

BRAINTREE DISTRICT VOLUNTARY SUPPORT AGENCY (BDVSA)

ANNUAL REPORT

Agenda Item 11

The BDVSA is a registered charity whose aim is to give help and support to the many voluntary and community groups working in Braintree district. It is funded by a grant from Braintree District Council, Essex County Council, the mid Essex PCT and a five year grant from the Lottery Fund. All these grants are monitored closely and the Lottery Grant is for a specific piece of work known as Management Matters, the aim of which is to support, co-ordinate, promote and develop the work of the voluntary sector within the Braintree District. It is envisaged that up to 300 voluntary organisations will benefit from this grant.

Volunteering enquiries continue to increase and were well over 1200 in 2009. About 200 go on to register and another 250 are referred directly to other agencies.

2009 saw the 10th birthday of Voluntary Sector Training, of which BDVSA is a partner, and at a special birthday celebration lunch, Judy Cuddeford, the director of BDVSA, was presented with a MATRIX accreditation award by Lord Petre who was the guest of honour. This was for a particularly tough assessment that the VST had recently achieved.

Over the last year Essex Association of Volunteer Centres (EAVC) has been looking at ways in which volunteer centres across Essex could work together. BDVSA has recently signed an agreement on working together as a federation to achieve a joint accreditation from Volunteering England in June 2010.

In January 2010 Essex County Council launched its new employee volunteering policy, known as Essex Volunteers. Basically this allows employees to take two days paid annual leave to engage in volunteering, with the hope that this will spark a long-term interest beyond the initial two days. BDVSA will be helping put potential volunteers in touch with the appropriate organisation.

Finally, I would just remind you that BDVSA produces a quarterly newsletter and a small pamphlet called 'snippets' copies of which I leave in the member's room.

Cllr. Sandra Howell
12th April 2010.