



LOMBE MWAMBA
introducing
hackney's
francophone
community



HCVS
adiaha antigha
community
achievement
award winners



NEWS FROM THE SECTOR
african arts
project opens its
doors

HCVS magazine for Hackney's voluntary and community sector

SPARK



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- Hackney Refugee Forum
- Looking for new CEN reps
- events diary
- youth crime
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supporting the VCS to shape policy
Community Empowerment Network

who's who at HCVS

Put a face to the name! Here are details for our team here at HCVS. If you have a question about any of our services, please give us a call on 020 7923 1962, email info@hcv.org.uk or drop in to our offices at 84 Springfield House, 5 Tyssen Street London E8 2LY where you can also use our computers for free!

General enquiries, Event bookings, Conference room and desk space hire



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HCVS Trustees

Bekele Gessesse from Agroforep, Eileen Bellot from Hands Inc, Jill Williams from Chance UK, Karl Frisbee from Institute of Learning, Maggie Cooke from ECAT and Pam Frost from Peter Bedford Housing Association.



HCVS would like to say goodbye and good luck to Maneesha Sharma, our Sustainable Development Officer who left in July 2009.



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HCVS children & young people's activities directory

Celebrating success - our directory of voluntary and community sector (VCS) organisations working with children and young people is growing.

We know there are still more VCS groups out there, so if you want to be part of this directory, please complete our survey.

📍 **For copies of our directory and survey**

✉: zelina@hcvs.org.uk ☎: 020 7923 1962 🌐: www.hcvs.org.uk

Summer Issue 09



Welcome to SPARK, this issue focuses on how people from across the VCS can have their say on local and national policy. Policy work can be complex and takes a lot of time and commitment which puts off a lot of people. However, it does pay off in the long run.

Through Hackney's Community Empowerment Network (CEN), it is easier to have your say on the big issues. Join one of our many community networks or apply to be a CEN rep see pages 12 - 15 .

contacts

Produced and designed by - Gillian Trevethan

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Advertise in this space

Everyone is welcome to advertise in SPARK - Hackney's voluntary and community sector (VCS) magazine, circulated to hundreds of local organisations.

To arrange space in SPARK is simple - just contact Gillian as above. HCVS members get discounts.

Get your story in SPARK!

We are always looking for stories from the VCS, if you would like to submit an article or discuss ideas for upcoming features get in touch.

To keep up to date with news on Hackney's VCS, join our email news service, contact Gillian above!

Election results for Health watchdog

Hackney LINK



Local watchdogs on health: New LINK steering group

Hackney LINK, the borough's new watchdog for health and social care services, has elected a new team, pictured above, to lead it through the coming year.

The Local Involvement Network (LINK), which represents local residents and service users, was holding its first ever election for the 13 places on its Steering Group.

The results were announced at the Town Hall by Michael Summerville, the borough's Head of Electoral Services. Top of the poll was Catherine Love, coordinator of Disability Backup, a local forum for disabled people. ♦

① **Hackney LINK** ☎: 020 7275 2743 ✉: info@hackneylink.org.uk

CEN: Shaping up for 2012 BEMA or Black & Ethnic Minority Arts Network

BEMA your premier arts network, has been busy preparing for 2012.

Chair, Ngoma Bishop spoke to SPARK "We held a CEN funded and very useful meeting with the Hackney Olympic & Paralympics Unit to find out how our members can benefit from 2012. We also organised eight workshops (above) with CLR consultants to help empower our members with free advice on organisational development.



BEMA: Fighting fit

Our newly-designed email newsletters are a hit; our distribution has swelled to over 150. Our weekly bulletin includes networking, events and funding opportunities. Just imagine what we can achieve if we had paid staff!

If you have an interest in arts, become a member of this far thinking network or advertise through our newsletter, please contact us." ♦

① **BEMA** ✉: bemainfo@hcvs.org.uk

Chance UK won the Centre for Social Justice award for exceptional poverty fighting charities. Over 335 organisations applying for the national awards programme. Chance UK provides volunteer mentors for primary-aged children with behavioural difficulties at risk of developing anti-social and criminal behaviour across the UK. CEO of Chance UK, Gracia McGrath also has been awarded an O.B.E. ♦

① **Chance UK** ☎: 020 7281 5858

East Reservoir Community Garden in Hackney has been awarded a Green Pennant, making it officially one of the UK's finest green spaces. Green Pennants recognise and reward the best community run parks in the country. The new garden space nestles between the New River and East Reservoir on the edge of the Woodberry Down Estate in Stoke Newington. Complete with a fully equipped eco-classroom with living roof and bide hide play structure, it provides a base for school visits and a variety of community projects including inter generational volunteering projects and vegetable growing clubs. ♦

① **London Wildlife Trust**
☎: 0208 802 4573

Hackney Carers Centre has moved to Dalston and next door to HCVS. The Centre helps 2,600 people who provide unpaid practical or emotional support to relatives or friends who are frail, ill, mentally ill or disabled. Services include emotional support, counselling, advocacy, advice and information. Hackney Carers Centre was the joint winner of the Adiaha Antigha Community Achievement Award for raising equality - see page 11. ♦

① **Hackney Carers Centre** ☎: 020 7923 8750



Young people at African Arts Project

**Free arts education open to all
African Arts Project**

In July, The African Arts Project (AAP) threw open its doors to introduce its range of free activities for children and young people. Thanks to a Grassroots Grant from HCVS and funding from BBC Children in Need, AAP offer creative writing, reading, drama and music performance lesson and a series of day trips.

On top of this, AAP also offer homework support, mentoring, language support and health education - all activities are FREE and open to everyone. Based in Howard Road Resource Centre in Stoke Newington, AAP was created in November 2003, in a bid to try and bring solutions to problems encountered by people from BME and African communities through the promotion of African arts. To find more, please contact Mr Dan Ilunga as above. ♦

African Arts Project Timetable

My Expression: Sat, 11am - 1pm for 10 - 18 year olds

Drama: Sat, 2.30 - 5pm for 14 - 22 year olds

General activities: Wed, Thu, Fri, Sun 2 - 6pm for everyone

Venue: Howard Road Resource Centre, 6A Howrd Road N16 8PX

☎ **African Arts Project** : 07951 586 081
 ✉ aap-arts@hotmail.com
 🌐 www.africanartsproject.org.uk

Hoxton Street Casting is a performing arts agency with a difference.



It represents 13- 19 year olds; is run by young people and was set up specifically to support the young people of Hackney gain employment in the creative and performing arts industry.

Over 100 talented young people responded to the call for performers and both audition days in may were over subscribed. The lucky 15 will receive agent representation, a 6 week course in professional development, professional photographs, a showreel, audition technique classes, a CV and inclusion in Spotlight.

Hoxton Street Casting will be holding auditions again on 19, 20 and 21 August and are inviting young people aged 13 - 19 in Hackney and surrounding areas to apply. ♦

☎ **Hoxton Hall** 📞: 0207 503 4406
 ✉ hsc@hoxtonhall.co.uk



June saw the launch of a scheme to allow families on low incomes to use their Healthy Start vouchers at Stoke Newington Farmers' Market on Stoke Newington High Street, run by Hackney-based group Growing Communities.

Stoke Newington Farmers' market is the first farmers' market in London to accept the vouchers from the government backed scheme which can be exchanged for fresh vegetables, fruit and milk. Healthy Start vouchers are available to families on low incomes with children aged under 4. Stoke Newington Farmers' market is the only all-organic weekly farmers' market in the UK. ♦

☎ **Growing Communities** 📞: 0207 502 7588

☎ **Did you know HCVS produces a directory of VCS groups working with children and young people?** Find out more 🌐: www.hcvs.org.uk / Quick Links or ✉: zelina@hcvs.org.uk



Ali Aksoy, (left)
**Chair of Hackney
Refugee Forum
updates SPARK
on work over the
summer**

Fight to stop ESOL cuts continues



Refugee Week success!

Over 300 people hungry for information on employment and ESOL classes attended our Access to Information for Refugee Week in July. Despite the heat, everyone stayed on to fire questions at the panel. Central to this, was the future of ESOL provision amidst the recent cuts to adult education. Access to ESOL is crucial for refugee, migrant and asylum seeker communities.

This success is thanks to our partners: Hackney African Forum, Busoga Association UK, RWCA, African Support & Project Centre, SPC, Hundred Flowers Cultural Centre, Tohum Cultural Centre, SOS Families, International Youth centre, Liberty Supplementary School, London Saz School, AGROFOREP, Halkevi, RENK-ART, African Community School, Zenith Women Association, Find Your Voice, IDMC and mainstream service providers. ♦



Pandemic presentation

Swine Flu: How Hackney's VCS can help

Forty people from across the voluntary and community sector (VCS) attended a seminar to find out about swine flu. This was organised by HRF, HCVS with City & Hackney Primary Care Trust (CHPCT)'s Public Health department on Tuesday, 28 July at HCVS.

We showed videos on swine flu and Dr Jose Figueroa, from the CHPCT made a presentation about the pandemic and answered questions from the floor. Dr Figueroa told us that the swine flu vaccinations will start in October, with two doses for each person. Priority groups include: people with chronic illnesses and serious health problems, the elderly and children. Following this, everybody will be vaccinated.

The main differences in symptoms from ordinary flu is that swine flu starts with a sudden fever with temperatures over 38 degrees and sudden coughing. There two kinds of antibiotic available from your GP.

VCS role: Flu friends

According to the worst scenario, infection could rise to over 60,000 people, with 14,000 people ill – reaching its peak during one week in mid October 2009.

The VCS has an important role to play, organizations can help by providing Flu Friends to get medication and help for those people fallen ill from their communities. A Flu Friend is someone who doesn't have swine flu. When collecting medication, they must show their own ID as well as that of the patient. That ID includes: a utility bill, passport; a credit or debit card, driving licence, or NHS card.

Swine Flu Info Line: 0800 1 513 513

As SPARK went to print, there were a number of reports in the media about giving antiviral drugs to children for swine flu. The NHS policy is to offer these to people with symptoms. Watch out for updates on HCVS Email Information Service or contact Ali directly. ♦

① **Ali Aksoy, HCVS Refugee Health Coordinator and Chair, Hackney Refugee Forum (HRF)** ☎: 020 7923 1962

✉: ali@hcv.org.uk 🌐: www.hackneyrefugeeforum.org.uk

Mention the words 'influencing policy and decision making' and many voluntary and community sector (VCS) groups feel excluded.

The language used is full of jargon, and keeping up with the changes, let alone attempting to influence policy, takes too much time. This can be harder for smaller and BAMER led groups (Black, Asian, Minority Ethnic and Refugee).

Yet, service delivery and influencing policy are closely connected. As a grassroots group, you DO have the power to influence social policy and your view is crucial.

How can you influence policy?

As well as delivering your services, try and influence the wider policy surrounding their service. There are so many local forums where you can raise your views.

Through the Community Empowerment Network (CEN), reps from the Children and Young People's Providers Forum got The Learning Trust to change its stance on funding non-maintained schools.

Changing policy includes changing attitudes and perceptions. One of our estate based groups working with young people, paused on their youth activities to change the attitude and perception of the wider community who had a fear of youth crime. Through their engagement in a Good Neighbours Day on the estate, they were able to change the attitudes and perceptions of residents towards young people. Therefore contributing to Hackney community cohesion agenda. ♦ ⓘ **HCVS** ☎: 020 7923 8388 ✉: info@hcv.org.uk



Kristine Wellington and Kishore Kanani from HCVS went to an international

research conference at the University of Bristol in May. This research investigated how grassroots faith and BAMER groups are affected by the shift in priorities from funding single communities to integrated services.

Kristine said: "We shared the experience of grassroots groups in Hackney. Our success in Hackney is attributed to engaging under represented communities over a realistic time frame and walking the journey with the community we serve."

Sharing good practice for Older People

Kishore said: "At this conference, we met Professor Irene Hardill from Nottingham Trent University and Suzette Key, fellow researcher from Middlesex University. Both are working on a study looking at IT use by Older People to promote independence. They are coming to Hackney on Monday, 12 October to meet groups working with older people. If you would like to take part, please contact either myself or Kristine." ♦

Key local networks

1. Get involved in the CEN which supports the VCS to participate as fully as possible in decision making and shaping local services.

Read page 8 to see how the CEN supports people from across the VCS to influence Hackney's approach to community cohesion and other issues.

Join a community network based on your work area, i.e. health, young people.

Find a list on www.hcv.org.uk

Apply to become a CEN rep at Team Hackney to influence service planning and policy - see page 15.

2. Get involved with local networks - There are other forums in Hackney. Identify the area you work in below and contact them:

- **Youth Provider Networks:**

✉: Tom.Craggs@Hackney.gov.uk

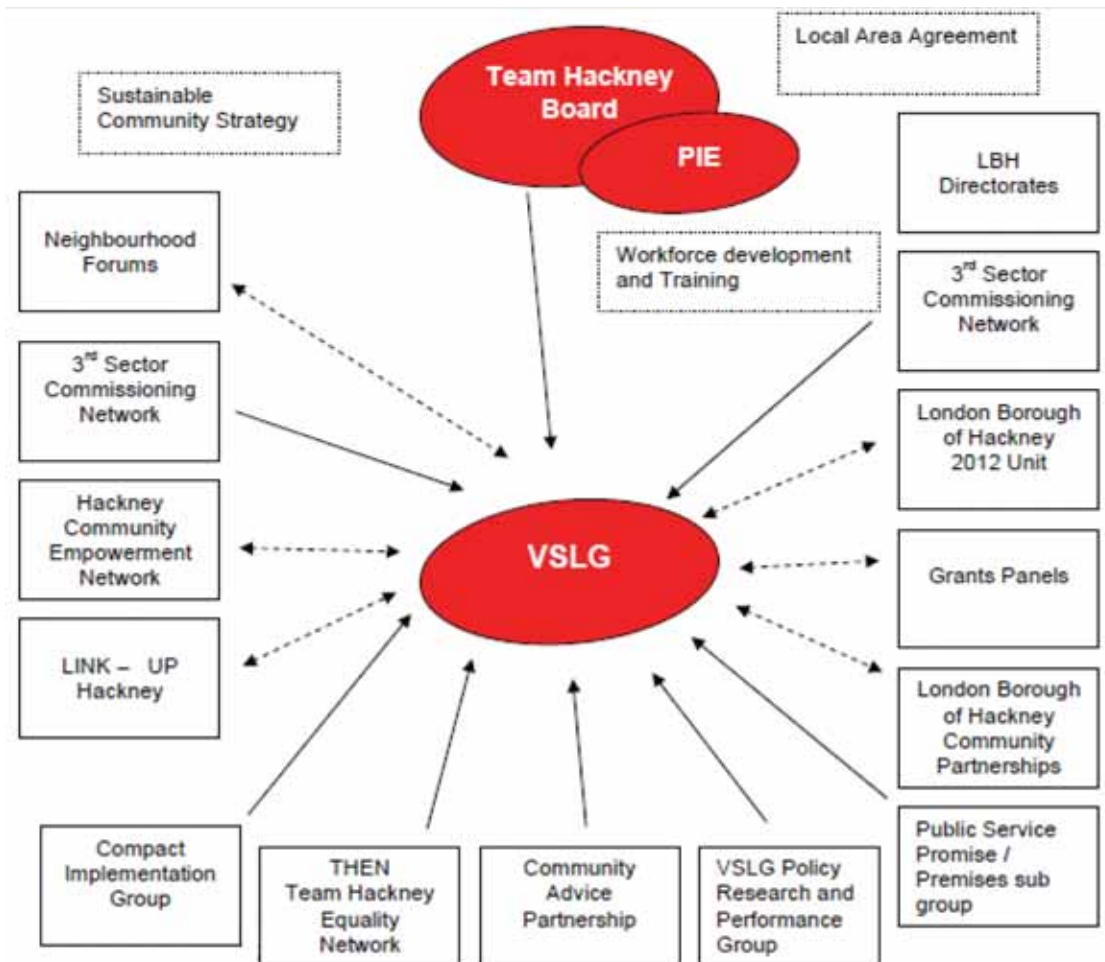
- **Community Advisory Panels** - led by the Police

✉: hackneypolice@met.police.uk

- **Arms Length Management Organisation**

(ALMO) - Housing issues ✉: almo.question@hackney.gov.uk

- **Hackney LINK** - Watchdog for health and social care services ✉: esther@hackneylink.org.uk



Where the VSLG fits in Hackney

VSLG or Voluntary Sector Liason Group provides a forum for discussion between statutory and voluntary and community sector (VCS) organisations.

HCVS with Hackney’s Community Empowerment Network (CEN), which supports the VCS to influence local services and decision making, are key to ensuring the VSLG works for the Sector. One the next two pages is information about this Forum and what it is working on for the Sector.

VCS Accommodation Review

The Council’s Community Partnership Team is working with Property Services to review Council properties that house local VCS organisations. The idea is get a profile of who is in each property, the services they provide and whether the property fits their needs.

Decisions will be made on how to make best use of the accommodation available using the business cases for each organisation. As well as future arrangements for the management of the properties and clear guidance on landlord and tenant responsibilities for maintenance - including arrangements for setting rents, allocating properties and negotiating leases. The VSLG is committed to ensuring fair and transparent processes.

The review has information on 44 properties

which together host 60 organisations. A report on the lettings policy will be submitted to Cabinet in October 2009. Before then, VSLG members will review the recommendations.

Developing a Third Sector Strategy

HCVS is working with the Council and VSLG members to develop a Third Sector Strategy which will run up to 2018 which is in line with the Sustainable Community Strategy.

HCVS Chief Executive, Jake Ferguson said “Discussions about the strategy have only just started – we need to determine the scope of the strategy and what it should cover first. Once we have engaged the sector and got all partners to sign up to the strategy I firmly believe it will help cement the role of the sector in Hackney and help provide a more sustainable future for all of us”.

Hackney COMPACT

You should have received a letter explaining what the COMPACT is about. If you haven't then please email gillian@hcvs.org.uk

The COMPACT Implementation work plan is on track. The COMPACT Implementation Group has commissioned Regen First to research a Full Cost recovery COMPACT Code by September 2009 - one that ensures funding programmes in Hackney support a sustainable third sector.

Two 'test' cases are currently at stage two of the Compact compliance procedure. Susan Gooding, Head of Community Partnerships at LBH, right, said: "These cases mean that we are now using the COMPACT to settle disputes rather than it just being a document on the shelf – it feels very empowering."



We are looking for COMPACT champions across the VCS and public sector to be trained to support anyone wanting to understand the role of the COMPACT. Find out more about becoming a COMPACT Champion and the training by emailing Rebecca Clarkson, right, at HCVS on rebecca@hcvs.org.uk



Hackney Volunteering Strategy

The first draft of the strategy is now complete, and consultation will begin soon: be prepared to have your say!

Advice Strategy

A community advice partnership has been established, to address Hackney's priority advice needs and to develop and support a coordinated approach and

information provision across the borough. The forum will bring partners and advice providers together from all sectors to discuss the advice and information needs for the borough. VCS organisations are represented and VSLG members are keen to ensure the strategy locally works for all communities and smaller advice providers are seen as equally important.

Third Sector Commissioning Strategy

A Third Sector Commissioning Strategy workshop in April brought together commissioners from organisations across the borough for the first time to share understanding of the national guidelines for Third Sector Commissioning and how these relate to commissioning in Hackney. It was also an opportunity for the commissioners and third sector leads to establish a network to support the development and implementation of the Third Sector Commissioning strategy. The strategy is beginning to take shape and will be available for consultation soon.

Other areas covered by the VSLG include Hackney Council Main Grants, Third Sector Strategy and 2012 Volunteering and Community Engagement Strategies. ♦

Members of VSLG:

- Age Concern
- CEN
- HCVS
- Hackney Voluntary Action
- Interlink Foundation
- London Borough of Hackney
- The Primary Care Trust
- The Learning Trust

"The VSLG was set up by the council three years ago to provide a place for the VCS and the council to come together to discuss the issues that affect them both. The group has recently taken a step forward in becoming the monitoring group for influencing the national indicator 'creating the environment for a thriving third sector' which is a sign of the maturity of the relationship between the VCS and the council."

Councillor Nargis Khan, VSLG CO-Chair



"We are pleased at the level of partnership in taking forward commissioning, accommodation and in the decision making process for the Hackney Grants programme. Although we do not always agree, the VSLG is a place where we can come together to discuss the issues that affect the VCS with the council and other partners."

CEN Chair Mary Cannon, VSLG CO-Chair



"It's a great place to negotiate a better deal for the VCS and I am looking forward to developing a Third Sector Strategy through this group which will further establish the sector's key role in the Borough"

Jake Ferguson, Chief Executive, HCVS





THE ADIAHA ANTIGHA

Community Achievement Awards 2009



To recognise the massive impact made by the voluntary and community sector, HCVS honoured seven local groups with an Adiaha Antigha Community Achievement Award at our Funders Fair and AGM in June. Now in their second year, these awards are in memory of Adiaha Antigha (1949 – 2006), the founding director of HCVS who died in 2006. Find out more about the unique contribution our 2009 winners made to improving life in Hackney.



Nimrod Allon, Kadimah Centre for Wellbeing, Jewish Care - Winner for services to faith communities

Nimrod Allon, Kadimah Centre for Wellbeing, said: "I am delighted that the Kadimah Centre for Wellbeing has received this award. It is recognition of the quality work the Kadimah staff team do in supporting our members with their mental health issues, on an ongoing basis. But it is more important to note that it is the Kadimah members themselves who have nominated the Centre for this award and, therefore, it is their acknowledgement and gratitude to services received that is the important factor here." ♦

📍 Kadimah Centre for Wellbeing ☎: 020 8809 1875
✉: nallon@jcare.org

Hackney Volunteer Police Cadets - Winner for contribution to children and young people's wellbeing

Hackney Volunteer Police Cadets work on crime prevention initiatives, message / leaflet delivery and community engagement meetings. Eight per cent of the cadets are working on Duke of Edinburgh Awards and they have achieved sports, first aid and bike maintenance awards. ♦

📍 Hackney Volunteer Police Cadets ✉: Paul.Piper@met.police.uk



Hansy Josovic Maternity Trust (HJMT) - Winner for changing local policy or practice

HJMT's approach to labour support for women from the Orthodox Jewish community was used as a model of best practice in setting up the successful "Reducing Infant Mortality Programme" - a similar service open to the wider community. The Trust provides support for women in all aspects of childbirth – advice, signposting and highly trained birth coaches or doulas who accompany women in the labour ward as birth partners.

This free service is provided 24 hours a day, 365 days a year to hundreds of women from the Charedi community of Hackney, Haringey and surrounding areas.

Mrs Rachel Klien, accompanied by some of her team, impressed the audience by the generosity of spirit of the volunteers. ♦

📍 HJMT ☎: 0208 806 4490

Joint winners for contribution to raising equality

Caroline Nelson, CHOICE in Hackney



CHOICE in Hackney is a disability organisation providing advocacy and independent living support to disabled Hackney residents to help them have an independent and dignified lifestyle. Caroline Nelson, left, leads this organisation, which helps people with accessible housing, care packages, maximising benefits, and access to transport and the health service. They have 75 active cases. ◆

① **CHOICE in Hackney** ☎: 020 7613 8130

✉: caroline.nelson@choiceinhackney.org

Maggie Bromage, City & Hackney Carers Centre



Hackney Carers Centre works tirelessly to identify the 18,000 'hidden' carers in Hackney provide a lifeline to people who care for someone close to them. Maggie, pictured left, said: Our team of over 40 staff and volunteers at the Carers Centre are absolutely delighted and honoured to have received this Award. We would like to thank the carers and supporters who took the time to nominate us and to assure everyone that, despite severe funding cuts, we will do everything possible to maintain and improve our services to carers whose daily lives are often a never

ending struggle. ◆ ① **Hackney Carers Centre** ☎ 020 7923 8750 ✉: maggie@hackneycarers.org.uk

The Sharp End - Winner for services for older people

The Sharp End was one of the first organisations of its kind in London, serving the senior members of the community. Welcoming and accessible, it provides exercise, activities and education to help residents over 50 to improve and maintain their health.

The menu of activities is always growing, encouraging members to try new things and discover new talents – keeping people active in body and mind and enriching their life experiences. Also provided is a valuable social network where people make friends – across social barriers and give and receive support in times of emotional or other life difficulties. ◆

① **The Sharp End**

☎: 020 7923 8690

✉: sharpenddirector@thesharp.org.uk

Hackney Migrant Centre - Winner for services for new communities



Hackney Migrant Centre was set up in March 2008. They provide advice on health, housing and immigration every Wednesday afternoon.

The Centre relies on a team of 15 – 20 volunteers from different communities, who work in wonderful harmony and discipline serving food, chatting with people, looking after clients' children and overall support for newly arrived people in the UK.

Helen Hibberd, Coordinator, said: 'We are delighted to have won. It is encouraging to know that the hard work of our volunteers and trustees is appreciated and valued; as well as the recognition that we offer an important service to some of the most vulnerable communities in London.' ◆

① **Hackney Migrant Centre, St. Marys New Church Rooms Spensley Walks London N16 9ES** ☎: 07504 332 706 ✉: info@hackneymigrantcentre.org.uk

CEN:

Influencing Hackney's approach to tackling worklessness, child poverty, community cohesion and youth crime

SPARK found out about the latest series of consultation events organised by Hackney's Community Empowerment Network (CEN).

On behalf of Team Hackney, the Council is reviewing how to best improve worklessness, child poverty, community cohesion and youth crime as part of work into the Sustainable Communities Strategy. This is the 10 year vision which guides local partners from business, public sector and voluntary and community sector (VCS) to improve Hackney.

'Our role on the CEN is to create a bridge between the community and those who make decisions'

said Taylan Sahbaz, right, from Day-Mer and former CEN rep on Children & Young People Partnership Board.



CEN reps on Team Hackney's Boards and Sub groups and leads of community networks joined key officers from Hackney council for each discussion. At the worklessness review in May, this was extended to members of the Economic Development



Youth crime consultation: Getting the view from the ground

Pictured in the foreground: Willis Atherley-Jones, Off Centre and Ibrahim Avcil, from Hackney Turkish & Kurdish network and Refugee Workers Cultural Association

Network and was attended by more than 80 people who provide training and employment support in the VCS. Over 30 people from across the VCS joined CEN reps and partners from Team Hackney's Youth Crime Reduction Sub Group.



Patricia Salt, left, from City and Hackney Alcohol Service and CEN rep on the Drug & Alcohol sub group said: 'The

format and preparation for these events was excellent – breaking up into small groups and talking through the issues. Having someone from the statutory sector present and listening makes a huge difference. You feel this is going somewhere.'

Defining the issue

Throughout the reviews, people questioned the definitions given. With worklessness, for example, the Council was urged to look at the role of carers, volunteers and others who are working, yet not necessarily economically active.

Also emphasised was the real need for statutory sectors to recognise the role the VCS can play in solutions to these

problems. Both in offering cost-effective programs and the particular role that small VCS groups can play in their reach into communities.

How CEN influences policy

Reports from each event are given to Hackney council, so that each review includes the VCS perspective. While CEN consultations are great opportunities for the VCS, we recognize that this takes up valuable time away from your work. As one provider at the CEN's Domestic Violence focus group on page 10 said, 'Because I am here, the shutters are down on our organisation – there is no one to respond to the community this morning'

The CEN is agreeing a set of operating principles with the Council – 'a rule book for how we work with Team Hackney'. Among these is a commitment from the Council that whenever the CEN runs a consultation or provides comments on a document, they will report back to the CEN on the impact that this has had. So we can report to you on what has changed in policy or practice as a result of the work CEN has done. ♦



VCS Views: Community Cohesion



"The barriers to cohesion for Francophone communities are immense, many people feel isolated and marginalised. Language differences make it harder to access information, find work or make friends. Poverty is everywhere, many people live on benefits. This prevents access to social areas where people can get to know others. The VCS has the link between the Council and the community, this should be used to promote cohesion."

Richard Ntaka, International Youth Centre and member of Hackney Francophone Organisations Network



"In Hackney, cohesion could be considered in terms of a cultural mosaic [like in Canada]. This idea is something we should promote, rather than the idea of cohesion – which like sustainability can mean and have its own political agenda." **Wayne Hincks, from Barton Wilmore Design London and CEN rep on Community Investment Sub-group**



"I don't think we can look at community cohesion without questioning the economic system we live in, which divides people as they compete for jobs and business. This is the antithesis of cohesion." **Russell Miller, Hackney Environment Network and Interim CEN rep on the Sustainable Environment Sub-board**



"We need more projects that are flexible and meet numerous targets. No matter how much planning and consultation has taken place, humans are fairly unpredictable so projects need the flexibility to respond to varying expectations. For example, I am working on a project supporting young people that have offended or likely to offend. I find it successful to mix the target group with young people that may be considered as positive role models. However, when it comes to reporting to our funders we can only report the target group." **Ergel Hassan, from YOH and CEN rep on the Anti-Social Behaviour Sub-group**



VCS Views: Youth Crime



"The event meant I could build partnerships with other agencies. I've formed relationships with the Turkish Kurdish community and Holly Street partnership. I hope to form more partnerships through events like this." **Janette Collins, The Crib**



"It's always useful to come to this type of consultation. But timing is an issue, you finally get what it is about and given time and there is not time to respond. Little bit more time would be great." **Amanda Blenman, Hackney Marsh Partnership (HMP)**



"Time for change. Hackney seems to be moving in the right direction towards positive change." **Vonley Joseph, PLG - Hope Social Enterprise**



"It's a fantastic forum, so many people that have so much to say and share - it should be a day or two day conference. It's an exciting start and going forward there should be more opportunities, this needs to happen regularly for things to change." **Charli Faux, Hackney Voluntary Action (HVA)**

Want to get involved?

Download these reports from www.hcvs.org.uk and click on Find out about the Community Empowerment Network on the left. Or join HCVS Email Information Service to get updates on CEN. The Community Empowerment Network (CEN) aims to raise issues from the voluntary and community sector (VCS) at Team Hackney – the key decision making partnership which shapes policy, service delivery and some commissioning in the borough. [Contact Liz Hughes](mailto:liz@hcvs.org.uk) ☎ 020 7923 1962 ✉ liz@hcvs.org.uk

CEN: Influencing policy and practice: Domestic Violence



Raising awareness about domestic violence: Hackney women at Great Nile Trust 's Domestic Violence Awareness Day in July 2009. The Trust is a member of the African Women's Forum

Team Hackney asked the CEN to run a focus group looking at how Hackney can improve its Domestic Violence Service. Nine voluntary and community sector (VCS) organisations took part sharing their experiences of working in Hackney's communities.

How you can get involved:

- Add your comments to the Domestic Violence consultation – these will be used in writing the workplan for Team Hackney's subgroup work
- Let us know that you are working in this area so we can include you in future focus groups and consultations
- Volunteer to be a CEN rep to Team Hackney's Domestic Violence subgroup
- Join a community network who will be working in this area:

- **Hackney Women's Forum** ✉:
hackneywomensforum@yahoo.co.uk

African Women's Forum
✉: hackneywomen@yahoo.co.uk

The group's recommendations ranged from practical immediate changes, for example:

- to work in partnership with other boroughs so that service users can easily be housed outside Hackney
- that a 999 call results in the attendance of the police AND a domestic violence counsellor

to identifying some current gaps in service, for example

- need for additional support for young families
- need for more culturally appropriate information and services
- need for clarity on rights to domestic violence service for those without full citizenship

to a very strong recommendation

- that the council work in greater partnership with the voluntary sector – who have a lot of knowledge of the grassroots situation, and are working with domestic violence issues, often as part of a complex array of support. ◆

① **Read the full recommendations here** 🌐: www.hcvs.org.uk

Update on CEN Cross Cutting Grants programme

Through HCVS, the CEN is administering a network grant programme to support local VCS networks to build their capacity to influence local policy.

We received 23 applications and the awarded networks will be announced shortly on www.hcvs.org.uk and HCVS Email Information Service. ◆

Do you have an idea for an innovative project with a 2012 focus?

As a result of concern from the CEN that the VCS was not involved enough in the Olympic agenda, the Hackney 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games Unit would like to speak with organisations that are interested in being part of the build up to the 2012 Games in Hackney. ◆

① **Helen Goodsell, Hackney 2012 Unit**

☎: 0208 356 3975 ✉: helen.goodsell@hackney.gov.uk

The Community Empowerment Network (CEN) aims to raise issues from the voluntary and community sector (VCS) at Team Hackney – the key decision making partnership which shapes policy, service delivery and some commissioning in the borough.

① Find out about the CEN, becoming a CEN rep or joining a community network, contact Liz Hughes ☎ 020 7923 1962 ✉: liz@hcvs.org.uk



Your CEN needs you!

There are lots of opportunities to become a CEN representative at Team Hackney. This is the key decision making partnership which shapes policy, service delivery and some commissioning in the borough.

The CEN supports 20 CEN reps to attend Team Hackney Board meetings focusing on issues from Youth Crime Reduction to Housing Management. Once selected you are supported by the CEN Officer team and get the opportunity to take part in consultations as on page 8.

Children & Young People and Health & Social Care

The CEN is supporting these three community networks below to recruit people to represent them.

• **BEMWG or Black & Ethnic Minority Working Group** are recruiting a CEN rep with experience of health and social care in Hackney's BAMER communities. ☎ **Aliya El Agib** ☎ 0207 923 2229 ✉: post@bemwg.org.uk

• **Children and Young People's Providers Forum (CYPPF)** are recruiting eight CEN reps working with children and young people in Hackney. ☎ Kristine Wellington ☎ 020 7923 1962 ✉: kristine@hcvs.org.uk

• **City & Hackney Health & Social Care Forum (HSCF)** are recruiting one CEN rep with experience of health and social care. ☎ **Jackie Brett** ☎: 020 7923 8361 ✉: jackie.hscf@googlemail.com



Youth Crime consultation: Meeting place for VCS and public sector discussion on shaping policy

Youth Crime

The CEN is also looking for people with local knowledge to influence Hackney's approach to tackling youth crime. If you have worked with the Police or Youth Offending Team and influenced how they work, we want to hear from you!

Domestic Violence and Drug & Alcohol

People from the VCS who are working in the fields of drug, alcohol and domestic violence are needed to be CEN reps at Team Hackney. ♦

☎ **For a CEN rep application pack** 🌐: www.hcvs.org.uk or contact Liz Hughes as opposite

Welcome to our new CEN reps



Simon Hughes
from St Mungo's
CEN rep on Better
Homes Partnership



Martin Harris
from Thames Reach,
Greenhouse CEN
rep on Better Homes
Partnership



Avril McIntyre
from Lifeline Projects
Interim CEN rep on
Economic Development
Partnership Board

**Russell Miller
and Liz Moxon**
from Hackney
Environment Network
are Interim CEN
reps on **Sustainable
Environment Sub-
board (of Safer
Cleaner Board)**



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part of the hct group 



It has been a busy few months for our Grants team, Elizabeth Adebola, HCVS Grants Manager

talks to SPARK on the success of our Believe to Achieve, Team Hackney Community Grants and Grassroots Grants programmes.

Team Hackney Community Grants

Team Hackney invested £750,000 in the voluntary and community sector (VCS) to deliver projects which addressed local priorities. These included educational underachievement, inequalities in health, worklessness, support for older people, improving our environment, tackling domestic violence and reducing youth crime.

These grants were awarded in three tiers to develop VCS groups and prepare them for taking on larger contracts:

- **35** VCS groups were awarded Fast track grants of up to £1,000
- **43** VCS groups were awarded Small grants of between £1,000 and £5,000
- **12** VCS groups were awarded Large grants of between £5,000 and £50,000.

In September, we will be holding a Post-Awards Grants workshop for groups who received small and large grants. Information will be given on working with Team Hackney, CEN and community networks, marketing, monitoring and evaluating the impact of their work.

Did you miss out on this funding?

Requirements for grants are getting tighter and many applicants missed out because

key documents were missing. Please double check that you include all required documents with your application form. This way, your application will be scored and passed for consideration by the Grants panel, which is made up of people from Team Hackney and the CEN.

Unsuccessful applicants have received feedback on why their applications weren't funded. Please take advantage of the free support from our Organisation Development team, such as one-to-one advice sessions and training workshops.

Believe to Achieve

The Learning Trust commissioned us to run the Believe to Achieve grants programme for VCS groups working with children or with parents or carers of children who are moving from primary to secondary school. This has been identified as a key age where extra support is needed to ensure children's educational success.

Fourteen groups were awarded a grant of between £15,000 and £30,000. Assessment included the views of a group of local children aged 10 – 12 from schools in Hackney, who helped the Grants panel assess each application.

Like Team Hackney Community Grants, awardees will be invited to a post award workshop.

Grassroots Grants

Funded by the Office of the Third Sector, Grassroots Grants is for small community groups with an average income of £30,000 or less over the last three years. A rolling programme until March 2011, 17 groups were awarded in the last panel, successful applications from July's deadline will be announced in September. The next closing date for 2009 will be announced later this year. ♦



Impact of small grants on people in Hackney

Grace Women's Organisation was awarded a small grant to continue their after-school classes in Maths, English language and homework support for children in Key Stages 1 and 2. GCSE results have improved dramatically since 2002, however Hackney's schools have been consistently at, or near, the bottom of national league tables. Key to improving this is after-school or supplementary education provided by local VCS organisations. Oby's project brings together local children from different cultures, many of whom have English as their second language as well as provide one-to-one special educational support for children and their parents.

Oby Ofomata from Grace Women's Organisation said: 'The grant has helped our Organisation to continue to bring young people and families from different cultures together to learn, socialise, improve their grades at school and encourage community cohesion.' **Grace Women's Organisation**
☎: 0208 533 7477

📍 **Find out who was awarded a grant** 🌐: www.hcvs.org.uk and click on Funding and Commissioning

Lombe Mwamba

SOS Families and Hackney Francophone Organisations Network

SPARK spoke to Lombe Mwamba from SOS Families about Hackney's growing Congolese and Francophone African communities.

SOS Families started in 2003 in response to distress calls from families facing crisis.

Our mission is to improve the quality of life for people from Congolese and other French-speaking or Francophone African communities. Our work is strengthening families.

We empower the family by showing parents what they are entitled to and how the UK system works. For example, a child may be aggressive at school. By talking to the child and their parents, we find out they are living in an overcrowded home. So because the child hasn't got enough space at home they make trouble at school. We visit the housing office, advocate on behalf of the family and apply pressure to get suitable accommodation. It's not until you are in these situations that you understand what your rights are and how to solve your problems.

Women are unsure of their rights and what help to expect from the authorities here. As a women's led organisation, we boost women so they can take charge of their lives, discover who they are and achieve their ambitions. For example, we raise awareness around violence - in the home, sexual violence and its impact on children - and mediate with the family including the perpetrator.

Common to many refugee and asylum seeker communities, our two main needs are language and understanding the British way of life. From dealing with the school to explaining personal health problems with the doctor on behalf their parents, children become their parents' interpreters. Not only is this inappropriate, but children are given more responsibility than they should.

Our big project is to encourage parents' interest in their child's education. The more active parents are, the more likely a child is to achieve. Parents don't know what's going on in their children's lives: they don't speak the same language as their kids or understand how schools work here. This distance contributes to the rise in young people's involvement in gangs, as members and victims. We hold workshops for parents, show them how to approach the school and help their children. This is funded by a contract with The Learning Trust, which is responsible for education in Hackney.

Regardless of the economic climate, finding work is an issue. People have qualifications but it is difficult to transfer qualifications which are recognised by British employers. The first thing to do is learn English. Once you are in the labour market and you can speak English, it's easier to find a way. Although this is hard, it's helped significantly by access to free ESOL classes.



We offer IT and job search training to lone parents, many of whom are on benefits. We teach practical skills in CV writing, completing job application forms but also encourage their social skills and build their self esteem.

Sharing the French language, people from Francophone countries have developed a strong network. In 2007, we set up Hackney Francophone Organisations Network with seven other VCS groups serving Francophone African communities. Having limited resources, means we avoid duplication of services across our groups wherever possible. Being an active member of Hackney Refugee Forum for many years helps. We work across communities to meet shared areas of need with other VCS groups working with refugee and asylum seeker communities.

We must raise awareness about our communities' needs with service providers to prevent further crisis. With the support of Liz Hughes from the Community Empowerment Network (CEN), we are building our capacity to work with Team Hackney partners, including Hackney Council. Thanks to a Grassroots Grant from HCVS and support from Kristine from HCVS Organisation Development team, we are compiling research that will give us a profile of Hackney's Congolese community and evidence of their needs. ♦

① **Lombe Mwamba** ✉: sosfamilies@aol.com ☎: 020 7923 1962

Summer view

Please send in your photo and 50 words for the next SPARK to

✉: gillian@hcv.org.uk

On Yer Bike was run by **ECAT** and delivered by **STA Bikes**, on Evelyn Court on Saturday morning. We have had ages from 3 to 60+ and it is wonderful to see the joy in peoples faces when they finish the lesson.

📍 **ECAT Evelyn Court Association of Tenants**

✉: ecat.hackney@hotmail.co.uk



CEN funded **Interfaith Forum** held another successful conference in July at HCVS, bringing together people of all ages and faiths to discuss the role of faith in community cohesion. 📍 **Nida Trust** ☎: 07931 934116

Gayhurst School children met **Free Form** artists and Cany Ash of Ash Sakula Architects who designed award winning Hothouse; most recently of a 2009 RIBA Award. The children took part in creative workshops to inspire a love and understanding of architecture and design - part of Free Form's Legacy Now! Programme offering opportunities for young people to explore their creativity towards and beyond London 2012. 📍 **Free Form** 🌐: www.freeform.org.uk



Tribute: Prue Poulton

ecoACTIVE



Prue Poulton was involved with urban environmental education for sustainable development in Hackney for over 25 years. She joined Hackney Environmental Education Project in 1984, a year after its inception. Prue's background in Zoology and experience as a local activist were key to HEEP's innovative approach to urban environmental education well before it was on the mainstream agenda.

HEEP's pioneering approach was recognised by WWF-UK who in 1991 published Eco School, which Prue co-wrote. The Urban Environment, which Prue and her colleague wrote for A&C Black in 1992 was translated into seven languages including Polish, Malay, Swahili and Afrikaans and is still popular.

On Prue's arrival ecoACTIVE's future was by no means secure. However, she had a clear vision of where ecoACTIVE should be, and through diligent planning and clever grant writing the organisation flourished.

Prue worked with ecoACTIVE until she died. She was their manager, fundraiser, finance officer, personnel and HR manager, policy writer and tea and coffee maker. Prue was our boss and our friend and an inspiration to many. Her legacy to the future generations of school children and community groups in Hackney will be ecoACTIVE.

📍 **ecoACTIVE** 🌐: www.ecoactive.org.uk

COMPETITION TIME! WHAT'S GOOD IS THE 1ST OF ITS KIND!

Youth Skills network launched their brand new state of the art video directory, a copy is in SPARK. This will help you increase funding opportunities, raise awareness and promote your service in a unique way! **Sign up now and you and a loved one could be whisked away for an all inclusive 4 star holiday to the Dominican Republic.** So what are you waiting for! ☎: 020 7923 0022 ✉: whatsgood@ysn.org.uk



I Summer Diary

Here's a list of upcoming events, meetings and workshops organised by HCVS and the Community Empowerment Network (CEN). For weekly updates subscribe to HCVS email service, contact Gillian ✉: gillian@hcv.org.uk

August 2009

Sun, 23, Aug from 1.30pm: Hackney Million Mothers March @ Bradbury Street / Boleyn Road near Gillett Square to St John's Church, The Narrow Way

Wed, 26 Aug, 11am – 3.30pm The Sharp End's 13th AGM @ The Sharp End, Dalston Methodist Centre, E8 3HY ☎: Jon 020 7923 8690

September 2009

Tue, 1, or 29, Sep: Mapping services and Hackney's social care workforce ☎: Jo McGlynn on 020 8356 4539 ✉: Jo.McGlynn@hackney.gov.uk

Thu, 3 Sep - 11am - 1.30pm: CEN: Hackney Women's Forum @ HCVS, 84 Springfield House, 5 Tyssen Street E8 2LY
✉: hackneywomensforum@yahoo.co.uk

Mon, 7 Sep - 2.30 - 4.30 pm: CEN: Hackney Advice Forum AGM VENUE TO BE CONFIRMED
✉: cathyjm1234@aol.com

Mon, 7 Sep - 4.30 - 6pm EcoACTIVE AGM @ Hackney City Farm, 1a Goldsmiths Row London E2 8QA ✉: admin@ecoactive.org.uk

Fri, 11 Sep - 2 – 4pm: CEN: Older People's Special Interest Group: Consultation on the aging well in Hackney @ The Sharp End, 11 Richmond Road, E8 3HY ✉: jackie.hscf@googlemail.com

Tue, 15 Sep, 10.30am – 1.30pm HCVS: Application Support Workshop Hackney Funding Programme 2010 / 2011 @ HCVS ✉: info@hcv.org.uk

Sat, 19, Sep 11am, Hackney Peace Walk @ Hackney Community College, Falkirk Street N1

Sat, 19, Sep 2pm, Robert Levy Foundation Talent event @ Hackney Empire ✉: info@robertlevyfoundation.org.uk

October 2009

Thu, 1, 10.30am – 1.30pm HCVS: CWDC Safeguarding @ HCVS ✉: info@hcv.org.uk

Wed, 7, 10.30am – 1.30pm HCVS: CWDC Common Assessment Framework @ HCVS

Get your CRB at HCVS

If you need your staff, trustee members and volunteers to undergo a CRB check, please contact Nadia at HCVS. It is a legal requirement that individuals working directly with children and young people and vulnerable adults need to be CRB checked. If you are not sure whether you or other individuals within your organisation require CRB check, please contact us. ☎ **Nadia Capogrosso** ☎: 020 7923 1962

City and Hackney Carers Centre is the ideal place for conferences, AGM, launches and meetings located in the heart of Dalston within easy reach of all parts of Hackney and 10 minutes bus ride to the City.

The conference hall features high ceilings, large windows and exposed brickwork giving a contemporary look to a period building. It can accommodate 100 people seated and is adaptable for many types of functions.

There are also smaller meeting rooms available which can be arranged to your specification.

Desk space or longer term room hire is also available, prices negotiable.

Equipment is also available for hire. The building has full disabled access and facilities for disabled people.

For further information please contact

Azhar Rahman on 020 7923 8750 or email info@hackneycarers.org.uk. Our website address is www.hackneycarers.org.uk

96-102 Springfield House, 5 Tyssen Street London

E8 2LZ



City & Hackney Carers Centre



SPARK is produced by Hackney Council for Voluntary Service (HCVS). HCVS is Hackney's leading voluntary and community sector (VCS) support agency and your local Council for Voluntary Service (CVS). We provide hundreds of local VCS organisations with the key skills, knowledge and resources to respond to the needs of local people, especially those most in need. HCVS's vision is of an equal society where local people are empowered to tackle local problems and the contribution of all communities to civic life is recognised and supported. HCVS, 84 Springfield House 5 Tyssen Street London E8 2LY ☎: 020 7923 1962 ✉: info@hcv.org.uk 🌐: www.hcv.org.uk