

PRESIDENT'S INTRODUCTION



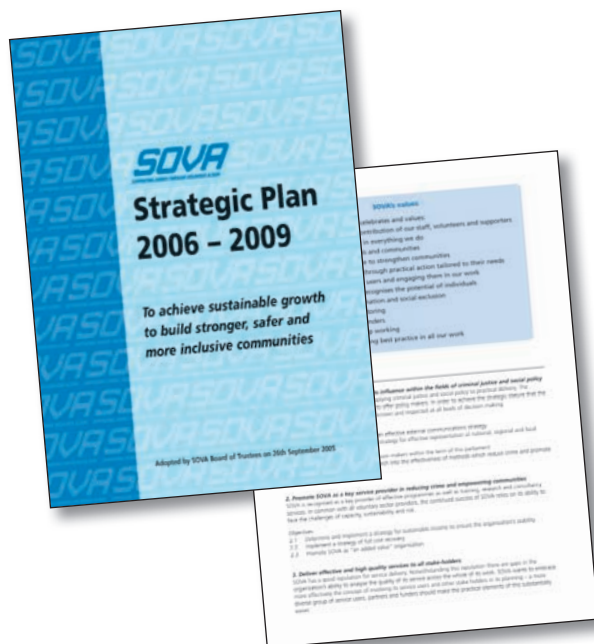
I am very pleased to introduce this Annual Review for SOVA. It has been interesting to read the individual stories of the people with whom SOVA works and I have found myself impressed by how far people can move in improving their lives when given reliable support and guidance.

In her report the Chief Executive states SOVA's position on NOMS and the times of change that it will engender. I am pleased to see SOVA both recognising the opportunity to spread its work more widely and expressing a determination to sustain important values.

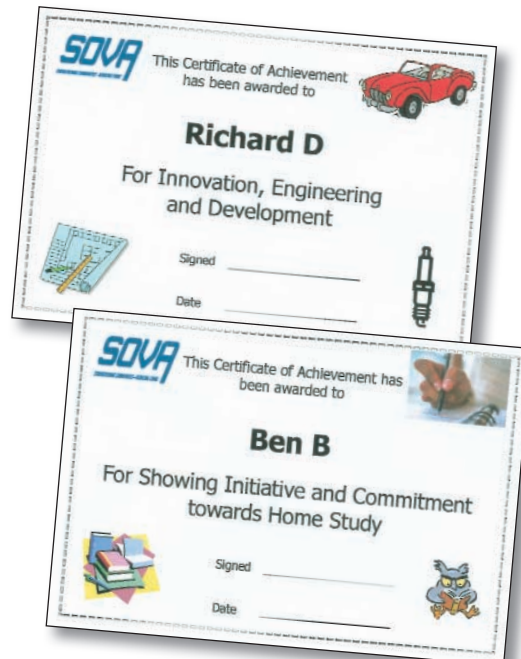
I wish SOVA every success over the coming year.

Baroness Hilton, QPM

Planning professionally...



...Working individually



MARVIN'S STORY



"I'm so pleased that I stopped you and asked what you did"... that's what Marvin told project worker Craig Milner just before he was released from prison. Although all new inmates are told about the SOVA/Yorkshire Prisons Employment, Training and Education Project when they first come into prison, they are not always ready to take up the offer of support, and so it was with Marvin. Project staff spend a lot of time out

on the wings reminding inmates about what is on offer – and it was whilst Craig was on his wing that Marvin stopped him and asked him what he did. Craig, having explained how the SOVA project worked, offered Marvin an interview.

Marvin had originally received a two year sentence, but had been released with a tag after one year. Unfortunately, he breached his tagging conditions and was taken back into custody. When he attended his interview with Craig, he was in pessimistic mood: "I don't know why I'm having this interview, I've had loads in the past, and nobody ever does anything to help me". He was also confused as to why he had been recalled to prison – he hadn't received the relevant documentation. Little by little Craig worked at building Marvin's trust in the project, starting with tracking down the paperwork pertaining to Marvin's recall to custody.

In the short term, Marvin hoped to return to his previous employment as a road worker; but he was also interested in developing a career as a youth worker, and prior to coming into custody had gained two years' work experience with young people. Focusing on his immediate needs first, Craig (with Marvin's permission) contacted Marvin's previous employer to discuss the prospect of re-employment, and arrangements were made for Marvin to visit the company as soon as he was released.

Some years before, when Marvin first became interested in youth work, he had been advised that he could qualify by compiling a 'portfolio'. Craig discovered that this approach was now obsolete, and had to tell Marvin that the best way to qualify now was to study for an NVQ level 3, which comprised evening classes plus supervised fieldwork, probably as a volunteer, over a two year period. Craig expected Marvin's response would be to lose interest in his ambitions, but instead Marvin asked Craig to see if he could arrange for voluntary placement. This turned out to be quite a challenge, not because of Marvin's criminal record but because of the demand for placements. Finally Craig found the ideal placement: an education project for 12 to 19 year olds which included football crafts: prior to his incarceration Marvin had played football at a semi-professional level. The project held daytime classes for excluded students, as well as three evening sessions a week, which would enable Marvin to work as well as to gain his voluntary experience.

So... when the time came for Marvin's release and he met with Craig for the last time, his final feedback was to say... "I am so pleased I stopped you and asked you what you did; no one has ever given me so much help and support in prison".

Name changed to protect identity

MARVIN'S STORY

The majority of participants in SOVA projects around the country – 61%, or just over 10,000 individuals – are men and women in custody. The main focus of SOVA's work with this client group is the provision of advice and guidance around employment, training and education, readying ex-prisoners to return to the labour market on release.

During the year under review the first of SOVA's projects achieved the Matrix Standard, the quality standard for information, advice and guidance services; and the majority of staff have achieved or are pursuing the NVQ level 3 in Advice and Guidance.



To: Gina Carter, SOVA ETE Project Manager, HM Prison Wealstun

Dear Gina,

I am writing regarding Julia and Laura, your employees in post at HM Prison Everthorpe.

Since their arrival at our establishment, the ETE service that they have performed has been to an excellent standard. They have linked into the Resettlement function with flexibility and enthusiasm, rapidly becoming key team members and a genuine asset.

They represent your organisation with both professionalism and a caring approach that is realistic and appropriate to the client base with which they work.

I would ask that this note of recognition and formal thanks to both Julia and Laura for their efforts is recorded on their record of service (or equivalent) and that their line managers are made aware of my satisfaction with their performance.

As I depart this establishment, I am leaving behind an outstanding Resettlement team, of which Julia and Laura are genuine key members. I trust that you will feed back these comments on my behalf to Julia and Laura with my personal gratitude for their efforts and friendship during our time together at Everthorpe.

Andy Crofts
Offender Interventions
HM Prison Everthorpe

JEZ'S STORY



Jez was 17 and living with his mum and step dad. Relationships were strained and Jez was frequently missing overnight. Jez also had a drug problem and had developed something of a reputation in his local area. In 2005 he received a six month referral order for theft. He had been visiting an elderly relative of a friend and stole the man's wallet containing £70.

The package put together for Jez's order included reparation and mediation to be delivered through the SOVA Wessex Restorative Justice Project. Initially Jez was very difficult to engage with, turning up for appointments very much 'under the influence', but a multi-agency intervention approach, including the support of a drugs worker, enabled Elaine, the SOVA worker, to begin victim awareness work fairly early on.

Elaine contacted the victim, who was pleased to be involved and in particular wanted to receive an apology from Jez. Elaine worked with Jez on a one-to-one basis and supported him in writing a letter apologising for the distress he had caused.

Over the course of the order Jez ceased using drugs and turned up for all of his appointments. Time with his YOT worker focused on what he might do with the rest of his life, and Jez expressed an interest in the building trade. With the support of the whole team, and of his parents, with whom he had worked to improve relationships, Jez applied for and secured a residential apprenticeship in the construction industry, where competition for places was considerable.

"Jez has expressed great remorse," says Elaine. "In his last session with me, he told me that he is thankful for the whole referral order as it gave him the support to change his life, and the opportunity to make up a little for what he had done. His emotional and physical health has improved one hundred percent, as well as his confidence and his ability to manage himself and his life. He simply isn't the same person that I met back at the beginning of his order".

The final word goes to Jez's victim, who was happy to receive his letter of apology and "would like to wish Jez every success for the future".

JEZ'S STORY

Fifty percent of SOVA project participants across the UK are under 25, 23% are under 18. Many of these young people are offenders referred to SOVA projects by local Youth Offending Teams. SOVA projects offer a variety of interventions, in particular in the area of restorative justice and mentoring.

The SOVA Wessex project alone received 1,600 referrals during the year under review and successfully concluded 1,200 of these. Almost 100% of identifiable victims were contacted by the project, and full mediation took place in just over 19% of these cases. The project arranges a broad range of reparation activities, including the refurbishment of a local charity shop and numerous environmental and fundraising/sponsored projects.

To [redacted]

I am really sorry about what happened at the Rapids park that day. I don't normally do those sort of things. Please don't feel that you can't go there anymore, because I promise that I won't do it again and if I am there at any point and ANY one else tries to pick on you, I will immediately try to stop them from doing it. I am sorry if I have made you feel scared from going there again or even from going out anymore, because you shouldn't feel worried about anyone that tries to bully you. Again, I am really sorry, and I know I shouldn't of done it, I have felt regret from the moment I walked past you and your dad that day. I guess I felt influenced by Teresa when she started having a go at you and joined in because I thought that I might look 'cool'. I have never ever done anything like that before, and I promise you that I won't ever do it again - to ANYONE. I really do hope that you can forgive me, because I feel so bad about it. Feel free to reply with your thoughts about me and what happened

From [redacted]

-X-

To
managers and staff at [redacted]

I am writing this letter to apologise to you all for breaking the shop window the week before Christmas.

I know it upset you all and frightened the lady who lives upstairs but I honestly did not mean to break it or break it on purpose. I was messing around with my friends throwing road signs to each other a stupid thing to do. I know, the one I threw went into your window.

I am deeply sorry for the stress and worry I caused you all, especially at the time of year it was, I have been told you were very busy so this was a problem you should not of had and I'm sorry, I have upset a lot of people. My family include I have been to court and received a 200 fine and 3 month referral order, I pay the fine every week out of my wages and attend meetings with the Youth Offending team, this is my first time in trouble with the police and will be my last.

I am very sorry for upsetting you all and I hope you will except my apologise for the trouble I have caused.

DOMINIC'S STORY



"My name is Dominic and I am 38 years old. For the past ten to fifteen years I have been leading a very unsettled way of life. I have been out of work and receiving sickness benefit for over ten years due to health problems caused by alcohol and substance misuse. I have also served several prison sentences during this time. In 2003 I got three years for street robbery and at this point I decided I had had enough. In 2005 I was released from prison and went to

live at Rookwood Bail Hostel in Rotherham. I spoke to the outreach worker from SOVA (Graham) who attends the residents' meeting every week. My self-esteem and confidence were very low at that point. I wasn't sure what I wanted to do, but I did know that I wanted to get back into full-time employment. Graham reassured me and urged me to take things one step at a time. I decided that I would like to improve my maths and try and look for some voluntary work.

"After looking at my options, Graham took me to Swinton Lock Adventure Centre to see what courses they had on offer. I decided I would like to do something different and I settled for a boat-handling course. I had never been on a boat before and I was a bit nervous about the whole thing but as soon as we got started I began to feel much more relaxed. Everyone was really nice and the instructors were great. The course was one day a week for six weeks, learning how to handle a narrowboat and drive it. At the same time, I began attending numeracy classes at SOVA.

"After the course finished I was asked if I would like to get my skipper's licence and I have just returned from an overnight trip on the boat learning to skipper and be responsible for the boat and crew. Since obtaining my skipper's licence, I have been offered some voluntary work at Swinton Lock Adventure Centre. This work involves being responsible for the crew on the Centre's narrowboat and taking groups of people out on day trips.

"I am over the moon about what I have achieved in the past few months. My confidence and self-esteem have improved dramatically because as well as gaining the boat qualifications, I have learned new skills in team building and made new friends. This has enabled me turn my back on a life of drugs and crime. The next stage for me is to get off sickness benefit and make a claim for Jobseeker's Allowance. This will then hopefully take me one step closer to my ultimate goal, which is to secure full time employment."

Supporting offenders under supervision in the community is where SOVA started over 30 years ago, and many SOVA projects continue to offer services to this client group.

The SOVA Hertfordshire Probation Partnership, after nine years of delivering services to people on Probation orders and other community sentences, continues to develop new areas of expertise, this year adding to its repertoire support to domestic violence survivors, and money advice. The project has also brought additional funding to the partnership from sources such as Job Centre Plus, the Learning and Skills Council and Community Safety Partnerships. The project delivered over 7,000 volunteer hours during the year, 30% over target and the highest ever recorded in the project's history.

DOMINIC'S STORY

The SOVA Essex Probation Partnership expanded to establish the SOVA Essex Drug Action Team Partnership, a project for class A drug users who are prolific offenders and/or use acquisitive crime to fund their habit. Although only in its first year, the project has already received 78 referrals, and has recruited 55 volunteers.

Many SOVA community projects provide employment, training and education advice to offenders under supervision, as with Dominic. SOVA projects provide basic skills support – literacy and numeracy to level 2 – as well as employment advice through programmes such as Progress 2 Work and deploying volunteers to support project participants.

Women into Work – Building Futures is piloting a range of approaches working with employers to improve the gender balance in occupational sectors under-represented by women, particularly women with additional needs created by multiple disadvantage. This has included, for example, the setting up of traineeships in the construction industry. Research in this area resulted in 'I ain't no tea lady' which was published, and launched at various dissemination events and conferences.



An example of work created by participants of the Friday Art Group at Barnsley Eldon Street Projects. The Art Group provided participants with an opportunity voluntarily to attend art sessions where they themselves identified topics of interest that they would like to research and around which to produce artwork.

JAKE'S STORY



Jake (15) and his younger brother have only recently been taken into care. Their mother had been unable to take care of them for some time, which meant that Jake had developed a number of problems. Of particular concern was Jake's behaviour in relation to food. Because he had not known when food would be available, he had developed a habit of hiding and hoarding food in his room. He also had a phobia about being seen eating and was therefore unable to

eat with the other children at the residential unit. He had neglected himself in terms of personal hygiene, which made him a target for bullying at the school he attended. Jake's little brother is very bright, Jake's response to which has been to act younger in terms of speech and behaviour.

Staff at the unit in Sheffield where Jake was living decided to introduce him to the SOVA CAST & Befriending Project, which runs a drop-in for young people in and leaving care. Even though he was 15, staff were concerned that he was so easily distracted, that he might not be able to travel there by himself and so brought him along every week. At first he was very reserved, especially with the female staff and young women at the drop-in. The only thing Jake felt he was any good at was football and so staff used that interest to encourage Jake to make new friends.

The opportunity for Jake to attend the project's residential at Whinell Forest in Cumbria came around and staff were pleased when Jake agreed to attend. One of the workers made a special effort to get up early every morning to prepare and cook breakfast with Jake whilst the others slept; soon Jake was eating his breakfast with the worker and by the end of the residential, with the rest of the group.

Jake now makes his own way to the drop-in, has made lots of new friends, and helps out with the preparation and eating of meals at the centre! A donation of chocolates was given to the project, far more than the project needed, and so it was decided to share them out around the residential units. Jake was given the task of taking a big bag of sweets back to the unit where he lives. A few months earlier he would have eaten what he could in transit and hidden the rest in his room; but the full bag arrived safely and was shared among the residents.

Jake's key worker wrote to the project: "... the change in Jake has been quite remarkable, he has made friends ... and his self confidence has improved massively. He is now joining staff and other young people at meal times, joining in conversations and making eye contact. He spends a lot more time out of the House with friends... takes more pride in his appearance, and his personal hygiene has improved."

SOVA Project Manager, Thelma, says, "Jake is now a foot taller than when I first met him ... it's not that he has actually grown; it's just that he walks with his head up now."

Name changed to protect identity

JAKE'S STORY

SOVA has a long history of providing support to young people in and leaving care, from independent visitors to one-to-one mentoring and befriending, to group drop-ins. Independent visitors are deployed to work with 'looked after' young people who have infrequent or no contact with their families. The SOVA Independent Visitors scheme in Hull saw an increase in referrals approaching 200% during the year.

Research carried out by the Staffordshire Leaving Care Service explored the benefits of mentoring: it concluded that mentoring projects were flexible and more easily fit the needs of young people, were cost effective, and that young people like them – 75% of young people surveyed said they would like to have a mentor. Many SOVA projects across the country provide a one-to-one service, often supplemented by group activities, special programmes such as services to young parents, residentials and drop-ins. The Hull Befrienders Scheme even has an allotment with regular activities for young people, such as building a scarecrow, painting the shed and growing and carving pumpkins for Halloween.

Mentors make future positive

FOUR years ago, Nicola Corfe found herself in foster care facing a daunting future.

She was put in touch with SOVA, and through the help of her mentor and SOVA staff she is now positive about her future.

"I had problems at home and for various reasons I ended up in foster care. I met Chrissie, the project manager here, and she put me in touch with a mentor.

"This system is better than

counselling. It is more useful because they offer practical help and you don't feel they are judging you.

"All the counsellors I have been to try to make me talk about the past and I just feel it isn't relevant. I want to look to the future. My mentor can help me do that by helping me to get a job.

"I am starting a course in child care soon. I have already worked with children in a holiday resort in Hastings."

“ They offer practical help and you don't feel like they are judging you. ”

Bexley Extra, 23 September 2005

MAURICE'S STORY



Gary Jackson (Project Manager), Maurice, Lord Falconer and Rob

Maurice is a participant in SOVA Side by Side Mentoring at the North Liverpool Community Justice Centre. The Centre is unique in the UK and is based on a model from Brooklyn, New York. The model combines a court, presided over by a circuit judge, along with a wide variety of support agencies, all housed under one roof. The court deals with guilty pleas on so-called 'quality of life' crimes (crimes that especially affect the local community) and the offender's entire history is presented and considered as part of the sentencing. Complete packages are therefore put together, aimed at combining punishment with holistic support and rehabilitation. Maurice was sentenced through the Centre. He resides at the YMCA, attends a structured day care programme called Alternatives and is matched with Rob, a SOVA mentor.

Excerpts from Maurice's diary:

17th February

"I was first introduced to Rob... (he) came to the YMCA and we went for a coffee, and I told him that I was going to Alternatives every weekday, studying IT and English & Maths. We talked about how I ended up in court and that it was all because of my drink problem and that all the times I have been in trouble over the last five years is all because of the drink. I told Rob how long I had been off the drink and that it was the longest I had been sober since being in rehab, which was two years ago".

24th February

"Second meeting with Rob. Rob asked how I was doing at Alternatives, I told him I really enjoy going because it gets me out every day. Told him about my ex-wife who I still miss even after five years. Told Rob that I can handle this but when I start drinking it makes it seem so much worse – I either end up in Police cells or hospital feeling completely depressed and suicidal because the drink has beaten me again. Told Rob I had tried to kill myself on numerous occasions."

3rd March

"Went for coffee again with Rob. Told him about the church I was going to and the nice people I had met. Talked about how I had to keep away from my old friends, because if I go to see them I know I will start drinking again. Discussed what I wanted to do in the future, told him I'd like to get back into work when I get my confidence back. Still find the weekends hard, need something to do. Good to tell someone how long I've been off the drink. Don't know how it helps, but it does."

10th March

"Talked about how I really wanted to do some voluntary work at the weekend. I tend to go on too much and Rob just listens. So good to be off the drink and feeling better in myself."

17th March

"For some reason feeling really low and depressed. I really felt like going for a drink, I told Rob this and we just talked about it. If it was not for Rob and being able to talk to him there is no doubt about it that I would be drinking again and back into the madness. It helped to have Rob to talk to, I usually have no

MAURICE'S STORY

one and the drink gets the better of me once again. It is the first time in five years that on St Patrick's Day I have not had a drink."

7th April

"Went with Rob to the Volunteer Centre and filled out the forms."

14th April

"I talked about a lot of things, must drive Rob mad because I just go on and on."

21st April

"Told Rob about the exams I had taken in IT. And about how the music class was going and the new friends I had made which I thought I never would."

28th April

"I was so worried about seeing Rob because I had a drink on Monday and did not stop until Thursday, and felt so guilty that I had let him down after all of the advice he had given me, so ashamed. We went for coffee. I told Rob I had no idea why I had drunk again, I knew exactly how I would feel and still did it. Rob once again gave me such good advice and did not judge me. We went to the Cathedral and just sat for ten minutes, which helped me gather my thoughts."

5th May

"After church on Sunday got invited to lunch. There was a man who runs AA meetings and I had a good chat with him."

12th May

"Told Rob I was back at Alternatives, and hadn't had a drink for four days. We talked about how I got through it and that it was the first time I have only drunk for a few days and stopped, it usually goes on for weeks or months."

19th May

"Went to Volunteer Centre with Rob, and have an appointment for 2nd June to discuss what voluntary work I would like to do. Told Rob my mind was made up, it will give me something to do at the weekend, because that is the time I am really tempted to go and have a drink."

26th May

"Told Rob I had just done a test on Power Point in IT, which the previous week I was going to give up, but Rob had advised me to do something else for the day and come back to it, which I did and it suddenly clicked. Told Rob about the music class and that I was getting a bit annoyed that we keep getting complaints from the office next door ... we did not choose the room. I cannot get annoyed about things like this, because I usually turn back to the drink ... I think this thing about getting annoyed over stupid things is just an excuse for me to go and drink again and blame it on whatever has wound me up and I have done this so many times in the past..."

Maurice, Rob and Project Manager Gary have agreed that now Maurice is developing a new network of support, they will move from weekly meetings to fortnightly meetings to further encourage Maurice's independence.

JAY'S STORY



Keith, Jordan and Jay – taken at their final meeting

Jay was referred to SOVA for a mentor in February 2004; he was serving two years of a four year sentence. He was matched with Keith, a volunteer mentor, who continued to work with Jay for over two years until earlier this year. During that time, Jay was moved around four different prisons, in locations from Lancashire to Cumbria: the original SOVA project to which Jay was referred closed and he was transferred to a new project with new staff but Keith continued to visit. Ruth Fielding, Project Manager, says “Keith’s

relationship with Jay is an example of the importance of having continuity, of providing long-term support through an ever-changing custodial sentence. The relationship was the one thing that Jay could rely on not to change.”

Jay had been a problem drug user, and was estranged from his family. Just prior to his sentence, Jay’s girlfriend had had a baby and he was struggling to cope with the fact that he was missing out on his little boy growing up, and was not around to support his girlfriend, who was finding it hard to cope as a single mother. Keith helped Jay to work through his feelings: they had long discussions and exchanged many letters on the subject of fatherhood, the role of men in society, reflections on Jay’s past and plans for the future. Keith worked with Jay to identify appropriate courses that he could undertake whilst in custody and helped him work through the disappointment of having his parole turned down. The following are some excerpts from Jay’s letters to Keith. “Thank you for the postcards. I have put them up in my cell, and all your cards. You have been so good to me Keith ... all the times you have come to see me, and the talks we have had have helped me doing my time.”; “I hope that your birthday is as special as it can be. Keith you are a very good man that cares and has a loving heart”; “I wish I had a man like you for a dad.”

Jay was released earlier in 2006. Within days of his release, Jay’s father died and Jay discovered his body. His first thought was to call the SOVA project, where staff helped him to deal with the situation. Rather than responding negatively, Jay managed to move on and has subsequently found a job with a building firm, somewhere stable to live and is co-parenting his son, Jordan.

Four months after his release, Jay attended his final meeting with Keith and the project staff. He is still in work, has rebuilt relationships with family members and, with a new circle of friends, has not returned to problem drug use. Reflecting on his relationship with Keith at this meeting he said, “I’ve never had this kind of support in ... 22 years. It’s made me a better person by making me realise my responsibilities.”

JAY'S STORY

Many of the young people with whom SOVA works are in Young Offenders' Institutions. Jay served the last part of his sentence in HMYOI Lancaster Farms. The SOVA project here has achieved considerable success through the implementation of thorough 'through the gate' support, that is making a considerable investment in keeping in touch with young people once they leave custody. The project carried out a post-release tracking survey, following up on young people who had been mentored through the project between January 2003 and November 2004. They were able to trace all but 15% of young people, and found that 60% had not returned to custody. Looking at more recent participants (January to April 2005), 69% had not been reconvicted. The project has also taken part in or introduced some exciting new developments during the year such as 'Theatre in Prisons', the piloting of NVQs for volunteers and the negotiating of 'legal' visits for volunteers at weekends (so that inmates might be able to see their mentors at weekends without using visitors' orders). The project staff also delivered SOVA volunteer training in Finland as part of a transnational comparison and further study visits for staff and project volunteers are scheduled.

MENTOR

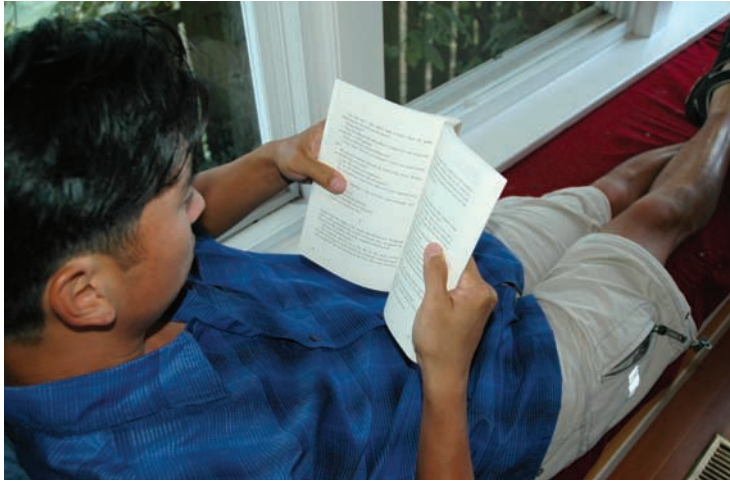
What is a mentor? Do you know?
It's someone who can help you grow
in confidence and pride;
someone by your side
to support you in every way,
listen to what you have to say.

Not to judge you in life
but to assist you in your strife;
to show you other things to do
that may help to develop you
a relationship that's built on trust.
To be a mentor, this is a must.

Not interfering in what you do
but helping to see things through.
Guiding you with a friendly voice
And knowing that it's all your choice.
The mentee decides the way to grow;
The mentor hopes they've helped you grow.

*Avril Ainsbury, volunteer mentor with the Side by Side Mentoring Scheme
Based at the North Liverpool Community Justice Centre*

ED'S STORY



Ed is 16 and grew up in Thailand before moving to Croydon. His parents are in the restaurant business and Ed is left alone for long periods of time in the evenings until well after midnight whilst they are at work. Because of this Ed spent a lot of time with friends and soon became involved in the fringes of gang activity. Although he has never been involved in any criminal behaviour, he was sometimes around when the police picked up

other gang members; this led to his referral to the SOVA Croydon Young People's Project. Ed was soon matched up with volunteer mentor Collette.

Ed admitted to Collette that he had issues with peer pressure and anger management, and confessed to getting involved in "bad" activities to "fit in". However, he made it clear that he is not happy with this lifestyle and expressed a desire to stay out of trouble. His college work was also beginning to suffer. Collette helped Ed to identify three things that he particularly wanted to focus on within the mentoring relationship. These were to finish his college course successfully; to improve his relationship with his dad who, because of his army background, Ed felt was too strict; and to look at moving into his own accommodation (Ed's parents were planning a move to the south coast to open a new restaurant and Ed didn't want to go).

Collette has been encouraging Ed to find different mechanisms to deal with his anger, and together they have been role-playing difficult scenarios around family relationships and discussing how Ed might cope with these situations. Because of his involvement with gangs, Ed finds some areas in the town centre intimidating, particularly those areas where the gangs congregate. Collette is helping him to access resources in Croydon where he feels safe and encouraging him to engage in positive leisure activities focused on his main areas of interest: football, basketball and street dancing. Coincidentally, Collette has a friend who teaches street dancing and is exploring options for Ed to get involved.

Ed's ambition is to become a physiotherapist or sports instructor, and Collette is encouraging him with his course work as well as supporting him in making the transition to his second year at college. They have begun to explore options around independent living and the part-time work that will be necessary to fund this.

Collette says, "I can quite understand why someone like Ed gets involved with gangs. Left on his own, they must seem like a kind of extended family. But Ed's a good kid and I am pleased to think we might have been able to channel his energies before he went too far down that road."

Name changed to protect identity

ED'S STORY

SOVA projects provide a variety of opportunities for young people who are socially isolated/excluded or who may be considered to be at risk of offending. Some projects also offer services to parents.

The Croydon Young People's Project offers a number of programmes, such as the Healthy Living Project. During the year 77 young people, 74% from BME backgrounds, took part in activities centred sports, music and art. A sufficient number completed a 12-week football programme to allow for a team to be formed and regular fixtures to be set with other youth groups. The establishment of a working relationship with Duke McKenzie's Duke Box Gym has enabled the project to add boxing to the list of activities on offer, which has proved very popular. Following a successful pilot in 2004, a 12-week drama programme was introduced: young people chose the theme of 'body image' and at the end of the summer the programme culminated in a performance attended by the Mayor.

Many SOVA projects offer services to young people who are just beginning to get into trouble. This includes Appropriate Adult services and bail support. SOVA Appropriate Adult schemes continue to perform well above target: in Derby City attending 597 call outs against a target of 400; in Sheffield missing only three out of 800 call outs, providing over 4,500 volunteer hours; in Lincolnshire providing 12 hours of cover, seven days a week, 365 days a year, over an area of 2,284 square miles. The SOVA project in Derby City added a PACE Secure Remand Transfer service to its repertoire during the year, whereby volunteers on a rota sit with young people in their cells whilst they await transport to a secure establishment or YOI.

The Barnsley Bail Supervision and Community Remand Scheme introduced 'Let's Talk About It', a programme of sessions delivered in schools in the area, aimed at deterring young people from committing crime.



Participants receiving their recognition of achievement awards for Skills for Life qualifications at a presentation attended by members of the National Probation Service, SOVA Skills for Life tutors and other participants engaging with the projects. This type of presentation provides the setting for the participants' achievements to be recognised and acknowledges in a more formal manner by funders, tutors and other participants.

HANI'S STORY



Hani and her baby son

Hani came to the UK from Somalia as an unaccompanied minor and was taken into the care of Social Services. Her mother was dead, her father had disappeared and she had no brothers or sisters. When she was referred to the Croydon Young People's Project she was 17, four months pregnant and living in a bed-sit. The project soon matched her with a befriender called Maxine.

Maxine got to work straight away, attending ante-natal classes with Hani and advising on healthy eating. Hani was underweight and suffering the usual digestive complaints that go with pregnancy. As a mum of three, Maxine knew that generous portions of broccoli, spinach and prunes would soon sort Hani out. One of the first things to attend to was to get Hani settled into more suitable accommodation, and after Social Services had helped Hani to secure a flat, Maxine went to work on teaching her basic DIY, sewing curtains and shopping for the essentials such as a

fridge/freezer and cooker. As the time of the birth came closer, Maxine helped Hani to get a bag ready and talked to her about what to expect.

The baby, a little boy, was overdue and was eventually delivered by caesarean section. Unfortunately he was suffering from jaundice and needed special care. Maxine was able to visit Hani the day she gave birth and was able to explain what the nurses were saying, as Hani was struggling, English being her second language.

Maxine visited Hani as soon as she came out of hospital and helped her and her partner to settle into a routine with their new son. Over the next couple of weeks Maxine helped Hani to complete housing and child benefit forms.

Two weeks after she came out of hospital a team of bailiffs turned up at Hani's flat and evicted her, even though her rent had been paid, there being some issues between the landlord and lettings agency that were nothing to do with Hani. Hani immediately contacted Maxine, who took her straight to the Social Services offices, where they stayed for the next six hours, telephoning around trying to find alternative accommodation. Finally they found somewhere and Maxine, Hani, her partner and their son headed out into the pouring rain to catch a bus to get there. They arrived at around 7pm. Maxine immediately dispatched Hani's boyfriend to go out and buy some essentials for overnight and popped home herself to get some blankets, cups and plates to lend Hani until they could arrange to retrieve her belongings. The next day Social Services arranged for a van to collect their remaining belongings.

Maxine is now back into helping Hani make new curtains and is attending the clinic with her for her son's immunization appointments.

HANI'S STORY

Maxine says, "Maybe it has all been for the best. Hani is now in a much nicer, modern, ground floor flat. She and her partner are coping well and her little boy is thriving. I am so pleased to have been a part of Hani's life. I cannot imagine what it must be like to arrive in a strange country, where you don't know anyone and you don't understand how things like hospitals work; and once you are over 18, to be pretty much left to fend for yourself. Now that Hani is settled, we can begin to look at things like getting her into college, and working on her English."

A number of SOVA projects across the country work with refugees and asylum seekers, many of whom are young people who arrived as unaccompanied minors. In some projects a peer mentoring approach has been implemented which enables the project to provide volunteers who are able to speak languages such as Arabic, French, Somali, Farsi, Kurdish, Sourani, Bardini, and Turkish.

Using experience gained through the delivery of the Cardiff Plethu Project, SOVA staff in Wales have produced a Good Practice Guide on the use of volunteer mentors with refugees and asylum seekers.

SOVA mentors and befrienders say...

"It gives me a 'feel good' factor. I want to put something back and I feel that however small my contribution feels to me, it makes a positive difference to a young person.

"People ask me sometimes why I work with such difficult young people and I say that working with them makes you see them in a different light and makes you start to appreciate what some of their issues are.

"I think a SOVA volunteer gives young people a really powerful message. It says 'there's someone here who is willing to give up their time to help me'. This is why most young people commit to the volunteer when they have never committed before to anyone."

"I have always loved young people's energy and I am moved by the fact that these really 'hard to reach' young people are in fact just waiting for someone to 'reach' them. Someone who enjoys their company, listens to their problems and helps them to work out their own solutions without judging them or preaching to them.

"Being given the freedom and space to think about things is sometimes all they need.

"My own life feels much richer and complete because of the time I spend as a volunteer, working with disadvantaged youngsters."

"I struggle sometimes to feel that what I have done is enough. It never feels like very much when you see how huge the issues and difficulties are in a young person's life.

"I feel that if this is the small part that I can play in making a positive difference in a young person's life, then I feel that everything else in my life makes sense."

HANNAH'S STORY



Hannah with Jack Shepherd (who plays David Platt in Coronation Street)

Hannah, 25, moved to Sheffield after completing her history degree. After applying for a number of positions in the arts, she realized that her CV was a little short of relevant experience, and so decided to do some voluntary work. She approached the SOVA Sheffield Millennium Volunteers Project.

Hannah has volunteered as a Millennium Volunteer with the project since March 2004 and has completed over 300 hours of volunteering with a number of organisations. She

regularly volunteers four hours per week and combines this with being a freelance community artist and working full time at 'Inspiral', an organisation which supports businesses in the creative industries.

Hannah volunteered with The Garden Rooms (a Sheffield artists' co-operative) for over 15 months and helped at a weekly community based pottery workshop for local people. She also volunteered on the Create Kids and the Kids Out Clubs, encouraging and supporting children with a wide range of abilities to participate in art and creativity activities. Hannah's volunteering has led to her becoming an active member of The Garden Room's management committee.

She also volunteered to design, organise and deliver weekly arts workshops for female asylum seekers and refugees after receiving an enquiry from a local charity, ASSIST (Asylum Seekers Support Initiative Short Term). This art group proved so successful and so popular that Hannah was also able to develop her own youth-led initiative called the Creative Activity Group to provide arts and craft-based activities to socially excluded women living in the Burngreave area of Sheffield.

In March 2006, Hannah's volunteer efforts were recognized when she was voted the regional winner under the Arts category at the Regional Millennium Volunteer of the Year event held in Leeds, and the overall winner of the Millennium Volunteer of the Year title for the Yorkshire & Humber region. Hannah was presented with her trophy by local acting star Jack Shepherd (who plays David Platt in Coronation Street).

All of Hannah's volunteering has focused on expanding her own and others' knowledge and enjoyment through art and craft activities. She has targeted her efforts as a volunteer at groups who would not normally participate in arts-based activities.

Hannah has always volunteered and recommends the experience for everyone. She says, "You meet the most amazing people, and with them, achieve the most amazing things, and along the way, maybe you achieve something for yourself too".

HANNAH'S STORY

Millennium Volunteers is a Department for Education and Skills (DfES) initiative. Millennium Volunteers are young people (aged 16 to 24) who give up their free time to help their local communities. After 100 hours of volunteering, MVs are presented with an award signed by the Minister for Skills and Vocational Education. After 200 hours MVs receive an Award of Excellence signed by the Secretary of State. The SOVA MV Project in Sheffield began in November 1999 and since then 1,057 young people have taken part, 672 of those completing 100 hours, and 457 completing 200. During the year under review, the project was supporting 688 young people.

The project achieved the Matrix Standard, the quality standard for information, advice and guidance services, and was highly commended for the quality of the services it provides. The future is a little less certain and will depend on the project's ability to deliver against the recommendations of the Russell Commission, which may mean some refocusing of the project's work.



Croydon Young People's Project ran a drama project over the summer school holidays, with twelve afternoon sessions culminating in a final performance. The project targeted eleven and twelve year olds and pervading themes were bullying, peer pressure and anger management - issues pertinent to the majority of participants. Press interest resulted in an article and picture in the Croydon Advertiser and the Mayor of Croydon awarded participants with certificates of achievement.

The drama was an invaluable tool in encouraging creativity and imagination, particularly amongst those young people whose skills were not thriving in the academic sphere. The project offered a chance to achieve some of the softer skills: negotiation and communication, teamwork and conflict resolution. Enhancement of these skills also helped to raise the confidence and self-esteem of participants.

SOVA IN WALES

THE SWANSEA REFUGEE PROJECT



AMANI

Amani is Sudanese and a graduate in Agricultural Economics from the University of Cairo. She also has a Post Graduate Diploma and an MSc in Development Planning. Amani has first hand experience of the UK asylum process, having moved through it with her family. She is 40 and has three children aged between 9 and 18 and was dispersed to Wales three years ago, as her sister was living in Cardiff; however they sent her to Swansea, some 40 miles away, and on a limited income. Visits are rare.

As a highly educated person, Amani has struggled with the restriction on asylum seekers not being allowed to work. She wanted to contribute to her new community whilst waiting for permission to work, and so sought the opportunity to undertake some voluntary work. Amani's sister, Amira, had previously volunteered with SOVA in Cardiff and so as soon as SOVA opened the project in Swansea, Amani signed up.

Amani's voluntary work with SOVA began with a training course: "The training was really useful and thorough. It explained my rights and responsibilities as well as those of SOVA and the clients and how they interact. The training explained about confidentiality and setting ground rules and also explained about Health & Safety in the UK, which is a new thing for me.

"I do two things with SOVA: I am a mentor for clients and an interpreter in Arabic for Asylum Justice (a local group providing legal advice and representation and working towards charity status). I am working with two clients at the moment, they are women who are newly arrived in the city. I have assisted them by explaining where places such as the mosque, clinic and Halal food shops are in relation to their homes, as well as showing them how to use public transport. The general feedback from these women is that they are very happy with this service. When they were sent here they didn't expect such assistance. One of them was previously living in London for more than six months and she was unsure about how to find help.

"For myself, I was frustrated doing nothing. I wanted to give something to the place where I will stay. I have started to do that – I'm getting inside the life here. When they don't allow you to work, they stop your life. When they cut your way, you need to find another way. With SOVA I have done that."

During the year The Swansea Refugee Project worked with 64 asylum seekers: 53 men and 11 women from countries as far apart as Pakistan, Poland, Hungary, Iran, Iraq, Turkey and from Africa. Support was provided around areas such as the translation of forms, accessing health care, registering children in schools, shopping for culturally appropriate foods, signposting for help with asylum claims and integration with faith groups.

SOVA's work in Swansea and Cardiff has been instrumental in establishing a number of new developments such as the 'Time Together Project', a Timebank initiative focused on mentoring to help people feel at home in the UK; and the securing of European funding under Equal Theme B – Tackling Racism and Xenophobia in the labour market for a new pan-Wales partnership called Curiad Calon Cymru.

SOVA YNG NGHYMRU

PROJECT FFOADURIAID ABERTAWA

AMANI

Mae Amani o Sudan, a graddiodd mewn Economeg Amaethyddol ym Mhrifysgol Cairo. Mae ganddi hefyd Dystysgrif Ôl-raddedig ac MSc mewn Cynllunio Datblygiad. Mae gan Amani brofiad personol o broses ceisio noddfa'r DU gan ei bod wedi bod drwyddi gyda'i theulu. Mae'n 40, yn fam i dri o blant rhwng 9 a 18 oed, a chafodd ei 'gwasgaru' i Gymru dair blynedd yn ôl gan fod ei chwaer yn byw yng Nghaerdydd. Ond fe'i hanfonwyd hithau i Abertawe, 40 milltir i ffwrdd, ac ar incwm cyfyngedig. Prin iawn yw'r ymweliadau.

Fel person addysgedig dros ben, mae Amani wedi brwydro gyda'r cyfyngiad ar geiswyr noddfa sy'n eu gwahardd rhag gweithio. Roedd am gyfrannu at ei chymuned newydd tra'n disgwyl am ganiatâd i weithio, ac felly, edrychodd am gyfle i wneud rhywfaint o waith gwirfoddol. Roedd Amira, chwaer Amani, wedi gwirfoddoli gyda SOVA yng Nghaerdydd ac felly, cyn gynted ag yr agorodd SOVA'r project yn Abertawe, ymunodd Amani.

Dechreuodd gwaith gwirfoddol Amani gyda SOVA gyda chwrs hyfforddi: "Roedd yr hyfforddiant yn ddefnyddiol iawn ac yn drylwyr. Roedd yn egluro fy hawliau a'm cyfrifoldebau yn ogystal â rhai SOVA a'r cleientiaid, a sut maen nhw'n rhyngweithio. Roedd yr hyfforddiant yn egluro ynglyn â chyfrinachedd a phennu rheolau sylfaenol ac roedd hefyd yn egluro lechyd a Diogelwch yn y DU, sy'n beth newydd i mi.

"Rwy'n gwneud dau beth gyda SOVA: rwy'n fentor i gleientiaid ac yn gyfieithydd mewn Arabeg ar ran Asylum Justice (grŵp lleol sy'n darparu cyngor a chynrychiolaeth gyfreithiol, ac sy'n gweithio tuag at ennill statws elusenol). Rwy'n gweithio gyda dau gleient ar y foment, dwy fenyw sydd newydd gyrraedd y ddinas. Rwyf wedi eu helpu drwy egluro ble mae llefydd fel y mosg, y clinig a siopau bwyd Halal mewn perthynas â'u cartrefi, yn ogystal â dangos iddyn nhw sut mae defnyddio cludiant cyhoeddus. Ymateb cyffredinol y menywod hyn yw eu bod yn hapus iawn â'r gwasanaeth. Pan gawson nhw'u hanfon yma doedden nhw ddim yn disgwyl y fath gymorth. Bu un ohonyn nhw'n byw yn Llundain am fwy na 6 mis a doedd hi ddim yn siŵr sut i ddod o hyd i gymorth.

"O'm safbwynt i fy hun, roeddwn i'n teimlo'n rhwystredig yn gwneud dim byd. Roeddwn i am roi rhywbeth i'r lle y byddaf yn aros ynddo. Rwyf wedi dechrau gwneud hynny – rwy'n dechrau treiddio i mewn i'r bywyd yma. Pan na fyddan nhw'n gadael i chi weithio, maen nhw'n atal eich bywyd. Pan fyddan nhw'n torri'ch ffordd, rhaid i chi ddod o hyd i ffordd arall. Gyda SOVA, dwi wedi gwneud hynny."

Yn ystod y flwyddyn, gweithiodd Project Ffoaduriaid Abertawe gyda 64 o geiswyr noddfa: 53 dyn ac 11 menyw o wledydd mor amrywiol â Pakistan, Glwad Pwyl, Hwngari, Iran, Irac, Twrci ac Affrica. Darparwyd cefnogaeth mewn meysydd fel cyfieithu ffurflenni, dod o hyd i ofal iechyd, cofrestru plant mewn ysgolion, siopa am fwydydd priodol i'w diwylliant, cyfeirio pobl at gymorth gyda cheisiadau am noddfa, ac ymuno â grwpiau ffydd.

Mae gwaith SOVA yn Abertawe a Chaerdydd wedi bod yn allweddol mewn sefydlu nifer o ddatblygiadau newydd fel y 'Project Amser Ynghyd', menter Timebank sy'n canolbwyntio ar fentora er mwyn helpu pobl i deimlo'n gartrefol yn y DU; a sicrhau cyllid Ewropeaidd o dan Thema B y cynllun EQUAL – Ymladd Hiliaeth a Senoffobia yn y man gwaith ar gyfer partneriaeth genedlaethol newydd o'r enw Curiad Calon Cymru.

SOVA IN WALES

CANOLFAN DEWI SANT CENTRE

The Centre, which opened in 2003, continues to provide support to socially excluded people in Rhyl. The project operates as a day centre and a one-stop-shop offering local people a place to go and a hot meal, as well as access to a wide variety of help and support agencies. Fifteen volunteers, three full time, three part time and four sessional workers ensure that the project is able to meet its targets, which include registering 50 new service users per year, providing 4,700 meals, producing action plans for each participant, helping 22 participants to secure employment and 18 to obtain training.

During the year 244 new service users were registered, bringing the total over the lifetime of the project to 850. Of the new participants, 193 were homeless, 145 had previous convictions, 109 had drug problems and 89 had mental health problems.

The Centre was able to extend its opening hours from 10am-2pm to 9am-4.30pm; it secured accommodation for 11 people and helped 50 get into training.

For the future, the project hopes to expand to provide an all-day service, seven days a week. This will require an increase in funding and alternative premises, both of which will feature in the new business plan.

From a participant whom SOVA Wales continues to support, and who was in custody at the time of writing: Other agencies ... "don't do their job as good as you do, at least you're dedicated to your jobs which are many, bless you ... I hope that I am not the only client that you have that is grateful for your work."

SOUTH WALES NEW DEAL MENTORING SERVICE

ALEX

Whilst Alex was in the Army he trained in IT and when he left, it seemed a natural step to set up his own business as an IT consultant. And he was a great success, working for over 16 years as a senior network designer/architect for many blue chip companies, including Orange, and for major banking institutions such as Barings. But he wasn't happy. The work did not play to Alex's strengths, which as an outgoing and gregarious person, were much more to do with working with people. This, coupled with a downturn in the market, plunged Alex into a period of depression.

After six months on medication, Alex decided it was time to put some structure back into his life. The world of IT had moved on and it would have been difficult for Alex to break back in; and in any event he wanted to do something that enabled him to work more with people. He thought he would try sales, and got a job in telesales. He hated it, but even so he stayed for 18 months. However, the experience only served to worsen his depression. His medication was increased and he was feeling really ill. In September 2005 he moved from sickness benefit to incapacity benefit and therefore was part of a pilot focused on getting people off incapacity benefit and into work. That is when he met Malcolm, the SOVA project worker. Alex was referred to SOVA in order that he might have a mentor, and so he had an interview with Malcolm. However when Alex's address was checked, it turned out that he was not eligible for the support of a SOVA mentor. Malcolm felt Alex had a lot to offer and so suggested that he become a mentor himself when he was ready.

SOVA YNG NGHYMRU

CANOLFAN DEWI SANT

Mae'r Ganolfan, a agorodd yn 2003, yn parhau i ddarparu cefnogaeth ar gyfer pobl yn y Rhyl sydd wedi'u heithrio'n gymdeithasol. Mae'r project yn gweithredu fel canolfan ddydd a siop-un-stop sy'n cynnig lle i bobl leol i fynd iddo a chael pryd poeth, yn ogystal â chysylltiad gydag amrywiaeth eang o asiantaethau cymorth a chefnogaeth. Mae 15 o wirfoddolwyr, 3 person llawn-amser, 3 rhan-amser a 4 o weithwyr sesiwn yn sicrhau fod y project yn gallu cyrraedd ei dargedau, sy'n cynnwys cofrestru 50 o ddefnyddwyr gwasanaethau newydd y flwyddyn, darparu 4,700 o brydau bwyd, paratoi cynllun gweithredu ar gyfer pob cyfranogydd, helpu 22 o'r cyfranogwyr i ddod o hyd i waith a 18 i sicrhau hyfforddiant.

Yn ystod y flwyddyn, cofrestrwyd 244 o ddefnyddwyr gwasanaethau newydd, sy'n dod â'r cyfanswm yn ystod oes y project i 850. O blith y cyfranogwyr newydd, roedd 193 yn ddigartref, roedd gan 145 dded-frydau blaenorol, roedd gan 109 broblemau gyda chyffuriau ac roedd gan 89 broblemau iechyd meddwl.

Gallodd y Ganolfan ymestyn ei horiau agor o 10am – 2pm i gam – 4.30pm; sicrhodd lety ar gyfer 11 o bobl a helpodd 50 i gychwyn hyfforddi.

Yn y dyfodol, y gobaith yw y gall y project ehangu i ddarparu gwasanaeth drwy'r-dydd, saith diwrnod yr wythnos. Bydd hyn yn golygu y bydd yn rhaid denu mwy o gyllid a sicrhau adeilad arall; bydd y ddau beth yn ymddangos yn y cynllun busnes newydd.

Oddi wrth gyfranogydd mae SOVA Cymru'n parhau i'w chefnogi ac a oedd yn y carchar ar yr adeg y sgrifenydd hyn: Dydy asiantaethau eraill ... "ddim yn gwneud eu gwaith mor dda â chi, o leiaf rydych chi'n ymroddedig i'ch holl waith, bendith arnoch chi ... gobeithio nad fi yw'r unig gleient sy gyda chi sy'n ddiolchgar am eich gwaith."

GWASANAETH MENTORA'R FARGEN NEWYDD YN NE CYMRU

ALEX

Tra'r oedd Alex yn y Fyddin, cafodd ei hyfforddi mewn TG a phan ymadawodd, roedd fel pe bai'n gam naturiol iddo sefydlu ei fusnes ei hun fel ymgynghorydd TG. Ac roedd yn llwyddiannus iawn. Gweithiodd am fwy nag un flynedd ar bymtheg fel dylunydd/pensaer rhwydweithiau i lawer o gwmnïau blaenllaw, yn cynnwys Orange, ac i sefydliadau bancio mawr fel Barings. Ond doedd e ddim yn hapus. Doedd y gwaith ddim yn gydnaws â chryfderau Alex, a oedd, ag yntau'n berson cyfeillgar a chymdeithasol, yn gweddu'n well i weithio gyda phobl. Achosodd hynny, ynghyd â chwymp yn y farchnad, i Alex ddioddef cyfnod o iselder.

Wedi chwe mis ar feddyginiaeth, penerfynodd Alex ei bod yn hen bryd dod â rhywfaint o drefn yn ôl i'w fywyd. Roedd byd TG wedi symud yn ei flaen, a byddai wedi bod yn anodd i Alex dorri'n ôl i mewn iddo; p'run bynnag, roedd am wneud rhywbeth a fyddai'n gadael iddo weithio gyda phobl. Penderfynodd roi cynnig ar werthu, a chafodd swydd mewn gwerthu dros y ffôn. Roedd yn casáu'r gwaith ond arhosodd yno am ddeunaw mis. Y cwbl wnaeth y profiad oedd gwaethygu ei iselder. Cynyddwyd ei feddyginiaeth ac roedd yn teimlo'n wirioneddol sâl. Ym mis Medi 2005 symudodd oddi ar fudd-dâl salwch i fudd-dâl anallu a daeth felly'n rhan o gynllun peilot a oedd yn canolbwyntio ar gael pobl oddi ar fudd-dâl anallu ac yn ôl i mewn i waith. Dyna pryd y cyfarfu â Malcolm, gweithiwr project SOVA. Atgyfeiriwyd Alex at SOVA er mwyn iddo gael mentor, a chafodd gyfweiliad gyda Malcolm. Ond pan nodwyd cyfeiriad Alex, gwelwyd nad oedd yn gymwys i dderbyn cefnogaeth mentor SOVA. Teimlai Malcolm fod gan Alex lawer i'w gynnig, felly awgrymodd y dylai fynd yn fentor ei hun pan fyddai'n barod.

SOVA IN WALES

It took a few months, but eventually Alex got in touch and went on to train as a mentor. Alex now works on the pilot project, mentoring people on incapacity benefit as they return to work. And he loves it. So far he has worked with about half a dozen clients, helping one person set up his own business, supporting another young person in challenging unacceptable behaviour by his boss and supporting someone trying to manage her alcohol problems and keep her new job.

Alex says it is wonderful to be working with people, to feel you are really helping and to have something to take your mind off of your own problems. As for his future ambitions, Alex would like to work for SOVA!

The South Wales New Deal Mentoring Service matched 470 project participants with mentors against a target of 432. Forty eight volunteers spent 4,161 hours supporting unemployed people on New Deal.

The year also saw the launch of a new pilot project in Bridgend and Rhondda Cynon Taff providing mentors for people on Incapacity Benefit, which Alex is working with.

"Thanks for all your help ... I can't believe how much my life has turned around! I've got my dream job and a father who wants to meet me and wants me in his life." New Deal lone parent who had spent time in custody for assaulting a police officer and who suffered badly from depression following her release.

NORTH WALES NEW DEAL MENTORING SERVICE

The North Wales New Deal Mentoring Service provided mentors for 202 project participants, all aged under 24 and supported by 49 volunteer mentors across an area from Holyhead, Ynys Mon in the north west to the English border at the Wirral in the north east, and from Barmouth in mid-Wales to the border with England near Chirk.

NEW DAWN PROJECT

The New Dawn Project is a multi-agency partnership aimed at simultaneously addressing a range of participants' needs including substance misuse, offending behaviour, education and training. SOVA works in partnership with Cais, NACRO, The Prince's Trust and the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme, focusing specifically on providing a mentoring service. The role of the mentor is to provide support with issues such as homelessness and housing, debt, lack of confidence, form filling, family issues etc. During the year under review, the project supported 282 participants, well over the 15 per month target.

EMPLOYMENT PATHFINDER PROJECT

In 2004, the North Wales Probation area was successful in its bid for an Employment Pathfinder contract. The pilot is a partnership between the Probation Service, NACRO and SOVA. The overall aim of the project is to move participants from the New Dawn project into training, education and employment. The project is open to offenders under the supervision of the Probation Service and scoring 5/5+ on Oasys. Twenty eight project participants have been supported during the year under review, positive outcomes being achieved for 13 of these, with eight securing employment. The introduction of a modular approach to interventions enabled the project to cope with the fact that participants were moved around between hostels etc.

SOVA YNG NGHYMRU

Cymerodd rai misoedd, ond yn y man, daeth Alex i gysylltiad â ni a mynd ymlaen i hyfforddi fel mentor. Mae Alex bellach yn gweithio ar y project peilot fel mentor i bobl sydd ar fudd-dâl anallu wrth iddyn nhw fynd yn ôl i'r gwaith. Ac mae wrth ei fodd. Hyd yn hyn, mae wedi gweithio gyda rhyw hanner dwsin o gleientiaid, gan helpu un person i sefydlu ei fusnes ei hun, cefnogi person ifanc arall i herio ymddygiad annerbyniol gan ei bennaeth, a chefnogi rhywun sy'n ceisio rheoli ei phroblemau gydag alcohol a chadw ei swydd newydd.

Mae Alex yn dweud ei bod yn wych gallu gweithio gyda phobl, a theimlo eich bod yn helpu go iawn, gyda rhywbeth i gadw'ch meddwl oddi ar eich problemau eich hunan! O ran uchelgais am y dyfodol, fel hoffai Alex weithio i SOVA!

Cydweddodd Gwasanaeth Mentora'r Fargen Newydd yn Ne Cymru 470 o gyfranogwyr ar y project gyda mentoriaid, yn erbyn targed o 432. Treuliodd 48 o wirfoddolwyr 4,161 o oriau'n cefnogi pobl ddi-waith ar y Fargen Newydd.

Lansiwyd project peilot newydd yn ystod y flwyddyn ym Mhen-y-bont ar Ogwr a Rhondda Cynon Taf i ddarparu mentoriaid ar gyfer pobl sydd ar Fudd-dal Anallu, a dyna'r project y mae Alex yn gweithio arno.

"Diolch am eich holl help ... alla'i ddim credu gymaint mae fy mywyd wedi newid! Mae gen i swydd fy mreuddwydion a thad sydd am gwrdd â fi ac am i fi fod yn ei fywyd." Rhiant sengl ar y Fargen Newydd a oedd wedi treulio amser yn y ddalfa am ymosod ar heddwas ac a ddioddefodd yn ofnadwy o iselder ar ôl cael ei rhyddhau.

GWASANAETH MENTORA'R FARGEN NEWYDD YNG NGOGLEDD CYMRU

Darparodd Gwasanaeth Mentora'r Fargen Newydd yng Ngogledd Cymru fentoriaid ar gyfer 202 o gyfranogwyr yn y project, a oedd bob un o dan 24 ac yn derbyn cefnogaeth 49 o fentoriaid gwirfoddol ar draws ardal sy'n ymestyn o Gaergybi, Ynys Môn yn y gogledd-orllewin i'r ffin â Lloegr yn y Wirral yn y gogledd-ddwyrain, ac o'r Bermo yn y canolbarth i'r ffin gyda Lloegr gerllaw'r Waun.

PROJECT GWAWR NEWYDD

Mae'r Project Gwawr Newydd yn bartneriaeth aml-asiantaeth sy'n ceisio mynd i'r afael ag amrywiaeth o anghenion cyfranogwyr ar yr un pryd, yn cynnwys camddefnyddio sylweddau, ymddygiad troseddol, addysg a hyfforddiant. Mae SOVA'n gweithio ar y cyd â Cais, NACRO, Ymddiriedolaeth y Tywysog a Chynllun Gwobr Dug Caeredin, gan ganolbwyntio'n benodol ar ddarparu gwasanaeth mentora. Swyddogaeth y mentor yw rhoi cefnogaeth gyda materion fel digartrefedd a thai, dyledion, diffyg hyder, llenwi ffurflenni, problemau teuluol, ac ati. Yn ystod y flwyddyn o dan sylw, cefnogodd y project 282 o gyfranogwyr, llawer iawn yn fwy na'r targed o 15 y mis.

PROJECT Y CYNLLUN BRAENARU CYFLOGAETH

Yn 2004, llwyddodd Gwasanaeth Prawf Gogledd Cymru yn ei gais am gytundeb Cynllun Braenaru Cyflogaeth. Mae'r peilot yn bartneriaeth rhwng y Gwasanaeth Prawf, NACRO a SOVA. Nod gyffredinol y project yw symud cyfranogwyr o'r project Gwawr Newydd i mewn i hyfforddiant, addysg a chyflogaeth, Mae'r project yn agored i droseddwr o dan oruchwyliaeth y Gwasanaeth Prawf ac sy'n sgorio 5/5+ ar OASys. Cafodd 28 o gyfranogwyr yn y project eu cefnogi yn ystod y flwyddyn o dan sylw, a sicrhawyd canlyniadau positif yn achos 13 o'r rhain, gydag 8 ohonynt yn sicrhau gwaith. Drwy fynd ati mewn dull modylaidd, gallodd y project ymdopi â'r ffaith fod y cyfranogwyr yn cael eu symud o gwmpas rhwng hosteli ac ati.

SOVA IN WALES



A BME training event held at Wrexham Office on 15th August 2006

Digwyddiad hyfforddi ar gyfer pobl ddu ac ethnig lleiafrifol yn Swyddfa Wrecsam yn ystod 2006

Volunteers say...

"Volunteering for SOVA is really good, as not only does it give me experience to go alongside my degree but I really enjoy it and have met loads of fantastic new people. It also has the feel good factor attached to helping people and doing something useful in the community." *SJ, volunteer with SOVA Wales*

"The SOVA staff in Wrexham I have always held in high regard for both their approachability and helpfulness. As a mentor for SOVA, I have gained a valuable insight into another's world. This I feel is not only a privilege but an honour." *EP, volunteer mentor with SOVA Wales*

SOVA YNG NGHYMRU

Mae gwirfoddolwyr yn dweud...

“Mae gwirfoddoli gyda SOVA yn beth da iawn, nid yn unig am ei fod yn rhoi profiad i mi i fynd ochr yn ochr â'm gradd, ond am fy mod i'n gwir fwynhau ac wedi cwrdd â llawer o bobl newydd ffantastig. Mae hefyd yn gwneud i chi deimlo'n dda i fod yn helpu pobl a gwneud rhywbeth defnyddiol yn y gymuned.”

SJ, gwirfoddolydd gyda SOVA Cymru

“Dwi wedi bod â pharch mawr tuag at staff SOVA yn Wrecsam erioed am eu hagosatrwydd a'u parodrwydd i helpu. Fel mentor gyda SOVA, cefais fewnwelediad gwerthfawr i fyd arall. Teimlaf fod hyn nid yn unig yn fraint ond yn anrhydedd.”

EP, mentor gwirfoddol gyda SOVA Cymru

CHAIR'S REPORT



Our 30th anniversary was celebrated in style, with a reception at the House of Lords on October 31st last year. Thanks to our President, Baroness Hilton, for arranging this event and to our speaker, Nigel Whiskin, for his powerful and challenging message. We look forward to the next thirty years with a mixture of excitement and trepidation!

For me, the highlight of the year has once again been the visits I have made to projects up and down the country. I have witnessed staff and volunteers undertaking superb work, often in difficult circumstances. Our projects are innovative and imaginative and focus on the prevention and reduction of crime and the constructive resettlement of offenders. What a pity that staff and volunteers operate constantly in a climate of uncertainty about future funding and how tragic that some of our successful projects are lost simply because contracts come to an end and funding runs out.

In spite of this prevailing climate, the year has once again been a successful one. A read of this Annual Review should convince you of that! A key factor in SOVA's success this year, as it has been for so many years, has been the tireless work of our Deputy Chief Executive, Pat Roach, who has once again exceeded her ambitious development target. Sadly, in July, we said farewell to Pat, after seventeen years with SOVA. Pat has joined one of our private sector partners, GSL. We wish her well in her new post and thank her for her enormous contribution to SOVA. We also said farewell to our Finance Director of the past eight years, Tarun Chotai, who has been appointed to a similar position with NACRO. Our thanks and best wishes to Tarun as well.

I believe that we are developing a strong Council of Trustees at SOVA and I would want to thank my fellow Trustees for their contribution to SOVA's success over the past year. A culture of project visiting is now established in Council and this leads to better informed discussion and decision making, as well as a greater sense of commitment by Trustees to SOVA's work and values. I hope we are not making too many demands on staff by our programme of visits and that our "hands on" interest in the work is welcomed. During the year, we bade farewell to two of our Trustees – Brian Jones, who had served on Council for ten years, recently as Vice Chair, and Mike Hough. Our thanks to both of them and welcome to Randeep Kaur Kular as our new Vice Chair.

Life in the voluntary sector is a complete mixture of fragility and robustness! Fragility because the climate for the sector – created by central government – is one of reduced funding and uncertainty about the future. Robustness because, in spite of this climate, healthy voluntary sector organisations like SOVA continue to operate to a high standard and to grow. It is nothing short of astonishing and is attributable to committed people, operating shrewdly, professionally and with imagination, believing strongly in the ethos of the organisation – and always prepared to go the extra mile. Our staff and volunteers deserve our thanks.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Mike Worthington". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Mike Worthington OBE

CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

We live in times of change. In fact, it would be true to say that working in Criminal Justice guarantees that we live always with change. Currently, however, we live with more potential change than we have seen in many years.



The advent of NOMS and the drive towards “contestability” have made it necessary to look again at long held principles, and to re-examine those things that have always been “givens”. SOVA Council and senior management have spent considerable time on the discussion of these things and will continue to do so for some time to come.

We must now, for instance, consider whether we should increase our range of partners to embrace the private sector; whether we should express interest in work that we have never before seen as “ours”; and, above all, whether we can do those things whilst still retaining our clear ethical and values stance.

Ultimately we believe that we can achieve this balance. We are now for the first time looking at a formal relationship with one private sector provider and believe that the work we may do with them can only enhance the services we provide.

There will continue to be debate about the NOMS contestability principles in all sectors of the Criminal Justice System. There are real concerns to be overcome. Not least is the concern that the stated aim to provide a “seamless service” to offenders may be undermined by a multiplicity of providers. We will not know whether this concern is well placed for some time to come.

For SOVA however, what finally matters is the ability of the organisation to continue, and indeed expand, its work with its participants. We have chosen to present this Annual Review in the form of individual stories. These are the people we are constituted to help, these are the people our skills are directed towards, these are the people we hope we support into more useful and positive ways of living. I believe that whatever the politics, whatever the change, it is these people to whom we owe our endeavours, and we will continue to pursue the opportunities so to do.

2005/2006 has been a year in which we have succeeded in our aim to provide high quality services and a year in which we have examined ethical means of doing so in the future; I am certain that 2006/2007 will reflect the same balance of operational success and continued debate.

In conclusion, I would like to thank SOVA's Trustees for their commitment and willingness to consider new ideas; my colleagues for their exceptional dedication to our work; and our volunteers who, as ever, represent all that is best in terms of generosity of time and spirit.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'Gill Henson'.

Gill Henson

DEVELOPMENT REPORT

Over the past 30 years SOVA has built excellent partnership and contractual relationships with public and statutory organisations: The Prison Service, The National Probation Service, Youth Offending Services, The Youth Justice Board, Learning Skills Councils, Job Centre Plus, Social Services, The Home Office, Welsh Assembly Government to name but a few. SOVA is pleased that it has been actively involved at regional and national level in the development of the new National Offender Management Service (NOMS) and looks forward to the opportunities available under contestability.

With the introduction of the Offenders' Learning and Skills Service (OLASS) and in preparation for NOMS, SOVA has investigated new strategic alliances with national, regional and local organisations. It has continued to promote the unique contribution of volunteer mentors and the engagement of members of local communities to support learning programmes. Peer support and peer mentoring have proved effective ways of assisting young people and adults to make changes to their lives. Across England and Wales, SOVA's priority will always remain one-to-one support to those involved in the Criminal Justice System, to vulnerable children and adults and to those who have experienced disadvantage.

Over the past year SOVA has secured contracts to develop new multi-agency arrangements between the voluntary, public and private sectors. The organisation's commitment to diversity, equal opportunities, training, learning and quality contract management has proved a strong foundation for new partnerships. Changes from the European Social Fund to the European Structural Fund at the end of 2007 will bring new challenges for all sectors over the next few years and SOVA is well prepared to meet them.

Service users within SOVA projects are from a variety of backgrounds, with various needs. SOVA's future income generation strategy will reflect this diversity and the organisation will work with Government policies and initiatives in order to contribute to long term solutions aimed at reducing crime and promoting social inclusion.

Partners say...

"I can only speak very positively of the service that the SOVA volunteers have provided to me and my offenders over the last five years. They have picked up house-bound offenders and brought them in, been mentors to some very difficult young men and have empowered them to make changes in their lives." *Chelmsford Probation Officer*

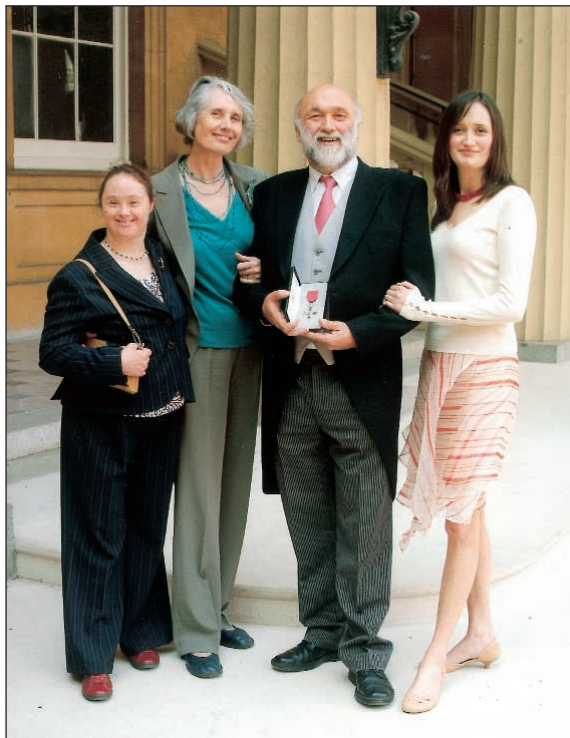
"I just wanted to let you know that volunteer C has been involved with one of my offenders for a few months and her service has been fantastic. She is supportive, professional, friendly, very empathetic but firm and has supported this offender very well. The offender is emotionally immature and this can be very tiring, to say the least; but the support that volunteer C offers is enabling and I know that the work she has done has made a big difference." *Harlow Probation Officer*

DEVELOPMENT REPORT

SOVA FACTS AND FIGURES

SOVA carefully monitors and evaluates all of its work. Collation of statistics for the year under review, in comparison with the previous year, indicates some interesting trends:

- an increase in the number of SOVA volunteers across the country
- an increase in the number of hours they spend volunteering per week
- more hours being spent in direct contact with project participants and fewer hours on administration, meetings and training
- a big increase in the number of project participants: 21,055 as opposed to 14,714 in the previous year
- the majority of volunteer hours spent in support of young people; the majority of SOVA participants are adults in custody, suggesting that more volunteers are deployed to/more intense work takes place with, young people
- all SOVA projects now deliver multiple services, in most cases to a diverse client group



Godfrey Leak, SOVA Regional Director, proudly displaying his MBE at Buckingham Palace. The honour, which Godfrey received in summer 2006, and for which he was nominated by Hertfordshire Probation, was awarded for services to the Criminal Justice System

SOVA – THE ORGANISATION

SOVA, a company limited by guarantee (No 3645143) is governed by its Memorandum and Articles of Association. It is the leading national organisation for voluntary service with offenders, ex-offenders and their families and is also a registered charity (No 1073877). SOVA recruits and trains volunteers from the community to achieve its objects. The SOVA Memorandum and Articles define the roles of its senior personnel and its volunteers; the mechanisms for electing Council, its governing body; the application of its funds; its powers, objects, membership and regulations; as well as the other financial and administrative components necessary to the running of a limited company and registered charity.

The objects for which SOVA is established are to act as a charity:

- a) to promote the rehabilitation and resettlement of persons who are suffering, have suffered or are in danger of suffering, a legal restriction on their liberty in any penal establishment or any other restriction or penalty under the provisions of any legislation concerning the Criminal Justice System, including persons who are drug addicts, alcoholics or who are or have been subject to Probation Orders; and
- b) to promote the welfare of such persons and their families and dependants within the community in such ways as may be wholly charitable, in particular the advancement of education and social and economic inclusion and the relief of poverty, sickness and distress; and
- c) to promote the reduction and prevention of crime within the community and the rehabilitation of offenders and persons affected by crime; and
- d) to promote the relief of the physical, mental and financial needs of people who are socially excluded due to their displacement from their homes, lack of employment or education, criminal behaviour, health, age or poverty, in particular by the provision of mentoring and education.

Council members are elected by the SOVA Annual General Meeting, with the membership voting on agreed nominees who are seconded by two other SOVA members. In 2004/2005 Council members were:

Elected officers:

Mike Worthington, *Chair*
Brian Jones, *Vice Chair (until March 2006)*
Robert Fulton, *Vice Chair*
Randeep Kular *(from July 06)*
Mark Lockhart, *Treasurer*

Elected members:

Mike Hough *(until July 2006)*
Benjamin Fry
Gillian Watson *(from November 2005)*
Hilary Barnard *(from November 2005)*
Barry Silverman *(from November 2005)*
Chris Dolphin *(from November 2005)*

Senior SOVA staff attending Council:

Gill Henson, *Chief Executive*
Pat Roach, *Deputy Chief Executive (until July 2006)*
Janet Crowe, *National Director of Operations*
Tarun Chotai, *Finance Director (until September 2006)*
Diana Clough, *Personnel Director*

SOVA's accounts are audited by Blinkhorns, 27 Mortimer Street, London W1N 8BL. Its bank is Lloyds TSB Bank plc, City Office, 1st floor, 39 Threadneedle Street, London EC2R 6DN. Its solicitors are Goody's, 55 North Hill, Colchester, Essex CO1 1PX.

SOVA's Registered Office is at 1st floor, Chichester House, 37 Brixton Road, London SW9 6DZ. This office functions as SOVA's head office.

Organisational structure:

In addition to its head office, which is the base of the Chief Executive and the National Director of Operations, SOVA has a regional office in Sheffield and a Welsh national office in Newtown, mid-Wales. SOVA's senior management meet regularly to review the work of individual projects, to co-ordinate the company's work and to discuss development and policy.

TREASURER'S REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2006



The organisation of statutory services within the Criminal Justice sector continues to change and that change continues to present a challenge to all the voluntary sector organisations that work in the field. SOVA is affected as much as any other organisation.

We have benefited from a number of significant funding streams from Europe, many of which are coming to a close, and there appear to be fewer new opportunities for this type of funding in the short term. This comes at a time when the transfer of statutory arrangements to NOMS is beginning, but the funding opportunities for the value added services that SOVA offers remain unclear. This means that we will almost certainly have to work with a reduction in the number of directly provided projects, and our ability to maintain the existing infrastructure is under threat, until greater clarity is given by central government.

I am pleased that at this difficult time we have managed to deliver a result that is a little better than breakeven. Turnover has declined as major projects and funding programmes have ceased, but we have controlled our cost base to keep within affordable boundaries. Even with a difficult budget for the current year, we continue to keep our head above water. Nonetheless, Council is mindful of the high regard with which SOVA is held in the sector and

we are determined to maintain our capacity to deliver high-quality, well-managed projects in the future and to be poised to take advantage of the new opportunities that will arise from the new statutory structure. The Trustees are aware of the risks that we run as we wait for the funding regimes to be opened up: we have had positive encouragement and some financial support from central government, yet we monitor the financial situation critically and constantly. We are working positively with the private sector to meet the opportunities available from partnership working and will continue to look for complementary ways of providing services so that we can continue to deliver our charitable objectives as widely as possible.

We are sure our strategy is right. But we look to a rapid settlement of the statutory providers to enable us to fulfil our mission.

We present only summary accounts in this review. The full accounts, upon which the Auditors issued an unqualified audit report, are available from the Company Secretary upon request.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mark Lockhart', written over a horizontal line.

Mark Lockhart

SOVA SUMMARY FINANCIAL STATEMENT

This is a summary of information extracted from the annual accounts of SOVA, which have been audited and given an unqualified opinion. The full accounts were approved by the Council of SOVA on 25th September 2006 and have been filed with the Charities Commission. These summarised accounts may not contain sufficient information to allow for a full understanding of the financial affairs of the company. For further information, the full audited Accounts and Trustees' Report should be consulted. These can be obtained from the Chief Executive at SOVA, 1st Floor, Chichester House, 37 Brixton Road, London SW9 6DZ.

Statement of financial activities for the year ended 31 March 2006

	Unrestricted funds		Restricted funds	Totals	Totals
	Accumulated funds £	Designated funds £	Project funds £	2006 £	2005 £
INCOMING RESOURCES					
<i>Incoming resources from Generated Funds:</i>					
Government grants and similar income	668,556	–	–	668,556	897,198
Interest	11,649	–	–	11,649	12,875
<i>Incoming resources from charitable activities:</i>					
Grants and contracts for the provision of support	1,614,769	–	6,785,323	8,400,092	9,989,984
Donated services and facilities	–	–	946,391	946,391	584,676
Training and consultancy	7,062	–	16,972	24,034	520
Total incoming resources	2,302,036	–	7,748,686	10,050,722	11,485,253
RESOURCES EXPENDED					
<i>Charitable activities:</i>					
Provision of support to:					
Young persons	240,333	–	826,495	1,066,828	1,328,230
Offenders	1,005,080	–	3,456,425	4,461,505	6,503,264
Unemployed	179,894	–	618,648	798,542	555,334
Other socially excluded groups	827,902	–	2,847,118	3,675,020	2,875,380
	2,253,209	–	7,748,686	10,001,895	11,262,208
<i>Governance</i>	41,897	–	–	41,897	35,195
Total resources expended	2,295,106	–	7,748,686	10,043,792	11,297,403
Net incoming resources before transfers	6,930	–	0	6,930	187,850
Transfers between funds	(6,930)	6,930	0	0	0
Net movement of resources in the year	0	6,930	0	6,930	187,850
Total funds brought forward	178	450,835	0	451,013	263,163
Total funds carried forward	178	457,765	–	457,943	451,013

All of the above results are derived from continuing activities.

All gains and losses recognised in the year are included above.

SOVA SUMMARY FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Balance sheet at 31 March 2006

	2006 £	2005 £
TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS	92,622	90,169
CURRENT ASSETS		
Debtors and prepayments	2,137,560	2,556,504
Cash at bank and in hand	571,399	109,064
	2,708,959	2,665,568
CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR		
Creditors	2,343,638	2,304,724
NET CURRENT ASSETS	365,321	360,844
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES	457,943	451,013
FUNDS		
Unrestricted funds		
Accumulated fund	178	178
Designated funds		
Reserve fund	457,765	450,835
	457,943	451,013
Restricted funds		
Project funds	–	–
	457,943	451,013

Approved by the Council of SOVA and signed on its behalf on the 25th September 2006

M Worthington, Chair
M R Lockhart, Treasurer
G A Henson, Chief Executive

Independent auditors' statement to the members of SOVA

We have examined the Summary Financial Statement of SOVA.

Respective responsibilities of SOVA's Trustees and Auditors

SOVA's Trustees are responsible for preparing the Annual Review and Summary Financial Statement in accordance with applicable law. Our responsibility is to report to you our opinion on the consistency of the Summary Financial Statements and the Trustees' Report and its compliance with the relevant requirements of Section 251 of the Companies Act 1985 and the regulations made thereunder. We also read the other information contained in the Annual Review and consider the implications for our report if we become aware of any apparent misstatements or material inconsistencies with the Summary Financial Statement. This statement, including the opinion, has been prepared for and only for the Company's members as a body in accordance with Section 251 of the Companies Act 1985 and for no other purpose. We do not, in giving this opinion, accept or assume responsibility for any other purpose or to any other person to whom this statement is shown or into whose hands it may come save where expressly agreed by our prior consent in writing.

Basis of Opinion

We conducted our work in accordance with Bulletin 1999/6 'The auditors' statement on the summary financial statement' issued by the Auditing Practices Board for use in the United Kingdom.

Opinion

In our opinion the Summary Financial Statement is consistent with the full annual accounts and Trustees' Report of SOVA for the year ended 31 March 2006 and complies with the applicable requirements of Section 251 of the Companies Act 1985 and the regulations made thereunder.

Blinkhorns, Registered Auditors
Date: 25th September 2006

PARTNERSHIPS

PARTNERSHIPS 2005-2006

All Wales Ethnic Minority Association
 Association of London Government (ALG)
 Barnsley Development Agency
 Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council
 Barnsley Youth Offending Team
 BBC Children in Need
 Bexley Council
 Bexley Social Services
 Bexley Youth Offending Team
 Brumby Resource Centre
 Camden Borough Council
 Catalyst (ESF/Connexions)
 Connexions South Yorkshire Ltd
 Croydon Children's Fund
 Croydon Social Services Department
 Croydon Youth Offending Team
 Denbighshire County Council
 Derby City Youth Offending Service
 Derby Social Services
 Derbyshire Probation Service
 Ealing Children's Fund
 Ealing Youth Offending Team
 Essex Drug Action Team
 European Social Fund – EQUAL
 Hampshire Probation Partnership
 HM Prisons – Askham Grange
 HM Prisons – Everthorpe
 HM Prisons – Linholme
 HM Prisons – Moorland
 HM Prisons – New Hall
 HM Prisons – Wealstun
 HM Youth Offenders' Institution – Northallerton
 HM Youth Offenders' Institution – Deerbolt
 HM Youth Offenders' Institution – IMPACT
 HM Youth Offenders' Institution – Lancaster Farms
 HM Youth Offenders' Institution – Thorn Cross
 Home Office
 Hull City Council
 ISSP – South Yorkshire
 Job Centre Plus – Barnsley
 Job Centre Plus – Wales
 Job Centre Plus – Rotherham
 Learning & Skills Council – Hertfordshire
 Learning & Skills Council – Nottinghamshire
 Learning & Skills Council – South Yorkshire
 Lincoln Children's Links

Lincoln Community Chest Fund
 Lincolnshire Social Services
 Lincolnshire Youth Offending Service
 Liverpool Community Justice Centre
 London Borough of Ealing
 NACRO
 National Lottery Fund
 National Probation Service – Barnsley
 National Probation Service – Essex
 National Probation Service – Hertfordshire
 National Probation Service – Rotherham
 North Hertfordshire Community Partnership Unit
 North Lincolnshire Connexions
 North Lincolnshire Social & Housing Directorate
 North Lincolnshire Youth Offending Service
 North Wales Probation Area
 Prison Service Plus ESF Unit
 Rotherham Borough Council
 Rotherham Primary Care Trust
 Rotherham Youth Offending Service
 Sheffield Children's Fund Plus
 Sheffield Futures
 Sheffield Local Education Authority
 Sheffield Primary Care Trust
 Sheffield Social Services
 Sheffield Youth Offending Team
 Staffordshire County Council
 TimeBank
 Welsh Assembly Government
 Welsh Refugee Council
 Wessex Youth Offending Team
 West Mercia Probation
 Women into Work
 Youth Justice Board

Charitable Trusts & Donations 2005-2006

Esmée Fairbairn
 HACRO
 Kids' Club Network
 Lincoln Economic Action Partnership
 Local Network Fund
 Longhurst Housing Association
 The Prince's Trust
 Peabody Trust