

CHESHIRE AND MERSEYSIDE

State of the Sector report

WARRINGTON

Summary Review 2023



Warrington
VoluntaryAction

Warrington

Context

Warrington has a population of approximately 211,227 people, and life expectancy for both men and women is in the region of 1 year less than the England average. Further, there are significant inequalities between local communities: between the most and least deprived areas there is a variance in life expectancy for women of 7 years, and 10 years for men.



Size and scope of the VCFSE sector in Warrington

Number to registered charities	382	26%
Community Interest Companies (CICs)	72	5%
Companies Limited by Guarantee (CLGs)	195	13%
Registered Societies	20	1%
Community Sports Clubs	23	1%
Below the radar groups (BTR)	773	53%
Total	1465	

Size of workforce

Number of paid staff	3,239
Number of volunteers (once a month minimum)	29,361
Number of regular volunteers	12,090
Volunteer hours per week	39,172

Value of workforce

Value of paid staff	£77.3 million per year
Value of volunteering	£22.2 million per year
Total	£99.5 million per year

Economic contribution of the VCFSE sector in Warrington

£98.4 million GVA per year

Summary profile of the VCFSE sector in Warrington

- **54** groups in Warrington responded to the survey (**14%** of all C&M boroughs).
- The majority of groups are registered charities (**45%**) with **10%** of groups reporting as unincorporated organisations (below the radar).
- **67%** of groups in Warrington are over **10 years old**, with no 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 (**46%**), or local neighbourhood (**35%**) level.
- The majority of surveyed groups in Warrington are micro (**34%**) and small (**45%**) organisations.
- **27%** of groups main activities fall under wellbeing, health and social care as the most common area of work.
- **24%** of groups report supporting “everyone” followed by **14%** targeting children and young people and **14%** older people specifically.
- The most common source of funding for organisations is through fundraising and donations (**27%**) followed by charging for goods and services (**25%**) and funding via charitable trusts (**13%**).
- There are approximately **2,854 full-time** and **2,207 part-time** staff employed by surveyed organisations.
- **82%** of organisations in Warrington with paid staff pay the Real Living Wage or above.
- **96%** of organisations utilise volunteers, with a reported total of approximately **1,687 volunteers** and an average of **40 volunteers** per organisation. These volunteers provide approximately **2,885 hours** of volunteering per week.
- The most popular priority for Warrington groups over the next 12 months was sourcing funding opportunities (**18%**) followed by recruiting and retaining volunteers (**16.4%**) and maintaining sufficient financial reserves (**10%**). **44%** of groups reported feeling confident in being able to achieve these goals, with **51%** unsure.



Key Findings

Income and expenditure

The majority of groups in Warrington have seen their income and reserves fall or stay the same over the preceding 12 months, however their spending has increased (42%), which is attributed chiefly to the impact of the pandemic and subsequent cost of living crisis. However, despite this, 42% of groups plan to increase the scale of their activity over the next 12 months.

Workforce and volunteers

There are approximately 2,854 full-time and 2,207 part-time staff employed by surveyed organisations in Warrington (this is skewed by two very large organisations employing 2,620 full-time and 2000 part-time staff). Without these two very large organisations of the smaller organisations who completed this survey 354 full-time and 206 part-time staff are employed. In comparison to the rest of C&M, Warrington organisations are slightly less likely to employ staff on a part-time basis but are typically likely to employ similar numbers of people as the regional as whole.

Warrington VCFSE staff and volunteers are not particularly diverse, with only 5% of staff reported to be from a Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic background only 2 known transgender employees however this is comparable with the wider region. Similar to regional trends, the workforce is predominantly female (67%).

Warrington groups expect their staffing position to remain static with almost half expecting staffing levels to remain the same. Warrington organisations have a higher reliance on volunteers than C&M, with 86% of organisations report that volunteers are crucial to the running of their organisation with 44% expecting to increase their use of volunteers.

Community assets and skills

Almost three quarters (73%) of organisations report utilising a community asset, with the most common types being office space (14%), community centres

(10%) and education centres (6%). Where premises are rented, the most common landlord situation is for the premises to be rented privately, or actually owned by the organisation themselves (21% respectively). For groups that report barriers to having a community asset, this is more related to affording ongoing maintenance and 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 staff training and development (55%) over funding for equipment (27%).

Surveyed organisations in Warrington are less likely to be measuring and evidencing the impact of their work in comparison to C&M, with a quarter stating they do not measure their impact and 42% only partly. This is a significant gap.

Priorities and partnership working

Nearly a quarter of groups reported having a positive working relationship with Warrington Borough Council (23%). Percentages were low for relationships with NHS organisations, with 8% having a positive relationship with their local NHS place-based partnership, 7% with their NHS trusts and 6% with Primary Care Networks.

The most common priority area for Warrington groups over the next 12 months is sourcing funding opportunities (18%) followed by recruiting and retaining volunteers (16.4%) and maintaining sufficient financial reserves (10%). Warrington groups are more likely to be focused on developing funder relationships moving forward, however are less likely to want or be able to measure their impact as part of this, nor funder influencing and relationship building. 44% of groups reported feeling confident in being able to achieve these goals, with 51% 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.

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

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