

VCFS Update for Resident Experience

Purpose:

At the Resident Experience Board meeting in September, Members of the meeting asked that any useful material relating to opportunities or improving work and relationships with the voluntary, community and faith sector (VCFS) is shared with them. This would then be used to share more widely with Members and through any local newsletters, websites or relevant channels that you have access to. We have put together some information of a range of initiatives and services that are available for the VCFS as shown below and please feel free to contact either Rhea Newman (rhea.newman@surreycc.gov.uk) or Saba Hussain (saba.hussain@surreycc.gov.uk) if you need any further information.

The voluntary, community and faith sector in Surrey (VCFS):

The VCFS in Surrey are really important partners for the council working with us to help deliver services to local communities. The county council, along with borough/district councils and Clinical Commissioning Groups provide funding to organisations called Councils for Voluntary Services (CVSs) which offer support to the wider VCFS enabling them to thrive and work better. Any VCFS organisation can contact a CVS to get support with funding, finding volunteers, governance advice, developing or setting up an organisation, back office support, training etc and the CVSs can act as a link to statutory bodies and other organisations in the area. The CVSs all have incorporated Volunteer Centres and a local base across each district and borough.

The CVSs are linked in to all the important activity in your area and are also able to signpost to useful services.

To find out about your local CVS please go through the following [link](#).

Support with finding funding:

The [CVSs](#) can support with finding funding but there is also a useful [leaflet](#) produced by the county council's Community Partnership's Team which has some handy information ready to share with the communities in Surrey.

Social Value Surrey:

The county council is always looking at ways we can support the communities of Surrey and a recent area of focus has been on deriving social value from the suppliers we work with as well as wider businesses.

We have teamed up with one of suppliers Minted Box and developed an online brokerage tool, linked to the Supply to Surrey site. The Supply to Surrey site is where we advertise all our contracts, making it a significant point of engagement for business. The facility enables VCFS organisations to upload any 'needs' they may have and businesses are able to go in and see which of these needs they are able to meet as either part of their general social

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responsibility or as part of their tender application. 'Needs' can range from asking for support with specialist training, to sharing meeting rooms to requesting equipment.

For further information you can visit the [Supply to Surrey](#) site or ask your local [CVS](#) for support in uploading a request.

Communication Campaigns about Volunteering:

Since the end of October, the county council has been running a campaign to encourage residents and colleagues in the council to think about how they can use the extra hour they gained when the clocks went back to make a difference in their community. We've been teaming up with the Volunteer Centres in Surrey to share ideas for how to make the most of those extra 60 minutes - from helping an elderly neighbour with their shopping to donating to a local foodbank to getting in touch with a local volunteer centre to find out more about volunteering opportunities. You can see lots more ideas on our [volunteering webpage](#).

We will be running a larger communication campaign around volunteering in March and April 2017 and this is currently being planned with the Volunteer Centres and council services who work with volunteers. Further details, including ideas for how to get involved, will be shared with Members via the Communicate Bulletin and Local Committees nearer to the campaign launch.

For further information about the communication campaigns, please contact Rhea Newman, Strategic Partnerships Manager (rhea.newman@surreycc.gov.uk) or Rachel Smith, Campaign Communications Officer (rachel.smith@surreycc.gov.uk).

Timebanking:

There are now 8 Timebanks up and running in Surrey, enabling people to exchange time and skills within their communities. There are over 150 Members across the Surrey Timebank Network with over 490 hours exchanged so far.

Timebanks are live in the following areas and you can find out further details about each Timebank on their website.

- [East Surrey Timebank](#) (17 members, 43 hours)
- [Epsom & Ewell Timebank](#) (18 member, 15 hours)
- [Farnham Area Timebank](#) (51 members, 252 hours)
- [Godalming Timebank](#) (20 members, 20 hours)
- [Guildford Timebank](#) (11 members, 2 hours)
- [Spelthorne Timebank](#) (16 members, 150 hours)
- [Surrey Heath and Borders Timebank](#) (3 members, 6 hours)
- [Woking Timebank](#) (15 members, 6 hours)

The county council is continuing to work with Timebanking UK to support the existing Timebanks and to set up further Timebanks in other parts of Surrey. This work includes

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developing a collaborative bid for Big Lottery funding which, if successful, will ensure the financial sustainability of the current Timebanks and provide funds to develop more Timebanks across the county. If you would like any further information about Timebanking or an update on Timebanking in your local area then please contact Thomas Davis, Project Assistant - Adult Social Care, thomas.davis@surreycc.gov.uk .

Interests.Me

If you're looking to find out news and information about what's going on in your community, then a number of local communities in Surrey have set up pages on the [Interests.me](https://interests.me) website. Interests.me is an online platform which enables organisations in the same local community or with a shared interest (e.g. Community Resilience) to come together to share news and stories about what's happening locally. There are already community pages for Guildford, Godalming, Farnham, Cranleigh, Horsell, New Haw and Woodham, Spelthorne, Runnymede, Haslemere, and Camberley, with other new pages being set up on a regular basis. If you're interested in receiving updates from one of these communities, you can register to join the community on the website.

Interests.me can also be used by local Voluntary, Community and Faith organisations for communicating with their membership. Through the website VCFS groups can easily create newsletters (for sharing via email or printing) as well as articles and blogs that can be shared on social media. So if you're involved with a local community group who may be keen to improve how they communicate with their followers, encourage them to check out the website for further information.

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