

Advice and information **volunteering** housing
befriending *social groups* **practical support in the**
home *Legal Advice* **arts and culture** Gardening
Charities *Community initiatives* supplementary
schools **Keep active & Well** share your views
clubs and associations *health and wellbeing*
community groups *fitness and sports* children and
families finance, debt and benefits **employment and**
enterprise

**Building the voice, capacity and sustainability of
the local voluntary and community sector**

**High quality, flexible and affordable serviced
offices & meeting rooms**

**Supporting partnerships, collaboration,
cooperation and coalition**



Dawes Road Hub, 20 Dawes Road, London SW6 7EN

Tel: 020 7952 1230 email: info@sobus.org.uk

Registered Charity No.1071089 and Company Limited by Guarantee. Registered in England No.03471416

About us

Originally the Voluntary Sector Resource Agency (VSRA), then renamed as the Community & Voluntary Sector Association (CaVSA), Sobus was established in 2014 following a merger of CaVSA and the Fulham Community Partnership Trust.

The name “Sobus” was generated as a combination of Social Business (although one of our customers decided it was an abbreviation of “so busy, (so busy that you haven’t got time to add the y!”

Sobus is a small but key organisation working in Hammersmith & Fulham to strengthen local communities through supporting and developing the local community and voluntary sector. We are the Council for Voluntary Services (CVS) in Hammersmith & Fulham and also offer enterprise support through our Hub in North Kensington to entrepreneurs, businesses and individuals in RBKC.

Sobus works directly with residents to enable them to address local issues through social action, and supports organisations, businesses and entrepreneurs around our hubs in Fulham and North Kensington with affordable office and meeting room spaces. We work at grass roots level to nurture and support responses to local needs and at strategic levels to influence and inform local developments and decision making. Sobus supports existing and emerging community and voluntary organisations through training and 1-2-1 support, and enables better collaboration and partnerships through a range of networks and communication projects.

With over 500 local community organisations registered on our database, and operating in an environment of unprecedented change, Sobus is at an exciting and challenging point of its development.

Our values

1. Collaboration, cooperation and coordination:

- Outward looking: supporting organisations to come together to reduce duplication and maximise resources and benefits for local residents.
- Inward looking: Working collaboratively with other organisations to empower and support our communities.

2. Innovation and empowerment:

- Outward looking: enabling organisations to help themselves by developing their skills, capacity and sustainability. Supporting organisations to make a difference.
- Inward looking: Embracing challenges, seeking new opportunities and solutions. Developing services which make a difference in our communities.

3. Individuality and Independence:

- Supporting and enabling communities and organisations to establish and thrive – supporting a diversity of options and choice

4. Equality and Diversity:

- championing and promoting diversity and equality in everything we do, and in every aspect of our management and governance.

5. Passion, Professionalism, Integrity and Accountability:

- Demonstrating these qualities in our daily work and behaviours, actively seeking opportunities to develop individual skills and the effectiveness of our services.

Our strategic objectives are:

1. Support a stronger, sustainable VCS in Hammersmith & Fulham
2. Strengthen the voice of the VCS
3. Develop and support Collaboration, Cooperation and Coordination with and between the VCS, and build and develop stronger links with statutory and corporate sectors
4. Maximise and make best use of our assets to support the VCS in Hammersmith & Fulham and the enterprise community in North Kensington
5. Be a sustainable, responsible, responsive and effective organisation

What we do

The overarching aim of **Sobus** is to “strengthen local communities” through the provision of infrastructure support to the local 3rd sector, the provision of affordable office and meeting room space, and empowering residents to collaborate. Our services and activities include:

Capacity Building & Organisational Development: **Sobus** provides a monthly funding bulletin, plus training and 1-2-1 support to local groups around:

- Fundraising – helping organisations with funding strategies, improving their grant application skills and funding applications
- Governance: helping groups ensure their organisations are run well and are robust and sustainable, including training and advice for Trustees
- Strategic development: supporting you to develop your organisation and services to respond to local priorities and emerging needs
- Monitoring and evaluation: supporting groups to be able to evidence the difference they make.

Voice & Representation: supporting the engagement and involvement of local organisations to ensure the views and voice of the sector are heard. At times **Sobus** represents the sector, but primarily seeks to support the direct participation and involvement of local groups. **Sobus** supports a number of local forums, providing opportunities for organisations to come together around areas of mutual interest.

Signposting, Database and Directory: **Sobus** manages a database of local community and voluntary groups, and uses this to communicate with local groups, and to signpost people to local services and organisations. An online searchable directory will be available soon.

Communication: **Sobus** uses its database to enable communication with and between local community and voluntary organisations, statutory bodies and others. We produce regular news bulletins, a local events calendar, disseminate information and to invite and encourage groups to get involved in local opportunities. Information about local

organisations from the database is available on request, where consent for sharing information has been provided.

Community Organising Sobus works directly with local residents to enable them to voice common issues and concerns and collectively explore and respond to these challenges, including shaping and influencing existing services through engaging with local organisations, or establishing new services and groups.

Information & Intelligence: Sobus provides organisations with access to a range of information and data sources, including borough profile and JSNA, and collates data from local organisations to contribute to local service development and decision-making processes.

Collaboration, Cooperation & Partnerships: Sobus facilitates cooperation and collaboration between organisations to develop effective service proposals which respond to local needs, challenges and priorities in a joined up and cost effective way. **Sobus** supported forums bring together organisations around particular themes and areas of work.

Affordable Premises: Sobus provides affordable serviced offices and meeting rooms at our hubs. Our Dawes Road Hub in Fulham offers meeting rooms for 2-50 people, and flexible office space and business services. Our Dawes Road Hub prioritises local 3rd sector organisations, with reduced rates for our desk use and room hire. Our Freston Road Hub prioritises supporting local enterprise, business start-ups and entrepreneurs.

Meet the team:

Our staff team is well established and is committed to developing high quality, professional and results driven services. We are committed to developing staff skills through formal and informal training and peer support. Staff are encouraged to suggest new ideas and review our existing service offers and activities to ensure we provide services which best meet the diverse needs of those we support.

Sue Spiller: Chief Executive Officer & Company Secretary

Sue has overall responsibility for the day to day management of Sobus, overseeing our strategic priorities and engagement with partners and statutory bodies, shaping our services, delivering strategic support to local VCS organisations, being the strategic representative for the VCS in a range of forums and networks, and overseeing the strategic and day to day management of our hubs (including business and enterprise support at Freston Road Hub), HR, finance and communications. Sue line manages Shad, Nigel and Carita.

Sue can be contacted by email: sue.spiller@sobus.org.uk, by landline: 020 7952 1230 or by mobile phone: 07885 910585 or 07825 290313)

Shad Haibatan, Head of Partnerships & Engagement/Deputy CEO

Shad is primarily the lead for voice and representation activities, representing Sobus and the VCS in a number of areas (predominantly with health), and facilitating the Providers of Older People's Services forum, and the BAME Mental Health Group. Shad line manages Nigel and Sharon.

Nigel Jacques, Head of Organisational and Enterprise Development

Nigel delivers the day to day capacity building services of Sobus, working 1-2-1 with groups, delivering training and workshops. Nigel is the main source of information on grant funding sources and governance structures.

Sharon Tomlin, Community Organiser

Sharon is the Sobus Community Organiser, working directly with residents to identify shared issues and concerns, then developing these into social action projects – either linking them with existing groups and organisations, or supporting them to start their own group. Sharon represents Sobus and residents groups on a number of local panels and groups.

Carita Magnani, Facilities Manager

Carita manages the day to day running of our hubs, including line managing our support staff. Carita liaises with licensees, room hirers and mailbox users, and also has general overall management of our health and safety practices and monitoring.

Glen Desmier, Michelle Manswell and Teresa Gardiner, Support officers

Glen, Michelle and Teresa provide support to the team, through a reception service at both hubs, managing day to day tasks in the running of the hubs, admin support to the team, plus compile and distribute our monthly news, funding and Covid bulletins.

Volunteers

Sobus currently has one volunteer (Ani) who provides some volunteer reception cover at Dawes Road Hub, and is also paid to provide reception cover at our hubs for any weekend bookings.

Board of Trustees

The Charities Act 1993 defines charity Trustees as those responsible under the charity's governing document for controlling the administration and management of the charity. This is the case regardless of the terminology used to describe the role. For Sobus, as a company limited by guarantee, Trustees are also company Directors. The Board comprises:

- Chair
- Vice Chair
- Treasurer
- Up to 8 additional non-executive Trustees

Our committed team of Trustees, are elected for a three-year term and may continue to stand for election for three consecutive terms. We are keen to include on the Board Trustees who are familiar with Hammersmith and Fulham and/or North Kensington and representative of its diverse community.