

Update on the self-help group project



Elaine Garrett was appointed Development Manager for the Self-help group project in February 2013 to coordinate access to a range of support, information and resources and promote good practice in setting up, running and sustaining self-help groups on the Island.

The project is being delivered as part of the My Life, a Full Life programme. In the first year of the project, a considerable amount of progress has been achieved. Here are just some of the highlights:

Support groups identified and mapped

Mapping of support groups has been undertaken and approximately 50 condition specific self-help groups have been recorded to date and this information will be made available via the Community Action website in the next few months.

A range of help and support has been provided

At the end of January the project had provided support to 45 different organisations on approximately 300 occasions to address a wide range of needs relating to promoting and supporting their work ranging from fundraising advice, developing databases, training needs, advice on policies and procedures, developing partnerships between groups and much more.

Newsletters have kept people informed

Five bi-monthly newsletters have been completed and circulated to an ever increasing mailing list of local organisations. These will also be posted on the Community Action website in the near future, along with other resources.

What next? In the next year of the project, the key priorities will be to launch the directory of local groups and ensure information is made available widely including directly to GPs, developing networking between local groups and producing a comprehensive toolkit to support local self-help groups.

More funding opportunities

Two new prospectuses will be issued in April 2014 as part of the My Life a Full Life Programme

1. Small grants to support improvements in community facilities and equipment linked to organisations or facilities supporting delivery of the My Life a full Life programme objectives.
 - Proposals will be invited for capital funding of up to £10,000 to support refurbishment or equipment to upgrade their facilities/infrastructure.
 - Applicants would be asked to accommodate a funded information hub terminal, display external MLAFL branding on their building and provide an internal MLAFL information and advice display.
2. Long Term Conditions:
 - A further sum of £30,000 is being made available to fund LTC self help groups to support their development. This grant programme has already shown how

investment in these groups has helped them make some excellent progress in the support they can offer to their members

Information about these two prospectuses will be available from Elaine Garrett in early April. If you would like to receive information please contact Elaine by email on egarrett@actioniw.org.uk

Please note Elaine works on Tuesdays and Thursdays.