

Merger of Newark & Sherwood and Rushcliffe CVS: Frequently Asked Questions

Rushcliffe and Newark & Sherwood CVS's are engaged in a project which works towards a merger of the organisations into a single new body in April 2025 subject to due diligence and approval of members. This document aims to enable our stakeholders to understand the process and to communicate about the change to those they are working with. For further information or to give feedback please contact the chief executive/director of any of the two organisations (see below). We will issue updated versions of this document as things change and new questions arise.

Why are the two CVS's merging?

The two organisations believe that a single new organisation, formed of the two, is the best way to secure the best possible services for those that we work with. We will build our current strengths and successes into a more robust, sustainable and effective organisation, sharing our knowledge, experience and skills and increasing our influence on local policymaking and implementation. In challenging times for both the people and groups we work with and for organisations like ours it is vital that we respond to change by ensuring we are in the best possible shape for the years ahead.

How will it affect people and groups currently supported by the two CVS's?

Both CVS's currently operate across Newark and Sherwood, Rushcliffe and Broxtowe and Gedling. Our aim is to provide at least the same level of benefit to people and groups that we currently deliver, and in the longer term we expect we will be able to do even more. Any short-term change to our level of service is more likely to be due to the ongoing cycle of funding, which can result in reductions in service where public funding is no longer available to us and can of course bring new levels of service where new funding is secured.

One example of joint working during this process is the development of one shared Volunteer Offer across both organisations with the launch of a shared CRM system in April 2024

<https://notts.getvolunteering.co.uk/>

In addition, we have set up a Joint Volunteer Offer working group who will look at standardising strategy & policy, sharing best practice, knowledge and experience across the two organisations. Through the working group a Volunteer Passport has been developed as online training sessions for potential volunteers. This will provide volunteers with 'core' accredited training, generating a certificate once completed. Sessions will cover:

- Introduction to Volunteering
- GDPR
- Equality and diversity
- Health and safety in the workplace
- Safeguarding Adults level 1
- Safeguarding Children Level 1
- Unconscious Bias

Where will you be based and how will it affect delivery of your services?

Our bases in Cotgrave and Edwinstowe will be retained. It is vital that we retain our links to local organisations. We will continue to engage with sector through our Forums, Engagement Groups and through the work of our Community and Engagement teams across the area. We are also going to look at options for 'hot desking' in community venues and explore a 'surgery' approach to support groups and volunteers in locations that work well for them.

Will the new organisation be able to deliver the services currently delivered in the districts?

We are working with councils and other organisations in the districts to explain what the merger means for them, and we aim to continue to deliver a range of services across Newark and Sherwood, Rushcliffe, Broxtowe and Gedling based on excellent local connections, knowledge and experience.

What area will be served by the new organisation?

Our heartland remains the districts of Newark & Sherwood, Rushcliffe, Gedling and Broxtowe, where we will focus our work for the public benefit. As we already do, we will deliver some projects and services across the district borders. It is important for the effectiveness and sustainability of our services that we can engage with partners and groups that don't work to the same boundaries.

What will the new organisation's remit be?

Our full remit will be clearer when we complete the formalities Charity Commission's registration process. Essentially, we are aiming to build on the success that the two organisations have had: leading change in the voluntary sector, supporting local voluntary and community groups, helping communities to develop services to meet their needs (and delivering those services where appropriate – voluntary transport, befriending health work), influencing policy and practice and facilitating communication and collaboration within the voluntary sector. Our remit will cover the districts of Rushcliffe, Newark & Sherwood, Gedling and Broxtowe, but also enable us to work more widely in neighbouring areas, where it is right for us to do so.

What will the new organisation be called?

We don't know the answer yet. We will be seeking to establish a task and finish group to develop a name and branding that works best for the people we work with and will consult on various options.

How are your staff and volunteers affected?

Staff and volunteers have already begun to work together, for example delivering our joint volunteer offer, and by attending joint away-days to prepare for the merger. We will engage specialist HR advice as required to help us manage the change and establish the right structure to continue our work together in the new organisation.

Will the merger definitely happen?

We think so. The two organisations will work together throughout 2024 to complete all the necessary preparations to bring our resources, projects, services and teams together in a new organisation, including a process of "due diligence" – a structured approach to examining commercial, legal and financial aspects of each charity to ensure that is prudent to merge. There is always the possibility of something unexpected, but our plans are robust and the connections between us are getting stronger all the time. In line with legal requirements and good practice, the project plan we are working to involves members of the organisations voting on a motion to enable their boards to continue with the merger.

What is the timetable for the merger?

Our target date for the launch of the new organisation is April 1st 2025. At that point the new organisation will become operational and able to begin to deliver the services previously delivered by the two CVS's, and as separate CVS's, they will wind up/dissolve.

Contact details

For more information or to discuss the issues raised by this document please contact one of the merging organisations:

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