

REPORT PROFILE

Voluntary Action Swindon is commissioned by Swindon Borough Council to provide support to the voluntary and community sector of Swindon. For a pulse check on the sector and for us to ensure we are providing a quality service, we carry out a Sector Survey every two years. This survey is three years since the last due to other surveys responding to the COVID emergency.

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SECTOR SURVEY 2020 - 2022

METHOD OF GATHERING DATA

This Sector Survey was compiled using Survey Monkey and sent out to the Voluntary and Community Organisations in Swindon via e-mail and our newsletter VAS id.

The survey opened on 25th April 2022 and closed 10th June 2022.

74 responses were received from charities, not-for-profit organisations, and community groups.

KEY FINDINGS

- 72% have seen an increase in demand for services.
- 82% hold reserves:
 - 14% less than 3 months (9)
 - 39% 3-6 months (25)
 - 14% 6-12 months (9)
 - 12% 12+ months (8)
- 11 organisations hold no reserves.
- 52% have had to look for additional funding at the same time as managing an increase in demand.
- Skills currently lacking:
 - 47% fundraising
 - 36% social media
 - 26% website
 - 26% marketing
- Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) – 31 groups are interested in help from VAS to further develop this area.
- 69% of organisations reported a greater awareness of VAS compared to 3 years ago, with 30% about the same.

DATE OF REPORT

August 2022

- Awareness of the range of VAS services ranged from 40% to 78%.
- Satisfaction scores of VAS services are mainly either 'very satisfied' or 'satisfied.' Just two 'not satisfied' one for printing services and one for DBS services.
- 50% of groups, who responded, have a training budget.
- 65% of organisations deal with people of all ages.
- 77% of organisations have less than 10 paid staff.
- Trustees are each providing, on average, 395 volunteer hours per year.
- Most organisations use volunteers for support, with 61 organisations saying they have between 1 – 30+ volunteers.
- 90% stated that 'word of mouth' was the best way to recruit volunteers.
- 45% declared an income of between £10,001 - £100,000, 15% have less than £10k.
- 34% have seen a decrease in income in the last 12 months.

RESPONSES

Type of organisation

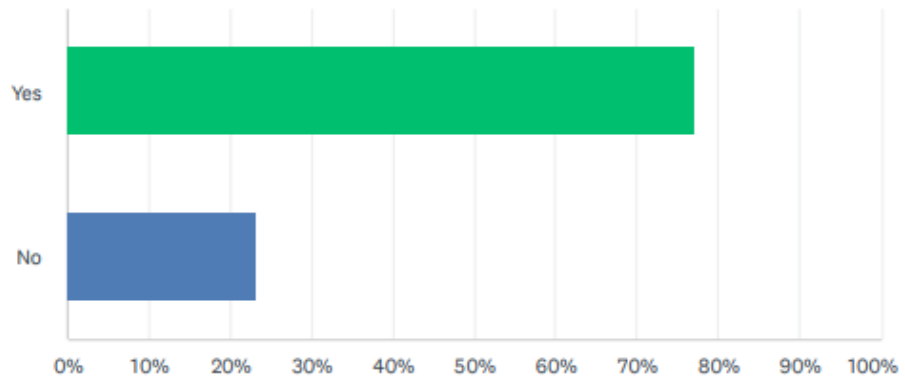
74 organisations answered this question, with the largest response coming from charitable companies (limited by guarantee).

Charitable Company (Limited by Guarantee)	31
Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO)	17
Community Interest Company (CIC)	11
Other*	6
Unincorporated	5
Trust	4

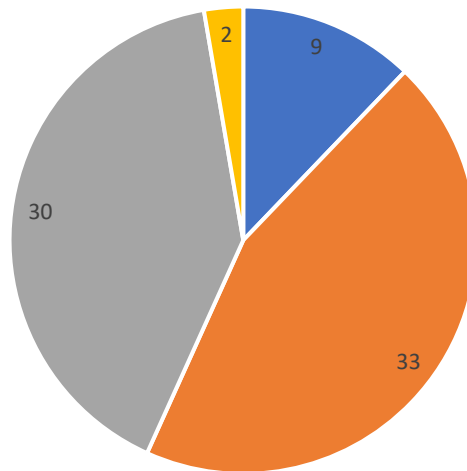
*Church, collaboration of individuals, community group, local club (part of a national charity), co-operative.

Are you registered with the Charity Commission?

74 responded to this question with 77% (57) saying they were registered with the Charity Commission, 23% (17) said they weren't registered.



Who completed the survey?



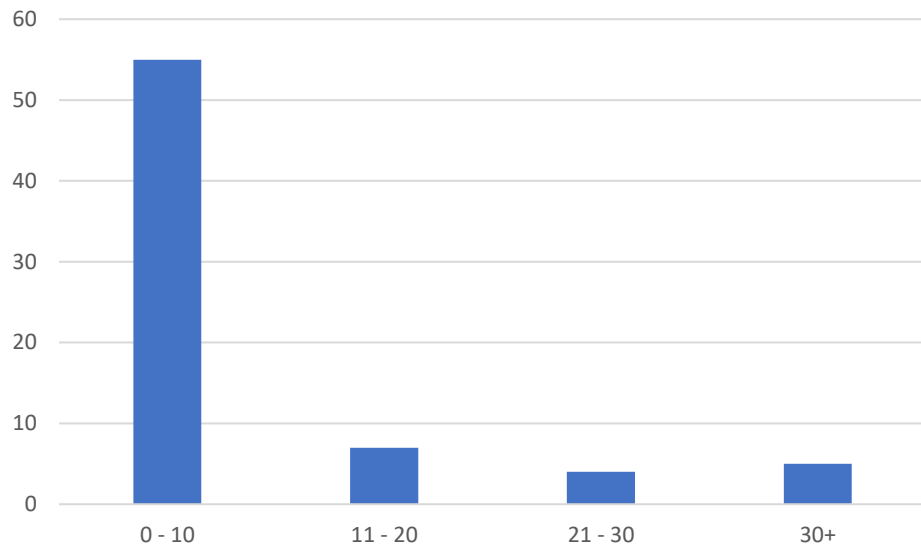
■ Employed worker ■ Senior staff member ■ Trustee ■ Volunteer

Most surveys had been completed either by a senior member of staff (33) or a trustee (30).

STAFF & VOLUNTEERS

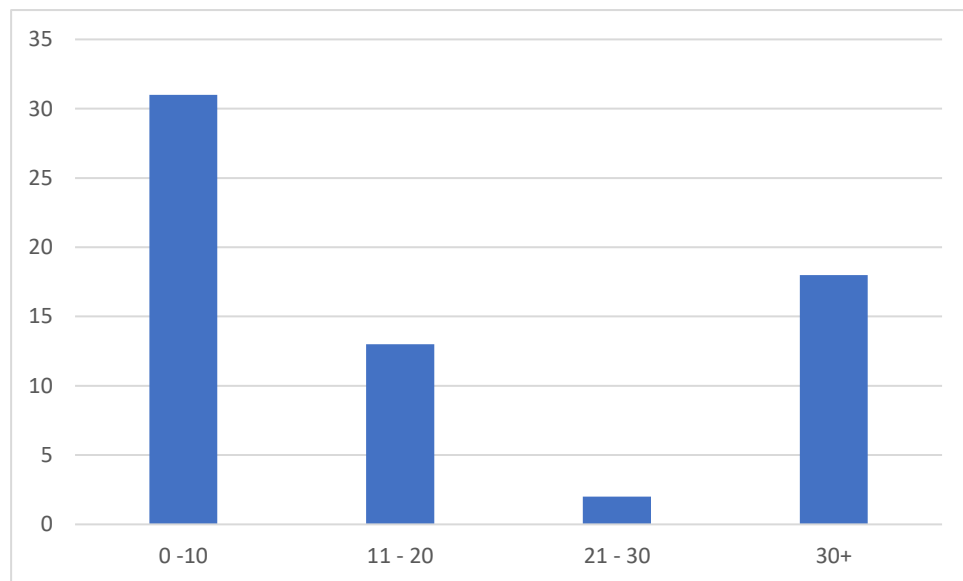
Number of paid staff

71 organisations answered this question, with 77% (55) organisations having 10 or less paid staff.



Volunteers

70 organisations answered this question. Four reporting that they had no volunteers.

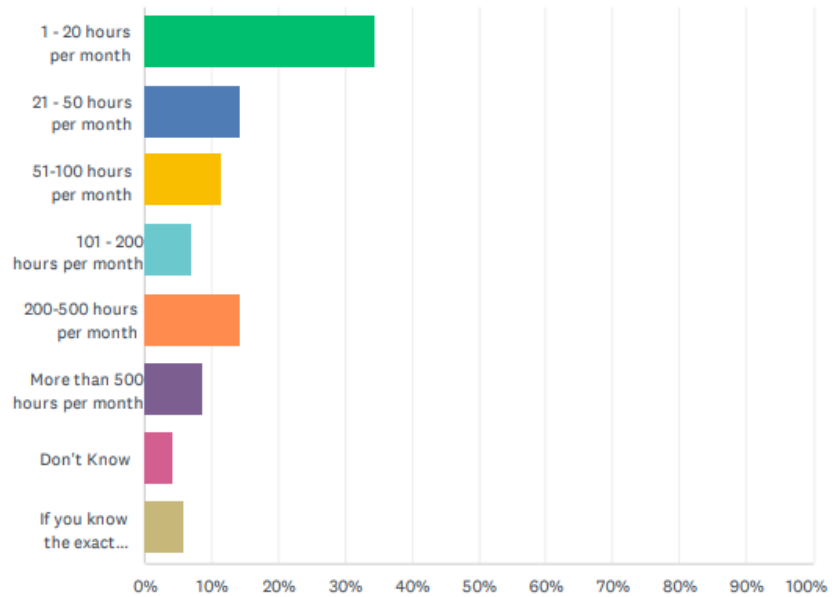


31 organisations have between one and 10 volunteers. 17 organisations had more than 30. Three organisations reported that they were unaware of how many volunteers they had.

Number of hours dedicated by volunteers

Volunteers are dedicating a considerable amount of time to volunteering for the sector, with 24 organisations reporting that they are collectively receiving between 1 – 20 hours of volunteer time per month. 23 organisations are receiving between 21 – 200 volunteer hours per month, and a further 6 receiving 500+ volunteer hours per month. Three organisations didn't know how many

volunteer hours they were receiving. 70 organisations provided an answer to this question.



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
1 - 20 hours per month	34.29%	24
21 - 50 hours per month	14.29%	10
51-100 hours per month	11.43%	8
101 - 200 hours per month	7.14%	5
200-500 hours per month	14.29%	10
More than 500 hours per month	8.57%	6
Don't Know	4.29%	3
If you know the exact number of hours please specify	5.71%	4
TOTAL		70

Recruiting volunteers

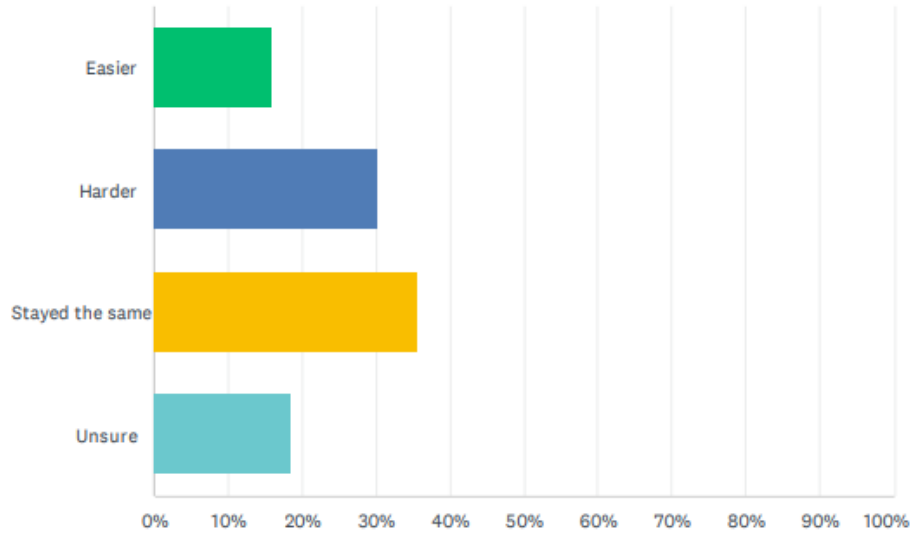
69 organisations answered this question, with 46 saying they had no issue recruiting volunteers. 23 said they did have issues recruiting. Of the 23 saying they did have issues recruiting; the following types of reasons were given:

- “Difficult to reach specific groups”
- “Lack of interest”
- “Difficult to recruit for specific skill sets”
- “Haven’t heard of the organisation”
- “Lack of commitment for meetings and specific tasks”
- “People need paying”

Two organisations said they were still recovering their volunteer position after COVID, and one said they had just started out so would be looking for volunteers.

Has the recruitment of volunteers been easier or harder in the last 12 months?

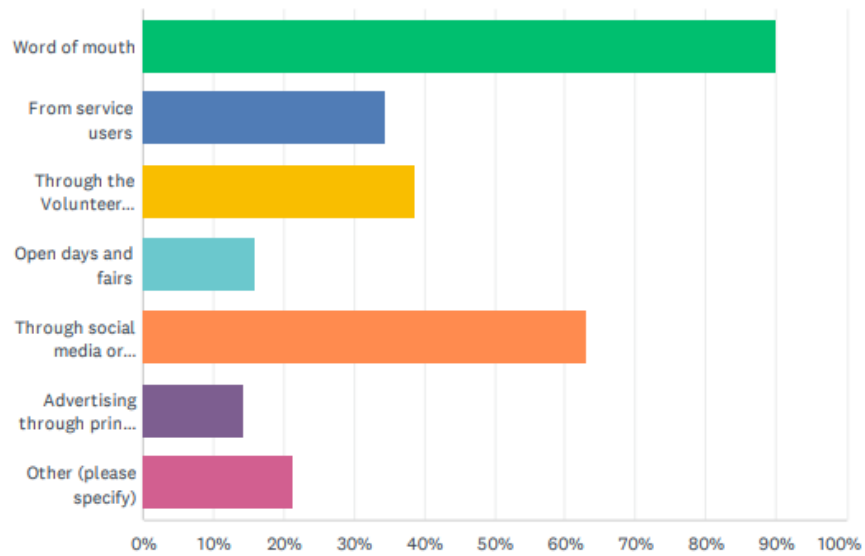
When asked if recruitment had become easier or harder in the last 12 months, 11 said it was easier, 21 said it was harder, 25 said it had stayed the same and 13 were unsure.



How do you usually recruit volunteers?

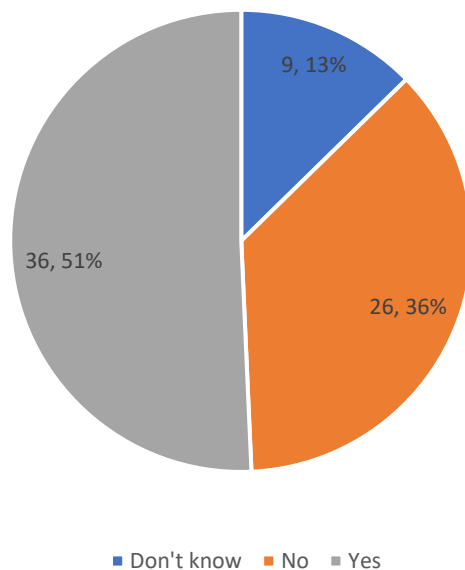
We received 70 responses to this question, with the best way of recruiting volunteers, by work of mouth.

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	Count
Word of mouth	90.00%	63
From service users	34.29%	24
Through the Volunteer Centre Swindon	38.57%	27
Open days and fairs	15.71%	11
Through social media or website	62.86%	44
Advertising through printed media	14.29%	10
Other (please specify)	21.43%	15
Total Respondents: 70		



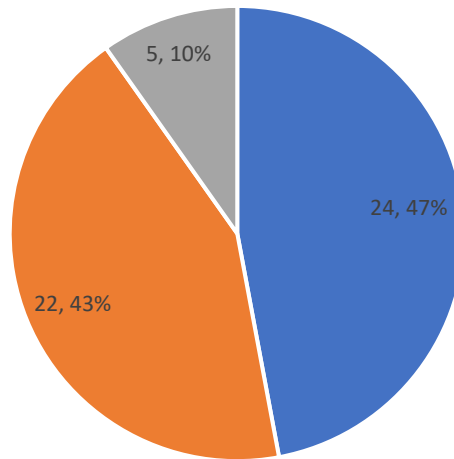
Do you have enough volunteers to meet demand?

When asked if organisations had enough volunteers to meet demand, 51% (36) stated that they had enough volunteers to meet demand with 36% (26) saying they didn't.



Trustees

71 responses were received for this question. 47% (24) organisations reported having 5 or less trustees, 43% (22) had between 6 -10 and 10% (5) had between 10 – 12 trustees. One organisation reported having over 25. 10 had no trustees (some organisations do not require trustees). One stated they had national board of trustees and one organisation had only just started up.



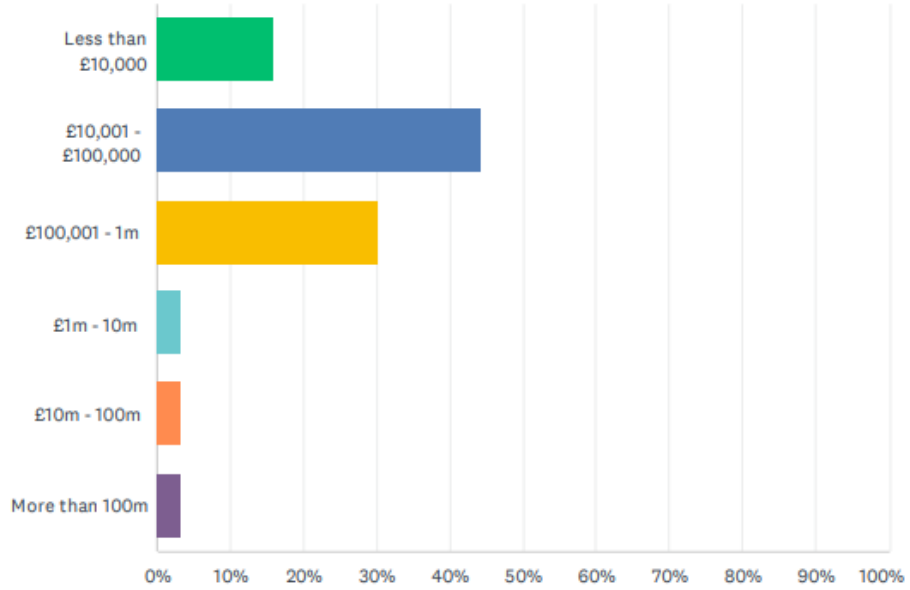
■ 5 or less ■ Between 6 - 10 ■ Between 11 - 15

When asked how many hours trustees volunteered collectively per year, those that provided precise answers ranged from 0 – 1500 hours. With the average amount of hours provided by trustees being 395 hours per year for the 69 organisations that responded to this question. Eleven stated that either the data was not available or that they did not know the answer to this question. Other responses stated that trustees provided support at events, outreach and meetings, so it was hard to quantify exact hours.

FINANCE

What is your organisation’s overall income?

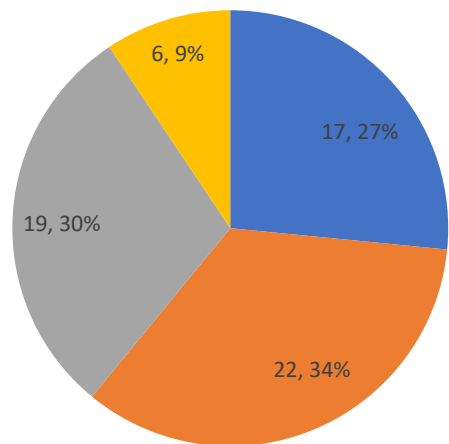
63 respondents answered this question. 90% of respondents reported annual income of up to £1 million with 15% below £10,000 and 44% up to £100,000.



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Less than £10,000	15.87%	10
£10,001 - £100,000	44.44%	28
£100,001 - 1m	30.16%	19
£1m - 10m	3.17%	2
£10m - 100m	3.17%	2
More than 100m	3.17%	2
TOTAL		63

Have you seen a change to your income in the last 12 months?

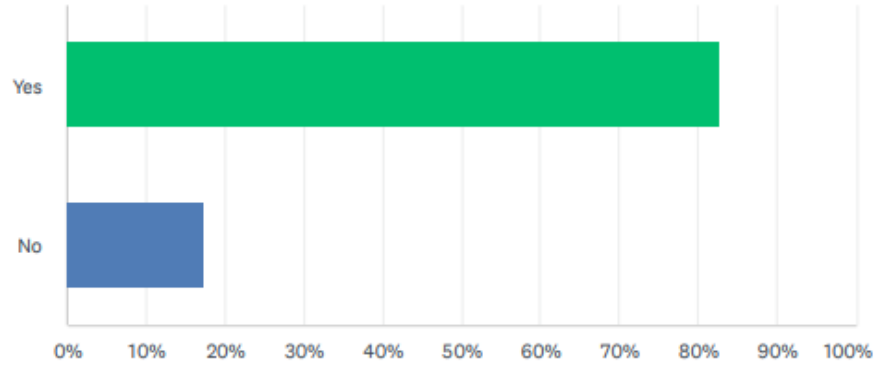
This question was answered by 64 organisations.



■ Increased ■ Decreased ■ Stayed the Same ■ Don't Know

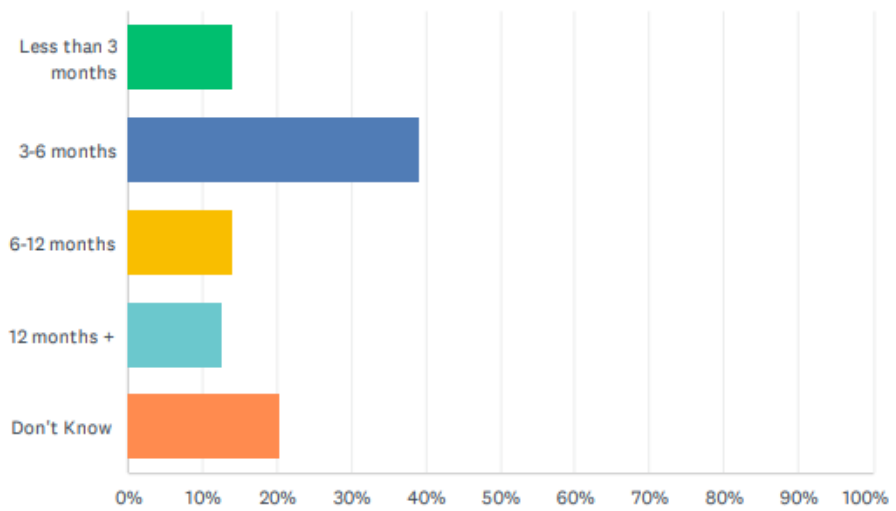
64% had either seen a decrease in income or their income had stayed the same. Only a third of those that answered had seen an increase.

Do you hold reserves?



The majority 83% (53) hold reserves.

How long will these reserves allow you to carry on?



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Less than 3 months	14.06%	9
3-6 months	39.06%	25
6-12 months	14.06%	9
12 months +	12.50%	8
Don't Know	20.31%	13
TOTAL		64

25 (39%) have reserves to last 3 – 6 months, with 9 (14%) having less than 3 months. 11 (17%) have no reserves, the Charity Commission recommends having reserves of at least 3 – 6 months. Companies House recommends 6 months.

Where has your organisation found funding from in the last 12 months?

Donations from Individuals	43	67%
Grants from local charitable trust/foundations (Wiltshire Community Foundation or Zurich Community Trust)	35	55%
Contracts from the public sector (Local Authority / CCG)	25	39%
Fundraising Events	22	35%
Grants from National Trusts and Foundations	21	33%
The National Lottery Fund	20	31%
Trading of Goods and Services	20	31%
Sponsored Events	14	22%
Sponsorship from Private Sector	13	20%
Other	10	16%
Membership Charges	9	14%
Legacies	5	8%
Crowd Funding	4	6%
Charging Beneficiaries	3	5%

Have you had to do any of the following to balance the books in the last 12 months?

51 respondents answered this question, with 52% (27) organisations having to look for additional funding. Organisations also had to make use of the furlough scheme, increase charges, investigate cost reduction (IT system), extend bookings into the weekend.

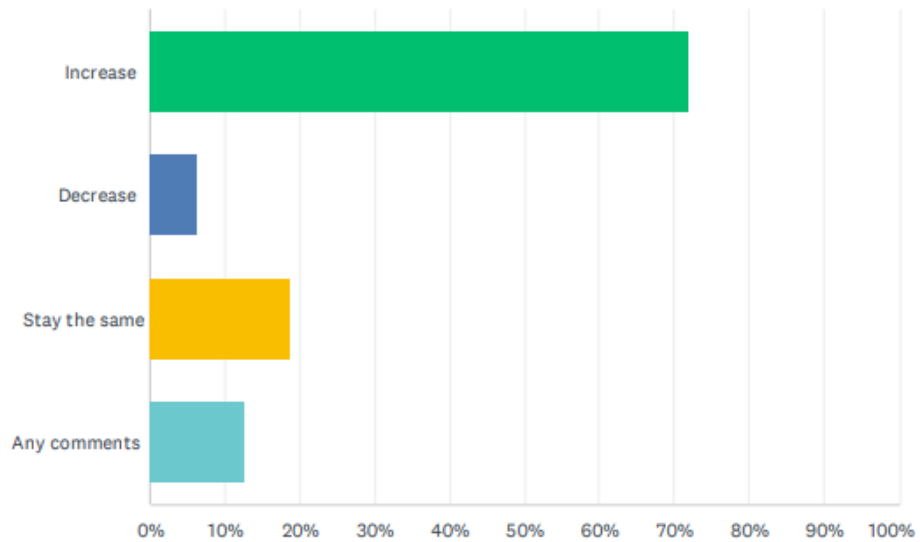
SECTOR SURVEY - 2022

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Reduce hours of paid staff	19.61%	10
Make one or more staff redundant	5.88%	3
Limit service provision (fewer hours/ less beneficiaries)	15.69%	8
Increase or introduce charges for service	17.65%	9
Cut services	7.84%	4
Start new chargeable services	9.80%	5
Invest in fundraising, marketing, or business development	21.57%	11
Recruit more volunteers	33.33%	17
Review spending on small items eg. office supplies	31.37%	16
Apply for additional funding	52.94%	27
Use reserves	17.65%	9
Other (please specify)	21.57%	11
Total Respondents: 51		

SERVICE DELIVERY

Have you seen demand for service increase or decrease in the last 12 months?

72% (46) of organisations have seen an increase in demand over the last year.

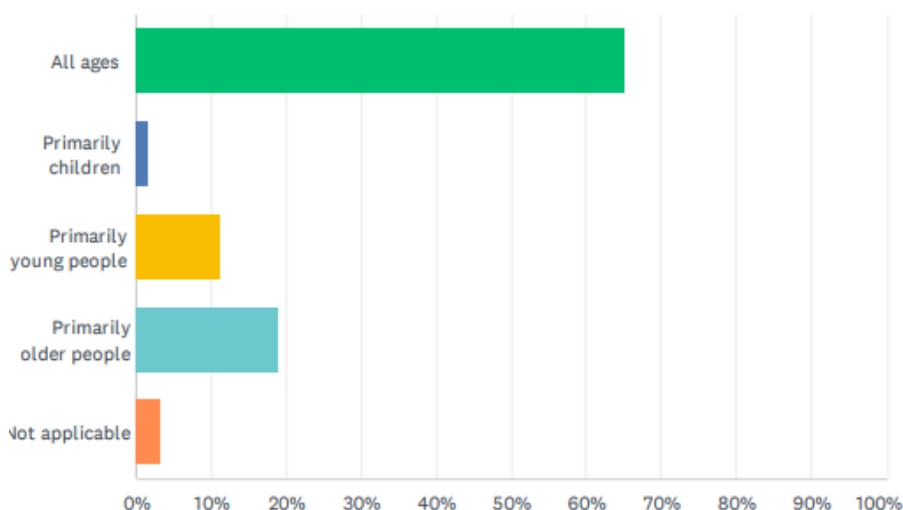


SECTOR SURVEY - 2022

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Increase	71.88%	46
Decrease	6.25%	4
Stay the same	18.75%	12
Any comments	12.50%	8
Total Respondents: 64		

What ages are your beneficiaries?

66% deal with beneficiaries or all ages with 31% specialising in specific age groups, with 3% of organisations don't deal directly with beneficiaries.



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
All ages	65.08%	41
Primarily children	1.59%	1
Primarily young people	11.11%	7
Primarily older people	19.05%	12
Not applicable	3.17%	2
TOTAL		63

Who are your primary beneficiaries or what does your organisation support?

63 organisations answered this question, some have ticked more than one area.

People with poor mental health	34	54%
The general public	28	44%
People with physical disabilities	27	43%
People with learning disabilities	27	43%
People with specific health conditions	22	35%
People who have experienced or are experiencing poverty	22	35%
Young people who are NEET (not in employment, education or training)	22	35%
People with a long term or chronic illness	19	30%
People who are unemployed	18	29%
People with low skill and educational attainment	17	27%
People with a caring responsibility	17	27%
People with experience of drug and alcohol issues	17	27%
People who are experiencing domestic violence	16	25%
Other charity or voluntary bodies*	16	25%
People who are homeless	14	22%

Other*	13	21%
People who are from the LGBTQ+ community	12	19%
Veterans	10	16%
Offenders/ex offenders	9	14%
Culture and heritage	9	14%
Environment	7	11%
Animals	1	1%

*

Asylum seekers and refugees

Victims of crime

People with brain injury

How would you describe your main activities?

63 organisations answered this question, some ticking more than one area.

Provide support services	41	65%
Provide advocacy/advice/information	27	43%
Provide training	23	36%
Other *	20	32%
Other charitable activities *	15	23%
Provide buildings/facilities/open space	11	18%
Provide employment opportunities	10	16%
Act as an umbrella or resource body	9	14%
Provide equipment	3	5%
Provide transport services	2	3%
Make grants to individuals	2	3%
Make grants to organisations	2	3%
Sponsor or undertake research	1	2%

*

Providing education through creative arts

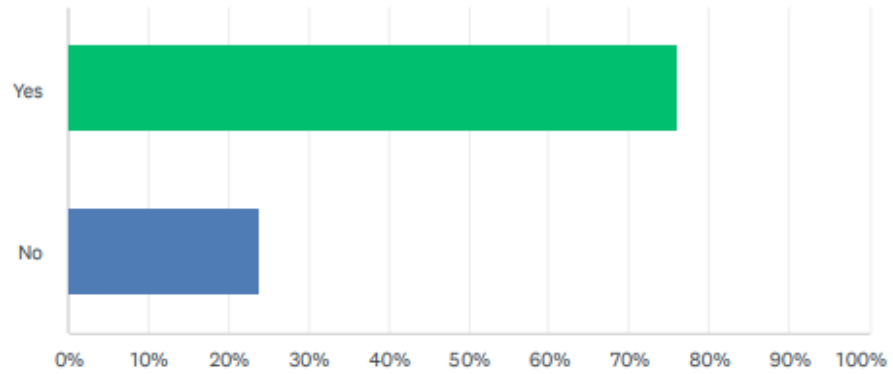
Museum

Addressing food poverty

Broadcasting / comms.

Does your organisation mainly provide direct services to individuals?

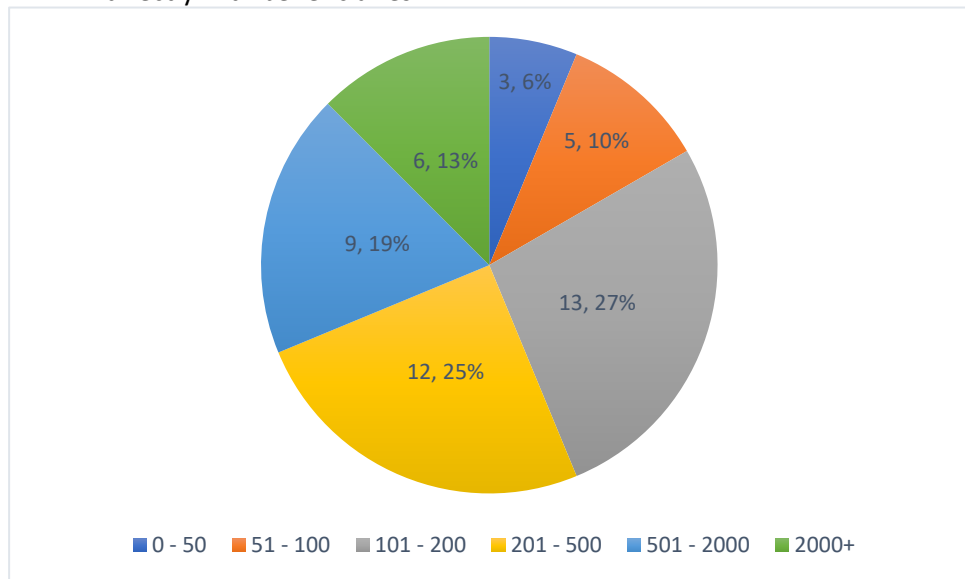
63 organisations answered this question. 76% (48) responding yes, and 15 (24%) saying no.



Approximately, how many beneficiaries do you help annually?

63 organisations answered this question. 48 provided the estimated number of beneficiaries illustrated below.

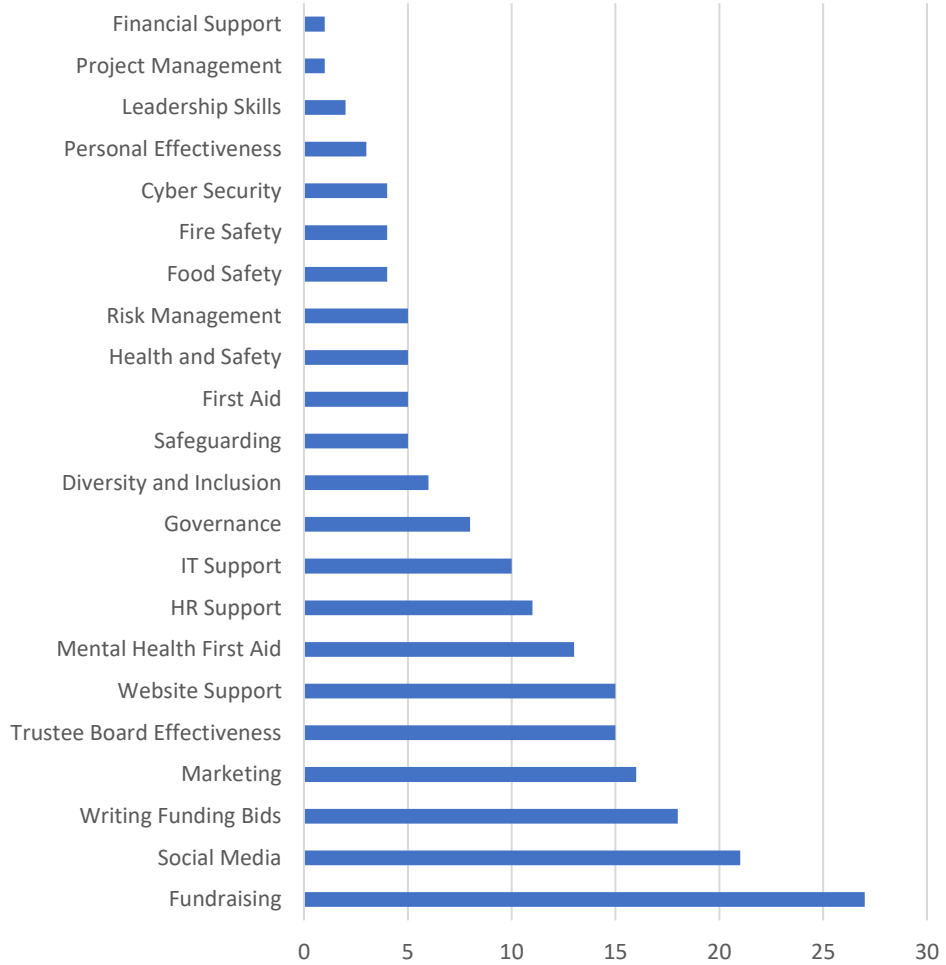
- 52% of organisations(25) help an estimated number of between 101 – 500 beneficiaries.
- 13% (6) organisations help 2000+ per annum.
- One organisation gave their exact number of beneficiaries as 475,
- 14% (9) organisations said they either ‘didn’t know’ or did not work directly with beneficiaries.



SKILLS & TRAINING NEEDS

Which skills and experience would you say your organisation needs but lacks the most?

There were 101 responses from 57 organisations, highlighting the following needs:



The top request from 27 organisations is that they would like help with fundraising, and 18 with bid writing.

21 organisations highlighted social media as being an issue.

The next three highest needs highlighted by 15 organisations each are:

- Trustee Board Effectiveness
- Marketing
- Website Support

VAS will use this information to shape and develop our training services for the sector.

Which of these descriptions best describe where your organisation currently is in respect of equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI)?

57 replies were received in answer to this question.

We provide training, support and leadership to make sure that our EDI policies and procedures are understood and implemented.	38.98%	23
We want to become more inclusive and are actively developing policies and procedures to help us get there.	28.81%	17
We are committed to promoting equality and diversity but lack the resources to make the progress we would like.	28.81%	17

“We are an inclusive and accessible service and have continually strived to maintain that position in our 14 years. We would like to retain more individuals from the Black communities.”

“We have an equality policy.”

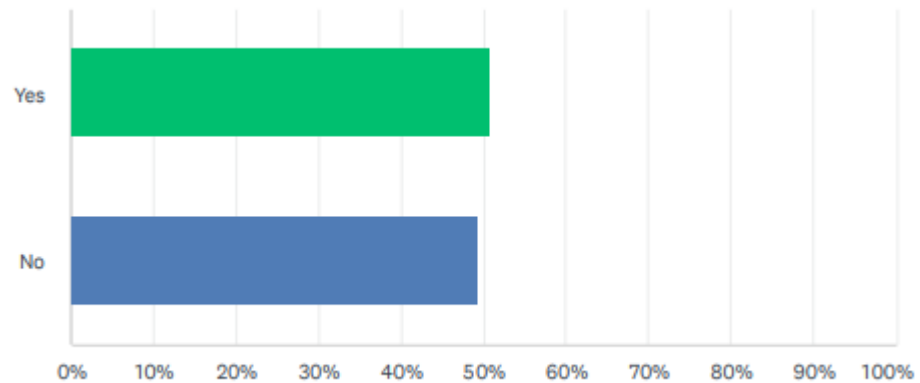
“We are a diverse organisation.”

When asked if organisations would like to hear from VAS about how we can support your organisations EDI journey, 31 respondents ticked this box.

VAS will contact each organisation requesting support in due course.

Does your organisation have a training budget?

We received 61 responses to this question. 51% (31) said they did have a training budget, and 49% (30) said no.



Does your organisation offer training?

59 organisations answered this question. 20 answered ‘no’ they do not offer training. 17 organisations answered ‘yes’ but did not state what training they offer. 22 organisations said they provide the following training, although it is not clear if the training provided is for staff only, or available externally.

- Safeguarding
- Media training
- Research
- Interviewing techniques
- Recording
- Editing
- Public presentation
- Broadcasting
- Reporting at external events
- Writing and editing material
- Administration
- Crime and impact of crime

- Autism awareness
- Asylum awareness and support
- Brain injury
- Essential garden skills
- Café cookery skills
- Midas minibus driver awareness
- Trustee training
- Music and dance
- Counselling skills
- Mental health
- IT skills
- Listening skills
- First aid
- Trauma informed approach
- Disability awareness and inclusion
- CSCS
- Health and social care
- Volunteer management
- Mental health in sport
- Class vehicle restoration
- Retail experience

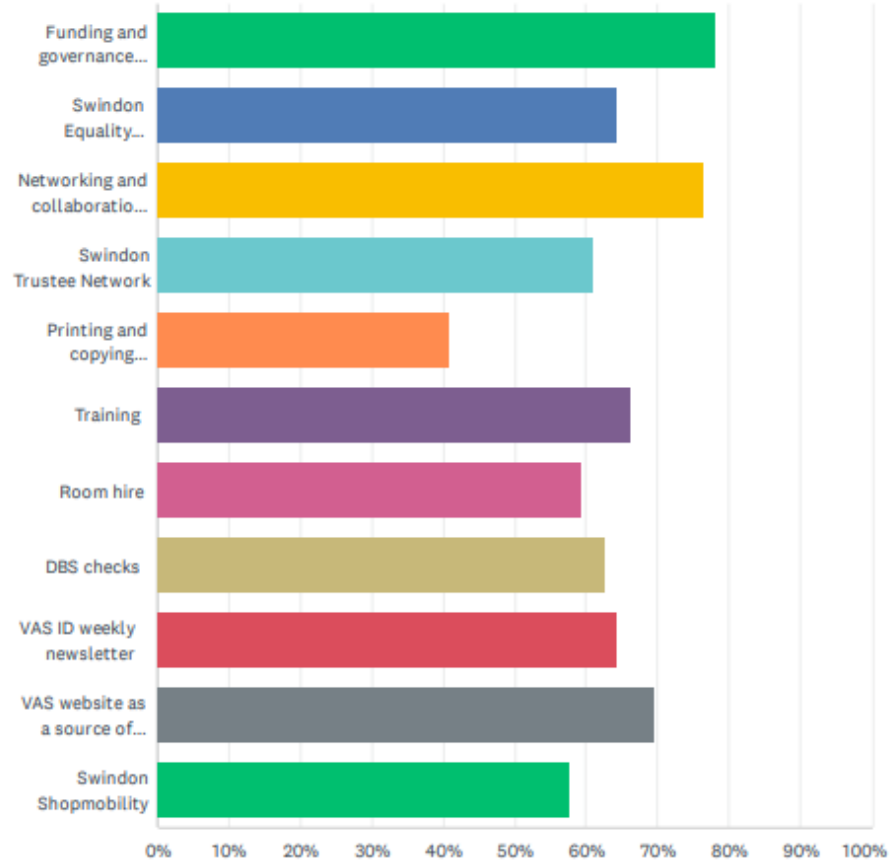
VAS will explore the opportunity for the sector to provide training as part of the developing integrated care system.

QUALITY CHECK

VAS wanted to find out how we add value to the sector. Organisations were asked which services they are aware of.

59 organisations provided an answer to this question, some selecting more than one option. 78% of organisations were aware of the funding and governance service, closely followed by networking and collaboration at 76%.

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ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Funding and governance advice	77.97% 46
Swindon Equality Coalition/ Supporting Swindon Equality	64.41% 38
Networking and collaboration e.g. VCSE Alliance, VAS live, Swindon Wellbeing	76.27% 45
Swindon Trustee Network	61.02% 36
Printing and copying services	40.68% 24
Training	66.10% 39
Room hire	59.32% 35
DBS checks	62.71% 37
VAS ID weekly newsletter	64.41% 38
VAS website as a source of useful information	69.49% 41
Swindon Shopmobility	57.63% 34
Total Respondents: 59	

Which VAS services have you used?

A total of 59 organisations answered this question, with the following responses:

	Yes	No	Not Sure	Total
Funding and Governance Advice	25 (42%)	29 (49%)	5 (8%)	59
Swindon Equality	23 (40%)	26 (46%)	8 (14%)	57

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Coalition / supporting Swindon Equality				
Networking and Collaboration	34 (59%)	22 (38%)	2 (3%)	58
Swindon Trustee Network	13 (24%)	37 (68%)	4 (7%)	54
Printing and Copying Services	3 (6%)	47 (89%)	3 (5%)	53
Training	15 (28%)	35 (66%)	3 (5%)	53
Room Hire	8 (15%)	43 (81%)	2 (4%)	53
DBS Checks	13 (24%)	41 (75%)	1 (1%)	55
VAS ID weekly newsletter	38 (68%)	16 (28%)	2 (4%)	56
VAS website as a source of information	33 (60%)	18 (33%)	4 (7%)	55

From those organisations that had used VAS's services the following feedback was given:

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Not Satisfied	Total
Funding and Governance Advice	23 (70%)	10 (30%)	0	33
Swindon Equality Coalition / supporting Swindon Equality	9 (37%)	15 (62%)	0	24
Networking and Collaboration	22 (56%)	17 (44%)	0	39
Swindon Trustee Network	10 (53%)	9 (47%)	0	19
Printing and Copying Services	3 (37%)	4 (50%)	1 (12%)	8
Training	10 (56%)	8 (44%)	0	18
Room Hire	6 (46%)	7 (53%)	0	13
DBS Checks	12 (63%)	6 (31%)	1 (5%)	19

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VAS ID weekly newsletter	29 (79%)	8 (22%)	0	37
VAS website as a source of information	20 (61%)	13 (39%)	0	33

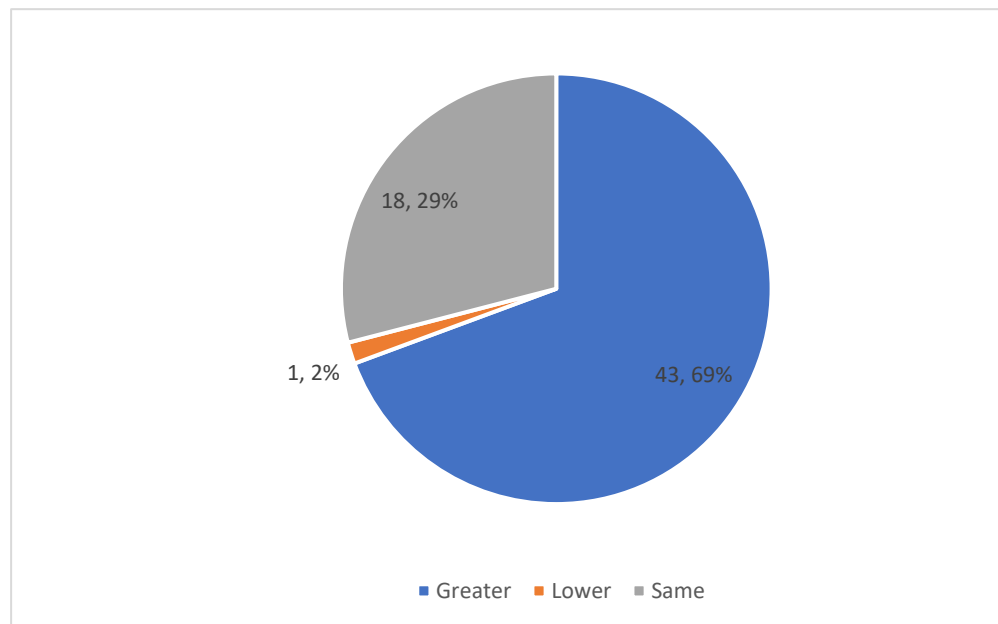
The majority of organisations using our services are either very satisfied or satisfied. Two organisations said they were not satisfied, these will be followed up by VAS.

Additional comments received were:

“It would appear that VAS have a manpower shortage.”

“We are very impressed with the service VAS provides.”

How would you describe your current level of awareness of VAS compared to 3 years ago?



Over the last 3 years, 69% of organisations have a greater awareness of VAS.

85% of the 60 organisations answering said there were no other services that would like VAS to provide, the following comments were made:

“VAS offer so much, as well as being an incredible support to us we have also seen the reach and growth of bringing the voluntary sector together because of the incredible leadership at VAS and staff expertise and knowledge of Swindon, the council, and the sector. I wonder if VAS have considered communal social space that the sector could access different to providing office space?”

“Regular survey of communities in Swindon to establish what Performing art they would like to be available locally, via schools / colleges or other organisations and businesses.”

“Possibly a course about paid workers working with volunteers. VAS live was a great asset and helped me to connect with other charities and share ideas that were simple but made a difference.”

“Sit on our board and strengthen our governance!”

“Smaller on-line chats for beginners starting up.”

“A way of contacting veterans across Swindon.”

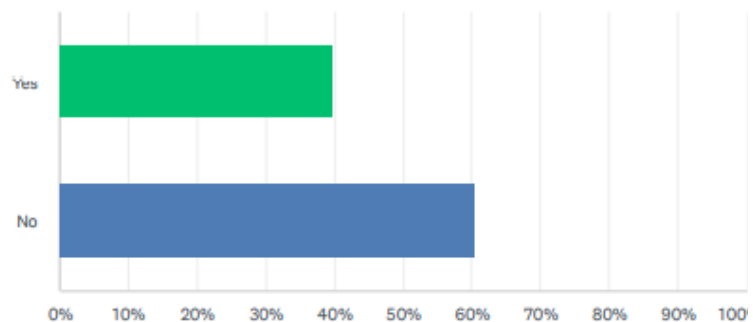
“A database of groups and organisations in Swindon.”

VETERAN SUPPORT

VAS is committed to supporting the Armed Forces Covenant.

Does your organisation work with or support veterans or their families?

58 organisations answered this question, with 40% saying they work with veterans or their families.

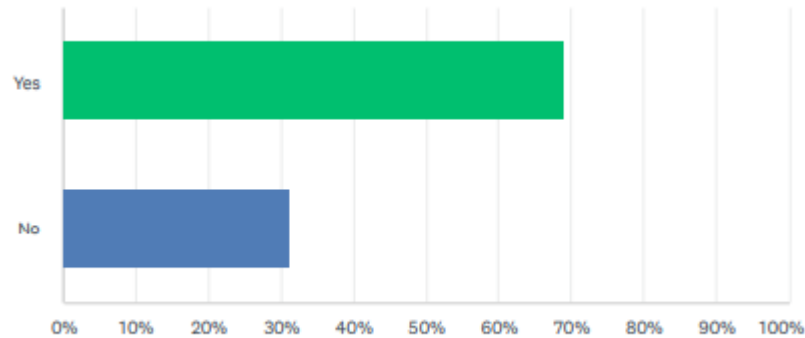


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	39.66%
No	60.34%
TOTAL	

TRUSTEE NETWORK

VAS supports Trustees through a Swindon Trustee Network. Are you aware of the Trustee Network?

61 organisations answered this question, with 69% (42) having heard of the network.



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	68.85% 42
No	31.15% 19
Total Respondents: 61	

19 organisations had not heard of the Trustee network, a further question was asked:

Would you like your organisation to be added to the Trustee Network for information on dates and topics?

14 organisations responded to this question, with 7 providing answers like ‘not at this time’ – 8 provided an e-mail address which will be added to the Trustee Network.

When asked if there were any topics that they would like covered at the Trustee Network, the following topics were suggested:

- Adult safeguarding
- Fund raising
- Finance and returns to the Charity Commission
- Bid writing
- Mean of finding veterans who are sleeping rough
- Basics of governance
- Risk assessment
- Introduction programme for new trustees
- Becoming a new trustee
- Working with paid workers

These suggestions will be taken forward by VAS for the Trustee Network.

One additional comment – **“the network can be dominated by individual issues, of no interest to the rest of the group”**. This is noted and will be considered at forthcoming meetings.

SECTOR SURVEY PRIZE DRAW RESULT

Organisations were asked to add their details to the survey for the chance to win a £500 unrestricted grant from VAS. Those that did were added to the selection process and the winner was selected at random by Shopmobility staff.



**And the winner is
THE HARBOUR PROJECT!**



A big thank you to all those organisations that took the time to respond to the survey!