



Volunteer Centre

Bath & North East Somerset

Annual Report 2006 – 2007



Connecting people through volunteering



Volunteering
England

Quality Accredited Member

Chair's Report

If 2005 – 6 was the year in which we focussed on “getting our house in order” and planning our future developments, 2006 – 7 has been the year in which we have strived to make our plans a reality. For staff and Trustees alike this has been both exhilarating and exhausting.



The year has been dominated by work to secure the external funding we know is crucial to our long term sustainability. Despite enormous efforts by both staff and Trustees, including applications to a number of sources, we remain without any external funding. Through a series of regular reviews of our Business Plan we have been able to amend our development plans accordingly. In doing so have recognised the need for a more incremental approach to our growth. The need to raise funds continues to be a concern and a priority for the Trustees.

Much of the year has also been spent working with the local authority to explore how we can work in partnership to deliver the Local Area Agreement target to increase volunteering in a way that improves local services and strengthens communities. We have welcomed the opportunity to work with the BANES in this way and remain hopeful that the details of this arrangement will be agreed at the earliest opportunity.

This year also required the Trustees to plan for the recruitment of a new Manager as our only full time member of staff, Helen Morrison, prepared to begin her maternity leave. In a small organisation like ours such a change required careful planning and managing in order to ensure a continuation of service. Trustees, staff and Helen worked closely together to ensure this was the case. The addition of a part time Administrator and a volunteer working with us to monitor successful placements has also built our organisational capacity.

Throughout the considerable challenges the year has presented the staff and Trustees have continued to show enormous levels of commitment, faith and loyalty to the organisation and I would like to thank them for that. I am fortunate to be part of such a great team. As we are currently looking to recruit additional Trustees, perhaps you would like to join us?

Helen Timbrell
Chair

Volunteer Centre Developments

The award of Volunteer Centre Quality Accreditation from Volunteering England in November 2006, and the achievement of PQASSO level 1, demonstrate the significant progress made by the Volunteer Centre, building on those solid foundations laid in 2005-2006.

Due to growth in demand for our brokerage services, we increased our opening hours, making us open and accessible to individuals for three days each week. We produced new marketing materials and were assisted in distributing posters and leaflets around the Bath and North East Somerset area by a team of University students. Our existing part-time staff team of Volunteering Advisors (Hazel Newman and Jane Brimble) and Administrative support (Jill Ponsford), continued to work with the Manager to develop the organisation, and our steady growth in activity also led us to recruit and appoint a new part-time Administrator, Zoe Smith, in January 2007. Zoe has made a very significant contribution to the organisation, through her support to the Board and the Manager, and through the improvements that she continues to make to the Volunteer Centre's systems and procedures.

We created two new volunteering roles, and were pleased to welcome Elizabeth Clarke and Mike Searl into the organisation. Liz has helped us greatly in developing our systems for capturing information about the brokerage service that we offer, by contacting people who've accessed our services to find out how many initial enquiries translate into actual placements. In addition, Mike came on board as our Web Designer, and has done wonderful work, in helping us get our site set up, in keeping it up to date, and in advising us on layout and content.

We were also delighted to welcome a new Trustee, Jim Cronin, who came to us with a wealth of skills and experience in business, marketing and publicity, and with an infectious enthusiasm! Our existing Trustees continued to make significant and valuable contributions in developing the Volunteer Centre's financial systems and procedures, and in providing strategic direction.

The exciting news that our Manager, Helen Morrison, was expecting her first child, presented us with an opportunity to take stock of our progress against the Business Plan 2006 – 2009, and to review Year Two (2007 – 2008) of our Business Plan. This enabled us to focus on the key priorities for the year to come, taking a temporary change of management into account. Discussions began with B&NES Council regarding the Local Area Agreement, and we were actively involved with the Compact Board and Working Group. Substantial research was conducted with organisations and with registered volunteers, to establish important demographic information, which will help to inform the expansion of our services in the future, according to identified areas of need.

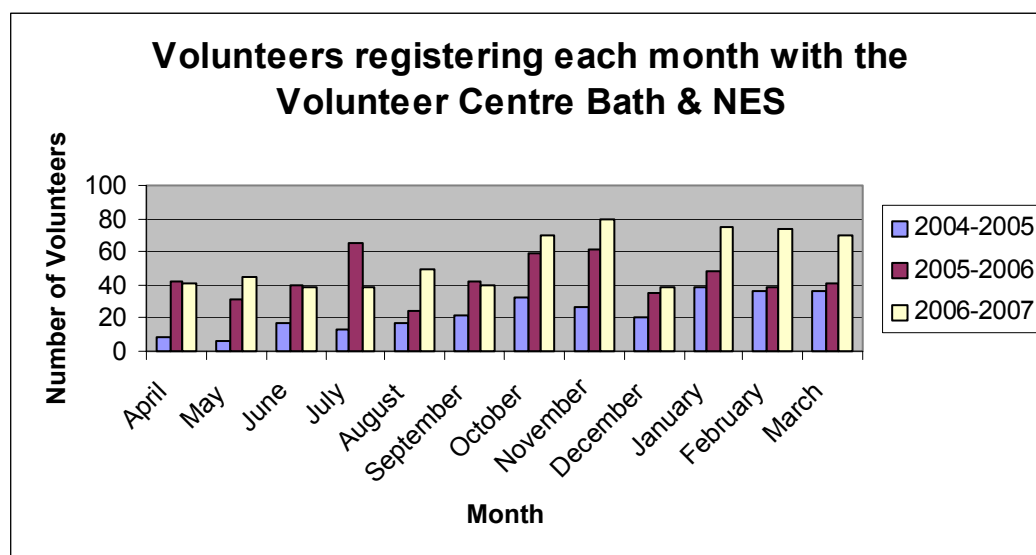
Details of the development of our core work can be found on the following pages, in our operational report.

Volunteer Centre Bath & North East Somerset: Operational report

The work of the Volunteer Centre is driven by our Business Plan, 2006 – 2009, in accordance with the 6 core functions of a Volunteer Centre identified by Volunteering England, and with the requirements of the Volunteer Centre Quality Accreditation standard which we were awarded in 2006. The following pages outline the Volunteer Centre's key activities under each core function.

Brokerage

- The Volunteer Centre opened its doors to the public for an extra day each week, starting in October 2006, meaning that Volunteering Advisors became available on Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays each week, between 10.00 and 4.00. As a result, the number of volunteers registering with us increased markedly, with monthly figures consistently exceeding those of corresponding months in the previous year.



- We continued to follow-up our brokerage service by contacting volunteers at set intervals following their registration. The number of volunteers confirmed as having taken up placements as a result of our service, increased from 18 in the first quarter of 2006-2007, to 42 in the final quarter.
- Regular contact with organisations such as Millennium Volunteers, the Universities, RSVP and Timebank helped us to avoid duplication of services and to ensure that enquiries were appropriately signposted.

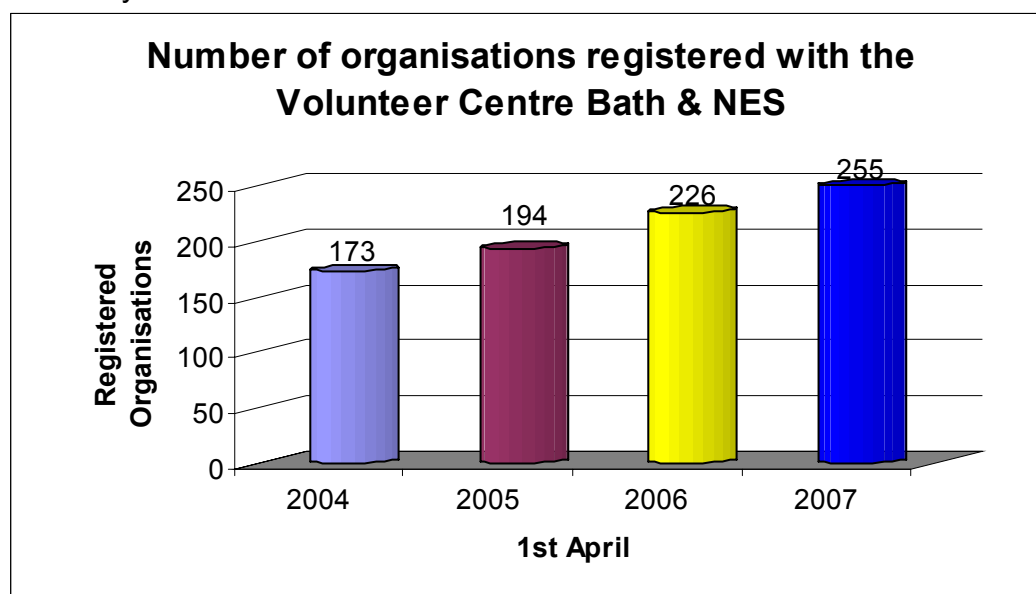
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Marketing volunteering

- We obtained a grant from Volunteering England to enable us to create new signage, with a banner erected above the entrance to South Vaults, where we're housed, and new notices within the building in order to identify our presence.
- Articles about the Volunteer Centre were published in Context (the newsletter of Bath & N.E.S. CVS), and Bath & N.E.S. Council added information about the Volunteer Centre onto its website.
- New publicity leaflets were produced, over 1000 of which were distributed by a team of University volunteers. In addition, the Volunteer Centre launched its website in March 2007, with press attention helping to get its launch publicised.
- We gave talks, and participated in local events and networks to promote volunteering and the work of the Volunteer Centre – both to general audiences, and also to specific groups (for example people with mental health issues, and older people).

Good practice development

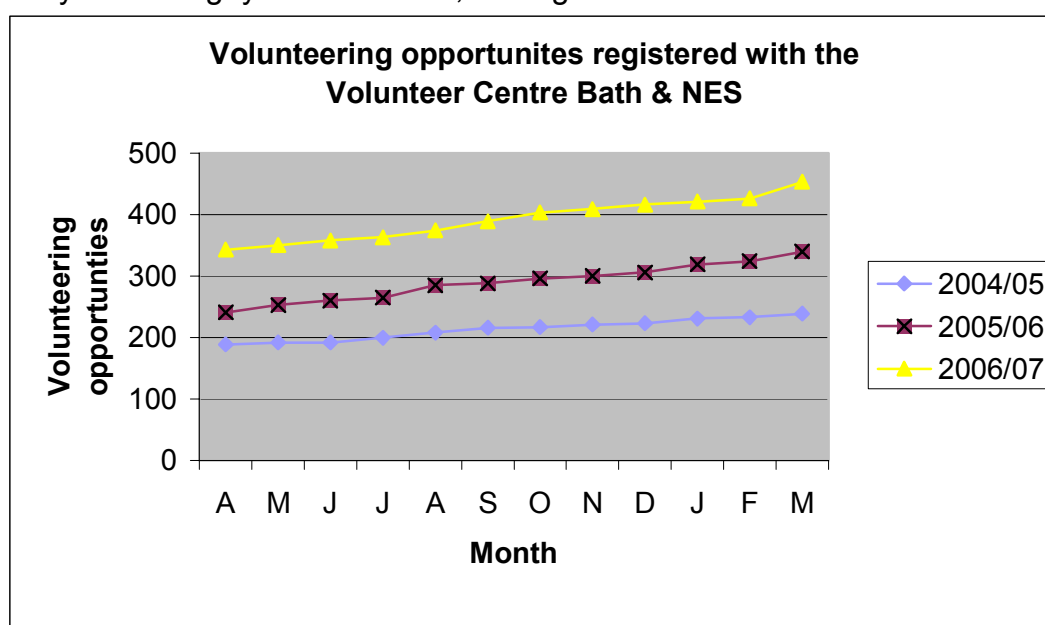
- We worked to help promote good practice in volunteer management by working in partnership with Bath & N.E.S. CVS on a training course entitled "Recruiting, Supporting and Keeping Volunteers".
- Organisations requesting support in issues around volunteer management were supported either by advice from the Manager or Volunteering Advisors, or by signposting to other relevant sources of information.
- The number of volunteer involving organisations registered with the Volunteer Centre rose by almost 13%.



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Developing volunteering opportunities

- New volunteering opportunities registered with the Volunteer Centre increased consistently throughout the year 2006 – 2007. The Manager and Volunteering Advisors worked with both registered organisations and new ones, increasing the number and diversity of opportunities available. Sport and physical activity was a particular area of development with new volunteering opportunities registered for Volunteer Walk Leaders with the Sport and Active Leisure Team of B&NES Council, Volunteer Youth Workers at Bath City Farm, and Rugby Game Assistants at the Old Culverhaysian's Rugby Football Club, amongst others.



Policy response and campaigning

- The Volunteer Centre actively campaigned on behalf of volunteers and volunteer involving organisations by taking action when the Department for Work and Pensions announced the intention to remove the entitlement of volunteers to claim lunch expenses – a step which we and many others felt could prove a barrier to some people volunteering. We were delighted when the DWP decided not to proceed.
- The Volunteer Centre Manager took up the position of Volunteering Code Champion for the Bath & N.E.S. Compact.

Strategic development of volunteering

- The Volunteer Centre continued to be actively involved in decisions on the planning and delivery of the Local Area Agreement, with particular contribution to the development of the Volunteering Stretch Target.
- Year Two of the Volunteer Centre's Business Plan was revised in order to ensure that desired outcomes remained appropriate in the context of both external factors, such as the Local Area Agreement, and internal factors, such as the forthcoming temporary change in management.

Future Plans

The work of the Volunteer Centre continues to be driven by our Business Plan for the period 2006-2009, with Year Two – 2007 to 2008 – having been revised in early 2007 as a result of impending staff changes and initial progress against agreed objectives.

The following are the key activities planned for 2007 – 8:

- Continuing to seek external funding, through ongoing discussions with B&NES Council regarding the Local Area Agreement, and with additional potential sources being identified by the Fundraising Sub-Group.
- Two additional Trustees will be sought, with skills and experience that will enhance and assist the existing Board of Trustees.
- Work will continue on seeking to relocate the Volunteer Centre into more central premises in Bath, allowing us to increase our visibility and accessibility.
- Research will be conducted regarding the appropriate development of our Good Practice Development core function, enabling us to plan for an increased level of support to organisations in their involvement and management of volunteers.
- We will continue to look for ways in which to increase awareness of our services in areas outside of Bath, registering additional volunteer involving organisations and opportunities, and taking part in opportunities to promote the benefits of volunteering in communities across the Bath and North East Somerset area.

Treasurer's Report

The Financial Year 2006/2007 has been marked by the consolidation of financial systems and meeting the costs of maintaining and improving the Volunteer Centre's services, referred to elsewhere in this report. The Volunteer Centre contribution for the year (£48,395) shows a 65% increase on 2005/2006 (£25,947) due to a full year's employment of key staff and staff pension for the first time.



Governance costs have also increased as the bookkeeping and payroll charges have provided improved controls over our accounts and payroll procedures.

The future outlook involves budgeting for the costs of a possible relocation of the Volunteer Centre and an increase in staffing as we try to improve our services. Both these prospects require an even greater emphasis on fund raising from whatever source to add to the regular interest obtained on current funds at the Bank.

Derek de Val
Treasurer

Financial Review

Incoming Resources

There was again no substantial funding from grants or contracts, the only grant received being £1,400 from Volunteering England towards signs. Revenues for the year again consisted mainly of bank interest received on the charity's bank balances, which this year amounted to £12,951 (2006 £13,747).

Resources Expended

Following the employment of a Manager from August 2005, the rental of additional space at Envolve, and increased opening hours, the charity's expenses have increased from £39,694 in 2006 to £62,864.

Outcome for the year

As a result of the increased activities for the year there has been a deficit for the year of £48,395 (2006 £25,947 deficit), which has been funded from accumulated unrestricted surpluses.

Designated Funds

The charity, in October 2003, received £475,000 from the sale of their original premises in Bath and, after discharging an outstanding Bank loan, were left with residual sale proceeds amounting to £370,000. The Trustees have decided to set aside from the existing balance on the Volunteer Centre accounts, a sum of £200,000 to meet the future expectation to move to new premises.

No decision has been made by the Trustees to determine whether a lease of premises over a term of years is appropriate or whether to contribute a lump sum towards the acquisition of new premises in conjunction with other bodies having the same charitable objectives. Nevertheless the Trustees believe that it is prudent to make a substantial provision in the Volunteer Centres accounts in anticipation of substantial outlay on new premises at some time during the next three years.

Balances carried forward

After setting aside £200,000 in designated reserves there were unrestricted funds of £90,365 (2006 £138,760) to carry forward at 31 March 2007.

Reserves policy

The charity has funds to cover its current costs over many years. However, once a fully functioning service has been launched, revenue funding will be required. The Trustees have decided to leave the charity's funds on deposit with Unity Bank, which they consider is a sensible and correct investment strategy, which meets their current investment objectives and risk profile (a reasonably high yield with no risk to capital).

Future plans

The costs of a possible move to new premises are expected to be met from the reserve sum set aside to meet the additional cost likely to arise from relocation of the Volunteer Centre. There is continuing liaison with the Quartet Community Foundation with this in mind. The fundraising sub-committee will continue to explore all grant earning and other avenues to meet future revenue expenditure.

Future Risk Assessment

There are no major risks to which the charity is likely to be exposed other than arising from its payment system. The only known future source of income is bank interest. The Volunteer Centre has established systems and procedures to manage risks arising from its financial activities. The system is approved and reviewed by the Trustees each financial year.

Summary Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2007

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 2007	Unrestricted Funds (£)	Designated Funds (£)	Restricted Funds (£)	Total 2007 (£)	Total 2006 (£)
Incoming resources					
Investment income: bank interest	12,951	-	-	12,951	13,747
Grants	-	-	1,400	1,400	-
Donations and other income	118	-	-	118	-
Total incoming resources	13,069		1,400	14,469	13,747
Resources expended					
Direct charitable expenditure	57,394	-	1,388	58,782	39,956
Governance costs	4,082	-	-	4,082	2,738
Total resources expended	61,476		1,388	62,864	39,694
Net incoming / (outgoing) resources before transfers	(48,407)		12	(48,395)	(25,947)
Transfers between funds					
	-	-	-	-	-
Net outgoing resources for the year and deficit of income over expenditure	(48,407)		12	(48,395)	(25,947)
Other recognised gains and losses					
	-	-	-	-	-
Net movement in funds	(48,407)		12	(48,395)	(25,947)
Fund balances brought forward	138,760	200,000		338,760	364,707
Fund balances carried forward	90,353	200,000	12	290,365	338,760

BALANCE SHEET AT 31 st MARCH 2007	Total 2007 (£)	Total 2006 (£)
Fixed assets		
Tangible fixed assets	735	686
Current assets		
Debtors – prepayments	407	711
Cash at bank and in hand	294,690	342,360
	295,097	343,071
Creditors: falling due within one year	(5,467)	(4,997)
Net current assets	289,630	338,074
Net assets	290,365	338,760
Funded by		
Unrestricted funds		
General Fund	90,353	138,760
Premises Designated Fund	200,000	200,000
Restricted Funds	12	
Restricted Funds	290,365	338,760

The above figures are taken from the full financial statements of the Volunteer Centre Bath & North East Somerset for the year ended 31 March 2007, which were approved by the Board of Trustees on 13/09/07.

Reference and administrative information

Company number 2948107
Charity registration number 1042007
Registered office South Vaults, Green Park Station, Bath BA1 1JB

Trustees

Bren Abercrombie Appointed 28.04.05. (Vice-Chair 02.12.05)
Maya Bahra Board Member, appointed 09.11.06
Jim Cronin Board Member, appointed 09.11.06
Derek De Val Treasurer, appointed 16.03.06
Helen Timbrell Appointed 18.11.05. (Chair 02.12.05)

Company Secretary

Helen Morrison (nee Jones) Appointed 24.11.05

Staff and Volunteers

Jane Brimble Volunteering Advisor (6 hours per week)
Liz Clarke Volunteer
Hazel Newman Volunteering Advisor (6 hours per week)
Helen Morrison Manager (Full-time)
Jill Ponsford Administrative Assistant (4 hours per week)
Mike Searl Volunteer Web Designer
Zoe Smith Administrator (7 hours per week)

Bookkeeping

Hannah Leach

Auditors

Moore Stephens, Chartered Accountants

Structure, governance and management

Volunteer Centre Bath & North East Somerset is a registered charity and a company limited by guarantee, governed by its Memorandum and Articles of Association. It changed its name from Bath & North East Somerset Voluntary Service (Voluntary First) at its Annual General Meeting on 29 November, 2005.

The charity is governed by a Board of Trustees who are also directors of the company. The Board makes decisions on the annual budget, formulates policy and considers strategic issues which affect the organisation. The Board employs staff to manage and deliver services.

Objectives and activities

The principal objectives are to improve the quality of life of the citizens of Bath and North East Somerset by encouraging, promoting, supporting and developing the work of volunteers within voluntary organisations and community groups in the area, and helping them to be as effective and as sustainable as possible.