



Cheshire and Merseyside VCFSE News

December 2025

Welcome to our December update for voluntary, community, faith and social enterprise (VCFSE) colleagues across Cheshire and Merseyside (C&M). As this is the final newsletter of the year, we wanted to take a moment to say thank you to everyone who has engaged with, contributed to, and supported this work over the past year.

Some of you will already receive updates directly from us, or through your local infrastructure organisation. This newsletter complements those channels and provides another way to share key news, opportunities and learning from across C&M.

We hope you find this edition useful and relevant, and we encourage you to share the full newsletter, or individual items, with your networks.

We look forward to continuing to work alongside you in the year ahead and building on what we have achieved together.

You can also find past and future editions online [here](#).

Updates



Embedding the VCFSE in Neighbourhood Health – webinar highlights

Thank you to everyone who joined our recent Embedding the VCFSE in Neighbourhood Health – Cheshire and Merseyside webinar.

We heard valuable insights from Sefton and St Helens, two of the 43 national pioneer areas shaping neighbourhood health services.

Speakers shared practical learning on how integrated neighbourhood teams are developing, with the VCFSE sector playing a central role in community-led prevention, early intervention and tackling health inequalities. The session explored what is working well locally, alongside the challenges of funding, data sharing and sustaining partnerships.

Watch the recording and download the slides to explore the insights and examples shared.

[Find out more](#)

VCFSE sector elected to the Cheshire and Warrington Combined Authority Shadow Board

Cheshire and Warrington Infrastructure Partnership (CWIP) is delighted that the VCFSE sector has been elected to the Cheshire and Warrington Combined Authority (CA) Shadow Board, giving the sector a stronger collective voice in shaping regional decision-making.



CWIP members have chosen Gary Cliffe, Chief Executive of Cheshire West Voluntary Action (CWVA) to represent the sector on the shadow board ahead of the CA's launch in April 2026.

There is also a commitment for a VCFSE representative seat on the main CA Board once it is established, with a fair and transparent election process being coordinated by Voluntary Sector North West in the coming months.

This milestone reflects sustained sector engagement in devolution conversations and helps ensure VCFSE voices, including lived experience perspectives, are heard at the highest level.

[Find out more](#)



VSNW Funding and Commissioning Awards 2025

We are delighted to celebrate Cheshire and Merseyside based winners of the VSNW Funding and Commissioning Awards 2025, recognising excellence in partnership, leadership, and support for the VCFSE sector.

- **Outstanding Grant Funder: Cheshire Community Foundation** was recognised for its long-term vision, multi-year funding, transparent processes, and support for organisations during the cost-of-living crisis.
- **Highly commended: The Westminster Foundation** for its five-year commitment to early years work in Chester and collaborative, partnership-led funding approach.
- **Outstanding Commissioner – Local/Combined Authority: Sefton Council Public Health Team** received a highly commended award for its pioneering work embedding the VCFSE sector in neighbourhood health and prevention models.

Congratulations to all these organisations for their dedication and impact in Cheshire and Merseyside – your work is inspiring the whole sector.

[Find out more](#)

Events and Opportunities

Cheshire & Warrington

Infrastructure Partnership

Shaping the Cheshire and Warrington Get Working Plan

CWIP is inviting people to a workshop to help shape the Get Working Plan. We'll explore what helps and what gets in the way of accessing work, training and volunteering opportunities.

The session is open to:

- People with lived or living experience of barriers to employment or skills opportunities
- Community and voluntary organisations supporting residents

It will be a welcoming, informal session where everyone's voice matters. Travel support may be available for those who need it. Your input will directly inform the subregion's Get Working Strategy.

26 January 2026 | 1pm to 3pm | Cheshire Football Association

[Register now](#)

The Great North VCFSE Exchange

Join VSNW for the first ever Great North VCFSE Exchange, a new event bringing together voluntary, community, faith and social enterprise (VCFSE) leaders from across the North – including across Cheshire and Merseyside – to explore how we work with our strategic authorities.



The session will share experiences from across the region and create space to reflect on how different areas are building strong, effective partnerships.

This is a chance for C&M colleagues to connect, share learning, and help define what good collaboration looks like between the VCFSE sector and strategic authorities.

14 January 2026 | 1pm to 3pm | Online via Microsoft Teams

[Find out more](#)

New funding opportunity from CMCA

Cheshire and Merseyside Cancer Alliance has launched a new funding opportunity through its Targeted Interventions for Early Diagnosis (TIED) programme. This

initiative aims to support projects that help people receive an earlier cancer diagnosis, particularly in communities experiencing the greatest health inequalities.

Up to £20,000 is available for VCFSE led activity that boosts awareness of cancer signs and symptoms, encourages earlier help-seeking, and increases access to care in areas of high deprivation.

Applications are open to established VCFSE organisations with suitable experience and capacity. The deadline for submissions is 16 January 2026, and the process includes an initial expression of interest followed by a discussion with the CMCA team.

Apply now



New grant funding opportunity from CABWI

CABWI has announced a new funding round to support young people aged 16+ and adults across the UK to develop skills, confidence and routes into employment.

The fund is open to projects working with people who face complex barriers to the labour market, helping them move closer to or into apprenticeships and jobs. Activity should include employability support, life skills, training, work experience and opportunities to gain qualifications.

Projects with a focus on the water, utilities and construction sectors are particularly encouraged. Grants of up to £40,000 are available, subject to eligibility.

The funding round opens on Monday 5 January 2026. An application webinar will take place on Wednesday 7 January 2026, 10.30am to 11.15am. To register, email grants@cabwi.org.uk with "webinar" in the subject line.

Find out more

Subscribe and feedback

If you didn't receive this newsletter directly from VSNW, you can [subscribe here](#) to ensure you don't miss future updates.

We'd love to hear your thoughts on this new update—what's useful, what could be improved, and how we can make it more relevant to you and your work. **Share your feedback with us at** cmhcl@vsnw.org.uk

Thank you for your continued support and engagement. If you have any updates or opportunities you'd like us to share in future newsletters, please contact cmhcl@vsnw.org.uk





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