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* Up to an agreed amount



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Autumn 2009

Voluntary Action Barnsley

vab news

Supporting the Barnsley Community and Voluntary Network

Welcome to VAB News!

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w www.vabarnsley.org.uk

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The Global Xchange programme is a 6 month exchange programme which gives young people from different countries a unique opportunity to develop and share skills and to make a practical contribution in local communities.

Find out more about the Barnsley volunteers on page 9. ▶▶



VOLUNTARY ACTION BARNSELY



VAB welcomes feedback on its services from customers and service users.

If you wish to make a compliment, complaint or comment, please contact us for a copy of our procedure or send your comments to Chief Executive, Voluntary Action Barnsley, The Core, County Way, Barnsley, South Yorkshire. S70 2JW Tel: 01226 320100 Fax: 01226 320101 EMail: info@vabarnsley.org.uk

Newsletter/Press Queries

Do you have any queries regarding this publication, wish to be featured or want to be added or deleted from the mailing list? Did you receive this newsletter via post? Would you rather receive it by email? If so, please contact Naomi Douglas on 01226 320107 or you can email her at naomi.douglas@vabarnsley.org.uk

If you wish to receive this magazine in an alternative format/language contact us and we will endeavour to arrange that for you.

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INTRODUCTION BY EDDIE STREET

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT
MANAGER, VOLUNTARY
ACTION BARNSELEY



VAB recently concluded a series of 'roadshows' (detailed reporting on pages 6 - 7), around the borough with the aim of finding out what you felt needed ideally to be in place if you were to be able to better carry out your activities. Or to put it another way, as the Government does, 'what would be the environment for a thriving Third Sector?' In Barnsley when we talk about the Third Sector we are, for the most part, referring to the 800 or so voluntary and community organisations who do so much, often unheralded, to make Barnsley a better place to live and work. So what did we find out? And more importantly what will we do with the information?

It is clear that there is a fundamental issue relating to understanding in that public sector bodies, particularly BMBC, don't understand the Third Sector and that this needed addressing if we are all going to pull together to tackle Barnsley's needs in what are going to be very difficult times ahead. It is also the case that the Third Sector very often does not understand how public bodies work. So clearly there needs to be an orchestrated effort to get people connected better; community activists, councillors and officers of public bodies. This is particularly important if the Council's new Neighbourhoods Framework is to succeed in giving local people more say and control over what happens in their communities.

Now that the roadshows have concluded we will present our findings to BMBC and One Barnsley, the local strategic partnership, for consideration. Some of the findings can be dealt with by VAB and other Third Sector Organisations (better co-ordinated and accessible advice, training and guidance services for example), but we will be looking to the public sector, and BMBC in particular, how they will drive forward the much needed improvements in relation to cross-sectoral relationships and working.

We will report on progress, through a variety of media, over the coming months.

SWINE FLU

In most cases in the UK, Swine Flu causes a mild illness. While seasonal Flu is common (there are thousands of cases across the world every year) Swine Flu is different because it's caused by a new strain of the Flu virus which most people do not have any immunity to.

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS?

Some of the key symptoms are the sudden onset of fever (high temperature), cough or shortness of breath. Other symptoms can include sore throat, headache, tiredness, aching muscles, chills, sneezing, runny nose or loss of appetite.

Unless you have Flu like symptoms or are being tested for Swine Flu, there is no need to stop normal everyday activities such as going to work or school.

HOW CAN I PROTECT MYSELF AND OTHERS?

The best thing you can do to protect yourself is to follow good hygiene practices:

- Always carry tissues
- Use clean tissues to cover your mouth and nose when you cough and sneeze
- Bin tissues after one use
- Wash your hands with soap and hot water or a sanitiser gel often

There's a simple way to remember this:

CATCH IT, BIN IT, KILL IT.

IF YOU DEVELOP FLU LIKE SYMPTOMS:

- Stay at home. Check your symptoms on www.direct.gov.uk/pandemicflu if possible, or call the Swine Flu information line on **0800 1 513 513** to hear the latest advice.
- If you have taken these steps and are still concerned call your GP.

Do not go to your GP's surgery or local accident and emergency department unless you are advised to do so or you are seriously ill, because you might spread the illness to others. If you are prescribed medication to treat Swine Flu ask a friend to go out to collect it for you.

- If you think that you may have Swine Flu, call your doctor for an assessment immediately. If your doctor confirms Swine Flu over the phone, you will be prescribed antiviral medication to take as soon as possible.
- Unless you do have Swine Flu symptoms, carry on attending your antenatal appointments to monitor the progress of your pregnancy.

WHAT ELSE CAN YOU DO?

GET A FLU FRIEND

These are healthy friends, neighbours or relatives who can help you if you get ill by collecting medicines, food and other supplies so that you don't have to leave home.

It is very important that people with Swine Flu or Flu like symptoms do not go into pharmacies, GP surgeries or hospitals. Flu Friends are an essential part of our Flu plan as they ensure that people with the virus avoid coming into contact with the wider public - reducing the spread of infection.

GET YOUR FLU JAB

If you normally receive a winter Flu jab, please make sure you get yours this year, as soon as possible. Contact your GP for details of their Flu clinics. There will be different vaccination for Swine Flu - keep an eye out in the local paper or tune into the radio for up to date information.

For more information visit www.direct.gov.uk/pandemicflu or call the Swine Flu Information Line on **0800 1 513 513**



NEW ONLINE DIRECTORY OF VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY GROUPS IN BARNSELEY

On 12th August, the launch of the new Online Directory of Voluntary and Community Groups took place at The Core and was organised jointly by Social Services, Age Concern and Voluntary Action Barnsley. The directory is on Voluntary Action Barnsley's website and is free and easy to use.

Over the past year VAB and Di Robson (Age Concern) have been working to get as many groups signed up to the site as possible. Di Robson has conducted a series of community mapping workshops across the borough and groups were asked to sign up. In the last year alone the number of groups online has risen from 113 to 270. However we know that there are still plenty of groups out there who are not yet registered.

Why should you register?

The Online Directory gives you free advertising and you are in control of your page - you can update your details at the touch of a button. All groups who register will get a password to our site that allows you to update your page as often as you like.

The site will be accessed by a variety of people including the general public who may be looking for activities in your area.

It will also be used by statutory agencies. This could be of benefit to your group, as Barnsley has been a pilot area for the Individual Budgets scheme. This means that people who receive statutory care or services are now in control of deciding their own care and managing their own allowance. Therefore, it could mean that someone in your area would like to pay to attend your group/activity.

Also you can do the following on the website:

- Add your details
- Add your news
- Add your events

In order that your group or organisation may be featured in this directory (FREE of charge) please complete your details on our website at:

www.vabarnsley.org.uk

Or if you have already registered but would like to update your details go to:

www.vabarnsley.org.uk/admin

and enter your user name and password.

Instructions on how to use the directory can be downloaded from the site. Alternatively if you have lost your password contact Naomi Douglas on **01226 320107** or e mail her at naomi.douglas@vabarnsley.org.uk

VAB's New Community Accountancy Service

Voluntary Action Barnsley's Community Accountancy Service is a new project, funded through the Big Lottery BASIS, working closely with partner organisations across South Yorkshire.

The service provides a range of accounting services, advice and information to support charities, community groups and social enterprises in Barnsley.

We have a dedicated Community Accountant, Angela Hayes, who came into the post on 1st July 2009. Support available through the service includes:

- Assistance with book keeping and setting up financial systems
- Advice on implementing internal financial controls
- Help with budgets, cash flow and management accounts
- Preparation of annual accounts
- Year end independent examination of accounts
- Support with grant returns and meeting requirements of funders
- Advice on compliance with Charity Commission and Companies House regulations
- Back fill for finance related work, to cover staff sickness and holiday periods
- Finance related training, on an individual or group basis

We also have a competitively priced Payroll Bureau, providing a payroll service and support, information and advice for groups who employ staff. Debbie Hollingsworth is our Payroll and Financial Services Officer who can offer:

- Payroll calculation, the production of monthly/weekly pay slips and essential payroll reports
- Help with payroll, tax and Inland Revenue queries
- Year end data, P60s and assistance with year end queries
- Advice and training on any payroll issues, such as absence, SSP, SMP and record keeping

The Benefits of Using VAB for Your Accountancy Services

All charities are required to manage funds and prepare year end accounts to comply with charity law. At VAB we specialise in voluntary sector finance and can offer a high quality, value for money service. Our work is subject to stringent quality checks and we have access to other services within VAB such as legal and HR advice. We are also part of a South Yorkshire wide and a national network of community accountants who can provide support and expertise.

Contact Details:

Angela Hayes,
Community Accountant
Tel: **01226 320116**
EEmail: angela.hayes@vabarnsley.org.uk

Deborah Hollingsworth,
Payroll & Financial Services Officer
Tel: **01226 320119**
EEmail: deborah.hollingsworth@vabarnsley.org.uk



Angela Hayes



Deborah Hollingsworth



Charity Reporting and Accounting The Accounting Framework - What You Need to Know!

The law requires that all charities, no matter how small, must keep proper accounting records and must prepare annual accounts to be available to members of the public on request. Charities with an annual income of £25,000 or more are also required to have their accounts externally examined or audited.

In many respects the rules governing charity accounting are more stringent than those for commercial business organisations. This is because charities are entrusted with other people's money and are accountable to the public for the proper use of funds. Charity trustees commit a breach of trust if they allow funds to be wrongly used.

The requirements placed on charities are largely determined by the level of income of the charity, so if you are a very small group the requirements should not be too onerous, although you may need help in understanding your obligations and setting up systems to work effectively for your organisation.

Over recent years changes have been made to the thresholds for accounting requirements and it is important that you understand the requirements that apply to your organisation. Full details of the minimum requirements for charities with year endings falling after 1st April 2009 can be found in the publication 'Charity Reporting and Accounting - The Essentials (CC15b)' - available on the Charity Commission website at:

[www.charitycommission.gov.uk/
publications/ccpubsar.asp](http://www.charitycommission.gov.uk/publications/ccpubsar.asp)

WHAT THE CHANGES MEAN FOR LOCAL VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY GROUPS

There have been a number of key changes to the accounting thresholds which could be relevant to your organisation:

- **Threshold for mandatory accruals accounts rises from an income level of £100,000 to £250,000 per annum**
(Start date: accounting periods ending on or after 1st April 2009)

If you are a non-company charity with gross income falling between £100,000 and £250,000, and assets of less than £3.26m, this means that you can now opt for the simpler form of accounts preparation, using the 'Receipts and Payments' method. This method of preparation consists of an account summarising all money received and paid out by the charity in the financial year and a statement giving details of assets and liabilities at the end of the year. (NB. charitable companies are not allowed by company law to adopt this method.) Receipts and Payments accounting is a much simpler and flexible basis of accounts preparation which should reduce the amount of work and time spent on keeping and preparing your accounts.

- **Threshold for independent examination as a means of external scrutiny rises from £250,000 to £500,000**

(Start date: accounting periods ending on or after 1st April 2008)

This means that charities with gross income between £250,000 and £500,000 (with assets not exceeding £3.26m) who would previously have been required to have a statutory audit of accounts by a registered auditor, can now opt for an Independent Examination of Accounts. An independent examination is carried out by an independent person who has the 'requisite ability and practical experience to carry out a competent examination of the accounts', in accordance with the Charity Commission's directions.

- **Threshold for external scrutiny for charitable companies**

(Start date: accounting periods beginning on or after 1st April 2008)

Prior to April 2008 the scrutiny of company charities accounts was governed by company law. At this time there was no requirement for external scrutiny for a company with income less than £90,000 in the financial year.

From April 2008 the Charities Act scrutiny arrangements apply. This means that currently a charitable company with an income of £25,000 or more is also subject to external scrutiny. As with unincorporated charities, if gross income is less than £500,000 in the financial year, most organisations will be able to opt for an independent examination rather than a full audit, saving time and money on accountancy services and fees.

It is important to note that the minimum requirements outlined above will be overruled by the specific additional requirements of the governing document/constitution of your charity and also by any requirements of your funders. Even if your charity is below the audit threshold you will need to check that the governing document will permit an independent examination. Where there is a specific requirement for statutory audit, an amendment to the governing document will be required before the charity can opt for independent examination. This is something that the legal team at Voluntary Action Barnsley can help with.

For further information or advice on charity reporting and accounting requirements or to discuss the possibility of VAB carrying out an independent examination of accounts for your organisation, please contact Angela on **01226 320116** or e-mail angela.hayes@vabarnsley.org.uk

Initial Findings From the Barnsley Community and Voluntary Network Roadshows

Following the publication of the results of some national research conducted by the Office of the Third Sector (OTS), Barnsley Council (BMBC) asked Voluntary Action Barnsley to conduct some additional research with Barnsley's Third Sector organisations (TSO).

Whilst the results of the national survey are valuable, the research only focused on registered charities and incorporated organisations and it was felt this resulted in a significant number of Barnsley organisations not being surveyed.

The aim of the additional research has been to find out more about the existing relationship between Third Sector organisations and statutory organisations in Barnsley and how this relationship might be improved. VAB were also keen to find out how it and other infrastructure organisations could improve the delivery of their support services to TSOs.

The research was undertaken in a series of roadshows throughout the borough from 30th June to 15th July, 2009. The roadshows which took place in Penistone, Thurnscoe, Barnsley Town Centre and Barugh Green were facilitated by VAB and took place between 5.30 p.m. and 7.30 p.m. 61 people in total attended the 4 events.

The events were coordinated by VAB and other local infrastructure organisations were invited to be involved. South Yorkshire Funding Advice Bureau and Together for Regeneration were both involved throughout the planning process and their staff acted as facilitators and scribes.

Representatives from a variety of TSOs attended the roadshows, including representatives from very small groups (like mother and toddler and craft groups for the elderly), tenant and resident associations, community interest companies, community partnerships and national charities.

Attendees were grouped into small workshops with a facilitator and scribe and 3 questions were asked as follows:

- What is your vision for a thriving Third Sector (in an ideal world what would the voluntary and community sector look like in Barnsley)?
- What is the reality of the current situation? Give positive and negative examples of your existing relationship with statutory agencies.
- How do we achieve the vision? What skills/support do you need to achieve the points raised in Question 1?

See our website for the actual feedback from each question. However, a summary of the key themes can be found opposite.

SUMMARY FINDINGS OF THE KEY THEMES

1. LACK OF RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE THIRD SECTOR AND STATUTORY AGENCIES

1. Relationship Between the Third Sector and Statutory Agencies

In many cases there was no relationship at all between TSO and the statutory agencies. The evidence suggests that some organisations feel they have a positive relationship with individual BMBC council officers (and to a lesser extent elected members) who are committed and supportive. However the majority of groups highlighted the lack of relationships between the sectors.

The following points were the most consistent themes across the roadshows regarding the relationship between the sectors:

a. Training for Statutory Agencies

This lack of relationship highlighted the lack of mutual understanding and one of the strong themes that came through at each event was that the Third Sector needs to be better understood by the Public Sector. With the success of 'How Your Town Works' it was felt that the Public Sector needed to learn about 'How Your community Works'.

b. Lack of Communication

Communication was a cross cutting theme and many people suggested that they wanted to be able to access all of the relevant and pertinent information in their own local area. Communication is a 2 way process and groups were also guilty of not accessing or reading the existing communications. Communication is a theme that will be followed up and explored at later events (see Forward Planning on page 3) as many cited it as a problem, however solutions to how it could be improved were very vague.

c. Lack of Trust Between the Sectors

Another key theme throughout the roadshows was the lack of trust between the sectors. It was felt that the Public Sector viewed the Third Sector as a threat, an inconvenience or a burden, frequently to be disregarded. It was felt that activities were duplicated because the Council did not trust the sector to deliver services.

d. Contracting

Contracting was seen as something complicated and many organisations stated that in order to tender they needed access to information which they could only get from the Local Authority, who were not forthcoming or able to give the relevant information or statistics needed in order to meet tendering requirements.

e. New Neighbourhood Framework

Clarity is required, and soon, as to how the Council's Neighbourhood Framework will translate in practice. This is anticipated as a significant move towards empowering active citizens and providing a springboard for community activism.

2. RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE THIRD SECTOR AND SUPPORT SERVICES (INFRASTRUCTURE ORGANISATIONS)

In relation to infrastructure support locally (provided by local infrastructure organisations) the evidence from the roadshows told us that:

a. Lack of Awareness of the Support Available

There is lack of awareness amongst TSO about the provision of support to organisations. Many cited that they did not know that these organisations existed, however once they did find them they were praised for their services.

Duplication of effort is seen as an issue and clarity and focus on the part of infrastructure support agencies needs to be addressed. In a number of recorded exchanges individuals had no understanding of the role of the different infrastructure organisations.

An absolute requirement for the future is for infrastructure organisations in Barnsley to work together to provide a more seamless service.

b. Communication

It was evident that groups did not know about the services provided by some of the infrastructure organisations.

Some of the solutions which people cited to improve communication (such as a central directory of groups and regular networking meetings) do already exist however this shows there is a lack of awareness which is something VAB must address.

c. Proximity of Infrastructure Organisations to BMBC

Infrastructure organisations (and in particular VAB) were seen as being too 'close' to BMBC as result of current funding arrangements. This is seen as compromising VAB's independence and its ability to act as an objective advocate for the Third Sector.

3. FUNDING

As expected, funding remains a key issue for groups. Additionally, we find that organisations are frustrated because of:

a. Complex Funding Applications

Funding applications (to national and regional funding bodies, statutory, charitable or otherwise) were seen to be too complicated, and the expectations placed on Barnsley organisations to know how they fit into a much bigger picture were onerous, when most of the time small groups just want to access a small pot to do something in their area. There was a feeling that they were penalised for their 'lack of jargon'. Many people stated that they need hands on support to actually fill in funding applications with a mediator who understood all sectors and their terminology.

b. Access to Small Grants

Increasingly it is becoming difficult to access comparatively small funding opportunities unburdened with exacting reporting requirements. The majority of groups in Barnsley are small and often only require small pots of money. The Community Chest programme (managed by VAB) was cited on numerous occasions across the borough as a good

example of a small grants programme (it was also led by the community).

4. THE VALUE OF VOLUNTEERS

There remains a lack of understanding around the value, the role and the impact of volunteers.

a. Employer Supported Volunteering for Statutory Officers

Developing employer supported volunteering programmes was seen as a positive way for statutory officers to get involved at grass roots levels.

b. Retaining Volunteers

Retaining volunteers remains a problem for many groups and volunteer training, encouragement, incentives, 'moving on to work' placements were all cited as positive ways of encouraging people to actively engage in their communities.

Forward Planning

The above provides only a brief understanding of how people visualise a thriving Third Sector environment, how they see it now and some suggestions as to how improvements could be made. BMBC, together with partner agencies through One Barnsley, is committed to considering in detail the feedback and issues raised through the roadshow events and developing an action/implementation plan to address the key issues identified. The proposed timetable for making this happen is as follows:

September 2009

Third Sector Infrastructure (NI 7) Group to consider this report and agree broad recommendations to address the key issues identified.

October 2009

Joint report of VAB and BMBC to be presented to One Barnsley Board meeting in late October 2009. The findings from the roadshows and other events together with broad recommendations for addressing the key issues/themes will be presented.

November 2009

Hold further workshop events with TSO's to look in detail at potential solutions to some of the key issues for example, communications. Third Sector Infrastructure Group to develop draft Action Plan to address the issues identified. Disseminate the Draft Action Plan to TSO's and partner agencies.

December 2009

Finalise Action Plan and circulate to TSOs.

From January 2010

Implement Action Plan.

VAB will keep you posted with information throughout this process.

Safeguarding Children and Young People in a Digital Age

With the ever expanding range of electronic devices and access to a world wide network of websites, the potential for learning and entertainment is increasing rapidly. However it is also heightens the potential risks to children and young people. It is no longer enough to ensure that you have procedures in place or parental controls to ensure children do not access sites on your network, there is now a need to go beyond this and ensure that children have the knowledge and skills to make informed choices.

As part of a national drive to ensure children and young people's 'E-Safety', the Government has instructed each local authority to implement an 'E-Safety Strategy'. The Barnsley Safeguarding Children Board is now implementing its own E-Safety Strategy.

In November 2008, the E-Safety Task Group was formed and chaired by Pat Stansfield (Head of Safeguarding and Welfare and E-Safety Champion for Barnsley). Pat agreed that 'Whilst there is an emphasis on schools, the council is looking at this being a policy to be implemented across all agencies where young people have access to computers, including raising awareness around the issues with mobile technology and the possible risks of sexual exploitation, cyber bullying etc. There is also a need to provide information for parents, carers and staff around how to help children and young people manage their use of the internet and knowing what to look for if inappropriate activity is becoming a cause for concern'.

All partners need to be aware of the challenges they face and the resources/training opportunities they can access. If your organisation works with children or young people, has access to computers and/or is worried about E-Safety and would like to be involved with the E-Safety developments then please contact Doreen Gwilliam (Children's & Young People's Partnership Support Officer, VAB) on:

Tel. No. **01226 320106**

EMail **doreen.gwilliam@vabarnsley.org.uk**

Website **www.safeguardingchildrenbarnsley.com**

Third Sector Children's Services - Strategic Voice and Influence

Dr. Penny Stanley, Chief Executive Officer of Voluntary Action Barnsley, is the Third Sector Representative at the Children's Trust Executive Group (TEG). This is the main strategic group for ALL children and young people's services across Barnsley.

Penny also chairs the Third Sector Sub Group, where reports from the TEG and other strategic sub groups can be shared and issues raised to take forward. This group meets once a month.

We also facilitate an 'electronic information network', where we circulate monthly updates, reports and information bulletins; members can also promote any events or projects they are running.

For information about the Sub Group or to join our information network please contact the VAB Participation Team on 01226 320106.

GLOBAL XCHANGE IN BARNSELY BY GILLIAN SMITH, GLOBAL XCHANGE VOLUNTEER IN BARNSELY

... CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Global Xchange recently had 12 teams across the country and Barnsley was linked with the town of Manhica in the southern Maputo Province of Mozambique. Our team was made up of 8 young people from the United Kingdom and 9 young people from Mozambique and we spent 3 months doing voluntary work there before returning to Barnsley to continue volunteering for a further 3 months.

Volunteers were divided into cross cultural pairs (one UK volunteer and one Mozambican) to live with a family in the community called a 'host home'. With the combination of different cultures living together it offers a unique opportunity to learn about and respect our cultural differences.

The volunteers worked for 4 days a week in a local community organisation which created a wonderful opportunity for us to learn about Barnsley.

Our work placements included:

- Heeley City Farm
- Grimethorpe Lifestyles & Fitness Centre
- The Exodus Project
- Voluntary Action Barnsley - Vinolved Team
- Barnsley Youth Service
- SportActiv Barnsley
- Grimethorpe Pentecostal Church
- FORGE Community Partnership
- Migrant Asylum & Refugee Community Organisation
- Northern Refugee Centre

Myself, Teles Cossa and Herminio Generoso worked with Voluntary Action Barnsley's Vinolved Team. As well as spending lots of time composing a newsletter for Global Xchange we also enjoyed experiencing Yorkshire culture! This included a visit to the traditional English town of Whitby and the beautiful Abbey of St. Hilda. It really showcased some lovely English heritage and culture and after a climb to the lighthouse we all enjoyed our award winning fish and chips!

Another fantastic day out was to the Blue John Mines in Castleton where we investigated the ancient and awesome mines in the Peak District. The tour into deep mountainside was incredible and very fascinating. Some of the rock and crystals were mesmerising and enchanting.



involvedbarnsley

Clockwise: Herminio Generoso, Beryl Cooper (VAB), Gillian Smith, Louise Hawkins, Jane Wildsmith, Dan Wildsmith, Penny Hinchcliffe (all from VAB) and Teles Cossa

Once a week, Host Home Counterparts took it in turn to organise a day of mutual learning around themes such as Nutrition, Global Discrimination, Social Inclusion and Inequality.

Community Action Days involved the group and the community for example, in Mozambique we renovated a children's play park which was really rewarding seeing an instant physical difference. In Barnsley, we took part in a range of community events and we performed a Mozambican dance called Xigubo (pronounced "Shegooboo") at the opening of Refugee Week in Mandela Gardens.

I think Barnsley is a lovely place - it has a rich history and culture and the people are kind, warm, funny and welcoming!

- If you would like a copy of the newsletter that the Barnsley Volunteers put together
- Or if you are 16 - 25 and are interested in volunteering
- Or if your organisation is interested in taking volunteers

Please contact Penny or Dan at VAB on 01226 320 104.

“ When we went to the Blue John Mines and saw all the shining beautiful stones I felt really content and at peace. ”

Teles Cossa

FOCUS ON: CONDITION MANAGEMENT PROGRAMME (CMP)

WHAT IS CMP?

South Yorkshire Condition Management Programme helps people to better manage their own health condition. Since the start of the programme in July 2006, CMP has helped thousands of people who receive health related benefits on their journey to return to work. The programme is the NHS part of the Pathways to Work initiative provide by Job Centre Plus (JCP) and is managed and run by health professionals through NHS Barnsley. The programme is totally voluntary and does not affect a person's benefits in any way.

The 8 week programme focuses on healthy lifestyle, pain management, pacing, managing low mood and anxiety and aims to increase motivation, confidence and self esteem, regardless of someone's health condition. It recognises the important link between physical and psychological health in relation to returning to some form of employment. People attend 1 day per week at a venue of their choice. To help support a person to attend the programme, travel costs are refunded, childcare and caring costs are available and a 6 months free leisure pass is provided for those wanting to start exercise programmes.

The programmes are delivered away from NHS settings, such as leisure centres and community venues, as group members tell us that they want a non-stigmatising environment with comfortable facilities. We run 2 groups a week from The Core, plus other venues across Barnsley. The Core is very accessible from the bus and train station, has excellent parking and the staff are very welcoming and helpful; being in such a pleasant environment makes a big difference to how we feel and learn.

Following completion of the programme 48% of customers return to work or take part in a work related activities.

It is a privilege to observe experienced, skilled and capable people return to work with renewed confidence and the knowledge that they can function at work and better manage their health condition. The benefits to individuals, their children and the local economy as a whole is substantial.

“ My confidence is now a lot higher and I have a new job. This is my fresh start ... thank you CMP! ”

CMP Graduate

CMP AND VOLUNTEERING

CMP now has an established volunteer programme where people who have been on the programme return in a range of voluntary roles; supporting group work, administration roles and telephone support to those interested in coming on the programme. Volunteers have great insight into the challenges of living with or recovering from a health condition that has kept them out of work. They have been in receipt of benefits (usually Incapacity Benefit) and not only understand the barriers in taking steps towards work but also the anxieties and fears in attending new initiatives such as the group work offered through CMP.

“Volunteering has given me an opportunity to get into the workplace. It has allowed me to help myself and has given me purpose. It has also proven to me that I can work in new areas. My volunteering role has involved admin duties and I have previously worked in a manual role.” (CMP Graduate)

CMP recently came runner up in the NHS Barnsley Team Awards for 'Engagement and Participation'.

HOW TO GET INVOLVED

If you would like to come on the CMP programme, please contact your adviser at the Job Centre to make an appointment.

If you would like more information about CMP please look at our website www.southyorkshirecmp.co.uk or pick up a leaflet in the Job Centre or local venues such as The Core, library, G.P or local leisure centre.



South Yorkshire Credit Union (Formerly Barnsley Credit Union)

South Yorkshire Credit Union is a financial cooperative providing financial services including savings and loans accounts to people who live and work within the boroughs of Barnsley, Doncaster and Rotherham.

There are a number of accounts available to members including:

- **Standard Members Account:** members may save up to £10,000 and apply for loans that will be considered on the members' ability to repay. Members may pay by cash, cheque, standing order, benefit payment, BACS or payroll deduction where agreed with the employer.
- **Benefit Plus Account:** members can have their benefits paid into a credit union account and collect their benefit from credit union premises. Members may apply for loans up to a maximum of £500 in the first year of membership and loan repayments will be deducted from their benefit payments.
- **Christmas Savings Account:** regular contributions must be made into the Christmas Savings Account by cash, electronic transfer or payroll deduction. Minimum contribution, £1 per week or £5 per month. Payments can be made into the Christmas 2009 Savings Account until 10th November 2009. After this date, all savings will be frozen and any further contributions received will be paid into the members savings account. All savings will be paid out from Thursday, 12th November 2009.

Budgeting advice and payment planning is available to assist members to manage their money.

“ It is important to remember that we are members not customers, so we are treated as individuals ... in the end the Credit Union belongs to us. ”

SYCU Member

- **Junior Member Accounts:** are available to young people under the age of 16 years. Junior collection points are held in 23 schools and children's centres and payments can also be made at credit union premises or collection points.

Membership of the credit union commences from when a completed membership form, £5 membership fee and £1 savings is received. Members may apply for a loan when they have saved for a specified period. For a first loan new members are required to have paid the membership fee and have a minimum of £2 in their account. Loans must be repaid at a minimum of £4 per week. All loans will be granted on the member's ability to repay. Benefit Plus Account holders can apply for a loan when the credit union has received a benefit payment; members on Job Seekers Allowance are subject to savings requirements and 4 benefit payments must be received before a loan application can be made.

PAYROLL DEDUCTION

We offer direct payroll deduction facilities for business and organisations who would like to offer this facility to their employees. There are great benefits to becoming involved. Some of Barnsley's major employers are already offering their staff added value employee benefits via the Credit Union including Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council, Barnsley PET and Voluntary Action Barnsley. The cost is minimal to the employer. All the administration of members' accounts is done by the staff at SYCU.

If you would like more information about South Yorkshire Credit Union please contact:

South Yorkshire Credit Union, 70 Market Street, Barnsley, S70 1SU. Telephone 01226 734945.

Goldthorpe Branch, 49 Barnsley Road, Goldthorpe, Rotherham, S63 9LT
Telephone 01709 897487.



Free Debt and Housing Advice

The Town Centre Communities Partnership is offering free debt and housing advice. Appointments can be made by telephoning 01226 320147 or 0750 111 7099 Monday to Thursday or by e.mail to sandra.andrews@vabarnsley.org.uk The project is funded by the Coalfields Regeneration Trust.