

VODANEWS

THE QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER FOR VOLUNTARY AND
COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS IN NORTH TYNESIDE



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VODA News is a community newsletter that is sent to almost 700 groups, organisations and individuals. If you have a leaflet or a flyer that you'd like distributed, why not use VODA News to get the word out? We offer a low-cost insert service: £45 for VODA members, £60 for other VCS groups, £85 for private business and statutory organisations. Contact us for more information.

WELCOME

A MESSAGE FROM OUR EDITOR



“ As editor of VODA News, I decided it was time for a welcome message takeover! Having been at VODA for over eight months now, I can truly say I am privileged to work for an organisation that puts people at the heart of what it does and to work with an amazing team committed to making a difference to the lives of the people of North Tyneside.

We strive to ensure our members, and the sector, are heard at both a local and regional level. In this issue, Chief Executive Robin Fry blogs about the recent 'VODA Listens' activity which saw key team members getting out and about to find out what really matters to you all. If anyone else would like to have their say, please do get in touch!

Our new Backpack Buddies scheme (page 4) looks to tackle an issue that is only now just starting to gain awareness - weekend and holiday hunger in children. Backpack Buddies focuses on children in NE29, living in food poverty. The project is gathering momentum and we have been lucky to work with excellent partners and have support from local organisations.

As part of our commitment to supporting the sector, we run a range of great value training courses and free Sector Connector workshops throughout the year. Our new Autumn and Winter timetable is out now. See the full list of courses on the back page and our website.

The 23 October is our AGM and Awards (page 6). Your invite and agenda is included in this magazine. We will be launching the award nominations in September, so keep a eye out in our e-bulletin and online. The 2018 awards were my first experience of VODA - I attended the AGM prior to my start date and knew after listening to the presentations and watching the awards I had made the right choice - and I haven't looked back...

Victoria Logan-Coulsey
Editor

VODA LISTENS

VODA's Chief Executive Robin Fry blogs about the recent VODA Listens activity...

Hot on the heels of the launch of our 'VODA Megaphone' - communicating our purpose, values and objectives - I was keen to take a reality check and test our offer against the most pressing needs of our members. Rather than adding to the plethora of surveys lingering in your inbox, we decided to spend some quality time visiting a cross-section of VCS organisations in the Borough. Together with my colleagues Amy Millar and Keith Hardy we spent time with 14 different organisations, listening to them explaining the key challenges they face and the support they would like from VODA.

During the visits we heard organisations encouraging VODA to do more 'convening', bringing organisations together to explore ways of working more collaboratively helping them to become more sustainable, delivering high impact services with reduced back-office costs. Collaborative working should not be limited to the VCS sector. Members are keen for VODA to forge stronger mutually beneficial links with other partners such as universities, funders, the CCG and private

NORTH TYNESIDE RECOVERY COLLEGE 2.0

The last few months have been very busy for one of our new team members - Ali Donkin. - having taken on the challenge of developing the new North Tyneside Recovery College.

The Recovery College aims to enable people to become experts in their own self-care.

“ *We believe that people with lived experience of mental ill health have a unique contribution to make towards supporting others manage their own conditions.*”

Our goal is to provide a safe space for individuals to:

- connect
- build confidence
- gain knowledge
- develop skills
- explore possibilities

We will do this through the delivery of groups, workshops, seminars and courses, designed to

businesses. This is an area we are committed to developing in the best interest of our members.

“ *We're all trying to do the same things, but on our own ... there must be a better way of us being able to support each other more? I'd like to see VODA doing more to encourage partnerships and open conversation by linking people together.*”

We also heard that attracting and managing volunteers is becoming increasingly challenging for organisations that are already at capacity with the delivery of their core services. Blurring of the boundaries between service-users and volunteers is adding to this pressure. Members are keen for VODA to offer additional support and resources around managing volunteers, including the training and induction of Trustees.

As a result of this listening exercise we are developing an action plan addressing the key issues raised by our members. I would very much welcome the opportunity to meet with other organisations to discuss this in more detail, so please do get in touch.

Spending time with our members has been a great experience, offering an opportunity for us to explore some of the key challenges facing the voluntary and community sector. We are committed to doing all we can to continue supporting organisations and volunteers to change lives for the better in North Tyneside.

empower each student and volunteer on their path of personal growth. We aim to support and understand all individuals on this journey.

Delivery is already underway, with our Art Group on Tuesdays 1pm to 3pm and our DBCuppaT group on Wednesdays 1pm to 3pm at the Linskill Centre.

Enrolling now for courses starting this September!

Student: Courses are free of charge and open to all North Tyneside Residents aged 18 years and above. They are particularly aimed at people who have experienced mental health challenges, their families and carers and for those who work in the mental health field.

Volunteer: Our roles are flexible and include a variety of experiences including administrative, peer support, co-facilitation and course delivery.

To ensure you receive a copy of our prospectus and to be added to our mailing list, please email ali.donkin@voda.org.uk.

BACKPACK BUDDIES: TAKING ON THE CHALLENGE OF HOLIDAY AND WEEKEND HUNGER

Backpack Buddies is a social action project designed to address food insecurity - when a household is uncertain of having enough food to meet basic needs. In those instances where a guardian may have to choose between food and other necessities such as heating, a child is considered food insecure.

VODA's SAINT project is working with the Bay Foodbank and with schools and community centres to identify children and young people that are at the greatest risk of food insecurity, who may have access to school meals but have little to eat at the weekend and during the holidays.

The project has initially been focusing on weekend hunger, but now the summer holidays are here, it has turned to holiday hunger and we are working with the Scouts, nurseries and youth clubs in NE29 to identify children in need of support.

The idea of Backpack Buddies is to provide a child or young person with a bag of healthy snacks to take home in order to address food insecurity. Donations of healthy snacks are always welcome.



VODA recently held a Packing Party with staff from Accenture and Capita to prepare backpacks for vulnerable children. The volunteers gained a real insight into some of the issues faced by struggling

families in North Tyneside and are keen to get more involved.

“ I have gained more knowledge and better perspective of what is happening within the community”

“ It has helped me to understand social problems”.

Even in the early stages, Backpack Buddies is already making a difference to children's lives:



beneficiaries of the Backpacks are young carers who look after their parents.

4

children from a domestic violence refuge.

1

child has Special Educational Needs and their parent has recently been made redundant. Pressure has been taken off the family with the intervention of a Backpack.

1

child speaks English as a second language and is new to the area. The school has found the family hard to reach, but when the child displayed signs of food insecurity, the school was able to respond with help from Backpack Buddies.

1

working single parent family that has been struggling to find funds for meals during the holiday and has been accessing the Second Bite resource at Cedarwood on a daily basis.

There are plenty of opportunities to get involved, you could join a packing party, host a food collection box, hold a food donation drive, or raise awareness of the scheme. For more information of how you could help, contact Rebecca Southern by emailing rebecca.southern@voda.org.uk

NEWS FROM SECTOR CONNECTOR

SECTOR CONNECTOR REBRAND

Sector Connector has got a new look, courtesy of our friends at yourPrintDepartment, who also kindly produced a special printed edition of the Sector Connector Bulletin for us.

This new logo has been developed to reflect the changing nature of Sector Connector and more accurately reflects the professional standard of the project and what it does.

Thank you to the team at yourPrintDepartment for all of your support.

WOULD YOU LIKE HELP FROM A LOCAL BUSINESS?

If you have a specific project you would like support with, we may be able to connect you with a local business which is looking for volunteering opportunities for their employees. Please get in touch with Ian Dodds at ian.dodds@voda.org.uk to discuss your requirements.

THE RED BOX PROJECT NORTH TYNESIDE TAKES A BOW!



The Red Box Project

You may be aware of The Red Box Project North Tyneside, managed by our SAINT volunteers, which was part of the national Red Box Project. Created in 2017 in Portsmouth, The Red Box Project aimed to tackle period poverty in young people - particularly where it was causing young girls to miss out on their education because they couldn't afford sanitary products.

The project was two pronged – campaigning to end period poverty and also providing practical support to young girls experiencing period poverty by providing free sanitary items to schools via donations from the public. The project now has 3750 active red boxes in schools and other educational settings across the UK.



Chris Holmes, Director at Fairmans Pharmacy commented:

“ When we heard about The Red Box Project North Tyneside, we knew it was something we had to get involved in. Awareness of period poverty was on the rise and we had seen a lot of it in store and our staff were often asked if there was anything in place to help with the problem. When we joined the scheme, the response from our customers and patients was amazing. It was a pleasure to be involved in this campaign, no young girl should miss out on their education due to period poverty.”

The Red Box Project North Tyneside

18
Months of fighting period poverty

57
Boxes placed in local schools, colleges and youth services

40+
Collections donated by lovely local people

Thank you!

The Red Box Project Community kindness matters

We were overwhelmed by the generosity of the people of North Tyneside - sometimes quite literally - with our offices occasionally resembling a pharmacy! In 18 months we were able to place 57 boxes in schools, colleges and youth services.

“ We have been part of the scheme for some time and it has really made a difference to our children. We have also managed to get parents/carers to donate sanitary items and help 'spread the word'. This has allowed us to provide free sanitary products all year, across the school, without relying solely on your donations, so that other schools could benefit.”

Organisations such as North Tyneside Women's Voices, Soroptimist International, North Tyneside Council, Santander, Boots, Healthwatch North Tyneside, World Mental Health Day, the O2 Academy and Frank Turner to name but a few.

One particular supporter – Fairmans Pharmacy - deserves a special mention. The customers and patients of Fairmans Pharmacy went above and beyond, donating literally thousands of sanitary items to the project.

In Spring 2019, the Government announced its plans to provide free sanitary items to all schools and colleges from early 2020. As a result, The Red Box Project North Tyneside will be winding up by October 2019, with the aim of sending out enough supplies to cover until the Government provision takes over. While this will help to alleviate period poverty for young people, there is still always the issue of period poverty. We recommend that anyone who would like to help with this issue to consider supporting The Bay Foodbank and The Hygiene Bank Newcastle with their excellent work in this area.

Thank you to everyone who contributed to this campaign, from the amazing generosity of organisations and individuals, those of you who campaigned and lobbied their MPs, signed petitions and pushed to get the Government to step up and work to eradicate this problem, each of you has had a positive impact on a young girl's life!

VODA OUTREACH SESSIONS

We will be at the following venues from 11am to 1pm to talk to anyone about volunteering and how we can support the North Tyneside VCS. Call in and speak to our friendly team.

- **Monday 9 September:** Wallsend Customer First Centre
- **Tuesday 12 November:** White Swan Centre, Killingworth

ENDING LONELINESS IN NORTH TYNESIDE



Josie Robinson, VODA's Ending Loneliness Coordinator, blogs about her new role and what the Ending Loneliness campaign is all about...

VODA recently secured four years of funding from the National Lottery Community Fund - in partnership with North Tyneside Carers Centre, Citizens Advice and Age UK - with the aim of spending the next four years increasing our services to address social isolation and loneliness in North Tyneside.

This is an excellent opportunity to work closely in addressing an issue that affects a huge number of vulnerable residents in our borough.

Each organisation has been awarded additional funding to increase provision of services.



VODA will be scaling up our Good Neighbours Project by recruiting more volunteers to provide essential support to

isolated people in their own homes which include small jobs, maintenance, dog walking, travel support and supported shopping trips.



Age UK will build on their current befriending offer by matching more trained volunteers with isolated

residents to provide companionship and support and



Citizens Advice will increase their capacity to offer more information and advice surrounding debt and benefits

support; to alleviate the problem of isolation associated with debt and low income.



North Tyneside Carers Centre is creating a new service to support carers to reconnect in the local community through peer support.

This is an exciting opportunity to further develop our current work addressing social isolation and loneliness in North Tyneside and we hope to reach

hundreds of new residents through this partnership. Here at VODA, I have taken on the role as project coordinator for the Ending Loneliness partnership.

I'll be working to increase the awareness of the partnership and develop closer working relationships with other relevant organisations within North Tyneside. I'll also be trialling new ways of working in collaboration with Newcastle University to see how local academics can add value to the partnership.

We'll be holding a catalyst event in early September which will bring together local organisations and specialist academics to address the issues associated with social isolation and loneliness. This is a fantastic opportunity for the North Tyneside voluntary sector to work alongside university scholars to identify real life impact measurement tools, evaluation methods and innovative practices.

The ending loneliness partnership is also keen to raise the profile of the SIGN directory and will be working with the North Tyneside Council to identify methods for implementing this in new ways across organisations. We're keen that volunteers can support beneficiaries to access the SIGN directory which boasts over 600 activities available to local residents.

Over the next few months, I'll be visiting local organisations to see how we can work together on ending loneliness and social isolation, so if this is something you'd be keen to have a chat about, please get in touch.

We're also keen to speak with anyone who may be considering a role in volunteering, either as a Good Neighbour, befriender, peer supporter or advisor. Call 0191 643 2633 or email volunteer@voda.org.uk to find out more.

VODA AGM & AWARDS 2019

You should find included within this issue of VODA News your invite to our AGM on Wednesday 23 October, from 10.30am to 12.15pm at the Linskill Centre, North Shields (please get in touch if you did not receive this).

Alongside the AGM, we will be holding our annual North Tyneside Voluntary Sector Awards, The awards will include categories such as Volunteer of the Year, Young Volunteer of the Year and Organisation of the Year, as well as the Sector Connector Community Business Awards. We will be launching the awards in early September, so keep an eye out on our website, e-bulletin and social media for details.

SPOTLIGHT ON...

TOP TIPS WHEN APPLYING FOR A GRANT FROM THE COMMUNITY FOUNDATION



The Community Foundation matches generous people with important community causes. Every year, the Foundation award grants to hundreds of small charities in Tyne & Wear and

Northumberland, and across North East England, through funds set up by its donors

There are two ways to apply to the Community Foundation:

1. It is possible to apply for a grant at any time through the Community Foundation's general grants programme.
2. The Community Foundation encourages specific applications to its funds via its "calls for applications".

Below is a list of top tips on the do's and don'ts when applying for a grant:

1 Plan your application

The first thing to do is check the list of things the Community Foundation doesn't fund at www.communityfoundation.org.uk/apply.

If you fall into this list of exclusions, don't waste your time by making an application that will be rejected! Also, do check that you've sent monitoring and feedback from any previous grants because the Community Foundation cannot process a new application unless you show a good track record at managing a grant.

The best way to keep up-to-date on how to apply is to sign up to the Foundation's fortnightly e-newsletter at www.communityfoundation.org.uk/subscribe/

2 Go through all the questions before you start

If you give yourself an overview of all the application questions, rather than completing them one by one, you can avoid duplicating information or missing something out. Fund guidelines should help steer your answers so that you meet the criteria of the Fund, and remember - short, clear answers that get your point across are best.

3 Be factual and avoid grand claims

If you run a successful sports club and someone asks you what you do, you probably won't say 'we enhance the lives of young people through physical exercise and increased well-being.' So, don't write your application that way! Funders want to understand the basics: who you are, what you do and where, why you do it and who benefits.

Be realistic about your claims. Remember, you'll need to report what you actually achieve when a grant is awarded. Therefore, be realistic with your objectives. For example a weekly discussion group on healthy eating will probably not solve obesity in your town, but it will raise people's awareness in ways you can monitor. Equally, young people gaining coaching badges are unlikely to get jobs during a grant period, but they will be able to gain valuable skills, volunteering experience and enhanced CVs.

4 Explain the financial support you need

A good budget is an indication that you know what you want and why. Avoid generalised estimates adding up neatly to the maximum you think you can apply for. Break down your costs, such as hourly rates for sessional work, room hire, etc. and refer to quotes for larger items of equipment or capital expenditure.

5 Check the draft before you send

You've finished. Great! But, before you hit the send button, click save and ask someone else to read your application through. Did you put 'xxx' and mean to go back to fill in the answer? Did you leave out something obvious? Do your answers make sense? Do your figures add up? A fresh pair of eyes can be helpful. Now is also the time to check that you have all the supporting documentation ready to send.

P.S. The Third Sector Trends 2019 survey is now open. Whether your voluntary and community sector organisation is big or small, flourishing, struggling or just carrying on - the Community Foundation want to hear from you at <https://bit.ly/2SN8snf>.

To find out more, please visit www.communityfoundation.org.uk



FUNDING

NATIONAL LOTTERY HERITAGE FUND: HERITAGE HORIZON AWARDS

Grants of £5million and over are available to support large and ambitious heritage projects through this new £100m fund. The Heritage Fund is looking to support projects that are transformative, innovative and collaborative. Applicants should show clear and ambitious plans for how the project will bring about positive changes and benefits to people, places and wider heritage. They should also have plans to share learning from the project widely across the sector.

The awards will be made over the next three years. £50m is available in this first year. The focus for this year's awards are

- landscapes and nature.
- revitalising heritage at risk.

There are two phases to the programme – a development phase lasting up to two years and a delivery phase lasting up to five years. Those successful at this Expression of Interest stage will then have until August 2020 to submit a development phase application.

The organisation or partnership must contribute at least 10% of costs in both the development phase and the delivery phase. This could be cash, non-cash contributions, volunteer time or a combination of all of these.



Deadline: 11 October 2019
(expressions of interest)
www.heritagefund.org.uk

RAGDOLL FOUNDATION: OPEN GRANTS PROGRAMME

Supports the cultural sector's work with children and young people – specifically projects where the concerns of childhood can be heard. Proposals are invited from organisations developing creative and innovative approaches to engage children and young people using the arts and creative media.

They are interested in projects that capture and develop the imagination of – and directly involve – children and allow their voices to be heard. Projects should place children and young people at the heart of the creative process.

No deadline
www.ragdollfoundation.org.uk

SPORT ENGLAND: COMMUNITY ASSET FUND

Sports clubs, local authorities, schools and community organisations can apply for grants of £1,000 to £150,000 to enhance local sports and recreational facilities.

The aims of the fund are as follows:

- Improve and protect existing sports facilities that support the needs of local communities.
- Invest in new and different places that meet the needs of local communities.
- Ensure capital investment reaches organisations who have not accessed Sport England funding before.
- Create a more resilient, sustainable, less grant dependent sport sector.

The funding can be used to enhance traditional sports facilities as well as outdoor spaces like canal towpaths, woodlands and open spaces etc. that can be used as part of an active lifestyle.

Statutory bodies and education establishments need to provide a minimum of pound-for-pound partnership funding and demonstrate the strategic need for their project proportionate to the scale of investment requested.

Sport England typically expects the awards to be small scale (£1,000 to £5,000) or medium scale (£15,000 to £50,000). By exception, Sport England will consider larger investments ranging from £50,000 to £150,000. This will be when organisations can demonstrate a considerable impact or are targeting under-represented groups.

No deadline
www.sportengland.org/funding

LLOYDS BANK FOUNDATION: ENABLE GRANT

Through Enable grants Lloyds Bank funds opportunities for your charity to develop, or trial new approaches to service delivery, so you can become more effective in your work. You may want to improve your charity's capability in areas such as business development and planning, monitoring, leadership and governance and communications. An Enable grant could put your charity in a stronger position to deliver services and attract more volunteers, funding and support. They can provide up to a total of £15,000 across one or two years.

No deadline
www.lloydsbankfoundation.org.uk

SUPPORT ADOPTION FOR PETS

Grants of £1,000 to £150,000 are available for charities and not-for-profit organisations whose main activity is one of the following:

- The rescue and rehoming of UK pets.
- The provision of temporary support to ensure pets can remain with their owners.

Funding will support projects that have a direct impact on animal welfare, including

- vet bills.
- boarding costs.
- equipment.
- vehicles.
- low-cost neutering initiatives.
- trap, neuter and release.
- building additions and improvements.

No deadline specified*.

* Applications for £20,000 or less are seen every 3-4 months and greater amounts every six months. www.supportadoptionforpets.co.uk

2020 GSK IMPACT AWARDS: FUNDING AND FREE TRAINING FOR HEALTH CHARITIES

The GSK IMPACT Awards provide core funding, training and national recognition for charities doing excellent work to improve people's health and wellbeing. Up to 20 awards will be made ranging from £3,000 to £40,000. To be eligible organisations must be at least three years old, a registered charity, working in a health-related field in the UK, with income between £80,000 and £2.5 million.

Winning organisations will have a film made, receive support with press and publicity and be given a set of promotional materials. They will also be offered free training and development valued at a further £9,500. In 2020 there will be three days of training leading up to the GSK IMPACT Awards ceremony in London. After this participants will be invited to join the GSK IMPACT Awards Network which connects past award winners both online and at meetings, to get and give support, share best practice and continue their professional development.

Many participants have commented that the training, the new ideas and enthusiasm that they take away, and the connections they make are even more important than the award money.



Deadline: 23 September 2019
www.kingsfund.org.uk

BRITISH CYCLING: PLACES TO RIDE PROGRAMME

Grants of £1,000 to £500,000 are available for organisations developing cycling activity in their community for the development of new – or the improvement of existing – cycling facilities in communities. Funding can be used for small to medium scale facility improvements or equipment through to large-scale new build facilities across all types of cycling.

The aims of the programme are as follows:

- Encourage more people from a range of different backgrounds to engage with cycling.
- Provide more opportunities for people to enjoy riding in an accessible and inclusive environment, focusing on women/girls and people with a disability.
- Invest in opportunities that connect local communities and address barriers to engaging with cycling.
- Recognise the wider benefits of riding a bike to enable societal benefits such as community cohesion, reducing social isolation and promoting health and well-being.
- Deliver a lasting legacy of active environments that provide high quality and affordable opportunities to engage with cycling.

No deadline

www.britishcycling.org.uk/placestoride

FOYLE FOUNDATION SMALL GRANTS

The scheme is designed to support smaller charities (turnover less than £150k) – especially those working at grass roots and local community level – in any field, across a wide range of activities.

One-year grants of £1,000 to £10,000 for core costs, equipment or project funding are available for charities that can show such a grant will make a significant difference to their work. Demonstrating ongoing sustainability is also important, particularly if the charity has recently lost local authority or other regular funding.

Applications will be received at all times but it may take up to four months to obtain a decision from Trustees. If applying for funding towards a capital project charities should apply towards the end of their fundraising campaign, when the majority of funding has been raised and they have an estimated start date for the works. Please note that the Foundation does not fund feasibility studies.

No deadline.

www.foylefoundation.org.uk

FUNDING

VIRGIN MONEY FOUNDATION COMMUNITY ANCHORS FUND

The Foundation believes that everyone has the right to live in a vibrant, diverse and thriving community and they want to support those vital local organisations that act as the “bedrock” in a neighbourhood – providing a place where people feel welcome, where problems can be solved and where good ideas are helped to grow. For this reason they have launched the Community Anchors Fund in partnership with the Clay Hill Trust.

Grants of £10,000 to £50,000 can be used to cover core costs or on designing and launching new activity.

Organisations should:

- be a local organisation, committed to making long-term positive economic, social and environmental changes within their neighbourhood.
- offer open, voluntary access for the local community.
- have strong, long-lasting local relationships.
- be independent, but working in partnership with others.
- bring money and/or jobs into their community.
- own or trying to acquire or revitalise important local assets.
- provide a voice for local people in shaping the future of their community.
- have a track record of resilience.

The Foundation will make awards totalling £500,000 over the year and expect to make between 10 and 15 awards.

No deadline – but applications will be assessed as part of a rolling grants programme. When all of the available funding has been allocated the programme will close and so organisations are advised to apply as soon as possible.

No deadline

www.virginmoneyfoundation.org.uk/grants-programme/the-community-anchors-fund/

NEW CODE OF FUNDRAISING PRACTICE

The Fundraising Regulator has published a new Code of Fundraising Practice due to come into effect in October 2019. The changes are designed to make it easier for fundraisers, charities and third-parties to understand the standards expected of them when fundraising. www.fundraisingregulator.org.uk

D'OYLY CARTE CHARITABLE TRUST

The Trust funds UK charities working for the advancement of the arts, health and medical welfare and environmental protection or improvement with grants of £500 to £5,000 (typically for one year).

The Trustees will consider applications for core costs or projects, and they also consider applications for matched funding.



Deadline: 14 October 2019
www.doilycartecharitabletrust.org

NORTH OF TYNE COMMUNITY LED LOCAL DEVELOPMENT

North of Tyne Community Led Local Development (CLLD) is currently looking for projects that will support local people to:

- Improve skills
- Overcome barriers to training and employment
- Progress towards employment

There are lots of ways this support can be delivered and they are keen to hear your ideas. They are also interested in how partnerships could work between smaller local groups and a larger organisation.

They are able to support you with every stage of your application:

- 1-2-1 meeting to discuss project ideas and CLLD funding
- facilitated session for staff/management committee/trustees to refine project ideas
- project development support
- help to identify match funding
- support to complete your EOI and prepare your presentation
- support to develop a full application



Deadline: This call is open on a 'rolling basis' until Friday 29 November 2019 (or until the available funding has been allocated).

WOODLAND TRUST - FREE TREES

The Woodland Trust has thousands of free tree packs to give away to community groups and schools. The trees can be planted as copses, groves, avenues, shelter belts, hedgerows and many other ways. www.woodlandtrust.org.uk

COMMUNITY NEWS

THE RED HOUSE RAMBLE



In 2016 a group of residents in Whitley Bay got together to bring about change in their local environment.

Running through the middle of their housing estates was a dark and dismal

green area planted by the housing developers and left as a nature area. Unfortunately, the trees and shrubs used were not ideal for encouraging wildlife, or indeed to make it a pleasant place to walk. The residents decided to set up a community group to deal with the problem.

The Friends of Red House Ramble was created and in three years, with support from North Tyneside Council and the up to 120 household members, they have taken a dark, unloved and neglected space and turned it into a beautiful, welcoming natural area, suitable for people and wildlife alike.

Gone are the large ash and sycamore trees that are not good habitat for small birds, replaced by more welcoming hawthorn, field maple and hazel. Gone are the snowberries with their inedible white berries, replaced by plants such as elderflower, wild cherry, rowan and roses, that provide berries and other delights for birds and small mammals (and also the humans with their homemade Elderflower cordial and blackberry jelly).

The group works closely with local schools and youth organisations growing wildflowers, with the aim of encouraging them to start their own wildlife gardens. They also got their name and logo by challenging a local school to come up with ideas.



Part of the Ramble contains an orchard with pear, apple, plums and damson, some donated by members who ask for them for Christmas and birthday presents and in one case,

an apple tree planted by a member in memory of her dog who she used to walk in the Ramble.

The Friends of Red House Ramble are committed to biodiversity and shaping the environment. All planting has been considered from a wildlife perspective, with the young members creating habitats for bees, butterflies, small birds and mammals. Also, the paths throughout the site have been created from chippings and logs from the large trees that were removed.

“ *The Ramble is a place to gather, work, socialise, walk and enjoy the tranquillity. We appreciate and the opportunity to meet others whilst helping to maintain a green environment for all.* ”

The work on the Ramble has also helped people get active, with members referring to the woodchip path maintenance as a 'Rural Gym'. Surprisingly, these are some of the more popular days, with members lining up to ferry wheelbarrows up and down the paths (so far over 93 tons of woodchip).



The group has benefitted from hedge saplings from the Woodland Trust, a grant of £1,500 from the Community Foundation, funding from Northumbrian Water and seeds from Kew Gardens. They are also eternally grateful for the support they have received from North Tyneside Council, the local councillors, committee members and not forgetting over 4000 volunteer hours.

The Red House Ramble has been awarded the Mayor's Award for Outstanding Contribution to Improving the Life of the Borough, 'Outstanding' by the RHS for their 'In Your Neighbourhood' scheme, and this year was recognised with the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service.

They are always looking for new members - you do not have to live on the adjacent estates to join and take part in their twice monthly gatherings. If you would like to get involved, please contact Cheryl Savage email info@redhouseramble.org.uk or call 07969714308. Annual subscription is £10 per household.

www.redhouseramble.org.uk or find them on Facebook: Friends of Red House Ramble.

COMMUNITY NEWS

THE CINNAMON TRUST

The Cinnamon Trust - the only national charity for the elderly, the terminally ill and their pets - works to ensure that the treasured relationship between owners and their pets is respected and preserved. They work in partnership with owners to overcome any difficulties that might arise, supported by a national network of over 16,000 community service volunteers who provide practical help when any aspect of day to day care poses a problem – for example, walking the dog for a housebound owner.

Their support includes:

- Pet support (primarily dog walking)
- Short-term fostering (owner in hospital etc)
- Life-long fostering – the equivalent of rehoming, but the Trust retains legal ownership
- 2 pet sanctuaries where pets who may need more support or have medical conditions can live out their life in comfort.
- Maintaining a list of pet-friendly care homes.
- Pairing bereaved owners with bereaved pets.

When a pet is in The Trust's care either short term or long term because the owner is in care, the owner is kept in touch with visits, if possible, or regular photos and letters. With long term care, arrangements are made well in advance, so owners have peace of mind that their beloved companion will have a safe and happy future.

Claire Sands volunteers locally for The Trust. After volunteering for several years, Claire read an article in the local paper about The Cinnamon Trust. Being a dog lover, but unable to have one as a pet due to long working hours and a pet cat that would not approve, Claire got in touch. Six weeks later, Claire was put in touch with a lady called Gwen who had two dogs for companionship, but due to health problems was unable to walk them. Claire and her husband grew to love both dogs and walked them until the dogs passed away and although they no longer walk dogs for her, continue to visit Gwen every week.

“*Friendship with the owners is an important part of the role we play. For some, we are the only people they see from week to week. It's such a lovely charity and we've made some incredible friendships as well as walked gorgeous dogs.*”



Volunteer Cadi with Max

After taking a break to get over the dogs passing, The Trust connected them with Irene and her working Guide Dog Breeze. Along with one other walker, the couple provide Breeze with his play time - a break from his Guide Dog duties - as well as supporting Irene with her Guide Dogs fundraising.

The Trust is in urgent need of new volunteer dog walkers, even if you can only spare an hour or two a week. You must be over 16 (unless volunteering with a parent or guardian) and provide references as you will be responsible for someone's beloved pet and may also be going into someone's home. The Trust will support you if you need it and provide insurance for the pet should anything happen. To find out more contact 01736 757 900 or go to www.cinnamon.org.uk.

NORTH TYNESIDE SUCCESS AT THE QUEENS' AWARDS 2019

It has been a successful year for North Tyneside, with four local VCS organisations being awarded the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service. Congratulations go to Collingwood Bowling Club, the Friends of Red House Ramble (page 11), Walking With in North Tyneside and The St Bernadette Club.



The Queen's Award for Voluntary Service

Nominations are now open for the Queen's Awards 2020. We'd love to see North Tyneside represented again next year, so if you know of a voluntary or community sector organisation that you think deserves to be recognised, make sure you submit your nomination by midnight on 13 September 2019. www.qavs.culture.gov.uk.



THE EXCHANGE

Situated within the grounds of a stunning Grade II listed building in North Shields, The Exchange on Howard Street is a unique destination.

The building has been a part of North Shield's history since 1849, from Town Hall to Magistrate Courts, it has played host to many organisations.

Three years ago, The Exchange was taken over by a charitable trust and converted to a cultural arts venue. The aims are to create a welcoming and accessible space where the community can come and enjoy creative events.

The Exchange offers many different activities, from writing workshops to dance. You can go and see a piece of theatre, comedy or gig and the ticket prices will always be reasonable. There is a gallery space where local artists exhibit their work every month alongside a plethora of free events. You don't need to attend any performances as you can just enjoy the superb Cafe Bar and relax in the courtyard.

The venue and charity have been growing steadily, but still needs a great deal of support to really cement it as the creative hub of North Tyneside. This means that local people need to enjoy and use the building and, if possible, volunteer their time to support it.



There is a range of volunteering opportunities available. One example is a front of house role, a fun and socialable volunteering opportunity. You will greet the public and make sure that they feel welcome, check tickets and guide people to their seats and facilities. Alongside this, you will sell programmes, refreshments and merchandise, if required, and collect data. At all times, you will need to communicate with staff and customers. You will get to see the event and help make sure everyone in auditorium is happy. The Exchange sends volunteers details of upcoming events each month you can choose as many or as little opportunities as you would like to do.

To find out more about the volunteering roles available email contact@theexchange.live.



BIKES TO GAMBIA

When a Gambian support worker brought a service user to Key Enterprises, no one imagined

that it would be the start of an incredible charity partnership that would change the lives of hundreds of children in The Gambia.

Many children in The Gambia walk three to four miles to get to school, usually after fetching water, firewood and other heavy chores. Tiredness, arriving late and danger from wild animals has a big impact on their education.

Key Enterprises is a regional charity that provides supported activities for adults with learning disabilities, mental health problems or acquired brain injuries. Part of their activities includes bike maintenance and in their bike workshop service users repair donated bikes and sell them to members of the public.

When they learned about the desperate need for bikes in Africa through support worker Lamin, staff and service users at Key Enterprises were keen to help. Now over 10 bikes a month are being sent to The Gambia.

Although Key Enterprises provides the bikes they cannot support work outside the North East of England. Consequently a Gambian charity, 'Key Charity Foundation for Kids' has been formed.

How you can help!

- Donate bikes
- Spread the word
- Donate/raise funds to cover costs (like Bodhi did – see photo)

Also, the Key Foundation is keen to build partnerships between the UK and schools in the The Gambia. If you or your school is interested, please contact Alan.Robson@northtyneside.gov.uk.

Please visit www.key-enterprises.com/blog or call 0191 270 1138 for more information.

Five year-old Bodhi on his 450km fundraising ride!



SECTOR NEWS

NORTH TYNESIDE: BETTER TOGETHER STRATEGY

North Tyneside Council, VODA and the North Tyneside Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) have been working together to refresh the North Tyneside Better Together strategy.

The strategy was first developed in 2015, setting out how North Tyneside Council and the voluntary and community sector would work together to build strong and sustainable partnerships. Since then, a number of positive outcomes have been achieved to increase capacity within the VCS, improve engagement between the two sectors and involve VCS organisations in decision making.

The Better Together strategy has now been widened to include North Tyneside CCG and VODA with an ambition to achieve the following outcomes over the next three years:

- increasing the capacity of VCS organisations to adapt and thrive in times of diminishing resources and increasing demand
- supporting residents to play a more active role in managing their own health and wellbeing, as well as the health and wellbeing of their local communities
- ensuring every resident has the opportunity to contribute to their community through volunteering and social action
- supporting systems that facilitate positive engagement and collaborative working between all partners
- supporting the VCS to have a strong and meaningful role in influencing policy by speaking up on behalf of the people they represent.

We welcome your thoughts on this strategy - see www.voda.org.uk/updates - which will also be discussed at September's Working with the VCS Event (see below).

WORKING WITH THE VCS EVENT

The next "Working with the Voluntary and Community Sector" is at Meadow Well Connected on 11 September from 9.30am to 12pm.

The event will include an update on Universal Credit, details of the North Tyneside CCG grant funding, a look at how we make North Tyneside an even better place to volunteer and will feature an update on the Better Together Strategy. We do hope you can attend. Book your place via the VODA website www.voda.org.uk/voda-events

NEW CIVIL SOCIETY MINISTER

The sector has broadly welcomed the appointment of Baroness Diana Barran as minister for civil society within the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS).

Baroness Barran has a deep understanding and hands-on experience of working within the charity sector. She previously worked at the think tank, New Philanthropy Capital (NPC) as head of grant development and has been a trustee for Comic Relief and chair of the Henry Smith Charity.

NATIONAL LOTTERY COMMUNITY FUND LAUNCHES FREE IMPACT TOOL



The National Lottery Community Fund (TNLCF) has launched a free tool to help voluntary organisations measure their impact.

The tool is expected to be particularly valuable to small and medium-sized organisations, which are increasingly expected to demonstrate the value of their work but often lack the resources to do so.

The NLCF commissioned Social Value UK, a national network for anyone interested in social impact, to undertake the project for £7,500.

The tool signposts organisations to the most popular and relevant outcome frameworks and standalone measures for organisations that tackle a wide range of social issues, including unemployment, mental health and homelessness.

The NLCF has also published a guide to accompany the tool, which provides information on the methodology and rationale behind the list of frameworks.

The tool is part of the NLCF's commitment to helping Civil Society be fit for the future. Access the tool at www.socialvalueuk.org.



TRUSTEES' NEWS

TRUSTEE DIVERSITY

During our last "Working With the VCS" event in June

- which was held in partnership with North Tyneside Council - we looked at how to work with businesses and the VCS to improve the number and quality of charity trustees in the borough. One thing that kept cropping up was the issue of diversity and how to improve the diversity of an organisation's board. Following on from this, we've put together some guidance to help you get started...

Diversifying your board; can it be achieved?

The short answer is yes, but it will take a whole organisational approach and commitment to diversity to achieve it.

"Taken on Trust" the 2017 Charity Commission report (see www.gov.uk) presents a sombre picture about the lack of diversity on charity boards, highlighting that men outnumber women by two to one and that 90% of trustees are white and older with an above average income and education, 18 to 24 year olds making up just 0.5% of trustees. Whilst charity trustees with an ethnic minority background are around 6.6% which is less diverse than the top 100 companies at 8.2% according to FTSE.

Encouraging Diversity



To achieve this groups must start in the boardroom and be embedded throughout the organisation. Make an honest assessment of how you are addressing diversity and what needs to change to attract more diverse trustees. Put

your commitment into action, develop a plan that includes concrete goals, objectives, set tasks and a timeline.

Boards are more likely to focus on an issue if an official goal or policy exists to remind them of what they want to achieve.

A diverse board is able to make decisions more effectively by reducing the risk of "groupthink" the psychological behaviour of minimising conflicts and reaching consensus decisions. Including the contributions of people with different skills, backgrounds and experiences, creates solutions to problems that take on a greater range of perspectives.

How can charities use recruitment strategies to ensure diversity in their leaders?

Often people are recruited from similar backgrounds to existing trustees who may recruit people who move in the same circles as themselves, friends, colleagues and existing networks.

There are other things that can be done to improve diversity,

- Flag that you are looking for people of any age, experience or background, encouraging applicants who may fear they won't fit in. Make it clear your organisation is open to diversity.
- Advertise in local colleges, businesses, local authorities, health professionals and other charitable organisations, consider the clients and customers already using your organisation.
- Use social media and other platforms to promote vacancies this may attract younger people.
- Consider holding meetings at a convenient time for most trustees, e.g. evening meetings may be more suitable for younger or people who work.
- Be upfront about the time commitments for trustees and what their role would be.
- Provide mentoring as part of the induction, pairing them with a more experienced trustee to show them the ropes and answer any questions that they may not want to ask in front of the whole board.
- Prepare an information pack that includes, the constitution, accounts, policies, a biography of the other trustees and any strategies or planned initiatives.

Your local infrastructure support organisations, such as VODA, can help with advertising for trustees, provide training for trustees and give general advice and guidance about trusteeship.

TRUSTEE VACANCIES



- North Tyneside VODA
- Dyslexia North East
- The Rising Sun Farm Trust
- The Baby Equipment Loan Service
- North Tyneside Learning Trust
- North Tyneside Citizens Advice
- The Soundroom
- Walking With in North Tyneside

If you would like to find out more, please visit www.voda.org.uk/trustee-vacancies. Or, if you would like to have your vacancies listed, please email victoria.logan-coulsey@voda.org.uk.

VODA TRAINING

JANUARY

- 29** **Managing the risks of Cloud storage:** Free Sector Connector Workshop 10am to 12pm.

FEBRUARY

- 05** **Blogging for beginners:** Free Sector Connector Workshop 10am to 12pm.
- 17** **All change! Change management:** Free Sector Connector Workshop 10am to 12pm.

MARCH

- 09** **Self awareness for managers:** Free Sector Connector Workshop 10am to 12pm.

SEPTEMBER

- 05** **Impact Measurement for small VCS organisations:** Free Sector Connector Workshop 10am to 12pm.
- 18** **Effective communication:** How to communicate more effectively. Half day.

OCTOBER

- 07** **Getting the most out of your team:** Free Sector Connector Workshop 10am to 1pm.
- 16** **From recruitment to redundancy:** Free Sector Connector Workshop 10am to 12pm.
- 16** **Professional boundaries for front line staff:** Understand what professional boundaries are. Half day.
- 21** **That's entertainment!:** Guide to public event planning. Free Sector Connector Workshop 10am to 12pm.
- 22** **About time!:** A practical toolkit to help you manage your time on a weekly basis. Half day.

NOVEMBER

- 11** **MailChimp essentials:** Learn the basics of email marketing with Mailchimp. Full day.
- 19** **Public speaking:** Be a more confident public speaker. Half day.
- 20** **Influencing and managing outstanding results:** Free Sector Connector Workshop 10am to 1pm.
- 27** **Cultural awareness and equality:** An introduction to the issues of difference, diversity and discrimination. Full day.
- 29** **Just a minute!:** How to take minutes efficiently and effectively. Full day.

“I was really grateful for the opportunity to attend such useful and practical training. I'd recommend it most highly to sector colleagues.”

All courses take place at VODA - see below for our address. For full course descriptions, prices and to book your place online visit www.voda.org.uk/training.

Membership: VODA is a registered charity providing advice, training, information and support to volunteers and voluntary and community organisations working in North Tyneside. To find out more visit the About Us section on our website or telephone 0191 643 2626.

Formats: We can produce this newsletter in large print and various other formats - please contact us to discuss your needs.

Next Issue: November 2019. Copy deadline 31 October.

Disclaimer: The information in VODA News is, as far as we know, correct at the time of going to print. However, North Tyneside VODA can take no responsibility for any changes that occur or guarantee the quality of information or services provided by others.



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