

REGIONAL BULLETIN: LONDON

WELCOME

Welcome to the first edition of the Capacitybuilders' newsletter. This regional bulletin is intended to provide more information on what is happening across the London region with Capacitybuilders' and the ChangeUp programme.

The Newsletter will be produced around 3 times per year and will be supplemented with regional bulletins; the next edition will be out in November/December. We welcome suggestions for articles and content; in particular on areas of sharing best practice, so please do get in touch if you would like to contribute.

THE ROLE OF A REGIONAL COORDINATOR

Jill Walsh is the Regional Coordinator covering the London region. Jill worked in the voluntary and community sector in London for sixteen years before joining the Association for London Government (ALG) as ChangeUp Policy and Grants Officer. She has already met and worked with many of the Infrastructure Investment consortia and is looking forward to continuing to work on the ChangeUp programme with Capacitybuilders.

The Regional Coordinator role acts as the link between Capacitybuilders and ChangeUp initiatives, and they have been described by Simon Hebditch as ambassadors of Capacitybuilders and advocates of the voluntary and community sector. Broadly, this translates into two key functions:

- Providing a communication link between Capacitybuilders, Consortia and other ChangeUp stakeholders.
- Working with stakeholders to maximise the impact of the ChangeUp programme and Capacitybuilders' grants programmes on a regional, sub-regional and local level.

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EXAMPLES OF CHANGEUP PROJECTS FUNDED IN THE REGION

EALING COMMUNITY ACCOMMODATION PROJECT

During consultation of their draft ChangeUp Plan, a lack of affordable accommodation emerged as a top priority issue for Ealing groups. In response to this need, Ealing Consortia are using ChangeUp funding to develop a **Community Accommodation Project**, comprising of four linked elements:

- The *Community Premises Directory* aimed at identifying available premises in each area of the borough;
- The *Premises Information and Advice Pack*, highlighting good practice advice on matters such as leases, licenses, health and safety and insurance;
- The *Shaping Communities* pilot scheme, in conjunction with Ealing Council Planning Department, aimed at using IT to increase community organisations' involvement in major planning applications; and
- The *Ealing Community Accommodation Strategy* aimed at addressing long-term premises needs of voluntary groups in the borough.

For further information about the Ealing Community Accommodation Project, please visit www.ealingcvs.org.uk

SUPPORTING VCS INVOLVEMENT IN LOCAL AREA AGREEMENTS

Local Area Agreements (LAAs) have been negotiated between local partnerships and central government, setting local targets for government funding. The voluntary and community sector need to be key strategic local partners in these agreements, to ensure that targets reflect local need and that services commissioned under LAAs are open to the voluntary and community sector (VCS).

Using ChangeUp funding, a project was designed to support VCS engagement with LAAs which has been rolled out in three tranches between April 2005 and April 2007, with 'Round 3' LAAs being developed in 2006/7. The initial tranche of funding for 2005/06;

- Lead to the establishment of a range of activities to support VCS engagement;
- Provided research on this engagement, which was used to make recommendations for the future; and
- Financed an event for Local Authority and VCS organisations to share experiences

Continuation funding for 'Round 3' LAAs has been used on a number of activities including, recruiting VCS mentors to support their engagement, running a launch event for 'Round 3' LAAs and providing training to support LAA development.

Further details of the project are available on www.lvsc.org.uk/laa