



ADUR VOLUNTARY

ACTION

ANNUAL
REPORT

2021 -
2022

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A FEW WORDS FROM OUR CHAIR

ADRIENNE LOWE | CHAIR

This year has seen a revitalisation of the work of Adur Voluntary Action due in no small part to the Trustees, Advisors and Staff working together to fulfil our Vision Statement of fostering caring, connected and co-operative communities across Adur.

Whilst there have been continuing challenges such as the pandemic and its aftermath, the cost-of-living crisis, financial concerns and more widely, the war in Ukraine, AVA has had the opportunity to tackle these head on and become stronger for it. Consolidating previous areas of work and developing new ones has enabled us to focus on our core purposes of building up our volunteering centre, support for voluntary groups, developing networks and partnerships, and supporting Adur's charities.

We made the difficult decision to withdraw from Adur Community Transport following the retirement of Keith Mitchell. Keith served us admirably for over 15 years as a voluntary driver and will be known to many, especially the Age UK members he ferried around every Friday, and we wish him well in the future. We also offer our thanks to Robin Ready who has stepped down as a Trustee and for all his support with the vehicle management over the years. We welcome Trevor Bignell who has a wide experience in the field of mental health. Cllr Ann Bridges has also joined our team as the representative of Lancing Parish Council. John Kelly stood down as Chair after the last AGM but is still an active Trustee. John deserves an enormous amount of thanks for holding AVA together after the death of both the Chief Officer and the Chair in 2018/19. Fortunately, John has chosen to stay on as Vice Chair and we value his wide experience, especially in the field of fundraising.

As I write this report, I am heartened by the news that we have been awarded a substantial grant from the National Lottery Community Fund due to the dedication of our CEO, Cat Arnold, who was appointed just before last year's AGM. This and other smaller grants have put us on a sound footing for the next three years and I look forward to our future with enthusiasm.

OUR VISION

OUR VISION IS ABOUT WHY WE EXIST

WE WANT THERE TO BE:

CONNECTED, CARING AND COOPERATIVE COMMUNITIES ACROSS ADUR

OUR MISSION IS WHAT WE DO TO MAKE OUR VISION A REALITY:

AT THE HEART OF ADUR, WE PROMOTE TOGETHERNESS BY CONNECTING PEOPLE WITH LOCAL OPPORTUNITIES, SUPPORTING GROUPS TO DEVELOP SUSTAINABLY AND BY FINDING WAYS TO GIVE COMMUNITIES A VOICE.

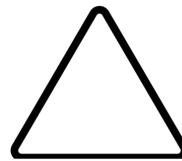
WE COURAGEOUSLY STAND UP FOR OUR **VALUES**, BECAUSE THEY MAKE UP OUR DNA. THEY ARE **HOW** WE DO THINGS HERE:



LOCAL



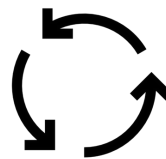
COLLABORATIVE



INDEPENDENT



INCLUSIVE



SUSTAINABLE



EMPOWERING



CREATIVE



ENVIRONMENTALLY RESPONSIBLE

ADOPTING AVA'S IDENTITY

In early 2021 AVA created new brand guidelines with a logo, colour palette, typography, tone of voice work, imagery and photography.

Whilst these were replicated throughout the website & social media it was time to implement this branding further in 2022. AVA created signage for its office premises, banner stand, literature and updated its online Google products (maps & reviews).

The newsletter was re-designed to include easy to read sections on: advice, local news, funding, volunteer opportunities, charity adherence updates and cost of living signposting.



2019/21 - What AVA has achieved and aims for 2022

AVA service - bank account service: If you are about to, or have recently set up as a new charity, CIC or social enterprise did you know we can host your funds? If you aren't big enough to open a charity bank account or just need to get your project going, please [enquire here](#) about us holding your funds in our bank account.



Volunteer News

Are you from a European, Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic background? Would you like to become a community champion working with Citizen's Advice Sussex? We know there is increasing evidence that people from a Black, Asian, Minority Ethnic background [have been affected more by Coronavirus](#). We are working in



Network & Partnership

From charities in your area to share best practice and you are an Adur: charity, CIC or social organisation join us for "Charity Chat".

on the second Tuesday of the month. We host a and A and a charity advice session, over a delicious,akfast.

ended. So much help and advice offered and care in the ely people and lovely venture!"

mation please email: sarah@adurva.org



Support Adur charities

id grassroots charities in Adur is solely based on ations. To sponsor our work, in order to support visit: adurva.org/donate-to-ava

www.adurva.org
untaryAction1 Connecting volunteers and communities



RESETTING FOCUS

STAFFING

We welcomed Cat Arnold as new CEO in November 2021 working part-time 18 hours per week and responsible for two part-time staff; community administrator - Sarah Leeding, working 17 hours per week, and bookkeeper - Keri Hamblin, working 6 hours per week.

Cat comes from a digital marketing and business development background and we welcome her skills in project management, strategy and network building. With an absence of 3 months since the previous CEO left, Cat got to work straight away, taking time to understand the charity, VCS sector and AVA Trustee composition and skills.

BACK TO BASICS

Cat studied the AVA vision against its operating process and focus and sought to ensure that AVA was doing the right things, with the right resources at the right time (Stop, Start, Continue). This involved detailed analysis of finances, strengthening the foundations of the volunteer centre and management, as well as getting AVA funding fit whilst ensuring data capture was at the heart of proof of AVA's impact. In addition, a number of AVA's core policies around safeguarding and GDPR were updated.

STOP, START, CONTINUE

STOP: AVA had been running an aging community minibus with some legacy funding. It was facing dwindling bookings against rising running costs and lack of driver volunteers. AVA conducted a detailed cost analysis with the Trustees. It was determined that the costs in relation to income did not fulfil the "going concern" rule. The bus has been sold to enable core charity business concentration.

START: Investment was made in the Volunteer Plus platform to support the volunteer centre, involving transfer of all organisational, volunteer and opportunity data from an aging platform and a full data cleansing exercise. Data cleansing of old newsletter contacts took place, ensuring those contacts are opted in, ensuring full GDPR compliance. A full safeguarding policy was written with safeguarding contacts trained and safeguarding manager appointed. A new trustee was brought in with mental health charity experience. AVA designed a new newsletter template for members. Adur Ukraine Support networking forum was started to bring together stakeholders & "charity chat" sessions, to offer support to Adur charities.

CONTINUE: AVA conducted a comprehensive GDPR policy update, as well as engaging a Data Manager (Paul Shepherd). A clear impact reporting & feedback to funders approach has been adopted. AVA are regularly applying for grants and funds to sustain its future. AVA continues to build Adur wide voluntary sector contacts & connecting charities to targeted support.

PREMISES

AVA has settled in well at the 'Community Space' which is adjacent to the Co-op supermarket in Ham Road, Shoreham. We have a presence Monday, Tuesdays and Wednesdays.

Our volunteer vacancies, advertised in our shop window, new signage and networking "charity chat" sessions have helped us establish ourselves as the Shoreham volunteer centre presence again.

Recent funding now allows us to expand our location, we are in discussions with other locations in Lancing, an area of acute deprivation and social isolation.

VOLUNTEER IT

With thanks to Paul Shepherd (IT support) AVA upgraded to a more comprehensive volunteer database called Volunteer Plus in May 2021. This system was chosen due to ease of use, provision of clear reporting and the fact it is the database of choice across the local VCS agencies, locally. Therefore the ability to run joint campaigns is an easy possibility and something AVA will move towards in 2023.

1.

Strategic leadership and establishing direction:

Analysing existing operations: stop, start, continue. Ceasing transport and bolstering the volunteer centre with database investment and subsequent impact, reporting for grant funders.

2.

Ensuring that the Big Picture is clear and understood:

Working together with the board of trustees to build understanding of plans, reporting regularly with updates and progress. Designing external marketing to communicate the changes.

3.

Stakeholder relationship management, the starting of local forums and committees, starting to establish new partnerships and build relationships across the district.

4.

Modelling the AVA behaviours and values.

5.

Putting in place the right structure and frameworks: Volunteer Plus and its data management with GDPR & reporting

Manage Operations and oversee process improvements: Start building new, accessible policies, establish training opportunities, improve recruitment and onboarding processes as well as monitoring and evaluation.

Risk management; Establishing monitoring and processes including safeguarding, premises, training, assessment and training.

SERVICES

LANCING FOOD BANK (LFB)

Although LFB is a fully independent organisation we have had a long-standing link with them. We have supported them through the pandemic and now the cost of living crisis.

Our staff/volunteer support for LFB's continued operation during these times is very appreciated, and demand has risen 40% through the cost of living crisis we are now in. We see this is an important investment of our staff's time as areas of Lancing are very deprived. Mash Barn in Lancing is in the lowest 20% nationally in relation to income and education deprivation.

VOLUNTEER CENTRE

AVA saw volunteers returning to indoor and outdoor activities from mid 2021 onwards.

The new CEO decided that the aging volunteer platform needed to be upgraded. Funding was sought for the cost of the database, training and IT support and the new Volunteer Plus system was secured in March and fully operational by May. . This was after a large data tidy up and transfer.

AVA now have a clear picture of the amount of opportunities and organisations it's supporting and understands any interventions needed, in order to fill vacancies. As well as having the ability to capture diversity data. This provides AVA with the capacity to identify gaps and work to solve these by actively seeking solutions, as well as providing a clear path of impact to share with funders and grant givers.

CHARITY CHAT

The Adur Community Network has been rebranded "Charity Chat". Open to small community, charity or volunteer groups across Adur, the new forum takes place on the second Tuesday of the month.

It will continue to be a space for networking and sharing best practise but will also invite guests speakers and thought leaders to develop Equality, Diversity & Inclusion practise across the region (not currently being explored). AVA will refer to training opportunities to make it affordable and building social change together.

BUDGET HOLDING FOR COMMUNITY GROUPS

We have hosted small budgets for a number of community groups such as Men in Sheds, Keep Lancing Lovely; Fun4Us, Adur Churches Forum and Fishersgate Bicycle Workshop. We are pleased to continue to offer this free support for small projects

FINANCES & FUNDRAISING

AVA knows that for many charities looking for and applying for grants, the due diligence required is an almost full-time job. AVA's 21/22 year was tough, fundraising and grants received were on a basic level as we revived after the pandemic and adapted to the new ways of VCS working.

AVA had some remaining legacy reserves from our Community Transport offer and also received income from this activity.

In March 22 we were successful with an Awards 4 All National Lottery grant, which funded the investment in the new Volunteer Plus database and additional IT support. We also received help towards core costs from a Sussex Community Foundation (SCF) grant. In addition, we received a small Arnold Clark Community Fund to assist with office set-up costs. All funders have engaged with us in a positive manner across many years both prior to, and throughout, the pandemic.

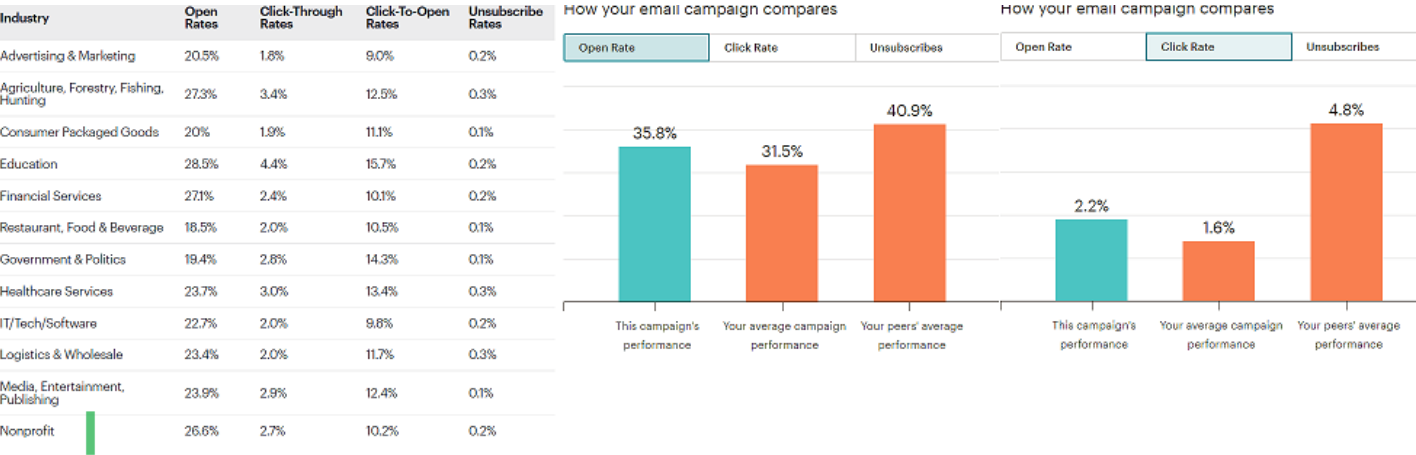
We have set the 2022/23 financial year off to a great start with a National Lottery Community Fund of £208,000 and an NAVCA/Red Cross grant of £10,000.

AVA now have a clear focus and precision of its grant procurement as detailed in The Chair's report, and that of the CEO - see below.

ADUR VOICE NEWSLETTER

We continue to be members of NAVCA (National Association of Voluntary and Community Action) and to receive their information bulletins on issues of interest to the sector. Updating our organisation's directory, building our networks and our IT data review, has enabled us to build the circulation of our own newsletter to just over 400 local contacts.

We will continue to circulate information on sources of charitable trust funding and are happy to circulate announcements from local voluntary organisations about events, job opportunities or other items of interest.



WHAT THE FUTURE HOLDS

Cat Arnold, CEO:

The first year of working at AVA has certainly been challenging and fun.

I want to thank the staff, who have had to adjust to differing ways of working due to the refocusing of our core charity business. I have worked with the board to ensure we are engaging our resources in the best way against a background of reduced grant investment in a competitive charity space. I therefore have worked to see how we compliment and work with other bodies to avoid overlapping each other's work in the community.

Our 2022/2023 year is starting incredibly positively. In late 2022 we were thrilled to secure two grants, one via NAVCA for £10,000 for Adur Ukraine support network partnership and another National Lottery Community Fund for £208,000 over 3 years to cover core costs and support the development of our local charities.

These two grants set a strong foundation for AVA for the 2022/2023 financial year and ensures we can continue to support our grassroots, small to mid-sized charity, community interest companies and social enterprises in Adur.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Special thanks must go to all the staff and volunteers who over the past year have assisted the trustees in contributing to AVA's recovery.

Thanks to Community Space for their support, and for offering us a new home from September 2021.

TRUSTEES, COLLEAGUES AND ADVISORS,

AVA Board of Trustees:

Adrienne Lowe (Chair), John Kelly, Val Garland,
Jonathan Smith, John Hollington, Trevor Bignell

AVA colleagues:

Chief Executive Officer: Cat Arnold
Adur Community Administrator: Sarah Leeding
Financial Administrator: Keri Hamblin

AVA Advisors:

Fundraising: David Richardson
General Advisers: Robin Ready, Ann Bridges, Robin Olivier
IT & Digital Support Volunteer: Paul Shepherd

REGISTERED CHARITY NO: 1131610

LIMITED COMPANY NO: 6922401

HOW TO CONTACT AVA

COMMUNITY SPACE, HAM ROAD, SHOREHAM, BN43 6PA

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EMAIL: INFO@ADURVA.ORG**