



Annual Report

2016 – 2017

**Sandwell Community Information
& Participation Service Limited**



Chairs Report

I am pleased to report that we have successfully secured a new three year funding package from Sandwell MBC. Our Grant Agreement covers the period 2017-2020. We would like to thank everyone that was involved in the negotiation process for their help and support.

We have been based in Church Square for over 20 years and are looking to renew our lease agreement in line with the Grant Agreement from Sandwell MBC this will allow us to continue to offer room hire and the use of our resource centre to the community and other external organisations.

Part of our grant agreement this year has been to support Tenant and Residents Associations (TRA's) in the borough. We have supported a number of TRA's through their Annual General Meetings and grant applications. We have also delivered six town events to promote the work of TRA's.

Funding for groups within Sandwell is high on our agenda and we have developed training sessions around funding. These sessions will highlight any available funding pots, explain the application process and the criteria. We are hoping to increase the number of sessions in 2017 as they have proved to be very popular.

Our work with external partners continues to deliver new and innovative projects. The work with Big Local Hateley Cross area, Soho Victoria Friend & Neighbours and St Albans highlights the need for close partnership working between communities, third sector organisations and the local authority.

The Click & Chat sessions have continued to provide support towards the digital inclusion agenda. We have delivered 3 sessions to date and as they have proved to be very popular we are planning to run more sessions during 2017.

We have a great team who have worked hard throughout the year. We have introduced a Charity Event each November at the General Meeting which encourages the staff to compete against each other. This year it was a Christmas Card design and the event raised over £60.00 for St Mary's Hospice .

We also remain committed to our membership and the services we provide at grass roots level. The Board continue to look at our services and how we can improve and develop them. I would like to thank the Board for all their hard work and commitment to SCIPS, supporting the staff and me. I would also like to thank the staff for their endless enthusiasm and willingness to go the extra mile.

Ann-Marie Docker



Following our update in last years report, SCIPS continue to provide support to Hateley Cross Big Local (HCBL) Partnership Group. The 10 year programme will bring £1 million into Hateley Heath and Stone Cross areas in West Bromwich, for the benefit of local communities.

In **April 2016**, the Partnership launched their Community Plan and SCIPS were appointed for a further two years to provide community development support. Our role as a Locally Trusted Organisation also includes holding and administering finances on behalf of the Group.



The priorities for the area are outlined within 3 key themes:

- ♦ **Community & Leisure**
- ♦ **Community Safety & the Environment**
- ♦ **Education & Learning**

Budgets for each of the themes have been agreed to support the delivery of projects to achieve the priorities outlined in the Community Plan.

So Far

- ♦ Through a Small Grants Fund, 13 applications have been funded to support local community groups for events, purchasing equipment and community cohesion days.
- ♦ Newsletters and a promotional leaflet have been produced and circulated widely.
- ♦ Ongoing meetings have been held with a range of local community organisations, Sandwell Council and a range other agencies to promote the plan.
- ♦ Young people from Phoenix Collegiate have been involved in designing art work for a bookbench as part of the 'Wild in Art' programme which is on display in Stone Cross library.

What's Next?

- ♦ We are supporting the development of a new website and promotional materials.
- ♦ An exciting programme of future activities and projects is being developed with a number of local organisations to deliver their services in the area.

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Sandwell Tenant & Resident Groups

Background

Since January 2016 SCIPS have been delivering direct services to Tenants and Residents Groups across Sandwell. During the initial stages a survey was undertaken to determine the needs of each group.

Ongoing Support

Undertaking a flexible approach, whilst ensuring consistency to all groups, the service offer has been reviewed and refined to include:

- ♦ training, support, and advice to tenant and resident groups to enable them to deliver their aims within their community
- ♦ support groups to engage in the Council's wider agenda
- ♦ to manage and administer the tenant and resident grant system.
- ♦ encourage and enable groups to attract additional funding to deliver their aims
- ♦ to set governance and financial standards and monitor groups against these
- ♦ to sustain and increase the number of tenant and resident groups in the Borough and the number of tenants involved in them
- ♦ develop and produce regular tenants and resident newsletters
- ♦ currently supporting 15 groups with ongoing training and governance issues.
- ♦ delivered 7 training sessions:
- ♦ 6 town events to promote the work of tenant and residents groups.



Facts & Figures



We have:

- ♦ attended 38 tenant and resident meetings (Jan 16 – Dec 16).
- ♦ officiated 6 group's Annual General Meetings.
- ♦ administered 7 grant applications.
- ♦ agreed with neighbourhoods, the support that is required from council officers to attend and correspond with tenant and resident groups

Moving Forward

SCIPS endeavour to deliver ongoing proactive support that strengthens the relationships with tenant and resident groups and their communities.



Developing and Delivering Our Core Work

SCIPS receive a grant from Sandwell Council to deliver an agreed work programme. The current 3 year agreement finishes in March 2017. The Board started negotiations with Sandwell Council in July 2016 and a report went to Sandwell Council Cabinet Committee in December 2016. The report submitted to the Cabinet stated that:-

“The council remain committed to working closely with tenants and the Voluntary and Community Sector and recognises the important contribution SCIPS makes in helping to fulfil its duties to tenants.

SCIPS is named in the Council’s Third Sector Funding Strategy as one of the infrastructure organisations that have a significant role in supporting the work of many other voluntary and community sector organisations, associations and groups”

The report was approved which has secured SCIPS a grant of £150k per year for the next 3 years. The grant will fund SCIPS to deliver a range of work around 5 key core outcomes, which are:-

- ◆ To provide training for tenant led groups and organisations
- ◆ To provide support for existing and new tenant led groups and organisations
- ◆ To provide development and capacity building to groups leading to local initiatives, especially provision of activities and services
- ◆ To support the independent contribution of tenants organisations and to enable effective consultation by SMBC and partners with tenant led groups & organisations
- ◆ To support tenant led groups and organisations to develop initiatives and to attract funding to deliver and sustain them.

SCIPS Board would like to thank everyone involved in helping and supporting the submission and we look forward to working with SMBC into the future.





FEEDBACK



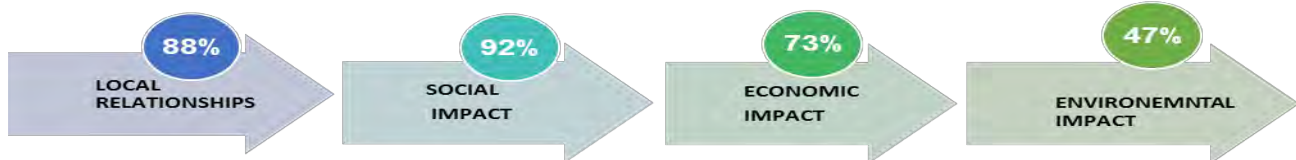
Your Value!

In last year's Annual Report we updated you on the approach Board members had agreed, to assess the social value of our work and the impact of our services. **Your Value!** is a national programme that helps us to demonstrate how well we deliver our services in a number of ways.

So Far We have carried out a survey asking members for their views on the benefits of being a member of SCIPS, which services they value and what difference SCIPS makes. The responses received were very positive and were highlighted in last years report.

We also consulted with staff to seek their views and have since reviewed all of the feedback. This has enabled us to assess our services and social value against the 4 key areas set out by **Your Value!** (see results below).

How Did We Score Ourselves?



We feel that that these scores fairly reflect our current position and recognise that we have scored highly in some areas for our core area of work. For example, building on our strong local relationships with individuals, voluntary & community groups and local statutory organisations. Also, how we value and support strong social capital and community cohesion and how we contribute to the economy, through our workshops supporting groups to raise external funding.

We also acknowledge that we need to continue with ongoing progress to minimise our own and where feasible, the community environmental impact.

What Happens Next?

The initial assessment was carried out by SCIPS and will need to be verified externally. Once this has been completed and our final scores confirmed, our report will be submitted online.



Financial Report 1st April 2015 — 31st March 2016

SCIPS Ltd most recently prepared accounts are summarised below and cover the 12 month period from: 1st April 2015 to 31st March 2016.

Income Received— The company received total income of **£177,792** from several sources:

SMBC Core Grant —This was a core grant from Sandwell MBC of £133,500.

BIG Local Trust –Hateley Cross Grant:

This amount of £20,645 was to continue work with Hateley Cross Big Local Area Partnership Group as their Locally Trusted Organisation to help them deliver their Community Plan.

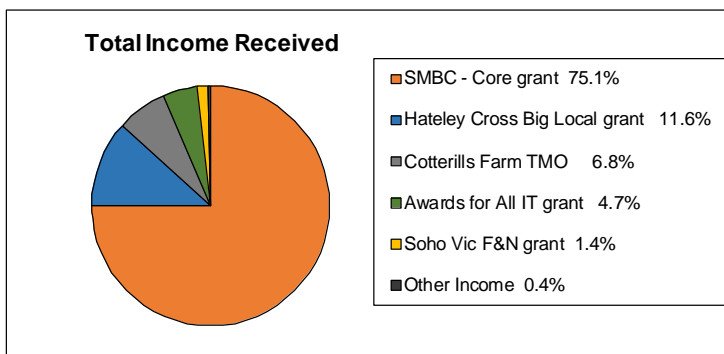
Cotterills Farm TMO Development Grant:

£12,074.00 was received via grants from Cotterills Farm TMO to develop the Community Development strand of the TMO’s work.

Awards for All Grant : This grant is a total of £8,337 received in this financial year to support SCIPS update of the IT structure of the company. This project total was in excess if £12,000 paid for from SCIPS reserves and this grant.

Soho Victoria Friends and Neighbours Project Grant : The grant of 2,500 during this year was to carry out small projects within their locality strand.

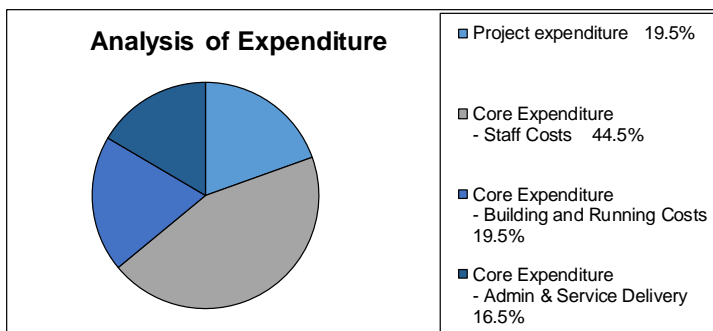
Other Income: This was received from ad-hoc projects, bank interest and sundry income £736.



Expenditure Incurred

Total expenditure for the period was **£211,053** as detailed below:

Project expenditure: All restricted funding expenditure including project planning, salaries, training and all expenses amounted to £41,201.



Core Expenditure: Core expenditure was £169,852 which can be further broken down as follows:

Staff Costs: Our largest core expense totalled £93,873, some staff were partially funded using restricted project grants.

Building and Running Costs: Essential costs needed to operate the company. Including Rent & Rates, electricity, insurance, audit and accountancy fees, office equipment hire, AGM and Annual report costs these costs amounted to £41,099.

Administration & Service Delivery:

This all costs incurred in carrying out services, including postage & stationery, expenses, training and conferences, advertising and depreciation. These costs amounted to £34,880.

SCIPS Ltd accounts were prepared by the Company’s accountants, John Pye and Co, who have confirmed that these accounts are in agreement with the accounting records kept by the company under section 221 of the Companies Act 1985.

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Achievements and Highlights

- ⇒ Securing our 3 year grant agreement with Sandwell Council enabling us to sign a further lease on our Resource Centre
- ⇒ Assessing the social value and impact of SCIPS work through the Your Value! tool
- ⇒ Providing the Local Trusted Organisation role for Hateley Cross Big Local
- ⇒ Supporting the development of Locality Working – including the Mutual Gain project which is a new community development initiative between Sandwell Council and West Midlands Police
- ⇒ Establishing a new service offer for Tenants and Residents Groups across Sandwell

Objectives for the Year Ahead

- ⇒ Increase the funding training and support offered to front line groups
- ⇒ Support the development of new Tenants and Residents Groups across the Borough
- ⇒ Continue to support and develop locality working in Sandwell encouraging groups and projects to work together
- ⇒ Assist Hateley Cross Big Local Partnership to review their existing 2 year Community Plan

Working in partnership with:



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