



Moving Forward - Recovery & Restart

Community Action Suffolk
Impact Report
(April - June 2021)



#NeverMoreNeeded

Recovery, Restart, Regeneration and Revitalisation...

...all words we have heard so many times in recent months. Ultimately, whatever we call this next phase of navigating a pandemic, this quarter has been one of renewed hope as we move towards the end of lockdown, and a time to reflect on the last year and look towards the future. I'm delighted to bring you a report this quarter, that demonstrates how much of our support has now focused on how we assist the sector to restart activities that have been on hold for so long, and embed lessons learned in to a 'new normal' so as not to forget what has worked well and create more diverse and accessible service delivery.



This quarter, we have launched a new project in partnership with Suffolk County Council and every district/borough council, and with more than 300 enquiries and 270+ grant applications already made, **Suffolk Community Restart** has been a great success impacting on many local communities by enabling community activities and buildings to restart and re-open in a Covid 19 safe way.

Our national policy work continues to be busy this quarter contributing to the **Levelling Up White Paper** consultation and the **Health and Care Bill** with national partners at NAVCA and ACRE. Locally, CAS is contributing to various recovery plans and strategies through our work with the **Collaborative Communities Board, the Integrated Care System, Clinical Commissioning Groups and the New Anglia LEP**.

It was a pleasure this quarter to celebrate **20 years of Suffolk ProHelp**. When we agreed to bring the project under the banner of CAS back in 2017 we knew it was a project that had the potential to form lasting relationships between sectors and support many organisations with vital expertise they would be unable to access otherwise. Now with 50 professional members and having provided more than £1.2 million since inception, the project has adapted and grown to meet sector needs and offers a whole range of services and information delivered in many different ways.

However, with celebration this quarter, also came time to say goodbye to another successful project – **The Young Leadership Project**, which had also made a huge impression on our sector and introduced 45 young people to the wonderful world of being a Trustee. Although, the formal project has now closed, the learning and opportunities have not been lost and our volunteering team continue to provide support for young volunteers and organisations looking to increase board diversity and inclusion. You will read later some of the benefits of these roles and I would urge anyone looking for a role such as this to contact the team.

On that note, I will leave you to make your way through the report and hope you enjoy reading about our work as much as we enjoy providing such a rich and diverse range of services and projects.



Social Media

✉ x 133
 ❤️ x 389
 ↻ x 235
93.3k impressions

75 posts
 👍 x 387
 ↻ x 135
10,205 impressions

54 posts
 ❤️ x 427
5,826 reached
6,226 impressions

179 posts
 👍 x 1007
 SHARE x 391
64,576 reached

Thank you for helping us to raise awareness of the issues faced by LGBTQI people fleeing persecution. Happy #Pride2021! Micro Rainbow

'Thank you for all your support and encouragement during lockdown' Restitute

We even partnered with the Cabinet Office to communicate the Emergency Alerts Pilot in East Suffolk

Press
 5 Interviews
 16 Articles

<http://communityactionsuffolk.org.uk>
57,960 HITS

"This seems like such a good idea. I am looking forward to getting to know people. Hope to be able to come here for support resources etc. and to share!"

"Thanks for the welcome and the link to resources, this feels like it's going to be a great hub."

Making its first splash in June was our brand new network specifically for marketing, comms & PR people working in the sector across Suffolk. A place to share best practice, tips, campaigns & knowledge, 'The Pod' is packed full of resources, bitesize training/skills sharing & a chance to promote anything you are doing in your organisation that you would like the network to get behind - if you work in this role, it's the place to be!

Email bryony.glover@communityactionsuffolk.org.uk to join us

on air
 Podcast
 Introducing CASpod!

Episodes 1,2 & 3 available now:
www.communityactionsuffolk.org.uk/caspod

CAS Network:
 1069 Organisations ↑ 129
 1402 People ↑ 202

The organisation support team continued to be busy this quarter helping VCSE sector organisations navigate their way through restart, recovery and future sustainability. The launch of the Community Restart Programme has been a great addition to the team (see the spotlight in this edition for more information) providing Covid 19 specific support. Financial resilience, CAS training, specialist business support, safeguarding and support for Village Halls & Community Buildings also continue to be sought after areas for support across the county. Our digital move as a direct result of C19 challenges has been embraced by the sector, with 121 surgeries and 'on demand' courses, webinars and resources attended and viewed in higher numbers than ever before over the past 18 months. This quarter:



574 New Users
1050 Funding Searches
345 Funding Opportunities

Specialist Business Support during this quarter has focused on supporting organisations to plan for the future as they begin to recover from the impact of C19. 13 organisations have received 2+ hours of 121 support enabling them to move forward with their new version of normal & make better use of resources available to them.

10 Funding Surgeries

Training & Development

- 52 Training Courses
- 7 Bespoke Courses
- 3 Webinars
- 13 Networking Events
- 1 Safeguarding Micro Conference
- 342 Organisations attended
- 734 Individual attendees

96% participants stating 'as a result of attending the event they are better able to do their role'

92% participants rate CAS training 'very good' or 'excellent'

- 6 Safeguarding Courses

COMING

soon...

Understanding Impact -
a brand new 3 part
course from NASIP



<https://www.communityactionsuffolk.org.uk/the-new-anglia-social-investment-partnership/>

Community Restart Social Media Launch





Spotlight on...



Celebrating 20 years of Suffolk ProHelp

Suffolk ProHelp provides vital support for the VCSE sector here in Suffolk & this quarter the project celebrated its 20th anniversary! When CAS was approached to bring the project in to our infrastructure activities in 2017, short term funding was secured from the Transformation Challenge Award - a fund designed to support projects evolve, and evolve it did!

4 years on, and now funded by the National Lottery Community Fund, the professional network has grown from 30 to **50 members** offering their skills, expertise and specialist advice to charities, community groups and social enterprises completely free of charge. The way they offer that support has also developed with additions of Learning Lunches, Specialist Webinars, Training workshops, and most recently, the brand new Podcast providing bitesize skills sharing alongside the traditional 121 project support.

The statistics speak for themselves, but can not entirely encapsulate the phenomenal contribution this project has made to **more than 1200 organisations** across Suffolk.

They have received support with legal issues, building works, marketing, public relations, digital expertise, human resources, and so much more that they would otherwise have been unable to pay for.

£1.2 million

Since 2001 Suffolk ProHelp has distributed over £1m in kind through sharing professional expertise with Suffolk's charities and community groups. Now that's something to celebrate

20 Years of Suffolk ProHelp

1,200

Since 2001 Suffolk ProHelp has supported more than 1,200 charities and community groups with free professional expertise. Now that's something to celebrate

20 Years of Suffolk ProHelp

PODCAST

187 listens

THE PODCAST HAS ENABLED US TO BRING TO LIFE OUR CASE STUDIES AND FIND A WHOLE NEW WAY OF SHARING EXPERTISE

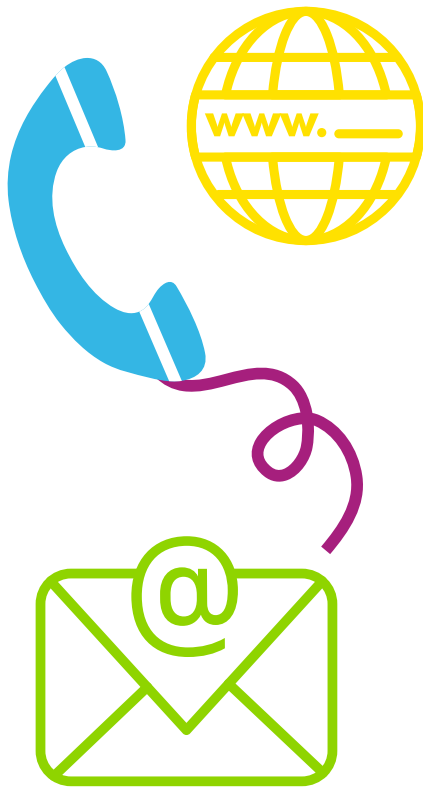
The Suffolk ProHelp podcast, launched this way has gone from strength to strength. We've covered a wide range of topics with our Ask the Experts episodes, as well as sharing some of the good work we've done with our In Conversation case study episodes. We've had 187 listens to our podcast since our launch in February 2021, including listeners from the US, Germany and Sweden!

LISTEN TO OUR PODCAST HERE

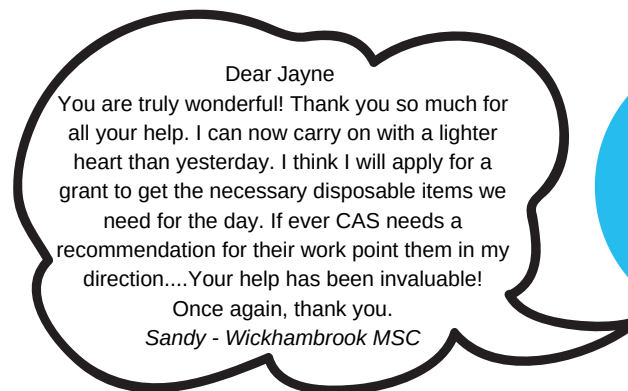
To all our Network Professionals, from all of us here at CAS & on behalf of the sector...

Thank You!





Support enquiries for village halls and community buildings remain high with **139 referrals** as we move towards re-opening following lockdown. This quarter, we also surveyed the network and received **166 responses** about intentions for opening their doors once again. **125** said they were or would be re-opening from 17th May. Information from CAS helped equip them with the tools to re-open safely, ensuring that these community hubs are open to service the needs of the communities as soon as they can be.



Dear Jayne
You are truly wonderful! Thank you so much for all your help. I can now carry on with a lighter heart than yesterday. I think I will apply for a grant to get the necessary disposable items we need for the day. If ever CAS needs a recommendation for their work point them in my direction....Your help has been invaluable!
Once again, thank you.
Sandy - Wickhambrook MSC



Every Person, Every Conversation #AreTheySafe?

Approached by NAVCA recently, we have been heavily involved with delivering a national safeguarding campaign #AreTheySafe? with national colleagues from NAVCA and ACRE this quarter.

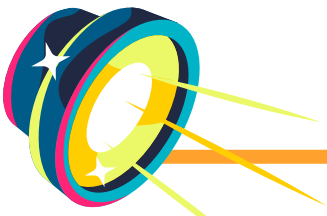
Community Action Suffolk produced written content for the Every Person, Every Conversation pack, which will later become part of a national campaign - #AreTheySafe? This included, but was not limited to, content detailing key messages we will share with the NAVCA membership and VCSE organisations. We worked collaboratively with NAVCA and a Third Party Designer to also produce a resource pack of key messages and images.

Events are scheduled over the Summer across the country to raise awareness of this crucial topic and introduce the campaign - watch this space for updates next quarter!

“Jacqui has written all the content and her knowledge is absolutely immense on this topic so I’m really excited about this!” Lucy Straker, Policy and Communications Manager, NAVCA

#AreTheySafe Partners





Spotlight on...

In partnership with Suffolk County Council, Babergh & Mid Suffolk District Council, East Suffolk District Council, Ipswich Borough Council and West Suffolk District Council, the **Community Restart Project** supports small, local community groups, charities, social enterprises and community buildings to navigate the challenges of re-opening their doors or restarting activities.

With **121 support, training, workshops, and grants of up to £2500 available**, the Community Restart team at CAS have been inundated with requests for help. Adhering to government guidance while trying to reassure and encourage those that benefit from their activities can be tricky and the project has been able to provide specific guidance, practical tips and funding where applicable, allowing groups and buildings to restart in a confident manner.

317 responses to enquiries

Through the Community Restart grant, 5th Woodbridge Sea Scouts have been provided with £1080 of funding to purchase tents. This has meant 120 young people will have access to overnight stays in a covid-safe manner. As Barrie Hayter, Group Scout Leader explains:

“Covid has certainly not stopped us in our tracks, because scouting adapts and finds new ways to support young people – but there have been challenges.

We lost around 15% of members at one point, but now, we find ourselves in a position of a large waiting list, too few volunteers, and the need to continue to run our activities in a socially distanced way. The Suffolk Community Restart programme has been great for us because it’s funded the cost of some patrol tents, which will allow us to resume some trips with our youngsters, while maintaining the limited capacity rules, once the Scout Association allows.”



274 applications received

81 awards so far
>£105k distributed



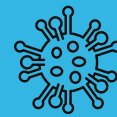
61

Restart Workshops



56

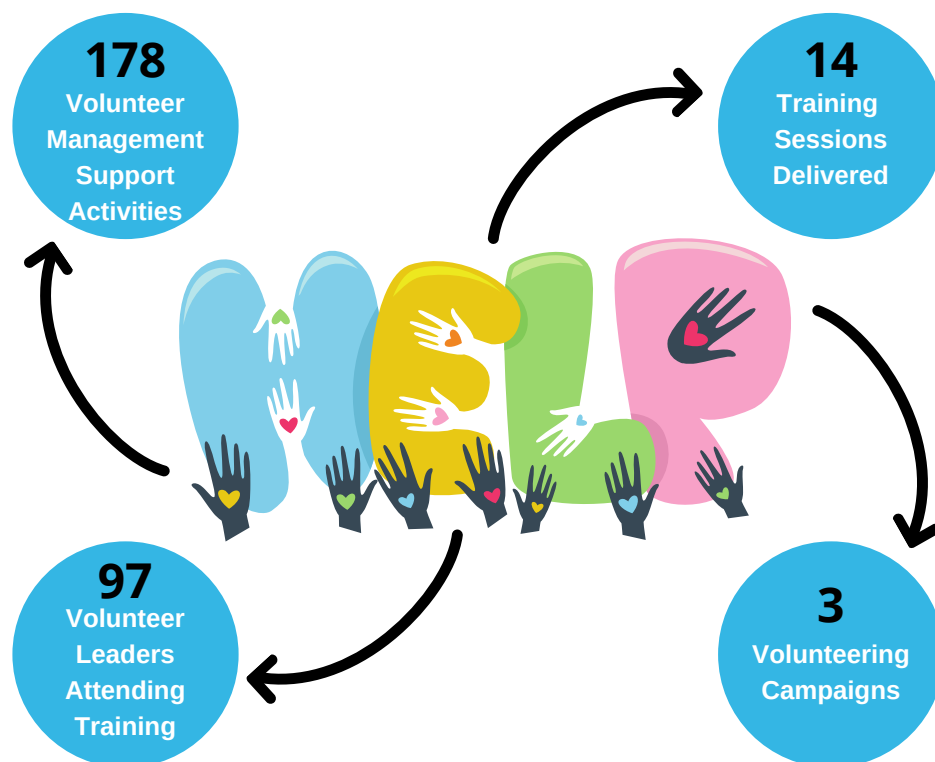
On Demand Health & Safety Courses



34

121 Restart Planning Sessions

“As a community arts venue, serving an area of significant deprivation, we’ve always been much valued by those who volunteer for us, and also for those who visit us,” explains Des Reynolds, director of The Seagull Theatre. “The Suffolk Community Restart programme has been really helpful for us in both offering a source of financial support for some of the additional costs around COVID compliance, but also by being a massive source of information and encouragement. Being open during the pandemic at various times has involved having to decipher government guidelines and produce risk assessments and so much more, all of which can be daunting, so the backing and support of a programme like Suffolk Community Restart has been vital in bolstering our confidence.”



Looking for **Volunteer Suffolk** volunteers?

NEW to Volunteer Suffolk website?

If you would like to advertise volunteer roles on our website be Collective will guide you on how to create an account and add roles. *(room webinar session)*

Tues 29th June: 10am

To book a place (opening hours: 10am-4pm) contact: volunteering@communityaction.suffolk.org.uk
www.volunteersuffolk.org.uk



Volunteer Suffolk had an upgrade this quarter!
www.volunteersuffolk.org.uk



East Suffolk Volunteering Campaign

"Was well organised and flowed through each organisation nicely. Great opportunity to meet other charities and understand what they offer for volunteers. A good variation of roles."



Volunteers Week - 1st-7th June

With the objective to promote volunteering to the public with a campaign; and to stimulate and connect people to community and voluntary action, Volunteer's Week is a key part of the CAS calendar.

We coordinated social media activities and online promotion of volunteering and local radio. Our very own, Janet Perry was also part of the national steering group, making decisions on the final week. Films, podcast and case studies were created and themed days included young people and ESV.

The key outcome was raising awareness of Volunteers' Week in 2021 with a wide ranging number of groups across Suffolk thanking their volunteers and raising the profile of volunteering. Applications on Volunteer Suffolk increased as a result and the campaign also improved relationships with charities/groups as we had a common activity to promote.

This week makes a huge difference to individuals as it helps introduce members of the public to charities. We support charities to pro-actively promote their volunteer roles impacting both the VCSE sector and local communities. The week also supports increasing inclusivity of volunteering as the week promotes volunteering wider than groups' members. This year many groups also took a lead on thanking volunteers for their amazing contribution to Suffolk which shows how annual efforts to take part in the campaign are now filtering through to organisations.



The Local Conversation In Kirkley



"I have lived in towns and cities across the country but have never felt like I belonged until I came here. I have never experienced community like this and you [KPF] are the glue that holds it together"



Individuals participating in the LC:

- KPF 13 members
- Sub/action groups 3
- Community Room users 26 (including groups)
- Parks/Gardens 60
- Kirkley Youth Voice 2
- Zoom meetings 10




- ✓ More than 1200 est. visits to pump track
- ✓ Newsletter delivered to 68 residents
- ✓ 71 attendees at allotment plant sale
- ✓ Facebook reach 17,732
- ✓ 13 Morning Coffee Group members

Lowestoft Community Enablers

From supporting 'Dino Days' & Scarecrow Competitions, to Seafront regeneration, 'Fiver Fest' and food provision in local communities; our Enablers continue to support hundreds of local people and businesses in the 3 wards of Kirkley, Harbour and Kessingland. With another packed quarter of activity, one of the highlights was to support the 'First Light Festival' that returned this year, and although not able to take place in the usual way, with more than 50 local businesses taking part and over 3000 colourful bird boxes around the town, it once again did not fail to bring out the incredible community spirit this town does best!





Rural Housing

17 EOI's & 5 meetings re: Housing Needs Surveys & 3 parishes underway, 1 completed

7 out of 8 local authorities signed up to Eastern Community Homes

3 EOI's for Community Led Housing projects



14 2 22

Buddies recruited Q1 Training courses Q1 Buddies trained to date

In Ipswich, one of our newly recruited Buddy Up volunteers has found the confidence to return to work after a 2-year gap in employment. She says the kindness and support that she experienced in joining Buddy Up, gave her the confidence to put in her application.

A is a single parent to three children, one of whom has significant additional needs. She has a wealth of experience working with vulnerable adults and young people, but her caring responsibilities meant that she was unable to work. This, coupled with a significant loss, led to a gradual erosion of A's confidence. A applied to be a Buddy early on in the project and has proven to be a talented and caring support to her linked friend. By engaging with her linked friend, A has built up her confidence and realised that all of the skills she spent many years developing are still with her. A says "The kindness and support of my Buddy Up Co-ordinator gave me the confidence to go for it and put in my application."

A got the job and started her new role this week. So many volunteers don't realise quite how amazing they are and that's why it's such an important part of our job to tell them.

Why 'Buddy Up'?



Q1 Facebook Reach 17,738

1 online Dementia Friends session for good Neighbours, Mutual Aid Groups & community volunteers

3 Articles in local press & 1260 visitors on suffolkgoodneighbours.co.uk

3 Virtual Coffee Breaks

1 radio interview on BBC Radio Suffolk Jon Wright show with IP3 Good Neighbours

3 New Good Neighbour Members





Spotlight on...



In mid-June the **Young Leadership Project** closed (although current young trustees and opportunities will still be supported with Governance support CAS provides).

Over **3 and a half years** this project has supported and brokered over **45 young people** as Young Trustees or Young Shadowing Trustees or Youth Council roles. **Two Young Trustees have been involved as Shadowing Trustees and now Trustees for the duration of the project.** CAS's own Shadowing Trustee has become a Trustee and been volunteering for CAS for nearly two years. **51 young people** have taken part in **Young Trustee Training**. The volunteering hours for the length of the project (as a cautious estimate) are **over 700 hours**.

The legacy of the project is organisations involved in the project taking ownership of including young people and continuing to recruit further young trustees (eg: St Elizabeth Hospice) and some organisations have changed their constitution to ensure they continue to involve young people on the board. (eg: Suffolk Libraries). Many young people involved in the project are continuing to support the charity sector at leadership level.

There is more to be achieved in Suffolk to increase the diversity of trusteeship and boards. It is not as simple as promoting the role to young people/wider public. Trustee boards and charities can make a positive change if they pro-actively understand and accept the barriers of getting involved as a trustee and help remove more of these barriers. CAS will continue to raise awareness of these opportunities for young people, wider community and will support organisations to take a pro-active approach to improving diversity of their boards, ensuring they are being truly representative of the communities they serve.



Tues 8th June 4.30pm



"Great to get more of an idea of what being a young trustee means, how charities work and funded. Very useful."

"Explaining in depth about the role of a trustee and the different hats they have."

To conclude this spotlight, it is fitting to include feedback from the first organisation involved in the Young Leadership Project who sent this email in April. Chloe and Suffolk Artlink were the first organisation/young person to be matched, with Chloe taking on the role of a Shadowing Trustee in 2018. Suffolk Artlink took on Chloe as full trustee in 2021.

"Chloe Pearson, an alumni of your young trustee programme, was formally elected as a trustee director at last night's general meeting of the Board of Trustees of Suffolk Artlink. Chloe has brilliantly fulfilled the role of a trustee for sometime already and has made a significant contribution to Suffolk Artlink. Chloe speaks very highly of you and the training she received from Community Action Suffolk. On behalf of the Board of Trustees and staff of Suffolk Artlink our thanks and appreciation to you and Community Action Suffolk for your excellent programme. Kind regards, Alistair"



Engagement with **New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP)** focused on the Growth Hub Board and the Clean Growth bids to the Community Renewal Fund. These bids build on the work of BEE Anglia – a European funded project that provides support to businesses and VCSE organisations to improve their energy efficiency.

Suffolk does not have any priority areas for this fund (which is seen as a pilot for Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF)) so our work continues to ensure we participate as a County with cross border bids retaining a seat at the table and an awareness of opportunities to feed into the development of SPF.

3 Health & Wellbeing Updates
Delivered **3,099** times

5 Voluntary Sector Leaders Updates
Delivered **283** times

Work with Seldom Heard/Multi-cultural communities

The Pandemic has highlighted the issue of health inequalities for our seldom heard communities including minority ethnic. These are existing inequalities that have been brought into sharp focus by Covid with proportionally higher deaths and infections among that community.

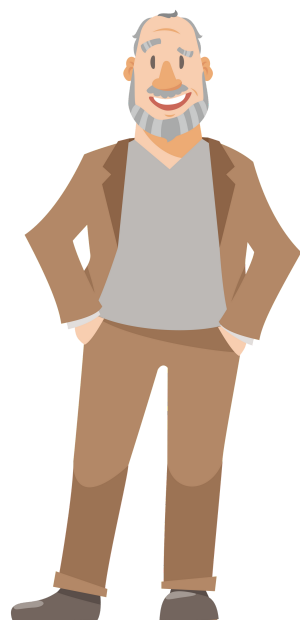
We have worked with ISCRE and other partners from the multicultural community to deliver an event to look at 'WAWM Moving Forward from Covid' – held on 26/05/21. It was a successful event with 28 attendees and speakers from a range of our multicultural communities looking at how their organisation had managed through the Pandemic. Speakers came from Suffolk Refugee Support, One Voice for Travellers and BME Suffolk. We followed the speakers with a workshop to look at funding issues – access to funding, what happens when you are not successful, and a look at policies and procedures that organisations need to have. A volunteer focused event is planned for July to continue this essential work.

The **East Suffolk Community Partnerships** have met remotely during lockdown via Zoom. The work of the Partnerships is progressing with a joint focus on rural proofing, and engagement of additional VCSE representatives – particularly from the rural areas. We have been working to increase VCSE organisational engagement in each Partnership area.

CAS has been implementing the approved proposal to provide rural proofing support to the individual Partnerships – this has included the development of a rural proofing toolkit, and support to each Partnership to understand how to implement this effectively. The Rural Proofing work has been well received by 5 of the 8 Partnerships so far and continues with the remaining 3 through Spring and Summer.

Beccles, Bungay and Halesworth CP have set up a dedicated workshop on 20/07/21 to look at the rural proofing work and it has been mentioned in discussion about projects – most recently at the Small Grants Panel that met on 30/06/21.

Lowestoft and Northern Parishes have agreed to set up a task and finish group to look at rural proofing, as have Carlton Colville, Kessingland and Southwold CP. Aldeburgh Leiston and Saxmundham have identified issues with limited representation from rural areas so the rural proofing work will help with this with an approach of more proactive engagement in rural areas.





Spotlight on... **Levelling Up**

In May 2021 the Prime Minister appointed Neil O'Brien MP to be his Adviser on Levelling up and has requested a White Paper be developed as soon as possible.

On 13th May CAS received the following invite from NAVCA :-

"We have been invited to feed into the development of the Government's White Paper on Levelling Up at the beginning of June - but have been given a very short deadline.

The Government has placed levelling up firmly at the heart of its planned programme of activities... we want to make sure we contribute to the debate, on behalf of our members but also as part of the wider movement for social action.

We really want to hear from our members about what levelling up means in your area, and the issues and concerns you have. But we also want to understand what you have identified as the opportunities and potential from this work. "

Chris Abraham wrote to all Chief Executives on the VCSE leaders network to ask if they would like any specific points or issues raised that they think should be discussed and included in the white paper.

Key points from that consultation with Suffolk VCSE Leaders included:

- **'Levelling up' should not just be about geographical boundaries but should start with a people-centred focus – and the very real needs they have: to improve their opportunities, their health and wellbeing and their economic situation**
- **Levelling up recovery from COVID pandemic should focus on local and community-based structures**
- **Established, locally-based organisations, can be the glue that connects communities**
- **Leveraging established and trusted community assets to avoid duplication**
- **Transformative change needs to be driven by organisations that already work with the communities to understand and deliver on their needs**
- **The omission of the growing gap for rural communities at all levels needs focus**
- **Deprivation – Suffolk is seen as an affluent rural county, there is unseen deprivation (both rural and urban) and local variances go undetected contributing to a growing rural 'gap'**
- **Why rural towns in Suffolk are identified as only Priority 2, when through the issues highlighted in the Suffolk Hidden Needs report they need to be Priority 1**
- **Community Led Housing provides housing the community *needs* not what developers want to provide**
- **Joined-up thinking with Education - Health – Housing being central to the thinking**
- **The significant contribution made by the VCSE and the need for investment in VCSE infrastructure**

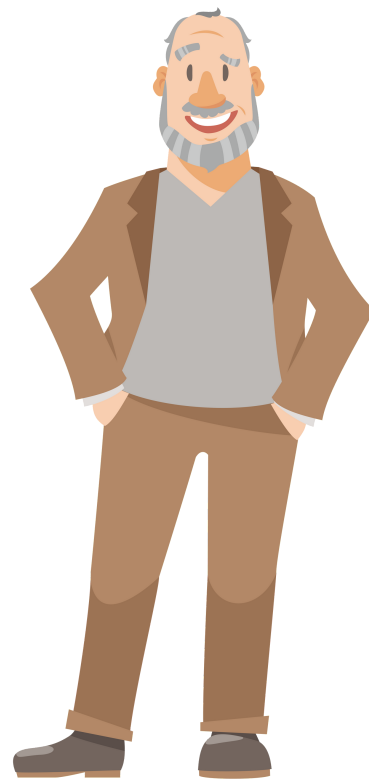
Chris attended the NAVCA round table on 27th May along with other members of NAVCA Network and represented the above views which have clearly been reflected in the NAVCA summary of views and the final submission document. To view these reports, visit: [Levelling Up - the view from local infrastructure \(navca.org.uk\)](https://www.navca.org.uk/levelling-up-the-view-from-local-infrastructure)



And Finally...

With special thanks to all our
partners, funders, volunteers
& VCSE organisations - we
couldn't do it without you!

Thank
you



Join our network, like us, follow us or tweet us on social media, and don't forget to visit our
website for up to date information & guidance

www.communityactionsuffolk.org.uk