

MVA

Outcome Report

2023



Supporting Communities
in Kent & Medway



Thank you from all at MVA

Welcome to our Outcome Report for 2023.

It has been another good (and very busy) year for MVA.

Grateful thanks for ongoing support from our funders and many partners (their logos are shown on this slide).

It remains a privilege to work alongside the ever-growing and thriving VCSEF (Voluntary, Community, Social Enterprise and Faith) sector in Medway and beyond. We have continued to provide relevant and useful information to over 1000 charities in Medway alone.

In 2023 MVA's support to the VCSEF resulted in £928,891 being allocated to VCSEF organisations through successful funding applications. Since 2019 we have supported the sector to raise £6.5m – a return on investment for Medway Council of £13 for every £1 provided via the MVA funding support mechanism of the Infrastructure contract.

The local VCSEF continues to face many challenges; the continued Cost of Living Crisis, difficulties in recruiting new volunteers and ongoing issues in securing longer term funding. We can weather this storm together and are with them every step of the way.

As you would expect from an organisation committed to continuous learning and development, we have also started to share our best practice and tools with VCSEF organisations across the county. We look forward to continued development of our services in 2024 to support and capacity build within the VCSEF in both Medway and Kent.



Peter Stokes

MVA Chair of Trustees

With special thanks to our funders and VCS partners over the past year:



Supporting Medway Voluntary, Community, Social Enterprise & Faith (VCSEF) Sectors

67 attended the Funding & Governance club representing **31** members from **28** different organisations

251 views of MVA training videos on YouTube.
5 Training sessions delivered, supporting **52** learners and **1324** page views on our web pages relating to training

17,772 visitors to our web site, with **4,421** of these viewing our volunteering support pages

98% of organisations supported with Funding & Governance gave positive feedback that they felt they had been supported with: advice and information, and income generation

1348 e-newsletter subscribers, **1671** digital news items, E-bulletins, press releases and social posts published

Community Update Group Membership has grown to over **259** individual members from **209** different local VCSEF organisations and groups

Medway VCSEF organisations supported to generate additional income to deliver their services totalling **£928,891**

A cumulative total of **£6,683,467** over the 5 year contract

Hosted **11** Monthly Community Update Meetings with between **20** & **30** individuals attending most sessions

VCS Transformation Academy

In 2023, the Transformation Academy concluded its first year and began its second year.

Academy members have now decided their second year objective:

Increasing the sector's capacity, ability and skills to demonstrate and communicate the impact of their work in order to improve their credibility and sustainability and improve local lives.

In 2023, Transformation Academy members started the process to sign up for coaching their peers in the VCSEF Sector; and they offered free sector wide training based around storytelling.



Transformation Academy members have received **£3,300** in Task and Finish payments to date.

Over **30** VCSEF organisations have been members of the Academy since inception.

Over **700+** organisations from the wider VCS given access to TA Resources

Over **750** hours of 'Generous Leadership' given to Transformation Academy to date

Feedback from the Storytelling Training Session:

"I will go away knowing a great deal more about how effective storytelling will help my organisation"

"A great training session that will be very useful in the way we publicise ourselves"

Partnership working and MVA Collaboration Toolkit

MVA have been delighted to share best practice with our VCSEF peers and develop new partnerships across Kent.

Working with Stronger Kent Communities(SKC), we are helping to deliver the Kent Charity Leaders Partnership & Development Programme - facilitating each local network session using MVA's Collaboration Toolkit

We have also joined Swale Voluntary Alliance's (SVA) Steering Group and we're working closely with SVA's Project Manager to support comms, marketing and partnership development across Swale VCSEF groups and organisations. We're proud to be sharing Medway's 'lessons learned' with our peers across Kent; supporting the movement: *'Owned by the sector, working for the sector'*



61 VCS groups/organisations participating in workshops launching 3 new networks in Kent

3 workshops held across Ashford, Canterbury & Sevenoaks

214 hours of generous leadership given by Kent CEOs/Managers to participate in developing their new networks

Quotes from Participant:

"(the session) enabled me to make connections that I don't think would have happened previously. I already have a meeting planned to consider collaboration which would not have happened. I am looking forward to



Stronger Kent Communities



SWALE
VOLUNTARY
ALLIANCE

Befriending Together

This year MVA has been working in partnership with Carers First, who Cares and Swale CVS to deliver the programme in Medway and Swale.

Now established as an innovative way of connecting people who have become isolated and lonely, the programme offers bi-weekly group meetings in a various of locations for Medway residents as well as regular groups and activities for those living in Swale.

During the year our Bingo sessions, have been very popular and Seated Exercise has supported people to enjoy gentle exercise sessions to music. In addition we have introduced Horticultural Therapy activities which have been delivered by one of our volunteers.



354 people have been referred to the service this year

55% of people referred were isolated and **38%** were lonely.

64 group meetings delivered with **273** attendances

59% increased their mental wellbeing

60% improved their social connections

"I had the best time ever at the Horticultural therapy session, I absolutely loved it"

"Being together with new friends was wonderful" (Members)

Befriending Together Projects

Couch 2 Community

These sessions continued during 2023 and the funding from KCF provided a range of activities. Members of the Befriending Programme were able to attend seated dance sessions, improving their physical health and a 'Cream Tea' afternoon and trip to Herne Bay enabled people to socialise with thereby improving their mental well being.

Test Bed Fund

Grants were offered to organisations to deliver activities which strengthened community cohesion through befriending services. 30 groups applied and 13 were successful in securing funding. The activities offered ranged from music sessions to fitness and cookery. 1213 people were estimated to have participated in activities, and in total 1845 people actually benefitted across all the activities.



181 people sessions and gained new skills, increased confidence and feel safer and connected

3 new volunteers were recruited

18 activities delivered including seated exercise, craft and cookery sessions and Bingo.

13 VCS groups received a total of **£65,000** to deliver projects to reduce isolation and loneliness

Woodwork and craft sessions enabled participants who may be widowed, retired, isolated and lonely to talk and bond whilst engaged in activities this led to participants socialising outside of the session, increasing their own social network and mental wellbeing

35% more people than predicted attended the **464** sessions

Project Joy!

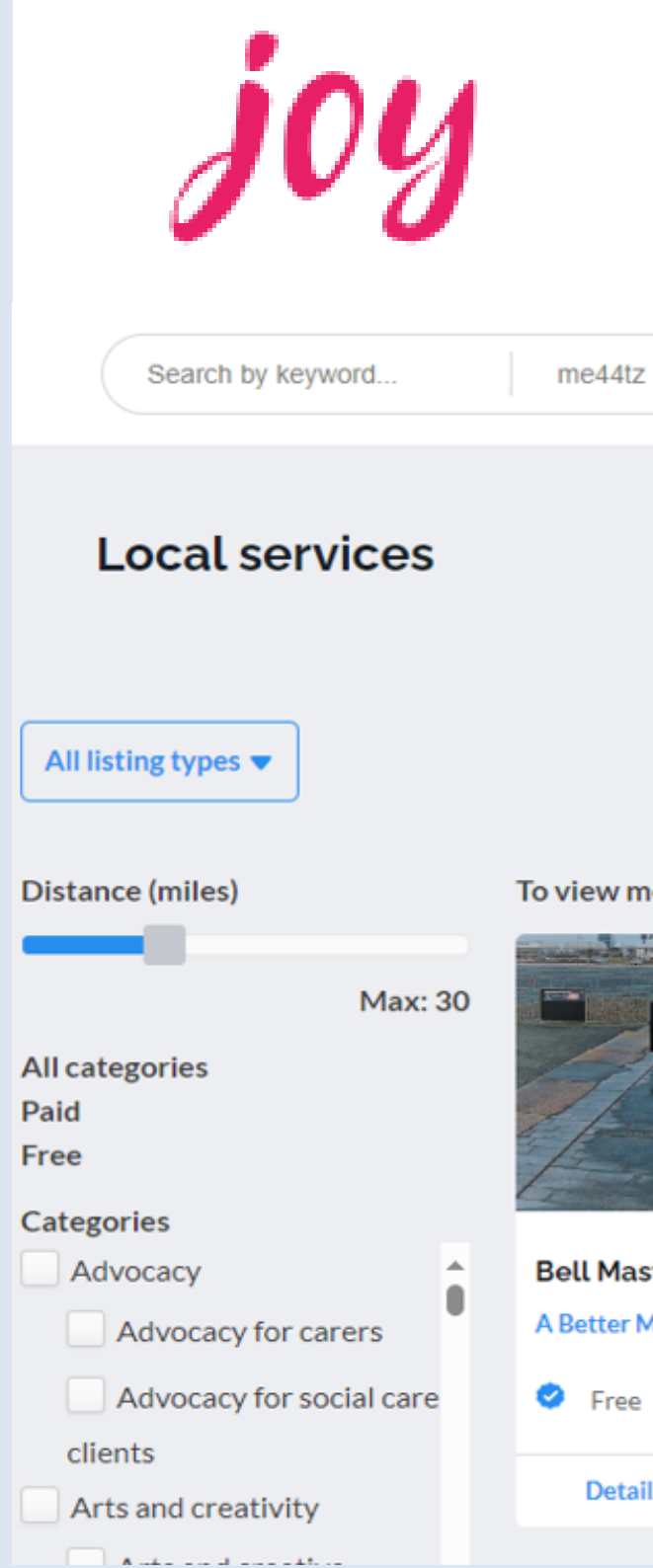
Joy Marketplace is a directory of services for Medway and Swale's community groups. We started September 1st laying the foundation blocks and establishing a directory that allows social prescribers to refer their clients to activities provided by the Voluntary Community Social Enterprise and Faith sectors (VCSEF). Funding is attached with payments made per referral accepted.

We began by introducing social prescribers to the Joy system, setting accounts and training.

We have engaged the VCSEF organisations through email campaigns, delivered a webinar, printed leaflets, and had face to face meetings. The more that join the greater the impact.

Please see link below to find out more and to sign up.

<https://services.thejoyapp.com>



Engaged **75** Social Prescriber Link Workers and organised training.

Contacted **380** Medway and Swale service providers

742 emails sent. **44** online meetings. **22** Visits to service providers.

550 activities on Joy so far and continues to grow!

We have heard many 'word of mouth' testimonies that the VCSEF organisations on Joy are promoting this platform widely to others groups across Medway and Swale

Medway Volunteer Network

During 2023, Medway Volunteer Network continued to promote volunteering across Medway online, through regular MVN Bulletins and at a range of events and activities.

During June's National Volunteers Week, MVA's singing volunteer bears Vic and Viv travelled far and wide to say a huge 'thank you' to Medway's amazing volunteers. Medway's volunteers were also celebrated through the Barry Clout Awards. The quality of nominations highlighted the extraordinary contributions of individual volunteers and volunteer teams. Certificates were awarded to the winner of each category by The Mayor of Medway, Cllr Nina Gurung at MVA's AGM in November 2023.

From December 2023, attention turned to future development of MVN. A new Volunteering and Community Development Officer was recruited and in post. Planning started for even more opportunities and support for both Medway residents and VCSEF organisations to launch early 2024.

Viv & Vic Bear handing out more than you certificates with the Deputy Mayor and Carers First Team



Welcome to your One Stop Shop for Volunteering in Medway

7 people considering volunteering each year, you're missing out 42% of adults in the UK who give unpaid support at least once a month to a local group, club or organisation.

Volunteering is about giving your time and skills, unpaid, for the benefit of others, the community or the environment.

It's a really rewarding activity that can help you get involved in your local community, meet like-minded people, develop your confidence and skills, and have fun!

Medway Volunteer Network has been established to support the volunteering community in Medway, and can offer you a range of support and information.

We can help you find out more about local organisations, community groups and clubs that need your help and we always have a wide range of volunteering opportunities in Medway available.

Visit our [volunteering opportunities page](#) to see what is currently available.



BARRY CLOUT AWARD 2023
MVA's Barry Clout Award for Outstanding Contributions to Volunteering in Medway

Getting Started

Benefits Of Volunteering

Application Tips & Advice

Harinder from Sahara & Vic Bear

Robert from Rochester Rotary & Vic & Viv Bear

#MedwayHeroes
Nichole from Medway & Swale Health & Care Partnership with Vic & Viv Bear

Volunteers' Week takes place between 1-7 June every year and is a chance to recognise and celebrate the contribution made by local people through volunteering in our communities. It's a time to say thanks and it goes without saying that local volunteers continue to play a key role in helping Medway's charities to survive not only the current cost of living crisis, but their ongoing recovery from Covid-19.

Every year for Volunteers Week MVA organise an activity that all of Medway's volunteers and VCS organisations or groups can get involved in. This year MVA are pleased to introduce you to 2 very special characters that are equally as passionate about Medway: **Viv & Vic Teddy Bear!**

How can I get involved: On the run up to, and during Volunteers' Week, Viv & Vic Bear will be out and about in Medway saying 'thanks'. MVA are inviting all Medway volunteers and community groups to get involved in our 'Where-oh-Where are Viv & Vic Bear' activity to recognise the remarkable contributions made by Medway volunteers, charities & community groups.

Competition Time: MVA will be rewarding winners of the most **'fun & interesting' photo's of Viv & Vic Teddy Bear**, which will be judged by you online!

There will be 2 categories: 1 for organisations and 1 for volunteers!
At the end of Volunteers' Week MVA will invite Medway to vote on their favourite 'Viv & Vic' Bear photos.

MVA will announce the winners after Volunteers' Week and be rewarding them with cake!

If you want to join 'Where-oh-Where are Viv & Vic Bear' Register your interest on the email below with the subject heading 'I want to find the bear' for more information and take part!



#MedwayHeroes

MVA's #MedwayHeroes campaign returns and is keen to hear individual volunteer

758 potential volunteers subscribe to the monthly newsletter

168 volunteer opportunities advertised on the MVA website.

Volunteering was promoted to Medway residents or organisations through emails, events, activities

186 organisations provided with volunteering related support and advice.

This involved 808 support activities for existing organisations and 153 activities supporting new start ups

Macmillan 'Year of Listening' Medway & Swale

"We will reflect and represent the communities we serve in everything we do to support everyone living with cancer"

(Macmillan's 5 aims in the plan for 2023 – Objective 6)

Medway and Swale areas underperform in many cancer system indicators and there are diverse inequalities in engagement with cancer services in these areas.

The aim of the programme has been to work in partnership with local Voluntary and Community organisations as well as delivering events across Medway and Swale to understand the barriers and challenges people are experiencing in accessing local cancer treatment and support services.

Engagement activities focused on people from one of five community characteristics which included people aged over 60, people living with a disability/limited daily activities, people of the Global Majority (formerly BAME), people from LGBTQIA+ communities and those from coastal towns and/or geographic areas experiencing high deprivation.

The easy read report and full report will be available on the MVA website.

Funded by

**MACMILLAN
CANCER SUPPORT**



icl **Interactive
Community
Listening**



Cancer survival rates in Medway and Swale have been among the lowest in the country for some time.

We engaged with **903** respondents - at events, focus groups, surveys, via What App sessions and using ICL model

"I often feel like what I'm saying to various clinicians is falling on deaf ears. I definitely don't feel listened to." Sally, Case Study



Community Health Catalyst Programme

Funding for the Community Health Catalyst Programme has been extended until 31st August 2024 and entered its second year of delivery during 2023.

Working with the local VCSEF sector, we have engaged with communities from the NHS Core 20 PLUS 5 health inclusion groups across Medway and Swale.

Since the project began, we have engaged with 1133 people across Medway and Swale and held listening groups and individual interviews with 246 people from 10 health inclusion groups, to understand the personal impact of health inequalities on their wellbeing and what they feel is needed to overcome these issues.

We have signposted 133 individuals and delivered 18 Local Asset and Signposting Plans to VCSEF groups and their service users, supporting communities to engage with the plan and access local support including NHS screening services, housing advice, food banks, energy saving advice, suicide prevention and support, befriending services and local activities. This programme is funded by the Medway and Swale Health and Care Partnership.



In 2023 we engaged with **922** people from **11 CORE 20 PLUS 5** communities across Medway & Swale through partnership working with the VCSEF

The Community Health Catalyst Programme in Medway & Swale has involved more than **100** VCSEF Organisations

We have signposted **133** individuals to local support services across Medway & Swale

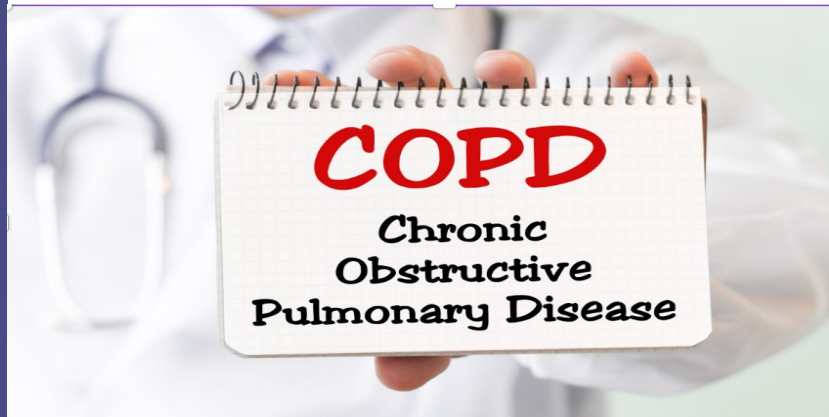
78% of people across Medway & Swale that were engaged with feel they know more about the Health & Care Partnership

*"The project that MVA involved us in, was a lifeline for all **52** people in our group. No one ever gave us a real chance, but this project did. It allowed us to access health services the group desperately needed and importantly gave us a glimmer of hope to finally belong somewhere."*
Leader from a local Roma Community.

Involving Medway & Swale



**Involving
Medway & Swale**
Supporting Healthier Communities



A partnership between community organisations and Medway & Swale Health and Care Partnership aimed at building healthier communities.

In 2023 the Involving Medway & Swale programme engaged with residents on the topic of COPD

The concept of IMS is to provide VCS groups and organisations opportunities to access community grant funding to co - develop 'quick win' initiatives with their service users in response to the issues they identify during the Focus Group activities - supporting a goal of 'meaningful engagement and lasting change'.

194 participants across 9 organisations running 15 focus groups. With 50% of participants from people of a global majority.

We supported our active focus group organisations generate £3,360 extra income.

Engaged with 70 VCS organisations to help facilitate focus group ups with their service users.

92% of participants felt the activity made them feel more supported and listened to about issues impacting their health of 77% felt there was a significant increase.

"we would like training using a breathing pump and an organisation that supports mental health wellbeing. They would then give them a call on a regular basis/befriending"

Looking Ahead to 2024...

MVA has a strong history of evolving to meet the developing needs of Medway's VCSEF and local communities, and 2024 we will continue act as agents of change; sharing best practice to support and champion the VCSEF. Here is just a snapshot of activities and support planned for the next 12 months:

- *Working across Kent with partners to make the VCSEF stronger*
- *Bowel Screening Awareness Programme across Medway and Swale*
- *Promoting involvement in Health Research in conjunction with NIHR (National Institute for Health and Care Research)*
- *Mental Health Workforce Training*
- *Further growth of Joy—our Social Prescribing Platform*
- *Dynamic Collaboration Tool on the MVA website*
- *Raise the profile of the incredible job that the VCSEF does with stakeholders across Kent and Medway*
- *Continuation of outstanding services in Befriending, Community Health Catalyst, Infrastructure work, Involving Medway and Swale.*
- *The growth and development of both our Transformation Academy and Alliance*
- *Celebrating our 35th year*