
Analysis of the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) Infrastructure Support Needs Survey 2009

Background

Bristol City Council (BCC) is working to build a thriving Third Sector ('Third Sector' is the government's term for charities, voluntary and community organisations and social enterprises).

As part of this commitment BCC is intending to commission a set of Voluntary and Community Sector ('VCS') Infrastructure Support Services for a minimum period of three years to ensure stability and continuity to the sector. These services will commence operation in October 2010. The purpose of this Survey was to contribute to a VCS Support Needs Analysis to inform the design of a Commissioning Strategy for future VCS Infrastructure Support Services.

Methodology

Corporate Consultation were commissioned to create an online survey and paper questionnaire that was publicised by mailout and e-mail distribution to 1,400 Voluntary and community groups in Bristol. It was further disseminated by VCS-funding Directorates within Bristol City Council and by NHS Direct to their funded VCS organisations. It was publicised by all the currently grant-funded VCS infrastructure organisations in addition. The survey was placed on the council's Consultation Finder. The survey commenced on 26 May 2009. Paper copies of the survey were available on request, along with a Freepost return envelope.

Response

There were 219 responses to the survey. The survey closed on 17 August 2009.

Analysis

The analysis has been carried out in compliance with the agreed criteria set out by Keith Houghton, Planning and Commissioning Manager, Investment and Grants Team, Community Development, Bristol City Council.



Daniel Kemp
Corporate Consultation

Summary of findings

Section 1 – About you

- Around half of the respondents are the organisation's paid Chief Executive, Manager or other paid staff member. Another third are Management Committee members; the remainder are volunteers within their organisation or classify themselves as 'other'.

Section 2 - About your organisation

- Legal structures and types of organisation: 58% of respondents are a registered charity. The most common legal structure is that of a Company limited by guarantee but a wide range of organisation structures are included, including unincorporated groups and newer types such as Community Interest Companies (CICs).
- Main areas of work: The main fields within which respondents work are health & social welfare (19%) and arts/media/sport (18.5%), followed by Advice/counselling/advocacy; Immigration/Asylum and Housing/homelessness organisations (15.5%) and then Community-focused buildings and groups (14%) and early years/play/young people and Education support organisations (12.5%).
- Equalities Groups: 50% of respondents indicate that they are led by an Equalities Group. The main Equalities Groups represented are Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) at 10% of the total; Children and Young People at 9.5 % and Disabled People at 8% of all respondents. There is a fairly even spread between three equalities groups – BME, young people and disabled people. These groups are more represented than the other equalities groups.
- Where Groups work: 77% of Groups mainly operate within Bristol and surrounding area, and generally provide services to all within the community.
- More of these groups are working in what are the old Neighbourhood Renewal areas of Bristol (Easton, Ashley and Lawrence Hill in particular). However, the spread is fairly even across the city, probably meaning that organisations operate citywide.
- Income levels: 37% of respondents had an income level of less than £20,000 in 2008/2009 (26% less than £5000); A further 24% are in the £20,000 - £100,000 bracket; 21.5% between £100,000 - £500,000 and 17.5% from £500,000 to over £1million.
- Age of groups: Most responding groups have existed for over 10 years (71%), with 10% between 5 and 10 years old; 13% 2 to 5 years and 6% under two years in existence.

Section 3 – Accessing support

- All currently-funded VCS Infrastructure organisations have been accessed over the past three years by respondents to varying degrees. 40% of respondents did not reply to this question. It is not clear if this can be interpreted that they have not accessed the support or if they simply chose not to answer the question.
- Organisations which had used existing services expressed significant levels of satisfaction with information and advice services; training; funding advice, networking, volunteer support and governance and legal support; Satisfaction was also expressed in numbers identifying no barriers or no improvement (23%-29% of groups responding).
- A number of areas for development or barriers to getting support were identified. These include more clarity about the services available and access to services outside work hours; more tailored and more practical services; ideas about how services could be delivered more effectively, a need for more specialised support and concern for more awareness on specific equalities issues.
- Access to funding is the biggest barrier facing VCS organisations, and funding advice is one of the main support features accessed.
- A number of the ways Bristol City Council functions are also barriers to a significant minority of respondents.

Section 4 – Supporting your needs

- The top 3 support priorities have been identified as
 - Improve funding
 - Provide better services
 - Increase influence
- This is true for organisations no matter what their size or type. But there are specific needs which relate to income level, age of groups and Equalities groups which need to be attended to.

Section 5 - Support needs in more detail

- After weighting all the functions and areas where support could be provided, **fundraising** is by far the highest priority of VCS organisations. This is followed by **Service Improvement; Publicity and Public Relations; Procurement and commissioning, Influencing and Equalities/Community Cohesion**
- The most popular way of accessing this support would be **face to face**, followed by **On-line and e-mail advice, Training, courses and learning events, tailored training and consultancy, Forums and networking and outreach.**
- However, a picture emerges of different styles of support needed by groups at different levels of development, with support styles preferred by particular Equalities-focused VCS groups which are not the same as the overall preferred support routes.

Section 6 – Delivery of support

- Most of the options presented were considered very important. In particular, VCS organisations supported the following six qualities as the most important to them about the delivery of VCS Infrastructure support:
- **Open and transparent**
- **Flexible and responsive**
- **Effective at getting Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) voices heard and listened to by key decision-makers**
- **Convenient and easy to access**
- **Reliable and good quality**
- **Well networked with local groups, agencies and partnerships**

Section 7 – Thriving Third Sector

- The majority of the VCS organisations responding to this Survey (61%) consider that Statutory bodies have a positive influence on their organisation's success.
- 52% of all the survey respondents had heard of the Bristol Compact. Generally the higher the income level of organisations the more likely they are to be aware of the Compact. This would suggest that it is less established, smaller, less wealthy groups which are not aware of the Compact

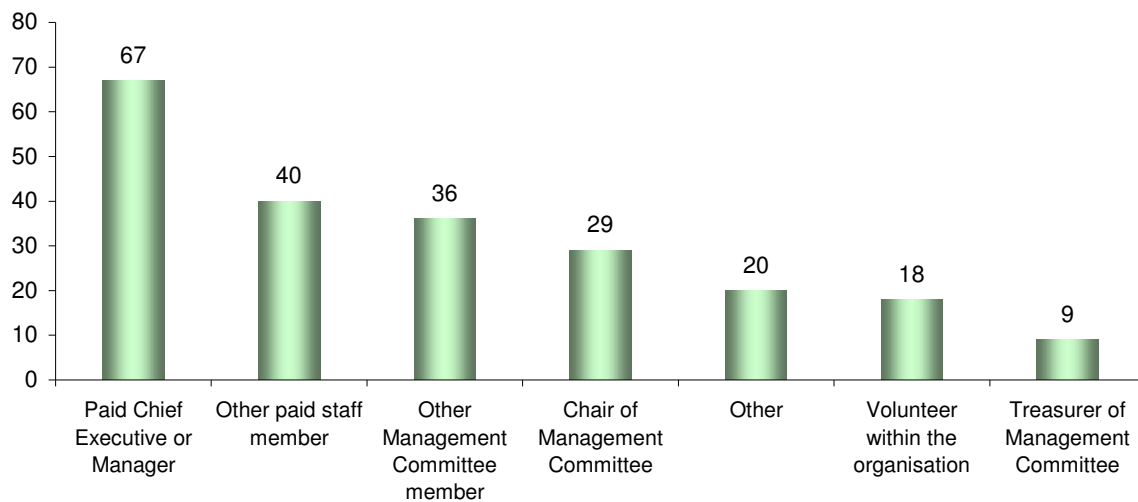
Section 1 – About you

Q1 Position in the organisation of person completing this survey:

No. of responses	219
Paid Chief Executive or Manager	67
Other paid staff member	40
Other Management Committee member	36
Chair of Management Committee	29
Other	20
Volunteer within the organisation	18
Treasurer of Management Committee	9

Other	
Principal in Independent Third Sector Consultancy	Manager
Branch Officer	Founder & Team Leader of Bristol Paranormal Investigators
Manager	Conductor
Manager (full time volunteer)	Resident Teacher.
General Secretary	Secretary
Centre manager	Honorary secretary
Director	Co Chair or group.
Representative and Committee member of Hindu Temple Bristol	Chair and Project Manager
District Commissioner (Manager of the Brunel Scout District) Brunel of area covering the North East	Editor
Deputy Manager	unpaid organiser
volunteer not within organisation	Centre Director & Leader In Charge
League Organiser	Elected President
	Charity Manager

Note: there are 20 'other' cases listed, but only 8 people ticked the 'other' box, which means some people omitted to tick the box, but just typed in the text box. This may also be the case for other questions throughout this analysis where respondents are able to give an 'other' response



Section 1 summary

- Around half of the respondents are the organisation's paid Chief Executive, Manager or other paid staff member. Another third are Management Committee members; the remainder are volunteers within their organisation or classify themselves as 'other'.

Section 2 – About your organisation

Q2 What type of organisation is yours?

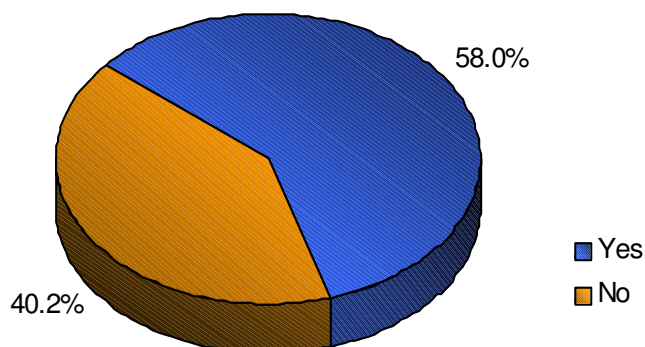
No. of responses	219
Company limited by guarantee	85
Unincorporated club, society or association	50
Branch or part of a national organisation	28
Social Enterprise	25
Voluntary/Community Group (no constitution)	22
A Trust	21
Independent organisation federated to a national umbrella body	20
Formal network or forum with clearly defined membership	12
Project within a bigger, formally constituted organisation	9
Federation of independently constituted organisations	8
Informal network or forum open to any interested persons/groups	7
Company (CIC) Community Interest	7
Co-operative or Industrial and Provident Society	6

Other

- soon a charity
- Independent Third Sector Consultant
- Social Firm
- Bristol LINKs
- Community Group with a Constitution and registered with Companies House
- Reg Charity
- Community Interest Company
- Community Centre
- Reg Charity
- national umbrella body
- In the process of registering as company limited by guarantee and charity
- individual
- charity
- Part of Bristol City Council
- Voluntary organisation with constitution
- constituted tenant & resident social group
- Voluntary Project with constitution - non profit organisation
- Faith community - Church
- A Hindu Temple
- BCC Adult Learning Service
- Charitable Company
- PENSIONERS
- Community Group with a constitution
- Voluntary/community
- Charitable
- Community organisation (with constitution)

Q3 Is your group also a registered charity?

No. of responses	219
No reply	4
Yes	127
No	88

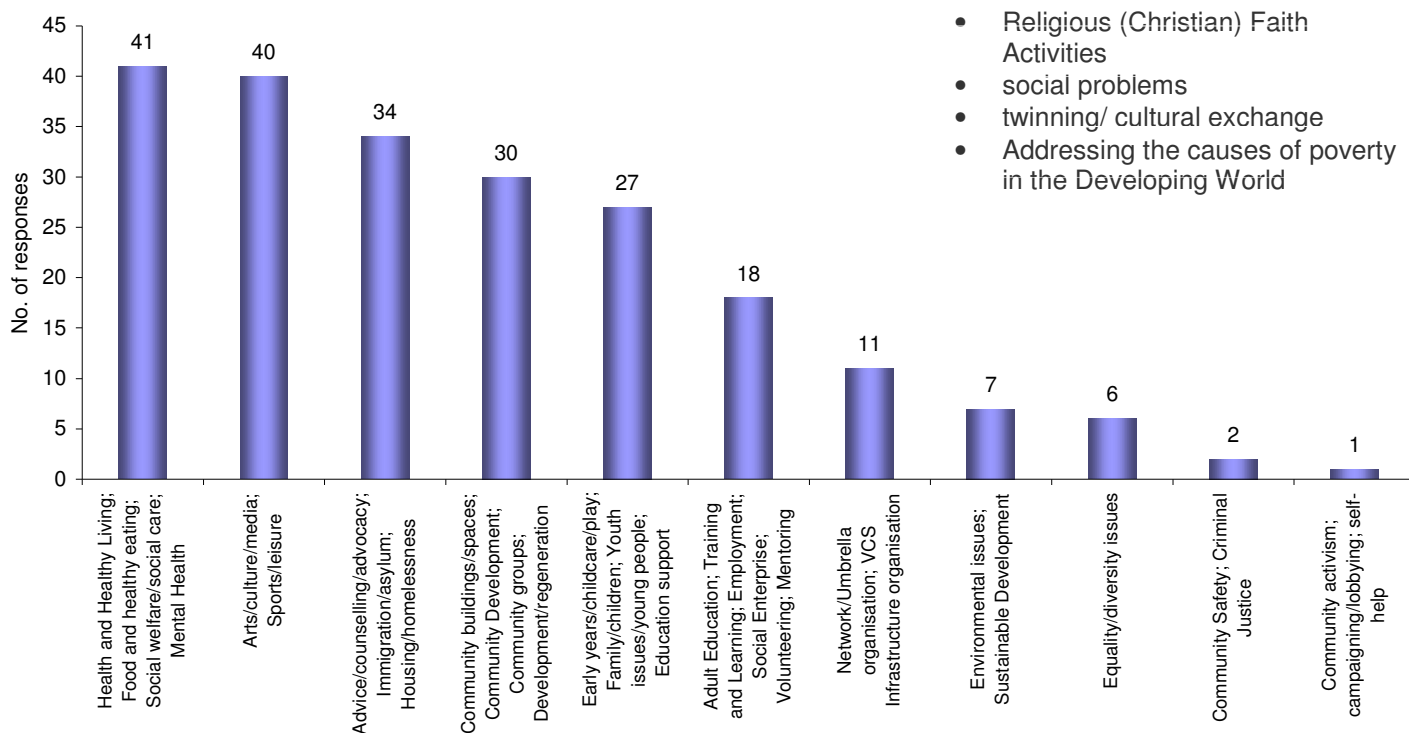


Q4 What is your organisation's general (main) area of work?

No. of responses	217	% of whole
Health and Healthy Living; Food and healthy eating; Social welfare/social care; Mental Health	41	19
Arts/culture/media; Sports/leisure	40	18.5
Advice/counselling/advocacy; Immigration/asylum; Housing/homelessness	34	15.5
Community buildings/spaces; Community Development; Community groups; Development/regeneration	30	14
Early years/childcare/play; Family/children; Youth issues/young people; Education support	27	12.5
Adult Education; Training and Learning; Employment; Social Enterprise; Volunteering; Mentoring	18	8
Network/Umbrella organisation; VCS Infrastructure organisation	11	5
Environmental issues; Sustainable Development	7	3
Equality/diversity issues	6	3
Community Safety; Criminal Justice	2	1
Community activism; campaigning/lobbying; self-help	1	0.5

Other

- Community Transport
- an LGB organisations' network/umbrella organisation
- Survey requires a main focus but I work with organisations in all sectors.
- Co-operative Development Agency
- community centre
- Advancement of Hindu Religion and faith education, observance of principles of Hinduism
- Information and Support to parents of children with SEN
- Social group of adults with learning difficulties
- Day Service for older people
- local history group
- Psychotherapy: 9 to 25 yrs
- Drugs & Alcohol; Young at risk and Prisons
- craft(lapidary)
- Paranormal Investigation
- Community cohesion work
- Older Volunteers Placement
- Community foundation - grant making trust
- funder
- tennis club
- A place of worship
- Charitable Faith Organisation
- PENSIONERS
- OAP Club
- Religious (Christian) Faith Activities
- social problems
- twinning/ cultural exchange
- Addressing the causes of poverty in the Developing World



Q5 Is your organisation led by one of the following Equalities Communities/Communities of Interest? (Main group)

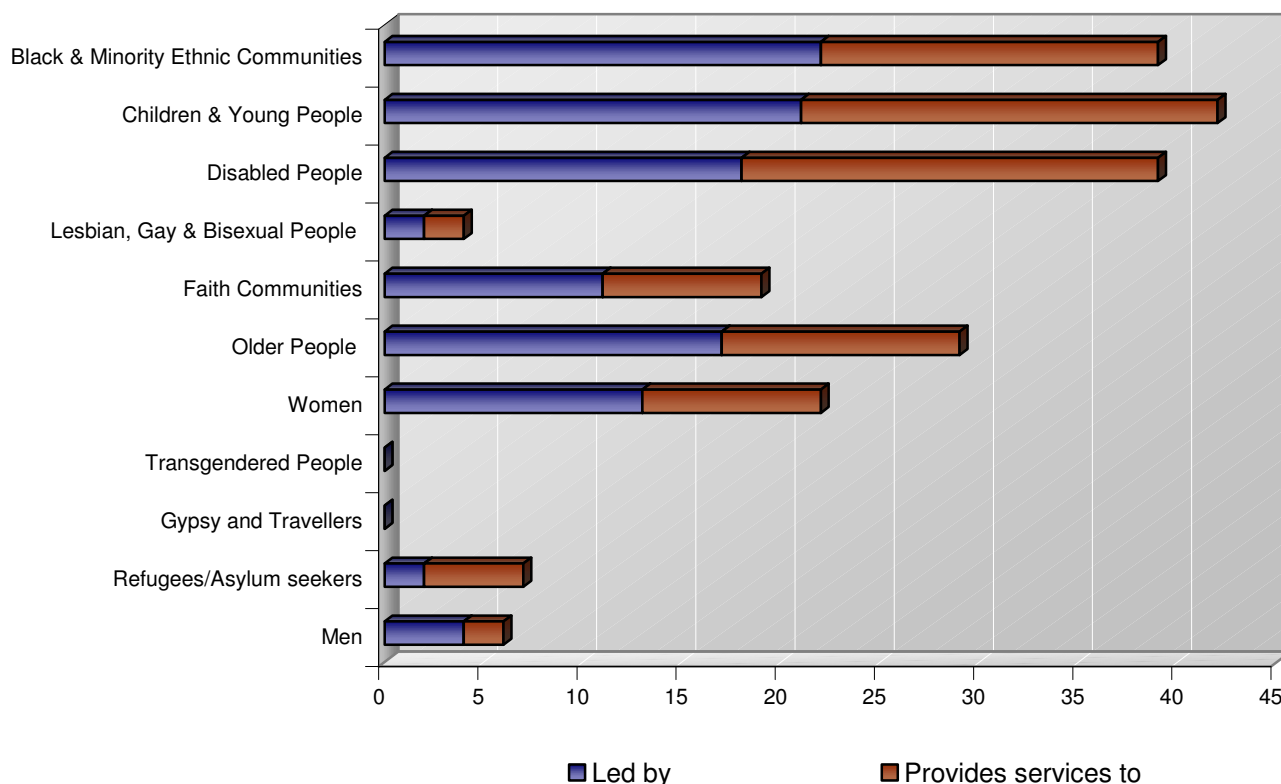
No. of responses	110	% of whole
Black & Minority Ethnic Communities	22	10
Children & Young People	21	9.5
Disabled People	18	8
Older People	17	8
Women	13	6

Faith Communities	11	5
Men	4	2
Lesbian, Gay & Bisexual People	2	1
Refugees/Asylum seekers	2	1
Transgendered People	0	
Gypsy and Travellers	0	

Q6 Does your organisation exist to represent or provide services solely to any of the following Equalities Communities/Communities of Interest? (Main group)

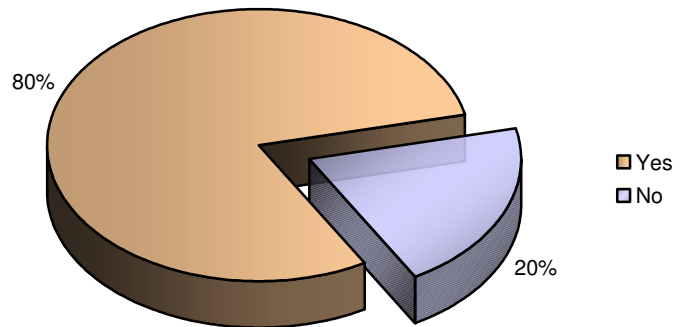
No. of responses	97	% of whole
Black & Minority Ethnic Communities	17	8
Children & Young People	21	9.5
Disabled People	21	9.5
Lesbian, Gay & Bisexual People	2	1
Faith Communities	8	3.5

Older People	12	5.5
Women	9	4
Transgendered People	0	
Gypsy and Travellers	0	
Refugees/Asylum seekers	5	2
Men	2	1



Q7 Does your organisation provide services open to everyone in the community?

No. of responses	211
Yes	160
No	41



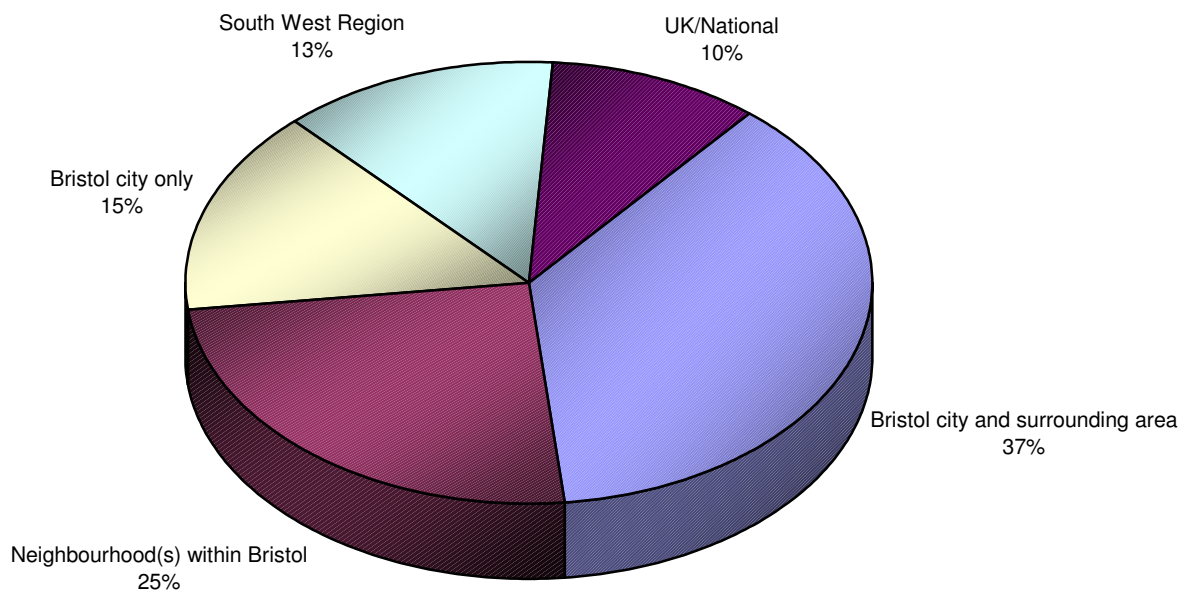
Q7a If no, and the communities your serve are not listed in questions 5 and 6 above, please describe who your organisation represents/ provides services to (for example, single parents).

- Children who attend Colstons Primary School. Their parents/carers must either work or be students.
- People of a certain ethnic origin
- Youth organisations
- Adults with a learning disability who want employment
- People with bipolar disorder (aka manic depression) and their friends/family (aka carers)
- We represent the issues and concerns of faith to the local government and statutory organisations and the public sector. We bring the concerns about faith from such organisations back to faith communities and to de-mystify faith in a secular world.
- Homeless single people and families
- Parents and Carers of children with any kind of SEN
- Adults with Learning Disability/vulnerable Adults
- We provide housing services primarily. Other community development activities are generally open to everyone.
- somali young people
- furniture, appliance and ICT reuse charities
- older people who meet fair access to care standards and are referred to us through care direct and locality teams
- children/young people with Autism and their families
- Children of divided families
- Teenage parents aged 16-25 and teen parents children aged 0-4 and up to 8 year olds during summer holidays. We also run a Child Contact Centre for absent parents to bond with their children, referrals made through solicitors. Opening times 9-2pm every Saturday
- South Asian Elderly as part of Day Care facilities
- For children ages 5 - 12 years
- women and children
- people with physical health problems - many of whom are older
- People living with and/or affected by HIV infection
- Our services are open to all people suffering from Social Anxiety Disorder or people who find social anxiety is significantly affecting their life or well-being.
- Elected Reps from service user/survivor led mental health groups in the PCT areas (also now known as NHS areas) of: Bristol, B&NES, North Somerset & South Gloucestershire.
- The YWCA Bristol Young Women's Centre, works with Young Women aged 13-30 years. Who face unique problems in today's society, are largely unheard and lack influence: young women come to YWCA for support, guidance and learning opportunities which are designed with their specific needs in mind and we campaign with them to combat the discrimination and disadvantage they face. This is carried out through Peer Education, Informal Education and One to One Counselling services.
- We represent those interested in Practical Action's work in the Developing World

Q8 In which geographical area does your organisation carry out its activities?

No. of responses	217
Bristol city and surrounding area	111
Neighbourhood(s) within Bristol	74
Bristol city only	44
South West Region	39
UK/National	30

217 people responded to this question, with many choosing more than one option(hence the total of responses does not add up to 217).



Q8a If you ticked ‘Neighbourhood(s) within Bristol’, please tick below to show which Neighbourhood Partnership area(s) you work in.

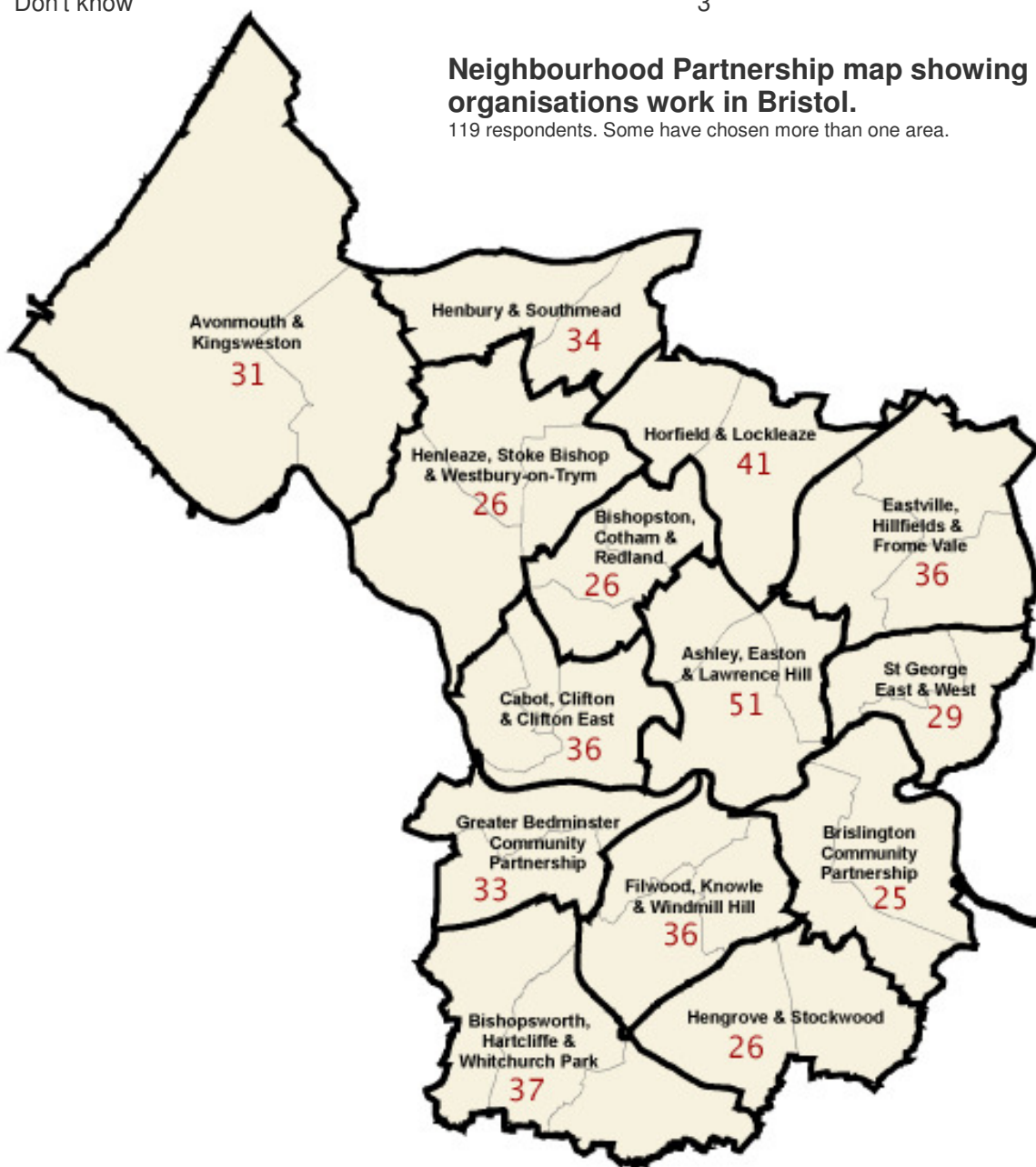
No. of responses	119
Ashley, Easton & Lawrence Hill	51
Lockleaze & Horfield	41
Hartcliffe, Whitchurch Park & Bishopworth	37
Eastville, Frome Vale & Hillfields	36
Knowle, Filwood & Windmill Hill	36
Southmead & Henbury	34
Bedminster & Southville	33
Clifton, Clifton East & Cabot	33
Kingsweston & Avonmouth	31
St George East & West	29
Westbury-on-Trym, Henleaze & Stoke Bishop	27
Bishopston, Cotham & Redland	26
Stockwood & Hengrove	26
Brislington East & West	25
Don't know	3

Although only 74 groups ticked the box ‘Neighbourhoods within Bristol’ (Q8), 119 groups have responded to this question.

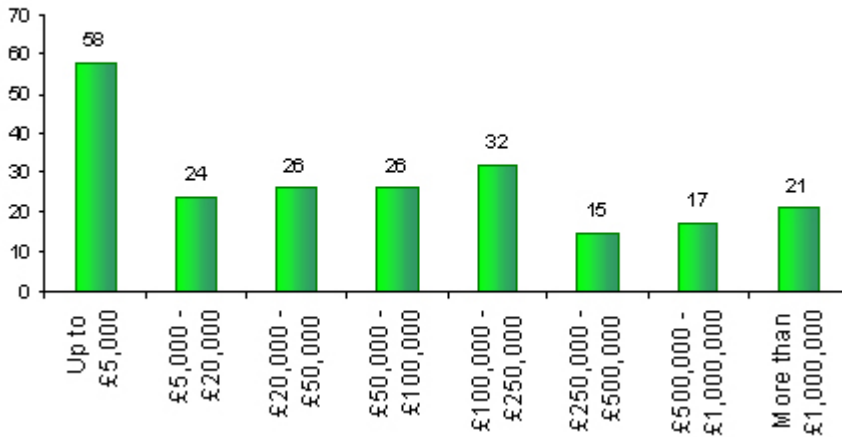
There seems to be a fairly even spread across the city.

Neighbourhood Partnership map showing where organisations work in Bristol.

119 respondents. Some have chosen more than one area.



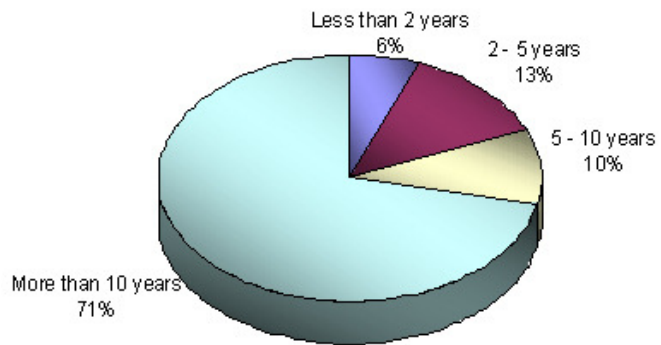
Q9 What was your organisation's income in 2008/09?



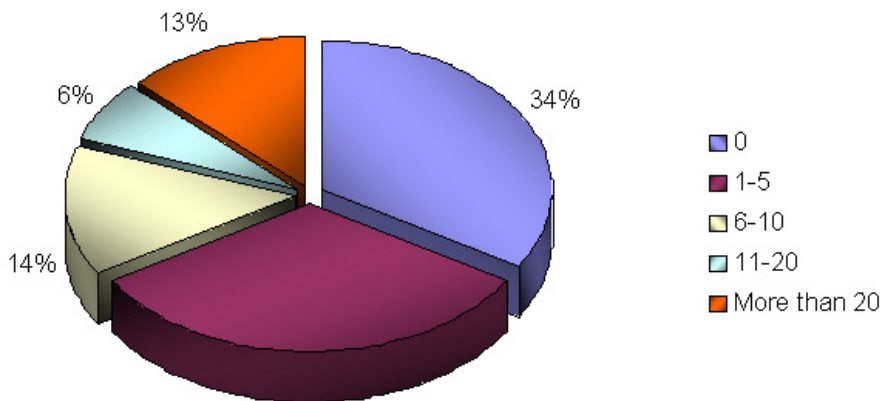
No. of responses	219	%
Up to £5,000	58	26%
£5,000 - £20,000	24	11%
£20,000 - £50,000	26	12%
£50,000 - £100,000	26	12%
£100,000 - £250,000	32	14.5%
£250,000 - £500,000	15	7%
£500,000 - £1,000,000	17	8%
More than £1,000,000	21	9.5%

Q10 How long has your organisation been in existence?

No. of responses	219
Less than 2 years	13
2 - 5 years	28
5 - 10 years	21
More than 10 years	157



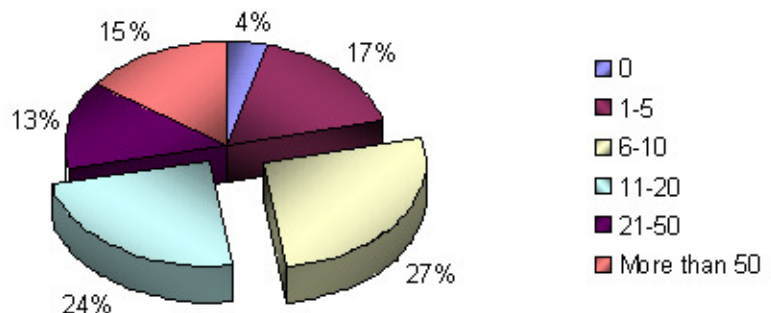
Q11 How many paid staff does your organisation employ?



No. of responses	217
0	73
1-5	71
6-10	31
11-20	14
More than 20	28

Q12 Please estimate how many volunteers, including Management Committee members, are regularly involved in running your organisation?

No. of responses	218
0	9
1-5	37
6-10	58
11-20	52
21-50	29
More than 50	33



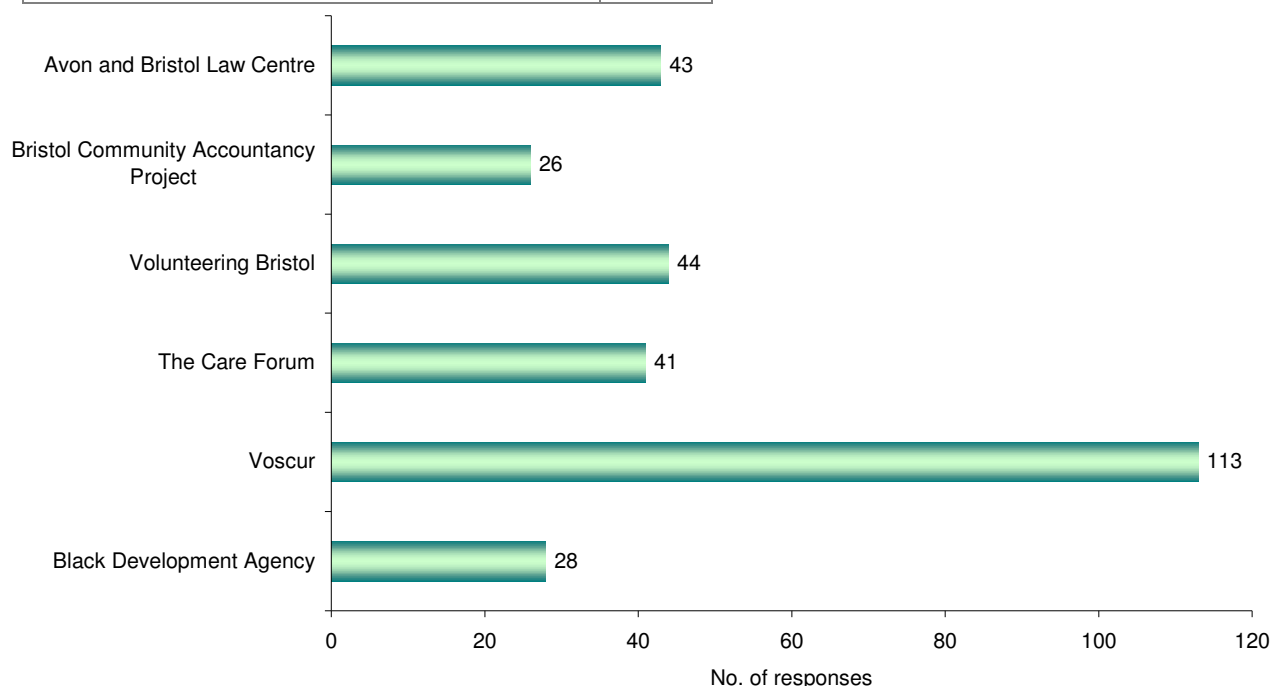
Section 2 summary

- Legal structures and types of organisation: 58% of respondents are a registered charity. The most common legal structure is that of a Company limited by guarantee but a wide range of organisation structures are included, including unincorporated groups and newer types such as Community Interest Companies (CICs).
- Main areas of work: The main fields within which respondents work are health & social welfare (19%) and arts/media/sport (18.5%), followed by Advice/counselling/advocacy; Immigration/Asylum and Housing/homelessness organisations (15.5%) and then Community-focused buildings and groups (14%) and early years/play/young people and Education support organisations (12.5%).
- Equalities Groups: 50% of respondents indicate that they are led by an Equalities Group. The main Equalities Groups represented are Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) at 10% of the total; Children and Young People at 9.5 % and Disabled People at 8% of all respondents. There is a fairly even spread between three equalities groups – BME, young people and disabled people. These groups are more represented than the other equalities groups.
- Where Groups work: 77% of Groups mainly operate within Bristol and surrounding area, and generally provide services to all within the community.
- More of these groups are working in what are the old Neighbourhood Renewal areas of Bristol (Easton, Ashley and Lawrence Hill in particular). However, the spread is fairly even across the city, probably meaning that organisations operate citywide.
- Income levels: 37% of respondents had an income level of less than £20,000 in 2008/2009 (26% less than £5000); A further 24% are in the £20,000 - £100,000 bracket; 21.5% between £100,000 - £500,000 and 17.5% from £500,000 to over £1million.
- Age of groups: Most responding groups have existed for over 10 years (71%), with 10% between 5 and 10 years old; 13% 2 to 5 years and 6% under two years in existence.

Section 3 – Accessing support

Q13 Has your organisation/group accessed support from any of the following VCS Infrastructure Support Service organisations in the last 3 years?

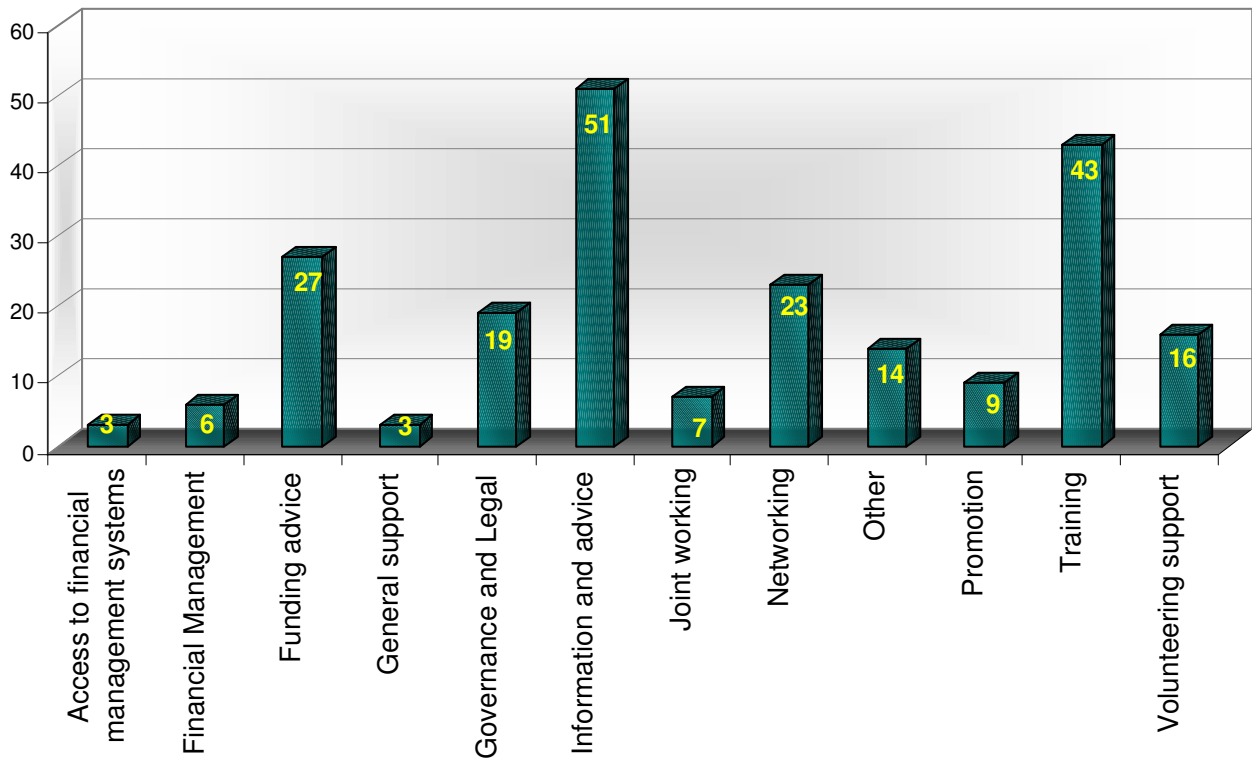
No. of responses	132
Voscur	113
No reply	87
Volunteering Bristol	44
Avon and Bristol Law Centre	43
The Care Forum	41
Black Development Agency	28
Bristol Community Accountancy Project	26



Other	
ACEVO	no
BAND	Keith Bates Development Services
Social Enterprise Works	Refugee Action; CEED
Equality South West	none
Social Enterprise Works	None of the above
BCC community Development	NAVCA
Social Enterprise Works; ACFA	university students and lecturers
social enterprise works	none of above
NO	none
Cemvo	Bristol City Council twinning officer
Bristol Debt Advice Centre, Bristol mediation, Bristol Credit Union, Bristol CAB	

Presumably the entries saying 'No' or 'None' under Other are indicating that they have not received any support from any of the agencies listed. 87 (40%) of total survey respondents did not reply to this question. It is not clear if this can be interpreted that they have not accessed the support or if they simply chose not to answer the question.

Q14 What has been the most effective support your organisation has received from these VCS Infrastructure Support Services over the past 3 years?



In order to be able to analyse these responses, each response has been labelled under one or more of the 12 categories above. 122 groups responded to this question in total – but many comments could be matched with more than one of the above categories.

Information and advice (general or specific) would appear to be the most commonly recognised support received (this is separate from specific advice on funding-related issues). Organisations also appreciate the training that has been offered to them.

Below are examples of comments made by respondents to give a flavour of how respondents have experienced the support. Some are summarised rather than quoted directly to protect the confidentiality of respondents.

Information and Advice

VOSCUR emailings; Regular information relevant to the sector/our work/the local community/ national local policy developments; News about national & local developments in funding & policy which affects us; Information about Local Area Agreements; general info and advice, e-bulletin for info and advertising; Specific advice and information on internal problems and issues; Help with policies; Voscur

have been a source of information and assistance, we have also used resources available on their website.

Training

Training given on Full Cost Recovery and assisted us with policy development; took part in very useful training programme on outcomes run by Voscur in the last year; Training course for filling in grant application and course on information on CICs; Training on commissioning; Excellent training to be a good Trustee and have active management committee; Trustee training course; BCAP - Financial management Training and Bookkeeping support; Joint delivering of training to other organisations. Accessing cost effective training for staff and volunteers; training support with funding applications; Training (repeated references)

Funding Advice

Provision of funding information; Fund raising; Access to funding sources; information about grant funding from charitable bodies & companies; grant finder; funding searches; Surgery on Funding; timely advice on new funding opportunities; Funding research from Voscur; funding surgery from voscur; information about funding opportunities; help from Voscur to understand and formulate Outcomes for a 5 year Lottery bid just completed

Networking

Promotion of our work to other organisations (networking); The most effective support we have received from VCS is the networking opportunities, such as Children and Young People Multi Agency meetings and Mental Health Network; Community Buildings network from Voscur; Meetings that include other agencies - networking; networking opportunities (repeated references); Opportunities to share best practice.

Governance and Legal

Governance support; From Law Centre/Voscur: Understanding legal structures; day to day support re policies and management of project; The ABLC was both helpful and inspirational; governance and constitution writing; Avon & Bristol Law centre - excellent specialist support; legal and practical responsibilities. Legal advice and support; We have benefited greatly from support for developing and supporting local community groups we are involved with from Voscur and ABLC; Help from Avon & Bristol Law Centre to become constituted; Understanding legal structures

Volunteering Support

link to volunteers; Recruitment of volunteers via Volunteering Bristol; assistance with sourcing volunteers; Advertising for volunteers; Promoting opportunities for Adult Volunteers to join us and work with us; Volunteering Bristol: advice and volunteers; Volunteering Bristol - volunteers and advice on vol coordination; VOF meetings at Volunteering Bristol

Promotion

Primarily these organisations disseminate information about us to other agencies; Including our events on their website and in Voscur bulletin; Promoting our work and activities; advertising vacancies; publicity for our organisation/projects; Directory listing

Joint Working

Joint delivering of training to other organisations; VOSCUR and BDA have supported our Positive Action Programme by acting as host placement organisation for our trainees and providing 100% funding for trainees; We work in partnership with these organisations in various ways and this enables us to improve our services to our beneficiaries; They have worked in partnership to capacity build local BME voluntary groups or projects; mutual referral protocols;

Financial Management

BCAP - Financial management Training; work legislation advice; advice on technical financial issues; Financially linked legal requirements ie. changes in procedures/reporting of accounts, employment issues from B.C.A.P.

Access to Financial Management Systems

Good accounting service; BCAP - Bookkeeping support; BCAP:Accountancy support, payroll service, independent examination service; the payroll service BCAP provides; Running payroll and other financial services

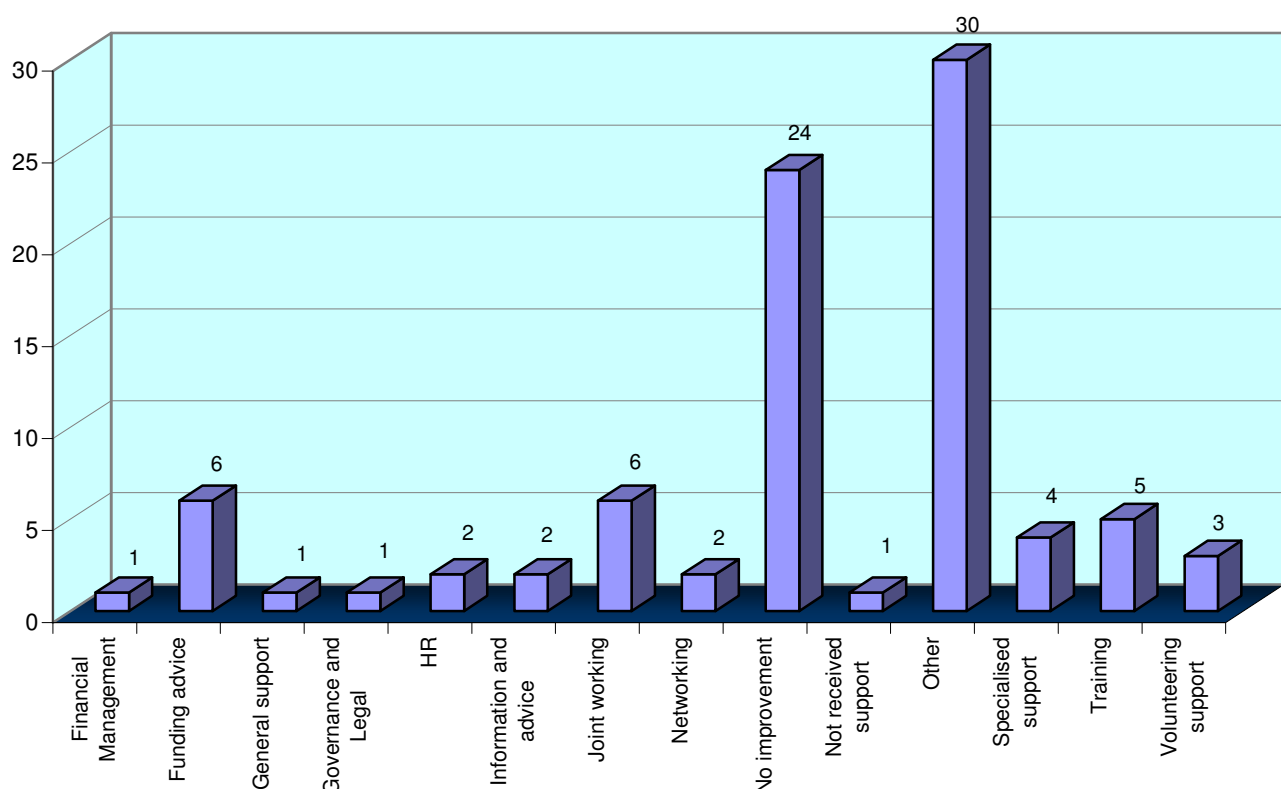
General Support

The support and information from Voscur has been effective; Admin support for an event; Help with difficult cases;

Other

Opportunities to have voice of refugees heard; advocacy issues; rented hot desking facilities for one year from BDA; The Care Forum; ICT information; providing one off advice; representation; None really but we know they are there

Q15 Are there any aspects of the support your organisation has received from these VCS Infrastructure Support Services over the past 3 years which you'd like to see improved?



84 groups (38% of the Survey total) responded to this question, generating 88 comments. Again, the 88 comments have been categorised into 14 categories for ease of analysis. Comments under 'Other' include those who have not received support.

The most obvious observation is that the single opinion around which there is greatest consensus is that there is no improvement looked for from 29% (24) of the groups responding to this question, which means they are generally satisfied with the support they have received.

Below are examples of comments made by the 71% of respondents (60) answering the question who described the improvements they identified (The 'Other' category includes those identified issues for which there are only one or two comments):

Other:

Clarity about services: More information on the services which are available to us; Be useful to have information on what support is available to individual organisation, eg if we need to refer a small group to an organisation who need advice/support on their legal structure, committee needs, training, who is offering what?;

Access to services and type of support: More ground floor relevance to actually running a third sector organisation; ...more rigorous, systematic support activities need to be funded and overseen by funders; More proactive/interactive support required-not just signposting but actual 'holding hand' approach till successful outcome; ... could put their time to assist small organisations with more advice or training (staff and volunteers) to enable gain of knowledge and experience - that could help to improve quality of services as well; Greater availability; Support specifically tailored to the needs of the organisation; The help offered seems to be on the terms of the organisation - doesn't necessarily fit with the limited time of a volunteer;

Representation: VOSCUR representation with CYPs should be stronger; More support to have voice heard in decision making of city; lobbying; Clear guidance on the services Bristol would like us to provide

Equalities issues: in terms of equality all tend to provide traditional or recognised information and training on equalities. None...deal with Gay, gypsy, asylum seekers and womens expertly; Better understanding of Autism and Asperger Syndrome; The needs of members with learning difficulties;

Increased investment: More core funding for all of the above mentioned; more long term, not restricted by funding; Only more resources...There is a need for more support for capacity building BME projects or voluntary groups that are struggling. There needs to be funding for those of us who are VOSCUR reps - we give many

hours to benefit the city from a VCS and equalities point of view but have no back fill or funding for these hours; More of most of the services they provide as they are very useful; Investment in the sector and its infrastructure;

Promotion: We need help in promoting what we do and the opportunities that we provide for all the young people in Bristol as well the opportunities we offer adult volunteers; Training acknowledging diversity of voluntary sector and promoting this;

Networking: acevo to set up greater bristol group - currently south west; networking with other organisations and also up to date information; Re-instate the Bristol Artists' network;

HR: More employment related stuff would be great; Higher level support direct support in HR matters (e.g. redundancies) Courses available but could do with direct advice and guidance similar in nature the the Law Centre;

General Support: Being able to support us and our clients more - sometimes referrals are not accepted due to heavy workload; Better sharing of information

Financial Management: more access to accountancy advice on an individual basis, as the charity sector is complicated with lots of benefits people may be unaware of;

Funding Advice:

more help at accessing funding to organisations with Black & Minorities leadership and members; better funding advice; More assistance with the funder finder; Assisting with identifying funders, trusts and foundations, and advice on completing application forms; Help with funding applications: we don't have the resources; Open information about funding and other finance access;

Joint Working:

(some Infrastructure services) unwilling to engage with us when developing a communities' project. Insisted on being paid to get involved in anyway whatsoever; There should be more partnership working with BDA and Care Forum (esp around training and mutual referrals); I would like to see all of these agencies renting rooms across Bristol and sharing the financial support they gain from the Council with other community buildings; More integration between agencies - there's a lot of duplication; To work in partnership...to provide Positive Action Training on a yearly basis

Training:

Training should be tailored to organisation's needs; I was disappointed to see Voscur's Neighbourhood Learning programme discontinue as I felt this offered such an important component to residents wanting to take action in their local area; More inhouse relevant training; quality of training; More trainings; Further relevant training sessions;

Specialised Support:

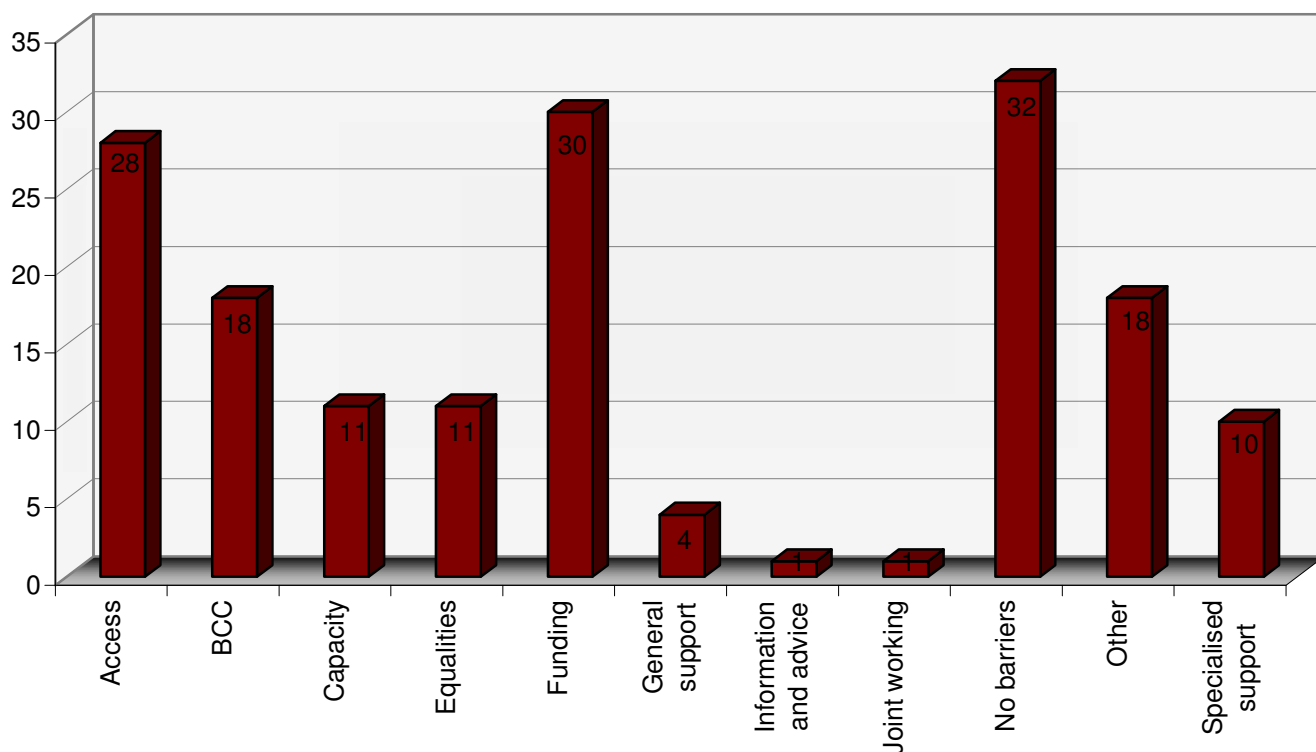
This support has been good but there are areas of more pressing concern where we have not been able to access support because it is not on offer; 'Advance'

training and support would be useful for experienced organisations; infrastructure support needs to be provided by a much larger range of organisations... We need specialist support... I suspect there are many other specialist infrastructure and support services in Bristol which need to be strengthened;

Volunteer Support:

Support to help us better support volunteers; Would be good to have a central volunteering bank / database; Need help to recruit more volunteers especially for management committee;

Q16 Please tell us below about any barriers or problems you've experienced in getting support for your organisation's needs.



For this question, 139 groups responded (64% of the Survey total). There were 164 comments which have been divided into 11 categories. 32 groups (23% of those responding) indicated that, for them, there were no barriers or problems in their experience.

The remaining 107 groups describe a range of issues. Funding issues are clearly key for many – although it is arguable if VCS Infrastructure in itself could alleviate many of the problems described but this focus is also reflected in Section 4 when identifying the priorities of organisations over the coming years. Access to VCS support services is also a key issue. It is interesting to note that 18 organisations directly cited Bristol City Council (explicitly or implicitly) as being a barrier to getting support. This could be an area to be influenced by VCS Infrastructure services on behalf of the sector. Equalities groups and organisations also indicate some problems with services, including faith organisations which have not seen the Infrastructure services as available to them.

Of the 132 comments which described barriers or problems the 18 related to Bristol City Council cannot fairly be taken as a comment on Infrastructure delivery by current providers; similarly the 30 comments on funding are mostly not a reflection on current VCS Infrastructure support as such. This leaves 84 comments which more directly suggest problems with the way current provision works.

The following section sets out a selection of the comments describing barriers or problems encountered. The categories with few comments have been included in the 'Other' section.

Funding

Funding and eligibility for certain funding streams; Funding and funding opportunities; Not fitting the criteria to access appropriate support. Funding issues; Funding; Lack of funding for religious groups; We have not been able to fund any self-management training programme courses since 2003. These 3-day courses can change the lives of up to 14 service users in a long weekend, but the cost of £5k or so has proved impossible to fund; Very difficult to access support to finance staff costs to carry on running; More access to funding opportunities; few opportunities to bid for continuation funding for existing services; huge resource that goes into fundraising; fundraising is not accessible for refugees and asylum seekers to lead on and control; Funding procedures that assume you have full-time professional managers; My biggest barrier is receiving information on which funding streams are available to my organisation; Accessing small grants; Our only source of income is by donation by users.... bodies do not support faith based organisations; There is great good will for our work but no financial assistance whatsoever coming from BCC or statutory bodies although we have appealed time and again; We have had difficulty securing funds to buy sports equipment; Major barrier is getting organisation to provide 100% funding for positive action traineeships;

Access

There appears to be no effective provision for supporting non-statutory youth provision in the city; We need to be reimbursed for the cost of staff attending consultations and offered free training. This way we can pay for 'cover' whilst a member of staff is engaged in such activities; The time available to our volunteers to access these VCS services as they only operate during normal working hours on weekdays when many of our volunteers are in their own paid employment so cannot make contact; Lack of funding for free support; lack of e-mail facilities; Cost of accountancy advice; Many of these organisations do not attempt to represent peripheral estates and focus all of their attention on Central Bristol; Access and speed of response; Have not been aware any was available; There is no support for faith (muslim) group, we have put our differences aside -joined together to create an umbrella organisation to act between the faith groups and bristol city council; ...It appears there is real need to address the needs of small organization particularly from new comers communities and particularly refugees; At times some of the VCS appear to be invisible. Not sure what they are doing for small community groups like ourselves; our barriers are mainly our own. Where we are just too busy and mainly make do; It can be difficult to find a specific person to help with payment issues (i.e. Supporting People) and Housing issues; In this

area there are problems around getting the communication to small community groups about the support that is available. The support that is available lacks coordination and without a local VCS organisation with a skilled community worker, people do not know what is available ie. support to draw up constitutions from ABLC, Funderfinder at Voscur etc; Support needed was not offered - or when sought not available/given; Capacity within the VCS agencies and resources to be able to assist; Meetings held during the working day: guess what, volunteers are at work too; Long delays and insufficient; Availability of Staff from VCS. - Slow information and communication (when one of the staff is not in, the whole system is blocked); No where to turn for infrastructure advice; no specialist service for capacity building community groups and projects in need; not enough support for fund raising, policies, procedures - need free support where someone actually helps you do the work; When there is training and a cost to the training, we are unable to afford this; we have contacted (particular organisation) a few times for support but never got any support from them (they are not very helpful); Staff shortages and limited availability; Previously unaware of any support. Filed Sports Relief funding from Quartet but still awaiting reply

Bristol City Council

Most of the barriers are with Bristol City Council, i.e. not being able to get answers to questions, decisions not being made promptly; committment to long term funding; Under the old Parks Dept management structure, it was felt that input from user groups such as ours was not encouraged and perhaps constituted nuisance value. With the new structure, there seems to be hope that this position will diminish; Failure by BCC to make funding applying processes more accessible to local, B&ME groups; We have experienced barriers because we ...are funded through Economic Regeneration... This year the funding has been dripped through quarter by quarter rather than yearly or longer length service level agreements; We are a small organisation - so our capacity to meet needs of funders e.g Bristol City Council for information and monitoring can really stretch us. It is hard to compete with larger organisations that have dedicated staff and more resources already in place, in order to get the resources that our local area needs. Turn around time for some applications can be very short; Inability of BCC officers to make decisions concerning Urban Enterprise; being charged for a licence to hold group activity on BCC open space/park; opaque BCC grant funding application process with conflicting messages from different officers involved in commissioning; I am a committee member of a local Residents Association that was formed to complete an Alley Gating Project to make the rear of 41 properties more secure by gating a private lane... The Traffic Management Team could not have been more unhelpful; bristol city council communication problems eg around publicising the LAA local target consultations (found out last minute) and they weren't going to even address the environmental indicators; BCC and NHS slow in funding BME projects which satisfy health and social care needs of the BME community. The funding is also short term-only for a year in most cases- so it is difficult to plan and strategise; There is at times a lack of consistency within BCC between National Initiatives and how these are interpreted at a local level. Examples are the agenda to support third sector providers and transfer assets to them. In Bristol it seems that this is ignored and our own organisation is expected to purchase or rent property at market value and market rents; not knowing which department to contact with in the council for different aspects of things; Bristol City Council

Planning consent. As a non-professional organisation, we found it very difficult to get planning permission for our landing extension. We found we had to jump through one hoop after another rather than been presented with a comprehensive list of objectives in one go. As a result our programme is at least one year behind time; We had the excellent support of Bristol Council's Local Nature Reserve Officer until last year... Bristol Council (Parks) are seeking to gain a grant to provide 2 replacements but even if the application is successful we will not have this support this year; Spend a lot of time form filling for the council; Fundraising within BCC-- caught between Partnership and CYPS; We need longer building lease form the council as only being offered 5-7 yr short term ones which is not helpful when applying for funding as most grant applications insist that there needs to be at least a 10 year lease on the property before they will invest;

Capacity

Cost - impact upon the delivery of our organisation's services resulting from the time involved in attending consultation events and training; Capacity issues means that it's difficult to make the most of support that's available; Time pressure on all involved; Time constraints, capacity constraints; Lack of support from an Admin point of view has meant that communication with other agencies has been hindered; timing schedule. trying to fit training/ support in with other commitments;

Equalities issues

Older people are rarely a priority for non-dedicated organisations; Shortage of British Sign Language Interpreters; Lack of acknowledgement of the excellent services we are providing, the fact that as a black lead organization there is general feeling that we are perceived as inferior and as small community organization we are generally squeezed away and only the bigger organization tend to get funded; the VCS lack expertise in the 6 + more equality strands- they are often biased towards traditional minority categories, black and ethnic minorities and disability and women in particular; Prejudice against christian faith organisations; Issues with immigrants from Bulgaria and Romania;

Specialised Support

Organisations/groups have different training needs depending on development stage, resources. One course to suit all does not always work; it is my experience that organisations will turn to my sort of organisation when they need professional, qualified advice as they begin to move beyond the 'general' into the 'specifics' of modernisation and professionalisation; There is very little tailored support. Some 'how to' ie Asset transfer. Also some general community buildings advice ie VAT on fuel, do you need to pay rates?; I have been unable to get support for the help I need in setting salary levels, in evaluating whether Trustee Indemnity Insurance is appropriate for us, or in dealing with the inappropriate policies imposed by the Criminal Records Bureau; Local infrastructure support organisations do not offer the support that would be useful to our organisation; Courses on specific topics can be helpful but do not make people experts overnight. More specific direct guidance needed on some topics - e.g. employment law etc.; We do not have enough space to further expand our community work such as toddler groups, pre school and are looking for a new site and want to sell our existing site. we cannot get planning permission on our site

before we find a new site to move to. We have little money but want to expand to provide a better service for our community; Level of support in respect of quality and appropriateness. The main barrier is always time;

Other

We are a national organisation support in Bristol tends to be parochial; receive help/support from BAND (generally very good); Relevance of umbrella agency to our work; Not getting decision from organisations that we needed, in a clear and positive manner; there is confusion with the Care Forum's name as it does not necessarily describe what they do and gets confused with the Carers Centre; Access to places to carry out our activities; high room hire rates in central Bristol; Lack of experience/volunteers to run branch efficiently particularly in applying for funding; General lack of support for specialist poetry organisations, even though we have a thriving and active membership and a proven track record of success; because we do a great deal of single sex work this has caused considerable barriers; Partnership working with (particular organisation) is sometimes difficult; Constant change to Patient and Public Empowerment... the problem is not local but with national health and social policy; Accommodation, accommodation, accommodation;

Section 3 summary

- All funded VCS Infrastructure organisations have been accessed over the past three years by respondents to varying degrees. 40% of respondents did not reply to this question. It is not clear if this can be interpreted that they have not accessed the support or if they simply chose not to answer the question.
- Organisations which had used existing services expressed significant levels of satisfaction with information and advice services; training; funding advice, networking, volunteer support and governance and legal support; Satisfaction was also expressed in the numbers identifying no barriers or no improvement (29% & 23% of groups responding to Questions 15 & 16).
- At the same time responses to both Question 15 (how support could be improved) and particularly to Question 16 (where there have been barriers and problems with support) indicate that there are a number of potential service areas which users would like to see improved and which can be considered in the design of future service provision. These include more clarity about the services available and access to services outside work hours; more tailored and more practical services; ideas about how services could be delivered more effectively, a need for more specialised support and concern for more awareness on specific equalities issues.
- Access to funding is the biggest barrier facing VCS organisations, and funding advice is one of the main support features accessed.
- A number of the ways Bristol City Council functions are also barriers to a significant minority of respondents.

This section represents a brief snapshot to the current service provision. The next sections look in detail about how VCS organisations see their support needs in the future and how they'd prefer them to be delivered.

Section 4 - Supporting your needs

Q17 The support priorities for my organisation/group over the next 5 years (2010-15) are:

	Low priority	Medium priority	High priority
1. Providing better services	11	63	107
2. Managing your organisation better	25	104	35
3. Improving your funding and financial stability	4	27	169
4. Improving how you manage your people resources	29	107	25
5. Developing skills	15	111	40
6. Improving your physical resources and environmental impact	35	84	46
7. Increasing your influence	14	74	88
Other	5	9	20

In order to help rank these priorities, a weighting has been applied to each priority (Low=1, Medium=2, High=3). If we then add together the high and medium priority choices, we can get an idea of what the most important areas for development are:

	Low priority	Medium priority	High priority	Total high and med
3. Improving your funding and financial stability	4	54	507	561
1. Providing better services	11	126	321	447
7. Increasing your influence	14	148	264	412
5. Developing skills	15	222	120	342
2. Managing your organisation better	25	208	105	313
6. Improving your physical resources and environmental impact	35	168	138	306
4. Improving how you manage your people resources	29	214	75	289
Other	5	18	60	78

So the top 3 priority areas are

- **Improving funding and financial stability**
- **Providing better services**
- **Increasing your influence**

The other priorities mentioned were:

- marketing our sector
- Providing better services for more young people
- Developing new (and better) services
- Generating income by providing products and services
- not applicable as an independent consultant
- Being an asset to the community
- Advertisement of service
- Filling new space according to targets
- Being able to pay for self management courses
- We urgently require a building (A community centre) and the resources to manage that Centre.

- Improving relevance to our membership
- develop services allied to information & counselling
- Increasing local involvement by increasing peoples confidence and activity
- support with demands of evaluation
- Attracting more adult volunteers to support Scouting as Young leaders, supporter and managers.
- Business support
- Understanding the value of staff and paying reasonable wages
- Increasing services; increasing capacity for increased numbers of service users
- Ensure departments/teams with BCC are accountable to the Council Tax-paying Residents of Bristol
- Understanding the strategic environment ie. LAAs, Neighbourhood Partnerships etc
- Becoming sustainable; Social Return on Investment (SROI) measures
- More paid staff
- None
- ACC understanding South Asian Elderly People's Needs Better
- Accommodation
- We would welcome more opportunities to perform our music
- Develop my organisation and expand partnership work with other organisations
- Improving policies and procedures in line with new legislation and guidance
- recruiting volunteers
- Our present premises are not adequate for the needs of the community we serve. We need larger premises
- Addressing relevant needs in the community
- PENSIONERS NEEDS
- Providing a wider range of services
- Attracting more members
- Succession planning to ensure our group does not die when our 3 most active managers move on
- Helping more people to understand how to develop and maintain peaceful, happy minds.
- Recruiting volunteers
- Bringing national perspectives
- Developing new forms of collaborative work and innovation
- Maintain branch through volunteers
- imparting knowledge
- Highest priority is to improve awareness of our existence to people with epilepsy
- Raising Profile
- Creating more volunteer and paid opportunities for women from refugee backgrounds
- Integrate well with British society by learning to liaise with other associations.
- providing infrastructural support

Cross-tabular analysis

In order to drill down further into what these responses tell us, we have broken down the responses by four criteria:

1. Income
2. How long the company has been in existence
3. Which main equalities group it is led by
4. Which main equalities group it provides services to

The figure for each priority area uses the same weighting system as above.

	Income							
	Up to £5,000	£5,000 - £20,000	£20,000 - £50,000	£50,000 - £100,000	£100,000 - £250,000	£250,000 - £500,000	£500,000 - £1,000,000	More than £1,000,000
1. Providing better services	84	49	54	62	77	37	40	44
2. Managing your organisation better	48	38	37	50	65	23	24	28
3. Improving your funding and financial stability	117	65	63	77	90	44	51	54
4. Improving how you manage your people resources	49	29	34	39	55	24	31	28
5. Developing skills	79	35	40	46	55	25	24	38
6. Improving your physical resources and environmental impact	59	45	30	38	47	25	32	30
7. Increasing your influence	102	31	47	51	75	26	33	47
Other	21	8	5	18	9	0	10	7

	How long in existence?			
	Less than 2 years	2 - 5 years	5 - 10 years	More than 10 years
1. Providing better services	19	62	43	323
2. Managing your organisation better	14	42	36	221
3. Improving your funding and financial stability	32	74	58	397
4. Improving how you manage your people resources	14	43	30	202
5. Developing skills	19	48	35	240
6. Improving your physical resources and environmental impact	16	32	32	226
7. Increasing your influence	36	54	50	272
Other	3	4	13	58

No 1. priority

No 2. priority

No 3. priority

	Led by										
	BME Communities	Children & Young People	Disabled People	Lesbian, Gay & Bisexual People	Faith Communities	Older People	Women	Trans-gendered People	Gypsy and Travellers	Refugees /Asylum seekers	Men
1. Providing better services	57	38	36	2	26	39	29	0	0	6	8
2. Managing your organisation better	39	30	27	2	23	30	23	0	0	5	6
3. Improving your funding and financial stability	66	56	47	3	31	44	35	0	0	6	10
4. Improving how you manage your people resources	34	29	27	2	19	27	15	0	0	5	2
5. Developing skills	44	32	33	2	21	29	26	0	0	4	7
6. Improving your physical resources and environmental impact	43	27	17	5	21	32	20	0	0	0	9
7. Increasing your influence	42	35	37	3	22	41	30	0	0	4	10
Other	7	6	8	3	3	10	0	0	0	2	0

	Provides services to										
	BME Communities	Children & Young People	Disabled People	Lesbian, Gay & Bisexual People	Faith Communities	Older People	Women	Trans-gendered People	Gypsy and Travellers	Refugees /Asylum seekers	Men
1. Providing better services	45	45	41	6	16	24	23	0	0	11	4
2. Managing your organisation better	30	34	32	2	17	18	16	0	0	11	4
3. Improving your funding and financial stability	54	59	53	6	22	27	24	0	0	15	6
4. Improving how you manage your people resources	26	32	32	2	12	17	13	0	0	6	5
5. Developing skills	35	36	38	3	14	23	19	0	0	2	4
6. Improving your physical resources and environmental impact	33	31	23	5	11	28	11	0	0	9	5
7. Increasing your influence	32	37	45	2	14	29	21	0	0	11	6
Other	7	3	11	0	3	6	5	0	0	4	0

This breakdown of responses by criteria very definitely agrees with the main findings – **that improving funding and financial stability** is the most important priority no matter what the organisations' size or type, followed by **Providing better services** and **increasing your influence**.

There are exceptions and additional nuances to this overall picture, however, set out below:

Income levels:

There is no difference between a company with less than £5k p.a. income compared to one with more than £1 million in terms of how they rank priorities. In almost every case, it follows the order:

1. Improve funding
2. Provide better services
3. Increase influence

For small groups between £5,000 - £20,000 **Improving your physical resources and environmental impact** is a significant need.

How long in existence

The main thing to note is that new companies under 2 years old prioritise **increasing influence** as their most important need, and also rate **developing skills** as highly as providing better services. However, these groups make up the smallest proportion of respondents (only 6%) but are presumably also among the most vulnerable of VCS groups.

Equalities groups

In addition to the focus on improving funding, better services, influencing noted above:

BME-led and service providing groups rate **developing skills** as one of their priorities; Faith groups and Refugee and Asylum-supporting groups both look for **Managing your organisation better** support, and Refugee and Asylum Seeker-led groups want help to **improve how they manage people resources** (paid staff and volunteers)

Older people's groups in particular want to **increase their influence** and **improving physical resource and environmental impact** are important to LGB organisations and groups providing services to Older People.

Section 4 summary

- The top 3 support priorities have been identified as
 - Improve funding
 - Provide better services
 - Increase influence
- This is pretty much true for organisations no matter what their size or type. But there are specific needs which relate to income level, age of groups and Equalities groups which need to be attended to.

Section 5 – Support needs in more detail

Questions 18-24

This section breaks down each option within Section 4 to give a more detailed description of the kind of support organisations are looking for. Again, a weighting has been applied to help identify the key support areas. This weighting takes the formula (*medium priority x2 + high priority x3 - does not apply*). These areas of support have then been ranked in order.

1. Providing better services

	Low priority	Medium priority	High priority	Does not apply	Weighted
Service improvement	19	65	106	14	434
Publicity and Public Relations	21	83	86	13	411
Equalities / Community Cohesion / Diversity	26	74	72	29	335
Using Monitoring and Evaluation more effectively	35	81	59	22	317
Other	0	0	14	10	42

Other

- Fundraising and training
- improving accessibility of premises.
- I have answered this from the perspective of an independent and my knowledge of my clients' needs
- Knowing what is likely to be tendered and supported
- Improving Facilities and Equipment
- funding
- improving range of support services for adolescents to complement information, counselling and curre
- Business support
- financial stability/capacity to plan forward services
- Involving residents in service improvement
- Educating ACC on what aspects of Health and Social Care is important to South Asian Elderly
- Consolidation of partnership work with other organisations
- PENSIONERS NEEDS
- Salaried employee
- financial support to run activities of the association

2. Managing your organisation better

	Low priority	Medium priority	High priority	Does not apply	Weighted
Strategic planning	21	77	84	14	392
Organisational improvement	36	97	50	18	326
Developing partnerships / mergers / exit planning	42	71	68	23	323
Financial management	46	75	58	21	303
Governance issues	63	73	39	24	239
Legal issues	60	67	30	33	191
Other	6	1	6	17	20

Other

- Volunteer recruitment & support
- I have answered this as an independent from an understanding of my clients needs
- being more aware of support services available
- Business support
- on HR
- quality assurance in our services
- Building financial sustainability, Not relying on funding only
- Adapting to social changes
- succession planning/recruitment to ensure the group continues
- we seek to clarify the scientific, moral and political issues of the day

3. Improving your funding and financial stability

	Low priority	Medium priority	High priority	Does not apply	Weighted
Fundraising	7	53	140	9	517
Procurement and commissioning	32	52	80	37	307
Social enterprise	39	57	43	44	199
Other	5	7	5	13	29

Other

- I have answered this as an independent from an understanding of my clients needs
- We are interested in exploring opportunities around Social Enterprise
- survival

4. Improving how you manage people resources

	Low priority	Medium priority	High priority	Does not apply	Weighted
Involving volunteers	33	75	94	11	421
Staff recruitment	48	74	30	47	191
Staff management	47	63	36	46	188
Other	2	2	6	13	22

Other

- Affordable training and staff development
- Volunteer recruitment (we have no paid staff)
- training for legal advisors is very expensive.
- I have answered this as an independent from an understanding of my clients needs
- Dealing with staff shortages
- volunteer management
- Staff training
- not applicable

5. Developing skills

	Low priority	Medium priority	High priority	Does not apply	Weighted
Organisational skills	48	87	51	21	306
Personal effectiveness	46	79	57	23	306
Other	1	3	5	11	21

Other

- Social enterprise - business research and set up
- bertter community cohesion
- Networking and partnership development
- Trainings for the management committees to run the association

6. Improving your physical resources and environmental impact

	Low priority	Medium priority	High priority	Does not apply	Weighted
Accommodation, resources and environment	48	68	63	28	297
Technical/facilities support	57	82	35	26	243
Other	3	1	5	14	17

Other

- New equipment and furniture for the new building
- Better quality of services with good resources, work space and equipment
- Financial Funding
- Need venues to conduct activities of the association

7. Increasing your influence

	Low priority	Medium priority	High priority	Does not apply	Weighted
Influencing	26	59	93	14	383
Other	3	4	13	8	47

Other

- Orgs need support to understand and respond to strategic/policy drivers
- We need an opprtunity to put and argue our case in person.
- more council representation on management committee
- Closing the gap between council decision-making and residents
- Becoming a leader
- PENSIONERS NEEDS
- Attracting new members
- raising awareness in GP practices about our existence
- Creating activities that will involve children and young people

Identifying the priority areas

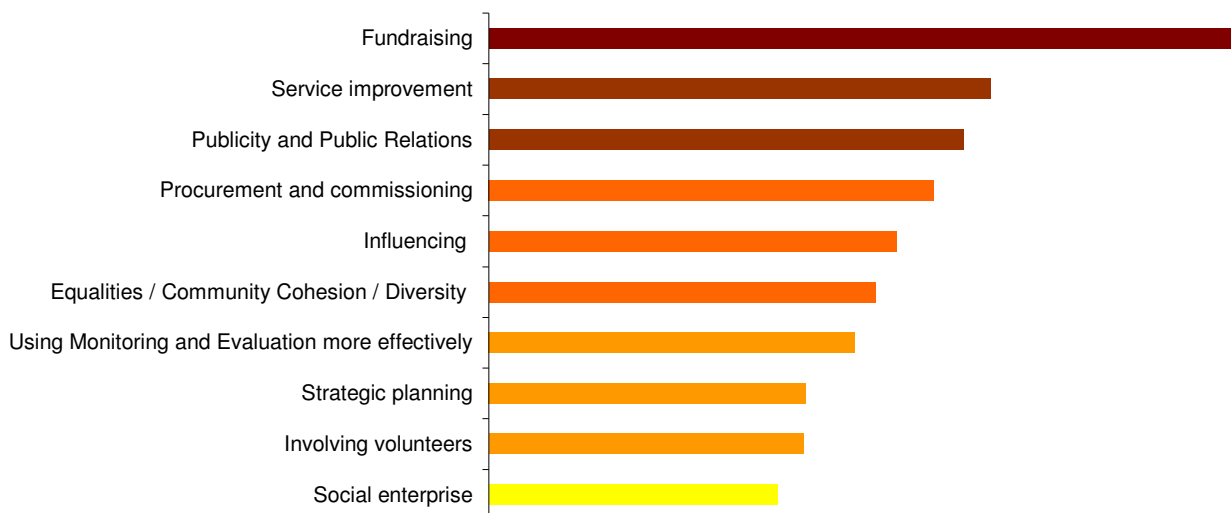
Having broken down each of the seven areas into more detailed functions, it is now possible to apply a further weighting to attempt to rank all of these functions, to give us an idea of where to invest resources in order to add the most value to VCS organisations.

To do this, we take the weighted result of responses for each function, and multiply that by the weighted ranking we already applied to the seven overall areas, as identified in Section 4. Note that the number is meaningless in itself, apart from providing a way of ranking each function. The result is as follows.

Function	Weighting	Area	Weighting	Overall weighting
Fundraising	517	Improving your funding and financial stability	561	290037
Service improvement	434	Providing better services	447	193998
Publicity and Public Relations	411	Providing better services	447	183717
Procurement and commissioning	307	Improving your funding and financial stability	561	172227
Influencing	383	Increasing your influence	412	157796
Equalities / Community Cohesion / Diversity	335	Providing better services	447	149745
Using Monitoring and Evaluation more effectively	317	Providing better services	447	141699
Strategic planning	392	Managing your organisation better	313	122696
Involving volunteers	421	Improving how you manage people resources	289	121669
Social enterprise	199	Improving your funding and financial stability	561	111639
Organisational skills	306	Developing skills	342	104652
Personal effectiveness	306	Developing skills	342	104652
Organisational improvement	326	Managing your organisation better	313	102038
Developing partnerships / mergers / exit planning	323	Managing your organisation better	313	101099
Financial management	303	Managing your organisation better	313	94839
Accommodation, resources and environment	297	Improving your physical resources and environmental impact	306	90882
Governance issues	239	Managing your organisation better	313	74807
Technical/facilities support	243	Improving your physical resources and environmental impact	306	74358
Legal issues	191	Managing your organisation better	313	59783
Staff recruitment	191	Improving how you manage people resources	289	55199
Staff management	188	Improving how you manage people resources	289	54332

This confirms what might have been guessed, that getting support with funding is far and away the priority for VCS organisations. It also sheds some interesting light on other areas that the council might want to invest in – for example publicity training, commissioning advice and training to increase influence, for example.

Top 10 priority areas



Q25 How helpful would the following ways of delivering support be to your organisation around these issues?

Respondents were asked to rate how helpful each method of delivering support would be to them. This has been weighted using the following formula: (*very helpful* x3 + *fairly helpful* x2 – *not helpful*). The methods have then been ranked depending on the weighting.

	Very helpful	Fairly helpful	Not helpful	Weighted
Face to face advice and help	123	61	18	473
On-line and e-mail advice and help	77	105	16	425
Training, courses and learning events	95	78	27	414
Tailored training and consultancy identified by you	111	54	35	406
Forums and networking opportunities	64	103	31	367
Outreach - visiting our group	88	69	38	364
Signposting to specialist support	69	94	37	358
Telephone advice and help	64	93	39	339
Tailored support and mentoring for key members of our organisation	88	60	47	337
Briefings and consultation meetings	56	101	42	328
Newsletters and mailings	46	113	40	324
Advocacy on your behalf with decision-makers	74	59	62	278
Practical support with rooms, computing / printing / phone facilities etc.	41	54	102	129
Other	7	0	0	21

Other

- Not applicable - independent consultant
- We do not have any funding and the above is not very meaningful without financial support.
- Investment into a network of community centres/trusts to act as local support body for local groups
- It's the quality of the help that matters - not just that it is available!
- We regard infrastructure groups as partners to assist our grantees
- Publicity
- general publicity in Bristol City Council publications

There is large support for face-to-face advice, although in this age people are more willing to accept online alternatives (more so than traditional print-based media). Training features heavily, either in large events and courses or more tailored training and consultancy.

Cross-tabular analysis

In order to drill down further into what these responses tell us, we have broken down the responses by four criteria:

1. Income
2. How long the company has been in existence
3. Which main equalities group it is led by
4. Which main equalities group it provides services to

The figure for each priority area uses the same weighting system as above.

	Income							
	Up to £5,000	£5,000 - £20,000	£20,000 - £50,000	£50,000 - £100,000	£100,000 - £250,000	£250,000 - £500,000	£500,000 - £1,000,000	More than £1,000,000
Face to face advice and help	94	60	55	65	85	27	40	47
Outreach - visiting our group	54	47	44	54	80	19	30	36
Telephone advice and help	63	38	40	39	63	27	33	36
On-line and e-mail advice and help	100	52	45	48	71	30	34	45
Training, courses and learning events	49	48	61	62	79	32	34	49
Tailored training and consultancy identified by you	47	45	52	62	81	33	46	40
Tailored support and mentoring for key members of our organisation	36	27	48	49	72	29	42	34
Newsletters and mailings	72	32	49	40	45	15	34	37
Forums and networking opportunities	71	38	53	49	53	25	37	41
Briefings and consultation meetings	45	32	53	33	63	27	36	39
Signposting to specialist support	60	42	50	47	61	18	32	48
Practical support with rooms, computing / printing / phone facilities etc.	42	12	33	20	18	-4	2	6
Advocacy on your behalf with decision- makers	45	38	44	45	55	9	21	21

No 1. priority

No 2. priority

No 3. priority

	How long in existence?			
	Less than 2 years	2 - 5 years	5 - 10 years	More than 10 years
Face to face advice and help	33	64	46	330
Outreach - visiting our group	31	58	30	245
Telephone advice and help	23	42	32	242
On-line and e-mail advice and help	27	43	46	309
Training, courses and learning events	35	57	36	286
Tailored training and consultancy identified by you	28	55	36	287
Tailored support and mentoring for key members of our organisation	26	47	25	239
Newsletters and mailings	20	38	31	235
Forums and networking opportunities	30	55	44	238
Briefings and consultation meetings	25	46	32	225
Signposting to specialist support	28	50	37	243
Practical support with rooms, computing / printing / phone facilities etc.	29	26	19	55
Advocacy on your behalf with decision-makers	32	45	26	175

No 1. priority

No 2. priority

No 3. priority

	Led by										
	BME Communities	Children & Young People	Disabled People	Lesbian, Gay & Bisexual People	Faith Communities	Older People	Women	Trans-gendered People	Gypsy and Travellers	Refugees /Asylum seekers	Men
Face to face advice and help	59	51	39	2	30	34	31	0	0	6	11
Outreach - visiting our group	57	38	27	-1	27	24	30	0	0	6	7
Telephone advice and help	41	19	28	-1	15	29	25	0	0	4	4
On-line and e-mail advice and help	44	43	40	2	25	35	32	0	0	4	10
Training, courses and learning events	58	51	35	-1	30	26	33	0	0	5	9
Tailored training and consultancy identified by you	55	48	32	-1	27	27	33	0	0	6	11
Tailored support and mentoring for key members of our organisation	50	36	25	-1	26	27	25	0	0	6	8
Newsletters and mailings	35	31	35	2	18	31	20	0	0	4	6
Forums and networking opportunities	48	40	33	-1	24	33	15	0	0	5	2
Briefings and consultation meetings	54	27	22	-1	23	30	21	0	0	1	8
Signposting to specialist support	48	29	34	-1	25	34	23	0	0	5	8
Practical support with rooms, computing / printing / phone facilities etc.	37	10	16	-1	7	18	19	0	0	-2	-1
Advocacy on your behalf with decision-makers	51	30	11	-1	30	27	20	0	0	4	6

	Provides services to										
	BME Communities	Children & Young People	Disabled People	Lesbian, Gay & Bisexual People	Faith Communities	Older People	Women	Trans-gendered People	Gypsy and Travellers	Refugees /Asylum seekers	Men
Face to face advice and help	43	47	47	4	21	23	24	0	0	15	5
Outreach - visiting our group	46	32	32	2	18	14	23	0	0	14	2
Telephone advice and help	30	22	31	1	8	16	15	0	0	12	2
On-line and e-mail advice and help	36	40	47	4	17	25	18	0	0	9	5
Training, courses and learning events	42	47	42	2	21	18	25	0	0	13	5
Tailored training and consultancy identified by you	41	45	43	2	21	18	26	0	0	14	5
Tailored support and mentoring for key members of our organisation	36	35	32	2	20	15	24	0	0	12	2
Newsletters and mailings	30	29	42	4	17	19	18	0	0	6	1
Forums and networking opportunities	31	37	40	1	19	23	13	0	0	13	1
Briefings and consultation meetings	41	25	29	1	15	23	18	0	0	4	5
Signposting to specialist support	34	35	41	1	17	23	19	0	0	13	5
Practical support with rooms, computing / printing / phone facilities etc.	24	8	16	2	11	16	15	0	0	-1	1
Advocacy on your behalf with decision-makers	39	25	19	1	22	20	13	0	0	12	2

Section 5 summary

- After weighting all the functions and areas where support could be provided, **fundraising** is by far the highest priority of VCS organisations. This is followed by **Service Improvement; Publicity and Public Relations; Procurement and commissioning, Influencing and Equalities/Community Cohesion/Diversity.**
- Overall, the most helpful way of accessing support is **face to face**, followed by **On-line and e-mail advice, Training, courses and learning events, tailored training and consultancy, Forums and networking and outreach.**
- But within this overall picture there are significant differences in how VCS groups at different stages of development, income level and from Equalities groups prefer to receive support:
- Income Levels: while all income levels rate **face-to-face advice and help** highly, **on-line help** is as helpful to lower income groups, while **training** is also strongly preferred by groups above £20,000 income levels. **Tailored training and consultancy** is particularly sought by groups over £50,000 income.
- Age of group: newer groups value **training** as much as **face to face** support or **Outreach and Advocacy** is important to them. **On-line support and face to face help** are strongly preferred by groups over 5 years old.
- Equalities groups – led by: BME-led groups prefer **face-to-face, training and outreach** services over on-line support; disabled-led groups want **on-line services** as their top preference as well as **face-to-face and training**; Refugee and asylum seeker-led services also look for **face-to-face and outreach services**, alongside **tailored training and mentoring**. Older people-led groups also prefer **on-line support, face-to-face and signposting to specialist services**. Faith-led groups rate **advocacy support** as highly as **face-to-face and training**.
- Equalities groups – services to: **Advocacy support** has a high preference for Faith Groups; **Online advice** is the preferred support for groups providing services to Disabled people; to Older People and to Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual People; Groups providing services to BME communities however prefer Outreach and Training over online, as well as **face-to-face support**. Refugee/Asylum Seeker support services want **face-to-face, outreach and tailored support and mentoring**. Women’s groups look to tailored support, **face to face and training**. Face to face and tailored training is also a favoured support style for

ERROR: syntaxerror
OFFENDING COMMAND: %ztokenexec_continue

STACK:

-filestream-