

Fareham Community Action

Support for Community Groups

A brief explanation of some of the aspects of our work; please ask about any items of interest.

Criminal Record Bureau Checks

We provide access to CRB Checks because Fareham Community Action is an “Umbrella Body”. Where applicable we pass on the CRB’s fee (free for volunteers) but also we charge an administration fee of £7.50. see www.farehamaction.org.uk/crb
Additionally we provide, without charge, guidance on good recruitment practice and we have model policies for groups to quickly develop or revise their own.

Volunteer Centre

The volunteer centre exists to help promote volunteering. It also acts as an “agency”. Groups can register their need for volunteers that we can then put onto the national- do-it database. This then helps us offer volunteering opportunities to potential volunteers to match their interest, skills and travel choices.

The Volunteer Centre promotes good practice in volunteering and has a complete set of paperwork available to help groups with their own administration when needed.

Payroll Service

Our payroll service can really take the hassle out of paying staff. The service includes: Statutory calculations, changes to salaries, payments to Inland Revenue, salaries directly into employees bank account, payslips, duplicate payslips and breakdown of charges

Community Accountancy

Occasionally groups need help with their accounts. Depending on our resources at the time, we can assist in the short term with book keeping until the group has re-established its own procedures.

Examination of Accounts

We provide an independent examination of your accounts for the year end, before sending to the Charity Commission, this will include random checks and a bound report for trustees and the Charity Commission. We only provide this for small groups with a turnover of under £30k pa.

Equipment loan

We have a wide range of equipment for hire, these include a digital projector and laptop, which is very portable and easy to use, a digital camera which is excellent for instant pictures, display boards, portable flipcharts and PAT testing equipment.

Meeting Room Use

Our Boardroom can be hired for a small charge. It comprises of a large table and comfortably seats 10/11 people. Wheelchair access is available, but limited. Refreshments can be made available at a small charge. The table can be moved out. We also have a more ‘comfy’ room for one to one/informal meetings.

Community Transport

We have a number of large accessible busses that we can hire to groups who have a MIDAS qualified driver. Rates are reasonable. Occasionally we are able to help by providing a driver too.

Newsletter

Our paper newsletter provides the opportunity for occasional readers to find out what is happening in voluntary organisations. Issued 6 times per year we will include articles of community interest and we will also insert fliers for groups. There would probably be a charge for inserts as it often increases the costs of distribution. We hope that all 600 voluntary groups receive a copy.

E-News

To keep people up to date with the latest information we issue an e-newsletter – usually monthly. This provides a headline and a link for further information. You can be added to the circulation list without charge. www.farehamaction.org.uk/enews.htm

Funding Advice

Groups often seek funding assistance for new initiatives. There are many sources of funding but each is for specific purposes. Fareham Community Action can provide guidance on funding and will undertake a “Funderfinder” search that will narrow your investigation to the funds that are most likely to be helpful. See www.farehamaction.org.uk/funding

Network Lunches

We organise lunches so that members of voluntary groups can get together to discuss items of common interest. Additionally we invite speakers to the lunches to provide information, perspective or opinion on a particular topic. Run 9 Fridays during the year

Support for Organisations

Because community groups have specific, often unique, purposes their problems are often unique too. At Fareham Community Action we can give information on best practice, provide links and we can use our network of 350 similar organisations across the country to help groups with enquiries.

Annual General Meeting

Besides being a legal requirement, our annual general meeting is intended to provide links for all our 110 members and also non-member community organisations. For 3 years we have given 10 groups the chance to speak about the achievements of their volunteers.

Compact events

The compact has been established for 4 years yet for many it is still a mystery! In conjunction with Fareham Council and others we have presented annual compact meetings in the hope that understanding of the Compact will develop. Hopefully groups have also found them useful, some will have had cause to enquire if activities of local authorities are compliant with The Compact. See www.farehamcompact.org.uk

Links to Local Strategic Partnership

The Local Strategic Partnership, called NetworkFareham, has been established by the various public authorities to generate cooperation and involvement. Fareham Council has lead its development and Hampshire Council, health and Police have been involved. Businesses and the Voluntary Sector have also participated. It is important to connect strategies in our communities. Voluntary organisation can participate though links provided by Fareham Community Action. See www.networkfareham.org

Info on Local Area Agreement –LAA

LAAs aim to bring together a range of partners to achieve better outcomes and quality of life for local communities and residents. They have been introduced by central government to:

- § improve co-ordination between public bodies such as local authorities, health, police, probation, Job Centre Plus, Connexions, etc

- § improve services
- § rationalise (reduce) the number of funding streams and performance targets
- § allow greater flexibility for local solutions to match local circumstances

The local partners are required to agree with central government the priority outcomes that they wish to achieve in relation to: children and young people; healthier communities and older people; safer and stronger communities; and economic development and enterprise.

(See: www.action.hants.org.uk/LAA.html)

Training Sessions

We find that short training sessions for staff, volunteers and committee members of voluntary organisations are highly valued by the many participants. We have a list of about 50 training courses that we offer. We collaborate with our sister organisations to present training as “Harbourside Training”. Sessions are delivered by teachers or trainers who understand both their subject and the voluntary sector. The costs to participants is usually subsidised.

Training Needs Assessment

Sometimes it is easy to list what training you want to do. However it is sometimes better for the organisation to take a step back and ask what its staff need to learn in order to do it’s job safely, effectively and efficiently. Fareham Community Action has 2 training needs processes to help community organisations plan their future training.

Risk Assessment / Management

Understanding risk and how to manage it is really important for community organisations. We can provide guidance, checklists and signposting to help organisations.

Information finding

Fareham Community Action receives a vast amount of information that might be relevant to voluntary organisations. We do our best to index and file it. We will be very happy to help organisations find information that they need

Merlin / eVolve Directory

We maintain a local database of voluntary organisations and contacts. Additionally, at the explicit request of the group, we will link this to the county-wide directory of voluntary groups called eVolve (see www.e.volve.org.uk)

Website Hosting & Domain registration

Fareham Community Action has quality web space with independent access available for groups. Domains can be registered and email accounts provided on a pop or forwarding basis. This has the advantage of giving a memorable web name for your members and public. The costs are minimal. Web page training is available and we even have some volunteer web page writers for groups.

Really Helpful IT Company

In collaboration with our sister organisations in SE Hants, we have set-up an IT company to give support to local voluntary groups. It is not free but it is half the price of their charges to businesses. See www.thitc.co.uk

Model Policies

Most voluntary organisations need to write down how they have agreed things will be done. Sometime this needs to be a formal policy and or procedures. We have a comprehensive range of model policies that will enable groups to either write theirs easily or check their’s for good practice.

Facts / Help sheets

We have a comprehensive range of Facts Sheets that provide guidance on the many aspects that community organisations need

Staffing / Personnel advice or signposting

People are our most important resource. Proper processes for managing staff are important, sometimes there are legal obligations. Sometimes we need to get specialist advice. Fareham Community Action can provide information about basic personnel management and we can provide direction to sources of specialist help.

Councils / Health Strategy Information

The strategies and initiatives of local public authorities (Fareham Council, Hampshire Council, Hants PCT, Police etc) can provide opportunities and challenges for community organisations. It is best to know what is being discussed and consulted on and then what policy has been decided. Fareham Community Action provides information about policy development.

Representation of your interests to committees

Various meetings are held to explore matters that might affect community organisations or their members. Fareham Community Action might sit on committees or would know who does. If you would like your opinions represented then that is possible provided we have communicated with you and you have responded with your opinion.

These are the main areas of our support; in reality we aim to support all community organisations with information, training, “backroom services”, office facilities or we will find another who can!

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