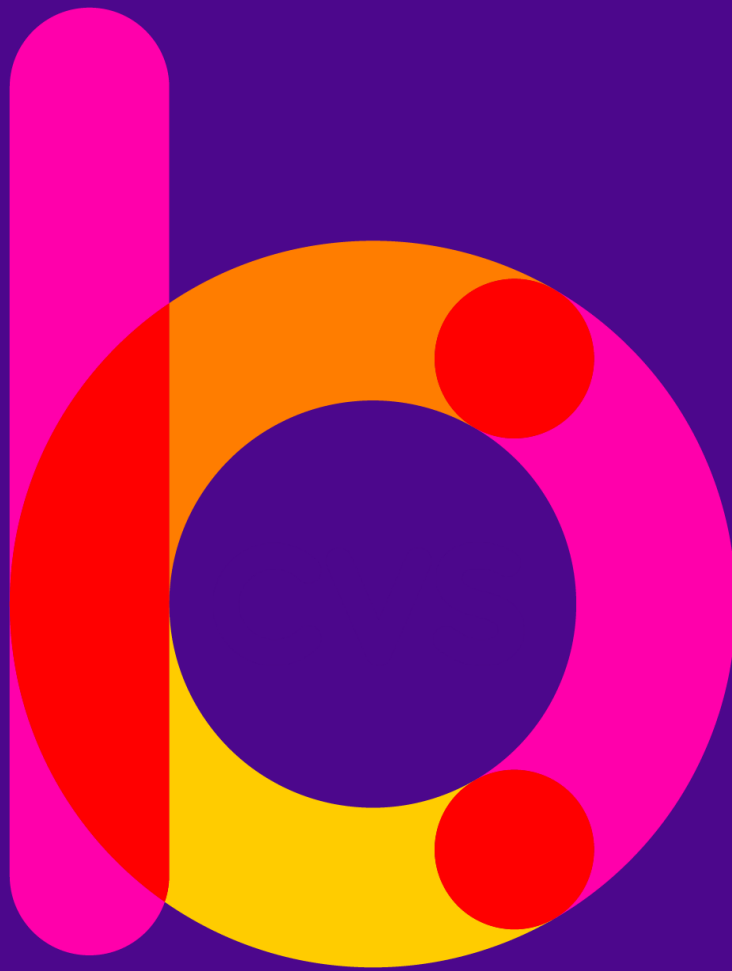


# Quarter 4 Reporting



January – March 2024



## A few words from Dawn Yates-Obé, Chief Executive of Bolton CVS...

As we reflect on the closing of Quarter 4, it's with immense pride and gratitude that I share with you our highlights of this last quarter of 2023/24 and a glimpse of our journey over the past year at Bolton CVS. This report marks not just the culmination of another quarter but also a celebration of the remarkable dedication and impact of Bolton's voluntary, community, and social enterprise (VCSE) sector.

Amidst the challenges we've collectively faced, the resilience and ingenuity of our VCSE sector have shone brightly. From the bustling streets of our neighbourhoods to the quieter corners where vital services are delivered, the spirit of collaboration and compassion has been palpable.

I invite you to grab a brew and immerse yourself in the pages ahead, where you'll encounter inspiring success stories, delve into impactful case studies, and glimpse some of our ambitious plans for the first quarter of the new year! Each statistic represents lives touched, dreams realised, and communities strengthened.

At Bolton CVS, we firmly believe in the power of collaboration and inclusivity. Together with our valued stakeholders, we've forged partnerships that transcend boundaries and hierarchies, embodying the true essence of collective impact.

As you navigate through this report, I hope you'll feel the warmth of our shared journey and the depth of our commitment to creating spaces where every individual can flourish. Thank you for your unwavering support, your tireless dedication, and your belief in the transformative potential of our Bolton communities!

## Quarter 4 in Numbers

[Click here to see how we have evolved](#)

- **£365,039.53 in grants and investments** made to **67 groups** and organisations
- **101 volunteering enquiries** managed, **80 individuals** received one to one support, **52 direct connections** made to volunteering opportunities
- Overall, **90 VCSE** groups and organisations have been supported in a development capacity
- **22 eBulletins** delivered to **2,589 people** across the sector (weekly, TGI Friday, Funding Bulletin, Proper Good and Stronger Together Training Programme)
- **11 training** sessions with **117 participants**
- **2 Voluntary and Community Sector Forum's** held with **59 people** in attendance

# Engagement

Quarter 4, 2023 – 2024



**80,130**  
website hits

The most viewed pages this quarter are: 'Bolton CVS Homepage', 'Bolton's Fund', 'Job Vacancies', 'Training & Events', and 'Our Team'.



**5,996**  
followers

This quarter, we have had **38** new followers, sent out **39** tweets, gained over **11,283** impressions and the Bolton CVS profile was visited **2,156** times.



**3,003**  
followers

This quarter, we have had **60** new followers and **41** page likes. The Bolton CVS Facebook page now has a total of **2,594** likes.



**522**  
followers

This quarter, we have gained **50 new followers**.

# Engagement

## Additional Information



**13** weekly eBulletins have been sent out reaching **2,589** recipients.

**3** Trustee, Governance and Information (TGI) Friday e-shots, **3** Stronger Together Training Programme e-shots and **3** Proper Good e-shots shared.

**50** groups were promoted in the weekly eBulletins.

**16** consultations and surveys were promoted via eBulletins and social media, ensuring Bolton CVS supports a comprehensive response to local key consultations and that the borough's VCSE sector voice is included.

As part of our continued relationship with our sister organisation in South Lanarkshire, the Communications and Impact team took a trip up North to participate in a skills exchange.

The team spent two days in South Lanarkshire, and a particular highlight was the opportunity to try our hand at filming a community group in action.

You can see the video of the skill share [here](#).



Bolton CVS supports the **Show The Salary** campaign.

This campaign is designed to promote transparency between employers and potential new employees, by making sure they can make an informed decision on whether a role is right for them by always displaying the salary in all job advertisements.

# Events & Celebrations

Quarter 4, 2023 – 2024

## National Career's Day Event

Bolton CVS had a presence at the National Career's Day Event organised by Bolton College. We spoke to **67 students** about careers in the charity, voluntary and social enterprise sector.

There were 26 other organisations present, giving us opportunity to engage with them and create connections. Some organisations showed interest in promoting their volunteering opportunities on the Bolton CVS website.

Bolton CVS has built a good working relationship with Bolton College, attending regular sessions for job shop and 121 appointments for any students who are interested in volunteering.

## Celebrating 5 years of the Peer Navigator Programme



A special celebration was held in February 2024 to mark just over five years of Bolton at Home's ground-breaking programme, which sees local residents funded by our housing association partner, and employed by Bolton CVS, to raise issues and organise activities on behalf of their neighbours.

The Peer Navigator programme was set up in 2018, working in partnership with Bolton CVS and various

funding partners, the programme has given more than 35 people the opportunity to become 'trusted beacons of support in their communities.' [Read more.](#)

## Bolton Means Business Event

The Bolton Means Business event was an opportunity for Bolton CVS and the Proper Good programme to connect with entrepreneurs from across the borough and explore how they might connect with us and the wider VCSE sector. The event was vibrant and very useful, enabling lots of conversations about how our services and sector can support, and be supported by the businesses in our town.

As a result of attending the event, **8 new enterprises** signed up to the Proper Good mailing list and a number of relationships have opened up around potential skills support from businesses for the VCSE sector.

## Bolton Sixth Form's Careers Day



Helen Clayton, our Business Development Manager and John Hastings, Founder of Recycle IT, were invited to participate in Bolton Sixth Form's Careers Day. They spoke to a group of **20 students** who were keen to understand the various jobs, roles and careers available in the third sector in Bolton. John delivered an inspirational talk with an engaging overview of how he came to set up his social enterprise, touching on all the support that is available from programmes such as Proper Good.

# Training

Quarter 4, 2023 – 2024

Click here to see all the training sessions we held this quarter!



11

sessions

117

participants

11 training sessions with 117 participants from 62 different VCSE groups.

Size of groups accessing training



How individuals found out about our training



■ Bolton CVS Website (30.3%) ■ E-mail (34.34%)  
■ Word of Mouth (27.27%) ■ Other Source (8.08%)

**16 people** have completed the Volunteer Passport training. **80 people** signposted to the session.

The **Volunteer Passport** is a short online course for potential volunteers covering basic information and topics to ensure they are 'volunteer ready'.

**A great example of the impact and outcome of attending Food Safety Level 2** – 'I just wanted to let you know that one of the participants of the Food Safety Level 2 training informed me that the certificate received from attending the training has opened doors to catering. She was able to provide catering for a group which has led to more work, after being recommended' – **Mandy Jelenje**

## Feedback from The Essential Trustee training:

'The training will help keep me up to date with what trustees are responsible for and I can relay this information to potential trustees' – **The Darren Deady Foundation**

'The training has given me confidence to reinforce our governance documents for our charity' – **Bolton Lions Club**

# Funding

Quarter 4, 2023 – 2024

**10**

Funding programmes open

**67**

Grants approved

**£365,039.53**

Total amount approved

**18**

Groups supported

In Quarter 4, Bolton's Fund made up the majority of the funding awarded through grants administered by Bolton CVS (£243,410.53).

**£1,978,072.00** in grant funding was secured by Bolton VCSE groups from external funders, including sponsors.

Bolton CVS also administered the following grants in Quarter 4:

- Bolton Community Homes Investments Programme
- Big Local - Tonge with the Haulgh
- VRU Community Led Programmes – Bolton – Year 3
- Proper Good Business Development Grants
- Proper Good Seed Funding

The following rounds of funding were administered in Quarter 4:

1. Bolton's Fund Micro Grants
2. Bolton's Fund Small Grants
3. Bolton's Fund Medium Grants
4. Bolton's Fund Large Grants
5. Bolton's Fund Easter Holiday Activities and Food Fund 2024
6. Bolton's Fund Hate Crime Awareness Grants

The summary reports for Bolton's Fund awards can be found [here](#).

# Meet the new Funding and Grants Development Officers!

Since the start of February 2024, we have had two new Funding and Grants Development Officers join the Bolton CVS Funding and Grants Team.



Meet Karina Royles, one of our Funding and Grants Development Officers. Her role is to support groups within the VCSE sector in relation to funding and grants advice and applications, as well as helping to process all our grants administration.

Karina has spent her first six weeks in post going out into the community to meet groups, attending lots of VCSE external training within the Greater Manchester sector and learning our internal processes.

Karina has taken the opportunity to meet with local organisations such as Bolton Community Furniture Store and Lancashire Central Homing Club to introduce herself and provide funding support. She has also spent a great deal of time learning about the diverse local groups we support and the vital support and services they provide in our community.



Kikelomo Folashade joined Bolton CVS in early February 2024. She describes the past 10 weeks at Bolton CVS as 'more than I could have ever imagined; having a role that I enjoy and find fulfilling. I have found myself in a role that makes me wake up every day and want to see what interesting and beautiful projects people in the community are organizing for the community'.

Kikelomo comes from a Public Health background and into the funding and grants development role and she has really enjoyed meeting people who have first-hand experience of things that she has learnt in theory as a public health researcher. This experience has made her feel connected to the community and she is enjoying being able to play a huge role by providing support to these groups and the work they do.

Kikelomo says 'Bolton CVS is a place with great leadership and people with zeal and passion for the community. I am glad to be a part of this community of Bolton CVS, I could not have asked for any more than this community of amazing people. Thank you to everyone at Bolton CVS for the warm welcome and support for me in this role.'

Please contact the team at [funding@boltoncvs.org.uk](mailto:funding@boltoncvs.org.uk) if you require any support.



# Volunteering

Quarter 4, 2023 – 2024

**101**

Volunteering enquiries

**80**

One to One support

**52**

Direct connections made

**90**

Organisations supported

This quarter, **2 Volunteer Development Network** meetings have been held with **29 participants** in attendance who were interested in learning more about volunteering.

There were **5 sessions** of the **Benefits of Volunteering Workshop** delivered at Deane and Derby Community Centre, Precious Gems, Brownlow Fold Community Centre and Wonder Women Group engaging with **54 participants**.

**30** people have given their time as Bolton CVS volunteer grant assessors during this quarter.

*"I am delighted to say that we have now recruited 6 volunteers in our latest recruitment drive, supported by Bolton CVS. I am busy chasing up references and organising inductions at the moment. Thank you for your assistance, it is much appreciated." – Ruth Malkin, Bolton Deaf Society*

*'Thank you for all the support you have given to SNUFS Charity. Since September 2023, we have welcomed 19 new volunteers to our team.*

*We are busier than ever and currently providing over 130 hours of volunteering support every week. We really appreciate your support.' – Niki Wareing, Special Needs Under Fives Support (SNUFS)*



*'The Volunteer Development Network has been really insightful and the team have been a great help in getting us off the ground with our volunteering strategy and approach.'*

*– Jemma Wootton, Project Manager, Bolton Cares Group*

# Refugee and Asylum Seeker Volunteering

Quarter 4, 2023 – 2024

During this quarter, we've successfully completed the recruitment process for a new Refugee and Asylum Seeker Volunteer Development Officer, who commenced their role on 2nd April. We eagerly anticipate sharing updates on their progress and contributions in the upcoming quarter.

## **Breaking Barriers to Volunteering Session:**

As a part of the Bolton CVS Stronger Together training programme, our Refugee and Asylum Seeker Volunteer Development Officer and team delivered a session on Breaking Barriers to Volunteering.

The session was aimed at helping the attendees to identify barriers and ways to overcome common obstacles encountered in the volunteer recruitment process.

The session focused on empowering volunteer managers and coordinators with enhanced skills and tools to effectively recruit and manage volunteers, build stronger volunteer teams and foster a more inclusive and supportive volunteer environment.

# Family Hub and Environmental Volunteering

Quarter 4, 2023 – 2024

**Family Hubs Engagement:** Our Family Hub and Environmental Volunteer Development Officer (FHEVDO) engaged with 5 Family Hubs across Bolton, encouraging the community to get involved in volunteering and discussing the benefits of volunteering opportunities. Around 25 individuals expressed an interest in volunteering, they were signposted to the Bolton CVS volunteering portal.

**Environmental Initiatives:** FHEVDO collaborated with various VCSE organisations, offering support on sustainability and organisational health checks.

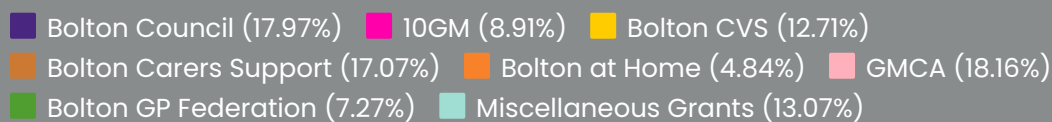
## **Outcomes:**

- Engaged with Precious Gems group on environmental support.
- Community Litter Pick: Participated in a litter pick, removing two tons of rubbish and promoting Bolton CVS services.
- Engaged with the School Streets Project, created a volunteering opportunity for them.
- HomeStart Visit: connected with HomeStart to recruit volunteers who are bilingual.
- Collaborated with Green Umbrella, The Hive, Bolton Council's Green Space Officer and Burden Park Wellbeing Project, attended a recycling and waste workshop, delivered by the Environmental and Enforcement Team at Bolton Council.

# Income

Quarter 4, 2023 – 2024

## Income Analysis By Funder



Total income for Quarter 4: £441,737.35

Our income during the 4th quarter has been generated via the following streams:

- GMCA – VRU Strategic Lead Programme
- Bolton Council – Infrastructure Contract, investments via The Bolton's Fund for the VCSE sector and project specific costs
- Bolton CVS – Generated income from tenants and room hire
- Bolton Carers Support (UK Lottery) – Facilitator Programme
- 10GM – Violence Reduction Unit – Facilitator Programme
- Bolton GP Federation – Care Coordinator Programme (grants)
- Bolton Community Homes – Community Investments Programme
- Bolton at Home – Peer Navigator Programme
- Miscellaneous smaller grants includes:
  - Bolton Wanderers in the Community – Lightful Project
  - GMCVO – Proper Good Programme Grant
  - GM NHS – Collating Lived Experience data
  - RP Tyson Construction – donation to Bolton's Fund
  - Bolton & South Lancs Community Rail Partnership – programme costs
  - Age UK Bolton – Age Friendly Town Centre Programme

# Wellbeing and Health

Quarter 4, 2023 – 2024

**Homecare Consultation** – Working in partnership with Age UK Bolton, we carried out a consultation for Bolton Council of almost 40 people in receipt of Homecare and Community Support from various providers. The aim was to find out what's working well, and what could work better. The feedback will help to shape future contracts to ensure the service provided is fit for purpose.



**Winter Vaccines** – Building on the learnings from last winter's Health Inequalities Project, we have worked closely with the NHS in Greater Manchester to help increase uptake of winter vaccines in the BLI area and to signpost people to walk-in clinics. 6 VCSE organisations distributed over 10,000 leaflets – through local mosques, shops and other networks.

**Childhood Obesity** – To help shape a new strategy to tackle childhood obesity across Greater Manchester, we have been working with the NHS to carry out a consultation of people's attitudes on the issue.



With the help of 9 VCSE organisations, we held a number of focus groups, and over 150 people completed an online survey (the highest number across the 10 GM authorities). All of these insights will form part of a new approach aimed at addressing a growing public health problem.

**We Are Here** – We have delivered several more of these sessions in the past quarter – and have now reached over 100 Health & Care staff. The aim is to showcase a sense of the full reach, diversity, knowledge and expertise contained within the VCSE sector and to show how drawing more effectively on all of that can help to address some of the health inequalities that exist within communities.

The feedback from the staff who've attended has been really positive:

*'It is good to know that we are able to tap into these services as a central point via your team and hope to make use of this moving forward.'*

*'Think outside the box when you are supporting patients, as the voluntary sector in Bolton is vast.'*

*'It was very informative in highlighting the number of services that are available in the Bolton area.'*

# Social Prescribing

Quarter 4, 2023 – 2024

30

Total referrals

93

Organisations referred to

4

Events attended

1

Group visited

10

Partners worked with

## Group visit to Horwich Over 50s Group, undertaken by Tracey McCue, Social Prescribing Link Worker:

This friendly group meet every 2nd and 4th Thursday at Horwich Community Centre from 12.30pm to 2.30pm. With a good average attendance of around 25 people, there is a range of activities on offer which includes darts, board games, table tennis and of course lively conversation. There is always a welcome brew and cake or biscuits too.

On the day I visited, there was a serious game of dominoes taking place on one of the tables, so I sat at another table where I had a lovely chat with a few of the group's members. We chatted and put the world to rights on a wide range of topics, such as the varied scope of VCSE organisations in Bolton, the number of pubs which have closed down locally, North versus Southern friendliness, our love of dogs and much more!

Friendships have been forged within the group with some people going out to eat together following meetings. I heard that there was a group trip out to Lytham St Anne's being planned, which everyone was really looking forward to. I was advised that anyone who struggled to get to the group due to poor mobility could usually be supported with a lift from one of the volunteer drivers, which was very useful to know. All in all, a very welcoming and accommodating group that I would definitely be happy to signpost people to.



# Development

Quarter 4, 2023 – 2024



90

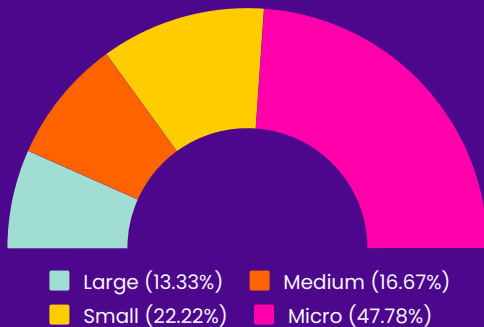
Groups were provided with support in this quarter



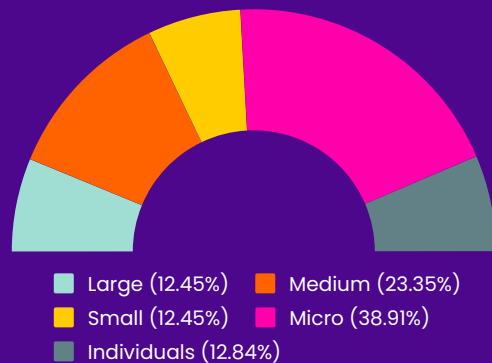
16

Individuals were supported around setting up a new organisation/group in this quarter

Size of organisations supported



Hours of support given



In this quarter, **3** organisations have undertaken a 'Health Check'.

**4 groups** are working towards acquiring the Bolton Mark. **Reach Family Project** have completed their Bolton Mark journey. [Have a look at their video.](#)

**MhIST** received a bespoke board development session to review their business plan.

## Type of support given

In this quarter, **16 types** of support have been given to different groups, organisations, and individuals, including:

Trustee Boards with governance, policy reviews, trustee recruitment, and business plans.

General support with committee roles, networking, access to training, governance and legal structures, employing staff, access to funding, event promotion, GDPR, managing money, venue information and safeguarding.

# Social Value

Bolton CVS staff held a 'swishing' event for all the VCSE organisations based at The Bolton Hub. People brought in clothes they no longer wear to 'swap' – and everyone went home with something 'new to them'. The evening was a fun way to recycle, reduce clothes waste and save money. We donated three huge bags of clothes to a local charity shop and a bag of work wear to Working Wardrobe. Also, we all had fun trying on clothes!

At Bolton CVS we are keen to support staff wellbeing and our regular Staff Book Club is attracting new members who are all reading the same book and coming together over coffee to chat about the themes and express their opinions. A great opportunity to bond over a shared love of reading.

# Membership

Bolton CVS is a membership organisation open to voluntary, community and social enterprise organisations.

In total, there are **632 Bolton CVS members**. This number is made up of **558 full members**, and **74 associate members**. **No members** have disbanded in Quarter 3.

**1 new full member** was approved by the Bolton CVS Trustees. This group is known as **Barefoot and Free**.

**3 new associate members** were approved by our Trustees. These groups are: **Matriarch MCR CIC**, **Adullam Social Enterprise CIC** and **UK Funding Futures CIC**.

**Beth from Matriarch MCR CIC, have said this about becoming a member of Bolton CVS:** *'It's important to work with local communities and it feels right to connect with them and create a wonderful web of connection and support for women. We can't offer everything, and we want to be able to signpost to others who have more specialists in that area.'*

**We welcomed Note Weavers CIC and Provincial Walsh Trust Bolton at the March VCS Forum. They were handed their membership certificates and spoke about the work of their organisations.**

## Connecting with Bolton CVS Members:

Karen, our Development Officer and Diana, our Senior Development Officer, went to visit one of our newest Bolton CVS members, Families and Babies (FAB). During the visit, they met Kim, the Peer/Volunteer Coordinator. They discussed how they could best support FAB and got to see the amazing work they're doing at their store in Tonge Moor.

[Find out more](#) if you are interested in becoming a member of Bolton CVS.

# Social Enterprise

Quarter 4, 2023 – 2024

4

Workshops delivered

20

1-2-1 support given to entrepreneurs

1

LAP funding application

30

attendees Social Enterprise Networking event

This quarter:

- 4 workshops delivered to 30 Social Enterprise leaders.
- 3 organisations were supported with the Local Access Partnership (LAP) funding process with 1 organisation completing the application for social investment.
- 3 monthly drop in sessions held with 9 people attending.
- 2 advice clinics held with attendance by 4 participants.
- 25 Social Enterprises and/or entrepreneurs were given 1-2-1 support either face to face, via email advice or signposted to the social investment fund at Greater Manchester Centre for Voluntary Organisations, to Bolton CVS services and to the various elements of the Proper Good Programme.
- 4 entrepreneurs took part in our tailored business mentoring programme.

## Funding Distribution

Seed Fund: 7 x £300 seed fund grants awarded

Business Development Grant: 6 x £1,000 grants awarded



The Proper Good Programme is funded by Big Society Capital and Access – The Foundation for Social Investment. It provides locally delivered, free support and social investment for social businesses, social entrepreneurs and social enterprises that aim to make a positive difference to the community. [Find out more.](#)

This quarter, we have added to our programme 'Greening your Organisation' sessions. So far 5 social enterprise leaders have engaged in 121 sessions to create sustainability plans.

Social media presence around Proper Good is growing slowly but steadily. We shared 5 posts per week which is 60 posts across this quarter.

We have created an online, social enterprise resource hub to add to the existing information on the Bolton CVS website. The dedicated pages will host videos, information, links and resources designed to support social entrepreneurs. The pages will go live next quarter!



# Business Development

Quarter 4, 2023 – 2024

The Business Development Team (BDT) played a key role in the co-production and re-launch of the Bolton Family as the Bolton Family Social Value Partnership which culminated in Pasties & Pledge event at the Albert Halls. The event brought together local businesses to access a variety of opportunities to engage with and improve Bolton communities. Many pledges were made by businesses and the BDT is enthusiastically following up interested parties, having made some wonderful new connections.



BDT have been promoting and encouraging investment in the Bolton's Fund from local organisations which has resulted in some new partnerships including Bolton Wanderers Remembrance Group who are keen to see their funds distributed as widely as possible across the local community and to support the amazing work of the Bolton's Fund to make an impact in Bolton communities.

The BDT team have also developed a new partnership with Adullum Homes Social Enterprises who kindly sponsored the Funding Collaborative meeting in March enabling the VCSE groups who are interested in working in partnership to have a wonderful lunch whilst discussing opportunities and possible partnerships.

Our Business Development Manager, Helen, co-chairs the Inclusive Economy Working Group, one of the working groups that are delivering The Greater Manchester VCSE Accord; a three-way collaboration between the Greater Manchester Combined Authority and the Greater Manchester Health and Social Care Partnership and the GMVCSE Sector represented by the GM VCSE Leadership Group to tackle inequality.

The group aimed to increase the profile of inclusive economy approaches through articulating the framework needed for an inclusive economy, showcasing good practice and through a series of GMCVO blogs to demystify the language used. The working group is pleased to have had feedback that there has been an acceptance and understanding of the concept.

It is now evolving to move from a campaigning approach to one that focuses on the 'how' with several reactive, relevant sessions throughout the year open to all VCSE groups. The first event will be based on progress around devolution and the single settlement.

# Accessibility

Quarter 4, 2023 – 2024

Bolton CVS and The Bolton Hub continues to be a centre for community activity and action in Bolton.

We are committed to ensuring accessibility of our services both within The Bolton Hub and within the community.

## Rent a Desk

The Bolton Hub is offering desk space and a great range of services available to hire on a daily basis. Printing, copying and mail box facilities are available at an additional charge.

- Building access Monday to Friday from 8.30 am – 5.00 pm
- Friendly staffed reception
- High speed Wifi
- Free tea and coffee
- Fully accessible building
- Discounted rate for meeting room hire

Email our team at [hub@boltoncvs.org.uk](mailto:hub@boltoncvs.org.uk) if you are looking to rent a flexible desk space, we will be happy to provide more details.



Emily Barrow was given an opportunity for a 6 week voluntary work placement at The Bolton Hub. This is what Emily has to say about her experience:

*'I have been so grateful for this opportunity, it has given me the confidence to know that with the right work situation, I am now ready to manage my health conditions and work at the same time without letting an employer down.'*

*It has also given me confidence that I can learn new skills, be trained to develop and grow, hopefully into more demanding roles. It has helped me to show that I am*

*professional and reliable. I would recommend volunteering at The Bolton Hub to gain new skills for the work place. I have loved meeting lot's of new people and making new contacts, this will be useful for my new role as a Peer Navigator.*

*Everyone at The Bolton Hub is lovely, very welcoming and helpful. I am especially grateful to Niki Meikle at Bolton at Home as she put me forward for this opportunity and to Rachel and Andy at Bolton CVS who have helped me to learn new skills.'*



In this quarter, we have had a new electronic signing in system installed to bring us up to date and generate less paper wastage. The new system allows us to access information on how many visitors we have had come into the building and speed up the signing in process for some of the larger, regular groups. It is also a more efficient and safe way to complete a fire recall.

# Influential Voice & Collaboration

Quarter 4, 2023 – 2024

## Voice and Influence

Over the last quarter, we have invested a lot of resources into understanding all our Voice and Influence spaces: what is working, what needs further establishment, and how we best capture groups' voices within them. We found the best solution to be to truly co-design and co-deliver these spaces with all who are in them – to make them more purposeful, meaningful and worthwhile.

A great example of this in action is the development of Wider Leadership Team meetings, which aim to bring both leaders of Bolton Council and leaders of VCSE organisations together. During a meeting held this quarter, we approached the topic of misconceptions held by either VCSE organisations about Bolton Council, or vice versa. Listening to conversations and feedback from the room, we identified that language and jargon was one of the main barriers for both parties. After trying to clarify some of the different terms we use, we all found that “partnership working” meant different things to different people in different contexts. Here we agreed that if, in future, we do not understand what each other mean, then we will be bold and brave enough to question and challenge that with each other.

All parties involved agreed that gaining clarity was important to them and would be pivotal in shaping their thinking around this work. They agreed that working in this way was a clear step forward and would allow things to be more joined-up. Since then, all involved parties have developed a document that states how we might like to work together in future and how we can all create and be responsible for engagement. The same conversations are happening across different sectors of Bolton and understanding the desire and need to develop, learn, and grow together feels really exciting and progressive.

The impact of Voice and Influence spaces undergoing all of this ‘behind-the-scenes’ work has really been felt this quarter. We have seen more collaboration and work on joint-funding applications. We have also seen more cross-sector working with external partners and allies, agreeing approaches and ways of working together. All of this is building our sector's infrastructure, so we aren't becoming reliant on one set of funds, we aren't working with the same people we always have, and we are building the networks and relationships we need to be able to better influence what happens to the people and place of Bolton. Well done Bolton's VCSE sector!

# Partnerships

Partnership and collaborative working is very important to us at Bolton CVS, as such, members of our team continue to participate in **102** strategic Boards and Partnerships across Bolton and Greater Manchester.

## Workforce Development Project with 10GM

Over the last quarter, work on the VCSE Workforce Development project has been based around enabling Local Infrastructure Organisations to establish a collective workforce development hub, built purposely for the Greater Manchester (GM) VCSE workforce so that we can become:

- Better, more inclusive employers.
- Better equipped to support our mental health and wellbeing, and that of our colleagues.
- Led by confident and effective change-makers.
- Strong, resilient, and motivated.
- An attractive and competitive option for jobseekers.

Alongside using key recommendations from the VCSE Workforce Capability Report/State of the Sector 2019, we have been working collectively across GM to understand the needs of our sector and what would be important for us to see in this collective workforce development hub.

We aim to launch the hub publicly early next quarter - and it will be called the GM Workforce Hub. As well as all the outcomes mentioned above, another ambition for this dedicated website is to reduce demand and increase capacity of workforces in this sector. The GM Workforce Hub will compile useful information, tools, and resources all in one place, so that it can be easily accessed, and people will no longer have to spend lots of time and resources searching for information, examples of best practice, or training opportunities from across the internet.

As well as the launch of the GM Workforce Hub next quarter, we are also excited to share that we have created a GM Recruitment Hub to run alongside it. This will be a website that will compile VCSE recruitment opportunities across Greater Manchester. We are working hard to get the GM Recruitment Hub to communicate with each Local Infrastructure Organisation's recruitment pages, so we do not need to keep posting opportunities to different websites, with different providers. This means that recruitment processes will remain the same for employers, however, they will now be asked whether they would like us to advertise on a GM level to increase reach and diversity of candidates.

We are hoping to launch the GM Recruitment Hub at the same time as the GM Workforce Hub. We plan to run engagement sessions when these websites launch publicly to demonstrate how they work and to understand what we may need to add or change to make them as effective as possible. All information on these sessions will be posted in our E-bulletin, so please make sure you check this for any future updates.

# Case Studies & Success Stories

Quarter 4, 2023 – 2024

## A Complex Case

A referral was received by the Social Prescriber from the Community Therapy Team: *'We have been to see a patient today who has a complex medical history... He is socially isolated... He has epilepsy and can only go out with support... He is also having difficulty paying his debts... We would appreciate your input with this patient.'*

[Find out what happened next.](#)

## The Wild and Fruity Garden

The Wild and Fruity Community Garden was set up to improve the wellbeing of the Bolton community through gardening and outdoor activities. The project is run by Trish Goodwin and Jayne Filio. Originally a project set up by The GP Fed, the group felt ready to become independent and approached Bolton CVS for advice about how to do this.



[Find out how they overcame their challenges.](#)

## Choosing a legal structure

Sara called Bolton CVS to ask for support to complete their organisation's application to become a community interest company. They're interested in setting up a healing room in Bolton and aim to expand their work across Greater Manchester and beyond.

Registering their organisation was an important step for them to take, but they also recognised that it was new to them. By recommendation, she was told to contact Bolton CVS to get support with the application. Sara wanted the opportunity to ask questions as she went through the application.

[Find out](#) how Diana, our Senior Development Officer, supported Sara in completing the application.

# Case Studies & Success Stories

Quarter 4, 2023 – 2024

## Four Seasons Allotment

The Four Seasons Allotment in Halliwell wanted to increase the number of people that attended the group and benefitted from outdoor activities. They wanted to be able to host speakers and offer workshops to teach the Bolton Community green skills and gardening. In order to do this, they needed to improve some of the features of their allotment, buy new equipment, and provide some sheltered areas.

[Find out what happened next.](#)

## Proper Good Business Planning

Bolton Adult Autism Support (BAAS) attended our 'Planning for your Business' workshops earlier this year. BAAS are a well established charity in Bolton, providing essential support to autistic adults and their carers. As is the case for some VCSE organisations, finding the time out of service delivery to concentrate on strategy and planning had been a real challenge for Vicky, their Service Manager. She attended our workshop after seeing it in the Bolton CVS e-bulletin.

[Find out how BAAS were supported in creating their business plan.](#)

## Funding Futures



'The journey we have begun over the past 6 months has been nothing short of amazing for our CIC and the communities we serve.

Your team's commitment to our cause, coupled with their generous sharing of knowledge and resources, has been vital in our development and growth.'

[Read more](#) about Funding Futures journey, and the outcome and impact of that journey.

## Bolton's Fund Roadshow

Due to changes to The Bolton's Fund, making the application process simpler and the fund more accessible, it was decided that to reach VCSE organisations in Bolton, we would take the information 'on the road'.

[Find out more](#) how the Funding Team were able to reach groups that found it difficult to attend The Bolton Hub and create opportunities for groups to network with other like-minded organisations.

# Next steps, looking forward to Quarter 1, 2024 – 2025

- 1 Collaborate with each team within Bolton CVS to improve our website and communications**
- 2 Review of the training offer has started, we will be asking VCSE Sector and partners for feedback**
- 3 Deliver a session on Vision for Volunteering**
- 4 Improve how we collect and learn from feedback from groups and individuals on the support provided by B CVS**
- 5 Launch of the online Social Enterprise Hub and GM Workforce & Recruitment Hubs**
- 6 Taking the Social Enterprise Networking event outdoors to do some 'networking with a twist'**
- 7 Debut our 2024/2025 social media content pillars so people can understand our focus for the next financial year**
- 8 Raise awareness of the social investment opportunities to grow and develop businesses**