

JUNE 2007

New Regional Infrastructure Consortium

As a means of refreshing governance arrangements for regional Capacitybuilder's projects the Regional Forum is in the process of setting up a new Regional Infrastructure Consortium. The new consortium will make recommendations about the needs and provision of infrastructure services to frontline organisations working at regional level. The new body will work alongside existing sub-regional consortia.

Previous regional Capacitybuilders ChangeUp funding has focused on networking, regional advocacy and representation of thematic groups of third sector organisations such as the Faiths Forum and the BME VCS Regional Panel for Yorkshire and the Humber. Research into regional aspects of volunteer centres, shared back office and management functions and community accountancy services, has also been funded.

The Forum will be inviting regional voluntary organisations to be part of the Regional Infrastructure Consortium, in the near future. For further information about the new Regional Consortium, please contact Mark Crowe, Head of Development on 0113 394 2300 or <mailto:mark.crowe@regionalforum.org.uk>



Sub sectoral research project: Have your say

The Regional Forum and the BME (Black and Minority Ethnic) VCS (voluntary and community sector) Regional Panel for Yorkshire and the Humber are researching voluntary and community sector sub-sectors that exist in Yorkshire and the Humber, the extent to which their support needs are being met through existing infrastructure, and any links to ChangeUp/Capacitybuilders funding or activity. The term 'sub-sector' means a group of organisations with a shared theme, for example older people, disability or working with offenders. We will shortly distribute a questionnaire via our email networks to find out your opinions on these issues. We are keen to collect as much information as possible, so would be grateful if you could disseminate the questionnaire via your networks and contacts, when you receive it. The questionnaire will also be available on our website www.regionalforum.org.uk. A report summarising the research findings will be produced over the summer. If you would like more information, contact Ruth Beattie on 0113 394 2300 or <mailto:ruth.beattie@regionalforum.org.uk>



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The Forum meets the Office of the Third Sector

Representatives from the nine regional voluntary and community sector (VCS) networks, including the Regional Forum, met Campbell Robb the Director General of the Office of the Third Sector (OTS) in June. It was an encouraging meeting where Campbell advocated the OTS working in partnership with the VCS. He said he would like to hear good and bad feedback about what is happening on the ground, from VCS organisations. The nine regional VCS networks will be part of OTS intelligence links to the sector, so we will keep you informed about any developments in this promising relationship.



School leaving age to rise

The Government Green Paper "Raising Expectations: staying in education and training post 16" is currently out for consultation. Due to a range of economic needs (e.g. fewer jobs with low skills) and social factors (e.g. young people trapped in unemployment and deprivation or jobs with no training), it is likely to be made compulsory for young people to stay in education or training until the age of seventeen in 2013 and until age eighteen at a later date. In order to support this new programme there will be vocationally based Diplomas available from 2008. The Foundation Learning Tier will bring together qualifications and training below Level 2 (5 A*- C grade GCSEs) from 2010. The Regional Forum will be submitting a response to this Green Paper, outlining the potential contribution the sector can make to these proposals. To find out more information about the proposals and to access the consultation paper, use the following link to our website:

<<http://www.regionalforum.org.uk/learning/news.php?id=481>>

Forthcoming Events

- **25th June 2007**
Leadership in the VCS conference
- **5th July 2007**
Regional Forum Information Session
Further sessions will be held on 26th September and 28th November 2007
- **11th July 2007**
Regional Forum Annual Policy Conference: Because We're Worth It – Promoting Equality and Valuing Diversity
- **17th July 2007**
Commissioning of Mental Health Services and the VCS Conference

See the events section of our website for further details of these events and more.

A gold watch for Cath?

Cath Joyce, our European and Regeneration Officer, celebrated 25 years of European funding work on 1st June 2007. Cath began her European career in 1982 as finance manager at East Leeds Women's Workshops, a women only training centre which pioneered the provision of childcare as a European Social Fund (ESF) eligible expense across Europe. Throughout the 25 years Cath has championed the third sector's use of European funding to address disadvantage and exclusion. She has done this by representing the sector on the national and later regional, ESF Monitoring Committee, and by disseminating information to the sector. Her plain talk and 'Mickey Mouse' guides have enabled many third sector organisations to access, use and manage European funding.

Mental Health Services Conference

The next event linked to the Regional Forum Procurement Project is a conference on mental health service commissioning. This will be held on July 17th 2007 at Leeds Town Hall. The line up of speakers includes Paul Johnstone, Regional Director of Public Health Medicine, Lyn Boyd from Mental Health North East, Pip Goff from Volition, Fiona Venner from the award-winning Leeds Survivor-Led Crisis Service, and Gill Collinson from Leeds Metropolitan University. Discussion will focus on the planned Yorkshire and Humber Mental Health consortium and about how to ensure the vital and unique contribution made to mental health services by the Third Sector is recognised. You can download a booking form and further information from our website using the following link:

<http://www.regionalforum.org.uk/conferences_and_events.php?event=247>



Footsey 2007 News

We thought it would be helpful to have a regular update in the run up to this year's Footsey event, the UK's biggest Social Enterprise Trade Fair, on 18th October 2007 at York Racecourse. The event website (<http://www.footsey.org.uk>) will be live shortly so you will be able to visit it for all the latest information about the event. The full list of planned workshops has been released and is as follows: Asset management; Dragon's Den; Social Enterprise Case studies; Opportunities in the Health sector; Funding for Social Enterprises; Legal Structures (one of the speakers will be the Community Interest Company regulator); How to win business - public sector; How to win business - private sector. To book a stand, sponsor the event or book delegate places, please ring the Footsey hotline on 0114 221 0478 or email

<mailto:chloe@footsey.org.uk>. For more general information on Footsey, contact Brian Lawrence at the Forum: <mailto:brian.lawrence@regionalforum.org.uk>

New Voluntary Action launched

The Regional Forum was very pleased to see the launch of a new Voluntary Action- "Coast and Moors" which will work in the Scarborough Borough area. It is the product of Scarborough District CVS and Whitby and District Voluntary Action joining together.

The new body has come out of more than a year's worth of work by trustees and staff of both organisations. The end result is a real tribute to their commitment to providing high quality support and a voice for the sector. Contact details for the new organisation are listed below:

Allatt House, 5 West Parade Road
Scarborough
YO12 5ED
01723 362 205
<mailto:post@coastandmoors.org>

Children's Conference Success

The Forum, as part of the Procurement Project, worked with the National Council for Voluntary Child Care Organisations (NCVCCO) and Government Office Yorkshire and Humber (GOYH) on a conference to bring together VCS children's services providers and other stakeholders to identify issues and good practice. Helen McMullen, Government Office lead on Children and Learning opened the day. Highlights of the event included an excellent presentation about collaborative working in Bradford and June O'Sullivan's inspirational speech about the efforts of Westminster Children's Society to thrive in the current challenging environment. Groups shared issues and ideas, which have been fed back to GOYH staff. Further information about the conference will appear shortly on the Forum website, <http://www.regionalforum.org.uk>.

WYLDA goes worldwide

WYLDA, the West Yorkshire Local Development Agencies partnership, is launching its own website in the next month. It will keep you up-to-date with all the latest information, news and events from the third sector infrastructure forum for West Yorkshire. It will include the latest news from Capacitybuilders and information from each of the five districts. Designed to the highest standards of accessibility, the website aims to be highly interactive with content being added all the time by WYLDA members across West Yorkshire. The website address will be:

www.WYLDA.org.uk
Once it is up and running, we would like to receive feedback about how useful you find the website and your ideas for further development of the site. You can contact Rachael Loftus, Regional Development Officer on 0113 394 2300 or <mailto:rachael.loftus@regionalforum.org.uk> to give your feedback.