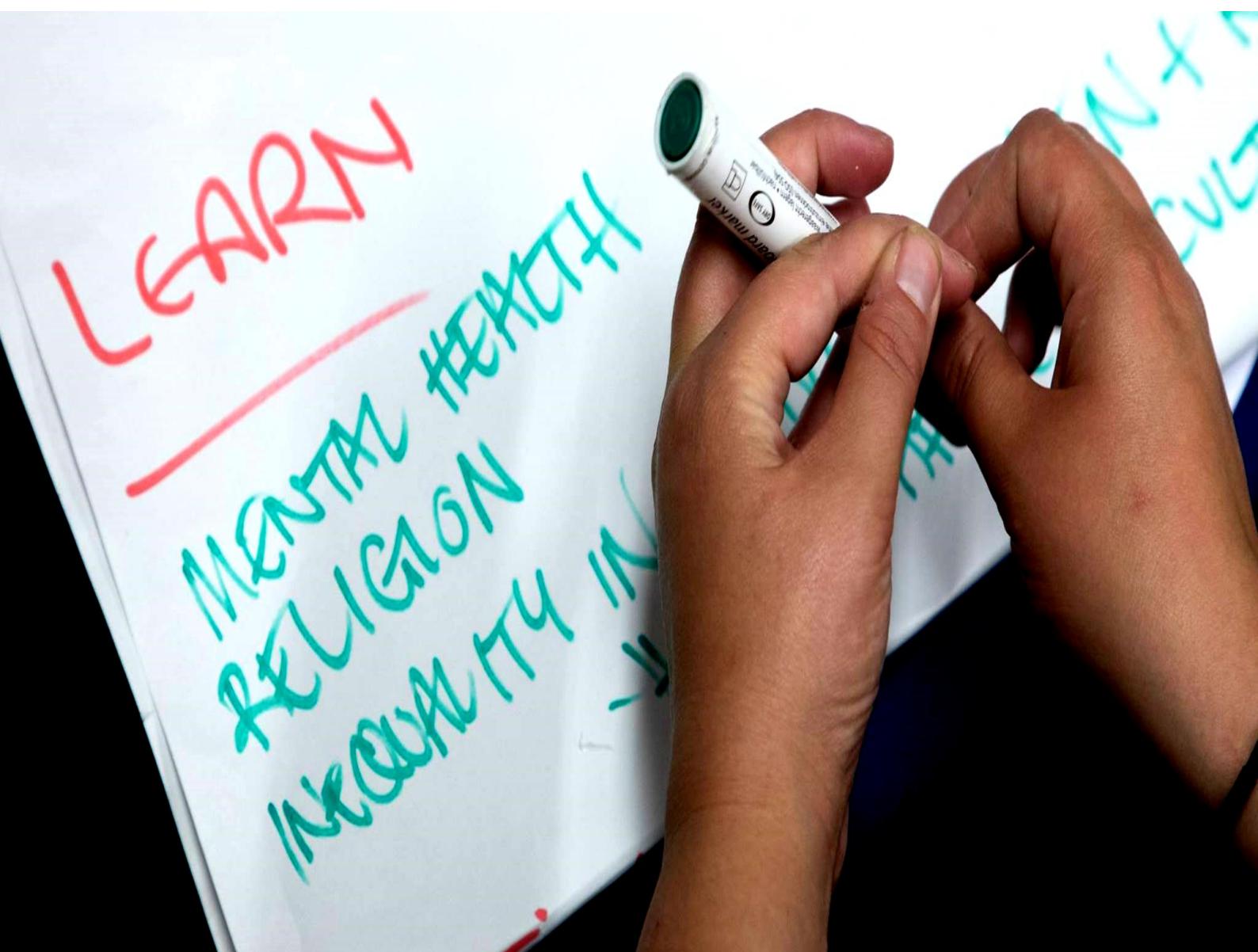




Working for thriving communities and voluntary organisations



Annual Review 2017-18

Trustees, Staff & Volunteers

September 2018

Trustees

**Tim Ward (Chair), Arthur Amos (Vice Chair), John Markey (Treasurer),
Bob Barrett, David Bell, Ram Thiagarajah, Stephen Henderson**

Staff

**Richard Hill (Chief Executive Officer), Russ Francis (Development Manager),
Seniz Mutlu (Development Manager), Hannah Parry (Development Officer),
Jo Roberts (Development Officer), James Moss (Administration Officer),
Shaz Qaddus (Finance Officer), Jonathan Harris (Facilities & Maintenance Officer)**

Volunteers

**Linda West, JB Gurung, Charmaine Fisher, Jonathan Harris, Kristian Millington,
Naresh Ladhu, Shabbir Ahmad, Elaleh Rezaei, Megan O'Mahoney, Pallavi Pramod**



L-R: John Markey, Seniz Mutlu, Pallavi Pramod, Russ Francis,
Linda West, JB Gurung, James Moss, Richard Hill

Chair's Report

Tim Ward

I am pleased to be able to report on another successful year for Voluntary Action Swindon. We continue to improve the services and facilities we provide to the sector within constrained resources. We have also provided an effective and respected voice for the local voluntary and community sector.

Our success and our sound financial position will help us to prepare effectively to bid for the renewal of the voluntary support contract when it is put out to tender by Swindon Borough Council.

Once again, I would like to express my thanks to our volunteers, staff and Trustees for their continued hard work, commitment and enthusiasm. I also want to express my appreciation to our partners, friends and supporters in Swindon and beyond
for your continuing support.

Tim Ward

Chair

Voluntary Action
Swindon



Chief Executive Officer's Report

Richard Hill

I am delighted to be able to reflect on what has been a very successful year for VAS, during which we have made further progress in ensuring a sustainable future for the organisation - against a very difficult funding backdrop for the voluntary and community sector, locally and nationally. We have also continued to make a positive difference to the many groups and organisations we support.

In last year's report, I mentioned that we had worked hard to balance our budget following several years of losses (indeed I note that, before last year, the last time VAS generated any surplus was in 2008/9). We have continued our prudent approach to financial management this year, with the result that we have delivered a surplus of nearly £25,000. We are now making use of this surplus in a balanced way to:

- Ensure our reserves do not become depleted
- Invest in VAS to ensure we continue to improve the delivery of our charitable objects. A good example is that we have increased the working hours for the Development Officer role which focuses on equality and inclusion
- Carry out some much needed maintenance work at John Street, including repairs to the roof and new carpets on the top floor

We have also been able to reinvest money into Sanford House (on e.g. improved signage, additional seating areas, improved kitchen facilities), for the benefit of both the tenant organisations and service users.

Most importantly, we continue to deliver real value to a wide range of groups and organisations – as described elsewhere in this report.



Looking forward, we have much to do in 2018/19, including:

- Bidding for a new voluntary and community sector support contract from SBC (the existing contract, currently in an extension period, is due to end in December 2018)
- Progressing the project to renovate the former caretaker's cottage next to Sanford House (which we intend to use to provide supported accommodation)
- Representing the sector at a range of boards/forums and initiatives. A current exciting example is the formation of a community interest group which will be formally launched towards the end of the year and which will seek to promote and develop social enterprise in the town

In summary, I think we can take great pride in a team effort which has led to a very positive year. My thanks go to the VAS staff and volunteers (including, of course, our trustees), our members, funders and our many other friends and supporters.

Richard Hill
Chief Executive Officer
Voluntary Action Swindon



Training Courses at VAS

VAS offers a range of training courses for the local voluntary and community sector, including Fire Safety, First Aid at Work, Food Safety, Health & Safety, Life Support, Lone Working, and Manual Handling. Last year, we ran 28 courses attended by 211 people from the local voluntary sector.

Our training courses are aimed at the local voluntary sector, and are therefore heavily subsidized (typical course prices are £45 for a half day course, £95 for a full day course).

Some of our most popular courses include:



First Aid at Work

Make sure you are able to respond confidently to a range of first aid incidents and emergencies. This course will teach you the skills and knowledge to give emergency first aid in a low-risk work environment.



Fire Safety

Learn essential knowledge about fire safety, including carry out a fire safety risk assessment, implement appropriate fire precautionary and protection measures and maintain a fire management plan.



Health & Safety

All employers are required to have the correct systems in place to ensure a healthy and safe working environment for employees and any other people who may be affected by their business activities.

For our full list of training courses, including dates and information on how you can book a place, please go to:

<http://vas-swindon.org/training/>

Swindon Sports Forum



Swindon Sports Forum is the voice of the sporting community in Swindon. VAS supports the Sports Forum's administration, enabling it to bring funding into the town to help develop local sports clubs and to hold regular club training and development courses. The Forum is run by a committee of dedicated volunteers who work with partners including Wiltshire & Swindon Sport (WASP) and Swindon Borough Council.

VAS's administrative support has enabled Swindon Sports Forum to focus on delivering its objectives, including awarding £14,000 worth of funding to 13 local sports clubs, including £600 to two young people from deprived areas of Swindon, which will allow them to take part in sports.

VAS supported the Sports Forum to form a working partnership with Total Swindon, and to run two public events which provided local sports clubs with information about funding opportunities. We helped to produce the Sports Forum's monthly newsletter, which passed on information to sports clubs such as the availability of bike racks in the town.

For more about Swindon Sports Forum, please see:

<http://www.swindonsportsforum.co.uk/>

Sector Support

Some of our achievements in the last year:



Supported Inner Flame to raise £45,000 from the Blagrave Trust; Swindon Children's Scrapstore to raise £23,000 from the Aviva Community Fund; and Headway Swindon to raise £10,000 from Wiltshire Community Foundation.



Supported more than 100 local organisations with funding and governance advice, including helping Sabrina's Mile, Swindon City of Sanctuary, STEP and Oak & Furrows to register as charities or change their legal structure.



Held 2 Equality Ambassador events to engage people to drive forward the Swindon200 project, launched the Swindon200 monthly radio show, and supported Refugee Week, with events attended by over 500 people.



Organised training for 40 local organisations on charity law, new fundraising rules, taxation and trade for charities, charity reserves, workplace pensions auto-enrolment, cyber crime, fraud, and new data protection rules (GDPR).



Finance Report Summary

This summary financial information is taken from the trustees' annual report and statutory financial statements, which has been approved by the trustees before the AGM. The statutory financial statements, on which the auditor, Chris Vaughan Reeves & Co has given an unqualified report, will be submitted to the Registrar of Companies and the Charity Commission.

This summary information may not contain sufficient information to give a complete understanding of the financial affairs of the charity. The full Trustees' report, statutory financial statements and auditors' report may be downloaded from the VAS website or the Charity

Commission website - <http://www.charity-commission.gov.uk>

VAS Accounts Summary: Year to 31 March 2018		
	2017-18	2016-17
	£,000	£,000
INCOME		
Rent	82	65
Printing	4	4
Training	4	2
Interest	0	1
Other (1)	9	5
PROJECTS/FUNDING		
SBC—Community Sector Support	62	60
SBC—Sanford House	109	107
VCS—Involve	1	1
Wiltshire Community Foundation	5	-
Other Income	0	22
Total Income	276	267

VAS Accounts Summary: Year to 31 March 2018		
	2017-18	2016-17
	£,000	£,000
EXPENDITURE		
Staff Costs	-144	-148
Other Costs (2)	-105	-99
Audit/Independent Examination Fees	-2	-2
Total Expenditure	-251	-249
Net Deficit/Surplus	25	18
BALANCE SHEET		
	2017-18	2016-17
	£,000	£,000
Fixed Assets	90	90
Bank Accounts	244	213
Other Assets	6	6
Total	340	309
Liabilities	-32	-26
Net Funds	308	283

(1) Other includes income from our DBS checking and PAT testing services, and charges for advertising vacancies in VAS id.

(2) Other Costs includes admin and management staff, premises expenses, community print and publications, governance costs, and costs associated with training and conferences.

Sector Support

Some of the feedback we received last year:



We have been granted £2,000 from the Wiltshire Community Foundation. I would like to thank you for your help. Since this has come through I feel more encouraged so I will try other trusts.

- Joy Corrigan, Friends of Gloucester House

Just to let you know that the Charity Commission responded very quickly to our application and has approved it! Many thanks for all your help in preparing the application – we certainly couldn't have done it without your invaluable guidance.

– Mike Cheeseman,
Oak & Furrows

The services that VAS and their amazing team provide supporting local charities and organisations in Swindon has benefitted the Swindon Scrapstore many times over the past 16 years in a variety of ways and we would not have achieved as much as we have without their continued support.

– Olivia McCann, Swindon Children's Scrapstore

VAS id (information digest) is our weekly e-bulletin, helping to keep you up to date with voluntary and community sector activity in Swindon. Sign up to receive local news, upcoming community events, training courses, funding opportunities, voluntary and community sector vacancies, charity law updates, and advice on fundraising and governance.

You can also let us know what your charity or community group is up to, and we'll feature it in VAS id. Just send us an email:

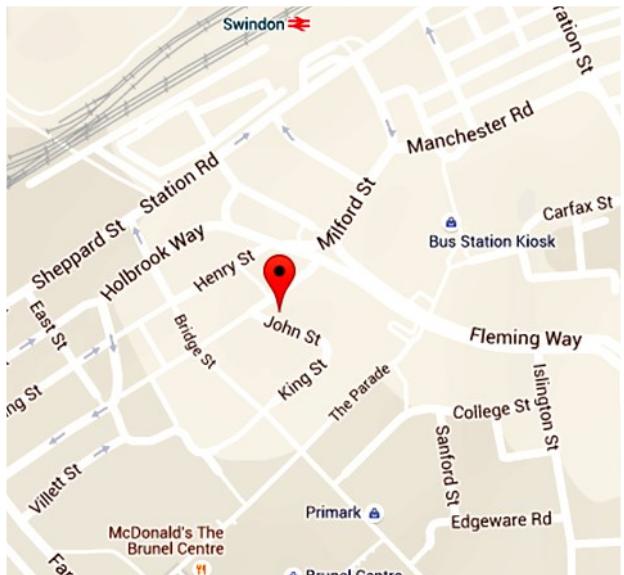
vasid@vas-swindon.org



Sign up here:

<http://vas-swindon.org/subscribe>

How to Find Us



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1 John Street, Swindon,
Wiltshire, SN1 1RT
Tel: 01793 538 398

Email: info@vas-swindon.org
Web: <http://vas-swindon.org>

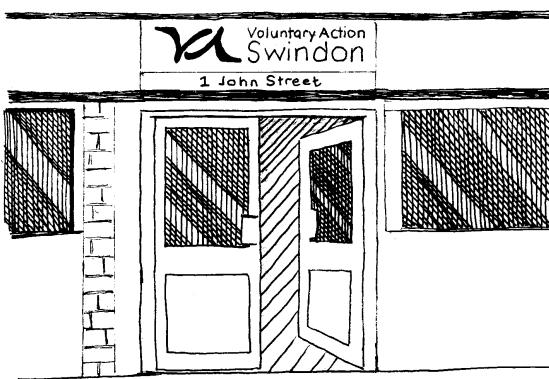
<https://www.facebook.com/VoluntaryActionSwindon>

<https://twitter.com/vaswindon>



We are based in the town centre, only 5 minutes walk from the Fleming Way bus station. You can reach us by turning off Fleming Way onto Fleet Street and following the road around to John Street. Our building is on the left.

The cheapest car parks near to us are the Whalebridge (Islington Street, SN1 1TN) and Spring Gardens (SN1 2BF) car parks.



Special thanks to our funders:

