



At the Heart of Our Community

Annual Report

2018/2019



Welcome

Welcome to our 2018/19 annual review. I hope you find it enlightening and inspiring. Enlightening, in that you will read about the work that Gosport Voluntary Action (GVA) does to represent its many member organisations and the projects we undertake directly to support our local community. Inspiring, to see how many people benefit from our work and to read about the volunteers and staff who make all this possible.



Our report highlights our major achievements during the year including the launch of the Community Lottery to help raise funds for local good causes, a new partnership with Age UK Portsmouth, the increasing number of beneficiaries of our Surgery Signposters project and the vital support we are receiving from our funders, businesses and the community.

We want to continue to build on our successes, to provide a range of high quality infrastructure **support and training** to volunteers and voluntary and community organisations within Gosport; to run programmes that **promote volunteering** to support residents directly and through voluntary and community organisations within Gosport; to **deliver services** directly to the local community in Gosport to promote health, relieve poverty, distress, loneliness and sickness; to ensure the voluntary sector in Gosport has a **strong voice**, is respected and is involved in decision making as an equal partner; and to facilitate stronger mutually beneficial **partnerships** between voluntary organisations, statutory bodies and other sectors.

I hope you enjoy reading about our work and that it inspires you to work with us and support us in the future. Thank you to all the volunteers, staff, funders and trustees who have made our achievements last year possible.

A handwritten signature in white ink that reads 'I. Reeves'.

Ian Reeves, Chair

Our Key Achievements - Apr 18 to Mar 19

134 local groups were directly supported

326 volunteer referrals were made to the local community

1,064 older/vulnerable people supported by our projects

231 people were supported with Surgery Signposting

143 volunteers supported us through the year

11,854 volunteer hours given, equivalent to **£136,914** in value

Chief Officer's Report

Reporting Back on a Successful Year!

- In June this year, **we launched the first CVS Community Lottery**, having been given the opportunity by Gosport Borough Council. Having sold the first ticket in September, we have gone on to raise over £14,000 for registered Good Causes. Other CVSs are now queuing up to follow our example.
- We were delighted to hear in September that **our partnership bid to the Community Fund with Age UK Portsmouth as the lead, had been successful**. For 3 years, this will enable GVA to continue to support the most vulnerable and lonely, older people through its Advocacy and Befriending services. This "Close Encounters" project has two other partners, South Central Ambulance Service and the University of Portsmouth. Together we are hoping to reduce the number of Frequent Callers to 999 and 111 and be able to evaluate what support is most effective when aimed at alleviating loneliness.
- **Two appointments have also been crucial to the future development of GVA.** In November at the AGM, Ian Reeves took over from Margaret Wilkinson as Chair. Margaret stepped down due to ill health but during her reign, GVA went from strength to strength, acquiring its own office in Martin Snape House, providing several well respected Older People's Services and expanding its support to voluntary groups through its Community Engagement team. Ian brings a wealth of commercial leadership and management skills and moreover, extraordinary energy, commitment and humour!
- **The second appointment was a freelance fundraiser**, Ian Ayres. His diligence has led to some successful small applications as well as the Community Fund triumph.
- **In order to decrease our overheads, we have sublet the Old Railway Room for a period of 7 years** to Friends of the Homeless for their Basics Bank (foodbank). This has satisfactorily resulted in increased bookings for our meeting room at Martin Snape House.
- **Despite all the changes going on in the NHS, GVA has continued to run its Social Prescribing (Surgery Signposter) project** for Fareham and Gosport Clinical Commissioning Group and has seen a 42% increase of patient referrals over the previous year.
- **We established a good relationship with Wates, the developers at Daedalus**, and they are already generously contributing to two of our projects.



Our staff and volunteers continue to make GVA the professional, respected and loved organisation that it is. So often visitors say that we are their last port of call in the storm and that we don't disappoint them. Our Executive Committee continues to be involved both strategically and in some cases practically. The achievements in this report are a tribute to the entire GVA team.



Nicky Staveley, Chief Officer



At the Heart of
Our Community

Community Engagement

This has been another busy year for the Community Engagement Team, which has dealt with a diverse range of enquiries from community groups needing support and from local people requesting help to set up new groups.

One real success story from this year has been **Friends of Stanley Park**. The group came together as a result of concerns from local residents about anti-social behaviour in the park.



With support from Gosport Voluntary Action a committee was formed and quickly set about promoting positive use of the park. A competition was held across Gosport schools to design anti-littering posters, with the winning entries placed around the park.

Litter picks are now held once a month and a number of activities have been held such as the Easter Egg Hunt and a talk about the historical significance of the park and buildings including Bay House and the Alverbank Hotel.

Regular engagement with Gosport Borough Council's Parks and Landscape Team has paid dividends and the group have been instrumental in bringing about a new path through the woodland area, enabling those with reduced mobility to explore more of the park. An area of wild flowers has been planted and there are plans for further development in the near future.

The group are generating their own funding through the Gosport Community Lottery and also from a monthly 'cable amnesty' where unwanted cables can be recycled.



Our team provide support, advice, information and practical help for groups in Gosport, to help them get started or move forward with new ideas and projects. We can help with setting up groups, best practice advice, funding Information, volunteer recruitment and networking and training opportunities. We also represent the voluntary sector at strategic level in many different settings, making sure that community and voluntary groups have a voice at this level.

Our Services 2018/19

134 

Local groups
directly
supported

89 

Attendances
at statutory
meetings

8 

Local
networking
events held



26 training & development events held, **671** learners attended



44 grant applications supported, totalling **£550,745**

Community Emergency Action Plan launch

Also this year, Gosport's first Community Emergency Action Plan (CEAP) was launched at the Henry Cook Centre (formerly Waterside Community Church), which will act as the first community-run 'place of safety' for residents affected by incidents and emergencies in the Waterside and Town area. This public event was the culmination of more than a year of collaborative work between Gosport Voluntary Action, local community groups and Hampshire and the Isle of Wight Local Resilience Forum.

Around 100 members of the public attended, along with local representatives from Hampshire Fire & Rescue, Street Pastors, the Women's Institute, Neighbourhood Watch and the Lions 'Message in a Bottle' scheme.



GVA continues to provide informative networking, training and development opportunities including the Voluntary Sector Health Forum, Children Young People and Families Forum, Funding Workshops and Social Media training, where groups can come together to exchange information, learn new skills, hear updates that affect the voluntary sector and share best practice.



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Our volunteer brokerage service, Go Volunteer, supports individuals in finding suitable volunteering roles and helps local organisations with volunteer recruitment and best practice development.

25% were looking for work.



We've attended outreach events throughout the year and have recently started delivering a monthly session at Job Centre Plus, which has so far resulted in several referrals and placements.

25% were looking for work.

In June our Volunteers' Week activities were extremely successful, including outreach sessions, social media campaigns and running the Gosport Volunteer Awards Evening with a record breaking 120 guests attending.

"What a lovely evening celebrating all that is good in Gosport. A massive thank you to all volunteers, our town would be poorer and less happy without you." The Worshipful, The Mayor of Gosport, Cllr Diane Furlong

This year 86 volunteers, representing 22 organisations received awards for one, five, ten or 20 years of voluntary service. With support from Gosport Rotary and Lions Club we were able to give the volunteers a celebration they deserved!



Preparation for Volunteering

Our Preparation for Volunteering course is for people who wish to gain confidence and hopefully go on to volunteer. This supportive 8 week course is open to everyone aged 18+, with preference given to those with mental health conditions. We are extremely proud of the learners who attended, many of whom went on to find volunteering roles and paid work. We ran:



1 course and 9 learners completed the course.



VoluntHeroes

Thanks to funding from Wates Giving, VoluntHeroes, our supported volunteering group for people aged 25+, was launched in January this year. Tackling volunteer projects in Gosport, members learn new skills, meet new people and develop their confidence. The group welcomes those who feel they need some support to volunteer and may have a disability, mental health issues or face other barriers to volunteering or work.

The group have already got off to a fantastic start have undertaken litterpicks and raised funds and awareness for brain tumour research with Wear a Hat Day.

We look forward to the group growing and developing over the coming months. New members are encouraged to get in touch to find out more.

Superhero masks and capes are optional of course!



Wates
GIVING

Advocacy Service

Our Advocacy Service is provided by Volunteer Advocates, who are independent of statutory services and local government. They represent the wishes of older and vulnerable Gosport residents, without judging or giving personal opinions.

Thankfully in December 2018, our Advocacy Service along with the Befriending Service, secured funding for another three years from the National Lottery Community Fund as part of the Close Encounters Project. The project aims to alleviate pressure on ambulance services, offering support, advice and companionship to older, frequent callers with no medical need.

We are continuing to deliver our existing Advocacy Service as part of the project, however the age requirement to access the service has been lowered to 55 years old.

We are passionate about finding solutions to reduce loneliness for older and vulnerable people in the Gosport community. Advocacy gives people a voice to say what they want (and do not want) and to access the services they need. This also includes the good things in life, such as support to join and attend a new social club until confidence is gained to attend without support.

Advocacy has had another successful year, with **78 people supported with 102 cases**.

The year has not been without challenges, mainly with different ways of working within a new project and the introduction of Universal Credit. With on-going training and the tenacity and commitment of our dedicated team of volunteers, we will continue to adapt so we can meet the needs of those who need it most in our community.



Dawn Ward, Homeserve & Close Encounters Manager, with Mr MB, who we helped to reduce his energy bills and put in touch with a local café that supports Veterans, which he continues to visit.

“A sincere and heartfelt thank you for all the help you’ve given my aunt. I dread to think what would have happened to her had it not been for your patient support. The work you do makes a real difference in this world.”

Our Services

2018/19

A client's story....

The referral

A 65-year-old gentleman, with anxiety and long-term health conditions was referred to the Advocacy Service as his relationship had just broken down, his ex-partner looked after their benefit claims, he had a recent family bereavement and also had rent arrears.



Our team provided

- ✓ Support to access bereavement counselling
- ✓ A food bank delivery
- ✓ Submission of PIP and ESA applications
- ✓ Support to move to Universal Credit
- ✓ Support to gather evidence for benefit claims
- ✓ Help with changing account details on bills
- ✓ Submission of blue badge and bus pass applications



How we helped

- ⇒ Refund received from TV provider
- ⇒ Refund received for rent error made
- ⇒ Reduction in car tax
- ⇒ No longer in debt
- ⇒ In receipt of correct benefits
- ⇒ Blue badge and bus pass obtained

Our client was able to buy a small car and left the house without assistance for the first time in a year. He is much more independent and his well-being has improved immensely.

78

people were supported

98%

of outcomes were positive

505

volunteer hours were given



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Befriending Service

This year has been a challenging but successful year for the Befriending Service, which has, yet again, proved to be extremely valuable to many of Gosport's older residents. December 2018 saw the start of the new Big Lottery funded project, Close Encounters, which GVA are delivering in partnership with Age UK Portsmouth. Alongside our existing Befriending Service, we are now working towards reducing the burden on South Coast Ambulance Service (SCAS) by helping to reduce repeat callers who are seeking only reassurance and company, by providing them with a Befriender Volunteer.

Our service helps isolated Gosport residents aged 55 years and over, by providing friendly conversation and companionship on a regular basis, with a Volunteer Befriender. We offer face-to-face befriending, telephone befriending and CHAT Groups, where a volunteer hosts, in their own home, a monthly meeting for four guests to enjoy an afternoon of chat, tea and cake. In many cases we hear that the volunteers gain a huge amount from being a Befriender, so although the service supported 148 older residents during the year, our 69 volunteers who generously give their time, also benefitted from being part of this vital service.

"Befriending is very much a two-way thing - being a Befriending Volunteer gives me purpose, I always get a lot out of it." Betty, Volunteer Visitor

"..Learning about their lives past and present is very interesting...I chat to one lady who drove an excavator during the war!" Liz, Telephone Befriender



Our Services 2018/19



The start of a strong friendship....

Mrs D was recently bereaved and had been referred to the service by a family member. Mrs D's husband died suddenly; one day he was mowing the lawn and the next day he passed away, leaving the family in shock. Mrs D was living with the early stages of dementia and was desperate for company. A new volunteer who had also suffered a recent bereavement and was introduced to Mrs D.

The two had a great deal in common; not only the loss they shared, the same first names, plus their respective husbands had the same name. The two immediately clicked, each helping the other understand their loss. They said they were able to laugh together and cry together at times, each knowing how the other was feeling. The Befriending Service has been a support to both and they have quickly become friends.



148

people were
helped by our
service

69

volunteers supported
our service

7,722

Volunteer hours
were given



At the Heart of
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Dustbusters

It has been a productive year for Dustbusters, our accredited not-for-profit cleaning service for older/vulnerable residents of Gosport. We have taken on 85 new customers this year, a significant increase compared to 37 new customers in the previous year. We've also seen a reduction in the waiting time for our customers and are continuously recruiting new Dustbusters, who are chosen for their caring attitude and appreciation of the needs of our customers.

We have had the challenge of a necessary price increase in our administration fee and expected a decline in customers, but in fact, we didn't experience this at all and our customers have remained with us as they feel they get value for money. Referrals continue to come in at a steady pace and we are delighted to be able to continue to offer this invaluable service to residents of Gosport, who need some extra help to keep them living independently in their own homes.

"Becky does a marvellous job in getting the flat clean and she brightens up my day when she comes." Mrs B

"It's nice to know I am helping people to stay independent in their own homes. I enjoy my job and all of my customers are lovely and I enjoy the social aspect I bring to them. For some of my customers, I may be the only person they see all week and it brings great job satisfaction to know that I am making a real difference. I would 100% recommend working self-employed for Dustbusters." Becky



Our Services

2018/19

Dustbusters go the extra mile.....

We have been receiving some wonderful feedback regarding our Dustbusters. One in particular that stands out and demonstrates the great work our Dustbusters do, came from the daughter of a long-standing customer who took the time to get in touch.

Our Dustbuster, Jan, had been for her usual weekly visit to clean and had noticed the microwave was in a very bad condition and was posing a serious risk of a house fire should the customer continue to use it. With the consent of the customer, our Dustbuster contacted the next of kin, her daughter, who do not live locally and made her aware of the risk, which caused great concern. The customer's daughter was then able to order a new microwave and gave heartfelt thanks to our service and commented that if Jan had not have been so vigilant, her mother could have been in serious danger as she used the microwave to heat all of her meals. They were both extremely grateful to Dustbusters for being so much more than just a cleaning service.

Another lovely comment we received from a customer:

“My lady comes; she makes me laugh and she makes my bungalow feel like Buckingham Palace.”

295

people were supported

40

workers supported the service

18,886

Hours of cleaning was provided



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DART & Gardens

Gosport Gardens, Decorating and Repair Taskforce is our accredited not-for-profit DIY and gardening service for residents of Gosport, who are over 60 and are unable to do their own gardening and DIY. Although Big Lottery funding for this project ended in September 2018, we managed to continue the valuable service and since then our dedicated DART & Garden workers have undertaken 80 new gardens in the borough.

Having a manageable garden empowers our clients to do more in it, which in turn, improves their health and mental well-being and gives them back control. Our clients' families know that their loved one is being visited regularly. Some of our clients love gardening but are too scared to do it when they're on their own. When we're there, they are happy to come out and do what they can, knowing there is someone there to help if they fall or feel unwell."

"Annette helps me with the work that I can't do in the garden, we work together. The service has improved my quality of life, no end! The mental stimulation it has given me is invaluable." Mrs Froud, customer.



Gardener Annette, Gardening Customer Mrs Froud, and Project Co-ordinator Emma May



At the Heart of
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Our Services 2018/19

"Outstanding work. I can't speak highly enough of my gardener Annette. The work Annette completed in 2 hours, would have taken me months, I just can't bend down to do this work anymore. I hope now that the hard work has been done, that I can maintain it." Mr H

"John was very good, he came to look at the problem in my home, shopped around for the cheapest price and fixed the problem. Businesses aren't interested in these small jobs around the home." Mrs C

"I needed a shed built, to securely store my mobility scooter in, I have very poor vision so would be unable to complete this work myself. Thank you." Mr A

268

people were
helped by our
service

14

workers supported
our service

4,323

hours of Garden and
DART work was
provided



Before



After

Surgery Signposting

Our objective is to help local people access community organisations that can help them to lead a healthier and happier life.

Our Surgery Signposter service operates from GP surgeries in Gosport. Clients are referred by GP's and are given a 40 minute confidential session with a trained Volunteer Surgery Signposter, who can put the client in touch with voluntary and community services in the area that meet their individual needs. The project has a clear impact on freeing up GPs' time and empowering local people to improve their health and well-being.

This year a new Surgery Signposter telephone consultation service was introduced to meet the needs of those with access issues. The highest social problems from people needing help are loneliness, depression, bereavement and dementia. Some comments from our clients:

"Nobody else listened patiently and then helped."

"You do what you say you do."

"You helped three members of my family, thanks so much."



Our Services 2018/2019

83%

of clients sampled felt
'better or much better'
following their
engagement with the
Service.

"The signposters are offering an absolutely great service that I certainly really value and use regularly for my patients. As a clinician it is hard to know exactly what is available locally, or we don't have the time to properly discuss these in an appointment. The Signposters offer their expertise in this and their valuable time, which is a great way of supporting people to help themselves and really get them to connect with the local community and local services which can sometimes be hard. I really don't know what we would do without this service now. A big thank you to all the great people who volunteer to do this."

Adrian Federico, Clinical Practice Pharmacist (The Willow Group)

231

people were
supported

11

Volunteers
supported the
service



523

Volunteer hours
were given



At the Heart of
Our Community



Hampshire
County Council

NHS

Southern Health
NHS Foundation Trust

Gosport Community Lottery

'The Gosport Community Lottery is an opportunity for the various local good causes, for the players and for the borough to become more self-sufficient when it comes to our local voluntary sector. There are so many people who will benefit from the community lottery – it's a great thing for us to do as a town as a way of supporting these causes.' Ian Reeves, GVA Chair.

Launched in June 2018 at The Alverbank Hotel, the Gosport Community Lottery is a new initiative managed by Gosport Voluntary Action with support from Gosport Borough Council and Gatherwell (External Lottery Manager). It was set up to support community projects in the local area, and operates on the principle of raising money within the community, for the community. Tickets cost just £1 each and deliver 60% back to local good causes - two thirds of this is paid directly to good causes each month and one third is held in the Community Fund and local voluntary organisations can apply for grants to further support the Gosport community. The remaining 40% goes back into the prize fund and pays for the running costs.

The first draw took place in September 2018, and between then and 31 March we've paid out £14,519 directly to Gosport good causes, with an amazing 728 winners taking home £3,561 worth of prizes!

The Community Fund opened for the first round of funding grants in February 2019. Non-profit organisations were able to apply for grants of up to £1,500 and individuals for up to £250. A panel was responsible for evaluating the applications and awarding grants in June 2019. For more information visit www.gosportcommunitylottery.co.uk or phone 02393 190222.





Achievements so far:

36,298

Tickets sold

717

Weekly players

£14,519

**Paid direct to
good causes**

£3,561

**Worth of
prizes won!**

How it works....

Support Gosport Good Causes



- 60p from every £1 ticket stays local:
- 40p goes directly to a nominated Good Cause
- 20p goes into Gosport Community

Win up to £25,000



- 1 in 50 chance of winning a prize
- Only £1 a ticket
- Play online or over the phone

A New Way to Fundraise



- No cost to Good Causes, ever!
- Web page & marketing tools for Good Causes
- Businesses can donate bonus prizes



"Age Concern Gosport are currently set to raise £500 annually from the lottery, which is a significant amount for us – the more people that support us through the lottery, the more local older and, often vulnerable, people we can help get the benefits they are entitled to and find support in the community." Kathy Preece, Age Concern Gosport Volunteer



GOSPORT
Borough Council



At the Heart of
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Loud & Proud

Group volunteering for young people aged 16 to 25 years

It has been another very successful year for Loud and Proud, and despite staffing and funding difficulties, the group has continued to support the local community through their magnificent volunteering activities, receiving many plaudits.

Notable volunteering activities include:

- assisting at all 8 locations of the Safer Gosport 'Summer Passport' scheme, which provides Summer holiday activities for secondary schoolchildren, with the members carrying out registration duties, serving refreshments and helping to set up equipment
- playing a key role in ensuring the smooth running of the 2019 Gosport Borough Council Employment and Skills Fair
- running a drinks station at the Gosport Half Marathon.

The young members have continued to learn valuable horticultural and team working skills by cultivating their own allotment and engaged with the UK Youth Future Proof Programme, which equipped them to meet the changing needs of young people regarding safeguarding, health and safety, social media, grooming and radicalisation risks and achieve silver and bronze awards.

We are now looking to enjoy the benefits of in-house governance and a more sustainable future under GVA, and will be seeking longer term funding to continue our work.



At the Heart of
Our Community

Our Key Achievements 2018/19

84

Events were completed

21

Young Volunteers participated

1,342

Volunteer hours were given



"The Loud and Proud members were a pleasure to work with again, they were all extremely helpful and hard-working, punctual and coped incredibly well with the higher numbers we experienced at Gosport Summer Passport scheme this year."

Sam Mitchell, Gosport Community Safety Team



Thanks to the Mayor, Councillor Diane Furlong, for including us in her chosen charities and to National Lottery Awards for All, Hampshire County Council, HIWCF, Tesco Bags of Help and HMS Sultan Charity Chest and our local HCC Councillors for much needed funding grants.

Driving Force

Driving Force is GVA's not-for-profit transport service for individuals who are unable to drive or take public transport. Our friendly volunteer drivers use their own cars to provide the service and are supported by our dedicated Volunteer Driving Force Co-Ordinator, Agnes Cooke.

Driving Force has had a very successful year with an increase in trips, more variety in the nature of the trips, more volunteer drivers recruited and lots of very happy customers.

A photograph of an elderly man, Ernest Smith, standing next to a blue car. He is wearing a blue and white striped polo shirt and grey trousers. In the background, there is a building with a sign that reads "Martin Snape House".

275

passengers were helped by our service

1,164

volunteer hours were provided

388

trips were provided by the service

Ernest Smith, known as Ernie, had been a Driving Force Volunteer since 2014. He was known for compassion and his sense of humour and went above and beyond for his customers. If he had one fault, it was he could never say no to someone who needed help, however, he always said he had to get permission from "the boss" first, his beloved wife Mrs Maureen Smith. Sadly, Ernie passed away in January 2019 suddenly. He will be sadly missed by the Driving Force team and all his customers.

With this sad news at the very start of the year, all the other drivers stepped up and helped cover all of his customers trips, showing the outstanding strength and dedication of the Driving Force team.

Thank You & Acknowledgments

We are grateful for the continued support of Gosport Borough Council and Hampshire County Council.

We have been very fortunate to receive grant funding to deliver a variety of projects, including The National Lottery Community Fund, Wates Giving, National Lottery Awards for All, Southern Health NHS Foundation Trust, The Partnership Foundation and Hampshire & Isle of Wight Community Fund.

Our sincere thanks goes to our many partners, members and supporters, including Age UK Portsmouth, Age Concern Gosport, South Central Ambulance Service, University of Portsmouth, The IBD Partnership, Gatherwell, Hampshire CVS Network, Gosport Rotary Club, Gosport Lions Club and the many businesses and organisations who have supported us.

Finally, GVA could not continue to support our community without the dedication and commitment of our talented and resourceful volunteers. We really appreciate all that you do.



GOSPORT
Borough Council



Hampshire
County Council



HiWCF
LOCAL GIVING FOR LOCAL NEEDS



Partnership
Foundation



Southern Health
NHS Foundation Trust

Legal and Administrative Details

President of Gosport Voluntary Action: The Mayor of Gosport

Council of Management: Ian Reeves (Chair)

Other Elected Members: Norma Butler, Adam Corcoran, Andrew Mair, Chris Robson, Heather Wood.

Ex-Officio Representatives

Gosport Borough Council: Cllr Zoe Huggins, Cllr Austin Hicks, Cllr Lynn Hook, Cllr Keith Farr, Cllr Jamie Hutchison.

Hampshire County Council: Cllr Stephen Philpott.

Company Secretary: Angela Weston

Bankers: Lloyds TSB High Street, Gosport, PO12 1BX

Independent Examiners Wood Hicks & Co, Unit 1 to 2 Warrior Court, 9 –11 Mumby Road, Gosport, PO12 1BS



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www.gva.org.uk



/GosportVoluntaryAction



@GVATweets

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Registered Charity No. 1087177

