

# Maximising Community Potential



## Introduction

Welcome to our annual review which this year is adopting a different format and focuses on illustrating the impact and unique contribution of High Peak CVS and how we have met our strategic objectives. We have therefore moved away from highlighting our specific projects to looking at how the collective work in which we are engaged benefits the High Peak.

High Peak CVS key mission is: "to improve the quality of life for individuals, groups and communities by enabling a vibrant and sustainable Voluntary and Community Sector that is valued throughout the High Peak."

This report focuses on our impact and the extent to which we are achieving success. One measure of the relevance of our support services is an increase in our group membership from 324 in the previous financial year to 377 at the end of March 2010, a substantial increase of 53 over the year. Our individual membership at the end of the year stands at 11.

This year High Peak CVS was officially recorded within parliament on the 22nd February 2010 in Hansard, the House of Commons Record of speeches.

*'We are privileged to be served by what I believe is one of the best councils for voluntary service in the country. The CVS, which now provides services to the national CVS movement, as well as a wide range of training and other opportunities for community groups across High Peak to tap into and deliver their part in the community life of their areas.'*

**Tom Levitt**

Former High Peak MP



## Message from the Chair

Our previous chair Pete Spriggs had to stand down last year after only one year in the post, because of family commitments. Pete made a tremendous impression on High Peak CVS, and his input has shaped much of what we do. A huge debt of gratitude to Pete for this.

As your new chair, the commitment and determination of staff at High Peak CVS utterly amazes me. If anyone wishes to see the big society in action, then come to High Peak CVS: it is alive, thriving and making a huge difference in our community. You also have an equally impressive set of trustees, who have done an enormous amount of work behind the scenes to help our organisation move forward. (And made my first year as Chair as easy as possible!)

We are all of course bracing ourselves for the impact of the Comprehensive Spending Review, due in October. The Voluntary Sector will be hit particularly hard with the reduction in support expected from Councils and other bodies, as they draw in their purse strings. So your trustees and managers have begun a series of negotiations with our partners in the Voluntary Sector to see how we can together reduce our costs and share some of our expertise, to achieve a leaner and fitter sector, able to withstand the uncertainties ahead.

**Mike Crompton,**  
Chair of Trustees,  
High Peak CVS.



High Peak CVS  
Community & Voluntary Support

## Message from the Chief Executive

Whilst this report inevitably focuses on the activities and results we have created this year I want to acknowledge the significance of longer term investment in development work which has over the years led to new start up groups maturing and developing their services. The Small Group Project now in its twelfth year is testament to what can be achieved with sustained investment over a longer period.

We are very fortunate to have a dedicated and highly motivated staff team at High Peak CVS and I wish to

congratulate the whole team on our excellent results and our continued impact on quality of life in the communities in the High Peak.

At this time of potential cut backs in public services we are very fortunate in the High Peak to have a strong and vibrant community and voluntary sector. Our services are particularly needed at this time to protect and enhance the valuable work of the sector. Whilst there are very challenging times ahead I trust that the achievements over the last 8 years will not be undone.



## Organisational Strategy

In order to deliver on our mission it is critical that we focus our energy and resources towards the needs and requirements of our beneficiary groups.

During the course of the year we appraised all our current work to assess how much it contributes to the core objectives of High Peak CVS and any new strand of work is similarly appraised.

Our objectives are:

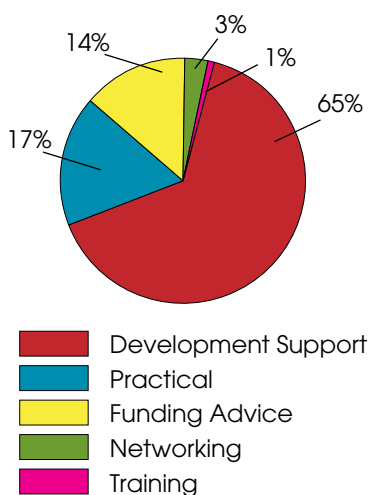
- To improve the quality and increase the capacity of the community and voluntary sector (VCS) in the High Peak
- To enable the community and voluntary sector (VCS) to gain better access to information, training, practical services and facilities
- To facilitate liaison, collaboration and representation and nurture effective working relationships between sectors (VCS, public and corporate)
- To identify and prioritise the needs of local communities and develop appropriate responses
- To create a secure and effective CVS in line with members needs

### OBJECTIVE 1:

## To improve the quality and increase the capacity of the community and voluntary sector in the High Peak

During the year we worked with a total of 188 groups, 131 of these received low level support, 44 groups received medium support and we worked with 13 groups intensively.<sup>1</sup>

CVS Development Work Monitoring Full Report Analysis 01/04/09 – 31/03/10



Most of this work is achieved through our Development Team who can offer generic

or specialist support. Our specialisms include the needs of: small and disadvantaged groups, social enterprises, sustainable development including income diversification and the environment, arts related groups, festivals and creative industries and ICT.

We expanded the Healthcheck review work with voluntary and community groups in the High Peak, looking at all aspects of running a group and agreeing action plans. Thanks to the links with Derbyshire Learning and Development Consortium, groups were able to access free accredited training, quality standards processes plus other relevant training courses.

### Case Study - Action Men

This group of mental health service users enquired about setting themselves up as a separately constituted group

so they could become more independent.

High Peak CVS offered in depth support on developing and adopting their constitution, opening new bank accounts, funding opportunities, providing one to one and tailored support for roles within the group. This included work on job descriptions, public liability insurance, scoping and supporting first AGM, committee meetings and tailored motivational sessions and linking with other services.

### Assessing impact

High Peak CVS have consistently supported this new start up group through this year and without our input they would not function as an independent group for more potential members to access. This would mean a substantial reduction in the support that is available to men with mental

<sup>1</sup> Low is under two hours, medium between 2 hours and 2 days, intensive is over 2 days

health difficulties. The activities have also been enhanced by High Peak CVS introducing them to other groups in the area i.e. cooking lessons with Wednesday lunch club.

*'High Peak CVS is always a great support to the group'*

**Robert Kinsey**  
Secretary, Action Men

### **Objective 1; next year we will:**

- Increase the focus of environmental work within the Sustain Project and identify resources for this new development
- Expand the sustainable funding surgeries and fundraising training
- courses to encourage an enterprising approach to diversifying income streams
- Undertake the NAVCA Quality Award : Excellent Service for Local Groups
- Obtain additional funding resources for the Development Work.

## OBJECTIVE 2:

### **To enable the community and voluntary sector to gain better access to information, training, practical services and facilities**

#### **Information**

Our information services remain very popular with the local groups, our weekly Email bulletins which are received by over 250 subscribers are complemented by our broadening range of web based information including Peak Directions

**www.peakdirections.co.uk;** the first one stop shop for business advice in the Peak District.

We launched a new Stepping Up to Enterprise website **www.steppinguptoenterprise.org.uk** a regional resource encouraging and supporting VCS income diversification delivered through our Sustain Project and with considerable assistance from Northampton Enterprising Solutions and the Development Trusts Association.

The year also saw the launch of the new website of the Regional ICT Champion **www.item3.org.uk**. The site provides a range of useful resources which can help third sector organisations to enhance and develop their uses of ICT.

#### **Training**

This year we redesigned our training brochure. We also enhanced the range of courses available taking account of specific requests from members including social media.



*'Completing this course has enthused me to go on to more training in this subject'*

**Claire Owens,**  
High Peak Homestart

*'Excellent course, very informative, relaxed and yet professional delivery'*

**Janet Lee,**  
Glossop Womens Aid

#### **Practical Services**

Our practical services remain very popular with local groups; over the course of the year 48 groups accessed our equipment hire service and our Community Print Service continues to flourish.

*'Thank you so much for turning this around so quickly. The leaflets look great on lilac and I think it was great value for money'*

**Kate Barrett,**  
Coourage, Social Enterprise

### **Objective 2; next year we will:**

- Market and publicise the refurbished state of the art training room to increase usage by a wider range of groups and organisations, including evening use
- Invest in an upgraded photocopier to provide even better quality colour print facilities

## OBJECTIVE 3:

## To facilitate liaison, collaboration and representation and nurture effective working relationships between sectors (VCS, public and corporate)

We continue to fully engage in a wide range of partnerships and develop partnership arrangements with key stakeholders including High Peak and Dales Local Strategic Partnership and Derbyshire Partnership Forum.

We engaged in our first contract with the Peak District National Park Authority via the Peak Partners for Rural Action partnership which we chair. In addition, we organised a well attended question time session where groups could raise concerns with the prospective parliamentary candidates for the High Peak, in partnership with the Voice Project.

The CVS facilitates quarterly meetings of the Development Workers Forum which addresses common issues

and good practice between workers with a development responsibility from statutory and VCS backgrounds.

The Arts & Creative Businesses Project maintains an email forum and meetings for creative industries; including a highly successful Creative Business Roadshow bringing together artist and arts organisation for an update on resources and support services across all sectors. We take a full and active part in Derbyshire Arts Partnership and stepped up our commitment to the Derbyshire Arts Development Group by Chairing this group.

Through our social enterprise Digital Umbrella we aided the development of a countywide voluntary and community

sector database by offering technical support and advice.

The Regional ICT Champion has shown leadership by facilitating the ITEM3 collaborative network enabling the sharing of key information and good practice, and supported new initiatives.

### **Objective 3; next year we will:**

- Continue to develop a constructive dialogue with statutory partners about investing in the VCS in the context of reduced funding.
- Hold a series of VCS surgery sessions with colleagues at the High Peak Borough Council.

## OBJECTIVE 4:

## To identify and prioritise the needs of local communities and develop appropriate responses

This year we encouraged members to inform and steer the work of High Peak CVS. We delivered a participatory members meeting which drew together all the information from our interactive session (AGM 2008) and members survey (2009) to shape High Peak CVS priorities for the future years.

In partnership with the East Midlands Infrastructure Steering Group baseline research was undertaken by the Regional ICT Champion, to examine the ICT needs of third sector organisations and to develop a regional action plan.

Much of our work is developing new groups to respond to local unmet needs in local communities. The Small Group Project undertook a review of geographical focus of its work; this confirmed there was a high level of work in the five market towns with a reasonable spread of work across the rural areas, however there was a clear under representation in the Hope Valley which we will seek to address next year. Significant work was undertaken with Older Peoples Groups and Mental Health Groups in response to increasing demands for this type of support.

### **Case Study - Glossopdale Fibromyalgia Group**

This group was set up in March 2006 in response to a statutory gap in support for people with a medical diagnosis and physical condition of Fibromyalgia and Chronic Fatigue Syndrome. Very intensive support has continued to be offered this year including supporting group members with their roles, election of a new committee, developing and delivering groups working well training, support with administering their first grant and working up the case for core funding and

successful funding from the Grassroots Fund.

**Assessing our impact**

Glossopdale Fibromyalgia Group is valued by local GP's who refer people directly to the group and without the group there would be no ongoing local support for those with Fibromyalgia and Chronic Fatigue Syndrome in the Glossop area. The group supports people and this reduces demands on GP and hospital services.

High Peak CVS ongoing support has enabled the group to reach the stage of managing funding applications and putting on fundraising events, accessing training and putting key policies and practices in place.

Group members have learned new skills and developed strengths which have

increased their confidence and thereby enhanced their quality of life. It has provided an effective and viable support group for health professionals to make referrals.

*'Without CVS input we may have started up as a friendship group but would have struggled to be a viable voluntary group that can be there to support others in the community. We definitely needed help around running a successful group. Thinking about it I don't think we would have survived as a voluntary group without CVS input'*

**Leigh Ann Williamson,**  
Chairperson, Glossopdale Fibromyalgia Group

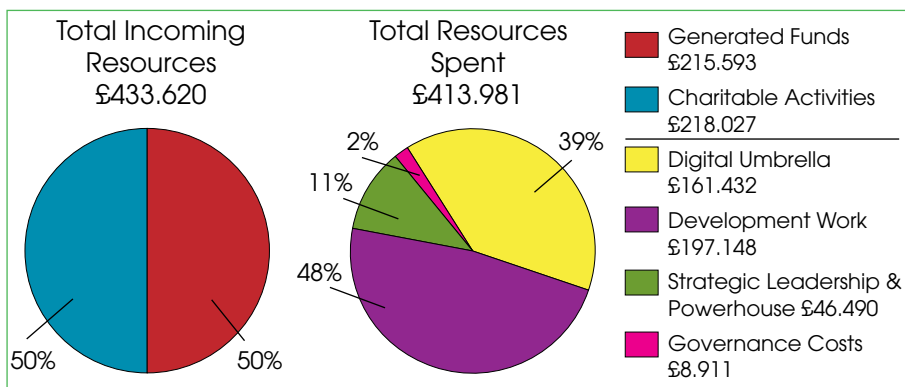
**Objective 4; next year we will:**

- Undertake proactive marketing of our services in the isolated rural areas with a focus on the Hope Valley, in collaboration with the High Peak Volunteering Project.
- Continue to develop strategic alliances and partnership projects with key stakeholders.
- Identify additional resources to fund our work with groups supporting Older People and Mental Health



OBJECTIVE 5:

**To create a secure and effective CVS in line with members needs**



Generated income increased to £167,392 (of which £149,733 was generated by Digital Umbrella).

We retained a surplus on unrestricted reserves of £187,308 (£161,223 finances fixed assets). Free unrestricted reserves available short term are £26,085. We performed a funding review of all projects up to 2014 - financial strategic

sessions launched and a detailed financial strategic analysis undertaken of projects.

High Peak CVS faces significant changes to its activities as a result of the restructuring of the Strategic Health Authorities, abolition of the Primary Care Trusts and the termination of various funding streams. The CVS Board and Management Team are examining a number

of future strategic options for implementation by 2011/2012. An orderly transition to the reshaped scheme of activities will be undertaken, and members will be fully consulted when the options have been analysed.

**Objective 5; next year we will:**

- Develop a 5 year organisational sustainability plan to ensure High Peak CVS is best placed to support its members into the future
- Float Digital Umbrella as a subsidiary and implement a sustainable business model
- Develop new income streams

**Thank you to our funders...**



**Principal funding sources - Our top four grant funders are:**



A full set of accounts can be obtained from Gina Spencer, Office & Finance Manager.  
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