

SOUTH EAST ENGLAND REGIONAL ASSEMBLY SELECT COMMITTEE ON SEEDA's APPROACH TO LABOUR FORCE AND EMPLOYMENT

Submission from: Surrey Community Action

Date: **September 2008**

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

1. SCA do not believe that the needs of individuals and communities in rural areas have been given due consideration. Rural access is more than lack of transport – additional resources should be considered to enable local people in rural areas to have the same opportunities, ie Broadband access for home working, shared car schemes, moped loans for your people, affordable housing in rural areas enabling young people to stay and reduced business rates.
2. SCA would like it recognised that the VCS is a growing employer of paid staff as well as volunteers, that younger people are choosing the VCS as a first career. Rarely is this appreciated or supported in education career guidance except perhaps as 'gap' years abroad.
3. SCA would like consideration given to training opportunities for volunteers. Volunteers do see volunteering as a way of building confidence, skills etc. but do not wish to undertake formal qualifications of NVQs. Finance for volunteers in this category is hard to find.
4. The VCS have a vast contribution to make to the prevention and remaining independents service provision. This contribution is rarely acknowledged but without the thousands of hours of support, guidance etc. health and social services would not be able to cope. The same can also be said for the role of carers (only briefly mentioned)
5. Engagement with Job Centre Plus is almost impossible, with clear lack of understanding in to the role the VCS can play.

6. Lastly should it not be VCFS, ie faith groups have a clear role to play in supporting people, especially ex-offenders, lone mothers etc.

Yours sincerely

Jean Roberts-Jones
Chief Executive