



# Action!



Newsletter

February 2011

## Voluntary and Community Action

### Volunteer Centre Central Bedfordshire romps through Accreditation

The Volunteer Centre Central Bedfordshire has achieved the Volunteer Centre Quality Accreditation mark from Volunteering England, and been strongly commended on the quality of its work. The accreditation was awarded with no conditions, recommendations or development points.

This is the third consecutive time the Volunteer Centre Central Bedfordshire has achieved the Accreditation and means it is licensed to operate as a recognised Volunteer Centre for the next three years.

Volunteering England said "This was an excellent submission" which "demonstrates high quality planning, performance management and evaluation". Volunteering England has also asked to use extracts as examples of good practice.

Additional comments on Volunteer Centre Central Bedfordshire's work and the submission included:

- ✓ A comprehensive and clear overview of the context in which the Volunteer Centre and Voluntary and Community Action operates was given.
- ✓ Reference to this work and knowledge base was made consistently ... and used to inform (the) work undertaken.
- ✓ There was clear evidence that the Volunteer Centre has a sound understanding of the local environment in which they operate and their work priorities are evidence based.
- ✓ Much of the evidence presented seemed to be part of a rigorous reporting system. Overall, there is evidence of consistent,

confident, evidence led and reflective practice in all the core functions. This was an excellent submission.

Comments made about the Core Functions of the Volunteer Centre were just as impressive.

In the Brokerage section, the Volunteer Centre leaflet for people enquiring about volunteering was described as well written and comprehensive; while comments made on Marketing said "The Volunteer Centre has well established and very effective systems of planning, delivering and evaluating (this function) and there is evidence of very good practice".

Volunteering England also commented that the evidence submitted in Good Practice Development "was very strong and there are clearly very effective mechanisms for assessing, planning, conducting and evaluating good practice work".

Volunteer Centre Central Bedfordshire was also complimented for its work in developing volunteering opportunities and for its contribution to the strategic development of volunteering.



# Training



## Springboard for Women Returners - Houghton Regis

A **FREE** 6 week course designed to help women returners to build self confidence and consider options for future work or training. It will cover topics such as:

- Introduction to confidence building and assertiveness,
- Unlocking your skills and identifying your interests,
- Benefits advice and information,
- Local job and training information,
- Jobsearch skills – writing a CV/application forms/interview skills,
- Guest speakers and *lots of fun* .....



Wednesdays, 9.45am to 2.45pm from 2 March to 6 April 2011. Childcare costs will be met or an onsite crèche provided if there is enough demand. All women welcome.

## Health and Safety at Work

Thursday 10 March 2011 - 10am to 4pm  
£20 members, £30 non-members  
*Fee refundable upon attendance.*

Ensure that your organisation complies with health and safety regulations and that you are able to assess risks and put control measures in place.



## Employing staff - contracts, policies and procedures

Thursday 24 March 2011 - 10am to 4pm  
£20 members, £30 non-members  
*Fee refundable upon attendance.*



This course will help you to update your knowledge of recent changes in employment law in areas such as equality, discipline and family friendly policies and to ensure that you have policies and procedures that are up-to-date and reflect good employment practice.

## First Aid for Appointed Persons.

If you require a certificate in First Aid as a nominated person to take charge in an emergency, this training will give you a certificate valid for three years. There are several courses over this coming year. The evening courses are divided over two evenings and you must attend

both evenings to obtain your certification.

Tuesdays 17 & 24 May - 6.30pm to 9.30pm  
Thursdays 8 & 15 Sept - 6.30pm to 9.30pm  
Thursday 1 December - 9.30am to 4.30pm

£60 members, £85 non-members



For more information on the upcoming workshops, please contact Kim Mead, Information and Resources Co-ordinator on 01525 850559 or [training@action-centralbeds.org.uk](mailto:training@action-centralbeds.org.uk)

## Restructure of Voluntary and Community Action

In common with many organisations the Trustee Board of Voluntary and Community Action has recently implemented changes to enable us to deal with the challenges of reduced funding and the uncertainties we face. It has been necessary to restructure so that we remain in a strong position to serve our members and achieve our aims this year and beyond. Although we are now a smaller organisation our commitment to represent and to serve you by providing high quality services remains unchanged. Most staff below are now part-time:

**John Gelder** - Director  
**Kim Mead** - Information and Resources Co-ordinator  
**Rebecca Gooch** - Volunteer Adviser (Volunteer Brokerage)

**Janet Brennan** - Volunteer Adviser (Volunteer Management)  
**Jenny Allthorpe** - Development Adviser  
**Rizwana Zaman** - Funding and Social Enterprise Adviser

# Funding



## The Wixamtree Trust

This Trust favours registered charities based in Bedfordshire. Grants average from £1000 to £5000 and can be for one-off projects, core costs and research. As long as the charity, project or service is for the benefit of people in Bedfordshire, the trustees will consider a request for funding. Trustees meet quarterly to consider applications. The next deadline is 17 October for a November panel meeting.

Application forms are available from Paul Patten, Administrator, 148 The Grove, West Wickham, Kent BR4 9JZ, 0208 7774140. They prefer to communicate by email: [wixamtree@thetrustpartnership.com](mailto:wixamtree@thetrustpartnership.com) website: <http://diqbig.com/4yspf>

## UnLtd Sport Relief Awards

UnLtd Sport Relief Awards are funded by Comic Relief and provide opportunities for young people 11-21 years old, to bring communities together, to help promote understanding and solve problems through sport, arts and recreational activities. There are three types of awards: Try It, Shape It, Do it.

You can contact UnLtd Sport Relief by either completing the online message box or Email: [sportreliefawards@unltd.org.uk](mailto:sportreliefawards@unltd.org.uk) Tel: 08453 670 770 Website: <http://www.unltdsportrelief.com>



## Bedfordshire and Luton Community Foundation

### Grassroots Scheme

The aim of the scheme is to increase immediate grant funding and capacitybuilding support to small voluntary and community groups and organisations throughout the area, enabling them to continue or expand their work. Any small volunteer led community group that is connected to the needs of the local community can apply for a grant, provided that their annual turnover (averaged over the last three years) is less than £20,000 and that they have been running for a year or more. Groups must have a governing document which at the

least shows the name, aim/purpose, objects of the group and which includes a dissolution clause and a list of executive members/trustees and their signatures. Grants range from £250 to £5,000.

### Small Grants Programme

The Bedfordshire and Luton Community Foundation is dedicated to improving the quality of community life of Bedfordshire people and, in particular, those in special need by reason of disability, age, financial or other disadvantage. Grants of up to £500 can be made for a wide range of purposes, including buying equipment, training staff and volunteers, printing and publicity, start up costs, social events and running costs.

Applications are accepted throughout the year. The grant panel meets every quarter.

For more information contact the Bedfordshire and Luton Community Foundation, The Smithy, The Village, Old Warden, Beds., SG18 9HQ. Tel: 01767 626459, Website: <http://www.blcf.org.uk/grants/>

## Age UK - Summer Grant Programme



Grants of up to £500 are available to any voluntary or charitable club for older people aged 50 or over in England whose charitable objectives are similar to those of Age UK for activities or projects that help or sustain activities.

The Grants and Resources Team, Age UK, Astral House, 1268 London Road, London, SW16 4ER Tel: (020) 8765 7738, E-mail: [grants@ageuk.org.uk](mailto:grants@ageuk.org.uk) Website: <http://www.ageuk.org.uk>

## Funding E-Bulletin

Our Funding E-Bulletin is produced bi-monthly in between **Action!** Newsletter, it contains a larger number of funders.

For more funding information email [info@action-centralbeds.org.uk](mailto:info@action-centralbeds.org.uk) to sign up to receive the next issue of the e-bulletin.

# Resources



## Legal factsheets for community groups



LawWorks, the charity providing pro bono legal advice for community groups, continues to add to its range of online fact sheets. Recent additions include a glossary of common terms in commercial leases <http://digbig.com/5bdfjj>, and the new rules on Pre-Employment Health Questions under the Equality Act <http://digbig.com/5bdfjk>

## Literature review on skills and workforce development

Skills-Third Sector has published 'Do Skills Matter? A Literature Review on Skills and Workforce Development in the Third Sector' providing a review of current thinking and information about the issues, and includes volunteers in its scope. Download (pdf, 283Kb) via <http://digbig.com/5bdfjm>

## How to measure and fund healthy living strategies



The Department of Health has a couple of consultations relating to its 'Healthy lives, healthy people White Paper: Our strategy for public health in England'. One is 'Transparency in outcomes - proposals for a public health outcomes framework', the other 'Consultation on the funding and commissioning routes for public health'. Both close 31st March, see <http://www.dh.gov.uk/healthypeople>

## Charitable Incorporated Organisation model expected for 2011

Charity Commission chief executive Sam Younger has reaffirmed plans to launch the new Charitable Incorporated Organisation legal structure early next year. From Civil Society Media, <http://digbig.com/5bdfjn>

## Briefing on Social Enterprise

The Charities Panel of public sector accountancy body CIPFA has started a new series of topical briefings with one on social enterprise. Maybe nothing new here but it is clearly laid out and explains different models and various considerations. <http://digbig.com/5bdfjq> or download the PDF (183KB) direct <http://digbig.com/5bdfjp>

## Trustee ideas on making charities and trustees more effective



New Philanthropy Capital ran a number of seminars over the summer where over 80 charity trustees debated how they could make their charities more effective and shared ideas about improving trusteeship. 'Talking to trustees' - <http://digbig.com/5bdfjr> brings together some of the ideas raised.

## Revised and shortened Compact published

A renewed Compact - the agreement which governs relations between the Government and civil society organisations in England - has been published by Government and Compact Voice, which represents civil society organisations. <http://digbig.com/5bdfjt> with link to the Compact material on government site.

**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.

Registered Charity No. 1108879. Company limited by guarantee. Registered in England No. 5386570.

Tel 01525 850559, Fax 01525 376281,  
Email [mail@action-centralbeds.org.uk](mailto:mail@action-centralbeds.org.uk),  
Internet [www.action-centralbeds.org.uk](http://www.action-centralbeds.org.uk)

Copy deadline for the next issue is 16 March 2011.