

# Tamworth Centre for Voluntary Services

Annual Review 2010-2011



Supporting Voluntary Action in Tamworth

[www.tamworth-cvs.org.uk](http://www.tamworth-cvs.org.uk)





## From the Chair

**2010-11** has been another mixed and challenging year for the voluntary and community sector (VCS) and for Tamworth CVS.

The impact of public funding cuts on the VCS in Tamworth has still to fully unfold. As some public sector partners restructure and commit to greater commissioning of services, which should provide opportunities for the VCS, these opportunities have been slow to materialise and a hiatus exists between former structures and funding arrangements and the “brave new world”, which puts voluntary sector services, jobs and organisations at risk.

Last year I wrote:

*“In a changing funding environment, we all need to think differently about how we sustain our services. CVS will do all it can to support groups to adapt and respond to the changing environment in order that they can remain true to their aims.”*

I was pleased to see from our annual impact survey that almost 2/3 of respondents felt that their organisation was more sustainable as a result of support from TCVS. However, we must not rest on our laurels. Looking forward, we will continue our work and develop new ways to support the sector to cope with these shifting sands.

Tamworth CVS is not immune to these difficulties. Faced with year on year reductions in funding, we embarked on an action plan in the latter half of the year to help improve our sustainability and ensure that we can continue into the future to provide support services to the sector and to volunteers.

During 2010-11 we have seen a number of changes, both in the staff team and on the Board. We said goodbye to Compact and Partnerships Officer, David Basset, and Volunteering for Health Worker, Andrea McLoughlin as their contracts came to an end. We also wished well to Kerry Vieira, Volunteering Support Worker, as she went on maternity leave, and welcomed Julie Ravell in her place. On the board we welcomed new members Andy Ellis, Selina Hewlett, Kent Peters and Lisa Turner. I would like to thank trustees, staff members and all our wonderful volunteers for their contribution to the work of Tamworth CVS over the year.

Pat Dix

## Pride of Tamworth Community Awards

June 2010 saw the inaugural Pride of Tamworth Community Awards event - a prestigious gala celebration evening at Drayton Manor.

The awards aim to recognise and celebrate the contribution and achievements of local people and groups who make a real difference to community life in Tamworth.

Pride of Tamworth was conceived by Tamworth CVS and we led a small, multi-agency team in launching the scheme and organising the first Pride of Tamworth event, which was received to high acclaim.



In 2010-11 we received funding from:



“ Without the support of Tamworth CVS it is unlikely we would have received the grant and therefore would have been unable to proceed with the project we had planned. ”

## Voice and Influence for the Sector

We recognise the importance of ensuring that the sector has a strong, collective voice and opportunities to influence policy and the planning and delivery of services. During the year we organised and facilitated four meetings of the Tamworth Voluntary and Community Sector Forum covering such themes as safeguarding, Staffordshire LINK, Big Society, and personalisation and commissioning. These events provided opportunities for VCS groups to discuss issues with officers from a number of different statutory bodies along with Tamworth MP, Christopher Pincher. The Forum also provides invaluable opportunities for groups to network and share information.

Following the change of government, the relaxation of requirements for Local Strategic Partnerships and the abolition of Local Area Agreements, an in-depth review of partnership structures and priorities took place in the latter half of the year, resulting in the dismantling of the former Tamworth Local Strategic Partnership, with its thematic partnerships and sub-groups. With a significant shift in emphasis from structures to outcomes, these arrangements were replaced by the end of the year with a single Tamworth Strategic Partnership (TSP) Board, comprising representation from public bodies and the business sector, along with a place for Tamworth CVS to represent the interests of the Voluntary and Community Sector. The vision and strategic priorities for Tamworth were agreed as:

**Vision:** One Tamworth, Perfectly Placed

**Strategic Priority 1:** To aspire and prosper in Tamworth

**Strategic Priority 2:** To be healthier and safer in Tamworth

As we moved into 2011-12, work was starting on setting up a series of task and finish groups to address key issues for Tamworth. Tamworth CVS will keep the voluntary and community sector up to date on the development of these, along with opportunities to engage and influence going forward.

“ Better networking with groups we would not naturally come into contact with. ”

## Building the Capacity of Voluntary and Community Organisations

Work continued steadfastly in 2010-11, providing one-to-one development support on setting up a group; governance; legal structures; funding; business planning; project development, quality systems; managing people and employment law; finance management; marketing and promotion; and a range of organisation policy and procedural matters.

Groups responding to our impact survey, conducted early in 2011, reported that our support had led to increased confidence to make funding applications (89.5%); greater awareness of funding opportunities (94.4%); increased knowledge, skills and confidence (60%) and their being better informed about relevant issues (71.4%). 62.5% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that their organisation was more sustainable as a result of support from TCVS.

## SCIO

SCIO increasingly plays an important part in the life and work of Tamworth CVS, and we have continued to play a leading role in it during the year. SCIO is the Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent Consortium of Infrastructure Organisations - a partnership of 12 voluntary sector support agencies working together to improve quality, sustainability and access to support services for voluntary and community organisations and for volunteers. Rather than SCIO being viewed as a separate, unrelated entity that happens somewhere outside Tamworth, we prefer to see it as a way of working, and indeed Tamworth CVS is the face of SCIO in Tamworth. As we moved into 2011-12, SCIO embarked on a number of innovative and exciting developments that will benefit the voluntary and community sector in the coming years.



“ We have found that the support given to our more vulnerable volunteers has been crucial in settling them into full participation in our activities and we appreciate that, because we are anxious to be welcoming to all who want to join us. ”

“ The Volunteer Centre enables us to attract a wide range of volunteers from all walks of life. ”

## Developing Volunteering

Demand for Volunteer Centre services remained high, with Volunteer Centre staff and volunteers working with over 1,300 new and existing volunteers during the year.

Our core volunteering development and support services continued throughout the year:

- Marketing volunteering
- Recruiting, placing and supporting volunteers
- Supporting volunteer-involving organisations to build their capacity to recruit and manage volunteers and develop volunteering opportunities.

**Volunteering for All**, our supported volunteering programme, aims to enable people facing barriers to volunteering - through incapacity, mental ill-health, lack of confidence or social situation - to engage in volunteering. Again, we saw a range of positive outcomes for participants, including improved confidence and self esteem, gaining skills and experience and improvement to health and well-being. During the year we worked with 74 volunteers with additional support needs.

Similar outcomes were achieved for individuals engaging with **Volunteering for Health**, the countywide project designed and managed by Tamworth CVS, which worked closely with health professionals to promote volunteering as a route to improved health and well-being. This project ended mid year due to lack of funding.

In 2010-11 we continued to be at the forefront of volunteering development in Staffordshire: leading on SCIO's volunteering work; supporting and co-ordinating the Volunteer Centre Network across Staffordshire; and providing advice to the **Volunteer Staffordshire** campaign, a partnership initiative between Staffordshire County Council and Volunteer Centres Staffordshire to increase volunteering in the county. Under Tamworth CVS's leadership, Volunteer Centres Staffordshire achieved Volunteering England's Volunteer Centre Quality Award in February 2011.

## 2010-11 at a glance

- With our support, groups in Tamworth secured **£161,944** of funding
- **30** Funderfinder sessions delivered
- Regular dissemination of funding information to **213** groups
- **6** editions of our Tamworth Connects newsletter issued to **213** groups
- Proactive organisational health checks, resulting in detailed action plans, conducted with **35** groups
- **4** meetings of the Tamworth Voluntary and Community Sector Forum organised and facilitated
- **787** new volunteers registered and referred to opportunities within **201** groups
- Ongoing support provided to **585** existing volunteers
- Information and advice provided to **213** volunteer-involving organisations
- In-depth support in working with volunteers provided to **37** volunteer-involving organisations

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