

DVA Health & Wellbeing Forum 2026

**What We Heard.
What We Learned.
What Happens Next.**



Bringing Derbyshire's VCFSE Sector Together

Over 35 organisations came together to discuss the findings of DVA's State of the Sector Survey and explore the future of community health and wellbeing across Derbyshire.

Against a backdrop of system change, funding uncertainty and rising demand, one message came through clearly:

Derbyshire's VCFSE sector remains resilient, collaborative and essential.

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**DERBYSHIRE
VOLUNTARY
ACTION**

THE SCALE OF OUR IMPACT



Based on responses from just 50 organisations it is transparent that Derbyshire's VCFSE is directly supporting thousands of people and hundreds of community groups.

The DVA survey clearly reinforces the critical preventative community role of Derbyshire's VCFSE sector with...

40%	Directly supporting health services
40%	Actively preventing crisis
47%	Building community resilience
69%	improving the wellbeing of individuals
69%	Reducing isolation

We continue to provide the trusted, local support that strengthens communities and improves wellbeing. Often acting as the first point of support for people experiencing isolation, poor mental health, financial hardship and long-term health conditions, our work helps prevent problems escalating into crisis and reduces pressure on wider services.

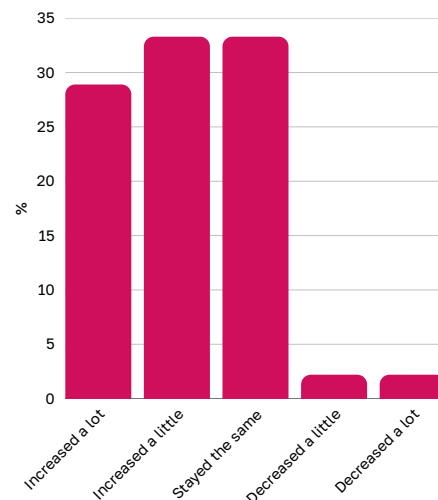
THE CHALLENGES WE CANNOT IGNORE

The survey and forum discussions highlighted four major pressures affecting organisations across Derbyshire.

62% Reported Rising Demand

Top drivers

- Isolation (67%)
- Mental Health (58%)
- Health Inequalities (42%)



58% Operating with little or no capacity

"We are struggling to maintain our services through volunteers and ad hoc hours."

Volunteer Sustainability

"We need a new generation to keep providing our services."

47% say recruiting volunteers is a major challenge

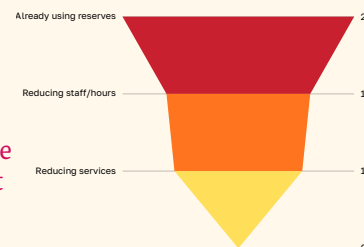
42% report burnout/capacity pressures

Funding Insecurity

Key concerns:

- Short-term funding
- Rising costs
- Increased competition
- Limited development capacity

78%
need sustainable
funding support



"We spend more time trying to survive than planning for the future."

The challenge is no longer simply delivering services. It is sustaining them.

'WE NEED TO COME OUT OF THE SHADOWS!'

Despite the challenges, discussions focused strongly on solutions and opportunities.

Collaboration Not Competition

Participants called for:

- More networking opportunities
- Shared resources and learning
- Joint funding opportunities
- Better communication

"We all bring specific value."

Demonstrate Our Value

The sector wants to:

- Better evidence impact
- Demonstrate social value
- Show what community support saves the system
- Use stories alongside data

Strengthen Our Collective Voice

Key priorities:

- Greater visibility
- Better integration into neighbourhood working
- Stronger relationships with decision-makers
- A clearer shared identity

"We need to speak with one voice."

Stronger collaboration will create stronger communities.

Participants prioritised...

- ✓ **Collaboration**
- ✓ **Visibility**
- ✓ **Sustainable Funding**
- ✓ **Volunteering**
- ✓ **Demonstrating Impact**
- ✓ **Neighbourhood Working**



WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

The conversations from this forum will help shape DVA's work with members, partners and decision-makers over the coming months.

The 2026 DVA Conference

The headline action from us all will be to collaborate and utilise the 2026 DVA Conference to shine a light on our collective value of our sector by:

- Championing the collective voice of the sector
- Strengthening networking and collaboration opportunities
- Supporting organisations to demonstrate impact and social value
- Promoting volunteering and workforce sustainability
- Advocating for stronger VCFSE involvement in neighbourhood working
- Building relationships with emerging system leaders and regional partners



Save the Date! Thursday 22nd October at The Post Mill Centre

Our Collective Message

“The resilience of Derbyshire's VCFSE sector is being stretched. Together we continue to deliver vital support that reduces isolation, improves wellbeing and helps prevent problems escalating into crisis. If any one of us fails or disappears it leaves a huge hole that cannot easily be filled. We must seize the opportunity to ensure our sector is properly recognised, connected, supported and invested in, and not simply taken for granted. Derbyshire deserves stronger communities supported by a stronger VCFSE sector.”

- Jacqui Willis, CEO

Find out more about DVA Membership
www.dva.org.uk/dva-members



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