

Voluntary, community and social enterprise: Skills, talent and values in our workforce

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BOB VCSE
HEALTH ALLIANCE

The size & shape of the VCSE Sector in Bucks

Bucks:

- **2,400 registered organisations**
(many more not big/formal enough to be registered)
- Estimated annual value of **£670m.**
- **11,000 paid staff**
(4.6% of employment in the county)
- **47,000 regular volunteers** per year
(8.5% of the population of Bucks.)

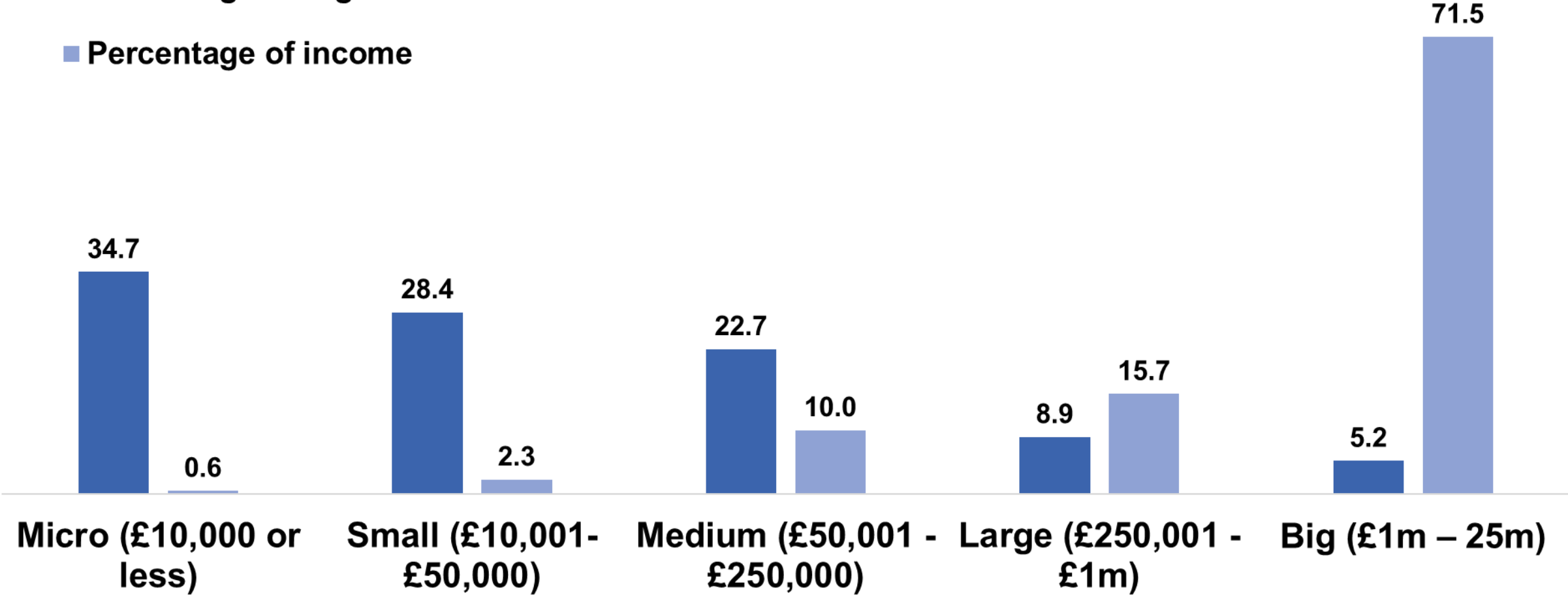


BOB:

- 7,500 registered organisations
- Estimated annual value of £2.1bn.
- 44,500 paid staff
- 144,000 regular volunteers per year

Sector Structure

- Percentage of organisations
- Percentage of income

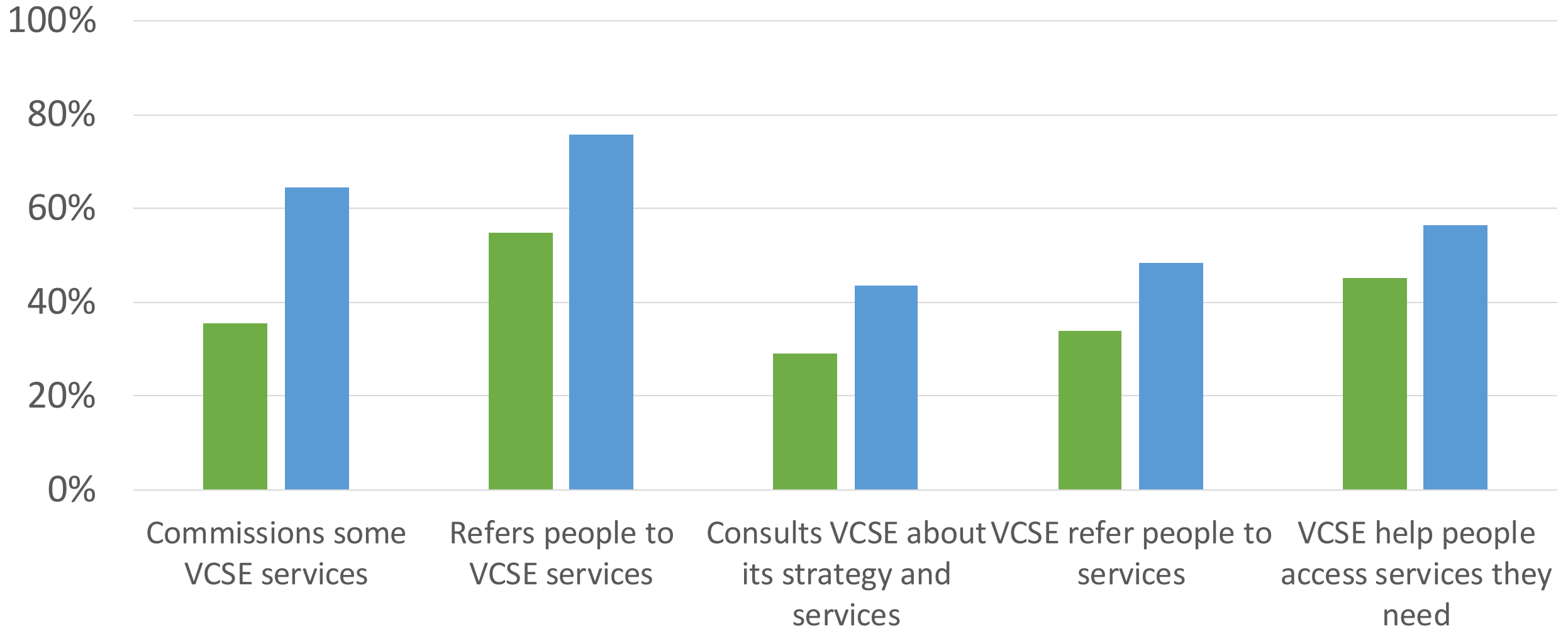


(BOB-wide - Chapman, 2023)

VCSE: how we relate to NHS and Councils in BOB



■ NHS ■ Council



Percentage of 56 respondents ticking multi-choice in BOB VCSE Health Alliance survey (June 2023)

How VCSEs see their relationship with the public sector

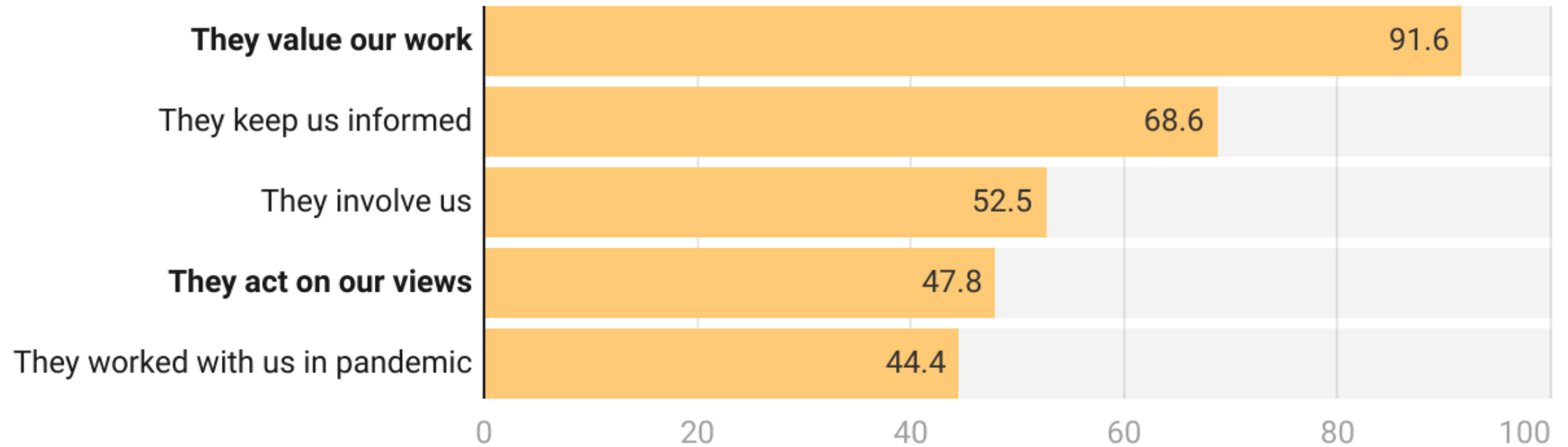


Chart: BOB VCSE Health Alliance • Source: Third Sector Trends Survey • Created with Datawrapper

Income sources of VCSE in BOB compared to national average

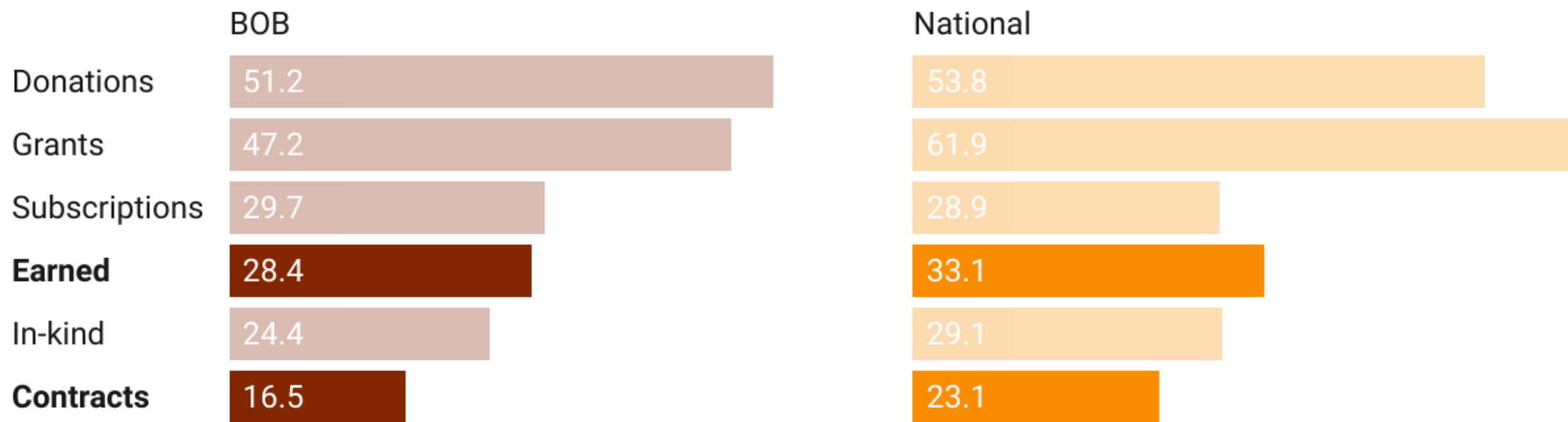
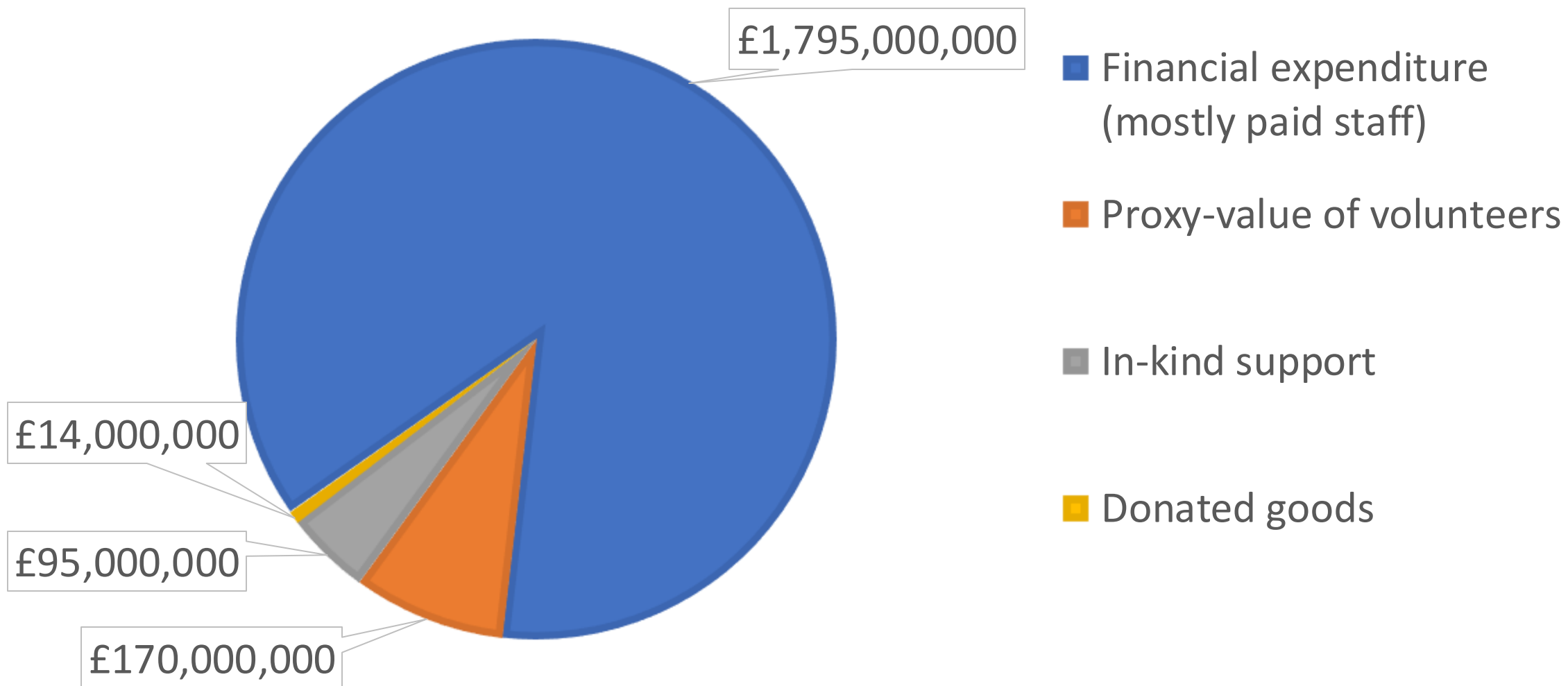


Chart: BOB VCSE Health Alliance • Source: Third Sector Trends Survey 2022 • Created with Datawrapper

VCSE FINANCES IN BOB: £2.1 BILLION FINANCIAL VALUE



(BOB-wide - Chapman, 2023)

VCSE Energy nationally: Paid staff vs Volunteers

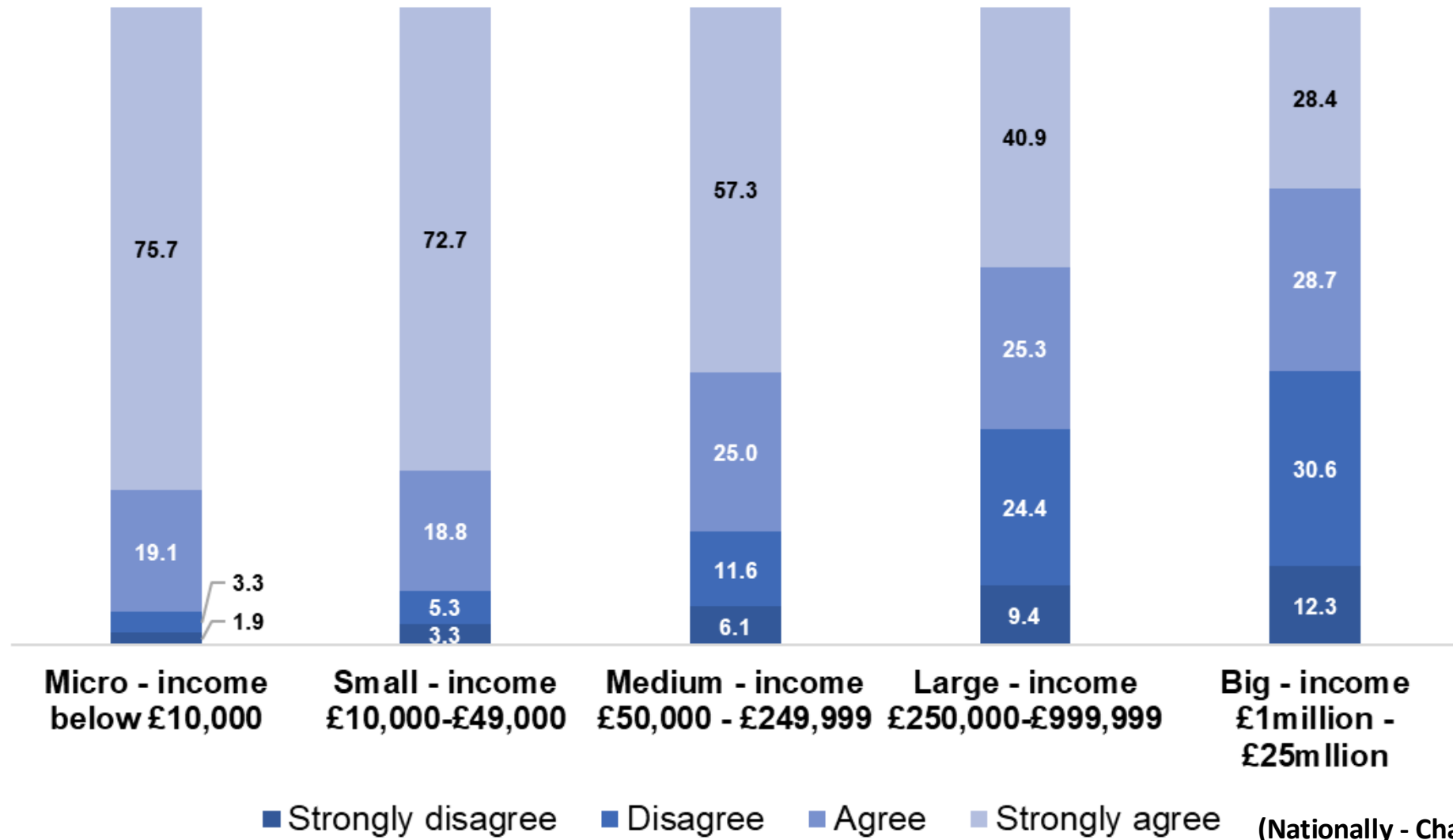
**Volunteer hours
p.a.**



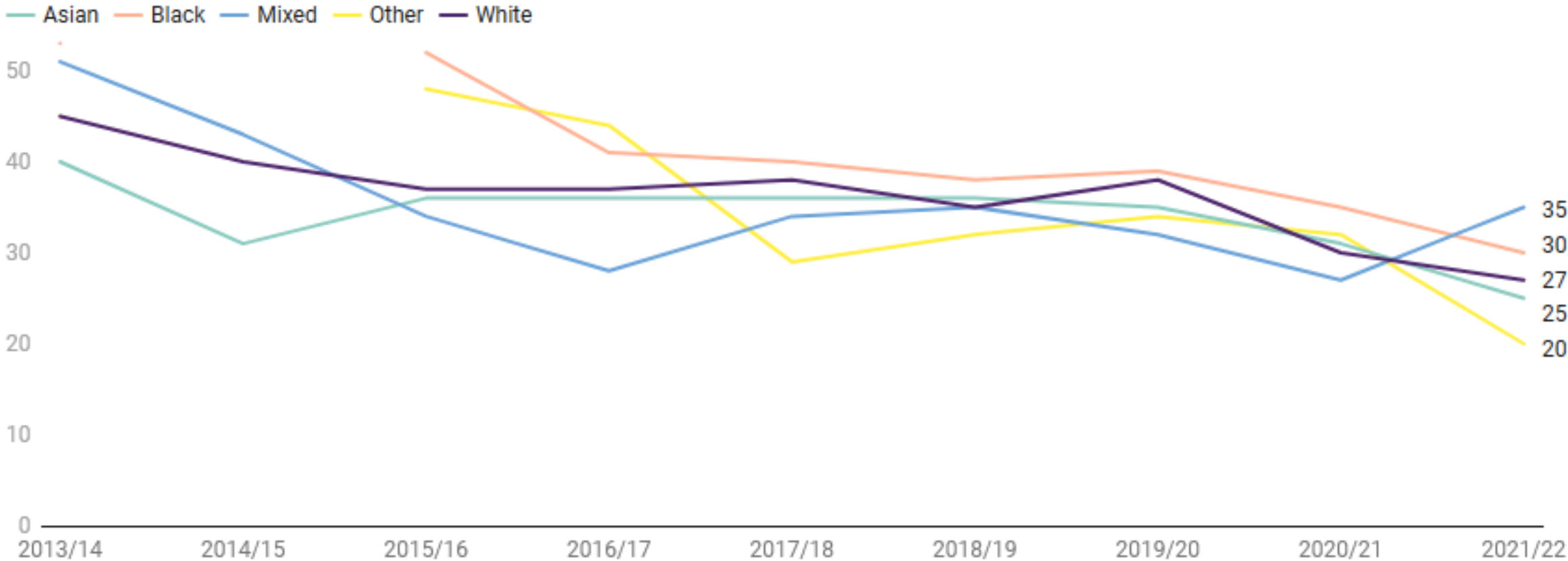
**FTE paid staff
hours p.a.**

(Nationally - Chapman, 2023)

Percentage of VCSE organisations in England and Wales which 'could not keep going' without volunteers (n=4,686)



Formal volunteering once a year in England, 2013/14 to 2021/22



Source: [Community Life Survey, 2023](#) • [Get the data](#) • Created with [Datawrapper](#)

Change in the composition of the volunteer workforce

	It's been much harder to hold on to our older volunteers	A lot of our recent volunteers joined us because they prefer to work online	Our group of volunteers have become more ethnically diverse	We have more volunteers under the age of 30 now	We're losing some of the volunteers who joined us during the pandemic
NHS Buckinghamshire Oxfordshire and Berkshire West Integrated Care Board	44.0	7.7	21.2	14.4	25.5
Home counties statistical neighbours	43.4	6.8	18.7	14.6	23.1
London statistical neighbours	46.3	17.9	40.7	26.7	28.7
Combined authority statistical neighbours	49.0	7.3	24.9	24.1	28.7
Town and country statistical neighbours	49.8	5.8	11.3	15.4	21.1
England and Wales	47.9	9.4	21.7	20.0	26.1

(Chapman, 2023)



**Carly
Newman**

No5

Portrait 1 Service user to VCSE professional

- Carly is a young person who accessed No. 5's counselling service
- Became one of the lived experience young leaders - a volunteer
- Been helped so want to help others
- Then an employee: comms and fundraising assistant > officer
- Now Operations and Relationships Manager

Percent of VCSE organisations finding with recruitment and retention problems

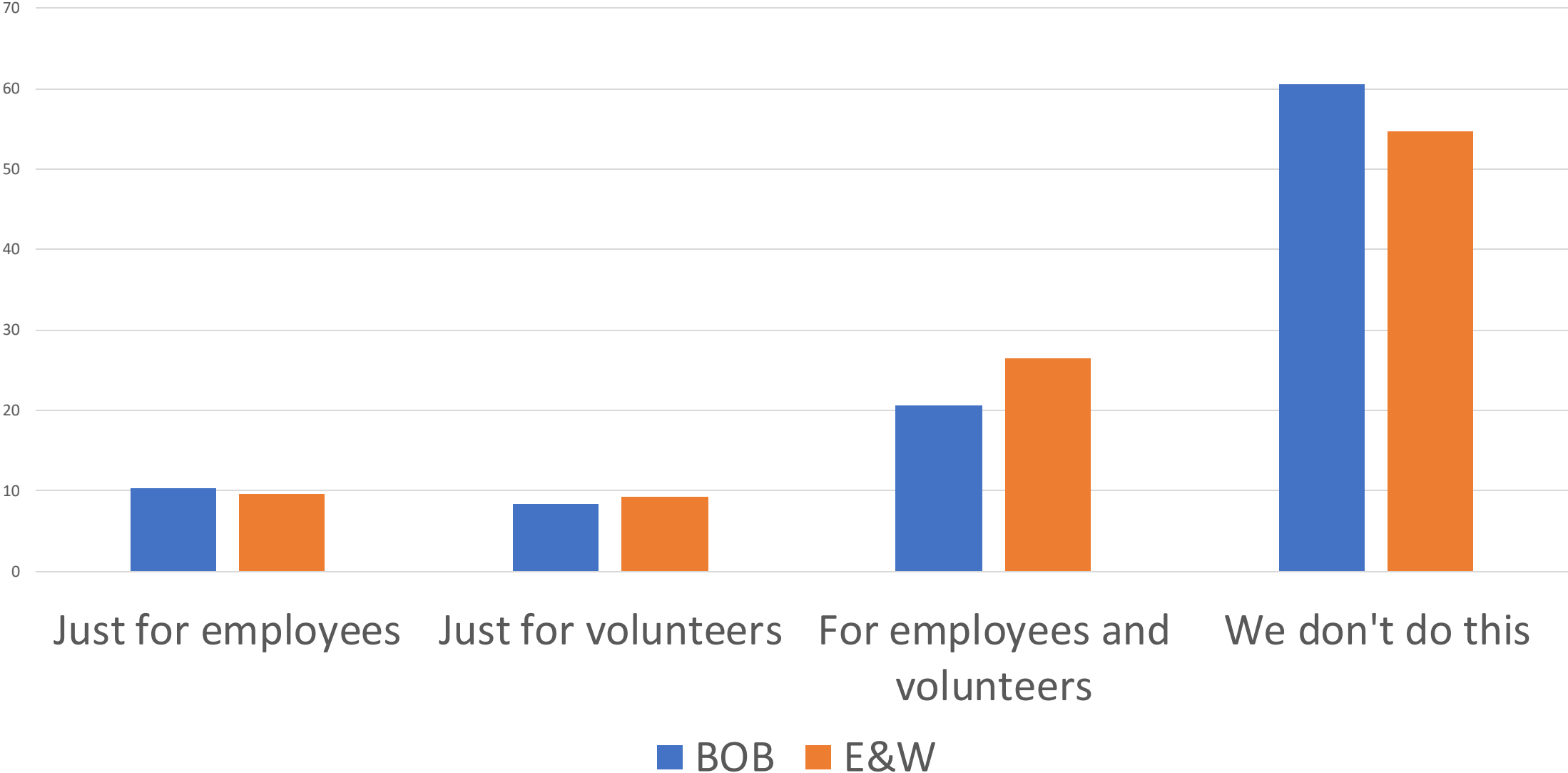




Portrait 2 Retired nurse to Chair of Trustees

- Alison is a retired NHS nurse
- Looking for a way to use her skills
- And contact with local community
- Chair of Trustees from 2017
- Working with paid Operations Manager
- And a team of volunteers

BOB VCSE sector: provision of training



(Chapman, 2023)

Diversity in leadership amongst chief officers (Third Sector Trends survey data, 2022)

	Graduate chief officers	Women chief officers	Chief officers with disabilities	Black, Asian and minority ethnic chief officers
NHS Buckinghamshire Oxfordshire and Berkshire West Integrated Care Board	70.3	66.3	4.8	8.0
Home counties statistical neighbours	58.4	63.8	4.8	6.8
London statistical neighbours	70.8	53.4	6.1	25.6
Combined authority statistical neighbours	67.7	61.2	10.5	10.5
Town and country statistical neighbours	55.7	61.1	7.4	3.6
England and Wales	62.7	61.5	7.9	9.7

(Chapman, 2023)

Workforce research findings

- **What are VCSE professionals like?** Dynamic, committed, entrepreneurial, and highly professional.
- **Why do they work in VCSE?** Personal and family experiences, community embeddedness, whole-person approach, career-building and rebuilding
- **Full report due March 2024**

KEY FINDINGS FROM
BUCKINGHAMSHIRE
RESEARCH

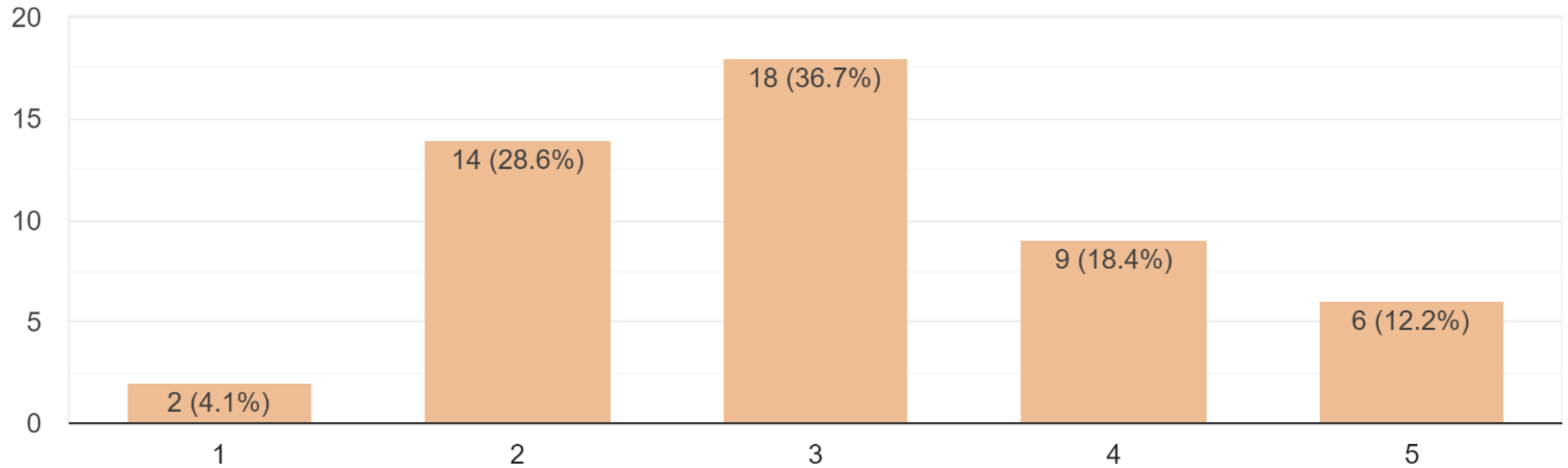


ENGAGING VOLUNTEERS IN 2023



Do you have enough volunteers to fulfil your objectives and plans for the future?

49 responses



Community Impact Bucks Volunteering Pulse Survey February 2024



Volunteering at its
lowest levels in a
decade



Volunteering in Buckinghamshire

Broad research aims:

- • • • 1. Explore volunteering needs and barriers – for organisations, current and potential volunteers
- • • • 2. Test and develop ideas about how to evolve the [Buckinghamshire Volunteer Matching Service](#)
- • • • 3. Identify skills and training requirements for volunteers and assess whether a volunteer passport could support skills development

Research by Laura Elson Consulting Ltd for Community Impact Bucks and Buckinghamshire Health and Social Care Academy, November 2022 to February 2023

Surveys (169 participants) and focus groups (18 participants)

Volunteers in Buckinghamshire

Main reasons for volunteering:

86%

enjoy it

75%

Use skills for good causes

Other motivations:

55%

Socialising

54%

Mental Health

51%

Passionate about the cause

Current Volunteers:

56%

Volunteering in multiple places

22%

Would volunteer more

For those who don't volunteer

– many had time and plenty of skills to offer.



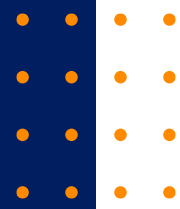
Barriers to volunteering

Barriers for people who don't currently volunteer:

- Not enough spare time (44%) but many said they could give 5 hours a month, which is enough time for many roles
- Don't know how to find out about volunteering opportunities (42%)
- Lack of flexibility in volunteer roles →



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.



Barriers to volunteering

- Onerous onboarding processes and training

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

- but this must be balanced with preparing volunteers to deliver activities safely and to a high standard.

- Ignoring applications – or being too persistent

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.

- Lack of relevant opportunities

32% of people not currently volunteering hadn't been able to find a role that matched their interests.



Visiting the organisation first



chosen by 66% of current volunteers, 64% of potential volunteers

Face-to-face support



Provided early in the role to help volunteers build confidence

Volunteers' needs

Getting a flavour for volunteering – taster sessions

What would help to make choosing and starting a volunteer role easier?

[← Read More](#)

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?

Reducing barriers - making it easier to volunteer

Creating more flexible opportunities – and promoting them

1 in 3 current volunteers

felt that more 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

1 in 2 people

say volunteering from or near home would help

53% of those not volunteering

would prefer to support one-off events





Increasing the
diversity of
volunteering



Reducing barriers – making it easier to volunteer

Underrepresented groups: men, people from minority ethnic groups, the LGBTQIA+ community and those under 40.

- Current volunteers suggested organisations needed more targeted promotion and community outreach to specific groups to let them know about volunteering

19% of potential volunteers identified as disabled, as did 15% of current volunteers.

What would make volunteering more
accessible:

- Volunteering remotely from home
- One place online where volunteering opportunities can be found
- One participant would prefer for meetings, training, and supervision to be held online
- Another would find having the assistance of a support worker would help make volunteering accessible.

Reducing barriers – making it easier to volunteer

Managing expectations around
onboarding

Levels of “bureaucracy and red
tape” – onboarding processes a
major barrier.

One volunteer suggested that this
might be unavoidable, but that
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.





Volunteers' needs

Skills, training and volunteers' motivations

- Skills development wasn't a major motivator for volunteering among respondents
- Organisations identified a wide range of skills they were hoping volunteers would bring in 2023
- Organisations felt strongly that common core training (safeguarding, confidentiality, professional boundaries) must be provided in-house



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.



Volunteer Passport Scheme

- There was opposition from volunteer-involving organisations regarding the elements of the scheme that would allow volunteers to be centrally checked and onboarded
- **Volunteer skills record** - capturing training and experience from prior roles, education and career

Opportunity: promoting volunteering

Volunteering can:



be flexible, does not need to require a large, or regular time commitment



cater for a wide range of interests



be enjoyable, sociable and develops a wide range of skills

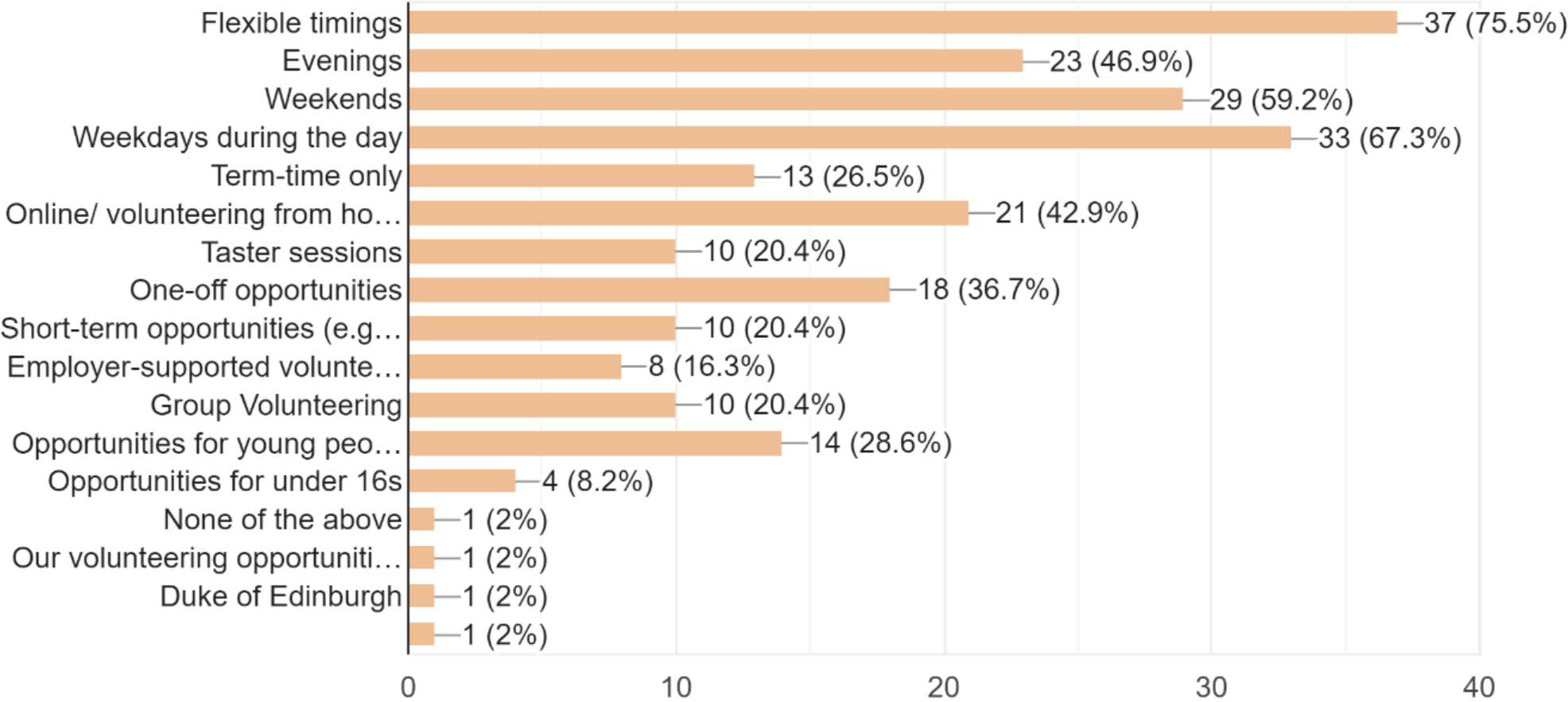


be done from, or close to, home



Previous feedback from volunteers has suggested that more people would volunteer if there were a wider range of ways to get involved and fit around vol... of the following? If so, please tick all that apply:

49 responses



What's working well with volunteer recruitment and retention? It's not!

Recognition, internal and external awards, that it not too demanding. Making them in to a friends group

Listening and appreciating the volunteers

Volunteers enjoy having a cuppa after their session and some biscuits and a chance to connect and chat.

Keeping in contact with the existing volunteers and encouraging them to continue with us.

Regular time - Monday each week 1.00pm to 3.00pm = people know where they are with their weekly schedule..

Having a 6 month commitment for each partnership mean volunteers may do another stint when the first comes to an end.

Use of rotas so they can swap, valuing and thanking them, respecting time out and lots of tea and cakes!

It's much easier to recruit volunteers for one-off assignments.

Approaching current providers of training for counselling students - direct approach

Taster sessions, induction, buddying with existing volunteers, making sure we keep communicating with volunteers, involvement in decision making where possible.

The volunteers who actively find us through a desire to give back or further career prospects are usually the most reliable and committed.

Advertising online via Facebook targeting

Swift response, friendly approach, simple process, range of opportunities - the what, how and when

Local community advertising is working well.