

## IN THIS ISSUE:

- Impact of the Welfare Reform
- Strategic Engagement Update
- Neighbourhood Employment and Skills Panels
- Volunteer Centre AGM
- Spotlight on..Hallam Street Community Project
- Charities Update
- Localgiving Launch
- Funding Digest
- Training

*Sandwell Council of Voluntary Organisations is a membership organisation representing the experiences and aspirations of Sandwell's Voluntary & Community Sector.*

*It offers a wide variety of capacity building and developmental services to charitable and community organisations.*

## An Exciting Opportunity for the Black Country

**"If you always do what you've always done you will always get what you always got"**  
**Albert Einstein**

This quote is central to a new Lottery fund entitled 'Talent Match'. Vicky Fowler and Rianna Vernon (Rianna pictured) chaired a meeting in Sandwell in early July to inform the Black Country that we have the exciting opportunity to apply for up to £9.5m from this new £100M fund, which aims to support a partnership approach to working with unemployed young people aged 18-24.

The voluntary and community sector working closely with public and private sector colleagues have been tasked with working in new and different ways to deliver agreed outcomes.

Absolutely central to this partnership approach will be young people themselves who will be invited to co-produce the Black Country programme.

SCVO and Sandwell Council will be part of an initial group from across the sub-region working with young people to agree what needs to be done in the early stages of developing a Black Country proposal.



We will then be working with the voluntary and community sector and partners across the sub-region to look at potential projects and ideas that will form part of a portfolio of innovative solutions to tackling the levels of youth unemployment.

If we are successful work will start in early summer next year.

For further information about Talent Match go to [www.biglotteryfund.org](http://www.biglotteryfund.org)

We will keep you updated, so for further information on progress in Sandwell, please look at our website, read our e-bulletins or contact: Saffi Price, [saffi@scvo.info](mailto:saffi@scvo.info) 0121 525 1127

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## SCVO Update

# The Impact of the Welfare Reform

**There is every chance that the proposed welfare reforms will have a big impact on Sandwell residents, and local partners need to work together to minimise this impact. SCVO has been meeting with a number of local agencies to try to assess the scope of the problem.**

In October 2013, a massive shake-up of the benefits system is planned, with the introduction of Universal Credit to replace a number of pre-existing benefits:

- child tax credit
- housing benefit
- income related employment and support allowance
- income based jobseekers allowance
- income support
- parts of the social fund
- working tax credit

Conservative (with a small c!) estimates suggest that as many

as 5,000 families in Sandwell could lose out as a result of this change, with their benefit entitlement reducing. At the same time, a number of key elements of the previous welfare system are being localised, for example the provision of "crisis loans" from the Social Fund, and the delivery of housing benefit.

In order to respond to these changes effectively, we need to work out the extent of the impact these changes will have, who will be most immediately affected, and what might need to change to limit this. SCVO is working with public bodies, and with voluntary organisations involved in welfare advice and other related areas, both to gather information about the impacts and work together on a collective approach to addressing them.

For more information, contact Nick Drew email: [nick@scvo.info](mailto:nick@scvo.info) or tel: 0121 525 1127



## SCVO Update

# Results of Communication Survey

**Over the last few months SCVO has conducted a Survey to gather feedback on the way it communicates with the Voluntary and Community Sector. A very positive response was received with little change needing to be made to layout and content. More of the same was the general consensus.**

Many thanks to all of you that took the time to complete the Survey which has proved very insightful. The majority of those responding felt that SCVO's newsletter was both useful and interesting with the most useful sections being around Funding, General SCVO Updates and information relating to Legal and Governance issues. In terms of items currently missing from the newsletter organisations felt that more promotion of local events could be included.

SCVO will continue to produce a bi-monthly newsletter which may be slimmed down to include feature articles of interest. SCVO



also produces an electronic e-bulletin every week in which items including events and shorter articles of interest can be included. We will also reduce the numbers of hard-copies produced in an attempt to reduce cost and continue to include a link to the newsletter in the e-bulletin.

If you want to include any articles in either our Newsletter or E-bulletin then please contact the Staff Team on 0121 525 1127.

## What difference SCVO's newsletter has made to your organisation over the last 12 months

- "Kept me informed on various opportunities to engage with public sector/voluntary sector, training opportunities, funding opportunities and made me aware of legislation and policy affecting the sector"
- "Provided quality and timely information in a cost effective manner to enable capacity building for organisations to make informed choices"
- "Our level of funding has increased thanks to contacts made through the funding digest - well done and keep us updated of new funding opportunities."
- "Helps to keep me informed generally and about Sandwell life in particular which is great, thanks."

## Farewell to Martin Drayton

**SCVO is sad to be saying goodbye to a member of our capacity building team during July.**

Many of you will know Martin and will have been supported by him through his work on the 3Cs project and his efforts to support collaboration within the Sector. Martin joined SCVO in July 2009

bringing with him an extensive knowledge of organisational development. Here in the office, we will miss his fun sense of humour and thorough research skills along with everything else that he added to our team and our organisation. I am sure that readers of SCVO.INFO will want to join us in wishing Martin every success in his future.

Following Martin's departure at the end of July, we are reviewing how SCVO can continue to support collaborative and consortia working amongst Sandwell's VCS. Further details will follow in future newsletters.



### GET INVOLVED

SCVO is working to help increase engagement between the Voluntary and Community Sector and public sector bodies. The Sector can also benefit from having the opportunity to meet more often with each other.

SCVO aims to achieve this in various ways, including:-

- Informal networking events
- Facilitating thematic VCS networks and groups
- Consultation events on important local strategies
- Developing ways for the VCS to be represented on key local partnerships
- Supporting VCS groups to understand, influence and lobby decision makers
- Promoting understanding and use of the Sandwell Compact in relations between the VCS and public sector
- Receiving issues from the VCS and raising them with the appropriate public body

For further details and to get involved call the Strategic Engagement Team on 0121 525 1127.

Since our last newsletter landed on your doormats or in your inboxes, the Strategic Engagement Team here at SCVO has been working in a number of thematic areas to benefit the voluntary sector in Sandwell. Here's a flavour of what we've been up to...

### Food Banks Networking

SCVO recently hosted a meeting of a wide range of organisations working across Sandwell who provide food banks. It is a sad fact of the current economic climate that more and more people are having to resort to food banks, and it became clear that organisations which provide these services need to join up strategically to meet the need.

### Social Return on Investment

SCVO is currently in discussion with Sandwell MBC and a number of other principal commissioners of services to define what we mean by "social value" or "social return" which the VCS can contribute when it



delivers services. We envisage commissioning a consultant to come up with a common definition, which commissioners can then use in taking social return into account when assessing bids.

### Engaging with Sandwell and West Birmingham CCG

The new Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) for Sandwell and West Birmingham has now started to recruit its staff, ahead of taking over commissioning responsibilities from the PCT in April 2013. SCVO has been meeting regularly with key people from the CCG, and has been working together with our Birmingham equivalent BVSC and the regional body RAWM to make sure that voluntary sector organisations from across the new CCG area are engaged.

For more information about SCVO's strategic engagement activity, contact Nick Drew: [nick@scvo.info](mailto:nick@scvo.info) / 0121 525 1127

# Supporting Sandwell's Residents and Organisations to Get Sandwell Working

**Neighbourhood Employment and Skills Panel meetings bring together a partnership of voluntary and community organisations, local authority services, public sector partners, agencies, and the private sector to drive forward the improvement of education, employment, entrepreneurship and skills within the Borough of Sandwell – offering local people an integrated, multi-agency approach.**

Panels take place in each town of Sandwell ensuring that all local organisations are given the opportunity to work collaboratively to identify and address the employment, learning and skills needs of the Borough and its residents and then looking to develop a mutually acceptable solutions that will support the Town and its residents.

Contributing to emerging regeneration, employment and learning related government initiatives. Working together

- supporting and developing partnerships and their working practises that will ensure that Sandwell's residents, employers and entrepreneurs will benefit from the resultant projects, developments and initiatives.

Through the Panels, we are building relationships with local employers giving them the opportunity to access the diverse range of services available to them through members as well as ensuring Sandwell residents have access to vacancies within local companies.

Also identifying the local skills shortages and ensuring that the skills, abilities and employers' needs are catered for by local provision – making residents 'job ready'.

The Panels have a diverse and wide ranging membership of Voluntary Sector, Public Sector and private sector organisations who all focus on supporting Sandwell residents with their employment and skills needs

- This also ensures that the knowledge base within the Panels allows for the effective partnerships focussing upon priorities of the Neighbourhood Employment Skills.

Overall the Panel members are working towards removing the barriers to employment and learning that may be faced by Sandwell residents and ensuring that there is adequate provision of accessible quality employment, education and training opportunities for residents, employers and businesses alike as well as giving local organisations the opportunity to share best practise, work together and support each other in any way possible.

If you would like to find out more about Neighbourhood Employment and Skills Panels or if you are interested in becoming a member of your local Panel, please contact Nicy Morgan on 0121 569 2096 or email [enquiries\\_sector@sandwell.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries_sector@sandwell.gov.uk)

## Council Policy on Asset Transfer

**The council has just agreed a policy on asset transfer. This forms part of their overall policy on land and premises for voluntary and community organisations, which is available on the website [www.sandwell.gov.uk](http://www.sandwell.gov.uk).**

The council will consider asset

transfer applications from vcs organisations on a case by case basis. Asset transfer will usually be done through a 99 year lease at a reduced rental. Applications will go through an in depth assessment process.

The council's approach to asset transfer will include all types

of council property, not just community centres, but land and property held by Housing will not be considered for asset transfer.

For further information please contact Heather Chinner. Email: [heather\\_chinner@sandwell.gov.uk](mailto:heather_chinner@sandwell.gov.uk) or tel: 0121 569 3020



## GET SUPPORT

SCVO offers a range of services to support the development and sustainability of Voluntary and Community Sector organisations in Sandwell, however big or small.

We achieve this through one-to-one support, workshops and training events, and signposting and referrals to specialist services.

- Funding advice and information
- Governance support including start-up, constitutions, forming and running a committee and charity registration
- Planning activities, services and projects
- Recruiting and managing staff and volunteers
- Implementing quality systems and improving performance
- Monitoring, evaluating and reporting to stakeholders
- Working collaboratively and in partnership
- Information on local, regional and national issues affecting the Voluntary & Community Sector

For further details and to request support call the Capacity Building Team on 0121 525 1127.

## VCS Resources

# Free Legal Advice for the VCS

**LawWorks is a charity which aims to provide free legal help to community groups who cannot afford to pay for it and who are unable to access legal aid.**

LawWorks for Community Groups aims to provide free legal advice and guidance to small charities, not-for-profit, voluntary and community organisations and social enterprises in England and Wales.

They offer support in the following areas:

### Free Legal Assistance

They can try to broker help for a wide range of legal work including company law, employment law,

intellectual property law, charity law, tax VAT law, insolvency and help in drafting contingency plans, insurance law, health and safety law, general contractual / commercial matters etc.

### Legal Fact-Sheets

LawWorks fact-sheets give general information to groups on specific areas of law, to enable them to spot and avoid potential legal problems. They have fact-sheets on employment law, corporate structure and charity law, intellectual property, data protection, tax and property.

For more information please visit: [www.lawworks.org.uk](http://www.lawworks.org.uk)

# Information Funders Want to Know

**Sandwell Trends has a section on its website designed especially for voluntary and community organisations requiring information to support funding applications.**

The section has been developed in partnership with voluntary sector organisations in Sandwell, in response to the increasing need to provide accurate up to date information to evidence local need in funding applications.

Sandwell Trends provides a wide range of information for the borough as a whole and at various

levels of geography, that may be of use when preparing a funding bid including population, health, economy, levels of deprivation and ward profiles. Please visit [www.sandwelltrends.info](http://www.sandwelltrends.info)



## Volunteering

# National Volunteers Week - 1 - 7 June 2012

**Volunteers turned out in force with smiling faces to promote and celebrate National Volunteer's Week.**

Despite the torrential rain, local volunteers and voluntary organisations staffed outdoor stands for 18 hours, to raise the profile of volunteering in Sandwell.

The event, which was launched on Friday 1 June 2012 at West Bromwich Library and later outside New Look in the High Street, had been arranged by Jean Taylor, CEO of the Volunteer Centre Sandwell.

The aim of this event was to recruit and raise awareness of the benefits and satisfaction in volunteering.

The Volunteer Centre has also produced special "THANK YOU" certificates which over 290 were personally endorsed by Cllr Keith Davies Mayor of Sandwell and distributed to local volunteers.

The Volunteer Centre worked together with seven voluntary organisations, including SCVO,

Beacon Centre for the Blind, Sandwell Deaf Association, Age UK, Volunteer Reading Help, POhWER and Brook Street Community Association.

The week was such a success that enquiries are still being taken from people who have seen banners and promotional material.

Patricia Jarrett volunteer said "Volunteering - it gives me something to do" It is great for my CV and gives me a great deal of

personal satisfaction in assisting in the local community".

The Volunteer Centre has a wide range of opportunities available from administration, befriending, catering, gardening, retail to youth work, to name but a few. So whether you are 18 or 80, there is an opportunity for everyone.

If you are interested in volunteering, please telephone the Volunteer Centre Sandwell on 0121 544 8326.



## Volunteer Centre AGM and Conference

**23rd November 2012 10am -1pm**

**Sandwell Council Chamber Freeth Street Oldbury B69 3DB**

Volunteers are the only human beings on the face of the earth who reflect this nation's compassion, unselfish caring, patience and just plain love for one another.

Invited speaker Cllr Simon Hackett

Come and hear how local lives have been transformed.  
Make it a date in your diary! Further details will be available soon.



## ROOM HIRE

SCVO offers high quality Board and training facilities.

Rooms for hire include a Board room that seats up to thirty people, a meeting room that seats up to six and a smaller one to one meeting room.

Conference and training equipment is available to hirers along with a range of catering options.

Rates for room hire are competitive, with reductions for local not for profit groups. For more information call SCVO on 0121 525 1127.

## VCS Feature

# Credit Unions Win Funding Boost to Expand Services

**With a backdrop of articles in the news around fiscal accountability and communities struggling in the recession the Government has announced that Credit unions will receive up to £38m to modernise and expand so they can offer 1 million more people an alternative to high cost credit.**

Credit unions are generally member-owned organisations that offer loans at more competitive rates than more aggressive types of short-term lending. The co-operative values and principles of credit unions mean members have full control of their own financial business, keeping the benefits in the community.

Welfare reform minister Lord Freud said the additional funds will help credit unions buy new computer systems and infrastructure so they can increase the numbers of people they help to save and borrow.

The Unite union has reported that workers are increasingly turning to payday loan firms because their wages run out before the end of the month, creating a "debt disease".

Lord Freud, in an interview with the Guardian, said: "Credit unions provide an essential service for communities and we want to help them to extend the support they provide."

"Credit unions are growing – almost doubling in membership



since 2006 – but we want them to be a mainstream option for savers and borrowers just as they are in other countries, and to ditch the image of a 'poor man's bank'. "Our investment will help credit unions reach up to 1 million new customers providing a real alternative to rip-off interest rates from payday loans, doorstep lenders and illegal loan sharks." One of the reasons credit unions are not as well used in the UK as in other countries is a lack of awareness.

Here is Sandwell, we have a thriving 6Towns Credit Union which last year paid out a 4% dividend on savings. For further information, please contact them through their website: [www.sixtowns.co.uk](http://www.sixtowns.co.uk) or phone 0121 553 3110 or call into their West Bromwich branch: 382 High Street.



## Sandwell VCS Feature

### Spotlight on ...



# Hallam Street Community Project

**This month Hallam Street Community Project are the spotlight. 'SCVO.INFO' talks to Merilyn Wakeman (Project Manager) and Josie Attwood (Catering Manager) from the group**

#### 1. Tell us what you do.

From the Centre which is based on the corner of Hallam Street/Lewisham Street in West Bromwich, we cater for all ages providing lunches on a Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday from 10am – 2pm. The Project has been running for 9 years and came out of the need of the community. Many groups use the facilities at the Centre and we have 3 rooms available. We also have a wet room which offers shower facilities for people with disabilities. At the moment, Sure Start use the Centre for a Stay and Play Group, Different Stokes a group supporting young people affected by stroke. We also have over 60's Groups, Knit and Natter groups and Extend Classes to name but a few! Every year we provide a Christmas Day lunch for those that might otherwise spend this on their own.

#### 2. What is your proudest achievement?

In 2000 we started to fundraise and with the help of Children

In Need and also Radio WM we managed to raise almost £250,000 to completely refurbish the Centre and develop a garden with a soft play area for children. The numbers of organisations using the rooms at the Centre is increasing as are the numbers of people who want lunches. As part of the support for the Project we have two volunteers with learning disabilities. When they first started with us they had little confidence and needed a mentor to offer support. They now have the confidence to come on their own and to see how they have grown is one of our proudest achievements.

#### 3. What is the most valuable lesson you have learnt about working with people in Sandwell?

The people in Sandwell are very supportive of what we do and there is a real sense of community spirit. We might only be small as a Project but people really do value what we do in helping those that are isolated to have a place to go that isn't intimidating and is welcoming where they can chat and socialise with others.

#### 4. What are the plans for the future?

We want to expand on what we already do and encourage more



groups to use our community facilities. The Project also needs the help of others for it to grow and we would welcome more volunteers to support it in the future.

#### 5. What are the most important challenges for the voluntary sector in Sandwell in the coming years?

Finding the resources to carry on doing what they are doing is going to be challenging both in terms of the funding and the people needed. There will be an increase in demand on services due to the recession and the increase of an ageing population will mean more people needing support.

#### 6. How can SCVO help strengthen the sector over the coming years?

We have had really good support from SCVO in the past and they have helped us to secure funding. SCVO need to do more of the same. They really do help to point organisations in the right direction. Hallam Street Community Project is based at Lewisham Street, West Bromwich, B71 4HG. If you would like more information on the services it offers or to access some of the facilities it has available please contact 0121 580 2041.



## WANT TO BE PART OF THE BUDDIES PROGRAMME?

This programme is an exciting initiative which aims to build the capacity of the voluntary and community sector in the Black Country by matching specific community groups, charities and voluntary organisations with experienced professionals and community workers.

- The four areas covered by the programme include Funding, Finance, Business and Marketing.
- Organisations will have access to a dedicated buddy for approximately 8 hours per month over three to four months.
- Buddies can come from anywhere in the West Midlands but participating organisations must be based or operational within the Black Country.
- Buddies can be anyone with skills or knowledge in one or more of the four buddy strands. They can be from the world of business, industry, the public sector, and the voluntary and community sector; we also welcome graduates and postgraduates looking to exploit their skills and build their work experience.

For more information visit the Buddies website: [www.buddiesuk.org](http://www.buddiesuk.org)  
Registration: Carolyn Pratt on 0121 525 1127 ext 220 or email [carolyn@scvo.info](mailto:carolyn@scvo.info)  
Enquiries: Tippa Naphtali on 0121 525 1127 ext 216 or email [tippa@scvo.info](mailto:tippa@scvo.info)

Funded by The Social Action Fund and run in partnership with local charity support agencies across the Black Country.

## Legal and Governance

# August Charities Update

## Identity Verification for Record Check Tightened

The Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) is tightening up the identity verification procedures used by Registered Bodies for applicants (for record checks) with the intention to reduce any possible abuse of the system and improve public protection. Revised identity (ID) checking guidelines come in from 28th May, although it is not mandatory until 31st August, to allow time for staff training at the registered bodies. Twenty one documents will no longer be valid for identification purposes.

## Lord Hodgson's Charities Act Review

Lord Hodgson has published his review of the Charities Act 2006, 'Trusted and Independent: Giving charity back to charities'. This was laid before parliament on 16 July. He has made over 100 recommendations to simplifying reporting and regulation but increasing transparency. These include: Large charities with an income over £1 million should have the automatic power to pay their trustees; The income threshold for compulsory registration with the Charity Commission should be raised from £5,000 to £25,000; Charities with income under £25,000 will be allowed to register voluntarily; Charities should be charged to register and file annual returns; The Charitable Incorporated Organisation legal form should be implemented immediately.

The National Association for

Voluntary and Community Action (NAVCA) is pleased to see recommendations that will make it easier to run a charity, including Lord Hodgson's call for the Charitable Incorporated Organisation legal form to be implemented immediately and the recommendation that charities should be able to voluntarily register with the Charity Commission. However NAVCA is concerned at some proposals, especially the recommendations to raise the threshold to £25,000, allow payment for trustees of large charities and charging new charities to register.

NAVCA have joined with other national umbrella bodies, including National Council of Voluntary Organisations (NCVO) and Community Matters, in writing to the Minister for Civil Society, Nick Hurd, expressing their opposition to the payment of trustees. Voluntary trusteeship is something we have long seen as part of what makes charities special. SCVO will keep you updated on further developments.

## Music Licensing

Early 2012, new legislation gave PPL the right to collect fees for playing music recordings from charities that were previously exempt. This is in addition to the fee payable to PRS for Music for playing copyright music. Community Matters, the sector body with a particular interest in the management of community buildings, has written a useful article on the changes, implications, and ways to minimise costs. Please visit: [www.communitymatters.org.uk](http://www.communitymatters.org.uk)

## Charities Update

# Extension of the Charities - Exception from Registration Regulations 1996

**Certain religious charities that are connected with particular Christian denominations and have an annual income of £100,000 or less are currently exempt from the requirement to register with the Charity Commission. The current exception is due to expire on 1 October 2012.**

Subject to Ministerial and Parliamentary approval, the Cabinet Office is proposing to extend the exception to 31 March 2014. The continuation of the exception would mean there would be no changes for religious exempted charities until at least April 2014.

## What is the exception?

Currently most charities have to register with the Commission if their annual income is more than £5,000. However some charities are exempted from the requirement to register (and consequently send their annual accounts and report and returns to the Commission) unless their annual income is more than £100,000. In all other respects they are subject to the full regulation of the Commission. For example, they can be the subject of a formal Commission inquiry or be required to send documents such as annual accounts to the Commission for scrutiny. The £100,000 threshold cannot be amended until the report of Lord Hodgson's statutory "five years on" review of the working of the Charities Act 2006 is laid before Parliament. This is expected to be laid in July 2012. The great majority of exempted charities are

religious exempted charities, Boy Scout and Girl Guide charities and armed forces charities. The religious exempted charities are exempted by the Charities (Exception from Registration) Regulations 1996 as amended. It is only the exception that applies to religious exempted charities that is currently due to expire on 1 October 2012.

## Why are they extending this exception?

The purpose of extending the exception is to give the Government and religious exempted charities, time to digest Lord Hodgson's review's findings and any relevant recommendations, and for Government to formulate and consult on a longer term solution. It does not rule out a further extension of the exception in 2014, or for example, the implementation of a reduction in the current £100,000 registration threshold phased over several years from 2014. If the current exception were not to be extended, all religious exempted charities would be required to register with the Charity Commission from 1 October 2012 if their annual income is more than £5,000. Extending the religious charities exception will mean that religious exempted charities can continue as now until at least 31 March 2014.

## Why are they considering ending the exception?

In 2002, the Prime Minister's Strategy Unit report "Private action, public benefit"<sup>2</sup> stated that it did not believe that there was any continuing justification

for retaining the exceptions and that these charities should be subject to the same registration and accountability requirements as other charities. That review recommended that there should be no exempted charities. It also said that a higher income threshold could be set to "ensure a manageable process of registration". The Government accepted those recommendations in principle and a higher income threshold for exempted charities was set at £100,000 in the 2006 Act, with a view to its reduction over the long term to the same level as for non-exempted charities.

## Why don't you simply end the exception now?

They do not know what Lord Hodgson's review will recommend and what the Government's response to those recommendations will be. The recommendations could, for example, include a change to the current general registration income threshold as well as other changes that may have an impact on exempted charities or the Commission. It could even recommend that the exceptions should continue. It would be unfair and premature to require all religious exempted charities to start registering from October 2012, without properly considering recommendations from Lord Hodgson's review.

If you have any further queries please e-mail David Hale at the Cabinet Office at [david.hale@cabinet-office.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:david.hale@cabinet-office.gsi.gov.uk). David Hale Office for Civil Society Cabinet Office



**SANDWELL VCS  
DIRECTORY**

This internet-based directory lists details of a large number of voluntary organisations and community groups in Sandwell. It can be searched to identify groups that work with a particular client group, in a particular location, etc..

To add your group's detail to the directory call SCVO on 0121 525 1127.

To view and search the database visit [www.sandwellvcs.info](http://www.sandwellvcs.info)

**FUNDING PORTAL**

SCVO's funding portal allows instant, online access to hundreds of funders and contractors. Situated on the home page you can search the portal for funding tailored to your organisation's needs.

To view and search visit [www.scvo.info](http://www.scvo.info)

**E-MAIL UPDATES**

Did you know that you can receive e-mails on SCVO services and events?

Currently more than 900 people receive 'SCVO.INFO' by e-mail each month and this list is also used to circulate up to the minute information on news, events and services arranged by SCVO.

To sign up to this list contact the Capacity Building Team on 0121 525 1127.

**All Together for a Future that Works**

**Join the TUC's campaign against Youth Unemployment in the Black Country**

The TUC recently launched a campaign against youth unemployment and its impact on communities in the Black Country entitled 'All Together for a Future that Works'. Youth unemployment is a national crisis that has hit young people in the Black Country particularly hard. Currently more than 1 in 10 young people are claiming Job Seekers Allowance, which is almost double the national average. The TUC believes that youth unemployment does not just harm young people themselves but the whole community that is deprived of skilled workers in both the public and private sectors.

Government cuts to careers and voluntary services and the scrapping of Educational Maintenance Allowance and the Future Jobs Fund have made it harder than ever for young people to find work. Thus the TUC campaign is focussed on lobbying the four local Conservative MPs in Dudley South, Halesowen and Rowley Regis, Stourbridge and Wolverhampton South-West who have voted for government cuts. The campaign asks that these MPs take action on youth unemployment and provide the investment in jobs, education and training that is urgently needed. Please help by signing the TUC's petition at: <http://chn.ge/tucyouthpetition>.



The TUC's campaign is already being supported by local colleges, youth councils, unions and students' unions in the Black Country and we will be taking part in the Choose Youth rally on September 22nd in Wolverhampton against cuts to youth services.

To make the TUC's campaign stronger we need your support and the support of your organisation, if you are interested in becoming active in our campaign please email [tucwestmidsaction@tuc.org.uk](mailto:tucwestmidsaction@tuc.org.uk).

To receive campaign updates and actions in your area please text "Youth" and your postcode to 85515.

Find us on Facebook at "All Together for a Future that Works Black Country"

**Former 400m Bronze Medalist Supports Sustainable Future for Groups**

**On the 6 July 2012 Katharine Merry, former 400m bronze medalist, along with local dignitaries supported West Midlands Community Foundations launch Localgiving.com at Barclays, Latitude Club, Birmingham, to enable local Community and Voluntary Organisations (VCO's) become sustainable.**



Localgiving.com is a not-for-profit website providing VCO's with the technology to have webpages giving them an online presence, a straight forward way to raise new sources of funding through reaching wider audience and potential donors, helping to reduce dependency on grants and become more sustainable. The additional advantage is that it also provides VCO's the financial benefits of a charity allowing them to receive Gift Aid increasing a tax paying donors gift by 25%, which ordinarily is not possible.

Katharine Merry who attended and hosted the launch stated; "I am very pleased to be supporting Birmingham and Black Country Community Foundation and Localgiving.com, and doing my bit to help community & voluntary groups become sustainable. It is a great way for groups to raise money through their online presence and reach a wider audience of people to support the amazing work they do. The day was wonderful hearing directly from groups on how this initiative is making a real difference to local groups working on the ground"

Over 40 people attended the

event. Corporate attendees included Mills and Reeves LLP, Barclays, PwC, Deutsche Bank, Rider Levett Bucknall, as well as Voluntary Council Services from the region, community and voluntary groups such including Special Olympics Sandwell and many more.

Administered locally by Community Foundations across the UK; over 100 groups have, so far signed up to Localgiving.com across the West Midlands. The Foundations have supported these VCO's through local workshops to help them in creating their own web presence and Birmingham and Black Country Community Foundation (BCCCF) are working in partnership with Localgiving.com to get as many groups in the region involved and locally over 30 groups have signed up.

Zoë Keens, Director - Development, Birmingham and Black Country Community Foundation commented: "We are proud to be working in partnership with Localgiving.com, to be able to

provide community and voluntary organisations with this wonderful opportunity and a chance for survival in this time of austerity. We are very excited that we have launched this event and would like to continue the momentum and gain more support off key members of our community. We are about linking people who care with causes that matter."

Local Giving was the brain child of philanthropist Marcelle Speller OBE who featured in the last series of the channel 4 programme Secret Millionaire. Inspired to support the work of small community projects, Marcelle founded Local Giving in partnership with the Community Foundation Network in 2011.

If you are a group and would like to get involved with Local Giving.com please email [localgiving@bbccf.org.uk](mailto:localgiving@bbccf.org.uk) or call 0121 322 5572. Registration is free for three months, and then costs just £5 a month. In return, groups can take advantage of online marketing and donation.



# August Funding Digest

### Comic Relief UK Grants Programme

Comic Relief has announced that the final funding round as part of the current UK grants strategy will open for applications on the 13th August 2012.

Under the UK grants programme voluntary and community groups can apply for funding for projects in the areas of:

- Young people and mental health
- Sexually exploited and trafficked young people
- Domestic and sexual abuse
- Mental health
- Young people and alcohol
- Refugee and asylum-seeking women.

Comic Relief provides both capital and revenue and can pay for up to 100% of project costs but they encourage applicants to get some of their funding from other sources.

On average grants of between £25,000 and £40,000 are available. The closing date for applications will be 12 noon on the 19th October 2012. <http://www.comicrelief.com/apply-for-a-grant/apply-for-a-uk-grant>

### Young Roots

Young Roots offers grants of between £3,000 and £50,000. The scheme aims to involve 11 - 25 year-olds in finding out about their heritage, developing skills, building confidence and promoting community involvement. Projects need to be related to the heritage of the UK.

For example, it could involve young people researching a local archive or doing practical casework on a nature reserve. Projects must also show how young people are managing and participating in the project.

The final date for submitting an application under the current programme is 31 January 2013. <http://www.hlf.org.uk/HowToApply/programmes/Pages/youngroots.aspx>

### Funding for Projects that Support Disabled Children and their Families

Local organisations and projects that support disabled children and their families have the opportunity to apply for funding through the True Colours Trust.

Grants of up to £10,000 are usually available for one-off purposes, to help smaller organisations develop and deliver programmes for children, their siblings and families. The Trustees are particularly keen to award grants for:

- Hydrotherapy pools
- Multi sensory rooms
- Mini buses
- Young carers projects
- Sibling projects
- Bereavement support.

This programme provides grants, of between £1,000 - £2,500, to organisations offering palliative services.

Applications can be submitted at any time. [http://www.truecolourstrust.org.uk/small\\_grants.aspx](http://www.truecolourstrust.org.uk/small_grants.aspx)

### Grants to Help New, Innovative Visual Arts Projects

The Elephant Trust offers grants to artists and institutions for new, innovative visual arts projects based in the UK.

The Trust's aim is to make it possible for artists and those presenting their work to undertake and complete projects when confronted by lack of funds. The Trust supports projects that develop and improve the knowledge, understanding and appreciation of the fine arts.

Priority is given to artists, small organisations and galleries who should submit proposals for making or producing new work or exhibitions. Arts Festivals are not supported. The Trust normally awards grants of up to £2,000, but larger grants may be considered.

The next deadline is the 15th October 2012. <http://www.elephanttrust.org.uk/docs/intro.html>

### The Britannia Building Society Foundation

Registered Charities and Schools, working within education and who are seeking funding specifically for numeracy and/or - financial literacy projects can apply to the Britannia Building Society Foundation for grants of between £1,000 and £25,000.

Applications can be submitted at any time and there is a simple application form which is available on request by e-mailing [charitable.foundation@britannia.co.uk](mailto:charitable.foundation@britannia.co.uk) or telephoning on 01538 391806.

Voluntary groups, charities and schools can apply for grants of up to £1,000 through the Britannia Community Fund.

Applications to the Community Fund can be submitted at any time [http://www.britannia.co.uk/\\_site/corporate/social-responsibility/index.html](http://www.britannia.co.uk/_site/corporate/social-responsibility/index.html)

### Nationwide Foundation Small Grants Programme

The Nationwide small grants programme makes grants of up to £5,000 to registered charities with incomes of under £750,000. Under its Grants programme the Foundation makes grants in the following areas:

- Money Matters - tackling financial exclusion affecting disadvantaged groups.
- Home Matters - addressing housing and homelessness among vulnerable groups in the UK. In particular survivors of domestic abuse
- Supporting older people with their housing needs.

Applications can be made at any time. <http://www.nationwidefoundation.org.uk/grants.asp#a2>

### Support for Projects Working with Disadvantaged Young People, Offenders & Ex-offenders

The Worshipful Company of Weavers Benevolent Fund is open to applications. The Fund is open to small registered charities and seeks to support:

- Projects working with disadvantaged people aged 5 to 30 to ensure they have every chance to meet their full potential

- Projects that address the social and economic problems faced by offenders, ex-offenders and their families.

Grants available are of up to £15,000. The Grants Committee meets in February, June and October of each year to consider applications. <http://www.weavers.org.uk/charitable-grants/grant-application-guidelines>

### Sport England Small Grants Programme

Constituted not-for-profit organisations, statutory bodies and voluntary organisations, can apply for grants of between £300 and £10,000 through the Small Grants Programme.

Sport England will give priority to projects that:

- Increase the number of adults participating in moderate intensity sports
- Projects seeking to reduce the drop off rates for 16-19 year olds.

Applications can be submitted at any time and decisions are usually made within ten weeks. [http://www.sportengland.org/funding/small\\_grants.aspx](http://www.sportengland.org/funding/small_grants.aspx)

**For support with identifying and applying to these and other funding opportunities, contact the Capacity Building Team at SCVO on 0121 525 1127.**

**To download the full Funding Digest visit [www.scvo.info](http://www.scvo.info) (under 'Get Support').**

**Visit our Funding Information Web Portal at [www.scvo.info](http://www.scvo.info)**



## SCVO MEMBERSHIP

Sandwell Council of Voluntary Organisations is a membership organisation open to all community groups and voluntary organisations active in Sandwell. It's Board of Directors is elected from it's membership and oversees the strategic direction of SCVO.

Its broad base of members therefore provides strength and credibility for SCVO in giving a voice to the experiences, views and aspirations of the Sector and in delivering capacity building services relevant in a diverse and ever-changing environment. SCVO are always looking to increase their membership and welcome applications from organisations and groups serving any part of Sandwell's community.

For further information about membership and how to apply please call 0121 525 1127.

## SCVO.INFO NEWSLETTER

If you would like to submit an article for inclusion in this newsletter or give feedback on any aspect of it, please call 0121 525 1127 or e-mail leona@scvo.info.

The deadline for articles for the October/November 2012 issue is Friday 21 September 2012.

## Training

# SCVO's Training Programme 2012 - 2013

**Thank you to everyone who completed our 2012 Support and Development Needs Survey, writes Saffi Price, SCVO's Capacity-Building Manager. We have taken on board the Sector's requests for training from the survey, by putting together a comprehensive and flexible training and support programme. The most requested topics, as you may imagine, were funding and fundraising and writing bids and tenders.**

Some other popular topics requested were: defining aims, outcomes and objectives, business and strategic planning, partnership and consortium working, marketing and communications, policies and procedures, and working with volunteers.

We already have a comprehensive programme of events and training in place during the year and we aim to leave some space for flexibility in the programme for sessions as needs or requests arise.



We have already run a very popular First Aid at Work session with St John Ambulance, following a request from the Sector, Voice facilitator training and a session on updates in pensions for employers within the sector. We have training planned on outcomes, funding, governance, buddies, community engagement and working with volunteers. We will also be offering drop-in support on using our funding portal.

We have simplified and improved our training administration, so your feedback on this is welcomed. If there is something that you would like us to include in our programme, please contact us and we will see whether we can source find other organisations who want the training too.

In these challenging times, we will try and keep our training free or as cost effective as possible. We can also offer bespoke training for your organisation on some topics at a reasonable rate.

Please look out for our e-bulletins and updates on our website for further information on our all our training and support sessions.

For further information or to sign up for our e-bulletins and RSS feeds, please look at our website: [www.scvo.info](http://www.scvo.info), email: [saffi@scvo.info](mailto:saffi@scvo.info) or [mazeline@scvo.info](mailto:mazeline@scvo.info) or phone us on 0121 525 1127

We look forward to welcoming you to one of our sessions.