

ANNUAL REPORT 2023-2024



Contents

Foreword from Our Chair.....	4
Warwickshire Infrastructure.....	5-15
Solihull Infrastructure.....	16-23
Big Local: Arley and Ansley.....	24-28
Big Local: Hill Top and Caldwell.....	29-30
Bishopton and Clopton - Community Builder	31-32
Community Mental Health Transformation.....	33-35
Health & Wellbeing.....	36-37
Health Representation for the VCFSE.....	38-39
Newtown Centre.....	40-42
Research Engagement Network.....	43-44
Social Fabric Fund.....	45-46
Stratford Social Inclusion Partnership.....	47-49
Three Villages Youth Project.....	50-52
Vaccinations Project.....	53
Volunteering.....	54-56
Membership.....	57
Financial Summary.....	58-59
Acknowledgements & Thanks.....	60
Message from our Chief Executive.....	61

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Our Vision

Continue making a positive impact within communities by promoting and advocating the impact of volunteering and support delivered by the Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise Sector (VCSE). Working collaboratively with all partners to reduce inequalities, tackle disadvantage whilst embedding and celebrating the diversity of the sector, its people and its value to society.

Our Values

Approachable, Inclusive, Empowering

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report online.



“

Thank you so much for all your help. It has meant we can still continue our service and reach out to those people most in need!.

- CAVA Service user

Foreword from Our Chair



This Report, and the stories within it, illustrate the major contributions which CAVA and its members have made towards addressing the challenges of poverty, social deprivation, learning difficulties, environmental depletion and physical and mental health in Warwickshire and Solihull. These achievements and positive outcomes have been driven by partnership and collaboration with our public and private sector partners and funders. Working together will always yield better results than working separately.

We have a new government, and no doubt a new set of challenges and opportunities for the community and voluntary sector. The Government has expressed a desire to work out solutions in collaboration with those outside government. This report is a record of the sector's willingness to work in that way. We must not, however, be complacent and must continue to adapt and evolve in meeting the challenges that will remain acute.

CAVA will continue to speak for, support and act as an advocate for the community and voluntary sector and the role it plays in enhancing the well being of our citizens. We look forward to working with all our members, partners and funders through the coming year and beyond.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'Andrew Gabbitt'.

Andrew Gabbitt

Chair of CAVA's Trustee Board

Warwickshire Infrastructure

Warwickshire & Solihull Community And Voluntary Action (CAVA) are contracted by Warwickshire County Council (WCC), Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council (NBBC), Rugby Borough Council (RBC), Warwick District Council (WDC) and Coventry & Warwickshire Integrated Care Board (ICB).

Elements of our WCC contract namely Social Enterprise and Social Action are delivered in partnership with Coventry and Warwickshire Co-operative Development Agency (CWCDCA) and Grapevine.

In the period April 2023 to March 2024, 1,189 unique organisations have received support from us on 2,056 specific activities. In addition we organised 220 events and contributed to 245 others reaching over 13,324 people and upskilling 2,397 organisations.

We have advised 429 organisations on funding and supported 372 applications since April 2023. £7,947,461.82 was applied for and £1,470,252.86 has been awarded. Our involvement on grant panels saw a further £426,526.84 bought in to Warwickshire.



2023/24



1,189

Organisations supported



£1,470,453

Funding awarded



220

Events held



2,392

Organisations
upskilled at events



£4,053,498

Economic value
of volunteering



1,211

Volunteers placed

Case Study: North Warwickshire

Baxterley Church School Room Refurbishment

CAVA were approached regarding an Old School Room in North Warwickshire.

The Church School Room was built in the 18th century to educate up to 30 children from the local area. It was, and is, made up of only one small room without a toilet or any kitchen facility built or linked to the School Room. This of course restricts hiring and usage of this historic building.

For decades it had been left unused. In 2023 it was decided to look at upgrading the existing building to include a toilet and kitchen facilities so that the building could be used as support and comfort access for services etc, but also to open up the building itself as a community asset for use for events and activities by local groups.

The two wardens from the church set about finding out information on how this could be done, apply for planning permission and obtain quotes for the building work as a starting point. They then contacted North Warwickshire CAVA about possible funding options and opportunities to assist in covering the cost of the refurbishment. The NW FGDO met with the two wardens early in 2023 to discuss the plans and objectives and recommended possible applications to a range of funders including; National Lottery Community Fund, WCC Cllr grants, Severn Trent Community Foundation, NWBC Rural Sustainability Fund and The 29th May 1961 Foundation.

From this list we supported successful applications from: 43 NWBC Rural Sustainability Fund: £25,000 Awards for All: £10,000 29th May 1961 Foundation: £9,000 WCC Cllr Grants Fund: £500

After the works were completed The School Room and toilet facility was officially opened on the 14th March 2024 where CAVA attended to show our support. This facility is now able to provide a space for local community groups which will secure income to continue the running of the room.

Case Study: Nuneaton & Bedworth

Funding Success and Development Support Grows Nuneaton's Gurkha Community

CAVA has been supporting the British Gurkha Veterans Association.

The group was established in 2009 when some of the Gurkha members felt there was a need to provide basic welfare support to the ex-Gurkha members and their families as well as all associated members from the UK.

At the start of the year the group were successful with a county councillor grant for trips to take elderly people out of Nuneaton to experience some more of England. CAVA was contacted to go through the evaluation form for the money and to find out how the project had gone.

While meeting the group leader, it was suggested that the group apply to WRCC (Warwickshire Rural Community Council) for some additional warm hub money. They had been successful last year and had run a popular warm hub, providing extra activities such as yoga and ESOL lessons.

CAVA supported them to put in an application and they were successful straight away enabling them to continue their good work for the community. At the same time a new grant was being advertised for Kind Food, Kind Communities. The group were encouraged to apply because they had already done some food demonstrations at a number of county council events.

The chair of the group came to a workshop about the funding, where ideas were talked about. It was decided that the group would like to go back to Nepalese traditions and encourage the younger generations to grow their own food. A couple of elderly members of the community already have allotments. They grew up in Nepal in farmers fields where it was unusual not to grow your own food.

As generations have passed by and people have settled in Nuneaton, growing your own food has dwindled and the younger families eat more processed food and takeaways.



“

I wish to thank you personally for assisting us in our funding bid and in championing our work.

- CAVA Service user

The British Gurkhas, with the support of CAVA put in an application for a grow your own project where members of the community will come together, be mentored by elderly, 44 experienced growers.

The money will provide a growing kit and people will form social groups where they can update each other about their progress and share their growing experience, ideas and boost each other's confidence. In the meantime, Michelle from CAVA visited the warm hub to speak with the people benefiting from the group. Each week Bhim, the chair invites people in from other community groups or services to talk to people. On this occasion Michelle was able to catch up with the PCSO for Equality and Diversity in Nuneaton who had also been invited along to talk to the group. Bhim had also made links with a new local business called Rhenus. He went and met with them, and they offered him some space with raised growing beds, which the group can use on a regular basis. This fitted in perfectly with the new project.

The warm hub and the new growing project fit perfectly together. Once the warm hub finishes it will continue as regular social sessions where growers will come together to have refreshments and chat. The time slot will also be used to cook food grown at Rhenus and to do cooking demonstrations.

With Warwickshire CAVA's support, The British Gurkha Veteran Association has been made aware of funding and encouraged to apply. They have been boosted by some successful funding applications and now they are developing more projects off the back of their smaller warm hub project. The group has been listening to what members want and have been able to expand, thanks to funding, putting on some really good projects which have benefited their members and the wider community in many ways.

Case Study: Rugby Borough

Working collaboratively to improve awareness of regional funding opportunities

To increase awareness of various funds available to voluntary and community sector groups in Rugby, CAVA approached a number of funders to see if they would be willing to deliver a funding workshops. We collaborated with two different funders to provide sessions for the sector.

Severn Trent Community Fund agreed to deliver a funding workshop and we worked with them to coordinate the face-to-face event that was provided on Thursday, 4th July and was a resounding success. A total of 18 individuals from 17 different organisations participated in the workshop, representing a diverse range of sectors including village halls, sports clubs, and counseling organisations.

The Grants Officer from Severn Trent provided a power point presentation in such an interactive way, that many attendees felt comfortable to ask questions and engage in meaningful discussions. Additionally, attendees had the valuable opportunity to have one-on-one conversations with the Officer, further enhancing the impact of the workshop.

The resulting collaboration not only raised awareness but also led to tangible outcomes in terms of two funding applications and ongoing conversations with multiple groups and organisations.

We also worked with Soroptimist International of Rugby Charitable Trust to organise a webinar to promote their fund. The webinar, which was attended by seven different organisations, was delivered on 13th September. Two Trustees from the trust attended and provided a detailed presentation that simplified understanding of the process to apply. This was followed by the attendees being given the opportunity to ask questions about specific project ideas and criteria.

Case Study: Stratford District

Stratford District Capital Collaboration

Background

The demand for capital funding by voluntary and community groups in the Stratford District has increased in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic. This increase can be attributed to several factors, including the need for groups to reduce operating costs such as heating amidst the cost of living crisis, reduced access to funding from entities like Sport England due to their focus on post-pandemic recovery, the desire for community groups to enhance their facilities to generate sustainable revenue and the growing demand for services such as Warm Hubs provision and food schemes.

In 2022, the Stratford Social Inclusion Partnership (SIP), with Warwickshire Community and Voluntary Action (CAVA) as a key member, hosted presentations by various Officers from Stratford District Council. These presentations shed light on the Community Infrastructure Levy Fund (CIL) and the first year of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF).

The presentations outlined that CIL funding is a charge which is levied by Stratford-on-Avon District Council on new development in their area. The money collected allows the Local Authority to fund capital infrastructure projects that will support the area. By 2022 over £3.7 million had been allocated to projects.

Whilst UKSPF is A £2.6 billion funding pot nationally and over £3 million locally, announced as part of the levelling up agenda, to be invested in communities by March 2025. A mix of revenue and capital funding can be used to support a wide range of interventions to build pride in place and improve life chances.

Following the SIP presentations, CAVA'S Stratford Development Officer disseminated information about these funding opportunities to the voluntary and community network within the District. This led to increased awareness and successful applications from groups that would not typically have been aware or confident enough to apply.

2023 Approach

Building on the achievements of 2022, CAVA approached the Planning Department at Stratford-on-Avon District Council to see if there would be an interest in running an online webinar on the Community Infrastructure Levy and the application process for 2023. Similar to CAVA's "Meet the Funder" series, the webinar aimed to inform and engage participants. Once agreed CAVA managed the logistical aspects, including setting up the Zoom webinar, administering the bookings and promoting the event through extensive social media campaigns. The District Council supported the promotion by leveraging its database of statutory and traditional infrastructure organisations.

Based on feedback received, the webinar expanded its scope to cover other sources of capital funding. Held on Wednesday, May 24th, the webinar attracted 54 delegates. CAVA hosted the session, introducing their organisation and outlining the support they provide. Additionally, Stratford-on-Avon District Council presented on the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and led the Q&A session. The webinar was recorded and garnered an additional 49 views.

Encouraged by the webinar's success, the UKSPF team in the Council approached CAVA to organise similar webinars for the UKSPF and the new Rural England Shared Prosperity Fund. Two webinars were scheduled for June 15th and 20th, one in the evening and the other as a breakfast session - a first for CAVA. These webinars were organised, promoted through voluntary and community networks and administered by CAVA. The District Council once again promoted it through their networks, presenting during the webinars and answering participant questions. Over 80 delegates attended the two sessions, and the subsequent recordings have been viewed 36 times.

Participants included senior managers, local politicians, private sector staff, local authority personnel, and volunteers from the voluntary and community sector (VCS). CAVA subsequently supported groups that may not have previously considered these funding opportunities, with a particular emphasis on those involved with social inclusion priorities.

Outcomes

The webinars proved popular and feedback has been very positive. The collaboration between Stratford-on-Avon District Council and CAVA has also yielded a number of positive outcomes.

Case Study: Warwick District

Warwick District 'Coffee and Chat' networking events

The Warwick District team has been spearheading quarterly 'Coffee and Chat' networking events, aiming to foster collaboration among VCFSE (Voluntary, Community, Faith, and Social Enterprise) groups operating within the region. These events bring together organisations that play a pivotal role in supporting local communities across Leamington, Warwick, Kenilworth, and surrounding areas.

In Warwick District, a diverse range of VCFSE groups operate, from grassroots initiatives to larger charities spanning wider geographical areas (South Warwickshire/Warwickshire). Many of these groups share a common desire for networking and partnership, but they often face time and capacity constraints. Additionally, the sector contends with increased challenges, including rising costs, growing service demands, and various operational obstacles. The 'Coffee and Chat' events aim to address these challenges by providing a flexible platform for sharing experiences and finding solutions collectively.

Recognising the need for efficient yet impactful networking opportunities, CAVA initially trailed 'NetWalk' events during the pandemic, which offered groups a chance to engage in outdoor discussions and share/address the impact of COVID-19 on their organisations. These efforts evolved into the 'Coffee and Chat' format, offering a more flexible and informal structure. The events take place approximately every quarter, allowing attendees to freely participate within the allocated 1.5-hour timeframe. Attendee numbers have consistently increased since the inception in 2021, demonstrating the relevance and value of the initiative.

The July 'Coffee and Chat' event held at Brunswick Hub was attended by a variety of groups, with attendees engaged in meaningful conversations facilitated by CAVA staff. The post-event follow-up included sharing updated attendee lists with contact details, enhancing networking possibilities even further.

WARWICKSHIRE INFRASTRUCTURE: WARWICK DISTRICT

Feedback from participants underscored the impactful outcomes of the 'Coffee and Chat' events:

One attendee expressed gratitude for the networking event, highlighting positive conversations around community bookings and potential volunteer recruitment opportunities

Another participant found value in connecting with diverse organisations and had already begun discussing collaboration opportunities

The event's effectiveness in fostering cross-sector interactions and promoting personal growth was acknowledged by an attendee who found the experience encouraging and informative.

The success of the events has paved the way for continued development of the Coffee and Chat format. CAVA plans to diversify event locations across the district, ensuring broader participation and accessibility. For autumn/winter 2023, we will plan further opportunities to help people within the sector to connect and explore partnership working and information sharing.



Solihull Infrastructure

CAVA has completed its fifth year of delivering the Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise Sector (VCSE) infrastructure contract for Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council (SMBC).

This year we have increased the number of volunteers recruited through our Simply Connect volunteering portal. We have also increased the amount of funding brought into Solihull through successful funding bids. CAVA provides 1:1 bespoke support sessions for a variety of organisations - small community groups, social enterprises and charities around funding, sustainability, organisational development and governance. In addition, we regularly promote Solihull specific funding opportunities through newsletters, meet the funder events and social media.



SOLIHULL INFRASTRUCTURE: OUR YEAR IN NUMBERS

2023/24



140

Organisations supported



£1,525,347

Funding awarded



60

Events held



3,569

Attendees



£388,416

Economic value
of volunteering



112

Volunteers placed

Case Study: Solihull

Solihull VCFSE Assembly 2024: Future Focus



Scan this code with your
smartphone QR reader to
read the full report.

The Future Focus event was designed to bring together the local VCFSE sector to connect and stay informed. It was conceived as a network of networks, with invites going to the major VCSE led forums across Solihull. The VCSE has been under increasing pressure in relation to reduced funding, increased expenditure and more demand for services, since the COVID-19 pandemic. The event was an opportunity for organisations to hear presentations on their priorities and engage in a range of topics affecting the sector. Speakers included Alex Boys Deputy CEO of NAVCA, Tina Costello CEO MBE, Heart of England Community Foundation (HoECF), Austin Rodriguez, Head of Stronger Communities SMBC, and Fidelis Navas, Warwickshire County Cricket Club Community Director.

The event was shaped around the findings of CAVA's recent State of the Sector Survey (please scan the QR code above to read the full report).

Morning sessions focused on the main challenges for the sector: funding, recruitment and volunteering and afternoon sessions on opportunities for collaboration and partnership working across the sector and with other sectors. The conference comprised a mix of presentations, workshops and time for networking.

58 people attended and most appreciated:

- Information from presentations and about organisations - increased knowledge
Contacts made,
- Networking with other participants and sharing ideas with a good mix of statutory and voluntary organisations,

Delegates provided feedback about priorities for future events. Follow up actions included meetings about improved joint working with SMBC, HoECF and further HR training on recruitment.



“

I think that when you've got the support of other organisations that really does help - especially when you're a small organisation.

- CAVA Service user

CAVA continue to share VCSE trends and issues with SMBC, based on interactions with organisations and individuals, supplemented by national research from NCVO and the National VCSE Data and Insights Observatory.

Showcasing the sector

CAVA organised another major event this year - the first time that Solihull has been showcased as part of the West Midlands Social Economy drive.

Social Economy Drive 2023 Solihull Thriving Communities

Partnering with iSE CIC start up and growth support for social enterprises, CAVA organised an event with 82 participants attending, to showcase the impact of the VCFSE on health and wellbeing. 29 organisations formed part of the marketplace and presentations were provided by Colebridge Trust, Ordinary Magic, and Solihull Moors Foundation. CAVA shared State of the Sector information and Charles Rapson from WMCA shared an overview of the social economy in the West Midlands. Delegates included representatives from SMBC, Chamber of Commerce, Primary Care Networks and social prescribers.

We continue to increase our profile in the borough and our knowledge of the VCSE through the direct delivery of 60 events and a contribution to other partners' events. Highlights have included a 'Meet the Funder' event with Heart of England Community Foundation on the Fairer Futures Fund and a seminar on 'Cyber Security Awareness'. A capacity building training programme has included training on volunteering such as 'Recruiting volunteers' from NCVO and 'Managing remote volunteers' and on funding such as 'An introduction to funding applications' and a 'Practical bid writing' workshop.

Strengthening networks and partnerships

CAVA facilitates and supports key VCSE networks and forums:

North Solihull Voluntary and Community Alliance (NSVCA) - NSVCA meetings continue to be well attended. Meetings focus on issues for the North of Solihull and actions arising. For example, a session on domestic abuse resulted in future support for a local Women's Aid refuge. Meetings have also included discussion on Cost-of-Living data and insight, disability support for North Solihull and a marketplace event to showcase the services of NSVCA members.

Volunteer Managers' Forum (VMF)

The VMF continues to be highly valued as a place where organisations can share good practice around volunteer management. The forum feeds into the annual volunteers' week celebration tea at Seeds of Hope which this year attracted 72 people.

Solihull Faiths Forum

CAVA holds funds on behalf of the forum and runs the governance aspect of its AGM.

VCSE leaders' group

This year we have set up a VCSE leaders' group for peer support, information exchange and the sharing of what's working well.

Organisations have highlighted the importance of collaboration and partnership working:

"I think that when you've got the support of other organisations that really does help especially when you're a small organisation, in terms of mentoring and bouncing ideas off each other, shared practices, I think that's imperative. In terms of delivering more holistic support and more sustained outcomes I think it's important that we work in partnership."

Cross Sector Partnerships

Funders

CAVA sits on a number of funding panels and provides a link between funders and the VCSE, particularly the National Lottery Community Fund and Heart of England Community Foundation.

SMBC (Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council)

CAVA continues to work closely with the SMBC Community Development team in identifying community needs and has been an active member of the VCSE engagement group and Social Value events.

Integration of the VCSE into the BSOL ICS (Birmingham and Solihull Integrated Care System)

CAVA facilitates VCSE engagement into the ICS through place-based meetings which link to a BSOL VCSE Leadership Alliance providing a single point of contact for VCSE engagement. Solihull meetings have included the promotion of the Fairer Futures Fund, the BSOL Community Engagement Framework, the nomination and election process for the VCSE Leadership Alliance and regular updates from the Mental Health Collective. CAVA represents the VCSE at Solihull Place and through the newly developing Community Care Collaborative.

CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility)

CSR has been busy this year. CAVA's work has included finding team day opportunities linking businesses with local voluntary and community organisations (VCOs), helping the NEC group as part of their social impact programme to distribute furniture and other office equipment and resources to VCOs and gaining sponsorship for the Solihull Civic Honours Awards ceremony.

CAVA also helped the NEC to host 380 older people from over a dozen local charities, community groups, residents' groups and sheltered accommodation for Christmas festivities on 1st December – One day at Christmas. People were invited who live on their own, or those who would be on their own at Christmas time to encourage people to become less isolated and re-connect with other people.

Volunteering

CAVA promotes volunteer opportunities and links organisations to prospective volunteers through its volunteer matching database Simply Connect, via outreach events in libraries, volunteer pop ups and surgeries and through flyers and newsletters. In line with current trends in volunteering, there has been more focus on promoting one off and flexible volunteering opportunities with a significant piece of work to recruit seasonal volunteers during December.

Volunteer promotion has also included trustee roles and the promotion of volunteering through the Big Help out. CAVA is part of the judging panel for the Solihull Civic Awards and promotes the KAVS (King's Award for Voluntary Service) to Solihull groups.

CAVA works in partnership to promote volunteering, for example, with the National Trust to engage new communities. This year we have worked with West Midlands Police to help organise their Street Watch recruitment event. We have organised an event at Solihull College for VCOs to promote their opportunities and given a presentation to the adults with learning disability group to promote the benefits of volunteering.

Our team supports organisations around volunteer management, completing volunteer health checks, and advising on aspects such as DBS checking. Organisations have been supported to set up volunteer programmes such as at Rayner House Care.

During this year CAVA was awarded Volunteer Centre Quality Accreditation (VCQA) through NAVCA demonstrating the quality of our offer and impact in supporting local voluntary community and social enterprises.



Big Local

Trusting Local People | Transforming & Improving Lives

Big Local is an exciting opportunity for residents in 150 areas around England to create lasting change in their communities; each area has had at least £1m to use over 10 years.

In Warwickshire we have two Big Local areas, Ansley, Old Arley and New Arley in North Warwickshire and Hill Top and Caldwell in Nuneaton. With only 2 years left of the programme, CAVA continues to act as their 'locally trusted organisation' to administer and account for the distribution of the funds and employ 5 members of staff on behalf of the resident-led Partnerships.

Arley and Ansley Big Local

The Arley and Ansley Big Local project is now in its third and final year of delivering their Community Plan 2021-2024.

The Community Plan has been developed by a resident led Partnership Board after consultation with the residents and community groups of New Arley, Old Arley and Ansley Village in North Warwickshire. The Plan outlines what the community needs and wants for their area and what priorities the Big Local should focus their resources on to become a better place to live for all.

Development has included working with Arley Parish Council to progress plans of building a Sports Pavilion at Hill Top Playing Fields, continued delivery of community events and youth work, alongside investing in community groups, businesses and assets through our grants programme. The project is keen to develop a legacy; ensuring there is long lasting support, opportunities and pride in the community, creating a place people enjoy living, working and volunteering.

During the year 2023-2024 continued support was provided via the Youth Project, delivering youth clubs in Old Arley, New Arley and Ansley Village. The lead youth worker and a volunteer completed their level 3 in youth work award this year, with the lead worker now enrolled on level 4.

BIG LOCAL: ARLEY AND ANSLEY



www.howeandsons.co.uk

BIG LOCAL: ARLEY AND ANSLEY

The project youth team as been bolstered with additional recruitment of a new member of staff and volunteer to support the continued delivery of 3 sessions per week with a strong team of 5 volunteers and 2 staff.

During the year the youth group have worked with many services to support young people and address anti-social behaviour, such as Compass, Warwickshire Police, Bikeability and The High Sheriff of Warwickshire. The youth group has also worked closely with an MMA group who delivered a course of boxing and self-defence, including knife crime workshops. A small group of young people showed off their cooking skills and spent an afternoon with MP Marcus Jones, making pizza and planning a trip to Parliament.

Arley and Ansley Big Local host a series of annual events including the Festival of Flight, with over 450 people attending the event was a huge success, the community support increases year on year, this year we had 31 volunteers helping on the day. 36 groups, organisations or businesses came along to the festival, giving a fabulous variety of craft, food, information and activity stalls, alongside a roaming dragon, bird display, singers, model plane displays and more.

The Scarecrow Festival saw houses take part with creative displays of scarecrows themed around the environment.

Our Lantern Trail is a guided walk through one of the villages, this year through Daffern Woods in New Arley, with Christmas lights lighting the way, followed by a visit from Santa for the children, carol singing and refreshments at the Community Centre. As part of our festivities, we decorated Ansley Mining Wheel and supported Ansley Christmas Tree Festival with our annually decorated tree.

We completed two community litter picks again this year, encouraging residents to take part and keep the area clean and clear of litter.

This year the team, have also hosted a World Book Night event; A family friendly event to celebrate World Book Night and encourage people to get in to reading more. The community donated books for others to take away, Ansley Tots and Jelly Beans Nursery set up themed Tuff Tray activities based on popular children's books for little ones to interact with.

BIG LOCAL: ARLEY AND ANSLEY

The Leys Youth Group created a display to demonstrate the benefits of reading for young people and the Big Local had a display demonstrating the benefits of reading and how to make time to read more for adults. A local author, A. Hyde, came along to read from her locally based book 'Luna and the Great Bear'. We provided free milkshakes and biscuits. Adult Community Learning delivered a family book making workshop, 2 volunteers supported attendees to make their own reading cushion and 3 residents helped to create 10 story sacks that were raffled off for free. We had 34 people of all ages join us at the event.

Three 'Bring your memories' sessions were delivered and we invited residents to join us for coffee and homemade cake and to share stories and their favourite memories of Arley and Ansley Villages, we heard about the very popular Carnival and the rich mining history and discovered that 2 residents are working on a history book of the local area and have shared with them our findings.

Funding has been invested to more environmental projects this year, including bitesize workshops such as how to use leftovers, mending clothes instead of buying new and attending Christmas events with an 'Eco Christmas' themed stall; sharing ideas on how to cut waste but still have a luxurious Christmas, we gave away templates for re-usable fabric Christmas Crackers, displayed how to wrap presents in cloth, and supported people to create cards from recycled materials.

Ansley Pathways group were supported to access funding to build and install noticeboards in the villages and Ansley Gardening group to install beautiful planters in each village. A bench has been installed by the project at Daffern Woods to help walkers take rests and planted 3 trees for King Charles's Coronation.

A programme of support has been provided to families in the area either through our youth project or our project coordinator, with events such as the parents evening and referrals to Lifelines, Citizens Advice, Family Information Service, The Community Pantry, the Food Bank, Compass, MASH Front Door and Young Carers. Two subsidised family trips to Weston Super Mare and Twin Lakes were also facilitated.

We ran our community cupboard every Thursday from Arley Community Centre, alongside The Community Pantry, with a wide range of pre-loved school uniform that was free to access by anyone.

BIG LOCAL: ARLEY AND ANSLEY

We also had a range of activity kits that can be hired for a low cost, these included a movie night kit, stargazing equipment, sports day, bug hunting and a potter's wheel.

Citizens Advice were re-commissioned, in 2023 they worked with 127 clients on 890 issues across the year, including Personal Independence payment (PIP), blue badge applications, legal advice and energy advice.

Feasibility of building a resident led community shed initiative, for local people to access, to learn or share skills, alongside opportunities to improve their mental health and connections with other people is being explored. Meetings between Arley News and Ansley Magazine were undertaken to look at the possibility of joining both publications as a joint magazine for both Arley and Ansley Parish. After recruiting a team of volunteers, the new Village News Publication is now on its third edition and is sustained through advertising revenue.

During 2023-2024 Arley and Ansley Big Local awarded £52,768 in grant funding to local businesses, groups and assets. 2023-2024 grant recipients included Arley Primary School for Nursery equipment, Ansley Parish Council for the Kings Coronation event, a local knit and natter group, Reforged Blacksmith to provide free welding taster sessions, Eagle Martial Arts for a first aid course, Green Shoots Muddy Boots, to purchase equipment for their forest school, a local warm hub, a Women's health group and to Seedlings Productions to deliver trauma informed practice courses to local professionals working with children and young people.



BIG LOCAL: HILL TOP AND CALDWELL BIG LOCAL

Hill Top and Caldwell Big Local

The final Big Local Plan will see the Partnership deliver activities until December 2025 until the national programme closes out. The year saw some challenges, but it did not stop activities and services continuing to benefit residents. The 'HTC Hub' continued to be a key focal point to make the area a better place for residents, a welcoming place where residents can meet, get advice, share skills and learn new ones; with coffee mornings, holiday activities for children and young people, craft sessions and a base for accessing free or affordable food for families.

Food insecurity is a big priority for HTC. Every week from April – October HTC worked with the Healthy Living Network to distribute family food bags for £1, and the school holidays saw them give away free food grab bags for children twice a week alongside Wembrook Community Centre. Grants were also made to all schools and the Community Pantry to provide Christmas Hampers to identified families in the area.

The Partnership, via CAVA, continued their commitment to commissioning local organisations who could actively deliver on their behalf. BRANCAB provided targeted outreach in the area and the Positive Impact Foundation started new weekly youth clubs.

HTC held a stakeholder 'commissioning conversation' in February which saw 12 partners attend to hear more about HTC and discuss how we could improve and build on services for residents, this resulted in 6 organisations being commissioned to deliver projects worth over £40,000 over the next 6 months, including Warwickshire Wildlife Trust and Aspire in Arts.

We continued to discuss with Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council about a £100,000 investment in improving local parks, and planning has started on the community consultation to finally bring this project to completion.

Events and publicity are an important way to ensure that residents know about HTC. They regularly distributed newsletters and leaflets to the 1,700 households, have 2 active facebook pages, encouraging local discussion and self-help, and the shop window and outdoor noticeboard they have at the Hub is always filled with posters and information about things happening locally.

BIG LOCAL: HILL TOP AND CALDWELL BIG LOCAL

We worked with the Creation Station and Messy Kids to provide fun craft and 'STEM' activities at Christmas and for Fathers and Mothers Day, organised 4 litter picks (with a pizza to say thank you!), held games nights, supported the first Nuneaton Pride event in July, ran numerous coach trips, including Weston Super Mare, West Midlands Safari Park, Leeds, London, Stratford and York, ran 2 popular wreath making workshops and offered 'Panto for a Pound' tickets for performances of Jack and the Beanstalk with the Abbey Theatre.



Bishopton and Clopton - Community Builder

The Bishopton and Clopton Community Builder role is commissioned by a partnership of organisations in Stratford comprising Stratford District Council, Orbit, Stratford Town Trust and Stratford Town Council.

The funding enables the worker to support the communities of Bishopton and Clopton, working towards the following priorities:

- **Community Safety & Housing** - Residents feel safer in their neighbourhoods.
- **Environmental Action** - The areas are cleaner and greener, with more people enjoying their environment.
- **Community Activities** - There are more & varied activities available for residents of all ages to engage in.
- **Health** - Residents feel more able to help themselves to improve their health and wellbeing.
- **VCSE Resilience** - There is greater involvement of residents in local formal and informal community action.

Since starting the project in November 2022, the project has gained momentum across the communities of Bishopton and Clopton.

Support had continued to the two Warm Hubs in both Clopton and Bishopton which have carried on as Community Connects to continue with the partnership working started already.

In development with Net Zero a weekly food provision was established, reducing food waste and providing a subsidized meal for local families.

A range of trips have been arranged and delivered including, Cotswold Beach and Bletchley Park.

BISHOPTON AND CLOPTON - COMMUNITY BUILDER

Other activities have included seated exercise, Lavender meadows, development of the Shottery brook programme, delivery of an event for international women's day, the formation of a sewing skills group, development of the secret garden space at Bishopton.

A note of thanks to Stratford Town Trust who has provided a support budget to enable access to a range of activities for the residents of Bishopton and Clopton.

A Talking Rubbish Conference was held with 100 delegates from Stratford WI Lite, Stratford Society, Shakespeare Lions, sports clubs, schools, environmental groups as well as Councillors from all tiers of local government were in attendance. Organisations included Let's Go Zero's climate action advisor for schools, nurseries and colleges, Warwickshire Wildlife Trust, Severn Trent and Severn Trent Green Power, Warwickshire Recycles and Climate Change Officers from the South Warwickshire Local Climate Engagement Programme.

The Community builder also supported a session with the Stratford Support Group which included 21 different organisations: Everyone Active, Social Prescribers, SDC, STC, Municipal Charities, VASA, Escape Arts, Samaritans, WCC, Foodbank, Police, SWWMind, Fred Winters, CAB, Welcome Here, Act On Energy, Timebank, Shakespeare BPT, Shaw Trust, BCC, Rubbish Friends, Shakespeare Hospice.

There will a games club, Lego groups and walking for health programme launching next year.

CAVA has applied for continuation funding for the role from July 2024.



Community Mental Health Transformation (CMHT)

The Community Mental Health Transformation (CMHT) Programme has brought together experience and support from all sectors in Coventry and Warwickshire, including the voluntary and community sector. The engagement of the Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) sector during this programme was jointly led by Voluntary Action Coventry (VAC) and Warwickshire & Solihull Community and Voluntary Action (CAVA).

We want to thank all the VCSEs we have worked with over the last three years who have given their time and shared their expertise and experiences to design the new community mental health services that are now in place.

By working in partnership with Coventry and Warwickshire Partnerships Trust, and collaborating across organisations, we can ensure that more people who need support can be reached, and that improved mental health services offer more choice and control for people living with mental health challenges.

Some highlights:

- A total of £655,713 has been distributed to 38 VCSE organisations via the CMHT Innovation Fund. These projects have covered all 4 places - Coventry, North Warwickshire, South Warwickshire and Rugby.
- Over 3,500 people have been supported by projects funded by the CMHT Innovation Fund with over 1,300 sessions ran and 4,358.5 hours (!) of project delivery.
- Connections have been made with over 140 VCSE organisations supporting mental health and wellbeing across Coventry and Warwickshire.
- Our “Demonstrate Your Impact” survey report and video highlighted the scale and value of the VCSE - of those who responded, the cost if delivered in the NHS would be over £3million!

COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH TRANSFORMATION (CMHT)

Highlights cont'd:

- The Counselling Organisations Network is now up and running with 16 VCSEs dedicated to improving the provision of counselling services for the wellbeing of Coventry and Warwickshire residents.
- We ran a training programme to upskill VCSEs which included Safeguarding, Mental Health Awareness, Canva Skills and Community Bid Writing.
- We were able to share over our thoughts and ideas during forums, cross-sector networking, showcases and celebrations.
- A display in Rugby Art Gallery and Museum of photos and videos from VCSEs Warwickshire CAVA & Voluntary Action Coventry have worked with over the last three years.

With the programme coming to an end, we wanted to share just a few photos that highlight some of the work we have done during CMHT. This includes some of the wonderful VCSE organisations who were part of the programme (sorry we can't fit you all on here!) - your passion and dedication to your communities continues to inspire us.

For our Community Mental Health Liaison Officers at VAC and CAVA, thank you for being the link between sectors, championing the voice of the VCSE during NHS workstream meetings, and identifying opportunities to grow professional relationships to improve services for people with mental ill health.

And from Eleanor Nunn; *"It has been a pleasure to be the VCSE Programme Lead for CMHT- we have connected with amazing organisations and everyone across the project has been driven by a passion to see mental health services transformed. I'm looking forward to seeing how we continue to embrace the integrated care approach in Coventry and Warwickshire."*

COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH TRANSFORMATION (CMHT)



“

I have found the team extremely helpful, understanding and supportive of VCSE with a genuine interest in the work of the sector

- CMHT evaluation quote

Health and Wellbeing

Better Health & Wellbeing for the CAVA team

CAVA Inform staff newsletter

Staff health and wellbeing has always been a priority of ours. We continued to send out quarterly wellbeing newsletters to all employees and volunteers with advice and top tips on self-care: various seasonal focuses on topics of nutrition, the 5 ways to Mental Wellbeing, managing symptoms of common conditions (e.g. hayfever); infection control (e.g. minimising spread of COVID-19); stress management self-help techniques; and local opportunities for engaging with nature and being physically active (some options involved colleagues supporting each other to do this).

Employee Assistance Programme

Valuing the wellbeing of the CAVA team, the Employee Assistance Programme continues to be available to provide staff emotional support and practical guidance. The programme has a range of options to access such as structured counselling, and legal advisors providing guidance on non-work issues such as: writing a will; property and partnership rights; and motoring issues.

Make a Difference Days

There are well known benefits to volunteering for both recipients and the volunteer. Every year CAVA staff mark Make a Difference Day by volunteering for local causes. This year contributions included:

- **Rugby Borough** - Staff and volunteers from the Rugby team supported Shine a Light Cancer Research Hub to make hampers for their service users.
- **Warwick and Stratford** - As part of their make a difference day activities the team from South Warwickshire made cards and handmade gifts for clients of Derventio Housing to add a little Christmas sparkle.

HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Make a Difference Days

- **North Warwickshire, Nuneaton and Bedworth** - Our local staff teams took part in a make a difference day at Middleton Hall and Gardens supporting general grounds clearance
- **Solihull** - The CAVA team took part in 'Make a difference Day' – gardening and painting at Newlands Bishop Farm.

CAVA Health and Wellbeing at CAVA

As part of CAVA's strategic approach to deliver our 'Vision and Strategic priorities for 2023–26', a working group was created to enable expert input from the team.

The Health and Wellbeing working group collated feedback from colleagues about CAVA's approach to supporting Health and Wellbeing at work. People felt that there were many things currently being done well by CAVA to support health and wellbeing in the workplace including flexible working, hybrid working, generous annual leave entitlements and that we celebrate success, amongst others. The survey results have also informed next actions.

Disability Confident Standard

CAVA is an equal opportunities employer – 'Putting Equality, Diversity and Inclusion into Practice'. We are a Disability Confident Employer level 2 accredited and actively promote this through our recruitment to encourage applicants from anyone living with a disability. CAVA staff who have a disability or long-term health condition are provided with support through reasonable adjustments and flexible working to enable them to effectively remain in post.

CAVA is an equal opportunities employer – 'Putting Equality, Diversity and Inclusion into Practice'.

Armed Forces Covenant

CAVA is signed up to the Armed Forces Covenant and is an Armed Forces friendly employer.

Health Representation for the VCFSE

As a local infrastructure organisation, we frequently participate in a variety of health and wellbeing forums, boards, and networks to gather pertinent information to share with our members, to influence decision makers, and to raise the voice of the Voluntary, Community, Faith and Social Enterprise (VCFSE) sector at a local neighbourhood, place, regional and national level. This has included the National Association for Voluntary and Community Action's (NAVCA) health and wellbeing forums, the Voluntary and Community Sector Emergencies Partnership, the Midlands Social Prescribing Steering Group and The Place Partnerships for Warwickshire.

CAVA has undertaken a variety of representation roles within the Integrated Care System Coventry and Warwickshire. Karen Winchcombe (CEO) attends the Integrated Care Partnership, Warwickshire Care Collaborative and also attends the Integrated Care Board as an 'observer'. This supports the voice of the sector to enable the evolving ICS to develop and move towards a framework in which the wider VCFSE can become engaged and work collaboratively. Area Managers, Tracy Southam and Alison Thompson represent the sector at the Warwickshire North, South Warwickshire Place and Rugby Place based Partnerships.

In February, "*Embedding the VCFSE within the ICS*" meetings were hosted by CAVA to enable an opportunity to gain updates on the work of the ICS, consult with those attending, on how the sector can help shape the integration of the VCFSE. This feedback contributed towards the development and implementation of the ICS VCFSE Collaborative at a System level of the Integrated Care System (commencing 01.04.2024). There was also a chance to hear about the recently adopted Mental Health Concordat.

Looking to the future, CAVA will continue this work and from March, appointed an ICS VCFSE Collaborative Programme Manager to lead forward on and implement this vital work. The VCFSE play a key role in prevention and are more often better placed to support those less likely to follow traditional pathways to health and social care services. The System recognises its presence within and across all communities and are keen to ensure it works with the VCFSE sector to reduce health inequality collaboratively and through equitable opportunity.

HEALTH REPRESENTATION FOR THE VCFSE

The System recognises its presence within and across communities and are keen to ensure they work with the VCFSE sector to reduce health inequality collaboratively and equitably. Resource has been allocated to support a level of infrastructure development and as we move through 2024 and beyond, support will be required to increase this aspect to integration and delivery.

CAVA worked with Birmingham Voluntary Service Council (BVSC) and NHS Birmingham and Solihull on the programme of embedding the VCFSE sector into Birmingham and Solihull's Integrated Care Systems (ICS). CAVA has hosted quarterly online events open to all VCFSEs, with various guest speakers. Insightful discussions have been facilitated covering topics including: Birmingham and Solihull ICS developments and updates (at a Solihull neighbourhood level, system-wide community engagement framework, 10 year strategy); the Fairer Futures Fund; Community Integration, Community Care Collaborative; VCFSE Leadership Alliance (including elections); the VCFSE Mental Health Collective; funding opportunities and general updates for the VCFSE sector; updates from VCFSE sector (focused on integration); and other general VCFSE sector updates.

Our Health and Wellbeing Manager and CEO have also been working in partnership with Health Research Partners across the system to form the ICS Coventry and Warwickshire Research Engagement Network. The network is focussed on engaging communities and the wider VCFSE to help inform research priorities for the future. The CEO chairs the wide system Community Involvement Network which brings together insights and intelligence together, from across all partners which highlight patient and community voice to highlight the needs of patients and population around service provision and impact.



Newtown Centre

After the huge phase 4 redevelopment of the centre in the last report, things have slowed down a little on the refurbishment front, but certainly not stopped! The replacement automatic doors that were the one of the final elements of the refurbishment and were completed in July 2023. The two sets of grey doors have not only modernised the frontage of the centre and made it look more appealing, but also offer greater reliability and security.

The rooms were also painted throughout in August 2023 with more durable paint that has freshened the areas and we hope will extend the period between coats.

The side garden area was becoming overgrown and a security issue as the secluded nature of the area was encouraged misuse. The area has now been professionally cleared, including the official removal of the evasive Japanese Knotweed. We have also installed an additional security camera in this area, both of which has increased the lighting and safety of the side entrance.





“

The Newtown provides a valuable connection between health and wellbeing services and the community.

- Newtown Service user

Our volunteer gardener, Michael continues to do a great job staying on top of this. A further camera has also been installed at the car park entrance to assist in security and safety of our building and its users.

Our next planned project of the refurbishment of the main hall floor has already been set in progress and we will have more to follow in the next report. We look forward to sharing these photos with you.

We are always looking for ways in which we enhance the look and experience of centre users as well as maintaining the building from a safety perspective.

The centre continues to run at almost full capacity groupwise. This period has seen a new partnership develop with Sky Blues in the Community, who provide much needed physical and mental well-being/lifestyle sessions and a monthly support group for those who care for children other than their own, via the charity Kinship.

Extension of existing services via Change Grow Live, who provide support for people who have experienced primary addiction.

Going forward, Adult Community Learning are also booked to extend their offer of varied courses going into the new academic year. Other health services and dance classes, peer support, tin whistle, ESOL and digital access classes remain as valuable assets to our community.

December 2023 was the fourth annual event we hosted, run by the amazing volunteers of Nuneaton Community Christmas Day Lunch. They prepare and serve a free delicious meal, provide gifts and transport to the centre for many local people who would otherwise be lonely or isolated on Christmas day. They hope to do more of the same again this year, with some proposed changes to increase the number of vulnerable people reached.

Research Engagement Network

Increasing diversity in research participation

Across Coventry and Warwickshire Integrated Care Service (ICS), CAVA has been involved in partnership working, aiming to increase diversity in research participation. The aim is to enhance the lives of people in Coventry and Warwickshire through improving health and social care treatment, diagnosis and prevention. This can happen when research better reflects the needs and interests of all areas, groups and communities and the research enables us to tackle health inequalities.

This REN project aims to:

- Build trusting, mutually beneficial relationships with the community;
- Listen to and understand the community better, including how they currently view and understand research;
- Work in partnership with community members to make research more inclusive and representative
 - identifying and addressing barriers to taking part in research
 - co-creating research with the community
 - developing research which addresses what's important to the community
 - sharing opportunities to get involved in research in different ways.

So far, we've been:

- Embedding a REN Working Group within the ICS, including linking with the ICS Involvement Network, prompting discussions about how to reduce duplication and share learning.
- Developing a Research Engagement Charter which details agreed ways of working to ensure a 'One ICS' approach towards research engagement.

RESEARCH ENGAGEMENT NETWORK

- Identifying engagement opportunities within existing networks and research strengths of partner organisations.
- Developing a Research Engagement and Insights Atlas, to collate opportunities for others to become aware of.
- Co-creating research engagement resources and, in conjunction with Coventry University, training 6 Community Research Champions.
- Developing case studies to share best practice and impact.

"While we've not had long to build these relationships there's real commitment to make them last and sustainability has been forefront of our minds. We'd also like to ensure more future funding goes into VCSE so to do that we've invested in an ongoing new post as match-funding to continue the development of the Research Engagement Network."

(Research Lead, NHS Trust)

"Without sharing the Community Research Champion (CRC) opportunity through VCFSE communication channels we wouldn't have got the number nor breadth of applicants who have so much knowledge and expertise to share. Initially we intended to recruit 3 CRCs, but through a small amount of focussed advertising have had 6 move through the co-creation training, and have more who we intend to involve in an extension to this work in May 2024."

(Patient and Public Involvement and Engagement Lead)

"We wouldn't have had the rich conversations with diverse communities without the REN project."

(Patient and Public Involvement and Engagement Lead)



Social Fabric Fund

Investing in “social infrastructure” to develop and strengthen Warwickshire’s most deprived communities.

Through the work of Funding and Group Development Officers, Thom and Michelle, supported by the wider CAVA team, there has been a carefully crafted project of support, encouragement and direct action to ensure Warwickshire County Council receives well rounded applications to the Social Fabric Fund from organisations supporting residents across the council’s 22 priority LOSAs (Lower Layer Super Output Areas).

CAVA’s priority has been to focus it’s work on the groups and organisations known to it across the county and in reaching out to, discovering and supporting organisations new to it that qualify for the fund with bespoke support; be that in project design, consultancy, or support in writing and proof-reading the applications.

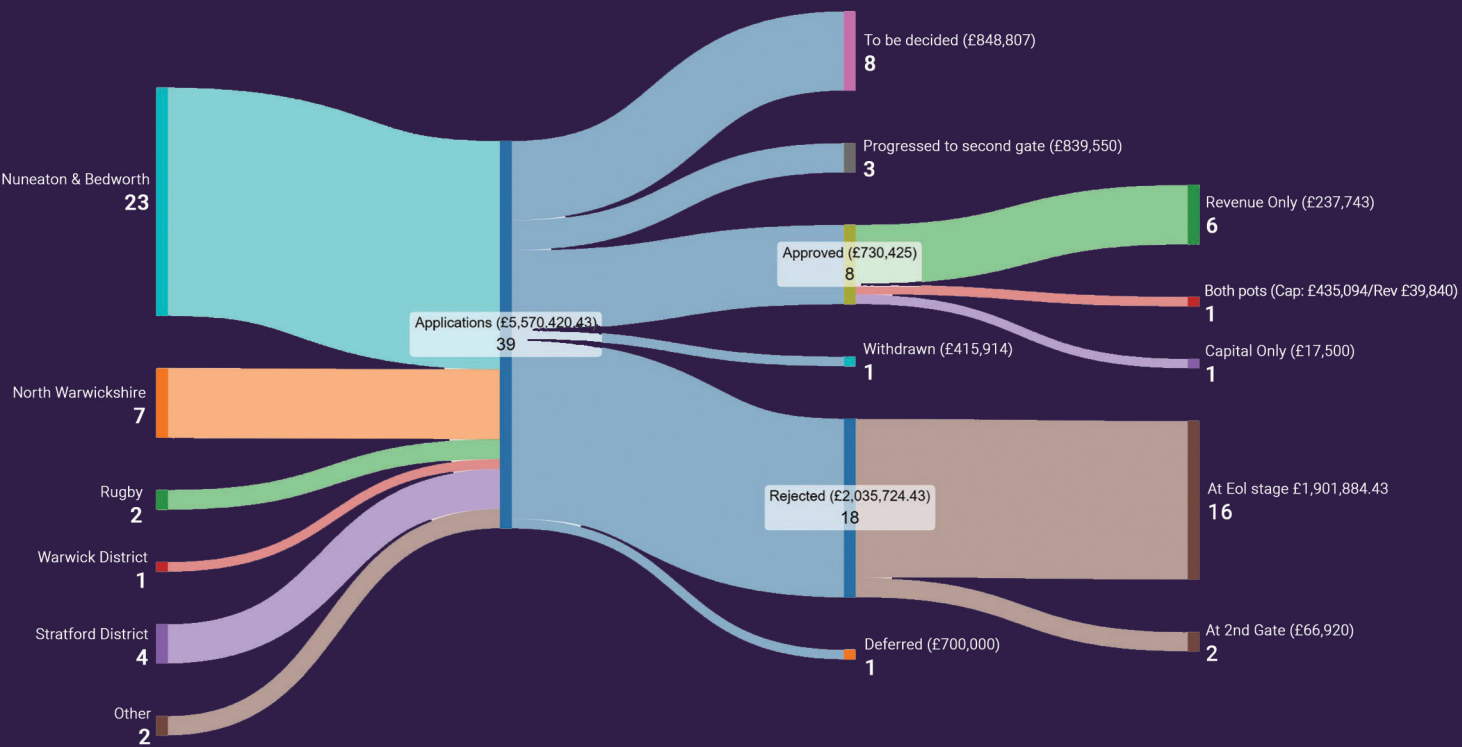
This has resulted in a wide variety of applications from across the county allowing the council to carefully hone its donations to the right organisations that best match the funds principles.

By the end of this reporting period, the fund had received over £5 million in applications from all over the county. The Sankey graph on page 46 demonstrates the spread of the incoming applications geographically and, how those applications are currently sat in the ongoing process of rolling awards*.

Through the rest of CAVA’s work on the Social Fabric Fund, the team intend to continue this support and begin a program of legacy building workshops and forums to ensure the delivery of this fund builds a framework of support to the sector that will upskill, improve and progress the sector across the 22 LSOAs.

*Correct as of 31.03.2024

WARWICKSHIRE INFRASTRUCTURE: SOCIAL FABRIC FUND



Stratford Social Inclusion Partnership

Increasing community resilience

Stratford District Council and the partners in the Stratford Social Inclusion Partnership (SIP) have worked together for several years to reduce social exclusion within the district. As part of the Social Inclusion Statement/plan 2019-24 funding was secured to recruit a Development Officer to support the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector (VCSE) so they could more effectively support the priorities of the SIP. CAVA secured the contract to employ the Development Officer in 2020.

The main purpose of the Development Officer is to support VCSE groups to more effectively secure funding and support their development needs.

Key achievements in 23/4

- **£475,885** of funding secured into the district
- **23.7%** increase in funding compared to 22/23
- **71** organisations supported
- **£1,305,547** secured since 2020

Alongside a very busy year certain success stories stood out:

UK Shared and Rural England Prosperity

The Development Officer worked closely with Stratford District Council to promote and support group applications to the UK Shared and Rural England Prosperity Funds. Three online webinars were organised with 168 delegates attending and over 100 viewings of the recordings on the CAVA YouTube Channel. Groups were then supported with a focus on those who could impact on the SIP priorities.

Bishopton Community Centre (BCC)

BCC is a community centre that serves the most deprived area within the district. The project was able to work closely with the Community Builder and the Trustees at BBC to secure funding for new equipment in their kitchen, to run a weekly Warm Hub and through UKSPF to transform their derelict back yard space into an inspiration Secret Garden for hirers and residents. A workshop day was also held organised and facilitated with BCC Trustees to go over their responsibilities as trustees as well as undertaking a Health Check on the Charity and start and complete an improvement action plan. This was part of their move away from just being a hiring hall to direct delivery.

Stour Health and Wellbeing Partnership

The Partnership covers the south of the district and involves over 50 organisations in seeking to improve the health and wellbeing of the local community. Support was given to the Partnership on a variety of funding applications. Guidance was also given on the recruitment of their first paid member of staff.

A start was also made on the Partnership's 'Growing the Future' project which aims to develop a step change in the capacity of the Partnership with securing funding to employ a paid staff team for the Partnership. The Development Officer played a key role in setting up the project in collaboration with the Trustees and facilitated 3 Trustees workshops to move the project forward.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

The project worked closely with Stratford District Council to promote and publicise the CIL in the district so that VCSE groups could bid in for funding. A successful online seminar was held and over 50 delegates attended. The project was then in an advantageous position to be able to guide VCSE applicants with a particular emphasis on those projects that were aligned to SIP priorities. One success story was the newly established Stratford Youth Collective who secured over £149,000 with the project supporting the application and brokering the inclusion of a revenue element which was a first for CIL in the district.

STRATFORD SOCIAL INCLUSION PARTNERSHIP

New Communities

Continued support was given to initiatives in the new communities of Meon Vale and Upper Lighthorne. Funding guidance was given to the Meon Vale Residents Association and access to furniture for the village hall from the closing Foundation House was brokered. The project worked closely with the Upper Lighthorne Community Champion to support the formation of a Residents Association for the new community.

Warwickshire Reminiscence Action Project (WRAP)

WRAP has existed for 25 years supporting people with cognitive brain disorders. They, like many groups, have taken time to recover from COVID lockdowns, losing beneficiaries in the process.

A variety of funding applications were supported to get WRAP back on their feet and recruit a new Charity Manager. Their development needs were also addressed with significant support and guidance on the recruitment process for their new Charity Manager appointed in March 2024.



Three Villages Youth Project

(The Ex-Mining Villages Partnership)

The Three Villages Youth Project has been delivering a weekly youth club in Hartshill, Dordon and Hurley for young people aged 11-18. They have worked with approximately 96 young people across the year 2023-2024. The project was funded, during this period, by Warwickshire County Council Youth Work Fund with various themes and areas to cover. Informal workshops focused on anti-social behaviour, personal safety and health and wellbeing. The youth club provided a safe space for young people to access information, engage in positive activities and learn new skills.

We finished 2023 with Christmas parties and arranged silent discos at each session.

During this year we had some sessions that were led by Total Insight Theatre. They attended each of the 3 youth clubs to run workshops using music, spoken word and theatre to support our themed work.

Alongside the themed workshops we also support young people to engage in cooking and baking sessions. Learning new skills and demonstrating healthy eating. We also provide arts/crafts and sports activities so that there is something for everyone to engage in regardless of interests. In terms of arts and crafts we have used spray paints, tie dying, crocheting and clay modelling. As far as of sporting activities, we have ran sessions including tennis, dodgeball, badminton, hockey and team building activities. All of which have been adapted to the space that we have available, whether this be inside or outside.

We have also joined in with other local activities and youth clubs, this year working with the Leys Youth Project to deliver Easter themed activities for young people across North Warwickshire. We also arranged a first aid awareness course for young people.



THREE VILLAGES YOUTH PROJECT

We have also been working with a number of young volunteers who were previously young people who attended the youth clubs. Not only have they supported the sessions we have been running but we have also been able to support them in looking for work and training opportunities. We have supported with references, CV's and application forms which has led to new opportunities for them. One of our volunteers is now completing the Level 3 Youth Work Award, just another positive outcome of this project.



Vaccinations Project

Thanking our Volunteer Heroes!

For the COVID Spring booster March and April 2023 volunteers provided approximately 450 hours of volunteer support across the vaccination clinics at Atherstone, Rugby, Bedworth and Stoneleigh.

Volunteer recruitment took place via CAVA's communication channels and portal for volunteering, as well as through external promotion through mechanisms such as radio BBC Coventry and Warwickshire. Volunteers have been flexible and adaptable meaning that CAVA could respond effectively to need. One of the most prolific volunteers Frank Dun gave many hundreds of volunteer hours to the Bedworth clinic.

For the 2023 Autumn Booster we were asked to provide volunteers for vaccination clinics in Atherstone, Bedworth, Rugby, Warwick and Kenilworth. CAVA volunteers provided more than 650 hours of support from September - December.

We were also able to respond at short notice to requests to support Saturday Pop Up clinics at the Priory Medical Centre in Warwick, filling 100% of slots in under 2 hours of the requests being made.

In September, early in the programme, queues formed as the clinic teams and patients grew accustomed to new locations and patients arrived for their flu and covid vaccinations. Volunteers walked the queues, providing updated information and reassurance, maintaining calm and minimising complaints.

Site Managers were very complimentary about the support provided by the volunteers, who are very much seen as part of the teams.

In March 2024, preparation for the COVID Spring booster 2024 took place.

Volunteering

As part of our funded infrastructure delivery in Warwickshire CAVA provides a volunteering brokerage service, our aim is to ensure that every volunteering experience is of the highest quality and that the skills and energies of volunteers are targeted to make the most difference within local communities across the county.

Our support includes:

- Connecting organisations and volunteers
- Promotion of volunteering opportunities
- Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and Employer Supported Volunteering (ESV)
- Good Practice support and guidance
- Volunteering events, forums and training
- Volunteering awards and celebration events

Every year we help thousands of potential volunteers (see page 17) to find the right role for them, matching their skills with opportunities in voluntary, not-for-profit and public sector organisations, in addition to providing them with practical advice and information.

Alongside our support to volunteers and volunteer involving organisations CAVA continues to work with local and national employers offering their skills through volunteering



Volunteer Case Study

Supporting Asylum Seekers to take up volunteering placements

Within Rugby three hotels have now become designated accommodation for people seeking asylum in the UK. Once established at the hotel, many residents are keen to find ways to engage with their local community, build friendships, develop their language skills and enhance their existing skills in order to feel more settled, build confidence and support their application to remain within the UK.

After an initial discussion with Rugby Borough Council's Communities Projects Officer regarding how CAVA could support residents, we arranged a meeting with the Activities Coordinator at the main designated hotel. Initial meetings with the Activities Coordinator highlighted that a number of residents felt disengaged with the community and somewhat unwelcome. During the meeting, we were introduced to some residents for an informal chat. Residents explained that there was also a feeling of boredom and concerns that they were not able to utilise their skill base, which would hinder their asylum application. Residents explained that they wanted to integrate within the community for a number of reasons including; meeting new people, having other children for their children to interact with, improve language skills, gain experience in their particular area of study and qualifications, develop new skills, keep busy and improve their mental health and wellbeing.

It was agreed that we would conduct a series of presentations to residents to explain what volunteering is, the benefits of it, example placements and the CAVA registration procedure and portal demonstration. With the support of the activities coordinator we scheduled presentations into the activities weekly timetable and also attending existing groups such as ESOL, gardening groups and a women's sewing group.

We created a number of resources to promote volunteering and support residents such as a simple explanation of what volunteering is and is not, a sign-up sheet for those residents wanting a 1:1 appointment, a simplified volunteer guide for registering and using the portal, our contact details etc.

VOLUNTEERING

This meant that residents could either browse volunteering opportunities in their own time or meet with CAVA for further support. It was agreed that the activities coordinator would contact us once the sign-up sheet had 50+ names and arrange for us to come to the hotel to meet with clients.

CAVA has met with over 30 residents and many more have used the resources to register and apply for volunteer roles within their own time. Examples of volunteer roles taken up are Theatre scenic design and build team, café volunteers and World Kitchen volunteers, tool refurbishment assistants building maintenance, gardening volunteers, toddler group support, vaccination project meet and greet assistants, hospitality assistant, event marshals and charity shop retail assistant.



Membership

What does being a Member involve?

CAVA is a registered charity but it is also a limited company and so being a member is a bit like being a shareholder in a company anywhere. Like a shareholder, you will not run the Company on a day-to-day basis.

As a member, you delegate this role to a Board of Trustees who will be responsible for running the Charity. The Board will be expected to keep you up-to-date with its decision-making.

The Board of Directors has an obligation to call a General Meeting at least once a year, involving all the members. At this meeting members will be asked to decide on things like voting on resolutions put by the board, electing the directors to the board, electing the auditors, and approving the accounts.

Membership Benefits

- Support around HR, IT, Accounting, Telecoms and Payroll needs through our BOSS (Back Office Support Services)
- Discounted rates and priority bookings for training and events
- Have voting rights at our Annual General Meeting
- Access our Resource Library
- And best of all, membership is FREE!

To find out more about becoming a member, or to see if your organisation has already registered, please visit: www.wcava.org.uk/membership



Scan this code with your smartphone QR reader to register as a member online.

Equality Statement

If you require this publication in a different format or language, please contact us on 01926 477512, email: information@wcava.org.uk or write to the address below:

Warwickshire CAVA, 4&6 Clemens Street, Leamington Spa, Warwickshire CV31 2DL

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

UNRESTRICTED FUNDS		
	<u>2023/24</u>	<u>2022/23</u>
	£	£
Income	738,703	745,641
Expenditure	(874,611)	(706,360)
Transfer between funds	<u>23,228</u>	<u>-</u>
Surplus (Deficit)	<u>(112,680)</u>	<u>39,281</u>
DESIGNATED FUNDS		
	<u>2023/24</u>	<u>2022/23</u>
	£	£
Income	-	0
Expenditure	(1,320)	0
Transfer between funds	<u>(23,228)</u>	<u>-</u>
Surplus (Deficit)	<u>(24,548)</u>	<u>0</u>
RESTRICTED FUNDS		
	<u>2023/24</u>	<u>2022/23</u>
	£	£
Income	800,344	799,389
Expenditure	<u>(740,005)</u>	<u>(709,858)</u>
Surplus (Deficit)	<u>60,339</u>	<u>89,531</u>

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

BALANCE SHEET at 31 March 2024		
	<u>2023/24</u>	<u>2022/23</u>
	£	£
FIXED ASSETS		
Property	518,057	520,539
Other	<u>16,214</u>	<u>16,406</u>
	534,271	536,945
Current Assets less Liabilities	<u>447,666</u>	<u>526,773</u>
NET ASSETS	<u>981,937</u>	<u>1,063,718</u>
Unrestricted Funds - General	282,239	394,919
Unrestricted Funds - Designated	-	24,548
Restricted Funds	514,284	453,945
Endowment Funds	<u>185,414</u>	<u>190,306</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>981,937</u>	<u>1,063,718</u>

The financial Summary figures in this review have been extracted from the full audited accounts. A copy of the full audited accounts are available from www.wcava.org.uk/reports-publications/

To obtain a printed copy contact **Ruby Sarkaria**, Finance Manager on **07966 380442**.



Scan this code with your smartphone QR reader to read this report online.

THANK YOU AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thank you...

We are extremely grateful to all those local communities, individuals and funders who have pledged their support and given generously. We would especially like to thank the following for their kind support:

Funders

- Awards for All
- Birmingham and Solihull ICS
- Birmingham and Voluntary Services Council
- Bishopton Community Centre
- Coventry and Warwickshire ICS
- Coventry and Warwickshire Partnership Trust
- Ex Mining Villages Partnership
- Local Trust
- National Lottery
- NAVCA
- NEC Group
- NHS Coventry and Warwickshire ICB
- Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council
- Orbit
- Rugby Borough Council
- Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council
- South Warwickshire Place Partnership
- Stratford District Council
- Stratford Town Council
- Stratford Town Trust
- The Ken Kennett Community Centre
- Warwick District Council
- Warwickshire County Council

Volunteer Award Sponsors

- A-Dec UK
- Associated Telecom
- LinkIT Advanced Solutions
- Mid-Counties Cooperative
- North Warwickshire Borough Council
- Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council
- Rugby and Hinckley Building Society
- Rugby Borough Council
- Sharp
- Silvertime Legal Services Ltd
- Warwick District Council
- Warwickshire County Council

Acknowledgements

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@Warwickshire Wildlife Trust (Page 54) Warwickshire Wildlife Trust Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/wildlifetrusts>

Message from our Chief Executive



The Annual Report for 2023-2024 highlights the breadth of activity and engagement completed by CAVA. This cannot happen without our funders or the passionate, diverse and resilient VCSE that we have the pleasure of working with. A HUGE thank you to our amazing staff and volunteers who work extremely hard to deliver our services.

In my second year as Chief Executive I have had the pleasure of meeting more of our partners and groups in person and look forward to engaging more widely with the roll out of the new VCSE collaborative in 2024-2025

Our sector continues to see changes and challenges with many groups needing support to sustain core operating costs, the need for volunteers ever greater and general need from communities increasing with our ageing population. The work we do across Warwickshire and Solihull remains key to ensuring the voice of the sector is heard.

CAVA will also continue to build on its current priorities in 2024-2025 and continue to identify needs so that we are able to respond by fostering support, build skills and find solutions to help address emerging issues.

Although we said goodbye to some excellent programmes in 2024/24 we have new work emerging and I look forward to working with our staff team, volunteers and partners over the next year to support our vibrant VCSFE across Solihull and Warwickshire.

A handwritten signature in white ink, appearing to read 'Karen Winchcombe', with a small dot at the end.

Karen Winchcombe

Chief Executive

Your local office

WARWICKSHIRE & SOLIHULL

CAVA

COMMUNITY & VOLUNTARY ACTION



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Nuneaton & Bedworth

The Newtown Centre
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