

Claire Chapman

From: Claire Chapman

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Empowerment Newsletter

November 2011

Welcome to issue 7 of the monthly Empowerment e-bulletin for the East Midlands Empowerment Network, which will aim to keep you up-to-date on relevant empowerment news and events.

You are receiving this e-bulletin as a contact for an organisation listed on the East Midlands Empowerment Partnership Directory. If you do not wish to receive further monthly issues, please email information@one-em.org.uk.

If you have any comments, please get in touch by emailing information@one-em.org.uk. You can also visit the East Midlands Empowerment Network website at www.emep.org.uk or the One East Midlands website at www.oneeastmidlands.org.uk.

If you have any events, news articles, announcements etc that you would like to contribute to the November Empowerment e-bulletin, please email them to clairechapman@one-em.org.uk by Friday 16 December 2011.

One East Midlands News

Website & e-bulletin survey 2011

One of the key functions of One East Midlands is to provide effective and timely information to the voluntary and community sector, including through our e-bulletins and website. As part of this, we would be grateful if you, as an individual on our mailing list, could take a few minutes to complete our online survey (www.surveymonkey.com/s/JNJRR8P) on our current e-bulletins and website by **Friday 2nd December**. The information you provide will help improve our future e-bulletins, website development and communications.

Empowerment News

Localism Bill receives Royal Assent

The Localism Bill has received royal assent and, as the Localism Act, will grant new rights to communities to bid for land and run local authority services. The legislation will require local authorities to maintain lists of 'assets for community value'. If any of these assets comes up for sale, the local authority must allow a suspension of six months on the sale of the asset, so that local groups have time to put together a bid to take it over for community benefit.

The right to bid in the new Act is weaker than originally proposed by community groups, because it does not give community organisations first refusal when community assets come up for sale. However, community organisations have successfully lobbied against attempts to weaken it further by reducing the suspension period from six months to three.

For further information on the Localism Bill visit <http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2010-11/localism.html>.

New scheme for communities to benefit from businesses

People who share a passion for connecting and engaging the resources of businesses for the benefit of the local community, are about to start secondments through Business in the Community's new Business Connectors programme. The programme is designed to:

- Support business to work in partnership with local community organisations
- Support enterprise activity in the local area
- Increase the capacity of the VCS through facilitating business support
- Improve the quality of life for local communities in need.

The programme offers leadership and personal development opportunity for employees in supporting companies, including Sainsbury's, BT, Lloyds, Dairy Crest, Everything Everywhere, Greggs and Royal Mail, who have all already signed up. Over a five year period, the programme aims to have over 1,500 Business Connectors, working in 450 local communities, creating more than 20,000 new local partnerships and mobilising resources and support into the VCS worth more than £130 million.

For further information, including how to host a Business Connector, visit www.bitc.org.uk/business_connectors, email alice.sheffield@bitc.org.uk or telephone Alison on 020 7566 8768.

Community volunteering medal reintroduced

The British Empire Medal (BEM), awarded as part of the Queen's Honours system to British citizens making a difference in their communities until 1992, will be reintroduced in the Diamond Jubilee Honours list in June 2012. Associated with the Order of the British Empire (OBE), the BEM was established in the same year, 1917. It was originally split into two medals, one for exceptional civil service and one for military gallantry, and was awarded to those who did not qualify to be made a Member of the Order of the British Empire (MBE).

The medal will now be awarded to volunteers, with its reintroduction seen by Downing Street as a way to drive community volunteering, a key component of the government's Big Society agenda. It is expected there will be around 270 to 300 medals awarded in each Honours round, with those awarded attending the Royal Garden Party. BEM recipients will also be entitled to use the post-nominal letters.

While the medal was taken out of service in the UK, other Commonwealth realms including the Bahamas and Cook Islands continued to issue the award.

Empowerment Funding

Next Steps: Supporting Social Investment Initiative

The Big Lottery Fund has announced a £6million initiative, which will aim to develop the social investment market and explore its potential to help tackle issues facing communities and individuals. The Next Steps: Supporting Social Investment in England initiative will award between £40,000 and £1million to social investment proposals already in development but in need of extra funding to realise their plans.

The funding is available to organisations acting in the role of commissioner or intermediary, as well as frontline organisations who will deliver the interventions to tackle social need. It can be used to facilitate a wide range of activities to develop social investment proposals, from creating systems to collect data, covering the legal and technical costs of finalising social investment proposals, or funding the delivery of interventions to show how in practice they can produce cashable savings for other services.

The deadline for expressions of interest is Wednesday 14 December. For further information, guidance and application materials visit

www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/prog_supporting_social_investment.

£50million Growing Places Fund announced

The Department for Communities & Local Government has announced a £500million Growing Places Fund to help boost economic growth by getting required built to enable the creation of new jobs and homes and get stalled projects moving again.

The fund will enable local businesses and organisations in the 38 Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs), including five in the East Midlands, to apply for funding and then take decisions about what to prioritise locally. Councils will support these plans, leaving LEPs free of red tape and better able to focus their attentions on ensuring the funds go to where they will be used most effectively.

The fund, which will all be allocated by the end of January 2012, can be used to establish revolving funds to take forward a range of projects that can help facilitate economic growth, jobs and housebuilding in the local area, providing returns which can be re-invested locally. Through this, LEPs will be able to offer secure funding to developers in their area, making it quicker for projects to get off the ground and securing a return on that investment for the local area.

Types of projects that can be funded include:

- Early development of strategic link roads and access works to unlock major mixed-use developments, enabling the delivery of homes and commercial space
- Provision of flood storage capacity to enable development of homes, employment space and retail space
- Works to improve local connectivity and reduce congestion through interventions such as extending dual carriageways, enabling developments to be taken forward sustainably.

The department has also published indicative allocations of the fund to each of the LEPS, including nearly £50million in the East Midlands, broken down into the following:

- Derby, Derbyshire, Nottingham and Nottinghamshire - £17,466,313
- Leicester and Leicestershire - £8,896,731
- Lincolnshire - £6,493,608
- Northamptonshire - £3,925,692
- South East Midlands - £13,100,217

For further information visit

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/regeneration/growingplacesfund>.

Empowerment Jobs

Community Development Worker vacancy at CVP

CVP (Community Voluntary Partners), the infrastructure organisation for the CVS in the Bolsover District, is recruiting for a Community Development Worker for 28 hours a week on a salary of £24,646 pro rata.

The post will target and work with the most excluded and marginalised residents and groups, identifying local needs and issues, and developing initiatives and activities that improve communities and the lives of local residents by bringing together a range of partners to develop and implement community action plans. Applicants should be experienced and confident working with, and building partnerships between, people and organisations at all levels in the community. They should also have:

- A successful track record in hands-on community development work
- Well-developed communication, advocacy and influencing skills, and be skilled at understanding the needs of local residents and small groups and giving them a voice
- Experience of recruiting, supporting and developing volunteers
- A successful track-record of income generation.

For further information and an application pack visit www.bolsovercyp.org.uk/jobs or email cvpadmin@bolsovercyp.org.uk. The closing date for applications is 2pm on Friday 2 December.

- You are receiving this as a member of the Empowerment network. Please feel free to share this e-bulletin or any of the information in it with your members and contacts. If you have something you would like us to publicise that's of regional interest to the Empowerment network, you can email us at information@one-em.org.uk

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T: 0115 934 8471 **F:** 0115 934 8436 **W:** www.oneeastmidlands.org.uk

One East Midlands, Nottingham Voluntary Action Centre, 7 Mansfield Road, Nottingham NG1 3FB

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