



# Outcome Report

## Medway Voluntary Action

January—December 2021





# Thank you from all at Medway Voluntary Action

“*Welcome to our 2021 Outcome Report highlighting our work across Medway to deliver change for the local communities with whom we work throughout the year.*

*As we collectively recover from the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, Medway Voluntary Action continues with renewed vigour to work towards a Medway where communities are active, empowered and connected. Our work with local not-for-profit organisations, groups and community members has never been more important or rewarding.*

*We are delighted to share with you the difference MVA has made by working alongside Medway’s community members and organisations over the past year and, on behalf of the entire MVA team, we would like to thank all of our VCS partners and all those we serve.*”



**Peter Stokes**  
Chair of MVA Board of Trustees



Medway Voluntary Action, 5a New Road Avenue, Chatham, Kent, ME4 6BB

Registered Charity No: 1042475

*With special thanks to our funders and VCS partners over the past year:*



*'MVA has been invaluable to us a relatively new charity operating in Medway. We've been able to quickly and easily meet other organisations that we can work collaboratively with to help our funding go further and help more people in Medway communities.'*

*'This group is an important discussion group for issues impacting Medway'*

*'MVA provide numerous networking opportunities for the sector and also have extensive knowledge of local organisations enabling them to effectively signpost us, as an organisation, as well as members of the public. MVA encourage collaboration and have often linked our organisation with other agencies.'*

*'MVA's support engendered frank and open communication with officers in the Medway public health team and paved the way for a process of negotiation around potential available funding and services what the charity could offer which supported the public health agenda as a critical time.'*

*'Through MVA's networking events, we now has representation in the Council's Cultural Strategy team, Curriculum Task and Finish group and contributing towards Medway City of Culture bid.'*

Feedback from groups and organisations we have worked with this year

## Supporting Medway's VCS

At the heart of MVA's mission is our work to support local not-for-profit organisations, charities, groups and community members to develop skills, build resources and amplify their voice.

Through our regular VCS Community Update meetings, web resources, one-to-one support, events, training and many other activities we have been able to successfully support the growth of knowledge, skills and collaborative working within the VCS.

You'll find some quotes here from groups and organisations we have been fortunate to work with this year - and turn the page to discover the impact of our work in numbers...



## Supporting Medway's VCS - our work in numbers...

**3570** e-newsletter subscribers, **210** digital news items, bulletins and press releases published, and over **2110** social posts created.

The funding and marketing club had **102** attendances, representing **52** members from **46** different organisations.

**73** Events were held in 2021 with **2061** attendees (mostly online).

**18** Community Update Meetings attended by over **40** local VCS Charities, Organisations & Groups.

**98%** of organisations supported with funding & marketing who responded to a poll (**183**) felt they had been supported with: advice and information, income generation and were better connected to other services.

We have grown our Community Update Meeting membership to over **172** local VCS leaders and team members.

Over **323,986** web visitors to our web sites, with just under **600** of these to our new volunteering support for organisations pages and over **1,500** to our new support pages for volunteers.

**15** Training sessions delivered, supporting **140** new learners.

**98%** of organisations responding to the MVA Satisfaction survey (**101**) felt better connected to other services and support networks as a result of contacting the service.

Released **25** Videos on Youtube including a new series of 'Bitesize How To Videos' to support the sector on various topical issues.

**87** organisations supported to generate additional income totalling **£2,813,222**



## A brief update on MVA's continued support during the Pandemic

As we entered 2021 we returned to Governmental restrictions, but the vaccine rollout saw some in the sector to return to more familiar operations that had not been seen since before the pandemic.

Despite the changing restrictions, the sector continued to explore how to offer services and assistance where needed.

MVA helped recruit volunteers to support the vital vaccine rollout in Medway, supported to sector with ongoing information and guidance about Covid-19, developed a Bitesize training video on returning to the workplace and infection control (The link here—<https://youtu.be/m6xgBuT3z2c>) and responded to the increasing demand for befriending services.

*'Thanks so much for the volunteers list, which is a huge help. Without the support of organisations like yours, our vaccination programme would not be as successful as it has been so far, so again, a big thank you.'*

Lauren Grieve -Pentagon Vaccine Centre

*'It's very nice to have this as I've been so isolated, and its been so difficult over Covid. You've offered real friendship.'*

MVA Befriending Member

**MVA's free Bitesize training videos enabled the VCS to continue learning new skills safely online during Covid-19 restrictions. Our Returning to the Workplace and Infection Control alone had 93 views on YouTube.**

**In response to Covid-19 restrictions, the MVA befriending team rolled out a programme of meets and held events in green spaces across Medway - allowing people to meet and connect with others safely.**



*'Wow that's a lot of really great recruitment info. Thank you so much!!  
Rest assured I will make the most out of it.'*

James Mason – Mason Foundation

*'Thanks for helping design my new volunteer documents, this has been unbelievably helpful to me.'*

Parmajot Kaur – Sahara Group



Over 140 different  
volunteer roles  
advertised on our  
volunteering  
webpages

249 VCS Organisations supported with  
Volunteering enquiries

## Medway Volunteer Network

Medway Volunteer Network, since its launch in 2017, continues to grow from strength to strength, despite the challenges that Covid presented. Membership continues to grow - now with over 600 local residents being members - and more VCS groups and organisations are accessing MVN support and working more collaboratively.

Our National Volunteers Week Campaign involved 31 organisations receiving our support pack and 51 local volunteers sending in jigsaw pieces. A giant jigsaw puzzle, and a thank you video for Medway's Volunteers, were central to the campaign.

All of the 53 Barry Clout Volunteering Award Nominees received recognition and thanks at our annual event

649 MVN e-Bulletin subscribers

Attended 10 local events to promote Medway Volunteer Network and spoke to 200 people about the benefits of volunteering

Bespoke 'National Student Volunteers Week' pack produced for Mid-Kent College

Supported 3 local businesses to find volunteering opportunities for their employees to get involved in



Quotes from members using our service:

*'For me it's a life line to talk and walk with other people, as most days and nights I don't hear from anybody. Thank you for being there.'*

*'Good company, good advice, a listening ear all prepared to listen and help each other. Help when you think you are alone. Satisfaction that you can help others it means a lot.'*

*'It's the company of going out with people when I go for a walk with someone in the morning. It gets me through the rest of the day.'*

## Befriending Together

MVA continues to deliver a Befriending scheme for adults in Medway who are socially isolated or feel lonely. Support is delivered through our Befriending Hub, allowing us to signpost residents to our VCS partners where they are best placed to support an individual. The Hub also enables partners to share resources and best practice - resulting in service improvements and efficiencies across the partnership.



**We received 454 referrals from 110 sources**

**In 2021 over 10% of our referrals were covid related**

**We receive on average 10 compliments every month about the service from referees, volunteers and befriendees.**

**Through the befriending service, members showed the following:**

**39% used medical services less.**

**49% felt happier.**

**52% were more physically active.**

**54% felt less anxious.**

**99% members improved in at least outcome measure**

**96% improved overall.**



# Community Engagement & Research

The programmes we are commissioned to deliver have helped people from a diverse range of, often less heard from, communities to engage and have their say on local health and wellbeing issues. Residents that have participated include those who are: socially isolated, living with learning and physical disabilities, Long Covid, BAME & LGBTQIA+ communities.

*Programmes we have delivered this year include:*

**Digital Inclusion Project** - in response to rising concerns around the negative impact of digital exclusion for local residents, MVA worked with Medway Diversity Forum to gather insights on this issue from local residents; especially from people living with a disability and people from the Global Majority (BAME Communities).

**Kent & Medway Listens Project** - in which we gathered insights from Medway & Swale residents about the impact that Covid had on their mental health and wellbeing.

**Involving Medway** - whilst the NHS rallied to respond to the Covid-19 pandemic, the Involving Medway programme - continued to provide insights from local residents on strategic issues of interest to the Kent and Medway Clinical Commissioning Group (this included the topic of Long-Covid).

*'On behalf of all of us, thank you both for giving your time to our Coffee Morning Project, exactly when it was needed through the Pandemic. There clearly were some people who were having a hard time & I'm sure benefitted from the chats & a cuppa - and hopefully some smiles and laughs for everyone at times.'*

Better Medway Project Officer

**266 Individual Community Research interviews conducted on 3 different topics including Digital Inclusion, Mental Wellbeing & Long Covid**

**11 Organisations supported to generate £37,800 in additional income through our community engagement projects**

**4 Focus Groups facilitated in the community with over 30 participants, supporting local organisations' service users to have a voice**

**18 Community Engagement Training Courses & Briefing Sessions delivered supporting 27 new Research Volunteers**





# Greater VCS Collaboration

In 2021 MVA supported the VCS to secure extra funding to deliver programmes collaboratively for the benefit of Medway's residents. These projects are being mobilised in preparation to make an impact in 2022 and offer exciting prospects for the wider VCS and communities.



## VCS Transformation Academy and Alliance

Our bid to the National Lottery's Communities Fund was successfully awarded in 2021. This proposal was developed in recognition that MVA's infrastructure contract delivers 'business as usual' support for the VCS – but additional programmes, and associated funding, would be essential to empower and build capacity within the VCS to radically transform how they operate. We co-developed this proposal in conjunction with the VCS Leaders Network and submitted the bid in partnership with Age UK Medway.

## Involving Medway

This ongoing project, funded by Kent & Medway CCG, to engage effectively with local communities is delivered entirely in conjunction with the wider VCS (who receive free training and access financial remuneration for their participating in the programme).

## Kent & Medway Listens

Delivered in partnership with 5 VCS Partners, this collaborative approach helped to deliver a unique programme of listening across Medway & Swale. Kent County Council Commissioners commented on the collaboration:

*'It was wonderful to hear such a diverse group of people come together for a collective purpose. Everyone seemed very energetic and engaged and mindful of the strategies and overall outcomes.'*

## Community Renewal Fund

This funding aims at supporting local people to find employment, and was awarded to the Medway Together collaboration in 2021. MVA worked with the lead partners for this programme, YMCA and University of Greenwich, to support the successful development of this placed-based consortium of **10** VCS partners.