



Better Together Forum Policy Conference

Trust and Relationships across a system - How do we create and sustain the environment for collaboration?

Bringing public sector and VCSE leaders together for an honest conversation about what needs to change if County Durham is to create a genuinely collaborative relationship between sectors. Externally facilitated by Mutual Ventures we will test the appetite for a different relationship, explore the values, behaviours and mechanisms that would support it, and identify the next practical steps, including whether an Accord would add value.

Tuesday 6 October 2026 | 9.30am-3.30pm | Spennymoor Town Hall

AGENDA

09:00 - 09:30	Registration, Refreshments and networking	
09:30 - 09:40	Welcome & Introduction	Kate Burrows Chair - Better Together VCS Forum
09:40 - 09:55	Setting out the day	Andrew Laird Mutual Ventures (Facilitator)
09:55 - 10:25	Presentation: Putting Relationships First	Neil Denton Co-Lead, Relationship Project
10:25 - 10:55	Presentation: The Power of Partnerships (Learning from Greater Manchester)	Scott Darraugh MBE CEO/Founder, Social adVentures
10:55 – 11:15	Coffee, reflection and networking	All
11:15 – 12:00	Conversation 1: Values and beliefs	Facilitated table discussions & feedback
12:00 - 12:45	Lunch and networking	All
12:45 – 13:30	Conversation 2: Trust and relationships	Facilitated table discussions & feedback
13:30 - 14:15	Conversation 3: Mechanisms that enable collaboration	Facilitated table discussions & feedback
14:15 - 14:35	Coffee break	All
14:35 - 15:15	From conversation to action: what needs to happen next?	Whole room discussion Andrew Laird Mutual Ventures
15:15 – 15:30	Closing reflections and next steps	Kate Burrows Chair - Better Together VCS Forum