sector leaders are among the ten board members to be appointed by the Independent Safeguarding Authority, which will oversee the new vetting and barring scheme for people working with children and vulnerable adults. <http://www.isa-gov.org.uk>

Young People's Fund Local Grants

The Big Lottery Fund is seeking applications to stage two of its local grants

programme for young people's projects that meet the Government's five outcomes within the Every Child Matters programme. This second stage covers projects of a local nature, led and managed by young people, mainly aged between 10 and 18. Closing date is 16 October.

http://www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/prog_ypf2_local_grants

THE ENVIRONMENT

Sustainable development and climate change

IDeA has published a series of interviews with local authorities across the country, highlighting some of the innovative ways they are tackling climate change. <http://www.idea.gov.uk/idk/core/page.do?pagelid=8411339>

Better Places, Better Planet

Local action is vital if we want our neighbourhoods to be better and stay better. This new guide from CDF shows how any group can take effective action on both local and global issues. <http://digbig.com/4xbgd> or <http://www.cdf.org.uk>

Energy saving opportunities for charitable organisations

The Carbon Trust has launched a free guide to reducing carbon emissions and cutting energy use in association with the Charity Commission.

<http://digbig.com/4xbgf> or <http://www.carbontrust.co.uk>

PUBLICATIONS

Voice4Change England

NAVCA's partner Voice4Change England (national voice for the black and minority ethnic third sector) has produced a new leaflet to publicise the progress it has made over the past year. http://www.voice4change-england.co.uk/v4ce_marketing_leaflet.html

Charitable Status: a practical handbook

The new edition of this DSC publication includes a quote from NAVCA Chief Executive Kevin Curley: "A vital reference book for every local development worker and charity adviser". <http://www.dsc.org.uk/Publications>

Full value

NCVO has published 'True colours', a book about the concept of 'Full Value'. Full Value is a way of thinking about any organisation, from any sector, and appreciating the full range of impacts it has on the world. It is about going beyond a focus purely on outcomes for users, to include outcomes for other people/things affected by your organisation (trustees, staff, volunteers, funders, local residents, the environment, etc), and to include satisfaction (e.g. whether

people enjoy using a service because the staff are friendly, sympathetic, etc).
<http://digbig.com/4xabx> or <http://www.ncvo-vol.org.uk>

National Hubs joint publications guide

This guide pools together valuable hub publications in one accessible place, and has been produced so organisations can benefit from a range of resources, long after the life of the hubs. <http://digbig.com/4wyxx> or <http://www.improvingsupport.org.uk>

Benchmarking made simple

'Benchmarking made simple: a step-by-step guide', produced for the Performance Hub, is available for download (pdf, 467KB) from authors Charities Evaluation Service web site at <http://www.ces-vol.org.uk/index.cfm?pg=112>. It covers practical issues such as when it is appropriate to share experiences with others through a benchmarking exercise and finding partner organisations to benchmark with. Direct link: <http://www.ces-vol.org.uk/index.cfm?format=238>.

Charities Evaluation Service (CES) launches quality assurance system 3rd edition

CES has updated the Practical Quality Assurance System for Small Organisations (PQASSO). Following national consultation the third edition rises to the challenges of the voluntary sector operating environment including the importance of outcomes, environmental and sustainability issues, the role of VCS organisations in public service delivery and it gives greater prominence to the voice role. For more visit www.ces-vol.org.uk or email enquiries@ces-vol.org.uk.

A Winning Team?

The impact of volunteers in sport. From Volunteering England.
<http://digbig.com/4xbgj> or <http://www.volunteering.org.uk/sport>

how2fundraise

How2fundraise is a free online resource for the UK's 16 million volunteer fundraisers, from the Institute of Fundraising. <http://www.how2fundraise.org>

FREE guide to Interim Management worth £15

Interim management can be practical, productive and cost-effective for voluntary organisations looking to manage major projects, bring heavy-weight management skills to solve a particular problem, put together bid or tender documents, or to fill management gaps due to illness or maternity leave.

This FREE guide from interim management provider Russam GMS will help you establish whether an interim management solution could work for your organisation. To receive your free guide [Email](#) your full postal details, name and job title.

TRAINING/EVENTS

Governance that works: Leadership that inspires

Join NCVO's OnBoard Trustee Conference, 6 October in London, to find out how to improve your board's effectiveness. You will hear about developments and key issues facing boards, strategies on governance and best practice in trusteeship. You will receive practical advice on governance topics and the latest information on financial and legal changes. For more and to book visit www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/trusteeconf08.

Are you new to the voluntary and community sector?

If you want to find out more about how the voluntary and community sector works then the online Effective Voluntary Sector Management course is for you. It is a great overview of working for a charity and you'll get up to speed on fundraising, volunteering, governance, marketing, employment, financial management and more. To enrol visit www.wfac.org.uk/training/online-learning-course.html.

SKiLD summer learning programme

Available at <http://www.skild.org.uk>

FUNDING

Innovation Exchange Next Practice

NESTA has published information about the Innovation Exchange Next Practice programme, including the NESTA Innovation Exchange Fund. The programme aims to help third sector innovators to develop, evaluate and grow their work by offering a combination of in-kind support and funding. Funding awards are likely to vary between £10k and £40k. Closing date is 31 July. <http://innovation-exchange.org/next-practice-programme>

Sport Relief Community Foundations Programme

Over the next two years, up to £4m of Sport Relief money is being distributed through Community Foundations, focusing on community groups that are using sport and exercise to increase access to sport and exercise for people who face social exclusion and isolation, and help people who are experiencing difficulties in their lives to regain their confidence and self esteem.

<http://www.comicrelief.com/apply-for-a-grant/uk/sport-relief>

Government funding portal now includes funding opportunities from all relevant Whitehall departments

www.governmentfunding.org.uk now offers funding opportunities from 14 government departments and their extensive range of grant administrators. In the last year, governmentfunding.org.uk has doubled its remit, bringing the potential funding available to over £850 million across 57 grant schemes. Subscriptions to the portal are FREE to voluntary organisations with a turnover under £500k and

£75 for all others. Subscribe today at www.governmentfunding.org.uk and get a FREE updated version of the "Government Funding" chapter from The Complete Fundraising Handbook.

OTHER NEWS

Criminal Records Bureau checks: Guidance for volunteering

The Cabinet Office has launched 'Criminal Records Bureau checks: Guidance for volunteering'. This should help organisations that use volunteers to be clear about when they do and don't need to carry out Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) checks on volunteers. <http://digbig.com/4xajf> or http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/third_sector

Tackle Mental Health

The Shaw Trust has created a website to provide information and advice on how to support staff who are dealing with mental health issues. <http://www.tacklementalhealth.org.uk>

Warm Front

Warm Front is a government-funded programme managed by EAGA that ensures vulnerable communities and households are well insulated and centrally heated with energy-saving benefits that reduce bills and CO₂ emissions. <http://www.warmfront.co.uk>

Banking that fits your needs

Do you want a bank that understands and supports the voluntary sector as well as offering you market leading accounts? NCVO has joined with CAF Bank to offer you services that are designed exclusively for charities and voluntary organisations. Choose from a range of financial solutions to ensure you get the account that suits you. For more visit www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/cafbank.

Legal help for Charity Tribunal cases

A specialist panel of lawyers is being set up within the Bar Pro Bono Unit (<http://www.barprobono.org.uk>) to ensure that every appellant to the Charity Tribunal has the chance of legal representation. With charity law being quite specialised, there is a need to expand and formalise arrangements with specialist lawyers.

Technology and Social Communication

This month's NCVO ICT Development (was ICT Hub) feature articles have a 'social media' focus. 'What can Social Media do for you?' has a good run through of the "Web 2.0" tools and terminology and ways of communicating more widely. http://www.ichub.org/articles/What_does_social_media_do_for_you.html.

Contribute to Baroness Liz Barker's new book

Ever been offered a company's best and brightest staff to spend a day painting when you really need help with your strategic plan? Liz Barker of ThirdSectorBusiness is writing a book to help charities attract business people to assist in the management and governance of their organisations. Answer ten short questions and your views can help Liz address the needs of charities big and small. Have your say at <http://snipurl.com/2351k>.

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