

## **What is the Forum ?**

North Yorkshire Forum for Voluntary Organisations is a charity formed and run by voluntary and community organisations in North Yorkshire and York to provide the sub-regional infrastructure of the voluntary and community sector - promoting, developing and supporting new and existing forms of voluntary and community action. The Forum is in regular contact with over 1500 local voluntary and community organisations.

The Forum exists “to promote any charitable purposes for the benefit of the community” in North Yorkshire and York, “in particular, the advancement of education, the protection of health and the relief of poverty, distress and sickness” and “to promote and organise co-operation in the achievement of the same and to that end to bring together in council representatives of the voluntary organisations and statutory authorities” (clause 2a of the Forum constitution).

The Forum focuses its work where a voluntary and community sector sub-regional strategy or approach is necessary or appropriate, complementing and enhancing the work of the district/sub-district Local Infrastructure Organisations (LIOs):

- providing and promoting high quality and accessible information, support and training for voluntary and community organisations and volunteers
- ensuring that voluntary and community sector views and interests are well represented at county, sub-regional, regional, national and European levels
- promoting, developing and supporting high quality district/sub-district generalist and sub-regional specialist voluntary and community sector infrastructure
- operating and managing itself and its resources in an effective and efficient manner and in accordance with best practice

The Forum:

- believes that voluntary and community action is a means of combating disadvantage and contributes to the improvement of the quality of life for groups, communities and individuals and their empowerment
- believes that no person should suffer oppression or lack of opportunity because of race, gender, belief, sexuality, disability, age, class or geographical location
- gives priority to working with those whose full participation in society is limited by economic, political or social disadvantage
- is committed to ways of working that ensure equality of opportunity, participation, co-operation, democratic involvement and accountability
- is a member of the National Association for Voluntary and Community Action (NAVCA), the National Council for Voluntary Organisations, the National Council for

## Voluntary Youth Services (NCVYS) and the Yorkshire and Humber Regional Forum for Voluntary and Community Organisations

Member voluntary and community organisations, at the Annual Meeting, elect the majority of the Board of Trustees. Others are nominated by local statutory authorities or co-opted by the Board. The Board is responsible for the policy and general management of the Forum. It may appoint committees, including non-trustees, to advise it on selected areas of work and currently there are two - the Risks and Resources Committee and VOX (Voluntary youth Organisations eXchange). Meetings of the Board, with minor exceptions, are open to members of the public. Day to day work is undertaken by a staff team managed by the Chief Executive.

The Forum is principally funded by North Yorkshire County Council, North Yorkshire Primary Care Trusts, Learning & Skills Council North Yorkshire, European Funding (ESF and ERDF), Yorkshire Forward, Connexions York & North Yorkshire, Business Link York & North Yorkshire, members' subscriptions, plus income from charges for certain services.

Membership of the Forum is open to voluntary and community organisations supportive of the Forum's aims. Non-voting membership is open to other organisations and individuals.

November 2007