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## Update on training and education initiatives for the voluntary sector in Wales

February 2007

### **The Voluntary Sector Workforce Hub (WFH) in Wales**

*Workforce development conference 2007 – shaping the future*

Thursday 8 March  
Holiday Inn, Cardiff

This conference is aimed at both those whose remit is to contribute to, shape and/or deliver local, regional and national learning agendas, and those who have responsibility for developing staff and volunteers within their organisations.

The aim of the day is to offer participants an opportunity to learn about:

- What is shaping workforce development in Wales
- What are the implications for the sector
- How the sector can influence and contribute to policy and programme development at local, regional and national levels
- Initiatives and practical ways in which voluntary organisations can support and develop their staff

Workshop sessions include:

- Investors in People
- A competency-based approach to workforce development
- Growing your own – learning from others
- Strategic frameworks
- Investing in Volunteers
- Mentoring and action learning
- Sector Skills Councils in Wales

For further information and booking details, visit [www.wcva.org.uk/training](http://www.wcva.org.uk/training)

## **Update on Sector Skills Councils activity (SSCs) in Wales**

### *Sector Skills Agreements*

Sector Skills Agreements (SSAs) are fundamentally altering the way skills are demanded, delivered and developed throughout the UK. They map out exactly what skills employers need their workforce to have and how these skills will be supplied – both now and in the future.

SSAs are facilitated by the network of Sector Skills Councils (SSCs) but are signed up to by everyone who supplies, funds and plans education and training. SSAs are created by a five stage process involving SSCs, trade associations, employer bodies and organisations that supply and fund education and training. The final outcome is an agreement of how the SSC and employers will work with key funding partners to secure the necessary supply of training for the sector.

SkillsActive, the SSC for active leisure have issued their SSA for Wales. For further information please visit [www.skillsactive.com](http://www.skillsactive.com)

### *Lantra*

#### **Funding for volunteers to develop their skills**

Are you an environmental conservation volunteer in Wales and want to improve your skills? If so, 30% grant support is now available to help with the cost of training, through the Countryside Skills Project.

The project, managed by Lantra, the Sector Skills Council for the environmental and land-based sector, will support a variety of courses including dry stone walling, hedge-laying, coppicing, tree planting, pond creation and management, bracken control, pollarding, pruning and grafting of orchard trees and the creation and management of new public access routes.

Volunteers need to be 16 years or over and volunteering for an organisation or business in Wales to be eligible for the grant.

“The project promotes the importance of countryside skills and is already benefiting people working in the environmental field, helping to improve existing skills as well as giving people the opportunity to learn new ones,” says Lantra Regional Partnership Manager, Hefin Hughes.

For further information on the project and how to claim support please call Hefin Hughes on 01766 819016 or 07867 908 185 or email [hefin.hughes@lantra.co.uk](mailto:hefin.hughes@lantra.co.uk)

### *Skills for Justice*

#### **Skills summit 2007**

7 March 2007  
Hilton Hotel, Coventry

Skills summit 2007 is the only conference that brings together a range of organisations from across the Justice sector to debate and discuss the skills agenda.

Skills summit 2007 will provide a unique opportunity to:

- hear from leading figures in the UK Justice sector
- discuss skills needs and set future priorities for workforce development
- identify ways of working more closely on skills issues
- share information and good practice
- network with colleagues from across the Justice sector

To register for this event, please see the Skills for Justice website [www.skillsforjustice.com](http://www.skillsforjustice.com)

### *Skills for Care and Development*

#### **Development of National Occupational Standards for commissioning, procurement and contracting for the social care, children's and young people's workforces**

Skills for Care and Development is developing National Occupational Standards for commissioning, procurement and contracting. The development work began in August 2006 and is scheduled to conclude in June 2007. During this period, there are opportunities to participate in consultation events throughout Wales.

For further information on these events please visit [www.ccwales.org.uk](http://www.ccwales.org.uk) or contact [commissioningandcontracting@ccwales.org.uk](mailto:commissioningandcontracting@ccwales.org.uk)

#### **News from Department of Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills (DELLS)**

##### *DELLS/Voluntary Sector Compact Liaison group*

Following a meeting between Steve Marshall, Director of DELLS and Graham Benfield, Chief Executive of WCVA, DELLS have committed to re-establishing the partnership, widening its remit to incorporate all policy areas across the education spectrum to include children and schools, qualifications and curriculum, lifelong learning and skills, and higher learning.

The first meeting of the DELLS/Voluntary Sector Compact Liaison group was held in Cardiff on 29 January 2007 to look at developing close working links to benefit voluntary sector employers, training providers and learners themselves.

A matrix of how and where the sector contributes to the Welsh Assembly Government's learning and skills agendas at local, regional and national levels in Wales will be drawn up and individuals and organisations from the sector will be invited to represent particular areas of interest at future meetings.

A funding sub-group has also been established, its remit being to consider current funding mechanisms for the voluntary sector and make recommendations to the Compact Liaison Group of appropriate funding systems for the voluntary sector, which will in turn be submitted to DELLS Executive Director.

Contact Kate Thomas, Training Manager on 029 2043 1715 or [klthomas@wcva.org.uk](mailto:klthomas@wcva.org.uk) for further information.

## Other news

### *Review of Further Education in Wales*

Jane Davidson, Minister for Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills has announced an independent review of Further Education in Wales.

*“The review will be holistic and incorporate an analysis not just of Further Education Institutions, but an evaluation of the wider role of the sector in relation to post sixteen developments, 14-19 Learning Pathways, higher education, workplace learning, and the Leitch review.”*

*“It will consider the extent to which FE institutions should focus on economically useful skills; the extent to which they should specialise; efforts to improve quality; the place of self regulation and other measures to streamline governance; the diverse nature of the sector; workforce development initiatives; and how best to monitor the views of students on a regular basis and to publish the results.”*

The review is expected to take a broad “whole system” view of future needs and systems and will look at all elements of provision within post-14 lifelong learning, including the interfaces between colleges, schools, community and voluntary sector, adult learning, employees, private training providers, and higher education.

The scope of the Review includes all further education and will specifically focus on:

- the functions currently exercised by publicly funded bodies in respect of further education and training;
- the efficacy and cost effectiveness of these functions;
- what functions and priorities should be exercised in the future and the priority placed on them;
- the mechanisms for how these functions should be discharged; and
- the development of the workforce.

The Review Panel, led by Sir Adrian Webb, is particularly interested in gauging views as to how we can meet the **future** learning needs of individuals, society and the economy in Wales, as well as identifying current strengths and weakness within the FE sector. Comments must be received by 31 March 2007.

You can find the consultation document on the Assembly’s website at:

[new.wales.gov.uk/consultations/currentconsultation/educat\\_skills/1237909/?lang=en](http://new.wales.gov.uk/consultations/currentconsultation/educat_skills/1237909/?lang=en)  
[new.wales.gov.uk/consultations/currentconsultation/educat\\_skills/1237909/?lang=cy](http://new.wales.gov.uk/consultations/currentconsultation/educat_skills/1237909/?lang=cy)

For more details email [WEBBReview@wales.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:WEBBReview@wales.gsi.gov.uk) or contact Julie Matthews or Arwyn Williams on 01443 663 890 or at the email address above.

## *2007 Conference: Learndirect; Improving skills in Wales*

28 February 2007  
Cardiff Village Hotel, Cardiff

Ufi Cymru is pleased to invite you to their 2007 Conference: **learndirect**; Improving skills in Wales, which will take place at the Cardiff Village Hotel, Wales on 28 February 2007.

The ambition of Ufi Cymru over the next five years is to support the learning agenda in Wales by focusing on basic skills, skills for employability and courses that lead to progression and qualifications.

The conference will bring together delivery partners and stakeholders to showcase successful elements of **learndirect** delivery in Wales, demonstrate effective partnership working, and celebrate the successes of **learndirect** in Wales to date.

The event aims to highlight the possibilities offered by **learndirect** in enabling individuals to access learning irrespective of their physical location and time constraints. Since 2000, more than 100,000 learners in Wales have engaged with **learndirect** to gain new skills and new confidence. Examples of effective **learndirect** delivery in FE Colleges, community organisations, Prisons, the PCS Union, SMEs and large employers will be shared at the conference.

The keynote speaker will be Steve Marshall; Director of the Department for Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills, Welsh Assembly Government.

## *Regeneration Hub Conference*

13 March 2007  
Glamorgan Business Centre, University of Glamorgan

The conference marks the launch of the Regeneration Hub, a multi-disciplinary network of experts in regeneration practice, research and policy at the University of Glamorgan. The conference will examine a number of issues in contemporary regeneration that will be of interest to community organisations.

For full details and booking form contact Louise Rees on 01443 654535 or [lrees@glam.ac.uk](mailto:lrees@glam.ac.uk)

## *EU Lifelong Learning Programme 2007-2013*

In December 2006 the European Commission published the first call for proposals for its new Lifelong Learning Programme, which will run from 2007-2013. The Lifelong Learning Programme comprises four programmes on school education (Comenius), higher education (Erasmus), vocational training (Leonardo da Vinci) and adult education (Grundtvig), and is complemented by a transversal programme focusing on policy co-operation, languages, information and communication technology and dissemination and exploitation of results.

Two of these new programmes will be of significant interest to voluntary and community organisations: **Leonardo da Vinci** and **Grundtvig**.

**Leonardo da Vinci** promotes mobility, innovation, and quality of training through transnational partnership – co-operation between various players in vocational training, such as training bodies,

vocational schools, universities, businesses, and chambers of commerce. See [www.leonardo.org.uk](http://www.leonardo.org.uk). The deadline for the first call for proposals is 30 March 2007.

The aim of the **Grundtvig** programme is to improve the quality and strengthen the European dimension of adult education of a non-vocational nature by means of European co-operation activities of various kinds, thereby helping to make better lifelong learning opportunities more widely available to Europe's citizens. The European Commission provides funding to promote exchanges of experiences and the development of a European dimension in all sectors of adult education. See [http://ec.europa.eu/education/programmes/socrates/grundtvig/index\\_en.html](http://ec.europa.eu/education/programmes/socrates/grundtvig/index_en.html). The deadline for first call for proposals is 30 March 2007.

### *PQASSO publication - PQASSO in Practice*

A brand new publication is available for voluntary and community agencies interested in how PQASSO can strengthen their organisation. PQASSO in Practice provides an overview of the system, introducing the twelve quality areas and different levels of achievement. It describes the self-assessment process, which is the essence of how PQASSO works, and the elements involved in getting started and keeping motivated with PQASSO.

PQASSO in Practice is priced £7.95 and available to order from [www.ces-vol.org.uk](http://www.ces-vol.org.uk)

### *Adult Learners Week*

Adult Learners Week is fast approaching and once again NIACE Dysgu Cymru are working with Newspaper's across Wales to provide FREE advertising and promotion for Bite-Size Tasters and events in your area. If you are planning an event or a course less than 10 weeks, download the form from [www.alweek.org](http://www.alweek.org) and return it by the deadline of 30 March 2007.

The website also has a range of promotional material, most of which is available for free.

Also, if you're planning to apply for a **Learning Promotion Grant** then the deadline for applications is 2 March, or if you want to nominate a Learner for the **Inspire! Adult Learner Awards 2007** then the deadline for nominations is 26 March.

### *Continuing and Professional Development: Working with Young People*

Everyone is welcome to participate in the trial of this new process; giving you the chance to contribute to shaping this sector-wide CPD process.

Most professional bodies have been asking for evidence of continuing professional development as a basic requirement of their members for many years as they increasingly recognising the benefits of adopting a planned and structured approach to the maintenance and upgrading of their skills. This should not be different from a youth work perspective even taking into account the voluntary and part-time nature of the workforce within the service.

It is now important to assess whether this CPD process meets the needs of staff across whole sector and within individual organisations.

To get the most complete picture possible we are welcoming participation from experienced and new practitioners, those already undertaking CPD at work and those new to the process.

Anyone wishing to take part will need to complete a registration form which will ensure you are updated with any new developments.

For further information and to download the registration form, visit:

<http://new.wales.gov.uk/topics/educationandskills/educationskillsnews/continuingandprofdevelopment>

## **WCVA news**

### *Events diary*

A new events diary for the third sector has been launched on the WCVA website.

It can be accessed from the WCVA home page by clicking **diary** (in the orange area just under the logo) or by using the following link [www.wcva.org.uk/diary](http://www.wcva.org.uk/diary)

Anyone from any organisation can add an event to the diary, which will be moderated by the WCVA Help Unit before appearing live in the on-line diary.

So if you know of any voluntary sector events happening in Wales and they don't appear in the diary, then please add them. To do this click **Add an event** and enter as much information as you can. We need as many events added as possible to make this the definitive voluntary sector events diary in Wales.

### *New Helpdesk number*

WCVA Helpdesk has a new number. It can now be reached on 0800 2888 329 or by email on [help@wcva.org.uk](mailto:help@wcva.org.uk)

### *Volunteer of the Year Award 2007*

We are now promoting and receiving nominations for this year's Volunteer of the Year award.

There are five categories in which people can nominate:

- Adult (over 25 years)
- Young person (under 25 years)
- Group (two or more individuals, whether as an informal group or a formally constituted organisation)
- Trustee
- 'Green' volunteer (any age, volunteering with an environmental project or organisation)

The closing date for nominations is Friday 13 April 2007. Each eligible nominee will receive a certificate of commendation. For further information and nomination form, please visit

[www.wcva.org.uk/volunteering](http://www.wcva.org.uk/volunteering)