

# support fenland



# How did we get here

- In 2021, Support Cambridgeshire received funding from Lloyds Foundation Bank. This work was to consult on what a CVS service would look like in Fenland and prove that further funding was needed for this type of work.
- The outcome of this report highlighted the small impact we had made over 12 months but also highlighted the real need for funding such a service in Fenland.
- This was taken to the Support Cambs Infrastructure and Funders Network. Here, The National Lottery Rep encouraged us to apply for funding.
- Over the next year, using the data collated in the Lloyds Report, a project was designed to outline a basic infrastructure and community development project: Support Fenland.
- Applications were made to the National Lottery Community Fund, and after amendments and development in the outline, funding was granted in March 2024.

# Support Fenland Project

- 5-year project, funded by The National Lottery Community Fund
- The project aims to further increase Fenland VCSE's resilience and develop more resources through the local communities.
- Activities concentrate on developing a strong VCS, as well as broader community development and the celebration of their work.
- The ethos of this project is:
  - For Fenland
  - By Fenland
  - Impacting Fenland

# Activities

## Networking

- Create a culture of cooperation within the Fenland voluntary and community sector and with all the organisations working in support of the communities across the District.

## Volunteering

Heightened profile of the value of volunteering resulting in:

- the recruitment of new volunteers as 'Support Fenland' Champions, or Buddy or Mentor,
- local communities getting involved in the 'Love It, Hate It, Shape It' campaign,
- and to directly support Fenland voluntary and community sector organisations.

## Support

- The establishment of a robust local infrastructure support offer for the Fenland area, combining the application of good practice with locally identified needs.

## Training

- Demonstrable improvements to the operations and delivery of voluntary and community sector organisations as a result of the application of the learning from training attended.

## Promotion

- Greater awareness of the value of the voluntary and community sector's work across Fenland by key local partners and the general public as a result of the successful establishment and use of the 'Support Fenland' brand.

# What does this mean?

- More opportunities for groups to link up and support each other
- A Fenland-based Development Officer who can guide and support VCS groups
- Training and events based on the needs of Fenland organisations
- A heightened awareness of the VCSE across the district
- Continual support around volunteering.
- Communities are encouraged to identify challenges and put in solutions

# How you can engage with the project



Throughout the project, we look to engage communities and groups to support us in doing this work.

We want to help the VCSE's, but we will also need their help. So, how can they engage with us?

**Drop us an email:** We want to meet as many people as possible, in person, at events and online.

**Send us their newsletters and updates:** We are keen to know what groups are up too across Fenland.

**Feedback groups:** We want to hear feedback on our project but also work collectively on how we develop the project further – we look to set up different groups which discuss this and influence us.

**Mentoring/Buddies:** We are keen to explore mentoring/buddies as part of staff development and as a way to bring larger, more established and smaller groups together to help each other out.

# Meet the team



**Marija Lysak**

Fenland Development Officer

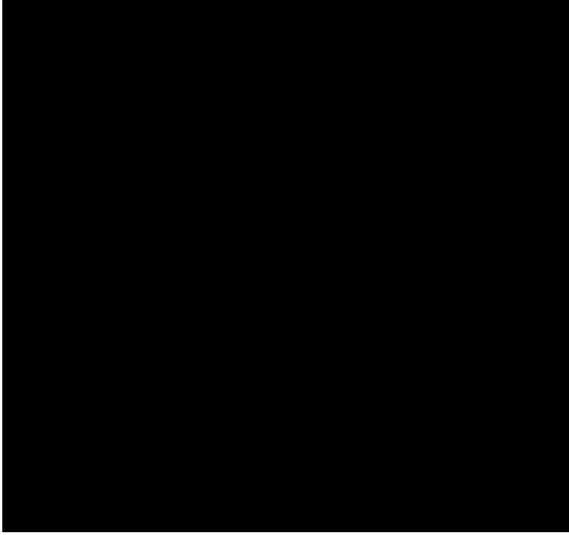
3 days (Mon, Tues, Wed)

[Marija@huntsforum.org.uk](mailto:Marija@huntsforum.org.uk)

My role:

- Oversee the project development.
- Support groups with one-to-one advice and support
- Organising the training and Funding Events
- Looking at ways to develop a stronger Voluntary and Community sector across Fenland.

# Meet the team



**Interim member of Staff**  
Fenland Communities Officer  
3 days (days tbc )

## Their Role :

- Support communities in coming together to identify areas of development and engaging them to act.
- Organising network opportunities and ways to bring people together.
- Developing the volunteer work across the county.



# Meet the team



## **Role Vacant**

Fenland Communications Worker  
14 hours across the week.

Some of what the Communication Worker will be doing:

- Promoting the Support Fenland project and the work done under this branding
- Creating a branding that incorporates the value of VCS and community engagement.
- Creating a better awareness of the value of the voluntary and community sector's work across Fenland

# Questions

1. What are the Strengths and Weaknesses of Fenland Communities? (Please state which Fenland Town your answer refers too)
2. What Improvements would you like to see in Fenland Communities? (Please state which Fenland Town your answer refers too)
3. What are the obstacles and challenges facing groups in the Fenland area?
4. How can Support Fenland help you and how would you like to be involved in the project?

# Feedback

1. **Networking** - Fenland coming together as one
2. **Funding**- more awareness of available funding opportunities and accessing it.
3. **Training**- making applications, procedures and policies simpler to understand, guidance on group structure.
4. **Youth** - encouraging young people to volunteer and identifying more organisations to integrate with young people.

## Contact Details

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