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Subject: Empowerment network newsletter - Issue 8, December 2011

Empowerment Newsletter

December 2011

Happy Christmas and welcome to issue 8 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.

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 do not wish to receive further monthly issues, please email information@one-em.org.uk.

If you have any events, news articles, announcements etc that you would like to contribute to the January Empowerment e-bulletin, please email them to clairechapman@one-em.org.uk by Friday 20 January 2012.

Empowerment News

Consultation on community halls as food businesses

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) is carrying out a consultation into how food law applies to community halls that are used for the preparation, sale or supply of food. The results of the consultation will inform the development of any proposals to reduce legislative burdens on those using community halls for events involving food, where doing so would not leave consumers at risk. The FSA would particularly welcome comments about the requirement to register with your local authority.

Regardless of whether activities in community halls are registered, there is an overriding requirement in European food law that food placed on the market is safe. This provides legal protection for consumers and effectively applies to all activities outside of the purely domestic settings.

For further information on the consultation visit

www.food.gov.uk/consultations/consulteng/2011/registrationcommunityhallseng.

To respond to the consultation, which closes on 6 February 2012, write to David Gray, Hygiene & Microbiology, Food Standards Agency, Room 3C Aviation House, 125 Kingsway, London WC2B 6NH or email david.gray@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk

Information on elected police commissioners

A poll carried out by Safer Future Communities, a group of eight organisations set up to help community organisations prepare for elected police and crime commissioners replacing police authorities in England and Wales from November 2012, has found that one in three people involved in community safety had not heard about the forthcoming reforms.

The elected commissioners will help to set police strategy and budgets, oversee the work of chief constables and work with local community groups to cut crime. They will also have grant-making powers to support local organisations in their work.

The Home Office will hold a series of events in the New Year to offer guidance to community organisations that will be affected by the reforms.

Empowerment Funding

£10million Communities Living Sustainably programme

The Big Lottery Fund is investing £10million of good cause funding through its Communities Living Sustainably programme, which aims to inspire people to adapt the way they live, work and engage with each other to reap financial, environmental and health gains.

Communities will be expected to introduce a range of different sustainable activities including reducing waste, identifying alternative energy sources, accessing and growing local fresh foods or improving energy efficiency for individuals and in community buildings. Other activities that could be encompassed include supporting communities at risk of flooding or other extreme weather events, recycling and reuse schemes such as the refurbishment of furniture for people in need and educating those suffering from fuel poverty on how to make their homes more energy efficient.

Community partnerships are invited to submit an expression of interest by noon 31 January 2012, with 30 areas likely to receive development funding of up to £10,000 to draw up detailed plans. The ten best proposals will then receive up to £1million to deliver ideas for a period of up to five years, with the learning being shared to inform and influence others on how communities can become more sustainable.

Communities Living Sustainably is part of the Big Lottery Fund's £50million Sustainable and Resilient Communities strategy that aims to encourage behaviour change amongst individuals and communities so they can cope better with the environmental, economic and social impacts of a changing climate.

For further information visit www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/prog_communities_living_sustainably.htm?regioncode=-uk.

Community Grants application – deadline 16 December

The deadline for the second phase of Community Grants, financed through the European Social Fund and Skills Funding Agency and open to small VCS sector organisations, is 5pm on Friday 16 December. Grants of up to £12,000 are available for projects that support people from the hardest to reach communities and individuals experiencing disadvantages accessing mainstream European Social Funding, domestic employment and skills provision.

For further information, including an application form, visit [www.tchc.net/services/community-grants/applications?](http://www.tchc.net/services/community-grants/applications?utm_medium=email&utm_source=The+Consultancy+Home+Counties+Ltd&utm_campaign&utm_content=Applicationspage&dm_i=GIF,LZX1,28C)

An online forum has also been set up to discuss the grants. To register visit [www.tchc.net/forum/7-community-grants-applications?](http://www.tchc.net/forum/7-community-grants-applications?utm_medium=email&utm_source=The+Consultancy+Home+Counties+Ltd&utm_campaign&utm_content=Forumlink&dm_i=GIF,LZX1,28CGHG,15)

Buy Better Together Challenge

The Department for Business, Innovation and Skills has launched the Buy Better Together Challenge, an initiative which aims to inspire new models of community buying, stimulate enterprise and promote shared learning.

In addition to producing a guide giving practical information and advice on how to set up and run a community buying group, the initiative is also looking for organisations who have devised new ways of buying collectively to help save money, or people with ideas about communities working together. £60,000 of funding is available to put towards training, mentoring and seed funding for stand out projects, including £15,000 for the overall winner.

For further information visit <http://discuss.bis.gov.uk/buying/innovation-prize>.

Communities and low carbon fund

The Department of Energy and Climate Change has opened a new £10 million fund, which is available to communities in England and Wales playing an active role in the development of a low carbon society. The deadline for the first round of applications is 12 noon on 22 December. Funding is available to finance projects that increase understanding and uptake of energy efficiency and renewable energy technologies and help to make energy supply secure and affordable for everyone in their community.

For further information and to apply visit www.greencommunitiescc.org.uk.

Empowerment Resources

Free advertising in Community Resources

New magazine Community Resources aims to provide community sector organisations with free advertising and signposting to free or low cost resources. Circulated every Monday, the magazine, which is operated entirely by volunteers, has a mailing list of over 10,000 organisations across England and includes regional voluntary hubs, volunteer centres and local government agencies.

For further information visit www.communityresources.org.uk.

Empowerment Events

Community Rights Made Real Workshop – 28 March, 10am to 4pm, Birmingham

Urban Forum and NAVCA are running a free workshop, in partnership with Birmingham Voluntary Service Council and NCVS, to prepare for the practicalities, opportunities and challenges of the rights within the Localism Act.

The organisers want to support inclusion and equality in how the new rights are taken up, focusing in particular on the needs of communities who currently lack power. As the government introduces new community rights designed to give local people the chance to take action on local services, assets and development, they want to make sure that communities are equipped with the knowledge and skills to take advantage of these when the Localism Act comes into force in 2012.

The workshop will:

- Brief people on the details of all the new community rights
- Discuss their practical implications for communities
- Share experience of existing community action – successes and pitfalls
- Support community groups and community activists in planning how they will respond to the new rights.

For further information visit <http://urbanforum280312.eventbrite.co.uk/?ebtv=C>.

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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