



HARTLEPOOL VOLUNTARY DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

WELCOME TO HVDA

AUGUST 2013

This document is provided for the general public and explains the current services being delivered by HVDA; what people can expect from HVDA in terms of standards of behaviour and staff conduct and find key information on how members of the public can register comments, compliments or make complaints.

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Charity No: 1098248

A SUMMARY OF THE WORK OF HVDA

Hartlepool Voluntary Development Agency (HVDA) was established in 1986 and acts as a support body for the Voluntary & Community Sector (VCS) and 'not for profit' groups which serve the Borough of Hartlepool. HVDA's Mission is to "serve and develop the Voluntary and Community Sector in Hartlepool".

Groups are able to access appropriate information, advice and guidance on a wide range of issues from charitable status, to managing a group, raising funds or developing meaningful partnerships with other agencies. With this help, groups can flourish and expand their services and/or activities to the community. HVDA encourages voluntary action in a number of ways:

- Providing volunteers and potential volunteers with the information, advice and guidance that they require in order to be able to take up a suitable volunteer placement which matches the skills and interests of the volunteer with suitable placement opportunities.
- Providing information, advice and guidance to groups which enable them to achieve their aims and objectives.
- Providing the information, advice and guidance which enable local VCS groups and local residents to participate within a range of decision-making structures within Hartlepool.
- Providing information, advice and guidance to VCS groups in order to better promote and publicise their work.

All HVDA staff work to one or more of these goals.

THE SERVICES DELIVERED BY HVDA

RECRUITING & SUPPORTING VOLUNTEERS

The Volunteer Centre

HVDA recruits and places volunteers and develops projects with a focus on new opportunities to volunteer. This service is offered by the Volunteer Centre and is available to Hartlepool residents and open to people of all ages. HVDA holds information on a wide range of volunteering opportunities and community activities and, on occasion, markets and promotes volunteering through specific campaigns. Potential volunteers are offered support and advice in matching their motivation to volunteer with appropriate opportunities.

Volunteering can involve helping the following groups of people: children, young people, older people, minority ethnic groups, ex-offenders, lone parents, those experiencing substance misuse/abuse, those experiencing health related problems, individuals with mental health issues, physical disabilities, learning difficulties and learning disabilities.

Voluntary work can be in any of the following areas: advice; counselling; art/culture; befriending; advocacy; mentoring; catering; clerical/ administration/reception; committee work; conservation; forestry; gardening; animals; education and training; first aid; fundraising; publicity and media; music recording and broadcasting; practical skills; DIY; driving; social care; retail; training; finance; management.

Volunteering for All (VFA)

The VFA service is used to describe the main brokerage function to recruit, interview and place people into volunteering placements with relevant VCS groups and other volunteer using organisations. The aim of the project is to encourage Hartlepool residents to participate in voluntary activity by undertaking the recruitment of potential volunteers and conducting confidential interviews to match their skills and interests to suitable volunteering opportunities. Progress will be monitored and volunteer experiences will be evaluated. Further volunteer development will be supported by referring to other Volunteer Centre projects as detailed below.

Career Coaching Programme (CCP)

Open to 16 – 25 year olds who are not in education, employment or training (NEET) or at risk of becoming NEET. The aim of the project is to provide a personal development programme of support offering a series of development workshops and 1-2-1 individual coaching sessions to remove potential barriers to participation and enable involvement in voluntary work, training and employment.

Volunteer Skills Training

In partnership with Adult Education, this project aims to deliver support for adults who wish to participate in volunteering and offers access to the Volunteer Skills training programme. The programme is delivered on a 4 week roll-on roll-off basis and is an introduction to volunteering and includes sessions on

communication skills, working with others, health and safety, equality and diversity and understanding what volunteering is all about.

Health Development Project

This project supports and promotes the work of The MacMillan Cancer Awareness Roadshow to the general public specifically through liaising with local VCS organisations. This work involves identifying, facilitating and managing booking for the attendance of the Roadshow at local events and co-ordinating cancer awareness and early diagnosis promotions at venues within the community.

For further information on the Volunteer Centre or in relation to any of the above work:

Contact: Julie Laking – Volunteer Centre Co-ordinator

SUPPORTING & DEVELOPING VCS ORGANISATIONS

Project Development

This service can involve many different types of assistance. Local people often identify local needs or gaps in services and may wish to establish a new group or initiative, both of which often require support. In some cases existing groups also require continuing assistance. The range of help available includes:

- providing a constitution
- registering a group as a charity, Community Interest Company or other legal status
- organising public meetings
- offering resources such as photocopying, stationery and stamps or finding consultants
- business/forward planning
- funding and fund raising
- finances/accounts
- publicity and promotion
- recruitment and employment of paid staff
- procurement
- project evaluation and monitoring
- training for paid staff, volunteers and committee members
- policies and procedures
- management committee and governance
- mediation or conflict resolution.

- merger/partnership working and resource sharing
- liaison and representation
- 'signposting' to other helper agencies

Contact: Peter Gowland – Project Development Officer

Community Chests

HVDA currently administers 2 Community Chests, which provide local groups with easy to access funding for small scale activities. These are the Public Health Grant Scheme and the Cancer Awareness Grant Scheme.

Contact: Liz Ashton – Participation & Information Officer

Straight Through Money Service

Occasionally a group awarded grant funding may have difficulty accepting it either because it does not as yet have its own bank account or is not a registered charity. HVDA can act as an intermediary body in these circumstances, receiving grants on a group's behalf.

Contact: Peter Gowland – Project Development Officer

LINKS & PARTNERSHIPS BETWEEN THE VCS & OTHER AGENCIES

Building Collaboration

HVDA promotes collaboration and awareness of the activities of VCS groups and seeks to secure the involvement of those groups as equal partners in local decision-making processes. This is achieved by HVDA making direct representation to public sector providers, organising one-off specific consultation meetings and through a variety of fora facilitated by HVDA.

Contact: Keith Bayley – Manager

Healthwatch Hartlepool

Healthwatch Hartlepool is the new independent consumer champion created to gather and represent the views of the public. Healthwatch plays a role at both national (through Healthwatch England) and local level and ensures that the views of the public and people who use health services are taken into account. Although Healthwatch Hartlepool is based at HVDA, it has its own policies and procedures. For further information visit www.healthwatchhartlepool.co.uk

Contact: Christopher Akers-Belcher – Manager

50+ Forum

The purpose of the Forum is to enable people aged 50+ in Hartlepool to have a voice on matters which are important to them as well as providing organisations and agencies with a mechanism to consult with people aged 50+ on a range of issues that relate to planning and developing services. The Forum welcomes anyone who is aged 50+ and lives in Hartlepool. Some examples of current involvement are: Champions Of Older Lifestyle (COOL) Group; Hartlepool Partnership; Healthwatch Hartlepool; Extra Care Partnership and Housing Care and Support.

Contact: Phyl Rafferty – 50+ Development Officer

PROMOTING THE ROLE & VALUE OF THE VOLUNTARY SECTOR

Publicising the work of the VCS and promoting their value is carried out by different staff members and is achieved through:

- Publishing HVDA News, a regular newsletter, 6 times a year for the local voluntary sector.
- Publishing an HVDA Update 4 times a year which is not only distributed to the VCS, but also to all Hartlepool Borough Ward Councillors and Council Officers.
- Providing a directory of voluntary and community organisations which is available to view on HVDA's website.
- Undertaking research on the value of the VCS locally.
- Campaigning on issues that are important to the continuance of the VCS in Hartlepool.

Contact: Keith Bayley – Manager

CONNECTING COMMUNITIES

Between October 2013 and March 2014 HVDA, in partnership with Hartlepool Carers, Hartlepool MIND and the NDC Trust will be delivering a service involving the following:

- Navigation through Health & Social Care services.
- A low level support service.
- A handyman scheme.

Contact: Reception at HVDA

WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT FROM HVDA

HVDA is committed to equality of opportunity and provides impartial help, advice, information and guidance free to anyone who requests it.

Service users and visitors can expect a courteous and welcoming reception and staff will do everything they can to assist you with your enquiry. Our service to you will always be professional and remain confidential.

We recognise that our service users are individuals and we strive to deal with their requirements on an individual basis. Private interview rooms are available.

HVDA STAFF WILL:

- Identify themselves by name when speaking to you.
- Deal professionally and politely with you.
- Arrange appointments and deal with written or telephone requests for information within five working days or as agreed, or will keep you informed of any delays.
- Provide clear impartial information and advice.
- Provide information in verbal or written form.
- Identify your needs and if we are unable to help you, we will refer you to a network partner or organisation that can assist you (signposting).
- Provide copies of policy documents e.g. Equal Opportunities Policy on request.
- Keep Personal information in paper format or on computerised systems for monitoring and evaluating purposes only.
- Adhere to any relevant Health and Safety requirements.

HVDA EXPECTS YOU TO:

- Keep appointments that have been arranged.
- Deal with staff politely.
- Advise us if you change address or telephone number.
- Be prepared to be referred to other agencies as necessary.
- Complete a client feedback questionnaire to help us evaluate the service we offer to you.

HOW YOU CAN HELP US TO IMPROVE SERVICES

HVDA expects our clients to offer criticism where our services fail to meet their needs. If it is felt that our services can be improved or a new service be provided, we will make the time to discuss this with you.

You may be sent a survey from HVDA to see whether the advice, guidance and support you received was useful. We would urge you to complete such surveys as they are essential in evaluating how HVDA's work responds to you and your needs. Findings from such surveys will be presented to the HVDA Board and will be fed back to groups through HVDA meetings.

HVDA strives to ensure that our services are continuously improving and expanding to meet the demands and requirements of our community base and aims to provide its members, organisations and individuals with the best possible service.

HVDA welcomes compliments from those who have benefited from HVDA's support.

We recognise, however, that from time to time there may be occasions when users of our services feel that the quality or level of service provided falls short of what they could reasonably expect.

Your continued custom and goodwill is greatly valued by us; therefore if you have a complaint to make we would like you to tell us about it.

The following procedure is intended for use by organisations and individuals who use HVDA's services:

This is what you should do if you have a complaint:

1. We hope you will discuss the complaint fully with either the person concerned or with the senior staff person in their department. We believe that in most cases this should be sufficient to sort the matter out.
2. If you still feel you are not satisfied you should make a complaint, by email or letter, to the Manager who will acknowledge, again by email or letter, the receipt of any complaint within seven days.

This is what HVDA will do:

1. The Manager will, in consultation with the Chair of the Board of Trustees, undertake to investigate the circumstances leading to the complaint.
2. The Manager will communicate the results of the investigation to you within a reasonable time; normally 21 days. If the complaint is found to be justified, HVDA will agree any necessary further action with you.
3. If you are dissatisfied with the results of the enquiry, you have the right to put your case to a sub group of the Board of Trustees. If you wish to do this, the Manager will arrange for a special meeting of at least three Board members chaired by either the Chair or the Vice Chair. You may be accompanied to this meeting by a friend/colleague if you wish.
4. If the complaint is found to be justified, HVDA will agree any necessary further action with you. If the Board does not consider the complaint justified, they will provide you with their reasons for this in writing.
5. The HVDA Manager will keep the Board informed of the number and nature of complaints and the outcomes.

If you have a complaint, please contact:

The Manager
Hartlepool Voluntary Development Agency
Rockhaven
36 Victoria Road
Hartlepool
TS26 8DD
Telephone: 01429 262641

HVDA's Business Hours

Monday to Thursday 9.00 am – 5.00 pm

Friday 9.00 am – 2.00 pm

This leaflet will be reviewed on an annual basis by the HVDA Board and will be displayed in HVDA's premises. A copy is freely available to service users and visitors.

There are no specific alternative formats currently available; however, HVDA will do its best to cater for individual needs.

HVDA is always keen to find your views on how we deliver our work and welcome comments, both positive and negative, which should be forwarded to Keith Bayley, Manager at HVDA.

This leaflet brings together HVDA's Statement of Service, The Work of HVDA leaflets and the Complaints Procedure which first came into operation in August 2007.