

Bringing community & voluntary groups together

Hillingdon

Association of Voluntary Services



Spring 2010

Newsletter

About us

Hillingdon Association of Voluntary Services exists to support and develop the voluntary sector in the London Borough of Hillingdon. Take a look at the back of this newsletter to read about our aims.

Newsletter

We welcome your news items and articles for the next edition of the HAVS newsletter. To contribute a piece, please contact us before the end of June 2010.

Website

Visit our new website at www.havs.org.uk for the HAVS directory of Hillingdon's voluntary sector organisations, for information about all of our projects and latest news.

Hillingdon Association of Voluntary Services (HAVS)

Invites you to attend



HILLINGDON EQUALITIES CONFERENCE 2010

"Reaching Equality: where do we stand, where do we need to be and what's stopping us getting there?"

Date: 31st March 2010

Time: 9am to 2.30pm

Venue: The Middlesex Suite, Civic Centre, High Street, Uxbridge.

This major conference aims to put equalities at the top of the local agenda, explore delegates understanding of equality and reopen dialogue locally on the barriers to equality. Hillingdon's voluntary sector is invited to be strongly represented.

Organised by HAVS, the conference is expected to pave the way for a forward plan of action and an equalities consortium to ensure that equality for all of Hillingdon's residents is achieved.

Ted Hill, HAVS' Chief Executive, said: "Come along to the conference and play your part in putting equalities back at the top of Hillingdon's agenda. It should not be seen as 'just another talking shop' but as a way to overcome the inequalities blighting many residents' lives."

Lunch and refreshments will be provided. Booking is required. To reserve your place contact Catherine Herriott at HAVS on 01895 422722 or 0794632025. Email: cherriott@havs.org.uk

See page 6 for details

Inside:

- *News & Views* • *Information & Advice*
- *Children & Families* • *Funding opportunities*
- *Volunteer Centre news* • *Training* • *Legal*
- *Health & Safety* • *and much more...*

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Sign up for ICT Healthcheck and strategy development

HAVS' ICT service is looking to work strategically with voluntary and community groups within the borough of Hillingdon.

If you missed the workshop on 'ICT Funding and Strategy Development' then why not book a date in May 2010 with our ICT development worker and get a Healthcheck done for your organisation or project.

An ICT strategy is important for any organisation wanting to develop their ICT infrastructure in order to meet their needs and objectives. It will answer questions such as:

How can we make sure that the equipment we buy will meet our needs and won't become outdated within a couple of years?

What about printers, scanners and modems – important components of any computer system?

Then there are more complex issues like installing a network, providing email for all your staff, or deciding on maintenance contracts and support. So

How should we go about buying our equipment?

How should we choose a supplier that will provide good after-sales support?

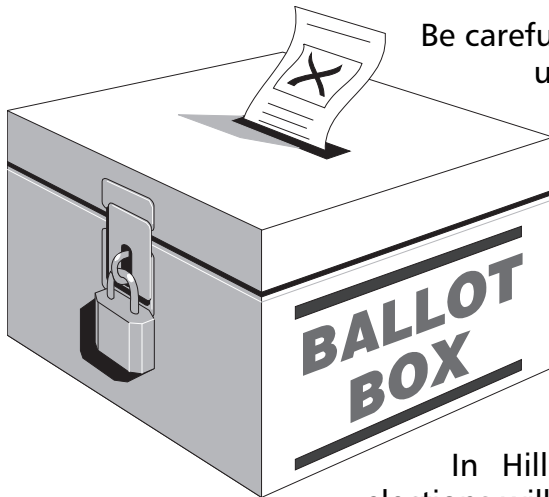
Finally, and most importantly:

How can we ensure that whatever we buy helps to develop our organisation's services and doesn't just become a drain on limited resources?

For more details and to book an ICT Healthcheck contact Marcus Otite on 01895 442722 or email motite@havs.org.uk



Watch out - Elections about!



Be careful how you promote your organisation's activities in the run up to this year's local and national elections.

That's the message from the Charity Commission in its latest guidance to charity and community groups.

A charity can carry out campaigning and political activity with a view to furthering or supporting its 'charitable purposes' but must not give any perception of political bias for or against any political candidate or party. Charities must maintain their independence from the party political debate.

In Hillingdon, and the 31 other London boroughs, council elections will be held on Thursday 6 May. As we went to press, the date to elect Members of Parliament was still to be announced but the election must take place on or before 3 June, barring exceptional circumstances.

For the commission's latest guidance on promotional activities see:
<http://www.charity-commission.gov.uk>

Payroll assistance

Following a review of our services we are pleased to say that we will continue to provide groups with payroll services from 1 April, 2010.

We have though had to increase the cost of these services as we are unable to continue subsidising them in the current economic climate. This is only the second rise in these charges since payroll services were introduced in 1999.

The new charges are: a one-off set up fee of £50, £6 per payslip with a £50 fee for end of year returns.

To sign up to the service contact Moses Sarquah on 01895 442722 or email msarquah@havs.org.uk Please notify Moses in writing by 31 March if you wish to move to an alternative payroll provider.

As a further result of our review we will no longer be providing an accountancy service from 1 April. Should your group have accountancy needs please contact Moses for advice.

Join the Voluntary Sector Health & Social Care Forum

HAVS hosts this forum which has been set up to act as a collective voice for the third sector on local health and social care issues across the London Borough of Hillingdon. The forum is currently undergoing a review, the results of which will be published in April. Membership of the forum is open to all groups with an interest in health and/or social care. Agenda items often discuss current developments in the sector as well as tackling any concerns raised by members.

If your organisation would like to attend the health and social care forum, please contact Catherine Herriott, Health & Social Care Manager on 01895 442722 or 07946362025, or email: cherriott@havs.org.uk



Hayes Hawks race into the new decade

Hayes Hawks bicycle motocross club is racing into the new decade at local, national and international levels and is also on track to help set up a new club in Africa.

Hawks BMX Club has been part of the local community since 1981 and began life on a site in Kingshill Avenue, Hayes.

After a spell based in Slough, the club returned to Hayes in 2002 to the brand new bicycle motocross racing track at the newly created Lake Farm Country Park.

Suitable for local and regional BMX races the 300-metre long dirt track, with its starting grid, jumps and banked features, is also ideal for club training, fun events and sessions for new riders.

In 2008 BMX racing moved into the big time when it became an Olympic sport and its popularity has been growing world wide ever since.

Today, Hawks has a membership of more than 100 children, teenagers and adults who currently train and compete at Lake Farm. A number of riders also represent the club at national and international events at home and abroad.

Now the club, which is a non-profit making organisation, is working with Hillingdon Council and Hillingdon Community Trust on a plan to develop the Lake Farm track to an international standard and to provide a visitor centre.

The idea is to make the club sessions and events enjoyable to many more people, from novice riders to those with expertise and experience.

It's also planned to appoint a full time worker to support the club and complement all the voluntary work that currently takes place. The club is now drawing up funding applications to turn the plans into reality.

In the near future a new concrete skate park for young people of all ages will open in the country park next to the BMX track. This latest achievement follows many years of planning and fundraising by the club and its volunteers.

It is also to Hawks' credit that, as well as working towards developing its own facilities, it's assisting an emerging BMX club in Kampala, Uganda to get established. In 2009 Hawks supplied the shirts and trophies for the first ever BMX race to be held in that country.

At present there is no purpose built BMX track in Uganda. The club is using the Nelson Mandela Stadium, but Hawks hope to support members to build their own track and during this year plans to supply riders with bikes and helmets.



Closer to home the club has started a schools' outreach programme which gives school children in the borough the chance to get a flavour of BMX from some of the club's experts.

Fiona Millar a member of HAVS' staff said: "My daughter and son joined Hawks when they were eight and twelve years old respectively, and were given help in learning BMX skills.

"They then went on to compete in regional and national races. They really enjoyed the camaraderie, fun and exercise, and even the occasional minor injury, mud and site maintenance.

"They would recommend BMX to anyone on a tight budget looking for an activity for their children. The club has bikes and safety gear available to loan to riders just starting out."

The Lake Farm track is open to the public seven days a week, weather permitting, except when club events are taking place.

For further details of Hayes Hawks please see www.hawksbmx.co.uk or contact club chairman Scott Dick on 07944 557 689.





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Date: 31st March 2010

Time: 9am to 2.30pm

Venue: The Middlesex Suite, Civic Centre, High Street, Uxbridge.

AGENDA

9.00am	Registration & Refreshments
9.30am	Welcome & Introductions Ann Chad, Chair of HAVS
9.35am	Opening Speech by The Mayor of Hillingdon, Cllr Shirley Harper-O’Neill
9.45am	National equality perspective
10.00am	Regional equality perspective
10.15am	Hillingdon statutory equality perspective
10.30am	Hillingdon Third Sector equality perspective
10.45am	Equality Question Time
11.00am	Break
11.15am	Asphaleia Youth Theatre Performance – <i>“Equality?”</i>
11.30am	Equality & Diversity Training Taster Session The London Discrimination Unit
12.30pm	Lunch
1.30pm	<i>“Reaching Equality”</i> Workshop
2.15pm	Feedback & Plenary
2.20pm	Closing Speech
2.45pm	Meeting Close

Lunch and refreshments will be provided. Booking is required. To reserve your place at the event please contact Catherine Herriott at HAVS on 01895422722 or 07946362025 or email: cherriott@havs.org.uk

HAVS' Investors in People success

HAVS has successfully retained recognition as an Investor in People, the coveted business performance standard.



Following a detailed assessment by the IiP, HAVS was commended by the assessor for continuing to meet all of the IiP's statutory requirements.

HAVS on-going commitment to staff, training and strategic development in the challenging conditions of the recession were also noted by the assessor.

As part of the detailed assessment, more than 90% of employees and volunteers were interviewed. Positive feedback from staff included HAVS clear planning objectives for staff, volunteers and external stakeholders.

Staff also commented favourably on management's openness to views and ideas and considered HAVS 'a good place to work' where staff are 'well supported, and valued.'

Ted Hill, HAVS' Chief Executive, said: "Again achieving this taxing standard is great news for us and demonstrates that we are committed to providing the best in Hillingdon to the voluntary community and our own staff and volunteers.

"We are not resting on our laurels though. The assessor suggested some improvements to aid internal communications and we will be looking very closely at them to make things even better."

HAVS was initially awarded IiP status seven years ago and the award was first renewed in 2007.



**INVESTORS
IN PEOPLE**

HAVS apprenticeships

With young people expected to continue finding it difficult to obtain that all important first job HAVS is stepping in to help.

We plan to take on two office based apprentices in April to provide much needed experience to young people as they start their careers. See the next edition for more details.

Cutting red tape

A new Law and Regulation section can be found on the Cabinet Office of the Third Sector website. It focuses on Charity law in England and Wales and 'cutting red tape for third sector organisations'.

BEWARE!

council tax scam

Some people have recently fallen victim to a scam by companies telephoning them claiming that they can provide a council tax refund.

The alert has come from Hillingdon Council which says that the companies ask residents for their bank details and then access the accounts and withdraw large fees.

Please remind all of your clients not to disclose any personal details to anyone, especially if it is in response to unsolicited telephone calls. If you have any queries about the scam please call Consumer Direct on 08454 04 05 06.

For details of those residents entitled to council tax reductions or discounts see the council website www.hillingdon.gov.uk

Concerns over vetting and barring scheme

Concerns continue to be voiced over the Vetting and Barring Scheme run by the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) for the assessment of people working with children or vulnerable adults.

NAVCA Chief Executive Kevin Curley wrote to Third Sector Minister Angela Smith on 5 February expressing NAVCA members' concerns about the scheme. www.navca.org.uk/news/vbasmith5feb

In addition, Volunteering England has published research which shows high levels of confusion over how the scheme will affect volunteers in England when it is introduced this summer. <http://bit.ly/veresearchvb> or www.volunteering.org.uk

For its part the Government has published a 'Vetting and barring myth buster'. It gives examples of when registration is not required, focusing on areas highlighted by the media in recent months. <http://bit.ly/vemythb> or www.dcsf.gov.uk

The Vetting and Barring Scheme Information Roadshows are continuing, and the NAVCA has asked for more events to be scheduled.

www.vbsroadshow.org/DatesAndVenues.aspx and www.isa-gov.org.uk

Source: NAVCA (National Association of Councils for Voluntary Service)

Children's projects showcase event April 2010

An event to showcase children's projects, sponsored by Hillingdon Children and Families Trust (HCFT), will be held on the 29 April, 9.30am to 4pm in the Middlesex Suite at the Civic Centre, Uxbridge.

One of the key objectives of the HCFT is to bring together resources in Hillingdon to deliver better outcomes for children, young people and their families.

The Children's Projects Showcase Event is being held in order to:

- enable frontline staff in all agencies to develop a knowledge and understanding of, and build relationships with, other projects in Hillingdon that support children, young people and/or families
- inform frontline staff in all agencies of opportunities to work together with other projects
- further develop the use of preventative services in all agencies to aid better outcomes for children.

The event will enable nine to 10 projects to each make a short presentation explaining, for example:

- What the project is
- How children, young people and/or families are referred into the project and/or how the project is working/could work with others in the future
- The difference the project makes to outcomes for children
- Successes achieved and case studies.

There will be opportunities for those attending to ask questions of the organisations involved.

In addition, projects not presenting may wish to set up an information stall to give others the chance to gather information on their projects, and have informal discussions over tea/lunch breaks. Space will be available for around 12 stalls. Lunch and refreshments will be provided at the breaks.

By the time you read this, voluntary organisations in Hillingdon will already have been contacted to ask if they wish to showcase their work at this event.

Once a programme has been compiled, invitations will go out to frontline staff from children's health, education, police, social care and the voluntary sector to book a place to attend the event.

If you have not received an invitation to attend by the time you read this, please contact Fiona Millar at fmillar@havs.org.uk

Its a great chance for voluntary organisations to tell statutory partners what we do and to build links for better working together in the future.



Funding opportunities



The Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) welcomes applications for schemes that help people to learn about, look after and celebrate heritage in a fun and enjoyable way.

HLF - Young Roots stem directly from the interest and ideas of young people who are supported by youth and heritage organisations to develop skills, build confidence, and connect with their local communities.

www.lotteryfunding.org.uk/uk/heritage-lottery-fund

Veolia Trust is committed to supporting projects aiming to install or enhance play areas and skate parks, restore footpaths and green spaces, protect natural habitats, improve community halls and restore churches.

www.veoliatrust.org

Nationwide Foundation. Small grants can now be applied for by charities working for the benefit of all older people to improve their housing needs or address financial exclusion.

www.nationwide.com/about-us/nationwide-foundation

Cash 4 Clubs gives clubs a chance to apply for grants ranging from £250 to £1000, in order to improve facilities, purchase new equipment, gain coaching qualifications, or generally invest in the sustainability of their club.

www.cash-4-clubs.com

Co-operative Community Fund awards between £100 and £2,000 to community, voluntary, or self-help groups to run projects.

www.co-operative.coop/membership/Community-Fund/Post.aspx

Hedley Foundation supports young people, the disabled and the terminally ill.

www.hedleyfoundation.org.uk

Henry Smith Charity assists groups experiencing social and/or economic disadvantage (for example, people with disabilities) as well as work that tackles problems in areas of high deprivation.

www.henrysmithcharity.org.uk

The Archer Trust supports organisations working in areas of high unemployment and deprivation. It favours charities which make good use of volunteers.

www.archertrust.org.uk

Grassroot Grant. Local groups including charities, voluntary groups and neighbourhood initiatives, with an annual turnover of less than £30,000 a year, can apply for £250 to £5000.

www.nwlcommunityfoundation.org.uk

Austin and Hope Pilkington welcome applications for projects within the following areas: children, youth, the elderly and medical research projects dealing with the ageing process.

www.austin-hope-pilkington.org.uk

Mrs Smith and Mount Trust currently funds projects within the following areas: mental health, learning disability, homelessness, family support.

www.pwwsolicitors.co.uk/charitable-applications/charity-details/the-mrs-smith-and-mount-trust



british polio

today's support and information network

Polio isn't history !

It may come as a surprise to learn that polio isn't history in the UK.

Across the country it's estimated that there are approximately 120,000 people still living with the after-effects of contracting the poliovirus.

Most of them caught the virus in the epidemics of the 1940s and 1950s while those under the age of 40 generally caught polio overseas before coming to live in the UK.

Polio affects different people in different ways. Most commonly it affects the limbs, spine, breathing and swallowing. Affected limbs are often shorter and there may be severe muscle wastage. Sufferers usually mention extreme fatigue and are unable to keep certain limbs warm.

Most people who caught polio have led fully independent lives with careers and children. Now, years later, many are suffering from new symptoms due to Post Polio Syndrome.

This can lead to extra pain, muscle wastage and loss of function in affected limbs, increased fatigue and cold intolerance. Consequently many people have had to give up work earlier than they wanted to.

Sufferers are also greatly concerned as to how they will cope as 'good' limbs wear out with the extra strain on them.

There is no cure for the condition and the help given is to manage the symptoms.

The British Polio Fellowship is a national charity that has just celebrated its 70th anniversary. It supports people with polio/Post Polio Syndrome and their carers. The Fellowship:

- Runs a Helpline (0800 0180586, option 1 for Support Services)
- Gives Benefits advice and help in particular with completing Disability Living Allowance and Attendance Allowance forms
- Produces a number of publications and a bi-monthly magazine
- Offers a membership scheme, an IT discussion forum, plus discretionary grants for winter heating, holidays and equipment relating to disability
- Has a local branch network and regional events that people can attend.

continued overleaf

Polio isn't history!

London 50+ project

Additionally, London councils have funded a project to give extra support to people aged 50+ who contracted polio and are living in the London boroughs.

The project worker can assist by way of home visits or, over the telephone, with benefits checks/claims and to discuss direct payments and support from social services.

Information can also be given on medical queries relating to polio and Post Polio Syndrome as well as help to enable sufferers to take advantage of the services offered by the Fellowship and other appropriate local organisations.

The Fellowship is reaching out to people who are living with polio/Post Polio Syndrome and are not aware of the information and support the Fellowship can offer.

If you would be willing to display a poster about the project or if you are aware of any potential clients, please give us a call on 0800 0180586 (option 1) or email london50@britishpolio.org.uk

Please mention the London 50+ project.

Sign language courses

A series of sign language courses is being offered by the Crown Centre for the Deaf, with the support of Brunel University and DASH (Disablement Association Hillingdon).

For more information, email the centre's co-ordinator:
paul.black111@gmail.co.uk

Volunteer Centre hits target



Hillingdon Volunteer Centre has been awarded a bumper £300,000 for meeting a series of challenging targets for increasing the number of residents volunteering.

The grant will help HAVS, and the volunteer centre which it runs, to continue to provide a raft of services of benefit to the whole of the voluntary and community sector in Hillingdon.

The centre was tasked with raising the number of volunteers by more than 1,000 over a three year period. It exceeded this target by some 1,500 bringing the current total to over 23,600. It also had to ensure that residents from socially excluded groups had access to volunteering opportunities.

The funding has come from the London Borough of Hillingdon under a Local Area Agreement with HAVS and the volunteer centre.

Meeting the targets involved promoting the opportunities available for volunteering, assessing would-be volunteers and matching them to the needs of the borough's voluntary and community organisations.

Refreshment helpers in dining centres, transport drivers, admin workers, befrienders, bookkeepers and web site designers are just some of the many voluntary opportunities that were filled in the lifetime of the project.

Tracy Johnson, volunteer centre manager, said: "It took a great deal of hard work to meet the targets but to say we are thrilled with the result is an understatement.

"Every penny of the funding will be ploughed back into the services that HAVS and the volunteer centre provide to the sector.

"The funds will also help us to develop and adapt services to meet new challenges, or fresh calls for support."

Here to help you

Antonella (Nella) Matia has been appointed as our new Volunteer Placement Adviser.

Nella joined the Volunteer Centre team at HAVS in Key House on 2 March and succeeds Katie Musgrave who left in December.

For volunteers wanting to register with us, and organisations wanting to add volunteering opportunities to our listings, Nella will soon be the first point of contact.

Until the end of March Nella will be completing her training and induction programme for the post. From April she will be available for you to contact on: amatia@havs.org.uk or 01895 442730.



Get your nominations in now!

Hillingdon Volunteer Awards 2010

It's not too late to get your nomination in for **The Volunteer Achievement Awards 2010**. Nominations must reach the HAVS office by 4.30pm on Wednesday 31 March 2010.

We know (because you tell us) that there are thousands of 'Amazing' volunteers out there. They really do keep the voluntary and community sector going with their commitment, energy and enthusiasm.

You can download a nomination form by visiting www.hillingdon.org.uk or call Tracy at Hillingdon Volunteer Centre on 01895 442730 or drop her an email at tjohnson@havs.org.uk

Vote for a winning volunteer

The winner in the **Volunteer of the Year Award** category will be decided by you – the residents of Hillingdon – so in April keep a look out in the local press and across the borough for details of the nominees and how you can vote.

The process will be really simple and you'll be able to text, go on line, or post your vote.

You can escape domestic violence

Ring the national helpline



Are you, or someone you know, in the terrifying grip of domestic violence? If so help is just a telephone call away.

The Freephone National Domestic Violence Helpline, 0808 2000 247, is open 24-hours a day, 365 days a year. It offers a range of support, everything from talking things through to providing a place of safety.

Run in partnership by Refuge and Women's Aid, the Helpline is staffed by fully trained women support workers and volunteers.

The Helpline receives more than 400 calls a day. Between November 2008 and August 2009 it received over 600 calls from the Hillingdon area alone.

Some of the calls are from women experiencing domestic violence, others are from family and friends wanting to know how they can support a loved one. Calls are also received from agencies who work with the victims of abuse.

For the women affected and their children, home can be an isolated, frightening place. They may feel alone, cut off from friends and family by their abusers. They may not know where to turn for help.

Cris Kinkkead, Senior Operations Manager at Refuge, said: "The Helpline team can provide emotional support or refer a woman to counselling services.

"If a woman needs to escape from her partner staff can help find her, and her children, a place in a refuge which may give the breathing space needed to try and decide what to do next.

"If required the the Helpline can help put a woman in touch with a registered family law solicitor in her area, or with a local face-to-face outreach service.

"The Helpline can also provide information on a range of other issues, such as safety planning, housing rights and entitlements, legal rights and immigration law."

As you read this thousands of women around the country are living with domestic violence. It affects one in four women and, shockingly, every week in England and Wales two women are killed by a current or former partner.

continued overleaf

You can escape domestic violence continued

All too often children are the silent witnesses of abuse: in 90% of incidents in family households, children are in the same or next door room. And over 50% of these children are abused themselves.

For any woman experiencing domestic violence, it is important to remember that the abuse is not your fault. You are not alone. Calling the Helpline could be the first step towards escaping domestic violence and living a life free from violence and fear.

www.nationaldomesticviolencehelpline.org.uk

***Case study* – Kate's experience**

Kate was 25 when she began a relationship with James. He became very controlling, telling her what to wear and bossing her about in front of friends. He was obsessive about meals and how things were organised in the house.

Physical abuse started when Kate was driving him to his Sunday football game. Out the blue, he punched her in the face because she didn't know the directions. He then continued to abuse her both physically and verbally.

Kate left James after he tried to strangle her during a particularly vicious attack. She managed to escape from the house and call the police. After that, she phoned the National Domestic Violence Helpline.

Kate said: "I had a long conversation with the woman on the Helpline. She was really understanding. She said that a leopard rarely changes his spots without help.

"I loved James and really thought he would change - every time he hit me he promised he'd never do it again. But he always did. After calling the Helpline, I realised that I had to look after myself.

"The Helpline put me in touch with a specialist domestic violence support worker who came and met me at home. She helped me to rebuild my confidence and now I feel safe. I wish so much that I had called earlier.

"Before meeting my support worker I had withdrawn my statement to the police because James threatened me and my family. I really thought he would kill me. Maybe if I'd met my support worker earlier I would have had the strength to go through with court proceedings against him."



Staffing matters

New 'Fit Note'

From April, employers will be presented with a new 'Fit Note' to replace the existing doctor's sick note. Under the new arrangement doctors will be given a choice of either marking the patient as 'not fit for work' or 'fit for some work'. If the latter option is chosen the doctor has four courses of action they can recommend for the patient's return to work. They are:

- Phased return to work
- Amended duties
- Altered hours
- And/or work place adaptations

Staff - your most valuable asset

Not surprisingly, staff morale and job satisfaction are hard hit during a recession. These are fundamental issues which organisations need to address in order for their staff to feel engaged and for organisations to move forward.

Encouraging commitment and inspiring your staff are vital. Communication is a valuable tool in achieving these goals. Becoming as transparent as you can and sharing the knowledge you have will demonstrate honesty to your staff which, in turn, will help them to understand where the organisation is going. Those who choose to ignore the warning signs, run the risk of losing staff support and the key to the organisation's long term success.

Managing sickness, absence and dismissal lawfully

It is essential to keep on the right side of the law relating to policies and procedures in the workplace. Dismissing employees based on their levels of absence can be a tricky and expensive decision to make.

As more sacked employees struggle to secure alternative employment, claims become common practice. Employers would not be expected to continue employing a member of staff if they are unable to carry out their duties for reasons of ill health. But dismissing an employee for these reasons, or for long periods of absence, should be a last resort in most cases.

Following the steps below will assist you in keeping within the law and provide you with guidance on what to do when presented with an employee whose absences are causing a detrimental effect on the organisation's performance.

continued overleaf

Stage 1: *Meeting with the employee*

- It's imperative that you meet with the employee following periods of absence. Return to work interviews give the employee the opportunity to discuss periods of long term absence and any subsequent medical advice they have received. In turn, you as the employer will get the chance to discuss possible job changes or reasonable adjustments that may be made to assist back to work an employee who has been taking frequent, long term and/or intermittent absences.

Stage 2: *Medical*

- Obtaining medical information is crucial in identifying any potential adjustments that can be made to help assist employees back into the workplace. This should be done as part of the consultation process with individual employees.

Stage 3: *Reasonable adjustments*

- Under the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA 1995) employers have a legal obligation to consider any 'reasonable adjustments' to enable employees classed as disabled under the DDA to continue to perform their duties. There are many factors determining whether the adjustments considered are practical, including: cost, nature and size of the organisation, and willingness of the employee and colleagues to co-operate with the changes.

Stage 4: *Dismissal decision*

- Prior to taking the decision to dismiss an employee various avenues should have been explored, including the employee's length of service, alternative suitable work, and performance. If having considered these points, the decision leads to dismissal, the employer should be able to justify the reasons for dismissal, by which time the employee will no doubt be aware from previous conversations with their employer, regarding their absences, that dismissal is highly likely.

Proposed paternity rights

New rights for fathers to take up to six months paternity leave in the second half of the baby's life, providing the mother returns to workplace, are planned for April 2011. The Government hopes that sharing in this way will lead to a more flexible workforce. Ministers claim that less than one per cent of small businesses will be affected by the change.

For further information on any of these topics, or for any general advice on personnel issues, contact Gurdip Rai at grai@havs.org.uk or on 07931 467 335.

Source: People Management February 2010



Free capacity building support

What is Pilotlight?

We are the charity that helps small and medium-sized charities and social enterprises grow. Our mission is to help charities, help more people, more effectively.

How do we work?

Pilotlight brings together professionals from the private sector with the directors of charities and social enterprises and harnesses their skills to create growth and sustainability by focussing on business planning and strategic thinking.

Meeting with a team of four Pilotlighters every four to six weeks, leaders of charities and social enterprises are mentored through the creation/revision of a business plan to make the vision a reality.

Benefits to you

With the wealth of experience of skilled professionals from companies such as BP, Morgan Stanley and Barclays Capital we offer a uniquely managed capacity-building process, exploring your vision and giving you the skills to make it happen.

And it won't cost you a penny because we are funded by donations from our business partners.

Two years after working with Pilotlight the charities and social enterprises we support increased their turnover by 54% (six times voluntary sector average) and reached 60% more people.

Contact us:

For more information contact Pete Smith on 0207 283 7017, email to psmith@pilotlight.org.uk or look at our website www.pilotlight.org.uk

Bringing community & voluntary groups together

Hillingdon

Association of Voluntary Services



Hillingdon Association of Voluntary Services

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Hillingdon Association of Voluntary Services is a Council for Voluntary Service and shares these aims with all other Councils for Voluntary Service within the CVS network across England.

Charity Registration Number: 1079371

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our aims

Committed to enabling the **DEVELOPMENT** of Hillingdon's voluntary sector so that it can meet the challenges of the twenty-first century

Committed to enabling the development of **LOCAL SERVICES** that meet the needs of local people

Committed to representing the **INTERESTS AND CONCERNS** of the voluntary sector at a strategic level within local statutory agencies

Committed to establishment of **REPRESENTATIVE** systems, procedures and structures, which enable the voices of the whole voluntary sector to be heard on all issues that concern the sector

Committed to promoting **LIAISON** between the voluntary sector and other organisations in the belief that joint working produces incalculable benefits for the local community

Committed to provide **SUPPORT** for the voluntary sector to enable it to achieve its many aims and objectives for the benefit of local people, and the local environment

Committed to ensuring that all its work is based on **EQUALITY OF ACCESS** and **EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY**, and that it works to address the issues of the whole voluntary sector within the London Borough of Hillingdon

A sincere thank you to all our funders