

2022/23

Annual Report



Stratford-on-Avon District
Social Inclusion Statement
Action Plan 2021 - 2024



Stratford Social Inclusion Partnership Development Officer

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STRATFORD SOCIAL INCLUSION PARTNERSHIP (SIP)

Introduction

Welcome to Stratford-on-Avon District's Social Inclusion Partnership's Development Officer annual report for 2022-23.

The Development Officer, hosted by Warwickshire & Solihull Community and Voluntary Action, came into post on the 14th of April 2020 and started in unprecedented times within the worst public health crisis for over a century. The third full year of funding for the development officer post saw the Voluntary and Community Sector in the district facing a cost of living crisis with the highest inflation for many years, increased demand for their services, reduced funding from traditional funding streams, changes and reductions to volunteering.

The report is a record of what has been achieved in collaboration with and support of Stratford-on-Avon District's Social Inclusion Partnership (SIP) by the Development Officer in these unprecedented times, the challenges faced, the funding secured for the district, the networks and relationships developed and maintained.



We have been incredibly grateful for the advice and support we have been given by Warwickshire CAVA.

- Wixford Village Hall Committee



STRATFORD SOCIAL INCLUSION PARTNERSHIP (SIP)

Key achievements



of funding secured
into the district



Organisations
supported



increase in funding
compared to 21/22



secured
since 2020



Project renewed
for 5 years

Purpose of the Development Officer post

The Development Officer post's purpose is to support voluntary and community organisations (VCO's) operating within Stratford-on-Avon district so that they may have a greater impact upon the priorities in the Stratford -on- Avon District Social Inclusion Statement (SIS).

The posts key duties and responsibilities are:

- Identify funding opportunities relating to SIP opportunities
- Ascertain the funding requirements of local Voluntary Community Organisations (VCOs)
- Identify opportunities for partnership, collaborative working and operational efficiencies related to SIS
- Take a lead in submitting funding bids
- Build and maintain key relationships
- Provide advice, support, and promote good practice in VCSE management, governance, and development.

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STRATFORD ON AVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

ELIZABETH HOUSE



STRATFORD SOCIAL INCLUSION PARTNERSHIP (SIP)

Achieving £698,780 in funding - a celebration

One of the highlights of the year was a celebration involving over 30 VCS organisations at Elizabeth House in Stratford Upon Avon which marked helping groups secure over £698,780 of funding since the start of the project.

Cllr Jo Barker, Portfolio Holder for Homes, Health, and Wellbeing:

'It is great to see how this project has maximised the funding provided by the district council to enable even more residents to benefit from the support of local voluntary and community groups. Charitable groups are vital within the local community, providing activities to support the physical and mental health of people and creating lasting local connections. I am pleased that this funding will enable additional support for local communities at a time when people are struggling with cost of living challenges.'

At the time of the celebration 83 applications have been supported since the project started in 2020 totalling over £1.2 million.

Stratford-on-Avon District Social Inclusion Statement 2019-2024

The Stratford-on-Avon District Social Inclusion Statement 2019-2024 is a partnership document created by Stratford-on-Avon District Social Inclusion Partnership (SIP) to achieve the greatest impact.

In terms of how the Development Officer's work has supported the priorities; the following pages provide highlights of all our activities over the past year.

STRATFORD SOCIAL INCLUSION PARTNERSHIP (SIP)

Stratford on Avon District Social Inclusion priorities - Highlights



Improve education, employment, and training; increasing income and reducing debt within priority areas

Forest of Hearts, a local charity with an environmental emphasis, were supported with a Skills for Sustainability European Social Fund application for £19,150. This enables local people to attend weekly skills sessions and work in teams to develop their confidence and skills using work-based community projects.

Stratford Men Shed's new trustees board was trained in the roles and responsibilities of a charity trustee. This helped them re start afresh after a period of closure and being at risk of closure.

Many of the applications supported over the year led to employment opportunities such as the Community Developer in the Stour area and the continuation of the Dad Matter's Coordinator.



Combatting social and rural Isolation

Wixford Village Hall is a much loved and historic facility that sadly has had to close because it was no longer fit for purpose. The Development Officer has supported a variety of funding applications by the committee and this year applications were supported to the Postcode Lottery, Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), UK Shared Prosperity Fund and the Community Ownership Fund. In this financial year, they heard that the Postcode lottery, CIL and UKSPF applications had been successful securing just over £200,000 towards the half a million project.

The Village Hall Committee gave the following feedback:

"Wixford Village Hall Committee has been incredibly grateful for the advice and support we have been given by Warwickshire Community and Voluntary Action (CAVA). Mr Chris Freeman, Development Officer, has been extremely helpful in sharing information about potential grants suitable for our project and has also been very generous in helping us with the application process for a number of grants."



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"With his support we were awarded almost £25,000 from Warwickshire's Green Shoots Fund and most recently he has given us valuable guidance concerning our application to the Community Ownership Fund. We had found this application particularly challenging until Chris suggested new strategies that helped to shape our approach."

"During the last two years we have also attended several Warwickshire CAVA webinars which have been very helpful and informative."

Alcester's Crafty Lunch Club provides a weekly session for adults with a disability and the project had previously helped them secure Social Impact Fund funding. Guidance was provided on the different legal options the club had as it moved from under the Alcester Town Councils' wing.

The project worked with Warwickshire County Council Community and Partnership Team to identify groups that could benefit from loneliness and social isolation funding. As a result, £5,900 of funding was secured for Stratford district groups.

Studley Parish Council were offered guidance on Social Value and the development of their business case for their proposal to secure and re-open the old Youth Centre for community use.



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Studley Youth Foundation was supported to become a Charity with their application submitted during this year.

In total 14 community and village facilities were supported during the year.



Support: Older People

Alcester Dementia Care was provided with advice on funding opportunities regarding their proposal to build a dementia day centre in the town.

WRAP (Warwickshire Reminiscence Action Project) were supported as they recovered from COVID lockdowns. Workshops were undertaken with Trustees and this led to the creation of a recovery action plan and a successful application for Awards for All funding to sustain their future.



Men Shed Stratford Upon Avon was also supported throughout the year through guidance on governance issues, a campaign to recruit a new treasurer and general support. They successfully applied for Warwickshire County Council cost of living support and we also helped them secure loneliness and isolation funding.



Empowering communities to harness local resources and expertise to help themselves

Meon Vale and Upper Lighthorne (UL) parish were supported as new communities.

In terms of Upper Lighthorne:

- Supported the new Community Champion
- Met Lighthorne Health Village Hall Chair and key committee members to talk about their governance

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- Presented to all the committee on the implications of being an Unincorporated Association and the options for incorporation
- Support was also given to the development of a community action plan by the Community Champion
- Attended the UL Strategic meeting.

In terms of Meon Vale support:

- Ongoing support throughout the year for Meon Vale Residents Association (MVRA)
- Feedback on funding applications for MVRA
- Supported and presented at an evening on setting up new groups in the community
- Supported the new Children and Families Partnership for Meon Vale
- Advice given to Marston Sicca Parish Council regarding funding opportunities for Meon Vale projects
- Meon Vale Café supported with governance advice
- Met the allotment group and did a detailed funding search for them
- Attended the Meon Vale Strategic meeting.

Other work included the Promotion of the Community Infrastructure Levy Fund for the first time to a wide variety of VCS groups and supporting Stratford Town FC, a proposed disability day centre in Alcester, Wixford Village Hall, and the Meon Vale pavilion in their applications.

Various groups were supported to tackle the cost of living crisis and warm hubs. Advice and guidance were given to the setup of the Moreton Morrel Cost of Living group

Led the selection process for the Community Builder post. Assisted in the induction of the eventual successful candidate. Once in post supported the Community Builder with a few of her first community door knocks. Led to funding application support for Bishopton Community Centre and Clopton Community Action Group

Provided Stratford Youth Collective with governance advice. Referred them to additional advice and supported a successful UK Shared Prosperity funding application.

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Improving Health and Wellbeing

Support and guidance were given throughout the year to the Stour Health and Wellbeing Partnership including:

- Collated a proposal for a Pop-Up Hubs project
- Created and delivered an online workshop for the SHWP'S workstream Chairs getting their input into the Partnership's revised Strategic Framework.
- Helping them develop their Community Developer project
- Completed a successful Awards for All application for the Community Developer
- Linked them with the Community Powered 'Ground Breaker' concept
- Partnership development mentoring support.

Stepping Stones who provided food for the street community were supported on policies and funding identification.

Led on applications from Bishopton Community Centre and the Ken Kennett Centre to the Community Mental Health Transformation Micro grants fund for their community socials as identified and nurtured by the Community Builder.



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Delivering Afghan Relocation & UKRS Refugee Resettlement Scheme

A fortnightly Stratford Activities meeting was attended and supported. This was set up in response to people seeking asylum coming to live in Stratford town. The group aims to create activities for the residents. The project was able to write a funding application for Escape Arts to the COVID Recovery Diversity fund which was successful and enabled arts and crafts activities to be delivered by Escape Arts for the new community. The project was also able to engage and bring Stratford Sports Club, Timebank, and local social prescribers into the group.

Impact and Value

A key responsibility of the Development post is to work with VCS groups to secure funding so that they may make a greater impact on SIP priorities. The work can take many forms such as working through the 8,000 charitable funding opportunities available and identifying those which are most likely to be successful for a group, providing evidence and data, sense checking and proof-reading applications, advising content and actually writing funding applications for those groups who lack the capacity and/or capability but are doing key SIP priority work within Stratford-on-Avon district. The table on page 13 highlights the funding applications made in the 2022/23 year that the Development Officer was able to support in a meaningful way.

STRATFORD SOCIAL INCLUSION PARTNERSHIP (SIP)

Funding applications 2022/23

Men's Shed	WCC Loneliness and Isolation Fund	Successful	£500.00
Rubbish Friends	WCC Loneliness and Isolation Fund	Successful	£500.00
Warwickshire Pride	WCC Loneliness and Isolation Fund	Successful	£400.00
Friends of Hastings House	WCC Loneliness and Isolation Fund	Successful	£2,000.00
Warwickshire Reminiscence Action Project (WRAP)	WCC Loneliness and Isolation Fund	Successful	£1,000.00
Stour Health and Wellbeing Part	Prince's Countryside Fund	Unsuccessful	
Marston Sicca Parish Council	Stratford District Council CIL	Successful	£15,000.00
Stratford Town FC	Stratford District Council CIL	Withdrawn	
Wixford Village Hall	Stratford District Council CIL	Successful	£175,000.00
Rubbish Friends	Stratford Town Trust	Unsuccessful	
Homestart South Warks	CMHT Innovation Fund	Unsuccessful	
Escape Arts	CMHT Innovation Fund	Unsuccessful	
Lighthorne Heath Parish Council	Severn Trent Community Fund	Successful	£7,000.00
Alcester Baptist Church	WCC County Councillors' Grant Fund	Successful	£3,180.00
Radway Parish Council	WCC County Councillors' Grant Fund	Successful	£1,760.00
Friends of Hastings House	WCC County Councillors' Grant Fund	Successful	£2,000.00
Marston Sicca PC	WCC County Councillors' Grant Fund	Successful	£1,500.00
Halford Village Hall	WCC County Councillors' Grant Fund	Successful	£4,000.00
Ken Kennet Centre	WCC Green Shoots Fund	Withdrawn	
Forest of Hearts	WCC Green Shoots Fund	Successful	£21,500.00
Little Bird Baby Bank	Stratford Town Trust	Successful	£666.00
Young Minds Matter	Stratford Town Trust	Successful	£29,896.00
Meon Vale Residents	WCC County Councillors' Grant Fund	Successful	£1,000.00
Escape Arts	WCC Reducing the Impact of COVID	Successful	£8,599.00
Stour Health and Wellbeing Part	Scorfen Trust	Successful	£5,000.00
Wixford Village Hall	Postcode Lottery Trust (National)	Successful	£25,000.00
Stour Health and Wellbeing Part	Awards 4 All	Successful	£10,000.00
Stepping Stones	Prime	Successful	£1,600.00
WRAP	Awards 4 All	Successful	£10,000.00
WCAVA	Stratford Town Trust	Successful	£7,404.00
Stour Health and Wellbeing Part	Stratford District Council UKSPF	Unsuccessful	
Wixford Village Hall	Stratford District Council UKSPF	Successful	£20,000.00
Townsend Hall	Heart of England Community Foundation	Successful	£2,000.00
Escape Arts/Youth Collective	Stratford District Council UKSPF	Successful	£25,000.00
Bishopton Community Centre	WCC Cost of Living	Successful	£1,000.00
Clopton Community Action Group	WCC Cost of Living	Successful	£1,000.00
Men's Shed	WCC Cost of living	Successful	£1,000.00
Dad Matters Warwickshire	CMHT Innovation Fund	Unsuccessful	

TOTAL £384,505.00

STRATFORD SOCIAL INCLUSION PARTNERSHIP (SIP)

Build and maintain key relationships

Building and maintaining key relationships is a key responsibility of the Development Officer.

The table below highlights those organisations/partnerships/networks to which the Development Officer has worked and added value to in 2022/23:

Alcester dementia day care	Meon Vale Residents Association
Alcester Health and Wellbeing Board	Moreton Morrel Cost of Living Group
Alcester Town Council	Net Zero Stratford
Arts in The Community	Rubbish Friends
Barnardo's	Southam Local Network Group
Bidford Parish Council	Southam Town Council
Bishops Itchington Memorial Hall	Stepping Stones Stratford On Avon
Bishopton Community Centre	Stour Health and Wellbeing Partnership
Clopton Community Action group	Stratford littlebird baby bank
Crafty Lunch Club	Stratford Samaritans Community Hub
Crawford Memorial Hall	Stratford Sports Club
Earlswood Village Hall	Stratford Timebank
Embrace	Stratford Town Council
Escape Arts	Stratford Town Football Club
Forest of Hearts	Stretton Under Fosse Village Hall
Graham Adams Centre	Studley Parish Council
Harbury Guides and Scouts	Studley Youth Foundation
Home-Start South Warwickshire	The Parenting Project
Langley Village Hall	Townsend Memorial Hall
Lifespace Trust	Warwickshire County Council
Lifeways	Warwickshire County Council - Asylum and Leaving Care team
Lighthorne Heath Village Hall	Warwickshire County Council - Communities & Partnerships Team
Little Compton Bowls Club	Warwickshire Reminiscence Action Project
Marston Sicca Parish Council	Wixford Village Hall
Men's Shed Stratford upon Avon	Young Minds Matter
Meon Vale Pavilion Cafe	

STRATFORD SOCIAL INCLUSION PARTNERSHIP (SIP)

Conclusion

In conclusion, the annual report for 2022-23 showcases the invaluable contributions of the Development Officer in supporting and strengthening the Voluntary and Community Sector in the Stratford-on-Avon district.

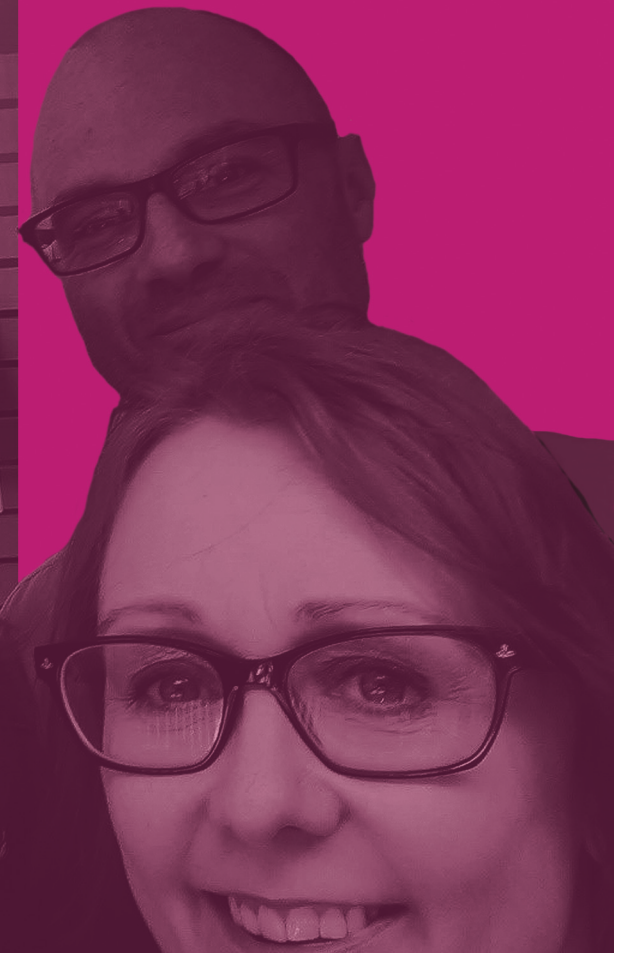
Despite the challenges posed by a community's recovery from an unprecedented public health crisis and a cost of living crisis, the officer's efforts have significantly enhanced the social inclusion and well-being of the local community.

Having the Development Officer, employed and supported by Warwickshire & Solihull Community and Voluntary Action, again proved invaluable. The achievements highlighted in this report demonstrate the positive impact that strategic and dedicated support can have on the growth and resilience of voluntary and community organisations. As the report indicates, the Development Officer's role remains crucial in fostering a thriving, inclusive, and interconnected community.



The Stratford-on-Avon District Council funded Development Officer has played an invaluable role in supporting, advising and guiding myself and the SHWP team over the last two years.

- Bob Armstrong Chair of the Stour Health and Wellbeing Partnership



Warwickshire Community And Voluntary Action in Stratford-on-Avon District

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