

Voluntary Action Swindon

Strengthening the Swindon Community Sector



Annual Review 2019-20

Trustees, Staff & Volunteers

September 2020

Trustees

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

Staff

Pam Webb, CEO), **Jol Rose**, Equality and Collaboration
Carol Willis, Funding and Governance ,
Seniz Mutlu , Business Development , **Shaz Qaddus**, Finance (no photo) ,
James Moss , Property, Office and Shopmobility,
Chris Hills , Maintenance
Mesut Mutlu and **Jonathan Harris**, Shopmobility



Pam Webb



Jol Rose



Carol Willis



Seniz Mutlu



James Moss



Chris Hills



Mesut Mutlu



Jonathan Harris

Our valued regular volunteers

Linda West, **JB Gurung**, **Charmaine Fisher**, **Shabbir Ahmad**,
Meena Fernandes, **Pinar Tezcanli**,

Chair's Report

Arthur Amos

I am pleased to be able to report on another positive year for Voluntary Action Swindon. Now into our second year of delivering the voluntary sector support contract, we continue to provide funding and governance advice; the voice for Swindon equality; opportunities for collaboration; training courses and other support services to the Swindon not for profit sector as well as a collective voice for the sector on key forums.

We continue to run Sanford House as a successful community hub in Swindon and have developed the Swindon Shopmobility Service since taking it over from Swindon Borough Council in January 2019.

Whilst this report covers the 2019/2020 financial year it would be remiss of me not to refer to the final part of the year in March 2020 when the COVID-19 pandemic hit and the whole country went into lockdown.

I would like to say a big thank you to Pam and the team for their responsive actions and the partnership working with Swindon Borough Council and the Swindon Volunteer Centre to launch the Compassionate Swindon appeal which recruited several hundred willing volunteers to respond to urgent need. VAS responded specifically to launch a volunteer food shopping scheme for those shielding or isolating and through a grant from the Wiltshire Community Foundation were also able to support those who were also experiencing financial hardship with critical food.

We have been proud to play our part in what has been an excellent Swindon collaborative response in these unprecedented times.

VAS delivers a diverse range of support and services, none of which would be possible without our committed staff team and our wonderful volunteers. I express my appreciation to all of them as well as our valued partners, friends and supporters.

Arthur Amos

Chair, Voluntary Action Swindon



Chief Executive Officer's Report

Pam Webb

Now over a year into my role as CEO at VAS it remains a privilege to work with such a committed team of staff, Board and volunteers. It has also been an inspiring journey building a network of contacts across the statutory and local voluntary sector and learning more about the fantastic work all these great organisations do to support our local community.



I am pleased to welcome Jol Rose and Carol Willis as new members of the team leading on our equality and collaboration work and funding and governance advice respectively. They both bring a range of excellent experience to VAS and I look forward to seeing both these roles develop under their leadership.

It's quite difficult to report back on this 2019/2020 financial year when most work prior to March 2020, when the pandemic hit, now seems a distance memory! But I will highlight the continued development of the Shopmobility Scheme; the VAS Community Fair in October 2019 which was a great event with a real buzz and saw 38 voluntary groups come together to promote what they each do and to network with each other. This was followed in February by our evening 'Voice of Equality workshop' which brought 44 community representative together to understand the equality priorities for Swindon. This work continues with Jol developing the equality coalition to be a wider network of equality champions and a core group to provide the collective voice.

The final part of this financial year was very focussed on making sure that vulnerable people in Swindon had access to food or knew how to access food whilst shielding or isolating due to COVID-19. A sterling combined effort of the Food Collective, Swindon Scrapstore, Swindon Night Shelter, the SBC Live Well Team and Emergency Assistant Fund; Swindon Support; Swindon

Volunteers and the RVS and VAS shopping schemes and all the wonderful volunteers that supported them made a huge difference to thousands of people when they needed it most.

I'd like to thank the entire VAS team and volunteers for their hard work and commitment during what has been a truly unprecedented time.

Community spirit, collaboration and speed of decision making are many of the positive things that have made a difference during the COVID-19 pandemic. It is important that the voluntary sector and statutory sectors continue to work in partnership to harness all this positivity and learning and I'm excited about the role VAS has to play in supporting this.

We are moving into a 'new normal' which will bring new opportunities but it will also highlight barriers - digital exclusion being a potentially huge one. As we move into a more virtual world, I and the entire VAS team look forward to playing our part to harness the opportunities, encourage collaboration, understand the barriers and help to strengthen the Swindon Community sector.



Training Courses at VAS

VAS offers a range of subsidised training courses for the local voluntary and community sector (typical course prices are £12 an hour).

Information on our range of courses is here:

How effective is your Board? How effective is your leadership team?



Charity
Governance
Code



Being an
Effective
Trustee



Building
Confidence
and
Assertiveness
Skills

These short courses aim to strengthen the governance and leadership of your charity.



Equality &
Diversity
Training

This half day course aims to:

Explore the meaning of equality, diversity and inclusion

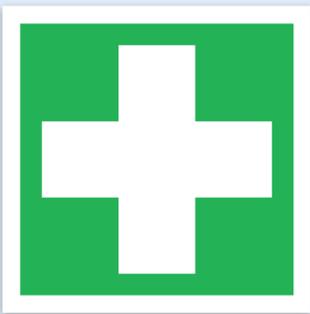
Introduce The Equality Act 2010 and the equality duties it sets out

Look at and discuss the language we use and ways we talk about people with protected characteristics

Discuss the importance of equality issues for your organisation and its effectiveness

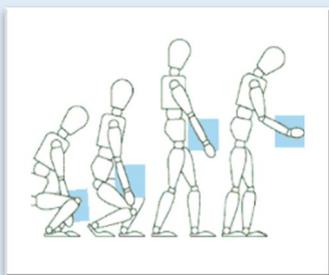
For our full list of training courses, including dates and information on how you can book a place, please go to:

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



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.



Manual Handling

Manual handling injuries are the main cause of lost working days in the UK. This training will look at how to prevent back injuries.



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.



Life Support (basic)

Rapid response to emergency situations can save lives. This course will provide basic life support training.



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.



Food Safety

This course reinforces the importance of food safety and provides learners with an understanding of how to identify and control food safety hazards

Other Services at VAS

Our key support to the local sector and community



Funding & Governance Advice

Carol is here to help you with funding sources, bid critique and governance advice.

Carol@vas-swindon.org



Equality & Collaboration

Jol is here to help you raise any equality issues and to encourage sector collaboration.

Jol@vas-swindon.org



Shopmobility

Enabling independence in Swindon town centre. Mobility Scooters and Power and manual wheelchairs for hire.

07379 689128



DBS Checks

VAS is registered umbrella body for standard and enhanced DBS checks.

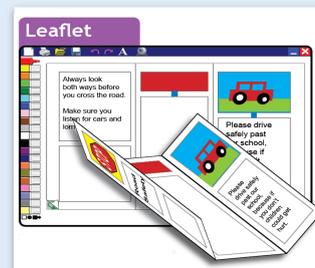
info@vas-swindon.org



Room Hire

A range of conference and other rooms available for hire from £15 an hour.

info@vas-swindon.org



Printing and Copying

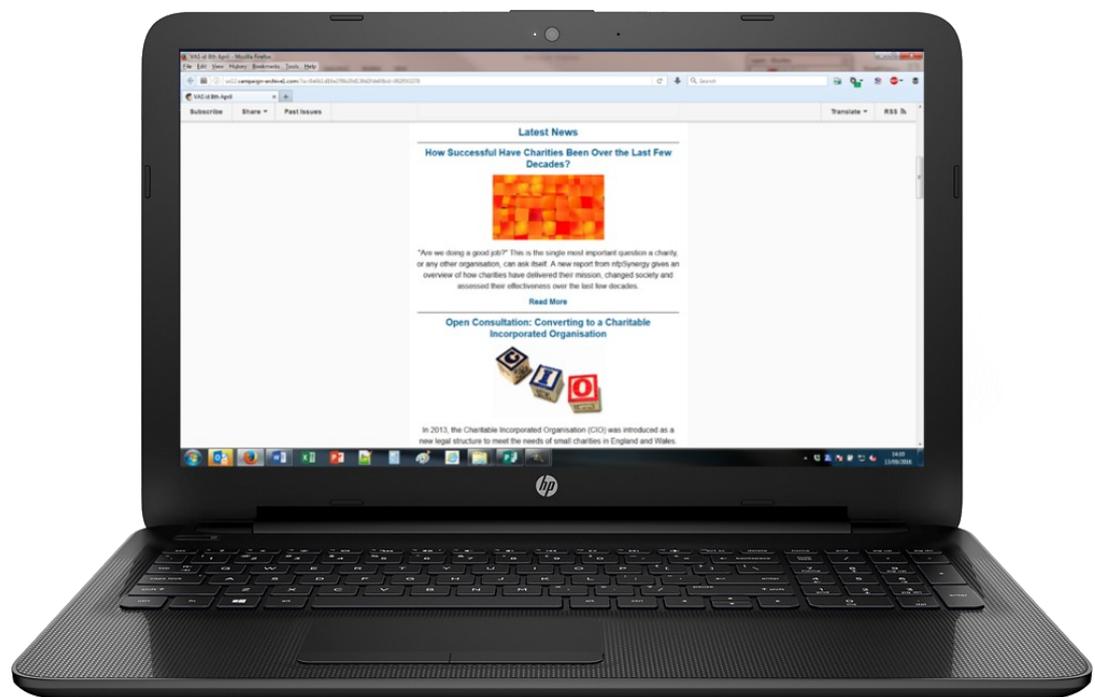
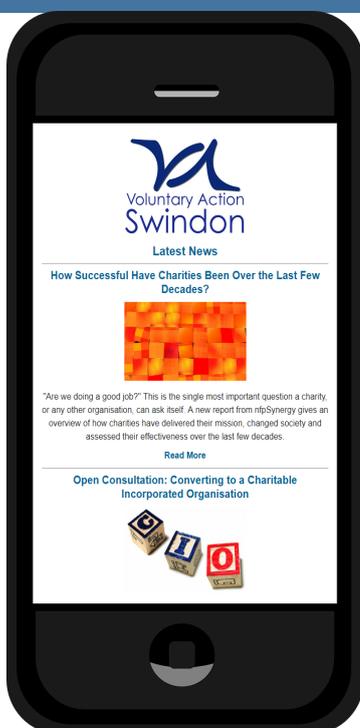
Charity leaflets, newsletters, posters and all your copying needs at preferential rates.

info@vas-swindon.org

VAS id (information digest) is our weekly e-bulletin, helping to keep you up to date with voluntary and community sector news. Sign up to receive national and 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>

Sector Support

Some of our achievements in the last year:



We helped a range of local organisations with successful funding bids totalling £115,800.



We supported 87 organisations with funding and governance advice including help on safeguarding, gift aid advice and to how to become formally incorporated or constituted.



We delivered 10 training courses as well as facilitating 190 DBS checks for 35 organisations and helped a range of community groups with their printing and copying needs.



We continued to provide representation to the Swindon Equality Advisory Group, continued to develop the equality voice for Swindon as well as help to deliver a knife crime rally to educate young people on the two-strike rule



We chaired the judging panel and provided the administration back-up for 54 team and individual Pride of Swindon Awards.



We managed 5837 room bookings.



Our Community Fair brought 38 charities together. Our networking meetings brought the sector and the CEO of Swindon Borough Council (SBC) and the Chief Operating Officer of the Clinical Commissioning Group together. We launched the Compassionate Swindon COVID-19 volunteer appeal with SBC and the Swindon Volunteer Centre and we provided first-line response to help residents following lock down.

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, independently examined by Chris Vaughan, Chris Vaughan Accountants, will be submitted to the Registrar of Companies and the Charity Commission.

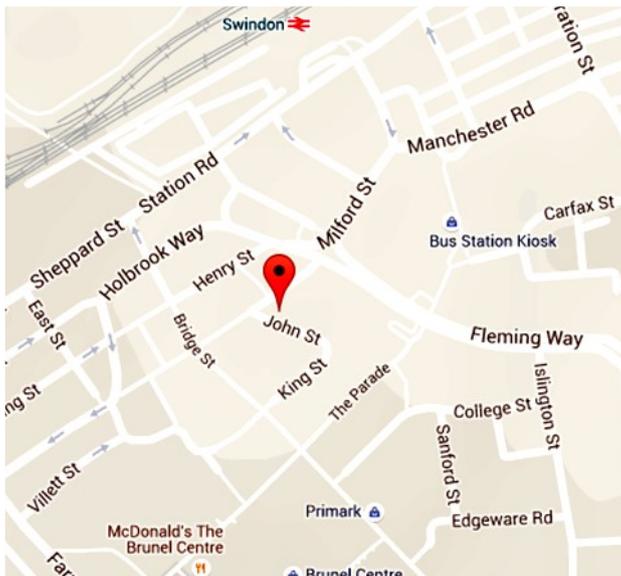
This summary information may not contain sufficient information to give a complete understanding of the financial affairs of the charity. The full Trustees' report, statutory financial statements and independent examiner's report may be downloaded from the VAS website or the Charity Commission website - <http://www.charity-commission.gov.uk>

VAS Accounts Summary: Year to 31 March 2020		
	2019-20	2018-19
	£,000	£,000
INCOME		
Rent	92	93
Printing	3	4
Training	2	3
Interest	2	2
Other (1)	13	9
PROJECTS/FUNDING		
SBC - Community Sector Support	89	70
SBC - Sanford House	113	110
VCS - Involve	1	1
Wiltshire Community Foundation	5	5
Other Income	16	0
Total Income	336	297

VAS Accounts Summary: Year to 31 March 2020		
	2019-20	2018-19
	£,000	£,000
EXPENDITURE		
Staff Costs	-189	-151
Other Costs (2)	-153	-119
Audit/Independent Examination Fees	-1	-1
Total Expenditure	-343	-271
Net Deficit/Surplus	-7	26
BALANCE SHEET		
	2019-20	2018-19
	£,000	£,000
Fixed Assets	91	91
Bank Accounts	262	259
Other Assets	6	9
Total	359	359
Liabilities	-31	-25
Net Funds	328	334

- (1) Other includes income from our DBS checking, donations and charges for advertising vacancies in VAS id.
- (2) Other Costs includes reinvestment of £20,156 Sanford House restricted funds, admin and management staff, premises expenses, community print and publications, governance costs, and training costs.
- (3) SBC Community Sector Support and Other Project Income reflects addition of Shopmobility Service

How to Find Us



Voluntary Action Swindon

1 John Street, Swindon,

Wiltshire, SN1 1RT

Tel: 01793 538 398

Email: info@vas-swinton.org

Web: <http://vas-swinton.org>

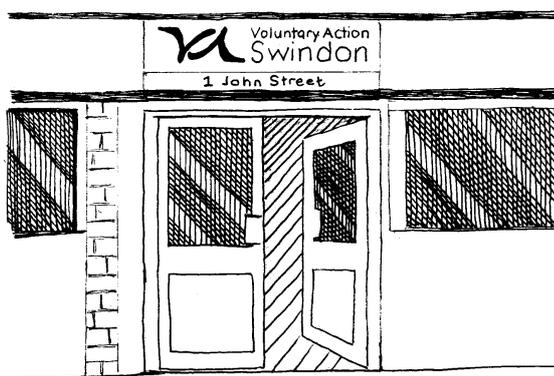
<https://www.facebook.com/VoluntaryActionSwinton>

<https://twitter.com/vaswinton>



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:

