

Charitable Incorporated Organisation No. 1156302

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# ANNUAL IMPACT PACT REPORT 2024-25

www.volunteerwestberkshire.org.uk



# CEO OVERVIEW

It's hard to believe that a year has passed since I wrote my first overview as CEO.

What an eventful and rewarding year it has been as we marked our charity's 50th anniversary, celebrated the dedication of our incredible volunteers, and bid farewell to departing staff, trustees, and volunteers while warmly welcoming new faces into the fold.

We continue to provide essential transport services for elderly and vulnerable residents, thanks to our devoted team of volunteer drivers who support regular trips for shopping, social events, and local groups. This year, we've seen an increase in requests for our Chairman vehicle and more demand for hospital visits across Berkshire and Hampshire.

In the past year, we've supported 462 individuals with volunteering advice – an increase of 59 from last year – and maintained a comprehensive database of 365 active volunteering opportunities across 48 parishes. Our Flexiteering scheme has continued to offer flexible, short-term volunteering options, and our engagement through events and partnerships has been key in promoting volunteering across West Berkshire.

Our annual V365 recruitment fair at The Corn Exchange was a major success once again. With strong feedback from both organisations and attendees, the event provided 55 charities the opportunity to engage with 297 attendees, leading to numerous volunteer placements.

We've also made significant strides in mental health awareness, delivering 12 Suicide First Aid courses across West Berkshire, reaching a broad range of organisations and sectors. Our outreach worker has been instrumental in fostering strategic partnerships, attending professional development events, and distributing essential resources to promote suicide prevention.

This year, we further strengthened the relationships between the VCSE sector, local authorities, and statutory bodies through regular forums and strategic board involvement.





Brien's departure in July



We've supported over 65 organisations with advice, connections, and promotion while planning improvements to our systems and exploring funding for a new training facilitator to expand our CVS capacity.

The Meet the Funder Day continues to be a highlight, bringing together seven funders and 27 VCSE organisations. It provided a fantastic platform for relationship-building and practical fundraising guidance. Feedback was overwhelmingly positive, with 100% of respondents saying they would recommend the event, solidifying its place as a key annual initiative for the sector.

At this point, I want to take a moment to express my heartfelt thanks to our board of trustees for their ongoing support and governance throughout the year. We owe a special debt of gratitude to those trustees who have retired: Brien Beharrell (Chair of Trustees), Malcolm Poynter (Vice-Chair of Trustees), Chris Armitage (Hon. Treasurer of 17 years), Ian Nichol, and Rob Cao. We are excited to welcome our new trustees, Paul Dick, Palmira Arnau Bret, Michael Mpala, Rosalind Littlejohn, Emma Terleske, and Richard Crisp, who have joined us this year and will help steer the charity into the future.

Finally, we are deeply grateful to our funders and sponsors for their continued support: The West Berkshire Council, National Lottery Community Fund, Greenham Trust, BOB ICB, Newbury Town Council, Peter Baker Grants and Apple Print and Creative. Your belief in our mission is invaluable, and we could not do the work we do without your partnership.

Looking ahead, I'm excited about the opportunities this next year will bring, and I am confident that, with your continued support, we will continue to make a meaningful difference to the communities we serve.

Rachel Peters, Charity CEO rachel@vcwb.org.uk

## GOVERNANCE, TRUSTEES AND STAFF

It was indeed a very great honour for me to be elected as Chair of the Board of Trustees in July 2024.

I know from personal experience what a wonderful organisation the Volunteer Centre West Berkshire is from my time spent with them as a volunteer since 2017 and the invaluable services which they provide to the good people of West Berkshire.

I would personally like to put on record my sincere thanks to my predecessor as Chair, Brien Beharrell who did such a marvellous job during her time in office. My grateful thanks also go to the other retiring Trustees since the 2023/24 Annual Report – Malcolm Poynter, Chris Armitage, Ian Nicol and Rob Cao, all of whom (just like Brien) did such a splendid job during their time on the Board.

Inevitably with so many of our friends and colleagues leaving us then Rachel Peters (CEO) and I set about recruiting some new faces to the Board and I am delighted to welcome Emma, Michael, Palmira, Paul, Richard and Ros in joining Ellis, Lesley and myself onto the new Board of Trustees. We passionately believe that we have a very enthusiastic set of personnel in place, with a diverse range of skill sets which we can put to particularly effective use as we go forward.

The Trustees are of course acutely aware of what a wonderful team of staff, led by Rachel our CEO and Bernie Prizeman our Community Services Manager we have and also an army of volunteers on our books, who give up that precious commodity of time to help people in the community. There are too many to mention everyone by name individually, but I can assure you all that your hard work and dedication is very greatly appreciated.

I look forward with excitement to the future of the VCWB and to meeting all the challenges we encounter along the journey in maintaining our vital role in the community.

Gary Walsh,
Chair of Trustees





CIO 1156302

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#### **MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

Chair Brien Beharrell (Retired), Gary Walsh

Vice Chair Malcolm Poynter (Retired), Ellis Banfield

Treasurer Chris Armitage (Retired)

Ian Nicol (Retired), Lesley Wyman, Rob Cao (Resigned), Paul Dick, Palmira Arnau Bret, Michael Mpala, Rosalind Littlejohn, Emma Terleske, Richard Crisp

Minute Secretary Rosalind Littlejohn

STAFF

**CEO** Rachel Peters

Community Services Manager and Deputy to CEO

Bernie Prizeman

Accounts Officer Jacqui Letsome

Volunteer Recruitment Officer Chris Read

**Training and Events Officers** 

Pankaja Samant (Maternity Leave), Alina Zhykhareva (Maternity Cover)

Suicide Prevention Outreach Worker Sue Bennett

Handybus Coordinator Ross Wilson

Funding Advice Officer Sara Hanson (Retired)

**ShopMobility** Angie Nother (Retired), Vicky Preston, Lindsay Malyon, Sarah Bartlett

Patron David Jones

Vice Presidents Mary Baker, Tim Barton, Sue Campbell, Sue Cox, Lizzie 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

### FINANCES AND FUNDERS

The Charity wouldn't be able to continue providing the services it does for the residents and VCSE sector in West Berkshire without the continued generosity and financial donations of our partners and supporters.

A special thanks must go to our Honorary Treasurer, Chris Armitage who retired this year, after serving the charity for 17 years.

The Charity made an unrestricted surplus for the year of £7,461 against a prior year surplus of £15,232. This means that the Charity's unrestricted reserves to fund future running and overhead costs increased by £7,461 (increased by £15,232 in 2024). Following a review of the nature of funding the Charity receives; most funding was classed as restricted as it is tied to specific activities or projects within the charity. Restricted funds received amounted to £198,699 during the year. £204,429 of restricted funds was expended during the year leaving a restricted funds balance of £21,844 as at 31 March 2025.

Income	
Donations and legacies	1,454
Grant income	237,222
Direct transport income	43,713
Investment income	5,767
Other income	1,067
	289,223

Expenditure	
Transport costs	39,391
Employment costs (12 employees, 5.4 FTE)	147,366
Premises costs	12,206
Advertising and promotion	2,036
Depreciation	32,320
Postage, stationery and telephones	4,981
Other overheads	49,192

287,492

The Volunteer Centre receives financial and in kind support from many sources. We are grateful and give thanks to:

















We also wish to express our thanks to those **groups** and **individuals** who have supported VCWB during the year, whether financially or with their time.

The Volunteer Centre is proud of our strategic alliance with **Greenham Trust** and our training alliance with **Connecting Communities in Berkshire**. Our officers meet regularly to discuss and understand the issues and stresses within the sector and work in partnership to provide appropriate support and solutions to VCSE organisations.



## VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT

This year, we have given **462** individuals advice and information on volunteering (424 of these enquiries were made online/via phone and 38 in person).

Enquiries came from individuals in **48** different West Berkshire parishes.

There are currently **365** active volunteer opportunities on our database.

Our Flexiteer programme offers a flexible way for volunteers to contribute their time and skills without committing to a regular schedule. Flexiteers are notified of one-off and short-term volunteering opportunities as they become available. This year, two new volunteers joined the Flexiteer mailing list, bringing the total number of registered Flexiteers to 48.

This year, our Volunteer Centre continued to raise awareness and promote volunteering across West Berkshire. Chris delivered talks to learners at **Educafe** and **Recovery in Mind**, inspiring new audiences to consider how they can get involved in their community.

We also had a visible presence at several key outreach events, including:

- Newbury College Welcome Week connecting with new students
- **Trinity School Careers Fair** introducing young people to local volunteering opportunities
- West Berkshire Council Staff Wellbeing Day encouraging employees to volunteer and support local causes

Following the success of our V365 event at the Corn Exchange, we were pleased to support Thatcham Town Council with two local volunteer recruitment fairs. These events adopted the 'V365 On the Road' branding and were held in March, bringing volunteering opportunities closer to local residents and increasing visibility for a wide range of community groups.







#### **Volunteer Voices**

"The volunteer office in Newbury was very useful in providing me with suitable opportunities when I was new to the area. The list of organisations, complete with details and contacts, was extremely helpful."

- Sue M

"The Centre helped me explore a range of opportunities and gave me invaluable advice: don't overcommit your time, and choose something you enjoy and are passionate about. That guidance made all the difference."

- Marian S

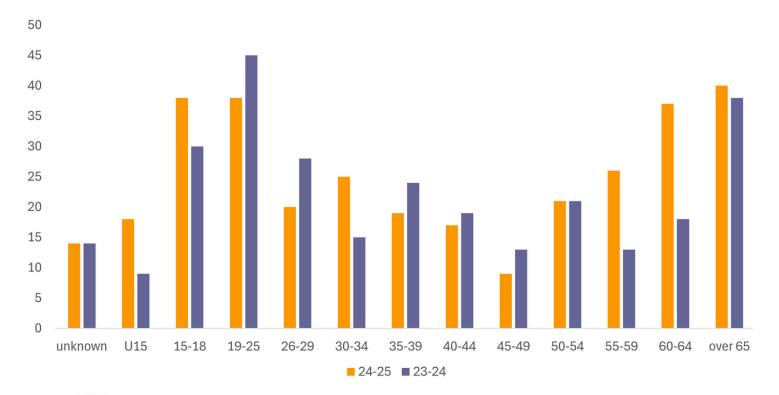
"I've been supported by the Volunteer Centre for over a decade. Chris always goes the extra mile – if he doesn't have the perfect role, he'll find it for you He's just brilliant."

- Brian C

"I was looking for something specific – art and animals – and Volunteer Centre West Berkshire came up trumps with **Living Paintings** and **Hedgehog Bottom**. I'm 80 years young and love every minute of it. Well done and thank you!"

- Jo D

This graph demonstrates the age range of new volunteers coming into the sector in 24-25 compared to 23-24





# What Our Partners Say...

"With the continued support of Chris Read and the Volunteer Centre, we have now got 16 volunteers – but we are always looking to engage more."

– Patient Information Point, from the Chairman's Report 2024

"Major appreciation goes to the Volunteer Centre West Berkshire for their support, advice, and all of the volunteers they directed toward Good Hope Farm."

– Good Hope Farm, from their end-of-year newsletter

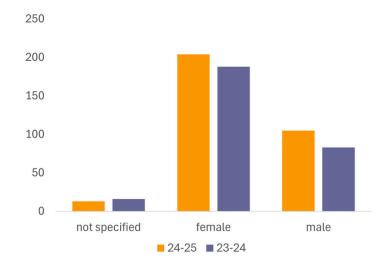
"We have welcomed 19 corporate groups into the garden (156 people) between April 2023 and March 2024. They contributed a huge amount of energy and really helped us to keep the garden in good shape. Many have returned since April, and some have already booked for 2025. Once again, thank you VCWB for pointing them in our direction."

– Five a Day Garden, from the Chair's AGM report



This graph demonstrates the gender of volunteers coming into the sector

Not all online applicants state gender at initial point of application







On a chilly Saturday in January, the Corn Exchange in Newbury was buzzing with energy and conversation. It was the day of our annual **V365 Volunteer Fair** – a much-loved event that brings together local charities and people interested in giving their time to help others.

This year, **55 charities** set up stalls to meet the public, offering a wide range of volunteering opportunities – from gardening and befriending to youth work and community support. By the end of the day, they had spoken to more than **500 potential volunteers**, with **265 meaningful contacts** made. Many visitors told us they were now much more likely to volunteer.

Over **300 people** came through the doors, many from Newbury, Thatcham and Kingsclere. While most were in the **46-65 age group**, we also welcomed younger and older attendees, showing that volunteering really is for everyone.

Our promotion in the run-up to the event worked well. Many visitors heard about it from **friends and family**, while others saw it on **Facebook**, in the **local newspaper**, or through our **email updates**. We were especially pleased with the reach of our social media – one post alone reached over **7,000 people**.

The feedback was overwhelmingly positive. Visitors loved the chance to speak directly to charities, explore new ideas, and discover roles they hadn't considered before. Charities praised the organisation and the friendly atmosphere, with many commenting that this year felt busier and better than before.

Of course, we also listened to suggestions. Some organisations said the space felt a little tight at peak times, and a few visitors suggested clearer signage and more room to move between stalls. These are all things we'll take on board for next time.

In short, **V365 2025 was a great success** – a day full of connections, conversations, and community spirit. It showed once again how powerful it can be to bring people together in one space, united by a shared goal: to make a difference.

The busy hall at V365



# THE NEWBURY COMMUNITY CAR SCHEME

Our Volunteer Car Scheme continues to be a lifeline for older and less mobile residents in Newbury, helping them get to essential appointments – especially those related to health and medical care, both within West Berkshire and further afield.

This service would not be possible without our incredible team of **46 volunteer drivers**, **41 of whom** actively drove this year. Our volunteer drivers completed **1,476 journeys**, helping people get to hospital, clinic, GP, and dental appointments. We've seen growing demand for help reaching larger hospitals across Berkshire and Hampshire, and many passengers are now using our **Chairman vehicle** for longer or more complex trips.

Behind the scenes, our 13 office volunteers play an equally important role – taking calls, handling requests, and ensuring that every journey runs smoothly. Their support keeps the service running day to day.

We're also very grateful to **Jeff Goodenough**, who continues to volunteer his time and expertise to maintain and improve the bespoke database he built for the Car

Scheme. Thanks to his ongoing work, we can track our activity more accurately, understand our clients' needs better, and run a more efficient service overall.

To make things easier, we introduced **card payments**, so passengers no longer need to handle cash – and neither do our drivers.

Our car scheme telephones are open from 10am to 1pm Monday to Friday on 01635 49004



"Especially the use of the Chairman – without it, I wouldn't be able to go." – C.M.

"Truly grateful – thank you so much." – A.B.

Destinations	24-25	23-24
Newbury	749.5	858
Thatcham	131	169
Hungerford	31	18
Reading	310.5	283
Oxford	58	33
Basingstoke	124	70
North Hants excl. Basingstoke	1	7
Swindon	1	1
London	1	1
Other	69	58
Total	1476	1498

Journey type	24-25	23-24
Hospital/clinic	904	934.5
Surgery	247.5	253
Dentist	57	63
Optician	10	15
Day centre	35	19
Club	48	34
Shopping	3	1
Relative/friend	3	5.5
Care home	79	107
Other	89.5	66
Total	1476	1498

# NEWBURY & THATCHAM HANDYBUS

This year saw continued growth and development across our Handybus and Chairman Vehicle services, helping more people in **Newbury and Thatcham** stay connected and active in their communities.

We introduced a **new regular private hire route** for the Fair Close Centre in January, and we've also seen increased interest in our **Saturday Special trips, lunch clubs, and outings arranged by local organisations.** Our new **monthly garden centre trip** launched in March and is already proving popular, with nine more planned for the coming year.

The **Chairman Car**, has been well used, supporting individual and small group transport needs, especially where mobility or access to services is limited.

We've placed a strong focus on **recruitment** this year, attending **events** to raise awareness of our services and encourage more people to volunteer as drivers. These events not only helped with recruitment but also promoted the broader benefits of the service, helping to ensure our buses are out in the community – not sitting idle.

We currently have **20 regular drivers**, with another **8 occasional drivers** helping when they can. We're pleased to have welcomed **three new drivers** this year: **Alice Fogg, Micky Adamantos**, and **Ian Wood**, with another in the process of joining. Sadly, **two long-standing drivers stepped down** due to age, including **Trevor Lisseman**, who also provided invaluable support in the office – our heartfelt thanks go to him.

Looking ahead, we're planning further trips, continued collaboration with organisations like **Berkshire Youth** and

Our Jubilee Handybus



and the **Young Dementia Group**, and regular driver meetings to build team spirit and share feedback.

Together, our volunteers and staff have delivered another strong year of community-focused transport – keeping people connected, supported, and moving.

Newbury	
Single trips	660 (845) ▼ 22%
Passenger trips	1844 (1983) ▼7%
Miles	6867 (5933) 🛕 15.7%
Volunteer hours	1080 (990.5) 🛦 9%

Thatcham	
Single trips	450 (418)   7.7%
Passenger trips	1819 (1608) 🛦 13.1%
Miles	6287 (7140) <b>▼ 12%</b>
Volunteer hours	819.5 (650.4) 🛕 2.6%

Chairman	
Single trips	246 (356) ▼31%
Passenger trips	236 (230) 🛦 2.6%
Miles	2308 (2830) ▼18.4%
Volunteer hours	337 (388.5) <b>13.3%</b>



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

## NEWBURY SHOPMOBILITY

At Newbury ShopMobility, we believe that freedom of movement is a fundamental right. Whether you're a resident of West Berkshire or a visitor to the area, mobility challenges shouldn't be a barrier to living life fully. That's why our service exists – to help people stay independent, connected, and confident in their everyday activities.

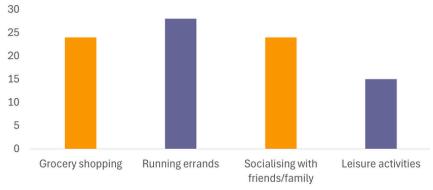
Throughout the year, ShopMobility has continued to support hundreds of individuals with accessible, affordable mobility solutions. We offer a wide range of equipment, including manual wheelchairs, powered chairs, and mobility scooters – helping people with disabilities or short-term mobility issues get out and about with ease. We also stock a selection of small daily living aids available for purchase in-store.

This year has seen a **notable increase in engagement** with our ShopMobility service, highlighting its importance in promoting accessibility and independence.

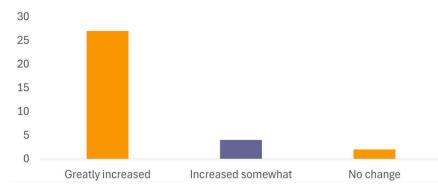
- **162 new members** joined, with the majority coming from Newbury and Thatcham.
- Membership **renewals remained steady**, increasing slightly from 31 to 32, showing continued trust and satisfaction among long-term users.
- **Visitor numbers rose significantly**, from 29 to 51, indicating broader appeal and increasing use by people visiting the area.

In our ongoing commitment to improve and measure the value of our service, we rolled out a **revised customer questionnaire**. From October '24, we received feedback from **27 users**, offering deeper insight into how ShopMobility is making a difference in people's lives:

#### Activities supported by ShopMobility



Impacted your sense of independence - over **86%** of users felt their independence had **greatly increased**, highlighting the life-enhancing value of the service



National ShopMobility Awareness Day



Membership type	This year	Last year
New members	162	116
Renewals	32	31
Visitors	51	29

The high satisfaction levels, along with thoughtful suggestions, affirm that users deeply value the service. We will continue to act on feedback and maintain our commitment to accessibility, affordability, and outstanding support.

We are proud to operate with the continued support of **West Berkshire Council**, ensuring that this vital service remains accessible and affordable to those who need it most.

Opening Hours:
Tuesday to Saturday, 9.30am – 3.30pm
01635 523854
newburyshopmobility@vcwb.org.uk



# VOLUNTARY SECTOR SUPPORT: PARTNERSHIPS AND FORUMS

Our mission this year was to lead and demonstrate the value of strong partnerships between the VCSE sector, the Local Authority, BOB ICS, and other statutory bodies. We worked to strengthen the VCSE's voice in decision-making spaces and support the sector through our role as a Council for Voluntary Service (CVS).

#### **Key Achievements**

**Partnership & Engagement:** Facilitated 24 forums across diverse themes (Arts, Children & Young People, Poverty, SEND, Sports, Safeguarding, and general VCSE Voice) with active participation from both VCSE groups and statutory partners including West Berkshire Council, Greenham Trust, and Berkshire Community Foundation.

**Strategic Representation:** Maintained regular presence at strategic boards including the Health & Wellbeing Board (4 meetings), Steering Group (5), Locality Integration Board (7), and VCSE Alliance (6). Participated in safeguarding and community safety meetings to advocate for the sector.

**Support to VCSE Sector:** Responded to 92 enquiries from 65 organisations and 2 members of the public. Support ranged from advice (24 cases) to connections (38), promotion, fundraising, and equipment sourcing.

**Networking & Events:** Engaged in over 20 sector-related events including funders forums, AGMs, awards judging panels, remembrance services, and peer support groups to maintain visibility and build relationships.

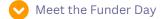
#### Successes

- V365 event was a notable success in celebrating volunteering.
- Trusted to judge the West Berkshire Community Champions Awards.
- Positive support provided to organisations planning their strategic growth.

#### **Funding Support**

In September, Broadway House once again became the hub of collaboration and possibility as we hosted our annual *Meet the Funder Day*. Building on the success of last year's event, this year's gathering brought together seven prominent local and national funders with one shared mission: to connect with the incredible voluntary and community organisations working tirelessly across our region.

Over the course of the day, 27 VCSE organisations walked through our doors, each one given the opportunity to sit down face-to-face with funders to ask questions, share their mission, and better understand the funding





landscape. Some met with just one funder, but most seized the opportunity to speak with multiple – 42% of attendees met between four and seven funders, with a few meeting all seven. These meaningful conversations opened doors, clarified processes, and sparked ideas.

The funders who attended – Greenham Trust, Berkshire Community Foundation, Sport England, The Clothworkers Foundation, Bernard Sunley Foundation, BWB Technologies Community Fund, and Lloyds Bank Foundation – brought with them not only knowledge but a real openness to building new relationships. Although one funder, Wooden Spoon Charity, was unable to attend on the day, the energy in the room remained strong and purposeful throughout.

The event was promoted widely through our newsletter, social media, and direct invitations, with most attendees learning about it through personal outreach. Inside the building, seven appointment stations ran simultaneously, while our waiting room buzzed with informal networking and conversation. The room was filled with a sense of possibility – organisations left not just with business cards, but with real momentum.

Feedback was overwhelmingly positive. 41% of attendees rated the session as "fantastic" for its usefulness, while similar numbers said they left feeling inspired and confident it would make a real difference to their work. Importantly, 100% said they would recommend the session to a colleague or friend. A few helpful comments were made about improving clarity of funder information next year, which we've already taken on board.

While the full impact of the event will be measured in six months through a follow-up survey, the immediate results tell a clear story: this event is now a key part of our support offer to the sector. More than just a day of meetings, *Meet the Funder Day* continues to build bridges, strengthen partnerships, and support our shared goal of creating a thriving, resilient West Berkshire.

# VOLUNTARY SECTOR SUPPORT: DIGITAL ACTIVITY

This year, our focus was on enhancing communication, training delivery, office management, and digital presence. We supported the charity's mission by creating engaging social media content, promoting opportunities through our weekly newsletter, managing training events, and overseeing digital and office operations.

#### **Key Achievements**

**Training Delivery:** Promoted **267 training opportunities** via our weekly newsletter and **delivered 19 workshops**, reaching **170 delegates**. Courses included suicide prevention (adults and youth), first aid, dementia, co-production, and parental conflict reduction.



#### Digital Activity & Engagement:

Newsletter: 51 issues sent to 845 subscribers (an increase of 31 since the previous report) with an average open rate of 35%, featuring 51 job vacancies, 267 training opportunities, events, and sector news.

#### Website Usage:

**Volunteer Enquiry Form:** 2,033 entries (+486)

Simple Contact Form: 3,063 entries (+1,705) Training Booking: 583 entries (+133)

#### Social Media:

**Facebook:** 1,860 followers (+173), 366.3K impressions, 58.7K reach (+19.8%), 10.9K

page visits (+55.9%)

Instagram: 415 followers (+56)

LinkedIn: 204 followers (+53), 205 page

views

**X (Twitter):** 2,231 followers (-51), 34.5K

impressions

Launched #ThrowbackThursday campaign

to celebrate 50 years of service.

Promoting our Voluntary Sector Voice forums





A Throwback
Thursday post,
featuring one of
our earliest
reports





## **VOLUNTARY SECTOR SUPPORT:** TRAINING

#### Training is a core element of our Voluntary Sector Support offer.

It strengthens the skills and capacity of individuals and organisations, ensuring compliance with legal and regulatory standards.

Through tailored learning opportunities, we support the sustainability and growth of voluntary groups, improve service delivery, and enhance community impact. Training also boosts volunteer engagement and retention, fosters collaboration, increases access to funding, and builds trust and credibility across the sector.

This year we delivered 19 workshops on various subjects, training a total of 170 individuals from the VCSE sector in West Berkshire.

To find out more about our upcoming training courses, visit

www.voluntarysectortrainingalliance.org.uk

Training course/workshop	Number of courses/ workshops	Delegates
Suicide First Aid Lite	7	56
Suicide First Aid: Children & Young People	5	43
Everyday First Aid	1	9
Emergency First Aid at Work Level 3	2	20
Feeling confident with bereavement	1	9
Co-production	1	17
Reducing Parental Conflict	1	6
Dementia Friend training	1	10
Total	19	170



West Berkshire Council delivered 🔼 training to introduce the sector to co-production



Responding to demand from the sector, we offered two Emergency First Aid at Work Level 3 courses this year



# WEST BERKSHIRE SUICIDE PREVENTION ACTION

Over the past year, 12 Suicide Prevention First Aid courses were delivered to 99 attendees from a wide range of West Berkshire organisations.

These included local charities, youth services, educational institutions, arts and cultural venues, healthcare professionals, statutory services, and businesses. Attendees came from groups such as Berkshire Women's Aid, CRUSE, West Berks Food Bank, Blind Veterans, City Arts, Vodafone, GP surgeries, schools and colleges, Newbury Rugby, and Thatcham Town Council, among many others.

Each participant received a personalised Certificate of Attendance and a digital badge, and those completing the full course were given guidance on how to pursue an accredited Level 4 qualification from the Royal Society of Public Health.

This year, our outreach worker, Sue, continued to represent the service by attending the quarterly Suicide Prevention Action Group, delivered a presentation at the Trustees Induction, and spoke about her role at the Voice Forum at the DoubleTree Hilton in Chieveley.

She also met with West Berks Council to deliver a bespoke Children and Young People (CYP) course at Shaw House for secondary school representatives – a particularly timely and well-received session.

Another standout event was delivering a tailored session at Euro Car Parts as part of their Mental Health and Wellbeing Day for managers, highlighting how organisations can actively care for their workforce.

The feedback received continues to reflect the emotional depth and value of this work.



To strengthen community engagement, over 100 QR code stickers linking to support resources were distributed. These are now visible in surgeries, pubs, cafés, leisure centres, libraries, and other local venues, helping make information about suicide support more accessible across West Berkshire.

Sue Bennett, our Suicide Prevention Outreach
Worker, works 8 hours a week and can be contacted
by email on wbspag@vcwb.org.uk



WBSPAG QR code sticker





Thursday 7th November 2024, 9:30am-1:00pm



City & Guilds

A half-day suicide prevention education programme.

The training will equip you with the tools to enable you to ask the right questions and signpost people to the right support.



Course provided by Volunteer Centre West Berkshire

Touristie Incorporated Organization No. 1116302

WBSPAG



**WBSPAG** 

**West Berkshire Suicide Prevention Action Group** 



Our 50<sup>th</sup> birthday celebration at the Waterside Centre - thanking some of our long-serving volunteers

None of what we do would be possible without our incredible volunteers. Their dedication, time, and care are the backbone of our success, and we are deeply grateful to each and every one of them.

#### **Car Drivers**

Since 1974, our service has thrived thanks to the selfless commitment of our volunteer drivers. Their patience and compassion make a real difference to the lives of those we serve.

#### Thank you to:

Mary Baker, Richard Baker, Steve Bartlett, Jane Bellmont, Caroline Billington, Sam (Simon) Brown, Sue Campbell, Simon Carter, David Cussans, Mervyn Else, Peter Fergusson, Iain Firth, John Fleming, Duncan Gibb, Graeme Hindhaugh, Graham Hunt, Ian Langley, Trevor Lisseman, Graeme MacDonald, Jenny McCartney, Robert Meyer, Hazel Owen, Neil Pegg, Annie Potter, Keith Richards, Gary Shambrook, Marian Smitheman, Chris Strang, Malcolm Thomas, Gary Walsh, Bob Whiting.

We welcomed the following new drivers this year - John Abramson, Micky Adamantos, Bob Day, Alice Fogg, Mark Letsome, Tim Lewis and Karen Sadler, and said goodbye to Angus Macdonald who retired this year after many years of volunteer driving.

#### **Handybus Drivers**

Operating since 1986, our Handybus service relies on a dedicated team of volunteer drivers who provide care, time, and patience every day. We thank them for their unwavering support.

#### Thank you to:

Micky Adamantos, Richard Aston, Adrian Aylward-Brown, Neil Cave, David Coppock, Philip Eaton, Peter Eeles, Alice Fogg, Richard Foster, Graeme Hindhaugh, Oliver Hinton, lan Langley, Darren Merry, Mark Lewis, Diane Loveridge, Roderick McGregor, Annie Potter, Sheena Ronan, Gary Shambrook, Gary Walsh, Jeremy Whitmore and Ian Wood.

We welcomed the following new drivers this year - Micky Adamantos, Alice Fogg, Jeremy Whitmore, Ian Wood and Roger Ekaneyake who joined us briefly before retiring to Spain.

#### Office Volunteers

Behind the scenes, our office volunteers are essential. From answering calls and supporting clients to coordinating drivers and managing administration, their contributions keep everything running smoothly.

#### Thank you to:

Lizzie Fenton, Ros Littlejohn, Katy Hawthorne, Gill Brown, Karen Eeles, Catriona Ottner, Jean Fleming, Sarah Summerbell, Julia Jones, Jeff Goodenough, Karen Robbins, Julian Greaves, and Gill Smith (who retired this year).

We also welcome Nicole Bakehouse, Sarah Boyle, and Alyson Hardy who have strengthened our office team this year.

Special thanks also to Bob Day, our volunteer photographer, whose wonderful images enrich this report.

#### ShopMobility Volunteers

A dynamic duo supporting customer service and administration at ShopMobility - your help is invaluable!

#### Thank you to:

Pat Lisseman and a special thanks to Angela Neale, who retired this year after being with Shopmobility from the beginning.







The Queen's Award for Voluntary Service