

CVS Fife News

23 - 27 Randolph Street Buckhaven KY8 1AT - T: 01592 567001 - E: cvsfife@cvsfife.org - W: www.cvsfife.org

December 2009

Spotlight on the Community Marketplace

At the time of writing, planning for our Community Marketplace event is well underway. On Friday 4 December, the main hall of the Rothes Halls venue will be taken over by stands and displays showcasing the work of voluntary, community, social enterprise and charitable organisations. We're delighted to have Dr Eddie Coyle, Director of Public Health for NHS Fife, as our Guest Speaker, and with the broad range of organisations that have signed up to take part (sixty-five in total), we're looking forward to a lively and busy morning.



Community Marketplace
Friday 4 December
10:30am to 12:30pm
Rothes Halls

The event is open to the general public as well as representatives from public sector and other partner agencies, and Voluntary Sector organisations that are not taking part as exhibitors will also be encouraged to show their support for colleagues by coming along on the day. The Big Lottery Fund will be taking part in the marketplace and representatives will be available to give information and advice on the funder's current programmes.

With demand on services and activities provided by the Voluntary or Third Sector currently growing, and concern building over the impact of public sector funding cuts following the banking bail-outs, the next few years could be crucial for voluntary, community, charitable and social enterprise organisations. Events like the marketplace give us an opportunity to showcase and promote our individual services and activities, and they also give some sense of our collective impact on and input into communities throughout Fife.

As the public sector looks to take a step back and perhaps do a bit less for people in the future, communities will be asked to step forward and do more for themselves. A strong and vibrant Third Sector helps build resources within communities to make them better equipped for this challenge, and that's why we're looking to build on and strengthen the relationships we have with partner organisations and members of the public, not just at the Marketplace event, but in the months and years to come. CVS Fife will continue to work hard to promote the interests of the sector and we look forward to working with you in 2010.



Getting into the Spirit!

The Fife Free Press is urging readers to demonstrate that the Christmas spirit is alive and well in the Kingdom this November and December by donating gifts for children from vulnerable families, homeless people, women and children in refuge and isolated elderly people. A range of voluntary organisations have signed up to the appeal and will be involved in the distribution of gifts, including Frontline Fife, Glenrothes YM/YWCA, Scottish Christian Alliance, Barnardos, Fife Gingerbread, Link-Living, Clued-Up, Kingdom Housing and East Fife & Dunfermline Women's Aid. Donations are being collected at the Fife Free Press office in Kirk Wynd, Kirkcaldy and anyone wishing to donate can do so up until Monday 14 December.

Previous Press appeals have generated strong public support, and local businesses are also being encouraged to get involved. Donations can be small and simple, including basic toiletries, socks and hats and gloves, and the appeal is also looking for new or unused toys and games, books and CDs, gift vouchers and other ideas that will brighten up Christmas for those who could benefit from some kindness and generosity. Please encourage people to get involved – we have great networks in the Voluntary Sector and this is the ideal opportunity to make good use of them!



INSIDE: Digital Fife, White Ribbon Campaign, Employability Forum, Children's Forum, Tendering Update, Fife Law Centre, Fife 2010, Thrift Shop, Training News, Food Hygiene

New Look for Digital Fife ...and New Learning Opportunities

Digital Fife's website has had a makeover, giving it a more modern look and feel.

Also new to the Digital Fife site is the latest Online Learning Module on the topic of **Online Shopping**.

The module is offered in two parts and the first part is very accessible in that learners can access it without having to register – this makes it ideal if you just want to find out about the way that training is delivered through Digital Fife.

The second part goes into more depth and hopefully there is enough in part one – with its information on voucher codes giving great discounts when you shop – to tempt learners to register for the second part of the module.

By registering, learners can print off completion certificates at the end of the modules as well as keep a track of their online learning.

Digital Fife supports community groups across Fife to develop websites. It also hosts free online learning modules on a variety of topics from e-mail and searching the net, online banking and finding health information through to topics useful to community groups such as fundraising and running events and working with volunteers.

Log on to the new-look site to access these free learning resources and to discover a wealth of information on local community groups and their activities.



www.digitalfife.com

White Ribbon Campaign in Fife

The White Ribbon Campaign was started in Canada by a group of men who wanted to take a stand and speak out against men's violence against women. Wearers of the white ribbon make a personal pledge never to commit, condone or remain silent about men's violence against women.

Voluntary sector organisations are being encouraged to get behind the White Ribbon Campaign in Fife, which will lead two weeks of focussed activity from 25 November until 6 December. However, the campaign is a year-round effort - for further information about getting involved visit:

www.whiteribboncampaign.co.uk



Employability Forum Building Connections

In our last edition, we updated on the progress to date of CVS Fife's Engagement in Employability Project. The Voluntary Sector Employability Forum is now established, and is attended by a broad range of organisations who assist clients towards employability, even if employability is not a key focus.

We are always keen to encourage new organisations to get involved – those attending the forum have already found value in making connections with organisations they may not currently work with. One example is Fife Society for the Blind; as a result of attending the forum, FSB has now teamed up with the Ecology Centre to create an allotment area for people with sight loss. Supporting people towards employability, the focus of our project and of the forum, is all about supporting people to stay active, build confidence and skills and to get involved.

At the last meeting of the forum, Maureen Campbell from 16+ Learning Choices attended as Guest Speaker and gave those attending an update on Activity Agreements. Subsequently, CVS Fife worked with the 16+ Learning Choices team to compile a survey to gauge interest from Voluntary/Third

Sector organisations who can or do work with 16 year-old school leavers. We received a good response to this survey and follow-up meetings are now being planned with organisations who responded.

The forum has also continued its involvement with Future Jobs Fund, and 15 Voluntary/Third Sector organisations have applied to create posts in the Phase 2 bid coming from Fife. This represents an excellent level of participation given that Future Jobs Fund is an entirely new scheme and timescales have been fairly tight for pulling information together. Lastly, our project staff were involved in the planning for the Opportunities Fife conference and secured good attendance from colleagues in the sector.

If you have any queries on any of the topics covered in this article, please

contact Marri Welsh at CVS Fife – the next forum meeting will take place on 20 January 2010 and we hope to welcome you along!

Voluntary Sector Children's Forum: Date for your Diary

The next meeting of the VSCF will be held in the morning of Monday 18 January 2010, venue TBC.

Invited speakers will give updates on the Early Years Strategy, Getting Right in Fife and the Child Protection Improvement Plan. You will also have the chance to meet the voluntary sector representatives on these groups.

If you would like to join Children's Forum mailing list or find out more about the Forum, please contact Lyndsay Macadam at CVS Fife.

Full details and the opportunity to book your place will be circulated by email nearer the time.

Tendering Issues Hit the Headlines

Here at CVS Fife we've been using our newsletter, website and training programme to keep Voluntary and Third Sector organisations up to date with developments around tendering and procurement throughout 2009. With increasing pressures on public sector budgets, there is growing concern amongst voluntary, charitable and social enterprise organisations that tendering will be used largely as a means of cutting costs, to the potential detriment of service quality. Groups representing the interests of service users, particularly users of social care services such as people with learning disabilities, physical disabilities and mental health issues, are concerned about the impact of putting services out to tender – change can be difficult for all of us, but vulnerable people can find it particularly traumatic especially if their views are not taken into consideration from the outset.

In Edinburgh, the City Council has come in for criticism after a tendering exercise which has seen eighteen specialist and experienced voluntary sector social care organisations lose out to four private and four voluntary organisations – worryingly, service users who wished to access Direct Payments as a means of avoiding having to change service providers will not now be able to do this (at least not in the short-term) as the City Council has frozen applications for Direct Payments until March 2010.

Learning Disability Alliance Scotland has been supporting some of the affected service users in Edinburgh,

and also supported service users in East Lothian earlier this year who felt their views had not been heard by their Council when decisions were being made regarding tendering for services. As a result of some of these experiences, LDAS is now campaigning for better consultation with service users in tendering – see the website for powerful personal testimony: www.ldascotland.org

For public sector agencies, although there is a requirement to work within the EU Procurement Framework, there are a number of alternatives to going to open tender including framework agreements, negotiated and restricted

tenders. Fife Council's Housing Service, following consultation with current providers of homeless services and service users, is currently researching some of these options with a view to getting the right provision for people across Fife. We will continue to monitor progress in this area but view the developments so far as positive – the process followed could become a useful learning tool for other Council and public sector services. Please contact us if you have any information to share on any of the issues highlighted in this article or if you are interested in further information.

Warm Welcome to Fife Law Centre

Fife's Third Sector received a welcome boost in November when Fife Law Centre opened its doors to the public for the first time. The Centre, which held its official launch event on Wednesday 4 November, offers free legal advice for people who find it difficult to access legal representation or those who cannot afford to pay.



L-R: Sarah Jordan (solicitor)
Afshan Rathore (principal solicitor)

Principal Solicitor Afshan Rathore said, "We are very pleased to be up and running from our base at Crosshill Business Centre, and are looking forward to working in partnership with Voluntary and Third Sector organisations across Fife. The Law Centre will be focussing on providing advice on Housing Law, Employment Law and Children's Rights, and many organisations in the sector will be working with clients who have needs in these areas. As well as providing legal

consultation, we will also be providing training opportunities and information resources."

Fife Law Centre can be contacted at:

Crosshill Business Centre on
01592 860503, or by emailing:
info@fifelawcentre.co.uk

Celebrating Fife 2010 Funding for Community Groups and Organisations

There are two new community funding strands for 2010. Both funds, "Extravagala" and, "Community Spirit" offer support of between £100 and £2,500 to communities who wish to develop:

- ★ something extra special or memorable as part of an existing gala day or festival, community event or activity; or
- ★ something brand new that will bring people together in a positive and celebratory manner to enhance your community.



Who can apply?

Constituted community groups, social enterprises, micro or small businesses, voluntary organisations or public sector bodies with an event or project idea that will benefit, celebrate and enhance the local community can apply for sums of between £100 and £2,500 towards their special 2010 idea.

How do I apply?

Complete a 'Celebrating Fife 2010' ideas form - you can do this online or download the printed version at www.fifedirect.org.uk/2010. For a hard copy, contact the Celebrating Fife 2010 team on 01592 583583 and the Cultural Co-ordinator for your area will contact you to discuss the idea and plan how to progress it.

For more information about how your event or great idea can be a part of Celebrating Fife 2010, or to find out more about what funding might be available to help you get your ambitions off the ground, please contact the Celebrating Fife 2010 team.

Thrift Shop Move a Success

In spite of the recession, local groups have continued to benefit from the Thrift Shop facility in Leven as an effective means of fundraising. The Thrift Shop, which moved into new premises at the former St Peter's Church in Leven in May of this year, has been used by church groups, animal welfare charities, community associations, arts groups and overseas development charities to raise much-needed funds. The move to new premises has not deterred bargain hunters, and CVS Fife appreciates the support of Linksfield Construction in providing the new base for the shop.

The highest fundraising total of the year so far was raised by the Glenrothes & District Across group which raises money to take children to Lourdes – the group raised over £1,600. The Children of Ineu Romanian Appeal which supports a range of projects benefiting Romanian orphans also did very well, raising £1300. The average amount raised during 2009 has been between £700 and £800, which for many groups is a significant sum and represents a worthwhile week's work.

The Thrift Shop is available for hire on a weekly basis, and a number of slots are available for 2010. The hire charge is £105, and groups must also have Public Liability Insurance. Contact Elizabeth Kirk at CVS Fife for further information or to make a booking.



Training Talk

The Skills for Scotland project is continuing to develop, offering both accredited and more informal learning opportunities. The CVS Fife Training Team issued a new programme of courses in October, and would like to remind you that there are a range of training opportunities available in December, January and February. See the website for details:

www.cvsfife.org/courses

Food & Health

We experienced high demand for places on the Food Hygiene and Food & Health courses which ran in November, and our partnership work with the Food & Health Strategy Group has allowed us to build up a better knowledge of the work that's taking place in the Voluntary Sector around food and health. We will be looking at running another Food Hygiene course in the New Year and although we will be charging for places we will source a competitive rate.

Pensions Trust: Date for the Diary

There have been a number of changes in the pension landscape recently, with more changes on the way – from April 2010, the earliest age for taking benefits from a pension scheme will rise from 50 to 55 and Personal Accounts will be introduced from 2012, effectively making pension provision compulsory for every employee.

To assist organisations to develop their understanding of some of these issues, CVS Fife has invited the Pensions Trust to come to Fife and host a Pensions seminar on Thursday 28 January. Please note the date in your diary and keep an eye on our e-bulletins and website for further details (or give us a ring!)



Health Improvement Information & Resources Centre

The IRC, which is housed at Cameron Hospital, aims to support statutory and voluntary organisations and workplaces within Fife to contribute to local health improvement with a focus on tackling health inequalities and offers a wide variety of resources including books, leaflets and teaching materials.

IRC staff can give advice on which materials would be best for your needs and produce lists of resources tailored to your interests.

To view or order materials online or make an appointment to visit the IRC, go to the 'Information, Resources and Training' section on www.healthyfife.net or call 01592 712812.

You can also access a fantastic range of hands-on resources specific to promoting Food and Health via fun and interesting activities for all age groups. To find out more about these resources contact Lyndsay Clark, Senior Health Promotion Officer for Food & Health: lyndsayclark@fife-pct.scot.nhs.uk or 01592 226498.

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