



Autumn 2011

CAVOS

consultation pages

2013 Boundary Review

As you may have heard, the boundary of the Sedgefield Constituency is being reviewed with plans to change its geographical area and population coverage to fit in with new Parliamentary rules regarding constituency size. You have a chance to have your say on what you think of this as part of the 2013 Boundary Review Consultation.

About the review: The Boundary Commission for England is an independent and impartial public body responsible for reviewing Parliamentary constituency boundaries in England. They have the task of regularly reviewing these boundaries and are currently conducting a review on the basis of new rules laid down by Parliament.

These rules involve a significant reduction in the number of constituencies in England. They have now completed the first stage of the review process and have published their initial proposals.

What is changing in the North East? The North East region has been allocated 26 constituencies – a reduction of 3 from what is currently in place. The new Boundary Commission proposals make changes to all existing constituencies; however, there are a number of constituencies where they have made only minor changes, as necessary, to enable them to comply with the new rules.

How to have your say: The Boundary Commission is consulting on their initial proposals until 5th Dec 2011. They encourage everyone to use this opportunity to contribute to the design of the new constituencies and ask anyone wishing to contribute to first read the *Initial proposals* report and accompanying maps before responding to them. In particular, they would like to know:

1. if you agree in full, part or not at all with their initial proposals for the North East region; and
2. if you can propose alternatives for areas you disagree with that meet the statutory rules they set out in their report.

Getting your hands on the report: You can contact CAVOS to request a copy or download the report from our website www.cavos.org.uk. The Boundary Commission website also has plenty of information available on the review and you can also access the Initial Proposals report via this website: www.consultation.boundarycommissionforengland.independent.gov.uk

Sending in your views: Once you have read through the Initial Proposals report, you can respond by email to northeast@bcommengland.x.gsi.gov.uk

By post to : Boundary Commission for England, 35 Great Smith Street, London SW1P 3BQ

Or you can register via the website above to attend one of the public hearing meetings below:

- ⇒ Mon 14 - Tue 15 Nov @ Civic Centre, Newcastle upon Tyne
- ⇒ Thu 17 - Fri 18 Nov @ St George Hotel, Durham Tees Valley Airport, Darlington

If you have any queries relating to this newsletter, or would like an article published in the next issue please contact us:

Tel: 01388 811115 Fax: 01388 817772

Email: enquiries@cavos.org.uk www.cavos.org.uk



CAVOS Voluntary Sector Question Time

As part of our recent AGM, CAVOS hosted a Voluntary Sector Question Time where local groups and organisations had the opportunity to put their questions to a knowledgeable panel. This was very popular and a brief outline of the questions and answers is detailed below with a full version available to view and access as a downloadable document from our website www.cavos.org.uk

Q1. Lots of projects are closing due to lack of funding. What will happen when there are no groups working at grass roots level in the community?

The simple answer is we're not sure what will happen, it's a difficult thing to predict. We can say that it would certainly be a very sad day if it did ever come to that. It seems the Government still don't understand the sector (VCS) and they especially need to recognise the huge value of small groups working at a grassroots level. We also need to recognise on the other hand that local groups and organisations rarely use the opportunity during times of change and difficulty to make the most of the good value of their work to move forward, change or innovate.

VONNE is the regional support organisation for the VCS and they are very much aware of current issues. A recent survey they conducted showed that many organisations are considering closing part or all of their service. As a result, there is now a national campaign running with many government links taking on board these issues and supporting us to look forward positively.

Q2. Would CAVOS consider: negotiating an umbrella insurance for all community centres; organising for each centre via NHS to carry out health checks for diabetes, blood pressure, etc and negotiate a deal for Gas and Electric for the centres?

CAVOS are aware that Durham Rural Community Council (DRCC) already provide a negotiated insurance service for community groups and rather than duplicate, we can provide information to Community Buildings for them access this deal directly with DRCC. Although the Pioneering Care Partnership (PCP) would usually be a great contact for health checks, recent funding cuts have had an impact on the availability of such services. However, the PCP do have a Health Trainer project that could link with groups and advise regarding the provision of health events and services. Helen Brown at CAVOS has been looking into gas and electricity deals for community buildings but there seem to be a number of issues and needs across the Borough that must be addressed first so this is still being investigated. CAVOS will keep you updated.

Q3. Is it reasonable for a small group to have a small amount of cash in hand to save going to the bank when we need to buy for the group?

It is fine for a small group to have petty cash in hand as long as the group has a good system in place to manage the money and everything is fully transparent and above board. In fact it might be said to be 'essential'. CAVOS can provide the group with a model 'Cash Handling Policy'.

Q4. It was previously mentioned by VONNE that their survey recently revealed groups are considering closing; are CAVOS providing a specific service to help these organisations?

At the moment, CAVOS are not aware of any actual local groups closing although we are aware of some groups that are looking at refocusing and possibly changing their ways of working. CAVOS would advise groups to come for support and advice as soon as possible when they are aware they may be facing difficulties. If the group isn't able to continue, CAVOS would be able to help with officially closing the group.

Q5. My group has a high turnover of volunteers and we struggle to keep a volunteer with us for long. How can we change or improve this so that our volunteers stay longer?

CAVOS provides training that touches on this particular difficulty and we would recommend that any VCS group looking for further support book onto our 'How to be a Brilliant Organisation' training course to find out more. What we would begin by saying though is that it's very important for groups to bear in mind that they may always have to face the issue of having a constant turn



over of volunteers as it's the nature of volunteering. However, an important point for groups to think about is the fact that each and every person volunteers for their own personal reason and group's should, where possible, look to meet these particular needs for each individual.

Q6. Our community centre is currently struggling due to a lack of volunteers to help us keep the centre open. What can we do to bring more people on board and help us to keep the centre open?

Again, we would initially encourage groups to book onto our 'How to be a Brilliant Organisation' training to find out more and have the chance to ask specific questions that affect their own group. Part of this may have been covered in the points from the previous question, however, there is another key area that groups sometimes don't think too clearly about with regard to volunteering and that's the actual volunteer role. Groups should think carefully about the roles they need volunteers to perform whether it is a driver, befriender or fundraiser; they all need clear guidance on what tasks are expected of them and having that guidance makes a huge difference.

Q7. CAVOS receives information and issues from local groups like ours, what does CAVOS do with what we give in terms of passing them on to a regional or national body?

As most of you will be aware, we are always keen to consult with local groups around important issues that arise and these are promoted through our e-bulletins and newsletter consultation pages. Any responses we receive are forwarded on to VONNE to feed into the bigger picture of the sector and recently this has been linked into VONNE's Surviving Not Thriving survey. We would remind groups that they can also go directly to VONNE as well as CAVOS if they have anything they want to contribute into the regional voice. VONNE uses the details we pass on to them to respond to national consultations on our behalf and links with senior parliamentary officers to ensure our voices are heard.

Q8. Our group's funding is about to run out, what can we do so that our group can keep going?

Unfortunately, if groups come to CAVOS for support at the last minute and at crisis point there is usually very little we can do to help them continue once they have reached this stage. For the majority of funding applications, you are looking at a minimum of a 3 month turnaround from a group submitting an application to the funders decision and even then the application could be unsuccessful. It is vital for any group to contact CAVOS as soon as they're aware there may be future difficulties and not wait until they are on their last reserves to ask for help. Support can be provided around looking at the future and sustainability of the group.

Community Buildings Consultation

Durham County Council are running a consultation about the future of community buildings that they own. They are looking to invest £2.15million in community buildings and want views on the six options they have developed for the future of County Council owned community buildings.

The consultation ends on 12th December 2011. The reviewed findings will then be amended based on the information collected before a final decision is made by their Cabinet in 2012.

How you can get involved:

The first thing to do is read the documents about what's involved in the review of their community buildings which are available via www.durham.gov.uk/consultation

You can then have your say by: completing their online questionnaire, emailing your comments to cbconsultation@durham.gov.uk or calling 0191 383 4215 for help with completing the questionnaire.

For more information:

Contact - Community Buildings Consultation, Partnerships and Community Engagement, Assistant Chief Executive's Office, Durham County Council, County Hall, Durham. DH1 5UF

New policy directions for Big Lottery Fund

There is a government consultation currently running on proposed new policy directions for the Big Lottery Fund. The consultation invites views from a wide range of stakeholders which include the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector and other government departments.

To download the consultation documents use this shortened web link: tinyurl.com/3bvkw2
Complete the online response form and email: biglotteryfundconsultation@cabinet-office.gsi.gov.uk or post a written response to: Deborah Boswell, Cabinet Office, 4/16, 1 Horse Guards Road London SW1A 2AS. Deadline for responses is: **Midnight on Friday 18th November 2011.**

Following the consultation, the government will consider feedback. A summary will be published in January 2012 with the overall government response to the consultation.

Reducing the licensing of performances

The Department for Culture, Media and Sport is seeking views on the removal, in certain circumstances, of the requirement for a licence in England and Wales to host a performance of a play, an exhibition of a film, an indoor sporting event, a performance of live music, any playing of recorded music or a performance of dance.

They are consulting on proposals to deregulate Schedule 1 of the Licensing Act 2003.

To view the consultation document use this shortened web link: tinyurl.com/6h8t8ad
You can respond to the consultation by email regulated_entertainment_consultation@culture.gsi.gov.uk or by post to: Nigel Wakelin, Regulated Entertainment Consultation Co-ordinator, Department for Culture, Media and Sport, 2-4 Cockspur Street, London. SW1Y 5DH

Closing date for responses is: **3rd December, 2011.**

Allotments letting policy

Durham County Council inherited all the former district council allotment sites in April 2009. It soon became clear there was a range of agreements and resources dedicated to allotment inspection, maintenance and a number of issues across the sites. To make sure all tenants are subject to the same rules and enforcement procedures, they are now consulting on a revised allotments lettings policy for directly let Durham County Council allotments.

You can complete the Allotment Consultation Questionnaire online via tinyurl.com/66rpo5a or, alternatively, if you would like a paper copy of the questionnaire or require it in another format, contact Sandra Howes, Outdoor Sport and Leisure Assistant by phoning 0191 372 9184 or emailing ns.sportadmin@durham.gov.uk

