



Barnsley CVS Strategy 2022

Our commitment to doing
the best we can for the
Voluntary, Community and
Social Enterprise sector in
Barnsley

March 2022



This document outlines the principles of Barnsley CVS's strategy for 2022 and beyond.

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FOREWORD FROM MELVYN LUNN, BARNSELEY CVS CHAIR OF TRUSTEES

Barnsley has an outstanding Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) sector.

But the last two years have been a difficult time for everyone, including Barnsley CVS.

We have faced a range of challenges which we are working to resolve. As we come through this period of uncertainty, we know we must strengthen our organisation to be a more effective advocate for the VCSE sector in Barnsley.

We believe that a strong and effective CVS is needed to ensure that the VCSE sector in Barnsley achieves its full potential, and our members agree with us.



We want to refocus our vision, aims and activities so that we do everything we can to support the VCSE in Barnsley.

Over the last three months, we have engaged with as many charities, social enterprises, community groups and stakeholders in Barnsley as we can to help us gather evidence and shape a future strategy for the organisation. We have received independent support and facilitation for this activity from Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council's (BMBC) Covid Bounceback programme, for which we are very grateful.

Our engagement with members of the Barnsley VCSE sector has given us insight into the challenges that this sector faces, and what they want from us.

They have been honest with us. This has not always been a comfortable experience, but has been valuable. We have listened because we are deeply committed to our new strategy being shaped by the organisations and individuals that we are here to support and represent.

Moving ourselves to a more secure financial footing is also critical for the success of Barnsley CVS. Key to the future will be our partnership with Barnsley Council, as well as the continued support and engagement of our membership.

We know that we will not be able to deliver everything people want within a limited budget and will need to prioritise. However, we are committed to doing our best for the sector and continuing to listen to the views of our members to help shape our organisation and the services we offer.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Lunn', written over a light blue background.

Melvyn Lunn
Chair of the Barnsley CVS Board

LISTENING TO THE VIEWS OF THE SECTOR

We engaged with 77 individuals from a range of VCSE organisations to inform our strategy, as well as seek feedback on our organisation and our offer to the sector.

Engagement activities included:

- **Two online listening events for members and other VCSE organisations.**

These were and independently facilitated by Mutual Ventures via the Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council Covid Bounceback programme.

- **A survey of members and stakeholders.**

Which collected 41 responses over an eight-week period.

- **A meeting of the Voluntary & Community Strategy Group.**

Hosted by Barnsley Council and involving 12 VCSE organisations.

- **Individual meetings with stakeholders.**

These included, Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council (BMBC), NHS Barnsley Clinical Commissioning Group, The National Lottery Community Fund (Yorkshire and Humber), South Yorkshire Community Foundation and Barnsley Healthcare Federation.

We asked the sector for feedback on our draft vision and aims, what they value about Barnsley CVS, what their views are about what we do at the moment, and what they need us to do in future.

A summary of the feedback is included in appendix 1 and 2.

We have developed our new vision and aims in response to this feedback.

OUR VISION

To have a thriving, sustainable Voluntary Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) sector that is valued, respected and inclusive of all.

We will accomplish this by being a champion for the VCSE sector, supporting the sector with advice and guidance, and promoting volunteering.

OUR AIMS

Barnsley CVS aims to:

- Improve the lives of the people of Barnsley by supporting VCSE organisations to thrive.
- Help VCSEs to become sustainable, independent, well-managed, and to build capacity through our support offer.
- Represent and lead the VCSE sector, promoting it to partner agencies including those in the statutory sector, and embedding it in the Integrated Care System and Barnsley Place.
- Liaise across all sectors to develop partnership working and create new opportunities for the VCSE sector.
- Ensure Barnsley is an excellent, supportive place to volunteer, that can offer people a wide range of skills and experiences, creating inclusivity for all.
- Communicate relevant, high-quality, timely information, tailored to the needs of each of our members.
- Share learning and best practice on key issues in the sector through providing information, networking, and events.

OUR VALUES

Independence

Acting for and to challenge decisions on behalf of the VCSE

Integrity

To stand up for and implement our vision and aims

Collaborative

Working with others to create the conditions for a successful VCSE sector.

Inclusive

Listening to supporting and representing the public and the VCSE sector as a whole.

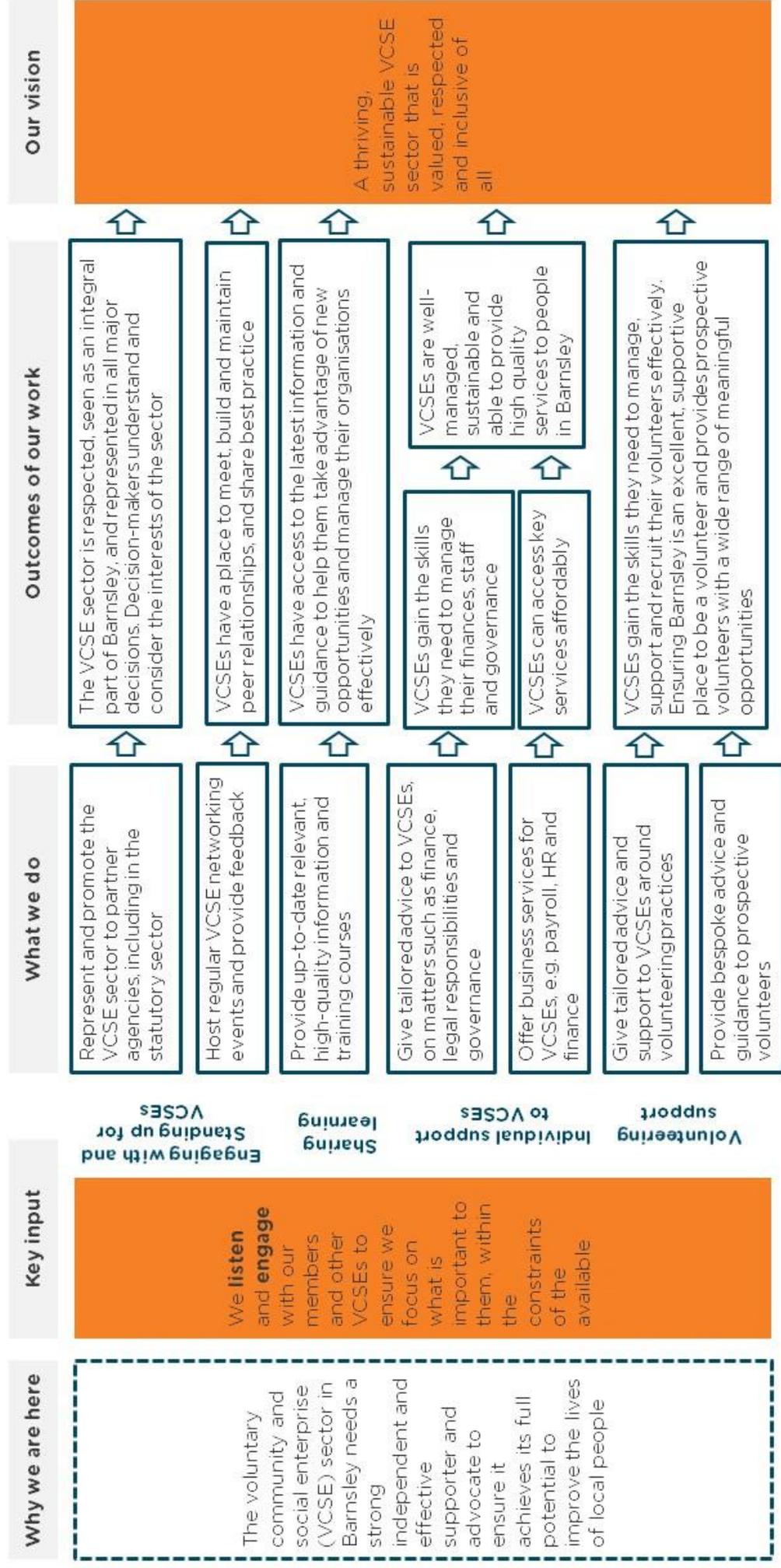
Ambitious

Wanting the best for the VCSE sector and doing all we can to help new and existing organisations achieve their full potential.

THEORY OF CHANGE

Our Theory of Change describes what we want to achieve and how we will go about doing it. It presents our vision and aims visually, alongside the steps involved in making them happen. Crucially, it includes our commitment to listen to and engage with VCSEs in Barnsley.

Barnsley CVS Theory of Change



HOW WE WILL DO THIS

Engaging with, listening to and standing up for the VCSE sector.

We will provide quarterly engagement events where organisations and individuals can inform us of the issues they face and the help they want us to provide. The agendas for which will be based on information received from our membership on the areas they want us to concentrate on.

We will gather information via online engagement, surveys and in person meetings and provide feedback regularly on areas we are working on and improvements that have been made. We will look at ways to increase our membership so that we can help more organisations and better advocate for the whole of the Barnsley VCSE sector.

We will represent and champion the VCSE sector at a strategic level, working towards improving the relationships between them and stakeholders by facilitating the VCSE strategy group, meeting with and maintaining good relationships with key stakeholders and taking forward issues raised by all parts of the sector.

We will strive towards improving community links by providing a development co-ordinator role to manage, upskill and co-ordinate activity to feed information in and out of the sector to support joint working and provide a more accurate representation of the diverse sector as a whole, with built-in capacity to engage with wider groups to provide feedback.

We will enhance our marketing and communications strategy to raise awareness of our support offer amongst the VCSE, to support them to develop and grow.

This will respond to the needs of VCSE organisations of all sizes, from community groups to large charities. It will also ensure the dissemination of tailored, targeted and timely information responsive to the needs of unique networks and cultures within Barnsley's localities.

We will be guided by the sector as to the frequency they wish to receive our newsletter, we will not send out any information that is not up-to-date and relevant to organisations or individuals, and we will ask for people to contact us and feedback on the items sent out so that we can better focus on the areas of information they wish to receive.

Sharing learning

We will ensure we provide up-to-date high quality information, guidance and training enabling VCSE's to manage their organisations effectively

HOW WE WILL DO THIS

Individual support to VCSE's

We will continue to provide high quality governance and organisational advice including matters such as implementing relevant policies, awareness of legal responsibilities, Trustee responsibilities, and organisational set-ups. While also ensuring that the VCSE have access to guidance and support to maintain accurate records, financial compliance, bookkeeping and accounts and payroll services.

Volunteering support

We will look to continue our work, developing a Yorkshire wide Volunteering Quality Award, with volunteer centres in the region. This will help organisations to be the best they can be to support their volunteers, maintain best practice, enabling volunteers to know they are volunteering in a supportive environment. We will develop our workaround volunteer passporting across South Yorkshire, which looks to simplify the process of volunteering for volunteers and organisations, providing volunteers with skills and training records that can help progress them into further volunteering roles or meaningful employment. Focus will also be on building capacity within organisations who support volunteers. This will be done throughout bespoke development work and training on the organisations specific needs, ensuring that inclusive volunteering practices are actively embedded in their delivery.

Training

We will research and develop ways to improve our training offer, whether via our Brain Train site or through in person training in the areas that the sector requests.

WHAT RESOURCES WE NEED

Governance, leadership and management

We will recruit Trustees aligned with our priority needs and gaps, which we are currently evaluating to further develop and grow.

We will continue to involve our membership in the election process annually and are committed to ensuring equity, diversity and inclusion and to represent all organisations in Barnsley.

We will re-evaluate our leadership and management structure to ensure that we have the energy, skills and commitment to provide the best support we can to the VCSE sector in Barnsley.

Funding and Partnerships

We will review the current service level agreement that we have with Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council. We will do everything we can to secure the ongoing financial support and commitment of the council so that we are able to continue to provide the services that the sector has told us it needed.

We will develop a wider funding strategy to secure new sources of income working with other Infrastructure support organisations locally, regionally and nationally to bring financial support in to Barnsley.

Premises and sustainability

We will review our current properties and look to where our resources should be best utilised to ensure our sustainability moving forward to enable us to concentrate on the important work we need to do rather than trading activities.

APPENDIX 1: SUMMARY OF STAKEHOLDER FEEDBACK

The following points summarise the feedback from members and stakeholders collected from our engagement process. This has all been fed into our new strategy.

Respondents are pleased to have had the opportunity to contribute to the process of developing Barnsley CVS's new strategy.

They value being able to give open and honest feedback. One respondent commented:

“ I genuinely think that this is the first time I've felt heard ”

Respondents want to be able to continue to influence and shape the direction and role of Barnsley CVS in the future.

They want to be able to engage with Barnsley CVS and give their views regularly, for example through conversations with a named Barnsley CVS contact, networking meetings or in-person conferences. This must be done in a way that is time efficient.

Respondents generally think that the services provided by Barnsley CVS, including volunteering support and organisational administration services, are useful and good quality.

They described how Barnsley CVS's support has contributed to the development of their organisations and say that it was important that these services remain available.

Respondents see Barnsley CVS as the umbrella body for the VCSE sector and recognise its value.

They say that there is a clear role for Barnsley CVS in Barnsley.

Respondents feel that Barnsley CVS needs to strengthen and improve its work representing the sector in Barnsley.

They say that Barnsley CVS could do more to stand up for the sector and improve in this area. Respondents want Barnsley CVS to be a strong advocate for the sector.

Respondents want Barnsley CVS to be the 'bridge' between VCSEs, BMBC and other statutory organisations.

In practice, this would mean working to coordinate and amplify the voice of VCSEs, challenging key decisions where required, and feeding back information to VCSEs.

Respondents see the relationship between Barnsley CVS and BMBC as critical to success.

However, respondents are clear that Barnsley CVS needs to be able to speak with an independent voice and challenge the council when necessary.

APPENDIX 1: SUMMARY OF STAKEHOLDER FEEDBACK

Respondents say that effective leadership is vital to Barnsley CVS's future success.

Improving leadership is seen as necessary for re-establishing credibility and trust with the sector and wider stakeholders.

Respondents would like Barnsley CVS to be more visible in the sector.

As one respondent says,

“I think people should know more about Barnsley CVS and what you do. I speak to colleagues, and they do not know what help you provide”

Respondents want to see more 'community-focus' to the activities of Barnsley CVS, which recognises the unique networks and cultures within each of Barnsley's localities.

This should cover the whole of Barnsley and include VCSE organisations of all sizes.

Respondents want Barnsley CVS to provide more opportunities for networking and bringing the sector together.

Respondents want better signposting to other local VCSEs through the Barnsley CVS website, in-person events for all VCSEs in Barnsley, and activities that bring together VCSEs in specific localities.

Respondents want communication from Barnsley CVS to be more relevant to them.

Respondents said it needs to be more tailored, targeted, and relevant to the sector. Email communication was mentioned in particular.

Respondents like the proposed new vision and aims.

Although some have given specific comments to make them more relevant and focused. These comments have been used to update the vision and aims, as set out above.

APPENDIX 2: KEY STATISTICS FROM OUR SURVEY

A total of 41 individuals responded to the survey.

Not all respondents answered every question.

Our survey has reached the right stakeholders.

36 out of 41 (88%) respondents to our survey are charities, volunteer groups or social enterprises, and 20 out of the 36 (56%) VCSEs who responded are Barnsley CVS members. 35 out of 41 (85%) respondents say that they have used Barnsley CVS services before.

Respondents have mixed views on the support Barnsley CVS gives to the VCSE in Barnsley.

24 out of 40 (60%) say the support is 'very good' or 'quite good'.

“Excellent work, helpful and professional and really understand the needs of the voluntary sector.

My main involvement is via the volunteer centre, and I have always had a very positive relationship and experience working with the team.

When I started my charity, I got all my help from Barnsley CVS. ”

9 out of 40 (23%) say it is 'very bad' or 'quite bad'.

“I am not really aware of the current work of Barnsley CVS.

We have been members for years. They used to provide high level support and guidance, but this is no longer the case.

This organisation needs to get back to its roots. ”

Respondents have mixed views on how well Barnsley CVS represents the voice of the VCSE in Barnsley.

21 out of 40 (53%) say Barnsley CVS is 'very good' or 'quite good' at representing the voice of the VCSE, while 10 out of 40 (25%) say it is 'very bad' or 'quite bad'.

“I am not clear about how you represent us and who you are representing up to.

Be our voice, but tell us how you are doing that and how we can tell you what we want to be heard. ”

APPENDIX 2: KEY STATISTICS FROM OUR SURVEY

Respondents were asked how important it is for Barnsley CVS to undertake the following activities:

- **Represent the VCSE sector in strategic conversations with partners.**

30 out of 34 (88%) said it was 'very important' or 'quite important'.

“Be an effective voice for the non-profit sector and build effective networks with the council.”

Barnsley CVS acts as a link between our service and the vast amount of Community and Voluntary services in Barnsley. ”

- **Provide capacity building services for VCSE organisations.**

29 out of 33 (88%) said it was 'very important' or 'quite important'.

“Help with networking, so organisations can work together and support each other rather than compete. ”

- **Communicate relevant, timely information to the VCSE sector.**

31 out of 34 (91%) said it was 'very important' or 'quite important'.

- **To share learning and best practice within the sector (e.g. through training).**

32 out of 34 (94%) said it was 'very important' or 'quite important'.

- **Ensure Barnsley is a supportive place to volunteer.**

29 out of 34 (85%) said it was 'very important' or 'quite important'.

“Be an advocate for what it means to be a volunteer and strive for organisations to meet this. ”



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