



Harrogate and Ripon Centres
for Voluntary Service

**Harrogate and Ripon CVS
Strategic Plan 2017 – 2020**

VISION, AIMS, STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES
AND PLANNED ACTIONS

Approved by the HARCVS Board September 2017

Our Vision:

People in the Harrogate District live active and fulfilling lives and make a positive contribution to local community life

Our Mission:

To support our communities, charities and volunteers to make the Harrogate District a great place in which to live and work

Our Overall Aims:

- To help people take positive action to identify and meet the needs of their communities and enhance their own lives in doing so
- To support communities, charities and volunteers across the Harrogate District by ensuring access to the best support and advice possible
- To ensure that the role of charities and volunteers across the Harrogate District is recognised, and their contribution is valued and supported
- To support the local voluntary and community sector to have a strong voice and effective influence on all decision makers in our area

Our Strategic Objectives:

1. To provide local voluntary and community sector information services
2. To support local community and social action, especially volunteering
3. To support local community fundraising
4. To provide services which help people stay safe and well at home, supported by volunteers.
5. To ensure HARCVS is fit for purpose, independent and marketed effectively

HARROGATE & RIPON CENTRES FOR VOLUNTARY SERVICE (HARCVS)

HARCVS is a registered charity which exists to provide support to charities, voluntary and community groups across the Harrogate District of North Yorkshire. We are member led organisation and have a membership of over 180 local voluntary and community sector (VCS) organisations. We can trace our history back to 1963 with the establishment of Ripon CVS. Harrogate and Area CVS was founded in 1988 and the two organisations came together in 2013 to form an organisation which now serves the whole District.

Harrogate District covers a large and geographically diverse area:

- 505 square miles in area;
- Population of 157, 016 at 2017;
- In the west, nearly half of the District comprises the relatively sparsely populated Nidderdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) with its upland farming and internationally important wildlife;
- In the east, nearly a third of the District is low lying flat arable farmland in the Vale of York;
- The District's three main settlements are centrally located: the Victorian spa and modern conference town of Harrogate (75,260 pop. in 2015), the nearby medieval market town of Knaresborough (15,300 pop. in 2015) and the cathedral City of Ripon (16,430 pop. in 2015);
- Over 120 smaller settlements are scattered across the district, including the market towns of Boroughbridge and Masham, and in the centre of the Nidderdale AONB, Pateley Bridge.

We are a member of the National Association of Voluntary and Community Action (NAVCA) and have achieved the NAVCA Quality Award. We also have the Matrix quality standard for information, advice and guidance services.

There are approximately 1000 voluntary and community groups in the Harrogate District and HARCVS is in regular direct contact with around 1000 people with an interest in the local voluntary and community sector, from all sectors.

We are a multi-purpose charity and manage a number of services to support older and vulnerable individuals in the community, under the umbrella of the Harrogate Easier Living Project (HELP). Approximately 1000 clients receive support, provided with the assistance of over 130 volunteers.

We also provide the reception service for Harrogate Community House, which is owned and managed by the separate charity (Harrogate Community House Trust).

As at Sept 2017 HARCVS has a turnover of £286,390 per year and employs 20 staff (11 full time equivalents). Our staff team is mainly located at Harrogate Community House, with a small team also based in Ripon at Ripon Community House.

HARCVS FUNDING

From 1st April 2017 the main funder of our voluntary and community sector support work is Harrogate Borough Council, together with a smaller core grant from Ripon City Council. Funding previously received from North Yorkshire County Council and the NHS for these services ended on 31st March 2017. At present we continue to receive funding from North Yorkshire County Council and Harrogate Borough Council towards our practical support services for older and vulnerable people and have a contract to provide the reception service for Harrogate Community House. These grants and contracts do not meet the full cost of providing the services we offer and the remainder of our funding is secured as a result of further grant and trust fund applications, bidding for contracts and management fees/full cost recovery for the delivery of services, programmes and contracts. This is supplemented by charging for some services and additional local community fundraising, donations and pro bono support.

Following the substantial reduction in our funding in April 2017 the Board of Trustees has reviewed our financial position and set a budget through to 31st March 2019, taking into account current funding agreements and contracts. Although it will be challenging we retain sufficient staff, volunteer, financial and other resources to operate as a viable and effective organisation for the duration of this Strategic Plan.

SCOPE OF HARCVS SERVICES

Our charitable objects allow us to work in the local government area of Harrogate District and its environs. Over the next 2 years we envisage focussing exclusively on the delivery of services within the Harrogate District, except where there would be a significant financial or other advantage to our beneficiaries. Any growth will come from tapping into and developing local resources, skills and expertise and connecting and collaborating with more local volunteers, groups and partners.

This strategic plan positions HARCVS as the ongoing local provider of information, advice and guidance to the voluntary and community sector within the Harrogate District, and as a trusted organisation which is able to collaborate effectively and with ease with local public and private sector partners to deliver its mission.

The voluntary and community sector is all about people. The activities of our charity must ensure that people have

- Easy access to information on how to get involved in their local community
- Easy access to support on running a voluntary organisation or being a volunteer
- Easy access to the practical support services we provide

In turn this will help people to be motivated to get and stay involved and to feel the benefits of doing so. Over the past 50 years HARCVS has built up an enviable reputation as a member led organisation which makes a positive difference. We have the people, infrastructure, knowledge and skills to continue support our communities to make the Harrogate District a great place to live and work.

Strategic Objective 1	
To provide local voluntary and community sector information services <i>(to help people be active in their communities)</i>	
	Specific Actions
1.	Ensure access to comprehensive information on VCS organisations and volunteering opportunities in the Harrogate District, published online as the Where to Turn and Volunteering Directories.
2.	Compile, edit and regularly publish comprehensive and accurate information on VCS events and activities in the Harrogate District, via all appropriate communication methods
3.	Compile, edit and regularly publish relevant information on volunteering and funding opportunities, legal and policy issues and consultations affecting the local voluntary and community sector, via all appropriate communication methods
4.	Promote and raise the profile of the local voluntary and community sector via close liaison with partners from other sectors, including the press and media
Strategic Objective 2	
To support local community and social action <i>(to help people stay fit and well in their communities)</i>	
	Specific Actions
5.	Host/co-ordinate a programme of networks and events which enable local VCS organisations to connect and collaborate in their localities/or on issues of common concern.
6.	Via our networks identify VCS training and support needs and ensure local provision to help build capacity, access additional resources, attract & retain volunteers and develop effective skills. Develop the “Get Set” concept for HARCVS products and services.
7.	Actively explore all opportunities to collaborate with appropriate partners to ensure access to local advice and guidance for communities, charities and volunteers throughout the Harrogate District, seeking to build partnerships, share good practice, signpost to resources and provide peer support.
8.	Promote social justice and equality of opportunity in the Harrogate District, including sharing VCS issues with key decision makers and supporting national/other relevant campaigns when appropriate.

9.	Champion the role of the voluntary and community sector through active participation in programmes and projects which develop local community and social action across the Harrogate District
10.	Champion and celebrate volunteering by working in partnership to run the annual Harrogate District Volunteering Oscars and other appropriate events/projects/campaigns.
11.	Work with volunteer involving organisations to ensure the sufficient supply of good quality local opportunities for people to get involved in volunteering, whatever their circumstances
12.	Work to ensure there is a sufficient supply of volunteers to enable local voluntary and community organisations to operate sustainably and effectively (numbers and skills)
Strategic Objective 3 To support local community fundraising <i>(so that activities are sustainable, affordable and accessible)</i>	
	Specific Actions
13.	Enable additional investment into the Harrogate District VCS as a lead partner on the establishment of the Harrogate District Community Fund.
14.	Compile and share information which signposts the local VCS to potential funding opportunities
15.	Secure funding to carry out or commission research that will support local voluntary and community sector fundraising e.g. a State of the Sector report, evidence of needs etc
Strategic Objective 4 To provide practical services which help people stay safe and well at home, supported by volunteers.	
	Specific Actions
16.	Retain HARCVS' ability to develop/incubate services for disadvantaged and vulnerable people when there is no other viable option within the local VCS.
17.	Provide practical services which directly support disadvantaged and vulnerable people when this is in the best interests of our beneficiaries and HARCVS sustainability.
18.	Maintain active volunteer involvement in the delivery of HARCVS services which directly support disadvantaged and vulnerable people.

19.	Plan, agree and implement exit strategies for HARCVS services for disadvantaged and vulnerable people when viable alternative providers are identified or such services are no longer viable or sustainable.
20.	Contribute to the development of innovative approaches to supporting disadvantaged and vulnerable people via connecting and collaborating with other organisations when appropriate.
21.	Adopt a rigorous approach to monitoring and evaluation and share good practice and learning with members, customers and partners.
<p>Strategic Objective 5</p> <p>Ensure HARCVS is fit for purpose, independent and marketed effectively <i>(to make best use of our resources)</i></p>	
	Specific Actions
22.	Recruit, retain and develop a skilled and experienced board, staff and volunteer team
23.	Fundraise to maximise levels of unrestricted income in order to secure the long term sustainability of the services provided by HARCVS.
24.	Invest in appropriate systems, procedures and technologies to enable more efficient and effective delivery of HARCVS products and services
25.	Apply a marketing led approach to the development of HARCVS products and services, based on market research, evidence of need, customer feedback and evaluation of impact.
26.	Achieve and maintain relevant quality award accreditation.

HARCVS Values

Our work is guided by a set of shared values, which influence how we deliver first class services across the Harrogate District.

Integrity – we will act at all times in the primary interest of voluntary and community groups. We will be trustworthy and transparent in our work and in dealing with partner agencies. We will not assume we know what the community wants; we will consult and respond to needs but will also be pro-active in identifying how issues might be taken forward. We will be accountable back to the community at all times.

Professionalism – we will offer accurate and reliable information at all times and will have a dedicated ‘can do’ attitude to our work. We will develop our expertise and strive for an excellent standard of professional behaviour from all staff and trustees.

Independence – we will maintain our independence from government and will work to promote and protect the local community. We will be responsive to local need and will strive to ensure a voice for the ‘voiceless’. We will champion the value of the voluntary and community sector and be a conduit for change and improvement. We believe in the equality of all the sectors (public, private and the voluntary and community sectors).

Equity – wherever voluntary or community groups are situated in the District they will receive the same level of service from the HARCVS. We will respond equally to need and strive to ensure equality of access to services. We are committed to challenging oppression and prejudice and aim to promote both diversity and full access to opportunity in all areas of our work and structures.

Empowerment – we seek to maintain an appropriate balance between helping groups and maintaining their independence.

Participation and social justice – we are committed to working towards a just and participatory society. We believe that all people have equal rights to work towards social justice and to participate in decision-making processes and local actions

Appropriate funding – we will seek to avoid competing for scarce resources with the groups we support, but recognise that we shall need to access resources in order to develop and sustain our support activities to community groups and voluntary organisations.

Collaborative working – we will work collaboratively and in partnership with agencies in all sectors to maximise the benefits to the groups we support across the district.

Harrogate and Ripon CVS Performance Management Framework 2017 - 2020

HARCVS Vision to 2020

HARCVS Mission

HARCVS Aims (4)

Strategic Objectives (5) and Actions (26)

Information services (4)

Community & social action (8)

Community fundraising (3)

Practical support for older & vulnerable people (6)

Fit for purpose and independent (5)

Key Performance Indicators

Each strategic objective has a number of indicators to enable HARCVS to measure its progress against the strategic plan over time.

The Board monitors progress via quarterly board meetings with budgets monitored via quarterly Finance Sub Committee meetings

Annual Operational Plan

The Chief Executive is responsible for producing the operational plan which sets out the annual activity of staff and volunteers that will deliver the strategic plan over time. The plan will link to the performance indicators described above.

Annual Individual Officer Work Plans

The Management Team are responsible for the preparation of individual work plans for each member of their staff teams, who are managed and supported through annual appraisal and quarterly supervision meetings

The clear boxes denote the Board's role in setting and managing the strategic operations of the organisation, the shaded boxes the responsibility of the Chief Executive to manage the delivery of the Annual Work Plan.