

# REGIONAL BULLETIN: NORTH EAST OF ENGLAND

## WELCOME

The Capacitybuilders' regional bulletin is intended to provide more information on what is happening across the North East of England region with Capacitybuilders and the ChangeUp programme. It will form part of the Newsletter which will be produced around 3 times per year. The next edition of the Newsletter 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

**Neil Bennett** and **Sandra Beighton** are the Regional Coordinators for the North East, Yorkshire and Humber region. Neil has joined Capacitybuilders from his previous role at the Government Office, having been seconded for the past 12 months to coordinate the ChangeUp programme in Yorkshire and Humber, and prior to that as Director for the Council of Voluntary Service. Sandra has spent a number of years in the voluntary and community sector, most recently working with partners to improve health and social care services in Yorkshire.

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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## **NEW REGIONAL RESEARCH**

The Voluntary Organisations Network North East (VONNE) has been responsible for facilitating the region-wide consortium and implementing a development plan for the region. VONNE recently commissioned four pieces of research on behalf of the Region-wide Consortium for ChangeUp which had been prioritised within the regional development plan.

The four research projects have all been completed and will be available from the VONNE website [www.vonne.co.uk](http://www.vonne.co.uk). Further developments aiming to address the issues and recommendations from the research will be carried out by the Region-wide Consortium over the coming months. The regional research projects included:

### **Performance Improvement and Governance**

Commissioned by the Foundation for Good Governance, the aim was to identify and report on the relevant issues relating to performance and governance within the VCS especially as they relate to groups working at the regional level.

### **Representation**

Commissioned by Diane Jones with the aim to identify and report on relevant issues relating to representation of the VCS at a regional level and identify sector representation opportunities.

### **Signposting**

Commissioned by Geoff Walker with the aim to provide accessible information on which infrastructure organisations do what for whom, by compiling a regional infrastructure organisation online directory, to be launched in the Summer. The web based directory ([www.nevoldirect.org.uk](http://www.nevoldirect.org.uk)) would enable keyword and category searches and link to national, sub-regional and local equivalents with the potential to develop and expand in the future.



### **Best Practice Review**

This piece of work included examples of initiatives from the sub regional and region-wide consortia. It was commissioned by ARK 19 and Regeneration Exchange to explore 23 case studies. This project aimed to identify and highlight areas of good practice as well as issues facing the VCS organisations involved in ChangeUp. The report will enable the sharing of good practice, inform the further regional development and support the case for funding of infrastructure within the North East.

The Best Practice Report will be launched at a regional event in the near future. The launch will include guest speakers from Capacitybuilders and workshops from the featured projects. Details and booking forms of this event will be available from VONNE shortly.