

Voluntary, Community, Faith and Social Enterprise (VCFSE) Strategy

This strategy is produced on behalf of the Lincolnshire
Mental Health, Dementia, Learning Disability and Autism Alliance



2025–2030

*Working in partnership to
remove barriers*



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Introduction

The MHD LDA Alliance is a partnership which has been developed within Lincolnshire comprising a wide range of stakeholders from across Lincolnshire Integrated Care Board, Lincolnshire Partnership Foundation Trust, Lincolnshire County Council (public health, adult social care and children’s services), district councils, Lincolnshire Police, Office of Police and Crime Commissioner, VCFSE sector, people with lived experience, primary care, acute and community NHS trusts working collaboratively to learn, share and work together to improve outcomes for the communities we serve.

A key tenet of the MHD LDA Alliance is to work in partnership with the VCFSE sector to ensure that the population of Lincolnshire is able to be part of healthy communities that respond to the needs within their local area and that mental ill health in its broadest context i.e. those people living with a specific diagnosis through to people wishing to support their own mental health and wellbeing, are able to do so in an easily accessible and responsive way.

Throughout this document, the term ‘we’ means the VCFSE sector and statutory organisations in partnership.



The MHD LDA Alliance vision is:

“We will promote wellbeing for all and enable those with a mental illness, dementia, learning disability, and autistic people to live independent, safe, and fulfilled lives in their local communities.”

Why do we need a VCFSE strategy?

To ensure that we can truly work together to support the growth, sustainability, and resilience of the VCFSE sector, a collective commitment is required across a wide range of people to build on and maximise the vital and amazing work that already occurs within this diverse and rich tapestry of VCFSE organisations in Lincolnshire.

The NHS Confederation report *No Wrong Door: a vision for mental health, autism and learning disability services in 2032*^[1] has been a key document that the MHDLDA Alliance has drawn upon to continue to iterate its thinking to ensure that prevention, early intervention, accessibility to whole-person care with outcomes that matter, can be at the heart of the work delivered through the partnership.

It is envisaged that a co-produced MHDLDA VCFSE strategy will underpin, maximise, and build upon these strengths, bringing together key partnerships that help to support an even more vibrant and sustainable VCFSE sector within Lincolnshire that contributes to the mental health and wellbeing of all people, including carers and their families, across MHDLDA.



The wider context

There is already great strength and collaboration happening across the public and VCFSE sector within Lincolnshire. Both sectors work across both physical and mental health to promote healthy communities, and a wide range of partners support the development of the VCFSE sector to grow, sustain, and respond to the variety of needs across the Lincolnshire population.

Key to this development is valuing diversity and inclusion and ensuring that our local communities have the opportunity to influence and shape their local strategies and services. This means drawing together people from all faiths and none, recognising that Lincolnshire has a large geographical spread that experiences many different health and social inequalities and is also an ever-evolving canvas of traditional farming communities, migrant and ethnically diverse communities, transient and seasonal populations, as well as strong links to the NHS, and serving and former members of the Armed Forces. Lincolnshire is an ageing population with a higher-than-average rate of people over the age of 65, with many people choosing to retire to the east coast, mixed in with families wishing to either return or stay to work within the county, and a growing population of students accessing both Higher and Further Education.

The King's Fund '*Healthy Communities Together*'[2] and the subsequent *Reflective Learning Framework for Partnering*[3] draw upon three key principles: equal partnerships, Investment, and active learning to support the work between the public and VCFSE sector.

This aligns with the NHS guidance issued on building strong integrated care systems everywhere[4], in particular Principle 2: Creating a culture of shared learning, collaboration and innovation, working alongside patients and local communities, which drives the importance of the work being with people and their communities.

Both the *Sector 3 VCFSE strategy for Stockport*[5] and the *Suffolk and North East Essex VCFSE Resilience Charter*[6] reference the importance of strong collaboration, innovation, maximising investment, and nurturing relationships as key principles when creating a sustainable and thriving VCFSE sector that can stand as an equal strategic and delivery partner.

In Lincolnshire, the ICS is already committed to embedding the five foundations of the *Our Shared Agreement*[7], which has been developed to create new ways for health, care,

people, and communities to work together to share knowledge, build skills and confidence, and grow relationships to really live our lives. This agreement sits within the *Lincolnshire Joint Forward Plan*[8] and encompasses the work developed by the MHDLD A Alliance to co-produce the *Together We Will*[9] statements that set out key principles of working that adhere to a trauma-informed approach to care.



Building on strong foundations

Across the MHD LDA Alliance, there is already a huge amount to celebrate and be proud of in terms of the work already done between the public and VCFSE sectors. This includes a wide range of developments and investments such as the Mental Health and Wellbeing Community Investment Fund, Suicide Prevention fund, mental health social prescribing, community wellbeing hubs and satellite outreach work, winter pressures schemes, Night Light and Twilight Cafés, Lincolnshire Autism Hub funding, as well as the wide-reaching transformation work across adults, older adults, and children and young people.

Other new ways of working have also been established, such as the embedding of roles to work alongside travellers, peer support workers to work alongside people with serious mental illness, and roles such as community connectors to bring together and solidify partnership working on a population needs-led basis at the heart of their communities.

A web-based resource navigation tool, H.A.Y. Lincolnshire, www.haylincolnshire.co.uk has also been established (developed with people with lived experience) to support connectivity and communication, as well as the ability to ensure that training and resources are available for free to all professionals (paid and unpaid) working within the mental health and wellbeing space.

There is a strong willingness and commitment to continue the work to build on these foundations and to develop vibrant, lasting networks with faith and non-faith community leaders, and others, in the VCFSE sector. These can facilitate engagement in the planning and development of joined-up services that ensure care and treatment are appropriate and responsive across the entirety of care delivered across the MHD LDA population, and that funding is deployed to truly meet the needs of local communities, resources are co-produced with people with lived experience and we address opportunities to learn, raise awareness and reduce stigma.



This includes the commitment to continue to flow targeted investment into the VCFSE sector, and in line with the MHD LDA Alliance structure, a review is taking place to identify how to best utilise budgets available to ensure that we maximise impact for the people of Lincolnshire. Currently c.£4.5 million is invested into the Lincolnshire VCFSE sector via MHD LDA partners and as part of the ongoing commitment to this work, this strategy will seek to ensure that we continue to demonstrate the impact this investment has through the utilisation of strong evaluation such as Social Return on Investment, Community Reporting through the Our Shared Agreement work and by involving the people of Lincolnshire in the continued design and delivery of services that are reflective of their populations.

To enable this work to move forward, an MHD LDA VCFSE strategy group comprising people with lived experience alongside representatives from the NHS, local authority, public health, voluntary, community and faith sectors has worked together to set a strategic direction within the VCFSE sector that enables the MHD LDA vision to be realised and contribute towards the following agreed outcomes:

- Reduce the number of children and adults with mental ill health.
- Reduce the number of people in a mental health crisis.
- Maximise people's independence.
- Increase the number of people who have meaningful occupations.
- Improve quality of life.
- Increase the number of people who live longer in good health.



Principles of working together

The following principles have been co-designed by partners within the strategy group and form the basis of how voluntary, community, faith and social enterprise sector organisations can best work together with public sector organisations within Lincolnshire.

To produce these principles, the strategy group has explored what is working well, what the priority areas are on which the strategy should focus, what the challenges and obstacles are that we as a collective need to overcome, and how we will measure and demonstrate impact and success.

Together we will:

- Work in equitable, empowered partnership – integration and collaboration are fundamental to developing trusted relationships.
- Value our partnership, but we will also value differences.
- Have compassionate conversations, will not make assumptions. Hear, understand, learn, adapt.
- Engage widely, taking into account cultural considerations, ensuring inclusivity by involving people and organisations from as many diverse sectors and perspectives as possible.
- Take the time to get this right, accounting for the diversity of needs, and to gain understanding and build relationships.
- Respect each other's views, being honest and transparent, with an understanding of boundaries and limitations.
- Keep discussions clear and simple, avoiding acronyms.
- Drive change to develop sustainable resilience in our VCFSE sector.
- Continued commitment to invest.
- Establish what we are going to achieve by setting clear goals and outcomes and continually evaluating and learning from the work we do.

Our identified priorities for the VCFSE sector

This strategy embraces our collective commitment to ensure that within Lincolnshire, we champion a resilient, independent, and influential VCFSE sector that benefits all within the scope of MHD LDA.

This piece of work will also actively contribute to and be a part of the overarching Lincolnshire VCFSE work, acting as a more defined and focused lens on those people affected by MHD LDA.

To ensure that we continue to strengthen partnerships and maximise positive outcomes for people, we will focus on the following five priorities as part of Lincolnshire's *No Wrong Door* approach to MHD LDA services:

Priority 1:

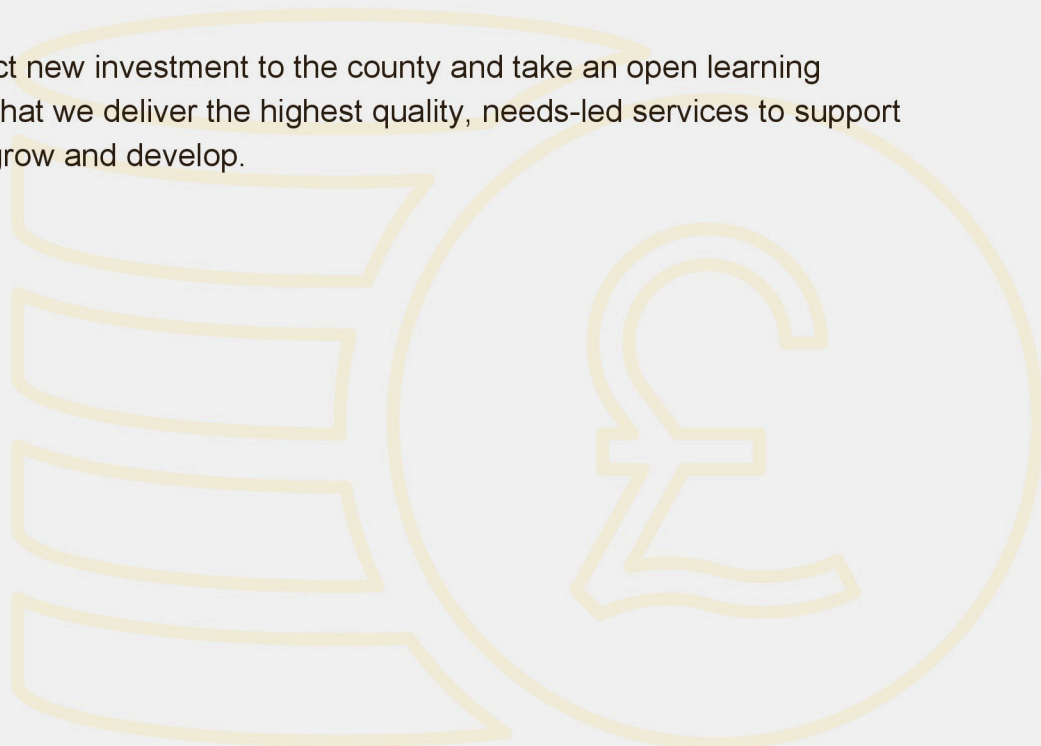
Empowering people to lead their communities

- Through the use of the Our Shared Agreement five foundations, we will be inclusive of all people, across an all-age pathway.
- We will embrace and nourish opportunities for growth (personal and professional), sharing knowledge and understanding, and always ensuring that people, families and carers are at the heart of everything we do.
- We will be prepared to challenge the status quo and continually seek to ensure that we are communicating effectively, staying connected to each other, and evaluating the work that we do from the outset to ensure that we are aligned with the identified MHD LDA Alliance vision and outcomes.

Priority 2:

Investment

- We will ensure that investment is balanced and includes time, resources, skills, as well as financial investment.
- We will use the principles of an Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) approach where possible, ensuring that we recognise and nourish what we already have, what we can seek to develop, as well as recognising what the shortfall is and what requires future collaboration and investment.
- We will take the time to understand each other's organisational boundaries, financial restrictions, and regulations, seeking to co-produce the services that are reflective of the needs of the Lincolnshire communities.
- We will seek, where possible, to work together, minimising competition but appreciating and respecting each other's skills and supporting each other to develop.
- We will take the time to think together and engender a proactive rather than reactive environment in which to work, which is underpinned by a relational approach rather than a transactional one.
- We will build in regular reviews of investment, proportionate to the level of funding involved, working with the Best Use of Resources Group, and ensure that we take a needs-led approach that is based on evidence and does not duplicate resources.
- We will seek to attract new investment to the county and take an open learning approach to ensure that we deliver the highest quality, needs-led services to support our communities to grow and develop.



Priority 3:

Building resilience and sustainability

- We will proactively work together to ensure that we are developing local organisations to continue providing the services that our population needs at the earliest opportunity. We will seek to innovate, educate, and develop new solutions where gaps are identified.
- We will strive to promote a mix of funding options within the MHD LDA VCFSE space in order to support all organisations to become sustainable in the long term.
- We will ensure that all organisations have access to support to grow and develop their businesses for those who wish to do so by providing training, opportunities for mentoring, and sharing of learning.
- We will utilise existing partnership boards/community groups, valuing the roles such as the community connectors to help support the local communities to share knowledge and learning, promoting cohesion, and seeking to enhance opportunities for growth.
- We will develop a local evaluation framework that can aid us in demonstrating impact and value, alongside supporting organisations to grow and develop. Where appropriate and proportionate, we will utilise independent evaluations at the start of all projects and contracts.
- We will encourage all organisations to have healthy workplaces, building in support and wellbeing for their staff, and to role model balance and healthy living.



Priority 4:

Working together to ensure that the rurality of Lincolnshire doesn't prohibit access

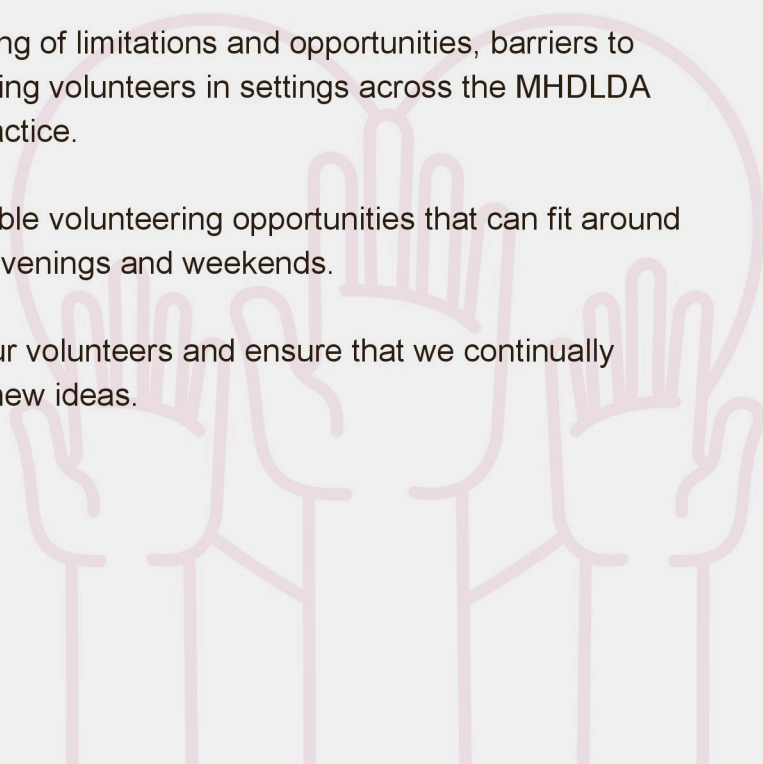
- Where possible, we will share assets so that we can work together to capitalise on opportunities to make community projects accessible.
- We will map “desire lines” and seek to understand where people gravitate towards and build support around those lines to support our rural infrastructure and transport needs.
- We will seek to work in partnership with local transport providers to explore opportunities that can maximise people’s ability to access groups that are not directly within their reach.
- We will work together to ensure that we understand each other’s data captured and data needs, how we can share data safely, and ensure that it is meaningful and used productively to inform future developments.
- We will embrace digitalisation as an option for the delivery and sharing of information, whilst ensuring that it does not become the only choice for people.
- We will work to develop the market to make it more accessible for all. Ensuring that we are finding ways to work with racialised communities and hidden cohorts of people, and developing new and trusting relationships.



Priority 5:

Recognising the value of volunteering and volunteer generation

- We will recognise the value of volunteers and the huge contribution they make to our communities. Volunteers should be recognised for their individual contributions as well as a critical part of our workforce.
- There are benefits to individuals as volunteers – such as learning skills, social connection and meaningful occupation, and in contribution to communities, we must recognise the value they have in experience, knowledge and skills, which are crucial.
- Through working with existing resources such as the Lincolnshire Volunteer Partnership, the Wellbeing and Recovery College, and the MHDLDA Co-production Network, we will seek to support new people to come into volunteer roles.
- We will support organisations to embed volunteering opportunities for their staff to support their own wellbeing and to broaden the experience and skill base within their organisations.
- We will commit to working with schools, colleges, and universities to provide volunteering opportunities for their students that are safe, flexible, and responsive to need.
- We will seek to increase understanding of limitations and opportunities, barriers to and need for, volunteering or employing volunteers in settings across the MHDLDA scope, sharing learning and good practice.
- Where possible, we will offer accessible volunteering opportunities that can fit around people's own employment, such as evenings and weekends.
- We will listen to the feedback from our volunteers and ensure that we continually learn from challenges and embrace new ideas.



How will we measure impact?

The strategy will be led through the Lincolnshire MHD LDA Alliance, reporting into the wider Lincolnshire Integrated Care System via the Better Lives Lincolnshire Executive Team.

It will align with the outcomes of the MHD LDA Alliance and use a mixed methods approach through the use of data, case studies, and social return on investment that aligns with the five foundations of the Our Shared Agreement, and glean this information from a broad range of partners to showcase the impact of the work for the people of Lincolnshire.

During the first year of this strategy, we will work together to baseline our information and then develop short-, medium-, and long-term targets that are collectively owned and reviewed on an annual basis.

We will celebrate success by committing to sharing our knowledge locally, regionally, and nationally, and ensuring that we honour and acknowledge people's hard work, acting with integrity by learning from our mistakes and continuing to embed the principles set out by the VCFSE strategy group.

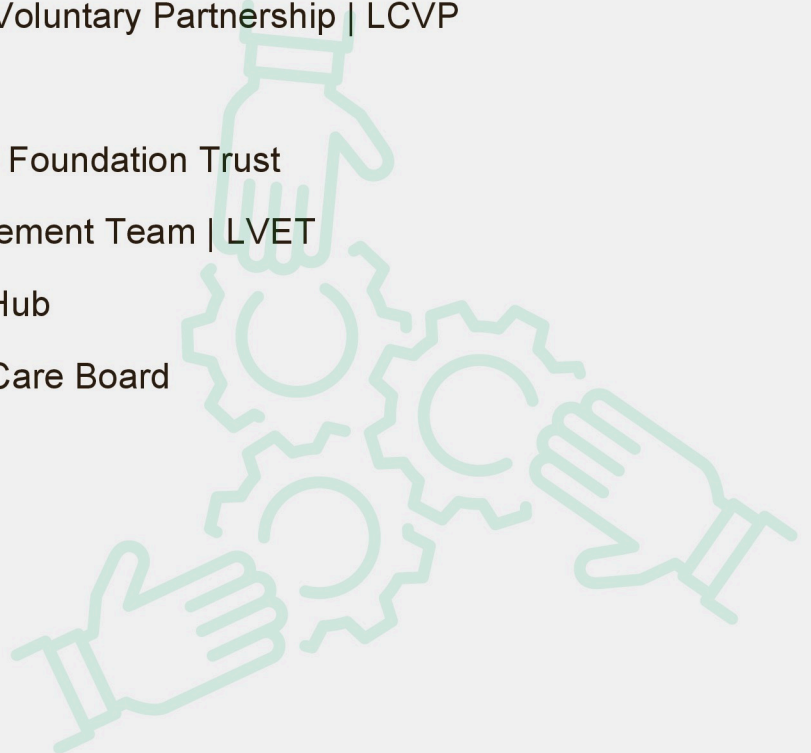


Thank you to those involved

We are pleased to say that members of the MHDLDA Alliance, which includes colleagues from Lincolnshire County Council (public health, adult social care, and children's services), district councils, NHS England, Lincolnshire Police, Office of Lincolnshire Police and Crime Commissioner, people with lived experience, VCFSE sector, primary care, acute and community NHS trusts, substance misuse services are in support of this strategy.

A special thanks to the following organisations for their significant contributions in developing this document.

- Acts Trust
- Bridge Church
- Children's Links
- Every-One
- Lincoln Embracing All Nations | LEAN
- Lincoln Mosque
- Lincolnshire Community and Voluntary Partnership | LCVP
- Lincolnshire County Council
- Lincolnshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust
- Lincolnshire Voluntary Engagement Team | LVET
- Lincolnshire's Virtual Autism Hub
- NHS Lincolnshire Integrated Care Board
- People with lived experience
- Public Health
- Shine Lincolnshire
- St Barnabas
- YMCA



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