

Chair and Development Officer now in Post

The Chair and the new Development Officer are now in their posts for the Devon Consortium.

We welcome back Alistair Macintosh, who has been Chair for the previous three years and Sara Bennett, previously the Compact Development Worker.



Alistair is very pleased to have been appointed as Chair for a further period of two years. He says, "The Consortium has taken some important steps over the past three years since it was formed -

for example supporting the development of the *Compact for Devon* and its six Codes of Practice, and enabling more co-operative working between voluntary sector infrastructure organisations.

However, there are still major challenges ahead in terms of how the Consortium makes our work more relevant and engaging for local voluntary and community sector organisations in Devon.

In particular I am excited about the potential for the new Voluntary Sector Assembly, and the continued development of

our representation work to give local voluntary and community organisations more of a say in both how our representatives are chosen, and in shaping the views which the representatives express. This in turn will help us become more effective in influencing the agenda of local statutory organisations for the benefit of all the people of Devon."

Sara started in post as the new Devon Consortium Development Officer at the beginning of May. Since then she has enjoyed meeting Consortium members, attending relevant meetings around the county and generally 'feeling her way' into the post. She works twelve hours a week - usually on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday mornings.



Before taking up this post Sara was the Compact for Devon Development Worker, and was actively involved in producing the new Codes of Practice to accompany the Compact, so she is lucky enough to already know a few people and to have a sense of the structures and networks that exist in the county. ▶

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Dates for your Diary:

Sector Independence Day	4 July
Management Board 10–12.30	7 July
Compact Hub 2.30–4.30	31 July
Management Board 2.00–4.30	24 Sep
VCS Assembly	Jan 09

Special points of interest:

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Chair and Development Officer now in Post From page 1.

Sara says, “The Devon Consortium has already established a good track record for providing support to infrastructure or second tier organisations in Devon, who can then in turn work more effectively with their membership. This is crucial. Devon needs to make sure that we keep abreast of national developments in infrastructure support to the voluntary and community sector, if not ahead of the game!

I’m delighted that we have already achieved so much, and that we have won funding from Capacitybuilders to deliver our CPR Programme - but I’m also determined that we will accomplish more. My aim is to build

confidence in the Devon Consortium, and create some tangible ‘wins’ that genuinely support and enhance the work of local infrastructure agencies.”

The Development Officer will be overseeing the work of the Delivery Plan, more of which is outlined on page four.

If you have anything that you want to say about the Consortium - any feedback on our work or on areas that you think we should be addressing, then Sara would love to hear from you:

developmentworker@devonconsortium.net

The CPR Programme is detailed on page 3.

Grantfinder helps community groups with funding

Voluntary and Community Sector Groups in Teignbridge have reaped the benefits of improved funding advice resources at Teignbridge CVS. The CVS has been able to improve its funding advice service thanks to the purchase of Grantfinder, a comprehensively supported database carrying in excess of 4,000 UK and EU funding programmes. This “reservoir of information” was purchased through the Devon Consortium Performance Improvement project funded by Capacitybuilders.

Some groups are lucky enough to be able to draw down all their funding from one funder, but for many more groups the reality is a number of applications to different funders for smaller elements of their project – this is where Grantfinder has been invaluable.

Holcombe Village Hall’s new Annexe was opened in October after finally getting all its £130,000 funding together from a range of funders identified with support from Grantfinder; the Annexe is totally self contained which allows for more activities whilst the pre-school operates in the main hall without interruption from other community activities.

The children of Christow woke up one morning

to find that their play equipment had been burnt down in an arson attack. The Christow Play Committee approached the CVS who were able to identify a range of funders, using Grantfinder, and the Committee, successfully drawing down the £25,000 funds needed, opened their new play park in October. Similarly, Bishopsteignton looked to draw down funds from 12 different funders identified with the support of Grantfinder for their new play equipment.

These larger projects tend to attract the most publicity, but Grantfinder has allowed us to support the smaller funding needs including groups such as The Towersey Foundation which provides music therapy to children and adults with life threatening illnesses, who were able to access a number of smaller grants during the year.

Whilst Grantfinder has not been the only resource supporting the investment of over £5.5m into Teignbridge last year, it has certainly provided a valuable resource to groups in identifying the most appropriate and relevant funders for their needs.

Grantfinder can be found at www.grantfinder.co.uk

We've won!



The Devon Consortium has successfully won funding for their Collaboration, Partnership and Representation Programme (CPRP), which was part of the Modernisation Project Proposal submitted to Capacitybuilders. This is two year funding, allowing time to establish and develop the project activities.

Exeter CVS was the successful applicant for the CPRP, lead by John Bunting. He says, "I am pleased to be the Lead Agency on this Programme. It means that we can continue the great work that has already been done on the *Compact for Devon*, as well as promote the Communities of Interest and representation, and also pick up new pieces of work."

The objectives of the CPRP are:

- to be 'the voice of the VCS third sector' in both representation to statutory agencies and in the design and delivery of infrastructure services to frontline organisations
- to influence the political context and structure of emerging strategies and plans—particularly with Local Strategic Partnerships (LSP) and the Devon Local Area Agreement (LAA).

It will also seek to ensure that the benefit of ChangeUp funding and other investment opportunities are felt by frontline organisations.

The CPRP has three main strands:

- VCS issues reaching LSP and LAA decision makers in Devon
- Effective Communities of Interest (COI) established and used as a mechanism for collecting input
- Continuing the success in implementing and embedding the *Compact for Devon* in both Statutory and Voluntary sectors.

This is an exciting time for the Devon Consortium. Underpinning these strands is the commitment to ensure that each element is accessible to all, particularly disadvantaged groups, ensuring there is 'opportunity for all' for those who wish to be involved.

The Devon Consortium has also obtained match funding for the overall project from Devon County Council, who have been partners to the Devon Consortium on other successful projects, like *Representation* and *A Compact for Devon*.

More detailed information on the CPRP can be found in the Devon Consortium Business Plan, and on the website www.devonconsortium.net

A further bid for funding is now being developed and will go forward to BASIS 2 in the autumn, a funding stream of the Big Lottery, who are seeking to invest in Consortia nationally.

The BASIS Programme aims to provide a more comprehensive, consistent and sustainable service to frontline VCS organisations throughout England, and will compliment the work done by Capacitybuilders.

Devon Consortium will seek funds for two strands of work:

- Rural Volunteering
- and Services to Grass Roots.

Watch this space for further news.

Look out!

VCS Survey:

We will be carrying out a survey of the infrastructure support needs of the voluntary and community sector in Devon, and will use this as the basis for developing our work priorities.

Compact Codes of Practice:

The three **new** Compact for Devon Codes of Practice have been launched - which support and facilitate effective engagement between the VCS and the statutory sector: They are:

- Partnership
- Community Groups
- Consultation

Diversity Steering Group:

A focused piece of work to support VCS organisations to be more diversity aware and to share best diversity practice.

Funding:

We will be submitting a bid to Big Lottery in the autumn to develop work streams around rural volunteering and support to grassroots organisations, priorities that have been previously identified for the county .

VCS Assembly:

The VCS Assembly is open to any voluntary and community organisation who wishes to contribute to the debate on how our sector can be developed, to be held in late January 2009.

Directory of Representation:

A downloadable directory of VCS representation on key county partnerships, with details on the partnership activities, it's key areas of focus and also key contacts to enable you to communicate with VCS representatives is now available on the Devon Consortium website

www.devonconsortium.net

So watch this space!

Devon Consortium
C/o Exeter CVS
Wat Tyler House
King William Street
EXETER
EX4 6PD
Phone: 01392 202055
Fax: 01392 202054
info@devonconsortium.net
www.devonconsortium.net



ChangeUp



FUNDED

Future Activities for the Consortium

The Delivery Plan outlines all of the activities that the Consortium will undertake by 2011. Its falls under four thematic headings of which are summarised below:

- 1. Making the Consortium work** (Monitoring performance, Intelligence gathering, Communication , Boundary Commission review activities, CDF Work plan, Programme Monitoring, and Meetings).
- 2. Infrastructure Development Strategy and Business Plan**
- 3. Representation**
- 4. Joint working.**

This work will include carrying out the Devon-wide VCS survey, monitoring the CPRP, and being inclusive taking into account equality and diversity ,as well as engaging in local and regional planning processes.

It will also help the Devon Consortium establish and maintain an accurate picture of capability and capacity within the VCS to inform the development of action plans and highlight priorities to address gaps. Updating these plans will seek to ensure the provision of appropriate infrastructure services to frontline organisations.

The full version of the *Delivery Plan* is available on the Devon Consortium website at www.devonconsortium.net

To receive this newsletter in large print, please contact:
info@devonconsortium.net or call 01392 202055