

Community Action Network

Strategic Plan 2024



Action with heart

We believe everyone deserves to live happy healthy lives in a good society that promotes fairness and social justice.

We want to see communities across the county of Dorset that are strong, healthy, diverse and thriving.

There is a sense of community where everyone can play an active role. People volunteer and work for the causes and organisations which are close to their hearts, minds and values. We know that charities and community groups play a vital role in supporting health and wellbeing - creating and facilitating opportunities for participation, action and decision making in local communities.

We serve and champion Dorset's voluntary and community sector (VCS)

We provide professional information, advice and training. We're collaborative - growing networks, building partnerships and supporting people to make a difference. We're compassionate advocates - inspiring social action and equitable representation.

Our strategic goals:

1. Strengthen VCS organisations to deliver high-quality services sustainably.
2. Enhance collaboration and influence to improve community well-being
3. Increase volunteer engagement and positive impact
4. Promote equity, diversity and inclusion
5. Strengthen VCS infrastructure through member-led leadership
6. Sustain a strong successful charity

1. Strengthen VCS organisations to deliver high-quality services sustainably.

- Provide expert bespoke advice and guidance to VCS groups through 1:1, group work and online resources
- Procure and deliver high quality training and webinars based on identified need
- Provide expert fundraising advice and support
- Work with partners to bring investment into the sector
- Bring VCS groups together to tackle the climate emergency
- Offer an enhanced level of support to groups supporting ethnically diverse communities in Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole

Metrics - Number of:

1. groups provided with expert support improving their overall capacity
2. newly forming groups supported

3. training sessions on topics critical to VCS success
4. participants attending training
5. participants reporting an increase in knowledge / confidence following training/webinar
6. funding opportunities secured on behalf of VCS organisations strengthening their financial stability.
7. new initiatives launched to support VCS groups in (i.e) tackling climate change, with number of groups engaging

Case study/testimonials demonstrate:

- how support helped VCS organisations improve a specific aspect (e.g., governance, safeguarding, financial health, environmental practices)
- the real-world impact of our work from members of the public

2. Enhance collaboration and influence to improve community well-being.

1. Carry out research to identify gaps in service provision and lead on transformation with partners to take social action
2. Champion Dorset VCS and influence local public policy on behalf of the VCS
3. Be the point of contact, reference and information for the sector locally enabling collective interventions
4. Facilitate networks – geographical and thematic bringing people together to connect, collaborate and enhance our knowledge and intelligence about the VCS
5. Develop and facilitate VCS Involvement Partners – enabling VCS leaders to influence public policy
6. Deliver projects:
 - Family Hubs
 - Ethnically Diverse Communities
 - Trusted Reviewers
 - Access to Community Support Services
 - Access to Health Checks for people with Serious Mental Illness
7. Provide a Wellbeing Volunteers offer – enabling people to stay well and recover well
8. Deliver face to face Information Stations across the Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole area connecting people to the services they need
9. Facilitate a Professional Network – Virtual Hub, connecting professionals with the information and advice they need to best support the people they serve
10. Work in partnership with BCP Council to distribute one off wellbeing grants supporting discharge from hospital
11. Co-design with VCS/NHS/Councils/Communities the wellbeing offer across the county of Dorset including wellbeing hubs/spaces
12. Communicate with our members and the public via our eNews social media and website
13. Conduct annual State of the Sector survey

Metrics: Number of:

1. people attending networks
2. boards/meetings attended representing the VCS
3. networks/events delivered on themes related to community connection or well-being
4. VCS Involvement Partners actively engaged in policy discussions
5. professionals accessing the Virtual Hub (demonstrates impact on professional practice)
6. grants distributed and number of individuals benefiting
7. Information Stations facilitated and number of people connected to needed services

8. Wellbeing volunteers and number of individuals served
9. eNews published
10. social media posts and followers
11. visits to website

Case study/testimonials demonstrate:

- Successful reporting on KPIs relating to projects:
 - Family Hubs
 - Ethnically Diverse Communities
 - Trusted Reviewers
 - Access to Community Support Services
 - Access to Health Checks for people with Serious Mental Illness
- Bridging the gap - how we connected previously isolated groups.
- Research influencing policy and practice - how our research has been used
- Higher profile of the VCS locally (use media mentions to quantify increased awareness)
- Increased collaborative working (examples of successful collaborations and their impact)
- Hospital discharge success rate due to the grant (track data on hospital readmission rates).
- Wellbeing Volunteer impact (use testimonials or surveys to showcase improved well-being of those served).

3. Increase volunteer engagement and positive impact.

1. Promote volunteering to benefit communities and individuals
2. Deliver and maintain an online volunteering platform, which enables organisations to recruit volunteers and volunteers to access volunteering opportunities
3. Provide one to one support for people needing help to volunteer
4. Ensure volunteers are recruited and managed safely and effectively

Metrics: Number of:

1. Initiatives launched to support this goal
2. opportunities on the Volunteering Hub
3. organisations advertising vacancies
4. organisations supported to recruit and manage volunteers
5. people supported to volunteer
6. people and organisations attending Volunteer Fairs
7. people attending Volunteer Coordinator networking events

Case study/testimonials demonstrate:

- Improved practice in managing volunteers
- How volunteering improves lives for communities and the volunteer
- How volunteers sustain social action (showcasing long-term volunteer impact)
- Increased volunteer retention rates (demonstrates successful placements and value for volunteers)

4. Champion equity, diversity and inclusion

This approach runs through all our work. However, there is sadly still work to be done, and so we are investing energy, time and funding to drive change.

1. Increase engagement with and amplify the voices of groups that serve people with protected characteristics
2. Work with Public Health Dorset to deliver the Trusted Voices project
3. Lead on work that brings together groups supporting people with protected characteristics to build cohesive communities
4. Through our Ethnically Diverse Communities project based in Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole we get alongside people and communities to:
 - Amplify their voices
 - Secure sustainable funding
 - Expand their service delivery
 - Participate in service design
 - Build strong core teams
 - Develop leadership
 - And engage the next Generation.

Metrics - number of:

1. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) training sessions delivered
2. VCS organisations attending EDI training
3. EDI training participants
4. Trusted Voices Champions ready to use their voice to improve equal access to health care messaging and services
5. Members from the EDC community
6. New members from the EDC community joining CAN
7. Members serving people with protected characteristics
8. New members serving people with protected characteristics
9. Groups supporting people with protected characteristics receiving funding secured with CAN support
10. New projects planned or delivered to meet this goal.

Case study/testimonials demonstrate:

- How Trusted Voices help address health inequity.
- Empowerment and how through working with CAN participants have taken social action (e.g., advocacy campaigns, service development).
- Capacity Building: how the EDC project has strengthened the capacity of ethnically diverse VCS groups (e.g., improved governance, leadership development).
- Tackling Challenges: highlight specific challenges in the integrated care system related to EDI and showcase how CAN has addressed them (e.g., language barriers, cultural competency training).

5. Strengthen VCS infrastructure through member-led leadership.

- Actively recruit and support a strong membership of VCS and Public Sector organisations to lead and inform our work
- Support our members to access what they need and have a voice and influence
- Enable private businesses to connect with the VCS
- Support private business and VCS groups to deliver Employer Supported Volunteering
- Collaborate with partners for the greater good of the sector

Metrics:

1. Number of new members
2. % membership growth
3. Number new business supporter members
4. % growth in Business Supporter membership
5. Initiative(s) launched to support this goal

Case study/testimonials

Case studies showcase member influence and demonstrate the value of member leadership. Impact stories / testimonials from the public illustrate the real-world impact of our work

6. Sustain a strong successful charity

- Our values inform all our decisions
- We are accountable to our members and evidence this through our board that sets the strategic direction of CAN and demonstrates diversity of perspective
- Clear vision, mission, goals and objectives are agreed / monitored / evaluated
- Good governance practice is in place and sustained
- Sound financial practice is demonstrated
- Fundraising strategy is in place to inform funding
- Policies and processes are in place to drive good practice
- Excellent leadership is supported and promoted
- Excellent recruitment, induction and management for staff and trustees is in place

Matrix:

1. Values in place and demonstrated
2. Strong board in place bringing diversity of perspective
3. Vision, Mission, Goals and objectives are in place and monitored
4. Trustees / staff / volunteers retention and satisfaction
5. Finance Committee report satisfaction with budgets to full board
6. Strategic plans in place
7. Fundraising Strategy informs funding bids
8. Policies and processes are in place and updated regularly
9. Policies and processes are shared and understood by the team
10. SLT and SLT+ provide excellent leadership
11. Breathe HR provides:
 - a. Recruitment
 - b. Onboarding
 - c. Record of training
 - d. Sickness monitoring
 - e. Supervision oversight / setting of objectives and deliverables