Support Staffordshire - State of the Sector

Join Us

2023

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Introduction

Thank you for taking the time to discover more about our local voluntary, community, and social enterprise (VCSE) sector in Staffordshire. Here at Support Staffordshire, we seek to be the voice of the sector with partners, particularly in the local statutory sector, at councils and the NHS, but we can not do this without the knowledge and understanding of our members. So, I also want to thank our members for taking their precious time to complete our census and survey.

The overall picture of the VCSE sector is positive despite the many challenges we face.

The membership of Support Staffordshire continues to grow, though there have also been closures in recent months, which have been driven by post-Covid challenges and fatigue, particularly amongst volunteer-run groups of older generations. Our members continue to deliver the widest possible range of services that you can imagine, supporting all of our varied and diverse communities.

Income has risen but so has the size of the sector, and taking recent inflation into account we can confidently conclude that income is either flat or falling. The sector looks to have shrunk in terms of average size, with more smaller organisations, and fewer middle-sized ones.

This is the first time we have sought to assess income diversification and sustainability. The picture is one of reliance for most organisations on relatively few income sources, and a lack of clarity or predictability about future income. However, this is offset by the fact that most income is from the public, not from the state. And traditionally, fundraising and fee income from the public holds up far better in challenging times than grants from councils, for example.

We have also asked about staff and volunteer recruitment, retention and wellbeing which are all facing strains. Yet, the sector remains resilient, with a renewed and laser like focus upon its purpose and its beneficiaries, not as might be assumed, its own survival per se.

Finally, there is a strong case, based on this data, for a renewed effort to strengthen local relationships with the NHS in particular…

We look forward to sharing and understanding what this data means for the local VCSE sector and acting for and with you to continue to make change as a result.

Garry Jones
Chief Executive

SUPPORT STAFFORDSHIRE

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See the member data behind the charts on each page by clicking on the magnifying glass

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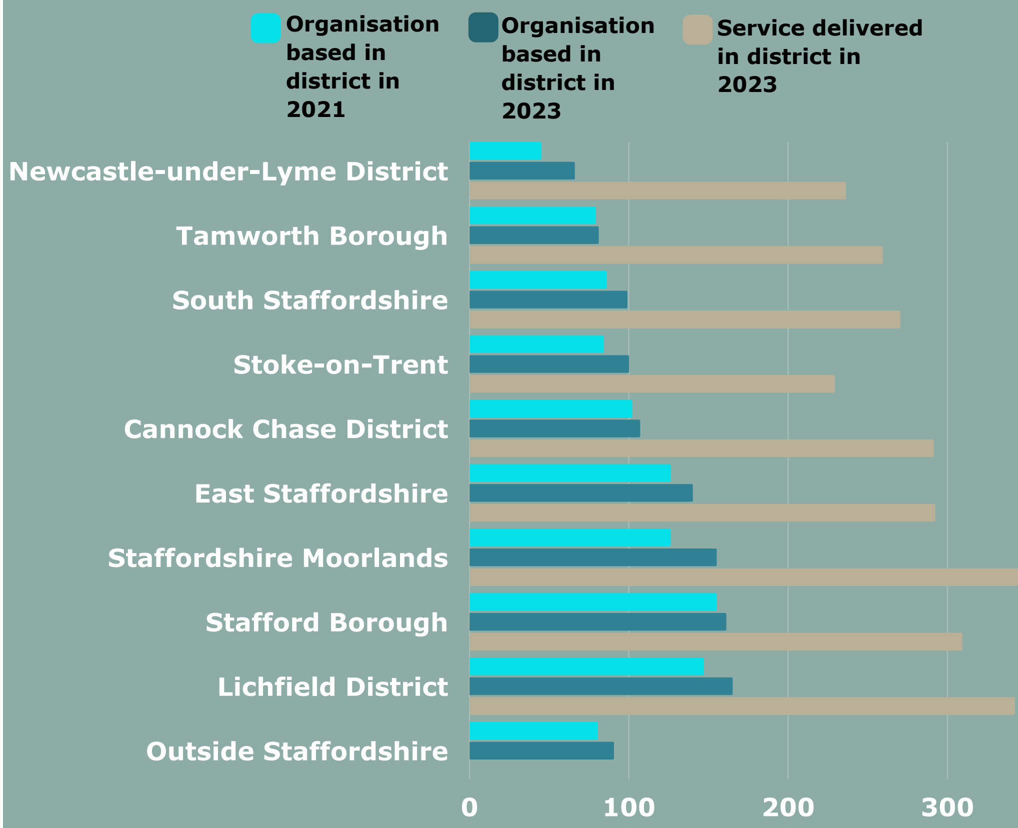
| Member Breakdown by District

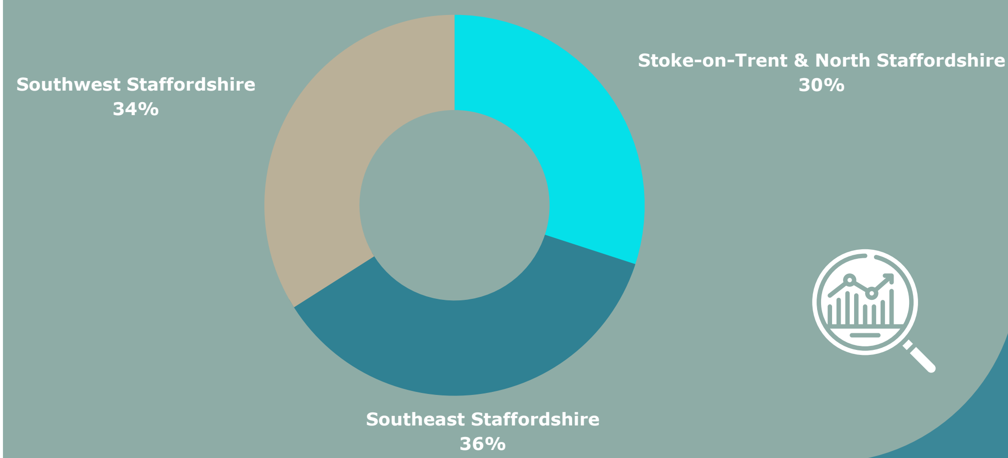
Key Highlights

- **Total membership numbers remain lowest in Newcastle-under-Lyme, Stoke-on-Trent, South Staffordshire and Tamworth**
- **In Newcastle, Stoke and South Staffordshire this is thought to be historical due to other similar organisations operating in the area in the past or currently in the case of VAST**
- **In Tamworth this is thought to be due to the historical newness of the town and a smaller, weaker VCSE sector**
- **The other five areas all have over 100 members based in their area, with the most based in Stafford Borough (161) and Lichfield District (165) which reflects Stafford as the county town, and may be refective of a more sustainably resourced VCSE sector in Lichfield**

We have seen particularly strong growth in member numbers based in Newcastle-under-Lyme and Staffordshire Moorlands.



Percentage of Members based in Areas



Services delivered are more equitable across the geography, with all places having more than 220 services, ranging from 229 to 344. The most being in Staffordshire Moorlands (344) and Lichfield District (342) - again this may correspond to sustained investment in the sector in these districts

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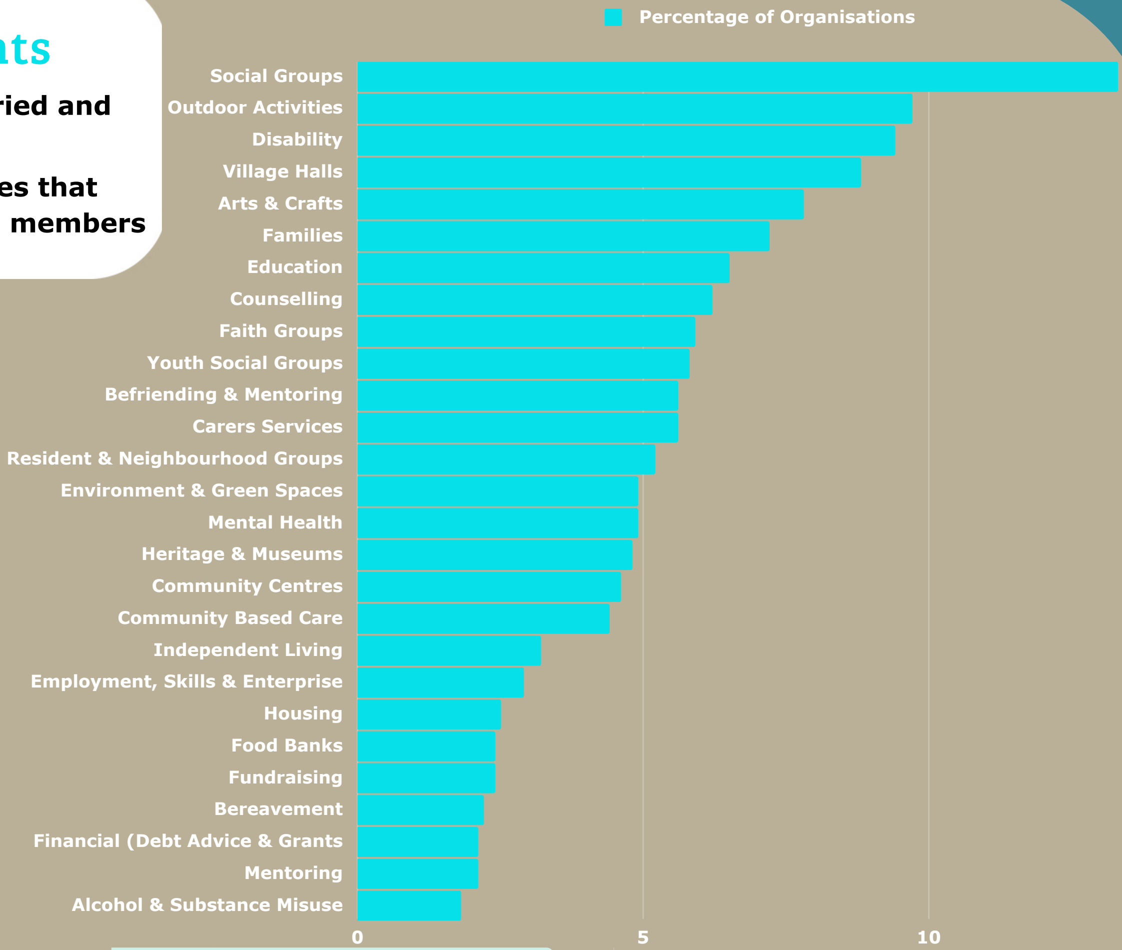
| Member Breakdown by Service Provided

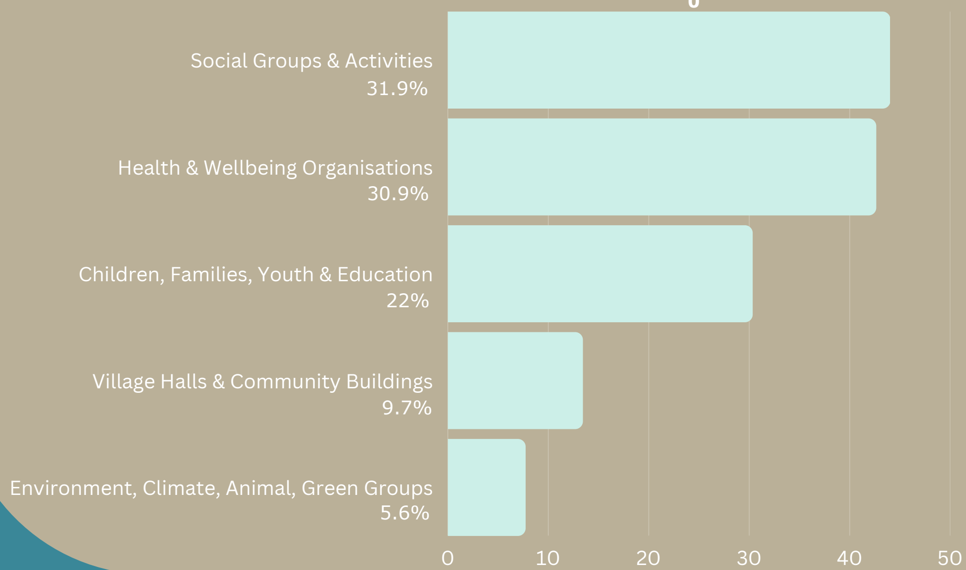
Key Highlights

- **Services are very varied and diverse**
- **We have 27 categories that each hold at least 20 members**

1164

Total members





Percentage of Organisations by Broader Thematic Types*

*not mutually exclusive

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| Beneficiary Type

Key Highlights

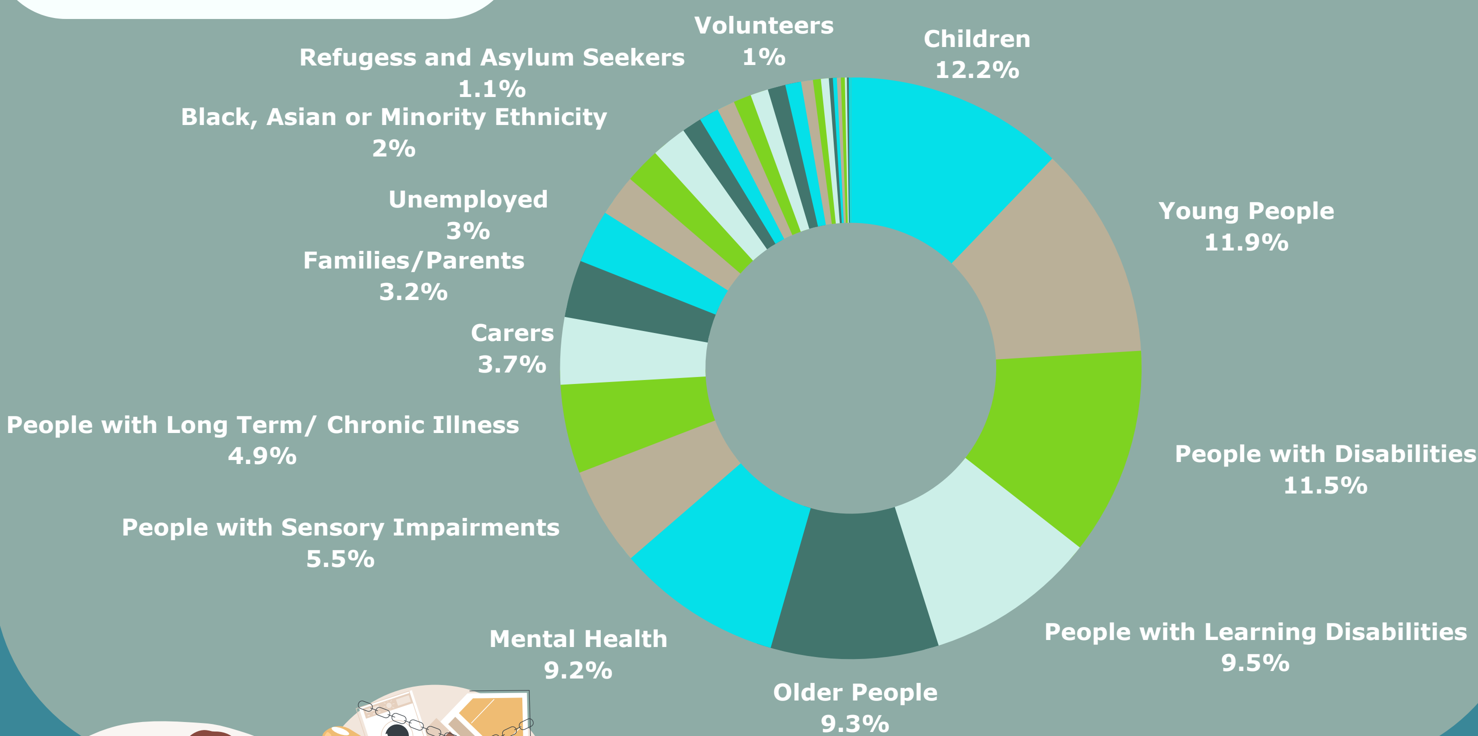
Our Members top 6 specific beneficiary types (all having more than 10% of our members supporting them) are:

- **Children**
- **Young People**
- **People with Disabilities**
- **People with Learning Disabilities**
- **Older People**
- **People with Mental Health needs**

729

Member organisations say they support all client groups

Members with a beneficiary type for categories with at least 10 member organisations



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| Number of Beneficiaries

Key Highlights

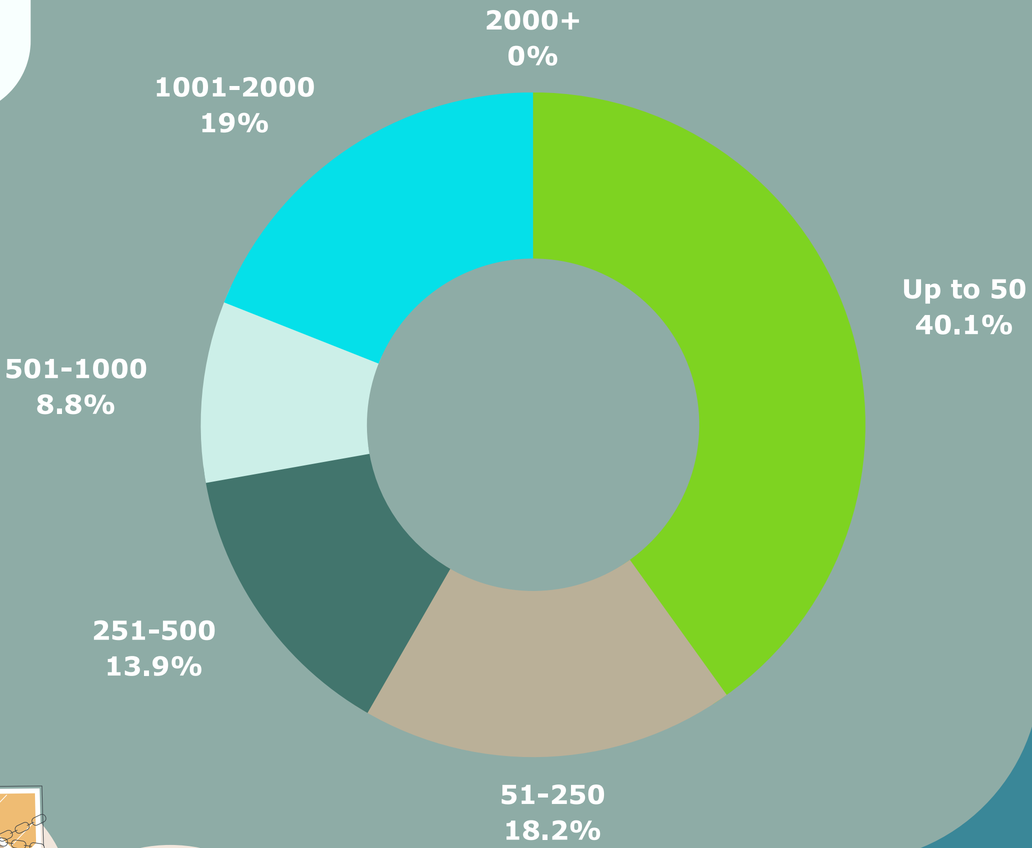
- **40% of the sector works with a beneficiary group of under 50 people. This has grown since 2021**
- **18% of the sector works with 50 to 250 beneficiaries. This has fallen since 2021**
- **42% of the sector work with over 250 beneficiaries. This is about the same as 2021**

511,905

TOTAL estimated LOCAL sector beneficiaries based on SuS membership only.*

This is a small reduction in beneficiaries compared to 2021 figures.†

Percentage Breakdown of VCSE Organisations showing 'Number of Beneficiaries' in Bands



***The total number of beneficiaries does not take account of overlapping beneficiaries of more than one organisation which is likely (sample size n=137)**

†Please note we currently don't hold any data on organisations working with more than 2,000 beneficiaries (due to how we collect data having changed), and this is likely to have skewed our reported figures.

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| Total Income of Local VCSE Sector

Key Highlights

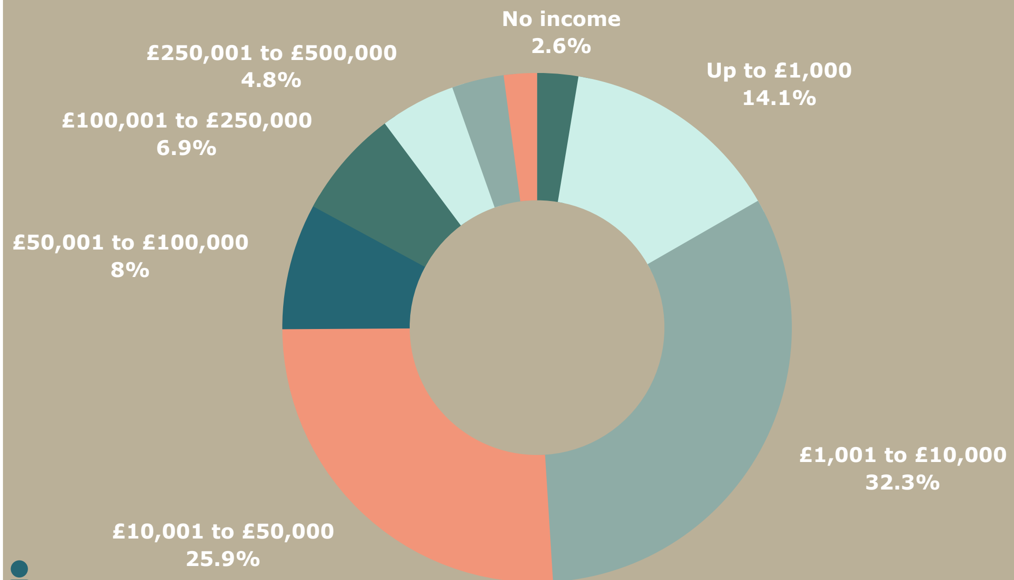
- **17% have an income of £1,000 or less**
  This is the same as 2021
- **49% of organisations have income of £10k or less**
  This has increased by 2% since 2021
- **34% have an income between £10k and £100k**
  This is the same as 2021
- **15% have an income of between £100k and £1M**
  This has decreased by 3% pts since 2021
- **Only 2% have an income of £1 million or more**
  This is the same as 2021

£126,648,017

TOTAL estimated LOCAL sector turnover based on Support Staffordshire membership only and not including National/Regional Charities with income over £500k (sample size n=725)

This is an overall 12.5% rise in reported total turnover. This has happened at a time when total numbers of members has increased by 13%, so it represents a small decrease in the turnover of the average organisation.

Percentage Breakdown of VCSE Organisations showing 'Income' in Bands



Analysis:
There looks to have been an increase in organisations with smaller turnovers and a decrease in organisations with larger turnovers - it is not possible to say if this an actual change of organisations in each category since 2021 or shrinkage in size of the same organisations; it may be a bit of both. The number of middle sized organisations are about the same.

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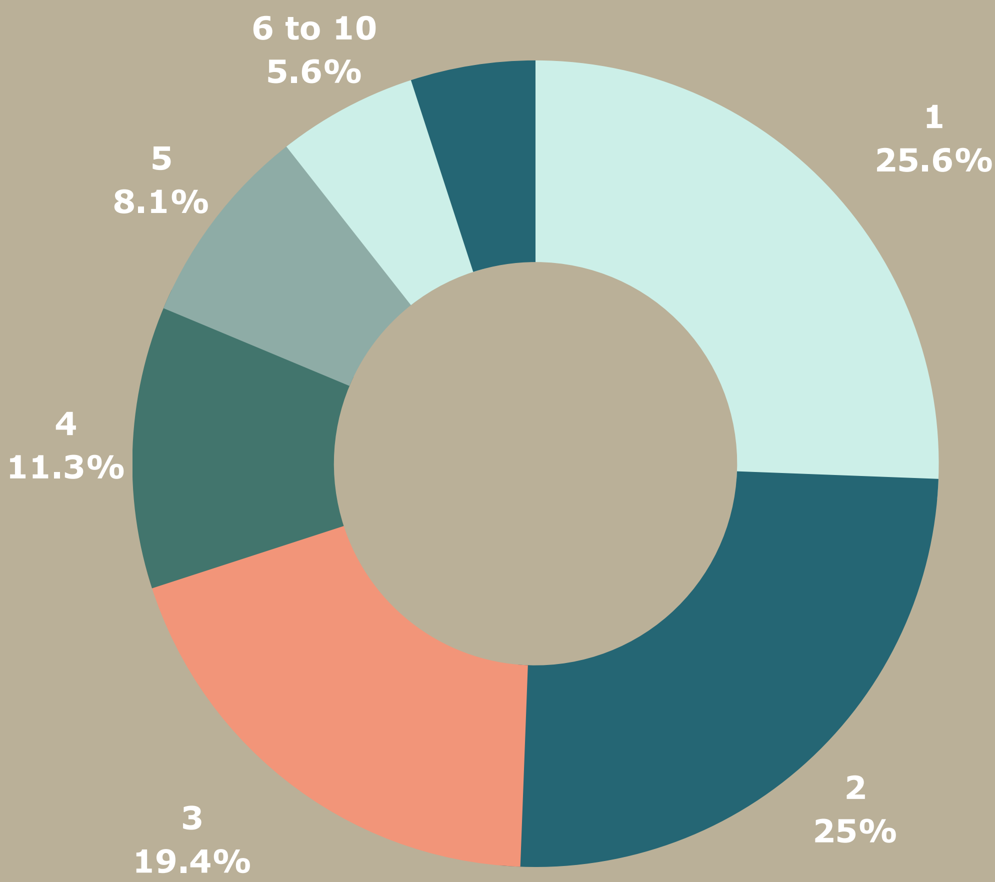
| Number of Income Sources for each Member Organisation

Key Highlights

- **A quarter of members have only one source of income**
- **A further quarter have just two sources of income**
- **A further fifth of members have just three sources of income**
- **This means 70% of members rely on three or fewer sources of income**

Percentage of Members by Number of Income Sources



Analysis:
Although a new question with no 2021 comparison; the dependence on a limited number of income sources by much of the sector is a concern

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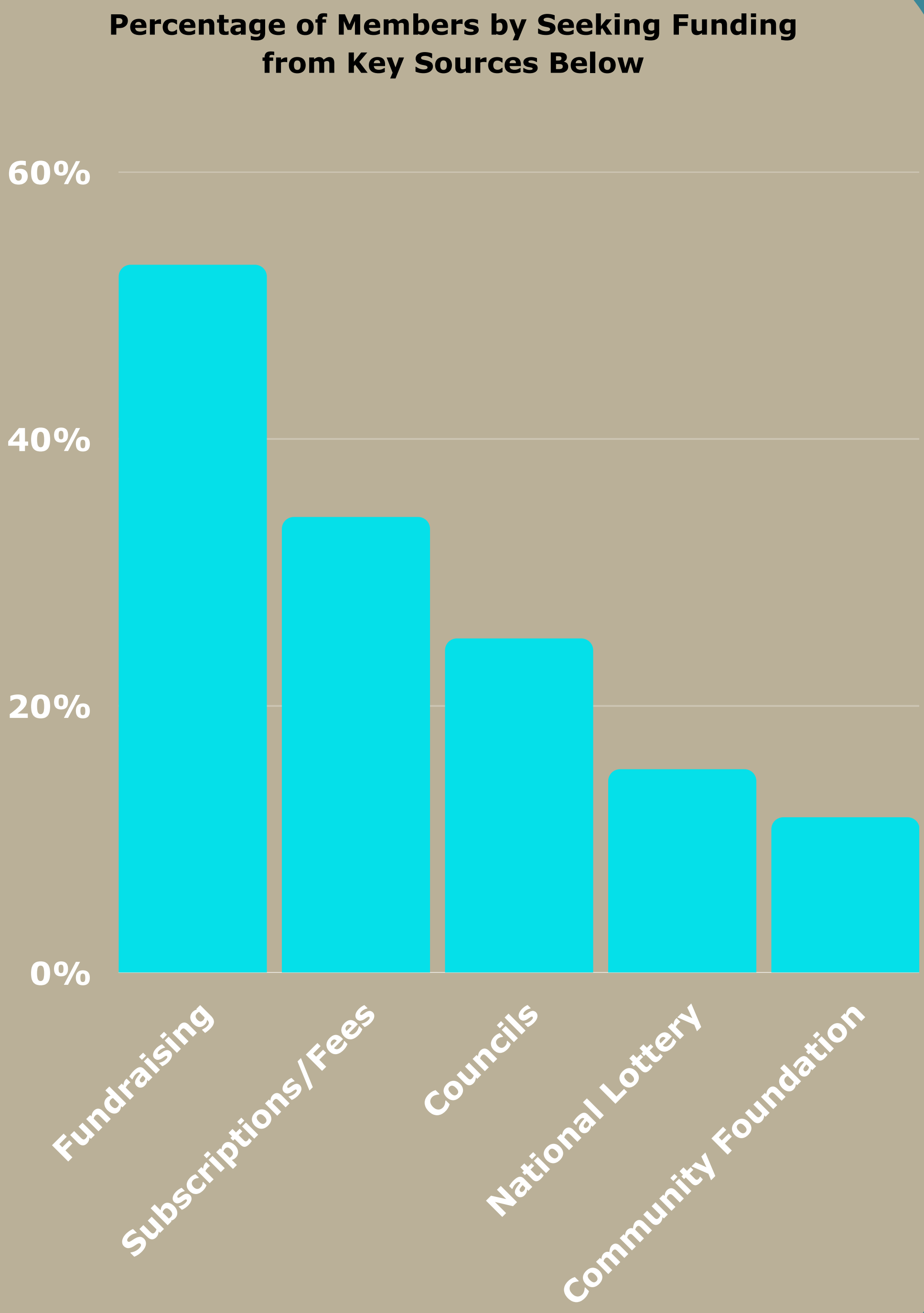
| Types of Income Sources

Key Highlights

- Over ½ of members seek income through fundraising
- A third generate income from fees or subscriptions
- ¼ look to local authorities for income
- 15% seek income from one or more National Lottery funders
- A tenth look for funds from the local Community Foundation

Analysis:

Perhaps contrary to common opinion, more of the sector seeks funding from the general public through fundraising or fees than via local councils or major trusts and foundations



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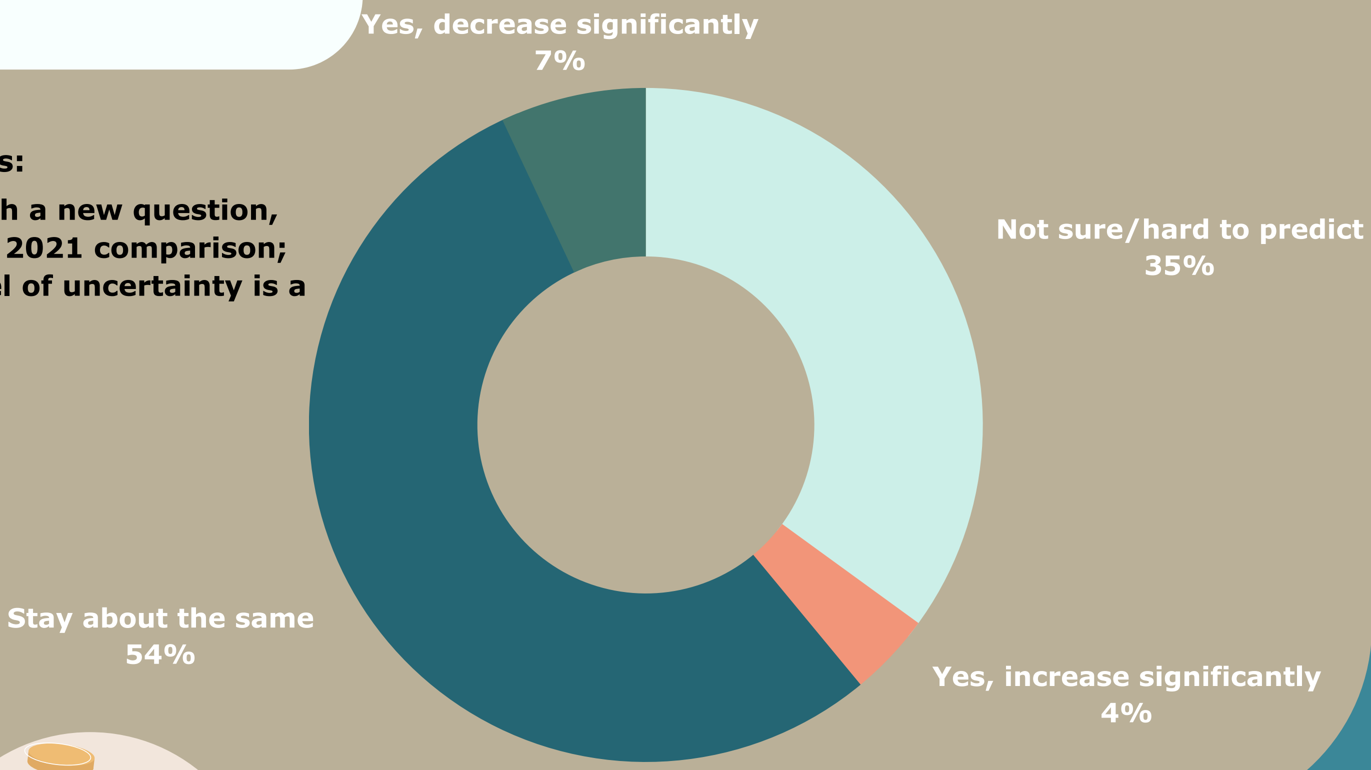
| Expected Income Changes

Key Highlights

- One third could not predict their income change 12 months ahead
- Over half expected income to remain about the same
- Just 11% predicted a significant gain or loss of income

Do you expect your income to change in the next 12 months?



Analysis:

Although a new question, with no 2021 comparison; the level of uncertainty is a concern

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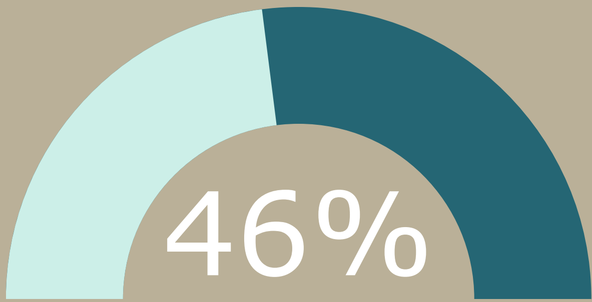
| Financial Reserves of Member Organisations

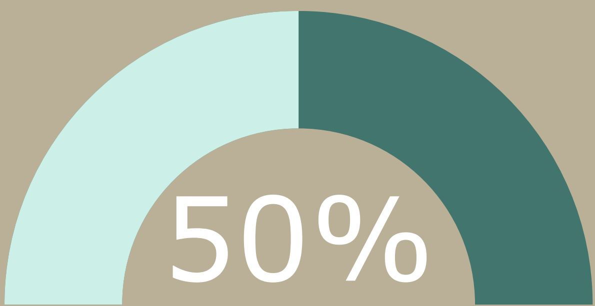
Key Highlights

- **46% of members had used reserves in the past 12 months**
- **50% expect to use them in the coming 12 months**
- **30% expect their reserves to drop below a healthy level in 12 months time**

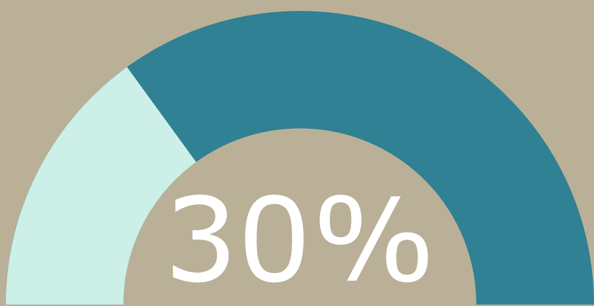
Have you had to use reserves in the last 12 months?



Do you expect to use reserves in the next 12 months?



Do you expect to have a healthy remaining level of reserves in 12 months times?



Analysis:

This is a new area of enquiry but results do raise concerns

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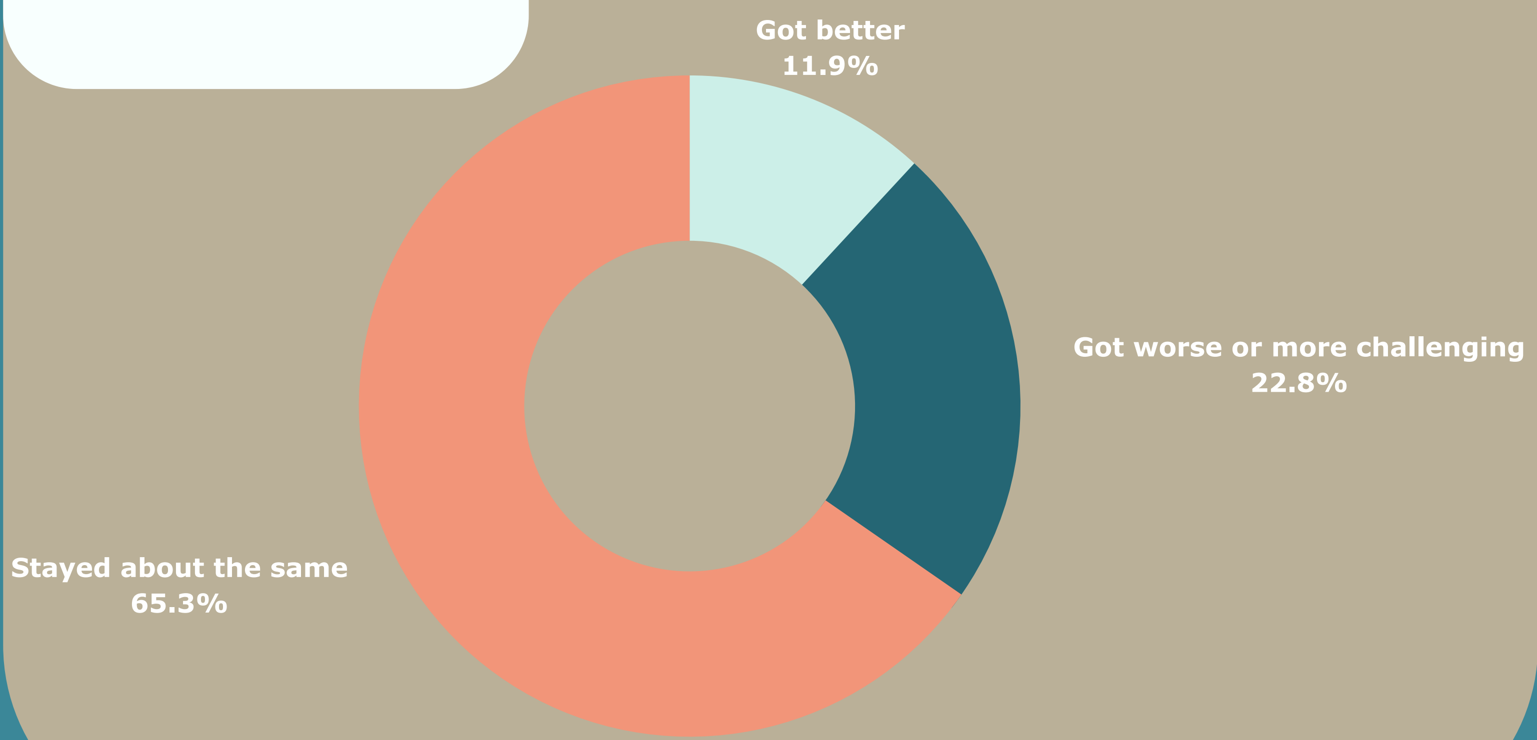
| Funding Relationships

Key Highlights

- **Two thirds of members said relationships with funders had stayed about the same**
- **Over one fifth reported funder relationships as more challenging or having gotten worse**

"Bequests & donations remain about the same as previous years but fundraising has been more challenging as has the ability to raise funds from other Trusts and charities."

Have your relationships with funders/investors changed?



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| Recruitment of Staff & Volunteers

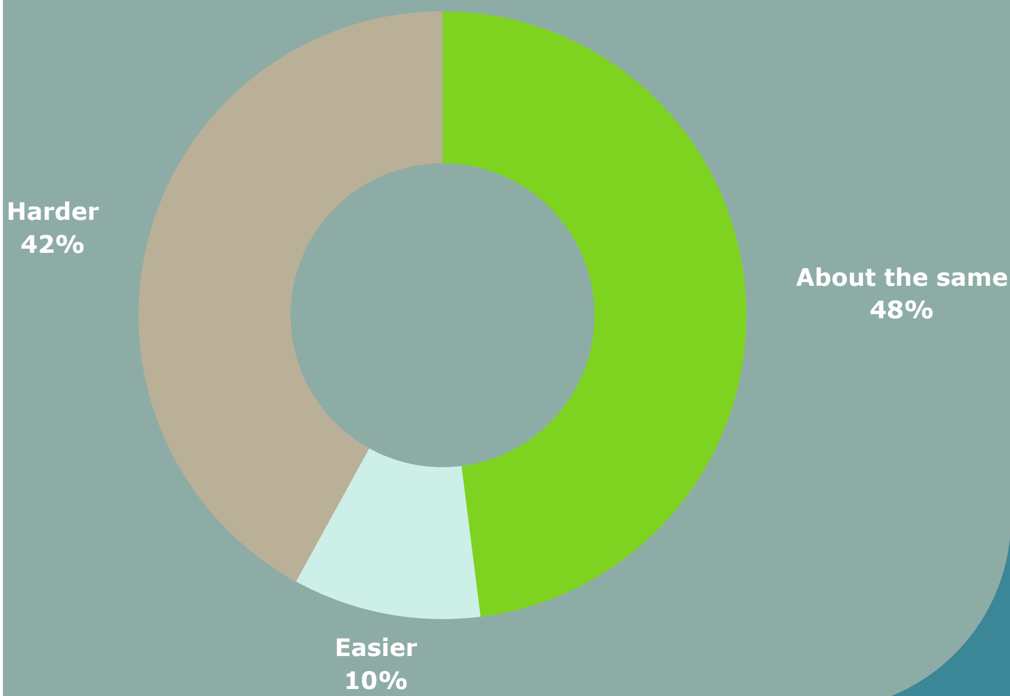
Key Highlights

- **43% of members said they were finding staff recruitment and retention harder than they did before**
- **42% said they were finding volunteer recruitment and retention harder than before**
- **35% said they were finding trustee recruitment & retention harder than before**
- **A small but statistically significant number said they were finding volunteer recruitment easier (10%), suggesting some organisations have benefitted from either positive publicity or changes to ways of recruiting/working during the pandemic**

54%

of members said they planned to use more volunteers in the next 12 months. And nobody said they planned to use fewer.

How are you finding general volunteer recruitment and retention?



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| Wellbeing

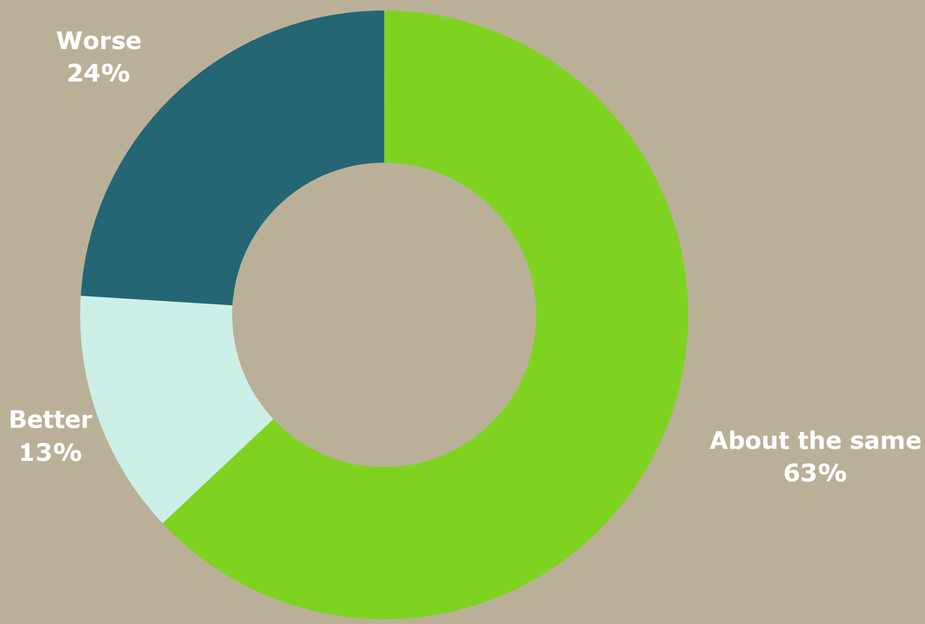
Key Highlights

- **Almost two thirds of members reported staff and/or volunteer wellbeing as about the same nowadays, with a quarter saying that wellbeing was worse, and 13% saying it was better**

- **The most commonly cited challenges were the impact of the cost of living and also ageing volunteers**

"We have a resilient team - small number of staff and lots of volunteers - who are coping well with a significant increase in demand for our service"

How do you think overall staff and volunteer wellbeing is nowadays?



"Cost of living is affecting peoples ability to volunteer spare hours"

Analysis:

Results on wellbeing are encouraging showing the resilience of the VCSE sector

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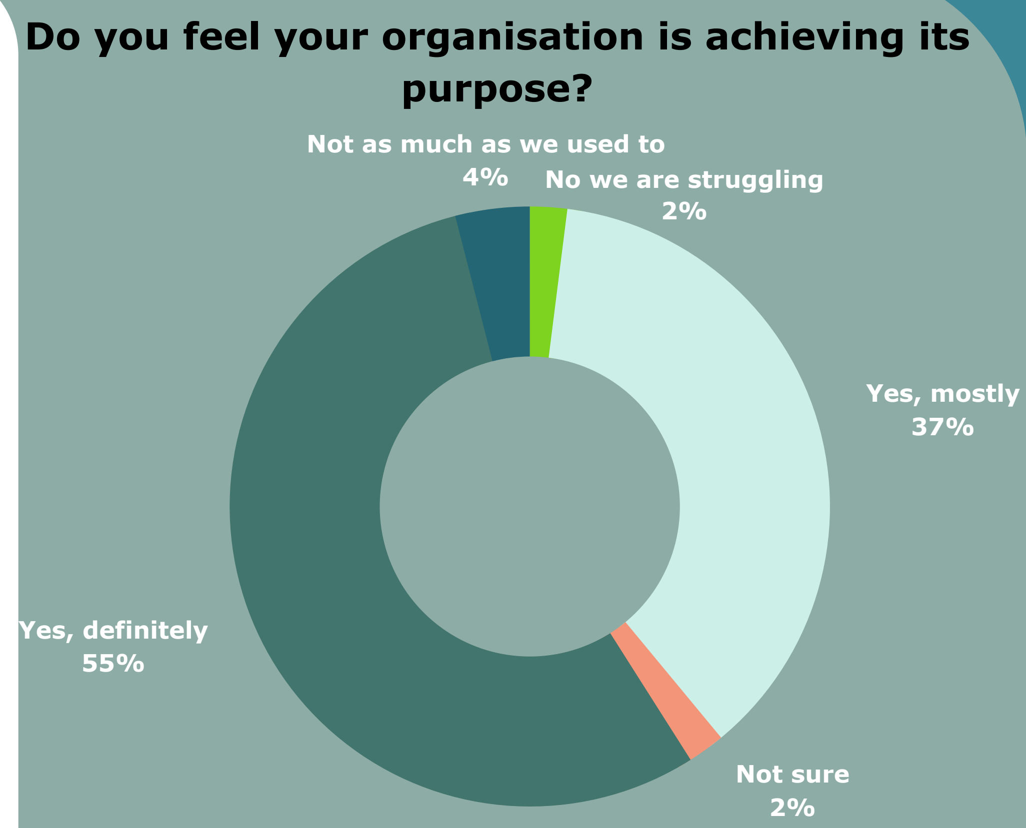
| Purpose & Future

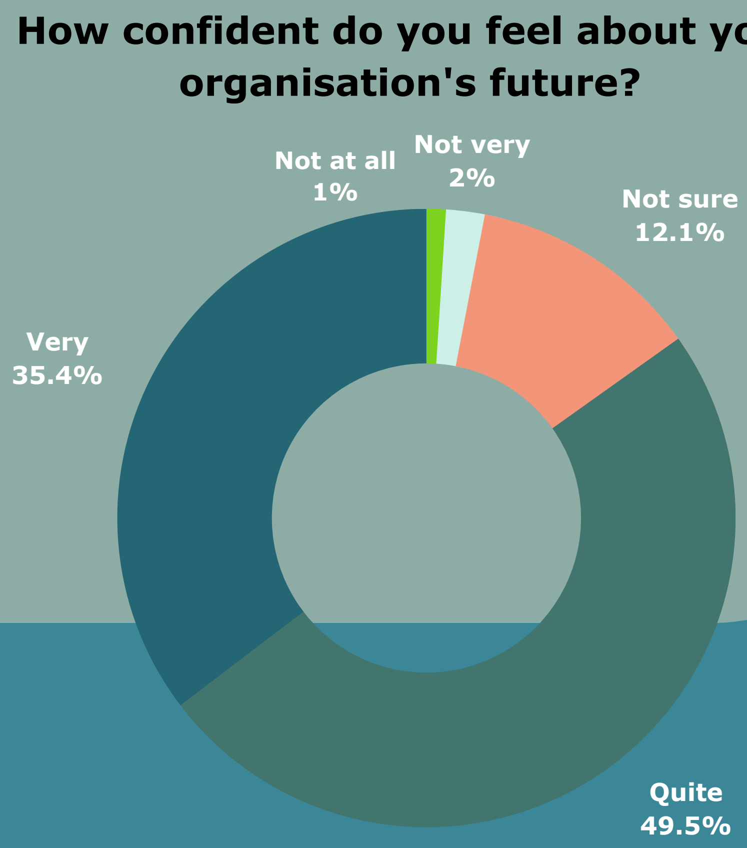
Key Highlights

- Over half of members stated that they definitely felt they were achieving their purpose; with a further third saying they were mostly achieving their purpose; just 8% were not able to say yes to this question

- Half of members were 'quite' confident about the Future and a further third 'very' confident; just 15% were not able to answer this question positively, and only one respondent said they expected to close in the next 12 months

Analysis:
Despite the financial and personal challenges, VCSE's remain confident and focused on their purpose





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| Specific Action Questions

Key Highlights

- Half of all members said they were taking specific actions on the Cost of Living Crisis
- One quarter were taking specific actions on Equality & Inclusion
- 15% were taking specific actions on supporting emergencies in the NHS or social care
- 10% were taking specific actions on Climate Emergency

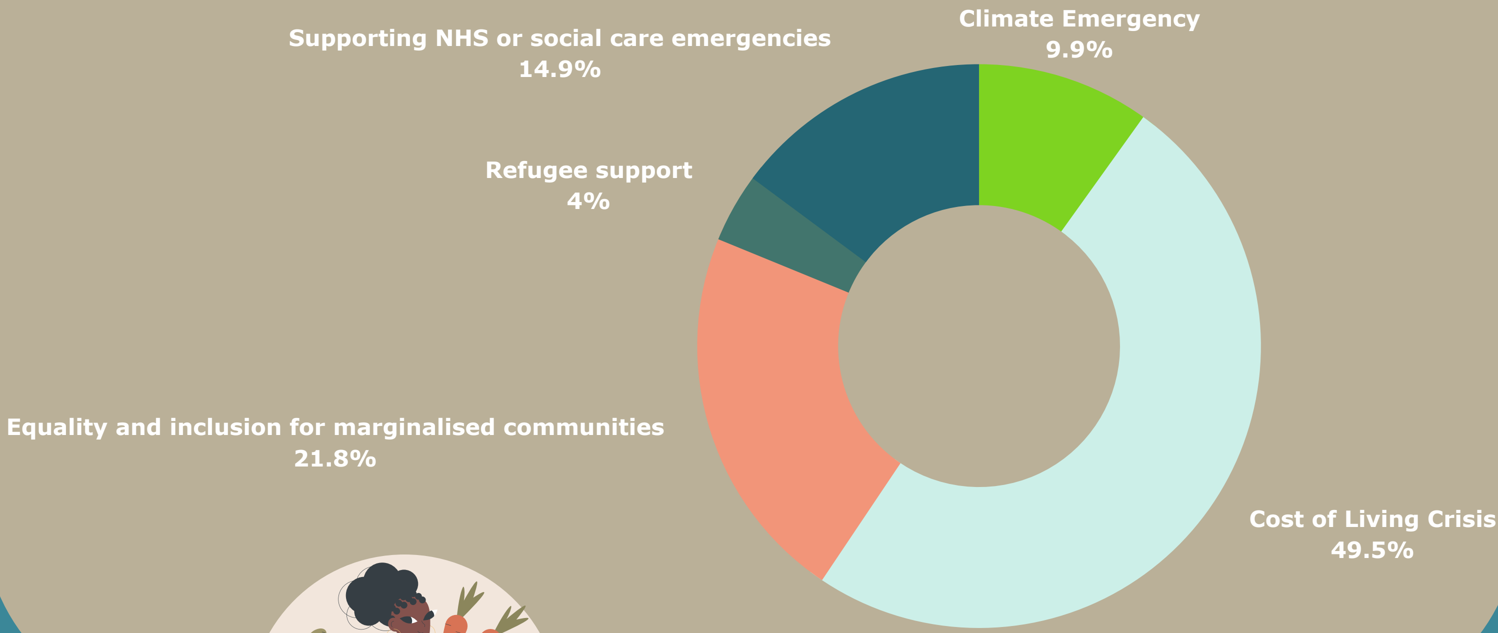
As part of our survey this year we asked about a number of topical areas:

It is encouraging to see the high figures for Cost of Living and EDI work.

It is perhaps rather surprising to see that 15% of all members feel they are taking specific action related to NHS and social care 'emergencies'; given there are very few funding steams supporting this in Staffordshire.

It is rather disappointing that just 10% of members are taking action on the Climate Emergency.

Is your organisation taking specific actions on any of the following?



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| Partnership & Collaboration Ratings

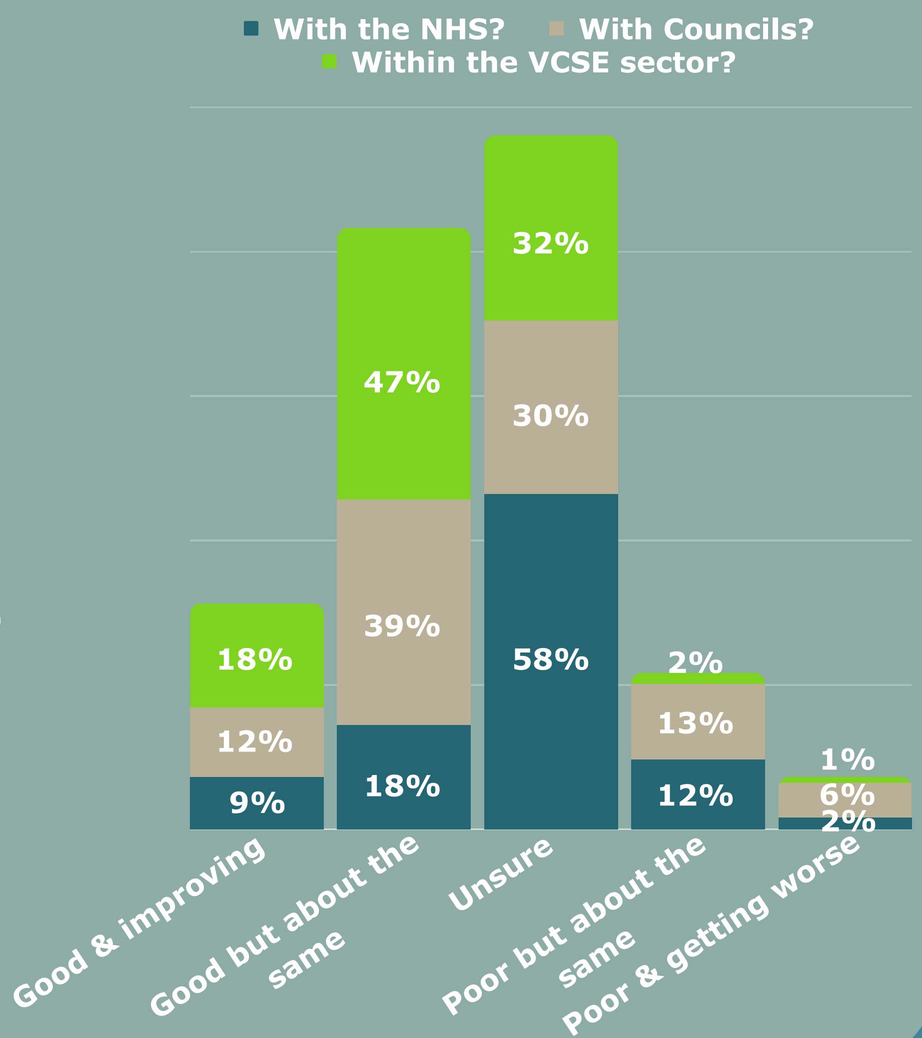
Key Highlights

- **Two thirds rated Partnership and Collaboration within the VCSE sector as good**
- **Half rated Partnership and Collaboration with local Councils as good**

> (We want) to significantly increase our active participation in partnership events

How would you rate local partnership & collaboration?

More than half of respondents said they were not sure about Partnerships & Collaborations with the NHS - almost twice as many as were unsure about the VCSE or Councils; this tends to chime with what we already know about the need to work more closely with the VCSE sector



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| Legal Status of VCSE's

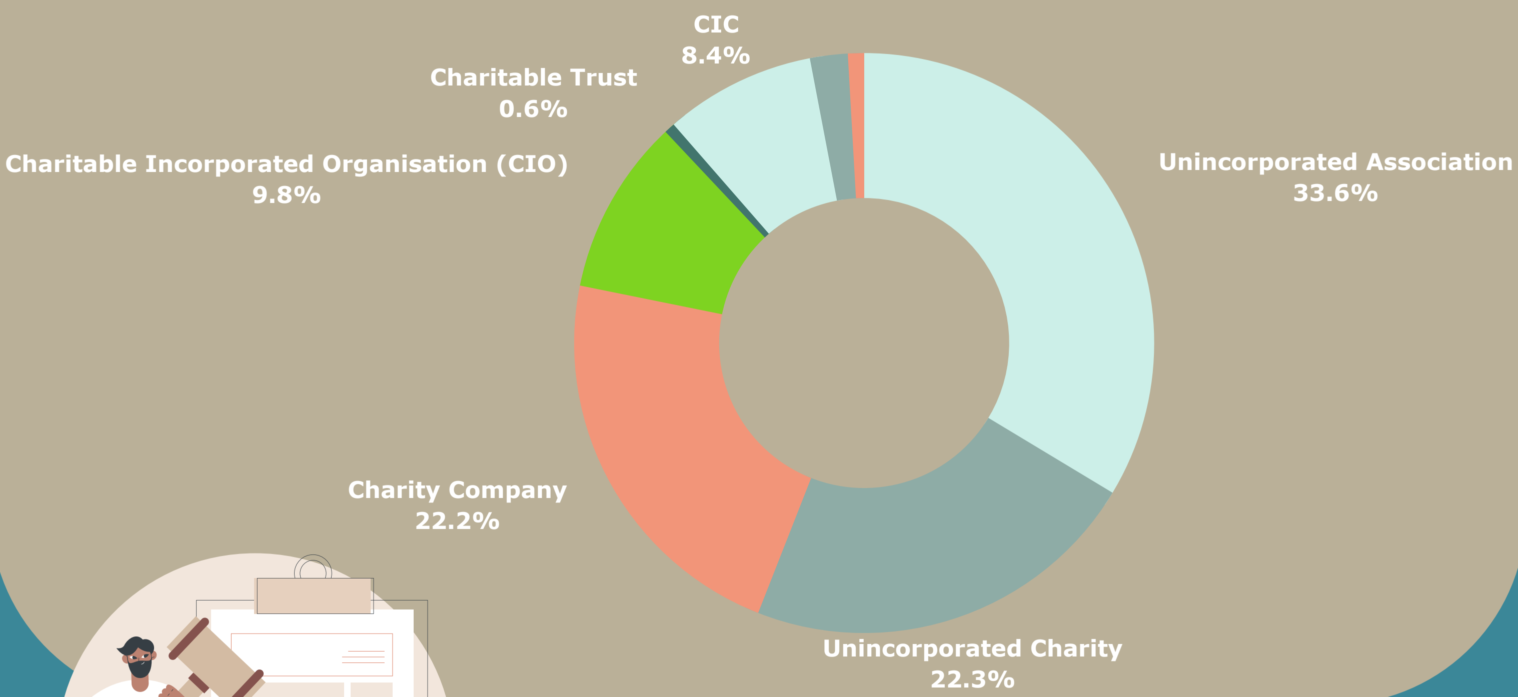
Key Highlights

- 55% of our members are registered charities of one kind or another
- 43.5% of our members are incorporated (with or without also being a charity)
- 11.4% of our members are none charitable social enterprises of one kind or another

1164
Total members sampled

A third of Support Staffordshire members are run as unincorporated associations that are not charities - this is the simplest and most common form of community group.

Legal Status of Members



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| Member Priorities for the Year Ahead

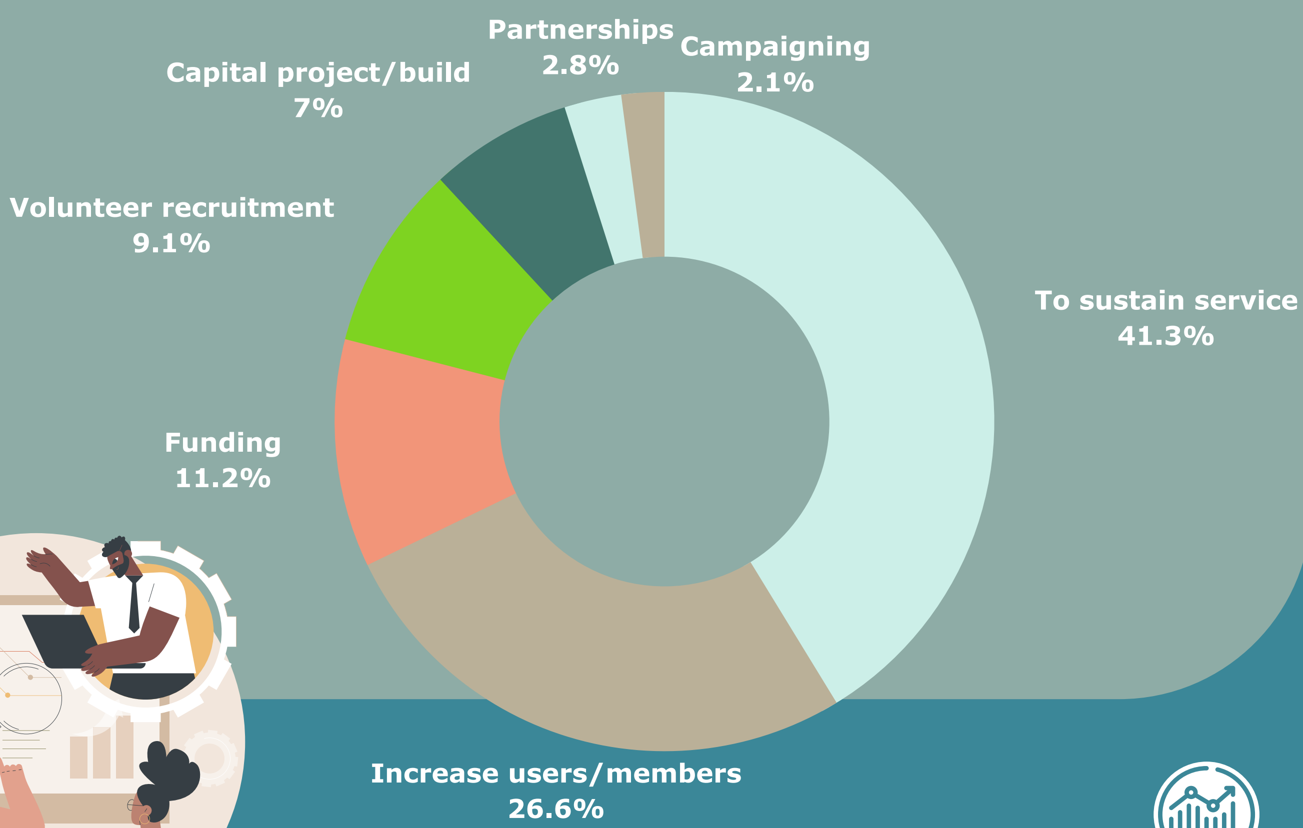
Key Highlights

- Over one quarter said it was to increase service users or members, or their reach
- Just 11% explicitly said funding was their top priority - it is encouraging that despite the obvious financial pressures, the overwhelming majority of VCSEs describe what they do in terms of the service/support and the beneficiaries of their help; not their income or finances

Over 40% of members described their top priority in terms that were about sustaining their existing purpose or service.

"Continue to serve our community in a more sustainable way."

What is your organisation's top priority in 2023?



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| Support that Members Value

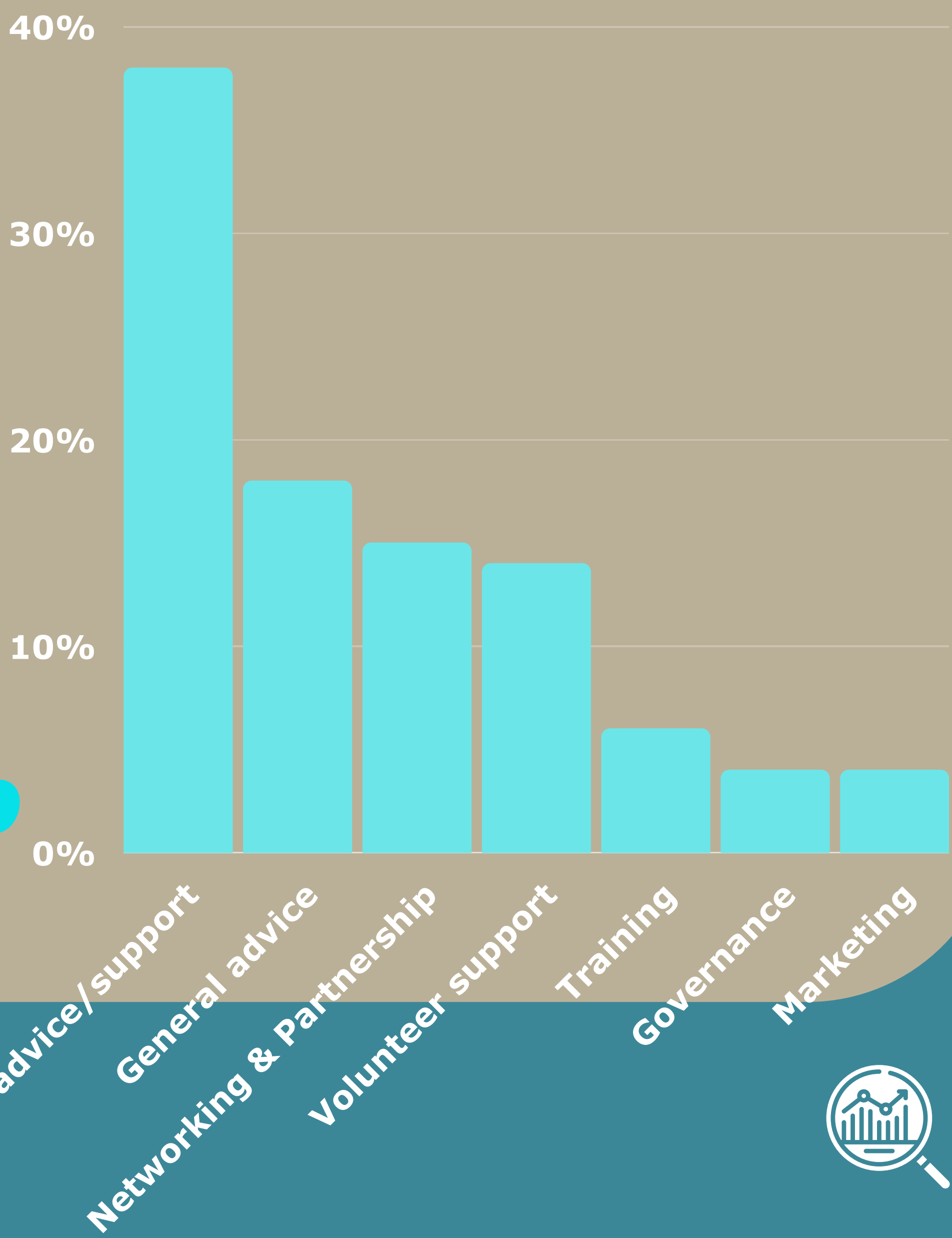
Key Highlights

- Over a third of respondents said the support they would most value was funding advice and support
- Just under one fifth said general advice
- Around 15% said networking and volunteering support respectively
- This tends to cement what we already know about what members most want from us, and what most enquiries and support time is spent upon

"Support Staffs is very proactive and helps to develop partnerships and promote the VCSE sector, be great to see this continue and that funders/decision makers engage even more positively"

"Continue to include us in your communications and any funding bid ideas and collaborative bids that may be of interest and fit with our ethos.
Thank you so much."

What support would you most value from Support Staffordshire in 2023?



Member Data & Responses

Member Breakdown by District

	Member based in (2021)	Members based in (2023)	Services delivered in 2023	% of 'delivered in' that are 'based in'
Newcastle-under-Lyme District	45	66	236	28.0%
Tamworth Borough	79	81	259	31.3%
South Staffordshire	86	99	270	36.7%
Stoke-on-Trent	84	100	229	43.7%
Cannock Chase District	102	107	291	36.8%
East Staffs	126	140	292	47.9%
Staffordshire Moorlands	126	155	344	45.1%
Stafford Borough	155	161	309	52.1%
Lichfield District	147	165	342	48.2%
Outside Staffordshire	80	90		
		1164		

	Members based in	Services delivered
Stoke-on-Trent & North Staffordshire	321	809
Southeast Staffordshire	386	893
Southwest Staffordshire	367	870
	1074	

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Member Data & Responses

Member Breakdown by Service Provided

Service Delivery	Number of Members	% of Memebrs
Social Groups	155	13.3%
Exercise & Outdoor Activities	113	9.7%
Disability	109	9.4%
Village Hall	103	8.8%
Arts & Craft	91	7.8%
Families	84	7.2%
Education	76	6.5%
Counselling	72	6.2%
Faith Groups	69	5.9%
Youth Social Groups	67	5.8%
Befriending & Mentoring	65	5.6%
Carers Services	65	5.6%
Resident & Neighbourhood Group	61	5.2%
Environment & Green Spaces	57	4.9%
Mental Health	57	4.9%
Heritage and Museums	56	4.8%
Community Centres	53	4.6%
Community Based Care	51	4.4%
Independent Living	37	3.2%
Employment, Skills & Enterprise	34	2.9%
Housing	29	2.5%
Food Banks	28	2.4%
Fundraising	28	2.4%
Bereavement	26	2.2%
Financial (Debt Advice or Grants)	25	2.1%
Mentoring	24	2.1%
Alcohol & Substance Misuse	21	1.8%
Other	312	26.8%
actual members	1164	

We have 27 categories that each hold at least 20 members		
	Members	% of Members
Social Groups & Activities	513	44.1%
Health & Wellbeing Organisations	496	42.6%
Children, Families, Youth & Education	353	30.3%
Village Halls & Community Buildings	156	13.4%
Environment, Climate, Animal, Green Groups	90	7.7%

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Member Data & Responses

Beneficiary Type

Client Group	Number of Members
All Client Groups	729
Children	111
Young People	108
People with Disabilities	105
People with Learning Disabilities	87
Older People	85
Mental Health	84
People with Sensory Impairments	50
People with Long Term/ Chronic Illness	45
Carers	34
Families/Parents	29
Unemployed	27
Women	21
Black, Asian or Minority Ethnicity	18
Forces Personnel/ Veterans	18
Gay/ Lesbian/ Bisexual/ Transgender	10
Refugees and Asylum Seekers	10
Low Income	9
Offenders/ Ex-Offenders	9
People with Autism/ ADHD/ASD	9
Volunteers	9
Men	8
Survivors of Abuse/ Victims of Crime	6
Homeless/ At Risk	4
Housing Support	4
Faith Groups	2
Single People	2
Substance Misusers	2
Tenants & Residents	2
Lone Parents	1
Minority Ethnic (Other)	1
Not In Education, Employment & Training (NEET)	1
Travellers	0

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Member Data & Responses

Number of Beneficiaries

Number of beneficiaries	Average within band	Number of members in this band	% of Membership	Totals
Up to 50	25	55	40.1%	1375
51-250	150	25	18.2%	3750
251-500	375	19	13.9%	7125
501-1000	750	12	8.8%	9000
1001-2000	1500	26	19.0%	39000
2000+	2000	0	0.0%	0
total		137	100.0%	60250

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Member Data & Responses

Total Income of Local VCSE Sector

Annual income	Average within band	Number of members in this band	% of membership	Totals
No income	0	19	2.6%	£ -
Up to £1,000	500	102	14.1%	£51,000
£1,001 to £10,000	5500	234	32.3%	£1,287,000
£10,001 to £50,000	30000	188	25.9%	£5,640,000
£50,001 to £100,000	75000	58	8.0%	£4,350,000
£100,001 to £250,000	175000	50	6.9%	£8,750,000
£250,001 to £500,000	375000	35	4.8%	£13,125,000
£500,001 - £999,999	750000	24	3.3%	£18,000,000
£1M - £5M	1000000	14	1.9%	£14,000,000
£6M - £10M	6000000	0	0.0%	£ -
£11M - £100M	11000000	1	0.1%	£13,680,000
£100M and over	100000000	0	0.0%	£ -
	total responses	725	100%	£78,883,000

Analysis with fewer bands		
Annual income	Number of members in this band	% of membership
No income	19	2.6%
Up to £1,000	102	14.1%
£1,001 to £10,000	234	32.3%
£10,001 to £50,000	188	25.9%
£50,001 to £100,000	58	8.0%
£100,001 to £250,000	50	6.9%
£250,001 to £500,000	35	4.8%
£500,001 - £999,999	24	3.3%
£1 million and over	15	2.1%
Total	725	100%

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Member Data & Responses

Number of Income Sources for each Member Organisation

No. Income Sources	Members	% of Members by No. of Income Sources
1	41	25.6%
2	40	25.0%
3	31	19.4%
4	18	11.3%
5	13	8.1%
6 to 10	9	5.6%
More than 10	8	5.0%
Total	160	100%

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Member Data & Responses

Types of Income Sources

Income Source	Number of Members	% of Members
Fundraising	87	53.0%
Subscriptions/Fees	56	34.1%
Councils	41	25.0%
National Lottery	25	15.2%
Community Foundation	19	11.6%
Total	164	

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Member Data & Responses

Expected Income Change

Do you expect your income to change in the next 12 months?	Number of Members	% of members
Not sure/ hard to predict	58	35.4%
Stay about the same	89	54.3%
Yes increase significantly	6	3.7%
Yes reduce significantly	11	6.7%
	164	

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Member Data & Responses

Financial Reserves of Member Organisations

	Have you had to use reserves in the last 12 months?	% of Members	Do you expect to use reserves in the next 12 months?	% of Members	Do you expect to have a healthy remaining level of reserves in 12 months times?	% of Members
Yes	74	46%	81	50%	112	70%
No	87	54%	80	50%	49	30%
	161		161		161	

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Member Data & Responses

Funding Relationships

Have your relationships with funder/investors:	Number of Members	% of Members
Got better?	18	12%
Got worse or more challenging?	35	23%
Stayed about the same?	101	66%
Total	154	

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Member Data & Responses

Recruitment of Staff & Volunteers

	How are you finding staff recruitment and retention?	% of members	How are you finding trustee recruitment and retention?	% of members	How are you finding general volunteer recruitment and retention?	% of members
About the same	42	56%	71	61%	68	48%
Easier	1	1%	5	4%	14	10%
Harder	32	43%	41	35%	60	42%
	75		117		142	

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Member Data & Responses

Wellbeing

How do you think overall staff and volunteer wellbeing is nowadays?	Number of Members	% of Members
About the same	101	63%
Better	21	13%
Worse	39	24%
Total	161	

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Member Data & Responses

Purpose & Future

Do you feel your organisation is achieving its purpose?	Number of Members	% of Members
No, we are struggling	4	2.44%
Not as much as we used to	6	3.66%
Not sure	3	2%
Yes mostly	61	37%
Yes definitely	90	55%
	164	

How confident do you feel about your organisation's future?	Number of Members	% of Members
Expect to close	0	
Not at all	2	1.23%
Not very	4	2.47%
Not sure	19	12%
Quite	80	49%
Very	57	35%
Total	162	

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Member Data & Responses

Specific Action Questions

Is your organisation taking specific actions on any of the following?	Number of Members	% of Members
Climate Emergency	10	10%
Cost of living crisis	51	50%
Equality and inclusion for marginalised communities	23	22%
Refugee Support	4	4%
Supporting NHS or social care emergencies	15	15%
	103	

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Member Data & Responses

Partnership & Collaboration Ratings

	How would you rate local partnership and collaboration within the VCSE sector?	How would you rate local partnership and collaboration within the VCSE sector?	How would you rate local partnership and collaboration with Councils?	How would you rate local partnership and collaboration with Councils?	How would you rate local partnership and collaboration with the NHS?	How would you rate local partnership and collaboration with the NHS?
Good and improving	30	18%	20	12%	13	9%
Good but about the same	76	47%	63	39%	26	18%
Unsure	52	32%	49	30%	83	58%
Poor but about the same	4	2%	22	13%	17	12%
Poor and getting worse	1	1%	9	6%	3	2%
	163		163		142	

Rate your partnership & Collaboration	Good and improving	Good but about the same	Unsure	Poor but about the same	Poor and getting worse
With the NHS?	9%	18%	58%	12%	2%
With Councils?	12%	39%	30%	13%	6%
Within the VCSE sector?	18%	47%	32%	2%	1%

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Member Data & Responses

Legal Status of VCSE's

Legal status	No. of Organisations	% of membership
Unincorporated Association	370	33.6%
Unincorporated Charity	246	22.3%
Charity Company	245	22.2%
Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO)	108	9.8%
Charitable Trust	7	0.6%
CIC	93	8.4%
Co-operative / Mutual	23	2.1%
Company Limited By Guarantee	10	0.9%
Total	1102	100%

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Member Data & Responses

Member Priorities for the Year Ahead

What is your organisation's top priority in 2023?	Number of Members	% of Members
To sustain service	59	41.3%
Increase users/members	38	26.6%
Funding	16	11.2%
Volunteer recruitment	13	9.1%
Capital project/build	10	7.0%
Partnerships	4	2.8%
Campaigning	3	2.1%
EDI	1	0.7%
Env	1	0.7%
Staff recruitment	1	0.7%
To make service not needed	1	0.7%
Total	143	

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Member Data & Responses

Support that Members Value

What support would you most value from Support Staffordshire in 2023?	Number of Members	% of Members
Funding advice/support	46	38%
General advice	22	18%
Networking & Partnership	18	15%
Volunteer support	17	14%
Training	7	6%
Governance	5	4%
Marketing	5	4%
Financial management	1	0.83%
Village Halls	1	0.83%
Total	120	

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