

A Word from the Chair

In a challenging economic environment, snvb has weathered the storm and emerged even stronger, continuing to deliver high quality services to our communities.

In my report for last year's Annual Review, I alluded to the difficult year ahead, and how critical achieving funding streams would become to the voluntary and community sector. Without any doubt that prediction became a reality, but I am pleased to report that in spite of such a difficult economic backdrop, snvb has grown visibly stronger.

During the year we successfully completed 2 ongoing projects. The Big Lottery Village Reach project was completed in April 2010, after 2 years of activity. All of the goals set out for the project were successfully achieved. The 3-year Capacity Builders project was completed right at the end of our fiscal year in March 2011. Once again the results achieved were outstanding, and continue to live on in the groups that we have helped to generate extra capacity.

One of the areas threatened by financial cutbacks was our Brackley Area Volunteer Car Service, which traditionally had been funded by local authority grants in addition to a modest membership fee. It became clear as we approached the end of the year that these funds would be reduced, and to combat this we launched a significant fundraising exercise, which has been a great success and secured the future of the scheme for the current

year and beyond. The fundraising will of course continue and we have achieved 3 major successes, that are very important for the future of the business.

Firstly, the Local Infrastructure contract for South Northants and Daventry has been awarded to snvb after an open tender process. This contract is for 2 years through to March 2013, and provides the platform for our main activities in volunteering and supporting local groups. Whilst this is an NCC contract, our district council SNC financially supports our infrastructure activities, and we thank both authorities for their support to us and their confidence in us.

Secondly, the end of March 2011 was also the date for the completion of our work on the School of Life intergenerational project, after 18 months of what was a pilot project. The results achieved were so exciting that they inspired us to submit a bid to the Big Lottery for a new 3 year project. I am delighted to say that we have been successful with this bid, and the new project commenced in July 2011.

Thirdly, we have been successful with a Big Lottery award for 3 years to deliver our Village Networks project. This is a major piece of work designed to reduce

social isolation by taking activities and support services out to our rural communities, and generating community involvement. This project is now in planning and the first activities will happen early in 2012, in what really will be action at the heart of the Big Society.

Once again this year I wish to thank our group of volunteers who act as trustees to the business. They continue to freely give their time, skills and experience to our cause. This year we welcomed one new trustee Alex Lohman, who has been a valuable addition to the team.

During the last year the trustees witnessed considerable pressure on our loyal staff to continue to deliver excellent services, in the most difficult conditions. To their credit they have achieved this, as ever with a smile, and the trustees are both appreciative and proud of every member of staff and all of our amazing volunteers.

In summary the business continues to deliver to a high level and faces an exciting future, in a much stronger position than just a year ago.

Dave Kidd, August 2011.

School of Life – A Celebration!!

On 9th March 2011 snvb celebrated the "School of Life" pilot project at Greens Norton Community Centre. The School of Life project created opportunities for the younger and older generations to come together and share their skills with each other. The celebration event was a perfect opportunity for snvb to thank those who could join us, for all their support in getting involved in the intergenerational activities over the past 18 months. The School of Life pilot project successes were due to the time and effort given by all the volunteers and our dedicated team.

There were memorable performances from Nicholas Hawksmoor Primary School children presenting their courtyard gardening project followed by The Greens Norton Community Choir and Greens Norton Primary school children singing together. Not forgetting the fabulous cup cakes that went down very well and looked delicious.

The displays around the room were a good representation of local activities and showed the many ways to get involved in the local community and schools.



Information, advice and assistance

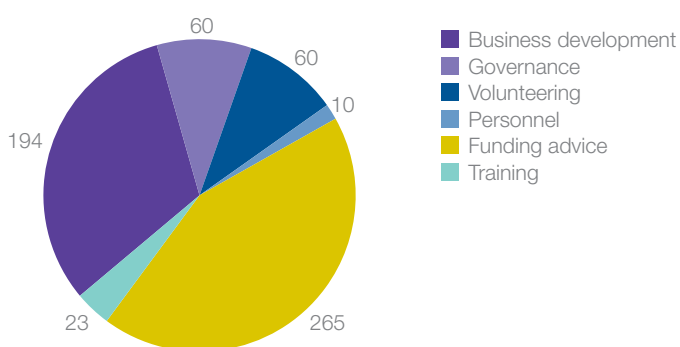
snvb holds the County Council contract for local infrastructure support services to the voluntary and community sector across South Northamptonshire and Daventry which is delivered in co-operation with Daventry Volunteer Centre.

Funded within the term of the three year Capacitybuilders *Improving Reach* programme and the two year BIG Lottery BASIS grant, we have seen our work with groups go from strength to strength.

Direct support to groups in 2010-11

We worked with 312 separate groups, logging 612 individual activities and in many cases received requests for support and guidance across several categories.

We were pleased to work in 22 new villages and with 132 new groups that we had not had contact with previously.



Amount raised by local groups as a result of advice given

We are continually impressed by the inspiration and dedication shown in the wealth of voluntary groups we have in our area. Our groups come in all shapes and sizes and work tirelessly behind the scenes to enrich our community.

Examples include the following:-

Helmdon Acorns Pre-school	£150,000
Hackleton Village Hall	£80,000
Blisworth Scouts	£119,000
Pattishall Village Hall	£6,999

We helped groups to raise a total of £1,087,000 – a 19% increase over last year.

Newsletter

5 editions of the newsletter were published during the year. We are continually requested to add recipients to the distribution list which has increased by 17% this year. Our satisfaction surveys always show that the newsletter is much appreciated.

e-bulletin

Every two weeks we send out an e-mail to selected clients highlighting important news and information regarding such things as funding and training. This is a very cost effective method of communicating with our clients. During the current year we have increased the circulation from 328 to 512 (an increase of 56%). We are also increasingly using this mechanism for single alerts to targeted recipients – for example a new funding stream that may interest certain groups.

We have also had considerable success using on-line marketing techniques to produce surveys (such as our annual "Satisfaction Survey"). We find that the response to these is very much higher than we have experienced in the past with printed surveys sent by post.

Volunteer Brokerage Service

As a Volunteering England Accredited Local Volunteer Development Agency snvb promotes volunteering and works with individuals and organisations, helping them to get the most out of volunteering.

Throughout 2010/11, our Volunteer Brokerage Service has grown steadily; achieving a 7% increase in enquiries and 9% increase in volunteering placements on the previous year.

We also signed up more than 20 new organisations wanting to use volunteers and registered 154 new volunteering roles.

Our weekly volunteering feature in the Brackley and Towcester Advertiser has continued to raise awareness with the number of people reporting that they had heard about us through the newspaper rising by 25%.

Similarly, our involvement with South Northamptonshire Council's Brackley and Towcester Job Clubs has proved a great success with a 41% increase in the number of enquiries received from jobseekers from the previous twelve months.

In June, snvb held a Volunteering Fair at Towcester Town Hall to celebrate National Volunteers Week. Local groups were invited to promote their opportunities and volunteers were thanked for their contributions throughout the year during an award ceremony. The event was covered by BBC Radio Northampton's roving reporter, Paul Ennever, who turned up to interview volunteers about their experiences!



"May I take this opportunity to thank you & your team for a wonderful support service as without you guys I doubt we would still be running as we wouldn't have had any helpers at all!!"
- Age Concern in Brackley

Resources from snvb

Both of our volunteer centres have interview rooms that may be hired on a sessional basis to provide advice and information services. In addition, at Towcester, there is a larger meeting room which may be hired for meetings or training sessions.

Agencies making regular use of our facilities include:

- Home-Start
- U3A
- Community Law
- Connexions
- Working Links
- Northamptonshire Carers
- Willen Hospice
- CAB Banbury
- SNC (Housing Advice)
- S4YP (NHS)
- Sure Start
- Users Support Service
- Nene Valley Community Action
- Service Six

snvb also provide equipment and services to local voluntary groups. Display boards are very popular, as are equipment such as laptops and digital projectors.

We have also been pleased to be able to print village newsletters and flyers for groups.

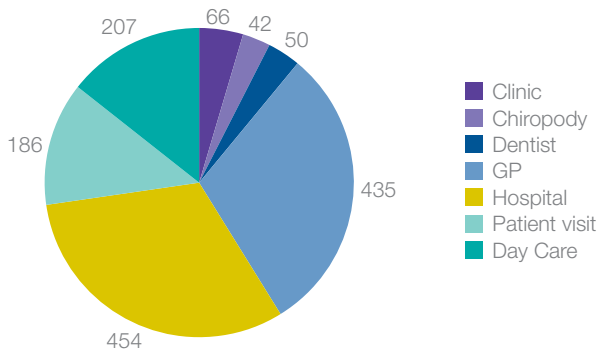
Over 2,000 local people have benefitted from advice sessions at our volunteer centres this year.

Direct Services

Brackley Area Volunteer Car Service

BAVCS provides transport to medical/social care appointments for people who have no access to other suitable means of transport. We use volunteer car drivers who receive a mileage-based payment from the passenger. We are grateful to NCC, SNC and Brackley Town Council for their financial support. We have also been quite successful in gaining financial support from other sources this year (listed on page 4).

Car Service Destinations 2010/2011



The response rate to our Customer Satisfaction Survey, issued in February 2011 was good and the principal messages were a high level of satisfaction and dependence on the service.

"I want to thank you for the efforts made to keep the service going with such poor travel services to and from Brackley, visits to hospitals in Oxford and Northampton would be impossible"

"When one is elderly with "limited mobility" it is comforting to know that this service is available. Thank you all"

"I am aged 91 and housebound and appreciate the helpful, useful and friendly service given by all concerned"

Our volunteer drivers completed 2,956 journeys totalling 32,278 miles ensuring that local people could attend vital appointments.

Charity Crafts

Our Charity Crafts volunteer group uses donated materials to produce craft items which are passed to other local charities to promote their work or raise funds. In June, the group attended the Volunteering Fair at Towcester Town Hall which was organised by snvb to celebrate National Volunteers Week (1-7 June). Members demonstrated their skills to encourage new members and were interviewed for a live broadcast by BBC Radio Northampton.

Safe n Sound

Safe n Sound is a multi-agency partnership initiative led by snvb providing advice and assistance on energy conservation, home safety and health improvements. The partnership comprises Daventry and South Northants Care & Repair, NHS Northamptonshire, Northamptonshire Fire & Rescue Service, Northamptonshire Police, South Northamptonshire Council, South Northants Homes, NCC Library Services and Northamptonshire LINK. 9 events were held in South Northants benefitting in excess of 200 people.

The national cuts in public spending brought constraints to several of the partners with regard attendance at events. The majority of partners also support the DASH (Daventry Area Safer Homes) scheme and snvb has been collaborating with Daventry Volunteer Centre the lead agency for the DASH project to secure future funding beyond March 2011.

South Northants Youth Information Directory

In partnership with South Northants Youth Council, snvb has developed an on-line resource for young people in the area. The Youth Information Directory has details of activities, support services, news and events of interest to young people. The Youth Council, having provided guidance regarding structure and design of the website, is responsible for maintaining the events and activities content, using representatives from each of the secondary schools in the area.

Organisations that offer activities or services to young people are able to register directly on the website and enter their details into the directory.

snvb administers and maintains the website, ensuring the integrity of all the data in the directory.



School of Life

This pilot intergenerational project was successfully completed on 31 March 2011. Working in partnership with Northampton Volunteer Centre and Nene Valley Community Action, the project saw 3,009 younger and older people participate in a series of events promoting the values of sharing skills and experiences. No less than 52 individual projects were developed in consultation with local community groups and schools and colleges.

Comments from participants included:

"I now have the courage to use the computer on my own"
- quote from a 50 plus participant

"I thought gardening would be boring, and just for old people, but it's really good fun and I want to do it at home now" - quote from an under 25 participant.



We are delighted to have kicked off a new 3 year School of Life project in July 2011, and look forward to continuing the good work started with the pilot project.

Training & Promotional Events

This year's outreach programme included a series of Saturday morning clinics in all the libraries across our region as well as three full days out and about with the mobile library service. We also attended four Annual Assemblies promoting the work we do and answering questions from councillors and residents.

In April we hosted a training session on Safeguarding with information on Vetting and Barring in association with Childrens Links (Safe Network in the East Midlands) which proved very popular with over 35 groups represented.

Training on fundraising, as part of our infrastructure support to voluntary groups remained a major theme for us over the year with three highlights:

- A session focused on the BIG Lottery Awards For All fund.
- An awareness session on the Northampton Community Foundation's new online funding application process.
- A double-bill of training by the Santander Foundation and Funding Central (via NCVO) both carefully pitched to advise our local groups.

Representatives from over 120 groups benefitted from our training and outreach events: our reputation and success often attracting representatives from outside our area for example Northampton Borough and Buckingham.

Networking & Communications

Networking - snvb represents the sector on several strategic bodies and provides the secretariat service to the South Northamptonshire VCS Forum and hosts a forum called Link Up. The purpose and benefits of these forums are detailed below.

South Northants VCS Forum

This forum seeks to provide a voice for the voluntary and community sector, enabling groups to participate collectively in the local consultation process by creating a platform between the sector and statutory bodies. The forum invited several guest speakers including Roger Clarke, Pattishall Parish Council to talk about the benefits of a Parish Plan and Dr Tony Hillier Snr Partner Roade Medical Practice regarding the 'Future of the NHS'.

LinkUp

LinkUp is a quarterly meeting for paid workers from both the voluntary and statutory sectors in the area and provides an opportunity to network, share information/experiences and develop partnership working.

There is usually a lead speaker and a diverse range of subjects are covered e.g. the development of SureStart Children's Centres in South Northants and Domestic Abuse - prevalence and services available in the district.

Communications - snvb has a diverse and comprehensive database of voluntary, statutory and public sector organisations.

This database enables us to communicate with local community organisations and groups. Additionally, it is an invaluable resource when signposting customers to other service providers. Future plans for late 2011 include our migrating to a new database in collaboration with the other Local Infrastructure Organisations in the county. The new database will allow us to more readily target our services to specific groups and to disseminate information if specific to a target audience.

Finance

	2010/11	2009/10
	£	£
Total Income	295,600	293,500
Total Expenditure	270,500	287,000
Income:		
Capacitybuilders	97,200	94,500
NCC	126,400	95,600
Big Lottery	750	35,300
SNC	23,370	26,000
BTC	1,250	1,250
Others	46,630	40,850
Expenditure		
Staff costs	183,650	181,900
Premises	14,200	15,300
Office costs	36,600	43,000
Insurance	2,350	2,800
Infrastructure partnership	25,800	21,500
Miscellaneous	7,900	22,500

Volunteer Centre
Moat Lane
Towcester
NN12 6AD

Tel 01327 358264
info@snvb.org.uk

Also at:
Volunteer Centre
Market House Courtyard
Brackley
NN13 7AB

Tel 01280 841250

Local Partnership Representation and Collaboration

snvb has close links with Daventry Volunteer Centre with whom we have collaborated for the last five years in the delivery of infrastructure support across the two districts.

snvb is a founder member of Local Infrastructure Organisations Northamptonshire (LION) and participates fully in the management of the five year Big Lottery BASIS programme to develop an effective countywide forum for the voluntary and community sector in Northamptonshire.

External Links

snvb has extensive external links and is represented on a number of formal partnerships.

These include:

- South Northamptonshire Local Strategic Partnership
- Northamptonshire Infrastructure Consortium
- LION/VCN
- Daventry Local Strategic Partnership
- Towcester JAG
- Children & Young People Network Group
- Volunteering Co-ordinators Group

Our thanks go to:

Our Funders

- Northamptonshire County Council
- South Northamptonshire Council
- Brackley Town Council
- Capacitybuilders
- Big Lottery Fund
- South Northamptonshire Youth Council
- Daventry District & South Northamptonshire Safer Stronger Partnership
- Co-operative Society
- Waitrose
- South Northants Homes
- Provincial Grand Charity of Northants & Huntingdonshire
- Farthinghoe Fine Wines
- Greatworth Parish Council
- Sulgrave Parish Council
- Kings Sutton Parish Council
- Dulverton Trust
- Steel Charitable Trust
- AMMCO Trust
- Mercedes Petronas GP

and also to

Our partners, staff and volunteers including our Board of Directors, Car Drivers and all the other volunteers that help to make our work a success.

Registered charity 1104848
Company limited by guarantee 5068116

www.snvb.org.uk