

## Welcome

Hello and welcome to SAVS second edition of our 6 weekly E Bulletin.

Summer is usually a very

quiet period, but this bulletin is packed with loads of useful information for you all, including some really interesting information on

funding, training and a great article on starting up a voluntary group!

## So, you're thinking of starting a voluntary group.....

### What is a voluntary or community group?

A voluntary or community organisation works to achieve specific aims within the community – usually to help a particular group of people or a cause. With the right planning and support, you can go a long way to making a difference in your local community.

Most types of community groups are known in legal terms, as an unincorporated association. Unincorporated associations do not need to be registered, nor are they regulated in any way.

### Step 1: So what is it that you want to do?

You need to have a good idea of exactly what you intend to do. Here are some questions to consider:

- Will your group offer a service to a community or will it solely benefit its members?

- What are the aims of the group?

- What do you want to achieve?

- What geographical areas are you going to cover?

In order to move onto the next step, you will also need to have at least two other people who are committed to your group.

### Step 2: Who will you work with?

If you are providing a service then you may want to identify a specific group of people with whom you are going to work, for example people affected by a specific issue or living in a defined area.

You should also think about what area you will cover, for example, will you only cover a specific local neighbourhood or a whole town or city? Be realistic with

your capacity and where you can make the most impact. Don't overstretch yourself.

### Step 3: Does your project idea already exist?

Once you have put some consideration into how it might work, you need to research and find out if there are any existing groups that already do similar work in your given area. It is much harder to find support and funding if you are duplicating what other groups are doing. Make sure that your big idea is 'new or unique' in some way before you start. If there are already groups doing the same work, perhaps you could get involved with them?

### Step 4: Collaborate with others

If you have a new idea and are ready to go, can you work



with other organisations to create something new or benefit from their experience? If you are in a similar geographical area, then you could perhaps share premises and work together for the benefit of both groups.

### **Step 5: Structure and documentation**

An unincorporated association is a group of individuals coming together to achieve specific aims within the community. At this point your organisation has no separate legal identity but you will need:

1. A set of rules or a constitution – SAVS can offer model constitutions for you to adapt

2. A management committee - to make decisions, manage finances and decide on the direction of the organisation

3. A shared purpose or activity – usually to help a particular group of people or a cause

(If applying for funding then dependant on the funders' requirements other documentation such as equal opportunities policy or public liability insurance may be required).

As an unincorporated association, you have a greater level of privacy because you do not have to disclose who your members are, how you operate, or how you keep your finances. However, because you have

no separate legal entity, members are personally liable for the organisations debts or other claims.

As your community group grows and develops, you may consider registering as a charity. (If you are to employ paid staff, own land or premise, or deal with finances of over £5,000 then you must register as a charity with the Charities Commission). To register as a charity you can consider various legal structures and will need to select the form that is appropriate for you.

The Charities Commission website has useful advice for groups aiming to register as a charity.

**Jo Mcpherson  
Commissioning,  
Procurement and  
Funding Officer**

## **NSPCC Text Service**

The NSPCC Helpline has launched a mobile phone texting service which will allow members of the public to contact the Helpline by texting 88858. For the Channel Islands the number is 07786200001 (networks standard message rate applies). Members of the public can use the text service to seek advice and assistance and also to report concerns that may need follow up action or investigation. The service will be run on a pilot basis in the first instance until the end of 2011.

The new service was launched on Monday 16 May and since then they have received a steady number of texts.

The public can send a text anonymously if they wish at no cost to themselves. On receipt of the text the Helpline will send an immediate automated confirmation response and then a specific response to their enquiry from a Helpline practitioner within three hours.

## **Southend-on-Sea Culture Strategy**

Earlier this year, we advised Southend Community Forum Members about a pilot survey for the Culture Strategy; this document has now been amended and been made publicly available

for wider consultation on the Engage Essex website until 7th October ([www.engageessex.org.uk](http://www.engageessex.org.uk)).

If you would like to take part in the current consultation on

this strategy then you may do so easily by accessing the above website.

# £Funding£

Essex Community Foundation (ECF) currently manages 72 Named Funds, all with differing criteria, but there is no need for an organisation to match their application to any specific fund.

Usually one application will access all of the Funds.

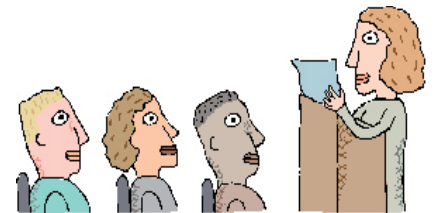
ECF have two main deadline dates per year - September 9 and January 9, and the grants team are always happy to discuss your funding needs, so please do contact them on 01245 356018 to discuss a potential application.

All application forms and guidelines can be obtained from the website [www.essexcommunityfoundation.org.uk](http://www.essexcommunityfoundation.org.uk)

Also The Home Office are releasing £10m worth of grant to 'encourage greater community activism' and to 'enable communities to develop innovative approaches' to tackling local crime issues. They're particularly interested in funding 'grass roots community activists' – so could be some clear links to our active citizens/voluntary sector work. <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/crime/partnerships/innovation-fund/>

## Training

Every voluntary organisation should take some time to look into training for their staff and volunteers. The Local Safeguarding Board and Voluntary Sector Training are offering some really useful training at competitive cost information about both can be found at [www.savs-southend.org/training](http://www.savs-southend.org/training)



## Who's a new SAVS member?

Focal Point Gallery  
RCHL (Redbridge Community Housing Limited)  
Soroptimist International – Southend-on-Sea & District  
Turnstone Counseling  
Southend Unitarians  
World Harvest Family Church  
Ceolians in Southend  
Alex Angel-Benscher  
Ayigafrik Dance  
Help for Hurting Children  
Go-Culture  
Disability Essex  
The London Bus Theatre Company  
Cheeky Cherubs Baby and Toddler Club  
Poppins Care

To find out more about  
SAVS Membership  
contact Dan on  
01702 356021

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**[www.savs-southend.org](http://www.savs-southend.org)**