

Warrington
VoluntaryAction

Engaging People
Empowering Communities

Annual Review 2012 – 2013



Contents

| | |
|-------------------------------------|---------|
| ✱ Welcome from our Chief Officer | page 3 |
| ✱ Our Staff, Trustees & Volunteers | page 4 |
| ✱ Empowering Communities | page 5 |
| ✱ Training the Voluntary Sector | page 7 |
| ✱ Training the Community | page 9 |
| ✱ Partnerships & Representation | page 10 |
| ✱ Transforming Local Infrastructure | page 12 |
| ✱ Communications | page 14 |
| ✱ Volunteering | page 16 |
| ✱ Our Projects | page 18 |
| ✱ How we were funded | page 19 |
| ✱ Stay in touch... | page 20 |



Welcome from the Chief Officer



Nationally, the voluntary sector is going through a period of change and upheaval. Budgets are under ever increasing pressure, funding opportunities and criteria are changing and many long established customs and practices are disappearing. We continually strive to embrace new ways of delivering effective and resourceful services for those that rely on the varied activities we offer. I believe WVA is making real progress as a key player and significant partner agency, with capable leadership, and a committed and experienced staff team. We have good relationships with

commissioners, funders and other stakeholders locally and nationally and we continue to demonstrate our willingness to change and collaborate rather than compete with others. I remain committed to making our services the best they can be, focusing on the needs of the organisations we work in partnership with and support. As we continue to develop and learn, I will ensure that this remains at the core of our approach.

I am delighted to be able to share the achievements of 2012/13 and describe how far we have travelled in our second year of delivering infrastructure support to the local community, voluntary and faith sector. I hope you will take away from this report that despite the challenging external environment, we have been able to grow and diversify our services and consequently reach out to an increasing number of individuals and organisations, from small volunteer led groups to many of the larger charities and trusts.

Our mission...

Our core work supports the development of a vibrant, thriving and sustainable third sector to meet the diverse and changing needs of local communities.

Our activities include:

- ✱ Providing information, guidance and resources enabling local voluntary, community and faith organisations to deliver effective quality services
- ✱ Promoting, supporting and developing volunteering for individuals and local communities to make a positive difference
- ✱ Develop and champion excellence in volunteer management
- ✱ Initiating and nurturing the development of new groups, schemes, enterprises or activities to meet identified needs
- ✱ Supporting local networks and forums to facilitate and encourage effective partnerships and strengthen cross sector working
- ✱ Enabling effective representation and involvement on key strategic partnership bodies to ensure third sector organisations have a strong voice.

Our Staff, Trustees & Volunteers...

It's been an eventful year; we've said goodbye to some brilliant members of staff and welcomed some brand new people! Here's everyone who has been involved this year:



Staff 2012-2013

Alison Cullen
Stef Woof
Paula Cooper
Helen Mackenzie
Patricia Hartley
Phil Blocksidge
Sue Jones
Claire Ross
Rebecca Brown
Bryan Dargie Lynch (Joined Feb 2013)
Kirsty James (Joined August 2013)
Claire Workman (Left Nov 2012)
Rebecca Tansley (Left Nov 2012)
Chris Jepson (Left May 2013)
Fatima Rhaman-ali (Left August 2013)
Chris Huffee (Left Sept 2013)

Volunteers

Yvonne Hughes
Elzbeita Rudniak
Chris Jepson
Batool Fatima
Janine Platt
Carole Sheperdson
Renuka Kotecha
Pam Hardy
Helen Burnett
Rachel Mcauliffe
Helen Povey
Siva Ranjani
Lisa Faulkner
Harvey Hansra

Trustees

Dorothy Carter (Chair)
Mary Barbour
Paul Chadwick
Tina Shelton
Jean Flaherty
Roz Coleman

A word from our Chair...

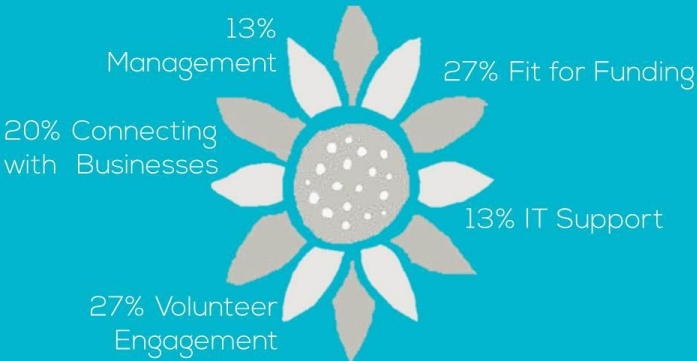
I want to take this opportunity to thank our staff, volunteers and trustees for the commitment and hard work they have shown over the last year. The professionalism, passion and bold thinking of our staff has been central to our current successes and will be vital in securing our futures ones. – Dorothy Carter

Our Values...

- ✳ **Being Passionate:** Utilising energies purposefully and committing to the development and enrichment of others.
- ✳ **Thinking Creatively:** Seeking to get the best from available resources and unlocking potential by thinking differently.
- ✳ **Working Collaboratively:** Developing effective relationships that aim to benefit all partners as well as the wider community.

Empowering Communities

150 community groups have been supported with different aspects of their development this year:



Over 70 people from 49 local organisations attended the 'Meet the Funders' event in 2012

WVA are well placed to advise groups about development and growth in a constantly shifting economic and social environment. We ensure that key information is widely disseminated, which this year included hosting training and networking events. We also offer one-to-one support for groups, helping with constitution, policies and social impact reporting, to ensure they are 'fit for funding'.

Developing Groups...

Ken Cosgrove of the St Alban's Bowling Club was signposted to our service by the Cheshire Community Foundation, following an unsuccessful funding bid. The goal was to make the club house more accessible for disabled users, and to bring disused allotments at the bottom of the green back into use as a community resource.

Ken worked with Group Development Officer Paula Cooper to demonstrate the club's social impact, and developed a local partnership to address the allotments. A consultation exercise was carried out to allow members the opportunity to identify the difference the club makes to the local community;



"We are a longstanding successful bowling club with over 90 members offering a leisure facility in an area of high unemployment and social deprivation. We have always welcomed every member of our community and this is reflected in our membership with ages ranging between 18 and 85 years.

We aim to provide a space that will offer a chance to enhance health and fitness, social inclusion and the opportunity to get involved in the time honoured art of crown bowling."

– Ken Cosgrove, member of St Alban's

As a result of collating and demonstrating impact, the bowling club were successful in securing funds from Cheshire Community Foundation, Awards for All and Warrington Charities Trust. As a result, St Albans are well on their way to making the club house fully accessible for less able members. Plans are also being developed for the future use of the allotments.

Training the Voluntary Sector

Our wide range of accredited and unaccredited training aims to provide learning opportunities and practical tools to empower individuals to develop their organisation at every stage. **20 courses were delivered this year**, including 'Setting up a Social Enterprise', 'Introduction to Volunteer Management', '3-day First Aid', and 'Adult Safeguarding'. We have welcomed requests for training from the sector to ensure our courses are relevant and fit for purpose.



169 Voluntary Sector delegates attended our training this year

The Skill Up training conference for third sector organisations was a huge success. WVA offered a variety of workshops, taster sessions and networking; supported by skilled members of the local community. Sue Jones, director of the charity **RRRRe-Vamp**, delivered a workshop on the potential of social media for community groups. Sue has built the success of her group through communicating through Facebook and Twitter, and wanted to pass on her learning; "I really enjoyed the Skill Up, and I was flattered that WVA asked me to share my expertise. Since then, I have been offered a place on a PTLLS training course, so there's a lot more where that came from!"

88% of participants rated our training Good to Outstanding





- ✓ 3 Day First Aid
- ✓ Adult Safeguarding
- ✓ Basic Food Hygiene
- ✓ Equality & Diversity
- ✓ Developing your People
- ✓ Managing Performance
- ✓ Relationship Marketing

- ✓ Intro' to Volunteer Management
- ✓ Basic Suicide prevention
- ✓ NLP
- ✓ Setting Up a Social Enterprise
- ✓ Good Governance
- ✓ DBS & Screening
- ✓ Social Media Workshops
- ✓ Basic Web Design

"The training courses I have attended have benefitted me immensely, providing greater awareness of my role and responsibilities as well as keeping me continuously updated on current legislation." – Eileen MacDonald, Long Term Conditions Support

"All the training I have attended through WVA has been excellent. Really enjoyed the volunteer management course and I think it has helped me in my job. Thank you."
– Nicola Issac, Warrington Housing Association

Open Leadership Programme...

WVA organised this course, which covered effective leadership skills for those of a senior position in their organisation. The course spanned 3 days, and gave participants a chance to gain advice and objectivity for their organisation's successful development. Paul Tanner of Warrington Open Doors at Christmas found the course particularly useful:

"There is so much that I'll take away from the course. It's given me a greater understanding of what is expected of leaders in all areas that I am engaged in. The mix of activities, exercises, group thinking, theory and discussion worked well." – Paul Tanner, WODAC

Training the Community

96 learners successfully completed Introduction to Volunteering, and were supported to find volunteering opportunities.



The Introduction to Volunteering programme offers the first steps into voluntary work, and encourages those who are unemployed to build on their confidence and existing skills. The course spans two days, and is delivered by Training Coordinator Patricia Hartley. It has been designed to support individuals to understand their role as a volunteer; covering topics such as rights and responsibilities, equality, diversity, and communication.



James Jones (pictured left) completed the Introduction to Volunteering course this year. James experienced a lot of hardships early on in his life which affected his motivation and ability to move on and live a normal life. His support workers suggested attending this course to build his skills and confidence. Since then, James has gone on to complete 12 courses, and this number is steadily rising! Other people have started to benefit from his progression; James has made such an impact on some of his support workers that they have arranged for him to do some art classes for a local charity working with adults with a disability and, as part of this volunteer role, he will do the PTLLS course with support to do this from the Life Long Learning department within the council.



Partnerships & Representation



WVA worked with the Gateway and OPEG for Older People's day



At the Volunteering Strategy Launch



Becky Brown and Lynn Johnson (centre) at the BITC event in London

Everyone has the right to be heard when it comes to making decisions about local services. WVA offers a voice to the voluntary sector, allowing groups to raise with public decision makers the issues affecting their service users and members. WVA is a key partner of local public bodies but able to engage on its own terms, and is able to act as a conduit, providing information and opinion in both directions. We believe providing this voice influences key decision makers, whilst also providing them with vital local information. We sit on various strategy and policy groups in order to articulate the expertise and experiences of our membership. Our involvement this year has included the development of the borough wide volunteering strategy, 3rd Sector Job Centre Plus Liaison, Skills Commission, Cheshire & Warrington LEP, NEET strategy, Policy Group and Commissioning Sub Group, Lifelong Learning Partnership, Rugby League World Cup, Neighbourhood Boards, NHS Trust Governor Board, Healthwatch and many more.

A major role for WVA is to support the work of the 3rd Sector Network Hub as the representative for infrastructure.

The 3rd Sector Network Hub is a key link between local voluntary and community groups to the strategic and service delivery structures within Warrington. The Hub is made up of 23 representatives from various sub sectors from youth, older people, disability, homeless faith, green spaces sports, mental health etc.

In addition, to the Network Hub we have co-ordinated a wide range of network events to inform, advise and empower groups on current policies and initiatives both local and national. These have included 3 network lunches themed around health, young people and communications, 5 Volunteer Co-ordinator Network meetings, seminars to update on DBS and provided opportunities for the local authority to engage with the sector such as consulting on the Families with Complex Needs programme.

“The sector plays a vital role in partnership activity, achieving best outcomes for the well-being of the community, and the Hub enables its representatives from a wide variety of disciplines to consult, and be a significant voice in its discussions with statutory and other contributors to service users, as well as its participation in the Warrington Partnership, Health & Well-being Board, Neighbourhood Management Boards and similar strategic groups.”

Rev. Stephen Kingsnorth, Warrington Borough Ministry

“The Network Hub provides the vital forum where often different and separate voluntary organisations and sectors - all working in their own specialisms with the diverse local communities of need - can come together and share, compile, and understand the bigger picture and issues, in order to find ways to jointly contribute and unify under the common objective – supporting the people of Warrington.”

Michael Sheppard, Warrington Community Living

The Third Sector Partnership Assembly

aims to bring together voluntary and statutory agencies in partnership to develop and promote a thriving, effective and influential third sector that will work to improve the quality of life for the people of Warrington.

The last event facilitated by WVA and the Assembly Planning group consisted of leaders from the local authority and the third sector presenting on local challenges, such as the public spending cuts. The event which took place at the Tim Parry and Jonathan Ball Young Peoples Centre included third sector and statutory perspectives of the Social Value Act and what it means for third sector organisations. This was followed by workshops for participants to debate on their organisations issues and concerns along with the opportunity to raise these concerns to a panel of commissioners, voluntary and public sector leaders, issues such as surviving and managing the cuts and filling skills gaps.



delegates attended the 3rd Sector Assembly in March this year

93% of delegates rated the assembly good to excellent



Transforming Local Infrastructure...

In April 2012, WVA were successful in securing funds from the Transforming Local Infrastructure initiative; which was commissioned by the Cabinet Office and managed by Big Fund. The initiative encouraged strategic partnership work to ensure voluntary sector support services were updated and made relevant for communities on a local level. Led by WVA, the TLI partnership is the Gateway, Warrington CAB, Youth Federation, Warrington Youth Club, CHAWREC, LTCW, and BHA.

TLI Outcome:

"We will develop and produce a new online support service to meet the identified needs of voluntary sector organisations, and support them in using this new service"

Voluntary sector delegates were invited to take part in a 12 week consultation period, which consisted of a launch event, focus groups and questionnaires, in order to identify services the website would provide. There was a good response, and a detailed report was produced which was instrumental in the overall development of the Community Hub website. Focus groups were held to allow the sector to make recommendations for the final test-site before it went live, and a number of drop-in sessions and workshops were organised to offer training on how to get the most out of the Community Hub



102 people
Representing local charities and voluntary community groups took part in the 12 week consultation period.



92% said the
Community Hub site would be very beneficial for charities & voluntary community groups

98% requested an updated Community Directory which could be accessed online



It was important for us to develop a site and a service which reflected the identity of Warrington's third sector. Our new branding has a really local and vibrant feel, with photos of Warrington's community groups and volunteers presented throughout the site.

Photo competition...

Charities and voluntary groups from across Warrington submitted their photos to be included on the site. The entries celebrated community action throughout our town, and show case real civic pride throughout the site.



TLI Outcome:

“Following a needs analysis, sub-sector leaders and WVA staff will receive relevant training in order to deliver the best service to the sector”



All WVA staff have been upskilled to deliver expert support and advice

WVA organised representation training for the Network Hub delegates, to emphasise their position as representatives of the sector, not just their organisation. The Hub delegates welcomed the opportunity to work together for a whole day, and as a result annual training has been included in the Network Hub terms of reference. It was also identified that there needs to be a more robust induction system for new delegates.

Communications

One of our most important core services involves disseminating relevant updates and information to the sector. As the voice of the voluntary sector, a key role is to keep charities and groups updated with local, regional and national events and news that effect them. It is also our aim to advertise your news, events and training to the wider community, and there are a number of ways to connect with us...

The Community Hub website went live this year, with 1,300 members and counting! The site offers a platform for charities and community groups to promote their services, advertise their events, access support, and connect with others. The newly updated Community Directory provides an accurate picture of the sector, and allows us to share news and updates widely.

Since going live in April, 3,676 people have accessed the WVA Community Hub



There are 1,326 organisations on the Community Directory



Click to connect! www.warringtonva.org.uk



'Like' us on Facebook!

Our Facebook page is an extension of our community events calendar; if you use Facebook regularly, this is a great way to keep up to date with community activities!



Follow us on Twitter!

Join 781 followers on Twitter to keep up to date with our staff. We regularly tweet our activities, including links to interesting articles and national news stories affecting our community. Join the conversation today [@warringtonva](https://twitter.com/warringtonva)



Find us on Flickr!

We're involved with lots of events across Warrington, and we've created a community photo album on Flickr. If you would like to contribute your snaps to the album, just get in touch.

The Latest News, Training & Events from Warrington Voluntary Action...

We send email alerts twice a week to our mailing lists, including 1,213 voluntary sector representatives; 50 local training providers; 62 volunteers; and 85 local businesses. We target information according to each mailing list to ensure our users only receive what is relevant to them. Not all of the organisations on our directory have email addresses, therefore it is the mission of our Communications Officer Stef Woof to get everyone on line by 2014! The alerts are a great way to celebrate local success stories, highlight new funding streams, and advertise training, as well as promoting news, events and volunteering requests on behalf of our members.

"We advertise on the Community Hub site for our volunteer placements and gather a lot of interest" – Messini Stavrea, CRI

"Regular information updates, especially on courses and funding, are very helpful" – John Ashby, Friends of Grappenhall Library

"I really appreciate the helpful email updates, there is always something of interest."
– Kathryn Yates, MacIntyre



Walton Lea Project



WIRED Young Carers



Wargrave House School

Marketing & Promotion

This year, WVA encouraged charities and community groups to create engaging and exciting campaigns to help them raise much needed funds. Development Partnership Officer Becky Brown worked with Chester University Students to produce short films to make the appeal to local businesses and individuals. 7 groups completed the project, including Wargrave House School, who have almost reached their target of £8,000 for a music therapist:

"We are delighted by the way this has helped us get our message across, and with the experiences our students had in making the film. We have almost reached our target thanks to donations from parents and community donors.

Thank you WVA and Chester University for this opportunity, and a special thanks to Becky Brown for her support!" – Sheila Jaeger, Wargrave House Director of Services

Volunteering

WVA support, encourage and promote excellence in volunteering and volunteer management. We work with everyone; from individual volunteers, to volunteer managers and their organisations; to develop programmes and opportunities to ensure successful community action. This year, we offered a range of support; including training, quality assurance and mentoring.



The Basis Report 2009-2012...

The funds left over from the Basis project enabled a report to be produced which described the impact of 3 years encouraging, promoting and supporting volunteering projects with charities and community groups across Warrington. The report is called 'Changing Seasons', and can be found on the Community Hub website.

Volunteering in the Community

TAKE ME BACK TO THE 60s

This intergenerational inclusion project was funded by Heritage Lottery, and provided the chance for older people of the community to connect and relate with younger people by sharing stories about 60s pop culture in Warrington. The project ran for 12 months, and involved young people aged 16-25. They created a fantastic exhibition at the Warrington Museum and Art Gallery, including a short film that celebrated the older people's memories.

The young volunteers gained valuable skills, including project management, research, filming, interviewing, photography and curation.



Sellafield Sites at Warrington Community Living...

This local business provided £3,500 of supplies and equipment, and 69 members of staff to complete gardening projects for Warrington Community Living. As a result, Heath Side and Mews now have beautiful gardens for the residents to enjoy.



16 businesses have completed 34 voluntary projects benefitting the local community this year

Starting from Scratch...

Our Volunteer Engagement Officer Bryan Dargie Lynch joined us earlier this year, and has worked with numerous organisations to help them get started with volunteer programmes that benefit the individual, the organisation, and the wider community:

Foundation for Peace & Volunteer Manager Anna Connelly:

Anna joined the Foundation this year following an internship. She approached WVA for advice and guidance, having no prior experience of volunteer management. There was an existing programme that had been running under the previous Volunteer Manager, however, this was under-developed. Anna began working with Bryan to revamp the programme's policies and opportunities which would better suit the organisation;

"All the meetings I have had with Bryan have been super valuable and a really good use of my time. As well as offering guidance and support, Bryan is also very creative and offers lots of ideas and suggestions on all topics about volunteering.

Overall, the meetings have helped me develop my volunteer programme and filled in all the missing knowledge gaps that I had, especially surrounding volunteering policies etc. I would definitely recommend these meetings to charities in the Warrington area who are looking for any type of support or guidance regarding volunteering."

Volunteering Pledge



Volunteering Pledge Evaluation: Warrington Youth Club

What was the main reason for your organisation embarking on the pledge? Did it achieve all you expected it to?

The main reason we took part in the Pledge was to ensure that all aspects of our involvement with volunteers were at a high standard. Further to this, we wanted to develop new and exciting ideas to make volunteering at Warrington Youth Club a fantastic experience for all volunteers.

Overall, what is the main difference that the pledge has made to your organisation?

We have really focused on celebrating the achievements, commitments and loyalty of all our volunteers. Our Volunteers Week was a massive success; we created a week's worth of events for volunteers. We have also introduced a volunteer of the month scheme internally; this gives our young people and parents and carers a chance to recognise the hard work that our volunteers do. We celebrated the achievements of volunteers with our 2013 Youth Awards; this was sponsored by numerous organisations in Warrington and was supported by the local media.

The Volunteering Pledge was developed and piloted this year as part of WVA's Transforming Local Infrastructure project. This is a quality standard tool for organisations that involve volunteers. Achieving the Pledge demonstrates your organisation provides the highest level of service for volunteers. It is a flexible programme which works around your organisation and focuses on your particular strengths and development areas. Ten local organisations were involved in the pilot process and have achieved the Pledge this year with the support of our Volunteering Pledge Officer Helen Mackenzie, including St Rocco's Hospice, Deafness Support Network, and the Warrington CAB (pictured above with Cllr Mike Hannon receiving their certificate). These organisations were instrumental in directing the overall process, including aftercare and potential impact of achieving the quality standard. This has ensured that the Pledge is fit for purpose for local organisations and groups.

Praise for
the
Pledge...

Lots of help
from Helen

Flexible - able
to be honest

Format worked
well

Local contact

Good ideas
developed

It highlighted that
we are already
following good
procedures 😊

Our Projects

There are 165 trading members of the Timebank



201
people have engaged with the Timebank this year



Warrington Timebank is a membership scheme that provides skill-swapping opportunities for older people, organised by our Timebank Officer Phil Blocksidge. Our membership is comprised of carers who look after older family members at home, to retired folk just looking to share their interests & hobbies with others.

How it works is really quite simple: members use the special currency of the Timebank called 'time credits' to purchase 'favours' from other members. The scheme has been successful in offering respite for carers, and companionship for isolated older people; so much so that other regional Timebanks are looking to adopt a similar approach to support their communities.

Excellence in Volunteer Management



Our Excellence in Volunteer Management programme offers an opportunity to be part of a unique learning experience led by Sue Jones, Claire Ross and Volunteer Management specialists. EVM provides a work-based learning experience, enabling learners to apply the knowledge, skills and understanding acquired within their organisations volunteering programme and gain a qualification. Over the past 12 months we have delivered the EVM level 3 qualification to 36 volunteer co-ordinators via partner infrastructure organisations across the North West, predominately, with Greater Manchester Centre for Voluntary Organisations, we have also developed a level 5 which has been approved by ILM and is ready to roll out. We have identified EVM as a source of income that could potentially provide a surplus to support our core services. With vouchers from the Big Assist we are currently developing a business plan to take this forward.

How we were funded...

| Income | 2013 | 2012 |
|-------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| WBC Core Activities | £96,000 | £76,000 |
| WBC Grants for Learning | £52,150 | £18,300 |
| Grants for Projects | £296,987 | £195,353 |
| Generated Funds | £42,177 | £24,372 |
| Investment Income | £581 | £267 |
| TOTAL | £487,895 | £314,292 |

This is a very brief summary of the accounts of the year ending 31st March 2013. Much more can be found in the full Trustees' Annual Report and Financial Statements, which are available on request; please contact our Finance Officer Kirsty James.

Total income increased from £295,513 in 2011/2012 to £449,918 in 2012/2013. A significant part of this reflected the expansion of our services from the Volunteer Centre to Warrington Voluntary Action. The increase also includes TLI funding and payments to TLI partners. WVA has made appropriate efficiencies and savings to ensure on-going sustainability in each of its funding streams.

| Expenditure | 2013 | 2012 |
|-------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Salaries & on-costs | £252,985 | £210,981 |
| Overheads | £11,390 | £18,356 |
| Project Costs | £75,274 | £59,608 |
| Portal Development | £12,875 | - |
| Governance Costs | £6,131 | £6,568 |
| Payment to TLI partners | £91,263 | - |
| TOTAL | £449,918 | £295,513 |

Thank you to the following for the financial support:

Warrington Borough Council

The Big Lottery

The Big Fund (Cabinet Office)

Lloyds TSB

Warrington Collegiate (Xpand)

Heritage Lottery

Stay in touch...

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Warrington
VoluntaryAction

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