



IMPACT REPORT 2013 ▶ 2014

Business support

Volunteering

Adult learning

Accounts & budget

exetercvs.org.uk

welcome to exeter cvs

Our vision is of active communities that are truly alive: informed, engaged and resilient.

Our mission is to awaken the potential within communities by creating and connecting “doers”: people whose passion is infectious and whose actions deliver change.

Building stronger communities

Business support

Resources, networking and insights to make local VCSE organisations fit for purpose. Page 4

Learning

Delivering low-cost personal and professional development training to individuals and organisations. Page 9



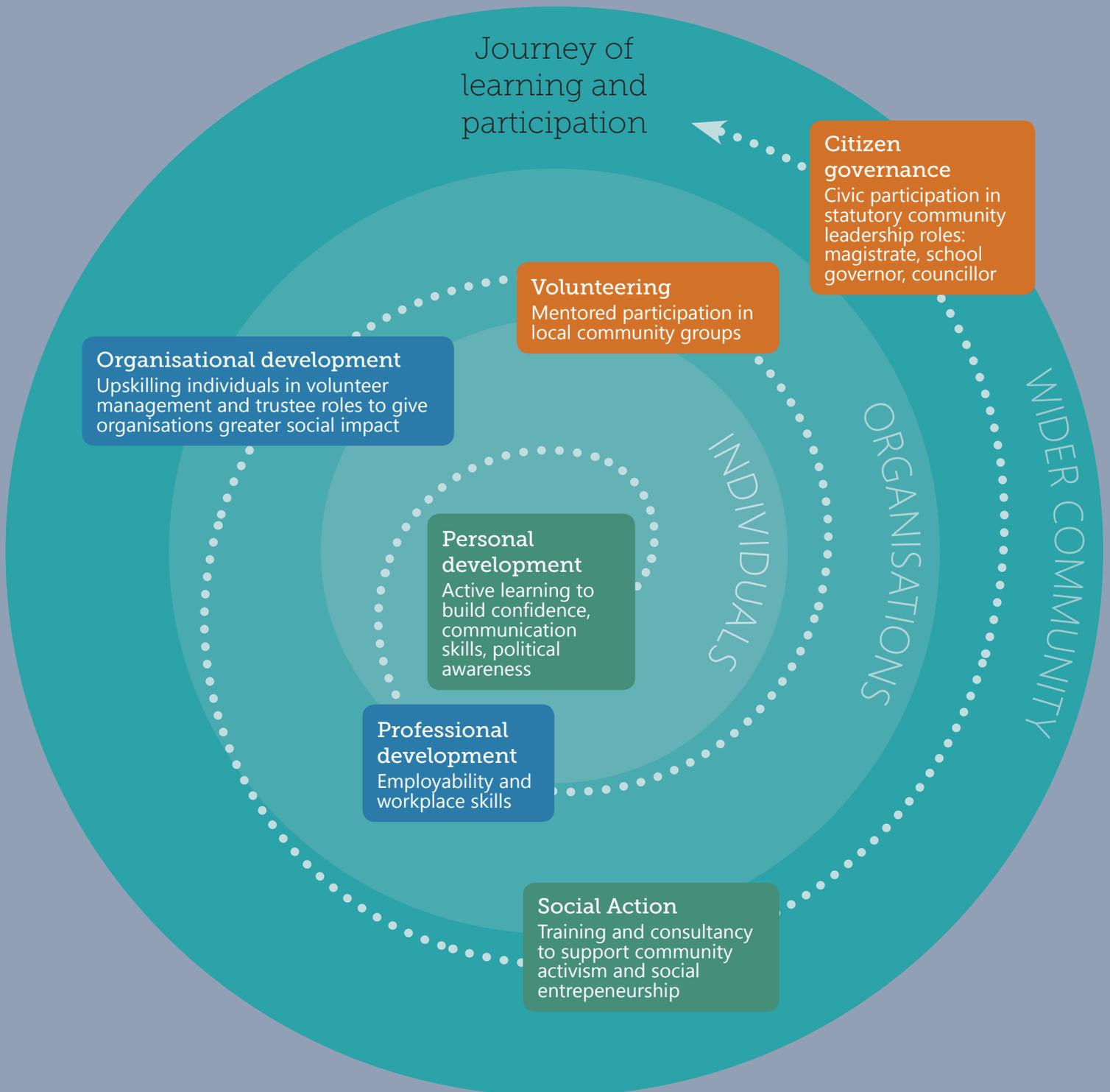
Volunteering

Promoting participation through volunteering, engagement with local services and local democracy. Page 15

Accounts & Budget

How ECVS income is used to build stronger communities, with financial report for 2013-14. Inside back cover

Impact Report 2013-2014



welcome to exeter cvs

WELCOME to the ECVS Impact Report 2013/14, which we hope will give you a flavour of this year's great work. This year has seen many changes, both in the VCSE sector and within our organisation. In many ways this has been a year of transition, for us and for infrastructure provision in the sector generally. The leadership team would like to thank all staff and trustees for their hard work and creative input, and our stakeholders for great collaborative relationships and work towards development of a shared vision. We would particularly like to thank all our volunteers – across the organisation – who have given their time and skills to the service of CVS and of our community. The depth and breadth of our volunteers, and their energy and commitment, allows Exeter CVS to demonstrate the enormous social value that volunteers and the voluntary sector bring in our society and economy. Together we look forward to a future of yet more change, but also greater opportunities and stronger partnerships.

AMANDA KILROY, DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE, ECVS



An expanding sphere of influence

A **KEY FOCUS** for ECVS this year has been to explore a *Radical Efficiency* approach to business development. This essentially means reconfiguring our team and resources to achieve greater impact and value for money spent. This also includes investing in innovation and enterprise to integrate and expand our offer, and as a result make our sphere of influence more relevant and meaningful in both the short and long term.

Our aim as a service is to ensure that progression routes for service users are clear, accessible and inspiring. Individuals coming to ECVS to take part in a range of mentored journeys in learning and participation, becoming part of overall efforts to build social and community capital for collective benefit. We believe that when individual efforts combine, they generate a growing sphere of influence that transforms lives and changes places - this is how we are able to have an impact, and make a difference.

Survive and thrive

Adapting to the challenges facing local communities and infrastructure support providers

A **S THE ROLE** of the state shifts, and funding for public services diminishes, political and community leaders are wrestling with how best to meet the needs of local communities.

At the same time, local authority officers are wrestling with the challenges of maintaining current levels of service provision within a shifting landscape. What we see is that the local authority are increasingly finding their current levels of provision unaffordable. As a result, communities are being asked to develop their own local solutions to ensure that important local services such as libraries, day centres and youth clubs are maintained or adapted.

The present government has indicated through policy messages that it sees these times of change as an opportunity for communities to have greater control over how their needs are met. In reality however, the impetus that new powers have generated is diluted by the reality of a Voluntary Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) sector struggling to meaningfully exercise such powers on the ground.

We at Exeter Council for Voluntary Services (ECVS) feel that the focus going forward must be on leveraging the value of individual and organisational assets across systems of delivery, building community capital and generating social

value as a result, in collaboration with statutory and business sector partners.

What this has highlighted for us is the urgent need to define, develop and promote our role as infrastructure providers in an emerging 'marketplace,' something which has already begun to take shape as an important forum for cross-sector collaboration, innovation and (to coin a phrase) 'doing things differently' in order to meet the challenges and maximise opportunities that exist.

Evolution of infrastructure

As the VCSE sector seeks to evolve in response to changes in the landscape, so its support and development needs change too. In turn the Local Infrastructure Organisation model has had to evolve and adapt significantly. It is this need for adaptation that underpins development of the ECVS business plan for 2014-17, a plan that aims to draw from the strong historical roots of the CVS movement, and simultaneously to look forward proactively, to enable us to remain relevant and active in the greatest sense.



Historical roots of ECVS

As Devon's oldest infrastructure organisation, Exeter CVS was founded as the Exeter Council of Social Service in 1947.

In its very first annual report, the then Chair of Trustees, F.D. Newcombe, looked ahead to the coming year – 1948 – which would see the introduction of the National Health Service, and the establishment of the Welfare State:

"The coming year will see the beginning of great schemes of social welfare - The National Service Act, the National Insurance Act, and the National Assistance Act; and some people express doubts whether voluntary societies can still find a useful sphere of action. We believe they can, and that, as the State takes more responsibility in social matters, voluntary agencies can turn to new and unexplored regions of service."

In the early days the Council was largely occupied with supporting and coordinating volunteering and community projects to assist in the post-war rebuilding efforts. This was a trend continued by early infrastructure organisations, which tended

What is Community Sector Infrastructure?

LOCAL INFRASTRUCTURE organisations (LIOs) working at the interface between policy and practice take many shapes and forms, but generally exist to ensure local VCSE organisations get the advice, support and representation that they need to function effectively at multiple levels. Infrastructure organisations do this in a number of key ways, for example they:

- identify and fill the gaps in existing provision
- raise standards by providing access to information, advice and support to local groups and organisations
- enable communication and collaboration
- enable two-way communication and consultation so that the local sector can be consulted on, and contribute to, policy developments and decision-making
- promote strategic involvement in local policy-making and planning.

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ecvs business support

to focus on the individual needs of geographical areas. Mr Newcombe was right: Voluntary, community and charitable activity has continued to grow since the end of the Second World War, and has evolved significantly; and now, though we remain deeply connected to our roots, we have had to acknowledge that our role is changing, and we have to adapt.

On the most fundamental level, this adaptation is about the way our services are funded. Over the last decade most LIOs have received some financial support from local authorities, supplemented by paid-for services, membership schemes, service delivery contracts and grants. However, as local government finances are cut year-on-year, core funding to infrastructure organisations has come under more stringent review. Like all other services, receivers of this funding have increasingly been asked to demonstrate genuine impact and value.

It is this context of an ever-diminishing community resource, and demand for evidence of impact, that provides impetus and imperative for evolution in infrastructure provision – something we have been exploring as a team and, with encouragement from government funding, more widely as a sector.

Transforming infrastructure

THE Transforming Local Infrastructure (TLI) Fund was a £30 million fund distributed by the Office for Civil Society to areas where bids were successful in 2011. The aim of this three-year investment was to increase long-term sustainability and reduce the need for ongoing funding support from the public purse – whether from national or local government. The fund aimed to “transform and modernise local charity

support services” and help recipients to provide “high-quality, joined-up support” to frontline VCSE groups that deliver direct services in their communities. It was made clear to recipients that success would be indicated by an increase in both efficiency and innovation of provision – by reducing delivery costs and supporting the plethora of local infrastructure organisations to explore mergers and shared services, and by developing a more marketised approach overall. The national programme’s ambition to move infrastructure towards a “paid-for” market model has in reality had limited success, as the need for development of the market was perhaps underestimated. In order to address this ongoing challenge, a range of new, innovative and more targeted funding strategies has emerged.

Cabinet Office, for example, are currently consulting on a proposed Sustainability Fund, which will allow VCSE organisations to bid for funding “vouchers” enabling them to purchase the particular support intervention they need. What is interesting about this is that choices remain within organisations: Support can be sourced from current VCSE infrastructure organisations, or from business consultants in the private or social enterprise sectors, highlighting the trend towards a ‘marketplace’ culture.

This fund – among other developments – reflects the continued drive from government to create a dynamic, responsive market, rather than the “one size fits all” model of commissioning and purchasing services which has dominated transactions historically, with variable impact.

What we draw from this is that the direction of travel is towards local market development and support, perhaps for development of a more integrated and innovative approach to service delivery solutions and addressing needs.

We believe that we must adapt to these landscape changes now in order to survive, thrive and remain relevant in the future.

I T IS OUR BELIEF that a new breed of Local Infrastructure Organisations is emerging, shaped by these forces, and we can and must play a key role in co-designing what that looks like, so we are best placed to shape local public service responses for mutual benefit. We believe we must be part of a solution that rises to meet challenges in practical ways, by:

- helping to map services and resources that exist
- identifying and nurturing existing and new delivery partners within local communities
- developing and focusing impactful volunteering and active citizenship activities
- securing external funding to develop the VCSE sector and to protect and develop services for the future.

We believe that without a vibrant VCSE sector working with and alongside public services, communities will be failed and opportunities missed. As the public resource diminishes and as councils, NHS, criminal justice and other services look to us and other LIO's to "step up" and help redefine service delivery (and at the same time stimulate self-care and personal problem-solving capacity in individuals) it is vital that we, as an organisation, are clear, realistic and ambitious in what offer.

I N SUMMARY, with both Cabinet Office and BIG Lottery investing in the development of a vibrant, thriving market place, particularly in terms of delivering support to VCSE organisations, and with changes and developments in the way that VCSE organisations receive funding already upon us, we need to re-think what is wanted and needed from local infrastructure – we need to be fit for purpose and ready to contribute to system transformation by brokering relationships and engaging in activities

I T IS NOT ONLY Cabinet Office that is moving towards advocating local and national markets for infrastructure support to the VCSE sector. BIG Lottery is also investing in development of a choice-based market to support VCSE organisations to derive best value from its own funding.

It is against this backdrop, and with these drivers, that Exeter CVS has developed its business plan for the next three years. The plan is based on a core approach of collaboration, co-production, community capital generation and innovative development within areas of need, articulated within three organisational aims:

- Work collaboratively with public service providers and civic leaders to find effective and sustainable community-focused solutions to emerging socio-economic challenges
- Work cooperatively across sectors to design and deliver services that can demonstrate their impact, that offer value for money and social value, and that are built on the social capital and assets that exist within organisations and communities
- Develop and support the expansion of social capital, innovation and expertise within communities and the VCSE sector, through consultancy, training, advice, developing and supporting volunteering and brokering market opportunities and partnerships.

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ecvs business support

that respond to the challenge whilst maintaining the dynamic balance between meeting public sector need and developing VCSE sector capacity.

It is our view that all stakeholders in the emerging system have a stake in what the infrastructure offer needs to look like – and there must be critical friendship between organisations to ensure successful adaptation now. It is a

way of working that offers much more 'choice and control'. The way we want frontline VCSE organisations to access support involves much greater control and choice than has historically been the case. Our investment in VCSE support should lead to activities that are sustainable, scalable, replicable, or help generate leverage from other investments.

ECVS Business support in 2014:

3,992 people used the ECVS building for training, meetings and groups

36 local organisations saved time and money using the Safe Hands administration service

48 organisations used our meeting and seminar and rooms

157 organisations worked in partnership with our Volunteer Centre

190 course bookings were made for staff and volunteers from organisations

Towards a market model

Increasingly, councils, NHS services, criminal justice services and others are looking to the community sector to "step up" to deliver interventions as services that were previously delivered by public sector organisations are withdrawn, and at the same time trying to stimulate self-care and personal problem-solving in individuals, in order to decrease the demand on services. This shift is seeing the local VCSE sector becoming more important as a core, strategic partner to public authorities, rather than merely a "nice to have" partner. Without a vibrant VCSE sector working with and alongside public services, some communities will be failed. Yet, at the same time that the sector is seeing an increase in the value placed on it by public sector partners, the ability for the public purse to resource the sector is diminishing.

In order to meet the needs of individuals and communities, commissioners and decision-makers need pathways to signpost individuals to the range of help and support available in their communities, and a strategic approach to capacity-building in the local VCSE sector in order to support organisations that might play a greater role in meeting local need.

This is likely to be most successful where there is collaboration and co-design of responses between public services, the VCSE sector and the end users of services.

SIMON BOWKETT, CEO, EXETER CVS



learn at exeter cvs

THE SPEED AND MANNER of changes to adult and community learning over the last 18 months have been unprecedented. In our response we have been creative, resourceful, diverse and distinct. Our flourishing department has become the Exeter CVS Learning Centre; our vision is to create a centre that responds to the needs of individuals, organisations and communities in an increasingly dynamic economy. To this end, we asked the questions: Who are we, what are we trying to achieve, how do we get there?

We know that adult and community learning supports policies on localism, social justice, stronger families, digital inclusion and social mobility, but how do we create learning opportunities to support that understanding?

We know that learning reaches across the sectors improving health and wellbeing, enhancing productivity and extending working lives, but how do we work collaboratively to ensure that the limited funds are used to innovate and bring about change?

Our response: We are working to regenerate and renew relationships with organisations with shared vision and values, and closely aligned objectives. We focus on collaborative enterprises, sharing good practice, co-designing innovative learner-centred projects to meet the needs of the hesitant learners, using informal and formal learning opportunities to build confidence, self-belief and motivation. We continually adapt to new and shifting circumstances.

Throughout these changes we are proud to have maintained our quality and integrity. Our good practice continues to exceed national benchmarks in learner retention and

Learning VOICE

"Inequalities in participation and success in learning mirror closely inequalities in income and wealth. This matters because too many adults lack the skills to be active citizens. Too many are on the margins of the labour market and the distance from them to a decent job is getting bigger."
NIACE June 2014

achievement, and a Grade 1 'Outstanding' OFSTED assessment of our delivery with Exeter College commended the department's "strong leadership and vision" and "very good proactive links with the local and wider community."

Challenges remain. Flexibility is a permanent feature. The Learning Centre continues to develop and invest in relationships for meaningful change. Working with learners, local stakeholders, and government we will continue to be innovative, agile and responsive; reaching into communities to support, enable and promote lifelong learning for all.

We will work to support the vision of NIACE Chief Executive David Hughes to work with learners to support "the changes happening around them, resilient to everything which life throws at them and, ultimately, able to shape and influence the community and society in which they live."

FIONA CARDEN,
LEARNING CENTRE MANAGER



Professional skills

ECVS provides training in governance, management, administration, IT, Health and Safety and First Aid. In 2013-14, 11.6% of ECVS of course bookings were made to achieve compliance with professional standards for work, with 3% being

made to formalise a qualification/certificate for existing skills. ECVS is increasingly recognised as a 'go-to' place for workforce development, and in 2013-14 we began offering bespoke learning programmes for staff and volunteers of local organisations. 13 such courses ran successfully.



32.5%

of course bookings were for staff and volunteers from local organisations

Workforce development

13 bespoke courses were custom-designed for local organisations

Level 2 Personal Development through Horticulture

Personal development and practical skills, 12 weekly sessions, 10:00-16:00. Accredited by NOCN

ITQ Level 2 Certificate

IT skills, 12 weekly sessions 10:00-16:00 Accredited by City & Guilds

ITQ Level 1 Certificate

IT skills, 8 weekly sessions 10:00-16:00 Accredited by City & Guilds

Learn

BRETT was in residential support, recovering from drug problems. He had missed out on school and education. ECVS arranged for Brett to volunteer at a local urban farm, and to take part in our Level 2 Horticulture course, to enhance his wellbeing through outdoor challenges.

Through the course he developed teamwork skills, increased self-esteem, and a renewed interest in sports and group activities. His social circle widened and moved from destructive to positive influences. He continued contact with ECVS, studying Levels 1 and 2 IT, and receiving mentoring through his

In 2014:

69 courses were held,
20 with accredited
qualifications

656 course bookings
were made, by
524 learners.

That's a **23%** increase in bookings
since 2013, by **22%** more learners

Personal development

23% OF LEARNERS join us for personal development, looking to build their confidence, social skills, and understanding of community engagement and citizenship. Hundreds of jobseekers also boost their CVs each year with accredited employability training at ECVS, including courses directly commissioned by Job Centre Plus. Our diverse 'active learning' techniques are proven to successfully engage adults with no academic background, who often move on to further education. The transformative effects of our progressive learning programmes on individuals, families and communities are well documented in case studies and video interviews on our 'Learning Voice' pages at www.exetercvcs.org.uk/learn

Offering new horizons to
jobseekers and first-time learners

Unemployed people make up:

3.1%
of working age
Exeter people¹

34.9%
of ECVS learners

Work

Outside learning

Literacy Level 2
Numeracy Level 2

Learning journeys: Brett

transferral to independent living. Brett is now completing Literacy and Numeracy Level 2 at Exeter College and aims to study Sports Science at HE level. Brett has gained confidence, qualifications and a sense of purpose, moving from dependence on services into independence and self-reliance.

Education

25% of adults in Devon
have no qualifications²

30.8%
of ECVS
learners have
no previous
qualifications



learn at exeter cvs

People of non-white ethnic origin represent:

7%
of Exeter's population³

10% of ECVS learners

Ethnicity



■ White ■ Asian ■ Chinese ■ Black ■ Mixed ■ Other

Building on long-standing outreach links with multicultural communities.

People with a disability represent:

18%
of the UK⁴

24%
of ECVS learners



Disability

Our staff are skilled in meeting complex needs in our accessible training centre.

Speaking Up Level 2 Certificate

Personal development, 22 weekly sessions
10:00-16:00. Accredited by NOCN

Outside learning

Maths GCSE
English GCSE

Speaking Up Level 1 Award

Personal development, 6 weekly sessions
10:00-16:00. Accredited by NOCN

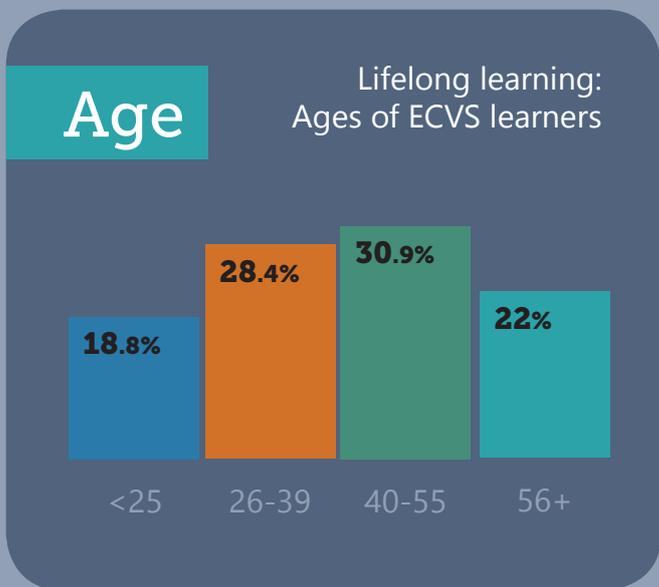
Active Citizens: "Locally engaged, globally connected"

Introduction to social action through active learning: music, sport, cooking, drama. Five full day sessions. Designed by British Council

TINA LEFT SCHOOL with no qualifications. A lone parent of two children with additional needs, she had been in and out of low-paid work and experienced long periods of depression. Tina approached ECVS aiming to "make some changes for me". At

the beginning of Level 1 Speaking Up, Tina was uncertain of herself and her opinions, but with encouragement and support from her tutor and peers, she developed her voice and began to engage. Tina went on to participate in three more courses and acquire her Maths and English GCSEs

Our community outreach learning actively builds participation among hard-to-reach, marginalised and under-represented people



Diverse marketing and learning aimed at all ages, using drama, arts and sport.

Our typical learner is a white female, aged 26-55, with a background of no or minimal education, looking for personal development or professional skills training.



Learning journeys: Tina

ITQ Level 1 Certificate

IT skills, 8 weekly sessions
10:00-16:00 Accredited by City & Guilds

within 12 months. With this astonishing trajectory Tina become a self-sufficient, pro-active learner, with a new sense of purpose and direction, and improved job prospects. Her experience exemplifies the positive, permanent impacts of lifelong learning for learners and their families.

Gender

50.9%
of the population
are female⁵

63.7%
of ECVS learners
are female



Trusted working relationships with children's centres and women's support groups.

Active learning

Blending arts, sport and practical skills with personal development training, to create accessible training for first-time adult learners

IN 2010 ECVS worked alongside Double Elephant Print Workshop and Organic Arts offering a range of 'Ecotherapy' activities to promote good mental and physical wellbeing through outdoor activity in a green environment. This work, funded by Big Lottery via Ecominds, has continued this year with ongoing delivery of the Personal Development through Horticulture programme. The course blends classroom-based personal development with practical gardening sessions at a local urban farm.

Participants on these courses are usually 'non-traditional learners,' often with no formal qualifications, low aspirations around achievement, and historical challenges around poor experiences of learning environments. Many have issues with substance misuse, health inequalities and long term conditions such as anxiety and depression, or chronic low self-esteem and confidence.

Learners benefited from being part of a group and a supportive, non-threatening and non-judgemental learning environment. They spoke at length about the new aspirations they had - intending to stop abusing substances, and to meet attendance requirements - which were their own indicators of success.

The work is now being taken forward in a more integrated model, which leads to



progression into further learning and employment opportunities. Learner feedback from recent courses includes:

- "I came for the confidence building rather than the gardening, and I am more confident, more aware of how to approach people."
- "We have a great dynamic; we are all blokes so it means we can speak our mind, people are honest about their problems and for some reason that's really enabled me to learn."
- "It's been interesting to be on a working farm and to be able to contribute to it working. I'd like to take it further really, who knows maybe even get a job..."

Creating Chances

Learning VOICE

IN MAY 2013 the ECVS "Creating Chances" course was awarded a Devon Sports Award. Funded by Active Devon's Sportivate programme, this innovative learning programme engaged young people not in employment or training.

Delivered in partnership with Exeter City Football Club's "Football in the Community" project, learners achieved a Level 1 NOCN qualification while engaging in football coaching activities and opportunities to enrol on ECFC coaching courses and volunteer in a range of social action projects.

Project coordinator Jamie Vittles applauds the benefits for the Creating Chances learners: "It's really giving them a chance to meet new people, to raise their aspirations, increase their self confidence, and it's been a huge success."

TO HEAR LEARNER TESTIMONIES WATCH THE VIDEO DOCUMENTARY 'CREATING CHANCES' AT YOUTUBE.COM/EXETERCVS



Creating Chances

Aged 16+?
Looking for work?

Get a **Level 2 qualification (Employability Skills)** to help you into work and....

Improve your **teamwork, tactics and fitness** with football coaching from the professionals

3rd active devon

Six two-part sessions:
Friday 1,8,15,22 Feb
and 1,8 March 2013

Employability Skills learning
10.30am – 1.30pm
at Exeter City FC

Football coaching sessions
2.30pm – 4.30pm
at the University*

Working at the Heart of our Community
Exeter City Football in the
COMMUNITY CHARITABLE TRUST

Call 01392 202055
learn@exetercvs.org.uk www.exetercvs.org.uk

exeter **CVS**

A**CTIVE CITIZENS IN THEATRE** (ACT) is a learning partnership funded by the European Union which provides educational opportunities for mixed groups, with a focus on disadvantaged learners and older people. During this year's programme, learners from five countries were supported to develop theatre sketches on the theme of 'social solidarity'. Learners studied a range of dramatic techniques and their historical origins, and were invited to explore in detail their experiences as active citizens, highlighting their issues, concerns and agency.

ECVS hosted a week-long celebration in the UK, bringing together the partners to rehearse and combine each country's contribution to an hour-long public performance. The ECVS Learning Centre facilitated a seminar exploring the successes and challenges of the project, and coordinated the production of a full report

and learner handbook for the course. ECVS also managed technical aspects of the study partnership, hosting a web portal for learners to interface internationally, and commissioning a professionally-edited video of the performance and seminar to be disseminated online.



learn at exeter cvs

ECVS is committed to engaging people from all backgrounds in lifelong learning journeys. Our retention rate for course completion, including employability courses (where learners frequently leave early by finding paid work), is over 94%. Learners regularly return for further training, and/or report the intention to access learning opportunities in a range of settings.

In 2015, ECVS plans to gather more data about long-term outcomes and progression for learners. This will provide greater insight into the broader impact of our provision, and steer us in the best ways to engage people in ongoing learning.

Lifelong learning

33% of learners take part in more than one course, as part of an ongoing learning journey.

44% of these journeys include accredited qualifications.

Learning journeys: Vari

Speaking Up Level 1 Award

Personal development, 6 weekly sessions
10:00-16:00. Accredited by NOCN

Counselling Skills

Introductory workshop
10:00-16:00

Speaking Up Level 2 Certificate

Personal development, 22 weekly sessions
10:00-16:00. Accredited by NOCN

ITQ Level 1 Certificate

IT skills, 8 weekly sessions
10:00-16:00 Accredited by City & Guilds

Outside learning

Passed driving test
Enrolled in College

Speaking Up Progressions

Personal development, workshop
10:00-16:00.

Recently released from prison and on the path to recovery from drug and alcohol addiction, Vari was referred through ECVS' links with a community based recovery organisation to a Speaking Up course in 2013. Vari's previous experience of learning had been entirely negative, leaving her with no faith in herself or her abilities. By the end of her Level 1 course, Vari was transforming her life: "That is the first qualification I have ever had, I can't believe I did it!" Vari launched herself into personal development and practical skills training, and within 12 months had completed Speaking Up Level 2, ITQ Level 1, passed her driving test and was on her way to college. Vari's experience demonstrates that community learning – meeting people where they are in their lives – is transformative, empowering, meaningful and life-changing.

A **S PART OF** this year's business plan review, our Volunteer Centre was brought together with social action projects to consolidate our offer and strengthen understanding of the impact and value of the work we do. As Health and Wellbeing outcomes are becoming central core objectives for the city and the region, our relaunched *Volunteer and Participation Centre* also incorporates our diverse range of health and wellbeing related projects.

The launch of the centre comes at a very exciting time for volunteering and social action/participation in general.

In 2012, the 120,000 Games-Makers were hailed as the lifeblood of the Olympics in London, and a primary reason for its resounding success. Locally, we look toward 2015 and see further opportunities to raise the profile of volunteering through participation in Rugby World Cup events.

We will continue to collate evidence of the benefits of community participation and volunteering not just in these events but generally. We have recorded some encouraging developments this year:

- 71% of England's population participated in some form of social action at least once in the last year (6% up on 2013) with an even bigger increase in the proportion of people participating regularly.
- In Exeter, more people than ever want to participate in community activity and to use volunteering as a way to change their career path.
- The business community want to improve their Corporate Social Responsibility profile

Volunteer VOICE

with skills sharing, and linking with charities through social (and not just financial) sponsorship

- The use of social and digital media has encouraged people to connect with each other and participate in group activities and one-off events. This has enabled people from all walks of life and backgrounds to come together for one cause.

I **N THESE PAGES** we hope to showcase some of our exciting projects, and share the data we have gathered about volunteers and their activities. Looking to the future, we see government and statutory agencies increasingly considering volunteering and participation as core service delivery for prevention of illness, supported community care and social action.

Whilst we welcome the increase in profile and opportunity for volunteers, we firmly believe our role is to ensure opportunities continue to be appropriate, fair and mutually beneficial.

Our ability to perform this function well relies on access to up-to-date, robust and reliable information about volunteers, their experience and outcomes. Within these pages we offer a flavour of that information, but see this as a work in progress, and a key area of development in the next phase of growth.

EMILY MCCARTHY,
V&P CENTRE MANAGER



exeter volunteer centre

Top five...

Interests

Disability **26%**

Health, hospitals and hospices **19%**

Children **16%**

Older people **13%**

Art and culture **12%**

Activities

Administration **19%**

Support work **17%**

Fundraising **15%**

Buddying **14%**

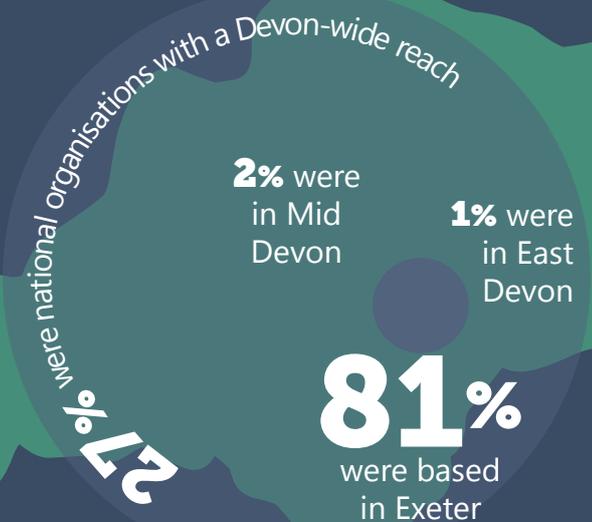
Advice and info **13%**

In 2014:

Exeter Volunteer Centre worked in partnership with

157

voluntary organisations



314 volunteering opportunities advertised

90% for organisations in Exeter

22% with Devon-wide reach

5% in Mid-Devon

3% in East Devon

954 volunteers interviewed in 2014

Our typical volunteer is a white female, under 30, in education or unemployed, and finds our services through digital media.



People of non-white ethnic origin represent:

6.9% of Exeter's population¹
17.4% of Exeter's volunteers

Ethnicity

■ White ■ Asian ■ Chinese ■ Black ■ Indian ■ Other

Future plans ▶▶

Only 5% of our volunteers are males in full-time employment. Only 19% of our student volunteers are male

Exeter Volunteer Centre plans to actively engage more male volunteers in 2015

50.9% of the population are female²



65% of ECVS volunteers are female

40.6%

31.7%

19.2%

8.5%

<25

26-39

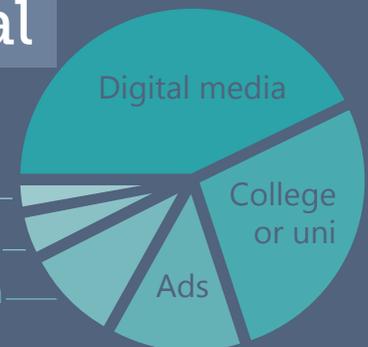
40-55

56+

Age

Referral

Government agencies
 Care managers
 Word of mouth



Health & Wellbeing

INDIVIDUAL and community health wellbeing have become increasingly important as key outcome objectives in Exeter. This year the Volunteering and Participation team at ECVS have co-developed and delivered a diverse range of innovative projects; this is likely to continue to be a growth area, particularly as more services are delivered within the community.

Our projects range from supporting people being discharged from hospital to ensuring people stay warm and live independently in their own homes. Wellbeing as a personal development theme is a core element of our volunteering and participation offer.



Complex Care

ECVS LED the integration of voluntary and community sector representatives as equal partners into 23 health and social care teams working alongside GP practices across Devon. These teams focused on people with long term conditions or complex needs, and their carers. Within the last year Exeter Complex Care Teams received 244 referrals and helped to:

- provide support for carers
- decrease social isolation
- support patients after hospital discharge
- support people to maintain their independence
- support for people with dementia
- provide patients and carers with Information.

Hospital Discharge

THIS PROGRAMME offered one-to-one advice and signposting to support patients during the first 12 weeks at home after leaving hospital. The service ensured that patients had access to transport, prescription collection, hot food, cleaning and washing, and help to purchase white goods. ECVS was able to help 57 people maintain their independence whilst remaining at home, and to reduce rates of re-admission to hospital.

244 people supported by Complex Care Teams

57 patients supported by Hospital Discharge Programme

Stay Warm and Well

96%

felt safer and warmer in their homes after referral

E CVS led the Stay Warm & Well in Devon partnership with Devon Welfare Rights Units, Devon Care & Repair, Teignbridge CVS and Torrridge CVS to support vulnerable and older people across the county between December 2013 and March 2014, tackling health and social issues, warmth and financial concerns.

- 82** referrals received
- 16%** had wellbeing concerns
- 74%** were struggling to keep warm
- 49%** were in economic difficulty
- 15%** had dependent children
- 82%** were homeowners
- 79%** had a disability
- 65%** were female

Case Study

A **NEWLY** recruited Police Community Support Officer was introducing herself to a community in South Devon, and encountered a man in his late forties with learning disabilities whose flat, with a tenancy through Teign Housing, was cold and unkempt. The PCSO decided to make a referral to the Stay Warm and Well in Devon project for a full assessment with regards to the 'warmth' strand. The referral was received on Christmas Eve.

After several lengthy discussions and emails with the PCSO, the project established that the client had picked up a cooker from the side of the road and installed it himself, but that this unit had been assessed as unsafe. He was immediately advised to make use of the property's microwave oven instead to ensure his safety; he could still make himself a warm meal, and his cupboards were stocked with food. However, the property was extremely cold as the client felt he could not afford to switch his heating on.

Volunteer VOICE

It appeared that the client had 'fallen through the net' in relation to Social Services, and the Learning Disability team

The project contacted the Learning Disability team and the client has since been allocated a case worker who is supporting him with paperwork, budgeting, creating a vocational work profile along with any and all ongoing needs. A referral has been made to Devon Welfare Rights Unit for a full maximisation benefit check, and to the 'wellbeing' strand of Stay Warm and Well to purchase and install a new cooker, organise a deep clean of his flat and arrange hospital transport for his upcoming ear operation. A final referral was made to Devon Care & Repair for a full winter warmth assessment.

Overall, the client's health and wellbeing has been improved considerably, and all services have been established to secure support for the future.

EMILY MCCARTHY,
V&P CENTRE MANAGER



Project DAVE

Devon Active Volunteering Experience

THIS COMMUNITY wellbeing project was commissioned to invest in preventative services to delay people's need for social care and health services, as per the 2011-13 Devon Prevention Strategy 'Promoting Independence and Wellbeing'. This explored a shared approach between the public, VCSE and private sector to service delivery for local disadvantaged people.

The supported volunteering strand aimed to assist vulnerable people to live happier and healthier lives, by helping them to sustain their independence and wellbeing, avoiding unnecessary hospital admissions and the need for long term care. The DAVE Project was commissioned to recruit and place 90 individuals, each with a learning disability, physical disability and/or mental health issue, into a local community based volunteer placement.

Research and evaluation of volunteering projects tells us that the sense of self-confidence and wellbeing participants report during short-term intervention often decreases sharply after nine to 15 months. Longer term projects have proved that intervention and support beyond this stage is necessary for the participant to have a sustained improvement, enabling them to decrease dependency on health related services, to work towards meaningful occupation, and to move from being a passive to active citizen.

Participants of the DAVE Project valued the sense that the work was not overtly focused on their health and wellbeing; unless they were unwell, their illness was not the primary issue. Instead, participants' health appeared to improve as a by-product of being more relaxed, and feeling able to contribute positively to the project and the community.

- 51%** were placed into community based activities
- 26%** progressed to further training/education
- 20%** felt significant improvement in physical wellbeing
- 22%** felt significant increase in their emotional wellbeing
- 17%** reduced dependency on health services
- 24%** became more active and socially-engaged
- 23%** reported increased self-confidence and self-esteem

In 2014:

101
volunteers recruited
to Project DAVE



Case studies

Volunteer VOICE

THROUGH close liaison and training of an existing member of staff to 'buddy' him, Charlie was supported to volunteer at the Phoenix Arts Centre. By gradually increasing the responsibility in his role, he is now supporting others as they take up positions within the organisation. Charlie reports an increase in self-confidence and self-esteem with a marked effect on his own assessment of his emotional health. His personal development has been so positive that he is now seeking to move out of his family home into independent living. As a part of his journey with ECVS, Charlie was signposted towards self-directed learning, as he was not eligible for funded traditional learning pathways.

KATRINA had previous experience volunteering, but these opportunities had broken down due to a lack of communication, or people finding her behaviour challenging. She was referred straight into a 'Safe Hands' volunteering opportunity at ECVS, where she found a place within a group who are understanding and have empathy. Katrina also experienced a change in service provider during this time; this professional shares the view that Katrina will eventually be able to attend the group without support, and is working with her towards this goal. After six months, clear benefits were visible in Katrina's conduct, including a reduction in self-harming activity, an increase in independence (going to the toilet alone) and autonomy (working on a separate task to her enabler). The close work between the enabler and support worker of the group to reduce Katrina's direct support and increase her sociable interaction has also contributed to her overall emotional wellbeing away from the group.

STUART CREWES, PROJECT DAVE COORDINATOR



Mental health engagement

B **E INVOLVED DEVON** (BID) has three paid staff and is for anyone in Devon who has used services for their mental health needs. BID is part of Healthwatch Devon, the local health and social care watchdog, and helps people to have a say in the development of mental health services and wider health and social care issues.

Through a quarterly newsletter and regular e-bulletins, BID keeps a network across Devon updated on involvement and engagement opportunities locally, regionally and nationally. These include specific mental health involvement opportunities, as well as more general health and social care engagement requests from Healthwatch Devon and other organisations. BID also holds quarterly *Coming Together* meetings in each of its three localities to enable people to meet together and share their experiences of involvement, hear about upcoming opportunities and talk directly with local service managers and commissioners.

BID supports people to get involved in a range of ways so they can share their views and experiences where it counts. People from the BID network take part in service development meetings and consultations. They also get involved in other opportunities such as staff training and recruitment.

In February 2014 the Care Quality Commission (CQC) inspected Devon Partnership

Trust (DPT) services and while they found many areas of good practice, they also identified areas that needed improvement. In response, DPT and the commissioning bodies in Devon took measures to make the necessary improvements, and BID were asked to support this work. In particular BID supported people with relevant lived experience to contribute to the work of multi-agency workstream groups set up to focus on Integrated Psychological Therapies and the Acute Care Pathway.

A major part of BID's work involves supporting the Healthwatch Devon engagement gateway and related activities. In 2014 BID worked extensively to promote Healthwatch England's special inquiry into people's experience following discharge from a hospital, care home or secure mental health setting. BID provided ways for people to contribute to this inquiry via its e-bulletins, and BID workers met with groups and individuals across Devon to gather views and experiences. All feedback was passed onto Healthwatch Devon who in turn fed back to Healthwatch England.

To ensure that BID also gather feedback from those less likely to speak out, the team undertakes outreach visits across its patch to meet with people and log their issues. These views are passed on to Healthwatch Devon, as well as being used to inform mental health service development such as the Community Care Pathway meetings.

Be Involved Devon



healthwatch
Devon

Case study

Volunteer VOICE

FOLLOWING A REQUEST from Devon Partnership Trust, BID agreed to support the involvement of two participants in meetings related to targets on a 'passport to health' for people with schizophrenia. One participant was a man with lived experience of schizophrenia who had never attended meetings like this before. A BID worker met with him at the local mental health drop-in prior to the first meeting, and explained the process. They then travelled to the meeting together.

The second participant was more experienced in meetings and agreed to offer peer support to the new person at subsequent meetings, including meeting him in town so they could travel together. A BID worker followed up with each person after the meetings; both participants felt their contribution was fully valued and that they had made a real difference.

The man with lived experience of schizophrenia also reported that he had learned a lot through his involvement. He realised he had not been receiving the annual health checks he should have, having only received one health check on his heart and liver in 10 years. He therefore went to his doctor and asked for all the necessary health checks to be done. He also asked about fitness on prescription, as this had been mentioned at the meetings. His healthcare routine is now established, and he is looking at ways to be more active.

CHARLOTTE HUBBARD, ED COUTTS AND CLAIRE NOLAN, BID DEVELOPMENT WORKERS

First step

THIS PROJECT provides people with a supportive and comprehensive service that looks at their volunteering and training needs as part of a whole-person progression route. It is a portal into a world of meaningful activity, through guided personal progression: an opportunity to take on new challenges and gain skills, experience and qualifications with friendly support and ongoing encouragement. Over the last 12 months referrals have increased and the referral route has widened, with the project becoming the first port of call for mental health and wellbeing

organisations looking to access volunteering and training opportunities for their clients:

- CMHT (including Assertive Outreach and Recovery and Independent Living), WorkWays, RiseRecovery, Westcountry Housing Association, Shilhay, Carers' Support, The Amber Foundation
- Residential organisations such as Pennhaven, Shilhay, Caraston and Seabrook
- Self-referrals and GP referrals: engaging in First Step activity when wellbeing issues first appear reduces the likely need for future mental health service intervention.

21 people signposted to other services or withdrew through illness

81
referrals

60

people engaged in First Steps programmes

85%

achieved independent mainstream volunteer placements

55%

achieved an accredited Level 1 or 2 qualification in IT, Speaking Up, Horticulture or Employability

Case study

Volunteer VOICE

A **NNA** was referred to ECVS by WorkWays. At that time, she was still in full-time employment but was off work through stress. Anna's referral stated that she wanted to volunteer to prepare her for a return to work, however after an initial consultation, she really felt as though the circumstances that had created her illness would not change if she returned to her previous workplace. What she really wanted was to reassess her career and who she was, to find a new direction, and summon up the confidence and courage to make a break.

Anna said that her real love was the outdoors and gardening, and so she began studying the Personal Development through Horticulture course. This filled her with enthusiasm for a subject she loved, and allowed her to develop friendships and contacts through her study group. Alongside the course, Anna began work at Killerton (National Trust) as a volunteer gardener.

ECVS noticed positive changes in Anna's general wellbeing – her sociability, energy and sense of hope for the future.

Anna then undertook two very significant tasks: firstly, she took it upon herself to organise the PDTH field trip to Killerton House, arranging with the Head Gardener there for the group to have an educational tour of the nursery and the grounds, undertaking the latter herself. Secondly, as her period of extended sick leave was nearing its end, Anna decided to give up her job to focus on gardening.

Anna has become an impassioned director of her own life. She continues to volunteer at Killerton when she can, as she now has a part-time job. The PDTH course really fired up her enthusiasm for horticulture and she is now studying a series of RHS Horticulture courses at Bicton College, which she is enjoying – she says "They are really great and interesting, although not as entertaining as the PDTH course!" **JOHN STAMMERS, FIRST STEP COORDINATOR**



16% have gone into paid or self employment

6% progressed to Level 2/3 Further Education at local colleges

Economic value

Financial contribution of First Step volunteers to Exeter's economy, calculated at minimum wage:

£80,439

Estimate allowing for higher average earnings of skilled roles: caring, mentoring, support, admin:

£150,000+

Promoting tenants' rights and welfare

Exetra is a project run by private tenants, for private tenants. The project supports private tenants in Exeter to campaign for fairer deal, by working within the private rental sector to affect change at a strategic level. The project also acts as a hub where tenants who experience problems with their privately rented housing (or any issues around it) can access information and support.

Exetra enables tenants to run campaigns or raise awareness on a range of matters including the key issues identified in its survey: high agent's fees, rent prices, low standards, and lack of knowledge about tenants' rights.

The project facilitates a city-wide Private Rental Sector forum where all those working within the sector can come together to build a picture of its problems, and to work together to identify solutions.

Exetra has engaged a core group of regular volunteers who lead the group and decide on its actions, campaigns and events. People from across Exeter have accessed support and

signposting through the group over the last six months, mainly through informal outreach events held at community festivals and in the city centre.

Exetra has engaged with a variety of tenants, landlords, agencies and housing departments within the Council. The Council has begun to consult with Exetra on plans to introduce a new service for private tenants.

A city-wide survey has been conducted amongst private tenants to build up a local evidence base of people's experiences of the renting in Exeter. This evidence has allowed the project to evidence the need and reason for organisations to engage in the city wide forum. In bringing the private rental sector together, Exetra is now the leading tenants' voice for change in Exeter, and has the capacity to influence and effect real change in the city.

In the long term, the work that Exetra has done will impact on the city as a whole, with a view to building strong relationships within the Private Rental Sector, and to improve it for everyone involved.



LIVING STANDARDS?
not quite as high as the rent.

Case Study

Volunteer VOICE

LIZZIE, aged 38, works full time, and has been a private tenant for 20 years. Although now in secure housing with a good landlord, Lizzie struggled for years with poor housing, high energy bills and rent. Before the tenancy deposit protection came into place Lizzie lost two different deposits to landlords for invalid reasons. These two incidences began a fall into long-standing debt, as she still had to find new deposits despite not getting her old ones back.

Lizzie hasn't had specific support from ExeTRA, but she acts as an ExeTRA 'Resident's Champion'. As well as regularly coming to meetings and drop-ins, she often attends community events and talks with tenants about their experiences, and how the group can help to support them during and after the resolution of the issues.

Lizzie is a great example of an ExeTRA 'Champion' and the group will continue to support her through additional training to enable her to continue in this voluntary capacity. **VICKY WORTHINGTON, EXETRA PROJECT WORKER**



Devon Carers

EXETER CVS, as a member of the Devon Carers Consortium, has managed the staff and activities of the Exeter Locality Team and also hosted the Mental Health Carers Lead Practitioner. During this year the team offered a range of support services to almost 4,000 Exeter carers providing unpaid support for a family member or friend because of illness, frailty, disability, mental health challenge or substance misuse issue. During 2013-14 carer support workers provided almost 2,000 hours of one-to-one advice, information and support. They also ran a range of support groups and training sessions to enhance both personal and carer role development.

The team learned that Carers faced various issues; many were stretched to breaking point,

trying to juggle work and family life, some even having to give up work to care. Many faced depression because of their caring role and some were unable to maintain a life of their own, often struggling financially.

The Team offered carers Health and Wellbeing checks, and discussed with them the best way to get them the support they needed, offering as well as support worker time:

- Welfare Benefit Checks
- Regular newsletters
- 1,700 short breaks (including Flexible Breaks Grants and Take a Break Vouchers)
- 475 Carers Alert Cards to ensure that the cared for person would get help if something unexpected happened to the carer.

Devon Carers

Just for Carers

08456 434 435

NHS

carerstrust
a Network Partner

Devon County Council



Carer feedback

Volunteer VOICE

"I realise I must look after myself if I am going to carry on caring."

"I don't feel quite so helpless anymore, as I can see a way forward - a light at the end of the tunnel!"

"It's opened up a whole new world to me about caring that I never knew existed!"

"I feel better already, by just talking about it."

Safe Hands

SAFE HANDS is a volunteering opportunity for people with support needs, run from its own office space in ECVS. It offers four sessions a week for people with mental health and learning difficulties to attend and perform admin and clerical tasks for community and charity organisations in the region.

Volunteers participate in a review process, where they look at both the physical nature of the tasks and the social aspects around performing them. The intention is to provide people with a solid foundation of empirical knowledge gained in a friendly yet semi-professional environment. People develop at a rate which is comfortable for them, whilst being encouraged to take on new and more complex tasks.

There is a tea break in every session, where everyone is supported to appropriately share about their social life outside of the group and engage in conversation about current and local issues. The volunteers attend an annual Christmas meal together as well as group activities provided by the organisations whose admin they process, including an art workshop at Spacex and a conjuring show by the Exonian Magical Society.

The Safe Hands project has seen some subtle developments over the last year, with a number of people starting in the group with a view to increasing their independence as a priority. The DCC enabling team have been referring people to the group to this end.

Volunteer VOICE

Case study

ONE PARTIALLY-SIGHTED volunteer now attends without support (and comes to and from her bus stop with another group member) and a young woman with high support needs now conducts the set tasks with a reduction in hands-on support. Another, longer-term attendee has now reached a point where she is supported by another member of the group to catch the bus after her session, meaning she can use her paid support elsewhere in her life.

A number of people have gained confidence and skills through attending the group and are now volunteering with other organisations as well as a result.

STUART CREWES, SAFE HANDS COORDINATOR

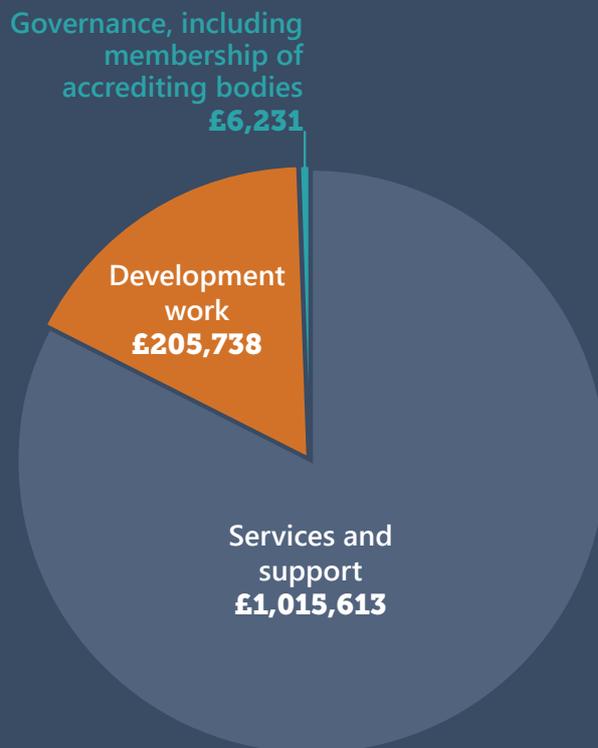
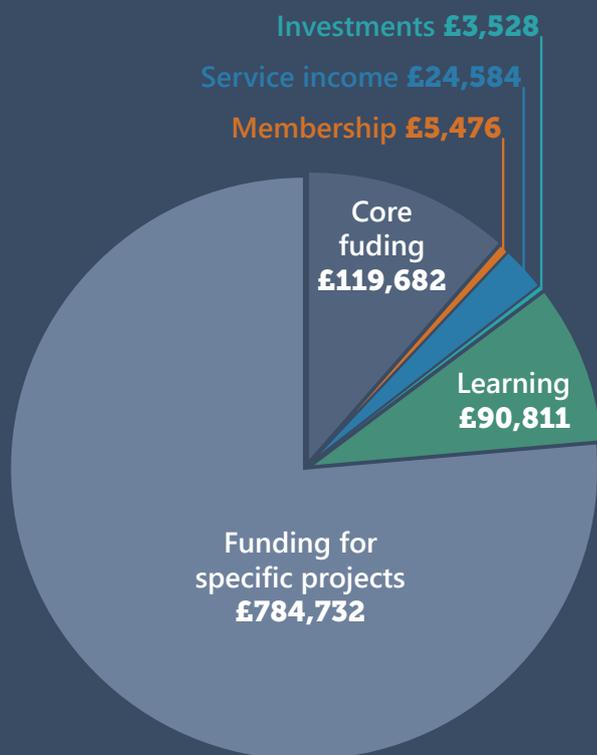


£27,300

contributed to local economy by **29** Safe Hands volunteers

- 52%** have learning difficulties
- 20%** have mental health conditions
- 10%** with Asperger Syndrome
- 17%** have complex needs

Financial report



In: £1,028,813

Out: £1,227,582

IN THIS financial year we received £1,028,813, and spent £1,227,582. 81% of the in-year deficit was met from restricted funds received in the previous financial year for work to be carried out in 2013-14. Exeter CVS closed the year with restricted fund balances of £46,930, and unrestricted fund balances of £116,717. For more detailed information the full audited annual accounts and the Trustees' annual report can be consulted; copies can be obtained from the Chief Executive, Exeter CVS, Wat Tyler House, 3 King William Street, Exeter EX4 6PD.

The Independent Auditors' Report concluded that the financial statements give a true and fair view of the state of the company's affairs as at 31st March 2014 and of its incoming resources and application of resources.

The financial statements have been properly prepared in accordance with the Companies Act 1985 and the information given in the Trustees' Report is consistent with the financial statements.

Exeter CVS is grateful to receive a contribution to its core funding from Exeter City Council and Devon County Council.

We would like to thank all our funders for their contribution to our project work:

- Devon County Council
- Devon Primary Care Trust
- BIG Lottery
- British Council
- Volunteering England
- UK Online
- DACVS
- Job Centre Plus
- Bicton College
- Exeter College
- Learn Devon
- Westbank
- Healthwatch Devon

For more information about our work, visit exetercvs.org.uk

Data analysis and design
by Nick Kiss
fridayanimal.com



IMPACT REPORT 2013 ▶ 2014



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE



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office as above.



Business support

Volunteering

Adult learning

Accounts & budget

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