

Warrington VoluntaryAction

Engaging People
Empowering Communities

Annual Review 2013 - 2014



A Word from our Chair Dorothy Carter:



This year has been a time of both opportunities and challenges, with WVA facing declining and/or uncertain income streams alongside potential areas of new work. The organisation has continued to thrive during the last 12 months and I hope you will pick up the energy and enthusiasm that permeate the organisation as you read WVA's achievements in this Annual Review.

The Directors are proud of the work of the staff and volunteers and seek at every opportunity to provide the stable basis they need to accomplish their targets. WVA is still only in its third year and in times of austerity the Board agreed to utilise some of the reserves to ensure the organisation develops and becomes well established to effectively support and promote social action across the borough.

The Board of Directors and I are confident that WVA will continue to offer strategic leadership and effective support to the voluntary and community sector in Warrington. Key to the success of the next 12 months and our continued sustainability is the positive thinking of our Chief Officer, Alison Cullen. I am confident that Alison has the vision and commitment to lead the team through yet another year of unprecedented external change and challenge.

Having been with the organisation for 11 years, this will be my last annual review as WVA moves progressively forward.



Welcome from our Chief Officer:

I am pleased to share our achievements and highlight how we have reached out to numerous groups in a variety of ways, from support with funding, training and governance to providing opportunities for networks and building long-term partnerships. Although, this year has been a time of both opportunities and challenges we continue to strive to embrace new ways of delivering effective and resourceful services across the borough. This year we have been working in partnership with various organisations including statutory partners supporting projects to recruit and engage volunteers in new ways to ensure more people have the opportunity to participate in social action in something that best suits their time and talents.

WVA continues to make real progress as a key player and significant partner agency, with an enthusiastic and experienced staff team. We have good relationships with commissioners from the local authority and are working towards creating stronger links with other statutory agencies as well as the private sector. I remain committed to making our services the best they can be, focusing on the needs of the organisations we work with and support.

Capacity Building

£757,415

of new income was raised
for groups with WVA's help



How many groups
accessed support...

Volunteering 154

Funding 122

Training 103

Governance 29

Marketing 14

Total
number of
groups
supported:

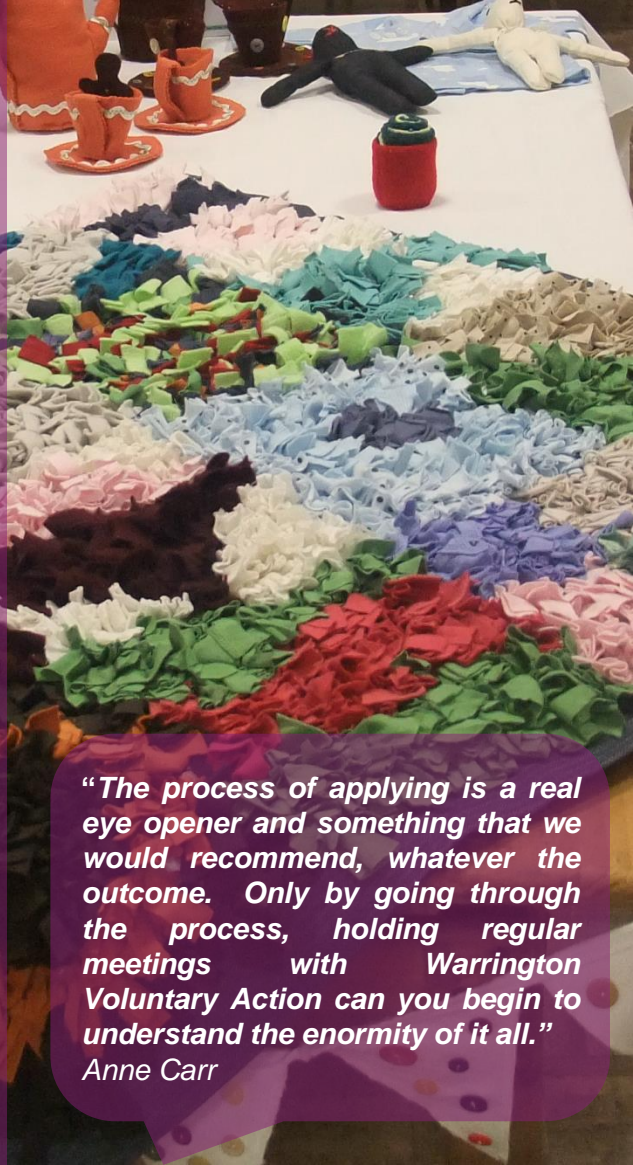
372

Burtonwood Sewing Group

The Group first contacted WVA to enquire about potential funding sources for their project. Having met with the BSG's founder Anne Carr, it became apparent that they required guidance and support to develop their group and become 'fit for funding'.

WVA supported the group to become formally constituted, including policies & procedures appropriate for their group. They were also supported to carry out consultations with their members, highlighting need, impact & areas for development.

Working with WVA to implement changes and strengthen the group has enabled the BSG to apply for & successfully achieve funding & increase their membership. The group have recently received funding from Cheshire Community Foundation & Warrington Charities Trust. The money will be used to buy equipment & supplies to continue their good work.



"The process of applying is a real eye opener and something that we would recommend, whatever the outcome. Only by going through the process, holding regular meetings with Warrington Voluntary Action can you begin to understand the enormity of it all."

Anne Carr



"There's so many worthy causes all applying for the same pot of money. So when you finally get the letter it's like winning the jackpot! More to the point –the funders share our vision. It was worth every ounce of effort."

– Anne Carr, Burtonwood Sewing Group

This year, the PHT commissioned the support of WVA to encourage and help local groups apply to their Active Communities fund...

12 weeks of
intensive
marketing &
support:



Social & Local Media 1-2-1 Visits

Mailings to over 1,300 people

Leaflets & Community Briefings

Direct
contact with
56 groups

19 groups
received
1-2-1 support

With WVA's help, a total of

2013 -2014

£156,973

PHT funding has been secured
for groups over the next two years.

Signed:
People's
Health Trust

6 out of 8
projects
awarded
based in
Warrington

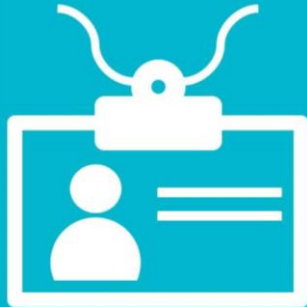
Training & Events



52
sessions

were delivered – the
equivalent of one per
week

186



local groups were
represented



512

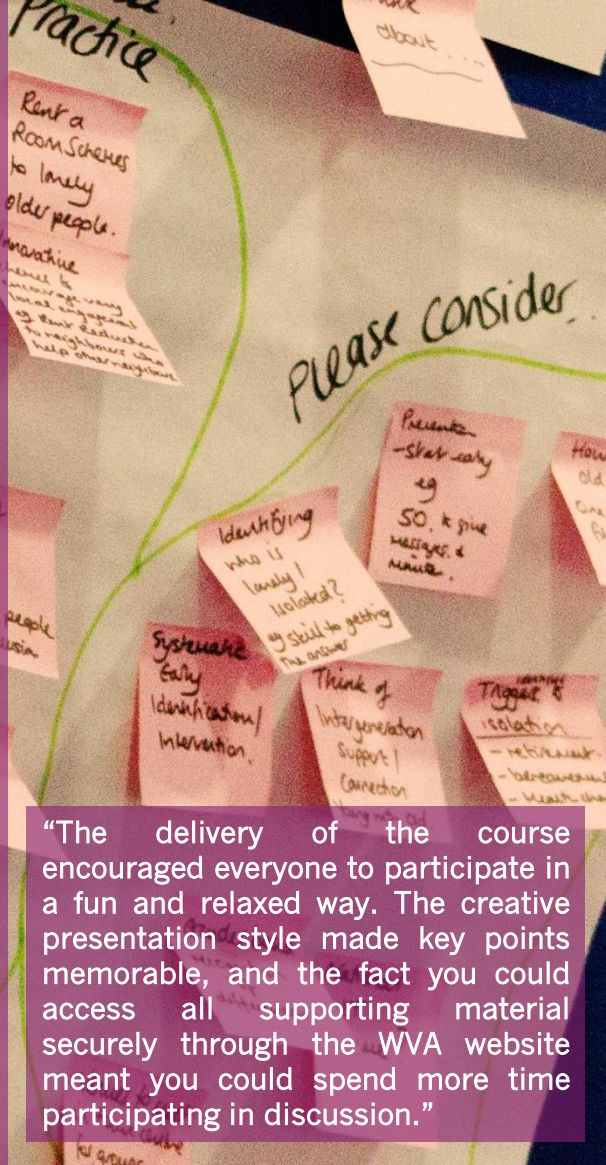
people
attended our
training &
events this year

Volunteer Manager's CPD Training

VMCPD is a bespoke course developed by WVA staff. It allows charity practitioners to debate, discuss, & actively explore current best practise concerning working with contemporary volunteers. Volunteer Coordinator Diane Unsworth attended the training earlier this year;

“Since the VMCPD I have made a number of changes to our volunteer programme, mainly to recruitment;

- Reworded applications forms, giving a clearer and more user-friendly impression for potential volunteers,
- A better understanding of DBS has allowed me to risk assess the various roles, and rewritten role descriptions where a DBS is needed
- Introduction of a new individual training record sheet, including an evaluation of skills on joining, which is revisited and reassessed on leaving, which informs their volunteer experience certificate.”



“The delivery of the course encouraged everyone to participate in a fun and relaxed way. The creative presentation style made key points memorable, and the fact you could access all supporting material securely through the WVA website meant you could spend more time participating in discussion.”

Develop Yourself as a Volunteer

Patrick Christie worked for a charity called The Orford Neighbourhood project. His role as a Project Support Officer had opened the door to the community, and Patrick enjoyed engaging with people and the voluntary ethos of the role. TONP closed down earlier this year, making Patrick redundant;

“The prospect of being unemployed was awful, not only because of the normal sustainability that a job provides, but because of the role itself.

I kept my spirits up by attending the Develop Yourself as a Volunteer course delivered by WVA, where I learned valuable skills such as communication and working as part of a team.

After the course, I actively volunteered as much as I could with the Clothes Bank Project and the RRRRe-Vamp shop— where I still offer my time every Saturday to teach guitar.

I then applied for a job at Warrington Community Living and was successful.

The course delivered by WVA helped to boost my confidence and bolster my knowledge of volunteering – which I still use today.

I believe the development of my volunteer work helped a lot to gain the position at Warrington Community Living.

Volunteering your time – however short – opens doors which you never thought possible before.”



Save a life - give blood
Thursday 20 October
16:00 to 18:00 & 17:30 to 19:30
THE SPANISH ARMS CENTRE
PATENTIA SQUARE HEALTH
BARRACKS

“Volunteering your time – however short – opens doors which you never thought possible before.”

– Patrick Christie, attended the Develop Yourself as a Volunteer course

Social Action

154
local
groups



received support
to develop their
volunteer
programmes

3,154

Registered
volunteers



281

business
volunteers

supported **25**
community projects

Active Whitecross

WVA provided bespoke marketing support to Warrington Borough Council to support the growth of Active Whitecross, a project which encouraged the residents of Whitecross to provide sports and activities for the children and young people of the area.

As part of the development of this, WVA provided a branding package which was used to give the project a strong identity from the start as it was felt that this would give greater ownership by the local community.

A concern was for the retention of the volunteers who would be delivering most of the activities. Many of them were first time coaches and had never taken on anything of this scale.

WVA designed an engagement logbook which allowed the volunteers to record the hours they have given of positive engagement to the project.

This logbook also contained a discussion of what positive engagement meant and furthered the value of the work being delivered by the community for the community. This logbook was so successfully embraced by the members of the scheme that it was rolled out to other projects.

In early 2015 Active Whitecross will be handed over the community and a committee will be formed and WVA will be proud to offer further support to the new group.

Representation

There are

1,326 VCS
organisations



WVA represents the
sector on 30 local
strategic boards
& forums



hours were spent
representing the
sector this year

Representation

WVA plays a key role in ensuring the third sector has a strong and collective voice, enabling groups to raise the issues affecting their service users and members. We do this by acting as a conduit, providing information in both directions with policy makers and commissioners. WVA is committed in ensuring that there is voluntary sector representation on a range of partnership boards and decision-making meetings. WVA staff represent the sector on many boards, this year representation from WVA has included:

- Warrington Partnership
- Cheshire & Warrington LEP
- Third Sector Policy Group
- Commissioning Sub Group
- Compact Implementation Group
- NHS Trust Governor Board
- 3rd Sector JCP Liaison Group
- Active Warrington
- Bewsey and Dallam Project
- Warrington Rugby World Cup
- Neighbourhood Boards

WVA also facilitates both the Third Sector Network Hub and Assembly ensuring there is appropriate representation across all sub sectors and a collective voice across the whole sector. This year a priority area of work for WVA has been to raise awareness of the value of the sector, to coincide with the Social Value Act. We have been informing commissioners off the added value the local voluntary sector contributes to Warrington, ensuring decision makers value the skills, experience, capability, and the capacity of the sector to deliver frontline services as well as the significant contribution made by volunteers the sector supports.



Partnerships

Partnership working is an essential feature of the voluntary and community sector both with other VCS organisations and with statutory agencies. At WVA much of our work involves promoting and supporting the development of partnerships within the sector and with statutory bodies. Partnership work this year has included:

WVA led a borough wide cross sector partnership to address issues of social isolation and loneliness for our older people. The Fulfilling Lives Ageing Better Partnership was established to submit a bid to the Big Lottery in May 2014, highlighting the need for effective integrated services across the borough and increased civic participation. The partnership also carried out substantive consultation and engagement to seek the views of older people and identify gaps in services. The intelligence gathered will inform future strategies and policy changes.

WVA supported the 2nd year Advertising students over a 12 week period in their project to promote the Warrington Islamic Association. The brief was to provide some positive press about the WIA and raise their profile. It was important that this was handled sensitively, as the students gathered intelligence on the views of local residents. WVA worked in partnership with Golden Gates Housing Trust and Warrington Borough Council to ensure that all local agencies were aware and comfortable with the project and its aims.

WVA play an active role on the Cheshire and Warrington VCS/LEP Infrastructure Partnership. The aim of the partnership is to provide a reference point and a 2-way communication channel for the VCS LEP Representative to report back to the sector and to collate information to report into the LEP Strategic Boards, making sure that developing strategy and activity is inclusive. As a sub-sector partnership it is key that WVA ensures any potential funding is made available to groups from Warrington.

Projects

Warrington Timebank...

Members give on average **10-15** hours of time



170 active Timebank members in Central



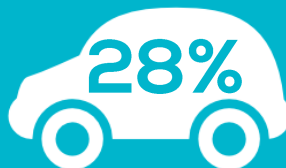
64% brand new to volunteering

Engage to Change consultation...

60% of older people surveyed live alone...



...**30%** also felt isolated



28% experience factors preventing them from engaging

72% agreed Warrington is a friendly place



Communications



8,758 people
accessed our website this year

1,459
people

on our emailing list
from charities,
community groups,
statutory bodies.



“The email bulletins are really helpful in terms of keeping up to speed with what is happening in the sector. Information about training & courses is invaluable for myself and the team.”

Pip Horne, Warrington Speak Up

Warrington VoluntaryAction

Engaging People
Empowering Communities

Need support? Get in touch!

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Connect: info@warringtonva.org.uk

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