

Monitoring Report 2023/24

Outcome 1	Outputs & Commitment	Measurement/Supporting evidence provided
Community and voluntary groups can access appropriate support and guidance enabling them to strengthen their governance, financial/organisational sustainability and volunteering practice.	Information, advice and support delivered to community and voluntary groups in the Borough, including but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> new trustees identified, trustees supported to understand governance responsibilities, improve volunteer recruitment, retention and management practices. New member organisations supported to achieve membership eligibility criteria. A programme of information, development and networking opportunities is provided.	Data demonstrating the number of organisations and support provided. Details of new member organisations. Details and data of the events hosted by RVS. Case studies to demonstrate variety depth and impact of support provided.

Number of member organisations: 329

	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	Total
Total number of groups supported:	76	62	33	45	216
Governance/ policy/business planning:	13	10	25	10	58
HR (volunteers and paid staff	5	10	14	15	44
Measuring & demonstrating impact:	0	5	6	40	51
Number of new member organisations:	5	7	3	5	20

New members:

- VoiceAbility
- Barnardo's Hampshire Healthy Families
- Rosie Minibus (affiliate member)
- Hart Foodbank (affiliate member)
- Fleet & District U3A
- Spirit Youth
- Hawley Primary School
- Hart District Council (affiliate member)
- Farnborough International Ltd (affiliate member)
- Branches
- Spaces for Growing
- Twins Trust
- Borders Cadet Corps & Borders Cadet Corps-Corps of Drums (affiliate member)
- Girlguiding Whitewater Division (affiliate member)
- St Paul's CofE Infant School
- The Whole Hub
- Tourette's Action
- Every Other Mother
- Our Lady & St Dominic Catholic Church
- Orchard Manor Care Home

Affiliate members are those who register to hire minibuses only, as required by our HCC CT contract.

Voluntary Sector Fora - Rushmoor Voluntary Services (RVS) holds a Voluntary Sector Forum (VSF) four times a year to give voluntary/community groups the opportunity to get together, share experiences and learn from one another. Presentations are given from a variety of voluntary and statutory organisations which provide valuable information and support. This enables the voluntary sector to keep abreast of any changes which might have an impact on their organisation. We provide the opportunity for local issues to be discussed and events to be promoted. Strong partnerships have been formed because of the Forum.

Our quarterly VSF are planned to respond to emerging issues and need. We have held three VSF so far, attracting over 79 delegates from 30 organisations with ten 10 presenters. These figures do not include RVS or RBC staff, volunteers and councillors.

Together for our Planet - In June, we focused on supporting the local VCSE to green their organisations and consider how we can work in partnership to improve our response to climate change in Rushmoor.

We had an excellent agenda of speakers from across the community including Ben McCallan, CEO of Zero Carbon, Guildford who helped delegates to 'Understand the Carbon Conversation'. His extremely enlightening presentation gave advice on developing organisational sustainability plans, the energy savings of making switches to building utilities and understanding your impact. Ben helpfully busted some jargon about CO2 and the three 'scopes'.

Sarah Taylor, the Sustainability Officer for Frimley ICS spoke about the ICS's Sustainability Projects and Plans. Sarah shared details of the NHS carbon footprint and the ICS's key targets for the emissions they control directly and the emissions they can influence. Sarah gave an overview of how their green plan was developed and how it will be delivered. This includes increased recycling which will include insulin pens and crutches and the change of inhalers from aerosol to powder and how we, as patients, can progress this ambition.

Other speakers from local groups gave updates on their organisation's progress in greening processes, policies etc. They shared some hints, tips and some practical solutions to addressing the carbon footprint in using IT.

Sophie Rogers, the Climate Change Officer with Rushmoor Borough Council gave an update on the Council's progress further to the climate emergency declared in 2019. Delegates were particularly keen to understand that offsetting doesn't form part of the response plan.

Equalities - In September, we focussed on Equalities. 40 guests representing 18 organisations benefitted from engaging with three very passionate and well-informed speakers: Esi Hardy, CEO of Celebrating Disability provided valuable insight into how to get the recruitment process right and how to meaningfully become Disability Confident through engagement with people with lived experience. Charlotte Mason, Associate Director of Frimley ICB gave an overview on their latest initiatives to address health inequalities across the system and particularly in Rushmoor. Anna Murray, a Sexual Health Promotion Practitioner from Solent NHS gave an insightful presentation on gender identity which encouraged further exploration of the issue which is often not understood by the wider population.

Measuring Impact - The theme for March's Rushmoor Voluntary Sector Forum was Measuring Impact. This has been identified as being particularly valuable at a time when funding and services are under threat. We received a positive response to presentations from Action Hampshire who shared their recently published resource - *Impact Measurement Guidance Booklet*; NHS Frimley ICB who demonstrated how to Evidence Impact using Open Data Sources, and the Community Grub Hub who shared information on how their service impacts upon local residents. During the networking lunch it was clear that organisations were rethinking the importance of measuring impact, particularly in the present climate. We promoted existing workshops and will follow up with an offer of a local workshop later in the year.

Direct Support – Our core activity includes providing support to groups directly. General requests can often be resolved by signposting to resources that we have created or identified as

suitable for the purpose, e.g. guidelines on which organisation structure might be most appropriate for the new group being set up. When more intensive support is needed, our Community Development team will work with the groups to support them to develop the skills, find the solutions and assist with the completion of forms, bids etc to support the development of the groups. If necessary, support will be provided to address specific issues on governance, people, funding, etc.

Case Study - Two groups we support are Project Together - led by Nepali young adults - and the Rushmoor Repair Café. They are very different groups that can offer each other the benefit of their knowledge and an alternative perspective. We facilitated 'Lets Talk Trustees', a workshop that enabled them to explore their roles, their organisations strengths and needs. They supported one another to identify gaps in skills and knowledge and the Trustee roles they need to recruit to. It was an eye-opening experience, particularly for the Repair Cafe, who had not looked beyond the project until now. A second workshop assisted them to build a framework for a business plan based upon their learning and reflection.

Outcome 2	Possible Outputs	Supporting Evidence Provided
Increased funding secured for a wide range of voluntary and community organisations.	<p>Information shared about a wide range of funding opportunities accessible to local groups.</p> <p>Access provided to national funding databases.</p> <p>Member organisations actively supported to submit bids.</p> <p>Fundraising activities supported with advice, resources and volunteers.</p>	<p>Data demonstrating the number of organisations supported.</p> <p>Details of funding achieved, where feasible.</p> <p>Feedback from funders showing increase in applications.</p> <p>Case studies to demonstrate variety, depth and impact of support provided.</p>

	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	Total
Total number of groups supported with financial/fundraising:	12	14	15	33	74
Value of bids supported:	£63,200	£129,000	£161,364	£261,256	£614,820

We share information with our members on the many grants, trusts and funds which are available to community groups. This is achieved through our bi-weekly newsletters, through direct e-mailshots to members, sharing funding bulletins, through access to searchable databases, also via our website - [Funding Help – Rushmoor Voluntary Services \(rvs.org.uk\)](http://Funding Help – Rushmoor Voluntary Services (rvs.org.uk)).

Due to the specific criteria of eligibility, the needs of the group and the increasing competition for monies, a number of bids may need to be submitted to different grant makers in order to achieve the funding required.

Grants – RVS have provided six grants to local groups so far this year. Benefits range from gardening in schools, supporting young carers and young people with disabilities to creating environmental community engagement.

Case Study – The Nepali group Ama Samhua Gurkha Dance want to expand what they do as a group, to increase number of sessions, offer food and trips out of the area. Under the umbrella organisation GRNC and with the support of GRNC president Man Gurung, we identified The National Lottery Awards for All as the most relevant fund to apply to. We went through the application together, considering each question and agreeing the answer. RVS completed the forms due to limited knowledge and confidence of using English language.

Case Study – RVS member Equal Potential CIC applied for TNL Heritage Funding, to produce a book celebrating historic figures who were diagnosed or considered to be neurodiverse. RVS wrote a reference for Equal Potential, outlining the support we had given to ensure they had firm foundations and good connections with local people and organisations.

Outcome 3	Possible Outputs	Supporting Evidence Provided
Enhanced capability, capacity and resilience in the sector, which reflect the diversity and breadth of Rushmoor communities and activities.	<p>Communications signposting organisations to sources of local and national support.</p> <p>Signposting to local, regional and national training, conferences and professional development opportunities.</p> <p>New groups/activities established, in response to emerging needs.</p>	<p>Newsletters, social media and comms to share information.</p> <p>Examples of new information/training delivered in response to expressed need.</p> <p>List of training delivered and number of attendees.</p> <p>Data demonstrating the number and diversity of new groups, activities and members.</p> <p>Case studies to demonstrate variety depth and impact of support provided.</p>

	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	Total
New groups or projects established:	1	2	1	2	6

New Groups:

- **Rushmoor Repair Café** – aimed at saving money for residents and reducing carbon emissions by reducing landfill.
- **Spaces for Growing** – an environmental group focussed on developing community and green spaces locally.
- **Fernhill Community Partnership** – aimed at building a stronger community by working together.
- **Aldershot Methodist Church Wellbeing Group** – a group providing coffee and cake to reduce isolation and provide a safe and warm place. Also provides access to support with food and fuel poverty.
- **Blooming Minds** – green social prescribing programme, supporting adults with moderate mental health challenges through gardening.
- **The Smile Project** – addressing health inequalities for primary age children.

	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	Total
Training events hosted:	12	6	6	7	31
Training learners registered:	77	72	61	89	299

RVS distributes information to members and stakeholders via a bi-weekly e-newsletter. Our 'padlet' includes information from local groups, organisations and partners, funding opportunities, local events and activities, training workshops and courses and information of general interest to our members - <https://padlet.com/msc79/rvs-members-newsletter-28-w1ckenr9vczsr01e>.

Our social media highlights similar messaging and is accessible to the public. We re-post information provided by partners including news from Hart Voluntary Action which might benefit Rushmoor residents and groups.

During the pandemic, most training providers adapted their courses to be provided on-line. This provides access to a far wider resource of training than we could hope to provide locally, so we research and collate information of courses available to the local VCSE sector. RVS maintain a

centralised calendar of these training opportunities on the Hampshire CVS website - [Events – Hampshire CVS Network](#). Over 30 training events are promoted for each month across a broad spectrum of skills development and from a wide variety of organisations, including national bodies and Hampshire CVSs.

We have established an effective relationship with Hampshire Libraries. Through their Hampshire funding for Learning in Libraries, Farnborough and Aldershot provide training to meet the needs of our member organisations such as Emergency First Aid. The additional benefit of this partnership working is that the training is free to volunteers.

Case Study – The recruitment of Trustees remains a challenge for all CVSs and for VCSE groups. In acknowledgement of this, for Trustees Week in November, we recruited 12 delegates for a 'Let's Talk Trustees' workshop. They were all potential/new trustees. Two experienced trustees worked with us giving presentations, sharing testimonials and encouraging Q&A. We were pleased with the level of enthusiasm, with most keen to take up opportunities locally. We are encouraged by the success of the event and in future will expand it to include organisations looking to recruit new trustees. This is a suggestion from the delegates themselves.

Outcome 4	Possible Outputs	Supporting Evidence Provided
<p>Council and partner organisations value the strengths of the community and voluntary sector and understand the scale and nature of the challenges faced.</p>	<p>Proactive engagement in local networking and working groups/events specifically including the Supporting Communities Working Group.</p> <p>RVS highlights emerging issues and challenges facing the sector to RBC and other key partners.</p> <p>RVS acts as a credible voice for the sector, gathering and sharing insight and evidence from its member organisations.</p>	<p>Examples of issues raised and any resulting changes in policy/practice/procedure.</p> <p>Examples of evidence gathered highlighting the benefits and impacts the sector brings to communities and to partner agencies.</p> <p>Case studies demonstrating the forums/networks where RVS represent the sector and how information is shared back to the sector.</p>

Rushmoor Link – although a separately commissioned project, the directory is a valuable achievement for the community and a great example of collaboration. Within approximately six months, we have moved from concept to delivery of Rushmoor Link - [Find local support in Rushmoor - Rushmoor Link](#).

The directory provides access to local information about activities, groups and community services. It will be valued by residents looking for support and social opportunities, by health partners signposting for health and wellbeing and other professionals needing to engage with community groups.

A collaboration of RBC and RVS staff, colleagues and volunteers achieved the specification, the design and content, the development and the comms to achieve a soft-launch in December. The initial analytics evidence 1115 users and 1740 searches in January

Youth Influence - RVS's Community Development Officer gave a presentation about volunteering to 30 young people at the Rushmoor Youth Influence group in May. This group provides a regular opportunity for young people aged 13-20 to share their voice on what matters to them. The focus of the evening was employment, volunteering, and budgeting. They enjoyed our interactive presentation and came up with lots of ideas about the benefits of volunteering. Approximately one-third of the young people were either already actively volunteering or had volunteered previously. This included volunteering through the Duke of Edinburgh award.

Since the presentation, two of the young people have come forward to volunteer in social media and photography for one of our member organisations. This is just being finalised but they hope to start soon. One of them says that he would like to volunteer because “*I would like to build my skills for my future career*” and the other says “*I would like to give back to the community I live in*”.

In addition, we were delighted that Dhruv, one of the young volunteers in Rushmoor, was nominated for a Rushmoor Volunteer Recognition Award in recognition of his support with setting up the Rushmoor Youth Influence group at our annual awards ceremony.

Inequalities in our Communities - at our December VSF, we highlighted the work being undertaken by RVS, as an organisation and as a sector representative. We fed back on work undertaken alongside HCC, RBC and Frimley ICB strategically, to reduce health inequalities and impact. We spoke to the Live Longer Better strategy and Rushmoor Borough Council's Supporting Communities strategy. We spoke about how volunteering supports residents to remain active (e.g. Health Walks) and connected; how volunteering with other groups offers opportunities to contribute to healthy lives at all ages from Home Start through to Age UK.

Green Social Prescribing - We recognise that many new developments that are taking place in health and social care has seen a rise in prevention initiatives with a link to nature. RVS recognise that Social Prescribing has emerged as a crucial method of linking patients back into their communities. We recognise that Blooming Marvellous - our supported volunteer programme - can contribute to this methodology, in halting the depreciation of mental and physical health for participants.

Funding has been secured to expand RVS's current offer to include Blooming Minds ten week green social prescribing programme, for people with mental health and wellbeing challenges. A new Community Support Worker has been appointed, to support the existing Blooming Marvellous offer and facilitate the development of Blooming Minds. The green social prescribing programme will offer another referral pathway to and from Blooming Marvellous, serve as a conduit for new and existing supported volunteers. We are currently working with partners to develop appropriate green spaces and to further referral pathways.

Future Services Consultation - We created a campaign to raise the awareness of the HCC Future Services Consultation to our member organisations. This included social media and regular articles in our newsletter.

Two workshops were also delivered to give VCSE organisations an opportunity to explore, share and discuss how the 13 proposals would impact on the organisations and their clients/members. We discussed the hidden impacts, identified unintended consequences and explored alternative solutions which the groups fed back to HCC via the consultation. Groups also shared their plans on how to engage their clients/members to ensure that underserved communities had a voice in the consultation. We are very pleased that the feedback summary demonstrates that those voices in Rushmoor were strong.

Case Study – In recognition of the above and of the increasing number of green community spaces in Rushmoor, we have created a new forum. The inaugural meeting of the Rushmoor Green Community Forum took place in December. There were 19 in attendance, representing 13 organisations ranging across woodland rangers, community garden volunteers, conservation groups and green social prescribers. All agreed it was a worthwhile event and that the forum has a lot of potential. They agreed to meet quarterly, to share ideas, knowledge, experience and challenges.

Three project ideas are being explored by different members of the forum as a result:

- Mobile coffee van to visit public green spaces, like Brickfield Country Park, Wellesley Woodlands, Southwood Woodlands.
- Great Big Green Week joint event – art installations and craft activities to be created at each organisation/place participating.
- Mapping community green spaces.

A purpose of the forum is to create links between potential green social prescribing placements and a better understanding of social prescribing. The first steps towards this have been achieved. RVS have offered to facilitate the forum, however it was agreed that any activity will be owned by the group. The next forum is planned for February.

Outcome 5	Possible Outputs	Supporting Evidence Provided
Increased volunteering to meet and respond to local need.	Campaigns/events/promotions held and local events engaged in. Increased involvement of Rushmoor residents with the local voluntary and community sector. Organisations supported to attract new volunteers and to retain existing team. Organisations registering their new opportunities with RVS. Volunteers matched to opportunities.	Data showing number of opportunities promoted. Data demonstrating the number of placements achieved. Case studies demonstrating the variety and impact of volunteering, including the number of bite sized opportunities fulfilled as well as traditional placements.

	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	Total
Volunteer Passports:	0	7	1	6	14
Active placements for micro/bite-sized volunteering:	0	72	69	32	173
Number of volunteers recruited and placed during the quarter via brokerage:	34	55	37	33	159
Annual value of the brokerage placements*:	£50,759	£81,953	£55,132	£49,075	£236,919
Number of volunteering opportunities advertised during the quarter:	126	128	135	178	n/a

Championing Volunteering - RVS aims to promote the varied range of different volunteering opportunities available to a wider audience and to encourage more people to volunteer in Rushmoor. This is a particular priority, post-pandemic as some VCSE organisations are struggling to fill their volunteering opportunities and people need support to reconnect to their communities.

Volunteer Fair - We organised a Volunteering Fair in Kingsmead in September; the first since the pandemic. Eighteen organisations attended ranging from national charities such as Guide Dogs, Royal British Legion and Citizens Advice through to Hampshire-wide organisations such as Home-Start Hampshire, Innovation Volunteers and Hampshire Healthy Families (Barnardo's) through to smaller Rushmoor organisations such as the Rowhill Nature Reserve Society, Rushmoor Repair Café and Hart & Rushmoor Young Carers.

We promoted the event with posters in Farnborough Town Centre as well as on social media. This was translated into Ukrainian to reach out to our Ukrainian residents in Rushmoor. We also collected and displayed flyers from other organisations who couldn't attend on the day so that we could promote their roles too. In addition, we invited staff from Hart Voluntary Action, the DWP Disability Employment Adviser and local businesses to attend on the day to talk to the organisations. We estimate at least 80 people engaged with the stall holders, finding out more information about what volunteering would entail. A biproduct of the event was links made between voluntary organisations that would not usually meet.

Bitesize Volunteering – more people are attracted to short term, micro volunteering opportunities where they can support/respond to a specific project and walk away without ongoing responsibility. We maintain a team of about 120 RVS Responders. Some have continued with us since joining during the pandemic and we have a regular trickle of new sign ups.

Bitesize volunteers are in demand from our member organisations. Opportunities have ranged from Rushmoor Borough Council town centre event marshals, support for Remembrance Sunday events and drivers for the community Christmas Lunch, plus Rotary events including Music in the Park, Donkey Derby and the Christmas floats. They make a big difference to our smaller organisations where every volunteer is much appreciated. Parents Action Group for special play and Hawley Community Garden have both needed extra pairs of hands at their special events. The volunteers increase their own wellbeing through helping others as well as the individuals and organisations benefiting from the support.

Youth Volunteering - RVS are working in collaboration with Frimley ICB to deliver The Smile Project. The aim is to improve the oral health and wellbeing knowledge of primary age children living in Rushmoor areas affected by health inequalities. We have recruited young volunteer Ambassadors from Wavell School, Farnborough Technical College and Farnborough 6th form. We have also recruited volunteer Mentors with experience in dentistry and/or working with young people.

Interactive training has been undertaken ahead of the delivery which will take place in schools, uniformed groups and community events in the summer. We anticipate that this work will prepare us for future collaborations, particularly to support the VCSE sector to work effectively with the NHS.

*The value of volunteering is calculated by:

Annual Value = number of active volunteers (a snapshot - the figure from the most recent quarter) x 11 (average number of hours in a 4 week cycle as per Institute of Volunteer Research) x 13 (4 week cycles/yr) x £10.42 (minimum wage) = estimated economic value per annum.

Donna Bone
May 2024