

CHESHIRE AND MERSEYSIDE

State of the Sector report

CHESHIRE EAST

Summary Review 2023

CVS Community & Voluntary Services
cheshire east



Cheshire East

Context

Cheshire East has a population of approximately 400,528 people, and although life expectancy for both men and women is slightly higher than the England average, there are significant inequalities between local communities: between the most and least deprived areas there is a variance in life expectancy for women of 8 years, and 10 years for men.



Size and scope of the VCFSE sector in Cheshire East

Number to registered charities	1049	30%
Community Interest Companies (CICs)	135	4%
Companies Limited by Guarantee (CLGs)	755	22%
Registered Societies	39	1%
Community Sports Clubs	40	1%
Below the radar groups (BTR)	1,466	42%
Total	3,484	

Size of workforce

Number of paid staff	6,009
Number of volunteers (once a month minimum)	56,010
Number of regular volunteers	23,063
Volunteer hours per week	74,724

Value of workforce

Value of paid staff	£143.5 million per year
Value of volunteering	£42.3 million per year
Total	£185.8 million per year

Economic contribution of the VCFSE sector in Cheshire East

£174.1 million GVA per year

Summary profile of the VCFSE sector in Cheshire East

- **46** Groups in Cheshire East responded to the survey (**12%** of all C&M boroughs).
- The majority of groups are registered charities (**46%**) with **13%** of groups reporting as unincorporated associations (below the radar).
- **63%** of groups in Cheshire East are over **10 years old**, with only **4%** of groups reporting that their organisation was formed in the **last 12 months**.
- Groups are more likely to be working at either a whole local authority (**33%**), or local neighbourhood (**35%**) level.
- The majority of surveyed groups in Cheshire East are micro (**34%**) and small (**32%**) organisations.
- **28%** of groups main activities fall under wellbeing, health and social care as the most common area of work.
- **27%** of groups report supporting “everyone” followed by **10%** targeting children and young people and **8%** each for older people, families, and people with learning difficulties specifically.
- The most common source of funding for organisations through fundraising and donations (**30%**) followed by funding via charitable trusts (**16%**), and charging for goods and services (**14%**).
- There are approximately **122 full-time** and **265 part-time** staff employed by surveyed organisations.
- **83%** of organisations in Cheshire East with paid staff pay the Real Living Wage or above.
- **98%** of organisations utilise volunteers, with a reported total of approximately **1,184 volunteers** and an average of **32** volunteers per organisation. These volunteers provide approximately **1,163 hours** of volunteering per week.
- The most popular priority for Cheshire East groups over the next **12 months** is sourcing funding opportunities (**15%**) followed by organisational planning and strategy (**14%**), and recruiting and retaining volunteers (**10%**). **66%** of groups reported feeling confident in being able to achieve these goals, with **32%** unsure.



Key Findings

Income and expenditure

The majority of groups in Cheshire East have seen their income and reserves fall or stay the same over the preceding 12 months, however the spending of many has increased (49%), which is attributed chiefly to the impact of the pandemic and subsequent cost of living crisis. However, despite this, 47% of groups plan to increase the scale of their activity over the next 12 months.

Workforce and volunteers

There are approximately 122 full-time and 265 part-time staff employed by surveyed organisations in Cheshire East. In comparison to the rest of C&M, Cheshire East organisations are slightly less likely to employ staff on a full-time basis and are typically likely to employ fewer numbers of people than the region as whole.

Cheshire East VCFSE staff and volunteers are not particularly diverse, with only 6% of staff reported to be from a Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic background (lower than the regional trend of 9%). Similar to regional trends, the workforce is predominantly female (69%).

Cheshire East groups expect their staffing position to remain static with over 40% expecting staffing levels to remain the same. Cheshire East organisations have a higher reliance on volunteers than C&M, with 98% of organisations report that volunteers are crucial to the running of their organisation and 63% expecting to increase their use of volunteers.

Groups in Cheshire East are more likely to have higher numbers of volunteers than the region as a whole.

Community assets and skills

Almost three quarters (72%) of organisations report utilising a community asset, with the most common types being office space (17%), community centres (14%) and commercial premises (12%).

Where premises are rented, the most common landlord situation is for the premises to be rented privately (46%), or actually owned by the organisation themselves (31%). For groups that report barriers to having a community asset, this is usually related to having insufficient access to funding needed to purchase a building, and the understanding how to manage a physical community building.

In terms of education and skills, the majority of groups report being digitally enabled organisations however there is a high demand from those who require digital support for funding for equipment (43%) over staff training and development (29%).

Surveyed organisations in Cheshire East are less likely to be measuring and evidencing the impact of their work in comparison to C&M, with over 21% stating they do not measure their impact and 44% only partly.

Priorities and partnership working

Nearly 20% of groups reported having a positive working relationship with the local authority, and also their local CVS infrastructure organisation (19%). Percentages were low for relationships with NHS organisations, with 9% having a positive relationship with their local NHS place-based partnership, 6% with their NHS trusts and 6% with Primary Care Networks.

The most common priority area for Cheshire East groups over the next 12 months is sourcing funding opportunities (15%) followed by organisational planning and strategy (14%), and recruiting and retaining volunteers (10%). Cheshire East groups are more likely to be focused on developing funder relationships moving forward, however are less likely or able to want or be able to recruit and retain staff, nor work together with other VCFSE groups to influence local decisions. 66% of groups reported feeling confident in being able to achieve these goals, with 32% unsure.

This executive summary report should be read in tandem with the wider Cheshire and Merseyside State of the Sector report to help the reader relate findings to wider regional and national trends where it may be of interest to do so. Additionally, important data caveats are contained within the regional report to be aware of when interpreting these findings.

CHESHIRE AND MERSEYSIDE STATE OF THE SECTOR

2023 Review

For more information about the VCFSE
sector in the North West visit

www.vsnw.org.uk

For more information about the VCFSE
sector in the Liverpool City Region visit

www.vs6partnership.org.uk

For more information about the VCFSE
sector in Cheshire and Merseyside visit

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