

With a profusion of snowdrops and crocuses we know that spring has arrived. It is welcoming after the dark days of the past few months. We have been fortunate in missing most of winter's ills and made progress on all fronts.

School Visits

Jacky Boyce our Schools Liaison Officer has been busy booking schools for the summer and autumn terms and trying to cope with requests for repeat visits and drama workshops as well as breaking new ground.

Recruitment and Training

Our next training session is to be held at Alton on the Wednesday 22nd March where Ross Smith will be supported by Esi Hardy.

A lot of people from areas in and around Hampshire have taken a great interest, including several Occupational Therapists and students from Nash College, Bromley.

Our first training session for next term will be held on the Thursday 8th June which will be back in Sussex. We already have people interested in coming.

Visual Supports

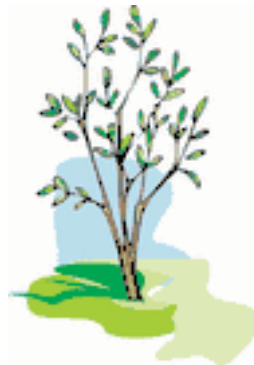
As mentioned in our Christmas Newsletter we are asked time and again to supply visual support for our speakers. As applications for grants for this purpose have been unsuccessful we are now writing to all schools we have visited asking them for a donation either for this purpose or towards the speakers' expenses which would increase some funding for equipment.

Outreach News (Crawley & Haywards Heath)

We have now four speakers working in the Crawley area and one currently searching for suitable premises to hold an 'Awareness Day'. We are also working in Haywards Heath and adjacent areas.

Disability Awareness Week in Chichester.

With so many other activities programmed for the summer term in the Chichester area we have put our Disability Awareness Week on hold until the autumn term. More information nearer the time.



Fundraising

January has seen the start of a major push for fundraising at the SVA.

The month of January rewarded us with a grant from Bognor Regis Town Council, received by Patrick Jeffries.

In February, we were delighted to receive confirmation of a grant from Global Grants to fund the establishment of a small training office in Hampshire to provide IT training and office skills to disabled young people.

We are still seeking funding for specialist equipment and software. Also in February, the Chichester City Council awarded us a grant for our services to the Chichester area, received at their AGM by Pam Skilton.

The Local Network Fund has suggested we apply for a second grant this year, based upon the results achieved from our last award. We have therefore applied for a grant to stage a further "Celebration of Disability Awareness & Volunteering" in the Crawley/Horsham area.

We have approached almost 70 local Parish Councils and have received a considerable response, enabling us to apply at specific times of the year for 2006.

The West Sussex Youth Service has confirmed our affiliation for the coming year and they too are considering a further grant.

With almost £60,000 of applications already in the pipeline, this is an excellent start and we hope that 2006 will indeed be a year to raise the profile of disability awareness and inclusion.

An application is in progress to the Arts Council for drama workshops and art training.

A further application has been made to Volunteering England.

This grant is specifically to fund the SVA's opportunity to achieve the Investing in Volunteers Quality Standard.

Sponsored Walk

Pam Skilton is doing a Sponsored walk on Sunday the 21st of May. Would you please be able to find sponsors?

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Our offices will be closed from 3rd - 7th April for annual leave.



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