



VOICE  
STRENGTH  
ADVOCACY  
CONNECTING  
COMMUNITIES

ADVISING DELIVERY VOLUNTARY INTEGRITY PARTNERSHIP STRATEGIC FORUMS  
INVOLVEMENT EMPOWERMENT INFLUENCE CHAMPIONING COMPACT  
SUSTAINABLE TRUSTED INDEPENDENT  
SUPPORTIVE ENGAGEMENT SOCIAL JUSTICE



Newcastle Council  
& Voluntary Service

## **Our Work 2015-2016**

Supporting voluntary  
and community action

## Chair's Report

**In the 2015 AGM, I talked about the need for Newcastle CVS to be relevant, sustainable and open to change.**

I'm pleased to say that in the last 12 months, in the face of ever increasing challenges, Newcastle CVS has more than lived up to these three challenges.

**The Support and Development** work of Newcastle CVS continues to be the significant voice for the voluntary and community sector (VCS) and able to shape the debate. Specialist Services in the last 12 months carried out more than **900** direct advice sessions with **570** organisations, which strengthened governance, improved organisations and maximised fundraising.

**For Advocacy Centre North**, there has been significant change and the service has proven to be agile in meeting the needs of existing and new service users.

**For Healthwatch Newcastle**, the future entails being an independent organisation – and we will be excited to help make that happen.

**Ellison Services** goes from strength to strength, providing financial services at a price the sector can afford. Jim Dodds and his team have set it well for future growth.

**Simon Elliott**  
Chair, Newcastle CVS



Newcastle CVS is very pleased to be working with colleagues in the VCS in Gateshead, at the request of Gateshead Council – and I would like to take a moment to pay tribute to the excellent work done by GVOC over many years. All the trustees of Newcastle CVS, our excellent Chief Executive, Sally Young, and the entire team are committed to ensuring that the Gateshead VCS is able to go from strength to strength – and that same commitment applies of course to the VCS in Newcastle.

In closing, I would like to thank my fellow trustees for their time and energy and thank the staff at Newcastle CVS for their dedication and professionalism. The next 12 months will no doubt present many more challenges – and equally I have no doubt that we will all rise to meet them.

## Chief Executive's Report

We had to change as the external environment is moving fast and our member organisations and others who use our services rely on us for high quality advice, information and support.

During the year we looked very closely at what we did to ensure that all our services were necessary and relevant. We were asked to describe ourselves and we agreed that

**Newcastle CVS gives people who struggle to be heard a voice, supports voluntary and community organisations to be resilient and sustainable and promotes a fairer society by influencing and challenging the debate.**

The organisation works well as each group has a clear contribution to make which goes towards complementing and strengthening the whole. These are difficult times for a number of our service users, partners and member organisations, and Newcastle CVS believes we can achieve much more through working in partnership than in isolation.

Although this review covers our work in 2015-16, we are delighted to be working in Gateshead and to be able to offer all our services to more people and organisations.

**Sally Young**  
Chief Executive, Newcastle CVS

# Our Year in Numbers

## Support and Development



Supported **388** organisations through **886** individual contacts



Provided **13** training courses, sessions and workshops to **133** people



Provided **27** forums and events to **839** people



Increased our membership from **624** to **655** member organisations



Helped local organisations raise over **£2 million**



**1,994** followers on Twitter

## Advocacy Centre North



Advocacy support to **736** people



**17,534** hours of direct advocacy support



Supported and mentored **41** volunteer Advocates



Worked with people from **33** BME communities

## Healthwatch Newcastle



Spoke to over **900** people about their preferences when making a GP appointment



Held **7** listening events for community groups



Met with **hundreds** of local people at community events



Reached **240,300** people on social media

## Ellison Services



Supported payroll and auto enrolment for **110** organisations



Supported the year-end accounts and independent examinations of **85** organisations



Supported bookkeeping and management accounts of **15** organisations



Provided onsite support and training to **9** organisations



This was the first year we had operated under our new group and management structure. Like many other organisations we had to reorganise to become more sustainable and flexible. I would like to thank the staff and trustees for taking us through this change process.

Sally Young

# Forward Planning

Annual Reviews are retrospective looking back on work done and completed. Here we have decided to include our current work. Given the pace of change and the numbers of new services we now provide, this gives a more accurate picture of our work.



**In Support and Development** the key change is working in Gateshead. There is a temporary contract until April 2017 to provide support and development services to the voluntary and community sector in Gateshead. As a number of CVS members cover Newcastle and Gateshead, there is a single Clinical Commissioning Group and there are joint cultural initiatives and other partnerships; this means a more effective approach. We are focussing on small, community based organisations for the direct support but providing networking and representation across the sector, working with key Gateshead partners and organisations.

**For Advocacy Centre North** the new Families Through Crisis Service was launched in July. Newcastle Law Centre formed a partnership with Changing Lives and Advocacy Centre North and successfully won a grant from Big Lottery Fund "Help Through Crisis" Programme to provide an Accompany, Advocate and Advice service to families. The project provides specialist welfare benefits and debt legal advice, holistic support services and advocacy services. At the same time an app is being developed with Fresh Ideas Funding, and the new services which began in 2015 are developing further.

**For Healthwatch Newcastle** the year is in two parts. Until November it is still housed within CVS, but the new contract means it will be a

fully independent, freestanding Community Interest Company from mid-October. We are delighted all the hard work has paid off and it is a well-respected partner within the health and wellbeing community.

**Ellison Services** has increased both the number of customers as well as the range of services it can offer. As well as taking on an Apprentice Accountant, it is doing more work on pension auto enrolment, with a number of clients who will come on stream in 2016 and 2017. There are new SORP and HMRC requirements, and Ellison Services staff have been through additional training so they can offer a full and current service.

## Support and Development

Fundamental to our support to voluntary and community groups in the city is the expert advice available from our Specialist Services.

As funding becomes more competitive and voluntary organisations have to show clearly their ability to deliver outcomes successfully, our funding advice service has supported Newcastle CVS members to raise over **£2 million**.

Our training programme and workshops increase key skills and understanding in bid writing, trustee responsibilities, safeguarding and more.

For in-depth support our organisational review, evaluation and consultancy services enables voluntary organisations to identify the changes to make their organisation sustainable for the future.

We have continued to review and adapt our newsletters, bulletins and blogs so that Newcastle CVS members are informed about latest news, issues and opportunities.

**“Ensuring the city’s voluntary sector is visible, informed and influential.”**

Image courtesy of Success 4 All



The Wellbeing and Health Open Forum and CHYP IN Network provide opportunities to network, share information and exercise influence.

This year the Wellbeing and Health Open Forum has heard from Newcastle’s Director of Public Health about commissioning priorities for the city, asked ‘Is Social Housing Dead?’ and discussed safeguarding, collaboration and how information is provided in the city.

The CHYP IN Network has provided a regular point of contact with Newcastle CVS members during a review of children and young people mental health services and for updates about so called legal highs and what the sector role can be in a coordinated response. In addition there have been presentations about the lives of young carers, and partnership opportunities with Newcastle University.

Other events have included the Make a Difference Event. Working with Newcastle YMCA, Excelsior Academy, City Council and others, the MaDE event explored young people’s experience at crucial transition points in their life. We used a mixture of video and social media to encourage young people to tell their own stories.

**During the General Election we published a voluntary sector manifesto** and held



Chi Onwurah MP

**a hustings** event with candidates from all the main parties attended by over fifty people.

We have continued to promote the voluntary and community sector voice, supporting representatives to have an active and influential role in 55 voluntary sector places on partnerships in the city.

These include the Wellbeing for Life Board, Children’s Trust Board and Safe Newcastle Board, both the adult and the children’s Safeguarding Boards and other multisector partnerships like the Newcastle Progression Forum.

# Advocacy Centre North

Advocacy Centre North provides free, independent, quality advocacy which helps people say what they want, secures their rights, represents their interests and obtains services they need. Advocates work in partnership with the people they support and take their side. Advocacy promotes social inclusion, equality and social justice.

## Services we provided in 2015-16

**BME Advocacy** supported people from BME communities around health and social care issues, often using bilingual Advocates and interpreters. The work is challenging and complex, particularly working with failed asylum seekers with mental health needs.

**Community Advocacy** supported people with disabilities, long-term conditions and older people to advocate for themselves and provided short-term advocacy interventions and longer-term advocacy provided mainly by volunteers.

**Mental Health Advocacy** supported people with mental health needs around issues including access to services and information, support for meetings, finance, benefits, housing, care planning, care proceedings, safeguarding and criminal justice procedures.

**Independent Mental Health Advocacy** worked with Newcastle residents detained under the Mental Health Act around their care and treatment and ensuring their rights were being upheld.

**Independent Care Act Advocacy** supported people's involvement in care and support assessment, planning and review and safeguarding processes in Newcastle between April and August 2015.

**Relevant Person's Representatives** ensured the rights of people in Newcastle deprived of their liberty under the Mental Capacity Act Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards were protected.

**Fulfilling Lives** worked closely with people with complex and multiple needs and chaotic lives, to help them find their way through the health, social care and criminal justice systems in Newcastle and Gateshead.

**Directly contracted services** for all types of advocacy including Independent Mental Health Advocacy, Relevant Person's Representative and non-statutory advocacy.



Shoulder to shoulder with you

## New services in 2015-16

- **Neurological Advocacy:** provided a specialist service in Newcastle and Gateshead, funded by the National Lottery through the Big Lottery Fund, to people with long-term neurological conditions such as Parkinson's, Stroke, Multiple Sclerosis, Motor Neurone Disease and Autism.
- **Partners in Health Advocacy:** provided support for people around appointments in specific GP surgeries.
- **Partners for Justice Advocacy:** supported vulnerable people who have contact with the police and criminal justice system.

## New areas of work in 2016-17

- **Families Through Crisis:** is a new service providing advocacy for families in positions of extreme hardship and crisis in Newcastle in partnership with Newcastle Law Centre and Changing Lives.
- We launched two new films about advocacy: **Voices of Advocacy:** service users tell us what advocacy means to them; **It's a Win-win:** service users, Advocates, referrers and commissioners talk about the importance of advocacy.

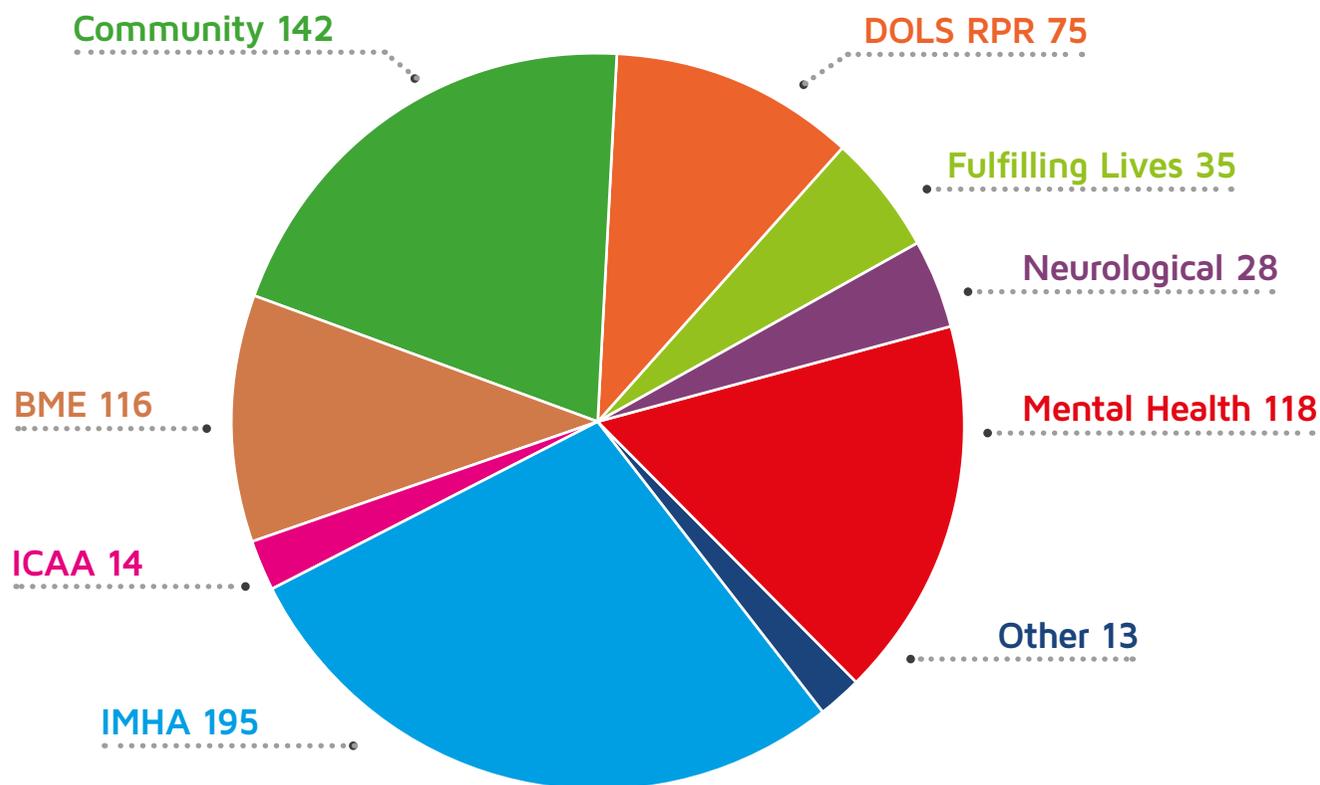
To see the detailed Advocacy Centre North Annual Review go to:

[www.cvsnewcastle.org.uk/advocacycentre-north/our-impact](http://www.cvsnewcastle.org.uk/advocacycentre-north/our-impact)



We are delighted to have been re-awarded the **Advocacy Quality Performance Mark**

# Clients for each advocacy service 2015-16



## Snapshot

- Advocacy support to **736** people
- 17,534** hours of direct advocacy support
- Worked on **1,080** issues with our service users
- Recruited and trained **4** new volunteer Advocates
- Supported and mentored **41** volunteer Advocates
- Volunteer Advocates provided **3,775** direct advocacy hours
- Worked with people from **33** BME communities
- Employed **5** bilingual Advocates
- 99%** of service users who replied to client questionnaires were positive about their Advocate

## Feedback from our service users

- Since I have come to this country, this is the first time I have had somebody who is going to care about me and is so kind and does not make me feel like I'm just a client. My Advocate doesn't say sorry I can't help – even if she doesn't know the answer she says don't worry, I'll find out, you are not alone, we can do this together! I am so appreciative of all your hard work helping me.
- Without my Advocate my life would be a disaster but my Advocate is fantastic and helps me a lot.
- Having an Advocate has given me a voice.
- The help I received came at a time when I could not think clearly and was at a loss as to which direction to take. I felt I was going round in circles and help from the Advocate helped sort out and clarify the matter.
- I tried myself to resolve this problem literally for years without any result.
- With the help of an Advocate this issue was completely resolved.
- To have someone with you that helps you to be heard clearly and fairly and understands the complexities of the impact of mental illness cannot be praised enough. It can give you confidence to speak out and show other parties you are not on your own.
- I've found this year more difficult than the last as all my support other than my Advocate has been stopped by the cutbacks. I now have to pay out of my benefits if I want any help. I would not know what to do if my Advocate is taken away.

# Healthwatch Newcastle

Healthwatch Newcastle is the independent champion for members of the public and users of social care and health services.



Our vision is to be **Newcastle's voice for outstanding health and social care services for all**, and our new online 'feedback centre' helped to realise this vision. It enables people to search for local social care and health services, as well as review and rate them using a star system.

We also held a range of listening events throughout the year to gather the views and experiences of a diverse range of communities, including refugee and asylum seekers and people with learning difficulties. A **'Bring an audience'** scheme was developed so that VCS organisations and their members were supported to share experiences at a time and in a venue of their choosing.

During 2015-16 we continued to strengthen our strategic direction and influence across social care and health providers and commissioners. Major research was carried out in home care services, young people's mental wellbeing and people's preferences when making a GP appointment in Newcastle.

A large scale survey of service users, their family and carers, and workers investigated their views about local home care services. Six of the ten recommendations we made in the **'Spotlight on home care'** report – including continuity of care worker and monitoring of visit times/change of care worker – were incorporated into Newcastle City Council's new home care contract specification.

We worked with the University of Northumbria to find out the relative importance people put upon different aspects when booking a GP appointment. **A total of 748 of eligible questionnaires were completed**, and the overall results showed that evening and weekend appointments were valued the most.



There was a strong core of 17 volunteers throughout the year, helping on stalls, at events and with research, as well as our **'Young Healthwatch'** group of volunteers aged 16-25 years.

**Young Healthwatch** designed a survey to get a better understanding of the main issues young people face regarding mental health. **There were 465 responses**, with a clear call from young people for information on mental health support to be made available at school/college, GP practices and public events in particular.

Read all the reports at [www.healthwatchnewcastle.org.uk/about-us/documents](http://www.healthwatchnewcastle.org.uk/about-us/documents) under 'Reports'.

# Ellison Services

Ellison Services provides expert, high quality, cost effective and efficient financial support services and payroll to meet the growing needs of charities, community organisations and social enterprises in the North East.



We offer a fully managed payroll service, preparation of statutory accounts and independent examination (income up to £1 million), complete bookkeeping and management accounts service and an onsite support/training service.

Over the past year, **Ellison Services has shown real growth**; we have increased our staff team to seven employees compared with four in the previous financial year. New staff have expertise in large charity accounts, payroll and auto-enrolment.

The staff have undergone training for the new **Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) 2015 Financial Reporting Standards 102**, to ensure Ellison Services is up to date with all changes affecting the production of end-of-year accounts.

**We have invested in accounts production software** to facilitate the production of tax returns, since HMRC stopped providing this facility earlier in 2016. **We have also invested in Pension Assessment software and relevant staff training**; this has allowed us to increase our service provision to incorporate carrying out auto enrolment work on behalf of our payroll customers.



## Our Year



Supported payroll and auto enrolment for **110** organisations



Supported the year-end accounts and independent examinations of **85** organisations



Supported bookkeeping and management accounts of **15** organisations



Provided onsite support and training to **9** organisations

# Our Thanks

## Grants and Contracts

- Newcastle City Council
- NHS Newcastle Gateshead CCG
- Community Foundation Tyne & Wear and Northumberland
- Northumbria Police and Crime Commissioner
- NHS England
- Blue Stone Consortium
- Newcastle City Council – Healthwatch Newcastle
- Gateshead MBC
- Northumberland Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust
- Big Lottery Fund Reaching Communities
- Big Lottery Fulfilling Lives

## We have received donations from:

- RW Mann Trust
- The Joicey Trust
- Sir James Knott Trust

## We have received support from:

- SkillsBridge
- Northstar Ventures
- Over 70 volunteers

During the year a number of people and organisations have helped Newcastle CVS deliver its work. We are very grateful to our funders and the many others that have helped us including our trustees, volunteers and staff. We have also received in kind, support from a number of others.

## Income and Expenditure

For the year ended 31 March 2016	Unrestricted funds (£)	Restricted funds (£)	Total (£)
<b>Income from:</b>			
Generated funds	167,511	20	167,531
Charitable activities	320,296	727,049	1,047,345
<b>Total income</b>	<b>487,807</b>	<b>727,069</b>	<b>1,214,876</b>
<b>Expenditure on:</b>			
Raising funds	136,227		136,227
Charitable activities	380,001	751,726	1,131,727
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>516,228</b>	<b>751,726</b>	<b>1,267,954</b>
Investment gains / (losses)	(6,753)		(6,753)
<b>Net income / (expenditure)</b>	<b>(35,174)</b>	<b>(24,657)</b>	<b>(59,831)</b>
Transfers between funds	(9,554)	9,554	
<b>Net movement in funds</b>	<b>(44,728)</b>	<b>(15,103)</b>	<b>(59,831)</b>

If you would like to see our full staff list and details of our trustees please go to our website.

# Our Research and Publications

## Paint a Canvas

- **957** hours of direct activity and face to face support each week by **20** organisations.
- Better outcomes for older people include reduced social isolation, enjoyment of life, being healthier, staying at home, support in their caring role and independence.

## Build a Picture

- **803** hours of face to face services and activities offered weekly by **23** organisations.
- Most issues spiralled around poverty and inequality.
- Outcomes were building resilience and self reliance.
- Of the children and young people, **13%** are referred by the statutory sector, **41%** find the service or activity through word of mouth, websites, family, friends and social media.



## Charities at the crossroads

- There is a role for the voluntary sector in delivering public services and the close ties voluntary organisations can establish with communities can contribute to public sector priorities.
- But public sector delivery is clearly not for every organisation and trustees have an important role holding voluntary organisations to their charitable aims and help to steer the organisation to the opportunities that are most suited to their purposes.

## Our Lives: Challenging Attitudes to Poverty

- Gathers together individual accounts from across the UK of the impact of poverty.
- The report was produced in response to a challenge from social activist Bob Holman to update Our Towns, an influential 1943 report about poverty in wartime Britain. Sadly Bob died in June 2016 and this is the last piece of research with which he was involved.

**“Newcastle CVS is an invaluable resource, providing information and support across a whole range of development needs in the sector, as well as listening to us and representing our interests.”**

(Newcastle CVS Annual Members Survey 2016)

## VCS 2020: A Force for Good

- Newcastle’s voluntary and community sector has the skills, experience and ideas to address the city’s key challenges.
- The voluntary and community sector can be quick, flexible and focused on outcomes.
- The sector continues to experience increased demand for services.

## Our Publications



Published **5** studies about the voluntary and community sector in Newcastle



Published and disseminated **4** issues of Inform magazine to **1,000** people



**24** issues of Newcastle CVS e-inform to over **1,915** people



**43** information sheets



**11** issues of On the Hoof



**Newcastle CVS** provides a trusted, independent voice to individuals who struggle to be heard and support to voluntary and community organisations in Newcastle and Gateshead to be more resilient and sustainable. We do this by:

- using our established reputation and signposting within our extensive networks
- working with integrity and strength to promote social justice and a fairer society
- influencing and challenging the debate

**Newcastle Office:**

**T:** 0191 232 7445 (option 1)  
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**W:** [www.cvsnewcastle.org.uk](http://www.cvsnewcastle.org.uk)

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**E:** [information@gatesheadsupport.org.uk](mailto:information@gatesheadsupport.org.uk)  
**W:** [www.gatesheadcvsnewcastle.org.uk](http://www.gatesheadcvsnewcastle.org.uk)



[www.cvsnewcastle.org.uk](http://www.cvsnewcastle.org.uk)



**Advocacy Centre North**

(part of Newcastle CVS) gives a voice to vulnerable people who are struggling to be heard. We support them to secure their rights, understand their choices, make decisions and access services. We improve communication and decision-making between service users and service providers.

**T:** 0191 235 7013

**E:** [advocacy@cvsnewcastle.org.uk](mailto:advocacy@cvsnewcastle.org.uk)



**Ellison Services**

(part of Newcastle CVS) provides expert, high quality, cost effective and efficient financial support services including payroll to meet the growing needs of charities, community organisations and social enterprises in the North East Region and nationwide.

**T:** 0191 232 7445 (option 2)

**E:** [ellisonservices@cvsnewcastle.org.uk](mailto:ellisonservices@cvsnewcastle.org.uk)

All at: Higham House, Higham Place, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 8AF



**Healthwatch Newcastle**

(part of Newcastle CVS) makes sure that the people that plan, buy and deliver social care and health services ask for the views of service users and the public and amplifies those views when necessary to make sure they are heard.

**T:** 0191 338 5720

**E:** [info@healthwatchnewcastle.org.uk](mailto:info@healthwatchnewcastle.org.uk)



Newcastle Council for Voluntary Service is a registered charity (number 1125877) and company limited by guarantee (number 6681475) registered in England and Wales. Our registered office is as above.

Photography by Gavin Duthie and John Hipkin