

TWICS acts as the 'Locally Trusted Organisation' for SO18 Big Local. This is a ten year project administered by Local Trust for the National Lottery Community Fund with our Big Local project being one of 150 in England to receive £1.1m, drawn down through plans agreed by a local partnership committee. The SO18 Big Local committee, made up of local residents from Harefield, Townhill Park and Midanbury, has now completed six years, and has had its new plan for 2019 – 2022 agreed.

SO18 Big Local is making a big difference to its neighbourhoods, whether through the weekly 'Townhill Helping Hub' at Townhill Park Community Centre, the engagement with the large scale redevelopment of Townhill Park through a Regeneration Forum which it convenes, or the presence of Harefield Hub in a small shop unit (for which TWICS holds the lease for SO18 Big Local) which is a meeting place and venue for small groups and support services. Visually SO18 Big Local has made an impact too, most recently through a large wooden signpost, designed by wood sculptor Andy Frost, and pointing to local green spaces, sited prominently on Meggeson Avenue leading into Townhill Park.



Transition Southampton & the Immaculate Conception Catholic Church

TWICS in partnership with Transition Southampton, was chosen as the Church's local charity of the year. Some of the money raised has already paid for the reprinting of Transition's Southampton Sustainable Living Guide, whilst it will also help support TWICS' gardening projects. It was a fruitful partnership, with TWICS attending Church events, in partnership with Transition, promoting our gardening work, and with ideas for recycling and local opportunities to engage.



Together We Grow and the Mosaic Way

TWICS has been successful in applying for two grants from the People's Health Trust Lottery, both of which have some match funding from and are in partnership with SO18 Big Local. The 'Together We Grow' project employs a community gardener, Pippa, who has worked with local residents to transform some unloved urban spaces into colourful, insect friendly and sometimes edible planted areas. The most spectacular change has been at Vanguard Road, where a local resident in a previously rather bleak block of flats, recently described her flat as being 'above the flowers'.



Just started, our second People's Health Trust project is The Mosaic Way, working with mosaic artist Will Rosie and our tutor Gillian to gather local residents to make their own small mosaics, which will be installed across the SO18 Big Local area.



Training For Work In Communities

ANNUAL REPORT 2018 - 2019

"Empowering people to take an active role in their communities through encouragement, advice and training"

A word from the TWICS Chair

Once again TWICS has risen to the challenge of a difficult financial environment. Because of the severe cuts in funding faced by the Council, we knew that we would lose our core grant at some time in 2019 and had no certainty about what would replace it. In this light we made great efforts to reduce our staff costs, finance and administration overheads as well as reducing our office costs even further. The results of our cost-saving exercise are visible in our financial report. A very welcome donation more than covered a small deficit and we have not needed to set so much money aside to meet commitments as we anticipated at the beginning of the year. And so, we ended the 2018-19 financial year on a much better financial footing than at the beginning of the year.

We continue to work with the most disadvantaged learners and communities and experience first-hand how the current political and economic climate impacts on these communities. We are still distributing FareShare food and increasingly need to refer people to food banks. We work with local people to change things for the better. A recent example is working with people in Harefield for better bus connections to the city. We aim to upskill our volunteers so that when the time is right for them, they are better equipped to enter the labour market.

Finally, none of what we do could be achieved without the dedication of TWICS staff who continually go the extra mile to meet the challenges we are facing with creative and mindful responses to ensure that TWICS continues to make a very valuable contribution to the communities it serves.

Mike Page, TWICS Chair



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Swaythling Neighbourhood Centre
Hampton Park Way
Southampton
SO17 3AT
Telephone: 023 8067 1111
e-mail: admin@twics.org.uk

A reflection of the past year

By *Iane Chambers, TWICS manager*

Every year when I come to write this reflection I breathe a huge sigh of relief that we are still here and every year I think that things cannot get any harder, but they do! Truth is we are still here because of the dedication of the TWICS team and Management Committee who have adapted to new ways of working and embraced change in order to cope with ever decreasing resources.

We had to get used to working without a finance officer and I would like to express my gratitude to Mike, our Chair, for establishing our new accounting system and training us in using it. As a staff team we now have an improved understanding of our financial position and can monitor it much more closely.

Our core grant has come to an end but we have been fortunate enough to replace some of it by being part of the new SO:Linked service as one of six partner organisations. SO:Linked is a joined up service delivering community navigation and community development in the city and we are pleased that we can continue to benefit the city of Southampton through our community development expertise.



We have entered into a partnership with the Avenue St Andrew's church by employing and line managing a community worker on their behalf. I would like to say a huge welcome to Beccy Gange. Beccy will support the church in recruiting volunteers for their many community activities as well as supporting many projects and developing new ones whilst benefitting from being a member of our community development team.

Finally, some thank-yous:

Thank you to our Management Committee for their support, encouragement and friendly challenges during the year.

Thank you to all the staff members and in particular Maureen and Barbara for being so flexible to meet the demands of the organisation. Thank you also to Jo and Kyle, our Big Local workers, for doing amazing work in the SO18 Big Local area and to Pippa, our community gardener, for all her work in making parts of Southampton greener and more colourful.

I want to thank Southampton City Council's Community and Adult Learning Team for their ongoing financial support and Southampton Voluntary Services for their successful SO:Linked tender submission to Southampton City Council and the Clinical Commissioning Group and for letting us be part of it.

Some of the highlights of the year are included in this annual report and we hope you enjoy reading about them.

Community & family learning

Once again our funding from Southampton City Council was slightly reduced from last year, however we still managed to deliver 29 courses delivered at different locations across Southampton. For less money we have delivered 2 more courses than last year!

All of our tutors were independently observed during the academic year by the team from Southampton City Council. Quotations from reports include that our tutors "had a very clear understanding of the individual learners"; "had excellent subject knowledge"; and "very good attention was paid to safe working practices".

Our Arts and Crafts tutor, Gillian Jeffery has been busy teaching a variety of skills to learners at Mencap and Way Ahead. She has continued with teaching volunteers upcycling at Scratch, helping to upcycle donated furniture.

Our choir leader Alison Moffatt has set up a very successful new singing group at Erskine Court, which offers supported living for the over 55's. Some learners are recovering from strokes and re-learning their spoken word with others in wheelchairs and the singing and waving of arms helped them all to benefit from the sessions. One lady attends as a carer for her husband and coming to the singing group is the only time he goes out in the week helping combat social isolation for them both.



Pula Popat continues to be in demand with her Healthy Cooking and Food Hygiene courses. We now have a number of people who have achieved their Food Hygiene Level 2 qualification including volunteers who support Lunch Clubs and other food related activities in community centres around the city.

Iane Chambers has introduced Financial Literacy to our curriculum which has been very well received. She continues to raise the profile of community development and has delivered courses to employees & volunteers in other locations including Gosport Voluntary Services. We continue to work in partnership with Way Ahead, Mencap, Own2Feet, Scratch and quite recently The Grow Project. Many of our learners have diverse needs and we are always delighted to see the progress that they make through attending one of our courses.

Our success continues to be down to our tutors so a big thank you to Gillian Jeffery, Pula Popat, Iane Chambers & Alison Moffatt for all their hard work.