

Voluntary and Community Sector Projects - Economic Recovery

DARG funding impact

July 2022

Project 1: VCS Infrastructure/Business Support

Funding: £194,000

Partnership: Shropshire Infrastructure Partnership

Lead organisation: Community Resource

Project: To offer VCS groups and organisations support in 3 main areas:

- Volunteer brokerage, recruitment and management
- Governance and growth (VCS 'business advice' and support)
- Small grants aimed at pandemic recovery



Project 1: VCS Infrastructure/ Business Support



Match Funding: Year 2 from Public Health COMF (Outbreak Management Funding)

Results:

- 56 VCS groups and organisations offered business support
- 36 groups offered ongoing guidance
- 62 training courses offered
- 59 participants to end of April 2022
- 30 groups trained
- 50 external grants applications supported
- 1 grant scheme launched
- 3 jobs created

Volunteering Results:

- 19 different VCS groups and organisations received volunteers
- 106 volunteer roles supported
- 610 volunteer hours recorded
- Schools vaccination scheme supported
- 14 volunteer 'thank you' events held across the county
- 700 volunteers contacted and thanked for roles through pandemic

“For the past few months, we have received excellent support and advice ...with grant applications, with volunteer recruitment and has helped us to link up with other organisations. Carol’s expertise and knowledge have been invaluable to our small Charity. We really appreciate her help and support, she is always on hand whenever we need her advice, this can often be at short notice. The Charity has already been successful with a recent Grant application, we feel that this could not have been possible without her help and expertise. ”

Project 2: Debt and Money Advice

Funding: £50,000

Partnership: Money Advice Forum

Lead organisation: Citizen's Advice Shropshire

Project: To improve access to debt and financial support and advice for Shropshire residents impacted by the pandemic (with a focus on people who are self-employed).

- Establish a Money Advice Forum bringing together VCS groups and organisations across Shropshire to share best practice and improve referrals.
- Publish a Money Advice Strategy for Shropshire.
- Offer advice and a support pack for self employed people

Project 2: Debt and Money Advice

Citizens Advice Shropshire	Sevenside Housing
Christians Against Poverty	Hands Together Ludlow
Connexus	Shrewsbury Homes For All
Bishops Castle Community Foodbank	Transforming Communities Together
Macmillan Cancer Support	Taking Part
DWP	Christians Against Poverty
Stretton Foodbank	Red Cross
CAP Bridgnorth debt centre	Riversway Elim Church
Shropshire Council	Age UK
Star Housing	Barnabas Money Advice
Shropshire Housing Alliance	Ludlow Foodbank
Wrekin Housing Trust	Marches Energy Agency
Community Resource	Shropshire Peer Counselling & Advocay Service
Oswestry and Ellesmere CMA Connect Centre	Landau Ltd
A4U	Shropshire Food Poverty Alliance

Project 2: Debt and Money Advice

Information sharing:

- The issue of medical evidence for PIP applications
- Information sharing around the Household Support Fund – discussing common issues faced by organisations in accessing support for clients
- Information sharing around sanctions on experience of accessing support from DWP
- Information sharing around clients experience of digital exclusion
- Information sharing experience of supporting clients with insolvency
- Training session on Shropshire Council Housing Benefit and DHP new online application system
- Development of money advice strategy
- Information sharing around client experience of Council Tax system

Project 2: Debt and Money Advice

Results:

- New forum and established partnership working with meetings every other month.
- Money Advice Strategy (draft) – presented to Social Task Force, Hardship & Poverty Group and Shropshire Food Poverty Alliance.
- Training on Housing Benefit and DHP online application system.
- Training on DWP Fitness for Work Assessments and PIP/AA applications.
- Information sharing on themes: digital exclusion, insolvency, sanctions, Household Support Fund.
- Research into local debt and money advice services (report published).
- 1 job created

Support Results:

- 943 debt clients
- 229 supported in employment
- 50 supported in housing need

Project 3: Community Asset Grant Scheme

Funding: £124,960

Project: Grant funding was offered to support Shropshire's community buildings recover from the pandemic and make improvements to ensure they are sustainable and able to support the community for years to come.

In total 48 applications were received by the closing date of 17th January 2022 with an average request of £10,798.08 each. These comprised of village halls, community interest companies, heritage trusts and outreach centres.



Loppington Village Hall

Project 3: Community Asset Grant Scheme

Awards: 14 Community buildings

Bishops Castle & District Community Land Trust Ltd.

Brownlow Community Centre Trust

Clive Village Hall

Easthope Shipton and Stanton Long Memorial Hall

Great Hanwood Community Interest Company

Lee Brockhurst Village Hall

Loppington Village Hall & Recreation Ground

Lower Bush Farm CIC

Market Hall Trust

Neenton Community Society

Shrewsbury Railway Heritage Trust

St. James Hall, Lodge Lane

The Church Barn, Bishop's Castle

The Shrewsbury Ark

Outputs:

- Case study project outlines
- Overall grant scheme report

