



South and Vale Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) Forum March 2018 – Feedback to delegates

85 delegates attended the 2018 South and Vale VCS (Voluntary and Community Sector) Forum, representing more than 70 different voluntary and community sector organisations from across South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse districts.

Thank you to delegates for providing feedback, comments and suggestions which we use to plan future training and networking events and help shape how we work with and support the voluntary and community sector. We are always reviewing the issues you face, what strategies you are successfully using and what support we can offer based on what you say you would like from South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse district councils and sector support partners.

The table below outlines the key points that you raised at the forum this year.

For more information please contact;

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What you told us	Our response
Volunteering Support	
Lack of volunteers - where do we go to find them	<p>South Oxfordshire District Council is currently exploring a South Oxfordshire district focused IT volunteering platform. For more information contact Suzi Wild, Volunteering Development Officer suzi.wild@southandvale.gov.uk</p> <p>You might like to contact Oxfordshire Community and Voluntary Action - the accredited volunteer centre for Oxford City, South Oxfordshire, and Vale of White Horse: ocva.org.uk - 01865 251946</p> <p>You could sign up as a 'provider' on the oxonvolunteers.org website. A website run as a partnership by Oxfordshire's three volunteer centres.</p> <p>You might also like to look at: Community First Oxfordshire www.communityfirstoxon.org</p>
We need flexible volunteers to work in the evenings	
How to attract the 'unusual suspects' to volunteer	
How to attract new committee members and re-invigorate existing trustees	
How to encourage volunteering as a way back into work	<p>You might like to look at: www.jobcentreguide.org</p>
Funding	
We need funding from core funding to project start-up funding to ongoing funding?	<p>Both district councils offer community grants - please check the websites for details www.southoxon.gov.uk/grants and www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/grants. If you have further questions you can contact the district councils' grants team at grants@southandvale.gov.uk</p>
How to diversify funding stream	
Finding funding and resources, time spent on this takes away from working on GDPR	<p>South Oxfordshire also offer low interest Community Loans to eligible groups. For more information please see www.southoxon.gov.uk/communityloans</p> <p>If you operate in South Oxfordshire you could join the SO Charitable Lottery - www.socharitable.co.uk</p> <p>Oxfordshire LEADER has £1.55m to grant before March 2019, with grants of up to £100,000. Grants are given to projects that provide essential rural services, increase productivity, develop new markets, increase visitors to the area or create jobs. More information can be found at: www.oxfordshireleader.org.uk</p> <p>As part of The Big Lottery's new ways of working locally, you might find it useful to meet with the Big Lottery Thames Valley team for a 1 2 1 advice session on 22 June at the OCVA office in central Oxford. For more information and to book your place visit: www.ocva.org.uk</p> <p>You might also like to look at: Oxfordshire Community Foundation www.oxfordshire.org</p> <p>The Good Exchange - an online platform that helps charities reach more funders in a single application. The platform automatically matches a funding request with a funder's specific grant-</p>

	<p>giving criteria, saving time and effort and allowing the collective funding of a project or programme of work, www.thegoodexchange.com</p> <p>NVCO Funding Central is a searchable database of grant-making organisations. You can specify the themes of the projects you are looking to fund, and register to receive a personalised update when new grant rounds open. www.fundingcentral.org.uk/default.aspx</p> <p>Help on Tap has a regularly updated list of locally applicable grant funders. www.helpontap.org/funding-opportunities</p>
Legal entity for enterprise – what are best ones to apply for grants	<p>There isn't really a single answer for this as all funders have different criteria, priorities and requirements. It should be about what is the right structure for your organisation's operational needs and then find the right funding for your structure.</p> <p>OCVA run training programmes on many issues facing the voluntary sector www.ocva.org.uk – 01865 251946.</p>
How to evidence the need	You might like to contact OCVA details above, to discuss forthcoming OCVA training courses.
Issues with paying for things when you're upscaling	
Funding applications are difficult to fit perfectly into guidelines - too hard to access funds means you have to alter your idea.	<p>The Big Lottery Thames Valley team would love to hear your experiences. Why not meet Sarah Frayne on the 22 June at OVCA office in Oxford? To book your place visit www.ocva.org.uk</p> <p>If possible attend advice workshops/meetings with funders before submitting applications. If you hit a stumbling block when filling in a form talk to them before giving up as they might be able to find a work around.</p> <p>Also try to think laterally and creatively when saying how your project meets their criteria /priorities/ themes.</p>
Audiences	
How to engage with the local community/wider audiences?	You might like to look at: Community First Oxfordshire www.communityfirstoxon.org
Increase and encourage more youth participation and engagement.	<p>You might like to contact the district councils' Young People's Co-ordinator – Karen Tolley, karen.tolley@southandvale.gov.uk</p> <p>You might also find it useful to speak to Oxfordshire Youth about this for advice and guidance, visit www.oxfordshireyouth.org</p>
How to be relevant to local demographics	You might like to look at: www.insight.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms
Links with Businesses	

<p>Business connections are hugely untapped - it needs someone to co-ordinate</p>	<p>You might like to contact our economic development team to learn about opportunities to meet interested businesses and increase links with them:</p> <p>economic.development@southandvale.gov.uk</p> <p>ROBIN was established to develop links between Oxfordshire's businesses, public sector bodies and local charities and community groups, www.robinoxford.org.uk</p>
<p>Promoting and Raising Profiles</p>	
<p>We need a charity mentor</p>	<p>You might find it useful to speak to:</p> <p>Charity Mentors www.charitymentors.co.uk</p> <p>Jennings Business Mentors www.jenningsbusinessmentors.org</p>
<p>Partnership working</p>	
<p>Managing, enabling and facilitating with statutory bodies. More support needed, especially after someone is referred to the organisation</p>	<p>You might like to contact your local district and parish councils.</p> <p>OSCA (Oxfordshire Stronger Communities Alliance), part of the Oxfordshire Partnership, is developing a volunteering strategy, which includes looking at how to encourage more effective partnership working.</p> <p>See the ROBIN website, www.robinoxford.org.uk</p>
<p>Miscellaneous</p>	
<p>GDPR – how does it affect smaller organisations How do we find out more</p>	<p>You might like to contact OCVA:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to request GDPR training - to rent space at the OCVA office for meetings - for future OCVA training programmes <p>ocva.org.uk - 01865 251946</p>
<p>Issues with lack of premises</p>	
<p>Red tape – safeguarding etc especially in schools</p>	
<p>Planning a strategy can be difficult</p>	
<p>Lack of transport is a real issue</p> <p>The need for transport to ensure everyone can attend sessions</p>	<p>You might like to look at:</p> <p>www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/content/community-transport for advice on community transport support.</p> <p>www.communityfirstoxon.org - Community First Oxfordshire offer support and advice on local transport issues.</p>
<p>If there are any other topics or issues that you would like information on please contact Anne or Suzi.</p> <p>anne.richardson@southandvale.gov.uk suzi.wild@southandvale.gov.uk</p>	