

Monthly Update of Key Information about the Third Sector

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NEWS FOR SUPPORT AGENCIES

Empowering the Voluntary Sector

Issue 7 of the Empowering the Voluntary Sector newsletter, including an update on the Southall Black Sisters case, is now available.

<http://www.navca.org.uk/services/learningopps/evs/evsnewsletter.htm>

Skilling Up for Stronger Voices - A skills framework for third sector representatives

'Skilling Up for Stronger Voices' is a summary of recent research from the Improving Local Partnerships project at NAVCA. It looks at the roles that representatives have in LSPs, the range of key tasks that they carry out and the types of skills and abilities they are using, and proposes a skills framework which divides skills and abilities into three simple themes: Partnership skills; People skills; Practical skills. <http://www.navca.org.uk/publications/strongervoices>

Working in a consortium - A guide for third sector organisations involved in public service delivery

The Office of the Third Sector has produced a guide to consortia for third sector organisations involved in public service delivery. This guide includes a range of options and different approaches to working collaboratively, background information and further support. <http://digbig.com/4xyyg> or <http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/thirdsector>

Volunteering England: Recession Challenge

Volunteering England is challenging the Government to invest in volunteering to contribute to national and personal economic renewal. The call to action is included in a nine-point 'Recession Challenge', which the organisation presented

to the Office of the Third Sector at its Strategic Partners meeting on the recession on 15 December. <http://digbig.com/4xyym> or <http://www.volunteering.org.uk>

Third sector and the current economic climate

At NCVO's Recession Summit at the end of November, Kevin Brennan, Minister for the Third Sector, announced his intention to develop an action plan of government support for charities, voluntary groups and social enterprises through the economic downturn. The OTS would welcome suggestions from the sector on innovative ways the government could help support the environment for a thriving third sector in the coming months and years, with a particular focus on the six key themes raised at the summit. Stuart Etherington, Chief Executive of NCVO and Kevin Brennan, Minister for the Third Sector, issued a joint statement after the summit: <http://www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/press/briefings/?id=12016>
A summary of all responses, a presentation that was made at the summit and notes from the meeting are all available on the NCVO website: <http://www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/research/index.asp?id=1195>

Pre Budget Report

There was very little in the Pre Budget Report presented by the Chancellor of the Exchequer on Monday (24th November) specifically for the third sector. The full text does have a couple of paragraphs "confirm(ing) the Government's ongoing commitment to the third sector" and the importance of social enterprise, http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/third_sector/news/news_stories/081124_pbr.aspx. Otherwise, two national charities are to receive additional funds to provide additional debt advice to people in financial difficulty - Citizens Advice gets £10 million and the Money Advice Trust £5.85 million. NCVO response to the report: <http://www.ncvo-vol.org.uk>

The temporary reduction in the standard rate of VAT from 17.5% to 15% starting on 1st December will save many voluntary organisations some running costs. For practical information on VAT rate changes, see HM Revenue and Customs, <http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/pbr2008/measure1.htm>.

Developing a Sector Qualification Strategy

The Workforce Hub has been commissioned by the UK Commission for Employment and Skills to develop a Sector Qualification Strategy for the third sector (building on the Labour Market Intelligence reports available at <http://www.ukworkforcehub.org.uk/sqs>). The draft Sector Qualification Strategy is now available for consultation at <http://www.ukworkforcehub.org.uk/DisplayPage.asp?pageid=13025> responses wanted by 27th February.

Mutual Action, Common Purpose: Empowering the Third Sector

This report was written by David Blunkett for the Fabian society at the request of the Prime Minister. It will inform the Labour Party manifesto for the next election.

NAVCA particularly welcomes the chapter 'Commissioning, Contracts and the Compact' which stresses the importance of grants as part of the funding mix and recognises that there are some unintended consequences of commissioning.<http://www.navca.org.uk/news/mutualaction.htm>

Tools for representation

NAVCA's Improving Local Partnerships (ILP) team has developed a new set of guidance sheets to support third sector colleagues involved in developing representational structures in partnership working.

<http://www.navca.org.uk/reptools.htm>

'Circulation' 406

The December/January issue of Circulation is now on NAVCA's website at: <http://www.navca.org.uk/publications/circulation/2008/406>. Articles include: Governance and faith organisations; Third sector support for offenders and their families; and how local infrastructure organisations can help create the 2012 legacy.

Investment in Regional Voice

The Government has announced £1.5m to support third sector regional networks in delivering many of the Government's policies and programmes at the regional level. The Office of the Third Sector will provide £1m over two years, whilst Capacitybuilders has identified a further £500,000 for 2009-10.

<http://digbig.com/4xxxw> or <http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/thirdsector>

Futurebuilders consortia fund

Futurebuilders has launched a new fund specifically for consortia groups aiming to work together to win public service contracts. The Consortia Fund offers bespoke investment packages comprising loan finance and professional support, individually tailored to suit the needs of the consortium. There is no upper limit to the size of investment, but the minimum investment package is £50,000.

<http://digbig.com/4xyab> or <http://www.futurebuilders-england.org.uk>

WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP

NCVO Collaborative Working

The latest NCVO Collaborative Working News (Dec 08) can be found at www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/cwnews

NHS Next Stage Review: What it means for the Third Sector

Earlier this year the Department of Health published 'High quality care for all: NHS Next Stage Review final report' (June 2008) and 'NHS Next Stage Review: Our vision for primary and community care' (July 2008). This was followed in December 2008 by 'NHS Next Stage Review: What it means for the Third Sector'. This states "The third sector is encouraged to develop local partnerships and then proactively contact the local PCT". See: <http://www.navca.org.uk/news/nhsnextstagerewiew.htm>

NHS standard contracts update

Department of Health standard contracts are being introduced for both generalist community services and specialist mental health services. From April 2009, or when the current contract expires following this date, all providers that are contracted to deliver these services will be required to use the new standard contracts. <http://www.navca.org.uk/localvs/lcp/news/nhsstandardcontracts.htm>

Health

The NHS operating framework for 2009/10, which sets out priorities for the NHS for the next year, has been published <http://digbig.com/4xyyt> or <http://www.dh.gov.uk>

Better together: Improving consultation with the third sector

A practical handbook "to help public servants open up the consultation process to reach third sector workers on the ground and to use their experience to influence policy outcomes" has been produced by the Office of the Third Sector and umbrella body Children England. Find 'Better together' at <http://preview.tinyurl.com/673nck>, news item at <http://preview.tinyurl.com/5usn98>.

Shaping places through sport

Sport England has published five themed guides advising local councils on how sport can assist in the delivery of local priorities. This is part of Sport England's ambition to create sporting opportunities in every community. <http://digbig.com/4xyrx> or <http://www.sportengland.org>

Compact Commissioner delivers his recommendations

Sir Bert Massie CBE, Commissioner for the Compact, has delivered his recommendations about the future of the Compact and the role of the Commission for the Compact. These include "That the Compact remains a voluntary agreement and that no further consideration be given to converting it into statutory form" and "That the Commission for the Compact be established as a statutory corporation". <http://www.thecompact.org.uk/information/100019/102559/prrecommendations/>

LAA Peer Matching

NLGN has launched a new LAA Peer Matching Tool, enabling an area to see which of its peers have chosen an indicator set that most closely mirrors its own. The analysis will allow authorities to see which indicators they have in common

with other areas. It can be downloaded at <http://www.nlgn.org.uk/public/laas/local-area-agreements>.

Guidestar Data Services

GuideStar Data Services (GDS) has launched its new website <http://www.gs-ds.co.uk>. GDS provides a range of products and services that serve a wide audience including third sector, umbrella, networking and funding bodies.

LEGAL MATTERS

PAYE

HM Revenue and Customs has issued a reminder that employers with 50 or more on the payroll will need to submit in-year PAYE information online from 6 April 2009. This includes forms P45/P46 for employees leaving and starting. <http://www.hmrc.gov.uk>.

SANDY ADIRONDACK: AMENDMENTS TO THE LEGAL UPDATE WEBSITE FOR VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS

News from Sandy Adirondack

- 3rd edition Voluntary Sector Legal Handbook (VLSH) delayed until March 2009. Standard reference for medium to large voluntary organizations, CVS, funders etc. More info at www.sandy-a.co.uk/books.htm#rclh.
- Also due March 2009 – Voluntary But Not Amateur: A guide to the law for voluntary organisation and community groups (VBNA) – same topics at VSLH but less detail for small organisations and boards.
- Other books recommended by Sandy:
 - Charitable Status** (6th edition), a very accessible intro, £14.95.
 - The Charity Treasurer's Handbook** (2nd ed), another accessible intro, £14.95.
 - A Practical Guide to VAT for Charities** (3rd ed), detailed guide, £24.95.
 - The Complete Guide to Surviving Contracts for Voluntary Organisations**, a practical guide for organisations moving (or being pushed) into contract funding, £18.95.

To order www.sandy-a.co.uk/bookserv.htm or www.dsc.org.uk.

Employment law:

- 'Weekly pay' for redundancy and similar purposes + maximum unfair dismissal awards, from **1 February**. www.sandy-a.co.uk/employment.htm#weeklypay
- Statutory annual leave goes up to 28 days (5.6 weeks) from **1 April**. www.sandy-a.co.uk/employment.htm#annualleave

- Business Link guidance, including templates for notifying workers of the change, and how to calculate entitlement for part-time and other atypical workers: <http://tinyurl.com/9v7p7y>
- Implementation deadline for the EU directive giving agency temps most of the same rights as directly hired employees is 5 December 2011. www.sandy-a.co.uk/employment.htm#agencyrights
- Proposed extension of the right to time off for public duties. www.sandy-a.co.uk/employment.htm#publicduties

Pay & pensions:

- Proposed tax allowances and NI thresholds from 6 April 2009 www.sandy-a.co.uk/employment.htm#taxallowances or go direct to www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/prebud_pbr08_press02.htm
- *Employee and volunteer taxation made simple* and a range of other short "made simple" guides for finance (and non-finance) staff in voluntary organisations - produced by Sayer Vincent accountants in association with Charity Finance Directors Group. <http://tinyurl.com/6uw9el>
- New ACAS guide to help you decide whether job evaluation is right for your organisation as a way of reviewing and setting pay. www.acas.org.uk/index.aspx?articleid=682
- Updated info about the national pensions saving scheme (from 2012), and the new right to "top up" an additional six years' national insurance qualifying years (from 6 April 2009). www.sandy-a.co.uk/employment.htm#statepensions
- Consultation on whether tips paid to employees through the payroll should count towards minimum wage. www.sandy-a.co.uk/employment.htm#minimumwage-tips or go direct to www.berr.gov.uk/consultations/page48902.html

PLEASE PUBLICISE THIS TO YOUR STAFF, SERVICE USERS AND ANYONE ELSE. HM Revenue & Customs has warned taxpayers not to respond to emails or telephone calls saying they are eligible for a tax refund and asking for personal, bank and/or credit card details. HMRC **only** communicates by post with people who are due a tax refund; it **never** uses emails, telephone calls or external companies in these circumstances. Anyone who receives a phishing email should forward it unopened to phishing@hmrc.gsi.gov.uk. Details: www.hmrc.gov.uk/security/fraud-attempts.htm.

Dealing with employees who take "sickies"

Advice from SA Law (www.salaw.com) about how to deal with employees who you suspect of taking "sickies": Check that your sickness and disciplinary procedures are appropriately drafted to deal with such situations, including the process through which employees should notify you that they are unable to work; investigate periods of sickness absence where you have reason to believe that

the periods of absence are not due to genuine periods of illness; and where you conclude that a period of absence is not genuine, take appropriate action against any employees concerned as soon as possible in accordance with your policies.

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

2020 Children and Young People's Workforce Strategy

The Government has published the 2020 Children and Young People's Workforce Strategy. Proposals include: investment of £73m over the next three years to improve social work training, induction, practice and recruitment; establishing a Social Work Taskforce to support this programme of reform; Setting up a development programme for senior leaders.

<http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/deliveringservices/childrenandyoungpeoplesworkforce>

Children's Plan: one year on

A progress report on the anniversary of the flagship Children's Plan. The Government has announced a new £200m 'co-location fund' to bring health, education and children's services together under one roof. More support is promised for those who work with children, building capacity to work across boundaries to join up and support services so that children come first.

<http://digbig.com/4xyys> or <http://www.dcsf.gov.uk>

Funding

For funding opportunities from Paul Hamlyn Foundation, Youth Sector Development Fund, and Children in Need, see **Funding** section below.

NCVYS Children's Trusts briefing

NCVYS has produced a paper on DCSF's 'Children's Trusts: Statutory guidance on inter-agency cooperation to improve well-being of children, young people and their families'. The guidance recognises that third sector organisations should be included in strategic decision-making processes and Children's Trust governance arrangements. It also highlights that Children's Trusts need to support, in particular, small third sector organisations to engage in these structures.

<http://www.ncvys.org.uk/index.php?page=361>

Family support

The Government has confirmed that the Family Intervention Projects announced earlier this year as part of the Youth Crime Action Plan will be extended to all 150 local authorities across England. The projects aim to reduce anti-social behaviour in the most challenging and anti-social families. The 83 local authorities will receive a £22m funding package over 2009-10 and 2010-11 to implement the projects and the 'Think Family' reforms.

http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/pns/DisplayPN.cgi?pn_id=2008_0268

Integrated working campaign

The Children's Workforce Development Council (CWDC) has launched a campaign to encourage the whole workforce, including the third sector, to work together to improve outcomes for children and young people. The campaign aims to inspire and motivate the workforce to engage with the integrated working tools on offer. It will also highlight how each element fits within the bigger picture of integrated working, workforce reform and the Every Child Matters agenda.

<http://www.cwdcouncil.org.uk/integrated-working/storyonce>

Boom!

BOOM! is a volunteering project for 16-25 year olds. The project challenges young people to make films about where they live, what they think, their interests, passions and concerns - and then to use their films to help make a positive difference in their communities and society at large by raising awareness and campaigning for change. All BOOM! films produced will be broadcast through MTV, and shown to local communities. <http://www.boomnation.net>

THE ENVIRONMENT

How charities can tackle environmental responsibility

The Charity Commission has published findings from research into the ways in which charities are taking environmental responsibility. 'Going Green: Charities and Environmental Responsibility' shows how 21 charities interested in environmental sustainability are tackling the challenge, from basic steps to fundamental changes in the way they deliver their services, and contains ideas that may be adapted and adopted. Report at

<http://www.charitycommission.gov.uk/publications/rs17.asp>, press release at <http://www.charitycommission.gov.uk/news/prgreen.asp>.

Sustainable Energy - without the hot air

A free online book by Prof David JC MacKay of Cambridge University.

<http://www.withouthotair.com>

PUBLICATIONS

ACAS Guide to Discipline and Grievance draft Code of Practice

Employment advisory body ACAS has published a draft guide to go alongside their draft Discipline and Grievance Code of Practice, which is due to come into effect on 6th April 2009. This will replace the statutory code currently in force.

The guide "provides more detailed advice and guidance that employers and employees will often find helpful both in general terms and in individual cases".

Download from <http://www.acas.org.uk/index.aspx?articleid=2124>.

Employment law summary for 2009 (and 2008)

Personnel professionals' body CIPD has updated its factsheet on current employment law developments to summarise the main changes in 2008 and a look ahead at those expected in 2009.

<http://www.cipd.co.uk/subjects/emplaw/general/legaldevs.htm>

Make Equality Count

The Office of Government Commerce has published a new practical guide which clarifies what the existing public sector equality duties mean for public procurement, and how equality related issues can be addressed at each stage of the procurement process in a way that is consistent with EU procurement rules.

http://www.ogc.gov.uk/documents/Equality_Brochure.pdf

Engaging with the local agenda

The Women's Resource Centre has produced a guide to engaging with the local agenda (basically Local Strategic Partnerships and local councils). As decision making powers are devolved to local areas, women's organisations must engage with the local agenda to ensure their issues and services (and funding for them) are taken into account. Also relevant to other organisations.

<http://digbig.com/4yaad> or <http://www.wrc.org.uk>

Increasing adult participation in sport through a thriving third sector

The new leaflet from the Sports Partnership Pilot project is now available:

<http://www.navca.org.uk/localvs/sport>

Early Warning Guide

The Development Trusts Association has published a guide for groups to use to assess where they are facing difficulties. The guide is available to download from

<http://www.dta.org.uk/resources/publications/earlywarningguide>

How to recognise and avoid financial difficulties

How to avoid the causes of crises and how to recognise imminent financial problems from NCVO. <http://digbig.com/4xxyk> or <http://www.ncvo-vol.org.uk>

Putting People First - the whole story

DH leaflet outlining key messages from the Putting People First - the transformation programme managed by the NHS, local government and the social care services. <http://digbig.com/4xxyp> or <http://www.dh.gov.uk>

TRAINING/EVENTS

Train to gain

Skills Minister Lord Young has announced that third sector organisations will be eligible for an extended leadership and management programme through Train to Gain, the Government's flagship skills service. From January 2009, funding

rules will be relaxed so that third sector employees will be able to access more flexible training support including: stand-alone accredited training modules and part-qualifications in essential areas like business systems, communications, and information technology; fully-funded Level two qualifications and subsidised level three qualifications. <http://digbig.com/4xyse> or <http://nds.coi.gov.uk>

Social Media Exchange

A series of bitesize masterclasses, practical creative surgeries, discussions, collaboration and networking opportunities for organisations to practically get to grips with social media communications. You can pick and mix sessions and try out blogging, podcasting, twittering and more. 26 January, London.

<http://www.sounddelivery.org.uk> or telephone Jude Habib on 020 8888 2951.

FUNDING

Paul Hamlyn Foundation - Education and Learning Programme

The Paul Hamlyn Foundation has issued new guidelines for its Education and Learning Programme, which has three specific themes: supplementary education, tackling school exclusion and truancy, and developing speaking and listening skills for 11-19 year olds. The Foundation makes grants throughout the UK (especially outside London) and prefers to support work that others may find hard to fund, perhaps because it breaks new ground, is too risky or unpopular.

<http://www.phf.org.uk/landing.asp?id=3>

Children in Need

BBC Children in Need has advised NAVCA of changes to the way in which their grant application process is to be managed: new application deadline dates will be 15 January, 15 April, 15 July and 15 October 2009. There has also been a switch to online applications - from now all applications will only be accepted exclusively online. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/pudsey>

Youth Sector Development Fund

The third round of the Youth Sector Development Fund (YSDF) has been launched. Expressions of interested are invited (by 23 January) for smaller organisations with proposals to deliver positive activities to disadvantaged young people. <http://ysdf.ecotec.com>

Community Sustainable Energy Programme

The Building Research Establishment is inviting applications to its next funding round of the Community Sustainable Energy Programme. Capital and project development grants are available to community-based organisations throughout England to install small-scale energy efficient technology such as wind turbines or solar panels on sites including village halls, visitor centres or schools. Funding

to improve building insulation is also available. The next closing date is 30 January. <http://www.communitysustainable.org.uk>

Capital Grants for Third Sector Resource Centres

Capacitybuilders is to invest £5m in a new capital grants programme to improve access by frontline third sector organisations to high quality and affordable facilities and services offered by local resource centres across England. The programme will run until March 2011 and will have three phases to support the enhancement and refurbishment of buildings, each phase providing different grant levels for different scales of investment requirements. <http://digbig.com/4xysd> or <http://capacitybuilders.org.uk>

Big Thinking

NCVO has published a briefing on the Big Lottery Fund's consultation on their 2009-15 programmes, see <http://www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/policy/index.asp?id=12122>. The consultation itself is at: <http://www.big-thinking.org.uk> and runs until 27 February.

Community Spaces

Community Spaces is a £50m grants programme that provides funding to community groups across England to improve or create green open spaces. The programme is funded through the Big Lottery Fund's Changing Spaces initiative and is managed by Groundwork UK. <http://www.community-spaces.org.uk>

OTHER NEWS

Codes of Conduct for Trustees

Charity Trustees Network has developed a practical resource to help trustees work well together, and to develop and use codes of conduct appropriate for their own organisations. <http://www.trusteenet.org.uk/resources/codes-conduct-trustees-ctn-booklet>

Online trustee recruitment service

Charity Trustee Networks has launched an online service for posting and searching trusteeship vacancies across the UK: <http://www.trusteefinder.org.uk>. It connects with the national volunteering database Do-It and also has guidance on recruitment and induction. News item at <http://www.trusteenet.org.uk/news/ctn-launches-new-free-trusteefinder-service>.

Local authority mileage rates 2008/09

The mileage rates on the NAVCA website have been updated to take into account the changes to the rate of VAT which took effect on 1 December. <http://www.navca.org.uk/localvs/scales>

Volunteering England membership for small organisations

Volunteering England has launched a free membership package for volunteer-involving organisations with an income of less than £20,000 a year.

<http://digbig.com/4xxyb> or <http://www.volunteering.org.uk>

Small Charities Coalition

The Small Charities Coalition exists to help small charities access the skills, experience and resources they need to achieve their aims. Its commitments include: matchmaking small charities with other organisations to increase resources or improve knowledge and skills; and providing support, guidance, encouragement, advice and information to small charities, particularly on best practice and good governance. The coalition launched its new website on 1 December. <http://www.smallcharities.org.uk>

Advice videos on dealing with IT threats

WorkSmart, the TUC advice site, has put together a group of experts from industry, media and unions to give workers the basics on IT safety through some short advice videos and quizzes. Not Safe For Work is at

<http://www.worksmart.org.uk/nsfw/>.

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