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RedbridgeCVS 

# Community

a newsletter for the community and voluntary sector in Redbridge

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**November  
2010**

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## At the Network

**Network Meeting: Weds 3 November**  
London Ambassadors • Compact •  
Children's Network  
**Weds 1 December**  
Learning Disability Partnership • Census

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# BIG SOCIETY?

## "No Thanks – We've Already Got One"

There has been a lot of talk recently about the "Big Society". This apparently baffling concept is being promoted by the coalition Government as something which aims to change the fundamental relationship between citizens and the state. What can this mysterious "Big Society" be? And how can we bring it to Redbridge?

My response is to say that, in many important ways, the "Big Society" is already here.

The government says that Big Society has three main strands:

**Social Action** – where people are supported to give their time, money, ideas and views to help shape their local areas for the better;

**Public Service Reform** – where public services are opened up to new providers, like charities and social enterprises; and

**Community Empowerment** – where

local people feel confident that they will be listened to and respected as experts in their own neighbourhoods and where they can work together to shape local services and the local environment.

Some of the government's efforts to bring about these changes will not necessarily involve voluntary and community organisations. The proposed changes to local planning regulations,

for example, may not have much impact on us - but a great deal of the Big Society 'agenda' is about the voluntary and community groups, faith based organisations, social enterprises and other not-for-profit organisations that RedbridgeCVS exists to support and serve.

The government imagines a world where power moves from the state to



the citizen and a time when people take responsibility for each other and their local communities, working together to solve problems.

In many ways, we are already there! There are many excellent local examples – the article about “Operation Reach” on page 5 of this issue of *Community* is just one of many. Similarly many of you will have seen the last issue of “Community” which highlighted the way that faith leaders representing minority communities in Redbridge are working together with local health services to provide a well informed first point of contact for many people experiencing psychological distress. We don’t really need to give you more examples – your organisations carry out this kind of innovative, solution-focused work every day all across the borough.

And it is not just our sector that is well primed to deliver the Big Society locally – many of the necessary structures for public sector engagement are already in place too. The Redbridge Strategic Partnership, Patient Panels, the Redbridge Compact, the LINK and other bodies and forums exist to help us work in partnership. Of course things are far from perfect, but it is up to us all to make the most of the opportunities that we all have to give power to local people to shape their own lives.

It is unfortunate that the Big Society is being talked about at the same time as huge cuts in public spending are being planned and implemented. Whether you blame Gordon Brown, globalisation or the banks for the recession, and whether you agree with the speed and depth of the cuts that are now being made to public spending, it is clear that major cuts to public services are coming and we are going to have to learn to live with them. The Big Society can help government and local public sector bodies to ensure its cuts are the ones that local people see as being the least unpleasant, and Big Society can help us to cope with the worst effects of the cuts – but Big Society must not be confused with the cuts. The Big Society concept could more easily have been developed a time of increased public services – but that is a luxury we don’t currently have.

If Big Society becomes seen as a way of removing public services and blaming local people for taking the decisions

that influence specific cuts then it will fail. If Big Society is about expecting the sick, the young and the old to look after themselves or hoping that untrained and unpaid volunteers will spontaneously appear to provide support in times of crisis then it will fail. The good news is that the coalition seems to understand this. The bad news is that, apparently, the general public does not. In a recent speech the Prime Minister said, “We shouldn’t be naïve enough to think that if the government rolls back and does less, then miraculously society will spring up and do more. The truth is that we need a government that actually helps to build up the Big Society. This means a whole new approach to government and governing.”

In Redbridge we have started to have discussions about Big Society with our partners in the public sector as well as amongst ourselves in the voluntary and community sector. The local voluntary sector does seem keen on many of the ideas in the Big Society – and wants to seize this opportunity to shape the debate locally so that it reflects the needs and wishes of our communities.

Although the voluntary sector seems keen – we are not yet sure about how the general public feels about it. The Council’s “You Choose” consultation has been a good start – though we have heard many complaints that it isn’t fully accessible as it is only available online. However, we in the voluntary sector can help: we can offer access to our

organisations’ computers and help our communities to complete the survey because *we are the Big Society*.

Locally we can work to shape what the Big Society means and how it comes into being in Redbridge – and we want your ideas and views. So far RedbridgeCVS has made it clear that the new Volunteer Centre (that we will be formally launching very soon) will help to create a new wave of social action through committed volunteers undertaking useful tasks for local organisations – but we will not support the replacement of paid jobs with volunteer roles. We are also committed to supporting people’s voices in any forums that are offered – and will do our best to ensure that we are truly representing all the communities of Redbridge. We will not allow those that shout the loudest to dominate debates. We know that our sector can and does engage with people in very different ways to public sector bodies and we want to work in genuine partnership with all sectors to deliver exciting and positive changes in Redbridge.

Big Society is, in part, an attempt to fix what has sometimes been called “Broken Britain”. Well I don’t believe Britain – or Redbridge – is broken. We may be broke – but we’re not broken, and I know that together we can deliver a Bigger, Better Society for us all.

**Ross Diamond**  
**Chief Officer, RedbridgeCVS**

**FOOTBALL REPLAY**  
**FANCY A KICK ABOUT?**  
**FUN 5-A-SIDE FOOTBALL FOR OVER 35'S**  
**GET INVOLVED AS A TEAM OR ON YOUR OWN**

**5.30pm, Sundays**  
**Powerleague Fairlop, Forest Rd, Ilford**

**Call now to book a place:**  
**020 8501 4567**

# Redbridge Compact Revision Gets Under Way

The Redbridge Compact is a joint agreement between the voluntary and community sector and local public sector bodies. It seeks to build trust and improve working relationships for the benefit of all parties. The 2008-2011 Redbridge Compact and its Codes of Practice now need to be revised and updated for 2011-2014.

The current Compact is available on the RedbridgeCVS website, as well as in CD-Rom and hard copy formats that RedbridgeCVS can post to you on request.

The revision of the Compact will be an item for discussion at the November Network meeting and then as a standing item for all Network meetings until the final draft is agreed and adopted in 2011.

As one of the local "Compact Champions" RedbridgeCVS wants to support our sector to take an active part in this process. We have already begun asking for your general comments on the Compact and have prepared a short questionnaire which has been available online and in paper form. These initial comments are now being collated and will be passed on to the people who have agreed to draft the new Compact Codes of Practice for Redbridge. (Don't worry if you haven't yet given your comments, you can still access the consultation online and on-request from the office – we will pass on your comments and thoughts at any time until the final Compact document is agreed.)

The people who will be drafting the suggested new Compact are the

members of the Public and Voluntary Sectors' Partnership, who have agreed to use the existing Redbridge Compact and its Codes as the basis for a "refreshed" new document. They are:

## Consultation and Involvement

- Marie Price (NHS Redbridge)
- Nicholas Hurst (Frenford Clubs)

## Funding and Commissioning

- John Garlick (Age Concern)
- Cllr Lambert (Council rep)

## Reaching Out to the Whole Community

- Stan Greatrick (Police)
- Cllr Mrs Ryan (Council rep)

## Volunteering

- Rosie Payne (Young People's Project)
- Cllr Coomb (Council rep)

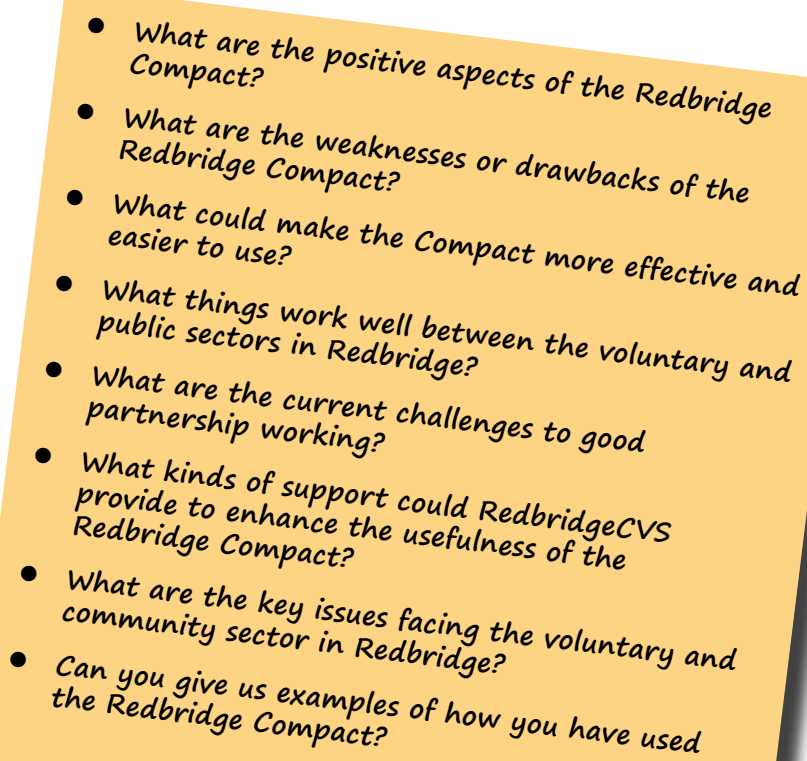
## Resolving Disagreements

- Rita Chadha (RAMFEL)
- Richard Binder (London Fire Brigade)

We will send reports on all the comments we receive to these working groups and they will use these comments and suggestions, the existing Compact, and some examples of best practice from other local Compacts, to produce a new draft Compact for Redbridge at their meeting on 1 December. This draft will then be available for consultation until March 2011. The final draft should then be adopted by the Public and Voluntary Sectors' Partnership.

Please do let us know your ideas for an improved Compact that can help ensure all partners can work together in these difficult times.

**Ross Diamond**  
Chief Officer, RedbridgeCVS

- 
- What are the positive aspects of the Redbridge Compact?
  - What are the weaknesses or drawbacks of the Redbridge Compact?
  - What could make the Compact more effective and easier to use?
  - What things work well between the voluntary and public sectors in Redbridge?
  - What are the current challenges to good partnership working?
  - What kinds of support could RedbridgeCVS provide to enhance the usefulness of the Redbridge Compact?
  - What are the key issues facing the voluntary and community sector in Redbridge?
  - Can you give us examples of how you have used the Redbridge Compact?



# A Picture of Health

## Art exhibition promotes mental health and well-being

Thinkarts members from across four boroughs in North East London have once again joined together to display their art at the annual 'Paint the Town Red' art exhibition, held in conjunction with Redbridge Concern for Mental Health.

This year the exhibition, held in Ilford Central Library, has drawn more artists and work than ever before, and with many art works already purchased by members of the public within the opening days.

Thinkarts annually joins with Redbridge Concern to celebrate World Mental Health Day and promote mental health and well-being through arts and creativity. The exhibition was officially launched on 5 October, with guest speaker and local artist, Lisa Atkin, sharing a personal account of the strong link between creativity and well-being.



Finian's Rainbow by Eileen Simpson

Artists and guests also enjoyed live music by the Redbridge Music Lounge, and refreshments catered for by the local Blue River Café. Creativity not only assists and promotes health within an individual, but also a whole community, as is seen in the outcomes of this exhibition.

Thinkarts offers art projects to any person in the locality who has experienced or is experiencing mental ill health. It is affiliated to and supported by North East London NHS Foundation Trust. More information regarding Thinkarts artists and projects is available at [www.thinkarts.org](http://www.thinkarts.org)

## Redbridge Police Community Engagement Group Update

### Meeting Update

The full RPCEG met on 27 September where, in addition to the normal performance reports from the Police, they had a presentation from the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Independent Custody Visitors (ICV) Panel for Havering & Redbridge. They explained the role and purpose of ICVs, and how they carry out their unannounced visits to police custody suites. The presentation was very informative and members of the RPCEG were pleased to learn more about this part of the custody process.

### Stop & Search

The last Stop & Search Monitoring Group meeting benefited from the attendance of a number of new members who were all interested in learning more

about Stop & Search in the borough, and in being involved in monitoring the use of these powers. One member of the group attended the London Wide Community Monitoring Forum and is due to report back on this to the next meeting in November. The Police are also going to give a presentation of the training that their Officers undergo on carrying out Stop & Search. They will also receive reports on the latest statistics for the borough.

### Redbridge Hate Crime Strategy Update

As reported in the last edition of Community, the revised Hate Crime

Strategy is now in the final stages of preparation. It was approved "in principle" by the Redbridge Safer Communities Partnership at their recent meeting, and will be subject to a formal 12 week consultation period shortly. The strategy and details of the consultation will be available on the RedbridgeCVS website as soon as it is released.

### Dates of Future Meetings

#### Stop & Search Monitoring Group

10am, Wednesday 17 November

#### RPCEG

7pm, Wednesday 15 December

Both meetings take place at RedbridgeCVS offices, 5th floor Forest House, 16-20 Clements Road, Ilford, IG1 1BA.

To be included in the RPCEG mailing lists, or for more information about their work and role in the borough, please contact Liz Pearce on 020 8514 9613 or email [liz@redbridgecvs.net](mailto:liz@redbridgecvs.net)



# Community Unites to Help Homeless

## The voluntary and statutory sectors in Redbridge have been praised for their partnership work in organising a special exercise to help the borough's homeless.

The Police, Local Authority, health services and voluntary organisations were united in the Redbridge "Reaching Out" initiative, a multi-agency effort to count the number of rough sleepers in Redbridge and offer them support and access to services. The initiative was launched in response to the Mayor of London's strategy for overcoming homelessness, and as part of the Metropolitan Police London wide "Operation Reach".

Over 40 volunteers took to the streets across both nights of the scheme, which took place on 21 and 23 September until the early hours of the morning. A public awareness event was also held in Ilford Town Centre on 22 September.

The operation was supported by dedicated teams of volunteers from groups including RAMFEL (Refugee and Migrant Forum East London), the Welcome Project, RedbridgeCVS, London Street Rescue and other organisations.

Tom Vincent, of London Street Rescue, said: "Of the 20 boroughs we work in, no other borough has come close to the

response and level of engagement in Redbridge and I have no doubt that this will have had a really positive impact for those sleeping on the streets."

Donations from the community also flooded into the Cardinal Heenan Centre, in Ilford's High Road, which was open on both nights to offer clothing, food and advice to the rough sleepers who attended. Mental health professionals, housing officers and immigration advisors were also on hand to offer support.

Each group of volunteers was accompanied by police and community support officers who provided intelligence about where to find the

popular spots used by rough sleepers, such as parks, cemeteries and car parks.

Rita Chadha from RAMFEL said this was an excellent example of the 'Big Society' in action. She added: "Such events are a tribute to the commitment and determination of local agencies in supporting one another – and, more importantly, local residents in meeting mutually beneficial aims."

A total of 22 street sleepers were contacted over the two nights, and most of them accepted the offer of advice and assistance in getting off the streets.

Since the event, the group of partners who organised the initiative have met to review the outcomes of it. As a result of this, it has been agreed that a similar operation will take place on Thursday 16 December, and further information about this will be circulated nearer the time. Plans are in place to ensure that the issue of street homelessness is regularly considered by the organisations who were involved.

If you would like to be kept updated about the "Reaching Out" initiative and future plans then please contact Liz Pearce at RedbridgeCVS by emailing: [liz@redbridgecvs.net](mailto:liz@redbridgecvs.net) or phoning 020 8514 9613.

**Liz Pearce**  
**RedbridgeCVS**



*Staff promote Reaching Out at the public awareness event*



## Carefree Kids Supporting Children Under Stress

**Imagine being a child who heard his mother scream last night when beaten up by a drunken father.**

Imagine then going to school and having to sit still and conform to the day's 'learning objective' and try, hopelessly, to keep up with the others. Imagine being shouted at, at home and at school. What does it do to your mental health?

Now imagine having 45 minutes a week at school with an understanding adult in a room full of toys and paints, being invited to play just as you would like. A chance to express and discharge some of your unbearable feelings in the presence of a non-intrusive companion, a chance to get a bit of self-esteem and the ability to cope better with what life throws at you.

Carefree Kids is a charity, set up in 2003, which provides affordable therapeutic play for troubled children in schools, including two in Redbridge. They train local people for free to do this work. They don't need qualifications but do need the right personal qualities. We also support parents, train teachers and provide other services when resources allow. And we take students on placement.



If you or someone you know might like to join us, please contact us on 020 8558 7799 or [carefree.kids@btinternet.com](mailto:carefree.kids@btinternet.com). You can see our website at [www.carefreekids.org](http://www.carefreekids.org).

## ACE Help with Money Problems

**Debt is a problem for thousands of people – but a local organisation can help.**

According to finance charity Credit

Action, a home is repossessed every 14 minutes, while someone is declared insolvent or bankrupt every four minutes. The recession, of course, is making it even harder for many people to keep their finances under control.

But now help is available from a Romford-based charity. ACE has years of experience in helping community groups manage their money. Now they are making that expertise available to members of the public.

Short courses are available, lasting a

total of 4 hours spread over 2 days. The courses cover values and attitudes to money, what kind of spenders we are, what it means to be "financially capable", making ends meet, keeping track of money, planning ahead, choosing financial products and staying informed.

The courses are delivered in central Ilford from October to March 2011, and the good news is that they are free.

For more information or to book a place, contact ACE by phone on 01708 735214 or by email at [info@acecas.org.uk](mailto:info@acecas.org.uk).

## Arthritis Support Four-Legged Fundraiser

**An ageing pet has helped raise more than £1,500 at a sponsored walk for arthritis.**

Around 40 people joined Tessie, a Labrador-Springer Spaniel crossbreed, the in the money-raising stroll for Arthritis Support Network (ASNET). Those unable to walk around Seven Kings Park themselves sponsored Tessie to complete the challenge on their behalf.

canine, who has arthritis herself and is blind in one eye. Tessie has taken part in the sponsored walks since 2007 and even undergoes regular acupuncture. She was joined on the walk by families, hospital staff and Mike Gapes MP.

Tessie's owner Diane Wynne-Fitzgerald, Chair of ASNET, said: "We had so much support from the community, it was a great event. Tessie's always the one who brings in the most money!"

The funds will be used to set up a new craft group and counselling work for people with arthritis.

Anyone wishing to find out more about Arthritis Support Network can email [asnetlondon@googlemail.com](mailto:asnetlondon@googlemail.com), or call the office on 020 8252 4887.



It was no mean feat for the 14-year-old

## Meeting Dates for Your Diary

### Redbridge Voluntary Sector Network

**RedbridgeCVS**  
5th floor, Forest House,  
16-20 Clements Road, Ilford IG1 1BA

12.30pm: Lunch and light refreshments  
Agenda starts at 1pm and finishes at  
2.30pm.

If you have access requirements, or suggestions for future meeting topics, contact Colin on 020 8514 9616 or by email at [colin@redbridgecvcs.net](mailto:colin@redbridgecvcs.net)



**1pm**  
**Wednesday**  
**3 November**

**London Ambassadors**  
Duncan Rosie, Operations Manager of this 2012 volunteering project

**Redbridge Children and Young People's Network**

Ann Garrard, Co-Chair, talks about the group's development and their

development with support from BASIS

**The Redbridge Compact**  
RedbridgeCVS Chief Officer Ross Diamond on updating this agreement between the public and voluntary sectors



**1pm**  
**Wednesday**  
**1 December**

**Redbridge & Waltham Forest Learning Disability Partnership**  
Sheenagh Burgess, Head of the partnership

**2011 Census**  
Phuman Singh on how the local voluntary sector can become involved

### Redbridge Advice Forum



**3-5pm**  
**Tuesday**  
**2 November**

Redbridge Advice Forum is a partnership of voluntary, private and public sector advice providers, who meet on a monthly basis to discuss issues of common interest with regards to advice and advocacy services locally

Membership is open to any agency that provides 1-1 advice and advocacy based services for local people.

Examples include advice on asylum, immigration, housing, education, welfare benefits, employment disputes,

community care and advocacy support to people with learning disabilities.

For further information contact Rita Chadha on 020 8478 4513 or email [rita.chadha@ramfel.org.uk](mailto:rita.chadha@ramfel.org.uk)

**Cardinal Heenan Centre**  
**326 High Road**  
**Ilford IG1 1QP**

- Tuesday 2 November, 3 - 5pm
- Thursday 2 December, 10am - 12 noon

### Redbridge New Arrivals Forum



**3pm**  
**Tuesday**  
**16 November**

Redbridge New Arrivals Forum is a meeting for all those interested in and passionate about asylum seeker, migrant and refugee issues.

Part campaigning, part information exchange, meetings will look at how changes in legislation and local community tensions can affect those new to the borough and from overseas, and what can be done to help support and develop positive community relations and ensure

equal and fair access to services and support.

For further information contact Rita Chadha on 020 8478 4513 or email [rita.chadha@ramfel.org.uk](mailto:rita.chadha@ramfel.org.uk)

**Cardinal Heenan Centre**  
**326 High Road**  
**Ilford IG1 1QP**

- Tuesday 16 November, 3 - 5pm
- Tuesday 11 January, 10am - 12 noon

# The Truth about Redbridge's Roma Community

Much has been written and more has been said about the Roma community in Redbridge. Half truths and rumours have been peddled based on hear say, misinformation and cruel stereotyping.

So let us look at the facts:

## The Roma population has been one of the most persecuted communities in history.



Racism against the Roma, and the violence that comes with it, date back as far as history or memory go.

By the 20th Century Europe's Gypsies had already experienced centuries of slavery, rejection and ethnic cleansing. There were already anti-Gypsy laws in Germany but under the Nazis things got even harder. The 1935 Nuremberg laws took away their citizenship and categorised them as a "racial problem". As Germany took over the countries around it they adopted the same policy. Hungary, Croatia and Romania, Germany's allies in the war, also stripped their Roma of all their rights.

As the Nazis started to develop their final solution to the Gypsy "problem", they planned to round the Roma up in camps and starve and gas them to death until there were none left alive in Western Europe. The Romani word for what happened is Porraimos which means "devouring". Nobody knows for sure how many died. The Romani scholar Ian Hancock estimates that more than 600,000 Roma and Sinti may have been murdered.

## Redbridge's Roma community does not all come from Romania.



Roma people can come from anywhere in the world. Roma is not technically a nationality, (as there is not a country called Roma) it's an ethnic group, a culture, a community of real people. Roma can be found in Poland, Bosnia, Czech Republic and most central and eastern European countries.

## Most Roma families in Redbridge came after Romania accession to the EU in 2007



Roma individuals entering in the UK, despite being EU citizens have limited rights. They cannot automatically claim any state benefits, or social housing.

## Restrictions now apply to Roma immigration



Roma adults who have come in from 2007 onwards need special permission from the UK Border Agency to be able to work, or if they cannot find an employer to take them on and apply for a work permit for them, they must register as self employed.

## They don't know how to behave, they are noisy



Every community has its specific communication style, with language and cultural traditions which develop over the generations. Misunderstanding is a source of conflict. Every person desires peace, harmony and happiness, and the same goes for the Roma.

## They are all engaged in crime



The same was also said about the African and Caribbean community in 1976 when a spate of muggings in Brixton led to a nationwide panic. There are elements in all cultures and communities that engage in crime, in this respect there is nothing that sets the Roma community apart from any other

## Redbridge is doing all it can to help the Roma Community



All public agencies in Redbridge have a duty to promote community cohesion, and understand and know their residents. Their collective response to the Roma community has been largely



1940: Nazis round up Roma and Sinti children for deportation



reactive, with perhaps a small bit of community cohesion work going on in schools and Redbridge Equalities and Community Council working with the residents of Area Committee 6 to set up a group to promote greater community cohesion between Roma and non Roma residents.

Last month there were allegations of child trafficking and 16 homes were raided, 28 people arrested, a number of children taken into the temporary care of social services, and all now released. Whilst we are not at this stage questioning the police operation, we have serious questions about the way public sector agencies responded to the aftermath.

Work with the Roma community is committed to in the community cohesion strategy, but not funded by anyone. Applications under the New and Emerging Needs Fund were rejected and even an application under the LPSA reward money by the council to itself was also rejected by key decision makers. Funding for the Roma Support Group's education work in Redbridge and RAMFEL's advice service will cease in March 2011 because of the proposed 'repatriation' of funding from London Councils to the boroughs. Obviously the term 'repatriation' is a highly unfortunate one to use in the context of ethnic groups providing support services, that other agencies simply could not.

### Who is working directly with Redbridge's Roma community?

#### Big Issue

signs up vendors from the Roma community, and has worked with RAMFEL for the last 2 years on specialist work.

#### RAMFEL

provides advice on immigration, employment, adult education and training, work permits, dealing with landlord disputes, general advice and information.

#### RAMFEL and Redbridge LINKS

will from 2nd November be running a specialist health outreach service from Loxford Polyclinic.

#### Roma Support Group

has a specialist project to help Redbridge

Roma families access schooling and support the integration of children in local schools.

Redbridge's Roma community's experience is no different to that of previous generations of Asian, African and Caribbean migrants coming over in the 1960s and 1970s. It has become fashionable to say that migration is a problem, it has become easy to say that public services are put under extra pressure just by new migrants. What this should teach us is that public services need to wake up and change to the reality of the Roma experience and value it, rather than see problems in a community that has already had more than its fair share of difficulties and hardships.

A fuller discussion on the Roma in Redbridge will be held at the next New Arrivals Forum meeting on Tuesday 16th November, 3-5pm venue to be



confirmed. If you would like to attend please contact Rita Chadha on 0208 478 4513 or email [rita.chadha@ramfel.org.uk](mailto:rita.chadha@ramfel.org.uk)

**Rita Chadha**  
**RAMFEL**

## Facing Discrimination from the First Day at School

Every parent remembers the moment his or her children started school. These are normally happy moments, in spite of the occasional feeling of anxiety. But for Darina Balazova, her child's first day of school was a moment of humiliation and distress.

Darina is Roma, and her daughter Krystina – like many Roma children – was placed without justification in a "special school" intended for pupils with learning disabilities by education authorities in the Czech Republic. She took up a fight and eventually brought the case to the European court of human rights in Strasbourg.

The court's grand chamber held that disproportionate assignment of Roma children to special schools without an objective and reasonable justification amounted to unlawful discrimination.

Since then, Darina says, she has seen a positive change in teachers' attitudes towards Roma pupils. "In the past, they would not care about the children. Nowadays, they treat them nicely and talk to them, even though the teachers

and the director are the same," she said.

We must empower the Roma through positive anti-discrimination measures that would give families confidence to send their children to schools. We must hold member states accountable to their human rights commitments.

We need to work together: governments, European organisations, local communities and civil society, especially those representing Roma and Traveller populations.

The situation today – the lead-ridden encampment our human rights commissioner visited recently in Mitrovica, the deportations of Roma by France, or any other case that has failed to catch the public attention in the same way – illustrates the magnitude and the complexity of the challenge before us.

*Thorbjørn Jagland*  
*Secretary General*  
*Council of Europe*

# Redbridge Lesbians and Gay Men Launch Forum

**A recent report makes it clear that discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans (LGBT) people still exists, despite changes in attitudes and the law over the last forty years. The new Redbridge LGBT Forum hopes to make changes.**

The Equality Commission's recent report "How Fair is Britain?" points out that two-thirds of gay school students have been bullied, and that gay people are twice as likely to face unfair treatment at work.

The views of LGBT people are sometimes sought in areas such as hate crime, and social and health care

services. Even here discrimination continues. Police report that hate crime – including murder – is on the rise, and elderly LGBT people report they cannot find accommodation where they feel welcome. But there needs to be much wider consultation and involvement of LGBT people in service delivery.

Redbridge is relaunching its LGBT Forum with a new, more expansive role, and regular meetings and events that will enable the views of LGBT people who live, work and/or socialise in Redbridge to be taken into consideration.

Over the forthcoming year, the new LGBT Forum will:

- Host 6-8 open meetings per year for individuals, communities and agencies with an interest in LGBT issues.
- Produce a website
- Publish a quarterly newsletter
- Undertake a survey into the needs of LGBT individuals and communities locally

The ultimate aim is that the organisation



will be self sufficient and even possibly an independent charity within the next 18 months.

The inaugural meeting of Redbridge LGBT Forum will be from 7-9pm on Wednesday 24 November.

For further information and to reserve your place contact Danielle on 020 8478 4513 or book on line via <http://redbridgelgbtforum.eventbrite.com>

**Rita Chadha  
RAMFEL**

# Heard any Good Stories Lately?

**Concerned that your part of the community or some part of the community is being falsely or negatively presented to others? Redbridge Equalities and Community Council has produced 'myth-busting' materials that can help.**

**Q. What are 'myths'?**

A. 'Myths' refers to stories told about groups, communities or issues that are completely untrue or highly exaggerated but are believed because they are repeated so often. "Everyone knows it's true" but is it really?

**Q. Why do these myths create problems?**

A. Because they usually present a very

negative picture of the people or issues concerned and they help to fuel prejudice and misunderstandings between communities. They lead to people believing things that are untrue and treating others differently or unfairly.

**Q. What is myth busting?**

A. We show you the truth behind the myth. We look at the real facts and figures and share factual information with as many people as we can through using the media and talking to groups and individuals.

**Q. What topics do you cover?**

A. We now have myth-busting packs available on:

- Immigration
- New Arrivals
- Islamophobia

These packs are available free of charge to individuals and organisations on request.

We are in the process of producing further packs on:

- Homophobia – available soon
- Learning Difficulties – currently being researched

**Myth-Busting Speakers!**

If you would like a speaker to come along and speak to your organisation or group about myth-busting contact RECC with details of the date, time and venue and language/s required.

**Redbridge Equalities & Community Council**

020 8551 8178  
[info@redbridgeequalities.org](mailto:info@redbridgeequalities.org)



## Opinion

**“The strong do as they wish, while the poor suffer as they must.”**

**Why are mental health services being targeted? Jon Abrams of Redbridge Concern for Mental Health shares his views on the cuts.**

A few weeks ago Mervyn King, the governor of the Bank of England, placed the blame squarely on the financial sector for the economic crisis of 2008. Now, as a result of the financial crisis, Redbridge Council must save £25 million. As the cutters sharpen their knives users of local mental health and social services are being targeted.

Redbridge Council have decided to ‘defer’ and ‘review’ the closure of Abury House and the Progress Day centre. We have asked the local authority to clarify what this means.

In the meantime, why are people with mental health conditions and other socially excluded groups being targeted?

It is not because we have spent too much on hospitals, schools, freedom passes and welfare benefits that we are in the current mess. I didn’t see any hedge fund managers the last time I visited Abury House. Successive governments have trumpeted responsibility and self-help. Yet now people with mental health conditions are asked to take responsibility for a mess which is not of their making.

Study after study demonstrates that people with mental health problems are one of the most excluded groups in society. Lives are blighted by stigma and discrimination. Often people are denied access to jobs, education and healthcare and can also be shunned by neighbours and colleagues, prevented from playing a full part in our communities.

Moreover, poverty is a dominating feature in the lives of many service users. Without access to appropriate housing, freedom from violence, meaningful employment and other services how can we expect people to lead flourishing and meaningful lives?

Benefit claimants and service users are now subject to repeated attacks. If people are forced off benefits and out of day centres, will we really save millions? A recent research report in the *British Medical Journal* argues that “radical cuts in social welfare spending to reduce budget deficits could cost lives as well as causing economic pain” .

A good example locally is the Freedom Pass. We work with people who tell us that they will be unable to attend college courses, day centres and other social activities if they have to pay £1 or so to travel. All mental health and social care professionals will tell you that social relationships are a fundamental human need, contribute to functioning well in the world and also act as a buffer against mental ill health.

So apart from exacerbating social exclusion and isolation the decision to withdraw Freedom Passes also flies in the face of economic sense. If someone with a mental health condition relapses as a result of social isolation and exclusion and lands up at Goodmayes Hospital, a week on an inpatient ward – I’ve been reliably informed – is the equivalent to the cost of a Freedom Pass.

**We are asking policy makers and local councillors to be brave and preserve the mental health and social care budgets. And at the same time we are asking you to continue to campaign and fight for services that society should be providing simply by virtue of being civilised.**

*The headline is a quotation from the ancient Greek writer Thucydides.*

### Need Internet Access?

You can use the computers in the RedbridgeCVS Library. They are easily available and there is no charge – just ring in advance to book on

**020 8514 9616**

## Equality Act Now in Force

**The new Equality Act aims to update, strengthen and simplify equality law.**

The law took effect on 1 October. It protects people from discrimination on the grounds of:

- disability
- gender reassignment
- pregnancy and maternity
- race (including ethnic or national origins, colour and nationality)
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation.

Discrimination against people with these ‘protected characteristics’ is forbidden. It’s also illegal to discriminate against those associated with them – for example, if a woman is not allowed into a community centre with her son because he uses a wheelchair.

It’s also illegal to discriminate against a person who is believed to have ‘protected characteristics’, even if they don’t. For example, it’s against the law to refuse a service to a woman because she is believed to be a lesbian, though in fact she is heterosexual.

Indirect discrimination is illegal as well. If an organisation only provides a service on Friday lunchtimes, this might prevent Muslims from using it. This would be illegal, unless they have a good reason for not offering the service at any other time.

Positive action – working to prevent discrimination – is legal. In particular, charities can provide services only to people with a protected characteristics; but there are rules:

- your constitution must say the group exists to provide these services
- the services must be provided in a fair and balanced way
- the service must prevent or compensate for discrimination

### More information

See the government guide for the voluntary sector at [www.bit.ly/cEFFd5](http://www.bit.ly/cEFFd5)



**RUN-UP**

# A Voice for Mental Health Service Users

RUN-UP was formed in 1998 by a group of mental health service users and carers who wanted to bring their perspective to negotiate for change to service provision both in the present and for the future.

RUN-UP has grown from a 'front room' pressure group to become a formidable advocate for the collective rights of service users in the London Borough of Redbridge.

And the journey continues...

## Description of the project

RUN-UP (Redbridge User Network User Pressure group), is a user led service for people experiencing mental health issues and their carers. RUN-UP currently reaches out to 420 service users including many different services in Redbridge. Monthly meetings are organized to discuss different topics relevant to them with invited speakers. These meetings also give service users an opportunity to socialise and share their experiences with each other. RUN-UP also has some voluntary and non voluntary User Consultants whose role is to represent users on various forums including North East London Foundation Trust (NELFT) and actively campaign for the improvement of mental health services.

RUN-UP disseminates information amongst all its service-users, on mental health related issues, policy changes and about its activities including training courses through a bi-monthly newsletter. The newsletter goes out to more than

500 individuals and groups in Redbridge as well as other East London boroughs. It is also available now on NELFT and Redbridge Concern for Mental Health websites.

## How does RUN-UP help service users?

- By offering a safe place for service users to express their experiences of service provision
- By offering information to users about available services
- By providing training so that service users can participate in and make meaningful contributions in different committees, meetings and forums

## Need for the project

Our society finds it hard to deal with mental distress and sometimes responds by marginalising those who experience it. Those experiencing mental distress do so as a result of many factors. As an independent service RUN-UP wants to see changes in local and national policies; in user led mental health services; in the rights to choose a better way of life; in the right to access community services; in the right to know about medical treatments and side effects; in the right to choose alternative treatments, such as homeopathy, acupuncture etc; in the right to live in the community without harassment or prejudice.

## What are the aims and objectives of RUN-UP?

RUN-UP aims to ensure that users have

group representation to assert their views, needs and rights, and that their knowledge and expert viewpoints are used to improve mental health services. RUN-UP achieves its aims by:

1. Making their service available and user-friendly, providing knowledge and information to change local policies and practices.
2. Applying a responsible but strong pressure on the local agenda affecting the provision of mental health services in Redbridge.
3. Including all members of the community without discrimination of age, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation or disability.

## Benefits of the Project

### Benefits for Users

As Run Up is an independent user-led group, all its policies, procedures and activities are based on the views of its service users. It is able to challenge decisions of service providers if mental health services are not designed to cater to the needs of service users.

Involvement and representation of User Consultants on various policy forums gives them confidence and skills to become assertive. It has built their capacity to represent other users.

### Voice of Service User

"RUN-UP is our own voice and not one manipulated by Trust managers. Often source of valuable, frank questioning of service discussions." – Service user

"RUN-UP has an influence in the quality of mental health services in Redbridge. Especially in the commissioning of new services as they were involved in local implementation meetings where decisions on new services are taken." – Service user

### Benefits for NHS and Social Care services

RUN-UP helps NHS and Social Care to understand the real needs of service users and challenge things that are not right for service users.

### Quotes of Service Providers

"RUN-UP is still unique and over the last 2-3 years, their advocacy has become stronger, which influenced the introduction of Independent Mental

Capacity Advocates " North East London Foundation Trust

## How does the project know that it is achieving its aims and objectives?

- RUN-UP is able to represent users on various working groups across NELFT and Redbridge and gives voice to Redbridge service users
- RUN-UP started with around 10-15 members in 1998 and has grown to a current membership of 151. Its newsletters are sent out to over 400 organizations including all different services and community groups.
- RUN-UP advocated against closure of Progress team at NELFT through campaigns with local MPs and representation at the Parliament
- RUN-UP is currently advocating for involvement of service users on changes proposed for access to the Freedom Pass
- RUN-UP is involved in developing a Service User Involvement Strategy for NELFT

## Lessons Learnt

- It is important to work in partnership with different organizations like NELFT, that work towards improving mental health and wellbeing of local residents
- Clear and regular communication between partners and service users is key to success of any project
- Transparency is fundamental to good partnership
- Be tactful in working with different partners
- It takes lot of perseverance to advocate for rights of service users
- It is very important that a user led group is open and accessible to everyone irrespective of ethnicity, socio-economic or religious background
- Better investment in user led groups like Run Up will enhance its

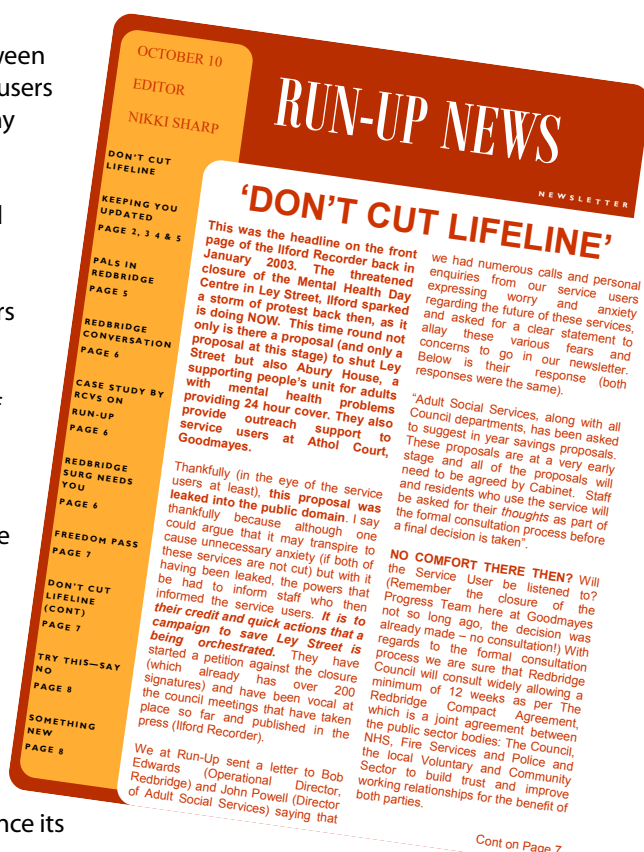
services and will reach out to a wider group of mental health service users

- Not to be afraid to challenge decisions or policies that are not beneficial to service users

## The Way Ahead...

RUN-UP has been able to give a voice to its service users and advocate for their right to quality mental health services in Redbridge. RUN-UP plans to strengthen its efforts by:

1. Increasing staff resources and support to equip staff to carry out daily functions.
2. Raising its profile and promoting its services more widely.
3. Becoming politically astute in local and wider context, to enable them to navigate the system.
4. Putting more effort into increase funding to deliver appropriate services to its client group.
5. Reviewing their role in the light of the introduction of personalised budgets
6. Joining forces with other campaigning user groups and extending its services across other boroughs.
7. Reviewing its newsletter with the view to making it more user-friendly.



# Fit for Fun Offers Groups Free Exercise Training

**Fit for Fun is an exercise project coordinated by RedbridgeCVS which will give local groups of people a chance to have 20 weeks of free exercise training.**

We will then work with the groups to support them to find ways to continue with the activities once the training is complete.

We will help groups to decide what kind of activities they would like – from vigorous aerobics or dancing, to gentle yoga or chair based exercises. We will provide groups with an appropriately skilled trainer for 20 hours of fun and fitness.

We are keen to hear from any group in Redbridge. We will work with you to help you choose the kind of sessions you want. In the past, trainers have provided classes from line dancing and bhangra dancing to keep fit and yoga

We will help the groups work out simple ways to measure the impact of the exercises on the people taking part – and explore ways that we can keep the classes going once the 20 week funding period has ended.

## More information

To find out more about this free and fun fitness program please contact:

Tracy Andrews  
Fit for Fun Coordinator  
tracy@Redbridgecvs.net  
020 8514 9618

Tracy Andrews  
RedbridgeCVS



The first of our new, regular funding column

# How We Got the Money



**Anxiety Care have received £20,000 of funding in the last year from Lloyds TSB Foundation towards their staff costs. We spoke to General Manager Regina Byrne about what she learned, and the fundraising advice she'd give to other organisations.**

The first point is to be sure you're approaching the right funder. Every funder will give money for different things, and many have lists of costs they will never fund. Regina tried Lloyds TSB because they fitted her needs: "many funders won't pay salaries, only certain funders will. Read everything very carefully. Be clear that you actually meet the criteria."

There are hundreds of funders, so how do you find the right one? You can use software like Funder Finder, available at RedbridgeCVS, or check out NCVO's Funding Central website at [www.fundingcentral.org.uk](http://www.fundingcentral.org.uk). Regina also suggests, "if you know of a similar organisation to yours, have a look at their annual report, and that will detail where they've got funding from. That can be a shortcut to funders who will fund your organisation." Most

organisations publish their annual report on their website, and you can also find them on the website for the Charity Commission.

You need to be clear how the procedure works. With Lloyds TSB, Regina explains, "there is an application form you fill in. You need to answer all the questions that they are asking in the way they want them answered. If they like that, they contact you to progress the application. I had several lengthy phone calls with the Grants Officer."

The amount of paperwork varies from funder to funder: "Some funders only require a 2-page letter. But think carefully – you need to be very concise with your information, make sure you get across precisely what it is you're doing and what you hope to achieve, and that it's got across in a powerful way."

Of course, you need to decide how much money to apply for. Organisations often seek funding for projects, and you obviously need to cover staff costs. Be sure to include other expenses – a staff member will probably need a desk, office space and a computer. They will need to be managed, and may require admin support and training. You need to get back all the money you're spending – "full cost recovery" is the jargon used for this.

Regina feels it's crucial for organisations to take this approach. "A lot of funders like to fund a particular project. If you do full cost recovery, you can ask

for funding for part of the cost of a Coordinator or a Project Manager. In that way you can sometimes cover a staff member's salary from a number of different projects."

Full cost recovery can add a lot to the total amount of a funding bid. Organisations can worry that the extra costs will mean their application is turned down – and there have been problems with some funders. But Regina feels there is also a positive side: if you include all the costs "it can give your bid credibility, because it's more realistic."

Realism is important. A small charity with no employees, for example, probably needs to grow slowly rather than being over-ambitious. Regina comments that "you have to demonstrate your ability to manage the project – financially, but also in terms of sustainability. What's going to happen after the money runs out? What do you hope to achieve?"

The key thing is to know your organisation and project in detail, and be able and willing to discuss your plans. Those phone calls from the Grant Officer, Regina remembers, may come in unexpectedly.

"The really important thing is that you know what you're talking about, because if you seem uncertain at any point it's going to cast doubt on your credibility. Don't put anything in the funding bid that you can't support with evidence. You have to be quite approachable – it can be down to the relationship between you and the grant assessor. And you have to be transparent as regards your finances, that's something they focus on quite a lot."

All this can be intimidating, but help is available. Regina speaks positively about how organisations can help each other: "don't be afraid to ask other, similar organisations that have had funding, if they would be happy to look at your application and give advice." RedbridgeCVS staff will also be happy to do the same thing. Good luck!

**Colin Wilson**  
**RedbridgeCVS**



# Funding Diary

## Mental Health and Criminal Justice Funding

The Lloyds TSB Foundation for England and Wales has funding available to support work to improve the life choices and chances of people with mental illness in the criminal justice system.

The next applications deadline is **Wednesday 3 November**

For more information go to [www.bit.ly/bYib8X](http://www.bit.ly/bYib8X)

## Young People's Musical Theatre

The BBC has launched a Young People's Musical Theatre Fund. A total of £200,000 will be available to encourage young people to take part in musical theatre.

The next applications deadline is **Tuesday 30 November**

For more information go to <http://bbc.in/a4dhYZ>

## Woodward Charitable Trust

Small grants of up to £5000 and large grants of over £5000 for charities working with social or ethnic minorities, prisoners and ex-offenders, disabled people, the environment, arts outreach, or people experiencing homelessness, violence, abuse or addiction.

The next applications deadline is **Tuesday 30 November**

For more information go to [www.bit.ly/duLfn6](http://www.bit.ly/duLfn6)

## Youth Music Open Programme

Youth Music's Open Programme is available for organisations wishing to apply for grants of £5,000 to £30,000

The next applications deadline is **Friday 10 December**

For more information go to [www.bit.ly/cSTtZY](http://www.bit.ly/cSTtZY)

## Sport England Sustainable Facilities Fund

Sport England has announced that its Sustainable Facilities Fund will re-open for applications on 1 November. The fund will be available to sports clubs and voluntary or community organisations to invest in innovative projects capable

of transforming the places where we play or take part in sport.

The next applications deadline is **Thursday 16 December**

For more information go to [www.bit.ly/ahFRpo](http://www.bit.ly/ahFRpo)

## Creme of Nature Community Action Award

Applications are being invited to the Creme of Nature Community Action Award. A £10,000 award and four smaller runners-up awards will be given to African-Caribbean community or faith organisations whose primary objective is to support and encourage women

The next applications deadline is **Monday 31 January**

For more information go to [www.bit.ly/bGRF4y](http://www.bit.ly/bGRF4y)

## Co-operative Membership Community Fund

The Co-operative Membership Community Fund is a grants scheme which helps local communities throughout the UK. Between £100 and £2,000 is available for positive work in the community.

**No applications deadlines**

Apply four months before planned project start

For more information go to [www.bit.ly/cOuUny](http://www.bit.ly/cOuUny)

## Samaritan Grants

The Samaritan grant programme is a scheme run by registered charity London Catalyst. It makes funds available to assist people in immediate need. Funds are available to:

- Social work and health professionals
- Community groups with welfare rights expertise
- Faith leaders

The fund can be used for items such as essential clothing and footwear, household items, essential repairs, special equipment and services, respite care, travel, short vocational

training courses and one-off childcare expenses.

Agencies will have discretion to make payments of up to £250 to individual clients: larger payments may be possible. Organisations typically receive £5

The fund cannot be used to cover expenses which should be met by statutory agencies.

For more information, and to apply, see the website at

[www.londoncatalyst.org.uk](http://www.londoncatalyst.org.uk)

# RedbridgeCVS

## Mission Statement

To promote a strong, effective and independent voluntary and community sector in Redbridge

## Aims

1. Redbridge voluntary & community sector to be strong partners when working with local statutory bodies.
2. Redbridge voluntary & community sector to maintain its independence and flexibility.
3. RedbridgeCVS to be a credible and authoritative representative of the voluntary and community sector.
4. RedbridgeCVS to be able to respond to the voluntary & community sector support needs; enabling Redbridge voluntary and community sector to grow to meet local needs.
5. RedbridgeCVS to continue to encourage, support and facilitate the development of sustainable services to children.
6. RedbridgeCVS to provide sound financial planning in order to continue the furtherance of our work with the voluntary and community sector within Redbridge and across the East London Network.

RedbridgeCVS is an



## Contact Us

### RedbridgeCVS

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## Services

### Access to computers

RedbridgeCVS has internet-connected computers in its library for use by organisations that don't have their own facilities. You can produce documents, search the internet or use FunderFinder to get information on grants for your project. Call 020 8514 9616 or email [colin@redbridgecvs.net](mailto:colin@redbridgecvs.net) to book a time.

### Voluntary Sector Library

RedbridgeCVS has over two thousand items in its library covering all aspects of the voluntary and community sector. This includes over twenty fundraising books and many books on Information Technology (IT).

To get access to the library call 020 8514 9616 or email [colin@redbridgecvs.net](mailto:colin@redbridgecvs.net) – or just drop in during working hours.

# Community

## Large format

Anyone who requires large print versions of the newsletter please email [colin@redbridgecvs.net](mailto:colin@redbridgecvs.net) or phone 020 8514 9616.

## We want to hear from you

We want *Community* to reflect the voluntary and community sector in Redbridge. Tell us about the news and issues that affect you. New project? New funding? Looking for training? For advice? Let us know.

## Community by email

This newsletter is available as a PDF file by email as well as on paper. Save trees and the environment, save RedbridgeCVS printing costs, and get *Community* in colour. Just email [colin@redbridgecvs.net](mailto:colin@redbridgecvs.net).

## Deadlines for publication

### Issue

January 2011

March 2011

### Deadline

10 December

15 February

## Disclaimer

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Much of the information in this newsletter is received from other agencies. RedbridgeCVS cannot be held responsible for any inaccuracies.

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