The Council for Voluntary Service for Torridge District

Bright Future for TTVS

As most of you will be aware, this will be my last editorial for Torridge Matters as I move on to a new role within the Devon Wildlife Trust. I am leaving at a very exciting time for TTVS. We are one of 12 infrastructure organisations which worked together within the Devon Excellence Partnership to submit a successful bid to the ‘Transforming Local Infrastructure’ fund. The programme will operate over the next 12 to 18 months and will allow partners to work together to develop a single, coherent service, which provides better and more consistent services to volunteers and voluntary and community groups in Devon. See inside for more details.

We have also just completed a Business Plan for our adult Carers services and are about to launch two new projects. The lottery funded ‘Bright Futures’ project will provide support to young adult carers across Devon and the Comic Relief funded ‘AfterCare’ project will help older carers in Northern Devon manage as their caring role comes to an end. We are just completing staff recruitment and details of these projects will follow in the next edition of Torridge Matters. Generally, we will be working to improve and develop our Carers services in the coming year.

All of this will mean that Directors will be examining the function and purpose of TTVS over the coming months and will be actively seeking your views.

TTVS will not be recruiting for a new Chief Officer following my departure – CVS and Carer Managers are already in post to support all aspects of the organisation. Please see the back sheet of this newsletter for details.

I want to thank everyone who has supported me over the years – it is a great sector in Northern Devon and I look forward to watching it continue to develop and flourish.

Penny Mason

The Queen’s Awards for Voluntary Service

The Queen’s Awards for Voluntary Service are the highest awards given to volunteer groups across the UK for outstanding work done in their local communities.

Nominating A Group For The Award

You can nominate any volunteer group if you know about the work they do. However, you can’t nominate a group that you are a part of, for example if you are a volunteer or a staff member.

Any group of two or more people doing volunteering work that is a social, economic or environmental service to the local community can be nominated for the award. In order to be nominated, volunteer groups should do work that:

- provides a service and meets a need for people living in the local community
- is supported, recognised and respected by the local community and the people who benefit from it
- is run locally

Also, volunteer groups should have been running for three years or more.

You can download the nomination form and guidance notes by going to www.direct.gov.uk
Voluntary sector infrastructure organisations across Devon are celebrating the award of £400,000 from the BIG Lottery Fund to help improve the services they provide to other charities and community organisations across the county.

The award was made as part of a £30 million national programme called the Transforming Local Infrastructure Fund which was launched by the BIG Lottery Fund and the government’s Cabinet Office for Civil Society. The fund is designed to help infrastructure services – those that help to support other voluntary organisations – to modernise, make efficiencies, and to innovate - developing new ways of delivering services to community groups.

The Devon Excellence partnership saw a coming together of 12 organisations that includes the 8 local Councils for Voluntary Service, Voluntary Youth Services Devon, the Devon Community Foundation, the Devon Pre-school Learning Alliance and the Intercom Trust.

The funding will last for just over one year, and will enable the 12 organisations within the Devon Excellence partnership to create a single delivery service that will join-up their operations to give local groups a one-stop county-wide advice, information and support service, whatever their need.

Exeter CVS led the partnership bid, a representative said “We are delighted that, in what was a very fiercely contested national process, the evaluators saw the strength of Devon’s partnership and of our proposals, and have awarded us the maximum grant available.”

“This is a significant investment in Devon’s voluntary infrastructure services and shows the strength and importance of the sector locally. This money will ensure that the services that the Devon Excellence partnership offers local voluntary and community groups are more accessible, better coordinated and more consistent. It will also offer those local statutory services that help fund our work even better value for their investment than ever.”

“Wherever in Devon a community group is, whatever stage of development they are at – whether starting out, growing, or a well-established charity - Devon Excellence will offer a single point of support with access to training, information, development support, consultancy, and specialist advice. The partnership will be uniquely placed to help the voluntary sector in Devon to grow and develop, and to forge links between Devon’s civil society organisations and our partners in the public and commercial sectors.”

Your local CVS is a member of the Devon Excellence Partnership so please contact them for further details.

Key Points From The 2012 Budget For Our Sector

Some of these are new announcements and some confirm that they will implement decisions previously announced. Full budget documents can be downloaded from www.hm-treasury.gov.uk

Not-for-profit advice sector – The Government will make £20 million available to the not-for-profit advice sector in 2013–14, and again in 2014–15 to support the sector as it adapts to changes in the way that it is funded.

Inheritance Tax: reduced rate for charitable donations – As announced at Budget 2011, for deaths on or after 6 April 2012, the Government will introduce legislation to provide for a lower rate of IHT of 36 per cent where

Charity Shop Donations – The Government will work with the charity sector to simplify the administration of Gift Aid in the context of charity shops.

VAT: cost sharing – Following the announcement at Autumn Statement 2011 the Government will introduce a VAT exemption for services shared between VAT exempt bodies including charities and universities.

In-year repayments of tax to charities – The Government will legislate to amend CASC and Gift Aid legislation to ensure it operates as originally intended and to put on a statutory footing the practice by certain charities and CASCs of making claims for repayment of income tax including Gift Aid outside a tax return.

Gift Aid Small Donations Scheme – As announced at Budget 2011, the Government will introduce a new Gift Aid small donations scheme from April 2013 to enable charities to claim a Gift Aid style top-up payment on up to £5,000 of small donations, without the need to collect Gift Aid declarations. Charities will be able to claim the new payment on donations of £20 or less.

VAT: charitable buildings – The Government will withdraw charitable buildings from the scope of the VAT reduced rate for the supply and installation of energy-saving materials. (Finance Bill 2013)

Social investment – The Treasury will conduct an internal review looking into the financial barriers to social enterprise.

Source : NAVCA
Charities Hit During The Recession

The National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO) has recently published The UK Civil Society Almanac for 2012. This contains research on the state of the sector nationally. Its findings support what many of us on the ground already know:

- Charities faced a "toxic mix of circumstances" over the past year, with increased demand for services, rising costs and an unprecedented fall in income.
- There has also been a dramatic drop in the voluntary sector workforce, losing over 70,000 staff in the past year.

Figures also show that charities spent the years since the start of the recession 'swimming against the tide' to meet increased demand from users and beneficiaries. During the height of the recession in 2010, voluntary organisations spent 99 per cent of their income (£36.3 billion out of £36.7 billion) in order to keep pace with rising costs and expand their services to cope with demand; this was the smallest gap between income in spending in ten years. Many organisations dipped into their reserves to stay afloat, and a higher proportion of funding was channelled directly to frontline charitable activity.

Research in The Almanac shows that income from statutory grants has declined steadily from a peak of £5.3 billion in real terms in 2003/4 to £3 billion in 2009/10. At the same time, the decade saw a significant increase in contract income as voluntary organisations' role in public service delivery expanded, from £4.3 billion in 2000/1 to £10.9 billion in 2009/10 and shows how charities have had to spend every last penny just to keep their heads above water. The charity sector has already taken a significant hit and we must act quickly to ensure that communities are not deprived of vital services.

Other interesting findings from the 2012 NCVO Civil Society Almanac include:

- In 2010 there were 163,763 voluntary organisations in the UK, with an income of £36.7 billion, employing 765,000 staff.
- Peak funding: in 2007/08, £38.0 billion was the voluntary sector's highest recorded income in current prices.
- Spending is up: a real increase of £1.1 billion over the 2 years 2008/2010. In the face of the recession, charities expanded their services in order to meet increased demand.
- Inflation is biting: increasing prices cost the sector £2.3 billion over the 2 years 2008/2010.
- Grants squeeze: during the recession public sector grants fell by almost £500 million.

- More service delivery: The sector gets £13.9 billion from government, 79% is contracts for services.
- Cuts: by the end of the spending review period 2015/16, the voluntary sector is forecast to lose £1.2 billion in government income each year, a cumulative total of £3.3 billion.
- Giving down, buying up: charitable giving fell by £383 million in the recession, but sales to the public increased by £905 million (this would cover raffle tickets, charity shops and membership fees).
- Sustainability: in 2009/10 voluntary organisations spent 99% of all incoming resources.
- Reserves: free reserves were £42.2 billion in 2009/10: in real terms, £4.1 billion lower than at the beginning of the decade.

Visit www.ncvo-vol.org.uk for further details.

Source: NCVO

National Citizen Service (NCS) supports the Government's vision for building a Big Society. It will act as a gateway to the Big Society for many young people by supporting them to develop the skills and attitudes they need to become more engaged with their communities and become active and responsible citizens.

NCS will make a positive contribution to local communities, requiring close working with schools, local authorities, businesses and other neighbourhood groups to create a more cohesive, responsible and engaged society.

Recruitment is underway for National Citizen Service (NCS) 2012. This is a great opportunity for 16 year olds to get away for 2 weeks this summer on an activity based residential, and then develop a project to benefit their communities. Martin Lewis also recommends this as a free 2 week holiday on his website http://www.moneysavingexpert.com/deals/cheap-days-out/national-citizen-service.


NCS is a voluntary eight-week summer programme for 16 year olds that will promote:

- a more cohesive society by mixing participants of different backgrounds
- a more responsible society by supporting the transition into adulthood for young people
- a more engaged society by enabling young people to work together to create social action projects in their local communities.

NCS is being piloted over two years across England. Thousands of young people took part in the first pilot this summer. In 2012, some 30,000 places will be offered to young people. Following this, we hope that NCS will, over time, become a valued rite of passage into adulthood that all 16-year-olds will want to complete.
TORRIDGE RESOURCE CENTRE INCORPORATING VOLUNTARY ACTION AND VOLUNTEERING - Provides practical support, advice and information to any organisation, activity or self-help group working or wishing to work within the voluntary/community sector. Enables local people of all ages to become involved in a range of voluntary activities and links people and groups who need practical help with those volunteers able to give it. Develops the voice of the voluntary/community sector in decision-making on local and countywide issues. Contact: JENNY FISH 01237 420131 or BARBARA GRANT 01237 420138

TAW & TORRIDGE CARING – Offers advice, information, practical and emotional support to local carers and their support groups. Contact: SUE PIRRIE 01237 459337

CAREWISE – Supports the needs of Young Carers. Through the use of trained volunteers, a range of practical skills and emotional support is made available to any young person with a caring responsibility. It also helps to encourage Young Carers to articulate their concerns and to find appropriate ways of supporting these. Contact: MARION WELCH 01237 4420144

TorrAGE - Incorporating the Neighbourhood Links Project, provides services and support for older people in Torridge. Contact ANNA MALONE Development Worker, or LINDA BEALEY Volunteer Co-ordinator on 01805 622666

Bright Futures - Supports the needs of Young Carers and Young Adult Carers through periods of transitions. Contact: GEORGIE FIDDIAN 01237 479380

TTVS is an accredited Volunteer Centre, a Member of Volunteering England, NCVO, and NAVCA and is an Approved Provider with the Mentoring and Befriending Foundation

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