

Social Audit Network Circular July 2009

The SAN e-mail list reaches some 1500 people in the UK and all around the world. If you know of other people who are interested in social accounting please invite them to join the network via the website or simply email us their address. Please remember the network is there not only to send out information but also to be used as a way of contacting other people and spreading information about what you are doing.

This edition contains information about future Masterclasses, the SAN Conference coming up in Liverpool in November, and events across the world! Australia appears to be a hot spot of SAA activity!

If you want to focus on what is going on in your area – please contact your Regional Co-ordinator or contact Anne Lythgoe alythgoe420@btinternet.com.

Events and Training

Master-classes and Social Auditor training...

Future events include:

North Wales – Social Accounting Masterclass, Wrexham, to be held on **7th & 8th September 2009**, at Plas Pentwyn, Coedpoeth, Wrexham, LL11 3NU. Lead Trainer will be Graham Waterhouse. For further information and booking please contact Nicola Millar 01978 722980 or nicola.millar@wrexham.gov.uk website: www.plas-pentwyn.co.uk

Exeter – Social Accounting Master-class – to be held on **23rd and 24th September 2009** – lead trainers Helen Vines and Debbie Stewart – for further details contact info@ceultd.co.uk or info@socialauditnetwork.org.uk I am told that Exeter is lovely in September – still sunny but not too busy – how about combining a masterclass in social accounting with a short break in the south-west? (Thank you Sean...)

London - The dates for the master-class to be held in London have been confirmed as **Monday and Tuesday 5 & 6 October**. A Social Auditor workshop will be held on **Wednesday 7 October**. Both the master-class and the SA workshop will take place in Corsham Street N1. Further details are available from John Pearce and anyone interested in attending either or (both) events should contact him on j.pearce@cali.co.uk



Cardiff - master-class - date in Sept/Oct to be confirmed – lead trainer John Pearce. For further details contact sarah.germain@cylch.org.uk

Edinburgh or Glasgow - master-class and Social Auditor workshop - possibly December or late January 2010 - lead trainer John Pearce – for further information watch the SAN Circular.

If you are interested in working with SAN to hold a Master-class or other training in your region, please contact John Pearce by e-mail at j.pearce@cali.co.uk

The **two-day master-classes** are aimed at people who wish to understand the Three Step social accounting process either in order to facilitate the process with social economy organisations or to use it within their own organisation. The cost of these classes in the UK is £375 including a copy of the social accounting and audit Manual & CD and dinner on the first evening. (If you already have a Manual & CD the cost is £350).

Social Auditor workshops are aimed specifically at those people wishing to become SAN approved Social Auditors. Participants should have sound prior knowledge and/or experience of the social accounting and audit process either by having used it for their own or another organisation or by having attended one of SAN's two-day master-classes or similar SAN recognised training. The cost of the Social Auditor workshop is £150.

SAN News and Developments

Register of Social Auditors

Anyone wishing to become approved as a SAN Social Auditor contact their Regional Co-ordinator in the first instance - see end of Circular. Prospective auditors are required to attend a SAN Social Auditor workshop and to have attended at least two social audit panels and written a set of notes before being mentored when they chair a first panel for themselves.

For information on the register of approved social auditors, please go to our website at: <http://www.socialauditnetwork.org.uk/register2.htm>

SAN Conference 13 November 2009

The 2009 SAN Conference - **Accounting, Measuring and Reporting - how does it all add up?** - will be held on **13 November at Blackburne House in Liverpool** and will be an international affair with social accounting practitioners from Europe and Overseas in attendance. Confirmed speakers and workshop presenters so far include:

- Gerry Higgins, CEO of Community Enterprise in Scotland;
- Steve Wyler CEO of the Development Trusts Association;
- Bob Doherty of John Moores University Liverpool;
- Mrs Latha Suresh of the Centre for Social Initiative Management in India;
- Marcelle Holdaway, social auditor based in Australia;
- Lindsay Jeffs, social auditor based in New Zealand;
- Johny Josphe of Creative Handicrafts Mumbai,
- Namrata Kaur from Dr Reddy's Foundation in Hyderabad
- Tytti Siltanen of Develooppi Oy Finland.

Colleagues from Nepal, Germany and Canada will also be joining us.

Please note the date in your diaries. Further details and a booking form will be available in the next month.

SAN Social Accounts

We would like to thank all those who completed questionnaires for our second set of social accounts for the period December 2007 to March 2009. These have now been drafted and are out to Board members for consideration and comment. Once they have been audited by a social audit panel later this summer a summary will be circulated with the monthly Circular and the full social accounts and appendices will be available on the SAN website.

SAN manual...

Should you wish to purchase a copy of the interactive Manual and CD, please contact your Regional Co-ordinator in the first instance, who may have some in stock. Larger orders should be placed via the SAN office in Exeter (contact details at the end of this newsletter) or via Anne Lythgoe, by e-mail (alythgoe420@btinternet.com). The order form is available on the SAN website at <http://www.socialauditnetwork.org.uk/ManCD2.htm>

The 2009 cost of the Social Accounting and Audit Manual and CD is as follows:

- 1 - 5 copies - £27.50 each (incl. Post and Packing)
- 5+ copies - £25 each (**plus** Post and Packing)

Call for Case Studies...

SAN is always looking for organisations to feature as Case Studies in both this newsletter and on the SAN website. A number of case studies have been prepared following the SAN research project, and a number of these are now available for you to download from the SAN website at <http://www.socialauditnetwork.org.uk/what%202.htm>.

SAN is planning a booklet of case studies to illustrate good practice in social accounting and audit – if you would like to feature in this booklet, please contact Anne Lythgoe for more details.

If you are willing to share your experiences of social accounting and audit in order to help inform others, you do not need to write the whole article – we are happy to help. However, the information and opinion must come from you and your organisation – it's your story that is being told! We are especially looking for Case Studies from the great number of organisations around the world who practice social accounting and audit. Please contact Anne Lythgoe (alythgoe420@btinternet.com), to discuss how your story can be included on our website.

Social Accounting Case Study Feature

BRAG Enterprises

Introduction

Following pit closures in the 1980s, the Benarty Regeneration Action Group (BRAG) was set up to tackle the severe levels of unemployment and subsequent poverty in the local area. Its vision was to *'assist in the creation of a vibrant economy in Central Fife - an economy in which all the key indicators are at least on a par with Scotland as a whole.'* Since its inception in 1988, its remit has developed to include local economic and community development; learning and training; small business development; New Deal and Gateway to Work Programmes and The School for Social Entrepreneurs. It is now a leading agency for community based learning and regeneration in the West Fife Coalfields area.

Social accounting and audit

BRAG was invited to participate as a field subject in the CONSCISE program in 2001/2002. The program was designed to test the generation of social capital and regeneration through the social accounting method. As a participant in the program, BRAG was given a high level of support including external funding and significant consultancy input through CBS Network. BRAG are clear that the accounts would not have been delivered

without this support and that they were *"very lucky having the support of John and Alan (CBS Network) that helped us through the Objective setting"*. The consultants were heavily involved in developing the aims and objectives of the organisation; production of questionnaires; assistance in the collection of data; one to one interviews; analysis of data and finally completion of the accounts.

BRAG hoped that the social accounts would demonstrate its social value; enable them to monitor performance and impact; review and manage the way the organisation worked; hear what stakeholders felt about their services; and be more accountable.

Benefits and value of social accounting and audit

BRAG felt that the *"process was more important than the output"* and *"helped to bring the staff teams together. Like many medium sized voluntary organisations BRAG had staff groups operating different activities under contract or funding. The process helped to orientate the staff around the wider organisation. This helped to rally the staff"*. BRAG also felt that the process of putting together the social accounts helped open channels of communication with stakeholders; *"many people very much appreciated the fact we were interested in their opinion"* and that *"the process of Alan conducting face to face interviews with our funders was very helpful. We got a lot of great feedback on their perception about BRAG and were able to (make) adjustments to our approach. I feel this brought us closer to our funders as it allowed us to align objectives."* BRAG reported that this benefit was directly responsible in securing a large New Deal contract. BRAG felt that these benefits would not have been fully realised had they not had third party support.

BRAG staff involved in the accounts also reported personal benefits including a better understanding of the organisation and being given the skills to facilitate the process with other organisations.

Negatives, problems, snags

Overall, BRAG felt that the social accounting process did not pose many difficulties and found many elements easy to understand and complete. However, they recognise that the accounts, particularly the consultation process, would not have been completed without third party support. BRAG did feel there was not enough time to do the work required, despite external assistance. *"The most difficult aspect was having the discipline to conduct the various consultations on time"*.



General thoughts on social accounting and audit

BRAG felt the production of social accounts was a positive experience for its stakeholders but that external support was crucial to this success. Whilst social accounting should not be compulsory for social economy organisations, BRAG felt it should be more widely available and mainstreamed through national training programs and funders/investors accepting social accounts in place of bespoke reports. It also felt strongly that any submissions to funders should include an allocation to pay for producing social accounts. It also agreed that having a standard set of values for social economy organisations with appropriate indicators would be very beneficial to the sector.

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www.brag.co.uk

01592 860 296

SAN in Scotland

John Pearce writes....

SAN in Scotland's most recent meeting was held on 18 June when Bev Meldrum of the **Tool Factory** gave a presentation and demonstration of their *Social Impact Tracker*. This is an IT tool which assists organisations collect and manage the information they need for their social accounts.

The next SAN in Scotland meeting will be held in Glasgow in September. If you wish to be added to the mailing list please contact John Pearce at j.pearce@cali.co.uk

Social Accounting celebration at the Scottish Parliament

On 13 May, James Kelly MSP hosted a reception at the Scottish Parliament for some 50 people involved or interested in the recently concluded Social Accounting and Audit programme supported by Co-operative Development Scotland and delivered by SAN in Scotland. At that event, the West Whitlawburn team resorted to verse to get their message across. Although this was published on the SAN website, I thought that you might be interested in singing along to the following ode:



" An Ode to Social Accounts: The Three steps to Heaven"
(With apologies to Showaddywaddy)

We six set out on this journey,
not too sure what we were about
to challenge pesky bean counters
Social Accounts would give us clout!

We all set sail with CDS
From the dock at Atlantic Quay
With Al and Pat, and John P
Showing us Steps One and Two and Three

New friends we met upon the shores
Of Inverness and Loch Fyne
smoked salmon lunch and what a view
we had a real whale of a time

Some of Whitlawburn's finest
Were charged with the task
Through I/vs and many surveys
The right questions indeed were asked

The answers revealing what we had sought
and things we'd hoped were true
That we're kind and we're caring
.....and we're often life-savers too

Objectives, evidence and the scope
we all had to define
with faith and hope
and blood and sweat
we got there just in time (a comment on wwhc tardiness and
brinksmanship!!)

We shared notes with the Carers
And that Group who are so Wise
With the Panel skilfully ensuring
These accounts would tell no lies

The draft complete, twas testing time
In front of a learned panel
No bluff, no huff, no way jose
would this the panel swallow flannel

Making beancounters listen
Must now be our quest



They must value our undoubted quality
And in uscontinue to invest

As Stock Markets crash
and banks implode
There really can be no doubt
In proving the merits of the Co-op code
Social Accounts is what it's about

The West Whitlawburn Housing Co-operative Social Accounting Team
Cambuslang, May 2009

SAN in Australia..

Carol Adams writes...

I would like to let all those who are interested in social accounting about the new Sustainability Accounting Management and Policy Journal. The website for the journal is www.emeraldinsight.com/sampj.htm
<<http://www.emeraldinsight.com/sampj.htm>>

The aim of the *Sustainability Accounting, Management and Policy Journal* is to find practical and policy solutions to improve the social and environmental sustainability performance of (private, public sector and non-governmental) organisations and societies. The journal will bring together work from a range of disciplines to promote a multi-disciplinary perspective to developing such practical and policy solutions. In addition to inter- and multi-disciplinary papers, the journal will take single disciplinary papers which are important to researchers, practitioners and policy makers in the field, regardless of their main discipline. Such papers would be expected to be accessible to readers coming from different discipline perspectives.

We are currently seeking papers for this exciting new journal, to be launched by Emerald in 2010. For author submission guidelines and full editorial team details please go to:

www.emeraldinsight.com/sampj.htm As a guide, articles should be between 8,000 and 11,000 words in length. A title of not more than eight words should be provided. Submissions should be sent via e-mail to the Editor at c.adams@latrobe.edu.au

Contact the Editorial Team

Editor: Professor Carol Adams

E-mail: c.adams@latrobe.edu.au

Publisher: Joe Bennett

E-mail: jbennett@emeraldinsight.com



Joanne McNeill writes...

Demonstrating value and impact in the social economy forum held in Sydney on 15 June 2009

Over 170 people attended the forum which aimed to explore approaches to social impact assessment and increase local knowledge about their application. The free forum booked out within three weeks with another 70 people on the waiting list.

A collaboration between Parramatta City Council, the Cosmopolitan Civil Societies Research Centre at the University of Technology Sydney, Westpac Foundation and GROW Sydney ACC organised the event. Context and history were presented by Professor Mark Lyons, followed by presentations on three different methods. Social Accounting & Audit, Social Return on Investment and Log Frame were covered and each section included presentations from a 'case' organisation and from a method expert. These were followed by a presentation from the Australian Government's Productivity Commission on their current project, which will report on the contribution of Australia's third sector. Group discussions and a panel Q&A session rounded out the day.

Very positive feedback has been received, from across the diverse range of organisations represented. The organisers will be meeting soon to discuss how to continue the momentum generated, albeit without a budget! Information from the session will be made available on a website shortly. For further information about the event contact Joanne McNeill on jmcneill@parracity.nsw.gov.au

For information on Social Accounting & Audit in Australia contact Marcelle Holdaway on marcelle@sun.big.net.au

SAN Regional Co-ordinators...

London:

Mike Gordon (pro tem)- mike@mgc13.plus.com

South East:

Mike Gordon (pro tem)- mike@mgc13.plus.com

East Midlands:

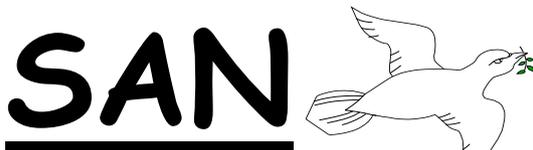
Mike Swain - Mike.S@asan.org.uk

West Midlands:

West Midlands Social Accounting Cluster - Mike.S@asan.org.uk

Scotland:

SAN in Scotland - info@cbs-network.org.uk



Social Audit Network

social accounting and audit for the community sector

South West England:

Community Enterprise Unit - lorna@ceultd.co.uk

East of England:

Mike Gordon - mike@mgc13.plus.com

Wales:

Cylch in partnership with the Development Trusts Association Wales (DTAW) - sarah.germain@cylich.org.uk

North West England:

contact either Graham Waterhouse - graham.waterhouse@ntlworld.com
or Liz Brooks Allen - Liz@elect.org.uk

Yorks and Humber:

Contact in the first instance Mary McGarry -
mary@punchthehorse.karoo.co.uk

North East England:

Community Campus 87 - lawrence@cc87.co.uk

Northern Ireland:

Vacant

We are still seeking to identify people willing to serve as Regional Co-ordinators in Northern Ireland and the South of England.

Contacting SAN...

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*Anne Lythgoe
June 2009*