



Scottish Borders Social Enterprise Chamber Newsletter

April 2009

Volume 12

Charity shops lobby for change in Gift Aid rules

By David Ainsworth, Third Sector, 31 March 2009

Association of Charity Shops wants tax back on donated items

Charity representatives are lobbying the Government to make it easier for charity shops to claim Gift Aid on donated items.

The Association of Charity Shops is holding a series of meetings with the Treasury and HM Revenue & Customs about the operation of retail Gift Aid schemes, which enable charities to claim back tax on the sale of donated goods in the same way they can on cash.

The association wants a system that allows people who donate items to sign a declaration saying those items sold up to a set amount are eligible for Gift Aid. In order to claim back tax under the current system, charities must confirm with donors in writing how much donated items are sold for.

"The problem is that donors must know exactly how much they are giving before they can confirm that Gift Aid applies," said Lekha Klouda, executive secretary of the association.

"We think donors could tick a box saying they are UK taxpayers so that the charity could claim Gift Aid on, say, up to £100. This would save a lot of time and effort."

"This change would allow charities to sweep up the Gift Aid from small donations," he said.

"There should be no technical reason why this isn't acceptable."

Lottery fund opens £58m programme

By John Plummer, Third Sector Online, 2 April 2009

Awards for All to offer grants of between £300 and £10,000

The [Big Lottery Fund](#)'s new-look [Awards for All](#) lottery programme has opened in England, Wales and Scotland, offering grants totaling more than £58m.

Awards of between £300 and £10,000 are available for grass-roots social and environmental projects that benefit local communities in England. Grants of between £500 and £5,000 are available in Wales.

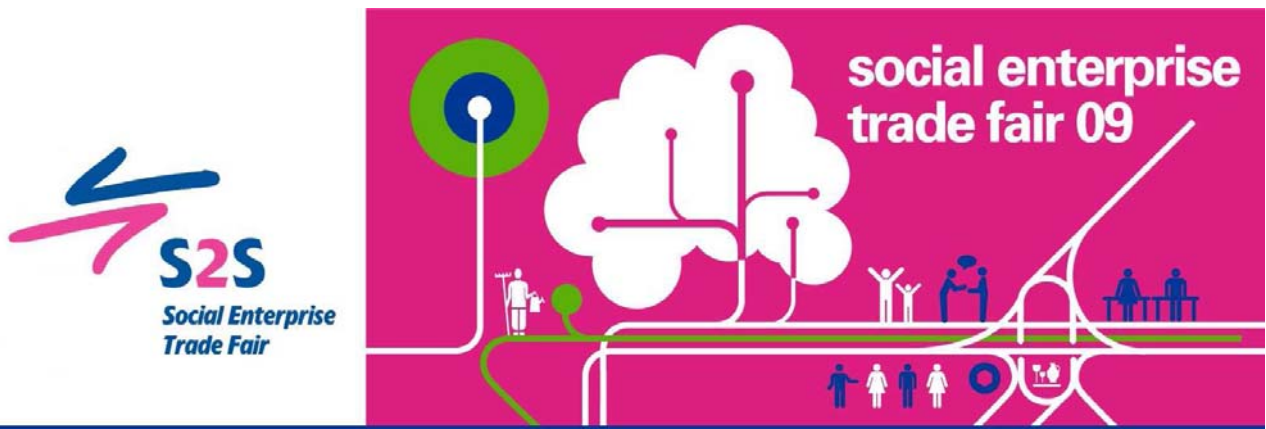
Voluntary and community groups, schools and health organisations, parish and town councils can apply.

"A simpler application process and a maximum turnaround time of six weeks for a decision are among the changes to the programme, which will make it much easier for applicants to successfully apply for small pots of funding that can have such a big impact on local communities and lives," said Sir Clive Booth, chair of the Big Lottery Fund.

Scotland's new £10.5m Awards for All scheme is jointly administered by the Big Lottery Fund, the [Scottish Arts Council](#) and [Sportscotland](#) and offers grants of between £500 and £10,000.

For more information and a look at the new application process go to:
www.awardsforall.org.uk

Important Dates!



The S2S Trade Fair is now firmly established in the Scottish business calendar as the social to social business event to attend.

'The Marketplace' – is a dynamic, busy and productive environment where Social Enterprise companies and organisations can meet together to trade, collaborate and help each other to grow your business.

The Marketplace is not restricted to Social Enterprise organisations however and they are keen to encourage private sector organisations to attend also.

The Trade Fair is open to the general public and last year attracted over 70 exhibitors and over 550 delegates throughout the day.

Edinburgh - Corn Exchange - 23rd April 2009

Aspire to Enterprise – Costings your services

Date: 6th May 2009
Venue: The Melting Pot, Edinburgh
Time: 9.30am-12.30pm

An introduction to the techniques used to cost and price products and services to achieve financial sustainability.

For more information or to register visit www.aspiretoenterprise.org.uk/seminar.asp

Assist Social Capital Annual Conference

'Social Capital & Community Resilience'

Date: 4th June 2009
Venue: New Lanark

Assist Social Capital wishes to focus on practical examples of the connection between

community resilience and social capital in the success of a community's efforts to cope with adversity and enhance collective wellbeing.

The conference will take place at historic site of New Lanark Heritage Centre, famous for the work of Robert Owen and its influence on the cooperative movement 150 years ago. The event will gather a number keynote speakers and present a series of case studies on the theme of community resilience and the role of social capital.

For further information visit www.social-capital.net

Scottish Borders Social Enterprise Chamber – Diary Dates!

Demystify OSCR!

Date: 15th May and 22nd May 2009

Venue: SBSEC office, 1 Orchard Park, St Boswells TD6 0DA

Time: 10.00am-1.00pm

This three hour workshop is designed to start to un-ravel the OSCR forms, looking at the information required to complete your Trustees Annual Report. Help alleviate the fears of the accounts section by going through some basic principles.

To book a place please contact Sue on sbsecfinance@btconnect.com or telephone 01835 822099.

'Flying by the seat of your pants!'

Date: 17th June and 24th June 2009

Venue: SBSEC office, 1 Orchard Park, St Boswells TD6 0DA

Time: 10.00am-1.00pm

The workshop will help with the basic principles of budgeting, planning and forecasting. Also the processes you could have in place for the paperwork required by grant funders, as well as looking at grant tracking.

To book a place please contact Sue on sbsecfinance@btconnect.com or telephone 01835 822099.

Customer Care!

Customer care is a crucial element of business success. Every contact your customers have with your business is an opportunity for you to improve your reputation with them and increase the likelihood of further sales.

From your telephone manner to the efficiency of your order-fulfillment systems, almost every aspect of your business affects the way your customers view your business. But there are also specific programmes you can put in place to increase your levels of customer care.

What is customer care?

Customer care involves putting systems in place to maximise your customers' satisfaction with your business. It should be a prime consideration for every business - your sales and profitability depends on keeping your customers happy.

Customer care is more directly important in some roles than others. For receptionists, sales staff and other employees in customer-facing roles, customer care should be a core element of their job description and training, and a core criterion when you're recruiting.

But don't neglect the importance of customer care in other areas of your business. For instance, your warehousing and dispatch departments may have minimal contact with your customers - but their performance when fulfilling orders has a major impact on customers' satisfaction with your business.

A huge range of factors can contribute to customer satisfaction, but your customers - both consumers and other businesses - are likely to take into account:

- how well your product or service matches customer needs
- the value for money you offer
- your efficiency and reliability in fulfilling orders
- the professionalism, friendliness and expertise of your employees
- how well you keep your customers informed
- the after-sales service you provide

Scottish Borders Social Enterprise Chamber



1 Orchard Park
St.Boswells MELROSE
Roxburghshire
TD6 0DA

Please send any items for the next newsletter to:

Tel: 01835 822099
or Email: borderssec@btconnect.com
www.sbsec.org.uk

Your Chamber Your Choice