

DCMS Know Your Neighbourhood Fund

19
projects funded

£136k
awarded in the
first year

300+

Volunteers
engaged in local
projects

The Know Your Neighbourhood Fund is a national project which is funded by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS).

Working in partnership with UK Community Foundations (UKCF), Norfolk Community Foundation have secured £1.3M of grant funding to fund Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) organisations in the Borough of Great Yarmouth to deliver projects which focus on developing local volunteering roles and tackling loneliness in the community.

During the first year of the Know Your Neighbourhood fund the programme funded projects that either piloted a practical volunteering project, or undertook research into volunteering in the Great Yarmouth Borough.

Fund Aims

- To increase the number of people who experience loneliness/ isolation into volunteering roles, to reduce chronic loneliness in the community.
- To increase volunteering opportunities and reduce barriers to those accessing these activities.



Funded Projects in Year 1 (January to March 2023)

Organisation	Project Summary
East Norfolk District Scout Council	To enhance a planned volunteer training session by providing additional resources.
Get Me Out The Four Walls	To provide four social meets for families in Great Yarmouth during February and March 2023.
Shrublands Youth and Adult Centre Charitable Trust	To hire a Volunteer Coordinator to support both existing and new volunteers.
Edfords Care Farm Community Interest Company	To provide set up costs for a volunteering programme and provide volunteering opportunities for eight weeks to the end of March 2023.
The Bread Kitchen CIC	To develop a wellbeing garden at the James Paget University Hospital, and to develop research and outreach methods to engage more volunteers.
Feathers Futures CIO	To work on volunteer recruitment and development within the organisation.
St Elizabeth Hospice	To develop and deliver the Compassionate Conversations volunteer project.
MensCraft	To develop and implement a qualitative research project, which seeks to explore local men's attitude and knowledge of volunteering, voluntary organisations, and participation / engagement into this kind of activity.
Carers Voice Norfolk and Waveney	Engagement and research to uncover ways in which the talents and assets of local communities can be better harnessed through volunteering and social action.
DIAL Great Yarmouth	To develop a new training programme aimed at increasing access to volunteering for people who are lonely and isolated.
The Shoebox Enterprises CIC	To complete a feasibility study in how the organisation may introduce elements of its successful Shoebox Community Hub model into communities in Great Yarmouth.
GYROS	To build a significant volunteering scheme mainly but not exclusively for people who have English as a second or other language.
Voluntary Norfolk	To undertake research, evaluation and strategic planning to strengthen and join up the Voluntary Norfolk's work in Great Yarmouth.
St George's Theatre	To fund the Great Yarmouth Volunteer Café offering a 'menu' of volunteer opportunities.
Gorleston Clifftop Festival	To hold a series of pop-up events that will aim to identify barriers to volunteering in Gorleston.
Wastesmiths CIC	To carry out a series of activities to enable further and longer engagement of volunteers.
Back to Basics Bushcrafters CIC	To recruit and train additional volunteers to help deliver sessions.
Mancroft Advice Project (MAP)	To undertake a small research project into young people's attitudes and experiences towards volunteering in Great Yarmouth.
Age Connected Great Yarmouth	To support a range of volunteering activities and training at their hub in Great Yarmouth.

Here are some highlights of funded projects from Know Your Neighbourhood Year 1.

Volunteer Menu

St George's Theatre

St George's Theatre is home to a variety of productions and provides a range of volunteering and work-place opportunities where residents can meet new people, build confidence, and learn key transferable skills. The theatre's community cafe and outdoor area provide a flexible community space where residents and social-support groups can meet.



St George's Theatre used their funding to establish a 'volunteer menu' at their café, working with other organisations to advertise local volunteer opportunities. Building on the success of their warm hub (funded by NCF), the theatre wanted to use this opportunity to engage local residents in a range of different volunteering opportunities.

The 'volunteer menu' has proved to be an engaging and different way to advertise local volunteering opportunities, engaging 20 volunteers. The project also gave the theatre the opportunity to develop 10 local partnerships to assist in delivery, including Rerezent Project, DIAL and East Coast College to help develop the volunteer menu and branding. The collaborative project at St Georges Theatre shows the power of bringing together community groups to engage local communities in volunteering opportunities.

DIAL

Volunteer training and research

DIAL is a free to access, independent local charity offering free, confidential information and advice to disabled and vulnerable people across the borough of Great Yarmouth. The organisation applied to the fund to support their research and training programme, which aims to help increase volunteering opportunities and support for those who experience loneliness. The discovery phase of KYN allowed the organisation to:

- Explore and test out new ideas.
- Facilitate sessions with their volunteers to better understand their volunteering experiences.
- Work in partnership with St George's Theatre.
- Facilitate team training and development sessions.
- Develop a new logo (working with Rerezent Project) to encourage people to volunteer with DIAL, a scheme they have named 'Friends of DIAL'.



New training for staff and volunteers combined with the creation of the Friends of Dial scheme, will see the development of a more flexible volunteering role with the possibility of progressing into to more formal volunteering roles in the future.

The funding from the Know Your Neighbourhood Fund has allowed DIAL to gain a greater understanding of what the barriers to volunteering are in Great Yarmouth, to develop a new volunteering scheme, and offer more training / support to staff and existing volunteers. Volunteers represent almost 50% of the DIAL team so it is fantastic to see the success and progress that the organisation have been able to make with their Know your Neighbourhood funding, which has created a strong foundation for their volunteering projects moving forward.

The Bread Kitchen CIC

Wellbeing Garden

The Bread Kitchen is a Community Interest Company whose main social purpose is to engage, support, and progress participants into volunteering, employment and independent living. By participating in gardening based activities, learners use the skills and experience acquired to achieve their full potential.

The Bread Kitchen applied to the Know Your Neighbourhood Fund to support the development of their wellbeing garden project (Good to Grow) at the James Paget University Hospital. The creation of this space at the hospital aims to give hospital staff and patients a place to relax and engage with the outdoors. The project worked with local volunteers, including those from Shrublands Youth and Adult Centre.

This project successfully engaged 20 volunteers to work on the wellbeing garden project and also gave the Bread Kitchen the opportunity to develop relationships with key stakeholders involved in the project. This information can then be shared with other VCSE organisations seeking to undertake similar projects with statutory bodies like the NHS.



Key Learnings

A key aim of the Know Your Neighbourhood Fund is to develop an understanding of attitudes/ barriers to volunteering and loneliness within in the Borough of Great Yarmouth. To help inform future projects applying to the fund in year 2 and/or 3, the key learnings from the first phase of the fund are shown below.

Flexible volunteering opportunities

Organisations found that people were more likely to engage in volunteering activities if the opportunities were flexible and that there was little / no time that the participant had to commit when expressing an interest. This is particularly important when working with people who have multiple commitments, such as child care, work or education.

Challenging misconceptions about volunteering

Some of the research conducted by organisations in the first phase of the fund discovered that using the term 'volunteering' came with negative connotations, especially amongst younger people who felt that engaging in volunteering would not be viewed well by their peers. Misconceptions around rigid time commitments to volunteering opportunities were also raised, linking closely to the point above.

Power of partnerships

As seen in the case studies above, working in partnership to deliver programmes which tackle loneliness and increase volunteering in the borough have been very successful. The ability to share resources and expertise has led to some really exciting projects with excellent outcomes. Partnership working will not be appropriate for all organisations, but should be considered for those seeking larger grants

Sharing of research amongst VCSE Organisations

Feedback from organisations taking part in the first phase of the Know Your Neighbourhood was the request for other local organisations to share learnings and findings from their research and projects. Making this information available to other local VCSE's builds local relationships and prevents using more resources when there is existing research and information available.

Training for volunteers and staff/ Time and resources

Offering tailored and supported training for both staff and volunteers is important in developing an effective and meaningful project. Ensuring that time is given to staff to complete the necessary training to confidently deliver the project is something that can sometimes be missed in the planning stages. Building in increasing capacity for the organisations to deliver the project, to realistic timescales, was another important point raised in feedback from the groups. This could mean that the organisation needs to budget for additional staff time or resources, this should be considered and included within the project budget if needed.

Know Your Neighbourhood Fund

Years 2 & 3

The Know Your Neighbourhood Fund (Years 2 & 3) is now open for applications. The fund will run across two years to March 2025. The four key objectives of the fund are

- To build the evidence to identify scalable and sustainable place-based interventions that work in increasing regular volunteering and reducing chronic loneliness.
- To increase the proportion of people in the Borough of Great Yarmouth who volunteer at least once a month.
- To reduce the proportion of chronically lonely people in the Borough of Great Yarmouth who lack the desired level of social connections.
- To enable the local voluntary and community sector in the Borough of Great Yarmouth, to implement sustainable systems and processes that encourage volunteering and tackling loneliness.

[Apply Now](#)

[NCF Eligibility
Criteria](#)



Find out more or get in touch

- 🌐 www.norfolkfoundation.com
- ☎ 01603 623958
- ✉ Shinebrighter@norfolkfoundation.com
- 📍 5th Floor St James Mill, Whitefriars, Norwich, NR3 1TN



Together, Norfolk shines brighter