# National Resilience Strategy:

A Partnership response to the call for evidence

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**Voluntary and Community Sector Emergencies Partnership**

**National Resilience Strategy:** A Partnership response to the call for evidence

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Building a whole society approach to resilience is entirely contingent on harnessing the power and expertise of the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS).  The 2021/2022 review of the National Resilience Strategy and the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 represents an opportunity to transform the way we think about our collective responsibility and role in building and maintaining resilient communities.  Emergency planning and response is no longer just the responsibility of formal and centralised structures, our formal and informal community organisations and groups are a vital tool in the armoury of effective and human-centred emergency response.

This submission sets out evidence and insight, generated by a cross section of representatives of the Voluntary and Community Sector's Emergencies Partnership (VCSEP), that illustrates how the VCS can form an integral part of a cross system response, and collaborate with national Government, local authorities, local authority hubs and local resilience structures to provide a holistic, sector wide and inclusive approach to planning and responding to emergencies.

We provide the case and supportive evidence that illustrates the power of the VCS in building and maintaining resilient communities, the imperative nature of resilient communities to a strong emergency response and suggest how best to harness that power.  We also outline why the outcome for people impacted by major emergencies is enhanced if we all work better together.  On behalf of the partners of the VCS Emergencies Partnership, we call for the following action to deliver that system-wide change, including to ensure inclusion and integration of the voluntary and community sector in our collective approach

1) Emergency <u>and</u> community focused VCS involvement should be mandated in National Strategy and Guidance, specifically in the planning of, training for and responding to major emergencies at every level of the local resilience structures
2) The local resilience structures should be supported to meaningfully foster engagement and capability building with and amongst the VCS
3) The VCS should be recognised and adequately resourced as a network of effective and connected resilience building assets
4) The VCS Emergencies Partnership and representative partners are engaged in ongoing set of discussions following this submission on how to practically enable these changes to happen and how they sit within wider reform

# Section 1: The VCS Emergencies Partnership and the power of a joint response

## About the VCS Emergencies Partnership and our history

The [VCS Emergencies Partnership](#) is a coalition of c.250 voluntary and community infrastructure groups and larger regional and national charities, across England.

Our partnership was formed following the 2017 crises at Manchester Arena, London Bridge and Grenfell Tower, with recognition that independent humanitarian effort in an emergency whilst well intentioned led to a chaotic, confusing and ultimately more traumatic experience for the individuals affected by major emergencies. Since 2017, the partnership has evolved and grown, building on our shared knowledge, learning and ways of working through major flooding, the COVID-19 Pandemic, the surge in Afghan Arrivals and a range of regional emergencies.  As a collective, we now advocate for and create space for increased collaboration between government and the VCS in an emergency, and for improved coordination within the VCS to better reach and support communities most impacted.  By pooling resources and intelligence when capacity is stretched, we are collectively improving responses to major emergencies and mitigating the short-, medium- and long-term impacts which they have on resilience.

Our partnership is co-chaired by the British Red Cross, the largest and leading emergency response charity in the UK and National Association for Voluntary and Community Action (NAVCA), the umbrella body for local VCS infrastructure organisations (LIOs), which are place based charities supporting a thriving voluntary and community sector in the areas they serve.  Local voluntary and community organisations are often best placed to understand the needs and concerns of the local community and by working together with larger organisations and the government we can develop a clearer picture of what support is required and who is best placed to provide it.

The content of this submission is based on the operational experience, insights and research gathered from our partners, and drawn from their experience of preparing for and responding to major emergencies.

## Purpose of this response, partners and why the joint voice is powerful

Many of our partners are making individual submissions on the unique contribution their organisation has made and continues to make in preparing for, responding to and learning from emergencies in the communities in which they work.  Here, the VCS Emergencies Partnership aims to highlight the collective and cumulative impact that it is having, and to use a shared voice to advocate for a systemic shift in the way we think about and empower those individual organisations as part of the emergency planning and response ecosystem.

In some locations the emergency system in its widest sense incorporates and draws on the VCS contribution effectively.  In others, the system is missing the potential opportunity as many VCS aren't well connected into existing emergency structures. As part of what they do, all our VCS partners are contributing to resilience building with marginalised, vulnerable and hidden or seldom heard groups in our society every day, these are the communities who are often hardest hit by, with the least capacity to withstand an emergency.  We have seen where the VCS is actively included in the strategic decision making, planning of and preparation for emergencies both locally and nationally, people – individuals and families – feel better supported, safer and are recovering from major shocks more quickly and more resiliently than before.
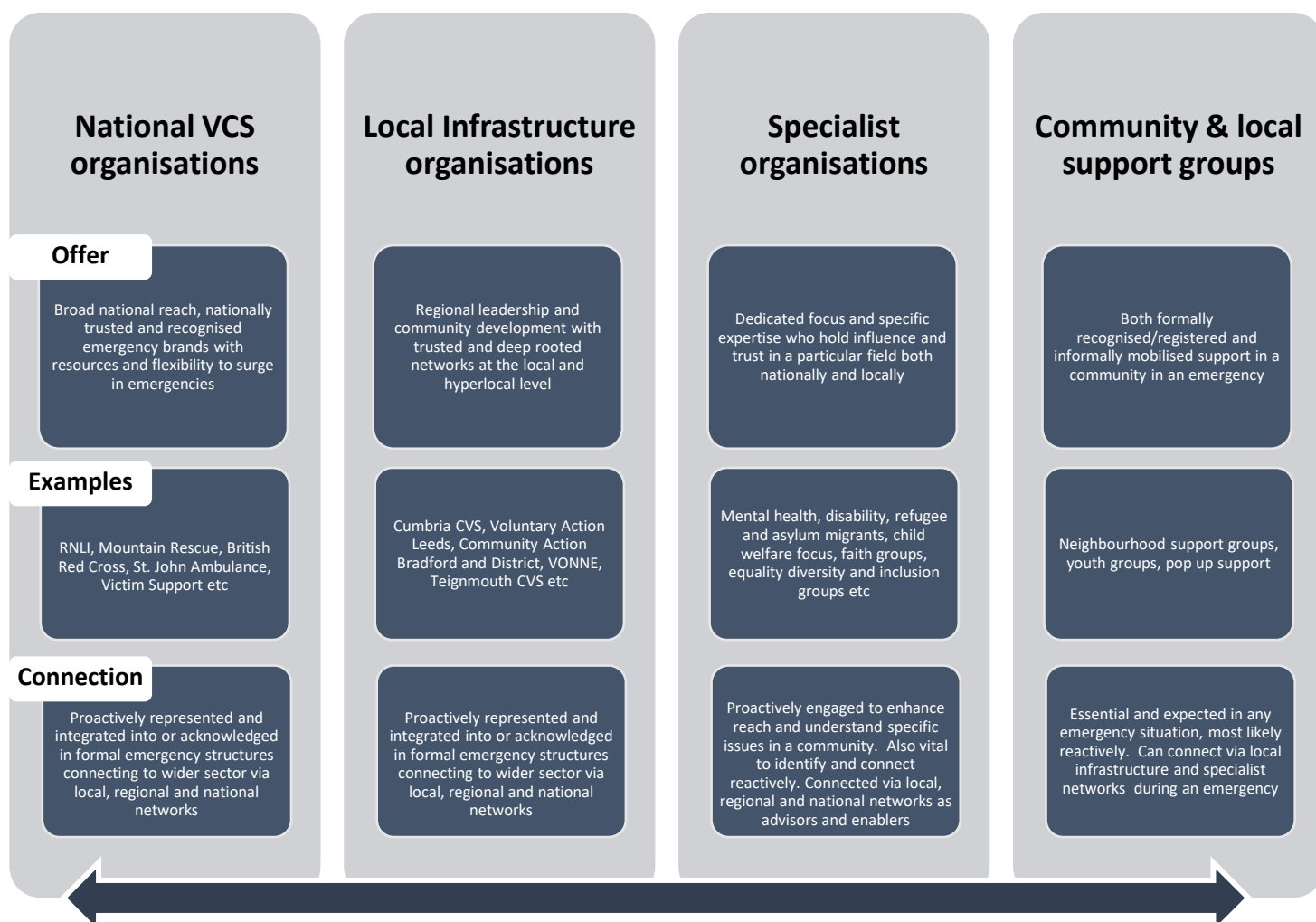
The era of centralised resilience building is over.  The need for a whole society approach to building resilience is gaining traction, and reflective of what our partners have observed in practice for many years.  We shouldn't see the VCS as filling the gaps where the formal structures can't, but as a vital, integrated and consistent part of the whole across the country.

## Section 2: Understanding the sector – and how to harness it

### Types of organisations/ roles in the resilience ecosystem (individually/collectively)

The VCS is a wide and varied sector, and we consider the diversity, flexibility and responsiveness of the VCS to be a real strength. It includes organisations working explicitly in response to people in immediate danger; those working with a broad community-focussed remit around a geographical location; organisations with a national coverage for a specific cause or issue, and those with a more generalist approach. Each has their own place in emergency planning and response and bring varied assets and strengths.

Below, our aim is to articulate the types of organisations and roles in the VCS resilience ecosystem and how they interconnect individually and collectively. We acknowledge that the freeform and varied nature of the VCS has historically been hard to navigate, however, this is also its greatest strength as it gives it the flexibility to respond where and when needed. By increasing the connections to the sector at the local, regional, and national level there is opportunity to better understand how we can work together, and which unique tenets of the ecosystem have different relevance, at different times.

| | National VCS organisations | Local Infrastructure organisations | Specialist organisations | Community & local support groups |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Offer** | Broad national reach, nationally trusted and recognised emergency brands with resources and flexibility to surge in emergencies | Regional leadership and community development with trusted and deep rooted networks at the local and hyperlocal level | Dedicated focus and specific expertise who hold influence and trust in a particular field both nationally and locally | Both formally recognised/registered and informally mobilised support in a community in an emergency |
| **Examples** | RNLI, Mountain Rescue, British Red Cross, St. John Ambulance, Victim Support etc | Cumbria CVS, Voluntary Action Leeds, Community Action Bradford and District, VONNE, Teignmouth CVS etc | Mental health, disability, refugee and asylum migrants, child welfare focus, faith groups, equality diversity and inclusion groups etc | Neighbourhood support groups, youth groups, pop up support |
| **Connection** | Proactively represented and integrated into or acknowledged in formal emergency structures connecting to wider sector via local, regional and national networks | Proactively represented and integrated into or acknowledged in formal emergency structures connecting to wider sector via local, regional and national networks | Proactively engaged to enhance reach and understand specific issues in a community. Also vital to identify and connect reactively. Connected via local, regional and national networks as advisors and enablers | Essential and expected in any emergency situation, most likely reactively. Can connect via local infrastructure and specialist networks during an emergency |

In most emergencies, the first responders are almost always the community itself and its local organisations. Organisations (both statutory and voluntary) who are mandated to respond in an emergency are then notified and come to the scene. Our partners recognise that no one organisation can achieve universal equality, community connectedness and resilience alone and understanding the relevant capabilities within the ecosystem allows us to forge the right connections at the right time. VCS involvement in national and local formal structures is an essential part of effective preparedness, however, recognising and accepting that informal mobilisation and the independent connections and trust that exists in a community will always be a part of the reactive picture. These groups may often be the fastest, most informed, and most connected player in an emergency situation. Acknowledging and

harnessing both the informal community role, and the capabilities and professionalism of the formal VCS – beyond volunteers themselves - as an essential and expected part of the response will bring huge benefit.

## How to harness it?

We recommend three simple initial steps to harnessing the voluntary sector in emergency planning, response, and resilience building.

1) **Seek to understand each other**
   - Make the links and friends that are needed, before they are required – allowing for eyes and ears on the ground, when something does happen
   - The graphic above paints a very simplified view of the VCS.  Each of those pillars – and the intersectional crossover between them varies from region to region.  To overcome this, clear roles need defining for the VCS and other players, within capacity limits. During the COVID response it was clear that those LRFs with long-established VCS subgroups were the most effective and least likely to approach the Emergencies Partnership for assistance whilst still maximising the input of the VCS
   - Seek to build a shared understanding between the different players in the wider system including the VCS and how each works in a specific geographic location (sensibly at an LRF level) – who the key players are, and what connections can be unlocked together.  Building shared capability and awareness will allow smoother, quicker and more trusted connections to be made
   - By developing a shared understanding of who is on the pitch before an emergency, together statutory and different sector partners can uncover the capability and gaps in the capability that exist by both profiling organisations and the emergencies most likely to occur, or that have occurred and how best to connect

2) **Involve VCS in the thinking at every stage**
   - Identify and involve representatives from the VCS early and throughout – include representatives from across the spectrum in the graphic above ensuring those with emergency skills, specialist knowledge and community connections and experience are brought in as they bring different perspectives.  Involving the VCS at "problem formation" stage means the wealth of intelligence and knowledge informs the framing of the problem as well as driving a wider set of solutions.  Involvement helps to build mutual trust and understanding of strengths and assets which in turn helps both with shaping and implementing plans, assessing the risks and needs and in understanding the community resilience already in place
   - Ensure there is the infrastructure for success – create multi agency and mixed sector coordinating groups, hub systems that connect requests for help, with the expertise and support available across all parties
   - Regular and clear two-way updates and communication between statutory and VCS partners

3) **Enable VCS to make connections and invest in communities**
   - Create space – attempting to harness or control too much will lead to even greater and more disconnected efforts.  Recognising that spontaneous volunteers and external support can feel disruptive – but they are also a certainty. Creating space that recognises and champions the power of different approaches that community role can add in a response, will make a difference in terms of preparation
   - Invest in and develop the resources, connections, and expertise that the VCS can offer.  Extend the funding of formal resilience structures to include resources within the VCS prior to, during and following emergencies, as well as investing in the glue that is required for collaboration to work effectively.  Roles like dedicated and mandated Community Resilience Coordinators, designed to close the gap between statutory and community responders provides essential capacity
   - We know that the most deprived areas are most susceptible to and worst hit by emergencies, and are also less likely to have a really strong VCS.  Investing in resources to address that will build resilience in

local communities, foster connections within and between the community itself and enable the VCS to connect more, share more and meet the more complex needs of their communities in a crisis situation

*Case Study: Cumbria Community Resilience Group*

*Informed by a collaborative model used in Cumbria to coordinate the community response to COVID-19, we can start to understand a little more about how the formal and informal voluntary sector, together with statutory partners, can start to build resilience for everyone. This is not about regulating or trying to control each element of the pyramid, but instead absorbing it as a necessary and definite part of the landscape. This was brought to life through a network of a region-wide multi-organisation Community Resilience Group (CRG) supported by local CRGs – all of which feed into the Strategic and Tactical coordination groups of the LRF – tested and used following Storm Desmond.*

*"There has been significant investment in community emergency planning (and wider community resilience, including climate change) in Cumbria over at least the last 10 years - and that's important, it is a long term, low key approach that's needed, rather than a short sharp push. This has included Lottery grants (via CVS) after both 2009 and 2015 floods, support from flood appeals (from Cumbria Community Foundation) and ongoing investment by local authorities - both in local VCS infrastructure organisations and in their own community development teams" (Cumbria LRF, Community Resilience Group)*
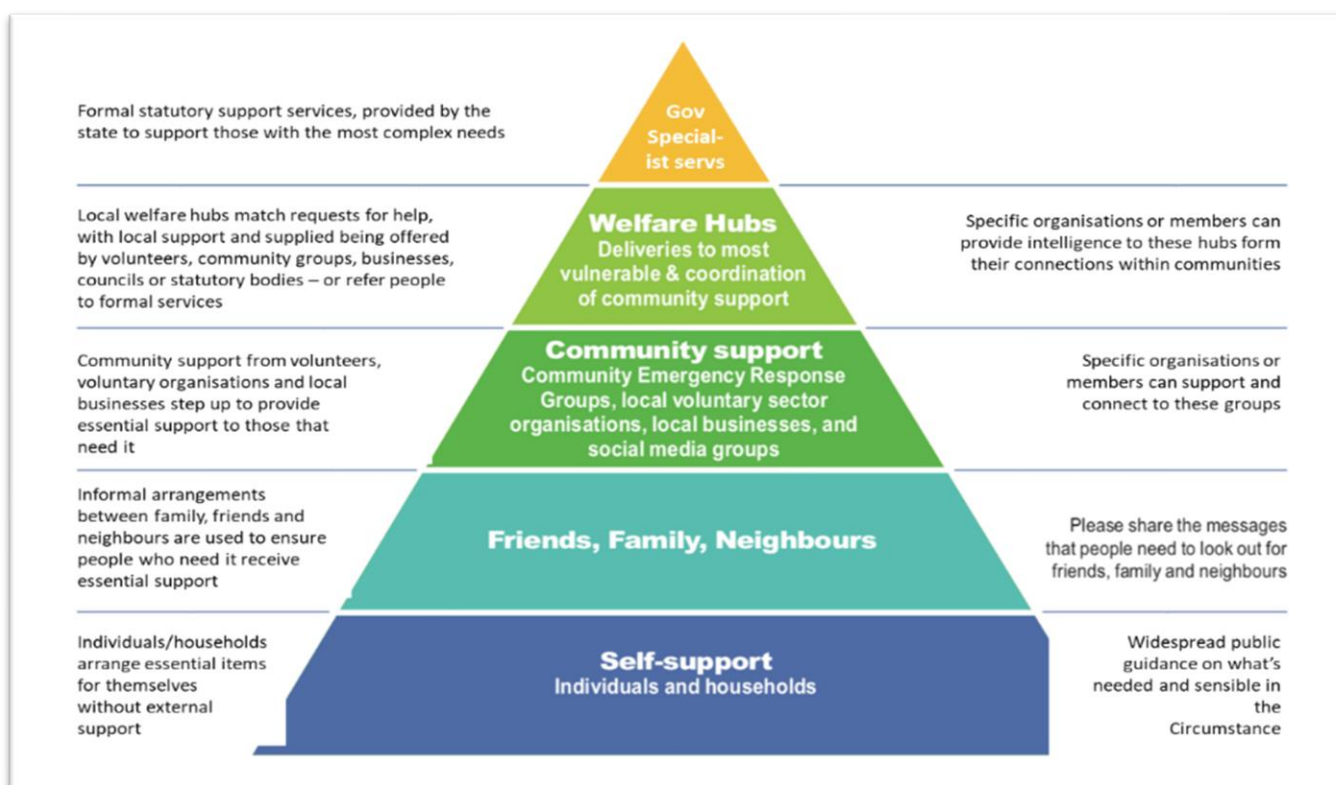
***Case Study: Collaboration in Staffordshire***

*Support Staffordshire, a local infrastructure organisation covering the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent LRF have received investment from Staffordshire County Council since 2016, most recently in the region of £200,000 per year to support, build and sustain the voluntary sector. The longstanding relationship was put to the test from March 2020 when Covid-19 hit. Because of the existing relationships of trust and the established networks of support, they stepped up, downed tools on 'business as usual' work and worked collaboratively with the council to establish a bottom-up support network. This included pro-active support to over 80 local mutual aid groups, ensuring they were safe and connected; a district level safety net of VCS 'anchor' organisations, able to take on urgent calls for essential food and supplies, as well as keep in touch calls to the lonely and isolated. In turn this enabled the council to focus its efforts on supporting social care provision and emergencies. As response moved to recovery, Support Staffordshire stepped back up with training, support and confidence building, to get community groups going again, disseminating recovery grants from the council. All of this was coordinated through an LRF Covid Vulnerability Cell that included district councils and the local Civil Contingencies Unit. The Staffordshire CCU is now considering the possibilities offered by this new relationship with the VCS sector, and how it could be leveraged in more usual times. (Garry Jones, Support Staffordshire, 2021)*

# Section 3: The VCS distinct contribution to a whole society approach to resilience

## The VSC specific responsibilities and accountabilities in resilience (our ques 3)

No role in building resilience sits alone. This is an ecosystem, and success lies in understanding, appreciating, and providing the interconnecting glue between the respective roles. Below we illustrate how the role of the VCS and the specific responsibilities and accountabilities we have as a sector, to the communities we serve, intersect with the crucial roles of others.

Research from our partners tells us, that as robust as centralised statutory approaches are, they fail to take a "person-centered" approach – this means that the organisations and systems fail to empower people to access personalised support at times of crisis, or provide support that addresses both the practical, psychosocial, and emotional needs equally and or continue to offer longer term support as people recover and rebuild their lives. This perfectly frames the distinct contribution that the VCS currently and should continue to fill.

The UK's emergency structures, and legislation must be able to meet people's humanitarian needs in a crisis. Our partners report that in previous emergencies, people's needs are routinely not met, there is ad hoc and insufficient involvement of the VCS and a lack of clear accountability and connections from the local to national level.

In order to resolve this, we propose the specific role of the VCS in preparing for and responding to an emergency is:

- To continuously build and strengthen resilience amongst communities every day – there is more to resilience than emergency planning - a connected and active community to which people feel they belong and will contribute to is significantly more resilient than a fragmented one
- To recognise and access the range of human and physical assets that are available within a community and helpful in an emergency scenario and develop a plan for how gaps are filled
- To assess and manage risks, particularly to those most vulnerable, marginalised or seldom heard.
- To signpost, connect and reinforce the support structures in place in the short, medium and longer term
- To work with communities to understand the threats they face, to listen, understand their needs (existing and emerging) and connect that to emergency planning and response approaches. Their local knowledge must be valued, Residents will know about issues which may arise and the plan must have the community voice in its formation
- To provide timely insight and data, including human intelligence and situational awareness to help understand the vulnerability, resilience and need in an emergency and a reality check for the experience within the different facets of community
- To share good practice, learning and ideas for how communities prepare, react, respond to and learn from major emergencies across the UK
- To provide access to and the voice of those at risk of or impacted by emergencies – particularly where there is a lack of trust in statutory support
- To provide proven capability and value in raising and distribution of funds and urgent provision of essential practical and emotional support to those impacted (e.g. mental health support, accommodation, vehicles, cash-based assistance, or goods such as food and clothing)
- To inform and contribute to emergency training and exercising based on the experience and needs of the community
- To inform, review and test emergency plans based on the experience and needs of the community
- To coordinate and mobilise between the different elements of the voluntary sector, to minimise or eliminate duplication and confusion (this is a specific role that the VCSEP can fulfil nationally, and local infrastructure can fulfil locally, if resourced to do so)
- To work with communities to bring them together, foster connections and relationships and drive active engagement in communities

***Case Study: Citizens Advice Denbighshire Flood Response***

*In Feb 2020 Storm Ciara hit the UK with heavy rain and strong winds. Residents in Denbighshire were affected by River Elwy flooding and more than 50 people were evacuated from their homes. The Welsh Government set up an emergency flood relief scheme to provide financial support to those people impacted. Working in partnership with Denbighshire County Council, Citizens Advice ensured that all eligible residents were aware of the scheme and could have assistance to make the application. Experienced benefit caseworkers explained the process, discussed eligibility and offered assistance. In addition, Citizens Advice offered all residents a full benefit check, as well as referrals for energy, housing, financial capability and employment advice and casework. In this instance, it wasn't just about supporting the immediate impact of the emergency – but taking a human-centric approach to ensuring those families affected were able to get back on their feet quickly and effectively – and become even more resilient to future challenges. This was just as well, as in January 2021, Storm Christoph caused devastating havoc in the same region. Citizens Advice and Denbighshire County Council worked together again, learning and strengthening their response from the year before (Citizens Advice, 2020/21)*

***Case Study: COVID-19 incl. Devon Communities Together, St John Ambulance and Rotary GB&I***

*From the onset of the COVID pandemic spreading across the UK, the VCS stood up formal and informal support covering everything from food and basic good delivery, excess mortality management, through to government funded large-scale vaccinations and testing. The VCS played and continue to play an integral role in every aspect of the response and recovery. The pandemic did not exist in a vacuum, in the last 18 months, the VCS have been requested by Category 1 agencies to participate in flood responses, UXO evacuations, food distribution hubs, rapid surge of Afghan arrivals, as well as providing essential support and ongoing support to school testing and vaccination initiatives. These activities have, we believe disproved the myth, that the voluntary sector is not able to provide a reliable contribution to rapid and dynamic situations.*

*VCSEP partner, Rotary GB&I provided a brief summary of their voluntary activity in supporting communities across South East England during the pandemic - partnering with food banks, mutual aid, faith and community groups to distribute food, partnering with CCGs and the NHS to provide volunteers at pop up vaccination centres in 13 areas in the South East, administered covid tests in schools and colleagues over Christmas, supporting young carers, the elderly and those with life-threatening diseases as medical support was stretched, providing befriending programmes with local authorities and care groups, sourcing and distributing hundreds of computers to support with home schooling, sourcing scrubs, bags, masks, creams and gifts for hospital staff across the region. This list merely scratches the surface of one organisation in one corner of the country.*

*Above and beyond the practical support, the pandemic has created and reinforced conditions where VCS have become increasingly involved in forward planning – and have alerted Local Authorities and LRFs of the value of involving and listening to the expertise of staff and volunteers across the sector. There have been many examples of best practice VCS working alongside local resilience forums, local authorities and other statutory bodies and the learning from this must be embedded to improve national society resilience irrespective of the nature of the crisis.*

*"The mutual aid and other community groups that have arisen in response to the pandemic provide a vital service to neighbours in the form of shopping, collecting prescriptions, walking dogs, providing information, and giving emotional support. They have enabled people to stay at home and self-isolate when needed and created a sense of solidarity and community. Practically, they have complemented the role of the official agencies." (University of Sussex, https://www.sussex.ac.uk/research/projects/groups-and-covid/community-support-and-mutual-aid)*

*"We have seen repeatedly that taking action together, rather than simply talking about it, is an effective way of building working relationships, and reinforcing trust and understanding. Once things are up and running there are plenty of opportunities for revision and improvement, but it's hard to improve something that does not yet exist. More specifically, in [the COVID-19] crisis situation, the speed at which both local neighbourhood groups, and voluntary organisations, mobilised, adapted, and started to be effective, has surprised and impressed local authorities. Newly-formed mutual aid groups in Devon mostly had immediate access to established local infrastructure organisations. Over 400 community groups, often having mobilised quickly to meet local need, then accessed the Devon Communities Together community helpline seeking additional advice and support to organise sustainably and apply for funding" (Roads to Renewal, Devon Community Foundation 2020)*

### Case Study: Training and skilled Volunteers

*The voluntary sector is capable of providing trained volunteers and training for new volunteers in an emergency. For example, England was the only country in the world to train members of the public without medical backgrounds to actually administer vaccinations. Training was delivered by St John Ambulance to volunteers recruited through a collaboration with British Red Cross and the Royal Voluntary Service. This work was made possible and built on the fact that St John has expertise in giving basic clinical skills to lay people and volunteers. Nor was this a unique example of the use of trained volunteers. Trained volunteers play an important role in many emergency situations such as on lifeboats, in mountain rescue teams, and on ambulances.*

*Separately, in hospitals during the pandemic, the enhanced skillset of the St John Ambulance volunteers was valued by NHS staff who acknowledged their training allowed them to do more tasks and integrate into ward and A&E teams quickly and effectively. Volunteers aided a more efficient flow of patients through hospitals by helping to transfer patients, supporting triaging of patients, restocking equipment, turning over beds and preparing patients for discharge. On top of this hospital volunteering, St John Ambulance crews, including volunteer crews, have responded to thousands of 999 calls on behalf of Ambulance Trusts.*

**"The service engages people who would otherwise struggle to get help. A lot of people won't come into clinics, they'd rather see someone in their own environment. For some of these people, if they didn't get care from the outreach service then they could end up deteriorating and injuries could lead to potential sepsis and even loss of life." Craig Halliday, St John Ambulance, Bolton Homeless Outreach Project**

**"Our work is not all about taking observations and practical help. We chat to the patients, read letters and show photographs from family to keep them going. Strangers are having to play the role of family and that's where St John can help." Nadine Tudor, St John Ambulance, Operational First Aider and hospital volunteer**

### Case study: The power of local volunteering

*New research, conducted throughout 2020 and 2021, has shown how local volunteering arrangements have helped those in need most during pandemic response. Findings from the Mobilising Volunteers Effectively study, highlight the more informal nature of localised volunteering fostered stronger community links.*

***"The first findings from the 18-month study found that informal volunteering and 'good neighbourliness' have been key to providing support and serving communities. Finding also that there is a necessity to 'free' local communities to respond quickly to the needs in their own area; empowering volunteers and taking a less bureaucratic approach to emergency responses...If we are to harness the energy and goodwill that communities have shown [during COVID], we will need to invest in our communities. Their flexibility was***

*crucial to the speed and effectiveness of responses, and in many cases challenges the more conventional notions of volunteering… local volunteering schemes in many cases were able to respond quickly, playing a crucial role feeding and supporting their communities during the time of crisis. The VCS adapting their activities to join this decentralised approach to mobilising volunteers will remain extremely valuable." -- [Dr Harriet Thiery, MoVE researcher from the University of Sheffield](...)*

*Case Study: M20-Dover-Truck drivers.*

*In December 2020 More than 6000 lorry drivers were held in Kent over the Christmas period. Lorry drivers have been parked up on the M20 and at Manston Airport from Sunday 20th December 2020, after France closed its border following the discovery of a new COVID strain in England.  Operation Stack was deployed where parts of the M20 were used to queue lorries travelling towards the continent, to avoid causing gridlock across Kent's road network. Working Closely with Kent County Council to understand the situation, an emergency response coordination was setup with local grassroots community organizations across London to source, cook, and deliver food with over 65 volunteers packing hot-food, water bottles, snacks and other essential items to cover the Christmas period, and to support those people impacted. The Muslim Charities Forum coordination response was part of a human-centric approach with a close coordination of updated needs assessment provided by Kent County Council. The Emergency operation was conducted over four days delivering 6820 hot cooked meals, 6000 Water bottles and 1000 snack boxes-all delivered with the support of a coalition of 15 grassroots community groups ranging from a cricket club, a mosque, a charitable foundation, and a Michelin five-star restaurant serving the act of kindness and compassion to fellow humans during the time of real needs. (Muslim Charities Forum, December 2020)*

## Unique contribution of VCS in assessing and managing risks

Understanding, assessing, and then effectively managing the risks associated with rapid onset emergencies is critical. As is maintaining a shared view of the risks and mitigations in place.

Nationally, the National Risk Register represents a valuable tool, although some national partners would press for a more accessible and interactive format as well as more information on the Governments mitigation actions and response plans to make identifying and filling gaps easier. In addition, the regional and local level understanding of risk – and the resilience to those risks requires more nuance.  Currently, where VCS are well embedded within LRFs and Emergency Planning teams within local authorities, the VCS are contributing to the understanding and analysis of risks at both strategic and operational levels.   Local Infrastructure partners, and specialist VCS organisations can act as a conduit to local intelligence about risks and pressure points – and inform the planning and response where appropriate.  The VCS provides a unique contribution in this environment as its able to highlight the importance of appreciating impact – particularly unequal impact and how some risks may exacerbate existing or systemic inequalities.  Where this is happening,

Within the everyday work of VCS organisations – we continuously champion and recognised the importance of lived experience in ensuring a greater shared ownership of risks, mitigations and plans at the local level.  This is a critical consideration in the creation of emergency plans, and something that VCS can facilitate and ensure.

*Case Study: Manging the risk of vaccine hesitancy in Bradford*

*Community Action Bradford and District developed a hugely successful information comms campaign which not only resonated with local communities but also gained traction nationally picking up media coverage and widespread sharing.  The 'Behind the mask' campaign ([https://www.cabad.org.uk/behindthemask](https://www.cabad.org.uk/behindthemask)) utilised the connections these organisations have with the communities they support. Debunking some of the myths surrounding Coronavirus, behind each mask lies a true story of Bradford residents and their reality of how it*

*has changed their life, the campaign enlisted diverse voices from the community and was used to successfully target and encourage vaccine take up amongst hesitant communities. (Soo Nevison, Community Action Bradford and District)*

***Case Study: Food poverty risk in underrepresented communities in Northamptonshire during COVID-19***

*Voluntary Impact Northamptonshire established a Poverty Truth Commission in West Northamptonshire seeking to influence local and regional policy formulation on poverty by ensuring the voices of individuals and communities are heard. This work focussed primarily on the BAME experience of poverty whilst the COVID-19 Pandemic was at its height.  The BAME community felt largely disconnected from their Local Authority and the more traditional routes of accessing support and there was no BAME representation on either the Local Resilience Forum or the County Wide Resilience Cell. As a result of this disconnection (which in part preceded the pandemic) a separate Black Infrastructure Organisation has been launched and is known as Black Communities Together.  The following illustrates what members of their network have been able to achieve.*

*Increasingly people within the various local communities are struggling with food poverty, exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Food provision was identified as woefully inept and not culturally specific. All the BAME organisations surveyed had to support their own communities with culturally specific food parcels or the collection, delivery and circulation of culturally specific food.  Since March 2020, the United African Association (UAA) provided food parcels and wider support to the African community that had been affected by the onset of COVID-19, at a time when media reports were causing panic amongst the disproportionate impact of the pandemic on the black community.  To manage this risk, UAA have delivered 2,500 food parcels in the last 12 months, responding to an increase in number and diversity of requests. They regularly make and receive referrals with other hardship schemes (Social Services, Red Cross, NHS staff, the Borough Council, The Citizens Advice Bureau, GPs, other charities as well as self-referrals from their community), and together with other food banks UAA have formed the West Northamptonshire Food Alliance to better serve those struggling with food poverty. UAA have also run a telephone befriending service with the aim of reducing isolation within the community. (Voluntary Impact Northamptonshire)*

# Section 4: Why we're better together

In this section, we provide evidence of how working together has had a significant benefit, and conversely where either a lack of investment, or a lack of involvement – or both – has hindered the development of community resilience. LRFs in their current form are collaborations of varying depth, and those variations exist above and beyond their connection to VCS. This inconsistency will continue to be a real challenge in terms of enabling a whole society approach to resilience building. Whilst we recognise that a single way of working will need to have flexibility and regional variation – it is too different currently, and there is a need for local resilience structures to have greater consistency, and crucially accountability to the communities they serve. If the appetite for reform is there, and we are starting to think differently about how communities contribute, then we need a set of structures whose performance is regularly assessed, quality assured and iterated if and when it can be improved.

We attempt to highlight the barriers and make suggestions for what and how we need to overcome them and where increased investment should be established.

> *"No one knows when an emergency will strike. The effects can be devastating, far reaching and life changing. While we can never fully mitigate all the negative impacts of a major incident, we can work together to ensure our communities, families and friends are more resilient to withstand an emergency, then have the support they need during an emergency, and finally are enabled to recover well." (British Red Cross, Ready for Anything Report)*

## Ensuring central, local and region government, critical national infrastructure, academia, local responders and VCS collaborate

It is in the joining up of these multiple sectors and skill sets that resilience building is at its most effective. Initiatives like the UK National Resilience forum and the National Situation Centre are vital mechanisms for the sharing of human intelligence and information, and the VCSEP advocates for access and the opportunity to input from local charities and organisations on the ground during an emergency. Mechanisms like this are key to collaboration and more joined up and effective responses.

However, currently, there is no common or formal operational collaboration network used to link the VCS, government and local responders in the context of emergencies at the local or regional level. In some LRF areas, voluntary sector cells exist. In some of those areas those cells are integrated at multiple levels and with different sector representatives, and in others they are isolated and stand alone.

Our partners tell us, where infrastructure has been established that integrates the voluntary sector with the Category 1 and 2 responders, academics and local responders – the outcome is more coordinated, more person-centric and more effective. Recognising the challenges of trying to have every person around every table – there is a critical role for national, regional and local networks to ensure rapid decision making and to maintain an effective flow of information and understanding. There is a clear role for collectives like the National Emergencies Trust, responsible for the collective and coordinated distribution of funds in an emergency, and the VCS Emergencies Partnership, to provide that collaboration and information sharing space. These networks of networks pull national and local partners together to avoid duplication, share best practice and ultimately increase reach before and during a crisis.

The biggest opportunities in working more effectively together across sectors are:

1) Sharing of data, intelligence and expertise between these players – to ensure that together our individual decisions are consistently informed by a shared picture; and
2) The 'freeing' of local communities to respond quickly to the needs in their own area, empowering volunteers as a key part of our resilience framework and enabling a less bureaucratic approach to emergency responses.

*"Supporting communities affected by an emergency is at the heart of our work…. Yet we are unable to achieve this alone. We are committed to convening and collaborating with all partners from across sectors involved in responding to emergencies, as well as supporting community engagement, to share insights and develop policy and practice … And to drive the agenda forwards with those who have the power to make a difference." (BRC Ready for Anything Report)*

### Case study: Sharing Information and communication

*The voluntary sector is growing its capability and usage of data and insight.  The human intelligence available across the sector of the communities we support is significant.  There are tools and insights across the sector which could help our statutory and sector partners develop and maintain a strong understanding of risk, vulnerability and resilience*

*When Living Options Devon was asked to provide the decision makers across the Sustainability and Transformation Partnership with information as to how the pandemic has impacted on vulnerable people, the VCSE network combined with the Engagement Contract Partnership enabled them to quickly work with those partners trusted by their communities of interest (LGBT, Deaf, BME and disabled people) to produce the first report within a couple of weeks. Since then, Living Options has been asked to produce two more reports, highlighting the user experience due to lockdown easing and infection rates subsequently rising. (Roads to Renewal Report, Devon Community Foundation 2020)*

*"In order to support people most effectively, information needs to be shared appropriately between statutory responders and the local community and voluntary sector.  Sharing information can also help lessen the psychological impact of an emergency by providing reassurance, clarity and managing expectations." (BRC Ready for Anything)*

### Case Study: Planning and Preparation

*Procedures and planning for engaging the VCS Workforce of volunteers (including briefing packs, roles and requisite support) is something that key players could create together – understanding the different roles different players will assume.  Training and briefing of those volunteers can be provided by VCS – but needs to be hooked into the wider ecosystem.  This was the case for both vaccination centres, and the Afghan arrivals support.*

*A brief recent survey of members of the Devon Community Foundation advisory group revealed that between them, members sat on dozens of committees and advisory groups of all kinds with public sector colleagues, at all levels, from local operations to groups with a countywide remit. This participation has increased during the [Covid19] crisis period, and has contributed to some very effective working relationships, especially at an operational level, where mutual knowledge, trust and openness has never been greater (Roads to Renewal Report, Devon Community Foundation 2020)*

### Case Study: Sharing good practice

*Communities 1$^{st}$ (St Albans and Hertsmere) recruited 6,000k volunteers at the height of the first COVID-19 lockdown. They recruited a further 3,000k wanting to support the vaccination programme to provide volunteers at six vaccination sites across the county, in a mix of mass vaccination sites and Primary Care Network (PCN) GP surgery sites. They have recruited, sourced and supplied volunteers to deliver five roles across the vaccination programme – front of house, admin, steward, advocacy and post vaccine*

*observations. One of the key advantages of their service is every volunteer receives MECC (Make Every Contact Count) training, so regardless of the task the volunteers are delivering, they have the added knowledge to be able to identify potential additional needs a person may have and crucially signpost them to access further help and support. To train their volunteers they devised an online portal where training modules could be completed and, once trained and onboarded, volunteers could log on and select the shifts they wanted to work. Communities 1st shared their volunteer role profiles and training system model with neighbouring VCS organisations to save time and efforts in duplicating processes and to streamline the volunteering experience across the South East region. (Communities 1st, 2021)*

**Case Study: Training and Exercising**

*Rotarians in Kent, Bromley and Medway have taken part in exercises locally and have been trained to contribute at rest centres. Rotarians also have trained flood wardens in Kent and have been involved in multi-agency voluntary organisation planning for traffic hold ups at the Port of Dover. The Emergencies Partnership has organised table-top exercises across the country which have enabled partners to better understand the respective roles that are appropriate for them to play in an emergency.*

## Key enablers to collaboration

Working together across different sectors and organisations isn't always easy – but when investment is made, the results speak for themselves. Collaboration takes effort, and we have identified key enablers to successful collaboration in emergency planning, response and resilience building as:

- Shared scenario simulation and or tabletop exercising between statutory and sector bodies
- Access to data and information and a shared understanding of data protection and sharing guidelines that enables different organisations to work safely together
- Widespread networks across the UK are invaluable to accessing a volunteer workforce, but for also developing a very detailed and clear understanding of local areas and their people well.
- The human intelligence and insight available across the sector (and in some cases curated by the VCSEP has helped organisations understand where the greatest needs have been and assign resources appropriately.
- Involvement of those with lived experience
- Clear lines and common understanding of where accountabilities/responsibilities lie
- Investment of time and resources

***"Investing time and resources to create a resilience network and using that network to brief volunteers has been invaluable for Rotary. In addition to that, regular meetings with VCSEP partners have allowed communication of need and response to be shared rapidly and informed the steps we take as an organisation… finally, knowing members of our LRF was also valuable – and where that hasn't been possible, the VCSEP has helped us stay connected" (Rotary GB&I)***

## Key barriers to collaboration

We know that the amount and effectiveness of collaboration between the voluntary and community groups, and local resilience forums can vary. Where collaboration is lacking, emergency response planning focuses mainly on statutory agencies, missing the opportunity to use the experience of voluntary and local organisations that are important to community recovery. Although there are pockets of great practice where collaboration is delivering great benefit – that is where significant barriers have been overcome. Elsewhere, many of these barriers remain a challenge:

- The community often have no knowledge of how to get involved in forward planning unless through a local organisation that is well connected
- The community often have no knowledge that preparation for emergencies is taking place.
- Statutory bodies haven't engaged or sought input from the sector – or where they have, the VCS involvement isn't at the right level (VCS tend to sit on voluntary sector subgroups, these focus on building coordination, skills and capacity within their own sector – rather than contributing to the LRF's broader emergency planning and response work)
- Lack of VCS capacity and funds to deliver. In many cases, statutory bodies have expected VCS assistance for free. Although volunteers do not expect payment, there are costs for engagement, space to collaborate, expertise in volunteer management, psychosocial services, training, management, subsistence, and travel or ongoing support to VCS organisations and maintaining and activating our networks
- In the context of testing and vaccination support – a lack of investment of time and mechanisms for working together to discuss an agreed approach meant there was very little joined up working between delivery partners.  Everyone working very hard, but in their own silos
- Lack of investment in simple data and information sharing technology that allows different organisations to work together
- Effective cross-sector collaboration requires investment in relationships by all parties *before* emergencies take place – in order to build trust, a common language and crucially to shape the approach to make space for each other.  This won't just happen and needs to be sufficiently resourced.

*Case study: VCS had no access to heat wave plans*

*Ahead of the 2021 summer heatwave, VCS organisations working together in London found it difficult to identify ways to prepare communities and build resilience to the forecasted heat threat across London because they did not have access to borough resilience forums plans and did not want to duplicate efforts. Access to those plans and to others also preparing could have enabled a joined up and effective gap analysis of where the sector could focus efforts.*

*Case Study: VCS not seen as first choice*

*An example of the lack of VCS inclusion amongst LRF planning structures can be found where LRFs request assistance from the MOD. It is now an accepted protocol for military planners receiving assistance requests from LRFs via the Military Aid to Civilian Authority (MACA) system, to begin the conversation by ensuring that those Civilian Authorities have first exhausted all other options, including for the Voluntary Sector to assist. In such instances there have been numerous occasions where those LRFs have subsequently sourced additional capacity from VCS organisations via VCS Emergencies Partnership, thus negating the need for a MACA request. This example underscores the assertion that many such Civilian Authorities, in the guise of LA Emergency Planning staff or LRF Chairpersons have not yet embraced the Voluntary Sector as a fully-fledged partner in their resilience planning frameworks.*

*"Historically, we've seen a reluctance to involve VCS groups (particularly smaller and informal ones) in exercises, because of a worry that they'll see that there isn't a completely perfect plan and lose confidence in statutory sector responders. Our experience [in Cumbria] is that generally it has the opposite effect - VCS groups get a realistic idea of what to expect in an incident, and can begin to think about what they can add and how they might link in" (Cumbria CRG)*

## Section 5: Recommendations

Each day the VCS works with the most vulnerable and marginalized communities in society,
and we see the disproportionate impact that disasters have on these groups. The insights our sector can provide to government and emergency structures will be crucial for an effective response and recovery following the current spate of emergency events.

Despite the significant contribution to community and national resilience, the VCS is not currently systematically embedded in resilience planning, training, or responding other than in a piecemeal way by some local resilience fora and local Authority planners, for some aspects of the VCS described above. To deliver their support effectively a cross section of the VCS, rather than just the large, government funded agencies, or those with emergency response at the heart of their purpose, need to be embraced and embedded into local and national emergency preparedness, response and recovery awareness and structures.

Our recommended structure for achieving this is as follows:

1) **Emergency and community focused VCS involvement should be mandated in National Strategy and Guidance, specifically in the planning of, training for and responding to major emergencies at every level of the local resilience structures**
   All government forums on emergency planning, preparedness, response, and recovery should contain representation from the VCS – both in terms of traditional emergency response leaders in the sector, and community and place-based leaders in the sector.  Single person representation is not sufficient to reflect the breadth and diversity of VCS activity and working groups and coproduction with a range of VCS expertise can help increase inclusion and provide a meaningful link. Not only will this ensure no vulnerable group is going unsupported, but it will also enable the VCS to be more coordinated in local and national responses. CCA and local resilience structure guidance should explicitly encourage that the VCS should always be involved in formal training and exercising for future emergency. Any resilience and / or capacity training should be mandated to include an offer to VCS.

2) **The local resilience structures should be supported to meaningfully foster engagement and capability building with and amongst the VCS.**

   Local resilience structures (Local Resilience Forums or Strategic Coordinating Groups) and local authority hubs should proactively foster connections with VCS organisations, whether local representatives of national organisations or local organisations, perhaps utilising their regional VCS Emergencies Partnership contact or other representative structures and be granted the capacity to do so. This is vital where there are 'cold spots', such as where there is not an established relationship between councils and VCS, or where specialist support from the VCS may be required. It is important that efforts are made by LRFs to increase understanding of their role and to undertake outreach to different parts of the voluntary sector both in peacetime and following an incident to help ensure that it is clear how to link into communications if they respond to an incident. This should include simple explanations of the emergency response processes and procedures. We also advocate for a greater level of performance review, quality assurance and improvement assessments of local resilience structures.  Cabinet Office and the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (formally MHCLG) should develop or adopt and promote infrastructure and guidance which enables and supports LRFs to continuously improve, work with and actively foster engagement as well as capacity building amongst all their partners including their VCS communities.

3) **The VCS should be recognised and adequately resourced as a network of effective and connected resilience building assets.**
   The UK government should continue to host the National Resilience Forum that includes the key government departments together with non-statutory auxiliary partners, and the VCSEP and lead sector organisation to

oversee the development of preparedness and response plans against the risks highlighted in the national risk register. In addition to a strategic seat and resources at the national table, national and community resilience funding should be ringfenced for and distributed to the VCS for their ongoing contribution to resilience building in their communities including providing for the resources required to collaborate effectively.  This will require a long-term, flexible approach to investment, to replace short-term rigid grant-making, procurement and commissioning processes. All funders and commissioners, whether public sector or independent, should consider how to sustain and expand progressive, flexible funding models that encourage cooperation rather than competition, and facilitate enduring relationships between funder and funded. We recognise the challenge this represents when public funds are under pressure, and when VCSE organisations, cushioned by short-term emergency funding, will find their sustainability severely challenged in the months and years ahead. We believe maximizing opportunities to support trusted organisations with unrestricted funds, to achieve resilience building outcomes will deliver a significant return on investment when major shocks hit.

4) **The VCS Emergencies Partnership and representative partners are engaged in the ongoing set of discussions following this submission on how to practically enable these changes to happen and how they sit within wider reform**

   The benefits and barriers set out in this submission provide an outline of how the sector has and continues to support resilience. The practical steps we must take, how that is funded and reinforced is more complicated, and the VCS Emergencies Partnership, as a collective voice on behalf of the sector in the Emergency planning and response space, will work with Government, and key partners to shape how to do this effectively. The VCS Emergencies Partnership provides a vital role in aiding the coordination of the sector when a major incident occurs and has a number of mechanisms to help identify activity and meet need during a crisis. As this is a new partnership further links need to be embedded within official structures to help facilitate engagement between LRFs/SCGs and the VCS Emergencies Partnership, this will require support from the government. It is also vital that government departments respond to concerns raised by the VCS Emergencies Partnership and works collaboratively to address issues affecting the response to major incidents for the benefit of those affected in future.

People in our communities should expect that their needs in a crisis are central to the way emergency response is designed, implemented and coordinated across emergency responders, statutory services and the voluntary and community sector. We call upon stakeholders to ensure that guidance is improved, and the voluntary and community sector are placed firmly at the heart of preparedness, response to, and recovery from any emergency.

When an emergency hits, on one level, the community response "just happens", but as layers are peeled back, it is very clear to see that a huge amount of work goes into making sure community responses are supported, coordinated and connected into the statutory response.

From Communities to COBRA; it is time to recognise there is more to community resilience than emergency planning, and the VCS is the partner to help unlock that.

*End of report.*

# Section 6: Contributors

This report has been created by the VCS Emergencies Partnership, based on the thoughtful and constructive contributions of a cross section of our partners.

A special mention to the collaborative efforts of Nora Corkery at Devon Communities Together, Carolyn Otley and the members of the Cumbria Community Resilience Group, Ellen Tranter and Louise Palk at the British Red Cross, Kerrie Fletcher at Community Action Derby, Garry Jones at Support Staffordshire, Clare Mills at NAVCA, Amanda Watkins, Brenda Parsons and the Rotary GB&I South East Volunteers, Professor Duncan Shaw at the University of Manchester, Johanna Philips and Melissa Hatch at Citizens Advice, Rachel Almeida at Victim Support, Luke Cox at RE:ACT Disaster Response, Tansy Hutchinson and Ali Harris at Equally Ours, Jon Everett at UK Community Foundations, Elliot Bidgood at Volunteering Matters, Sam Ward at Royal Voluntary Service, Sarah Troop at Maldon and District Community Voluntary Service, Selina Rodrigues at CommUNITY Barnet, Martin Trinder at Community Voluntary Service Bedfordshire, Soo Nevison at Community Action Bradford and District, Melissa Brackley, Noah Froud and Katie Gallon at St John Ambulance, Jane Howard at Medway Voluntary Action, Adrian Clee at Salvation Army, as well as the collective effort of the VCS Emergencies Partnership team.  These sector colleagues have provided input via workshops, focus groups, written reports and verbal updates to help create a considered view of the sector.

*Contributing reports and research include:*

- British Red Cross – Ready for Anything Report (2018)
- British Red Cross – People Power in Emergencies (2019)
- British Red Cross – Ready for the future: Meeting people's needs in an emergency (2021)
- Citizens Advice – Denbighshire Flood Report 2020 and 2021
- Cumbria Community Foundation and Cumbria CVS - Sustaining community action and volunteering in thriving communities (workshop)
- Danny Kruger MP – Levelling Up: The new social covenant
- Devon Community Foundation – Roads to Renewal Part 2 – Towards genuine partnership
- Devon Communities Together – Covid 19 Summary Impact Report
- Medway Voluntary Action – 2020 Outcome Report
- Universities of Sheffield, Hull and Leeds - Mobilising Volunteers Effectively
- Sheffield Hallam University – Stepping Up: Coordinating local voluntary sector responses to the COVID-19 crisis
- St John Ambulance – Million Hours Report
- Victim Support – Major Incidents Policy (2020)

*Additional thanks for the endorsement from our network of networks. The list of core and collaborating partners changes regularly – Summer 2021 summary outlined below:*

ACRE
Action Hampshire
Action Together CIO
Action with Communities in Rural Kent
Adur Voluntary Action
Amber Valley Council for Voluntary Service
Ashfield Voluntary Action
Baobab Foundation
Barking & Dagenham Council for Voluntary Service
Barnsley CVS
Basingstoke Voluntary Action
Bassetlaw Community and Voluntary Service
Bath & North East Somerset Third Sector Group CIO
Bedfordshire and Luton Community Foundation
Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity
Bexley Voluntary Service Council
Birmingham Voluntary Service Council
Blackburn with Darwen Council for Voluntary Services
Bolton Community and Voluntary Services
Brentwood Council for Voluntary Service
Brighton & Hove Community Works
British Red Cross
Bromsgrove and Redditch Network
Burnley Pendle And Rossendale Council For Voluntary Service
Bury Voluntary, Community and Faith Alliance
Business in the Community
Cambridge Council for Voluntary Service
Canterbury and Herne Bay Volunteer Centre Ltd
Central Surrey Voluntary Action
Chelmsford Council for Voluntary Service
Cheshire Community Council
Chester West Voluntary Action
Citizens Advice
Communities 1st
Communities First Wessex
Community Action Bradford and District Ltd
Community Action Derby
Community Action Hampshire
Community Action Isle of Wight
Community Action Network
Community Action Network (Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole)
Community Action Norfolk
Community Action Northumberland
Community Action Suffolk
Community Action Sutton
Community Action Wirral
Community Action: MK
Community and Voluntary Action Blyth Valley
Community and Voluntary Services Cheshire East
Community Barnet
Community Council for Somerset
Community Council of Devon
Community Council of Lancashire
Community First
Community First in Herefordshire and Worcestershire
Community First Yorkshire
Community Impact Bucks
Community Links Bromley
Community Southwark
Community Voluntary Service Bedfordshire
Community Voluntary Services For Broxbourne And East Herts
Connected Voice
Connecting Communities in Berkshire Ltd
Connex Community Support
Cornwall Rural Commmunity Charity
Cornwall Voluntary Sector Forum
COUNCIL FOR VOLUNTARY SERVICE (MEDWAY)
Council for Voluntary Services West Lancashire
Crawley Community Action
Croydon Voluntary Action
Cruse
Cumbria Council for Voluntary Service
CVS South Gloucestershire
Dacorum Council for Voluntary Services
Derbyshire Dales Council for Voluntary Service
Devon Communities
Devon Voluntary Action
Dorset Community Action

Droitwich Spa and Rural Council for Voluntary Services
Dudley CVS
Durham Community Action
EALING COMMUNITY AND VOLUNTARY SERVICE
EAST RIDING VOLUNTARY ACTION SERVICES (ERVAS) LIMITED
Enfield Voluntary Action
Equally Ours
Erewash CVS
Evesham Volunteer Centre
Faith Action
Fare Share
First Aid Nursing Yeomanry
Food Foundation
Glossop and District Volunteer Bureau
Gloucestershire VCS Alliance
Gosport Voluntary Action
Greater London Volunteering
Greater Manchester Centre for Voluntary Organisation
Hackney Council for Voluntary Service
Halton and St Helens Voluntary and Community Action
Hambleton Community Action
Harrogate and Area Council for Voluntary Services
Hart Voluntary Action Limited
Hastings VA
Havering Volunteer Centre
HEREFORDSHIRE VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS SUPPORT SERVICE
High Peak CVS
Human Appeal
Humber and Wolds Rural Community Council
Hunts Forum of Voluntary Organisations
Imago Community
Inclusion Barnet
Inspire South Tyneside
Involve Community Services
Jewish Volunteering Network
Khalsa Aid
Kingston Voluntary Action
Lancashire BME Network
Lancaster District Community and Voluntary Solutions
LGBT Consortium
Lincolnshire Community Foundation
Lincolnshire CVS
Liverpool CVS
London Plus
London Search and Rescue
Maldon & District CVS
Manchester Alliance for Community Care
Manchester University
Merton Connected
Mid Sussex Voluntary Action
Middlesbrough Voluntary Development Agency
Mind
Muslim Charities Forum
NAVCA
NCVO
National Emergencies Trust
Newark & Sherwood CVS
North Tyneside Voluntary Organisations Development
Northamptonshire ACRE
Nottingham Community and Voluntary Service
One Community Eastleigh
One Knowsley
One Walsall Ltd
One Westminster
Oxfordshire Community and Voluntary Action
Peterborough Council for Voluntary Services
Plymouth VSCE (POP+)
Principle Consulting
Rainbow Services (Harlow)
Rayleigh, Rochford & District Association for Voluntary Services
RE:ACT
Reading Voluntary Action
Redbridge Council for Voluntary Service
Redcar and Cleveland Voluntary Development Agency
Richmond upon Thames Council for Voluntary Service
Rotary Great Britain and Ireland
Rural Action Derbyshire
Rural Community Action Nottinghamshire
RURAL COMMUNITY COUNCIL (LEICESTERSHIRE AND RUTLAND)

Rural Community Council of Essex
Rushmoor Voluntary Services
Royal Voluntary Service
Salford Community and Voluntary Services
Salvation Army
Sandwell Council of Voluntary Organisations
Sefton Council for Voluntary Service
Selby District Association of Voluntary Service
Slough Council for Voluntary Service
South Derbyshire CVS
South Hams Community & Voluntary Services
South Yorkshire Community Foundation Limited
Southampton Voluntary Services
Spark Somerset
St John Ambulance
St John Wales
Support Staffordshire
Surrey Community Action
Sutton Borough Volunteer Centre
Tees Valley Rural Action
Teignbridge Community and Voluntary Services
Telford and Wrekin Council for Voluntary Service
Tendring Community Voluntary Services
The Community Council of Shropshire
THE COUNCIL FOR VOLUNTARY SERVICE UTTLESFORD
The Metro Centre Ltd.
Torbay Community Development Trust Ltd
Tower Hamlets Council for Voluntary Service
TTVS
UK Community Foundations
Urban Challenge Ltd
VAST Services (1920)
Victim Support
Voluntary Action Arun and Chichester
Voluntary Action Camden
Voluntary Action Coventry
Voluntary ACTion Cumbria
Voluntary Action Epping Forest
Voluntary Action Harrow Limited
Voluntary Action Islington
Voluntary Action Leeds
Voluntary Action Leicester
Voluntary Action Leicestershire
Voluntary Action North East Lincolnshire
Voluntary Action North Lincolnshire Limited
Voluntary Action North Somerset
Voluntary Action Reigate & Banstead Ltd
Voluntary Action Rotherham
Voluntary Action Sheffield
Voluntary Action Swindon
Voluntary and Community
Voluntary and Community Action East Cambridgeshire
Voluntary and Community Action Sunderland
Voluntary Impact Northamptonshire Ltd.
Voluntary Norfolk
Voluntary Organisations' Network North East
Voluntary Sector North West
Voluntary Support North Surrey
Volunteer Centre Blackpool Wyre & Fylde
Volunteer Centre Dorset
Volunteer Centre Kensington & Chelsea
Volunteer Centre Swindon
Volunteer Centre Uttlesford
Volunteer Centre West Berkshire
Volunteer Cornwall
Volunteering Bradford
Volunteering Matters
VONNE
VOSCUR Limited
Wansbeck Centre for Voluntary Services
Warrington Voluntary Action
Warwickshire Community and Voluntary Action
Warwickshire Rural Community Council
Wessex Community Action
West of England Rural Network
Wolverhampton Voluntary Sector Council
York Centre for Voluntary Service