The information contained in this annual report is available in different formats on request.
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The CVS Funding Information Service helped Sefton groups to raise £1,401,361 from various sources.

The ABILITY network received a North West Employers’ Organisation equality and diversity award.

CVS provided capacity-building advice to community groups and voluntary organisations on 2,692 occasions.

The Community Accountant helped 69 groups to prepare their annual accounts during the year.

324 people attended the 31 training courses that were delivered by Sefton CVS during the year.

Sefton Equalities Partnership has developed a new framework for engagement and consultation in the borough.

Nine new community groups were established in the borough with the help of Sefton CVS.

84 north Sefton residents found employment and 68 took up training opportunities with the help of WorkZONE.

173 forum, network and sub group meetings were held to enable groups to influence decision making.

305 Criminal Records Bureau disclosures were processed by CVS on behalf of 52 Sefton groups.

Membership of the VOLA learning consortium grew to more than 150 organisations by March 2009.

CVS recognised 184,700 hours of volunteering which equates to a value of at least £2,321,679.

The Community Empowerment Network now gives more than 650 groups a voice in local decision making.

CVS was successful in its bid to become the host organisation for the Local Involvement Network (LINK) for Knowsley.

The Handy Help Service completed more than 900 repairs and adaptations in the homes of older people.

The In-Trust network received an award for innovation from the North West Employers’ Organisation.

The Voluntary and Community Sector Support Project helped groups working with children and young people to raise £301,000.

The Funding Information Service email information bulletin now has around 2,500 subscribers.
Sefton CVS seeks to improve the quality of life of all residents in the borough, particularly those who are marginalised or experiencing disadvantage.

We do this by supporting and enabling voluntary and community groups, along with active citizens and volunteers, to identify and serve unmet needs through the provision of professional, quality services offered in accessible and culturally sensitive ways that reflect the needs of our diverse communities and also the sector’s values of equity and equality.

We also seek to promote the needs of citizens and the sector by working in partnership with public sector agencies such as Sefton Council, NHS Sefton, Merseyside Police, Merseyside Fire Service and the private sector.

The core work of Sefton CVS is described as follows:

- Providing support services to the voluntary, community and faith (VCF) sector.
- Promoting partnerships within the sector and between the voluntary sector and other sectors.
- Providing a channel through which the sector is represented.
- Developing new ideas, strategies and organisations.
- Supporting and developing volunteering opportunities.
- Promoting equality of opportunity and access and valuing diversity.
The strategic objectives of Sefton CVS are reviewed annually and are prepared cognisant of the organisation’s charitable aims, purpose and public benefit requirements.

CVS also considers partners’ priorities and partnership plans - such as the Local Area Agreement (LAA), Sefton Council’s Corporate Plan, NHS Sefton’s Plan and the Community Strategy - and how the VCF is co-ordinated and engaged in these plans.

CVS also takes into consideration stakeholder and user demand, external and internal policy initiatives impacting on the sector, regulatory requirements such as the outcome of the Charities Bill and voluntary and community sector trends.

The objectives which are reviewed annually are:

- To be actively involved in the formation of strategic cross-sector partnerships.
- To meet the increasing demands of legislative, social and structural changes and underpin the VCF sector infrastructure to respond to change.
- To act as a conduit between the communities of Sefton and the local authority, the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) and other partnership bodies in the development of local strategic initiatives.
- To be an active partner in the planning, development and delivery of initiatives relating to central Government policy (such as activities to tackle social exclusion, health inequality and long-term unemployment, through initiatives such as the Local Area Agreement, Choosing Health and Every Child Matters).
- To be the lead voluntary sector development agency in the pursuance of economic and social regeneration partnership initiatives such as Housing Market Renewal and Working Neighbourhoods.
- To encourage inward investment and be in a position to maximise leverage to the sector from, for example, the Big Lottery Fund, charitable trusts, corporate sponsors, central Government initiatives and Europe.
- To underpin the VCF infrastructure in Sefton through a programme of community development actions in order for organisations to have sufficient capacity to respond to change and enhance their effectiveness.
- To support the VCF sector in achieving enterprising and collaborative solutions in the development of non grant-based income, including the delivery of public sector contracts.
- To increase voluntary and community engagement amongst the citizens of Sefton.
There are more than 1,200 known voluntary, community and faith groups and organisations delivering services in the borough of Sefton. Sefton CVS aims to provide the following services in pursuit of its charitable objectives:

- Signposting services to the VCF sector, partner agencies and residents
- Sefton Volunteer Centre and the Volunteer Certificate Scheme
- Payroll bureau service
- Criminal Records Bureau umbrella service
- Employment law brokerage scheme
- Community accountancy, financial health checks and independent examination for VCF groups
- Community development and outreach services targeted at Sefton neighbourhoods
- Funding advice and support, maintenance of the Merseyside Funding Information Portal and electronic bulletins
- Business and strategic planning support and development for VCF groups
- Project and organisational development to support organisations in the community
- Charity registration, company registration and constitutional advice
- Board development and governance training
- Liaison and networking between partner agencies and the VCF sector
- Development and facilitation of networks and forums including those for minority groups
- Health and social care policy and planning co-ordination of the VCF sector
- Children, young people and families policy and planning co-ordination of the VCF sector
- Representation of the VCF sector at a strategic level
- Neighbourhood engagement
- Newsletters and electronic bulletins to VCF sector organisations and partner agencies
- Equipment loan services to the VCF sector
- Training and skills development programmes
- National, regional and local policy dissemination to the VCF sector
- Information giving and advice to the VCF sector
- Directory of VCF organisations
- Database and annual community mapping of VCF organisations in Sefton
- Briefing sessions and conference facilitation
- Programme and contract management
- Research and publications
- Development of new services and organisations
- Advice on employment/ personnel issues
- Project management and development
- Equality and diversity promotion

Sefton CVS managed projects

Part of CVS’s role is to identify new needs and develop new initiatives. Often CVS manages projects that are starting up and need initial support to get going, or more often, provides specific support to other groups at this formative stage.

CVS can act as an incubator, offering start-up facilities and then helping the project to become independent. Sefton Carers Centre, Netherton Feelgood Factory, Sefton Advocacy Service and Helping Hand are now independent organisations that started out being housed under CVS at the start.

Programme management

As CVS continues to build partnerships within the sector and with statutory agencies, it has taken on the role as lead agent and accountable body for significant programmes locally and sub-regionally. These currently include the ChangeUp Programme for Greater Merseyside and VOLA, the learning consortium. CVS also lead the previous Sefton Sure Start Programme and was also the lead agent for Sefton Children’s Fund.
At the same time we have continued to plan for the future and develop services responsive to the needs of the local sector.

The legislative requirements of running charities and groups, and keeping people safe in organisations, are high on the public agenda. CVS has been active in helping groups to get information and access services, ensuring support is available to ensure compliance.

The Criminal Records Disclosure Service that we administer as an approved umbrella agent is accessed primarily by small community groups. CVS undertaking the administration of gaining clearances relieves groups of some of the burdensome - but necessary - processes to ensure they operate to best practice whilst delivering frontline services to local people.

CVS is keen to bring new services to the borough, for example by brokering arrangements with organisations such as Peninsular, a leading human resource and employment advice consultancy. This new group employment and advice support service, which is affordable and accessible to the local sector, is an example of an initiative providing the underpinning support that organisations need to function effectively.

This year we held a specialist seminar with solicitors Brabners Chaffe Street to inform charity trustees of the requirements of the Charities Act and the new Companies Act.

We plan to organise further seminars on specialist topics in the future, such as assisting groups in demonstrating their public benefit which is now a requirement in charity reporting.

The Board of Sefton CVS has met six times during the year and the three sub-committees - Finance, Corporate Management and Projects and Performance - have met on a regular cycle to report their actions to the Board. The Trustees and Managers also attended an away day to undertake risk assessment and planning for the organisation.

I am also pleased to report that CVS have gained Investors in People accreditation for a further three years.

I am grateful for the active participation of Board Members, who are also involved in the local community and who give their time readily to CVS. Our Vice Chair, John Marsden, retired at the last AGM after many years of service and I welcome Dave Roscoe who has now taken over this important role.

I would like to thank Angela White and the staff of CVS for their continued commitment to the organisation and Sefton Council who continue to provide essential resources for our core functions.

Margaret Hardman MBE
Chair
At the time of writing the impact of the recession, both financially and in supporting local people and communities, has shown the importance of the voluntary, community and faith sector to life in Sefton.

CVS’s role is to underpin this community activity, whether through the networks we facilitiate, or by providing support and advice to groups, or by working in partnership to develop responses to unmet need.

The networks link in to all the key strategic partnerships and groups and provide a conduit to the sector. The new Local Area Agreement for Sefton has recognised how valuable the sector is by continuing to include a national indicator relating to increasing local people’s involvement in volunteering, and a new national target measuring the impact of an active and vibrant VCF sector in community and public life.

Currently CVS and the networks are contributing to borough planning in response to the recession by working together with our public sector partners and looking at how our collective resources can support local people in difficult times.

Providing advice and support to groups is the core function of the CVS and, not surprisingly, advice on funding, sustainability and organisational development, and volunteering requests, are the key enquiry areas.

CVS helped groups with funding applications that raised £1,401,361 this year from sources such as the Big Lottery, charitable trusts and private sector giving.

The development of Sefton’s Consultation and Engagement Strategy, evidencing the sector’s contribution to tackling health inequality in the borough, supporting the priorities of the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and participating in the Transforming Social Care Strategy, are some of the policy initiatives the CVS and the networks have actively engaged in during the year.

CVS has continued to be lead and accountable body for ChangeUp on Merseyside, which has received national recognition as one of the leading consortia in the UK, and seen the continued development of VOLA, the VCF learning consortium.

Working as a collective can be an effective and creative way in which the sector can maximise its impact and the opportunities for widening engagement.

As always, I am immensely grateful for the support and involvement of our Board of Trustees and our Chair Margaret Hardman, the funders who continue to support us and the members of the VCF sector who work in partnership with us.

Angela White
Chief Executive
Developing Communities Teams

The CVS Developing Communities Teams in north and south Sefton provide advice and support to empower voluntary and community groups to become more efficient, effective and sustainable.

Groups can receive assistance with a wide range of issues such as advice on how to become a charity, guidance on developing policies and procedures to enable them to operate safely and legally and help with the development of boards, staff and volunteers.

The teams use a diagnostic toolkit with each group to establish what help is required. This enables them to develop a tailored package of support.

The teams are very flexible in how they operate, offering a mix of face-to-face work, group work, telephone and website support. They work in local community venues at a time that suits groups, which can include evenings and weekends. The aim is to provide the service in the most accessible and friendly way to meet the requirements of each organisation.

Customised training is also available to groups who may wish to involve staff and trustees in - for example - re-visioning the organisation or planning for the future.

The North Team supports VCF activity in Southport and Formby with a particular emphasis on the electoral wards of Dukes and Cambridge and other areas of deprivation.

The project supports strategic links to economic and social regeneration initiatives in the north of the borough. It also links with the Southport and Formby Area Committee structure, Southport Partnership and the Southport Community Safety Area Partnership.

The project is based in the Resource Centre in Southport, which is fully accessible and hosts a range of support organisations such as Sefton Pensioners Advocacy Centre, Sefton Women’s and Children’s Aid and Brighter Living.

The South Team covers an area including Bootle, Seaforth, Waterloo, Crosby, Maghull and Aintree and links with the Area Committee structure and regeneration initiatives in these areas.

Team members provide a customised support programme to groups looking to achieve the Visible Communities kitemark, a nationally recognised quality assurance framework devised by Community Matters. CVS has the license to deliver support to groups wishing to achieve this accreditation.

In June 2008, the South Team hosted a partnership event with solicitors Brabners Chaffe Street aimed at the Trustees of Sefton charities. It introduced the recent changes to the Companies Act 2006 and provided an update on charity governance. 64 representatives attended the event.

One of the key aims of the South Team is to enable the sector to participate and influence local strategic planning and decision making in Sefton. As a result, a seven-module training programme, focused on representation and influencing, has been developed.

Due South is the quarterly newsletter distributed to more than 550 VCF organisations in south Sefton. It includes news on local groups, funding and training opportunities and local events. A regular e-bulletin is also distributed to 220 local groups.

Also in the South of the borough, the Linacre and Derby Community Development Project was funded by Fair Share until December 2008. Based at Community Visions on Stanley Road, it offered information and advice to groups and residents and hosted services including the local credit union, the community accounting service, job search sessions and crime prevention surgeries.

The project also facilitated the L20 Zone, a local practitioner information network, and an accompanying quarterly magazine distributed to 4,000 local homes.
Key outputs 2008/9

- 6,500 people accessed services, information and advice at the Resource Centre in Southport.
- 2,692 capacity building interventions were undertaken.
- 925 face-to-face interventions were undertaken.
- 1,593 people accessed the Community Visions surgeries.
- Nine new community groups were established in the borough.
- The most requested interventions related to funding support, organisational capacity building and finance.

Community Accountancy Service

The Working Neighbourhoods Fund supports 60 per cent of the costs of the Community Accountancy Service for local groups. It has been established as a friendly and flexible service providing financial health checks, independent examinations, training and support to groups and treasurers. Customised training is also offered on subjects such as full cost recovery, cash flow forecasts and the duties and responsibilities arising from the Charities Act 2006.

The accountant - part of a network of six operated by the CVS organisations across Merseyside - has provided support to 83 organisations during the year.

The accountant also works with the Stepclever initiative, providing the same service for social enterprises in north Liverpool and south Sefton.

Key outputs 2008/9

- Accounting systems set up for 17 groups.
- Annual accounts prepared for 69 groups.
- Independent examinations carried out for 23 groups.

Payroll Service

CVS provides a payroll service for groups employing staff. The service includes preparing wage slips, calculating tax and national insurance contributions, registration with HM Revenue and Customs, preparing year-end figures and dealing with childcare voucher schemes, pension payments and payroll giving.

Key outputs 2008/9

- 17 groups used the Payroll Service.
The Funding Information Service aims to improve groups’ access to funding opportunities while building links with key funders and promoting their investment within Sefton.

Local organisations can access relevant information on these opportunities through funding surgeries, one-to-one support, training courses, bulletins and conferences.

Funded through ChangeUp Merseyside, the Merseyside Funding Information Portal (www.mfip.org.uk) is supported by the CVS network and local authorities of Greater Merseyside. Local groups can also receive an electronic bulletin containing funding updates and new opportunities to apply to funds.

Big Lottery Fund application support is available to groups that are developing submissions to Reaching Communities, Community Buildings and other funds. Building on business planning practice, organisations have been guided through the process of researching beneficiary needs, planning out proposed projects and developing outcomes in line with Big Lottery Fund guidance.

During the year, CVS helped Tweenie Tots 2 to obtain a Reaching Communities grant, while Lydiate Parish Council and Linacre Methodist Mission secured £500,000 each from the Community Buildings Fund with Sefton CVS support.

A range of other organisations including the Children’s Cancer Support Group, Netherton Park Community Association, Crossens Community Association and Sightline Vision (North West) Ltd have also been supported through the process.

CVS organised a major funders fair - The Sustainability Challenge - which was held at the Floral Hall in Southport in October 2008. The event was opened by Councillor Brenda Porter, Sefton’s Cabinet Member for Communities, and the keynote speaker was Andrew Robinson of CCLA Investments.

Representatives from charitable trusts and funders were available to meet VCF organisations. Workshops covered topics such as procurement and commissioning and asset management. 200 people attended the event.

Funding Information Service

CVS has also delivered special workshops and funding roadshow events, as well as training courses around fundraising as part of the Skills Development Calendar.

Key outputs 2008/9

- 2,500 subscriptions to the funding email service.
- Visits to the Funding Information Portal averaged 6,400 per month.
- £1,261,512 raised by Greater Merseyside organisations via the portal.
- 471 local organisations provided with funding advice.
- £1,401,361 raised for local groups as a direct result of CVS support.
Skills development

Sefton CVS provides a wide range of training opportunities to strengthen VCF groups and to offer personal development opportunities to their workforces.

During the year, 108 people attended 12 formal courses on topics including business planning, full cost recovery, procurement, health and safety and equality and diversity training. Increasingly, CVS is also providing intensive and customised support to organisations, for example governance training to trustees.

During the year CVS became an Accredited Centre for the Royal Society of Public Health and, in partnership with NHS Sefton, delivered two Understanding Health accredited courses. These will continue during 2009/10.

CVS also became an Open College Network Accredited Centre and successfully developed and delivered an Understanding the Common Core for People who Work with Children and Young People course. 48 learners attended the course during 2008/9 and this too will continue in the current year.

Other successful training initiatives included two VOLA-funded Healthy Way to Work courses which helped 24 women from very different backgrounds to improve their health, confidence and lifestyles. 110 people were also trained in basic health promotion.

CVS has also signed the Skills Pledge which is a voluntary, public commitment made by an organisation to invest in the skills of its workforce.

Key outputs 2008/9

- 31 training courses delivered to 324 people.

Business planning support

Groups are able to access targeted help from CVS with business planning to support the development and sustainability of their organisations.

A structured training programme guides organisations through a business planning process resulting in a detailed business plan being produced which outlines the organisation’s proposed priorities and actions for delivery. Assistance is also provided with developing a needs analysis and evidence base including questionnaires, local surveys and gathering relevant data to support the business plan.

Criminal Records Bureau Service

Sefton CVS is registered as an Umbrella Body with the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB).

This enables us to provide a key service to groups in the sector in contact with children, young people and vulnerable adults, by offering access to the Disclosure Service by the countersigning of applications on behalf of those organisations that do not have this service provided by a regional or national body. 52 groups used the service during the year with 305 disclosures being undertaken.

Employment advice and support

CVS launched the new Peninsular Employment Brokerage Service during the year. This scheme provides VCF organisations with access to the services of Peninsular, a leading employment law specialist, at discounted rates by virtue of a group scheme organised through Sefton CVS.
Community Researcher

Sefton CVS’s Community Researcher provides advice and support to VCF sector groups in south and central Sefton.

A four-day research and consultation training programme is offered twice yearly to residents living in the Working Neighbourhoods Fund areas. Participants are encouraged to carry out their research to benefit their local VCF sector or neighbourhood group.

The training meets the new standards included in the Sefton Borough Partnership’s Public Engagement & Consultation Framework and is Open College accredited at Level 3.

Each community project runs over several months and during this time it is the role of the Community Researcher to mentor and support each of the participants to complete their research. This is an opportunity for residents to increase their own skills and knowledge as well as benefiting their local group.

To date there have been six training courses with a total of 66 participants. In total 25 Community Research and Consultation certificates have been awarded with ten in the moderation process. Eight Volunteering Certificates and two Special Achievement Awards have also been presented.

The Community Researcher also works closely with partner agencies to ensure up to date data and information is readily available for groups to access to support and enhance their research and funding bids.

Community intelligence

Sefton CVS hosts a central Volbase database of intelligence on the local VCF sector.

This information is gathered through an annual mapping exercise, with questionnaires circulated to more than 1,200 organisations delivering services within Sefton. The mapping secures very respectable response rates - 49 per cent in 2008/9.

The information held on the Volbase database enabled the production of the State of the Sector Report 2008 and has been used to map VCF sector service provision across Sefton. It is also used to produce the Sefton CVS Directory, which has been recognised as a valuable resource by both the VCF sector and statutory agencies. A web-based search engine is also in development.

The information held on the Volbase database can be filtered, using layered searches, to meet specific requests for information on the local VCF Sector, while complying with data protection legislation. Demand for this information is increasing with 81 requests for specific information processed this year. The feedback received from those requesting information is very positive.

VCF sector information has also been provided to Sefton Council for the web-based Sefton Family Services Directory and the Find My Nearest Service directory.
Volunteer Centre Sefton

Volunteer Centre Sefton is a service providing support, advice, training and development opportunities for voluntary, community and faith organisations who recruit volunteers within Sefton.

Established for more than 30 years, the centre provides a brokerage service between organisations and potential volunteers via a national database, ‘Do It’.

Volunteer Centre Sefton is affiliated with Volunteering England and holds the Matrix standard of quality assurance.

The Volunteer Centre developed and maintains www.volunteeringmerseyside.org.uk, a Merseyside volunteering web portal that enables both potential volunteers and volunteer-involving organisations to access relevant information and advice about all aspects of volunteering and volunteer management. Almost 900 voluntary opportunities are marketed on the site with the 350 organisations registered. 1,664 volunteer enquiries were dealt with last year.

During the year, the Mayor of Sefton presented 223 certificates to volunteers working with Sefton-based organisations. The certificates recognised between 100 and 2,000 hours of formal volunteering.

In the past 12 months, through this scheme, volunteers in Sefton undertook 184,700 hours of volunteer work which, based on the average hourly pay in the 2008 survey of hours and earnings for Sefton, equates to a value of £2,321,679 to the local economy.

Vinvolved

Vinvolved is a three-year project funded by V, a national volunteering charity. The project aims to develop new volunteering opportunities for young people aged 16 to 25 that are supportive to the development and needs of young people.

The project also actively recruits young people into volunteering and increases their access by highlighting the opportunities available. Vinvolved is lead by young people for young people and enables them to support their community whilst building and developing individual skills. 571 volunteers were registered last year.

Innov8

Innov8 is a three-year project also funded by V. The project provides a volunteering mentoring and befriending scheme for young people aged 16 to 25. The project actively recruits and trains young people to mentor and befriend other young people.

The project also recruits those aged 16 to 25 who have low self-esteem, disability or mental health issue to be mentored. The project’s aim is to support young people and to enable them to develop the skills and confidence they need to move into other volunteering opportunities or education schemes. 150 young people were recruited during the year.

Express Sefton 08!

This project was funded via Liverpool’s Capital of Culture programme in partnership with Sefton MBC Tourism Department.

The project’s aim was to recruit and train volunteers to support event opportunities with Sefton, helping their personal development and providing visitors to the area with local knowledge from local people.

136 volunteers were registered during the year and supported events such as the World Firefighter Games, the Open Golf Tournament at Royal Birkdale and Southport Air Show.
Basis – Bridging the Gap

Bridging the Gap is a Big Lottery-funded project which aims to support voluntary and community organisations and projects that wish to develop mentoring and befriending services to support their clients.

The project provides one-to-one support and recognised training for volunteers and organisations to ensure that projects can successfully develop and operate suitable policies and procedures. 48 organisations were supported in 2008/9.

Connect

Connect was a six-month project fund via Connexions that ended on March 31st this year.

The project supported young people aged 16 to 24 into volunteering who identified themselves as having extra support needs such as learning disabilities, physical disabilities and/or mental health issues. The project provided one-to-one support for young people via volunteer mentors within the local community.

North Sefton Social Inclusion Project

This project, funded by Sefton PCT and Sefton MBC’s Health and Social Care Directorate, supports older people, particularly those who are socially isolated due to physical disability, sensory disability, long-term illness or bereavement.

The project provides social clubs to reduce isolation for older people, which 35 people regularly attend. A shopping service for older people who are housebound or have poor mobility supports 16 regular clients, through a group of volunteer shoppers.

The project is supported by a team of volunteers who provide input into the development of services and receive training tailored to meet the needs of the people they support.

Handy Help Service

This project, also funded by Sefton PCT and Sefton MBC’s Health and Social Care Directorate, focuses on accident prevention and carrying out small household repairs for people aged over 60 in north Sefton. The service can also help to fit new equipment or upgrade home security.

The aim of the service is to provide the advice and support that people need to continue living independently and to support their general health and wellbeing. The service made 766 visits in 2008/9 and conducted over 900 separate repairs and adaptations. It has more than 2,000 users on its database.
The Safer and Stronger Communities (SSC) Team leads in engaging the VCF sector in the Safer and Stronger Communities agenda as part of the work of the Sefton Borough Partnership.

A key aspect of this work involves the co-ordination of the Sefton Community Empowerment Network (CEN), a ‘network of networks’ giving more than 650 local VCF groups a voice in local decision-making.

The CEN provides the principal mechanism for representing Sefton VCF sector organisations across a range of thematic areas and partnerships, and has also worked closely with the Sefton Equalities Partnership to ensure that the views of under-represented communities are heard within local decision-making processes.

The team also supports the development of the Local Area Agreement (LAA) which was refreshed in 2008/9, establishing the VCF sector’s priorities in terms of influencing and shaping services aimed at reducing crime, the fear of crime and other related initiatives (including Respect and emergency planning) and the development of Community Safety Area Partnerships across Sefton.

The team is also responsible for co-ordinating actions to support the delivery of an existing LAA national target to increase the number of people engaged in volunteering locally. The new LAA also includes an additional target which is to measure the contribution a ‘thriving third sector’ makes to local communities. This was the theme of the CEN conference in September 2008.

During the year the team disseminated information on a wide variety of key policy areas affecting the VCF Sector and wider Sefton community. Policy briefings are prepared as digests of policy documents, such as the Planning for a Sustainable Future White Paper and the Communities in Control White Paper.

The team has also facilitated consultation events and provided training sessions to ensure the sector is knowledgeable about local decision-making structures.

The SSC team also provides lead support for the Sefton Compact, which focuses on establishing best practice in partnership working between the Sefton public and VCF sectors. A conference on this theme was held in November 2008, with Paula Barassi of NCVO giving the main address.

Work has also continued with HMP Kennet in Maghull. The aim of this project is to enable VCF Sector organisations to effectively engage with the prison in delivering quality services to offenders. Sefton CVS’s HMP Kennet Liaison Worker has continued to deliver activities and projects which help to reduce the risk of re-offending.
Network South

Network South has a wide membership of more than 450 voluntary, community, faith and neighbourhood organisations within south and central Sefton.

Quarterly open meetings during the year provided a platform to link local VCF groups to statutory service providers, enabling groups to develop and strengthen their influence over local developments.

The meetings, themed around the Local Area Agreement priorities, focused on key issues including developing sustainable communities, practical ways to create safer and stronger communities and health inequalities.

At the health inequalities meeting it was identified that the Seaforth area did not have any fruit and vegetable outlet. Members therefore agreed to set up a fruit and vegetable scheme at the local community centre which was due to be launched in September 2009.

Providing access to information about new developments and changes in service delivery within the sector is another important aspect of the work of Network South. Member organisations receive the Due South newsletter and regular e-bulletins updating them on news and forthcoming events.

Network South’s core group continues to drive the network forward and has revisited its aims to ensure that these are still relevant and achievable. The group has agreed to review the terms of reference in the current year.

Southport and Formby VCF Forum

The North Sefton Developing Communities Team facilitates the Southport and Formby VCF Groups Forum which organises events and acts as the conduit between the VCF and statutory sectors in the area. Members of the Executive Committee have seats on the Southport Partnership, the Sefton Borough Partnership and a range of other strategic partnerships.

In Autumn 2008, the forum hold an event at which delegates heard presentations on current and planned regeneration initiatives in Southport. The aim was to support sustainable and cohesive community activity alongside the development of capital regeneration projects in the area.

The Forum AGM was held in March 2009 and attended by representatives of 28 organisations. The new Chief Executive of Sefton Council, Margaret Carney, spoke about her first few months in Sefton and her initial impressions of the strength and diversity of the VCF sector in the borough.

Delegates were also given an overview of current strategies relating to older people by Andrew Booth, Chief Executive of SPAC. Topics covered included individualised and personalised budgets and the implications for VCF organisations delivering services to older people.

Currently there are 217 organisations registered with the VCF Groups Forum.

Giving the sector a voice

| CEN Sefton Networks (Geographic) |
Fawcett Society Sefton Branch

The Fawcett Society promotes the positive contribution that women make to society and campaigns to remove barriers that exclude women. 122 people are signed up to the network.

Highlights of the year included a balloon release to launch the Sefton Says No To Violence Against Women campaign and an International Women’s Day event to raise the profile of justice for rape victims.

Other events included a reclaim the night march, the launch of a book club and a trip to see the play, Lady of Burma. As part of Sefton’s Diversity Week in November, the branch held an event to look at women and the so-called ‘concrete ceiling’.

Embrace

Embrace is a network for lesbian, gay and bisexual (LGB) residents which informs the development of relevant policies and procedures within Sefton’s public and voluntary sectors.

Highlights of the year for the network included organising the first LGBT Jobs Fair in Sefton as part of Diversity Week in November. In February, to celebrate LGBT History Month, Embrace and In-Trust held a special screening of the award-winning film Milk at the Plaza Cinema in Waterloo attended by 280 people.

Members also supported Age Concern Liverpool’s Silver Pride event, which highlighted issues of concern to older LGBT people.

Embrace and In-Trust are now working on the establishment of a Merseyside LGBT charter of rights and kitemark scheme. 64 members are now registered with the network which has seen a recent increase in women members.

In-Trust

In-Trust is a network to support men and women with an intersex or transgendered history. It currently has 38 members.

During the year In-Trust won an award for innovation from the North West Employers’ organisation. The network also presents its own award recognising good practice in supporting transgendered men and women in the workplace. This year’s winner was NHS Sefton.

The award was presented during a special event - Trans Mersey Pride 08 - which was organised for public sector and VCF delegates from across the North West to highlight ways of supporting transgendered people in their areas.

Other successful network initiatives during the year included a programme to train a group of people to deliver transgender equality training in the area. Plans were also initiated for a safe house for trans people.

Talking Men

Talking Men is a network run in conjunction with NHS Sefton which aims to raise awareness of a range of men’s health and lifestyle issues.

In November a health information event was held at the Salvation Army in Bootle. This included cholesterol and blood pressure checks and advice on how to access support with issues such as how to stop smoking. A wide range of health-related literature was also available. Five people were advised to contact their GP as a result of potential health problems identified at the event.

Talking Men also has a website which provides information and signposts visitors to men’s groups who work to improve men’s health such as the White Ribbon Campaign and CALM.
ABILITY

The ABILITY network is a single point of access for public bodies to consult and engage with disabled people in Sefton, thus ensuring they have a voice in local decision making. 80 members are registered with the network.

The network also co-ordinates a range of projects including a mystery shopper group that can test the accessibility of services in its broadest sense and Sefton Access Forum, now recognised as the conduit for public bodies to use to consult on matters relating to physical access, the built environment and inclusive design.

ABILITY also runs meet the directors and service providers events, a model of consultation and engagement between the network and decision makers from a range of partner organisations.

During the year ABILITY was honoured for its efforts to involve disabled people in decision making with an Equality and Diversity Award from the North West Employers’ Organisation.

Faith Communities Network

The Faith Communities Network focuses on themed events and faith representation to the key strategic bodies in the borough. The Diocese of Liverpool facilities the network for Sefton CVS and members receive regular email communications.

During the year open meetings were held looking at vulnerable adults and young people and citizenship. Links have also been developed with the Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education and new work is underway following the appointment of a Chaplain at Hugh Baird College.

The network is also preparing to repeat the Living Faiths in Sefton mapping exercise of faith communities first undertaken in 2004. In total the network has 98 members.

Transform

The Transform network brings together VCF sector organisations with a particular interest in environment-related matters. It holds open meetings for members to discuss key issues.

Themes covered during the year included waste management, low carbon economies and adapting to climate change.

The network has also been strengthening its contacts with public sector organisations operating in Sefton, to increase its influence in terms of environmental issues. In total, 94 members are now registered with Transform.
The Every Child Matters Forum operates as part of Sefton’s Community Empowerment Network and plays a key role in children and young people’s service planning, bringing together agencies with an interest in delivering services for children and young people aged 0-19 years and their families.

The overarching aim of the Forum - which has a membership of around 190 - is to develop a strategic approach to services for children, young people and their families in all sectors.

It is particularly concerned with promoting the co-ordinated development of services across the borough through inter-agency working, and supporting the involvement of voluntary and community organisations in planning and development processes.

The Forum continues to be represented on the Children and Young People’s Thematic Group – now the Children’s Trust Board - and the five Every Child Matters themed performance management groups.

CVS also participates in the Children’s Trust Executive (CTE), which is tasked with co-ordinating the development of Children’s Trust arrangements in Sefton.

Membership also extends to another 12 relevant strategic bodies for children and young people, such as the Extended Schools Steering Group and the sector is represented within the local Safeguarding Children Board’s structures at all levels.

Over the past year, forum meetings have included presentations on policy developments and information on funding opportunities, new initiatives and service developments, including:

- Policy developments such as Workforce Reform, The Children’s Plan - Building Brighter Futures and Safeguarding Children.
- Integrated processes such as the Common Assessment Framework, Lead Professional and Contact Point.
- Consultation and engagement exercises on topics such as Sefton’s Children and Young People’s Plan, the Local Area Agreement and the Children’s Health Services Commissioning Review.

Youth Providers Network

The Youth Provider’s Network was initially set up as a sub-group of the Every Child Matters Forum and comprises a network of groups and organisations from across Sefton. The meetings provided a strategic approach to matters relating to the age range of 13-19 years.

The group is now run virtually via an email network and provides information relating to funding, training and other opportunities. There are currently 54 providers in the group, including statutory, voluntary and community sector organisations.
The aim of the Health and Wellbeing Development Team is to support and raise awareness of the work of the VCF sector in improving the health and quality of life of adults living and working in Sefton.

The project facilitates the Health and Social Care Forum and has been involved in a number of initiatives to ensure the VCF voice is heard and to widen participation in the modernising agenda, including developing relationships with the new PCT and the outcome of Sefton’s Major Service Review.

Forum members have been consulted on setting the vision and priorities of the new Local Area Agreement, Sefton’s Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and the baseline review of End of Life Services.

The forum is also involved in Sefton Council’s Transforming Social Care and NHS Sefton’s Transforming Community Services agendas to ensure the VCF sector is supported as transformation of services takes place over the coming years.

The forum also continues to work with Social Services in developing sector engagement through thematic groups focusing on mental health, working with older people and advocacy. Through these groups the sector has contributed to discussions relating to the Mental Health Capacity Act, older people’s mental health services and individual budgets in social care. The group focusing on older people has been involved in the development of the Sefton Partnership for Older Citizens.

The forum is widely represented in a variety of partnerships and its members are kept informed of the latest developments in health, social care and children and young people issues through an information exchange bulletin.

Healthy Communities Development Worker

A new Healthy Communities Development Worker post was established in January 2009. The aim of the post is to work in partnership with NHS Sefton and Sefton Council to support work on the five priorities set out in the NHS Strategic Commissioning Plan (2008-2013) and to tackle health inequalities in the borough.

There are two projects currently in operation. The Healthy Communities Collaborative aims to tackle obesity through clinical and community engagement and puts the people who live and work in the community firmly in the driving seat in terms of making changes and influencing practice.

The second project - Healthy Settings - is working to encourage organisations within the VCF sector in Sefton to become more health promoting.
Sefton LINk

Sefton Local Involvement Network (LINk) was established in April 2008 and is an independent volunteer network of Sefton residents and local groups who want to help improve the design and delivery of health and social care services provided in Sefton.

The LINk works closely with key providers of services in Sefton and has statutory powers to visit and inspect premises where these services are delivered.

Sefton LINk currently has 250 members who have already helped create a stronger local voice that finds out what local issues and concerns are and then holds local services to account. Sefton LINk acts as the ‘critical friend’ to the service providers, scrutinising and monitoring the services they provide.

In the 12 months since being established Sefton LINk has:

- Established good working relationships with its key partners eg Sefton Council, NHS Sefton, Aintree Hospital, Mersey Care, Sefton Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Adult Social Care Services.
- Attended over 120 meetings with local organisations and key partners to explain the role of the LINk and to identify local issues and concerns.
- Developed its work plan and identified the priorities to be addressed.
- Represented the LINk on numerous groups and committees with key partners eg NHS Trust board meetings, patient access groups and various consultation exercises.
- Held various meetings across Sefton to which the general public have been invited to express their views on a range of issues.

Knowsley LINk

In October 2008 Sefton CVS was successful in its bid to become the host organisation for the Local Involvement Network (LINk) for Knowsley.

By January 2009 the Knowsley LINk support team was in place, based in the Knowsley CVS offices, and key developments to date include:

- Producing the governance documents for the LINk.
- Writing a joint working protocol with Knowsley’s Health and Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- Developing a structure for the forum and an election process.
- Outreach activities to increase the membership.
- Partnership working to help develop a network of contacts for Knowsley LINk. This included a mapping exercise of Knowsley to identify key partners to engage with.
- Designing and producing promotional materials including the launch of a Facebook group and the Knowsley LINk website.
- Introductory training for new LINk members.

The inaugural Knowsley LINk AGM was attended by 108 community members and partners involved with the organisation. The membership elected the Core Group and workshops were undertaken to inform the action plan that Knowsley LINk is working on in the current year.
Working in partnership is a key role for Sefton CVS and the organisation is recognised as a key strategic partner by Sefton Council, NHS Sefton and other members of the Sefton Borough Partnership.

CVS brings the voice of the VCF sector to the partnership table, using its various networks as the principle engagement mechanism in terms of joint planning processes in the borough.

Working in partnership also provides an opportunity for bringing innovation and best practice to new initiatives and enables resources to be used effectively and creatively.

Examples of partnership working include:

- CVS acts as Vice Chair to the Southport Partnership and facilitates VCF involvement with the Partnership via the Southport and Formby VCF Groups Forum.
- Working with HMP Kennet, the Category C Prison in Maghull. CVS promotes joint working between the prison and the VCF sector brokering additional services in line with the National Offender Management Service and Reducing Re-offending Strategy.
- CVS and the forums have contributed to the development of the Safeguarding Children Board Business Plan, Integrated Youth Support and Sefton’s Emergency Planning.
- CVS has been a key partner in the development of the Child Poverty Pilot for Sefton.
- Working with Sefton Council, the Equalities Partnership has developed the borough’s Consultation and Engagement Strategy.
- CVS, in partnership with St Helens CVS and Churches Together in the Merseyside Region, produced the publication Partnership People on behalf of IDeA which looks at how elected members work in partnership with the VCF sector. A group of elected members from Sefton were involved in this project.
- CVS has co-ordinated VCF involvement in the development of Sefton’s Cultural Strategy. CVS acts as Chair to the Sefton Cultural Forum.
- CVS is part of a consortium including Merseyside Expanding Horizons, South Sefton Development Trust, Vauxhall Neighbourhood Council and Blackburne House which is delivering support to social enterprises as part of StepClever, the Sefton and Liverpool Enterprise Growth Initiative (SLEGi).
- CVS is continuing to work with partner organisations in supporting the principles of the Compact, a partnership protocol for national and local government and other organisations informing how they work with the VCF sector.

Sub-regional partnerships

- Sefton CVS acts as the lead and accountable body for Greater Merseyside ChangeUp and facilitates the ChangeUp consortium of VCF infrastructure organisations working in Greater Merseyside.
- Sefton CVS is the CVS representative for Merseyside on the Greater Merseyside Connexions Partnership Board.
- Sefton CVS leads the programme management for VOLA (Voluntary Organisation Learning Association), Greater Merseyside’s VCF sector learning consortium.

Regional working

- CVS is a member of the Five Counties Partnership, the North West ChangeUp lead bodies who share best practice across the region.
- CVS is also a member of the North West Infrastructure Partnership which is formulating a plan for VCF infrastructure and delivery in the region.
Sefton Equalities Partnership is a multi-agency project that works with key statutory, voluntary and community organisations to deliver on equality, diversity, cohesion and engagement across Sefton.

The initiative, managed by Sefton CVS, was formed in April 2006. Staff were seconded from the Council to CVS to work with Community Empowerment Network staff on the equality and diversity agenda and create additional forums and networks.

Sefton Equalities Partnership has been supporting the equality networks with the aim of making Sefton a more inclusive place to live, work and play.

A new framework has been developed for public engagement and consultation which puts local people at its heart. The framework has been adopted by partners and is supported by a Standards Panel which is now fully operational.

At the end of March this panel had met twice and four consultation and engagement schemes had been approved - Better Health Better Life, Air Quality Management Areas, Core Strategy and the Single Equality Scheme for Sefton.

The strategy and approach to community cohesion has been refreshed and is being rolled out across all members of the Sefton Borough Partnership.

With the networks for under-represented groups the Partnership has developed the first draft Single Equality Scheme for Sefton and this is currently being consulted on.

The Partnership has also helped Sefton Council to progress to 84 per cent of Level Four of the Local Government Equality Standard, refreshed its gender, race and disability equality schemes and put new action plans put in place.

Diversity Week

Diversity Week events were held in November 2008 to showcase the work that is taking place across Sefton to celebrate diversity as an economic, social and cultural asset.

These events included the Shining Stars Awards, celebrating young people’s achievements in the borough, which were attended by dignitaries, parents and children. Awards were made by Sefton CVS, Sefton Council, Sefton Equalities Partnership and NHS Sefton amongst others, and the evening concluded with the group Eton Road playing live.

Other events included a Diversity in Employment Conference held at Southport Convention Centre, a faith, youth and citizen event hosted by Sefton Faith Network at Hugh Baird College and a Merseyside Compact event with an address by Paul Barasi, NCVO’s Compact Officer.

The Partnership’s Holocaust Memorial Project received an award from the North West Employers’ Organisation for its work with schools and community groups that culminated in a six-week art exhibition at the Atkinson Art Gallery in Southport. The first Sefton Hate Crime Week was also held in February 2009.
VOLA, Greater Merseyside’s VCF sector learning consortium, exists to provide a formal structure for supporting the sector in the area of learning and skills provision and associated information, advice and guidance (IAG) services.

Created in 2007, VOLA aims to build the capacity and capabilities of the sector to respond and contribute to the Government’s agenda on learning and skills, with the ultimate goal of enabling more collaborative working between organisations, in particular around the delivery of public-funded learning and skills contracts.

Initially, VOLA was formed through a partnership of four founding organisations - Sefton CVS, Blackburne House, Merseyside Network for Europe and the Workers’ Educational Association (WEA). By March 2009, consortium membership has grown to more than 150 organisations.

A Partnership Board, made up of the four founding partners and representatives of the wider consortium membership, provides strategic direction to the consortium’s development. The VOLA management team, employed by Sefton CVS, provides an administrative hub for the work of the consortium.

Key achievements
In the first 18 months of operation, to the end of March 2009, VOLA succeeded in:

- Building an active membership base spanning the six boroughs of Greater Merseyside.
- Engaging and up-skilling more than 1,000 learners from LSC target groups.
- Developing robust contract management processes and involving 40 member organisations in the delivery of consortium contracts.
- Sampling the workforce development needs of 25 member organisations and providing a comprehensive programme of training and support.
- Engaging more than 100 member organisations in activities to improve the quality of teaching and learning delivery, including the provision of more than 70 initial teacher education (PTLLS) qualifications.
- Developing good practice networks and brokering new links between organisations that have not previously worked together.
- Winning a range of contracts to deliver learning opportunities, undertake research and promote workforce development opportunities.

VOLA, through Blackburne House, is currently leading one of the ten national Adult Advancement Network Prototypes, the only voluntary sector-led prototype in the country. VOLA also co-ordinates a programme of learning to more than 150 learners in disadvantaged groups through the Neighbourhood Learning in Deprived Communities (NLDC) fund in Sefton.

More recently, VOLA has been awarded two significant LSC contracts. One aims to increase the sector’s involvement in Train to Gain and the Skills Pledge while the other is focused on the delivery of functional IT skills in the workplace. These contracts were set to run from summer 2009 until December 2010 and are key to securing VOLA’s sustainability in the short to medium term.
The Greater Merseyside ChangeUp Consortium was formed in early 2005 and includes 18 principal infrastructure bodies that serve frontline organisations. Sefton CVS is ChangeUp’s lead and accountable body in the area.

ChangeUp is dedicated to ensuring that in Merseyside ‘by 2014 the needs of frontline organisations will be met by support which is available nationwide, structured for maximum efficiency, offering excellent provision which is accessible to all while reflecting and promoting diversity, and is sustainably funded’.

Greater Merseyside ChangeUp was funded to develop four specific projects:

- **Proving Value**, a three-year project which involves the development of a data gathering and reporting mechanism for infrastructure organisations.
- **Tips and Tools**, a one-year project that has developed an online diagnostic tool (www.kar-tool.org.uk) and trained and supported a team of copyright and licensing experts.
- **Tendering and Procurement Support (TaPS)**, a three-year project which will provide a ‘one-stop-shop’ for advice, information and support and will enable organisations interested in becoming involved in public service delivery to access specialist support services.
- **Consortium Development Fund**, another three-year project which ensures the ongoing development and support of the ChangeUp Consortium and includes the Development Exchange, a networking and training resource for advice and support staff employed by Consortium member organisations.

The Greater Merseyside ChangeUp Programme Management Team has ensured that the programme continues to meet Capacitybuilders required outcomes, outputs and monitoring requirements and that the support and development needs of both infrastructure and frontline organisations are met.

**Highlights of the year included:**

- **March 2008-November 2009** - 13 chief executives/senior managers from Consortium member organisations undertook the Institute of Directors (IoD) training programme.
- **September-November 2008** - 23 participants undertook the Making Sense of Leadership programme developed by Greater Merseyside ChangeUp.
- **October 2008** - the Demonstrating the Impact brochure was published, showing the key investments that ChangeUp made between 2005 and 2008.
- **May 2008** - the launch of the GRIPP online diagnostic tool (www.gripp.org.uk). 320 organisations have used it to date.
- **May 2008** - 56 staff attended the Making a Case - Proving a Point marketing conference.
- **January 2009** - TaPS Project Manager appointed.
- **February 2009** - First Development Exchange Conference held, attended by 54 staff.
- **February 2009** - National Audit Office Building the Capacity of the Third Sector report is published and includes Greater Merseyside ChangeUp as an example of good practice.
- **February-March 2009** - delivered nine recession-focused projects including a Greater Merseyside third sector recession consultation.
- **March 2009** - First TaPS Steering Group meeting held.
- **March 2009** - three BASIS Round Two submissions, endorsed by ChangeUp, awarded a combined £1.5 million over three years (Chara Trust, Knowsley CVS and Wirral CVS).
Children and Young People’s Network Co-ordinator

The role of the Children and Young People’s Network Co-ordinator was established after a need for better co-ordination and support for neighbourhood-based activities for children and young people was identified. The project ran for over two years and was funded by NRF until October 2008. The aims of the project included:

- Establishing links between youth delivery agents, existing partnerships, initiatives and policy developments at a neighbourhood level in the NRF areas of Sefton.
- Identifying gaps in provision and helping groups to develop projects to fill these gaps.
- Developing appropriate networks for providers so they could share views, ideas and best practice.
- Organising training opportunities in subjects such as sexual health awareness, conflict management and drug awareness.
- Signposting groups to other areas of support, including funding and training.

Children’s Workforce Reform

This project, funded by the Children’s Workforce Development Council, aims to help organisations develop the skills of their workforce to ensure they meet the new requirements expected of those working as paid and unpaid staff in the sector.

A mapping exercise was undertaken amongst voluntary, community, private and independent providers of children and young people’s services in Liverpool and Sefton to establish the level of knowledge of the workforce development agenda and to respond to the capacity needs of the sector.

Following this exercise, a workforce development induction pack and fact sheets were prepared for use by groups. A range of Level 1 courses have also been developed to introduce the Common Core Skills to organisations.

A grant from NAVCA enabled the project to offer initial safeguarding training to VCF organisations working with children. 42 people attended the Level 1 training. A further 33 individuals participated in an e-learning pilot.

Supporting groups and raising funds

The Voluntary and Community Sector Support Project helps build the capacity of VCF sector groups working with children and young people. The project supports the active involvement of VCF organisations in the work of the Every Child Matters Forum.

The project is also involved in promoting funding streams that help to tackle social exclusion and child poverty. During 2008/9 the project worked with 282 groups, 130 of which were small groups with an income of less than £20,000 per year. A total of £301,000 was raised for groups as a result of the support provided by the project.
Young Apprentices Programme

This is a new programme, developed in partnership with Sefton Council’s Working Neighbourhoods Fund. The aim of the programme is to develop the skills of young people in targeted neighbourhoods by providing work placements and training for them within voluntary and community youth settings.

There are currently 21 young people involved in the programme and they have been accepted onto placements within seven youth organisations in the Working Neighbourhoods Fund areas.

All the current Young Apprentices are involved in innovative opportunities such as activities worker, youth worker and peer mentoring roles. Each placement is led by what the young person wants to get out of the programme and how they can develop their skills through their placement experience.

Sefton Voices

Sefton Voices aims to increase the involvement of children and young people in decision-making and develops children and young people’s confidence and skills to give them a voice. The project is funded through Children’s Services and the Working Neighbourhoods Fund.

Its services include:

- Developing creative, art-based techniques to support the participation of children and young people.
- The Sefton Young Advisors scheme which equips a group of young people aged from 15-21 with the skills to assess and evaluate the quality of public services and carry out research and consultation that responds to needs identified by local children and young people. They can also ‘youth-proof’ adult-led organisations to make them more likely to successfully engage with young people.
- Raising awareness of children’s rights and participation through workshops and training for children and young people and/or adults.

- The Playin’ Out project which offers inclusive, outdoor play opportunities in ‘play deserts’ throughout Sefton by working in partnership with a consortium of play-related projects and other relevant partners.

Sefton Voices uses its involvement in strategic partnerships to help agencies develop inclusive structures that will involve children and young people in the design and delivery of services from the outset. Examples of involvement include:

- Being invited to make a presentation to Merseyside Police Authority on the impact of current anti-social behaviour deterrents for young people.
- Consulting with primary schoolchildren, as well as other young people, about changes they would like to see in their communities.
- Taking part in a discussion session during a ministerial visit to Sefton by Hazel Blears and Andy Burnham.
- Two of Young Advisors being invited to the cabinet meeting that was held in Liverpool in February 2009 where they met Gordon Brown, Jack Straw and other ministers.
WorkZONE provides a comprehensive information, advice and guidance service to assist unemployed/workless residents of north Sefton into work or training with particular emphasis on priority neighbourhoods and groups.

A total of 285 new clients registered with WorkZONE during the year. The project helped 84 to find work with 68 taking up training opportunities and 26 going into volunteering.

Initiatives
In the third quarter of the year WorkZONE re-launched its StreetWise initiative, a doorstep canvassing programme in the WNF wards of Southport as part of a multi-agency approach to providing help with issues affecting unemployed people including housing, debt and health.

The initiative carried out 161 doorstep interviews, distributed 1,500 information packs to households and raised awareness of other CVS services such as the North Sefton Social Inclusion project and Handy help.

Child Poverty Innovation Pilot
WorkZONE provided input into the delivery plan for the pilot and its working relationship with families provided data for the bid and identified families with children who may wish to participate.

Partnership working
In partnership with Sefton@Work, WorkZONE helped to deliver the Identity and Passport Services (IPS) Routeway Programme in Southport. The programme involved an intensive return to work course to prepare clients for a work placement at IPS and ultimately paid employment.

Seven clients successfully completed the programme and received a certificate in recognition of their achievement presented at a graduation ceremony by IPS’s Head of Support Services.

Responsive services
The first impact of the economic recession on the local labour market filtered through in October 2008 and in January this escalated into a rapid increase in footfall and referrals, particularly from Jobcentre Plus.

The profile of clients seeking assistance changed and a balance had to be struck between assisting the hard-to-reach, long-term unemployed and more skilled people who were experiencing unemployment for the first time.

A significant increase in clients aged 50 plus was recorded in the last quarter of the year. This placed additional pressure on the service as many of these clients do not have a CV, lack the necessary IT skills to complete online applications and have not attended an interview in many years. Creative use of co-funding opportunities with partners has resulted in the break in employment being short for some of these clients.
I have pleasure in presenting the financial statements of Sefton CVS for the period 2008/9.

Sefton CVS has, wherever possible, diversified its funding sources for the development of specific projects. The income has dropped £1.2 million from last year to £3,618,850. This was expected and planned for by the organisation, and was due to project changes. The core services are highly dependent upon the continued support of Sefton Council with their contribution of £166,480.

The Trustees have considered the reserves of the charity and designated funds and have concluded that, to allow the organisation to be managed efficiently and to provide a buffer for uninterrupted services, a general reserve of approximately six months of unrestricted core expenditure should be maintained. This equates to £279,911 for this year.

The Finance Sub-committee regularly reviews the organisation’s investment policy, taking into consideration the fluctuations in the investment market. Excess funds are held in cash deposit schemes with the bank giving quick access to funds in the interest of ongoing liquidity.

I would like to thank the finance team for their continued hard work. Colin Antrobus and Steve Hughes of auditors Gasking, Lace and Company are also to be thanked for ensuring our compliance with legislative requirements. I have proposed their re-election at the annual general meeting.

Simon Sharman
Treasurer – on behalf of the Trustees

Funders
- Sefton Council
- Sefton Social Services
- Sefton Children’s Services
- Neighbourhood Renewal Fund
- Working Neighbourhoods Fund
- Safer and Stronger Communities Fund
- Supporting People
- NHS Sefton
- European Regional Development Fund
- Learning and Skills Council
- Capacity Builders
- Big Lottery
- Greater Merseyside Connexions Partnership
- Neighbourhood Learning in Deprived Communities
- Fair Share
- Children in Need
- HMP Kennet/NW ROMS
- Children’s Workforce Development Council
- Young Person’s Advisory Service
- Local Enterprise Growth initiative
### Financial statement

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| NET INCOME/(OUTGOING) RESOURCES BEFORE TRANSFERS | Gross transfers between funds | (12,673) | 12,673 | 0 | 0 |
| NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS | (111,116) | (86,178) | 481,146 |
| BALANCE BROUGHT FORWARD | 854,531 | 1,543,266 | 1,062,120 |
| BALANCE CARRIED FORWARD | 713,673 | 743,415 | 1,457,088 | 1,543,266 |

**Statement from the Sefton CVS Trustees**

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the special provisions of Part VII of the Companies Act 1985 as they relate to medium companies.

Margaret Hardman - Director
Approved by the Board on September 14th 2009

Simon Sharman - Director

The summarised accounts are a summary of information extracted from the annual accounts and certain information relating to both the statement of financial activities and the balance sheet.

These summarised accounts may not contain sufficient information to allow for a full understanding of the financial affairs of the charity. For further information, the full annual accounts which have been subject to audit by Gasking, Lace & Co and received an unqualified opinion, and the Trustees’ annual report, should be consulted. Copies of these can be obtained from Sefton Council for Voluntary Service, 3rd Floor, Merseyside 3C Centre, 16 Crosby Road North, Waterloo, Liverpool L22 0NY.

The annual accounts were approved by the Trustees on September 14th 2008 and have been submitted to the Charity Commission.

Signed
For and on behalf of the Trustees
## Balance Sheet

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<td>53,855</td>
<td>59,456</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CURRENT ASSETS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Debtors</td>
<td>49,876</td>
<td>383,317</td>
<td>433,193</td>
<td>845,402</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cash at bank and in hand</td>
<td>847,130</td>
<td>528,294</td>
<td>1,375,424</td>
<td>1,132,035</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>897,006</td>
<td>911,611</td>
<td>1,808,617</td>
<td>1,977,437</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CREDITORS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amounts falling due within one year</td>
<td>230,535</td>
<td>174,849</td>
<td>405,384</td>
<td>493,627</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NET CURRENT ASSETS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>666,471</td>
<td>736,762</td>
<td>1,403,233</td>
<td>1,483,810</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>713,673</td>
<td>743,415</td>
<td>1,457,088</td>
<td>1,543,266</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>FINANCED BY:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>THE FUNDS OF THE CHARITY</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unrestricted</td>
<td>713,673</td>
<td></td>
<td>713,673</td>
<td>654,156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restricted</td>
<td></td>
<td>743,415</td>
<td>743,415</td>
<td>407,963</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL CHARITY FUNDS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>713,673</td>
<td>743,415</td>
<td>1,457,088</td>
<td>1,062,119</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Independent auditors’ statement to the Trustees of Sefton CVS
We have examined the summarised financial statements of Sefton Council for Voluntary Service.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and auditors
The Trustees are responsible for preparing the summarised annual report in accordance with the applicable law. Our responsibility is to report to you our opinion on the consistency of the summarised financial statements with the summarised annual report with the full financial statements and Trustees’ Report. We also read the other information contained in the summarised annual report and consider the implications for our report if we become aware of any apparent mis-statements or material inconsistencies with the summarised financial statements.

Basis of opinion
We conducted our own work in accordance with Bulletin 1999/6, "An auditors’ statement on the summary financial statement", issued by the Auditing Practices Board for use in the United Kingdom.

Opinion
In our opinion the summarised financial statements are consistent with the full financial statements and Trustees’ Report of Sefton Council for Voluntary Service for the year ended March 31st 2009.

Signed Gasking, Lace & Co
September 16th 2009
Registered office:
Third Floor
Merseyside 3tc Building
16 Crosby Road North
Waterloo
Liverpool
L22 0NY
Tel: 0151 920 0726
Fax: 0151 920 1036
E-mail: mail@seftoncvs.org.uk
Website: www.seftoncvs.org.uk

Southport office:
Shakespeare Centre
Shakespeare Street
Southport
Merseyside
PR8 5AB
Tel: 01704 501024
Fax: 01704 531192
Registered in England and Wales
as a Company
Limited by Guarantee No: 2832920
Registered Charity No: 1024546

Membership/affiliations
National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO)
National Association for Voluntary and
Community Action (NACVA)
Volunteer England
Merseyside Environmental Trust
Community Matters
Child Poverty Action Group
Association of Community Workers
Association of Chief Executives of Voluntary
Organisations (ACEVO)
Chartered Institute of Personnel &
Development

Auditors:
Gasking, Lace & Co Ltd
40 Crosby Road North
Waterloo
Liverpool
L22 4QF

Bankers:
HSBC
197 Stanley Road
Bootle
Merseyside
L20 3DX

Solicitors:
Yaffe Jackson Ostrin
1 Temple Court
Victoria Street
Liverpool
L2 6PY

Principal insurers:
David Edwards
Insurance Brokers
Herring House
98 High Street
Henley-in-Arden
Solihull
B95 5BY

Board of Directors
Margaret Hardman MBE (Chair)
Dave Roscoe (Vice-Chair)
Simon Sharman (Honorary Treasurer)
Paul Cummins
Ullan Russell
Mike Hornfray (resigned Jan 2009)
Louise Barry
John Marsden (resigned Oct 2008)
Lesley Patterson (resigned May 2008)
Godwin Bateren
Ruth Smart
David McGregor (appointed May 2009)
Angela White (Chief Executive
and Company Secretary)

Patron: The Worshipful the Mayor of Sefton
Hon. Life President: WH Davidson MBE

Sefton MBC advisors and
representatives
Cllr A Hill
Cllr A Doran (to March 2009)
Cllr B Porter (from April 2009)
Cllr D Veidman

Executive Committee:
Chair – Margaret Hardman MBE
The Executive Committee is the Board
of Directors, which has the governance
responsibility for Sefton CVS.

Sub committees
Finance Sub-committee:
Chair – Simon Sharman
The Finance Sub-committee reviews the
fiscal information and systems, and the
management of Sefton CVS’s investments.

Projects and Performance
Sub-committee:
Chair – Ullan Russell
The Projects and Performance Sub-
committee is responsible for reviewing
the performance of the organisation and
for developing CVS’s project work and
evaluating new and existing initiatives.

Corporate Management Sub-committee:
Chair – Margaret Hardman MBE
The Corporate Management Sub-committee
is responsible for considering the strategic
development, policy and planning of CVS.
As part of the work of this Sub-committee
there is an Editorial Board which oversees
CVS publications and other publicity
matters.