

## Autumn 2008

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#### **Volunteer Centre Tameside**

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## Good News!

Volunteer Centre Tameside (VCT) has been successful in bidding to Capacity Builders "Improving Reach programme", a 3 year project to support Black, Minority and Ethnic volunteer recruiting organisations.

The project will offer intensive work on all areas of Volunteer Management needed to increase the capacity of organisations to recruit, train and retain volunteers thereby ensuring the sustainability of small organisations.

There are many new and emerging BME groups who have asked for help in setting up their volunteer projects. This fund will allow us to work with developing new organisations as well as the more established groups who find they need ongoing support.

The project will commence in September and the first 4 organisations to "sign up" are Tameside African Refugee Association, Kushamdid, Hyde Healthy Living Project and West African Development.

Organisations, which do not come under the BME heading, will continue to benefit from the Building Bridges Gold Star project that also offers support and advice on Good Practice in Volunteer Management.



# Volunteer Centre Tameside gets a Gold Star

Volunteer Centre Tameside's Building Bridges project has been held up as a shining example for its work with volunteers from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Volunteer Centre Tameside has been included in a guide to help voluntary organisations across the country work successfully with volunteers from socially excluded backgrounds, including people with no qualifications, people from BME groups and those with disabilities or long term illnesses.

The guide, published by volunteering initiative, Goldstar, was launched in earlier in the year by Phil Hope, Minister for the Voluntary Sector, at the Goldstar National Conference in Birmingham.

Building Bridges works with disabled volunteers and offers them the extra support needed to enable them to volunteer. Volunteer recruiting organisations are also offered training and ongoing capacity building support in order for them to best support volunteers in their organisation. The aim of the project is to remove as many barriers surrounding disability, as possible for both volunteers and organisations, which benefits everyone involved, including the community as a whole.

"Volunteering has helped me build some new skills and given me a great deal of confidence. I now help to deliver a service rather than sitting at home waiting for help from other people"  
Quote from Joan, one of our many volunteers.

The Good Practice Handbook is available from [www.goldstar.com](http://www.goldstar.com), and through VCT's website, [www.tamesidevb.org.uk](http://www.tamesidevb.org.uk).

If you want to find out about volunteering or how VCT can support your organisation then get in touch on **0161 339 2345** or via the website.

# Leadership Required

Are you a supporter of the voluntary sector? Do you value its independence, creativity and commitment? Do you believe it has a major role to play in the economic and social welfare of the people of Greater Manchester? Would you like to see it getting a fair share of resources and punching its weight with the policy makers?

Greater Manchester Centre for Voluntary Organisation (GMCVO) is seeking six Board members for election at our AGM on 27th October 2008. This is an exciting time for GMCVO which is developing a diverse range of work aimed at the promotion, representation and development of the voluntary/third sector of Greater Manchester in the context of the emerging city region.

For an application pack, more information about what is involved please Tanya Coutts (Operations Manager) on **0161 277 1002**.

# Volunteer Centre Tameside 2008/09 Training Calendar

**Managing Volunteers** - October 2nd  
**Public Speaking** - November 6th  
**Dealing with Difficult Behaviour** - December 4th  
**Motivate and Retain Volunteers** - January 8th  
**Risk Assessment** - February 5th  
**Recruiting Volunteers** - March 5th  
**Learning Disability Awareness** - April 2nd  
**Support and Supervision** - May 9th  
**Cultural Awareness** - June 4th  
**Presentation Skills** - July 2nd

To book on any of these courses, or for more information on these or any other training requirements your organisation may have contact David or Riona on **0161 339 2345**.

# Train to Gain

The Learning and Skills Council service 'Train to Gain' is designed to help people and organisations get the training they need to succeed.

For organisations, the Train to Gain service aims to help leaders improve their productivity and competitiveness by ensuring their staff have the right skills to do the best job.

The Training Grant is 'match funding' so any financial contribution you make from the organisation can be matched with further grant money, to a maximum of £1000. The development and learning activity **MUST** enhance your leadership and/or management skills and have a positive impact on the organisation. It may be a traditional formal 'programme', course or qualification or a range of development activities such as coaching, mentoring or action learning or purchase of relevant learning resources such as books or CD-ROMs. The funding does not include technical training such as IT skills.

The scheme has recently received a doubling of funding and will now seek to extend the service to volunteers working in the third sector. Phil Hope, Minister for the Third Sector said "In extending Train to Gain to volunteers we are giving new opportunities to thousands of people to gain new skills, enabling them to contribute fully to a fairer and stronger society".

The Learning and Skills Council Train to Gain Service provides impartial, independent advice on training to businesses across England. It can help organisations improve their productivity and competitiveness by ensuring that employees have the right skills to do the best job. Train to Gain gives you access to a Skills Broker who will carry out a needs analysis of training within your organisation and help you assess what skills your organisation has now and what you will need in the future. Find out how Train to Gain can benefit your organisation by asking to be referred by your Adviser.

Email: [information@traintogainnw.co.uk](mailto:information@traintogainnw.co.uk) or tel: 0845 602 0062



“...good leadership and management is key to innovation and growth...”

## Voluntary and Charity Sector Studies

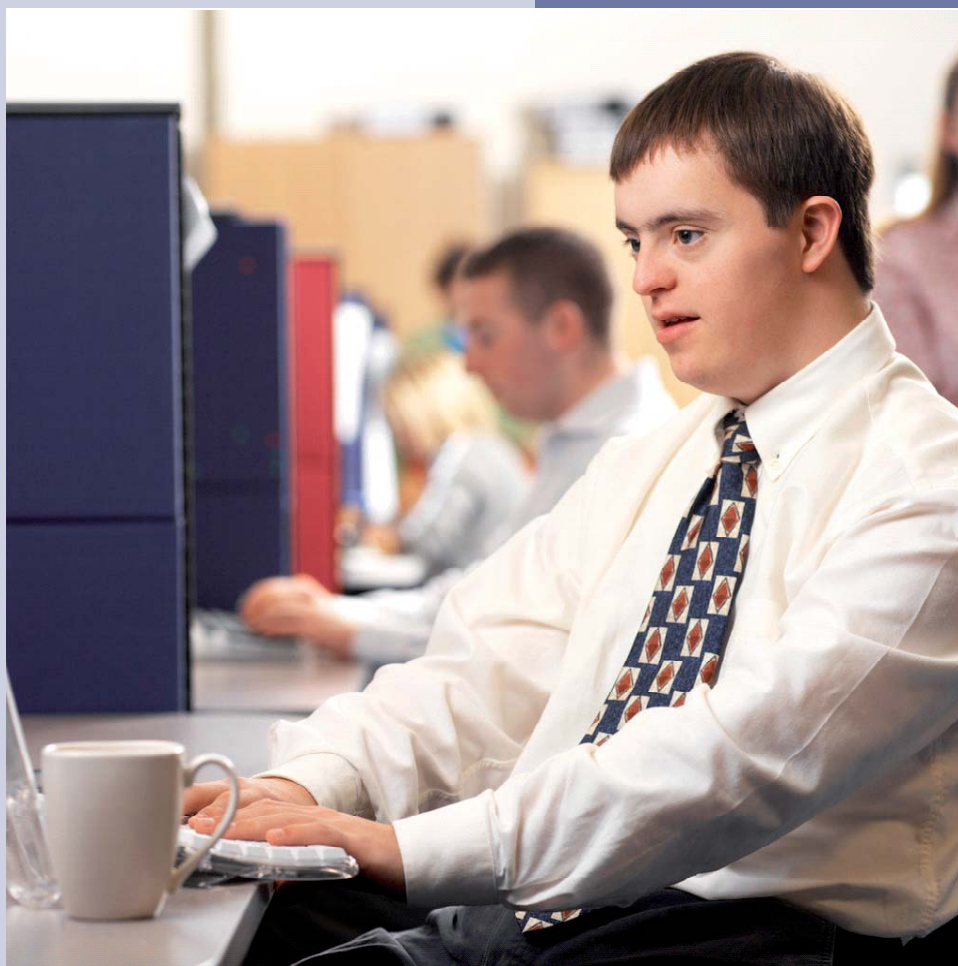
Interpersonal communication lies at the heart of all human social behaviour, but not everyone has the ability to communicate effectively. Volunteers and paid workers require a range of communication skills to deal with a variety of situations. The skills that enable people to cope with interpersonal events successfully, so that all involved feel respected and valued, can easily be learned.

The Certificate in Interpersonal Skills for Volunteers aims to facilitate students' learning of these skills, whilst they simultaneously acquire the knowledge to recognise and develop their existing communication skills. The course employs an experiential approach to learning, which means that students use experiences from their roles in the voluntary sector to aid their learning rather than background reading. This course offers the opportunity to gain recognition by formal validation through a series of written assignments which encourage students to reflect on their role in the voluntary sector.

At the moment the course is available free of charge for UK and EU residents who do not hold (and are not currently studying for) a degree or higher qualification. The course is part-time distance learning with no exams. We have monthly start dates and our tutor support is second to none. The course is fully accredited by the University of Wales and can lead to a BA Degree in Voluntary Sector Studies.

If you would like to know more then please visit our website: [www.volstudy.ac.uk](http://www.volstudy.ac.uk), or phone us on 01570 424785.

“...communication lies at the heart of all human social behaviour...”



# Volunteering: the Spirit of the Age?

Stemming from the Government's mainly positive reaction to Manifesto for Change and the recent report by Baroness Neuberger's Commission on the Future of Volunteering; Volunteering England's recent convention found the future looking hopeful. The Office of the Third Sector is putting £2m into a new fund to help disabled people access volunteering and £4m into the training of volunteers and volunteer managers.

There's also cross-party consensus about the importance of volunteering, third sector minister Phil Hope and his shadows from the two other main parties all made the trip to the conference in Newcastle. Phil Hope, Minister for the Third Sector told the convention that volunteering was "in a stronger place" than three years ago. His Conservative shadow Greg Clark quoted William Beveridge on how voluntary action characterises a free society, and Susan Kramer, the recently appointed Lib Dem counterpart, spoke of volunteers providing the "social glue" of communities.

Justin Davis Smith, Chief Executive of Volunteering England mentioned what he saw as the challenges for volunteering, starting with inclusivity and diversity. The Government's new access fund would help, he said, but getting all sections of society involved remained difficult. He later went on to question whether enough money was going into volunteering infrastructure, one recurrent topic among delegates was the difficulties faced by local volunteering centres, which are not centrally funded and rely on other funding in their area. The result is patchy provision that is strong in some places, but fragile in others.

In what seemed to be a veiled reference to the Government's £117m funding of youth volunteering charity v, Greg Clark referred to the "logo, launch and lunch" syndrome. "The Government should trust people to say what the money should be spent on, not launch new schemes all the time to replace old ones," he said.

Kath Patton from the Volunteer Centre Newcastle said the centre had lost most of its funding, which had now gone to Changemakers and the Volunteer Centre in Gateshead, and that most of her organisation's staff had been made redundant. "Now v is going to come to us and ask us for input, or to work in partnership with it, when we can't because we've now got such a reduced capacity," she said.

Whatever the gripes, Volunteering England is taking advantage of a political tide in its favour, and is setting up six groups, with high-profile chairs, to take forward the 21 recommendations of Manifesto for Change. Of the six, it looks at the moment as if the most tricky one will be modernising infrastructure, which struggles to get any new Government money.

