



## Annual Report

September 2015

# Background

**Coventry 4 Good** was established in July 2014 as an initiative of Voluntary Action Coventry (VAC) a registered charity, established in Coventry for almost 60 years.

**VAC** is the leading development agency for voluntary and community groups in Coventry, whose primary aim is to support and sustain voluntary and community activity in the city.

**Coventry 4 Good** has been developed as a recognisable brand to promote the work of local voluntary and community groups and to encourage local people and businesses to help them. Coventry is the 6<sup>th</sup> area in England to become a 4 Good city, following in the wake of Tameside, Sefton, Salford, Wigan and Chelmsford.

## **Coventry 4 Good Vision:**

**Coventry 4 Good** is about everybody helping to make Coventry a great place to live and work by supporting local good causes.

## **Mission:**

**Coventry 4 Good** makes it easier for businesses and individuals to help local good causes through the giving of **time** and **skills**, **money** and **resources**.

## **Aims:**

- To strengthen and support local voluntary and community organisations
- To build better relationships with businesses and voluntary and community groups
- To raise the profile of local good causes
- To increase local giving by establishing a local tax efficient fundraising initiative
- To improve mechanisms for businesses and individuals to 'give something back' to communities.



## **Key focus**

The **Coventry 4 Good** approach aims to increase giving locally in the following ways:

Through giving **time** by volunteering to support activities in the local community such as: participating in a one off event — office bake sales, shoe box appeals, sponsored activity; giving a few hours a month to support a local group, becoming a trustee or joining/starting an employee volunteering scheme

Through using **skills** and talents to help others. This could include a painter and decorator sprucing up a community room, a joiner repairing a fence or a marketer helping a local good cause raise awareness of its positive impact.

Through offering **resources** to meet the needs of a local community or voluntary group. This could range from food for a pensioners lunch to surplus stationery or furniture or even a venue for a meeting.

Through giving **money** by establishing a payroll giving scheme for employees; setting up a fundraising appeal page for a sponsored event, making a donation online or via the collection tins; developing a corporate social responsibility programme or match funding charitable groups enabling them to access a wider range of grants.

This report reflects the successes and achievements of **Coventry 4 Good** over the first year.

# Time



## Launch event

The launch of Coventry 4 Good took place in Bull Yard, Coventry City Centre on the 14<sup>th</sup> July 2014 and saw the then Lord Mayor, Councillor Hazel Noonan officially declare Coventry to be a 4 Good city – the only one in the Midlands. A number of presentations, community events and talks were undertaken following the launch to spread the Coventry 4 Good message as widely as possible, ensuring recognition of the brand.

To help kick start the initiative Voluntary Action Coventry staff picked up their Coventry 4 Good T' shirts and collection buckets on the 4th September 2014 en route to Sainsbury's in Trinity Street to promote Coventry 4 Good with shoppers and raise funds for local good causes in the City.



Many shoppers stopped to find out more about the collection and were really generous with their donations. One lady said 'It's great to be able to contribute funds to help groups, although I am too old to volunteer now, I know how hard volunteers work'.

Cllr Faye Abbott, Cabinet member for Community Development, Co-operatives and Social Enterprise has been supportive of the initiative and has recommended that the City Council seeks ways to inform Council employees about volunteering and Coventry 4 Good.

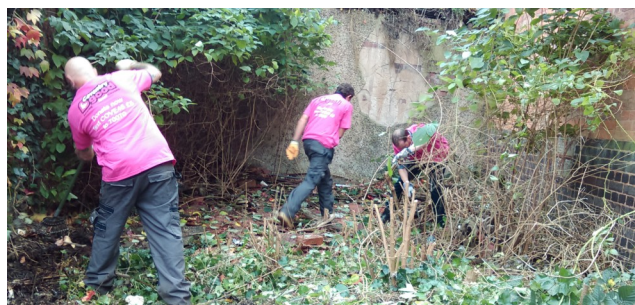
**In the 6 months following the launch event 52 volunteers participated in volunteering events in support of**  
**Coventry 4 Good**

## Business donates time 4 Good



Coventry based commercial property company The Wigley Group have made a big difference to users of the Koco Community Resource Centre in Spon End. During two days in October '14, members of Wigley's Facilities Team volunteered in Koco's garden, breathing new life into a forgotten corner, giving it a much-needed facelift by cutting down overgrown shrubs and clearing rubbish and weeds. If paid for commercially the labour, materials and skip hire would have cost over £1400.

The Koco gardening project was a perfect match for Wigley's skills, experience and expertise. Mary Hart from Koco commented: "With Wigley's help we are getting the area cleared for winter with a view to put block paving down, perhaps creating a sundial, and making it suitable for some of our outdoor activities. Wigley have given us breathing space to be able to continue what we want to do; we would not have been able to afford to pay for this work at the moment. the directors of Koco would like to thank Wigley, and Coventry 4 Good, for their help in making the garden a great place to be." Alan Greenway, Wigley's Facilities Manager, added: "It's great to be giving our time for such a good cause, especially in Coventry where we're based. And we also like wearing the pink Coventry 4 Good T-shirts!"





# Time

## 4 Good Christmas events

December 2014 saw plenty of festive cheer, with the Coventry 4 Good team proud to take part in the city's Christmas Fair in Broadgate. With handmade Christmas cards created by our volunteers, and unique knitted hats, gifts and up-cycled tree decorations made and donated by talented Coventry crafter Caron McKenna. Coventry 4 Good were delighted to have been joined by partner organisations promoting their own handmade gift items, including jewellery from Imani, and sari fashions from Women Included and Coventry Refugee & Migrant Centre.



On Monday 15th December 9 Coventry 4 Good volunteers took part in Age UK's annual hamper wrapping activity. Age UK called upon the people of Coventry to help to make the festive season brighter for lonely, vulnerable and isolated people during Christmas.

Volunteers sorted out the donations, wrapped the boxes and filled the hampers ready for them to be delivered. Volunteers were set the target of making 25 hampers during their session however they doubled their target, wrapping and packing over 50 hampers.



The Coventry 4 Good team helped to kick off the promotion of the Coventry Fun Run in June 2015. Coventry 4 Good recruited volunteers to help marshal at the event or to help raise funds for good causes in Coventry at the run on 4<sup>th</sup> October 2015. This regular event hosted by Coventry Three Spires Round Table is the ideal opportunity for families, work colleagues, friends and neighbours to get together to show their support of voluntary and community groups in the



*Volunteers at Cheylesmore allotments*

## Perkin Elmer get stuck in

An allotment scheme in Cheylesmore approached us for help in finding volunteers to dig over and prepare an unused community plot.

Coventry 4 Good invited a group of volunteers from IT company Perkin Elmer to lend a hand clearing and preparing the plot, and helping to plant vegetables.

The Perkin Elmer volunteers had come from a range of towns across the country to take part, and enjoyed the chance to get to know a Coventry community whilst also enjoying meeting up with colleagues and team-building. They commented: "Seeing what we had achieved at the end of the day was extremely rewarding. We wish the local community all the best and hope the plot proves to be very fruitful."



*The Perkin Elmer Team*

**Coventry 4 Good volunteers supported 7 fundraising events  
Aug – Dec 2015 raising £979.45**



# Skills



## Paint it Pink

In collaboration with other 4 Good areas in the country we held a number of events focused on encouraging people to paint or wear something pink during the run up to Valentines Day 14th February 2015.

On Valentine's Day we ran promotional activities for Coventry 4 Good at our Volunteer Shop in Bull Yard, including the chance for budding artists to participate in painting two original canvas artworks along the themes of love, friendship, support, and championing Coventry.

We also ran card-making and a tombola to raise funds; and were joined by students from Sidney Stringer Academy as part of their Community Volunteering initiative.



*Images from Paint it Pink activities*



## Skills

Coventry 4 Good Champion Rachael Mackintosh raised £232.87 for Coventry 4 Good by organising music night Skank Out in May 2015 at The Golden Cross pub. Rachael persuaded a number of Coventry's dj's and hip-hop artists to give their time for free, and the event formed part of Rachael's assessed work for her Business and Event Management Course.



*Musicians at Skank Out*



Rachael Mackintosh said "Being Coventry 4 Good Champion has been rewarding. I'm the type of person who thinks your value as a person isn't based on material things – it's about doing good. Everything I've done for Coventry 4 Good has been enjoyable, it's not like work. The arts and crafts projects we did were just up my street, and I've met people of all ages, cultures and backgrounds. I definitely think volunteering is a good thing to do – if you have the time to do it, then do it"

### National Volunteers Week 2015

As part of our support for National Volunteers Week we hosted a gazebo in Bull Yard and were joined by Andi and Helen from local business Artisan Plant Nurseries. They gave up a day in their busy summer schedule to volunteer with Coventry 4 Good, answering questions from the public about gardening, and giving out handy hints and tips. They said: "Giving our time is a fundamental part of our ethos – in the past we've had volunteers and you've got to return that. We are happy to help."



*Passersby stop to pick up gardening tips*

Several other organisations also supported National Volunteers Week using the event to raise awareness of their work and recruit new volunteers. Warwickshire Wildlife Trust, Canal & River Trust, Groundwork West Midlands / Cook & Eat Well, and Culture Coventry / Lunt Roman Fort all took the opportunity to promote their volunteering opportunities at our shop or gazebo.



# Money



The Coventry 4 Good website [www.coventry4good.org](http://www.coventry4good.org) has been developed providing information about the initiative and how individuals and businesses can get involved.

Also established are online approaches to make it easy for supporters to donate funds via <https://mydonate.bt.com/charities/coventry4good> and by text giving:

**Text COVE46 £1, £3, £5 or £10 to 70070**



*Coventry students show their support at the Student Shopping night 2014*

The shoppers of Coventry showed their generosity at Bag Packs run by Coventry 4 Good to raise money for organisations in the city.

In March 2015, busy afternoon shoppers at Sainsburys in Trinity Street donated £46.32, encouraged by students from Sidney Stringer Academy's community volunteering group.



And during the Easter holidays in April, shoppers at Morrison's on Holyhead Road dug deep and donated £180.57 in return for help with their packing. It was great to meet and chat with so many of Coventry's residents, and we would like to give a huge thank you to staff and shoppers at both stores, and of course to all of our volunteers.



*Coventry 4 Good fundraising and promotion at the Community Information Fair 2015*

## Charity of choice

Coventry 4 Good was selected by Sidney Stringer Academy as one of their promoted charities at their Winter Wonderland event in December '14. The students were keen to support a Coventry-based initiative making a donation of funds raised on the day.



# Money

Councillor Faye Abbott and Coventry 4 Good Champion Rachael Mackintosh presented the very first Coventry 4 Good grants at an event in June 2015. Awards were presented to six Coventry based good causes that provide essential advice and support to people in the city; groups awarded include:

- Stoke Tenants and Residents group received funds to enable the group to hire a room for their meetings.
- Oromo Muslim Community UK received funds to buy a printer for their group work helping unemployed people improve their employment prospects
- 26th City of Coventry South Brownie pack received funds towards activities that help young girls to develop self-confidence and communication skills
- RCCG Covenant Restoration Assembly were funded to buy educational toys for their group providing support to single parents and children in need
- Sunrise Community Solutions CIC a community organisation that provides low cost or free event equipment to help other groups put on community activities received funding for tables and chairs that would be made available for 12 community events for free
- Coventry Asylum and Refugee Action Group received funding to provide a meal each week for up to 30 refugee and asylum seekers over 12 weeks.

The Coventry 4 Good initiative ensures that all the money raised in Coventry stays in Coventry and goes towards helping small volunteer led groups continue their work.



*26th Coventry Brownies have a go at den building*



*Edwina Jones, Stoke Tenants & Residents Association with Cllr Faye Abbott and Rachael Mackintosh*



*Jean Rawlings, 26th Coventry Brownies with Cllr Faye Abbott and Rachael Mackintosh*



*Abiodun Olaitan, RCCG with Cllr Faye Abbott and Rachael Mackintosh*

## Coventry University Fund

Coventry 4 Good and Coventry University are collaborating on a funding programme focused on increasing neighbourliness in the areas around the University campus. 21 groups applied for funding and 3 were awarded:

1. Foleshill Women's Training
2. Warwickshire Wildlife Trust
3. Three Spires Tots



## Resources

Coventry University became the first organisation in the City to donate goods through the new Coventry 4 Good scheme. The University supplied **20 computers** for use by voluntary groups in the city who lack the funds to purchase ICT equipment to support their activity with some of the most vulnerable people within the city. University staff gave their time to help prepare, pack and load the computers ready for collection by the Coventry 4 Good team who transported the equipment to the Community Hub where Whitefriars Housing staff volunteered to help unload and set up the computers in the community room in Paul Stacey House.

### First business pledges

Coventry 4 Good attended the Coventry & Warwickshire Chamber of Commerce Business & Trade Expo at Stoneleigh Park in September 2014. It was a great day for



Coventry 4 Good as we picked up 14 pledges from a range of local businesses and potential Coventry 4 Good partners, including:

- a company offering to assemble a team to help repaint a community centre
- an IT expert offering support to small organisations with their computers
- HR and bookkeeping professionals offering expertise to small organisations



The Coventry 4 Good team hosted a free event on Tuesday 2nd December 2014 that brought businesses and professionals that wanted to share their time, skills and resources together with voluntary and community organisations in need of support. The

### #Giving Tuesday event



The lunch time 'speed networking' event attracted interest from a range of local good causes that need help to undertake renovation projects, develop databases, create new play areas, support creative therapeutic sessions as well as those seeking donations of office furniture and goods that can be distributed to families in crisis. This event was a first step for VAC in bridging the gap between the sectors and a way of testing whether networking events are the right approach. Some attendees felt they needed more time between 'appointments', others would have liked a larger room as it did get quite noisy. One participant said 'Thank you for organising the event. It was a great start to what promises to become a valuable forum for those in need and those willing to help.'

### Motorvate need to rotavate

Coventry 4 Good organised the loan of a rotavator from The Wigley Group to Motorvate a small community group in Hillfields, who needed help preparing their ground to grow food with local residents. Gardening volunteer Niall O'Donnell said "this will make a huge difference to us during the summer – it means we can get on with our planting and be able to engage the local community. Thanks very much to Coventry 4 Good for your help."



Photos: on location at Motorvate

## Summary

Coventry 4 Good is an innovative approach to increasing social responsibility in towns and cities. Founded by Voluntary and Community Action Tameside the 4 Good brand has been adopted by 6 other areas in the country.

So far Coventry is the only midlands based 4 Good area. Each 4 Good area has different issues, different partnerships in place and different community profiles but all have found that individuals regardless of their backgrounds are motivated to support the initiative on the basis that it's good to give; and giving has longer term rewards both to communities and beneficiaries receiving support but also to those that give.

Feedback we have received from individuals that have supported Coventry 4 Good super-market bag packs has been that getting involved in a one-off activity has suited them as they aren't able to commit regular time to volunteering. They also enjoy meeting different people from different backgrounds participating in the event that they may never usually meet whilst undertaking an activity that benefits others in Coventry.

We estimate there are well over 1000 voluntary and community groups in Coventry, many of them operate on limited budgets and rely on volunteers to ensure services/activities are run safely and appropriately for members/users. For example parent and toddler groups, lunch-eon clubs for older people, crafting groups, mental health support groups etc. Coventry 4 Good is an approach that enables individuals and businesses to show their support of the role these good causes undertake supporting vulnerable or disadvantaged people in a way that is suitable for them. For example donating craft material that they no longer use, making a donation by text, participating in a fundraising event or sharing a skill.

The Coventry 4 Good Grant scheme provides a new way for the public in Coventry to show their support of local good causes, especially those small volunteer led groups that don't have the capacity to fundraise themselves. Every penny donated goes into the grant scheme which is opened up to applications from groups with an annual income less than £30,000 that need to buy small items such as toys for a play group or refreshments for a tea and chat session. The concept ensures that the funds donated stay in the City and are distributed to those in need.

## Recognition



Coventry 4 Good staff were delighted to receive the Coventry Partnership and CEMAP (Coventry Ethnic Minority Action Partnership) Community Cohesion Award in the Voluntary/Community Sector (large) organisation category at the ceremony in June 2015.

The award is presented to organisations that demonstrate how their activity contributes to Community Cohesion; Including how the activity brings people from different communities together; the benefit to participants engaged in the activity – particularly with regard to changes in attitude and the successes or achievements of the activity in terms of community cohesion.



*Winners and runners up in the Voluntary / Community (large) category at the Community Cohesion Awards*

**Thank you**  
**To everyone that has supported**  
**Coventry 4 Good**

**Coventry 4 Good is the catalyst that encourages people to come together to make a difference in Coventry.**