



Barnet Together

# **Barnet Voluntary Sector Manifesto: Working together for a better Barnet**



Developed by the Barnet Voluntary Sector  
Coordinated by Inclusion Barnet

## Our vision



A better Barnet for all those who live and work in the Borough, based on real partnership and active collaboration.

## Our mission



As representatives of a thriving and important stakeholder in the Borough, to work collaboratively with local government, in all its forms to ensure that all those who work or live in Barnet are getting the services and support that they deserve, while also recognising the constraints within which we all work.

## Why a manifesto?



We think that it is important that the voluntary sector in Barnet is clear about its intentions and views. That, while representing a plurality of views, opinions and stakeholders, we are clear, as a sector, of what we are hoping for and what we expect.

Over the next year, we will be campaigning to ensure the following for the voluntary sector and the people it represents in Barnet:



## Supporting a large and diverse sector, which in turn supports a large and diverse population

# 1

The Borough of Barnet has a thriving voluntary sector. From faith communities to grassroots organisations to established borough charities, we are a multi-faceted but vital element of our local area.

Over a thousand charities are registered as operating here, and there are also many social enterprises, unincorporated groups and branches of national charities.



## Recognising the financial and social impact of the work we do

# 2

It is almost impossible to precisely quantify the impact of such a diverse and complex sector, but it is likely that we expend a nine figure sum (i.e. upwards of £100 million) in the borough. This is augmented by the multiplier effect of social return on investment, whereby each pound spent on tackling a social issue will effectively save far more than is spent. Also, in addition to cash, the hard work of local volunteers also creates millions of pounds' worth of value in kind. Previous estimates suggest that the sector also employs over 3000 people in Barnet, many of them local (Community Barnet, State of the Sector report, 2014).

From Youth Groups to Parents' Associations, to Community Trusts to Friends Groups, there is hardly an area of human endeavour that does not benefit from the energy and public spiritedness of the voluntary sector. We deliver services, fund research, plug gaps, and develop solutions to problems.

Because our motivator is social not commercial value, we try to work in a way that fosters community, creates connections and engenders hope. Some of us are paid to do this, but many more of us give our time for free. All of us are motivated by the opportunity to do work that speaks to our values, and the chance to contribute to the change we want to see.

### 3

## **Making sure that we have a proper say in the development of services in the Borough**



We are already delivering a major contribution to the quality of life in Barnet, but we have an ambition to achieve even more. We want to build stronger, deeper partnerships with other sectors, and create even more value for our beneficiaries. Therefore, we have developed this manifesto to state our beliefs and commitments, and also what we ask from our statutory partners. Some of the things we ask for are already happening in places, but we want them to become a commitment embedded in systems and ways of working. Therefore, we ask our partners to commit to working with us to make this a reality, so that together we can deliver the best possible outcomes for Barnet.



# We believe

- We believe that a strong and diverse voluntary sector is crucial for Barnet
- We believe in strong, mutually respectful relationships with the statutory sector
- We believe in hearing the voice of the most marginalised in our communities
- We believe we can provide creative and cost effective approaches in a resource constrained environment, whilst still delivering high quality work
- We believe that we bring significant extra resource into Barnet
- We believe we can offer a holistic view of people and communities, creating more effective interventions
- We believe we have the reach to engage the Barnet community
- We believe we can provide flexible and responsive solutions to challenges and add significant value

# Our commitments



- We will continue to seek solutions to challenges in Barnet
- We will work in partnership wherever appropriate
- We will build transparent and honest relationships
- We will speak truth to power – especially about the needs of our beneficiaries and the effects of statutory policies
- We will demonstrate our outputs and outcomes
- We will add value wherever possible
- We will listen to and promote user voice
- We will work in a person-centred and empowering way
- We will work to keep people safe
- We will deliver social impact, rather than profit for shareholders
- We will bring together people of all faiths and none to work for the good of the Borough
- We will value and support our volunteers



# We ask

- We ask for equal partnerships, and that we are recognised and valued as expert partners who can deliver solutions
- We ask that our ability to add value is recognised, as is our contribution to the local economy
- We ask for a meaningful seat at the table when decisions that affect the sector are discussed, with processes for regular collaboration with the sector
- We ask for a commitment to co-production with the sector and our beneficiaries
- We ask that expectations are realistic and mindful of the available resource envelope
- We ask for a clear, long-term strategy around prevention, developed in partnership with the sector, and a commitment to building evidence about prevention and our impact
- We ask for a commitment to building stronger communities
- We ask that clear and binding agreements or contracts are signed before work commences
- We ask for a commitment to the Prompt Payment Code
- We ask that outputs, outcomes and targets for work are agreed in advance
- We ask that within future Borough development plans, including regeneration and Section 106 agreements, that the local VCSE/F are considered as potential partners to ensure that sector development aligns with the growing local needs

As partners we sign up to this manifesto  
and will work to the principles outlined



Barnet Together is a collaboration between Inclusion Barnet, Volunteering Barnet and the Young Barnet Foundation. Together we offer high quality training, volunteering support and provide vital resources and advice to Barnet's community organisations. We unite local people, charities and businesses to grow and strengthen local partnerships enabling our borough to innovate and thrive.

*Barnet Together*