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*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.*

## Charities Receive Big Funding Boost

**A funding lifeline of at least £50 million to support hundreds of vital Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) projects and services was announced in October by the Big Lottery Fund (BIG).**

The full impact on the VCS of cutbacks is still to come according to the National Council for Voluntary Organisations which estimates that voluntary and community groups will face a reduction in public funding of over £900 million by 2016, losing a total of £2.8 billion in that period.

Demand for services is expected to increase and BIG is planning its £50million cash injection in response to be awarded before the end of the financial year, bolstering the Sector as it deals with the developing impact of funding cuts.

As part of the package, BIG has increased funding through their existing Reaching Communities and Awards for All programmes, making an extra 650 awards, and in the coming weeks will be offering grants of up to £10,000 to around 1,000 eligible BIG grant holders who have received more than 12 months funding from us and are in the last 18 months of their project. These grants will



allow projects to review the way they work and explore ways of becoming more sustainable.

Projects coming to the end of their grant that are having a particularly significant impact will also be eligible to apply for an additional year's worth of funding to continue their project and carry out plans to make their projects more sustainable in the long term.

All eligible grant holders will be sent an e-mail from BIG about applying to the Supporting Change and Impact fund with details of how they can apply.

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

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## SCVO Update

# Voluntary Sector Leading Through Change

**This year SCVO's Conference and AGM provided a chance for representatives of the voluntary sector in Sandwell to make its collective voice heard and to take a leadership role locally.**

Over 60 delegates from both the Voluntary and Community Sector and Public Sector in Sandwell joined SCVO's AGM and Conference which was kicked off by Mark Davis, Chief Executive Officer, providing an overview of some of the challenges affecting the voluntary sector in Sandwell. These include: public sector funding cuts; changes in funding priorities and concerns around increased competition over the funding that is available.

SCVO is helping the Sector respond to these challenges by providing networks and forums to enable them to have a voice and influence local decisions. These fora were highlighted by Leona Bird, Network Development Officer, and include a Health and Social Care Forum and a new Children and Young People Forum (see page 14 for more information). SCVO are also exploring future engagement around Housing and have begun conversations around Crime and Disorder. (please see page 13 for more information).

Steve Baylis, Funding Officer at SCVO provided details of the support available to organisations to help make them more financially sustainable. This support includes training around various aspects of completing a successful funding



**Keynote speaker Nick Beddow challenging the Conference**

application; a bi-weekly funding digest; the Funding Buddies programme which matches volunteers with organisations to provide them with funding support and a dedicated funding portal <http://funding.scvo.info/>. It was highlighted that SCVO has successfully assisted organisations to access over £700,000 in funding since April this year.

The AGM business then took place. SCVO's Annual Report and Annual Accounts were accepted and Ruth Levesley from Relate, Pauline Tomlinson from West Bromwich and District YMCA and Sudhakar Naidu from the Balaji Temple were all voted onto the Board. Various Board Members were stepping down including Emma Chetcuti, Tonia Flannagan, Mohammed Loan and Andrew Sjurseth and they were all thanked for their support of SCVO throughout the year.

The conference theme of Leading

## SCVO Update

through Change began with Nick Beddow, Chief Executive of Community Development Exchange providing a unique presentation and his take on the importance of leadership for the voluntary sector. The key messages were that leadership is not about being the boss. It's about collective leadership through shared vision and pooled talents. Change is not just willed from above – it happens as the outcome of forces struggling. Leadership also isn't about having power over others, or managing them towards something. It is about facilitating people to find their own answers and responses to their own needs.

SCVO's local response to leadership has been the creation of the Voluntary Sector's Leaders Forum. The Forum's aim is to provide an opportunity for the sector's Leaders to meet together and agree sector-wide approaches to common issues. The Forum also has the ability to escalate issues

to the senior level of public and private sectors in Sandwell and across the Black Country in order that its voice is heard.

Geoff Coleman from Options for Life, provided an overview and concluded that "to those critics of the voluntary sector and the skeptics out there who thought the

sector would never get it together and speak with a single voice, I say this.....we have found our voice.... and we are very very loud".

For more information about the AGM or Conference or any other issue, please do call the office on 0121 525 1127.



**SCVO's Conference shares a light-hearted moment**

**SCVO has recently welcomed two new members to the team: Saffi Price joins as Capacity Building Team Manager, and Mazeline Hemmings as Database Administrator.**

Mazeline writes: "Having been at SCVO for only five weeks, I'm very much the new girl. Still getting to know everyone and how things are done. As the database administrator, I look after things database related. Together with my colleagues, I recently attended (my first) SCVO AGM. Here I had the opportunity to meet many of our members. It's one thing managing entries on a database; it's something quite different actually meeting members and listening to them explain what they do and how

they are helping members of their local community.

I previously worked at Lifework, so it could be argued that I'm not completely new to the organisation, more like transferred from one area of the business to another. Semantics aside, I'm sure I will be getting to know more about our membership base and the valuable work that is carried out by members of our voluntary organisations."

Saffi writes "Hello! I am really pleased to be joining SCVO. My role is to lead the capacity building team and together we will continue to develop and deliver training and services with Sandwell Voluntary and Community Sector.

I have come from Wolverhampton Voluntary Sector Council where I worked for the past 6 years. My background is firmly rooted in the sector, working in different organisations and in partnership with the Statutory Sector over many years. I volunteer as a Secondary School Governor and with Woodcraft Folk. I live in Wolverhampton with my partner; we have four children. We also have a rescue greyhound and rabbits. I am involved in community activity and have a particular interest in issues around peace, environment and social justice. I love music and exploring the countryside. I am really looking forward to learning more about Sandwell and meeting with many of you. I hope to see you soon!"

### TRANSFORMING LOCAL INFRASTRUCTURE: UPDATE

Since August, SCVO has been involved in the process of pulling together a bid to the Cabinet Office for money to improve efficiency and service offer of local voluntary sector infrastructure.

A joint bid has now been submitted, involving SCIPS, Sandwell Volunteer Centre, the Sandwell Consortium, the Community Hubs Co-operative and other partners, to establish a joint contract management centre for Sandwell's VCS. This will allow the partners to continue the collaboration and capacity building work which has been piloted over the last few years in the Borough, as well as offering enhanced local support, communication, volunteer development and linkages with business.

The bid has passed the first stage, and we will be informed in the New Year as to whether we have been successful in bringing this funding to Sandwell. At that point, there will be a number of opportunities for a wide variety of Sandwell-based organisations to input into the further development of the project. For more information, please contact Nick Drew, Strategic Engagement Manager: [nick@scvo.info](mailto:nick@scvo.info)

## Leaders' Survey Results

**Local voluntary and community organisations continue to prove resilient in the face of increased demands and against a backdrop of diminishing funds, reveals a new SCVO report on Sandwell's VCS.**

The report, compiled using data from SCVO's Voluntary Sector Directory and drawing on feedback from its recent VCS Leaders Survey, also reveals the Sector's own 'squeezed middle'. Whilst smaller community groups and larger organisations have managed relatively well in the last 12 months, leaders of medium-sized organisations report that

the cuts are hitting them hardest. This part of the Sector is also least positive about its engagement with the local public sector and is notably less optimistic than the rest of the Sector about the future.

SCVO's Chief Executive Officer Mark Davis said "Thanks to the many local leaders who completed this Survey. These findings will prove invaluable in helping us to focus our support and understand where our lobbying on behalf of the Sector can make the greatest difference."

A copy of the full report is accessible on SCVO's website [www.scvo.info](http://www.scvo.info)

## New £80m Of Grants Puts Community First

**The Community Development Foundation (CDF) has been chosen by the Government to deliver its national Community First programme.**

A small grants scheme will distribute £30m to some of the most deprived areas of the country over the next four years, and a national £50m Endowment fund will be established to sustain neighbourhood projects in the long-term. In addition, CDF will bring together partners to boost the fund by up to £10m by 2015.

The programme will support communities to enable them to make the changes they want to see in their area. In total, just over one million pounds has been

allocated to sixteen wards across Sandwell, to provide money for community-led projects.

All Community First funding must be matched by community groups in the form of money, in kind contributions and the giving of volunteer time. The money will be administered by local panels supported by Panel Partners and trained Community Organisers. In some areas practical and financial help, which may be used as a match, has been pledged by the Asda Foundation.

Guidance on any aspect of Community First can be found on the Community Development Foundation website [www.cdf.org.uk](http://www.cdf.org.uk)

## Co-operation Can Secure Futures

**Ten community centres in Sandwell have collaborated to help secure their futures as Sandwell Community Hubs Co-operative.**

The centres have always shared a history of collaborative working but decided to formalise their relationship to prepare themselves for changes to the funding climate. The move will enable them to work together and collaboratively bid for contracts to provide services from their respective centres. The centres were encouraged to collaborate by commissioners at Sandwell MBC in order to provide the best chance of competing in an open tender processes. Crucially the co-operative seized the opportunity to create a future together and avoid direct competition and fragmentation of services.

Tonia Flannagan said: "As community centres it's vital that we work together to win contracts and continue to offer excellent services to our users. The launch of the Sandwell Community Hubs Co-operative will do this."

If you would like to find out more

about the Sandwell Community Hubs Co-operative please contact Tonia Flannagan, tel: 0121 558 0018, ext 1 or email: [tonia.flannagan@stalbans-cc.co.uk](mailto:tonia.flannagan@stalbans-cc.co.uk) Alternatively, you can contact John Rennie, tel: 0121 525 5245, or email: [fpmillenniumcentre@googlemail.com](mailto:fpmillenniumcentre@googlemail.com)



## Health & Social Care Consortium Update

**SCVO are committed to providing the Sector with news on progress towards the development of Sandwell Health and Social Care Consortium.**

The consortium now has a Working Group consisting of fifteen organisations and held their first meeting in October 2011.

At the meeting Sharon Liggins, Sandwell PCT provided a helpful update on the development of Clinical Commissioning Groups and SCVO prepared a Collaborative Working Understanding for consultation. The main outcome from the first meeting was to quickly establish a Task and Finish

Group to discuss ideas, share consortium learning experiences and identify development needs. SCVO has scheduled a series of Working and Task and Finish Group meetings at regular intervals to take place before the end of March 2012.

The Group meets again in November to discuss adopting a parallel development process. This process will allow bidding for contracts to take place, e.g. under a lead agency agreement, whilst the Consortium moves towards establishing its independence through a special purpose vehicle.

The following organisations form the Working Group: Action for Blind

People; Beacon Centre for the Blind; CARES; Healthy Resolutions OHS; Ideal 4 All; Murray Hall Community Trust; Options for Life; Partnership for Peace Foundation; Relate Birmingham; Sandwell Asian Families Support Service; Sandwell Community Hubs Co-operative; Sandwell Crossroads; Sandwell Mind; West Bromwich & District YMCA and West Bromwich African Caribbean Resource Centre.

If you are interested in working collaboratively or want to know more about who's working collaboratively in Sandwell, please contact Martin Drayton, Collaborative Projects Officer, tel: 0121 525 1127 or email: [martind@scvo.info](mailto:martind@scvo.info)

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.

# Localism Bill Becomes Act of Parliament

**Just before this newsletter went to press, it was announced that the much-discussed Localism Bill has now received Royal Assent and has become an Act of Parliament.**

However, there is still some lack of clarity about how the provisions in the Act will impact locally. The passing of the Act does not mean that all of its contents will come into force immediately, as some of its provisions will need further legislation and guidance to set out how they will work in practice.

The Department of Communities and Local Government has suggested that many of them will be in place by April 2012, but we will monitor the situation and keep you posted as to when we can expect the community provisions to be implemented.

## Right to Challenge

The Act as passed into law still includes the “community right to challenge” – a right for local communities and organisations to express an interest in running a Council service which they think they could run better. A “challenge” under this provision will trigger a procurement process, under which the community or group making the challenge would be able to bid – however this does not take into account whether they have the capacity to either bid or to deliver the service.

## Right to Bid

It also includes the “community right to bid”, which obliges local authorities to maintain a register of “assets of community value”. When such assets come up for sale or a lease is due for surrender, communities will have a short window in which to express an interest in it, and then there will be a moratorium period on the sale or let of that asset, to allow the community an opportunity to prepare a bid. In the course of the consultation and Parliamentary debates, this moratorium period was shortened to three months. Also, we will need to see what types of assets are included in the definition “assets of community value”, and how it will impact on local organisations and institutions who have allowed community use of their buildings or other assets but who might now see their ownership challenged by that very community.



# Sector Supports Community Development

**The Voluntary Sector in Sandwell is being invited to get involved in the progression of Community Development to benefit communities across the borough’s six towns.**

In July 2010 the Council’s Partnership and External Scrutiny Panel decided to review how the Council and its partners were working together to support and develop communities in Sandwell.

The Panel wanted to know how Community Development work was being utilised to ensure effective community consultation, engagement and involvement, and the development of social capital.

The panel acknowledged the wide variety and amount of community work happening in Sandwell;

however the approach and outcomes varied widely.

The panel were keen to ensure wider partnership working across all the relevant agencies in developing, delivering and embedding community development as this can be the key to making a real difference to communities within Sandwell.

Since then a range of partners from the statutory and voluntary sector have been working together to help respond to recommendations from the panel.

Through this partnership approach five Pathfinder organisations have been identified and are taking a leading role in developing this initiative. It is an aspiration that through strong partnership work they will develop a model

of excellence which will have a strategic significance and impact upon community development.

The five partners are: Sandwell MBC, Sandwell Homes, Sandwell Community Hubs Co-Operative, Murray Hall Trust and Sandwell PCT. They are keen to ensure a wider involvement from the Community and Voluntary Sector.

With the support of the panel the Pathfinder organisations are supporting the development of a fully integrated Community Development Strategy, which will have a major underpinning effect on public services.

If you would like to get involved or would like any further information please contact Manny Sehmbi, Senior Community Development Officer, Sandwell MBC on 0121 569 4637.

# Priorities for Sandwell Health Board Chosen

**In October, SCVO and Sandwell Primary Care Trust (PCT) jointly ran a session to identify the key health and social care priorities for Sandwell’s Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (or JSNA).**

The JSNA is an annual programme of needs assessments for individual health conditions, medical processes or issues affecting particular population groups, which should inform the service commissioning decisions made by the Health and Well Being Board and the PCT/

Clinical Commissioning Groups.

In an interactive session, the 19 shortlisted possible JSNA priorities were presented by Carl Griffin, the PCT’s Public Health Consultant, and representatives of voluntary sector organisations from across Sandwell voted to indicate what their main priorities were. The top four priorities eventually chosen by the voluntary sector representatives were: cancer (post diagnosis and post treatment care); use of A&E (urgent care); dementia; and reducing avoidable hospital

activity.

These chosen priorities will now be amalgamated with the choices of other stakeholder groups, and the Health and Well Being Board will use that information to make the final decision about which priorities to pursue in this year’s JSNA. The process will be repeated annually, and in future SCVO will be represented on the JSNA Project Sub-Group which will have an input into setting out future draft priorities, so the voluntary sector will be involved from the outset.

## 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.

## Volunteering

# Volunteering Makes a Difference

**Make a Difference Day provides people across the borough with the opportunity to try out and find out more information about volunteering.**

Friday 28th October saw twelve voluntary and statutory organisations joining together in Oldbury Town Square to convey the message of volunteering to Sandwell residents.

## 50 New Volunteers

The outreach event generated a lot of interest and saw over fifty potential volunteers register their interest for current volunteer opportunities. It also gave the centre staff a chance to discuss the services of the Volunteer Centre to passers by some of whom were not aware of our existence. We recognise the developmental work that

is ongoing around raising our centre's profile.

## More Opportunities

Of the day, Jean Taylor CEO said "We are committed to work with Jobcentre's to assist unemployed people to access volunteering opportunities, also continue to work with schools and colleges to provide information and volunteering opportunities to children and young people. We look forward to hosting more outreach events in 2012"

Organisations which attended during the day included Agewell, Albion Foundation, Buds, Lifework, Reach People Charity, Rowley Hospital, Sandwell Brook Advice Service, Sandwell Befriending Service, Sandwell Children's & Families, Sweda, Welfare Rights and Windmill Centre Smethwick.



## Volunteering

# Finding A Way Forward for Young People & Volunteering

**Sandwell has a thriving Voluntary and Community Sector with approximately 800 recognised groups across the borough; of those groups around 500 are wholly reliant on volunteers.**

In response to local need, Volunteer Centre Sandwell is working with partners from private, public and Voluntary and Community Sector to develop a series of volunteering opportunities in getting the best out of our young people. Jean Taylor Chief Executive Officer comments "we have seen a significant rise in the number of young people seeking volunteering opportunities. In fact over the period 1st April 2010 to 31st March 2011 the number of people who used our services increased by 91%."

Local solutions to help young people could be developed through an expansion of accredited programmes of informal learning and volunteering. These should be included in the definition of meaningful activities. If local partners ensured that opportunities become more attractive by placing more weight on volunteering and community service as a route into work and formal training, developing local initiatives for young people who give their time can provide a wide range of social outcomes.

Young people are motivated to volunteer for a number of reasons; their personal feelings (e.g. satisfaction, feel-good); personal needs(e.g. pastime, relationships);

altruism; experience (e.g. skills and work prospects); and personal incentive (e.g. qualifications) For young people who are not engaged in education, employment or training, or who are not engaged as carers, volunteering offers a tool to help them re-engage and often has a positive impact.

Volunteering helps to develop skills which young people can then use. This includes generic skills such as teamwork, communication and other social and interpersonal

skills. It is often the supportive and people-centred ethos of the volunteering sector that facilitates the development of these skills.

If your organisation would like to consider the option of providing an opportunity for young people in Sandwell, The Volunteer Centre would be happy to arrange a meeting with you. Please contact Richard Lodder on 0121 544 8326 or email Richard@volunteercentresandwell.co.uk



## Social Outcomes from Youth Volunteering

- Start to break down some of the engagement barriers
- Provide a valuable way of improving skills, building confidence and gaining work experience
- Allow young people to contribute to the local economy
- Act as a stepping stone into work and training and in some cases be an alternative to employment or training.
- Help tackle social problems, build social cohesion and further develop local culture and sport.

**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)

# Ideal for All Anniversary

**Ideal for All celebrated its 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary at its recent AGM. The Deputy Mayor, Councillor Ann Shackleton with Carol Goff, Chair and Naeem Arif, Executive Director cut the cake to mark this significant milestone for the charity.**

The event saw speeches from members who praised the support Ideal for All had given them in living independently. Councillor Bob Badham, Cabinet Member for Children and Families and Richard Nugent Chair of Sandwell Primary Care Trust (PCT) said that Ideal for

All had achieved great things and hoped it would carry on supporting disabled people for many years to come.

The 250 guests were also treated to a variety of entertainment including bhangra dancers, a belly dancer, a local band called The Heels and a three-course dinner at the Platinum Plaza Old Hill.

To find out more about Ideal for All visit their website [www.idealforall.co.uk](http://www.idealforall.co.uk), call them on 0121 558 5555 or text on 07535 209 711. They are also on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#)



# New Charity Launched

**Sandwell Council members, local business owners and residents gathered recently to witness the start of an exciting new era for a local charity.**

Community Connect Foundation (CCF), formerly known as Smethwick Bangladeshi Youth Forum (SBYF), has helped thousands of local residents improve their quality of life. Since 1996, with the help and support of managed funding from

a variety of sources, the charity has been able to provide quality service provisions to more than 5,000 people. Operating out of the North Smethwick Resource Centre (NSRC), CCF provides employment support, health education, promotes women's development and supports youth development.

More information on CCF's history and service can be found at [www.communityconnectfoundation.org.uk](http://www.communityconnectfoundation.org.uk).



## Spotlight on ...

# Great Bridge Community Forum

**This month it's the turn of one of Sandwell's many local umbrella bodies, the Great Bridge Community Forum, to stand under the spotlight. 'SCVO.INFO' talks to Maureen Whitehouse, Chair, and Linda Paskin, Secretary of the Forum.**

### 1. Tell us what you do?

The Forum provides activities for the community. We're here for you from birth until you pop your clogs.

Farley Lodge is home to a number of groups including tenants and residents group, a mental health group, a youth club, a bingo club and aerobics, extend and tai'chi groups.

All the groups using the centre benefit from the support of a full time Development Officer who assists them to identify and secure funding to sustain their work and provide occasional seasonal events like a Halloween disco and a Christmas grotto and disco.

### 2. What is your proudest achievement?

Winning the first lottery bid of £198,000 to kick-start the forum, has to be our proudest moment,

with employing a paid worker coming a close second.

Our relationship with Sandwell Children's Trust has enabled us to provide a youth club for five years. Unfortunately it is surviving by the skin of its teeth and desperately needs new money next year. Twelve young people achieved national qualifications last year. Three of them are CRB checked and ready to deliver sports and drama activities on the summer play scheme. Another three are being coached towards the regional table tennis team.

To contribute to the local economy the Community Forum utilises local businesses to buy services and employs local people to deliver services. In the interests of career development all staff are trained.

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

How do you pluck one thing from a lifetime? The most important thing is to recognise that people are unique and we should never make assumptions about anyone. Always be prepared to be surprised but remain unshockable!

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

At the moment we're struggling

to maintain things the way they are but given the resources we would like to employ more workers to train young people for employment, develop projects to improve life for the elderly and support volunteers.

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

We must respond to the needs of the moment which are activities that bring young people closer to employment and support for parents to enable them to manage work and family life. More money needs to go direct to the grass roots to support practical work instead of being cascaded through several layers before reaching the target; marginalised and deprived communities. Stop wasting scarce resources on posh PR.

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

We need stronger communication, to be able to put a face to a name. A visit means more than a thousand emails. SCVO must bring money into the Borough and lobby on behalf of grass roots groups to stop the cascade system of funding and make sure that the voice of the little people is heard.

## 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 and to lobby Sandwell Partnership, its members or VCS representatives
- 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.

## Funding Support

### Funding Required?

The next round of SCVO's successful Funding Buddies programme will run from January 2012 and SCVO are now inviting expressions of interest from grassroots community groups and organisations interested in benefitting from a volunteer community fundraiser.

This innovative programme which matches skilled volunteers with small groups in need of support with their fundraising was piloted early in 2011 and has already netted over £50k for local groups, as well as many hours of advice and support.

Buddies are recruited from all walks of life and offer their time for free, committing to at least

eight hours per month group. After training and induction into the programme Buddies are matched with a local group to help with sourcing funding, writing funding applications and developing funding strategies.

If you would like a Buddy to be placed with your organisation, please contact Steve Baylis on 0121 525 1127 or [steve@scvo.info](mailto:steve@scvo.info). You will need to fill in an application form explaining how a buddy will benefit your work. Anyone interested in being a Buddy can also contact Steve on the same number.

## Funding Buddies

### Million £ Milestone Reached!

SCVO funding advice has enabled Voluntary and Community Sector Organisations in Sandwell to raise over £1 million since April.

This is really exciting for communities in Sandwell. Congratulations to all our member organisations that have been successful in gaining funding to support the crucial work they undertake. We are looking forward to hearing about several more funding applications which are in the pipeline. We will keep you updated.

For funding advice please contact

SCVO's Capacity Building Team on 0121 525 1127 - for small group support ask for Carole Harte; for support to medium and large organisations ask for Steve Baylis.



## Community Safety Partnership

### Sector Strives to Make Sandwell Safer

On the 8 November 2011, SCVO, together with Safer Sandwell Partnership (the Community Safety Partnership for Sandwell) met with a range of voluntary and community organisations to kick start more open dialogue on services around crime and disorder.

Sector organisations providing these kind of services met with statutory partners including Sandwell MBC, the Police, the Probation Service and the Fire Service.

Over 60 delegates attending this energetic and lively event heard more about Safer Sandwell Partnership, including its main priorities of: reducing crime; increasing community cohesion; preventing and reducing re-offending; reducing harm caused by alcohol and drugs; helping people to feel safe and reducing anti-social behaviour.

“the need for networking and building partnerships were well demonstrated”

Organisations were given the opportunity to provide details of the services and activities they are delivering that are contributing to these priorities, together with helping to identify gaps in areas where they feel

services are lacking.

With the decrease in funding that the public sector have available to them, it was highlighted that the voluntary sector are well placed to attract and draw down other funding into Sandwell.

Some of the funding opportunities available were highlighted by Steve Baylis, Funding Officer at SCVO together with details of the support available from SCVO to

The event coincides with a review and refresh of the main Safer Sandwell Partnership Board, which for the first time will include VCS representation through SCVO. Organisations with issues that they wish to have raised or considered by this partnership board should be get in touch with SCVO's Chief Executive Officer Mark Davis, [mark@scvo.info](mailto:mark@scvo.info)

Please look out for further information on SCVO e-bulletins,



organisations in helping them to put together funding bids and to help them work more closely in partnership to deliver services.

It was highlighted that in order for Sandwell to be safer place to live, it was vital that a more joined up approach is needed. This event was the start of helping this to become a reality. It is hoped that the event will help to create a longer-term engagement with Safer Sandwell Partnership.

future newsletters and on SCVO's website – [www.scvo.info](http://www.scvo.info), or contact Leona Bird, Strategic Engagement Officer at SCVO on 0121 525 1127 or e-mail: [leona@scvo.info](mailto:leona@scvo.info)

“thank you for the opportunity for the sector to have a voice”

# New Forum Engages Children and Young People Issues

**The New Year is due to herald the emergence of an important new engagement opportunity for Sector organisations in Sandwell.**

Many people will be aware that SCVO have previously facilitated a Children and Young People Voluntary Sector Executive. This Executive consisted of 8 voluntary organisations having regular meetings with leads within the Council around the issues faced by them in delivering services to children and young people.

SCVO recognise the need for many more organisations to be involved in these conversations and is therefore launching a "Children and Young People Forum" for the voluntary sector in Sandwell.

It is hoped that this Forum will be a more inclusive model and will enable organisations to

meet and engage with leads from the statutory sector to have a meaningful dialogue on key issues, to help shape service provision and to broker discussions and help identify best practice in the delivery of services.

The Forum will also help the sector to keep informed on developments and influence the work of Sandwell's Children and Young People's Trust Partnership and other statutory led groups.

The first meeting will take place on 23 February 2012 and further details about the Forum will be publicised by SCVO in due course. If your organisation is interested in attending this Forum, then please contact Leona Bird, Strategic Engagement Officer on 0121 525 1127 or e-mail: leona@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.

# 'Friends and Neighbours' Support Residents

**The focus of social work and adult social care in the UK is changing and in response a new initiative is growing in Sandwell to harness the support of friends and neighbours for those more vulnerable within our communities.**

The increase in life expectancy, growing numbers of older people and adults with disabilities living at home, decreasing size of households with more people living alone, the mobility of younger generations in search of work, career development, advances in medicine in tackling life threatening illnesses; all these factors have led to an ever increasing population of older people or people with disabilities, needing care and support.

The starting point of a new initiative called "Friends & Neighbours" is the perspective of a vulnerable resident or their carers: when someone's ill, or has a disability, when there are problems the family can't sort out themselves, residents are clear that the people they most turn to for help are their "friends and neighbours". Residents struggle to find their way through the maze of local services, who provides what, and under what circumstances. Residents trusted friends or neighbours to help or at least to find out answers.

Since 2010 a small team have been working with residents in one ward of Sandwell to show how "Friends & Neighbours" can increase the "social capital" which results from informal exchanges



and interactions between residents. The work starts from an "asset based" approach, which means quite simply that instead of viewing residents as "problems", communities and residents are seen as being rich in talents and abilities. Working from an asset based approach enthuses and energises everyone involved, because participants are working towards solutions and opportunities, rather than dwelling on obstacles.

"Friends & Neighbours" has developed a local community run organisation, which will broker support for vulnerable residents. Unlike many approaches to health and social care, the vulnerable residents are the direct clients, who decide what services they need and how they can best be supported. The Community Development Officer is working with residents to create a pool of "good neighbour" volunteers and care workers. Vulnerable residents have the offer of a visit to assess their support needs. The assessment asks residents

to think more widely about what would help improve their quality of life, and looks at options which include collective as well as individual solutions. The solutions are designed to add to existing help, if that's what residents want, and make the links with other organisations, where they are best placed to help.

More than 50 local people have already offered their services as volunteers and good neighbours. 24 local residents with related skills want to provide more in depth care and support for their "neighbours" as personal assistants.

For vulnerable residents local brokerage widens the scope of the help they can get, but at the same time, because it harnesses both informal and formal support, it liberates resources currently spent on care support. Those resources liberated are being shared between the residents, the community (through the community interest company) and the local authority.



# December Charities Update

## Investment Guidance For Charities

The Charity Commission recently published a new guide entitled Charities and Investment Matters.

This online guidance, which replaces the Commission's previous advice on investments, describes the legal duties and principles that apply to charity investments and the risks that trustees must address.

The guide offers a clear framework for decision making and confirms that trustees can invest ethically, sustainably, for a financial return or to achieve charitable aims or for a mix of all or any of these. But it stresses that trustees must be clear about their motive in making an investment and must justify that they are using their charity's resources in its best interests.

The guide forms part of a wider review of the Commission's financial guidance to charities, which began in 2008 in response to the economic downturn. A copy of the guidance can be downloaded from Charity Commission website.

## Umbrella Bodies Promoted

At the Charity Commission's Annual Public Meeting, Commission chair Dame Suzi Leather said that in light of the significant cuts to the Commission's budget, in the future it would expect charities

to become members of umbrella bodies, which could take an advice role.

The comment prompted an unexpected flurry of criticism from charities and umbrella bodies alike.

Eager to offer reassurance Dame Suzi said "We have absolutely no intention of asking umbrella bodies to 'regulate' their members. We have no plans to pass on those core duties or responsibilities to others. However, we do know that networks and infrastructure bodies can make an important contribution by encouraging high standards and providing advice that helps prevent problems occurring in the first place."

## New Media Licensing Guide

A Beginner's Guide to Media Licensing in the Charity Sector, sets out to answer some of the questions communications professionals ask when working out where their charity stands regarding media licensing and their media monitoring work.

It covers the requirements of the Newspaper Licensing Authority and Copyright Licensing Authority and is part of a CharityComms campaign to relieve the burden of media licensing for charities. For more information visit [charitycomms.org.uk](http://charitycomms.org.uk)

## 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)

# Free IT Support Project for Charities

**iT4 Communities is a project which offers a wide range of IT support including building websites, developing databases to manage information, creating IT strategies, and checking if IT equipment needs replacing.**

iT4Communities matches IT professionals who want to volunteer their time and technical skills to organisations that need IT help. They have over 7,500 IT professionals across the UK who are willing to give their time to charities, community groups and social enterprises.

On average organisations get £3,000 worth of support from their volunteers. That support can be strategic advice, practical work, training or troubleshooting. Their volunteers have helped plan databases, build websites, network computers, write policies, and maintain computers.

To remain sustainable iT4 Communities charge an £85 (plus VAT) admin fee which buys 12 months advice and support from volunteers and their staff team.

Black Country Touring (BCT) recently got a volunteer to review

## Commission Appeals For More Trustees

According to the Charity Commission around half of charities across England and Wales have at least one vacancy on their board and most people say they would not consider being a trustee because they have never thought about it, or

and improve their contacts database, and train their staff in how to use the program effectively.

BCT is an arts charity that bring professional touring theatre and dance to local communities. They were using a database to manage contact information but it was in a poor state, containing duplicate and conflicting information. iT4Communities' volunteer, Tim O'Mara, was selected by the charity to work on this project. His expertise in databases allowed him to analyse their needs and then advise on how best to revise the structure of the database. The changes were mainly implemented

within six months, but Tim continued to support BCT as they tested the revised system. He then provided training to staff members showing them how to edit data and how to extract information.

Bobby Tiwana of BCT said "Tim became an esteemed member of our team during his time with us. He was attentive, knew how to communicate his expertise to make it accessible to us, and was an absolute pleasure to work with"

For more information on the support available please call 020 7796 2144 or visit [www.it4communities.org.uk](http://www.it4communities.org.uk)



because they would not know what it involved.

Charities touch millions of people every day and achieve so much good in our communities. Trustees are the driving force behind them and are responsible for making decisions about a charity's direction and activity.

As well as being of huge benefit to the charity, trusteeship provides

an opportunity to develop skills, knowledge and experience which can help the individual to re-enter the workplace, or change career path.

If you would like to know more about becoming a trustee call Carole Harte at SCVO on 0121 525 1127 or email [carole@scvo.info](mailto:carole@scvo.info)

## SPORTED

sported. is a national charity established to support organisations and groups delivering sports projects that have a positive impact on disadvantaged communities.

The services offered by the charity, including two grant programmes, are available exclusively to sported.

Membership is open to all voluntary groups, charities and social enterprises, is free for all and is applied for via the sported. website.

The grants programmes available include a recently launched Small grants scheme that offers funds of up to £2,000 and has a wide reaching criteria.

For further details contact John Ellery, West Midlands Regional Manager, or use the links below: c/o BVSC, 138 Digbeth, Birmingham, B5 6DR M: 07901339336  
[www.sported.org.uk/join-us/members](http://www.sported.org.uk/join-us/members) [www.sported.org.uk](http://www.sported.org.uk)  
[www.facebook.com/sported](http://www.facebook.com/sported)

## Funding and Sustainability

# December's Funding Digest

### Coventry Building Society Foundation

Support for charities in the region covered by the Coventry Building Society's branch network that are aimed at improving the quality of life and the opportunity among those who are disadvantaged or deprived, the consequence of which may lead to social exclusion.

The maximum level of grant is £3,000. Grants are normally between £500 and £2,000. Support for charities in the region covered by the Coventry Building Society's branch network that are aimed at improving the quality of life and the opportunity among those who are disadvantaged or deprived, the consequence of which may lead to social exclusion. Funding is available to registered charities that are based or active within the region covered by Coventry Building Society's branch network. Applications that focus on the following will be welcomed:-

- Young people, particularly those who are disadvantaged.
- Vulnerable groups such as the frail elderly, people with physical disability, people with learning difficulties or those who are mentally ill.
- Small neighbourhood groups in areas where they are experiencing the greatest disadvantage.
- Supporting communities and voluntary organisations through assisting them in the achievement of social and community development.

More than one donation for the same organisation in any year - further applications will be considered after a period of three years. Applications may be submitted at any time. For further information on how to obtain this funding opportunity locally, please contact the Coventry Building Society on 0845 766 5522

### Comic Relief Local Communities Programme 2011-2013 - £1,000-£10,000

The programme aims to empower local people, enabling them to create lasting change in their communities. Projects should be run by people directly affected by the issues they are dealing with and priority will be given to small, locally based groups or organisations in areas of disadvantage that have a clear understanding of the needs of their community. Under the programme, organisations can apply for funding to:-

- increase local services build skills of local people
- increase community cohesion
- respond to local economic needs
- increase access to sport and exercise for people who face social exclusion and isolation

<http://www.bhamfoundation.co.uk/how-to-receive/comicrelief.html>

### Funding to Support Homeless Charities

StreetSmart, which launches a

## Funding and Sustainability

fundraising campaign towards the end of each year, to support homeless charities has announced that charities wishing to apply for funding should submit their application during December. The main objective of StreetSmart is aimed at helping the homeless to make a better life for themselves, focussing on mental and physical health, employability and sustainable independent living. Grants are given to those who support people through the crucial stages in their progress from vagrant to valued community member. StreetSmart supports a wide range of homeless organisations that operate within the cities in which the campaign runs. Charities can apply for funding of between £500 and £15,000, depending on the project/service to be funded. There is no formal application process, but charities should outline the aims and achievements of the organisation, and explain in detail the specific area of their work in need of financial support <http://www.streetsmart.org.uk/apply-for-funding.php>

### Funding for Projects that Support Disadvantaged Young People

LandAid, the property industry's charity which supports projects that help disadvantaged young people has announced that its grants programme is currently open for applications.

Grants of between £5,000 and £25,000 are available through two funding streams. The Training, Education and Support Fund aimed at disadvantaged

young people aged 16-25 and the Capital Projects Fund which supports the refurbishment, conversion, extension or new build of facilities for young and disadvantaged people. The closing date for applications is 5 pm on the 31st January 2012 <http://www.landaid.org/grants/>

Hilton in the Community Foundation Grants (91 Words) Organisations that work with young people have the opportunity to apply for grants through the Hilton Foundation. Organisations such as charities and other not for profit organisations can apply for grants ranging from a few hundred pounds up to £30,000 per year for up to 2 years that meet one of the Foundation's chosen areas of focus these are:-

- disabled children
- children in hospital
- homelessness
- life-limited children in hospices.

The next closing date for applications is the 7th February 2012. <http://www.hilton-foundation.org.uk/application.htm>

### Dickie Bird Foundation Grants - Grants to Help Disadvantaged Young People Participate in Sports

Disadvantaged young people under the age of 18 who do not have the financial means to participate in sport can apply for financial support from the Dickie Bird Foundation. The foundation aims to help disadvantaged young people to participate to the

best of their ability in the sport of their choice irrespective of their social circumstances, culture or ethnicity. The Foundation grants can help with the cost of clothing and equipment and make a small contribution towards travel expenses within the UK. The Foundation will only accept applications from individuals not organisations. Applications can be submitted at any time and will be considered at Trustees meeting in February, April, June, August, October and December. <http://www.thedickiebirdfoundation.co.uk/>

### Mount Everest Foundation - Deadline 31st January 2012

Grants are available to support exploration of the earth's mountain regions and to encourage education and research there. The Foundation supports primarily British and New Zealand expeditions planning to make first ascents on high or remote mountains. Funding may also be available for expeditions on existing routes in more challenging conditions. <http://www.mef.org.uk/NewFiles/site.html>

For support with identifying and applying to these and other funding opportunities, contact Steve Baylis at SCVO on 0121 525 1127 or e-mail: [steve@scvo.info](mailto:steve@scvo.info).

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](mailto:leona@scvo.info).

The deadline for articles for the February/March 2012 issue is Friday 20 January 2012.

## Olympic Torch in Sandwell

**Thousands of Sandwell people will get a once-in-a-lifetime chance to see the Olympic Flame carried through the borough next year on its way to the London 2012 Games.**

Local people will be able to share in the excitement of the Olympic Torch Relay and cheer on torchbearers as they pass through Oldbury, West Bromwich and Smethwick on Saturday 30 June 2012.

Details of the exact route will be released in mid June 2012.

Your organisation may already be planning some sports or cultural activities in the run up to or during London 2012, or you may just want to give an event such as a fun day or summer play scheme an Olympic twist.

If you are planning something, then we can help to promote your event through the new Sandwell for 2012 website <http://www.sandwell2012.co.uk/>. Just contact [leisure@sandwell.gov.uk](mailto:leisure@sandwell.gov.uk) with a brief outline of your idea and your contact details and someone from Sandwell Leisure Trust will contact you.



**The Board and staff of SCVO would like to wish all our members and partners an enjoyable festive season and a prosperous New Year!**

**The SCVO office will be closed from Thursday 22nd December 2011 and will re-open on Tuesday 3rd January 2012**