

WASHINGTON VCS AREA NETWORK: WORK PLAN 2018/19

Priority	Challenge/Need	Proposed activity	Progress Report
Supporting smaller grassroots organisations to grow and develop and be informed and engaged at whatever level they require	Identify appropriate mechanisms for engaging & involving smaller grassroots organisations	<p>1. Washington Area Network Communications Plan - to determine appropriate methods of engagement for the different groups across the Washington Area Network via survey, 1 to 1s, meetings and forums</p> <p>2. Propose 'Mentoring' Project where the more capable organisations support smaller organisations to engage and become involved</p>	<p>1. New Leaflet to promote Reps, services and support and mentoring proposals – invite to small organisations to request support. Washington MIND/Reps/ ACDL to meet to draft.</p> <p>2. Develop WellBeing Info/What's On page as a resource for Area Network members. Also consider Washington Face Book page. ACDL/Washington MIND to meet to determine mechanism and methodology.</p> <p>3. Survey grassroots organisations re support requirements, how do they want to be contacted etc. ACDL.</p> <p>4. Organise monthly Drop Ins as part of a programme of support, advice and mentoring. 16th October</p> <p>4. Build activity into VCS Support Project (signposting)</p>
Recruitment of more volunteers and help to support, train and co-ordinate volunteers.	20 organisations responded identifying nearly 500 volunteers working for a range of organisations in Washington. Capacity within individual organisations, some quite small, to manage, support and train volunteers can be limited.	<p>1. Area Committee to consider Call for Projects for a VCS Support Project – which includes support and co-ordination of volunteering as a proposed project outcome.</p> <p>2. Washington Area Network members to establish and commit to Washington Volunteering Strategy and Action Plan</p>	<p>1. Develop a Washington Volunteers Passport Scheme. (highlights experience and skills and can be used for interviews, for UC and DWP, work experience). Needs to link to REACT, Clean and Green, Health Champions, young people's projects, to be recognised 'currency' across local VCS organisations – need organisations to sign up.</p> <p>Included in the role for VCS Support Project as part of the project outcome of "Volunteers are recruited and supported to work within a specific organisation in the area, to contribute to the development of that organisation, and to form a 'bank' of volunteers who give time on an ad hoc basis to a number of volunteering opportunities and local activities."</p>

Longer term sustainable business planning and future proofing VCS organisations	Changing landscape of funders and funding strategies – less money available and competing priorities. This priority needs to support some of the smaller organisation to plan for their sustainability using a business approach to address needs, gaps, and opportunities.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Area Committee to consider Call for Projects for a VCS Support Project – which includes supporting the VCS to future proof the organisation as a proposed project outcome. 2. VCS Support Project to identify, prioritise and assist those organisations requiring business planning/future proofing. 3. CPS to support VCS Network and VCS support Project to identify additional opportunities for resources and support to future proof small to medium VCS organisations 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Included in the Project Brief for VCS Support Project being presented to Area Committee June 2018. 2. As above 3. Community Partnership Service links already established via ACDL.
Improved use of community run buildings to help sustain VCS organisations	A number of VCS organisations who deliver much valued services for local people request various levels of support to assist with managing their community buildings. As external funding opportunities reduce for the 3 rd Sector and larger funders redraft their strategies and criteria, it is becoming increasingly difficult for groups (especially those run entirely via volunteers) to access funds to help them either maintain their buildings or repair or refurbish them.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. CSP will ensure all relevant external funding opportunities circulated. 2. Linked to supporting smaller organisations via Network Mentoring 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. SCC – Member Support & Community Partnerships Service (ACDL) + Washington ANW links and signposting already established. Regular bulletins detailing current funding opportunities circulated to all Network members. 2. Utilise volunteering scheme for gardeners, decorators, handyman service to assist VCS organisation re managing community buildings and sites. Links to Clean and Green and REACT.
Identify longer term core funding opportunities	Many larger organisations highlight the need for longer term funding to support core costs as they struggle to deliver more with less and to sustain core interventions that have worked, whilst responding to the shorter term opportunities which come along. Sustaining the programmes and		

	activities that are proving to have a positive impact but have been piloted using short term funding is also an issue.		
Partnership working and collaboration embedded	Area Committee has encouraged partnership working and collaboration via the local VCS to deliver joint priorities for some time. That support was confirmed at the last Area Committee. Where local organisations work together for funding opportunities (AC) and submit collaborative bids, WAC is happy to target such opportunities where appropriate	<p>1. Encourage collaborative bidding for AC opportunities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VCS Support Project • REACT • WISP <p>2. CSP to identify external opportunities where shared or joint priorities/criteria are identified. All key organisations to confirm priorities for 2018/19</p>	<p>1. In place. SCC – Member Support & Community Partnerships Service (ACDL) + Washington ANW</p> <p>2. ACDL to confirm focus/priorities of key organisations and work with them to identify opportunities to collaborate. Regular bulletins circulated to ANW Members</p>
Help sustain VCS organisations re governance	Aging committees, lack of volunteers, capacity of volunteers. There is a need to grow volunteers who can step in and support some of the more ‘aging’ committees and governance structures of VCS groups and organisations	1. Area Committee to consider Call for Projects for a VCS Support Project – which includes supporting the smaller VCS organisations to recruit and grow new volunteers as a proposed project outcome.	1. Included in the Project Brief for VCS Support Project being presented to Area Committee June 2018. SCC – Member Support & Community Partnerships Service (ACDL).
Meeting the ever changing needs of the local community and increased demand	<p>Organisations are also struggling with trying to continue to deliver services to more people and having the time to seek additional funding to support the organisation going forward.</p> <p>To support staff to deal with clients with higher levels of need and more complex issues. More and more local residents need help and whilst the local VCS are willing to try and help as many as possible, the challenge is the capacity of organisations and their staff.</p>		<p>1. Identify shared priorities of WAC and Area Network</p> <p>2. Work together to achieve added value for Washington – via Area Network reporting, collaboration, and links between SIB projects – WISP, Time 2 Care, REACT, Clean and Green – recognising capacity will determine delivery.</p> <p>3. Confirm key priorities and new challenges – on-going</p> <p>4. Set up Washington Area Network Provider Group to map, audit, and prioritise re opportunities.</p>

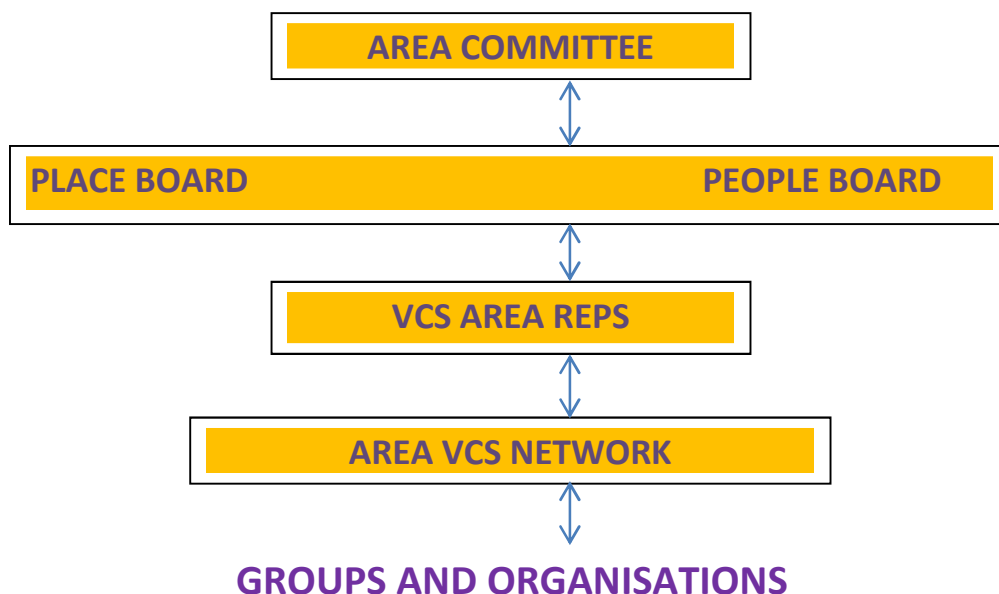
WASHINGTON VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY SECTOR (VCS) AREA NETWORK

Washington Voluntary and Community

Sector (VCS) Area Network is a fantastic resource for any local voluntary or community group in Washington. The Network offers you and your group the opportunity to

- Develop your work, organisation or group
- Find out about the latest funding opportunities and local community developments from the Council and other partners
- Work with other local groups to build partnership opportunities and support
- Promote the work you are doing in the area
- Raise issues and challenges you face in the local community and be part of finding the local solutions

WHERE DOES THE NETWORK FIT?



HOW CAN YOU GET INVOLVED?

- Attend the Area VCS Network meetings – held every 6 weeks in the local area
- Receive the email bulletins to keep up to date on latest opportunities
- Become one of the VCS Area Representatives
- Speak to one of the 3 Area VCS Network Representatives for support and guidance

WHO ARE THE AREA VCS NETWORK REPRESENTATIVES?

Jemma Amer (Development Manager Sunderland North Community Business Centre).

I have worked in the Voluntary Sector for over 15 years delivering community development projects across the Sunderland area. I have worked for Sunderland North Community



Business Centre since 2016, where whilst I have a city wide remit, the majority of my delivery is based within the Washington area. My Washington projects include Wise Steps Employability Delivery (Non - accredited Adult Learning opportunities), Clean and Green Environmental Volunteer project, Washington Events programmes, holiday hunger play schemes and some general community development support.

I have experience of applying for grant funding and contracts as well as managing and monitoring funding. I have managed and supported grass roots groups as well as larger established VCS organisations with advice on governance, staffing and leasing issues along with many other day to day struggles that the VCS face. I have been a Washington VCS Network Rep for two years and I am happy to support the local network wherever I am needed.

Sylvia Copley (Chief Officer at Shiney Row Advice Project).



Shiney Advice and Resource Project (ShARP) a local charity based in

Shiney Row. ShARP was established over 30 years ago and has developed as a community hub providing to welfare rights, benefit, and debt and energy advice. ShARP delivers advice services in the Coalfields, Washington and East areas of Sunderland. We have a strong team of volunteers who provide over 120 hours of support each week to our advice service, charity shop, electronic village hall and our community library. In previous jobs I have worked in and managed services for children, young people and families in Sure Start Children Centres, Children's Services, Family Intervention Projects and Crisis Support Services. I am a Member of the Chartered Management Institute

and have over 30 years experience of managing and delivering services in the voluntary sector and local authorities. I really enjoy working in the voluntary sector because it is possible to develop strong partnerships that work closely with communities to respond to local priorities creatively and often more quickly than mainstream services can. This is my first year as one of the Washington VCS Network Reps

How to contact your Area VCS Network Representative

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