

Case Study:

Adur CVS Homefront & HMP Ford

Project: Supporting Offenders

Area covered: West Sussex: Fishersgate, Southwick, Sompting, Lancing, Shoreham-by-Sea, Kingston-by-Sea.

Working with offender volunteers

Adur CVS, located on the south coast in West Sussex manage Homefront, a project that provides gardening and practical help services mainly to older people and people with disabilities. Adur CVS secured a 3 year grant in 2006 from the Big Lottery to pay for staffing and basic running costs for their Homefront Project. The “spade work” is done by volunteers. Initially they came from a local mental health association but since last year more volunteers have come from HMP Ford, a category D Open Establishment with an emphasis on resettlement. While the work is mostly garden clearance and lawn mowing, during the last winter season additional volunteers helped with refurbishment of the new Adur CVS offices in Chesham House.

To date Homefront has provided approximately 15 community service placements for prisoners coming towards the end of their sentences. This provides valuable work experience, references for future employment and experience of being part of the community once again. These prisoner volunteers are thoroughly screened by HMP Ford and Homefront staff before joining the project, and operate under direct supervision of CVS staff.

The Sussex Quaker Meeting, who provided financial support to top up the project’s lottery award, provided the initial brokering between Adur CVS and HMP Ford. Although there is a good relationship between Homefront and the prison staff, the establishment does not provide resources towards the project.

Work is currently being done for the next lottery funding bid as well as looking into the prospect of adopting a social enterprise model to sustain the project over the long term. Adur CVS is grateful to their prison volunteers, not only for their work, but for teaching them so much about life’s vagaries, and helping the CVS to evolve into a wider, more socially-inclusive organisation.

Contact details:

Contact name: Peter Upton

Address: Adur Voluntary Action
Chesham House
124 South Street
Lancing
West Sussex
BN15 8AJ

Tel: 01903 854990

Email: peter@adurcvs.org.uk

Website: www.adurvoluntaryaction.org/homefront_services.html