

LEEDS THIRD SECTOR STRATEGY

2023 - 2028

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FOREWORD

For many years, the third sector in Leeds has been recognised as diverse, strong and mature in its approach – which is a testament to the 6,500 individuals employed within the sector, and the 40,000 who volunteer and work with communities across the city.



In my first six months as Chair of Third Sector Leeds, what really strikes me is the collective experience, wisdom and power in those voices. Hundreds of individuals working and volunteering in the third sector also give their time to represent the sector and the communities they work with across a wide range of strategic boards, meetings and forums – all on top of their day-to-day work with people and communities. I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the significant contribution this sector makes to the city, and the enormous value this holds.

This strategy came out of discussions around the sustainability of the sector in increasingly challenging times, and the need for a clear direction that all partners in Leeds can understand, and play their part to move forward. For many third sector organisations that have supported communities in Leeds for many years, the future looks uncertain, and the latest [State of the Sector report](#) reflects this. We must learn from our response to the COVID-19 pandemic and our collective responsibilities to communities in Leeds, and double-down on efforts to work in partnership – even when this isn't easy.

This strategy sets out a citywide vision that is ambitious but critical if the third sector is able to continue to play its crucial role not only at the heart of communities, but in our mission to tackle poverty and inequality and improve quality of life for everyone who calls Leeds home.

Kim Groves, Chair of Third Sector Leeds

FOREWORD

I am very pleased, as the Chair of Leeds Third Sector Partnership, to present the Leeds Third Sector Strategy. This strategy represents a pivotal milestone in our collective journey to strengthen and enrich the vibrant tapestry of Leeds' third sector, and in achieving our ambition of securing a thriving third sector.



For many years, our city's third sector has thrived as a dynamic force, characterised by its diversity, resilience, and unwavering commitment to our communities – however, we know that challenges and uncertainty lay ahead. It is precisely during such times that our shared purpose becomes even more critical.

This strategy is a testament to our unwavering commitment to creating a fairer, more inclusive, and compassionate Leeds. It builds upon our successes, learning from our challenges, and sets a bold course for the future. In these times of unprecedented change and uncertainty, our role as advocates for positive change is more crucial than ever before.

Councillor Mary Harland, Chair of Third Sector Partnership
Elected Member for Communities, Leeds City Council

PURPOSE

This strategy sets out a shared vision for how the third sector in Leeds should work, and what we need to do to get there. In developing this strategy we are not starting with a blank page, and we recognise the previous decade has involved growing trust and understanding between the third sector and public sector partners, businesses, schools and universities.

This is not a strategy **for** the third sector – it's a strategy for the whole city to better understand, support and work in partnership with the sector to continue playing a vital role in supporting communities in Leeds to thrive. We call on all partners to work with us to deliver this.

What is the third sector?

It's important to recognise the term 'third sector' describes a diverse range of not-for-profit organisations, including charities, voluntary and community groups, faith-based organisations, social enterprises, cooperatives and housing associations.

Other interchangeable terms for the sector include VCSE (voluntary, community and social enterprise sector), the 'voluntary sector' and 'not for profit sector.'

Third sector organisations have a set of distinctive characteristics, which include:

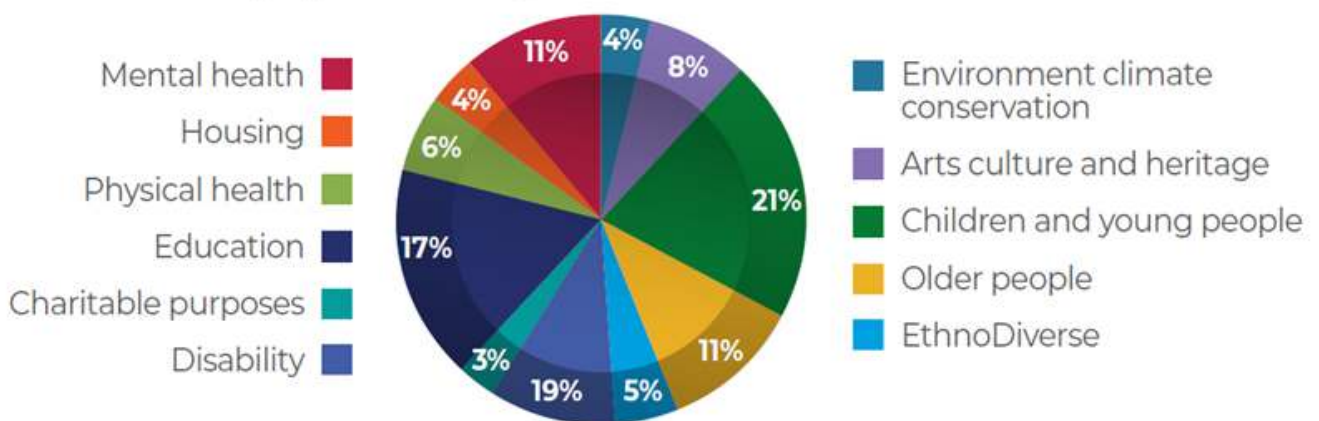
- Being self-governing, established voluntarily by people who choose to organise themselves
- Independence of both formal structures of government and the for-profit sector
- Commitment to reinvesting the money or products they make to further their social aims and for the benefit of people and communities in Leeds

In Leeds, there are over 3,200 third sector organisations that work across a wide range of areas:

How many Third Sector organisations are there?



Estimated proportion of organisations in different areas of work



Infographics taken from Leeds State of the Sector report (2022).

Why do we need a strategy?

Our communities are key to what makes Leeds a great place to live, and a strong third sector is part of this, specifically through the sector's work to:

- Tackle the impacts of poverty and inequality
- Prevent people from becoming unwell
- Empower communities by amplifying their voices
- Enable communities in delivering social change
- Generate value – a recent report [1] estimated that the third sector in West Yorkshire generated £5.4 billion per year in social benefit
- Build community wealth (our collective assets that we use to care for each other, for example housing associations and worker-owned businesses)

In the last five years, there have been a number of significant shifts and developments (in Leeds and beyond) that have changed the way that the third sector operates, both in itself and within the wider system in the city. Public sector partners face an increasingly challenging financial environment, and this impacts significantly on both the third sector, and on communities in Leeds. The need for a strong third sector is greater now than ever:

- The third sector showed itself to be flexible, tenacious and innovative during the COVID-19 pandemic, mobilizing to work in new ways as a key and critical partner as part of Leeds' response
- Health services are going through a major change programme, moving from localised Clinical Commissioning Groups to regional Integrated Care Systems. It is recognised that the third sector must be an equal partner in these systems, as the sector is central to prevention and to community based delivery.
- The cost of living crisis has impacted both on the resilience of communities, and on third sector organisations themselves. The State of the Sector report (2022 data) findings show that the third sector is under significant stress, and in the last couple of years there has been a large drop in the number of employees, volunteers and trustees in the Leeds third sector.

[1] [Local health and social wellbeing: the value of the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector in Yorkshire and Humber \(June 2023\).](#)

This is a strategy for the whole of the diverse third sector, but achieving this will particularly benefit small organisations, and those that support minoritised communities. For example, getting our collective approach to social value right will result in more funding for smaller local groups, more volunteers and more access to specialist advice and professional skills.

Developing our shared approach to commissioning groups of third sector organisations (or 'consortia') will allow more small organisations, with the trust and in-depth experience of minoritised communities, to access funding through commissioned routes and deliver specialist services.

This strategy sets out a vision that is ambitious but critical if we want the third sector to be able to continue to play its crucial role not only in supporting communities, but in shaping our society and economy going forward.

Leeds Third Sector Strategy in context – why it matters

Leeds ‘Best City Ambition’

In Leeds, there is one overarching city strategy that connects a wide range of partners’ collective ambitions under one overall ambition: for Leeds to be the Best City in the UK.

Leeds will achieve this mission by focusing on improving outcomes across three main pillars:



Health and wellbeing - In 2030 Leeds will be a healthy and caring city for everyone: where those who are most likely to experience poverty improve their mental and physical health the fastest, people are living healthy lives for longer, and are supported to thrive from early years to later life.



Inclusive growth - In 2030 Leeds will have an economy that works for everyone, where we work to tackle poverty and ensure that the benefits of economic growth are distributed fairly across the city, creating opportunities for all.



Zero carbon - In 2030 Leeds will have made rapid progress towards carbon neutrality, reducing our impact on the planet and doing so in a fair way which improves standards of living in all the city’s communities.

We believe that the third sector ambitions in this strategy are crucial to achieving the Best City Ambition; Leeds needs a diverse and resilient third sector in order to be the Best City.

Diagram 1 shows the relationship between the Third Sector strategy ambitions, and the Best City Ambition under the three pillars.

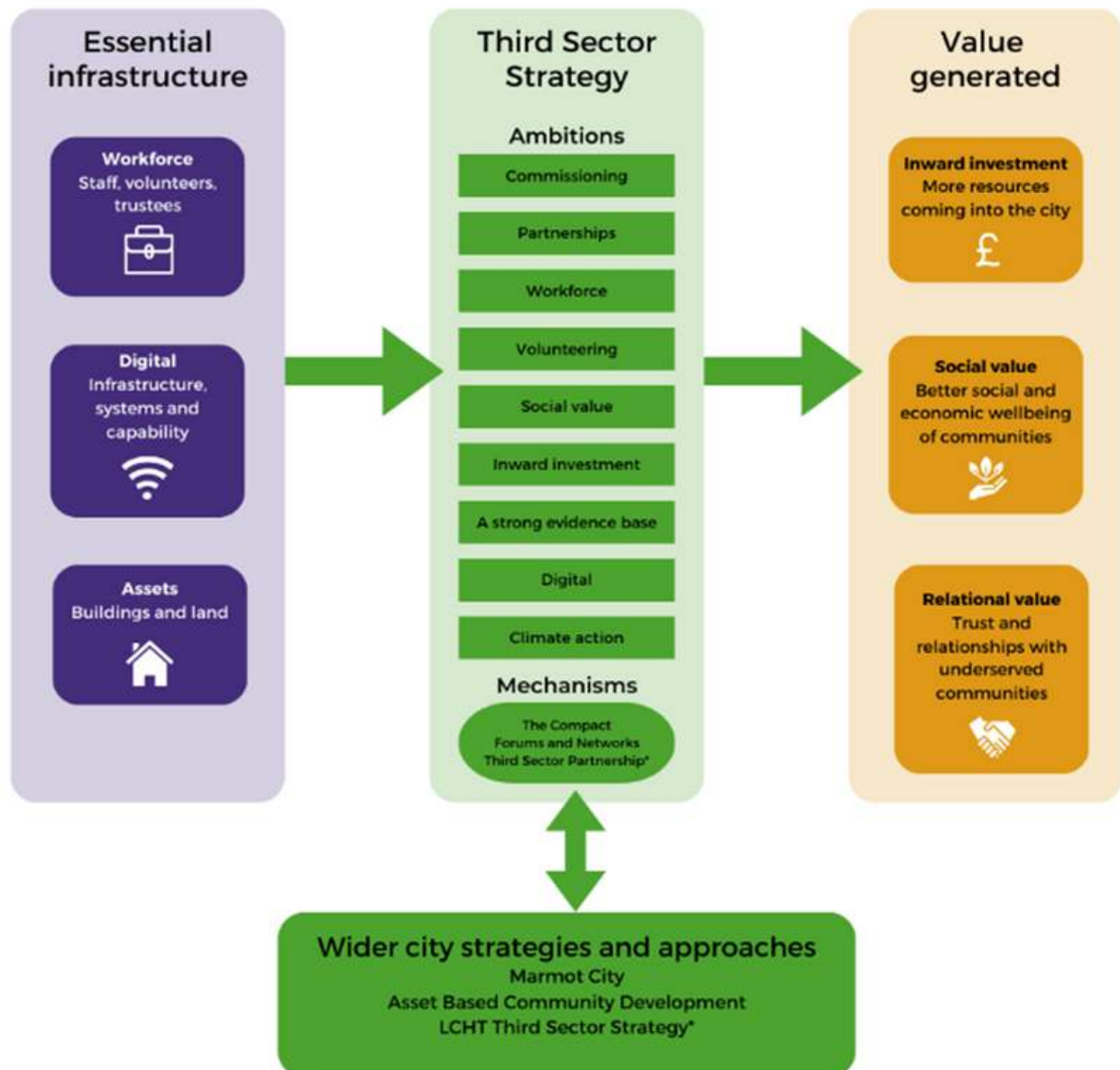
The factors listed within the three circles draw out some of the areas where the third sector has a crucial role in supporting the city's achievement of the three pillars.

The green box includes examples of third sector strategy ambitions that will have a substantial impact on progress against the three pillars. For example, making volunteering more accessible, inclusive and valued will support work to ensure climate action is community-led. Furthermore, a diverse and resilient third sector is critical to ensuring that community voice is at the heart of decision-making across the city.



Diagram 1

What are the outcomes of the strategy?



*The examples listed are indicative rather than an exhaustive list

Diagram 2

Diagram 2 describes the infrastructure needed to achieve the third sector strategy ambitions, and some of the added value achieving these ambitions will bring to the city.

Essential infrastructure – these are things that we need to invest in getting right. A strong workforce, digital infrastructure and physical assets such as buildings will provide the conditions needed to achieve the strategy ambitions.

Third sector strategy – these ambitions outline our vision, and the changes we need to make in order to achieve this. The ambitions support - and are supported by - wider city strategies. For example, strong partnerships with the third sector are a vital part of Leeds achieving its ambitions towards a more inclusive economy.

Value generated – these are some of the ways that Leeds as a city will benefit from achieving our Third Sector Strategy ambitions. A strong third sector attracts more inward investment into the city, and a shared vision will allow us to direct efforts towards opportunities that align with Leeds' priorities, at a time when the system is under pressure from financial cuts at a national level. The energy generated by a diverse and resilient third sector is accumulative, and impacts include public sector savings, stronger communities, and latent capacity (e.g. the sector's response to COVID-19).

The importance of the sector isn't just about additionality. Third sector organisations provide essential capacity and capability to reach and connect with the most at-risk and minoritised communities. Reduced capacity and funding in Leeds' third sector will therefore have the biggest impact on communities experiencing the most significant inequalities, both directly through reduced support and advice, and indirectly by lack of link workers / staff / volunteers who can connect people to statutory services [2].

[2] The impact of community anchor organisations on the wider determinants of health (Locality, 2022).

Shared principles

These principles were developed with public sector partners, as part of the sector's work [3] to address the cost of living crisis and its impacts:

- Working in a way that ultimately benefits people and communities living in Leeds
- The importance of delivering preventative measures where possible
- Investment in resilience
- The importance of working together in partnership
- A commitment to 'one workforce'
- The third sector being an equal partner as part of both the West Yorkshire Health and Care Partnership, 'Team Leeds' approach and West Yorkshire Combined Authority.

What is 'Team Leeds'?

Everyone in Leeds coming together to play their part is how we will achieve our ambitions

'Team Leeds is about supporting one another to make Leeds the best it can be. It is about sharing ideas and learning and working in genuine partnership, being ambitious about our collective social and environmental impact, and organisations sharing their resources and assets as we work towards common goals.

You can find out more about what the Team Leeds approach involves in the [Leeds Best City Ambition](#).

[3] [Third Sector Leeds cost of living position statement \(TSL, 2022\)](#).

LEEDS THIRD SECTOR STRATEGY AMBITIONS

This section sets out one overarching ambition for the third sector in Leeds. In order to achieve this, there are nine ambitions that set out a path for ensuring Leeds has a more diverse and resilient third sector.

Under each ambition, there are a number of steps towards achieving these in the next five years. There is also a key forum for this work, and existing mechanisms to ensure we make the most of our assets in the city, and build on work that has already been done in these areas.

Overall ambition of the strategy: Leeds is a city where all partners work together to ensure that the third sector is more diverse and resilient, and therefore better able to continue supporting our communities.

Partnerships

Our ambition: City anchors [4], businesses and the third sector work together in a fair and equitable partnership as a whole system to make Leeds the best city to live in. Partners are open and transparent, and leaders actively share their decision-making power.

[4] City anchors are a group made up of the city's largest (mainly) public sector employers. They come together and focus on areas where they can make a difference for people as an employer, through procurement, through service delivery or as a civic partner. Anchors are locally-rooted, have high spend, provide vital services and are influencers, enablers and champions within the city.

How could this be achieved?

- Commit to engaging with the third sector (ideally through infrastructure [5]) at the earliest opportunity when developing investment policy with a view to co-designing interventions and appropriate investment / funding mechanisms
- Ensuring equitable representation and voice on strategic boards within the city and the region
- Develop streamlined ways for the third sector to work in partnership on different levels; neighbourhood, place and regional, and enable involvement of relevant communities with least-heard voices through associated networks, e.g. Communities of Interest Network
- Develop Third Sector infrastructure led by culturally diverse communities.

Key Leeds forum:

Third Sector Partnership
Group

Mechanisms

- Power of Communities (PoC) structure
- Leeds Community Anchor Network, Local Care Partnerships and Neighbourhood Networks

[5] By 'infrastructure,' we mean the organisations that exist to ensure that local third sector organisations get the advice, support and representation they need to improve the circumstances of the people and communities they work with. In Leeds, these organisations include Voluntary Action Leeds and Forum Central.

Good examples

Household Support Fund and Leeds Community Anchor Network

The Government provided the Household Support Fund for 2022-2024, through the Local Authority. In Leeds, a significant portion of this funding was allocated to the third sector to support households on low incomes or those struggling with the cost of living.

Leeds Community Anchor Network (LCAN) worked in partnership with the Council to deliver this funding using a hyper local approach. LCAN members are rooted in local communities and work closely with other third sector organisations in their area to ensure that the funding reaches those who most need it.

For example, in an area of Leeds where houses were older and less energy efficient, the fund was made available as fuel vouchers. In other areas communities were supported to access food, via supermarket vouchers or through a food pantry. The network agreed to redistribute funding between organisations according to demand, and work closely with organisations in the same area to ensure there was good coverage of support for communities.

This fund was also an example of trust-based funding, as there were minimal reporting requirements. LCAN co-designed a monitoring form that worked for each organisation despite the funding being used differently, and Voluntary Action Leeds collated the reporting, which went back to Leeds City Council.

Commissioning and funding

Our ambition: All partners invest in who is best placed to co-produce and provide the service or support needed in the city. Commissioning relationships are centred around trust, values, flexibility and outcomes and are a partnership of equals.

How could this be achieved?

- Embedding a shared understanding of good practice around commissioning consortia, including engaging through a neutral trusted party (such as infrastructure), investing time in building partnerships, and considering additional costs
- Improving the collective understanding of need through intelligence and insight that is informed by the third sector, and widening access to this information
- Improving partnerships, including sharing systems and data between commissioners and third sector organisations to enable more collaborative working
- Continuing to promote opportunities for trust-based funding, taking the learning from the pandemic and Cost of Living crises
- Investing in networks that support more constructive commissioning environments, with good practice examples including Leeds Community Anchor Network and the Neighbourhood Networks.
- Partners to support the resilience of the sector by committing to ensuring that funding for ongoing work (i.e. not pilot or test and learn projects) is wherever possible planned from the outset as multi-year and recurrent, and that statutory grant / contract payments are upfront to support cash flow.

Key Leeds forum:

Third Sector
Commissioning,
Collaboration and
Partnership Group

Mechanisms

- Commissioning code of practice
- Compact
- Consortium working research and toolkit

Good examples

Housing Support

During the COVID-19 pandemic, organisations providing housing support had to work in new and different ways. As face-to-face contact was limited, Leeds City Council and third sector organisations had to make the most of opportunities to speak with people looking for housing support, and share this information between organisations to ensure safe accommodation could be accessed as quickly as possible.

Leeds City Council's Gateway platform holds a wide range of information around housing, including case management, assessments, details of referrals / placements, and individual support plans. During the pandemic, information sharing agreements were made and access to this platform was opened to third sector organisations to view and use, allowing people's information to be used more effectively and reducing duplication. This was an example of commissioners and providers working together to meet communities' evolving needs.

Workforce

Our ambition: Leeds has a thriving, local and diverse third sector workforce that is valued and remunerated for their work. Careers in the third sector in Leeds are attractive, sustainable and values-driven.

How could this be achieved?

- Committing to funding contracts and grants with the third sector that:
 - Sustains the Real Living Wage for all staff
 - Enables recruitment and retention of staff at all stages of their career / levels of responsibility
 - Minimises the need for insecure contracts of employment such as short term / zero hours contracts aligning with the West Yorkshire Mayor's Fair Work Charter
 - Supports organisations with the capacity to develop their systems and culture, for example digital expertise and inclusive recruitment
- Investing in promotion of third sector career choices, for instance:
 - Exploring recruitment initiatives such as third sector job fairs
 - Supporting and communicating a wide breadth of / mechanisms for accessing increased levels of learning and development
 - Developing opportunities to support secondments across the third sector, including through mechanisms such as the Leeds Portability Framework (see below)
- Monitoring key third sector workforce characteristics and taking action on findings such as:
 - Increasing the diversity of the third sector workforce
 - Reducing underemployment, insecure employment and levels of low pay
 - Other key elements of Fair Work Charter.

Key Leeds forum:
Leeds One Workforce

Mechanisms

- Leeds H&SC Innovation Hub
- Forum Central Third Sector HR Network
- Health and Care Third Sector Careers Padlet

Good examples

Staff Portability Framework

Through Leeds One Workforce, a voluntary Staff Portability Framework has been produced. This allows for short-term sharing of staff across health and social care organisations in Leeds, enabling the health and care sector to take a collective view of resourcing, and work together as a citywide group to respond to changing demand.

By signing up to the framework, member organisations can work with diverse partners to enable skilled and experienced staff to work in different settings for a short period of time, when there is critical service need, whilst retaining a permanent and stable position. So far, 30 partners have signed up, including all three Leeds NHS Trusts, Leeds City Council, the GP Confederation, as well as some GP Practices and third sector organisations.

There is potential to make better use of this framework to support job placements across the third sector, responding to demand whilst providing an opportunity for individuals and organisations to learn from each other and develop a wider skillset.

Volunteering

Our ambition: Leeds is a city that celebrates volunteering in all its forms, and the benefits it brings to communities, organisations and individuals. It's easy for people in Leeds to find ways to make a difference and get involved in the city. All partners work together to support an innovative and diverse volunteering environment.

How could this be achieved?

- Volunteer contributions are formally recognised at a city level and there is a demonstration that they are valued
- There is long-term resourcing to support the management and support of volunteers, including [Leeds' online volunteering platform, BeCollective](#)
- City Anchors commit to actively encouraging staff to become trustees of third sector organisations, volunteer or share professional skills and expertise.

Key Leeds forum:
[Volunteer Managers
Network](#)

Mechanisms

- Leeds Volunteering Strategy
- BeCollective
- Corporate Social Responsibility and employee development programmes

Good examples

Community Champions

Forum Central, Voluntary Action Leeds and Leeds City Council developed the Community Champions project to support the city's response to COVID-19 messaging and activities in Leeds in 2021.

The project has evolved to support partners and communities with current health trends and priorities in the city as well as wider health and wellbeing messaging such as Cost of Living, physical and mental health and debt. The aim of the project is to reach people within communities who experience worse health outcomes in order to help to reduce health inequalities.

Our project actively recruits a diverse range of volunteers. Champions are able to act from a position of cultural awareness, knowledge, experience and using their language skills to enable improved community engagement and social action. Some champions attend community events or do 'street based' work, whilst others share messages through their online and in person social networks. Champions feedback their experiences and the conversations they have to help shape the messaging to their communities, focusing on what's important to particular communities and responding to those needs. In turn, Champions drive the project forward and lead on activities.



Social value

“Social value” refers to the activities carried out by a business or organisation receiving public money that supports the long-term wellbeing of the communities they are working in and with. This could be through:



Directly giving money
to third sector
organisations



Sharing time, skills and
resources with the
third sector



Sourcing staff or
goods through the
third sector

Our ambition: In Leeds, partners agree that social value activities should be delivered with and through the third sector. Leeds has a clear set of co-designed priorities for where social value activity will have most impact. There are clear routes for larger organisations to be matched with opportunities that create social value, and to see the impact this has.

How could this be achieved?

- Using our evidence base, including insight from third sector forums, to establish a set of priorities for social value activities where they will have the most impact
- Resourcing the brokerage of social value opportunities, including:
 - Understanding contractors values and aligning with Leeds social value priorities
 - Connecting contractors to opportunities with community organisations
 - Communicating the impact of social value activity with the funding organisation.

Good examples

KPMG and GIPSIL

KPMG offered their mentorship or business support to third sector organisations in Leeds. GIPSIL was introduced to them through The Old Fire Station Tenants partnership. GIPSIL accepted their offer, initially to look at reviewing their internal communications system. The management team at GIPSIL were interested in developing an Intranet, and were looking for advice on the best way to approach this and potential providers.

Mechanisms

- Leeds Social Progress Index
- Leeds Social Value Charter
- Partner procurement frameworks

KPMG worked with GIPSIL to understand how their organisation worked across different sites and projects, and how staff worked in different locations, including from home. GIPSIL already had access to Microsoft 365, and was using some of the programmes within this such as Microsoft Word and Excel. KPMG worked with different teams within GIPSIL to support them to make greater use of Microsoft 365, including Microsoft Teams. GIPSIL found that using Teams more effectively improved internal communication, collaboration and information sharing to a degree that eliminated the need for an Intranet.

Leeds Digital Ball

For several years, Leeds Digital Ball has provided a platform for the tech sector in Leeds to raise funds for third sector work around digital inclusion. Conversations at the Digital Ball showed that often people in tech organisations want to give time as well as money; they want to share their skills and knowledge and volunteering enables people to get new perspectives on their day job.

100% Digital Leeds, Leeds Community Foundation and Voluntary Action Leeds have been working together with tech colleagues to address barriers to digital specialists volunteering their skills to third sector organisations.

Inward investment

Our ambition: Partners have a shared understanding of the city's priorities for investment. All partners in Leeds support the third sector to attract more external funding to the city, and have a consistent approach to matching / utilising investment from different sources.

How could this be achieved?

- Identify priority areas for investment in the city by using our evidence base (e.g. State of the Sector report, Joint Strategic Assessment) and engagement through forums to identify community ambitions
- Investing more in independent, dedicated resources for identifying new and emerging opportunities for the third sector; facilitating the right people coming together to deliver the right services, and supporting the bid writing process
- Recognising the value of and creating the conditions for more Leeds based community business (social enterprises, enterprise activity and cooperatives)
- Investing in supporting forums for informal networks to develop, as these build the trust needed for more formal delivery partnerships to thrive.

Good examples

Climate Action Leeds

The Leeds Climate Change Citizens' Jury was convened by Leeds Climate Commission working with Shared Future CIC. It was tasked with examining the Leeds' response to the climate emergency and with producing recommendations that would be used to guide the future work of the Commission and a range of organisations across the city.

Recommendations made by the Citizens Jury directly informed a bid for National Lottery Climate Action Funding.

In 2020, over 40 Leeds groups come together from all across Leeds to develop the bid for the funding and to plan a city-wide programme of activity to create lasting change. Partners included third sector organisations, academics from universities and interested individuals. The bid was successful, resulting in £2.5m for Leeds and a five-year workplan involving six delivery partners and seven transition partners, who work across each of the priorities identified through the recommendations made by the Leeds Climate Change Citizens' Jury.

Mechanisms

- Existing forums and networks
- Consortium working research and toolkit

A strong evidence base

Our ambition: All partners commit to gathering, analysing and making data accessible about how the third sector in Leeds looks, how it is funded, what is working and what is not, on a regular basis. Both quantitative ‘hard’ data and qualitative insight from communities is valued and used to inform decision making. The third sector and, crucially, communities themselves have the ability to identify gaps in knowledge, influence agendas and lead research in the city.

How could this be achieved?

- Partners committing to investing in the core evidence base (State of the Sector report [6] and Investment Analysis [7]) to inform understanding about the sector, its diversity and resilience
- Partners working together to identify a pipeline of key research and to scope community led research that supports the wider aims of the strategy
- Partners agreeing a set of principles for community-led research, and explore new ways to introduce and strengthen community-led research in their work
- Investing in the third sector’s capacity to carry out research and evaluation, and in routes for this research to have impact on strategic decision making in the city.

[6] The State of the Sector is a report which gives an insight into the reach, scale and diversity of the third sector of Leeds. It also highlights the sector’s strengths and some of the current challenges it faces. It demonstrates that in its diversity and range of services, the third sector continues to play a vital role in our city’s communities and ecosystem. The report has been completed using both 2020 data, and 2022 data.

[7] Investment Analysis here refers to the breakdown of spend by the local authority and the NHS on the third sector in Leeds. This data is made available annually to Third Sector Partnership Group.

Good examples

State of the Sector report

The previous and current State of the Sector reports provide a critical insight into the health and function of the third sector. Direct uses and impacts of the research include:

- Supporting third sector organisations with strategic planning and funding bids
- Supporting colleagues across all sectors in Leeds to better understand the third sector landscape, including strengths and challenges
- Supporting the development and an ongoing measure for Leeds' Third Sector Strategy
- Contributing to wider discussions on the state of the sector nationally, and enabling us to benchmark Leeds against other areas.

Mechanisms

- LeedsACTS
- Leeds Academic Health Partnership
- Peoples Voices Partnership
- Data Mill North



Volunteers at the Big Leeds Chat



St George's Crypt occupational health

St George's Crypt collaborated on a research project with Leeds Beckett University to explore the occupational health needs of people with a history of homelessness and alcoholism in a 'wet hostel' setting. This research identified a significant need for occupational health support amongst these groups.

St George's Crypt worked with Leeds Beckett to develop a bid for Third Sector Health Grants (funded at the time by Leeds CCG) to fund an Occupational Therapist (OT) position, based on the findings of the research, which was successful. Evaluation of this pilot project provided the evidence needed to support commissioning of a range of occupational health services for people with experience of homelessness, including a full-time dedicated OT position.

Climate action

Our ambition: The third sector is an active partner in reaching net zero, increasing biodiversity and moving towards social as well as environmental justice, by creating capacity and empowering communities to take effective action in reducing carbon emissions and developing their climate change awareness. This transition is made in a just and democratic way, involving all areas of the local community.

How could this be achieved?

- Resourcing for organisations to reduce environmental impact e.g. insulating third sector spaces; creating more community gardens and greenspaces
- Engaging city partners through infrastructure organisations and networks to ensure there is a shared understanding of climate ambitions across the sector and to maximise collective action
- Investing in third sector organisations, from local grassroots groups to larger regional organisations, to improve people's climate change awareness and engage in community-led behaviour changes and actions.

Mechanisms

- Climate Action Community hubs
- Leeds Green Active Providers Network

Key Leeds forum:

[Climate Action Leeds](#)

Good examples

Pudsey Community Project: Reduce Reuse Kids' Clothes

Pudsey Community Project collects donations of used clothes for children from ages 0-12 years old and redistributes them where they are needed for free.

Through the Reduce Reuse Kids clothes project, PCP have contact with 250 families each month, save around 500kg of fabric from landfill each month, and save enough carbon each year to drive a car 25 times around the world.

Within one clothes swap round recently, they redistributed 93 bags of children's clothes – diverting them from landfill and saving families money in an intervention that didn't cost the organisation anything in raw costs, although they invest in storage and a dedicated staff member.

Climate Action Leeds community hubs

The aim of community hubs is to improve people's understanding of climate change and what they can do to make a difference, and to facilitate community-led climate action at a local level. The hubs are run by people living locally, and all have slightly different priorities in line with community interests.

In Otley, one of the priorities is on a piece of woodland in East Otley, which was recently put up for sale, marketed as a potential timber plantation. The community hub, along with other local group, launched a fundraising campaign to hold the woodland for the community and nature, and raised the £140,000 needed in 10 days.

Digital

Our ambition: Leeds is a city where all communities have access to digital technology and skills. The third sector is key in digital innovation and accessibility, and partners invest in training, data-sharing and systems to ensure the third sector can support communities who experience the greatest inequalities accessing digital technology.

How could this be achieved?

- Co-designing new projects with the third sector to support and include communities experiencing digital exclusion
- Investing in support and training for existing sector staff and volunteers
- Building better hardware and software systems to give parity to the sector – for example databases or grant management systems
- Enabling relevant third sector organisations to access and share information about people living in Leeds, in support of joined up, person-centred delivery; through investment in shared information governance roles
- Improving access to, and quality of information about third sector services for system partners and citizens through investment in shared digital information infrastructure.

Good examples



Leeds Asylum Seekers Solidarity Network

In 2020, Leeds Asylum Seekers Solidarity Network ran a programme putting affordable technology into the hands of anyone who needed it – particularly refugees and asylum seekers. Volunteers distributed over 100 phones, 40 WIFI dongles and 150 data IM cards to asylum seekers and refugees in Leeds. Alongside this, they developed online training, guidance and toolkits, videos and social / chat spaces to build people's confidence using technology. The network worked with schools, hotels housing asylum seekers, and temporary accommodation providers to help hundreds of people get online during lockdown, when many were experiencing disconnection and loneliness alongside destitution.

Good examples

Leeds Care Record

Leeds Care Record is a joined-up digital care record which enables clinical and care staff to view real-time health and care information across care providers and between different systems. It is a secure computer system that brings together certain important information about patients who have used services provided by their GP, at a local hospital, community healthcare, social services or mental health teams. Currently, third sector hospices are able to access the Leeds Care Record, but there is huge potential in being able to share data better across third sector services, for instance those that provide counselling or specialist support.



Mechanisms

- 100% Digital Leeds
- Leeds Digital Strategy

DELIVERING THE STRATEGY

The strategy ambitions will be delivered through the sector working closely with partners across the city.

- Third Sector Leeds, the overall policy forum for the sector, will oversee the workplan for each year.
- Third Sector Partnership Group, the strategic meeting for third sector activity chaired by the Elected Member for Communities, will be the body accountable for the strategy.

Our aim is to jointly invest in ongoing work to understand the health of the sector through robust data collection and analysis, including the State of the Sector report. This approach to gathering insight into the size and function of the third sector will be invaluable as a benchmark to measure the success of the strategy going forward.

How will we know we are getting it right?

Progress on the strategy will be reviewed annually. The measures we will look at include:

Measure	How this is collected
Number and size of third sector organisations	State of the Sector report
Typical income of third sector organisations	State of the Sector report
Number of employees and registered volunteers	State of the Sector report
Views and experiences of third sector organisations	TSL Goes Local events

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