

## **Westminster Briefing Third Sector Conference 2008**

### **A Thriving and Independent Third Sector: New Opportunities and New Challenges**

The *House Magazine*, written for and by Parliamentarians, holds regular *Westminster Briefings*, which aim to provide a forum for practitioners, local policy makers and civil servants to debate key issues with leading figures from within Westminster, Whitehall and Local Government. In view of the importance of the subject, we present a full one day Conference.

**Title:** 'A Thriving and Independent Third Sector: New Opportunities and New Challenges'  
**Date:** Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> November, 2008  
**Time:** 10.00am-4.30pm  
**Venue:** Westminster

"The common factor that unites our sector is our motivation: what we are *for*, not what we do. We exist because individual citizens are willing to come together, to act collectively, to make a positive difference to their lives and the life of their community. And doing so because they want to: not because the government compels them to; nor for commercial advantage or financial gain."

- **Stuart Etherington, Chief Executive NCVO, November 2007**

"Building on the final report of the Third Sector Review, the conclusion of the Comprehensive Spending Review recognises the critical contribution that third sector organisations make to the delivery of key outcomes across Government.

Over the CSR years the Government will put in place significant investment to build the capacity of third sector organisations to support their enormous contribution to our society, economy and environment."

- **Phil Hope, Minister of the Third Sector, October 2007**

With the Third Sector Review having set out a new relationship between charities and the Government, and the CSR spending round now well under way with £515million being invested into the sector there has never been a greater opportunity for charities to develop and thrive. In addition the key role that the Third Sector will play across all facets of the new Local Area Agreements to be signed off this summer means that charitable organisations must be ready for new responsibilities and scrutiny.

This *Westminster Briefing* Conference will give delegates the opportunity to be informed on the Government's vision for the future of the Third Sector. Charities will be considered in the context of their multiple identities as campaigners for change, deliverers of public services and champions of communities. Participants will also discuss how the profile of the Third Sector's work can be enhanced and promoted and how we can work towards regulatory conditions where charitable organisations can fulfill their full potential and social missions with complete public trust and confidence. Delegates will have the chance to engage with the panel in investigating key issues such as:

- What are the full range of **investment and funding opportunities** available to third sector organisations of all sizes and how best can these be accessed?
- How can third sector organisations build their **relationships with local authorities** and forge effective and lasting partnerships through Local Area Agreements and public service delivery?
- How can the third sector make the most of its unique role as a force for **local change and empowerment**, and campaign effectively for the people it serves?
- Investigating innovative methods of **fundraising** and how to ensure best practice and transparency?
- How to increase the profile of **volunteering** and ensure that volunteering opportunities are available and visible to all, particularly those at risk of social exclusion?
- How can **social enterprises** ensure that they have the skills and structures to win public service contracts and use their unique characteristics to their full advantage? How can we raise the profile of social enterprise?

Delegates will be drawn from local authorities, charities, voluntary organisations, social enterprises, volunteer organisations, community groups, the private sector, central government, academia, and from across public services such as education and young peoples services, NHS, social services and police.

All *Westminster Briefings* take place within close proximity of the Palace of Westminster; Morning refreshments will be served upon arrival with a networking lunch and afternoon tea to follow. Any special needs or dietary requirements should be notified to us upon booking.

**Places on our conferences are strictly limited and I advise you, therefore, to book as early as possible to secure your delegate place(s).**