

# Literacy Volunteers in Nottinghamshire Schools

LVNS is registered with the Charity Commission and is governed by a constitution dated 14th May, 1996

## Executive Committee

Chairperson:	Ann Sanderson
Treasurer:	Julia Orme
Secretary:	Pam Meese
Members:	Kamlesh Passi Gaynor Preston Terry Wass (until 2.7.09) Margaret Beales (until 26.10.09) John Popple (from 2.7.09)
Co-opted:	Louie Williams

Officers are elected annually.  
Committee members are elected for a period of three years.

## Staff Team

Service Director:	Richard Wray
Administrator:	Karen Ballinger
Principal Trainer/Area Co-ordinator:	Heather Brooksbank
Development Officer and Area Co-ordinator, North Notts:	Sue Marriott
Trainer/Area Co-ordinator, Newark & Dist.:	Toni Edwards
Trainer/Area Co-ordinator, City:	Rachel Morgan (until 31.4.09)
Area Co-ordinator, City:	Emma Collis (from 1.5.09)
CA/Trainee Area Co-ordinator:	Emma Trowbridge (from 1.7.09)

## Independent Examiner

John O'Brien, Community Accounting Plus  
Pelham Street, Nottingham

# LITERACY VOLUNTEERS



**1996-2010** Over a decade of service to the children of Nottinghamshire



## Annual Report April 2009-March 2010



The Queen's Award for  
Voluntary Service 2006

Registered Charity No. 1055942 Literacy Volunteers in Nottinghamshire Schools



## **Our Mission Statement**

***Literacy Volunteers is a registered Charity  
that enriches young people's lives  
by assisting with their literacy,  
communication and social skills.***

***We work in partnership with schools  
by providing trained and supported Volunteers  
who make reading and communicating enjoyable  
to those at risk of disengaging from education.***

**The Sandfield Centre  
Sandfield Road  
Lenton  
Nottingham  
NG7 1QH**

**0115 915 0820**

**Office hours:**  
Monday to Thursday  
9.15am-3.15pm  
24 hour answerphone

Please contact all members of staff  
at the above telephone number.

**Website:**  
[www.literacyvolunteers.org.uk](http://www.literacyvolunteers.org.uk)

**Email:**  
[contact@literacyvolunteers.org.uk](mailto:contact@literacyvolunteers.org.uk)

## Chairman's Report

**Our reporting year for the period 1st April 2009 to 31 March 2010 has, to use typical British understatement, been a most challenging one, the phrase "Keep Calm and Carry on" becoming very much our mantra!**



*1000th Volunteer Rachel O'Mara*

completed and these are being rolled out across both City and County. Feedback indicates that we are particularly hitting the target with our Family Reading at Home and 6<sup>th</sup> Form Mentors courses by the mobilization of parents, carers and senior school pupils.

We have also continued to achieve our core aim of helping some 1200 children each week in the City of Nottingham and County of Nottinghamshire come to know the joy that reading and communication can bring.

The offer of the net proceeds of a dance organised and played at by Corporate Charity Band, the Demons of Tune, was most welcome and, as the Treasurer will report, added some £2500 to our funds. Richard, Karen and Emma C "manned" the door and the evening was an unforgettable experience especially for Committee Member Pam Meese and friend who came along to see what it was all about!

As you will gather from my opening remarks, the year was also filled with challenges some of which have been surmounted, others still being with us.

You will be aware that Nottingham City Council, due to the current economic climate, are unable to provide us with an actual cash grant and continued dialogue has been maintained with them throughout the year regarding our accommodation and facilities package. I regret that these discussions have yet to bear fruit and perhaps you will know that the Sandfield Centre is due to close in October 2010.

We have had, however, some notable successes, amongst them being the recruitment of our 1000th Literacy Volunteer who was Rachel O'Mara a Volunteer at St. Margaret Clitherow RC Primary School.

The development of new courses to extend our mission and diversify our income streams has been

It was also known that the County Council was experiencing financial difficulties and they were not sure if they would be able to continue to support us and many other third sector organisations. Our application for funding was duly submitted but, because of constraint mentioned above, no answer regarding our successful funding bid was received until after the end of the financial year.

In view of the dire situation, we made contact with both Local Authority Leaders, relevant Portfolio Holders and Officers outlining the possible demise of Literacy Volunteers.

During the same critical time Vernon Coaker, MP, the Schools Minister and a long standing "Champion" of Literacy Volunteers, was fully briefed on the situation and was requested to write to both Council Leaders supporting our case. This he duly did and replies were received from both Leaders which endorsed the value placed on the services provided by Literacy Volunteers and although not being able to promise any definite outcomes indicated that they would see what could be done.

In addition, during Volunteer events other "Champions" were made aware of the current situation and as a result Paddy Tipping, MP, also made contact with Philip Owen, Portfolio Holder for Children & Young People's Services at Nottinghamshire County Council, endorsing our valuable work and hoping that the County Council would be able to provide us with a Grant and consider our accommodation issues.

During these events the likelihood that Literacy Volunteers would have to be wound up became an increasing possibility and our reserves had to be maintained at an adequate level to pay staff redundancy payments and any closing liabilities.

As we were informed that more of the funding from Central Government would go direct to schools we also had to change our business model so that it fitted the changing circumstances. Your Executive Committee had to regretfully make the decision that in order to remain a financially viable organisation we would have to increase our subscriptions to member schools by 100%.

I am delighted to tell you that after communicating this to Member Schools the great majority felt that they would be in a position to pay the increase and the amount of subscriptions paid in advance for the forthcoming financial year is the highest ever.

No report, especially at times like these, would be complete without an enormous thank you to all our Staff Team. Their loyalty to Literacy Volunteers and each other, together with their "can do and will do"

attitude is inspirational. They have been kept fully in the picture regarding the current situation and continue to give 100% to the fulfillment of our mission.

Thanks are also due to all members of the Executive Committee who have shared the many and complicated tasks that the role of Trustee increasingly involves at this time.

From our termly Infosheet we have attempted to keep Volunteers in the picture regarding our fluid situation and here, once again, I have been delighted and heartened by the support and encouragement we have received. Volunteers have also kept focussed on the task before them and continued to provide a dedicated and committed service to "their children". (Please see a selection of comments about the help that has been given to Member Schools on Page 11 of this Report). On their behalf I thank you all.

Towards the end of this year we applied to the European Social Fund for funding to run a series of "Confidence Building through Family Reading" courses and our Application has been successful. In the new financial year we will run 5 courses in both City and County locations, helping parents and carers to learn and become confident in their abilities to help their children read. The courses will also contain a module for basic computer skills which will signpost participants towards the wealth of literacy facilities that can be downloaded from the internet.

As I said at the beginning of this report it has been a challenging year, but we move forward into the new year totally united in the conviction that what we do helps so many children achieve their full potential.

**Ann Sanderson**  
**Chairman**

## Treasurer's Report

**Grants and Donations decreased by £27,514 mainly due to the cessation of monetary funding from the Nottingham City Council (2 years of funding being received in 08/09) and the decrease in amounts of funding received from Charitable Trusts due to the current economic situation. School subscriptions however showed a healthy increase, when, including the annual rise for inflation, they rose to £38,609, up some 15%.**

Fee income increased from £727 to £2,345 due to a successful campaign to market the extra services we can now offer. Due to the banking crisis our interest decreased by some £2,417 although the continuance of a policy of strict credit control resulted in our reserve account balances being kept as high as possible. We are grateful to the Demons of Tune, a music group formed by members of the corporate sector, who performed a benefit concert on our behalf and raised the impressive amount of £2,567 for our Charity.



*Demons of Tune in full swing*

Dealing with Expenditure, Wages and NI were £60,626 a modest increase of some £276 and well within the Budget of £63,000. It is noted, with deep appreciation, that many of our Staff Team have worked extra hours without payment because of their dedication to our mission.

The amount spent on Volunteer resources reduced by £189 to £1,105. Volunteer and Staff Travel Expenses rose by £1,310 which was largely due to more Volunteers claiming travel expenses because of an increase in fuel costs and increased staff mileage to cover marketing and networking events. Our Insurance costs remained constant at £859.

Telephone, Stationery, Publications & Subscriptions and other general expense items were within allowable limits and a one off charge for the printing of our new corporate image of £782 was made, this was financed from the proceeds of the fund raising concert.

The net result of our financial year was a budgeted deficit of expenditure over income of £7,451.

Because of the payment of monies direct to schools instead of Local Authorities, the Trustees have decided, with regret, that in order to make up the shortfall in Council grants, school subscriptions will have to be increased substantially in the forthcoming financial year. Our Member Schools have been advised of the proposed increase and their reaction has been positive with a larger amount of subscriptions being pre-paid than ever before.

The provision of accommodation and facilities package provided to our Charity by Nottingham City Council is currently under review and should a satisfactory outcome to negotiations not be achieved then the continuation of the charity, in its current form, is under threat.

**Julia Orme**  
**Treasurer**



*10 year Presentation to Sheila Wright by Paddy Tipping MP at Hillside Primary School on 15th January, 2010. Head Teacher Mrs Dorothy Stenson said "It's a fantastic moment to celebrate with Sheila, her 10 year achievement as a Literacy Volunteer. Sheila has supported over 100 children to learn to read."*



*John Mann MP attends the retirement presentation for Gladys Wilson at St Augustine's Junior School, Worksop*

**(Literacy Volunteers has no political affiliation, the fact that both MPs shown are members of the Labour Party is purely a reflection of the sitting MP in the locality.)**

## What we can offer

In addition to the service traditionally provided by Literacy Volunteers we are now able to offer:

**Family Reading at Home** - training parents/carers to read at home with their children.

**Parent Volunteers Course** - training Volunteers recruited by the school to help with literacy.

**Pen Pals Project** - arranging an inter-generational exchange of letters with selected primary school children.

**6th Form Mentors Course** - training 6th formers to mentor year 7s with literacy.

**Community Course** - recruiting and training a group of up to 10 Literacy Volunteers for service in a specific area or family of schools.

For further amplification, please visit our website [www.literacyvolunteers.org.uk](http://www.literacyvolunteers.org.uk). Costings are tailored to suit individual client's requirements, please contact Richard Wray, Service Director, for further information.



## What we have done

**We have helped, on a 1 to 1 basis, some 1200 children each week, during term time, in primary schools in the City of Nottingham and the County of Nottinghamshire overcome their literacy and communication problems.**

We have contributed to the increase in the standard of literacy in Nottinghamshire Primary and Secondary Schools.

We have trained, over 11 courses, vetted and CRB checked (Enhanced Disclosure) 86 new Volunteers over the last financial year.

We have supported some 312 Volunteers "in post" in 162 member schools in Nottinghamshire by visits and meetings organised by Area Co-ordinators and provided a help desk facility for day to day Volunteer management, support and enquiries. 1500 copies of our termly "Infosheet" have been produced and distributed to Volunteers, schools and other interested parties.

We have, on a "simple" monetary basis, contributed in gross terms, by the hours donated by our Volunteers, the equivalent of some £450,000 in total to City and County Schools.

We have rolled out a series of Family Reading at Home courses and 6<sup>th</sup> Form Mentors courses which has enabled us to extend our mission to areas not previously covered by our mainstream activities.

Existing partnerships with Nottingham City Council Children's Services and Nottinghamshire County Council Children & Young People's Services, ENABLE and the Adult and Community Learning Service of the County Council have been maintained and strengthened.

In addition, we have maintained contact with all City and Countywide Community Volunteers Services Bureaux.

In the City we have participated at meetings of Strategic Partnership for Children, Young People and Families, Voluntary and Community Sector Shadow Board, NCVS Partnership Network Meetings, Education Improvement Partnership Managers and attended Big Top EIP Family Support Worker Meetings.

In the County, we have also attended meetings of NAVO—Families, Children, Young People's Forum and Extended Services Events.

## What they say about us

"Your Literacy Volunteers are a real asset to the Southwark team and have a significant impact on the academic progress and confidence of the children they work with."

**Assistant HT, Southwark Primary School**

"Our two Volunteers continue to provide an excellent service. Apart from their weekly reading sessions, they have willingly become more involved with other activities."

**HT, Berridge Junior School**

"As always, the support provided to our pupils is excellent. The children gain much from the one to one tutoring. I recommend the Literacy Volunteers to other schools without any reservations."

**HT, The Priory Catholic Primary School**

"We are delighted with our Literacy Volunteers. The children love them coming in and they make a significant contribution to the children's overall progress."

**HT, John Hunt Primary School**

"We very much appreciate and benefit from the impact of having someone who can spend quiet, quality time on specific aspects of literacy. The children's confidence and motivation definitely improve."

**HT, Christ Church Infant School**

"The two ladies who come to us are fabulous! We hope that they feel part of our team."

**Co HT, Seely Infant & Nursery School**

"The two Volunteers we use in school are brilliant – very dedicated and professional and definitely part of the team."

**HT, Sutton-on-Trent Primary School**

"We are all very grateful for the superb help we receive from Literacy Volunteers – the children love working with Mrs X and all gain an immense amount from her fun and games approach to reading."

**HT, Fairfield Primary School**

"The opportunity for the children to talk to an adult and develop a positive relationship is as important as the reading."

**Assistant HT, West Bridgford Junior School**

"Literacy Volunteers form an integral part of our provision."

**HT, Brocklewood Infant and Nursery School**

## Acknowledgements

- All our funders for providing finance and support in kind to enable us to develop and maintain our service.
- Nottingham City Council for providing us with office accommodation and facilities at the Sandfield Centre and training accommodation at the Denewood Centre, Nottingham.
- Nottinghamshire County Council for providing us with training resources at Home Brewery House, Arnold.
- Our Volunteers who freely give their time and commitment.
- The Officers and Committee for shouldering the responsibilities of managing the organisation.
- The Staff Team for working so hard and effectively to run all our activities.
- Our partners for allowing us to share so many more opportunities, and

### **most importantly**

- The children for allowing us to spend time with them and making sure we have fun!



## Funding

Our grateful thanks are extended to the following organisations and individuals for providing financial support during the year.

**Nottinghamshire County Council  
Adult and Community Learning Service -  
(Nottinghamshire County Council)  
The Whittaker Charitable Trust  
Lady Hind Trust  
Thomas Farr Charity  
Sir John Eastwood Foundation  
Jesse Spencer Trust  
HSBC Bank Plc  
Rothera Family Charity Trust  
Sutton Local Area Forum  
Anon  
B. Dewing  
Mrs M.A. Smith  
Mrs G. Watson  
Mrs I. Reid  
Miss F. Abbott  
D. Curtis**

We would also like to thank the following Nottinghamshire County Councillors who have made grants out of their Electoral Division Initiative monies for Member Schools in their constituencies:

**County Cllr. the Rev. T. Irvine  
County Cllr. M. Murphy  
County Cllr. R. Adair  
County Cllr. M. Spencer  
County Cllr. M. Suthers  
County Cllr. S. Carr  
County Cllr. D. Taylor  
County Cllr. K. Rostance**

Without the help from all our funders we could not continue to extend our mission.

## Roll of Honour

This lists the **active** members on our Roll of Honour who have been helping children enjoy reading and communicating for ten years or more.

**Floss Abbott**  
**Hazel Simms**  
**Ann Sanderson**  
**Diane Melling**  
**Annice Towndrow**  
**Sheila Parish**  
**Margaret Romaine**  
**Elaine Goodwin**  
**Carol Robinson**  
**John Marter**  
**Pam Ward**  
**Tom Elliott**  
**Carol Foord**  
**Lyn Jacob**  
**Barbara Nightingale**  
**Julia Orme**  
**Carol Smith**  
**Sheila Wright**  
**Jean Baugh**

## Equal Opportunities Policy

Literacy Volunteers in Nottinghamshire Schools aims to help individual children who are learning to read and need extra support and help. They also provide literacy related courses to both schools and other community organisations utilising the experience and talents of members of the Staff Team.

In order to encourage the widest possible representation of the community, the Organisation has adopted the following equal opportunities policy:

L.V.N.S. will ensure that all existing and prospective volunteers and employees will receive the same treatment irrespective of sex, age, marital status, family responsibility, colour, race, sexual orientation, ethnic origin, religious belief or disability and only conditions relevant to performance as a volunteer or employee will be required. All children being helped by volunteers will also receive the same treatment on these grounds.

It is the duty of all committee members, employees and volunteers to follow the equal opportunities policy in all aspects of their work and to ensure that their actions comply with this policy.

Any breaches of the policy will lead to disciplinary investigation and possible disciplinary action.

