



**SEFTON**

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Voluntary, Community and  
Faith Sector at the Frontline of

**TRANSFORMATION**

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October 2021

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Research and report undertaken by:

**Voluntary Sector**  
North West 

# Foreword

In Sefton, we have long understood the value of our VCF sector. Throughout the life of our local clinical commissioning groups (CCGs), we have sought to engage, involve and support our VCF sector colleagues whenever possible and as a result the sector has led some remarkable work, resulting in positive changes for the lives of some of our most vulnerable residents. I'd particularly commend the sector for its achievements during the COVID-19 pandemic. You can read examples of the difference the VCF sector is making to Sefton residents later in the report.

Forthcoming changes to the health and social care system expected in 2022 present a real opportunity to further build on these successes. It is a chance for all partners in Sefton to find new and stronger ways of working together to transform and better integrate health and care. In advance of this we have already come together to start shaping an Place Based Partnership, and VCF sector colleagues are very much part of this.

Sefton's CCGs will cease to exist in April 2022 and they leave a strong legacy of partnership with our VCF Sector. In light of these forthcoming system changes I welcome the recommendations set out in this brochure. As we look to the future, we must ensure the good outcomes the local NHS and the VCF Sector have achieved together in recent years will provide the foundation for deeper successes in the future.

**Fiona Taylor**  
**Chief Officer**  
**South Sefton CCG**  
**Southport and Formby CCG**



"Sefton Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector (VCF) at the frontline of Transformation" is the title of this brochure describing our vital role in delivering quality health and social care services for Sefton residents. The importance of which has become more evident and increasingly amplified as thousands of interventions have been undertaken in supporting our local residents during the world wide pandemic.

Sefton's VCF sector is vibrant, agile and diverse in terms of delivery; reflective of the neighbourhoods and locality and predominantly grown from the local community, providing a critical asset alongside our key partner agencies in health and the local authority. As our health services undertake a significant change with the development and implementation of a local Place Based Partnership (PBP) by 2022, this brochure describes why the VCF sector is integral to strong and successful partnership working illustrated by case studies, with recommendations to build upon this collaboration and the opportunity for place based social innovation being at the heart of community wellbeing services.



**Angela White, OBE FRSA**  
**Chief Executive - Sefton CVS**



# Executive Summary

2020 was a year of unprecedented change, challenge and uncertainty, however it was also a year where cross sector relationships with the VCF sector in Sefton were significantly strengthened and the role of the sector as critical public sector partners has been more important and recognised than ever before.

As we navigate through 2021 and beyond, the health and care challenges associated with COVID-19 will persist, with the pandemic having a disproportionate impact on our already vulnerable and disadvantaged communities as well as individuals and families whose circumstances have forcibly changed. This impact will undoubtedly be felt in the long-term, with recovery likely to take many years as people's lives, ways of working and society respond to such fundamental change.

While the VCF sector adjusts to the aftermath of the pandemic, we also must pave our way and cement our place within the transformation of the health and care landscape nationally, regionally, and locally. The changes in the health and care systems from local Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) to Place Based Partnerships (PBPs) and Integrated Care Systems (ICSs) present both opportunities and challenges for the VCF sector in Sefton. The pandemic has fortified understandings of just how essential the sector is at designing and delivering innovative and effective services, engaging with communities and improving health outcomes across the borough, particularly at a local placed-based level.

There is an appetite and energy across all sectors in Sefton to collaborate and partner, and there are many great examples of how this is already happening with long-established networks of organisations working together to develop solutions to improve outcomes for places. In order to develop truly impactful integrated care systems across Sefton, the VCF sector must be recognised as equitable and sustainable system partners, with the protection of place and accountability to local communities.

Following consultation across networks in Sefton, including the VCF sector, NHS and local authority colleagues, we have arrived at a series of recommendations contained on the following pages. They provide the building blocks for developing a mature working relationship between the VCF sector and Sefton PBP. These recommendations for achieving change will be shared with Sefton's emerging PBP partnership for consideration to support PBP planning and delivery and build collaborative working arrangements. The VCF sector networks and leaders look forward to working in partnership with the PBP to put these recommendations into practice.



# Recommendations for Achieving Change:

## ***Recommendation 1:***

### **Increased public sector understanding of the VCF Sector Ecosystem**

**a**

Increase the diversity, range and local VCF sector representation of those involved in governance, partnerships and decision making. Ensure that all stages of PBP planning and delivery are directly informed by their knowledge and that of existing social infrastructure through engagement with established VCF sector networks and forums.

**c**

Deepen the understanding of system leaders, commissioners, PBP staff and frontline practitioners of the VCF sector structure, organisations and services. Provide training and inductions for public sector staff to better understand and how to work with the VCF sector.

**b**

As an PBP principle, build on the unique strengths, diversity and reach into communities of Sefton's VCF sector ecosystem and strong networks.

**Recommendation 2:**

**Continued assurance of the maturity of PBP and VCF sector working relationships as the new health and care system is implemented**

**a**

Sefton PBP to adopt the VCF sector checklist to ensure the sector is embedded within PBP processes and policies.

**Recommendation 3:**

**Increase the reach of the New Realities agreement and principles to widen its influence**

**a**

Sefton PBP to embrace the New Realities principles and system leaders to champion these measures, include them within PBP planning and delivery and ensuring new staff and teams understand the principles.

**c**

Develop and deliver an engagement plan to increase the number of partners adopting the New Realities way of working.

**b**

Embed New Realities outcomes and measures of success within the PBP Dashboard.



## **Recommendation 4:**

### **Explore opportunities for PBP investment in the VCF sector and provide opportunities for building community capacity and resilience**

**a**

Scope out the feasibility of a 1% Community Levy on large PBP tenders, with proceeds invested into the VCF sector to promote sector collaborations to ensure capacity and resilience.

**d**

Support a consistent approach to social value as part of all PBP commissioning, planning and delivery with support for commissioners to put this into practice.

**b**

Explore opportunities for developing a small grants programme to invest in local grassroots organisations to deliver innovative projects for improving health and wellbeing outcomes at the most local levels.

**e**

Explore opportunities for a joint workforce development initiative for VCF sector leadership to support the stimulation and growth of tomorrow's leaders, encouraging diversity of leadership to support continuity and sustainability.

**c**

Scope the potential for large-scale, longer-term 3-5 year VCF sector investment. This investment should be significant and drive shifts in public service demand driven by a significant portion of the local VCF sector

## **Recommendation 5:**

# **Further develop integrated relationships with NHS and wider partners with better incorporation into community structures**

**a**

Enable the VCF sector to lead on agreed workstreams and priorities where it has particular expertise and knowledge including areas such as social prescribing and hospital discharge.

**b**

Invest in co-design and co-production processes as part of local PBP work programmes and commissioning arrangements.

**c**

Utilise the cross-sector estate and acknowledge the accessibility and location of buildings rather than centralising services into single buildings to avoid destabilising VCF sector assets and diminishing reach into localities. Strengthen front line practitioner knowledge and awareness of key VCF sector services and locations.

**d**

Ensure VCF sector practitioners are involved in the Integrated Care Team approach of multi-disciplinary team working that has been enhanced in South Sefton, soon to be borough wide, with more people involved in the Sefton 100 workforce model to bring in more VCF sector organisations, locality and place-based working into that collective workforce and Team Sefton approach.



**Recommendation 6:**

**Develop a local, universal social impact tool for the VCF sector in Sefton**

**a**

Develop a VCF sector social impact tool that is localised for Sefton and scalable to all types and sizes of organisations to provide a collective evidence base for the social impact of the VCF sector, aligning to PBP Dashboard priorities.

**c**

Ensure that VCF sector social impact data is captured within the PBP Dashboard and is embedded within the delivery of the PBP work programme.

**b**

Design a programme of engagement with the VCF sector to encourage sign up to using the tool including training, ongoing support and how to effectively use this information.





# Introduction

OUR VCF SECTOR IN SEFTON  
ARE TRUE EXPERTS IN OUR  
& NEIGHBOURHOODS  
PLACES

The VCF sector in Sefton are true experts in our places and neighbourhoods and we have a deep understanding of the needs and desires of our communities due to the scale of the footprints we work within, from very local, grassroots groups to organisations working across borough lines. Early intervention, prevention and social prescribing activities are our bread and butter, providing population health improvement services in a variety of delivery models and as key providers of health, care and wellbeing NHS and Local Authority services in Sefton. It is therefore essential that the Sefton VCF sector is firmly embedded as a key partner in the health and care transformation in the Borough and enabled to continue to innovate and transform its offer in collaboration to improve health outcomes for our communities.

The purpose of this report is to develop a transformation narrative for the VCF sector in Sefton, through the lens of both wider health and care transformation and in the aftermath of COVID-19. We also want to support our public sector partners to understand how the sector works in Sefton, how it continues to adapt and innovate, and how embracing our community assets can really help shape the delivery and improvement of health and social care outcomes for our Sefton communities at a place-based level.

Following extensive research and engagement with the VCF sector, we have produced several recommendations for Sefton's Place Based Partnership (PBP) that emphasise the sectors crucial role as a key partner within population health management, and how the PBP can support the sector to become more sustainable and resilient for the benefit of Sefton communities.



# National and Regional Health and Care Context

The NHS Long Term Plan (2019) and the NHS Five Year Forward View (2014) both point to evidence as to why our health systems should be working smarter with their local VCF sector as a way of engaging with communities and local people and importantly as an equal partner in delivery of services to improve health and wellbeing outcomes.

The Department of Health & Social Care's recent [White Paper](#) (February 2021) provided proposals for how Integrated Care Systems (ICS) should function, with Place Based Partnerships (PBPs) as key building blocks for the ICSs. It emphasises the need to work with the sector to improve the health of local areas with a joined-up approach to strategic decision making and specifically makes it clear that the term "health and care partners" includes the VCF sector as standard. More recently, the proposed [Health and Care Bill](#) (July 2021) introduces Integrated Care Boards (ICB) which will take on the commissioning functions of clinical commissioning groups and focus on integration between NHS bodies. ICBs will form part of the ICS alongside PBPs which will focus on integration between a wider range of providers, including the VCF sector, to address the health and social care needs of the local population.

Regionally, the VCF sector in Sefton is a key contributor to health structures with its role well recognised and understood across various policy areas within Cheshire and Merseyside, and at a sub-regional level within Liverpool City Region (LCR).

Through [Sefton CVS](#), the VCF sector has a strong presence within the Cheshire and Merseyside VCF Sector Health & Care Leaders group, which links directly into the Cheshire and Merseyside Health & Care Partnership Board to influence health strategy, service delivery and PBP transformation.

Sefton CVS is also a member of the [VS6 Partnership](#) of infrastructure organisations in Liverpool City Region (LCR), representing the VCF sector across Merseyside and working closely with the LCR Combined Authority. As a member of the VS6 Partnership, Sefton CVS represents the VCF sector on a number of boards and programmes throughout the City Region, including the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP), and has been key to mobilising the LCR VCF sector emergency and recovery response to COVID-19.

[Sefton Council's Joint Strategic Needs Assessment](#) (JSNA) for 2018/19 highlights core areas of concern across the borough with Sefton 'significantly worse' than the England average in areas including male and female life expectancy, mental health including suicide rates, cancer, and alcohol use. Sefton also has an ageing population growing faster than the national average, which will put increasing future demand on health and social care services with rising rates of severe frailty, dementia and social isolation in this population.

These areas of concern, amongst others, are mirrored within the [Sefton2gether Strategy](#) which highlights these areas as priorities for the Sefton health and care system, including the VCF sector, to deliver against as well as addressing the wider determinants of health.

# About Sefton

As with many areas of the country and the Liverpool City Region, Sefton faces significant health and wellbeing challenges both now and in the long-term. This graphic, from [Cheshire and Merseyside Health and Care Partnership](#), shows what the population of Sefton would look like as a village of just 100 people.



Cheshire and Merseyside  
Health and Care Partnership

## If Sefton was a village of just 100 people...

34



Children are overweight or obese by year 6

20



Adults suffer from depression

9



5-16 year olds have a MH disorder

29



Will die from cancer

68



Adults are overweight or obese

3



Adults under 40 have Type 2 diabetes

60



people are living with a long term condition

10



Will die from heart disease

16



Are smokers

82



Is the average age that women will live to

32



People take less than 30 mins exercise a week

78



Is the average age that men will live to

10



People are over 75

# Size and Scope of the VCF Sector in Sefton

Sefton is fortunate to be home to a rich and varied VCF sector that is dedicated to supporting communities and those in need through an assortment of diverse services and organisations.

The sector is made up of organisations and services of all shapes and sizes, from our small voluntary place-based grassroots groups working at hyper-local levels to larger indigenous organisations working across Sefton.

Many of our VCF sector organisations provide services commissioned by our NHS or Local Authority partners, evidencing the sectors' ability to apply and be successful in securing public sector procurements and contracts.

However, there are significantly more organisations in Sefton that are funded through other sources such as local, regional and national charitable trusts, funding bodies and grant makers (e.g. National Lottery Community Fund). Our micro and grass-roots, organisations, which make up the majority of the VCF sector, rely on small grants, fundraising and donations to provide their services, often utilising their funding in the most innovative, cost-effective and placed-based ways.

The funding brought into the borough through our VCF sector organisations contributes significantly to the local and regional economies, and ultimately supports communities to improve health outcomes through services such as social prescribing, prevention and early intervention.

Number of VCF sector services in the three Sefton localities:

**675**  
VCF SECTOR SERVICES

**CENTRAL**

**LARGE**  
> £1m **2%**

**MEDIUM**  
£100k - £1m **8%**

**77%**  
**MICRO**  
< £10k

**12%**  
**SMALL**  
£10k - £100k

Size of sector based on income:



**1,158**  
VCF SECTOR  
SERVICES

**NORTH**

There are approximately 1,000 VCF sector organisations delivering 3,500 voluntary, community and faith services available to Sefton across the three localities: North, Central and South Sefton <sup>(1)</sup> This locality approach mirrors that of local authority locality areas and allows the gathering of more targeted intelligence.

2,343 services are delivered by organisations physically located in Sefton, with approximately

**1,000**

services available to Sefton residents which are delivered by organisations based outside of Sefton.

Sefton is home to approximately

**280**

community businesses, including Community Interest Companies and social enterprises.

The sector is a significant contributor to the local and regional economy, providing

**£149 million**

GVA to the Sefton economy every year.

**509**  
VCF SECTOR  
SERVICES

**SOUTH**

Employs over **3,900** FTE employees in the VCF sector.

There are over **33,000** volunteers in the borough providing over

**99,000** hours of volunteering per week, or the equivalent of

**2,645** full time jobs. <sup>(2)</sup>

# Sefton Voluntary Sector Estate

A particular characteristic of Sefton's VCF sector is that it has largely developed locally or "bottom up", in response to needs identified within neighbourhoods and communities. Our townships and centre places throughout Sefton such as Waterloo, Bootle, Crosby, Southport and Formby have strong local identities, and VCF sector formation reflects this with many organisations physically based within their localities in close proximity to communities.

Most organisations are locally managed and governed with strong connections to communities and residents, alongside borough-wide organisations with local and outreach services. These strong connections make Sefton's voluntary sector estate ideal for place-based delivery of health and wellbeing services and outcomes, as trusted community assets.

Our Voluntary Sector Estate includes:

The faith sector including worship centres and ancillary buildings used by VCF sector organisations for social activities.

Social Care and End of Life services such as hospices, care homes and day centres.

Decommissioned or redundant public sector buildings such as libraries and community centres passed to community organisations to be revitalised.

Sports and leisure organisations and associated green spaces.

Purpose built flagship projects such as Netherton Feelgood Factory and May Logan Centre.

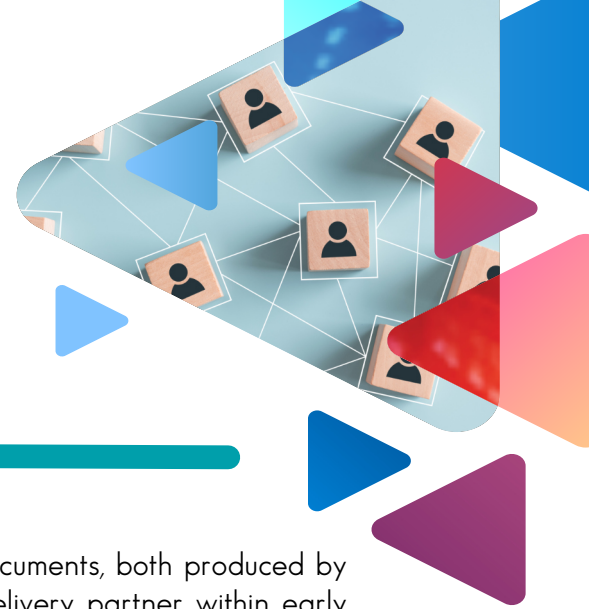
Delivery of community outreach services in partner premises.

Use of commercial premises such as community centres, charity headquarters, shop fronts.

The development of a social highway of organisations located within the Strand Shopping Centre in Bootle made up of organisations including Reach Men's Health, The Big Onion, South Sefton Foodbank, Bootle Tool Shed, Kingsley Children's Book Shop, In Another Place and "Strand By Me" (Sefton CVS).



# System Partnerships



The VCF sector in Sefton is identified in all local strategic documents, both produced by Sefton Council and our NHS strategic partners, as a key delivery partner within early intervention, prevention and population health management. The role of the sector in addressing the wider determinants of health at a place-based level is not underestimated by our public sector colleagues, however we continue to push for a more equitable role to maximise the value of the sector's activity.

The [New Realities](#) agreement between Sefton Council and the VCF sector is a great example of collaborative working and re-imagining of local, more productive relationships with the public sector. The agreement aims to improve outcomes for Sefton communities by strengthening working relationships to make the most of available resources, tap into unused community assets and establish a new culture of working together through finding common solutions and reducing bureaucracy. It represents good practice for commissioning and procurement, focusing on stimulating micro-level activity for the common good of Sefton communities with Sefton Council acting as the enabling authority for encouraging cultural shift within local authority workforces. The agreement has been recognised as best practice and has won awards including the National Compact Awards Community Impact Award and the NHS Health Education England Adult Learners Week Award.

New Realities has been refreshed for 2021 with learnings from the collaboration and support in Sefton in response to COVID-19, reflecting on what worked well and how to keep the shared enthusiasm and positive changes post-pandemic with case studies, measures of success, and key priorities for Sefton until 2025. The document is currently out for consultation.



New Realities Steering Group

Front Left to Right:  
Councillor Hardy Cabinet Member for Communities and Housing and Angela White  
Back Left to Right:  
Nick Thompson, Lorraine Webb, Andrea Watts, Mandy Elliot

# VCF Sector Response to COVID-19



Without a doubt we know that the COVID-19 pandemic has had a profound and significant impact on the health and wellbeing on people nationally, however we also know that it has and will continue to intensify the health and wellbeing challenges facing Sefton communities.

The impact on the VCF sector itself has been considerable, with significantly increased demand in the face of limited resources yet continuing to step up and support our most vulnerable despite these challenges. A [survey undertaken by the VS6 Partnership](#) of VCF sector organisations across the LCR during the first wave of the pandemic found that, in Sefton:

Despite the struggles and challenges presented throughout the pandemic, the VCF sector in Sefton has evidenced just how truly adaptable and innovative it can be. The mobilisation of the sector to support those most impacted on the crisis has been immense, with some organisations adapting their service delivery to be as safe as possible whilst others have changed their focus all together to ensure those in need get the most appropriate support.

**83%**

of organisations stated that their beneficiaries were becoming more vulnerable as a direct result of the impact of COVID-19.

**73%** organisations reported an increased need for mental health support and **53%**

for health and wellbeing support for service users.

Almost three quarters of organisations surveyed **(70%)** stated that they had been able to adapt their delivery to meet these increased needs.

Almost half **(49%)**

were working in collaboration with other organisations to respond effectively to the crisis.

Collectively, the VCF sector organisations highlighted below achieved the following during 2020/21:



Provided

**268,229** **55,449** people  
Supportive interventions to



Contributed

**65,114**

hours of volunteer support. If these hours of support were offered by one person, they would have to volunteer 24 hours a day, everyday, for over seven years. This equates to an economic and social value contribution to Sefton of

**£892,061**



Supported people in Sefton to claim financial assistance totalling

**£8,222,895**

“ If you weren't here to help I couldn't have done it, I would have just sat and cried. ”

“ Many thanks, you do all really make a wonderful difference to people's lives. ”



Delivered

**21,341**

Meals and food parcels

“ You have been BRILLIANT no other word for it. ”

“ Thanks for your help, we felt lost and didn't know where To begin! You swooped in and helped us sort everything out. ”



# COMMUNITY IS STRENGTH.

BE STRONG. LET'S LOOK OUT FOR ONE ANOTHER.



# Sefton VCF Infrastructure



The value of strong VCF sector infrastructure cannot be underestimated for developing a strong, robust and sustainable VCF sector. The government's [Civil Society Strategy "Building a future that works for everyone"](#) (2018) emphasises the importance of strong leadership and local infrastructure support systems to enable the VCF sector to flourish and to support the development of thriving local VCF sector ecosystems.

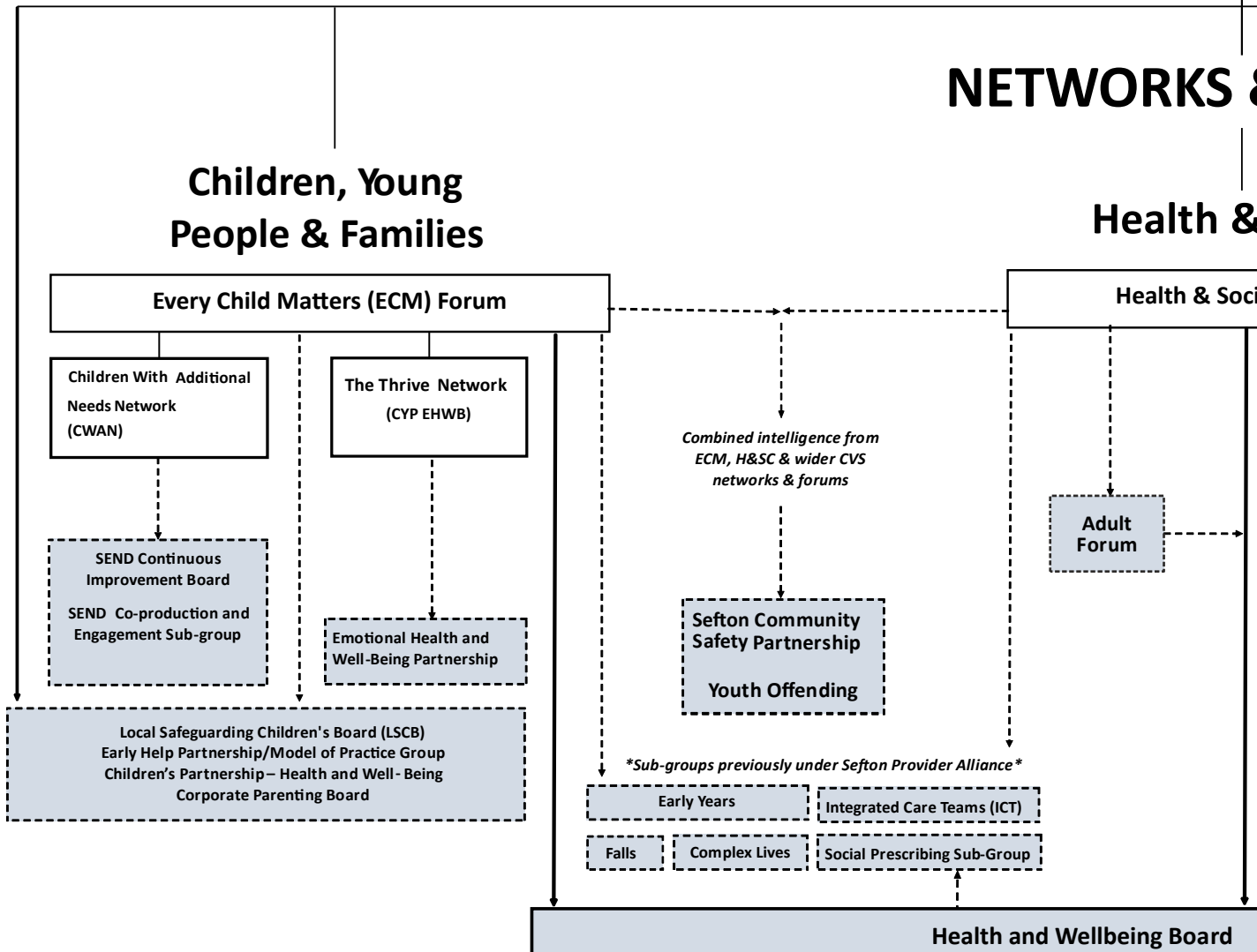
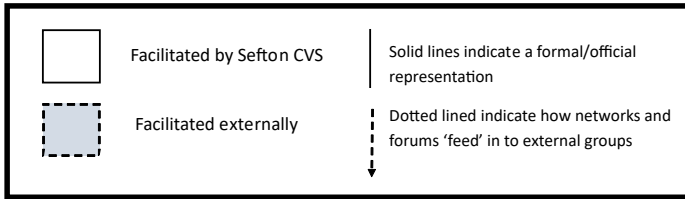
Sefton has an active VCF sector infrastructure representation through the Sefton Council for Voluntary Service (CVS). Active since 1974, Sefton CVS is one of the the largest CVSs in the country and provides support and assistance to the VCF sector within Sefton through key activities including:

- **Providing support services to the VCF sector.**
- **Promote partnerships with the sector, and between the VCF sector and other sectors.**
- **Provide a channel through which the VCF sector is represented.**
- **Develop new ideas, strategies and organisations.**
- **Support and developing volunteering opportunities.**
- **Promote equality of opportunity and access, and the value of diversity.**

As well as Sefton CVS, the borough is home to key VCF sector networks, collaborations and user voice groups spearheading the sector and our communities on multiple agendas, providing a thorough social infrastructure for Sefton. The diagram on the next page shows the recognised strategic representative eco-system for Sefton's VCF sector to local authority and NHS structures, and evidences just how far the influence of the sector reaches into these structures.

This architecture has been in place for a considerable amount of time and over the years has been strengthened. It provides an ideal framework though which PBP interaction can occur with the sector with well-established networks, connections and areas of expertise to build upon.

Recognised strategic representation  
for Sefton's VCFSE sector to the local authority



Combined intelligence from ECM, H&SC & wider CVS networks & forums

Sefton Community Safety Partnership  
Youth Offending

*\*Sub-groups previously under Sefton Provider Alliance\**

Early Years

Integrated Care Teams (ICT)

Falls

Complex Lives

Social Prescribing Sub-Group

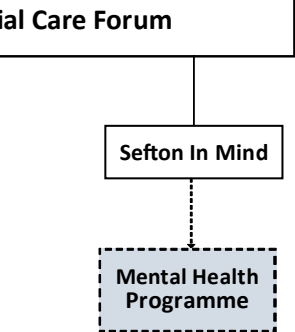
**Health and Wellbeing Board**



CROSS-CUTTING

FORUMS

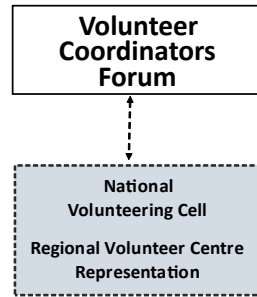
Wellbeing



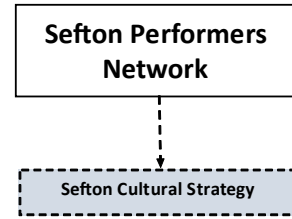
Sefton CVS representation on behalf of the wider VCF sector



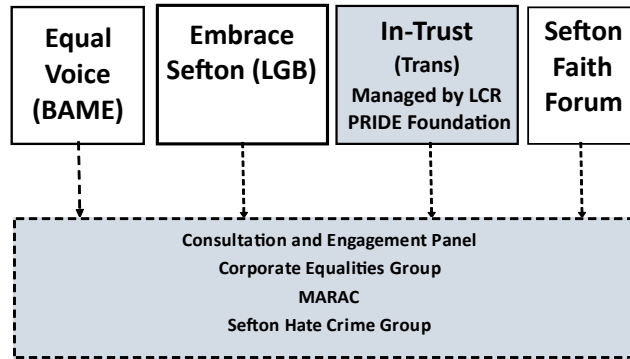
Volunteering



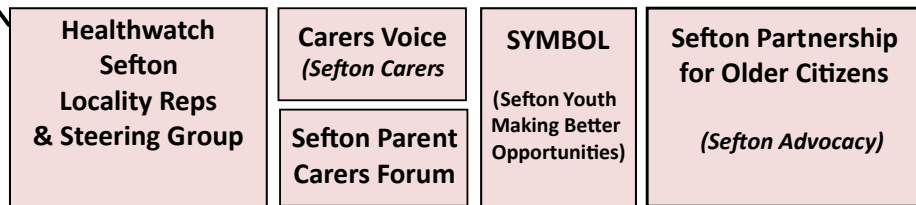
Art & Culture



Equalities



User Voice Forums



CROSS-CUTTING



Consortium  
digital inclusion consortium

New Futures Sub-Contractors  
Kickstart Partner Orgs

REGIONAL & NATIONAL



Recognised strategic conduit to the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority, Metro Mayor, LEP, C&M Partnership (via VSNW)



National membership body for local infrastructure organisations

# Our VISION for the Sefton VCF Sector

Our vision is for the VCF sector to be at the heart of Sefton's health and social care system to support the Borough's ambitions for integration and improved health and wellbeing outcomes. The local VCF sector in Sefton are essential transformation, innovation and integration partners and the sector's diversity means it is well placed to be both at the heart of population health and prevention services, as well as supporting and leading on specialist and hospital-based services.

We need the VCF sector to play its part in Sefton because the sector helps by:

Bringing vital community insight and local intelligence to inform service planning and service redesign and integration of services.

Providing reach into and hold the trust of different communities and groups, working across systems, including communities of geography, ethnicity, people with similar health conditions.

Addressing inequalities and promote engagement - particularly for groups with the poorest health and those who are most marginalised.

Bringing assets into partnerships, including volunteers, non-statutory funding, insights into inequalities and prevention as well as community assets such as the people who live there and their unique skills and knowledge and premises.

Delivering services and activities that are value based, holistic and person centred. VCF sector staff and volunteers make up a significant proportion of the health and care workforce.





# The OFFER of the VCF Sector

There are many award winning examples of the work of the VCF sector in Sefton. We have set out many of the reasons why the sector in Sefton is important to local people, partners and communities throughout this document, with a summary of the collective offer of the sector below.

The VCF sector in Sefton provides a network of groups and organisations which are:

**Accessible:** Support individuals to access the services they need. Provide a bridge to 'hard to reach' communities and pick up people who 'fall through the net' .

**Trusted:** Get to the heart of local communities who may be disengaged to understand their needs and build confidence in public services, particularly those furthest away .

**Values based:** delivering more than what is written in the contract.

**Close to communities:** Understand the needs of communities, both geographic and of interest.

**Socially innovative and flexible:** Find innovative solutions to Sefton's needs through co-production and trialling new approaches.

**Working with residents and communities:** Enabling people to look after themselves and prevent ill health, eg. through local support networks, health promoting activities, co-production.

**Needs and outcomes focused, not money and targets:** Prevent people needing to go to hospital, or more costly interventions, by providing support at an earlier stage.

The next few pages showcase a series of case studies that demonstrate the flexibility, diversity and the importance of the sector to achieving local health and wellbeing outcomes in a variety of ways, featuring some of our innovative VCF sector organisations and projects from across Sefton.

# Sefton High Intensity User Project (HIU)

## AIM

A new pilot service funded by Sefton CCG's. HIU aims to reduce inappropriate A&E attendances and admissions from individuals identified as frequent attenders through a strengths-based, person centred and solution focused approach, working closely with individuals to help address the underlying reasons for attending A&E.



## OUTCOMES

From September 2020 to March 2021, the team supported 36 patients in total. The service has been successful in supporting many patients with complex social issues, with many not attending A&E at all during and post-intervention, achieving an approximate 40% reduction in attendances across the cohort<sup>(3)</sup>.

Given that this service has been operating since September 2020 these figures are likely to increase in the future as normal service starts to resume following the COVID-19 pandemic.

Extrapolating patient outcomes over 12 months, the service will achieve:

An average reduction of  
**36** hospital admissions  
reducing costs to the NHS  
by **£193,000**

An average reduction of  
**132** In A&E attendances  
reducing costs to the NHS  
by **£25,000**

This reflects in-year savings of  
**£54,001**  
<sup>(4)</sup> to the NHS



**Sefton CVS**  
Supporting Local Communities

# Living Well Sefton

Living Well Sefton is a voluntary sector collaborative led by Sefton CVS comprising May Logan Centre, Netherton Feelgood Factory, Brighter Living Partnership, Citizens Advice Sefton, Sefton Carers' Centre and Community Connectors. It liaises closely with Smoke Free Sefton, Active Sefton, and Sefton Council and in addition to 20+ Living Well Sefton Neighbourhood Partners from the VCF sector.

## AIM

To reduce health inequalities experienced by vulnerable groups and those living in Sefton's most deprived communities. The programme delivers a cohesive and seamless integrated wellness service, continually evolving to meet the needs of Sefton communities and improve access to health and wellbeing services. LWS also manages the Social Prescribing Link Worker Service working closely with Sefton GP's, reducing demand and utilising community-based approaches to improving wellbeing.

This collaborative approach has been procured for an initial 3 years through Public Health Sefton Council. It builds on the integrated wellness service with the same group of providers which had operated through a directly commissioned model. The new hub and spoke model procured CVS as the lead agent with the named VCF sector partners. CVS manage and commission the investment and programme delivery, training and development, communications and facilitate neighbourhood and themed micro grants.

## PARTNERSHIP

The LWS collaborative working approach is fundamental to the success of the programme, building upon the strengths and specialisms of the delivery partners to provide a seamless and effective service to communities that reach across the borough. The service adopts a 'no wrong door' approach, with clients able to attend any partner for support whilst receiving a consistent service across all agencies using the specially designed Integrated Wellness System database which is shared by all Delivery Partners. The staff across the providers participate in joint workforce training to ensure consistency and knowledge across all providers.

The established collaboration of local organisations also meant that LWS could respond quickly and innovatively to meet the needs of communities throughout COVID-19 working closely with other CVS services, neighbourhood partners and the direct referral process from Sefton Council's Call Centre into LWS and CVS. LWS is also closely linked to the National Academy for Social Prescribing and the North West Social Prescribing Network.



CASE STUDY

## OUTCOMES

In 2020/21 alone **3,167** clients interacted with LWS with **86%** completing a Universal Consultation

Based on the calculated value of a 3-year social prescribing model providing savings to the NHS of

**£269** Per client <sup>\*(5)</sup>

this equates to LWS providing potential cost savings to the NHS system of

**£851,923**



# The Power of Small Grants and Grassroots Activity

Grassroots activity and organisations are the cornerstone of homegrown VCF sector activity across Sefton. They have a vital role in achieving better health and wellbeing outcomes for Sefton residents through their hyper-local place-based services, meeting local needs in innovative ways with small investment yet big impact.

Sefton Council and both of Sefton's CCG's have a track record of recognising the importance of our micro VCF sector organisations and the importance of the transformative impact of grants to stimulate grassroots activity and build capacity and resilience in Sefton's communities. Small grants for the VCF sector have the power to provide much needed community services that reach deep into communities due to the ideal placement of organisations within neighbourhoods and places. The maturity of the VCF sector ecosystem within Sefton, with the well-established networks and connections, means that the sector is ideally placed to support the administration and delivery of grants.

Successful grant programmes established within Sefton include:

- Winter Pressures Grants
- Sefton Council Transition Fund
- Community Resilience and Neighbourhood Action Grant Programme
- Community Champions Fund
- Violence Reduction Partnership Grants
- CCG VCF Fund
- Covid-19 Grant Funding



# Community Resilience Grants Programme

Living Well Sefton

## AIM

The Community Resilience Grants Programme has been running since 2016, providing funding and support for a range of community programmes to generate innovative solutions to tackle long-term problems in Sefton communities, enable personal and community resilience, and improve health and wellbeing outcomes



## HOW

Small grants of up to £2,500 per organisation are awarded to Sefton community groups, voluntary organisations, faith groups and social enterprises. Further grants of up to £500 are also available for individuals with ideas to improve health and wellbeing at a very local level. The application process is designed to be very simple to attract groups that may not normally apply for larger grant funds. Each round has a different theme reflecting community needs, with the latest theme focused on COVID-19 recovery and resilience.

Over **£220k** has been awarded through **132** small grants

Since the beginning of the programme, with awardees demonstrating tremendous value in developing high-impact, low-cost responses.

The Community Resilience Grants Programme is a great model for supporting communities and funding grassroots organisations, as well as providing cost-savings for the NHS, that we would like to see continue, supported, and replicated.

The next two case studies are examples Community Resilience Grants programme awardees, and showcase the power of small grants and grassroots activity.

# Small Grants Spotlight 1

## Get Outdoors Southport Strollers Project Southport Strollers in North Sefton

Grant amount  
**£1,730**

Southport Strollers, a walking and running group, aimed to encourage more people to take part in the club and benefit from physical exercise whilst building social connections. Organised running evenings and training sessions were unable to continue through the COVID-19 pandemic however the club supported members to run on their own and held monthly challenges to encourage members. The grant helped the club formalise and, despite the pandemic, their membership grew from 35 to 74.

Outcomes: The value of confidence training per person is estimated at **£1,195**<sup>(6)</sup>, therefore attracting **39** new members generated a potential total value of **£46,605** in improved confidence.



# Small Grants Spotlight 2

## A Wellbeing Space for Young People Merseyside Youth Association (MYA) in South Sefton

Grant amount  
**£2,000**

MYA originally aimed to deliver their 'A Wellbeing Space' project to address physical and emotional wellbeing from their base in Bootle. With the pandemic, the project moved online with a total of 100 young people taking part in the 'Space to Talk' sessions which provided one-to-one opportunities where the young person could discuss their feelings and anxieties with a Volunteer Peer Support Mentor. The Mentors have worked so well that MYA has secured extra funding for sessional hours and recruited two of the peer mentors into paid roles.

Outcomes: The value of a meaningful increase in the self-confidence in young people is estimated as **£499.38** Therefore with 100 participants,

A Wellbeing Space has potentially generated a total of **£49,938**<sup>(7)</sup> in value for young people in Sefton.

# Making Every Contact Count (MECC)

A whole system approach to Having healthy conversations

## AIM

Making Every Contact Count (MECC) is a National Programme aimed at reducing health inequalities by training non-health professionals to have 'healthy chats' with the people they see every day. MECC supports the Early Intervention and Prevention Agenda as well as building community resilience and positive behaviour change.

CASE STUDY



MECC has been delivered to more than 1,400 beneficiaries over the period of the project to date including the VCF sector, Primary Care, Council and DWP staff. Additionally, the training was recently adapted to be online focusing on supporting people with health behaviour changes linked to COVID-19, with an additional 64 participants in these sessions from a variety of organisations.

MECC training is still ongoing, following the success of the project and is a great example of a VCF sector led integrated training programme and increasing community resilience.

## OUTCOMES

It has been calculated that a MECC project training 1,000 staff each with 100 MECC encounters across all topics could result in a lifetime saving to the NHS of approximately

**£500k<sup>(8)</sup>**

With over 1,460 people trained in MECC in Sefton, this provides potential long-term cost savings to the NHS of approximately

**£730k**

# Sefton's Voluntary Sector Estate

and the strength of place-based working

The VCF sector in Sefton is home to several important community hubs and assets across the different geographies of the borough, providing the foundations of the voluntary sector estate. These dynamic hubs are particularly important as they are place-based within localities and provide irreplaceable support for their local communities.

CASE STUDY

Sefton's community hubs focus on levelling up the communities they serve to improve health and wellbeing through enabling and building upon assets that already exist within communities, developing resilience and empowering residents to manage their health and wellbeing. Utilising Sefton's community hubs and all of the voluntary sector estate aligns with the PBP's emphasis on place-based working, with the VCF sector in Sefton well attuned to local population configuration through local community organisations.

A sample of our community centres and key locality assets across Sefton include:

1. [Netherton Park Neighbourhood Centre](#)
2. [Woodvale & Ainsdale Community Association](#)
3. [Southport Community Centre & Brighter Living Partnership](#)
4. [Linacre Bridge Community Hub](#)
5. [Strand By Me](#)
6. [The Orrell Trust](#)
7. [Compassion Acts](#)
8. [Citizens Advice Sefton \(Southport\)](#)
9. [Citizens Advice Sefton \(Bootle\)](#)
10. [Sefton Carers Centre](#)
11. [Swan Women's Centre](#)
12. [Linacre Methodist Mission](#)
13. [Brunswick Youth and Community Centre](#)
14. [Litherland Youth and Community Centre](#)
15. [Waterloo Community Centre](#)
16. [L30 Community Centre](#)
17. [The Salvation Army](#)
18. [Southport Salvation Army](#)
19. [Bowersdale Resource Centre](#)
20. [SING Plus Centre](#)
21. [Sefton Council for Voluntary Service \(CVS\)](#)
22. [Venus](#)
23. [Ykids](#)
24. [Alchemy Crosby \(Parenting 2000\)](#)
25. [Alchemy, Southport \(Parenting 2000\)](#)
26. [Light for Life](#)
27. [St Leonards / South Sefton Foodbank](#)
28. [Sefton Women's & Children's Aid \(SWACA\)](#)
29. [Formby Hub \(at Formby Methodist Church\)](#)
30. [The Independence Initiative](#)
31. [Regenerus](#)
32. [Seans Place](#)
33. [The Reach Mens Centre](#)
34. [Ainsdale Lunch & Leisure](#)





# L30 Community Centre

## AIM

Based in the Netherton estate of Sefton, L30 Community Centre has been operating for over 30 years providing a diverse range of activities and support for all members of the local community. L30 specialises in supporting communities to mobilise with community-based solutions - focusing on what talents, skills and opportunities already exist and enabling them to make a difference for all.



**SPOTLIGHT  
CASE STUDY**

## CASE STUDY

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, L30 have been busier than ever. Some great examples of innovative ways of bolstering community assets including working with a local fitness instructor to organise street exercise sessions, providing pedometers for those social isolating to improve physical exercise and maintain mobility around the house, and supporting the community to set up a Community Pantry, attended by a Community Connector, for families struggling financially.

This activity has supported people to develop support networks, friendships amongst neighbours, improve physical activity, reduce social isolation, and provide food to the most vulnerable.

## OUTCOMES

L30 has seen membership grow from 300 to over

**1,000**

Since the start of the pandemic.

An increase of over 700 members over the past 12 months could mean that, if all the members were active, L30 could be generating

**£662,018** In value to the community every year.  
\*(9)

It is a great example of just how important Community Hubs and our Voluntary Sector Estate is in reducing health inequalities in some of Sefton's most deprived communities effectively

# Independence Initiative

## AIM

Independence Initiative have been operating throughout Sefton since 1998, supporting people with complex and interdependent forms of exclusion to reduce substance dependency, improve physical and mental health, reduce the risk of homelessness and offending whilst promoting social inclusion and resilience.



CASE STUDY

## CASE STUDY

Independence Initiative have supported over 9,000 people over the years, working in partnership with local agencies and the wider community to facilitate long-term rehabilitation from substance and alcohol misuse through person-centred and community-based approaches. In addition to providing one-to-one support, Independence Initiative provide a supported housing service for people in recovery for a transitional period of 9-12 months, giving much needed security and on-going support for clients.

On average, 150 individuals are housed at with Independence Initiative every year, providing people with the best possible chances to maintain recovery and improve health and wellbeing.

This model of recovery also reduces demand on NHS and Local Authority services by working closely with clients in a community based setting and developing support networks within the community.

## OUTCOMES

Local authorities spend on average  
**£6,874**  
On temporary accommodation per person per year \*(10).

With an average of **150** Individuals housed every year, Independence Initiative is able to save local government over **£1million**  
A year, without even taking in to account the potential cost savings of reduced health service use and criminal justice spending.

# A Framework For Collaboration With The VCF Sector

From our conversations with the VCF sector and local health and care partners we recognise that there are already well established relationships in Sefton and a strong track record of working together. To achieve our desired step-change in the role for the sector into the future we will need to build on this with:

A flourishing and diverse local VCF sector working as an equal partner in the Integrated Care System for Sefton.

Investment into the structures and networks that will help to make this happen, recognising the current good practice that exists in Sefton.

An agreement with local health care partners that the role of the sector is key and valuable and that the case has been made for the VCF sector to be at the heart of integration.

A more sustainable approach to funding the VCF sector and its work that enables the vision to happen and recognises how key the sector is to Sefton's ambitions.

This checklist, designed by VSNW, VS6 and the Cheshire and Warrington Infrastructure Partnership in collaboration with the Cheshire & Merseyside Health & Care Partnership, provides a framework for PBP's to work with the sector. It also supports the sector to hold PBP's accountable for ensuring the sector is in a strong position to work with PBP's to shape local services that support health and wellbeing for local people, building upon place-based partnerships and developing the maturity of PBP collaboration.



# A Framework For Collaboration With The VCF Sector



## A defined equitable role

1. There is a plan which shows how a clear and equitable role for the VCF sector will be developed and implemented within the PBP.
2. There is a clear position and role for the sector at different levels in the PBP.
3. There is a chance to make time for relationships, trust and understanding to be developed with VCF sector leaders, providers and other PBP members.
4. There is a lead role within the PBP for working with VCF sector representatives linked into the local VCF sector networks that already

## Building on existing infrastructure

1. Existing representative bodies through Sefton CVS and the local networks are connected into the PBP and have an agreed role in enabling the PBP to involve, embed and invest in the sector.
2. There is a clear plan which is resourced to enable the PBP to build capacity within the VCF sector to meet any identified gap and/or respond to specific needs, and to lead on key areas of expertise.

## Co-designing outcomes

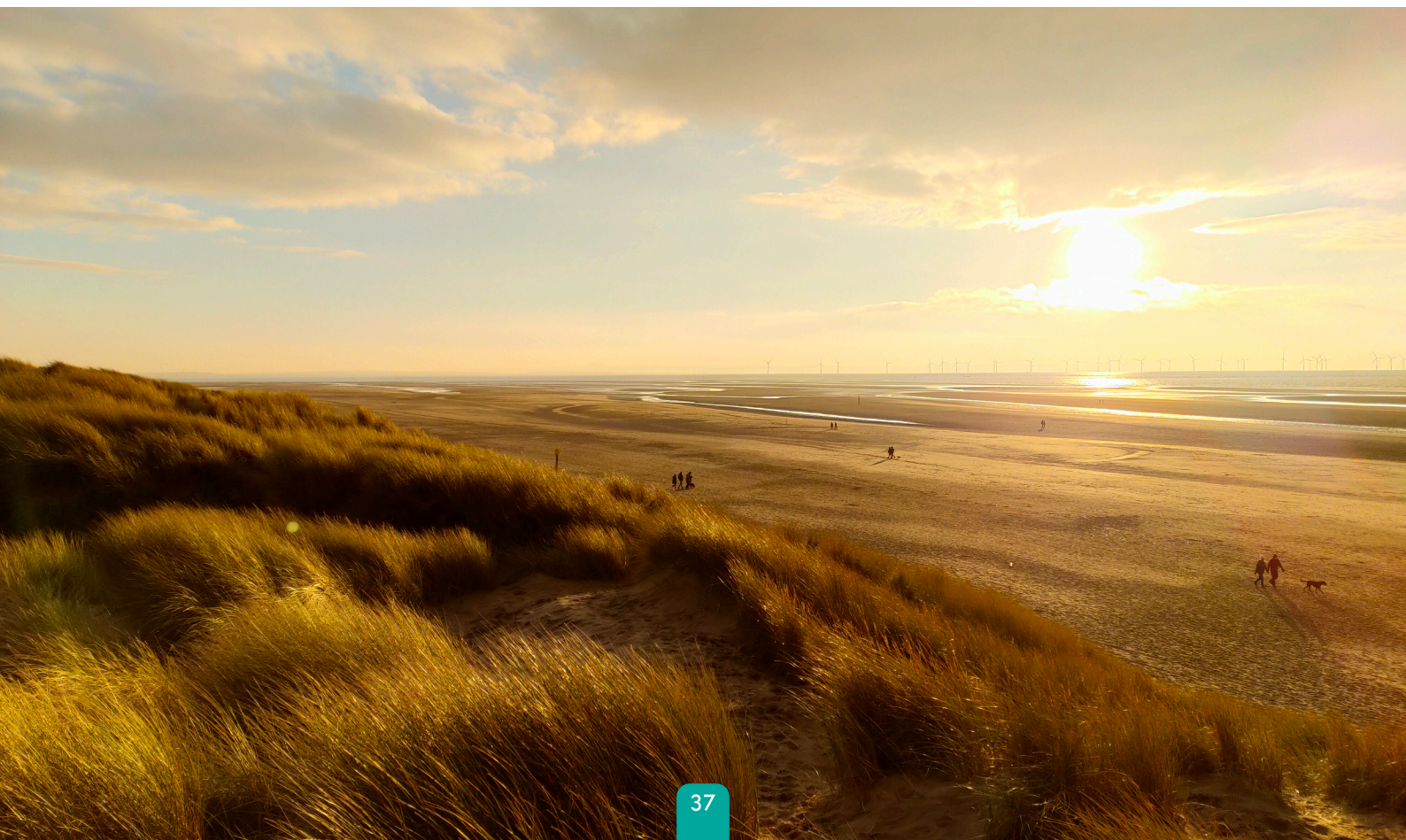
1. There is an inclusive approach: including VCF sector partners in decision-making at the initial stages of strategic planning and the development of new service delivery models.
2. Services are co-designed with VCF sector partners ensuring the PBP makes use of their expertise and knowledge.
3. There are systems in place which make it easy as possible for VCF sector organisations and communities to be involved in system-wide workstreams and service redesign.
4. The value of VCF sector partners in decision-making and service design is recognised and evidenced.

## Commitment to longer term investment

1. Specific commissioning arrangements in place to ensure that VCF sector activities are accessible, sustainable and flexible including strategic grants and reducing barriers by proportionate tendering and monitoring.
2. VCF sector leaders are supported to drive forward large-scale workforce and organisational development work.
3. The PBP support calls for further national government financial support for the sector and actively engages and partners in funding bids with VCF sector organisations.
4. The PBP is using the principles of the social value charter to create investment opportunities for the sector e.g., requiring suppliers to contribute to a grant fund or build VCF sector into their supply chain.

## Embedded in service delivery and redesign

1. A consistent approach to measuring and understanding the impact and value that VCF sector providers and the wider sector brings.
2. Alliances and partnerships for VCF sector providers with clinical services are actively created to support joined up delivery.
3. VCF sector activities are consistently and proportionately including in data collection and operational returns with resource to support this work.
4. The PBP uses the VCF sector to gather intelligence and insight, collate wider community feedback, escalate priority issues and take action on these issues.





# FINDINGS

These findings summarise the research carried out to inform this document and the feedback obtained following consultation held with VCF sector networks, NHS and local authority colleagues to understand how the role of the VCF sector within local health and care transformation can be strengthened. They emphasise the importance of integrated, collaborative working between the VCF sector and Sefton's emerging PBP, forming the basis for the recommendations for achieving change in planning and delivery to develop healthier, happier communities in Sefton.

## Finding 1:

The VCF sector within Sefton is recognised and respected by public sector partners as being a vital link into communities, providing innovative and diverse service delivery models to improve health and wellbeing at the most local levels often in ways that are unique to the sector. However, even more than being closely connected to communities, the sector is made up of organisations, networks, collaborative groups, leadership, and user voice forums that form the architecture of the vast VCF sector ecosystem. A greater understanding of these structures within the public sector will provide valuable opportunities to improve strategy and service design, as well as forming a framework for PBP interaction to happen with the VCF sector.

## Finding 2:

In addition to greater public sector understanding of the VCF sector ecosystem, there needs to be greater representation and participation of the VCF sector within PBP working to truly shape services that are place-based to support the health and wellbeing of local people. A framework, such as the PBP Checklist provides an opportunity for the sector to hold PBPs accountable for ensuring the sector is in a strong position to work with PBPs. The checklist covers areas including the sector having a defined and equitable role, building on existing infrastructure, co-designing outcomes, longer term investment and embedding the sector in service delivery and redesign.

## Finding 3:

The New Realities agreement is a highly commended piece of work promoting collaborative and equitable partnerships with the VCF sector, ensuring services and policies consider place-based community needs. We need to see more partners adopting this way of working, promoting a better culture of working with the sector and its values, and signing up to its principles and build upon it.

## Finding 4:

The VCF sector within Sefton is made up of a large number of diverse organisations operating at different levels and sizes throughout the borough. They play a key role within communities, particularly smaller grassroots organisations, in supporting the people of Sefton by providing local informal and formal support to improve health and wellbeing outcomes and quality of life.

We have seen in the case studies throughout this document just how much value the sector can generate and cost savings to the health system from these small projects delivering health and wellbeing outcomes based on needs. To enable the sector to continue to develop innovative ideas and models for population health management, prevention, and early intervention the sector must be resourced properly and sustainably with opportunities for leadership development.

## Finding 5:

The VCF sector provides innovative and impactful population health management services across Sefton, with expertise in early intervention and prevention of poor health and wellbeing within communities. The voluntary sector estate is a vast trusted asset and enabler for delivering these place-based local services right in the centre of communities. It provides significant opportunities for NHS partners to build upon the assets already available within the VCF sector ecosystem to make services accessible, rather than adding the sector on to NHS systems that are further away from communities.

## Finding 6:

The Sefton2gether strategy emphasises the need to embed social value and social impact across the commissioning process to contribute to healthier, happier communities and create a wealthier and more prosperous borough for everyone. The VCF sector in Sefton generates substantial social impact by its very nature being focused on people, places and communities and the sector should be supported to measure and demonstrate this impact to funders, commissioners, and public sector partners. This has been an area identified by the sector as being of value to understanding both individual organisation and collective VCF sector impact. Demonstrating social impact will also allow VCF sector organisations of all types and sizes in Sefton to understand and contribute to place priorities, linking in with the PBP.



# APPENDICES



## Page 15:

1. [Sefton CVS Impact Report and Accounts](#) (2019) Pg.22
2. [Measuring the size and scope of the voluntary and community sector in Liverpool](#) (2015), Liverpool John Moores University

## Page 26:

3. Data from internal evaluation of HIU by Sefton CVS
4. Total projected savings over 12 months (£218,000) minus cost of service for 12 months (£163,999)

## Page 27:

5. [Rotherham Social Prescribing Service Evaluation](#) (2015) pg.30

## Page 30:

6. [Evaluation of Salford's Third Sector Fund Grants Programme](#) (2016) Pg. 47
7. [University of Bristol "Off Centre" Social Return on Investment Analysis](#) (2012) Pg. 11

## Page 31:

8. [Making Every Contact Count: Values for Money](#) (2016) Pg. 4

## Page 33:

9. [Evaluation of the Salford Third Sector Fund Grant Programme](#) (2019) Pg.91

## Page 34:

10. [Evaluation of the Salford Third Sector Fund Grant Programme](#) (2019) Pg.56



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**For more information about the VCF sector and this document please contact:**

 [communications@seftoncvcs.org.uk](mailto:communications@seftoncvcs.org.uk)



**Sefton CVS**  
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## Waterloo Office

Suite 3B, 3rd Floor, North Wing  
Burlington House, Crosby Road North  
Waterloo, L22 0LG



**Tel: (0151) 920 0726**

**[www.seftoncvcs.org.uk](http://www.seftoncvcs.org.uk)**

This document has been authored by:

Laura Tilston  
Voluntary Sector North West  
[laura.tilston@vsnw.org.uk](mailto:laura.tilston@vsnw.org.uk)

Warren Escadale  
Voluntary Sector North West  
[warren.escadale@vsnw.org.uk](mailto:warren.escadale@vsnw.org.uk)

Sally Yeoman  
Halton & St Helens VCA  
[syeoman@haltonsthelensvca.org.uk](mailto:syeoman@haltonsthelensvca.org.uk)

Document design:  
Annie Lawrenson - CommunicART Ltd  
[annie@communicart.co.uk](mailto:annie@communicart.co.uk)

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