

# CREATIVE EXTREMISTS

Fighting for the common good

*Inform Opinion*

*Highlight Trends*

*Inspire Action*

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## **Major Conference**

Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2009

Stormont Hotel, Belfast

## Conference Context

“So the question is not whether we will be extremists but what kind of extremists will we be. Will we be extremists for hate or will we be extremists for love? Will we be extremists for the preservation of injustice - or will we be extremists for the cause of justice?”

(Martin Luther King Jnr. Letter from Birmingham Jail 1963)

### Inform Opinion, Highlight Trends, Inspire Action

As we move into a new era never has it been more important to understand and recognise the contribution that volunteering has and will make to ensure a better society for all. Volunteering is the cohesive force which has given many people the opportunity not only to help others and their community but also enrich their own lives. In a period of increased stability this is a time for change and opportunity. Opportunity to transform communities, possibly on a greater scale than ever before, into those that share a common concern for the well-being of others. With a plethora of reviews and consultations in progress this conference seeks to Inform, Highlight and Inspire all those of influence. We issue the challenge - are we to be Creative Extremists and if so to what end?

### Outcomes:

- Increase awareness of the importance of volunteering.
- Begin the process where local and central government recognise that volunteering and active community participation is a key component of community planning.
- Demonstrate good practice particularly in areas of young people and older people as actively contributing to society.

### Target Audience

It has been recognised that civic institutions have played a significant part in holding the fabric of Northern Ireland's society together through turbulent times. This conference is aimed at exploring, in a post conflict situation, the role of these institutions and the role of volunteering as key to future stability. The conference will engage people with an interest in and a passion for volunteering and we wish to attract people who can ensure that volunteering makes a significant contribution to Northern Irish society. In order to achieve this VSB seeks to involve a broad section of people from central and local government policy makers, council, Assembly politicians, community and voluntary sector leaders and academics. We intend to bring together people from a number of perspectives using the conference to harness their energy and knowledge to provide new thinking on the contribution volunteering does and will continue to make to Northern Ireland.

### Conference Aims:

#### Inform:

On the impact of volunteering showing the contribution it makes to the delivery of public services and the strategic role volunteering makes to the well being of a civil society.

#### Highlight:

Models of good practice, international trends and excellence from Northern Ireland and elsewhere.

#### Inspire:

New political and public bodies, central government, local councils, education and health to develop strategies to support volunteering (civic engagement/ active participation)

# Conference Programme

**9.15 am**

Registration and refreshments

**9.45 am**

Welcome: Lord Mayor of Belfast Councillor Tom Hartley

**9.55 am**

Margaret Ritchie MLA: Minister for Social Development

**10.15 am**

Keynote Speaker: Rt Hon. David Blunkett MP

**10.45 am**

Refreshments served in the reception area

**11.15 am – 11.40 am**

Harriet Eadie: Director of Volunteer Centre Edinburgh

**11.40 am**

Creative Extremists in Action - Northern Ireland case studies

**12.10 pm**

Playback Drama Group - Morning Summary

**12.30 pm**

LUNCH

**1.15 pm**

Keynote Speaker: Michael Edwards

**1.50 pm**

World Café Conversations

**2.30 pm**

Panel Discussion, Facilitator: Nuala McKeever

**3.30 pm**

Playback Drama Group – Thoughts for the Road.

**3.45 p.m**

Conference Close - Bill Smith, VSB Chairman

# Speaker Panel



## Rt Hon David Blunkett MP

David Blunkett was elected as the Member of Parliament for Sheffield Brightside in 1987. Following the Labour victory in 1997 David has served as Secretary of State for Education and Employment, Home Secretary and Secretary of State for Work and Pensions. Since 2005 he has been undertaking constituency and

parliamentary duties and has become involved with a number of local, national and international charities, and has further engaged with his long-standing commitment to the third sector in promoting voluntary and community activities, and social enterprise. He is currently leading work for the Prime Minister on the third sector for Labour's next manifesto, as well as developing a project on welfare reform. He has recently completed significant work on the issue of social mobility and is deeply engaged in anti-poverty work.



## Michael Edwards

Michael Edwards is a Distinguished Senior Fellow at Demos, a Network for Ideas and Action, in New York, a Senior Visiting Scholar at New York University's Wagner School of Public Service, and a Senior Visiting Fellow at the Brooks World Poverty Institute at Manchester University in the UK. From 1999 to 2008, he was the Director of the Ford Foundation's Governance and Civil

Society Program in New York, and also co-founded the Seasons Fund for Social Transformation. Mike is also a Trustee of the Centre for Contemplative Mind and Society in Northampton, Massachusetts. He is the author of *The Oxford Handbook on Civil Society*, *Just another Emperor?* *The Myths and Realities of Philanthrocapitalism.*, *Civil Society*.



## Margaret Ritchie MLA

Margaret Ritchie is an SDLP Assembly Member for South Down. She was appointed Minister for Social Development in May 2007. Her Ministerial portfolio includes responsibility for housing, urban regeneration, community development, Child Support and the Social Security Agency. Margaret Ritchie's political career began in 1985 when she was

elected to Down District Council representing the Rowallene area. Later she was appointed Parliamentary Assistant and Political Researcher to the MP for South Down, Eddie McGrady. Margaret Ritchie is committed to building a shared future in Northern Ireland and this theme permeates all aspects of her political life.



## Rt Hon the Lord Mayor, Councillor Tom Hartley

Councillor Hartley a member of Sinn Féin, represents the Lower Falls area and was elected Lord Mayor in June 2008. He has been involved with Sinn Féin for the last 40 years and this year will mark his 16th year as a member of Belfast City Council. Councillor Hartley is a member of the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust Board and Belfast Harbour

Commissioners Board. He is a keen supporter of tourism initiatives, arts projects in Belfast and is also an environmental campaigner and historian. He has written a number of books, including *Written in Stone* about the history of the Belfast City Cemetery.



## Harriet Eadie

Harriet Eadie is Director of Volunteer Centre Edinburgh which is the lead body for volunteering in the city. She has been heavily involved with the development of volunteering strategy both nationally and locally, including periods as chair of the Volunteer Centre Network Committee and secondment with Scottish Government to develop the first proportionate funding formula

for the Volunteer Centre Network. In 2007 she took the lead with the council as key strategic partner, on developing Inspiring Volunteering, the first community planning volunteer strategy for Edinburgh. She is chair of Edinburgh Compact Partnership which is currently leading on developing the Scottish Government's new localism agenda ensuring joined up infrastructure support for voluntary sector, volunteering and social enterprise.



## Nuala McKeever

Nuala McKeever appeared with the Hole in the Wall Gang in the award winning television comedy - *Give My Head Peace* and her own TV show *McKeever* on Ulster Television. In 2005 she wrote and performed a one-woman comedy drama *Out of the Box*. Besides performing and writing for radio, stage and television she also offers tailor made training to business

and charitable organisations. Nuala is also a highly sought after dinner speaker and conference/awards ceremony MC in Belfast, Dublin and London.

# Booking Form

I wish to reserve \_\_\_\_\_ places at the Creative Extremist Conference at a cost of £75 per delegate.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Job Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Organisation: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Post Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

## Payment Options

I enclose a cheque for £\_\_\_\_\_ Payable to VSB

Please invoice my organisation

Please charge my credit card. Please circle: Visa / Mastercard / Debit

Card Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Name of card holder: \_\_\_\_\_

Issue Number (if applicable) \_\_\_\_\_ Valid From: \_\_\_\_\_ Expiry date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Security Number: \_\_\_\_\_

(please provide card billing address if different from company address)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Post Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Confirmation of registration and payment will be acknowledged.

Cancellations/substitutions: For those unable to attend a substitute delegate may be sent at any time for no additional charge. Alternatively a refund will be given for cancellations received in writing, by fax or letter, up to 14 days prior to the conference, less 25% administration charge. Regrettably no refunds can be made after that date.

### Who should attend?

This conference seeks to Inform Opinion, Highlight Trends and Inspire all those of influence. It will engage people with an interest in and a passion for volunteering:

- Policy Makers
- Local and Central Government
- Councillors
- MLAs
- Community and Voluntary Sector leaders
- Academics

### Other ways to book:

-  Fax: 028 9020 0860
-  Phone: 028 9020 0850
-  Email: [info@vsb.org.uk](mailto:info@vsb.org.uk)
-  Online: [www.vsb.org.uk](http://www.vsb.org.uk)
-  Post: VSB  
34 Shaftesbury Square  
Belfast  
BT2 7DB

# CREATIVELY EXTREMISTS

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34 Shaftesbury Square  
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BT2 7DB

**VSB North Down & Ards**  
91 High Street  
Bangor  
BT20 5BD

**VSB Fermanagh**  
Fermanagh House  
Broadmeadow Place  
Enniskillen BT74 7HR

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[honchodesigns.com](http://honchodesigns.com)



The conference is supported by: Department for Social Development, Belfast City Council, Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action and the Volunteer Development Agency