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# E-bulletin January 2012

## Happy New Year and welcome to the first THCVS ebulletin of 2012!

It's a bumper bulletin this time, and comes hot on the heels of our newsletter, which is now available as a [downloadable pdf](#) and has also been distributed to a range of sites around the borough. We are always looking for news items, announcements and features from voluntary and community groups in Tower Hamlets. If you have anything you'd like us to put on our website, send round in a bulletin or write up as a case study, then do drop us a line at [admin@thcvs.org.uk](mailto:admin@thcvs.org.uk).

### CVS and Tower Hamlets News

The new year has brought a change for the team here at THCVS; our colleague Nasrin Patel will be leaving very soon to get ready for a new life in sunny Florida after just over a year as Information and Admin Officer. Nasrin's been a real asset to our team – helping to set up and run our new office, administering our training courses, keeping track of our membership and taking care of the website. We'll miss her a lot and hope you'll join us in wishing her all the best for her American adventure.

For the next few weeks our admin and information work will be covered by Michelle Agyakwa, who started with the CVS this week.

### Tower Hamlets Mainstream Grants (MSG) Update

We were hoping to announce the launch of the council's Mainstream Grants programme in this bulletin but the release of the guidance notes and application forms (originally scheduled for 9<sup>th</sup> January) has been delayed. As soon as we get any definite information about the programme from the council we'll let you know; please keep an eye on the [council website](#), [our website](#) and follow our [THCVS Twitter](#) account for updates.

### Joint Race on the Agenda and THCVS event:

#### Shaping the Future: Race and Racism in 21<sup>st</sup> Century Britain

16:00 – 19:00, 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2012, Osmani Centre, Vallance Road, E1 5AB

*Is there an elephant in the room? If we live in a post-racial society, why do certain ethnic groups continue to experience disadvantage?*

This [seminar](#), planned to follow the retrial into the murder of Stephen Lawrence, will debate these questions and seek to identify solutions to inequalities faced by Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) children, young people and their families in Tower Hamlets. A range of experts will present their views on what needs to be done to progress race equality in key areas relevant to BAME young people and employment. The Chair will then facilitate a solutions-focused discussion.

This event will be chaired by Shaynul Khan, Assistant Director of the East London Mosque and London Muslim Centre, Chair of Tower Hamlets CVS, and Founder and Secretary of the Osmani Trust. Confirmed speakers and panellists include: Elizabeth Henry, Chief Executive, Race on the Agenda; Jane Milligan, Borough Director, NHS East London & the City; Phillip Kissi, External Relations Manager, Job Centre Plus and Deputy Young Mayor Tasmina Khanum.

To find out more and book your place, please visit the [event website](#).

### **Local organisation in need of space – can you help?**

[Ayasofia Primary School](#) is a charitable project of the Cityside Primary Trust. They are urgently in need of a suitable premises ( 6 classrooms and 1 multifunctional hall with outdoor space) within Tower Hamlets and are happy to buy, rent or even share premises with other community organisations. Can you help? Do you know of any organisations looking to lease, sell or share space? If so please contact their Chair of the school, Umair Bajwa at [info@ayasofiaprimary.com](mailto:info@ayasofiaprimary.com)

### **Seeking premises? Spare desks available at Tower Hamlets Co-operative Development Agency...**

We have up to 5 spare desks to rent at £200 each per month (cheaper if you take more than one desk) in Whitechapel Road, near Aldgate East & Whitechapel underground stations. Free Broadband, use of a printer (just pay for cartridges), use of photocopier (4p per copy), some use meeting rooms, bike park (on site shower) & 24 hour access. Includes rates, heat, light, power and cleaning. For more info please contact - [gregory@co-operation.coop](mailto:gregory@co-operation.coop)

- Free Broadband.
- Use of an A3 / A4 printer.
- Use of photocopier.
- Free meeting / training rooms.
- Bike park (and on site shower).
- Limited off street staff car parking.
- 24 hour access.
- Rates, heat, light, power and cleaning are all included.

There is no long-term contract.

### **Consultation to inform Tower Hamlets' Financial Inclusion Strategy**

**Deadline 27<sup>th</sup> January**

The Financial Inclusion Strategy Team at LBTH are asking for input on this important strategy:

“Across the services we offer throughout the borough, we frequently come across individuals and families who face financial difficulty in their day to day lives. We would like to build up an understanding of what these issues are for residents; what is taking place to support those in

difficulty through the different services we offer; and the challenges faced by staff in dealing with these issues. This will inform the development of a Tower Hamlets Financial Inclusion Strategy.

One way that we are doing this is through an online survey with professionals working with local residents. Below is a link to the survey, which provides further information and the opportunity for you to contribute to this important piece of work by telling us about your views and experiences.

Your contribution is vital, so we would be grateful if you could take the time to fill in this [short questionnaire](#) and submit it to us by **27<sup>th</sup> January 2012.**”

## Sector News

### **Joint Government and Big Lottery survey – how does your organisation use social media?**

The Office for Civil Society and the Big Lottery Fund are running a joint survey to ask how voluntary and community organisations use websites and social media to access advice and support, funding information and networking opportunities. The [survey](#) should take no longer than 15 minutes to complete and closes on Friday 20 January.

### **Report on Sector Independence**

[The Panel on the Independence of the Voluntary Sector](#) has published the first of its [annual assessments](#), highlighting that this is a pivotal moment for the voluntary sector as a whole and for many individual organisations within it. There are two connected Guardian articles, [one by panel chair Dame Anne Owers](#), which calls for a greater commitment to protecting the independence of the voluntary sector, and another which picks up on charities being increasingly [reluctant to speak out](#) because they fear they will lose their funding.

### **The Youth Contract; a subsidy for organisations taking on young people**

The Youth Contract is a Government scheme that will provide nearly half-a-million new opportunities for young people, including apprenticeships and work experience placements. There will be 160,000 job subsidies available worth up to £2,275 each for businesses who take on an 18-24 year-old from the Work Programme. Find out more [here](#).

### **Big Society vision versus ‘little society’ reality**

There’s been concern recently that the Government’s Big Society initiative has lost its direction, with news that the Big Society ministerial committee [hasn’t met for 10 months](#), and a [report](#) from the Public Administration Select Committee warning that: ‘Big Society doesn’t do enough to help ‘the little society’; and that without a coherent implementation plan, there is confusion over message, whilst smaller charities face barriers in contracting and commissioning policies’. The Guardian rounds up some of the responses to this report [here](#) and Civil Society Media has a piece saying that if the government is serious about getting charities to help create the Big Society, it should [give the sector back its irrecoverable VAT](#).

On a more positive note, the Minister for Civil Society recently [announced](#) that £3.1 million from dormant bank accounts will be invested in new projects to support local communities. The [Big Society Investment Fund](#) has agreed in principle to invest the money in four projects including:

money to help the long-term unemployed set up their own businesses; support for vulnerable young people to get into employment; a community energy project; and the creation of the first ever social stock exchange.

### **Olympic Venues on Track**

LOCOG has published a list of [key dates](#) in the run-up to this year's London Olympic and Paralympic Games, alongside some very impressive aerial images of the venues, which are now 90 per cent complete.

### **Employment falling faster in voluntary sector**

The latest analysis of Labour Force Survey data shows that the UK voluntary sector now employs 723,000 people, which equates to a fall of 70,000 (8.7% of the workforce) over the past 12 months. Over the same period, public sector employment fell by half of that rate with the private sector seeing employment rise by 1.5%. The sector's gross hourly pay median also fell by nearly three per cent, while it increased elsewhere. See [NCVO news item](#) or a discussion article on The Guardian's [Voluntary Sector Network](#), where NCVO's head of research Karl Wilding asks if the worst is now over.

### **Concern over business rate relief**

The Charity Commission has [expressed concern](#) that some charities may find themselves involved in what local authorities might consider to be business rates avoidance by landlords. Charities occupying commercial property qualify for a mandatory eighty per cent discount on business rates, with the rest subject to discretionary relief, and landlords may let to them so that a liability for 'empty rates' does not occur. This is OK as long as it is a bona fide arrangement, not a sham

### **Cost sharing VAT exemption**

This short article from [Bates Wells and Braithwaite solicitors](#) explains concerns about the government's proposed implementation of the VAT exemption for shared services, as announced in the autumn statement. HM Revenue and Customs believes that the cost sharing group must be a separate body that is capable of being VAT registered, and not simply be a group of charities working together without charging each other VAT. Discussion on this [Civil Society Media article](#) states that the Treasury reckons that the sector could save a hundred million pounds through the sharing of services

(These last few news items come from [VolResource](#) – an excellent source of VCS news; you can sign up for their weekly mailings [here](#))

### **Credit union membership now open to organisations**

Charities, social enterprises and community groups are now able to join a credit union under changes made to the Credit Unions Act 1979. As financial co-operatives, owned and controlled by their members, credit unions have no outside shareholders to pay. Any profit they make stays in the community and is used to develop the credit union and provide a return to savers. Previously everyone eligible to join a credit union had to have something in common but this requirement has now been removed, leaving credit unions free to extend their operations by offering financial services to organisations such as housing providers, social enterprises and businesses, community groups and charities. This means that credit unions can now:

- Reach out to more people by extending membership to new groups – as a credit union will no longer have to prove that everyone who can join the credit union has something in common
- Provide services to community groups, social enterprises and businesses, not just individuals
- Choose to pay interest on savings, instead of a dividend

For more information see the Association of British Credit Unions' [website](#).

## Events and Training

### Help for businesses in Tower Hamlets to prepare for the London 2012 Games

18:30 – 20:30, Thurs 19<sup>th</sup> January

Queen Mary's College, [Mile End Campus](#) (Octagon Room), Mile End Road, E1 4NS

The London 2012 Olympics will start in six months and will bring opportunities and challenges to those who work in the borough. To ensure that local businesses are aware and prepared Transport for London (TfL) and the London Olympic bodies have agreed to hold four business planning seminars. Booking for these events is essential. To reserve you place please email [olympics@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:olympics@towerhamlets.gov.uk) with your organisation name and contact details (inc.telephone number address and postcode).

### 2 Day Restorative Justice Awareness

24<sup>th</sup>, 25<sup>th</sup> January - £95

### 4 Day Restorative Justice Facilitators Training

24<sup>th</sup>, 25<sup>th</sup> Jan and 31st Jan & 1st Feb - £200) to be held in Brixton

*Restorative Justice is '...a process whereby all the parties with a stake in a particular offence (or incident) come together to resolve collectively how to deal with the aftermath of the offence and the implications for the future' (Marshall, 1999).*

[Communities Empowerment Network](#) is holding a two day and a four day training seminar aimed at community and youth workers, justice workers and local authority staff. The training is intensive, highly participatory and you will walk away with an in depth understanding of RJ principles. For further details and to register contact Deuan German at [deuan.german@compowernet.org](mailto:deuan.german@compowernet.org), 020 7733 0297

### The People's Budget - London Event in Tower Hamlets

10:30 – 14:30 Thurs 26 January, Account3 Bethnal Green (Creche and light lunch provided)

Are you interested in winning the right for local people to have a say in local budgets?

Make sure you are part of this energising workshop on getting a much greater say for ordinary people in how public budgets are spent locally. Billions of pounds of our money is being used by public bodies without any involvement of local people. [The People's Budget](#) is about helping you understand how to persuade your local council, health organisation, police force or housing provider to give you a significant say.

Places are limited so please book at <http://bethnalgreen.eventbrite.com/>

If you need help with travel or childcare costs to be able to participate, please email or ring Susie on 7984 871462 as soon as you can, and by 19 January at the very latest.

## **Making Time**

10:00 – 16:00, Tues 31<sup>st</sup> January 2012

A one-day course from BTEG showing how you can use your time more effectively, especially by changing your responses in three key areas: prioritisation; guarding your time and organising your activities. Find out more and book online on the [BTEG website](#). If you have any further queries please email [courses@bteg.co.uk](mailto:courses@bteg.co.uk) or call 020 7832 5834

## **St Katharine and Shadwell Trust Active Grants – Tower Hamlets application workshop**

10:00 – 13:00, Thurs 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2012

Business Development Centre, 7-15 Greatorex Street, E1 5NF

St Katharine and Shadwell Trust has begun a new grants programme, [Active Grants](#), which are small grants (up to £3,000) to encourage people to get involved in their communities. This workshop, run jointly by THCVS and SKST, will go through the guidance notes and online application form for the Active Grants programme and will address queries from potential grant applicants.

Places are limited so booking is essential; please email [gemma.cossins@thcvs.org.uk](mailto:gemma.cossins@thcvs.org.uk) for a booking form.

## **Measuring social impact event**

Thurs 2nd February 2012, CCLA

LVSC is working with the new Social Impact Analysts Association to run an evening networking event for voluntary and community sector groups in London who want to find out more about measuring their social impact. Please e-mail [policy@lvsc.org.uk](mailto:policy@lvsc.org.uk) or visit [their website](#) for more details.

## **Getting to grips with employment**

An [LVSC](#) course commissioned by THCVS

10:00 -16:00, Weds 8<sup>th</sup> February 2012, Oxford House, Bethnal Green

The aim of the course is to raise the awareness of potential and new employers about employment legislation and good practice in the workplace. At the end of the course, learners will know the difference between volunteers, the self-employed, employees and casual workers, know what a contract of employment should include and what employment policies and procedures should be in place, understand the basics of performance management and be aware of the legal requirements for discipline and grievance issues. To book your place please email the [booking form](#) to [training@thcvs.org.uk](mailto:training@thcvs.org.uk) or call 020 8980 8427.

## **Developing a Funding Strategy**

A [VCTH](#) course commissioned by THCVS

14:00 – 17:00, Thurs 16<sup>th</sup> February 2012

Volunteer Centre Tower Hamlets, Norvin House, 45-55 Commercial Street, E1 6BD

## **Selling and promoting your organisation**

A VCTH course commissioned by THCVS

10:30 – 13:30, Weds 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2012, VCTH

Find out more and book for these courses by contacting Peppe at Tower Hamlets Volunteer Centre at [peppe@vcth.org.uk](mailto:peppe@vcth.org.uk).

## Management Fair 2012 from the Directory of Social Change

Thurs 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2012, Euston

Management Fair is specifically aimed at voluntary sector managers and features four workshop streams with [17 sessions to choose from](#). There are also three, two hour long masterclass sessions and Russell Cooke Solicitors will be holding 20 minute slots to give advice on any employment issues you may have. [Book online today](#).

## Boost your chances of success in 2012

18:00 - 21:00, Tues 7<sup>th</sup> February 2012, Idea Store Canary Wharf

10:00 - 13:00, Sat 11<sup>th</sup> February 2012, Idea Store Chrisp Street

As part of International Coaching Week 2012 Idea Store Learning has put together taster courses to help you to grow your key skills and talents:

- Learn how to effectively set and achieve your goals
- Improve your communication skills using basic coaching tools
- Develop successful questioning techniques to boost access to new opportunities

Call into your local Idea Store or Learning Centre for more information or email

[ideastorelearning@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:ideastorelearning@towerhamlets.gov.uk). You can also call and leave your details on 020 7364 5665 and a member of the team will call you back.

## Deeply subsidised courses for small charities from the Institute of Fundraising and the Office for Civil Society

These [training courses](#) offer practical insight, tips, techniques and are led by practitioners with extensive experience of working with small charities. Subjects covered include Fundraising through Companies, Major Donor Fundraising and Fundraising through Legacies to [name but a few](#).

To be eligible your organisation must have an income of less than £1 million.

## How Neighbourhood Planning Works

LCF, Just Space and CDNL are planning a How Neighbourhood Planning Works event in February.

Aimed at representatives from community organisations, community development workers and the statutory sector it will support participants to gain a greater understanding of the legislation relating to NP in the Localism Act. For further information contact

[Deirdre@londoncivicforum.org.uk](mailto:Deirdre@londoncivicforum.org.uk)

## Forum meetings

There are a range of forums for voluntary and community, faith and social enterprise organisations operating in Tower Hamlets. If you'd like us to advertise your forum or network and/or to let people know where to find your notes and agendas online, please email [admin@thcvs.org.uk](mailto:admin@thcvs.org.uk), or call us on 020 8980 8427.

## Tower Hamlets Training & Employment Forum meeting

10:00 – 12:00 Thurs 19th January 2012

Business Development Centre, 7-15 Greatorex Street, E1 5NF

Contact Gregory Cohn, Tower Hamlets Training & Employment Forum chair, at [gregory@co-operation.coop](mailto:gregory@co-operation.coop)

## Resources

### Changes to Employment Law in 2012

[This article](#) from People Management includes a round-up of proposed employment law changes in 2012 and beyond. Several more consultations are planned, and a raft of new legislation is likely in 2012 and 2013 – see [Sandy Adirondack's excellent site](#) for more information, and check out here list of [employment resources](#).

### Sustainable Funding for Trustees - free guide

NCVO has published a [free guide](#) for trustees on sustainable funding, covering grants, contracts, donations and also income from trading goods and services.

### Dealing with the impact of the Olympics

Two interesting articles – firstly from ACAS, looking at the impact of having employees who are signed up to [volunteer](#) at the 2012 Olympic Games, and secondly from Civil Society magazine, which gives advice on how to [prepare your charity for Olympic disruption](#).

### Resources on Climate Change from LVSC

Learn more about environmental sustainability, energy efficiency and other ways of greening your organisation [here](#).

### Social change noticeboard for London

Ekologi has now launched the beta version of its "noticeboard for social change that makes it easy to find funding, facilities, contacts and support" –check it out [here](#).

### Unite community membership

Unite have set up a new community membership scheme intended to draw together marginalised unemployed and recently unemployed people to challenge policies, offer mutual support and energise campaigning. Read more on their [website](#).

### New ACEVO guide aimed at improving workplace diversity

ACEVO's latest report - [Improving Equality & Diversity in Your Organisation: A Guide for third Sector CEOs](#) offers practical advice on how equality and diversity can be mainstreamed in third sector organisations. The guide is primarily for chief executives of any small or medium-sized third sector organisation and may also be of interest to trustees.

### Cranfield Trust - free management consultancy

Cranfield Trust has a pool of over 600 highly skilled volunteers who provide free one-to-one management consultancy to charities local to them. To qualify for their help, charities, social enterprise or community interest companies must be working to address issues of poverty, disability or social exclusion. To find out more see their [website](#).

## Funding available now

### SKST Active Grants

Deadline: Fri 17<sup>th</sup> Feb

Amount: Up to £3000

[Active grants](#) are small grants to encourage people to get involved in their communities. The programme has two separate strands: for young people and for older people. The aim of the scheme is to encourage social cohesion, improve self-confidence and employability in young people; and, to encourage physical and mental activity, decrease isolation and encourage participation in older people. If your organisation is based in the London Boroughs of: City of London, Hackney, Newham, or Tower Hamlets, you can find more details of the programme and how you can apply [here](#).

- ➔ To book onto the Tower Hamlets application workshop for this grant programme, to be run jointly by THCVS and St Katharine and Shadwell Trust on the morning of 2<sup>nd</sup> February, email [gemma.cossins@thcvs.org.uk](mailto:gemma.cossins@thcvs.org.uk) for a booking form.

### Second window for Social Action Fund

Deadline: Noon, Fri 3<sup>rd</sup> Feb 2012

Amount: Minimum £100,000

There are two themes: Encourage people to come together in their locality to support each other, and Focus on the different life stages of volunteering.. The second application window is now open. Find out more [here](#).

### PRS Music Foundation

Deadline: Mon 6<sup>th</sup> Feb

Amount: First time applicants max. £5000. Previously recipients max. £25,000

For new (UK) work, music residencies, tours, programmes, community projects, and work involving new technologies. [See website](#) for more information.

### Trust for London

Deadline: Tues 7<sup>th</sup> Feb 2012

Amount: Up to £100,000

Trust for London is an independent charitable trust which aims to enable and empower Londoners to tackle poverty and inequality, and their root causes, and to ensure that funds reach those most in need. See their funding guidelines and application form [here](#).

### BBC Children in Need Emergency Essentials fund

Children in Need's [Emergency Essentials Programme](#) will deliver the charity's welfare grants for individual families. The programme will be administered by Buttle UK for three years and will give emergency grants for essential items for struggling families living in extreme deprivation throughout the UK. Applications must come through statutory or voluntary agency able to assess the needs of the young person, and administer the grant.

### The Naturesave Trust

Funding for conservation groups and 'seed corn' grants for renewable energy. Find out more [here](#).

## Finding the funds

We regularly update our website with news about grants and send out announcements about new funding to our members as we get it. To help you identify and apply for sources of funding, here's a short guide to fundraising resources available online and in print:

- [Tower Hamlets 4 Community](#) is an online database hosted on the Tower Hamlets website and a great place to start your search. Use the [search page](#) and the tabs just above it to identify funding for different types of work.
- You can also access [GrantNet](#) via the Tower Hamlets site. Registration is free and fast.
- The Council's Third Sector team produces and distributes a regular Funding Information Bulletin, as well as posting up information about funding distributed by agencies within the borough. Find out more on their [community grants pages](#).
- [Funding Central](#) from [NCVO](#) is easy to use, frequently updated and can help you to narrow down your grants search in order to find the most appropriate sources of funding
- [J4b funding information portal](#) offers free access to a range of searchable grants databases
- [Fundinginformation.org](#) isn't free to subscribe to, but you can sign up for a free temporary password in order to have a look around
- [Grantsnet](#) offers a very simple keyword search, much like Google

If you need help with fundraising or other organisational development issues, please contact our Development Officer, Gemma Cossins at [gemma.cossins@thcvs.org.uk](mailto:gemma.cossins@thcvs.org.uk)

## About THCVS

THCVS is an independent membership organisation for voluntary, community faith and social enterprise organisations in the borough of Tower Hamlets. We are a registered charity (no 1137143) and a Company Limited by Guarantee (no 07251141) with a voluntary Board of Trustees elected from our membership. To find out more about Tower Hamlets CVS, catch up on news in between mailings and find information about how to sign up as a member, please see our website at [www.thcvs.org.uk](http://www.thcvs.org.uk)

### Our team:

Chief Executive: Khadiru Mahdi - [Khadiru.Mahdi@thcvs.org.uk](mailto:Khadiru.Mahdi@thcvs.org.uk)

Information and Admin Officer (temporary): Michelle Agyakwa - [Michelle.Agyakwa@thcvs.org.uk](mailto:Michelle.Agyakwa@thcvs.org.uk)

Development Officer: Gemma Cossins - [Gemma.Cossins@thcvs.org.uk](mailto:Gemma.Cossins@thcvs.org.uk)

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