

2025 TO 2026

IMPACT REPORT



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WELCOME



Dr Soo Nevison

Chief Executive Officer

As we reflect on the past year, the word that consistently comes to mind is resilience. Our sector has continued to navigate a landscape defined by rising demand and a challenging economic climate.

Yet, despite these pressures, Community Action Bradford & District as an infrastructure organisation has not only maintained its vital services but has evolved to meet the changing needs of our communities.

I would like to extend my deepest gratitude to the Trustees, CEO and Staff Team for their continued hard work and dedication. To our funders and infrastructure partners for their continued trust, and most importantly, to our communities for allowing us to walk alongside you.

Through collaboration, together, we can continue to make a measurable difference.

Welcome to our Impact Report for 2025/26. It's been a different kind of year for us all at Community Action; we have quickly flexed from an organisation relying on grant income to one providing support through a mix of contracts and income generation, alongside prudent use of our reserves.

In the Summer of 2025, we reset our strategic direction and within this document, you find our renewed values, strategic themes and future intent.

Whilst we have seen the size of the team reduce over recent months, our ambition for and dedication to the sector has grown. We are grateful for everyone who has contacted us to receive a service, for those showing up at events, those joining networks and for all those who continue to read Briefing Bradford.

We hope this report gives you insight into the difference Community Action is making in the District and we look forward to seeing you in 2026/27.



Mark Nicholson

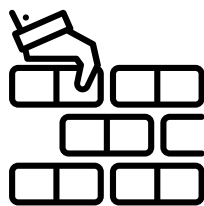
Chair

Who we are

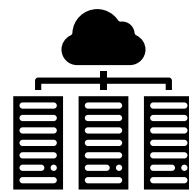


The Charity for Charities*

*(and all other VCSE sector organisations!)



An organisation that helps to build up other third sector organisations



A support hub offering crucial advice and guidance

Purpose



Support



Develop



Enable



Advocate for



Inform

Values



Accountability



Bravery



Integrity

Our strategic priorities

Collaborations and Partnerships



- More productive partnerships: consider why/purpose and who
- What is a good partnership: develop partnering criteria, model the behaviour
- Development of partnerships across the whole staff team

Support and Capability



- Clear and flexible offer to the sector
- Ensuring our staff team has the skills and knowledge to deliver our services
- Keeping up with technology to support service delivery
- Early planning of services to support the sector to engage
- High quality consultancy offer

Financial Sustainability



- Grants/contracts: horizon scanning for self and sector
- Expanding footprint (as an organisation and in partnership(s))
- Business/strategy package for the sector
- Skills and services matrix – playing to our organisational strengths and recognising where the gaps exist in the market
- Visibility around our actions and services

What we do

Governance

Training

Safeguarding

Room Hire

Volunteering

Payroll

Funding

Networking

Policies

Job Advertising

Resources

Newsletter

Consultancy

Impact



Our Team

Our team is small and agile, hardworking, passionate and with lots of expertise on a range of topics affecting VCSE organisations of all sizes. Whether it is setting up a charity, diving into trading and earned income, marketing your organisation, measuring your impact, safeguarding, governance, managing a building, financial management or any other topic!



Soo

Chief Executive Officer



Emma

Business Development
Manager



Richard

Business Development
Officer



Brigitte

Business Support
Officer



Chris

Development Officer



Chris

Development Officer



Chris

Development Officer



Sarah

Training Officer



Debra

Assets Manager



Lisa

Front of House



Marika

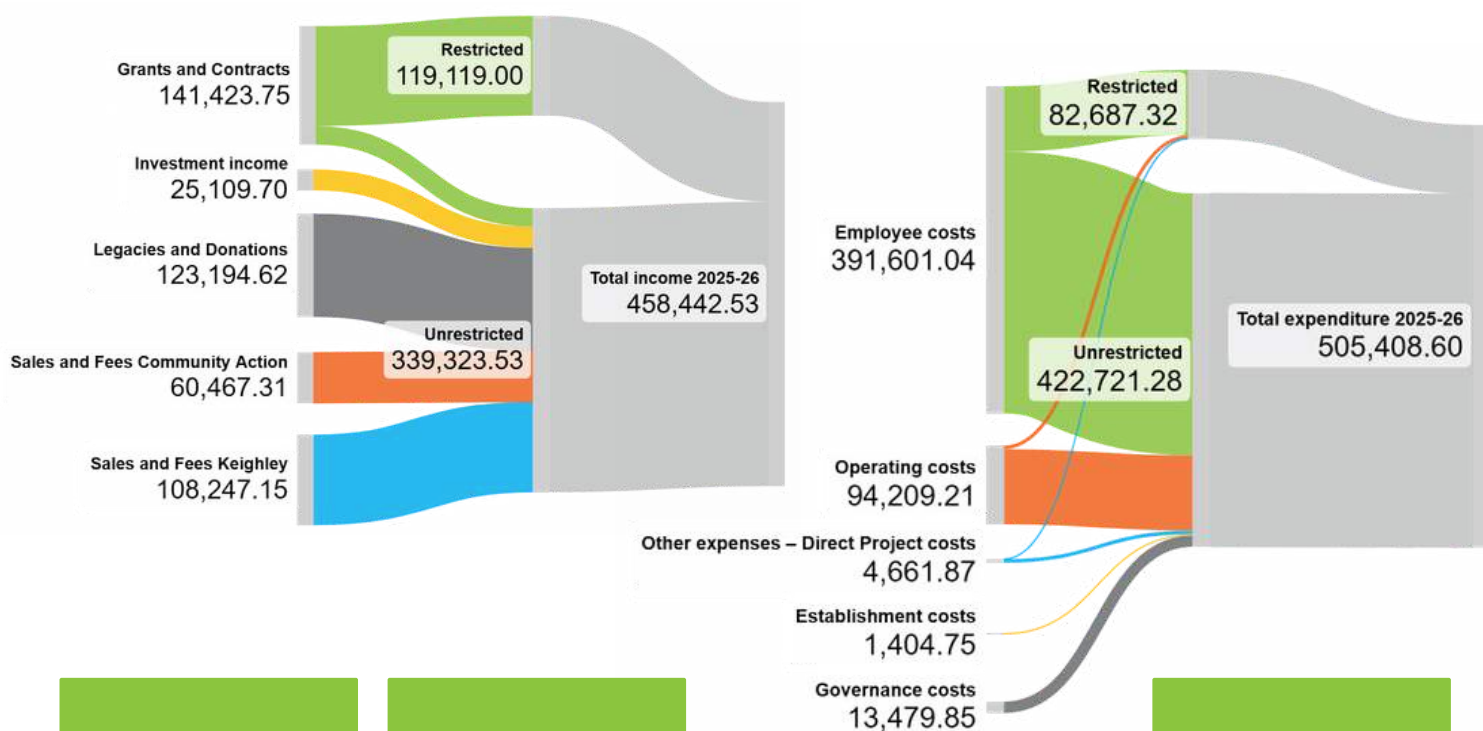
Finance Manager



Colin

Caretaker - Bingley

FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS



64%

of annual income was earned through trading

30%

of annual income was earned through contracts and grants

77%

of annual expenditure was spent on employee costs

In 2025/2026 we saw a reduction in our unrestricted reserves of around £47,000. We use this to deliver additional support to grassroots organisations. We also invested in the team so we are able to increase our earned income and trading in the future, aiding our organisation's long-term financial sustainability.



Income

£458,442.53



Expenditure

£505,408.60



Deficit

£46,966.07

THE GRASSROOTS PACKAGE

In April 2025 we put in place a package of *free* support for grassroots organisations, with our Development Officers committing 2 days each to working exclusively with small groups.

This support is available free of charge to organisations with an annual income under £100,000. That means it is open to a whopping 75% of registered charities and community groups in the District! So far each organisation we have supported, has received an average of a half day of free support.

From February 2026 we bolstered this with weekly outreach sessions across the whole district, covering all 30 wards. This is part of a 6-month trial to increase our presence in local communities, allowing the VCSE sector to come along, chat to us and access signposting and further support. We held 5 sessions through February and March!

This is the first time this level of commitment to grassroots organisations has been seen - funded entirely out of Community Action reserves.



Picture: Community Action pull up banner



“ A big thank you for all your support and guidance - we have successfully secured funding! Your help played a massive part in getting us to this stage and we appreciate the time and effort you put in to support us throughout the process. ”

UPSKILLING THE SECTOR

Getting Started



In July 2025 we launched our brand new training programme, including a suite of 8 *Getting Started* courses on a range of topics, free for grassroots organisations, and just £20 for larger groups!

Courses on:

Fundraising Safeguarding

Volunteering Governance

Marketing Data protection

Project management Impact

26 courses and workshops delivered through our training programme

114 people upskilled through our training programme

21 people across four organisations trained *in-house*

£1380 value of the training places given free to VCSE organisations





Picture: people seated at Leaders' Network December social

OUR LEADERS' NETWORK



The Leaders' Network is a space for VCSE leaders to come together, shape the sector and support each other in their organisational and sector leadership roles.

With 8-weekly meetings and member communication through emails and a WhatsApp.

The WhatsApp group is a fundamental channel for our members, enabling them to give and seek support at any time. This is supplemented by a *Promotion and Events* WhatsApp group for members to promote their work.

“

The Network enables me to stay connected to local issues, it also provides me with a supportive network of like minded leaders, which is vital during times of uncertainty.

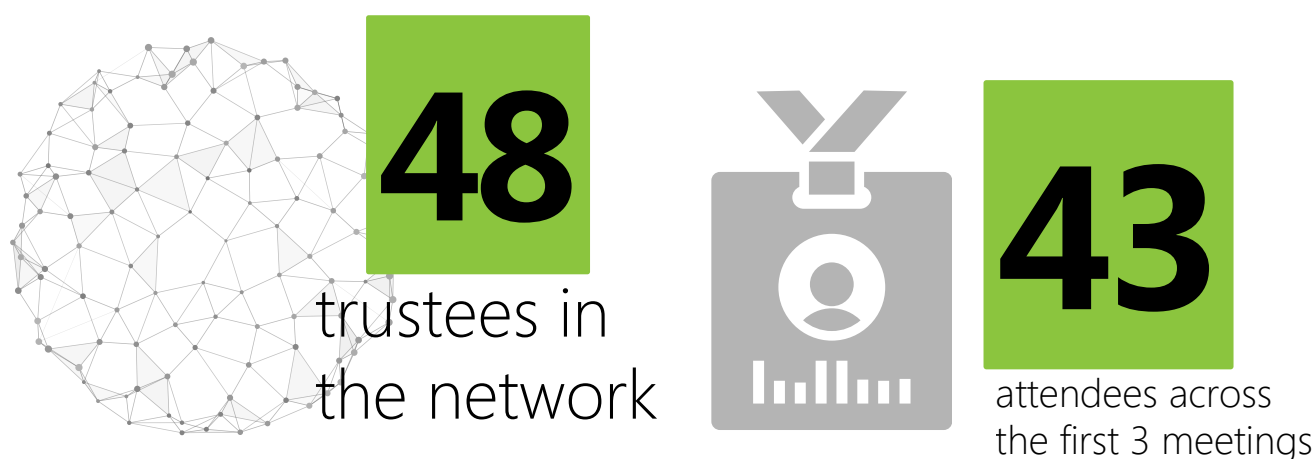
Network member

”



Picture: People seated at our VCSE Big Meet 2026.

OUR CHAIRS AND TRUSTEES NETWORK



Launched in November 2025 at the request of VCSE trustees, this network is a space for those with a voluntary sector governance role to come together, offer peer support, exchange information and get support in their roles.

The group meets quarterly online and is open to anybody across West Yorkshire, expanding the footprint of groups we support!

Lots of our Chairs and Trustees members came to our VCSE Big Meet 2026, centred around governance and board relationships.

“

Networks like this are invaluable for VCSE directors, trustees, management committees and the organisations they serve.

They strengthen the sector through shared knowledge, peer support and collaboration. The network is integrated, inclusive and impactful.

Network member

”

THE VCSE BIG MEET 2025

Manningham Mills Community Hub



Picture: people seated at the VCSE Big Meet 2025

 **52**
colleagues from across
the VCSE sector

 **5 SPEAKERS**
from 3 organisations

 Event revenue rolled over to
VCSE Big Meet 2026
£110

“ Our [colleague] had a great time at the VCSE Big Meet hearing from some fantastic, inspirational speakers talk about all of the challenges faced by the VCSE sector. The table decorations were fabulous, made & sold by a Lady Royd Primary School to raise funds to help their recycling efforts. We cant wait to plant our wild flowers!

“ Huge thank you to the team for putting on an amazing event. Fantastic guest speakers, really engaging sharing what they know. I have connected with all of them in one way or another!

I thought having the break for food in between the Q&A was also a good idea too as it gave us all time to network.

“ It was an incredibly engaging evening, with inspiring guest speakers. It was also a fantastic opportunity to connect with so many passionate individuals and learn about the incredible work happening across the district. The evening wrapped up with delicious free food and plenty of time for networking, such a great way to end the night!

A huge thank you to the organisers for putting together such a valuable event. I'm already looking forward to the next one!

ACTIVATION CONTRACT

The Activation Contract is a partnership between The VCS Alliance, Community Action Bradford & District, Participate Projects and CNet. It is soon to enter its third contract year, running from July to June each year.

Community Action and Participate work together on the Strengthening the Sector strand. This is done in an innovative way, using an award-winning process, where a data tool called MyCake provides organisation resilience ratings to indicate the organisations most in need of support. Matching this with our local insight gives us the base list of organisations to work with.

These organisations then receive a organisational diagnostic and where required, a free development plan. The plans lead to additional support from the whole team and/or external consultants who work with them on specific developmental areas.

Working with Participate Projects means we can support a wider range of issues as we are able to draw on the expertise of two staff teams, not just one.

Additional expertise in 2025/26 included leadership coaching and specific support for social enterprises.



“ I would like to thank [the Activation contract partners] for their professional and approachable nature - they go the extra mile to provide high-quality support in identifying opportunities and solutions to our challenges. ”

#ActivateBradfordDistrictAndCraven

CONSULTANCY SUPPORT

Horton Community Farm

In June 2025, we supported Horton Community Farm in pulling together their year 1 Growing Together impact report. We think it turned out really well, don't you?



SEND Salaam



In May 2025, we worked with SEND Salaam to rebrand, creating several logo options for them to choose from, eventually adding this to a flyer we designed for their new creative health project!



Sport for Good

Through the summer of 2025 we worked with some of the other local infrastructure organisations in West Yorkshire to deliver a regional Sport for Good programme. This was a range of workshops on a range of topics and 1:1 organisational coaching to build capacity and resilience in local sports organisations.



A LEGACY, SOON TO BE REBORN

Through 2025 we worked with Better Start Bradford to help shape their 10-year legacy as they came to the end of their National Lottery funded project.

This work involved community engagement, sector and system engagement, and supporting with future business and transition planning.

Better Start Bradford delivered a whole range of projects over its 10 year span and many of these have transitioned to new homes, or gone on to become independent organisations!

Although the delivery phase of Better Start Bradford has ended, its learning and evidence base will continue through *Better Start - Better Futures: from Conception through Reception (CoRE) Partnership*, which aims to bring Bradford community members and system leaders together to embed best practice and create sustainable early years improvements. This is a piece of work we will be continuing to support them with through 2026/2027.



189
interviews held

3 Social Venture Schools delivered to Better Start projects

4
meaningful transition options presented

IMPACT HIGHLIGHTS

The Briefing Bradford newsletter has been a key source of sector communications for over three decades!



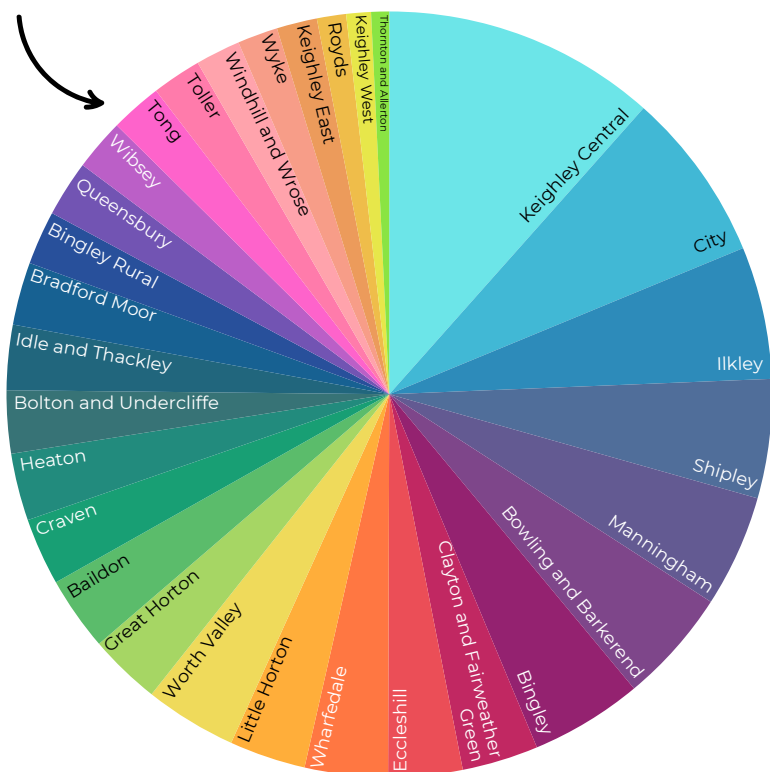
active email subscribers

1113

30

average number of pieces of content in every single newsletter!

Our sector support is spread across all 30 wards



211

sector jobs advertised on www.snicket.org



200,000 social media views

Over 40,000 website views 🔍

You said...

“ [Community Action] have been a great support and help in setting up. It is daunting however we were given advice and guidance through the process to ensure we understand, learn and develop as we go. You made us feel confident enough to apply for funding on our own. ”

“ Really helpful! This has given me a structured approach to adapt our policies and create a volunteer handbook. ”

“ I have found the session very useful. It has helped me to understand some of the impact things we have just started implementing, and helped me to break down the planning process of projects. ”

I feel more confident in how to take an idea and move it forwards. ”

“ This course has been very useful, I have learned so many new things! [The trainers] were amazing! ”

“ Very informative and delivered in a great way, easy to digest and lots of resources shared too! ”

“ Community Action stands with organisations, offering expert guidance, resources and support to help us achieve our goals. Whether it's finding funding, strategic planning, capacity building, they are there to assist. They turn aspiration into action! ”

WHAT THE FUTURE HOLDS

In 2024/2025 we spent time regrouping, planning, listening to what you need and designing services to meet that need.

Over the next year, we plan to put more of this aspiration into action.

We have developed three service offers:

- Universal - open to everybody, information giving and signposting
- Standard - group or one to one support as a free or costed service depending on an organisation's income level
- Enhanced - costed bespoke training and consultancy support

We will be out in communities more often, through our Outreach programme, and you might see us at community events.

In autumn 2026 we will be launching a quarterly Beneficiary Advisory Group. A group where passionate people from VCSE organisations can feed into our planning and decision making.

We will be working more closely with the public sector to increase cross-system collaboration and advocate for the sector.

We will be holding a representative seat on the newly launched West Yorkshire VCSE Advisory Group, independently chaired.



Picture: Leaders' Network feedback tree.

2027 will see the return of the Big Advice Day, and of course the VCSE Big Meet will return for its third year.

If this isn't enough, we will still be producing Briefing Bradford, ensuring our online resources are relevant and accessible, and be on the end of an email or phone to help you out!

Please get in touch if you would like to speak to us about concerns or needs and we will discuss all options with you.

CONTACT US



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 Community Action Bradford & District

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Picture: Chief Executive Soo's dog, Tommy (informally known as the charity's Chief Happiness Officer) hard at work