

Four Functions of Local Infrastructure



Our members are local voluntary and community sector infrastructure organisations based across England. Strong local infrastructure enables communities to influence decision-making, builds partnerships and resilience, and encourages volunteering.

We know that our members' work is diverse and different in each area, responding to local needs. From our research and conversations with members, we have identified four broad categories that this support comprises. We have called these the 'Four Functions of Local Infrastructure'. When this support is accessible locally, individuals and communities can thrive.

Leadership and Advocacy

Communities, both individuals and organisations, should have an impact on decisions that affect the place they live in. Our members are leaders and advocates in their communities, mobilising action to strengthen our sector's voice and influence on key decision-makers and funders. Local infrastructure organisations bring together diverse groups and marginalised communities to mobilise ambition and aspiration.

Partnerships and Collaboration

Places and communities are strengthened when organisations work collaboratively. Our members create opportunities and drive effective joint working by building networks and partnerships between local organisations and strategic partners. Through nurturing these trusted and reliable relationships, communities are better equipped in both times of crisis and in the development of ongoing projects.

Capacity Building

When local voluntary and community organisations have access to practical support, people and communities become more resilient and able to flourish. Our members provide resources or advice to facilitate community development. This work is both strategic and developmental, building strong foundations so that the local voluntary, community and social enterprise sector thrives.

Volunteering

Volunteering, whether formal or informal, is integral to thriving communities. Our members encourage and nurture volunteering opportunities, so that people can build connections and work together on things they care about, driving positive change locally. Through initiatives such as the [Vision for Volunteering](#) and the [Volunteer Centre Quality Accreditation \(VCQA\)](#), the voluntary sector is supported further.