

BEDS-SPREAD

March 2007

Local Area Agreement - A brief guide

Many people have heard of the Local Area Agreement, but what is it?

- A **Local Area Agreement** (known as an LAA) is a three-year contract between Government and a range of local public sector agencies. In Bedfordshire the LAA runs from April 2006 - March 2009
- The LAA encourages all partners in a locality to agree to work together to find better solutions to local issues
- In return for signing up to an LAA, Government should allow greater local control over how some public funds are allocated
- In the Bedfordshire LAA there are 15 outcomes and 41 specific targets, spread over 4 blocks:
 - Children and Young People
 - Safer and Stronger Communities
 - Healthier Communities and Older People
 - Economic Development and Enterprise
- 14 of the targets have financial rewards attached which are worth up to £11 million if they are all achieved
- One of the 14 'reward' targets is to increase the level of formal volunteering in Bedfordshire. The Volunteer Centres are actively involved in this target

Why do I need to know all this?

- The work that many local groups is doing is contributing towards achieving the LAA target which could bring additional resources to Bedfordshire
- The recent government white paper '**Strong and Prosperous Communities**' made it clear that LAA's are the way in which central government will do business with local agencies in the future. If the voluntary sector wants to continue working with local government agencies, then it needs to be involved in the LAA process

CVS is working to represent the views of the sector at LAA meetings and events. Contact **Martin Trinder** on **01234 354366** or email **martin@cvsmidandnorthbeds.org.uk**



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How do we get involved with the Local Area Agreement?

Three actions to get involved!

Get a copy of the LAA - you can get a copy by emailing:

mark@cvsmidandnorthbeds.org.uk

Join the LAA Voluntary Sector Reference Group

- This is a group that meets quarterly to discuss the LAA, receives updates on the progress of each of the 'blocks', and will play a key role in future discussions on the LAA and the sector's involvement.

The next meeting is on the **12th April (pm)**.

Please contact **David Brewer** on **01234 228078** or email

david.brewer@bedscc.gov.uk if you would like to attend and/or receive papers for future meetings.

Attend a Countywide Community Strategy consultation event on the 1st May 2007 (am) The Rufus Centre, Flitwick

- The LAA should reflect the local priorities set out in various documents and strategies. One of the key documents is the **Countywide Community Strategy**, which is being refreshed. If you are interested in this voluntary sector-focused event. look out for the enclosed flyer or contact **Jan** at **CVS** on **01234 354366** to book a place.

CVS Training

If you are quick, there are still a few places on **Finding and Keeping Volunteers**. This is a one-day course on **Tuesday 13th March 2007** and is for you if you are responsible for finding, recruiting, managing or supporting volunteers. The cost is from £10 per delegate. To book a place please contact **Jan** at **CVS** on **01234 354366**

For further details on any of these **free** one-day courses below, please contact **Jan** at **CVS** on **01234 354366** or email: **jan@cvsmidandnorthbeds.org.uk**

- *Tuesday 8th May 2007*
Allocating and Monitoring Progress and Quality
- *Wednesday 6th June 2007*
Health and Safety at Work
- *Wednesday 4th July 2007*
Managing a Budget
- *Tuesday 17th July 2007*
Promoting Equal Opportunities and Diversity



Leading learning and skills



EUROPEAN UNION
European Social Fund

We are recruiting!

Funding and Development Officer

35 hours per week
£18,500 p.a.

Here is your chance to make a difference by supporting local voluntary and community groups throughout Mid and North Bedfordshire. You will assist groups to improve and sustain their work in the local community and help them to identify and secure funding. The successful candidate will be willing to learn about charity governance and legislation, and be able to work with a diverse range of local groups. Training will be provided.

For an application pack, please call: **01234 354366**,
or email:

jobs@cvsmidandnorthbeds.org.uk
or download an application pack from:
www.cvsmidandnorthbeds.org.uk

Deadline: **12pm, Wednesday 14th March 2007**

Our Collaborative Working Officer is here at last!

Ian Curtis started work with **CVS** on 12th February. His role is to support collaborative working between VCS agencies in Mid and North Bedfordshire and between VCS organisations and agencies in the private/independent/local government sector. This project is in partnership with **NCVO's Collaborative Working Unit**, and is funded by the **Bedford Charity (The Harpur Trust)** and **Capacity Builders 'Change Up'** Programme for three years.

Ian said "Local voluntary and community sector organisations are operating in a rapidly-changing business environment and may need additional and sometimes urgent support. I am here to help with such issues as governance, forward planning, funding, policy development and reacting to the new 'service commissioning and procurement arrangements' now coming out of the statutory sector. These issues are often better tackled in partnership because we can draw strength from each other's experiences, resources and ideas."

We are aware from recent research that most people in the sector understand the word 'collaboration' to mean 'mergers' and whilst this could be one outcome of two or more organisations working in partnership, collaborative working can also be on the basis of informal or formal partnerships, lead agency working, and consortium working. Ian said "I am not here to try to force partnerships but to help organisations explore options together and move forward in whatever way they think is best."

Ian has been working in the voluntary sector since 2000 mainly in the fields of funding and development. Most recently he was Funding and Development Officer for all eight of North Yorkshire's Citizen's Advice Bureaux. Ian can be contacted on: **01234 354366** or email **ian@cvsmidandnorthbeds.org.uk**

Serving the Voluntary and Community Sector in Mid and North Bedfordshire

Registered Charity: 1091423

SNIPPETS

Relate have launched a **Family Counselling Service** at four Children Centres across Bedfordshire. From the week commencing 19th February Relate Family Counselling will be available at Goldington Children Centre, The Lawns Early Excellence Centre, Tithe Farm Neighbourhood Centre and from April 2007, Queens Park Neighbourhood Centre. For information, contact **Michele Flynn** at **Relate** on **01234 400730**.

Bedfordshire Action for Older People (BAOP) is a totally independent group providing **Bedfordshire County Council** with direct feedback on what older people think of the current services provided in Bedfordshire and is also a vital part of the Council's strategy of engaging older service users in every stage of the commissioning process. Meetings are held quarterly. For information, contact **Steve Perry** at **Age Concern Bedfordshire** on **01234 216002**

Bedford Advice Forum (BAF) are running a number of training courses: **Introduction to Benefits** (Thursday 15th March, full-day course), **Benefits Update** (Wednesday 18th April, half-day course), and **Disability Benefits** (Wednesday 16th May, full-day course). Please contact the BAF Secretary on **01234 360607** for details.

Family Groups (Bedford) have a new co-ordinator. **Jane Harvey** takes over from **Sue Herbert**. **Family Groups** are led by local women who speak a variety of community languages. Our groups provide a warm, friendly atmosphere and a well-equipped free crèche, where your children are able to play, make friends and take part in activities under the supervision of trained crèche workers. You can then spend a couple of hours exploring your creative abilities, sharing and discussing day-to-day issues over a cup of tea and biscuits. Activities include craft, keep fit, food, discussions of local concern – health, housing, parenting, safety, and many others. Each group meets for two hours once a week (in term time) and **all** local women are welcome with or without children:

- **Neighbourhood Group** **Tuesdays 1.00 – 3.00pm**, Queens Park Neighbourhood Centre
- **Berry Group** **Tuesdays 12.45 – 2.45pm**, Hastingsbury School
- **Cherry Group** **Wednesdays 12.45 – 2.45pm**, Cherry Trees Children's Centre
- **Westbourne Group** **Wednesdays 12.45 – 2.45pm**, Queens Park Community Centre
- **Cauldwell Group** **Thursdays 9.30 – 11.30am**, Raleigh Centre, Amptill Road
- **Riverside Group** **Thursdays 12.45– 2.45pm**, Scott Hall, Barford Avenue
- **Baby Bollywood** **Tuesdays 9.45 – 11.15am**, Queens Park Neighbourhood Centre
Music & language group for the under-fives

We extend a welcome to all local women to come along and see for yourselves! If you would like more information or a visit from your local group leader, please call the Co-ordinators on **01234 316801**. E-mail: **admin@familygroups.co.uk**

Refugee Week is the **18th-24th June 2007**. The **Bedford Refugee Week Steering Group** would love to hear from you if you would like mark the occasion but have no firm plans as yet. **Refugee Week** is a UK-wide programme of arts, cultural and educational events that celebrate the contribution of refugees to the UK, and encourages a better understanding between communities. Each year, the week is organised to coincide with the **World Refugee Day**, on 20th of June. Events are encouraged around the idea that Refugee Week is *a space of encounters* between different communities and a great opportunity to use more creative ways to bring refugee experience and other relevant issues closer to new and wider audiences. In Bedford the steering group are planning a celebration evening on **Friday 22nd June 2007** where the achievements and activities of local refugee community groups and those that support them will be featured. For more information, contact **Carol Solaiman**, c/o **BRASS**, St Lukes, United Church, 26 St Peters Street, Bedford. Or Email **carol.solaiman@ntlworld.com**

Bedfordshire Primary Care Trust is consulting on its **Strategic Intentions** between 2007-2012. *'The newly-established Bedfordshire PCT will continue to develop as a primarily commissioning organisation, involving our patients and public and assessing local healthcare needs in order to plan and procure the right services from a broad range of providers'*. Comments must be made by the end of March. For a copy of the consultation document or the 12-page overview, go to **www.bedfordshirepct.nhs.uk**

Free to a good home - Epson 24 Pin Dot Matrix Printer, practically new. Contact **Fiona** at **CVS** on **01234 354366**

Funding

Construction help from CRASH

CRASH is the construction and property industry charity for the homeless. The charity provides practical help for homelessness charities. It does this by harnessing the skills, products, talents and goodwill of the construction and property sectors to help homelessness charities throughout the UK to improve their premises, facilities and accommodation provided for homeless people. Working with the companies that support CRASH means that the homelessness charities save money, get better value for their money, or both.

If your project is in need of refurbishment help, please contact the **CRASH** office today - Tel: **0208 742 0717**
Fax: **0208 747 3154** Email: crash@crash.org.uk Website: www.crash.org.uk

Lloyds TSB Foundation - New Guidelines

The **Lloyds TSB Foundation for England and Wales** has launched a new set of guidelines featuring significant changes to its core programmes. The Foundation has reviewed the **Community Programme** for consistency and to sharpen/tighten its focus on supporting smaller underfunded charities that help disadvantaged people to play a fuller role in the community of their choice:

The Community Open Programme - The Community Programme has been relaunched as the Community Open Programme to reflect the Foundation's core mission of supporting local charities that help disadvantaged people to play a fuller role in the community of their choice. At a local and regional level the Foundation is now focusing on supporting underfunded charities with an income of £1million or less for core and project funding of one to three years.

At an England and Wales-wide level the Foundation is prioritising charities with an income of £5 million or less. It is very important that charities speak to the grant-making team before they apply as staff will give guidance on submitting an application in relation to how much money it would be realistic to request and the most appropriate aspect of funding requirements to submit. For further information contact **Tracy Miles**, East of England Office on **01284 750168** or visit the website www.lloydstsbfoundations.org.uk

The Conservation Foundation and O2 have launched a new award scheme

"It's Your Community" – to help provide funding for projects designed to improve local environments throughout the UK.

Awards of up to £1000 are available to local groups and individuals for the hire of tools or equipment, and to purchase plants, paint, signs, materials etc. All types of environmental projects such as: turning derelict land into an amenity park or wildlife area, tree planting, creating a wildlife pond, renovating neglected river and canal footpaths, providing water butts and recycling facilities in village halls - are welcome to apply, from anywhere in the country.

Everyone receiving an **"It's Your Community"** award will be invited to send 'before and after' pictures to **The Conservation Foundation** to show how their award has made a difference and qualify for a further "Well Done Award" to ensure the project's sustainability.

Who can apply: *Local amenity groups, parish and town councils, schools, youth clubs, heritage groups, environmental and conservation groups and individuals* - who can show that their project will benefit the local environment.

Application forms are available in all **O2's** 350 shops or by contacting **The Conservation Foundation** to request an application form. For any problems please contact: **Libby Symon: 0207 591 3111**, The Conservation Foundation1, Kensington Gore London SW7 2AR or visit the website: www.conservationfoundation.co.uk

**FUNDING
FAYRE
2007**



**Thursday 14th June 2007
12.30pm—5pm**

Bedford Corn Exchange

**A mixture of stalls,
presentations and
workshops**

**Further information will
be sent out in April**

**Get the date in your
diary!**