



Strategic Plan 2020 - 2023



- 1 Introduction**
- 2 Mission & Values**
- 3 EVOC's work**
- 4 Looking to the Future**
- 5 EVOC's Strategic Response**
- 6 Three-year Strategic Direction**
 - 6.1 Leadership**
 - 6.2 Development**
 - 6.3 Advocacy**

Strategic Plan 2020 - 2023

Introduction

It has never been more important to listen to people's voices. Over the next three years, EVOC will build on the learning from the local events and research we undertook to mark our 150th anniversary, ensuring that our future work is based on the purposes that drove our establishment a century and a half ago. We will take forward our work energetically in the context of the 21st Century: a changed environment but one in which tackling social deprivation and inequality are still as critical as they have always been.

2 MISSION AND VALUES



OUR MISSION

To be a leader and catalyst of social change.

2 MISSION AND VALUES

We define our values as:

Enabling: We work to develop opportunities and deliver change

Fairness: We act with impartiality, balance and integrity

Collaborating: We listen, share and challenge

Excellence: We strive to lead with passion and professionalism

Creating: We are creative in our approach, ideas and in creating the space for better outcomes

Supporting: We respond to the voluntary sector's changing needs to enable them to continue to meet the needs of communities

3 EVOC'S WORK

Our position

EVOC has a deep understanding of the practice, priorities and pressures in communities, the voluntary sector and the public sector and we are skilled at building the bridge to support productive and respectful planning and delivery. We support the voluntary sector to be heard and develop to meet modern challenges and the public sector to understand and be understood.

As a partner in Edinburgh's Third Sector Interface (TSI) we accept this is challenging however we believe it also presents opportunities. Our ability to bring the skills of diplomacy, negotiation and speaking truth to people who are comfortable in the status quo means we create spaces which are thought-provoking, inspiring and productive.

3 EVOC'S WORK

Who we work with

Within the voluntary sector, EVOC's partnerships are with its members, the diverse range of Edinburgh's voluntary sector who choose to work alongside EVOC, sister Third Sector Interfaces across Scotland and other infrastructure organisations.

EVOC's strong relationships with key public sector bodies are crucial in delivering our leadership and advocacy role. We act as a catalyst for change by increasing influence in, and access to, the support people need in the communities they live in.

Partnership working is, and always has been, fundamental to our success and the success of the voluntary sector. We achieve our outcomes through building good relationships and listening to communities.



What we do

We provide leadership, development support and advocacy in the planning, shaping and delivery of services and support in communities. Any combination of these three essential elements which EVOC delivers to the voluntary sector in Edinburgh is unique, and our strength lies in our expertise in combining these areas with our members and partners.

4 LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

EVOC is committed to doing the right thing rather than the easy thing – which we believe is more vital than ever before.

4 LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

This is what we know

The voluntary, community and public sector environments have changed significantly since 2015 when we last reviewed EVOC's strategic direction. Relationships across the sectors have once again evolved and the landscape we all now work across is of a different nature.

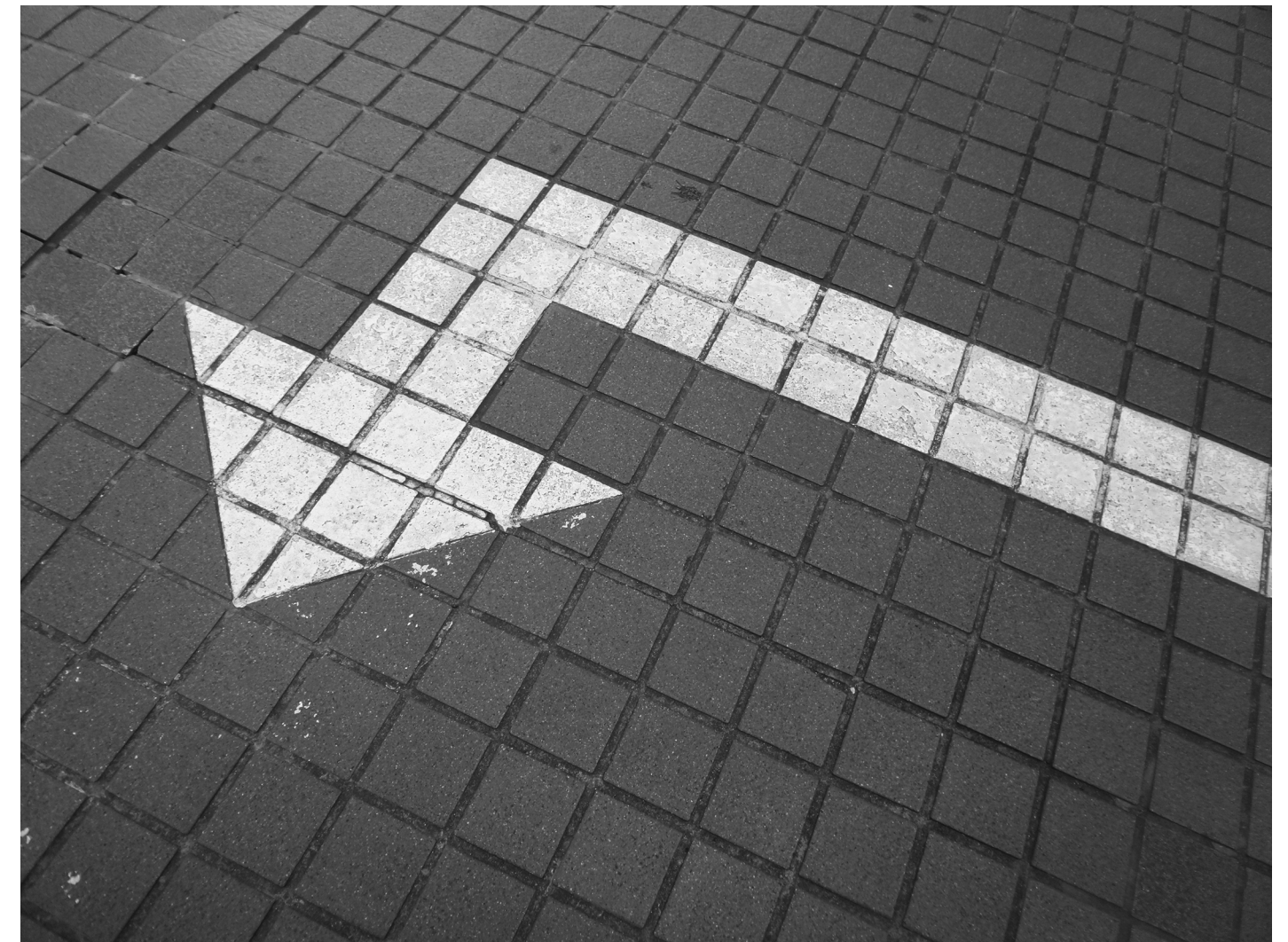
The principle of enabling people to take control and to fully connect into their own communities, is an approach to delivering and measuring service delivery identified in 'The Enabling State', Carnegie UK Trust programme. It is also a cornerstone of the recommendations of the 2011 Christie Commission – Commission on the Future Delivery of Public Services. Key pieces of research, like the Hard Edges Scotland¹ report, the delivery of our 150th year celebrations and our own project Mind the Craic², have provided further evidence

supporting the need for deep and sustained collaboration across all sectors. They also reinforce and re-emphasise the effectiveness of support which is centred on local delivery to promote prevention and early intervention.



¹ Lankelly Chase and the Robertson Trust, June 2019

² Mind the Craic, EVOC, November 2019



The early 2020s will undoubtedly see the need for more work to:

- tackle poverty
- mitigate the effects of and our contribution to climate change
- improve housing availability
- challenge the effects of austerity
- seek positive outcomes from the ongoing changing relationship with the state
- further embed approaches to promote prevention and early intervention in all service areas
- support and build on the resilience within communities

4 LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

Similarly, we believe the following require examination:

- the application of procurement methodology
- a more effective scrutiny function – making accountability effective
- responding to proposals for and reform of legislation
- implementation of approaches to community empowerment

These are some of the challenges and pressures we face:

- lack of investment
- the increased level of legal and regulatory compliance required of all organisations
- new models of working
- the withdrawal by the state in supporting people with low to moderate needs
- population changes
- political uncertainty

At the organisational level, good governance is the key for all organisations seeking to become both compliant and resilient, whilst remaining true to their purpose and mission. There is an increased expectation of support for organisations, as they strive to evidence compliance with ever-increasing regulatory regimes and deal with issues such as public scrutiny, the challenges of their chosen legal form and future sustainability. All issues which we expect to see continue and grow in frequency.

5 EVOC'S STRATEGIC RESPONSE

From 2020-2023 EVOC will seek to improve capacity, focus and performance to ensure that our work is effective:

- We will improve how we communicate with all sectors, by developing a comprehensive communications plan
- We will become more actively and visibly involved in partnerships both locally and nationally, promoting, challenging and influencing thinking across sectors on behalf of voluntary organisations and the communities they work with
- We will increase the expertise of our teams in essential skills and competencies
- We will clearly explain our priorities
- We will work with all partners to identify the risks and opportunities that face us
- We will change the support we offer organisations, shifting towards preventing difficulties arising
- We will continue to grow our services to the voluntary sector and increase our independent income using the expertise we possess
- We will become more transparent to the sector but no less robust in our interface role
- We will review how we bring organisations together to increase influence



6 THREE-YEAR STRATEGIC DIRECTION

OUR VALUES

Enabling
Fairness
Collaborating
Excellence
Creating
Supporting

6 THREE-YEAR STRATEGIC DIRECTION



From 2020 to 2023 EVOC will focus on three key areas on which we will base our strategic change programme and which will provide greater value and flexibility, for the organisation, our members and our partners.

6 THREE-YEAR STRATEGIC DIRECTION

6.1 LEADERSHIP

We will articulate EVOC’s leadership role in the sector, manage the intricacies of our interface role, and make those interventions visible across all sectors. Our principles are to be inclusive and collective in all our work. At the same time, we will develop our leadership role both nationally and politically. We will also develop the leadership roles of our staff team.

Priorities

- Enhance EVOC’s role as a champion of better models of working, in turn supporting change in local communities
- Cultivate national collaboration
- Promote collective leadership within EVOC

6.2 DEVELOPMENT

EVOC will be a vehicle for changing social outcomes, driving and implementing solutions based on our own and others research findings. It is our intention to embed a broad-based 'Development Agency' approach, building capacity and skills across the sector, therefore raising the reputation and the profiles of many of Edinburgh’s voluntary organisations.



6.2 DEVELOPMENT (cont.)

Priorities

- Build resilient organisations and collaborations
- Ensure consistency of evidence gathering and analysis
- Develop our workforce

6.3 ADVOCACY

EVOC has a key influencing role in working with the voluntary and community sector and in bridging and brokering the relationships with our public sector partners. EVOC’s unique role of informing, engaging and communicating these different interests and priorities is challenging and one which we aim to strengthen.



Priorities

- Advocate for community empowerment approaches
- Increase our political influence
- Advocate for organisations working with local communities – geographical and communities of interest



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company limited by guarantee No. SC173582
and is a registered Scottish charity No. SC009944.

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