



Southampton Voluntary Services

# ANNUAL REVIEW

2020-21

[WWW.SOUTHAMPTONVS.ORG.UK](http://WWW.SOUTHAMPTONVS.ORG.UK)  
[INFORMATION@SOUTHAMPTONVS.ORG.UK](mailto:INFORMATION@SOUTHAMPTONVS.ORG.UK)  
02380 228291

## OUR TOTAL IMPACT



455,580  
page views across all  
our websites



93,773  
people visited our  
websites



746  
volunteering  
enquiries processed



110  
COVID volunteering  
opportunities  
added



32  
strategic partnership  
meetings attended to  
represent sector views



405  
total day hires of  
scooters & wheelchairs  
despite COVID

## FUNDING & EVENTS



£138,910  
awarded to local groups  
through grants



404  
people attended over  
21 events and training



12  
Friday Forum  
events held online

## SO:LINKED



284,814  
page views on  
SO:Linked website



50,308  
different people  
visited website



2607  
new people supported  
by SO:Linked navigators



295  
total services  
advertised on SOLID



53  
people supported  
through SO:Lets Connect



596  
referrals from SCC  
Covid Helpline

## HEALTHWATCH SOUTHAMPTON



33,887  
pageviews on  
Healthwatch  
Southampton website



197  
people shared their  
experience with  
Healthwatch



3  
healthwatch  
Southampton reports  
published

# A TIME TO REFLECT

## KEVIN LILES



**Our business year for 2020/21 was the strangest if not the most difficult one we have experienced in the fifty plus years we have been operating in the city. The war against Covid has been a difficult one for people everywhere and when it is won its legacy and our recovery will no doubt be a long and challenging one when our skills and leadership in the sector will be in even more demand.**

Time then to reflect on what our organisation and the voluntary sector has, can, and will achieve to make the recovery pathway less arduous for individuals and communities in our city. I never cease to be amazed by just how much volunteering makes a city like Southampton 'work' and how its continuing goodwill and adaptability in stressful times reaches out to meet many needs.

Our role as the City's principal organisation for building volunteering capacity and fostering good practice has had a very challenging year finding different ways to work and deliver

services but as this Annual Review shows we can be proud of the things we have maintained and delivered in these times. Strengthening and championing social action through volunteering is what we do. This was recently recognised through the Hampshire High Sheriff's Award for our work supporting volunteering and voluntary groups.

I would also like to take this opportunity of mentioning Jo Ash who recently retired as CEO of our organisation which she has led with great dedication and success for the past 30 years. Jo's contribution to voluntary action, services and capacity within our city and beyond has been incalculable and we wish her a long, happy and well-deserved retirement.

Also of note is the massive contribution of Mike Treasure-Jones, who has served on the SVS Executive Committee for many, many years, as both Honorary Treasurer and more recently as Vice-Chair. I thank Mike for standing by the organisation through thick and thin, and wish him well as he retires from the Executive Committee at the AGM on November 5th this year.

On a final note, and with an eye on the future, I welcome Rob Kurn as the new CEO. Rob epitomises the spirit and values of SVS, having started with us as a volunteer in the late 90s, and then progressing through various paid roles to his current position. The trustees, and I, look forward to working with, and supporting Rob, as we embark on the next chapter of our journey.

**Kevin Liles**

SVS Chairperson

# LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

## ROB KURN



**This annual review covers the period from 1st April to 31st March 2021, a period during which Jo Ash, CBE, was Chief Officer of SVS, prior to my appointment as Chief Officer on 1st July 2021, and Jo's retirement the following day. Therefore, it is only befitting that the narrative report covering this unusual period has been penned by Jo, including some parting shots, as she moves on to the next phase of her life as a "lady of leisure"; although those of you who know Jo, also know this is unlikely!**

My own journey to Chief Officer started way back in 1996, joining Southampton Council of Community Services, as SVS was back then, as a volunteer for the night-time safety project Safe in Sound. I had suffered with a serious illness during the preceding two years, and volunteering was a huge step in my recovery, in changing my perception of myself from one who had been "helped" to one who could "help" others. This is a pattern I have seen play out in others uncountable times over the years, and illustrates the

transformative power of volunteering and voluntary action – SVS' raison d'être.

Over the ensuing years I have been lucky to undertake numerous paid roles for the organisation, from Safe in Sound and organising the K2 Youth Festivals, through to detailed policy and development work with the sector and colleagues within local government and NHS. One aspect of my work that has always kept me motivated has been the breadth and depth of human contact in my roles; to be able to work with senior decision makers within the city, informed by close contact with grass-roots organisations and individuals focused on making a real difference in their communities has, and will continue to be, a privilege.

Within my work I have met, and continue to meet, some hugely inspirational people across all walks of life, who whether they know it or not, have mentored and enabled my own personal and professional growth. So many of you have played a role in where I am today.

Another motivator has been witnessing the impact people can have when they rally round a common goal, for common good, benefiting the whole community. So much can be achieved, and often with very little money.

However, for fledgling groups, and more established organisations, to do what they do, in a way that is sustainable, safe, inclusive, democratic, and within the confines of the law; for prospective volunteers to be supported on their journeys, and volunteer receiving organisations to be mentored on best practice; and, for networks of

organisations to be systematically brought together to collaborate and have a stronger voice takes resources, and an independent organisation like SVS to stand beside organisations and help make these things a reality.

Community and voluntary action, the space of civil society in its myriad of forms, is the glue that holds our city together, if you need proof look to the community response to Covid, and SVS will continue its mantra of "Voluntary but not Amateur", with a goal of Promoting Voluntary Action.

SO:Linked, led by SVS, with partners Spectrum CIL, Solent Mind, TWICS, Social Enterprise Link and Alzheimer's Society, has proved a responsive model to not only support the sector, but to also navigate people with support needs to community led activity. The scope for growth in collaborative community activity through SO:Linked is vast, and numerous exciting developments are currently underway.

So, looking to the future, we know there are a plethora of challenges to be met; living with, and recovering from, Covid; the fallout from Brexit, and establishing our place in the world; the levels of inequality, in all its divisive forms, I could go on.

However, we also know there will be opportunities. The pandemic has shown us how communities can come together and support each other. It has shown us how organisations across sectors can

collaborate for the common good. It has shown us how in a time of crisis that not only the big gestures, but also the cumulative effect of a thousand small acts of kindness can make a difference. It is the job of not only leaders, but everyone to remember, and practice, these lessons as we move into the future.

In terms of Southampton Voluntary Services this coming period provides an opportunity to reflect, regroup, and respond. Therefore, coinciding with our AGM on the 5th November this year we will commence a round of forward planning. For this to be meaningful we will be looking for input from all of you who have a stake in what we do – our members and beneficiaries, the wider VCSE, colleagues across sectors, our funders, supporters, strategic partners, and of course our own dedicated staff and Executive Committee.

Through this exercise I intend to strengthen our strategic intentions as, primarily, an infrastructure and support organisation, based on the city's, our sector's, and our partners' needs. This will provide us with a blueprint for the coming years and a direction of travel, defining the space we want to inhabit, enabling sound business planning and financial sustainability, and resonating with the city's strategic objectives.

We have a lot to achieve over the coming months and years, and I look forward to working with you all in the focused pursuit of our shared goals.

**Rob Kurn**, Chief Executive

**"Southampton Voluntary Services provide invaluable support to our communities across Southampton and acts as a central point for our vibrant and active voluntary sector in the city. Its work across many years meant SVS was ideally placed to step up during the COVID-19 pandemic, supporting the most vulnerable people in our time of greatest need in the NHS. The challenge ahead will be immense but with partners like SVS the local NHS is prepared to take us forward and out of this pandemic."**

**STEPHANIE RAMSEY, HAMPSHIRE, SOUTHAMPTON IOW CCG**

# END OF AN ERA

## JO ASH, CBE



**This Annual Review covers the period from 1st April 2020 to 31st March 2021 – a year that entirely coincides with the period in which the world was knocked sideways by the Coronavirus pandemic but which also saw bright rainbows, silver linings, and heroic efforts by many unsung heroes through the darkest hours.**

A year of extraordinary efforts and a collective 'Team Southampton' spirit in which SVS staff and volunteers, alongside our SO:Linked colleagues, all played our parts together to make a real difference to Southampton people and communities in the most difficult of times.

Our SO:Linked community development and community navigation partnership, launched in Oct 2019, was still in the early stages of establishing itself and becoming known around the city when the COVID crisis hit so this report reflects the various activity which evolved during an uncertain and ever changing year of lockdowns through the initial crisis response stage from spring into summer, the gradual reboot and recovery phases of summer to autumn

followed by the third wave winter lockdown from which we are gradually emerging to an as yet unknown new normal but determined to build back better and focus forward.

Throughout, SVS and SO:Linked have adapted and adjusted our service delivery to meet the different needs and demands of our customers and our voluntary sector colleagues, constantly trying to anticipate next stages and new requirements to stay a step ahead in terms of leadership, sector support and representation at strategic and operational group levels of which there were many new COVID versions to sit alongside the business as usual versions which though paused initially soon started back in operation to some degree.

We quickly adapted the SO:Linked website to be an easily accessible central information source about services and support available to the public and to support frontline workers in the immediate panic stage in April. This has continued to expand and develop into SO:LID – SO:Linked Information Directory – which now includes services provided by many organisations at local and city-wide level; activities, ideas and free resources to support health and wellbeing; volunteering opportunities including in recent months those linked to vaccines centres and test sites; information about bereavement support, befriending and a whole host of other issues like food and prescriptions access.

SVS provided information and guidance for the surge of volunteers and mutual aid groups which emerged early on as a very localised neighborhood response to the immediate crisis phase including

promoting good practice and awareness through both one to one advice and online videos about Safeguarding, Volunteering safely and Confidentiality. The Volunteering section of SVS website was quickly adapted to display the changed opportunities available as service rapidly moved online, group activities and charity shops closed but new opportunities for telephone befrienders and volunteers to help with shopping and collecting prescriptions were needed. In the more recent period the volunteering focus has morphed to include new and different roles and also widened to include provision of volunteers for the PCN and main vaccination centre as well as for the recently open test centre sites in the city.

For a while we had local cluster groups setup to link extra help both with the SO:Linked community navigation service which was swiftly diverted towards supporting people referred via the SCC COVID Helpline as well as mutual aid groups. The SO:Linked service took on the full pick up from the SCC Hub when the shielding arrangements ended in the autumn and that has proved to be a very effective partnership which has flexed to meet varying levels of demand at different points along the way.

The clusters groups have now been merged into the SO:14 to 19 Links meetings which are local networks providing a neighbourhood based focus for frontline workers, agencies and active members of the public and which build on from the previous local solutions groups, cluster groups and the originally planned SO:Linked community conversations which had to be abandoned due to lockdown.

SVS also commissioned a training video from a qualified CRUSE bereavement service counsellor on Bereavement support for volunteers and frontline staff who were finding themselves helping people who had lost loved ones in circumstances where the usual family support and rites of passage were dramatically disrupted making the loss so much harder to cope with. This resource was freely shared across our Hampshire resilience forum and CVS colleagues as well as through our NAVCA national network which promoted it nationally.

In the early stages from spring to summer SVS conducted several VCSE sector surveys to ascertain the issues and problems organisations were experiencing which we fed in to both local and national emergency planning arrangements and strategic groups as well as funders. These fed in to local and national planning groups and contributed to securing some extra resources for the sector including for IT support of which more later.

SVS also hosted several online recovery forums where colleagues could share experience, concerns, ideas and issues as we all tried to foresee what was coming next, reassure staff, volunteers and customers and make sensible adjustments and contingency plans. Lots of practical tips and ideas emerged as well as providing a sense of we are all in this together and not alone in the uncertainty and rapid changing circumstance in which we were operating. The early panic mode swiftly changed into adapt and reboot mode with the rapid adoption by even the most Luddite amongst us to embrace the new world of technology which

**“Just had a quick look at your paper from crisis to recovery and wanted to thank you. It is really hard to focus at times and this will really help. I have been recording some changes and reasons for doing so but this will certainly help to concentrate my mind.”**

**MARINA, FRIENDS OF ST JAMES PARK**





had enabled us to work from home and continue to deliver much of our usual work albeit that we miss the human contact and informal networking hugely.

SVS Mailing was immediately increased to a weekly newsletter covering all the latest relevant Govt guidance as well as local info from groups on services changes and all the usual funding and policy guidance, consultations and a myriad of other topics of interest. We have had lots of positive feedback and my CEO blog has chivied, celebrated, occasionally despaired and tried to keep our collective spirits up on pertinent topics of relevance at the time, again with much positive feedback and pithy comments.

In this function we source information direct from Government daily updates and other sources but our national bodies NAVCA and NVCO have also provided useful core information. They also provide a Quality Assurance framework which supports our local infrastructure role providing independent advice and information

to the local voluntary, community and social enterprise sector as an umbrella body championing volunteering and giving voice for the sector overall.

Through them we also feed into national consultations and articulate local perspectives in national debate and campaigns including this year the #NeverMoreNeeded and #RightNow emergency funding campaigns highlighting the crucial impact and efforts of the volunteers and voluntary sector throughout the pandemic.

The loss of income and fundraising across the sector has been profound and SVS has been hit too in terms of income generation from the Voluntary Action Centre as well as loss of Shopmobility service bookings although the Chancellor's welcome furlough scheme has enabled us to avoid redundancies and some successful additional short term emergency funding has seen us through, despite the extra costs of COVID secure premises, provisions and essential IT upgrades as we shifted to online and home based working.

**"I just wanted to let you know how useful all the emails/updates you have sent out have been. They have been our best source of reliable information throughout lock down in a constantly changing situation. I have repeatedly shared the information with parents, volunteers and on our website. Thanks so much, keep up the great work! It has made a real difference to our charity."**

**HELEN, SOUTHAMPTON FAMILY TRUST**

SVS has also this year administered several flow-through grant schemes to support the local VCSE sector from many different sources and which helped many VCSE organisations adapt and deliver (albeit differently to planned maybe) going forward.

These grants programmes included small grants from SCC for 22 groups to hold community get togethers around marking VE / VJ day events which if course mostly had to be deferred but are now being rescheduled as re-opening celebrations.

The remaining sum held by SVS was intended to go towards a 'green' grants programme which was obviously deferred due to lock down in 2020 but which went live alongside the launch of a new Green Network at our Friday Forum in May 2021 to hopefully give lots of groups a welcome boost to restart outdoors and green focused initiatives going forward.

A further 13 local groups benefitted from the SVS administered Mayflower 400 Giving Thanks grants for activities again which all had to be rapidly transformed from those originally planned Giving Thanks American support type community events. Adaptable as ever the programme saw groups get training in video making resulting in creative end productions and a whole host of inspiring social media posts on what people valued and wanted to give thanks for during this tough year.

It was especially nice that SVS SO:Linked service won the prize for the most retweeted #GivingThanks post which brought a small donation to help support the SO:Lets Connect project tackling digital exclusion of which more later.

In the autumn SVS highlighted the need for IT and digital investment based on findings from its sector surveys over the summer period which resulted in

us securing and administering a very welcome £100k from Southampton City CCG for investment in IT and digital upgrades to enable the sector to respond to meeting needs in the new COVID world.

This saw 12 of the main contracted services, including SVS itself, receive match funding for upgrades to better support their work in the first tranche administered swiftly before Christmas which was greatly appreciated by organisations playing central parts in the citywide emergency response as shown by a selection of comments below which were of course fed back to the CCG colleagues who had supported us.

**"I can't say how delighted and grateful we are to receive this grant. A new fit for purpose database will make a palpable difference to our organisation and relieve the pressure on some battle-weary members of staff."**

**"Thank you to SVS for your assistance with our application, and please also convey our thanks to Southampton City CCG for recognition of our efforts and contribution during this challenging period."**

This first tranche was rapidly followed up by a wide-ranging smaller grants scheme offering up to 35 grants of between £250 and £1k which saw any voluntary group that could demonstrate through production of receipts that it had invested funds in IT or digital updates during the period from 23rd March 2020 to end November 2020 being able to apply for a partial matched reimbursal sum.

If anything, the difference these relatively modest sums made both to



*The mayor attends a VE Day grant funded garden party hosted by GEMS*

the overstretched funds of small groups as well as being a welcome boost to morale for all involved was even greater than the first tranche as these few comments demonstrate:

**"Wow! Thank you so much Jo, SVS and CCG this is amazing! Reimbursing these costs are so very much appreciated, we have even had tears of joy. After all the digital efforts for zoom and upgrades to be able to support our current families through these tough times we cannot thank you enough."**

**"Thank you so much. I'm so very excited about this project as our current website is so old and our membership system is still on paper and then I have to do all the data input. The new site will be integrated and paperless. Meaning I will have more hours to concentrate on other projects."**

**"How lovely to receive such amazing news! We really appreciate not only the sum of money but also that this put a huge smile on our faces, which feels a little rare some days."**

We are currently working with the CCG, SCC and sector partners to progress further strands of interlinked digital development work including training and upskilling the VCSE sector, tackling digital exclusion and linking with self-directed health and care records and programmes utilising some additional CCG funding secured just on year end so more on that in next year's report but it will extend some of the work strands we have already started.

Rob Kurn, SVS Deputy CEO has been working with our Hampshire CVS colleagues on delivering a wide-ranging digital, IT and social media skills training programme to the VCSE sector funded through a Hampshire and IOW community foundation capacity building grant which many local groups have taken up already including myself and some of our staff too so we hope the programme can be further developed going forward.

He has also been leading SVS own internal digital strategy development and system upgrades supported by welcome pro bono consultancy support through the Cranfield Trust which has been extremely helpful in providing an independent and external view on some of the technical and system change options which can bamboozle any of us without detailed expertise in the field.

The SO Lets Connect programme mentioned earlier has been a strong collaborative approach between our SO:Linked partners together with Drop the Mask CIC, Jamie's Computers, Communicare, Abri, EnergiseMe, and SO18 Big Local, ably led by a steering group chaired by Paul Lewsey from the Itchen to Bridge the Gap network.

It started as a SO:Linked community development project and practical attempt to solve a real need because SO:Linked was very aware of how people were digitally excluded and missing out on much needed help because of lack of connectivity. We estimate that about one third of city residents are digitally excluded for various reasons including lack of IT or WIFI, poor broadband speed or connection; affordability issues; lack of skill or knowledge to access or use IT or inability to do so due to age, illness, reluctance or lack of confidence.

The scheme aims to help digitally excluded people who are currently unable to access all the services and goods available online to be able to make the connection whether by helping them have access to the internet in their home, providing the kit to use it or the skills and knowledge be able to do so, by making the tech available free or at low costs and offering volunteers as mentors and helpers to enable people unfamiliar with it to use it.

SO:Linked community development worker Iane Chambers from TWICS has provided initial co-ordination of the referrals and links with the volunteer helpers as well as kit available according to requirements eg provision of a Wi-Fi connection or laptop, smart phone with

dongle etc as well as help with how to get online and use basic programmes.

We have successfully secured funding to pilot and subsequently extend further the scheme from several sources including SO18 Big Local for that area, Radian (now Abri) Housing Assoc for the Mansbridge/Swathing area, from the SVS administered IT fund and COVID response fund for Mental Health service users to connect too. We aim to roll the scheme out further across the city to meet the need and help close this gap which is widening inequality for some of the poorest and most vulnerable in our communities and are actively seeking additional funding to support this.

Another area in which SVS has been proactive in community development work is leading delivery of a BME capacity building programme for the wider Hampshire CVS network again funded by HloW Community Foundation. This has seen 25 participants join a Certificate in Charity Management course and peer learning network as well as another 48 places offered for on line delivery of 2 x 6 session Trustee Roles and Responsibilities course and 2 x 6 session Equality and Diversity for All courses each for up to 12 participants.

Further courses are planned and we have just submitted a bid for further funding to extend this in the coming financial year. Feedback has been very positive, and the peer learning network is, as we hoped, continuing to provide a self-directed support network and arena for sharing issues and ideas across BME community activists which Southampton Voluntary Services will help facilitate on an ongoing basis.

**"I have really valued the group meetings and have learnt lots of new strategies as well as increasing my network of contacts. The group composition was very diverse and covers so many community groups, which was exactly what I needed and was looking for. I've already started arranging sub-group meetings so I hope that may continue and lead to further collaborative opportunities. I am so grateful for SVS giving me this invaluable opportunity."**

**ATTENDEE, CHARITY MANAGEMENT COURSE**

One-to-one group support or development work continues behind the scenes to help with problem solving, governance issues or the myriad of issues and conundrums that challenge individual groups on a day to day basis, albeit much more via telephone and online modes of delivery than would previously have been the case but we have continued to provide a listening ear and sounding board combined with good practice advice and guidance to be able to make constructive suggestions to help progress or resolve a multiplicity of issues from organisations.

Examples of this type of support work included how to resolve disputes over staff shift rotas and care compliance requirements fairly for a large charity; work with the trustees and members of a BME charity on governance issues including SVS acting as their election commissioner and liaison with the Charity Commission to ensure they got back on track with legal requirements; advising on new charity and social enterprise set up options for several groups working in some cases alongside our Social Enterprise Link colleagues where relevant; supporting trustees through charity closure steps; advice on funding bids and fundraising strategies and helping committees function effectively or resolve disputes and difficulties.

Also, of course continuing to advise on each of the four cornerstone areas that are the building blocks of effective operation and of interest for every voluntary group at some stage or other in their operation or development:

- fundraising and financial

management advice;

- volunteering recruitment, retention and recognition ;
- policies, procedures and political or social policy context and of course
- good governance and accountability.

In terms of sector support and funding needs SVS has also been progressing the options for a Place Based Giving Scheme for the city which is a positive opportunity for a united effort to encourage new and concerted philanthropy to support voluntary action and VCSE sector at a time when it is most needed. Work on this had commenced, with support from Southampton Connect the local strategic partnership leadership group, in late 2019 but then stalled for 6 months as all efforts were shifted to the COVID emergency response but we picked it up again in the autumn and from January a small task and finish group has been looking at issues and options and will be reporting back to the Connect meeting in June on the overall proposition for a multistrand PBGS initiative to be progressed under the working title SO: Giving.

Meanwhile, SVS will be running the first strand of the cashless alternative giving scheme in the city, which is currently COVID paused, with support from GO! Southampton. This is linked to our work over recent years with the Street Support Action Group following the successful Beds, Begging and Business events and should go live once all the COVID retail and hospitality sector restriction are lifted. This partnership initiative called Change the Way You Give should encourage cause not personalised giving which will provide some welcome resources to support

**“I really enjoyed the sessions – they made me realise how little I really knew and encouraged me to look at topics such as ‘naming’ from a completely different perspective. The group were really supportive and I am sad that they have finished!”**

**ATTENDEE, CHARITY MANAGEMENT COURSE**

homelessness support and prevention work without the risk of giving to individuals which often fuels their drug or alcohol use rather than helping solve any housing need or other underlying issues.

We have also presented the proposal for a sector wide lottery for the city - SO: Lotto - to the March Voluntary Sector Friday Forum which was very positively received so we are progressing the license and set up arrangement for that with a view to a summer 2021 launch and SCC are progressing a crowd funding initiative to link to the overall scheme too.

SVS has also hosted funders to present their open funding criteria and rounds at Friday Forums; has endorsed and provided references for individual organisations funding bids as well as supporting number of joint bids for external funding such as the Saints Foundation led Active Through Football partnership where we have been active in both the planning and community engagement element as well as contributing to development of the overall governance and partnership framework.

**"SVS is a vital resource for Southamptons' communities. In-Residence will provide us with an opportunity to work more closely with and learn from SVS in the University's development as a Civic University based on partnership and collaboration."**

**DR RONDA GOWLAND-PRYDE,  
SENIOR ENGAGEMENT FELLOW  
/ CIVIC UNIVERSITY LEAD**

Another significant joint bid which SVS is actively supporting is for City of Culture 2025 which we believe will bring huge social, economic and well-being benefits

to the city if successful. We have helped make links to the sector, hosted several sessions with Claire Whitaker and the bid team at Friday Forum and SO:Links meetings, distributed info and the survey through our mailing and networks and also chaired the Volunteering and Community subgroups in the consultation stage.

SVS and our Healthwatch Southampton past work around arts and health including the Umbrella arts festival, Art and health group links and Health and wellbeing cycle/walk contributions all tie in with the involvement and wellbeing aspect of the city's cultural engagement offer with potential mutual wins if we are successful in the bid. Other areas of joint and collaborative work include SVS work with Belinda Cone of SCC Early Years team to support the voluntary run parent led Preschools network. A good team effort with Belinda providing the child focused and Ofsted required elements and SVS supporting on the governance and management of charities aspects this has seen the regular termtime network attract a loyal group of participants who clearly find the sessions informative and helpful peer learning. We have also participated in sessions with the Royal British Legion, Carers in Southampton and CCG colleagues to discuss collaborative work and more effective referral pathways to identify and support veterans in the city and also participated in multiagency and user discussions around carers needs and service improvement at the Carers Partnership and Carers Scrutiny panels amongst others.

User voice and experience is of course reflected strongly in both SVS work through Healthwatch Southampton which is overseen by its own strategic groups chaired by Harry Dymond, MBE, as well as direct delivery to people with mobility impairments who use the SVS City Shopmobility wheelchair loan service to access shops, leisure and service in the city centre.



*Pearl receives flowers from Southampton Sign that was funded by a grant designed to keep people in touch.*

Shopmobility continued to offer a limited service on a booked appointment basis two days a week throughout the year in order to meet essential needs and during the early stage of the pandemic also made welfare check calls to all our registered customers to ensure they were aware of services available through SO:Linked and didn't feel alone. These have happened subsequently on the period basis just to keep in touch with current needs and for reassurance and information giving where necessary.

Healthwatch Southampton has continued to take up individual issues and aggregate collective experience to help inform and improve local health and social care delivery. Key themes have been around mental health services and more recently on experiences of care homes. Obviously, the proactive outreach and direct talking to patients, carers and service users which have been big components of previous years' work have all been on hold during the last year of lockdown and COVID restrictions but our online and website reporting have continued. Further details of its work are available in Healthwatch Southampton's own separate annual report produced for local stakeholders and for the Secretary of State and Healthwatch England.

This user voice and lived experience feedback combines with our daily contact with individual volunteers and

**"We're really looking forward to working with SVS more closely. In-Residence is a project that should develop long-term, sustainable public and community engagement models, all with the aim of being more responsive to local research needs."**

**DR STEVE DORNEY, DIRECTOR,  
PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT WITH  
RESEARCH UNIT, UNIVERSITY OF  
SOUTHAMPTON**

voluntary sector organisations to both inform and shape our response to sector needs as well as to the perspectives SVS articulates as a broad sector overview of needs, opportunities and issues in the various strategic and multiagency groups that we attend.

This VCSE sector representation and strategic leadership role also enables us to keep the sector briefed and help make connections across the wide spectrum of voluntary, community and social enterprise sector groups as well as encouraging them to make their individual voices and specific interests heard directly in relevant consultations and joint working across agencies.

SVS strategic input includes to Southampton Connect as the

overarching city leadership group as well as to all the main areas of activity and shared interest in the city. This includes input to both Children and Adult Safeguarding boards and serious case review group, to the breadth of health (inequalities) and social care agendas' including the Health and Wellbeing board, Better Care board and associated working groups as well as specific COVID 19 response groups such as the Health Protection Board and vaccines group.

We have also input to development of the Carers strategy and scrutiny enquiry where our past work around carers support including setting up the original young carers work in the city some 20 odd year ago together with recent experience through the SO:Linked and Healthwatch case work have informed our contribution though it is salutary to reflect that most of the issues being raised and discussed are the same as those being raised then.

The process of real change and for embedded improvements directly experienced by people sadly seem to go through recurring loops, as despite intense bursts of spotlights and the best intentions systems revert to old ways, and resource constraints or short-term initiatives mean the same cycles

and concerns recur with disheartening regularity, I fear.

Other strategic input and connectivity has been through SVS support of the City of Culture 2025 bid which could provide a positive catalyst for change and renaissance of the city, impacting on social and economic wellbeing and future opportunities for all for it is obvious that whatever issue we are looking at neither the challenges nor the solutions lie in silos nor the remit and influence of any single organisation or sector.

Only by working together and each sector contributing from their perspectives and influence can we together tackle city challenges and engage local people positively in line with SVS own vision for Southampton to be a city where everyone is inspired to make a positive contribution to their communities.

We were pleased to support the ONS in their work to include the widest levels of inclusion and involvement in the 2021 Census and were pleased to promote this through our Friday Forum and networks to help link local groups and bases in for which we are pleased to have been acknowledged with award of a Census Champion certificate and we

**“One of the privileges I have in my role is to highlight individuals and organisations I come across in Hampshire with a High Sheriff's award in recognition of great and valuable services to the community. Therefore, it is my pleasure to make this award to you and all who work and volunteer through SVS. As you will know, the High Sheriff remit is to focus on Law and Order – on Justice. Having a network of organisations and volunteers so well facilitated by an organisation such as SVS – helping highlight areas of need and enabling grass roots initiatives to thrive makes the whole community safer – I've been reading some stats from the think tank Civitas about how criminal behaviour disproportionately impacts and victimises the poorest. I honestly believe that enabling a culture of volunteering, of being a place charities can thrive, will, in the long term reduce poverty and therefore reduce crime...it's a slow process, and I suspect that you won't see the end result of all you have poured into the life of Southampton bear fruit, but I have no doubt that through your motivating passion and commitment many, many seeds have been planted which will flourish! “**

**REV SUE COLMAN, HAMPSHIRE HIGH SHERIFF**





look forward to further work with ONS as the results and analysis becomes available. City Safety is another area where SVS also makes a positive contribution and reflects sector wide issues and interests. We contribute as members of the Safe City Partnership and also the Prevent board locally.

SVS has contributed to the discussions about the Violent Crime reduction initiatives, participated in the Safer Streets initiative of the Police and Crime Commissioner, briefed potential OPCC candidates for election on sector issues and interests and also contributed to consultations of development of domestic violence and abuse services where we have flagged the need for much more early intervention and perpetrator focused work as well as of recognition that violence can be initiated by women towards men but the stereotypical framing of violence against women becomes a barrier to men seeking help or even discussing the issue openly.

Links are also in place to the Local Resilience Forum which we don't regularly attend due to capacity but do get the papers and did participate in some of the COVID related county wide network discussions and Rob links to the national emergency planning voluntary sector network through NAVCA.

As members of the Hate Crime Third Party Reporting network, and as SVS now leads on the Dementia Friendly City initiative, we are keen to see the

various 'Friendly city' type initiatives consolidated into a more coherent and mutually reinforcing approach so that everyone, whatever their particular additional support needs, will know or recognise safe places and where supportive organisations or help is available.

Our role in these areas is always a mix of contributing perspectives and intelligence from the sector as well as helping make links and being a 'critical friend' to provide a community or slightly external perspective to those for whom work in the area is their primary focus.

We were absolutely delighted therefore that the period covered by this report ended in March 2021 with a High Sheriff of Hampshire Award that recognises our holistic contribution to safety and justice (*Extract left, front cover photo*).

So, on that very positive note it is time to draw together some final thoughts in what is my final report as the retiring SVS CEO. Having worked several spells



## HIGH SHERIFF'S AWARD 2020

here since the late 1970's and also been a volunteer and trustee I can only hope that indeed SVS and its invaluable work will continue to plant seeds and flourish to see new initiatives and work come to fruition. It has been my privilege and pleasure to work with the best of people in the city from grassroots volunteers and activists to the great and good of the parish and I thank everyone for the support, encouragement, challenges, fun and laughs along the way in what is undoubtedly the best job in Southampton.

I have worked on all the important issues in the city with valued and respected colleagues from across all sectors in shared endeavours and through good times and bad especially during the difficulties of the past year which has seen collaborative working and shared efforts at their best, so long may that continue going forward.

During my years I have also personally been able to operate on less parochial stages through Non-Executive Director roles on the PCT, 2 regional housing associations, as a GOSE appointed voluntary sector advisor and in the national context as a trustee of the National Council of Voluntary Organisations for over 13 years including 6 years as its Vice Chair and was honoured to received a CBE in the 2016 New Year Honours list for 'services to the voluntary sector'.

In all this I have been supported and encouraged by the wise counsel and sage advice of all those volunteers who have served as SVS Trustees and Executive Committee members especially the Chairs and Honorary officers who have been unfailing in their guidance and quiet advice as we have traversed the changing terrain together with SVS wonderful staff and volunteers too.

That staff team are what I call SVS constellation of bright stars – occasionally they might shoot off slightly tangentially but together are

always shining examples of SVS values and vision - willing to do their best, go the extra mile, committed to what they do and caring of others. I shall miss them, and all with whom I have worked over the years, immensely but I am delighted to hand over the baton to Rob Kurn who has not only been my very capable Deputy in recent years but who exemplifies all that is good about SVS and volunteering having started with us originally as a volunteer on the Safe in Sound night time economy outreach project and subsequently progressed on through many paid roles to now be SVS CEO Designate.

I wish Rob and everyone at SVS every future success and happiness as they move forward to the next exciting phase and am retiring confident in the knowledge that SVS will continue to champion our sector and help people and communities in the city who are in greatest need to build on their assets, find solutions and take actions to enhance city life.

Volunteering and voluntary action is at the heart of all that is good in civil society and our city – the social glue of communities which touch almost every aspects of people's lives in some way or another. The city needs a vibrant and robust voluntary sector with a strong volunteering base and never more so than now as we aim to build back better and fairer post COVID.

Equally the voluntary sector needs, and deserves to have, the independent support, good practice guidance and collective voice that SVS, as a membership organisation of and for the sector, is able to provide in its umbrella role across the depth and breadth of the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector. For over 50 years SVS has served our sector and the city well. Long may it continue to thrive and develop.

**Jo Ash CBE**

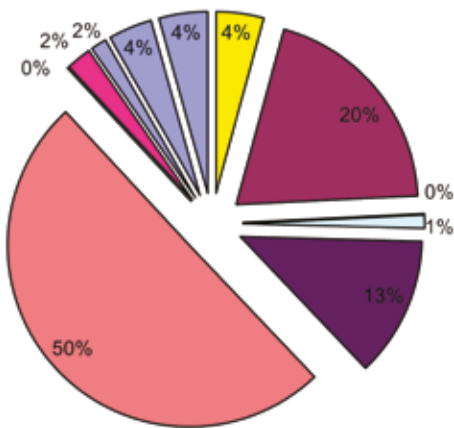
SVS CEO & Company Secretary  
(until 2.7.21)

# FINANCES

SVS' accounts have been successfully independently examined by Morris Crocker, showing SVS as a going concern

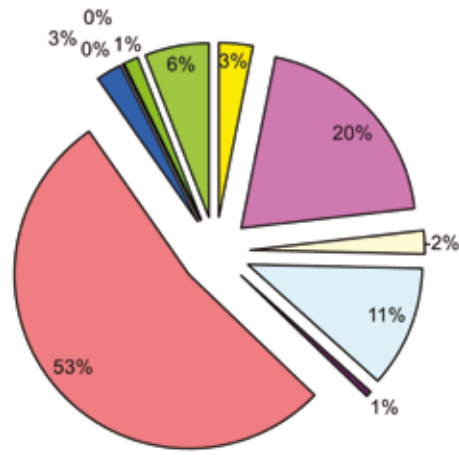
over the next financial year. Our full independently examined accounts are available on the SVS website.

**SVS, VSST & Project  
Income £944,084**



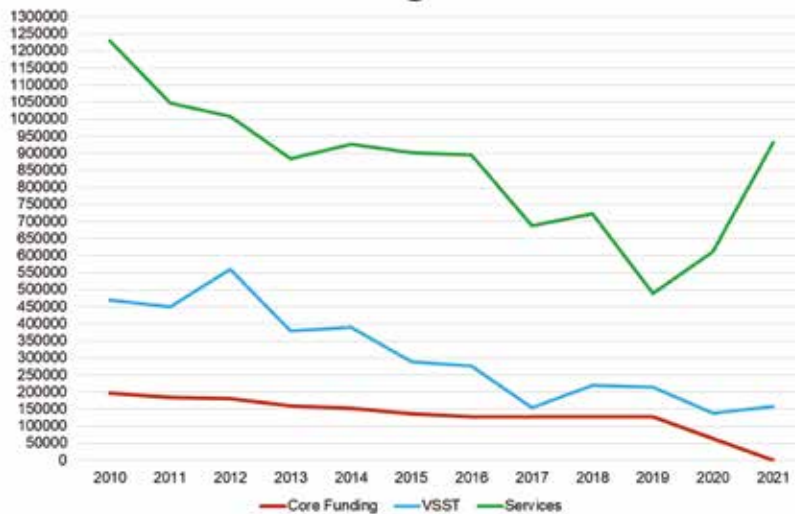
- Health
- Healthwatch
- Other
- Community Dev/Capacity Bldg
- SO: Linked
- Community Roots
- HMRCJRS
- SO: Lets Connect
- Buildings & Innovations
- Shopmobility

**SVS, VSST & Project  
Expenditure £845,927**



- Health
- Healthwatch
- Community Dev/Capacity Bldg
- Other Voluntary Sector Training
- SO: Linked
- HMRCJRS
- SO: Lets Connect
- Community Roots
- Buildings & Innovations
- Shopmobility

**Funding Trend**



# ORGANISATIONAL INFORMATION

## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

(As of August 2021)

Kevin Liles	Chair
Mike Treasure Jones	Vice Chair
Carole Rogers	Honorary Treasurer
Cllr Tom Bell	(nominated SCC)
Cllr John Noon	(nominated SCC)
Mary Carnegie	
Peter Keeley	
Simon Mantle	
David Wrighton	
Ahmed Sasso, MBE	

## SVS LEAD CONTACTS

Rob Kurn	Chief Executive / Company Secretary
Nicola Judd	Senior Manager (Ops & Programmes)
Jude Perrott	Senior Manager (Business & Finance)
Amanda Kelly	Healthwatch Southampton Manager
Tara Doel	Special Projects Development Worker

## SVS ORGANISATIONAL VALUES

- Passion – SVS believes voluntary action is built on the passion of people and communities to make a positive difference.
- Inclusiveness – SVS believes that the voluntary ethic is best upheld when organisations promote equality and diversity and are open, democratic, accessible and accountable to their users, members and the wider community.
- Independence – SVS will be a strong and independent voice for the sector, supporting best practice in autonomous organisations.
- Innovation – SVS will support organisational resourcefulness, flexibility and adaptability, through innovative, original ideas and creative solutions
- Partnership – SVS is committed to positive partnership work to create shared thinking and find solutions to meet local needs

## SVS VISION

“Southampton is a city where everyone is inspired to make positive contributions to their communities.”

## THE MISSION STATEMENT

“SVS aims to support a vibrant voluntary and community sector with a strong voice and the best of support. SVS actively promotes voluntary action and the provision of essential services to vulnerable communities.”

### Southampton Voluntary Services

The Voluntary Action Centre, St Mary Street, Southampton, SO14 1NW

Telephone:	023 8022 8291
Website:	<a href="http://www.southamptonvs.org.uk">www.southamptonvs.org.uk</a>
Email:	<a href="mailto:information@southamptonvs.org.uk">information@southamptonvs.org.uk</a> <a href="mailto:volunteer@southamptonvs.org.uk">volunteer@southamptonvs.org.uk</a>
Facebook:	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/SouthamptonVS">Facebook.com/SouthamptonVS</a>
Twitter:	@SouthamptonVS

### SO:Linked

Telephone:	023 8021 6050
Website:	<a href="http://www.solinked.org.uk">www.solinked.org.uk</a>
Email:	<a href="mailto:information@southamptonvs.org.uk">information@southamptonvs.org.uk</a>
Facebook:	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/SOLinked.svs">Facebook.com/SOLinked.svs</a>
Twitter:	@SOLinked
Instagram:	@Solinked

### City Shopmobility

Southampton Voluntary Services, 7 Castle Way, Southampton, SO14 2BX

Telephone:	023 8063 1263
Website:	<a href="http://www.southamptonvs.org.uk">www.southamptonvs.org.uk</a>
Email:	<a href="mailto:city.shopmobility@southamptonvs.org.uk">city.shopmobility@southamptonvs.org.uk</a>
Facebook:	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/SouthamptonVS">Facebook.com/SouthamptonVS</a>
Twitter:	@SouthamptonVS

SVS is committed to helping our environment and this Annual Review is printed on 100% FSC (Forest Stewardship Council) certified paper, which guarantees consumers and society that these products are manufactured from forests planted in an environmentally friendly manner, based on practices that fully respect and protect the surrounding environment and communities.

Charity registration number: 1068350  
Company registration number: 3515397

