



VOLUNTEERING IN BUCKINGHAMSHIRE

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1. Executive Summary

The brief for this work included:

1. To conduct independent research into the needs and barriers faced by volunteers, people who don't volunteer and volunteer involving organisations across Buckinghamshire, which is the area covered by the Volunteer Matching Service. This involved delivering surveys and focus groups with identified stakeholder groups and testing current thinking about evolving the matching service to meet needs and remove barriers.
2. The delivery of recommendations for future implementation of a volunteer passport service.

The work was conducted from November 2022 to February 2023 by Laura Elson Consulting Ltd. The research also included questions to explore the potential role a passport could play in the development of young peoples' skills to support a future career in Health and Social Care, in collaboration with Buckinghamshire Health and Social Care Academy.

The research revealed a significant amount of useful information about the priorities for developing volunteering in Buckinghamshire.

The research also highlighted an extremely challenging volunteer recruitment context in Buckinghamshire post pandemic. Organisations are increasingly struggling to recruit people as volunteers, and people are increasingly struggling to find out about volunteering and face numerous practical barriers when they do apply to become volunteers. This challenging context was evidenced by the higher than expected response from stakeholders to take part in the research, and a large number of organisations and people requesting further opportunities to give views, and to hear about the findings of the research. The report addresses several practical suggestions to overcome barriers that can be adopted by organisations and encouraged by Community Impact Bucks and the Volunteer Matching Service.

There is not sufficient appetite for the introduction of a Volunteer Passport Scheme in Buckinghamshire. The research found strong opposition from organisations regarding the elements of the scheme that would allow volunteers to be centrally checked and onboarded, despite volunteers highlighting this as a barrier. However, organisations and volunteers would find a universal volunteer skills record useful, to demonstrate to organisations the hugely diverse and unique skills volunteers both bring to and gain from volunteering.

Health and Social Care organisations find volunteer recruitment especially difficult and need to be supported to reach students more easily. Recommendations are made to better connect those seeking volunteers with those seeking volunteer opportunities, including a digital solution.

2. Method

Three surveys exploring volunteering in Buckinghamshire were conducted in January 2023. The surveys received responses from:

- **47** representatives of volunteer involving organisations
- **80** volunteers
- **42** people who were not volunteering

Surveys were delivered using Typeform and were open for 11 days. The response rate to all three surveys was higher than expected, thanks to promotional support from the Community Impact Bucks' Comms Team, Buckinghamshire Health and Social Care Academy and Buckinghamshire Council. We also believe engagement was high due to the appetite for organisations and volunteers to find solutions to make accessing volunteering easier.

Follow up focus groups for each audience explored specific findings in more depth. These focus groups were attended by:

- **10** representatives of organisations, ranging from volunteer led community groups to large national charities
- **6** volunteers with long volunteering histories, engaged in multiple roles
- **2** people who were not currently volunteering, and had experienced barriers

3. Findings

About the research participants

Volunteer Involving Organisations

Representatives with responsibility for volunteer involvement from 47 organisations completed the survey. A full spectrum of organisation size was represented, including 12 micro (less than £10,000 income per year), 12 small, 11 medium, 8 large and 2 major sized organisations (more than £10 million income per year). The majority of respondents, 68%, represented registered charities, 10% community groups, 10% local authority, 4% CICs (*Shown in Appendix 1, page 24*).

The organisations that responded to the survey were diverse, offering a wide range of 28 different services, with the most common being related to mental health and wellbeing, and community support. Organisations mainly provided support to residents of the local community, older people or children and young people. Roles of the person responsible for volunteer involvement varied, largely respondents were volunteer trustees or paid senior leaders. The organisations involved between 5 and 25,000 volunteers per year, with one organisation having no volunteers currently. The majority involved less than 50 volunteers and operated across the whole county.

Volunteers

80 current volunteers took part in the survey, representing a wide range of organisations, causes and roles, but broadly aligned with the core activities of community support, mental health and children and young people's projects outlined by organisations. The volunteers ranged in age from 20 to 81, with an average age of 58 (*shown in appendix 2, page 47*), and were a mixture of retirees (36%), and those employed full (33%) or part time (24%). The majority (70%) were women, and only 10% were non-White British. 5 volunteers identified with a sexuality under the LGBTQA+ umbrella. 12 were disabled. 21% worked or had worked in Health and Social Care.

Based on postcode analysis, volunteers are based mainly in High Wycombe, as well as some from Aylesbury, Beaconsfield, Chesham, and Buckingham. (*Shown in Appendix 2, page 45*).

People Who Don't Volunteer

42 people who don't volunteer responded to a third survey which sought to understand more about the barriers to volunteering. Only one person actively did not want to volunteer, all other respondents wanted to volunteer but had experienced a range of barriers. Despite being able to identify specific barriers to volunteering, this group had time and plenty of skills to offer.

They were also mainly female (80%) and on average slightly younger than current volunteers. The volunteers ranged in age from 20 to 76, with an average age of 51 (*shown in appendix 3, page 57*). Only 19% were retired, 50% were employed fulltime and 24% part time. 20% worked, or had worked in Health and Social Care, a similar amount to volunteers (21%).

The respondents were less diverse than volunteers in terms of sexuality and ethnicity. 1 in 5 were disabled.

Based on postcode analysis, respondents largely live in Aylesbury, with some from Chesham, Great Missenden, and High Wycombe (*Shown in Appendix 3, page 55*).

a) Barriers faced by volunteers and volunteer involving organisations in Buckinghamshire

2 in 3 volunteer involving organisations in Buckinghamshire who responded to the survey found volunteer recruitment difficult, or very difficult. Organisations' biggest challenges were finding volunteers in general, and specifically finding volunteers with the right availability, commitment, and skills. The biggest drains on organisations' resources were time and funding to resource volunteer recruitment, training, and retention.

1 in 3 organisations were investing more resource in volunteer recruitment than previous years (just over half were investing the same level of resource). The majority of organisations offered a range of flexibility in volunteering such as one off, remote or evening opportunities in order to accommodate volunteers.

Two types of barriers were identified, barriers related to awareness of how to find volunteering opportunities and practical barriers to recruitment.

Barriers - awareness

Time

For people who don't volunteer, the most common barrier was a perception that they did not have enough spare time (44%). However, the majority (64%) said they had up to 5 hours per month they could give to volunteering, sufficient for many roles available.

68% of current volunteers were giving more than 5 hours a month, with those who were retired volunteering more. However, more than half (56%) of volunteers were involved in more than one role, requiring more time. Therefore, the barrier may not be that people don't have enough spare time, but that there is a perception that volunteering is a bigger time commitment than it needs to be, as one volunteer described in the focus group:

"It's very hard these days for organisations to get volunteers, and I think it's got harder since COVID because you actually don't have the same face to face contact as you did before. And people don't seem as willing to communicate directly with you. If you can actually show people that they don't need to commit so much time, they would be surprised at how flexible and light touch it can be. And having been involved in this in such a very long time. I've seen trying to get people is really hard, because of those misconceptions about the amount of time it takes and when you can do it"

Lack of awareness about the opportunities, nature, and benefits of volunteering

42% of people who didn't volunteer said they did not know how to find out about volunteering opportunities. In focus groups some volunteers and organisations were not aware of the Volunteer Matching Service. One organisation used an equivalent service in Oxfordshire instead. One person who was not yet volunteering had not heard of Volunteer Matching Service and was frustrated, because they perceived the county to lack an important service that other counties had in place. One volunteer who had experience of using the Volunteer Matching Service to find roles, felt that it was confusing for people to know where to go to find out about volunteering:

"I actually think it's hard to find out about the VMS and there are lots of other volunteer services out there which confuses people. Why don't we just bring it all together and make really easy links for people if they want to volunteer?"

When asked what skills they hoped to gain from volunteering, only 3 of the non volunteer respondents could name any skills, the majority replied they did not know, that they would be happy to gain any skills or just feel useful. For people new to volunteering, it's not clear what you would get out of it.

Barriers – recruitment

Lack of flexibility from organisations

Organisations who took part in the research offered a great deal of flexibility in their volunteer roles, including 60% offering weekend and 51% offering evening volunteering. Many offered group (43%), one off (41%) and shared role (38%) volunteering to fit around work commitments. 40% also offered remote roles which could be done from home.

Despite this, finding a role that was flexible around work and childcare commitments in the week had been challenging for focus group attendees. Participants mentioned at least 6 local organisations who were unwilling to be flexible and allow someone to volunteer at a slightly different time, for example 10am – 2pm rather than 9am – 1pm. That small degree of flexibility would make volunteering accessible for younger volunteers juggling the school run. The rigidity of volunteer shift rotas of these organisations was a particular barrier:

“I work 4 days a week, but I can’t do every Monday. So many organisations need a regular weekly rota commitment, which doesn’t fit with me.”

One participant’s daughter was volunteering at a charity shop but had to leave after she felt pressured into doing more shifts to cover the holiday of older volunteers. This made it hard for the teenager, who had additional needs, to manage it with her college schedule.

One highly active volunteer felt that it was hard to find volunteer roles in the evening and at weekends that were not focused on youth work, which not everyone wants to do.

Onerous onboarding processes and training

The initial induction and onboarding processes organisations require volunteers to go through can sometimes be off-putting.

“If you keep people waiting around too long in the signup process, they get bored and they might move on to something else.”

Many volunteers were frustrated by having to complete multiple DBS checks for different organisations and undergo the same training several times for different organisations, such as safeguarding.

“The main barrier is the DBS checks, because every organisation wants you to do it again. They’re not happy with the one that you’ve got. I think at one point I had 5 being processed, and it’s frustrating having to do it over and over again, not to mention time consuming when you work full time, have kids and are doing lots of volunteering too. I think the automatic update has helped with this though.”

Several volunteers expressed frustration that their existing training record and skills acquired through careers and life experience were not considered which led to new volunteers undertaking mandatory training on topics they already had experience, and sometimes significant professional expertise in. There was however a recognition that organisations require volunteers to be prepared to deliver activities safely and to a high standard and a balance must be struck.

“I was surprised how much compulsory training there was for me in my volunteer role, I would have thought they could have taken into account my professional background, which included all the skills I was being trained in. But I had to do it all again as a volunteer because they had to tick boxes, which makes it very tedious and makes you question if you want to volunteer. I think it will be a lot easier for the training to be available if you want it but not necessarily compulsory.”

“In one role I do, the whole induction process has got more detailed over the years I’ve been doing it, now there’s online training before they even sign up. But in some ways that puts

people off as well because it is very, bureaucratic. So, I think it's about getting a balance I think it can go too much the other way. There's a lot of forms, lots of training, you get checked up on all the time."

National online brokerage platforms

Participants of the focus group for people who were not yet volunteering had both applied for several roles each via national online recruitment sites Do-Its and Reach but had never heard back from any organisations.

Most organisations also found they had little success finding any volunteers through these platforms and preferred to use local communication channels and the Volunteer Matching Service, which were thought to work better because they were locally focused.

Organisations ignoring applications – or being too persistent

A source of frustration for some people not yet volunteering was that organisations often don't respond to applications or enquiries:

"You contact them and you hear nothing back. I take it in my stride, but for a teenager that's hard to deal with when they don't have the courtesy to respond after, it's taken some building of confidence for a young person to apply. Even an out of office to say "thank you, the role is filled" would help. Especially as you have to take a lot of time filling in and submitting a form, and you're actually giving away quite a bit of personal detail in that form. It's just not good enough and it happens all the time."

Conversely some organisations are too persistent, calling potential volunteers too many times, including when at work/college which was felt to be inappropriate.

Lack of relevant opportunities

32% of survey respondents who were not volunteering hadn't be able to find a role that matches their interests. Volunteers are not a homogenous group, and will have different interests and preferences – one survey respondent commented:

"I want to do something different to my day job, which doesn't feel like more work".

Another commented:

"I can't find something that matches my professional skills I want to use from work".

Organisations in Buckinghamshire are clearly providing a huge range of volunteering opportunities that would align to a diverse array of interests, however potential volunteers aren't finding out about them.

The Volunteer Matching Service

The research highlighted a great deal of positive feedback about the Volunteer Matching Service from organisations and volunteers who had used the service. One focus group participant who was not yet volunteering shared that their experience of using the Volunteer Matching Service was itself a barrier to volunteering:

"I don't actually want to be matched by a stranger, it's not something I'm particularly comfortable with, someone ringing me several times, at what was an inconvenient moment for me, when I wasn't expecting the phone call. I'd rather be able to go online and find out about what roles are available, and make the call to organisations myself, than have someone calling me out of the blue. It feels old

fashioned and daunting and it's uncomfortable to be honest. I think more people would find it more accessible to find a website with everything listed on it. I want to make that decision myself I had just hoped by filling in the form I'd get the results via email to follow up."

Another participant would prefer not to be called too:

"As a parent I would feel uncomfortable with a stranger ringing my daughter out of the blue. I'd prefer to complete a form and tick the areas you like and then receive an email to say, "We've got these five roles, take a look and contact us if you're interested.""

It is useful to understand that people signing up to the Volunteer Matching Service will have different needs and contact preferences, however it is worth reiterating that this experience is unusual and it seems that in general feedback about the Volunteer Matching Service is extremely positive.

Lack of investment in volunteering from organisations' leadership

One participant of the focus group for organisations was vocal about a wider issue. They felt that a lack of understanding amongst leadership of organisations about the need for resources to be invested in volunteer involvement was the root cause of barriers to recruitment.

b) Needs faced by volunteers and volunteer involving organisations in Buckinghamshire

Volunteers in Buckinghamshire get involved in volunteering primarily because they enjoy it (86%), and to use existing skills for good causes (75%), which is reflective of their stage of life, with most aged 50+. Around half also said that volunteering was good for socialising, mental health and/or that they were passionate about the cause. Just over a half of volunteers are already volunteering in multiple organisations, and 1 in 5 current volunteers would be happy to volunteer more. Needs identified throughout the research can be categorised as raising awareness about volunteer opportunities and what is involved and reducing practical barriers to make it easier to start volunteering.

Raising awareness

Promoting volunteering

The barriers explored above suggest that volunteering in Buckinghamshire would benefit from significant promotion. Organisations are offering a wide range of flexible opportunities that cater to a diverse array of interests and bring great benefits for volunteers, but this isn't widely known about amongst potential volunteers. 42% of people not yet volunteering don't know how to find out about opportunities, 44% feel they do not have time, and 32% have not found a role to suit their interests. 78% of current volunteers would do more if they didn't have to sign up to a regular commitment.

There is a need to raise awareness in Buckinghamshire about how to find out about volunteering opportunities, and that volunteering:

- can be flexible

- does not need to require a large, or regular time commitment
- can cater for a wide range of interests
- is enjoyable, sociable and develops a wide range of specific skills
- can be done from, or close to, home

There is also a need to promote the Volunteer Matching Service and support available to find volunteering, as one potential volunteer pointed out:

“Community Impact Bucks isn’t well known about, I work for the Council, and I’d not heard of Community Impact Bucks or the Volunteer Matching Service.”

However, many more organisations who had success in recruiting volunteers had found the Volunteer Matching Service, in addition to social media and advertising in local community magazines and newsletters good ways to recruit volunteers.

“The VMS is the best way to reach local people, we’ve had a good number of high calibre people through that process.”

Many volunteers and people wanted to see all the volunteer opportunities available in Buckinghamshire in one central online hub, where they could self-serve, finding roles and reading about them for themselves, before deciding to apply, or enlist the help of the Volunteer Matching Service. For some the hands-on support of the Volunteer Matching Service was not needed, but many would appreciate being able to view the whole range of volunteer opportunities available in the county online in one place.

Generally, the first-place focus group participants who had not heard of the Volunteer Matching Service thought of to search for local volunteer opportunities, was to search the internet using Google or to explore Buckinghamshire Council’s website.

In person recruitment events

A clear finding from this research is that the best way to make accessing volunteering easier in Buckinghamshire is through in person recruitment events such as open days, taster days and volunteer fairs. When asked what would help to make choosing and starting a volunteer roles easier, the top response from both current (66%) and potential (64%) volunteers was an opportunity to visit an organisation in person first. This was significantly more popular for both groups than telephone and email matching support. Several volunteers in the focus groups suggested that following the isolation and reliance on digital communication during the social restrictions of the pandemic, people want to experience for themselves what volunteering might be like and meet the staff and volunteers they would be working with.

During focus groups, one person who wasn’t volunteering suggested volunteer recruitment fairs that could be tailored to demographics e.g., young people, or people coming back to work from parental leave could help to involve more diverse people:

“We don’t all fit in that one umbrella of a volunteer.”

In a focus groups several volunteers had found an organisation’s volunteer open day extremely helpful and supportive.

"I attended an open session for people who are interested in volunteering, and that was really nice. They gave lots of information, it's a less daunting approach than diving straight into that big amount of training."

"Being able to get a taste or the feel of the organisation is key. One organisation I volunteer with offer an open taster session, where members of the public can just enjoy the facilities. But so often at the end of it people approach us to see if they can become a volunteer because they've had a flavour of what we do and what it's all about. When you see a volunteer role on a piece of paper it doesn't come alive for people in that way does it?"

"People really want to speak with the organisation before they go ahead with the volunteering. The VMS can provide all the information, but it's not the same as talking to the person who actually works for the organisation. So, I think this idea of an introductory day or a chance to shadow someone per day would go down very well."

The Volunteer Matching Service and Community Impact Bucks could play a valuable role in encouraging the organisations that they support to meet the needs of potential volunteers through developing taster and open days and facilitating a face-to-face recruitment fair.

Email matching is preferred to phone matching

40% of current volunteers and 52% of those not yet volunteering would find email support to find a role useful. This was significantly more than would find a phone call helpful (17% and 21%). This finding is supported by the focus group participants who would prefer being emailed a list of volunteer opportunities that match their interests. It was important to be able to self-serve, and approach either the organisations or the Volunteer Matching Service themselves if they needed support. This was felt to be less intrusive and more empowering. For some people a phone call would be helpful, but it is important this is optional.

Reducing barriers

Creating more flexible opportunities – and promoting them

1 in 3 current volunteers felt that flexibility in opportunities would enable them to give more time to volunteer. 78% of people who don't volunteer said not having to sign up to a regular commitment would enable them to volunteer, with 1 in 2 saying volunteering from or near home would help. 53% of those not volunteering would prefer to support one-off events.

It's important to note that flexibility in volunteering means different things to different people. For 1 in 4 volunteers, it means the flexibility to volunteer during weekdays, for 1 in 2 it also means not having to travel far from home. The response needed from organisations, the majority of whom already provide a range of different types of flexibility, is to let potential volunteers know that this flexibility is in place.

"I volunteer very seasonally in one of my roles, doing more when I can and less when I'm busy. I wonder sometimes if there's any knowledge of seasonal activities that are out there, which would make it easier for people to attend?"

"Also, the other thing I do find is that different people want to (volunteer) at different times."

Current volunteers pointed out that some sectors such as youth work and environmental organisations offer more evening and weekend opportunities and this could be promoted.

The importance of face-to-face supportive induction activities

Several organisations and current volunteers described the importance of face-to-face support early in the role to help volunteers build confidence, from staff or an existing volunteer:

“We have a supportive six-week programme where someone can come along and try out volunteering, buddy with a volunteer and get a feel for it rather than dropping straight into any sort of role.”

Some volunteers (22%) thought having another volunteer buddy to shadow at the start of an opportunity would help. Focus group members in particular felt that a buddy system could help new volunteers to feel able to ask questions and gain confidence.

Increasing the diversity of volunteering

The demographics of volunteers in Buckinghamshire who took part in this research, show an underrepresentation of specific groups including men, people from minority ethnic groups, the LGBTQIA+ community and those under 40.

Organisations and current volunteers suggested organisations needed more targeted promotion and community outreach to specific groups to let them know about volunteering. One organisation had created relationships with a local mosque. One potential volunteer was surprised that voluntary organisations don't work more closely with schools and colleges to promote volunteering to teenagers and young adults.

1 in 5 of the survey respondents who don't yet volunteer identified as disabled. For them being able to access one place online where volunteering opportunities can be found, and the ability to volunteer remotely from home would make volunteering more accessible. 15% of volunteers who responded to the survey were disabled. These volunteers also would find that a single portal to search for volunteer opportunities and the option to volunteer from or near to home would make volunteering more accessible. One would prefer for meetings, training, and supervision to be held online and another would find having the assistance of a support worker would help make volunteering accessible.

Managing expectations around onboarding

A major barrier for volunteers were the levels of “bureaucracy and red tape” as one survey respondent described it, relating to the processes and initial training required when beginning a role. This was a major theme of the research for all three groups, with organisation's aware of the ways that “long winded signup and startup processes” could be off-putting.

One volunteer suggested that this might be unavoidable, but organisations could manage expectations:

“You probably need to manage people's expectations. They could say: “you know, we do have quite a robust induction process, we anticipate that it will take 12 weeks and you won't necessarily get up and running until three months down the line”. And then we just know what we're getting ourselves in for as volunteers.”

Better matching of people with admin and digital skills

The most common skills people who were not yet volunteering have to offer are admin and digital skills, in particular 58% of potential volunteers hoping to find an admin role.

In the focus group admin and digital skills such as IT and social media were the roles organisation most struggled to fill, despite offering flexibility such as evening shifts and less commitment, such as one shift per month.

c) Testing a passport model – portability

When asked in the survey “is there anything that would make moving between volunteer roles easier?” The most common response from existing volunteers was “no”. With more than half of volunteers already giving time to as many as six organisations, moving between roles may not be a challenge once someone has started volunteering.

Volunteers did express frustration at having to undergo multiple DBS checks and safeguarding training in the focus group, and 22 volunteers who answered the survey would prefer one universal DBS check and ID card would make it easier to move between roles.

Current volunteers and organisations pointed out in the focus groups that the portable DBS check element of a volunteer passport had already been addressed by the introduction of a universal DBS check upgrade.

“DBS checks were the biggest barrier to easily moving between roles, but the new automatic update service has fixed this. In the past it’s been difficult because each organisation won’t accept someone else’s DBS, once I had 5 going on at the same time which is crazy – but I think that’s less of a problem now.”

Organisations who took part in the focus group were opposed to the idea of receiving volunteers on a passport scheme. Despite admitting struggling to recruiting volunteers, all the organisations who attended the focus group were against the idea of receiving volunteers through a passport scheme, as they felt concerned this would impact their own recruitment and training processes, which needed to be bespoke to their area of support and service users. For local staff of large national organisations, and senior leaders of larger local organisations, who were the most vocally against the concept, a volunteer passport scheme was thought not to be compatible with the robust and multi-stage recruitment and onboarding processes which were important in managing quality and risk.

Some larger organisations did suggest that the model might be useful for hyper local, small community groups, however a poll in the focus group found no appetite from these groups either.

“It’s an interesting idea, and I understand the logic. For large national charities like ours, I don’t see that that would be helpful. For smaller charities. Absolutely. Who have less capacity, who have less time to dedicate to this, who don’t have a dedicated member of staff to onboard volunteers and having them ready skilled will be absolutely perfect. Large charities have standard training and processes that have to be completed. If your clients are vulnerable there are more rigorous training and processes that have to be in place and so outsourcing part of the onboarding process would not be possible. Because of the different service users, you have across many different charities, it might be difficult for some to say yes. Because they need that rigorous onboarding process of volunteers and training.”

Organisations understood that volunteers were experiencing barriers to recruitment and onboarding and had expressed interest in the idea of being able to move more easily between volunteer roles and organisations. Still, for the organisations in the focus group, a volunteer passport was not an initiative felt to work for their organisations.

Several organisations felt that a passport model might result in the creation of another barrier to volunteering, an extra stage of the application process which can already be onerous, which might particularly make it difficult to recruit volunteers from more diverse backgrounds.

d) Testing a passport model – skills

A key aim of this research was to understand the skills that volunteering develops, and the skills gaps organisations face, to better inform volunteer matching, and to identify any core induction training and skills development that could be included in a volunteer passport scheme.

The surveys showed that both the skills required by organisations and the skills volunteers had gained were incredibly diverse and largely unique. Volunteers listed a broad range of 56 hard and soft skills developed through volunteering, all unique to them, apart from planning and organisation, communication, people skills, listening skills and event management, each mentioned by 2 or 3 volunteers.

Most current volunteers did not feel they needed to develop any new skills in future volunteering, however a list of 23 new skills were suggested by 3, 2 or often a single volunteer as something they thought could be gained through future volunteering (*Shown in Appendix 2, page 41*).

8 volunteers felt that having a training or skills and experience record as part of a volunteer passport model would help them to move between volunteer roles more easily.

People who don't currently volunteer also described a broad range of 23 skills they could offer their community through volunteering, with the most common being admin. 5 people had IT skills to offer, 3 caring and 3 communication. A small number of people mentioned what they would like to gain from volunteering, such as feeling useful, working with others, and learning something new. People who are new to volunteering may not know what skills they could learn through being a volunteer.

3 in 4 organisations provide an induction, with the most common topic covered being safeguarding, followed by induction into the work of the organisation and the role, health and safety and policies and procedures. 3 in 4 organisations also offer training, including in house face to face learning (82%), eLearning (49%) and external training (33%). One organisation offered volunteer development sessions and one offered ongoing support.

Organisations named a range of 44 distinct skills they would like to see new volunteers bring in 2023, again these were often unique to their work. However, mentoring / peer support, enthusiasm, creative, social media, practical, IT, gardening, fundraising, finance, and communication skills were mentioned by at least 4 organisations.

Organisations mentioned 34 distinct preferred topics for potential external volunteer training, largely these were unique to the organisation's needs. However, there was a clear need for safeguarding

skills, and several organisations mentioned professional boundaries, mental health, data protection and first aid.

Two focus group participants who were not volunteering yet but had in the past felt that good topics to cover in the induction of a volunteer passport scheme would be what to expect in volunteering, confidentiality, and professional boundaries.

In the survey, 8 volunteers felt a universal skills record would be useful. Current volunteers describe their frustration in a focus group about having to repeat training within several organisations, or complete mandatory training on topics which they had already gained considerable expertise with their careers:

“I’ve had to do safeguarding training in each different organisation because each organisation wants you to do what they put together. So yes, if there was a central safeguarding training that would be useful, as long every organisation was happy to access that.”

While some volunteers and potential volunteers could see a universal induction and training on core skills as reducing the frustration of many organisation’s onboarding processes, all but one of the organisations were opposed to the idea in the focus group.

The majority of organisations had a strong appetite for access to ongoing role-based training after volunteers were settled in roles, which could be usefully provided by an external scheme, this was more popular as an idea than a skills record. The initial core learning such as safeguarding, confidentiality, professional boundaries etc was seen as important to be inhouse because of the need for learning to be bespoke to the organisations’ own processes and service users.

“I would prefer to have help with ongoing training that is specific to what we need, and we can pick and choose rather than having a set thing they do before they come to us.”

“For us it wouldn’t be useful before volunteers start, but once you onboard them and you get to know them you realise what skills they might need developing later on. Safeguarding needs to be bespoke, every organisation’s safeguarding training is different because your service users and operating context are different. But we don’t have budget for further ongoing learning though, which would be helpful”

One organisation was willing to explore the idea:

“We would find a skills record, to show they’ve already committed to the volunteering idea before they come to us would be good. Often once they’ve come to us, we find it hard to engage volunteers in training once they have started the role, because they just want to do the job. It would be good to have something to start with, like safeguarding, professional boundaries, confidentiality, lone working would be good ones for us.”

Another organisation was prepared to be open minded if there was a clear demand from volunteers:

“I think could be interesting to explore. Because if the volunteers are saying, that's what helps, we should think about it because maybe we're all doing it wrong. And we're putting up our barriers by having all these processes that aren't generic, so I think we'd probably be interested in learning more about how it would work in practice.”

Examples of Volunteer Skills Records

Many students' unions such as [Anglia Ruskin Students Union](#) [Greenwich Students Union](#) and [Edinburgh Napier Students Association](#) operate an online volunteer skills records which aim to allow students who volunteer the opportunity to reflect on skills gained in volunteering, and record them in a skills transcript, to help students understand and develop key employability skills developed through volunteering.

[Reach Volunteering](#) is a well-known national volunteer matching system which uses a skills-based approach. Volunteers who sign up are required to have 3 years experience in a range of sought after professional skills needed by organisations, which are logged on their searchable profile, enabling organisations to find and connect with volunteers, and view their skills online.

Most Volunteer Management Systems, including Volunteer Plus, allow volunteers to record their skills on their volunteer profile, and either print or email a PDF copy to organisations they wish to volunteer with. Since volunteer involving organisations were resistant to the idea of a volunteer passport, it may be unhelpful to refer to the use of the skills record as a skills passport, however the functionality of capturing and sharing volunteer skills would be valued by volunteers and organisations as part of the Volunteer Matching Service.

The research explored the idea proposed of volunteer skills endorsements, or badges. Some youth organisations such as the [Duke of Edinburgh's Award](#) allow volunteers to record skills and to have them approved by an assessor – however this is very simple, usually an adult signing a printed activity log in pen. One Volunteer Management Platform was identified, [Galaxy Digital](#), which enables volunteers to automatically receive badges for volunteer hours, however this is not an endorsement.

e) Volunteer management systems

To support the development of the Volunteer Matching Service, Community Impact Bucks are exploring acquiring and implementing a new digital volunteer brokerage system, to better support the online matching of volunteers with organisations. A volunteer management system could provide a significant advantage in tackling the barriers, and meeting the needs identified in this research – in particular making it easier for people to find out about local volunteering opportunities, self serve when choosing and applying to roles, and making it easier for organisations to raise awareness for the opportunities they offer.

As of January 2023, there are more than 100 volunteer management systems on the market ([Sourceforge.net](#)). Prior to 2009 the only volunteer management software that existed was

[Do-It](#), a volunteer brokerage platform and organisations used generic CRM systems to manage data for multiple audiences.

Today volunteer involving organisations have increasing choice within a market set to evolve and innovate further over the next decade. During the Covid-19 pandemic, innovation in the market has catalysed significantly and new products have emerged.

Current market leaders are bespoke volunteer management systems, and include [Better Impact](#), [Team Kinetic](#) and [Assemble](#), with newcomer [Volunteero](#), currently in its infancy, but potentially set to become a market leader in the next 2-3 years.

Most systems are designed for the management of a single volunteer base within one organisation – few are designed specifically with volunteer brokerage in mind. Team Kinetic and [Volunteer Plus](#) are able to deliver this functionality with enhanced usability for organisations and volunteers compared to similar systems such as Be Collective and Do-It.

The researcher consulted several Volunteer Centres and reviewed information about functionality and usability of volunteer management systems offered by the Association of Volunteer Managers, NCVO and Rob Jackson Consulting Ltd. None of these organisations offer recommendations for one product over another, however the information provided suggests that Volunteer Plus will best meet the Volunteer Matching Service's needs.

While Team Kinetic is a market leading global brand and offers the ability to create bespoke solutions that include accommodating volunteer brokerage – Volunteer Plus has the advantage of being designed specifically in collaboration with Volunteer Centres to meet their needs. Currently around 20 Volunteer Centres and local volunteer brokerage schemes use Volunteer Plus, including Volunteer Centre Newcastle which runs a small Volunteer Passport Scheme between 15 local organisations. Volunteer Plus is also specifically designed with local volunteering in mind and can enhance the local service that organisations value in the Volunteer Matching Service that national volunteer matching platforms and other volunteer management systems are not specifically designed for.

f) Student volunteering

2 in 3 organisations already involve students as volunteers, with 67% involving those aged 16-17 and 83% involving those aged 18+. This is working well for most organisations, with only a third of organisations saying they found recruiting students difficult - none found it very difficult. The primary barriers were fitting volunteering around students' busy diaries and their ability to commit for a short time only.

No students responded to the surveys to give their views.

g) Health and Social Care

Only one organisation stated in the survey that they delivered Health and Social Care, however an analysis of the organisations by name identified 12 organisations delivering Health and Social Care,

1 Local Authority run service and 11 charities. These organisations found recruiting volunteers more difficult on average than other organisations. All organisations delivering Health and Social Care found recruiting volunteers either OK or difficult – none found it easy.

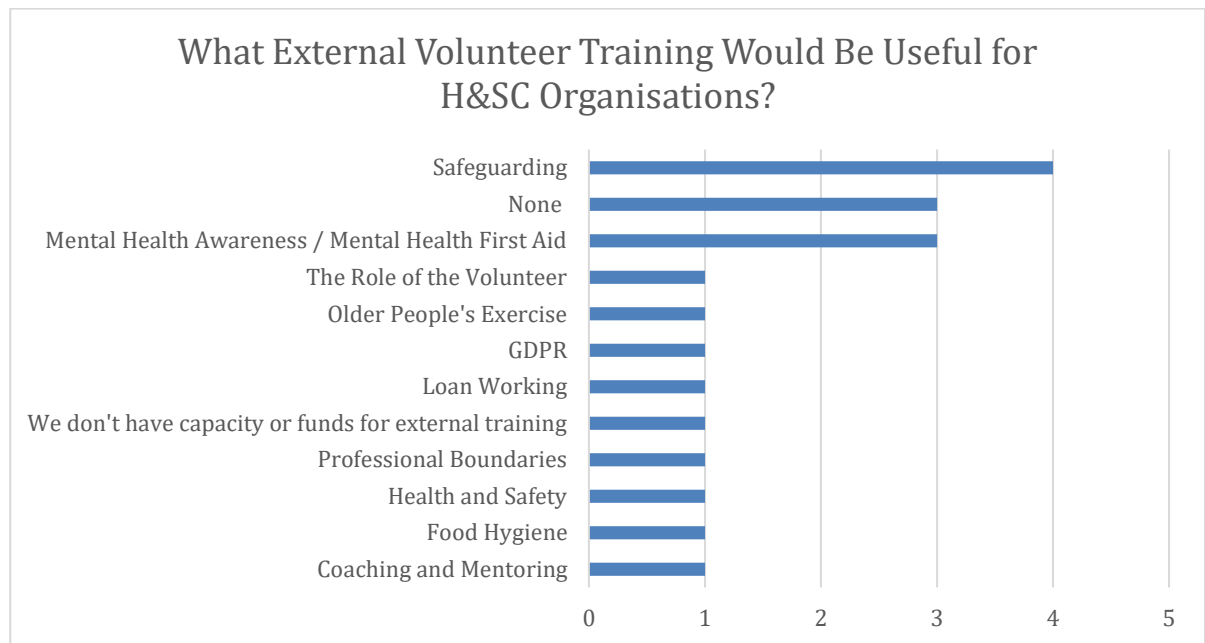
75% involved student volunteers aged 16-17 and 18+ in equal numbers. 2 organisations found recruiting students hard and 7 found it “OK”. Reasons given for finding recruiting students difficult varied in this group, and included their short-term availability, lack of sector knowledge, lack of confidence, lack of awareness amongst students about volunteering opportunities and ability to juggle around school commitments.

“Having access to be able to engage with them would help, perhaps we need a volunteer fair at colleges and universities.”

When asked what skills these organisations needed, and hoped volunteers could bring, a highly diverse range of skills were listed, similar to all organisations:

Volunteer Skills Sought by H&SC Organisations	Mentioned by How Many?
Reliability	2
Communication	2
IT	2
Interpersonal	2
Public Speaking	2
Fundraising	2
One on One Working with Clients	1
Non-Judgemental Attitude	1
Listening	1
Problem Solving	1
Peer Support / Mentoring	1
Social Media	1
Passion	1
Team Work	1
Lone Working	1
Working With Older People	1
Research	1
Working With Autistic People	1
Driving	1

For some of these organisations, safeguarding and mental health training for volunteers would be welcomed:



9 people who hadn't yet volunteered told us in the survey that they had experience of working in the Health and Social Care Sector and named a range of 11 unique skills they could bring to volunteering: youth work, therapeutic skills, admin, governance, care giving, nursing, safeguarding, communication, listening, IT and driving.

16 current volunteers had experience of working in the Health and Social Care Sector. Several volunteers felt volunteering had developed their interpersonal, emotional support, listening, organising and youth work skills. A broad range of individual skills had been gained through volunteering and were mentioned by 1 person each. During the volunteers' focus group, communication, people, and admin skills were mentioned by one volunteer each.

75% of volunteers with experience in the Health and Social Care sector did not feel they could learn any new skills from further volunteering.

One participant of the focus group for people who were not currently volunteering identified a key challenge:

"My daughter is on a health and social care course right now, and she and her classmates just cannot get on any work experience (volunteering) placements. She's keen to do it but there isn't anything available. If organisations targeted the colleges or the providers that would help. The experience that volunteering can bring, in understanding what the job may entail is so important, so they are missing a huge opportunity there."

4. Conclusions

This research has found that there is a clear, and urgent case to develop volunteer matching in Buckinghamshire. Organisations are offering a diverse range of flexible volunteering, yet most struggle to find volunteers with the time, skills, availability, and commitment needed, particularly admin and digital skills.

There are people seeking volunteering in Buckinghamshire with the time and skills organisations need, (particularly admin and digital skills) but many don't know how to find out about volunteer opportunities, and what is involved, often assuming the time commitment will be too big or too inflexible. Currently people looking to volunteer will use Google, look at Buckinghamshire Council website, or, if they are aware of it, the Volunteer Matching Service. The most popular way volunteers and potential volunteers want to find out about volunteering is through in person face to face recruitment events.

Potential volunteers also struggle with a range of specific barriers to volunteering which the Volunteer Matching Service and volunteer involving organisations could look to address. These include providing more flexibility, or making the existing flexibility of roles clearer, providing in person recruitment taster days and induction activities, actively targeting promotion of activities to underrepresented groups including men, working aged people, younger people, students, disabled people, and people from minority ethnic groups. Work is needed to ensure the beginning of a volunteer's journey from application to induction is smooth and expectations are managed to avoid an onerous onboarding process being a barrier to volunteer involvement.

For those currently volunteering, giving their time to causes they are passionate about is enjoyable, sociable and allows them to both use and gain an incredibly diverse range of skills. Since it's not clear to people not yet volunteering what the benefits might be, there is a need for significant awareness raising about what you can get out of volunteering, in addition to how to find out about roles, and that volunteering does not have to be a big commitment.

The Volunteer Matching Service is considered by organisations and volunteers in Buckinghamshire as the most effective way to recruit volunteers. Competing volunteer brokerage services such as Do-It and Reach are considerably less useful. For many people, the matching service could be more effective if a wider range of roles available (i.e., all those available in the county advertised by Reach and Do-It), and if the service could be conducted by email or self-serve, rather than a phone call which is not a preferred method of support for most people.

There was strong opposition from organisations of varying sizes to the implementation of a Volunteer Passport Scheme in Buckinghamshire. A small number of representatives of smaller organisations were curious about the potential benefits, particularly in capturing and assuring certain volunteer skills – however these organisations would not be willing to be part of a pilot scheme, instead preferring to see a scheme in action first. Research into Volunteer Passport Schemes and a review of existing models undertaken as part of this research shows that these schemes work best when delivered locally, with a focus on helping local people make a difference in their community, whilst building skills and employability through a skills and achievement record. They often involve a very small number of organisations and opportunities, requiring a “federation of trust” and strong relationships between organisations who share volunteers. Existing models often promote the benefits of volunteering such as enjoyment, wellbeing and skills development while raising awareness for the range and flexibility of opportunities. The scheme operated by Volunteer Centre

Newcastle involves 15 organisations and 30 roles and positions itself as an excellent way for those new to volunteering to “try before they buy” taking part in in person taster volunteer sessions, which people in Buckinghamshire would highly value, as this research has found.

In Buckinghamshire, volunteers generally do not need support to move between roles once they have started volunteering, but would find a universal DBS check and skills record, capturing training and experience from multiple roles and prior career useful, if it meant that it could make mandatory checks and induction less burdensome – a major barrier to new roles.

There was no consensus from organisations in the survey about what initial training could be usefully provided by a volunteer passport scheme, aside from compliance skills such as safeguarding, professional boundaries and health and safety. Organisations were strongly opposed to the introduction of a volunteer passport scheme, several were concerned that a Volunteer Passport Scheme could become a further barrier to volunteering and felt it important that initial training and DBS check remain inhouse within organisations, particularly medium to large local and national charities. Volunteers and organisations felt that the new upgraded DBS service was sufficient in addressing barriers related to onerous criminal record checks for volunteers.

Organisations would however value free external ongoing training and skills development for their volunteers, once recruited and onboarded inhouse, and would find a skills record for the volunteers they worked with and potential volunteers useful for organisations and useful for volunteers. Safeguarding is a particular volunteer training need, but organisations prefer to deliver this themselves bespoke to their organisation and clients’ needs. The implementation of a volunteer management system such as Volunteer Plus by Community Impact Bucks could provide a digital skills record whilst capturing and promoting a wider range of interesting volunteer roles.

Organisations do not find involving students of different ages especially difficult but do sometimes find fitting volunteer roles around students’ busy schedules harder. Health and Social Care organisations do tend to find volunteer recruitment more difficult and would welcome a wide range of skills volunteers could bring, rather than a set number of sector specific skills. Safeguarding and mental health training would be useful to access for some. Although no students took part in the research, the experience of the parent of a Health and Social Care student and some organisations indicates there is a need for better matching of student volunteers with Health and Social Care organisations, particularly for their study placements.

5. Recommendations

Raising awareness

1. Community Impact Bucks to raise awareness and challenge misconceptions about volunteering to tackle the barriers skilled people face. This should include promoting the diverse range of opportunities and flexibility on offer in the county, and the benefits of volunteering. Community Impact Bucks to encourage volunteer involving organisations to raise awareness and tackle misconceptions too.
2. Delivering in person volunteer fairs and encouraging organisations run volunteer open days would be an effective tool. In order to increase the diversity of volunteering in Buckinghamshire information campaigns should be targeted at the places where people from underrepresented groups may spend time, e.g., Men's Sheds projects, faith organisations, schools, colleges, LGBTQIA+ organisations.
3. Community Impact Bucks to support volunteer involving organisations to address practical barriers they may be creating for volunteers, such as inflexibility, overly onerous training and onboarding processes, and lack of timely of courteous responses to applicants.
4. Since the first-place people go to when they want to find out about volunteering is Google, Community Impact Bucks may wish to consider investing in search engine optimisation and Google Ads to promote the Volunteer Matching Service. Approaching Buckinghamshire Council in order to explore how further promotion could be offered will be useful for local people who have not heard of the Volunteer Matching Service.
5. The best way to engage new volunteers may be to promote the wide range of options and flexibility available – that volunteering can fit around lifestyles and does not have to be a big commitment.
6. The best way to engage with organisations may be to make a clear offer of support for volunteer recruitment, and to offer training for volunteers in a wide range of skills one they are in place in organisations.

Developing the Volunteer Matching Service

7. While there is no appetite currently for a volunteer passport scheme, there is an appetite for a greater number of opportunities to be added to the Volunteer Matching Service, and a universal skills record to be incorporated. Organisations and volunteers do not find Reach or Do-It to be useful, however those brokerage platforms offer a much wider choice of local volunteer opportunities. A useful development project could be for the Volunteer Matching Service team to contact the organisations advertising opportunities in Buckinghamshire through those platforms and encourage them to also use the service, which will mean the opportunities available will cater to a broader audience. Widening the categories of volunteer opportunity shown on the website may also support this. The new DBS check upgrade has been seen as a solution to frustrations volunteers previously held around the DBS process,

however Community Impact Bucks should monitor the experiences of volunteers and organisations to ensure that this is still the case.

8. By implementing a volunteer management system such as Volunteer Plus, which accommodates skills records and volunteer matching, Community Impact Bucks could provide increased volunteer matching. Community Impact Bucks should take care to avoid referring to this as a “passport” service, due to the negative perceptions volunteer involving organisations may have for the term.
9. The Volunteer Matching Service should review the current support offer and require potential volunteers to opt in to a phone call, with email support as default. The addition of a skills record within the Volunteer Matching Service should also be promoted as a great way for volunteers to use and gain skills, make a difference in their community, and access a range of volunteer opportunities. Organisations who sign up to the new skills record element of the Volunteer Matching Service should also be encouraged to offer taster sessions to encourage recruitment.
10. Community Impact Bucks should also explore potential funding opportunities to support the development of the Volunteer Matching Service, including the cost of expanding staff and volunteer resource, increasing outreach and engagement work and a new volunteer matching system. A review of existing funding sources of Volunteer Centres and other volunteer brokerage programmes has identified some potential funding sources:
 - Local Authorities are usually the core funders
 - Local Health and Social Care
 - Sport England (specifically for the promotion of sports roles)
 - #iWill Fund (via Volunteering Matters specifically for the support of young volunteers)
 - The National Lottery Community Fund (Reaching Communities and Awards for All)
11. Community Impact Bucks to consider resourcing for providing an increased range of ongoing skills training for volunteers once they are inducted and trained in house by organisations.

Developing careers in health and social care through volunteering

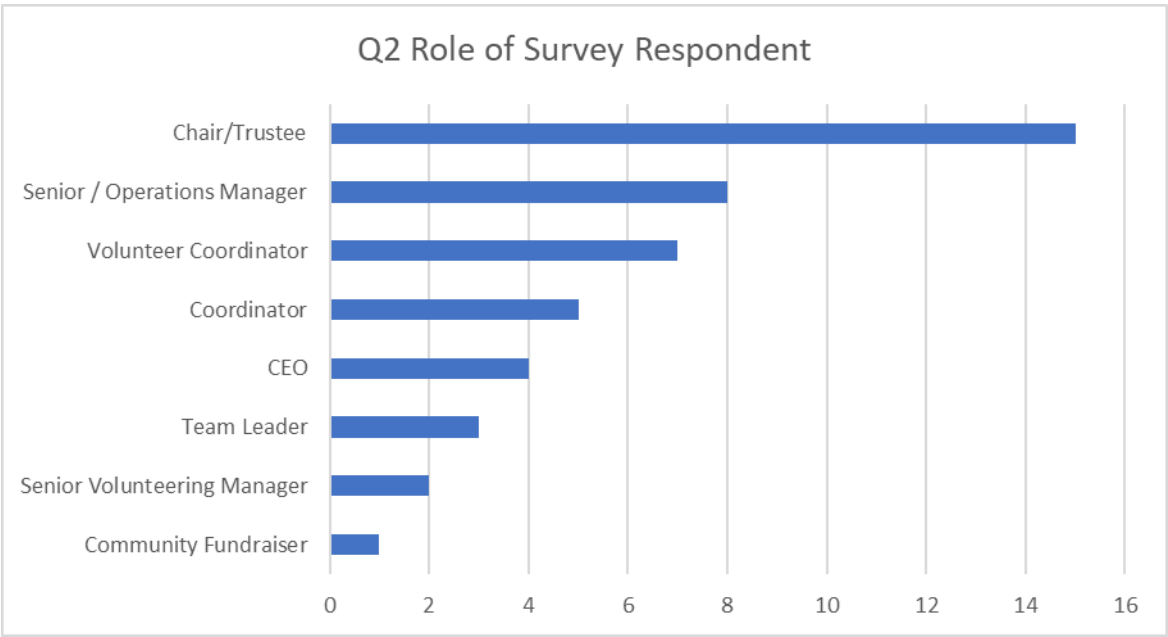
12. Community Impact Bucks and BHSCA should further explore the needs and preferences of students as volunteers, particularly in regard to developing skills which could support a career in Health and Social Care. The Volunteer Matching Service could be used to encourage organisations to sign up to the matching service and engage schools and colleges where students study Health and Social Care, to encourage more students to find out about and access volunteering and find placements.
13. The new skills record provided by the volunteer management system will support students' abilities to gain and demonstrate the wide range of skills Health and Social Care organisations need and find volunteer placements.

6. Appendix 1 Volunteer Involving Organisations Survey

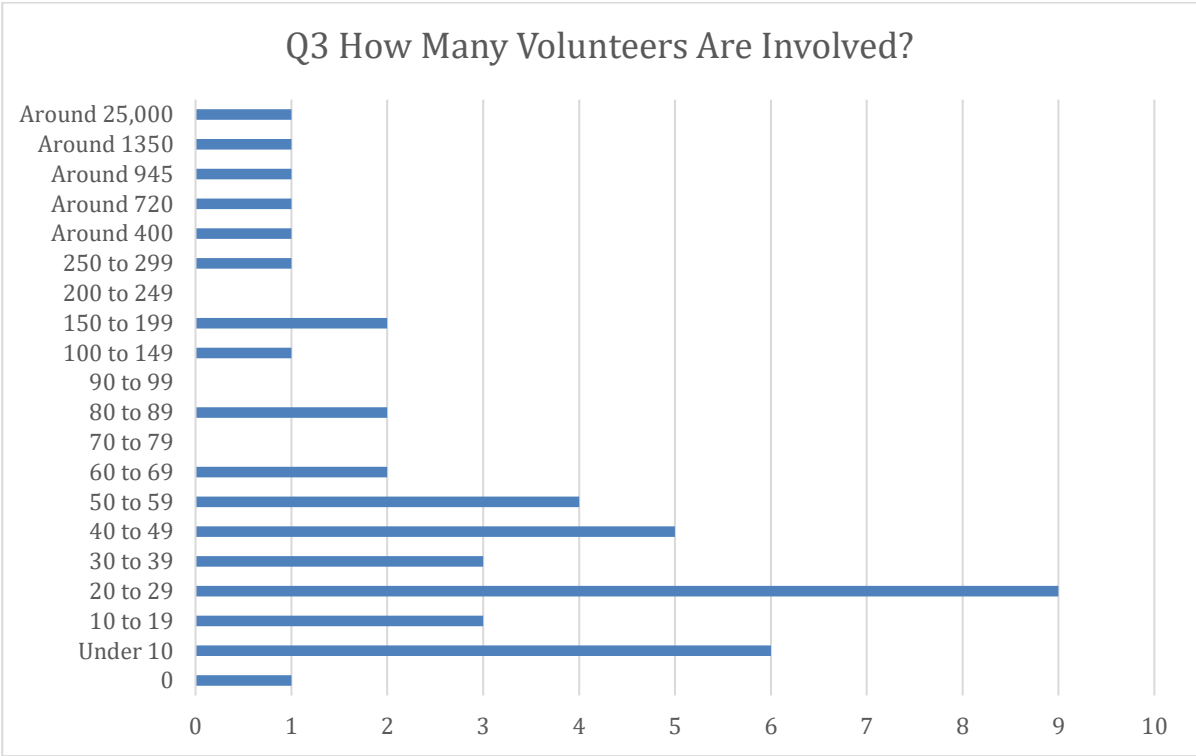
1. 45 Organisations Took Part

Action for Children, All Together Community, Autism Bucks, Bourne End Junior Sports Club, Brain Tumour Research, Buckinghamshire Council, Bucks College Group, Bucks Mind, Bucks SENDIAS Service - Buckinghamshire Council, Burnham Youth Club, Calibre Audio, Carers Bucks, Chesham in Bloom, Chiltern Foodbank, Chiltern Open Air Museum, Chiltern Society, Connection Support, Enrych Buckinghamshire, Farnham Royal Village Hall, Grow Together, Bucks CIC, Haddenham Community Library, Hairoun older adults day centre, Helen & Douglas House, Holmer Green Village Society, Iver Community Association, Lindengate Mental Health Charity, Marlow Age Concern, Marlow Museum, Medical Detection Dogs, MotherFibre, National Trust, NCT, Risborough Area Community Bus, Schoolreaders, Stoke Poges Memorial Gardens, Sustainable Amersham, Thames Valley Partnership, The Ivers Parish Council, The Theatre Shed, The Well@Lent Rise, Totteridge & Terriers News, Wednesday Lunch Club, Wendover Shed, Wycombe Talking Newspaper, Wycombe Youth Action

2. Role of Person Responding to Survey



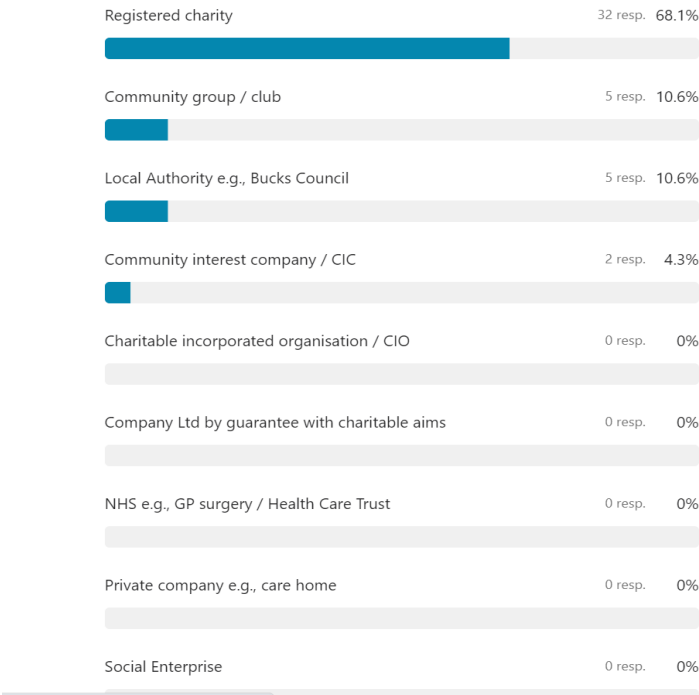
3. Numbers of Volunteers



4. Types of Organisations

✓ 4 Which best describes your organisation?

47 out of 47 people answered this question



Three responded “other” Education, Community Newsletter, Charity Shop

5. Are You Partnering With Any Orgs to Recruit Volunteers?

(This question was not compulsory and was skipped by the majority of respondents).

- Web-based recruitment channels
- Schools
- The Clare Foundation corporate exchange.
- Reach volunteering
- Community Impact Bucks Volunteer Matching Service
- No
- No

6. Does Your Organisation Deliver H&SC?

(This question was not compulsory and was skipped by the majority of respondents)

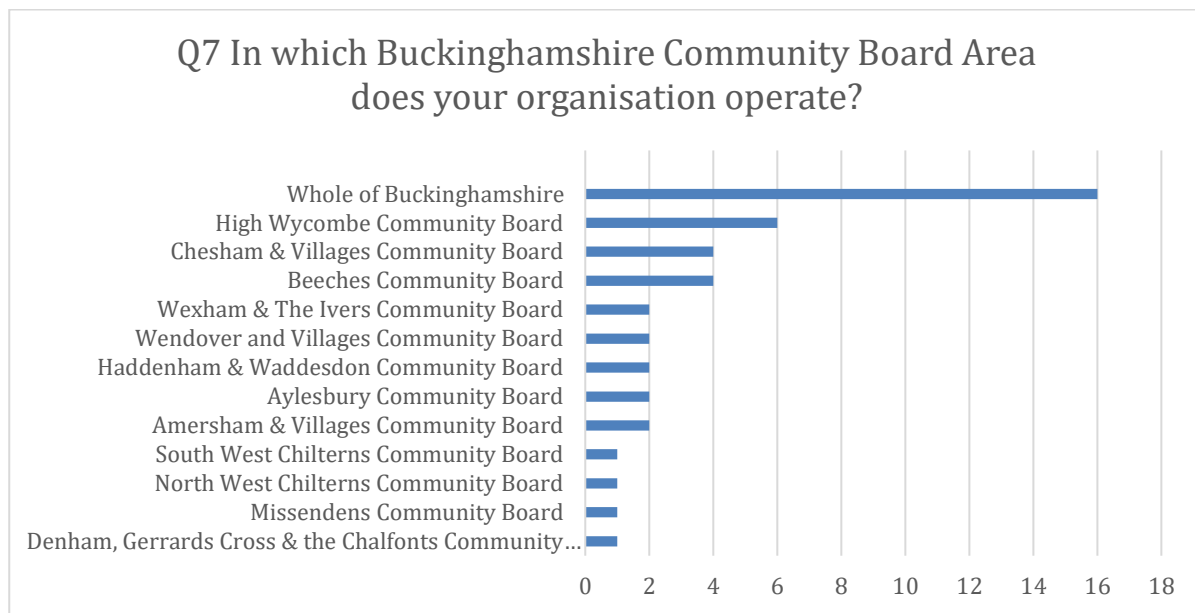
6

Does your organisation deliver health and social care?

5 out of 47 people answered this question



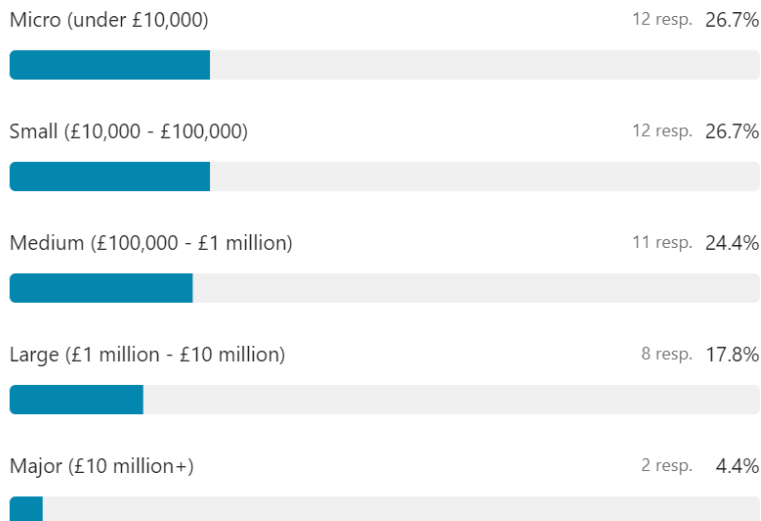
7. Where Do Organisations Operate?



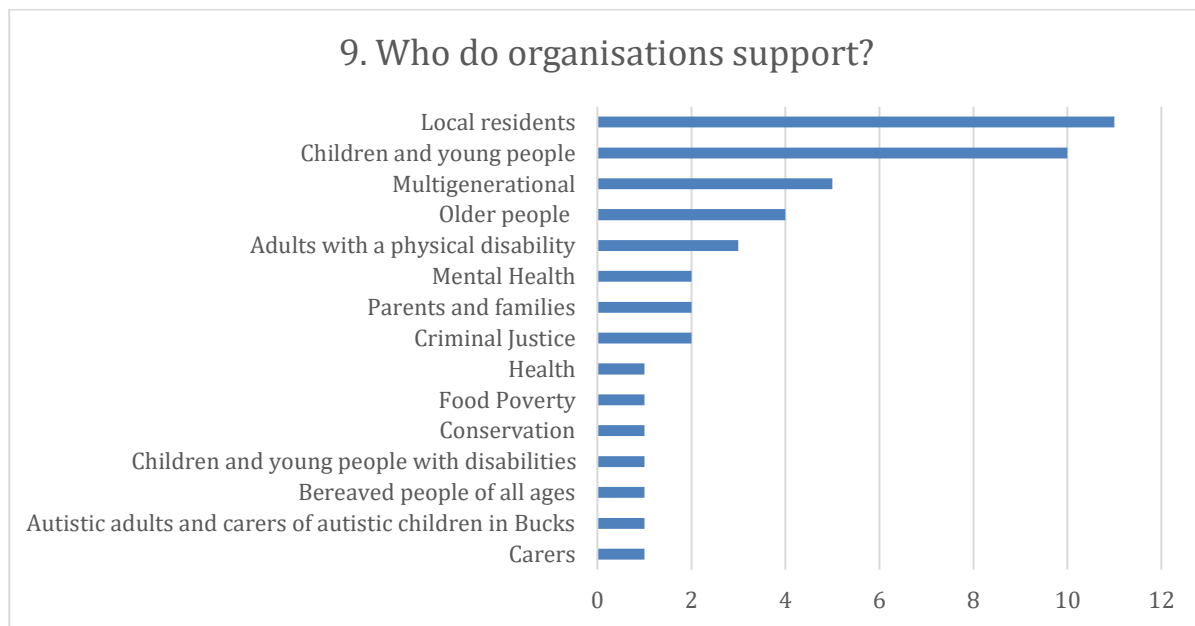
8. Size of Organisation

✓ 8 What size is your organisation based on annual income?

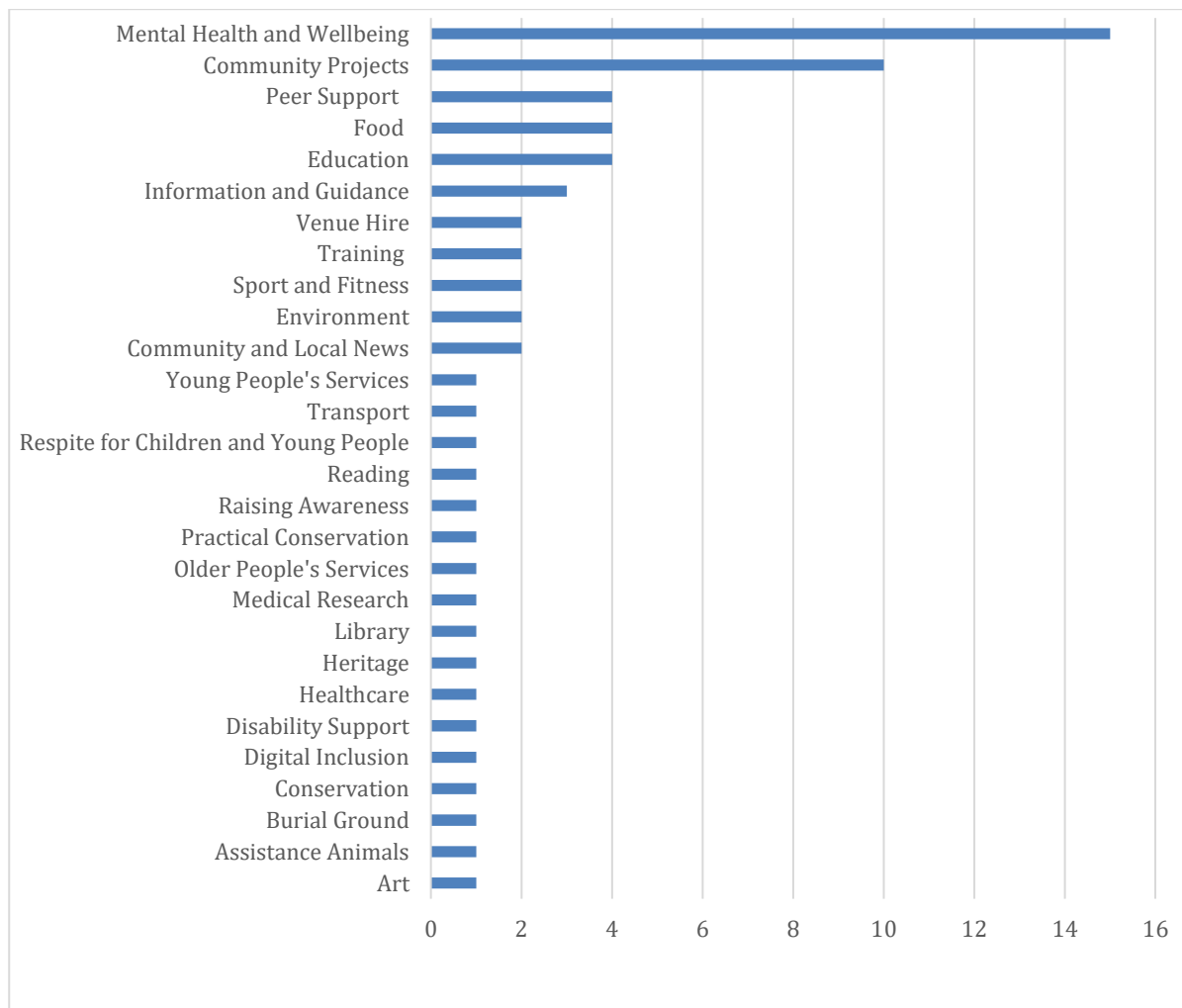
45 out of 47 people answered this question



9. Who Does The Organisation Support?



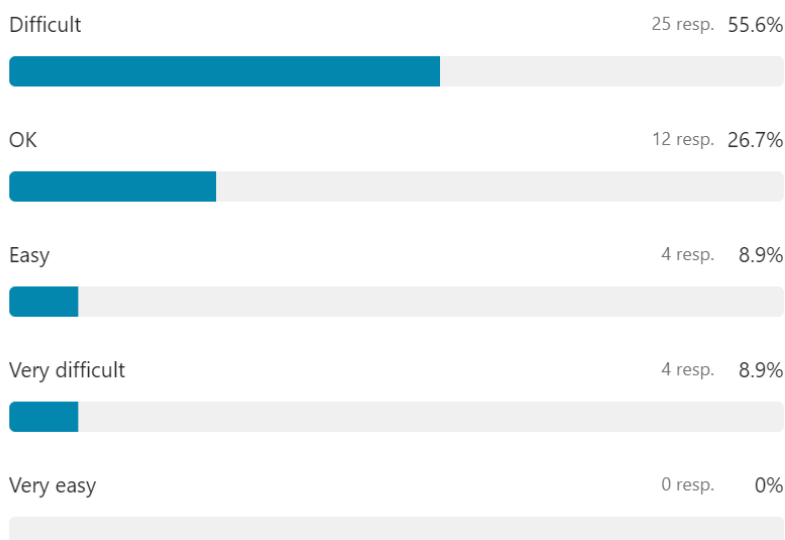
10. What Support and Services are Provided?



11. How easy do you find recruiting volunteers to your organisation?

✓ 11 How easy do you find recruiting volunteers to your organisation?

45 out of 47 people answered this question



12. What are the main barriers your organisation faces in recruiting volunteers?



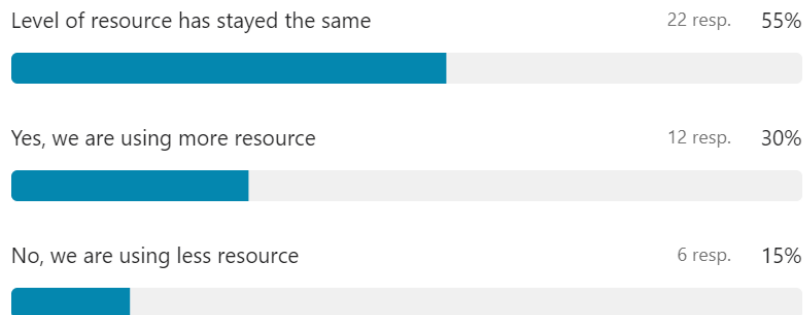
13. What are the biggest drains on your organisation's resources for involving volunteers?



14. How Much Has This Changed?

✓ 14 Has this changed in recent years?

40 out of 47 people answered this question

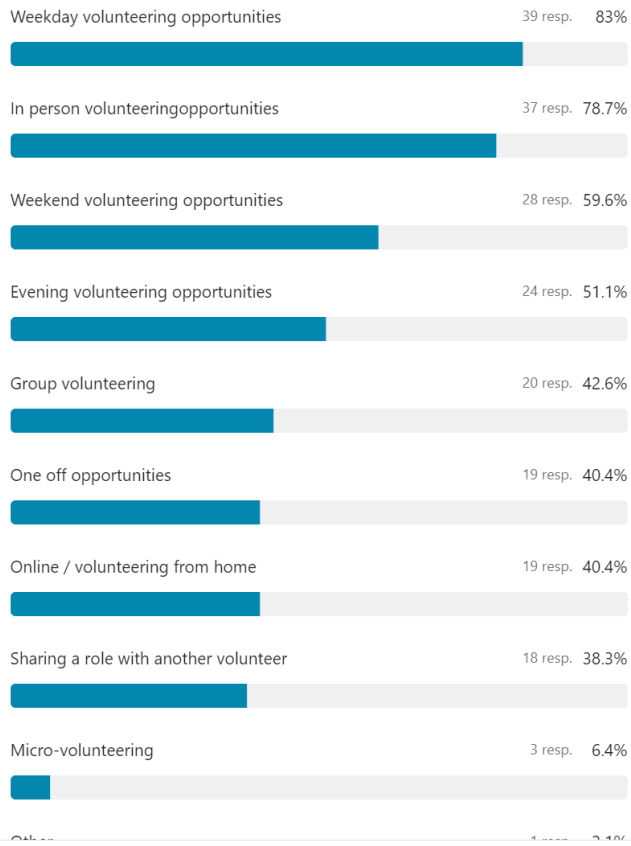


15. Does Your Organisation Offer Any of The Following?

✓ 15

Does your organisation offer any of the following?

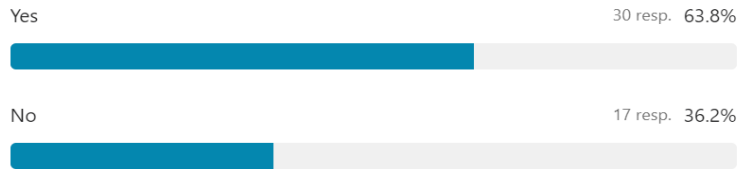
47 out of 47 people answered this question (with multiple choice)



16. & 17. Does Your Organisation Involve Student Volunteers?

16 Does your organisation involve student volunteers?

47 out of 47 people answered this question



17 What age students do you involve?

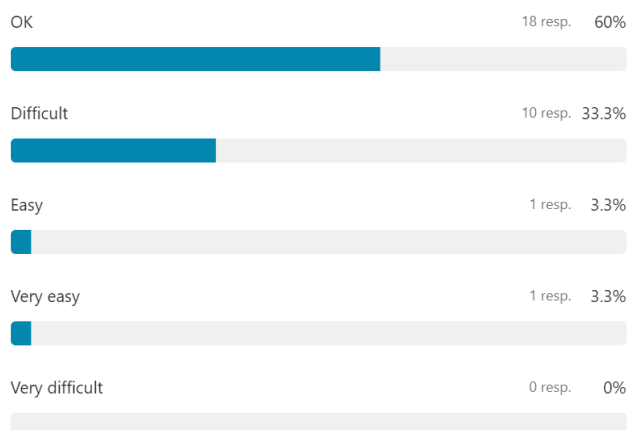
30 out of 47 people answered this question (with multiple choice)



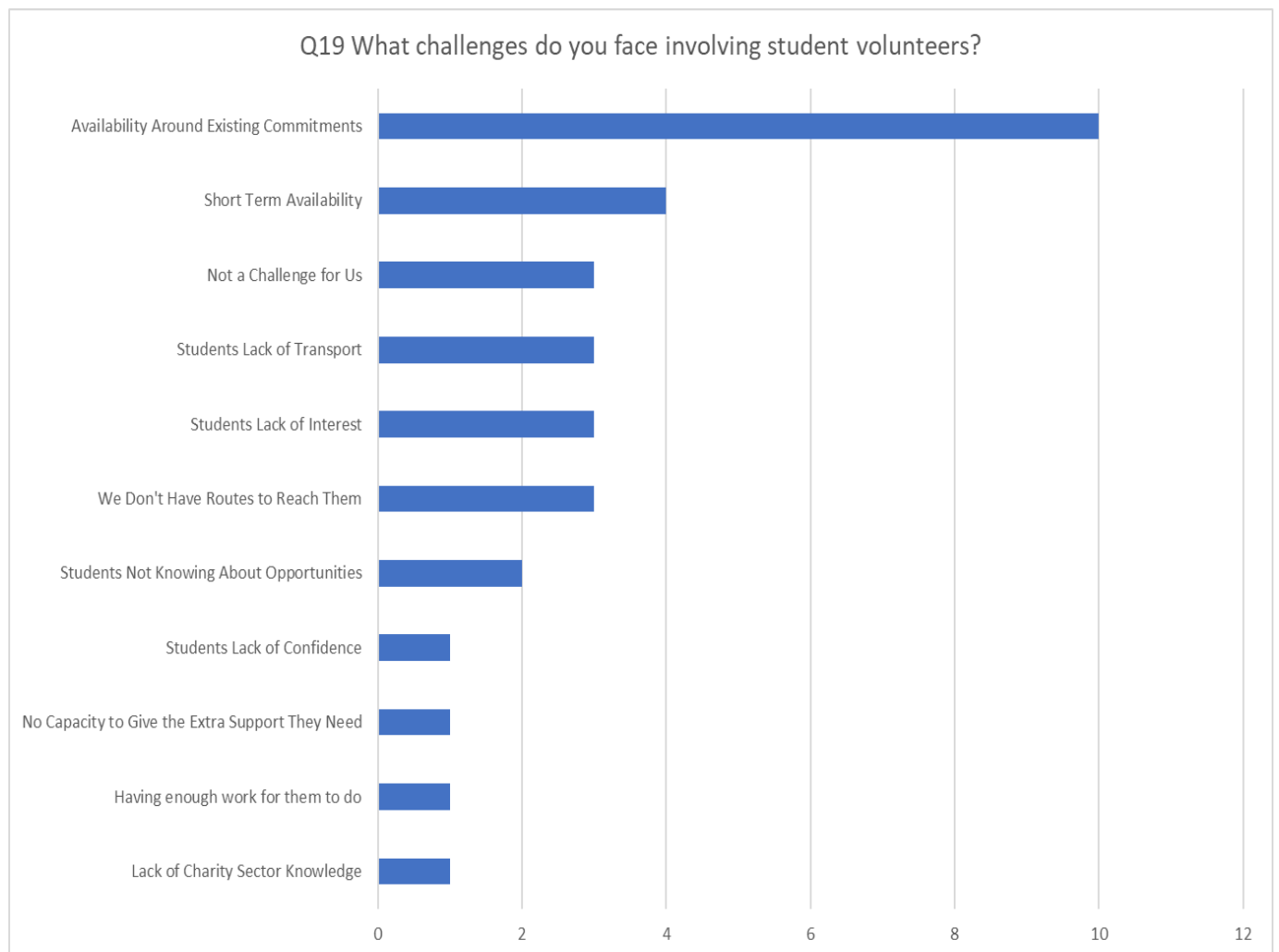
18. How Easy Is it to Involve Student Volunteers?

18 How easy do you find involving student volunteers?

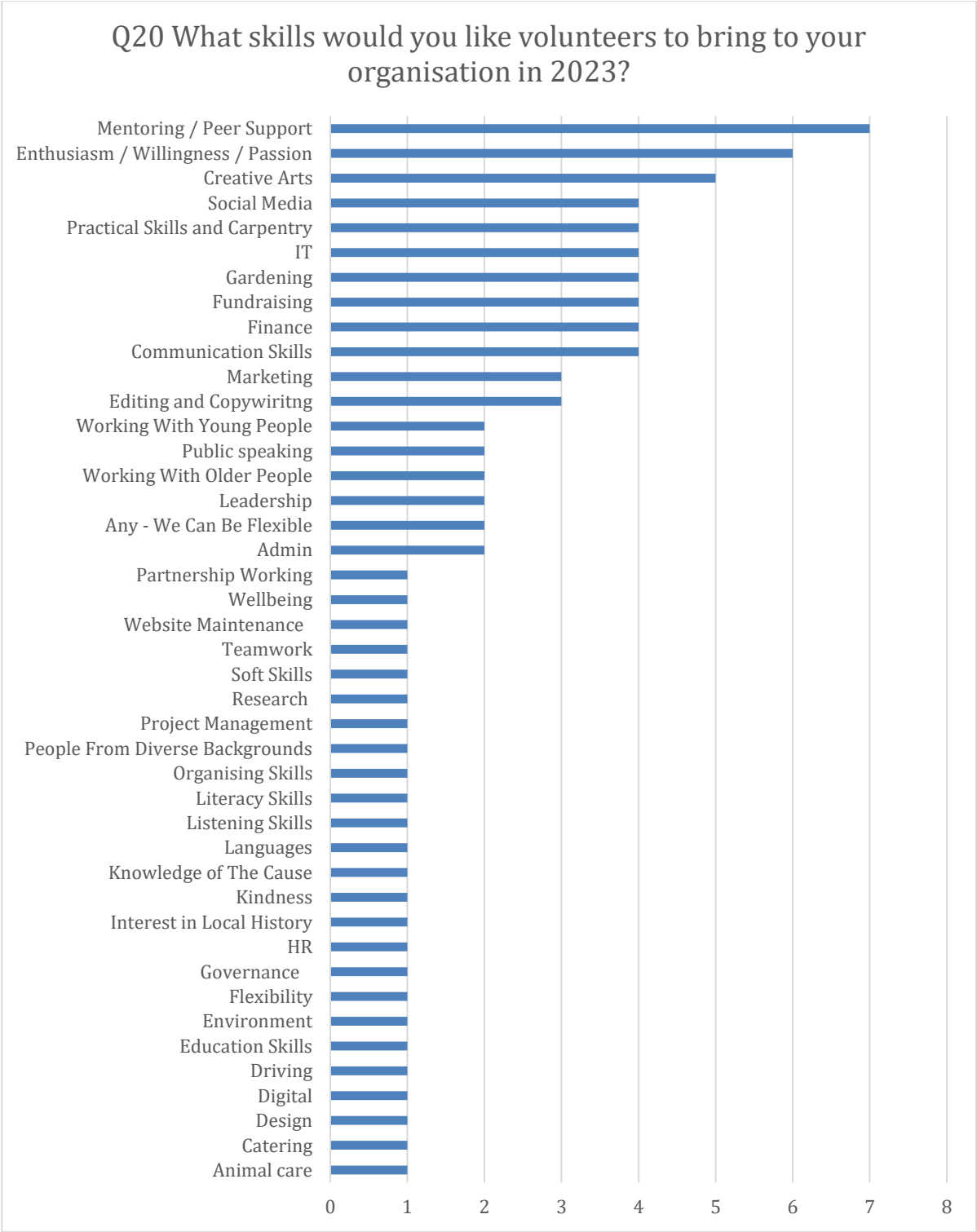
30 out of 47 people answered this question



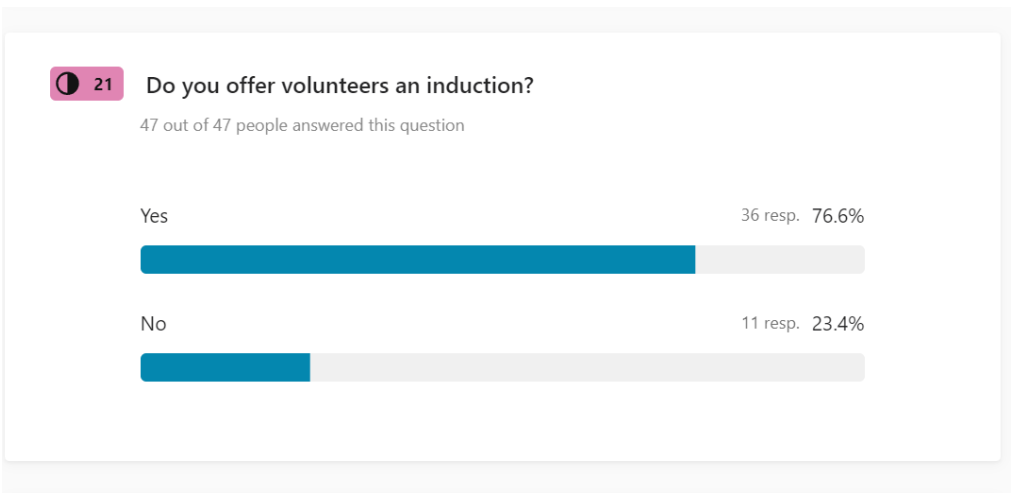
19. What challenges do you face involving student volunteers?



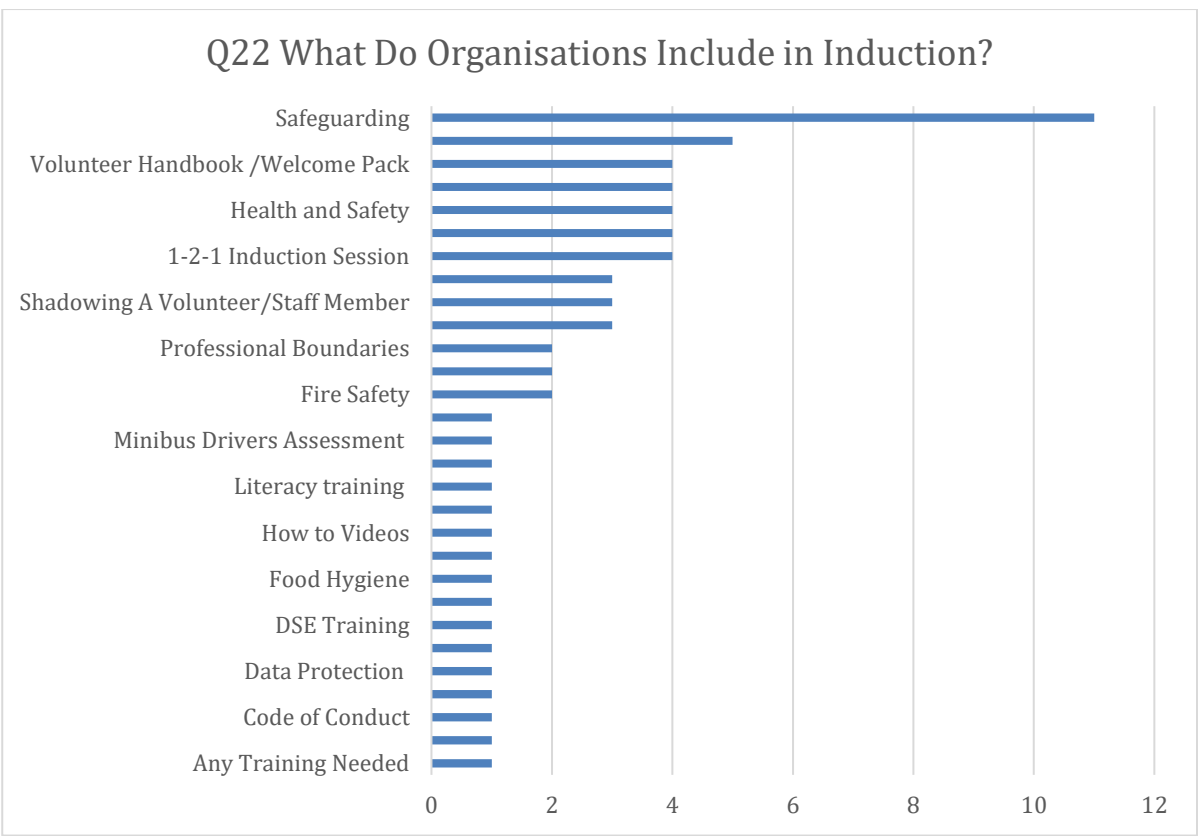
20. What skills would you like volunteers to bring to your organisation in 2023?



21. Do you offer volunteers an induction?



22. What is included in the induction?



Q23, 24 Do you offer volunteers ongoing training?

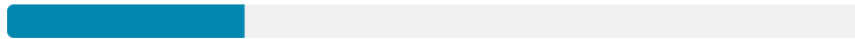
23 Do you offer volunteers ongoing training?

47 out of 47 people answered this question

Yes 34 resp. 72.3%



No 13 resp. 27.7%



24 What training do you offer?

33 out of 47 people answered this question (with multiple choice)

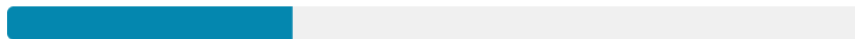
In house face to face training 27 resp. 81.8%



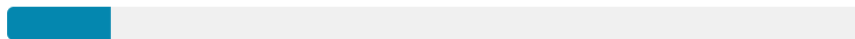
eLearning 16 resp. 48.5%



External training provider 11 resp. 33.3%

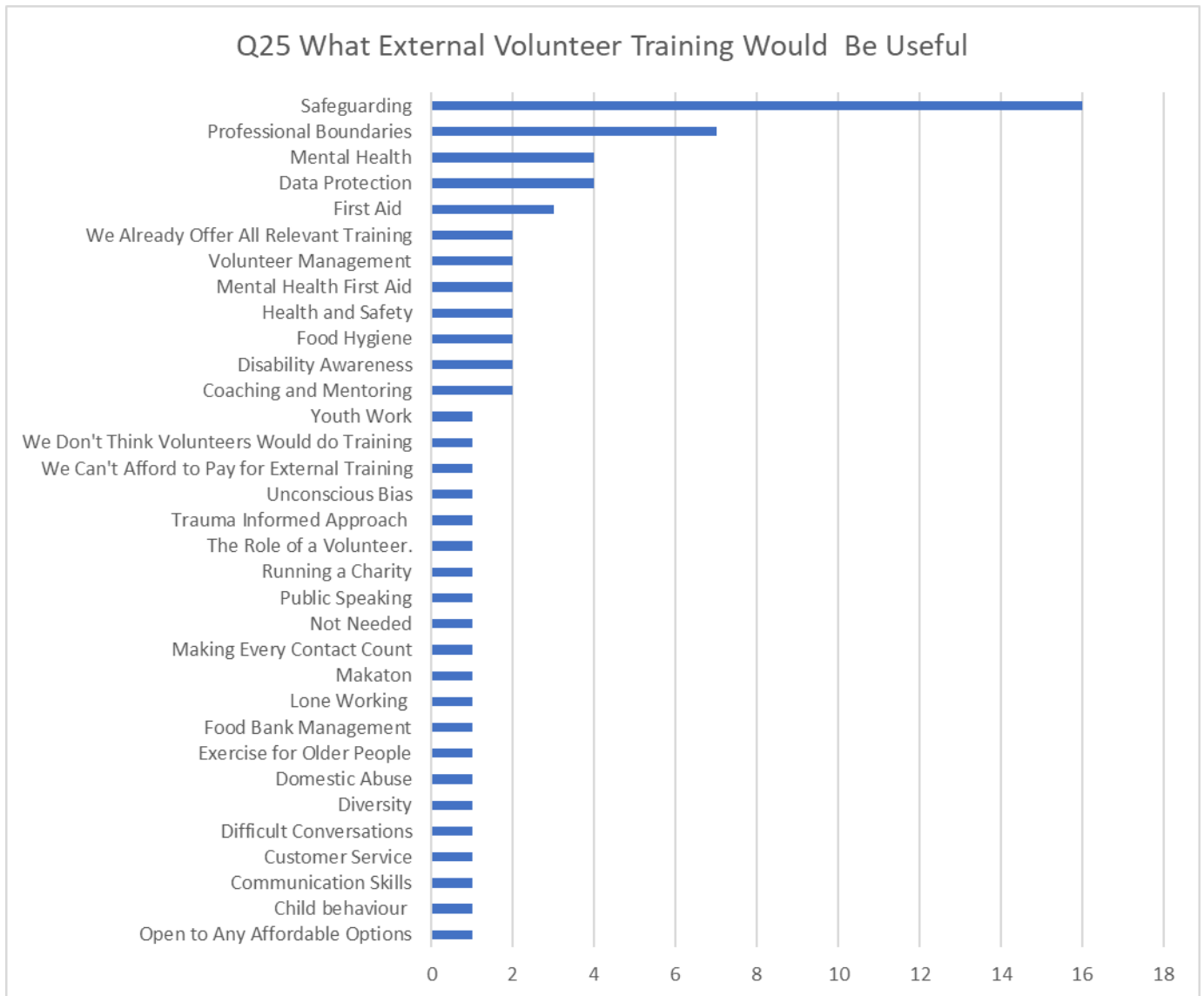


Other 4 resp. 12.1%



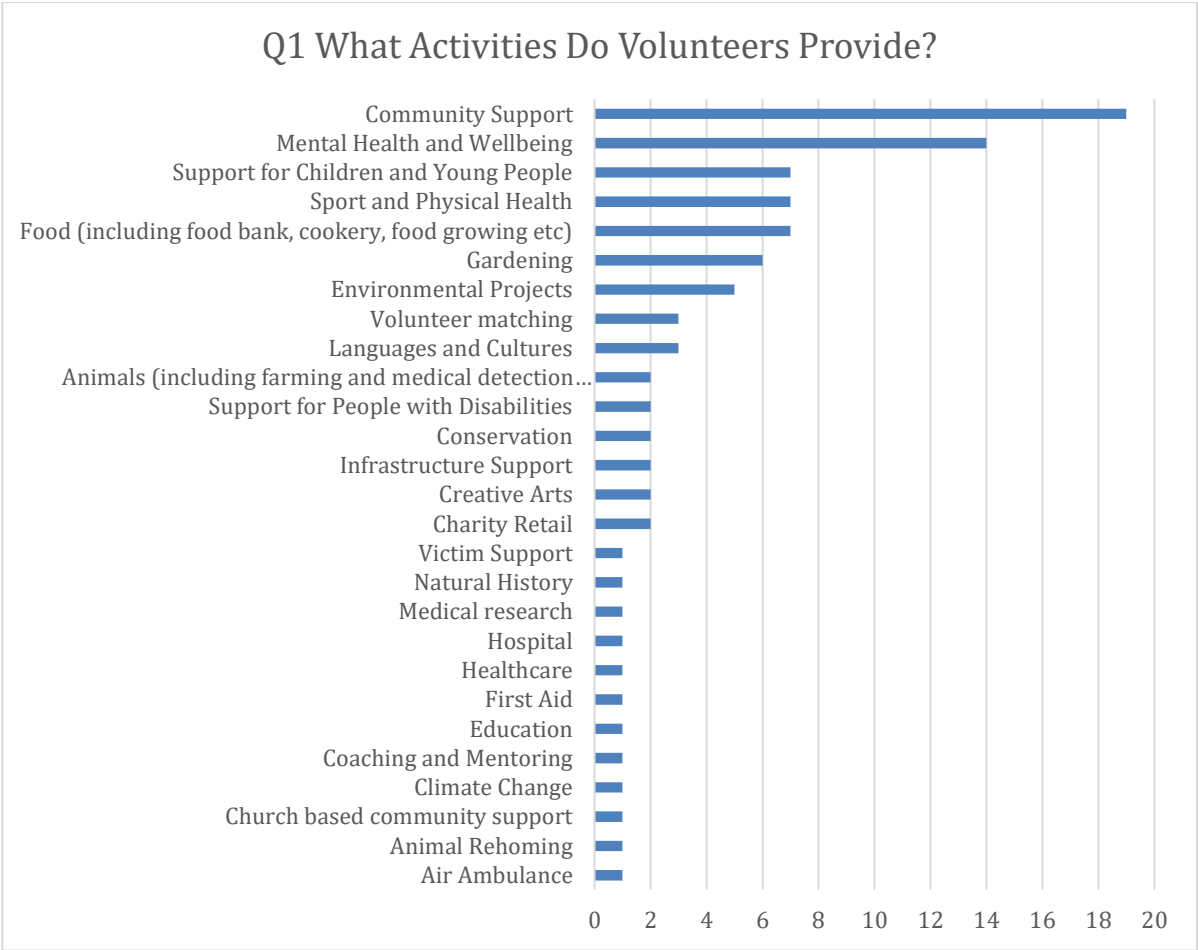
Other - In house online live sessions, volunteer development sessions, Ongoing support and updates, Opportunities to do training if they want to, but Volunteers don't usually have enough time

25. What external volunteer training would you find useful?

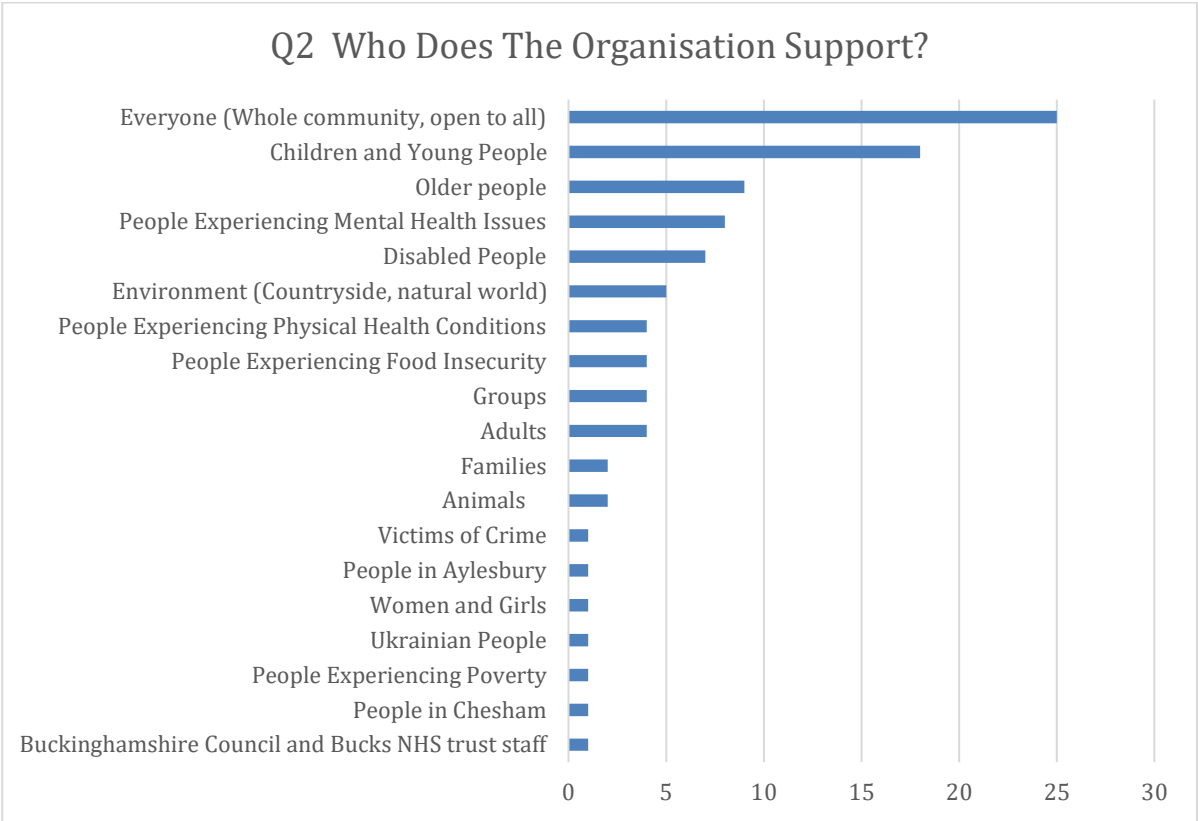


7. Appendix 2 Volunteer Survey

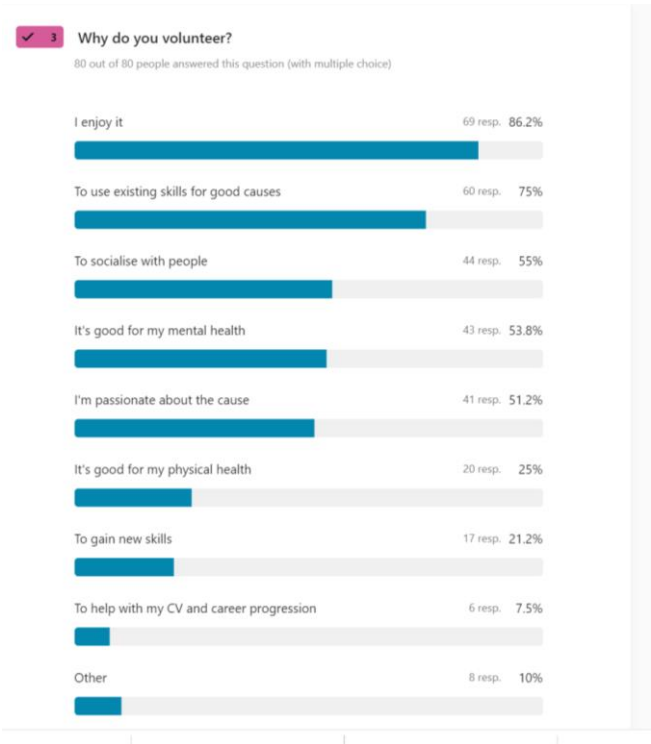
1. What Activities Do The Organisations Volunteers Work With Deliver?



2. Who Does the Organisation You Volunteer With Support?



3. Volunteer Motivations?

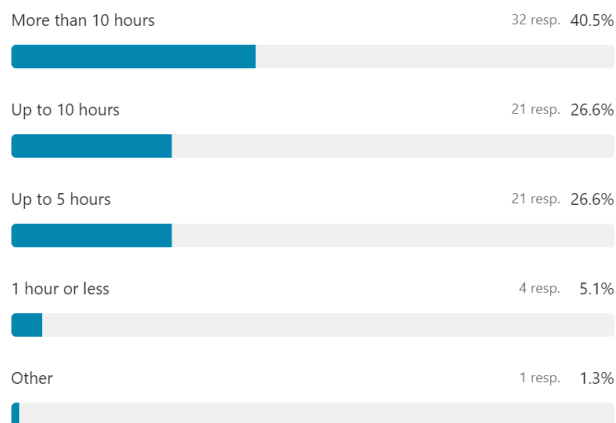


Other: To support and be a caring, listening ear, to give my children opportunities - no running club if I don't help, to help people get home quicker, to promote a sense of belonging and worthiness, it's important to me to be busy, to assist with those wishing to gain skills, put something back, I took early retirement.

4. How Much Time Do You Spend Volunteering in a Typical Month?

✓ 4 How much time do you spend volunteering in a typical month?

79 out of 80 people answered this question



One off day

3 days ago

5. Are You Happy With How Much Time You Spend Volunteering?

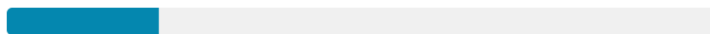
✓ 5 Are you happy with how much time you spend volunteering?

79 out of 80 people answered this question

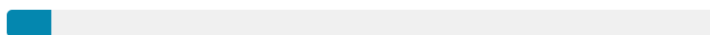
The time I spend volunteering is about right for me 48 resp. 60.8%



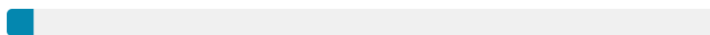
I'd like to volunteer more 17 resp. 21.5%



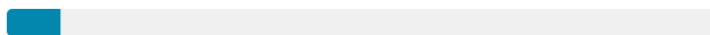
I'd like to volunteer less 5 resp. 6.3%



I do not wish to volunteer anymore 3 resp. 3.8%



Other 6 resp. 7.6%



If I didn't work I would volunteer more - life is too busy I would rather not volunteer, but it will be children who miss out

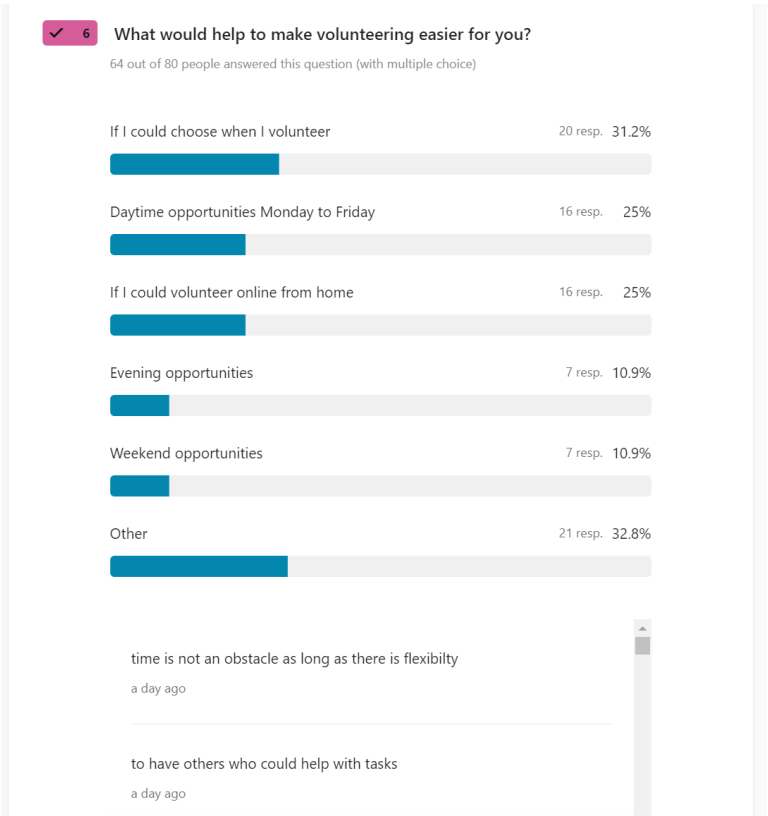
2 days ago

I like it , just family and work commitments come 1st

3 days ago

Other: If I didn't work, I would volunteer more - life is too busy. I would rather not volunteer, but it will be children who miss out. I like it , just family and work commitments come first. I do volunteer more but for another organisation. I would like to use the skills I have. It's a moveable feast.

6. What Would Help Make Volunteering Easier for You?

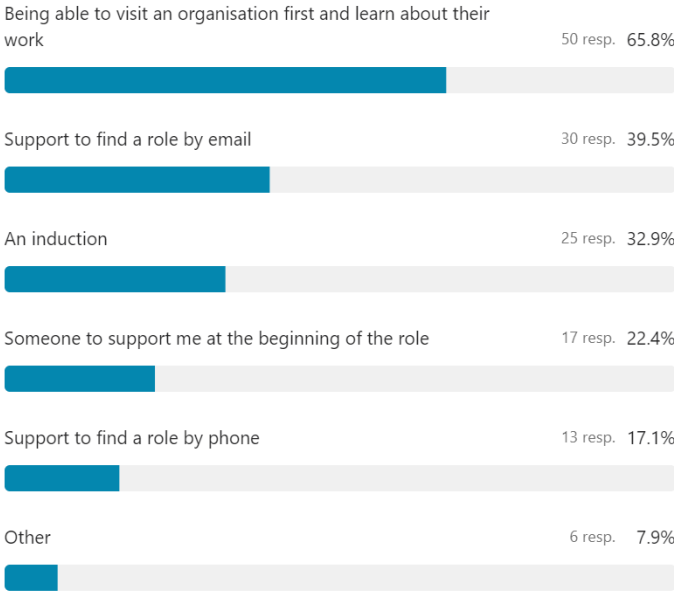


Other: time is not an obstacle as long as there is flexibility. To have others who could help with tasks. Nothing it's easy as it is! Reduced travel time. Does not really apply. More volunteers to take over some of the tasks. More hours in the day - time freed from work to volunteer. More paid annual leave to support organisation. Everything changed during the pandemic and has not been able to find a new way of being in the current time. The team leader stepped down and some key volunteers stepped back due to personal health situations. A new team leader with the vision and gifts could enable more to happen. Expenses having time off each week to volunteer more volunteers to spread the load. It's good as it is. If we had more volunteers. Works for me no change. If I didn't have to work full-time. Have the youth club in a day that suits me better, however I manage. Resources and covering costs. More opportunities to volunteer in general. It is fine. To attract more skills growers to volunteer with us and accept responsibility.

7. If you were looking for a new volunteer role, what support would you find useful?

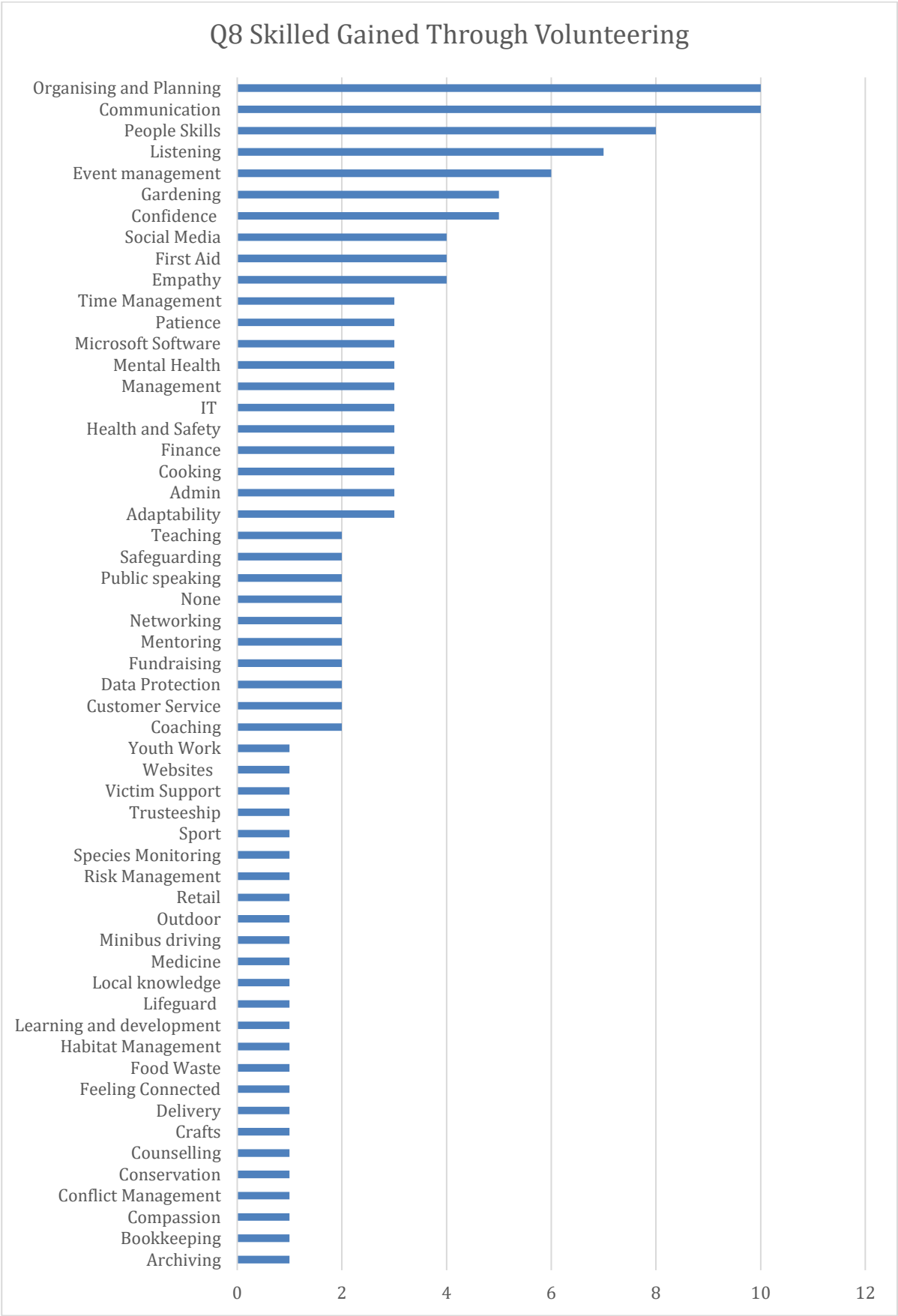
✓ 7 If you were looking for a new volunteer role, what support would you find useful?

76 out of 80 people answered this question (with multiple choice)

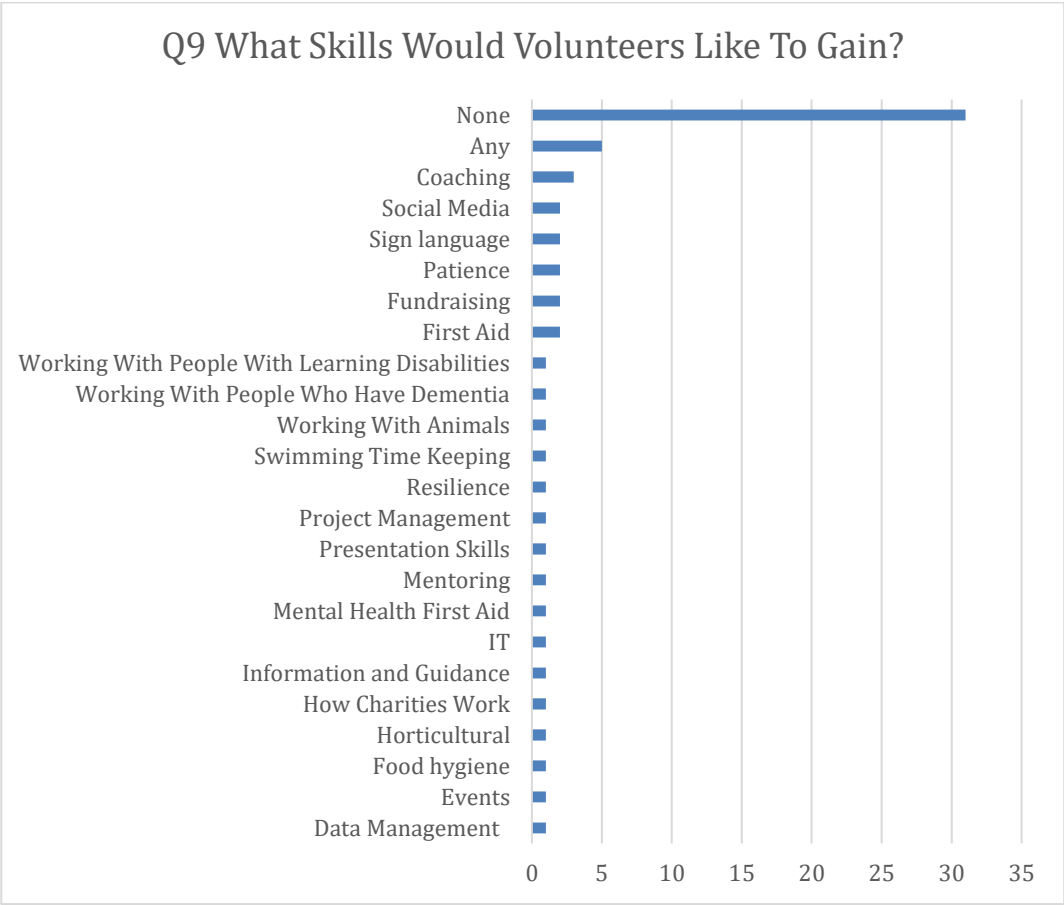


Other: To be able to try it out for a month or so without committing to it. Plenty of people asking me to volunteer already. Information about the role. Somewhere to search online for currently available local relevant opportunities

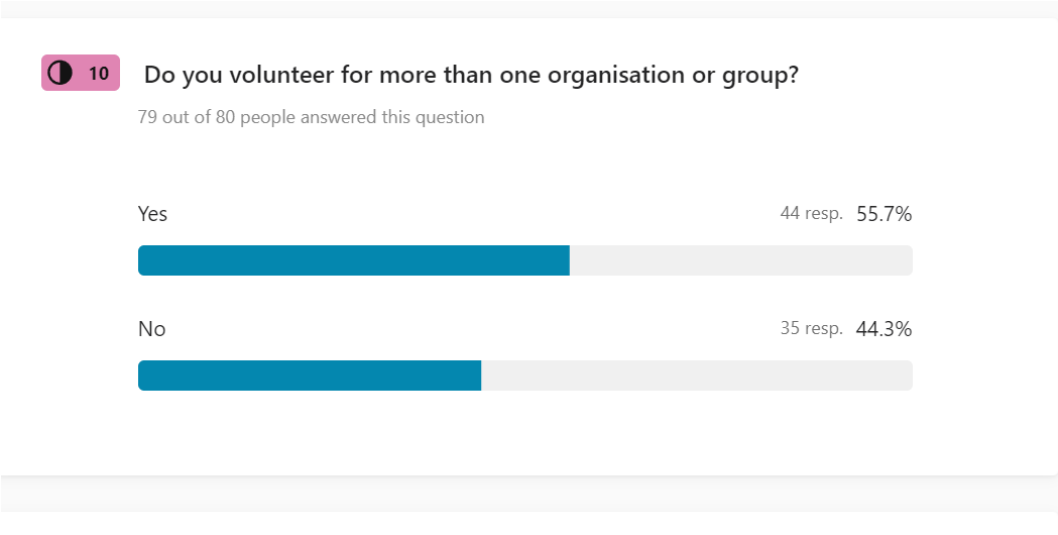
8. What transferrable skills have you gained through volunteering?



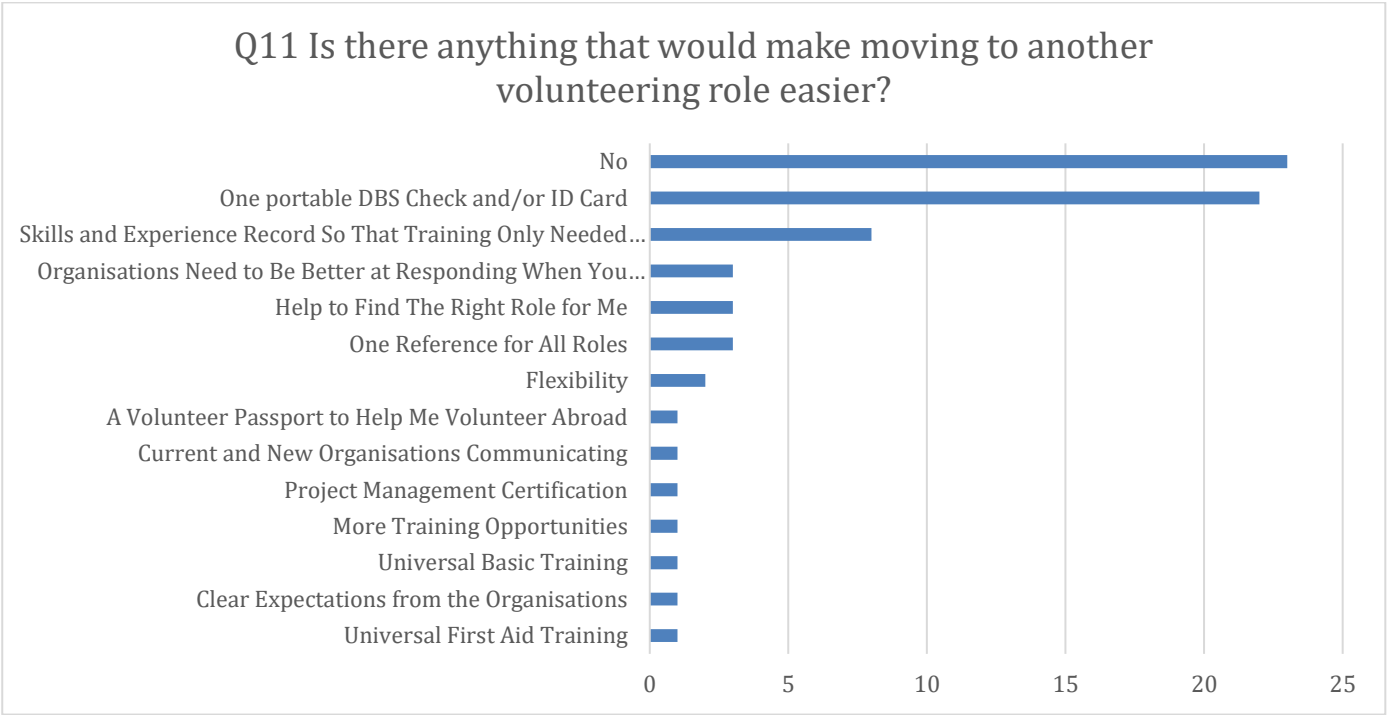
9. Are there any new skills you would like to learn through volunteering?



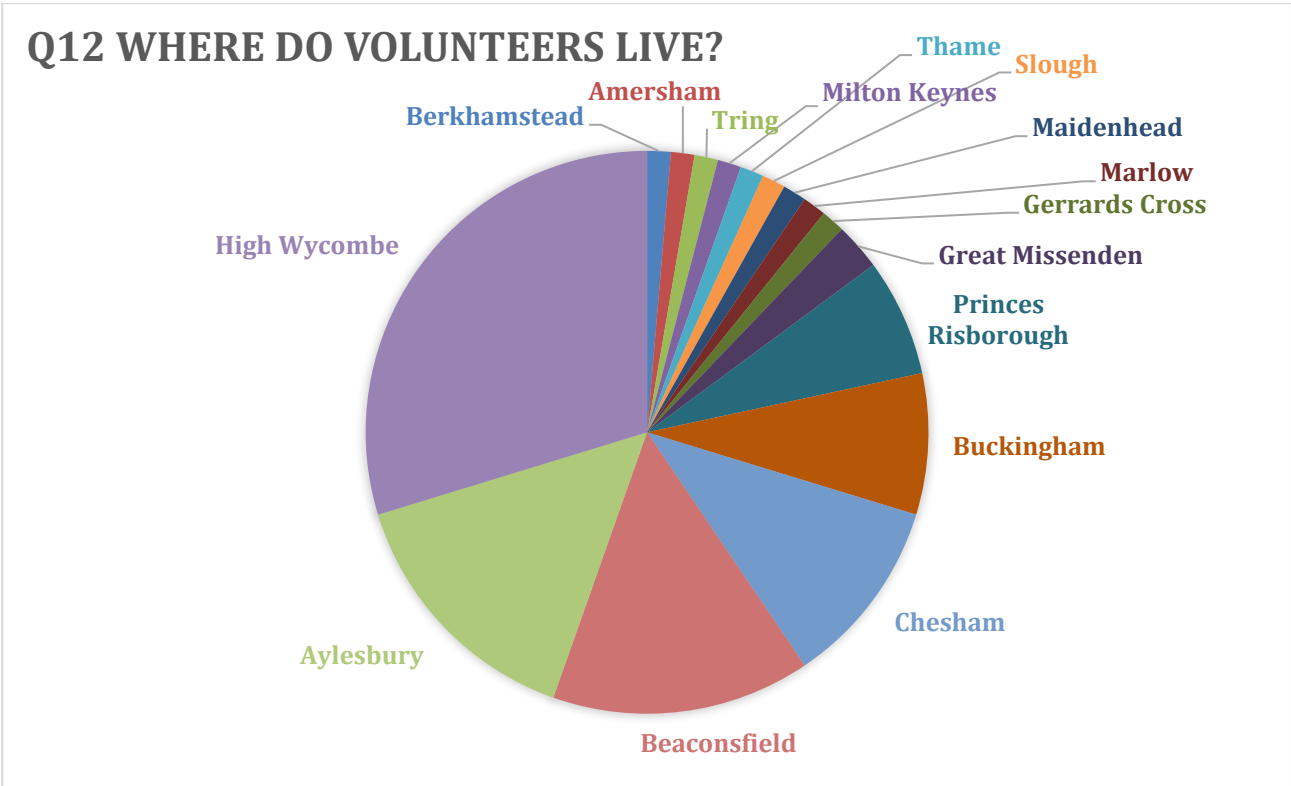
10.Do you volunteer for more than one organisation?



11.Is there anything that would make moving to another volunteering role easier?

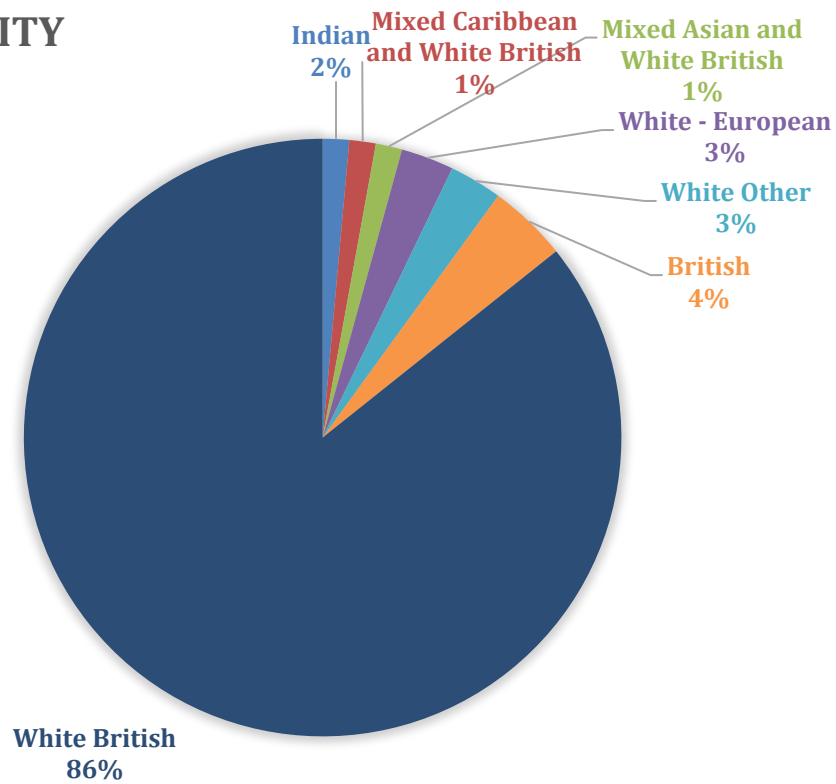


12.Where Do Volunteers Live?



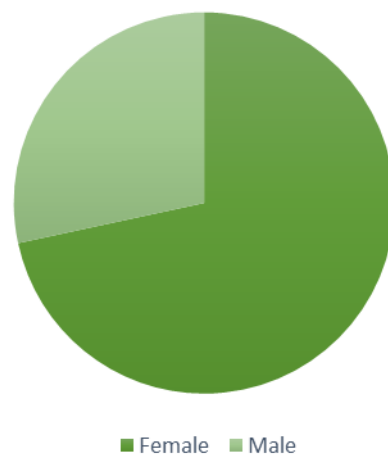
13. Volunteers Ethnicity?

Q13 ETHNICITY

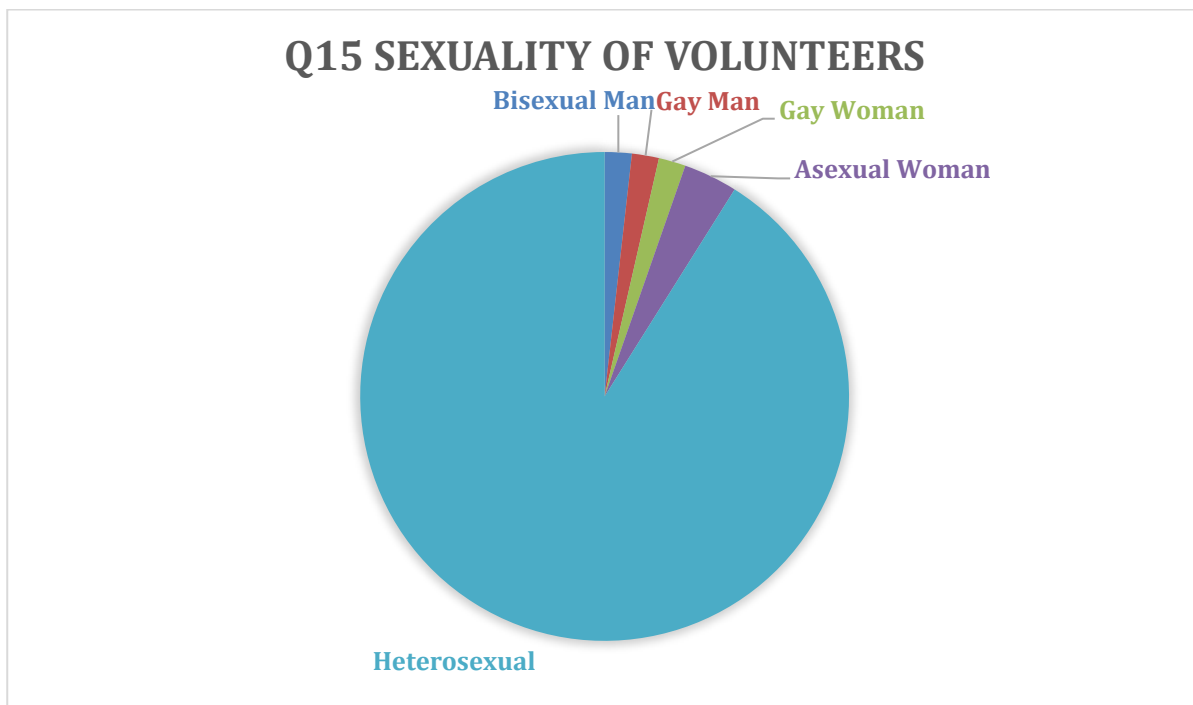


14. Volunteers Gender?

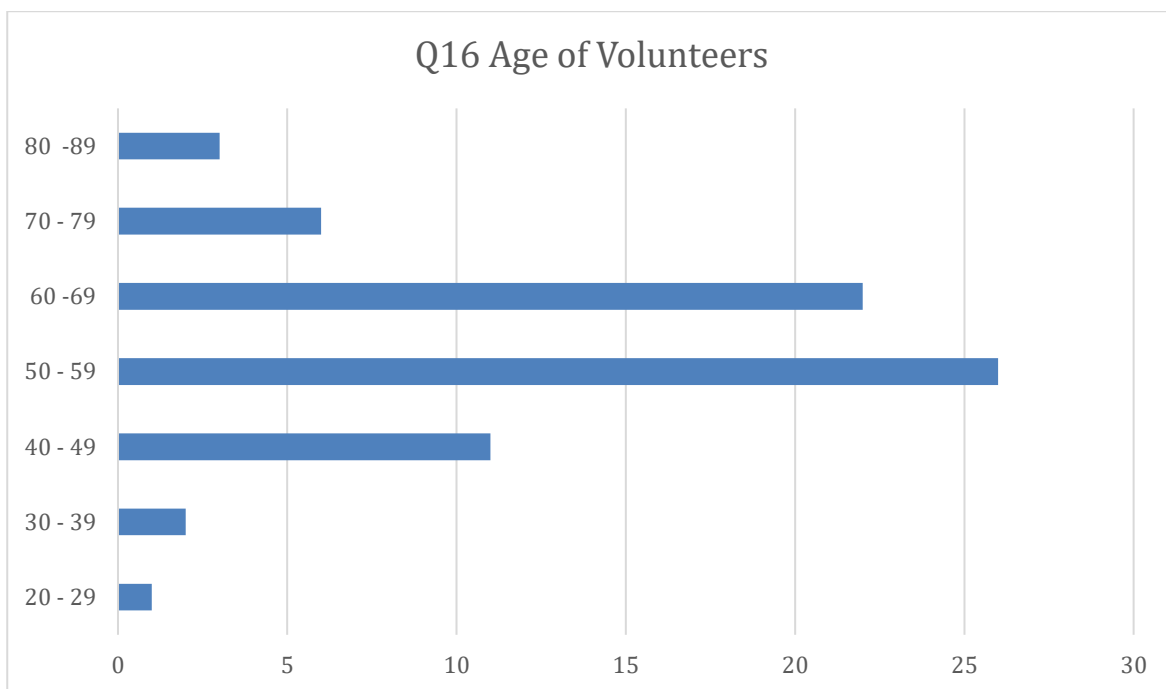
Q14 Gender of Volunteers



15. Volunteers Sexuality?



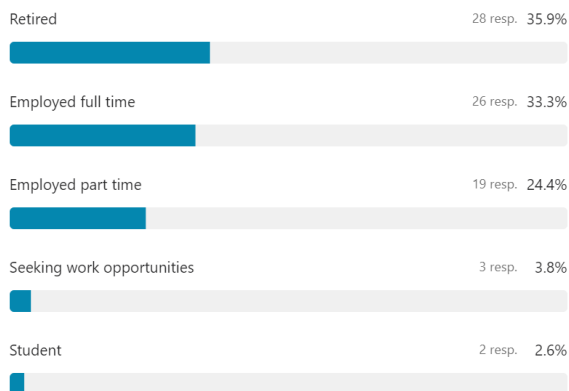
16. Volunteers Age?



17. What is your employment status?

✓ 17 What is your employment status?

78 out of 80 people answered this question



18. Have Volunteers Worked in the H&SC Sector?

18 Do / did you work in the Health and Social Care sector?

73 out of 80 people answered this question



19. Do you consider yourself to have a disability?

19 Do you consider yourself to have a disability?

80 out of 80 people answered this question



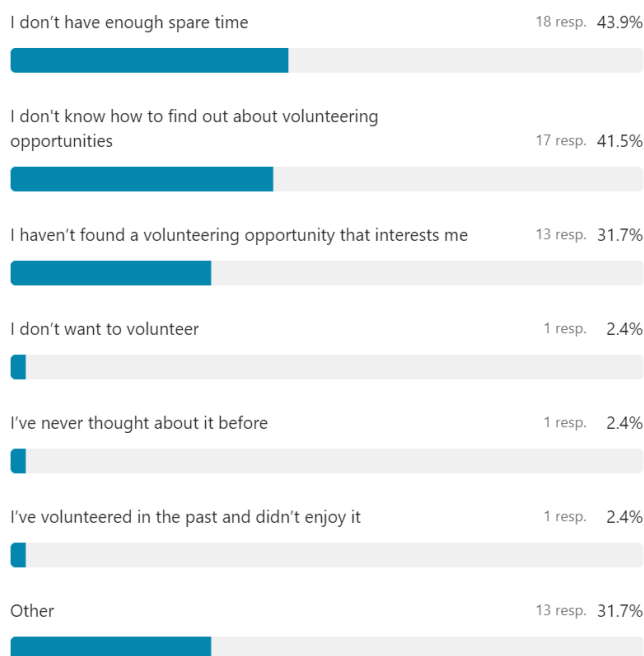
What Support Could Help: A support worker. A single portal to search and find opportunities. None. Opportunities in my local area that don't require driving. Mental health support. emails/text-based communication rather than phone calls, not needing to travel out as often outside of main volunteering activities (e.g., for induction meetings/supervisions), understanding and acceptance of disabilities/willingness to learn. more Zoom contact / meeting 1:1 with those in the Bellingdon/Chesham area

8. Appendix 3 People Who Don't Yet Volunteer Survey

1. What barriers have stopped you from getting involved in volunteering?

✓ 1 What barriers have stopped you from getting involved in volunteering?

41 out of 42 people answered this question (with multiple choice)

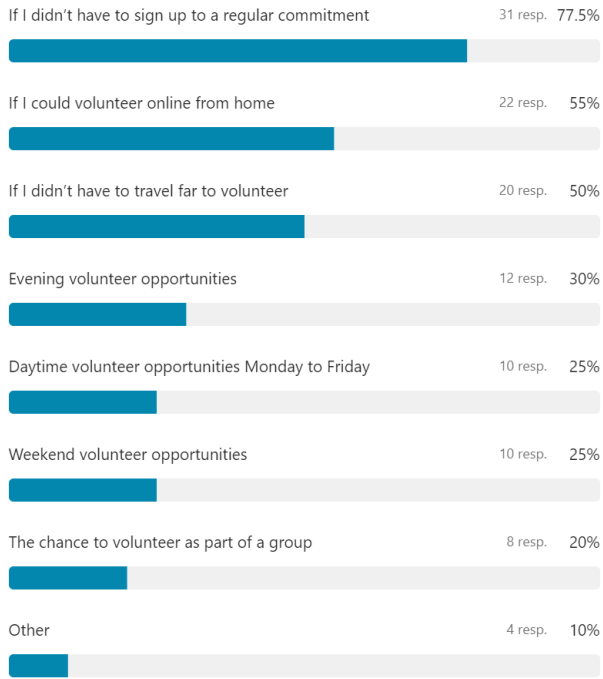


- Lack of (organisation's) flexibility can make you seem unreliable
- Too much red tape
- I don't have any barriers
- I have volunteered in the past but haven't got around to looking at new opportunities
- Am disabled
- Lack of public transport
- I'm still working p/t
- Timings clash with work for the types of volunteering I'd like to do
- Often when you look at volunteering sites, they want to match your present work skills I volunteer I may want to try something different from my day job.
- I haven't found a volunteering opportunity that uses my skills or professional experience

2. What would make getting involved in volunteering easier for you?

✓ 2 What would make getting involved in volunteering easier for you?

40 out of 42 people answered this question (with multiple choice)



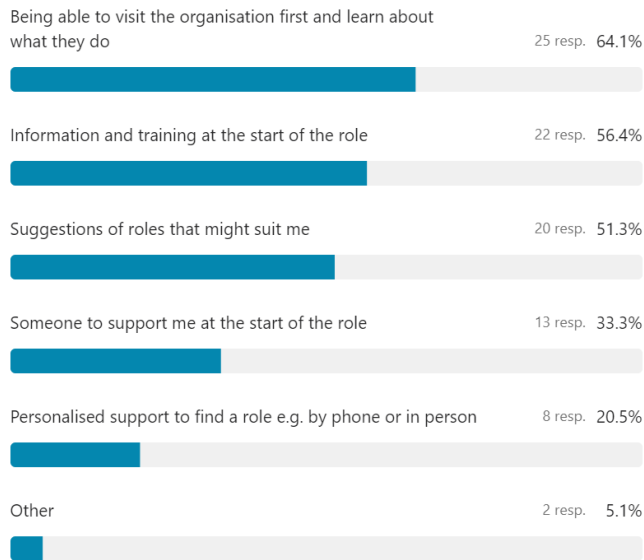
- Availability of public transport
- To be able to volunteer in a role I see there is need for that doesn't yet exist
- Advertising of orgs that need volunteers
- Seeing all the opportunities that exist e.g., advertising

3. If you were to look for a volunteer role, what support would you find useful?

✓ 3

If you were to look for a volunteer role, what support would you find useful?

39 out of 42 people answered this question (with multiple choice)

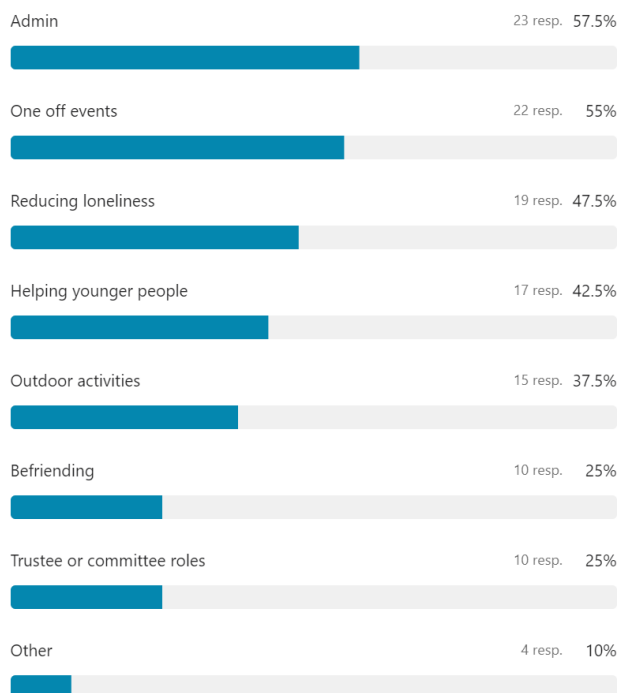


- Being able to work with others who see the needs I do and have the role organised by a suitable local charity (e.g., BuDS; Autism Bucks or another Neurodivergent related support group
- On the job training as needed . I hate classroom training

4. If you were to get involved in volunteering, what kind of role would interest you?

✓ 4 If you were to get involved in volunteering, what kind of role would interest you?

40 out of 42 people answered this question (with multiple choice)

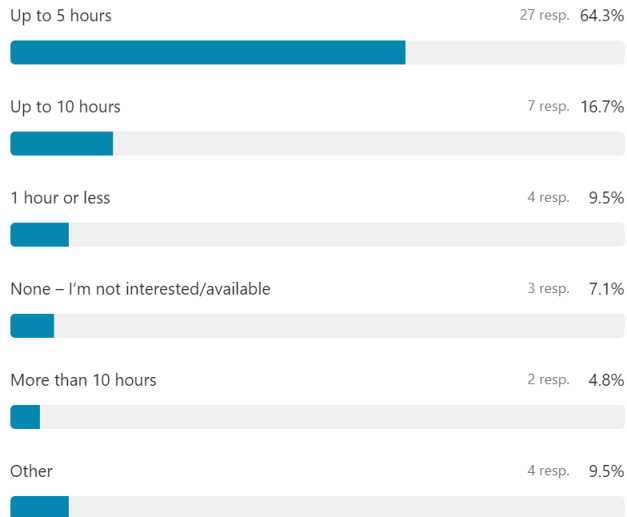


- Teaching IT skills
- Inputting into opportunities to meet needs in respect of existing structure that can be moderated/tweaked
- Not sure. Sometimes it might be the organisation rather than the role. Practical activities to help people but not necessarily outdoors
- Environment and conservation.

5. How much free time would you be interested volunteering in a typical month?

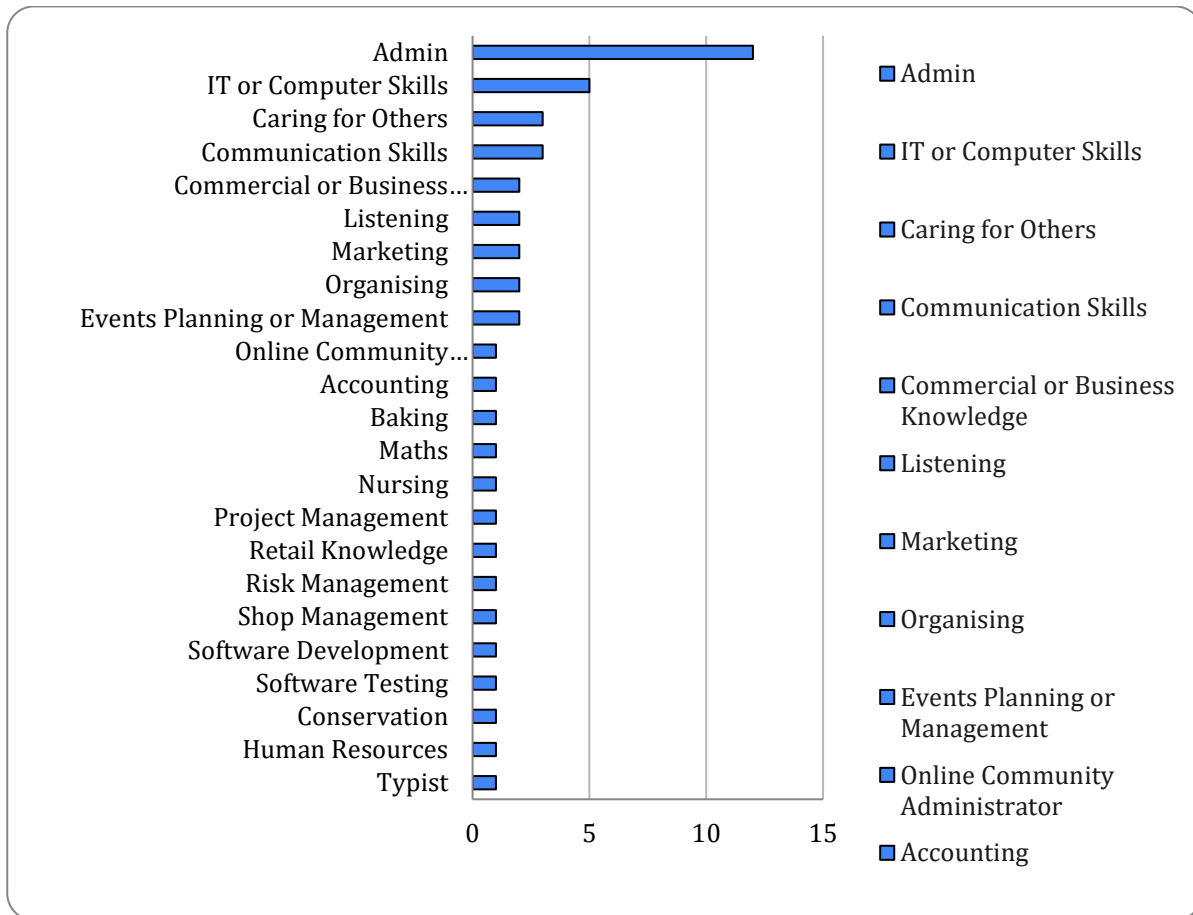
✓ 5 How much free time would you be interested volunteering in a typical month?

42 out of 42 people answered this question (with multiple choice)



- It would vary
- 1hour currently-probably more after end of term - especially if supports work experience/return to work opportunities
- Up to 3 days per year given by my employer

6. What skills do you already have, that you would like to use in volunteering?

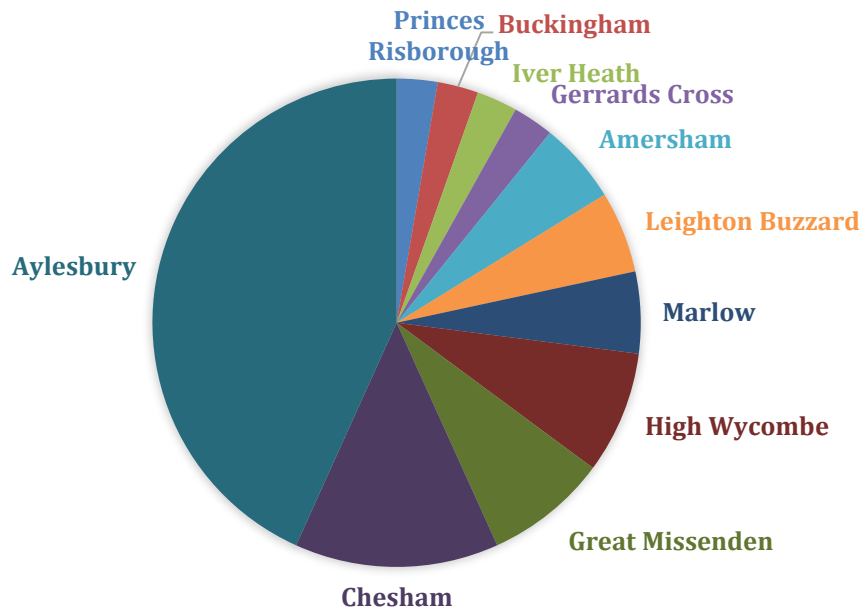


7. What skills and knowledge would you hope to gain from volunteering?

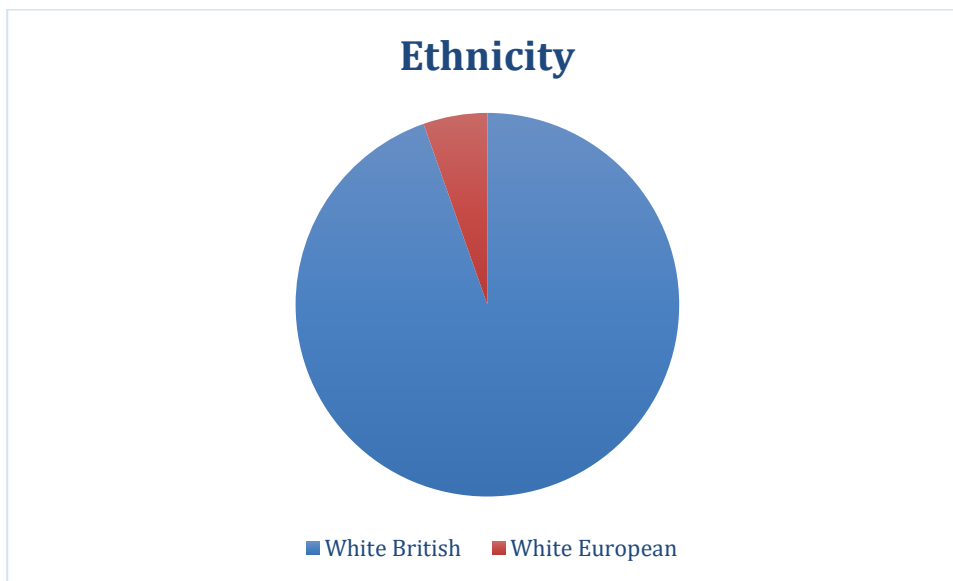


8. Where do people live?

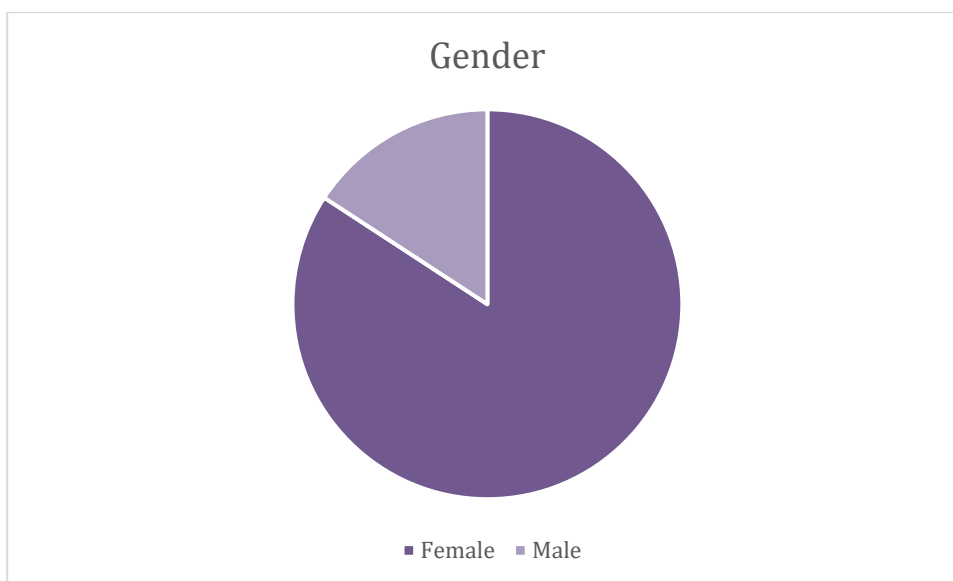
WHERE DO POTENTIAL VOLUNTEERS LIVE?



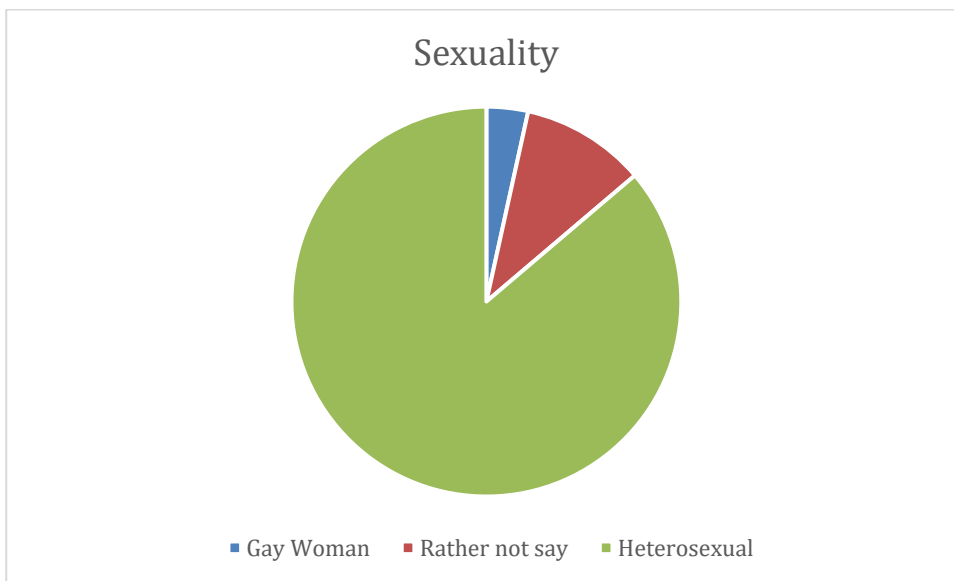
9. Ethnicity?



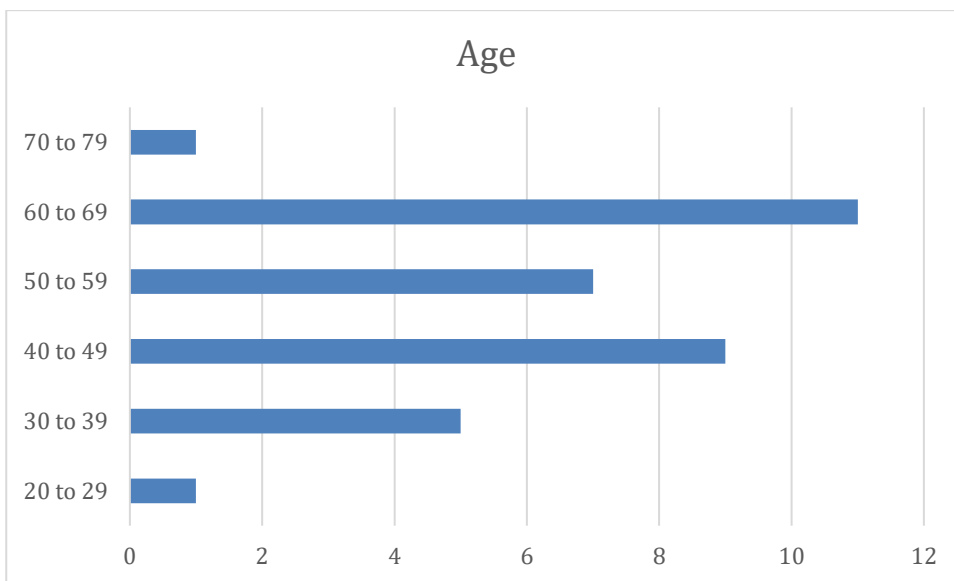
10. Gender?



11. Sexuality?



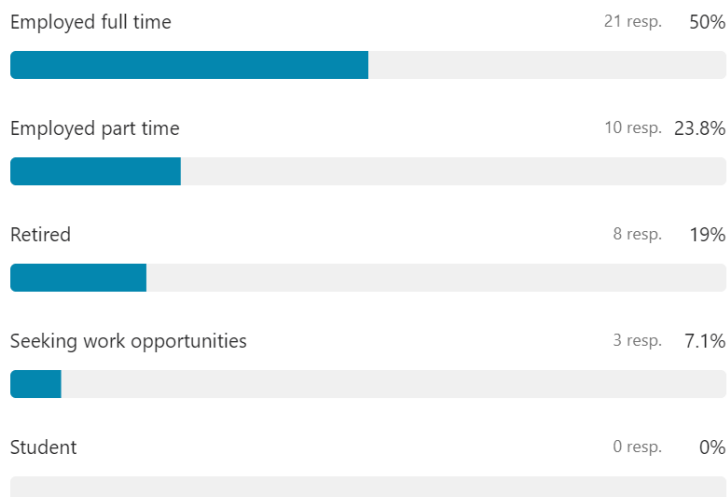
12. Age?



13. What is your employment status?

✓ 13 What is your employment status?

42 out of 42 people answered this question



14. Did/do you work in Health and Social Care?

🕒 14 Do / did you work in Health and Social Care?

39 out of 42 people answered this question



15. Do you consider yourself to have a disability?

15

Do you consider yourself to have a disability?

42 out of 42 people answered this question



16. What would help you access volunteering?

- being able to see on platforms what is available at the moment no idea from newspapers or other who needs volunteers
- Being able to volunteer online or in ways I can incorporate my children/have them occupied e.g., gaming/youth club/suitable activity