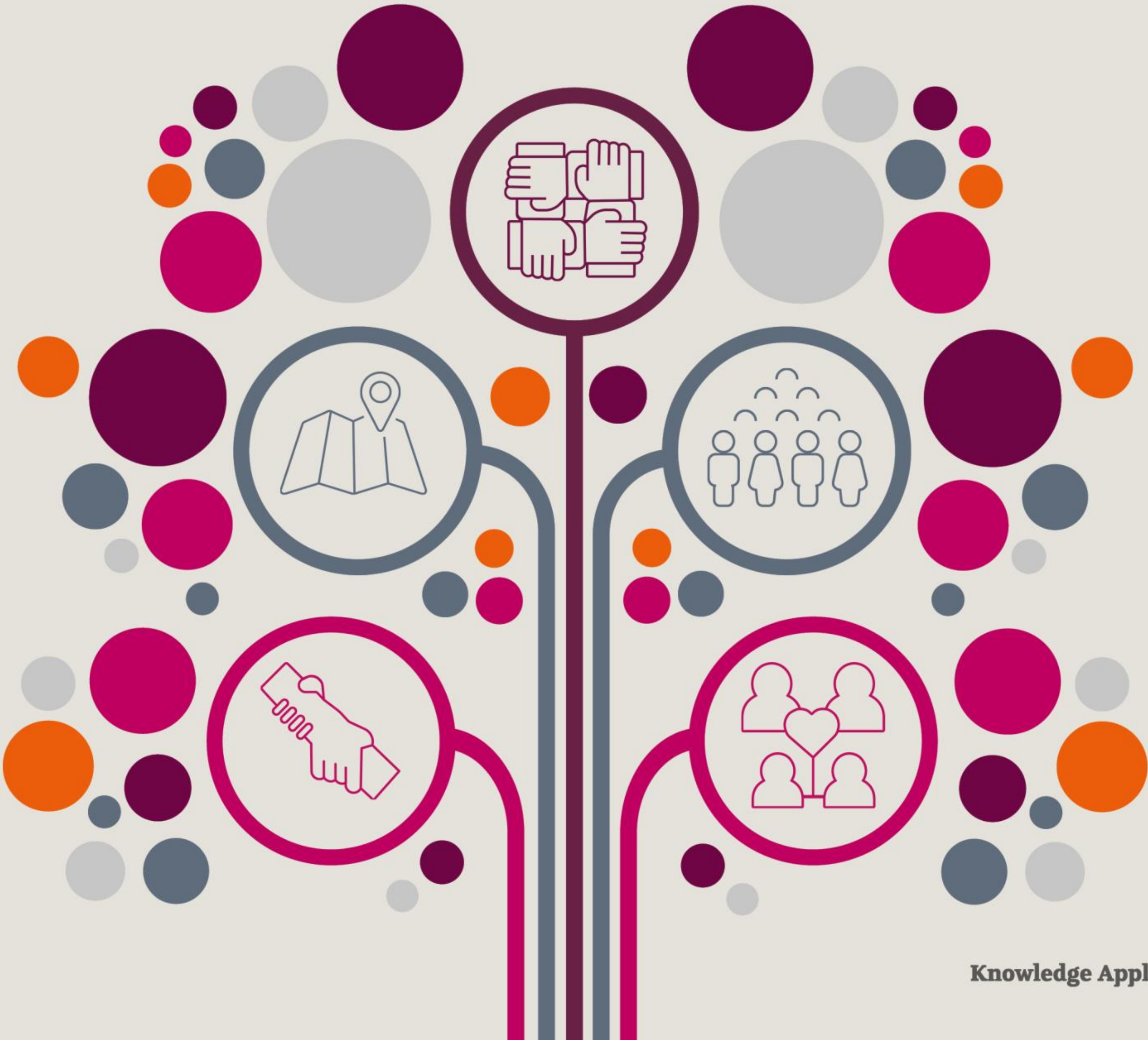
Sheffield Hallam University | Centre for Regional Economic and Social Research

South Yorkshire VCSE: Understanding Value and Impact

September 2024



Knowledge Applied

South Yorkshire VCSE: Understanding Value and Impact

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- South Yorkshire Community Foundation.
- South Yorkshire Integrated Care Board.

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Definitions/Glossary

CASC – community amateur sports club.

CIC – community interest company.

TSO – third sector organisation (including charities and other types of organisations, such as community interest companies, societies and unregistered organisations).

VCO – voluntary and community organisation (including charities and other types of organisations, such as community interest companies, societies and unregistered organisations).

VCS – Voluntary and Community Sector.

VCSE – Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise.

Foreword

Our Ecosystem

We know the Voluntary, Community, Social, Enterprise and Faith Sector (VCSE&F) is made up of many thousands of groups, organisations and micro entities across our South Yorkshire footprint. The VCSE&F sector can be described as a diverse 'eco system'; with different organisational sizes, governance structures and mission-focussed delivery having impact across the course of many people's lives.

People are at the heart of this ecosystem. Many of us know from our experience as a staff member, volunteer, partner or beneficiary, that the work, delivery, services and support provided by the VCSE&F has a positive impact on health and well-being of local people. The ecosystem also thrives when strong interconnections are created and developed.

South Yorkshire VCSE&F Alliance

In South Yorkshire, VCSE&F Infrastructure organisations have been working together for some time now to support a thriving community sector, and together with the South Yorkshire Integrated Care Board, we have developed a VCSE&F Alliance, that recognises and values the contribution of our sector in our sub region.

The VCSE&F Alliance Steering Group, is formed of representatives from, Barnsley CVS, Voluntary Action Doncaster, Voluntary Action Sheffield, Voluntary Action Rotherham, South Yorkshire Community Foundation, South Yorkshire Integrated Care Board and other partners. We work to connect our members and frontline groups and organisations to each other, to the health and care systems and to the shared work of health creation.

Our vision is for an equitable partnership embedding the VCSE at all levels of the Integrated Care System, that recognises and values the sector across strategy, delivery, engagement and insight and our mission is that VCSE organisations and health and care system leaders collaborate to tackle health inequalities across South Yorkshire.

Understanding and Impact (the "so what?" of this research)

We have called this research South Yorkshire VCSE: Understanding Value and Impact. It provides the most up to date analysis on our sector and our work with the most disadvantaged and marginalised communities. The intelligence is critical, especially at a time when a number of prevailing conditions challenge our ability to thrive, including, the tough economic conditions, the decline of regeneration, reduction in funding, the squeeze on public sector finances and much greater need in our communities.

Although not a ‘VCS Needs Analysis’, there are a number of areas which are highlighted by this report, that we will focus on going forward in our work as an Alliance:

1. **How do we maximise investment and work collaboratively to bring more resources to the sector?**

   The Alliance recognises the role of a formal set of principles for relationships between the VCSE&F and public sector / academic and other anchor institutions, to underpin effective commissioning support and tenders. The foundation of principles in policy and practice is critical alongside the development of creative and collaborative culture of work to enable health creation.

2. **How do we put people and communities at the centre of the transition of our services and enable decision making to take place closer to the people affected?**

   The VCSE Alliance has set out specific aims to:

   - Fully embed VCSE&F participation in strategies and partnerships, through supporting and enabling participation at all levels of the system.
   - Value and develop effective community involvement and insight to shape services and influence key decisions.

3. **How do we support smaller organisations?**

   Small but vital is how much of our sector is described and as an Alliance we have a role to amplify the voice and impact of the smallest of our sector. We will continue to:

   - Raise profile and awareness of sector and supporting sustainability.
   - Value the role of volunteering and support volunteer management across our system.

The VCSE Alliance will be working with our partners and stakeholders to address and support the areas above and we remain committed to, and positive and passionate about the role the local VCSE in contributing to the health and well-being of the South Yorkshire.

Helen Sims

Chair: South Yorkshire VCSE Alliance

Contents

Executive Summary

Background and methods

This report outlines the key findings of research into the **voluntary and community sector (VCS) in South Yorkshire** (comprised of the districts Barnsley, Doncaster, Rotherham, and Sheffield). The research aimed to provide an up-to-date picture of how the sector is made up, what it does, how healthy it is, and the support it needs.

The research consisted of two strands:

- **An online survey of voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) organisations** to collect organisational information, information on levels of partnership working, and strengths and challenges faced.
- **Analysis of administrative data** available on third sector organisations (TSOs) registered or operating in South Yorkshire. This data was primarily from the Register of Charities but was also supplemented with data on other types of relevant non-profit organisation. Estimations of the number of unregistered organisations were also calculated.

Findings

Make-up of the sector

Number: There are an estimated **7,761 third sector organisations** (TSOs) in South Yorkshire. This includes at least 2,720 registered organisations and an estimated 5,032 unregistered organisations. Charities were by far the most common type of registered organisation, making up 76% of those identified.

Size: Survey responses were received from organisations of a range of sizes, skewing towards the **smaller end of the scale**, with just over half coming from micro or small organisations. This broadly matches the skew of charity size overall across South Yorkshire and the UK, although slightly higher proportions of larger organisations responded to the survey.

Type: Just over half of survey responses came from **charities**, whilst 20% came from unregistered associations. Most organisations had a **local focus** with 86% operating within South Yorkshire only.

Income and expenditure: The total income of the organisations represented in the survey in the last 12 months is approximately **£141 million** whilst the total expenditure is **£131 million**. Whilst the majority of organisations had reserves (72%), this varies by size of organisation with 95% of large and major organisations having reserves compared to 61% of micro-organisations.

Funding: VSOs receive funding from a **range of sources** with the highest levels coming from grants from trusts and foundations, via fees and earned income and from grants from the public sector. The split of funding varies between different sizes of organisation, with large and major organisations receiving higher proportions through contracts or service agreements, and smaller organisations receiving funding through more of a mixture of routes (public donations, grants, and fees and earned income).

Workforce: Just over half of organisations said they had a paid workforce. As might be expected, almost all major, large and medium sized organisations (with income over £100,000 a year) have paid staff, while two fifths of small organisations and only 6% of micro-organisations have paid staff. From administrative data for the largest charities, and calculations based on survey responses, we estimate that **19,607 people are employed** in the VCSE sector in South Yorkshire. Similarly, based on administrative data and survey responses, we estimate that over **50,000 people volunteer** in South Yorkshire's VCSE sector, suggesting a large voluntary contribution across the region. There were a total of **11,152 trustees** recorded across South Yorkshire charities. The estimated economic contribution of paid employees in South Yorkshire is **£685 million** per annum. The estimated economic contribution of volunteers in South Yorkshire is **£152 million** per annum.

Purpose of the sector

The most common goals of organisations are **supporting health and wellbeing** (87% of survey respondents), **increasing community participation, cohesion and belonging** (75%) and **meeting individual needs** (72%).

Key themes emerging from respondents' descriptions of their organisations' purpose, mission and activities include:

- **Health and wellbeing:** including reducing social isolation and loneliness and increasing physical activity and health. These include both formal and informal support and activities can support health and wellbeing directly or indirectly.
- **Local communities and participation:** these organisations generally have an ethos which is inclusive of individual participation in community activities. They may also work on improving or maintaining local sites or amenities (e.g. parks or buildings).
- **Diversity, equity and inclusion:** with the aim of serving specific groups who may be marginalised, including older people, disabled people, people who are educationally or economically disadvantaged and young people.
- **Advice and training:** to support individuals who may be marginalised or disadvantaged. They work to improve access to opportunities and facilitate empowerment of the people they support.
- **Advocacy and awareness raising:** to promote equity and social justice relating to a particular cause. Activities can include campaigning for policy change, raising awareness, promoting diversity, equity and inclusion, and undertaking research.

Relationships and partnership working

Most respondents reported that their organisations work with other partners, particularly in their local area, including **local VCSE organisations**, the **local authority**, informal / local neighbourhood groups and education providers.

Respondents have mixed feelings about the level of connectedness and partnerships that their organisations have with around a third thinking it is about right, but 41% feeling the quality of connections could be improved and 38% feeling the range or number of connections could be increased. In terms of improving relationships with partners, most felt that **improved grant funding and contract opportunities** would help, as well as **greater understanding of their role and organisation** by external organisations and stakeholders.

Challenges and change

Income and expenditure: Income was the most significant concern currently affecting organisations. Nearly half of respondents reported that their organisation's total income had increased over the last year and a further 28% said it had stayed the same. However, over two thirds of organisations said their expenditure had increased, with most of these saying it had increased a lot. Similarly, although 39% of organisations expected their income to increase over the next 12 months, a greater proportion expected their expenditure to increase (58%). Respondents highlighted that funding was not keeping up with increased costs.

Demand and capacity: Demand for the services of voluntary sector organisations (VSOs) has increased for 80% of organisations over the last year. However, only half said that the level of service their organisation can provide has increased. Expectations are similar for the next 12 months, suggesting that there is a gap between the high levels demand for the services of VSOs and their capacity to meet this demand. Unsurprisingly, survey respondents identified the level of demand for services and their ability to meet this demand as key concerns affecting their organisation.

Staff and volunteers: Staff and volunteer numbers do not appear to have decreased for many organisations in our sample over the last year and are not expected to fall over the next 12 months. However, respondents identified recruitment and retention of volunteers, and staff and volunteer wellbeing, as key concerns affecting their organisation.

> *'Cost of living crisis has increased the level of support needed by our clients and also impacted on increasing our wages bill. However, funders do not take this cost of living into consideration and do not increase funding pots accordingly making this very challenging.'*

Just over half of organisations have taken actions in response to these challenges, including **increasing the price of their services, making changes to the organisations aims and/or service focus, seeking expert advice or support and reducing the level or number of services they provide.** Slightly more organisations feel that they will have to take action of the next 12 months, and a significant number say they will likely need to **renegotiate grants or commissioned contracts**, alongside other actions.

Conclusions

The research provides an up-to-date picture of the VCSE sector in South Yorkshire. It is important in understanding the impacts of Covid-19 and the ongoing cost-of-living crisis, and particularly gaining an understanding of smaller and unregistered organisations. The research provides a picture of the make-up the sector along with identifying challenges and concerns facing organisations. Key concerns include: financial concerns linked to heightened costs and stretched funding; demand for services and capacity to meet this demand; and recruitment, retention and wellbeing of staff and volunteers.

Introduction

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1.1. Research aims

This report outlines the key findings of research which aimed to provide an up-to-date picture of the voluntary and community sector (VCS) in South Yorkshire (comprised of the districts Barnsley, Doncaster, Rotherham and Sheffield). Overall, the research aimed to address the question of what the VCS looks like in 2023, i.e. how it is made up, what it does, how healthy it is, and what support it needs. The most recent mapping exercises of the voluntary and community sector in the area took place in 2015, covering Rotherham only (Dayson and Sanderson, 2016[1]) and 2016, covering Sheffield only (Damm and Sanderson, 2016[2]). Significant challenges for the sector have emerged since then, including as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic and the cost-of-living crisis, meaning that an up-to-date understanding of how the sector looks now is required.

1.2. Methods

The research consisted of two strands:

1. Administrative data analysis

Data on third sector organisations (TSOs) registered in South Yorkshire were obtained from a number of publicly available datasets.[3] Data was primarily gathered from the Register of Charities held by the Charity Commission, but was also supplemented with data on other types of relevant non-profit organisation (Community Interest Companies (CICs), registered societies, including mutuals and cooperatives, and Community Amateur Sports Clubs (CASCs)). Numbers of unregistered organisations were estimated using a formula developed through previous research[4] on the sector (Mohan et al., 2010).

The purpose of this strand was to provide an overall picture of the VCS in South Yorkshire, broken down by district.

[1] https://www.shu.ac.uk/centre-regional-economic-social-research/publications/rotherham-state-of-the-voluntary-and-community-sector-2015
[2] https://www.shu.ac.uk/centre-regional-economic-social-research/publications/sheffield-state-of-the-voluntary-and-community-sector-2016
[3] The Register of Charities, Companies House, The Financial Conduct Authority, HM Revenue and Customs.
[4] Mohan, J., Kane, D., Wilding, K., Branson, J. & Owles, F. (2010: 3). Beyond 'flat-earth' maps of the third sector: Enhancing our understanding of the contribution of 'below-the-radar' organisations – Briefing Paper. Third Sector Trends Study. Northern Rock Foundation.

2. Online survey of VCSE organisations

An online survey was undertaken to explore the following key areas:

- Organisational information (e.g. legal form, age, activities, aims, beneficiaries, financial information, workforce).
- Purpose, value and impact of the sector (mission of organisations, outcomes, who they support).
- Level of partnership working (who organisations work with, relationships with others, level of connectedness).
- Challenges and change (current situation, key concerns for the immediate future, support needs.

The survey comprised mainly closed questions with a small number of open questions to allow respondents to elaborate on their answers and provide additional information and context. The survey provides additional information on different types of third sector organisations, whereas the administrative data is primarily focused on charities (as the Charity Commission holds the most complete data).

1.3. Survey responses

We received 229 complete responses to the survey. A further 97 partially completed responses were included, meaning that a **total of 326 responses** were included in the final analysis. This is an estimated response rate of 4% (see total estimated number of TSOs in Chapter 2), so the results should be treated with some caution. Nonetheless, they offer an important insight into the situations, views and experiences of a range of organisations across South Yorkshire.

1.4. Report structure

The following sections summarise the key findings from the survey and administrative data. Findings from the analysis of administrative data are presented in boxes providing a high-level overall picture of the VCS in South Yorkshire. Survey findings (in the main body of the text) then provide a more in-depth exploration of organisations in the region. Section 2 explores the make-up of the sector, describing the size and income of organisations, how they are funded, their workforce, volunteers and beneficiaries. Section 3 describes the types of organisations that make up the sector in South Yorkshire, including their purpose, mission and activities. Section 4 explores how organisations work with others, and Section 5 looks at any changes that organisations have experienced and the key challenges and concerns they are facing. Section 6 includes overall conclusions and recommendations.

Make-up of the sector

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2.1. Number of organisations

There are an estimated **7,761 third sector organisations** (TSOs) in South Yorkshire. This includes at least 2,729 registered organisations and an estimated 5,032 unregistered organisations.

Administrative data: Number of registered TSOs in South Yorkshire

Analysis of administrative data indicates that there are a total of **2,729 third sector organisations with their registered address within South Yorkshire**. The highest number of organisations were registered or operating within Sheffield (1,348 organisations), followed by Doncaster (535), and then Rotherham (425) and Barnsley (421). Across all areas, charities were by far the most common type of organisation identified making up 76% of all organisations.

Figure 2.1: TSOs in South Yorkshire

	Charities	CICs	Societies	CASCs	Total
Barnsley	292	53	61	15	421
Doncaster	381	104	36	14	535
Rotherham	329	56	26	14	425
Sheffield	1,079	158	78	33	1,348

Source: See Appendix 1.

This is likely to be an underestimate of the total number of organisations operating in South Yorkshire as it includes only organisations who have an address in South Yorkshire. This means that some organisations, for example, those who work on a regional or national level (including within South Yorkshire) will not be included as we are unable to calculate the scale of their work in South Yorkshire.

Administrative data: Number of unregistered VCOs in South Yorkshire

As well as registered organisations, we know there are many unregistered organisations operating across South Yorkshire. It is very difficult to accurately estimate the scale of these organisations due to a lack of administrative data collected about these organisations. However, in a study of 46 local authorities, the Third Sector Trends study (Mohan et al., 2010) estimated that there were an average of 3.66 'below-the-radar', i.e. unregistered, organisations per 1,000 population. This formula has been utilised to estimate the number of unregistered organisations in specific areas across a number of different studies. These figures should be treated with caution due to the lack of definitive data available data on these organisations, however they provide a useful and plausible estimate of the scale of unregistered VCOs in South Yorkshire.

Using this calculation, there are an estimated 5,032 unregistered VCOs operating in South Yorkshire.

Figure 2.2: Estimated number of unregistered organisations

	Population	Estimated number of unregistered VCOs
Barnsley	244,900	896
Doncaster	308,700	1130
Rotherham	266,200	974
Sheffield	555,000	2031

Source: See Appendix 1.

2.2. Size and income of organisations

Size of organisations

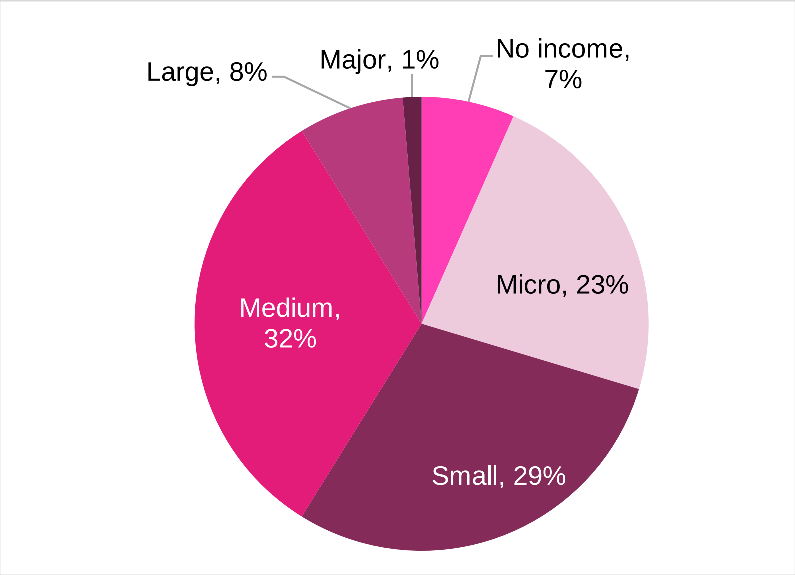
Survey responses were received from organisations of a range of sizes: as Figure 2.3 below shows, micro-organisations (with an annual income of under £10,000) make up 23% of our sample; small organisations (£10,000 to £100,000) make up 29%; medium organisations (£100,000 to £1 million) make up 32%; 7% of responses are from large organisations (£1 million-£10 million); and 1% are from major organisations (£10 million to £100 million).[5] An income of zero was reported by 7% of organisations for the last 12 months. This distribution broadly matches the skew of charity size.

in South Yorkshire and across the UK, although slightly greater proportions of larger organisations responded to the survey overall.[6]

[5] Categorisations from UK Civil Society Almanac (2023): https://www.ncvo.org.uk/news-and-insights/news-index/uk-civil-society-almanac-2023/about/definitions/

[6] Please note, administrative data is available for the size of charities. However, this survey was aimed at a broader range of third sector organisations.

Figure 2.3: South Yorkshire TSOs by size

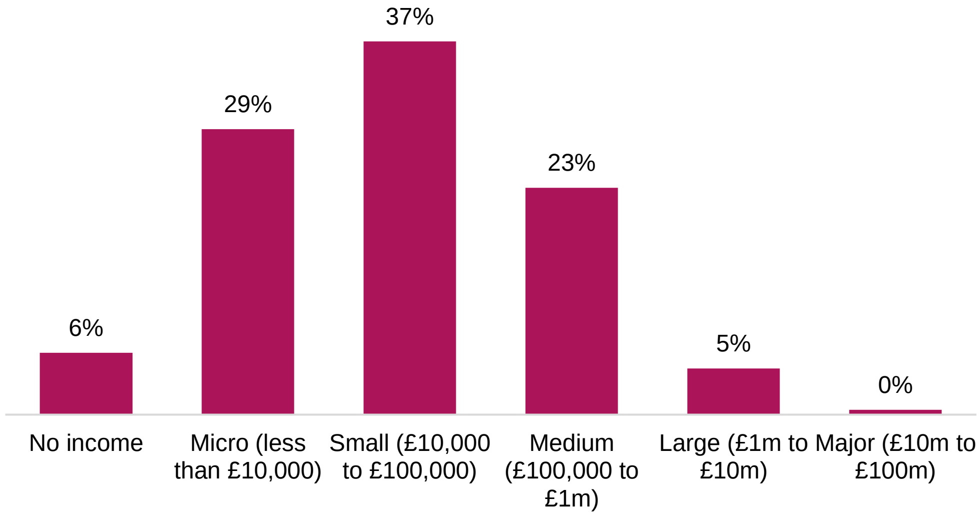


Source: Survey data. Base: 226.

Administrative data: Size of charities (by income)

Analysis of administrative data for charities shows that charities registered or operating in South Yorkshire skew towards the lower end of the income scale, broadly matching the size distribution seen in the survey results for the wider third sector. This is also reflective of charities generally across the UK.

Figure 2.4: South Yorkshire charities by size



An income of zero was reported by 129 charities (6%) for their most recent financial year, though 32 of these recorded an expenditure above zero. Some of these organisations may be dormant, potentially moribund. Others might be new charities yet to fully start operating.

There are a relatively small number of large and major charities (5% of all charities), though due to their size they account for a relatively large amount of all charitable income within South Yorkshire (71%, see Figure 2.5). Similarly, small and micro organisations account for 66% of all charities but only 5% of their income.

Figure 2.5: Income of South Yorkshire charities by size

Size (by income)	Charities	% of all charities	Total income (£)	% of all income
No income	129	6%	-	-
Micro (less than £10,000)	595	29%	£2,063,738	0%
Small (£10,000 to £100,000)	778	37%	£28,447,519	5%
Medium (£100,000 to £1m)	473	23%	£145,868,784	24%
Large (£1m to £10m)	96	5%	£279,963,055	46%
Major (£10m to £100m)	10	0%	£153,588,180	25%
Total	2081		£609,931,276	

Income and expenditure

The total **income** of the organisations represented in the survey is **£141,418,157.**[7] The mean is £634,162 and the median is £55,000 per organisation. The mean is the total income divided by the number of organisations, whereas the median is the middle-ranked income. As such, the median is generally less impacted by outliers, or a small number of extreme results.

The total **expenditure** of the organisations represented in the survey is **£131,130,561**. This is a mean of £588,029 and a median of £46,000 per organisation.

Largest charities in South Yorkshire

The largest charities in South Yorkshire cover a wide variety of causes. The five largest charities are listed below, and include health and wellbeing, housing, and education charities.

Figure 2.6: Largest charities in South Yorkshire

Charity name	Latest income	Activities / mission
Sheffield City Trust	£33,077,000	Local leisure activities and facilities in Sheffield
Doncaster Culture and Leisure Trust	£15,664,025	Local leisure activities and facilities in Doncaster
NOCN (The National Open College Network)	£15,341,508	Educational charity and awarding body supporting specialising in UK and international qualifications
Barnsley Premier Leisure	£14,852,987	Local leisure activities and facilities in Barnsley
Target Housing Limited	£13,920,504	Housing charity and social landlord

Reserves

The majority of responding organisations state that they have reserves (72%).[8] This varies by size of organisation, with 95% of major and large organisations stating that they have reserves, decreasing to 61% of micro-organisations. The maximum value of reserves held by one organisation is £6.8 million. Whilst the mean value of reserves was £221,439, the median is far lower, at £25,444 suggesting that only a small proportion of organisations have high levels of reserves.

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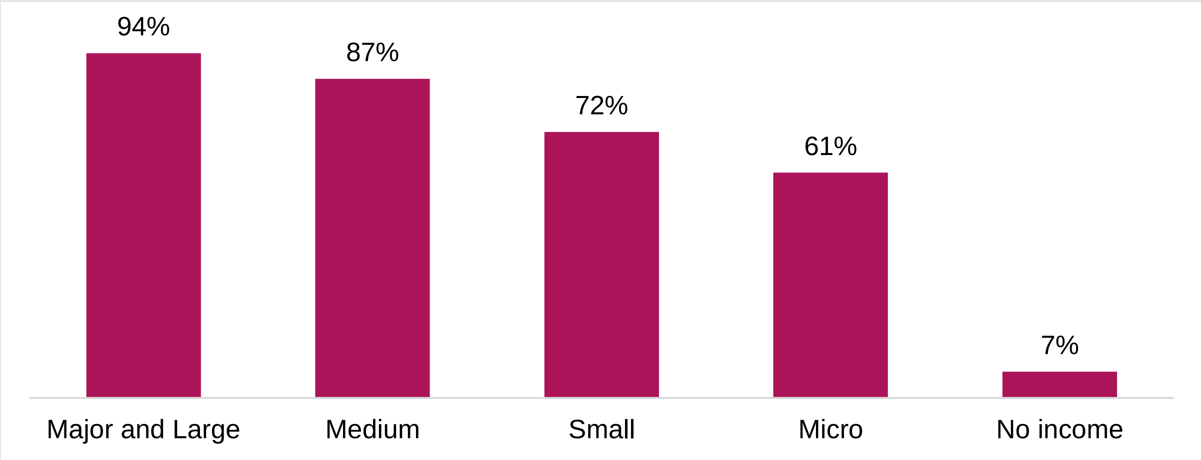
[7] Base = 223 organisations who provided income and expenditure information.
[8] The NCVO definition of reserves was used: funds that are freely available to spend on any of the organisation's purposes. They need to be:
- unrestricted
- cash (or things easily converted to cash, like money owed from debtors) – not long-term assets like buildings that you use in your work.
- not designated funds – funds not formally set aside for a specific purpose.

Figure 2.7: Proportion of organisations with reserves by size

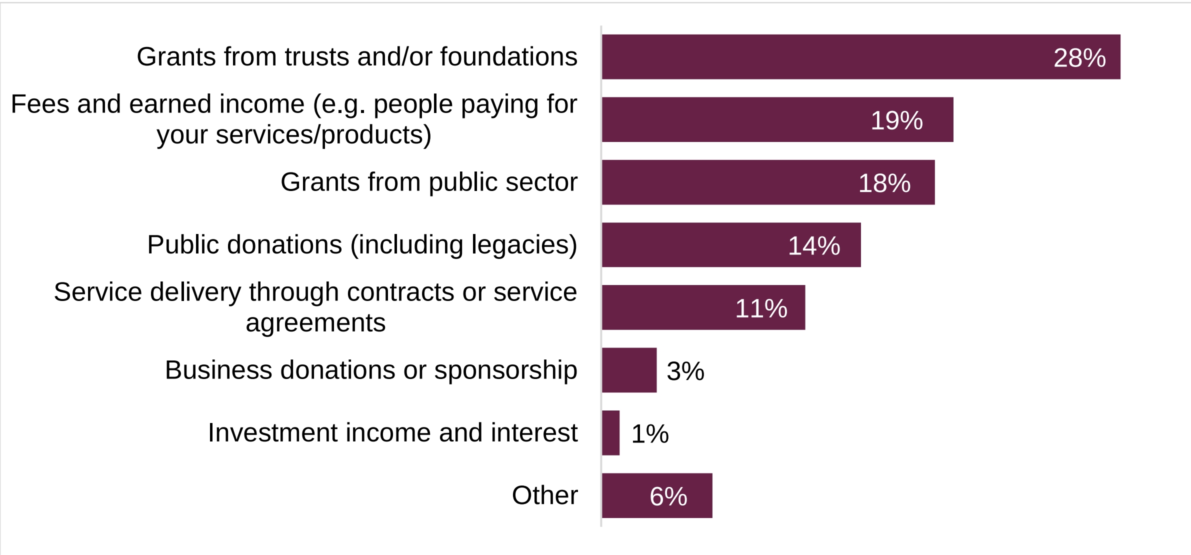


Source: Survey data. Base: 235.

2.3. Funding of VSOs

Survey respondents were asked to estimate their organisation's funding mix (totalling 100%) by entering the proportions they received from different sources. As shown in Figure 2.8 below, the highest proportion of funding comes from grants from trusts and/or foundations (an average of 28%). This is followed by fees and earned income (e.g. people paying for services or products) (19%) and grants from the public sector (18%). An average of 14% of funding for the responding organisations comes from public donations (including legacies). Service delivery through contracts or service agreements accounts for 11% of organisations' funding on average. Only 3% comes from business donations or sponsorship and 1% comes from investment income and interest. Organisations report about 6% comes from other sources.

Figure 2.8: Organisations' funding mix

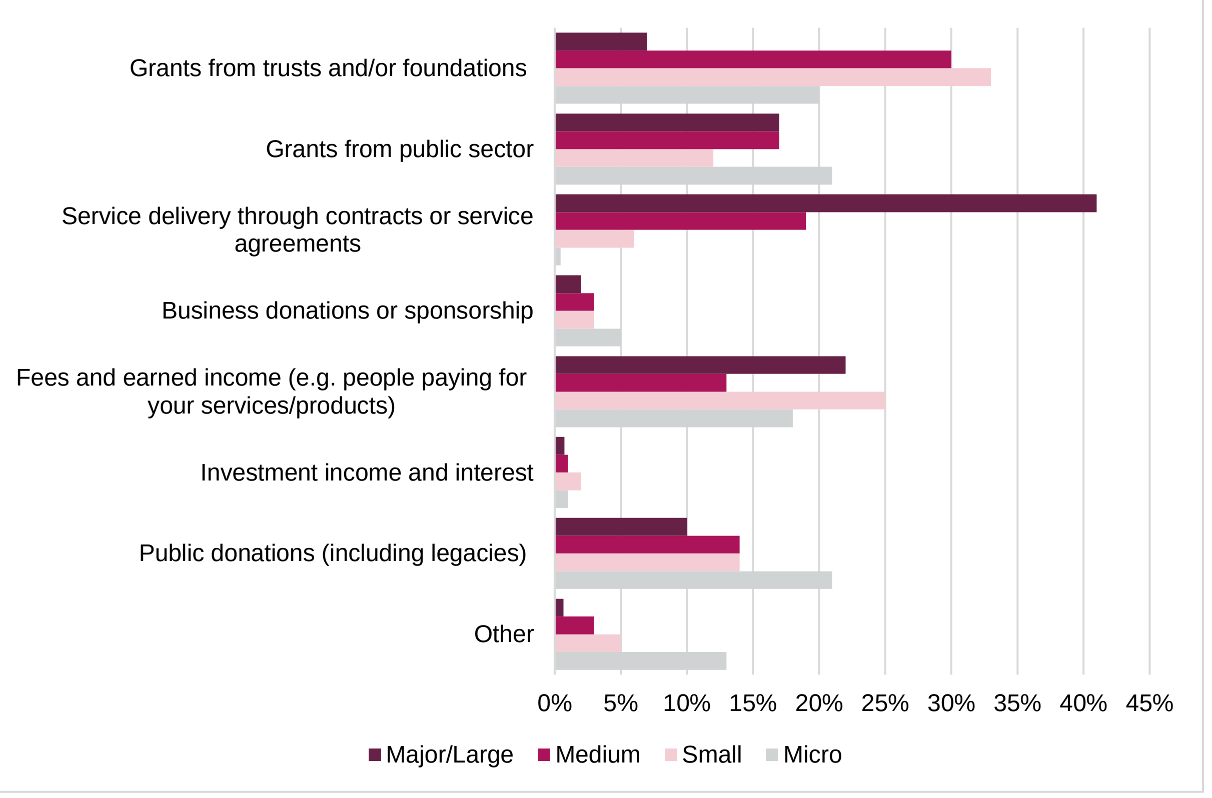


Source: survey data. Base: 206.

The split of funding varies between different sizes of organisation – as depicted in Figure 2.9 below. Major and large organisations receive an average of 41% of their income via service delivery through contracts or service agreements, whereas small organisations only receive 6% of their income through this route, and micro-organisations receive less than 1%. Micro-organisations appear to have more of a mixture of income routes with public donations (21%), grants from the public sector

(21%), grants from trusts and foundations (20%) and fees and earned income (18%) making up most of their funding. Grants from trusts and foundations account for the highest proportion of funding for small and medium organisations (33% and 30% respectively). Fees and earned income are also a key source of income for small organisations (25%).

Figure 2.9: Funding mix by organisation size



Source: survey data. Base: 171

Administrative data: How many SY charities receive income from the government?

- A total of **568** South Yorkshire charities recorded that they received at least some income from government. This amounts to **38%** of charities that filled in an annual return (generally those with an annual income over £10,000).
- A total of **518** charities recorded that they received at least some government **grant** income. This amounts to **34%** of all relevant charities.
- A total of **152** charities recorded that they received at least some **contract** income from government. This amounts to **10%** of all charities that filled in an annual return.
- A total of **102** charities recorded that they received **both** grants and contracts from government. This amounts to **7%** of relevant charities.

To summarise, a majority of charities receive no government income at all. Of those that do, however, more receive income from grants than from contracts.

Figure 2.10: Government funding to South Yorkshire charities

Government funding received	Charities	Percent
Grants and contracts	102	7%
Contracts only	50	3%
Grants only	416	27%
Neither	946	62%
Total	1,514	100%

Base: 1,819 South Yorkshire charities with a valid annual return

For those that receive at least some government grant income, the average (mean) number of grants is **three** and the median is **two**.

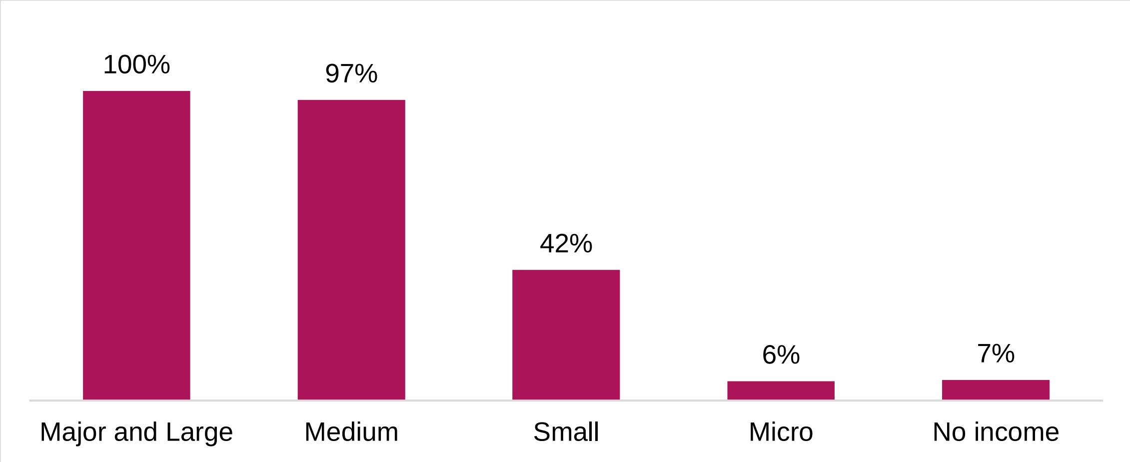
For those that receive at least some government contract income, The average number of contracts was **four** and the median number is again, **two.**

2.4. Workforce

Paid employees

Just over half of survey respondents said that their organisation has a paid workforce (58%). However, this varies widely between different sizes of organisation. As might be expected, almost all major, large and medium sized organisations (with income of over £100,000 per year) have paid staff. About two fifths of small organisations (income £10,000 to £100,000) have paid staff (42%), and only 6% of micro-organisations (income under £10,000) have paid staff. 89% of organisations stated that all of their staff are paid at least the real living wage of £10.90 per hour. The highest number of staff employed in any single organisation is 1,000, with the mean number being 31 and the median being 10. The mean number of FTE staff employed is 22, whilst the median is 4.

Figure 2.11: Paid workforce by size of organisation



Source: survey data. Base: 143.

Administrative data: How many people do SY charities employ?

Currently, employee figures are only available for charities with an income over £500,000 (though in future years data is also likely to be published by the Charity Commission for smaller charities). These larger South Yorkshire charities (n=206) collectively recorded 10,810 employees.

This is likely to be an underestimate for South Yorkshire charities as a whole, as although smaller charities employ fewer staff on average, their numbers mean that they are likely to employ a relatively high number of staff collectively. Based on the numbers of employees reported by organisations responding to the survey, and the proportions and number of different sized charities in the sector, we can estimate that there are **19,607** people employed in the VCSE sector in South Yorkshire.

Volunteers

In the last year, a total of approximately **20,295 people** volunteered across the 236 organisations who answered this survey question.[9] Respondents estimated that volunteers contributed 51,371 hours per week in total, which is a mean of 239 or median of **12 volunteer hours per organisation per week**.

[9] The data for one organisation was removed for this question as it was a significant outlier which heavily skewed the findings. This organisation was a national volunteering-focused organisation who reported that they have 35,000 volunteers.

Administrative data: How many volunteers do SY charities work with?

Charities with an income of over £10,000 are asked to report to the Charity Commission how many volunteers they work with as a headcount.

This data brings challenges as charities may double count within their own records, and the same volunteers may volunteer for multiple organisations. Records are also less likely to be reliable than staff counts.

Nevertheless, South Yorkshire charities report a combined total of over 40,000 volunteers, suggesting a large voluntary contribution across the region. This is also likely to be an underestimate, as it doesn't include the smallest charities with incomes of less than £10,000, who are more likely to be fully volunteer based. Again, based on the numbers of volunteers reported by survey respondents and the proportions and number of different sized charities in South Yorkshire, we can estimate that there are over **50,000** people volunteering in the sector.

Note that we removed one outlier with a very high number of volunteers from this total, the Conservation Volunteers, which recorded 9,500 volunteers from its work across the UK.

Administrative data: How many trustees do SY charities have?

A more formalised measure of volunteering is provided by the number of trustees registered with the Charity Commission for South Yorkshire charities. The full list contains 11,152 individuals, holding **11,853 trusteeships** across all South Yorkshire charities.

Estimated economic contribution of employees and volunteers

Gross Value Added (GVA), the value of goods and services produced, is a key measure of the economic contribution of organisations or voluntary and community sectors. It can be estimated for paid employees working in South Yorkshire organisations by multiplying the number of paid staff by the estimated GVA per FTE employee.

From this calculation, we estimate an economic contribution of **£685 million per annum** by employees in the VCSE sector in South Yorkshire.

Similarly, the contribution of volunteers can be estimated by multiplying the number of volunteers by the estimated GVA per FTE employee.

From this calculation, we estimate an economic contribution of **£152 million per annum** by volunteers in the VCSE sector in South Yorkshire.

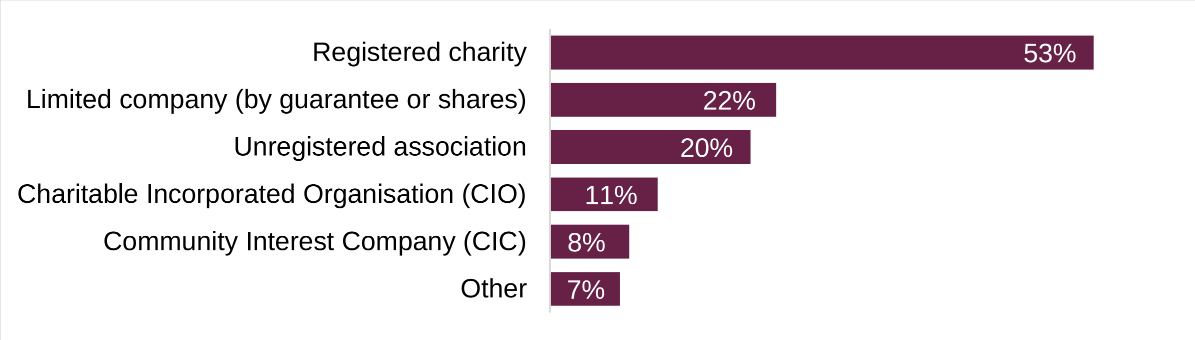
Beneficiaries

In terms of numbers of beneficiaries, 20% of respondents were unable to estimate the number of beneficiaries their organisation had supported over the last year, whilst 9% said that it was not applicable (presumably due to not having direct beneficiaries). The 171 organisations who answered this question estimated they had supported a total of **875,099 beneficiaries** in the last year, a mean of 5,117 or median of **300 per organisation**.

2.5. Types of organisations

Just over half of the survey responses came from registered charities (53%), with 22% coming from limited companies, 20% from unregistered associations (such as community groups not registered as charities or other regulatory bodies), 11% from Charitable Incorporated Organisations (CIOs) and 8% from Community Interest Companies (CICs). A small number of responses came from ‘other’ types of organisation (7%) including societies.[10]

Figure 2.12: Organisations’ legal form



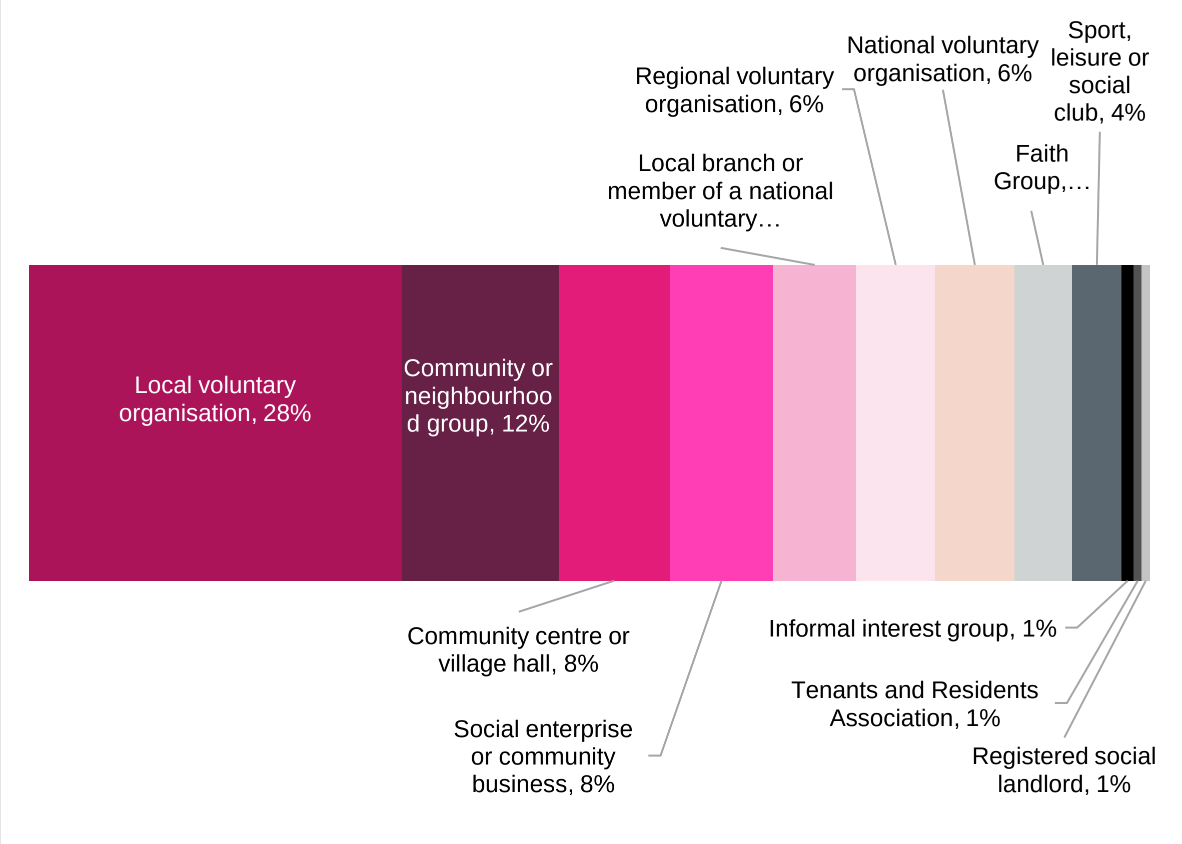
Source: Survey data. Base: 323.

The majority of responses appear to have come from organisations which have a local focus. When asked to identify how their organisation could best be described, the highest number of respondents selected ‘local voluntary organisation’ (28%), followed by 12% who described themselves as a community or neighbourhood group. Smaller proportions of organisations described themselves in various other ways (see Figure 2.13).[11]

[10] These responses add up to over 100% as organisations may fit into more than one category, e.g. a charity and a company.

[11] 16% of organisations described themselves in another way. However, these tended to be very specific so cannot be included in this Figure.

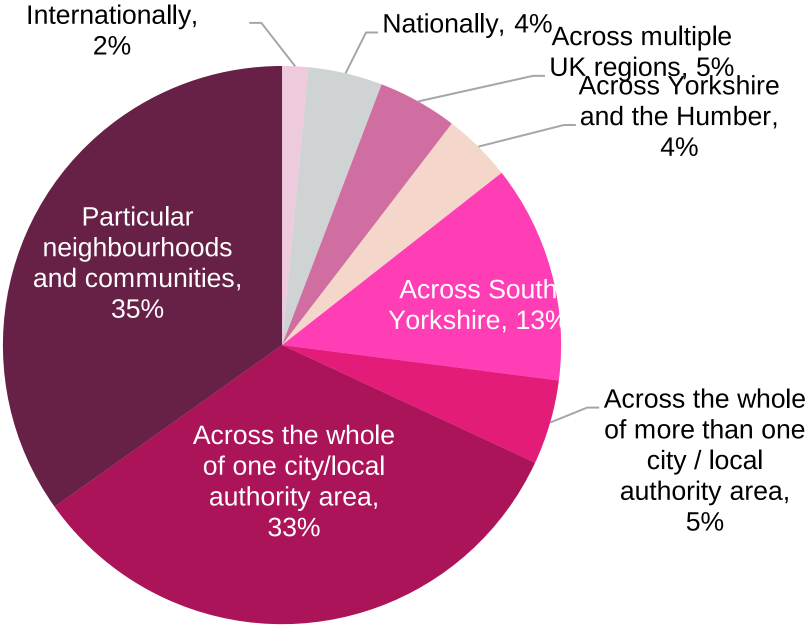
Figure 2.13: Types of organisations



Source: Survey data. Base: 324.

The majority of respondents confirmed that their work is locally focused with 86% of respondents stating that their organisation works within South Yorkshire. A third of respondents said their organisation operates across particular neighbourhoods and communities (35%), another third reported that they operate across the whole of one city or local authority area (33%) and 13% said they operate across South Yorkshire. The remaining minority of organisations work at a larger scale, including across Yorkshire and the Humber (4%), across multiple UK regions (5%), nationally (4%) or internationally (2%).

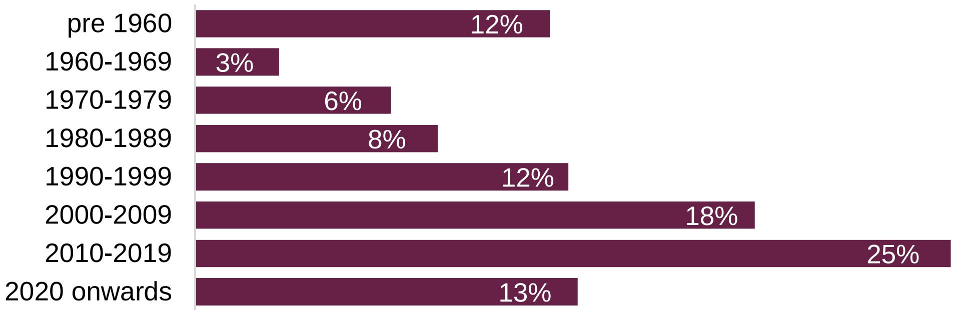
Figure 2.14: Geographical focus of organisations



Source: Survey data. Base: 325.

Responses came from organisations of a range of ages suggesting that that sector is well-established: 15% of organisations were formed before 1970. However, many organisations have been formed since 2010 (38%) and a further 18% were formed between 2000 and 2009.[12]

Figure 2.15: Age of organisations



Source: Survey data. Base: 316.

[12] 3% of respondents did not know when their organisation was established.

Purpose of the sector

3

3.1. Purpose and mission of organisations

In order to understand more about the purpose and mission of VCOs in South Yorkshire, respondents were asked to provide up to five key words to describe their organisation's purpose, activities and outcomes. This enabled them to express, in their own words, what was most important to their organisation. When brought together the information provides a snapshot of the breadth of the VCS across different policy areas.

The description and key words were matched to the UK Charitable Activity Tags.[13] The most common descriptors are 'social welfare', 'health', 'education', 'associations' and 'charity and VCS support'.

Figure 3.1: Purpose / mission of organisations

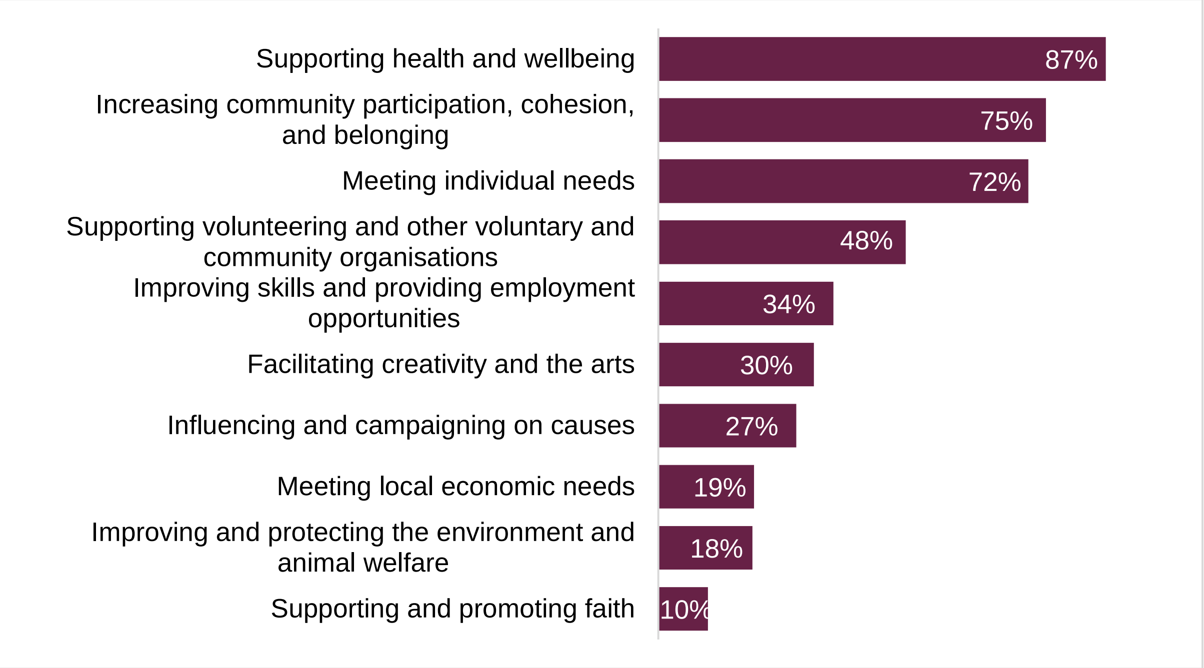
Source: Survey data. Base: 267-280.

Survey respondents were also asked to identify the key outcomes that their organisation aimed to achieve, selecting all that applied from a list of options. Again, the responses from this question provide an indication of the contribution made by the VCS across a range of policy areas.

[13] https://charityclassification.org.uk/data/tag_list/

The most common goal of responding organisations is supporting health and wellbeing (87%). Increasing community participation, cohesion and belonging and meeting individual needs are also key outcomes selected by most respondents (75% and 72% respectively). Supporting volunteering and other voluntary and community organisations (48%) and improving skills and providing employment opportunities (34%) are also common aims.

Figure 3.2: Key outcomes / aims for organisations



Source: Survey data. Base: 292.

Survey respondents were also asked to provide a short description of their organisation's purpose, mission and the activities it undertakes to fulfil them (including its user group and geographic coverage if relevant). These descriptions provide valuable additional understanding of the impact of the organisations and the sector for the communities and individuals they work with, as described in the following paragraphs.

3.2 Health and wellbeing

Reflective of the key areas of focus highlighted above, many organisations highlighted that a priority for their organisation is health and wellbeing, including reducing social isolation and loneliness, and increasing physical activity and health. For some organisations, this is an explicit purpose or mission of their organisation. One organisation describes their purpose as confronting and addressing *'poverty, inequality, prejudice and lack of opportunity in our inner city community […] using the background of a mini farm, community gardens and related resources.'* Others aim to support individuals and families with particular conditions by providing accessible and inclusive opportunities for activities to improve mental health, wellbeing and confidence and reduce isolation and loneliness. Examples include a charity providing weekly activity groups and outings for adults that are neurodiverse *'with the aim of increasing personal resilience and confidence'* and a CIC providing access to a diverse range of music and performing arts to combat loneliness and isolation for people with dementia and their carers.

Organisations providing more formalised health and social care services are also a key part of the sector in South Yorkshire. These organisations provide general and specialist services, such as residential social care, day care services, dementia services, hospice care, and supported accommodation. Respondents often highlight that their organisation ensures the provision of services *'at a low cost to individuals'* and *'identifying communities and individuals who would be unable to access the support they need elsewhere, either as it is unavailable through the statutory provision, or who are economically disadvantaged.'*

For other organisations, positive health and wellbeing outcomes occur as an additional benefit of their activities. For example, one sports club, a non-profit organisation run by local volunteer members highlights their welcoming approach to the local community and highlights that *'many of our members live alone and find coming along gives them exercise and social interaction with other members.'* Similarly, another organisation, set up to create items for newborn babies needing additional hospital care, feel they are also tackling loneliness and isolation. They had collected feedback forms which showed that *'the biggest majority of people attending come because they are lonely and want to meet new friends'* and as a result of being part of the group they had *'increased confidence and friendships while having a purpose'.*

3.3 Local focus and community participation

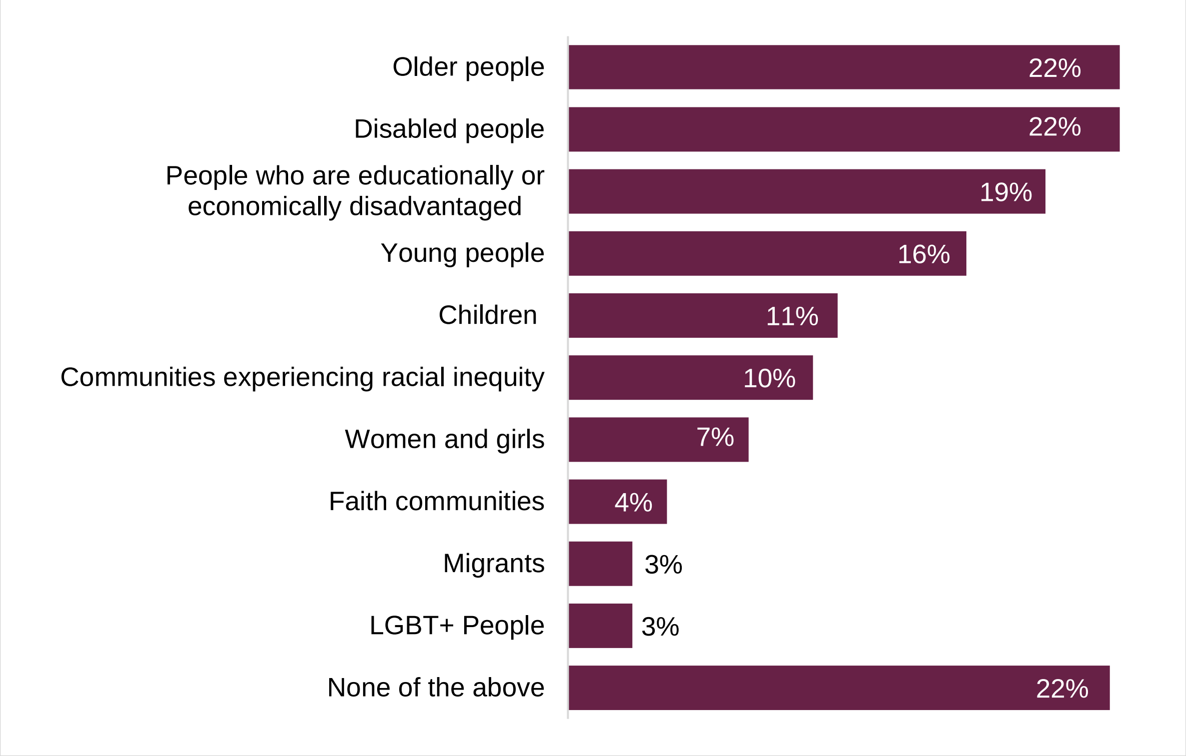
As outlined in Chapter 2, the majority of survey respondents report that their work is locally focused. As such, it is unsurprising that a key outcome is increasing community participation, cohesion and belonging. Many open responses also support this, with respondents stating that equitable access to activities for everyone in their local community was a key focus of their work and ethos. For example, one respondent from a performing arts organisation states that their organisation was established *'with the belief that everyone should have the opportunity to develop themselves creatively, irrelevant of background or age'* and that their focus was on *'improving the lives of those in our community'.* Another organisation, a community trust linked to a sports club describe themselves as being *'dedicated to making a positive impact across our community'*. Focusing on health and wellbeing, education, inclusion and participation they aim to help their community become *'stronger, healthier and more inclusive'.* Other examples of locally or community-focused organisations included those with a focus on preserving local historical or cultural sites or buildings and those with a focus on the environment. Examples included organisations focused on maintaining local parks, which are described as being *'for the benefit of the whole community'* and *'to promote wellbeing and health benefits through the promotion and encouragement of a healthy lifestyle, community cohesion and engagement'.*

3.4 Diversity, equity and inclusion

In terms of diversity, equity and inclusion, we asked whether organisations were primarily dedicated to serving specific groups.[14] This question specified that this would usually mean most of their beneficiaries belonged to these groups. 22% of respondents said their organisation is dedicated to serving disabled people, and 22% said older people. 19% said their organisation is dedicated to serving people who are educationally or economically disadvantaged, followed by 16% stating young people are the focus of their work. 22% of respondents stated their organisation is not primarily dedicated to serving any of these groups.

[14] The categories presented in this question were modified from those in the DEI data standard. See https://www.funderscollaborativehub.org.uk/collaborations/dei-data-standard.

Figure 3.3: Organisational focus on equity, diversity and inclusion



Source: Survey data. Base: 274.

3.5 Access to advice and training, alongside advocacy and awareness raising

A key theme emerging from respondents' descriptions of their organisations was a focus on providing information, advice, training and support for individuals who may be marginalised or disadvantaged. Respondents describe how their organisations activities' create a range of positive impacts on the lives of their beneficiaries through improving access to opportunities, overcoming barriers and facilitating independence and empowerment of the people they support. Many of these organisations are also focused on wider advocacy for equity and social justice around their particular cause. They undertake a range of activities related to this including lobbying and campaigning for policy change, raising awareness for their cause, promoting diversity, equity and inclusion and challenging discrimination and undertaking research. Survey responses came from a wide range of different groups undertaking this work in a variety of different ways. A small number of examples include:

- A charity aiming to *'increase the capacity and opportunities for isolated and socially excluded Asian women'* through education and training, and the development of skills for work.
- A by-and-for charity providing advocacy, advice and training to people with disabilities and their families *'to help them get the support and resources they need to lead an independent life with choice and dignity'*.
- A charity supporting young carers by raising awareness to *'reduce isolation and stigma', 'increasing young people's access to social, educational and career opportunities and providing practical and emotional support'*. They also undertake work at a strategic level to influence policy and practice in this area.
- A charity providing *'a safe, supportive, and excellent learning environment for vulnerable young people, asylum seekers, refugees, and E.U migrants'* including educational courses, work experiences, training and placements.

- A charity supporting mums who have experienced coercive control and post separation abuse who provide practical guidance and emotional support. They *‘encourage societal and policy change’* and *‘empower mums with skills and confidence to move forward with their lives’*.
- A charity supporting young people ages 16-25 who are at risk of homelessness. Their goal is to help young people to *‘overcome barriers so they can achieve their potential and thrive’*. They provide a range of housing advice and support, counselling, life skills, and access to education, training and employment.

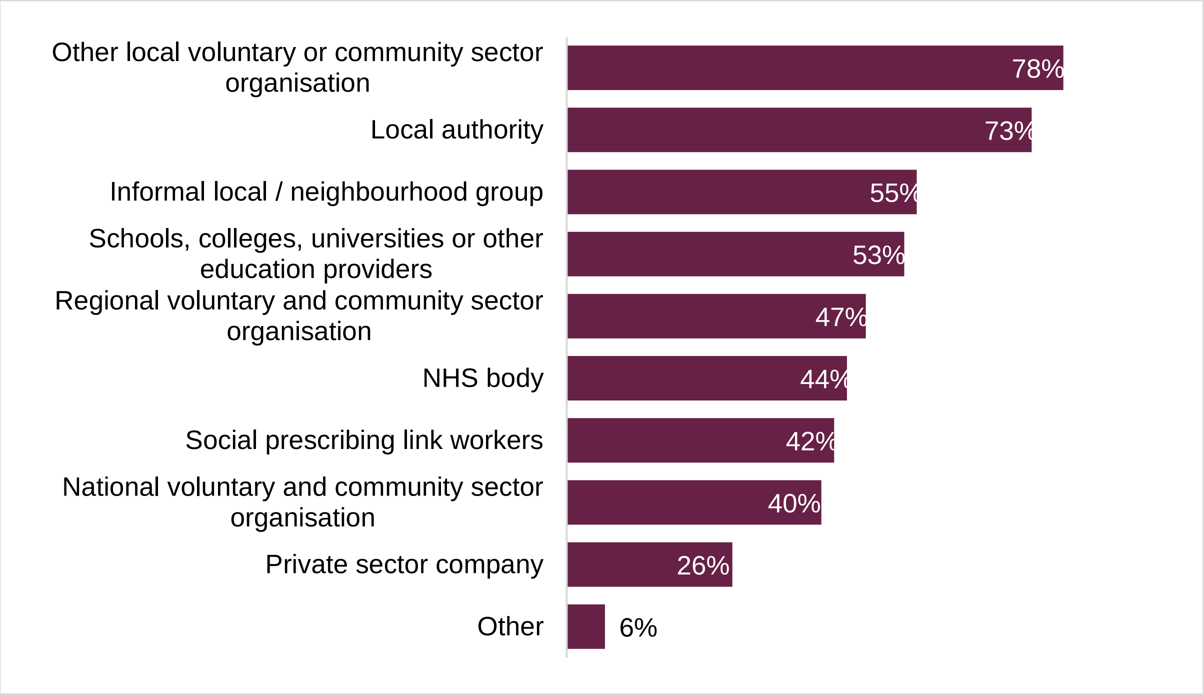
4

Relationships and partnership working

4.1. Partnership working

We asked respondents about the partnerships and connections that TSOs have within and beyond the VCSE sector in order to understand how they work and who they work with. The majority of respondents reported that their organisations work with other organisations in their local area including local voluntary or community sector organisations (78%) and the local authority (73%), while just over half work with informal / local neighbourhood groups (55%) and schools, colleges, universities or other education providers (53%). Lower numbers said that they work with regional voluntary and community sector organisations (47%) and national voluntary and community sector organisations (40%). Just under half worked with health-focused partners including NHS bodies (44%) and social prescribing link workers (42%). Only a quarter of respondents reported that they work with private sector companies (26%).

Figure 4.1: Partnership working

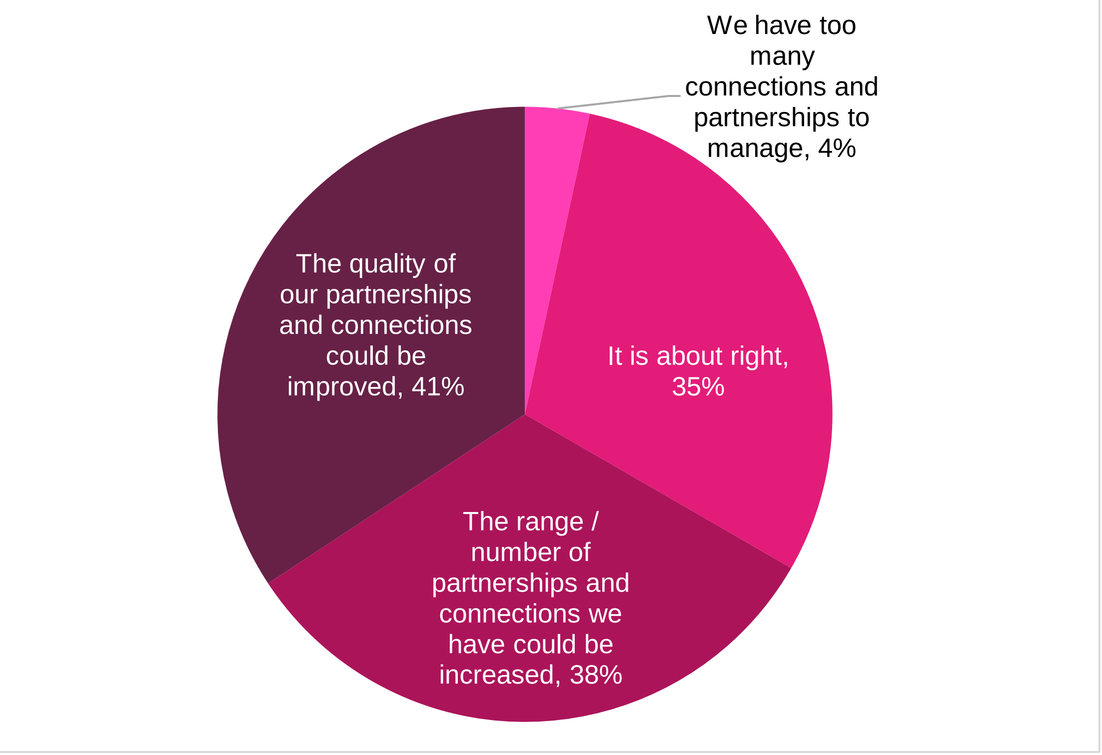


Source: Survey data. Base: 286.

4.2. Levels of connectedness

Respondents have mixed feelings about the level of connectedness and partnerships that their organisations have. Just over a third feel that it is about right (35%), but 41% feel the quality of their partnerships and connections could be improved and 38% feel that the range or number of partnerships and connections could be increased. Only 4% felt that they have too many connections to manage. However, three quarters of respondents are either very satisfied (20%) or fairly satisfied (55%) with their organisation's relationships with other organisations and stakeholders, with only 6% stating they are fairly or very dissatisfied.

Figure 4.2: Levels of connectedness

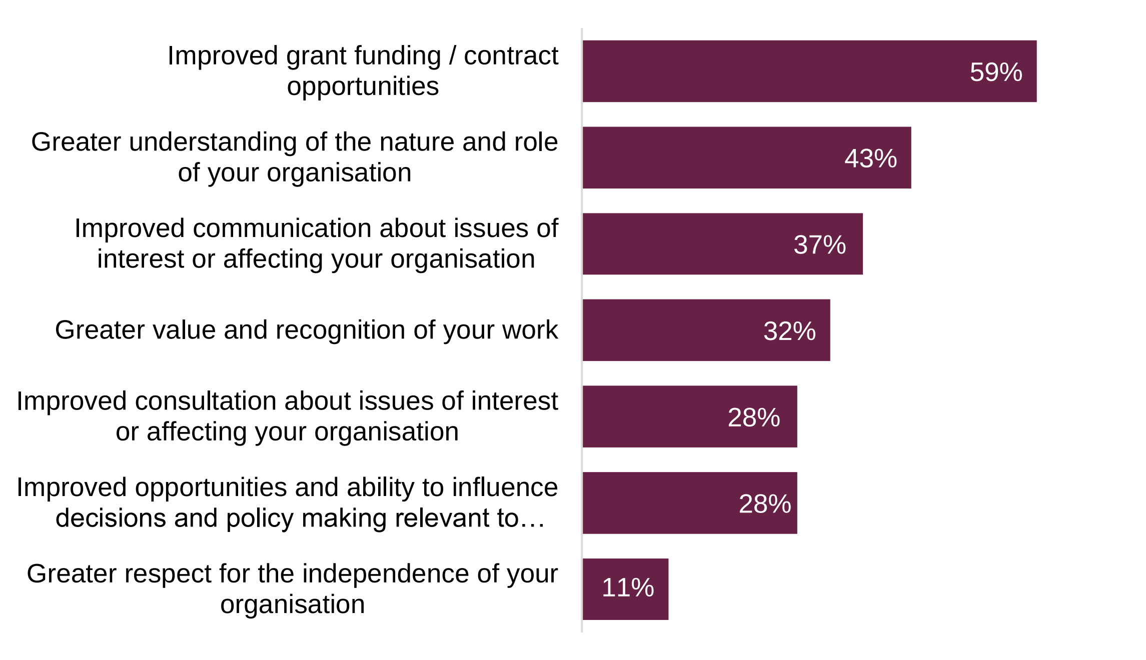


Source: Survey data. Base: 274.

4.3. Support needed

The majority of respondents feel that improved grant funding and contract opportunities from other organisations and stakeholders would help in improving their relationship with them (59%). Greater understanding of their role and organisation by external organisations and stakeholders is also felt to be important in improving relationships (43%) as well as improved communication about issues of interest or issues affecting their organisation (37%) and greater value and recognition of their work (32%). Improved opportunities and ability to influence decisions and policy making relevant to their organisation and improved consultation about issue of interest or issues affecting their organisation are also important to a noteworthy minority of participants (28% for each).

Figure 4.3: Support needed to improve relationships



Source: Survey data. Base: 256

Challenges and change

5

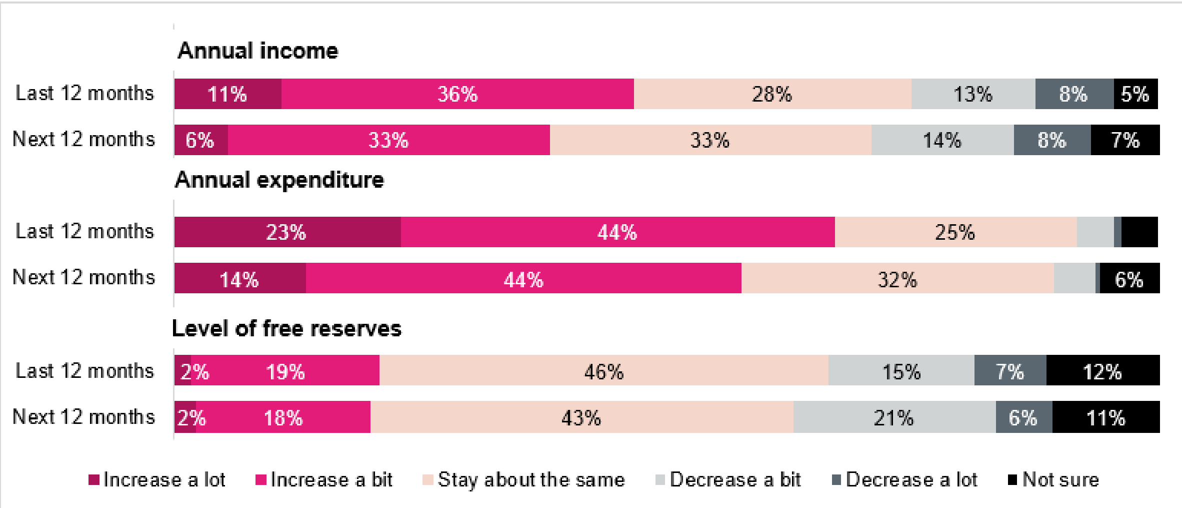
5.1. Change

Having described what the sector currently looks like, we asked respondents some questions to explore how it may be changing. Overall, nearly half of respondents reported that their organisation's total annual income had increased over the last year: 11% said it had increased a lot and 36% said it had increased a bit. A further 28% said that it had stayed the same. However, over two thirds of organisations reported that their expenditure had increased, with 23% saying it had increased a lot and 44% saying it had increased a bit. For both income and expenditure, slightly lower numbers of organisations expect increases in the next 12 months and slightly more expect things to stay the same. Almost half of respondents said that their level of free reserves had stayed the same over the last 12 months and they generally expected this to continue over the next 12 months, although a few more respondents expected free reserves to decrease slightly over the next 12 months.

These are concerning findings which suggest a trend towards organisation's costs outweighing their income. This is supported by open responses provided by participants who are worried about the impact of rising costs and insufficient funding:

> *'It is becoming more and more difficult to remain sustainable. Funding from government does not cover our costs.'*

Figure 5.1: Financial change – last 12 months vs next 12 months

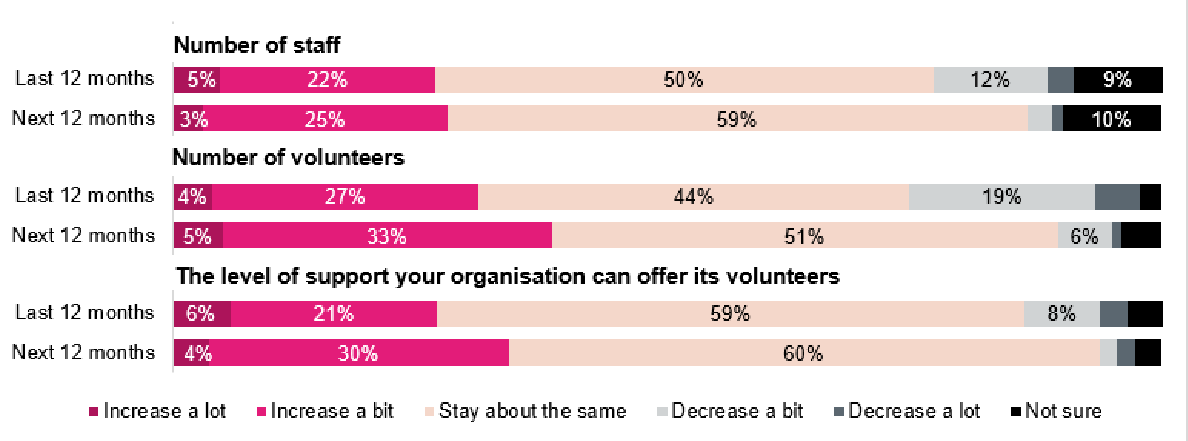


Source: Survey data. Base: 209-216.

Around half of respondents said their numbers of staff and volunteers had stayed the same, with slightly higher proportions stating that their numbers of staff and volunteers had increased than decreased. In the next 12 months higher proportions expect their numbers of staff and volunteers to stay the same or increase, compared to the last 12 months.

Over half of respondents reported that the level of support they can offer their volunteers had stayed the same over the last year (59%), with 27% saying the level of support had increased and 10% saying it had decreased. Organisation's expectations for the upcoming 12 months are similar with 60% expecting the level of support they can offer volunteers to stay the same. However, slightly more said they expect to be able to offer increased support in the next 12 months (34%).

Figure 5.2: Staffing and volunteering change – last 12 months vs next 12 months



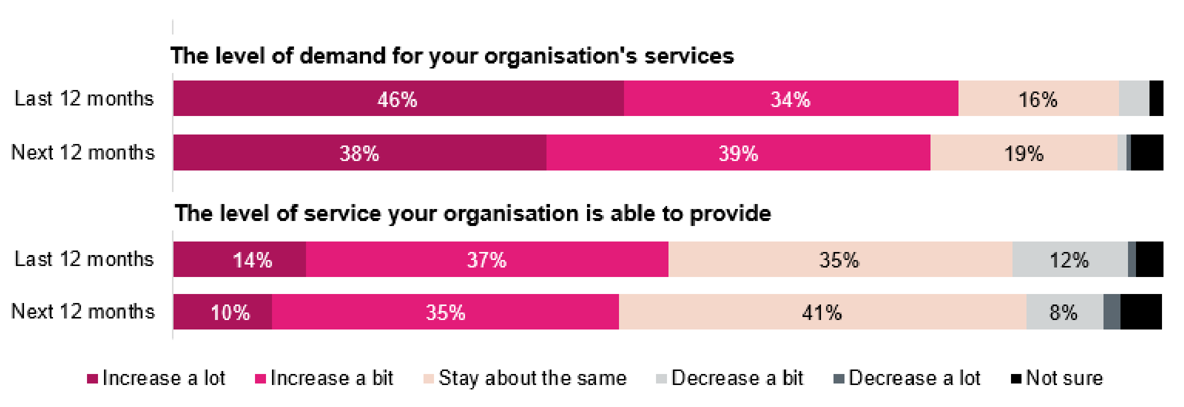
Source: Survey data. Base: 189-223.

80% of respondents said that the level of demand for their organisation's services had gone up in the last year, with 46% saying it had increased a lot and a further 34% saying it had increased a bit. Only 3% said that the level of demand had decreased a bit. However, only half of respondents said the level of service their organisation is able to provide had increased with most of these (37%) saying that it had increased a bit. Just over a third said their level of service had stayed about the same whilst 13% said it had decreased. Expectations for the next 12 months are similar, with the majority of organisations expecting demand for their services to increase (77%) and just under half expecting the level of service their organisation is able to provide to increase (45%), whilst 41% expect it to stay the same. Again, this is a concerning finding which suggests a gap between the demand for organisations' services and their capacity to meet this demand. Open responses provide more context on the reasons behind increased demand and limited capacity to meet this demand, with some highlighting that funding was not keeping up with increased costs, requiring them to deliver more with fewer resources:

> *'Increase in demand for [our services] can be seen, however our funders, especially the NHS, want us to do more work for less money.'*

> *'Cost of living crisis has increased the level of support needed by our clients and also impacted on increasing our wages bill. However, funders do not take this cost of living into consideration and do not increase funding pots accordingly making this very challenging.'*

Figure 5.3: Service demand and delivery change – last 12 months vs next 12 months



Source: Survey data. Base: 217-222.

Respondents were able to explain more about the changes their organisation had experienced or expected to experience. These responses provide additional context, with respondents describing how demand for services has increased as a result of Covid-19 and the cost-of-living crisis. Simultaneously, these have led to reductions in volunteering. Financial pressures on organisations and funders further compound the challenges of meeting demand.

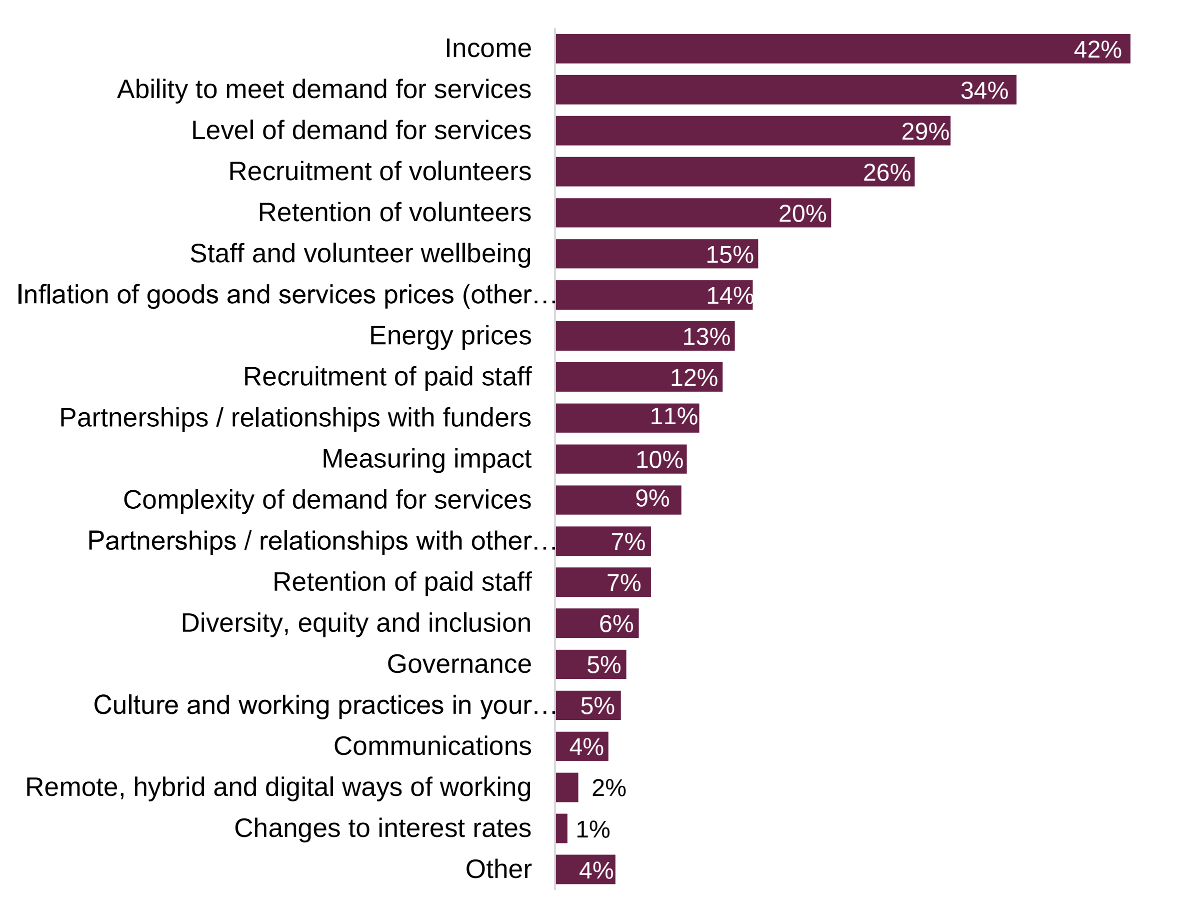
> *'The cost-of-living increases are not just affecting the charity, but volunteers may find themselves having to look for second income stream rather than volunteer. And the need for our service is greater as people struggle financially.'*

> *'Due to the effects of the Covid outbreak we have suffered losses that we cannot recoup and with the continuing rises in fuel costs and the continuing interest rate rises and general cost of living rises we recognize that we face very challenging times ahead.'*

5.2. Challenges and concerns

In light of the above findings, it is unsurprising that the most important concern currently affecting organisations is income (42%). Similarly, the next highest concerns are the ability to meet demand for services (34%) and the level of demand for services (29%). Many respondents are also concerned about recruitment and retention of volunteers (26% and 20% respectively) and staff and volunteer wellbeing (15%).

Figure 5.4: Current challenges and concerns



Source: Survey data. Base: 229.

Given the high level of concern around income, it is unsurprising that when asked about the types of support or opportunities that would be most helpful to their organisation, many respondents highlighted issues and support needs around funding, particularly in terms of sustainability, commissioning processes, coordination and reporting requirements:

> *'Economic austerity seems to have created more of a culture of competition for limited funds even when competition is not in the interests of service users who would benefit from cross-referrals and collaborations. In addition, as an organisation our social aims are not "commercial" - in so much as we lack robust revenue streams and are not aggressive enough in developing and selling services and products - part of this is due to already being stretched trying to bring in grant funding in the first place to deliver social impact!'*

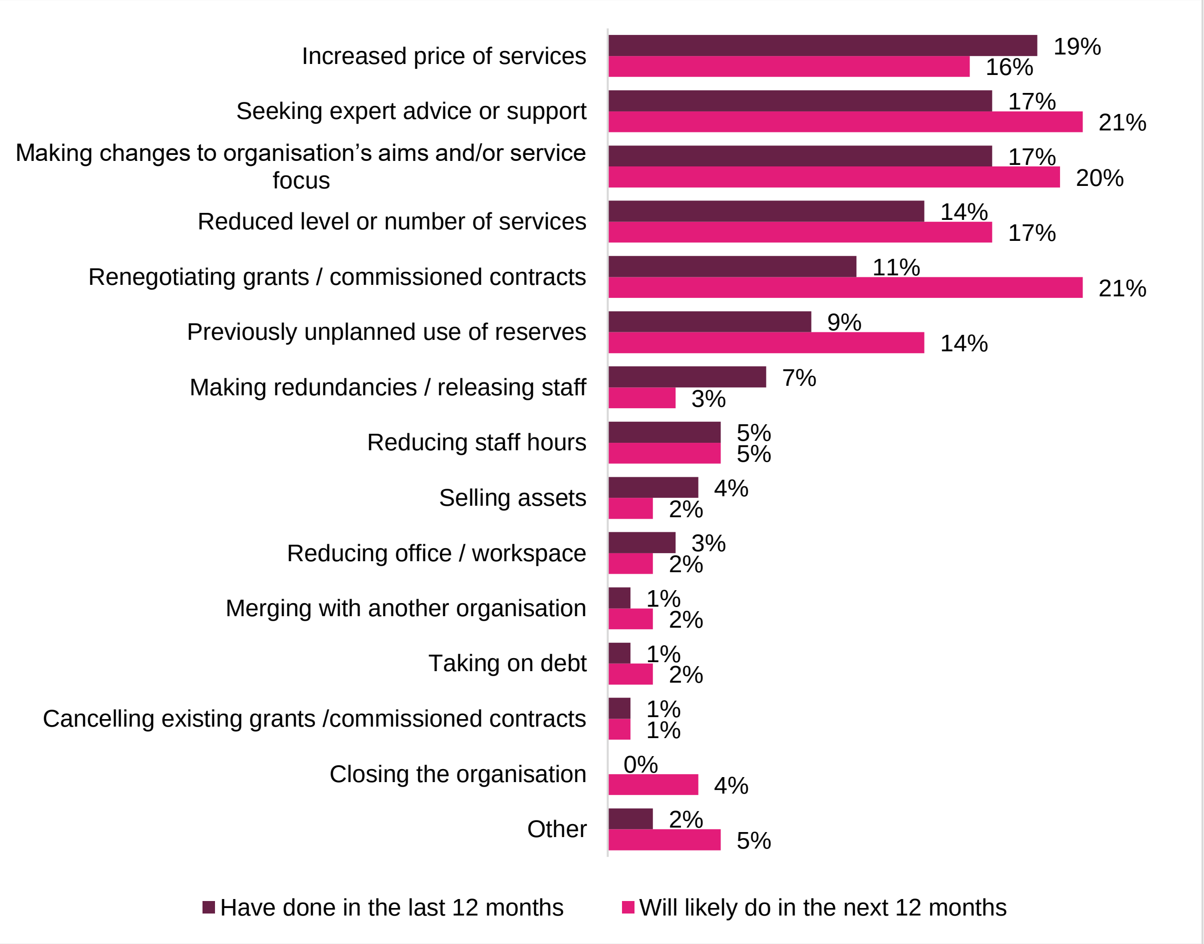
> *'Funding/commissioning opportunities - understanding the valuable work that we do and how we can support the work of stakeholders through commissioning arrangements. We have experience and skills in delivering a wide range of family support, health and social welfare support for children, young people and families. We are particularly interested in working more closely with other organisations.'*

> *'Sheffield is in desperate need of a coordinated approach from commissioners. It is very frustrating to hear about funding decisions that have been made without anyone checking whether there is an existing service that is already in place to deliver new work or programme.'*

'Longer term funding with less time needing to be spent on repeatedly reporting back on what has been done, often for quite small amounts of money.'

Just over half of organisations have taken actions in response to challenges over the last 12 months. Key actions include: increased price of services (19%), making changes to the organisation's aims and/or service focus (17%), seeking expert advice or support (17%) and reducing the level or number of services (14%). In terms of expectations for the next 12 months, a slightly higher proportion of organisations anticipate that they will need to take a range of actions in response to challenges. These include: seeking expert advice or support (21%), renegotiating grants / commissioned contracts (21%), making changes to the organisations aims and/or service focus (20%), reduced level of number of services (17%), increased price of services (16%) and previously unplanned use of reserves (14%).

Figure 5.5: Actions taken in response to challenges



Source: Survey data. Base: 247.

Conclusions

6

This research provides an up-to-date picture of the VCSE sector in South Yorkshire.[15] The research is timely given that the last large-scale surveys of VCSE organisations in the area took place in 2015 (Rotherham) and 2016 (Sheffield), since which the Covid-19 pandemic and cost-of-living crisis has had a substantial impact. Collection of this type of data is also particularly valuable in terms of understanding micro and small organisations, who are less represented in administrative data despite making up the largest proportion of organisations in the sector. This is often due to differences in reporting requirements (i.e. charities with income below £10,000 often do not complete a full annual return to the Charity Commission) or organisations being unregistered and therefore 'below the radar'. Given that 59% of survey responses came from organisations that were small or micro in terms of income, this research provides key insight into the current state of the VCSE sector in South Yorkshire.

The VCSE sector in South Yorkshire is large-scale and has a significant workforce of paid staff and volunteers

Administrative data indicates that there are an estimated 7,761 TSOs in South Yorkshire. Just over half of survey respondents said their organisation had a paid workforce and estimates using administrative data suggest that over 19,000 people are employed in South Yorkshire VSOs. Volunteers also make a significant contribution, with over 50,000 volunteers working in the sector.[16]

TSOs tend to be locally focused and partner with local stakeholders to support their work

The highest proportion of respondents describe their organisation as a 'local voluntary organisation' or a 'community or neighbourhood group'. The majority of survey respondents report that their organisation worked within South Yorkshire, with a third stating their organisation works within particular neighbourhoods and communities. Most partnered with other local voluntary organisations and the local authority to support their work.

[15] Please note: the results of the survey do not provide a complete picture as participation was voluntary and the estimated response rate was 4%, but they nonetheless reflect the views of a range of organisations across South Yorkshire.
[16] As identified earlier, this is likely to be a significant underestimation due to data limitations.

TSOs provide a wide range of important services and support a diverse range of individuals, communities and causes

Organisations often have a focus on accessibility and inclusivity, supporting individuals and communities who may be marginalised or disadvantaged. Key areas of focus are supporting health and wellbeing, community participation, access to advice and training, and advocacy and awareness raising. Principles of diversity, equity and inclusion are key across each area of focus.

Income is a key concern for TSOs in South Yorkshire leading to concerns over future sustainability

Survey respondents frequently identified financial matters as a key current concern for their organisations. The majority felt they needed improved grant funding and contract opportunities, whilst more organisations reported that their expenditure had increased over the last 12 months compared to those reporting their income had increased, suggesting that finances may be becoming more stretched. This was reflected in open responses with participants identifying the lasting impact of Covid-19, rising costs and a lack of acknowledgement of these challenges by funders as a key concern.

Organisations are experiencing increasing demand for their services coupled with a lack of capacity to meet this demand

Although respondents reported that levels of staffing and volunteering were remaining consistent, or even increasing in some organisations, recruitment and retention and staff and volunteer wellbeing were key concerns. These concerns are likely to be linked to the reported increasing level of demand for the services of VSOs, and a lack of capacity and funding to meet this demand. Respondents reflected that increasing costs added pressure to organisations, and therefore staff and volunteers. At the same time, individuals facing personal financial pressures may be less able to volunteer.

7

Recommendations

We know that the VCSE values its independence. We know that there is a huge range of diversity, breadth and reach across the thousands of VCSE groups and organisations in South Yorkshire, and that they deliver a range of impactful activities and support to the communities they work with. We know that generally it is also important for the VCSE to be accessible and ‘visible’; alongside, having the support and ‘connectivity’ to be able to thrive.

Based on this research, we suggest the following recommendations:

For VCSE support organisations (including VAR, VAS, VAD, BCVS):

- Publication and sharing of this research with relevant audiences to highlight the value, strengths and challenges of the sectors. For example, sharing with VCSE organisations, partners, commissioners and funding bodies.
- Development of actions based on the research and follow-up activities. Including, follow-up in-depth research with organisations to explore key issues raised in more detail, with a particular focus on support needed and how to move forward and address challenges.
- Regular review and updating of evidence on the VCSE sector in South Yorkshire to monitor trends and change over time.
- Proactive identification of opportunities for partnerships and collaboration on co-designing and delivery. For example, development of partnerships with health (including ICBs) could help to tackle health inequalities, address capacity and demand issues, and create a more joined-up approach to support people who need it.

For partners / stakeholders:

- Changes to funding models to facilitate greater stability and sustainability of the sector, including:
  - Funding in line with the increased cost-of-living and ongoing impact of Covid-19.
  - Funding of core costs.
  - More flexible funding with less stringent monitoring and reporting requirements.
  - Longer-term funding.

Data recommendations:

- Collection of basic information for all organisations by the main regulators. It is currently challenging to gain a full picture of the sector due to limitations in administrative data, particularly for smaller organisations, unregistered organisations and non-charity VSOs.

Appendix 1: Methodology

A1

Administrative data analysis – registered organisations

We attempted to identify South Yorkshire TSOs from four different public data sources. These were:

- The Register of Charities, maintained by the Charity Commission for England and Wales.
- Companies House, which regulates all companies, including Community Interest Companies (CICs).
- The Financial Conduct Authority, which regulates all registered societies.
- A list of all registered Community Amateur Sports Clubs (CASCs) supplied by HM Revenue and Customs.

For all these datasets, organisations registered within South Yorkshire could be identified using their postcode. This may miss, however, regional or national organisations registered outside of South Yorkshire that still have significant operations within its borders.

Some exclusions were made to try and eliminate organisations that have ceased operating.

We chose to use the financial year ending 2021-22 for our analysis. Charities have ten months following their financial year end to submit their annual documentation to the charity commission. In some cases, where charities were late submitting their annual return, but still appear to be trading, we used data from 2020-21 to fill the gap. All charities that submitted data on time will have been included.

Administrative data analysis – unregistered organisations

An estimate of the number of unregistered organisations was calculated using the formula developed by Mohan et al. (2010):[17] 3.66 unregistered organisations per 1,000 population. We used 2021 census data retrieved from NOMIS[18] to make the calculations for each district in South Yorkshire.

[17] Mohan, J., Kane, D., Wilding, K., Branson, J. & Owles, F. (2010: 3). Beyond 'flat-earth' maps of the third sector: Enhancing our understanding of the contribution of 'below-the-radar' organisations – Briefing Paper. Third Sector Trends Study. Northern Rock Foundation.
[18] https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/

Online survey

The survey was live for four months (August to November 2023).

The survey was promoted in several ways throughout the survey period including:

- Emails (and follow-up reminders) to organisations listed in the datasets compiled during Strand 1 (from the Charity Commission and other sources).
- Emails (and follow-up reminders) to membership lists of the funding partners.
- Promotion of the survey at relevant sector events and meetings.
- Promotion of the survey on social media in bulletins and on social media of the partners.
- Email reminders to those who had partially completed the survey.
- Printed flyers and postcards (400 in total) handed out at relevant events and posted to a sample of organisations in each area.

The research team provided regular updates to the funder on responses (broken down by area) to inform further promotion and targeting in each area.

Several strategies were also employed throughout the survey period to boost responses, including analysis of partial responses to the survey to identify at which point respondents may have abandoned the survey and implementing measures to address this. These included simplification of a couple of questions, more detail on the information participants needed to complete the survey (e.g. financial information), and an increase to the prize draw amount.