

Northumberland VCS Assembly Survey Dec 2014 – Feb 2015

A survey was undertaken to gain an understanding of voluntary and community groups awareness and involvement with the VCS Assembly, what groups would like the VCS Assembly to do for their organisation, the benefits of a more effective relationship between the voluntary and community sector and Northumberland County Council and the biggest threats to their organisations.

- 56 organisations responded to the survey.

You said	We did
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 27% had not heard of the VCS Assembly. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leaflet produced about the Assembly, publicised at events, meetings, through emails and e-bulletins which has led to a 20% increase in membership
<p>What organisations want the VCS Assembly to do for their organisations:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listen, work with, represent and influence views at strategic level. • Networking events • Give advice and support when required • Support us to win grants • Provide links to funding and training opportunities • Promote volunteering opportunities • Link partner organisations together. • Help with promotion/publicity of services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular meetings now take place with Northumberland County Council and involvement of members on working groups with other public sector organisations • Geographical networks have been developed for voluntary and community groups and county event to bring groups together. • Northumberland CVA Support Services provide funding advice, volunteering and governance advice. • Northumberland CVA website and fortnightly e-bulletins provide information on funding, training opportunities and links to volunteering opportunities. • Involvement in working groups with other public sector organisations, networking events provide opportunities to work together. Geographical networks are currently joint with Northumberland Advice Network. • Training courses are currently being planned and will include

	<p>promotion and publicity.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our e bulletins and website provide help and support in publicising services of organisations
<p>The benefits of a more effective relationship between the VCS and Northumberland County Council:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnership working – sharing best practice, working to the same objectives, understanding the needs of communities, representing views and concerns • Help become a registered bidder/tendering opportunities • More efficient delivery opportunities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Statement of Intent has been developed and jointly agreed by NCC and the VCS Assembly which covers these issues. We are working to get “sign off” from the Leader of NCC • The intention is that through being represented on working groups and regular meeting of the Liaison Group the VCS is better placed to be aware of opportunities, promote the sector and have influence on opportunities for VCS to tender when opportunities arise.
<p>Apart from funding the biggest threats to organisations:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruiting volunteers • Capacity to deliver, increased demands and more complex issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Northumberland CVA can advertise volunteering opportunities and identify potential volunteers, and help in developing good practice in involving volunteers • Northumberland CVA can provide advice and support, training and networking opportunities to assist organisations. We are developing relationships with other partners that will help increase the capacity of organisations to grow and develop

To support a vibrant and sustainable voluntary and community sector there is a need to constantly be aware of what members want from the Assembly and to be aware

that requirements can change. The survey provides information on the key issues raised and what is being done to address these. Other areas being addressed in the short term are a democratically elected Action Group to lead the Assembly, the development of a brand new website for the VCS Assembly and ensuring regular networking opportunities for members. Also working to ensure that the sector is represented on appropriate working groups/ boards where the sector can have influence.

If there are issues you wish to raise with the VCS Assembly please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Email: assembly@northumberlandcva.org.uk

Tel: 01670 858688