

# Impact Report & Accounts

Supporting Sefton's  
voluntary, community  
and faith sector

Find us on @SeftonCVS





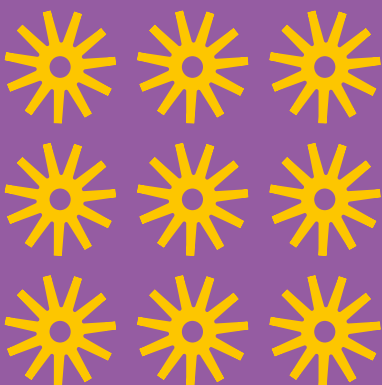
**£3,362,322**

invested in the Sefton VCF sector during  
the year with the involvement of CVS.



**£77,709**

distributed to Southport VCF  
sector organisations as part of the  
Southport recovery.



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# Foreword

**In introducing this report for 2024/25, we begin by reflecting on the tragic events that occurred on July 29th 2024 in Southport, remembering those who were killed and injured, and the lasting impact of that day and the subsequent riots on the community of Southport and beyond.**

We continue to remember Bibi, Elsie Dot and Alice, their grieving parents and families, and all who were injured and witnessed the events. We commend the bravery of first responders and the kindness of neighbours and communities in the subsequent days.

Sefton Council led a multi-agency response through thematic groups to respond to immediate events and the subsequent recovery programme that continues in terms of psychological support, health and wellbeing, community cohesion and resilience, communications and support to businesses and the VCF sector response.

As a strategic partner we have, along with Sefton Council, supported the fundraising appeal Southport Stronger Together, led by the Community Foundation for Merseyside and Lancashire, who have overseen the distribution of funds made to the families of the little girls, the other people injured, the schools impacted and VCF sector organisations in Southport.

We have co-ordinated a Southport VCF Sector Recovery Group and, with their support and that of our wider networks, we have captured local intelligence and insight that has been fed into partnership settings.

A VCF sector programme of support is continuing in 2025/26 focused on health and wellbeing, cohesion, target hardening of buildings, youth sector investment and VCF sector support to Team Around the School. We are especially grateful for the commitment and support of voluntary, community and faith leaders in Southport.

As reflected in our last annual report, Sefton CVS was founded in 1974 and we were hugely honoured when Sefton Council recently awarded us the Freedom of the Borough of Sefton in acknowledgement of our 50 years of service. A wonderful ceremony was held at Bootle Town Hall in June 2025 to mark the occasion. We are very grateful to Sefton Council for this special recognition.

This report details the multi-agency partnership work undertaken locally, regionally and nationally over the last year. At the core of this work is sustaining and supporting the VCF sector to be at the forefront of societal needs and concerns in the borough by being robust, resilient organisations in our communities.

The sector's interventions include tackling child poverty, health and wellbeing projects for people of all ages, support for community resilience and cohesion, social and economic regeneration and creating life opportunities for our residents, whether through leisure, culture, social activities or employment initiatives.

Our role is also to co-ordinate our sector through networks, forums and stakeholder groups to promote their work and responses. This has seen organisations contributing to the children, young people and families priorities, interventions through the Place Plan in promoting health and wellbeing, mental health transformation, and anti-poverty responses through community pantries, foodbanks and Warm Spaces, all underpinned by promoting social cohesion and engaging with Sefton's diverse communities.

We are again grateful to our key funders and partners and particularly to Sefton Council for their ongoing support of CVS and the wider VCF sector.

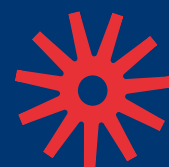
Our grateful thanks also go to our President, the Lord Lieutenant of Merseyside, our Patrons, the CVS Board and particularly to our staff and volunteers for their continuing dedication and hard work.

We are proud to work alongside our local VCF sector organisations and recognise their service and support across our borough and our communities in Sefton.

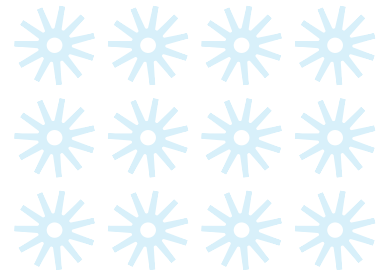
**Mark Sonne – Chair**

**Angela White OBE FRSA - Chief Executive**

**October 2025**



# Introduction



## Mission

Our mission is to promote and assist voluntary, community and faith (VCF) sector activity.

## Vision

Our vision is to develop a vibrant voluntary, community and faith sector that encourages and supports independent resilience and sustainable communities.

## Values

Our guiding principles are to:

- Put Sefton people, places and organisations at the heart of what we do.
- Be open and fair in our transactions.
- Take responsibility and be accountable for our actions.
- Promote equality, diversity and cohesion through our activities.
- Support the most vulnerable people in our communities.
- Seek solutions, not problems.
- Be prepared to listen and learn.
- Operate ethically, honestly and with the highest standards of integrity.



## Approach

The key elements of our approach are to:

### Start where people are at

We encourage grassroots social action and community-led service delivery by helping local people to set up and develop robust projects, groups and social enterprises.

### Pull in others and link it up

We operate as a sector champion, bringing together often diverse groups and organisations to network and collaborate more effectively.

### Do more and do it better

We support and train local community organisations to improve their effectiveness, quality, reach, sustainability and social impact.

### Innovate and pass it on

We help to spot gaps in provision and fill them by brokering creative solutions, leveraging in resources and developing new initiatives.

### Promote

We promote the positive and progressive values of the VCF sector, and highlight the added value of community-led and delivered services.



## Activities

Our key activities are to:

- Provide support services to the VCF sector.
- Promote partnerships within the sector, and between the VCF sector and other sectors.
- Provide a channel through which the VCF sector is represented.
- Develop new ideas, strategies and organisations.
- Support and develop volunteering opportunities.
- Promote equality of opportunity and access, and the value of diversity.



## Sefton CVS holds the following quality assurance marks and training accreditations:

- Volunteer Centre Quality Assurance
- Navajo (LGBTIQ-friendly) Charter Mark
- Workplace Wellbeing Charter
- Disability Confident Employer
- Open Awards Approved Centre
- Recognised Centre Royal Society for Public Health (RSPH)
- Social Value Quality Mark Level 1
- Living Wage Employer
- LCR Fair Employment Charter

# Strategic leadership and partnership

**Sefton CVS is a key agency in strategic partnerships and interventions in the borough, addressing local priorities through the work of the key Partnership Boards, Health and Wellbeing Board and Children's Partnership Board.**

CVS is also recognised as a key non-statutory partner within Sefton Partnership Board, Sefton Local Safeguarding Children's Board and Sefton Safeguarding Adults Board.

In addition, CVS works closely with Sefton Council and NHS Cheshire and Merseyside via Sefton Partnership Board, the Primary Care Networks (PCNs) and the borough's thematic planning groups to support local commissioning priorities.

Sefton CVS is also a partner in sector engagement and developing initiatives across the City Region with VS6, engaging with the Combined Authority and Metro Mayor's Office, and across the wider North West working with Voluntary Sector North West and engaging with the Cheshire and Merseyside Integrated Care Partnership Board.



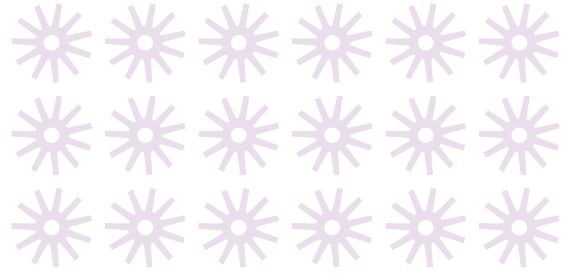
## Key features of this and other strategic work during 2024/25 included:

- Continued participation in ongoing workstreams relating to NHS transformation, health and social care integration and advocating the vital role that both the funded and unfunded sectors play in providing services and support to borough residents by addressing the priorities of statutory partners and the Sefton Partnership.
- Facilitating sector networks and forums, involving both groups and individuals, as a consultation and engagement conduit, helping to develop public policy and shape local services.
- Participation in a range of Sefton Council work programmes, including the Health and Wellbeing Board and the Sefton Partnership Board.
- Also engaging in the work of the People and Communities Group, Community Safety Partnership, Sefton Leadership Collaborative Multi-Agency Group, Sefton Adult Forum, Sefton Domestic Abuse Partnership, Sefton Combatting Drugs Partnership, the Consultation and Engagement Partnership and the Stronger Communities Partnership.
- Active involvement in other work programmes relating to children, young people and families including the Corporate Parenting Board, SEND Continuous Improvement Board, Children and Young People Partnership Board, Youth Offending Service Management Board, Early Help Partnership Board, Emotional Health and Wellbeing Board and Sefton Safeguarding Children Partnership Forum.



# 36,767

attendances recorded at  
Warm Spaces sessions across  
the borough.



- Continued involvement as Chair of the multi-agency Welfare Reform and Anti-Poverty Partnership (WRAP), and making a significant contribution to the Child Poverty Strategy for Sefton.
- Delivery of MECC (Making Every Contact Count) training to the wider workforce, including elected members, local authority staff, GPs, DWP staff and the VCF sector.
- Facilitating participation and engagement mechanisms with the equalities groups, the Young Advisors, Have Your Say (formerly SYMBOL) and the Youth Cabinet as conduits to our public sector partners.
- Facilitating the New Realities Steering Group and supporting key areas of work that demonstrate innovative working across public and voluntary sector agencies.
- Participation by the Chief Executive in the Sefton Lieutenancy Panel, providing advice and updates on the VCF sector to the Deputy Lieutenants of Merseyside covering Sefton.
- Continuing to co-ordinate the wide range of services delivered by Living Well Sefton, an integrated wellness service commissioned by Public Health, with additional activities delivered by the Strand By Me community and health services shop.
- Engaging with stakeholder groups about the proposed redevelopment of Bootle's Strand shopping centre, with particular emphasis on CVS/ VCF sector participation in the development of a proposed health hub.
- In partnership with VOLA, continuing to deliver the Include-IT Mersey digital inclusion programme through a City Region collaborative of VCF sector organisations, further funded by the Shared Prosperity Fund through the LCR Combined Authority.
- Hosting a celebration event in November to mark Sefton CVS's 50th anniversary attended by the Deputy Lord Lieutenant Ruth Hussey, the Mayor of Sefton, partners, funders, VCF sector representatives, trustees, staff and volunteers.
- Continuing to co-ordinate and develop Sefton's Warm and Welcome Spaces provision, a network of safe and accessible venues providing food, warmth and social activities for people affected by the cost of living crisis. 2,343 sessions were run during the year by our 40 community partners with 36,767 attendances. Options were also explored to sustain the project beyond 2024.
- Co-ordinating a group of 16 organisations who provided vouchers and clothing to 1,616 residents in need.
- Working as an active member of the Greater Merseyside VS6 which is a focal point for VCF and social enterprise infrastructure/support providers to debate, influence and shape policy at the Liverpool City Region level.
- Ongoing participation in VS6 work plans including monitoring of the Shared Prosperity Fund, development of the VS6 manifesto, ensuring the sector is engaged with ICB regional and place developments and supporting the delivery of LCR digital connectivity programmes.
- Working with VS6 partners and Mersey Care NHS Trust to secure a Sefton allocation of around £171,000 of Community Mental Health Transformation funding into locally based voluntary organisations.
- Supporting the delivery of activities by the Liverpool City Region Dementia Friendly Advisory Group to raise awareness of dementia and the services and support available to people affected by the condition.
- Working in partnership with the other CVS organisations on Merseyside as part of a sub-regional network. This year we co-ordinated VCF engagement with the development of regional NHS structures to ensure the appropriate involvement of the sector and local communities in new relationships and joint working across the City Region.
- Through the Sefton CVS CEO, engaging with Merseyside Resilience Forum and the VCSE Emergencies Partnership's national monthly network.



# £171k

of Community Mental Health  
Transformation funding secured  
for Sefton.



# Southport recovery

**On July 29th 2024 Southport experienced the tragic event of a knife attack at a dance class in Hart Street which resulted in the deaths of children Alice da Silva Aguiar, Bebe King and Elsie Dot Stancombe, with many others seriously injured and traumatised.**

On July 30th, riots and disorder broke out in the town which were targeted at Southport mosque, with similar events occurring in other towns and cities across the UK.

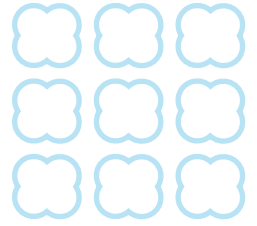
Sefton Council established a 'Recovery Cell' to lead the local response to the two separate incidents in Southport. Working with a multi-agency partnership, CVS contributed to the work of the thematic groups established.

## CVS actions in response included:

- Establishing the Southport Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector (VCFS) Recovery Group to harness local experience and response. 35 different Southport VCF organisations were represented in the group which continues to meet.
- Beginning a comprehensive 'listening exercise' with the voluntary, community and faith sector during the months of August and September 2024 to gain insight into the immediate, medium and long-term needs of the community. 50 organisations and additional lived experience voices fed into this document which was shared with partners.
- This insight work has informed the VCF Sector Recovery investment which is being developed around youth infrastructure, building security, Team Around the School and emotional health and wellbeing.
- Co-ordinating a Small Grants Fund with £15,000 from Sefton Council to meet local needs in the immediate and medium term. This supported 45 different community, family, youth and interfaith community activities. It also provided training on building security and safety and trauma informed practice for frontline VCF staff and volunteers.
- Working with the Belong Network on behalf of the sector to support them in reaching different groups and organisations in Southport as part of their community impact assessment work.
- The Sefton CVS CEO sitting on the local authority's Southport Recovery Executive Leadership Group and providing strategic oversight of the sector's funding allocation across the different work programmes.
- Working closely with the Community Foundation for Merseyside and Lancashire and Sefton Council on the Southport Stronger Together Appeal. The main priorities for the allocation of appeal funds are directly impacted individuals and families experiencing bereavement, serious injury, immediate hardship and psychological injury. The first grants were awarded in the early days of the appeal being established. This still remains the main priority for the fund.
- 11 schools with an association with those immediately impacted by the tragedy were also awarded grants, as were eight 'anchor' Southport community organisations to assist them in building capacity and extending the scope of their service delivery.
- Leading the Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector Grant Fund offering groups grants between £500 and £5,000. The priorities for the grant fund were community cohesion, psychological and wellbeing support, youth provision and community reassurance programmes, training, capacity building, events and activities. The grant panel allocated £62,709 to 22 VCF sector organisations based in or providing services in Southport.
- Developing the VCF Anti-Racism and Inclusion Pledge which was launched at a Community First Assembly in October 2024 in partnership with the Liverpool City Region's Race Equality Unit. To date, 22 VCF sector groups and organisations have signed up to the pledge and further work will be continued into 2026.



# Support for groups



## Organisational development and capacity building

This capacity building service provides support to local people looking to establish robust and sustainable new projects and groups, and also helps established organisations to improve their effectiveness, reach and social impact. It also encourages groups to collaborate more widely, and helps them to mitigate against, and respond to, the cost of living crisis.

Groups can access support with a wide range of issues including charity or social/community enterprise start-up, acquiring and managing community assets, governance and leadership, achieving quality standards, social impact, project development, business planning, policy development, training, accountancy services and volunteer development.

### Key activities during 2024/25 included:

- Handling 750 intensive cases of capacity building and customised support with 212 groups and 78 individuals. 16.5 per cent of these groups had an annual income of under £10k and 17 per cent between £10k and £100k.
- The work areas of groups and services receiving support included adult health and wellbeing (12 per cent), children, young people and families (nine per cent), faith and worship (12 per cent), sport, recreation, art and culture (17 per cent) and education, training and employability (11 per cent).
- Hosting six 'meet the funder' events, connecting 91 attendees with representatives of local, regional and national funders.
- Holding a Social Impact Tool Workshop which provided support to four organisations with improving their social impact reporting.
- Helping five VCF sector organisations to benefit from attending a 'volunteers and the law' masterclass run in partnership with Brabners LLP.

## Funding advice and information

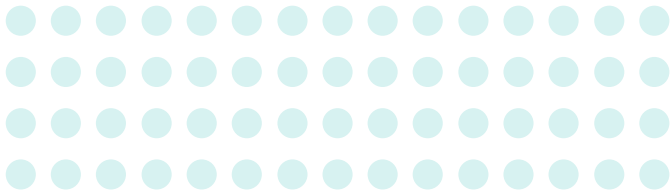
The funding advice and information function helps VCF sector organisations to access funding opportunities from sources including charitable trusts and commissioners that enable them to become more sustainable by improving their financial security and capacity.

The Group Development Team work closely with local, regional and national trusts and grant makers to ensure their criteria are widely understood by potential applicants via one-to-one advice sessions, meet the funder surgeries and the Merseyside Funding Information Portal. CVS also briefs funders on local demands in Sefton, helping them to have a better understanding of needs 'on the ground' in the borough.

The service provides support with developing proposals to bid status, assistance with compiling evidence and data, final submission and advice on managing and monitoring the grants once awarded. CVS also provides a bespoke bid reading service on request.

### Key activities during 2024/25 in support of responses to the cost of living crisis included:

- Providing bespoke advice and support to help the Sefton VCF sector submit funding applications totalling £3,824,479 during the year. Of these £2,183,256 were successful and a further £1,346,223 worth of bids were awaiting funding decisions at the year-end.
- Managing the Merseyside Funding Information Portal website on behalf of the VCF infrastructure bodies in the Liverpool City Region. The site attracted more than 15,000 unique visitors and generated more than 60,000 views during the year.
- Providing bespoke support to Sefton organisations making submissions to the Big Lottery Reaching Communities and Awards for All programmes. During the year groups secured £1,662,799 with the help of CVS.
- Organising funding surgeries involving a range of grant makers including the National Lottery Heritage Fund, Burbo Bank Community Fund, Steve Morgan Foundation and Duchy of Lancaster Benevolent Fund. These events connected 91 attendees with local, regional and national sources of funding.
- Participating in the work of the Merseyside Charitable Trusts Group and the Merseyside Funders Advice Network.



## Grants

During the year Sefton CVS secured and administered a range of grants from funders which resulted in £1,179,066 being awarded to Sefton VCF sector organisations.

### Key features of these grants programmes during 2024/25 included:

- Living Well Sefton awarding £52,130 via Community Resilience Grants, £60,000 via Locality Grants and £6,783 via Workplace Wellbeing Grants, a total benefit to the sector of £118,913.
- Working with Sefton Council on the distribution of £88,310 to 40 organisations to deliver Warm and Welcome Spaces sessions across the borough.
- Also in partnership with Sefton Council, distributing £75,000 via 16 VCF sector organisations to provide winter clothing and other essentials to 555 recipients.
- Administering £45,000 on behalf of Sefton's 13 public health organisations to support initiatives that aim to improve the wellbeing of residents aged over 65 in the borough.
- Administering a total of £25,000 awarded to eight organisations for initiatives aimed at reducing drug and alcohol-related harm to young people, and £12,000 to four organisations to capture qualitative insights into drug and alcohol use on behalf of Sefton's Combatting Drugs Partnership.

These grants, along with the funds we helped VCF organisations to secure, our grant allocation via VOLA and Living Well Sefton and Community Mental Health Transformation funding, means we helped to invest a total of £3,362,322 in the Sefton VCF sector during the year.

# £2.18m

of funding secured by Sefton VCF sector groups during the year with the help of CVS.

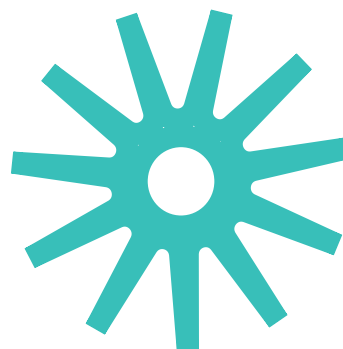


## Community accountancy

The community accountancy function provides a range of services for the VCF sector including payroll management, bookkeeping, preparing annual accounts and producing budgets and forecasts. The team also offer advice on issues such as VAT and Gift Aid, and provide intensive support to VCF groups in financial crisis.

### Key activities during 2024/25 included:

- Providing accountancy services to 115 groups.
- Preparing annual accounts for 112 VCF sector organisations, and carrying out independent examinations for 50 groups.
- Providing a payroll bureau service for 24 VCF sector organisations, and a pensions service for 15 groups.
- Undertaking bookkeeping services for 45 VCF sector groups.





## Training and skills

The Sefton CVS Training and Skills Programme builds the knowledge and skills of the VCF sector workforce, thereby strengthening the capability and capacity of the organisations they work for to sustain and grow their operations.

### Key activities during 2024/25 included:

- Providing training opportunities that benefitted a total of 554 individuals, including e-learning packages offered as a suite of 28 online courses by online learning platform TES Development.
- Providing TES Development online training packages to 224 individuals.
- Delivering more than 30 'in person' and remote training courses and masterclasses on a wide range of topics including mental health, bid writing, safeguarding policy, recruiting volunteers, mentoring, dementia, equality and diversity.

## Heritage

The objectives of the Sefton at 50 Hearts of Gold Heritage Lottery Project are to involve more people in heritage activities, and identify and better explain Sefton's rich and diverse heritage.

It also aims to help people and organisations develop new skills, educate people about heritage matters and make the local area a better place to live, work or visit.

The project aims to achieve these outcomes by awarding community grants for heritage projects celebrating special people, places and events from the last 50 years in Sefton.

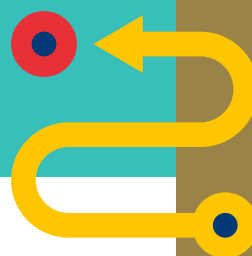
### Key activities during 2024/25 included:

- Awarding Heritage Lottery Community Grants of £23,054 to 15 VCF sector groups (£50,010 to 32 VCF organisations over the lifetime of the project). Some of the vibrant community activities funded included intergenerational podcasts, creative writing and story telling, projects about horticultural heritage and coastal biodiversity, performing arts and community theatre and the creation of tapestries illustrating Sefton's rich heritage.
- Creating three community heritage trails in Bootle, Netherton and Formby with the help of research from local volunteers. Printed trail leaflets have been produced for each location, along with dedicated websites and wooden heart signs placed at points along the route with QR codes on them to explain more about the locations featured.
- Holding two heritage meet the funder events, one with National Lottery Heritage Fund North.



# 554

people benefitted from training opportunities provided by Sefton CVS.



# 3

new community heritage trails created in Bootle, Netherton and Formby.

# Volunteering/ Sefton 4 Good

## Volunteering

Volunteer Centre Sefton supports volunteers, and the organisations that recruit volunteers, by providing a brokerage service that matches local people to organisations with volunteering opportunities.

Staff also provide bespoke support to organisations deploying volunteers including good practice guides, advice on policies and procedures, training and support with developing new initiatives. The centre also links in with regional and national agencies in policy work relating to volunteering, and has been awarded the Volunteer Centre Quality Accreditation from NAVCA.

### Key activities during 2024/25 included:

- Increasing the number of volunteer registrations on the Team Kinetic system from 975 to 1,549 during the year.
- Increasing the number of volunteer-involving organisations on the system to 505 during the year, offering a total of 765 volunteering opportunities.
- Holding four Volunteer Co-ordinators' Forums covering a range of volunteer-related topics attended by 68 people.
- Hosting a volunteer celebration event during Volunteers' Week attended by the Mayor of Sefton, Councillor June Burns, as well as other elected members. Certificates were awarded to 329 volunteers during the week.
- Providing intensive one-to-one support to 28 individual volunteers, signposting them to relevant roles and introducing them to appropriate organisations.
- Responding to 239 enquiries from 127 groups and individuals on topics such as volunteer recruitment, policies and procedures and best practice.
- Working with nine businesses on employer-supported volunteering opportunities.
- Continuing to grow our Volunteer Centre Sefton social media presence on Facebook (815 followers), Instagram (761 followers) and LinkedIn (59 followers). This year, we reduced our use of X/Twitter and launched a presence on Blue Sky instead.

## Sefton 4 Good

Sefton 4 Good supports philanthropy and local giving in the borough, primarily through an online presence. The project encourages local people and organisations to donate their money, skills, time or resources to support Sefton-based good causes.

These good causes also have the opportunity to maximise their fundraising by routing it through Sefton 4 Good which can claim Gift Aid on their behalf.

### Key activities during 2024/25 included:

- Organising a wide range of fundraising activities including an Easter raffle, silent auction, Euro 24 sweepstakes, Halloween quiz and raffles at the volunteer celebration event and Sefton CVS 50th anniversary celebration. Sefton 4 Good craft group 'pink hearts' were also sold at some events.
- Organising three Citizens 4 Good awards events in Bootle, Maghull and Southport at which 42 local people, groups or teams who have helped to improve life in their local communities received certificates from the Mayor of Sefton. £500 was donated to the Southport awards by Southport BID.
- Raising the profile of Sefton 4 Good by attending events with promotional stands, for example a networking evening hosted by solicitors Black Norman.
- Supporting the Winter Warm packs initiative for vulnerable residents. Pupils from Waterloo Primary School and St Philip's School Litherland helped to pack 300 bags ready for distribution.
- Celebrating the 50th anniversary of Sefton Council by running volunteer taster days with the Friends of Waterloo Seafront Gardens, the Canal and River Trust, Bootle Library, Southport Community Centre and the Inclusion Network. 94 people offered their services as volunteers at these events.
- Continuing to grow our Sefton 4 Good social media presence on Facebook (787 followers), Instagram (708 followers) and LinkedIn (40 followers). This year, we reduced our use of X/Twitter and launched a presence on Blue Sky instead.

# Criminal justice

**The aim of Sefton CVS's work in this field is to provide strategic leadership within the VCF sector, and to be a conduit to partners and interpret policy relating to the criminal justice system, community safety and Reducing Reoffending.**

It involves working with key partners within Merseyside Police, the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, HM Prison Service and Sefton Council.

## Merseyside Offender Mentoring Project

This project provides mentoring and befriending support to offenders before and after release from HMP Liverpool, with the aim of helping them to resettlement positively back into the community.

A comprehensive tailored service is provided to assist offenders with overcoming any barriers they face, with the objective of reducing reoffending rates significantly, and thus the impact on the wider community.

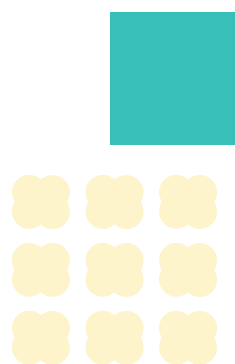
In 2024/25 the project was funded by a range of agencies and charitable trusts including the National Lottery Reaching Communities Fund, the John Armitage Charitable Trust and Sefton Council's Drug and Alcohol Partnership.

### Key activities during 2024/25 included:

- 230 offenders engaging with the project to seek support, of whom 98 were matched with a volunteer mentor to progress work on their individual action plans.
- Supporting mentees via 2,968 one-to-one interventions.
- Recruiting and training 239 new volunteer mentors.
- Providing mentees with 2,735 hours of volunteer mentoring support which equates to an economic value of £42,666 based on average wage rates in Sefton.
- Achieving a ten per cent reoffending rate for those who engaged with the project and subsequently returned to prison, compared with the national average of 33 per cent.

# 1,549

people registered their interest in volunteering with Volunteer Centre Sefton.



# 230

offenders engaged with the Merseyside Offender Mentoring Project to seek support.

# Equalities

## Sefton Equalities Team works with partners to reduce inequalities in the borough by supporting and enabling partners to meet their requirements under the Equalities Act 2010 legislation.

It also provides a conduit through which Sefton's protected groups can gain access to, and participate in, decision making, consultation and engagement.

### Key activities during 2024/25 included:

- Supporting the delivery of the Combined Authority's Race Equality Strategy.
- Delivering understanding personality disorder training and cultural competency training to South Sefton PCN staff.
- Delivering equality, diversity and inclusion training to the senior leadership team of the UK Clinical Research Facilities Network.
- Delivering self-harm training to staff and volunteers of the Crisis Cafes in Sefton.
- Delivering modern day slavery and human trafficking awareness training to almost 30 strategic partners, including the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner.
- Supporting Sefton Prevent, a multi-agency forum which aims to combat extremist activity and indoctrination across the borough.
- Supporting the local authority asylum seeker/refugee forum, a multi-agency group providing information, advice and support.
- Participating in Sefton Hate Crime Joint Action Group meetings, and the Crown Prosecution Service Hate Crime Sub-group.
- Hosting asylum seeker surgeries with NHS GPs at Thornton and Netherton health centres, and weekly migrant surgeries in the north of the borough at Parenting 2000 and Holy Trinity School.
- Ensuring the implementation of a Navajo action plan to enable Sefton CVS to retain the Navajo Charter Mark.
- Providing advocacy at DWP and employment tribunals, with extensive arrears recovered for clients.
- Ongoing support for football's Show Racism the Red Card educational work.
- Helping NHS partners to access DEB communities in Sefton.

## DEBs CDW Project (Diverse Ethnic Backgrounds Service)

This project provides intensive one-to-one support to vulnerable members of Sefton's DEB communities who are experiencing mental health issues.

### Key activities during 2024/25 included:

- Delivering 1,798 interventions for 457 people from DEB/migrant backgrounds from 47 different nationalities. 35 were asylum seekers, of whom 14 had complex needs.
- Working with a total of 257 new clients during the year. The three most common issues raised were again mental health, legal matters and safeguarding.
- Helping 19 clients to claim £114,963 in benefits arrears from the DWP through representation at social security appeal tribunals.
- Providing ongoing support to Ukrainian and Russian clients affected by the current conflict.
- Attending 24 meetings of the Southport Recovery Group and Community Cohesion Sub-group in response to the knife attack in the town.
- Providing direct support to Southport Mosque by meeting with the Imam in the immediate aftermath of the tragedy.

# Children, young people and families

**This area of the work of Sefton CVS involves the development of a co-ordinated, strategic approach to local services, seeking to embed best practice to deliver quality outcomes for children, young people and families, with a focus on multi-agency working and integrated processes.**

The Every Child Matters Forum, which has 773 members, facilitates VCF sector representation, enabling the sector to provide service solutions to the needs and priorities identified locally and nationally.

There are also additional sub-groups focusing on key areas of work including the Thrive Network, the Education and Mental Health Network and the Sefton Youth Voice Strategic Steering Group.

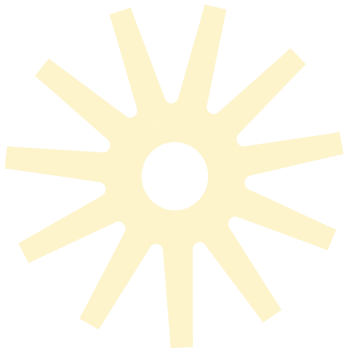
# 773

members are involved in the work of the Every Child Matters Forum.



## Key activities during 2024/25 included:

- Facilitating four meetings of the Every Child Matters Forum and supporting the VCF sector's response to a range of themes including family hubs, domestic abuse and youth voice and participation.
- Co-ordinating the Thrive Network sub-group which brings together organisations in Sefton who are keen to support children and young people using the Thrive model. Chaired by the CVS Children, Young People and Families Lead, the group is well attended by a wide range of partners.
- Facilitating the Education and Mental Health Network sub-group which provides an opportunity for local schools to highlight good practice and partner agencies to share information about their services. Regular updates are also provided by school mental health support teams.
- Co-ordinating Perinatal Community of Practice meetings, which provide partners across Sefton who work with families with children up to two years old with an opportunity to share good practice and information on the services available in the borough.
- Involvement in the new Sefton Youth Voice Strategic Steering Group established by partners including Sefton CVS, Sefton Council, Mersey Care and Career Connect to bring together youth voice and engagement in the borough.
- Co-ordinating 162 referrals for Southport and Birkdale Provident Society Trust grants for vulnerable families.
- Co-ordinating the Sefton Emotional Achievement Service (SEAS), a partnership of charities working to deliver bespoke emotional wellbeing support to children, young people, families and schools.
- Co-ordinating Buddy Up, a mentoring and befriending project for young people (13-18) with special educational needs and disabilities. It aims to reduce their social isolation, increase their confidence and prepare them for a more independent adulthood. 35 young people accessed 1,226 hours of activities during the year.
- Co-ordinating the linked Buddy Up+@Alchemy social club for young adults aged 18-25 which aims to improve their emotional health and wellbeing and increase their independence. 64 young adults accessed 3,765 hours of social opportunities during the year.



## Sefton Young Advisors

**Sefton CVS employs seven Young Advisors aged from 15-22 to show community leaders and decision makers how to engage young people in community life.**

They help organisations to 'youth proof' their practices, policies, strategies and commissioning, and engage directly with other young people to get them involved.

The Young Advisors have gained local, regional and national recognition for their work through a range of awards and commendations.

### Key activities during 2024/25 included:

- Representing the views of young people at the Healthwatch Sefton Steering Group, Sefton Children's and Young People's Board, Sefton Education and Mental Health Network, the Every Child Matters Forum, the Public Engagement and Consultation Panel, the Youth Providers Network, the Thrive Network and the former Experience and Patient Engagement Group.
- Developing and launching Have Your Say Sefton, an opportunity for young people across the borough to comment on topics important to them, with the information gathered then fed back to senior leaders and elected members. During the year the Young Advisors consulted on transport and activities for young people in Sefton.
- Updating the Youth Voice and Participation Toolkit to include the Lundy model of participation.
- Providing feedback on the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP).
- Attending the Sefton Parent Carer Forum Local Offer Event at St Michael's School and Youth Quake at Mann Island.
- Providing feedback to Sefton School Health Team on 'Chat Health'.
- Taking part in the 'Deliver You' campaign as part of the National Youth Strategy.



# 162

referrals were made for Southport and Birkdale Provident Society Trust grants for vulnerable families.



# 7

Young Advisors employed by CVS help organisations to engage more young people in community life.

# Health and wellbeing interventions

**During 2024/25 the Health and Social Care Forum ensured that the voice of the VCF sector was heard within the strategic planning arenas of both health and social care.**

Throughout the year members worked with Adult Social Care in preparation for their first CQC inspection and also participated in the options appraisal for the Shaping Care Together Programme.

## Key activities during 2024/25 included:

- Facilitating six meetings of the Health and Social Care Forum which currently has 176 members. Speakers from a range of organisations have provided members with insights into critical issues, for example Oliver McGowan training and the system challenges this would present for people with learning difficulties and autism.
- Engaging in consultation on Change NHS, Shaping Care Together, urgent and emergency care at Southport and Ormskirk hospitals and women's services across Sefton and Liverpool.
- Providing an opportunity to articulate the wider community impacts of the Southport knife attack, and a space to reflect. This intelligence was used to inform plans to support community cohesion and resilience.
- Disseminating safeguarding training opportunities to align with the aims and objectives of Sefton Adult Safeguarding Board and activities associated with Safeguarding Awareness Week.
- Providing a community engagement mechanism for the Sefton Combatting Drugs Partnership, addressing issues including the challenges of complex lives, homelessness and the new property pool process.
- Sefton Partnership for Older Citizens hosting three meetings focusing on topics including ageism, physical activity, extra care housing, dementia prevention, falls prevention, hydration awareness and the older people's forums.
- Co-ordinating a public health grant scheme providing funding for projects and initiatives designed to improve the wellbeing of Sefton residents aged over 65.

## Dementia Friendly Sefton

The Dementia Friendly Sefton Forum, which had more than 60 members, held four meetings during 2024/25. It has subsequently merged with the Sefton Dementia Steering Group established by the Cheshire and Merseyside ICB.

## Key activities during 2024/25 included:

- Championing a range of issues including the importance of dementia design, hydration in dementia, dementia prevention, cancer and dementia and the Herbert Protocol.
- Supporting activities at the Atkinson Southport, Maghull Town Hall and Bootle Library during Dementia Action Week.
- Providing representation at a number of strategic health and social care meetings throughout the borough including, for example, the Liverpool City Region Dementia Advisory Board and the Sefton Carers Partnership Board.
- Leading on the Dementia Friendly St Oswald's project which aims to collect insights and create innovative and creative solutions to low dementia diagnosis rates within Sefton's St Oswald's electoral ward area.
- Consulting with University of Liverpool Senior Clinical Lecturer Dr Uzman Alam resulting in a successful funding bid for further research into ophthalmology and dementia diagnosis.



## Mental Health Navigation Service

Sefton CVS established a new Mental Health Navigation Service during the year using Mental Health Transformation funding.

A gap analysis of existing service limitations identified a need for additional resources in cost of living support, carer support and help for individuals experiencing loneliness and isolation.

**In summer 2024 a grant scheme was launched through Sefton In Mind seeking expressions of interest for the provision of these services and three organisations received funding:**

- Citizens Advice Sefton is delivering social welfare law advice and support services across the borough.
- Sefton Carers Centre is providing support to both individuals caring for someone with a severe mental illness, and those who have a severe mental illness who also have caring responsibilities.
- Expect is providing support to people living with severe mental illness who feel lonely and isolated.

This service began operations in February 2025 and receives referrals directly from the NHS Mersey Care Community Mental Health Team.

## Sefton In Mind

Sefton In Mind, a sub-group of the Health and Social Care Forum, has around 140 members. Four meetings of the group were held during 2024/25.

### Key activities during the year included:

- Producing an adult mental health snapshot in response to the tragic events in Southport in July. This mirrored a previous snapshot developed for children's mental health support.
- Redeveloping the Sefton In Mind Directory to underpin the Public Health-led 'We're Here' campaign. The directory features contact details for 30 organisations. During the campaign the website received more than 25,000 views from 1,700 unique users, resulting in 974 click-throughs to organisational information.
- Hosting a 'Time to Talk Mental Health Research' event in partnership with the Mental Health Research for Innovation Centre (M-RIC). As part of this initiative small grants were awarded to ten VCF sector groups undertaking activities supporting M-RIC's work in making mental health research more accessible.

## Living Well Sefton

Sefton CVS co-ordinates the Living Well Sefton programme, funded by Public Health with the aim of reducing health inequalities experienced by vulnerable groups in Sefton and those living in the most deprived communities in the borough.

The emphasis of the programme is on prevention and early intervention, and working with a broad range of partners to meet the needs of local people by enabling them to access the services they need easily.

The overall aim of the service is to enable Sefton residents to live well by addressing the factors that influence their health, helping them to be independent, resilient and support both themselves and the people around them.

Sefton CVS is the lead partner in the initiative in a consortium model with the May Logan Centre, Netherton Feelgood Factory, Brighter Living Partnership, Citizens Advice Sefton, Sefton Carers Centre, SmokeFree Sefton and Active Lifestyles, in addition to more than 20 other Living Well Sefton neighbourhood partners.

The Social Prescribing Link Worker Service is overseen by Living Well Sefton managers, subcontracted to the Brighter Living Partnership in north Sefton and funded by the Primary Care Networks.

### Key activities during 2024/25 included:

- A total of 7,509 Sefton residents interacting with the service (including Active Sefton/Smoke Free).
- 3,235 new clients interacting with the service for the first time. Key issues of concern included being more active, healthy eating, mental wellbeing and social isolation.
- 94 per cent of clients completing either a Universal Consultation and/or a Brief Intervention.
- Achieving 92 per cent improved mental wellbeing among clients, measured by the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale.
- 224 clients starting and completing a course, and 2,155 individual goals set and completed including improvements to diet, being more active and reducing stress/anxiety.
- Hosting six Making Every Contact Count training sessions attended by 41 people.
- Delivering a wide range of courses and sessions on subjects including growing confidence, weight management, healthy cooking, a ladies friendship group, bereavement support, welfare benefits support, sleep mentoring, eating for health, a craft group and mindful movements.
- Attending a wide range of community events including a men's health event at the Feelgood Factory, Sefton healthy hearts event, the InvestSefton marketplace and a cardiovascular disease prevention awareness day.



- Providing emergency response and community engagement following the Southport knife attack and subsequent riots.
- Partner organisations offering drop-in sessions to support clients with low-level mental health issues.
- Supporting 30 VCF sector groups and 2,819 individuals with £52,130 of funding in Community Resilience Grants. The two rounds focused on mental health and healthy eating and physical activity.
- Supporting 16 small and medium-sized businesses with a total of £6,783 in Workplace Wellbeing Grants.

## Strand By Me

Strand By Me is an 'in person' addition to the service provided by Living Well Sefton.

Located in Bootle's Strand shopping centre, the service allows people to access face-to-face advice and support on Living Well Sefton services, as well as those provided by other organisations in Sefton whose role is to improve the health and wellbeing of residents and encourage positive lifestyles.

### Key activities during 2024/25 included:

- Holding a re-launch event in January 2025 to mark the shop's relocation as part of the redevelopment of the Strand shopping centre.
- Welcoming 315 visitors, with 209 of them new to the service. 133 members of the public experienced Brief Interventions with 167 residents being signposted to other sources of support.
- Hosting a wide range of services including Smoke Free Sefton, Healthwatch Sefton, Life Rooms, the Alzheimer's Society, Sole Survivors PTSD support, Sahir (LGBTQ+), Salvation Army Employment Plus, Light for Life, Parenting 2000, Bootle Hub, the Feelgood Factory bereavement clinic, Reach Men's Centre and sight loss charity Galloways.
- Hosting pop-up events to support national awareness weeks on a range of topics including sexual health, dementia and healthy hearts.
- Providing a community venue for the Social Prescribing Link Workers and the Community Connectors to undertake one-to-one client work.
- Working as a member of the Strand Group in collaboration with local community groups, Salt and Tar, the Strand management team and Sefton Council.

## Hospital Discharge and Admission Avoidance Service

The Hospital Discharge and Admission Avoidance Service (HDAAS) accepts referrals from health and social care professionals, and self-referrals, from any Sefton resident aged 18 and above who has recently been discharged from hospital, or who is unwell at home and being supported by any team in Sefton Emergency Community Response as part of admission avoidance support.

The service provides free practical support for up to six weeks, including ensuring that patients have basic provisions in their home, help with accessing assistive technology and carrying out basic risk assessments to ensure accommodation is suitable to meet a patient's needs.

The team also help patients to maximise their income through signposting to other services, for example specialist benefits and debt advice.

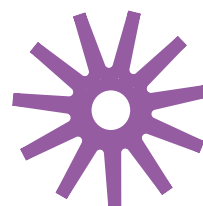
### Key activities during 2024/25 included:

- Receiving 717 referrals over the 12-month period.
- Completing 726 home visits, making 2,306 welfare telephone calls and signposting clients to more than 30 other services and organisations on 11,166 occasions.
- Supporting 62 clients with Blue Badge applications.
- Supporting 149 clients with benefits applications including Attendance Allowance, PIP and Pension Credit.



# 7,509

borough residents interacted with the Living Well Sefton service during the year.



## Community Connectors

The Community Connectors team link residents to organisations and activities in their local communities, helping to reduce levels of social isolation and loneliness.

To reach as many people as possible the team can call on a group of Community Champion volunteers who work alongside individuals on a short-term basis, increasing their confidence in attending groups and activities, while encouraging them to make their own connections as well.

### Key activities during 2024/25 included:

- Handling 181 referrals into the Community Connectors service during the year, offering clients one-to-one support and signposting information.
- Making 1,068 signposting referrals to other organisations over the 12-month period, including those offering careers advice, dementia support, long-term condition support and mental health services.
- Offering an outreach service to those visiting Maghull Advice Centre.
- Participating in a wide range of open days, awareness events and forums across the borough.
- Providing 'Happy to Chat' benches at four locations in south Sefton – the May Logan Centre, North Park, Sean's Place and SING Plus. These feature scannable codes which encourage people who feel isolated or lonely to get in touch with the service.
- Expanding outreach promotional opportunities by developing a monthly Health Hub with partners Parenting 2000 (Respiratory Parent Champion), Healthwatch and the Salvation Army.
- Expanding the service's digital offer by running Meet the Connectors 'Cuppa and Chat' Zoom meetings to explain the role of the service and the assistance available.
- Co-ordinating the team of Community Champion volunteers who provide key services including support with the running of groups and offer 'buddy' support to clients who lack the confidence to attend groups or activities for the first time.
- Supporting the collation of a physical activity spreadsheet for Public Health focused on the activities and groups available across the borough.

## Social Prescribing Service

The Social Prescribing Service now has a team of 18 workers across Sefton who liaise closely with the local primary care networks to improve the wellbeing of isolated and vulnerable people by helping them to access the wide range of community support available in the borough.

### Key activities during 2024/25 included:

- Handling 2,711 referrals during the year.
- Continuing to build excellent partnerships working alongside local NHS mental health services including the APPs (Associate Psychological Practitioners), community mental health teams (primary and secondary) and the ACES (Adverse Childhood Experiences) programme.
- Organising drop-in sessions in a variety of community settings to encourage people who may wish to access support from the service.
- Engaging with academic research opportunities such as the Defining Social Prescribing Practice study conducted by the Social Prescribing Research Group at Oxford University.
- Continuing the Brighter Connections group in Southport. Funded by a Living Well Sefton Community Resilience Grant, the group gives residents the chance to socialise, chat and meet new people.
- Delivering training sessions on the service to NHS staff in Southport and Formby and GP registrars.
- Working with the Complex Lives Group, a pioneering project in north Sefton looking at reducing barriers to support for those who meet the complex lives criteria, and trying to reduce the impact of the health inequalities they face.
- Developing closer links with the Social Prescribing GP Champions to increase awareness and support communication.
- Introducing fully-funded tai chi to support the mental health and wellbeing of residents with support from the Locality Grants, and supporting ongoing activities such as the Men's Group and Men's Shed run as part of the Living Well Sefton programme.
- Delivering a range of healthy living courses as part of the Living Well Sefton offer including Think Differently Cope Differently and others focusing on healthy cooking, weight and sleep.

# 2,711

referrals were handled by the Social Prescribing Service over the 12-month period.



## Enhanced Care at Home Social Prescribing

This service continues to work alongside South Sefton Primary Care Network on providing social prescribing support to older, housebound and/or frail people who have experienced a recent hospital admission.

Staffing changes during the year resulted in capacity within other services being utilised and subsequently a reduced staffing structure of two Enhanced Care Social Prescribers.

### Key activities during 2024/25 included:

- 541 referrals being received by the team.
- 244 support plans being completed and 572 cases completed and closed following 6,087 interventions towards achieving goals.
- 452 signposting referrals being made to a range of different services.
- Processing 53 successful lower rate attendance allowance applications resulting in annual income increases totalling £200,223.
- Processing 60 successful higher rate attendance allowance applications resulting in annual income increases totalling £338,676.

## High Intensity User (HIU) Service

This initiative, funded by NHS Cheshire and Merseyside Sefton Place, aims to reduce inappropriate A&E attendances and hospital admissions by individuals identified as 'frequent attenders'. The project aims to address the underlying causes for presenting at A&E.

### Key activities during 2024/25 included:

- Intensive work with 90 people to reduce their A&E attendances and hospital admissions – 55 from Southport and Formby A&E and 35 from Aintree A&E.
- Providing support to 198 people who re-attended Southport A&E for dressings, advising them on using other sources of community-based treatment services rather than A&E.
- 41 signposts to other services – 30 from Southport and Formby and 11 from Aintree.
- Providing 6,621 interventions to help people achieve their goals, 4,829 from Southport and Formby and 1,792 from Aintree.
- Attending a wide variety of multi-disciplinary team meetings in both the north and south of the borough.
- Making a presentation on Sefton's HIU journey at the first National HIU Community of Practice event.

## Reablement Service

The Reablement Service provides rehabilitative support to people with a range of health conditions and unmet social issues to enable them to regain their independence.

This includes interventions for timely and safe discharge from hospital, and the assessment of needs to avoid unnecessary dependence on more acute, long-term services.

The service is delivered by the South Sefton Health and Wellbeing Trainers, the High Intensity User Service and Enhanced Care Social Prescribing Link Workers.

### Key activities during 2024/25 included:

- 701 referrals being received by the team of Health and Wellbeing Trainers.
- 14,780 interventions being delivered by the team, the most common areas that clients needed support with being finance, social inclusion and accommodation-related issues.
- Clients achieving 90 per cent of the personal goals they set with the help of the Health Trainers, a significant increase on 67 per cent the previous year.
- Clients accessing £60,956 in benefits and grants with the support of the team.

## REDI (Reablement Drives Independence)

This project is an extension of the High Intensity User Service and is funded by Mersey Care's Mental Health Transformation.

The aim is to use the methodology of what works for the High Intensity User Service and embed this into community mental health to help address the underlying causes for frequent calls to community mental health teams (CMHTs) and crisis lines.

### Key activities during 2024/25 included:

- Intensive work with five people during the year (three from north CMHT/two from south CMHT) to reduce the frequency of their calls.
- Keeping caseloads low due to the complexity of the cases and to provide a high quality of service and level of interactions.
- Carrying out 64 face-to-face interactions and 401 non-face-to-face interactions.
- Introducing the new clinical system RIO which supports integrated working.

## Crisis Cafes

The Crisis Café Service offers out-of-hours support to anyone experiencing a mental health crisis in Sefton.

The service runs drop-in sessions at two sites (Crosby and Southport) from 5pm-11pm on Friday, Saturday and Sunday to give borough residents aged 18 and above a place of safety as an alternative to attending A&E.

Team members offer one-to-one support and a social space with refreshments in order to reduce distress and better manage crisis situations. Support is also provided via phone, email or Zoom meeting if required.

### Key activities during 2024/25 included:

- Recording a total of 1,826 attendances across both sites during the year. Out of these visits 86 were categorised as people in crisis, 175 in post crisis and 1,485 were to maintain wellbeing during a difficult period.
- Crosby recording 53 new registrations during the year, and Southport 66, a total of 119 new clients.
- Providing telephone support on 1,580 occasions.
- Working in partnership with Parenting 2000 who provide a full-time Peer Support Worker at each Crisis Café to provide additional support to people who may need it during weekdays.

## Sefton Cancer Social Action Lead

This project focuses on raising awareness of the signs and symptoms of cancer within local communities, and to encourage more people to go for NHS screening when invited.

The service focuses on tackling inequalities in cancer outcomes and empowering people to seek timely advice.

### Key activities during 2024/25 included:

- Working with People First Merseyside on making information accessible to people with limited literacy skills.
- Provision of healthy eating resources, slow cookers and healthy eating skills development to St. Leonard's Community Centre.
- Supporting local group In Stitches run by Sefton Opera which offers attendees companionship and support while involved in knitting, crocheting and other craft activities.
- Developing a Make Every Contact Count approach for hairdressing and beauty therapist students at Hugh Baird College, encouraging them to share positive contacts.

## Community Cancer Navigators

The Community Cancer Navigators offer support to people living with, or affected by, cancer who are over the age of 18 and registered with a south Sefton GP practice.

The Navigators can support clients with physical, practical, financial and emotional difficulties, and assist them in contacting the most appropriate services that can provide help.

### Key activities during 2024/25 included:

- 343 cases being referred to the project.
- Active promotion of the service to health professionals within adult social care, primary care nursing teams, GP practices and local support groups.
- Helping clients to access £5,000 in Macmillan grants and to make 212 applications for benefits and other grants, adding up to a total financial gain for clients living with cancer of £495,859.
- Signposting clients on 744 occasions to a total of more than 45 other groups and support services, and making 1,215 onward referrals to services such as occupational therapy, benefits advisers and clinical psychologists.
- Continuing to run the Navigating Cancer Together Group which meets weekly and has provided more than 40 people with a range of information, advice and support.

## Healthwatch

Sefton CVS employs the management teams of both Healthwatch Sefton and Healthwatch Knowsley who report to their respective Boards. Each organisation produces its own annual report. Healthwatch operates throughout England as the consumer champion for health and social care.



# 1,826

attendances were recorded at the two Crisis Cafes in Southport and Crosby during the year.

# Include-IT Mersey/ Southport Community Centre

## Include-IT Mersey

Sefton CVS, in collaboration with the VOLA Consortium, delivers the Include-IT Mersey digital inclusion project across the Liverpool City Region.

The aim is to help digitally excluded residents to improve their digital skills, motivation, confidence and access to digital technology.

Launched in 2017 it was originally funded by the European Social Fund and the National Lottery Community Fund. Since 2023 the project has been funded through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF).

Since its inception Include-IT Mersey has supported 2,747 people through basic digital skills courses, 1,312 of whom are known to have progressed to employment, active job search or volunteering. Several thousand more have accessed support through the network of volunteer-led digital drop-ins across the city region.

### Key activities during 2024/25 included:

- Training a further 298 learners to develop essential digital skills, making a total of 638 for the two-year period 2023 to 2025, exceeding UKSPF targets.
- 82 per cent of learners achieving their learning aims and completing their programme of study.
- 179 learners progressing to training/education, paid employment, volunteering or moving into active job-search.
- Expanding the network of digital drop-ins, with notable success in establishing them in libraries.
- 1,182 attendances at digital drop-ins, making a total of 1,923 over the two years, with the second year figure 60 per cent higher than the first.
- 59 volunteers actively involved in the digital drop-ins over the two years, contributing around 4,250 hours of volunteering.
- An evaluation of the project indicating high levels of satisfaction among learners with 100 per cent of survey respondents reporting improved digital skills, and 94 per cent saying that this had a positive effect on their health and wellbeing.

## Southport Community Centre

Southport Community Centre in the town's Norwood area works closely with the Brighter Living Partnership to provide local access to voluntary, community and faith sector services across north Sefton.

### Key activities during 2024/25 included:

- Welcoming more than 15,000 visitors and service users over the 12-month period.
- Continuing to provide activities, services and groups for the local community based on their needs. This included Warm and Welcome Spaces provision over the winter and summer periods.
- Acting as a hub for local organisations and residents to hire, which attracts a high number of users.
- Providing an IT suite which is available for use by the public and also used for regular training and support sessions run by local providers.



# 2,747

people have acquired improved digital skills with the help of Include-IT Mersey.

# Information and communication

**Sefton CVS manages the Here For You online directory, providing details of around 3,000 services offered by 1,000 VCF sector organisations in the borough, which attracted more than 10,000 visitors during the year.**

Where applicable the directory also includes links to each organisation's website, social media pages and Companies House and Charity Commission pages.

CVS has continued to regularly review and update the listings and add the details of newly-established VCF sector groups and the services they provide.

## Other key activities during 2024/25 included:

- Sharing more than 120 separate articles on the CVS website including details of events, activities, job vacancies, policy updates and consultations. These generated 90,000 views and 35,000 unique visits.
- Issuing 49 separate CVS email updates sent to around 1,100 subscribers per update.
- Managing the Sefton CVS X/Twitter account – @SeftonCVS – which had a total of 5,500 followers on 31st March 2025.
- Managing the Sefton CVS Facebook page (facebook.com/SeftonCVS) which has around 2,300 followers.
- In response to the tragic incident in Southport on 29th July 2024, establishing a dedicated web page, Support for Southport. This signposted to updates, information and details of wider support services on Sefton Council's Southport Together Hub, as well as details of VCF sector involvement in the Southport Recovery Programme.
- Hosting a dedicated Warm and Welcome Spaces Network page on the CVS website with information on providers across Sefton. This attracted 3,900 views during the year.
- Acting as an information and consultation conduit on a wide range of strategic and operational consultations and stakeholder engagement activities for partners including Sefton Council, the Integrated Care Partnerships for Cheshire and Merseyside and Cheshire and Merseyside NHS Trust.

# Sefton CVS at 50

**2024 saw Sefton Council for Voluntary Service celebrate its 50th anniversary. Founded in January 1974, the charity was founded along with the Borough of Sefton and other local organisations, such as St Joseph's Hospice.**

We were established to co-ordinate voluntary and social action, to promote volunteering, develop services in response to local needs and be the conduit between the wider sector and partner agencies.

More than 50 years later, the original objectives hold sound, though we see a significantly larger local sector, responding to increasingly complex societal needs and a wider policy context in which the sector engages with issues such as addressing health inequalities and anti-poverty measures, community cohesion, socio-economic responses, climate change and the environment.

There are also more stakeholders with whom to engage and collaborate within our diverse communities - local, regional and national government, health agencies, emergency services and economic partners.

To mark the occasion, we held a 50th anniversary reception in December 2024. The evening was an opportunity to express our thanks to all the staff, volunteers and trustees who have worked with us over the past 50 years. Key funders, partners and stakeholders were also present as we showed our gratitude for their steadfast support of CVS and the wider VCF sector.



Pictured at the Sefton CVS 50th anniversary reception (from left) CVS Chief Executive Angela White, Imam Ibrahim Hussein of Southport Mosque, Sefton Council Director of Public Health Margaret Jones and Deputy Lord Lieutenant Ruth Hussey.

As part of the anniversary, at our volunteer celebration event this year a new award was created to celebrate long service in volunteering. In total, 20 volunteers received long service awards for between 10 to 50 years of volunteering in the community. A Sefton CVS Special Recognition Award was also presented to Paul Cummins for his dedication to CVS and the community of Sefton over the last 50 years.

Our continued thanks go to our current President and Patrons, the CVS Board and particularly our staff and volunteers, for their commitment and dedication.

Sefton's VCF sector continues its remarkable work in supporting all age ranges across our neighbourhoods and communities, underpinning the social fabric of the borough.

We are sincerely grateful to all VCF sector organisations in Sefton and we are proud to be collaborative with them in being a social action movement to support our borough and its residents, today and for the future.



Sefton CVS Trustee Paul Cummins (left) receives his Special Recognition Award from CVS Patron Colonel Martin G C Amlôt.



Recipients of the long service award pictured at the volunteer celebration event with Mayor of Sefton, Cllr June Burns.



Guest speakers and VIPs at the Sefton CVS 50th anniversary reception.

# Treasurer's report/ funders

## I have pleasure in presenting the summarised financial statements of Sefton CVS for the financial year 2024/25.

Sefton CVS manages various projects and programmes throughout Sefton and, wherever possible, diversifies its funding sources for the development of specific projects.

This financial year saw an increase in income from £4.73 million in 2023/24 to £4.82 million in 2024/25. Of this income 87 per cent is restricted funding, coming with specific conditions imposed by the donor which are binding on the organisation.

Total expenditure during 2024/25 was £4.83 million. Of this expenditure 78 per cent was spent on services to the sector, work that helps CVS achieve its objectives of promoting and assisting voluntary, community and faith sector activity in the borough. The remaining 22 per cent was spent on support services which include audit, governance, rents and other ancillary items.

The core services of Sefton CVS are highly dependent upon the continued support of Sefton Council. We thank them for their ongoing support.

The Trustees have re-examined the charity's requirements for free reserves and have concluded that, to allow the charity to be managed efficiently and to provide a buffer for uninterrupted services, a reserve of approximately £171,840 should be maintained.

The Finance Sub-committee regularly reviews the organisation's investments, and the performance of the various funds. As such we continue to use Rathbones as our investment fund managers, who manages a portfolio investment in line with the ethical investment intentions of Sefton CVS.

This portfolio performance is reviewed on a regular basis to ensure a satisfactory return that can contribute to the furtherance of the objectives of the charity. Some funds are still held on a short-term investment basis with HSBC, which enables the charity to have access to the funds to ensure liquidity.

### Funders 2024/25

- BBC Children in Need
- Big Lottery Reaching Communities
- Cheshire and Merseyside Cancer Alliance
- Eleanor Rathbone Charitable Trust
- Mersey Care NHS Foundation
- National Lottery Heritage Fund
- NHS Cheshire & Merseyside ICB
- Sefton MBC
- Shared Prosperity Fund Liverpool City Region Combined Authority
- Southport and Formby PCN
- South Sefton PCN and Merseyside NHS Trust.

**Brian Thomas**

**Treasurer on behalf of the Trustees**

# Financial statement

|                                          | Unrestricted funds<br>general 2025 | Restricted funds<br>2025 | Total<br>2025    | Total<br>2024    |
|------------------------------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------|------------------|------------------|
|                                          | £                                  | £                        | £                | £                |
| <b>Income and endowments from:</b>       |                                    |                          |                  |                  |
| Donations and legacies                   | 494,770                            | 3,714                    | 498,484          | 535,110          |
| Charitable activities                    | 82,745                             | 4,219,555                | 4,302,300        | 4,180,878        |
| Investment income                        | 22,508                             | -                        | 22,508           | 21,641           |
| <b>Total income</b>                      | <b>600,023</b>                     | <b>4,223,269</b>         | <b>4,823,292</b> | <b>4,737,629</b> |
| <b>Expenditure on:</b>                   |                                    |                          |                  |                  |
| Raising funds                            | 5,519                              | -                        | 5,519            | 7,677            |
| Charitable activities                    | 687,359                            | 4,138,633                | 4,825,992        | 4,614,996        |
| <b>Total resources expended</b>          | <b>692,878</b>                     | <b>4,138,633</b>         | <b>4,831,511</b> | <b>4,622,673</b> |
| <b>Net gains (losses) on investments</b> | <b>(34,134)</b>                    | <b>-</b>                 | <b>(34,134)</b>  | <b>50,353</b>    |
| <b>Net movement in funds</b>             | <b>(35,174)</b>                    | <b>(7,179)</b>           | <b>(42,353)</b>  | <b>165,309</b>   |
| <b>Fund balances at 1 April 2024</b>     | <b>170,917</b>                     | <b>1,219,279</b>         | <b>1,976,887</b> | <b>1,811,578</b> |
| <b>Fund balances at 31 March 2025</b>    | <b>135,743</b>                     | <b>1,212,100</b>         | <b>1,934,534</b> | <b>1,976,887</b> |





# Balance sheet

|                                                | 2025      | 2025             | 2024      | 2024             |
|------------------------------------------------|-----------|------------------|-----------|------------------|
|                                                | £         | £                | £         | £                |
| <b>Fixed assets</b>                            |           |                  |           |                  |
| Tangible assets                                |           | 27,047           |           | 13,101           |
| Investments                                    |           | 583,355          |           | 613,234          |
|                                                |           | 610,402          |           | 626,335          |
| <b>Current assets</b>                          |           |                  |           |                  |
| Debtors                                        | 457,987   |                  | 588,674   |                  |
| Cash at bank and in hand                       | 1,151,428 |                  | 1,093,237 |                  |
|                                                | 1,609,415 |                  | 1,681,911 |                  |
| Creditors: amounts falling due within one year | (285,283) |                  | (331,359) |                  |
| Net current assets                             |           | 1,324,132        |           | 1,350,552        |
| <b>Total assets less current liabilities</b>   |           | <b>1,934,534</b> |           | <b>1,976,887</b> |
| <b>The funds of the charity</b>                |           |                  |           |                  |
| Restricted income funds                        |           | 1,212,100        |           | 1,219,279        |
| Unrestricted funds – general                   |           | 135,743          |           | 238,080          |
| Unrestricted funds – designated                |           | 586,691          |           | 519,528          |
|                                                |           | <b>1,934,534</b> |           | <b>1,976,887</b> |

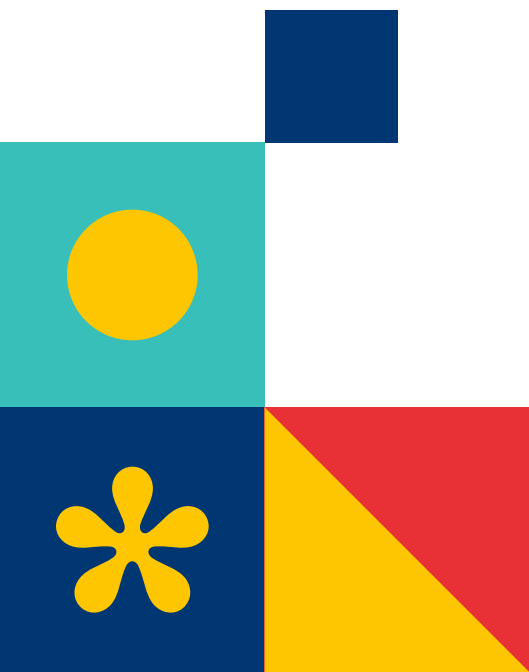
These summarised accounts are an extract from the statutory annual report and accounts of Sefton Council for Voluntary Service for the financial year ended 31st March 2025 which have been audited by Mitchell Charlesworth (Audit) Limited.

The auditors have confirmed to the Trustees that these summarised accounts are consistent with the full annual accounts of the charity for the year ended 31st March 2025.

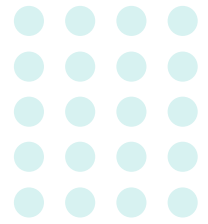
The full annual accounts and Trustees' Report of the charity were approved by the Trustees and signed on their behalf on 24th September 2025. They will be submitted to the Charity Commission in November 2025.

Copies of the charity's full annual accounts, the auditor's report on those accounts and the Trustees' Report may be obtained from Sefton CVS, 3rd Floor Suite 3B, North Wing, Burlington House, Crosby Road North, Waterloo, Liverpool L22 0LG.

Signed on behalf of the Trustees 24th September 2025.



# Sefton CVS factfile



## Registered Office

3rd Floor Suite 3B, North Wing,  
Burlington House,  
Crosby Road North,  
Waterloo L22 0LG

**T** 0151 920 0726  
**E** mail@seftoncv.org.uk  
**W** seftoncv.org.uk

## Southport Office

Southport Community Centre  
Norwood Road, Southport  
Merseyside PR8 6HQ

**T** 01704 517810  
**E** info@southportcommunitycentre.org.uk  
**W** southportcommunitycentre.org.uk

## Company and Charity Registration

Registered in England and Wales  
as a Company Limited by Guarantee No: 2832920.  
Registered Charity No: 1024546

## Auditors

Mitchell Charlesworth (Audit) Ltd  
14th Floor The Plaza  
100 Old Hall Street  
Liverpool  
L2 9QJ

## Bankers

HSBC Bank plc  
99-101 Lord Street  
Liverpool  
L2 6PG

## Investment Managers

Rathbone Greenbank Investments  
Port of Liverpool Building  
Pier Head, Liverpool L3 1NW

## Charity Legal Advisers

Brabners Chaffe Street  
Horton House  
Exchange Flags  
Liverpool L2 3YL

## Principal Insurers

Edwards Insurance Brokers  
Stonebridge House  
Kenilworth Road  
Meriden  
CV7 7LJ

## Board of Directors

Mr M Sonne (Chair)  
Mr B Thomas (Treasurer)  
Mr D Roscoe  
Mr P Cummins  
Dr M Homfray  
Ms P Lappin  
Mr D McGregor  
Mr R Mathew  
Ms V Elson  
Dr P Hawkins (Appointed 22 July 2024)  
Mrs H M Ollivier (Appointed 22 July 2024)

## Company Secretary and Chief Executive

Angela White (Carter) OBE FRSA

## Sefton Council Representatives In Attendance

Cllr Judy Hardman  
Cllr John Pugh  
Cllr David Robinson

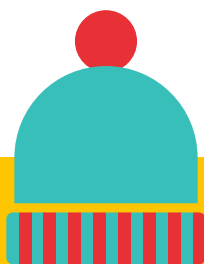
## President

Mr Mark FW Blundell CVO  
Lord-Lieutenant of Merseyside

## Patrons

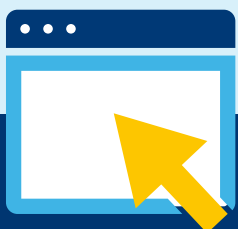
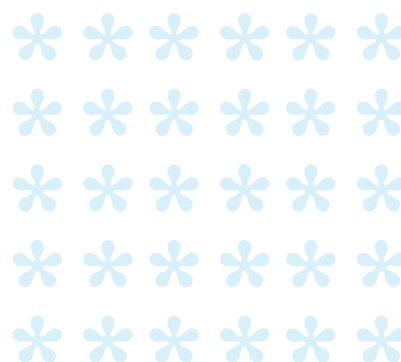
The Worshipful the Mayor of Sefton  
Colonel Martin G C Amlôt OBE OSTJ DL FRSA





# 300

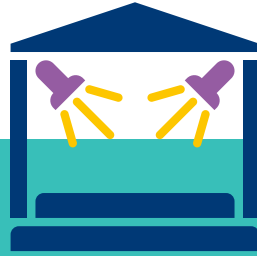
winter warm packs distributed  
to vulnerable residents across  
the borough.



# 90K

views on the Sefton CVS  
website over the 12-month  
period.



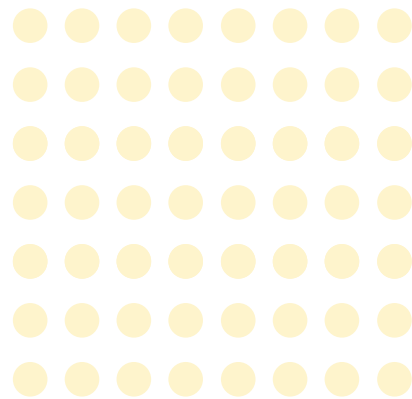


# 15K+

people attended activities at  
Southport Community Centre  
during the year.

# £1,095,714

claimed in new grants and benefits  
by Sefton residents with the  
support of CVS health teams.



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E [mail@seftoncvvs.org.uk](mailto:mail@seftoncvvs.org.uk)

**[www.seftoncvvs.org.uk](http://www.seftoncvvs.org.uk)**

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Registered Charity No: 1024546

The information contained in this annual  
report is available in different formats  
on request.

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