

# Valley Messenger

**The Newsletter of Test Valley Community Services**

**Autumn 2004 Edition**

It hardly seems possible that autumn is approaching, where has the year gone? I hope you have all had an enjoyable and relaxing summer.

The highlight for us this summer has been our move from Cricklade House to Wessex Chambers in Andover, next door to CAB on 9<sup>th</sup> August. Our new offices are very spacious and light. We also have superb meeting room facilities. We now have enough space for six people to be in the office at the same time! We are pleased to be sharing our floor with MIND and CAB Outreach. We hope that being in this smart office will raise our profile in Andover. Please come and visit us when you are in the area.

At the beginning of August I was pleased to appoint Greg Alexander as my Deputy. He is now managing the Andover office, which means he is working in Andover four days a week. He will also be deputising for me at meetings that I am unable to attend.

The Test Valley Compact Development Group has now met twice since our consultation meeting on 30<sup>th</sup> April. We are now working on principles and codes for Funding and Consultation. The One Compact for Hampshire general principles document has now been agreed and will be printed ready for Compact Week in November.

I look forward to seeing many of you at our Voluntary Sector Forum and AGM.

Janet Blann. Chief Executive.

## **Important dates for your diary.**

30<sup>th</sup> September 2004 Voluntary Sector Forum 10am – 12.30pm Longstock Village Hall. (more details on page 8)

12<sup>th</sup> October 2004 11am – 1pm TVCS AGM Longstock Village Hall, all welcome.

4<sup>th</sup> November 2004 – Carers Consultation Day, The Shoosmith Centre, Enham. (more details on page 3)

29<sup>th</sup> November 2004 10am – 3pm Hampshire County Council's Annual Compact Meeting, Brockenhurst Village Hall.

### **TVCS Training events - Funding Advice and Information for Voluntary Groups**



In response to requests from voluntary and community organisations Test Valley Community Services is running two training and information sessions in the autumn. The sessions are aimed at small to medium sized groups who are dependant on regular grants and spend time and resources in identifying new sources of funding or increasing their chances of retaining existing financial support for their work. The courses will be facilitated by Nancy O'Brien, a trained Funding Adviser, who worked with several groups at our 'Funding the Future' event earlier this year and Greg Alexander from TVCS.

Course 1: Having a Funding Strategy - **Tuesday 26th October 2004 (9.30am–1.30pm)**  
Why should we have one? And how to write a strategy relevant to your organisation

Course 2: Writing a successful bid - **Thursday 11th November 2004 (9.30am–1.30pm)**  
Applying to grant making trusts and other funders with a bid that stands out and is compelling. This session will also include information on monitoring and evaluation and managing your grant

Cost per course - Voluntary Organisations - £20 – Statutory Partners - £35  
Both courses will be held in the Boardroom of Testway Housing, Greenwich Way, Andover.

☀ *£10 Discount on total amount payable! - if groups book both events*  
For further information and a booking form please contact

Viv Parsons at TVCS on 01794 519998 or by email [viv.parsons@tvcs.org.uk](mailto:viv.parsons@tvcs.org.uk)

### **Test Valley Voluntary Sector Forum**

Our next Voluntary Sector Forum will be held at Longstock Village Hall on Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> September from 10.00 am – 12.30 pm. There will be a presentation from **The Local Channel** – an opportunity to promote your community group or village on your own website free using The Local Channel.

With funding very much in the forefront of the activities of voluntary groups, Steve Lincoln from Test Valley Borough Council will be talking about new web-based software for the voluntary and community sector which features offers, grant making trusts, funding sources and other resources.

For more information please contact: Viv Parsons at TVCS Romsey.

### **TVCS AGM**

Our AGM will be held at Longstock Village Hall on 12<sup>th</sup> October 2004 11am – 1pm. We have written to all of our members and contacts with an invitation. If you have not received an invitation and would like to attend please contact Viv Parsons at TVCS Romsey.

### **News from Dawn Elson, Partnership Officer – A project managed by TVCS**

Two exciting pieces of work have been taking place over the summer months.

In the June Valley Messenger I spoke of the setting up of The Andover Child Contact Centre, well work has continued at a fast pace! A Management Committee has been formed, a Co-ordinator has been appointed and we are looking to the Launch of the Centre in November. The Committee is pleased to welcome Jonathan Beeston into post as Co-ordinator. Jonathan will be responsible for the day to day running of the Centre and is currently recruiting volunteers to assist at the sessions. The sessions for the Contact Centre will be held at the Andover Baptist Church, on the 2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Saturday of each month between 2pm and 4pm. If you are interested in volunteering a little of your spare time, please contact me at the Andover office.

The other project will be of interest to Carers in the Andover area.

By listening to local Carers, it has become apparent that their needs are not being adequately met by primarily statutory organisations. To attempt to redress the balance, a Steering Group has been formed of local Carers and representatives from the Statutory and Voluntary Sectors. The role of this group is centred around understanding the needs & problems of Carers (being the 'ears' & 'voice' of Carers) and making sure service providers – whether they be statutory, private or voluntary sector organisations – understand those needs and address them fully.

We are aiming to hold an Information & Consultation Day for Carers in the Andover area on Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> November at The Shoosmith Centre, Enham. The focus of the day will be workshops for carers and professionals to attend, looking at - Local Social Services - What works? What could be improved? – Local hospital provision, what are your experiences as a Carer? What could make a difference? Consultation, how do you want to be a part of the consultation & development of public services? How do you want to be represented?

If you are interested in attending this event please contact me on 01264 362600 or Viv Parsons at [viv.parsons@tvcs.org.uk](mailto:viv.parsons@tvcs.org.uk).

We are looking for representatives from local groups, agencies & organisations that have links to Carers & their needs, who would like to have a stand at this event to advertise services, information or products.

### **Tell us your news!**

If you would like to promote the work of your voluntary group or project in this newsletter please contact Viv Parsons at TVCS Romsey  
Articles and features are welcome

This newsletter is sent to over 400 Voluntary Organisations in Test Valley – why not spread the word about the work you do in the community?

## Test Valley Community Transport Scheme

Since the last edition of the “Valley Messenger” TVCS have been pleased to make their **first minibus** available to a number of groups. A number of other groups have been in touch, but we are sure there are others who would benefit from this new facility. Please contact the Romsey office for more details.

For a number of reasons, there have been delays in the acquisition of the **other minibuses** for the Test Valley scheme, and it is unlikely we shall have any more of our own vehicles before early 2005. However, we continue to work closely with Hampshire County Council to plan the long-term usage of all four vehicles to meet the varying needs for community transport across Test Valley. We are keen to hear from any groups who could benefit from access to a minibus on a regular or occasional basis.

Alongside our own vehicles, we are keen to encourage greater use of other minibuses in Test Valley and regularly refer enquirers to organisations with vehicles available for hire. We are keen to develop this side of the scheme, and over the next couple of months we will be contacting any organisations with minibuses to establish whether their vehicle would be available, if so, when and on what terms. This will enable Hampshire County Council to update their **minibus register**, thus providing a better information service for anyone seeking to hire when the need arises.

To drive a minibus in Hampshire, it is necessary to have a **MIDAS** (Minibus Driver) certificate. This involves a half-day training for standard minibuses, and a further half-day for accessible vehicles, plus an on-the-road driving assessment. TVCS are now running MIDAS training courses, starting late September, for both new drivers and those whose MIDAS certificates are about to expire. Please contact the Romsey office for more details.

A number of people have come forward as potential **volunteer drivers**, but we still need more if we are to provide a comprehensive service at the best possible value to all groups. Groups who regularly hire minibuses might like to consider getting one or two of their volunteers trained to drive. Application forms for driving can be obtained through the Romsey office.

Meanwhile our Wheels To Work **moped loan scheme** for young people is being rolled out successfully, with eight of the fifteen mopeds so far out on the road since the launch in June. If you know of anyone (relative/friend/neighbour) who might benefit from this scheme, please get in touch with the Romsey office.

Dick Hewett, Community Transport Co-ordinator, can be contacted on his mobile phone (07834 680292), by email ([dick.hewett@virgin.net](mailto:dick.hewett@virgin.net)), or through either of the TVCS offices in **Andover (01264 362600) or Romsey (01794 519998)**.

## **Volunteering Information**

Things are moving in the Volunteer Centre! First of all, we now have a new office at the Romsey centre where we keep information resources about volunteers and volunteering and this has meant that we can update volunteering opportunities regularly – have a look at [www.do-it.org.uk](http://www.do-it.org.uk) to check your vacancies.

Tina Waterman-Roberts has been busy over the summer putting together an application for quality accreditation from Volunteering England and welcoming a number of new volunteers with extra support needs who face particular difficulties. Have you thought about whether your vacancy could be suitable for such a volunteer?

### **VOLUNTEERS WITH EXTRA SUPPORT NEEDS**

These volunteers face particular problems. For example, someone who is unemployed may feel vulnerable and lack confidence. Meeting a new group can be a challenge. What if they are not made welcome or rejected again? For people with mental or physical health problems there can be additional difficulties in the type of activity they undertake. If the opportunity is offered as a ‘package’, rather than being broken down into smaller tasks, they might feel that they cannot undertake it all and that they cannot, therefore, join the group.

### **DIFFICULTIES AND WAYS FORWARD**

The difficulties can, however, be addressed. But, you may be thinking, why bother? Very valuable contributions are made by people with different perspectives who can provide fresh ideas. Involving a wide group of people who represent our society should help services become more responsive to local community needs. It is definitely a good practice to make sure that regular supervision and appraisal are available to all. These practices help *all* volunteer.

### **SUPPORTING VOLUNTEERS**

Lastly, large adjustments are rarely needed. Do you remember your first day at a new job? It was probably the little things that made a difference, such as providing a ‘buddy’ to help during the settling in period. For people with extra support needs, it is important to focus on how *they* see their needs and that any adjustments should help them to contribute.

If you have any comments on this topic or would like more information, do contact us and see how we could help.

We are also keen to support voluntary groups and potential new volunteers. Our services include: induction, recruitment and training so please do not hesitate to contact us at either Romsey or Andover.

Tina Waterman-Roberts, Test Valley Volunteer Centre

Tel: 01794 519998 Email: [volunteers@tvcs.org.uk](mailto:volunteers@tvcs.org.uk)

## **Focus on Local Groups & Organisations**

### **New Service from Eastleigh and Romsey Carers Centre**

The Carers Centre has joined forces with Hampshire's Mobile Library Service to bring the carers of Romsey a unique service right to their door step. Every four weeks a member of the Carers Centre team will be travelling with Dave on his Library Bus in the Wellow and Sherfield English areas of Romsey. We will bring up to date news on caring issues, information on a wide range of subjects and provide you with links to Social Services and the mental health team.



The bus is well stocked with books, tapes, videos, and DVDs - the service is always friendly and personal. Now carers can access information and support along with a good book and some friendly conversation. We hope to expand to other areas of rural Romsey over the coming months. For the time table or for more information or help with carers issues please contact Wendy Walsh on 01794 511234.

### **An offer to Voluntary Groups from DLO**

Andover's biggest employer is seeking projects which can make a difference in the Community. Every government employee is allowed up to three days paid leave to carry out work that will enhance their area, and DLO Andover encourages staff to take up the Prime Minister's Challenge to work in the community.

Over the past three years 17 major projects have been completed and two are in the process of being achieved by the DLO volunteer teams. They have tackled projects including playground makeovers and decorating community halls. Staff are encouraged to plan, manage and discover skills they did not realise they had. The DLO provides the workforce and expertise but equipment and insurance must be supplied by the organisation requesting the help. Each project must be suited to the volunteers involved and agreed by all concerned. The DLO is always looking for new projects. For more information please write to: Paula Deverill, Communications Team, DLO Andover, Monxton Road, Andover, SP11 8HT or email [paula.deverill111@mod.uk](mailto:paula.deverill111@mod.uk) with details.

### **Hampshire Self-Advocacy Day**

**Saturday 9 October 2004      10am – 4.30pm      Osborne School, Winchester**

**People with a learning difficulty having their say ..... Workshops, Music, Refreshments, Artist, Open Forum & more**

All are welcome to this free event. For more information or help with transport, contact Verena Wright Tel 07963 420602, e-mail [harg.wright@btinternet.com](mailto:harg.wright@btinternet.com)

## **Focus on Local Groups & Organisations**

### **The Andover Carer Centre**

The Andover Carer Centre is located at the Andover War Memorial Hospital and exists to offer support and advice to all those in the district who selflessly care for a friend or relative. It is part of a national network of Carer Centres co-ordinated by The Princess Royal Trust for Carers. The Trust was founded by Princess Anne in 1991 to provide representation and support for unpaid carers.

Amongst the services the Centre offers are:

- information, advice, and guidance
- support and counselling
- advocacy and representation
- assistance with applying for benefits and liaising with statutory bodies
- access to training and education
- opportunities for short - and long-term respite

All services are completely confidential and free of charge.

#### Carers Support Groups

Support Groups provide opportunities for carers to meet each other in a relaxed and informal setting, to share experiences, raise concerns, and hear informative talks by guest speakers. The General Carers Group is for all carers, the Mental Health Carers Group specifically for those who look after someone suffering from a mental health problem. The groups meet as follows:

General Carers Group: Second Monday of each month, between 2pm and 4pm at The Bridge in Bridge Street, Andover.

Mental Health Carers Group: Second Tuesday of each month, between 7pm and 9pm at Andover Mind, Arcade House, Westbrook Close.

Note that the Groups do not meet in January or August.

#### Counselling

We offer free confidential counselling to all carers in the Andover district. All counsellors are qualified, experienced, and receive external supervision.

#### Volunteering

The Centre is on the look out for volunteers to help with its vital work. If you are interested in lending a hand please call Kerry on the number below.

Andover Carer Centre  
Andover War Memorial Hospital  
ANDOVER SP10 3LB  
Tel 01264 835246

Email [andover@hantscarers.com](mailto:andover@hantscarers.com)

**(See also page 3 regarding a Carers Consultation event planned for 4<sup>th</sup> November)**

## Information

### **The Local Channel – Promote Your Village, Community Project and Activities Free!**

The Local Channel has several offerings available to non-profit making community organisations for example: church, school, sports teams, scouts etc.

The Local Channel can give/provide these community organisations with a web presence effectively with a FREE website hosted within The Local Channel site. Any Organisation can add a FREE website using The Local Channel's easy to use Content Management System allows even the most novice users to add content.

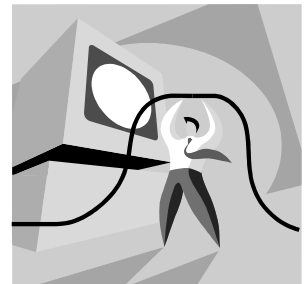
To receive your FREE website within The Local Channel all you have to do is register on the site and then set up your organisation through your login options. This will then be sent to The Local Channel for approval. Once approved the organisation will have a website with a friendly web address (i.e. [www.thelocalchannel.co.uk/OrganisationName](http://www.thelocalchannel.co.uk/OrganisationName)) FREE of charge.

Within your website you will have several options to add different types of information, the benefits for organisations are listed below:

- FREE website
- Unlimited WebPages
- Friendly URL i.e. [www.thelocalchannel.co.uk/OrganisationName](http://www.thelocalchannel.co.uk/OrganisationName)
- An Organisation Diary (Coming Soon)
- A News section
- Minutes and Agenda section (Coming Soon)
- A members directory

If you would like further information or if you have any questions then please do not hesitate to contact The Local Channel on FREE phone 0800 38 986 38 or by emailing [info@thelocalchannel.ltd.uk](mailto:info@thelocalchannel.ltd.uk).

(TVCS' Voluntary Sector Forum on September 30<sup>th</sup> will feature a presentation from the Local Channel – see page 2)



### **Information for charities from britishcharities.com**

We have created a educational charities portal, for which we have already been nominated an award "The most useful website" - by charitytimes.com publication. <http://www.britishcharities.com> The portal covers all A-Z that Charities come under, there is an online registration for charities which gives 24/7 access to your details. The portal also has a section on Charity Shops, Charity Magazines and Charity Suppliers, Charity Funding board and of course, Charity News.

Just go to the section marked 'Register your Charity', it will allow you to expand on the work you do and reach out to new people. Its FREE to join. Any questions please contact: Mr.Tom Watkins, Charity Support. [tom.watkins@britishcharities.com](mailto:tom.watkins@britishcharities.com)



*Working to support patients and improve services*

## **Information**



**PALS - Patient Advice and Liaison Service - *when you need advice, have concerns, or don't know where to turn.***

PALS is a free, impartial and confidential service for anyone who would like advice, information, or who may have a concern about care provided by the NHS locally.

This service covers:

- GP practices in Eastleigh, Romsey and the Southern Parishes
- Romsey Hospital
- Nursing services provided in the community
- Pharmacists, Opticians and Dentists

But we also link with other PALS in Hampshire to ensure that no matter where you come into contact with the NHS, help is available.

We aim to:

- Help resolve any concerns about healthcare and treatment
- Liaise with staff and managers on your behalf
- Signpost you to other relevant organisations where appropriate
- Advise on how to make a formal complaint and refer you to independent agencies

If you would like to speak to somebody impartial, then the PALS is based at Romsey Hospital, near out-patients reception.

If you would like help or information, we can arrange a meeting, or you can telephone. 01794 834727 or e-mail us at [pals@etvs-pct.nhs.uk](mailto:pals@etvs-pct.nhs.uk)

We are open from 9 am to 12.30 pm Monday to Friday

If we are closed, or busy, please leave a message and we will call you back as soon as we can.

### **New Village Hall Advisor at Community Action Hampshire**



Gordon Richardson is new in post at Community Action Hampshire.

As Community Resources Advisor (Village Halls) Gordon can help individuals or groups on all matters surrounding Village Halls. Advice includes:

- \* Law (Trustees, Governance and Charity Law)
- \* Funding (Application including Big Lottery and other sources)
- \* Development of services to the community (Help for new Groups)

At TVCS we are particularly pleased that we have an additional information resource for Village Halls and community buildings and hope groups in Test Valley will make use of the service available from Community Action Hampshire. Gordon Richardson can be contacted on 01962 857357.

## Funding Information

### Grants for Groups working with Children and Young People

# Local Network Fund

If so it may get a grant from the Local Network Fund of up to £7,000

The Local Network Fund can help local groups that want to do something to tackle poverty and disadvantage amongst children and young people aged 0 to 19 years. The Local Network fund wants to support new activities, or improvements to activities that will make a difference to the lives of children and young people.

To be eligible groups must:

- ❖ Be a voluntary, community or self-help group managed by local people.
- ❖ Have volunteers involved in the activity they want the grant for.

Telephone 0845 113 0161 for an application pack.

***TVCS CAN HELP AND ADVISE WITH YOUR APPLICATION***  
**If you need help – please call Greg Alexander on 01794 519998**

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### Government Funds Website

You can now make an online application for government funding through an upgraded website which provides details of £120m in government grant schemes. Your community or charity group can register with the site to receive information on relevant new grants, as well as putting in funding applications online and tracking their progress



More from: [www.governmentfunding.org.uk](http://www.governmentfunding.org.uk)

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### Lloyds TSB Foundation

Has issued new guidance for organisations applying for grants in 2004.

The mission is to support and work in partnership with recognised charitable organisations who help people, especially those who are disadvantaged or disabled, to play a fuller role in communities.

Thinking about applying? Telephone Gary Beharrell on 0115 9588745 or see [www.lloydstsbfoundation.org.uk](http://www.lloydstsbfoundation.org.uk)

## **Funding Information**



### **Glaxo IMPACT Awards**

GlaxoSmithKline are inviting organisations to apply for an IMPACT Award. They are open to registered charities, with at least three years operating experience, working in a health-related field in the UK. You must have an annual budget of less than £750,000. The unusual thing about these awards is that they are made on the basis of past work and performance, and you do not have to do anything new with the money.

An application pack can be obtained by sending an A4 self-addressed envelope (no stamp required) to:

65K IMPACT awards, Grants Department - The King's Fund,  
11-13 Cavendish Square, London W1G OAN.

Closing date for applications is Friday 22 October 2004

Winners will be announced at an awards ceremony in London in spring 2005.

For further information, see [www.gsk.com/community/impactawards.uk](http://www.gsk.com/community/impactawards.uk)

### **The NVYO Grant Scheme 2005-08**

For Information: As from today the application process for the National Voluntary Youth Organisation Grant Scheme 2005-08 has gone live. The application form and guidance can be downloaded from our website [www.dfes.gov.uk/nvyograntscheme/](http://www.dfes.gov.uk/nvyograntscheme/)

We have advertised the grant scheme in voluntary and community sector press.

Queries concerning the grant scheme should be referred to the Youth Service Team using the following contact methods.

Tel: 0114 259 4666 or email address is [NVYO.2005-08@dfes.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:NVYO.2005-08@dfes.gsi.gov.uk)

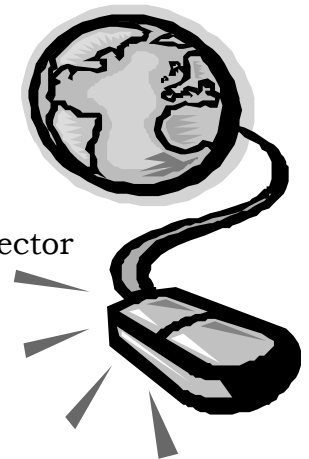
Should you have any queries concerning the grant scheme please do not hesitate to contact me: Cat Doust, Youth Services Team, E4b, Moorfoot, Sheffield, S1 4PQ

### **Latest Grant round from Connexions announced**

The next round of Connexions small grants will be available in October 2004. Grants are available to voluntary groups working with young people aged between 13 – 19 years. There will be two streams available and organisations can apply for funding up to £10,000. For more information please contact: Becky Davis, Voluntary Sector Co-ordinator for South Central Connexions. Tel 023 8063 4433.

Email: [beckydavis@connexions-southcentral.org](mailto:beckydavis@connexions-southcentral.org)

**If you are successful finding grants from any of the funders we feature in the Valley Messenger please tell us!**



### **FUNDING ISSUES FACING THE VOLUNTARY SECTOR**



#### Full cost recovery - What is it?

Many voluntary organisations deliver services, such as supported housing for people with learning difficulties, debt advice or environmental education campaigns, on behalf of local authorities and other clients. Sometimes the money they receive from the funders does not cover the real cost of delivering the service. They then have to scramble around to find the money to cover the gap. If they cannot find the money somewhere else it can affect the financial viability of the whole organisation.

#### Why don't funders pay full costs?

Funders have often argued that they don't want to pay for 'core costs' or are concerned about doubling up by covering costs already funded elsewhere. The term 'core costs' describes an organisation overhead or central costs as opposed to project costs. These include the cost of management and leadership and of support functions such as the price of premises, financial and personnel management. All organisations from all sectors have central or 'core costs'.

#### How can the problem be overcome?

A better approach may be to use the concept of 'full cost recovery'. Instead of separating costs into 'project' and 'core', it strengthens voluntary organisations' bargaining power to calculate the full cost of the project including both direct costs and an appropriate level of indirect or overhead costs. As the government said in its recent spending review: 'It is legitimate for service providers to factor in the relevant element of overhead costs into their cost estimates for services delivered under contract.' However, this is often not implemented at a local level, or even at national level.

#### How can I work out these costs?

One problem has been the lack of a consistent and transparent method to calculate the full costs of projects. But in November 2002, the Association of Chief Executives of Voluntary Organisations - (ACEVO) produced a tool for calculating these costs. It is called the 'cost allocation template' - part of the report Funding our Future II. This was researched and written by New Philanthropy Capital. In addition to input from ACEVO, KPMG and a sector steering group, including NCVO, the Charity Finance Directors' Group, and several large charities, supported the publication.

#### Why use a template?

By using the template voluntary organisations can be confident that they know the full costs of a project and are able to show funders a transparent breakdown of costs. This helps them seek full funding. Where a fixed amount of funding is on offer they can use the template to work out if the funding would cover the full cost of the project.

#### How do I find out more?

For details of Funding our Future II, which includes a copy of the cost allocation template, visit [www.acevo.org.uk](http://www.acevo.org.uk) or call ACEVO on 0845 345 8481. A modified template for smaller organisations is due out in summer 2004.

## **Guides, Helplines & Resources**



Cerebra, For Brain Injured Children and Young People, based in Carmarthen has commissioned external experts to write a guide to applying for Disability Living Allowance (DLA) especially for children under 16 with brain related conditions. The guide is free, in plain English, and is designed to give parents and carer's confidence in filling out the form. It can be downloaded from the web site [www.cerebra.org.uk](http://www.cerebra.org.uk) or you may request a copy be sent (the guide is 62 pages.) Cerebra can be

contacted on Freephone 0800 32 81 159 or email at [info@cerebra.org.uk](mailto:info@cerebra.org.uk)

### **Learning Difficulties: New Website**

Mencap has launched a new website that is designed to give interactive and accessible information to people with learning difficulties, their carers and professionals working in the field. The website, which is at <http://www.askmencap.info>, is supported by the Department of Health and gives specific information about learning disabilities as well as the contact details for local resources and national organisations in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. Developed with the help of people with learning difficulties, the site provides information on issues such as employment, education, leisure and advocacy, using illustrations, sound, and accessible language.



*Radar Bulletin No 346, June 2004*



### **Computers for Rural Communities**

A partnership between the Arthur Rank Centre (ARC) and the Government Disposal Services Agency is giving rural people access to IT and is making a positive impact on the quality of life in rural communities.

'Computers for Rural People' is giving community groups, churches, schools, farmers and businesses access to computer equipment at very reasonable prices (an internet-ready and delivery). David Long, who has managed the scheme voluntarily since 2002, says easy, affordable access to IT for isolated churches and rural communities enables them to keep up with the speed of change, change the way that they present information, or to access the internet.

The scheme is not for profit but a £30 donation is made to ARC for each purchase made to help support the charity's work.

To find out more call David Long 01295 788242

or e-mail [davidlong49@hotmail.com](mailto:davidlong49@hotmail.com)

## Guides, Helplines & Resources

### **Think Smart – What Now?**

The Home Office and the Office of Government Commerce (OGC) have just published “**Think smart think voluntary sector!** Good practice guidance on procurement of services from the voluntary and community sector.” Yet another indication that Government is serious about extending the role of the voluntary/community sector (VCS) in public service delivery.



The forward signed by Fiona Mactaggart, recognises the sector as a “key partner in the search for excellence in the delivery of public services” due to their “special talents in reaching and gaining the trust of disadvantaged groups in our society and their contribution undoubtedly makes our communities safer and more rewarding places to live”.

The document defines procurement as “the acquisition of goods and services from third party suppliers under legally binding contractual terms.” It recognises the barriers to greater VCS involvement in such activity such as:

- Difficulty in finding out about opportunities
- Too little notice
- Disproportionate paperwork
- Expense of tendering

However, it recognises that, above all, what is required is “a change of attitude by key decision makers and public sector procurement specialists. The assumption that the choice is just between public and private sector providers must be challenged.”

The document also lists the several advantages of using VCS suppliers and attempts to dispel the myth that the European procurement regime is a barrier to VCS involvement. Above all the guidance recommends treating the VCS as a partner, not just in delivery, but by early involvement in all development stages of the process.

This document’s key messages (highlighted in bold) are consistent messages coming from Government. They are promoting the value of our work, recognising barriers that we face - but what now? We have to work out how we influence the key decision makers? Often easier said than done! See further article ‘VCS Funding in the South East’.

The guidance can be found at <http://tinyurl.com/25umx>

or contact RAISE on 01423 500770

Source: RAISE August 2004

## Information

the Environment Centre (TEC)

**Reading this could save you £200 a year!  
Saving Energy gives us Healthy, Wealthy  
Lives!**

Many people in this area cannot afford to heat their homes, their health is suffering. The Solent Energy Efficiency Advice Centre and Test Valley Borough Council have teamed up to let people know how to stay warm and healthy this winter.

We are offering **FREE** 20 minute advice sessions to groups in Test Valley showing how to save energy and stay warm, and grant schemes that are available to help improve insulation and heating. Measures can save up to £200 per year on fuel bills, and improve health.

Cold homes increase susceptibility to illnesses such as Flu, Bronchitis, Asthma and aggravate any Arthritis and Rheumatism. Those who are particularly vulnerable are young families on low incomes, over 60's, long term sick or disabled people. Energy Efficiency improvements to a home have been proven to alleviate these conditions.

Free training sessions are also available for volunteers who work with these vulnerable groups.

There is also a Government funded scheme called "Warm Front" that can pay the full costs of insulating and heating a home for those people in receipt of benefits and who own or privately rent their homes. If you or anyone else you know want to take advantage of this, their advice line is **0800 316 2814**.

Our aim is to raise awareness of how people can save energy because it benefits them in so many ways.

- Householders can save up to £200 off their fuel bills.
- It is good for the environment.
- It also keeps a house warmer, which is good for people's health.

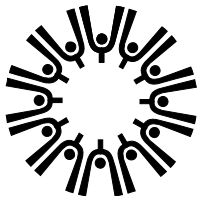
We visit groups to tell them of these benefits, how they can keep their home warmer for less money and grants and discounts to help them to insulate and heat their home well. We have a Freephone advice line – 0800 512012.

**Speakers at group meetings** – A 20-30 minute talk on energy, insulation, heating and ideas for saving energy. A Home Energy Check questionnaire offers a free low energy lightbulb and individual advice to make a home energy efficient.

**Awareness sessions for key community contacts** – The health benefits of making a home well insulated and heated properly (To enable elderly, low income families and the disabled to improve their health and access Government grants)

**Schools and youth activities** – Stories, quizzes and activities to help young people explore how they can help the environment.

This is a very brief overview, if you would like more information, please call



The Trustees and staff of Test Valley Community Services would like to thank the following for their support:

**Test Valley Borough Council** - Grant towards central costs  
**Hampshire County Council** - Grant towards central costs  
**Romsey Town Council** – Continued Support  
**Romsey Extra Parish Council** – Continued Support

**Can you help us to reach the community? Articles and events are always welcome from voluntary and community groups - please contact us: 01794 519998**

*The views and opinions expressed in The Valley Messenger are not necessarily those held by the staff and management of Test Valley Community Services. We are always pleased to include contributions from any of our readers and welcome articles and information. We are not able to recommend any of the services offered through advertisements in this publication.*

Published by Test Valley Community Services  
DTP & Typing Services - Dee Ewart (volunteer)

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