

Get Involved: Join Our EPSC Working Groups to Help Deliver Kingston's Empowering People Strengthening Communities Strategy

Are you passionate about shaping the future of Kingston's communities? We're inviting new VCSE representatives to join our **Empowering People Strengthening Communities (EPSC) working groups**. These groups are central to delivering Kingston's EPSC strategy, which focuses on empowering residents, strengthening partnerships, and promoting inclusivity across the borough.

The **EPSC strategy** was born out of the extraordinary community spirit seen during the pandemic and aims to build a more resilient, inclusive, and equitable Kingston. It provides a roadmap for how we can all work together—VCSE organisations, residents, and public services—to tackle challenges such as inequality, the cost of living crisis, and community wellbeing. By joining any of the working groups, you'll have the opportunity to directly contribute to achieving these strategic goals.

What Is the EPSC Strategy?

At the heart of the [Empowering People Strengthening Communities \(EPSC\) strategy](#) is the belief that by working together, we can create a more inclusive, equitable Kingston where no one is left behind. The strategy, which runs from 2023 to 2027, is built around the following key principles:

- **Collaboration and Partnership:** Strengthening relationships between the council, VCSE organisations, and the wider community to tackle shared challenges.
- **Empowerment and Inclusion:** Ensuring that all residents have the opportunity to participate in shaping their community, with a particular focus on promoting equality and rejecting discrimination.
- **Resilience and Adaptability:** Helping communities and organisations respond to emerging needs, such as the cost of living crisis, while building long-term resilience.

The Three EPSC Working Groups:

To deliver the EPSC strategy, we've established three working groups that focus on different areas of community empowerment and service delivery. Here's what each group is about and how you can get involved:

1. Supporting Communities Through Communications

This group focuses on ensuring that residents across Kingston have access to the information and services they need, while improving how we engage with the community. It aligns with the EPSC strategy by:

- **Improving Communication Channels:** Tackling digital exclusion and ensuring all communities can access important services, particularly vulnerable groups.

- **Coordinated Campaigns:** Organising campaigns that address community needs, such as winter planning and health awareness.
- **Promoting Inclusivity:** Ensuring all voices are heard and that community members are actively engaged in shaping services.

If you have expertise in **communications, digital inclusion, or community outreach**, this group needs your insights!

2. Volunteering, Social Value, and Building Communities

Volunteering is essential for a resilient community. This group works to ensure that volunteering opportunities are aligned with the EPSC strategy's goals of inclusivity and long-term sustainability by:

- **Developing the Kingston Volunteering Strategy:** A framework for expanding and improving volunteering opportunities, ensuring that everyone, including underrepresented groups, can get involved.
- **Maximising Social Value:** Ensuring that social value is maximised in order to contribute to the well-being of Kingston's residents, particularly those facing inequality.
- **Strengthening Partnerships:** Bringing together organisations to collaborate on projects that enhance community resilience, ensuring we're stronger together in facing future challenges.

If you're passionate about **volunteering and social value** and want to contribute to building stronger communities, this is the group for you!

3. Growing Communities Together

This group is focused on building a resilient Kingston by empowering communities and using data and insights to address inequalities. It supports the EPSC strategy by:

- **Sharing Data and Intelligence:** Developing better systems for sharing data across sectors, ensuring that decisions are evidence-based and responsive to real community needs.
- **Promoting Inclusivity and Resilience:** Ensuring that all residents, particularly those from underrepresented groups, have a voice in shaping their communities.
- **Addressing identified needs:** Collaborating on projects using data to better understand and respond to community needs.

If you believe in the power of **data-driven community development** and want to be part of a group that tackles inequality head-on, this is where you can make an impact!

Why Join?

By becoming a VCSE representative in one of these groups, you'll be helping to deliver the EPSC strategy and make Kingston a more inclusive, equitable, and resilient place. This is an opportunity to influence local decision-making, collaborate with fellow organisations, and contribute your expertise to critical initiatives that support Kingston's communities.

How to Get Involved:

We're eager to hear from organisations interested in shaping Kingston's future. To learn more about how you can join one of these working groups, please contact Terry Gee, VCSE Development Lead - terry.gee@kingstoin.gov.uk

Together, we can deliver on the EPSC strategy and ensure that Kingston's communities continue to thrive.