

Northumberland VCS | Assembly

Northumberland VCS Assembly Manifesto

Building a Better Future

We think that it is important that the VCS Assembly in Northumberland is clear about its intentions and views. Whilst representing a diverse, complex range of groups and organisations with their own views, opinions and stakeholders, we are clear as a sector what we hope for and expect. The VCS Assembly will campaign to ensure delivery of this manifesto to support the sector from small community groups to larger county-wide organisations and the diverse communities we serve.

All aspects of community life benefit from the services and support of the voluntary and community sector often plugging the gaps and providing solutions to the needs of the most vulnerable in our communities. We will build on the development and recent experiences of mutual aid groups that have come together spontaneously at a hyper local level successfully delivering support to their local communities which has challenged our usual ways of working.

Our Vision

A fairer and equal Northumberland where individuals and communities are supported, empowered and lead happier, healthier, fulfilling lives through active collaboration and partnership working across the public, private and voluntary sectors.

Our Mission

To work collaboratively with each other and the public and private sectors to ensure that all residents in Northumberland are receiving the services and support they deserve whilst recognising the constraints under which we all work

We believe

- We have the reach to engage with the residents and communities of Northumberland and in particular, those who are most marginalised.
- We enable those whose voices are too often drowned out to be heard
- We have good knowledge and understanding of residents and communities, the strengths they possess and the current challenges and barriers they face.
- We provide responsive and flexible solutions to challenges and add significant value.
- A strong, agile and sustainable voluntary and community sector is crucial to delivering life enhancing services that meet the needs of our residents and communities.
- A strong mutually respectful relationship with the statutory and private sector is fundamentally important.

Our Commitments

- We will work in partnership with communities to find solutions together using an asset-based approach where residents are empowered to make decisions about the issues they are facing.
- We will work towards developing vibrant sustainable communities.
- We will seek to ensure that services are delivered in the most timely and effective way possible by working with funders and commissioners, making best use of resources and ensuring duplication is minimised.
- We will work in partnership where appropriate in an open, transparent and honest way and share resources and expertise to benefit the whole community
- We will always add value and demonstrate the impact we make.
- We will enable our organisations, staff and volunteers to operate safely and securely and provide support, training and development opportunities to continuously improve the quality and standards of the services we supply.
- We will engage regularly with VCS colleagues, share best practice and learning
- We will share data, information and evidence to contribute to improved policy and practice whilst observing GDPR principles.
- We will listen and promote the voice of users, encouraging others to listen too.
- We will support, develop and champion volunteering, recognising the value it brings to volunteers themselves and the benefits it brings to Northumberland's residents, communities, economy and the environment.
- We will identify the issues and concerns most important to our communities recognising the role of volunteers as citizens identifying what is important to them and most concerning to the citizens they work with.

We Ask

- We ask for a commitment to embed the principles and ways of working set out in the Accord.

- We ask for a commitment to share information and intelligence that supports the delivery of improved services and support to our communities.
- We ask for active recognition and acknowledgement of the vital contribution of the voluntary and community sector and its role in the social, environmental and economic development of the county.
- We ask for a commitment to co-production with the sector and beneficiaries as equal partners through to delivery and strategic evaluation.
- We ask for a meaningful seat at the table when decisions that affect the sector are discussed and that processes are in place for regular collaboration with the sector.
- We ask for a commitment to long-term funding wherever possible which enables voluntary organisations to plan effectively and target their limited resources and capacity on making a difference to local people and local communities.