



London Civic Forum Ebulletin October - November 2011

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LONDON CIVIC FORUM NEWS

Growing London

This new active citizenship project, run by LCF in partnership with Ecological and WEA, has got off to a flying start. Groups of learners are getting together in five parts of London to create new vegetable gardens and learn more about how to make a difference in their communities and across the city.

Learning sessions have just started on the Butt's Farm Estate (Hounslow), Silchester Estate (Kensington and Chelsea), Mottingham (Bromley) and Bethnal Green (Tower Hamlets); our final group, in Newham, meets for the first time next week.

Learners from across London get together for the first time on 14th December, when we'll be visiting City Hall to attend Mayor's Question Time and learn more about the London Assembly.

For more information about Growing London please click [here](#), or contact Debby Matthews at Debby@londoncivicforum.org.uk.

Take Part Community Learning

Our Take Part Researcher is now writing up our investigation into the current active citizenship learning needs of Londoners - which, of course, are many and varied, particularly in the light of new developments around Localism and Open Public Services. We'll be publishing a series of research papers summarizing our findings in early November, so watch this space.

LCF's new *Take Part London* Learning Framework is now in development: once completed, this will be an invaluable resource for any London organisation or group seeking to develop active citizenship learning support for communities.

Supported by the Transition Fund, we've also been able to offer a series of free Take Part taster sessions to six London organisations, and are currently developing a series

of pilot learning activities with two local authorities and one London-wide campaigning network.

The Big Opportunity

The Big Opportunity Project, funded for 5 years by City Bridge Trust has now come to an end, and Paul Bower, the Programme Manager has left LCF. An independent evaluation of the project was conducted in the last few months and many stakeholders were interviewed. The feedback was overwhelming positive, although most respondents expressed regret that the project was ending prior to the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games actually happening. However the Project leaves important legacies, including the London 2012 VCS Advocates Group at LOCOG, plans for a Legacy Fund for community development through sports, ongoing work around housing and a community land trust being taken forward by partners at the BO last event and the many new links created between different groups and agencies. Many of the comments made as part of the evaluation were particularly directed at Paul's input and it was clear! he was greatly valued by the Project participants as well as by all at LCF. Good luck Paul, and keep in touch!

London Civic Forum's Empowerment Map

This online map helps you find empowerment opportunities in the capital. It includes any activities which help people have a say in the decisions that affect their lives. It also includes training and development opportunities. The map was created by London Civic Forum to help people find out about what's going on in their area, and to help organisations publicise their work.

If you have an event, activity, meeting or opportunity you would like others to get involved in, you can add to the map by clicking [here](#).

To visit the empowerment map, click [here](#).

Your Voice Your City

LCF's London Council's funded project has been particularly busy with a number of events and consultations:

Not Putting the Lid On – 11th October 2012

London Civic Forum and London Sustainability Exchange recently held an event to discuss the August Riots. The event considered what needs to be done to ensure something similar doesn't occur again. It brought together government, local authorities, private and voluntary sectors, the police and the community together to discuss how we can:

- build resilience in the capital
- embed community independence
- create effective, integrated interventions

Workshops looked at how we can work collaboratively to develop practical solutions to challenges facing us - workshops looked specifically at the Empowerment Deficit, Co-production and Young People: the solution.

<http://www.lsx.org.uk/news/events.aspx?id=3491>

It is also worth adding that research into the [cause of the riots](#) is being carried out by the LSE and The Guardian, supported by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation.

How Health Works & Community Involvement in Health – 8th September 2011

LCF in collaboration with LVSC and the London Empowerment Partnership gave 70+ participants the opportunity to learn more about both the proposed new health structures and discuss how patients, carers and communities can have a real say in the design and delivery of services

The first part of the day: How Health Works looked at the proposed new structures for health service delivery. With speakers from the GLA, NHS East London and City, Islington Links the event looked at how these new structures will affect London, including the setting up of Health Watch Boards, London Health Improvement Board and Clinical Commissioning consortia; how these new bodies can be held to account and how patient/community voices are to be represented.

In the afternoon Community Involvement in Health took a more in depth look at what past experience and research has taught us. Speakers included Mike Grady from the Marmot Review Team, Elizabeth Bayliss from Social Action for Health, Steve Griffiths from HELP and Rachel Carrell from NHS London. The seminar focussed on: broader issues around health inequalities as outlined in Marmot review, what the proposed changes will/could mean for patients and communities in holding bodies accountable, the work of the LEP and other bodies on the community/user involvement in the design and delivery of services and what that could or should mean for the commissioning of services

For reports and papers relating to this event click [here](#)

How Education Works – 15th September 2011

LCF held a solution based roundtable discussion, working with participants to look in detail at the opportunities and challenges raised by the educational reforms, identify where we can work together and find answers to the issues they raise. Stephanie Pinnock from the Academy of Entrepreneurship and Sporting Excellence spoke about her experience and work around establishing a free school in her borough.

Key questions raised included:

- What are the implications for education in London resulting from the growing number of academies and applications to set up free schools?
- Will reforms result in more or less accountability to parents and the communities they live in?
- Will reforms actually offer parents a real opportunity to have an impact on the way their children are educated?
- What impact, if any, will growing numbers of free schools and academies have on schools that remain within local authority control?
- How will academies and free schools meet the needs of those pupils who are most at risk of exclusion or academic underachievement or who need specialist support?

NATIONAL NEWS

DCLG publishes Best Value Statutory Guidance

In September the Department for Communities and Local Government published the

Best Value Guidance which sets out the expectations for councils considering changing funding to local voluntary organisations. The Government says that it is acting to remove barriers to more open and efficient local public services by freeing local authorities from targets, prescription and duties. They have revoked the whole statutory guidance *Creating Strong, Safe and Prosperous Communities*, which included general Best Value guidance on commissioning. They are also planning to repeal the two main remaining statutory duties covered in that guidance (the Duty to Involve and the Duty to Prepare a Sustainable Community Strategy).

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/localgovernment/bestvaluestatguidance>

Making Open Data Real: A Public Consultation

The Open Data consultation paper sets out Government's proposed approach for Transparency and Open Data Strategy, which is aimed at establishing a culture of openness and transparency in public services. The proposed approach is fundamentally about creating a 'pull' (an enhanced right to data) and a 'push' (a presumption of publication).

[The deadline for consultation responses is 27th October 2011.](#)

<http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/resource-library/making-open-data-real-public-consultation>

Armchair Auditors

DCLG has launched a new online [search engine](#) which shows local taxpayers when they can inspect their council's detailed financial spending and ledgers as part of greater public transparency. Every council is required by law to make its accounts available to the public for 20 days a year. This includes every invoice, payment and receipt registered in the council's ledgers. It applies to all expenditure, not just amounts over £500.

To help residents and armchair auditors to find out when they have a right to inspect, an online search engine has been published setting out the open day period for over 280 councils. Ministers have said they would like to see all councils sign up to the catalogue. Accounting rules have already been amended to require councils to publicise these little known rights to inspect.

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/news/corporate/1950602>

More pilots for Neighbourhood Planning ahead of the Localism Bill

DCLG has recently announced 36 more frontrunner areas, following the 17 announced in April, to test out neighbourhood planning, bringing the total to 126 across the country. Each front runner's local council is being given £20,000 to support work on neighbourhood planning and free advice from planning experts will be available for the local community.

There are currently eight frontrunners in London: these include London Borough of Southwark (Bermondsey and Bankside), London Borough of Sutton (Hackbridge), Kensington and Chelsea (Markham Square), Brent (Sudbury Town), Waltham Forest (Highams Park and Leytonstone) and Enfield (Edmonton Green).

Local planning authorities in England are invited to apply for grants under the Neighbourhood Planning Front Runners scheme. The closing date for the receipt of applications is 17.00 hrs on **Friday 4 November 2011**.

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/news/planningandbuilding/1975517>

GLA NEWS

Toughest budget yet for London's Mayor, warns Assembly

Mayor [Boris Johnson](#) faces his toughest financial decisions yet as he sets next year's budget for key services used by Londoners, a new report from the London Assembly warns.

The Assembly's Pre-Budget Report highlights the challenges the Greater London Authority (GLA) is facing as it looks for new ways of generating finances to make up for reductions in central funding: In his next budget, the Mayor faces important and difficult strategic decisions which will inevitably have consequences for Londoners.

http://www.london.gov.uk/media/press_releases_london_assembly/toughest-budget-yet-london%E2%80%99s-mayor-warns-assembly

Londoners to have greater say in the Royal Parks

The Mayor of London has today announced the first details of the new board for the The Royal Parks, with the aim to give Londoners a far greater say.

Following recent discussions between the Mayor [Boris Johnson](#) and DCMS ministers, it has been agreed that a new board will be appointed by the Mayor to strengthen the ways in which Londoners can have a voice in the oversight and management of these great assets. The new board will consist of 12 individuals. London Councils will nominate three members to represent London boroughs, and membership will also include two members of the Royal Parks senior management team and a member of the Royal Household.

http://www.london.gov.uk/media/press_releases_mayoral/londoners-have-greater-say-royal-parks

The Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act has now received Royal Assent which will make the Mayor (and the Deputy Mayor, if the Mayor chooses to appoint a Deputy Mayor) directly accountable to the public for policing performance in the capital. Replacing the MPA will be the Mayor's Office of Policing and Crime (MOPC) which will be established either late 2011 or early 2012 The London Assembly's role to scrutinise the way in which the Mayor and Deputy Mayor exercise their executive oversight of policing will be clarified and implemented through the work of the newly established Police and Crime Panel (PCP)

<http://www.mpa.gov.uk/mopc/>

Team London micro grants for grassroots groups

[Team London is the Mayor's action plan for volunteering](#), a bridge between London's greatest needs and the volunteers that help to make London a better place to live. Team London [Micro Grants](#) will help smaller, unconstituted and/or grassroots voluntary sector and community organisations with an annual turnover of less than £10,000 seeking to

increase their volunteering capacity.

The fund is for groups working to improve quality of life for Londoners through projects and programmes that build stronger neighbourhoods and improve the environment. There are 66 grants of up to £1,000 available - two in each London borough, including the City of London.

Organisations must submit an expression of interest to be eligible to apply for a Team London Micro Grant. The deadline for submitting an expression of interest for a Team London Micro Grant is Friday 4 November 2011 at 5.00 pm. **The deadline for submission of applications is Monday, 7 November 2011 at 5.00 pm.** [Full criteria and guidance notes](#) are available to download from the Team London website.

Apply for help now', Mayor tells riot-affected small businesses

The Mayor [Boris Johnson](#) is urging businesses affected by August's disturbances to apply for grants from the new High Street Fund, which started processing claims in late August. The fund, set up with contributions from the Mayor, leading UK companies and local authorities, is designed to help small businesses affected by looting, robbery, destruction or arson to get back on their feet.

http://www.london.gov.uk/media/press_releases_mayoral/'apply-help-now'-mayor-tells-riot-affected-small-businesses

Olympic Legacy Supplementary Planning Guidance

Closing Date: 18th November 2011 The draft Olympic Legacy Supplementary Planning Guidance (OLSPG) covers an area of around 2,000 hectares of east London focused on the main Olympic and Paralympic Games site at Stratford. It covers four local authority boundaries and proposes six overarching development principles designed to address the key strategic planning issues the area faces.

<http://www.london.gov.uk/consultation/olympic-legacy-supplementary-planning-guidance>

PUBLIC MEETINGS

Talk London in Barnet - 17 January

The next [Talk London \[MSOffice2\]](#) event is taking place in Barnet on 17 January 2012. Registrations will open soon, and in the meantime, you can [register for updates](#).

People's Question Time

People's Question Time is an opportunity for you to question the Mayor and London Assembly members. The next People's Question Time will take place in Havering on 7 November. Registrations will be open soon.

<http://www.london.gov.uk/get-involved/public-meetings>

State of the Underground report

This Transport Committee report takes a line-by-line look at the performance of the London Underground. Using data not previously available, *State of the Underground* analyses a recent 20 per cent increase in delays on the Tube by type of delay and line

affected.

<http://www.london.gov.uk/publication/state-underground-report>

OLYMPIC NEWS

Last chance to join London 2012 Inspire programme

Non-commercial projects and events inspired by the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games have until 1 December 2011 to apply to be a part of the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games as an official London 2012 Inspire project.

Organisations that join the programme will be awarded the Inspire mark and can use this special logo to promote their project or event as well as show that they are part of London 2012. After applications close in December, London 2012 will focus on supporting and showcasing the existing projects and events.

More information on how to qualify for the Inspire mark for organisations that have a project or event that has been inspired by the London 2012 Games is available at www.london2012.com/beinspired.

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

The Social Investment Business launches £20million Social Action Fund

A new fund to support the creation of new social action opportunities opened for applications on the 6th October. Worth over £20million, the Social Action Fund managed by The Social Investment Business on behalf of the Office for Civil Society is offering grants of £100k and upwards to projects across England that will expand volunteering and giving of time, money, knowledge and assets.

The first window which opened to applications on the 6th October will close **at noon on Wednesday 2 November**. A second application window will open in early 2012, exact dates will be confirmed in due course.

Strategic Legal Fund launches

[The Diana, Princess of Wales Memorial Fund](#), Trust for London and [MigrationWork CIC](#) have launched a new pilot to support strategic legal work. The Strategic Legal Fund for Refugee Children and Young People (SLF) will fund interventions and pre-litigation legal research for cases involving asylum-seeking and refugee children and young people.

The SLF will run as a pilot for a period of 12 months and will explore the viability of the funding model for this type of work. The SLF is open to applications during its 9 month 'live' phase from 10 October 2011 to 9 July 2012 and will accept applications from not-for-profit organisations that provide specialist level legal advice to refugee and asylum-seeking children and young people, and firms of solicitors that have legal aid contracts covering asylum, immigration, human rights, community care, housing, education, discrimination or health.

For further details on eligibility criteria and how to apply, please visit the [Strategic Legal Fund website](#).

BIG announces £110m fund for older people

The [Big Lottery Fund](#) has announced a £110m package for initiatives which help older

people.

An initial tranche of £10m will be distributed in to up to 30 organisations, and the progress of these initial projects will determine how the remaining £100m will be spent. BIG is expecting to receive applications for initiatives which involve experimenting with new ways of working with older people with the aim of helping them manage in changing circumstances and encouraging participation in the community.

Charities have until 28 October to submit applications for this first round.

CONSULTATION OPPORTUNITIES

Inclusion London (the umbrella body for Deaf and disabled people's organisations in London) has highlighted a number of consultations which may be of particular interest to Deaf and disabled peoples groups and individuals in London:

- [Health Select Committee calls for evidence on social care](#)

The House of Commons Health Select Committee is inviting evidence to its inquiry on adult social care, particularly of those people of 65 years of age and older. More information is available at: www.inclusionlondon.co.uk/health-select-committee-calls-for-evidence-on-social-care

To find out more about the Low Review, please visit the website: <http://lowreview.org.uk>

- **Accessible Transport for All? TfL consults on accessibility plan**

Transport for London (TfL) is consulting on the Mayor's Transport Strategy Accessibility Implementation Plan. The deadline for responses to the consultation is **Monday, 31 October 2011**. The accessibility plan follows the Mayor's Transport Strategy published in May 2010, which included proposals to make the public transport system more accessible. More information is available at the following links:

<https://consultations.tfl.gov.uk/consultation-and-engagement/accessibility-plan>

Localism Bill: Planning Regulations Consultations

The Localism Bill leaves various procedural and technical requirements of the neighbourhood planning system to regulations. This consultation seeks views on whether the proposed neighbourhood planning regulations are fit for purpose

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/planningandbuilding/planningregulationsconsultation>

RESOURCES, REPORTS AND INITIATIVES

LVSC report finds lack of VCS involvement in the Work Programme may worsen employment inequalities for Londoners

London Voluntary Service Council (LVSC) has today launched a report into the involvement of specialist voluntary and community sector (VCS) organisations in the government's Work Programme. The report has found that so far the expertise of specialist VCS organisations is largely unused, is in danger of being lost and that employment inequalities will worsen in London as a result.

The report found that in London the overall rate of subcontracting by the VCS is approximately 20%, lower by a third than the indicative 30% figure given by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) in [Work Programme documentation](#) earlier

this year.

It also found that the vast majority of tier 2 VCS subcontractors have had no job seekers referred to them at all, raising doubts that the most disadvantaged job seekers facing employment inequalities, such as lone parents, disabled people, and minority ethnic groups (all supported by specialist VCS organisations), will get the support they need.

Pathways through Participation launched

Pathways through Participation is a joint research project led by NCVO in partnership with the Institute for Volunteering Research (IVR) and Involve. It is funded by the Big Lottery Fund through its Research Grants programme. It started in April 2009 and launched its final report in September 2011. The project aimed to explore how and why people get involved and stay involved in different forms of participation over the course of their lives. Participation means many things to many different people. The project looked at participation in a very broad sense and considered the act of taking part in a wide range of social or civic activities.

<http://pathwaysthroughparticipation.org.uk/>

Trust for London's new *London's Poverty Profile* report was published on 20 October 2011.

The Profile includes a wide range of indicators on housing, work, transport, services and income poverty. It assesses what has changed since the [first report](#) was published in 2009. Alongside the new published report, all the data is available through their website, which was overhauled for the launch on 20 October.

<http://www.londonpovertyprofile.org.uk/>

'Double Disadvantage' – Citizen's Advice Bureau report

Disabled people often deal with a double disadvantage that can be caused by or contribute to the financial difficulties they experience, according to a report on by Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB). More information is available at: www.inclusionlondon.co.uk/double-disadvantage

Hidden in plain sight – new EHRC report

Harassment is commonplace but accepted as inevitable by many disabled people according to a new report on disability hate crime published by Equality and Human Rights Commission, (EHRC). More information available at: www.inclusionlondon.co.uk/hidden-in-plain-sight

Citizenship Survey

On the 22nd September the Department for Communities and Local Government published headline findings for the final ever Citizenship Survey. The survey, run by Ipsos MORI and TNS-BMRB on behalf of the Communities Analysis Division of DCLG, has been commissioned every 2 years since 2001. This statistical release is based on the April 2010-March 2011. The survey includes data on issues ranging from:

- Influencing decisions
- Volunteering and civic participation

- Community cohesion
- Fear of crime
- Racial and religious prejudice,
- Discrimination
- Attitudes toward violent extremism

For a copy of the survey go to:

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/corporate/statistics/citizenshipsurveyq4201011>

JOB OPPORTUNITIES

The London Organising Committee of the Olympic Games and Paralympic Games is currently advertising a number of jobs. For more information, or to apply, please visit <http://www.london2012.com/get-involved/jobs/index.php/main>.

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