BCRC

Building Communities Resource Centre

For the community, by the community, with the community

NEWSLETTER June 2026







BEAM - Building Empowerment & Awareness to Mind

The community came together in the early hours of Saturday 16th May.
Walking through the town at Dawn, promoting messages of hope, connection and positive mental health.
Over 200 people joined us, which shows that Ballymoney is a community that cares.
'To see so many people come together at 4am was incredibly special. The Dawn Walk was about showing people that they are not alone. There was such warmth, kindness and support throughout the morning'.
Thank you to all who joined us, contributed to the event, and supported us in every way.

Introducing our new Admin & Finance Officer



I'm delighted to be joining BCRC as the new Finance and Administration Officer, stepping into the role previously held by Jillian; whose incredible organisation, dedication, and calm efficiency have clearly left a lasting impression. She will be very much missed, and I certainly have big shoes to fill!

I've worked in accounts and finance for over two decades, but what has always mattered most to me is people. My previous role introduced me fully to the VCSE sector, and I quickly realised it was where I felt most at home. Over the years, I've volunteered within the community and have always found it incredibly rewarding to be part of work that genuinely makes a meaningful difference in people's lives.

One of the things that immediately stood out to me about BCRC is the passion and talent within the team. It's inspiring to see such a multi-talented group of people delivering projects that bring opportunity, development, inclusion and excitement into the community. There's a real sense of purpose and positivity here, and it's clear how much heart goes into every project.

Outside of work, I'm a mum to four children, so life is usually busy, noisy, and fuelled by coffee! Family and community are at the centre of who I am and I strongly believe that everyone deserves support, encouragement and a sense of belonging ; as the saying goes, "It takes a village".

I'm really looking forward to getting to know everyone, learning more about the fantastic work happening across BCRC and becoming part of such a welcoming and community focused organisation.

Danielle McKee
Finance & Admin Officer



BCRC Intercultural Conference 2026

Over 100 people joined us for our Intercultural Conference in March in Portrush. The event featured a fantastic lineup of keynote speakers, including Ignacio Packer, Zilka Gerritsen, Dr. Séamas Ó' Donnghaile, Brian Armstrong, and Dr. Orna Young.

The conference was expertly hosted by Jo Scott from BBC Newsline. The day was filled with inspiring conversations, meaningful connections, and the opportunity to enjoy a variety of international food.









BCRC COMMUNITY CHAMPION AWARD

The BCRC Community Champion Award was not about achievements, its about impact, this award honored individuals who have given their time, energy and compassion in a voluntary capacity to make a genuine difference in the lives of others. These are people who step forward when it matters most, often quietly, often without recognition, but always with purpose.

This year we received an incredible number of nominations, each telling a powerful story of dedication, kindness and leadership within our communities. We recognised 17 outstanding nominees, each one representing the very best of community service, individuals who inspire, uplift and create lasting change.

The BCRC Community Champion Award:

Joanne Adams of

Cancer Friends Causeway Coast (CFCC)

CFCC have created a safe space where people who are journeying Cancer can come together.

Joanne, congratulations, and thank you for everything you do, your dedication truly embodies the spirit of this award and we are incredibly proud to recognise and acknowledge your dedication to this cause.



In our Hearts Forever





Recently BCRC delivered a very moving and powerful event called Siúlóid an Imircigh (The Emigrant's Walk)

It gave participants the opportunity to walk in the footsteps of Irish migrants who left these shores to flee starvation, disease, unemployment and persecution at the time of An Gorta Mór more commonly known as The Great Famine. Many of those who walked up Carntogher mountain on a beautifully warm sunny day were visibly moved as our guide Cathy O'Neill described the horrors and motivation that led almost 2 million of the island's 8 million population to emigrate in search of a new life. With a further 1 million dying through starvation and disease she told us how Ireland remains the only country in the world with a smaller population today than in the 19th century.Cathy told us that a third of peolle on the 'coffin ships' never made it to their destination and that "the Atlantic Ocean is full of the graves of Irish migrants."

People leaving Ireland left behind the culture they knew and families they loved knowing that they would never see them again. They arrived in Canada and the United States with little skills, poor educational attainment, in destitution and not able to speak the language of their new home. The result was the migrants were subject to hostility, prejudice, employment discrimination and attack. Signage and newspaper advertisements at the time stated 'No Irish Need Apply' and the Irish were often characterised as apes.

The feedback from everyone who took part in the walk was as one voice stating the pain and trauma of emigration is a real thing and is as relevant today as in the 19th century even if in the opposite direction.

Each of us placing a stone where thousands left one never to return was extremely poignant. The inscription reads: *"In ár scroithe as deo"* which translates *"In our hearts forever."*

One of the participants said: *"This was a beautiful event and weren't we lucky with the weather? I found it tough going. God only knows how those poor, hungry people made that journey."*

Our guide on the walk made a toast to all present " Let us raise a glass to those who left, those who died, those who survived and those who remained behind"

On the Ground with Groups







It's difficult to believe that we are nearly half way through the year, but here we are, and here are some of the groups who we have connected with in recent months.

Local Men's Sheds are so important to the fabric of our communities, especially as they are often managed and ran by volunteers, men who may be retired, and who have experience of poor physical or mental health. We were invited to meet with Portstewart Men's Shed at their own premises, and enjoyed a tour of their building, which hosts a workshop, kitchen, and recreational area with a pool table. Ballykelly Men's Shed are also providing vital services in their community and it was a pleasure to connect with Brian and Co. Watching how patient they are with some of their oldest members was a humbling experience.

The Causeway Coast Humanists, hold monthly meetings in Coleraine, and cover a variety of engaging topics. We attended their February meeting to discuss the topic of "The Decline in Democracy" and this proved to be a very compelling conversation, with plenty of debate in the room, as well as hope and positivity.

We also called in with Ballymoney Community Fridge to share information about our Confidence and Self-Care workshops. It's amazing to see how everyone comes together each week, offering friendship and connection to each other. This is truly another vital service in our area, and the team of volunteers work so hard to make it possible.

We also called in at Bushmills Community Garden, for a meeting regarding funding, and it was a hive of activity with the volunteers cutting grass, and weeding, and the kids from the local Primary School were getting an opportunity to do some gardening. It was lovely to see all age groups enjoying the fresh air together.

If anyone would like more information about local groups and clubs and how to get involved
please contact:
hannah@theresourcecentre.org
or call us on 028 2766 5068

Bi-Lingual Outreach Support

BCRC provides Bi-Lingual outreach support for Ethnic Communities within Causeway Coast and Glens area. We are supporting families and individuals with wide range of issues. Please contact marzena@theresourcecentre.org or gosia@theresourcecntre.org for more information.

Crisis Support:

Our Team provides fully confidential support for anyone facing crisis. Whether you need support with housing, benefits, food bank or emotional support - we are here for you.

Please contact: marzena@theresourcecentre.org or gosia@theresourcecentre.org for more information.

Community Development Support

We provide one to one or group support with community groups in capacity building, good governance, policy development, community engagement and wellbeing and funding support. If you would like to avail of this support, contact Hannah at hannah@theresourcecentre.org





Kindness Weekend - INFUSE TEA BAR Fundraising

We are incredibly grateful to INFUSE Tea Bar for being one of their chosen charities during their Kindness Weekend. We are honoured and humbled, your support for everything we do through our Ethnic Communities Project is invaluable to us and every person who calls this place home. Thank you!





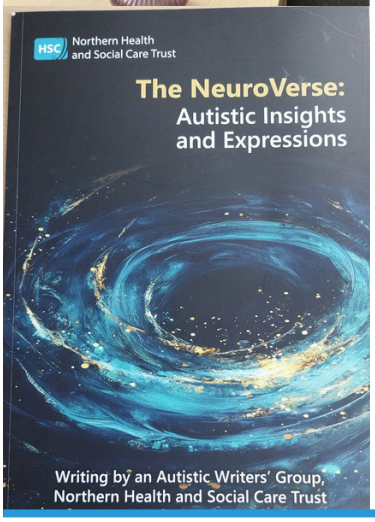


Wild and Well – Wellness Forest sessions in Garvagh Forest

Thank you to everyone who joined us on our mindful forest walk in May!

Thank you to Sasha, our walking instructor for her stories of wellness and nourishment herbal teas, wholesome treats and bluebells - we couldn't ask for a better experience





Here, at the Resource Centre, we recently learned that the Northern Health & Social Care Trust has published a book of short stories, poetry, and prose which was co-created by a Neurodivergent Creative Writing Group.

We were lucky to actually receive a copy of the book, as one of the contributors meets each week here at BCRC with another group.

The writing is powerful, because each contributor has shared a piece of their soul. There is sadness, humour, struggle, and a profound connection to nature. There is social commentary, stories of friendship, and words of hope. Unfortunately, we do not have copies to distribute but you are welcome to call into the Resource Centre and have a read.

In the introduction, written by Deborah Bond, she outlines some important points, and misconceptions about people with autism. She highlights that all communication is a two-way street, and difficulties in communication should not be seen as the fault of the autistic individual, and that we all have a part to play in better understanding each other.

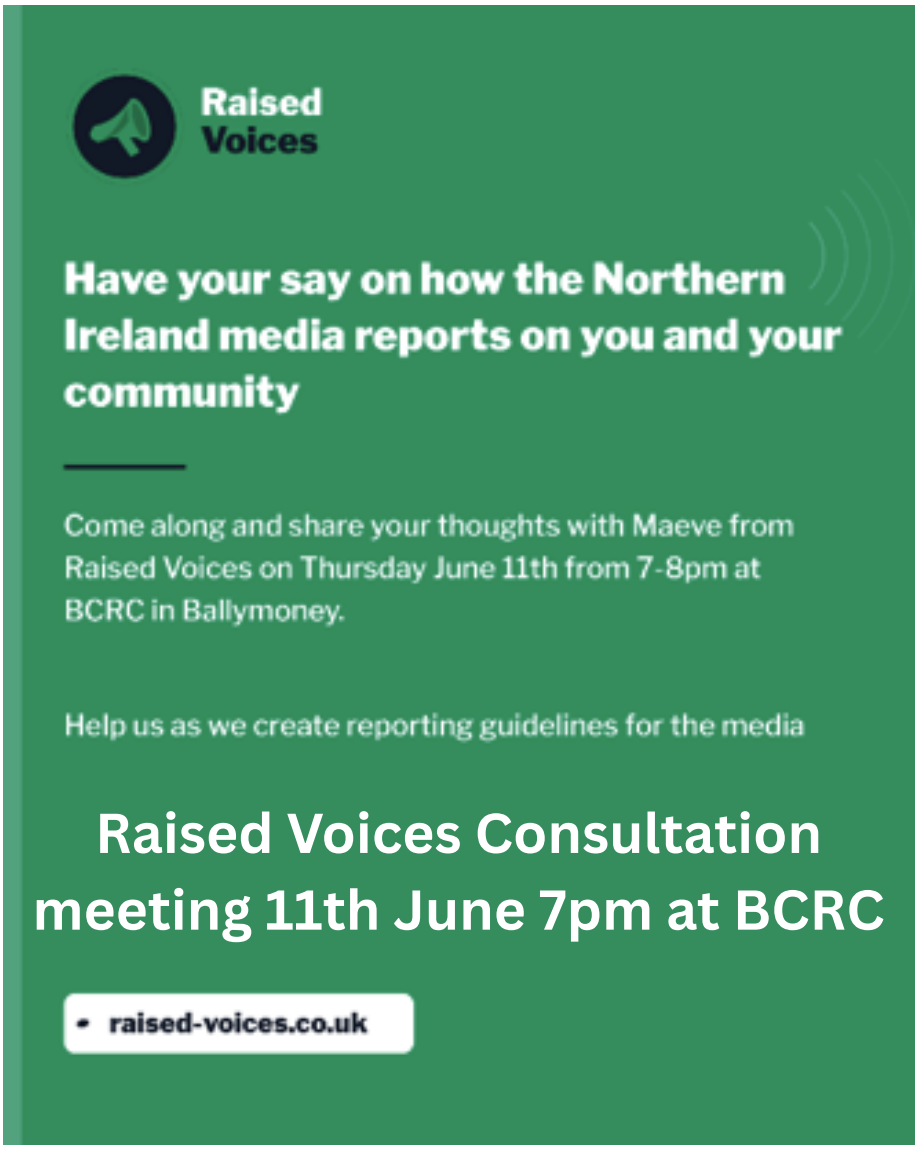
TEO Race Relations Consultations at BCRC



In April, we hosted representatives from The Executive Office to facilitate consultations on the Race Relations Strategy. The room was filled with local activists, representatives from community organisations, and council members, creating a strong and diverse discussion space.

The event led to many valuable conversations and highlighted the clear need for continued dialogue, collaboration, and action planning moving forward.

Thank you to everyone who attended and contributed so thoughtfully on the day.



Would you like to have a say on how the Northern Ireland media reports on you and your community? Raised Voices are writing guidelines for journalists on how to report on asylum seekers, refugees and ethnic minorities and we need your help. Come along and share your thoughts with Maeve from Raised Voices on June 11th at 7pm at BCRC in Ballymoney.

The session will last up to one hour and be audio-recorded for transcription purposes. Participants' contributions are anonymised.

A quote from a participant might be included in the reporting guidelines document, but it will be anonymous. You will be provided with a draft copy of the document for feedback as well as a copy of the final report.

For more information visit raised-voices.co.uk or email maeveconnolly@raised-voices.co.uk

To register, please email: marzena@theresourcecentre.org



Viva la Vida – Latino culture in Glenullin

We had lots of fun delivering 6 weeks project funded by Halifax, called Viva la Vida.

Zilka, our facilitator shared stories of Latino food, dance, traditions and migration. And no story is ever the same if Zilka is the one who tells them!

Each week the participants were able to taste some traditional Latino food, thank to Infuse Tea Bar.

Thank you to everyone who participated!

Ballymena South Community Cluster Best Practice Visit

BCRC hosted a best practice visit for members of Ballymena South Community Cluster.

They were interested in hearing more about the work we do within our community, and we were excited to deliver a presentation on key areas of our work. The group then had an opportunity to ask questions, and to talk a bit about their work in Ballymena.

We then took the group to The Courthouse in Bushmills, where we learnt about the history of the Courthouse, and the journey of transformation to becoming a shared space and creative hub. We then had a quick tour around the building, which was of particular interest to members of the Ballymena South Community Cluster.

We met with members of Bushmills & District Community Association, and enjoyed lunch at Market Square, before taking a walk up to their Community Garden, and learning about the work that Bushmills & District Community Association do. It was a successful visit and we hope that our friends at Ballymena South Community Cluster will stay connected as these opportunities provide great learning for everyone.



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crossroads Youth & Community Association

Funded by UK Government

We are pleased to announce that we have received funding to facilitate a new project:

Community Voices East-West: Shared Challenges Shared Future

Collaboration and partnership between:

Building Communities Resource Centre and Crossroads Youth and Community Centre.

Facilitated structured east-west dialogue between community leaders in NI and Scotland, centred on dialogue, listening, learning and shared problem solving. Through joint place based learning events, the project will create safe, constructive spaces for communities to explore shared pressures, build understanding and strengthen long term civic connections across the UK.

Looking forward to learning and sharing with the community in Glasgow, and welcoming them to our communities.

If you would like to get involved or want to hear more, please email Katherine at ceo@theresourcecentre.org

Connection Café

Connection Café is a vibrant space where people from all walks of life come together to dive into fascinating topics and share inspiring stories. Discover the flavours of the world as you explore global cuisines and immerse yourself in the rich traditions of diverse cultures-all in warm, welcoming space that celebrates connection and curiosity.

Next Connection Café will be on 4th June at 7pm in Coleraine and we would love to have you there!

If you wish to join our friendly Connection Café please email: marzena@theresourcecentre.org



Diverse Women's Circle



A space for women to connect, share stories, and build new friendships. We meet monthly in various coffee shops across the Causeway Area.

This is a safe, non-judgemental space where women support and empower one another.

This years programme is now fully booked.

Please follow our Facebook page for updates.

For more information please contact: marzena@theresourcecentre.org

Polish Poetry Night

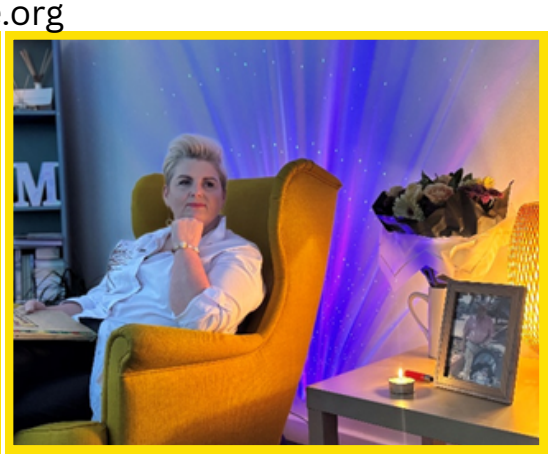
On 14th May our office was transformed for a magical Polish Poetry Night

It was an evening filled with connection, reflection, and beautiful emotions.
A heartfelt thank you to Aleksandra Chmielewska for sharing your inspiring and moving poems with us.
We are grateful to everyone who joined and helped create such a warm and memorable atmosphere.

If you are interested in similar events in the future please email: marzena@theresourcecentre.org







CACCC COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

What is a Child Contact Centre?

A short term safe, neutral space where children can spend time with a parent or important family member, while issues are resolved to support long term solutions.

A little bit about CACCC



CACCC recently celebrated our 20th Anniversary. Over the past two decades we have supported over 500 families to establish and develop contact arrangements in the Causeway Area - a momentous achievement and a legacy we hope to develop over the next decade.







Get Involved!

Our Service is only made possible by the volunteers who support and steer the organisation, without them hundreds of children would risk losing their relationship with a parent or important family member. To find out more about using our service or volunteering, scan the QR code or call 07899792948

Scan Me!

Men's Shed Networking Event





In February BCRC, along with Supporting Communities NI and Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council hosted a Men's Shed Networking Event where we brought together members of 7 local Men's Sheds.

This provided an opportunity for the men to share both successes and challenges that they have experienced over the years. The most common shared challenge was the lack of funding to help with the general running costs of Men's Sheds, as well as the increased demand of their services.

The majority of Men's Sheds are voluntary-led and their success requires a dedicated team of men to take responsibility for the day-to-day management. We had some discussion around the possibility of lobbying for Men's Sheds to receive more support from government, as well as delivering funding clinics to Men's Shed members so that volunteers would feel more confident in applying for much needed funds to keep the doors open.

A big thank you to all the men who took part in this event, for sharing their views, and for supporting each other with helpful suggestions and advice. We'd also like to acknowledge the work these men do year in and year out, and thank them for offering a safe space for other local men who may be experiencing loneliness, poor mental health, or who just need a place to belong.

Causeway Anti-Hate Crime Forum

Causeway Anti-Hate Crime Forum (AHCF) was established in 2024 to discuss and address hate crime issues. This forum addresses any crime against a person based on the 6 protected characteristics, namely sectarian, homophobic, faith, disability, transphobic and racist.

"We want action, We want change, We want to make a difference and to challenge where challenge is needed"

The purpose of the forum is to:

- Encourage collaboration and the exchange of ideas and information
- Engage with the public
- Raise awareness
- Provide support for victims and witnesses
- Influence policy making

Are you passionate about fairness and equality, and people being treated with dignity and respect?
Would you like to be an Anti-Hate Crime advocate for you community?
Can you commit to quarterly meetings each year?

We are particularly interested to welcome victims and survivors of hate crime who would like to join the forum. We will treat your story with respect and dignity.

As a member of Causeway Anti-Hate Crime Forum you will have the opportunity to avail of bespoke training and become part of a larger network and a collective voice for change.

If you are interested in finding out more please contact fearghal@theresourcecentre.org or hannah@theresourcecentre.org or call 028 2766 5068

The next meeting of Causeway AHCF will take place on Wednesday 24 June.

New Service: Independent Review of Charity Accounts

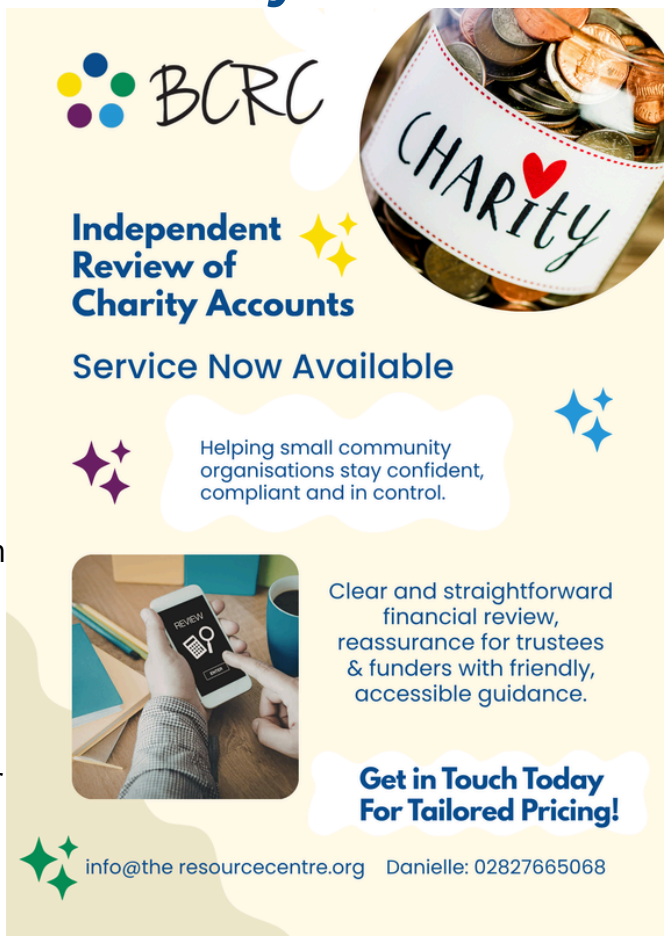
BCRC is pleased to announce a new Independent Review of Charity Accounts service, designed to support small community and voluntary organisations across the CCGBC area.

This service provides charities with a clear, professional and accessible independent examination of their accounts, helping trustees meet their legal responsibilities while giving funders, members and stakeholders additional confidence in the charity's financial management.

Our reviews are carried out in line with the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland's guidance "Independent examination of charity accounts: examiner's guide" (CCNI ARR07, June 2019). This ensures that examinations are completed with independence, accuracy and transparency.

BCRC understands the pressures faced by local organisations, which is why we aim to provide a supportive and straightforward service tailored to the needs of smaller charities and community groups. We can also offer practical guidance to help organisations strengthen financial procedures, improve record keeping and remain compliant with charity reporting requirements.

Whether your organisation is preparing for its annual reporting obligations or looking for reassurance that your financial controls are in good order, BCRC is here to help. To find out more about the service or discuss tailored pricing, please contact Danielle on 028 2766 5068 or email info@the-resourcecentre.org.





Workshops coming soon!
Facilitated by BCRC
Delivery locally or in your communities.

If you would like to hear more or interested please email info@theresourcecentre.org

Printing and Design Service



Contact:
info@theresourcecentre.org
028 2766 5068

Building Communities Resource Centre





These workshops are not about telling you what you know already.
They are designed to help explore what prevents us from having confidence, or the reasons why we are unable to practice self-care in the first place.
They provide a safe space for participants to reflect on their lives and gain a better understanding of themselves.

There is a focus on self-awareness as a powerful tool for positive change, as well as challenging negative self-talk, and how we view ourselves.
In a world that makes us believe we need to spend money in order to be good enough, these free workshops remind us that there is a transformative power in connecting, sharing, and showing our vulnerability.

If you would like to hear more about these workshops, or to book one for a group please contact
hannah@theresourcecentre.org
or call 028 2766 5068

BCRC Community Garden

We are looking for some volunteers who would like to help in our Community Garden at BCRC. If you could spare a little time we would love you to help us weed, plant, paint or tidy up our space. This little oasis of serenity and colour is for the benefit of the community to relax and meet others. You do not have to have previous experience. In return we will provide a nice cuppa and a pastry...and lots of fun.

To volunteer, please email fearghal@theresourcecentre.org



Membership Benefits:

£60 per Annum

Building Communities Resource Centre
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Become members of the BCRC network

We can't wait to work with you again this year, we have updated our membership benefits. For only £60 per annum your group could receive:

Capacity Building

Bespoke training when available
Good Governance advice and Guidance
Financial preparation advice and guidance
Measuring impact and data protection

Network and Collaborate

Facilitate connections and partnerships
Participation on forums
Shared learning and Best Practice

Funding Information and Support

Funding opportunities
Support and guidance to complete funding applications
Support with report writing for funders

Support and Resources

Review and update your Policies and Constitution
Support with CCNI and CHNI processes
Reduced rates for photocopying/printing
Digital copies of our Newsletters
Confidential Paper Shredding
Inclusion and promotion of your events and services in our newsletters
Administrative support
Design of publicity materials

Advocacy and Lobbying

Amplifying the voices of communities
Advocating for your needs and interests
Creating a collective voice to influence change