

Coventry VCSE Alliance member handbook

Welcome to the Coventry VCSE Alliance. By joining, your organisation has shown its commitment to:

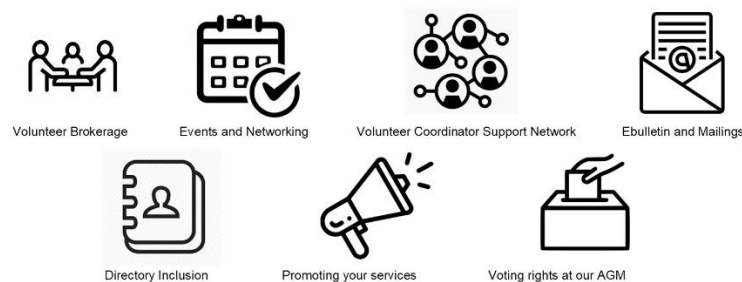
- Championing and sharing the [Coventry VCSE Alliance Manifesto](#) through your organisation and wider
- Encouraging others to join the Coventry VCSE Alliance and sign up to the Coventry VCSE Alliance Manifesto
- Working to avoid conflict and share best practice
- Celebrating the added value volunteers bring to organisations and ensuring they are all valued and thanked for the unique contribution they make
- Respecting and recognising the independence, views, and values of other members

This document outlines Coventry VCSE Alliance member support services provided by Voluntary Action Coventry. We encourage you to engage fully with this offer, to interact with us on social media and play an active part in peer and community support in Coventry.

Top Tips

- All members of the Coventry VCSE Alliance are required to create an [organisation profile](#) on our community engagement platform, “[Get Involved Coventry](#)”. The site has multiple functions and analytic tools to help support with volunteer recruitment, promotion of events, projects, and services
- Make sure colleagues, wider staff team and volunteers across your organisation know about your membership, our [Manifesto](#), and have access to any of our services that can support them in the work they do
- Get to know the [staff](#) at Voluntary Action Coventry: we are also here for referrals of clients to and from our support, partnership work across projects or developing new work in the city

Member Support Services



Volunteer Brokerage and how we champion volunteering

VAC promotes volunteering, community action and the power of participation and engagement to the people of Coventry. We do this through outreach events and presentations, volunteer information and support drop-in sessions, online and social media platforms, our supported volunteering projects, and our online platform, Get Involved Coventry.

Through the VCSE Alliance, our staff build up a detailed knowledge of the volunteering landscape in Coventry, and work closely with individuals and communities to best match them with the roles and wider support the VCSE sector offers.

Advertising volunteer roles and engaging with volunteers

Get Involved Coventry is our dedicated community engagement site. Coventry VCSE Alliance members each create an [organisation profile](#) for inclusion in our [Community Directory](#) and have the option to add activities for the community to take part in:

- **Volunteer roles** – these could be one-off tasks, volunteer support at events, short term, or ongoing opportunities. Volunteers can apply directly via our platform using custom-created or imported application forms
- **Events** – advertise community events, fairs, open days, family fun days or fundraisers
- **Workshops** – allow people to book onto volunteer information or taster sessions, project workshops or training

Our **Get Involved Coventry** platform is powered by Deedmob. You can find their comprehensive Knowledge Base for guidance on all site functions [here](#).

Find **Get Involved Coventry** [here](#).

Volunteering Events and Community Outreach

We both hold and coordinate, and attend, stakeholder and community events to promote volunteering as this is the best way to reach communities, and we champion not only VAC services but those of our Alliance members too.

From large scale volunteering and community fairs with stalls for the public to engage with, to presentations, delivering activities and Q&A sessions for different cohorts and communities, there are many ways we can provide you with opportunities to raise awareness of your support and services, and encourage Coventry residents to volunteer their time in support of this.

You are also able to promote and advertise your own events on Get Involved Coventry.

Keep up to date with our planned activities and calls to action by subscribing to our [bulletin](#) and [Volunteer Coordinator Support Network Outlook group](#), or [invite us](#) to your events.

Volunteer drop-in and education

Our face-to-face Volunteer Centre offer helps people access volunteering or identify the right role for them and takes three main forms, each offering different levels and timescales of support:

- **Volunteer drop-in:** ad hoc advice for anyone seeking guidance around volunteering
- **Introduction to Volunteering workshops:** 2-hour activity and discussion-based session giving comprehensive information on volunteering, how to find suitable roles, and demystifying volunteer recruitment processes
- **Supported Volunteering:** our Improving Lives project provides targeted community and classroom-based support to build confidence and skills in those interested in trying volunteering but experiencing barriers to their participation

We encourage you to add to this offer. You may like to provide a site visit or volunteer taster session for our small groups of Improving Lives clients. Please [contact us](#) to discuss.

Social Media

VAC utilises [Facebook](#), [X](#), [LinkedIn](#) and [Instagram](#) to reach a wide online audience. As an Alliance, together we can amplify our voice and reach more people by following, liking, and sharing posts and events. Please provide us with your social media handles, and you can follow and tag VAC using the details below:

- <https://www.facebook.com/VoluntaryActionCoventry> @voluntaryactioncoventry
- <https://twitter.com/VACoventry> @VACoventry
- <https://www.linkedin.com/company/vacoventry> @voluntaryactioncoventry
- <https://www.instagram.com/vacoventry/> @vacoventry

Every week, we shine a spotlight on one volunteer opportunity advertised on Get Involved Coventry by featuring it across our social media channels as our “**Role of the Week**”. If we select your role, we will tag your organisation, and encourage you to interact with the posts. Commenting or starting a conversation on these posts can really help potential volunteers to engage, too.

We also celebrate existing volunteers via our “**Volunteer Spotlight**” social media posts. To nominate a volunteer, [contact us](#). You will need to provide descriptive narrative of the difference they are making, along with their photo and permission to feature them. We operate a rolling nomination pool, meaning if your volunteer is not chosen this time, they still have the opportunity in future.

Community Directory

You will need to [create an organisation profile](#) on Get Involved Coventry to feature in our [Community Directory](#).

The directory provides an interactive map of third sector services across Coventry and a straightforward way for potential service users, social prescribers and corporate organisations seeking charity partners to find and connect with you. You have responsibility for your organisation profile, so do ensure this is kept up to date and looks engaging.

Volunteer Coordinator Support Network (VCSN)

This support service is specifically aimed at those who have responsibility for or assist with the recruitment, management, training, or support of volunteers. It includes access to monthly meetings, and the option to be part of the VCSN outlook group.

VCSN meetings

If linking in with other VCSE organisations would be useful to you, dates and times of our Volunteer Coordinator Support Network online meetings can be found [here](#).

VCSN meetings take place monthly, with both online and face to face options. They are an informal space to connect with, seek advice from and offer your experience and support to peers across a range of organisations with volunteering related topics and challenges.

VCSN outlook group

The outlook group is primarily provided for Volunteer Coordinators to receive information and updates from VAC that are relevant to the work they do – expect to receive links to useful websites and training, resources, signposting, meeting, and networking information along with connections from corporate volunteer teams. Click to join the group [here](#).

Ebulletin

VAC produces ten editions of our ebulletin per year, solely for our Alliance members with a focus on voluntary sector-specific content. We share updates on VAC projects and activity, and a monthly digest of national and regional funding, events, training, and sector news. You need to [subscribe](#) to receive our mailings.

Also included in the ebulletin is a “**Member News**” section. Please [email](#) content you would like us to share.

Sector Networking and Forums

From time to time, VAC coordinates events and ways for our Alliance to share and explore certain themes. These include things like our Annual General Meeting (AGM), networking events and meet-ups, online surveys, and support forums. Please [subscribe](#) to our ebulletin to be notified of upcoming opportunities.

Contact

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COVENTRY VCSE ALLIANCE MANIFESTO

Working together for Coventry

Our vision

A better Coventry for all who live in the city.



We believe

That creating a structure and support system at all levels which enables the VCSE to be active and equal participants in service planning, development and delivery, will enable us to reduce inequalities and improve the health and wellbeing of the residents of Coventry.

We come together to

- Share knowledge to ensure we are better informed and to provide mutual support
- Identify common causes or issues and to take collective action to result in greater impact
- Challenge inequality and champion fairness
- Value and promote diversity and difference
- Work to protect the services/support that empowers individuals and communities enabling them to become resilient and independent
- Be involved early in helping to define problems identified by individuals/communities in Coventry and help them determine their potential solutions/outcomes

Our context

- Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) organisations in Coventry are truly rooted in their communities and have a unique insight into the needs of local populations.
- We have developed to respond to specific local challenges faced by our citizens and communities. We have acquired local knowledge and devised our charitable offers to respond to real and abiding citizen need.
- We offer equitable access to citizens and communities, enabling people with protected characteristics to be able to use services effectively and play a fuller part in their community.
- We are committed to engaging effectively with local citizens, the Local Authority, NHS, universities, and other institutions.

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We ask statutory partners

- To recognise the VCSE sector is a key strategic partner with an important contribution to make in shaping, improving and delivering services, and developing and implementing plans to tackle issues
- To ensure Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise organisations are supported to be active and equal participants in decision making structures.
- To recognise the existing work that is being done by the VCSE sector to improve health and wellbeing outcomes and explore new and innovative ways of addressing any gaps
- To develop real collaboration by building relationships, awareness and trust across communities, organisations and sectors
- To proactively involve smaller community groups to provide a 'community voice' in development and design of provision
- To appreciate the contribution of the VCSE in terms of social return on investment, and the value in-kind of volunteers

We will

VCSE Alliance members will

- Champion and share the Manifesto through their organisations and wider
- Encourage others to join the Alliance and sign up to the Manifesto
- Work to avoid conflict and share best practice
- Celebrate the added value volunteers bring to organisations and ensure they are all valued and thanked for the unique contribution they make
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