



**COUNCIL FOR VOLUNTARY  
SERVICE FIFE**

Annual Report 2004/5

**CVS Fife**

Supporting Voluntary Sector Growth & Development

## WHO ARE WE AND WHAT DO WE DO?

CVS Fife is the Fife-wide Council for Voluntary Service. Our mission is to support and strengthen the role of the voluntary sector and, in doing so, to promote and support social justice in Fife.

We aim to develop the capacity of Fife's voluntary organisations so that they can continue to provide quality services, promote lifelong learning and be an effective partner in Community Planning, as providers of community-based services and as a voice for communities.

The services CVS Fife provides to voluntary, charitable and community organisations fall broadly into four categories:

- **Specialist Support Services**
  - ▶ Human Resources
  - ▶ ICT
  - ▶ Governance & Compliance
  - ▶ Finance
- **Training Services**
  - ▶ Quarterly Programme of Courses
  - ▶ Tailored Training Options
- **Community Planning**
  - ▶ Network Support
  - ▶ Community Engagement
  - ▶ Strategic Involvement
- **Information Services**
  - ▶ Enquiry Service
  - ▶ Information Resources
  - ▶ Support for Smaller Organisations

CVS Fife is one of a network of 58 Councils for Voluntary Service throughout Scotland, with an agreed set of six core functions in relation to the voluntary sector. In this report, we provide an update on our activities and demonstrate how we are delivering on the six core functions. Under the headings on each page are a series of quotations taken from the report, "*CVS Fife: Operational Effectiveness and Strategic Capability*" by Professor John Taylor and Dr. Eleanor Burt, compiled following a comprehensive review of CVS Fife and its activities.

## INTRODUCTION

I've been hearing a lot of Bob Dylan during recent weeks - is this because "the times they are a-changing"? It certainly seems that way for the voluntary sector. 2004/5 has undoubtedly seen a number of significant changes within CVS Fife - to staff, Board, locations, and services - as we endeavour to provide voluntary organisations with the services that they need whilst at the same time keeping abreast of local and national policy developments.

We are pleased that 2005 has seen the addition of new staff to provide advice and support on employment issues and information technology - both much needed in the voluntary sector as we seek to develop a more enterprising approach. We are also continuing to develop ways and means of engaging the sector in Community Planning, in particular around the newly-established Community Health Partnerships - our sincere thanks to everyone who is working with us in the Health & Wellbeing Forums to make this initiative a success. In support of all these activities, much has been done to develop our web site - we hope you like it! And finally, located across two offices in Buckhaven, our staff are now able to work more closely together, sharing information and expertise, making sure that our services are effectively co-ordinated.

It is a great privilege for us to work with the many voluntary organisations and community groups operating across Fife and we hope that we can make a difference to their activities. The wide-ranging review of our services and activities conducted by St. Andrews University this year certainly provided us with a great deal of positive feedback, as well as giving us pointers to strengthen our provision in the future. However, as we tackle new legislation, monitoring and evaluation, as well as getting to grips with the enterprise culture, there can be no doubt that lack of funding, combined with the complexities of funding streams, continue to threaten many, many organisations. Throughout this coming year, with your support, CVS Fife will pursue the issue of proper funding for the sector, including the principle of "full cost recovery". We look forward once again to working with you all.



**Alison Cameron, Manager**

## A SNAPSHOT OF OUR YEAR



*On a social note, CVS Fife's Admin Team organised a series of fundraising events during the year, involving staff and friends of the organisation. Events included participation in The Great Scottish Walk, and the total raised was £688 for the Haematology Unit at Victoria Hospital.*

### Oct 04:

- ▶ ICT infrastructure upgrade
- ▶ Information Session on FutureBuilders funding
- ▶ Briefing Sessions on Joint Health Improvement Plan for small community groups

### Nov 04:

- ▶ Annual Meeting with guest speaker Jane Ryder, Chief Executive of OSCR
- ▶ Network Support Officer joins CVS Fife

### Jan 05:

- ▶ ICT & HR Advisers join CVS Fife

### Feb 05:

- ▶ Community Health Partnerships awareness event
- ▶ CVS Fife represented at the Gathering, Scotland's national voluntary sector fair
- ▶ Canny Buyer Event (Green Office)

### Mar 05:

- ▶ Directory of voluntary and community organisations launched on CVS Fife's website



*In April, our Open Door Event for Board and Committee members, which focussed on voluntary sector involvement in Community Planning, received excellent feedback from the 50 plus attendees.*

#### **Apr 05:**

- ▶ Open Door Event (see left)

#### **May 05:**

- ▶ Election of Voluntary Sector Reps for Community Health Partnerships

#### **Jun 05:**

- ▶ Inaugural meetings of the Voluntary Sector Health & Wellbeing Forums in Glenrothes/NE Fife & Kirkcaldy and Levenmouth
- ▶ Disclosure Information Sessions
- ▶ Prof J. Taylor & Dr E. Burt present their Evaluation Report, "CVS Fife: Operational Effectiveness & Strategic Capability"

#### **Jul 05:**

- ▶ Issued Bulletin to statutory colleagues: Voluntary Sector Involvement in CHPs

#### **Aug 05:**

- ▶ Inaugural meeting of Voluntary Sector Health & Wellbeing Forum in Dunfermline
- ▶ Closure of Crosshill Office

#### **Sep 05:**

- ▶ Relaunch of Fife Voluntary Sector Children's Forum



*CVS Fife facilitated this session involving Fife Voluntary Sector Children's Forum Co-ordinating Group in October this year, where the group focussed on its remit and clarified its goals for the Forum. (see report on page 11)*

#### **For more details:**

More details on our activities are available throughout this report. Please contact us if you have any specific queries.

## UNDERSTANDING THE SECTOR

*"a comprehensive mapping and profiling of Fife's voluntary sector should be undertaken as a priority"\**

### Opening Doors to and for the voluntary sector

Knowing the local profile of the voluntary sector and carrying out mapping research is the first of the CVS core functions identified by Avante in its Review of the CVS Scotland Network (2003) and subsequently adopted by the CVS Scotland Network. The addition of an ICT Adviser to CVS Fife's staff this year has been a key factor in the strengthening of our capacity to track the shape of Fife's voluntary, community and charitable organisations. Our database of organisations, which now has over 575 entries, has been adapted into a more flexible tool to allow us to draw out key facts and figures, and has also been transferred onto our website as a Directory of Organisations, searchable by Category of Activity and Town.

### Key Milestones:

- Fife's voluntary and community organisations have a web presence via the directory, enhancing their profile and demonstrating the breadth of service provision

- CVS Fife has improved intelligence on the voluntary sector, which we are using to inform a regular Briefing Bulletin for key political representatives and decision makers

Our next steps include using the database to track the work we do with voluntary organisations, and using it as a basis for carrying out more in-depth research on a particular group of organisations, e.g. the children's services agencies.

The Admin Team, with its role as first point of contact for CVS Fife services, views the database as a key tool. The admin staff are



therefore very much involved in its development and maintenance, as well as identifying new ways of using the intelligence we are gathering. By getting to know our clients a little better we can deliver a more needs-driven, targeted service.

## REPRESENTING THE SECTOR

*“CVS Fife should consider forming a compact that will underpin statutory-voluntary relationships” \**

### Banging the Voluntary Sector Drum

CVS Fife’s Community Planning activity has taken on a new dimension this year, with the appointment of a Network Support Officer, the development of our Community Engagement project, “In It Together”, and a number of developments at a strategic level including the creation of a multi-agency Voluntary Sector Issues Group. These developments have enabled us to strengthen the voice of the voluntary sector within the decision-making processes in Fife. CVS Fife’s approach has always been to support voluntary organisations to represent themselves, while recognising our responsibility to campaign at a strategic level for better equity in the relationship between the voluntary and statutory sectors.



### Key Milestones:

- Over 50 Board and committee representatives from 28 organisations attended the Open Door event organised by the “In It Together” project to learn more about Community Planning
- CVS Fife has established a Consultative Group with key figures from the voluntary sector, which is taking forward several issues including the debate over a Compact
- CVS Fife ran a Fife-wide election process for voluntary sector representatives to sit on the three new Community Health Partnerships in Fife. All three reps are now in place

We consider the development of representative activity among the voluntary sector forums to be a key area for focus. The success of the elections for the CHP representatives has shown growing commitment amongst the sector to represent itself, as long as the necessary support is available.

*\*Quotes from “CVS Fife: Operational Effectiveness and Strategic Capability”, Report by Prof. John Taylor & Dr Eleanor Burt. May 2005*

## PROVIDING SUPPORT SERVICES

*“CVS Fife should (have a) view to providing better targeted training and development opportunities” \**

### Developing the Sector

This year CVS Fife has moved away from providing a general capacity building service for voluntary organisations, and has instead developed a portfolio of specialist services in response to demand from client groups. These are:

- Human Resources
- ICT
- Governance & Compliance
- Finance



These services provide the opportunity for voluntary organisations who may have had an introduction to a particular topic via Learning Together, our ESF-funded Training Project, to access more in-depth advice and support, as well as assisting them to tackle specific issues.

### Key Milestones:

- Our HR service has been involved in joint working with Investors in People Scotland

to put together a funding proposal which, if successful, will result in a group of staff within the national CVS Scotland network being trained as IiP practitioners

- Our ICT service is contributing to the long-term sustainability of Digital Fife, a community website for groups providing a web presence and skills development opportunities
- In the area of Governance & Compliance, three local seminars on Disclosure issues were held, and one-to-one development support has been provided to a number of organisations, including Fife Gingerbread (see case study)
- Our Finance service is now providing payroll services to six organisations and full accountancy services to three organisations
- Our Training Project is now delivering chargeable courses on topics such as Health & Safety, Food Hygiene and Emergency First Aid in response to specific demand

## Case Study: Fife Gingerbread

Fife Gingerbread was formed in 1987 and works to improve the quality of life of lone parents in Fife through actively developing mutual support groups and promoting the interests of lone parents. During the past year, the organisation has benefited from CVS Fife support in a number of ways:

- Review of governance/legal structure
- Participation in Financial Strategy Action Learning Set
- Development support for management committee
- Member database redeveloped by ICT service
- Training opportunities utilised for staff and volunteers

In addition to this, Fife Gingerbread has been involved in a range of networking activity, including taking on a representative role on behalf of the Fife Voluntary Sector Children's Forum and joining the Voluntary Sector Health & Wellbeing Forums.

## Impact/Outcomes:

For Fife Gingerbread, the results of the support given by CVS Fife over the year are:

- Improved ability to manage and develop its activities
- Better skilled and more confident staff and management committee members
- Better knowledge of voluntary sector role within Community Planning

These results have also led on to the following outcomes:

- Improved services to clients
- Greater ability to source funding, leading to enhanced sustainability
- Improved ability to take part in local regeneration planning initiatives

By utilising a range of CVS Fife services, Fife Gingerbread has boosted its effectiveness, not only as an individual voluntary organisation, but also as an active member of an increasingly networked voluntary sector.

*\*Quotes from "CVS Fife: Operational Effectiveness and Strategic Capability", Report by Prof. John Taylor & Dr Eleanor Burt. May 2005*

## COMMUNICATING WITH THE SECTOR

*“CVS Fife should commission work as a priority from which a strong web presence can be developed” \**

### Message Received and Understood

Two-way communication has become the goal of CVS Fife's Information Service, and the developments to the CVS Fife website this year have played a key role in working towards this aim. The website boasts the following new sections:

- A comprehensive searchable directory of voluntary and community organisations
- Online programme of Training Courses
- A searchable database of funding opportunities
- Dedicated sections for the Voluntary Sector Forums
- Improved News and Events section

More development is planned for the website, but already we are seeing the impact of the improvements in terms of better statistics and higher search engine ratings. These improvements have not only helped CVS Fife to communicate with its client groups, but are also encouraging organisations to communicate with us. Additions such as providing

online forms to allow people to post their community events and join our database of organisations are enabling our clients to shape the CVS Fife website. Two-way communication efforts have also been boosted this year by voluntary sector network activity. Our Community Planning staff team members have been heavily involved in rejuvenating the Fife Voluntary Sector Children's Forum (FVSCF) and establishing the three area-based Voluntary Sector Health and Wellbeing Forums. Involving people in this type of network activity requires a significant amount of face-to-face work, but the evidence from the St Andrews University Evaluation Report is that our client groups value this type of interaction.



### Key Milestones

- Redevelopment of CVS Fife website leading to more feedback from client groups

- New focussed remit drawn up for FVSCF and relaunch event attended by 36 people from 28 organisations. Of these organisations, 10 had previously not been involved in network activity
- The three inaugural meetings of the Voluntary Sector Health & Wellbeing Forums were attended by 67 people, who participated in establishing terms of reference, selecting a Chair and deciding on meeting frequency
- Newsletter redesigned and Briefing Bulletin for decision-makers launched, enabling us to build new relationships within and outwith the sector

### Case Study: FVSCF Co-ordinating Group

CVS Fife has facilitated the FVSCF from its inception, but this year the forum was offered a more comprehensive package of support. This support included working through a restructuring exercise with the Forum and its Co-ordinating Group. The main issue which needed to be tackled within the forum was representative activity, and support for those carrying out that activity. Forum members made the

decision that those carrying out a representative role (the VSCF has representatives throughout the Children's Services structure in Fife) should form the Co-ordinating Group of the Forum. This Group then worked through a facilitated session with CVS Fife to focus on its role and remit, and the responsibilities of an individual member of the Forum carrying out a representative role.

### Impact/Outcomes

- The Co-ordinating group has become more strategic, and there is improved support for those carrying out a representative role
- The meetings of the full forum have become more flexible and focussed, boosting attendance and participation

As a result:

- FVSCF members playing a representative role become more effective, thus impacting on the policy and planning process
- The Forum can influence change rather than simply reacting to it

*\*Quotes from "CVS Fife: Operational Effectiveness and Strategic Capability", Report by Prof. John Taylor & Dr Eleanor Burt. May 2005*

## GROWING THE SECTOR

*"CVS Fife should develop its strategy for developing capability enhancing network arrangements in Fife"\**

### Connecting the Grassroots

CVS Fife continues to work with small community groups in a number of ways. We provide direct one-to-one support via our Resource Worker, who helps groups get to grips with constitutions, meeting arrangements, roles and responsibilities, membership and other issues that are central to the operation of these groups. We are also encouraging smaller groups to get involved in the planning and policy process via our "In It Together" project.

Additionally, our Thrift Shop continues to be an in-demand fundraising resource for many smaller, community-based organisations. Our Information Service also provides enquiry support on a range of topics including data protection, funding sources, Disclosure issues and organising events.



### Key Milestones

- 60 people from 29 small community groups attended two Social Supper events aimed at recognising and developing the contribution they make to achieving the aims of the Joint Health Improvement Plan
- From October '04 to the end of September '05 the Thrift Shop was utilised to raise over £37,000 for voluntary/charitable organisations

Support in accessing funding remains a key enquiry area for the smaller groups. Our Resource Worker, Information Officer and Admin Team work together to provide help in clarifying project plans, identifying possible funding sources and putting an application together. However, many groups are extremely proactive on the fundraising front, as the level of activity via the Thrift Shop demonstrates. The challenge is to encourage groups to think about a broader fundraising strategy to make best use of their energies and boost their sustainability.

## PROMOTING GOOD PRACTICE

*“CVS Fife contributes both to the development of relevant new capabilities and to good practice”\**

### Responding to New Challenges

The members of CVS Fife’s Board of Directors see the promotion of good practice within the organisation as a key area of responsibility, taking the view that we must be confident of our own procedures if we are to be in a position to advise other organisations. Here two board members give their perspective on being involved with the running of CVS Fife, and how they can use their role to champion good practice.



*Andy Penman, Company Secretary*

Andy is due to step down from the Board this year, having been involved with CVS Fife since the organisation was formed. Andy is clear that the Board’s role is an advisory one, and he believes that the challenge for the voluntary sector is to show that it is “fit for purpose in the 21st Century”. He sees good practice as being central to this challenge, particularly

in terms of partnership working. The voluntary sector now has a seat at the table with statutory partners, and must aim to make full use of this opportunity.



*Robert Bell, Board Member*

Robert is new to the CVS Fife Board this year, having responded to our recruitment drive. He believes that in terms of sound governance, it is important that Board Members have the right mix

of skills to provide advisory support to the organisation. Robert would like to see CVS Fife taking a lead in encouraging voluntary organisations to fully cost their work, as the sector can only deliver quality services if it is properly resourced. CVS Fife will continue to focus on good practice in the year ahead, both in terms of highlighting areas where the sector is already performing strongly, as well as offering support where it is needed.

*\*Quotes from “CVS Fife: Operational Effectiveness and Strategic Capability”, Report by Prof. John Taylor & Dr Eleanor Burt. May 2005*

## SPOTLIGHT ON OUR PEOPLE



Angela Gallagher,  
Info/Admin Assistant

Sandra Rimmer,  
Finance/HR  
Assistant



Betty McKenzie,  
Info/Admin Assistant

Kirsty Dawson,  
Community  
Planning Animatuer



Elizabeth Kirk, Info/  
Admin Assistant



Bryan Poole, Deputy  
Manager



Douglas McLellan,  
Network Support Officer



Caron Hughes, Governance /  
Compliance Adviser



Isabel Ritchie,  
Senior Admin Officer

Ian Cowie,  
Learning Services  
Co-ordinator



Carole Patrick,  
Information  
Officer

Mary Cormack,  
Resource Worker





Ron Smith,  
ICT Adviser



Sandra Bruce,  
Info/Admin  
Assistant



Alison Cameron,  
Manager



Karyn McComiskie,  
HR Adviser

*Not Pictured: Craig Caskie, Finance Officer*

### **Our Board of Directors**

*Jean Haddow, Chair (stepped down Sept '05):*

"2004/5 has been another extremely busy year for CVS Fife, and both staff and board members have

given a great deal to the organisation during this time of transition. It has been a privilege to be involved with this vibrant organisation, and I would like to wish everyone involved continuing success for the future."

*Mary Hill*

Vice-Chair

*Andy Penman*

Company Secretary

*David Kinniburgh*

Treasurer

*Allen Armstrong*

*Robert Bell*

*Julie Hogg*

*Robin McAlpine*

*Frances McAulay*

*John McKendrick*

*Euan Porter*

*Nan Smith*

### **Our Funders**

We would like to acknowledge the support of our funders over the past year:

- European Social Fund
- Fife Council
- Communities Scotland
- The Scottish Executive
- NHS Fife
- Scottish Enterprise Fife
- The Community Fund

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