



Volunteer Centre

Broxbourne & East Herts

Annual Review and summary financial statement 2008-09



Our Mission is for Volunteer Centre Broxbourne & East Herts to promote, support and develop volunteering throughout the Borough of Broxbourne & East Herts District.

The organisation has provided a focus for volunteering in the Borough of Broxbourne for 13 years and in East Herts for the last 2 years.

Qualified staff offer Information, Advice and Guidance to volunteers and to volunteer-involving organisations, and work with other agencies in the overall development of the local voluntary sector.

Our Vision is to develop a high profile and high quality information resource and training centre for volunteers and volunteer co-ordinators, and to ensure our services are accessible to everyone, regardless of geographical location, ethnicity, abilities, interests, skills, gender, sexual orientation, age or employment status.

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Chair's Report

How did Broxbourne manage before Volunteer Centre Broxbourne & East Herts?

This is our first report following the division of the old BVSDA and the Volunteer Centre Broxbourne & East Herts becoming independent. The strategy behind the split was to enable both organisations to establish a clearer identity and focus in order to be in a stronger position to attract funding and deliver effective services to the community.

Going it alone as a registered charity and Company Limited by Guarantee was however a potential risk for the Volunteer Centre. But with a newly formed and committed Trustee Board and the experience and dedication of our Manager, Loretta Borg, the organisation has achieved a very healthy position.

Central to this was the successful application to the Big Lottery Reaching Communities, details of which are contained in the Treasurer's Report. This funding is to maintain and improve the Centre's services and to extend its activities into East Hertfordshire. It has enabled us to recruit 3 Guidance Officers to work as a team under Loretta's leadership.

The lottery funding combined with our contracts for delivery of Information Advice and Guidance (via nextstep) and training courses (via Hertfordshire Adult and Family Learning Services) now gives us much greater diversity in our income streams.

When the Centre became an independent body in 2008 we entered a new and uncertain world. Under the guidance of Loretta Borg as Director and Sarah Elliot as the Chair, five year support from Big Lottery's Reaching Communities fund enabled the Centre to enjoy increased financial stability and establish a team of advisors, staff and volunteers to create a centre of excellence.

It is hard now to envisage the community activity of the Borough without the support of Volunteer Centre Broxbourne & East Herts.

All credit then to Loretta for providing such sure guidance. Thanks to her inspired leadership major funding has been secured from Big Lottery, Learning Skills Council, Herts County Council, Broxbourne Borough Council and others. As the name implies Volunteer Centre Broxbourne & East Herts now works in East Herts in cooperation with East Herts District Council.

And what does the future hold for the Volunteer Centre?

The current economic climate places greater responsibilities on the Volunteer Centre Broxbourne & East Herts to advise, support, guide and provide training to potential volunteers, including those who have lost their jobs during the recession and in response to the government's drive to move people off benefits and into work.

The need for volunteering in the community has never been greater and the Volunteer Centre is well placed to offer a vital stepping-stone to build the confidence and work experience of clients to improve their employability.

However this work is resource heavy and the support of central and local government agencies and the private sector is crucial to the Volunteer Centre and local infrastructure.

Director's report

It is with great pleasure that I report on our progress and achievements.

It is fair to say that becoming independent has been liberating and energising. We have strengthened our position in Broxbourne and are rapidly expanding our services in East Herts, developing new partnerships and opportunities to build and support organisations and individuals in the community.

I am very grateful to Sarah Elliott, our former Chair; together we worked long and hard on a funding application to Big Lottery, successfully achieving 5 years funding. This has provided the core needed to enable us to employ 5 staff and 2 freelance trainers. We have a fantastic team who work tirelessly to meet the ever increasing demand on our services, a **very big thank** you to all of them.

A snapshot of how we have grown

Provision of advice

2007 – 2008	486 new customers
2008 – 2009	1194 new customers
2009 – 2010	1600 (based on figures to date)

Provision of training

2007 – 2008	84 attendees (average 3 days each)
2008 – 2009	153 attendees (average 3 days each)
2009 – 2010	209 attendees (average 3 days each)

We provide a unique service in Broxbourne & East Herts; we have taken the building block approach in our development. Starting with the foundations we offer IAG and Volunteering Brokerage services to all of our customers.

By listening to our customer feedback our services now also include: Personal Development Training, Employability Training, Coaching & Mentoring and links into local business opportunities.

We have made great strides and with the continued support of our funders we are well placed to continue along this course, at a time when things are very tough for a lot of people.

I would like to thank again my fantastic team, Juli, Peter, Deborah and Jules, our trainers Amanda and Jonathan, our many volunteers, supporters, funders, organisations, trustees and partners, all have contributed to our growth and success. I thank them for sharing the vision and I thank them for believing in what we have worked long and hard to achieve to date.

No doubt we face many challenges going forward, increased demand for our services and in this current economic climate ever more challenging access to funding.

We will continue to develop partnerships and work hard to ensure we are not just meeting, but taking action to support the additional needs of organisations and customers.

Questions and answers

Q. I could help ... but what time commitment do I have to make?

A. It's entirely up to you. You could work for few hours during the day, evening or weekends, once a week or even monthly. You choose whatever time suits you and the organisation best. The only thing we ask is that you commit to doing your voluntary work on a regular basis.

Q. I don't want to be out of pocket. Will I get expenses paid?

A. Nobody should be out of pocket as a result of volunteering. Nearly all organisations pay out of pocket expenses including travel.

Q. I'm unemployed. Will it affect my benefits?

A. No. You won't lose any benefits as volunteering is unpaid work. It may even give you the experience you need to get the job you're after.

Q. What does the Volunteer Centre offer in return for my time?

A. Personal one-to-one Information Advice and Guidance about volunteering, employment and training. Hundreds of work experience opportunities through volunteering. Free local training courses for example: confidence building, teamwork, personal development, interview skills, stress awareness, goal setting and CV writing. In fact all the keys to successful job applications.

Q. That sounds great but is it really FREE?

A. Absolutely and what's more you get a FREE LUNCH when you attend our training. Yes, there is such a thing as a free lunch.

Q. How do I find out more?

A. Phone: 01992 638633
or
email: admin@vcbroxbourne.org.uk

You can also check out volunteering opportunities online at: www.do-it.org.uk

Q. How does VCB&EH fit in with the local community?

A. VCB&EH has established itself as an integral part of the local community by working in partnership with other local agencies and organisations. Through the development of partnership working it has been able to offer a wider variety of services to the local community, including information, advice & guidance and training.

Strong links between VCB&EH and other local organisations mean that additional funding can be accessed to offer services and that the team at the centre are extremely knowledgeable about other provision locally that may benefit their members.

As the Manager of the centre, Loretta is very active in the community and attends a variety of local meetings. This ensures that the centre is well represented and plays an active part in decisions regarding services available to local residents.

Case study 1

I began my journey by attending an Improving your Chances course in December 2007. I then went onto volunteering when I was asked to become a second volunteer on the course.

Now I'm the lead assistant and I do all the administration for the course, book venues, arrange catering and do all the Health and Safety checks. I now volunteer in the centre 5 days a week.

In my personal development I have gone from having no one to talk to and no sense of purpose to now, where I have a close circle of friends who have done so much to support me and a volunteer job where I'm given respect. I have completed my NVQ Level 2 in Business studies and I'm going onto Level 3.

I don't think anyone from outside realises just how much the courses and volunteering can change a person's life for the better.

Case study 2

I have attended the 'Improving Your Chances Course' and in these courses I have gained confidence and motivation.

One of the highlights in the workshop was when the tutor talked about the importance of communication skills such as body language and voice tone. I had a light bulb moment and thought, WOW I understand now.

This hugely helped me with my interview for the Access to humanities and Social Studies course I am attending.

The courses are life-changing!

Volunteering in action



Treasurer's Report

The Volunteer Centre is continuing to see the benefits of the Big Lottery Reaching Communities grant amounting to £380000 over 5 years. This vital support for core funding has enabled the expanded team to deliver improved services and expand the reach of activities.

Whilst many volunteer centres across the county are struggling to maintain a viable service, thanks to the vision and dedication of the manager at Volunteer Centre Broxbourne & East Herts a model has been established which offers a greater chance of sustainability.

The Centre has a number of diverse revenue streams in addition to the lottery funding; it has developed contracts for the delivery of Information, Advice and Guidance (via nextstep) and training courses (via Hertfordshire Adult and Family Learning Service). These contracts, although highly demanding, have enabled the Centre to develop its capacity and be in a stronger position to bid for future projects. In the last year other funding has included liC (Investing in Communities) and (Local Area Agreement) LAA money.

The trustees have determined the appropriate levels of reserves that should be set aside during the following years based on likely income and expenditure.

Copies of the audited accounts are available on request from our office.

Financial Summary

Incoming resources	Year end 31/03/09	Year End 31/03/08
	£	£
Voluntary income	-	24,127
Activities for generating funds	204,337	64,109
Investment income	870	2048
Total incoming resources	205,207	90,284
 Resources Expended		
	£	£
Charitable activities	150,855	53,958
Governance costs	1,494	1,380
Total resources expended	152,349	55,338
Net Incoming resources	52,858	34,946
 Reconciliation of funds		
Total funds brought forward	34,946	-
Total funds carried forward	87,804	34,946

Our funders



Staff, Volunteers and Trustees

Our thanks to:

Sarah Elliott (Chair to March 2009)*

John Howson, Website Designer, Ariadne Designs

**As Chair Sarah brought a wealth of experience and great commitment to the Volunteer Centre. We look forward to continuing to work with her in her new role at Hertfordshire Training and Development Consortium.*

The current trustees:

Mike Hanks (Chair)

Russell Hedger (Treasurer), ADHD Coach

Claire Miles (Secretary)

Rob Bennett, Educational Consultant

Stephanie Mills, NextStep Centre, Waltham Cross

Amanda Rogers, Independent Trainer, Ripple Effect

Observer: Frances Sidey, Partnership Officer HCC

The staff team:

Loretta Borg

Juli Riley

Peter Egan

Deborah Matthews

Jules Moule

Independent Trainers:

Amanda Rogers

Jonathan Cohen

