

August 2008



Latest news from SMK

SMK is accepting applications for the 2009 Influencing Change course. To learn more about what the course entails [click here](#).

To have a look at the flyer and download an application form [click here](#) and send it to Ruby.coote@smk.org.uk by 2nd September 2009.

SMK and NCVO are jointly conducting a survey about issues facing campaigners, in preparation for an "Election Manifesto". We would be grateful if you would take ten minutes or so to complete [this survey](#). For a background discussion paper, which you may also want to read, [click here](#).

This month, Iffat Shahnaz joins SMK as the new Learning and Development Manager. She brings with her over a decade of experience working in the voluntary and community sector in Scotland and England. Her work has included capacity building, fundraising, policy, teaching and training, curriculum development, regeneration and community development and the use of information technology.

From 2003 to 2009 Iffat was the Community Learning Manager at the London Borough of Camden's Adult and Community Learning Service. Iffat managed a community learning partnership with a range of voluntary and community organisations, where she co-ordinated the development of the UK online learning centres across a variety of settings.

Iffat will be leading on the Influencing Change training programme at SMK to support London-based campaigners in increasing their impact, as well as regional campaign workshops across the UK.

Contact details: iffat.shahnaz@smk.org.uk 020 7700 8237

Local campaigning news...



Leicester's Bostring Bridge

Campaign spotlight: Leicester

Plans to knock down a historic bridge have been contested by residents in Leicester. The bridge along with the Pump and Tap Pub are due to be knocked down to make way for a new sports centre for De Montfort University. Campaign leader Lee Mullen argued that this action would be going against public opinion and destroying some of Leicester's cherished heritage. [Read more here.](#)

Leicester County Council has a campaign running called "The Big Switch Off". This will encourage businesses, households and community organisations to switch off unnecessary appliances and lights in a bid to save energy and cut CO2 emissions. [Read more.](#)

National campaigning news...

Since the G20 protests in April, much has been said about how the police reacted to the demos and whether their treatment of protesters was fair and legal. Since the demo, there has been a call for action against the police relating to specific incidents – particularly the death of Ian Tomlinson who died in the riots shortly after being struck by a police baton.

For information about the Independent Police Complaints Commission's reaction [click here.](#)

The price of school uniforms has been receiving criticism across the UK as many parents complain that they can't afford school costs. A survey conducted found that some parents had to spend up to £500 to clothe their children in school uniforms. [The Citizens Advice Bureau](#) has asked the government to take action on these high costs and make uniform policies more affordable for parents. [Read more.](#)



G20 demo, April 1 2009

International...

Stepping Stones Nigeria has been running a campaign around child abandonment in the Akwa Ibon State. Many children are abandoned or severely mistreated due to the local belief in child witches. Stepping Stones is working to combat the mistreatment of child 'witches', raise awareness around this issue and advocate the rights of the children who have been stigmatised. To read more and find out what you can do [click here](#).

2008 SMK Consumer Action award winner Andy Wilson recently visited Kenya as part of his campaigning work for Christian Aid. Their work with partner charity Ukambani Christian Community Services has enabled Kenyan families in the Ukambani region to learn new farming techniques, which help them cope with droughts.



Andy with a family in Kenya

Upcoming events...



SMK will be running one day regional workshops around the UK with support from CLG and The Baring Foundation. The workshops deliver introductory skills in strategic planning and influencing to under-resourced, novice campaigners and frontline service delivery organisations.

If you are interested in having SMK run a regional workshop in your area please let us know. Email Ruby.coote@smk.org.uk with your details.

NCVO is running its latest certificate in campaigning course, which is the first of its kind. Bursaries are available for low income organisations. Read more about the certificate [here](#).

Photo credits: 1. Pedal Power, STML Flickr. 2. Leicester Bridge, Facebook/Save the Pump and Tap and Braunstone Bridge Group. 3. Police Tactics, Ruby Coote/SMK. 4. Andy Wilson with Julianne's family in Kenya, Andy Wilson, Christian Aid. 5. Protesters at Trafalgar Square, Harmit Kambo/SMK.