



Volunteer Centre

West Berkshire

Charitable Incorporated Number **1156302**



ANNUAL IMPACT REPORT

2022/23

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DIRECTORS OVERVIEW

The cost of living crisis and Ukraine family support featured heavily in the year for the Volunteer Centre. Little did we know at the start of 2022 that a War in mainland Europe would have such an impact on the communities of West Berkshire. Alongside our alliance partner Greenham Trust and West Berkshire Council we established a support HUB to meet the needs of the community. Our job was to facilitate meetings of key voluntary sector providers and ensure that their voices were heard by statutory bodies and the Trust which would in turn provide much needed cash to groups to service their clients and customer needs.

The cost of living crisis partly driven by the war and the subsequent arrival of around 500 Ukraine national guests also meant the employment of a family support liaison worker. This post funded by the local authority has enabled us to provide much needed support to West Berkshire host families and their guests from Ukraine. All manner of needs have been met more of which inside.

Our annual major recruitment fair - V365 held at the Corn Exchange made a welcome return in January 23 and loud cheers from organisations went up at the opening of the event. 325 visitors met 55 charitable organisations all of whom recruited new people for their activities. The event was opened by Laura Farris MP and attended by the town Mayors of Newbury Cllr Gary Norman and Thatcham Town Mayor Cllr Jeff Brooks.

The end of this year was underlined by the return of our Knowledge Event first ran in 2018. The Volunteer Centre created a large scale networking event at Shaw House. 96 organisations attended the day long occasion and was visited by 103 local authority, health, police and others in order to expand their working knowledge of the voluntary and community sector in West Berkshire.

In addition to the Chairman of West Berkshire Council Cllr Rick Jones providing a welcome speech outlining the importance of partnership working and the Newbury Town Mayor Gary Norman attending. We were greatly honoured by the attendance of HRH The Duchess of Gloucester who spent her visit talking to around 70 people throughout Shaw House. A key note speech was delivered by Sarah Vibert The CEO of The National Council for Voluntary Organisations.

Community Transport to include Newbury and Thatcham Handybus, The Newbury Community Car Scheme and Newbury Shopmobility continue to increase their utilisation following the covid slump.

Training has featured strongly in the year and as you will see from our report we have tried to provide appropriate training at affordable costs that meet the needs of the sector in West Berkshire. Our Suicide Prevention outreach training has established monthly training sessions bringing easy accessible knowledge to West Berkshire people.

22/23 also welcomed The 5 year financial support of The National Lottery (The Community Fund) and 3 years funding from West Berkshire Council to further support the development and delivery of the voluntary sector support service. These funds have facilitated the appointment of a partnerships and engagement manager and I am delighted with our appointment of Rachel Peters to the post who is already making an impact on our services for the voluntary sector.

I want to express personal thanks to our board of trustees for their support and governance over the year and to Brien Beharrell in particular for her effective chairmanship of the board and for her support of me in my role.

The office team have without doubt been incredible in their support and have adapted to the new challenges. A special mention for Sue Campbell who reached her 40th year as a volunteer with our charity.

And finally as I write my report we received the news that we have been awarded full Volunteer Centre Accreditation. Well done to our recruitment officer Chris Read for taking on the collation of our 50 documents and evidence for submission to our national accreditation body The National Association of Councils for Voluntary Action (NAVCA).



Garry Poulsen,
Director, Volunteer Centre, West Berkshire
gary@vcwb.org.uk



One of the busy rooms at the Knowledge event



HRH The Duchess of Gloucester listening to the key note speech



Newbury MP Laura Farris opening V365 in January



Sue Campbell meeting HRH

GOVERNANCE, TRUSTEES AND STAFF

LIFE is rarely dull or routine for VCWB and 2022-23 has been no exception. Just as society began emerged from the global pandemic the impact of the war in Ukraine presented fresh challenges for VCWB that none could have anticipated. It is a tribute to its established work that it was to VCWB that the community looked to be a major presence in local Ukraine support. Discussion with the local authority regarding a more bespoke approach to the needs of this unique situation resulted in a grant-funded Ukraine Liaison Support Officer role joining the VCWB team.

While maintaining its regular services – Shopmobility, Training, Events, Community Transport, Suicide Prevention and other well-established sector engagement – VCWB has responded to the cost-of-living challenges typical to all. Typically, this has involved the voluntary sector support it provides to similar charities and volunteer groups in West Berkshire community. Even in these challenging times, this support has been delivered in various ways among which has been bespoke support for individual organisations, the facilitation of training, and the development of partnerships.

The VCWB is supported by its Board of Trustees. The eight dedicated Trustees living locally meet quarterly. All are volunteers, either within the VCWB itself or in the wider community. An active organisation such as the VCWB, encountering the challenges it does, receives the support and requires the deliberations of its Trustees much more than can be achieved by meeting formally four times a year. It is our pleasure to be part of such an organisation.



Brien Beharrell
Chair of Trustees,
Volunteer Centre West Berkshire



PATRON

David Jones

VICE PRESIDENTS

Mary Baker, Tim Barton, Sue Campbell, Sue Cox, Liz Fenton, Patsy Giles, Gill Hall, Kath Harding, Katy Hawthorne, Jonathan Hopson, Kate Kenna, Ian Langley, Mary Marsh, Angela Neale, Catriona Ottner, Andy Parsons, Brian Phillips

AUDITORS

James Cowper Kreston

VOLUNTEER CENTRE WEST BERKSHIRE

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MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

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Brien Beharrell

Vice Chair

Malcolm Poynter

Treasurer

Chris Armitage

Ian Nicol

Cllr Jeff Beck

Margo Payne

Ellis Banfield

Gary Walsh

Cllr Andy Moore

Paul Allen

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Sara Hanson

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Director

Garry Poulson

Partnerships and Engagement

Rachel Peters

Training and Events officer

Pankaja Samant

Volunteer Recruitment officer

Chris Read

Funding Advice officer

Sara Hanson

Suicide Prevention Training

Sue Bennett

Accounts officer

Jacqui Letsome



info@vcwb.org.uk
01635 49004

PARTNERSHIPS AND SUPPORT

Just a year ago, when newly appointed as Chairman of West Berkshire Council, Garry kindly offered to help me to meet the voluntary sector – I had mentioned that I was keen to meet and understand the voluntary organisations in the district, and convey that better understanding into the Council. As a result of Garry's help in this twelve months, I and my wife Valerie have been fortunate to meet with many volunteer leaders and organisations, using the opportunities to learn of the work and the challenges that you face at this time. Also how fast situations and requirements change at the moment for your clients and yourselves.

We have enjoyed those meetings and events immensely, learned a lot, frequently been inspired by amazing people, and triggered thinking about how the Council should engage and be involved in formal and informal partnerships.

I am pleased that we have been able to make some helpful connections, and also, I hope, to initiate an improved understanding of the voluntary sector in West Berkshire within the Council service groups. There is certainly a conviction that a Council cannot deliver everything that our residents both need and want, and working with voluntary organisations is vital to fulfilling more of those requirements.

Thank you for your welcome and open discussions and best wishes to all for this and future years.



Cllr Rick Jones,
Chairman West Berkshire
Council 2022-23.

The Volunteer Centre receives financial and in kind support from many sources.

We are grateful to:



We are also grateful to private donors and sponsors of our work.

Strategic Alliance

The Volunteer Centre is proud of our strategic alliance with The Greenham Trust. Our officers meet regularly to discuss issues, stresses and strains within the sector and resolve to provide support to organisations based on knowledge and understanding.

VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT

This year, we have given 395 individuals advice and information on volunteering (371 of these enquiries were made online/via phone and 24 in person).

Enquiries came from individuals in 45 different West Berkshire parishes.

In a survey carried out this year of volunteers who had used our recruitment service, 87% said they would definitely recommend it to others (the remaining 13% all responded maybe). We received an average rating of 8.85 out of ten for levels of satisfaction with the service.

A survey was also carried out of organisations who use our service to recruit volunteers; the survey asked organisations to rate how helpful and knowledgeable they feel our team are, with our average rating being 9.14 out of ten.

There are currently 286 active volunteer opportunities on our database.

Flexiteering - Short term flexible volunteering

Our flexiteer service provides a way for volunteers to offer their skills without making a regular, ongoing commitment. Flexiteers receive details of short-term and one-off volunteering opportunities as and when they arise. This year, two new volunteers joined the flexiteer mailing list; the total number of registered flexiteers is 42.

Feedback from organisations

“As a small organisation, recruiting Trustee directors is challenging but with the help of Volunteer Centre West Berkshire we have strengthened our Board with three excellent volunteers over the past 18 months. Fingers crossed you can work the magic one more time!” – John Gatward, Chair, The Charity of Mrs Mabel Luke

“I just wanted to update you on the applicant who you kindly put forward to us. We have had several Zoom meetings with her and she has agreed to help us with marketing with a view of increasing our membership and attracting a broader audience. She seems to have plenty of skills and ideas and we are hopeful that she will contribute hugely to the Arts Society Newbury. Thank you for your part in this recruitment. We are very grateful to you and will be back in touch should we need further help.” – Kate Harwood, The Arts Society Newbury

“We have had and continue to have a fruitful and positive relationship with VCWB which has been so helpful over the past year. It's taken some doing to recruit 40+ volunteers to work with the asylum seekers and refugees and also to then recruit some of the asylum seekers themselves to be in a position to volunteer for others. We couldn't have done that without the support of a range of organisations including VCWB.” – Karen Reeve, West Berkshire Action for Refugees

“We were delighted with the support that was offered from the Volunteer Centre. Chris especially guided us through the easy process of finding volunteers/businesses to support our school to complete work that we would otherwise not have been able to afford here in school. We engaged with businesses in our community that we have never worked with before and forged ongoing relationships with them offering continued help. Thank you for all of your hard work Chris and team, the service you provide is so vital for our local charities and schools.” – Rebecca Brophy, School Business Manager, The Downs School

Quotes from placed volunteers

“I am now a volunteer on Jubilee! I am very grateful for the comprehensive volunteering listing which you and the team provide. Keep up the good work!” – Janette Caulcutt, now volunteering for the Kennet and Avon Canal Trust

“The old saying goes, ‘You get back what you give’ and I've found that's certainly true of volunteering. So what can you get back? How about new friendships, skills and experiences, a sense of self-worth, not to mention a pride in being a part of a team making a difference.” – Karen Robbins, who joined Volunteer Centre West Berkshire as an office volunteer this year

“Thank you for your support with setting up our recent Team Challenge Day. We had a fabulous and productive day of painting outdoor benches and fences in the sunshine. The school were very pleased with our efforts. The school organisers were very welcoming to the eight team members who joined on the day.” – Rachel Haslam, Vodafone, part of a corporate team who volunteered at the Downs School, Compton

“As part of AWE's new corporate volunteering scheme, Time to Give, myself and some colleagues had a successful day volunteering at The Downs School in Compton, painting long corridors which were looking a bit tired and worn. It was a real change from the day job to get out and about in the local community and we really enjoyed it.” – Jon Cooney, AWE, part of a corporate team who volunteered at the Downs School, Compton

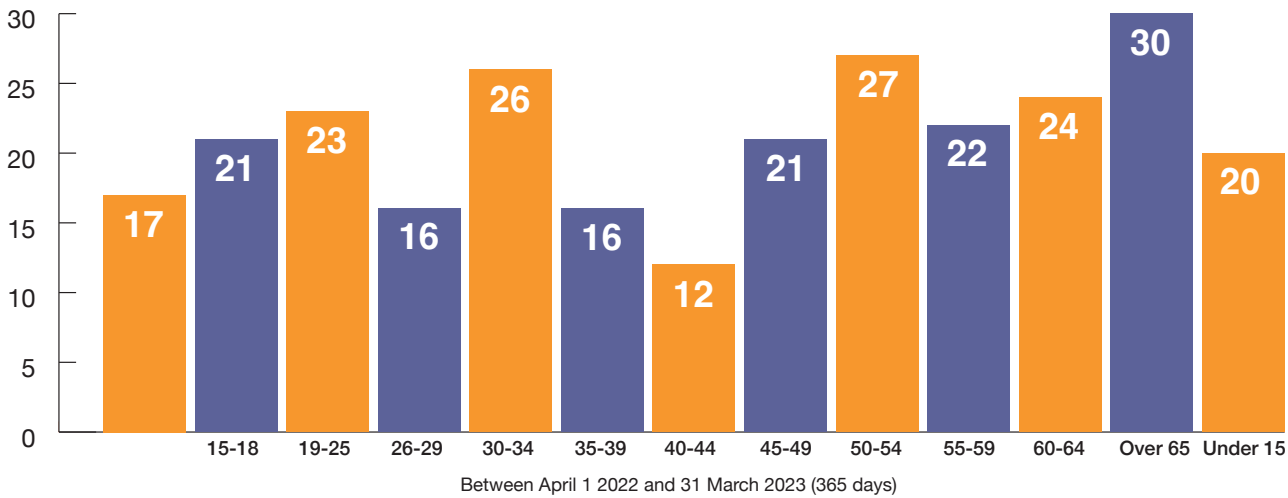
“We built a stall from reclaimed wooden pallets for the farm to display and sell their produce. It was enjoyable to spend a day out in the countryside getting stuck in and supporting a good cause. Spending time at the farm, you can see the benefits it will provide, and the need for the backing of volunteers like us” – Tom Beasley, Magnox, part of a corporate team who volunteered at Good Hope Farm, Hamstead Marshall, helping the farm prepare before its opening to clients with learning disabilities.



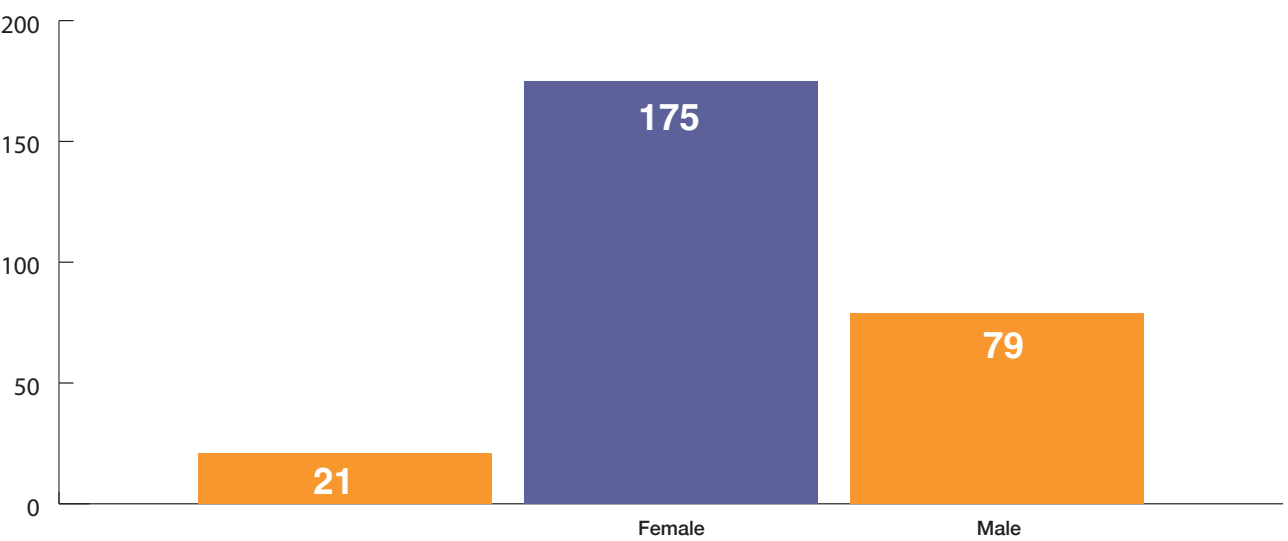
Chris Read,
Volunteer Recruitment Officer
vbbase@vcwb.org.uk



This graph demonstrates the age range of volunteersages:



This graph demonstrates the gender of volunteers coming into the sector.
Not all online applicants state gender at the initial point of application.



Office volunteer Karen Robbins who volunteers each Tuesday afternoon.
Karen calls volunteers that have been interviewed and provided with information about potential roles. We are then able to determine whether the volunteer has commenced a role.

THE NEWBURY COMMUNITY CAR SCHEME

Running since 1974 the Newbury Community Car Scheme has provided volunteer drivers taking older less mobile residents to essential appointments of all kinds. The annual statistics will show that we have still not yet recovered to pre covid activity levels. There are two main reasons for this firstly the slow return to in person appointments at doctors surgeries and secondly a continuing lack of confidence in more vulnerable patients and a reluctance to go out. Nevertheless, there has been an uplift on the previous years figures.

Driver recruitment remains a challenge. During the year we have recruited and inducted 4 new drivers to our car scheme. One driver however has maintained her service for 49 years. Young School teacher Mary Baker commenced volunteering for the service in 1974 and Mary continues to this day. Mary was the obvious choice to present HRH with flowers at the Knowledge event at Shaw House.

As well as the dedicated volunteer car drivers that provide our service a team of office volunteers ensure that the phones are answered and the request are dealt with. We thank. Lizzie Fenton, Ros Littlejohn, Katy Hawthorne, Gill Brown, Karen Eeles, Catriona Ottner, Jean Fleming, Sarah Summerbell, Julia Jones, Gill Smith and Andy Parsons. Thanks also to Jeff Goodenough who as a volunteer also looks after the Car Scheme IT Programme that he so expertly created for us many year ago. GGP



Household Support Grant

As a result of a government funded household support grant distributed by West Berkshire Council to The Volunteer centre we were able to establish a scheme that would assist the 10 Volunteer car Schemes in West Berkshire. This cash support provided by The Government was intended to defray the cost of living crisis and subsequent high household energy costs. Grant funds were distributed to the 10 car schemes ensuring that the costs of transport for the elderly was reduced to zero for a period of 4 months.

DESTINATIONS 22 – 23

Newbury	773.5
Thatcham	180
Reading	247.5
Oxford	29
Basingstoke	99
North Hants ex Basingstoke	2
London	1
Other	66
Total	1398

Previous Year 21 – 22

Newbury	690
Thatcham	98
Reading	236.5
Oxford	16
Basingstoke	111
Swindon	0.5
London	2
Other	46
Total	1227

JOURNEY TYPES

Hospital/Clinic	920
Surgery	227
Dentist	59
Optician	10
Day centre	25.5
Club	9
Shopping	7
Relative/Friend	5.5
Other	132
Total	1398

Previous Year 21 – 22

Hospital/Clinic	833.5
Surgery	187.5
Dentist	38
Optician	9
Day centre	17
Club	8
Shopping	10
Relative/Friend	6
Other	118
Total	1227

THANKS TO OUR VOLUNTEER CAR DRIVERS

The service that we have operated since 1974 would simply not be possible without the volunteer drivers who give up their time. We thank them for the endless time and patience and care that they provide to our service users.

Picture right

Marry Baker in the centre presented flowers to HRH The Duchess of Gloucester at our Knowledge event.



Marry Baker 49 years service



Mary Baker, Steve Bartlett, Caroline Billington, Matthew Briggs, Sue Campbell, Simon Carter, Bob Chapman, David Cussans, Andrew Edge, Mervyn Else, Peter, Fergusson, John Fleming, Duncan Gibb, Jeff Goodenough, Graeme Hindhaugh, John Holdaway, Graham Hunt, Ian Langley, Trevor Lisseman, Angus Macdonald, Graeme MacDonald, Jenny McCartney, Robert Meyer, Hazel Owen, Neil Pegg, Annie Potter, Keith Richards, Clive Self, Gary Shambrook, Chris Strang, Malcolm Thomas, Gary Walsh, Bob Whiting.



01635 49004 9am to 1pm Monday to Friday
car@wcvb.org.uk

THANKS ALSO TO OUR VOLUNTEER HANDYBUS DRIVERS

Newbury and Thatcham Handybus has been operating since 1986 and as with our car scheme we would not operate without these dedicated drivers. We thank them too for their care, time and patience.

Pictured far left is Mike Blackwell a former Newbury District Council officer whose idea Handybus was back in 1986. This was at the launch of one of our new buses with the then Chairman of WBC. Former driver Clive Loveless in his high viz jacket, Brien Beharrell Chair of Trustees front left, four passengers and Garry Poulson back right.



Neil Cave, Philip Eaton, Robert Ferryman, Richard Foster, Graeme Hindhaugh, Mark Lewis, Trevor Lisseman, Roderick McGregor, Annie Potter, Sheena Ronan, Gary Shambrook, Susan Wynniatt.

NEWBURY AND THATCHAM HANDYBUS

Significant increases in usage on last year

The year has been getting better and better! The number of trips, passenger trips and volunteer hours have all increased as people are gradually putting the shadow of Covid behind them. The Chairman's car, in particular, has become very popular and shows no sign of slowing down – figuratively speaking!

The focus is still very much on regular weekly shopping runs and group/society trips, which gives us a very good base to work from. Going forward, this focus should expand to include more one-off trips which will make sure that we maximise the use of the assets that we have. Pro-active promotion of our service will be a key part of this in 2023/24.

We currently have 27 drivers and are actively recruiting for the coming year. At the end of the year, our Handybus Co-Ordinator, Trevor Lisseman, finally hung up his keys to start a well-earned retirement. I am pretty sure that he will keep himself busy, and if he doesn't, Mrs. Lisseman will certainly find some jobs for him! I'm the new Co-Ordinator Ross Wilson and I started in mid-March and have been absorbing as much information as I can from Trevor during the handover – let's hope it's enough!

It wouldn't be a report without numbers, so here are the statistics, 2021/22 figures are shown in brackets.



Ross Wilson,
Handybus Coordinator
handybus@vcwb.org.uk
or by telephone 01635 37111
9am to 1pm Monday to Friday



Total miles
5064

NEWBURY

Trips

591 (487)
up 22%

Passenger trips

1746 (1435)
up 21.75%

Volunteer hours

825.5 (586)
up 41%

THATCHAM

Trips

369 (208)
up 77%

Passenger trips

1789 (851)
up 110%

Volunteer hours

693 (357.5)
up 87%

CHAIRMAN'S CAR

Trips

267 (81)
up 230%

Volunteer hours

162 (N/A)

NEWBURY SHOPMOBILITY

The freedom to go about our business in the town centre is something that the majority of us will take for granted. But for those of us with mobility disabilities or difficulties our independence can be very limited. Shopmobility schemes up and down the country provide independence of movement within town and city centres. Shopmobility customers enjoy their ability to spend their money ensuring that the disabled or purple pound as it is known can be spent here in Newbury. In its 28th year of operation from the North-brook car park our small team of part-time staff of Lindsay, Angie and Vicky supported by volunteers Pat and Angie provide a six day per week service loaning scooters, manual and powered wheelchairs and a friendly face. Parking is free for customers using our equip-ment and we are even able to loan equipment for up to 12 weeks where there is need.

The service welcomes anyone visiting the town who wishes to go about their business. ID checks are taken and safety advice is provided as well as mandatory instruction for new members.

Customers make modest contributions for the service at £3.50 for a days hire of a scooter or wheelchair. Longer term loans are made and are £22 for a weeks loan of a scooter or £15 for a wheelchair.



At the time of writing this report we heard the sad news that Mrs Pat Hicks pictured on the right sadly passed away. Pat had been a volunteer with the Shopmobility service from its inception in 1995 until suffering a stroke in 2015. Pat was a hugely reliable volunteer and mainstay of the service for 20 years



01635 523854 Monday to Saturday
newburyshopmobility@vcwb.org.uk

7 completed feedback questionnaires have rated us as excellent. Comments below; to the following questions.

Q1. How would you rate your overall user experience out of 10 being excellent?

Answers: 10,10,10,9,10,9,9,

Q2. How would you rate our overall service

Answers: 9,10,10,9,10,10,10

Q3. Would you recommend this service to others Three options yes definitely, Maybe or No Never

Answers: Yes definitely Yes definitely Yes definitely Yes definitely Yes definitely Yes definitely Yes definitely

Q4. Would you use this service again Three options yes definitely, maybe, no never

Answers: Yes definitely Yes definitely Yes definitely Yes definitely Yes definitely Yes definitely Yes definitely

Q5. How could we improve our booking process. Answers: You cant improve a service that has it all. Not sure Cant think of anything at the moment. N/A

Q6. Where did you hear about Shopmobility Service. Answers: I have seen you in the car park, Visited the car park. A friend, been a customer for years. Told about it in Salisbury. A friend. Google.

Any additional comments and or suggestions

Answers: None. Great service. Check your website for opening times. Wonderful service thank you.

Total Daily

579 (509)

Total Hire

3804 (3985)

Total Days

4383 (4494)

New members

131 (145)

Renewals

39 (43)

Visitors

34 (9)

The 131 new enrolling members in the year are from:

Newbury **71**
Thatcham **20**
Reading **5**
Cheiveley **3**
Hermitage **2**
Leckhampstead **1**
Lambourn **3**
Burghfield **1**
Hungerford **9**
Basingstoke **2**
Pangbourne
Bucklebury **1**
Tadley **1**
Kingsclere **4**
Hampstead Norreys
Wantage **1**
Swindon **2**
Highclere **3**

WEST BERKSHIRE SUICIDE PREVENTION ACTION GROUP

Established in 2017 this stakeholder project set out to provide information, resources and training to the voluntary sector, statutory partners and small businesses now in its 6th year the service aims to provide targeted training to 20 people each month giving them the tools to be able to speak to someone who may be having suicidal thoughts.

The opportunity I have been given to continue working in what I consider to be a unique and valuable role has been empowering. To continue delivering courses is so important, preparing for monthly courses is so valuable and has enabled diverse attendees to receive this simple three step plan to help move someone from a place of danger from their thoughts and actions to a place of safety I will endeavour as well to follow up contacts and places where I may not yet have received any feedback. I have very gratefully been given funding to attend a 2 day course at Grass Roots in Brighton, to further my knowledge of Suicide Prevention., and thus enhance the training I deliver.

2022/2023 and at last the ability to see and visit many face to face, however I am still able to email those not available in the day, or those remote, going out into the villages.

These are the organisations that I have been visiting during the year:

Suicide First Aid Courses delivered

9 Suicide First Aid Lite courses have been delivered, with the ambition now of delivering monthly. I attended Tutor training through the National Centre for Suicide Prevention, Education, and Trainings (NCSPET). The courses are City and Guilds assured and all attendees receive certificates. 72 people have attended, these include local volunteer organisations, for example, Soup Kitchen, Loose Ends, Two Saints. Local sports representatives, Estate agents, Racing welfare, Care Home, Counsellors.



Great course, definitely gave me food for thought and also made me self-reflect my practice, will now have confidence to provide suicide prevention.



Sue Bennett
Suicide Prevention Outreach Worker
wbspag@vcwb.org.uk

WBSPAG
westberkshiresuicideprevention.org

Sports Clubs 12 have been contacted, with some very useful conversations, 3 local runners have attended training courses as well as the Welfare contact from Team Kennett

Wine Bars/Pubs 13 Bars or Pubs visited; information has always been well received with promises of sharing.

Café/Coffee Shops 13 Café/coffee shops visited, lots of information given

Libraries 7 Libraries have been either visited or emailed and information given

Church Halls/Parish Clubs 11 have been emailed or visited, 2 pastoral workers recently attended training

Surgeries 6 Surgeries have been contacted, and I have been asked to attend a Social Prescribers meeting at some point. A local G.P has also contacted me to receive course information. I aim to contact the remaining local surgeries

Hairdressers/Barbers 5 premises visited, with information shared

Shops/Charity Shops 15 premises visited, many like to talk about their own experiences, and gratefully receive signposts of where to turn for help

Proud To Be Trans I was invited to talk at a meeting, where many shared their experiences, and information was very gratefully received. 2 members have attended training. I was asked to attend an awareness day in town and asked to provide information for Newbury Pride.

Construction 3 Local companies contacted and information given, to be followed up, very important to see if I can be of help, in this high-risk industry

BNI Jack O'newbury I was asked to give a 1-minute presentation on my work, many local businesses attended, feedback was very good, with promises for future training bookings.

Miscellaneous

Dance company, Dentists, Museum, Kennet Centre cleaner, sewing shop, Taxi firm, Print shop, Therapy and Therapy centre, Pottery shop, Insurance broker, Vets x2, Care Home, Markets Thatcham and Newbury, Community centres, Dog groomers, Building society, Men's Shed Fair close, Eight Bells Mental Health, Street Games, Eli's Club for the Learning Disabled, Phoenix Lacrosse, Head Teacher Castle School, Creative Communities, Christians against Poverty, General Carers support group, Lunch club Audrey Needham House, information left with all, all of Eight Bells staff have attended training.

FUNDRAISING AND FUNDRAISING ADVICE TO GROUPS

As with all fund raising projects funders require evaluation and monitoring and during the year three fund raising projects were completed and evaluated during the year which were:

Befriend and Activate 2020 to 2022. £15,372 was raised from grants from **Sovereign, Greenham Trust** and **Miss Lawrence Trust** and 5 private donations

V365 2023 £2,305 was raised from grants from Greenham Trust and Newbury Town Council (matched funded by Greenham Trust)

Suicide Prevention after the Covid 19 Pandemic, £11,659.60 was raised from Newbury Samatans, Greenham Trust and one anonymous donor.

We are actively fundraising for two projects: Voluntary Sector Support for Voluntary Action in West Berkshire, so far, £28,000 has been raised in grants and matched funding from Greenham Trust and grants from Sovereign, Englefield Charitable Trust, and Thatcham Town Council. West Berkshire Suicide Prevention Outreach Worker 2023-24 this has just been raised on The Good Exchange and has so far attracted £112.50 from a private donor (including matched funding from Greenham Trust).

Forums

I have passed the clerking of the SEND Providers Voice to Rachel; I clerked one routine meeting this while a new chair was sought.

Four meetings of the Children and Young People's Voice have been clerked and speakers have included the Head of Children's Services to answer questions on feedback to the voluntary sector when is-sues have been raised, Dave Wraight as manager of WB YOT (Youth Offending Team) explained the role of the voluntary sector in the "Supporting Families Project", Ric Jones Chairman of West Berkshire Council attended to understand the work of the forum and how he could help and Lindsey Upton talked about her work for young people in her role as Violence Reduction Officer.

No meetings of the Suicide Prevention Action Group were clerked as the meeting was cancelled due to the death of the Queen and this was rescheduled.

During the year we receive many requests for one to one support

Demand from community groups, small charities and new staff and volunteers for fundraising advice and support remains high. One to one advice sessions with follow up help were given to:

- **My cancer my choices**
- **Time to Talk**
- **Interakt**
- **Community Theatre,**
- **West Berkshire Fibromyalgia**
- **Newbury Town Council**
- **FLAG DV**
- **Connecting Communities West Berkshire**
- **Jesus Disciples Centre**
- **Purley Community Shop**
- **Newbury Street Pastors**
- **Blue Coat School**
- **West Berkshire Therapy Centre**
- **Happy Horse Box**
- **St John's Pre School**
- **Hungerford Dementia Choir**



Thank you for your email and coming to talk to me at the event on Monday I thought that the whole day was so positive, and I made some really good contacts.

The art of giving

Made lots of progress after our talk. **Happy Horse Box**

Thanks so much Sara... really helpful. **Dementia Choir**

Thank you for your email and the useful information you shared with me and have further provided in this email too.

Jesus Disciples Centre

Thank you for your time yesterday, it was lovely to meet you and extremely valuable to chat through funding opportunities

Interakt

Thank you so very much for your time today and all the follow-up emails I really appreciate all your help and advice.

Time to talk, Sara Hanson — Voluntary sector support team

That's wonderful – thank you so much for all your help. You have been very generous with your time, and I appreciate it.

My cancer my choices



sara@vcwb.org.uk

PARTNERSHIPS AND ENGAGEMENT MANAGER

Since my appointment in October, I have worked hard to become familiar with all aspects of our service in order to support the director and create capacity in the team.

Part of my remit was to build on existing partnerships between the voluntary sector and statutory & health services, we have started this by taking on the Health and Wellbeing Local Integration Board meetings, the Ageing Well Task Group and Community Conversations and working with West Berkshire Council to support their Annual Health and Wellbeing and Town and Parish Council joint conference.

I have also been able to take over clerking of the Special Educational Needs Providers Forum, now renamed SEND Providers Voice, from Sara Hanson. The first of which under my responsibility took place in February and during which we appointed a new chair, the CEO of Swings and Smiles.

The change in Chairperson and Clerk has given us the opportunity to review the Terms of Reference for this group and ensure that the right people from the right organisations are in the group.

In addition to this, we have established 3 new forums to support the sector. The West Berkshire Voluntary Sector Voice is a forum for any charity or voluntary organisation operating across West Berkshire to be part of. I chair and clerk it with support from Grace Green, CEO of Home-Start West Berkshire. We have had 2 meetings so far and have a broad membership from across the sector, with 69 individuals from 61 organisations registering an interest and getting invited to the meetings which take place quarterly online.

The WBVS Arts Voice and Sports Voice have had one meeting each with 14 individuals representing 11 organisations from the world of arts and 21 individuals from 17 organisations from the world of sports. Terms of reference have been agreed and Chairs have been appointed for both of these forums. The VCWB website has been updated to reflect the new forums and organisations to register an interest in joining them.

The voice of the voluntary sector is heard through a range of forums. This year we have established 4 new groups.



Rachel Peters,
Partnership and Engagement Manager
rachel@vcwb.org.uk



Rachel took the lead on the administration and bookings for the 2023 Knowledge Event at Shaw House and did an excellent job. Here is Rachel meeting HRH at Shaw House with Brien Beharrell Chair of Trustees of VCWB to her right.

Welcome to the team Rachel



Voluntary Sector
Voice



Children and Young
people Forum



Special Educational
Needs forum



Arts for well
being forum



Community Transport
operators Forum

UKRAINE FAMILY LIAISON

This is a new role which I started in October 2022. The main objectives are to build relationships with charities and organisations across West Berkshire. To manage and signpost Hosts and Ukrainian guests to a variety of sectors, offering information, form filling and general advice to help them settle and flourish here in West Berkshire. To also work closely with the Welfare Officers and Engagement and Communications Officer at the West Berkshire Council Hub.

Since the offset I have worked hard to fulfil all of these requirements. Through planning and laying out my objectives I have built and will continue to build some valuable relationships with relevant charities and organisations across West Berkshire. Networking via calls, meetings and events I have created a database with over 120 contacts.

I have weekly meetings with the two Welfare officers from the H4U Hub. Our work is split into single adults and families. With permission from Guests and Hosts the Welfare officers connect them with myself. October 2020 to date I have worked on 97 referrals.

TYPES OF REFERRALS

Areas of need	Approx. figure	Charity & organisations across West Berkshire
Children activities 7 – 16 year old	23	Basketball, music, singing, art, photography, dance, Scouts
Adult English classes	10	Berkshire school of English. Educafe. Vicci,
Work advice	10	Adviza, recruitment companies. Job adverts. Smart Works, Springboard, ENIC UK. DBS information. The Refugee Council. Gwcentre. Voluntary work.
Benefit advice	6	Meeting with CAB on Universal credit, managing a journal. Child Benefit. Pension. DWP.
School admissions	2	Met and advised parents with 'in-year' school admission information and online form filling.
Toddler groups	4	Local playgroups in their area. Family Hubs
Bereavement support	1	Cruse, Daisy's Dream
Mental health support	5	Sport in Mind, Time2Talk, Talking Therapies, Bear Us in Mind
Mother and babies	3	Homestart, Cowshed, Educafe-Parent Village, Toddler groups. Watermill. CAB. NHS Healthy start voucher
Disability	1	NHS. Mary Hare Hearing Centre, Deaf charities
Facebook posts	Up to 5 a week	Charity offers, updates and news relevant to the West Berks Ukraine Support Group



Fiona Bentley-Taylor
ukraineliason@vcwb.org.uk



Fiona Bentley – Taylor, Ukraine Family Liaison officer, talking to HRH

I research and gather up-to-date information and links for each Ukrainian adult or family this is normally sent to them via email and cc'd to the relevant Welfare Officer. From there we correspond accordingly and I follow up where necessary. Each referral is documented and saved; many Guests have multiple needs these are included the referral data.

I have also made home visits and had meetings with families at Broadway House and Market Street. The Newbury Baptist church meetings are now monthly, this is a valuable meeting point for me to use as a connection with new families but also to be introduced to people I've met via email. It's a great community event where I can do 'on the ground' referrals. I am now known well amongst the Guest and Host community which is really lovely. I also use the Baptist church to facilitate meetings between charities and the community, for example The Watermill Outreach, Berkshire Youth, Vox singing, and Adviza.

To summarize, the needs of guests since starting my role have changed, the realization that the war is not coming to an end anytime soon families are realizing they'll be remain-ing here for a time.

This is just a snapshot as I can only react on the referrals I am given via the H4U Hub but with working efficiently alongside the Welfare Officers I hope to continue to support and provide help and information to these adults and families.

AREAS REACHED

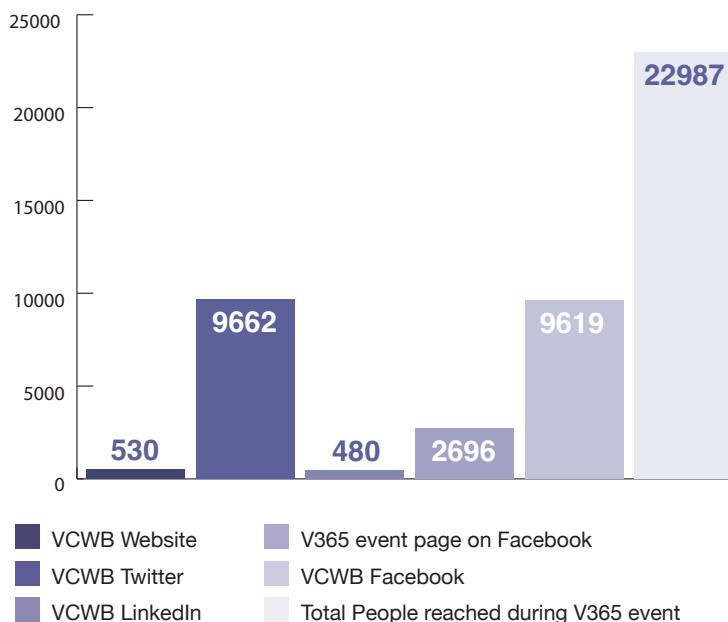
Areas of West Berkshire	Number of adults/families
Pangbourne	1
Burghfield	2
Mortimer	2
Theale	1
Tilehurst	2
Aldermaston	2
Boxford area	1
Chieveley	1
Hungerford	3
Newbury	36

PROJECTS AND TRAINING OFFICER

V365 2023 – 14th January 2023

This year's Recruitment fair was held Face to Face at corn Exchange Newbury. The event was successful and received positive feed-back about the event. 56 organisations and 325 visitors attended. 514 separate enquires were left with the 56 organisations meaning the public expressed interest on one and more volunteering opportunity.

- Post event, there were an estimated 1053 views with 190 engagements on the VC Facebook page, 247 impressions on the LinkedIn page and on Twitter there were 883 views on the V365 Thank you post.
- During the period of the report 256 people downloaded the V365 Brochure
- Our volunteer photographer Bob Day took lots of pictures on event day and we together all pictures for a PowerPoint video which has been uploaded onto the video on VCWB YouTube profile and on our website with 112 views to date.



Social Media

22,987

total people reached
our social media/
website pages during
the V365 event

“

Congratulations on a really successful event! It had a very lovely atmosphere and lots of really nice comments from people as they were leaving.

Amazed at the number of organisations that are up and running, the amount of potential volunteers showing interest in be-ing volunteer.

Thanks to everyone at NVC for organising the event on Saturday. It was very well organised and I think will prove to be very fruitful. Very best wishes.

Good to see so many organisations under one roof - some of which I didn't know about.



V365 was attended by the Mayor of Newbury and opened by Newbury MP Laura Farris and our Patron David Jones far right

V365 we had a record 325 visitors, they came from Newbury, North /south Thatcham, Compton and surrounding villages.

VISITORS BY AREA

RG14	Newbury	124
RG17	Hungerford	13
RG18	North Thatcham	33
RG19	South Thatcham	31
RG20	Compton and surrounding villages	31
RG21	Basingstoke	1
RG28	Whitchurch	1
RG29	Hook or Reading	1
RG31	Tilehurst/Calcot Reading	4
RG7	Woolhampton/Mortimer and surrounding villages	14
RG8 7EJ	Whitchurch-on-Thames	1
RG8 RET	Reading	1
SE19 3SS	London	1
SN8 2QF	Malborough	2
SP11 0AG	Hurstbourne Tarrant, Andover	1
Total		259

We promoted V365 via social media platforms our website and the Newbury Weekly News as below.

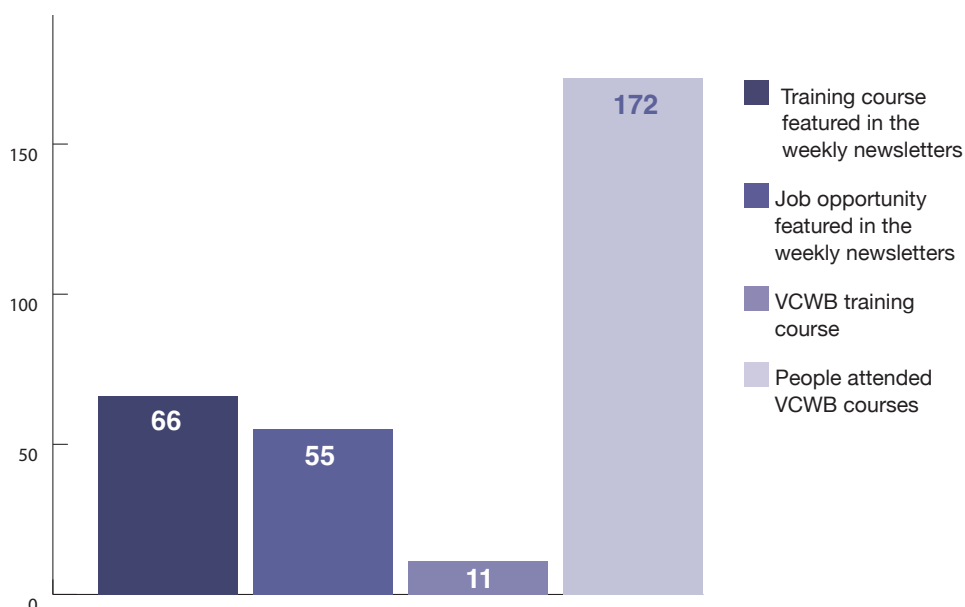
EVENT PUBLICITY

Been before	3
Email	14
GP surgeries	2
Internet	35
Local radio	5
Local press	47
Printed promotion	4
Social media	65
Through a charity	18
Through a local business	3
VCWB	13
Walk in	1
WBC	12
Word of mouth	38
Total	259

TRAINING THE VOLUNTARY SECTOR

Training has been and will continue to be a n important offer for the voluntary sector within our weekly voluntary sector bulletin.

During the period of this report we promoted 66 training courses (an increase of 38 from April 2022) and 55 paid job opportunities were featured in the weekly voluntary sector bulletin. We delivered 11 training courses of our own and 172 West Berkshire Voluntary sector people attended the courses.



325

visitors
to V365

66

training
courses

55

paid job
opportunities

66

VCWB
training
courses

172

attended
courses

TRAINING THE VOLUNTARY SECTOR



Digital and social media course delivered.

By Rob Cao
of Dynamiq



First aid in the workplace courses delivered.

By Mike Samuels

“

Pankaja, many thanks for the opportunity to attend last week's social media training, I found it very useful, it has given me ideas for PIP (if I can find a volunteer to help implement them!!)

Jane Jefferies Patient Information Point

Extremely useful as it demonstrated how to potentially save a life. not too much information to confuse, but just enough to give confidence to do CPR and use a defibrillator. Do you offer any other First Aid courses as I would definitely attend another.

RSPCA North Wiltshire
Financial Services

I thought the Zoom meeting went well. One of the group was in Portugal and was still able to join in, it worked well.

Julie King City Arts

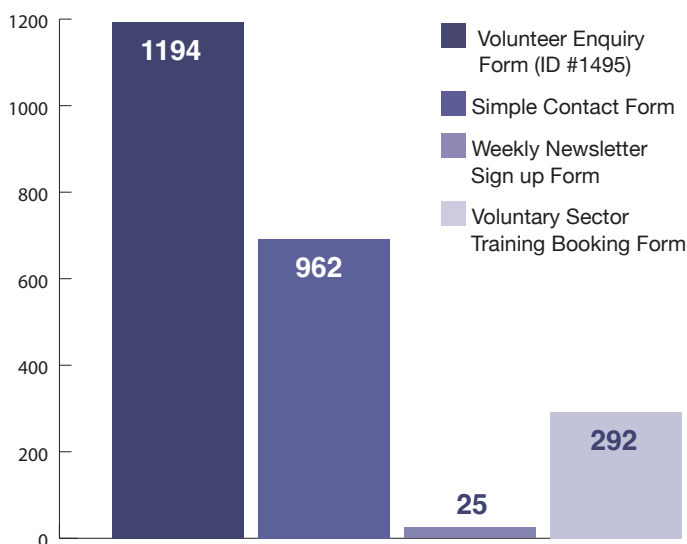
OUR DIGITAL ACTIVITY

Newsletter: 51 newsletters were circulated to 814 subscribers, from 1st April 2022 to 31 March 2023, an increase of 34 since the previous re-port. The click rate average was 34.2%

A wide range of organisations submitted training information, charity news, surveys and job vacancies for inclusion in the newsletter.

At present there are no analytical tools attached to the website to see how many people view the site, but during the period of the report we have the total number of entries for each WPFFor.

This is how our forms performed on the site:



“

I would like to thank you for your great weekly newsletter, informing us about important happenings within the voluntary sector.

Mikal Rahman
The Advocacy People (Berkshire) & Healthwatch (Berkshire)

A big thankyou I really appreciate it and if I can help you guys in anyway then please just ask.

Robdonnellytherapy

Thank you ever so much – we really appreciate your brilliant support!

Julie MacLean
(Berkshire youth)

Thanks for publicising Neighbourhood Watch for me which is very much appreciated. Also lovely to see all the photos from the Vol-unteer event at Corn Exchange.

Angela
Neighbourhood Watch

SOCIAL MEDIA IMPACT

The volunteer centre uses a range of social media platforms to promote our work to include (from 31/03/2022 earliest reporting accessible):



Followers
(increase of 118)

1,598

Likes
(increase of 168)

1,245

People reached

9322

Post engagement

1248



Followers
(increase of 24)

2,284



Followers
(increase of 42)

86

Page searches

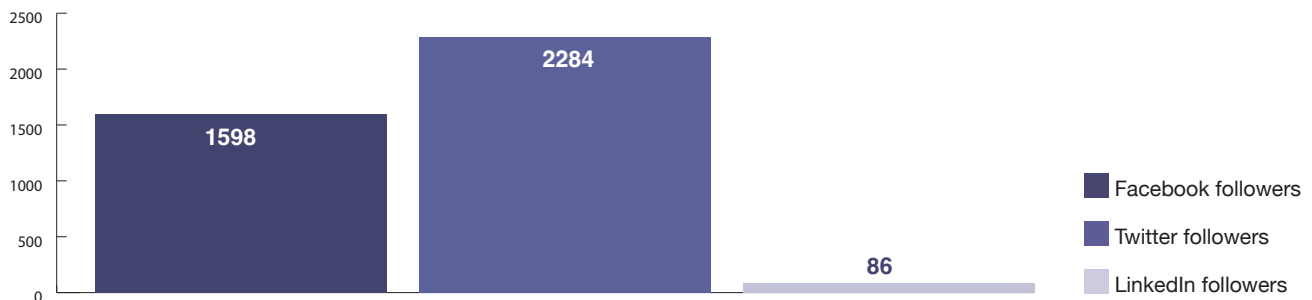
136

Unique visitors

16 that do not follow us

Post impressions

1,000



THE VALUE OF VOLUNTEERING CAMPAIGN

In October we created the 'Valuing Volunteer' survey and collected data from 76-organisations to create a power point presentation to include the volunteer hours and total volunteers were counted. The presentation was then given at the Knowledge Event held at Shaw House.

We recommend that all voluntary groups record their annual volunteering hours.

Volunteer hours

584,087.5

Volunteers counted this survey

12,169

Value of voluntary hours

£12.50 per hour

Total value

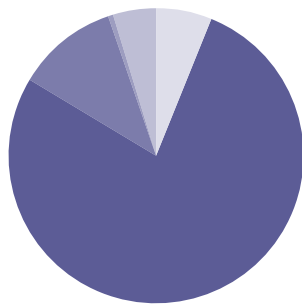
£7,301,093.75



Pankaja Samant
Pankaja@vcwb.org.uk

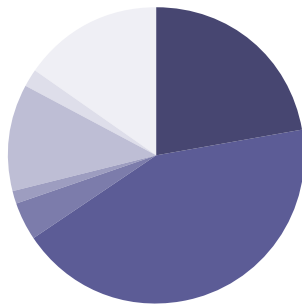
THE FINANCES

The charity provides a full range of direct public facing services such as our 3 transport services and our volunteer recruitment services. Our Voluntary sector support service for charitable and voluntary organisations seeking assistance from across West Berkshire could not be delivered without the financial support of our partners that provide grant and service level income. Our partners and supporters are listed elsewhere in this report.



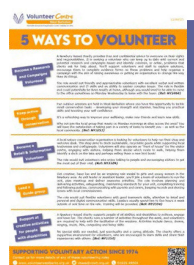
Income

Donations, legacies etc	17,218
Grant Income	209,230
Direct transport income	29,762
Investment income	1,567
Other income	12,395
Total	270,172



Expenditure

Transport costs	62,187
Employment costs (2 full time 8 part time)	119,594
Premises costs	11,043
Advertising and publicity	4,136
Depreciation	32,130
Postage, stationery & telephone	5,351
Other overhead costs	42,089
Total	276,530



Volunteer Centre
West Berkshire

Charitable Incorporated Number 1156302

www.volunteerwestberks.org.uk



VCQA
Volunteer
Centre
Quality
Accreditation

