



BVA

BASINGSTOKE
VOLUNTARY ACTION

COVID 19 IMPACT REPORT

“WE ARE BVA. YOUR VOLUNTARY SECTOR MEMBERSHIP BODY FOR BASINGSTOKE & DEANE. OUR MISSION IS TO HELP COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS THRIVE.”



CAROL BODE

BVA CHAIR

“The Coronavirus pandemic has demonstrated beyond doubt the vital role the voluntary sector has to play within our communities. We owe our hundreds of local volunteers who stepped up to support during the crisis a huge debt of gratitude. BVA stands proudly ready to champion the sector as we move into the next difficult phase of recovery.”



TONY CAPON

BVA CHIEF EXECUTIVE

“The past few months have shown the sheer strength and resilience of our local charities and neighbourhood groups. It has been so humbling to see the level of partnership working right across the borough to help keep our residents safe and well. We’re delighted to take the opportunity in this report to showcase some of the fantastic work that has taken place both by the BVA Team and the Community Hubs.”



BVA TEAM INTRODUCTION

THE BVA TEAM

Since March we have focused all our energies in to supporting organisations and community hubs right across the borough. Whether it be recruiting and deploying hundreds of volunteers, daily cascading of key information, establishing and coordinating the Community Hub network, distributing vital funds, organising food and PPE deliveries or picking up the phone to vulnerable residents in distress - we have been immensely proud to play a leading role in responding to the Coronavirus pandemic alongside our amazing community partners. As we move into the next phase of creating a new 'normal' and look towards recovery, the team at BVA stand ready to continue championing our members and fulfilling our mission of ensuring a vibrant and flourishing voluntary sector across Basingstoke & Deane.



THE RUNDOWN

A SUMMARY OF OUR EFFORTS

We have many to thank for the incredible support our local community received during the pressured stages of the COVID-19 pandemic and we would like to take a moment to reflect on the impact made collaboratively. Incredibly, over 400 new volunteers signed up to BVA directly to give their time & over 1000 volunteers came together to support our community overall.

Responding quickly to changing circumstances, we rapidly implemented changes to our volunteer matching software, enabling us to match volunteers & mutual aid groups to their nearest emergency hubs as well as one-off requests for support. This software also helped us find delivery drivers for several initiatives including delivering personal protective equipment, food supplies and one-off events such as cream teas and flowers to support Carers Week. In other areas, we have been working together with Fleet Lions to ensure laptops & computers were provided to local, vulnerable young people for them to do their schoolwork from home during lockdown and together with Age Concern Hampshire we worked to set up a Companionship Line for those in need.

We prioritised working closely in partnership with Basingstoke & Deane Borough Council, attending daily briefings, and holding weekly phone calls with our

local MP. This close working has enabled us to stay up to date with current rules & provide quick updates on our COVID-19 resource webpages to ensure that the most relevant information is readily available to the community. The webpage also included a hub map of the 30+ local emergency hubs set up & supported daily by BVA and the council.

We worked with local supermarkets to distribute food to the emergency hubs in our care, ensuring they had supplies for emergency parcels and making deliveries available if supplies depleted. Donated goods and services were distributed effectively and practical support was provided for the development of local initiatives such as Overton Lockdown Larder. Identifying sources of PPE packs for groups going back to work as well as providing support to charities and organisations restarting their activities has been important to us in making sure we can all safely begin getting back to normal. Looking to the future, we continue to centrally support all the remaining hubs and are continuing to keep in contact with them weekly with a view to transforming the hub network into an ongoing 'Community Connectors' initiative. We also continue to hold a central food and PPE equipment store utilising unused supplies from hubs standing down in preparation for any future spike.





400+

**NEW VOLUNTEERS
SIGNED UP TO BVA**

1000+

**INCREDIBLE VOLUNTEERS
ACROSS BASINGSTOKE & DEANE.**



25+

**EMERGENCY HUBS SET UP TO
HELP THOSE IN NEED.**

60+

**VOLUNTEER GROUPS, READY TO
HELP WHEREVER THEY COULD.**



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**STRONG & RESILLIENT
COMMUNITY.**

SUPPORTING OUR MEMBERS

A FOCUS ON SUSTAINABILITY

As the financial impact of lockdown and social distancing on our members becomes increasingly apparent we have placed a significant emphasis on ensuring our members receive increased access to support around available grant schemes and opportunities to review their income generation strategy. Our support has ranged from: increasing the frequency of our funding newsletter bulletin, sending targeted grant information updates, increasing the availability of our one-to-one funding search appointments along with distributing over £215,000 in funds from the BDBC Coronavirus Fund and the BVA Emergency Appeal Fund. Since May we have held monthly online workshops on key topics including funding and recovery to ensure our members remain as sustainable as possible.

To support the vital work of the Community Hub Network, we worked in partnership with Basingstoke & Deane Borough Council to establish the Coronavirus Emergency Response Grant Scheme. Through this scheme we helped to distribute on behalf of the council nearly £200,000 in essential funding to

local groups to provide access to food and equipment in support of local residents.

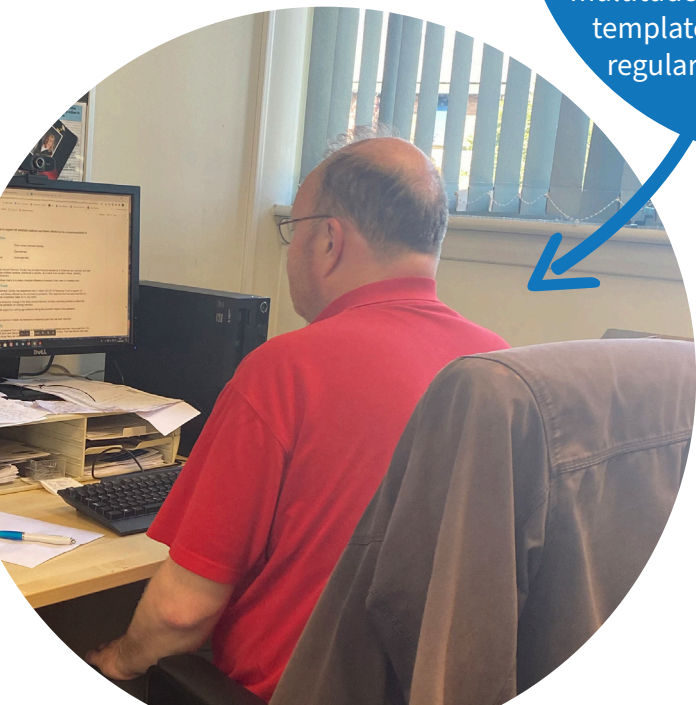
In the latter stages of lockdown we have prepared The Orchard for re-opening in line with government regulations and the team at BVA adapted the building with new safety measures to make sure it was covid secure for our resident members to return to. This included working closely with them to understand their specific needs and providing them with the tools they needed to return safely such as risk assessments templates and training.

From April to June our team received over 300 queries and requests for information from our member organisations and were provided with support on everything from HR guidance on managing furloughed staff through to safely re-opening services, accessing funding, DBS checking volunteers and increasing safeguarding for vulnerable client groups. We continue to provide daily support to our member organisations both online and over the phone and are ensuring we lead by example in terms of adapting our services to meet the changing needs of our community.



SUPPORTING OUR MEMBERS

One of our voluntary sector support officers (and resident IT whiz!) Chris Utting, produced an interactive coronavirus directory online that was packed with guidance for our members and community to keep up to date. Our emergency hub map enabled visitors to easily visualise their nearest source of help as well as a multitude of digital documents and templates being made available regularly for anyone to access free of charge!



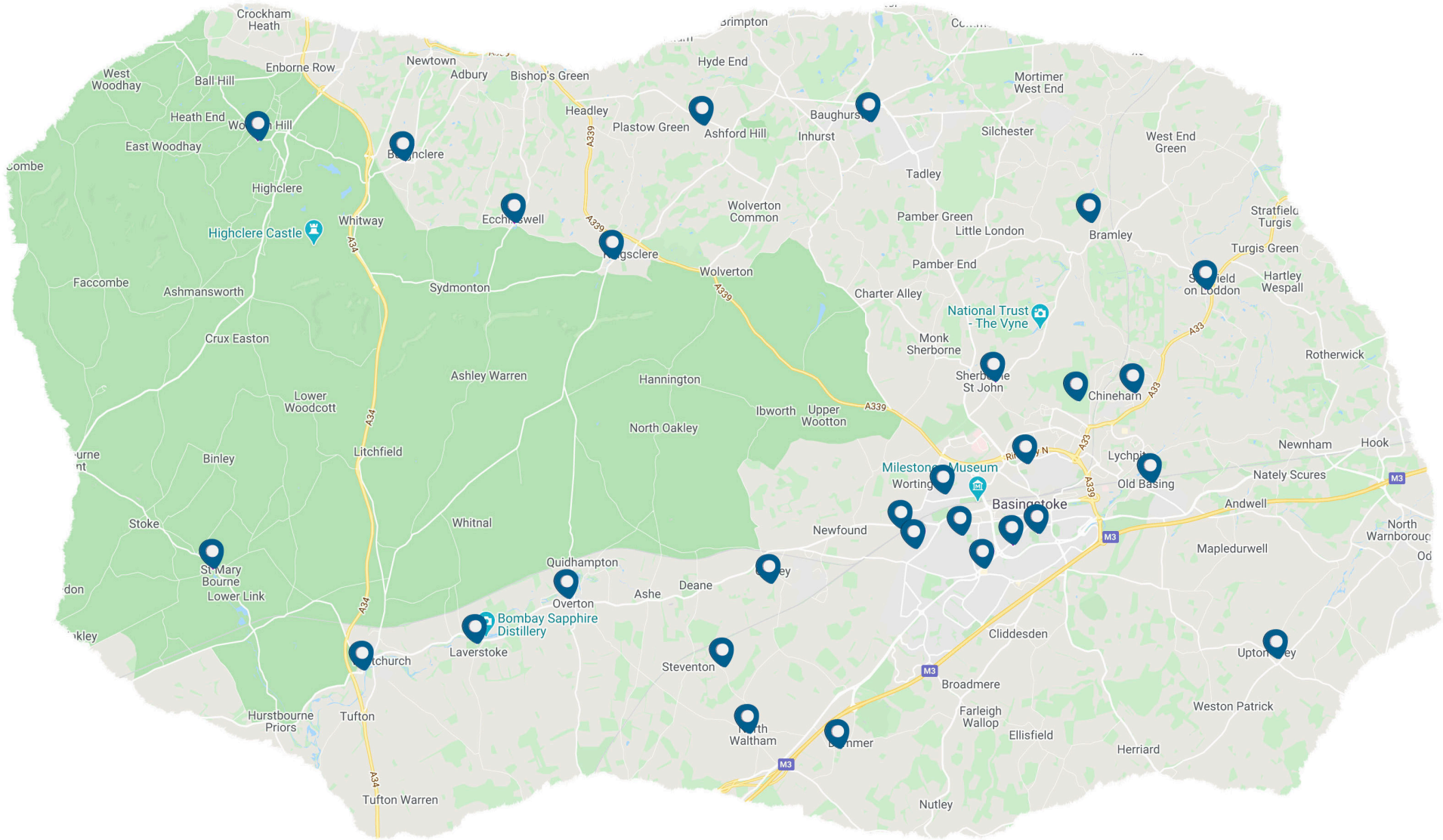
A FOCUS ON COMMUNICATION

To ensure our members remained up-to-date with the ever changing government and local guidance in relation to Coronavirus, we ensured our website was updated on an almost daily basis. Responding rapidly to any new information as we received it, including collating information from across key partners such as the council, public health and housing associations.

All of this information was conveyed in greater detail in our weekly Members Briefing newsletter which was consistently published even during the height of lockdown. We found that this was an effective way to let our members know how the current situation was affecting our local community and how our support could still be useful for their emerging needs.

We endeavored to keep in touch with as many of our members as possible, with organisations receiving phone calls and follow up emails regularly from their

allocated Voluntary Sector Support Officers. As part of our Insight & Development role, we have also engaged a significant number of our members in a 'State of the Sector' surveying exercise to try and establish a more detailed analysis of the coronavirus impact local across the voluntary sector. Since August we have now taken over responsibility for running the local Covid helpline from the borough council and continue to support the vulnerable with food parcels & prescription requests. However we continue to work very closely in partnership with council colleagues to regularly monitor and assess residents needs. In more recent weeks we have begun working with our Community Hub leads to create an exciting new initiative called the 'Community Connectors Network' to help us best guide residents to the appropriate resources in their area and as a method of ensuring a network of hubs remain ready to reestablish themselves as emergency hubs should another lockdown occur in the future.



EMERGENCY HUB MAP

THE INTERACTIVE ONLINE LOCATION GUIDE

We created and maintained a fully interactive and searchable directory of local support hubs. Meaning that responders and call centre operatives were able to find the nearest source of support quickly and efficiently to meet resident needs.

GRANTS & FUNDING

OUR EMERGENCY APPEAL

At the start of lockdown, BVA worked with Hampshire CVS colleagues to submit a successful bid to the Hampshire & Isle of Wight Community Foundation. Following a grant award of £6000 this enabled us to begin immediately distributing much needed funds to local neighbourhood groups via pre-payment debit cards for use in purchasing essential food and prescriptions for shielding residents.

We then established the Emergency Coronavirus Appeal online where anybody could donate to support the causes needing help during this time. Incredibly, we received over £9000 of donations through this appeal which have been distributed throughout the borough to community groups helping local residents.

Following the launch of our Emergency Appeal, we were delighted to partner with Basingstoke & Deane Borough Council to distribute almost £200,000 on their behalf to community hubs and local groups to provide emergency support to residents throughout lockdown. Working actively with the council to establish and coordinate the Emergency Grant scheme, these funds have enabled the purchase of everything from food and PPE supplies through to setting up telephone befriending schemes and essential IT equipment upgrades for local charities – ensuring our residents can continue to receive vital support remotely wherever possible.

In addition to the above, we are also thankful to the National Lottery Community Fund for providing us with essential grant support to set up and maintain an ongoing Covid Response telephone line along with provision of essential equipment and resources for maintaining the community hub network across the borough.



We remain committed to ensuring that every penny of support provided is used tirelessly towards furthering our mission – to help our community flourish. As a result we remain incredibly grateful to all those who have made the support possible, most notably Basingstoke & Deane Borough Council. Without their incredible help and support throughout this crisis our borough's ability to respond successfully to this pandemic would have been significantly diminished.

HARDY'S HAPPY DONATION

A STORY FROM THE COMMUNITY

Hardy's Cottage Garden Plants, the Chelsea gold medal-winning nursery in Freefolk, recently donated some beautiful cut flowers to the Laverstoke and Freefolk Community Hub. They were originally destined for showing at RHS Malvern Show which was cancelled. So generously & making sure they didn't go to waste, the wonderful new breed of Ranunculus Rococo - in orange, peach, pink and yellow were arranged into 36 bunches by the hub. The same day they were distributed as a thank you for all the local NHS and keyworkers and also for those self-isolating alone – all doing their bit to protect the NHS.

Everyone is so thankful for the hub, especially Rosy and Rob Hardy for this kind gesture which brought a little extra sunshine for those people needing it most at this time.



“Working through the local Community Hub, an opportunity arose to bring a bit of colour into people’s homes. The flowers seems to have gone down really well judging by the lovely feedback on social media.”

- Rosy Hardy

COVID COMMUNITY KITCHEN

A STORY FROM THE COMMUNITY

The incredible Telgu Association of Basingstoke created the Covid Community Kitchen at the very start of lockdown.

Opened by MP Maria Miller, they began producing over 150 portions a day, 3 times a week! Impressively, over 12 weeks they prepared and distributed over 5000 portions of Indian, Chinese & Italian food to key workers in need.

With the help of 6 businesses in Basingstoke, hot meals were delivered to the teams at the North Hampshire Hospital, The local NHS Blood Donation Team & The Ambulance Service members.

It was wonderful to see 10 communities come together with over 70 volunteers to help in every way they could during unprecedented times. Their noble efforts have been recognised by the NHS & the local newspaper & here at BVA we are very thankful for their hard work also.



FLEET LIONS IT PROJECT

A STORY FROM THE COMMUNITY

Another amazing initiative to come out of Covid-19 is the Fleet Lions Project. Multiple Lions clubs from the Basingstoke & Surrey area have banded together to help children in need of computers to help with their education & BVA joined with them to take the Basingstoke referrals.

When schools had to close during lockdown many children didn't have access to computers or tablets in order to be able to do their work effectively & stay on top of their education from home. A wonderful team of people decided to ask the local community if they could help! They asked local companies, schools & the general public such as Dove House School, Vivid Housing Association & Basingstoke Young Carers if they had any computer parts to donate. They took on computers, laptops, tablets, printers and anything else that could be of use.

Once collected they were stored ready to be refurbished. Paulo Silva & Simon Rankin generously refurbished any item received making sure to clean all components, wipe all hard drives & then install all drivers and software needed including windows 10.

When they were ready to go the admin team, Brian Proctor & Graham Drayton, were able to coordinate the safe doorstep delivery of any items to their new home. This incredible project helped many families & children, a much needed relief for some parents during lockdown. In total they have donated £24,000 worth of computers and helped over 200 families!



OVERTON LOCKDOWN LARDER



A STORY FROM THE COMMUNITY

The community of Overton and Overton Cares came together and in less than a week they had set up Overton Lockdown Larder. Set up to help families and vulnerable people, the Red Lion pub became a place for anyone who needed support with food through out lockdown

There was not only food available but a friendly chat with someone who really cares, something more crucial than ever when people became isolated. They continue to support the community and will be continuing their efforts through school holidays for any families in need.



“I don’t know what I would do without it.”

THANK YOU.

FROM THE BVA TEAM TO YOU!

To the NHS heroes, key workers, the emergency hubs & the many selfless volunteers, we thank you. The events of this year could never have been predicted & the collective spirit and comradery we have witnessed across our community has been so humbling to witness.

To those who made a donation to our appeal, big or small, we thank you. Without your generous gift we would not have been able to adapt & provide important services as efficiently as we were thankfully able to. The funding provided food, medication and sometimes just a little bit of light to those left more vulnerable by the pandemic.

To our members, we thank you. We have learnt so much together throughout this whole process. You have been unwavering in your support of our local residents, and for that you have our everlasting admiration and respect. We will continue to adapt and expand our services to ensure that you have all the help you need now and as we face an uncertain future for the sector. You are the superstars, and we are your cheerleaders!

Thank you,

The BVA Team





THE VOLUNTARY SECTOR MEMBERSHIP
BODY FOR BASINGSTOKE & DEANE.

Website: www.bvaction.org.uk

Email: contact@bvaction.org.uk

Telephone: 01256 423 816

Registered Charity No. 1077442

Company Limited by Guarantee No. 3802713

Address: BVA, The Orchard, White Hart Lane, Basingstoke, RG21 4AF



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