

**Claire Chapman**

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**From:** Claire Chapman

**Sent:** 20 February 2012 11:01

**Subject:** Empowerment network newsletter - Issue 10, February 2012

# Empowerment Newsletter

## February 2012

Welcome to issue 10 of the monthly Empowerment e-bulletin for the East Midlands Empowerment Network, which will aim to keep you up-to-date on relevant community empowerment news and events.

If you have any comments, please get in touch by emailing [information@one-em.org.uk](mailto:information@one-em.org.uk). You can also visit the East Midlands Empowerment Network website at [www.emep.org.uk](http://www.emep.org.uk) or the One East Midlands website at [www.oneeastmidlands.org.uk](http://www.oneeastmidlands.org.uk). If you do not wish to receive further monthly issues, please email [information@one-em.org.uk](mailto:information@one-em.org.uk).

If you have any events, news articles, announcements etc that you would like to contribute to the March Empowerment e-bulletin, please email them to [clairechapman@one-em.org.uk](mailto:clairechapman@one-em.org.uk) by Friday 16 March 2012.

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## One East Midlands News

### **One EM appointed to deliver Safer Future Communities networks**

One East Midlands has been appointed to work in partnership with NAVCA and CLINKS to run four local networks engaging communities with police and crime commissioners in Derbyshire, Lincolnshire, Northamptonshire and Nottinghamshire, as part of the Safer Future Communities programme.

The programme aims to support frontline VCS organisations in preparation for the arrival of Police and Crime Commissioners in November 2012. Its aim is to build a strong, vibrant and influential VCS network in each of the police and crime commissioners areas, which are replacing police authorities, in England and Wales to ensure knowledge of local needs is recognised in developing local policing plans.

One EM will be working to establish these networks in the four counties, with the aim of making them self-sufficient and locally managed in the future. Voluntary Action Leicestershire will run the network in Leicestershire.

If you are interested in joining one of the networks or in supporting One EM

with this programme email [information@one-em.org.uk](mailto:information@one-em.org.uk). For further information on Safer Future Communities click [here](#).

## **One EM organises Community Insight visits**

One East Midlands, in partnership with Business in the Community, has organised three Community Insight Visits to Soft Touch Arts in Leicester on Wednesday 7 March, Ecoworks in Nottingham on Friday 9 March and Oasis Community Centre in Worksop on Wednesday 28 March.

The aim of these three free, informal and interactive, half-day site visits is for up to 15 participants to learn from the experiences, struggles, successes and good practices of these fantastic community organisations. You will see how the organisations do what they do and where they operate from, be able to share and learn from their good practice, and talk to key members of staff about how they can support and replicate similar community empowerment work in their area.

- For further information and to book on to the Soft Touch Arts visit on 7 March visit [www.cambridge-experiential.org/soft\\_touch\\_arts](http://www.cambridge-experiential.org/soft_touch_arts).
- For further information and to book on to the Ecoworks visit on 9 March visit [www.cambridge-experiential.org/ecoworks](http://www.cambridge-experiential.org/ecoworks).
- For further information and to book on to the Oasis Community Centre visit on 28 March visit [www.oneeastmidlands.org.uk/infusions/one\\_events\\_panel/event\\_list.php?idx=1354](http://www.oneeastmidlands.org.uk/infusions/one_events_panel/event_list.php?idx=1354).

The organisations were chosen following a request for nominations last Autumn. As part of the project, case studies have been produced on the successful organisations and the other nominees. To view all the case studies on the Community Insight Visits and the nominees visit [www.oneeastmidlands.org.uk/casestudies](http://www.oneeastmidlands.org.uk/casestudies).

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## **Empowerment News**

### **Co-operative Community Energy Challenge**

The Community Energy Challenge is a new initiative from the Co-operative, supporting six to eight community energy projects involving local people, changing the way they think about energy, and inspiring others to shape a renewable energy future. The challenge is part of the the Co-operative's Clean Energy Revolution campaign, which supports clean and energy and is against the use of fossil fuels.

The scheme will provide 12-18 months of enterprise development, mentoring, technical advice and community facilitation for the successful communities, enabling them to initiate cooperative renewable energy projects on a significant

scale, valued at £1million to £3million or rated in excess of 500KW. This support will be delivered by CSE on behalf of the Co-operative Group with the aim of bringing the selected projects to a state of readiness for further support and investment from the Co-operative Enterprise Hub and the Co-operative Bank.

The Community Energy Challenge will operate a competitive bid process, with a supported application process in place to help communities develop strong project proposals from scratch. All applications will be carefully evaluated and the final selection made by an expert panel. The deadline for expressions of interest is 29 February 2012. For further information including how to apply visit [www.cse.org.uk/projects/view/1178](http://www.cse.org.uk/projects/view/1178).

### **Competition to become a Portas Pilot**

Struggling towns are being offered the chance to breathe new life into their high streets, as Mary Portas and the Local Government Minister Grant Shapps launch a competition to choose 12 towns to become 'Portas Pilots', with the winners benefiting from a share of £1million to help turn around their high streets. The successful applicants will be those that come up with the best High Street blueprints, in a move that fulfils two of the recommendations of Mary Portas' High Streets Review, commissioned by the Prime Minister and published last December.

The judges will be looking for pilot areas with a transformational vision for their high street and the backing to make it a reality. The lead partner should be able to clearly articulate this vision and demonstrate strong support for it from the local community and a wide range of local partners. They will need to show:

- A mix of pilot areas: from a variety of town centres and high streets including market towns, villages, large towns, new towns, coastal towns and suburban areas, a good geographical spread, areas with both high/low average income levels and high/low empty shop vacancy rates.
- Commitment: bids need to demonstrate maximum commitment to the town team approach.
- Potential for improvement: resources will be allocated on a value for money basis and therefore areas must be able to demonstrate their potential for improvement
- Innovation: bidders are asked to provide an outline of what the key priorities for their pilot area will be.
- Evidence of strong leadership: that will have maximum impact and can be replicated elsewhere.

Taking forward the first recommendation from Mary Portas's review, the 12 successful localities will create Town Teams, made up of key players in their local community, and benefiting from the support of the Minister, Whitehall and Mary Portas, as they take forward the recommendations from the review in their area.

To download the Portas Review visit

[www.communities.gov.uk/publications/regeneration/portasreview](http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/regeneration/portasreview). For further information on becoming a Portas Pilot, including how to apply, visit [www.communities.gov.uk/publications/regeneration/portaspilotsprospectus](http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/regeneration/portaspilotsprospectus).

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## **Empowerment Funding** **£1million fund to help communities revive their neighbourhoods**

Communities Minister Andrew Stunell has invited voluntary and community organisations to apply for a share of £100 million to help revitalise communities, provide opportunities for employment and training, and create more affordable houses by tackling the problem of empty homes. Around 720,000 homes are sitting empty across the country, with 280,000 unused and under-maintained for six months or more.

Fund manager Tribal has been appointed to assess applications, manage distribution of the funds and report back to the Department of Communities and Local Government. Successful applications should bring empty homes back into use as affordable housing, deliver value for money, have support from their local authority and expect to be completed by 31 March 2015.

For guidance on the fund visit [www.communities.gov.uk/publications/housing/emptyhomeappguidance](http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/housing/emptyhomeappguidance). To

apply visit [www.grantsadmin.co.uk](http://www.grantsadmin.co.uk). The deadline for applications is 17 April.

## **£24million fund opened for seaside communities**

Communities Secretary Eric Pickles and Chief Secretary Danny Alexander have launched the £23.7million Coastal Communities Fund, created to provide struggling coastal communities with funding to support new opportunities that can make them prosper.

Successful applicants will receive a grant of between £50,000 and £2million to start programmes that can deliver skills training, offer apprenticeships to school leavers, create new workspaces or support small-scale transport improvements. Bids will be especially welcome from community groups, charities, social enterprises, local businesses and local enterprise partnerships.

The Fund, financed by the Government from revenues from the Crown Estate's marine assets, will be delivered by the Big Lottery Fund. For further information, including eligibility and details of how to bid, visit [www.communities.gov.uk/publications/regeneration/coastalfundprospectus](http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/regeneration/coastalfundprospectus). Applications to the fund will be accepted from March.

## **Further £22million for former coalfield communities**

Communities Minister Bob Neill has confirmed a further £22million to help former coalfield communities get back on their feet and secure economic

growth for years to come. The funding will be allocated to the Coalfields Regeneration Trust over two years to 2015 and will be used to transform it into a self-sustaining organisation so it can continue to champion the interests and needs of coalfield communities - without being reliant on Government funding.

The funding is in addition to the £30 million announced on 10 March 2011 to support the work of the Coalfields Regeneration Trust, which was for the first two years of the Spending Review Period (2011/12 and 2012/13). This further £22 million is for 2013/14 (£12 million) and 2014/15 (£10 million), and is conditional upon the Trust producing an agreed Business Plan setting out an exit strategy for the Trust from 2015, after which the Trust will no longer receive funding from DCLG.

The Coalfields Regeneration Trust is an independent regeneration organisation, established in 1999 to improve the quality of life in Britain's coalfield communities. The aim of the Trust is to make coalfields sustainable, prosperous, viable and cohesive without support. For further information on the trust, including how to apply for funding, visit [www.coalfields-regen.org.uk](http://www.coalfields-regen.org.uk).

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## **Empowerment Resources**

### **Building Safe, Active Communities: Strong foundations by local people**

This is the third report by Baroness Newlove, appointed as the Government's Champion for Active, Safer Communities in October 2010, who has worked with communities across the country to discover what grassroots activists want and need. The report brings together new ideas that have been proven to work, case studies from different areas and highlights resources which can provide support to communities that want to do more.

The report also sets out progress on her three priorities of tackling problem drinking, turning the civil service into a 'civic' service, and finding a web hub for community activists to use, including outlining a £1million Alcohol Fund to help local agencies, businesses and local people to come together and tackle problem drinking in partnership. It also provides an update on the twelve challenges to action around antisocial behaviour and alcohol that she put to Government in her first report.

To download the report visit [www.communities.gov.uk/documents/communities/pdf/2088494.pdf](http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/communities/pdf/2088494.pdf).

### **My Community Starter**

My Community Starter is a free information resource for anyone who wants to get involved in organising smaller, straightforward community activities. Developed by Zurich Insurance plc, in association with specialists from legal, health and safety, risk management and volunteering backgrounds, the resource aims to make volunteering easier by providing some information and guidance for individuals and small groups who want to do more in the places where they live, for their own benefit and for those around them.

The resource includes guidance on legal, health and safety, planning and insurance considerations, which may help to make a community activity a success. It also includes a useful tool that will create a free printable My Community Starter Pack, specifically tailored to the type of activities the individual or group is considering. For further information visit [www.mycommunitystarter.co.uk](http://www.mycommunitystarter.co.uk).

## **Rough Guide to Community Energy**

Aiming to provide inspiration to new and existing local energy groups, the Rough Guide to Community Energy, published by Penguin Books and supported by M&S is full of practical advice and inspiring case studies, covering:

- Local energy groups – how to set one up and keep its momentum going
- Types of project - including solar, wind, hydro, biomass, CHP and energy efficiency
- Getting a project off the ground - from fundraising and planning to construction
- Real-world advice from successful groups all over the UK

For further information and to download a PDF of the book or request a printed copy visit <http://roughguide.to/communityenergy/>.

## **CREW (Community Resilience to Extreme Weather)**

Following the floods in 2007 and with the prediction that a changing climate will lead to wetter winters, warmer summers and greater frequencies of extreme weather, CREW was established to increase understanding of the effects of future climate change on extreme weather events, and develop a set of tools for improving local-community resilience. For further information and to download the tools visit [www.extreme-weather-impacts.net/twiki/bin/view/Main/WebHome](http://www.extreme-weather-impacts.net/twiki/bin/view/Main/WebHome).

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If you no longer wish to receive these emails or if you would like to change your contact details, email us at [information@one-em.org.uk](mailto:information@one-em.org.uk)

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