



Annual Report 2014 / 2015



Registered Company No: 5860971
Registered Charity No: 1116430

Community and Voluntary Action Annual Report 2014 / 2015

Contents:

	Page
Contents	2
Chairman's Report	3
Treasurer's Report	4
Summary of Accounts	5
Project Report	6
Training	7
Funding Advice	8 / 9
Community Development	10
Testimonials	11 / 12
Publications / Communication	13 / 14
Information Sheets	15
Trustees / Staff	16
Acknowledgements	17



Chairman's Report

It is my pleasure to present the CVABV Annual Report for 2014/15 to you, our membership, our supporters and our funders.

Whilst 2014/15 was another challenging year for CVABV, the staff team have continued to deliver the high quality support VCS groups across our area deserve.

CVABV are not alone in finding the current economic climate and the current austerity measures difficult to adapt to, as the measures continue to change and the size of the cuts increase.

The impact is being felt by infrastructure organisations similar to CVABV across the UK, with many reducing provision or indeed closing altogether.

In the face of these difficulties CVABV Trustees, working alongside the staff team increased the number of days available to staff to work, from 3 days to 4 days per week, during 2014/15.

This decision was taken in the full knowledge that CVABV's free reserves would be further depleted. This is never an easy decision for a board of management to take, but it was felt necessary to ensure as much of CVABV's services were provided to as many groups as possible, even in these difficult times.

We also hope that the support we have provided will lead to additional contracted work in our local communities.

This has been a strategic drive for CVABV over the past 3 years, which has seen contracted income increase significantly during this time.

And finally, I give my continued thanks to the staff and my fellow trustees at CVABV for the support and the team work that exists between us all. I also give my thanks to those funders that continue to provide valuable resources to CVABV, which in turn supports a significant number of local groups across Blyth, Cramlington and Seaton Valley.

Dave Johnston
Chair



Treasurer's Report

2014/15 was another difficult year for CVABV, as it was for many VCS groups up and down the country.

Reductions in available funding from, National and Local Government, European sources, Lottery Funds and Trust funds continue to make it imperative that as trustees we make every penny count.

We have to take difficult decisions alongside informed risks and 2014/15 was a risky year.

As trustees we increased the number of days worked for most staff, which we knew would lead to a significant reduction in our reserves.

But we also felt it was important to invest in our local communities and that our local communities knew that they could rely on us when they needed it most.

The increase in staffing capacity has led to an increase in contracted work being secured by CVABV. 62% of funding received by CVABV was generated by working directly with and for local partners. This is a significant increase in the levels of contracted income and something we hope to continue to develop over the coming 12 months to support our aims for a sustainable future.

David Vaughan
Treasurer



Summary of Accounts

Statement of Financial Activities (Including Income and Expenditure Account) For the Year Ended 31 March 2015

	Notes	<u>2015</u>		<u>2014</u>
		<u>Restricted</u>	<u>Unrestricted</u>	<u>Total</u>
		£	£	£
<u>Incoming Resources</u>				
Activities to further our objects:				
Grants Received etc		81,353	39,548	120,901
Investment Income:				
Bank Interest Received		-	199	199
TOTAL INCOMING RESOURCES		81,353	39,747	121,100
<u>Resources Expended</u>				
Charitable Activities		51,685	82,482	134,167
Governance Costs		-	1,320	1,320
TOTAL RESOURCES EXPENDED		51,685	83,802	135,487
<u>Net Movement in Funds</u>	3	29,668	(44,055)	(14,387)
Total Funds Brought Forward		2,914	52,203	55,117
Total Funds Carried Forward	£	32,582	8,148	40,730

None of our activities were acquired or discontinued and there were no recognised gains or losses other than as shown above during the above two financial years.



Project Report

Firstly, I would like to give thanks to the trustees at CVABV, for their continued support. Over the past couple of years they have taken a number of difficult decisions and in this financial year the most difficult decision was to increase staffing capacity to 4 days per week, up from 3 days per week, potentially using up a significant part of CVABV's Free Reserves. As it turned out, this decision resulted in CVABV increasing our income for this financial year and whilst we still had an operating loss for the year, it was substantially less than it could have been whilst having the benefit of delivering more services, supporting more groups and developing new areas of our work.

Decisions regarding staffing levels may well become an annual decision and does depend on the continued healthy relationship between staff members and the trustees at CVABV.

Regardless of how many days CVABV staff work, the one things that trustees demand of us is that the services delivered are of the highest standard and meet the realistic needs of our membership.

The quality of our work is demonstrated in the testimonials, further on in this report, provided by our local groups. Each and every testimonial demonstrates the recognition and the appreciation of the professionalism of CVABV staff, the depth and breadth of knowledge they possess and the way in which they put those skills to full use when working with local groups, whether large groups/ organisations or small scale groups supporting a very limited community area or issue.

Finally, I would like to thank the staff team at CAVBV for their continued commitment and energy to delivering our services in the way we firmly believe they should be delivered, working with our local communities, celebrating local successes and pulling together when times are hard.

T S Bradley
Chief Executive Officer



Training

CVABV have delivered various training courses throughout the year which were held at a variety of community venues in Blyth, Cramlington and Seaton Valley, using our own Capacity Building Team.

Course topics included:

- Funding Masterclass x 2
- Funding for community groups for arts projects
- Running a community building x3
- Funding for Beginners
- IT for Beginners
- Facebook
- Health and Safety
- Risk Assessment within a community building
- Basic Finance
- Petty Cash systems

“Information was good – also a great opportunity to meet people with similar obstacles and goals”

“The list of contacts was especially welcome, hearing about other groups’ funding application experiences was good”

During this financial year (2014 / 2015) we have had 82 delegates attending the above training sessions.

CVABV have become an accredited centre for delivering qualifications through One Awards and will be delivering an NOCN Level 2 Award in Community Development in the year ahead.

“The course was very well explained and easy to understand, so we understood everything we were told”

“Great course, thank you! Very informative and supportive”

“Very well presented, very factual, little need for further explanation. Useful handouts and useful information”



TRAINING

Funding Advice

Funding continues to be the highest priority for most of our community groups and we specialise in giving practical, grassroots funding advice to community groups and voluntary organisations in Blyth, Cramlington and Seaton Valley. Our funding advice services are tailored to the needs of each individual organisation, working with them so that all of their policies and procedures are up to date to ensure they are fit for funding and then enabling them to produce quality funding applications. We also support groups to identify opportunities for generating their own income becoming less grant dependent at a time when grant funding is increasingly difficult to secure.

We work closely with all of the people we help, enabling them to do it themselves rather than doing things for them. Building their personal capacity in this way ensures that the next time they need to apply for funding they can do this themselves.

Our advice and support includes:

- **Identifying appropriate funders**
- **Direct help with understanding application forms and funders' criteria**
- **Producing a project budget**
- **Full cost recovery**
- **Checking grant applications before they are sent to funders**
- **Ensuring that applications match the grant-giving criteria of funders**
- **Independent referee support**
- **Providing information sheets to help give your applications the greatest chance of success**

Our funding service continues to respond to the demands of our local groups and is as busy as ever, providing advice, information and training to help local VCS organisations become more confident and self-reliant in fundraising.

During the financial year 2014/2015 over £829,050 was received through funding applications made by groups we have helped. This is an exceptional achievement in the present difficult funding climate.



CVA Blyth Valley Annual Report 2014 / 2015

Funding Advice and Support

CVABV have supported VCS groups in Blyth, Cramlington and Seaton Valley to bring in funding from trusts and grant making foundations.



2014/5



Blyth	£625800
Cramlington	£125000
Seaton Valley	£ 78250

Applying for Funding for the First Time?

See our Guide

<http://www.cvabv.org.uk/docs/542.pdf>

Community Development

CVABV community development services are designed to equip local groups with the knowledge and know how to make a real difference in their local community.

Our experienced, well qualified and dedicated team are extremely effective in delivering a wide range of capacity building and community development services designed to enable local voluntary and community groups make a sustained impact in the local community.

We have a successful track record in supporting local groups to develop new initiatives and in attracting the necessary funding and resources to address local needs. As with all our support, we aim to pass on our 'how to' skills to the groups we work with rather than doing things for them. As a result of this approach VCS groups are more informed, more qualified and more experienced and equipped with many of the necessary skills they need to deliver their services more effectively.

Our work is tailored to the needs of each individual group, targeting our resources where they are most needed, often working in hard to reach communities who need one-to-one support, including:

- **How to form a community group**
- **Appropriate legal structures for VCS groups**
- **Management committee development**
- **Drafting and adopting constitutions**
- **Policies and procedures**
- **Safeguarding**
- **Basic financial controls and systems**
- **Project development**
- **Publicity and promotion**
- **Monitoring and evaluation**
- **Legal issues**
- **Health and safety**



Testimonials

“To everyone at CVA Blyth Valley – on behalf of the committee of the Cramlington Community Lunch Club, we would like to take the opportunity to say how impressed we were at your professional guidance and support. Thanks to your commitment in helping a group like ours, we received a large amount of funding. Without your help we could not have achieved this. Can we say that we would recommend that those needing funding contact your organisation, thank you”
**Ann Mitcheson, Treasurer
Cramlington Community Lunch Club**

“As a community centre the help we have received from CVA Blyth Valley has put our centre back on the map... thank you from all at East Hartford Community Centre. The help from the CVA team has been much appreciated”
**Marie Gregory, Secretary
East Hartford Community**

“CVA Blyth Valley has been a great support to our group helping us apply for funding which we have managed to obtain. I am very grateful for this support as I don't believe we would have achieved it without the help of CVABV, the support we have received has been phenomenal”

**Kath Nisbet
On behalf of Age UK, Bob Elliott House and ICCQ**

“On behalf of Blyth Cricket Club I would like to take this opportunity to thank Blyth CVA for their continued assistance in allowing us to obtain grants in respect of what are expensive pieces of equipment without which our Club would not be able to continue season after season. A local Club has no way of purchasing such items from players' annual subs! To say we are grateful does not really do justice to your organisation and we have been very lucky to use your professionalism and knowledge to make continued successful applications year on year. This year alone we have been lucky enough to obtain a new bowling machine but more importantly we also received funding for “end of season” work which basically sets the cricket square up for the following season. I feel also that I should give my personal thanks to Pauline Blake who I have had the pleasure of working with for many years and hopefully this will continue for many years to come as your reputation goes before you and that of your organisation”

**Ossy Lawrence, Secretary
Blyth Cricket Club**

Testimonials (continued)

“Without the help of CVA staff our cricket club would never have survived, they helped us to obtain grants to completely refurbish the club house and changing rooms as well as buying numerous pieces of equipment. In fact we have gone from obscurity to being promoted to the North Tyneside Senior League – this is the first time this has been done in the clubs history. We would recommend that any community organisation to contact CVABV for help as they do a magnificent job”

Norman Baston – Bates Cottages Cricket Club, Holywell

“Without the dedicated team at CVA Blyth Valley, we wouldn't be where we are today. The staff have been amazing and always go that extra mile to support and give their expertise to further develop the group. We have learnt so much and continue to do so and cannot thank CVABV enough for their time and support. Thank you”

**Sam Goodlet
Northern Butterflies**

“On behalf of all the Lazarus board of trustees may I extend to you our warmest greetings and profound gratitude in the procurement of our new CIO status. From the first point of contact to CVABV to the ongoing discussions with Jill Oxnard for our charity's requirements, we have been met with the most professional and meticulous service in our quest to change our charity's status. Jill has endeavoured through what can only be described as a frustrating and challenging sequence of events where information was not forthcoming from the Charity Commission. Her persistence was commendable with the outcome of the charity status being granted. Our charity wanted to recognise the exceptional service this team is providing”

**Alan Anderson, Chair of Trustees
Lazarus Home for Girls in Bethany**

Publications / Communication

E-zines, Facebook, Twitter and Website

CVABV continues to communicate with local voluntary and community groups in our local area of Blyth, Cramlington and Seaton Valley by producing the following:

- **E-zines – an electronic bulletin produced fortnightly with updates and information on current issues, emailed to 421 contacts. The e-zine is a great mechanism to inform our local groups about imminent events and activities as well as funding deadlines.**
- **Facebook – a social utility that connects people with friends and others which is a great mechanism for contacting with our groups regarding up to date news, information and facts.**
- **Twitter – connects with voluntary and community groups as well as friends and colleagues. Get ‘in the moment’ updates on things of interest to you.**
- **Website – visit our website at www.cvabv.org.uk**

Our e-zines can be used to promote local events and meetings, obtain funding advice, seek information on funders’ criteria, find out what training courses are available, see what’s on in the area and to find out about other local projects.

CVABV welcomes contributions from local VCS groups and local authorities who may have items of interest which is relevant to the areas of Blyth, Cramlington and Seaton Valley. If you would like to be included on our database please contact us by emailing info@cvabv.org.uk



The Facebook logo, consisting of the word 'facebook' in white lowercase letters on a dark blue rounded rectangular background.



Communications

CVABV communicates with our local groups via a number of means, including our website, our E-Zine, Facebook and Twitter.



Web Site

Unique Visitors 11333

Info Sheets 20

Total Hits

291,233

E-Zine

Recipients 421

Editions 24

Total Distributed

10,104

Facebook Friends

211

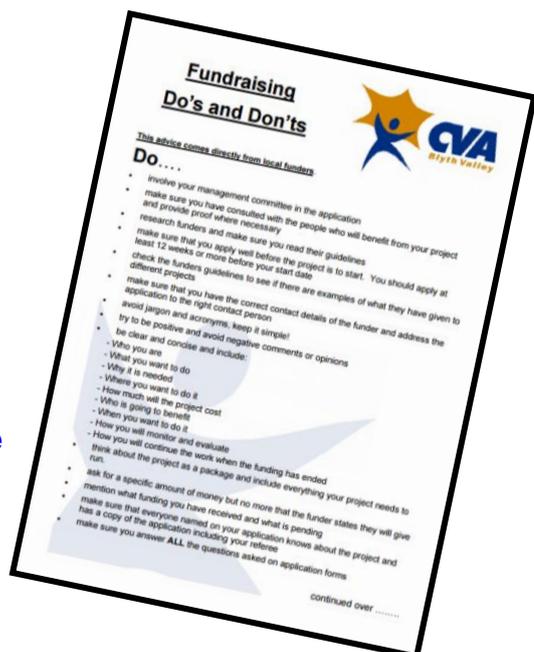
Twitter followers

120

Information Sheets

CVABV have FREE easy to understand Information Sheets covering a variety of topics to enable effective management for our local voluntary and community groups.

- **Starting a New Group**
- **Who can be a Trustee**
- **Legal Structures**
- **Charitable Status**
- **Roles and Responsibilities of Management Committees and Trustees**
- **Good Governance / Effective Management**
- **Policies and Procedures**
- **Financial Management**
- **Project Planning**
- **Fit for Funding**
- **Searching for Funding**
- **Monitoring and Evaluation**
- **Organising a Community Event**
- **Useful Contacts**
- **Applying for Funding for the First Time**
- **Annual General Meetings**
- **Fundraising Do's and Don'ts**
- **Chairing a Meeting**
- **Minute Taking**
- **Report Writing**



All of the above are available to download from our website at:

<http://www.cvabv.org.uk>

CVA Blyth Valley Annual Report 2014 / 2015

Trustees

CVA Blyth Valley Executive Committee Members for 2014 / 2015:

David Johnston	Chairman
Mark Beresford	Vice Chair
David Vaughan	Treasurer
Paul Smith	Executive Committee Member
Rob Bailey	Executive Committee Member
Craig Nicholson	Executive Committee Member
Grant Davey	NCC Representative

Staff

Thom Bradley	Chief Executive
Pauline Blake	Capacity Building Officer
Sybil Pattie	Administrator
Gina Robson	Capacity Building Officer
Jill Oxnard	Capacity Building Officer



Acknowledgements

CVABV would like to acknowledge that the services and support we provide and ongoing projects would not have been possible without the dedicated help of voluntary workers, the provision of funding, community organisations and establishments in Blyth, Cramlington and Seaton Valley.

Our sincere thanks go to:

- Community Foundation
- Big Lottery / Awards for All
- Funding Information North East
- Joicey Trust
- Rothley Trust
- William Webster Charitable Trust
- Hospital of God at Greatham
- Sherburn House Charity
- Barbour Foundation
- Hadrian Trust
- Blyth Town Council
- Cramlington Town Council
- Sir James Knott Trust
- ONE Awards

And last but not least, the officers and members of the Management Committee, the staff at CVA Blyth Valley and other members of the community who have contributed during the year.

Thank You