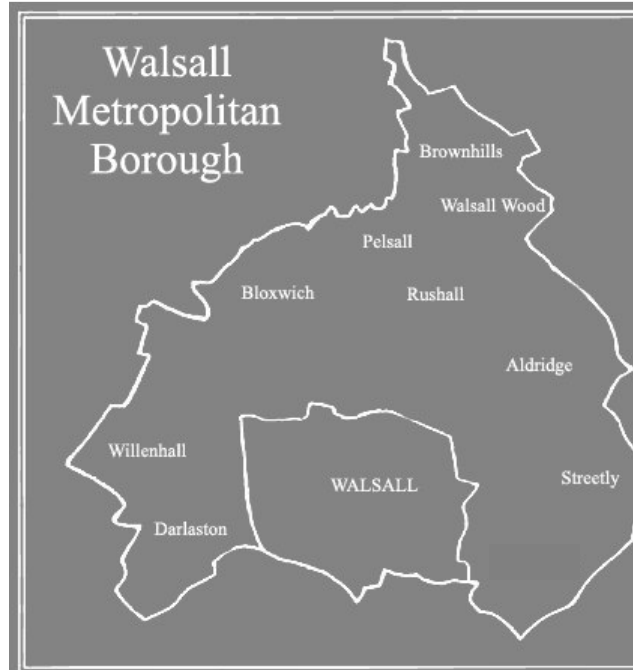


Life Support for Local Action



Walsall Voluntary Action is a local development agency and a charitable company which provides services to the community and voluntary organisations operating in Walsall.

Walsall Voluntary Action offers development support, funding advice and assistance with constitutions and charitable status. Our services include information, a newsletter, a small reference library, a volunteer bureau, payroll services and liaison to promote and facilitate the engagement of the voluntary and community sector in partnership initiatives.

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WALSALL VA NEWS



WALSALL VOLUNTARY ACTION in partnership with the LOCAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP



Walsall Voluntary Action is hosting a Senior Executive Networking Lunch on **Friday 23 November 2007**. This has become a regular event in Walsall, aimed at improving partnership working between all sectors in the borough.

The event presents an opportunity for key decision-makers throughout the borough to meet, network and exchange information.

Future dates for the Executive Networking Lunches for are:

Friday 22 February 2008

Friday 23 May 2008

For further details or to reserve your place please contact Elaine Kerr on 01922 619840 or email elainek@walsallva.org.uk





You are cordially invited to attend

**Walsall Voluntary Action
Annual General Meeting**

To be held on

Thursday 22 November 2007

1.30 pm for 2.00 pm start

at

The Crossing at St Paul's

Darwall Street

Walsall

WS1 1DA

**A light buffet will be available at the end of the
proceedings**



Are you up to date with Employment Law?

We have been working with **Peninsula Business Services**, the UK's leading Employment Law and Health & Safety specialists for three years. They provide a service to Walsall VA (and many other CVS' across the country) to ensure we deal with our people issues fairly and effectively, and to reduce the risks of an expensive and damaging Employment Tribunal case.

As the community/voluntary sector takes on more employed staff and employment legislation becomes more complex it is vital that employing organisations have the correct documents, policies and routines in place. Peninsula's service provides this plus access to professional advice 24 hours per day, 7 days per week and an Employment Tribunal service backed by an indemnity providing extra support and peace of mind for officers and trustees running these organisations.

If you think this support would be useful to your organisation please let us know. If we work with Peninsula as a group we can offer a service to member organisations at a very affordable price.

In the meantime for more information contact Elaine Kerr at Walsall VA on 01922 619840 (elainek@walsallva.org.uk) or Alan Eaton, Peninsula Business Services on 07976 083577 (alan.eaton@peninsula-uk.com)

Peninsula Business Service Limited
Riverside, New Bailey Street, Manchester M3 5PB
Telephone: 0161 834 2775 Fax: 0161 834 6212
Email: care@peninsula-uk.com Web: www.peninsula-uk.com

LOCAL NEWS



J L Community Association



Swimming Sessions

For Silver Surfers (50+)

Do you fancy a swim?

**Saturdays 2.00 pm – 4.00 pm or
Sunday Bookings Taken**

Reduced rate until Saturday 1 September 2007
£2.00 per adult for a 55 minute session

**For further information contact Coral Gardiner, Extended Services
Manager on 01922 721071 ext 271 or to book contact Naveed
Khan, Extended Services Administrator on ext 232**



Planning Aid

West Midlands Planning Aid Service
319 The Custard Factory
Gibb Street
Birmingham B9 4AA
Tel: 0121 693 5568
Email: wmco@planningaid.rtpi.org.uk
Web: www.planningaid.rtpi.org.uk

Planning Aid is the provision of free, independent and professional advice and support on town planning matters to disadvantaged community groups and individuals who cannot afford a planning consultant.

In addition there is the Planning Portal, the government's one-stop-shop for planning information and services online. It can be viewed on **www.planningportal.gov.uk**. The website aims to help anyone who wants to know more about the planning process in England and Wales.

WorkWise works for you

Did you know that if you are an unemployed Walsall resident looking for work, and are not already assisted with travel costs you could receive FREE:

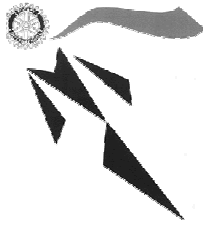
- Day tickets for travel to attend job interviews
- Monthly travel passes - helping with the cost of transport to a new job
- Travel advice - helping you to find the best way to get to work

WorkWise has operated in Walsall since January 2004 and is a partnership between the public transport body Centro-WMPTA, Steps to Work - the employment and training charity in the centre of Walsall, and Walsall Council through the Borough Strategic Partnership. Another key partner of the WorkWise project is Jobcentre Plus.

So, if you do not know how to get to a job interview or are worried about the cost of travel to interviews or your new job, just get in touch with **WorkWise at Steps to Work on 01922 627555**.

Alternatively, you can pop directly into **Steps to Work at the Challenge Building, Hatherton Road, Walsall, WS1 1XS on Monday to Friday between 10.00 am and 4.00 pm** where Kate or Nancy will be glad to help.





The Rotary Club of Walsall's 25th

Walsall Run

10k Run, 5k Fun Run & 3k Family Walk

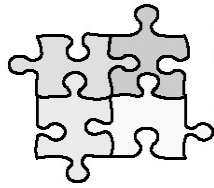
Sunday 30 September 2007

**Walsall Arboretum Extension
Starting at 11.00 am**

**Mixed terrain including
parklands, rural and urban stretches
only the 3K walk is suitable for wheelchair users
and pushchairs**

**For further information or an entry form visit
www.rotary.org or send an sae to Fraser Wood, Mayo &
Pinson, Lichfield Street, Walsall WS1 1TS.**





Walsall Centre
for
Independent Living

Ground floor,
Tameway Tower
Bridge Street, Walsall, WS1 1JZ
Tel: 0845 111 2838
Textbox: 0845 111 2910

Walsall Centre for Independent Living is a one stop multi-agency organisation offering support and advice on independent living services, capacity building initiatives for organisations, plus training and employment opportunities for disabled people, carers and people over 50.



What do we offer around independent living?

We offer information and support from; Occupational Therapists, Walsall Adaptive Housing Service, Employment Advisors, Disability Information Officers, Welfare Benefit Advisors, Peer/health support groups, Direct Payments and Over 50's workers.

What do we provide in training?

We offer training courses around independent living issues, confidence building and employment opportunities. These include Information, Advice and Guidance services,

Go For It training for people entering employment, New Outlook Walsall for people wishing to make 'life style changes' Mentoring and Mentoring Co-ordinators courses, Food Hygiene, First Aid, Skills for Life and NVQ's level 1 & 2, plus much more.



Capacity Building Services?

The CIL offers capacity building services for the voluntary and community sector, including Constitution surgeries, Development surgeries, Funding clubs and workforce development.



Walsall Council



EUROPEAN UNION
European Social Fund



The College of Continuing Education
Opening Minds and Extending Horizons



Walsall
COMMUNITY COLLEGE



Teaching Primary Care Trust



Project Part-Financed
by the European Union
European Regional
Development Fund



The 2007 Care Providers Conference

**Wednesday 5 September 2007
The Crossing at St Paul's
Darwall Street, Walsall WS1 1DA**

This conference is designed to provide care providers with an opportunity to hear about changes in the way public services including care services are bought or commissioned. The conference will allow delegates to consider how they might respond to the requirements of care purchasers and to explore innovative approaches to the development of care services. The conference closes with a hints and tips session on successful tendering that all care providers will find useful.

The conference timetable:

- 09.45 Registration and refreshments
- 10.00 Welcome to the conference
- 10.10 Understanding how the public services market is changing
- 10.30 The foreseeable future for care services in Walsall
- 10.50 Managing uncertainty – a question and answer session with the first 2 speakers
- 11.00 Refreshments
- 11.15 Innovation in care services (including sources of inspiration!) and enabling change
- 11.35 Successful tendering processes – what every person tendering should know
- 11.50 Closing forum
- 12.00 Conference closes with lunch.

Attendance at the conference is free but places are limited. To reserve your place please call 01922 726114 or email laura.grigg@wecic.org.uk

The 2007 Walsall Care Providers Conference, organised by Walsall Endeavours CIC and the Social Economy Centre is funded by the Walsall Borough Strategic Partnership and is supported by Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council, Walsall Teaching Primary Care Trust and the Regional Care Association.



IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT

Walsall Safeguarding Children Board Child Protection Procedures

The new interactive Child Protection Procedures are now available online via our website www.wlscb.org.uk. The procedures have been updated in response to the government guidelines Working Together to Safeguard Children (2006) and detail the processes which all agencies must follow in order to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, particularly in relation to Child Protection issues.

There are a number of **briefing sessions** being held to familiarise practitioners with the new procedures. Details of these can be accessed through our Multi-Agency Training Plan, also available through our website or by contacting **Jacqui Tattam at Manor Farm Centre, Tel: 01922 650580 or via email at tattamj@walsall.gov.uk**.

If you would like us to make links available from your own agencies intranet or website please contact, Anya Tindall on email Tindalla@walsall.gov.uk or telephone 01922 658361.



Walsall Safeguarding Children Board, The Hollies, 10 Lichfield Road, Walsall, WS4 2DH
Telephone 01922 646640, Fax 01922 625966 www.wlscb.org.uk



Walsall Deaf Peoples Centre, 59A Lichfield Street, Walsall WS4 2BX
Tel: 01922 614794 Fax: 0870 705 8738 Textphone: 01922 614795 Office SMS: 07745727001
Web Site - www.walsalldisabilityforum.com E-Mail walsall@walsalldisabilityforum.com

FITNESS AND HEALTHY LIFESTYLES FOR DISABLED AND IMPAIRED PEOPLE

This activity will be held every Tuesday until further notice at the

**Blakenall Community Association
Blakenall Row
Blakenall Walsall WS3 1LW
Telephone: 01922 711621 or
Email: bushellm@walsall.gov.uk**

11.00 am - 12.00 pm	Fitness in the Gym
11.00 am - 12.00 pm	Healthy Living Training
12.00 pm - 1.00 pm	Fitness in the Gym
12.00 pm - 1.00 pm	Healthy Living Training

Other sessions can be arranged by request

Cost of each session will be £3.00 each person or paid by your organisation for group sessions of up to 9 persons per session at £27.00.

All sessions must be booked prior to attending to ensure your place.

For further information or to book your place please contact Walsall Disability Forum on 01922 614794.

Art of Living – One Day Workshop

with
Raj Fulchand

Saturday 8 September 2007

at

**Rushall Community Centre
Springfields
Rushall
Walsall**

10.00 am – 4.00 pm

£20.00 per person

FREE for any voluntary workers and for people in the
caring professions

Stressed out and constantly tired?

Want more peace in your life?

This workshop is an introduction to wellbeing that focuses on breathing, easy stretching exercises (that anyone can do!) and various relaxation techniques. You will learn how to relax yourself using a unique and ancient breathing/relaxation method. Improve your health, improve your lifestyle and learn about the different types of energy that aid relaxation.

If you require additional information or would like to book a place please contact Sandy Edwards on 01922 627346 or sandedwards@googlemail.com

Proceeds support voluntary NFSH Healing visit www.midlandshealing.org.uk

Reasons To Refer To Shaw Trust

Are you claiming
incapacity or
sickness benefits?

Want to
work but
need extra
support?

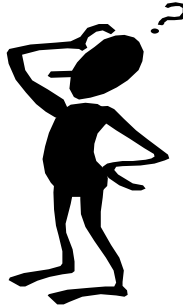
Need help writing a CV?
Interview Techniques?
Telephone Techniques?
Access to employer
vacancies?

Want a job but
afraid of losing
your benefit?

Do you need to improve
your confidence?

Need help
completing
application
forms?

Need training
but don't know
where to go?



Call 01902 779110
Freephone 0800 085 1001





The stop it now! Campaign is pleased to announce it has just appointed a new Development Officer Sarb Masih who will be covering the Black Country. Sarb is making links with community/voluntary, faith and BME groups to raise awareness of stop it now within the Black Country.

Stop it now! Is a public information and awareness raising campaign regarding child sexual abuse supported by a telephone helpline 0808 1000 900 housed by Barnardos in Halesowen. The Stop it now! Project is funded by Barnardos and the Local Safeguarding Children's board.

Our target audience is

- Adult abusers and potential abusers
- Family and friends
- Parents of young people with sexually worrying behaviour

Our approach is

- To mobilize communities and families to protect children from abuse/exploitation
- To raise awareness/educate communities and families about how abusers operate

Adults have a responsibility to work together to stop the sexual abuse of children.

The stop it now! Campaign offers free training to staff within voluntary and community groups on child sexual abuse, child protection and Internet dangers and safety.

Please contact Sarb Masih on 01384 561 775 or e-mail sarbjit.masih@barnardos.org.uk to make links, offer support and enquire about training/dates. You can also look on our website www.stopitnow.org.uk to learn more about the campaign.



Walsall Wellbeing Festival 2007

Saturday 13 October
New Art Gallery
10.00 am – 5.00 pm

Following the success of last year's event at the Forest Arts Centre, Walsall tPCT and Walsall MBC are holding Walsall's second Wellbeing Festival on Saturday 13 October 2007 to coincide with World Mental Health Day.

The aim of the event is to highlight issues around emotional wellbeing, targeting the general public and involving service users and community groups.

During the day there will be a range of stands and displays throughout the gallery. Demonstrations and performances will also take place.

Organisations and individuals are invited to attend with a stand/display. If you would like to take part please contact the Creative Development team for an application form.

The application form should be returned to Tatum Anderson at the Creative Development team, either via email andersont@walsall.gov.uk or via mail Creative Development Team, Leisure, Culture and Lifelong Learning, 12th Floor Tameway Tower, 48 Bridge Street, WS1 1JZ. Please respond no later than Monday 27 August 2007.

If you are able to offer an activity or demonstration on the day or for any further information contact **Moya Lloyd at the Creative Development Team on 01922 653114 (Wednesdays only) or via email moyalloyd@tiscali.co.uk**

Walsall DIAL

Breaking Down the Barriers of Disability



At Walsall DIAL we provide a wide range of services that relieve the needs and improve the quality of life of more than 6,000 physically disabled and sensory impaired local people every year through support, information, advice, guidance, education, training and representation.

Our services are also available to support carers, families, health professionals and organisations that work for the benefit of disabled people.

Along with housing Walsall DIAL and its' projects; the Centre is home to Walsall Deaf Services, Walsall Deaf/Blind Services, the Shaw Trust, the Black & Asian Disability Group and Infertility Network UK.

In addition, other groups and organisations use our rooms on a regular basis, including; Working Vision, SCOPE, Walsall Disability Forum, Walsall Physical & Sensory Impairment Board, Community Dieticians and Speech Therapists.

The centre and its admin facilities are also used by a large number of community organisations including MND, W'EYES, AFASIC, ME Link, HEADWAY and the Walsall Epilepsy Support Group.

The Centre, which is a fully accessible town-centre facility, offers office and rooms for hire at very competitive rates.

**For more information contact Walsall DIAL at
114 Lichfield Street, Walsall WS1 1SZ or alternatively
Phone: 01922 622227/650794
Fax: 01922 635588
E-mail: info@walsalldial.co.uk
Text: 07716 012937**

Volunteering Opportunities

Are you interested in becoming a volunteer?

Volunteers can do almost anything, from helping an elderly neighbour with their shopping to providing legal advice for a local charity. Whatever skills and experience you have, there is something that you can do.

Does your organisation need volunteers?

Do you have an opportunity you would like to share, if so; why not let us advertise it for you on the do-it.org national database of volunteering opportunities?

If the answer is yes, contact Kathy Cummins on 01922 619840 or email kathyc@walsallva.org.uk



West Midlands

1 Eldon Court
Eldon Street
Walsall WS1 2JP
Tel 01922 614500
Fax 01922 646789

Email w.midlands@diabetes.org.uk
Website www.diabetes.org.uk

Diabetes UK seeks office based volunteers in Walsall

Diabetes UK's West Midlands Office is seeking office based volunteers to work on an occasional basis. The office is based in Walsall and general activities would include basic data-entry tasks and assisting with mailing campaigns for various events.

For more information contact Emma Rowley on 01922 614500 or email emma.rowley@diabetes.org.uk



National Probation Service (NPS), Walsall, require an administrative worker who can support the Education, Training and Employment (ETE) Officer in their day to day work.

It is an interesting opportunity for someone with a few days to spare to gain valuable experience with this vibrant and challenging work the NPS delivers, as part of national pilots. There will be no contact with offenders.

Volunteer should be able to:

- start as soon as possible
- work 2.5 days per week (to suit volunteer)
- will do filing (65%)
- do a small amount of typing on Microsoft Word (25%)
- some Photocopying (15%)

Full training will be provided in all aspects of the job.

Volunteers must also be prepared to have an enhanced CRB check done. The cost for this can be paid by NPS.

If you have any further questions or for an informal chat please contact **Iffikhar Ali, ETE Officer at Walsall Probation Complex on 01922 721341.**

ETE Unit

**National Probation Service
Walsall Complex
Midland Rd
Walsall WS1 3QE**

NATIONAL NEWS



POhWER is an advocacy agency providing services in the West Midlands, London, the East of England and Leicestershire. POhWER is committed to giving people a voice and recognises the inequality that exists in society, working to promote respect and dignity for all. One of the services POhWER provides in the West Midlands is the Independent Complaints Advocacy Service (ICAS).



What is ICAS?

ICAS is the Independent Complaints Advocacy Service which has been provided by POhWER in the West Midlands since April 2006. POhWER ICAS Advocates can help if you feel you have not had the service you expect from the National Health Service (NHS). POhWER ICAS Advocates can support you to make a formal complaint about NHS care and treatment.

ICAS is:

- Free
- Independent
- Confidential

Meeting your needs and speaking your language:

ICAS can provide information about our service in a number of languages and we can adapt the way we communicate with you, depending on your needs.

ICAS can:

- Support you with your NHS Complaint
- Provide information so that you know how to complain
- Put you in touch with other people who may be able to help
- Involve an interpreter or a translator if you need one
- Meet you in a place where you feel comfortable if you are not able to visit our offices or speak on the phone.

ICAS cannot:

- Help you claim compensation
- Get an NHS employee disciplined
- Give legal advice
- Help you with complaints about private medical treatment (unless it has been paid for by the NHS)
- Give medical advice
- Investigate complaints

POhWER ICAS Advocates can:

- Help you to write letters to the right people
- Prepare you for meetings and go to meetings with you
- Give you an opportunity to speak confidentially to someone who is independent of the NHS
- Help you to explore your options at every stage of the complaint's procedure
- Answer questions to help you make decisions
- Act on your direction rather than the wishes of others

If you would like to find out more please get in touch:

Birmingham & The Black Country POhWER ICAS
iBIC, Holt Court South, Jennens Road, Aston Science Park
Birmingham B7 4EJ

Helpline: 0845 120 3748

Fax: 0845 337 3053

Minicom: 0845 337 3067

Email: pohwericas@pohwericas.net

Website: www.pohwer.net

Promoting good practice
for volunteering from
socially excluded groups

GoldStar



**Socially excluded people make great volunteers.
Find out why at a GoldStar Roadshow.**

GoldStar is a national initiative funded by the Cabinet Office, helping voluntary organisations and projects to realise the potential of people who don't normally come forward as volunteers. The aim of the programme is to promote and share good practices in engaging these people. Why not see how GoldStar can help your organisation by attending one of the regional Roadshows this Autumn?

Newcastle	Wednesday 5th September	Birmingham	Wednesday 19th September
Salford	Friday 7th September	Peterborough	Tuesday 25th September
Leeds	Monday 10th September	Bristol	Wednesday 26th September
Nottingham	Tuesday 18th September	London	Wednesday 3rd October

To **book now** or for **more information**, visit www.goldstar.org.uk (Events section).
Or call **Bev Channell** on **01773 519327** or **07778 294393**.

Help spread the word. Please send this on to any other community group or voluntary organisation you know. Thank You.

Funded by the **CabinetOffice**

TRIBAL



■ **Skilling up for LSPs - Research on leadership skills for effective strategic representation**

This report describes research conducted on behalf of NAVCA's Improving Local Partnerships Unit and the Workforce Hub. It reveals that there are very few training and learning opportunities that directly address the competencies for VCS strategic representation. The report shows that much of the training that does exist focuses on community representation rather than strategic representation for voluntary and community sector representatives on strategic partnerships.

The research establishes a common set of core competencies for effective representation. The skills identified are predominantly personal and professional, which are not adequately covered by existing training and learning provision. The research found that current training tends to focus local structures and policy or the local political context and not on providing skills needed to negotiate effectively on behalf of the VCS.

www.navca.org.uk/skillingup

■ **Sustaining Grants**

Together with nine other organisations, NAVCA has published *Sustaining Grants*, a brochure explaining why local grant aid is vital for a healthy voluntary and community sector and thriving local communities. www.navca.org.uk/sustaininggrants

■ **Reaching out – Providing advice and skilled volunteers**

Reaching Out is a new England-wide project providing advice and skilled volunteers to black and minority ethnic, refugee and migrant, faith and rural groups. Through the Reaching Out project, these organisations can gain new skills, strengthen their know-how and progress their aims more effectively. Such frontline groups

often find it hard to get the advice, support and skilled volunteers they need.

This REACH project has two key parts. In the first stage organisations complete a short questionnaire, helping them to assess their current situation and identify skill needs. The project team looks at the questionnaires and provides advice and guidance on volunteer requirements, so that requests can be registered. Some groups may have clear views about their skill gaps and require minimal input before registering their requirements; others may need a much greater level of involvement and support from the project.

In the second stage we match REACH volunteers who already have professional, business and management career skills to the groups. Roles registered by the frontline groups are sent to volunteers who have the requisite experience, through our bespoke matching service. Registered REACH volunteers are also able to review all opportunities on REACH interactive, our online facility. REACH has a pool of over 2,000 volunteers available throughout the country, with skills such as business planning, IT, human resources expertise and governance experience. Once the appropriate volunteer has been introduced, the organisation should ensure all the necessary recruitment procedures have been undertaken, before taking on the volunteer.

There is more information on the Reaching Out project at: www.reach-online.org.uk/projects/reachingout.htm

If you are, or know of, a group that would welcome this input, you can get more information and join the project by sending an email to Gerard Omasta-Milsom at: reachingout@reach-online.org.uk or by telephoning **020 7840 5663**.

■ **Building effective local voluntary and community sector infrastructure**

In a previous article NAVCA outlined the main findings from recent research commissioned by the Big Lottery Fund on what appears to make the difference between thriving and struggling local

infrastructure organisations (LIOs). NAVCA highlighted three key issues: the confidence LIOs have about the work they are doing; the role of the Chief Officer and how this affects the judgements made by external stakeholders; and financial sustainability.

The research concludes by trying to draw together the main issues which LIOs need to take into account in building their effectiveness and sustainability. This is based around the idea of the 'room' for an organisation to operate. This metaphor aims to describe an acknowledged role and position for an organisation, and a capacity to meet its aims and continue its operations.

Key aspects or characteristics of 'room' include understanding, recognition and acceptance of an organisation's role, aims and activities by the voluntary and community sector (VCS) itself, by other VCS infrastructure organisations, and by statutory agencies and funders.

'Room' is the main issue at stake for an LIO in ensuring its ongoing survival in order to fulfil its mission and purpose. But in order to create or preserve room, local infrastructure organisations need to (a) gain resources, (b) develop relationships and (c) build the regard for the organisation.

Overall, the study identifies strong reasons why LIOs need to attend both to internal factors (day-to-day activities, management and governance) and to external developments, such as relationships with key stakeholders and attention to emerging policy developments. The research suggests a need for LIOs, their users and funders to understand and recognise explicitly that 'room', 'resources', 'relationships' and 'regard' are legitimate issues at stake for LIOs, and as such need to be addressed both by LIOs and by funders wishing to see sustainable and effective local VCS infrastructure.

Please contact Dianne Leyland dianne.leyland@navca.org.uk or 0114 2893967 if you would like to discuss this further.

Building effective local VCS infrastructure is now available to download from the NAVCA website at www.navca.org.uk/belvi

■ Towards an effective framework for working together

The Third Sector Strategy discussion paper sets out the ambition of Communities and Local Government (CLG) to enable effective and on-going relationships between the department, local government and the third sector in delivering prosperous and cohesive communities offering a safe, healthy and sustainable environment for all.

Until 20 September 2007 the department is inviting third sector organisations and other stakeholders across the country to respond and shape its strategy.

CLG recognises that we share many aims and objectives with the third sector but have distinctive roles. By respecting your independence but involving, consulting and informing you when drafting and implementing policy we can be clearer on our priorities and achieve more from partnership working. It also recognises that the sector faces many challenges, including adapting to the new local government framework, where we can help create a more positive environment.

Therefore we set out four broad areas for action:

- improving our own ways of working
- guidance on local partnerships
- strategic partnerships
- sustainable investment.

What we do as a department will affect our understanding of third sector organisations and how we can work together at national and local level.

The best local authorities work with all partners, including third sector organisations, to achieve better outcomes for their locality. Our aim is for this to be the norm not the exception.

We have many links with third sector organisations but want to create a network that provides links between national and local advice and action across our priorities. We are proposing to create a new strategic partner arrangement and are currently

inviting expressions of interest from organisations able to fulfil this role.

As part of the emerging cross-government approach to supporting the third sector's role in social and economic regeneration we are considering proposals to make sustainable investment in community anchor organisations.

We would appreciate hearing your views and queries on this and would urge you to either email **thirdsector@communities.gsi.gov.uk** or to log on to our discussion forum **<http://forum.communities.gov.uk>**.

Copies of the Third Sector Strategy are available online at **www.communities.gov.uk/index.asp?id=1510989** or by telephone on **0871 226 336**.

NAVCA is going to respond directly to CLG and would like to base our response on your views. Please complete the NAVCA survey, accessible via **<http://digbig.com/4tfed>** or **www.navca.org.uk/news/clgstrategy**

■ **Just reward funding**

So, there is a local area agreement (LAA) in every area. As part of that, most areas will also have a set of 'stretch targets'. Hit these targets and reward funding is won. If all targets are fully met the total reward money equates to 2½% of participating local authorities' net budgets. Depending on the size of your local authority, this could be from £3m to £30m. Reward funding for individual targets will, typically, be in the region of £75,000 to £750,000.

The point, of course, is that reward funding encourages work that tackles issues of greatest local importance. Given this, it should be inevitable that relevant voluntary and community sector (VCS) groups are involved in some way – either delivering or helping to shape services. If they are not, an opportunity is being missed.

What is sometimes not clear is that because a group delivers the target it is not simply entitled to the reward money. Even if the group is entirely responsible for every aspect of delivering the target, exceeds the target, and does everything on its own, the group will not automatically get the reward money. It will even be difficult to argue that it is morally entitled.

Winners of reward funding do not necessarily get anything. If there has been no clarification about what happens to the money, your LAA can lead to some serious disappointment, not to mention an extremely sharp sense of injustice.

A clear understanding of what will happen to any future reward money must be established.

LAA targets are delivered on behalf of all LAA partners. Work that wins reward funding is on behalf of your local strategic partnership (LSP). It may be the work of individual organisations that wins the money but, in many ways, it is won on behalf of the area. Your LSP is responsible for what happens to the money and must consider how it will best be used to address issues of greatest local importance.

There are two key principles that must be borne in mind: Firstly, that the money should be used to address future priorities (that may be different to the ones being addressed through your current LAA). Secondly, that reward money is used to drive performance and not fruitless expectation. It's a balancing act, but it can be done.

As ever, guarantees are limited, and it may be that areas will not get much more than a 'first consideration' promise, but it is extremely important to have these discussions before the money is won, if only to avoid false expectation.

■ **Comprehensive Area Assessments**

To simplify the way the performance of local services is measured, the Audit Commission aims to introduce a different assessment framework in 2009. This is to be called the Comprehensive Area

Assessment (CAA) and will take over from Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA), Joint Area Reviews, Annual Performance Assessments and social care star ratings.

The Audit Commission has produced two consultation papers:

- *The Evolution of Regulation* which looks at how the Comprehensive Area Assessment might be developed. <http://digbig.com/4stws> or www.audit-commission.gov.uk
- *The transition from CPA to CAA* discussing how the transition period will be managed, but also including much of *The Evolution of Regulation* information. <http://digbig.com/4stwt> or www.audit-commission.gov.uk

The Local Government White Paper "*Strong and Prosperous Communities*" contained proposals for a new way to measure the performance of services in a local area. It proposed focussing on the outcomes of the services provided in a local area rather than the way in which individual bodies (such as local authorities) provide these services. This change is aimed at simplifying the process and helping local authorities to develop their role as 'place shapers'; that is, working in partnership with other organisations and sectors to improve their local area as a whole.

The proposed changes are contained in the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Bill, which is going through Parliament at the moment. The Audit Commission has produced its consultation documents on the assumption that the changes around performance assessment detailed in the Bill will be accepted.

There are several implications for the voluntary and community sector, most of which are positive. These include:

- an expected reduction in inspection and regulation of voluntary and community sector service providers
- according to the White Paper, the 'Use of Resources' judgement should include consideration of how the local

authority applies "key third sector compact principles on funding". This should ensure that local authorities will be assessed on how they comply with compact principles when dealing with the voluntary and community sector, such as sufficiently long contracts and funding relevant amounts of an organisation's core costs.

- the greater reliance on citizens' perspectives as the basis for the assessment could mean that voluntary and community sector organisations are consulted more about the services in their local area. This could help local communities to have a greater input into how services are set up and developed. If the Audit Commission manages to dovetail this work with that of the other inspection agencies, as requested by the government departments involved, there may be only one local consultation per year covering all local public services.

However, although the new proposals state that targets for local area agreements may be from outside the national target set, experience suggests this is unlikely. Statutory organisations are often unwilling to introduce additional targets over and above the national targets they already have to meet. Targets around specific local issues are, therefore, still unlikely to be developed.

Views on the proposals for CAAs are welcomed by the Audit Commission, although there will be a formal consultation, jointly with other inspectorates later in 2007. At the moment it is posing a number of questions about the proposed new arrangements on an online forum available at www.audit-commission.gov.uk/CAA

Additional Source: Alison Blackwood from London Voluntary Service Council Policy Briefing 15 April 2007

■ Lost in Translation

The voluntary and community sector often finds itself at the focal point for discussion by national government when it talks about public service delivery and communities. The Third Sector Review Interim Report identifies the sector's unique contribution: "its focus on the needs of service users, its knowledge and expertise to meet complex needs and tackle difficult social issues, its potential to be

flexible and offer joined up services, its capacity to earn users' trust and its ability to innovate about public service delivery". The same report sees working with the third sector as a part of building strong and connected communities.

In terms of both funding the sector to provide services and involving it in shaping services, there are clear messages from national government. Treasury guidance to funders says that there is no reason why procurers should disallow full cost recovery and that voluntary and community sector (VCS) organisations should not be allowed to subsidise public services. It also says that funding should nearly always be for more than one year. The Department of Health Third Sector Commissioning Task Force report outlined the role that the sector can play in shaping the services that are commissioned.

Tendering to deliver services with full cost recovery (FCR) can be problematic. Although FCR is now widely heard of, organisations can be told by funders that they cannot afford to fund the service on that basis.

With the development of more integrated health and social care services, a move towards a common approach to commissioning would benefit the VCS. However, if commissioning is to be the way forward then commissioners need to talk more to a wider range of potential providers, to enable them to understand commissioning and how they can engage with the process.

The Local Area Agreement model has provided an opportunity for a range of VCS organisations to work closely together with local authorities to shape with partners the services and needs of local people. Perhaps better support by local authorities for the VCS to engage with this model would increase benefits and understanding for all partners.

For further information contact Margaret McLeod, Voluntary Sector North West on 0161 276 9303 or email margaret.mcleod@vsnw.org.uk or visit www.vsnw.org.uk

Additional Source: Communities and Local Government's Efficiency News

■ Thought about workforce development?

The debate around full cost recovery continues within the voluntary and community sector. Organisational development – investing in your workforce and governance – is crucial to the success of any voluntary and community organisation (VCO), yet VCO's often struggle to understand how to cost this development and may not be aware of how important such development is. This means that many organisations are not budgeting adequately for, nor seek funding for, organisational development.

Organisational development incorporates two areas that are key to your organisation's success.

- *Workforce development* is about recruiting, retaining and developing your 'people resources'. It's about ensuring you have a skilled and motivated workforce that is supported, developed and well managed – all key factors in making sure your organisation's vision can be delivered effectively.
- *Governance development* is about ensuring that your organisation is accountable and operates within the law. Trustees are also responsible for developing the strategic framework of your organisation and they need to be effective and skilled in doing so.

Voluntary organisations often do not recognise the 'hidden' costs of organisational development. For example, when funding is secured for employing a worker, this may often be for salary and basic costs.

Organisations can then find themselves out of pocket when they pay for recruitment costs (and these can increase if you don't appoint first time round), costs of induction, and training and development to get the worker fully up to speed with their job. These can lead to VCO's using other project funds to subsidise this activity, which can in turn put additional pressure on those project staff.

To help support the sector in understanding and improving its organisational development, the UK Workforce Hub and the

Governance Hub have jointly produced: *Funding and Costing Workforce and Governance Development - A Resource for the Voluntary and Community Sector*.

We know that it is not only voluntary and community organisations who might not understand the need for costing organisational development, or how to cost it. The UK Workforce Hub and Governance Hub are therefore also producing a resource for funders, policy makers and grant assessors, a resource that will help those who make funding decisions understand the importance of organisational development. It will also offer a series of prompts, which can be used and adapted to assess whether funding will be invested to maximum effect and in a way that enables VCO's to perform well. This resource will be available from September 2007.

If you want more information about what you have read please contact:

Lai-Har Cheung
UK Workforce Hub
Email: Lai-Har.Cheung@ukworkforcehub.org.uk

or

Jolanta Lasota
Governance Hub
Email: Jolanta.Lasota@ncvo-vol.org.uk

Download a free copy of: *Funding and Costing Workforce and Governance Development – A Resource for the Voluntary and Community Sector* from **www.ukworkforcehub.org.uk** or **www.governancehub.org.uk**. A printed copy can be purchased for £5 via either of the websites or by calling **0800 652 4886**.

■ **Commission for the Compact - taking the Compact forward**

It is nearly 10 years since the Compact was launched, and a lot has been achieved and is to be celebrated, but challenges

remain. In 2006 John Stoker was appointed as the first Commissioner for the Compact – to listen to, and influence both government and the third sector – but to be independent of both. He has listened to the Compact's stakeholders, particularly through Compact Voice – which includes NAVCA – and set up an interim team, to identify evidence about the Compact's progress and what barriers need to be tackled.

The Commission launched its draft business plan in April. Feedback from the consultation is currently being looked at to fix the priorities for the Commission over the next three years. These are likely to include a shorter statement of the core aims of the Compact and work with central government departments to implement Compact commitments.

There is work arising from the recommendations made in the third sector review and to fully consider the legal and other changes to the landscape, such as new types of third sector organisation, increased commissioning and funding through contracts, and new structures for involvement, such as local area agreements (LAAs).

The role of advocating on behalf of individual organisations in disputes remains with NCVO's Compact Advocacy Programme.

There is a strong commitment from central government to the national Compact and codes, to listening to the voice of the third sector, and to investing in strengthening the sector's infrastructure and capacity. Last year the Chancellor committed to "three-year funding as the norm not the exception". The Commission has pushed the Government to set up mechanisms that will demonstrably deliver this and other key commitments such as full cost recovery.

If you want to learn more about the Compact and the work of the Commission visit **www.thecompact.org.uk**

Richard Stone Interim Communications Manager at the Commission for the Compact

Source: NAVCA circulation August/September 2007 - www.navca.org.uk



ACEVO Launches Online Governance Tool

In an effort to tackle a lack of confidence in the performance of third sector boards, ACEVO in partnership with Assess Us, has developed an online tool which offers a practical assessment to board members, and advice on how to up their game.

According to an ACEVO survey only 40% of Chief Executives think their board is highly effective in developing new strategy and 70% believe that improving governance should be a priority for the sector.

ACEVO's new 'Governance Review Service' involves a confidential online assessment of board members and the CEO followed by practical advice on improving governance practices. The assessment is based on four components:

- **A review of the board against the Code of Governance published in 2005.**
- **A review of the Chair's performance in leading and managing the board.**
- **A board skills self-assessment to identify any gaps.**
- **A review of the Chief Executive Officer's performance in leadership management and delivery.**

The National Governance Hub has endorsed the service and highlighted it's importance in improving governance standards and promoting the Code of Governance as best practice.

If you would like further information on ACEVO's Governance Review Service please contact Seb Elsworth, Head of Policy on seb.elsworth@acevo.org.uk or 0845 310 9469, you can also visit www.acevo.org.uk/governance

FUNDING



We are here to Help You!

West Midlands European Network has been supporting and advising third and public sector projects throughout the region for over ten years. WMEN is widely recognised as being the definitive resource on all European funding management matters from match funding to fulfilling record keeping requirements. Our structure has changed over the past few months, but we are still covering the whole West Midlands region offering:

- face-to-face and telephone support and advice
- a full range of training programmes designed to give you the necessary knowledge and skills to not only ensure you can manage your project in it's current capacity, but also exploring the possibilities for future funding and sustainability
- a West Midlands third sector voice in the region, nationally and at European level
- bespoke training courses, tailored to your organisations specific needs and delivered at your workplace
- the most up-to-date information on the latest bidding rounds and funding available so that the West Midlands third sector is best placed to access available monies

Funded from the Technical Assistance priority of the West Midlands Structural Funds Programme, we work in close partnership with all of the statutory agencies currently delivering EU funding - GOWM,

AWM, LSC, Jobcentre Plus, the two Objective 3 ESF Co-financing local authorities in the region, Birmingham City Council and Walsall MBC. Our Project Advisors have a wealth of experience in all aspects of European Funding and up-to-date knowledge of funding availability and requirements. In effect, if WMEN cannot tell you what is happening then no-one can!

If your organisation requires any support, advice or training on funding matters please visit www.wmeuronet.co.uk, or contact Sophie Reid on 0121 683 8891.

Bernard Sunley Charitable Foundation

The Foundation funds projects for a wide variety of charitable purposes including; education, arts, heritage, youth, community, conservation, housing, health, medical research.

It will fund capital and/or revenue costs and the size of the grant is normally between £200 to £5,000

To apply the organisation should be a registered charity and applications can be made at any time.

**20 Berkley Square
London W1J 6LH
Tel: (020) 7408 2198
Fax: (020) 7499 5859
E-mail: office@sunleyfoundation.com**

DSG FOUNDATION - SWITCHED ON COMMUNITIES

The Switched On Communities campaign aims to support disadvantaged local communities through the provision of technology and training. The main areas of focus are Regeneration and Education and Social Inclusion.

No minimum or maximum grant amount is stipulated, organisations applying may be registered charities or voluntary

groups. Applications may be made at any time, although grants are considered at six meetings a year with applications taking six weeks to process.

DSG International Foundation
c/o Charities Aid Foundation
25 Kings Hill Avenue
West Malling ME19 4TA
E-mail: community.relations@dsgiplc.com
Website: <http://www.dixons-group-plc.co.uk>

TESCO CHARITY TRUST - COMMUNITY AWARD SCHEME

Support is available to local community projects in two rounds. First round applications are for projects in which the core work supports the welfare of children and children's education projects, including special needs schools. Second round applications are accepted for projects related to elderly people and people with disabilities. Support is available in the UK in areas where Tesco has stores.

Grants range from between £1,500 and £5,000. Organisations who are registered charities or voluntary and community groups can apply.

Tesco House
Delamare Road
Cheshunt
Hertfordshire EN8 9SL
Tel: (01992) 646768
Fax: (01992) 646794
E-mail: customer.service@tesco.co.uk
Website: <http://www.tesco.com/everyLittleHelps/>





Are you a voluntary or community organisation?

Could your organisation
do with an extra £400?

Walsall Council, with your Local Neighbourhood Partnership (LNP) are offering grants of up to **£400** for any community and voluntary organisations who are undertaking any activities relating to the Local Neighbourhood Partnership pledges.

Interested?

Get an application pack from Lynn Percival or Carol Mason by ringing **(01922) 654717** or **(01922) 653379**

The closing date for applications is the 14th September 2007



Walsall Council



**Local Neighbourhood
Partnerships**

TRAINING



Walsall Safeguarding Children Board run a comprehensive multi-agency training programme that is **free** to all voluntary organisations in Walsall, whatever your size.

The focus of multi-agency training is **'Working Together to Safeguard and promote the welfare of children'**. Their comprehensive training programme provides valuable opportunities for practitioners to come together and share their knowledge and expertise in safe and stimulating adult learning environment.

There is recognition that multi-agency training should compliment the training available to staff in single agency, professional or voluntary settings for staff working with children and young people and with adults who are parents or carers. They also provide **'single agency'** child protection awareness training for organisations who have no provision for such training.

They provide a number of courses that cover all issues relating to the safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people in the Walsall area. Some are aimed specifically at the Community and Voluntary sectors

Details about our programme for 2007 – 2008 can be found on their website www.wlscb.org.uk or by contacting Jacqui Tattam, Telephone number 01922 650580, tattamj@walsall.gov.uk



Communiqué

Training Courses for the Voluntary Sector September – December 2007

September

- 20 Time & Workload Management
- 27 Chairing, Minute-Taking and “Effective” Meetings Skills

October

- 3 Basic Report Writing Skills
- 15 Speak Easy – Presentation Skills/Public Speaking - Level 1 (Basic)
- 24 Developing Assertiveness & Self-Esteem
- 31 Speak Easy – Presentation Skills/Public Speaking - Level 2 (Intermediate)

November

- 1 Writing Successful Funding Applications / Bid Writing
- 5 How to Raise Money from Charitable Trusts
- 13 Time & Workload Management
- 23 PR & Media Skills for all Voluntary & Community Groups
- 28 & 29 Speak Easy - Presentation Skills/Public Speaking - Level 3 (Advanced)

December

- 3 Chairing, Minute-Taking and “Effective” Meetings Skills
- 5 Basic Report Writing Skills

All one day courses cost **£90.00** per delegate and include refreshments, lunch and comprehensive course notes.

For further information or to request a booking form please contact Linda Cressey, Communiqué, telephone 01384 895633, fax 01384 424785 or email Lindacressey@aol.com



LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES 2007 CONFERENCES AND COURSES

The Down's Syndrome Association is the main UK charity covering all aspects of living successfully with Down's syndrome. Our driving ambition is to create the conditions that all people with Down's syndrome need to live lives of their own choosing.

We provide information and support for people with Down's syndrome, their families and carers, as well as being a resource for interested professional.

We work to improve knowledge and understanding of the conditions amongst all our audiences including the general public, government services and a wide range of other interested groups.

We work to champion the rights of people with Down's syndrome, campaigning for change and challenging discrimination where we find it.

For details of the conferences and courses the Down's Syndrome Association has on offer in 2007, please contact:

**Down's Syndrome Association, Langdon Down Centre
2a Langdon Park, Teddington, Middlesex TW11 9PS**

**Tel: 0845 2300 372
info@downs-syndrome.org.uk**

**Fax: 0845 2300 373
www.down-syndrome.org.uk**



Friday 2 November 2007

The course is suitable for staff who work in an advisory or supportive role with service users who may be entitled to DLA or AA. This includes service users with physical disabilities, mental health problems and learning disabilities.

By the end of the course, delegates should have the practical skills and knowledge to advise and support service users to make a claim.



Thursday 29 November 2007

This course is suitable for staff who work in an advisory and/or supportive capacity with service users who are, will and/or disabled.

By the end of the course, delegate should have the knowledge of which benefits people who are incapable of work can claim and how the relevant conditions can be satisfied.

For further information or to book a place contact Justin Wall on 01922 650595, email walljustin@walsall.gov.uk or at the Organisational Development – Social Care, Manor Farm Centre, King George Crescent, Walsall, Walsall WS4 1EG



Disclaimer

The information given in this publication is given in good faith, whilst every effort has been made to check the contents no responsibility or liability can or will be taken by Walsall Voluntary Action for errors and omissions.

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