

BEDS-SPREAD

April 2008

Helping the Third Sector face the future

The Finance Hub has just released details of research which demonstrates a marked decline in grant funding from Local Authorities. The research originally relied on data from contact with 90 authorities which showed a decline in grant support to the Third Sector to 87% of what it was in 2006/7. An additional sample was added which again showed this same level of decline and these calculations were made without taking into consideration any effects of inflation!

The article goes on to say that "underpinning these changes have been the shift towards 'a contract culture' and commissioning, greater competition for a dwindling pool of relevant funds, and the growing influence of Local Strategic Partnerships, Local Area Agreements and Government Policy".

The article can be accessed at: <http://digbig.com/4wrxy>

CVS Mid and North Beds is actively helping voluntary and community groups throughout Mid and North Bedfordshire in facing this uncertain future. CVS initiatives (many of which are detailed throughout this edition of Beds-Spread) include:

- **The Fit for Funding Work Shops** - that will firstly equip your group to enable it to apply for funding and will secondly define aims, outcomes, targets and milestones to make sense of some of the most common problems groups have when making funding applications – *more on page 4* - with dates of upcoming workshops
- **Training** - a comprehensive programme of training is available to enable your group to face up to the shift towards 'a contract culture' amongst the local statutory sector - *more on page 3* - with details of our '**Getting Tender Ready' Course**. Plus look out for our upcoming Training Programme
- **Attaining Quality Standards** - by attaining Quality Standards your group can effectively meet the requirements of local and central government in terms of tendering for a contracts or increasingly meet requirements when applying for grant funding (especially where local and central government funds are concerned) - *more on page 2*



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Contents

Page 2	Tackling Climate Change / Quality Standards
Page 3	Training
Pages 4	Funding
Page 5	Development issues / Social Enterprise
Page 6	Poverty Issues
Pages 7 - 8	Snippets

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TACKLING CLIMATE CHANGE

Cut Your Carbon

Cut your Carbon is an exciting regional initiative, led by the **East of England Development Agency (EEDA)**, with the goal of helping communities respond to climate change by reducing their carbon emissions.

Groups taking part will be able to:

- measure their carbon footprint online
- take action to become more energy-efficient
- seek up to £200,000 for carbon cutting projects in the £2.5 million funding competition

We are looking for people in the East of England who have the passion and drive to encourage others to join them in tackling climate change. If that sounds like you, we're offering practical support to help you and your community become low carbon heroes!

Cut your Carbon is led and supported by **EEDA** which is the regional body responsible for sustainable economic growth. To find out more visit: www.cutyourcarbon.org.uk

Receive Beds-Spread by Email

A reminder that we are keen to encourage readers of **Beds-Spread** with access to the internet to receive and read their copy by email. So if you are happy to read **Beds-Spread** via email please contact mark@cvsmidandnorthbeds.org.uk.

We are of course happy to keep sending **Beds-Spread** to everybody, so if you do not have access to the internet, don't worry, we will keep sending it the traditional way. However, you may also want to continue receiving the paper-based edition, but also receive an electronic copy that you can share more widely amongst your colleagues. Again this is no problem.

So far we have had 30 requests to receive **Beds-Spread** via email. Why not add to that number, as by receiving our newsletter in this manner in future, you will have greater flexibility in sharing it with colleagues!

QUALITY STANDARDS

CVS Mid and North Beds has been awarded funding from the **Big Lottery Fund** to help member organisations work more effectively and gain a Quality Standard. A Quality Standard is a system you can use to strengthen your organisation. It is intended to raise standards of work and to make sure everything is done consistently. A quality assurance system sets out expectations that a quality organisation should meet. It is a tool for continuous improvement that provides evidence of the quality of your organisation. Introducing a quality system will take commitment, planning and some investment of resources, but is important to your organisation because it will enable you to:

- Meet requirements for tendering, procurement, contracting
- Meet requirements from a growing number of funders, especially for local/central government funds
- Make stronger funding applications and monitoring reports
- Show how well you are performing and/or gain external recognition or validation
- Improve your services
- Decide where to put resources more easily
- Better management of staff and volunteers
- Manage risk more effectively

Quality is essentially about learning what you are doing well and doing it better. It also means finding out what you may need to change to make sure you meet the needs of your service users. **Jane Owen, Funding and Development Officer**, will help organisations to choose the right Quality Standard for them. Help will also be available to implement a system within your organisation involving trustees, staff and volunteers. The funding will also be used to provide training opportunities for staff and volunteers. Please watch this space for more information.

TRAINING

Making a Good Funding Application

Tuesday 20th May 2008

9.45am to 4.30pm

at 43 Bromham Road, Bedford

Cost: From £12 per delegate

(includes course hand-outs, buffet lunch, tea/coffee)

The course is for you if you want to develop your understanding of, and skills in, writing good funding applications.

Getting Tender Ready

Thursday 22nd May 2008

9.45am to 4.30pm

at 43 Bromham Road, Bedford

Cost: FREE

(includes course hand-outs, buffet lunch, tea/coffee)

The workshop is for Trustees, chief officers and other senior staff involved in funding and development, as it is becoming increasingly clear that government organisations are replacing many grants to the Third Sector with contracts.

Coming Soon: New CVS Training Programme

Our training programme for voluntary groups in Mid and North Bedfordshire will shortly be published and to give you a flavour of what to expect, we will include workshops on:

Making a Good Funding Application, Basic Budgeting, Project Accounting and Full Cost Recovery, Monitoring and Evaluation, Outcomes, Project Management, Fundraising and the Law, Getting Tender Ready, Presenting your Tender, Legal Considerations of Managing an Enterprise, Introduction to Marketing, Progressing into Partnership, Due Diligence in Mergers and Consortia Working, Roles and Responsibilities of Handling Volunteers, Quality Assurance, Business Planning, Understanding Annual Accounts and Fund Accounting.

For further details contact **Jan** at **CVS** on **01234 354366** or email: jan@cvsmidandnorthbeds.org.uk

Bedfordshire Train to Gain Awareness Event for Voluntary and Community Organisations

Beds Rural Communities Charity is pleased to announce this event is to be held:

on Thursday 24th April 2008, 10 - 12 noon at the Village Hall, Cardington, Beds MK44 3SX

Train to Gain (T to G) is a national programme managed and funded by the **Learning and Skills Council**. The programme is aimed at improving productivity and competitiveness by making sure that both employees and **volunteers** have the right skills to do the best job.

There are three strands to the way the programme operates:

- through a skills need analysis that assesses organisational training needs (for now and in the future)
- by making recommendations on the most suitable training providers and support service available
- by helping organisations get the best value for money from their investment in training and helping them to choose the best way to pay for training. **T to G** provides some funding itself.

If you would like to attend this event, please e-mail: laurieh@bedsrcc.org.uk A programme will then be forwarded to you.

FUNDING

Funding Workshops - New Dates

Workshop 1 – Fit for Funding

- Thursday 1st May (10am – 12pm)
- Saturday 14th June (10am – 12pm)
- Tuesday 1st July (7pm - 9 pm)

Workshop 2 – Demonstrating Need and Understanding Outcomes

- Saturday 17th May (10am – 12pm)
- Thursday 10th July (10am – 12pm)

If you would like to attend one of the workshops please contact **Kay Brennan** on **01234 354366** or email kayleigh@cvsmidandnorthbeds.org.uk

The Griffin Awards

Vauxhall's flagship initiative is the **Griffin Awards** which is now in its ninth year. Since its launch in 2000, more than £250,000 in prize money plus in-kind support in the form of loan vehicles, promotional videos and display materials with a similar value has been awarded to a wide range of worthy causes. In 2008 the overall winners in Bedfordshire will each receive £10,000 with the runner-up in each county receiving £5,000. In addition a loan vehicle will be provided to an organisation in Bedfordshire that best demonstrates how they would maximise its use in delivering their activities or services. Deadline: **30th April 2008**. Contact: **Paul Patten, The Griffin Awards 2008, 148 The Grove, West Wickham, Kent, BR4 9JZ**. Telephone: **01285 841919**. Email: griffinawards@thetrustpartnership.com. Website: www.griffinawards.org

My Place

My Place (though the **Big Lottery**) will deliver £190m of Government capital investment over the next three years through grants of between £1m and £5m. This is a ten-year strategy for positive activities setting out the Government's vision for improving youth facilities in response to clear ongoing demand from young people, parents and communities for more and better places for young people to go. Delivery of projects will have to encompass partnership working which will enable voluntary organisations to become involved in delivering this vision. Furthermore these partnerships will have to meet the following criteria:

- more young people, parents and communities feel that young people have exciting and safe places to go in their leisure time where they can get involved in an attractive range of activities;
- more young people, particularly the most disadvantaged, participate in positive leisure-time activities that support their personal and social development;
- more young people have access to information, advice and support services from within places they feel comfortable;
- stronger partnership working between local authorities, third, private and public sector partners to plan, deliver and operate financially sustainable youth facilities with and for young people.

Find out more about **My Place Funding** by visiting <http://digbig.com/4wrws> or you may wish to contact **Linda Bulled (Voluntary Organisations Consortiums Officer)** to register your organisation's interest in perhaps working in partnership with the local statutory sector in an effort to secure this funding for projects in Bedfordshire. Linda can be contacted at linda@cvsmidandnorthbeds.org.uk or on **01234 354366**.

DEVELOPMENT ISSUES

Annual Reports: Charity Commission Gets Tough

In March 2008 the **Charity Commission** announced that it is now clamping down on those charities which, even after default notices to the charity and to known trustees have been served, have not sent in their Annual Reports and Returns a year after they were due. Such charities will be removed from the register of charities and if appropriate, steps will be taken to protect the charity's assets. Even if removed from the register the organisation remains charitable and subject to charity law.

The Commission reminds all charities that since February 2007 it has been an offence not to submit charity reports or returns to the Commission, if required, and each person who was a trustee immediately before the report or return was due can be fined. Go to www.charitycommission.gov.uk for more information.

Charitable Incorporated Organisation Timetable Put Back

Following the **Charities Act 2006** details of the new legal structure of **Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO)** were expected to be available in the summer this year. However draft regulations and model constitutions are not now expected to be publicised for consultation until May and the new structures not available until either later this year or even early 2009. For more information on the proposed Charitable Incorporated Organisation go to <http://digbig.com/4wrxa>

SOCIAL ENTERPRISE

Trading goods and services is one of the options available to voluntary and community organisations who are looking to diversify their income base.

The National Council of Voluntary Organisation's (NCVO) Sustainable Funding Project has rewritten and restructured its online information on trading and social enterprise. It covers issues such as getting started, governance, charity law, culture and generating ideas.

Earned income is an important source of funding for the voluntary and community sector. Often referred to as social enterprise activity, it can be divided into **trading (selling on the open market)** and **'contracting' (tendering to deliver goods and services under contract)**. The **NCVO** website focuses on:

- **Introduction to trading and social enterprise** - provides an overview of what is meant by trading and social enterprise and what it means for the voluntary and community sector and your organisation.
- **First steps: getting started** - what are the benefits of trading? What do you have to sell and who might buy it? What are the various approaches to trading that VCO's can take?
- **Issues to consider when starting to trade** - including legal issues related to charities and trading, organisational culture, developing a competitive advantage and generating ideas.
- **Further support for trading and social enterprise** - signposting to resources, support organisations, networks, sources of finance and useful publications.
- **Real-life examples of trading and social enterprise** - case studies to help you learn from others in the sector.
- **Only Connect visit scheme** - supports you to visit another organisation in the sector to learn from their experience in generating earned income.

To find out more about this excellent resource and to see if your organisation could benefit visit: <http://digbig.com/4wrxb>

POVERTY ISSUES

Turn2us - Funding for Individuals



turn2us is a new charity offering a groundbreaking online service to help the millions of people in need in the UK.

For the first time, people can access information on all benefits and grants available to them from both statutory and voluntary organisations, at no cost, through **turn2us**. In many cases, applications for support can be made directly from the website and we'll keep people informed by email or by sending a text to their mobile phone.

Millions of people in the UK are living below the poverty line and yet up to £8 billion in income-related benefit goes unclaimed every year (DWP 2006). Research shows that there is low awareness of the support available from the voluntary sector (nfpSynergy 2007) despite the existence of nearly 800 charities giving help to people in need (Directory of Social Change 2006). Crucially, the people who need the help the most, find it hardest to navigate their way to get the help available to them.

turn2us aims to address this wide-scale and urgent need. Through **turn2us**, thousands of people from diverse backgrounds will have access to information that could make a real difference to their lives. To find out more visit the **turn2us** website at www.turn2us.org.uk

Migrant Workers Seminar

A FREE seminar on the social & economic impact in Bedfordshire

Friday 16th May 9.30am - 1.00pm - The Rufus Centre, Flitwick

The seminar aims to:

- Clarify the definition and legal status of migrant workers
- Begin to raise awareness of the potential numbers and needs of migrant workers
- Raise awareness of and identify gaps in support services for migrant workers
- Discuss the social and economic impact of migrant workers in Bedfordshire

The seminar will feature:

- A keynote presentation giving an overview of migrant workers in the East of England – **Mark Allison**, Manager – Migrant Workers (**EEDA**)
- Workshops covering:
 - Migrant worker needs assessment in Bedfordshire
 - The Migrant Gateway® Programme
 - Financial and care needs - local authority duties
 - Learning services for migrant workers
 - Pathways to Employment Project
 - Personal perspectives of migrant workers



Who should attend?

- Local authority councillors, policy officers, strategic managers and frontline staff from the statutory and voluntary sectors and others interested in migrant worker issues

How to book:

Online: www.tacklingpoverty-beds.org.uk

Email: tpt@infotrain.co.uk

Tel: **01234 360607**

SNIPPETS

Want to support Refugees and Asylum Seekers but haven't got the time?

Bedfordshire Refugee and Asylum Seekers Support (BRASS) is a charity working in the Bedford area to support refugees and asylum seekers.

We run drop-in advice sessions, English language mentoring and social events.

We depend on volunteers but know that many people just don't have the time to get involved. Instead, you can join:

Friends of BRASS

- Donate as little as £2 a month.
- Donate supplies such as office stationery and equipment, toiletries and dry goods.
- Donate to or help out at one of our annual events such as the Christmas party.
- Share your expertise on a one-off project e.g. independently checking our accounts, website design
- Take the **BRASS** challenge and fundraise a target of £50 a year perhaps by:
 - ⇒ Collecting money for **BRASS** by saving your coppers in a jar or by being sponsored for giving up chocolate for a month.
 - ⇒ Holding a BBQ/coffee morning/karaoke night for family and friends
 - ⇒ Encouraging your work place, place of worship, school or sports club to support BRASS

.....Or maybe you have another good idea to fundraise for or support us?

Interested? Contact on **01234 211 381** or at brass@britonline.net

EEDA introduce new ESF 'find your partner' service

The East of England Development Agency (EEDA) have very recently established a new web-based tool to help organisations find partners to access **EEDA European Social Funds (ESF)** and provide projects through consortia.

The tool is a data-base, and by using the varied criteria, assists registered users to identify prospective partners. So if you want to sign up today, search for partners..... and make your bids even stronger..... go to: www.eeda.org.uk/esf and click on the esf partnership tab on the left (blue button).

Criminal Records Checks

The Home Office announced that from 12th October 2009 individuals will need to register with the **Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA)** if they are to work or volunteer with children and/or vulnerable adults in a regulated activity. This has huge implications for voluntary organisations and it would be worthwhile preparing your organisation by accessing the following sources of information:

- **National Association for Voluntary and Community Action - Safeguarding Briefing** - <http://digbig.com/4wryb>
- **Independent Safeguarding Authority** - www.isa.gov.org

SNIPPETS

Meeting Space Available

The Studio Club (32 Alexander Road, Bedford, MK40 1JA) is available from 10am-5pm weekdays. Community groups are welcome to hold weekly meetings, private functions and parties.

The main areas that may be of interest to voluntary and community groups are:

- The main bar with a big screen and a projector
- Function room holds about 50 people

Any reasonable request will be considered. Contact: **Stephen Jones, The Studio Club**. Tel . **01234262665**. Mob. **07918148283**

Community Hall Available for Hire

St Martins Church Community Hall (Clapham Road, Bedford, MK41 7LG) is available for hire to voluntary and community groups.

Bookings can be made by ringing **01234 218619** and if you want to know more about the hall contact **Catherine Ward** on **07792664560**

Bedford Borough Workers' Forum

Do you give hands-on support to voluntary and community groups in Bedford Borough?

If so, whether you are a paid worker or volunteer, please come to **Bedford Borough Workers' Forum** on **Thursday 5th June 2008** at **43 Bromham Road, Bedford** (corner of Union Street) from **9.00am** for tea/coffee, toast and networking.

Please phone **Jane Owen** on **01234 354366** or email jane@cvsmidandnorthbeds.org.uk for more information.

Beds-Spread is the Newsletter of **Community & Voluntary Service Mid & North Bedfordshire, 43 Bromham Road, Bedford, MK40 2AA**. Tel: **01234 354366**. Email: info@cvsmidandnorthbeds.org.uk. Website: www.cvsmidandnorthbeds.org.uk. Registered Charity: **1091423**. Company limited by guarantee, Registered in England No. **4312967**.

Beds-Spread is distributed to voluntary and community groups across Mid and North Bedfordshire, as well as to Town and Parish Councils, Councillors (Beds County Council, Mid Beds District Council & Bedford Borough Council) and to local libraries. **Beds-Spread** is also available to download from our website at www.cvsmidandnorthbeds.org.uk, where previous copies can also be accessed.

Please note:

- Every care is taken to provide accurate information, however **CVS Mid & North Beds** accepts no responsibility for any errors or omissions in, or complaints arising from, items in this publication.
- Inclusion of information in this newsletter does not imply endorsement by **CVS Mid & North Beds**.
- Please feel free to replicate any articles, as long as you credit **CVS Mid & North Beds**.

Contributions are welcomed. Deadline for copy for inclusion in the next issue of **Beds-Spread**: **26th May 2008**

Send copy to **Mark Smith** at mark@cvsmidandnorthbeds.org.uk

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Serving the Voluntary and Community Sector in Mid and North Bedfordshire

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