

Community First New Forest

Annual Review 2009-2010



President's Report



I am delighted to have the opportunity of expressing my support for Community First New Forest and to be able to say thank you to all the volunteers and dedicated staff for their continuing effort in supporting the local voluntary and community sector. They are all amazing people who give of their time and experience without expecting anything back in return, other than the knowledge that they have helped other people, who are sometimes in difficult circumstances, in a meaningful way.

Community First New Forest continues to progress and make an impact on the lives of the people of the Forest; this could not be achieved without strong leadership and management. I thank everyone involved and wish the Chief Executive, Michael Clowes, and his team further success for the future.

I would also like to express my gratitude to the Board of trustees and Stephanie Stokes, their chair, for their continued support to Community First New Forest.

Cllr Pat Wyeth

Chair's Report

They say time flies when you are having fun and a year has flown at Community First New Forest because we do have fun. The key to this is the community spirit that pervades the organisation and consequently to work at Community First is to work in a happy and supportive environment. It is this function of support that sums up for me the essence of what we do in this charity. Each of our services supports a sector of the New Forest community, be it providing care for the elderly or providing help for children. It is the vital link between the individual and our community that is the lifeblood of our work and so as an organisation we engage on every level with the community we serve.

This year we have faced significant challenges; we have not been immune to the economic downturn. We have lost some income due to grants being cut or withdrawn, but we have risen to these challenges as a committed team and found new ways of developing through entrepreneurship and partnership working. Throughout, we have been able to retain staff and maintain a high level of service to the community. It has not been all doom and gloom, indeed the economic situation has meant we have helped more people through our Volunteer Centre than ever. The service is growing rapidly, with new ideas coming on stream.

The Innovations project, in its infancy last year, has grown and developed to cover a wider geographic area. The Grandparents as Carers and the Autism Support Groups have been successful start ups and our Small Repairs Scheme is stretched to capacity. Our cohesive Transport Service has increased throughput and we are looking at new ways of working to develop it. The personalisation agenda is providing our Home Support Service with

challenges which may alter delivery, but we have the expertise to meet that challenge effectively.

Our role as an enabler of community projects has been hallmarked by the number we have supported, from simple networking events to the more complex Local Strategic Partnerships. Our Chief Executive, Michael Clowes, has been at the forefront of decision making. He works hard regardless of the task. That he can do so is tribute to the support he receives from his staff. As trustees, the role of the Board is to be a 'critical friend', but with the emphasis on 'friend'. Each member of the Board is allied to a Service Manager, whom he or she supports particularly, providing that 'listening ear' and contact point to governance. It is often difficult to separate management from governance, but I believe we do it rather well at Community First New Forest. It would appear others do too, because to our surprise our Board has recently been listed as one of three finalists for the Wessex Charity Board of the Year. Such success can only be possible if we are seen to be committed, cohesive and mature. I believe that's exactly what we are and it is a privilege to serve as its Chair. We have a multiplicity of skills and talents and I am particularly indebted to our Treasurer, who has become a linchpin of the Board and to my Vice Chair who has been such a source of wisdom and support.

I look forward to 2011, confident that we can grow stronger and serve our community better. As Mahatma Gandhi once said 'Happiness is when what you think, what you say, and what you do are in harmony'. That's the spirit of Community First New Forest!

Stephanie Stokes, Chair

Chief Executive's Report

Introduction

I am pleased to report that Community First New Forest (CFNF) has continued to provide a range of essential services that support organisations and residents of the New Forest district. Each of these services has a positive impact to quality of life. I know that every day we continue to make a difference. This year has been one of successes and challenges, for CFNF and for voluntary and community groups across the New Forest. A key challenge for us all is funding and sustainability. This is set to continue and there are predictions that it will worsen.

In our support role as a Council for Voluntary Service we are committed to finding ways to help local groups with these key challenges. During this reporting period we have provided advice and support in many ways. Examples include funding advice, business planning, training, recruiting and retaining volunteers. The support we have provided this year has helped local voluntary and community groups to do what they do best - to meet local needs, that is underpinned by their personal commitment and drive.

This year has been a busy period for all of us and this Annual Review sets out to give you the highlights of the year.

Achievements

- Developed a 3 year Strategic Business Plan that demonstrates a planned approach to partnership, sustainability, quality and future needs.
- Supported the delivery of The New Forest Community Strategy and active partner of the New Forest Local Strategic Partnership.
- Lead and chair of the Active Communities Network. This Network has a focus on delivering actions that support community engagement, volunteering, diversity and equality.
- Supported the development of new local initiatives. Examples include Innovations, a service that supports the continued independence of older people, and the new Garden Share scheme in Ringwood.

We conducted an Annual Survey and asked members how they rated us overall on key areas for quality.

You rated our staff as follows:
Reliability - 98% good or excellent and 100% good or excellent for:

- Helpfulness
- Friendliness
- Knowledge
- Being non-judgemental

You rated our services at 100% good or excellent for:

- Reliability
- Helpful/informative
- Attentive and tailored
- Individualised support
- Being non-judgemental

Future plans

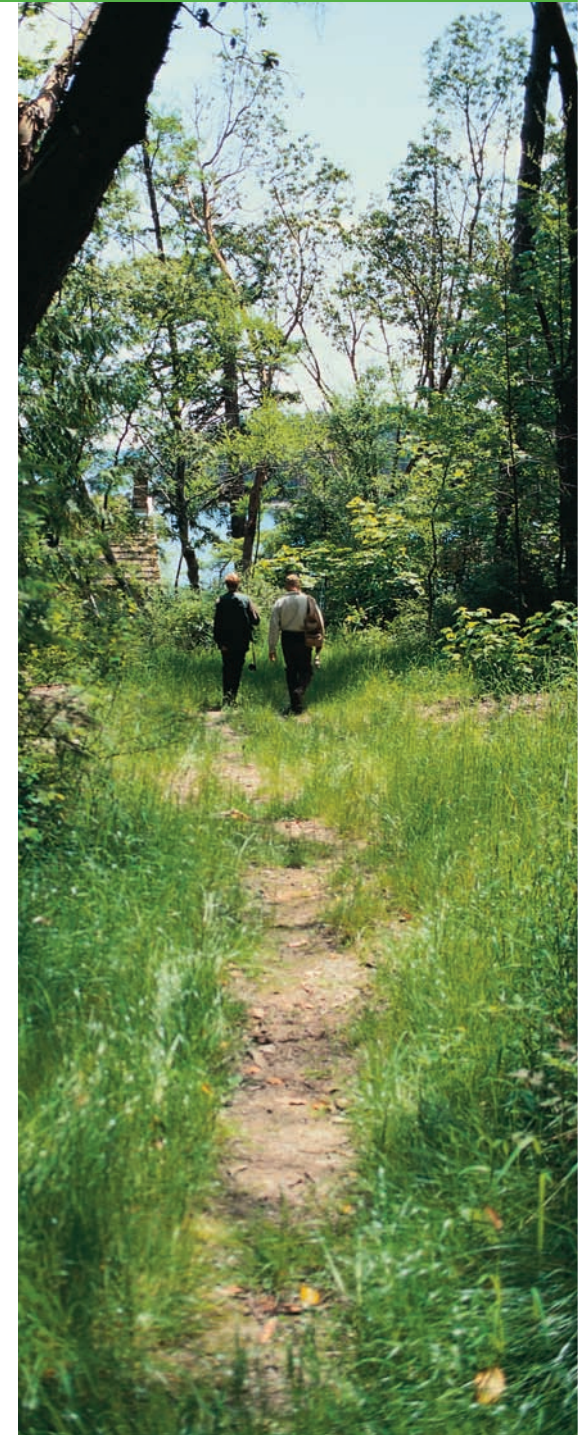
- We will develop our quality systems by pursuing ISO 9001.
- We will aim to reach more voluntary and community organisations across New Forest district and increase our membership.
- We will be developing our business with regards to opportunities and actively promoting and marketing the work of CFNF.

On a personal note I am fortunate to work with such a passionate and committed group of people. The level of professionalism and dedication of CFNF's Trustees, volunteers and staff has continued to shine in all our work throughout this past year.

A BIG 'thank you' to you all.



Michael Clowes



Voluntary & Community Services

Our Community Development Team provides dedicated support to communities across the district in order to bring about a collective social change and improve quality of life.

Achievements and Performance

Continuing the successful pilot of the Innovations team in Totton, we have been able to recruit three more development workers to join the teams that now provide the service to the entire district. Innovations is a partnership project working with older people who are becoming more vulnerable. It aims to reintegrate them within their communities to boost their wellbeing, slow their growing vulnerability, and reduce their need for expensive and distressing emergency interventions. We have run 15 training sessions attended by a total of 195 people and provided one to one training on specific issues including constitutions and policies & procedures.

We engaged with over 49 groups giving a range of general advice and support, advising on both large and small projects. £1,354,974 of grant money has been applied for both locally and nationally with 39 groups using FunderFinder. We also held another successful Funding Fayre at Lyndhurst which was attended by over 100 people.

Future Plans

We will be working in partnership with New Forest District Council and the National Park Authority to pilot a Healthy Walks project in the district. This will create opportunities to build on existing initiatives and develop new opportunities eg GP Referrals onto guided walks and

access to other recreational activities that encourage health and wellbeing whilst promoting understanding and enjoyment of the National Park.

Following the success of the Ringwood 'Let's Get Growing' Scheme, we will be using development expertise to expand this project to other targeted areas of the district. We will work to engage identified communities across the New Forest, empower local people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities, but primarily targeting vulnerable families with low incomes. This creates opportunities for them to grow, eat and enjoy fresh produce, in a green and sustainable manner, and in the process to make a positive impact on their surrounding environment.

We will be supporting Community First New Forest through a diversity audit ensuring we have the right policies, processes, procedures and systems in place so that diversity is promoted and valued. This in turn will help us improve service provision/support and engagement with diverse voluntary and community groups.

Client Comments

'Excellent and very instructive training session.'

'We feel so much more confident in our grant application, thank you for your support.'

Jackie Hartless

Community Development Manager
Tel. 01425 482773
email. cdmanager@cnf.org.uk

Volunteer Centre

Aim of Service

The Volunteer Centre actively promotes the benefits of volunteering for the individual and for our communities. We encourage diversity and inclusion in all aspects of volunteering, making a difference to the health and wellbeing for all concerned.



Achievements

We held an annual celebration event, recognising the valuable contribution that voluntary, community groups and charities involving volunteers make to our community.

We had enquiries from 398 people. We have personally interviewed 137 volunteers and placed 110 with local organisations and agencies.



Working with the Job Centre Plus network we actively encourage unemployed people to volunteer, aiding their return to the workplace. We held two recruitment roadshows, giving 30 organisations the chance to promote what they do, with over 70 members of the public attending.

Future Plans

We are piloting a new initiative, working with HCC, PCT and local doctors to provide volunteering placements to people over 55.

We will work with our LSP partner organisations, expanding their capacity by offering unemployed people voluntary placements.

We will continue to work in partnership with Solent Youth Action to encourage 16 - 25 year olds into volunteering.

Client Comments

'Although I have only just started my volunteering, getting over the fear of making contact and meeting people at the organisation has improved my confidence already.'

'This event was very well organised with an interesting range of organisations represented. An excellent day with a good response from the public.'

Hazel Dyson

Volunteer Centre Co-ordinator
Tel. 01425 482773
email. vol.bureau@cnf.org.uk

Home Improvement Services

Introduction

Home Improvement Agencies (HIA) support older people, people with disabilities and people on low incomes to maintain independence in their own homes. We support people with arranging and funding repairs, improvements and adaptations so that homes will be more suitable, safe and energy efficient.

Achievements

New Forest HIA

- We have supported a total of 486 people in the New Forest district.
- We have directly helped 318 people improve, repair or adapt their homes, and 272 of these have been supported to apply for Disabled Facilities Grants from New Forest District Council.

- We have carried out 228 home safety checks in people's homes, resulting in the removal of tripping hazards, installation of smoke detectors, and the improvement and/or addition of locks and door chains.

Test Valley HIA

- We have supported a total of 631 people in the Test Valley area.
- We have directly helped 250 people improve, repair or adapt their homes, and 235 of these have been supported to apply for Disabled Facilities Grants from Test Valley Borough Council.
- We have helped Test Valley Borough Council administer its Fix-It scheme by taking 106 telephone requests for work and dealing with 210 additional enquiries.



Small Repairs Service

The technician made 512 visits resulting in 549 jobs being completed. He has changed tap washers, repaired door locks, hung pictures, repaired toilet overflows, unblocked sinks and much more.

The technician carried out 126 of the 228 home safety checks, and has fitted equipment to improve home safety and security such as grab rails, key safes, door chains and window locks. The contract with the RoSPA Safe at Home scheme has resulted in safety equipment being installed in three homes.



Future Plans

Continue to be a key provider of support services that enable people to remain living independently in their own homes.

Formulate processes that improve and encourage service users to be more involved in the operation of services.

Successfully tender for the new contract which starts in 2011.

Client Comments

'An excellent service. Can hardly be bettered. Staff very friendly and helpful, and nothing is too much trouble.'

'The work carried out was of very high standard. The workmen were very polite and friendly.....and explained what they were going to do. Excellent service, top notch!'

Barrie Cheetham

Home Improvement Agency Manager
Tel. 01425 478005
email. hia.manager@cfnf.org.uk

Children and Young People Services

Aim

Our services support vulnerable children, young people and families across the New Forest. Our work focuses on supporting children's emotional wellbeing through a number of services, approaches and skills.

Achievements

- Over 600 children, young people and families supported during the last year.
- More than 120 teachers, other school staff and other agencies have taken part in our awareness raising of emotional issues concerning children and young people.

Children and Young People Services *continued*

- 90 parents/grandparents joined our new parenting support forums aimed at parents of children on the autistic spectrum and another for grandparents with full time care of their grandchildren.
- 27 voluntary and community sector organisations joined the new New Forest Children and Young People Voluntary Sector Alliance, started in February 2010, to enable improved infra-structure development and a voice for the sector within the New Forest.



Future Plans

Development of our current service is important. This year we will:

- Look to increase the number of our autism and grandparenting forums to other parts of the New Forest.
- Add a new holistic based approach to our young carer service.

Growth of our services is always important where there are unmet needs. For example, this year we are:

- Developing an application in partnership with children and adolescent mental health services focussing on mentoring.
- Developing an application for an obesity in children programme.
- Continuing and developing the New Forest Children and Young People Voluntary Sector Alliance is an important priority for us.

Client Comments

'Jigsaw is when you can talk to someone about something that's been stuck inside you and you feel you want to talk to someone but everyone is busy and won't listen to you.'

Helen, aged 12

'We began looking after our two grandchildren full time when their mother died last year. We thought we were the only ones worried about money issues, support, and our own health in the New Forest. It is really good to meet other people who are in the same situation and see how they are coping.'

Grandparents aged 70+ caring for two grandchildren aged 9 and 11

Jean Watkins

Children & Young People Services Manager
Tel. 01425 482773
email. jean.watkins@cfnf.org.uk

Home Support Service

Introduction

We aim to provide personal care and support to older people residing in the East of the Forest, Hythe and the Waterside areas. We accept referrals from Adult Services, directly from the person requiring help and from family members or friends. We intend to make a difference to clients' lives and to prevent social isolation and exclusion and unnecessary hospital admissions.

Achievements & Performance

- We have continued to provide a quality care service for our clients enabling them to remain safely in their own homes.
- We have increased the domestic support we provide. As our clients have become less mobile, we have been able to take over the daily tasks that they were finding difficult.
- We have been inspected by CQC and received a good report from them; they had no areas of concern.



Future Plans

In order to increase the number of hours of care we provide we intend to:

- Increase our share of private client care packages.
- Plan and embrace the new personalisation agenda.
- Widen the services that we can offer clients.
- Improve further the quality of care delivered by additional and varied training.

Client Comments

'An email received - 'It is most kind of you to accommodate my father's requirements. I have to say that both he and I have been very impressed thus far with the service that you and your carers have provided.'

'Attending the funeral of a client for whom we had provided care for 7 or 8 years at the end of April, I was overwhelmed by the gratitude of the family who were genuinely grateful for the care we had provided. 'Mum never praised anyone in her life but even she said you weren't that bad!' Praise indeed.'

Gael Clemett

Home Support Services Manager
Tel. 023 8066 7080
email. homesupportmanager@cfnf.org.uk

Community Transport

Aims

The Community Transport team aims to provide a transport service to both individuals and groups, meeting the needs of those living and working within the New Forest who may suffer with personal mobility issues, unavailability of public transport, or groups who need to travel together.

Achievements

Minibus Hire

We currently have about 20 groups who hire vehicles on a regular basis, and over 200 hirings during the last 12 months, enabling many individuals to overcome their geographical isolation and take an active part in their community.

Call and Go

We enabled 8,414 passenger trips to be made, compared with 7,888 the previous year. The average age of our passengers has risen to 82, and 74% of our passengers require mobility aids.

Wheels 2 Work

This scheme has assisted 37 young people either to find work or give them the opportunity to save for their own transport.

We have received several referrals from Social Services and this scheme has offered independence and the opportunity for vulnerable young people to turn their lives around. We currently have a six week waiting list for young people who wish to hire our mopeds.



Community Transport *continued*

Future Plans

Group Hire

- Increase the number of hirings by raising awareness of the scheme by promotion and publicity.
- Contact the harder to reach and diverse communities.
- Explore the possibilities of using our vehicles on contract work.

Wheels 2 Work

- To double the number of hirings during the next 12 months.
- Target the harder to reach hirers in the most rural areas of the region.

Call and Go

- Continue to provide a consistent and reliable service for our passengers.
- Increase the number of passengers registered with us.
- Investigate the potential of introducing new routes.

Client Comments

'This service is my lifeline. I have no other means to do my shopping, a wonderful service.'

Call and Go passenger

'The scheme itself is excellent, and the staff are very good and helpful and friendly. It has improved my personal independence and responsibility.'

Wheels 2 Work client



Graham Hartless

Transport Services Manager
Tel. 01425 482773
email. transport@cfnf.org.uk

Nightstop

The only emergency accommodation service for young homeless people in the New Forest District.

Nightstop helps prevent rough sleeping by giving young homeless people aged 16 - 24 free emergency accommodation of 1 - 5 nights (or more if necessary) in the homes of approved volunteers in the New Forest. The service allows young homeless people a short breathing space to consider their options in their own time, in their own area and to get further advice on housing, employment, education and health.

Achievements and Performance

Our volunteer households provided a total of 291 support nights throughout the year which is an increase on previous years. This provided homeless support to 19 young people.

Nightstop has fulfilled its required outcomes for its main funder, the Big Lottery, although the current economic climate has impacted on the outcomes for young people moving into employment and training this year.



Nightstop continues to maintain its team of hosts, drivers and support volunteers - a total of 27 volunteers with new enquiries from interested members of the community.

Future Plans

Over the coming year, Nightstop aims to:

- Improve the marketing and promotion to young people by developing a video on Nightstop and launching a dedicated website.
- Distribute essential packs to all hosts, including basic clothing and toiletries for young people.
- Continue to contact young people following their stay with Nightstop to record feedback from their experience of the service and to make any improvements.
- Continue to provide on-going training sessions for existing and new volunteers.

Comments from young people

'Really great and helpful and caring and I am really grateful. Thank you so much Nightstop for everything you have done for me. I shall be forever grateful.'

Sue Roberts

Nightstop Co-ordinator
email. nightstop@cfnf.org.uk

Jude Todd

Nightstop Support Worker
email. nightstopsupport@cfnf.org.uk

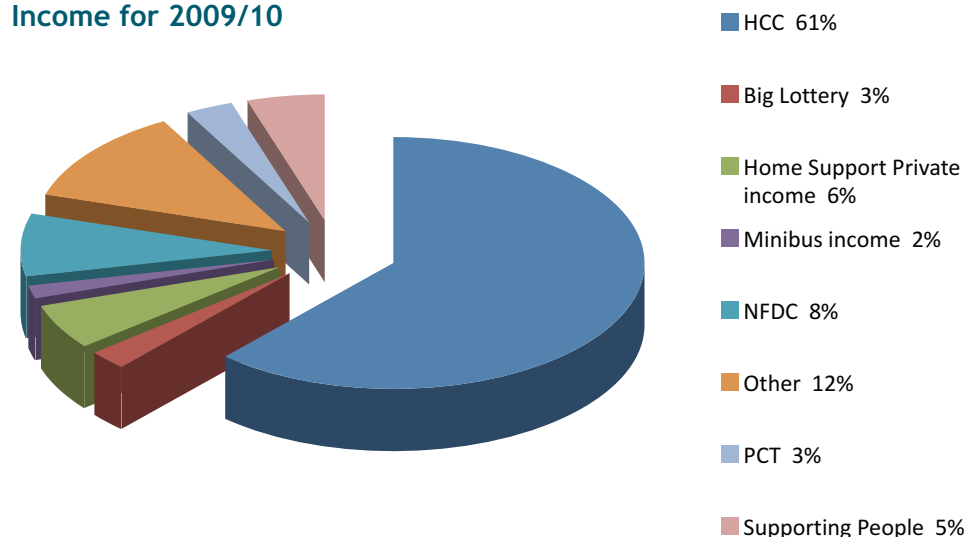
Tel. 01425 478391

Financial Summary

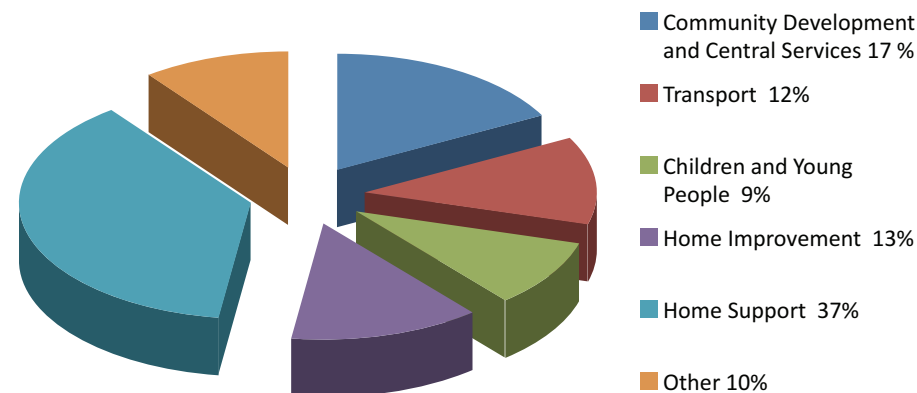
These financial highlights show the breakdown of income by funding source and the expenditure by project. Community First New Forest income for the year ended 2010 totalled £1,627,486 and net assets stood at £1,145,613.

Copies of the full audited financial statements can be obtained from: The Finance Office, Community First New Forest, Public Offices, 65 Christchurch Road, Ringwood, Hants BH24 1DH.

Income for 2009/10



Expenditure for 2009/10



Community First New Forest

Our Mission

We are a not-for-profit umbrella organisation which supports and promotes the sustainable development of the local voluntary and community sector. By building relationships, fostering partnerships and delivering quality services we aim to improve quality of life and assist in the development of diverse, strong communities primarily in the New Forest district. We work towards removing barriers to social inclusion by working with communities and individuals who may be socially disadvantaged, vulnerable and isolated.

We acknowledge the support of:

Big Lottery Fund
Connexions
Capacity Builders
Hampshire County Council
Hampshire Primary Care Trust
New Forest District Council
New Milton Masonic Lodge
Supporting People
Test Valley Borough Council
Town and Parish Councils
Our members

Community First New Forest is a charity and a registered company limited by guarantee

Charity number: 1068964

Company number: 3483827

Registered Offices: Public Offices, 65 Christchurch Road, Ringwood, Hampshire BH24 1DH

email: admin@cfnf.org.uk

Tel. 01425 482773

www.cfnf.org.uk