

Linksline

The Newsletter of Links: The Chesterfield and North East Derbyshire Council for Voluntary Service and Action Limited.

June 2016

Issue 157

Community Garden Opening at Eckington Library on June 3rd 2016

Links are happy to support a joint initiative by Eckington Library and Eckington Tenants & Residents Focus Group. This article is based on an information from Mandy Price, Assistant in Charge, Eckington Library. The staff at Eckington Library had ideas to turn an uncared for area at the back of the library into a Community Garden. Unfortunately there was a lot more work than they had anticipated and it may have never happened if Eckington & Tenants Focus Group had not offered to help. With a lease for the land from Derbyshire County Council they were able to apply for funding.

In February and March residents of Eckington had the opportunity to vote for the project whilst doing their shopping at Tesco, with the opportunity to be awarded either £8000, £10,000 or £12,000 with their Bags of Help scheme. The only hiccup being that they had to travel into Sheffield in order to vote. By April the group found that they had been awarded £8000. In May they had a generous donation of plants and garden items from Dobbies, as well as donations from a local businessman towards the project. Links was happy to help with advice and support on the Tesco funding application.

All of the group have worked really hard in the garden, clearing, digging, weeding and planting to turn it into a lovely space. Local Brownies have been involved in helping plant flowers in the pots in the garden. Walter (library assistant at Eckington) made some fantastic wooden planters. The official opening of the Eckington Community Garden was on Friday 3rd June (almost 40 years to the day since the library opened). It was a real celebration of hard work and determination to get the garden finished on time.



A good example of how statutory bodies and the voluntary sector can work together.



The work has not finished! Links is working with Liz Kirton from the Residents and Tenants Group to apply for funding from the Big Lottery to provide sensory plants and artefacts for people who are blind or partially sighted. Also to provide hand rails and ramps. This will make the garden more accessible to a wider section of the community.

Well done to everyone who worked so hard to provide a beautiful garden which is there for everyone to enjoy.

More photo's of the Community Garden Opening at Eckington Library can be found here:
<http://linkscvs.org.uk/sites/default/files/Community%20Garden%20Opening%20at%20Eckington%20Library%20Photos.pdf>

Links Core Service

This service is funded by Derbyshire County Council, Chesterfield Borough Council North East Derbyshire District Council and earnings by staff. It is only available to groups operating in Chesterfield and North East Derbyshire

National Minimum Wage

From April 1st it is a legal requirement for anyone aged 25 or over to be paid £7.20 per hour. The Regulations also double the financial penalties for which employers will be liable if they are found to have paid any workers below the compulsory minimum.

The other wage bands will be as follows:

- £6.70 for a worker who is aged 21 years or over (but under 25);
- £5.30 for a worker who is aged 18 years or over (but under 21 years);
- £3.87 for a worker who is aged under 18 years; and
- £3.30 for an apprentice.

The Living Wage Foundation – which recommends a higher rate of £8.25 outside London and £9.40 in the capital – has seen a spike in organisations looking to sign up.

Future changes to the national living wage will be recommended by the Low Pay Commission, with a view to increasing the rate to £9 an hour by 2020.

Statutory maternity, paternity, adoption and shared parental pay rates frozen

The Government has proposed that the annual increase in the weekly rate of statutory maternity pay, statutory paternity pay, statutory adoption pay and statutory shared parental pay will not happen in 2016.

The rates normally increase every year, but a fall in the consumer prices index has meant no uplift for 2016/17. Statutory sick pay will also remain the same.

All current and future statutory rates (where available) are listed here –

http://www.xperthr.co.uk/statutory-rates/?cmpid=ILCIPROFIHRPIO-2013-110-XHR_free_content_linksiptod_article&sfid=701w000000uNMa

Brenda Whitmore

It is with great sadness that we have to announce the death of Brenda Whitmore who worked at Links from May 1994 until March 2007. Many of you will have worked with her as Information Worker and then as Groups Adviser.

Linkslines was one of Brenda's priorities during her time at Links and in the 100th issue where she announced her retirement she acknowledged that there had been changes and she expected that there would be more.

There certainly have been changes but we hope that we have kept to her commitment to a good newsletter that "can be a very helpful service from a CVS to its member organisations". We have had a good foundation to build on.

Our condolences go to her family and friends.

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News from the Charity Commission

Have you read our reserves guidance yet?

Are you part of an effective trustee board? Has your board got a great plan for the charity's future success? Can your charity cope with any funding difficulties facing it now?

If you're not confident of these answers, you can use our checklist

'Charity governance, finance and resilience: 15 questions trustees should ask' -

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/charity-trustee-meetings-15-questions-you-should-ask> to help with these and other key questions that will help you operate effectively.

These 15 questions can help you:

- structure discussions about what your charity does and how it does it
- make sure your charity is financially secure, even in tough economic times
- develop plans and timetables for action
- demonstrate you are responding appropriately to change.

Be sure to use the links provided in the checklist to find commission guidance covering:

- strategy - opportunities and risks
- financial health
- governance, including safeguarding
- making the best use of resources

Trustees should feel supported and have help to make the right call about how much to hold in reserves, without feeling overburdened. That's **why we've updated our guidance** – <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/charities-and-reserves-cc19>, to make it clearer and more streamlined. It's important for charities to have a policy explaining their approach to reserves. We know that there is no single level or even a range of reserves that is right for all charities. Any target set by trustees for the level of reserves to be held, or decision that there is no need for reserves, should reflect the particular circumstances of the individual charity. Check our guidance for an explanation of:

- what reserves are
- the importance of having a reserves policy and how to develop one
- the legal requirements for publishing your policy and reporting on it
- what trustees should do to keep proper oversight of their charity's reserves
- the importance of reserves in maintaining your charity's activities

As regulator there is a limit on how much we can do and we understand that these are individual decisions for trustees to make. Ahead of a full review of the guidance later this year, we hope these tools will help you manage any difficulties properly and with confidence. It's also important that trustees keep their level of reserves under review throughout the year. Where a charity hasn't got the reserves it thinks it needs, it is exposed to greater risk and we would encourage trustees to address this actively.

Read more about reserves. –

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/charities-and-reserves-cc19>

Funding Information



Big Lottery Funding Seminar



Another successful funding seminar provided by Big Lottery for groups in Chesterfield and North East Derbyshire. The session on May 19th 2016 was organised by Links CVS in the Council Chamber at the Town Hall in Chesterfield. Many thanks to Chesterfield Borough Council for hiring us the room free of charge and for Wendy Blunt, Community Development Worker for the Borough for organising the refreshments.

34 delegates attended representing 24 groups, parish councils and local authorities.

Matt Rowe from Big Lottery gave a clear presentation about two of the grants, Awards 4 All and Reaching Communities.

You can read a copy of the presentation here:

<http://linkscvs.org.uk/sites/default/files/Big%20Lottery%20Presentation%2019.05.16%20Chesterfield.pdf>

There were positive responses to the seminar:

- “we know what sort of information is important and where to get assistance”
- “points of what to put into application form to make it successful”
- “new to the funding process so found all content useful”

This seminar was part of the Links Training Programme.

Future seminars include:

- NDVA – funding for health related groups in July
- Lloyds Bank Foundation – for registered charities with an income between £25,000 and £1million in September
- Derbyshire Sport– for groups involved in a range of sport and activity in October

To make sure that you receive information about our funding seminars and to receive our weekly funding bulletin sign up to our database - <http://linkscvs.org.uk/node/173>

You can also see past bulletins on the website on the funding page - <http://linkscvs.org.uk/node/12>



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Updates from voluntary organisations and community groups

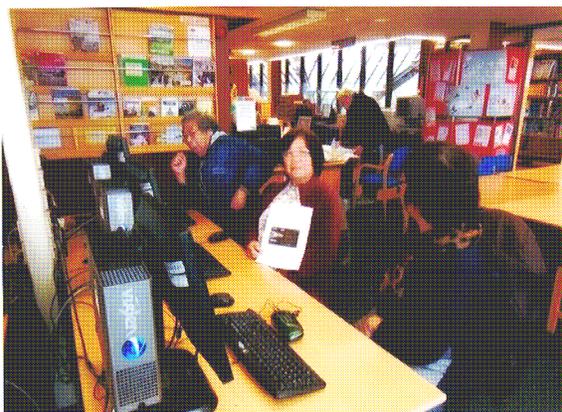
We welcome groups wanting to share their latest news such as new services, activities, and up and coming events. If you are interested please email us the information and we will try to include it in the next issue of Linkslines. However, we reserve the rights to vet any information sent to us and to refuse publishing information which may contradict Links' central value or compromise Links' charitable and company status.

Congratulations to the Following Groups who have recently received funding.

Chinese Elders Keeping in Touch Project

The group has been awarded £9,904 from The Big Lottery Awards for All grant. The group will use the funding to continue their Chinese Elders Project which includes ICT training, healthy eating sessions and recreational games for older Chinese speaking people.

This will engage beneficiaries in stimulating activities to reduce feelings of social isolation. This is their Second successful application to the Big Lottery.



More photo's of the Chinese Elders Group can be found here:

<http://linkscvs.org.uk/sites/default/files/Chinese%20Elders%20Photos.pdf>

North East Derbyshire Industrial Archaeology Society

Cliff Lea from the organisation sent us the following email:

Dear all at Links. I'd like to let you know that NEDIAS was successful in gaining funding for our next Journal, via Foundation Derbyshire who administer the Derbyshire Freemasons Fund. Many thanks to you at Links for putting me in touch with Foundation Derbyshire, and the place on their Funding Seminar. Kind regards Cliff Lea, NEDIAS

Eckington Tenants & Residents Focus Group

Funding from Tesco Bags of Help Scheme of £8,000 to develop a Community Garden at Eckington Library. See front page of Linkslines for more details.

If you are a group in Chesterfield and North East Derbyshire and would like to celebrate your group's success in gaining funding please let us know and we will include it in our next edition of Linkslines.

Keep up to date with funding by making sure you are on our database. We run seminars on funding for groups in Chesterfield and North East Derbyshire where you have a chance to speak to the funders about your ideas. Link to database form – <http://linkscvs.org.uk/node/173>



Comments on published articles & suggestions for future article topics

As a CVS (Council for Voluntary Service), we always try to ensure that our newsletter "Linkslines" is useful, informative, relevant and reflective to the needs of local voluntary organisations and community groups. Therefore, we would welcome comments on articles published and suggestions for future article topics. Please send us your comments or suggestions by post or email. Our contact details can be found on the back page of Linkslines.

Links

The Chesterfield and North East Derbyshire Council for Voluntary Service and Action Ltd.

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Groups Adviser: Sandra Pink
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Administration Assistant: Jon Wynn

Freelancers:

Velma Scott: Freelance BME Engagement Co-ordinator
Sushri Wells: Freelance BME Engagement Co-ordinator
Sarah Roy: Freelance Equality Worker

Links has as its central value a belief in equal opportunities. It recognises that many groups and individuals within society have been and continue to be discriminated against, both directly and indirectly, on the grounds of, for example, their race, nationality, ethnic or cultural origins, gender, age, disability, sexual orientation, religion, political belief, social class, employment status, low income, mental health, marital status, HIV/AIDS status, appearance, refugee status, caring responsibilities and unrelated criminal conviction.

Links recognises that passive policies are inadequate as a means of combating discrimination. It therefore commits itself to taking positive action to address barriers experienced by people who are discriminated against in the above ways.

Links is financed by Derbyshire County Council, Chesterfield Borough Council and North East Derbyshire District Council and Social Enterprise Earnings.

Linkslines is written and edited by the staff of Links. While every effort is made to check the accuracy of the information in Linkslines, no liability can be accepted for any error or omission. The opinions expressed are the views of the author and not necessarily those of Links.

Have we got your correct contact details?

If you have recently changed your contact details that are your postal address, email address or telephone number (landline and mobile) please let us know immediately.
We want to make sure that you are getting all the information that we send out.