



South Downs View

NEWSLETTER OF THE SOUTHDOWNS CVS

Supporting community initiatives across the Lewes District

Funding crisis hits volunteer bureaux in Lewes and Newhaven



Lewes Volunteer Bureau

The Volunteer Centre in Lansdown Place, Lewes and the Newhaven office based at the Hillcrest Centre, providing drop-in information services to volunteers about opportunities across the district, are sadly closing their doors at the end of March due to insufficient funding.

During the last 2 years alone the Volunteer Centre has provided over 600 volunteers with advice and information about a wide variety of opportunities involving conservation projects, advice

and support, trustee, treasurer and administration volunteering and many more.

The Volunteer Centre has also managed a Help Service for the local residents in the Lewes area by recruiting volunteers for shopping, befriending and driving. During the last 2 years 1077 shopping and befriending requests have been fulfilled as well as 514 driving requests. The Help Service scheme was set-up over 20 years ago by the late Don Chisholm. Joyce Hancock has been involved with the Help Service most of this time and has been Volunteer Manager of the Charity Shop in Lansdown Place, Lewes since 1998. The closure of these services and the shop will be a great loss to the community.

The organisation would like to thank all those volunteers who have supported them as well as the volunteer Trustees and Management Committee. It is hoped that the above services will continue in the new financial year through the South Downs Council for Voluntary Services.

Note from SDCVS – at time of going to print the future of volunteering in Lewes district is awaiting the outcome of funding bids in order for SDCVS to continue the service. SDCVS is committed to the need for a volunteer support service for the

district. We would also like to thank the staff and trustees for all their work supporting the community over the years. Tel: 01273 470108.



Joyce Hancock Volunteer Shop Manager

Politics Show hears about volunteering

Rosey Eggar, the manager of the volunteer bureau, was interviewed by BBC 1 on Sunday 16th March on the topic of what would happen if there were no volunteers. The item provided examples of why volunteering is both good for society and for the person getting involved.

CONTENTS	
Area Partnership News	p2
Funding	p3
Training/Top Tips	p4-5
Policy	p6
Comnet and	p7
Developing Communities	
Lewes Area News	p8
Enclosures	
Developing Communities Newsletter	
Performance Hub Magazine -	
Achieve More Spring 08	

2 Local Area Partnerships

Local Strategic Partnerships (LSP) bring together representatives from the public, private, community and voluntary sector in a local authority area. The key objective of the LSP is to improve the quality of life in that area. Because a LSP is locally based, the community are well placed to influence its decision-making, giving them the opportunity to have their say on what services should be provided to meet their needs.



Photos from local voices, local choices website

Our Newhaven: A Volunteering project in focus

Our Newhaven is a Newhaven Strategic Network partnership project led by South Downs CVS. It's an interactive website for local people's memories, photographs and histories – a living archive.

Our Newhaven has really captured the interest of local people who have truly embraced the project. Sylvia Woolford, one of the volunteer editors talks about her involvement in the project...

"I became interested in this project after seeing a poster about the information evening hosted by Jackie Blackwell and Jack Latimer in August last year.

Many people attended and four of us volunteered to be trained as editors and our nurturing began. After a few training sessions on how to use the website I started to feel confident to take on the editorial responsibilities and in September our site became 'live'. It is a very 'user friendly' site and it is growing daily – at present we are having around 100 hits on the site per day!

As a small team we meet regularly to share ideas and discuss plans. We have started to hold regular scanning sessions, where people bring their photos for us to add to the site. They are becoming very popular, not only to scan pictures but to share information, look at the website and socialise. Jackie has been enthusiastically co-ordinating the project and managing our team of editors.

I feel very confident to continue with the good work that Jackie and Jack have started and we are currently mentoring four new editors as part of our team. Jackie is taking a back seat role and I am very honoured to be asked to share the role of co-ordinator with Ginny, another volunteer editor.

I am really enjoying meeting friends, old and new and learning more about the people's history of Newhaven. Many memories are being shared unknown connections are being made. Recently two contributors found out their fathers had been ambulance crew in the 1930s. A contributor said that it's become the 'talk of the town!' I don't think that any of us realised how popular this project would become in such a short time and I hope it continues to grow."

www.ournewhaven.org.uk

Next Our Newhaven scanning session at Newhaven Library from 10-12 noon on Sat 5th April.



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Betsy Marriott

SDCVS Core Funders:
East Sussex County Council
Lewes District Council
East Sussex Downs & Weald PCT

AVAILABLE IN LARGE PRINT
Also available on our website:
www.southdownscvs.org.uk



Scanning session at Sainsbury's Café – (Sylvia Woolford fifth from the left)

Seedcorn Fund

There is less than a month to the deadline for Round 2 of the Seedcorn Fund. It is important to submit an application as early as possible in order to have the opportunity to tweak the bid and improve the chances of success.

The Seedcorn Fund is a county-wide programme made available by East Sussex County Council to support new initiatives within the voluntary and community sector. Hastings Voluntary Action has been closely involved in setting up the fund, co-ordinating the administration of the grant rounds and selection process in partnership with South Downs CVS, and the other CVSs in East Sussex.

Throughout the whole of East Sussex 13 bids were successful in the first round, worth £43,995 in total. Voluntary and community groups can apply for up to £5,000, although smaller applications will be encouraged.

The closing date is **Wednesday 30 April 2008** (decision advised by 18 June 2008 latest). You can download an application form/guidance notes from the home page at: www.southdownscvs.org.uk or www.hastingsvoluntaryaction.org For further information, or for help to complete your application, contact Julia Fowler at South Downs Council for Voluntary Service, T: 01273 483832. E: info@southdownscvs.org.uk

£37 Million Fund from Lloyds TSB Group for UK Charities

The four Lloyds TSB Foundations across the UK will receive £37 million this year from the Lloyds TSB Group following its annual results announced on Friday, 22 February 2008. The cash fund will benefit charities supporting disadvantaged people and

community groups across the UK.

The independently run Lloyds TSB Foundations receive one per cent of the Lloyds TSB Group's pre-tax profits, averaged over three years, in lieu of shareholder dividend to distribute to local charities throughout the UK. The four Foundations form one of the largest grant-making trusts in the UK and have distributed over £330 million since 1987. Full details of the funding programmes are available at <http://www.lloydstsbfoundations.org.uk>

Community Development Foundation – £130m Grassroots Grants Scheme

The Cabinet Office recently unveiled the name of a new, multimillion pound funding programme to boost local community organisations with much needed access to small grants and long-term financing. It also announced the appointment of the Community Development Foundation as its lead national partner in delivering the scheme.

'Grassroots Grants' will launch shortly with £130 million available from 2008-2011 to strengthen the community sector. It will be divided into two parts: an £80 million small grants fund for community organisations; and a groundbreaking £50 million endowments programme to enable local foundations to generate additional donations from the private sector on a matched basis and invest them in endowments, thereby building their capacity to provide long-term funding for frontline community organisations.

The Community Development Foundation (CDF) will open an application process in January to identify and appoint local funders who will deliver Grassroots Grants locally. Applications will be invited by April. For up-to-date information go to: www.cdf.org.uk or

<http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk> and use the search facility.

SDCVS will keep readers informed on this important new source of money.

Heritage Lottery Fund

Your Heritage and Young Roots Programmes will close on 30 June 2008 to make way for new grant programmes in 2008. This is in line with HLF's next Strategic Plan: they will be closing their current Heritage Grants, Your Heritage and Young Roots programmes. The new application materials and guidance for these programmes will be available from 1 April 2008. www.hlf.org.uk

Sussex Community Foundation

Grants are available to voluntary/community groups whose work improves the quality of life for people in East Sussex, West Sussex & Brighton and Hove. The Foundation manages three funds and matches applications with the most appropriate source of funding. Examples of areas of support include:

- education; social welfare; religious causes; and children and young people
- arts & cultural heritage; economic independence; developing new leaders for tomorrow
- homelessness; animal charities; and older people

The majority of grants awarded are between £1,000 and £5,000, in exceptional circumstances larger grant applications may be considered. Voluntary/Community groups must be not for profit and have a constitution or set of rules. The Foundation favours applications from smaller, locally managed organisations. They award grants four times a year. The next closing dates for receipt of applications are 30 April & 31 July 2008. www.sussexgiving.org.uk, T: 01273 403980 F: 01273 403921, E: info@sussexgiving.org.uk

4 Training & Conferences

South Downs CVS Training Opportunities

The current training programme is coming to an end and the 2008/09 training programme will shortly be developed. If you would like to discuss your training requirements contact Julia on 01273 483832, email: info@southdownscvs.org.uk

Other Training in the District Project Management

The workshop aims to explore the theories and practical skills behind good project management. The day will also look at the people skills behind managing projects. Ideal for anyone who is new to project co-ordination or who wishes to refresh their skills. No previous knowledge required.

It will be held in the EAVS Annexe, 8 Saffrons Road, Eastbourne on Tuesday 10 June 2008 from 9.30 am to 4.30 pm. Cost: £40 for members of voluntary or community groups, £55 for others. Please note that booking closes 3 weeks before course date. For further details and a booking form contact: Sue Duffell, Training Co-Ordinator, EAVS, 8 Saffrons Road, Eastbourne, BN21 1DG (phone 01323 639373).

Working with Children, Young People and Families

Are you interested in working with children, young people and families? But have no qualifications and lack experience. Are these barriers preventing you from gaining employment in Early Years or Playwork? If so, why not consider booking onto the New Entrants training which is being delivered across East Sussex. The course is free and is available to anyone living

within East Sussex. For further details or to register your interest please contact Lyndsey Collins, Recruitment Officer on 01323 747493 or Helen Ridge, Training Information Officer on 01323 747423

ESiF training

East Sussex in Figures is a website providing the latest statistics on the social, economic and demographic character of East Sussex and its communities.

There are some half day training sessions available on all aspects of East Sussex in Figures (ESiF) on 23 April, 20 May, 19 June (9-1pm). The sessions are at the East Sussex Training and Development Centre, Eastbourne. The cost of the course is £50 per person.

If interested please contact Jackie Pickering, Personnel and Training, East Sussex County Council for a booking form on 01273 481427 or email: jackie.pickering@eastsussex.gov.uk To view surveys in East Sussex in Figures (ESiF) go to: <http://www.eastsussexinfigures.org.uk/webview/>

Tackling Climate Change together in East Sussex

How Strategic Partnerships and local communities can work together to address the issue of Climate Change.

A one day conference for LSP Partners to learn how they can contribute to this major issue.

The organisers are particularly interested in attracting delegates who aren't already engaged in this issue but perhaps would like to be.

Where: The Eastbourne Centre, (TGWU Building)

When: 24 April 2008 – 10.00 am until 4.00 pm

Who should attend? Local authorities, Police, Fire, Health, Business, Community Representatives, Voluntary Sector Representatives.

Cost: Free to LSP Partnerships. Lunch included.

To Book: Please contact Barbara Arnold T: 01273 484372 Barbara.Arnold@lewes.gov.uk

ON THE WEB

Everyclick.com

When you use this internet search engine (which is a social enterprise) they will donate 50% of their income to the UK charity of your choice. Since it started in 2005, the site has raised over £368,000 for charities. Everyclick users can shop online at the site to raise more money.

You can nominate a beneficiary charity from a comprehensive database of 170,000 UK organisations; or you can use the site without registering or choosing a charity. Money raised that is not earmarked for specific causes — currently about 50 per cent — is pooled and split between all active charities.

In Kind Direct

In Kind Direct re-distributes new goods donated by some of Britain's best-known manufacturers and retailers to hundreds of voluntary organisations working at home and abroad. Founded in 1996, In Kind Direct became operational in 1997 and has since gone on to assist 4,000 charities, working with over 700 donor businesses and funders. In Kind Direct is proud to be one of "The Prince's Charities". www.inkinddirect.org

Measuring Soft Outcomes

Equal Brighton & Hove have published a guide covering how to record, measure, and demonstrate the qualitative (or so-called 'soft') outcomes of project work in eight steps. This guide is called *Soft Outcomes: A Shared Approach* and is based on research from over 30 projects and 11 different client groups in the local European Social Fund EQUAL programme. It is aimed at any project or programme that make a difference to people or communities but experience difficulties in recording the effects and impacts of work, for funding, monitoring, or evaluation purposes. For more information about the background to this work go to: www.equalbrightonandhove.org/SoftOutcomes. To download the guide in full graphic/accessible formats along with an accompanying resource package visit:

www.equalbrightonandhove.org/SharedApproach

Audio described cinema for visually impaired people

Audio description (a narrated soundtrack) enables people with a visual impairment to enjoy movies at the cinema. Most popular films are now available in an audio described format and more than 250 UK cinemas screen thousands of 'accessible' shows every week. Visit the website to view by film: <http://www.yourlocalcinema.com/ad.html>. For a list of UK cinemas with audio description go to: www.yourlocalcinema.com/ad.cinemas.html

National Search for Local Heroes

Nationwide Building Society has teamed up with the Heritage

Lottery Fund (HLF) to launch the Nationwide Community and Heritage Awards 2008, inviting the public to nominate people or groups who deserve recognition for community or voluntary work that has made a real difference to people's lives. Full details and nomination forms can be found online. Leaflets and nomination forms are available from local Nationwide Building Society branches, HLF outlets, public libraries and via local newspapers. The closing date for nominations is Monday 28 April 2008. A series of regional events for short-listed nominations will be taking place up and down the country at a variety of heritage venues. The final will take place in London during November 2008. Visit: nationwide.co.uk and hlf.org.uk

TOPICAL TIPS

The end of the Financial Year

With the financial year coming to an end it is a time for reflecting on what went well and looking ahead. Added to that there are a whole load of things to think about such as how you manage your year-end finances, staffing and inland revenue returns, how long to keep your archived papers and records etc. Once this is done though, maybe it is a good time to thank all your staff, volunteers and trustees for all their hard work. <http://www.charity-commission.gov.uk/> has a wealth of information and also details of what to do if your financial year is different to the tax year.

Partnership at Work - Employment Helpdesk

Improving the quality of working lives in youth, community, and

play organisations - this Employment Helpdesk is free and confidential and provides help on: Employment Law; Best Practice; Using policies and procedures. Contact: email: helpdesk@partnershipatwork.org.uk at any time or telephone: 0870 770 7907 (national rate number) on Tuesdays and Thursdays between 11am and 4pm.

ICT Support

The ICT Hub website contains a range of free advice and support for charities and community organisations to help you make the most out of technology. If you need to develop a database or build a website the ICT Hub has a range of services and support available. The site also contains practical advice in ICT issues; trusted ICT products and services listed in a

comprehensive suppliers directory; advice finding a volunteer to help your organisation with ICT; computer accessibility; advice on circuit riders and tips for writing an effective funding proposal and how to fully cost and fund your ICT. Visit / www.icthub.org.uk or call their Help Desk on 0800 652 4737 or email helpdesk@ctub.org.uk

Silver Surfers Day – 23rd May 2008

Silver Surfers Day is a day to mark in your calendar it is a great opportunity to support older people with digital literacy and to involve your community in helping them use ICT. If your older trustees aren't IT literate maybe this is your opportunity to build new skills and make all your lives easier. Find out more at: www.silversurfersday.org

Women-only services – what is your experience?

The Women's Resource Centre has published a report: "Why women-only? The value and benefits of by women, for women services" which seeks to answer the question asked increasingly of many women's organisations by funders and the public: why are you women-only? The Women's Resource Centre suggest that women-only services provide a space in which women feel more comfortable about articulating their needs and discussing personal and sometimes traumatic experiences. For more information about the Women's Resource Centre's report, see their website: www.wrc.org.uk.

What do you think? Does your organisation run women-only services? Do you have experience of using women-only services? There are few women-only services available in Wealden and Lewes Districts – do you think there should be more? Please e-mail policy@southdownscvs.org.uk with your thoughts.

Key findings from Voluntary Sector Skills Survey & UK Voluntary Sector Workforce Almanac 2007

There are now over 600,000 paid employees in the UK voluntary sector. This accounts for 2% of the total UK workforce, more than the banking and building society sector, and makes the voluntary sector a key part of the UK labour market.

The voluntary sector workforce has grown at a much higher rate over the last decade than the private and public sectors, increasing by over one quarter in ten years. Voluntary sector employees are much more likely to be employed part-time and over two-thirds of the sector's workforce is female.

1 in 4 employers report hard to fill vacancies within their organisations, particularly in the areas of youth work, social care and health care.

3 in 10 voluntary sector employers reported skills gaps amongst their employees, particularly in skills such as the strategic use of IT, legal knowledge and fundraising. This is likely to be due to the staff having to be multi-skilled to perform a variety of functions. Lack of funding and time for training were given as the main reasons for the skills gaps in employees.

To read the research visit:
www.ukworkforcehub.org.uk/almanac and
www.ukworkforcehub.org.uk/skillsgapsengland

Why Grants are Important for a Healthy Local VCS

There is a trend for local authorities to move funding for the voluntary and community sector away from grants and towards contracts.

This has raised concerns within the voluntary and community sector about a loss of flexibility, as well as concerns about implications for smaller organisations that may not have the capacity to meet the service delivery specifications set out in a contract, but nevertheless offer a useful service.

A report "Why grants are important for a healthy local VCS" was commissioned by the Finance Hub and written by NAVCA (National Association for Voluntary and Community Action). It looks in detail at four very different local authorities, providing snap-shot examples of their grant-funding relationships and grant funding practices. All four local authorities in the study have reviewed their funding policies for third sector organisations and all have very deliberately decided to retain significant grant budgets.

The report can be downloaded from www.financehub.org.uk or www.navca.org.uk/whygrants.

Volunteers and the minimum wage

As part of its response to a recent consultation on volunteers and the minimum wage, the department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform (BERR) stated that: 'Training beyond the needs of the volunteering opportunity or reimbursement of childcare expenses represents a significant benefit in kind and as such would change the nature of the relationship between voluntary worker and qualifying organisation.' This could mean that a volunteer who receives such benefits might be entitled to the national minimum wage. www.berr.gov.uk/consultations/page39871.html

According to Sandy Adirondack, BERR'S comment contradicts recent legal rulings on the employment status of volunteers and the Department for Work and Pensions' views on volunteer expenses for volunteers receiving state benefits.

The Association of Volunteer Managers (AVM) has launched a campaign to defend the right of volunteers to be reimbursed care costs without gaining entitlement to minimum wage. If you are concerned that benefits provided to your trustees or volunteers may raise questions about their status, please call our advice line on 0845 VISIBLE (0845 8474253).

'Benefits Awareness and Access to Money Advice'

This was a very successful event, co-ordinated by Lewes ComNet and a good example of cross sector training, with 52 representatives from VCOs and Statutory agencies attending. Jaki Hall (Wealden District Council) and Carolyne Ball (Pensions Service) gave very informative presentations surrounding benefits, raising the following key points:-

- 3 types of benefits, contributory benefits based on national insurance contributions, means tested benefits which are income related and circumstantial benefits depending on your circumstances e.g working tax credit
- Pension Centres are a telephone service (0845 6060265) offering advice on claims and the local

Pension Service can provide face to face interviews for people over sixty years old.

- Pension Credit tops up retirement pension at the age of 60 if someone's income does not reach £119 for single person and £181 for a couple
- Attendance Allowance is a health related benefit for people over 65 who receive some kind of personal care. This is the most under subscribed benefit and does not take into account savings or income. Disability Living Allowance is similar, however it is paid for people under sixty five.

Peter Gannon (Lewes CAB) and Matthew Bird (Lewes District Council) helped facilitate the following discussion:-

- Face to face advice is considered more useful than telephone

advice. CAB services need to be more accessible and advertised more, however, they have few resources and hence survive mainly with volunteers and few paid workers.

- CAB provides advice on debt but not on managing finances. This gap in service will be followed up by ComNet.
- Fuel poverty is when someone spends more than 10% of their income on fuel and does not only apply to people on low incomes
- Lack of knowledge on how to make houses more fuel efficient. People who experience problems can get their names put on the Priority Services Register. Advice and training available from LDC on 01273 484330.

For further details, contact Val Biggs on 01273 483832 or email: comnet@southdownscvs.org.uk

Developing Communities Project: Do you want to change the world?



Developing Communities Project

Do you want to fight a battle but think your contribution will be too small and make no difference?

Mark Twain said:

“When two dogs get into a fight, it’s not the biggest dog that wins. Rather it is the dog with more fight or determination that ends up winning.”

In other words, with good attitude and effort you can overcome a lot of obstacles.

Here is what we have been doing since the last issue:

- We ran the 2nd of our 2-day “empowerment” training courses for brain injury survivors who want to start a Service User Forum.
- We held an Awayday for the Trustees of the Peacehaven and Telscombe House Project and Volunteer Bureau.
- We held the first meeting of our Trustee Network.
- We put ourselves on the database of One Parent Families to set up a Lewes District group for lone parent family support.
- We arranged a visit for our Access Groups to the East Grinstead Access Group to exchange ideas.

More things coming up, including a DVD, a series of life skills workshops and a comedy workshop, training around young gypsy and traveller issues.

If you would like to know more or for a copy of our project newsletter, please phone us or email developingcommunities@southdownscvs.org.uk

Lewes Area News

Platform the news column from members and partners. If you have any relevant information that you would like to bring to our attention contact Julia on 01273 483832 or email info@southdownscvs.org.uk

Recruiting now for volunteer Independent Visitors

If you have a few hours to spare every couple of weeks, like children and young people and want to make a positive difference to the life of a young person in care, this could be for you.

An Independent Visitor is someone who is trained and supported to befriend a child or young person in the care of

Social Services, who has little or no contact with their birth family.

Expenses will be reimbursed. This post will be subject to an enhanced CRB and child protection check.



South Downs View
The newsletter of South Downs CVS
Editor: Julia Fowler

Notices of publications, events and services do not necessarily carry an endorsement by the editor or South Downs CVS, nor do they represent the CVS' own views

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Member of the National Association
for Voluntary & Community Action
(NAVCA)

If you are interested in finding out more or getting an application pack, please contact:

Kate Maxted,
Independent Visitor Coordinator
Xpress Advocacy Service
C/O EAVS, 8, Saffrons Road,
Eastbourne, BN21 1DG
Tel: 01323 733111
Text (mobile) 07980298174
E: kate.maxted@seap.org.uk



Xpress Advocacy Service

Lewes and District Talking Newspaper

The Lewes and District Talking Newspaper is now back at the newly refurbished Phoenix Centre and with new recording equipment they hope to be able to send out better audio tapes.

If you know of someone who is registered blind or partially-sighted and who would like to hear the local news from the Sussex Express each week, then please do contact them either at the Centre on 01273 488444 or the editor Joyce Hancock at home on 01273 813459. They will be delighted to arrange to send them a weekly sixty minute tape which has a reverse side of interesting magazine items. The service is completely free of charge because everyone concerned in producing the tape is a volunteer and the Royal Mail also delivers to the blind without payment.

Victim Support – Volunteers Needed

You may be able to help by visiting victims of crime or supporting witnesses in court. Victim Support also need people for management committees, fundraising, administration or interpreting, as well as people with IT skills or legal training. Find out more at: www.victimsupport.org. If you think you can help them help people cope with crime please contact their National Office on 020 7735 9166 or your local branch: Victim Support, 8 Saffrons Road, Eastbourne, BN21 1DG. T: 01323 728201

YOUR TOWN YOUR SAY

Lewes Forum
1st Tuesday bi-monthly 12.15-2pm. For venue contact SDCVS: 01273 483832

Newhaven Forum
2nd Tuesday bi-monthly. Contact Penny Shimmin (NCDA) tel: 01273 612539 or fax: 01273 612821

Peacehaven Forum
3rd Friday each month, 12.30-2pm, Peacehaven Library, Meridian Centre, Peacehaven. Contact Heather Maskell, (Sec), email: town_forum@btinternet.com

Village Elders Forum
For date and venue contact Gina Flanders, Action in Rural Sussex on 01273 405451

DIARY

April
2 Lewes District Seniors' Forum AGM, 11am – 1pm, Cliffe Hall, Cliffe High Street, Lewes, contact: Lesley Wilkins – 01444 241614

May
6 ESCC Cabinet Meeting 10.30am County Hall
17-23 Adult Learners' Week
29 East Sussex Downs & Weald PCT board meeting 10am (for venue call 01273 403503)

June
10-11 DSC Charity Fair, Westminster

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