

# Community Capacity & Resilience Fund

**Round Three Evaluation Report**  
January 2019



# Summary

## About

The Community Capacity and Resilience Fund (CCRF) allows small third sector organisations to access Scottish Government funding that would otherwise be out of reach.

## Awards

The average grant awarded by the Fund in this round was £8k, and evidence shows that the Fund is reaching its intended audience - grassroots organisations with an income of £250k or less - as the average income of the organisations who were awarded CCRF during this Round was £95k. Furthermore, 86% of the workforce of the 36 organisations funded are volunteers.

## Impact

CCRF is being used in innovative ways by organisations to tackle the impact of welfare reform and poverty that is being experienced in their own communities. In Round Three the projects and services delivered reflected the growing need to address food poverty, with 28% of CCRF projects providing support to overcome this and the continuing impact of Universal credit with 30% of CCRF projects providing support to overcome this.

## Frontline funding

Funding the frontline directly, and therefore trusting community-based organisations to develop targeted and effective solutions, is a successful means of alleviating the effects of welfare reform, poverty and social exclusion. 100% of organisations reported that the Fund was extremely helpful in meeting the needs of their communities and the key partnerships formed and developed in the delivery of projects could not have happened without it.

## Approach

The Fund's flexible, light-touch and supportive approach is valued by organisations as well as the space provided for peer support and sharing of learning.

# Context

Launched in April 2015, the CCRF is a pilot funding scheme which assists community-based third sector organisations with an annual income of £200,000 or less to pilot innovative and creative projects, and increase their capacity to deliver their core services to mitigate the impact of welfare reform and social inequality. Grants of between £1,000 and £5,000 were available to deliver activity over a six month period.

The ambition for the scheme was to deliver funding directly to the frontline, providing resource and capacity to organisations with unique insight into the needs of their communities. The Fund's focus on supporting grassroots organisations in their funding applications means that those who have their fingers on the local pulse and know their communities' needs have a better chance of receiving funding, rather than being out-bid by organisations with the resource to submit more competitive applications.

Since 2015 we have continually listened to feedback from organisations and reflected on our own practices and this has seen us adapt how the scheme operates. In Round 3, in addition to short term (up to 9months) funding, we introduced a strand to enable organisations to deliver pilot projects/new approaches for a 12 month period. Furthermore, we recognised that to maximise the impact made in earlier funded pilot projects we would support those organisations to scale-up their projects and deliver them for a further 12 months. This scale-up approach also enables organisations to gain confidence in their delivery of a Scottish Government funded project and gather a rich source of evidence of impact to take to other funders.

Round 3 of CCRF was launched in September 2017 inviting new proposals and proposals to scale up activities from existing projects. We received a total of 137 new proposals, and following an assessment process we provided grants totalling £164,396 to 23 organisations throughout Scotland to deliver projects/activities from January 2018. These new projects and activities included short term (up to 9 months) and 12 month projects. We granted further funding, totalling £124,218 to 13 organisations to scale up their projects and continue delivering for a further year.

This report documents the information gathered via our final evaluation survey distributed to all organisations who received CCRF Round Three grant funding and the information collected from application forms. The report is divided into the following sections:

### 1. CCRF Facts

### 2. Engaging with organisations

### 3. Organisation Profiles

### 4. Types of Projects

### 5. Fund Impact

### 6. Lessons Learned

### 7. Success Stories

### 8. Recommendations

# 1 CCRF Facts



**79%**

of respondents said that they could not have developed key partnerships without the fund



**98%**

of respondents said that the application process was 'easy' or 'very easy'



**100%**

of respondents said their CCRF projects were extremely helpful in meeting the needs of their community



**90%**

of respondents said they either 'fully' or 'mostly' achieved what they set out to



**70%**

of respondents reported unexpected positive achievements



Organisations gained at least

**£858k**

in benefits for claimants



Directly assisted more than

**3,000 people**

by providing services and support



# 2 Engaging with organisations

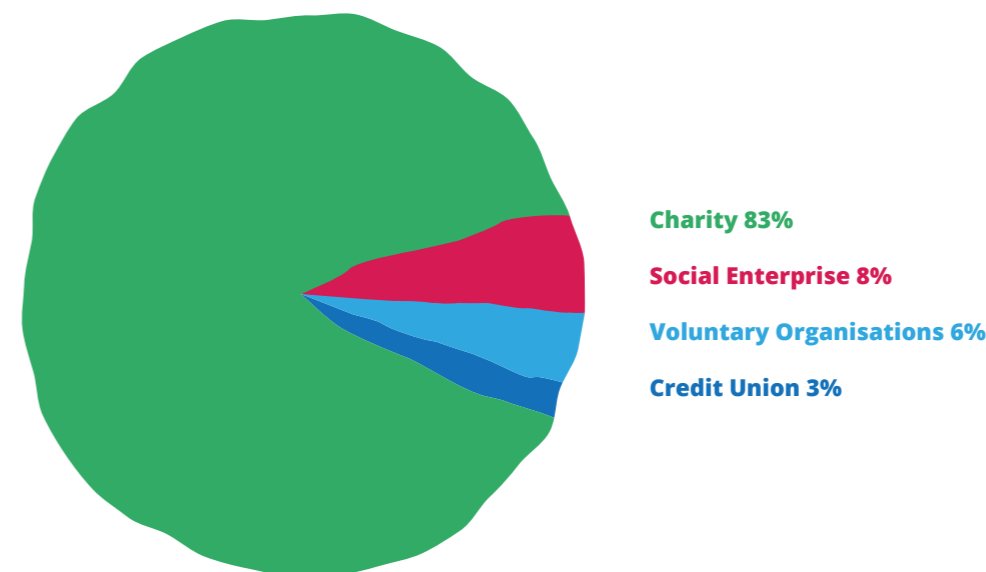
Our engagement strategy recognised the need to ensure we reached those small community organisations that could benefit. We promoted the fund via SCVO's social media channels, website, bulletins, networks and Third Force News.

We received a total of 137 applications from organisations across 27 local authority areas and the value of these applications was £894,879.

SCVO staff were available to provide support to organisations in relation to the application process and this support included talking through project ideas, identifying potential opportunities and/or constraints, connecting them to other funding/support.

## Organisational profiles

This information relates to the 36 organisations who received CCRF Round Three funding and was gathered from applications:



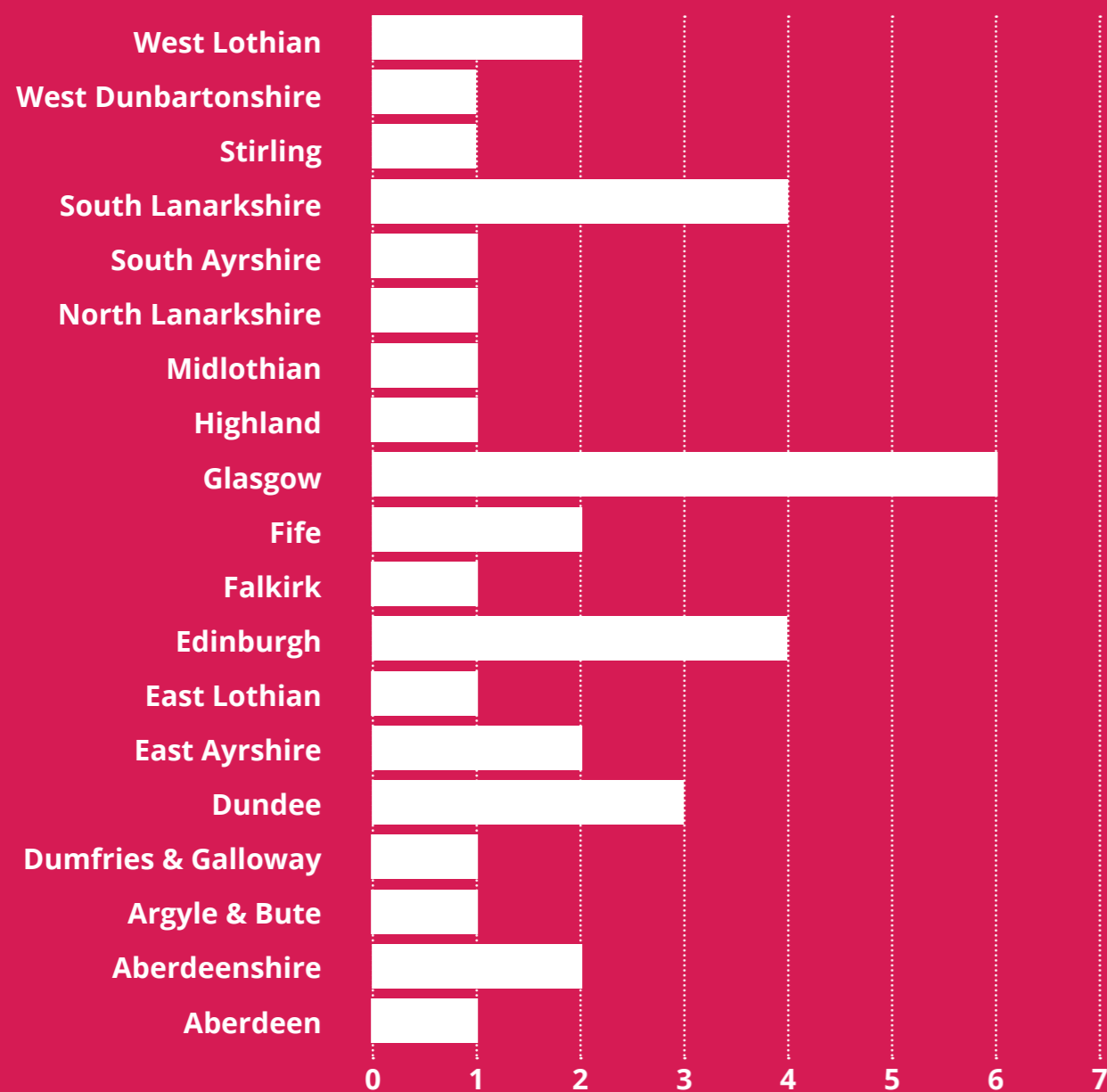
## Income and staffing

The average income of the organisations which were awarded CCRF Round Three funding was £95,000, which shows clear evidence that the Fund is reaching its intended audience of small grassroots organisations.

The staffing levels among these organisations varied, but on average the services delivered by them are done so by 5 paid staff members, supported by an amazing band of volunteers 1,000 across these 36 organisations.

# 3 Local Authority areas

Funding was granted to organisations in 19 local authority areas shown in the table below:



# 4 Types of projects

This report showcases the benefits of delivering funding directly to frontline organisations. The types of projects and activities that were funded in Round Three demonstrated once again the diversity and innovation that exists within the sector and indeed the passion and commitment those at grassroots level have in supporting individuals, families and communities.

The average award during Round Three was £8k, and perhaps not surprisingly, a third of the projects funded were focussed on providing support and services around Universal Credit including adding additional days to existing services to meet increased demand; the introduction of specialist digital support staff; increased outreach services in rural areas and training of staff and volunteers. This was closely followed by projects focussed on food provision (28%) including the development of food bank services to include information and support services, cooking sessions, planting and growing fruit & vegetables, food budgeting, nutrition, up-skilling volunteers and meal provision to children.

We also supported projects/activities involving support to those with disabilities, money management, volunteer development, employability, peer support, befriending and projects supporting social integration. Some of the funded projects were directed at specific groups, including Syrian refugees, black and ethnic minority groups, lone parents, those aged over 60 years, those with mental health issues, those with additional support needs, school pupils, those who are homeless.

The impact of the Fund will continue to be felt through materials produced, skills developed, equipment purchased and partnerships harnessed as a result of the projects and activities that took place.



# 5 Fund impact on individuals and families

It is estimated that 16% of Scotland's population, or 860,000 people each year, were living in relative poverty before housing costs in period 2014-17. <https://www.gov.scot/publications/poverty-income-inequality-scotland-2014-17/pages/1/>

The Fund has had an impact on addressing issues that are preventing people from fully participating in communities and achieving their potential, by directly funding third sector organisations to deliver services that help many vulnerable people across Scotland get access to a wide range of support, information and advice. This evaluation has focused on quality of services rather than quantitative research. However, based upon projects which provided figures in their responses, we know that funded projects have gained at least £858,000 in benefits for claimants and directly assisted more than 3,000 people.

Through the CCRF, people have been supported and empowered to:

- **develop new skills via training courses, workshops and volunteering opportunities**
- **obtain knowledge, awareness and information via community engagement events, audience specific booklets and drop-in services**
- **increase their resilience and prevent crisis**
- **engage with their community.**

The inclusiveness of the funded projects has also seen intergenerational activities take place. STRIDE, Dundee delivered a pilot project to engage African families in gardening and volunteering activities. Through their 'Germinator' project, Centipede in Edinburgh have enabled school children and their families to experience the hands on process of planting, growing, harvesting and eating the produce of their labour.

Frontline organisation such as these have the knowledge and understanding of the needs within their communities and through this can respond positively to provide support when and where it is needed most.

# Fund impact on communities

The CCRF has shown that one of the most effective ways to tackle the pressures of poverty, welfare reform and social inclusion is through facilitating community involvement in the provision of services to more vulnerable members. Of the funded organisations which responded, 100% said the Fund was extremely useful in helping them to meet the needs of their communities.

As part of their CCRF project, Church House Bridgeton were keen to introduce 'community meals'. Their original approach of a community meal once per month did not prove successful. They then introduced a 'family night' with a range of activities and built in the 'community meal' to this. This means families from the community come together once per week, share a meal together and then go on to enjoy the other activities provided.

Centipede, based in Edinburgh thanked CCRF for the support saying that in an area of North Edinburgh which has a huge problem with food poverty they have been able to pilot new approaches to tackling the issues that empower people and communities without relying on poverty.

Castlemilk Community Church produced an extremely useful 'Welcome to Castlemilk' booklet in several languages for new families to the community. Identifying the content of the booklet produced many ideas and many offers of translation from volunteers who were very enthusiastic to be involved. Because of this enthusiasm from volunteers the booklet, which was originally to be produced in English and Arabic, was also produced in French, Swahili, Urdu, Tamil.

## Fund impact on organisations

One of the clear findings from SCVO's 2014 mapping report, Third Sector and welfare reform on the frontline, was the positive impact that comes from strong relationships and trust between statutory agencies and third sector organisations. Partnerships are a crucial element in making organisations more robust in the face of the significant challenges that welfare reform and budget cuts presents, and the CCRF recognises this with its collaborative working focus.

The wide variety of partnerships formed by CCRF projects included community organisations, schools, churches, local businesses, housing associations, councils, NHS boards, DWP, jobcentres, colleges, universities and a range of third sector services. In some cases these were new partnerships which have opened the door to greater collaborative working in the future. Of the funded organisations who responded, 79% said that they could not have developed key partnerships without the fund.

Fairway Fife reported that CCRF has enabled a member of staff to spend some of her time concentrating on building relationships with other organisations and community groups. This has been very beneficial in helping raise the awareness of the work the charity does in the community, and helped them gain recognition as a quality support project and therefore impact on the lives of more young disabled people.

About Youth, Edinburgh, said...Our project benefited massively from the input and support from a variety of other community groups, voluntary organisations and statutory bodies in our community, each of whom brought with them a wealth of expertise, creativity and enthusiasm. As a result of engaging in partnership working during our project, we were able to access;

- New ideas and input for group-work session, particularly issue based ones,
- Resources, including occasional access to a minibus
- Use of buildings and spaces to deliver our project from
- Additional staffing input
- New funding opportunities for future partnership projects
- Help to promote our projects and reach out to more young people

## 6 Lessons learned

**1** We listened to feedback from organisations in relation to the funding period and for Round 3 we extended this to up to 9 months for some strands, introduced a new 12 month funding strand and introduced the facility to scale up some existing projects to enable them to maximise their impact. With the introduction of the 12 month funding period and scale-ups we increased the funding level to £10k.

**2** Organisations have provided feedback that indicates the support from SCVO in the application process and the access provided to evaluation workshops and a Learning & Sharing has been appreciated:

"The Gathering and the meetings that we attended were a great opportunity for networking with other organisations from all over Scotland, who were also benefitting from CCRF. This allowed us to share experiences and know-how as well as brainstorming ways to solve problems"

- MAXwell Centre, Dundee

"We are very pleased to have been supported through the CCRF. It's pitched appropriately for organisations with limited capacity and the actual benefits produced, often for people and families with significant life challenges, is very significant"

- Midlothian Financial Inclusion Network

"This fund has been vital in allowing us to provide our service to deaf people. We have already made a huge impact on 20 deaf families. The experience and support that we have received from SCVO has been superb"

- Lanarkshire Deaf Club

"The simplicity of the CCRF application form and reporting criteria has been a breath of fresh air, in comparison to some of the other (very lengthy and unnecessarily complicated) grant funding we have received/applied for"

- Edinburgh Food Project

**3** Fund recipients reported that the increased capacity provided by the CCRF allows for more resource intensive services such as one-to-one support, peer training of vulnerable people and increased opening hours leading to successful outcomes. The funding also enabled focused support and creative approaches to take place as well as carrying out research which provides a source of information to local people.

“We were able to help many people with disabilities to access benefits and services. The additional worker enabled us to provide more in-depth help and support, offer a holistic approach and gain a better understanding in comparison to some of the other (very lengthy and unnecessarily complicated) grant – should read in comparison to some of the other (very lengthy and unnecessarily complicated) grant and services, which could aid and assist them to improve their quality of living and personal circumstances”

- Aberdeen Action on Disability

**4** By using qualitative rather than quantitative reporting, small community-based organisations were able to provide information on the difference their projects have made to individuals and communities with organisations providing quotes/testimonies from people who have benefitted. Our Learning & Sharing event held midway through round 3 delivery period provided grant recipients with the opportunity to come to together to share their success to date and challenges faced.

“The SCVO events in Glasgow and Edinburgh were useful because it allowed us to meet other organisations who had also received funding and have the opportunity to make new connections, share our thoughts and feelings, give feedback and guidance directly to each other and to SCVO staff”

- Minority Communities Addiction Support Services (MCASS)

SCVO took on board feedback from Round 2 regarding our use of on-line surveys to gather information for the evaluation reports, therefore in order to gather information for this report we used a Microsoft word template. From SCVO's point of view, this seemed to capture richer qualitative information from organisations.

# 7 Success Stories

**The Edinburgh Food Project** is part of the Trussell Trust network of foodbanks, providing emergency food parcels to people living in food poverty. As the organisation has grown, they have identified a real and growing need to create Support Hubs to take the opportunity to assist, not only with the urgent, short term need for food, but also to tackle the long term causes of that need.

They were awarded a CCRF grant of £10k in December 2017 to pilot their idea of transforming 5 Foodbank centres into Support Hubs within which other agencies will be present alongside the foodbank allowing clients to easily access further support, to help them tackle the root causes of poverty. The CCRF grant enabled them to recruit a Support Hub Manager to develop and deliver this new project. This 'more than food' approach has delivered amazing results in the pilot stage and has shown the benefits of individuals being able to combine their use of the foodbank services with access a range of other services to support them tackle the impact of poverty and welfare reform. The following is just one example of this: Family and Household Support.

A lady presented at the drop-in and was very distressed as she was facing eviction from her home where she was currently staying with her two children. She had been experiencing problems with her housing benefit due to a family member temporarily staying with her because of illness. This led to her Housing Benefit being cancelled, as the family member's financial situation hadn't been taken into consideration. The family member subsequently moved into a care home, but an application for housing benefit had yet again failed. This lady had been using credit cards and pay day loans to survive, but she could no longer use this option, as she had reached the maximum credit limit.

She could not afford to purchase food therefore, we arranged for a three day food parcel to be issued by the foodbank. We also put arrangements in place with the foodbank that would allow the lady to receive a weekly food parcel whilst we tried to resolve her benefits issues. Because of the network of support agencies and organisations in the Hub we were able to arrange a meeting for her to try to get her housing benefit sorted, connect with a Debt Advisor and apply for a discretionary housing payment.

This multi-agency support resulted in housing benefit and discretionary housing benefit now being in place. Her rent arrears have been reduced from £4,500 to £500.00 and she has a payment plan in place. Her debt is being dealt with through the Advice Shop and she is currently managing her finances. She no longer requires the support of the foodbank.

## Success Stories cont.

**The Community Bureau**, based in Lochgilphead, is a young organisation formed to support young and vulnerable people, to focus on developing and building capacity and strengths in communities. It works across age groups, wherever there are needs and has a strong volunteer force supporting its ambitions.

They were awarded a CCRF grant of £4,600 in December 2017 to pilot a 'Getting Real for Life' project over an 8 month period involving information and cooking sessions with fresh ingredients to help those most affected by welfare cuts to learn to cook recipes on a budget and eat healthy, low cost meals which are easy to prepare. Sessions also had money management advice, energy saving and benefits information available.

The pilot has demonstrated that this is a relatively low cost investment which can change lives in terms of health, emotional well-being, resilience, nutrition, coping with low (or no) income and contributing to addressing inequality within our communities.

Its impact is clear from the following feedback:

'I have hope that I can feed my family, and that I know how to make a meal that is good for us all and hasn't cost all my cash. I feel in control and it is good to know we won't have to go without - I am determined we won't make bad choices again. Even the kids are happier and eating vegetables and some of the fruit dishes' - a 'Getting Real for Life' - should read ...Even the kids are happier and eating vegetables and some of the fruit dishes' - a 'Getting Real for Life' participant

A family in Mid Argyll learned how to cook nutritious meals and learned to better manage their money so eventually were able to save enough to have a family day out at the beach, and treat everyone to teas at the little café - for the first time in two years. The father, said 'you have no idea how it mattered to have a day with no stress and to see my kid's faces alight and happy. We hope to do something every six months if possible now we are cooking better meals and it costs less.'

## 8 SCVO Recommendations

- 1** Future CCRF rounds to continue to offer grants of up to £10k to pilot/test new approaches and services for a 12 month period. This is in addition to offering grants of £1k - £5k for shorter term projects and activities.
- 2** The facility to scale-up pilot/test projects and extend the delivery period to support increased impact to continue.
- 3** 3 Continued accessible support and guidance from SCVO to allow small organisations to compete for funds and deliver projects and services that make a difference to lives of people in their communities.
- 4** 4 SCVOs grant management of CCRF should be considered as a template for other funding streams targeted at smaller organisations.

### Conclusion

The Community Capacity & Resilience Fund has shown that a flexible, supportive and light-touch approach to grant management is an effective way of enabling grassroots and community based organisations to create projects and activities that meet the needs of their communities and make significant differences to individual lives.

By providing evaluation training, on-going guidance and information these organisations are supported to develop and grow in confidence. Participation in this fund has increased the capacity of organisations to deliver much needed services, to develop the skills of staff and volunteers, to establish and nurture partnerships with other organisations and public bodies and gain confidence to explore other avenues of funding to continue with their efforts to mitigate the impact of welfare reform, poverty and social exclusion.

SCVO will continue to manage the CCRF in a flexible and supportive manner to enable organisations with unique insight into the needs of their communities to increase their capacity and pilot innovative and creative approaches to mitigate the impact of welfare reform, poverty and social inequalities.



# Contact

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# About us

The Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations (SCVO) is the national body representing the third sector. There are over 45,000 voluntary organisations in Scotland involving around 110,000 paid staff and approximately 1.3 million volunteers. The sector manages an income of £5.4 billion.

SCVO works in partnership with the third sector in Scotland to advance our shared values and interests. We have over 1,900 members who range from individuals and grassroots groups, to Scotland-wide organisations and intermediary bodies.

Our governance and membership structures are democratic and accountable – with an elected board and policy committee from the sector, we are managed by the sector, for the sector

We work to support people to take voluntary action to help themselves and others, and to bring about social change.

Further details about SCVO can be found at  
[www.scvo.org.uk](http://www.scvo.org.uk)