

VANS In-Step Newsletter–July 2009–12th Edition

Welcome to the twelfth edition of the **In-Step Newsletter** brought to you by Voluntary Action North Somerset (VANS).

Are you or your group in need of any additional support or help? Maybe just feel a need to run something by a third party outside your own organisation? If you do feel in need, please feel free to pick up the phone or send us an email. VANS is here to support you.

VANS News and Events

Voluntary Sector Forum & Funders' Fair

Monday 30th November. Please try and keep this date free as we would like as many of our voluntary and community sector colleagues as possible to join us.

At the Voluntary Sector Forum, Phil Suter of the Audit Commission will be on hand to reveal the results of the Comprehensive Area Assessment. He will be joined by Dave Ostry, Consultation Officer with North Somerset Council.

Our last Funders' Fair remains one of the most popular events that we have run. The current financial climate makes funding more critical than ever. A chance to meet with representatives from some of the major funding organisations, pick up top tips from our experienced funding team, and of course network and share best practice with sector colleagues.

More information to follow on timings and location. Watch this space or check the VANS website www.vansweb.org.uk.

In-Step Network Meeting

On Friday 11th September we are joined by Mike Bell, the Liberal Democrat parliamentary candidate for Weston-s-Mare. Mike will be speaking on his party's vision for the voluntary and community sector.

All members of voluntary and community groups are welcome to attend, but we do need an idea of numbers so contact Justin at VANS to reserve a seat.

In-Step Training

Our next all-day facilitated training sessions will take place in the autumn, and we are always keen to hear your suggestions for potential subjects. Just let us know and if we can generate enough interest, we can run the session.

Call Justin Parsons on 01934 410196, or by email

justin.parsons@vansmail.org.uk. Or write to us at VANS, The Badger Centre, 3-6 Wadham Street, Weston-s-Mare, BS23 1JY.

Strategic Planning? Monitoring & Evaluation? Quality?

What are they and is it any use to me and my group/organisation?

- Maybe you are looking for help clarifying your group's purpose and developing a plan to make it happen.
- Perhaps you are interested in tracking the success of your project so that you can demonstrate its value to funders. And then get more funds!
- You may be considering introducing a quality system to track how well your group delivers its services.

If any of the above is the case, or you are interested in finding out more, then please let us know. We are keen to work alongside groups to help them more readily achieve their objectives.

Managing in Tough Times is the title of a new free resource available on the VANS website. It is a guide covering key issues that may affect Third Sector organisations during periods of financial insecurity.

It offers a framework for identifying and assessing current risks and offers guidance on how an organisation can manage and adjust to change. Should the difficult decision be made to close the

organisation, it offers guidance on the steps that are required depending on the legal structure of the organisation.

Download your free copy here

<http://www.vansweb.org.uk/managing-in-tough-times>.

In-Step Outreach Events

Voluntary Action have hit the road as part of a year long “tour” which will endeavour to take in most of North Somerset.

All events take place between 10am and 1pm and are “drop-in” style. Just show up and we will do our best to help you and your groups. So if you need volunteers (or want to volunteer), or if you need funding and development advice, come and see us.

Further events scheduled for later in the year include:

August 19th – Clevedon Community Association

September 14th – Pill Resource Centre

September 16th – Nailsea Town Hall

Local News and Events

SOFA Project launches in North Somerset!

SOFA Project, a Bristol-based charity and social enterprise, which specialises in the collection and supply of re-useable furniture, household goods, and domestic appliances are expanding into North Somerset with the opening of a new retail outlet at 3 Loxton Road on the Coronation estate in Weston-super-Mare, BS23 4QX – only 200 metres from Weston College’s University Campus. The new shop will be opening on Friday 24th July 2009.

The shop will be offering a range of new, graded and reconditioned domestic appliances as well as new and second-hand furniture. We can also provide a range of furniture packs for tenants moving into unfurnished properties – these can include bed, sofa, fridge, cooker, table and chairs.

For further information please contact:
Philip Parry, Project Manager – North Somerset
SOFA Project, 48 – 54 West Street, Bristol, BS2 0BL
Tel: 0117 954 3567 or wmpm@sofaproject.org.uk or visit
www.sofaproject.org.uk.

The Black and Minority Ethnic Forum for North Somerset have launched a busy schedule of events between now and the end of the year. The next ones are:

Tuesday 21st July, Presentation on Botswana by Jay Akerele,
10-30am
Tuesday 28th July, Presentation on Citizens' Advice Bureau by
Anne Richards, Noon
Tuesday 4th August, Presentation on National Health Service,
North Somerset by Equalities Manager Andrew May.

All these events take place in the Weston Room at the Badger Centre, Wadham Street, Weston-s-Mare.

For further details on all of the above contact the Forum on 01934 414455 or email quentin.isaac@srec.org.uk.

The newly relaunched ladder4learning website has now been running for a month under its newly rebranded site. Since its relaunch at the end of May it has welcomed roughly 13,000 visitors to the site. Currently this is averaging out now at around 500 visits per day.

ladder4learning provides a regional workforce development resource for the Community and Voluntary sectors and social enterprises across the South West of England and parts of the South East.

The site currently holds somewhere in the region of 1,000 courses with around 800 organisations registered currently as course providers. For further information call 01225 792505 or email ladder4learning@learningcurve.org.uk.

Bristol Airport has a community fund. If you were not aware of this already, or even if you were, then you may want to click on the

link and find out more about the criteria. Go on, have go.
http://www.bristolairport.co.uk/about_us/community/community_relations/application%20form.aspx.

Need information about the Equality Bill? Equality South West have uploaded a wealth of material onto the home page of their website. If you had planned attending one of the recent sub-regional equality bill events, but were unable to (or if you need a recap), then visit www.equalitysouthwest.org.uk.

They also have a download of an excellent ACAS produced guide on how your organisation can develop and equality policy. It is here http://www.equalitysouthwest.org.uk/esw/live/our-networks/cross-strand-information/Delivering_ED_Booklet.pdf.

North Somerset Enterprise Agency offer a tremendous range of services for social enterprises:

- Formation of a Social Enterprise
- Formation of a company Limited by Guarantee
- Formation of a Community Interest Company
- Training, Advice and supporting for Directors, staff and volunteers of Social Enterprises
- Income Generation, Trading and Funding Applications
- Business Planning
- Organisational development
- Preparation for commissioning

For more information contact Abdullah Ali-Ahmadi on 01934 418118 or Abdullah.Ali-Ahmadi@gwebusinesswest.co.uk.

Performance Improvement Training for Third Sector Advisers

September 23rd 2009, The Greenhouse, Hereford Street, Bristol, BS3 4NA

Learn how to;

- Facilitate self-assessment and action planning with organisations
- Support organisations to Improve Performance in a structured way
- Integrate the good practice 'business excellence' framework into your advice work

This fun and experiential one-day course offers an opportunity to really understand how the self-assessment and action planning tools work to allow you to use them with confidence. The course costs just £75 and includes a copy of the C3Perform toolkit.

For further information and booking details, click here [C3 Performance Improvement](#) or phone 0117 9070080.

Are you involved in a local secular or church green group?

If you are, the Diocesan Environment Group (DEG) would like to hear from you. It is putting together a resource to show where church people are involved in groups such as Transition communities (See <http://transitiontowns.org/Somerset/groups>) or other local green groups. The resource will also provide a picture of which churches have church environmental or “green” groups (either within an individual church or ecumenically).

Diocesan Social Justice and Environment Adviser David Maggs would be interested to hear your stories and something about what your group(s) have done. He adds ‘especially things that you have got excited about’. Send your information to him at david.maggs@bathwells.anglican.org or telephone him on 01749 685119.

Preanes Green Resource Centre are having a celebration and open meeting on Tuesday 21st July between 5.00 and 7.00pm at the Resource Centre, Feniton, Clovelly Road, Worle.

You are invited to take part in a great opportunity to promote your group to the people of Preanes Green and attract new members.

And you can check out our premises which are available to hire at very reasonable rates.

If you can't be there yourself, send us some leaflets and we'll display them for you.

Contact us to reserve your space or find out more:
More information on 01934 529733 or preanesgreen@tiscali.co.uk.

Breathe Easy Weston-s-Mare, the support group of the British Lung Foundation, are holding an open air special at Uphill Scout Hut. Local community groups interested in running a stall on the day are invited to contact Nick Pennycott on 01275 873322. The event takes place on August 22nd between 2pm and 4pm.

Free Sugar Available Here. The Domestic Abuse team at North Somerset Council are able to supply boxes of individual sugar sachets which have the Crimestoppers number and a domestic abuse message on. They are free to any community group, church, office etc where they will be used and help publicise the number. Delivery of sachets can be arranged by contacting Louise Branch on 01934 426343 or Louise.Branch@n-somerset.gov.uk.

National News and Events

Charity Commission News. Download the latest edition of this bi-annual publication by clicking here.
<http://www.charitycommission.gov.uk/tcc/newslist.asp>.

Governing with Confidence: Leading the Way is the title of the NCVO BWB On Board Trustee Conference 2009. The conference features information and advice from the Charity Commission, interactive workshops and essential legal updates as well as networking opportunities aplenty. It is London. <http://www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/events/latest/?id=13524>.

Managing People: Solutions for the Voluntary Sector is the Directory of Social Change's annual HR & Employment Law Conference. It takes place at the Royal Society of Medicine in London on the 7th October and features a wide range of workshops for anyone dealing with HR issues as well as legal updates and information about issues such as flexible working.
<http://www.dsc.org.uk/Search/Conferences/@15418>.

Looking for some marketing inspiration? Take a look at this presentation which may give you some ideas and top tips to better PR and marketing. Click here [marketing-a-nonprofit-](#)

Charity Builder UK is a new website that aims to give not for profit groups all of the information they need to become compliant

quickly, easily and free of charge. It covers HR, Health & Safety, Insurance, Governance and Finance. Find it here <http://www.charitybuilderuk.com>.

This programme has been brought together by funding received from the ChangeUp programme and delivered through West of England ChangeUp Consortium member organisations. ChangeUp is a government initiative, managed by Capacitybuilders, to strengthen the voluntary, community and social enterprise sectors by encouraging and enabling the delivery of effective infrastructure services.

For more details on any aspect of this project or the contents of this email, please contact:

Justin Parsons
Voluntary Action North Somerset
The Badger Centre
3-6 Wadham Street
Weston-s-Mare
BS23 2RT

01934 410192 (main line)
01934 410196 (direct)

justin.parsons@vansmail.org.uk

www.vansweb.org.uk

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