

What is SOVA...?

During 2002/03, 1,883
SOVA volunteers gave
105,925 hours in support
of 19,622 service users.

SOVA is a national voluntary organisation, launched in 1975, which works to strengthen communities by involving local volunteers in promoting social inclusion and reducing crime.

SOVA's existing operation encompasses seventy five projects and schemes throughout England and Wales, 303 staff and over 1,800 active volunteers working with more than 19,000 service users (offenders, ex-offenders and disadvantaged people of all ages).

SOVA presently has contracts with the Prison Service and individual prisons, the National Probation Service and individual probation areas, the Youth Justice Board and local Youth Offending Teams, Social Services, Connexions, Job Centre Plus, Learning Skills Councils and local government offices. Additionally it has funding provided by the Home Office, charitable trusts, the European Social Fund, the Single Regeneration Budget and the private sector.

It is SOVA's vision that volunteers, as members of the community, will actively seek to provide access to resources that offenders, ex-offenders and disadvantaged people may use in developing their own potential in society.

SOVA volunteers are recruited from all sectors of the local community. They deliver practical support and guidance, mentoring and befriending activities, depending on the focus of the local project. All SOVA volunteers are appropriately trained and supervised by staff to operate within health and safety, confidentiality and equal opportunities guidelines. SOVA volunteer training is accredited with the Open College Network.

SOVA's Head Office is in London, with regional offices in Sheffield and Lincoln and a national office in Newtown, mid-Wales. SOVA is a registered charity and a company limited by guarantee.



Penny Cowell and Caroline Trace of Richmond Dyslexia Association present Pip Deverson and Godfrey Leak of SOVA with a cheque to help with its valuable work at Feltham Young Offenders' Institution



SOVA's Nottinghamshire Celebration Event marked the first year of the Active Communities Mentoring Project. Attendees included a number of organisations working in the mentoring field, providing an opportunity for a forum of shared experience

