

# SOUTH WEST FOUNDATION INTERIM MONITORING REPORT ESMÉE FAIRBAIRN FOUNDATION Year 3



**REPORT FOR  
2014/15**

# Monitoring Report

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This is the sixth year that the South West Foundation has been managing a small grant fund on behalf the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation. This report covers the grants allocated through year 3 Funding and also provides some background to the current issues facing the sector in the South West region.

The Foundation undertook research into the smaller groups in sector in 2014/5 with over 80 organisations involved. We have included some of the findings of this research within this report. This research shows the amazing reach that the small Voluntary and Community Sector Organisations have. They also have an amazing ability to engage significant numbers of the community in their work, not just as beneficiaries but also as volunteers and yet support and advice for this part of the sector is also diminishing. Because these organisations operate 'Below the Radar' they have an independence in their operation that is now denied to many of the larger organisations. All of the organisations that benefit from the Esmee Fairbairn Fund have an annual income of less than £20,000. What is largely unrecognised with these small groups is their entrepreneurship in raising at least part of their income through other means such as small fundraising events, subsidised membership fees, small charges for services where people can afford the charge. There is a greater need than ever for small monetary investment in the way of small grants to enable these valuable group to survive. Also alongside this monetary support is the need for additional support in the say of advice, information and training which is now lacking in the sector. The Foundation has been providing this where it can and has worked with over 400 organisations through one off events, advice and has made as many helpful documents as possible available to groups through our website but has only been able to do this on an ad hoc basis.

In this report I wish to look at the following issues:

- The contribution that these small, 'Below The Radar' groups make to the independence of the sector. Loss of independence is one of the main challenges to the sector at the moment.
- The need for a 'grant plus approach' to supporting the groups. The research shows that significant number of these organisations need support and advice and are now finding it almost impossible to access that advice and support. The Foundation is increasingly stepping in trying to assist the groups because of this lack in provision.

- The wide reach, diversity of service and community engagement that these small community groups act as the catalyst to deliver in communities.

## **Independence of the Voluntary Sector**

There are currently quite serious challenges to the independence of the voluntary sector. Successive Governments have viewed the sector as an ally and often an agent to deliver its agenda. This has benefitted some Voluntary and Community Sector Organisations who have been able to engage with the contract culture and become service delivery agents. There are strong views about how this has challenged the independence of the voluntary sector and its ability to be a critical voice. (National Coalition for independent Action)

90% of the small organisations funded by the Esmee Fairbairn Fund operate as the Third Research Sector Research Council has identified 'Below the Radar.' It has been proven that by operating under the radar, these groups are not part of academic research reports, and the researchers have been unable to access data on these groups. Policy makers and funders rarely take organisations of this size into account when setting their policies and funding programmes as they know so little about their needs and their worth. Whatever, the downside might be of this invisibility, small groups are far more able to operate with an independence that larger groups lack. They are unregulated in that they are not registered with any overriding agency. They are able to deliver their services and their activities in ways that they see as the best way for their service users and customers. They have the independence of designing their services and a freedom of action.

## **Reach of the Small Voluntary Organisations**

Research recently undertaken by South West Foundation and shortly to be published reveals the diverse services that small groups offer from training for young people, dance groups, sports activities for wheelchair users, cooking classes, language help, craft activities play activities social clubs, newsletters the list is endless. In delivering these activities the groups that have been supported through the last grant programme recorded working with 12,516 individuals, engaging with 1,230 volunteers.

## **The Need for a grant plus approach to Funding**

Again the Foundation has undertaken research this year which shows the diminishing availability of help, support and advice that is available to small community groups in the South West. Over 74% of

organisations who took part in the survey so far said that they were unable to access any help and advice. Of the 26% that said that they could access some advice 65% of those said it was very little or insufficient. This year the Foundation managed to utilise about £20,000 to support the help that the small groups needed. Over 350 of the small groups accessed our networking opportunities through the 13 local seminars that we organised around raising funds and proving their worth. The Foundation is also putting access to useful documents on our website that small groups can utilise. Our concern is that we do not have the resources to continue this sort of support. Small organisation learn a great deal from each other through the networking events. They also shared resources with some people helping others for free with their fundraising. The Foundation would like to pilot the Hive approach, bringing small groups together to share experiences and skills. Almost in the way that Timebanking operates. At the moment we do not have the resources for this but this year has been such a successful year for being able to put on these networking events we are ever hopeful.

There is also the issue of small groups growing their ideas and their organisations. For many this is not an aspiration and what they achieve by remaining small is extremely valuable but for those who wish to grow the amount of skilled support is extremely limited and yet their ideas and approaches would be refreshing among and interesting.

## The Grant Programme

Fifty-three grants were made in total from a fund of £30,000 (spent £28,843). This gave an average grant size of around £566. A wide range of activities were funded with a diverse audience and range of beneficiaries. This is the magical ability of small grants to bring communities to life. The grants enabled at least 284 volunteers to engage in their communities and provide services directly to 4,805 people. Most of the people to benefit are people most in need in communities. Virtually all of the groups funded had an annual income of less than £15,000 and were totally or mainly run just by volunteers.



operate in an areas of low income that enables everyone to be able to enjoy the historic art and media of the area.

**Number of Applicants for Cornwall:- 3 Amount Approved:-  
£1,555**

## **Devon**

### **Barnstaple Disabled Fellowship Club £500**

The aim of the Barnstaple Disabled Fellowship Group is to support disabled people in and around Barnstaple. The organisation runs a disabled club in Barnstaple. They provide a variety of entertainment, homemade refreshments and a raffle to keep the club going. In addition they take members to a Dawlish hotel for a spring party and to meet other disabled fellowship members. Around 40 people will benefit from the grant.

### **Bideford Buzz £800**

The organisation operates to a charitable constitution. There are 8 people on the management committee and the organisation was set up in June 2000. The organisation uses content supplied by volunteers and local residents to publish in their local newspaper. The organisation feels that this enables people to have a much greater involvement with their communities. They have been funded in the past but are now moving forward with a new venture. This is quite an unusual request for Bideford Buzz. They want to raise £1,500 to run a project working with people with mental health problems. The funding will enable a group of people with mental health problems to run a social media project to enable Bideford Buzz to have a website and put their newsletter on line. They are working with Unite Community Learning. Up to 8 people will take part in the project.

### **Brixham Blind and VIP Club £1,000**

The aim of the Brixham Blind and VIP Club is to support people without sight or those who have severe sight impediments to lead more fulfilling lives. The organisation operates to a charitable constitution and there are 6 people on the management group. The organisation holds social events, club type activities, outings and also signposts people with sight difficulties to services and facilities that might be of benefit to them. They also encompass the blind archery club. They have 90 members and 6 volunteers. The grant of £1,000 will cover the cost of transport for members to get to activities. Without transport it would be impossible for many of the member's to travel around and get out of their home environment.

### **Cullompton Family Centre £1,000.00**

Cullompton Family Centre provide support and advice to families in the area. Cullompton is an area of deprivation and the families that access their services are usually going through a crisis period. The service they provide is unique to each individual client. The organisation works with unfairness and disadvantages which they feel limits what some families can achieve. They aim for excellence and help families to celebrate their achievements and bring about positive life changes. Their application is for £1,000 to enable them to continue to run their Thursday sessions where they offer an open session drop in for families to get together and

to receive support. They estimate that the beneficiaries would be 25 adults and 18 children per month.

### **Exeter Otters Wheelchair Basketball team**

Exeter Otters Wheelchair Basketball Team provides wheelchair users with the opportunity to take part in Basketball at a competitive level. They have a management committee of six wheelchair users and their supporters. The team is currently in the 1<sup>st</sup> division of the national League, and they also have development teams for young people and beginners. Part of the aim of training is to teach better wheelchair skills, particularly to young people. The grant of £835 will enable 9 players and 2 volunteer Personal Assistant to attend a disability sports tournament at the Bath and West Show. This will help team members to develop their physical skills, enjoy competing but also build confidence by socialising and trying out different sports.

### **Jellyfish Youth Project**

**£1,000**

The aim of Jellyfish is to facilitate community youth and children's Projects particularly for people in need. There are no paid employees and 4 people on the management committee. They work currently with around 60 young people. The organisation has just finished a major art project with young people including people from Totnes and Ashburton. The group would like to continue to work with young people as the local youth club is closing. They engage a wide range of artists to work with these young people and have been setting up exhibitions of their work. They operate on very small amount so funding. The request is for a grant of £1,000 to enable the organisation to set up new projects for young people in the community based with a range of artists and to hold an exhibition.

### **Penstone Village Glade**

**£459**

Penstone Village Glade is a small community group operating in village near Crediton. Newly established the community organisation is helping to ensure that Village is able to offer community facilities from the small community centre to prevent social isolation among the community members. The grant enabled them to purchase a cooker/urn so that they were able to undertake refreshments and lunches mainly for older people.

### **Soundart Radio**

**£1,000**

The aim of the organisation is produce bold and creative programmes by inspiring and enabling anyone and everyone to play and experiment in community radio skills. They stimulate the active engagement of local people in their community by giving them the freedom, opportunity and skills to learn and express their diverse voices through radio. The organisation runs a community radio station using volunteers. There are no paid workers. They also operate 'Radio Anywhere' which is a mobile studio where they can train local people in radio techniques. They currently have 10,000 listeners. Their programme makers include people with learning disabilities, mental health issues, brain injury travellers and those who have experienced homelessness. The grant of a £1,000 would enable the group to continue to broadcast and support volunteer expenses.

### **Winkleigh Short Mat Bowls Club**

**£200.00**

The objects of Winkleigh Short Mat Bowls is to bring older people together and to enable them to take part in a social activity which focusses around the game of short matt bowls. They are situated in a very rural area with virtually no facilities for older people. They have members who are older people who have mobility problems and the short mat bowls provides time for exercise and socialising. They hold twice weekly bowling sessions at the local sports centre in Winkleigh which encourages older people to come out socialise. They also encourage their members to play in the Devon and Cornwall short mat bowling leagues. The grant of £200 will help to contribute towards their insurance costs.

**Number of Applicants for Devon:-**

**Amount Approved:- £5,959.00**

**Dorset**

**Bournemouth Older Peoples' Forum £600.00**

This forum of older people operates on about £3,000 per annum. They have over 300 members and communicate with them through their newsletter. They have been finding it increasingly difficult to cover the cost of this newsletter. Without the newsletter it will be very difficult for the group to keep in contact with all their members who are unable to get out and about.

**Bus Stop Club £800.00**

The aim of the Bust stop Club is to advance education and to promote good health of children and their families in Thickets Cross in Dorset. There are 10 Trustees including the founding member. The organisation supports families and local residents through one to one support. They have 16 volunteers. 6 of whom run money management courses and family activities. They also run a community café. The grant of £800 to will enable the organisation to employ a sessional admin worker as the part-time co-ordinator has been also trying to manage all the administration as well as delivering most of the services and supporting families in the most difficult circumstances. The Bus Stop Club operates in an area of great need. Issues with families has always been a priority need in this area. The proposal would enable more direct work to be undertaken with families.

**Creative Kids £750**

Creative Kids runs free monthly arts workshops with a sessional drop and shop services in Boscombe , one of the most 'deprived' areas on the Dorset coast. They work with 63 vulnerable children. The grant enabled them to run arts holiday clubs in August. They used arts workshops as a tool to develop cognitive, personal and interpersonal skills to help improve emotional and behavioural outcomes and life skills for children. 93% of the children who benefitted from the grant are disadvantaged and/or the social care register. 20 volunteers also took part.

**Creative Kids 2 £600**

A second emergency grant has just been made to this organisation. They

were sharing their premises with another organisation who lost their income leaving creative kids to cover all the remaining costs of their small venue. They needed funds for insurance for the forthcoming year to enable them to continue and volunteer expenses. The organisation has had to move but is already planning their holiday activities and will now be able to survive.

### **Oaktree Clubhouse**

**£900**

The charity aims to support people in Weymouth and West Dorset who have, or have recovered from, a mental health problem. They are led by people who are themselves recovering from mental health issues. The Clubhouse expenditure is around £7,500 per year. They are a registered charity, with two Trustees who exercise oversight, and a Committee of members who do the day-to-day work. There are no paid staff and members with mental health issues organise themselves to meet weekly at community centres, and also organise a series of trips and events over the year including meals out and film nights. At present there are 20 members who regularly attending. The grant of £900 is for general running costs and also to enables members to have a meal once a week. For some this is the only 'proper' meal that they have in the week.

### **Willowtree Group**

**£850.00**

Willowtree is another small group of mental health service users in Dorset. The aim of the Willow Tree Group is to offer relief to those in need by reason of age, health or disability. Established in 1994 the organisation now mainly works with people who have mental health needs. There are three people on the management committee and they operate to a charitable constitution. The group offer seaside outings, 2-3 times per year, they provide Christmas dinner and each week members get a home cooked meal which might be the only meal like that they have in a week. They help each other with a wide variety of mutual support for such things as shopping and paperwork. The grant of £850 will help with their general running costs. They have recently taken on 5 new members and need extra funds to help to meet the new costs.

**Number of Applicants for Dorset:- 5 Amount Approved:-  
£4,500.00**

## **Gloucestershire**

### **Forest Upcycling Project**

**£1,000**

Forest Upcycling is a new organisation that aims to provide affordable household goods. They will be reusing items that would otherwise go to Landfill. The organisation has spent a great deal of its most recent time in getting properly constituted. This organisation following a grant from Esmee Fairburn Fund has gone from strength to strength. They have set up two furniture stores, saved many tons of waste going to landfill sites, helped numerous people with furniture for their. They have managed to access three vans, set up a gardening project Got their trustees in place. They have also started to work with disabled people and people with learning disabilities. One of whom they have on a paid contract to help to manage their store in Coleford. An artist in the Forest of Dean has been working on murals with some of the volunteers. The Foundation have made a film of this project's journey which is available on our website.

**Gloucestershire Churches for Change  
Fairbairn**

**£500.00 Esmee**

The aim of Churches For Change is to work collectively to build a cohesive and caring community which build bridges and gives hope to the needy. The organisation was established in 2009. There are 15 people on is group as trustees.. The organisation has a youth forum and work together to organise community events including cultural days, community lunches and networks. They also work with a consortium of three long standing community groups who support black elders and their carers. The grant will enable the organisation support the work with BME communities. To help improve the links between BME communities and the police. They have evidence to show that this work is helping relationships and needs to continue. They will not be promoting religion in any of their work funded via this grant.

**Number of Applicants for Gloucestershire:-**

**2**

**Amount Approved:-**

**£1,500**

**North Somerset**

**British Bangladeshi Association**

**£500**

The aim of the association is to advance employability, provide advice and information and provide facilities and improve their life for the Bangladeshi Community in North Somerset. The organisation has around 180 people that they work with locally. They organise training opportunities and provide their members with useful information and advice on a range of topics including health. This is new organisation and needed help establishing their governance prior to agreeing a grant of £500 to cover their volunteer expenses.

**Multicultural Friendship Association**

**£979**

The aim of the Multicultural Friendship Association is to provide a place where they offer friendship and support to people in North Somerset from all over the world. The organisation operates to a charitable constitution and was established in 2009. They have 12 members on their management group who also act as volunteers. There are no paid staff. The organisation hopes through interaction and exchange of experiences of living in a new country that people would increase their skills and confidence enabling people to widen their horizons. They provide assistance in the form of talks on various aspects of life in the UK. They also have members of British origin particularly older people who might otherwise be isolated. They estimate that they work with around 1,100 people each year through all their events. The grant would help to cover their rent. Without this the group would be unable to continue meeting as they have very little in the way of funds.

**North Somerset Black and Minority Ethnic Network: £950**

The Network aims to support and represent members of all BME communities in North Somerset. The Network is currently in a registered charity with 10

trustees. It was established in 2006. The Network currently runs a weekly drop-in at the Badger Centre where people can attend for advice and help with a range of issues. They also run English classes, and an annual cultural celebration. Their office now gets 2,400 visits from people needing help per year. They run training, offer support and information and provide a place where the organisation can meet others. The grant will go toward their running costs as they are run almost entirely by volunteers.

**The Notable Club** **£500**

The Notable Club provides social opportunities for disabled people in Weston Super Mare and area. The group is an unincorporated association with a management committee of ten and four volunteers. Virtually all the management group are themselves disabled. The club runs on £10,000 per year. The club meets weekly, at a venue in Upwey. They have a variety of speakers and activities, including speakers who help with issues such as finance and care planning. The members have a wide range of disabilities, including stroke and chronic illness. The grant for £1,000 will fund the total cost of accessible transport for their ongoing transport needs for a year as they need to hire an accessible minibus for weekly meetings and trips out. The transport is provided by a community transport scheme. So the money stays in the sector.

**Our Say Our Way** **£500**

The aim of Our Say Our Way is to support and provide activities for young people in South Ward in Weston Super Mare. They help people to develop their self-esteem and skills and to flourish as individuals. The organisation puts on a range of activities for young people and families in the area of 'high deprivation' Bourneville. They currently run a ladies fitness Boxing class, sports fun and a cooking group for families. The grant of £1,000 will enable the organisation to run 10 pit fire events which will help families and young people to come together and socialise over a pit fire. Around 40 plus families will benefit.  
Weston Malaylee

**Number of Applicants for North Somerset:-** **5**  
**Amount Approved:- £3,429.**

**Somerset**

**Better Together Frome** **£675**

Better Together Frome supports people in and around Frome who have long term health conditions. They are a peer support group that supports people with Lifelong conditions such as Fibromyalgia, Parkinson's disease. They meet once a month in the town centre and invite speakers along. They have forty members who attend the meetings. The grant will help with the costs of a venue, printing and insurance without which it is difficult for the group to continue to meet. Four volunteers with health issue currently manage the group.

**Caturn** **£250**

Caturn is a small community history group which operates in the coastal town of Watchet in Somerset. There are very few community groups operating in this community. The group organise festival events based around historical events and have been very successful in getting over 400 local people to attend these events and to undertake community work in schools. The group grant of £250 will enable them to u deliver a community event based on a historical performance poem and play by first school students and will focus on the abolition of slavery. Volunteers will be involved and around 400 people will attend the event.

### **IT Help at Home**

**£630**

The aim of IT help at home is to provide free tuition to people who cannot access locally provided IT courses for any reason. They may be carers, people with disabilities, who find it difficult to get to courses or people who have difficulties which make it hard to learn in a group. This small organisation operates on around £5,000 per annum and currently has 60 volunteers and 60 clients. They have received a previous grant when they were much smaller and they have managed to grow with both the number of volunteers and their client group numbers. The grant of £630 is to enable them to recruit 10 more volunteers, cover travel expenses, DBS checks and half their insurance for the year.

### **Puriton Over 60s Club**

**£350**

This organisation works to relieve isolation for older people in Puriton and surrounding areas by arranging entertainment, outings and social activities. They operate on an income of around £3,000 per annum. The sum of £350 to will help them to pay travel expenses, their volunteer expenses and enable to pay toward a lunch for their members. This has been paid for out of their funds. This organisation provides an important service to older people in a rural area of Somerset where public transport is not good and their members. There are 35 members and 7 volunteers who will benefit from this grant directly alongside carers.

### **Somerset Levels RDA Carriage Driving Group £600.00**

The aim of Somerset Levels RDA is to make carriage driving accessible to disabled people by providing disabled people with the means to ride and/or carriage drive at a level of their ability. There are 8 management committee members and 28 volunteers. The organisation offers carriage driving facilities to disabled people in the area of the Somerset levels which was affected by recent flooding. They aim to improve people's health and sense of wellbeing through their activities. They have no guaranteed form of income and rely on grants and donations and are independent of the National Riding for the Disabled. The request is for £800 to enable them to support their core costs. This organisation assists disabled people to take part in riding activities, build their confidence and helps to tackle social isolation. They also encourage community engagement through volunteering as well as direct service provision.

### **Womens Community Forum**

**£1,000.00**

The aim of the organisation is to support women, children and young people whose families are affected by poverty, unemployment drug abuse in Taunton

and surrounding areas. They have 7 Board members. The organisation currently offers holiday arts programmes for children and young people aged 8-15. They aim to give young people new skills and confidence. They also work throughout Somerset with people for whom English is not their first language. The grant of will enable the organisation to offer language classes in Chard. They have a significant demand for 40 people who need language classes and who are caught up in low wage economy from Spain and Algeria.

**Number of Applicants for Somerset:- 6 :Amount Approved:-  
£3,505.00**

**South Gloucestershire**

**Kingsway Dance Club £500.00**

The aim of Kingsway Dance Club is to provide opportunity for older people to meet once per week through dance. Through this they aim to break the social isolation that older people might be suffering through living on their own. The group currently organise a dance session every week. They have around 93 older people attending. They also arrange transport for people who would otherwise be unable to make the meetings. Most of the older people that they work with are living alone, isolated and have health issues. The committee also organise outings three times a year with meals and refreshments and 4 dance events.

### **Mavis Friendship Club £500**

The groups links in to the dance group but brings people in from a wider geographical area. They organise weekly dances for their 70 odd members. They also provide transport to and from the club for those people who are less able to utilise public transport. They help to reduce isolation of older people, and provide healthy exercise in the form of dance. Many people would not be able to afford this type of activity if it were not for the Mavis Friendship Club.

Their social club is a life line to many of their members who are over 70. 'Ageing brings it's own issues and because we are all facing them together we offer support and friendship.'

**Number of Applicants for South Gloucestershire:- 1**  
**Amount Approved:- £500.00**

## **Torbay**

**Great Parks Community Centre £1,000**

This Community Centre is in an area or Paignton where there was very little community activity and a great deal of antisocial behaviour. It has been brought to life by one of the residents who has tirelessly sought to put on a wide range of activities including mother and toddler groups, youth club, crafty cuppa club etc. Engaging many other local residents there has been a sharp measured decrease in anti-social behaviour with children now well provided for with a wide range of activities. The organisation would like to give the volunteers a break in school holidays and buy in some activities for the children and young people on the estate. This will include football, craft and fun days and play days run by qualified play leaders. The volunteers will help out when needed but will not have the often overwhelming responsibility of organising and running activities for what is a significant group of about 8-10 young people and children and their families( film available on the Foundation website: **Kath**)

**Prince Charles Formation £296**

This small community group organises outings and a range of social activities on and estate in a 'difficult' area of Torquay. They work mainly with a group of older people who are in supported accommodation. There are 6 people on the management committee. The organisation was formed in March 2012 they have worked on a small meeting room to make sure that it is nice for their meetings and bought themselves cooking equipment so that they can organise and cook their own meals. The group organise activities such as darts nights, bingo sessions, book club meetings, and weekly lunches. Meals for special occasions such as resident's birthdays, anniversaries and Christmas, Easter and Halloween celebrations. Having spent some time renovating the communal premises the premise was vandalised and the group had not insured its contents. The grant will

enable them to replace their cooking equipment so that they can continue to meet and cook lunches. They are now insured.

**Totally Teenagers**

**£1,000**

The aim of the organisation is to create a safe environment where young people feel secure enough to express themselves and build trusting relationships. The organisation comes with high recommendation from local development workers. The group have been involved in a number of short term projects helping young people in Torbay with their communication skills, effective problem solving and management. The grant will enable young people to take part in training around financial management. They will join a 6 week training courses in Torquay. There will be 1 volunteer assisting and 40 young people will benefit from the training in how to manage their money. The organisation works with young people from the 10% most deprived areas in the UK. They hope to stop young people taking out loans from loan sharks and getting into debt. They will also assist 20 young people to open a bank account. This is a great opportunity to provide some essential training to young people in one of the most deprived areas of Torquay.

**Watcombe Community Association**

**£799**

The aim of Watcombe Community Association is to present and support appropriate and sustainable activities for local residents, ensuring that everyone has a voice and the opportunity for participation in Watcombe which is in one of the most 'challenging' areas of Torquay. There are 7 local people on the management group and no paid staff. The organisation offers a wide range of activities including Line Dancing, Bingo, Mother and Toddler, Youth Drop in and much more. In addition they host regular older persons' lunches in rotation with other local community centres. The centre has been able to upgrade its facilities and is now in a better position to attract users. The £799 is to help them to set up a community café in the community centre which will also enable them to generate some income. They have already managed to train a small group of volunteers in health a hygiene so that they are ready to go with the catering.

**Number of Applicants for Torbay:- 5 :Amount Approved:-  
£3,095.00**

**Wiltshire**

**Arts Together**

**£1,000**

Arts Together aims to improve the health and wellbeing of frail elderly people in rural Wiltshire by providing a range of stimulating and enjoyable arts activities. They have four Trustees, 72 members, 15 volunteers, 12 family carers and 6 artists who are paid on a sessional basis. Arts Together runs groups in Pewsey, Marlborough and Devizes. Each group has around 12 members, most of whom are particularly isolated due to poor mental health, disability or dementia. All of their members have one or more conditions that affects their ability to live independently. Each group plans and runs a wide variety of craft and arts sessions, with the help of practicing local artists. The aim is to help older people to build friendships and maintain their self-esteem. The activities also promote teamwork and manual and mental dexterity. Most of the members are between 60 and 99 years old.

**South West Seniors Network****£1,000**

The main aim of the Network is to promote the welfare and interests of older people, raising the profile of their needs, values and interests, speaking up on the member's behalf in all areas of social, economic, health and community issues that directly and indirectly affect the lives of Seniors. For a network that has virtually no funding, they have a membership of over 50 older people's forums equating to around 60,000 smaller people. Most of these forums operate on less than a £1,000 per annum.

The Network organises events, when they have the funding and by getting agencies to allow them to use premises free of charge. They had 4 events last year in Torbay, Wiltshire, Bristol and Somerset. They try to ensure that their events cover topics of current interest to older people and they try to help with the travel expenses of older people who attend. They have an event planned for the summer with the commissioner for older people from Northern Ireland and are campaigning to try to get a similar Commissioner in England. They also have a website where older people can post their views and find out about what is going on in the region. The grant of £1,000 for their volunteer's expenses. This will largely consist of expenses for their meetings.

**Trowbridge Talking Newspapers****£1,000.00**

The aim of Trowbridge Talking News is to provide a free service to visually impaired people in west Wiltshire. The organisation was originally set up under the auspices of the local rotary club. When this closed they set up an independent organisation in 2012. There are 20 volunteers involved in producing this talking newspaper. They produce an audio edition of articles from the local newspaper. They deliver their talking newspaper to 70 individuals in West Wilts every week. They post the tapes out free of charge. The grant will enable the organisation to replace ageing equipment. They need a new duplicating machine, some pouches and memory sticks. They also have the demand of increasing number of service users. They cannot continue to operate without this.

**Number of Applicants for Wiltshire:- 3 Amount Approved:-  
£3,000.00**

**Number of Applicants:-****39****Total Approved for Selection:-****£25,734.20**