



Background to the Academy

For some time now, Medway's VCS have been exploring collaboration, but this has been principally around projects and deliverables; working collaboratively to transform service delivery and achieve organisational efficiencies was an intangible aspiration that many simply did not have the time or money to explore.

When we were faced with the challenges presented by Covid-19, and staring into possible closure or cutting of the support we offer, it struck many of us that if we had only acted with earnest on our shared discussions of collaboration, then the VCS might have been better placed to weather the storm.

Medway Voluntary Action and Age UK (Medway) are delighted to announce that National Lottery Funding has been awarded to help Medway's VCS find the capacity and skills to develop and transform how we work.

Over the coming three years, the funding will support three key initiatives in Medway:

- The launch of a VCS Transformation Academy – Owned and led by Medway's VCS, the Academy will offer access to training, locally tested solutions and mentoring to support groups and organisations of all sizes to transform their service delivery and operational functions.
- The creation of a Medway Charities Alliance – Developed by Medway's VCS, the Alliance will give local groups and organisations access to lower cost services (to reduce their overheads) and more flexible income generation solutions.
- An academically based Knowledge Exchange Platform – supported by Nottingham Trent University, this will empower Medway's VCS to share and access high-quality resources and learning to help improve their skills and capacity to engage with wider opportunities.

Our shared hope is that from out of the fire of a global pandemic that affected us all, no matter our size, experience, service or capacity, a phoenix of a transformed VCS can rise to ensure that a sustainable, self-sufficient sector is reborn.