

CASE STUDY – SEARCH DOGS BUCKINGHAMSHIRE

Search Dogs Buckinghamshire is a group of volunteers that operate 24 hours a day, seven days a week. They assist Thames Valley Police within Bucks and Oxon in the search for missing or vulnerable people with canine assistance when the alarm is raised.

Committee member Mark Glanville explained he met with members of Community Impact Bucks at a Funding Advice Surgery in Saunderton in 2013.

Like many volunteer groups, Search Dogs Buckinghamshire is funded entirely through volunteer donations and grants. The dogs themselves are family pets belonging to their handlers. To that end, gaining knowledge of organisations that offer grants to worthy groups became essential to Search Dogs Buckinghamshire.

Sara Greenwood, Sustainability Manager for Community Impact Bucks worked with Mark Glanville to identify groups that would offer grants to worthy causes in the local community.

Sara suggested applying to Awards for All, a grants programme operated by the National Lottery catering for small projects across the UK.

With that suggestion, Search Dogs Buckinghamshire made a formal application to Awards for All in June 2013. The application was successful, with Awards for All providing £10,000 to cover the costs of training individuals and dogs.

Sara also suggested making an application to the Buckinghamshire Community Foundation. The BCF's aim is to be the experts in local giving – matching people, ideas, resources and needs to make a lasting difference.

Search Dogs Buckinghamshire also made a formal application to this body, which again was successful. They received £6,000 to cover the cost of insurance and a further £1,050 towards building up a computerised call out system.

The final suggestion Sara made was to apply for a grant to the Bucks Masonic Centenary Fund. Since 1991 the BMCF has made more than 300 donations to community groups in the county, giving out more than £600,000 in total. Their grant programme is their way of providing a commitment to the communities they live in.

Once again, Search Dogs Buckinghamshire was successful, receiving £2,700 for six sets of GPS equipment and 10 sets of hand-held torches.

Community Impact Bucks also suggested the organisation use buckets and tins for street collections – and thus equipped, raised an impressive £1,500.

Mark Glanville said: "I would definitely recommend anyone go to a Funding Advice Surgery. It has proved incredibly useful to us, and the funding we have received would not have happened without the suggestions made by Community Impact Bucks.

"We will certainly use Community Impact Bucks again, other community groups could gain great benefit from the organisation, as we have," he added.