



## **PRESS RELEASE: September 2009**

### **Local Charities Reveal Effects of Recession**

A recent survey of over 800 charities has revealed the effects of the recession on the Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector (VCFS) in Surrey.

Nearly 100 groups responded over a four week period in August this year, 70% of whom said they had been affected by the recession since April 2008 either by loss of funding, or loss of interest on reserves. It was not all bad news however, as 19 groups reported an increase of funding.

There was a mixed response over staffing levels. 26 groups reported they now have more volunteers, and 10 groups have had to increase paid staff hours owing to higher client demand. A similar number have had to decrease paid staff hours.

54% of groups reported that their clients have more complex needs than they had previously. 30 organisations said these increased demands were related to client debt, loss of employment or threat of business closures.

In an attempt to meet the growing needs, 42% reported that they are entering into partnerships with other organisations.

Chief Executive of Surrey Community Action, Jean Roberts-Jones stated, "We have also noticed increased take-up of our payroll and financial services over the past 18 months, as groups look to reduce their back office costs."

Many respondents had attended a funding conference hosted by Surrey Community Action where they were able to find out more about the funding opportunities available to them and for those who missed it, there will be an opportunity to attend next year's funding conference on 30<sup>th</sup> June 2010.

If your group is struggling or you would like impartial funding advice, you can take advantage of a free service offered by Surrey Community Action. Contact our Funding Advisor, Pauline (Tuesdays and Wednesdays) email: [paulines@surreyca.org.uk](mailto:paulines@surreyca.org.uk) or telephone 01483 459292 ext 215.

Surrey Community Action is a registered charity which works to strengthen and support the Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector (VCFS) across Surrey through access to advice, training, funding and advocacy. Surrey Community Action actively encourages volunteering and the details of local volunteer centres in Surrey can be found on our website at: [www.surreyca.org.uk/vb.htm](http://www.surreyca.org.uk/vb.htm)