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Welcome

Welcome to issue 56 of the North West Network Newsletter.

In this edition we are able to offer information to our members about new services on offer from North West Network, thanks to funding secured from the Big Lottery Fund. North West Network's Volunteer Management Team is raising standards in volunteer management through its partnership work with volunteering infrastructure, notably Tameside Volunteer Centre and by bringing coaching to the sector. We will also be running training sessions in outcomes focused business planning, if you have not renewed your membership, don't forget to do so and then make contact with us to find out if you can access our services.

Our European Team continues to provide support to you; creating links between the voluntary sector and the LLSCs (local Learning and Skills Councils) in the North West. We are also looking ahead to post 2006 and the end of the current (European Structural Funds) programming period and we are commissioning research into the affect the change in funding will have on the sector.

We have some changes in personnel to report. In One North West (1NW), the Task Group has a new chair and we are recruiting a Project Director. During this time of change we would appreciate your patience until a replacement is secured. And finally, those of you that have made contact with us recently may have been greeted by an Australian voice and you can find out more about the person behind the voice in the staff profile that follows.

As always please feel that you can contact us with your views and, if you have any information that you would like to submit to the North West Network Newsletter please e-mail: info@nwnetwork.org.uk

Karina Ponsaing Staff Profile

In each edition of the newsletter we feature a member of staff or trustee of North West Network to help you to get know us better. In this edition, Karina has very kindly offered some personal history.

I was born in Canberra, Australia in 1976 where I spent the beginning of my childhood before moving to Auckland, New Zealand in 1985. In New Zealand I spent 7 years as a Pre-School Teacher - known over here as Nursery School – which was very rewarding and guaranteed leaving work each day with a smile. I also trained in Make-Up Artistry and Production Design before moving back to Australia in 2001 and working in the beauty industry in Sydney.

I came over to the United Kingdom in April 2005 on an Ancestry Visa to experience life on the other side of the world and to venture out and visit as many different countries as I could.

Since being here I have slowly become accustomed to the English diet, the various accents and of course, the weather! I have also adopted some English expressions i.e. I don't call crisps, chips anymore and have found myself saying 'brilliant' a lot.

After various temporary jobs in reception and administration, I joined the team at North West Network as administrator in October 2005. I enjoy my role here at North West Network, and as first point of contact on the telephone I look forward to talking to you when you call.

Arlene McCarthy MEP on the Future of European Funding in the North West

I was honoured recently, to be invited to give the keynote speech at an event celebrating our innovative and inspiring use of European funds, in the North West. We have a proud record of delivering high quality projects and while sometimes the focus has been on the high profile infrastructure projects, it is our innovative and creative approaches to training and employment that make the difference, when trying to engage people and make a difference to their lives.

The work of the voluntary sector in delivering projects has been critical to our success. From the contact I have had with North West Network, I know that their input and support for European Union programmes makes an important contribution to our delivery.

Now we have a deal on the European Union budget, I am frequently asked what this will mean for European funding in the North West. The budget deal, which the Prime Minister negotiated, was a good one for the UK, but I believe a good one for the North West, in particular Objective 2 industrial, urban and rural areas.

Initially, the proposal on the future of European funding did not want the continued use of funds for Objective 2 style areas. You will remember the debates proposed to replace this with UK funding from the Treasury. Many of us, as MEPs involved in European Union funding for the last 13 years, were not convinced of the arguments by the Treasury, although we understood the political tactics being used, for a tough negotiating stance with other European Union member states.

I have seen at first hand, as a European regeneration officer in local government, that it is not just the money that matters, but the working together with different partners and sectors, not least the voluntary sector, that delivers results. The European Union funding structure has helped us to develop a regional approach to regeneration and has been a catalyst to new thinking and innovation, new governance structures and extended partnerships.

Around £3.8 billion will be available for the UK, for the so-called competitiveness objective, to support jobs and growth. The North West currently in this round, received the highest amount of the funds and the region will be lobbying again to retain the highest amount in the next round. I will also be supporting the regional claim for a large share of the funds and equally important, seeking to ensure that it is the region that decides how and where the money is allocated. The Commission will make recommendations on

the split and it is vital that we can retain our distinctive and unique approach to regeneration, which has already made such a difference in the North West.

Arlene McCarthy

Member of The European Parliament for the North West of England

Objective 2 (ERDF) Programme Performance

The Objective 2 Advisory Group at its meeting in Manchester on 1 December 2005 heard encouraging news about the performance of the Objective 2 part of the Structural Fund Programme 2000 – 2006.

The voluntary and community sector was represented at the meeting by John Hacking the Senior European Officer from North West Network and Mark Dawson from Voluntary Sector North West (VSNW).

Total spend for the programme so far is at £333 million which is over the n+2 2005 target of £314 million. For those of you who like this sort of thing n+2 is the principle by which the spend required of a programme under the Berlin Profile is calculated. N is the commitment year and +2 is the year by the end of which funds committed in n have to be spent or returned. It sounds very complicated but what this means is that the programme is spending on time and to budget. The n+2 target for 2006 is £394 million.

The Objective 2 Advisory Group meets quarterly and is responsible for the management of the Objective 2 European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) section of the Structural Funds Programme in the North West.

A couple of developments since the meeting in December are worthy of mention.

- The Objective 2 Advisory Group has set up an Audit Sub-Group to look at audit requirements in this current programme and how to prepare for the new programme. This will report directly to the Objective 2 Advisory Group and we will keep you up to date through this Newsletter with any developments which may be of interest to the voluntary and community sector
- Government Office For The North West (GONW) has been undertaking a series of sub-regional workshops for Action Plan Partners and some projects explaining the requirements of Article 4 visits. NWN will be undertaking work with voluntary and community sector groups on Article 4 requirements in the next couple of months. Article 4 visits are a fairly basic audit visit establishing project activity and validity. If you are contacted by your Action Plan Partnership (APP) or GONW with regard to an Article 4 visit and you require assistance then please contact us here at NWN

If any members or readers wish to know more about the Objective 2 Advisory Group and what it does then please contact John Hacking, Senior European Officer, at North West Network on 0161 236 6493 or e-mail at john@nwnetwork.org.uk

Objective 3 Regional Round up

LSC Lancashire

LSC Lancashire has published their Prospectus for their fourth tendering round for European Social Fund monies from their Co-finance Plan for 2004-2006. There are seventeen invitations to tender which cover Policy Fields 1, 2, 3 and 4. The closing date for submission of tenders was 12.00 pm Monday 20 February 2006. The appraisal and review process of the tenders is to be completed by 16 May 2006. Applicants will be notified of outcomes and contracting discussions will commence on 18 May 2006. The earliest possible start date for projects under this prospectus is 1 July 2006.

For more information visit LSC Lancashire's website:

www.lsc.gov.uk/lancashire/Corporate/InformationBank/European+Social+Fund+%28ESF%29+Information+and+Documents.htm

LSC Greater Manchester Fourth Co-financing Prospectus

LSC Greater Manchester has published the results of their Fourth Co-financing Prospectus for their 2004-2006 ESF Prospectus for their 2004-2006 Co-financing Plan. For more information refer to LSC Greater Manchester's website:

www.lscgm.info/

LSC Greater Manchester Fifth Co-financing Prospectus

LSC Greater Manchester is currently planning to develop and launch their Fifth ESF Prospectus for their 2004-2006 Co-financing Plan. They have opened an invitation to provide them with your suggestions regarding the sub-regional priorities for European Social Fund and thus what types of programmes LSC Greater Manchester should tender for in their Fifth Prospectus.

Suggestions should be made via the completion and submission of a 'Programme Priorities Suggestions Proforma' which can be accessed at the LSC Greater Manchester's website:

www.lsc.gov.uk/grmanchester

Details are also on the North West Network website via the Home / News / Consultation link.

Deadline for submissions of suggestions is Friday 10 March 2006.

To assist you in this consultation LSC Greater Manchester have placed two documents for information; a summary of the Measures under which funding is available and a copy of the proposed funding priorities which the LSC submitted to the Programme Monitoring and Regional Committee as part of their application for funding from the Performance Reserve. These can also be found at either LSC Greater Manchester's website at www.lsc.gov.uk/grmanchester or on the North West Network website via the Home / News / Consultation link.

The proposed timetable for LSC Greater Manchester Fifth Co-financing Prospectus is as follows:

- Invitation for suggestions re the sub-regional priorities for ESF funding and what types of programmes the LSC should tender in their Fifth Prospectus: 20 February 2006
- Deadline for submissions of programme suggestions: 10 March 2006
- Draft Prospectus placed at LSC Greater Manchester's website for Consultation: 27 March 2006
- Consultation on the Fifth Prospectus deadline: 14 April 2006
- Final Prospectus formally launched: 24 April 2006
- Briefing Event for potential applicants: 24 April 2006

Following the formal launch of the Fifth Co-financing Prospectus LSC Greater Manchester will be holding a Briefing Event for potential applicants on Monday 24 April 2006. This event will provide potential applicants with information regarding the application process and how appraisals will be conducted, together with further guidance on the individual programmes contained in the Fifth Co-financing Prospectus. If you wish to attend the Briefing Event, then please complete the 'Briefing Event Proforma' which can be found at:

www.lsc.gov.uk/grmanchester and return it to LSC Greater Manchester by Monday 17 April 2006.

North West Network will be holding a training event for voluntary sector organisations who wish to tender for projects under the LSC Greater Manchester Fifth Co-financing Prospectus. Details about the training event date and venue will be announced in the near future on the North West Network website.

As part of LSC Greater Manchester's commitment to the involvement of partners and stakeholders in their Open and Competitive Tendering Process, external volunteers are invited to be involved at each stage of their appraisal and approval process. If you would like to volunteer to take part in their First or Second Stage Appraisals or in the Strategic Review Panel, then please complete and return the 'Appraisal Volunteer Proforma' which can be accessed at LSC Greater Manchester's website:

www.lsc.gov.uk/grmanchester

LSC Greater Merseyside

There are currently no open invitations to tender for Objective 3 European Social Fund in Greater Merseyside. For more information keep referring to North West Network's website or the LSC Greater Merseyside website:

www.lsc.gov.uk/merseyside/Documents/Procurement+2005.htm

LSC Cumbria

LSC Cumbria will publish their eighth bidding round for their Funding Gateway Prospectus for Discretionary Funds 2004-2006 in early spring. For more information visit:

www.lsc.gov.uk/cumbria/Documents/SubjectListing/FundingLearning/funding-gateway_round-6.htm

LSC Cheshire and Warrington

LSC Cheshire and Warrington have published the results of their eighth tendering round. 63 tenders were received requesting in total £8,650,560. 17 tenders were received from the voluntary and community sector requesting £2,273,444 of the funding available. 12 applications were successful, 6 coming from the voluntary and community sector. Of the £1,349,379 that was accessed in total, the voluntary and community sector secured £643,989. This accounted for over 47% of the total monies secured.

For further information on LSC Cheshire and Warrington please visit: www.lscdf.org.uk/

Jobcentre Plus North West

Jobcentre Plus North West has published the results of their second Co-financing Tendering Round. Jobcentre Plus received 212 bids under this round. Of these bids 108 were rejected, whilst a further 26 failed to reach the scoring threshold. Of the 108 rejected bids, 32

were rejected for format errors and 76 were rejected for other reasons including incomplete tenders (63), arrived late (12), not eligible (1).

104 tenders were fully appraised and 78 of them proceeded to the Strategic Appraisal Panel. This panel took place in 16 September 2005 and, in total, 34 tenders were successful. Of these successful tenders, 5 applications were from the voluntary and community sector. £6,138,765 was secured across all sectors with the voluntary and community sector securing a total of £959,569 or 15.6%.

Alternative (Direct) Bidding Round 12

The results of the Alternative (Direct) Bidding Round 12, launched on 12 October 2005 have become available. 40 applications were submitted from across all sectors with 5 being submitted by the voluntary and community sector. A total of £5,820,098 was requested in total with £250,467 being requested by the VCS. 24 applications (£2,783,378) in total were successful with 3 (£214,650) of these coming from the sector.

Alerts and Invitations to Tender for Objective 3 Co-financing

News for further calls are expected from Co-financing organisations in spring and North West Network will let all interested parties know as soon as calls for tenders are announced. Please note that subject to demand, North West Network will be holding training events well in advance for submission of tenders for interested organisations in the sub-regions. You can find information about new invitations to tender at North West Network's website as well as dates and information for future training events.

So, for further information the link to follow is:

www.nwnetwork.org.uk/index.php?page=browse&cat_id=113

If you require any information on Objective 3, Co-financing or Alternative Bidding, or have a project proposal in mind and would like to find out if it would be eligible for the European Social Fund, please contact a member of the European Team at North West Network on 0161 236 6493 or e-mail at info@nwnetwork.org.uk.

Regional ESF Sector Co-financing Plan 2005/08 Invitations to Tender

North West Region LSC has published 2 invitations to tender (ITTs). The tender specifications have been developed to support activity within Measure 5.1: Improving Women's Participation in the Labour market.

Through consultation with sector skills partners the LSC has identified the following specific tender specifications and is looking for projects that will:

5.1d Increase the participation and achievement of women in logistics occupations

Logistics is a sector that has a poor record on diversity; the profile of drivers within the sector is overwhelmingly male. Evidence from employers and trade associations also indicates that women in logistics companies are largely in administrative roles and not involved in the better-paid driving occupations. Available funding under this tender specification is £250,000 and the LSC seeks projects that will run from 1 April 2006 to 31 January 2008.

5.1e Increase number of women in leadership and management roles in Construction occupations

The Statement of North West Learning and Skills Priorities identified skills gaps in Leadership and Management as a key cross-sectoral issue.

Available funding under this tender specification is £250,000 and the LSC seeks projects that will run from 1 April 2006 to 31 January 2008

Applications should be clearly focused to address these specifications.

The closing date for applications to be received at LSC Cheshire and Warrington is 12.00 noon 29 March 2006

Further information about the invitations to tender can be obtained from: www.lsc.gov.uk/NR/exeres/81239C95-5B12-4900-8218-54868EF6E5CD.htm

By following the 'to view please click here invitations to tender' hyperlink in the middle of the page. You can download the form to attend the applicant briefing session which will be held on Friday 3

March 2006 at 10.00am and 2.00pm at The Haydock Thistle Hotel, Haydock from the same page.

Applicants are advised that proposals must be submitted on the revised Invitation to Tender Proposal Form (Version 5, published 03 February 2006). If you have a project proposal in mind and would like any assistance, please contact a member of North West Network's European Team on 0161 236 6493 or e-mail at info@nwnetwork.org.uk

Global Grants Showcase

The Global Grants Programme is the small grants element of the European Social Fund.

In Lancashire the Global Grants fund is called Grants for Growth programme and is a partnership programme between Lancashire County Council, Lancashire County Developments Ltd and the European Union.

Lancashire's Grants for Growth is aimed at helping disadvantaged people overcome some of the barriers they face in moving towards opportunities in employment, education, training or volunteering.

Projects must help individuals or groups who are not in paid work; develop their capacity and the skills they need to move towards voluntary work, paid work or training.

North West Network along with Lancashire County Developments Ltd held a Grants for Growth Showcase event at Preston North End Football Club on Friday 3 March 2006.

This event gave organisations the opportunity to find out more about Grants for Growth, speak with deliverers of current projects and network with other organisations.

A full report on the event will appear in the next edition of this Newsletter.

Success North West Awards

For more than a decade England's North West has benefited from European funding bringing both prosperity and pride — we have a lot of good projects to be proud of.

On Thursday 1 December 2005 Government Office for the North West (GONW) and the Northwest Regional Development Agency (NWDA) joined forces to recognise the contribution European funding has made to the region with a celebration event held in St George's Hall, Liverpool and to shine a spotlight on the best EU-funded projects in the region.

As part of the celebrations GONW and NWDA hosted an awards ceremony to recognise 6 of the most innovative and successful EU funded projects in the region.

The awards formed the centrepiece of an event in Liverpool on December 1 2005. Before an invited audience, the winning nominations were highlighted and recognised for the unique contribution that they have made to the lives of the people of the North West.

North West Network was there representing the Voluntary and Community Sector and you will see from the list of winners below it was a very good night for VCS projects.

The awards were divided into 6 categories. The judges were extremely impressed by the depth and quality of all the entrants and 7 winners were selected over all.

Due to the overwhelming strength of the nominations in the voluntary and community category the judges chose two winners.

The categories and winning projects are as follows:

Training and Skills

Learning and Skills Council
SkillWorks

Diversity and Inclusion

The Big Life Company
Big Life Employment

Business Development

MerseyBIO
Business incubator

ICT

Cybermoor Ltd
Cybermoor

Voluntary and Community

Green Apprentices
Team North Huyton ILM Programme
Energywise Recycling
Energywise

Environmental Excellence

ENWORKS
Resource Efficiency Programme

European Structural Funds 2007-13

Implications and Issues for the North West of England

On 16 December 2005 the European Council finally agreed the Financial Perspectives for 2007-13 setting the overall financial framework for the period at €862 billion. Of this overall financial framework, €307,619 billion will be assigned to the EU Structural Funds through the three new objectives of Convergence, Competitiveness and Territorial Co-operation. The UK element of these funds will amount to a total of approximately €9.4 Billion or £6.7 Billion. It is important to note that the figures given are only initial estimates. The precise figures will depend on final calculations that will be carried out by the European Commission once the Council and Parliament have reached a final Inter-Institutional Agreement on the budget.

How these Totals Break Down

Under the Convergence objective, the UK will receive approximately £1.9 Billion. These funds will go to West Wales and Cornwall with a phasing out element also going to the Scottish Highlands and Islands.

Under the Competitiveness objective approximately £4.4 Billion will be allocated to the UK of which approximately £1.26 Billion will go to South Yorkshire and Merseyside, with half of remaining amount going to Regional Employment Programmes across the UK.

The Territorial Co-operation budget for the UK will amount to approximately £0.43 Billion.

Implications for the North West

In the programming period of 2000 - 2006, the North West of England has been the largest recipient of European Union Structural Funds in the UK, with over £900 million in the Merseyside Objective One programme and over £500 million for the Objective Two programme and in excess of £250 million from the Objective 3 Programme.

Despite the progress made and the many opportunities in the North West for future growth, the GVA per head is still 12% lower than the England average, resulting in a £13 billion output gap (source: Regional Economic Strategy or RES).

The North West has developed strong, inclusive governance structures and experienced partnerships that have ensured that the Structural Funds programmes are delivered effectively and have provided a high level of transparency and accountability. Ensuring that this experience and level of involvement is developed as a framework for future programmes will be critical to success.

Competitiveness Objective

Merseyside

Initial guidance indicates that Merseyside will receive 'phasing-in' competitiveness funding averaging approximately one-third of the intervention rates for the UK's future full convergence regions. Roughly translated, this means that Merseyside will receive approximately £328 million.

Cheshire, Cumbria, Greater Manchester and Lancashire

Approximately £3.8 billion will be left to administer to the rest of the UK in the Competitiveness Objective. On a rough calculation based on each head of population receiving an equal amount regardless of the region where they live, the rest of the North West would receive approximately £200–£250 million.

However, this broad way of calculating does not meet the objectives of the Structural Funds which is to support less favoured regions in their development and support the Lisbon 'Jobs and Growth' Strategy. Therefore the North West as one of the most deprived regions in England and currently the highest recipient of Objective Two, would be looking for at least £400 million.

The major question remains therefore how will the Government provide the allocation from the Competitiveness fund to each region - will it be at regional, sub-regional or another NUTS level?

Additional Support for Cumbria

Cumbria failed to be recognised as a 'special case' in view of it being a declining region. Cumbria was also hit due to the anomalies caused by the inclusion of extra-regio GDP (Gross Domestic Product) in the NUTS II GDP figures for calculating sub-regions in need of extra support. If this were not the case, and if Cumbria had qualified for 'phasing in' status, this would mean an additional £143 million.

The North West region had previously argued for a special fund for Cumbria and may now seek consideration from the Government for some allocated assistance either as increased central funding or as a top-slice from the Competitiveness Objective at the national level. Any such funds would be aligned to the draft Regional Economic Strategy transformational actions for Cumbria.

The Division Between European Regional Development Fund and European Social Fund

The Financial Perspectives state that 'The respective contribution of the ERDF and ESF shall be fixed by Member States in consultation with the Commission.'

Currently the programme in the region is split 70/30 in favour of ERDF and future programmes will probably follow this allocation whilst still recognising that sufficient ESF is needed to add value to skills training and encourage a competitive economy.

Clarity will be sought from the UK Government on how they intend to proceed with this together with the option for regional flexibility to be taken into account when deciding the appropriate weightings of the funds.

North West Network European Team will provide further updates on the establishment of the new programme, but if you require further information then please contact the European Team on info@nwnetwork.org.uk or 0161 236 6493.

Research into Voluntary and Community Sector Sustainability Post-2006

We are all too aware that the voluntary and community sector in the North West region comprises thousands of vibrant and highly focused organisations delivering – amongst other things - a wide range of regeneration and social inclusion measures to their local communities in appropriate and effective ways. Historically the sector has been very successful in attracting grants from a wide range of funding sources, not only from Europe but also from domestic sources including the Single Regeneration Budget (SRB), the Big Lottery, Neighbourhood Renewal funds and a wide range of Trust funds.

However, the sector is facing a reduction in funding of unprecedented proportions after 2006. This reduction is due to the decline in the funds available from Europe, the demise of SRB and changes to the Community Fund and Neighbourhood Renewal budgets. The impact will not only be on the sustainability of projects and the viability of organisations, but also on the future role and contribution of the sector to the regeneration and well being of the North West region.

A consortium of VCS infrastructure organisations from across the North West region (North West Network, Voluntary Sector North West and Merseyside Network for Europe) have been successful in attracting some funds from Government Office North West European Programme Executive and from Change Up to commission a piece of research on behalf of the voluntary and community sector in the region to quantify the loss of funding to the sector post 2006 and to assess its impact on the sector. The research will result in the production of a comprehensive report followed by a dissemination event in June.

The aim of this research brief is to:

- Highlight the successes of the sector in delivering effective programmes in their communities of interest together with those organisations that have successfully adapted (or are adapting) to the changing funding climate
- Assess the impact on North West VCS organisations and their users, of the anticipated large reduction and restricted access to the above range of major funders
- Identify key issues and a range of strategies for the sector to minimise adverse effects

- Identify the impact on the activities currently undertaken by the sector, the consequent effect on public and statutory service delivery, and the consequences for users
- Include an evidenced assessment of impact in thematic areas of activities, particularly where delivery will be cut back or where it will cease
- Look at the overall financial impact to the sector of the decline in funds available both in economic and social terms
- Examine the impact upon partnerships forged via the funding or through delivery of activities within the VCS and with other sectors
- Provide contextual identification of the past levels of funding and an assessment on what the reduction in funding in the future may be
- Assess the sustainability of current projects receiving funding due to end or significantly change, and the viability of some VCS organisations themselves, including the significant employment issues that will arise

We expect the impact assessment from the research to include the following:

- Job losses within the VCS resulting from organisations closing down or down sizing
- The loss of VCS capacity to tender for and deliver public sector contracts
- The loss of the VCS contribution to the regeneration and well being of the region
- Loss of support to volunteers and any reduction in volunteering
- Loss of services and other activities/functions delivered by the VCS
- The impact on civil society, for example: communities finding solutions to their own problems; communities initiating and managing their own services and facilities

We also expect this research to lead directly to actionable outcomes, as well as adding to the larger picture that will result from the research towards the contribution of the VCS to the economy of the

region. A report will be produced primarily for the sector, but also for funders, politicians and other interested parties. This will:

- Identify in economic and social terms, the size and extent of the potential problem, through researching into the overall financial impact of the decline in funds. The key issue here will concern the work that won't be delivered in the community, directly and indirectly.
- Identify those services, organisations, thematic areas (e.g. disability, ethnicity, rural) and geographical areas most at risk.
- Identify those services, organisations, thematic areas (e.g. disability, ethnicity, rural) and geographical areas which have successfully adapted to the changing funding climate.
- Identify effective strategies for the sector to address the situation.
- Analyse the implications of funding changes for the sector.
- Suggest ways in which funders can respond to the problem - will replacement funding become available?
- Suggest strategies for the sector and its funders to avoid a post-2006 crisis.

Additionally, this work will include a dissemination event which will deliver the findings of the research to you the wider regional VCS and other key regional players/stakeholders. This will highlight the research recommendations for the sector in order to enable us to plan for change and to engage with the public sector and other funding bodies in future funding delivery.

The final report is expected to be available in the public domain by the end of June and as mentioned previously a dissemination event held.

If you would like more information on this development then please contact James Hadleigh at North West Network on 0161 236 6493 or e-mail at james@nwnetwork.org.uk

European Union's New Members

In May 2004, ten countries acceded to membership of the European Union. The addition of ten countries with varying economies will have an effect on the many different aspects of employment and business in Europe; and of course on the future of European Structural Funds in the UK. In this edition we have selected three of those countries to provide an insight into the economies of those countries and how they will be affected by Structural Funds.

Cyprus

Background

Cyprus is a Mediterranean island geographically close to the Middle East and due to the island's geographic proximity is often included in that region, though politically and culturally it is closely aligned with Europe, in particular Greece and to a lesser extent Turkey. Historically, Cyprus has been at the crossroads between Europe, Southwest Asia, and North Africa, with lengthy periods of mainly Greek influence.

Cyprus has a population of just short of 750,000 people and covers an area of 3,572 square miles.

Recent History

Britain took over the administration of Cyprus from Turkey in 1878, although Turkey retained formal sovereignty. In 1914, when Turkey entered the First World War, Britain annexed Cyprus. British sovereignty was recognised by Turkey under the terms of the 1923 Treaty of Lausanne and Cyprus became a Crown Colony in 1925.

Following independence in 1960, tension between Greek and Turkish Cypriots increased and culminated in serious intercommunal fighting in December 1963. From then until 1974 there were occasional outbreaks of further violence and the Turkish Cypriot minority retreated into small enclaves. In 1974 Turkish troops landed in northern Cyprus following a coup on the island by extremists against the elected President, which was backed by the military junta then in power in Greece. The island has been effectively partitioned ever since and approximately 36% of the territory of the Republic is not under the control of the Government.

Greek and Turkish Cypriots share many customs but maintain distinct identities based on their religion, language, and close ties

with their respective 'motherlands'. Greek is predominantly spoken in the south and Turkish in the north although English is widely used.

Cyprus joined the European Union as a full member in May 2004. Since 1974 the southern part of Cyprus has greatly grown economically, and the country enjoys a high standard of living. The north maintains a lower standing of living due to the economic embargoes placed since its unilateral declaration of independence.

Economy

Economic affairs in Cyprus are dominated by the division of the country. The Cypriot economy is prosperous and has diversified in recent years. Cyprus has an open, free-market, services-based economy with some light manufacturing.

Cyprus's accession as a full member to the European Union as of May 1 2004 has been an important milestone in its recent economic development. The Cypriots are among the most prosperous people in the Mediterranean region. Internationally, Cyprus promotes its geographical location as a 'bridge' between West and East, along with its educated English-speaking population, moderate local costs, good airline connections, and telecommunications.

Cyprus and the European Union

The continued difficulties between Greece and Turkey in finding a settlement presented a potential obstacle to Cypriot entry to the European Union, for which the government had originally applied in 1997. In December 2002 the EU formally invited Cyprus to join in 2004, insisting that EU membership would apply to the whole island and hoping that it would provide a significant enticement for reunification resulting from the outcome of ongoing talks. This however proved not to be the case with the presidential elections being won by an anti-unification candidate. The process of EU entry was therefore delayed.

Eventually in May 2004, Cyprus entered the EU (although in practice membership only applies to the southern part of the island). In acknowledgement of the Turkish Cypriot community's support for reunification however, the EU made it clear that trade concessions would be reached to stimulate economic growth in the north. The EU remains committed to reunification under acceptable terms.

Cyprus joined the European Union and stood formally as a full member since January 2005. The Cypriot government currently intends to adopt the Euro on 1 January 2008.

Objective 2 and Objective 3 in Cyprus

The funds available for Cyprus under Objective 2 are based on two priorities. These are:

- Sustainable Rural Development: with the aim of creating a more diversified economic base and improving the socio-economic conditions. This has an EU contribution of €18.49 million
- Development of urban areas in decline: with the aim of promoting the socio-economic regeneration of selected urban areas in the Nicosia region adjacent to the cease-fire line. This has an European Union contribution of € 8.41 million

With regards to Objective 3, the strategy and priorities of the Single Programming Document are to promote the modernisation of policies and systems in the fields of employment, education and training and lifelong training in Cyprus. Here two priorities are included:

- The development and promotion of active labour market policies such as promoting employment, equal opportunities and access to the labour market for those threatened by social exclusion. This has an European Union contribution of € 11.4 million
- The promotion and improvement of education and training systems and lifelong learning, such as the improvement of the education and training systems through the introduction of information and communication technology applications and modern methods of teaching in the context of lifelong learning which has an European Union contribution of € 10 million.

Links

Cyprus government www.cyprus.gov.cy/

NGO Environmental directory
www.mirror.undp.org/cyprus/endir/EnvDir_En_2005.pdf

Lithuania

Background

Lithuania is surrounded by Latvia, Russia, Belarus and Poland. It is the largest of the Baltic States and opens onto the Baltic Sea. The land is irrigated by thousands of lakes, streams and rivers, and is landscaped by forests. The climate is cool and in winter the temperature often falls well below zero. Half the land is arable, crops grown include potatoes and grain. Pollution has increased in the past two decades. Literacy levels are high, at almost 100 percent for men and women. The life expectancy rate for women is substantially higher at 76 years, than it is for men at 65 years of age.

Recent History

The history of Lithuania has close ties with that of Poland, its neighbour to the south west. By the end of the 18th century most of the country came under the Russian empire. German occupation in the First World War was followed by two decades of independence, although Vilnius, the capital of Lithuania, was occupied by Poland for most of that time.

Following a pact between Stalin and Hitler, Soviet troops arrived in 1940. The following year they were pushed out by the Nazis but returned in 1944.

For the subsequent half century of Soviet rule, Lithuanians relied on Catholic tradition and memories of independence to preserve their national identity, a skill mastered through centuries of foreign domination. Pagan traditions with roots stretching back centuries have been kept alive too.

Lithuania has embraced market reform since independence. In the run up to and period following European Union entry the republic has seen strong growth and low inflation.

Economy

Lithuania has shaken off the post-Soviet problems which have beset neighbouring Russia and has forged ahead with its transition to a market economy. Its programme of privatisation is almost complete. More reforms, however, will still be required before Lithuania is ready for the buffeting winds of the European Union's internal market. Unemployment is persistently high and more reforms are needed in the agriculture sector.

Lithuania and the European Union

On 8 December 1995 the Government of the Republic of Lithuania submitted an official membership application. On 15 February 2000, Lithuania started negotiations for European Union membership.

Lithuania became a full member of the European Union in May 2004 along with 9 other accession countries. Lithuania has already begun to benefit from European Union membership and has a full part in the Structural Funds programme.

European Structural Funds in Lithuania

Social and economic infrastructure: almost 39% of the whole budget is allocated to improve Lithuania's infrastructure, not only in transport, but also in energy, health, education, research institutions, labour market institutions and related social affairs sectors. This has a European Union contribution of € 347.1 million

Human resources development: such as upgrading of education and training, return into the labour market of socially excluded groups, training and retraining of researchers to increase the knowledge base of the country. This has a European Union contribution of € 163.8 million.

Strengthening competitiveness of enterprises: such as the business environment, the competitiveness of enterprises, measures to support information technologies and the tourism sector. This has a European Union contribution of € 222.4 million.

Rural development, agriculture and fisheries: such as the promotion of sustainable development in rural areas, and the diversification and restructuring of agriculture and fisheries. This has a European Union contribution of € 135 million.

The Voluntary and Community Sector in Lithuania

The Lithuanian non-governmental sector has increased and become stronger in the past decade. Statistics show that there are now more than 5,500 voluntary and community organisations active in Lithuania.

Non-governmental information and support centres are widely spread to promote and strengthen the voluntary and sector in Lithuania. These centres collect and disseminate information, consult with voluntary and community organisations, and organise various training events, seminars and conferences.

Links

Mission of Lithuania to the European Community
www.lt-mission-eu.be/index_en.htm

Parliament site of Republic of Lithuania
www.lrs.lt/

Slovakia

Background

The Slovak Republic is a country located in Central Europe with a population of 5.4 million people. It is bordered to the west by current European Union member state Austria, to the north by the Czech Republic and Poland and to the south by Hungary, all three of which are newcomers in the European Union. To the east is Ukraine, with which Slovakia shares a frontier only 98 kilometres (60 miles) long. Slovakia's capital is Bratislava.

Slovakia is a modern European country mixed with a deep rural tradition. Geographically, it is primarily a mountainous country which offers numerous winter activities. It has a continental European climate with moderate winters and warm summers. Most infrastructure and many of the tourist facilities are on par with or near Western European standards.

The population of Slovakia is 85.8 percent Slovak with a large Hungarian minority of more than 9 percent as well as around 1.7 percent Roma (gypsies) which according to some sources reaches 10 percent.

History

Slovakia struggled for centuries to find an identity for itself under the Austro-Hungarian Empire and, later, while part of Czechoslovakia. Slovaks drew closer to their fellow Slavs, the Czechs, in the nineteenth century when the Austro-Hungarian Empire imposed a policy of enforced Magyarisation, finally in 1907 making Hungarian the sole language of elementary education in Slovakia.

Slovakia had a sad period of independence under the Nazis when Hitler created a fascist puppet state headed by Jozef Tiso, who was executed in 1947 as a war criminal. Czechs and Slovaks were united in Czechoslovakia after World War I in 1918 and then reunited in 1945. The fall of communism in 1989 led to a rise in nationalism in Slovakia, whose people felt that the Czechs condescended to them.

Slovakia had been by far the poorest part of Czechoslovakia. In February 1992, the Slovak parliament rejected a treaty to remain part of federal Czechoslovakia. On 1 January 1993 Slovakia became an independent nation-state, recognised by the United Nations and its member states and on joining the European Union prior to accession which resulted in a 92.5% vote in favour of European Union membership.

Economy

Over the last few years, Slovakia has managed to overcome many of the problems encountered in its efforts to modernise the economy. Most of the privatisation schemes have been completed. Banks have attracted the participation of important foreign investors, and foreign investment in general is increasing. Main industries include metal products and machinery, food and beverages, oil, nuclear fuel, chemicals, textiles, artificial fibres, paper and printing, ceramics, motor vehicles and rubber products. Main exports include manufactured goods, machinery and transport equipment.

European Structural Funds in Slovakia

Slovakia has 4 cohesion regions comprising 8 sub-regions and 79 districts. Three regions are eligible for Objective 1 assistance and one region, Bratislava, is eligible for Objective 2 and 3. About €1.1 billion is allocated to Slovakia under the EU Structural Funds and some € 0.6 billion under the Cohesion Fund.

The overall objective of the funds in Slovakia is to bring about growth, competitiveness and employment, while trying to iron out regional imbalances through a growth pole approach. Structural Funds in Slovakia are implemented through 4 Operational Programmes and concentrate on business infrastructure and business development, transport and environment infrastructure, multifunctional agriculture and rural development, and education, training and active labour market policies. The Single Programming Document Objective 2 for Bratislava focuses on business services, infrastructure and tourism. The Single Programming Document Objective 3 focuses on training and lifelong learning measures. The Cohesion Fund will concentrate on transport infrastructures and environment.

So in further detail, European Structural Funds in Slovakia are allocated as follows:

Industry and services: € 151.2 million to support the development of industrial production, better integrating research and development

into industrial production, improving energy efficiency and promoting tourism

Human resources: € 284.5 million to increase labour market flexibility, reduce unemployment and reduce the risk of social exclusion of the most vulnerable groups in particular the Roma community

Basic infrastructure: € 422.4 million to foster balanced regional development by improving transport accessibility, improving the environment and renovating local infrastructure

Agriculture and rural development: € 183 million to increase the efficiency of agricultural and aquacultural production, modernising the processing of agricultural and fisheries products and to improving the quality of life of the rural population

The Voluntary and Community Sector in Slovakia

Slovak Academic Information Agency (SAIA) is a non-governmental not-for-profit umbrella service centre organisation for the voluntary sector which, since its establishment in 1990, by its programmes and services has been enhancing civil society and assisting in internationalisation of education and research in Slovakia. For further information on the organisation and projects visit: www.saia.sk/eng/

Links:

European Union information on Slovakia
www.europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/slovakia/

Structural Funds in Slovakia - www.europa.sk/

Guide to Slovakia - www.slovensko.com/

Guide to the Slovak Republic - www.slovakia.org/

British Chamber of Commerce in the Slovak Republic -
www.britcham.sk/legal.htm

British Council in Slovakia - www.britishcouncil.org/slovakia

CAPACITY BUILDERS

From April 2006 ChangeUp will be managed by Capacity Builders, an agency at arms length to government, led by a board of voluntary sector experts. Capacity Builders will be responsible for:

- The overall programme design and programme management of ChangeUp
- Making grant decisions and performance managing grants
- Ensuring the programme is joined-up and co-ordinated
- Mainstreaming diversity into the design and delivery of activities
- Undertaking action learning and longer term evaluation programmes

The Chair, Chief Executive and Board were appointed in November 2005, including Caryl Agard from the North West of England and former Chair of the NWN project 1NW. Recruitment of staff is now underway with offices to be located in Birmingham.

The Capacity Builders board have now met four times and begun discussions on their strategic approach. In order to commence a dialogue about ChangeUp, and inform their own thinking on how it should be taken forward. Board members are coming to each region during February and March and Caryl Agard will be representing Capacity Builders in the North West on 17 February to meet a small number of stakeholders drawn from the NWCBIF RAG (North West Capacity Building and Infrastructure Framework Regional Advisory Group). These meetings are being arranged by Government Offices.

The board are also meeting representatives from the national hubs of expertise. You can get the latest information from the ChangeUp website: www.changeup.org.uk/overview/capacitybuilders.asp

Emile Pinel
North West Network

CHANGEUP REGIONAL PROJECTS

Government Office for the North West (GONW) recently opened a bidding round for projects of regional significance for infrastructure organisations within the ChangeUp programme. The majority of ChangeUp activity in the North West is quite tightly locked into the sub-regional consortia, however the opportunity for regional activity funded by ChangeUp was welcome.

A panel comprising representatives of the Regional Advisory Group met on 30 November 2005 and considered all the project ideas which had been submitted in the context of the budget which was available. It was agreed that the following proposals should be considered for approval subject to certain specification determined by the panel. GO were delegated to take them forward.

If you would like further information about ChangeUp in the North West then Contact Ann Marie Wrigley on 0161 952 4380.

Project	Organisation	£ Grant
Measuring the economic impact of the voluntary sector in the North West	VSNW / NWDA	£40,000
NewNet: Taking forward proposals to amalgamate VSNW and 1NW	VSNW /1NW	£50,000
Regional Conference 'Including the BME Community in ChangeUp'	CEMVO	£7,500
Regional conference LAAs and the voluntary sector	VSNW	£7,500
Regional volunteering infrastructure	Volunteering NW	£28,850
Impact assessment of ChangeUp on BME pop	CEMVO	£15,500
Assessment of infrastructure support required at regional level	GMCVO	£12,000
Research into VCS sustainability	NWN /VSNW /	£15,000

Project	Organisation	£ Grant
post -2006	MNE	
Co-ordination of ICT investment across the North West	GMCVO	£5,193
Building relationships between infrastructure organisations in the North West	Cheshire CC	£5,000
		<hr/>
		£186,543
		<hr/>

ONE NORTH WEST UPDATE

North West Network members will be aware that we have been successfully running the Home Office funded regional BME network for the voluntary sector for several years now. NWN's input into this project was derived from its operational objective, 'to support emerging networks'.

Since 2002, NWN has successfully attracted financial support from the European Social Fund in addition to many one off grants from Government Office departments to deliver a range of consultations across the region. A Task Group was established with the objective of establishing a consultative structure across the North West region and this was delivered with a measure of success, although it is now somewhat superseded by sub-regional networks born out of ChangeUp.

The project has been staffed by two very capable individuals, Siddika Ahmed and Maneer Afsar and some of you may know that both of them have moved on to pastures new. Siddika joined PeaceMaker in Oldham towards the end of 2005 and Maneer left in February 2006 to return to the public sector after three successful years with North West Network as Project Director for 1NW.

The project is subject to further change following the resignation of Caryl Agard as Chair of the Task Group. Caryl, who is Executive Director of the Social Business Company, has been appointed to the board of Capacity Builders. Board members of Capacity Builders are required to relinquish any involvement in organisations that may benefit from Capacity Builders management of the ChangeUp programme, however, we wish him well in his new role and hope that his experience and knowledge of the complexities of infrastructure and the sector generally in the North West will be of great benefit to us all over the coming years.

Despite the departure of key individuals, life must go on, and it is with great pleasure that we introduce Mohammed Dhalech as the Interim Chair of 1NW's Task Group. Mohammed joins the project during a time of change. Notwithstanding the changes in personnel, the project is working closely with VSNW (Voluntary Sector North West) to identify the benefits of and take forward a merger of Home Office funded networks in this region to create a new single, generic, regional voluntary sector network. Clearly, such an ambitious project requires the support of many stakeholders, including NWN; and as an integral part of NWN during the last four years there is much negotiation still to take place. A wider consultation with the sector is

planned and NWN will report on developments through future editions of this Newsletter.

Emile Pinel
North West Network

CHANGES AT ONE NORTH WEST

First and foremost many thanks to Siddika, Maneer and Caryl for their contribution to the development of (1NW) One North West, and best wishes to them in their respective future roles.

The priorities for 1NW at the present for 1NW are recruitment of the Project Director, the establishment of the regional BME panel, and the creation of "NEWNET" the coming together of the regional VCS infrastructure organisations funded by the Home Office Active Communities Directorate in the North West. The process has begun with the implementation of a Joint Shadow Board, to drive the new organisation into reality over the next six months.

I look forward to the challenge ahead in the creation of "NEWNET" and the role of the regional BME panel within the new structure, and the mainstreaming of BME and race equality issues in the voluntary and community sector in the North West.

Mohammed Dhalech
Interim Chair
One North West

Big News on the Big Lottery Fund

After months of crossing our fingers North West Network is proud to announce that they have secured three years funding from the Big Lottery Fund to deliver coaching and volunteer management support services across the North West.



Supported by
The National Lottery[®]
through the Big Lottery Fund



The support from the Big Lottery Fund means that NWN can use its skills in coaching and our regional position to support volunteer managers and volunteering infrastructure organisations in the North West.

Coaching is a powerful approach to promoting personal and professional development. Coaching has come of age in the public and private sectors with many household names using coaching to help their staff improve their performance. The voluntary and community sector is lagging behind other sectors in the use of coaching and this project will raise awareness and increase the use of a coaching approach to support the work of the voluntary and community sector in the North West, and in particular volunteer involving organisations.

The project will provide individual and organisational development through 3 main activities:

- Coaching for volunteer managers
- Cascade training to volunteering infrastructure organisations
- Training in outcomes focused organisational planning for volunteer involving organisations

The project will start this spring; by developing partnerships with volunteering infrastructure organisations similar to the partnership featured in the Tameside Coaching Project (see the Tameside Coaching Project update on page 38).

We will keep you updated on the progress of this project and how you can benefit from its activities, in our newsletter and e-mail bulletins. However, if you would like more information on this project now please contact Carol or Dan. Tel: 0161 236 6493, e-mail: carol@nwnetwork.org.uk, dan@nwnetwork.org.uk

The Six Year Road to the Big Lottery Fund

2000: Millennium Volunteers Development Agent

NWN were contracted by the Department for Education and Skills to become a Development Agent for Millennium Volunteers (MV) a volunteering initiative for 16-24 year olds in the North West. NWN's role, as a Development Agent, was to recruit and support projects that involve young people in volunteering in running their own MV project as 'Host Projects'.

2001: The Beginning of the Volunteer Management Team

Carol Savage is recruited as Millennium Volunteer Project Co-ordinator. NWN develops a capacity building package for 'Host Projects' based around one to one support for project leaders.

2002: European Social Fund (ESF) Capacity Building Project

NWN secured ESF to expand its Millennium Volunteers project to offer more development support to 'Host Projects'. Dan Farley is recruited as part of the ESF capacity building project.

2003: Consultation

NWN identified volunteer management as an area in which organisations needed support in order to develop; by consulting with the membership, organisations supported by the MV project and research undertaken by the public and voluntary sectors.

2003: A Generic Volunteer Management Support Service

NWN successfully completed the Millennium Volunteers project and planned a project that built upon NWN's experience of developing youth volunteering projects under MV and made its support available to all volunteer involving organisations in the North West.

2004: SAM Volunteer Management

NWN delivered the Government Office for the North West funded SAM Volunteer Management project with the help of a consultation group made up of North West based voluntary sector delivery and infrastructure organisations, resulting in the production of SAM Volunteer Management.

2004: Coaching

NWN identified coaching as a technique that would enhance their ability to support volunteer managers. North West Network's Volunteer Management Team members successfully completed the Centre for Coaching, UK, Certificate in Coaching.

2004-5: CSV Media Young Volunteer Challenge

NWN were contracted by CSV Media North to support external volunteer placements as part of its Young Volunteer Challenge project. The project allowed the Volunteer Management Team to hone their coaching skills and put SAM Volunteer Management into practice.

2005: Tameside Coaching Project

NWN successfully gained LSC Greater Manchester Neighbourhood Learning in Deprived Communities Fund (NLDCF) money to deliver coaching and SAM Volunteer Management to volunteer managers in Tameside, through coaching.

The project is still active and is run in partnership with Volunteer Centre Tameside and provides a pilot of how NWN can work in partnership with local infrastructure to provide sustainable and effective coaching activities in local areas.

2006: The Big Lottery Fund

NWN successfully gain three years funding from the Big Lottery Fund to deliver coaching and volunteer management support services across the North West.

Tameside Coaching Project Update



The Tameside Coaching Project, funded by LSC (Learning and Skills Council) Greater Manchester is up and running. Thanks to a successful recruitment campaign led by project partners Volunteer Centre Tameside. Volunteer managers have now been recruited and coaching sessions have begun.

Over the next five months the North West Network Volunteer Management Team will be delivering the following services:

- **Coaching for Volunteer Managers**
The project will provide coaching to volunteer managers, working in Tameside regeneration areas. NWN coaches will help individuals to develop their skills and knowledge in managing volunteers in a series of one to one sessions.
- **Cascade Training to Volunteer Centre Tameside**
NWN will provide cascade training to staff members from Volunteer Centre Tameside on the basic skills in facilitation and coaching to enable them to utilise SAM Volunteer Management (a tool designed specifically to help volunteer involving organisations develop or improve their volunteer management programme).

Although NWN are delivering all the services above an important and successful aspect of this project is the partnership formed between NWN and Volunteer Centre Tameside.

Volunteer Centre Tameside has an active role in this project by assisting NWN in the following ways:

- Providing us with the expert / local knowledge to guide the project
- Ensuring that our work plan is realistic and is relevant to needs of Tameside residents/organisations
- Identifying and carrying out the initial contact with the potential volunteer managers who will benefit from our coaching

- Inputting into the management of the project through review/progress meetings
- Assisting us to feedback progress to the Tameside Volunteer Managers' Network
- Assisting us to produce a development plan for implementation of SAM Volunteer Management in Tameside

The Tameside Coaching Project will act as a pilot to developing a collaborative way of working with local volunteering infrastructure that NWN can replicate across the North West. For more Information please contact Carol or Dan on Tel: 0161 236 6493.

IT UPDATE

It has recently come to our attention that MS Small Business Server contains a bug, which means that users of pop3 e-mail accounts are potentially unable to receive blind copy e-mails. At NWN we distribute our own e-mail bulletin by this means with all recipients addressed through the blind copy facility.

To those of you operating this type of network, who have not received our e-mail bulletin recently, this bug in the network server would probably explain why. Apparently there is a fairly simple fix, which can be dealt with by your ISP, and involving a move from pop3 mail accounts to SMTP.

A further message for readers who may be using this type of distribution, you should be aware that many organisations may not be receiving your information and will not know that you had sent anything, on this occasion ignorance is not bliss and it may be worth double checking your systems and contacting your members to see if all is well.

From NWN's perspective; we are working on this problem and hope to remedy it within the month, but if you have been sending us information by e-mail distribution list, it may be worth checking whether we have actually received anything from you.

Emile Pinel
North West Network

News

Partners to Work on Key Governance Projects

The Governance Hub, one of six national hubs of expertise in the Home Office's ChangeUp programme, has announced that it is looking for partners to work on key governance projects. Open to any voluntary, community or local infrastructure organisation, projects include setting up governance pilot projects, developing resources for trustee boards and hosting governance workshops. Successful applicants will be given support and promotion as well as project funding.

The Governance Hub's aims are to promote trusteeship, provide resources and services for trustees and their advisors, and develop local support to increase knowledge and governance skills.

For more information and partnering application forms visit:
www.governancehub.org.uk

NCVO (National Council for Voluntary Organisations) and NACVS (National Association of Councils for Voluntary Service)

NCVO and NACVS have announced they are to work more closely together on major policy areas. The two organisations, which between them represent around 150,000 voluntary and community sector organisations, will collaborate on issues such as local government policy, particularly Local Strategic Partnerships and Local Area Agreements, regional government policies and funding arrangements. They are also to hold shared conferences and will make joint submissions such as that to the Comprehensive Spending Review – a Treasury report assessing government expenditure.

For more information please visit:
www.nacvs.org.uk/news/ncvoagreement.shtm

Noticeboard

Framework for Sport Volunteers Consultation - What You Think

Share your experiences and make your opinion count for the future of volunteering in sport. Volunteers are vital to sport in England: What can be done to help them do an even better job in the future?

Have your say in shaping sport volunteering by completing this online survey. It will only take minutes, and could set the agenda for years to come.

Visit the Framework for Sport Volunteers consultation to them what you think at:

sportssearch.php4hosting.com:81/phpESP/public/survey.php?name=SP_volunteering_Sport_Nav

Training and Events

Lottery Grants for Charities

19 October 2006, Manchester

Providing a detailed exploration of the policies, criteria and procedures for the awards of grants from the Big Lottery Fund's new "demand led" and voluntary sector infrastructure programmes, which is worth more than £150 million a year to the sector. The day will look at the nature of the new grants, the application process and how the new criteria will be assessed among other things. Repeated throughout the year around the country.

For more details please visit: www.dsc.org.uk/courses&training.html

Introduction to Management in the Voluntary Sector

6, 7, 8 June 2006, Manchester - 3 Day Course

Those who have either been in a management position for less than two years or to move from a supervisory role to a management position.

The course provides participants with a framework for underpinning knowledge concepts and models of good practice. It enables them to explore and apply ideas own situation. It also provides participants with the tools to assess their strengths weaknesses in order to identify the need for further training and development.

For further information please visit:

www.dsc.org.uk/charitytraining/management.html#5

Managing Volunteers

4, 5 April 2006, Manchester - 12, 13 September 2006, Manchester
2 Day Course

Volunteer co-ordinators and anyone who relies on volunteers for their organisation. An excellent introduction to good practice in volunteer management which concentrates on how to get, and keep, volunteers. Also covers recruitment and selection, motivation, planning, supervision and support. You will be equipped with the essentials to run a successful team of volunteers.

For further information please visit:

www.dsc.org.uk/charitytraining/management.html#5

Directory of Social Change - Managing Projects

4, 5 April, 2006 - 19, 20 September 2006, Manchester
2 days

Those who have to design, plan and manage projects that have a limited life.

Using case studies and practical work you will learn a range of project management tools and techniques, and how to highlight the key factors that determine the project's success. Includes defining the projects outcomes brief and scope; planning techniques; allocating resources; the role of the project manager; developing team work; winding the project up; and monitoring and evaluation.

For further information please visit:

www.lga.gov.uk/Event.asp?lsection=46&id=SXD5A6-A7836322

Equality and Diversity-from Education to Employment

10 - 11 May 2006 at the Holiday Inn Hotel, Lime Street, Liverpool

Contact details

For further information or to discuss any aspect of the conference, please contact Naseem Anwar (Senior Adviser, Equality and Policy Development, Liverpool John Moores University) on behalf of the Conference Planning Group.

Email: n.anwar@ljmu.ac.uk Tel: 0151 231 3188

Conference Website: www.ljmu.ac.uk/conferences/73125.htm

Using Research: The Impact and Value of Research in the Voluntary Sector

GMCVO is organising an event to explore the impact and value of research in the voluntary sector. A number of speakers will discuss research issues from various perspectives and there will be an opportunity to take a more in-depth look at specific research topics too.

Aimed at relevant staff in the voluntary and statutory sectors, the event will be held on Thursday 6 April 2006 at the St Thomas Centre.

Visit the below link to download the leaflet from the GMCVO Website
www.gmcvo.org.uk/uploaded/store/Using%20Research%20-%20Leaflet%20%20Booking%20Form.doc

If you would like to attend, please return the reply slip at the bottom of the leaflet, plus payment, to us by 31 March 2006. Places are limited, and will be allocated on a first-come first-served basis.

Publications

Volunteering Compact

The Volunteering Code was first published in 2001 and revised in 2004. The new Volunteering Code has been published.

The Compact is an agreement between the Government and the voluntary and community sector. If you would like more information please visit The Compact working together website:

www.thecompact.org.uk/C2B/document_tree/ViewACategory.asp?CategoryID=45 or Volunteering England

www.volunteering.org.uk/newsandevents/latestnews/index.htm

Branch Networks in the 21st Century: A Handbook

Published by Volunteering England
February 2006

Branch networks in the 21st century: a handbook, is a brand new publication by Volunteering England.

Very little has been written about how branch networks operate, even though such networks are widespread in the sector. Branch networks in the 21st century: a handbook, by Sarah J Butler, fills this gap.

It also looks at how a range of different organisations work with their networks and includes numerous case studies. It will be essential reading for any voluntary organisation working with branches and groups.

Branch Networks in the 21st Century is funded by the Home Office Active Communities Directorate.

Order from Volunteering England at:

www.volunteering.org.uk/publications, call 0207 520 8936 or e-mail membership@volunteeringengland.org

Other Funding

Big Lottery Fund (BLF) - Reaching Communities

Outline proposals are now being accepted for the Big Lottery fund Reaching Communities Programme. This is one of the demand-led programmes and will have £100million to spend in 2005 on projects working around community learning and creating opportunity; promoting community cohesion and safety and promoting well being.

Reaching Communities is an outcomes based programmes and projects under the three themes will be expected to produce the following outcomes

- People having better chances in life, including being able to get better access to training and development to improve their life skills
- Stronger communities, with more active citizens, working together to tackle the problems
- Improved rural and urban environments which communities are better able to access and enjoy
- Healthier and more active people and communities

Applications will have to demonstrate how they meet one or more of these outcomes. Applications can be for grants of between £10,001 and £500,000 for up to 5 years.

Groups wishing to apply will first have to submit an outline proposal form (4 pages) which will then be considered and responded to within 15 days. There are 4 possible responses:

- Unclear: groups will be asked to clarify some points in their proposals
- Outside funding policy: proposals don't fit the Big Lottery Fund criteria
- Unlikely: projects unlikely to be funded
- Maybe: projects may be funded

Groups who receive a 'maybe' response will be sent the full application form and invited to complete and return it.

For more information and to download the outline proposal form visit: www.biglotteryfund.org.uk or ring the advice Line on 0845 410 20 30

Tudor Trust - Guidelines 2006

Tudor Trust is launching new guidelines on 1 April 2006.

Until 31 March 2006 they will only consider applications from organisations which were awarded a grant by the Tudor Trust in the previous five years (to qualify, the grant commitment letter must be dated on or after 1 April 2000). If your organisation has not had a grant by Tudor in the last five years (with a grant commitment letter dated on or after 1 April 2000) you can't apply for funding for 2006-2007 and onwards until after 1 April 2006, when the new guidelines are published.

From April they are introducing a two-stage application process. The requirements for a first-stage proposal will be described in full in their guidelines and on the website. All proposals received on or after 1 April 2006 must follow these new guidelines. Any applications which don't follow the new guidelines will not be considered.

From 1 April 2006 you do not have to have received a grant from them in the past to apply to them.

Full details and guidelines will be on their website:
www.tudortrust.org.uk

Nationwide Foundation

The Nationwide Foundation recently launched new funding criteria. The Foundation is providing grants of up to £1,500 to registered charities, with incomes not exceeding £250,000, which support those affected by domestic violence. The focus will be on funding work which offers ways of preventing domestic violence at the outset or preventing its recurrence.

Preference is given to work which focuses on volunteers; black and minority ethnic (BME) groups; preventative measures e.g. research programmes, courses, workshops, seminars; young people 0 - 18 years; mediation; peer support; local projects; collaborative projects; advocacy.

If interested, the guidelines need to be read in full and a short application form completed. Once an application is received along with supporting documents, organisations will receive an answer on the success of the application within 4 months.

The Foundation supports organisations Nationwide (England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland); however any work supported needs

to take place at a local level and not nationally. Further information regarding this new grants programme, including guidelines and the application form, is available via their website.

Email: enquiries@nationwidefoundation.org.uk

Website: www.nationwidefoundation.org.uk

B&Q 'You Can Do It' Awards 2006

B&Q are offering twenty awards of £5,000 worth of B&Q products to local charitable organisations who wish to improve their facilities for the benefit of their local community.

Application forms and guidelines can be obtained by calling the B&Q hotline on 0845 300 1001 or visiting their website at: www.diy.com/awards.

The closing date for applications is Friday 17 March 2006 with all projects having to be completed by 24 September 2006.

Grants from Age Concern

Small Service Development Grants

One off grants of up to £2000 for new or expanding local projects which provide services which are of direct benefit to elderly people.

Small Grants to Clubs

Grants of up to £300 for new equipment or activities for clubs for older people. Applications for both can be made at any time – grants are allocated monthly.

Opportunities for Volunteering

Age Concern acts as an agent for this Department of Health Scheme which provides grants for projects involving volunteers in providing services which benefit elderly people. Grants of up to £20,000 per year for up to 3 years are available.

For more details of all these grants contact The Grants Unit, Age Concern England, Astral House, 1268 London Road, London SW16 4ER.

North West Network Information

North West Network was established by a consortium of voluntary organisations in 1993 as a direct response to the ever-increasing demand for clear, professional advice and information on how to access and manage funds from the European Union.

The charitable objects of North West Network are:

“To improve the efficiency of the administration of charities in direct pursuit of their objects and to further any charitable purpose in the present counties of Lancashire, Merseyside, Cheshire, Cumbria and Greater Manchester, by the provision of advice, training and information of educational value and in particular (but no so as to limit the generality of the foregoing) concerning the nature and assistance provided for charities by the institutions of the European Community.”

North West Network has developed significantly and now occupies a unique position within the region as an independent organisation.

Our strategic aims are:

- Maintaining voluntary sector confidence to access European Structural Funds
- Support for emerging networks
- Expansion of volunteer management and development services
- Development of wider funding and grant support services
- Development of wider intelligence and information dissemination on European affairs

Our Services:

North West Network provides a comprehensive package of support services:

- Representation & Policy
- Information Provision
- Telephone Support Service
- Newsletter & Briefings
- Website
- E-Mail Bulletin Service
- Information Mailings
- Individual Advice Surgeries
- Training Seminars & Workshops
- Project Development
- Monitoring, Evaluation & Audit
- Networking & Partnerships
- Coaching for Volunteer Managers
- Outcomes Focused Planning

North West Network Staff Teams

Directorate

Chief Executive	Emile Pinel emile@nwnetwork.org.uk
Director of Development	James Hadleigh james@nwnetwork.org.uk
Finance Manager	Ernie Edwards ernie@nwnetwork.org.uk
Operations Manager	Jane Stanistreet jane@nwnetwork.org.uk
Communications Officer	Denise Marriott denise@nwnetwork.org.uk
Administrator	Karina Ponsaing reception@nwnetwork.org.uk

Volunteer Management Team

Project Manager	Carol Savage carol@nwnetwork.org.uk
Project Officer	Dan Farley dan@nwnetwork.org.uk

European Team

Senior European Officer	John Hacking john@nwnetwork.org.uk
Assistant European Officer	Angeliki Stogia angeliki@nwnetwork.org.uk

BME Regional voluntary Sector Network (One North West)

Project Director	Vacant
Network Development Manager	Vacant

North West Network

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