



Mid Sussex  
Voluntary Action

# 2020-21 ANNUAL IMPACT REPORT





*Our mission is to develop, support, promote and represent charities & voluntary organisations for the benefit of the whole community.*

**We exist to:**

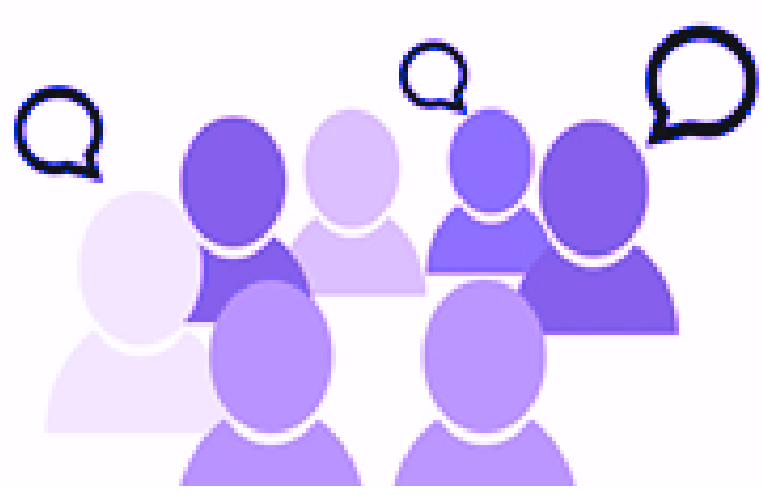
- help local charities and voluntary groups in Mid Sussex set up, grow and thrive through our support services
- enable people to work in partnership, bringing together voluntary, statutory and business communities

## Our Year in Numbers



**431**

**Member Groups**



**26+**

**Meetings representing  
Mid Sussex VCSE**



**200**

**Hours of 1-2-1  
Support**



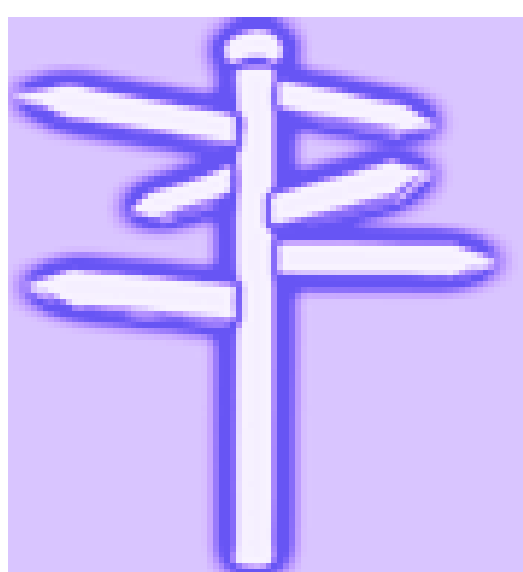
**69687**

**Website hits**



**45**

**E-Bulletins**



**98**

**New Volunteering Roles**



**439**

**New Volunteers**



**31**

**Training Courses &  
Online Events**

# Introduction

by Lauren Lloyd,  
Chief Executive Officer



**I am incredibly proud to share this report of how MSVA has supported the voluntary sector in the past year.**

**The year brought many challenges and change to us all and yet we were able to increase our support to our members, specifically supporting volunteers, helping groups to secure funding and giving advice and direction during the pandemic.**

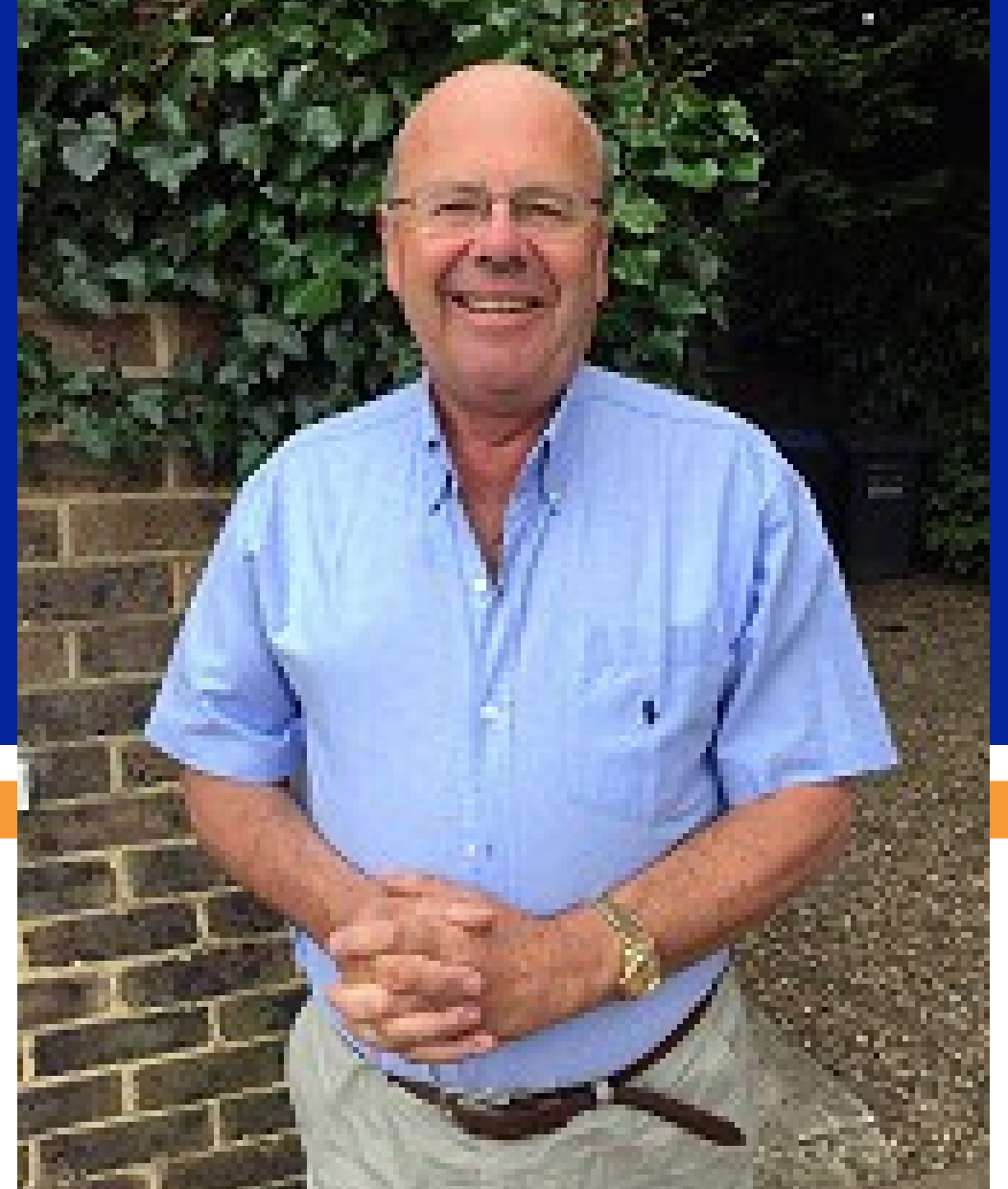
**Other areas of work we developed include setting up the Mid Sussex Food Partnership; working on Digital Inclusion and focussing on addressing social isolation.**

**In spite of working from home, we have delivered training sessions, Forums and ran innovative online volunteer match-making events.**

**We want to thank all our partners for their support and friendship over the past year and look forward to working with you over the next year and beyond in order to support VCS organisations to be set up, grow and thrive.**

# Chair's Report

by James Baldwin,  
Chair of Trustees



**MSVA is truly at the heart of Mid Sussex. I am privileged to be its Chair and I am delighted to share with you this report which highlights the amazing impact MSVA has had throughout 2020-21.**

**You don't need me to tell you the challenges we have all faced due to Covid 19: this report shows just how well MSVA rose to those challenges, embracing all.**

**We did so through a truly dedicated staff, working closely with trustees and our funders, embracing the need to work effectively and efficiently online to maintain and extend our services to the Mid Sussex community and voluntary sector. These services were vital in providing a comprehensive and proactive response to the unique economic and social demands posed by the pandemic.**

**Thus MSVA provided training, advice on funding, volunteering, setting up new voluntary groups and the development of Food Partnerships. We have also begun work on Digital Access and Inclusion, Tackling Loneliness and working with Diverse Communities.**

**All this indicates the range of our activities, one relentlessly focussed on promoting community development in Mid Sussex, providing support to existing local charities and helping grow new ones to meet emerging community needs.**

**I hope you enjoy reading our report!**



# 2020-21 - The Year of the Pandemic

## Responding to lockdown

We supported Mid Sussex Mutual Aid groups, which formed in response to community needs across the District, by ensuring they had the resources and guidance to operate safely and within safeguarding guidelines.

We stayed in regular contact with them and assisted with finding funding, supplying templates of policies, enabling networking and keeping all up-to-date with the rapidly changing legislation for volunteers.

We held Zoom sessions individually as well as for groups and offered support in any way we could.

We compiled a list of Mid Sussex Mutual-Aid groups which was available on our website and allowed members of the public to contact groups in their area to ask for help or to join them as volunteers.

*"MSVA have been amazing in many ways. They helped us set up as a CIO, recruit volunteers and with policies that we have needed. MSVA are a great support to us and volunteers."*

*Karen from The Escape Youth Club*

We were tasked by WSCC to act as a Volunteer Hub which included matching an increased number of volunteers with available roles.

We focussed on raising our profile by engaging the help of a PR agency which enabled us to ensure that the community at large knew about the support we were offering.

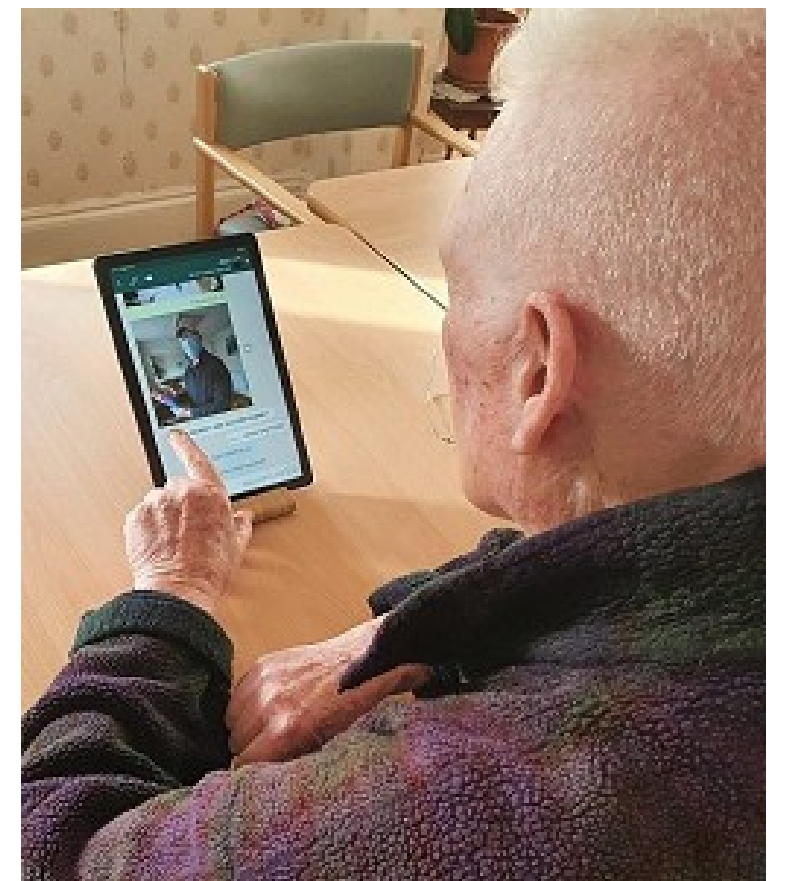
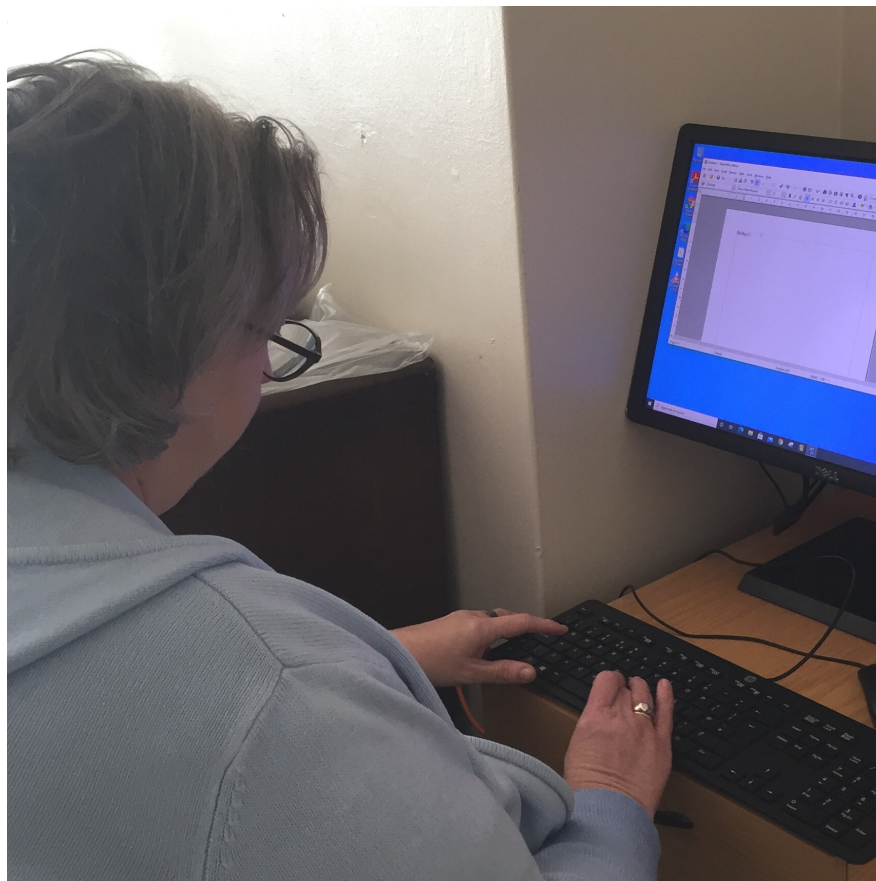


# Helping to fill gaps in service

As well as supporting our member groups, we took active steps to fill gaps in service in the Mid Sussex community.

We worked on setting up Digital Inclusion and Food Partnership projects, and were instrumental in bringing the services of Charity Mentors from East to West Sussex.

By co-working with local organisations, we assisted in setting up digital classes and helped to supply IT equipment to local seniors and to home-schooling children.



# We helped groups get funding

We ran information sessions with local funders and a series of fundraising workshops to give groups the knowledge and know-how to apply for funding.

By working closely with East Grinstead Common Good Trust we helped to bring £20k to charities in that area.

*"There were lots of helpful inputs from MSVA but the main one was accessing funding - there was no way that we could have run without the funding that MSVA helped us find and gave us the confidence to apply for." Jo from Ashdown Hub*



# Assisting local not-for-profits

**Our services contribute to building a stronger voluntary and community sector by providing expertise, advice, guidance and logistical support.**

**We aim to enhance resilience and sustainability through funding advice and support, facilitating and enabling connectivity, sharing best practice and pooling resources.**

*"Starting a small charity just before the pandemic was not easy at times. MVSA gave us advice on networking, bank accounts and fundraising. MSVA's Co-ordinator has been an upbeat, knowledgeable and friendly presence when things were difficult. Everyone we have come into contact with at MSVA has been a positive and encouraging resource." Jo from Ashdown Hub*

**MSVA members received over 200 hours of one-to-one support on topics such as:**

- **Funding Advice**
- **Networking, Linking, Connecting**
- **Volunteering Best Practice**
- **Marketing & Promotion**
- **Setting up a community group, charity, CIC or CIO**
- **Policies & Procedures**
- **Governance**
- **Safeguarding and DBS**

*"MSVA have been a wonderful support and encouragement. The networking chances, the advice about running a charity and supporting volunteers is such a valuable resource to turn to. The staff are so helpful and genuinely care about our organisation as if they were part of it. " Naomi from Hope*



## **We ran 18 online meetings:**

- **8 Forums:** for groups working in three specific sectors - 3rd Age & Beyond; Inclusive Health; Children, Young People & Families.
- **7 Drop-ins:** our Drop-ins gave groups and volunteers the opportunity to find out how we can support them.
- **2 Volunteer Matchmaking Events:** these sessions provided the opportunity for groups to introduce themselves to potential volunteers and vice versa.
- **1 Food Partnership Meeting:** we helped to set up this new ongoing initiative of groups to help those that provide food to people in need.

*"I have found MSVA's network meetings very helpful and informative. It's been very helpful getting practical information as well as being able to discuss the situation with other organisations."*

*Gail from Hourglass*

*"We have always received excellent service from MSVA. During Coronavirus MSVA helped us obtain funding to roll out our Christmas Hamper project which brought much comfort and joy to many older people across Mid Sussex and was a huge success.*

*Just another example of their support and resourcefulness throughout the years, from accommodating us for our regular meetings, to training & information. MSVA has always been a source of reliable help. For small voluntary organisations it's not just nice to have, but a necessity."* Barbara from MSOPC





# Volunteering

There has been a vast increase in people wishing to volunteer  
- MSVA registered 439 potential volunteers  
compared to 225 the previous year!

We have adjusted our website to make it easier for those looking to volunteer in response to Covid-19 and for those looking for home-based volunteering opportunities.

We responded to all volunteering enquiries, referred all potential volunteers to available roles and followed up on their progress.

At least 92 people started volunteering as a direct result of MSVA's referrals.

*"MSVA helped us find new volunteers and new Trustees which we were desperate for." John from Hassocks Age Concern*

As an alternative to our Volunteer Fairs we ran two online Volunteer Matchmaking Events where over 20 local organisations had the opportunity to introduce their work and volunteering roles to over 60 potential volunteers.

*"Thank you MSVA for introducing me to the DVLCC charity opportunity, I am very much enjoying volunteering there." Robin*

To address the increased demand for volunteering roles and a greater need to support groups with volunteer recruitment and management, we have secured funding to recruit a Volunteering Development Co-ordinator for Mid Sussex.



# Training

We ran 13 Training Courses which were attended by 221 people.  
We also added a webpage listing courses from other providers which proved to be one of the most visited on our website!

KEEP ON TRACK WITH GRANTS, TRUSTS AND FOUNDATIONS  
DIVERSIFYING YOUR INCOME VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT  
MEETING LOCAL FUNDERS SUPPORTING TRUSTEE BOARDS  
BASICS OF RAISING FUNDS EMERGENCY FIRST AID AT  
WORK MAKE YOUR FUNDING APPLICATION STAND OUT

*"I've just taken part in the grant funding Zoom session run by MSVA and found it enormously helpful for our relatively new charity."  
Felicity from The Treasure Basket Association*

*"I attended The Role of a Charity Trustee Course run in partnership with MSVA. It was a very comprehensive review on being a trustee which was particularly helpful to me as I was new to the role, it answered a lot of my questions." Trustee of SAGE Counselling*

## Keeping groups informed

To ensure that we kept everyone up-to-date in a rapidly changing world, we produced an increased number of e-bulletins and our website was regularly amended to include information relating to Covid updates for the VCSE sector.

*"As I work across Sussex, I get lots of different newsletters and yours is always the best one, it is just always full of really useful information."  
Becky from Motor Neurone Disease Association*

*"I find your e-bulletin very useful and packed with information - so please keep them coming!" Judy from Burgess Hill Town Council*



# Partnership Working

**We are proud to act as the voice for the not-for-profit sector in Mid Sussex and have represented the VCSE sector at many partnership meetings and events throughout this year, including:**

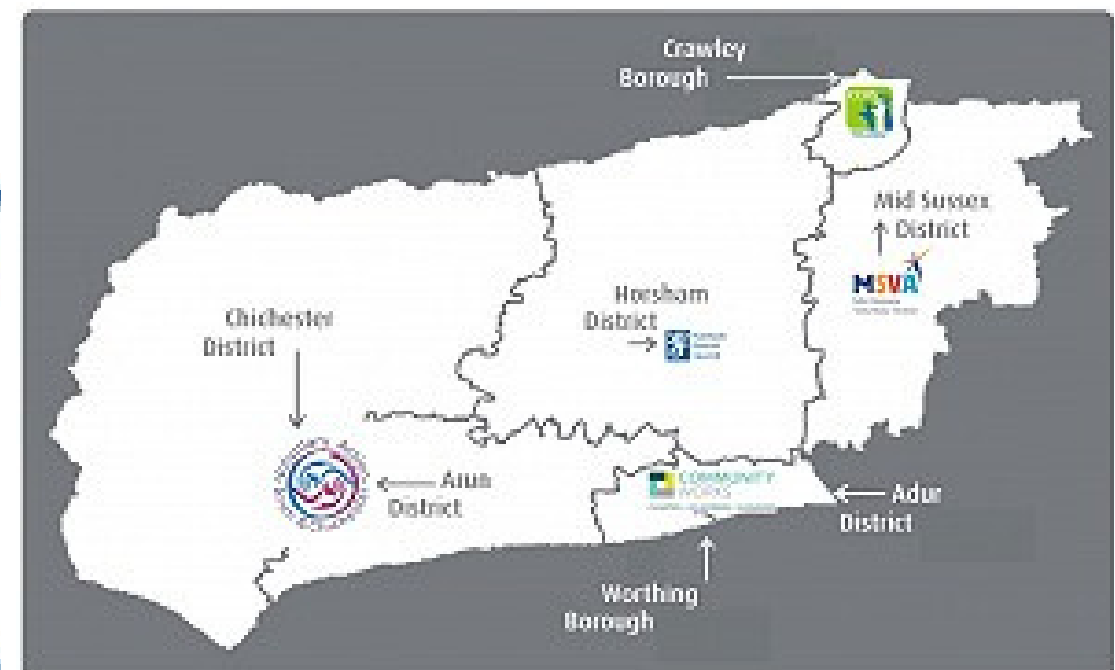


- **West Sussex Rural Poverty Forum**
- **Tackling Loneliness Together in West Sussex Conference**
- **MSDC Community Resilience Sub-group**
- **MSDC Community Safety Sub-group**
- **MSDC Health Sub-group**
- **Mid Sussex Partnership Board**
- **Mid Sussex Health and Wellbeing Network**
- **VCS Safeguarding Forum**
- **Lord Lieutenant's Voluntary Sector Support Forum**
- **East Grinstead Business Association**
- **East Grinstead Town Council Public Meeting**
- **Syrian Refugees Volunteers**
- **NCVO Briefing**
- **Small Charities Coalition**
- **Hurstpierpoint Partnership meeting**
- **Action in Rural Sussex meeting**

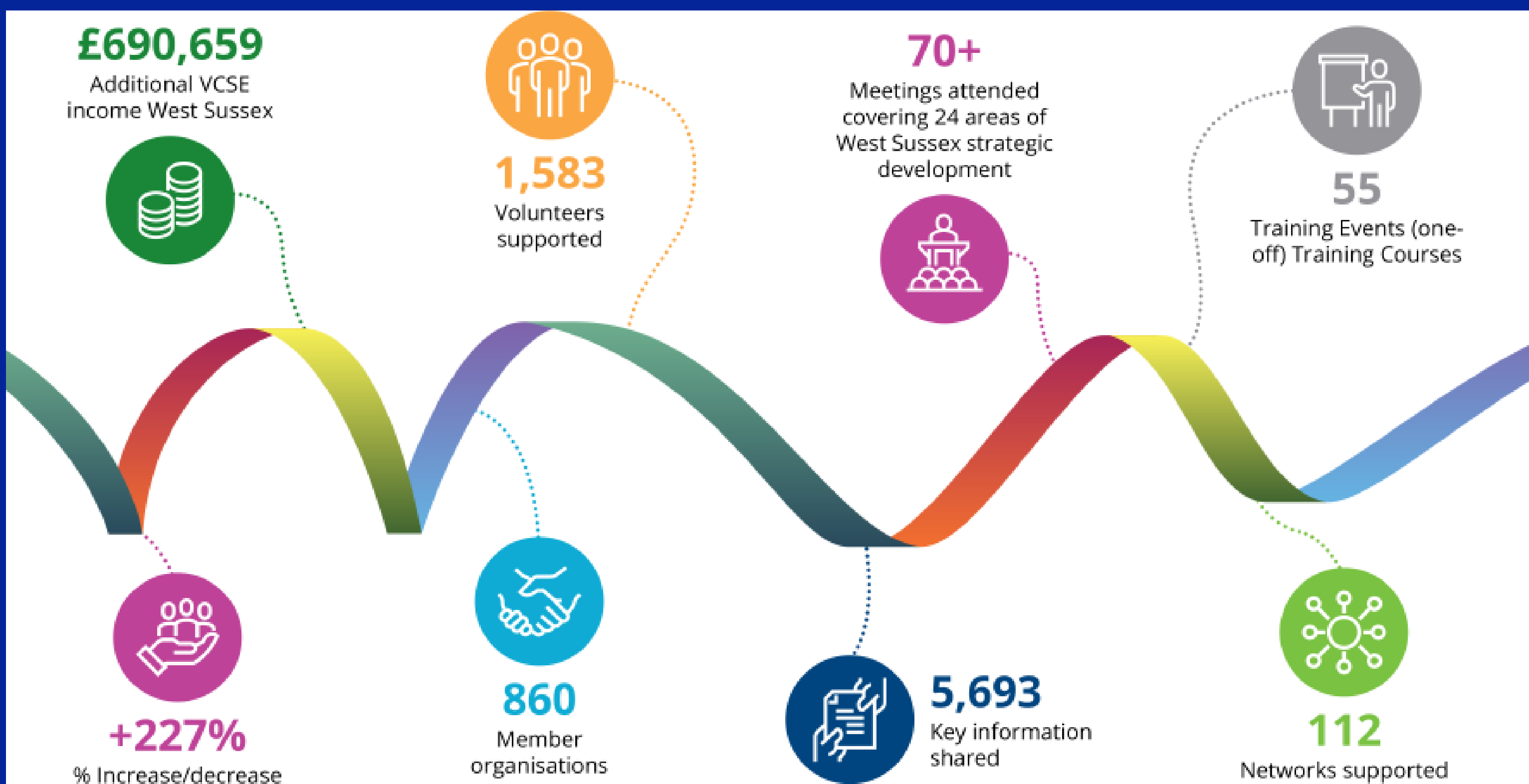


# Alliance Membership

We are members of The West Sussex Voluntary & Community Sector Infrastructure Alliance (WSVCSI).



The Alliance is made up of four place-based infrastructure organisations, each a charity in its own right with separate boards of trustees, delivering sustainable, effective and efficient support services to the voluntary and community sector across West Sussex. We also work with our colleagues from Voluntary Sector Support, Horsham District Council.





# We can help with:

**SETTING UP A NOT-FOR-PROFIT ORGANISATION**  
**FINDING & APPLYING FOR FUNDING**  
**VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT & MANAGEMENT**  
**ADVICE ON POLICIES & PROCEDURES INCL. TEMPLATES**  
**LINKING WITH USEFUL GROUPS & CONTACTS**  
**ACCESSING TRAINING TO HELP YOU DEVELOP**  
**REPRESENTING YOU AT LOCAL PARTNERSHIP, BUSINESS  
& STATUTORY MEETINGS**

*"It has been very useful to be a member of MSVA and you have always been extremely helpful." Wendy from Mid Downs Hospital Radio*

*"You have been instrumental in helping us set up and run our groups which are now supporting people in all kinds of circumstances."*  
*The Ashdown Hub*



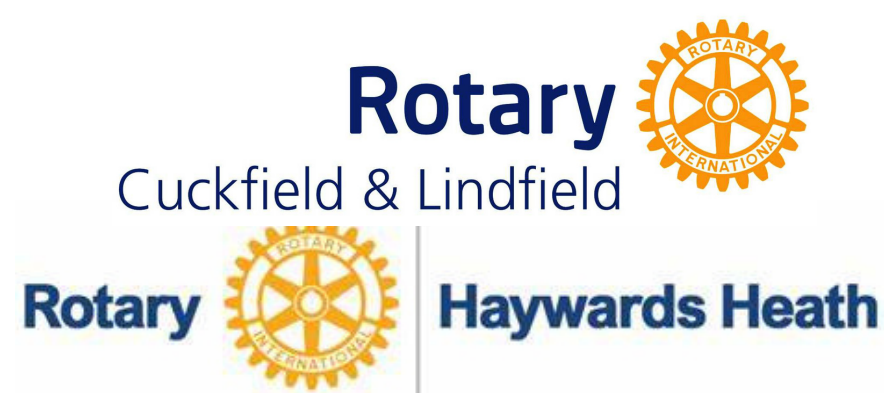
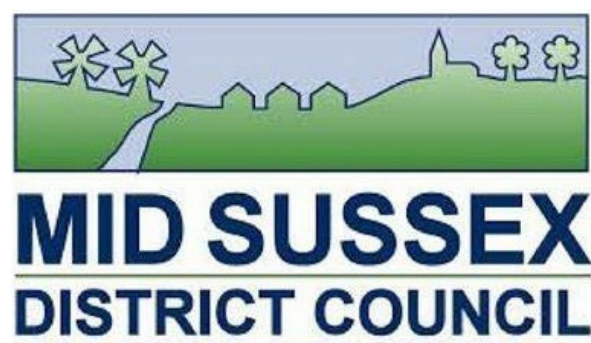
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   @MidSussexVA

We would not be here without the help of our funders - thank you all!



HAYWARDS HEATH  
TOWN COUNCIL

