



**The Queen's Award
for Voluntary Service**

The MBE for volunteer groups



**Contributing freely to
community events again**

**Borderland Voices: Art
for health &
mental wellbeing**



'Shards' – communal collage in the style of a serving platter

Borderland Voices, Story of our Year, 2023-24

Introduction and executive summary, Andy Collins, Coordinator



Coronation kids' activity – making WLA peg dolls

It finally felt this year as though those of us fortunate enough to survive finally emerged from the longest shadows of the pandemic. Granted that we still take sensible precautions when we meet indoors and that Covid and flu vaccinations go hand-in-hand, there's been a noticeable increase in community events and in public willingness to attend them.

Borderland Voices (BV) has contributed to many of these, frequently sharing the information, insights and creativity which we continue to derive from our Women's Land Army (WLA) project. The grant for this from the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) will continue through to August 2024. Don't forget to put Saturday 18th May 2024 in your diary, for the 1940s Gala Day at the Foxlowe which will be the project's grand finale.

The core of our service is continued support for regular participants' mental well-being via two face-to-face creative sessions every week (writing and expressive art) and outreach activities to counteract stigma. Sarah Males is our writer in residence but, as always, various visual artists facilitate expressive arts sessions and I fill in gaps as necessary, which saves money. With use of the large room at Leek Health Centre (LHC) only 1 day/week and with currently no funding for additional arts facilitation, we are restricted to the two sessions and have to put referrals/self-referrals on a waiting list.

The social aspects - meeting, chatting, enjoying a drink and a biscuit - remain as vital a part of the BV experience as learning or developing arts skills. We've also enjoyed many visits this year, some associated with the WLA project, which are simultaneously stimulating and social events.

I continue to do all admin work from home but am almost invariably at LHC on Wednesdays to set up the room and clear away. Having a holiday involves arranging for volunteers (usually Mark and Sarah) to deal with the folding tables and other heavy or unwieldy items and I'm really grateful for this help.



On the canal boat 'Beatrice' – always a delightful day



WLA memorial on International Women's Day; we took a group from Endon Hall School to visit the National Memorial Arboretum

All participants 'volunteer' in some way or another, perhaps without even realising it, to maintain BV's vital web of emotional support and practical help but as ever I remain indebted to the trustees and to our accountant, Liz.

It has been another year of slim pickings on the fund-raising front, partly because the WLA project consumes a lot of time and energy and partly because competition for large grants is so competitive.

Networking remains an important way of keep BV in the consciousness both of the general public and of organisations we have contact with. This annual 'story', our calendar, monthly newsletters and the Facebook page are equally important ways of maintaining a public profile.

Last year's section on Impact/Value drew on feedback from BV participants undertaken as a baseline for the second phase of the WLA project. This year it's again WLA-related, but focusses on community engagement with Endon Hall School and audiences for two public evening talks plus 2 other evening events. In addition, few people may be aware that we also facilitated an important link between WELLIES, which we visited last year for the WLA project, and Leek's John Hall Wellness Garden. This is having an

ongoing impact on local health and well-being which I explain in greater detail below.

I hope you enjoy this story of our year and the wonderful images which illustrate it so colourfully.

Our objectives. This year, we've continued to:

1. Provide weekly, enjoyable arts activities, in many forms, to support the health and mental wellbeing of regular participants, from in and around the Staffordshire Moorlands;
2. Employ local professional artists, supplemented occasionally by in-house expertise, to facilitate arts sessions;
3. Encourage participants, whether or not they have mental health issues, to socialise and support one another in order to help combat stigma;
4. Tackle stigma through displays, exhibitions, public events, publications, media coverage etc. which also raise awareness of our work;
5. Participate in community arts events, of which there have been many in the past 12 months.



'On the beach' – Will – acylic on the reverse of wallpaper



Solstice – Tony – acrylic on paper

Under each heading, these are our Key Achievements:

1. Weekly creative writing and art sessions.

Our core activities (creative writing and expressive art sessions) take place in-person, at our base in Leek Health Centre. Inspiration has come from both the Women's Land Army Project and a range of other topics from the solstice and Halloween to the Coronation.

A suitable room is available only 1 day/week and is generally at or near capacity.

Participants from across the Moorlands and

further afield enjoy the writing, art, drinks and biscuits plus the supportive, informal conversation which is integral to BV activities. Many continue generously to make weekly voluntary donations to support the sessions, even though money is tight.

2. Arts-sector employment.

Unfortunately, no students approached us this year for a placement, but we have had a number of new and returning visual artists (see below).

Although Sarah Males has facilitated most of the writing workshops, we have enjoyed the input of 2 guests: Staffs Poet Laureate Dawn Jutton and professional writer Alison Boyle who's recently moved to Leek.

Andy too has led several sessions, to make our resources stretch further.



Scrap books made, literally, from scrap materials



Art sessions have included landscape changes in the Dove Valley (Elspeth Walker), a canal trip on the 'Beatrice' (self-guided), scrap books (Steph Bogachi)), coronation plate (Andy), still life (Sheena), summer solstice (Andy), 3-D grotesques (Gordon and Mark), joining the lines (Andy), a 'shard' platter (Georgia Wilde), summertime (Andy), a Christmas gnome, to sit or hang up (facilitated by participant Tia), making/using nettle brushes, to work with natural dyes (Ruby Sufi), 'spooks' (Andy), spring dandelions (Sarah), the Chinese new year of the Dragon (Andy), shadow puppets (Ian and Jo Douglas in 'Telling Tales'), collage (Sheena), wildlife mandalas (Andy), willow-work and baskets (Rachel Wheatcroft), shadow puppet play (Sarah and Gordon).

(L) In Flash, making shadow puppets for 'Telling Tales'

Just a small selection of artwork illustrates this document, together with photos of various visits and events.

3. Socialisation and peer support.

Socialisation and peer support are integral to Borderland Voices. Although apparent and all-inclusive during the writing and art sessions, there's a complex web of support holding people throughout the rest of the week; it includes phone calls, visits, shopping, emails, texts, car shares and practical help with the most challenging situations e.g. accidents, hospital visits etc.

Although all participants help out within the limits of their



Tatton Park – meeting a ‘Land Girl’, above and the pigs, below.



day at Tatton Park Farm (Cheshire) where a ‘Land Girl’ showed us round, told us what her life was like, and introduced us to all the animals she dealt with, from Shire horses to pigs, goats, hens, ducks and more. We spend a relaxing day on the Beatrice narrow boat and had 2 visits to Poole’s Cavern Country Park, making ‘grotesques’ (like gargoyles, but without spouts, they’re a feature of Buxton’s architecture). That mini-project culminated in an evening trip to Buxton to see the grotesques displayed and marvel at a projected light display by ‘Illuminos’. We ventured up to Flash Village Hall for Telling Tales (organised by rural arts programme OUTSIDE), combining stories and shadow



Will, Linda and Tia receive their Volunteer Star certificates from Support Staffs CEO Garry

abilities, this year Will, Linda and Tia received Volunteer Star certificates from Garry Jones, CEO of Support Staffs. In addition, Maggie and Tia went above and beyond at the Twilight Market, persuading all and sundry to buy our wonderful 2024 calendar.

‘Socialisation’ has again included several visits. Elspeth Walker hosted us at the Dove Valley Centre to explore land use changes at Under Whittle Farm between WW2 and 2020. The only other one linked to the WLA project was a fascinating



Enthralled by the ‘Museum of the Moon’ in Cheadle

puppetry. Another OUTSIDE project we visited was the stunning 'Museum of the Moon', hosted in Cheadle Parish Church to celebrate Mary Adela Blagg, world-renowned astronomer, born in Cheadle in 1858. Finally, trustees and friends joined us for a relaxed, bring-and-share Christmas lunch at the Health Centre.



Grotesque – Bill – Modroc formed on clay, painted with acrylic



BV participants with their grotesques looking over their shoulders; at the finale of Buxton's 'Our Street' project

4. Tackling stigma and raising awareness.

Andy continues to attend many meetings, usually online, where she represents BV. These, including the Staffs Moorlands Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) Forum, the Green Network and the VCSE Alliance Mental Health Forum, remain on Zoom or Teams. The exhibition in the display cases at Leek Library curated by Sheena, which celebrated BV's quarter century, gave us a very visible platform. We also have in Mark Johnson – participant, trustee and district councillor – someone who fully understands the value of our services.

Our Facebook group

(<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1398672493722468>) is another active virtual space which allows members and 'friends' to share news and views. Finally, the number of local face-to-face events in which we've engaged has returned to pre-pandemic levels.

Yet again, we delivered a kid's activity (WLA-based) at the annual Foxlowe HuG environmental arts festival. We similarly worked with children at a special event arranged by the Town Council to mark the Coronation. We were almost overwhelmed with youngsters wanting to make WLA peg dolls at the Tittesworth Fun Day; we had to improvise to keep up with demand when we ran out of pegs.

There was no Mental Health Awareness Week stall in May '23 probably because Andy had no time to galvanise other groups into getting involved.



Newly dyed, our flag ready for the Textile Festival in September

However, OUTSIDE rural arts invited us and 3 or 4 other organisations, in conjunction with a professional group, to design and make, using the batik wax process and natural dye, a silk flag celebrating BV. The flags will all feature in the inaugural Leek Textile Week in September 2024. Our flag consists of the BV logo inside a radiant sun. Between the rays, the BV design group chose words symbolising what BV means: Mind, Help, Support, Friendship, Togetherness, Creativity, Well-being, Health, fun, Art and Talking.

The writing group made short work of assembling the 2024 calendar but, after last year's delivery disappointment, we looked for a new print firm. Bob Foster volunteered to format the words and pictures into a calendar and the new printer was quick and efficient. Thanks to the efforts of Tia and Maggie, we sold quite a few at the Twilight Market and it's as popular as ever, remaining a vital awareness-raising tool.



Maggie did a roaring trade in our calendars at the Twilight Market

5. Community involvement.



'A Land Girl's Christmas', the second of our '24 Doors' live advent events.

Gordon and Sarah worked with BV to devise a wonderful shadow-puppet play.

We have contributed to many events this year, particularly those which enabled us to share information we've been gathering during the WLA project. We also arranged 2 very well-attended evening talks as part of the project (see section below).

Throughout December 2023, OUTSIDE rural arts organised '24 Doors'. For this 'living advent calendar', they invited local organisations to present a short Christmas-themed activity within a Leek doorway. Members of the public looked online to find the location, came and knocked on the door and were admitted in small groups to watch.

We delivered 2 activities related to the WLA. First, we set up a war-time kitchen diorama where Sheena and Andy, acting in character, talked about local Land Girls and also offered the audience wartime cooking (chocolate cake whose ingredients included vinegar but no eggs or chocolate was a talking point).



WLA window at Flash church flower festival

We also accepted the Town Council's invitation to lay a wreath honouring local Land Girls and Lumber Jills at the town's 2 war memorials, the Nicholson monument and on Ball Haye Green.

Plans for the grand finale event, a 1940s Gala Day on Saturday 18th May 2024 at the Foxlowe, are progressing well and are now likely to involve a Polish element. The date coincides with the 80th anniversary of the Battle of



'Land Girl' Leanne talking to Girl Guides in Ipstones

Secondly, BV groups worked with Sarah and Gordon MacLellan to devise a story and shadow puppets about 'A Land Girl's Christmas'. In preparation for this, Gordon and Andy also delivered a popular public workshop in Leek library.

Further afield than Leek, we contributed a WLA-themed window display of flowers and artefacts plus the exhibition boards in the Flash St Paul's Church flower festival. This led to contact with a local lady whose mother was a Lumber Jill so that Catherine Croney, our reminiscence historian, was able to record Mrs Sproat's memories.

The Women's Land Army Project

This year has seen the Project make steady progress, with an emphasis on the community outreach activities which were impossible during the pandemic. Although circumstances prevented planned engagement with Leek High School we instead worked with uniformed groups of young people (Brownies and Girl Guides) and with Endon Hall Primary School.



Bill lays a wreath in honour of local Land Girls and Lumber Jills

Monte Cassino, in which the Polish 2nd army played a pivotal role, and many veterans found their way eventually to the Blackshaw Moor resettlement camp just outside Leek, hence our local Polish community.

Our WLA historian Richard Godley, Sarah and Andy spent a day in Endon Hall Primary School, with a slide presentation, Richard's handling collection of artefacts and various creative

activities. Andy then arranged a school visit to the National Memorial Arboretum on International Women's Day and school feedback was immensely positive.

WLA reenactor Leanne Billing came in uniform to visit 2 groups of Guides and 1 Brownie Pack; seeing and trying on the uniform and talking about wartime farming helped to bring to life that Land Girls could have been their big sisters.

Our 2 evening talks attracted appreciative audiences to the Foxlowe. Nationally renowned sculptor Denise Dutton, who designed and cast the larger-than-life-size WLA memorial at

the National Memorial Arboretum, gave a fascinating illustrated lecture which covered both the designing and the casting. She was particularly keen to get this commission as her aunt was a Land Girl.

Ray Johnson, who founded and runs the Staffordshire Film Archive, assembled specially for us a film entitled 'Feeding the Nation' which put the history of the WLA in a national context and also included local Staffordshire footage.



Ray's film featured an interview he conducted some years ago with a local lady who'd been a Land Girl

Impact/value

We will ask BV participants to complete another evaluation of the WLA project when it ends this summer. Meanwhile the feedback this year has come from community engagement with the project, specifically from Endon Hall School and the audiences for Ray Johnson, Denise Dutton and our 24 Doors events.

We have also facilitated an important link between the WELLIES project we visited last year and Leek's John Hall Wellness Garden. This is having an ongoing impact on local health and well-being.



Endon Hall School pupils with their WLA farm dioramas

Endon Hall School

'The Arboretum visit was a fantastic day; the children and the staff loved the whole experience so a huge thank you for funding and organising such a memorable day. The children had a real buzz as we returned to school and it was lovely to see them so enthused by History! So thanks again! :)'

'They told me all about the postcards, so it will be lovely to have a look at them and maybe display them when they are returned to school.'

'In terms of the Monday session... Our Year 3 children and History Ambassadors absolutely loved having a hands-on day

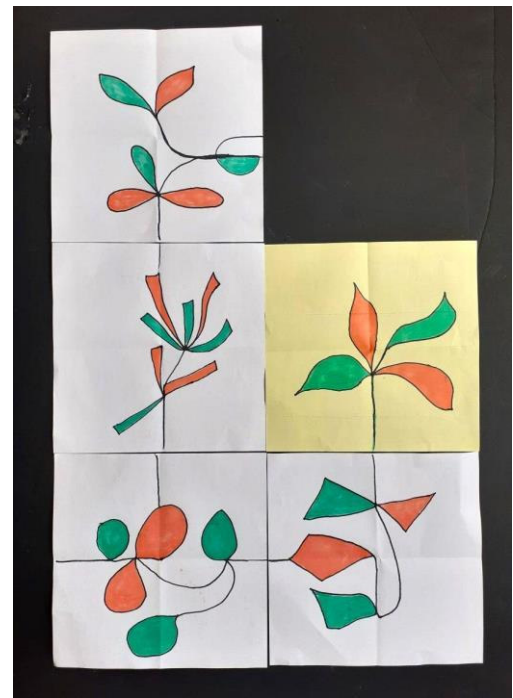
exploring International Women's Day and the tireless work of the Women's Land Army. All of the specialists who came into school, brought the subject to life through conversation and the use of artefacts. The children were engrossed in the topic and the visit to the Arboretum organised for the end of that week was an amazing way to reflect on the Monday session and continued to bring the topic to life.'

'Again, thank you so much for all of your hard work organising it. We look forward to working with you again in the future.'

- (Rob Harrison, KS1 head and History lead, Endon Hall Primary School)

'The children all had a fabulous day on both Monday and Friday. They all enjoyed the workshop in school and being able to see the artefacts in person and being able to investigate what some of them were. This is something that we haven't got in school so it was a great opportunity to be able to see these items. The information, provided by Andy, Sarah and Richard, was very interesting and informative. It built on the Year 3 knowledge that had been built during their WW2 Topic. All of the activities were enjoyable and engaging for the children.'

'On the visit on Friday, the children enjoyed seeing the place of remembrance and again, being able to look at different items of clothing and even dress up as some of the women from the war time. The Year 3s enjoyed learning about the WRAF as this is something that wasn't covered in our Topic at school.'



Line – Elaine – felt-tip on paper



Dandelion – Tia – felt-tip on paper

- (Andrea Coleman, Y3 class teacher, Endon Hall School)

To Andy

I enjoyed the memorials and reading the names on the wall of names [inscribed with all who have lost their lives serving their country]. One of the memorials I really enjoyed was the women standing together, the third one [WLA].

The workshop was brilliant because I got to see what it was like back then. The uniform was very smart and some people wore hats, too! I loved making a farm [a little diorama], lolly dollies [wooden lolly sticks, given a face and wrapped in wool to look like clothes] and post cards [a post card home, with a picture on one side and message on the other]. I liked the arm bands [which indicated length of service in the WLA] and seeing how many years were on them. They were loads of different colours.



***Baskets made with Rachel Wheatcroft.
Baskets had varied uses during WWII, from harvesting in the
fields to cushioning the landing of items dropped behind enemy
lines.***

Many Land Girls were involved in cutting and preparing willow

were beautiful and they all had lots of history hidden somewhere inside them.

- From two Y3 Endon Hall School pupils (aged 7-8)

Ray Johnson film evening

We used 'smiley face' evaluation forms at Ray's film evening. Under half of the 40+ audience (21 individuals) completed them. Analysing these forms, more than half already knew quite a lot about the WLA while others knew very little. All enjoyed the evening and three quarters said they'd learned something. The audience was almost exactly half and half, male and female. Three quarters were over 65 with a handful of younger people. All came from Leek and the Moorlands except 1 each from Congleton (Cheshire) and Stoke. Most had been attracted by word of mouth or our flier, with a few seeing it in the paper, the library, on Facebook, or a poster. Only 2 people added comments: 'Totally fascinating' and 'Very informative and well put-together' (the latter from the youngest member of the audience).

Denise Dutton's illustrated talk

Comments afterwards included:

'It was very well attended I thought for Leek (not a big town). My friends and ex-students who came were very impressed with the whole thing and had no idea that Denise was a local woman.'

'Without exception, people seemed so interested in the subjects she has been able to capture and fascinated by the intricacies of casting in bronze. We feel very fortunate that she was able to talk in Leek, about the WLA memorial, in

I enjoyed meeting people at the National Memorial Arboretum [NMA]. I liked that we got to draw in our booklets rather than lots and lots of writing. I loved learning about the Air Force and that Disney designed a character for the Americans out of a Roald Dahl book. I loved the women standing together [the WLA memorial].

To Andy

We enjoyed our time with you this year. I hope we can go again.

We had a very nice workshop learning more about the WLA. It was a nice experience to see in my head what it was like for women in the war. There were nice things to create, as well. Our visit to the NMA was fantastic and it had about 400 memorials. WOW! All the memorials



***Butterflies – Janette – watercolour on paper
(After our visit to the Dove Valley Centre)***

the Foxlowe. The artefacts that she was kind enough to assemble – clothing, maquette, scaled-up WLA tools, photos – just added to the evening.'

'It was a smashing night - very informative and enjoyable.'

'We really enjoyed last Friday and it would be good to get your Newsletter, as and when. Incidentally I have asked Denise about giving a talk to our u3a Art Appreciation group sometime next Spring which she agreed to. She actually did something similar but that was about 10 years ago now.'

Our two '24 Doors' events both attracted over 200 people

The wartime kitchen

(Feedback from OUTSIDE) 'Many said that this was one of their favourite doors. They found it really interesting to learn about local history in this way.'

A Land Girl's Christmas

A member of OUTSIDE staff who volunteered on this evening said, 'The whole setting worked wonderfully. It captured the audience into an intimate space, and everyone felt like they were taken on a journey. Each time you heard the story, you noticed something different which was very moving. The narrative was so relatable and puppetry that really gave a true sense of place. Both your doors managed to hold the essence of 'Leek', its traditions and community spirit.'



A wartime kitchen, lit only by an oil lamp, where the chocolate cake (available to sample) contained some unusual ingredients.

Legacy of BV days with WELLIES in August 2022, as part of our WLA project



***Fang, tooth, claw – Simon – natural dyes on paper
Last year we made 'Love Crows' with Ruby; this year we
experimented with natural pigments plus making and using brushes
from nettle fibres***

'Following BV days with the WELLIES Project and discussions with some participants about progressing onto the WELLIES project, we realised that the journey from Leek to Sudbury wasn't achievable for most people on a long-term basis.'

'There was a lot of interest in WELLIES and it became clear that there was a need for a similar project in Leek.'

'We approached the John Hall Wellness Garden (JHWG) to see if they could provide space and started weekly courses there in October 2022. The courses are still

running and have about 20 people attending each week. These guided learning hours of community education now take place in Leek for people with mental health challenges through the initial recommendation by Andy and our work with BV.'

'The courses are funded by Staffordshire County Council Community Learning Fund. SCC are very pleased with this as it is the only community learning provision in the Staffordshire Moorlands.'

- (Julie White, co-founder,



Dandelion – Pauline – Felt-tip on paper

WELLIES project/ Staffordshire Care Farming Development CIC)

Evidence for the impact of creativity on well-being is being published all the time:

Creative pathways to personal wellbeing: Exploring contexts, mechanisms and outcomes

based on a rapid scoping review conducted by Brunel University London, in partnership with the Social Purpose Lab at the University of the Arts: London. March 2024

The evidence shows:

- Creative activities can lead to improvements in a range of wellbeing outcomes, including Subjective wellbeing, Quality of life, Anxiety, Depression, Stress, Self-esteem, Confidence, Positive mood, Fear, Mood disturbance, Happiness, Anger, Sadness and Social connection.
- Pathways to wellbeing are both personal and relational.
- The importance of key factors including: skilled facilitators, inclusive and safe environments, autonomy and choice, and curiosity, immersion and distraction. (Although there is, of course, a risk of negative outcomes if activities are not designed with these key factors in mind.)

For all of us involved with BV, I think these findings are self-evident.

Volunteers

BV is built on a peer support network which also includes Andy as coordinator, our trustees, volunteers and of course our arts facilitators. This is why we gained the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service in 2017.



Gnome – Tia volunteered to facilitate a fun session just before Christmas

Few participants ever see Liz, our accountant and IT guru, but we couldn't function without her and the hours she puts in, many on a voluntary basis. We always owe thanks to Richard for the calendar photos and this year to Bob for making the calendar camera-ready for printing. Sarah and Mark both help set up and take down the activity room, when Andy is unavailable. Tia often helps clear away after art sessions while



John Hall Wellness Garden group doing research in the Leek local history library

Will and Bill set out chairs every week. In December, Linda helped get Tia to hospital after a very bad accident. Many people give lifts when we go on visits and others maintain phone contact with people who can't come along to BV.

Our Chair Pauline has contributed significantly to the WLA project, not only delivering many evening talks but also teaching the history group from John Hall Wellness Garden how to tackle research in Leek Library's local history section.

Gordon MacLellan, who remains a very good friend to BV, this year involved us in the Buxton 'Grotesques' project.

Andy is immensely grateful to a sub-group of trustees who are helping to shape activities for our WLA finale in May this year. And of course Andy's husband and daughter are both towers of strength.

Medium to Long-term strategy

'Maintaining funding' and 'planning for succession' are keys which we're still far from unlocking.

It is difficult to contemplate a medium term, as juggling grant applications, complex or even relatively simple, with ongoing delivery of the WLA is a challenge. The National Lottery Heritage Fund grant for the WLA project is effectively sustaining us until August 2024. Andy obtained funding from 'We love the Moorlands' and Leek United Charitable Foundation and Sheena's approach to Leek Town Lands was also successful. Sadly these are all relatively small sums and a much more substantial application for core funding to Severn Trent's Community Fund failed.

It is similarly difficult to contemplate 'planning for succession' when we have to keep our eyes fixed firmly on the ball of delivering the outcomes of the WLA project.

We increased the price of calendars to include a small profit and sold as many as we could. Participants continue to make small weekly donations, financial or in-kind, which mount up over time and Tracey's father Arnold undertook a parachute jump (apparently something on his bucket list), raising over £220 for us. Being onsite anyway, Andy continues to deliver occasional Wednesday sessions, thus making savings.



Plate designs to commemorate the Coronation

Networking and links

Whenever possible, Andy 'attends' relevant online meetings. These save time and the environment while helping us maintain important networks.

We're still able to afford our LHC premises by sharing an office with **Support Staffordshire (SuS) (Staffs Moorlands)**. As our VCSE umbrella organisation, they also deliver various useful, free training courses.

We also network with the following:

- Staffordshire Moorlands District Council: Officers and Councillors
- Staffs Moorlands Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) Assembly
- Staffs County Council: Library Service; County Archives; Councillors
- Integrated Care System (ICS) for Staffordshire and Stoke
- Leek Town Council: Officers and Councillors
- Stone and Water (Buxton-based artists' cooperative)
- Brighter Futures and the Mental Health Helpline
- Staffs Moorlands social prescribing link workers
- National Council for Voluntary Organisations
- W Midlands Arts, Health and Wellbeing
- Changes – 12 Steps to Mental Health
- National Association for Social Prescribing
- Institute for Voluntary Action Research
- Adult Community Mental Health Team
- Baring Foundation
- Small Arts Network
- John Hall Wellness Garden (Rethink)
- WELLIES health and wellness CIC
- Community Council for Staffordshire
- Citizens Advice Bureaux
- The Foxlowe Arts Centre
- Leek College of Art
- Dove Valley Centre
- SuS Health and Care Forum
- Dr Plot's Festival
- OUTSIDE Arts Project
- Samaritans
- Healthwatch

Both writing and art groups are often at capacity and produce outstanding work which we showcase in the monthly newsletter, the calendar and this publication. Some long-standing participants attend every other week, which makes it difficult to assess numbers; if everyone turned up at once, we wouldn't have enough space. But all involved with BV work tirelessly to ensure that its vital local service, supporting mental well-being, not only survives but thrives.



***Dragon (welcoming the Chinese year of the Water Dragon) –
Andrew – felt-tip on paper***