



THE VALLEY

Messenger

THE NEWSLETTER OF TEST VALLEY COMMUNITY SERVICES

July 2006

We hope you like the new look Valley Messenger!

After five years we all felt it was time for a change and we hope you agree with us that the newsletter has been brought up to date and is brighter.

We welcome short articles from you to include in each edition. If you have a new project or event or just want to publicise your work then please send us articles for consideration.

Don't forget if you would like to receive our E-newsletter and regular emails with topical information please let us know your email address and we will add you to the list.

For more information on submitting articles please contact Greg Alexander on 01264 362600 or greg.alexander@tvcs.org.uk



Volunteers' Week

Volunteers' Week 2006

During Volunteers' Week we held our annual Voluntary Groups Awards at Crosfield Hall in Romsey.

40 groups were presented with certificates by The Mayor of Test Valley, Cllr. James Neal. The Mayor of Romsey, Cllr. Mike Richardson was also in attendance.

Groups from all over Test Valley were represented. The event was a great success not only for the presentations but also giving the opportunity for groups to publicise their work and network with colleagues.

A big thank you to everyone involved! with a special mention to 21st Romsey Scouts and 1391 Squadron (Romsey) ATC and Kathy who provided help on the night. We are grateful to: Awards for All, A&A Business Supplies, Northridge Finance, Waitrose Romsey and Leckford Estate Charities/Communities Committee for their support of this event.

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ENCOURAGING COMMUNITY INITIATIVES



Test Valley Volunteer Centre

During recent weeks there have been changes within our Volunteer Centre. Tina Waterman-Roberts left us during April. Potential Volunteers can now see Viv Parsons in our Romsey office or Greg Alexander or Dawn Elson in Andover. We also welcome Alison Haddon who has joined us as a volunteer to work in both of our Centres.

We are keen to help local voluntary groups find new volunteers. If you would like to register your current volunteering opportunities with us then please contact us and we will send you a registration form. Alternatively, forms are available from our website: www.tvcs.org.uk Our new software enables us to post your vacancies onto a national web page (more and more volunteers are found this way) www.do-it.org.uk

As mentioned on the front page, we held our Voluntary Groups Awards in Romsey on 7 June. Listed below are all the participating groups:

21st Romsey Scouts, 1391 (Romsey) Air Training Squadron, 23rd Andover Scouts, 3rd Andover Scouts, Age Concern Romsey, Andover & District Carers Forum, Andover & District Mencap, Andover & District Citizens Advice Bureau, Andover Family Learning, Hampshire Constabulary Special Constables, Andover Visually Impaired Group, Andover War Memorial Hospital Volunteers, Arthritis Care (Romsey), Countess of Brecknock Hospice, Eating Disorder Support Group, Equal Care and Opportunity Group, Romsey Carnival Committee, Romsey Disability Forum, Romsey Good Neighbours, Romsey MIND, Romsey Opportunity Group, Senior Gateway Club, Southern Test Valley Voluntary Transport Scheme, The Environment Centre, Oakbank Family Centre, Jane Scarth House, Weyhill Electronic Organ Society, Woodley & Crampmoor Friendship Group, WRVS Meals on Wheels Romsey, The Pension Services, Twice as Nice, Broughton Bright Hour, The Alexandra Trust, Southampton University Hospital Trust.

Finding Local Volunteers for your group

Finding new volunteers for your group or project is no easy task. Volunteers are the life blood of any voluntary organisation.

At Test Valley Volunteer Centre we endeavour to place local people with local groups.

To do this effectively we need to hear from voluntary groups in Test Valley to let us know how many volunteers you need and what exactly you will want them to do.

If your group is currently looking for new volunteers to become involved in your work then please call us and we will send you a Volunteer Opportunity Form (this is also available on our web page www.tvcs.org.uk/volunteering.htm).

Once we have received your completed form we will publicise your vacancy to individuals and also post it onto our volunteering website: www.do-it.org.uk

You can find more details about Test Valley Volunteer Centre on our web page or by calling Viv Parsons on 01794 519998

Welcome to Alison Haddon. Alison has come to us as a volunteer and will help and support our Volunteer Centre. With a wealth of voluntary sector experience we look forward to working with Alison who will be in our Andover Office meeting volunteers and supporting our next Volunteering England accreditation.

Thank you to our own Volunteers! Like all voluntary organisations we are supported by a committed team of skilled and reliable volunteers. We would like to say a big Thank You to all of our volunteers. This not only includes our Trustees but also our small team of individuals who regularly help us - Jo White, Hilary Alexander and Dionne Westwood are always on hand to give us support at events and in the office.

Their help and commitment is appreciated!



Community Encouragement Project

Our project continues to reach community groups in Test Valley. We are helping groups with funding advice, training and generally supporting groups to work with and help more people at local level.

We are particularly keen to hear from small, isolated groups who may not know of the help and support available to them. We have publicised the project in village and church halls and also in village newsletters.

During June we received an additional grant of £2000 from The Peter Barker-Mill Charity to help us continue our work to address social and rural isolation in Test Valley.

The Project's main funder is The Big Lottery who has provided three-year funding to enable local voluntary and community groups to access training, support and information that will ultimately make groups stronger and better able to help and support people in the community. These groups include: Older people's social groups, carers support groups, pre schools and play groups and other projects that deliver community benefits.

If you would like to know more about our project or feel that we could help you then please call: **Greg Alexander or Dawn Elson on 01264 362600 or email: greg.alexander@tvcs.org.uk**



TVCS Community Transport

Community Transport – Minibuses addressing Rural Isolation – TVCS has four minibuses available to hire by voluntary groups.

The buses are both accessible and affordable. We are also encouraging groups to have their own MiDAS trained driver – this enables groups to be more self-sufficient in choosing when and where they can go with a minibus. For more details on minibus hire and MiDAS training please contact:

Zoe Bussian or Dick Hewett on 01264 362600, or email: transport@tvcs.org.uk

TVCS Partnership Officer

It has been a busy time since the last Valley Messenger!

The highlights have been organising and facilitating the second Local Services Awareness Event and another 'Time for You Day' for Carers.

The aim of the Local Services Awareness Event was to raise the profile of smaller, lesser-known voluntary & community groups to health professionals working in the Andover area. GP's, Community Nurses, Health Visitors, School Nurses and Hospital/Nursing Home Staff are hard pressed to keep up to date with the vast support resources available in our community; so this event enabled over 30 professionals to meet at first hand representatives from 23 organisations.

People who attended expressed surprise at the diversity and amount of support, advice & information available in the Andover area and went away with leaflets and booklets to use in their work with patients and clients.

The Event was funded from the Health Improvement & Social Inclusion Budget and held at the Phoenix Centre, Andover.

The 'Time for You Day' for Carers was funded through the Awards for All Grant awarded to the Andover Carers Forum. This is the third event the Forum has organised for Andover Carers, the last being a Local Services Information Event held in November 2005.

26 carers were able to attend on the day and there were opportunities to see a therapist for a massage or have a Reiki or Bowen Therapy. During the day there was time to limber up in a yoga workshop and have some fun in a music workshop. Two demonstrations proved very popular, Aiki exercise and at the end of the day chocolate making (and sampling!) was much enjoyed by all!

Also on offer were craft activities, making a greetings card and soap making and information stands. A delicious lunch was appreciated by everyone, transport services were provided and carers went home feeling relaxed, having had an opportunity to meet new people and learn new skills.

The next Event for local carers will be a Carers Therapy Day in September.

Dawn Elson - 01264 362600

Training for Voluntary Groups

Keeping Your Volunteers - how to look after your greatest asset

A one-day training event for organisations who use volunteers, looking at aspects of best practice in attracting, supporting and valuing volunteers

How to recruit volunteers

How can we build and maintain positive relationships with our volunteers?

What about rewards, awards and accreditation?

Volunteers are our greatest asset - let's get the best from them by offering our best.

Course participants will get:

- ! Clear informative handouts
- ! An opportunity to share ideas and reflect
- ! A chance to plan how to put ideas into action

TVCS will be facilitating this training at a number of venues throughout Test Valley over the next two years. The courses are free. If you would like more information about the courses or to book a place on a forthcoming course please contact me.

Brokering Local Training

We have started to highlight training available to voluntary groups that is available in neighbouring areas.

This enables groups to access low-cost, quality training. This has proved especially helpful when only a small number of people wish to attend a specific course. If you would like to be added to the email list to receive news of training course available in Southampton, Eastleigh, Winchester and elsewhere in the county then please contact me.

Please also let me know any specific needs you may have and I will try to find a relevant course or if enough people are interested I will try to bring the course to a venue near you.

Greg Alexander on 01264 362600 or email greg.alexander@tvcs.org.uk

A Volunteers View

A contribution from Andover Cruse Bereavement Care

“Can you help me? My husband/wife/mother/daughter/brother died and I don't know how to cope. My doctor said I should contact you”. Or, “it's not for myself, but my seven year old; since her father died”. These are the sort of messages that are left on our answer machine, several times a week, and dealt with by our volunteer Referral Secretary.

Some bereavements are sudden, some come about more slowly but whether we have time to prepare or not, the event causes a lot of heartache. Why him/her? Could I have done anything to stop it? Our volunteers help by being available, by listening, and suggesting ways in which those who have been bereaved can help themselves through a time of great difficulty. Some feel themselves to be going mad or not normal, but grieving IS a normal process and, with help, the bereaved can find their way to remembering the positives about the one they have lost.

We are sorry we cannot pick up the phone when a caller rings, but we do try to ensure that a trained volunteer gets back to the caller within twenty-four hours. Having talked the problem through (and sometimes resolved matters) arrangements are made for an appropriate volunteer to call and talk over matters, offering practical help if that is wanted, or just providing a listening ear. Sometimes it may be appropriate to suggest a client joins our monthly social support group where a bereavement volunteer can help a group to discuss the problems they are experiencing.

We are always glad to hear from would be volunteers. We need help with fund-raising (we make no charge to clients); speaking to groups about our work, taking our leaflets to doctors surgeries etc, and record keeping. Training courses (for which we make a charge) are held once a year, and most (but not all) participants can then go on to assist as bereavement volunteers.

Most people reading this will be heavily committed to one charity or another, but if you do happen to have some spare time, or know someone else who has, please do not hesitate to get in touch on **01264 335569**. Or if it is help that is needed, our help-line on 01264 336006 will put you in touch with someone who can

LearningNet - Training and Development for Voluntary Groups

This is a project created by the voluntary sector. Its aim is to identify and meet the learning needs of staff and volunteers working in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight.

We can offer a **FREE** service to help you identify where the skills gaps are within your organisation and help you to find where you can get low cost training to meet your needs. We are working closely with the CVS' throughout the area.

Mary Whitworth is the Area Development Worker for Test Valley, Winchester and Eastleigh and is based in the offices of Test Valley Community Services, Wessex Chambers, Andover. Contact Mary to find out more about how this project can help your group.

Tel 01264 723653
Mob 07736 806037 or email:
mary.learningnet@tvcs.org.uk



Andover Citizens Advice Bureau - 40 years serving the community in Andover.

We send our congratulations to staff and volunteers at Andover CAB. This year they celebrate 40 years of excellent work in the Andover area. Pictured below are Office Manager Ange Moon and CAB Volunteers receiving a 'Volunteers' Week award from Test Valley Mayor Cllr. Jim Neal.



Funding Information

The Local Network Fund - The Local Network Fund is still running in Hampshire. Grants of up to £7000 are available to voluntary groups who are working with children and young people. In the past we have helped: Mums and Toddler groups, youth clubs, pre schools and many other voluntary activities where children and young people are the beneficiaries. An application pack is available on 0845 1130 161. TVCS can help you with your application - for further details contact Greg Alexander on 01264 362600.



Awards for All - The Awards for All programme is still open. Grants of up to £10,000 are now available to local groups and voluntary organisations. Awards for All can fund projects which involve people in their local community, bringing them together to take part in a range of arts, sport, heritage, charitable and other community activities. For an application pack please call 0845 600 20 40 or visit <http://awardsforall.org.uk> TVCS can help you finalise your application, for information please contact Greg Alexander on 01264 362600.



The Big Lottery Fund will give out funding worth over £2.3 billion between now and April 2009.

Further programmes to be launched between now and September include: Advice Plus, Community Buildings, Community Libraries and Family Learning, Research, International and Changing Spaces. Details for some of these programmes will appear on their website. For the latest information on new programmes visit their Website: www.biglotteryfund.org.uk or phone the Big Advice Line on 0845 410 20 30



TVCS Noticeboard

TVCS Voluntary Sector Forum

Longstock Village Hall

Wednesday 13 September 10.00 - 12.30

TVCS AGM at Longstock Village Hall

Wednesday 8 November (will include lunch)
(More details will be sent to groups later in the summer)

Join TVCS' Email Network

Information for Voluntary and Community Groups .

We now have almost 150 groups receiving regular emails from us. The email network provides up to date information relevant to those working in the Voluntary and community sector in Test Valley. Groups can also pass on their news and events to others. We provide information on : Funding opportunities, Training, Volunteering, Community Events and promotion of local voluntary groups. We will do our very best to make all information sent topical and relevant. In the coming months we will be producing a regular E-newsletter You will also receive this.

If you would like to join our growing list of groups please let us know by sending your email address and group name to : greg.alexander@tvcs.org.uk
Greg Alexander, Community Development Manager 01264 362600

Next Valley Messenger

The next edition if this newsletter will be mailed out during mid-October.

We are pleased to receive articles and news from voluntary groups.

If you would like material to be considered for publication in the next edition please do so by 30 September by email to : greg.alexander@vcs.org.uk or by writing to us at the address given on page 8.

Snippets...

Change Up - Many of you will have heard or read something about Change Up. Change Up is the Governments 10 year vision to ensure that voluntary and community organisations have high quality support 'available nationwide, accessible to all, reflecting and promoting diversity, and sustainably funded'. Each area of England has set up a steering group to produce a local Infrastructure Development Plan (IDP). The Hampshire IDP is currently out for consultation - you can view the plan on www.action.hants/idp.html you can email any comments you may have to marie.leverton@action.hants.org.uk or telephone 01962 854971



Equipment and other resources available to hire or loan

- Part of the Change Up agenda has been to give the voluntary sector increased skills and capacity to do their work. As a result, TVCS as an infrastructure organisation now has new equipment for groups to use. We have: a digital projector, screen, access to computers installed with grant finding software and microsoft office applications. Also available are a loudspeaker system, photocopying service (colour and black and white) and a heavy duty shredder. If you would like to know more please contact TVCS on 01794 519998 or Greg Alexander on 01264 362600.

E.VOLve - Is a new web-based community database bringing information about community and voluntary organisations together in one place. e.VOLve will enable the public to find local groups or club at the push of a button. Having all the information in one place will make it clear just how great a contribution our local voluntary and community groups are making. Go to www.e.volve.org.uk or call the e.VOLve team on 01962 854674



General Information

Hampshire Local Area Agreement

The Hampshire Local Area Agreement is a three year partnership between statutory, voluntary and other agencies to improve lives and conditions in Hampshire communities.

The agreement aims to promote sustainable communities by focussing on eight priority outcomes. The key outcomes for the voluntary and community sector are:

! Improving the life chances for children and young people

! Deliver first class support for businesses, promote skills and workforce development, and address barriers to employment

! Improve the coordination of transport and access to services

! Improve access to housing and accommodation

! Tackle crime and anti-social behaviour recognising the harm of drug and alcohol misuse

! Promote the health and well-being of people in Hampshire

! Empower local people to have a greater voice and influence over decision making and the delivery of services

TVCS has attended several consultations and workshops on the Local Area Agreement for Hampshire. We are keen for local organisations to be part of that consultation and would like to encourage as many groups as possible to become involved with the shaping and delivery of the agreement.

Each of the 8 priority outcomes has a lead officer. These officers have written a statement on each of the outcomes and can be read on the following web site:

www.action.hants.org.uk/laa.html

For full details of the Hampshire Local Area Agreement and the action plan see:

www.hants.gov.uk/localareaagreement

General Information

ACRE Village Hall Information Sheets

Acre has recently updated two of its Village Hall Information Sheets:

No2 Parish Council help for Village Halls

No3 Village Halls, Children and Young People

These publications are available from Community Action Hampshire: Shirley Whitfield 01962 857351 or shirley.whitfield@action.hants.org.uk

HM Treasury Cross Cutting Review of the Third sector

As part of the 2006 Budget the Chancellor announced a review of the voluntary sector. At the same time a Minister for the Third Sector, Ed Milband MP was appointed.

We all know how hard we work and how much we contribute to society - our task now is to convey that to the government. This may mean recording our work and reporting positive outcomes in a way that the government and other statutory agencies want to receive it.

To some organisations this may mean additional work. It may also mean we have to think differently about how we work and report the positive things we do.

Most major funders are becoming 'outcome focussed' so it is important that we embrace the challenge ahead.

TVCS can help organisations and projects who need help and support in measuring and monitoring their work.

To find out more about HM Treasury Cross Cutting Review of the third sector please visit hm-treasury.gov.uk

Governance of a Voluntary/Community Group

RAISE has developed a Toolkit to help voluntary/community groups understand governance and this can be viewed on their website

[Http://www.raise.org.uk/](http://www.raise.org.uk/)

Office Equipment and Other Resources available to Voluntary Groups

TVCS has office equipment and other resources available for voluntary and community groups to loan or hire.

The following are available:

- ! Digital Projector
- ! Portable Projector Screen
- ! Portable Amplification System
- ! Low Cost Photocopying
- ! Electric Comb Binder
- ! Up to A3 size Laminator
- ! Industrial Shredder
- ! Access to computers
- ! Publishing Software

We also have software that can help with funding searches and bid writing: *funderfinder* available at both offices.

To find out more you can contact Greg Alexander at our Andover office or Debbie Forder at our Romsey office, who will explain how you can get to use these new resources.



The Trustees and staff of TVCS would like to thank the following for their support of our work:

Test Valley Borough Council
Hampshire County Council
Primary Care Trusts in Test Valley
Romsey Extra Parish Council
The Big Lottery Fund

Contacting TVCS

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South Street
Andover
Sp10 2BN

Tel: 01264 362600
Fax: 01264 353010

Email: andovertvcs@freenet.co.uk
Website: www.tvcs.org.uk

Andover Advocacy Alliance

2nd Floor
East Wing, Wessex Chambers
South Street
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Tel: 01264 362600
Fax: 01264 353010

Email: andoveradvocacy@freenet.co.uk

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