Worcestershire Volunteering Research Report

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CONTENTS

This research was commissioned by Worcestershire Voices, the strategic body for the voluntary and community sector. It was conducted between March and July 2013. The findings are drawn from the results of two surveys (one with organisations and one with members of the general public), interviews with key stakeholders; desk research and focus groups.

This report presents a profile of volunteering in Worcestershire in 2013. It explores the current extent of volunteering, attitudes, motivations and benefits, and presents a picture from seven key perspectives:

> General Public
> Volunteers
> Organisations with Volunteers
> Businesses
> Public Sector
> Recruitment and Brokerage Services
> National policy and innovations

Most importantly the research explores how the context for volunteering is changing in social, economic, technological and policy terms. It looks at what problems and issues need addressing, and how Worcestershire can best position itself to enable volunteering to grow and thrive in the future.

EXTENT OF VOLUNTEERING

Volunteering is an integral part of life in Worcestershire. Our household survey of over 300 adults showed:

47% give unpaid help as an individual to neighbours, friends and people in their communities (informal volunteering).

52% volunteer through clubs, groups and organisations (formal volunteering)

Overall 69% volunteer in some way

VALUE OF VOLUNTEERING

Volunteering brings enormous benefits to individuals, to organisations and to communities. This research provides powerful evidence about its social and economic impact. Key findings show:

71% volunteer to improve things/help people

Across all sectors, 95% have positive perceptions of Volunteering

Estimated annual economic value is £811M

STRONGER COMMUNITIES

Volunteering roots people in their communities and creates stronger social networks and a more cohesive society.

"Volunteering can provide a 'heart' to the community".

In the face of economic downturn, cuts in services and increased unemployment and hardship there's a clear need for communities to be more resilient and supportive.

Of respondents in our household survey who volunteered:

56% said it helped them feel part of the community

49% said it enabled them to make new friends. (60% of 60+ yrs olds)

27% said it gave them a social life (43% for those under 40)

In our organisation survey:

83% said volunteers provided 'connection with the community'

63% said they 'helped them provide a better service'

IMPROVED WELLBEING

Volunteering also brings benefits in people's health and wellbeing. With an ageing population and strains on health services the need for people to take care of their own and each others' well being has never been greater. In our household survey:

56% said volunteering made them feel good about themselves

30% said it improved their confidence

25% said it improved their health and wellbeing

66 organisations (36% of the survey sample) worked in the fields of health, care, disability and special needs. These organisations alone mobilised over 15000 volunteers.

IMPROVED SKILLS AND EMPLOYABILITY

Volunteering also has an important role in skills and employment development. In the household survey, of respondents aged under 30 who had volunteered:

70% said they'd improved their skills

64% added valuable experience to their CV

48% went onto further training and education

18% said it had led to paid work

Amongst the organisations:

69% provide training for volunteers

55% provide mentoring/personal support

34% provide career support

THE COST OF VOLUNTEERING

"People often aren't aware of the costs involved in managing volunteers and brokering placements. They think volunteers = free."

There are around a quarter of a million volunteers involved with groups, clubs and organisations in the county. The hidden costs include: publicity, recruitment, placement, training, support and supervision, communications, expenses, administration, health and safety, insurance, CRB checks, management and coordination.

Amongst the sample of 226 organisations in our survey there were 2034 volunteer managers and coordinators (over half were

volunteers themselves). They supported over 25,000 volunteers at a ratio of 1 manager to 13 volunteers. Crude estimates suggest as many as 20,000 - 30,000 are active in these roles.

"People with volunteer management responsibilities...have a challenging job. They need to be able to inspire people to give their time freely, maintain their motivation, ensure that they match skilled people with relevant roles, and ensure that paid staff and volunteers are able to work well together"
Nick Hurd, MP, Minister for Civil Society (extract from 'Valuing Volunteer Management Skills' (2010))

There was a significant need identified for more training and investment in volunteer managers. Where networks and district services exist there are benefits in terms of economies of scale though many are under-resourced.

ISSUES AND NEEDS TO BE ADDRESSED

Volunteering is established and growing across voluntary, community, public and private sectors. Of the county's 2750 voluntary and community organisations, many are experiencing increased service demand in a significantly reduced funding environment.

An estimated 77,000 new volunteers will be needed in the year ahead.

Policy changes around Localism, Social Value, and Health and Social care, rely on a considerable 'scaling up' of volunteering in communities. However there has been little or no investment to support this. Our research showed: Informal volunteering in Worcestershire is 15% below the national figure.

In particular the expected growth in health and social care was raised as an area of concern and risk as well as a potential benefit.

Volunteering of the future is going to attract a broader and younger demographic. It's going to offer more one off, short term and flexible ways of getting involved. It's going to be more integrated with other aspects of our lives. It's going to involve technology a lot more.

WHAT'S THE OPPORTUNITY?

Around 1 in 10 people don't know about any groups that need help, haven't thought about it or say they haven't been asked.

25% of those who already volunteer would like to do more. 40% of those who don't volunteer said they'd like to (33% more said they might)

43% said they would be interested in online volunteering (61% of those under 40 yrs old)

23% would be interested in using volunteering apps (43% of under 40s and 52% of under 20s)

63% of employees indicated they would or might volunteer as part of an employer scheme

1 in 3 of those under 50 would be interested in family volunteering and over half would be interested in volunteering with friends.

Members of the public, businesses and education institutions ARE willing to engage more in volunteering. However, currently opportunities to do so are fragmented, confusing and uncoordinated. They need the volunteering sector to clearly explain what's needed, make it easy, sell the benefits, and demonstrate the difference it makes.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR WORCESTERSHIRE VOICES

➢ Create a high level countywide joined up approach to volunteering linking the voluntary and community, public and business sectors.

➢ Increase volunteering both in breadth and depth of engagement.

➢ Drive technology adoption as a tool for recruiting, delivering and evidencing the impact of volunteering.

➢ Improve access to volunteering for disadvantaged and under-represented groups.

➢ Make volunteering more visible, accessible, valued, and joined up.

➢ Enable organisations involving volunteers to excel at volunteering.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE PUBLIC SECTOR

➢ Engage at a senior level in cross sector strategic work on volunteering.

➢ Embed a commitment to volunteering within strategic planning.

➢ Invest in supporting growth and development of volunteering.

➢ Provide opportunities for staff to volunteer in other organisations (through, for example, Employer Supported Volunteering programmes).

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ORGANISATIONS WITH VOLUNTEERS

➢ Provide a range of volunteering options including flexible, short term, one-off as well as regular/long term opportunities.

➢ Use websites and social media to promote volunteering opportunities and make it easy for people to get in touch and get involved

➢ Think creatively about how volunteering itself could be delivered online

➢ Recruit volunteers from amongst beneficiaries/service users to create a 'virtuous circle'

➢ Keep volunteers informed about what's going on and changes ahead and ensure volunteers are heard

➢ Be 'thoughtful' about matching people to roles and managing expectations. Be clear about roles and commitment. Give choice. Ensure there's some 'fun'.

➢ Pay volunteers expenses and be clear about this in promotion/recruitment.

➢ Thank and appreciate volunteers in genuine and meaningful ways.

➢ Evidence the difference volunteering makes in your organisation. Make sure volunteers and staff are aware of this.

➢ Create healthy staff/volunteer relationships. Make sure leaders and staff understand, respect and appreciate volunteer contributions.

➢ Provide opportunities for staff to volunteer in other organisations.

➢ Recognise, support and invest in your volunteer managers and coordinators.

This research was commissioned in February 2013 by Worcestershire Voices, the strategic body for the Voluntary and Community sector. The research took place between March and July 2013. The brief was to review volunteering in the county, build a picture of the current capacity and scope with recommendations on future needs and potential interventions. The key objectives were to:

➢ Provide a strategic overview of volunteering in Worcestershire outlining the perceptions, extent and value.

➢ Develop an understanding of the profile of volunteers, their motivations, activities, how they get engaged, barriers to volunteering, and volunteering in rural communities.

➢ Identify how organisations attract, retain and provide ongoing support and training, and the links between organisations recruiting and using volunteers.

➢ Explore business sector support for volunteering.

➢ Outline key recommendations with particular reference to: meeting the needs and enhancing the experience and aspirations of volunteers; satisfying the needs of organisations including effective practice in the recruitment, retention, support and recognition of volunteers; the use of technology to recruit volunteers and as a way to volunteer; maximizing effective marketing of volunteering; volunteering support by the private sector; and volunteering support in rural communities.

In view of this, the research reviewed volunteering in Worcestershire from 7 key perspectives.

2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

RESEARCH APPROACH

There were five approaches used in conducting this research:

- ➢ **Desk research** including: review of existing local and national research, policies and strategies on volunteering; geographic/socio-economic data gathering, innovative/technological tools and approaches relating to volunteering.
- ➢ **Interviews** with 14 key stakeholders from across the public, private and voluntary/community sector (See Appendix 1)
- ➢ **A Household survey** providing a perspective on volunteering from a representative sample of 302 Worcestershire residents aged 16+
- ➢ **An Organisation Survey** providing perspectives on volunteering from 236 public, business, voluntary and community, and cross-sector organisations
- ➢ 3 **Focus Groups** with: Organisations that manage volunteers, Volunteers, and Volunteer Centres.

In total the research engaged around 750 people and organisations.

VOLUNTEERING DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this research we used the definition of volunteering used by the Cabinet Office in the 2012-13 Community Life Survey:

Formal volunteering – giving unpaid help through groups, clubs or organisations

Informal volunteering – giving unpaid help as an individual to people who are not relatives

HOUSEHOLD VOLUNTEERING SURVEY

As part of this research, Worcestershire Voices were keen get an unbiased view of volunteering from the general public. In order to achieve this, a household survey was designed with a cash prize incentive. The survey was designed to explore both informal and formal Volunteering and in particular to look at three groups:

- ➢ Current Volunteers
- ➢ Former Volunteers
- ➢ Non Volunteers

Several approaches were used to gather responses:

➢ A promotional flyer was distributed directly to households in 3 postcode areas selected on the basis of their fit with the overall demographics of the county. This encouraged respondents to complete the survey either online or by phone.

➢ Face to face interviews were conducted by researchers in public and residential locations in, Bromsgrove, Kidderminster, Malvern and Worcester. These targeted sections of the population (by gender, age, ethnicity) in order to achieve a representative sample.

➢ Additional Flyer distribution in public places was conducted door to door and in various public locations (shops, libraries, cafe's, launderettes, community centres, health and leisure centres, pubs etc).

➢ The survey was promoted to District Council Media Teams in all six districts and press releases and follow up with 11 local radio and newspaper organisations around the county.

SAMPLE SIZE

In total there were 327 respondents of which 302 were valid complete responses from adult residents in Worcestershire.

MARGIN OF ERROR

As a sample of the population of Worcestershire aged 16 + (472,700, Census 2011) this means the margin of error is + or – 5.6%

QUALITY CONTROL

The survey was piloted with before going live. Fieldwork researchers were given training and guidance on survey method, random selection, data protection, and the Market Research Society Code of Conduct. Data input staff were given training and five percent of questionnaires (manually data input from face to face collection) were quality checked.

SAMPLE REPRESENTATIVENESS

The survey sample is representative to within 3% across age, gender, urban/rural dwelling, ethnicity and disability/health status. Geographic locations for conducting the survey were selected on the basis of ACORN socio-economic categories used by Worcestershire County Council. Comparative analysis of the sample with the Worcestershire population was conducted using 2011 census data and DEFRA rural/urban categorizations and can be found in Appendix 3.

The organisation survey was conducted online and designed for 4 types of organisation:

➢ Voluntary and Community Sector (e.g. Non Profit, Charity, Community group, Club, Society, Social Enterprise, Housing Association, Trust, Cooperative/Mutual, Faith Group)
➢ Public Sector (e.g. School, FE/HE institutions, Hospital, Emergency Service, Parish Council, Local Authority Service - Library, Sports and Recreation, Heritage, Park/Environment group)
➢ Business Sector (e.g. Sole Trader, Self Employed, Small or Medium Sized Enterprise, Large/Multinational Companies)
➢ Cross Sector Partnership or Network

SAMPLE SIZE

The survey gained 320 responses of which, 236 were valid complete responses:

➢ 198 Voluntary and Community Sector Organisations
➢ 24 Public Sector Organisations
➢ 4 Cross Sector Partnerships/Networks
➢ 10 Businesses

Due to the low response rate from businesses, the business sector findings and responses were excluded from the analysis. Therefore all the survey findings are based on the remaining 226 organisations from the voluntary and community sector, public sector and cross-sector respondents.

RESPONSE SOURCES

The survey was promoted through an extensive marketing and promotion strategy with a prize draw charity donation as an incentive. Responses came via a wide range of networks and partnerships including: Community First in Herefordshire and Worcestershire; and Worcestershire County Council Voluntary and Community Sector Unit; Community Groups, Faith Groups, Libraries, Schools, Hospitals, Emergency Services, Youth Groups, Economic Dev Team, Worcestershire Ambassadors, and other businesses/social enterprises, Volunteer Centres, MPs & Political Groups, Community Centres, CVS Worcester, Carewise, Sports Partnership, Chamber of Commerce, Shenstone. All data collection was conducted online.

ORGANISATION POPULATION SIZE

Calculating the number of voluntary and community organisations in the county is the subject of some debate. We found two research studies which provide figures:

➢ 'Valuing the Voluntary Sector in Herefordshire and Worcestershire' (2007) Sustain Consultancy and Guidestar. This study gave a figure of 2748 organisations (66% registered charities and 34% non registered organisations)
➢ IPSOS Mori National Survey of Third Sector Organisations Nationally and By County (2010). This study gave a figure of 1887 charities, social enterprises and voluntary organisations.

Both surveys were underpinned by data from Guidestar, however the 2007 research conducted a much more thorough look at the county, in particular organisations that were NOT registered as charities (currently there are 1907 registered charities in Worcestershire). We have therefore used this figure in calculating the population size. The number of public sector organisations with volunteers has been estimated as 508. This is based our research into a wide range of public sector services and their involvement with volunteers (see the Section '8 The Public Sector Perspective'). We have therefore used a base 'population size' of approximately 3256 (2748 voluntary and community sector organisations and 508 public sector organisations).

MARGIN OF ERROR

Based on a sample of 226 organisations from a base 'population' of 3256 organisations means the margin of error for the organisation survey is + or - 6.29%

SAMPLE REPRESENTATIVENESS

The research team sought to encourage all sections of the voluntary and community and public sector to take part in the survey. Analysis of the organisation survey respondents has been conducted by beneficiary group, area of activity, number of paid staff, urban/rural area of benefit, district location, and annual income (See Appendix 2). Whilst no detailed comparative analysis has been conducted against other research about the sector in Worcestershire, we are confident a good cross section of organisations responded to the survey.

Organisation Survey Respondents by District

N = 168
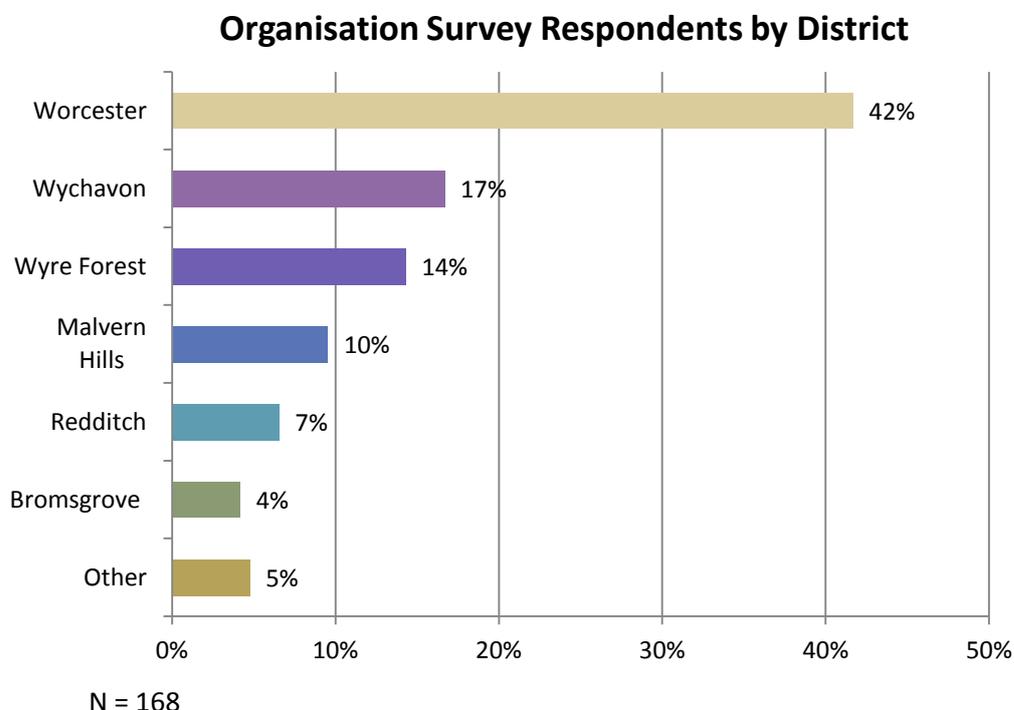
The 'other' category included organisations based outside Worcestershire, mostly in neighbouring counties, which provide services within the county. A further 58 organisations did not provide details of their location.

3. POLICY CONTEXT

The strategic and policy context at both national level and in Worcestershire is has created some very significant drivers for change and growth in volunteering. The key relevant policies are: The Giving White Paper; Think Local Act Personal; The Localism Act; The Open Public Services White Paper; and the Social Value Act.

NATIONAL POLICY

GIVING WHITE PAPER 2011

The Government's *Giving White Paper* announced a range of measures to support new and better ways to enable the giving and exchange of time, assets, skills, resources and money. A summary of their investment in building a bigger a stronger society is provided in the infographic overleaf.

"Our ambition is to stimulate a step change in giving…to make it easier and more compelling to give time and money…to give better support to the trailblazers and innovators." *Francis Maude Minister for the Cabinet Office and Paymaster General and Nick Hurd, Minister for Civil Society.*

The Cabinet office is the government lead department on volunteering. They have been conducting major 'Community Life' surveys of adults in England for a number of years to track the trends and developments across areas that are key to encouraging social action and empowering communities. Volunteering is one of 9 key areas they are monitoring along with others such as trust, giving, community engagement and well- being. The latest figures (for August – October 2012) suggest 72% of the population are involved in some kind of volunteering. 44% in formal volunteering and 62% in informal volunteering.
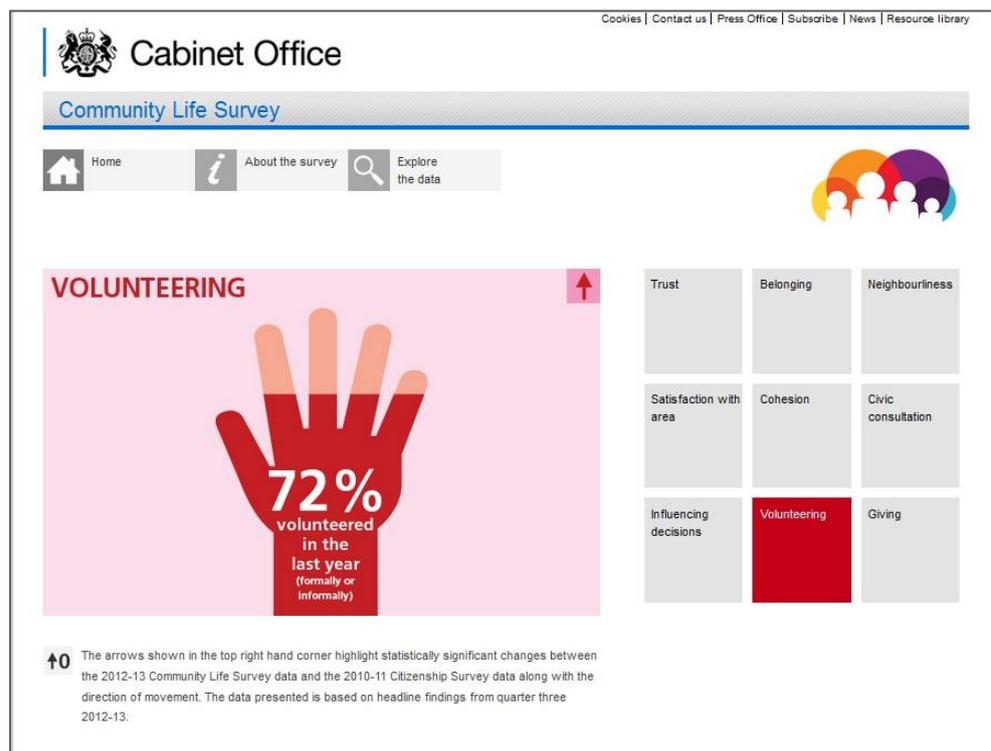
Building a bigger, stronger society.

Making it easier and more compelling to give back

Volunteering: 71 per cent volunteered in the last year (formally or informally).

Giving: 74 per cent gave to charities in the four weeks prior to interview.

Trust: 42 per cent think people can be trusted.

Neighbourliness: 53 per cent agree they can borrow things and exchange favours with their neighbours.

Belonging: 79 per cent have a strong sense of belonging to their neighbourhood.

Cohesion: 87 per cent say they live in an area where people from different backgrounds get on well together.

Satisfaction with local area: 84 per cent are satisfied with their local area as a place to live.

Influencing decisions: 48 per cent would like to be more involved in council decisions affecting their local area.

Source: Community Life Survey and Office for Civil Society, February 2013.

£1.3million

Match funding
To support charities through localgiving.com, Text Santa and Street Smart. For example the Grow Your Tenner campaign has leveraged £3 for every £1 government money spent.

300,000 participants

Join in
Inspired by the London 2012 Games, 300,000 people were able to participate in over 6,000 events across the UK thanks to Join in – the new Olympic volunteering legacy programme set up to keep the spirit of the Games makers alive.

12,000 ATMs allow donations

ATM Giving
People can donate to charity at the cashpoint.

New tax incentives
This Government is reforming charitable giving and has introduced new schemes for Gift Aid-style top-up payments on small cash donations, donations of pre-eminent items to the nation and a new lower rate of inheritance Tax for estates leaving 10% to charity. These new incentives should deliver around £450 million to the charitable sector in 2015/16 and around £700 million in 2016/17.

£450 million

500,000 opportunities

Social Action Fund - new volunteering opportunities
Through the Social Action Fund the Government has supported 40 charities with over £20m over the past two years so that they can recruit more volunteers. So far, over 100,000 volunteers have been recruited with half million expected by Autumn 2013.

£10 million

Youth United
We are supporting Youth United with £10m to establish 400 new cadets units (like the Scouts and Girl Guides), recruit 2700 adult volunteers and provide places for 10,800 young people in communities across the country.

34,000+ participants

Over 34,000 National Citizen Service participants
Supporting teenagers to gain new skills and give over 700,000 volunteering hours to the community. NCS will triple in size to offer one in six the chance to take part by 2014. 93% of participants would recommend NCS to a friend.

700+ organisers

Community Organisers
Over 700 organisers and volunteers have been trained to give communities the help they need to take control and tackle their own problems.

£600 million

Social Investment: Big Society Capital
The first social investment institution of its kind in the world – launched with up to £600m to build the social investment market. Over £55m of investments already committed for projects to support local communities. The UK is leading the world on Social Impact Bonds. There are now thirteen operational SIBs.

£7.9 million

Innovation in Giving
The fund has spent £7.9m to date to support 67 of the most innovative initiatives to encourage giving.

£150 million local endowment

Community First
The match funding programme to encourage local giving. We are match funding £50m in cash to create a total of £150m endowment funds (2:1 match).

THINK LOCAL ACT PERSONAL 2011

In 2011, the government issued guidance on the steps to be taken in the transformation agenda – Think Local, Act Personal (TLAP). TLAP links the personalisation of Adult and Social Care with the intentions of the Sustainable Community Strategies, The Localism Act, the Vision for Adult Social care and the Liberating the NHS Bill. It represents an overarching framework for delivering a radical transformation of public sector services with a move towards developing stronger communities, greater decentralisation and increased local capacity and independence.

LOCALISM

The Localism Act 2012 and contains a number of proposals to give local authorities new freedoms and flexibility.

'New government policies can offer opportunities to strengthen local action within communities by building on what already works well. This can help manage the inevitable reduction in public service expenditure, whilst bolstering the vibrancy and sustainability of rural communities'. *(Acre Policy Position paper)*

Localism aims to deliver a shift of power from central government to local communities, allowing people to do more to help themselves. It introduced a range of measures intended to reduce the power of the state and provide greater opportunities for local communities to determine their own future. In order to support this aim, a number of 'Community Rights' were introduced giving people and groups a greater say over what happens in their area and to shape their neighbourhoods future: by proposing new development, taking over the delivery of local services and bidding to take ownership of community buildings, assets and public land. These Rights include: The Right to Buy, The Right to Build, the Right to Challenge and Neighbourhood Planning.

OPEN PUBLIC SERVICES WHITE PAPER 2013

This sets out the government intention to open up more public services to local communities and where appropriate puts responsibility for local decisions in the hands of local people. The landscape in which public services operate is shifting rapidly with new demands arising from financial pressures and demographic changes. Health services are being transformed by giving patients and GPs the freedom to choose the healthcare that works for them. Power is being placed in the hands of medical professionals through clinical commissioning groups and extending personal budgets in health and social care so people can decide how money gets spent on their care.

SOCIAL VALUE ACT 2013

'Social Value' is a way of thinking about how scarce resources are allocated and used. It prompts us to ask the question 'If £1 is spent on delivery of services, can that same £1 be used to produce a wider benefit to the community?' As well as focusing on price, it helps us to consider the collective benefit to the community and wider social, economic and environmental outcomes (e.g. stronger

communities, improved health, improved environment) that can be procured over and above the direct purchasing of services, goods and outcomes' (Public Services Social Value Act 2012, A Brief Guide, Social Enterprise UK, 2012).

The Social Value Act came into operation in January 2013. This now places a requirement for Local Authorities to assess commissions against social, economic and environmental benefits. All procurement processes therefore will need to be measured and monitored against these criteria, thus providing greater opportunities for community benefit and involvement of local people in shaping their communities. Examples of this include providers committing to fund staff volunteer days to support community activities and/or local environmental projects. The potential for volunteering therefore through this act is huge and will provide opportunities for business supported volunteering that are innovative and transformational.

WORCESTERSHIRE POLICY

LOCALISM IN WORCESTERSHIRE

From March to June 2012, Worcestershire County Council undertook an extensive consultation exercise 'Act Local in Worcestershire' to inform the county's response to the localism agenda:

The Council's vision is to have:

- A strong society, with communities able to support themselves
- Strong relationships and a culture that encourages communities and our partners to devise different and new ways of meeting need
- Local Councillors as effective leaders in their local area, supporting and encouraging active citizenship and speaking up for the communities they have been elected to represent
- A county council that is flexible in responding to the needs of local communities, and faster in terms of decision making

Act Local demonstrates a commitment as a council to focus on delivering services to people and communities who cannot provide for themselves, whilst removing barriers to enable others to help themselves. For example: 2 rural library links have been established in 2 rural parishes, run by local community volunteers and supported by their local branch libraries.

FIT FOR THE FUTURE 2013-16

Worcestershire County Council's corporate plan, 'Worcestershire – Fit for the Future' sets out the vision and direction for the Council, which includes:

"empowering and supporting communities to come together and do more things for themselves and actively participate in delivering those services which are important to them."

The key priorities are:
> Open for Business;
> Children and Families;
> The Environment; and
> Health and Wellbeing.

JOINT HEALTH AND WELL-BEING STRATEGY 2013-16

Although health and wellbeing in Worcestershire has been improving and is better than the national average, there are however huge challenges:

> An aging and growing population, with a rising demand for health and social care services (The population is projected to increase to over 600,000 in the next 20 years, most significantly in the over 65 age groups)

> A growing burden of lifestyle related ill-health, particularly due to obesity

> A growing need for savings across the public sector, including health and social care services

> Relatively poor health in most disadvantaged communities.

Worcestershire Health and Wellbeing Board have developed a cross sector strategy to tackle these issues and focuses on:

> A greater emphasis on prevention and early help to avoid future ill health, disability and social problems; and
> Ongoing integration and improvement of the quality and value for money of health and social care.

One of the four priorities is 'older people and management of long term conditions'. As high users of health and adult social care services, these account for a significant proportion of expenditure both by the local NHS and the Council. The Integrated Care Programme has been set up to focus on this. It is collaboration between the Council, the three Worcestershire Clinical Commissioning Groups, the Health and Care Trust, the Acute Hospitals Trust, and the Voluntary and Community Sector.

Greater efforts on preventative care including early identification and intervention of problems is extremely important. This will include doing more to encourage and empower individuals, families and communities to take greater responsibility for their own health and care.

WORCESTERSHIRE NEXT GENERATION- OUR ASPIRATIONS FOR 2040

Leaders from Worcestershire's businesses, voluntary, community and public sectors are working together to make an even better future for Worcestershire. This vision emphasises the need and demonstrates the commitment for all sectors to work together to create and develop the kind of Worcestershire people want to live in. The commitments focus on three priorities that all sectors must act on to improve the quality of life for the next generation.

Our prosperity – making our economy stronger with more skilled jobs (working well)

Our community – valuing our people, our health and well-being (living well)

Our environment – valuing our special place and our natural resources (looking good).

This vision of working together with shared objectives across sectors and the commitment from all sectors to do this, will open up possibilities for cross sector working that can support and develop this vision.

WORCESTERSHIRE PARTNERSHIP –SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY 2011-21

The Sustainable Community Strategy sets out the strategic vision for Worcestershire and focuses activity on what is needed in the short term to improve the quality of life of people who live, visit or work in the county.

In September 2010, the Worcestershire Partnership Management Group approved proposals for a single Sustainable Community Strategy for Worcestershire. In the past there have been individual strategies for each of the district councils, plus a countywide strategy.

Having a single SCS enables county and district Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs) to streamline their processes and articulate priorities in light of reduced resources. It also improves links between countywide theme groups and the delivery of priorities in districts and helps establish a robust local vision to underpin future and flexible partnership delivery arrangements.

Our vision for Worcestershire is:

"a county with safe, cohesive, healthy and inclusive communities, a strong and diverse economy and a valued and cherished environment."

The three key priorities are:
1. A skilled and prosperous economy
2. An environment that is cherished and resilient
3. Improving health & well-being.

Volunteering has become increasingly high profile in recent years. It is seen as a critical component of creating strong communities and underlies the Governments' 'Big Society' message and policies. In particular the 2012 Olympics has left a legacy of increased recognition and value of volunteering and this is being built upon nationally and locally.

NATIONAL VOLUNTARY SECTOR PERSPECTIVE

VOLUNTEERING ENGLAND

Volunteering England is the national lead body for Volunteering. It has recently merged with NCVO (the National Council for Voluntary Organisations). It promotes volunteering, provides good quality resources, and leads on campaigns and policy influence.

VOLUNTEER CENTRES

Volunteering England provides links to a network of Volunteer Centres across the country. Volunteer Centres are local organisations that provide support and expertise within the local community, to potential volunteers, existing volunteers and organisations that involve volunteers. There are six organisations providing Volunteer Centre services in Worcestershire. See section 8 for further information
www.volunteering.org.uk

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DO-IT ONLINE VOLUNTEERING DATABASE

Do-it is the national online database of volunteering opportunities. It has over a million opportunities including over 8000 in Worcestershire (at the time of writing). People interested in volunteering can search by interest, activity or location and apply online or get referred to a volunteer centre.

Around 75% of the opportunities on Do-it come from local Volunteer Centres. These organisations have been provided with hardware, software and training so that they can upload local vacancies onto the Do-it system.

In addition, some organisations post their opportunities directly as a free or paid for service (depending on their turnover). In our survey 19.7% of organisations said they recruit via Do-it. These are mostly the large organisations or affiliates to national bodies based in Worcestershire i.e. hospices, CAB, Diabetes UK, RSPB, Age UK, National Trust, Scout Association etc.

The database was developed by YouthNet and is driven behind the scenes by a system called 'Vbase' which is used by 6 volunteer centres in Worcestershire. It has been around for about 10 years with continued improvements in usability and technical innovation. It is our understanding at the time of writing that Do-it has been put on the market and that NCVO/Volunteering England is a likely purchaser. It's believed Do-it are currently working on Apps development for smart phones and other devices.

www.do-it.org.uk

VINSPIRED

VInspired is the UK's leading youth volunteering charity. Set up in 1996 they have created more than one million volunteering opportunities. Their research suggests one in three young people know about Vinspired.

They believe that young people's creativity, energy and optimism can change the world. They are dedicated to helping young people improve their skills, confidence and employability whilst doing things they really care about. There are a number of Worcestershire-based volunteering opportunities promoted on their site. They also have a free App.
vinspired.com
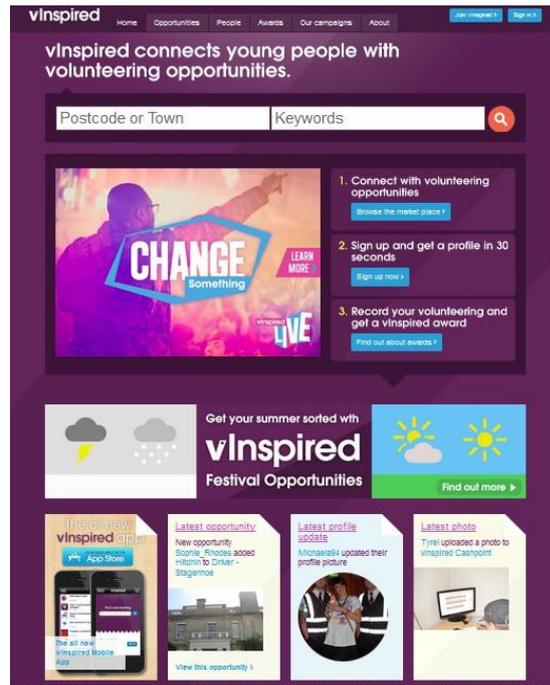
TIMEBANKING UK

Timebanking is a means of exchange to organise people and organisations around a purpose, where time is the principal currency. For every hour participants 'deposit' in a timebank, perhaps by giving practical help and support to others, they are able to 'withdraw' equivalent support in time when they themselves are in need. As systems of exchange they can be set up for person to person, person to agency, or agency to agency contexts. Benefits include better use of resources and assets in organisations and communities; promoting equality, and strengthening communities. There are over 300 timebanking schemes in the UK. www.timebanking.org

IVO

IVO is a social network for the community minded. It connects people and organisations that want to make their worlds a better place. Once signed up as an individual or organisation you can search through 25,000+ volunteering opportunities and get involved in networks to stay informed and engage in discussion. www.Ivo.org

REACH SKILLED VOLUNTEERS AND TRUSTEEWORKS

This charity matches skilled volunteers with charities. They have over 3,000 registered skilled volunteers with experience in management, IT, marketing, accountancy, project management, HR, finance or many other areas. They actively search their lists of skilled volunteers to find the right match and experience to suit charities and the role they wish to fill. www.reachskills.org.uk/
They also run Trustee Works matching trustees with charities. www.reachskills.org.uk/trusteeworks

NATIONAL BUSINESS SECTOR PERSPECTIVE

There are a number of established and successful national schemes that facilitate more engagement and volunteering between the business and voluntary sector.

BUSINESS IN THE COMMUNITY

Business in the community is the largest business-led charity of its kind - committed to building resilient communities, diverse workplaces and a more sustainable future. They work locally, nationally and internationally with members to transform businesses and transform communities. They run a scheme called 'Pro-help' which matches skilled business professionals with community and charity organisations providing pro-bono support in a wide range of fields. Business in the Community are active in west midlands with regional contacts in Birmingham/Black country, Shropshire/Staffordshire, Coventry / Warwickshire. There have been meetings between Business in the Community and the Chamber of Commerce though there is currently no presence in the county.

OTHER SPECIALIST PROFESSIONAL SCHEMES

There are a number of successful national schemes that support, relationship brokering and skills matching in specific professions. These include:

> - The Media Trust – Media and Communications
>   www.mediatrust.org
> - IT For Communities – ICT advice and Support
>   www.it4communities.org.uk
> - Arts and Business – Links Businesses with the Arts Sector
>   artsandbusiness.bitc.org.uk
> - The Big Give Trustee Finder
>   content.thebiggive.org.uk/charities/opportunities/trustees/
> - The Honorary Treasurers Forum – advertises charity vacancies for Treasurers
>   www.honorarytreasurers.org.uk
> - Trustee Bank – advertising for Trustees to NCVO members
>   www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/trusteebank
> - Reach Skilled Volunteers and TrusteeWorks
>   www.reachskills.org.uk

In late 2012 the Cabinet Office announced its investment in a new Centre for Social Action at the independent charity NESTA with a focus on giving both time and money. Their £34M 'Innovation in Giving Fund' is being led by the centre and is already supporting over 60 new initiatives, many of them exploring new approaches to volunteering and many involving technology. giving.nesta.org.uk These are some of the volunteering projects to watch:

SLIVERS OF TIME

A social business web based platform to make it easy for people to volunteer their spare time to employers, voluntary organisations or their local community.www.slivers.com

GOOD PEOPLE

Web-based talent platform – built on top of social technologies such as Twitter, LinkedIn and Facebook – helping organisations attract people who want to use their skills to support the causes they care about. goodpeople.co.uk

CARE BANK

Exploring whether people can be incentivised to volunteer and support each other and the most vulnerable. Allows volunteers to earn credits that can be exchanged for services within the local community, or gifted to people in need of support from i.e. a good neighbour or befriending scheme.
www.royalvoluntaryservice.org.uk/service/1365-wrvs-care-bank

GIVE WHAT YOU'RE GOOD AT

Platform that matches professional volunteers who want to give something back with charities that need their particular skill set. Charities can choose from off-the shelf solutions, whether they're looking for a professional to design a logo, plan a social media campaign, complete a funding application or build a website. Using technology, the platform finds the perfect match between a charity's needs and a professional's skills, passion and personality – enabling volunteers to make the
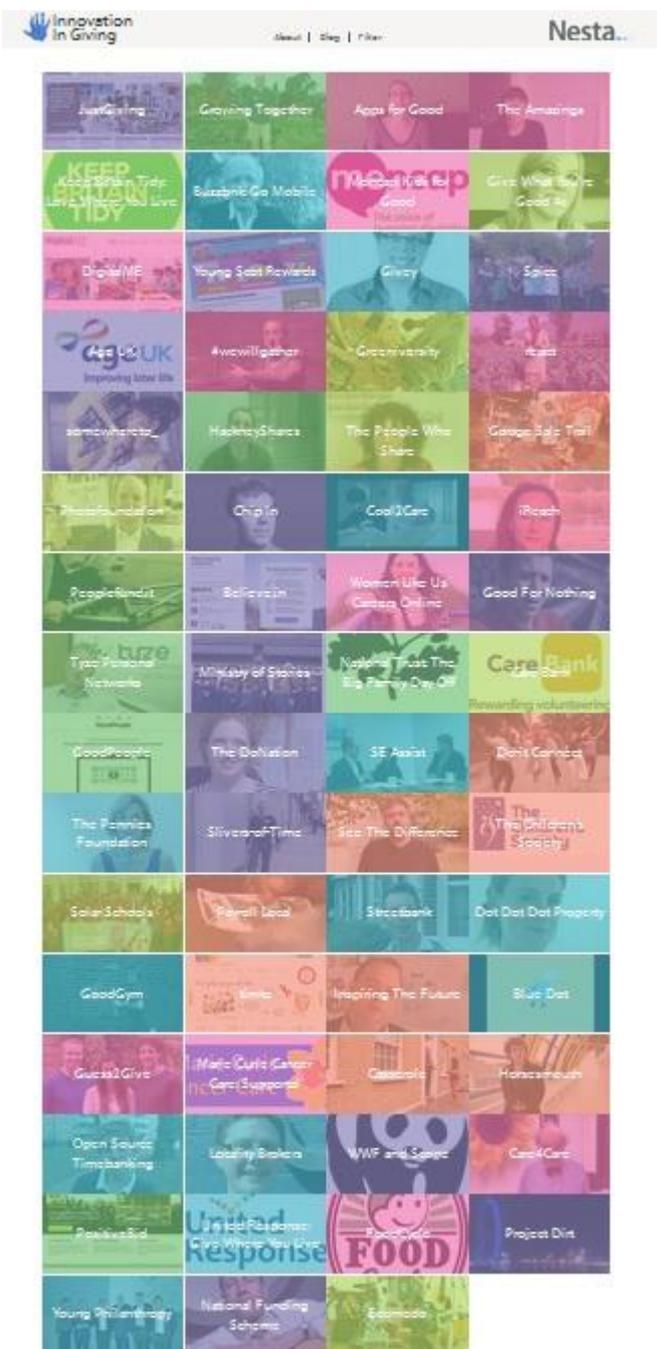
biggest impact when giving their time. Since its launch on March 1 2012, 580 professionals and 354 organisations have registered on the site; 149 matches have been made, with an average cost saving for charities of £11,000. The benefits are reciprocal: 90% of professionals who undertake one project return to work on another. www.givewhatyouregoodat.co.uk

THE AMAZINGS

New social venture that supports people who are retired or about to retire (aka The Amazings) share their skills, knowledge, experience and passion with their local community. **It** encourages people to run learning sessions based on skills and experience they've accrued over a lifetime, at a time and in a way that suits them. Activities on offer include everything from foraging, history walks, ballroom dancing, street photography, hairstyling and cooking. www.theamazings.org

VOLUNTEER CENTRE INNOVATION

£500K invested across 10 Volunteer Centre projects. Started in April 2013. The projects each aim to tackle a different social challenge facing their communities - from managing long term health conditions to creating an SMS Text group to share local volunteering opportunities. Until December, the volunteer centres will work with Nesta to further develop and implement their ideas and take projects to scale.
www.nesta.org.uk/press_releases/assets/features/new_support_for_volunteer_centres_using_innovative_ways_to_match_volunteers_with_opportunities

ONLINE VOLUNTEERING TOOLS AND EXAMPLES

COMMUNITY HOW TO

Community How To is a joint project from Online Centres Foundation (OCF) and Nominet Trust. The service helps community and third sector organisations find digital tools which could help them do more of what they do best, and helps them share their ideas and tools with others. It includes tools to support volunteering and communications amongst others www.communityhowto.com

UN VOLUNTEERS

The UN Online Volunteering service connects volunteers with organisations working for sustainable human development. Volunteers contribute their skills online to help organisations address development challenges. Organisations collaborate with online volunteers over the Internet to strengthen the impact of their development work. Examples of the types of online volunteering activities are: Writing and editing; Translation; Research; Project development and management; Training and coaching; Design; Coordination and facilitation; IT development; and Consulting. www.onlinevolunteering.org

DO SOME GOOD

Do Some Good is an app that lets people do bite-size actions on your mobile in five minutes or less to make a difference to the things they care about. It offers a number of actions that lets people easily volunteer at a time and place that suits them. Tasks include things like taking surveys. It was developed by Orange. There are currently around 40 charity partners involved, mostly the larger national and international charities though some smaller more local ones. Partners include: Mencap, Samaritans, Sustrans, Marie Curie, Race Online. dosomegood.orange.co.uk

REWARD VOLUNTEERS APP

US app developed by the Cooperative movement. It enables people to track the time they spend volunteering in their community and get friends involved by sharing on Facebook or via e-mail. The more volunteering hours and the more 'likes' and comments posts receive or emails friends open, the more Reach points volunteers earn. There are monthly cash prizes for volunteers and organisations donated by local businesses/cooperatives. www.rewardvolunteers.coop

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This section is based on the household survey of 302 adults living in Worcestershire. The survey was designed to collect data on three groups:

➢ People who currently volunteer
➢ Former Volunteers
➢ Non Volunteers

In addition it sought to explore Volunteering around the two key definitions:

➢ Formal volunteering – giving unpaid help through groups, clubs or organisations
➢ Informal volunteering – giving unpaid help as an individual to people who are not relatives

PERCEPTIONS OF VOLUNTEERING

Respondents generally had very positive perceptions about volunteering.

Respondents' perception of volunteering
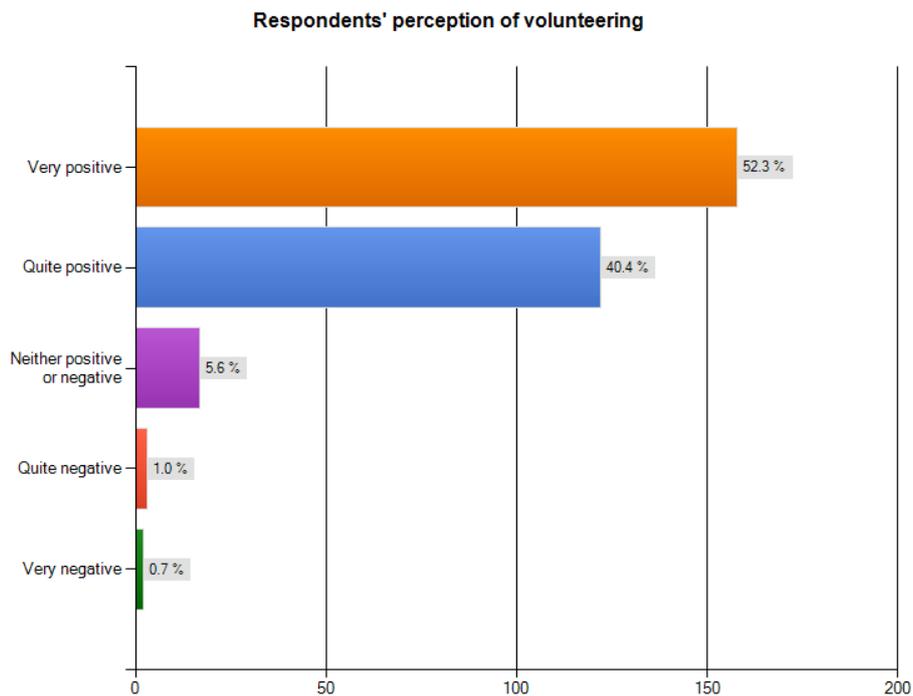
N=302

On being asked to explain why they felt this way about volunteering, 281 people made comments, these are summarized overleaf. A selection of respondents comments are provided here:

"Keeps me active. (1) I enjoy meeting people and helping them enjoy a day out. (2) By listening, and supporting, can perhaps lighten the day for someone in distress."

"Because I believe volunteering is a good thing as it helps people in need and also helps you gain knowledge and empathise about those in difficult situations."

"It enables me to feel that I am investing in my local community and hopefully helping to improve it. It enables me to meet and mix with a wide variety of people that I would not otherwise have such close contact with."

"I get more back than I give"

"It helps others, is not about money, can give you personal satisfaction for doing something for others for free, you can learn lots and be inspired."

"Gives work experience and confidence. Gets you into work"

"I have had both negative and positive experiences volunteering, but on the whole good things come from it"

"Volunteering is vital in this current climate. It allows unemployed people gain skills. People that don't work can volunteer which can help prevent loneliness and isolation. However, creating volunteer posts can sometimes mean a paid post is forfeit, reducing income opportunities for individuals. Also, many services shouldn't have to rely on volunteers."

"It's a great and enjoyable way of gaining invaluable experience in different fields. Especially if you are considering a change in career or perhaps would like to meet new friends and experience something new."

INFORMAL VOLUNTEERING

141 of 302 respondents (47%) were engaged in some kind of informal volunteering. The majority on a fairly frequent basis i.e. nearly half at least once a week and just under a third at least once a month. Respondents had spent an average of 9 hours informally volunteering in the previous 4 weeks. The biggest type of informal activity was giving advice or looking after a property or pet for someone. However respondents cited a broad range of other types of unpaid activity.

Types of informal volunteering

Type	Percentage
Keeping in touch with someone who had difficulty...	30.7 %
Doing shopping, collecting pension...	27.1 %
Cooking, cleaning, laundry, gardening or other...	27.9 %
Decorating or doing any kind of home...	11.4 %
Babysitting or caring for children	22.9 %
Sitting with or providing personal care (e.g....	14.3 %
Looking after a property or a pet for...	40.0 %
Giving advice	53.6 %
Writing letters or filling in forms	29.3 %
Representing someone (e.g. talking to a council...	25.0 %
Transporting or escorting someone (e.g. to a...	32.1 %
Other (please specify)	25.0 %

N= 141

How often people volunteered informally over the last 12 months

	Percentage
At least once a week	45.4 %
Less than once a week but at least once a month	31.9 %
Less often than once a month	22.7 %

N = 141

29

179 respondents (59%) said they'd been involved with groups, clubs or organisations in the last 12 months (excluding giving money and anything that was requirement of their job). Hobbies, recreation, arts, social clubs, and sports were the top types cited.

Types of groups, clubs or organisations respondents had taken part in, supported or helped over the past 12 months

Type	Percentage
Hobbies, recreation, arts, social clubs	27.5 %
Sport/exercise (taking part, coaching, watching)	23.6 %
Other (please specify)	23.0 %
Health, Disability and Social Welfare	21.9 %
Youth/children's activities (outside school)	21.3 %
Local community or neighbourhood groups	21.3 %
Children's education/schools	20.2 %
Elderly people	11.8 %
Environment, Agriculture, Horticulture, animals	11.2 %
Religion	9.6 %
Education for adults	9.0 %
Safety, First Aid	6.2 %
Politics	3.9 %
Justice and Human Rights	2.8 %
Campaign groups	1.7 %
Trade Union	1.7 %

N = 178

Of the 179 respondents involved with organisations, 158 had provided some form of unpaid help i.e. 52% of the total sample had provided some form of volunteering with organisations over the past 12 months. They described the type of help they provided as follows:

Formal Volunteering Activities

Activity	Percentage
Event organisation and help	59%
Fundraising (Raising or handling...	50%
Administration, Secretarial, Clerical	34%
Governance and Leadership (Leading a...	32%
Teaching, training or coaching	27%
Advice, information, counselling	27%
Visiting, befriending or mentoring people	25%
Practical skills (e.g. gardening, driving,...	23%
Caring for people or animals	15%
Information and Communications...	13%
Campaigning	6%
Other	9%

N=158

NUMBERS OF GROUPS PEOPLE VOLUNTEER WITH

Number of different groups, clubs or organisations respondents provide unpaid help to

Number	Percentage
0	2.5 %
1	43.7 %
2	31.6 %
3	13.3 %
4	5.7 %
5	1.9 %
All Other Responses	1.3 %

N=158

31
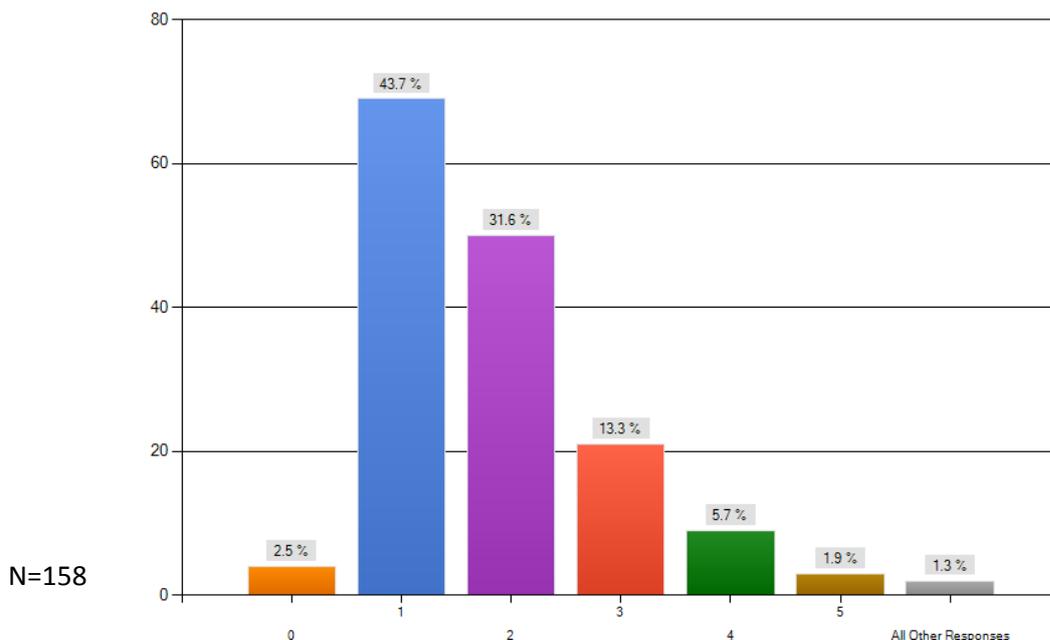
Over half of respondents volunteer with more than one group. The average in this survey was 1.9 per person. Note the question referred to numbers of organisations respondents were currently volunteering with. 2.5% had volunteered over the past 12 months but weren't currently involved.

**How often respondents have volunteered with organisations over the last 12 months**
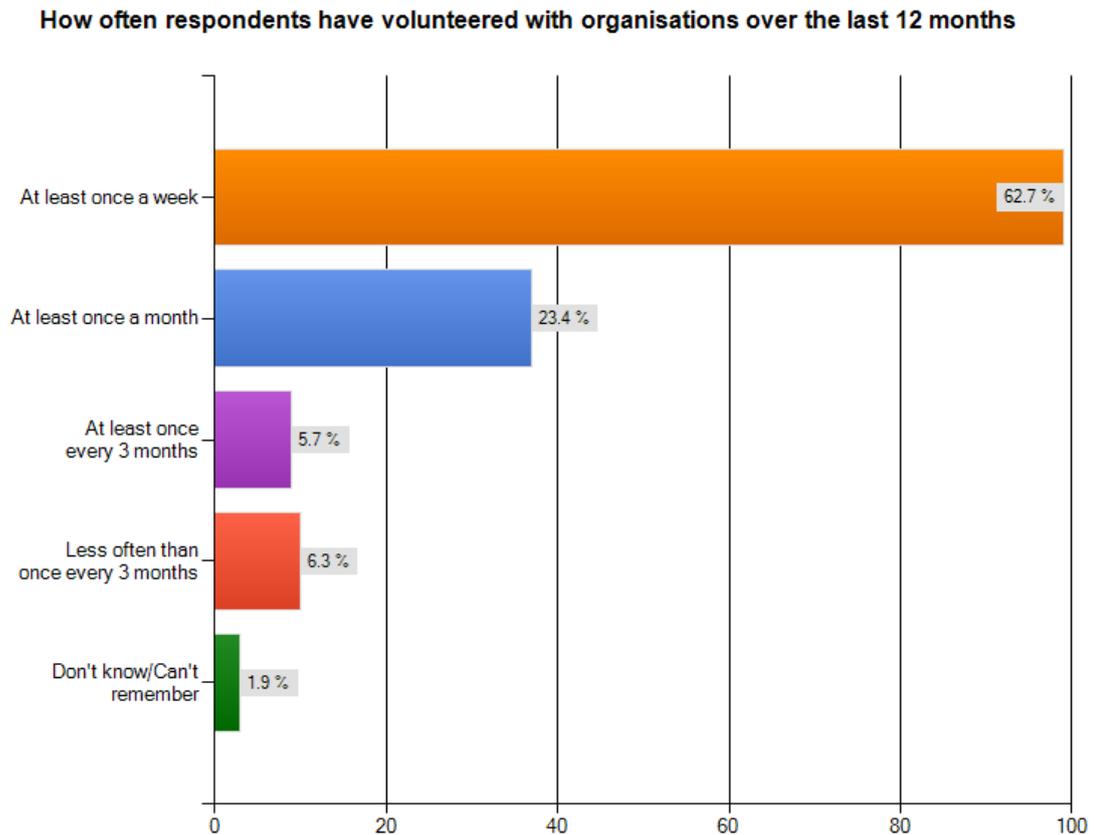
N=158

NUMBER OF HOURS PEOPLE VOLUNTEER

The extent to which respondents volunteered ranged from 1 to over 100 hours per month. On average respondents volunteered for 14.8 hours over the previous four weeks. This gives an estimated weekly volunteering figure of 3.7 hours and an annual volunteer contribution of 192 hours.

Respondents who volunteered were asked how they found out about opportunities to volunteer. The ways people found out about Volunteering match with the responses from organisations i.e. Word of Mouth is by far the most common route, and the next three being 'previous use of services provided', 'directly through organisations' website', and either via School/college/University or via a Volunteer Bureau/Volunteer Centre. 'Other' responses included: Facebook, Friend, received letter inviting me, approached directly, job centre plus, child at school, hospital.

How people find out about opportunities to volunteer

Category	Percentage
Previous use of services provided	14.7 %
Word of mouth	56.4 %
Place of worship	10.9 %
School, college, university	12.2 %
Doctor's surgery/ community centre/ Library	6.4 %
Promotional events/volunteer fair	7.7 %
vinspired.com	0.6 %
Newspaper (local or national)	11.5 %
TV or radio (local or national)	2.6 %
Directly through organisation's website	13.5 %
Volunteer Bureau/Volunteer Centre	12.2 %
Employer's Volunteering Scheme	1.3 %
www.do-it.org.uk	6.4 %
Other (please specify)	19.2 %

N=156

Respondents were asked to give up to 5 reasons why they got involved in volunteering. The primary motivation given was 'to improve things/help people' (71%). Just under half said it was a chance to use their existing skills and over 40% said the cause was really important to them.

Respondents' motivations for volunteering
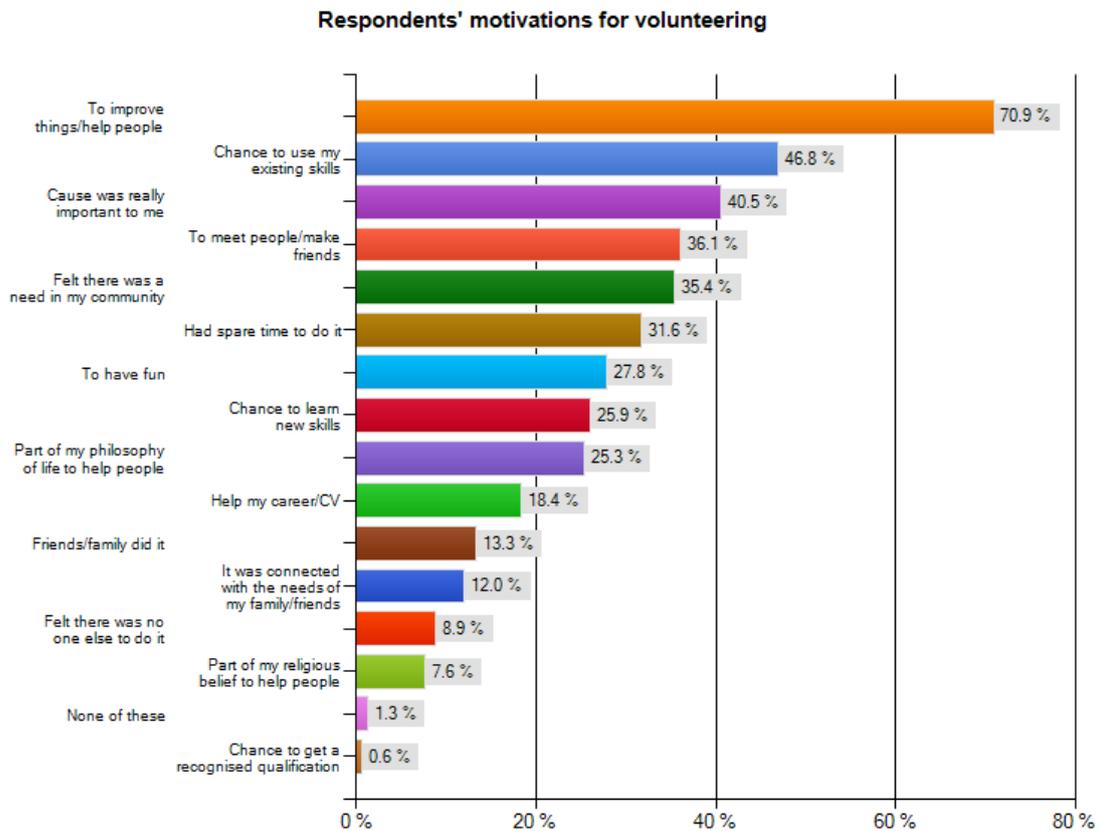
There are some significant differences on motivations depending on respondents' age.

Amongst those aged under 40:

➢ 43% said they volunteered " to have fun",
➢ 41% said it was a chance to learn new skills and
➢ 40% said to help their career/CV.

Older respondents were more likely to say they had spare time and wanted to use their existing skills.

SATISFACTION WITH VOLUNTEERING

Those respondents who volunteered were mostly satisfied or very satisfied with their experiences. There was very little dissatisfaction to report. However there remains scope for improvement. 29% were non committal or dissatisfied about 'Feedback on the difference they helped make'. Around 5% were dissatisfied and a further 10-15% were noncommittal or dissatisfied about their training, explanation of role, support, thanks and recognition.

Satisfaction with volunteering (based on main organisation where respondents volunteer)

N=157

Legend:
- Very satisfied
- Satisfied
- Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- Dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied

Categories: Training, Explanation of role/job, Support/Supervision, Thanks and Recognition, Feedback on the difference you helped make
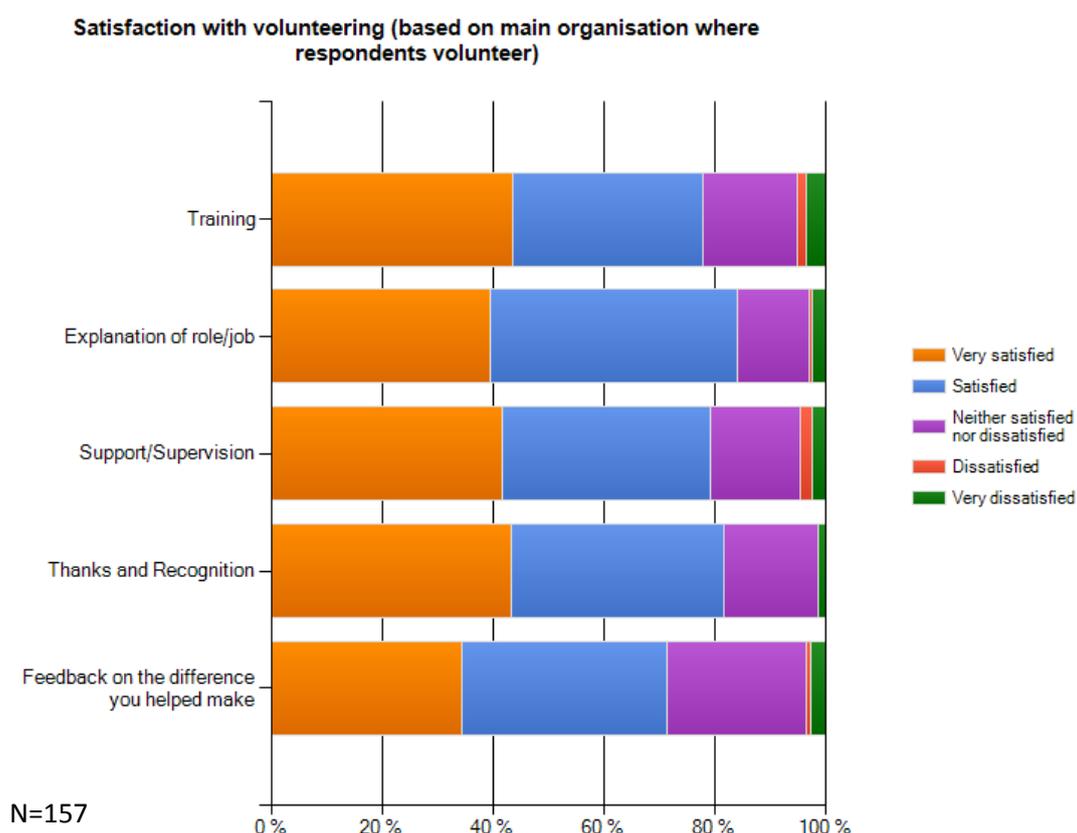
BENEFITS OF VOLUNTEERING

Respondents reported a range of benefits reflecting the value of volunteering in strengthening communities, improving well being and improving skills and employability. The top 3 benefits reported were: 'Felt good about myself', (56%), 'Helped me feel part of the community' (56%) and 'Enabled me to make new friends' (49%).

Again, the responses about benefits are slightly different depending on the age groups. For example of those over the age of 60, more than 60% said volunteering had enabled them to make new friends compared to 49% overall. 43% of those under 40 said volunteering 'gave me a social life'.

42% said volunteering improved their skills and just under a third reported improvements in confidence and CV development. 17% said it had led to further training and education and 8% said it had led to paid work. For those under 40 years old, 63% said volunteering had improved their skills, 59% said it had added valuable experience to their CV, 35% said it had led to further training and

education, 14% said It had led to paid work. For those under 30 years old 70% said volunteering had improved their skills and 64% said it had added valuable experience to their CV, 49% said it had led to further training and education, 18% said It had led to paid work.

30% said it had improved their confidence and a quarter of respondents said volunteering improved their health and wellbeing.

Only 5% said they hadn't experienced any benefits.

How respondents have benefited from volunteering

Benefit	Percentage
Felt good about myself	56.3 %
Helped me feel part of the community	56.3 %
Enabled me to make new friends	49.4 %
Improved my skills	42.4 %
Built my confidence	29.7 %
Added valuable experience to my CV	29.1 %
Gave me a social life	27.2 %
Improved my health and wellbeing	25.3 %
Led to further training and education	16.5 %
Led to paid work	8.2 %
Other (please specify)	8.2 %
Haven't experienced any benefits	5.1 %

N= 158

Some of the other benefits people expressed were:

"Understanding people"

"Broadened my horizons"

"Made me feel more worthwhile"

"Awarded MBE in 2007"

"Sheer enjoyment"

"Made a contribution"

SCOPE FOR GROWTH IN VOLUNTEERING

Amongst existing volunteers the majority expect to continue giving about the same amount of time. However a quarter said they'd like to do more.

How much volunteers would like to give unpaid help in the future compared to what they do now

Category	Percentage
More	25.3 %
About the same	68.4 %
Less	3.2 %
Don't know	3.2 %

N=158
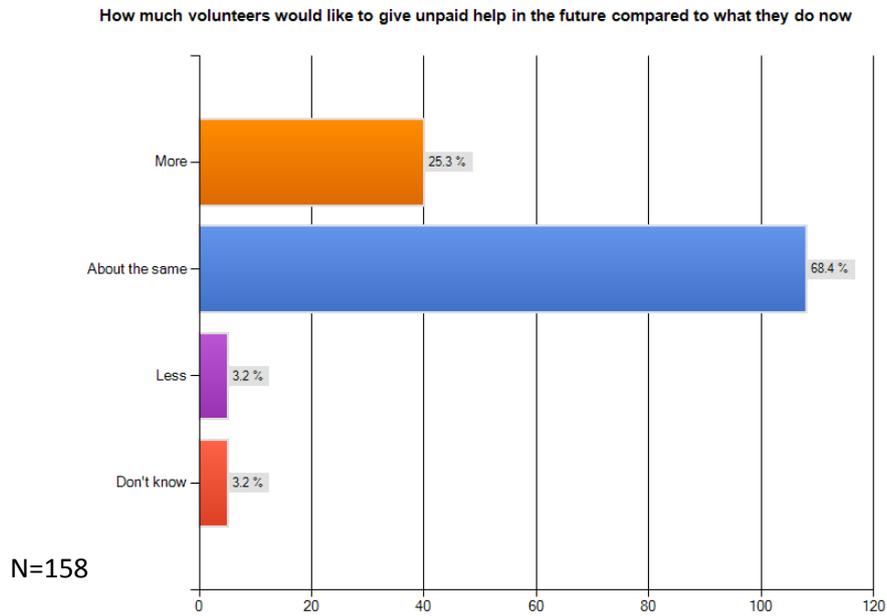
Amongst those not currently volunteering, 40% said they would be interested in volunteering in future and a further one third said they may be interested.

Interest in volunteering with groups, clubs or organisations in future by those not currently volunteering

Category	Percentage
Yes	40.1 %
No	26.8 %
Maybe	33.1 %

N=142
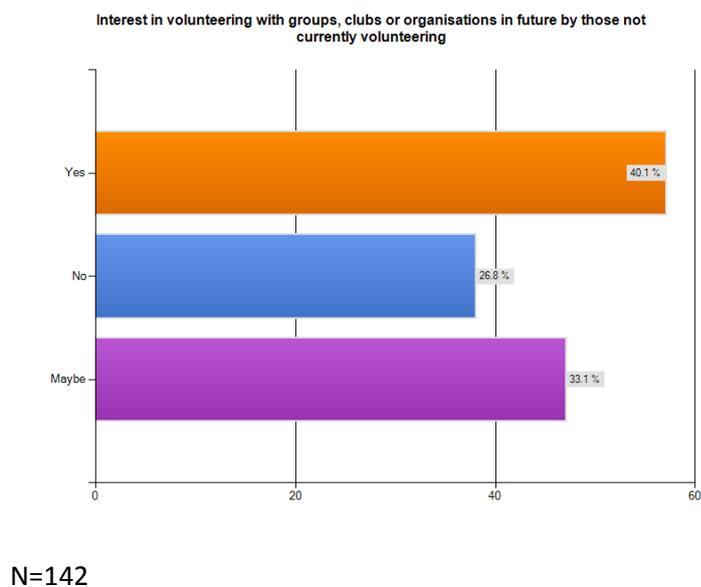
The main reason people gave for not volunteering with groups, clubs and organisations was 'work commitments' (38%). A quarter said they 'do other things with their spare time'. Caring commitments including looking after children/home or looking after someone elderly/ill were barriers for 18% and 11% respectively. Clearly there still remain a proportion of people who are unaware and not engaged in volunteering at all:

- 12.6% said nobody had asked them to give help
- 9.8% didn't know of any groups that need help
- 9.1% had never thought about it

Barriers to volunteering

N=143
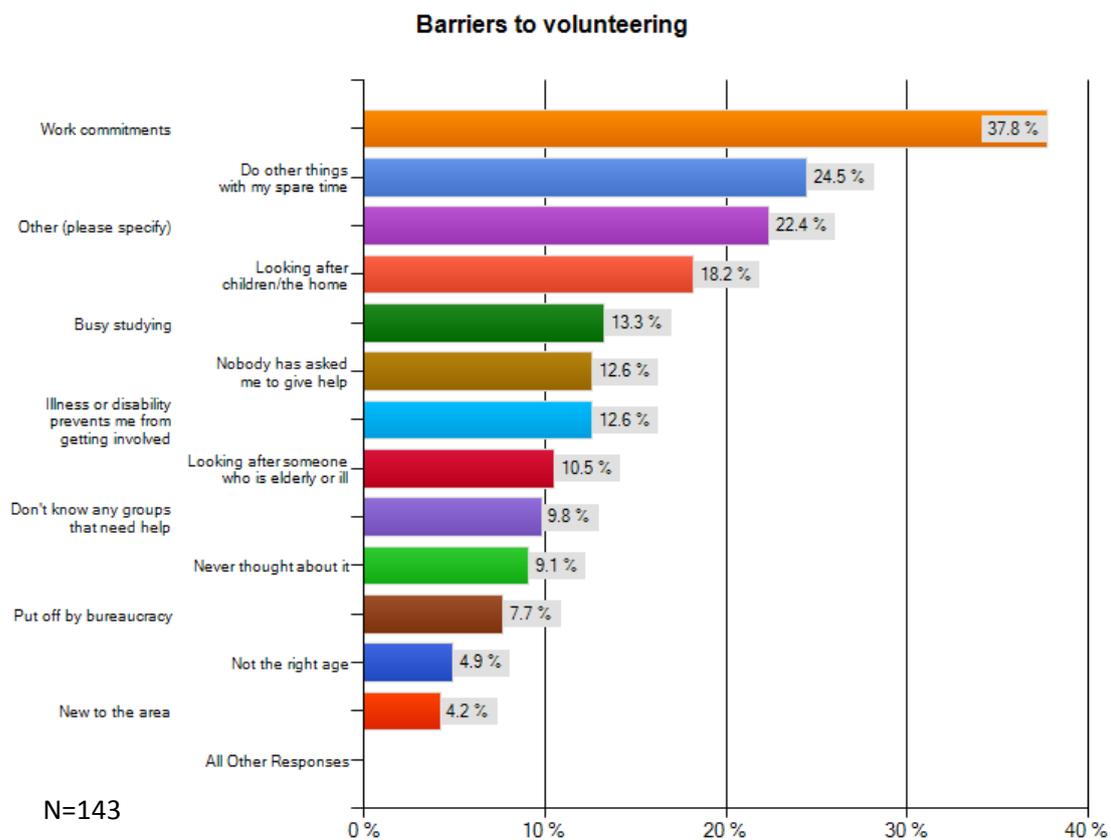
Amongst the 'other' responses many made reference to risks of losing benefits if not available for work because they were volunteering. This indicates a need for more clarity and joined up working with the benefits, job centres and unemployment services.

Just under half the respondents (46%) said they were interested in receiving further information about volunteering in Worcestershire.

For those respondents who specifically indicated an interest in volunteering or more volunteering in the future we further explored what they were interested in and how they might be engaged.

As can be seen from the chart below there was interest across all types of organisation. The 3 most popular were:

- Hobbies, recreation, arts, social clubs (38%)
- Environment, Agriculture, Horticulture, Animals (32%)
- Children's education and schools (31%)

The least popular were religion (8%), campaigning (11%) and politics (12%)

Types of organisation(s) where respondents indicated an interest in volunteeering

Type	%
Hobbies, recreation,...	37.8 %
Environment, Agriculture,...	31.9 %
Children's...	31.1 %
Youth/children's activities...	26.1 %
Elderly people	26.1 %
Health, Disability...	26.1 %
Education for adults	23.5 %
Sport/exercise (taking...	23.5 %
Justice and Human Rights	22.7 %
Local community or...	22.7 %
Safety, First Aid	17.6 %
Other (please specify)	13.4 %
Politics	11.8 %
Campaign groups	10.9 %
Religion	8.4 %
All Other Responses	1.3 %

N=119

The types of volunteering activity where respondents indicated most interest were: caring for people or animals (44%); Practical skills (43%); and visiting, befriending or mentoring people (40%). Least popular were: Campaigning (15%); Governance and leadership (14%); and Information and Communications Technology (13%).

Types of activity respondents indicated an interest in doing as volunteers

Activity	Percentage
Caring for people or animals	43.7 %
Practical skills (e.g. gardening, driving,...	42.9 %
Visiting, befriending or mentoring people	40.3 %
Fundraising (Raising or handling money/taking...	35.3 %
Event organisation and help	35.3 %
Teaching, training or coaching	35.3 %
Advice, information, counselling	26.1 %
Administration, Secretarial, Clerical	22.7 %
Campaigning	15.1 %
Governance and Leadership (Board/Trustee/Governor/Committee...	14.3 %
Information and Communications Technology...	12.6 %
Other (please specify)	5.9 %
Don't know	3.4 %

N=119

WHERE PEOPLE FIND OUT ABOUT VOLUNTEERING

Respondents were asked where they would look to find out about volunteering. Most popular was word of mouth, approaching organisations or looking at organisations websites. 28% would look in the newspaper, 19% would approach a volunteer centre. The Internet was the most frequently cited route in the 'other' category

Where people would look to find volunteering opportunities

Category	Percentage
Ask people/Word of mouth	43.7 %
Approach Organisations I know	36.1 %
Look at organisations' websites	30.3 %
Newspaper (local or national)	27.7 %
Volunteer Bureau/Volunteer Centre	19.3 %
Other (please specify)	17.6 %
Doctor's surgery/ community centre/ Library	16.0 %
School, college, university	14.3 %
Place of worship	6.7 %
TV or radio (local or national)	5.0 %
All Other Responses	3.4 %

N=119
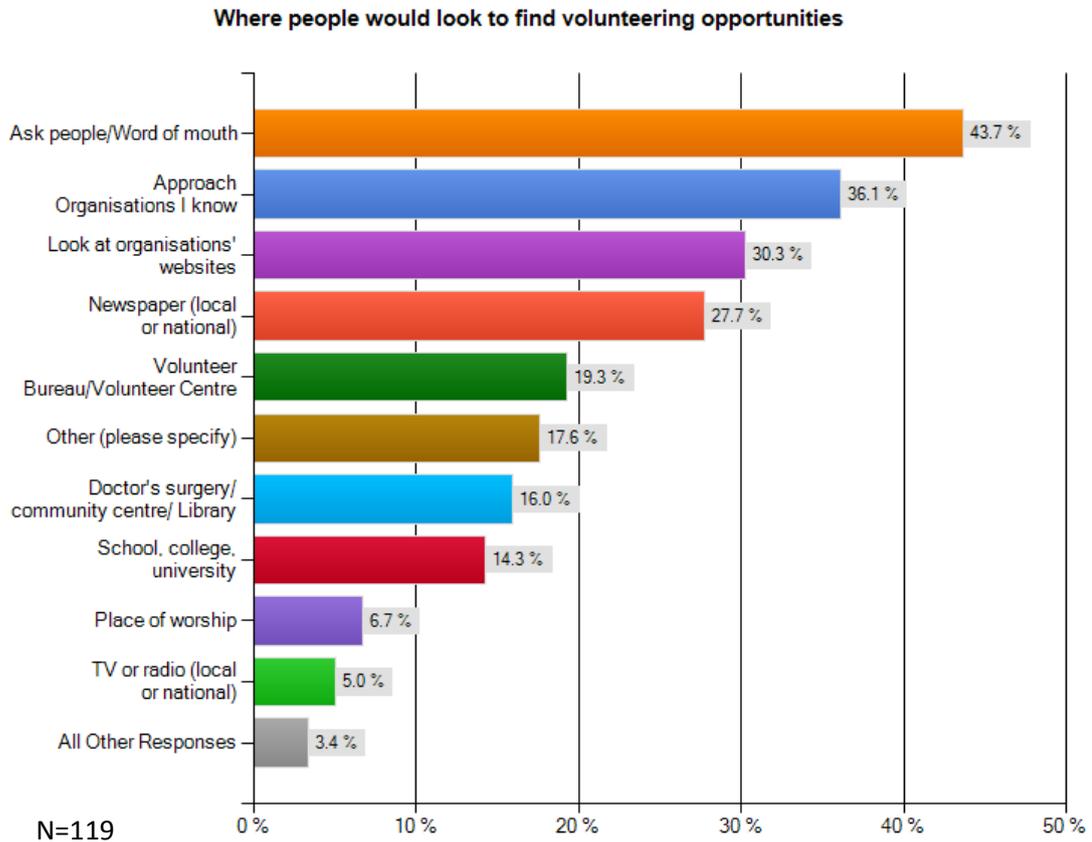
The research sought to explore whether respondents would be interested in volunteering or volunteering more if it was possible to do it in different ways.

Overall, volunteering as a social activity with friends received the most interest (40% yes, 29% maybe). Similarly many said they would volunteer if there was someone to support them (32% yes, 31% maybe) suggesting some kind of face-to-face/personal support is important.

Of those respondents currently employed full or part time (109 respondents) 35% said they would be interested in Employer Supported Volunteering (ESV) and a further 28% said maybe. Only 2% of employees said they were already doing ESV.

Interest in volunteering/more volunteering if these were on offer

N=264
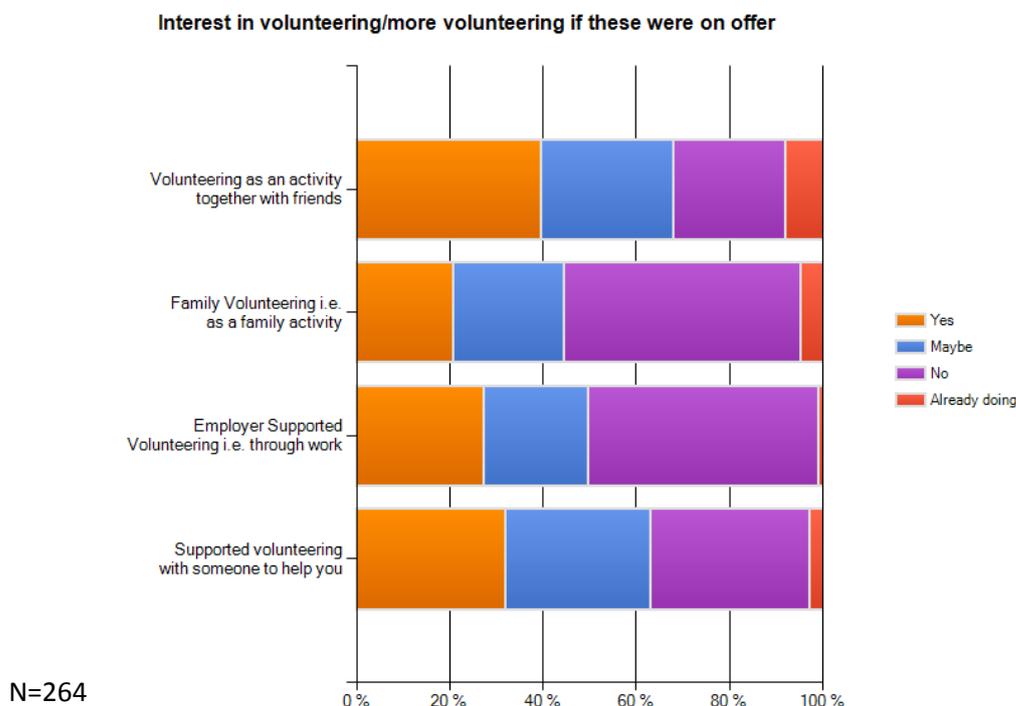
Again, looking just at respondents aged under 50 (157 respondents) there was a higher level of interest across all of these types of volunteering:

52% were interested in volunteering with friends (plus 29% maybe)

32% were interested in family volunteering (plus 27% maybe)

45% were interested in Employer Supported Volunteering (+23% maybe)

42% were interested in supported volunteering with someone to help them (30% maybe)

The research also explored whether people would be interested in a range of services, if they were available in Worcestershire. The greatest interest was in a Worcestershire Volunteer website with 78 % expressing an interest (51% yes, 27% maybe). There was also a high level of interest in online volunteering with 74% interested (37% yes, 37% maybe). Almost ⅔ were interested in placement and matching services (34% yes, 31% maybe).

Willingness to use Worcestershire services if they were on offer
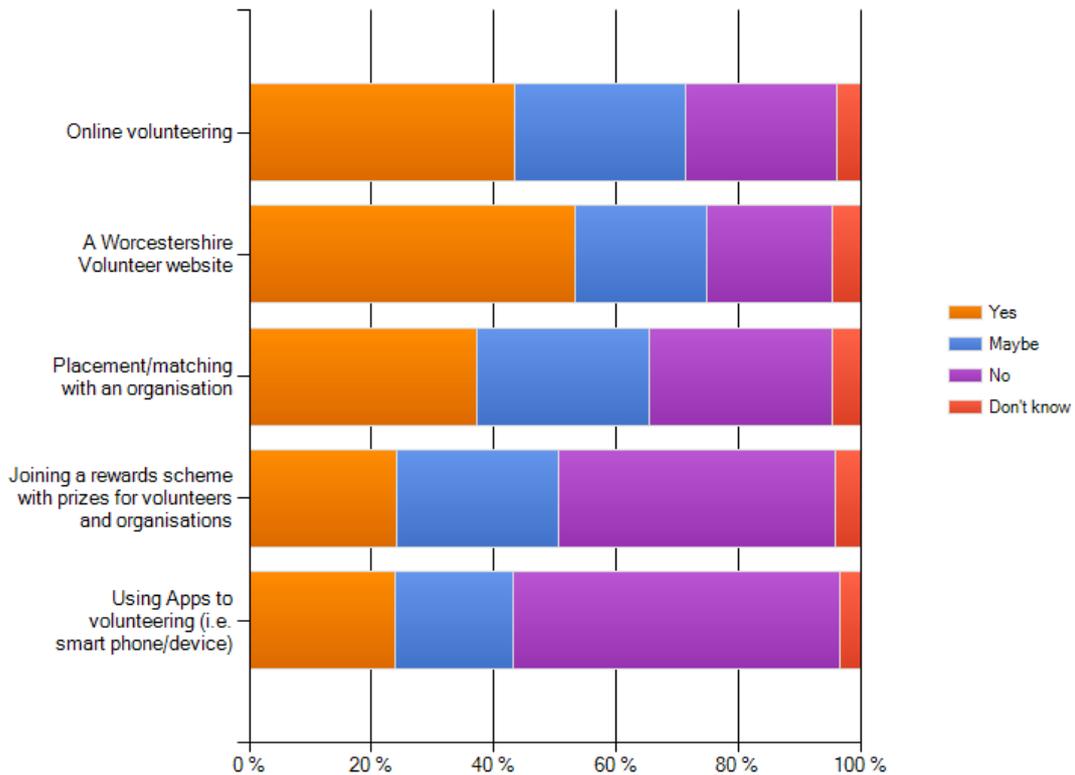
N=264

ONLINE VOLUNTEERING AND APPS

Whilst overall 43% of respondents said they were interested in online volunteering. Respondents' age was a significant factor. Amongst under 50s interest increased to 53%, amongst under 40s it increased to 61%.

Similarly with apps, whilst overall 23% said they were interested in volunteering in this way, the figure increased to 43% amongst those under 40, and 52% for those under the age of 20.

SUGGESTIONS ON ENCOURAGING MORE VOLUNTEERING

174 of the 302 respondents in our general public survey made comments and suggestions about how more people could be encouraged to volunteer. The key areas for improvement were:

BETTER PUBLICITY AND PROMOTION OF VOLUNTEERING AND VOLUNTEERING OPPORTUNITIES

"Volunteering is an understated occupation, it's not regarded as cool - needs jazzing up - needs someone front of house saying Look what's happening!"

"Better publicity about the opportunities available, perhaps a stand or event in the town centre"

"Lack of knowledge and info - old fashioned image of volunteering - need to bring it into the 21st Century"

"more advertisements e.g. posters and maybe the chance to work with celebrities or local people who run Worcester like for example Bear Grylls being chief scout and Kate Middleton helping with scouts really inspires people. Not personally the reason I joined but does make me proud thinking it's worthwhile doing."

"Have volunteering 'champions' in each local community, with opportunities and telling folk about the benefits to them."

II) IMPROVE AWARENESS OF THE BENEFITS

"Good to emphasise the benefits of doing voluntary work."

"People should be made to realise how important their input can be with regard to impoverished individuals even when they think they have nothing to offer; for they surely have; just by volunteering."

"Some people think that unpaid work is a punishment, so awareness needs to be raised to help those people understand how rewarding volunteering can be. It's not just for people doing community service! :)"

"Currently I don't know about any opportunities. Would be good to have a website, use social media and apps to reach young people"

"Dedicated area in the library to speak to someone directly about volunteering."

"Through the job centre."

"I think one thing that stops many people volunteering is time, especially if they have a family and/or work full time. It would be good if organisations/employers were encouraged to encourage their staff to volunteer, maybe with offering some time off or using volunteering as team building (something I have done in the past & it was great)."

"There are lots of activities taking place for volunteers, but sometime people still don't know how to go about it. I like the idea of online volunteering and a website. This may attract younger people"

"Finding ways of getting people on board without too much commitment"

Respondents in the household survey were on the whole very positive about almost all aspects of volunteering. However, there were a few who had clearly had bad experiences. Others expressed reservations about political motives especially capturing peoples leisure time to fill gaps created by cuts in public services, replacing jobs with volunteers and potential exploitation of 'free labour'.

Some of the key suggestions from the survey for volunteering organisations were:

> ➢ more appreciation
> ➢ pay volunteers expenses
> ➢ make it easy for people with not much time

"Organisations need to be clear about what they are asking people to do - particularly how much commitment they want."

"Ensure organisations who need volunteers have some guidance and training in how to respect the time volunteers give, make sure that volunteers expenses are covered in some way as helping often impacts on finances and that can deter people from helping others"

Our focus group involved volunteers who were active in a wide range of contexts including: education, health, environmental, social/caring, disability and criminal justice. Their volunteering roles include: befriending, advocacy, taking older people for Sunday lunch, driving, 'talktime' (telephone support), database development, canal maintenance, event organising, supporting families with special needs children, Teaching English as a Foreign Language, stewarding at cultural venues, employment advice for migrant workers, hospice care. These were their key messages to organisations using volunteers.

VOLUNTEERS LOVE IT AND TEND TO STAY LONGER WHEN THEY…

> ➢ are seen as equals 'we're all staff here it's just that some are paid';
> ➢ receive high quality induction and training that enriches them;
> ➢ feel informed about what is going on, and any changes ahead (and their expectations are managed);
> ➢ are interviewed and given roles that fit their skills, interests and values – where thoughtful 'match-making' has taken place;
> ➢ have clearly defined roles, and operate within clear guidelines so 'you know what's expected of you'. This is especially important when working with vulnerable people;
> ➢ feel they have a choice in what they do and can say no;
> ➢ know they make a difference and are given the evidence of that;
> ➢ are invited to socials;

- are thanked and acknowledged in a way that feels real (examples were given of receiving flowers if ill, birthday and Christmas cards, bar of chocolate at training days);
- are kept in touch with, after they've gone so they still feel part of something;
- are consulted as part of a volunteers annual review.

VOLUNTEERS DISLIKE IT WHEN THEY…

- don't feel heard;
- aren't consulted but are just told 'this is what we're doing off you go now'; ('like having to use new technologies that we couldn't handle' and 'when jobs were taken off people they'd done for donkey's years');
- don't feel wanted;
- have to do dull tasks repeatedly like shredding;
- feel the culture is hierarchical and 'we are at the bottom of the pile';
- are not acknowledged by paid staff;
- are exploited for specialist expertise and are potentially doing work that somebody should be paid to do, 'I worry I am helping the government make cuts because by meeting a need, I'm blocking potential funding, but if I don't do it…';

TECHNOLOGY IS…

- not for everyone. Phone calls and letters are welcome too;
- more efficient and time saving;
- texting is especially useful;
- useful to capture the value and data of volunteering. St Richards Hospice has built and now maintains (as a volunteer) a database to monitor volunteer time, attendances and value. It is also used to generate references. From this data they have been able to calculate an accurate, annual value on Volunteering at the hospice: £900K annually.

MISCELLANEOUS ISSUES

- Leadership of a host organisation is crucial. If they set the right tone and communicate the vital value of volunteers then there will be a healthy relationship between the staff and volunteers;
- Volunteers don't have legal rights but they DO need to be treated properly and have their voice heard. Use the volunteer's charter and campaign for more support to volunteers and how they are treated. Volunteers need rights but they have no contract;
- it becomes difficult if volunteers(and staff) think volunteers are replacing jobs;
- Volunteer Bureau didn't reply to my requests (one person said this);
- Volunteers can be territorial;
- Struggle to know how to engage younger people? Through schools / Churches / places that are hubs for young people;

➢ targeting people directly: go to them;
➢ taking volunteering opportunities to organisations like Remploy who work with people who have time to give but low confidence;
➢ finding ways to help people appreciate their own skills, and build the confidence to get out there;
➢ offer a range of volunteering opportunities to suit: long term, short, one off etc;
➢ Encourage the beneficiaries of volunteering to become volunteers themselves (virtuous circle).

KEY MESSAGES FROM VOLUNTEERS

We asked volunteers in our focus group what they would do if they were in charge of encouraging more people to take up volunteering across Worcestershire. These were their key messages:

➢ agree who leads it: needs a county wide volunteering leader;
➢ Have a communication campaign to raise the profile and value of volunteering like: Movember – on that scale, make the case; 'stop watching daytime TV and come and help someone less fortunate that you!' (could be a national campaign);
➢ bring it into school education as part of PSHE;
➢ media campaign advertise volunteering opportunities on the jobs page of Worcester News;
➢ have a central database for volunteering opportunities in Worcestershire and make it easy to access in variety of ways: online, in libraries etc;
➢ give face to face positive encouragement from the start (not a long application form);
➢ make opportunities flexible to encourage young people to participate, e.g. advice sessions in the evening or college lunch-breaks and go to where they are;
➢ hold volunteer open evening and volunteer fairs in public spaces;
➢ provide expenses and lever any gift aid;
➢ make sure there are volunteer managers in every host organisation who can provide effective support and feedback on behalf of volunteers;
➢ be clear and manage peoples' expectations (i.e. this does not lead to a job);
➢ make all senior staff in organisations who have volunteers spend two days a year 'on the shop floor', doing the voluntary work (often they are too divorced from day to day and make inappropriate decisions on behalf of volunteers);
➢ Provide social events and other ways of valuing volunteers. The volunteers felt uneasy about a county wide 'awards' ceremony. Volunteer of the Year etc. Said that was up to individual organisations, otherwise who decides? What they would like, is a joint volunteering social/celebration with food, drink, laughs and information sharing.

7. ORGANISATION SURVEY FINDINGS

In our survey of 226 organisations, 219 (97%) involved volunteers. The vast majority (88%) were from within the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) which is to be expected. However it's interesting to see there were also 24 organisations (11%) within the public sector and 3 cross-sector organisations (1%) with volunteers.

The findings in this section of the report are based on all organisations involving volunteers regardless of sector but of course predominantly present the VCS perspective.

Sectors with Volunteers

Sector	Percentage
Voluntary and Community Sector: (e.g. Non Profit Organisation, Charit…)	87.7 %
Business Sector (e.g. Sole Trader, Self Employed, Small or Medium Siz…)	
Public Sector (e.g. School, FE/HE institutions, Hospital, Emergency S…)	11.0 %
Cross Sector Partnership or Network	1.4 %
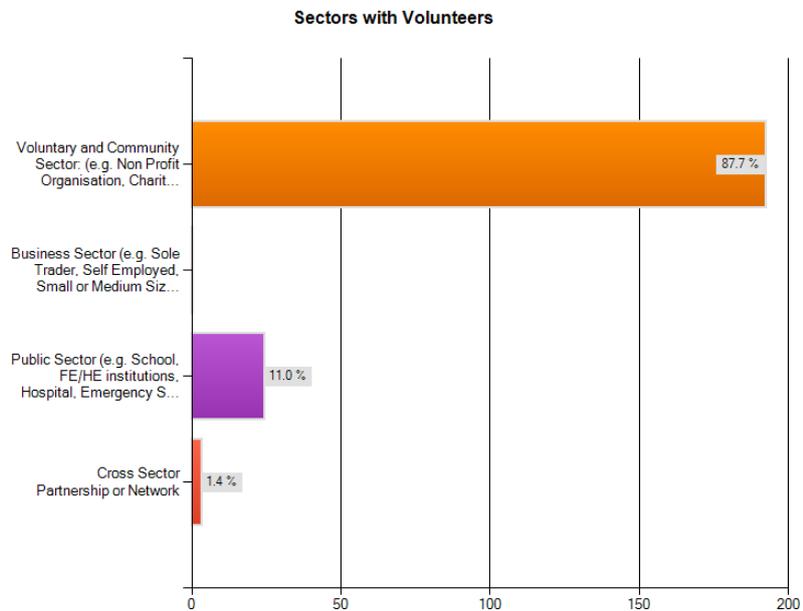
PERCEPTIONS OF VOLUNTEERING

The majority of organisations, 95%, had positive perceptions about volunteering, over 70% very positive.

Perception of volunteering, amongst those with volunteers

Perception	Percentage
Very Positive	70.6 %
Quite positive	24.8 %
Neither positive nor negative	3.2 %
Quite Negative	1.4 %
Very Negative	
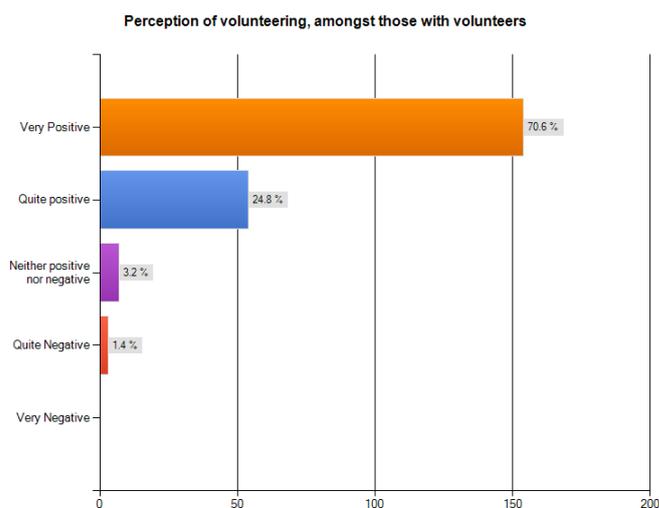
N= 218

Comments about volunteering were made by 183 respondents and provide some powerful testimony about the importance, role and value of volunteers in Worcestershire. These are a selection of respondents' comments.

"Our small staff team is consistently supported by our committed and reliable volunteer team. We would not be able to offer the same service to our users without volunteer support."

"We rely heavily on Volunteers to run our service. With the right training and support from paid staff our volunteers are very professional and committed. Volunteers form nearly 90% of our staff and enable us to run a highly cost effective service"

"Our organisation would simply not exist were it not for the determination of volunteers. We have no paid staff, it was simply an idea that was thought of by a few like minded individuals and an event grew from there…..Volunteers do something because they believe in it, there is a passion, a fire, that fuels them to excel at what they do and it's something sometimes that paid work can't offer."

"Because it can provide a 'heart' to the community."

"Our organisation involves many volunteers who are very dedicated and interested in supporting us and promoting the work we do. We also see the difference volunteering makes to people that are isolated or unable to find employment and the confidence it builds."

"We would not be able to operate many of our services without our volunteers. In turn this also requires us to invest in managing their recruitment and support"

"Generally volunteering is beneficial, but on occasion it generates its own issues and resource drains"

A surprisingly large proportion of respondents (60%, 131 organisations) provided specific types of volunteering schemes. Almost half had some kind of scheme for young people, over 1/3 provided supported volunteering where people receive additional support to carry out their duties e.g. if they have mental health issues, learning difficulty, substance misuse issues, language difficulties, disability or health issues, or are homeless)

Around 1 in 5 were engaged in some kind of Employer Supported Volunteering with businesses though interestingly a much lower proportion (10.5%) had a scheme for their own staff to volunteer with other organisations.

30 organisations said they did some kind of volunteer recruitment and matching with other organisations however on further analysis it appears there were different interpretations of the question. This is further discussed in Section 7 Volunteer Recruitment and Brokerage Services.

Specialist volunteering schemes provided

N=219
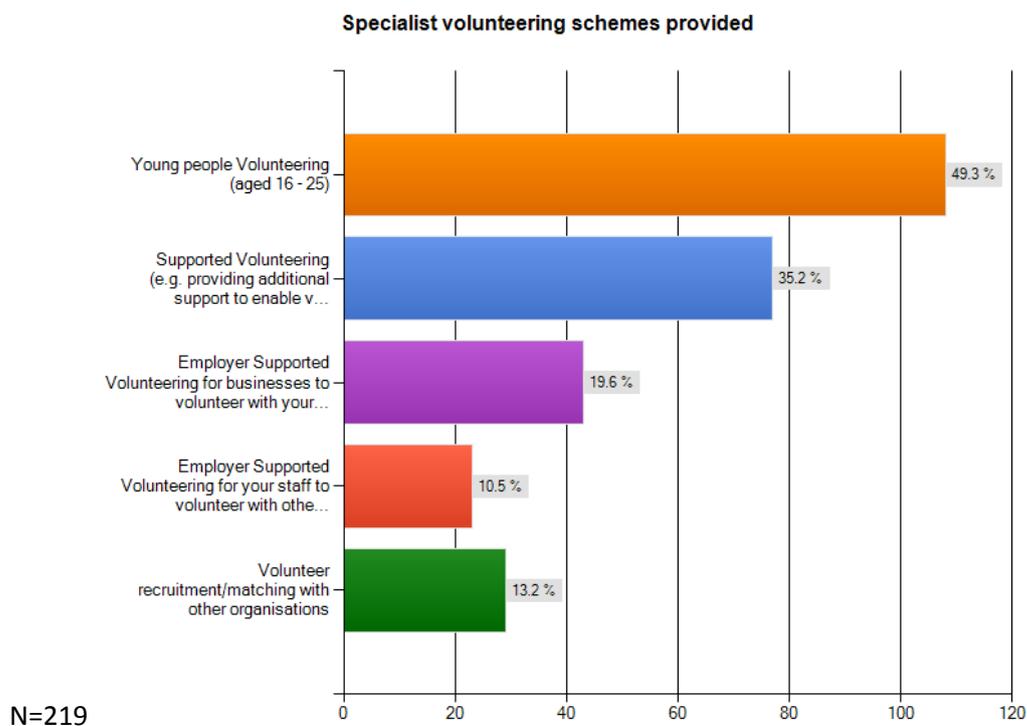
Most organisations use a mixture of recruitment approaches. Clearly word of mouth is the most common route, with organisations' own websites and service users the next most frequently cited. 34 respondents also said 'other' and described a wide range of activities e.g. leaflets, door to door, etc.

How organisations recruit volunteers

N = 218
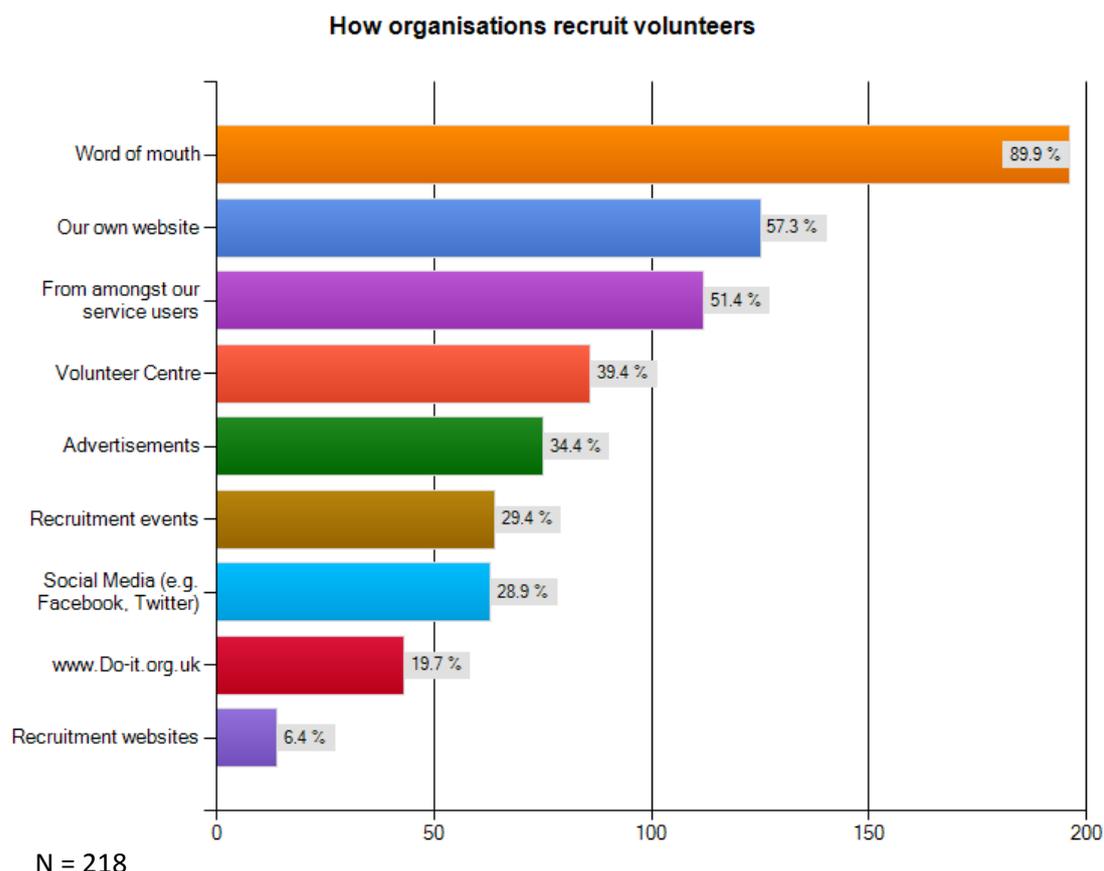
Respondents were subsequently asked to provide the top 3 most successful ways of recruiting: Word of Mouth 36% ranked 1, via service users 9% ranked 2, personal approach 8% ranked 3, volunteer centre 5% ranked 4.

EXTENT OF VOLUNTEERING IN ORGANISATIONS

167 organisations in the survey reported a total of 25,128 volunteers. An average of 150 per organisation. Around half of these had less than 20 volunteers. 17% had between 100 and 6000.

Based on an estimated 3256 organisations with volunteers with an average of 150 volunteers per organisation suggests a total of 488,400 volunteering roles in the county.

People in our household survey volunteer for an average of 1.9 organisations which would suggest an estimated 244,200 active volunteers in Worcestershire i.e. 54% of the adult population. (The household survey suggests the figure is 52%).

In order to mobilize such huge number of volunteers having people in roles to recruit, train, support and manage them is obviously crucial. 96% of organisations with volunteers had a person responsible for volunteer management/coordination. 69% of organisations had paid staff and 67% had volunteers fulfilling these roles. Amongst the respondents there were 2034 Volunteer coordinator roles (1045 volunteers and 989 paid staff). It is difficult to accurately estimate numbers across the county without more detailed analysis though broad estimates, based on the ratio of volunteer coordinators to volunteers or number of coordinators per organisation suggest there could be as many as 20-30,000.

Volunteer Coordinator Roles
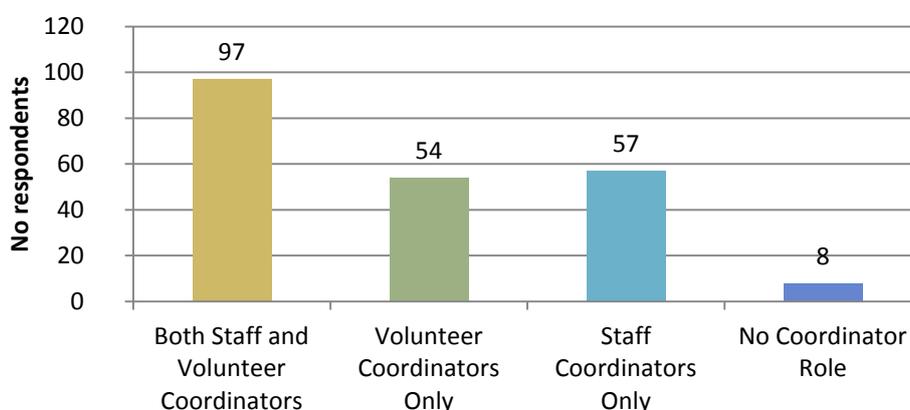
N=216

Number of People Managing/Coordinating Volunteers per organisation

N=223

No of People in Volunteer Manager/Coordinator Role
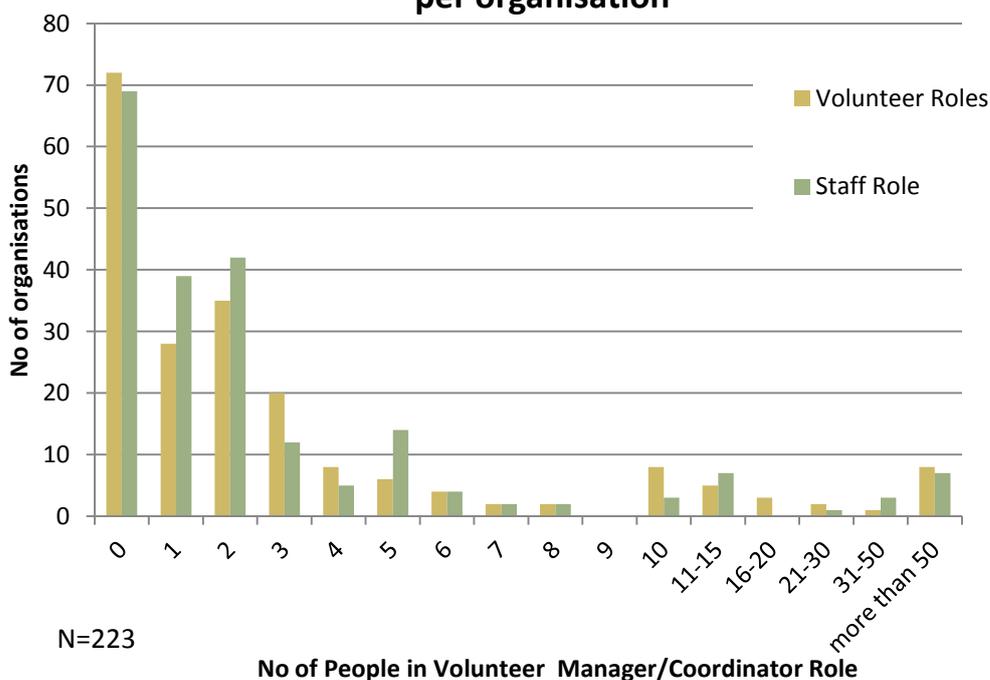
53

TRAINING, SUPPORT AND RECOGNITION FOR VOLUNTEERS

60% of organisations in the survey had a Volunteering Policy in place. 85% said they give recognition and thanks to their volunteers. 69% said they provide induction and/or training and nearly half provide written roles/job descriptions. Over half provide mentoring/personal support and around a third provide career support.

What organisations give to volunteers

Category	Percentage
Recognition and thanks	85.1 %
Induction	69.3 %
Training	69.3 %
Supervision	63.3 %
Mentoring/personal support	54.9 %
Written roles/job descriptions	48.4 %
Career Support (CV development, references)	34.0 %
Not applicable/necessary to have training and support in our organisa…	9.8 %
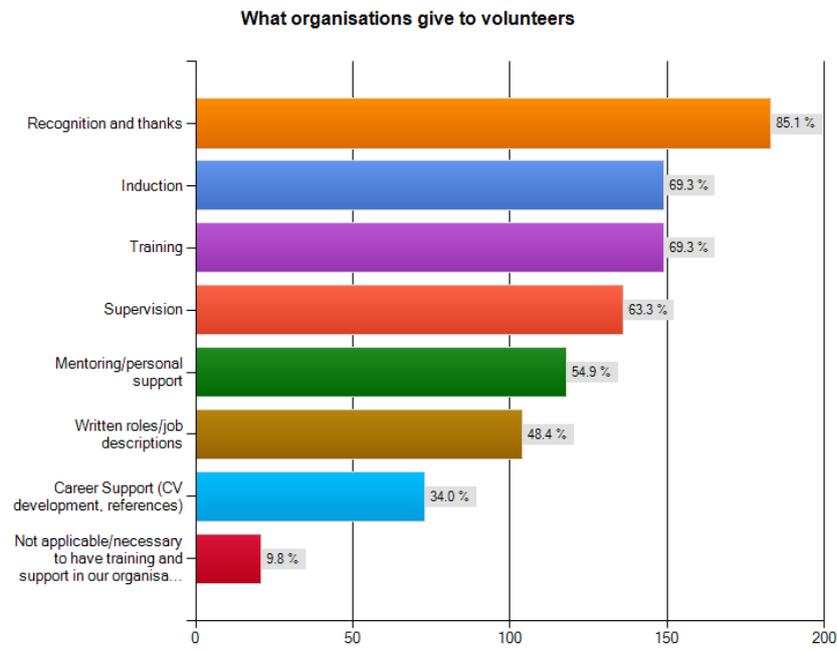
N=215

GOOD PRACTICE CASE STUDIES

During this research we came across many organisations doing some great work in the field of volunteering in Worcestershire. Unfortunately it wasn't possible to explore or feature their work in any detail in the report. However, as part of the organisation survey we stated that we were looking for examples of good practice in volunteering in Worcestershire and 44 organisations identified themselves as potential case studies and/or models of good practice. These were:

Abberley & Witley Scout Group	Ranger Service (Wyre Forest District Council)
Age UK Herefordshire & Worcestershire	Roundabout
Archive & Archaeology Service	St Richard's Hospice
Areley Kings Village Hall	The Fold
Barnardo's	The Scout Association
Beacon Employment	Upton rowing club
Bromsgrove District Housing Trust	WCC Countryside Service
Caribbean Roots Connection	West Midlands Search and Rescue
Diabetes UK	Worcester Students' Union
Duckworth Worcestershire Trust	Worcester Volunteer Centre
Feckenham Community Shop Association Ltd	Worcestershire Association of Carers
Hanbury Parish Plan	Worcestershire Countryside Service
Home-Start Wyre Forest	Worcestershire County Council
Kaleidoscope breakaway	Worcestershire Federation Of Young Farmers' Clubs
Malvern community forest	Worcestershire Health and Care Trust
Mentor Link	Worcestershire Literary Festival
National Trust (Croome)	Worcestershire Wildlife Trust
New Hope	Worcestershire YMCA
NHS South Worcestershire CCG	Worcestershire Association of Carers
Nora Parsons Day Centre	Wyre Forest District Council
Onside Independent Advocacy	Your Ideas
Protective Behaviours UK	

The research identified a wide range of organisation benefits from volunteering. Obviously the top benefit was 'Additional Resources'. However almost as significant was 'Connection with the local community' (83%). Two-thirds say volunteers also bring specialist skills and more than 60% said they help organisations 'Provide a better service'. Nearly half said it helped them to learn. Other benefits included:

"providing another perspective and we have a statutory 'duty to involve'"

"we could not operate without Volunteers as we have little or no income"

"Add even more diversity. Bring a great positive attitude as they want to be there."

"Wider Strategic Overview"

"A vibrancy, new ideas, team spirit."

Benefits volunteers bring to organisations

Benefit	Percentage
Additional resources	85.3 %
Connection with the local community	83.4 %
Bring specialist skills	67.3 %
Provide a better service (people giving freely as opposed to paid wor...)	62.6 %
Help fill a skills gap in the organisation	54.0 %
Help us to learn	48.3 %
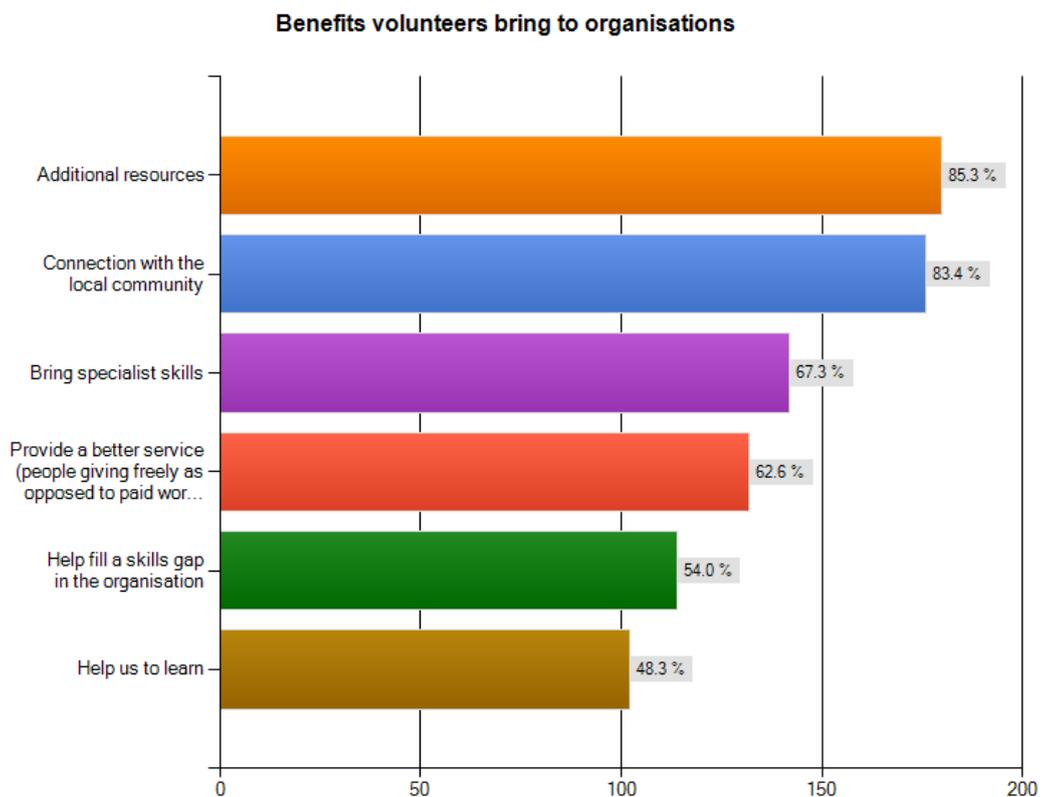
N = 211

Organisations were asked about a range of issues around volunteering. 'Advice and Support' and 'Recruitment' were the two biggest challenges.

➢ 51 % said they get good advice and support

➢ 56% said they recruit/attract enough volunteers

➢ 56% said they recruit volunteers with the skills/experience they need

➢ 70% said they provide volunteers with sufficient induction and training

➢ 76% said they retain their volunteers

Extent organisations are able to...
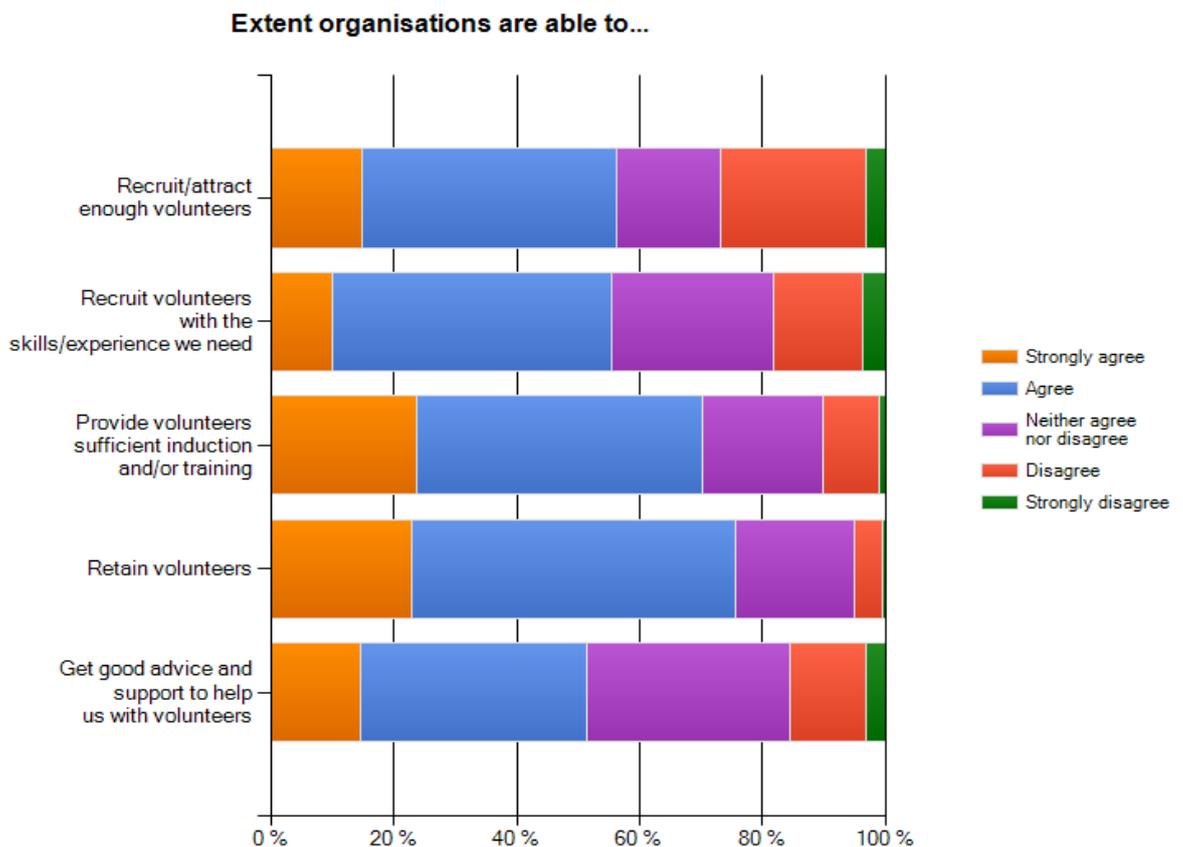
N = 219

VOLUNTEER NUMBERS NEEDED

96% of respondents said they were aiming to recruit new volunteers in the next 12 months. The 214 organisations in the survey were looking to recruit 5106 new volunteers. Extrapolating these figures proportionately to the whole population of organisations with volunteers in the county, suggests approximately 77,195 new volunteers are likely to be needed in the year ahead.

Number of new volunteers respondent organisation aim to recruit in the next 12 months

N=214
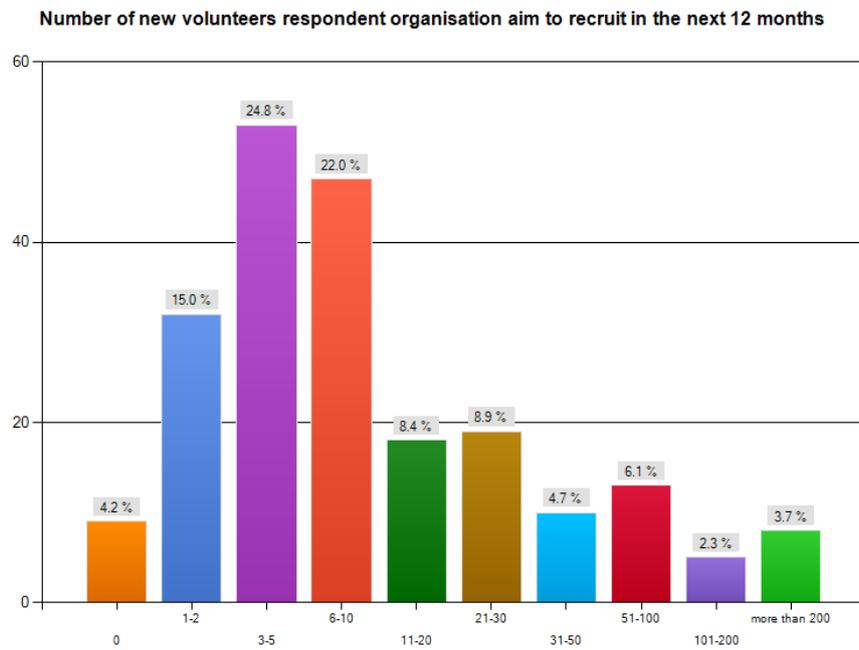
Given only 57% of organisations expected their overall numbers of volunteers to increase, this suggests there is a fair 'turn-over' of volunteers which is to be expected e.g. sports organisations recognized that most parent volunteers will only stay with the club for the period during which their children are involved.

How organisations expect the number of volunteers to change in the next 12 months

N=216
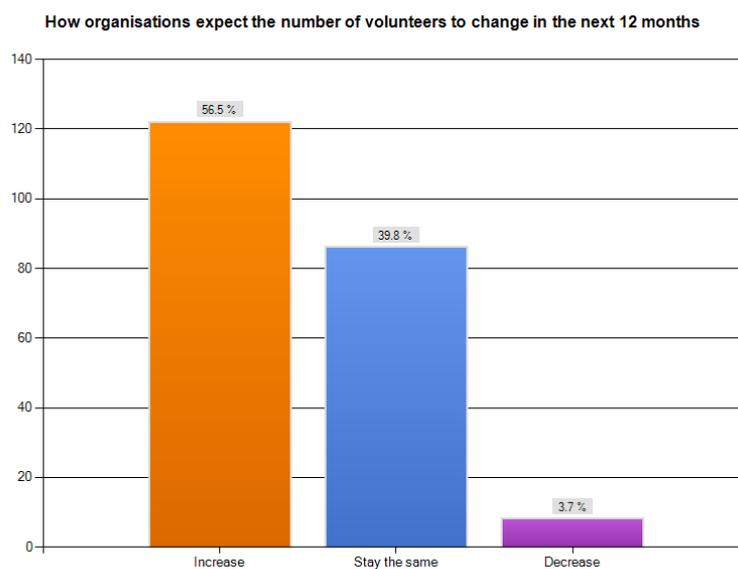
Respondents cited many different skills needs in their organisations. Event organisation, administration, and fundraising were the top three though there were also many practical, professional, social, and caring skills needed too.

**Types of skills organisations are looking for in volunteers**
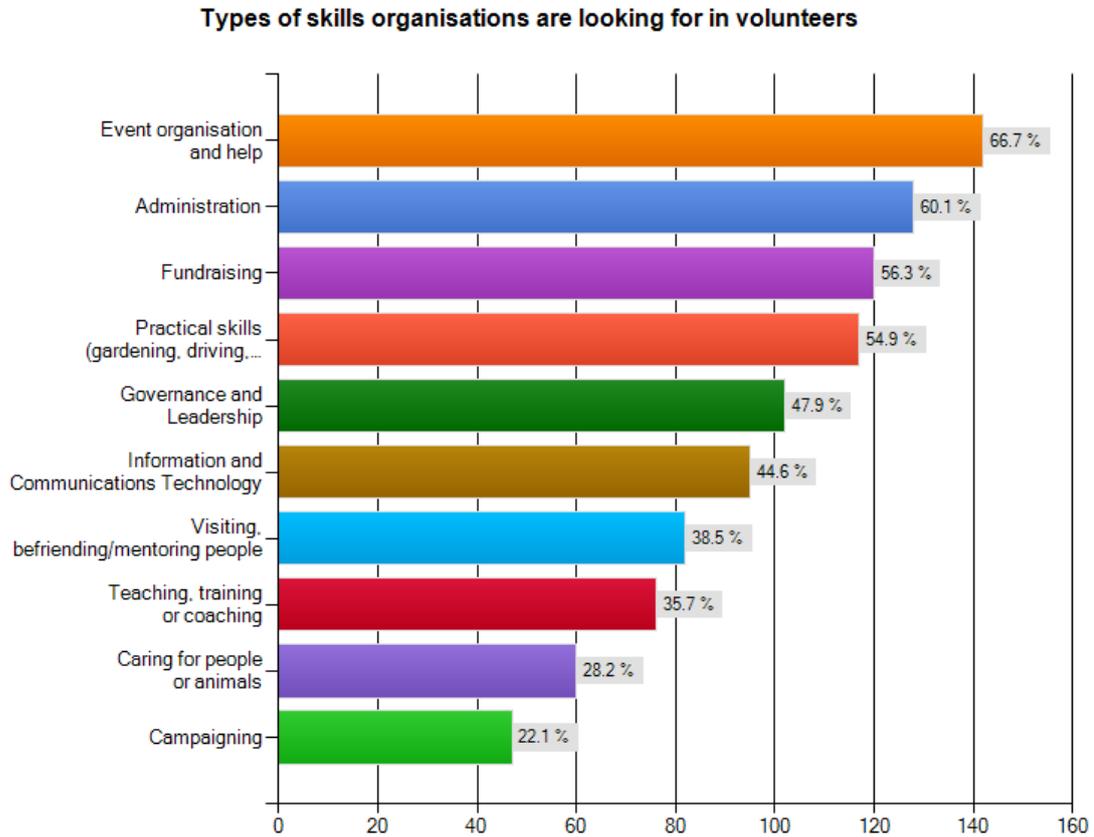
N = 213

Note: it is interesting to compare these skills needs with the types of activities members of the public said they would like to undertake. This indicates a degree of mismatch and highlights some areas which are likely to be difficult to recruit for particularly in: administration, governance and leadership, and ICT. See conclusions and analysis for further discussion.

ADVICE AND SUPPORT ON VOLUNTEERING

A substantial proportion (41.3%) say they get advice and support to help with volunteering. Around a quarter say they don't need any. One third of organisations said they don't get any advice and support but would like some – these came from across sectors and districts.

Those that received advice and support said this was primarily from local volunteer centres (56%), followed by national umbrella organisations (39%). Volunteer coordinators attending our focus group said their Volunteer Centre

Do organisation get any advice and support to help with volunteering?

N=218

support includes: publicizing vacancies on Do-it, CRB/DBS checks, legal updates, network meetings; best practice guidance in policy and procedure. National support networks used included: The Hospice Movement; The Carers Trust and The National Appropriate Adult Network. There was also reference to informal peer support and Internet searches on best practice.
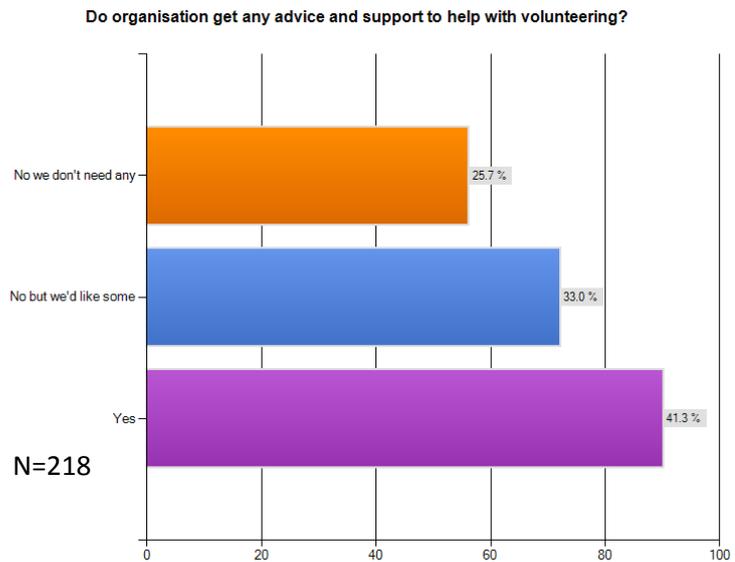
Where Organisations get Advice and Support to help with volunteering

N = 88
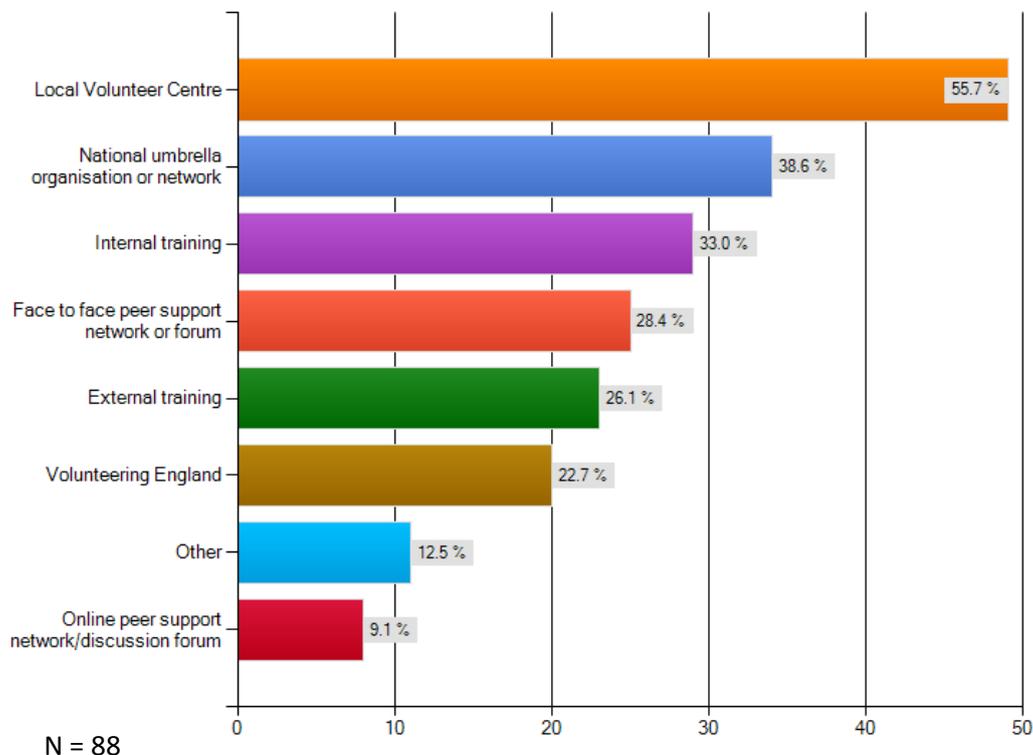
There was a clear interest in volunteering developments in the county with 73% of respondents (214) saying they would like to be kept informed.

As part of the research we explored demand for a range of support and services. Information and resources on good practice and help in recruitment were in greatest demand. Half wanted help around recruiting more young volunteers. There was also interest in training both for volunteers and volunteer coordinator/managers. 43% were interested in a countywide website to facilitate volunteer recruitment. Further analysis could be done to establish organisation types though it is significant that a similar percentage of organisations operate on a county-wide basis and these would be likely to be the larger ones.

Future Interest

Category	%
Access to information and resources on good practice	59.3 %
Help in volunteer recruitment	57.7 %
Recruiting more young volunteers	50.0 %
Training for volunteers	47.8 %
Training in volunteer management and support	44.5 %
Countywide website facilitating volunteer recruitment	42.9 %
Training and advice on technologies to support volunteering	37.9 %
Online network/support network	29.7 %
Engagement in live discussion/debate	15.4 %

N=182

There were 8 'other' responses. These included several wanting advice on getting funding e.g. for volunteer coordinators and developing business volunteering projects, advice on legislation, one commented about wanting to complete Do-it recruitment processes electronically, and another wanted recruitment fairs aimed at the general public and businesses.

The potential for establishing a network to share costs and resources in volunteering elicited considerable interest though would require further research and exploration. Whilst only 10% said they would be interested, over half said they may be interested.

Around 10% of respondents said they were already part of a network.

Interest in joining a network to share costs and resources in volunteering
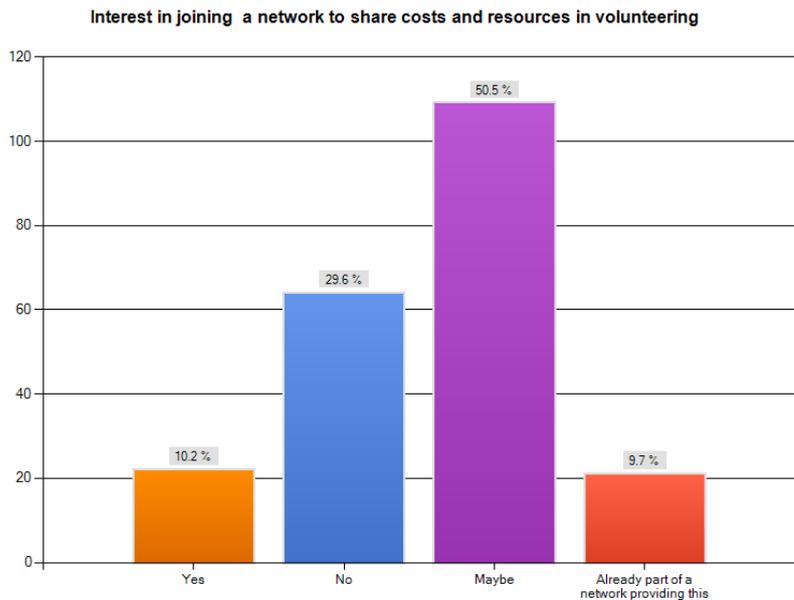
N=216

Only a small proportion of respondents said they would be prepared to pay for services which is probably to be expected given the current economic climate. However the areas where 15-20% of organisations would pay for services were in training (both for volunteers and for volunteer coordinators) and in celebrations/awards/events to recognize and thank volunteers. There were quite a lot of 'maybe' responses around these areas as well as publicity and recruitment. This suggests an interest but would perhaps be dependent on the quality and type of services on offer.

Services Organisations would be prepared to pay for
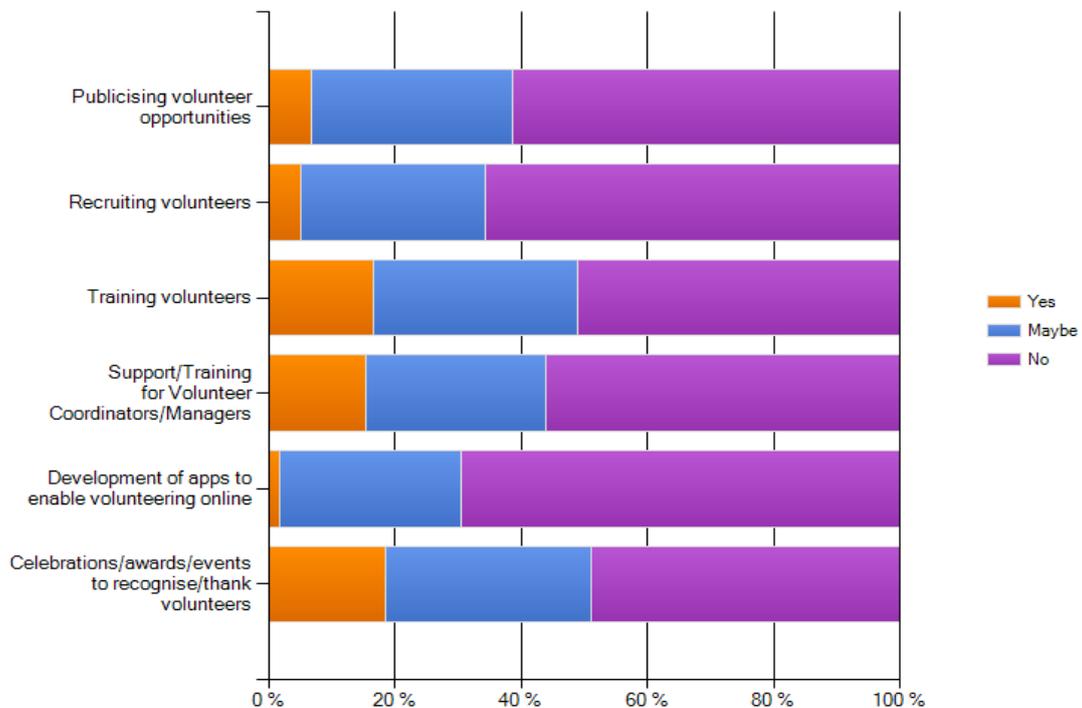
N=208

REFLECTIONS FROM THE VOLUNTEER COORDINATORS' FOCUS GROUP

Our focus group with volunteer coordinators provided a more in-depth perspective from a cross section of organisations involved in sports, hospices, mentoring and advocacy, carers, and criminal justice. One of the key issues discussed in the focus group was scope for more collaboration between organisations involving volunteers. Some of the key themes and suggestions coming out of this very positive session were:

- ➢ A strong desire to collaborate and provide peer support;

- ➢ Sharing opportunities, signposting and provide links from their own websites to wider volunteering offers;

- ➢ Where there is synergy, joining programmes to work together to recruit;

- ➢ Central awards ceremony;

- ➢ Shared training;

- ➢ Informal 'bring a plate' gatherings for volunteer co-ordinators in the county to share our learning and support one another;

- ➢ Develop a public 'hub' where all this information is shared and accessible, including of online info and excellent promotion. But:

  - o we would need to trust that we could refer people to it and that it would have a clear 'first step' application process;

  - o it would need to have a face to face presence so people are encouraged to look further into volunteering opportunities and find the right fit for them;

- ➢ **To do the above we need a coordinator to coordinate the coordinators!**

KEY MESSAGES

We asked organisations in our focus group what they would do if they were in charge of encouraging more people to take up volunteering across Worcestershire. These were their key messages:

- ➢ Where the 'Worcestershire volunteer voice'?
- ➢ Unify and centralise Volunteer Centres so information comes from one voice, and is less confusing and avoids duplication;
- ➢ make the above virtual;
- ➢ work through libraries;
- ➢ issue a county wide volunteering newsletter;
- ➢ work with Do-it to do more promotion and focus it county wide so it has a local feel about it. Only works if locally focussed. Link into to it;
- ➢ get Gove to put volunteering into schools as a taught area for ages 14+ within (PSHE): 'life experience';

- run a profile raising campaign which breaks down barriers and perceptions, with monthly advocates who tell their story of volunteering an what it's done for them (especially in North Worcestershire where it's harder to recruit). Diverse and open to all;
- be part of a rebranding scheme for a young person focussed campaign: use Facebook and Twitter, make it accredited or to go towards qualifications, Employer Link;
- invest in volunteering training and make the case nationally for resources for this in particular;
- encourage families to volunteer together esp. for 'one-off' slices (if the children see their parents value it they are more likely to follow suit);
- make a simple DBS (CRB): its puts people off who are worried about insignificant crimes in their past;
- Make links with the Asian communities.

8. VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT AND BROKERAGE SERVICES

As part of this research we sought to identify the key intermediary organisations with a recruitment and brokerage role between members of the public wanting to volunteer and organisations seeking volunteers. As far as possible we explored key issues and development opportunities amongst these services reflecting on both local and national contexts. Our approach was 5 fold, we:

> ➢ Sought involvement from known Volunteer Centres/service organisations in a specific focus group. Three of the six attended (Pershore, Worcester, and Bromsgrove and Redditch Network)
> ➢ Gathered information on Volunteer recruitment and matching services via our organisations survey, with some follow-up telephone calls to explore and clarify.
> ➢ Interviewed 2 volunteer centre managers as part of the key stakeholder consultation.
> ➢ Researched all public facing volunteering organisations' websites and annual reports
> ➢ Reviewed national research on Volunteering and volunteering infrastructure[12]

From this we identified 20 organisations providing services.

> ➢ 7 of these provide general public-facing volunteer matching services, most with additional specialist services;
> ➢ 5 specialist services around a specific type of volunteering or volunteer service; and
> ➢ 8 organisations which place some of their service users with other organisations as part of rehabilitation/social/employment development approaches.

PUBLIC FACING VOLUNTEERING SERVICES

The seven public facing services are a mix of Independent Volunteer Centres and Councils for Voluntary Service. Some integrate both functions. The organisations identified were:

> ➢ Bromsgrove & Redditch Network
> ➢ Droitwich Spa and Rural CVS
> ➢ Evesham Volunteer Centre
> ➢ Pershore Volunteer Centre
> ➢ Worcester Volunteer Centre
> ➢ Wyre Forest and District Community Action
> ➢ Malvern Hills Volunteering

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[1] 'Volunteering and volunteering infrastructure in the current economic climate' (March 2013) Volunteering for Stronger Communities research project, Year one report, Institute for Volunteering/NCVO

[2] Annual Return for Volunteer Centres 2011/12,(May 2013) 'Funding, Capacity and Demand', Institute for Volunteering Research

Many of these organisations also offer other services, often directly or indirectly related to volunteering e.g. community transport schemes, befriending services, gardening and shopping services, training. Some also provide news, information and advice services e.g. law, funding, best practice.

CURRENT STATE OF VOLUNTEER CENTRE SERVICES

All of these organisations (except Malvern Hills Volunteering) gained national accredited Volunteer Centre status with Volunteering England in July 2011. There are 6 key functions they are qualified to perform:

- ➢ Brokerage
- ➢ Marketing Volunteering
- ➢ Good Practice Development
- ➢ Developing Volunteering Opportunities
- ➢ Policy Response and Campaigning
- ➢ Strategic Development of Volunteering

All volunteer services have traditionally been heavily dependent on public sector income and have been affected by funding cuts over the past couple of years. Some have closed (Malvern), some seem to be running minimal volunteering services (Wyre Forest/Droitwich/BARN), and some of the larger ones have drawn on their reserves to keep services going (Evesham, Pershore and Worcester). Many other volunteer centres around the country have also been affected by cuts though the patterns vary considerably.

Community Action Malvern and District also gained Volunteer Centre accreditation but closed their Volunteer Service in 2012 due to funding cuts. It is our understanding Malvern Hills Volunteering has since been set up as an independent one person volunteer run service based at the Citizens Advice Bureau.

Based on the information we've been able to gather there appears to be a clear north south divide (this was also raised at the focus group with organisations who manage volunteers). Worcester, Pershore and Evesham are running active volunteer services, the north of the county are not. The scale of current operations is proportionate to i) the level of financial capacity to withstand the cuts and ii) the level of commitment in the organisation to providing volunteering services and balanced against other services and funding sources.

These are some of the distinctive services local Volunteer Centres provide:

- **Maintain national Do-it database of** volunteering opportunities. Currently there are 8000+ opportunities in Worcestershire on the system. It's believed around 70-75% have been posted by Volunteer Centres using the sites' back-end database system Vbase.

- **Public facing visible (and online) presence for volunteering.** They run forums and other events and link to many wider networks providing a volunteering presence in different context i.e. fresher's week, volunteer's week, local/county festivals.

- **Personal face to face service** – preferred by many people, with interviews and placement support leading to a higher conversion rate to successful placements than signposted referrals. They also provide **reassurance** and support for people after they've enquired online (around 80-90% of referrals come via Do-it). They signpost around three quarters of referrals and support around a quarter more intensively through face to face support.

- **Professionalism and best practice for organisations supporting volunteers**: templates, roles, employment, volunteering policies, Insurance, CRB/DRB checks, child protection procedures (particularly relevant given the increase in social care based volunteering).

- **Provide the more challenging/ 'harder' placements** for more vulnerable people (volunteers and hosts) in areas like social care. Placements into groups like hospices, children's organisations and sports tend to be easier.

> "We are willing to help everyone into volunteering, and often that means statutory services, and others, refer their more difficult and challenging clients for us to support into volunteering. This is labour and resource intensive"

- E**fficiency and economies of scale** in recruitment and advertising saving many organisations from having to do their own. Provides exposure for host organisations online, face to face and via media/promotional outlets e.g. free newspaper column to advertise opportunities.

- **Local expertise and knowledge** – about local geography (including rural), communities and organisations. Approx 41% of VCS organisations work at local/district level and many s**mall community groups**, with volunteer-run frontline services, recruit via Volunteer Centres.

- E**xpertise in volunteering in its full breadth and range of contexts** with considerable understanding of the sector and needs of both volunteers/host organisations.

- Offer **short-term volunteering opportunities** for people

CURRENT DEVELOPMENT PLANS

Six of the accredited Volunteer Centres are working in partnership as part of the VITAL in Worcestershire Partnership funded until September 2013 through 'Transforming Local Infrastructure' fund. This funding comes via the Cabinet office and is being managed by Worcester Volunteer Centre. It is unclear to what extent all volunteer centres are actively engaged. As part of this they are focusing on four areas:

➢ Worcestershire Volunteering Hub
➢ Income Sustainability
➢ Developing Business Models/Charging Policies
➢ New ways of promoting volunteering

As part of this initiative they have surveyed their members/organisations and volunteers about their needs, what services they would pay for and how much they would pay. Some of the actions they are currently taking forward include:

➢ Development of a single shared electronic form (for South Worcestershire Volunteer Centres only at present) ensuring county-wide organisations can promote their volunteer opportunities more easily via the Volunteer Centres on the Do-it website.

➢ Creation of a new website for one-off volunteering based on the 'Slivers of Time' platform (see page 25)

➢ New charged membership schemes (tiered according to organisation size/turnover) and paid for services for recruitment, CRB Checking, training and other volunteer services (being trialled from September 2013)

➢ New training and support services for volunteer managers/coordinators

➢ Exploring streamlining of services across centres

KEY MESSAGES FROM VOLUNTEER CENTRES

These are some of the ideas/suggestions raised in our focus group. It should be noted only 3 of the 7 organisations providing public facing services participated in the research and these would require further discussion and clarification.

➢ Central point and satellites (hub and spoke) – explore whether it would save resources by having one central hub inputting all Worcestershire County opportunities onto the Do-it database? Perhaps a central phone switchboard/helpline in addition to website.

➢ Maintain local provision for face to face service – especially for those people won't/can't travel and want local knowledge and for hard to place volunteers;

➢ Review the geographic/demographic distribution and location of volunteer centres/services.

- ➢ Help volunteer centres promote Do-it more;

- ➢ More outreach (mobile etc) – some is happening now (Worcester do it) where they are proactive about taking opportunities out there; i.e. a VBase laptop that sits on a desk in libraries that people can use; a volunteer 'pod' (were working on Volunteer one touch?);

- ➢ Rebrand? Clarity of message countywide. Could keep individual brands but also have a collective brand 'Worcestershire Volunteers'?

- ➢ Joint campaigning and promoting (have done this in the past) but need resources to do it;

- ➢ Support Volunteer Centres to develop consistent and effective systems to monitor and evaluate demand, service delivery and impact.

- ➢ Encourage consistency in membership services and explore networking, training and support mechanisms that suit both local/district and county-wide organisations involved in volunteering.

VOLUNTEER CENTERS ANALYSIS

In our organisation survey 38% used Volunteer Centres for recruitment, and 22% for advice and support. They play a unique role on the front-lines of volunteering responding to the needs of both volunteers and organisations. In particular their role in maintaining Do-it opportunities is critical to public engagement online.

However, there is a clear North/South divide with scant services available in the north and more active (though under-resourced) services in the south. Most operate with just one (often part time) volunteer post. The largest, Worcester Volunteer Centre, has 3 part time posts including a youth volunteering and supported volunteering post. Whilst we were unable to gather comprehensive data on enquiries, referrals and placements there appears to be a considerable mix in the scale of activity, the two most active ones dealt with between 400 and 800 enquiries a year of which around 25% were seen face to face. Most, with very stretched services, say they don't have the capacity to follow up and explore outcomes of their services making it difficult to assess or compare the scale and impact of their services. Excepting Do-it, we found the Volunteer Centres embrace technology to varying degrees.

Currently volunteer centre services are underfunded, fragmented and geographically patchy e.g. 3 of the 6 volunteer centres are in Wychavon district. They provide a very important and distinctive role in the volunteering ecology, however there appear to be mixed levels of commitment and capacity to work in a more unified way. Time will tell whether they have been successful in achieving the streamlined, partnership approach before September 2013 when the funding to support this work is due for completion.

In addition to the general public facing volunteering organisations, we identified 6 specialist organisations with a role in recruiting and brokering around volunteering.

WORCESTERSHIRE WARDENS

The Worcestershire Wardens Partnership (WWP) is a network of organisations working with volunteers in the parks and countryside sector. They work together to recruit, provide training opportunities, work parties and "thank you" events for their volunteers whilst striving to disseminate best practice and ensure a consistently high standard of support for volunteers.

Partners benefit from shared promotion and recruitment, an annual report, training, events, celebrations and collective admin support from the part time coordinator. They charge Partners a £500 per annum though smaller organisations can get 'co-opted' status.
www.worcestershire.gov.uk/cms/countryside/volunteering/worcestershire-wardens.aspx

MENTOR LINK

Mentor Link is a registered charity dedicated to supporting children and young people who may be experiencing difficult times by providing them with a volunteer mentor. Founded in 2002, the charity now offers it services to schools in Worcestershire and the West Midlands. Mentor Link is currently supported by the Big Lottery Fund. The charity has around 200 volunteers which it places with schools around the county. There are 16 schools listed as partners on their website.
www.mentorlink.org.uk

SPORTS PARTNERSHIP/EVENT MAKERS

The Sports Partnership operates in Herefordshire and Worcestershire. Following the successful 'Sports Makers' volunteering scheme allied to the Olympic Games, they experienced a huge increase in people wanting to get involved in sports volunteering. They support a network of 850 (mostly volunteer-run) sports organisations in Worcestershire and work with those organisations to promote good practice including volunteering. People can sign up to volunteer through the national sports makers site to register interest in volunteering www.sportmakers.co.uk They have recently launched 'Event Makers', set up by six games makers with a broader remit than sports, to promote volunteering through sports-related events.

www.morethansport.com   www.eventmakers.org

WORCESTER STUDENTS' UNION

Worcester University has around 10,000 students. They have a part time Student Advisor with Responsibility for Volunteering (1 day a week) and there are also links via the student careers service. Around 40-50 organisations a year approach them with requests for volunteers or specific skills. These are passed on to specific departments and are promoted on their website and via Facebook to staff and students. In 2011 they introduced 'V-Records' and certificates (Linked to the

VInspired scheme see section 3 National Picture). This year they distributed 200 v-records to interested students and received 85 back at the end of the year, 50-60 students were awarded certificates. In total these students had delivered over 4000 hours of volunteer time. Top Awards were also given by Worcestershire Ambassadors and Headway. In addition they also appoint around 200 volunteers internally as Student Academic Reps (STARS). www.worcester.ac.uk/journey/work-experience-volunteering.html

BRAVO – BROMSGROVE AND REDDITCH ACTIVE VOLUNTEERING OPPORTUNITIES

Bromsgrove and Redditch are encouraging residents to volunteer to support sports and health related clubs, groups and events in the area. BRAVO is a flexible programme and there are a wide variety of placements to choose from e.g. IT support for clubs, assistant coaches, health intervention for older people.
redditch.whub.org.uk/cms/leisure-and-culture/sports-and-leisure/get-active/volunteering.aspx

OTHER ORGANISATIONS PLACING VOLUNTEERS

These services were identified through the survey, and are mostly organisations that place their service users as volunteers with other organisations. We weren't able follow up all of their activities within the time of the research though we did manage to find out a little more about some.

YMCA

The YMCA provides a safe environment where homeless young people and vulnerable adults can develop their potential and build a better future. They provide some opportunities for their residents to volunteer in organisations and roles that give them a sense of self worth and value within the community. Recently merged as a county-wide organisation, they have just appointed a volunteer coordinator to support both inward and outward volunteering
www.ymcaworcester.org.uk

DUCKWORTH TRUST

The Duckworth Trust has a volunteer coordinator and they recruit for a partnership of organisations/sub projects including the Pump House, Environment Wardens Scheme, Worcestershire Resource Exchange. www.dwt.org.uk

MHA

Nationally they provide residential care and Retirement Living. Also provide befriending, activities and social support for people living in their own homes, and a number of Day Care Resource centres for people with dementia. West Worcester Live at Home Scheme says they match 1-5 volunteers a year with organisations.

OTHERS

- Abberley and Witley Scout Group – 1-5 volunteer placements
- Kemp Hospice 1-5 volunteer placements
- New College Worcester – 11-19 volunteer placements
- Tribe – unknown number of volunteer placements
- Victim Support – unknown number of volunteer placements

9. THE PUBLIC SECTOR PERSPECTIVE

This research sought to provide an overview of volunteering in the public sector. Clearly the policy context both nationally and locally strongly supports the notion of volunteering. See section 4.

PERCEPTIONS

Perceptions about volunteering from organisations we interviewed and from the 24 public sector organisations completing the survey were entirely positive. These were some of the comments from respondents:

"We work with many volunteers, both within the community (e.g. Neighbourhood Watch) and within the organisation (Police Support Volunteers and Specials). Therefore we are fully engaged with large numbers of volunteers and see the benefits on a daily basis."

"Gives people a sense of purpose which, for many reasons, they may not otherwise get. In these times of limited budgets the organisation gets a much needed task done for limited expenditure. Often the only way we can get certain tasks done"

"Adds greatly to our capacity to get work done, as well as creating links between that work (archaeology) and the wider community. Often helps as well in developing new procedures and products as volunteers bring an experience and different viewpoint not available in the organisation."

"We have a Volunteer Project where we encourage people interested in the countryside to get involved in conservation work on our nature reserves. We get help and input from our volunteers and they get training and feel included in the work and decisions that are being made on their local nature reserves. Volunteering is very beneficial to both the employer and the volunteer."

"Volunteering benefits the organisation and volunteers alike, if you find the right volunteer."

"Varying skills, help to enhance the services that we offer to families"

EXTENT OF VOLUNTEERING IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR

Whilst it wasn't possible to conduct a detailed search and analysis, we were able to identify 13 key areas of public services involving volunteers and provide some 'rough' estimates about the extent of volunteering. There is a rather grey area in defining organisations since many work in partnership with other sectors. Often the actual volunteering goes on within communities or other voluntary/community sector organisations but is led by public sector bodies. We have provided estimates here on the numbers of public sector organisations/services and volunteers involved.

Public Sector Service	Description	Estimated No public sector Organisations	Estimated No of Volunteers
Schools	208 maintained schools, 34 academies + (estimated) 8 private schools. Based on a conservative approximate of 8 volunteer governors plus 10 other parent volunteers per school.	250	4500
Parish Councils	CALC is the representative body for Parish and Town Councils - the first tier of government - in Worcestershire. There are 151 Parish and Town Councils and 10 Parish Meetings in Worcestershire. All parish councillors are volunteers. Estimate of 8 councillors per organisation.	161	1288
MPs	MPs– (some defined themselves as public sector/some VCS). We found 6 MPs and three local political party groups. All involved volunteers in their work. Numbers of volunteers ranged from 25 – 60 per MP. Estimate 35 x 6 MPs	6	210
Emergency Services	West Mercia Police have 80 Police Support Volunteers, several hundred Special Constabulary Officers and several thousand Neighbourhood Watch schemes of 15-20 households over 5 counties. (Estimate for Worcestershire only 800 Neighbourhood Watch schemes of 15 households, 80 special constables and 16 police support officers = 15,130). Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue service runs a Retained Fire Service and Young People's Fire Service. They have 17 volunteers in Worcestershire. No data re ambulance services.	2	12096
Children's' Centres	34 Sure Start Children's' centres in Worcestershire. Respondent in our survey said they had 5-20 volunteers. Assuming a conservative estimate of 10 per centre = 340	34	340

Libraries	24 libraries in the county. 12 at the Hive and estimated 2 for other libraries based on just one respondent (would need further research) = 46 +12	24	58
Countryside/ Conservation Services	Some schemes at both district and countywide level identified in Ranger Services/Conservation/Countryside Services/Worcestershire Wardens Scheme.	7	1500
Archaeology Service	Archaeology Service based at the Hive = 10 volunteers	1	10
Further/Higher Education	Colleges/Universities – approx 7 FE colleges with an average 25 volunteers per college = 175 volunteers; University of Worcester has approx 200 volunteers.	8	375
Public Health Care	Health and Care – NHS/Trusts. 3 hospitals and 5 community hospitals. Chaplaincy services, various hospital friends schemes. 17 Worcestershire based hospital related charities on charities commission website. Estimate a conservative average of 30 volunteers per hospital = 240	8	240
Sports Partnership	Cross Sector Partnership. Based at University of Worcester, support network of 850 organisations primarily volunteer run sports clubs and groups. Involves Worcestershire Council's Coaching Volunteering. Based on an estimate of 8 volunteers per organisation means sports volunteers number approximately 6800. Based on national research through the "Active People's Survey" 2011-12, 9.8% of the adult population of Worcestershire volunteer at least 1 hr a week (up from 5% in 2008-9). Based on census data of 472,700 adults in Worcestershire (aged over 16) = 46,324".	2	46324
Criminal Justice	Criminal Justice – huge area of volunteering – see 'CLINKS' report in reference section, no local data	3	50
Territorial Army	Territorial Army Volunteer Reserves. Kidderminster and Worcestershire branches – no local data	2	50
Total		**508**	**67041**

10. THE BUSINESS SECTOR PERSPECTIVE

Gaining a business sector perspective on volunteering was an important part of this research. The information here was gathered through desk research and interviews with key stakeholders from the business sector in Worcestershire. The online organisation survey promoted through economic, business and social enterprise networks returned too few responses to provide any representative data within the short time-frame of the research project.

OVERVIEW

There are approximately 7,500 businesses in Worcestershire[3] and a long history of business leaders engaging with communities and contributing to the social wellbeing of the county. Some of the more traditional routes have been via organisations such as the Round Table and Rotary Club. Most approaches are based upon social, fun activities with a focus on fundraising and 'giving back' to society. There are probably around 15-20 of these types of organisation across Worcestershire, largely based around the town/urban centres. These are generally run on a voluntary, not for profit basis, many as registered charities.

A number of more recently established business and social enterprise networks also provide support to the not for profit sector. Some around a particular demographic (e.g. the women's business network 'The Wednesday Club') or around a particular geography or cluster (e.g. Basepoint Business Centre in Evesham). The main organisations operating county-wide are Worcestershire Ambassadors; the Chamber of Commerce; Federation of Small Businesses, Midwest Rural Enterprise, and Social Enterprise West Midlands. In general, combining business interests and social activity around 'doing good' is fairly widespread.

In recent years an increased emphasis on Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) together with the emergence of a new hybrid sector of Social Enterprise and Community Interest Companies have created a more formalised and integrated relationship between businesses and the voluntary and community sector.

CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

The current government is keen to promote CSR. Adoption of these policies has brought a keener understanding of the role of businesses within their communities and there's plenty of evidence to support the business case. CSR is a key issue being promoted by the Chamber of Commerce and several other business networks locally there seems to be positive backing. Worcestershire Ambassadors are working with Worcester University around CSR training for businesses and run the annual awards for Corporate Social Responsibility. One of the four award categories relates specifically to *"involvement of businesses within the community and support given to charities".*

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[3] Estimate based on number of business addresses delivered to by the Post Office April 2013 less approx 6000 for public sector and not for profit sector organisations

'Employer Supported Volunteering' (ESV) provides employees with the opportunity to volunteer with support from their employer. This may be in the form of time off for individual volunteering, or in a programme developed by the employer, such as a team challenge event or ongoing arrangement with a community partner. ESV is just part of the CSR approach. Nationally there's an increasing body of evidence supporting the business case for volunteering, not just as a corporate add-on[4]. Obviously more of the big employers have the capacity to take this seriously and adopt policies and practices.

Those interviewed for this research said formally established volunteering of this kind was not wide spread in Worcestershire except perhaps among some of the larger employers (Boots, Barclays bank, Malvern Instruments, Bosch). However informally, volunteering is extremely common.

"Most businesses engage in some form of volunteering or other" *Mike Ashton, Chief Executive, Chamber of Commerce.*

Some of the key benefits of ESV identified by companies include:

> ➢ Improved brand value and reputation
> ➢ Demonstrates Corporate Social Responsibility
> ➢ Builds networks through collaboration with other sectors
> ➢ Engages companies and suppliers
> ➢ Increases company's chances in tendering processes
> ➢ Develops staff talent and skills
> ➢ Boosts staff morale and loyalty
> ➢ Aids staff recruitment and retention

According to recent national research "approximately 70% of FTSE 100 companies have an ESV programme, 20% of medium sized businesses and 14% of small businesses….. for many employees their ESV programme enables them to get involved when they wouldn't otherwise have been able to. The majority of employees (58 per cent) say they would be very or fairly likely to volunteer if their employer offered them help to do so." [5]

Our own household survey on volunteering in Worcestershire found 63% of employees showed an interest in volunteering through work (35% yes, 28% maybe) for respondents under 50 the figures were even higher.

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[4] Volunteering – The Business Case. Corporate Citizenship, City of London, May 2010
[5] Volunteering is the Business DirectGov 2011, commissioned by v"

THE VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY SECTOR PERSPECTIVE ON BUSINESS VOLUNTEERING

Many voluntary and community sector organisations have long established relationships with businesses sector that go beyond commercial/service interests. In our survey [6] 20% of voluntary/public sector organisations said they had schemes that enabled businesses to volunteer with their organisations.

On the whole business sector income is not a major part of the funding mix for most voluntary and community organisations. However, with cuts and competition in their traditional income sources, many are looking to diversify and build partnerships with business to increase donations, sponsorship, collaboration, and volunteering.

EXAMPLES OF BUSINESS VOLUNTEERING IN WORCESTERSHIRE

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

The Chamber of Commerce is a key promoter of Corporate Social Responsibility amongst the business sector. The Chamber has approximately 1600 members including a number from the not for profit sector. It facilitates relationships between the business and not-for-profit sector organisations when requested to do so and provides opportunities for charity members to present their case/needs amongst its membership through networking meetings and events. They also do a lot of work with schools and are involved in the Princes Trust Charity of the Year awards.

WORCESTERSHIRE AMBASSADORS

Worcestershire Ambassadors' mission is to promote Worcestershire as a place to work, live and visit. It is run by a group of 15 volunteer directors and is a Company Limited by Guarantee. It has 185 members, mostly leading lights in Worcestershire, mainly from the Business sector but also from sports, arts, media and other sectors. It has been very successful at running social events and fundraising and in 2012-13 raised £60K to give to charities.

"Worcestershire Ambassadors is very positive about volunteering. The majority of Ambassadors are business leaders within the county and we are all volunteers. As Chairman I am in awe about the time people give to volunteering." *Granville Orange, Chair.*

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[6] Worcestershire Volunteering Survey 2013. 236 respondents: 198 Voluntary sector; 26 public sector, 10 business sector, 4 cross sector.

MIDWEST RURAL ENTERPRISE

Midwest Rural Enterprise is a Community Interest Company supporting potential, new or existing small and medium sized businesses. Their services focus around Social Enterprise, mentoring, Business start ups, Building Business Responsibility, Schools and Young business. As part of building business responsibility they facilitate partnerships and matching with charities and community groups.

THE WEDNESDAY CLUB

The Wednesday Club help women improve their business opportunities and provide a supportive network. They also support local charities based in Worcestershire and donate funds raised from their events. Nominated charities are invited to talk about the work they do and raise awareness of their cause to the network. They also include links on their website to encourage members to donate to local charities. These include: Funny Blood; St Paul's Hostel; Worcestershire Rape and Sexual Abuse Support Centre; St Richard's Hospice; Worcestershire Breast Unit Campaign.

WORCESTERSHIRE MASONIC GOLFING SOCIETY

Regular and annual inter-county golfing events each sponsored by a private sector company. The organisation has been raising funds for charities since 1962. In 2013 they celebrate 50 years with fundraising for the Acorns Trust.

EVESHAM ROTARY CLUB

Evesham Rotary Club is part of world-wide organisation of 1.3m people dedicated to 'Service Above Self'. They raise money for local events including Christmas appeals and events like the Evesham Festival of Music. They have also supported a wide range of local charities (Hospices, Evesham Shop Mobility, County Air Ambulance, Citizen's Advice Bureau, Talking Newspaper, Noah's Ark, Tracey Sollis Leukaemia, RNLI, Acquired Brain Injury Unit and others, including the Mayor of Evesham's dedicated charities). They also contribute to international campaigns to provide education, medical care, water, sanitation and emergency relief to the world's most vulnerable people.

BUSINESS SECTOR ANALYSIS AND KEY MESSAGES

Volunteering is not an issue that 'grabs' the business sector. Many businesses are already volunteering (largely through voluntary fundraising efforts) within their own networks and charitable efforts. Much of the good work that goes on is not reported in the media.

There's a general sense that businesses (and their employees) should do volunteering because they 'want to' rather than because they 'have to' so over pushing on the CSR angle might not be very effective given there's already been a lot of work around that.

Most businesses don't see volunteering as particularly relevant to them. That said, there's a generally positive attitude to the voluntary and community sector and a willingness to engage around supporting local communities and charities.

- Most will do something as part of what they do but they don't like the 'tin rattlers'.
- More business involvement in volunteering needs to be driven by the Voluntary Sector. There needs to be a clear request around what needs to be done.
- The benefits of volunteering need to be sold to business (probably using local examples and champions where there has been success would be a good starting point)
- Explain what difference ESV makes to the voluntary and community sector and their beneficiaries
- Be realistic about the capacity of businesses to support volunteering. Big companies like Bosch can afford to release staff. Small and medium sized businesses (which make up the largest proportion of the local economy) need it to be much less demanding.
- Releasing staff for volunteering is costly especially in the current financial climate. Until such time as there are financial incentives/tax breaks for companies to release their workforces, 'good will' remains the overriding currency.
- Make it easy for businesses to understand what help is needed and provide a range of options to enable them to engage

"Where do businesses go to find out about which good cause needs help? And what help is needed? Even those who are well connected find it difficult. A well publicised one stop shop would be ideal." *Granville Orange, Chair, Worcestershire Ambassadors*

11. ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSIONS

EXTENT OF VOLUNTEERING

Volunteering is an integral part of life in Worcestershire. Throughout this research the enormous contribution volunteers make has been evident. More than a quarter of the organisations in our survey are entirely run by volunteers. Many stated that their organisations and services and simply wouldn't exist without them.

Just under half the adult population of Worcestershire volunteer as individuals providing unpaid help to friends, neighbours and people in their communities. Just over half volunteer through groups, clubs and organisations. Overall levels of volunteering in Worcestershire are not significantly different to national figures (69% Worcestershire compared to 72% nationally). However there are differences in the type of volunteering. Informal volunteering is 15% lower in Worcestershire and this is statistically significant. Formal volunteering is slightly higher.

COMPARISONS WITH OTHER LOCAL AND NATIONAL RESEARCH

We compared our findings with other recent research both in Worcestershire and nationally. National figures are based on the Cabinet Office 'Community Life Survey' (August 2012 – Jan 2013). Worcestershire figures are based on the Worcestershire Viewpoint Survey November 2012.

Type/Source	National Figure Cabinet Office	Worcestershire Viewpoint Survey	This Research
Informal Volunteering	62%	-	47%
Formal Volunteering	44%	54%	52%
Any kind of Volunteering	72%	65%	69%

SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC VALUE

Volunteering plays a vital role in the lives of individuals, organisations and communities. This research provides evidence of its powerful impact. Across all sectors and amongst the general public 95% had positive perceptions.

The main motivation amongst volunteers was to improve things and help people (71% of those in our household survey). This research clearly demonstrates its role in strengthening communities, and improving people's health and wellbeing.

Volunteering also plays a significant role in the local economy not just in terms of people's time and skills resources but also in investing new skills and helping people into employment. For the young, and those worst affected by the economic downturn this is a particularly important motivation and benefit.

STRONGER COMMUNITIES

Volunteering roots people in their communities and creates stronger social networks and a more cohesive society. "Volunteering can provide a 'heart' to the community". Of respondents in our household survey who volunteered:

56% said it helped them feel part of the community

49% said it enabled them to make new friends. (60% of 60+ yrs olds)

27% said it gave them a social life (43% for those under 40)

In our organisation survey:

83% said volunteers provided 'connection with the community'

63% said they 'helped them provide a better service'

IMPROVED WELLBEING

Volunteering also brings benefits in people's health and wellbeing. With an ageing population and strains on health services the need for people to take care of their own and each others' well being has never been greater. In our household survey:

56% said volunteering made them feel good about themselves

30% said it improved their confidence

25% said it improved their health and wellbeing

66 organisations (36% of the survey sample) worked in the fields of health, care, disability and special needs. These organisations alone mobilised over 15000 volunteers.

IMPROVED SKILLS AND EMPLOYABILITY

Volunteering also has an important role in skills and employment development. In the household survey, of respondents aged under 30 who had volunteered:

70% said they'd improved their skills

64% had added valuable experience to their CV

48% went onto further training and education

18% said it had led to paid work

Amongst the organisations:

69% provide training for volunteers

55% provide mentoring/personal support

34% provide career support

THE ECONOMIC VALUE OF VOLUNTEERING

The estimated annual economic value of volunteering in Worcestershire is: £811,656,484

This is based on the sum of calculations for informal and formal volunteering set out below. In both cases economic value has been calculated as follows:

The number of volunteers X average number of hours X average hourly wage

We researched a range of equivalent pay rates, see Appendix 4, and calculated value based the most recent rate used in national government programmes of £11.09 per hour. The base population figure used for adults aged 16 and over in Worcestershire is 472,700 (Census 2011)

ECONOMIC VALUE OF INFORMAL VOLUNTEERING

Based on our general public survey, 47% of the population of Worcestershire were involved in informal volunteering. These people had spent an average of 9 hours informally volunteering in the previous 4 weeks. Annually this amounts to an average of 117 hours a year.

47% of the adult population of Worcestershire = 222,169

222,169 volunteers x 117 hours x £11.09 = £288,270,943

ECONOMIC VALUE OF FORMAL VOLUNTEERING

Our general public survey found 52% of respondents were involved in formal volunteering with groups, clubs and organisations. Survey respondents who volunteered spent an average of 14.77 hours formally volunteering in the previous 4 weeks. This equates to an annual volunteer contribution of 192 hours.

52% of the adult population of Worcestershire = 245,804

245,804 volunteers x 192 x £11.09 = £523,385,541

Note: This figure is also confirmed by the findings of our survey of organisations to within 2%. In this, the average weighted number of volunteers was 150. Based on a population of 3256 organisations with volunteers, suggests there are 488,400 volunteering roles in the county. With volunteers involved in an average of 1.9 organisations, this equates to 257,053 volunteers. As a proportion of the adult population of 472,700 this represents 54%.

"People often aren't aware of the costs involved in managing volunteers and brokering placements. They think volunteers = free."

Whilst it's encouraging that so many volunteers are active and happy to contribute, most volunteering doesn't just happen on its own. There IS a real cost to volunteering.

Publicity, recruitment, placement, training, support and supervision, communications, expenses, administration, health and safety, insurance, vetting and in some cases CRB checking, and management and coordination of volunteer activity all require real resources. In our survey of the 216 organisations with volunteers all but 8 had people in volunteer management or coordination roles. Most of these people are hidden behind the scenes but have a critically important role.

"People with volunteer management responsibilities, who are often volunteers themselves, have a challenging job. They need to be able to inspire people to give their time freely, maintain their motivation, ensure that they match skilled people with relevant roles, and ensure that paid staff and volunteers are able to work well together" *Nick Hurd, MP, Minister for Civil Society (extract from 'Valuing Volunteer Management Skills' (2010), Third Sector Skills/Institute for Volunteering Research)*

Even amongst this relatively small sample of organisations (216) organisations there were 2034 volunteer coordinator/manager roles. Over half these were themselves volunteers (1045) whilst 989 were paid staff. In turn these people supported over 25,000 volunteers. This reflects a ratio of coordinators to volunteers of about 1:13.

Whilst it is difficult to accurately estimate figures (especially as many of these roles are likely to be part time or even short term), crude calculations suggest there could be around 30,000 volunteer coordinator roles in the county.

- ➢ With 52% of the population, volunteering for an average of 1.9 organisations means there could be 467,028 volunteer roles in the county, at a ratio of 1:13 this would mean over 35,000 coordinators.
- ➢ Alternatively, based on an average of 9 coordinators per organisation and 3256 organisations with volunteers would suggest 29,304

More detailed analysis would be needed to provide more accurate estimates but needless to say, based on this research, indications are that there are very substantial numbers of volunteer coordinator/manager roles in the county.

Whilst we didn't specifically explore resourcing, those we spoke to with paid volunteer coordinators tended to fund these roles either through projects (funded by lottery, trusts or public sector contracts) or covered costs as part of their organisation overheads. Many commented on how desperately under resourced and undervalued these roles are.

For organisations a range of tools exist for measuring the value of volunteering and returns on investment. This research revealed there were few using these though one example is St Richard's Hospice where they have calculated volunteering contributes £900k a year

At a strategic county level, despite a whole raft of policy agendas promoting growth in volunteering, and despite the enormous social and economic value it brings, there's very little if any investment of resources. Most public facing volunteer recruitment and brokerage services are significantly under-resourced.

"Volunteers are the most significant factor in maintaining and developing the communities we live in. We believe it is an under resourced service at a societal level. Many local communities survive on the commitment of volunteers and their ability to organise in a small and effective way without much resource, but organising volunteers at a wider society level requires much more significant resource which is not always understood or appreciated." *Organisation Survey respondent*

"The Government wants volunteers to pick up the slack of cut backs to the public services but aren't providing the money to support this epic shift." *Organisation Survey respondent*

1. LACK OF STRATEGIC COORDINATION, DEVELOPMENT AND INVESTMENT

Volunteering is growing and changing across all sectors. Indeed this research showed distinctions between sectors are becoming considerably less defined. Many voluntary and community organisations are taking on public services and engaging in more enterprise activities; public services are expanding into both community and commercial activities; and corporate social responsibility is becoming more embedded in the private sector and with social/community and ethical businesses on the increase. Partnerships and cross sector collaboration are now seen as critical to ensuring effective and positive social and economic change. This concept underpins the strategic policy context in Worcestershire and needs to do so for Volunteering.

As mentioned above, despite a swathe of new public policy with considerable expectation from volunteering, there has been little if anything in the way of investment.

In contrast to many other counties there is also no volunteering strategy. Indeed volunteering is fragmented and uncoordinated. There are pockets of specialist activity e.g. in sports, conservation and mentoring. The general public facing Volunteer Centre services are geographically patchy with little activity in the north and a more active cluster in the south. Public sector volunteering takes place in around 13 fields (e.g. schools, health, libraries, emergency services, sports, conservation, etc) but there is no single access route even where a range of volunteering opportunities exist within one organisation.

This research shows a clear demand both from the general public, from businesses, and from organisations with volunteers for a more coordinated, joined up, countywide approach to volunteering.

2. HIGH DEMAND AND GROWING NEED FOR MORE (AND DIFFERENT) VOLUNTEERING

Future demand for volunteers is huge. Major policy shifts are transforming public service delivery creating a growing expectation for communities to be more responsible, resilient and self supporting. This will require people and communities to be more active in taking responsibility for their services, their health and wellbeing, inclusion and care of the vulnerable and needy, and their environment. This research suggests informal volunteering is 15% lower than the national average. New innovative approaches and interventions are likely to be needed to support growth.

Of the county's estimated 2750 voluntary and community organisations, many are experiencing an increase in demand in a significantly reduced funding environment. Public sector organisations are also looking to increase numbers of volunteers. This research suggests:

This research suggests organisations will need around 77,000 new volunteers in the next 12 months alone.

58% of organisations wanted help with volunteer recruitment

RESPOND TO THE CHANGING DEMOGRAPHICS

The demographic of volunteering is changing. The traditional image of volunteering being about retired people with plenty of time on their hands is outdated. Today people in employment are more likely to volunteer than those who are economically inactive (42% and 34% respectively)[7]. There's a broader engagement across a wider age range and amongst the young there is a growing expectation of giving and volunteering in their communities, especially to improve their education and career prospects.

The recession has created an upsurge in young people, men and more 'professional' skilled people wanting to volunteer. This often comes with a greater expectation to get more from volunteering opportunities beyond altruism (CV development, job prospects, references etc).

50% of organisations in our survey said they want help recruiting young volunteers.

FLEXIBLE VOLUNTEERING/DIFFERENT VOLUNTEERING TO OVERCOME BARRIERS

The way people volunteer is also changing. Working people are 'time poor'. Young professionals are caught up in the pressures of life. Most families have two working parents and increasingly share family responsibilities. Many are more interested (and able) to get involved in quick, short-term, one-off volunteering around specific events or projects. Organisations therefore need to take a more flexible approach to how they promote volunteering and engage people.

"carve up jobs into bite-sized chunks. Job-share volunteer roles" *interviewee*

Volunteering of the future needs to fit better and more flexibly with people's lives. Developing and supporting initiatives that enable people to volunteer as part of their work, study, family and social lives are likely to be popular with many younger people. Making volunteering fun and sociable is an important motivation for middle aged and younger people. This research found

Over half of those under the age of 50 would be interested in volunteering with friends and a third would be interested in family volunteering.

43% of volunteers under the age of 40 said they did so 'to have fun'.

There is significant interest in Employer Supported Volunteering. 1 in 5 of the organisations in our survey said they were engaged with businesses in this kind of scheme. Yet only 1 in 10 of these provided a similar scheme for their own staff.

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[7] Source: Communities and Local Government 2011

63% of employees indicated they would or might volunteer as part of an employer scheme

Only 56% of organisations agreed they were able to recruit volunteers with the skills and experience they need.

When we compared the skills needed by organisations with the types of volunteering members of the public said they were interested in, this revealed some mismatches. For example:

➢ Administration, Governance and Leadership, and ICT skills were all medium to high demand for organisations but had relatively low levels of interest from the public.

➢ Members of the public were most interested in: caring for people/animals; practical skills like gardening, driving etc; and visiting/befriending. These were relatively low demand in terms of formal volunteering with organisations, however they do indicate important potential for growth in informal volunteering.

On order to fill skills gaps, organisations need to think more creatively and sometimes further afield (including online) in order to find the right volunteer with the skills they need. A more targeted strategic approach should be adopted, perhaps whilst also supporting organisations and members of the public to make use of existing resources e.g. REACH, The Media Trust, IT for Communities.

3. UNTAPPED POTENTIAL FOR TECHNOLOGY TO ENABLE MORE AND DIFFERENT VOLUNTEERING

Undoubtedly technology already plays a significant role in volunteering and it's going to be increasingly critical in the future. Currently it used largely to support recruitment; relationship building with volunteers; and access to information, resources and networks. However there is already growth in volunteering itself being conducted online, more online brokering and timebanking; and a move towards more collaborative approaches.

ONLINE RECRUITMENT

The majority of the 8000+ Worcestershire volunteering opportunities on the national online database Do-it are posted up by Volunteer Centres in the county. Equally the Volunteer Centres say the large majority of their enquiries from the general public come via this website (80-90%). Twenty percent of organisations in our survey recruit directly through Do-it though currently these tend to be the larger organisations often with a national body/affiliation although the service is free to those with an income of less than £10k. Those in our focus group reported very positive results. Do-it is well established and well used. This volunteering recruitment resource should be built on and more widely promoted rather than make expensive attempts to create a new online database for Worcestershire.

Overall 57% of organisations recruit via their websites, 6% via other websites 29% via social media. This indicates members of the general public are increasingly accessing volunteer opportunities online. Both our household and organisations survey findings support this. Those with effective websites are getting good results.

"we switched to a more interactive website and as a result have had significantly more volunteers who have come through it."
Attendee from focus group with organisations.

ONLINE VOLUNTEERING

Online volunteering is still at a relatively underdeveloped stage and yet the demand for this is high. Our research showed:

43% would be interested in online volunteering (61% amongst those under 40).

Online volunteering is a growth area. Types of activity include: Administration, event coordination, fundraising, writing and editing; research; project development and management; training and coaching; design; coordination and facilitation; IT development; and consulting.

There's also potential to take advantage of the growth in apps for mobile devices. The Orange App 'Do Some Good' is a good example of this. Whilst apps are there, they are still in their infancy and relatively under-utilised in terms of uptake amongst the wider population.

"We've used time tracking through apps (sports) and texts. The government target was that nationally, 50k would log at least 10+ hours of volunteering. However, only 27K of the 50K signed up actually used the app" *Sport Partnership*

However apps are likely to be a key aspect of volunteering in the future.

23% of those in our household survey said they would be interested in using volunteering apps (43% of those aged under 40 and 52% of those under 20)

SKILLS SHORTAGES
Clearly there are skills shortages within the sector around technology.

38% of organisations wanted training and advice on technology to support volunteering

45% of organisations said they were looking for volunteers with information and communications technology skills.

We identified many examples of volunteering roles focused around technology e.g. Kemp hospice has volunteers raising funds via e-bay, others have volunteers managing databases, websites or social media functions. Whilst the digital divide based on age is closing fast, it remains the case that older people are less comfortable with technology particularly social media and apps related. Organisations in our focus group reported:

 "We're increasingly using technology but it doesn't always work for older people. We still have to send letters but more and more people are switching to e-newsletters which makes life much easier for us"

 "Social media is a great tool especially for young people"

Many of the innovative approaches being piloted within the NESTA Innovation Fund programme involve technology and most have been developed with a view to their scalability/potential roll out to other areas. These and developments around timebanking and reward schemes will be important developments to watch and perhaps replicate.

4. LACK OF SUPPORT AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR DISADVANTAGED AND MARGINALISED TO VOLUNTEER

At a time of economic downturn, cuts in services, and increased unemployment and hardship there's a clear need for communities to be more cohesive and supportive. The very people likely to be hardest hit by the recession and cuts in services (i.e. those who are economically inactive, disabled, already disadvantaged or socially excluded or at risk of becoming so) are also amongst those least likely to volunteer. In some areas it has been recognized that volunteering schemes targeted at particular groups can improve community cohesion e.g. engaging BME groups can reduce prejudice and discrimination and build positive multicultural communities; engaging ex offenders or those at risk of becoming offenders can reduce crime and disorder.

In order for people with more complex and special needs to volunteer many require additional support. Volunteer centres report services refer many clients to them though these tend to need more help and are harder to place.

National research also shows white people are more likely to volunteer than those from BME groups. Around 8% of the county's population are from BME groups. Organisations in our focus groups recommended more should be done to engage Asian communities.

5. POOR PUBLICITY, ACCESS AND AWARENESS OF BENEFITS

There are some real opportunities to engage more people in volunteering but it needs to be made more accessible, attractive and easy. As mentioned previously volunteering in Worcestershire needs to be developed and strategically promoted at a countywide level.

25% of those who already volunteer would like to do more

40% of those who don't volunteer said they'd like to (a further 33% said they might)

While technology plays a critical role, face to face support and services are still important. People who know what they want to do and what they're passionate about go direct to organisations (or the organisations approach them). Those who want to volunteer but don't have connections or clear ideas about where to start, tend to go to Volunteer Centres (mostly via Do-it). In our household survey:

Around 1 in 10 people don't know about any groups that need help, haven't thought about it or say they haven't been asked.

Almost ⅔ were interested in placement and matching services (34% yes, 31% maybe).

Currently the main public facing services are Volunteer Centres though most of these are not located in visible public places and many are only able to open on a part time basis.

Selling the benefits, promoting good practice, championing volunteering, recognising and celebrating volunteering (and volunteer managers/coordinators) and Evidencing the difference volunteers make were raised repeatedly from across sectors and surveys as being critically important to engaging more people in volunteering.

6. LACK OF SUPPORT AND RECOGNITION OF THE IMPORTANCE OF VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT AND BROKERAGE

Volunteer Coordinators need support and training whether they are in large or small organisations and whether they are paid staff or volunteers themselves. Many of these people work on their own in this role with sole responsibility for volunteering.

59% wanted access to information resources on good practice

45 % of organisations wanted training for volunteer coordinators.

Currently there's little connection between organisations on the issue of managing volunteers. Our focus group indicated a huge desire for peer support/engagement/collaboration and sharing of good practice. Comments from research participants included:

"Volunteer Management doesn't get discussed, people do their own thing"

"There's not enough collaboration. It's too parochial."

The limited networking support available from (some) Volunteer Centre networks reach a small proportion of organisations in the county. The largest volunteer centre, Worcester has 140

members. Our focus group with Volunteer Centres reported a decline in organisations sending reps to their Volunteer Management Network meetings.

Further research would be needed to explore and test needs around networks and training. Given the increase in social-care based volunteering with potential risks as well as benefits, and the considerable extent of organisations working in this field suggests this would provide a likely cluster of interest from across sectors.

CONCERNS AND CHALLENGES

Changes in volunteering have also come with a number of concerns and new challenges. These are some of the other key issues raised through our research:

Increase in social care based volunteering opportunities with increased risks and a greater need for professionalism around supporting volunteers e.g. insurance, CRB, best practice, child protection procedures. This is particularly of concern in relation to the rise of 'informal volunteering'.

Influx of people with complex/special needs largely due to the introduction of policies around 'personalization' cuts in social services and promotion of a culture of 'independence'. Volunteer centres find there is little funding available for brokering these kinds of supported volunteering opportunities for people with complex/special needs and often struggle to find appropriate placements. Many organisations working with these beneficiary groups are now setting up volunteering schemes. There are concerns about huge pressures to get people involved in volunteering often without any support or protection mechanisms e.g. liability insurance, health and safety protection, risk assessments and training.

Commissioning Impact – particularly larger organisations (sometimes from outside the area), that have won new contracts to deliver services in Worcestershire with commitments/expectations around volunteer delivered services, looking for volunteer centres to find volunteers for them in large numbers.

Welfare Reforms including Work Programme/Work Together initiatives (via the job centres and private contractors) are creating a drive toward 'compulsory' volunteering which is not necessarily about choice and goes against the ethics of volunteering. "Community service/ volunteering/ conscription- has become blurred and interchangeable… like a punishment"

Job substitution was a concern raised by all the sectors/perspectives involved in the research. In some organisations volunteers are being recruited to fulfil roles left vacant from funding cuts/redundancies. Some Volunteer Centres also reported an increase in private sector organisations wanting volunteers raising ethical issues about replacing jobs/exploiting volunteer labour for commercial gain.

Higher Turnover of Volunteers. Organisations are beginning to accept that as the volunteer base diversifies, it might be more stop/start and people may have less commitment. Whilst there are more professional people coming as volunteers due to redundancies, these people tend to be quick

to get jobs and are more likely to leave. This presents resource issues for organisations as it is not cheap to train up volunteers and many are struggling in the current financial climate.

FINAL CONCLUSIONS

Volunteering is huge in Worcestershire. It is part of the very fabric of society and many people are engaged in some way and positive about it. Whilst traditionally seen as the domain of the Voluntary and Community Sector, volunteering is increasingly significant and widespread in both the public and private sectors. There are some good examples of cross sector partnership approaches in Sports and Conservation but on the whole there is little coordination or collaboration between sectors at a county level. Currently public facing Volunteer Centre services are underfunded, fragmented and geographically patchy. Whilst they provide an important and distinctive role in the volunteering ecology, there appear to be mixed levels of commitment and capacity to work in a more unified way. With significant growth in volunteering expected in the future, there is a clear need for a countywide, cross sector, joined-up approach. Strategic engagement and investment are also crucial.

On the whole organisations are doing a good job of recruiting, training, supporting and recognizing the value of their volunteers. However there is room for improvement, a need to adapt and change for volunteering of the future, and an opportunity to work more collaboratively to share resources, skills and knowledge. Within the county there are many examples of good practice, there are also innovative approached developing nationally providing rich opportunities for learning and improvement. Our research suggests there is great willingness to collaborate, learn and share within and between organisations and sectors.

The ways in which people want to engage in and conduct their volunteering are going to change in future. In part this relates to offering more flexible and varied types of volunteering. It also relates to technology which is going to play an increasingly critical role.

There are new concerns and challenges around volunteering. For example With a move to more social care based volunteering and informal volunteering there's a need for organisations to ensure the quality of training and standards of good practice remain high and alert to the risks as well as benefits of this trend.

In conclusion, it is recommended Worcestershire develops a strategy and action plan based on the findings of this research. Specific recommendations for Worcestershire Voices, for the public sector, and for organisations with volunteers are set out in the next section.

AREAS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

We have tried our best to deliver a comprehensive overview of the current state of volunteering in the county against the research brief. Inevitably it was not possible to speak to all organisations and many were not able to respond within the short timeframe of the project. One of the key gaps in this respect is CSV 'Community Service Volunteers' which operates nationally and on a fairly significant

basis in the county. We were also unable to explore Young People's volunteering as much as we would have liked. We remain unaware of any county involvement in the government's 'National Citizens Service'. With respect to Timebanking we found one scheme in Kidderminster and would have liked to have followed this up further.

Further more detailed data analysis would need to be completed to more accurately estimate the number of volunteer managers/coordinators in the county. In addition it was not possible to complete any real analysis around urban/rural volunteering, though we attracted an appropriate proportion of respondents from rural areas in the Household survey (20%). Also, in our organisation survey we attracted a higher proportion of organisations operating solely rural areas than urban – the large majority worked in both.

Finally, we are aware many other counties around the country have also explored Volunteering and developed a range of strategies and interventions to drive up volunteering in their areas. Some of these are featured in the recommendations and others are listed in Appendix 5 and there are probably many more. We have been unable to assess which strategies have been most effective.

Based on the analysis and findings of this research these are the key recommendations for Worcestershire Voices:

- ➢ Create a high level joined up approach to volunteering

- ➢ Increase volunteering both in breadth and depth of engagement

- ➢ Drive technology adoption as a tool for recruiting, delivering and evidencing the impact of volunteering

- ➢ Improve access to volunteering for disadvantaged and under-represented groups

- ➢ Make volunteering more visible, accessible, valued, and joined up

- ➢ Enable organisations involving volunteers to excel at volunteering

1. CREATE A HIGH LEVEL JOINED UP APPROACH TO VOLUNTEERING

- ➢ Establish a Volunteering Partnership led by senior representatives from the public, private, and voluntary and community sectors.

- ➢ Develop a 3 year countywide cross sector volunteering strategy and action plan. Set out clearly what success would look like. Embed within overall county-wide social and economic development plans.

- ➢ Ensure resources by promoting value, demonstrating need, and evidencing impact to increasing buy-in from across sectors

- ➢ Use this research as a baseline (for organisations and households) and conduct follow up research to monitor change in 3 years time

- ➢ Feedback the key findings of this research to the many people and organisations who took part in the research

Examples: Other areas where this cross sector approach is proving successful include: Camden, Brighton and Hove, Wiltshire, Staffordshire. In these counties organisations working together on volunteering development include: County/district councils, Volunteer Centres, Youth and Faith Bodies, Police Services, NHS and Health Trusts, Universities, Employment and Skills Agencies, Business Boards and Community Partnerships

2. INCREASE VOLUNTEERING BOTH IN BREADTH AND DEPTH OF ENGAGEMENT

➢ Support innovation and new development for both formal and informal volunteering particularly in response to low levels of informal volunteering and identified skills gaps within formal volunteering

➢ Create more varied and flexible types of volunteering

➢ Further develop Employer Supported Volunteering across ALL sectors

➢ Get more young people volunteering e.g. via the university, colleges, school/family projects

Examples: Timebanks are growing all over the UK, with clusters emerging in Birmingham and Gloucestershire. Camden now has 8 including Camden Shares and specialist ones for families; Over 50s, and people with mental health problems. Slivers of time is a tool to enable people to microvolunteer. For organisations it provides flexible and fast access to volunteers. In Sheffield, Event Management Students have set up speed dating events between charities and businesses to recruit Trustees. In Shropshire there have been Dragon's Den approaches. Graduate Internships and projects linking academic departments and students with the voluntary and community sector at University College London Creating Connections Programme. In Merton a scheme has been set up to connect businesses with local charities and community groups.

3. DRIVE TECHNOLOGY ADOPTION AS A TOOL FOR RECRUITING, DELIVERING AND EVIDENCING THE IMPACT OF VOLUNTEERING

➢ Promote and support online ways of recruiting volunteers (building on the national platform Do-it and other online recruitment options (both for individuals and organisations)

➢ Engage organisations using volunteers in training and awareness around effective and emerging innovative web and social media tools and technologies for promoting and marketing volunteer recruitment

➢ Develop pilot projects enabling organisations to explore and share learning on creative new ways to enable people to deliver volunteering activities online

➢ Research, develop and evaluate local projects using technologies for timebanking/sharing

➢ Build knowledge and skills about tools measuring the value and impact of volunteering

Examples: Countywide platforms have been developed for example in Essex and Staffordshire. Community How To "Doing More with Digital" provides a free online service helps community and third sector organisations find digital tools which could help them do more of what they do best, it includes tools for measuring outcomes and impact, managing and recruiting volunteers, communications and many more. Culture 24 is running a national Action Research Project on measuring success online for cultural organisations. The United Nations Volunteers has been facilitating and promoting online volunteering for over a decade – food for thought on the possibilities for doing things differently/remotely. Watch national Innovation in Giving developments.

4. INCREASE ACCESS TO VOLUNTEERING FOR DISADVANTAGED AND UNDER-REPRESENTED GROUPS

Strengthen schemes to enable the county's most marginalised and at risk of exclusion to engage in volunteering including: Young people Not in Education, Employment or Training(NEET); People with Convictions; Unemployed; Disabled/learning disabled; People living in poverty; BME Groups.

- ➢ Enable brokerage services and organisations working with these groups to develop more supported volunteering
- ➢ Provide flexible opportunities to volunteer and increase awareness around volunteering for people on benefits
- ➢ Increase skills and capacity of volunteer coordinators to recruit and support volunteers from disadvantaged groups
- ➢ Target publicity and promotion of volunteering opportunities to under-represented groups and those at risk of exclusion

Examples: In Brighton and Hove they are looking to: develop bespoke brokerage services that best address volunteer needs and aptitudes; provide incentives and resources to organisations to involve more volunteers from groups at risk exclusion; and developing good practice and training in recruitment and support of volunteers with additional support needs. Lambeth and Southwark Council have set up a scheme to encourage BME volunteering in the Arts and Culture sector.

5. MAKE VOLUNTEERING MORE VISIBLE, ACCESSIBLE, VALUED AND JOINED UP

- ➢ Create a countywide volunteering brand and focus which brings together existing local and national networks and services (e.g. volunteer centres, sports, wardens, mentor link; Do-it, Slivers of Time, Reach etc)
- ➢ Change cultural attitudes and understanding of what volunteering is. Promote models good practice through champions in different sectors, communities and case studies.
- ➢ Put volunteering more in the public eye and accessible in public places both physically and online e.g. in libraries, through targeted campaigns at district and county level, through a county website
- ➢ Recognize, value, and celebrate volunteering and volunteer managers/coordinators and their contribution to communities, organisations, and individuals
- ➢ Evidence the difference volunteers make.

Examples: Countywide Volunteering approaches have been developed in many areas including Essex, Shropshire, and Staffordshire. Many also have annual Volunteering awards and celebrations. Volunteering England/NCVO has good 'where volunteering begins' video resources which they encourage others to share. Pop up volunteering has been developed in empty shops Merton and Enfield as a service. Pop up volunteer recruitment services have been run in libraries (Halesworth) and at universities, through CSV's annual 'make a difference day'.

6. ENABLE ORGANISATIONS INVOLVING VOLUNTEERS TO EXCEL AT VOLUNTEERING

- ➢ Create dynamic new networks for sharing best practice amongst volunteer managers. These could include joint approaches to training, recruitment promotion where there is synergy (notably in the health and social care sector) and more generically across themes (e.g. sport, health and social care, criminal justice, environment). Conduct some pilots to test out.

- ➢ Support better management of volunteering e.g. through shared training, mentoring, placements, workplace shadowing for volunteer managers/coordinators and volunteers.

- ➢ Support organisations to measure the impact and value of volunteering

- ➢ Expand research and improvements in practice to include greater variety e.g. Partnerships with research and academic bodies; business engagement, young people, disadvantaged volunteers.

- ➢ Ensure quality support services provide for organisations working locally and countywide

Examples: local examples of networks include Herefordshire and Worcestershire Sports Partnership and Worcestershire Wardens. Volunteer Managers Networks and Forums exist locally and nationally all over the country e.g. Edinburgh; Association of Volunteer Managers . Links with academic research on measuring impact at the Third Sector Research Centre at the University of Birmingham

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE PUBLIC SECTOR

For those working in the public sector at a countywide strategic and decision making level, these are the key recommendations from this research:

- ➢ Engage at a senior level in cross sector strategic work on volunteering.

- ➢ Embed a commitment to volunteering within strategic planning.

- ➢ Invest in supporting growth and development of volunteering.

- ➢ Provide opportunities for staff to volunteer in other organisations (through e.g. ESV programmes).

In addition to maintaining high standards in policy, recruitment, induction, support and training these were some of the recommendations coming out of the research:

➤ Provide a range of volunteering options including flexible, short term, one-off as well as regular and long term opportunities.

➤ Use websites and social media to promote volunteering opportunities and make it easy for people to get in touch and get involved (looking online is the 2nd most likely route into volunteering after word of mouth). Make sure your website is 'mobile friendly'.

➤ Think creatively about how volunteering itself could be delivered online.

➤ Recruit volunteers from amongst beneficiaries/service user groups to create a 'virtuous circle'.

➤ Keep volunteers informed about what's going on and changes ahead. Ensure volunteers are heard e.g. there are volunteer managers/coordinators who can provide effective support and feedback to the organisation on behalf of volunteers; involve and consult them in annual reviews/organisation planning.

➤ Be 'thoughtful' about matching people to roles. Give volunteers a choice in what they do and the option to say 'no'. Don't repeatedly give volunteers dull tasks –'having fun' is a significant motivation and benefit.

➤ Be clear about what's involved and what kind of commitment is required, and manage people's expectations.

➤ Pay volunteers expenses and be clear about this in promotion/recruitment.

➤ Thank and appreciate volunteer in genuine and meaningful ways. Include them in social events and find other personal ways of recognising and valuing volunteers e.g. birthday cards, flowers if ill.

➤ Establish systems to capture data and evaluate the difference volunteering makes in your organisation. Make sure volunteers are aware of the difference they make and provide the evidence.

➤ Create healthy staff/volunteer relationships. Ensure paid staff understand the contribution of volunteers and treat them with respect and appreciation. E.g. suggest senior staff spend time 'on the shop floor' doing the work expected of volunteers

➤ Provide opportunities for staff to volunteer in other organisations (through e.g. ESV programmes).

➤ Recognise, support and invest in your volunteer managers and coordinators.

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'Valuing the Voluntary Sector in Herefordshire and Worcestershire' (2007) Sustain Consultancy and Guidestar, s3.amazonaws.com/zanran_storage/www.comfirst.org.uk/ContentPages/45721688.pdf

'Valuing Worcestershire Volunteers in 2008 and beyond' (2008) Volunteering Sub Group of the Worcestershire Infrastructure Consortium, unavailable online.

National Survey of Charities and Social Enterprises, (2008 and 2010), Overall Report- Worcestershire, Ipsos MORI on behalf of the Office for Civil Society at the Cabinet Office
www.nscsesurvey.com/download/2010/Worcestershire.pdf

Opportunity Vale of Evesham "Shaping Service Delivery in Rural Areas" (2012) Wychavon District Council. www.wychavon.gov.uk/cms/community-and-living/community-strategy-and-lsps/opportunity-vale-of-evesham.aspx

Social Return on Investment with Voluntary and Community Sector Organisations, Valuing what you do, Worcestershire County Council www.laria.gov.uk/laria/aio/865067

Worcestershire 2011 Census First Release (2012) and 'Worcestershire Demographic Report 2005-10' (2011) Worcestershire County Council. www.worcestershire.gov.uk/cms/research-and-intelligence/population.aspx

Worcestershire Viewpoint Survey (Nov 2012) Worcestershire County Council, www.worcestershire.gov.uk/cms/research-and-intelligence/market-research/worcestershire-viewpoint/november-2012-survey.aspx

LOCAL RESEARCH FROM AROUND THE COUNTRY

'Camden's Partnership Volunteering Strategy 2013-16'and their previous strategy 'Making a difference: Camden's Volunteering Strategy 2009-12'

www.volunteercentrecamden.org.uk/data/files/Volunteering_Strategy_2013-16_DRAFTConsultation.pdf

'Volunteering Survey' (Date unconfirmed) Portsmouth City Council www.portsmouth.gov.uk/media/CNS_VolunteeringSurvey-1010.pdf

Valuing the Voluntary Sector, The Economic Impact of Voluntary and Community Organisations in East Sussex, (2011). www.3va.org.uk/sites/default/files/Valuing%20the%20Voluntary%20Sector.pdf

Joining the Dots, Volunteering Strategy for Brighton and Hove

A Volunteering Strategy for Staffordshire and Action Plan 2013-18

Wiltshire's Volunteering Strategy and Action Plan 2011-2014

Mike Ashton, Chief Executive, Hereford and Worcester Chamber of Commerce

Steve Brewster, Director, Hereford and Worcester Sports Partnership, Worcester University

Granville Orange, Worcestershire Ambassadors

John Campion, Lead Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Localism, Worcestershire County Council

Sally Ellison, Chief Officer, Worcester Volunteer Centre

Sue Fry, Director, Midwest Rural Enterprise

Mark Jackson, Chief Executive Officer, St Richard's Hospice

Susie James, Voluntary and Community Sector Coordinator, Worcestershire County Council

Kate Harvey, Chief Executive Officer, Onside Independent Advocacy

Michael Hunter, Chair, Worcestershire Voices

Nick Parker, Executive Manager, Vestia Community Trust

Lorna Pearcey, Coordinator, Worcestershire Voices

Kate Walton, Chief Officer, Pershore Volunteer Centre

Jean Wilson, Founder and CEO, Newhope

Whilst no formal comparative analysis has been conducted against other research about the sector, we are confident that a good cross section of organisations responded to the organisation survey and these are broadly representative of the sector as a whole. Analysis has been conducted by Beneficiary group, area of activity, number of paid staff, urban/rural area of benefit, district location, and annual income.

**Respondent Organisations' Beneficiary Groups**

Beneficiary Group	Percentage
All members of the community/General Public	60.6 %
Children/young people/families	14.4 %
People with a disability/Special needs	11.1 %
Elderly/Older People	9.6 %
Women	1.9 %
Black and Minority Ethnic communities	1.4 %
Animals	1.0 %
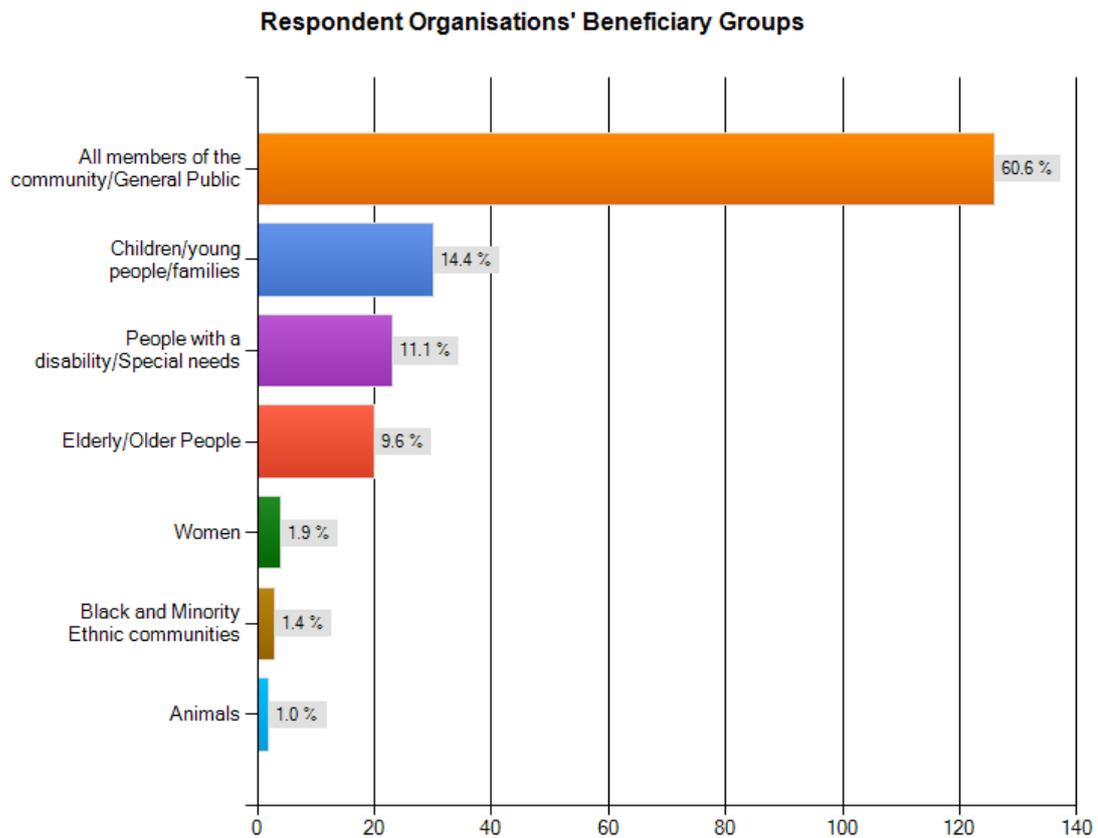
N = 208

Plus 21 other

Respondent Organisations' main areas of activity

Activity	Percentage
Education/Training	32.0 %
General charitable purposes	25.6 %
Disability/Special need	18.3 %
Arts/Culture	17.8 %
Medical/Health/sickness	17.4 %
Sports/Recreation	17.4 %
Environment/Conservation/Heritage	17.4 %
Economic/Community Development/Employment	11.9 %
Community Buildings/Resources	11.9 %
Relief of poverty	8.2 %
Religious activities	7.8 %
Equality and Diversity	7.8 %
Accommodation/Housing	6.8 %
Animals	4.6 %
Overseas Aid/Famine Relief	1.4 %

N=219

Organisations were asked to identify up to 3 main areas of activity.

No's of paid staff in respondent organisations

Number	Percentage
None	27.4 %
1	8.2 %
2	8.7 %
3-5	11.9 %
6-10	10.5 %
11-20	10.0 %
21-30	5.0 %
31-50	3.7 %
51-100	4.1 %
101 - 200	2.7 %
201 - 500	3.7 %
500+	4.1 %

N = 219

105
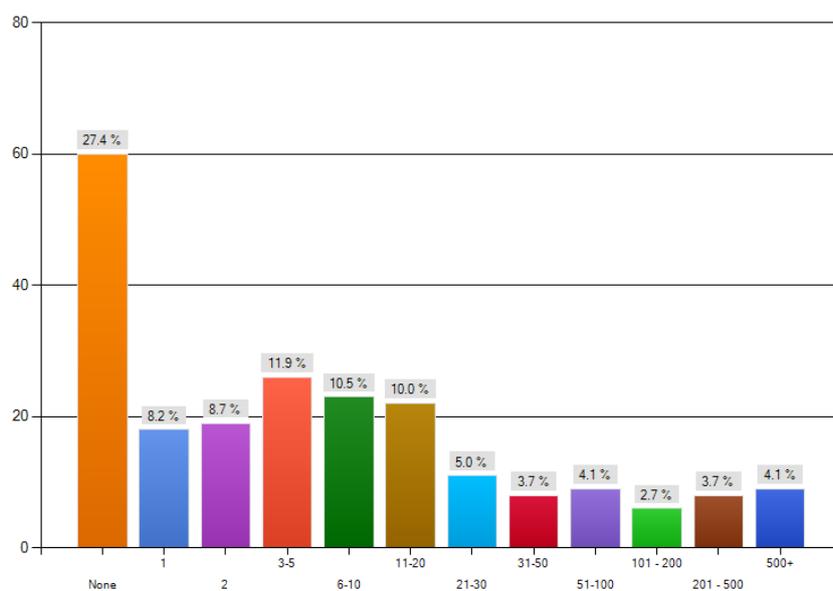
Organisations geographical area of benefit
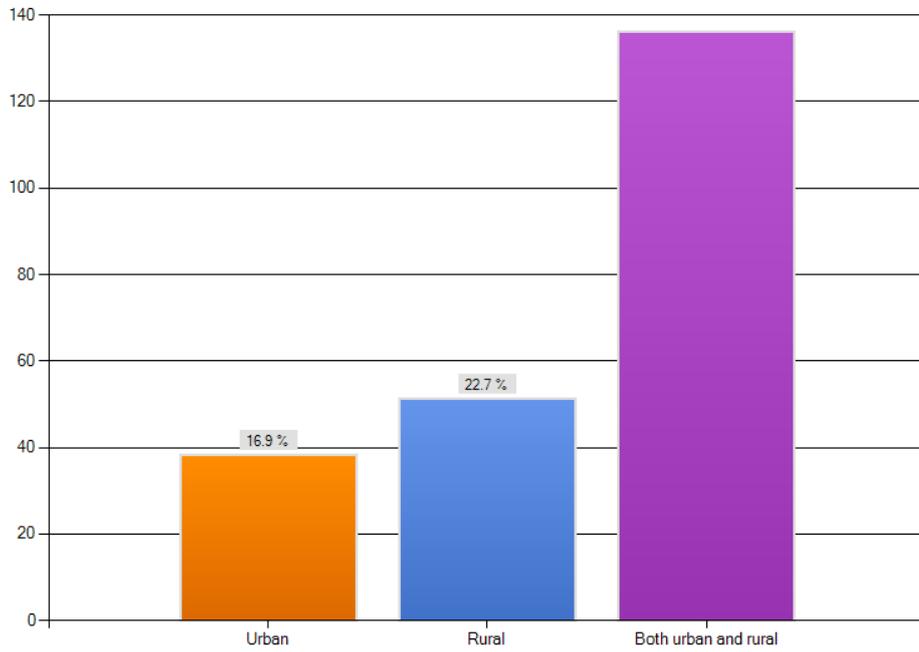
N=218

Organisation Respondents by District
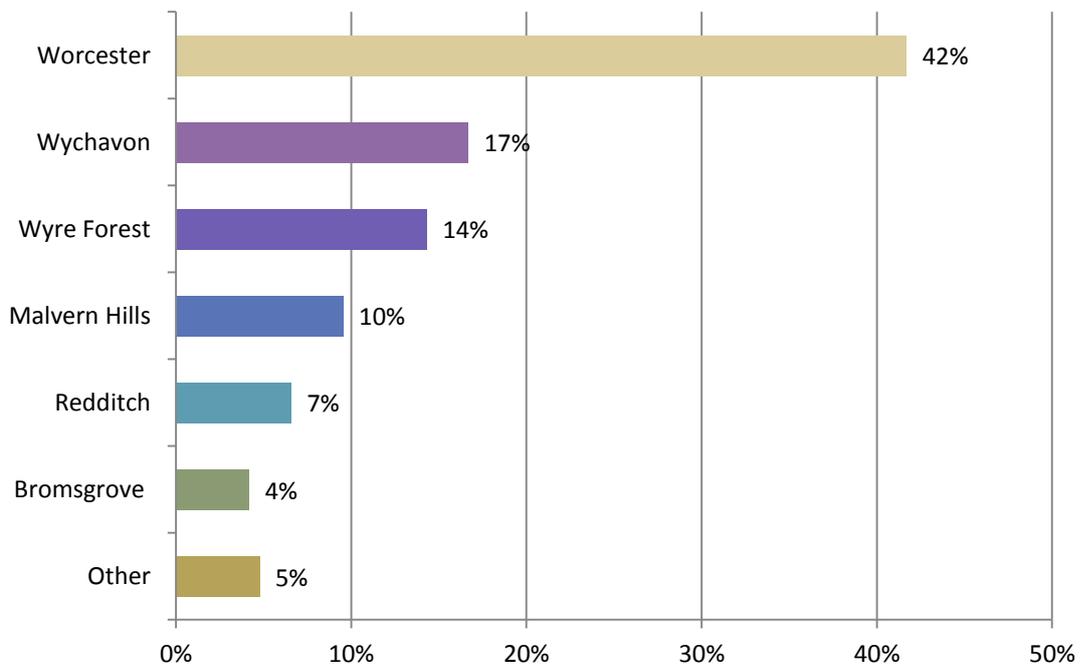
N = 168

Respondent Organisation's approximate annual income

Income	Percentage
Under £1,000	11.0 %
£1,000 - £9,999	15.5 %
£10,000 - £19,999	7.8 %
£20,000 - £49,999	12.3 %
£50,000 - £99,999	13.7 %
£100,000 - £499,999	19.6 %
£500,001 - £1 million	4.1 %
£1million - £5 million	7.3 %
Between £5 million and £10 million	2.3 %
over £10 million	6.4 %
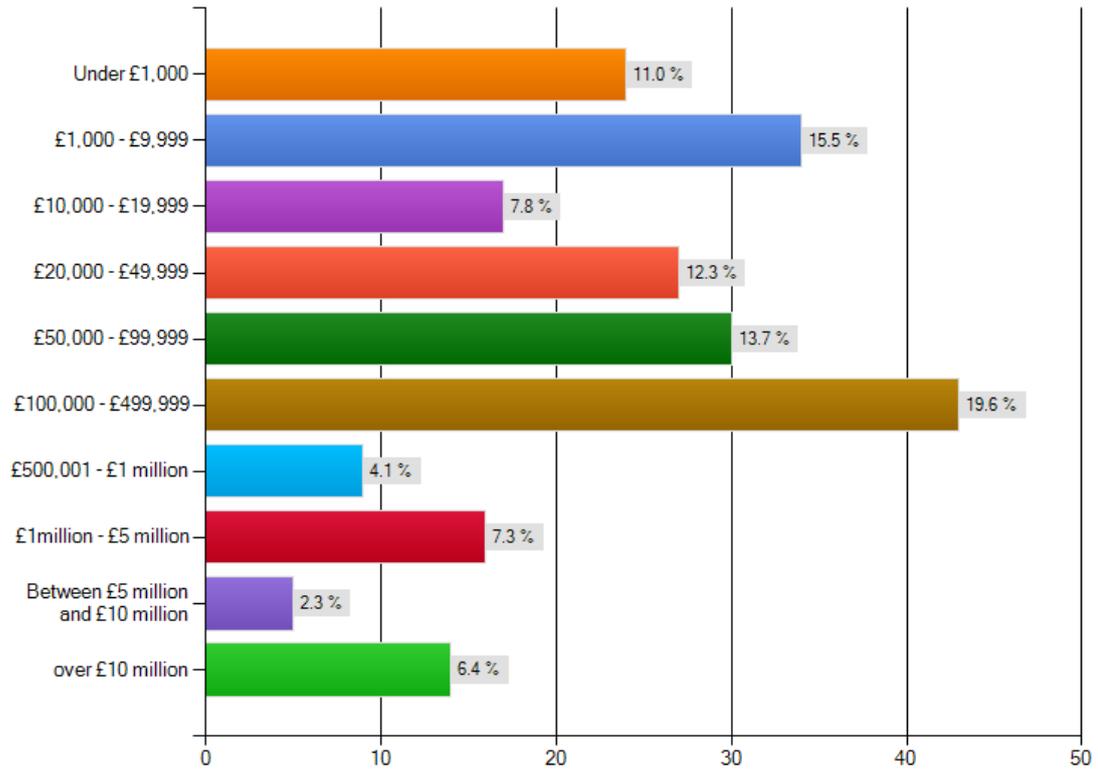
N = 219

RESPONDENTS BY POSTCODE DISTRICT

Respondents by Postcode
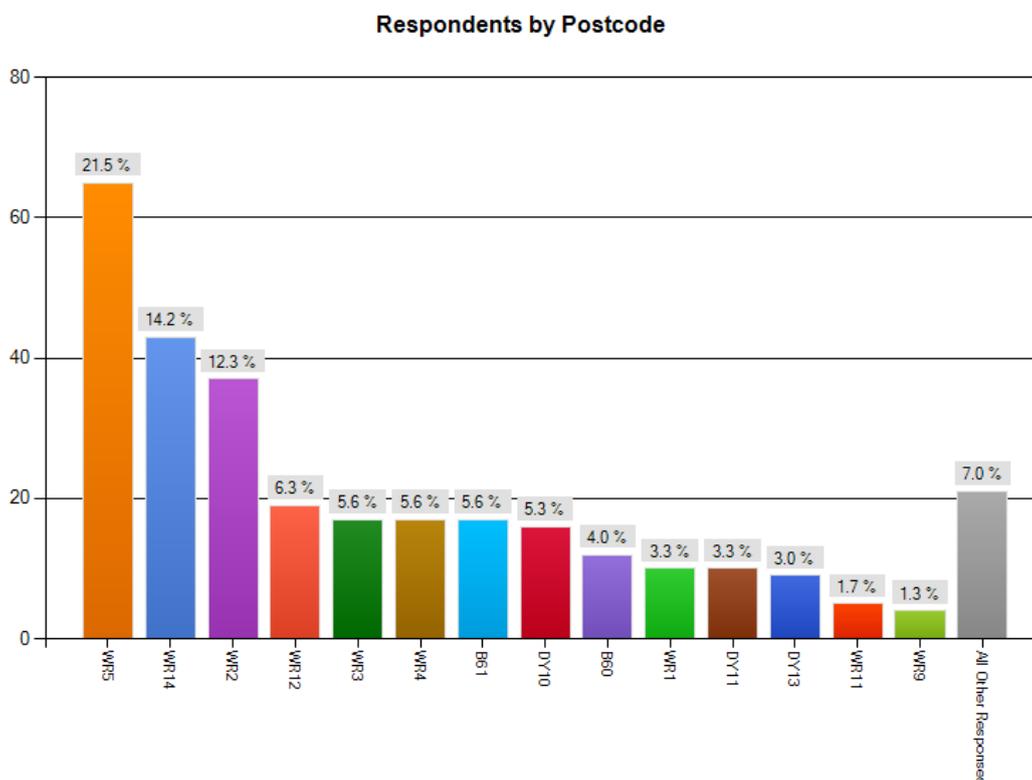
N = 302

Clearly most responses came from within the postcode areas where door-to-door leaflets were dropped and where publicity was distributed, that said, responses did come from a wide range of postal districts. The district with the highest number of responses (WR5) was selected because it includes wards with both the highest and lowest mean household income in the county. Refer to ACORN categories and data at Worcester County Council http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/cms/research-and-intelligence/economy/local-economic-assessment/population-and-communities/acorn-and-income.aspx

GENDER PROFILE

There were an equal number of male and female respondents (149 each) plus 4 respondents who preferred not to say. The population of Worcestershire is 51% female and 49% male. The survey respondents were 50% male and 50% female.

The graph below sets out how representative the research sample was of the county population by age group.

Age Profile of Respondents Compared to Worcestershire Population

N=301
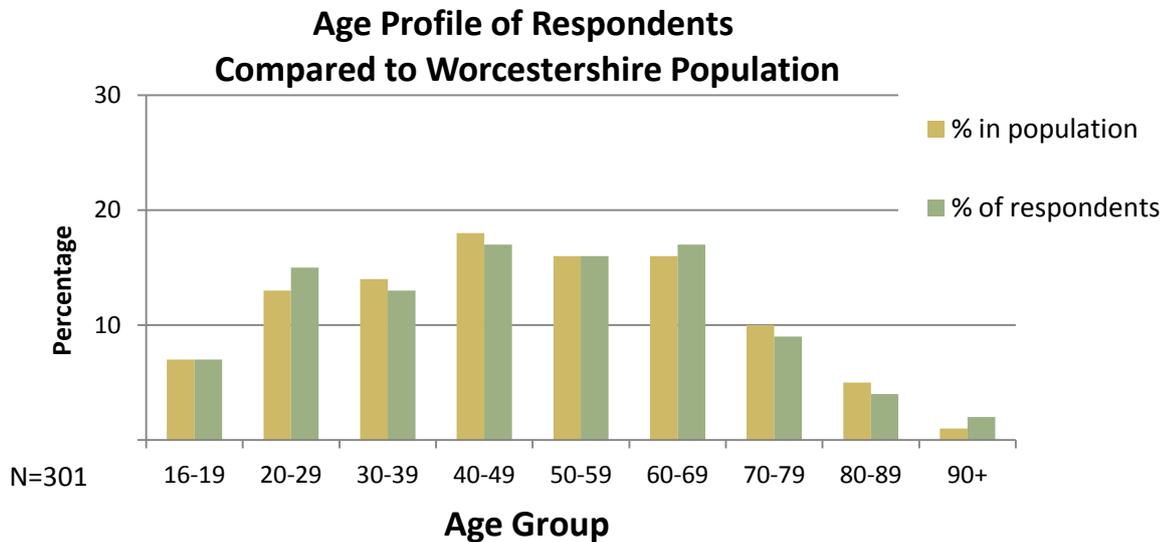
DISABILITY STATUS

According to census data 16.7 % of the Worcestershire population have a disability or limiting long term illness. In the survey sample 13.5% had a disability or limiting long term illness. (Based on 297 respondents to the question).

URBAN/RURALPROFILE OF RESPONDENTS

Geographic Profile of Respondents compared to Worcestershire Population

N=302
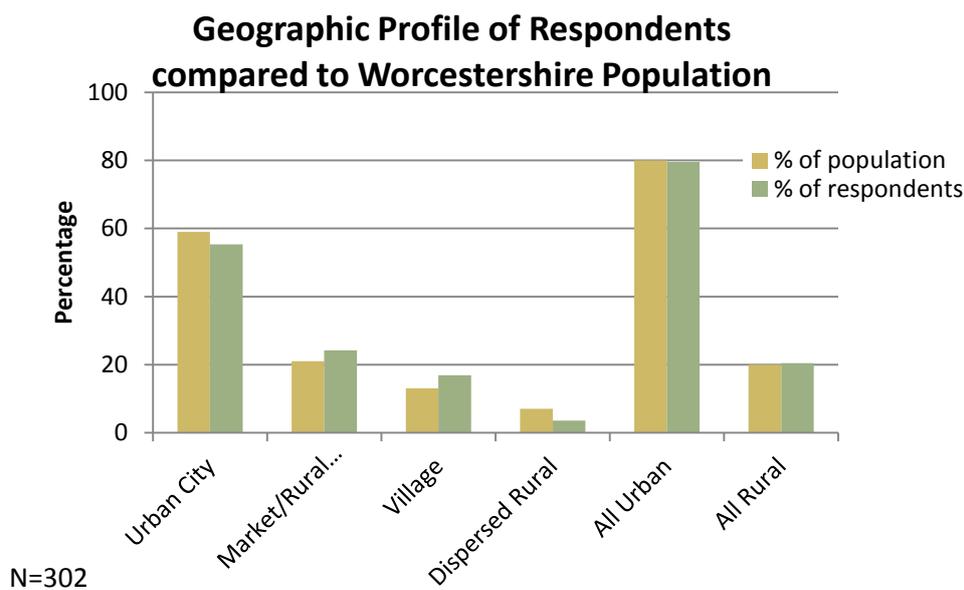
Worcestershire has a predominantly white British/Irish population, 92% of the population with 8% belonging to other white/BME backgrounds. Survey respondents were comprised of 90.2% white British/Irish and 9.8% White other and BME groups including mixed race, Black, Black British, Asian, British Asian and other ethnic groups.

Ethnicity of Respondents compared to Worcestershire Population
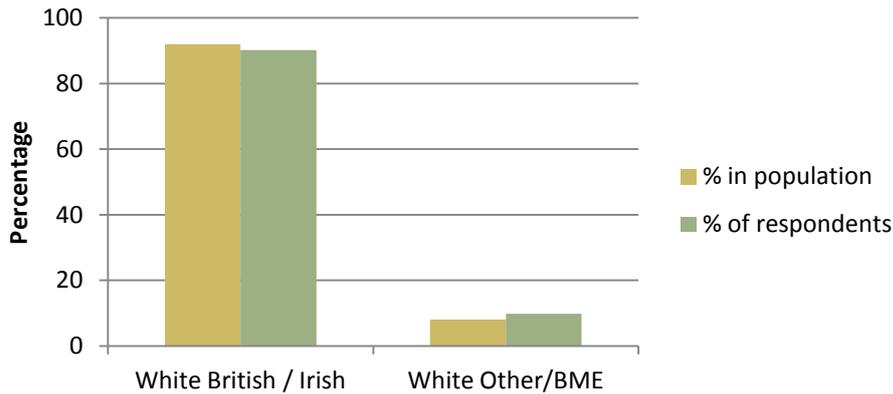
N = 296

EMPLOYMENT STATUS

No comparative analysis has been done with the Worcestershire population by employment status though a good cross section has been achieved. Given the 32% of the Worcestershire population are over 60 the number of retired respondents appears to be broadly representative.
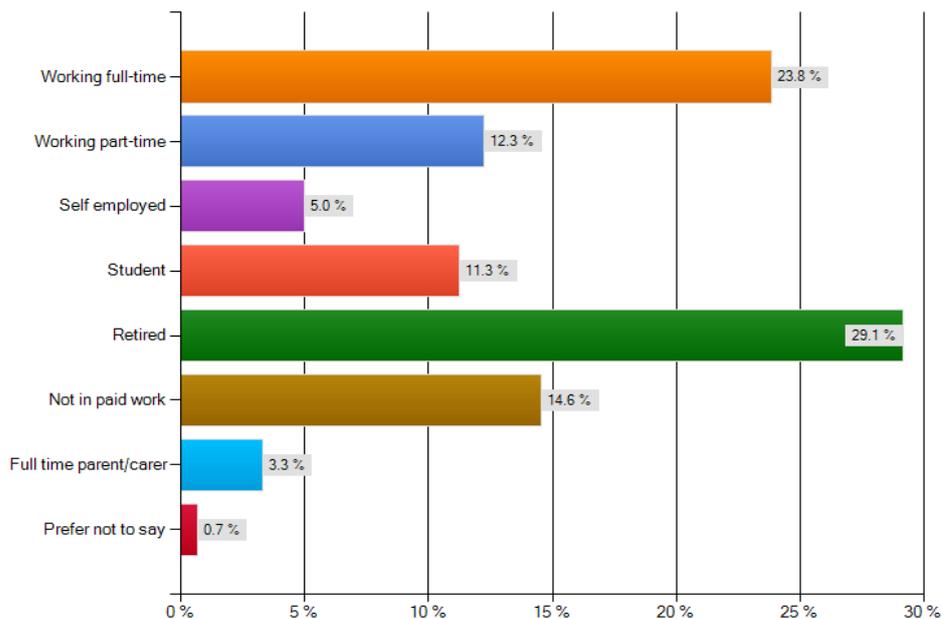
N=302

There were a number of options for calculating the hourly rate for volunteering. The figure agreed upon by Worcestershire Voices Board for formal volunteering was that used nationally by the Community Development Foundation of £11.09 per hour. The figure was provided by Sarah Golden, Head of Research and Customer Insight with confirmation they use this figure for all volunteering (formal and informal). It is also the figure used for match funding volunteer time in the Government's 'Neighbourhood Matched Fund' programme as part of the £150M Local Endowment. http://www.cdf.org.uk/

Reference Source	Hourly Rate
Current UK Government's minimum wage rate for 2012 for over 21s	£6.19
Unskilled volunteer rate of £50 for a 7.2 hr day used by the Arts Council, Heritage Lottery Fund, Countryside Council for Wales	£6.95
Community Development Foundation, National Figure	**£11.09**
Average gross national pay rate (ONS 2008)	£13.90
Semi skilled volunteer day rate of £100 for a 7.2 hr day used by the Arts Council, Heritage Lottery Fund, Countryside Council for Wales	£13.90
Professional volunteer rate of £300 a day for a 7.2 hour day for a 7.2 hr day used by the Arts Council, Heritage Lottery Fund, Countryside Council for Wales	£41.67

Brighton and Hove – Joining the dots. A triple impact volunteering strategy for Brighton and Hove 2010-2015 Cross sector strategy looking to make an impact on individuals, organisations and communities.

Camden – Just launched new 2013-16 strategy following successful 2008-12 strategy implementation. Interesting reading. Available online.

Shropshire – recently developed countywide approach to volunteering. Has run Dragon's Den style events to match businesses with voluntary and community sector organisations.

Darlington –Plans to develop a brokerage database utilising cloud technology for volunteering and personalisation to reduce administrative burden on frontline organisations and improving efficiency, accessibility and administration around the recruitment and selection of individuals.

Gloucestershire –plans to integrate software used for volunteer brokerage and time-banking into one system so that participation in Fair Shares (local time-banking schemes) can be promoted and expanded within the VCS and people will have more choice about how they volunteer in ways that fit with their lifestyles and environment.

Kent – County Council has a charter to support volunteering in the county. They've established an integrated IT platform for online volunteer brokerage http://www.bigsocietyweb.com that enables organisations to access a wide range of volunteer skills on an online/just in time basis – with the aim of increasing the number of volunteers and attracting more young people and professionals. An outreach service will support virtual volunteering, with volunteer centres able to offer more bespoke and specialized matching and sourcing on a paid for basis.

Wiltshire – Volunteering Strategy and Action Plan 2011-2014. A framework for developing volunteering across voluntary, public and private partnerships in the county.

A few areas have explicit plans to involve volunteers more in the delivery of infrastructure support, mostly in advice and volunteer brokerage functions (Bedford, Camden, Devon, and Middlesbrough). Some areas also appear to be willing to expand the traditional boundaries of volunteering to include volunteering opportunities in the public and private sectors.

Other related schemes include:

Sutton's plans to pilot of new Volunteer Corps Management programme.

Hull's plans to develop internship programme.

Plymouth's plans to launch an apprenticeship scheme, which will enable CSOs to access trained Apprentices in: business administration, health and social care, active leisure and learning, hospitality and catering and customer services.

Wakefield plans to establish a cross sector volunteering forum and link volunteering opportunities into tender bids to increase social value.

Merton is both looking to develop relationships via the local Chamber of Commerce. They plan to recruit a Business Engagement Manager and develop a partnership agreement with Merton Chamber of Commerce which will include CSR and volunteering initiatives and create new sources of funding

East Sussex is planning to increase the number of charities and community groups benefiting from skills support from the private sector with reciprocal benefits for local business in terms of continued professional development, training and volunteering opportunities for staff. They are also looking to increase the level of recognition businesses get for participating in this way in order to raise awareness of the scheme.

NATIONAL VOLUNTEERING CONTACTS

Arts & Business	http://artsandbusiness.bitc.org.uk/
Business in the Community	http://www.bitc.org.uk/
Centre for Social Action	https://www.gov.uk/centre-for-social-action
Common Purpose	http://www.commonpurpose.org.uk
Corporate Citizenship	http://www.corporate-citizenship.com/
Do-it	http://www.do-it.org.uk/
Innovation in Giving	http://giving.nesta.org.uk/
Institute for Volunteering Research	http://www.ivr.org.uk/
IT for Communities	http://www.it4communities.org.uk
IVO	http://ivo.org/
Media Trust	http://www.mediatrust.org
Vinspired	http://vinspired.com/
Volunteering England	http://www.volunteering.org.uk/

WORCESTERSHIRE VOLUNTEERING CONTACTS

We recognize there are thousands of organisations, large and small involved in volunteering. These can't all be listed here, however some of the key agencies involved in facilitating volunteering more widely are listed below. This is not an exhaustive list but includes many referenced in this research.

Bromsgrove and Redditch Network	http://www.barn.org.uk/
Chamber of Commerce	http://www.hwchamber.co.uk/
Community Action Wyre Forest	http://www.communityactionwf.org.uk/
Droitwich Spa and Rural Council for Voluntary Service	http://www.droitwichcvs.org.uk/
Event Makers	http://www.eventmakers.org/
Evesham Volunteer Centre	http://www.eveshamvolunteers.org.uk/

Malvern Hills Volunteering http://www.malvernhills-cab.org.uk/MHVol.htm

Mentor Link http://www.mentorlink.org.uk

Midwest and Rural Social Enterprise http://www.midwest-rural.org.uk

Pershore and District Volunteer Centre http://www.pershorevolunteers.org/

Shenstone Group http://www.worcestershirepartnership.org.uk/cms/shenstone-group.aspx

Sports Partnership Herefordshire and Worcestershire http://www.morethansport.com/

The Wednesday Club http://www.wednesdayclub.org.uk

University of Worcester http://www.worcester.ac.uk/journey/work-experience-volunteering.html

Worcester Rotary Club http://rotaryworcester.org/

Worcester Round Table http://www.worcester.roundtable.co.uk

Worcester Volunteer Centre http://www.worcestervolunteercentre.org.uk/

Worcestershire Ambassadors http://www.worcestershireambassadors.com/

Worcestershire County Council VCS Unit
http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/cms/voluntary-and-community-sector.aspx

Worcestershire Voices www.worcestershirevoices.org.uk

Worcestershire Wardens Partnership
http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/cms/countryside/volunteering/worcestershire-wardens.aspx

Contacts

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