

VOLUNTARY TIMES



London Borough
of Hounslow

The Newsletter for the voluntary sector
in the London Borough of Hounslow
Issue 76. October 2008

Message from Councillor Peter Thompson, Leader of the Council



Welcome to the latest edition of the Voluntary Times, in which I bring you some important news regarding our continued commitment to building a united and forward-looking community.

We have just launched our new vision which we are calling 'Building Pride Borough Wide'. It includes our priorities for Hounslow and our key ten promises which we will deliver on over the next two years. The activities of the Voluntary and Community sector appear strongly throughout this plan; underpinning a number of the targets set and displaying the importance felt by us of your activities throughout the Borough. As a result of that importance, we aim to encourage community representatives to work with the council in guiding and shaping the means by which

services are provided, to make Hounslow's community and voluntary organisations equal partners in the development and delivery of community services.

May I also take this opportunity to remind you of the survey due to be carried out this Autumn by the Office of the Third Sector, which will assess the extent to which statutory bodies influence the success of organisations operating within the Voluntary and Community Sector. Should you receive the survey, please take the time to complete it and contribute to the realisation of information regarding the strength of the sector both within Hounslow and at a national level.

Finally, as part of the recent internal Improvement Plan, the Community Development & Regeneration Unit has been restructured to become the Corporate Community Investment & Cohesion (CCIC) unit. This change reflects both the nature and diversity of the work undertaken by the section, which is recognised corporately, regionally and nationally as the key unit for the voluntary and community sector.

The CCIC unit takes a prominent position within the new 'Community Services' directorate. Encompassing housing, adult services and community safety, it is envisioned that this reorganisation will provide a simplified and focussed operational division, improving the way in which it works to support your activities individually in addition to the efficiency of the organisation as a whole.

GENERAL NEWS

LOAN SYSTEM FOR THE BLF?

The Big Lottery is considering an overhaul in the way in which it distributes its funds to third sector organisations by proposing a system of loans and endowments. A consultation exercise to take place in November will discuss the idea, which has been suggested as a means by which to diversify its current funding streams and ensure that the most appropriate option is offered to grant-receiving bodies. The announcement has been met with mixed reviews; with concerns raised over the possibility that the scheme is contributing to the current trend of 'across the board' reduced grant funding. Big Lottery Fund Chief Executive Peter Wanless though, has described this scheme as a means by which to increase the number of deserving projects supported by the BLF. He stated that the BLF, as a relatively small funder compared to other organisations, are also considering the additional move of distributing non-lottery funds as a result of the Lottery Act, passed in 2006.

www.thebiglottery.co.uk

CREDIT CRUNCH IMPLICATIONS FOR CHARITIES

The effect on charities of the credit crunch and economic downturn has been discussed at length recently. A senior figure at Business in the Community has stated that businesses will have no choice but to reduce their spending on charities and already, a number of company collapses have had implications on both volunteer support and corporate giving. Sparks, a medical research charity for children received about £200,000 a year from its charity partnership with travel company XL and the education charity Every Child a Chance Trust regularly benefited from 8,000 Lehman Brothers volunteers. The future of the HBOS foundation also looks to be cast in doubt, although the full details of the group's recent acquisition has still not been confirmed. The sector is undoubtedly facing a big challenge, but it has been suggested that the economic downturn may begin to act as a 'societal filter' for projects that aren't working and will make room for those which are deemed more valuable.

TEAM UP FOR GRANTS!

A new guide produced by the Nottingham Council for Voluntary Service suggests that small and medium-sized charities would have more chance of securing funds if they were to partner up in the delivery of similar projects. Jon Stevens, who co-authored the guide, pointed out that funders were reluctant to duplicate funding on projects with similar causes and creating successful partnerships would be a good means by which to remedy this.

To access a copy of the guide 'A practical Guide to Working With Partnerships', which outlines six phases of development, type the link below into your browser;

www.n2-consulting.com/partnerships.html

OPPORTUNITIES FOR VOLUNTEERS

The benefits of volunteering are insurmountable; as well as the element of personal satisfaction and the notion of giving something back to the community, there are also a range of benefits for employers such as the development of skills and a boosted public image of the organisation. Communities Secretary Hazel Blears has recognised this and has outlined plans to make key volunteering roles within the community more accessible, by modernising the list of activities that people are currently entitled to take time off work for. Currently roles such as school governors, magistrates and members of health bodies have leave entitlements - but it is hoped that new roles which are better reflections of modern life could also be introduced, such as youth offender panel and probation board members. It is anticipated that the move will enable a wider range of people to participate in volunteering activities, who will be more reflective of the diversity of modern society in Britain.

www.communities.gov.uk/corporate

A RAINBOW OF OPPORTUNITIES FOR HOUNSLOW HOMES RESIDENTS

Residents in homes owned by Hounslow Homes are being given the opportunity to bid for a slice of £1.5 million reserve funding, which has recently been released by lead member for Housing and Community Safety Cllr Phil Andrews and the London Borough of Hounslow Executive. The aim of the scheme is to develop community aspirations for a better local environment and to enable Hounslow Homes residents to pursue communal activities in well designed and well maintained community spaces. Residents will be encouraged to apply through their local residents, tenants or community associations and put forward their ideas to have a direct influence over issues that matter to them. Covering the themes of 'Promoting a united community', 'Environmental schemes', 'Transforming estates', 'Community buildings' and 'Social enterprise', there is massive scope for a number of exciting projects to be developed which will transform the local environment. A launch event took place on 1 October 2008 in which Corporate Community Investment & Cohesion staff were on hand to support the development of initial project ideas.

Attendees were also able to wander down a devised street scene, eat candyfloss and participate in street games to celebrate the opening of the scheme.

For more details, please see;

www.hounslowhomes.org.uk/rainbow_project_background_info_leaflet.pdf

If you are from a community group who are interested in getting involved and live in a Hounslow Homes owned property, or have a project idea which will benefit Hounslow Homes Residents, then please contact Sara Lindsay at the Corporate Community Investment & Cohesion Unit.

Tel: **020 8583 2450** or e-mail:

community.development@hounslow.gov.uk

NEW CHARITY COMMISSION WEBSITE LAUNCHED

An innovative new website has been launched by the Charity Commission this month, containing an interactive register which lists the financial details of every charity in the country. Registered charities will now be sent reminders regarding their annual return deadline, which can be submitted online along

with annual accounts and reports. The register names and shames charities that haven't filed their accounts on time and acts as an incentive, by highlighting their financial details with a red border until they are finally submitted. The system also allows details to be updated and advice to be requested and given. The scheme has been heralded as massively enhancing the competency of the organisation, increasing people's recognition of the commission's ability to act as both an advisor and regulator and acting as a 'warts and all' representation of the sector as it currently stands.

www.charity-commission.gov.uk

NEW OFFICER APPOINTED

Charlotte Brewster has recently succeeded Bob Holt as the London Borough of Hounslow's Community Initiatives & External Funding Officer. Charlotte, who recently worked for CIP in the support and development of Park's Friends groups will be supporting groups from the Voluntary and Community sector in identifying and securing external funding, as well as advocating fair and effective inclusion of the sector in LB Hounslow policy, Local Strategic Partnership activity and across Hounslow in general.

FUNDING NEWS

TESCO CHARITY TRUST

The Tesco Charity Trust has been in existence since 1987 and supports local charities and not-for-profit organisations. The Tesco Charity Trust Community Awards Scheme provides one-off donations of between £1,000 and £4,000.

The funding they give goes towards providing practical benefits, such as equipment and resources for projects that directly benefit children, the elderly and adults and children with disabilities; living in the local communities around their stores in the UK.

Tesco Charity Trust, New Tesco House, Delamare Road, Cheshunt, Herts, EN8 9SL Tel: 01992 646768.

www.tescocorporate.com/charitiesandfundraising.htm

BIG - YOUNG PEOPLE'S FUND 2 LOCAL GRANTS - ENGLAND

The Young People's Fund 2 Local Grants programme will put young people at the heart of local issues and services that affect their lives in England. It's the chance for young people to lead on developing the activities and services that they want in their local area.

The programme has two aims: to ensure that all organisations providing services to young people involve them in developing,

running and reviewing policies and services and to help achieve the five Every Child Matters outcomes (which are be healthy; stay safe; have improved economic well-being; make a positive contribution; enjoy and achieve in life.)

This programme will only consider projects that are youth-led. The programme is focussed on changing the lives of young people aged 10-18 and will also support projects working with young people up to the age of 25 if they are finding the change to independent living difficult.

BIG want to fund projects where young people are fully involved and improvements are made to young people's services. They also want to support work to increase understanding of young people's needs and create further opportunities for involvement in things that affect young people's lives.

www.biglotteryfund.org.uk

GOVERNMENT FUNDING FOR 3 YEARS

Charities, voluntary groups and social enterprises all stand to benefit from new guidance published by the Government, ensuring every Whitehall department offers three year funding to third sector organisations in all but exceptional cases.

The guidance document, published jointly by the Office of the Third Sector (OTS) in the Cabinet Office and the Treasury,

sends a clear message across Government that, where appropriate, funding for the third sector must be for a minimum of three years.

Throughout the next three years, departments will have to report their progress to the Minister for the Third Sector by the end of October, who will in turn report that progress to the Treasury and to Parliament as part of the annual review of the Compact.

This is the first in a series of concrete steps towards making three year funding the norm rather than the exception, and - with the reassurance they will not lose funding from one year to the next - aims to help third sector organisations to be:

- more sustainable** - to engage in longer-term planning, borrowing and investment;
- more innovative** - with more time to develop and demonstrate the impact of new services and activities;
- provide better value for money** - reducing time spent on year-on-year fundraising, freeing up staff to concentrate on delivering long-term outcomes.

While the Government are keen to ensure three year funding is the norm, there are instances where shorter-term funding may be more appropriate, for instance if a department is funding one off events or for very specific pilot projects.

Download Three Year Funding - guidance for government departments from: www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/third_sector/news/news_stories/080903_funding.aspx

TRUST FOR LONDON NEW FUNDING GUIDELINES 2007-11

Trust for London is an independent charitable trust set up in 1986 to support small, new and emerging voluntary organisations which have been established to improve the lives of people and communities in London. They believe that local people are often in the best position to identify the problems that affect their lives and the possible solutions to those problems.

Most of their grants are made through their open programme but they also occasionally fund special initiatives. They aim to develop supportive relationships with the community and voluntary organisations that they fund and to provide a 'funding-plus' approach. 'Funding-plus' includes providing advice, guidance, and where appropriate, consultancy support and training to help organisations grow and develop.

They work closely with their sister fund, City Parochial Foundation, which supports organisations tackling poverty in London. The Foundation is operated by the same staff and trustees but has separate funding guidelines. These are available from their offices or on the Foundation's website. Trust for London, 6 Middle Street, London EC1A 7PH.

www.cityparochial.org.uk/tfl/grants

COMMUNITY SUSTAINABLE ENERGY PROGRAMME (CSEP)

The Community Sustainable Energy Programme will provide £8m to community-based organisations for the installation of microgeneration technologies, such as solar panels or wind turbines and energy efficiency measures including loft and cavity wall insulation. Energy efficiency measures will only be funded in combination with a microgeneration technology installation. It will also provide £1m for project development grants that will help community organisations establish if a microgeneration and energy efficiency installation will work for them.

It aims to achieve the following outcomes: Reduction in CO₂ emissions; Increased community awareness of climate change and how changes to our behaviour can reduce it; Increased skills base of local trades (for example, local builders and building-service subcontractors working on renewable energy projects for the first time); Reduction in energy bills; Reduction in reliance on imported energy and increased independence from commercial energy suppliers; Stronger partnerships within local communities with lasting social benefits; Growth of local enterprise in new technologies.

If you have an initial enquiry about the Community Sustainable Energy Programme please call the helpline Tel: **08453 671 671** or e-mail:

info@communitysustainable.org.uk

or write to them at: Community Sustainable Energy Programme, BRE, B17/221, Garston, Watford WD25 9XX.

If you have any suggestions with regards to how we could improve the Voluntary Times, or if you would prefer to receive an electronic copy; please contact Sara Lindsay.

Tel: **020 8583 2450**, or e-mail:

community.development@hounslow.gov.uk

THE NEXT EDITION

The next edition of this newsletter will be available in January 2009.

If you have any articles you would like to submit please contact Sara Lindsay at the Civic Centre by 12 December.

Tel: 020 8583 2450 or e-mail: community.development@hounslow.gov.uk