

Regional Voices

Championing voluntary and community action in the English regions

www.regionalvoices.net

Media release

Regional Voices: getting the VCS heard where it matters

Decisions about things that affect communities, like skills, employment health and transport, are all made at the regional level. The nine Regional Voluntary Sector Networks in England are all about getting the voluntary and community sector voice (VCS) involved in this decision-making to get the best results for communities.

A new web site, www.regionalvoices.net, has just been launched to promote the work of the nine regional networks and make it easy for anyone to get the latest voluntary sector news from each region. Regional Voices is also the new identity for the networks' national forum and is designed to build on the networks' increasing profile and engagement with government and national bodies.

Stephen Woollett, Chief Executive of South West Forum, speaking on behalf of Regional Voices told *Third Sector* that *"the launch of the Regional Voices web site and new identity marks a renewed determination to ensure our partners in government and national voluntary organisations understand the crucial role we play in enabling the sector has a strong voice at regional level."*

"Regional networks provide a critical bridge between the local and the national and make sure that local intelligence and experience informs regional and national policy and strategy".

The higher profile for the networks also reflects increasing collaboration, information sharing and joint working between the regions. Regional Voices is one of the Department of Health's new national strategic partners and its project, Stronger Connections for Better Health, is designed to combine the efficiencies of national co-ordination with the extensive reach and communication routes of each regional network. *"This important new national project is the first time the networks will have collaborated formally on a specific initiative and, will be a model for working with other agencies"* says Judy Robinson, Chief Executive of Yorkshire and Humber Regional Forum, which hosts the project. She added *"We want to make maximum use of the skills and expertise of all the networks, work more efficiently and make best use of our collective resources at the national level".."*

For more information

Visit:

www.regionalvoices.net

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Contact details for all nine networks can be obtained through www.regionalvoices.net