

Impact Report 2023



Southampton Voluntary Services



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Overview

Southampton Voluntary Services 25th Annual General Meeting this year marks a quarter of a century since our incorporation, having been previously known as Southampton Council of Community Services, and having operated in the City since 1968!

Although our world looks very different today, SVS' core purpose of supporting a vibrant voluntary, community, and social enterprise sector, promoting volunteering and community action, and ensuring the sector has a strong voice through our networks, remains a vital aspect of local civil society. Whilst helping Southampton become a city where everyone is inspired to make a positive contribution to their communities is more relevant than ever before.

This report covers the period 1st April 2022 – 31st March 2023, a period during which the Covid-19 pandemic has thankfully been largely contained. Inequalities within our communities, however, have risen, amplified by economic crisis and the rising cost-of-living. Numerous community interventions are detailed throughout this report as a response.

In recent years SVS has stepped back from directly delivering services to the public, choosing instead to collaborate with our member organisations to address community need and gaps in public services. This has been a strategic decision, based on an increasingly mature and vibrant local sector, and our own role as, foremost, an infrastructure and support organisation.

We have taken the role of identifying issues to address, bringing partners together to play to their strengths, and finding resources to support joint activity. Not only is this approach characterised in the SVS led SO:linked programme, but is a thread running through all of our work, including mental health, dementia, fuel and food poverty, and community research.

Over the year we have broadened our activity in community research, which has seen us working closely with research organisations in the City. It is an area we are keen to further develop, as we are committed to enabling communities to have a strong voice in this area based on their own needs and lived experience.

The year has seen the formation of Integrated Care Boards (ICB) gather pace. These are the new NHS bodies that supersede Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCG), and cover a much larger population, Hampshire & Isle of Wight in our case.

We will be keeping a watchful eye on how this develops and have been exploring how the sector can work with these new, larger structures.

We are acutely aware, whether within health or local government, the financial outlook is fragile at best. Given this context SVS is keen to advance how the sector can collaboratively draw resources into the City to deliver solutions within communities, as a player in Team Southampton.

SVS wouldn't be able to deliver the impact detailed in these pages without the commitment of our paid staff and volunteers, the sage guidance of our charity trustees, creativity and can-do attitude of our partners, and support from our funders. A big thank you to you all for your ongoing contribution to our endeavours.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rob Kurn', with a thick horizontal line underneath.

Rob Kurn, CEO



1360

Organisations in
SVS networks



484

SVS voting
members



£219k+

Distributed in
small grants



74

Forums and network
meetings convened



485

Volunteer
placements



2997

Local people directly benefitted
from SVS public services



218k+

Visits to SVS, SO:Linked &
Healthwatch websites



4

Community research
projects



5

HWS insight
reports published



1200+

Shopmobility enabled
city centre visits



21

Volunteers supported at
Community Roots allotment



30

Volunteers
across SVS

Community Development

The SVS led SO:Linked programme "supporting Southampton's communities and people", continues to be the main delivery vehicle for our community development work, alongside partners TWICS and Social Enterprise Link. The following gives a flavour of our action and impact over the year.

Group Support

Supporting local organisations continues to be a key focus through helping with establishment, training, acting as election commissioners, helping to resolve conflict, finding funding, and all areas of governance and management of an organisation.

Grant Administration

Throughout the course of the year, we have administered numerous grants for the sector. These have included Warm Spaces grants totalling £108,000, Grants for activities promoting good mental

health of £40,000 and £16,000 supporting social prescribing activities for individuals.

SO:Lotto

Our local lottery scheme with Gatherwell has steadily grown over the year and has raised a total revenue of £43,556 and 63 local good causes have benefitted. £6475 of prizes have been distributed to players.

Friday Forum

We continue our monthly collaboration focused Friday Forum, with a different theme each month. Topics have included safeguarding, place-making and the Local Plan, warm spaces, meet the funder, Integrated Commissioning Unit review, volunteering, cost-of-living, meet the Southampton City Council CEO, alongside many others. The forum is well attended with between 15 – 65 organisations attending each session.

Top 3

Searches
on SO: Lid



Covid vaccines

Free online courses

Food banks



146

Voluntary activities
supported



244

New community
activities identified



500

Printed SO:Lid
compilations distributed



£43k+

Revenue raised
through SO:Lotto



63

Local causes benefitting
from SO:Lotto



£6k+

Prizes distributed
to players



10

SVS Friday
Forums held



5

Partnership projects
with business sector



25

Sector newsletters
published

Southampton Health and Care Alliance

A series of coproduction events were held during the year to connect with the Southampton place-based system of the Integrated Care Board (ICB). It was then decided to develop a local alliance of VCSE organisations, with a view to closer collaborative working with the ICB in Southampton. A small grant from Wessex Public Involvement Network has enabled staff time to drive this work forward and provide small bursaries for members' involvement. The inaugural meeting will be held in the next reporting period.

Leadership and Sector Advocacy

Our strong networks make us well placed to ensure a strong, representative sector voice at the city's strategic partnerships. This includes Adults, and Children's, Safeguarding Boards, Safe City Partnership, Reducing Drug Harm Partnership, Children & Young People's Partnership Board, Health & Wellbeing Board (through Healthwatch Southampton), Health & Care Partnership Board, and

Southampton Connect. This enables the sector a level of influence in the local policy, environment, and ensures the sector are well sighted on local developments, and opportunities for collaboration.

Young Southampton

Southampton Voluntary Services has worked closely with local youth organisations and the Young People's Foundation Trust to develop a citywide youth federation. It is planned this will constitute as a standalone organisation in the future and accelerate youth provision in the city, based on young people's engagement. SVS has administered funding for this work from the Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport.

Southampton Green Network

Co-ordinated by SVS and Solent Mind this network brings together over 50 organisations, of all sizes, to collaborate on the green / environmental agenda within Southampton. The network is now working closely with a researcher to develop impact measurement tools for green social prescribing.

Dementia Friendly Southampton

SVS has continued to deliver this work, within SO:Linked, to raise awareness of dementia, and help our city to be a supportive environment for people affected by dementia. Our model has provided co-ordination of the Dementia Network, whilst redistributing over 30% of the contract price in small grants to local VCSE organisations to undertake activities.

SO:Links Network

Covers each postcode area in Southampton and are Facilitated by SVS Staff, So: Linked partners and local organisations. The network has over 350 members, forging strong local links and bringing together communities; outcomes have been community celebrations, networking events and successful funding bids.



14

SVS attendance at Strategic Partnerships on your behalf



8

Organisations contributing to development of Southampton Health & Care Alliance



53

Organisations engaging with Southampton Green Network



45

SO:Links network meetings held



350

SO:Links network members



7270

SO:Linked social media interactions

Case Study

Winter Fuel Crisis

Over the winter months, SO: Linked worked in collaboration with organisations across the city to tackle the winter fuel crisis. The Integrated Commissioning Board (ICB) provided funding to support frail, older adults and adults with respiratory conditions who were at risk of fuel poverty.

SO: Linked led the application and SPECTRUM CIL provided additional hours for a Warm Space coordinator, who could navigate service users to support in the city; St Marys Church increased the capacity of their food pantry. Communicare and Saints Foundation were able to extend the falls recovery programme, providing extra time for a warm meal and socialising. Age UK and SPECTRUM set up new warm spaces. The Environment Centre provided winter warmth packs, containing essential

items. Referrals were supported by the Community Wellbeing Team. Citizens Advice Southampton were able to increase staff capacity with a new Advisor role. SVS provided grants to cover running costs to seven local Warm Spaces too.

Southampton Voluntary Services also secured Cost of Living funding from National Association for Voluntary and Community Action (NAVCA). This was used to fund cooking classes through Communicare and TWICS; new equipment for Citizens Advice and CLEAR and the Environment Centre were able to increase capacity.

SO: Linked worked with the library service to set up three Cost of Living events promoting local organisations offering support. The Event at Central Library was attended by the Lord Mayor and covered by the local media.

Community Navigation

Our partners Spectrum CIL, Solent Mind and Southampton Alzheimer's Society, have delivered the community navigation aspect of SO:Linked, helping local people access community support to improve their health and wellbeing. Working closely with the community development team has proved to be a successful model in terms of developing gaps in community provision. The programme has attracted further investment, demonstrating its local value, which has enabled new strands of complimentary activity.

SO:LID

Our Local Information Directory is providing a go to digital space to identify local services, support, activities, funding and more. This is an invaluable resource for our navigators, social prescribers in the city, the VCSE and statutory partners. We are now also using the

directory to digitally broker volunteer placements for the public. During the year we have secured funding from a private sector organisation, The DEOS Group, to print 500 copies of the information directory which have been distributed to frontline staff.

Social Prescribers' Network

SVS has set up a network for all those involved in community navigation or social prescribing to undertake joint training, share information on best practice, provide peer support, and learn about community provision in the city.

Our ambition is the network will enable the different organisations delivering this role to work more closely together, avoid duplication, and provide a more coordinated offer to the public.

Domestic Navigation

Working closely with Adult Social Care this strand of work enables clients to access domestic help (cleaning, shopping, etc) by working with local sector organisations, and free's up local domiciliary care workers' time to focus on personal care thereby reducing pressures on the local system, at a time when recruitment and retention of care workers has proved challenging. The project has worked with over 200 clients throughout the year.

Physical Navigation

This strand is about helping people to get moving by connecting them with local initiatives that include an element of physical exercise, in the broadest sense. This can include activities such as gardening, or environmental volunteering, and doesn't focus purely on sport, which some can find off-putting.

This pilot project has now come to an end, and an independent evaluation report has been prepared to identify the learning.

Future

Following an ICB commissioning decision, we will no longer be providing specialist mental health and dementia navigation services from 1st November 2023.

It is with sadness we say goodbye to Solent Mind and Southampton Alzheimer's Society from the SO:Linked programme, and thank both organisations, and their staff, for the contribution they have made to SO:Linked and Southampton residents over the last four years. Spectrum CIL will continue providing generic navigation as part of SO:Linked, and will be extending the offer into Southampton General Hospital to aid people leaving hospital.



1168

People we've
worked with



292 - Mental Health

401 - Dementia

475 - General Pop

Top 3

Reasons for
referral



Debt / financial

Domestic help

Social isolation / loneliness



5

Social Prescribing
Network meetings



100+

Community groups
partnered with



244

Community activities
added to SO:LID



49%

People received
low level support



39%

People received
medium level support



12%

People received
high level support

Research Unit

Over the past few years SVS has been building stronger relationships with the research sector, through our local universities and other bodies, such as National Institute of Health Research (NIHR), UK Research and Innovation (UKRI), and our local Public Health team.

Below is a snapshot of the work we have undertaken, as the community research agenda gathers momentum both nationally and locally.

In-Residence

With University of Southampton has entailed funding for one day a week of worker time to build connections within the university

through the Public Engagement in Research Unit (PERu) to enable better reach into Southampton's communities.

Green Social Prescribing Impact Research Project

Through In-Residence we have designed a project to better understand the impact of green activities, and how these can be harnessed through social prescribing. A university researcher is now working with SVS and four organisations in our Green Network and results will be published in 2024.



£8k

Financial bursaries for involvement



4

Organisations taking part in Green Social Prescribing Impact Project



4/24

Findings expected

Community Participatory Action Research (CPAR)

This project was commissioned by the Southampton Public Health Team and involved SVS working closely with research partner The Young Foundation, and five local VCSE organisations to recruit and train a team of peer researchers to explore questions about the community impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. We are now working with the participants and stakeholders to distribute £50k of funding to address the issues identified.

Wessex Public Involvement Network (WPIN)

This has led to stronger relationships between the PIN and SVS to enable further reach into local communities, particularly concerning health research. The project included a training module about understanding, and working with, the VCSE, and a podcast exploring our work.



4

Co-production events held to shape CPAR



£50k

Funding being distributed to support community projects



5

Organisations involved

SVS Public Services

Healthwatch Southampton

Healthwatch Southampton (HWS) undertook successful recruitments in year to secure its full complement of staff, and has recently refreshed its Strategic Group with new members.

Following a commissioning review Healthwatch Southampton has been granted a two-year contract extension to June 2025.

Healthwatch Southampton has delivered a number of proactive pieces of work in the last year, including Waiting for Hospital Care, Access to GP services, and Lived Experience of People Receiving Domiciliary Care.

Following a public engagement exercise this year Healthwatch Southampton has set its future priorities to include GP services, Dentistry, and Mental Health.

Throughout the year the Healthwatch Southampton team supported 191 people to access local health services, received feedback from 426 people on local services, and provided information and signposting to over 26,000 people through it's website.

The full Healthwatch Southampton annual report was published on 30th June and is available on the Healthwatch Southampton website:

www.healthwatchsouthampton.co.uk



26k+

People accessing
information through
HWS website



191

People supported
by HWS to
access care



426

People giving feedback
on local health and
care services

Community Roots

The project reopened in April '22 with a partnership with local drug service CGL, who are part funding this allotment project.

Since re-opening, 21 volunteers have contributed 1242 hours to the project. Volunteers report feeling safe and welcome within the group and a sense of achievement when they see the results of their efforts.

They describe the allotment as a calm place where they can get away from some of their daily problems. Volunteers can take home some of the produce that they grow and recipes are exchanged to encourage use of fresh ingredients. There have also been cooking sessions on site which have been a great success.

The Community Roots Project is a great example of the potential benefits of Green Therapy.

City Shopmobility

We continues to offer an essential lifeline to people needing mobility assistance to access city-centre amenities.

This project has suffered from rising energy bills and the fallout from the pandemic, ending the year with a £16k deficit. Over the first two quarters of the '23/'24 financial year we are focusing on project sustainability and a partnership with West Quay shopping centre to ensure we can keep this essential offer.



1242

Hours contributed
by Community Roots
supported volunteers



21

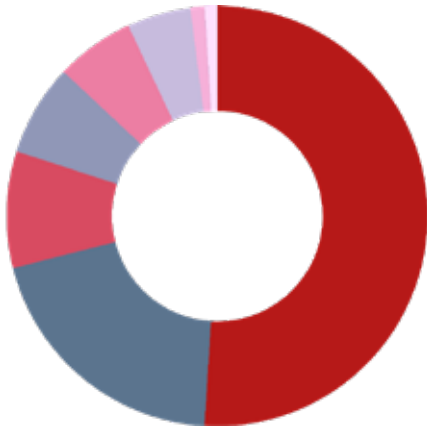
Supported volunteers
engaged throughout
the year



1200+

Visits to city
centre enabled by
Shopmobility

Governance & Finance



Breakdown of Restricted Income

- SO:Linked 52%
- Healthwatch 21%
- Health 11%
- Community Dev 7%
- Shopmobility 5%
- So: Lets Connect 2%
- YPF Trust 1%
- 1% Community Roots

SVS Executive Committee govern the organisation, as its Charity Trustees and Company Directors. They ensure we comply with our charitable objects, set strategy, and take financial decisions. The full committee meets six times a year, but members also contribute to sub-committees on strategy, finance, and risk.

At last year's AGM members elected Kirsty Rowlinson, Phil Aubrey-Harris, Peter Hull, MBE, and Stephanie Ramsey, SVS' new chairperson, onto the committee.

During the year Simon Mantle and Peter Keeley resigned, and we extend our thanks for their contributions over many years.

Income

Unrestricted income:	£16,410
Restricted income:	£869,106
Total income:	£885,516

Expenditure

Unrestricted expenditure :	£16,794
Restricted expenditure :	£868,142

Trustees & Staff

Executive Committee (as of October 2023)

Stephanie Ramsey
Chair

Kevin Liles
Vice Chair

Carole Rogers
Honorary Treasurer

Mary Carnegie

David Wrighton

Cllr John Noon
(SCC Nominated)

Peter Hull, MBE

Kirsty Rowlinson

Phil Aubrey-Harris

SVS Lead Contacts

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Amanda Kelly
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Manager*
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Wendy Redman
Community Roots Co-ordinator
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NAVCA
Quality
Award



Volunteer Centre
Quality Accreditation



Contact & Our Mission

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

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

023 8022 8291
www.southamptonvs.org.uk
information@southamptonvs.org.uk
volunteer@southamptonvs.org.uk
[@SouthamptonVS](https://www.facebook.com/SouthamptonVS)

SO:Linked

023 8021 6050
www.solinked.org.uk
information@southamptonvs.org.uk
[@SOLinked](https://www.facebook.com/SOLinked.svs)

City Shopmobility

Podium Car park Level 0, Westquay Shopping Centre, Harbour Parade, Southampton SO14 7EG

023 8063 1263
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city.shopmobility@southamptonvs.org.uk
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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.