

Equality & Diversity Update

November 2007



Welcome

Welcome to the Equality and Diversity Update, the newsletter of the Regional Strategic Partnership for Equality and Diversity, which provides a brief update on current developments and details of forthcoming events.

Partnership Activity Update

The Equality and Diversity Partnership will next meet in January. The agenda and papers for this meeting will be available from www.wmra.gov.uk/equalities. Further information on the work of the Partnership can be found at www.wmra.gov.uk/equalities

West Midlands Regional Assembly Annual Conference

This Conference will take place at Villa Park on **28th January 2008**. It will seek to explore how stakeholders of the West Midlands can work better together to promote the region's successes. The Conference also aims to explore the implications to regional governance structures in the light of the Sub National Review and the opportunities available to put in place structures which best meet the needs of the West Midlands.

Keynote Speaker – Liam Byrne MP (Hodge Hill), Minister for the West Midlands Region.

To book your place, please complete the booking form at www.wmra.gov.uk

Equality and Human Rights Commissioners Appointed

Harriet Harman, Minister for Women and Equality has announced the appointments of Maeve Sherlock, OBE and Joel Edwards as Commissioners for the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC). Maeve Sherlock, was formerly Chief Executive of the Refugee Council and Treasury Adviser on employment, child poverty and the Third Sector. Joel Edwards has served on a number of faith, government and public agency advisory groups and is currently, amongst other roles, the General Director of the Evangelical Alliance. The two new Commissioners will join the fourteen strong team of Commissioners already appointed to the Commission led by Chair, Trevor Phillips and Deputy Chair Margaret Prosser.

Barriers for Ethnic Minority Women Councillors: New Research Findings

A report recently published by the Fawcett Society and the Government Equalities Office reveals that ethnic minority women still face too many barriers to becoming councillors. It has found that ethnic minority women councillors are passionate about improving local communities and want to use their expertise on the issues facing ethnic minority women. They are motivated to become councillors by a desire to 'put the world right', taking pride in their abilities to make a difference by helping others.

Initial findings of the Routes to Power research project can be found at www.fawcettsociety.org.uk/index.asp?PageID=546

FaithReach Access to Resources Event: Herefordshire Worcestershire

This event will take place on **30th November** by the West Midlands Faiths Forum FaithReach Project, in Partnership with ChangeUp Consortia, is holding a FREE 'Access to Resources' Event. The day will be packed with information and resources to help faith-based organisations develop community projects and will also provide an opportunity to meet local support providers and find out what's happening in your area.

This event will also be held in Staffordshire and Solihull, details available soon. For further information please contact Angelina Jetson Faithreach Project Officer at Angelina.Jetson@wmfaiths.org.uk

Enterprise Conference 2007: Wolverhampton

This event on **3rd December**, will celebrate, debate and disseminate the role of entrepreneurship in addressing disadvantage and providing a route into economic activity. For more details, visit www.enterpriseconference.co.uk

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Women from New Communities: Regional Event

This free event focusing on issues experienced by women from refugee, asylum seeking and new migrant backgrounds has come out of the work of the new Regional Refugee Women's Issues Group to address the need for better information on rights in the West Midlands. It will take place on **5 December** from 9.30am – 2.30pm at Carrs Lane Church Centre in Birmingham with support from Birmingham Health and Well-being Partnership. For more information, please contact Cindie Johnstone at c.johnstone@wmlga.gov.uk or on 0121 678 1043.

Play England Seminars

Play and Health: Investigating the links.

Play England is running a FREE national policy seminar on **6th December** in Birmingham to investigate the potential for joint work between the play sector and children's health services. The seminar will bring together key health professionals and the play sector to explore how they can work in partnership, to ensure links between play, physical activity and obesity strategies.

Play England will also be running an event on 10th December in Uttoxeter to promote good practice and to debate equality in play.

RegenWM: West Midlands Regeneration Convention,

On **26th November** over 300 regeneration practitioners are expected to attend the Masterclasses at this conference which will also include a panel of regional leaders, national speakers, including Ian Pearson MP, Minister of State for Science & Innovation, John Grimshaw, Sustrans Chief Executive, Waheed Saleem, the Sustainable Development Commissioner and Stephen Karle, Chief Executive of the West Bromwich Building Society. The winners of RegenWMs 2007 prizes will also be announced on the day. Booking forms are available to download from www.regenwm.org

EU Connects: Simplifying the Route to Trans-national Funding

EU Connects is the new regional resource for the West Midlands offering advice and support to assist organisations in applying for European funding to deliver trans-national projects.

It aims to improve the quality of bids from organisations in the West Midlands; as well the success rate of bids and the amount of EU funds coming into the region. In addition it will help with the dissemination of practical and policy lessons learned, and build the profile of the West Midlands on the European Stage.

EU Connects offers assistance at each stage in the project cycle:-

Getting Started

- Explanation of trans-national funds: how relevant are they to your priorities?
- Advice and guidance on funding deadlines
- Training courses on project bid writing
- Open days and surgeries

Ideas into Action

- One-to-One advice to develop project ideas
- Second opinion on draft bids
- Help with finding European (and/or local) project partners
- Funded preparatory visit to meet your partners and discuss projects

Tools for Delivery

- Training and advice on project management / budget planning
- Help with impact assessments / report writing / audit returns / closure
- Good practice seminars to share experience across the region

For more information contact Julia Speht, EU Connects Project Manager at j.speht@wmra.gov.uk or on 0121 245 0180.

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Age Concern England: New Regional Offices

Age Concern England has established a new regional office at the Regional Partnership Centre in Birmingham with manager Steven Blick, who is also a member of the Equality & Diversity Partnership. The purpose of its work is to support and guide the 37 independent and autonomous Age Concern organisations and groups in the region in their work with a clear focus on older people's needs and aspirations with the support and sustainability which Age Concern can provide. It will also enhance Age Concern's policy and influencing work at a regional and sub-regional level and champion for better services for older people.

Big Lottery Funding Success: 'Fit as a Fiddle'

Age Concern England has been awarded £15m from the Big Lottery's Health and Well-Being Fund. This has provided the region with £1.25m over the next 5 years to enable it to implement two projects in partnership with a range of organisations across the region including PCT's, NHS Trusts, Health Professionals, GP practices, Horticultural Colleges, the Probation Service, Local Authorities and County Councils.

If you would like to find out more about the work of Age Concern England, Age Concerns or the 'Fit as a Fiddle' project please contact Steven Blick, Regional Manager on steve.blick@ace.org.uk or 0121 245 0177.

The Big Knit

Age Concern have joined forces with Sainsbury's knitting little hats for *innocent smoothie* bottles – for every one sold, *innocent* and Sainsbury's will give 50p to Age Concern. The target of 400,000 hats will raise £200,000 to help keep older people warm this winter.

Almost 25,000 older people died of cold related illnesses last winter. Age Concern will use the money to provide support to older people in winter, including hot meals, blankets and advice on how to keep their houses warm.



50p from every smoothie with hat sold goes to **AGE Concern**

2007 Social Footprints Symposium

This free event will be held at the International Convention Centre in Birmingham on **11th December 2007** from 9.15 – 4.30 pm.

Speakers from national and international companies will be sharing their Corporate Social Responsibility knowledge and experience. Key speakers include Simon Topman, Vice President of British Chambers of Commerce, Robin Landman, Chief Executive of The Network For Black Professionals, local broadcaster Sue Beardsmore, Bill Giles OBE, Carole Spiers of the Carole Spiers Group, and Dr Theodore Zeldin. Places can be booked online at <http://www.apricot-events.com/csr07.htm>

Climate Change is a Cultural Issue: Event in Birmingham

Climate Change is a challenge that is currently high on most organisations' agendas be they political, social or environmental. The cultural sector is no exception. Individual cultural agencies and organisations have made some progress, and now wish to do so one.

Culture West Midlands is looking to bring this work together through an inaugural symposium on **5th December** on the effects of climate change on the cultural sector. A panel discussion will, for the first time, bring together specialists from across the cultural and environmental sectors to tease out the issues and begin to identify areas of joint responsibility. To book your place visit www.culturewm.org.uk

Contact

If you would like further information about the issues raised or to disseminate information through this newsletter, please contact Cassie Manly at c.manly@wmra.gov.uk or on 0121 678 1077.