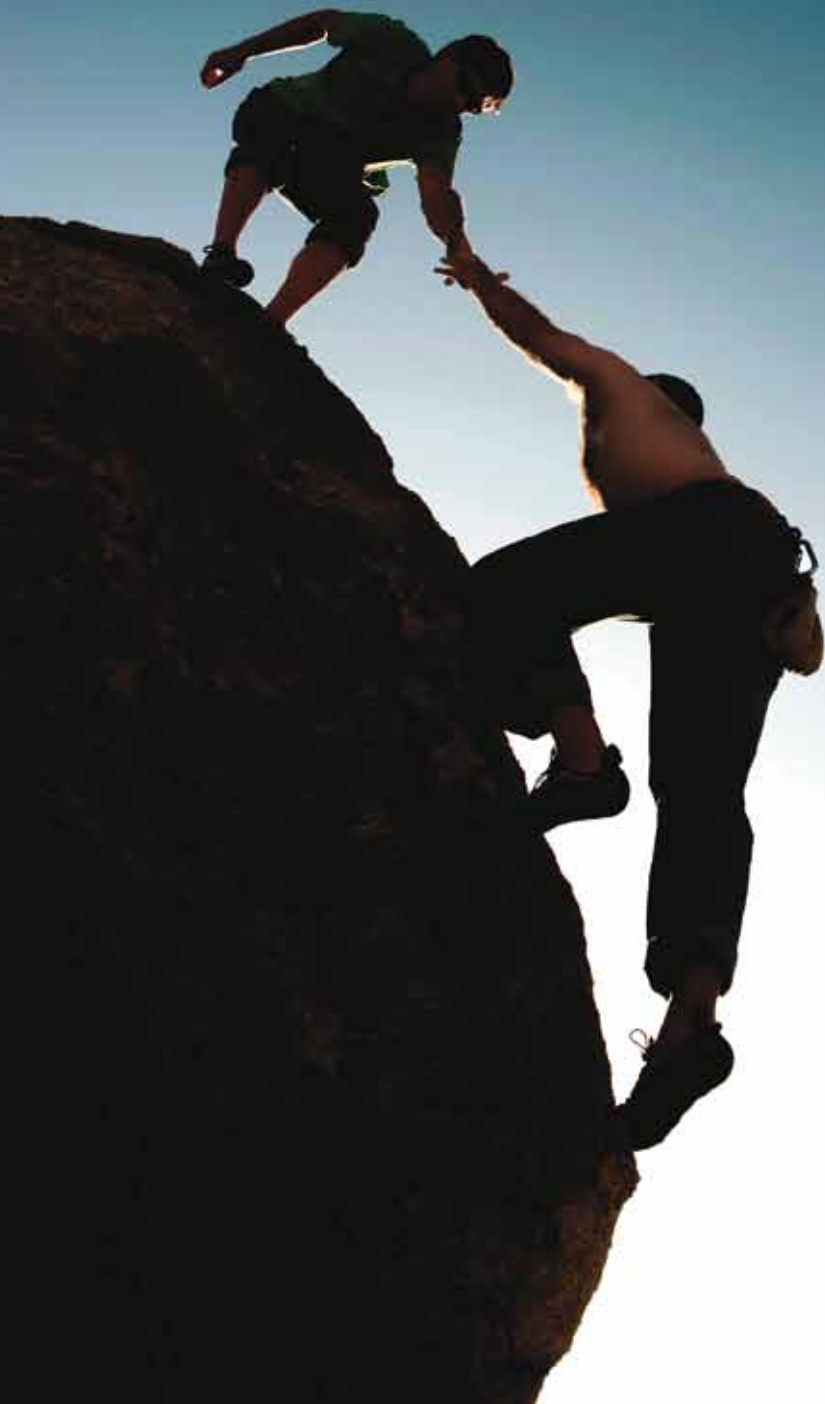


Doing things differently

Voluntary Sector
2010
Manifesto



Introduction

Scotland's third sector is incredibly diverse, with wide-reaching impact. From housing associations, social care providers and grant making trusts, through to NGOs and social enterprises, right down to the grassroots level of residents associations and community sports groups, the sector plays a vital role in shaping Scottish civil society.

These associations build the networks and relationships that contribute so significantly to Scotland's economy and quality of life. This makes Scotland a better place to live - whether by caring for elderly parents, enthusing and training young people, preserving our natural and cultural heritage or giving people the opportunity to create art or play sport.

Key Facts

- The sector includes 45,000 formally constituted voluntary organisations and thousands more informal associations
- Half of these are registered charities
- Around two thirds are grassroots groups working on less than £25,000 a year
- The largest 2% of organisations manage over 62% of resources in the third sector
- The sector generates £4.1 billion a year and provides paid employment for 130,000 people
- Over 1.3 million Scots volunteer on a regular basis and many more on an informal basis
- The sector holds over £8.6 billion of community assets

Why is the third sector so important?

No other sector brings this value to the economy or our society. Our sector is trusted more than any other. We:

- Support the most vulnerable people in our society
- Work together for a fairer, 'greener' and more equal society
- Create networks and relationships to build strong, resilient communities based on trust and mutuality
- Deliver high quality, value-for-money services for the public good

How can more be done?

This manifesto sets out where government intervention would enable the sector to play an even greater role in creating a happier, healthier and wealthier Scotland.

The Economic Value of the Third Sector

The sector makes a huge contribution to the Scottish economy, not just in the services we provide but in the added value we deliver. Social return on investment calculations show we deliver massive savings to the public purse - some projects have saved over £25 for every £1 invested.

With only 40% of our resources coming from government, the sector also draws in impressive additional investment. Every £1 spent on the third sector in Edinburgh brings in an additional £10 of outside funds.

We focus on preventing problems at source rather than dealing with the effects. Where it is impossible to head off problems, we provide joined up services that are more effective because they are rooted in communities.

In Scotland we employ more people than the NHS or the financial services industry, in areas that are fundamental to improving quality of life.

We are a major employer in the following areas:

- Older people's care
- Youth work
- Environment
- Care for people with disabilities
- Arts and culture
- Community development

Third sector initiatives are at the heart of the regeneration of many of Scotland's most deprived communities. Our work on employability is invaluable in creating jobs across the country. We have long been at the forefront of employability schemes through the delivery of programmes such as New Deal and the Future Jobs Fund.

Our ability to help people into employment is vital, particularly in a time of economic difficulty.

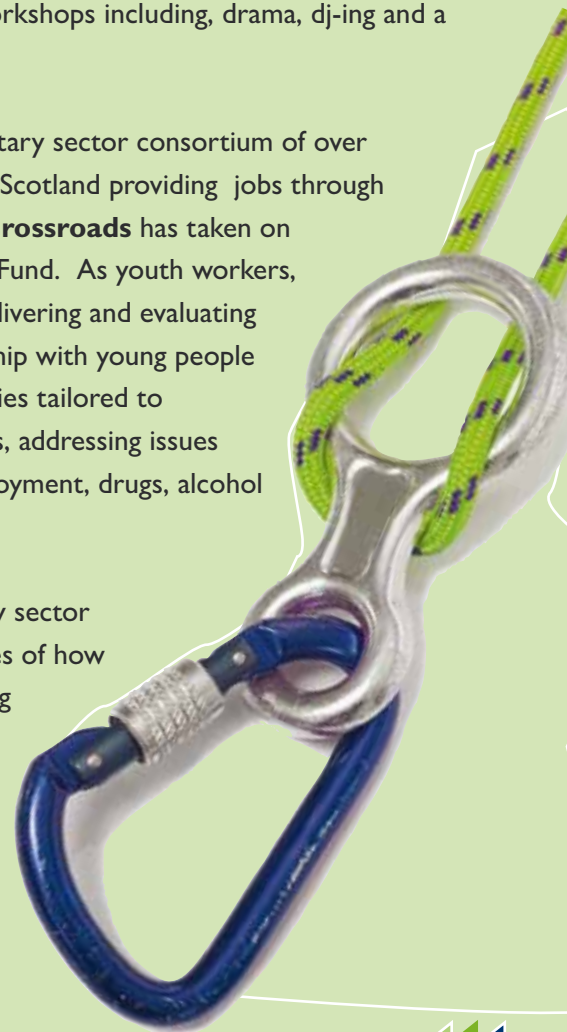
By promoting the value of worker and consumer owned enterprises, government can increase investment in employment and regeneration.

Case study: Crossroads, Gorbals, Glasgow

The Crossroads Youth and Community Association supports young people in their personal, political and social development through a range of activities and group work. Young people have an opportunity to take part in workshops including, drama, dj-ing and a variety of dance styles.

Crossroads is part of a voluntary sector consortium of over 300 organisations from across Scotland providing jobs through the Future Jobs Fund. So far, **Crossroads** has taken on two new recruits through the Fund. As youth workers, their roles involve planning, delivering and evaluating work programmes in partnership with young people and staff. These deliver activities tailored to individual young people's needs, addressing issues including empowerment, employment, drugs, alcohol and bullying.

Crossroads and the voluntary sector consortium are prime examples of how our sector excels at responding to opportunities to create community and individual benefit in employability and beyond.



The paradox of rising demand and falling income

Demand for many of the services delivered by the voluntary sector has risen dramatically in the economic downturn. These include debt advice, homelessness support and help for people to get back into work.

At the same time, income for voluntary organisations providing such services has fallen considerably. Trust funds and foundations reliant on the stock

market have been hit hard and donations from the public are also squeezed. The pressure on public finances is starting to be felt across the whole sector.

This paradox of rising demand and falling income has the potential to be very damaging to our sector and in turn to those we support.

We are skilled at doing more with less, but with growing demand

for our services, the Government must now help us to realise our potential and allow us to help drive economic recovery.

How can more be done?

The economic value of our sector is clear - we provide high quality services that build shared community concern and deliver excellent value. But there are specific barriers to the economic development of our sector which government must address:

- The use of lottery funding for public or private sector projects goes against the original principles of the lottery. The diversion to the 2012 London Olympics of £150 million of lottery funds destined for Scottish good causes is damaging our sector. We believe that 100% of lottery funding should come to community and voluntary organisations. The diversion of funds to pay for public projects is not acceptable.
- Gift Aid reform would release £70 million of tax relief in Scotland to good causes. Reducing bureaucracy around Gift Aid would also save government and the sector time and money.
- For charities most VAT is currently irrecoverable. Government should reform the system to recover VAT, to get back an additional £400-500 million a year into the sector.
- With the third sector's strong track record on employability, government should give a long term commitment to address joblessness through the third sector.



“...prioritisation
and delivery
of a healthier
society.”

Making a Difference to Society

Voluntary organisations are borne out of a shared concern or a desire to do something differently, to help other people and to improve lives. These values continue to drive our sector, helping to strengthen communities and deliver services for the public good rather than for profit or out of obligation. This is what makes 'the good society'.

Communities and societies that have high levels of shared concern are happier, healthier and more productive. This shared concern is often described as social capital. Building social capital improves the lives of individuals, and increases achievement. It creates and sustains employment. It is what we excel at delivering.

Happy and healthy communities rely on a shared sense of place, interests and the ability to rely on others. A strong civil society results in a stronger and more resilient country and its people. This is one of the key outcomes delivered by the third sector.

Further afield, creating a strong civil society maximises the impact of aid. The Department for International Development (DfID) should continue to focus on building the capacity of voluntary and community organisations - of civil society - in countries that receive aid. The stronger the civil society is in a country, the more effective the aid will be.

To truly measure social progress, we must use more than just economic indicators. Work such as the New Economics Foundation's Happy Planet Index identifies links between the kind of social activity which is carried out every day in our sector and levels of well-being. In countries where more people are involved in faith groups, sports, creative and other activities, levels of life satisfaction are significantly higher - just the kinds of social interaction that we deliver and that creates the fabric of our society. Creating a sustainable third sector is the means of creating a sustainable society.

Case study: Sacro, Aberdeen Project

Sacro is a national voluntary organisation which aims to promote community safety across Scotland to help reduce conflict and offending. It provides services in conflict resolution, criminal justice and restorative justice and reparation. These services are based on the values of mutual respect, recognising and valuing diversity, personal responsibility, society's responsibility to all its members, capacity for change and working together to reduce conflict and repair harm.

Sacro's Community Based Reparation service in Aberdeen gives a voice to a person harmed by a crime in how they would like the harm caused to them to be addressed. Young people and adults accused of crime are given the opportunity to take responsibility, apologise and take some action to repair the harm caused by their behaviour. Organisations like **Sacro** promote social inclusion and encourage community and personal responsibility. Their work is part of a wider ethos in the voluntary sector where long term solutions are sought.

How can more be done?

We need sustainable long term investment in our sector for the long term well-being and prosperity of our society.

This investment should:

- Support the development of policy based on our frontline experience of delivering services
- Maximise the potential for community organisations to create and maintain social cohesion and shared concern
- Focus on using the skills and connections of our sector to design and deliver services for communities, using a co-production approach
- Through DfID, the UK Government should continue to invest in building strong civil societies in order to maximise the impact of aid

Doing Things Differently

Scotland is widely recognised as having the poorest health record in the UK and inequality is a major contributory factor. One of the ways this can be tackled is by creating more cohesive communities. Building collective social capital - community feeling and shared concern – is just what our sector does best.

Care Commission research shows that services delivered by voluntary organisations are often of a higher quality than those provided by either the public or private sectors. We have led the way on the personalisation of care and continue to deliver effective and efficient user-centred services.

The last decade has seen a shift in the ways in which different sectors deliver public services. One example is co-production where clients are not just the passive recipients of services but are actively involved in their design. This allows shared responsibility for the commissioning, prioritisation and delivery of a healthier society. It goes further than the existing, often unequal partnerships and places the values of our sector at the heart of service delivery.

Many of the processes being used by local authorities in procuring public services are not necessary in law, and are counterproductive in outcome. They set voluntary organisation against voluntary organisation and community against community.

The disastrous impact of this was outlined in a BBC Panorama programme in April 2009, which looked at the retendering of care services. The dire standards, demonstrated by the example of one care home resident in South Lanarkshire who had not been bathed by his carers for six months, outlined the dangers of pushing down financial costs at the expense of wider social impact. Not only does a focus on cost put at risk the value of personalisation, it pushes down the wages and standards of working conditions for voluntary sector employees. We must work together across sectors to develop a commissioning process which places more value upon individuals as service users and delivers a fair and just market for service delivery.

Case study: Fife Online Referral Tracker

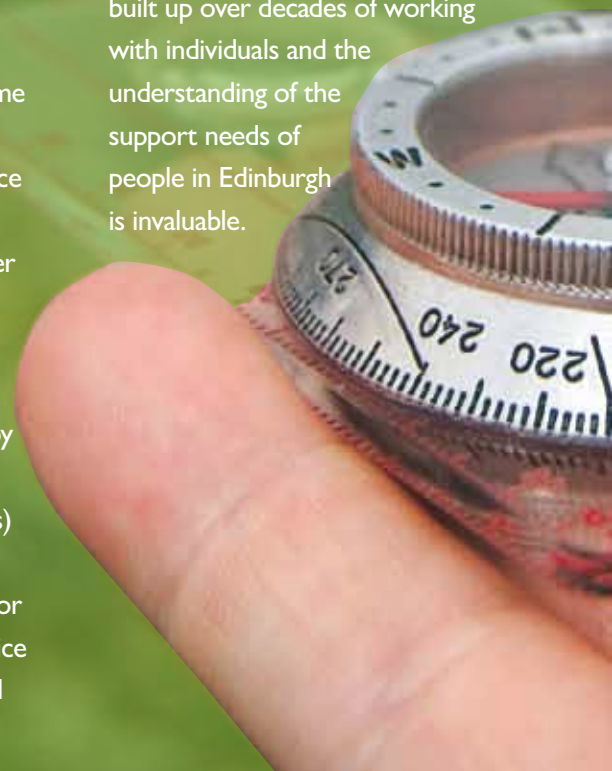
The Fife Online Referral Tracker (FORT) is an excellent example of how we can work together to deliver a better outcome for clients. The system allows a client to be referred from one advice agency (statutory or voluntary) to any other advice agency. Any adviser can sign up to use the system and can start accepting and making referrals after some basic training. **The FORT** system is supported by a service directory (with details of over 230 Fife-based advice agencies) and a commitment by agencies to find the most appropriate service for a client, badged under the Fife Advice Promise: “If we can’t help you, we’ll find someone who can”.

Case study: Garvald Edinburgh

Garvald Edinburgh supports adults with learning disabilities and those with additional needs. The organisation provides support services for around 150 adults with disabilities. As well as providing care at home, the organisation runs workshops, education and therapy services. It also encourages the adults it supports to input into the management of their care and facilities. In other words, service users have a voice in the support they receive.

A central principle of their work is mutual respect amongst service users, staff and volunteers, regardless of the nature of their disability or the difficulties they may face in meeting the world.

Garvald is the only organisation in Edinburgh providing this kind of support. The experience of the staff and volunteers, the knowledge base built up over decades of working with individuals and the understanding of the support needs of people in Edinburgh is invaluable.



Yet the organisation is facing an increasingly difficult funding environment. Recently the local authority, like many others across the country, put the contracts for the services **Garvald** provides out to tender. This process was shown to focus almost entirely on lowering costs, while paying little attention to the quality of provision.

Organisations like **Garvald** need support from government, at both the local and national level, and recognition that their expertise is vital for our communities to thrive.

How can more be done?

In order to give organisations the best chance of success, government must:

- Develop an agreement with third sector providers on the appropriate use of competitive tendering
- Ensure that contracts to deliver public services last for a minimum of five years, allowing expertise to grow and be maintained as well as minimising disruption for service users
- End the unjust disparity of pay and conditions between front line workers in the public and third sectors

Government needs to realise our potential:

The third sector is resourceful, innovative and adaptable. Too often we are hampered by red tape and unnecessary barriers to action. Government must enable our sector to be even more effective in delivering happier and more sustainable communities by removing these barriers.

We are the catalyst to create more effective communities. We deliver healthier lives, higher levels of well-being, and lower levels of offending. By supporting us, government can help communities to help themselves.

Unleashing the potential of our sector will mean Scotland as a whole can benefit further from the sector's contribution. It's not just about more funding, it's about better funding and the savings that can come from removing unnecessary barriers. This is particularly important given constraints on public spending.

The key to this is trust. As the third sector is trusted more than any other sector, it is crucial to creating a better, more equal society.

The time is right for the Scottish third sector to take the lead role in creating a happier, healthier and genuinely wealthier Scotland.



What is SCVO?

The Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations (SCVO) is the national body for the voluntary sector in Scotland.

SCVO seeks to advance the shared values and interests of the voluntary sector. We have over 1,300 members who range from individuals and grassroots groups, to Scotland-wide organisations and intermediary bodies. Every day more organisations realise the benefits of being *Stronger Together* by using our shared services and business support.

Our members employ over 50,000 people which is more than 40% of the total paid workforce of the sector. The sector does not just have paid staff, there are over 1.3 million volunteers too. Every year the sector generates £4.1 billion to help people and communities across Scotland.

For more information go to www.scvo.org.uk

EDINBURGH (HEAD OFFICE)
Mansfield Traquair Centre
15 Mansfield Place
Edinburgh, EH3 6BB
Tel: 0131 556 3882

GLASGOW
3rd Floor
Centrum Offices
38 Queen Street
Glasgow, G1 3DX
Tel: 0141 221 0030

INVERNESS
Fairways House
Fairways Business Park
Castle Heather
Inverness, IV2 6AA
Tel: 01463 235633

GENERAL ENQUIRIES
email: enquiries@scvo.org.uk
SCVO Information Service
FREEPHONE 0800 169 0022
Visit our website
www.scvo.org.uk
