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For all 'The Voice' submissions or queries please E-mail Jim Smith at :

WAVOCC@btconnect.com

Please contact 'The Voice' if you have any issues with the accessibility of this document, as we are happy to distribute in other formats.

Job Opportunities: Beat the Credit Crunch with Free Staff Recruitment!



The WIC Job Opportunities pages are now open for VCS organisations! The cost is FREE! If you're a CO or an HR manager please regularly e-mail details of positions to: wavocc@btconnect.com. Our WebPages are given a start and end date for your vacant position; after which time your advert is automatically removed. If you're a job-seeker, keep track of the rewarding and exciting VCS roles advertised over the coming months at: <http://www.winc.org.uk/>

Using feedback to develop our business support services

In the last edition of The Voice, the Business Support Hub provided a flavour of the support WIC have provided with funding received from the Worcestershire County Council Infrastructure Support grant - training, one to one advice and support to organisations and local network meetings.

We use your feedback, as one of the ways in which we make sure WIC's business support services are tailored to the needs of the voluntary sector in Worcestershire and for your organisation. As a consortium we are always focussing on improving our services, so please let us have your ideas.

Here is a taste of some of the feedback we have received over recent months from our direct one to one business support with organisations and from the training we have delivered on a range of issues, including financial management, planning and fundraising strategy, health and safety, costing and bid writing and governance, amongst others: "... stimulated my thinking", "Pitched at exactly the right level", "... thanks for your useful help and advice"

'you made more sense in a couple of hours than a consultant did in 6 months!'; "... extremely helpful ..."

Have you received advice/support from a WIC member, or attended one of our training courses or network meetings, or received information on funding, training etc? If so, please take a minute to send feedback on WIC business support services directly to Mark Herriott to markh@comfirst.org.uk. Alternatively, if you have not accessed our business support services, let us know what we need to do to change that.

Volunteer Forum

"Volunteering for all" an event on Good Practice on Equality and Diversity

Tuesday 17th of March 2009
9:30am-4:00pm

Worcestershire Rugby Club

Volunteering is an effective way for many people to alleviate the symptoms of exclusion, and can help to address some of the causes.

This event will explore how organisations can work towards overcoming the barriers to volunteering affecting people with physical disabilities, learning difficulties, mental illness or volunteers from socially disadvantaged areas. As usual, there will also be ample time for workshops, networking and support.

The event is aimed at all staff from organisations throughout Worcestershire who work directly with people in local communities, particularly focusing on those who recruit volunteers from, or work directly with people from socially deprived areas, people with disabilities and BAME groups, for Volunteer Coordinators and Volunteer Mangers.

There is no charge for attending this event and we would particularly like to welcome smaller, local community groups who are often not able to attend ...cont page 2

VCS Representation Opportunities:

There are currently VCS Representative opportunities at Worcestershire Partnership Level on:

- **Compact**
- **Safer Communities Theme Group**

For further details, of these and future Representation opportunities, and 'The Tools of VCS representation, please visit: http://www.winc.org.uk/representation_opportunities

Have Your Say! WIC Consultations

Part of the strength of the VCS is being able to utilize our collective voice. So have your Say! WIC are currently consulting with the VCS, at http://www.winc.org.uk/the_voice_hub_er

- **The effect of Post Office Closures**
- **The effect of the Credit Crunch**
- **Investing in Health for Worcestershire. A five year draft strategy: 2008—2013**

If your organisation or group feel they have a topic worthy of VCS consultation contact wavocc@btconnect.com

Representative Induction and, 'Best Practice in Representation'

Wednesday 25th March 1pm—3pm
The Bradbury Centre, Worcester
VCS Representatives old and new are invited to this to this package of workshops. (Even those in the VCS who might have future interests in representation and would like to discuss the implications of the role are welcome to attend.) The 'Best Practice in Representation' is most suited to those with representation experience. This workshop/listening event will be run by the Chair and Vice Chair of WIC - Cathy Clement and Sally Ellison. The induction will be run by WIC member Jim Smith: To sign-up for the day contact:

wavocc@btconnect.com
T. 01684 575545

VCS Conference 2008



The Conference - run by WIC - saw a broad range of attendees predominantly from the VCS, but also with strong attendance from the Statutory Sector. Speakers covered the topics of: Personalisation, The Signposting Service, Compact and Safer Communities. Testimonials included:

'My first real introduction to WIC, very useful!'

'Important items/speakers to consider for the future.'

'An opportunity to have your say, voice opinion and concerns.'

To sign-up early for this Autumn's Event contact Jim Smith at wavocc@btconnect.com Full details of the November conference are available at: www.winc.org.uk

The Short Term Representatives Bank

In the county, there are over 100 VCS representative places that are filled. However, there are times when a full election for a VCS representative, using the agreed format, is neither possible nor practical. This is especially true for one-off panels, short-term working groups, and decision making panels. WIC's VCS Voices Hub has recently produced, and received sector feedback on, the Policy for Nominating VCS Representatives onto 'short-term' representation opportunities. Anyone interested in being considered for the 'Nomination Bank' should send a brief résumé of their skills and experience, signed by their Chair, CEO or equivalent, to VCS Voices Hub c/o WAVOCC, The Training Station, Gt. Malvern Station, Malvern, Worcs. WR14 3AU or email: wavocc@btconnect.com

WIC Training Strategy and forthcoming opportunities

WIC's training programme, is constantly under review, and has been well received by the sector. We have been using the nationally recognised RARPA quality process (Recognising and Recording Progress and Achievement) to provide the evidence we need to confirm that delegates have gained understanding, knowledge and/or skills as a result of our training interventions. During March we will be running three courses on financial sustainability, in different localities - Redditch, Malvern and Pershore - so that local groups can help to develop sustainable funding strategies and improve their chances of continuing to provide services for local people.

Sustainability is a hot topic and Community First's are working with the NCVO's Sustainable Funding Project to provide local training for WIC member organisations, which will enable WIC to help voluntary and community sector groups to explore key issues around sustainable funding and income generation.

At the time of going to press we know the training in Redditch will be on Tuesday 3rd March at the Town Hall and will focus on groups hoping to secure grants from external funding sources. For more details, contact Ann Sowton – email ann@barn.org.uk. For further information on the Malvern course contact Jacci Phillips, email jaccip@communityaction.org.uk and for Pershore contact Kate Walton katew@pershorevolunteers.org. Alternatively see www.winc.org.uk, for details on all three courses.

Continued from page 2...Volunteering Forum...major conferences due to costs but who would really appreciate support in developing 'Best Practice' in how they work with volunteers.

For more info or to obtain a booking form please contact:

Gabi Gogan on 07525 335 184 or volunteringhybworcs@yahoo.co.uk
Or ,Penny Westley on 01905 24741 penny.wcvb@btconnect.com
Funded through Goldstar and Lloyds TSB foundation England and Wales.



Recent/Current Tenders from Worcestershire County Council

Round two of the Worcestershire County Council's grant-giving scheme for the VCS has now been completed. They received an unprecedented response to their invitation to apply for grants. Almost double the amount of available money was applied for. The County Council say, 'We appreciate that unsuccessful applicants will be disappointed. However, we encourage everyone to look out for Round Three, which will be announced in the Spring, and we thank all applicants for their high quality bids.' They also ask, 'Did you or your organisation apply for one of these grants?' If you did, why not complete their online survey to tell them about your experience and how they can improve the process. For a link to the survey go to: http://www.winc.org.uk/process_of_grant_giving_2008

The Grants were given across five areas:

Supporting Community Based Activities for Older People/Strategic (three year) Grant/ Community Transport/ Community (one year) Grant Carers Grant Community (one year) Grant/ Supporting Community Based Activities for Older People Community (one year) Grant/ Celebrating Cultural Diversity

Full details of all the successful applicants across these areas go to:
<http://worcestershire.whub.org.uk/home/wccindex/wcc-voluntary-sector.htm>

An Introduction to.....



supporting voluntary organisations that work with offenders and their families

West Mercia Probation Service became a Trust in April 2008. This change in status provides greater independence and flexibility in the way in which probation delivers services. It also means that the probation service can look to form new and innovative relationships with its partners, including the voluntary and community sector.

Clinks, the umbrella organisation for voluntary and community organisations working in the criminal justice system, and the South Worcestershire Area Office, are jointly convening a half day event in Worcester which seeks to enhance the relationship between the voluntary and community sector and the local probation service.

*Date: Tuesday, 24 March 2009
Time: 1:30pm (registration and networking lunch) -4:30pm
Venue: Bradbury Centre, 2 Sansome Walk, Worcester WR1 1LH*

This will be an opportunity for:

- Local voluntary sector organisations to meet with key staff in the S.Worcestershire Area
- Information to be shared about the needs of offenders and how these could be met by local voluntary sector organisations

- Identification of the support and information which local organisations would need to work more closely with probation
- Exploring how probation and the voluntary and community sector could work together to increase investment in services for offenders and their families.

How to book:

There are a limited number of places so book early to avoid disappointment. To register for this event please contact their York office:

Post: Office Manager, Clinks, 25 Micklegate, York YO1 6JH

Phone: 01904-673970

E-mail: info@clinks.org or

Download a booking form from our web site: www.clinks.org

Volunteering:

Have Your Say!

WIC's Volunteering Hub are currently consulting on: 'Measuring Volunteering in Worcestershire 2008. To contribute to this valuable piece of work please go www.winc.org.uk/volunteering

Communities in Control ?

Every Voice Counts in the West Midlands presents.....



EVC
Every Voice Counts

...FREE events for community and voluntary groups, officers and councillors to look at good practice in Community Empowerment:

February 26th
Asset Transfer & Participatory Budgeting
Sneyd Community Centre, Stoke-on-Trent

March 2nd
Asset Transfer & Participatory Budgeting
Kindle Centre, Hereford

March 11th
Housing & Neighbourhood Management
Burrowes Street TMO, Walsall

Looking at Government Policy on Empowerment and how that's reflected in Local Area Agreements led by local councils and, in practice, by the work of community groups and public services. The events will all include a short briefing on the Government's Policy on Empowerment 'Communities in Control' - but the emphasis will be on people with practical know how sharing their experience. Book Now - email: bookings@everyvoicecounts.info or call Carrie on 07912 26967



Common Assessment Framework

The Common Assessment Framework is a shared assessment tool used by practitioners to identify additional needs of a child or young person at an early stage. It is a holistic assessment looking at all aspects of a child's or young person's life, and is a framework to include support from a number of agencies and services around a child or young person in a coordinated way.

All voluntary sector workers who work with children and young people should have an awareness of the Common Assessment.

Awareness sessions are available now throughout the county and places can be booked through www.worcestershire.gov.uk/iwp or contact a member of the CAF Project Team on 01905 766082

Following an awareness session, depending on your role you may wish to attend further training which will enable you to complete the common assessment. Again dates, venues and booking details are available on the above website or by contacting a member of the CAF Project Team

So far 120 common assessments have been completed in Worcestershire as at January 2009 by a range of agencies, these include 13 completed by Voluntary Sector Workers.

Outcomes so far include improved school attendance, improved relationships within families, support of young carers and housing needs met.

There is advice and support available if you are unsure if a common assessment will help or not. You can contact your area CAF coordinator using the details below:

Jeff Barnard (Redditch/Bromsgrove)
jbarnard@worcestershire.gov.uk

Tel: 01527 556168

Peter Holland (Evesham, Pershore, Malvern, Martley and Worcester)

Please see top of column two for further contact details.....

pjholland@worcestershire.gov.uk

Tel: 01905 765787

Sarah McMorrow (Wyre Forest, Hagley, Tenbury and Droitwich)

smcmorrow@worcestershire.gov.uk
Tel: 01562 757867

An Introduction to a Committee or Board.....

Worcestershire COMPACT Steering Group

The Engaging Worcestershire Steering Group has changed its name to Worcestershire COMPACT Steering Group to more accurately reflect the work that it is aiming to address.

With an amended Terms of Reference and an enlarged membership, the group will work to embed COMPACT and COMPACT principals into both sectors.

Through improved marketing and promotion, the aim is to ensure that staff at all levels are aware of the Worcestershire COMPACT and its associated Codes of Practice and that these are implemented in how we all work on a daily basis.

The group will meet quarterly and are presently developing Community Groups and Communication and Involvement Codes. They are also planning to develop an Equality and Diversity Code for which we are currently seeking VCS involvement – please contact Sally Ellison if you wish to take part in this process) and a Mediation process, rather than a Dispute Resolution process – a point made strongly at the recent WIC Conference.

For further information, please contact Sally Ellison (Chair) on: 01905 24741 email:

sally@wvc.org.uk or Suzy James (VSSU Co-ordinator), Worcestershire County Council email: sjames2@worcestershire.gov.uk

News from Worcestershire Partnership

Have your say on the review of the Worcestershire Partnership Climate Change Strategy. Comments and contributions welcomed by 27 February 2009.

There is a new version of the LAA Short Guide, providing a useful summary of Worcestershire's second LAA. This is on the WIC WebPages or you can contact Worcestershire Partnership if you would like a hard-copy.

Read through the new Worcestershire Cultural Strategy 2009 - 2013 or visit the Cultural Theme Group pages:

For further information visit: <http://www.worcestershirepartnership.org.uk>

Process of Grant Giving 2008 Evaluation Survey

The Worcestershire County Council Research and Intelligence Unit has been asked to evaluate the effectiveness of the grant giving process.

As part of this evaluation they would like to seek the views of a range of VCS organisations and would be grateful for a few minutes of your time to complete this questionnaire. Please submit your response by 9th February 2009

The information you provide to them will be used by Worcestershire County Council, it will only be used for the purpose of evaluating the VCS Grant Programme. We may contact you to further explore any issues that you raise in the questionnaire and you will be sent feedback on the survey results. We may share results with our partners, however the survey results will be statistical and will not contain your name or anything that could identify you.

For details go to: http://www.winc.org.uk/process_of_grant_giving_2008