



VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL ENTERPRISE SECTOR STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

— 2021-2024 —

Better Together: A partnership approach to
improving people's lives in Buckinghamshire



In partnership with the VCSE Recovery Board

INTRODUCTION

Buckinghamshire's vibrant communities have united to help those in need during the crisis. They have demonstrated their flexibility and creativity, enhancing the important work of the Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise Sector (VCSE).

We have also seen businesses in Buckinghamshire respond in strength and depth, new partnerships flourish to support vulnerable communities, and a new wave of individuals offering acts of kindness. Buckinghamshire's community resilience has never been stronger.

We recognise the importance of valuing the existing strengths in our communities, to build community resilience to future emergencies, and provide services which make Buckinghamshire a great place to live, work and invest. This will be at the heart of our recovery and renewal to deliver our shared ambition for Buckinghamshire.

Buckinghamshire has a strong and diverse Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise Sector (VCSE) and has a fundamental role in strengthening communities and delivering shared priorities. They can be agile and develop the kinds of trusting relationships with communities which statutory services are not always able to. These organisations are best placed to provide early intervention, often reducing the need for statutory services. Close working has been crucial to understanding and meeting communities' needs during the pandemic and will be for recovery and renewal phases to come.

No single organisation can solve complex problems by itself, together we are greater than the sum of our parts. By harnessing, building on, and formalising the collaborative working we have seen in 2020, we can make the most of our collective skills, knowledge and resources to better understand, and respond to, the needs of our communities. We look forward to working with all our partners to deliver this ambition for Buckinghamshire.



"Our ambition is to make Buckinghamshire a great place to live, work and grow up in and help improve the health and wellbeing of everyone in our communities."

"The focus of this strategy is very much on integration and all sectors working together for the common good."

Gareth Williams
Cabinet Member Communities & Public Health



"It's vital that we carry forward the momentum built through the voluntary and community sector during the pandemic. 30 years in the sector and never before has there been so much 'can-do'. Let's keep it up!"

"It has demonstrated the benefits of relationships based on a common purpose, collaboration, mutual respect and trust."

Mark Ormerod
Chair of the Voluntary Community Sector Recovery Board



PURPOSE AND APPROACH



No wrong door

The launch of the new Buckinghamshire Council on 1 April coincided with the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. Our local response highlighted the strong partner relationships that exist both in the county, and nationally. We saw how swiftly we could collaborate, adapt services, and embrace new ways of working under immense pressure. It also demonstrated the need to think differently, creatively, and be innovative in the ways that sectors work together.

New, stronger alliances have been formed with a focus on protecting our vulnerable residents, and a common goal to work together for Buckinghamshire. It is vital that we continue to collaborate effectively at every level to build stronger, safer and more resilient communities and improve health and wellbeing.

This strategy demonstrates the value we have for the sector and the importance of strategic collaborative working. It aims to provide a high-level guide for partnership working with the VCSE's and act a spring board for discussions around the needs of our communities. We have demonstrated how a shared sense of 'place' can unite us despite our difference and the importance of positive relationships, innovative solutions and a collaborative approach.

We will work together with the VCSE sector to create a whole-system approach, delivering services in local communities, striving for social and economic results that will make Buckinghamshire an excellent place to live and work.

There is a need to be responsive, flexible, and adaptive to changing needs - this is not a static document. It will be underpinned by an action plan, co-produced with sectors and partners, and will continually evolve. The VCSE Recovery Board is an important partner to drive the development of the action plan.

Our approach – To focus on people in our communities

We developed this strategy in collaboration with the VCSE Recovery Board.



Supporting communities

“Rather than focussing on isolated interventions, a ‘place-based approach’ makes the most of connections and a shared sense of place. By considering the whole community – how it works and what it needs – and collaborating with different sectors, a place-based approach aims to make a lasting difference to people’s lives”. (New Philanthropy Capital, the think tank for the charity sector)

A joint strategy between communities, VCSE's, private and public sector is essential.



THE VCSE SECTOR IN BUCKINGHAMSHIRE

BERNWOOD BUS

TRANSPORT FOR THE COMMUNITY

Whether you know them as VCS, the Third Sector, or Not-for-Profit, our local charitable and voluntary organisations, and social enterprises provide vibrant, diverse and invaluable contribution to our communities.

The 'Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise Sector' (VCSE's), is a widely used term amongst statutory services and, as such, this term is used throughout this strategy.

The VCSE sector plays a fundamental part in protecting vulnerable people, representing marginalised groups, and improving our environment. It delivers key services, builds social connections, and is vital in strengthening and supporting communities by delivering shared priorities and offering referral pathways as they sign-post and enable prevention or early intervention.

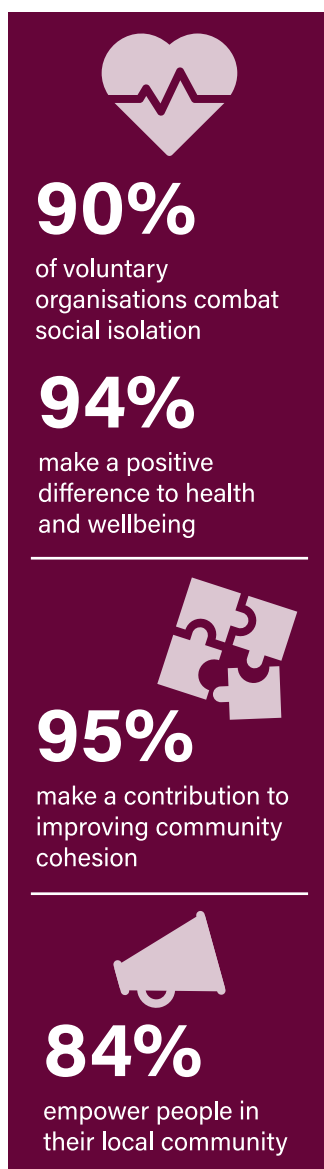
The VCSE sector is made up of a diverse range of socially driven, not-for-profit groups and organisations that have a unique role at individual, neighbourhood and community levels. The pandemic highlighted the community spirit across the county. Local 'pop up' support groups now join the more established organisations to further diversify the sector offer, it signals an appetite for volunteering when the offer is appealing and a new way of looking at community resilience.

The sector has developed in places that other organisations find it hard to reach into. Its responsiveness to local need and ability to coalesce and work with other partners is a great strength and this quality is the foundation of this strategy.

The sector in 2019



Making a difference

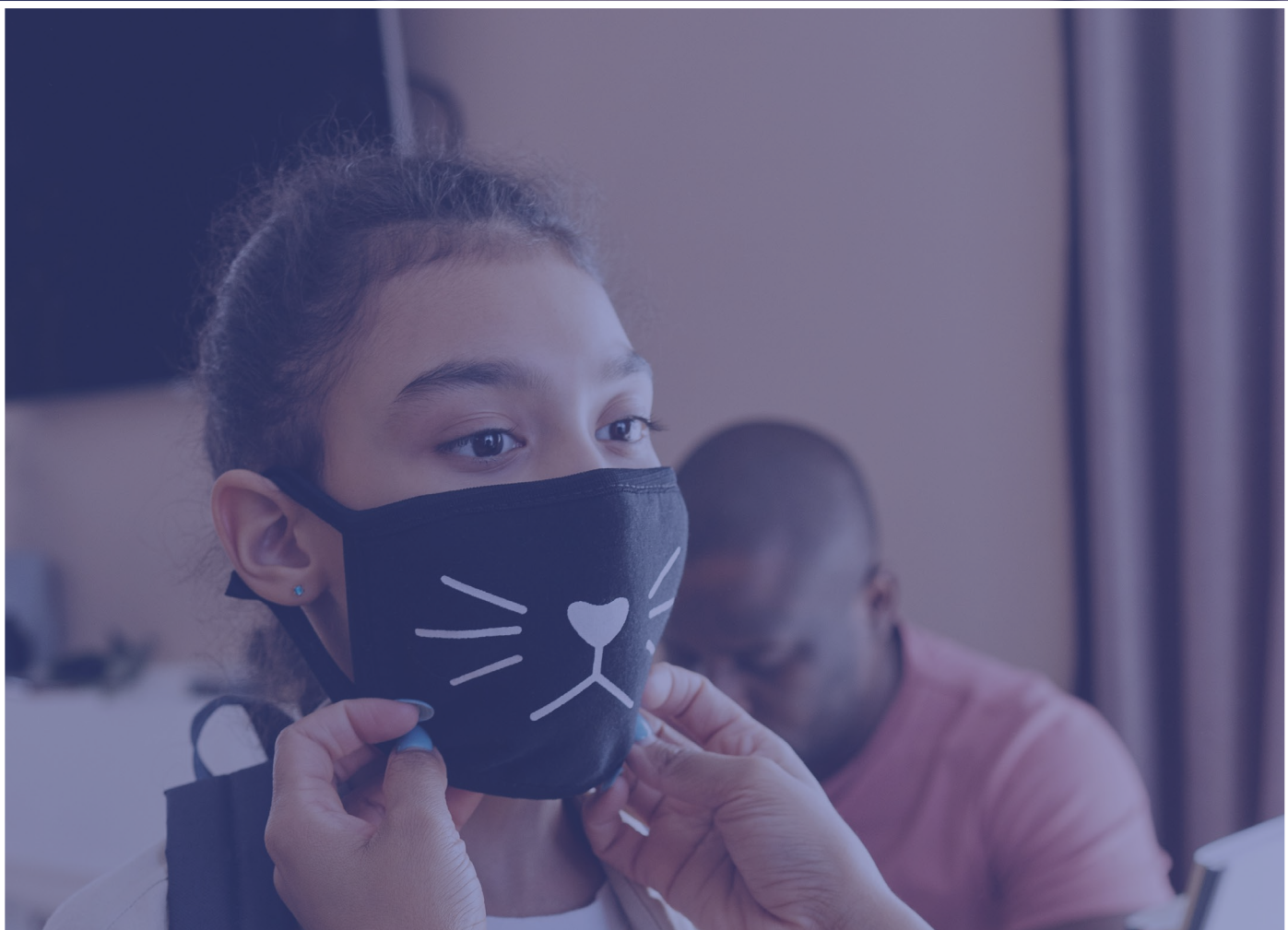


Challenging times



Statistics taken from state of the sector 2019 report produced by Community Impact Bucks.

Figure of 4,750 voluntary organisations includes registered charities and other formal not-for-profits, like sports clubs and social enterprises.



**THE VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL
ENTERPRISE SECTOR RECOVERY BOARD**



Reset, Resilience and Restoration

The VCSE sector was instrumental in providing a swift and collaborative pandemic response to support Buckinghamshire's most vulnerable residents. Close working has been crucial to understanding and meeting communities' needs during the crisis. The positive relationships and new ways of working are something we want to be a legacy of COVID-19.

In Buckinghamshire, 'The 3 R's for Recovery' sets out the framework for tackling the long term social, economic and environmental challenges arising from the COVID-19 pandemic. Working with all sectors ensures we can look across the county to identify key themes, dependencies, and interdependencies to maximise outcomes for Buckinghamshire.

There is VCSE representation on all of Buckinghamshire's key partnerships but one new board was created because of the exemplary strategic approaches taken in the pandemic. The VCSE Recovery Board was established as part of the 3R framework. It brings together senior officers from key organisations to provide invaluable insight, a planned response and a constructive call to action.

This group represent distinct aspects of the very diverse sector and help to drive forward thematic discussions, understand the wider VCSE landscape, provide early warning of fragility and risks, as well as maximising the collective impact of recovery opportunities. The board has a guiding principle of taking a pan-Buckinghamshire system-wide approach where there is no wrong door. It is hoped that the board creates a legacy of working well together and the model continues long after the pandemic.

The Chair connects to the Strategic Partners Forum. In addition, at a more local level, the board's activity is complemented by 16 Community Boards, which empower communities and partners to work together to tackle complex issues.

The VCSE Recovery Board helped codesign this strategy. With new definitions of 'vulnerable' emerging as the pandemic evolves the board monitors progress on recovery and renewal programmes and is therefore best placed to support the development of an action plan with the wider sector and partners. The action plan will include not only supporting the vulnerable but other shared priorities such as improving the environment.

Engagement sessions will help understand what success looks like, plot a road map as well as inform renewal and recovery plans. The community boards would be an essential aspect in knowing communities well and supporting the changing local risks.

Find out more about the VCSE Recovery Board email localities@buckinghamshire.gov.uk

The VCSE Recovery Board has four key roles:

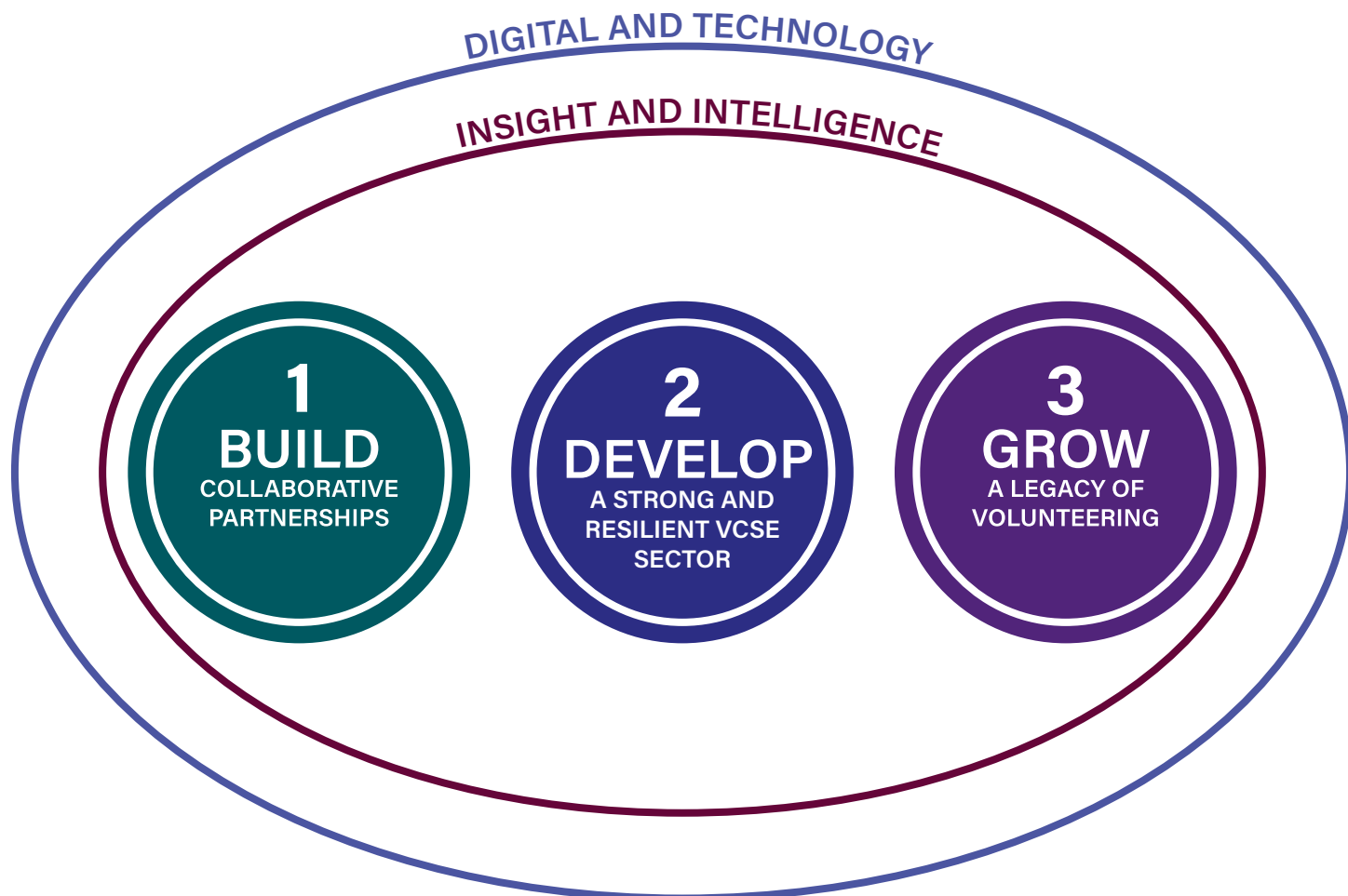
- Provide senior representation of key VCSE organisations for strategic and tactical 'calls to action' with a solution focused approach.
- Share insight to assess the impact of COVID-19 on Buckinghamshire's communities and the VCSE's.
- Enable more joined up thinking for community resilience and future emergency responses and help drive forward action in a more coordinated manner.
- Focus on maximising resources including identifying opportunities and mobilising volunteers.



THE VISION

We want to work together to address the needs of our residents, build strong and resilient communities and make Buckinghamshire the best place to live, work and grow up in. This strategic framework focuses on three high level aims enabling focus but still allowing for flexible and creative approach to be taken as recovery and renewal plans unfold.

Our ambition is to work together to:



Building and sharing 'Insight and intelligence' and maximising 'technology and digital solutions' are threads that run through all elements of this strategy and will enable us to collectively deliver solutions that are appropriate and efficient for our residents; focus resources where they are most needed and facilitate the communication that will eliminate 'gaps and duplication.'

Working to achieve:

- A common purpose with good will and trust between all partners.
- A 'can do' attitude where partners work collaboratively, adapting to changes in the environment together.
- Solutions that are co-produced by sharing skills, expertise, learning and risks. There will be a high pace of delivery, needing early conversations and effective planning and communication.



The changes and challenges we all face mean that we need to think innovatively about how we work together towards common goals. By building respectful, collaborative relationships with VCSE's and other partners, we will be able to adapt more quickly to evolving needs, and ensure the best outcomes for our residents.

It is crucial we maximise our available resources and enhance coordination by working together strategically and operationally.

To have the biggest impact in our communities, we need to enact creative, joint solutions and challenge practices that inhibit this from happening.

The impact of the pandemic will be felt for a long time and a growing proportion of residents will experience financial insecurity and health and wellbeing issues. Communities need to be empowered to organise, mobilise, and respond to long term changes that are now underway. To maximise our success, all partners must work together.

We already have strong foundations with the VCSE sector to encourage and facilitate collaborative relationships and partnerships, including:

- VCS Recovery Board
- Strategic Partners Board
- Health and Wellbeing Board and the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy
- VCSE sector representation on key decision-making boards
- 16 Community Boards

We will develop and enhance links with these and other organisations in other sectors as part of our all-system approach to developing the resilience of our communities.

Key aims:

- To share skills, expertise and resources, building a culture of collaboration and co-ownership.
- Develop thematic partnerships to co-produce creative solutions to key issues.
- Share knowledge, intelligence and insight about the needs of our local communities.
- Promote and champion the VCSE sector.
- Foster a system wide culture of working collaboratively across all sectors.
- Ensure effective communication and planning together to develop realistic and informed expectations.
- Explore new and different ways of working together e.g. shared locations.
- Co-develop strategic approaches to maximising funding, sharing costs and risks equitably.
- To have a collaborative, outcome-focused approach to commissioning.
- Ensure that relevant council policies and strategies encourage place-based, whole system approaches and recognise and enable the role of VCSE's in addressing key priorities.

BUILDING COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS

Case Studies



Working together to help our hardest hit communities be active

Leap's expertise in shaping physical activity projects and insight into these target audiences shows that there isn't a one size fits all solution. Sport England funded Leap to disseminate investment to projects that would result in targeted and swift impact. This initial funding provided the opportunity to make a real difference. Launching a new partnership fund with Heart of Bucks expanded the initial funding to support more residents hardest hit by coronavirus to be active. This partnership approach has been able to combine the investment and double the impact. It has supported Bucks MIND projects, enabling people managing mental health issues to access fitness and wellbeing sessions, extended a Police and Crime Commissioner project offering activity to young people in High Wycombe. It also provided funding to the Oasis Partnership to set up activities to support vulnerable older and younger people to engage in physical activities.

Addressing homelessness during COVID-19

The Council hosts a number of forums, including Homeless Prevention and Development Forums, and works closely in partnership with a range of stakeholders. The first pandemic lockdown measures required the service to make accommodation available to all homeless clients, namely those rough sleeping, to allow them to self-isolate and stay safe during the pandemic. In order to achieve this aim at very short notice, the team worked with housing providers to source additional interim accommodation and ensure that any additional assistance, including support with food parcels, hot meals, drug and alcohol support, mental health assistance and dedicated outreach workers, was provided. More than 140 people were accommodated, a number of whom have been assisted into settled accommodation. The Housing service liaised with Registered Providers to ensure that those who required urgent housing were able to view and accept properties in a COVID-safe way, including virtual viewings and sign up processes. In addition, the Vale of Aylesbury Housing Trust worked with the Housing Service and the NHS to provide accommodation to a small number of key workers, so they could self-isolate away from families.

The speed with which the service and our key partners mobilised to achieve the aims of the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (MHCLG), and to keep our residents safe, demonstrates the strong and collaborative partnerships that we have forged.

COVID-19 Mental Health Voluntary Sector Response Group

In April a response group, comprised of a number of VCSE sector organisations, NHS partners and Buckinghamshire Council, was established to focus on the mental health impact of Covid-19.

“The group has met regularly to respond to the increased need for mental health support seen across our communities. Member organisations have co-created solutions to shared challenges and kept each other up to date with service delivery and new funding opportunities. By working across the mental health system we have established a valuable partnership with system colleagues working in Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust, Buckinghamshire Healthcare Trust, Primary Care and Public Health. Group members have been part of the newly convened bereavement support group and a pilot project to tackle digital exclusion in partnership with The Clare Foundation. There has also been a key focus on supporting workplace wellbeing for both colleagues and volunteers.”

Andrea McCubbin, CEO, Bucks Mind



COVID Strategic Funding Group

In March 2020, Heart of Bucks, Buckinghamshire Council, The Clare Foundation, Leap, The Rothschild Foundation and The National Lottery Community Fund came together to swiftly distribute over £1.5 million of emergency funds and grants ensuring areas of greatest need were prioritised.

“The group have greater awareness and much more understanding where resources and funding should be focussed. Decisions that typically took days or weeks were made in hours because of the immediate commitment from partners.”

Mark Ormerod, CEO Leap



Aylesbury Garden Town's Community Partnership Projects Programme

This partnership programme embodies the principle of Community Stewardship (a key focus of the ethos of Garden Communities) and gives people the chance to take greater ownership of the area where they live. The Programme was launched in summer 2019 and has involved working with the voluntary and community sector, as well as key local stakeholders and partners, on projects that help enhance Aylesbury, build community and develop a stronger sense of place. Community Food Growing is one of the main strands of the programme. Working in partnership with local charity Community Transform, we have developed two Community Food Growing Projects – one in Quarrendon and one at the Healthy Living Centre at Walton Court. Our next growing project is being initiated at Hampden Hall Care Home, to look at ways to tackle social isolation with the elderly.



Creating the conditions that empower a strong, independent and influential Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise Sector is key to achieving a cohesive and active community.

Buckinghamshire is perceived to be a generally affluent county, providing good quality of life and a pleasant environment for residents. However, inequalities of both opportunity and aspiration exist within our communities.

A collaborative approach with VCSE's and wider partners will help us understand the assets in our community, the quality of services, and the unmet needs. By listening to the people who live and work here, we will be able to build a picture of the system from a local perspective. The social value gained will ensure that we engage in activities that transform the social landscape.

VCSE's have excellent knowledge of our communities and are often well placed to deliver sustainable solutions and help manage future demands on high cost statutory services. Working together at a local level, Community Boards will bring communities and local groups together to identify, co-produce and fund creative, community led solutions to local issues.

To help organisations in the county to flourish, we want to provide support in a strategic way. We will look across all the resources we have access to, ensuring we use them effectively to support building resilient communities, and clearly communicate our priorities and the way we can provide this support.

Key aims:

- Build strong community networks so that we better understand each community.
- Build a detailed knowledge and understanding of community assets needs and service provision.
- Develop a detailed understanding of services provided, and impact if they don't survive. This way we can work together to ensure vital services are sustainable and supported.
- Understand the changing risk profiles of our communities and adopt a flexible approach that responds to opportunities and challenges.
- Empower communities to have meaningful dialogue, ensuring engagement with unheard voices.
- Support community-based models of prevention, self-help and early intervention activities which help build resilience, improve quality of life and reduce demand on public services.
- Understand current investment flows using a partnership approach to leverage funds into Buckinghamshire.
- Understand and learn lessons about how the behaviours of statutory services and ways of working can create or remove barriers to the effectiveness of VCSE's.
- Respectfully uphold the independence of VCSE's.
- Value the work of grassroots organisations and recognise and enable their contribution to our shared outcomes.

DEVELOPING A STRONG AND RESILIENT VCSE SECTOR

Case Studies



The 'Buckinghamshire Wellbeing Capacity Fund' is a collaboration of three local charitable foundations (Heart of Bucks, The Rothschild Foundation and The Clare Foundation) to increase capacity during the COVID-19 crisis.

Managed by Heart of Bucks, the fund recognises that collaboration amongst the sector will be critical to long-term community stability, as such it encouraged innovative applications from partnerships of two or more local charities that address one of six key issue areas.

Four applications, each with at least five different charities involved, were made to the fund. One trustee from each of the funders, plus the Cabinet Member for Communities at Buckinghamshire Council, were invited to form the decision-making panel. The grant of £73k was awarded to the consortium led by The Oasis Partnership. Their project, 'Listen, Learn, Adapt,' will work with BAME communities, enabling local non-profit organisations to become more inclusive and diverse.



Creating a Partnership Capacity Fund



Street Association prevention workshops

Over 450 residents accessed free workshops which covered community safety and health and wellbeing themes, including; domestic abuse, scams, county lines, and modern slavery. This has enabled over 500 referrals to preventative services.



Community Boards support Scout Hut

Funding has been agreed to support the final stages of development of the Scout Hut in Amersham after fundraising was significantly impacted by COVID-19. The new facility will increase provision for young people and provide an excellent space for community groups and other activities.



Leap's activity packs kept kids moving

Over the summer, Leap distributed activity equipment packs, helping disadvantaged young people feel the benefit of moving more. The concept was shared with the Buckinghamshire Emergency Funding Group and warmly welcomed, with members offering to fund further packs which enabled Leap to expand the reach of the project.

Local Christian charity Restore Hope supported the project by putting the packs together and distributing through their community connections, alongside Buckinghamshire Council who facilitated the distribution of packs through the family centres. Rhiannon Smith from Leap commented *"Support from our partners has been vital in enabling us to distribute over 400 of these packs to disadvantaged families", while Restore Hope Latimer added: "The families who have been in receipt of this have been very thankful, one was telling me just this morning that her little boy has been sleeping with the football!"*



Communal treeplanting task and finish group

There are a number of community treeplanting initiatives underway in Buckinghamshire. ReLEAF Marlow was launched by Marlow Town Council in July 2019 and aims to increase the number of trees along Marlow's streets, in open spaces, and in hedgerows. reLEAF Haddenham is a joint project between Zero-Carbon Haddenham and Haddenham Parish Council. It aims to double the tree cover in Haddenham parish by 2030 and has developed a series of guidance documents and tools to support its community treeplanting activities.

ReLEAF is considered to be a good example of voluntary residential treeplanting action, and there is an opportunity to further develop and disseminate guidance to support wider community tree planting across Buckinghamshire. The Council has statutory duties as Highways Authority and there is significant interest regarding how communities can contribute towards treeplanting within the highway extent.

The aim of the Community Treeplanting Task and Finish Group is to develop and disseminate appropriate guidance to support community tree planting across Buckinghamshire.

The first meeting was held in November 2020 which enabled information sharing between the reLeaf groups and the council regarding licences, utilities, insurance, tree selection, and establishment and maintenance considerations. Work is ongoing to establish a process whereby community groups can contribute to roadside treeplanting activity.



Volunteers can have a real impact on people's lives. COVID-19 demonstrated the critical need for community volunteers and willingness to come forward to volunteer and support local communities. Buckinghamshire has a good volunteer base, with a third of residents undertaking some form of volunteering each year, making a vast contribution to society and the local economy.

The national lockdown highlighted a significant enthusiasm for volunteering and a swift partnership response to establish a process that enabled us to mobilise volunteers to support immediate practical needs. It also highlighted the need for an established system within emergency plans with system wide coordination for rapid volunteer deployment in an emergency that would address risks of oversupply, duplication and gaps. Those involved in the community call-to-action were not as widespread or fully representative of the county's diverse communities. It exposed an over-reliance on volunteers from within the potentially vulnerable shielding category.

Our businesses in Buckinghamshire also played a key role through volunteer days and donations of resource, skills, knowledge and equipment. Our partnerships need to be strong and broad-based. Partnership working would build on volunteer capacity in the county and harness the volunteer spirit seen during the pandemic. Our aim is to enable a legacy of volunteering that offers a more strategic and inclusive approach. It is essential that all volunteering strategies are joined up, while providing flexibility to embrace new technology and digital approaches.

In addition to emergency responses, volunteering remains critical during the recovery phase of COVID-19. Shared insight to the changing risk profiles in Buckinghamshire's communities will help reveal emerging themes, consider where volunteering may benefit both the volunteer (for example, in learning new skills, exploring career changes, and supporting wellbeing) as well as communities requiring prevention and place-based interventions.

Key aims:

- Develop a strategic and system wide approach to volunteering.
- Embed and promote an accessible and rewarding volunteering culture.
- Facilitate partnership working discussions on volunteering strategies and targeted areas of focus and develop collaborative approaches to strengthening the VCSE workforce.
- Support organisations to be ready for volunteers – offer a high-quality safe experience and meet public appetite for more task based, short term roles.
- Ensure volunteers are built into emergency plans and maximise key skills base i.e. retired police, health professionals, teachers, youth workers.
- Increase the number of residents taking part in volunteering by promoting opportunities locally.
- Understand the challenges facing VCSE's and actively match key skills.
- Build community resilience through partnerships, e.g. Neighbourhood Watch and street associations.
- Work with our business sector partners to harness corporate social responsibility.
- Lead by example, develop a best practice council-wide volunteer strategy that promotes and maximises staff volunteer hours to support and help.

GROWING A LEGACY OF VOLUNTEERING

Case Studies

Community resilience

A partnership with the Fire and Rescue service, supported by Manchester University, brings an opportunity to renew our approach to community resilience. Working with the new Community Boards, partners and volunteers to understand the changing local risks as well as learning by the amazing community spirit shown during COVID-19. Peoples' needs and vulnerabilities are changing, local capability and services or support can be delivered in different ways including by those working most closely with communities. Community resilience tackles the causes of emergencies, identifies local needs, reduces vulnerabilities, and creates capacity – making Buckinghamshire a safer, community-led place to live.



Volunteer Matching Service

In Spring 2020, more than 1,800 local residents signed up to volunteer via Buckinghamshire Council's website to support their communities during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. Since then, the Volunteer Matching Service has been placing volunteers with groups and organisations needing help to support our communities. More information can be found on the Buckinghamshire Volunteer Matching Service [webpage](#).

"By working closely with our partners the Council and The Clare Foundation to share intelligence and resources, by the end of 2020 we had mobilised over 800 volunteers to support immediate, practical needs such as medicine and food delivery, to build resilience through youth mentoring or mental health support, or to support major logistical programmes such as vaccination and, soon, mass testing. The service quickly deploys volunteers to wherever and however they are needed, enabling volunteer-involving organisations to focus more of their resources directly on their work to tackle the impacts of the pandemic on our communities." Katie Higginson, Community Impact Bucks



Adult Social Care 'Keep in Touch' adult befriending service

Working in collaboration with the Community Hubs, Adult Social Care developed a keeping in touch service to support the most vulnerable people at risk of social isolation during lockdown, through weekly check in calls. The Integrated Commissioning team brought together all commissioned and grant-funded befriending organisations into a weekly forum, to explore how they could support the response in a collaborative way. For the second lockdown, four of the befriending providers have offered to provide weekly 'Keep in Touch' calls to Adult Social Care clients in a more co-ordinated response, enabling Social Care staff to continue to focus on business as usual. The quick mobilisation of this support would not have happened if not for the effective relationships that were fostered during the original lockdown through the befriending forum.



Neighbourhood Watch

Neighbourhood Watch are looking to expand their reach to support communities during the pandemic and beyond. NHW Coordinators are in a unique position, with a good understanding of their local area and good connections with their neighbours. They are being encouraged to make their volunteering count for more and support vulnerable people who may be impacted by COVID-19. In addition, a campaign to increase the number of coordinators is piloting in the Chiltern area, supported by local community boards.



Businesses supporting the VCS and Communities

The community really came together during the pandemic with charities, organisations, council departments and local businesses all helping each other. Aylesbury Vineyard put out a request for boxes to pack food parcels in during an Aylesbury Emergency Food Response Zoom call. Rafiq from Aylesbury Youth Action suggested a contact at Aylesbury Box Company:

"I asked my colleague to call them while I was in the meeting, 20 minutes later he arrived back with a huge stack of boxes from them, all before the Zoom meeting had finished, amazing!"

Adam Townsend
Aylesbury Vineyard

The place you live
The people you know

#ProudofBucks

#ProudofBucks

The crucial collaboration between Buckinghamshire Council, charities and voluntary groups to combat the coronavirus emergency was featured in a vlog with Leader Martin Tett and shared on Facebook at the height of the first lockdown.

"There is so much support taking place in our local communities, it's absolutely fantastic. But looking ahead we anticipate there'll continue to be a huge need for volunteers."

Katie Higginson
CEO, Community Impact Bucks

"When you think of all the work by volunteers and the voluntary sector, we couldn't have got to this point in the crisis without them."

Martin Gallagher
CEO, The Clare Foundation



DELIVERY

This strategy highlights the appetite for greater partnership across Buckinghamshire and sets out a co-designed, collaborative agreement for how we will work together to build strong and resilient local communities.

While this strategy focuses on the VCSE sector, other partners are key to building robust and flexible community initiatives. It is essential that the strategic framework is brought to life through a shared action plan. The action plan will not be a static document, it is critical that it is an iterative process to adapt to changing circumstances. We will work with the VCSE sector and other key partners to co-design the action plan and ensure a collaborative and system-wide approach.

These will include:

- Thames Valley Police
- Buckinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service
- Buckinghamshire Clinical Commissioning Group
- Local Enterprise Partnership
- Department for Work and Pensions
- Housing Associations
- National Lottery
- Buckinghamshire Business First

The VCSE Recovery Board will have responsibility for reviewing and updating the action plan, and engaging with the sector and collaborating with partners to ensure it remains relevant and responsive. The initial focus will be on the immediate actions for the first year. For further information or comments on the strategy please contact: localities@buckinghamshire.gov.uk