



**Cheshire West
Voluntary Action**
Championing the community sector

Impact Report 2025



Championing the community sector
- building trust, influencing, inspiring

Connecting

Championing

**Sharing &
growing**

**Building
resilience**

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Welcome

We're delighted to share Cheshire West Voluntary Action's (CWVA) Impact Report for 2025, highlighting the wide range of work carried out by the CWVA team and the impact we've made.

It's been another extremely busy year for the team, supporting or engaging with 1,906 people from 375 organisations from across the community and public sectors. This equated to more than 9,000 collective hours of support and engagement.

We've run a survey to capture feedback from community and public sector staff and volunteers on the support we offer, looking at where we've made the biggest impact and how we can make improvements in future. You'll see data from this survey used throughout the Impact Report. While it's overwhelmingly positive, we're always looking to improve the support we offer, and we'll use the feedback to help shape our future priorities.

The way we support community sector organisations, their staff and volunteers can vary significantly as all organisations, as well as the roles within them, are very different. It means the work we do at CWVA is varied, and this Impact Report aims to provide an overview of our activity in 2025, focusing on areas like:

- **starting up and development support**
- **helping set a collective, strategic vision for the community sector through alliances and partnerships**
- **demonstrating the impact of both CWVA and the wider community sector to open up future opportunities**

- **engaging on devolution and other geographical footprints.**

We're fully aware these are challenging times for the community sector, with demand for services ever increasing at a time when funding is becoming more difficult to come by. We're pleased to have been able to distribute more than £500,000 into the community sector during 2025, and we'll continue to explore further funding opportunities for the sector.

We've seen more organisations reach out to us for support in 2025, but we're fully aware others could engage with us. It's completely free to access our support, and we'd encourage any organisations to get in touch should you need our help.

2025 was a challenging year for CWVA and our team as we sadly lost our Deputy Chief Executive, Clare Harrison, who worked for the charity for more than two decades. Clare's knowledge, experience and personality are irreplaceable, and we all miss her very much. We'll continue to champion Clare's legacy long into the future, launching the Award for Social Activism in her memory at last year's Volunteer Awards, and we'd like to thank everyone for their support and kindness during this period.

Gary Cliffe

Chief Executive

Toria Buzza

Chair of Trustees



Testimonials

"Working in a space that is evolving so rapidly – clinically, culturally, and system-wide – can feel daunting for a young organisation finding its place in the community sector. With the guidance and support of CWVA and its incredible team, we've been able to grow with confidence and purpose."

Michael Leibe, Director, ND Directed CIC

"CWVA is a passionate and effective champion of the community sector. Over the past year, Gary and the team have helped ensure the sector is an equal partner in the emerging Combined Authority, played a central role in developing the Cheshire and Warrington manifesto, and put the sector at the forefront of neighbourhood health in Cheshire West. CWVA has also built simple, practical ways to demonstrate the everyday impact of local groups, and continues to drive innovation and collaboration so the sector and communities can do what they do best."

Warren Escadale, Chief Executive, Voluntary Sector North West

"CWVA is a valued partner of the Council, working with us to achieve shared priorities and providing an effective link to the wider community sector. While there is already plenty of positive work taking place, the Council has ambitions to become even more community led, and the relationship with the community sector is an important part of this. We value the trust and knowledge the sector has in local communities across Cheshire West, and we look forward to continuing our work with CWVA and the wider community sector."

Natalie Abraham, Director of Strategy and Transformation, Cheshire West and Chester Council

"2025 has been a fantastic year for the ongoing relationship between CWP and CWVA, building on previous years of collaboration alongside Integrated Care Board (ICB) and local authority partners. The continued support from CWVA, ensuring that community remains at the heart of our transformation programmes of work, is crucial. This is particularly important with our commitment to the delivering key shifts from the NHS 10-Year Plan, from hospital to community and treatment to prevention. We are very fortunate to have the ongoing expertise and support of Andrew Herbert, who is involved in numerous programmes of work across the place area, and is a valuable guide and lead for how best we work together for people with mental health needs."

Sam Curtis, Associate Director of Operations for Community SMH and All Age Disability Services, Cheshire and Wirral Partnership (CWP) NHS Foundation Trust



Cheshire West Voluntary Action

Championing the community sector

2025 survey feedback

100%

were very satisfied or satisfied with CWVA's overall support*

88%

strongly agreed or agreed that CWVA had helped them build relationships and partnerships across sectors*

86%

strongly agreed or agreed that CWVA had helped make sure the community sector is treated equally**

86%

strongly agreed or agreed that they feel well represented by CWVA**

86%

strongly agreed or agreed that CWVA had helped them to promote their positive impact in the community**

70%

strongly agreed or agreed they had developed by best practice or advice shared by CWVA**

100%

would recommend engaging with CWVA*

91%

rated the communication they receive from CWVA as either excellent or good*

*Based on 82 responses from staff and volunteers across the community and public sectors

**Based on 66 responses from community sector staff and volunteers

Championing the community sector as a system leader

A key strategic aim for CWVA is acting as a champion for the community sector, helping make sure the sector is treated as an equal partner, sets a clear, collective strategic vision, and is well positioned to make the most of future opportunities.

The CWVA team regularly attends around 55 meetings to help champion the sector, including key forums like the Cheshire West Health and Care Partnership Committee, Health and Wellbeing Board, Cheshire and Warrington Leaders' Board, and regular discussions with public sector leadership teams to name a few.

There are a wide range of ways that CWVA captures the views of community sector organisations and residents to feed into its representation work.

The alliances and partnerships run by CWVA, covered in more detail later in this Impact Report, help create a collective voice for the sector on various themes, while the day-to-day development work with organisations uncovers challenges in communities, and where the sector feels we should be focusing our efforts.

To complement this, CWVA has been actively engaging in many consultations and policy developments on a local, regional and national level, making sure the sector's voice is heard through various engagement methods. Consultations and policy developments include Cheshire West and Chester Council's budget, Sustainable and Inclusive Economic Strategy for Cheshire and Warrington, Clinical Services Strategy for Cheshire and Merseyside, and many more.

Another key strand of this work is to lever funding into the sector, with CWVA distributing more than £500,000 during 2025, providing a boost for organisations at a time when there is significant demand on services across the sector.

Working with funders like Cadent Gas, Entep Properties and the Council through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF), CWVA uses its extensive local networks to make sure funds have the maximum impact in communities, supporting community sector organisations of all sizes.

As an infrastructure organisation that focuses on supporting organisations without moving into direct delivery, CWVA aims to never compete with its member organisations, and always approaches its representation work to create opportunities for the community sector as a whole. — — —



In CWVA's 2025 survey, 86 per cent of community sector staff and volunteers strongly agreed or agreed that CWVA has helped make sure the community sector is treated equally, and that they feel well represented by CWVA

– – Engaging with the devolution agenda

A key development in Cheshire and Warrington has been devolution, with a Combined Authority being put in place from April 2026.

CWVA, as a member of Cheshire and Warrington Infrastructure Partnership (CWIP) alongside other infrastructure organisations in the region, has been actively involved in discussions, positioning the community sector effectively and making it clear that Combined Authority priorities won't be met without equitable involvement for the sector.

CWIP has codeveloped a manifesto with the wider community sector, focusing on 10 key themes where the sector can make an invaluable contribution to the devolution process.

Manifesto themes

1. Working together as equal partners
2. Supporting health and wellbeing
3. Tackling poverty and the cost of living
4. Skills, jobs and volunteering
5. Climate and environment
6. Giving communities a voice
7. Promoting equality, diversity and inclusion
8. Fair and equitable funding and commissioning
9. Arts, culture and physical activity
10. Building stronger communities

A seat on the Combined Authority Shadow Board has also been secured for the sector, with Gary Cliffe, Chief Executive of CWVA, taking up this role in the short-term before a democratic process is carried out to elect a sector representative for the main Combined Authority Board.

This is one of few examples where the sector has had such involvement from the start, and CWIP is working with the Combined Authority to make sure the sector and lived experience influences all workstreams and priorities.



Cheshire & Warrington
Infrastructure Partnership

VCFSE sector devolution manifesto

CWIP members



A real opportunity with direct payments

As part of CWVA's work to champion the community sector and open up new opportunities, we have been working with the Council to develop a market for direct payments, which are a way to fund social care needs, giving individuals control to arrange and pay for their own support.

CWVA has been working with community sector organisations to make their services more visible, highlighting them as an option for direct payments that will achieve positive outcomes for individuals.

By creating a shop window of community sector services that can support eligible care outcomes, it will create a more seamless process for professionals referring into services, as well as individuals looking to access support and use direct payments.

Putting the community sector at the heart of neighbourhoods

CWVA once again coordinated Community Partnerships in Cheshire West during 2025, making sure the community sector was at the forefront of shaping the approach to neighbourhood health in the borough.

This is seen as an innovative model in Cheshire and Merseyside, approaching priorities and delivery from the community up, rather than being clinically led.

With Cheshire West being a diverse borough, all seven Community Partnerships are different and not one size fits all. Some Community Partnerships in rural areas are made up of small grassroots organisations led by volunteers, while others have more input from larger not-for-profit organisations and clinical staff.

During 2025, 745 staff or volunteers from 86 different organisations across sectors engaged with Community Partnerships in Cheshire West, equating to almost 1,400 attendances at meetings and networking events

To complement the work of Community Partnerships, CWVA has been working with system partners to develop a vision for community spaces, harnessing existing activity and exploring other opportunities to create safe spaces where communities can access the right wrap-around support at the earliest point.

CWVA has spearheaded the Northwich Hub at Barons Quay, expanding the Council's Let's Talk

sessions to bring together a wider range of organisations across sectors that can offer support in a community space.

With neighbourhoods being a hot topic for all partners across the system, CWVA and the wider community sector are in a perfect position to bring a wide range of stakeholders together, create a collective vision, and engage groups that are often seldom heard, marginalised, excluded and harder to reach.

Case study: Bren Brews

The Bren Project recently opened Bren Brews at Hoole United Reformed Church (URC), helping people with disabilities learn new skills that can support their journeys into volunteering or employment.

The initial connection between The Bren Project and Hoole URC was made at One Chester Community Partnership's networking event in late 2024.

Bren Brews is now open at Hoole URC from 10am to 3pm on Monday to Friday, with coffee, tea, milkshakes and cakes all on the menu.

Without Community Partnerships and CWVA, the initial connection to get this impactful project off the ground might not have been made.

Andy Ashford, Charity Manager at The Bren Project, said: **"For a long time, we've wanted to broaden our offer.**

"Our main ethos is to provide supported work placements to our beneficiaries, and we've historically done that through Bren — — —"

— — — — Bikes and external placements in the community.

“We met Hoole URC at a networking event run by CWVA and One Chester Community Partnership. We had a great chat, an initial conversation and that was the start of the whole process.

“A big strategic aim of ours has been to open a community café, but we’ve been looking for the right venue and feel for a café.”



Case study: Bee Friends

Frodsham Bee Friends, a not-for-profit member of the Frodsham, Helsby and Elton (FHE) Together Community Partnership, brings people together, makes connections and creates networks to reduce social isolation and loneliness.

Originally funded by Community Partnerships, Bee Friends has gone from strength to

strength with the support of FHE Together.

80 people now regularly attend the weekly drop-in sessions at Bee Friends, engaging with arts, crafts and other social activities.

A Bee Friends member moved to Frodsham from Somerset and the weekly drop-in sessions have helped her settle into a new area that she was unfamiliar with.

She said: **“On my first day, I stood at the door, I hesitated and I wondered whether I could go in.**

“I’m so glad I did as my Thursday mornings are now part of my life in Frodsham.

“I love the people who surround me. The volunteers wait on us hand and foot – cups of tea and biscuits – and they’re so nice. If we’ve got a problem, we know we can talk to them.”

Bee Friends is also listening to people with lived experience to continue developing its services to meet local needs.

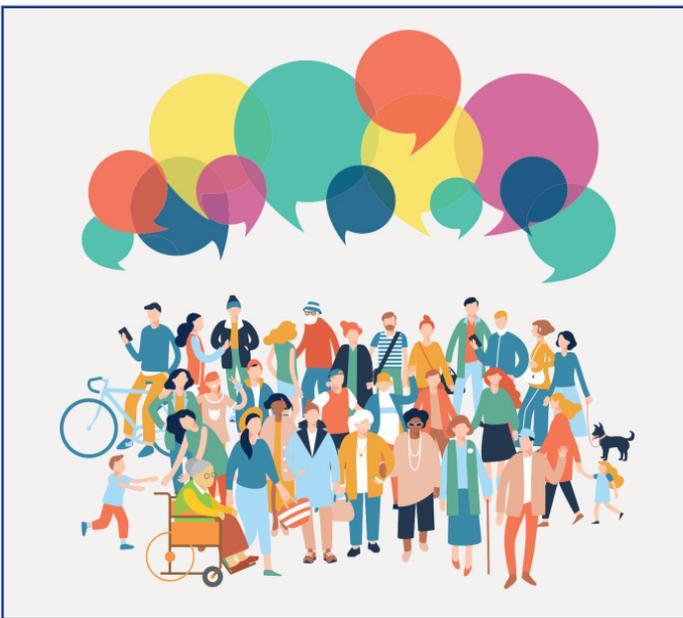
Bee Friends is delivering a social return on investment (SROI) of £2.64 per £1 invested – based on the value of community development, engagement in crafts or other social activities, and the value of volunteering per hour



Embedding lived experience

After working with the University of Chester to launch the Local Voices Framework a few years ago, outlining a set of principles to support coproduction in Cheshire West, CWVA has been working with partners and communities to continue developing a clear vision for local voices.

This has shaped CWVA's lived experience work in 2025, continuing to support organisations to embed lived experience within governance, service design and coproduction practice.



Examples of CWVA's lived experience work include the following.

- A Food Partnership member was supported to design and recruit a Participation Trustee with lived experience, providing lived experience representation at board level.
- Lived experience has been championed within CWVA alliances and partnerships, particularly the Mental Health Alliance, West Cheshire Food Partnership and Financial Resilience Forum, helping make sure lived experience is included from the outset.
- Championing the Local Voices Framework

principles in many consultations, including the Health and Wellbeing Strategy, Eating Well and Get Cheshire and Warrington Working.

- Helping establish a Local Voices Network, providing a space for community organisations and people with lived experience to share learning and explore best practice in coproduction. Two network meetings took place during the year, helping build relationships and create a movement of coproduction.
- Through a small lived experience development grant, enabling one member organisation to deliver a dance performance, showcasing participants' lived experience. The project helped people build confidence, creativity and leadership skills, while raising awareness through lived experience-led storytelling.
- Delivering coproduction training and developing resources for Sanctuary-funded organisations, working with asylum seekers and refugees to strengthen confidence and consistency in lived experience practice across the sector.
- Members of the Local Voices Network were involved in coproducing the Lived Experience Leadership programme, a 12-week initiative launched in February 2026, aiming to support people with lived experience to build confidence, strengthen their ability to influence decision-making, and progress into volunteering or paid roles.

There are also plans to introduce Food Ambassadors as lived experience volunteer roles within the Food Partnership.

During 2025, CWVA worked with 136 staff or volunteers from 33 different organisations around lived experience and coproduction

Mental Health Alliance takes next steps in its journey

With the Mental Health Alliance a couple of years old, member organisations have carried out a strategic review in the past year, identifying four overarching aims for the next two years that shaped our activity in 2025.

Now funded by Cheshire and Wirral Partnership (CWP) NHS Foundation Trust, the alliance has grown from its origins in the NHS transformation process into a strong, relational network with its own vision for the wider mental health system.

Our Journey So Far is a resource that has been created to tell the story of this collaboration, including new funding and partnership projects. A common theme is how the alliance has increased members' knowledge of each other's support and the wider mental health system.

Jolene Weaver, Chief Executive of Chapter Mental Health, said: **"Chapter has found many positive benefits of being members of the alliance, enabling us to gain real insight into the wide range of organisations operating across the area.**

"We have built meaningful relationships with our peers, helping us identify appropriate referral pathways for people we support.

"We have also built trust, enabling us to identify key partners that we can collaborate with to develop new, mutually beneficial relationships."

A commitment to investing in cross-sector relationships led to meetings between the alliance and CWP's Talking Therapies service, spending time to explore how we could work better together as part of a single system.

We agreed a key focus would be to improve Talking Therapies take up and outcomes among under-served communities, such as ethnic minorities, neurodivergent people and men. We are progressing this by building partnerships between Talking Therapies champions and relevant alliance members.

As a community of practice, the alliance recognises the importance of assuring the public and system partners on the quality of services, and creating a recognised quality framework is an important next step for the alliance's journey.

Building on Warrington's excellent EQIS model, a framework has now been developed. By the end of December 2025, the first cohort of six members had completed the process and been approved, including larger commissioned service providers, as well as smaller and newer organisations. — —



During 2025, CWVA worked with 186 staff or volunteers from 72 different organisations through the Mental Health Alliance

- - Case study: Young Hearts, Strong Minds

Young Hearts, Strong Minds is an early intervention therapy and youth-led support project, delivered by Cheshire Young Carers and Youth Fed.

The Mental Health Alliance helped secure two-year funding for this project from the Cheshire and Merseyside Integrated Care Board (ICB).

The project aims to increase mental health awareness and provide early intervention therapeutic support for young people in local schools, fostering positive conversations around mental health on both a personal and collective level.

Mark Smith, Fundraising Officer at Youth Fed, commented on the partnership to deliver this

project: "I hope we're able to keep this great partnership going for many more years, helping improve the lives of many more vulnerable young people in our communities.

"Not just Youth Fed and Cheshire Young Carers, but the ICB, Council and CWVA. The role of CWVA has been very important, helping us to keep things on track and have regular opportunities to come together to reflect, share outcomes, trends and challenges."

Young Hearts, Strong Minds has delivered a social return on investment (SROI) of £8.73 per £1 invested, based on the number of therapy sessions, improvement in confidence and self-esteem, and avoiding permanent school exclusion

CYPF Alliance continues to mature as strategic network

2025 was a year of continued development for CWVA's Children, Young People and Families (CYPF) Alliance, maturing into a network that can make real, collective change.

Now around two years old, the CYPF Alliance has grown its membership to more than 40 community sector organisations, with numerous associate members from across the community and public sectors.

There are four sub groups of the CYPF Alliance that meet regularly in line with the priorities set by member organisations: Child Poverty Sub Group (jointly run with the West Cheshire Food

Partnership), Mental Health CYPF Sub Group (jointly run with the Mental Health Alliance), SEND Sub Group, and Youth Sub Group.

Key milestones for the alliance during 2025 were holding its first conference and second marketplace, bringing staff and volunteers together from across sectors to explore future partnership opportunities that will benefit CYPF. 95 per cent of marketplace attendees who filled in post-event feedback rated the event as either excellent or good, and said it'd helped them make new connections.

After coordinating the initial engagement for a new CYPF neurodevelopment pathway in Cheshire and Merseyside, the CYPF Alliance and ■ ■

- its member organisations have created a suite of resources to support the launch of the pathway,

with Koala North West successful in its bid to provide training for key stakeholders.



There have been key policy developments in the CYPF area during 2025, including Families First, Starting Well and more, and the CYPF Alliance has played an important role with setting a collective vision for the community sector.

During 2025, 267 staff or volunteers from 111 different organisations across sectors engaged with the CYPF Alliance

Establishing a successful approach to food in Cheshire West

The West Cheshire Food Partnership, hosted by CWVA, plays a fundamental role in the local food system, working across sectors and with communities to tackle issues related to food.

Morphing out of what was previously the Welcome Network, the aim of the Food Partnership is to make sure everyone has access to affordable, healthy, sustainable and enjoyable food to make a decent meal.

The progress in recent years, making sure the Food Partnership is an effective strategic



network, led to Cheshire West winning a Bronze Sustainable Food Places Award in late November 2025.

CWVA, as the host of the Food Partnership, led on this application with the support of partners, and the panel highlighted many strengths, including joint working, the important role of lived experience in the local food system and clear structure of the Food Partnership.

The Sustainable Food Places team also visited Cheshire West during the summer of 2025, meeting different community food organisations to find out more about the whole-system approach being taken.

Many different projects and activities during 2025 supported the successful application, including some of the following.

- **Hosting a second West Cheshire Food Summit, bringing partners together for a day of celebration and helping set the future strategy of the Food Partnership.**
- **Distributing funding to local food groups**

- through initiatives like the Household Support Fund, making sure support reaches those who need it most.
- Influencing policy and developments on a local, regional and national level, visiting Parliament for a gathering of the Feeding Britain Network, plus many more events.
- Radiate Arts led a creative food project, working with young people and food growers to create artwork, a recipe book, inspire pride in sustainable local practices,

- and deepen community connections through tailored creative sessions.
- Offering a wide range of training to food groups, covering topics like food hygiene, demonstrating impact and much more.

During 2025, 193 staff and volunteers from 107 different organisations across sectors engaged with the Food Partnership

Providing the start that organisations need

CWVA has played an invaluable role with helping VegEd CIC start up as an organisation and take the next steps in its journey.

VegEd creates warm, welcoming spaces where children, their families, neurodivergent young people and adults can come together, learn practical cookery skills, and enjoy cooking and eating food together. A mobile cookery school brings these experiences directly to communities that might not otherwise have access.

Over the last two years, VegEd has delivered more than 140 hands-on cookery lessons, reaching over 1,100 students from underserved communities.

CWVA has offered a wide range of support, including governance, volunteer management, training, impact and much more.

Lisa Hinze, Founder of VegEd CIC, said: **“I never imagined how much support I would receive, especially when incorporating as a CIC and the confidence they gave me to do this.**

“Thanks to CWVA’s guidance and support, VegEd has organically mushroomed.

“The pinnacle has been securing National Lottery funding to help us recruit two

Vegucators in 2026, allowing us to continue expanding our reach and impact.

“The confidence to apply for this all came from the CWVA team and a training day I took part in.”



During 2025, CWVA supported 137 staff or volunteers from 67 different organisations with support around governance, starting up or group development

Setting a clear vision for volunteering

The Vision for Volunteering (2025–30), a coproduced framework to support the approach to volunteering in Cheshire West, steered CWVA’s activity in 2025.

There are five key themes for the Vision for Volunteering.

- **Inclusive**
- **Empowering**
- **Collaborative**
- **Experimental**
- **Appreciated**

With CWVA relaunching the Volunteer Managers Network, each of the meetings during the year were based on these themes, helping the vision evolve further.

A number of bespoke training sessions have also been delivered by CWVA, championing the important role that volunteering plays.

Youth Voices in Volunteering

CWVA led a Youth Voices in Volunteering project, funded by the Westminster Foundation, using these voices to support volunteer managers and remove barriers for young people accessing volunteering opportunities.

A series of coproduction workshops took place, working with a wide range of young people and community organisations, such as Live! Cheshire, Grosvenor Hart Homes, Youth Fed, 2Engage and Youth Pride.

The findings from these workshops created a training programme that has been delivered to organisations, helping them shape their volunteering opportunities in a way that will encourage more young people to get involved.

A video has also been created by Radiate Arts as part of the project, sharing the voices of young

people and their vision for volunteering in Cheshire West.



Volunteering in Sanctuary

Working with the Refugee and Asylum Seeker team at the Council through Sanctuary funding, CWVA started delivering a two-year Volunteering in Sanctuary project.

The aim of this project is to offer volunteer brokerage support to refugees, asylum seekers and other ethnic minority groups, working alongside the wider community sector.

This bespoke support means CWVA is able to get to know potential volunteers and find the right roles for them, enhancing personal and professional development opportunities and supporting community integration.

Volunteering in Sanctuary is providing a useful benchmark for further projects in the skills and employment area, particularly with potential opportunities available through devolution.

Volunteer Awards

CWVA again held a successful Volunteer Awards in 2025, always one of the most popular events of the year.

More than 100 people came together at Chester

Town Hall to celebrate all the amazing work volunteers do in communities.

Almost 200 nominations were received across the 11 categories, with a panel choosing a shortlist of nominees to attend the event.

The refreshed categories were coproduced with the Volunteer Managers Network, tying in with the key strands of the Vision for Volunteering.

The following winners were announced on the day.

- **Clare Harrison Award for Social Activism – Joe Maguire and Heather Swainston**
- **Mental Health Champion – Kyle Ravenscroft**
- **Grassroots Sport and Physical Activity Champion – Taha Hamoud**
- **Long Service Volunteer Award – Marie Dean**
- **Young Volunteer of the Year – Evie Magin**
- **Children, Young People, and Families Champion – Jay McKenzie**
- **Lived Experience Award – Tony McLinden**

- **The Food Partnership Award – Elton Larder CIC**
- **The Unsung Hero Award – Roy Adams**
- **Heritage and History Award – Blacon History Group**
- **Conservation and Environment Award – Leftwich Meadows Conservation Group**

There was also a performance from Sankofa Songsters, an intergenerational choir working with local schools, care homes and charities, such as Live! Cheshire.

During 2025, CWVA supported 284 staff or volunteers from 137 different organisations around volunteering, including the Volunteer Awards, volunteer management advice and support, and free access to CWVA's volunteering platform



Sharing important prevention messages in local communities

CWVA has expanded its work to help embed early intervention and prevention messages on various topics in local communities, working alongside the wider community sector.

Over the last couple of years, CWVA has coordinated the Cancer Alliance project in Cheshire West. Not only does CWVA provide support to help organisations build capacity and develop projects to embed these early intervention and prevention messages, but the Cancer Alliance project comes with a small pot of seed funding to support activity.

During 2025, CWVA has funded nine different community sector organisations, totalling more than £15,000 and supporting projects run by the likes of See Communications CIC, Her Place Charitable Trust, Tomorrow's Women and more.

The Cancer Alliance picked up yet another award in 2025, with the Health Creation Alliance naming the project as the Best Health Creating Cross-Sector Programme.

This project has shaped CWVA's wider work with early intervention and prevention messaging, and we started a Resilience in Action project in late 2025, working with the Cheshire Resilience Forum.

The aim of Resilience in Action is to work with community sector organisations to help make sure they and the people they support are better prepared in emergencies.

Case study: Live!'s visit to Gambia

Live! Cheshire has been funded through CWVA and the Cancer Alliance to deliver the innovative

Our Best Chance programme, sharing cancer and other health messages with people with learning disabilities and encouraging them to seek support at the earliest point.

A series of Our Best Chance programmes have been funded, and people who took part in the original programme are now health ambassadors within Live!, acting as champions for Our Best Chance and sharing these important health messages with others.

Our Best Chance has provided significant personal development opportunities for Live! members, increasing confidence both in seeking support and presenting to others, and this has culminated in a trip to Gambia.

As part of the trip with other community sector organisations, Live! members have delivered Our Best Chance to children and adults of various ages, adapting the programme to highlight some of the health trends in western Africa and encouraging people to seek the right support at the earliest point.

John Buchanan, Cancer Alliance Social Action Lead at CWVA, joined Live! on the trip. He said: **"The Gunjur Project stands as a powerful example of international collaboration and adaptation, demonstrating that, with creativity, flexibility and local leadership, complex public health challenges can be successfully addressed.**

"Being a CWVA representative on such a project is probably one of the most important things I've ever done, and I feel like I've barely scratched the surface."

The initial funding from CWVA and the Cancer Alliance has had a lasting impact for Live! members, and now people on another continent.





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Championing the community sector

2025 training recap

37 training sessions provided by CWVA staff or external trainers for community sector organisations, covering a wide range of topics, such as first aid, listening and communication skills, impact and much more

342 staff or volunteers from 116 different organisations attended CWVA training, equating to **almost 1,500 hours of support**

98% of attendees rated CWVA training as either **excellent or good** in feedback

95% said CWVA training had **improved their knowledge of the subject area**

94% said CWVA training would **enhance their future service delivery**

Funders and supporters



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CHESTER
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CHARITY



MarjoryBoddy
Charitable Trust



Dan Price
Cheshire
Police & Crime
Commissioner



Cheshire West
and Chester



Funded by
UK Government



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ENTEP
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Merseyside
Cancer Alliance



**Cheshire West
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2025 in numbers

£534,139 distributed to community sector organisations and partnerships

9,109 hours of support or engagement with community sector organisations and partners, working directly with **1,906 people** from **375 organisations**

100% of annual survey responses recommended engaging with CWVA

272 community sector organisations and partners **engaged with alliances and partnerships**

Over 1,500 volunteers and almost 250 providers registered on the volunteering platform

cwva.org.uk