

A photograph of three women standing together indoors. The woman on the left has short grey hair and is wearing a red jacket over a grey top. The woman in the middle has short brown hair and is wearing a red top and black pants. The woman on the right has dark hair and is wearing a blue cardigan over a grey top and light-colored pants, with a red jacket draped over her shoulders. They are all smiling. The background is a plain white wall with a framed picture hanging on it.

Tyneside Women's Health: celebrating and supporting women

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(re)focusing on what matters: tackling
poverty and inequality p5

surviving or thriving in Newcastle p6

your voice on Wellbeing for Life p24

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About ncvs inform

ncvs inform is published four times
a year by Newcastle CVS.

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Service is a registered charity
(number 1125877) and company
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Formats

This newsletter is also available on
our website at www.cvsnewcastle.org.uk. Please tell us if you need it
in a different format and we will try
to help you.

Comments and complaints

We welcome your feedback –
please contact Stephanie Cole on
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Next issue

The next edition of ncvs inform will
be published in June 2012.

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Spring forward, fall back

This phrase is supposed to help us reset our clocks for Daylight Saving Time; (even though non-Americans rarely use Fall for autumn). The work I've been involved in with Vonne and Unison, which has involved listening to the stories of many local organisations and carrying out a survey, has made me look at the phrase in a different light.

There are a small number of voluntary and community organisations (VCO) that have managed to regroup and focus and go after (and win) additional work, mainly through contracting. However this means they have to become more focussed on service delivery, have less time for partnership working and are reorganising internally on a regular basis; but they are thriving and springing forward.

The rest of us can be divided into three camps – those of us who see something nasty coming along but just don't know how to deal with it; those of us trying to change and work differently; and, those who haven't a clue what is going on and don't think it matters much to them. So some are standing still, but others are falling back.

The scale of public sector cuts, the welfare reforms, housing changes, NHS restructuring and local government finance within the background of general recession and an increasing north south divide means no-one can be immune. We are starting to see long-respected organisations seriously considering their futures. At the same time, most organisations are reporting an increase in demand for their services.

This edition of *Inform* illustrates what the sector is thinking, changes in partnerships and other structures, funding and budget issues and managing in hard times. This is against a national policy background of changes to infrastructure, concerns about the independence of the sector and the introduction of new initiatives such as the Work Programme.

Quite clearly we can't go on as before and there needs to be a radical review of how the Newcastle City Council and the NHS commission us if they genuinely want a thriving sector for the future. We are increasingly hearing about the importance of co-production, but the formal procurement cycles used locally don't encourage this. There needs to be new and different approaches to commissioning – looking at consortia, partnerships and other arrangements and positive support and resources given to these approaches.

We know the voluntary sector can offer a lot more than the private sector – we develop the communities we work with, we involve volunteers, we campaign for improvements, we are flexible and responsive and ultimately we improve the social capital of Newcastle. However we need fairness (not favours) in developing new approaches to work in these hard times.

As usual *Inform* contains a mixture of practical support particularly around finance (as we reach the financial year end), crisis management and local information.

Once again, if you are concerned about what is happening within your organisation and its future, please take action. Don't just wait and hope it will go away. Here at Newcastle CVS we offer a team of professional staff who can help you with financial management, funding advice and governance support. Because if you continue to ignore what is happening, you'll soon find yourself falling back.



Sally

(re)focusing on what matters: tackling poverty and inequality

In 1929, Newcastle CVS was set up to coordinate social work in response to high unemployment, serious overcrowding, poor education, poor health and pollution.

In 2012, 83 years later, the papers, TV, and social media are full of stories about unemployment, increasing poverty and increasing inequality. Are we really living in a different time?

Our aims and mission have always been to tackle inequalities and disadvantage, and fight poverty by working in the areas of greatest need. The trustees and staff feel passionately that we need to refocus on these core aims when the people of Newcastle and its communities are again in a time of great need.

Inequality and poverty were big themes at our recent joint trustee and staff planning session and our management team planning day, and we've been working on plans to help us use our current resources and energies on what matters most.

We are worried that

- ✓ health inequalities in Newcastle mean people living in the Byker ward die an average of 14 years earlier than people living in the Gosforth ward
- ✓ 32% of children and young people live in poverty

✓ 14.6% of people in Newcastle are on out-of-work benefits (28,790 people) – higher than the national average of 8.6%

✓ the impact of local housing benefit changes will lead to overcrowding, homelessness and worse housing conditions

✓ families are worried about the rising costs of food and are 'terrified of what the future holds'

These are big issues and we can't do it on our own. We want to focus our current roles of coordinating, informing, supporting, involving, networking, representing and campaigning with those of the 100s of VCOs in Newcastle tackling these issues, to help us answer

What poverty means for people in Newcastle?

How can the VCS work to improve people's lives and tackle poverty and inequality?

How can the VCS work together and with other partners to make a real difference?

We have some ideas such as

- ✓ collecting your stories about people and communities experiencing poverty and inequality to help the public, each other and the public sector understand what is going on

✓ focusing more of our resources, time and energy on supporting and developing those VCOs working with equality groups and in disadvantaged areas to help these VCOs stay strong or become stronger to continue to support the people and communities most in need

✓ refocusing the agendas of our networks and forums to look at the issues most important to Newcastle's people and communities

✓ working to coordinate the VCS voice to inform and influence local policy

✓ working to involve more VCOs in local initiatives that tackle or focus on poverty and inequalities such as the Newcastle Child Poverty Network

✓ supporting our members to share resources and to work together

We will work with our forums and networks to develop more ideas, and talk to the VCOs we meet in the coming weeks and months.

But we would like input from you, our members. Please tell us what else we can do, how we can help you tackle poverty and inequality in your areas and with the people you work with.

Contact Martin, Pam or Stephanie with your ideas and comments

Surviving or thriving in Newcastle

Newcastle CVS has recently been involved with two pieces of work which look at the position of voluntary and community organisations within Newcastle – *Surviving or thriving with VONNE* and *The heart of the city* with Unison.

Surviving or thriving?

Surviving or thriving is the sixth survey in the VONNE series which monitors the impact of the economic downturn on the voluntary and community sector in the north east; the previous survey was published in August 2011. This survey only focuses on Newcastle so it can also be seen as the second annual Newcastle state of the sector survey. We published the last one in January 2011.

This latest *Surviving or thriving* survey, carried out in January 2012, highlights

18%

may close in the next 12 months

both headline figures from 53 Newcastle VCOs plus five case studies from Newcastle CAB, Tyneside Women's Health, Newcastle Law Centre, Skills for People and Streetwise.

The VCOs that took part told us

- ✓ 59% have lost funding, totalling around £2.8million
- ✓ 37% have lost staff, making at least 75 staff redundant
- ✓ 57% have experienced an increase in demand for their service
- ✓ 57% are using reserves

And the VCOs told us that the future continues to look bleak:

- ✓ 18% may close in the next 12 months

44%

are thinking about closing services

- ✓ 44% expect to, or are thinking about, closing a service
- ✓ 47% will be, or are thinking about, reducing the number of beneficiaries they support

The five case studies illustrate the key issues facing these organisations. Most of the organisations are having to spend time reorganising over and over again to respond to changes in funding; shifting more towards providing services through contracts; seeing an increase in people needing their services; and, generally just trying to survive.

“The decrease in funding has had a major impact on our charity - we have had to make staff redundant”

“We regularly have to close our public “open door” advice sessions because the waiting room is full to capacity”

“Citizens, vulnerable people and children rely on voluntary and community organisations to improve their lives, tackle inequalities, give them a voice and just help them through their everyday lives”

The voices from the *Surviving or thriving* report

The heart of the city

The heart of the city: the voluntary and community sector in Newcastle was commissioned by Unison and carried out by Judith Green. Judith interviewed 31 local organisations to find out their stories – why they had set up, what they did and what was happening to them. She went back a year later to see what had happened in what turned out to be a year of change for our sector. Sally Young wrote the context and policy framework.

We weren't surprised when similar issues emerged

Most organisations faced cuts in income of about 10%, although a few have received more resources, mainly through contracts

For many organisations, 2012 and 2013 will be “make or break” times, and they will be faced with major decisions about closure or radical reorganisation

The funding climate is highly precarious, creating great stress and uncertainty, and making nonsense of notions of VCOs working towards sustainability

A lot of time and resources have been put into reorganisation and creating more “business” capacity to enable organisations to face

the future and especially to prepare for competitive contracting

VCOs have struggled to hold on to their core values and beliefs during hard times so that they can continue to support the causes for which they were founded

There has been in general a shift away from community development work and a greater emphasis on service delivery and contracts

There is less capacity for partnership and joint working with others

For many smaller organisations that rely on volunteers and do not employ staff, life goes on as before for now, but they may face difficulties soon as the infrastructure of support is reduced

Demand for services has risen and is expected to continue to grow, even as resources diminish

It's important for Newcastle CVS to be involved in this kind of work. It helps us provide evidence to decision-makers on what is happening and make recommendations for the future.

The reports are on our website at www.cvsnewcastle.org.uk

Capable and independent

There are two key issues exercising the minds of the staff at Newcastle CVS and other support and development organisations – independence and organisational support to VCOs. And we think you should be interested too. We know it is increasingly hard to focus on what can seem high level policy, when you have to deal with the daily work. However, if we don't engage with consultations, then the powers that be can push through key changes on the grounds that "nobody responded when we asked".

Independence

Protecting independence: the voluntary sector in 2012 is the first of five annual assessments by the Panel on the Independence of the Voluntary Sector. You can download the report from www.baringfoundation.org.uk/ProtectingIVS2012.pdf. It takes in the responses to an initial consultation document published in July 2011. Newcastle CVS was one of only 35 organisations to respond to the initial document.

The report notes that this is "a pivotal moment for the voluntary sector as a whole, and many individual organisations within it". It notes how VCOs have been encouraged to become involved in the delivery of public services; and the increase in funding from statutory sources rising by 60% between 2000-2008, mainly through contracts rather than grants. The Panel notes the challenges this caused for independence of purpose, action and voice, with the risk of organisations becoming too closely aligned with the aims and objectives of statutory funders rather than the individuals they exist to serve and the communities out of which they grew. Also the growth in competition had attracted the private sector and social investment vehicles.

The report notes the current economic crisis has added acute financial risks for many VCOs, particularly smaller ones. The scale and pace of change over the last eighteen months, with a combination of public sector cuts and reduced income in real terms since 2007/2008 in individual

charitable giving, has placed many VCOs in new and difficult places. Obviously this brings opportunities for some as well as risks.

Many VCOs, particularly the smallest, have never relied on public funds, but this does not eliminate the risk of being taken over by particular interest groups. Threats of loss of influence with key stakeholders can be just as powerful as concerns about loss of funding; as can excessive regulatory interference or new policy initiatives.

The Panel concludes that independence is crucial. If the VCS becomes, or is seen to be, simply a delivery arm of the state or private sector, or if it loses sight of its core mission and values; it will lose both public trust and its reason for existing. In the Panel's view, 2011 was a year that showed there were real risks to independence and that decisive action needs to be taken. The example of the Work Programme was used to illustrate how many VCOs have been excluded from an area where they have expertise and skills.

Organisational support

The Big Lottery Fund (BIG) has decided to change how it funds organisational support to local VCOs, and is now asking VCOs what they think. It has issued a consultation document *Building capabilities for impact and legacy*, see www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/building_capabilities. The closing date is 15 March 2012.

In the past, BIG has directly funded support and development organisations, like Newcastle CVS, to work with VCOs. We are currently receiving funding from BIG's basis programme until the summer, which may be extended for one more year.

The new direction proposes a more demand-led approach, where frontline organisations are given money or vouchers to choose support from a range of providers. If you chose Newcastle CVS, we would receive a payment for the piece of work only.

BIG has decided to change the way that it funds support and development because it doesn't believe the present situation is sustainable; there are untapped assets; there are many sources of support available to local VCOs; and BIG has insufficient funding to carry on as before. Instead BIG wants to target funding for support to potential applicants to its grants, in-grant support and end of grant support.

This means the majority of funding will go to frontline organisations to pay for a provider of their choice. There will also be some funding to improve the quality of support services directly. The consultation questions don't invite comments on this change of approach.

From a support and development perspective, Newcastle CVS believes that this is a naïve and inadequate consultation. Most support and development organisations offer much more than support and funding advice (important though these elements are). We try to offer a "wrap-around service" from helping a group to set up, become more established, support them with funding advice and help them to develop into a more sustainable group.

But our work doesn't stop there; we support VCOs to work together, to network and to have a voice. The work we do through our forums and networks, helping VCOs work together and share information is another element of development and support. We know, from feedback from members and statutory organisations, they welcome the work we do in supporting VCOs to get involved to influence plans and decision-making.

Our other key role is to promote and campaign for the interests of VCOs. We do

this by representing the views of the sector, research and campaign work, promoting voluntary and community action and our representing and influencing work.

Our experience is that funding advice might be the 'hook' that draws an organisation to Newcastle CVS, but once here we can give them a whole range of support, depending on where they are and their needs. Experience with web-based solutions has shown these don't work well with the majority of groups, because they need support – someone to talk to, explain things and listen to them and give tailored advice.

So what happens to the voice, campaigning and representation work? Who will fund this in the future? Taken together with the report on independence, does this mean that the voluntary sector becomes purely service providers/deliverers and loses the capacity to campaign, shape service and raise difficult issues and be extremely unwilling to bite the hand that feeds it?

What do you think?

If you can, please find time to answer the questions in the BIG consultation by 15 March. If you don't have time but have thoughts about how organisational support should be provided, please email or ring Sally Young. We will be making a response and will include your thoughts.

New partnership matching service

Voluntary and community organisations are being asked to work in partnership more and more. However it can sometimes be hard to quickly find the right organisations to work with. Newcastle CVS is lending a helping hand by sharing partnership requests in *NCVS e-inform* and via our website.

If you are looking for other VCOs to work with, you could also try Newcastle's online database of voluntary and community organisations at www.cvsnewcastle.org.uk > Online database.

If you are looking for partners, we need to know your organisation name, contact person, name of the fund or contract you need a partner for and/or the area of work you'd like to form a partnership for, and if you'd like to be a lead or sub-contractor. Please send the information to askncvs@cvsnewcastle.org.uk

However it is a good idea to build up partnership relationships before bidding for contracts, so we encourage VCOs to start this process now.

Newcastle City Council budget 2012-2013

Newcastle City Council published its draft budget proposals in December and has consulted on them. The final budget will be agreed in March and can be found on the council's website www.newcastle.gov.uk. Sally Young has responded to the consultation and you can read it on our website at www.cvsnewcastle.org.uk > Representing and influencing > Cuts and the budget.

Following cuts (or savings) of £44 million in the current financial year, the council is proposing to make further cuts of £30.3 million in 2012-2013. The proposals are based on protecting the priorities that emerged from the council's Let's Talk consultation programme. The council intends to cut £21.8 million through efficiency/internal service reductions and £5.2 million through external service reductions, and raise £3.3 million through fees and charges. The council tax will be frozen at its current level so there will be no additional income from residents.

The budget proposal papers highlight the areas of activity that will be affected, but it isn't always clear to see what the actual details will mean in practice for local people. A number of the services will inevitably impact on vulnerable people and their carers and we are concerned that removing some low level, prevention

services, could result in more people requiring higher cost services. The council does not intend to change its level of "substantial" for Fair Access to Care Services (FACS).

Obviously removing over £30 million from council spend, following £44 million this year, will have negative impacts on services, but the changes in national government council funding and grant regimes sees northern councils and cities particularly losing out. Recent research, the *IFS Green Budget 2012*, from the independent Institute of Fiscal Studies noted an average cut of £169 per person for local government spend (excluding education), which equates to 12.6% in the north east; in the south east of England, the cut was £47 per person or 4.6%. You can download the full report from www.ifs.org.uk/publications/6003.

If you haven't already, have a look at the council's budget proposals. The consultation period has now ended but it is important for you to understand how the changes will affect your organisation and the people and communities you work with.

Don't forget, speak to us if you are worried about the future of your organisation, we can help - askncvs@cvsnewcastle.org.uk or 0191 235 7037

Do you have staff in the Pension Trust Series 3 scheme?

The Pensions Trust is a multi-employer pension scheme that has many members across the VCS. In 2005, new pension legislation was created to protect individuals who had defined benefit arrangements with their employers by making sure defined pensions are fully funded.

The Pensions Trust checked all their pensions, and found that Series 1 and 2 were under-funded, mainly due to the state of the global economy and the impact on pension investments. This liability was shared proportionally between the VCOs in these two schemes, and VCOs were told by letter at the time.

The liability only became a real liability and needed to be paid if and when the organisation "withdrew" from the scheme. A "withdrawal event" is triggered, for example, if there are no active members of the scheme or if an existing organisation becomes a company.

A recent court case has brought a later scheme, Series 3, into the calculation of liability. All VCOs with staff in Series 3 should have received a letter from the Pensions Trust outlining their liability.

Newcastle CVS along with national organisations and local MPs lobbied the pension's minister on behalf of the sector to ask for the Pensions Trust to be exempt from the legislation but it was dismissed.

Your next steps

If your organisation is in the Series 3 scheme, you should

1. speak to your accountant or professional adviser about how to deal with the liability in your accounts
2. make sure you understand your liability and what it means for your organisation by getting information and advice from the Pensions Trust by phone 0113 234 5500 or the website www.thepensiontrust.org.uk

If you don't have an accountant or professional adviser or want to talk over the implications, speak to Graeme Lyall at Ellison Services by phone 0191 235 7020 or email graeme.lyall@ellisonservices.co.uk

News in brief

The (HSE) Health and Safety Executive has released a Health and safety made simple website aimed at small organisations. It hopes to make it easier to comply with the law and manage health and safety in organisations. It says that for many organisations, all that's required is a basic series of tasks. The site will take you through the steps and help you make sure you have done what you need to - and no more.

www.hse.gov.uk/simple-health-safety

The HSE has also published online interactive risk assessment tools to help you easily go through and create your risk assessment www.hse.gov.uk/risk/assessment.htm

There is also new guidance to help you understand your role in reporting anything to the HSE under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995 (RIDDOR). The guide includes the changes that are due to come in from 6 April 2012. It is free to download from www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/books/l73.htm

If you don't have access to a computer, don't forget that you can come in and use the Your Space area of our office for free, see page 30.

Tyneside Women's Health

We spoke to Kate Mukungu at Tyneside Women's Health...

Tell us about your organisation and what you do

Tyneside Women's Health was set up in 1985 and our purpose is to improve women's mental health and emotional wellbeing. To do this, we provide

- ✓ drop in sessions
- ✓ counselling
- ✓ courses to help manage mental health issues such as anxiety and depression
- ✓ therapeutic activities - yoga, singing, crafts and lots more
- ✓ support groups
- ✓ support with personal development, progression and participation
- ✓ regular information sessions for workers to learn about our work and referring women to us for support

We support women with common mental health problems as well as women with more severe and enduring mental health issues. We place a huge emphasis on wellbeing so believe it is important to support women who may not otherwise be mental health service users, but who have life experiences that affect their wellbeing. Such experiences include but

are not limited to: domestic abuse, isolation and living in Tyneside as part of a minority group.

What have you done this year?

In April 2011, we had a landmark event when Chi Onwurah MP opened our centre in Newcastle (see the photo of Chi and Kate above). The event was very informal, full of warmth and a wonderful celebration, even though it was a formal opening. The opening was a very special moment in our history: after 26 years of borrowing and hiring rooms from other community projects and organisations in Newcastle, we now have a dedicated centre north of the river to provide women with mental health and wellbeing support. We have run a centre in Gateshead since our early days as an organisation.

Our other main achievements this year are that we have managed to increase the range and volume of support provided to an ever increasing number of women. We have also stepped up our analysis of the needs of our service users and our ongoing evaluation of the impact of our work. We are delighted that



our service users report positive outcomes such as reduced depression, anxiety and isolation and increased wellbeing, confidence and ability to manage mental health needs. Not only is this great for the women concerned but a great affirmation for our committed staff and volunteer team.

How did we help and what difference did it make?

In September we were awarded the Science City Mental Health contract to deliver a wellbeing project with six other community organisations and Northumbria University. This was an amazing achievement for us as it was Tyneside Women's Health's first ever tender submission! The Science City community engagement work carried out by Newcastle CVS was really helpful as it allowed us to form partnerships and go forward with our submission. Thank you.

www.tynesidewomenshealth.org.uk

Image from Tyneside Women's Health

the funding pages

the funding pages give an A-Z of current funding opportunities plus articles on other ways of bringing in income including contracting and legacies. You can also find out about funding by signing up to our weekly email bulletin, *ncvs e-inform*.

Help for Newcastle groups

Newcastle CVS provides a funding advice service, information and training to help voluntary and community groups to find the funding and resources they need to run their organisations. It includes planning for successful fundraising; identifying possible sources of funding; preparing fundable applications; developing and discussing funding strategies; commenting on and helping with draft applications; identifying and monitoring outcomes in a straightforward way; and sustainability. We offer this support either at a face to face meeting, by phone and by email.

If you'd like help please contact Louise McGlen by email louise.mcglenn@cvsnwcastle.org.uk or phone 0191 235 7033.

a - z of funders

Act Foundation

This foundation gives grants to individuals and other charities to enhance the quality of life for people in need who are mentally or physically disabled. Grants generally fall into the following areas

- ✓ Buildings – funding modifications to homes, schools, hospices etc
- ✓ Equipment – specialised wheelchairs, other mobility aids and equipment including medical equipment to assist independent living
- ✓ Financial assistance – towards the cost of short-term respite breaks at a registered respite centre

www.theactfoundation.co.uk > Apply for a grant
E info@theactfoundation.co.uk
T 01753 753900

Allen Lane Foundation

This foundation makes grants of between £500 and £15,000, to support smaller organisations working locally with an income of less than £100,000 or those that work across the UK that have an income of less than £250,000. Priority areas of work are asylum-seekers and refugees (but not organisations working with a single nationality); gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender people; gypsies and travellers; migrant workers; offenders and ex-offenders; older people; people experiencing mental health problems; and, people experiencing violence or abuse.

www.allenlane.org.uk > Guidelines
E info@allenlane.org.uk
T 01904 613223

Clare Duffield Foundation – main grants

The foundation's grants range from below £5,000 to over £1 million, and support a mix of large-scale projects with far-reaching effects, and small-scale community endeavours. Most of its support is for the cultural sector, and in particular to cultural learning and to museum, gallery, heritage and performing arts learning spaces. Grants are awarded at a meeting of the trustees, held twice a year. As there is no fixed schedule for these meetings, applications are reviewed on an ongoing basis.

www.clareduffield.org.uk > Grant Programmes > Main Grants
E info@clareduffield.org.uk
T 0207 351 6061

Ernest Cook Trust

The trust funds a range of activities including land-based learning for children and young people, and work to encourage young people's interest either in the countryside and the environment or the arts (in the broadest sense) or aiming to raise levels of literacy and numeracy.

www.ernestcooktrust.org.uk > Grants > How to apply
E admin@ernestcooktrust.org.uk
T 01285 712492



Esme Fairbairn Foundation

The foundation main fund prioritises work involving the arts, education and learning, the environment and enabling disadvantaged people to participate fully in society. The work must

- ✓ address a significant gap in provision
- ✓ develop or strengthen good practice
- ✓ challenge convention or take a risk to address a difficult issue
- ✓ test out new ideas or practices
- ✓ take an enterprising approach to achieving its aims
- ✓ set out to influence policy or change behaviour more widely

The foundation has very specific exclusions so before applying you should read the guidance notes and carefully check the exclusions.

www.esmeefairbairn.org.uk > Apply for funding > Main Fund
E info@esmeefairbairn.org.uk
T 020 7812 3700

Golsoncott Foundation

The foundation aims to promote, maintain, improve and advance the education of the public in the arts generally and in particular the fine arts and music. This includes providing access to the arts for young people and developing new audiences.

www.golsoncott.org.uk
E Golsoncott@btinternet.com
T 01392 252855

Focus on: Sir James Knott Trust

The Sir James Knott Trust is one of the oldest family trusts in the north east of England, and its aim is to help improve the conditions of people living and working in the north east.

The history of the trust

Born in Howdon in 1865, Sir James had many commercial and personal interests. He acquired his first ship at the age of 23 with money borrowed from a friend. His Prince Shipping Line grew to be one of the largest shipping companies in the world. His philosophy was "Action not Words" and he and his wife, Lady Margaret, were well known for their generosity helping others less fortunate than themselves. For instance: the Knotts paid for a swimming pool for the Northern Counties Orphanage where they also left endowments to maintain two cots, they made an annual donation to the Northern Ladies Annuity Society (still going, and based at MEA House), and bought a section of the Roman Wall for the Newcastle Society of Antiquaries.

Sir James had three sons, who all fought during WW1 but only the eldest son Thomas survived. The family created the Memorial Park in Heddon in 1925 in memory of the two sons killed in action and St James' and St Basil's Church in Fenham, Newcastle, built in 1931 was named after them. They also set up a fund for men in need who served in their sons' regiments (including their widows and orphans) and bought a cottage in Wylam for the wives of French servicemen being treated at a nearby hospital.

In 1917 Sir James, sold his shipping line and received a knighthood for his services to shipping. The trust was

set up in 1920 when Sir James and Lady Margaret moved to Jersey and formed an investment company with an endowment of £500,000 to further his philanthropy. Sir James Knott died in 1934. In 1938, the trustees provided funds to build the Knott Memorial Flats, a nursery school in North Shields and gave a generous contribution towards building costs of the James Knott Youth Centre in North Shields. You can find out more about the Knott family's fascinating history from the trust.

The present day

Since 1990, the trust has made over 6,700 grants totaling over £21 million, many of them to charities known to have been of keen interest to Sir James Knott. The average grant size is £3,000 but grants range from £200 to £50,000.

The trustees try to follow the wishes and interests of the trust's founder where this is compatible with the present day needs of the north east. They have supported organisations such as Friends of Summerhill, Disability North, Recyke Y' Bike, East End and Ouseburn Community Association, the Tyneside Recreational Club for the Blind and the People's Kitchen.

The trustees meet three times a year in spring, summer and autumn but applications for £1,000 and under can be considered outside of usual meeting dates.

www.knott-trust.co.uk
E info@knott-trust.co.uk
T 0191 230 4016

J Paul Getty Jnr Charitable Trust

The trust is inviting applications from registered charities for projects that work to

- ✓ Reduce re-offending - to improve the lot of people in prison and smooth the transition for those leaving prison
- ✓ Improve prospects - to provide meaningful occupation for young people aged 14-19 to improve their employability and diminish the risk of social exclusion; work to improve the treatment of refugees and asylum seekers
- ✓ Repair communities - projects led from within the community with the aim of integrating different social and ethnic groups in pursuit of worthwhile goals
- ✓ Repair lives - make a lasting impact on the lives of people with substance misuse problems; to help people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness
- ✓ Preserve heritage - to conserve or restore buildings and landscapes which are of national value and accessible to the public; to save art and manuscripts of national importance from export
- ✓ Sustain the arts - to nurture and develop artistic endeavour of the highest quality

The main grants can be for between £10,000 and £250,000 over a period of one to three years; small grants of up to £5,000 are also available for smaller charities. The trustees decided in 2011 to wind down the trust within the next five years and plan to spend all the trust's funds. It is likely that the trust will close to new applications in 2012.

www.jpgettytrust.org.uk/funding.html
T 020 7486 1859

Match funding available on Localgiving.com

A new round of match funding starts in March. That means every £1 donated to a group through the site will be matched by a further £1, with Gift Aid on top. In December 2011, north east groups took a share of £30,000 match funding from a national Localgiving.com pot of £125,000. You don't have to be a charity to be on localgiving.com but you do need to register your community group on the site through the Community Foundation, which is easy to do.

www.localgiving.com

To register on Localgiving.com, email Jane Roberts Morpeth at the Community Foundation
jrm@communityfoundation.org.uk or ring 0191 222 0945

Newcastle Fund 2011

The list of grants awarded is available on the Newcastle City Council website. To find out more visit www.newcastle.gov.uk or go direct via <http://digbig.com/5bffqk>.

If you applied and were unsuccessful and would like support with finding funding and planning your future funding strategy or organisation plans, contact Louise, our supporting and developing officer (funding advice) fundadvice@cvsnewcastle.org.uk or ring 0191 235 7033.

Pilgrim Trust

The trust aims to preserve and promote Britain's historical and intellectual assets and to help vulnerable members of society. It prefers to support projects where funds will make the greatest impact. They are interested in projects where charities are having difficulty in raising funds from other sources.

The two funding priorities are

- ✓ Preservation and scholarship – historic building repair and conservation, cataloguing and research
- ✓ Social welfare – drug or alcohol misuse, projects in prisons or alternatives to custody

You should read the guidance in full before deciding whether to apply.

www.thepilgrimtrust.org.uk
E info@thepilgrimtrust.org.uk
T 020 7222 4723

Rayne Foundation

This foundation gives grants within four sectors: arts; education; health and medicine; and, social welfare and development. Within these four broad sectors they prioritise applications that apply to their current areas of special interest, which are listed on the website.

www.raynefoundation.org.uk/GrantAreas.aspx
The Rayne Foundation, 100 George Street, London W1U 8NU

SITA Trust

The total amount of funding the trust has to give away has gone up from £4.9 million in 2011 to £8 million in 2012. It runs the following funding programmes

- ✓ Enhancing Communities – grants of up to £60,000 for community improvement projects within three miles of SITA-owned qualifying waste processing sites. The projects must have an overall cost of less than £250,000
- ✓ Queen Elizabeth II Fields Fund – grants of up to £5,000 to improve designated Queen Elizabeth II Fields. Help is also available to make your community green space a designated Queen Elizabeth II Field – check the

website for information

- ✓ Young Persons' Volunteering Fund – grants of up to £10,000 to assist young people aged 14-25 to volunteer their time to create or enhance facilities that can be enjoyed by the wider community
- ✓ Enriching Nature – biodiversity conservation projects within ten miles of SITA landfill sites

www.sitatrust.org.uk/apply-for-funding
E info@sitatrust.org.uk
T 01454 262910

Henry Smith's Charity

Funding of £10,000 or more per year is available. There are two types of main grant

- ✓ Capital - one off grants for purchase or refurbishment of a building or purchase of specialist equipment
- ✓ Revenue - grants of up to three years for things like core costs (including salaries and overheads) or running costs of a specific project (including staffing costs)

www.henrysmithcharity.org.uk > Grant Programmes
T 020 7264 4970

Tudor Trust

The trust supports work that tries to meet the many different needs of people at the margins of society. They are interested in how organisations tackle these needs, and their root causes. They want to encourage progress, development and fresh ideas rather than keeping things as they are. They have a straightforward two-stage application process.

www.tudortrust.org.uk
T 020 7727 8522

Tax effective giving

Tax-effective fundraising is invaluable to the charity sector, allowing charities to boost their income further.

How to make the most of tax effective giving

There are many ways of donating to charity that can be tax effective but to receive donations you need to think about how you promote your charity and ask the public to give to your charity. Let people know how they can support your cause on all promotional material and make sure you have a “How you can help” button on the home page of your website that links to details about how to give money, gifts or time.

To be able to take advantage of any tax effective giving mechanism, all charities must be registered with HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) for tax purposes. If your charity has an income of less than £5,000 and so can't yet register with the Charity Commission, you can still register as a charity for tax purposes with HMRC. There is more information

about this on the tax effective giving website - see the end of this article.

The options for tax effective giving

Legacies to UK charities are exempt from inheritance tax which can reduce the amount of tax payable if an estate is over the exempt threshold. Legacies are left through a donor's will with instructions as to how and to which charities the bequest is to be distributed. It is not enough for donors to just inform family or friends that they would like a gift to a charity after their death. They need to make

a will if they do not have one, or add a codicil (a short amendment) to their existing will that details the type of gift and the name of the charities that they would like to benefit from it. From April 2012, a reduced rate of inheritance tax of 36 per cent for estates leaving 10 per cent or more to charity will be introduced, as announced in the 2011 Budget.

Setting up a trust or foundation can give a donor a framework for planning their charitable giving. As well as being able to receive money through tax-efficient giving methods a trust does not pay corporation tax, inheritance



Images by creativedocfoto at freedigitalphotos.net

tax or tax on its investment income. There will be no liability for business rates (there is a mandatory relief against business rates at 80%, as well as a further 20% on a discretionary basis) if the trust runs its own office. Donors who pay a higher rate of tax can also receive tax relief on any money they pay into it. In addition, unless the trust is very large, it will not have to register for VAT.

Giving by business All companies can get tax relief when they give money to a UK, EU, Norwegian or Icelandic charity that is registered with HMRC, but the relief works differently for companies, self-employed people and partnerships. See the tax effective giving website for more detailed information about this.

Gifts of shares Any shares that are transferable have potential to be donated to your charity, but only publicly quoted shares qualify for tax relief for the donor. The tax effective giving website gives full information on the potential tax relief and exemption from capital gains tax available and the shares that qualify.

Land and property Individuals who donate land or buildings to charity benefit from income tax relief and exemption from capital gains tax. Before deciding what to

do with the gift, you should consider the tax implications for your charity and get professional advice. The relief works in the same way as gifts of shares. Tax relief is given to donors for the market value of the property at the time of donation. The market value of a property is what it would fetch if sold. The relief is given as a deduction from the donor's income tax liability for the tax year when the gift is made. The income tax relief is in addition to exemption from capital gains tax.

Payroll giving enables employees to give to charity straight from their gross salary (before tax is deducted), and to receive immediate tax relief of up to £5 for every £10 donated. Any UK, EU, Norwegian or Icelandic charity that is recognised by HMRC for tax purposes can receive gifts this way. It can provide a regular source of income but is more likely to attract donations if your organisation is able to spend time and money on promoting its cause to potential donors.

Gift Aid allows charities to claim back the basic rate tax already paid on donations by the donor and is worth 25p for every pound donated by UK taxpayers. Charities wishing to claim Gift Aid need to register with HMRC for tax purposes. HMRC will then send out the charity

application form for you to nominate a member of staff to make the claims.

Donors have to make a declaration giving the charity permission to claim the tax back on their donations. This declaration can be backdated for donations made in the past four years and also used for future donations. You can download sample Gift Aid declaration forms from the tax effective giving website. It is also possible to claim gift aid back on “in kind” donations such as clothing given to charity shops and on sponsorship money.

Help from Newcastle CVS

Talk to Louise for help fundraising for your charity. We can also help your organisation become a registered charity so talk to Stephanie about our registering a charity support package.

www.tax-effective-giving.org.uk/

www.hmrc.gov.uk/individuals/giving/basics.htm

Writing effective applications

With more and more VCOs applying for funding, it is becoming more and more competitive, with even the most experienced fundraiser seeing an increase in rejection letters. You can give your projects the best chance of success by

- ✓ Researching funding opportunities properly and making sure you fit the priorities. When there is increasing demand funders are unlikely to consider any work that does not fit with their current priorities
- ✓ Understanding what is required in the application – it is surprising how many people don't read the guidance notes or check that they are answering the funders questions
- ✓ Showing a full understanding of the current needs for your work, using up to date statistics and studies to back up any statements of need you make and trying to link this in to current local and national policy

- ✓ Using the application to show how giving you a grant will enable you to have a positive impact on this need
- ✓ Keeping it simple, focused, concise and to the point
- ✓ Always getting someone from outside your organisation to act as a critical friend and comment on the application before you send it in

How we can help

Our supporting and developing officer (funding advice), Louise, can give you a helping hand by

- ✓ Helping you find potential funding sources – Louise can do this over the phone, by email or face to face
- ✓ Helping you to learn how to find potential funding sources yourself and increasing your fundraising skills through a free supported session in Your Space, showing you how to use our funding directories, search websites and how to navigate funders' websites

- ✓ Acting as a critical friend to comment on draft applications
- ✓ Informing you about potential funding sources in our weekly email bulletin, *NCVS e-inform* – it's free to sign up, just email Louise
- ✓ Developing your fundraising skills through regular training events – see the back page for future courses
- ✓ Giving guidance on project planning, monitoring, evaluation and outcomes
- ✓ Guiding you through the fundraising process in our information sheets including *Are you ready to fundraise*, *How to fundraise from trusts and foundations*, and *Writing effective applications*

Louise McGlen
E fundadvice@
cvsnewcastle.org.uk
T 0191 235 7033
www.cvsnewcastle.org.uk

Newcastle CVS funding information sheets

Our useful funding information sheets will help you...

- ✓ Are you ready to fundraise?
- ✓ How to complete application forms
- ✓ How to write an application letter

- ✓ How to fundraise from trusts and foundations
- ✓ How to prepare a budget

www.cvsnewcastle.org.uk

Public law: making it work for you

Martin and Sally from Newcastle CVS recently went to seminars about public law. The seminars included using the law to fight local cuts and challenging decisions on vital public services.

Challenges can be made individually or collectively, with a group of VCOs jointly challenging a decision. The more successful claims are usually brought by affected individuals, but there is nothing to stop organisations bringing challenges.

One of the most common reasons why challenges succeed is that there has been insufficient consultation

and/or consultations have been carried out without due regard to proper processes.

Another key area for challenge is around the Equality Act 2010 and the failure to carry out an Equality Impact Needs Assessment (EINA). Successful challenges have also been brought using 'Welfare Duties', particularly under the Children Act.

There are clear time limits and most actions have to be started within a three month period from a decision being made. This is obviously a complex and difficult area, and professional support is necessary. However, access

to free legal support and legal aid is becoming more difficult. This may mean that organisations have to pay for legal advice and support.

We understand that VCOs can be wary about launching a formal legal challenge because they are worried about the impact it may have on future relationships with the organisations they are challenging.

Where to find support

If you need support to use public law

- ✓ visit www.evproject.org.uk has resources, workshops, training and discussion forums – the Empowering the Voluntary Sector (EVS) project is run by NAVCA and the Public Law Project
- ✓ ring or email the EVS free advice line on 020 7520 3161 or evsadvic@ncvo-vol.org.uk – run by NCVO's Compact Advocacy Project, who will refer you to the Public Law Project if you need a lawyer

- ✓ ask Newcastle CVS if you'd like us to run the one-day EVS course on how to use public law or a shorter briefing session on public law in Newcastle (contact Jaz at Newcastle CVS)



Image by Salvatore Vuono at freedigitalphoto.net

Community organising

In March 2011, Newcastle CVS held a briefing session on community organising. At the time momentum was growing around this part of the big society. Locality had won a £15 million contract to deliver the government's target of 5,000 community organisers by 2015 and had published their successful bid which set out what they planned to do.

The first job was to develop a network of host organisations called kickstarters that would recruit and train 500 senior organisers, who in turn would recruit a further 4,500. Ten kickstarters were listed in the winning bid with more appearing from the autumn onwards. A rolling programme would train community organisers and kickstarters and it appeared that the impact of community organising could soon be felt in local neighbourhoods.

Those attending the March briefing session expressed scepticism about community organising but equally accepted that the approach

had merits if communities embraced it. And so whilst there was clearly nervousness about how well community organising would fit in with existing voluntary and community sector activity we would seek to remain open minded. Newcastle CVS agreed to organise a follow up meeting later in the year to learn from the first six months of the programme. We wrote up a report for the event, and there was some interest in it from out of the area. And then it all went quiet on the community organising front.

So what happened next?

In May 2011, Jess Steele, Locality's Director of Innovation, who leads on the community organisers programme, wrote on her blog *Spinning Plates*, that the employment and tax status of community organisers needed to be clarified. As a result training for the first round of community organisers would be delayed until September. During this enforced lull Locality advertised for more kickstarters and a second set

ETEC Development Trust is a social enterprise and has worked in Sunderland for over 20 years. Chief executive David Milburn told *Inform* that locally there was some initial wariness about community organising. However ETEC acting as host has given other VCOs and agencies confidence about how the community

organisers will be managed. Five community organisers have been recruited from 115 applicants. Having received their Root-Solution-Listening Matters training the five have now been "on the ground" for about a month, working in the East End and Hendon areas of Sunderland, knocking on doors and getting to know the local communities.

was announced in September that included Sunderland based ETEC Development Trust. If you'd like to know more about becoming a kickstarter, contact David, see box below.

Recently Locality announced a third round of kickstarters; again there has been little interest from the north east, and ETEC remains the only kickstarter in our area. There is a new community organisers website with information about the community organisers, stories about their work, resources and a blog. At last it seems to be achieving the momentum expected last year. We will continue to monitor community organising and will follow up last year's briefing session when there is more to report.

www.locality.org.uk
www.cocollaborative.org.uk
www.cvsnewcastle.org.uk
www.jesssteele.wordpress.com

David says the response to date has been positive, with the council and other agencies as interested as the local communities to see how community organising works and what it can bring.

David Milburn
0191 514 6150
www.etc.org.uk

The Work Programme: Is it working?

Voluntary and community sector involvement as Work Programme contractors and sub-contractors was originally announced as a "massive boost to the Big Society". However, the number of VCS contractors in the Work Programme has fallen well short of government predictions. In the last issue of *Inform* we referred to a number of reports highlighting the problems VCOs are experiencing with the Work Programme. In January another set of critical reports were published.

A report by Christopher Damm for the Third Sector Research Centre, throws more cold water on the notion of the Work Programme being a boost for the sector. According to Damm in *The third sector delivering employment services: research project and evidence review* those VCOs winning contracts have done so because they are offering the Prime contractors specialist services. What doesn't interest the Primes is the added value that small and medium sized VCOs can offer by way of access to local networks or boosting social capital.

This tendency towards specialisation and away from a more generalised added social value that the sector can offer is one of two trends Damm says are emerging from Work Programme contracting. The other is that

size and capacity matters and for the Work Programme bigger is better: successful voluntary organisations made bids to multiple Prime contractors. Damm asks, was this the goal of government ministers when they spoke about VCS involvement? Unfortunately, he adds, there is little clarity from the government about what it did expect.

According to the Panel on the Independence of the Voluntary Sector (also see pages 8-9) another reason for the Work Programme favouring larger organisations is the cost and complexity of the procurement process. The Panel states that the procurement process had an "implicit bias" against VCOs. The Panel expresses great concern about a steady move away from grant aid towards contracting and the impact this will have on small and medium sized organisations.

The accumulating evidence from these reports has led to increasingly vocal criticism of the Work Programme. NCVO, publishing its survey of over 100 VCS Work Programme sub-contractors, said the Programme was threatening the sustainability of these organisations and challenged the government to ensure bad practice doesn't slip through the net.

Nick Hurd, Minister for Civil Society, dismissed these fears, saying that the government "can't hold [the sectors] hands all the time" and "if a voluntary group finds its has entered a bad contract out of naivety or desperation there is not a great deal [the government] can or should do"

Where does all this leave Newcastle?

In December, Newcastle CVS hosted a meeting bringing managers from Avanta and Ingeus together with local VCOs. Avanta and Ingeus will both be delivering the bulk of the Work Programme services in Newcastle themselves. They were however interested in what the local voluntary and community sector had to offer, particularly specialist services. Avanta and Ingeus both acknowledged the benefits of volunteering and involvement in local voluntary activity. Whether this interest leads to real opportunities and income for local voluntary and community groups remains unclear however. A note of December's meeting is available on our website.

www.tsrc.ac.uk
www.ncvo-vol.org.uk
www.cvsnewcastle.org.uk
 > Networking and involving
 > Economy, work, skills and learning

Your voice on Wellbeing for Life

In December the shadow Wellbeing For Life Board held its first meeting. Attending, along with representatives from the City Council, PCT, Clinical Commissioning Groups, Hospital Trusts, Newcastle LINK and others were three voluntary and community sector representatives. One place for the sector is reserved for Sally Young, chief executive of Newcastle CVS. Mandy Taylor, Children North East and Jeff Hurst, Newcastle YMCA, who both represent the sector on other partnerships, filled the other two places on an interim basis. In January Newcastle CVS began the process for recruiting two new representatives.

Following a call out to all Newcastle CVS members and interviews of short listed candidates the new representatives have now been selected. Jeff Hurst (who applied during the January selection process) and Maurice Condie, Tyne Housing, will join the Board at its next meeting in March. Alyson Scott, Streetwise, will be acting as deputy for all three voluntary and community sector representatives.

As we reported in the last issue of *Inform* the arrival of the Wellbeing for Life Board, a requirement of the Health and Social Care Bill, marked the end of the Newcastle Partnership. In a letter to Partnership members, council leader Nick Forbes made it clear that arrangements for the new Board would make the continuing existence of the Newcastle Partnership potentially confusing.

The future of the former partnership issues

Casualties of these changes have been those Newcastle Partnership groups that had a strategic cross cutting role.

It looks as if these functions, which include **equalities, cohesion and inclusion**, will be taken on by the Wellbeing for Life Board. Meanwhile of the remaining five delivery partnerships, we are promised that those leading on **economic development, learning and skills, environment, housing and transport** will be supported to increase their capacity and effectiveness.

But what is happening currently with the remaining delivery partnerships? They

have all to some extent been affected both by the deep public sector cuts and the new priorities of the council's Labour leadership.

Whilst working through the consequences of a £6.6m reduction in its budget which will see 55.7 full time equivalent posts being deleted, **Children's Services** tenders worth £700,000 for services for young people were issued in February. Concerns have been expressed about the short time between the tenders being issued and the start of service delivery in April, particularly as the tender for activities for vulnerable young people is likely to demand some collaborative working between providers. The issue of the council's procurement timescales have been raised with the Children's Trust and the Voluntary Sector Liaison Group (formerly the Compact Review Group).

Safe Newcastle meanwhile is with Newcastle CVS reviewing its arrangements for voluntary and community sector engagement. Previous attempts to systematically involve the sector has had mixed success. The first incarnation of the Safe Newcastle Stakeholder Forum produced some useful

and consistent work but attendance proved too low for the views given to carry sufficient weight.

This year has begun with a new approach. Newcastle CVS and Safe Newcastle are surveying existing forums and networks to find out if they can form a virtual stakeholder forum. Working with existing forums, networks and their members, Safe Newcastle hopes to be able to access an informed and active group of voluntary sector groups and other stakeholders to inform and challenge it.

Finally, the three voluntary sector representatives to the **Adult Safeguarding Board**, Norma Tait, Victim Support; Liz Wright, Skills for People; and, Ray Brown, Mental Health Concern, are asking voluntary and community groups what are the issues, views and needs you have about adult safeguarding? Norma, Liz and Ray will be working with Newcastle CVS to hold a safeguarding event in the spring but in the meantime you can forward any views and comments about safeguarding to the reps via martin.gollan@cvsnewcastle.org.uk

Cast your vote! On elected mayors and policing

What is the government's opinion of the public sector? On the evidence of their policies it's somewhere between distrust and loathing: the public sector is synonymous with bureaucracy and bureaucracy is obviously bad. The individual, by contrast, is able to cut through bureaucracy, see things as they really are and is able to act. From such thinking springs two government plans, Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) and elected city mayors.

Elected mayors have been around for some time. Since 2001 support of just 5% of a local electorate could trigger a mayoral referendum. Few took up the offer so the Localism Act goes further. It names eleven cities, including Newcastle that will hold referendums in May to ask if local people want an elected mayor. If people are in favour, elections will follow on 15 November 2012, the same date as elections for PCCs.

PCCs will replace police authorities. They will, claim the Home Office, be the voice of local people, holding the police

to account. The PCC will not run the police but will appoint the chief constable, produce a five year police and crime plan, and commission services from the chief constable and other providers.

For Newcastle's voluntary and community sector, getting noticed by the PCC and demonstrating the sector's potential contribution presents a challenge because the Northumbria Force area extends well beyond the city boundaries.

An elected mayor should prove more accessible. One of the proposed advantages is that a mayor provides a single, accountable figure to lobby and influence. The government has said "mayors will provide strong, visible leadership" that will enable their cities to prosper nationally and internationally. Maybe, though last year a think tank report found Newcastle to be unenthusiastic about having a mayor. And of course a Newcastle mayor would be faced with the same year on year budget reductions facing the current council.

Be part of the London 2012 Games in Newcastle



Volunteer Centre Newcastle and the council want you to be a Newcastle Ambassador for the London 2012 Games. St James' Park will be hosting both men's and women's football matches – group matches and the quarter finals.

The ambassador roles will be based throughout the city supporting visitors to these football matches. There may also be other London 2012 Games related activities happening in the city that volunteers can take part in.

Kris Hartridge is the Newcastle Ambassador Coordinator. He'll be recruiting a large number of local people who are passionate about the region and the London 2012 Games. He says "This is a fantastic opportunity to get involved in celebrating our city while the eyes of the world are upon us!"

Ambassadors are volunteers who will be representing Newcastle during the period of the Olympic football at St James' Park. They'll play a key role in welcoming visitors to the city and will be on hand during the games to offer advice on how to get around, information about places to go and things to do, and promoting all that Newcastle has to offer.

If you are interested in this role, and aged 18 or over, please email [kristopher.hartridge@newcastle.gov.uk](mailto:hartridge@newcastle.gov.uk) or phone him on 0191 232 6616

askNCVS...your questions answered

What help is available for community buildings?

Newcastle CVS is working with Newcastle Community Buildings Network (NCBN) and Open Doors to improve the support available for management committees and trustees involved in running community buildings.

Newcastle CVS will be providing a training programme and surgeries as well as our other services.

NCBN is a network of community centres and aims to support their members to access and use the resources available to them in the best way for the benefit of the local community. The network includes sharing information, resources, experience and good

practice; promoting community buildings and their activities; and supporting community buildings to run well.

Open Doors is a local charter mark for community buildings, which will show that community buildings with the charter mark are welcoming, inclusive, safe and well managed. It has been developed by Ouseburn Trust, St Martin's Centre, East End Community Development Alliance, East End Health and other organisations.

Find out more at www.cvsnewcastle.org.uk



Image by Newcastle city council

Look forward to your year end

As another financial year end is almost upon us, its time to complete the annual accounts. All organisations have some kind of accounts to prepare but it can be seen as a statutory obligation only, instead of an opportunity to look forward.

We'll take the obligations first

Income levels	Type of accounts	Examination or audit required?	Annual report required?	Returns to Charity Commission?
less than £25,000	Receipts and payments basis	No, unless constitution, funders or members require it	Yes, but simple version	Annual return, if income more than £10,000
£25,000-£250,000	Receipts and payments basis	Yes, independent examination	Yes	Accounts, annual report and annual return
£250,000-£500,000	Accruals basis	Yes, independent examination by qualified accountant	Yes	Accounts, annual report and annual return
more than £500,000	Accruals basis	Audit	Yes	Accounts, annual report, annual return and SIR

Charities must send their return to the Charity Commission within ten months of the year end.

Charitable companies (companies limited by guarantee also registered as a charity) must follow the same rules as above, and must also make a return to Companies House within nine months of the year end. Charitable companies must also follow additional rules in the Companies Act 2006.

VCOs that aren't charities or companies must follow their constitution/governing document for their accounting and reporting obligations. These VCOs must also follow any obligations from funders and ask their members what reports they want to receive.

Then we'll look forward

Now you know your obligations, you can double-check if you need an audit or an independent examination. You don't need an audit if your income level has changed and is now below £500,000. If your income is less than £500,000, you may not need an audit even if your governing document says you have to have one. If this applies to you, please get in touch and we can check the wording in your governing document. And don't just choose an audit because this is what has always been done. An audit can be expensive so if you don't need one, it can be another way to reduce costs.

At Ellison Services, we help prepare year end accounts, and carry out independent examinations up to £500,000. We can help you review whether independent examination is suitable for you and can carry out the work for a competitive fee. We offer a wide range of services, so can also offer advice around systems and record keeping and identify issues that need attention - you can be even more efficient after the work is carried out.

To face your financial year end with confidence contact Graeme Lyall on 0191 235 7020 or email graeme.lyall@ellisonservices.co.uk or visit our website www.ellisonservices.co.uk

Managing in tough times

Our sector is facing a tough time at the moment. The environment we work in, with pressures on funding, mean that many of you will be experiencing the following

- ✓ We don't have a plan for how our organisation will be funded next year
- ✓ We are paying for our services and/or staff out of reserves
- ✓ We are paying our bills late
- ✓ We are uncertain about our finances and don't really understand them
- ✓ We delegate all our decisions and responsibilities to staff

These are danger signs that your voluntary or community organisation may be in trouble now or may get into trouble in the near future. You will be worried but now is the time to take action, to get the help you need and look to the long term future of your organisation.

Understanding the money

If you haven't already done so, work out your expected income and expenditure to the end of the year and for the year ahead. It will help to do a cash flow, which shows when money comes in and when it goes out. This will help you work out how long you can continue to run your services,

and to identify any areas where you can cut your costs.

You must work out how much it will cost your organisation to close down, including any redundancy payments, to make sure you have enough money to close the organisation if you don't have any other choice. It is vital for all organisations to understand their liabilities but it is especially important for unincorporated organisations (unincorporated means not a company).

It is good practice for all VCOs to do this and build up reserves to cover the costs, where possible. The reserves should cover redundancy and legal costs, the cost of ending contracts and paying bills up until the organisation actually closes plus any long term storage needs of records.

Understanding your responsibilities to staff

If you are facing funding difficulties and employ staff it is very important for you to understand your responsibilities and your financial situation. We have access to practical information on redundancy, and Acas also has a booklet on redundancy from www.acas.org.uk and can help answer questions on their helpline 08457 47 47 47.

A simple way to work out your liabilities to staff is to list all

your staff, their ages, how long they have worked with you, their average weekly pay and use the redundancy pay calculator at www.direct.gov.uk/redundancy.dsb. You can also use your list to work out the notice period you need to give staff, which is one week per year up to a maximum of 12 weeks for 12 years or more continuous service. However, don't forget to check your employment contracts for contractual notice periods.

How we can help

Our service package *Is your organisation fit and healthy to face the future?* will help you to

- ✓ understand your financial situation, think about ways to cut costs and help you plan for this year and next year including your budgets
- ✓ understand your risks, and your responsibilities to staff and as committee members or trustees
- ✓ think about ways to generate income and find funds to apply to and support you to make a strong application
- ✓ close your organisation, if there is no other option

This service is mainly aimed at small groups who can't afford to pay for legal advice.

Contact Louise, Stephanie or Graeme.

Older people's advocacy

Newcastle Advocacy Centre is starting a new project to provide advocacy for older people from 1 April 2012. The project is funded for a year by the Newcastle Fund, following a previous successful pilot.

We support older people to

- ✓ be aware of their rights and available choices
- ✓ make informed decisions about their lives
- ✓ make their voices heard
- ✓ advocate for themselves



Advocacy can support older people with access to services; personal budgets; safeguarding from physical, financial and other abuse; and, complaints.

Contact us if you need advocacy or would like to refer someone.

www.cvsnewcastle.org.uk/our-projects/newcastle-advocacy-centre
T 0191 235 7013
E advocacy@cvsnewcastle.org.uk

Science City community engagement

Newcastle CVS hosted an event in December with Newcastle University's Changing Age team. The event opened a dialogue between the VCS and the University around ageing: the implications this presents voluntary and community organisations working in Newcastle, the opportunities for the VCS to support, shape and influence research development at the University, as well as the help the University can give through specific expertise and collaborative opportunities.

The discussions demonstrated a real appetite for collaborative working but

a need for a better understanding between the sectors. The diversity of the sector was considered a real strength in terms of dealing with the challenges of ageing but the VCS is under pressure to demonstrate their impact – the university has the expertise to support in this area.

Newcastle CVS will be working with the University to develop the next stage of the dialogue which seeks to form sustainable mutually beneficial relationships with



the Changing Age Team at Newcastle University.

For a full copy of the report, or to discuss getting involved, contact Rachel Head at Newcastle CVS.



Our news

Do people know about you?

In November we launched the Newcastle voluntary and community sector online database. You can now search for voluntary and community organisations working in Newcastle by name, the services they provide, the area of Newcastle they work in and the client groups they work with. It is easy to add your organisation to the database, just become a Newcastle CVS member!

We think it will be a great benefit to our members, to the public and to other organisations working with voluntary and community organisations such as commissioners. It will

- ✓ help people in Newcastle find VCOs to support by giving time and/or money
- ✓ help people in Newcastle find local VCOs to help them
- ✓ help you find other VCOs near you or doing similar work so you can work together
- ✓ help public sector and others to find VCOs to work with or commission to deliver services

We'll soon be adding searches for venues/meeting rooms, and voluntary and community sector support.

www.cvsnewcastle.org.uk >
Online database

Your Space

Do you need space away from distractions to think, research and plan?

Do you need access to a computer, the internet, books and other resources?

Yes? Your Space is for you!

Your Space is a free resource in Newcastle CVS's office. It includes dedicated work space, computers and library resources for working, planning, and researching and preparing funding bids. Our supporting and developing team is also here to welcome you, show you what is available and answer queries.

Your Space is open 10.00am to 3.00pm on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays. If you need to use it at other times please ask as we may be able to make special arrangements.

Your Space is free for up to two hours in any one session but there is a charge for printing, photocopying and tea and coffee.

To find out more or to book a time slot contact the Newcastle CVS supporting and developing team 0191 235 7037 or askncvs@cvsnewcastle.org.uk

Are we doing a good job?

Can you help us? We would like all Newcastle CVS members to take part in a short survey. It will help us look at the quality of our services, as well as checking that we are providing what our members need and want from us. The survey should take no more than ten minutes to complete. The closing date for the survey is 9 March so there is still time to complete it. We will share the results of the survey with our members as soon as we can.

If you are a Newcastle CVS member please complete the survey at www.surveymonkey.com/s/7F25M85

If you've missed the survey, don't worry. We are always interested to hear what you think of us and our services.

0191 235 7013
askncvs@cvsnewcastle.org.uk

Our volunteers

We are sorry to say goodbye to our volunteer Jasmine Robinson who has helped us with our membership and database work. She's been an amazing help and we wouldn't have been able to do it without her. We'd like to welcome a new volunteer, Mukta Agrawal. We're really pleased to have her too!

Who's joined Newcastle CVS recently?

Bliss=Ability
blissability.org
0191 427 1666

Blue Sky Trust
blueskytrust.org
0191 281 5200

Bridge and Tunnel Voices
bridgeandtunnelproductions.com
0191 232 2500

British Federation of Women Graduates
bfwg.org.uk

Coquet Trust
coquettrust.co.uk
0191 285 9270

Criticallinks
criticallinks.org
0191 413 5603

Down's Syndrome North East
dsne.org.uk
0870 765 2121

Federation of City Farms and Community Gardens
farmgarden.org.uk
01207 562317

Footsteps to Ashfield
0191 272 2660

Girlguiding Newcastle upon Tyne
girlguidingnewcastle.org.uk
0191 267 4405

Institute Robert Walser
instituterobertwalser.com

Kingston Park Bowling Club
0191 286 9825

Jazz North East Ltd
0191 265 5699
www.jazznortheast.com

Lydia's House
lydiashouse.org.uk
0191 231 4974

Newcastle United Women's Football Club
nuwfc.com

North of England Institute of Mining and Mechanical Engineers
mininginstitute.org.uk
0191 232 2459

North West Carers' Group

St John Ambulance Northumbria
northumbria.sja.org.uk
0191 273 7938

Simonside Community Association
0191 286 5266

South Gosforth Residents Association
0191 285 2169
southgosforth.org

Together-Newcastle (Church Urban Fund)
0191 270 4147

Useful Vision
usefulvision.org.uk
0845 604 8491

Your Voice Counts
yvc.org.uk
0191 487 0594

Not a member? Then join us

Over 450 voluntary, community or not for profit organisations in Newcastle have joined Newcastle CVS. It is free to join! Our membership includes access to our free services, free magazine and email bulletin, discounts on our

training and access to forums and networks plus much more. You'll also be added to the Newcastle voluntary and community sector online database, which is a great way to promote your organisation.

Join us to help strengthen the voice of the VCS in Newcastle.

askNCVS
T 0191 235 7037
E askncvs@cvsnewcastle.org.uk
www.cvsnewcastle.org.uk

Newcastle CVS events and training diary

March

- 13 March Supporting and supervising staff [Training](#)
- 13 March Your role as a management committee member [Free bite-size session](#)
- 15 March Minute taking skills [Training](#)
- 15 March CHYP IN network open forum meeting [CHYP IN](#)
- 20 March NHS changes in Newcastle: one year on (morning) [Networking and involving](#)
- 20 March Newcastle LINK Executive Board meeting (afternoon; open to the public)
Newcastle LINK
- 28 March Writing better funding applications [Training](#)

April

- 17 April Fundraising for beginners [Free bite-size session](#)
- 18 April Sustainable funding [Training](#)
- 24 April Recruiting and keeping volunteers [Free bite-size session](#)
- 25 April Writing a project/business plan for beginners [Training](#)

May

- 9 May Are you thinking of using volunteers? [Free bite-size session](#)
- 15 May Newcastle LINK Executive Board meeting (open to the public) Newcastle LINK
- 22 May How to do market research [Training](#)
- 25 May Minute taking skills [Training](#)

June

- 14 June Health and safety [Training](#)
- 19 June Collaboration - why work together? [Free bite-size session](#)
- 25 June Newcastle LINK summer drop-in Newcastle LINK
- 28 June Writing better funding applications [Training](#)

July

- 17 July Newcastle LINK Executive Board meeting (open to the public) Newcastle LINK
- 26 July Risk assessment [Training](#)

To find out more or to book...

www.cvsnewcastle.org.uk ➔ training and events
E training@cvsnewcastle.org.uk
T 0191 235 7011