

**Annual  
Report**

**2013/14**

**Shropshire Voluntary and Community Sector Assembly**



# Executive Summary

In 2013/14 Shropshire VCS Assembly has...

Worked with **83 Public Sector contacts**  
from **17 partner** organisations.

Board members have attended **280** hours of meetings  
organised by the VCSA Support Team

...and **192** hours of public sector meetings.

We responded to over **800 email enquiries.**

We commissioned **3** projects and the VCSA Team itself  
delivered **21 new projects** in 2013/14.

The VCSA has **449** twitter followers...

... **118** more than 2012/13

**52** weekly newsletters have been issued...

...and **8** bi-monthly newsletters

We have **280** voluntary and community sector members

**9** new members since the New Year!

Over **61** reports and briefings have been produced

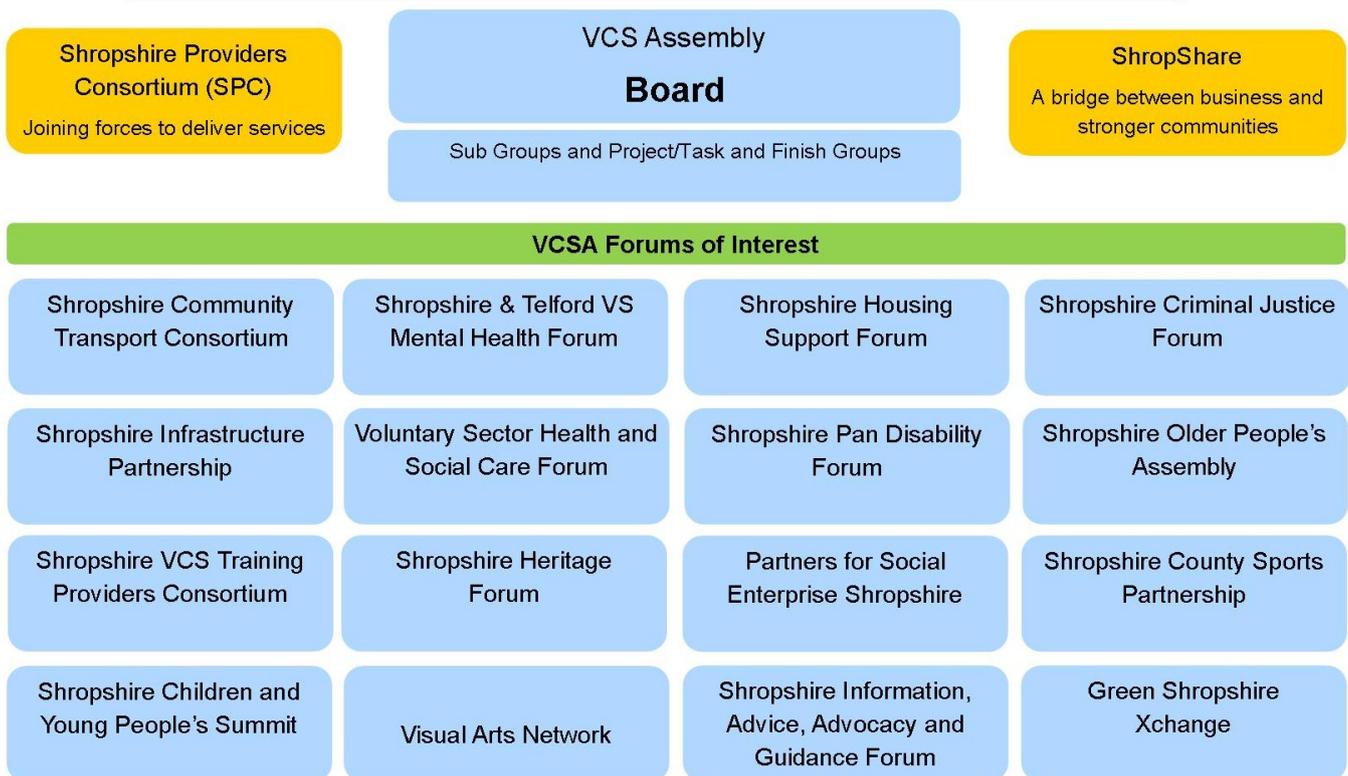
# Introduction

The Shropshire Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) Assembly works to represent Shropshire’s voluntary groups and organisations. There are over 280 members representing the diversity of the voluntary and community sector in Shropshire. Many members are small groups relying entirely on the dedication and commitment of volunteers, others are larger VCS organisations delivering a range of services to the people of Shropshire.

Shropshire VCS Assembly works to bring the voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) sector together, providing a common voice, and an opportunity to work collectively. It encourages and promotes partnership and collaboration both within the sector but also with other sectors. In particular the VCS Assembly allows the VCS to work with Shropshire’s Public Sector organisations. It aims to increase cross sector understanding and facilitate joint projects and initiatives that allow the needs of local people and communities to be met more effectively.

The VCS Assembly is formed of 16 Forums of Interest. The Forums work to bring organisations with a common interest together. Each Forum has a seat on the VCS Assembly Board to ensure communications flow from the Forums and back again. The Board works hard to deliver cross sector projects and to respond to current issues. An overview of many of the projects the VCSA Board has been involved in this year are highlighted in the centrefold of this document. Contact us to find out more about any of the projects we have listed. We hope you will find this information useful.

# VCSA Structure



# Projects 2013/14



**1. The Big Debate 2013 and Welfare Reform Awareness Project**

**2. Council accommodation request process**

**4. CCG Market Place Events**

**5. Compact Refresh**

The Compact has been extended in the last year and undergone a re-write to ensure it is appropriate for all Public Sector bodies and commissioners to support and brought in line with changing relationships between the VCSA and its commissioners. Work has included the delivery of Compact design workshops, a consultation survey and support for the Compact Group.

**3. Market Place Projects**  
Every 6 months the VCSA has provided the opportunity for VCSA members to promote their services to commissioners and public sector staff. These events form an important opportunity to not only showcase VCS services to Shropshire Council's Elected Members and commissioners, but also to increase networking and awareness within the VCS.

**7. Partnership with the Police and Crime Commissioner's Office**

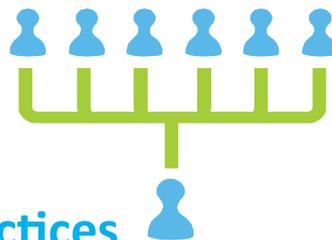
**6. Representation Review**



**8. Building Health Partnerships**

Shropshire won the place on a national programme called Building Health Partnerships. A series of workshops followed. All were designed to secure new partnerships between the VCS, CCG and Shropshire Council. The first session explored partnership relationships between the VCS and CCG and highlighted a number of key themes. The second event looked in much more detail at the key themes emerging from discussions and the end result is a draft action plan against which the £50,000 funding is allocated. September's workshop took the form of an expert learning session around on-line service information and tools. Since then a small working group has been established to take forward the main project of establishing a 'map of maps' that will enable health information (and wider information about VCS services) to be more easily available within the county.

**9. VCS Community Hubs Forum**



**10. Carers Forum Support**

**11. Working with GP Practices**

As a result of Building Health Partnerships the CCG and VCS Assembly have been working together to develop a project that will complement the GP Community and Care Coordinator scheme. The project is designed to establish closer working between the VCS and CCG through work in GP practices where a Community and Care Coordinator is not in place. There are approximately 20 practices spread throughout the county. The project aims to see VCS organisations joining quarterly GP practice meetings (12 VCSA members are involved) to consider the most frail and vulnerable patients using the GP practice, and then offer information to allow signposting to community based and VCS services.

The VCSA has facilitated VCS representation in the Optimising Capacity for Discharge Project. Findings that show that a significant proportion of patients stay in hospital beds when care could be provided at home or closer to home. Work is taking place to bring statutory and VCS services together to deliver a new model of local integrated health and social care services with responsibility for complex patients who are ready to leave hospital.

**12. Early Discharge**

## 13. Impact Networks

The VCSA identified the Impact Network model as a tool that could help commissioners and the VCS work together to design outcomes and move towards new models of commissioning. The approach is currently being trialled by Information, Advice and Advocacy providers.

## 14. Annual State of the Sector

Every year the VCSA monitors the State of the Sector in Shropshire. The work started as a recession survey many years ago but has developed to take a broader approach. The evidence collected is very helpful and informs the VCSA's annual planning.

## 15. Mental Health links

## 16. Armed Forces Community Covenant and the VCS

## 17. VCS Evidence Base 2013



The last VCSA Evidence Base was developed in 2010 and 2013 has seen an update take place. Understanding the contribution the VCS makes to the economy and to meeting needs of individuals, groups and communities is really important and informs the design of future projects and models of delivery. This year the work links strongly with social inclusion research commissioned via the VCSA Support Team and paid for by the LEP.



## 18. Social Inclusion and the Marches LEP

This project has been one of the main projects undertaken this year. The VCSA have, on behalf of the Marches area, organised workshops and supported a project group to develop the social inclusion theme of the Marches LEP Strategy. The work has included detailed research and consultation. Further work will be required to ensure delivery is carefully designed and investment opportunities maximised for the people of Shropshire.

## 19. Social Value



The VCSA brought together a group of public sector commissioners and VCS representatives to influence the way the main Public Sector commissioners in Shropshire recognise and respond to the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012. The group is working its way through an action plan.

## 20. Health and Wellbeing Consultation



## 21. Employ with Conviction

On September 20th, the Criminal Justice Forum hosted Employ with Conviction, an event aimed at private, public and voluntary sector employers. The event was held at Willowdene Farm, Bridgnorth. Speakers from high street giants Greggs and Timpson extolled the virtues of employing ex-offenders at the event. The event was supported by various VCS organisations and public services including West Mercia Probation Trust and the Department for Work and Pensions. Work continues to deliver work to support offenders into employment.



If you would like more information about all of our projects, please visit our website

[www.vcsvoice.org](http://www.vcsvoice.org)



# Shropshire Providers Consortium and ShropShare

Shropshire VCS Assembly works closely with its two sister bodies Shropshire Providers Consortium and ShropShare.



2014/15 has been a year of significant development for Shropshire Providers Consortium (SPC). Throughout the year SPC has grown from a relatively new body into a high performing consortium proving its success through winning a range of funding and contract opportunities and exceeding its year 1 targets. Shropshire Providers Consortium now has 35 members.

*“Energize County Sport & Physical Activity Partnership have benefitted hugely from membership of Shropshire Provider Consortium (SPC) as it*

*has allowed us to consider new opportunities, share expertise / ideas in a supportive environment and most importantly build relationships with other potential partners across the Voluntary and Community sector. “*

Quote from Chris Child, Chief Executive, Energize

## **SPC delivers a range of support for its members including:**

Accessing contract portals	Promoting contract opportunities	Joint funding applications
Information Sharing	Mentoring and skills sharing	Assessing and managing risk
Designing sub contracts	Managing contracts	Contract Management
Training	Provision of back office functions	Promoting work of its members
Working with commissioners	Independent Monitoring and Evaluation	

Over the last months Shropshire Providers Consortium has continued to take steps forward in its work to access opportunities for its member organisations and Shropshire people. SPC has also established a comprehensive search facility for funding and contract opportunities, tying into contract portals and a wide range of information sources. For more information contact Julie Tustin, SPC’s Contract Manager, pick up an SPC leaflet or visit the website: <http://www.shropshireprovidersconsortium.co.uk/>



ShropShare was launched in October 2013 and provides a hub for socially responsible businesses to come together to improve, evaluate and share practice around Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and community engagement. Although still in its infancy ShropShare’s ambition is to become the recognised way that local businesses demonstrate that they are good corporate citizens.

ShropShare’s membership is formed of local businesses ranging from large national organisations such as Caterpillar and TTC to smaller SME’s and micro-businesses across a wide range of industries.

Through its support and brokerage service ShropShare helps businesses build rewarding and mutually beneficial relationships with carefully chosen charities or projects that meet their business objectives. ShropShare uses its connections with the Voluntary and Community Sector Assembly (VCSA) and the Shropshire Providers Consortium (SPC) as a gateway to charities and community groups across Shropshire.

In addition to this work ShropShare offers its members an annual calendar of events and regular communications as a way of promoting effective collaboration within and between sectors. To find out more about this initiative, visit the website: <http://shropshare.org/>

## **Contact Details**

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