

# Medway's VCS Transformation Academy & Alliance Proposal

## Further information on the Alliance (January 2022)

The Medway Charities Alliance was devised during the coronavirus pandemic in 2020, and the resultant impact the Nationwide lockdown had on the charity sector. A devastating loss of income from business as usual activities, and a lack of appropriate central government support, led to an initiative of self-sustainability, brought on through close collaboration of the local sectors leading organisations.

The charity sector has always considered collaboration in the past, but normally on specific projects and deliverables, rather than organisationally, and the fear within Boards of Trustees and CEOs of Merger often breaks down collaborations as a result of apprehension of underlying agendas.

The Medway Charities Alliance initiative tackles those fears and perceptions head on, by coming right out at the start and being explicit about member charities retaining their unique identities. This is not a merger of any description, but a coming together of like minds, to drive efficiencies, and return those efficiencies to the front line of each respective charities work. Each member charity will take a stake in the new entity, but will retain their own uniqueness of brand, mission and vision.

Through investing in a new company/entity\* together, the Medway Charities Alliance (MCA) can harness the efficiencies in aggregated numbers often strived for by smaller organisations, and capitalise on the economies of scale to push more funds directly to the front line services of the alliances members.

Owned by the leading members, and governed by a new shared governance model created from the lead members own boards of trustees/Directors, The MCA will bring effective support services to the founding member charities, and offer the same to new members as they are welcomed to the alliance.

Within MCA, will sit the valuable services which every charity in the area can ill afford to sustain independently, but equally cannot operate effectively without, services provided by MCA could include:

- Payroll
- Human resources
- Finance
- Policy and compliance
- Fundraising
- Bid writing and tender services
- Information technology
- Business development
- Procurement

Each of the alliance members will make a contribution to MCA to cover the only cost it incurs, staffing costs. Through the power of collaboration, the costs to the member charities will offer a direct saving to each member, saving valuable charitable funds for the real impactful work at the frontline of service, enabling a greater reach by each of the alliance members.

The Trustees/Directors of the founding organisations will be bold ground breakers, choosing to move away from parochial and historical individual ways of working which drive competition between the charities in Medway, towards forming a true alliance in every sense. An alliance that shares expertise, shares experience, skills and knowledge, shares resources, combines resources to form critical mass and shares a sense that the true purpose of charity is to support beneficiaries, not inefficiencies and bureaucracy.

The MCA forms part of Medway's VCS Transformation Academy & Alliance, a programme being funded by the National Lottery Community Fund. For further information, or to express your interest in joining the MCA, please contact:

John Norely, CEO Age UK (Medway)  
[JohnNorley@ageukmedway.org.uk](mailto:JohnNorley@ageukmedway.org.uk)  
01634 790125

