



Supporting Scotland's voluntary sector to achieve its ambitions

SCVO's Strategy for 2019-22

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Photo credit: © Colin Hattersley Photography – images featured from former Scottish Charity Awards finalists: Teapot Trust (page 1) and The Yard (page 3).

The Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations (SCVO) is a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation. Registration number SC003558.



We must evolve what we do and how we do it to remain relevant and responsive to the needs of the sector

A photograph of two people, a woman on the left and a man on the right, sitting on a teal-colored tufted sofa. They are both smiling and looking towards each other. The woman is wearing a purple jacket over a black top, and the man is wearing a light blue striped button-down shirt. The background is a dark wall with a geometric pattern.

introduction

Anna Fowlie
Chief executive

Andrew Burns
Convener

Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations (SCVO) is the national membership organisation for Scotland's voluntary sector, with over 2,000 member organisations from charities, social enterprises and voluntary groups across the country.

For over 75 years, SCVO has worked alongside Scotland's voluntary sector as it has grown and evolved to meet the changing needs of individuals and communities.

Today the sector is diverse, thriving and making a huge impact on people and places. It also faces the challenges of uncertainty and the impact of rapid political, economic, social and technological change.

We are evolving what we do and how we do it to be as relevant and responsive to the needs of the sector as we can.

The next three years at SCVO will be a time of consolidation, improvement and modernisation of what works well, combined with development of new areas of activity. We have a clear purpose, are refreshing our membership offer and sharpening up our role for the wider voluntary sector as whole.

The challenges the third sector is experiencing are unprecedented and constantly changing. Need is growing while resources are reducing, and the political context is more volatile than ever, with no signs of settling. Scotland's relationship with the UK, the UK and Scotland's relationship with Europe and indeed the relationship between local and national Government are all fluid and all impact on the voluntary sector. Scotland's National Performance Framework, based on the UN's Sustainable Development Goals,

sets out a shared set of outcomes and values to which the sector has a huge contribution to make. SCVO plays a vital part in supporting the sector to do that and to tell the story of its impact. We have an important leadership and influencing role both on behalf of and within the sector.

Our engagement across the sector and with other partners demonstrates that people engage with SCVO for a variety of reasons and value different parts of what we do. We would like more people and organisations to engage with the totality of SCVO's offer. That diversity is something we embrace and we will work collectively across the organisation to raise awareness externally and internally of the diversity of our offer.

Our sector is diverse, and there are many ways to describe it. No one term is universally recognised (or even liked) but the closest terminology to our ethos is the voluntary sector, because we rely on the voluntary effort of individual citizens in the governance of our organisations. We recognise that there is work to be done (not just by SCVO) to debunk some myths about what that means in reality, building on our I Love Charity campaign to create a better picture of what the modern voluntary sector looks like in Scotland.

It is our ambition to support Scotland's voluntary sector to achieve its ambitions, and this strategic plan outlines how we will do that.



our mission...

A thriving and effective voluntary sector is vital to Scotland's economy and society.

We support the sector to achieve its ambitions through delivering services, by giving the sector a voice at a national level and promoting and supporting innovation and improvement.

Our purpose, therefore, is to **support, promote** and **develop** a confident, sustainable voluntary sector in Scotland.

what we do at a glance

In 2018-19, SCVO...



welcomed over
2,500 visitors
to **the Gathering**



provided
payroll services
to over **400 organisations**



hosted the prestigious
Scottish Charity Awards



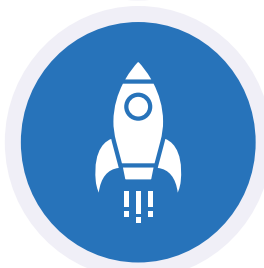
provided **managed IT** services
to **67 organisations** across
35 sites



ran
80 training courses



hosted over
4,000 job ads
on **Goodmoves**



launched the new
Third Force News
monthly magazine



helped create over
700 jobs through
Community Jobs Scotland

In 2018-19, SCVO...



engaged in ongoing dialogue with over **250 policy colleagues** across Scotland



responded to **1,500 enquiries** to SCVO's Information Service



worked on over **53 policy areas** that affect our sector



provided over **20,000 registered users** with access to funding sources through **Funding Scotland**



supported **4,400 people** to gain essential **digital skills** through the Digital Participation Charter Fund



provided **shared office space** for **58 organisations** and **300 staff** across our **5 offices**

our
plan...

what we're
going to do

how we're
going to do it

Support

Promote

Develop

**Follow our
principles**

**Live our
values**

**Value & grow
membership**

what we're **going to do**

SCVO's Strategic Objectives 2019-22

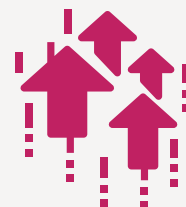
These objectives set out what we will do to deliver SCVO's ambitions for the sector, the organisation itself and our staff. What we do and how we do it is guided by broad-ranging engagement across the sector and with other stakeholders. The priorities identified against the objectives are not exhaustive, and are likely to evolve as the context changes.

to support

a confident, sustainable
voluntary sector in Scotland

We will continue to develop and roll out our **digital** capacity-building work across the sector, and we will continue to grow our **IT service** offer to external customers in the voluntary sector.

We will modernise our offer on:



Payroll services

Goodmoves recruitment portal

Shared office and meeting space

Information and advice

We will review and modernise our offer on:



Employability

Networks

Training

Funding

Events

We will look at new offers, such as:



Supporting the sector to work together

Supporting the sector with lobbying, influencing and engagement in local and national policy and legislation

HR, volunteer recruitment, marketing, digital and other potential shared services.

to promote

a confident, sustainable
voluntary sector in Scotland



We will champion the role of the voluntary sector in delivering Scotland's National Outcomes, lobbying for a more sustainable, empowered sector.



We will influence the sector's operating environment, providing constructive challenge to politicians, and facilitate engagement with policy-makers.



We will campaign on issues that matter to the sector.



We will promote the image and value of the sector.



We will influence Scottish Government and others on key financial, legislative and policy developments for the benefit of the sector.



We will engage with funders to help them understand how to develop processes which maximise outcomes and minimise administrative burdens.



Through Third Force News and other communication channels, we will highlight successes, good practice, challenges and areas for improvement.

to develop

a confident, sustainable
voluntary sector in Scotland

We will develop and host **funding and capacity-building resources**, being creative and constructive, with a focus on solutions and empowerment. Where appropriate, we will develop **shared infrastructure and resources** for the sector, promoting collaboration wherever possible.



We will support innovation in the sector, including digital, collaboration and funding approaches.



We will curate communities of interest, supporting networks and facilitating relationships.



We will work with other infrastructure organisations such as third sector interfaces, intermediaries and community development bodies to maximise the power of collective action, minimise duplication and competition and provide clarity to voluntary organisations about sources of support.



We will provide opportunities for voluntary sector organisations to influence and act on their own or in partnership.



We will champion the principles of service design with organisations and funders to ensure services are funded, developed and delivered in a way that is fit for purpose now and in the future.



We will work with the sector to enable wide-scale societal change, promote transparency and demonstrate the difference it makes to people's lives.



We will identify and highlight future trends and issues that may have implications for the sector.

For more information about diversity and inclusion, and sustainability, see [Appendix 2](#).

how we're
going to do it...

follow our principles

What we do to deliver on our purpose may change over the lifetime of this strategy, but the foundation must be a consistent approach to how we do it. Our work will therefore be underpinned by a set of ten guiding principles that define how we go about our business.

SCVO will:

- 1 be **transparent** and easy to understand in everything we do
- 2 base our offer on the **needs and ambitions** of the sector
- 3 have a **clear rationale** for how our activities deliver our mission and strategic objectives
- 4 demonstrate that we **listen to the sector** and show the actions we take as a result
- 5 be clear about **when and why** we choose to work independently, collectively or in partnership
- 6 be clear about **what** we are trying to achieve and **for whom**
- 7 demonstrate the **impact** of our work
- 8 be **clear about our role** and how it interacts with other organisations in the sector
- 9 **challenge on behalf of the sector** when we can demonstrate a good reason for doing so
- 10 **model the behaviour** internally that we promote to the sector; we will be respected for how we do things, as well as what we do.

live our values

Our values are the foundations of how we act individually and collectively as SCVO staff members.



value and grow our membership

SCVO is a membership organisation. Members should join us first and foremost because they believe in our purpose and want to work with us to achieve their own ambitions as well as those of the wider sector.

People have also told us that there is a need for a strong, authentic, national voice for the voluntary sector and that we are best placed to deliver that.

We therefore cannot solely exist to serve our members. Membership must instead be a key tool to demonstrate a collective commitment and belief in the power of the voluntary sector to change lives and communities.

Of course, we must also offer unique value to members. This value must be beyond financial and transactional benefits that traditional membership organisations provide. Engagement and influence is at the heart of this.

We are therefore committed to growing our membership and to reviewing the value membership offers. This will recognise the diversity of the sector, not only in terms of size, remit and location, but also in terms of priorities and beliefs.



Throughout the life of this strategy, SCVO will be forward-thinking and ambitious for the voluntary sector and what it can achieve.

We will be accountable to, and directed by, our members and the wider sector.

We will be a positive organisation, working constructively with as broad as possible a range of people and organisations interested in demonstrating the sector's value and impact.

We will be clear about what we want to achieve and demonstrate the difference we are making.

And we will be proactive, listening, engaging and improving.

conclusion

**find out
more
& get
involved**

We want to make it as easy as possible for people to engage with us, support our work and offer constructive challenge. You can do this in a number of ways:

On social media

 facebook.com/scvo1939

 twitter.com/scvotweet

 linkedin.com/company/scvo

 youtube.com/user/scvotv

and on the SCVO website – scvo.org.uk

appendix 1

SCVO's governance

Our board of trustees comprises six people elected from our membership and five people co-opted for particular expertise.

We are a SCIO, registered with OSCR (SC003558). Our charitable objects are:

- To promote the voluntary sector, and the effectiveness and efficiency of charities
- To advance education, and particularly in relation to (a) matters connected with the establishment, operation and governance of voluntary organisations, (b) the impact of voluntary sector organisations in promoting economic and social wellbeing and (c) issues which are of particular concern to voluntary organisations in each case, with a particular focus on voluntary organisations operating in Scotland.

Our charitable purposes are:

- The advancement of education
- The advancement of citizenship or community development.

Our board of trustees can be found here

www.scvo.org.uk/board-of-trustees

Our staff team can be found here

www.scvo.org.uk/staff-team

appendix 2

Diversity and Inclusion

SCVO is committed to embedding and promoting diversity and inclusion in the organisation and in the sector. We want an open culture that promotes equality of opportunity and respects difference. We want all staff to feel valued and to be treated fairly, and our work will support our members to do the same.

We will measure our success through:

- Board diversity
- Staff diversity
- Diversity of engagement across our functions, eg membership of networks and working groups, participants in training and events
- Diversity and inclusion visible in our publications

Sustainability

Financial sustainability is reflected elsewhere in the plan. This section focuses on environmental and social sustainability.

The environment

We are committed to minimising any adverse impact on the environment, and maximising our contribution to fighting climate change. Therefore we will:

- Offer recycling facilities in all our buildings
- Seek to use green energy and find energy-efficient solutions wherever we can
- Always use public transport unless there is no other option
- Minimise use of air travel
- Raise awareness amongst staff and tenants of environmental sustainability.

Social sustainability

We are committed to maximising our contribution to the local economy at all our locations. Therefore, we will:

- Look to support local voluntary, community or social enterprise organisations wherever possible
- Ensure our supply chains are ethical
- Promote volunteering by our staff
- Look to recruit and develop young people from socially disadvantaged groups through apprenticeships and other options such as CJS
- When awarding contracts, ensure third parties comply with the Fair Work Principles and have ethical supply chains.