



**Southend Association of Voluntary Services**

**Review of Services**

**April 2013**

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## **1. Introduction**

Southend Association of Voluntary Services (SAVS) is the support and coordinating agency for the voluntary sector in the unitary authority area of Southend-on-Sea, liaising between voluntary groups, statutory organisations and the public. SAVS has a membership of 324 groups (April 2013) representing a cross-section of the diverse community in Southend-on-Sea. SAVS assists its membership by providing practical assistance, information and advice, representation, liaison with other organisations and training.

## **2. Background to the Review**

As a membership organisation it is vital that members' views are taken into account. SAVS always asks its member organisations for comments on service in April each year. These comments will inform the work of SAVS officers in 2013/2014.

## **3. Method**

This year SAVS used an online questionnaire to collect the required information and comments. Members without email addresses were sent a paper copy of the questionnaire.

The questionnaire was based around four of the core services of a Council for Voluntary Service: development work; representation; liaison and strategic activities. The questionnaire also asked for opinions on the practical services which SAVS provides, such as funding advice and backroom/office services, Café and Catering as well as the Volunteer Centre.

## **4. Response**

32 groups responded to the questionnaire, and respondents represented a good cross-section of member groups and service areas of children & young people, older people, disability, ethnic minorities and carers are included.

## **5. Conclusion**

Responses were received from a good cross section of the membership and ratings for services were predominantly Satisfied or Very Satisfied.

The results show that each department continues to carry out work which is used and valued by the membership. Comments and suggestions will be taken on board and implemented where possible.

## 6. Results

The first three Sections of the Survey asked about the core functions carried out by SAVS (Development Work, Liaison, Representation & Partnership and Strategic Activities)

### Development Work

SAVS provides services to assist groups with their development e.g. advice on charitable status, accounting and governance, funding and training.

We asked if our Members had used this Service. 68.8% had used this Service, of whom 100% were very satisfied or satisfied with the service (72.7% very satisfied, 27.3% satisfied)

**Comments:**

- I think SAVS are wonderful!
- Our service has found that the SAVS service offers a lot of diverse things for a range of diverse people.
- Always helpful.

### Liaison

SAVS provide opportunities for liaison with other groups and statutory bodies e.g. Thematic Groups, Third Sector Assembly, networking opportunities and events.

We asked our members if they had attended any of the following groups and the results can be seen below

	General Thematic Group	Health and Wellbeing Thematic Group	Volunteer Managers Thematic Group	Children and Young Peoples Thematic Group	BME Thematic Group	Third Sector Assembly
Yes	41.6% (10)	55.2% (16)	28.6% (6)	25% (5)	27.3% (6)	36.4% (8)
No	58.4% (14)	44.8% (13)	71.4% (15)	75% (15)	72.7% (16)	63.7% (14)

We went on to ask, how members rated the service. 100% of those attending rated it as valuable.

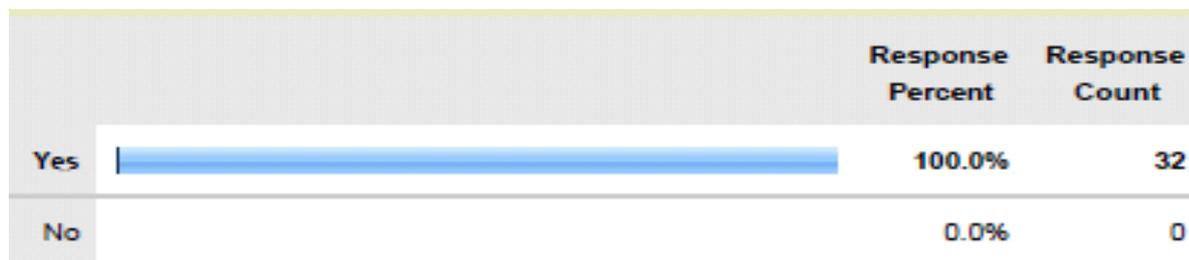
We asked whether the groups should continue and 100% said they should.

**Comments:**

- Good for networking
- Excellent opportunities to network were afforded by the meetings I attended – thanks
- The Thematic Groups offer a wide range of diverse topics.

SAVS is involved in a range of strategic partnerships to represent the Voluntary and Community Sector e.g. The Compact, Equalities Board, Local Safeguarding Children's Board, etc. to ensure the Third Sector in Southend is involved in future strategies.

We asked our Members if they found this Service valuable. Below is a graph of the responses received and comments from members:



**Comments:**

- I think it is essential that SAVS maintains the profile in these partnerships to represent the Third Sector in Southend.

### Training

SAVS has run various training course this year including Health and Safety and Safeguarding Children.

We asked members if they had attended any training at SAVS over the past year. 43.8% had and of those 100% had found the training valuable.

### Volunteer Centre

The Volunteer Centre provides a brokerage service to help Third Sector organisations find volunteers and helps in all areas of good practice.

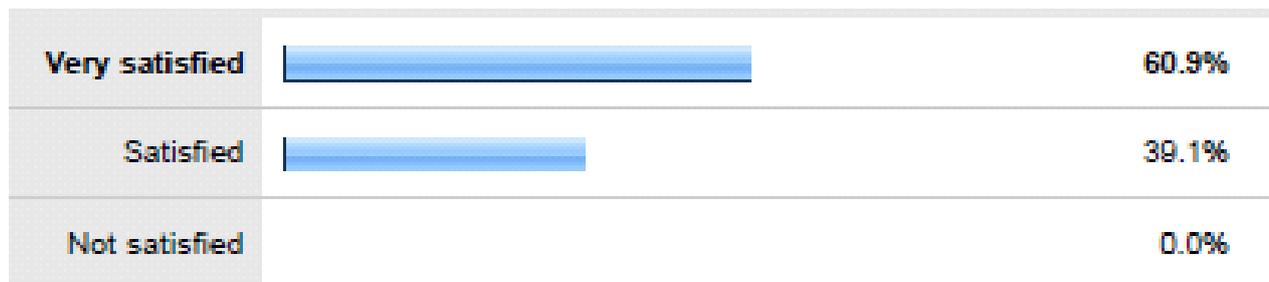
We asked Members if they were aware of the services available from the Volunteer Centre. The response is shown in the following graph.



We asked Members if their organisation has benefited from the services offered by the Volunteer Centre. The response is shown in the following graph.



We asked Members who had used the services of the Volunteer Centre to rate the service. The response is shown in the following graph.



We also asked those that said they haven't used the service, why this was comments are below

- Comments:
- I am not sure it is something we want to do at the moment.
  - Need no volunteers at present.
  - Did not know it existed – will use if we need to.

### Supported Volunteering Project

The Supported Volunteering Project provides support for people who have experienced mental ill health into volunteering roles. The project also supports the organisations who take on the supported volunteers.

We asked Members if they were aware of the services available from the supported volunteering project. The response is shown in the following graph.



We asked Members if their organisation has benefited from the services offered by the Supported Volunteering Project. The response is shown in the following graph.



Of the 29% of Members who had used the services of the supported volunteering project, 100% found it valuable.

We went on to ask the 71% of those that haven't used the supported volunteering project why they haven't. The comments are below.

- Comments:**
- We have not felt the need.
  - Not aware, do not currently have structures or vol roles to fit with this.
  - Maybe something we will look to use in the future, but not at present.

### Funding/Governance

SAVS Funding Officer assists new organisations in their development and advises them on how to write good funding bids and where to access funding.

We asked whether our membership organisations raised funding with the help of funding information advice from SAVS 28.1% said they had.

The following comments were received:

- Comments:**
- Susannah is wonderful! She really helps us with our bids.

### Information, Communication/Media Services

SAVS provides a Weekly information email (Friday Email), a quarterly newsletter, bi monthly e-bulletin, SAVS Website and Community Support Directory.

Members were asked whether the following services were valuable to them the table below shows the responses.

	Valuable	Not Valuable
SAVS Website	100.0% (29)	0.0% (0)
SAVS Newsletter	96.2% (25)	3.8% (1)
Friday Email	100.0% (30)	0.0% (0)
6 Weekly E bulletin	100.0% (26)	0.0% (0)
Community Support Directory	100.0% (30)	0.0% (0)

## SAVS Overall

This year we asked our members overall how satisfied are you with the service provided by SAVS? 100% said they were very satisfied or satisfied with the service (71% were very satisfied and 29% were satisfied) One comment was received.

### Comments:

- Great work, keep it up!

## Conferencing Facilities and Cafe

We asked our members whether you have used SAVS Function Rooms in the last year 12.9% had used our conferencing facilities we went on to ask members to rate on a scale of 1 to 4 on the following points a table below shows the responses.

	Very Good	Good	Average	Below Average
Booking Process	75.0% (3)	25.0% (1)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)
Catering	25.0% (1)	50.0% (2)	25.0% (1)	0.0% (0)
Equipment	50.0% (2)	25.0% (1)	25.0% (1)	0.0% (0)
Payment Process	25.0% (1)	75.0% (3)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)
Overall Satisfaction	50.0% (2)	50.0% (2)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)

We then asked our members whether they have used the SAVS Café in the last year, 32.3% had of those 32.3% we asked them how satisfied they were, the table is shown below.

Very satisfied		60.0%
Satisfied		40.0%
Not satisfied		0.0%

## Future Services

Like all our members, SAVS is facing financially challenging times and we want to ensure we continue to deliver services that are important to you. We asked our members to rate how valuable the following services would be, the table below shows the results.

	Valuable	Not Valuable	N/A
Funding Advice	77.4% (24)	3.2% (1)	19.4% (6)
Training	77.4% (24)	3.2% (1)	19.4% (6)
Development Advice	67.7% (21)	3.2% (1)	29.0% (9)
Opportunities for groups to network	77.4% (24)	0.0% (0)	22.6% (7)
Representation of the Sector	77.4% (24)	0.0% (0)	22.6% (7)
Strategic Partnerships	67.7% (21)	3.2% (1)	29.0% (9)
Volunteer Centre Services	80.6% (25)	3.2% (1)	16.1% (5)
Newsletter	87.1% (27)	9.7% (3)	3.2% (1)
Weekly Email	96.8% (30)	0.0% (0)	3.2% (1)
6 Weekly e bulletin	90.3% (28)	3.2% (1)	6.5% (2)
Community Support Directory	90.3% (28)	3.2% (1)	6.5% (2)
Website	87.1% (27)	6.5% (2)	6.5% (2)
Support to enable Third Sector organisations to work in Partnerships	74.2% (23)	0.0% (0)	25.8% (8)
Research of the sector	74.2% (23)	6.5% (2)	19.4% (6)
Support with fundraising events	67.7% (21)	6.5% (2)	25.8% (8)

Finally we asked all our members which of the following services they would like to see developed in the future the results for this are below

	Yes	No
Links to Local Businesses	86.2% (25)	13.8% (4)
Enable Organisation to share resources	93.1% (27)	6.9% (2)

SAVS Members are mainly based in the Borough of Southend but they cover a wide geographical area in their work including Essex, Southend & Thurrock, London, Kent, Surrey, Harlow, Herts, and East of England.

Our Members are pleased with the Services SAVS offers to them and Membership continues to grow steadily.