



Volunteer Centre
Dorchester

Volunteer Centre Dorchester

Registered Charity Number: 1113758

Company Number: 5685988

**1 Colliton Walk
Dorchester
Dorset
DT1 1TZ**

Telephone (01305) 269214

ANNUAL REPORT 2007/2008



VOLUNTEER CENTRE DORCHESTER

Charity Number 1113758 Company Number 5685988

Board of Directors

2007/2008

Hedley Harrison	Chairman
Alec Bailey	Hon. Treasurer
Marie Waterman	Company Secretary
Peter Wood	Director (till January 2008)
Dennis Maggs	Director
Cynthia Gittings	Director
Andy Canning	Rep WDDC
Val Warren	Director
Martin Ray	Director (co-opted March 2008)
Margaret Ray	Director (co-opted March 2008)
Gerald Duke	Director

STAFF

Marie Waterman	Manager
Craig Womble	Deputy Manager - Help Scheme Co-Ordinator
Jim Hart	Volunteer Coordinator LAA
Karen Jones	Outreach Worker - West Dorset
Dianne Cooper	Outreach Worker- North Dorset
Rosemary Britten	Administration Officer
Shaun Hollywood	Administration office LAA

Office

1 Colliton Walk
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DT1 1TZ
Telephone 01305 269214

Email: dorchester.vb@btopenworld.com

Opening Hours

Mon 9am-4pm
Tues 9am-4pm
Wed 9am-3pm
Thur 9am-3pm
Fri 9am-3pm

www.volunteeringdorset.org.uk

VOLUNTEER CENTRE VOLUNTEERS

2007/2008

OFFICE

Lisa Mitchell	Volunteer Admin Assistant
Jasmine Metcalfe	Volunteer Database Assistant
Gaynor Smith	Volunteer Database Assistant
Julie Williams	Volunteer Office Assistant
Richard Maxfield	Volunteer Office Assistant
Helen Southam	Volunteer Admin Assistant
Heather Jackson	Volunteer Admin Assistant
Vicki Waddington Black	Volunteer Admin Assistant
Sue Walkling	Volunteer Admin Assistant
Nicki Carrington	Volunteer Admin Assistant
Calli Cameron	Volunteer Admin Assistant
Paul Wiscombe	Volunteer Admin Assistant

GARDEN HELP SCHEME

Richard Makin	Garden Help Scheme Volunteer
Duncan Montrose	Garden Help Scheme Volunteer
Paul Mills	Garden Help Scheme Volunteer
Valerie Scriven	Garden Help Scheme Volunteer
Adrian Morton	Garden Help Scheme Volunteer
David Dean	Garden Help Scheme Volunteer
Steve Pallant	Garden Help Scheme Volunteer
Jason Broom	Garden Help Scheme Volunteer
Penny Glover	Garden Help Scheme Volunteer
Ashley Thompson	Garden Help Scheme Volunteer

S.P.A.C.E.S PROJECT—ARTS CENTRE

Gillian Wilson	S.P.A.C.E.S Project Supervisor
Alex	S.P.A.C.E.S Project Volunteer
Perren	S.P.A.C.E.S Project Volunteer
Sharon	S.P.A.C.E.S Project Volunteer

COMPANY AT CHRISTMAS TEAM

Colleen Mackinson	Co @ Christmas Co-Ordinator
Mandy Marshall	Co @ Christmas Volunteer
Darren Crowther	Co @ Christmas Volunteer
Gillian Edwards	Co @ Christmas Volunteer
Peter Watts	Co @ Christmas Volunteer
Desiree King	Co @ Christmas Volunteer
Georgina Bell	Co @ Christmas Volunteer
Mr Robson	Co @ Christmas Volunteer
Hannah Carding	Co @ Christmas Volunteer
Terry	Co @ Christmas Volunteer
Peter & Barbara Scanlon	Co @ Christmas Volunteer
Yvonne Vincent	Co @ Christmas Volunteer
Val O'Malley	Co @ Christmas Volunteer
Jenny Laney	Co @ Christmas Volunteer
Barbara and John Aslear	Co @ Christmas Volunteer
Keith and Christine Bailey	Co @ Christmas Volunteer
Dianne Mackle	Co @ Christmas Volunteer
Tom Mackle	Co @ Christmas Volunteer
Ashley Mackle	Co @ Christmas Volunteer
Daisy Mackle	Co @ Christmas Volunteer
Denise Prisk	Co @ Christmas Volunteer
Miss Johnson	Co @ Christmas Volunteer

CHAIRMAN' S REPORT 2008

The Centre has had another year that Staff and Volunteers can justifiably be proud of. Or rather another period of nine months since in 2006 the Board agreed to switch the Centre's reporting period to the fiscal year commencing April, 2008. This change in no way detracted from the success of the organisation and its impact on the people, organisations and communities it serves.

Nowhere is this achievement more apparent than in the development and burgeoning success of the Local Area Agreement (LAA) Target - Recruiting Formal Volunteers activities. As at March 2008, and after two of the three years of the LAA programme, not only has the recruitment target been well exceeded but the reach, credibility and reputation of the LAA team, and the Centre as a whole, has been established in areas previously not inhabited by the Centre and enhanced significantly within the Voluntary Sector and with both Local and Regional Government.

Whilst sustaining the LAA activities the core functions of the Centre have continued, developed and expanded. The services in the greater Dorchester area have continued to be appreciated by clients, voluntary organisations and increasingly by local government. The Garden Help Scheme continues to thrive and the Company at Christmas event was once again a resounding success, and won the accolade of a personal visit of the Mayor of Dorchester. The Outreach Workers in West and North Dorset have continued to embed volunteering into the Voluntary Sector activities in their areas whilst also contributing to the LAA work and expansion into new areas.

Whilst the outcomes achieved by the Centre and its Staff and Volunteers continued to new levels of success and to reach new heights of service, the funding situation of the organisation remained difficult and its fragility was never more apparent than from the increasing amounts of management time expended in searching for funding. The long-term future of Infrastructure funding remains unresolved, notwithstanding the efforts of DCC and the PCT, whose continuing support remains invaluable. The funding challenge for the future continues to be acute and a priority for the coming year is to expend whatever efforts that are necessary to achieve a resolution in whatever form that sustains a viable volunteering service in Dorset.

As with every year none of the achievements and successes of the Centre would have happened if it weren't for the loyalty and devotion of Staff and Volunteers. On behalf of myself and the Board I would like to offer my heart-felt thanks and appreciation to all who have contributed, however, great or small a part, to the success of the organisation over the reporting period. The Board will continue its search for a sustainable funding solution as a matter of both priority and urgency, we could owe Staff and Volunteers nothing less.

Hedley Harrison

MANAGER'S REPORT 2008

Each year I think I have had the most challenging and rewarding, but this past year has proved to be just as much a year of ups and downs, highs and lows, I have found it quite incredible just how hard everyone involved with the centre has worked, with relentless enthusiasm and determination to ensure the centre succeeds in its activities.

All of our existing projects have been maintained and even increased, especially the Garden Help Scheme, a project that shows just how much can be achieved with a dedicated team of volunteers. The Local Area Agreement target is well on its way to success, but still with much work to do.

Company at Christmas was an outstanding success with a new volunteer taking the lead this year, a daunting task for someone who just fancied helping out! But Colleen gave her all and over 30 older people enjoyed a traditional Christmas Day celebration in the company of over 20 volunteers and with a few families taking part this year.

Reflecting on the work we do its important to recognise that whilst we strive to deliver new work in new areas, its important not to forget what we already do successfully and whilst we cannot stand still, we need to bring along with us the tried and trusted projects that we delivered for a great many years - people rely upon us and we should not let them down.

The centre has done much to support volunteering groups and volunteers, we have provided information leaflets and data on good practice, volunteer management and training in areas such as Health & Safety, Basic First Aid, all the fundamental basics that volunteers should receive to feel competent and safe. We have helped many new groups who were unsure of how to go about recruiting and supporting their volunteers. With an increasing apparent need for Criminal Records checks we now provide a fully informed service free of charge for volunteers.

We held for a second year a Volunteers Awards ceremony which with over 200 people attending was a resounding hit, with many requests for this years event already in place, we hope to make this an annual event to recognise the dedication volunteers give and the difference they make to our communities.

Outreach continues to grow, and there is much demand for our services in areas such as East Dorset, Purbeck and we continue to support those wishing to seek volunteering in the Christchurch area - linking this need to the LAA target we hope to secure adequate funding to provide services in these areas, being the Volunteer Centre that delivers across Dorset. Although funding remains an issue for the centre, we can now continue our successful outreach project with the support from Capacity Builders for the next 3 years, both existing areas have supported many groups and individuals looking to volunteer, both areas are finding a need to provide additional support for people with disabilities, currently we

are finding a need to provide additional support for people with disabilities, currently we only offer limited support but with future plans we hope to develop a dedicated project that will enable participation from those who may otherwise be excluded from volunteering.

Working in partnership with others to provide structure and expertise in the 3rd sector is and will remain a priority, and this has been no exception in the last year, continuing the joint approach to encouraging young people into volunteering, working closely with the "V" Team. We have delivered a project supporting those interested in volunteering at the 2012 Olympics, enabling them to build on their skills and training with various events across the county, this will continue and we hope to provide new projects and support during the next year and of course leading up to and beyond 2012. Other partnerships where we have been an active participant are the Dorset Strategic Partnership, Dorset County Council, Primary Care Trust, Dorset Community Action and the 3rd Sector Infrastructure Group.

We have recently achieved Quality Accreditation from Volunteering England, for the second time, a tough robust process this time round. It gives the centre credibility and something which we are immensely proud of as this shows us as a strong, fit to deliver Volunteer Centre. We could not have achieved this without everyone's help. A big thank you to all staff, volunteers and Directors.

The centre has carried out numerous customer satisfaction surveys (Organisations, garden Help Scheme clients and Volunteers) over the past year and whilst recognising that there are areas for improvement, it shows we do have a great deal of support and satisfied customers.

We have seen a number of our volunteers move on and succeed in finding paid employment this past year and although sad to see them go, and we congratulate them, proof that volunteering really does make a difference, not just to the organisation but to the individual. We have been lucky enough to have recruited new volunteers, all have settled in to our way of working and are a pleasure to be with. We also welcome new board members, and will look forward to their ideas, skills and thoughts on how we can continue to improve our service.

Finally without volunteers we would not exist, not just those that support the centre itself but all those who for whatever reason want to give their time, skills and knowledge freely to 1000's of organisations and projects that gives Dorset a thriving 3rd Sector, and it continues to grow, volunteering takes place 24hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. Imagine a day in Dorset where no-one volunteered! Volunteering has a positive impact on everyday life, from a lunch club helper to the fund raiser for a national cancer charity, from a sports coach to a conservationist.

Marie Waterman
Manager

Adrian, David and Ashley at the CSV project, Allington Avenue Allotment.



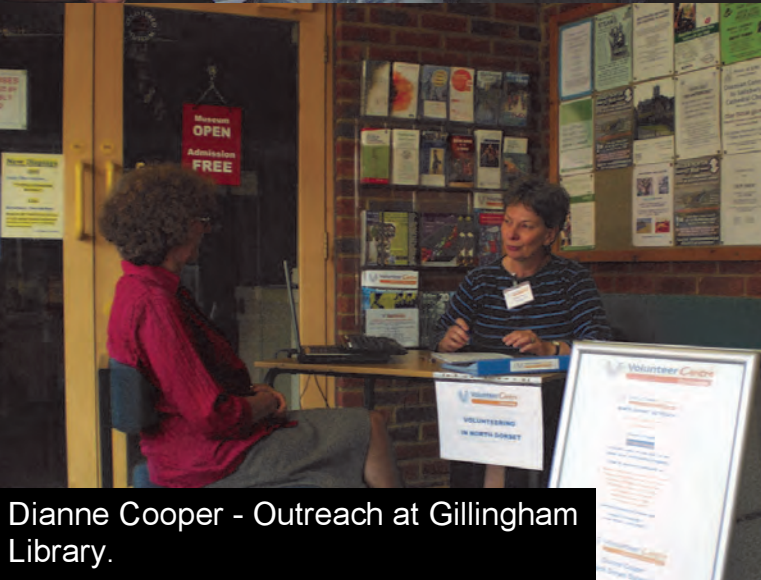
North Dorset Garden Help Team Penny, Dianne, Duncan Paul

Author: Laura Matthews presenting Young Volunteer of the year at awards ceremony

teering
tunities
in local
community



First Aid at Bridport



Dianne Cooper - Outreach at Gillingham Library.



Dorchester Mayor, David Barrett, attending Company at Christmas 2008



Angus & George supporting volunteers at the Sailing Academy.



Everyone Happy 'before the event!'



Huge success at Volunteer Centre Awards with 200 guest attending.

Angela, Fondly remembered.



Trust me I'm a First Aider!



Cheese Festival 2008. Sturminster Newton



The Centre Co-Hosting WOW 2012 Volunteers Leaders event at Weymouth & Portland Sailing Academy

GARDEN HELP SCHEME REPORT 2008

"As usual the garden help scheme has seen many developments and we are indebted to the commitment and flexibility of our volunteers and their hard work".

Allington Avenue Community Allotment

This popular resource has seen a steady stream of 'green fingered volunteers' and many small groups that use the facility to help the personnel development of their clients, and once again hosted a C.S.V environment action earth project, which was featured in the local press.

Arts Centre Community Garden

Has been a challenge for the sensory loss group this year due to the building work being carried early season. However Gill, Perren, Alex, and Sharon have maintained the surroundings for the groups that visit, and the teams have begun to regularly tend the lawns. Although we sadly lost one of the Characters of the team 'Angela' who passed away suddenly. Her cheerful personality will be greatly missed.

Team and Individual Volunteering.

The list of clients in Dorchester which includes the elderly and disabled continues to grow, as we strive to provide this vital community service. Basic work such as maintaining lawns and hedges regularly throughout the year provides much comfort and peace of mind for those on low incomes and lacking physical support from family and friends. We feel it enables them to remain in their own homes provides regular visits from trusted volunteers, and improves their wellbeing. Volunteers from all walks of life are involved, and the sense of achievement for those taking part is tangible. Team members with many issues including physical and mental disabilities are an integral part of this work and highly valued.

Men in Trees! This year we have cut down trees, cleared ponds hedges lawns cleared rubbish for some very appreciative individuals, Volunteers have taken part in First Aid Training, and horticultural courses including the use of Chain Saws!

Expansion Projects

With the help of a considerable grant from '**Signpost Housing**' in Blandford we have been able to extend our services to North Dorset and have begun to make our efforts (like volunteering) countywide, although we are still trying to gain support to extend our services to Bridport and other surrounding areas **and gain sound financial backing for a project that gives so much to all those giving and receiving support.**

We hope to continue our work with The "V" team and promote this type of voluntary activity for the benefit of all ages as well as developing more employee volunteering as this aspect of the volunteer centre gains popularity.

Craig Womble
(Garden Help Scheme Coordinator)

LAA REWARD ELEMENT TARGET “INCREASING VOLUNTEERS”

Aim - to increase volunteering by 3,800 by 2009 countywide

As of January 2008 the LAA project conducted an interim survey of voluntary and community organisations who agreed to take part in the project across the county to determine the number of regular active volunteers, monitoring any increases/decreases. The survey included the original surveyed organisation and the new organisations logged since the birth of the project.

To date the project has recorded a total of 4,462 new volunteers, this includes those that volunteer for 86 new projects/groups

The Project Coordinator holds regular meetings with the Dorset County Council officers and members of the DSP, and regularly monitors voluntary activity in relation to the project. Sample surveys are carried out quarterly to monitor progress.

Outreach

The Volunteer Centre's two outreach workers have publicised the project and recruited new volunteers and are supporting new projects. They are to take the work into locations not previously served. We are working with Sherborne, West Dorset and East Dorset partnerships to encourage and support volunteering. We will seek opportunities to work with partnerships in other areas. All are encouraged to use VC as a partner in voluntary sector engagement matters.

Success Stories/New Projects

◆ Brendon Care

Brendon Care is a charity based in Hampshire which provides residential and day centre activities and lunch clubs for the elderly. They were not active in Dorset until early 2007 when they responded to perceived demand for more services to the elderly and initiated a number of lunch clubs in the Christchurch area.

◆ Connecting Dorset

Connecting Dorset is an innovative project to provide a computer terminal and internet access facility in every village in the county. The programme is being rolled out over several years with a target to connect 150 communities. Terminals will be sited in a village hall or other public building and access will be managed by a small team of locally recruited volunteers. Recruitment of volunteers is being done in collaboration with Dorset Community Action who are leading on the project development.

◆ Dorset Blind Association

Dorset Blind Association is establishing several new home visiting service projects in Dorset. Each project has a paid coordinator but all visitors are volunteers. The VC is supporting these projects by recruiting volunteers

Marketing

We continue to attend events to raise the profile of the Centre including: Tolpuddle Martyrs' Festival, Dorset County Show, Bridport Charter Fair,

The Volunteer Centre website has been reactivated and improved. It contains an introduction to volunteering and links to other organisations and encourage potential volunteers to use online information sources as a first step to volunteering.

NORTH DORSET OUTREACH 2008

The North Dorset Outreach continues to be busy with 6 drop in sessions a month, three of these are weekly and the other three at various times during the month but covering a large area of North Dorset. I have added Stalbridge Library to my monthly visits this year and also on a monthly basis I visit Hope (new name was Martins) which is an initiative set up for people still being monitored by the Social Inclusion Group in North Dorset. It provides somewhere to go and meet people and have a chat. I visit at the same time as Next Step and we offer a service to assist those attending to get back into work or start volunteering to build their confidence.

Working from the library not only means I am constantly in the public eye but it provides me with a means of continually updating posters, magazines and promoting anything which might be happening in the area. In March this year my Booklet of Opportunities for North Dorset was distributed to all the Libraries. This evolved as a support service for library staff enabling them to continue updating the public in my absence. I also gave copies to the Mental Health Team, Stepping Stones and Next Step to aid their services to clients. I have been visiting Connexions who have been using our services for some of their younger clients including those attending Blandford school.

Last October I invited the Social Inclusion Team and their clients to take part in a MADD with an organisation who take in families in crisis at the weekend offering their children time to enjoy space and the animals they have on the farm. The challenge was to turn their front entrance to the house into a safer and more appealing area. Approximately 20 volunteers took part in the event including two volunteers who made a fantastic lunch for the workers. Paths were taken up and levelled, walls cleared of ivy, paving weeded and cleaned, beds turned and replanted. Lunch was a good bonding time and the DSIT still visit the farm and carry out projects as part of their ongoing therapy. One of the ladies providing lunch still continues to offer her cookery skills on a regular basis. The benefit of these days are enormous and should inspire anyone to volunteer. I was also surprised at local generosity - Harts donated soil, plants and bulbs and Your Choice donated tons of woodchip for the bedding.

Future Projects include:

- ◆ Information days for both volunteers and organisations, to be held at various events such as the Sturminster Newton Exchange.
- ◆ Further develop the Garden Help Scheme in North Dorset, building on the support from Signpost Housing Association, expanding the number of customers receiving gardening support.

Dianne Cooper
North Dorset Outreach

WEST DORSET OUTREACH 2008

Yet another very busy, active and interesting past few months.

Working closely with our LAA Coordinator Jim Hart in Sherborne we are now running a drop in service at The Rendezvous, on a regular basis. We have also run training workshops and very successful Community Lunches in association with the Sherborne Area Partnership with about 40 organisations attending to find out about the services that we can offer. Also with the LAA Project, I have been running information days, workshops, promotions, First Aid training sessions and coffee morning events to help set up a much needed service over in East Dorset.

I have also been working closely with local community groups on issues that concern them and helped them with volunteering issues, these are very new projects which are as I write are only just starting out so no full details as yet but they are in areas such as conservation, environmental, gardening, local libraries and farming so in an unseen direct beneficial way we are there helping and supporting our local communities.

As a member of the team we are always undertaking training to keep ourselves up to date with the many changes we face in the voluntary sector and at present taking part in the latest accredited programme from Volunteering England called Excellence in Volunteer Management (EVM) to improve the Centres services and quality of the workshops and advice that we can offer to other volunteer managers or co coordinators and help local organisations achieve a greater potential.

Future projects include:

- ♦ Engaging young people under the age of 18 into volunteering, overcoming the barriers facing young people who would like to volunteer and sourcing good quality placements.
- ♦ Supported volunteering pilot, providing support for people with disabilities that need extra support to enable them to volunteer, we receive a large number of referrals from social/welfare services asking for our assistance with placing clients. This project will not only benefit the clients but their families, partners, children, carers, support workers and local voluntary organisations.
- ♦ Working with two local conservation projects, alongside Dorset Wildlife Trust, local council and local resident committees.

I am looking forward to another full year of events, projects, campaigns and meetings but I would like to remind everyone that anyone and everyone can volunteer, there is NO '*our sort of person*' - every volunteer has something to contribute.

Karen Jones

West Dorset outreach

TREASURER'S REPORT 2008

This, the second, Annual Report is for a period of nine months. The Board has decided to align its year end with the Financial Year and so to that of many of its funders.

This has again been a period of growth with turnover up 12.6% on an annual basis. The Centre has managed to secure funding for all its on-going activities as well as starting some new projects. This is good news and leaves us continuing to work towards our aspirations of providing a uniform and improving service across the County of Dorset. There is, of course, a long way to go!

The single most important issue for the organisation has been and remains sustainable funding. This last period was successful in this regard, with the Local Area Agreement (LAA) (a three year contract) up and running. The on-going year is now also substantially funded. However, the Centre is still far too heavily reliant on one-off grants which carry no commitment to future funding and all have to be fought for at a large cost in staff and trustee's time. This significantly reduces the effectiveness of the organisation from where it could be.

The Board will continue to try and convince the major funders that a contractual agreement over a period of years will not only provide stability for the centre but increase the value it offers per pound received.

I have noted the rate of growth above. It is pertinent to note that the Centre has transformed from a tiny organisation, looking after a few gardens, into a many faceted charity with a budget of over £180k, in about ten years. I would ask you:-

Do you know the range of services that are now provided - and at cost to other charitable institutions?

Are you involved with an organisation that is contemplating its administration issues? We can get involved from simply supplying photocopying facilities to running payroll administration.

Working together we may be more efficient!

Alec Bailey M.A., F.C.A., Treasurer



“all Dorset residents should have an equal opportunity to volunteer their time, skills and experience, and equally have access to the support services for volunteers”

The number of hours given freely by Volunteer Centre volunteers during 2007/08 was a minimum of 4,900 which in employee terms this would be equivalent to £52,000!

(based on calculations published by Institute for Volunteering Research)

Quote from Age Concern Dorchester—*As an organisation, our volunteers are our life blood and we believe in being welcoming, treating everyone with respect, providing training and above all valuing their commitment, dedication and the skills they bring.*

Quote from Garden Help Scheme client—*Getting help with my garden has absolutely transformed my life as I am no longer having to worry constantly about it or struggle to try and do it myself and ending up in bed for several days afterwards. I really appreciate all their help, it has been great.*

Quote from one of our volunteers—*I came to the volunteer Centre in December to gain work experience with IT skills. The Volunteer Centre has helped me a lot, because it has helped me gain confidence in a close working environment. It has also helped me gain confidence with communicating with others as well as improving my IT skills. This increased confidence has helped me to get a job as a Nursing Assistant. I am very grateful to all the staff at the Volunteer Centre.*

**DORCHESTER VOLUNTEER CENTRE WOULD LIKE TO THANK
ITS PARTNERS AND SUPPORTERS.**

Volunteering England
Dorset County Council
Magna Housing Association
Dorset Strategic Partnership
Primary Care Trust
User Organisations
The Volunteers
The Board of Directors
Dorchester Arts Centre
Upton Country Park
Dorset Community Action
Lloyds TSB Foundation

Capacity Builders
Dorset Youth Partnership
Allen Lane Foundation
B & Q
Market Car Boot Sales
Environment Action Earth
Dorset County Hospital
The Rotary Club
Bridport Town Council
Signpost Housing Association
"Taste" - main sponsor of Company
at Christmas 2007

Nantes Solicitors—sponsor of
Volunteer Awards Ceremony 2007

**Many thanks to all those that have helped and been
involved in a very successful year**

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