

Annual Report 2023/2024



www.torridgecvs.org.uk

Charity number - 1125142 Company number 06577677

Supporting the voluntary
and community sector in
Torridge



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A MESSAGE FROM OUR CHAIR - Shirley Law



As usual our wonderful staff have given 100% to all the projects that they work on, the results are clear from the statistics that you will find in this report. Led by Simone, they have achieved a great deal. We were sorry that, towards the end of the year, Simone decided that she must leave us. I know that it was with reluctance, but personal factors led to this sorry decision. We were able to appoint a new CEO who came into post at the very end of the financial year. Beki Sharples who has worked in the voluntary sector for many years who impressed the interview panel with her enthusiasm and presentation. I look forward to working with Beki in the future.

TTVS to continues its valuable projects and to increase the money available to it. Funding of the projects continues to be a concern, but this is constant in the voluntary sector. The skills Simone has shown to persuade funders to support financially, is staggering. We will miss Simone's input, but I am sure that we will find a way to continue to look and find funders in the future.

The Board has worked hard this year, and I would like to thank our Vice Chair in particular. Nick has worked tirelessly to update the policies and framework that keeps TTVS compliant with legislation and the expectations of funders. Thank you, Nick and your team. Our premises remain a source of concern, especially the lack of access to facilities for people with mobility issues. TTVS will be looking carefully to improve this in the future.

I do recommend that in this report you, look at the statistics, as they show just how much work the staff and volunteers have achieved throughout the year. It would be unfair to pick out any one member of staff; their work is always as part of a wider, sometimes less visible team so I record my thanks to all of them.





New Beginnings

'I want to say the biggest thank you to my wonderful team and the amazing community of Torridge.

I have been the luckiest person to lead such a wonderful organisation and group of people over the last 18 months.

I would like to welcome Beki Sharples as our new CEO. Beki brings to the organisation many years of voluntary sector experience, breadth and depth in leadership, great partnership working and a whole heap of passion in supporting our community.

Beki also brings the colour, vibrancy and true passion that this community deserves.'

Simone Thompson



Mission

In a disconnected world, we create happy, prosperous, healthy communities, living, supporting, growing and working as one. Society, Community, Improved Quality of Life

Vision

A healthy, connected and happy community with opportunities to exchange ideas, knowledge, learn and empower one another

Our Values

Connecting People

At the heart of volunteering in Torridge for over 30 years. We will continue to work to connect, grow and strengthen our community.

Amplifying the Voice

from individuals to organisations, we believe everyone has a right to be heard.

Equality.

Everyone is equal. We work towards a fairer future for all. By making an impact on the small we change the big

Action

We Understand from our own experiences the challenges people face. We value people and will not judge or dictate. We will walk side by side with our community groups. We will share our knowledge and experience, resources, skills and connections. Together we will make a difference.

Inspiring Change

Through courage, resourcefulness dedication and determination we will challenge unfairness; we will ask difficult questions. We will work effectively with the community. We will be a vehicle for social change

SUPPORTING VOLUNTEERING AND THE COMMUNITY

As well as being the heart of volunteering for Torridge, TTVS work within our community to support voluntary and community groups. We have had a busy year engaging with the community to make them aware of what we do.

Just a glimpse of what we did in 2023
Bideford Water Festival 2023
Volunteering Event in Torrington
Health & Wellbeing Event in Holsworthy
Working with Bideford Job Club
Together 2023, at the Pannier Market
Volunteer Management Forums
and finally we did a beach clean!

It's great to get out and meet people whilst raising awareness for all the amazing work we do, and the support we can provide.



Together 23.

Bideford Town Council put on an event in Bideford Market bringing together community groups. It proved to be a wonderful opportunity for people to meet, discover and form new friendships.



Group and Business Development



Early in 2024 we teamed up with a community radio station to broadcast the wonderful work that TTVS has been doing in the community.



TTVS were delighted to support, Bideford Job Club. Through this wonderful collaboration TTVS were able to help a new group form. Torridge Growing Together are now a vibrant group of people working on a number of allotments in Bideford and are also engaging in other gardening projects.



In collaboration with Affinity Devon Shopping Outlet and Asda, we held a Tickled Pink fundraiser event on 3rd September. It was a brilliant opportunity for community groups to get together, support an amazing cause and even take part in some yoga!



ASDA



Bideford Job Centre Wellbeing Event



ACTIVE
TORRIDGE

**Who Have We Supported?
Who Have We Worked Alongside?
Who Has Supported Us?**

UPCLOSE
RADIO
Community Radio for Torridge and North Devon

Bideford
Rotary

 **Pickwell Foundation**
FOR PEOPLE & PLANET

 **COMMUNITY**
FUND

 **DMCC**
Devon Memory
Cafe Consortium


STEAMSHIP
FRESHSPRING
TRUST

ND *VS*



Devon
County Council 

one
northern
devon

Supported by

 **Nationwide**
Building Society



 **CAG Devon**
COMMUNITY
ACTION
GROUPS



The Edward Gostling Foundation
Enhancing Quality of Life for People in Need

OneAtlantic



Northern
Devon
foodbank 

 **EVA** Devon Voluntary Action



Torridge
District Council

the plough
ARTS CENTRE

Our Memory Cafés Northam Hall & Bideford Robins Nest

Our memory cafés bring people together.
Here, friendships form and rekindle.

Two lovely ladies arrived at a café one day
and sat down with a cup of tea and a slice
of cake. One lady turned to the other lady
and said

‘Did you live Appledore?’

With a smile on her face the other replied,
‘yes, I did. And I know you. You lived
opposite me. I remember you’.

They had been neighbours when their
children were small, but had lost contact
with each other.

Friday is now the day they meet up, drink
tea, and chat.

We have been fortunate with the generosity
of others, who come along to support our
cafés:

Thank You:

Mishmash Singers

Judith Gubb

All our four legged friends
And our wonderful volunteers.



TAI CHI

Tai Chi runs every Tuesday at the Northam Community hall.

"I do this because I enjoy seeing people being happy, making progress, finding that Tai Chi helps to ease and improve mobility. I say that Tai Chi is 'Moving Medication' "

Ian Godfrey Tai Chi Volunteer Instructor



Pickwell Foundation

FOR PEOPLE & PLANET

Ian Godfrey began running our Tai Chi classes as a volunteer in 2015. Over the years he has supported hundreds of people to access Tai Chi, to feel the benefits and to enjoy an hour with friends. It is testament to Ian that many of those who go along to the class have been with us since the beginning and continue to support Ian and TTVS. What wonderful, loyal and supportive clients we have.

Christmas 2023

Ian gave a demonstration of meditation techniques to the class.

All monies raised were donated to the Pickwell Foundation.



SUPPORTING PEOPLE – Our Projects

The following pages give details of all our projects.

We are so proud of the support we provide to the vulnerable people in our community.

A big thank you to all our funders, without their generosity we could not achieve all that we do.



Financial Inclusion

Torridge & North Devon

This project helps people of state pension age with support around their benefit eligibility.

£1,118,308.11

Accumulative £ of Benefits
Awarded

401

Total Number of Referrals

500

Over 500 Active cases being
supported at any one time.

Supported by



Financial Inclusion

Torridge & North Devon

We received a referral from a past client to help a friend.

The friend was struggling, so our TTVS Financial Inclusion project co-ordinator paid a home visit and had a conversation with the new client.

A request was made for an Attendance Allowance form and the client was supported to complete this form. The client was later awarded the higher rate of Attendance Allowance which opened the door to further financial support.

Although the client had some savings, the client was supported to make a claim for Pension Credit. This application was also successful. Subsequently, a further application was made for Council Tax support, which resulted in exemption.

The client is over 75 years old and because they are now receiving pension credit, they were able to apply for a free TV licence.

*'I have struggled all my life and cannot believe what I am entitled to.
Without your help I would still be struggling'.*

The client has informed us that she has never been so financially secure, and can now look forward to enjoying the rest of her life without worry.



Supported by





Who Are Young Carers?

Young Carers are children and young adults in a caring role.

Most are still in education.

Many of the referrals we receive are complex in nature.

Our Young Carers can be as young as 8 years, and can be dealing with situations that adults would struggle to cope with.

Our approach is to work intensively with the young carer and their family through:

1:1 support
CAB Referrals



Taken from the work of one of our support workers.

"The family were in crisis when they approached TTVS. They had one child with physical health needs. One of the parents was struggling with severe mental health issues, that had previously required medical intervention. Working closely with the young carer and the family, after several months we had identified the areas of support needed. We found ways to implement this support , creating a personalised support plan that allowed this young carer to complete their studies at college. Against all the odds, this young carer is now at university".



We offer 'whole family' support as part of our delivery

70 Referrals between 1st April 2023 and 31st March 2024

18 families Referred to our partner organisation, Citizens Advice Torridge North, Mid & West Devon

2 support workers working with up to 25 young carers at any time.

Our referrals come from GPs, Social Services, Schools, Colleges as well as Self Referrals

citizens
advice

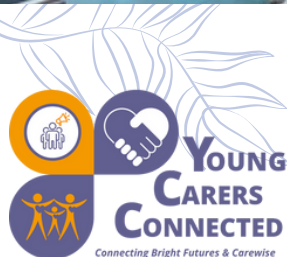
Citizens Advice Torridge, North,
Mid & West Devon



AVIVA | Community
Fund



We know that young carers face a number of challenges so we have been really fortunate that other organisations have supported us. We have given our young carers days out, surfing and snorkelling. A big thank you to North Devon Surf School and Seaful for their generosity.



Citizens Advice Torridge, North,
Mid & West Devon





Help at Home

Your life, your way

Help at Home offers a unique and flexible service putting the individual in control, enabling them to choose a service that is bespoke and tailored to their needs on every visit. We compliment care agencies, taking pressure off the sector and are able to provide the following:

- Cleaning, laundry, ironing, changing bed linen, decluttering and other household chores
- Assistance with paperwork & appointments
- Respite for carers
- Shopping /errands /accompanied outings
- Arranging other services required, such as organising reliable tradesman
- Meal preparation
- Signposting to other organisations
- Befriending
- Light gardening & dog walking



This year has been another incredible year for the Help at Home service, we have delivered thousands of hours of support which has meant we have helped our clients to remain independent in their own homes.

As we move into 2024 we look forwards to joining Help at Home North Devon and Torridge together and expanding our work into the Holsworthy area.



one northern devon

Number of Clients Supported During 2023/24

189

Number of Hours of Service Delivered

9588

Number of Clients Supported as at 31st March 2024

80



We began our project in July 2023 with the aim to overcome loneliness and isolation within our community. Volunteers are engaging with older people, visiting them in their homes as well as encouraging clients back to social activities in our community.

Feedback from client –

'He brightens up a wintery day for me and I have learnt so much about alpacas - I grew up on a farm and been around animals all my life but didn't know much about them at all. I enjoy learning from others. I would recommend him to you for any other clients'.

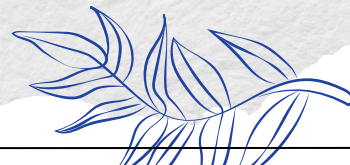
Number of Referrals 50

Active Clients 26

Active Volunteers 28

Words from a befriending volunteer –

"I'm a retired Registered Nurse and one of the best parts of my job was interacting with patients and their families, especially the elderly, as I found it so interesting and uplifting to hear about their lives - their stories and journeys. I always found these interactions to be mutually beneficial: I could see their eyes light up when talking to me about something other than their health, they seemed to gain a new energy. As for me I always learned something from them, whether it be anecdotes from WWII





Volunteer Centre

As a community-based charity, we work and provide facilities where our community needs us the most. We run a successful Volunteer Centre based in Bridgeland Street and we work across Bideford and the wider area of Torridge.

Our Volunteer Centre is a vibrant community space where people and community groups can meet. We have a Volunteer

Co-ordinator who ensures the team are on hand to help with general/volunteering enquiries.

In addition to the centre being open to talk to potential volunteers, we also share the space with several other groups, and offer signposting to members of the public.

We want to make the community feel that they have a welcoming space to drop in to and a point of contact to discuss community concerns.

The Volunteer Centre is also used to host community groups, events and training.

As we move forward into 2024/2025 we are excited at the potential that TTVS can offer its community.

TTVS Volunteer Centre is the perfect place to communicate and connect.

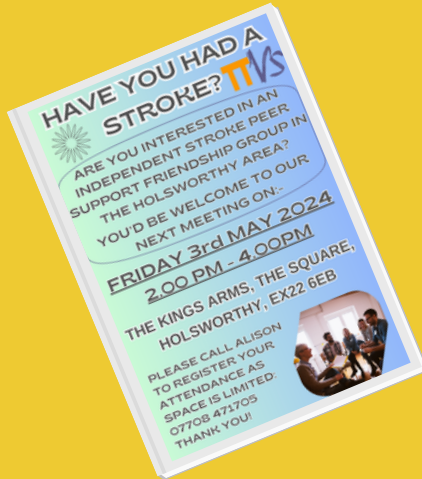
COMMUNITY DEVELOPERS



On behalf of the One Communities and a continued partnership with One Northern Devon, our Community Developers support the towns of Bideford, Great Torrington and Holsworthy and the surrounding area. The role of the Community Developer is to be a catalyst in our communities, helping galvanise activity and support to make our communities safer, happier and healthier.

Working with a number of organisations across each unique community, this year the team have been focusing on supporting communities with the impact of the cost of living crisis. We have seen some amazing work and some of the projects have included:

- Cost of living crisis drop in centres with partner organisations such as 361 Energy and Wiser Money.
- Attending various community events and fayres including Holsworthy Community Wellbeing Fayre and Great Torrington Cost of Living Community Fayre.
- We have been working in partnership with LiveWest; with Dartmoor Academy Trust; with the Holsworthy Community Fridge and the Foodbank.
- We secured funding from The Bideford Bridge Trust for a Coffee and Cake scheme for carers. This allowed carers who were isolated, and possibly struggling with money, a chance to stop, have a break and support local business at the same time.



Financial Report

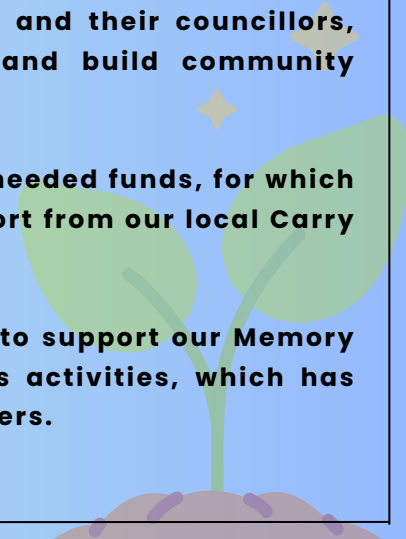
Investing In TTVS

We have been blessed by our funders and donors enabling TTVS to support many community driven projects, vulnerable individuals, young and old. During the year, with the Capacity Building Support from DEVA, we were able to introduce and deliver into Torridge, Devon Connect, an online platform connecting people to their community and promoting social action. With the financial support of Westbank Community and Devon Carers, whose mission is to improve the health and well-being of individuals we participated in the Settle at Home Service, supporting people leaving hospital to return home.

Our local funders Bideford Bridge Trust and Torridge District Council and their councillors, have continued to support TTVS, helping us to deliver, develop and build community relationships, alongside the support of the Asda Foundation.

There are also a wealth of people going out of their way to raise much needed funds, for which we are continually grateful. This year we had the added bonus of support from our local Carry On Choir group. A great big thank you to all of you.

A big thank you to the, Royal North Devon Golf Club who kindly chose to support our Memory Cafés in Northam and Bideford, raising donations by holding various activities, which has allowed us to continue to host these popular drop in monthly get togethers.



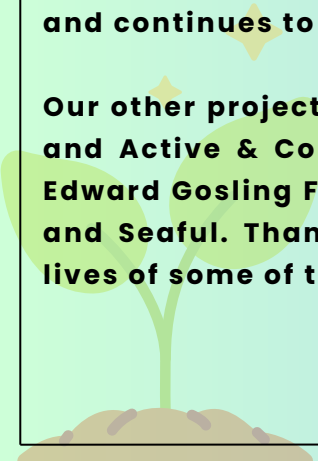
Financial Report

Our Community and Supported Projects

Our Community Developers in Bideford, Torrington and Holsworthy have continued to reach out to the community, and with the continued support of Royal Devon Healthcare Trust continue to deliver resolutions to ease hardship in Torridge. This year Creative Lives came on board with funding to help support and encourage people to be creative in their everyday lives. These groups continue to be delivered by our amazing Community Developers.

For the past year our Carers Lunch Scheme has been running. This began with the support of Torridge District Council and Bideford Bridge Trust. This has extended into a second year and continues to be successful.

Our other projects, Know Your Neighbourhood, Young Carers Connected, Financial Inclusion and Active & Connected continue to be supported by the National Lottery uplift funding, Edward Gosling Foundation and Nationwide Building Society as well as Bideford Rotary Club and Seaful. Thank you, with this support we have been able to make an impact upon the lives of some of the most vulnerable in our community.



A MESSAGE FROM OUR NEW CEO



Beki Sharples

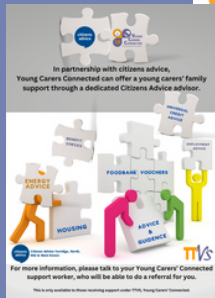
The achievements of TTVS over the last financial year, which we hope to have fully portrayed in this annual report, speak to the leadership of Simone Thompson as my predecessor as CEO, and the efforts and passion of our incredible team and Board of Trustees.

I have been really struck by the investment of the community in making Torridge a fantastic place to live and work, and I remain in awe of the many talented and devoted individuals and organisations who work so hard to ensure that we are working towards providing further opportunities to improve health outcomes and wellbeing of its residents. I am really pleased to say that many of these talented and compassionate individuals work and volunteer for TTVS.

As a team, alongside our professional partnerships, and as individual's that all care so deeply about our community, we have so many plans for this coming year. We look forward to sharing those with each of you... inviting you to come along with us!



OUR YEAR IN THE LIFE OF TTVS



TTV