

March 2005

### **March 7/3/05 Week one news**

#### **Starts**

#### **The Volunteer Centre Waltham Forest to take ‘national brand’ in March 2005**

Waltham Forest’s ‘VC’ will sign a special licensing agreement in March which ‘brands the Centre.

This follows development work in 2004 and negotiations with ‘Volunteering England’ (‘VE’). VE worked in consultation with around 300 local Volunteer agencies in England to develop the new brand of “Volunteer Centre”. In 2005, any agency that has the name of Volunteer Centre has to offer six ‘core functions’ - and more importantly – be externally assessed in the quality of their services.

The Board of The Volunteer Centre Waltham Forest took the decision to adopt the brand in January 2005. A licence agreement will be signed with Volunteering England later this month. VE in return will supply standard national signage and stationery and other brand materials. The Centre will adopt the operating name “Volunteer Centre Waltham Forest”, and the acronym VCWF will also be used.

Executive Director of VCWF, Trevor Moss, was one of four representatives from VC’s in London to help with the national developments in 2003 and 2004. Commenting on the developments, Trevor said: “ This is a very important development for our Borough. VCWF was started in 2000. In less than five years, we have established a strong agency with great potential and promise. The whole team here are excited by the prospects for our future in helping people, organisations and the communities of this Borough over the next years.

#### **Ends**

#### **Starts**

#### **The Volunteer Centre Waltham Forest to introduce “Investing in Volunteers” to Borough.**

On 28 February, the Volunteer Centre Waltham Forest signed a partnership agreement with its national partner agency to bring a new programme called Investing in Volunteers (‘IiV’) to key voluntary groups in Waltham Forest.

IiV was developed and piloted over a five-year period. It is designed to help voluntary organisations to involve and manage volunteers. The programme sets standards that are checked

by external assessors. Organisations who reach the standard are awarded a quality 'kitemark'. Volunteering England announced the new 'iV' programme on October 2004.

VCWF has already got the minimum resources in place to start on developing the local programme for Waltham Forest. In December 2004, the VC bid for funds from the Big Lottery Fund to expand its programme over the period 2005 –2008.

Chair of the Volunteer Centre Liz Willams said "I am delighted that the Board are able at last to launch work that will directly help our local organisations to develop their volunteer base. This project work has been in the Board plans for two years".

Executive Director, Trevor Moss commented: " I am very pleased to see the partnership starting – and grateful to Barbara Regnier at Volunteering England for her encouragement. The key to success – as ever – will be dedicated funding. I very much hope that the Big Lottery Fund might support VCWF - and the Borough - in an early launch".

## **Ends**

## **Starts**

### **The Volunteer Centre Waltham Forest: 2004 results**

Fred Rason, Centre Manager at VCWF has recently reported on key statistics for the performance of the Volunteer Centre in 2004.

The results show that 1070 people made enquiries about volunteering at the VCWF in 2004 and of these 558 came to interview at the Centre. Over 90% of these take are given referral appointments with organisations 'brokered' by the VC staff.

Recent follow-up research by one the Centre volunteer team showed that over 120 people had gone on to take up a volunteer position with an organisation.

Fred Rason commented: "

Executive Director Trevor Moss said" these results are in line with the Centre business plan in terms of the numbers of people we can help. Both the staff and board look to 2005 to make progress from 'promotion' to a more productive and targeted marketing approach. But right now I want to acknowledge the tremendous work of the team in 2004 to meet the baseline targets. Performance matters – but recognition matters even more".

The Volunteer Centre has key targets in the LBWF Community Strategy. Presently VCWF are working with the Borough to see if there is scope to formalise this under new Local Public Service Agreements in 2005.

**Ends**