



Reporting back on meetings of outside bodies

3VA

Councillor Gauntlett



Work in the Lewes District: Highlights in 2018

Please find below some highlights from 3VA's work over the last few months. It shows how 3VA are working alongside inspiring community projects in the Lewes District and with local people who are willing to share their talents, experience and skills. We are bringing people together, drawing on their strengths and helping to make their goals a reality – thereby strengthening and growing communities and community resilience.

Lewes District Dementia Action Alliance

LDDAA is a coming together of individual, voluntary organisations and local business (Town councillors, Lewes chamber of Commerce, the Phoenix Centre – under the auspices of SCDA, Know Dementia, Age UK) with the aim of making Lewes a more aware and dementia-friendly town. The vision is for people experiencing dementia and their families/carers to enter public places (community centres and shops) and receive the same high levels of staff awareness and friendliness.

3VA has supported the group to put together a constitution and form as an unincorporated association with common aims. We have also helped the group to develop relevant working policies and practice including; protection of vulnerable adults, health & safety and equal opportunities. We have also recently assisted the group with re-drafting an action plan from November to end March 2019 and this includes an innovative proposal to seek funding for a part-time coordinator to potentially work across three Lewes-based groups; the LDDAA, Lewes Area Access Group (LAAG) and Lewes Seniors Forum. 3VA's Community Development Officer (CDO) for the Lewes District is currently facilitating meetings within the LDDAA and with LAAG to take this proposal forward.

Lewes & the Havens Community Network

3VA's CDO co-facilitates this network with two ESCC Locality Link Workers (LLW). The Network meets four times each year, rotating venues between Lewes and The Havens. The average attendance at meetings is around 30 participants drawn from

voluntary & Community groups and public health professionals in the area. Ongoing project work has arisen from the Network and took place in late October to discuss local responses to addressing levels of loneliness and social isolation which were highlighted at the network meeting in September. Groups are currently being consulted about establishing a welcome charter to encourage socially isolated people to take up more local services.

Seaford Community Network

This network is co-facilitated by 3VA's CDO and the ESCC LLW for Seaford. Again, Network meetings occur four times a year and the average attendance is about 25 participants at each meeting. During this year, the meetings have focused on improving mental health services for children and young people and more recently, volunteering in Seaford with an indication that participants would like to look at the possibility of establishing a local volunteering brokerage (matching up potential volunteers with local opportunities) 'hub' in Seaford along the lines of models that have emerged in Eastbourne and Heathfield.

By far and away though, the most successful and inspiring on-going project work arising from the Network meetings, has seen the rise in intergenerational work currently being undertaken in the town. There are three main projects in progress; the setting up of a community garden in the children's centre, which has involved primary school age children and older residents from local care homes working side by side to design a garden, for which funding support has been secured from Sussex Wildlife Trust. Secondly, a 'life stories' project is capturing young and older people's lived experiences in Seaford and older people have gone into schools in the town and told their own stories and listened to pupil's experiences. This project has also involved the town's two Rotary Clubs working together for the first time. Thirdly a befriending project is being developed and supported by many Network participants, who are currently preparing a funding application to the Big Lottery with the aim of both strengthening existing befriending services and introducing new thinking like the 'good gym' (involving people breaking off from training runs to visit housebound people) model, which is being supported by Wave Leisure. Added to this are initiatives like the Cycling Without Age project (a covered tri-shaw offering vulnerable and isolated people rides along the seafront) and Men's Meals (cooking classes for isolated older men), both of which are being supported by 3VA with meeting the funding requirements as recipients of Building Stronger Communities grants.

The Unity Centre; Yoga, Wellbeing & The Arts

With a centre already established in Brighton, 'Unity' is the project which successfully secured the tender from LDC to run a programme of well-being activities in the Turkish Baths in Lewes and effectively therefore, return the building to community use.

3VA's input has involved working closely with the group to help them to identify potential funding to meet challenging targets associated with internal redecoration and the purchasing of specialist equipment to enable a programme of activities that will be genuinely inclusive. In addition to meeting with project organisers to facilitate funding searches and offering feedback on draft applications, 3VA's CDO has provided advice and guidance on business planning and set up meetings with other

relevant local services including; LDDAA and Lewes Access Group.

Lewes Open Door (formerly Rehoming Lewes)

This is an entirely volunteer run project which was set up in December 2017 and emerged from several local resident's concerns about the number of rough sleepers appearing on the streets in Lewes and a commitment to try and offer them initially at least, a place to get a hot drink, dry off their kit (sleeping bags etc) and a warm welcoming environment.

Having been approached by the project coordinator, the 3VA CDO who is an experienced trainer, drew on previous work experience with homeless agencies and agreed to facilitate an introductory workshop for the project volunteers, focusing on all aspects of health & safety, but with reference to maintaining safe and appropriate boundaries for volunteers and guests. In addition, 3VA's CDO has recently met with the Chair of Lewes Open Door to ensure that the group are aware of the Eastbourne and Lewes Street Communities Partnership and the Council's Street Communities Strategy and the role of the outreach worker who engages with rough sleepers and who has been in contact with Lewes Open Door.