



One Barnstaple

Case Study

About

One Barnstaple is a partnership of voluntary, community and public service organisations in Barnstaple which provides a forum to allow all local stakeholders to have a say in the future development of their local community, ensuring that wider system strategies are localised which enables the creation of joint action plans based on local data, feedback from residents and local service providers.

Our Challenge

In 2020 a Covid Response Team was formed between council, and local VCSE organisations so we could field incoming requests for assistance and deploy volunteers – all very informal and community based.

This highlighted a need that we did not have a system for co-ordinating action and sharing information or updates across the community and across partners

Our communication was being done through email, using email newsletters and at times it could be hard to keep on top of the incoming messages and variety of information.

And, working across a number of organisations with different IT systems, we struggled to have a “shared drive” of useful resources or templates we could all access.

We identified that it would be useful to have a single platform all the members of One Barnstaple could use to communicate with each other on and store documents for sharing. Thinking to the future, we also needed to make sure we had the right mechanisms in place to contact relevant groups or teams with updates and guidance, calls for assistance and coordination support should we be faced with another pandemic or emergency in our community.



The Solution (Funded by Devon County Council)

1. One Barnstaple Online Forum

An **on-line forum** where VCSE Organisations, including Churches, Grassroots, Charities and Statutory Providers, e.g. Hospice Provision, District Nurses, Community Therapy Teams, Community Mental Health Team, Police and Fire Services, GP Surgeries (Social Prescribers) etc....are able to share ideas, resources, vacancies and get support.

“During a time when we’ve not been able to meet in person and have a coffee with colleagues from other services, this has been a wonderful way for people to keep in contact in addition to our virtual Membership Meetings”

“It’s been wonderful to see the development of a self-sustaining and active forum where connection and professional relationships grow and can be supported. I like the fact that I can access posts whenever I need to so I can look back at info that others have shared and grab it to pass on to colleagues.” Programme Lead within Education

“Cascading of information from a Devon and North Devon level through to all Community Groups using the platform, even those outside of the One Barnstaple Membership has given an opportunity to see how in the future, it could be extremely beneficial for coordinating local response”

2. Partnership Project Secure Storage and Sharing

Groop provides a **secure space** to share documents/data that are relevant for **partnership projects** – without having to access organisational IT systems.

“Groop has provided our One Barnstaple Members a forum to ask questions and share updates in the MyGroupChat and a shared drive for resources. When there’s an update or a question, something to be shared and promoted or for other’s to be aware of, our members can be in control of sharing with the membership and not reliant on one person to post the information out to everyone via email.”

Home from Hospital: Volunteers from across the different organisations along with relevant professionals supporting the project are able to use the platform making the coordination and deployment of volunteers to visit community members more effective and efficient.

3. Individual organisation accounts



These support the sustainability of VCSE Partners by providing them with an account where they can record activities; service user data, and report on outcomes.

“...a great platform that promotes collaboration and information-sharing. I wish I’d known about it right from the start when I set up! Looking forward to seeing what benefits are drawn from it for my clients and business.” Founder and Director of a community CIC

4. Enable One Barnstaple to understand the impact of local delivery by VCSE Partner Groups.

“We hope in the coming months more community groups and services will be able to make use of the platform to benefit their work by having their own ‘Groop’; utilising the flexibility, safety and efficiency the system offers.” One Barnstaple Community Developer

Could Groop support your project or programme delivery?

Find out more about how you can offer Groop accounts to local VCSE groups and/or programme partners by contacting us from our website.