



Date: 30th January 2012

Welcome to the 9th Edition of Supporting Communities NI E-Biz

NEWS



ONE OFF FUEL PAYMENT

On Thursday 8 December 2011, First Minister and deputy First Minister announced the Northern Ireland Executive's intention to make a one off Fuel Allowance Payment to vulnerable people to assist with fuel bills.

Payments will be made in February to low income families pensioners and cancer patients.

More information is available at www.nidirect.gov.uk/index/information-and-services/money-tax-and-benefits/benefits-and-financial-support/one-off-fuel-allowance-payment.htm

PAC REPORT A POSITIVE OUTCOME FOR SECTOR

NICVA's campaign for more proportionate and appropriate administration requirements in the sector's relationship with government took a massive leap forward last week with the publication of the report on Creating Effective Partnerships between Government and the Voluntary and Community Sector by the powerful Public Accounts Committee in the Northern Ireland Assembly.

The report follows ongoing work with the Northern Ireland Audit Office, the Department for Social Development and the Public Accounts Committee which outlined the negative impact audit and monitoring requirements were having on organisations right across the sector.

Commentary and analysis of the report is available at www.nicva.org/news/public-accounts-committee-report with links to the NI Assembly press release.



BE SAFE STAY SAFE

The campaign is led by *Leonard Cheshire Disability* and helps disabled people in Northern Ireland feel safer in their homes and in their communities.

The project is funded through the Big Lottery Fund's Safe and Well Programme. Be Safe Stay Safe is aimed at:

- Disabled people living in Northern Ireland
- Families, carers and friends
- Voluntary, community and statutory organisations
- Paid staff in a supporting role



Campaigning Network

Be Safe Stay Safe are hosting a series of information workshops throughout Northern Ireland in January and February 2012 to discuss the next stage of the project: setting up local campaigning networks.

The initial meetings will give disabled people and their carers the opportunity to hear about plans we have for a community safety campaign specifically addressing issues affecting disabled people. These networks will give people the opportunity to make real change in their communities, influence policy and lobby for improvements in the issues that affect disabled people.

Monday 6th February 2012

6.30 - 8.00 p.m.

Fermanagh House

Broadmeadow Place

Enniskillen

BT74 7HR

Wednesday 8th February 2012

6.30 - 8.00 p.m.

Antrim Civic Centre

50 Stiles Way

Antrim

BT41 2UB

Monday 13th February 2012

6.30 - 8.00 p.m.

Crescent Arts Centre

2 University Road

Belfast

BT7 1NH

Wednesday 15th February 2012

6.30 - 8.00 p.m.

Verbal Arts Centre

Stable Lane and Mall Wall

Bishop Street Within

Londonderry

BT48 6PU

Contact www.besafestaysafe.org or Tel: 028 9066 1281

PARENTS NEEDED FOR ADVISORY GROUPS



Earlier this year a new Northern Ireland Partnership was set up to improve outcomes for children and young people across Northern Ireland. This Partnership is called the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership, and it oversees a number of planning groups across Northern Ireland. One of the mechanisms needed for the planning process to work will be the participation of parents in the planning processes. The active involvement of parents in planning is essential to ensuring that the plans are right.

Parenting NI is currently recruiting parents to new Parent Advisory Groups in the Northern, Southern and Western Board areas as well as parents across all of Northern Ireland who have a child with a disability to join the new regional disability themed group. If you are willing to attend a two hour meeting three to six times a year then why not get involved.

If you are interested in finding out more, or being nominated, download a form from the website www.parentingni.org or telephone 028 9031 0891.

CONSULTATIONS

Current Consultations with closing dates

EQUALITY COMMISSION DRAFT CORPORATE PLAN

Improving People's Lives – Our Draft Corporate Plan 2012-2015

The Equality Commission for Northern Ireland is keen to hear your views on its draft corporate plan 2012-2015. If you would like to find out more please contact Naomi Roberts on 028 9050 0645, Textphone 028 9050 0589 or email nroberts@equalityni.org.

You can also write to: Naomi Roberts, Equality Commission NI, 7/9 Shaftesbury Square, Belfast, BT2 7DP. The draft Corporate Plan can be accessed here:

www.equalityni.org/archive/pdf/draftcplan2012-15.pdf

Consultation closing date Tuesday 14 February 2012

CONSULTATION ON ENCOURAGING EARLIER GUILTY PLEAS

The Department of Justice is inviting you to participate in a consultation on measures to speed up the justice system in Northern Ireland. The consultation paper can be accessed on the Department's website at www.dojni.gov.uk



Department of
Justice

www.dojni.gov.uk

The Justice Minister, David Ford, has outlined his vision for reshaping the justice system in Northern Ireland and a key priority is tackling delay. The consultation paper considers options for encouraging people who are guilty of a criminal offence to admit their guilt at an early stage.

The purpose of this consultation exercise is to take account of as many views as possible, generate constructive debate and ensure engagement with and learning from those in the public, private, voluntary and community sectors.

Equality

An initial Equality and Human Rights screening of the document has been carried out and found that a full equality impact assessment is not required. Nevertheless, if on examination of the document you find that any aspect of it may have a differential impact on any Section 75 group, please let the Department know. A copy of the initial screening can also be found on the Department's website.

All responses should be sent to the Speeding up Justice mailbox at speedingupjustice@dojni.x.gsi.gov.uk no later than Friday 27 April. If you prefer to reply in writing please forward your response to the following address.

Speeding Up Justice Unit, Department of Justice, Criminal Justice Development Division, Knockview Buildings, Stormont Estate, Belfast BT4 3SL

The Department also intends to arrange a number of focus groups that will run in tandem during the consultation process. If you would be interested in attending such an event, please contact the Department at the following email address above.

EVENTS



NORTHERN IRELAND PENSIONERS PARLIAMENT

The Northern Ireland Pensioners Parliament was launched in 2011 and allows older people from across Northern Ireland to have their say on the issues that matter to them. Organised by Age Sector Platform, 2012 will mark the second year of the Parliament.

The Local Parliaments

These will take place during February and March 2012 and will ensure that older people's views from every county in Northern Ireland are represented.

- | | | |
|--------------------------|-------------|----------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Belfast | Wednesday 22 February 2012 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Craigavon | Wednesday 29 February 2012 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Antrim | Tuesday 6 March 2012 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Enniskillen | Thursday 8 March 2012 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Newtownards | Wednesday 14 March 2012 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Coleraine | Wednesday 21 March 2012 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Cookstown | Thursday 29 March 2012 |

All venues are centrally located in each town/city and each event will take place between 10am and 3.30pm (lunch will be provided).

Delegates from each local Parliament will be selected to attend the Northern Ireland Pensioners Parliament in Belfast on Tuesday 22 and Wednesday 23 May 2012. This two-day regional Parliament will decide on the priority issues for older people across the province.

If you would like to attend your local Parliament, please contact Age Sector Platform by phoning 028 9031 2089 or emailing info@agesectorplatform.org. As spaces are limited, booking in advance is essential.

Keep up to date with Northern Ireland Pensioners Parliament news at www.pensionersparliament.org

WELFARE REFORM CONFERENCE TO TACKLE MAJOR ISSUES



In light of the imminent changes and potential negative consequences for quite a substantial proportion of the citizens in Northern Ireland, NICVA, in conjunction with Law Centre (NI), will be hosting a welfare reform conference on Tuesday 6 March 2012 at NICVA from 9.30am to 3.30pm.

The conference will allow members of the voluntary and community sector an opportunity to hear from, and directly engage with prominent decision-makers, policy-makers, and eminent contributors to the welfare reform debate both here in Northern Ireland and within the UK. The conference will include contributions from chief executives and senior leaders of the voluntary and community sector, local MPs, a ministerial representative from DSD, Social Security Agency senior officials, and members of the Northern Ireland Assembly Committee for Social Development.

Visit the NICVA website for further information and to book a place. Places are limited so book early!

FREE FINANCE WORKSHOP FOR GROUPS WORKING WITH OLDER PEOPLE

This two hour workshop has been designed to remind or enlighten you about some of the key concepts and tools needed in financial accounting. It should help you think about your organisation's finances in a different way: more business-like than grant led but no less mission focused. The workshop will consider:

- Introductory financial accounting
- Income statements
- Profit v cash
- Cash flow
- Working capital v reserves



The workshop has been developed by Sector Matters in conjunction with Charity Bank as part of the 'Towards a Resilient, Sustainable and Independent Age Sector' project. The project is delivered through support from The Atlantic Philanthropies and aims to help build financial capability in the age sector and in particular to support more social economy activity.

Monday 13 February 2012, 10.30am to 12.30pm (Registration at 10.15am) in Conference Room B, NICVA, 61 Duncairn Gardens, Belfast, BT15 2GB

To request a booking click on the link above, or for more information, please contact Paula Reynolds at Sector Matters on 028 9087 5018 or email paula.reynolds@sectormatters.com

THE IMPACT OF VOLUNTEERING ON QUALITY OF LIFE

To recognise the legacy left from the European Year of Volunteering 2011 and to mark the beginning of the European Year of Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations 2012, Volunteer Now has organised a Seminar to discuss the Impact of Volunteering on Quality of Life.

Guest Speaker Dr. Pat McCloughan will consider participation in volunteering and unpaid work activities across Europe, by summarising a major study he carried out in 2011 for the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions. Part of the study focused on the determinants of volunteering and the relationship between volunteering and subjective well being.

Dr. McCloughan will also comment on the opportunities for volunteering in respect of 2012, which has been designated the European Year of Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations. Learning from the range of research being conducted on older people volunteering through the Unlocking Potential Project will also be included in the seminar to inform the discussion.

Date: 21 February 2012

Time: 12.45pm – 3.30pm (Lunch provided)

Venue: Training Room, Volunteer Now, 34 Shaftesbury Square, Belfast.

You can register for the information session by contacting Suzanne Grant
E: Suzanne.Grant@volunteernow.co.uk or T: 028 9023 2020.

To read more about the Unlocking Potential Project, the activities it is involved in and the range of research it has produced go to www.volunteernow.co.uk/volunteering/over-50s-volunteering



MEASURING THE IMPACT OF VOLUNTEERING

Measuring the impact of volunteering activities is increasingly important as the demand for organisations to evidence the impact and outcomes from their work becomes greater. The Volunteer Impact Assessment Toolkit provides information and customisable tools which organisations of all sizes can use to measure impact and therefore evidence what is being achieved.

Volunteer Now offers a one day training course to supplement the written toolkit handbook. The aim of the session is to guide people through the handbook, using exercises and group discussion to help people to start planning their own assessment.

The next training session will take place on **15 March 2012 from 10.00am - 3.30pm** at Volunteer Now's Office, Shaftesbury Square, Belfast.

Book directly on to the training course at <http://www.volunteernow.co.uk/training-events/view/83>

Contact Julie Aiken to find out more at Julie.Aiken@volunteernow.co.uk or call 028 9023 2020.

EVENT MANAGEMENT FOR VOLUNTEERS



Designed for both existing and new volunteers involved in sports or arts events and also people who support or manage event volunteers; all will benefit. Successful participants will gain an understanding of what is involved in event management for volunteers and have the opportunity to build on their event management skills. Participants who apply for the credited option will gain 5 credit points which could be used towards the University of Ulster's Certificate of Personal and Professional Development (CPPD).

Saturday 25 and Sunday 26 February 2012 at University of Ulster, Jordanstown

Course Costs:

Credited - £110 per person (only £60 if you are within the first 20 registered)

Non-credited - £70 per person (only £20 if you are within the first 20 registered)

The above costs reflect a £50 bursary from DCAL for the first 20 applicants to register and pay. To book a place contact Claire McLoughlin on 028 9023 2020 or email claire.mcloughlin@volunteernow.co.uk.

TRAINING

The following training courses are currently offered:



HOUSING RIGHTS SERVICE

Housing Advice Training Programme

7th February in Belfast for 6 Tuesdays or 3rd May in Derry/Londonderry for 6 Thursdays.

The Housing Advice Training Programme is our foundational 6 day course designed to enable those working in the housing arena to gain a qualification which enhances the skills and knowledge necessary to provide comprehensive housing advice.

Brand new course-Half day seminar on Welfare Reform

8th February in Belfast or 15th February, Derry/Londonderry

The impact of Welfare Reform can not be underestimated. This specialist half day seminar will ensure that you are equipped with knowledge of the proposed changes and their potential impact.

Dealing with Housing Debt - 21st February, Dungannon area (Venue to be confirmed)

This entry level course is designed to equip advisers with an understanding of housing debt. It will enable them to provide practical guidance and suggest appropriate actions to allow clients to avoid repossession/eviction due to arrears.

Private Rented Sector-1/8/15th & 22nd March, Belfast

At present around 12% of homes in Northern Ireland are rented from a private landlord. This four day, accredited course will provide participants with the knowledge and skills to provide comprehensive advice and assistance to tenants renting from a private landlord.

Full details on all courses can be found at www.housingrights.org.uk

Email geraldine@housingrights.org.uk to book your place

THE RORY CHILDREN'S STORYBOOK - HALF DAY TRAINING WORKSHOP

The Hidden Harm Action Plan (October 2009): Responding To The Needs Of Children Born To And Living With Parental Substance Misuse In Northern Ireland calls for two actions that contributes to reducing the harm to children:

- Raising awareness of Hidden Harm and the damage it can do
- Training for the workforce appropriate to the contribution they can make to address the issue.

This training workshop is part of regional hidden harm workforce development programmes funded by the PHA. Participants are required to agree to contribute to the impact evaluation of the programme by completing an impact assessment questionnaire several months after the training, providing information on whether and how the training has impacted on your practice.

Course Code	Date	Time	Venue
SE-A3-16	21/2/12	10-1pm	Trinity Centre, Lisburn
SE-A3-17	21/2/12	2-5pm	Trinity Centre, Lisburn
SE-A3-18	22/2/12	2-5pm	Trinity Centre, Lisburn
SE-A3-19	22/2/12	10-1pm	FARSET, Belfast
SE-A3-20	23/2/12	10-1pm	FARSET, Belfast
SE-A3-21	23/2/12	2-5pm	FARSET, Belfast
SE-A3-22	28/2/12	10-1pm	Cookstown Leisure Centre, Cookstown
SE-A3-23	29/2/12	10-1pm	Gort House, Cookstown
SE-A3-24	29/2/12	2-5pm	Gort House, Cookstown
SE-A3-25	29/2/12	10-1pm	Hope Centre, Ballymena
SE-A3-26	01/3/12	10-1pm	Hope Centre, Ballymena
SE-A3-27	01/3/12	2-5pm	Hope Centre, Ballymena

For more information please contact : Siobhan McIlroy on 028 9260 4422
23 Bridge Street, Lisburn. BT28 1XZ or e-mail to training@ascert.biz



FUNDING

STARBUCKS YOUTH ACTION PROGRAMME

Young People between the ages of 16 - 24 that wish to make a positive difference within their community can apply for grants of up to £2,000 through the Starbucks Youth Action programme. The programme is open to young people for projects in Greater London; Belfast; Birmingham; Bristol; Cardiff; Dublin; Edinburgh; Leeds; and Manchester.



For more information visit <http://starbucks.co.uk/responsibility/community/youth-action/>

Deadline for applications - 5 March 2012



Have you had a Big Lunch yet?

The Big Lunch is a simple idea from the Eden Project encouraging neighbours and communities to get together for a few hours of food, friendship and fun. It costs very little and encourages old fashioned community spirit, building stronger, more sustainable communities.

Why participate?

People, clubs, groups and organisations join in for lots of reasons, to reduce barriers and get to know local people, to share progress, celebrate success, raise awareness or funds for a cause in a very inclusive way. To open doors and discuss plans and ideas as part of something bigger, swapping items, skills, stories or to simply be friendly and get to know people living closest to you.

Housing associations, organisations charities, development groups and neighbours who took part in 2011 all had great stories to tell, just visit [The Big Lunch](#) on Flickr for a quick peek at some of the 2011 fun, everyone who wished had their story shared with others all over the UK and beyond, portraying a much more positive image of the Northern Ireland we live in. So join in and help make 2012 even better!

Big Jubilee Lunches

In 2012 as announced by Buckingham palace, UK communities and neighbours are encouraged to share Sunday lunch holding Big Jubilee Lunches in your streets and halls, as part of the [central weekend](#) celebrating the Queens Diamond Jubilee and you can [order a free pack](#) to get you started.

In Northern Ireland and Scotland this campaign will continue as The Big Lunch, ensuring it remains inclusive to all communities. You will be able to access normal undated Big Lunch packs – so you can have your event on any date to suit your local area; or you can order Big Jubilee Lunch packs dated Sunday 3 June 2012 and become part of the Jubilee celebrations. With the Olympic torch also travelling through the land, we've lots of reasons to party.

Planning

If you are not part of an organised group and have no experience planning a get together, remember this can be as simple as a BBQ in your garden or a few neighbours picnicing in the street, just get in touch to talk about how this could work near you.

Organised groups planning to participate with more than 50 guests perhaps making a small charge will need insurance, if you have no existing insurance, get in touch quickly for advice.

Funding

It's not too early to start planning! The Big Lunch is designed to be achievable on a shoestring and our website is packed full of ideas to help you have a memorable day in a low cost way. In 2011, 375 Big Lunches were organised in NI and only a couple were funded events. Its all part of the fun to try and make it cost as little as possible. If you believe your participation will be impossible without support, there are a small number of potential funding options available and more will be added to our website www.thebiglunch.com in the next few weeks. Funding should be applied for ASAP to allow time for consideration, but in the majority of cases it is not needed.

Matchfunding

Some funders include Awards for All Small Lottery Grants and the Co-op Community Fund.

Perhaps someone's employer offers match funding – why not ask?

Local Sponsors can provide funding why not invite them as special guests on the day?

Councils and Housing associations are doing more with less so are less able to support initiatives like this, get in touch locally to find out what's available.

Join in

No matter who you are or where you live or work, simply request your free Big Lunch or Big Jubilee Lunch Pack. It contains a wealth of information, a step-by-step guide to help you get your event off the ground, plus invitations, posters, 'crowd cooking' recipe ideas, stickers, competitions and much more.

Please get in touch if you are interested in attending our forthcoming regional launches, for more information and ideas or to receive your Free Pack, contact grainne.mccloskey@thebiglunch.com

COMMUNITY ENERGY CHALLENGE



Bringing a clean energy revolution to communities across the UK

The Community Energy Challenge is a bold new initiative by The Co-operative that will support a powerful set of community energy projects and help unleash a clean energy revolution across the UK.

The Community Energy Challenge will provide 12-18 months of enterprise development, mentorship, technical advice and community facilitation for six to eight communities, enabling them to initiate co-operative renewable energy projects at a significant scale (e.g., valued at £1-3 million and/or rated in excess of 500kW capacity). This support is being delivered by The Centre for Sustainable Energy (CSE) www.cse.org.uk on behalf of The Co-operative Group and aims to bring the selected community projects to a state of readiness for further support and investment from The Co-operative Enterprise Hub and The Co-operative Bank.

For the Community Energy Challenge, The Co-operative is seeking six to eight ambitious communities keen to develop projects that involve local people, change the way we think about energy, and inspire others to shape a renewable energy future. The Community Energy Challenge will offer a supported application process designed to help communities develop strong project proposals, even from a standing start. Lack of technical know-how should not be a barrier and communities with ambition are encouraged to apply. The Community Energy Challenge will operate a competitive bid process. All applications will be carefully evaluated and the final selection made by an expert panel. **The deadline for expressions of interest will be February 29 2012.**

The Community Energy Challenge is part of The Co-operative's Clean Energy Revolution campaign www.co-operative.coop/cleanenergy

- Saying NO to more dirty fossil fuels: calling for a moratorium on the development of shale gas in the UK and an end to the dangerous expansion of Canadian tar sands developments
- Saying YES to clean energy: supporting communities to develop renewable energy and calling on the UK Government to invest more in clean energy

Further information can be found overleaf and from February 1 2012 will be available online at www.co-operative.coop/cleanenergy. In the meantime, in the first instance please address all queries to Justin Woolford at The Change Co. on justin@thechange.co.org

Take action

say YES to clean energy

What sort of projects will be funded?

The Community Energy Challenge welcomes applications from projects that are or will be developed and owned by individuals or existing co-operatives businesses that live or work near the proposed project. Applications from housing associations, local councils and local authorities acting to deliver local benefits and involve the community in ownership and management will also be considered.

Projects will be selected primarily on the basis of the quality of their bid and the likelihood of success. Key success factors will include:

- the co-operative nature of the project;
- renewable resource availability;
- potential for carbon emission reduction;
- broad community ownership, support and involvement;
- project ambition and visibility;
- potential for replication.

The hope is to represent a mix of technologies (wind, hydro, solar PV, biomass) and a good geographical spread.

On CSE's website are some short (8 to 12 minute) films of successful community energy projects. These are all smaller projects than the ones the Community Energy Challenge is seeking to support, which is looking for even more vision and ambition! Follow the links to view the films.

Solar PV in West Oxford

<http://www.planlocal.org.uk/videos/videopages/solar-pv-in-west-oxford.html>

Biomass district heating for a small community in Sussex

<http://www.planlocal.org.uk/videos/videopages/biomass-district-heating-for-a-small-community-in-sussex.html>

A community-owned wind turbine in Hockerton, Nottinghamshire

<http://www.planlocal.org.uk/videos/videopages/a-community-owned-wind-turbine-in-hockerton-nottinghamshire.html>

A community hydro-electric scheme for Settle, North Yorkshire

<http://www.planlocal.org.uk/videos/videopages/a-community-hydro-electric-scheme-for-settle-north-yorkshire.html>

How to apply

Full details on how to apply will be available on the Community Energy Challenge web page from February 1– reachable by visiting www.co-operative.coop/cleanenergy

Energy for Children

NI Registered Charity No. XR92281

The aim of the energy for children charity where possible, is to support and provide a better standard of life for children and young persons in Northern Ireland who are in need or disadvantaged, whether materially, physically, mentally or emotionally and to help enhance their life.

The Energy for Children Charitable Trust would like to help as many projects/organisations/ individuals for the needs of children up to 18 years old in the local community.

Requests will be considered for grants up to £10,000 award and every applicant will receive an acknowledgement.

Example Grants:

- S**crabo Childrens Centre
- B**allymurphy Aspergers Youth Group
- R**athgill Learning and Resource Centre
- F**leming Fulton School
- L**isburn North Community Association
- M**idland White City Boxing Club

HOW TO APPLY

To make an application for funding to a 'local children's need' you are required to nominate through a member of the natural gas industry or a Phoenix Natural Gas employee. Contact can be made directly with the charity's Community Liaison Officer. If eligible a meeting will be arranged and an application completed between the applicant and the Community Liaison Officer. An applicant may only apply once in a 12 month period.

Each completed application will be taken forward at the Trust's next meeting and viewed in turn. The Trustees will then reach a consensus about which applications will be awarded funding, based upon the priority and availability of funds. The Trustees' decision is final. The applicant will be made aware of the Trust's decision by the Community Liaison Officer.

Contact Details:

Patricia Hunter, Phoenix Natural Gas Ltd., 197 Airport Road West, Belfast BT3 9ED

Tel: 07974700560

Fax: 028 90555500

Email: patriciahunter68@msn.com

Web: www.phoenixgroupni.com/about-the-phoenix-group/corporate-responsibility/energy-for-children-charitable-trust/