A deeper insight into the Traveller Community - excellent cultural awareness session

ABC Community Network welcomed representatives from Craigavon Travellers Support Committee (CTSC) and Armagh Traveller Support Group (ATSG) to a packed conference room in early February. Participants from a variety of community groups, statutory bodies and health organisations, alongside members of the public, took part in a lively presentation that was packed full of information, statistics, music, film and real-life experiences about the Traveller Community.

Leanne and Sabrina, supported by CTSC and ATSG staff members Lisa Hogg and Sinead Taylor, willingly shared what it’s like to be a Traveller in 2013 and dispelled a number of myths and perceptions held by society.

Programmes like Big Fat Gypsy Wedding have put back our work by about 10 years

Participants were encouraged to share their views too, and the four presenters were able to bring forward information which helped address those particular issues while acknowledging the need for greater communication between communities.

I’m shocked by some of the health statistics shown today – the life expectancy figures were alarming

Informal discussions continued during coffee afterwards where more ideas and feelings were shared, while a number of participants exchanged information and contact details with Sabrina, Leanne and the CTSC & ATSG team.

The Craigavon Travellers Support Committee and Armagh Traveller Support Group would welcome the opportunity of bringing their presentation to other groups. Please contact Lisa or Sinead for further information: 028 38342089 / 028 37412755 or visit their website: www.craigavontravellers.org
Welcome to the Winter Edition of Network News

This edition contains all our regular features on training, funding and local events.

I am pleased to report that ABC has been issued with a new 2013/14 funding contract under the Community Investment Fund from the Department for Social Development's Voluntary and Community Unit. The CIF Grant award will be similar to that for last year and will enable ABC to continue its ongoing work and development plans from April 2013.

As featured on page 3 the Debt Action NI project has now been extended to the Portadown area, operating from the ABC offices. We’re delighted to welcome Sam Walker, Debt Action NI Adviser, who will provide a free, confidential and impartial money / debt service open to anyone concerned about their finances. Sam is at the ABC offices on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday. In addition, Jim Cunningham, Community Development Officer with Southern Regional College will operate an SRC community-focused “Hot Desk” service each Thursday in ABC’s offices from the end of February 2013.

ABC is currently undertaking a training needs analysis to help inform the development of our training programmes for 2013/14. I should be grateful if you would complete and return the enclosed Training Needs Review 2013 Form. Alternatively download a form from our website, complete the form and e-mail it back to us.

Finally, I would like to extend an invitation to all our members and colleagues from our partner organisations to join the Board and Staff from ABC for a Celebration and Networking morning on Thursday 21 March at Portadown Town Hall. Please see back cover for more details about this special event.

John McGuinness
Director

Recent funding successes for ABC members!

Congratulations to all our member groups who were recently awarded funding for their projects under the PHA, SHSCT small Grants Programmes.

We have been busy assisting other groups with recent funding applications, and hopefully they too will meet with the same success!

Our Membership Support Worker, Gaius Ogilby is here to assist member groups with the funding process. She can arrange to meet you either on a face to face basis at the ABC offices 22 Church Street in Portadown or at your own premises. Help includes advice with the application form, help with the finance aspect of the form and preparation of supporting documentation e.g. quotations, policies, etc.

Gaius is also available to provide advice and assistance with your group’s finances in general. She can help you with advice on finances e.g. invoices, income/expenditure sheets, advice notes, reports to funders, and year end figures etc.

There is also an opportunity for member groups to refresh their training with a Book-keeping for small groups course.

This could take the form of a workshop with other groups, or on a one-to-one basis with a few people from your own group either at ABC offices or at your own premises.

If you would like to speak to the Membership Support Worker, please contact –

Gaius Ogilby
Membership Support Worker (Finance)
Tel: 02838 392777
Email: gaius@abccommunitynetwork.com
Debt Action NI

The Debt Action NI project was extended to the Portadown area in January 2013 operating from the ABC Community Network Offices at 22 Church Street Portadown.

As the Debt Action NI Adviser Sam Walker brings 12 years of money/debt experience to the project. Sam provides a free, confidential and impartial money/debt service open to anyone concerned about their finances.

Since the introduction of the project many people have been helped with their debts and in the current economic climate more and more people are having debt problems.

There is always a solution to a debt problem and Debt Action NI are here to help. Since the inception of the project over 306 clients have been helped with a total of £5.8 million of indebtedness an average of £19k per individual.

Debt Action NI is the only Debt and Money Service funded by the Department of Enterprise Trade and Investment co-ordinated by AdviceNI and supported by Payplan until 2015. It is an integrated service with a number of access options.

You can call the Debt Action NI Freephone help line 0800 917 4607 to speak directly to an adviser between 8am and 9pm Monday to Friday and 9am to 3pm on a Saturday. Our advisor in Armagh is James Long 37528462, and in our Lurgan office you can speak to Jim McDowell 38310972. You can also log on to the dedicated website www.debtaction-ni.net and send an appointment request, email an adviser or interact with our virtual adviser. People can also text the word Action to 81025 and an adviser will call them back.

If an appointment in the Craigavon area is required, face to face appointment and home visits to those who are vulnerable can be offered by Sam from the Portadown Office. Sam is willing to attend your group meeting to give a talk on the service and the options available and can be contacted on the numbers to the right.
Laurencetown, Lenaderg and Tullylish Community Association wants to see a community in which people are proud to live; where individuals are empowered to make a positive difference in their own lives and the lives of others; and where all groups within the community are afforded respect.

They are therefore pleased to announce £387,008 in project funding from the Big Lottery Fund’s Reaching Out Empowering Young People Programme.

The project aims to improve the knowledge, skills and experiences of the most ‘at risk’ young people, by providing support structures which are accessible and inclusive and enabling them and their community address the problems of perception, apathy and isolation.

The project has 2 strands:
- Supporting local young people engaging or at risk of engaging in criminal activity.
- Supporting young people with ASD who are disengaged from education.

For more information on this project contact Neil Gillan on 4062 3770 or email: lltca@btinternet.com
A New Year brings new challenges and opportunities. There has never been a better time to use your time usefully helping others and ultimately yourself.

The Volunteer Bureau is based in the Craigavon and Banbridge area and we recruit and match volunteers to suitable placements.

So if you would be interested in learning more about volunteering opportunities why not give us a call. As well as helping out with various projects volunteers get to learn new skills, make new friends and get in-house training.

We currently have vacancies for rural befriending, home visitation, Talking Newspaper, assistance with youth club work, working with children with disabilities, participation in suicide awareness, arts assistants to name a few.

So if you have some spare time, want to improve your CV and your career prospects, why not consider giving a few hours to a local community or voluntary organization. You never know where it could take you.

Telephone Brian on 028 38342741 for an informal chat and further information.

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**Banbridge District Council**

**COMMUNITY AWARDS 2013**

Recognising the extraordinary achievements of ordinary citizens

The winners will be announced at a gala awards ceremony in the Belmont Hotel on Wednesday 27th March 2013.

Banbridge District Council’s Community Awards 2013 aim to recognise citizens who make a valuable contribution to community life. These awards are designed to give you the opportunity to honour individuals of outstanding merit for making a difference to the lives of others in the Banbridge District.

The closing date for nominations is 12 noon on Thursday 28th February 2013. Contact T: 028 4066 0605

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**Banbridge District Council’s Community Awards 2013**

**NOMINATE NOW FOR THE COMMUNITY AWARDS 2013**

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**55+ IT FOR BEGINNERS**

Starts Wednesday 27th February, lasting for 4 sessions each Wednesday morning 10:00am to 12:00pm at ABC Community Network.

Focusing on using email, and accessing information from the Internet. To book a place contact Andrea 38392777

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**Craigavon & Banbridge Volunteer Bureau**

You can make that difference

Ever thought of volunteering?

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Choose to Live Better

Have you noticed lately these new advertisements on boardings, in the papers and on TV referring to the size of people’s waistlines? These ads have been placed by the Public Health Agency (PHA) as part of their new obesity strategy campaign to help individuals become more aware of their weight. With 61% of all adults in Northern Ireland now being overweight or obese the chances are they may be talking to you.

Being overweight or obese can increase the risk of developing serious diseases as well as reducing life expectancy by up to nine years. The problem is that for many adults in this country they may not even know or maybe in denial about their own weight.

To do a quick check, all you have to do is measure your waistline using PHA information. A woman’s waist should not exceed 32 inches (81cm) while for men the limit is 37 inches (94cm). A dedicated website www.choosetolivebetter.com has been developed as part of the public information campaign should you wish to find out more about measuring your own waist or ways to live healthier.

My name is Geralyn Maguire and I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself as the new REACH Community Lifestyle Coordinator for the Craigavon and Banbridge locality. I look forward to working within the community and hope to continue with the excellent service REACH has already provided in the area.

Just to remind everyone that REACH is a community based project funded by the Big Lottery to work with individuals, families and groups across the southern area to help improve health and wellbeing. We offer a number of programmes that aims to provide communities with the opportunity to enhance lifestyles.

How can REACH support you?
Throughout the year we will be running a number of programmes to help get people active and improve their overall wellbeing. Examples of these include:

Community lifestyle programmes:
- Walking group
- Cycling Group
- Quit & Get Fit
- Cook it programme
- Healthy eating workshops

Weight Management Programmes:
- Move it Change it
- Weigh to Health

Green Gym:
- Food growing
- Wildlife
- Woodland Management

Community Volunteering Scheme:
- Register as Community Health Mentor
- Help people with your community to overcome barriers to health
- Offer peer support

If you are a group, family or individual and are interested in participating in any of our programmes please contact Geralyn Maguire REACH Coordinator or Dale Robinson Community Lifestyle Support Worker on 028 38392777 or email: Geralyn.maguire@southerntrust.hscni.net

REACH are currently working in partnership with a number of statutory, voluntary and community organisations to help tackle obesity and help individuals become more aware of their weight. The Health Promotion Agency has released guidelines on how to measure your waistline and ideas on how to live a healthier lifestyle. Please see information below and if you require further support and advice on this issue please do not hesitate to contact us on details above.

Free Walking Programme in Craigavon and Banbridge

The REACH Project will be facilitating a walking group in both Craigavon and Banbridge that will be open to everyone. These walks will last for 8 weeks starting on the Tuesday 19th February until Tuesday 9th April.

The walking location and times are as follows:
- Banbridge Riverside Walk at 11am - 12 noon. Meeting at Banbridge Leisure Centre.
- Craigavon Lakes at 1-2pm. Meeting at the lakes Watersports Centre.

Walks will last 45min to 1 hour. But please arrive 15 minutes early for registration as walks will start promptly. For further information contact Dale on 028 38 392777.
Awards for All
This Programme is delivered and funded by the Big Lottery Fund in Northern Ireland and awards funds of between £500 – £10,000. You can now re-apply for funding up to a maximum of £20,000 in any 12-month period.

This means you can only hold one award up to £10,000 at any one time. You can reapPLY for funding if you have submitted your completed end of award report, but no decisions will be made until the report together with any other monitoring requirements is approved.

There are no specific closing dates. For further information visit www.awardsforall.org.uk.

Lloyds TSB Foundation NI
The key interest of the Foundation is ‘To support underfunded charities which enable people, especially disadvantaged or disabled people, to play a fuller role in the community’. The two key areas are social and community needs, and education and training.

Deadline for the next round of funding is Friday 12th April

Please check website www.lloydstsbfoundationni.org for more information or contact Lloyds TSB Foundation for NI on 028 9032 3000 or e-mail: brenda@lloydstsbfoundationni.org

Building the Community-Pharmacy Partnership programme - Level 2 & 3
The BCPP programme promotes and supports local communities to work in partnership with community pharmacists to address local health and social wellbeing needs using a community development approach.

Level 2 funding is for those who have a clear vision of what the project wants to achieve. It consists of a maximum of £10,000 for a project that can last up to 2 years. Please note there is now additional criteria for Level 2 applications. Level 3 funding is available to those who have completed several Level 2 projects.

Please keep in mind that we offer support in developing your partnership, ideas and application. Contact us if you are thinking of becoming involved.

Application packs can be downloaded from www.cdhn.org/bcpp For further information call us on T: 028 3026 4606. Closing Date: 18th April.

abc learning & development
Over the past six years, ABC Community Network has continued to devise, develop and deliver accredited, vocational and recreational learning opportunities throughout Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon’s community and voluntary sector. ABC is most grateful for the funding contributions received from Banbridge District Council, Craigavon Borough Council, Lloyds TSB and Southern Health & Social Care Trust. Such funding adds to the financial and in-kind contributions that ABC makes itself to ensure that targeted and innovative courses are made available. During 2012, ABC offered 24 courses to nearly 300 people in a variety of community locations.

Between September and December 2012
ABC courses included Powerpoint, First Aid, Food Safety, Designated Child Protection Officer, Information Technology, Drugs Awareness and Running Effective Community Groups. As usual, we’re most grateful to the group of training providers who willingly accommodate the particular needs of the community and voluntary sector: BISP, Training, Community Sector Training, the Neighbourhood Policing Team based in Portadown, and Key 2 at Edward Street Hostel were among those who contributed to the success of our most recent training calendar.

Six Core Courses that address the most practical needs of our membership were identified through course evaluations, discussions with ABC member groups and analysis of training requests, and we aim to offer these six courses throughout the year. Core Courses comprise: Book-keeping for Community Groups, First Aid, Food Safety, Good Governance, Health & Safety, and Running an Effective Community Group. We believe these Core Courses are vital to the development, effectiveness and sustainability of new and emerging groups and recommend that community and voluntary group representatives attend the Core Courses to ensure systematic development. For established groups, changes in committee members, group direction or the impact of external legislation means that updating of skills may be necessary and ABC strives to ensure that the most up-to-date information is included in its courses.

January to March 2013 courses still to come include 55+ IT for Beginners, and Moving and Handling People which is aimed at volunteers who may need to help move older people or those with limited mobility. If you would like to join either of these courses, please contact us as soon as possible. Don’t forget – booking is essential on all courses!

We need your help because learning and development is an evolving process, driven overwhelmingly by the needs of our membership and those in the wider voluntary and community sector. ABC is committed to providing a professional, needs-based learning and development programme and will shortly begin a wide-ranging review of current training and how we can further develop our service. We’re keen to get your input, so expect to be hearing from us soon!

John Moores Foundation – NI Grant
Grant for third sector organisations (TSOs) in Northern Ireland undertaking a variety of general charitable activities and aims to improve social conditions for marginalised groups i.e. tackle discrimination, support small volunteer-led organisations, encourage relationships between organisations and different social groups.

For further information please contact: John Moores Foundation PO Box 4 Carnlough BT44 0WZ
Tel: 028 28 886161 Email: jmfni@btinternet.com
ABC COMMUNITY NETWORK
SPECIAL EVENT TO CELEBRATE A GREAT YEAR!

ABC Community Network members and colleagues from our partner organisations are invited to join us for a Celebration and Networking morning on Thursday 21 March at Portadown Town Hall from 10:30am to 12:30pm

We hope you’ll be able to join us for this informal event to mark:

» Members’ funding successes
» Completed and ongoing projects
» Future opportunities for ABC and its members
» The chance for your group to showcase your activities
» A special entertainment from one of our newest ABC member groups

» All the while the tea, coffee and buns will be flowing while you have the chance to chat, share experiences and make connections!

To reserve your place contact us straightaway!
Phone: 028 3839 2777
Email: info@abccommunitynetwork.com

We can design for you:

Designing Websites, Blogs, Online Content Management systems, Ecommerce. Providing ongoing updates and maintenance.

ABC Community Design is a design service created for and working with the voluntary and community sector, small businesses & social enterprises.

22 Church Street, Portadown, County Armagh 028 3839 2777 design@abccommunitynetwork.com