



Action!



Newsletter

December 2009

Voluntary and Community Action

Christmas Opening Hours

Seasons greetings from all the staff at Voluntary and Community Action and Volunteer Centre Central Bedfordshire.



Our offices are closed to the public from
12.00pm Friday 18 December 2009
to
9.30am Monday 4 January 2010.



A Guide to our Support and Services

This is the sixth article of a series of six to inform you of our support and services that we can offer your group or organisation. We hope you have found this series informative and helpful.

Information and Support Services

Information Services maintains, develops and enhances the provision of information to meet the needs of the voluntary and community sector in Bedfordshire.

Voluntary and Community Action publishes Action! a free bi-monthly newsletter with regular columns on events, training, funding, capacity building, volunteering and resources, as well as up-to-date news and information on the sector.

We hold a database of voluntary organisations and community groups that deliver services in Bedfordshire. The information provided by these groups helps us to deliver appropriate and targeted information to those that request it.

We also produce the funding and training e-bulletins, and a weekly media review from local newspapers. We produce information sheets that can answer frequently asked questions on a range of subjects. We also

have an extensive library of more than 800 publications available for you to access by appointment.

We maintain our website giving full information on all of our services, including a Community Notice Board on which you can post notices of any events or vacancies for others to read.

We have additional services which include a mailing service, printing and copying, computer service, and equipment hire.

If your organisation becomes a member you benefit by free or reduced fees at training workshops and events, reduced mailing, photocopying, equipment hire service fees.

Contact Kim Mead our Training and Information Co-ordinator on 01525 850559 or info@action-centralbeds.org.uk





Need Money for Training?

Have you considered TRAIN TO GAIN, the Government's scheme to up-skill the UK workforce?

Staff and volunteers in the voluntary and community sector can now access free or subsidised NVQs, funding to develop literacy and numeracy skills and grants for qualifications, short courses, conferences or seminars in leadership and management skills.

To find out more about Train to Gain and other funding sources for learning and development, come along to one of our free **Learning and Skills Briefings** detailed below.

FREE Workforce Development Support

We are working with Community and Voluntary Service, Voluntary Action Luton and Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity to support our local voluntary sector to access relevant and cost effective training. During the next few months we will be offering one-to-one advice and support to voluntary organisations throughout Bedfordshire. This will include:

- A **free** review of your organisation's learning and skills needs
- Help to pinpoint the right training provider
- Support to access funding and grants

If you would like more information about this service or to arrange a meeting, contact Jenny Allthorpe on 01525 850559.

Courses in the New Year

- **Empowering the Voluntary Sector to Influence Public Bodies - 2nd February**
Essential knowledge for anyone who needs to negotiate funding or service delivery with public bodies.

Fee refunded upon attendance for organisations delivering services in Central Bedfordshire.
- **Roles and Responsibilities of Trustees - 6th March - FREE**
For anyone new to being a trustee or wanting to update their knowledge on legal requirements and responsibilities.
- **Making Successful Funding Applications - 9th March**
A practical workshop to guide you through the stages needed to make successful funding applications.
- **Assertiveness at Work - 18th March**
Suitable for paid workers and volunteers who want to build their confidence and skills in their relationships with others.

For further details contact Kim Mead, Training and Information Co-ordinator on 01525 850559, training@action-centralbeds.org.uk



FREE Learning and Skills Briefings

Supported by the Learning Partnership Bedfordshire and Luton, these briefings will provide information and handouts on the Government's Train to Gain Programme and local training providers, and details of other sources of funding to help you provide training and learning opportunities for your staff, trustees and volunteers. To book a place contact Kim Mead on 01525 850559, training@action-centralbeds.org.uk

Dates and Venues:

21st January 2010 Katherine's Garden (Aragon Housing Association)
10.00am - 12.30pm Dunstable Street, Ampthill

26th January 2010 Voluntary Action Luton
10.00am - 12.30pm New Bedford Road, Luton



New team member for Volunteer Centre

Welcome to Max Hayes who has joined the Volunteer Centre team as Volunteering Adviser.

Most recently Max was Funding & Development Officer with CVS Bedford; previously she was a Grants Administrator with BRCC and a Parish Council Clerk for several local parishes.

"I'm excited at the prospect of a new challenge and especially looking forward to going out in the community, meeting lots of organisations and getting more people involved in volunteering," said Max.

Lucy Crayk, Volunteer Centre Manager, adds: "Max's experience in development and funding further strengthens the knowledge and skills base of our team. We're delighted to have her on board and having the capacity to get out and about in the community more."

More help and advice available for organisations



With the addition of a new member of staff the Volunteer Centre is now able to start a Volunteer Management programme. This is a new initiative whereby the Volunteer Centre team will be offering help and

advice (up to intensive level if required and it's free of charge) to organisations that involve, or would like to involve, volunteers.

The Volunteer Centre can advise and give practical help with the following:

- methods, procedures and time frames for responding to volunteer enquiries and referrals;
- updating / introducing an application pack for volunteers;
- procedures for the appointment of volunteers (including CRB checks);
- induction of volunteers (including induction materials);
- reviewing volunteer roles to help develop good quality opportunities that appeal to potential volunteers;
- motivating, supervising and supporting volunteers;
- supporting volunteers with additional support needs;
- developing and implementing a Volunteering Policy;
- other policies and procedures relating to volunteers, e.g. expenses.

Any organisation wanting to find out more should contact the Volunteer Centre.

New year - time for more volunteers

With a new year just around the corner, now is a good time to think about how your organisation can recruit more volunteers in 2010, as well as retaining the ones you have.

A few pointers to get you thinking are below:

- What do you need volunteers to do?
- What will people get from volunteering in this role (apart from knowing that they're helping)?
- Does the role need to be made more appealing?
- Is someone on hand to give volunteer help if needed?
- Who will be responsible for the volunteer?
- Why do volunteers choose your organisation rather than any other?
- How long do most of your volunteers stay with your organisation for?
- What do your existing volunteers enjoy most about volunteering for your organisation?
- How do they think their volunteering experience could be improved?
- What way/s do you thank volunteers / recognise their achievements?



Funding



WREN (Waste Recycling Environmental Ltd)

WREN focuses its funding on community-based projects in the vicinity of a landfill site that fulfil the following criteria:

- the provision, maintenance or improvement of a public park or other public amenity (e.g. village halls, children's play equipment and skate parks, village greens and public parks, community gardens)
- the delivery of biodiversity conservation for UK species or habitats (e.g. reintroduction programme to a specific habitat, management planning for nature conservation where this is directly linked to a specific habitat or species at a specific project site)
- the maintenance, repair or restoration of a building or other structure, which is a place of religious worship or of historic or architectural interest (e.g. places of worship, buildings or monuments of architectural or historical interest, windmills, scheduled monuments, listed buildings and structures).

Funding can be obtained for capital funds for improvement of public areas. The minimum grant is £2,000 and maximum grant £50,000. There are no specific deadlines and it takes around four months to process grant applications.

For more information contact Project Administrator (Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire), WREN, Telephone: 01953 714126 or visit <http://www.wren.org.uk>

Ecominds

The Ecominds programme, is for a range of groups who want to encourage people with experience of mental distress to get involved in environmental projects, such as improving open spaces and wildlife habitats, designing public art and recycling.



The programme will award grants of up to £250,000. Four different levels of grant are available:

Small - up to £20,000

Medium – from £20,001 up to £60,000

Large – from £60,001 up to £150,000

Flagship – from £150,001 up to £250,000 (approximately five grants will be awarded within this category).

Ecominds is a rolling programme (it expects to have two funding rounds each year). All projects must be delivered by December 2012.

Visit their website <http://digbig.com/4ymxk>

Access to Nature

Access to Nature is to encourage people from all backgrounds to understand, access and enjoy our natural environment.



It aims to encourage more people to enjoy the outdoors, particularly those who face social exclusion or those that currently have little or no contact with the natural environment. It will fund projects in urban, rural and coastal communities across England.

The programme will award grants of between £50,000 and £500,000 to support projects that deliver one or more of the programmes main outcomes.

Visit their website for more information <http://digbig.com/4ymyr>

Community Spaces

The Community Spaces programme, is run by Groundwork UK. It will fund community groups (e.g. Friends Groups, Tenants and Residents' Associations) who want to improve local green spaces such as play areas, community gardens, parks, wildlife areas and village greens, kick-about areas and pathway improvements.



There are currently four types of grants available:

Small grants from £10,000 -£25,000, available on a rolling basis until January 2011

Medium grants from £25,001 - £49,999 available on a rolling basis until January 2011

Large grants from £50,000 - £100,000 closes on 9 January 2009

Flagship grants from £100,001 - £450,000 closes on 30 January 2009

<http://www.community-spaces.org.uk/>

Funding



Grants for War Memorials

The Grants for War Memorials scheme provides grants for the repair and conservation of free-standing war memorials to help organisations and individuals responsible for their upkeep.



Application forms and Guidance Notes can be downloaded from website below. The next application deadline is 30 April 2010.

For general grant enquiries please contact The Conservation Officer, War Memorials Trust, 4 Lower Belgrave Street, London SW1W 0LA Tel: 020 7881 0862 Email: info@warmemorials.org.uk Website: <http://www.warmemorials.org.uk>

Kellogg's Active Living Community Fund

The Fund provides small grants to fund projects and activities within the UK that directly lead to people taking part in sustained physical activity, with particular emphasis on encouraging children, young people and their parents to participate together. The aim of the Fund of up to £1,000, is to help remove the barriers which stop people being active.

Tel: 0161 214 0940, Email: <http://digbig.com/5baqqh>
Website: <http://digbig.com/5baqqg>

BBC Children in Need

Children in Need gives grants for projects delivered by organisations working with disadvantaged children and young people, who must be 18 years and under, living in the UK, the Isle of Man or the Channel Islands.



The application should focus on the children your project will work with and the differences that your project will make for them. You should clearly be able to demonstrate how your project will change the lives of the children involved for the better.

You can contact them by Email: pudsey@bbc.co.uk or Helpdesk Monday to Friday 9am - 5pm Tel: 020 8576 7788. The next closing date is 15 January 2010. Full guidance and application forms are available on Website: <http://digbig.com/4xwqc>

Happy Days Charity (day trips/theatre trips/theatre workshops)

You can apply to them for a day trip to a wide variety of destinations, for example, the seaside, a theme park or the theatre. You may also apply for a theatre workshop to visit your premises.

You must represent a group of young people aged 3-17 with special needs. You may apply if you represent a special needs school or special needs group. All key carers who will be accompanying children on the trip must be CRB cleared. You must also have a child protection policy in place.

Please call for an application form on 01582 755999 or Email happydayscharity@yahoo.co.uk

The Yapp Charitable Trust

The Yapp Charitable Trust makes grants to small registered charities to sustain their existing work with:

- elderly people
- children and young people aged 5 - 25
- people with disabilities or mental health problems
- people trying to overcome life-limiting problems of a social, rather than medical, origin - such as addiction, relationship difficulties, abuse, a history of offending

Please use their eligibility checker online before applying. Further help and their application form are on Website: <http://digbig.com/5baqqk>
Email: info@yappcharitabletrust.org.uk
Tel: 01484 683403.

Rizwana's baby!

We are pleased to announce the birth of a baby boy to Rizwana, our Funding Adviser.



He was born on 9 September weighing 7lbs 4ozs. Rizwana and her husband have named him Ahnya meaning the 'gift of god'.



Third Sector Representation on Local Partnerships

Having sought expressions of interest from those active within frontline voluntary, community and other third sector organisations who would like to make an effective contribution to Central Bedfordshire's Local Strategic Partnership Thematic Partnerships the first appointments have now been made.



Stronger Communities Thematic Partnership

Simon Evans-Evans has been appointed as the representative sitting on the Stronger Communities Thematic Partnership. Simon is Director of Corporate Services of the Aldwyck Housing Group, and to speak with him telephone 01582 869140, or email Simon.Evans-Evans@aldwyck.co.uk

Community Safety Partnership - Operational Delivery Group

Niall Spencer has taken the role of representative on the Community Safety Partnership's Operational Delivery Group. He is Service Director of CAN and Niall can be contacted by telephone on 01604 824777, or email Niall.Spencer@can.org.uk

Healthier Communities and Older Peoples Partnership (HCOP)

Gail Shanahan will be sitting on the HCOP as the third sector representative. Gail is Service

Manager for Bedfordshire Advocacy Service for Older People and can be contacted via telephone on 01234 218880 or via email gail.s@basop.info

Rae Bird has agreed to take on the role of representative on the **Older Peoples Delivery Group**, a sub-group of the HCOP, operating strategically to oversee the performance and delivery of national and local targets relating to older people. To discuss relevant issues with Rae telephone 01582 862406, or email Parkside50Club@aol.com

Economy and Environment Thematic Partnership

Gill Welham will be sitting on the Economy and Environment Thematic Partnership, with particular interest to the environment. Gill is the Chief Executive of The Greensand Trust and can be contacted via telephone on 01234 743666 or via email Gill.Welham@greensandtrust.org

Community Safety Partnership Meet the Public Event

**Tuesday 19 January 2010 6pm - 9pm
at Priory House, Chicksands**

Central Bedfordshire Community Safety Partnership is arranging an evening event to meet the public. There will be information and display stands, presentations from key Community Safety partners, and the opportunity to discuss emerging priorities and influence decisions.

For further information about the event contact Rosie Harper, Administration Officer, Bedfordshire Police Authority via tel: 01234 842208 or email: Rosie.Harper@bedfordshire.pnn.police.uk

Bedfordshire and Luton Compact Code of Good Practice for Consultation and Partnerships

The current Code of Good Practice on Consultation and Partnerships has undergone a review and refresh, and is now at the stage where input is invited from a wide range of stakeholders from the statutory voluntary and community sectors in Bedfordshire and Luton.

Please refer to the enclosed flyer for details of where to obtain a copy of the Code and how to submit your comments.

The closing date for receipt of views and comments is 21st January 2010.

Bedfordshire and Luton

COMPACT

getting it right together



Consultation on the Community Engagement Strategy

Central Bedfordshire Council and its partners are developing a Comprehensive Community Engagement Strategy and know it is vital that they understand the views, needs and aspirations of the communities they serve.

It is important that input from a wide range of stakeholders and partners, including the local voluntary and community sector is received and to ensure their views and concerns are taken account of. The closing date for views and comments is **18th January 2010**.

Either complete the [Online response form](#) or download the [Printable response form](#) and return it by post to Karen Aspinall, Central Bedfordshire Council, PO Box 1395, Bedford, MK42 5AN.

For further information contact Peter Fraser, Head of Partnerships and Community Engagement at Central Bedfordshire Council on telephone 0300 300 6740 or peter.fraser@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

Big Plan Public Review

Leighton-Linslade Town Council first published *The Big Plan* in 2007 and set out the improvements the community of Leighton Buzzard and Linslade wanted to see over the next 20 years. The Town Council now wants to revisit *The Big Plan* and bring it up-to-date.



During the next twelve months, a series of public engagement events are planned where *The Big Plan* will undergo a thorough review.

The first event, covering the Children & Young People and Sports and Leisure sections of the Plan will take place on Tuesday 8 December 2009 at the White House, Hockliffe Street, Leighton Buzzard Bedfordshire. Two sessions will be held on this date, one at 2pm and the second at 7.30pm. To confirm attendance or for further information contact Christian Wilson, Big Plan Officer on 01525 631920 or email info@leightonlinslade-tc.gov.uk

Enhanced Services Centre

NHS Bedfordshire intend to provide the flexibility to deliver different services as needs change over time, encourage shared use of space, shared services and shared responsibility for improving the health and well-being of local residents at the Enhanced Services Centre at the Bedford Health Village, Kimbolton Road, Bedford.



Over the next few weeks NHS Bedfordshire will be consulting the public for their views on what services should be included at the Centre.

Further information about the project can be viewed and downloaded at <http://www.bedfordshire.nhs.uk/> or contact Vivienne Payne on 01234 795 813, or email enquiries@bedfordshire.nhs.uk

New Date for Launch Event of the Central Bedfordshire Third Sector Assembly

Due to circumstances beyond our control the original date for the Central Bedfordshire Third Sector Assembly has been changed to 3 February 2010. Please accept our apologies for any inconvenience this change may cause.

Book your place early to ensure your voice is heard and your views and opinions help shape the future of the voluntary and community sector in Central Bedfordshire. Attendance of the event is free of charge.

New Date: Wednesday 3rd February 2010 9.15am - 3.30pm
Venue: The Rufus Centre, Flitwick, Bedfordshire



Refer to the enclosed flyer for details of the event and booking arrangements.

Resources



Official health and safety books to download



The content of around 230 priced publications from the Health and Safety Executive can now be downloaded from their new HSE Books web site at no cost. <http://books.hse.gov.uk>.

Reminder on filing charity returns online

The Charity Commission has issued a reminder about the range of services that can be accessed online in the light of expected postal delays. Charities can view or amend their organisation's details, complete Annual Returns or Update forms, and send in the annual accounts too. <http://digbig.com/5baqet>

First chapter of Charity Commission's risk management toolkit

The Charity Commission has launched a practical online toolkit, Protecting charities from harm, "which aims to give trustees the tools they need to manage risks and protect their charity from harm and abuse". <http://digbig.com/5baqfd>

Guidance on privacy notices in data collection



A 'Privacy notices Code of Practice' has been produced by the Information Commissioner's Office on the use of such notices when collecting information about people for use by an organisation. <http://digbig.com/5baqeq>

ICT Security Guide

Aimed at voluntary sector staff with responsibility for managing and securing ICT systems, the new Computanews ICT Security Guide looks at Assessing the risks and policies needed, How computer security is affected by

people and the environment in which it used, and how to secure those all-important assets. <http://digbig.com/5baqew>

New model constitution for charities with income under £5,000



A simplified model constitution has been produced for small charities which have an annual income under five thousand pounds (England and Wales), and is only 700 words long. <http://digbig.com/5baqje>

Advice for employers of lone workers

A leaflet from the Health and Safety Executive, giving advice and guidance on how to keep lone workers healthy and safe, has been updated. Download 'Working alone - Health and safety guidance on the risks of lone working' <http://digbig.com/5baqfb>



Free Services offered

Advice is offered on how a publicity requirement might be fulfilled. Also help with the design of any leaflet/mailshot/newsletters etc. and the writing of press releases and other publicity material, turning documents to PDF's and the handling of any administrative issues. Contact John Quick on 01525 853904

Inclusion of information within this newsletter does not imply endorsement by Voluntary and Community Action South Bedfordshire.

Action! is the newsletter of Voluntary and Community Action, Bossard House, West Street, Leighton Buzzard LU7 1DA.

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Copy deadline for the next issue is 20 January 2010.