

The logo for Thurrock CVS, featuring the text 'Thurrock CVS' in white on a dark blue square background, surrounded by several overlapping, semi-transparent squares in various colors (purple, green, yellow, blue).

Thurrock
CVS

TCVS STRATEGY 2024-27

Thurrock Community & Voluntary Services

Stronger Together or Thriving Thurrock? Enabling local organisations to grow and thrive, while improving

Established: 20/03/2002

 www.thurrockcvs.org

 info@thurrockcvs.org.uk

Charity No: 1090253 | Company Registration No: 4300967



"I'm very proud of the work we do at Thurrock CVS. We consistently deliver high-quality, innovative services. Everything we do is rooted in a strong sense of community and a commitment to improving lives in Thurrock. As Chair for the past 12 years, I've seen first-hand the positive impact we've had on the sector and the residents. We were instrumental in leading the COVID 19 response, making sure people were safe and supported. We are now entering a period of financial crisis and the challenge shifts to supporting financial resilience.

"As we launch our new 3-year strategy, it is important to reflect on our achievements as well as our hopes for the future. We have become a true anchor institution within Thurrock and are at the heart of much of the great work that is happening locally."

"We're proud to have around 250 local charities, groups, and organisations as members. They show incredible resilience and dedication, no matter the circumstances. We promise to continue to listen to you and find new ways to support the sector to thrive. We are proud of the health and social care services we provide to the residents of Thurrock. We promise to continue to listen, support, care and advocate on behalf of the people of Thurrock. Thank you to our amazing staff, volunteers, and trustees. Your hard work and commitment are the reasons for our success and will continue to drive us forward."

Mike Kelly

Chair of Thurrock CVS

Thriving Thurrock

Our Vision

"To enable a stronger, connected, and resilient voluntary, community, faith, and social enterprise sector, which improves the quality of life for residents in Thurrock."

Our Mission

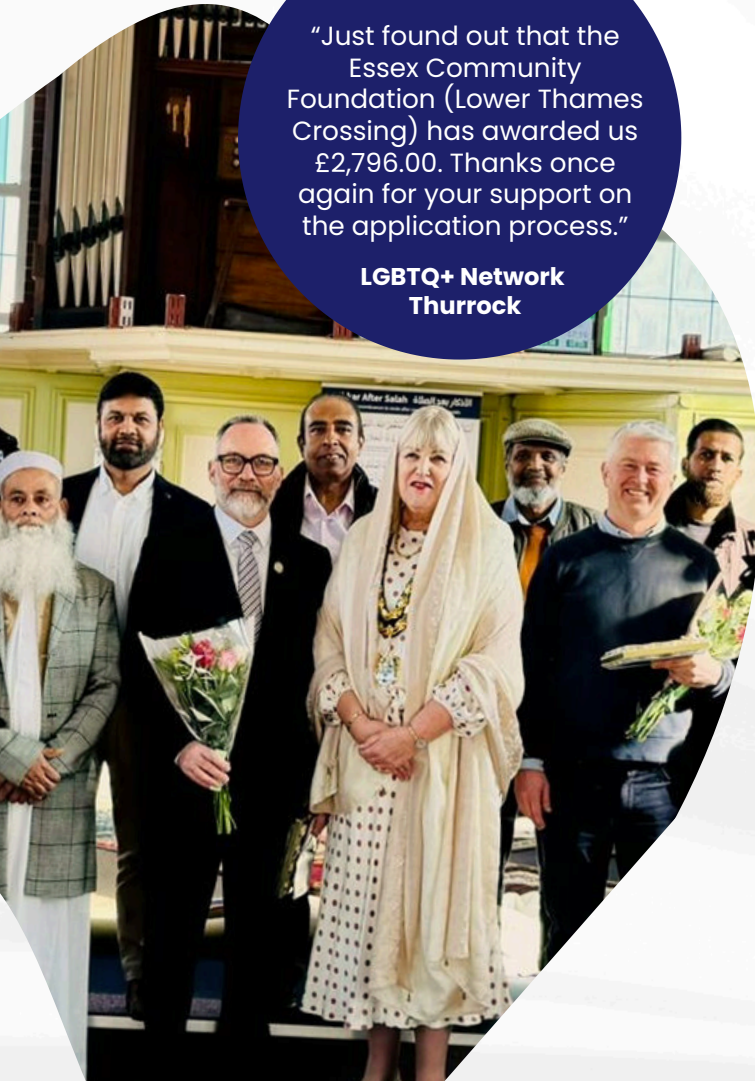
"To support, promote and develop a sustainable voluntary, community, faith, and social enterprise sector in Thurrock, enabling local organisations to grow and thrive, while improving the quality of life for residents and fostering community engagement."

Thurrock CVS's Values

-  **Collaboration:** Working together with individuals, organisations, and communities to achieve shared goals.
-  **Inclusion:** Promoting diversity, equality, and fairness in all activities and partnerships.
-  **Integrity:** Acting transparently, honestly, and ethically in all actions and decisions.
-  **Sustainability:** Ensuring long-term positive impact through careful stewardship of resources and fostering resilience within the community sector. Ambitious - We are driven by ambition to lead and inspire change, empowering the sector to create lasting, positive impact across Thurrock.

"Just found out that the Essex Community Foundation (Lower Thames Crossing) has awarded us £2,796.00. Thanks once again for your support on the application process."

LGBTQ+ Network
Thurrock





"I thought it was a great event, it was really good to know who is still out there and any changes that have been made to local services and organisations, particularly post covid. A really good opportunity to network."

**Attendee of a TCVS
Voluntary Sector Brunch**

Our Purpose

- ▶ 1. Leadership and Advocacy**

Thurrock CVS provides strong leadership and advocates for the Voluntary, Community, Faith, and Social Enterprise (VCFSE) sector. We represent the sector's interests in discussions with policymakers and stakeholders, ensuring that community voices are heard and valued. Our advocacy efforts focus on shaping policies that support the sector's growth and sustainability.
- ▶ 2. Partnership and Collaboration**

We foster effective partnerships and collaborations across the community and public sectors. By connecting organisations and facilitating joint initiatives, we enhance collective impact and drive shared goals. Our collaborative approach helps address complex community issues through united efforts and resource sharing.
- ▶ 3. Supporting Volunteering**

Thurrock CVS is dedicated to promoting and supporting volunteering within the community. We offer resources, training, and recognition for volunteers, helping to build a strong and engaged volunteer base. Our efforts ensure that volunteering is a fulfilling and impactful experience for individuals and organizations alike.
- ▶ 4. Capacity Building**

We focus on strengthening the capabilities of VCFSE organisations through capacity building. Our services include training, coaching, mentorship, and support in areas such as governance, fundraising, and strategic planning. By enhancing organisational effectiveness, we help groups become more resilient and better equipped to meet community needs. Our offer to the sector also includes providing small grants via the Thurrock Community Fund and operating the Beehive resource centre on behalf of the sector.
- ▶ 5. Health and Social Care Provision**

Thurrock CVS plays a crucial role in supporting and delivering health and social care provision. We collaborate with health services and social care providers to ensure that community needs are met effectively. Our work includes supporting discharge, facilitating access to services, supporting integration efforts, and addressing health and social care challenges in the community.

Working with Thurrock

Thurrock has over 350 charities, community groups and social enterprises with a combined income in excess of £23million. It employs over 9,000 WTE staff and provides around 500,000 volunteer hours. The Sector provides support in all parts of Thurrock and most areas of life including health, care, education, arts, heritage, sports, faith, poverty, food and the environment. The voluntary sector is the heartbeat of many Thurrock communities. One of the many strengths in Thurrock are our close relationships and passion for place.

Over the last 5 – 7 years we have seen a rapid rise in the number of new social enterprises in Thurrock. This often represents a strong entrepreneurial drive to find practical ways to support the most vulnerable. This agility is much required as the sector moves into service areas left by the retraction of the statutory services. Thurrock has many smaller charities, groups and social enterprises. One of the challenges for the sector will be our ability to co-ordinate and collaborate to provide these solutions at scale.

The charity sector perceives that the funding environment is becoming more competitive with grants often oversubscribed. This is coupled with challenges of rising costs, increased demand and challenges retaining staff due to low wages mean that it is a difficult operating environment for the sector.

At the same time, there will be exciting opportunities within the sector over the next few years through the programmes such as Active Thurrock Place Based Partnership expansion and the renewal of the Creative People and Places bid to the Arts council. There are likely to be more opportunities to partner with business. Over the course of the strategy, we are likely to see further industrial expansion through large scale developments such as the Freeport which could create opportunities for greater partnership working with industry.

Nationally the public finances are poor with some very tough decisions being made regarding public services and the welfare provision which will have profound impacts on levels of poverty, access to care and social cohesion. The situation is no better locally. The council are fast implementing their new operating model. The council will become much smaller and sell asset as it strives to save money whilst the Mid and South Essex NHS Integrated Care Board is entering into financial turnaround.

Finally, technology, including artificial intelligence, is rapidly changing our world and some parts of the sector are poorly prepared for this. Our recent digital survey showed that many charities and community groups are using old laptops and sometimes find the day-to-day navigation of technology to be difficult. There is much to do within the sector to ensure efficient operations and much to do within communities to address digital exclusion.





Our Achievements

Thurrock CVS has become a central player in Thurrock, and we are rightly proud of our many achievements. We are at the heart of many positive things that have happened in Thurrock, whether that is engaging communities, building partnerships, advocating for patients or hosting events. Over the last 35 years, we can see that we have stayed true to our mission whilst adapting to the changing circumstances around us.



Leadership and advocacy

We are proud of the impact we have made to change policy and strategy. An example of this was our work with carers, making sure that carer's voices were at the heart of the carer's strategy and new carers service specification. Our work on the 'missing middle' was at the heart of the case for change set out in the Better Care Together Strategy.

Our work on an unmet need for people with personality disorders influenced the Thurrock Mental Health investment into street triage and crisis care. All around, we can see how we have listened to our members and communities to advocate for change. Thurrock CVS and Healthwatch have often been the conscience of Thurrock. Making sure that people are at the heart of decision making.

Partnership and collaboration

Partnership working is at the heart of many of our achievements. Whether this be:

- During COVID19, Thurrock Coronavirus Community Action (a partnership between Thurrock CVS, Stronger Together Partners and Thurrock council) came together to provide practical support to the community via a dedicated phone line, providing welfare checks, food food deliveries and prescription delivery. We recruited an army of 500+ volunteers and supported over 2500 activities to support vulnerable individuals shielding. During Covid-19 an amazing 3985 hours were volunteered.
- Working with partners such as the Council, Purfleet Forum and local businesses to create the Purfleet Community Pantry.



Our Achievements



Working with partners to grow the Big Lunches into a staple for the summer calendar in Thurrock. In the summer of 2024 we had approximately 5000 people attend the big lunches.



Supported volunteering

We launched a volunteer bureau in 1997 and hosted the bureau until 2011. The Volunteer Centre then came back to CVS in 2017 where we have continued providing a volunteer service to support Thurrock residents and the voluntary sector.



We could not run the Beehive without our brilliant reception and garden volunteers. The Beehive is open 7 days per week and we have between 30,000 and 40,000 visits per year. The building provides space for a whole range of activities from Citizens Advice Sessions to Arts groups to Men's table tennis to workshops to Faith groups.

Capacity Building

We are, and have always been, a member organisation. At the last count, we had 248 members. Members receive support via our advice and guidance, training and networking events. Our newsletter reaches more than 1000 people and our social media views reach more than 178,000 per year.

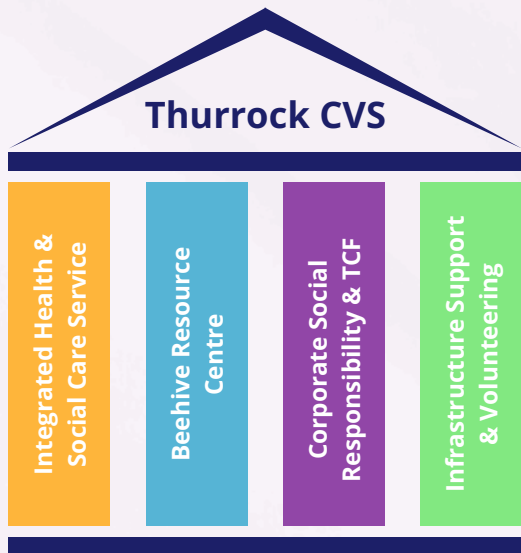
Health and social care provision

We are a specialist provider of health and social care support in Thurrock. This complements our other functions by understanding the issues and challenges faced by the sector as well as first hand experiences to try to influence change at strategic Board level.



What we do

Thurrock CVS is a stable, well-run organisation with a variety of income sources and services. We are connected by a focus on serving the Thurrock Community. Our 4 pillars are:



The First Pillar is Integrated Health and Social Care support. We currently provide 4 Key services:

- Thurrock Healthwatch
- Social Prescribing across Thurrock
- By Your Side
- Community Health Champions

These services complement and integrate with each other. We are one of the leading health and social care providers within Thurrock. We support patients throughout their health journey.

We hear patients experience of care, we help them when they come out of hospital, we link them to the wider community, and we help them find ways to prevent becoming ill in the first place. We use our place on strategic forums to make sure that the voice of the residents is heard by our statutory partners.

The Second Pillar is Corporate Social Responsibility and Thurrock Community Fund (TCF).

We use our networks and membership to help to distribute funds to the local sector. For example, we undertook a digital survey and then brokered funding from the UKSPF fund to provide IT equipment and connectivity. We are beginning the journey towards better coordinating the social value levy, so the benefits of economic growth can be felt locally.

The Third Pillar is the Beehive Resource Centre.

The Beehive is an important practical support to the sector. The Beehive is run on a non-profit basis to provide affordable rent and community space to the sector and the community. It currently hosts 9 different charities and organisations as well as having multiple regular hirers of the hall and kitchen. We aim to become net zero carbon.

The Fourth Pillar is our Infrastructure support and Volunteer centre.

We aim to support the sector through training, advice, advocacy, partnership building, networking and volunteer support.

How do we work?

A Human Learning System Approach and Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD)

Our approach to work across everything we do is grounded in the principles of Human Learning Systems (HLS) and Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD).



At its core, the HLS model emphasises the importance of continuous learning, adaptation, and collaboration. We recognise that every community, organisation, and system is unique, and solutions must evolve through shared learning and experimentation. This approach allows us to remain flexible, responsive, and committed to creating lasting impact.



In tandem, we apply the ABCD framework, which focuses on identifying and harnessing the strengths, skills, and resources that already exist within communities. Rather than seeing communities through the lens of their deficits, we work alongside individuals and groups to mobilise their assets, creating collective power and fostering local ownership of solutions.



By combining HLS and ABCD, we ensure our strategies are co-created with the people most affected by the challenges we aim to address. This collaborative, strengths-based approach nurtures resilience, innovation, and sustainable outcomes. Together, we support systems that are not only effective but also deeply aligned with the needs, aspirations, and capabilities of the communities we serve.



"A brief message to thank all at Thurrock CVS for the recent Big Lunch Events & all the hard work which was involved to make these happen.

"I believe these were well received by the Residents and hopefully will continue in the Summers to come!"

Kim Towlson
Thurrock Community Forums

"It was lovely seeing the community come together and having a good time. Well done to everyone involved with making these events so good."

Thurrock Resident
South Ockendon
Big Lunch

Strategic Objectives



Strategic Objectives 24-27

What are our key Goals?

To support and celebrate sector leadership and resilience.

To create a coaching and mentoring programme to support sector leaders.

To deliver an annual strength of the sector report celebrating the successes of the sector.

To host celebration events which showcase the work of volunteers and community groups.

Using data and intelligence to better support our members.

Continue to expand our membership base so that we reach more organisations.

To support digital connectivity and IT confidence within the sector.

Use AI and other tools to become more intelligence led as an organisation so we can better target our support to the needs of our members.

To develop our online offer to our members to provide advice, information, tools and resources to our members.

Diversify TCVS income sources to ensure a robust and sustainable organisation which is not reliant on individual contracts or commissioners.

Develop the TCVS commercial offer for the sector and businesses which build on our strengths and skills.

Strengthening the voice of the sector.

To create key strategic networks across the sector, ensuring effective representation of the diversity of the sector.

To effectively participate in the key strategic forums. To map and review our influence on statutory decision making.

To become a steward for the Human Learning Systems Approach supporting the process of continuous learning in Thurrock.

Strategic Objectives



Strategic Objectives 24-27

What are our key Goals?

Support the financial resilience of the sector.

To develop a Thurrock sector strategy to influence the grant making environment.

To create a strategy for the Thurrock sector that increases the flow of funding into the area.

To develop a co-ordinated approach to social value so money and resources support local residents.

To promote volunteering in Thurrock.

To become a nationally accredited volunteer centre supporting more people into volunteering.

To recruit volunteers from all parts of the Thurrock community.

Further develop the Beehive Resource Centre for the benefit of the Sector and the community.

To become net zero carbon through greater energy efficiency and increased use of renewable energy.

To fully utilise all areas of the Beehive for the benefit for the community including the kitchen and garden.

To upgrade the facilities so that the building is modern, comfortable, safe and digitally enabled.

Providing high quality health and social care solutions enhanced by our infrastructure role and underpinned by a Human Learning Systems approach.

To bring all 4 projects into an integrated, whole Thurrock offer.

To embed the HLS throughout the service delivery model.

To ensure the 4 services are embedded within the Integrated Locality Teams.

Statutory partners will seek to use CVS for independent, commissioned work.

All staff will understand HLS and how to live the values of this approach.



Statement from our Chief Executive Officer

“In my first year as CEO of TCVS, I have focussed on listening to the sector and our partners to understand how TCVS can make the most impact. This strategy is the result of those conversations.

“We have heard from our members and our communities about their concerns as we navigate the current financial crisis in Thurrock. There are real concerns about the resilience of the sector as local, regional and national funding become harder to secure. This time of change will, no doubt, also create opportunities for the sector as funders seek to drive value for money. This strategy sets out some of the challenges and opportunities that lay ahead.

“We have set out 8 clear strategic priorities. these represent the areas where we think we can use our skills and strengths to make the most difference. Not only that, but the strategy also sees the organisation adopt the human learning system approach as its guiding principle, alongside the ongoing commitment to strengths based working. We want to make sure we fully play our part in the wider community transformation.

“We will make sure that we are open and transparent in how we operate. it is important to me that we are an organisation that is accessible and open to all.

“I am excited about the future and looking forward to continuing to serve Thurrock.”

Mark Tebbs

Chief Executive Officer of Thurrock CVS
