RAISE

Hidden Asset

A report to demonstrate the value of the
Voluntary/Community Sector in the South East

April 2005

RAISE
Berkeley House
Cross Lanes
Guildford
Surrey
GU1 1UN

Tel: 01483 500770
Fax: 01483 574439
mail@raise-networks.org.uk
www.raise-networks.org.uk

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Researched and written by:

RAISE
Berkeley House, London Square
Cross Lanes
Guildford
Surrey GU1 1UN
Tel: 01483 500770
mail@raise-networks.org.uk
March 2005

CONTENTS   **PAGE**

Foreword

RAISE is the regional infrastructure body for the voluntary/community sector in the South East. We are delighted you are reading this *Hidden Asset report*. Politicians and policy makers seem to agree that the voluntary/community sector is a 'good thing'. The Prime Minister, Tony Blair, wrote: 'The work of voluntary and community organisations is central to the Government's mission…'[1] SEEDA's Regional Economic Strategy states that the sector is key to achieving the vision of 'a prosperous region delivering a high quality of life and environment for everyone, now and in the future'[2]. Yet what do we really know about this voluntary/community sector, this 'good thing', this 'hidden asset'? What does it contribute to the South East? What is needed for it and for the region to thrive?

This report has attempted to answer those key questions and begins to evaluate this asset. It builds on excellent work done nationally (by, for example, NCVO) and locally (by, for example, RAISE members). The research underpinning the report was carried out by Skills Insight, the independent organisation that analysed and disseminated skills and economic information and intelligence for the South East. Skills Insight and RAISE co-authored the report.

RAISE's mission is to 'help voluntary/community organisations in the South East influence regional policy' and *Hidden Asset's* primary audience is our voluntary/community sector membership. We hope members will use the report's clear and statistically robust data to deepen politicians' and policymakers' understanding of the sector, its contribution and its needs. We also hope the report will interest regional partners, policy makers and the region as a whole, helping bring that bit closer to SEEDA's vision of 'a prosperous region delivering a high quality of life and environment for everyone, now and in the future'.

Hidden Asset was almost 2 years in the making. From the large number of people and organisations that made it possible, we would like to single out and thank the Development Committee of the RAISE Board, our funders, Skills Insight, the voluntary/community organisations who helped develop the contact database and the local authorities, parish councils, businesses, other organisations and individuals who helped promote the focus groups.

Most of all, we would like to thank people who came to the focus groups and the voluntary/community organisations who participated in the survey. It was a long, complicated questionnaire. We hope you will agree that the time spent completing it was worth while.

Sue Dovey
Chair, RAISE

Catherine Johnstone
Chief Executive Officer, RAISE

---

[1] The Home Office, 1998, 'Getting it right together: Compact on Relations between Government and the Voluntary and Community Sector in England'
[2] SEEDA, 2002, 'Regional Economic Strategy'

MORE ABOUT RAISE

RAISE enables voluntary and community organisations (VCOs) in the South East Region of England to influence regional policy, wherever it is made or implemented, for the benefit of the people they serve.

Any VCO in the region can join RAISE free of charge. It can then:
- join in the election for members of the RAISE Board.
- join in the election for VCO representatives at the South East Regional Assembly and help nominate people to a host of other strategic regional bodies.

In this way VCOs can get a grass roots perspective into regional policy.

RAISE organises events, seminars, workshops and conferences. It publishes a variety of papers, guides and other publications that members say they need. It works to find funding so everything is delivered free to VCOs – including travel and childcare for very small community groups.

RAISE strives to ensure that, in the region, the voice of VCOs is heard and respected. It demands that the sector is always treated with fairness. But RAISE can only be as good as the sector in the South East and vice versa. So, if you are from a VCO in the South East, get involved. We need you.

RAISE Values

As a Voluntary/Community Infrastructure organisation, it is important that RAISE aspires to work within a value base that will enhance the organisational planning and day-to-day delivery. RAISE as an organisation will;

- Be **transparent** in its approach to all areas of work.
- Remain **true** to its mission.
- Act as an **advocate** for the Voluntary/Community sector.
- Have due **respect** for its position of power and influence within the region.
- **Listen** to the membership.

The RAISE team and Board have identified seven policy areas which it believes are important to its members and where there are significant opportunities to make a difference.

The **seven** policy areas that RAISE has identified are:
1. Infrastructure
2. Social inclusion
3. Financial sustainability through social enterprise
4. Learning and skills
5. Housing and homelessness
6. Social audit
7. Children, Young People and Families

To support Hidden Asset, a section has been created on the RAISE website www.raise-network.org.uk where you can access and download this and other reference documents.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- There are between 28,200 and 34,500 voluntary and community organisations in the region, employing over 300,000 people, about 6% of the region's workforce - a substantial resource to the region.

- The voluntary and community sector is incredibly diverse in terms of its; funding, staffing, size, age, area of activity, services provided and beneficiaries. This means that it is not suitable for a 'one size fits all' approach.

- The voluntary and community sector makes an important contribution to the region's GDP (3.4%), and the economic impact of voluntary and community sector organisations is particularly felt in local communities.

- The value of the volunteering labour in the region is estimated at £932 million.

- One in 11 of the region's residents volunteered, a total of 726,000 people.

- The voluntary and community sector makes significant contributions to skills development, both funding training and providing it 'in house' through mentoring.

- The opportunities provided by the voluntary and community sector often help individuals to make the transition into the formal economy, or from voluntary to paid employment, whether as recipients of services or as volunteers themselves.

- The sector plays an important role as the 'glue' holding communities together and enabling individuals to feel part of the community.

- Voluntary and community organisations expect to be delivering more services over the next 5 years, but will require adequate funding and support to achieve this.

- A key challenge to this growth is expected to be recruitment and retention of volunteers and trustees, which is expected to become more difficult.

- It is possible that the mix of volunteers and paid staff will need to shift towards more paid staff if the sector is to expand its output.

- There is a tension between providing formal training and volunteers' willingness or ability to participate within some voluntary and community service organisations.

- Many voluntary and community organisations need to find ways of meeting their core costs. Many funding streams are project-related and for a limited time period.

In terms of the needs of the voluntary and community sector other core concerns include;

- *Funding:* this needs to be sufficiently long-term to allow stability and planning, over focus on project funding at times detracted from the core mission.

- *Appropriate and affordable premises: premises* are essential, particularly to allow growth; associated issues emerged including running costs, refurbishment and providing disabled facilities.

- *Appropriate trustees:* the evidence shows that it is difficult to recruit appropriately skilled trustees, representative of organisations' volunteers, staff and beneficiaries.

- *Recruiting and retaining paid staff:* the region's high cost of living made recruitment and retention hard.

- *Recruiting volunteers:* this is already difficult and expected to become worse.

- *Awareness raising:* national and local government both had incomplete awareness of the sector's value and financial constraints, individual organisations felt raising their profile would help recruit volunteers and trustees.

- *Provision of adequate training for staff, trustees and volunteers:* staff and volunteers' development, staff turnover, growing expectations and changing legislation all necessitated good ongoing training. A key emerging challenge was 'professionalising' and increasing public service delivery without frightening off trustees and volunteers with paperwork and bureaucracy.

SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background and Aim of Hidden Asset

The voluntary community sector has never been so important to central, regional and local agendas. Nationally, 2005 is the *British Year of the Volunteer.* Chief Secretary to the Treasury Paul Boateng says, '… as we begin the 21st century we look again to the voluntary and community sector to help us rekindle the spark of civic services that fires the building of strong civic communities; to reform the operation of public services and build a bridge between the need of individuals living in those communities and the capacity of the state to improve their lives.'[3]

In our region, SEEDA says in its Regional Economic Strategy that the voluntary community sector is a necessary partner in delivering 10 of the 18 priorities set for delivering the vision of 'a prosperous region delivering a high quality of life and environment for everyone, now and in the future'[4].

So there seems to be general agreement that the voluntary community sector is important. However, not everyone who says this believes it, and those who believe it have a problem: there is insufficient data, certainly regionally, either to build understanding of the sector or to prove its importance. Policy-making and implementation, funding, development and partnership working all suffer.

1.2 Definitions

Voluntary/community organisations

This report refers frequently to 'voluntary/community organisations', 'the voluntary/community sector' and to 'the region'.
'Voluntary/community organisations`, for us, meet three criteria:
- They are free to decide their rules, their purpose and whether they exist at all.
- They must be *controlled* by volunteers (so their directors / trustees / management board are not paid).
- They must not exist to make a financial profit (so any surplus they do make is incidental and re-invested in the organisation).

By way of contrast:

- Statutory bodies such as the Government Office of the South East (GOSE) and local authorities have rules, responsibilities and their very existence is *determined by law*.

- Many statutory bodies engage volunteers but are not *controlled* by them.

- Profit making is core to organisations in the business sector, profit being distributed to owners, for example, or shareholders.

---

[3] HM Treasury, September 2002, 'The Role of the Voluntary and Community Sector in Service Delivery, a Cross Cutting Review'
[4] SEEDA, 2002, 'Regional Economic Strategy'

The voluntary/ community sector

Given that this report stresses the incredible diversity of voluntary/community organisations, it may seem perverse to refer to a 'voluntary/community sector' at all. RAISE believes and indeed the report shows that all voluntary/community organisations meet the three above criteria and, additionally, share characteristics including:

- Closeness to communities and beneficiaries

- Innovative management of volunteers and staff

- Short lines of communication and relative absence of hierarchy

- Flexibility

- Awareness of cost

- Focus on equalities issues, social justice, people: and action.

Self evidently, all voluntary/community groups are not the same. As illustrated in the Compact Code of Good Practice on Community Groups, community groups and voluntary organisations encompass a range of structures with the smallest community groups having the least formal structure and no income and with the largest voluntary organisations having formal structures and (comparatively) high income.

Providing diversity is respected, however, talk about 'the voluntary/community sector' is both meaningful and useful in that it builds understanding and effective interaction between individual voluntary/community organisations and between them and the wider world.

Whenever we talk about the 'voluntary/community sector', 'the sector' or 'voluntary/community organisations', we are referring only to that part of the sector or those organisations in England's South East Region.

By *Hidden Asset* is meant the volunteering which volunteers in the South East region engage in. Hidden Asset is the act of volunteering by volunteers in the areas of:
- Kent and Medway
- Surrey, East and West Sussex and Brighton and Hove
- Hampshire and the Isle of Wight (including Southampton and Portsmouth)
- Berkshire, Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes, West Berkshire, Reading, Wokingham, Windsor and Maidenhead, Bracknell Forest and Slough.

Qualitative and quantitative

The report's data is based on two main evidence sources: a questionnaire and focus groups (see below). Broadly, the data can be divided into 2 types:
- Quantitative: what can be measured by numbers
- Qualitative: opinions / views / anecdotal evidence that make up important intelligence but are not measurable.
All of the data from the focus groups is qualitative. All of the data from the questionnaire – except for individual comments – is quantitative.

Existing national and local research and research in other regions help in the building of understanding of the voluntary/community sector or parts of it. *Hidden Asset's* Appendix 2 (page 59) highlights key findings from NCVO's 'UK Voluntary Sector Almanac, 2004' and VONNE's 'The Contribution of the Voluntary and Community Sector to the Economic Life of the North East Region' Appendix 4 (page 62) lists these studies and others.

Nevertheless, until now, the only research into the sector across the South East was RAISE's 'How Many?' which established a baseline figure of the number of voluntary/community organisations in the South East. The report 'How Many?' achieved its limited aim. Now the time is right for *Hidden Asset* with its wider, threefold aim of building understanding of the South East's voluntary/community sector, proving its importance and setting out its needs. We hope the report will support our members, inform policy making and implementation, shape the development of funding, improve partnership working, and, more generally, strengthen the voluntary/community sector and the region of which it is so important a part.

1.3 Methodology

Preparing the Specification and Awarding the Contract

RAISE invited Board members, members and representatives from partner organisations to help decide what information *Hidden Asset* should contain. A detailed specification was drafted by the author of 'How Many?' RAISE invited bids and, after presentations by short-listed organisations, awarded the contract to Skills Insight.

Desk study of existing literature

In the first stage of the project, Skills Insight conducted desk research to establish what studies had been carried out already. They then sourced contact databases for the mailing list. The desk research helped them design the questionnaire (see Appendix 1) and write the focus group script. It also helped them compare *Hidden Asset*'s findings with those of previous studies.

Building the database of organisations to contact

To compile a mailing list, Skills Insight used Charity Commission data and databases from voluntary/community sector membership organisations across the South East. We are most grateful for this invaluable information. It was combined onto one main database which was then cleaned to remove duplicates and invalid addresses.

The survey questionnaire

Skills Insight drafted a pilot questionnaire based on the North Yorkshire forum for voluntary organisations survey 'Valuing the voluntary and community sector in North Yorkshire and York'[5]. Once RAISE board members were happy with the final version it was sent to a sample of 500 organisations taken from the cleaned

---

[5] Dowson, Burden, Hamm & Petrie (2000), 'Valuing the voluntary and community sector in North Yorkshire and York', North Yorkshire Forum for Voluntary Organisations

contact database. The aim was to test the effectiveness of the questionnaire and the reliability of the database sources. The final version of the questionnaire was then sent to 5,000 organisations and a follow up letter written to maximise response rates. A total of 719 responses (14%) was received of which 549 (76%) came from voluntary/ community organisations as defined above. This response rate was good for any postal survey, especially where the database had been assembled from different sources.

Analysing and weighting responses

The report's threefold aim was to build understanding of the South East's voluntary/community sector, to prove its importance and to set out its needs. Responses had to be extrapolated therefore to produce regional estimates. Skills Insight's methodology was heavily influenced by the VONNE study referred to already (page 9), that in turn being based on the Home Office's LOVAS (Local Voluntary Activity Surveys) work[6]. Skills Insight aggregated LOVAS's 13 district classifications into five: poor, town, suburban, rural and very prosperous. These classifications were then used to weight responses so they were representative of the population and classification type of the region overall. This produced a weighted total of 34,502 organisations.

As the weighted responses were based on actual responses, there was likely to be a skew in information received towards larger voluntary organisations. However, weighting by district classification helped compensate and the weighted total of 34,502 compared well with the working total of 28,200 organisations which 'How Many?' in November 2000 believed to be 'slightly conservative'.

The focus groups

Skills Insight undertook additional qualitative work to provide insight into the general public's involvement with, and attitude to, the voluntary /community sector. The aim was to run focus groups in each of the region's six local Learning and Skills Council (LSC) sub-regions. Manageable discussions were achieved through recruiting up to 10 people per focus group, recruitment occurred through free advertising in public areas and via major employers. Only Berkshire failed to attract enough participants.

Skills Insight wrote an interview script covering four main groups identified as potential attendees: paid staff working in or with the voluntary/community sector; volunteers; beneficiaries of voluntary/community services; and the uninvolved. Attendees of the focus groups consisted mainly of volunteers or those who worked in the sector. There were representatives from beneficiaries and the uninvolved although recruiting the latter was challenging.

Volunteers worked in a number of voluntary/community sector fields: essentially local community activity, youth work, leisure and sport, support services (counselling, listening), services to the public / specialist groups and

---

[6] LOVAS project is commissioned by the Active Community Unit and directed by the Research and Statistics Directorate at the Home Office. This project is carrying out a series of in-depth local surveys with the aim of providing representative information of local voluntary organisations and activity in England. To date it has completed 24 local studies with three of those in the South East: Thanet in Kent; Gosport in Hampshire; and Guildford's Eight Urban Wards in Surrey.

campaigning. The majority of volunteers worked a few hours per week, which included training, travelling, management committees and administration. The majority of participants were over 40 but there was a good proportion of those in their 20s and a few in their 30s. There was a mix of full-time employed, students and retired. Feedback from the groups raised a number of important issues as will be shown in the analysis.

1.4 Presentation of Information in the Report

The data and analysis from both the questionnaire and the focus groups have been split into 3 main sections corresponding to the 3 key questions:
- **How Diverse is the Voluntary/Community Sector?**
- **How much of an Asset is the Voluntary/Community Sector?**
- **What are the Needs of the Voluntary/Community Sector?**

The quantitative data comes from the survey and the qualitative data comes from comments in the questionnaire and from the focus groups. The qualitative data tells important stories and it is the evidence which help to explain some of the statistics. Generally, the key data is described in words with further detail shown in tables and graphs.

The percentages in the tables and graphs do not always add up to 100% or where multiple choice was involved or where questions allowed only one answer, percentages total 100%. We have signposted the relevant tables and graphs:

> **!** Multiple choice question

Where questionnaire questions allowed only one answer, percentages total 100% and tables and graphs are indicated thus:

> **!** Single choice question

SECTION 2: THE FINDINGS OF HIDDEN ASSET

2.1 How Diverse is the Voluntary / Community Sector?

The statutory and the business sectors are both incredibly diverse. The statutory sector ranges from parish councils to the NHS, the business sector from the self employed window cleaner to the multinational oil company. The voluntary/community sector is sometimes seen as uniquely diverse, and wrongly considered by implication, problematic. That view may be taken particularly by the statutory sector given that it, unlike the business and voluntary/community sectors, is not free to decide its rules and purpose and whether it exists at all. But denying the voluntary/community sector's diversity would, perversely, deny one of the key ways in which it is an asset to the region.

2.1.1 Summary quantitative data

Types of Organisation

- We offered respondents 9 types of organisation ranging from 'registered charities' to 'informal neighbourhood organisations without written rules'. All options were taken up.
- **84%** of all respondent organisations described themselves as registered charities, by far the largest response.
- **Over one third** described themselves as local voluntary organisations.
- **14%** of organisations could be described as 'informal'.

Areas of Work

- We offered respondents **16** areas of work ranging from 'welfare or social care' to 'animals'. All options were taken up.
- **The majority** of voluntary and community organisations **worked in more than one** of the suggested areas
- **15%** of organisations stated that their most important area of work was **'welfare or social care'**, the **largest response**.

Services Provided

- We offered respondents **11** types of service ranging from 'information / advice' to 'raising funds'. All options were taken up.
- **Over half** of all organisations stated that one of their main services was the provision of **information /advice.**

Beneficiaries

- We offered respondents **14** types of beneficiary ranging from 'older people' to 'homeless / poorly housed'. All options were taken up.
- **47%** of organisations stated that **older people were one of their main beneficiaries, the most common response**, with 18% stating that older people were the group that used their service the most.

- **17%** of organisations stated that their service was not used, specifically, by any one particular group and had **a far broader client group**.

Number of Beneficiaries

- Respondents were asked how many beneficiaries they had and their responses were placed into 'number ranges'. These ranged from **'25 beneficiaries or less'**, to **'5,001 or more beneficiaries'**.
- The **most common** answer was '**101 to 500** beneficiaries'.
- **29%** of organisations had **over 1,000** beneficiaries.

Age of Organisation

- Respondents were asked their year of establishment and their responses were placed into 'period ranges'. These ranged from '**1 or under' to '101 years or**
- The most common response was **'21 to 50 years'**.

Size as evidenced

- **different numbers of volunteers (directors/trustees/board of management) controlling the organisation**
- We estimated from responses that there were, on average **9** trustees per organisation, although these **commonly ranged from 6 to 13** across the different main activity types.
- **different numbers of volunteers**
- We estimated from the responses that there were on average **21** volunteers per organisation, although these **commonly ranged from 6 to 62** across the different main activity types.
- The above translates into **1 in 11 people in the South East who volunteer**, a total of over 7000,000 individuals. These figures compare favourably with the North East, for example, where it was found that 1 in 15 of the population volunteered[7].
- There was also variation between age ranges, with **32%** of volunteers in the **50-64** years old age bracket compared to only **21%** in the **25-49** age bracket.
- **different numbers of paid staff**
- We estimated from the responses that there were, on average **9** members of paid staff per organisation, although these commonly ranged from **1 to 24** across the different main activity types.
- The **sector employs over 300,000** people, this representing approximately **6% of the region's workforce.** This compares favourably with the North East, for example, where paid staff in the sector accounted for 4% of the region's workforce[8].
- Volunteers outnumbered paid members of staff by a ratio of two to one on average.
- **different levels of total income**
- We asked organisations their level of income and their responses were placed in 'number ranges'. These ranged from 'up to **£9,999', to £1,000,000** or more'.
- **28%** of organisations incomes were in the range **'£100,000 to £499,999'**, the highest proportion.

---

[7] (November 2000), 'The Contribution of the Voluntary and Community Sector to the Economic Life of the North East region, VONNE
[8] ibid

- **21%** of organisations had income in the **'£9,999 or below'** range with **7%** in the **'£1,000,000 or over'** range.
- **different sources of funding**

We asked organisations to define the main types of funding they received and say who provide that funding.

- **43%** of organisations stated that one of their main types of funding was from **'donations and gifts'**, with **41%** stating **'fund-raising'**.
- Of those organisations accepting 'contribution-in-kind' **over half** are provided with accommodation to run their organisation.
- Over **40%** of organisations mentioned **'individuals'** as one of their main sources of funding.

2.1.2 Summary Qualitative data

Three diversity themes emerged from qualitative answers to the questionnaire and from the focus groups. Organisations wanted to:
- diversify income sources
- attract a more diverse group of volunteers (especially more young people, particularly as trustees)
- work more effectively by networking with other organisations to share information and deliver services effectively.

Additionally, organisations had a sense of straddling two worlds: the 'official' world of statutory organisations such as local authorities and funders and the world of their beneficiaries whose views they felt were often left unheard.

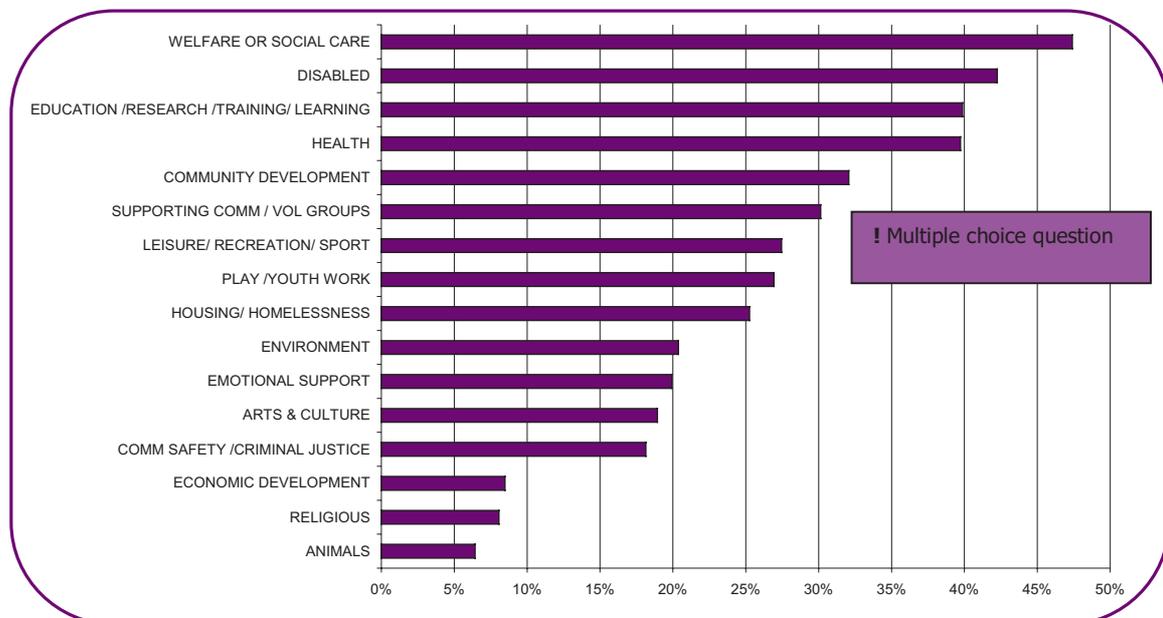### 2.1.3 Quantitative data

Figure 1.1 Type of organisation
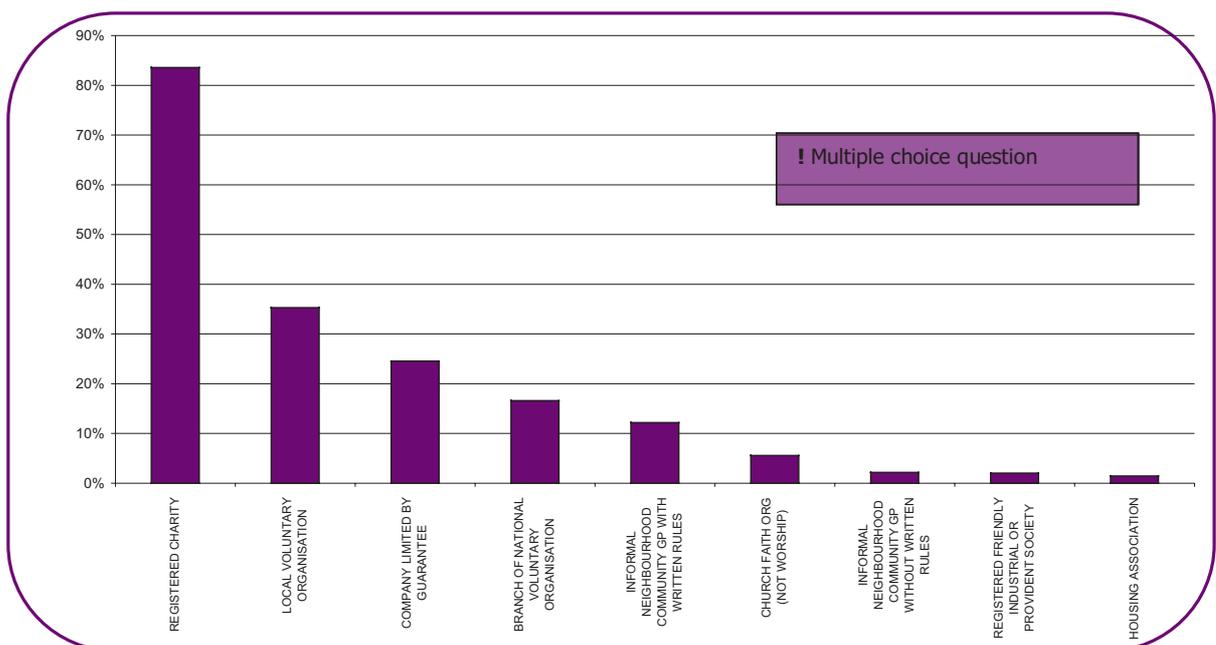
Key Facts

We asked organisations to define themselves by type. We offered, in addition to 'Other', 9 options including 'Registered charity' and 'Housing association'. All options were taken up. 'Registered charity' was most common, at 84%. 'Housing Association' was the least common. Where organisations felt that the options provided in the survey did not describe the type of organisation they were, they chose the option of 'other' and specified their type. 8% of organisations did so but the types of organisation specified were so diverse that they are not represented graphically.

- This was a multiple choice question so option percentages did not total 100. Many organisations were able to choose more than one option. For example many registered charities are also companies limited by guarantee and so chose both categories.
- Given that larger organisations were more likely to respond to the survey (please see section 2), the ratio of formal organisations (registered charities, companies limited by guarantee etc.) to informal organisations was almost certainly disproportionately high. Despite this, 14% of the responses did come from informal groups.

We are particularly grateful to the informal neighbourhood groups who completed the questionnaire. Although they made up some 14% of organisations replying, in the circumstances surprisingly high, more work is clearly needed in accessing, reflecting and supporting them.

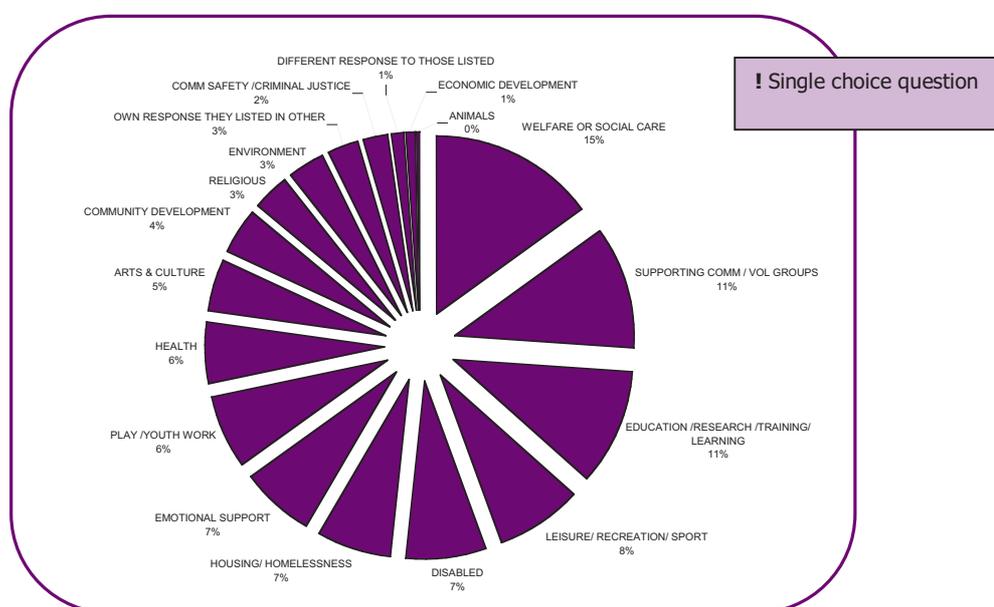*Figure 1.2 Areas of work the organisation is involved in*

Figure 1.3 Most important area of work the organisation is involved in

In figure 1.2, 32% of organisations said they undertook community development, but in figure 1.3 only 3% said it was their *most important* area of work. This, coupled with how many organisations chose 3 or more options at 1.2, showed how many organisations might indeed be providing 'joined up services' and, whatever their core work, adding value that supports community development. In this sense, they were indeed a *Hidden Asset*.

Figure 1.4 Main services provided by voluntary and community organisations
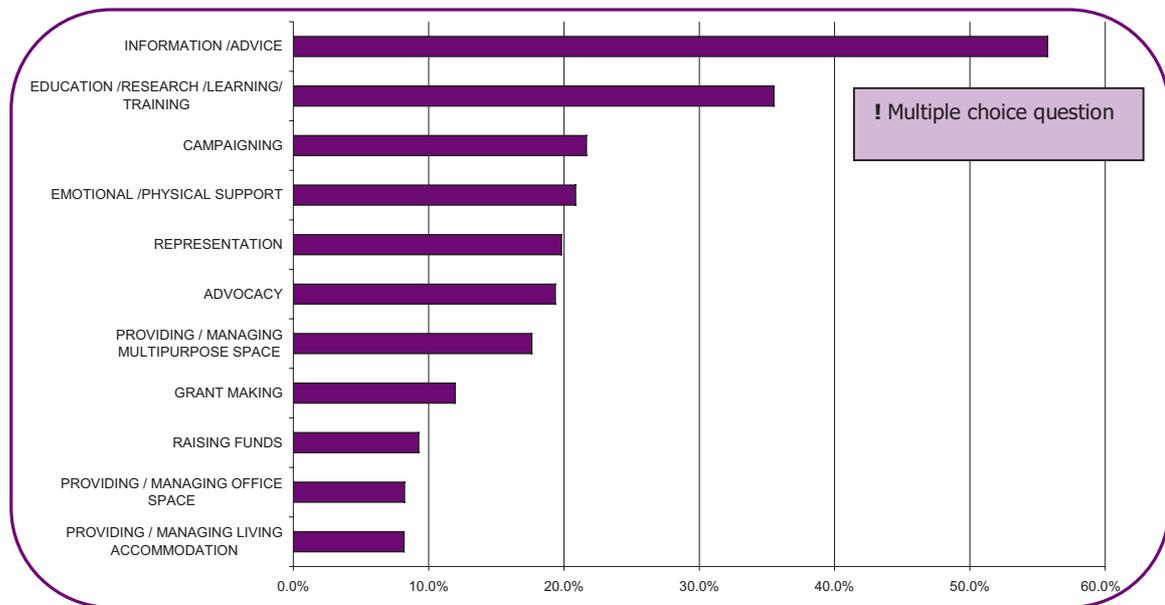
Key Facts

Having established organisations' work areas, and which area was most important to them, we wanted to find out what main specific services organisations provided within those work areas. We offered, in addition to 'Other', 11 options for organisations to choose between. Options ranged from 'Information or advice' to 'Providing or managing living accommodation'. 56% of organisations stated that one of their main services was 'Information or Advice', by far the largest response. This may mean giving out information, advice, guidance, counselling *or* emotional/physical support. Apart from this, 'Education/research/learning/training' was the only option to have more than 30% of organisations regarding it as a main service.

Not included in the diagram is 'Other'. 32% of organisations chose 'Other' as a response, referring to a hugely diverse range of main services including 'Behaviour modification', 'Fund-raising', 'Leisure activities', 'Transport', 'Volunteers' and 'Youth work'. The diversity was such that it is not represented graphically.

The 11 options provided clearly were not enough; this was the question where organisations most commonly entered a response in 'Other', bringing out most clearly the diversity of the voluntary/community sector's work.

Figure 1.5 Beneficiaries of the services provided by the organisation

Chart data (approximate percentages):

Beneficiary group	Percentage
OLDER PEOPLE	46%
YOUNG PEOPLE 16 TO 24 YEARS OLD	33%
FAMILIES	32%
PHYSICALLY / SENSORY IMPAIRED	29%
MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES	29%
CHILDREN 5 TO 15 YEARS OLD	28%
WOMEN	26%
LEARNING DIFFICULTIES	25%
NO ONE SPECIFIC GROUP	24%
UNEMPLOYED	22%
CHILDREN UNDER 5 YEARS OLD	21%
CARERS	21%
ETHNIC MINORITIES	21%
HOMELESS/ POORLY HOUSED	15%

! Multiple choice question

Key Facts

We asked organisations to say which groups were the main beneficiaries of their services. We offered, in addition to 'Other', 14 options, from 'Older people' to 'Homeless and poorly housed'. 'Older people' was by far the most popular, with 46% of organisations choosing this option. 'Homeless/poorly housed' was the least popular. 16% of organisations entered a response in 'Other'.

- Organisations working with older people might have opted for that but, if they worked with Alzheimer's, have opted for 'Mental health issues' too.
- 16% of responding organisations chose 'Other', many giving information suggesting the beneficiaries they had in mind were a subset of beneficiaries already chosen. 'Other' is not represented graphically.

Almost a quarter of organisations said their beneficiaries came from 'no one specific group'. Those organisations may focus on the specific service or services they provide (to all types of beneficiaries) whereas other organisations focus on providing joined up services to specific types of beneficiaries, perhaps those coming from a particular locality or community of interest. These different focuses form another part of the voluntary/community sector's diversity.

Figure 1.6 Single client group which uses the organisation's services the most
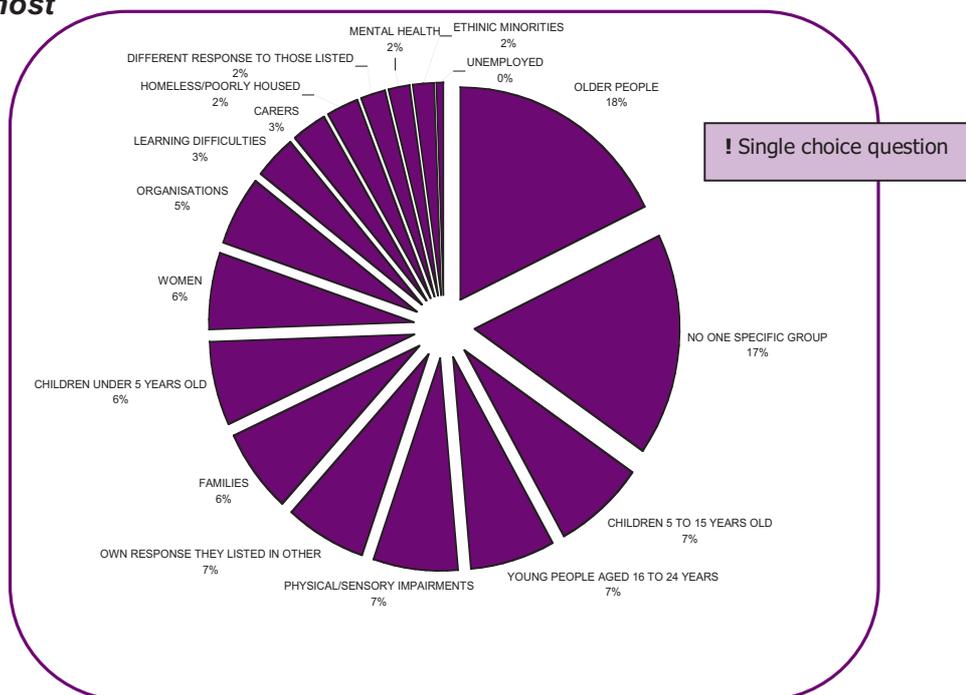
Key Facts

Having established which main beneficiary groups organisations worked with, we wanted to identify the single client group that used their services most. We offered 17 options, in addition to 'Other'. 'Older people' was again the most common (18% as opposed to 46% in figure 1.5). Many responding organisations were reluctant to identify a main client group, 17% effectively saying they had no beneficiary group they worked with more than any other.

- 7% of respondents listed their own response in 'Other'. Examining their comments and making some assumptions, we redistributed these responses as far as possible. This led to the creation of a new option: 'Organisations'. The 5% then put into this option is probably smaller than would have been the case had 'Organisations' been an original option.
- This was a single choice question so option percentages total 100. A responding organisation was only able to pick one option.

- Almost one fifth of organisations were reluctant to identify a main client group. Such reluctance is to be expected in organisations focusing on the specific service or services they provide rather than on a type or types of beneficiaries. It is interesting that 'Older people' was the single client group most commonly identified. This may correlate with an arguably disproportionate preponderance of older volunteers (see **1.11** below). It also suggests that the voluntary/community sector may be well placed to address demographic change (producing a higher percentage of older people in the population as a whole) and to fill gaps in statutory provision.

Figure 1.7 Total number of beneficiaries of the organisation's services in the past year compared with the North Yorkshire Forum's[9] study (2000)
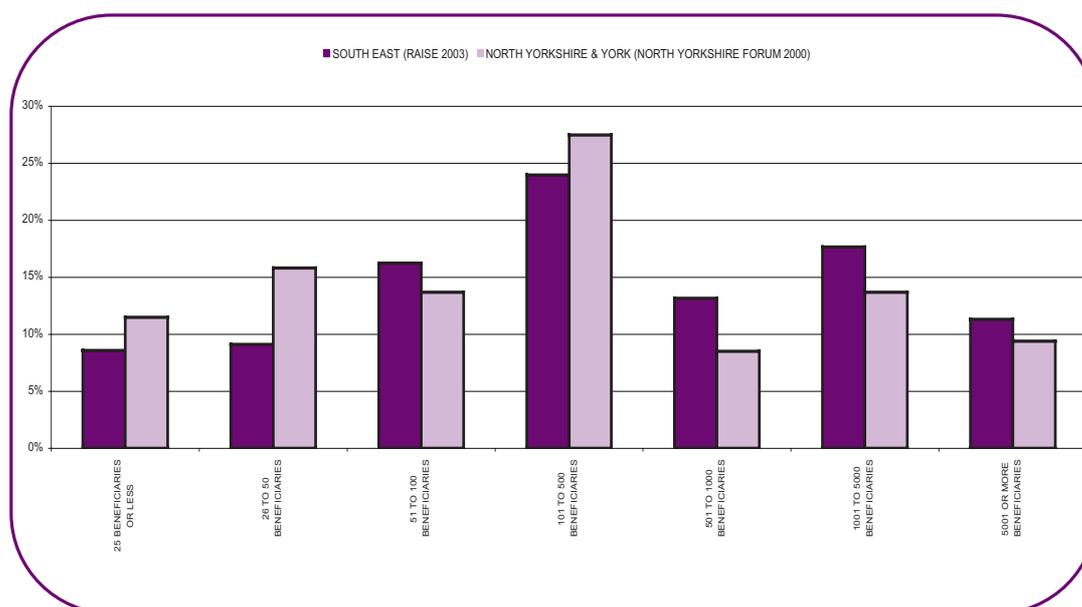
Key Facts

We asked organisations to estimate the total number of beneficiaries they had engaged with in the last year. Their responses were placed into options ranging from '25 or less' to '5,001 or more'. The largest percentage of organisations responding (24%) fall into the '101 to 500' number of beneficiaries category, but 11% of organisations responding opted for '5,001 or more'. When compared to the results of the Yorkshire study, it is noticeable that, a greater proportion of organisations in the South East appears to deliver to large numbers of beneficiaries.

Organisations were asked to estimate the total number of users / clients / members who used their service in the last financial year. We then placed the estimates into ranges ('25 or less' etc.) to allow easier analysis and comparison with the North Yorkshire study.

There was a clear relationship between the RAISE and the North Yorkshire results, both sets showing a predominantly normal distribution, where the results rise to a peak (at '101 to 500') and then fall away again. Intriguingly, however, both sets of results show a lower percentage at '5,001 to 1,000' than normal distribution might have led us to expect.

[9] Dowson, Burden, Hamm & Petrie (2000), 'Valuing the voluntary and community sector in North Yorkshire and York', North Yorkshire Forum for Voluntary Organisations

Figure 1.8 Number of years organisation has been established Compared with the North East VONNE study[10] (2000)
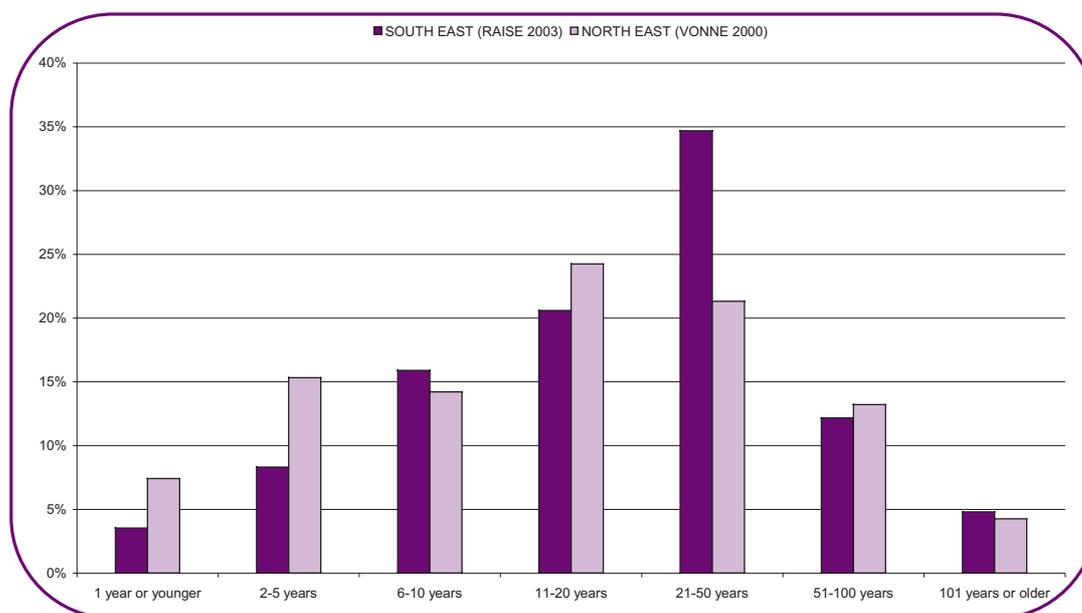
Key Facts

We asked responding organisations to tell us when they were established. Their responses were placed into options for the number of years they had been established ranging from 'one year or less' to '101 years or more'. The largest percentage of organisations responding (35%) opted for '21 to 50'. We then compared the answers with those in a survey conducted by VONNE, RAISE's equivalent in England's North East Region.

- It is tempting to see the table as reflecting historical periods when voluntary/community organisations are most or least likely to be set up. This is misleading for two reasons. First, the table may well overestimate the current percentage overall of older organisations; such organisations are arguably more likely than newer organisations to have grown, growth making it easier for them to complete the questionnaire. Second, the table will underestimate the number of voluntary/community organisations set up say '101 or more years ago.' Many of those organisations will no longer exist. Unlike public sector organisations that have to exist by law, voluntary/community organisations are subject to the market place in the sense that they die when there is no need for their services and/or no resources (volunteers and/or funding) to keep them going. In reality, the table probably overestimates the percentage of current organisations established 21-50 years ago, organisations not yet 'past their sell-by date' but now large enough for completing the questionnaire to be (comparatively) easy.

---

[10] (November 2000), 'The Contribution of the Voluntary and Community Sector to the Economic Life of the North East region', VONNE

The most popular option – '21 – 50 years' – coincides with a period from the end of the Second World War and the acceleration of the welfare state to the beginnings of Mrs Thatcher's first government – a period sometimes seen as least favourable to the establishment of voluntary/community organisations. This underlines the dangers of seeing the table as reflecting historical periods when voluntary/community organisations are most or least likely to be set up. Perhaps the table has two key strengths. First, it suggests voluntary/community sector 'churn', the sector as a whole surviving by helping meet fundamental needs while individual organisations come and go for more superficial reasons. Second, the table reminds us of the sector's longevity when compared with RAISE or any of our regional partners. Some 5% of responding organisations were established more than a hundred years ago.

Figure 1.9: Average number of trustees/management board members and hours worked by area of work

Main activity type	Average number of trustees		Average hours per trustee per year	
	Average	Ratio m : f	Average	Ratio m : f
Education /research/ training/ learning	6	1:1	107	1:1
Religious	7	1:1	86	3:1
Leisure /recreation /sport	9	1:1	80	1:1
Play /youth work	7	1:1	74	1:2
Emotional / physical support	8	1:1	74	1:1
Welfare or social care	9	1:1	67	1:1
Environment & animals	11	2:1	69	1:1
Health	9	1:1	65	1:1
Housing homelessness	9	1:1	57	1:1
Economic & community development	10	1:1	56	1:1
Supporting community / voluntary groups	13	1:1	55	1:1
Disabled	9	1:1	49	1:1
Arts and culture	11	1:1	47	1:1
Other	10	1:1	54	1:1
Total	9	1:1	**62**	1:1

Key Facts

In the introduction, section 1.**2**, we said voluntary/community organisations, for RAISE, meet three criteria, one of which was that they were *controlled* by volunteers (so their directors / trustees / management board were not paid). We asked responding organisations about their 'unpaid controllers' (here called 'trustees'): how many there were, the ratio of men to women and the number of hours worked. We discovered that, within responding organisations, there were on average 9 trustees, there were approximately the same number of male as female trustees and that trustees worked on average 62 hours each year for their organisations.

In figure 1.9 our findings have been divided into the main activity of the responding organisations. This table shows:

- There are twice as many male as female trustees working in the 'Environment and animals' activity
- Male trustees work slightly more hours than female trustees on average, the discrepancy being most noticeable in 'Religious' activity. Female trustees worked appreciably more hours in 'Play/youth work.

We did not ask about the ethnicity or age profile of trustees, age being a concern highlighted in the qualitative data below. It is unclear whether the average 62 hours per year were worked by trustees *in their controlling capacity only* or included time they spent working for their organisations in a more general volunteer capacity.

Figure 1.10 Average number of volunteers per organisation, hours worked and ratio of male to females

Main activity type	Average hours per volunteer per year		Average hours per volunteer per year	
	Average	Ratio m:f	Average	Ratio m:f
Supporting community / voluntary groups	16.7	1:1	187	1:1
Religious	9.8	1:1	182	1:1
Disability	21.6	1:2	135	1:1
Leisure/ recreation/ sport	7.3	1:1	106	1:1
Welfare or social care	21.1	1:2	92	1:1
Play/youth work	26.4	1:2	88	1:3
Environment & animals	16.3	2:1	66	1:1
Education / research / training /learning	33.4	1:2	60	1:1
Emotional / physical support	61.7	1:3	48	1:1
Health	16.1	1:3	47	1:1
Arts & culture	7.2	1:1	39	1:1
Economic & community development	8.8	1:1	33	1:1
Housing / homelessness	5.5	1:3	33	1:2
Other	22.4	1:2	226	1:1
Total	**21.0**	**1:2**	**115**	**1:1**

Key Facts

Having asked organisations about their trustees, we asked them about volunteers in general: how many there were, the ratio of men to women and the number of hours worked. We discovered that, within responding organisations:

- There were on average 21 volunteers per organisation equating to approximately 1 in 11 people in the South East population who volunteer, i.e. just over 726,000 volunteers.
- There were approximately twice as many female as male volunteers
- On average, each volunteer worked 115 hours per year
- Male volunteers on average worked slightly more hours than women
- The gender ratio and average hours worked varied significantly by activity.

Figure **1.10** shows the averages while dividing the findings into the main activity of the responding organisations. The table shows that as with trustees above, there were twice as many male as female volunteers in 'Environment and animals' activities, but there were three times as many female as male volunteers in 'Emotional/physical support' and 'Health' activities.

It is interesting to compare the gender balance of trustees (figure **1.9**) with the gender balance of volunteers. With the exception of activity 'Environment and animals', where the 2:1 prevalence of men to women volunteers was matched by a 2:1 prevalence of men to women trustees, there seemed a disproportionate number of male trustees. This is perhaps part of a wider picture in which trustees are unrepresentative of volunteers generally. It may also reflect a gender division of skills or experience in the wider economy.

Figure 1.11 Distribution of numbers of volunteers and hours worked by age cohort

Main activity type	16-24 years old %	25-49 years old %	50-64 years old %	65 years and over %	Total %
Distribution of volunteers	23	21	32	24	100
Distribution of hours worked	24	24	26	26	100
Number of volunteers as percentage of the total population in their age group	20	5	16	14	100

Key Facts

Having asked about volunteers generally and gender balance, we asked about the age ranges of volunteers and compared that with age ranges of the population generally. We asked responding organisations to put their volunteers into one of four age cohorts: '16-24', '25-49', '50-64' and '65 and over.' Broadly, we found:

- Volunteers were spread evenly across the four age cohorts with about a quarter in each (although 32% of volunteers were 50 -64). However, the cohort sizes were not equal.
- By comparison with the total in the age cohort across the population generally, there were significant numbers of 16-24 year old volunteers and significantly fewer '25-49' year old volunteers.
- Qualitative data suggested it was difficult to find younger trustees yet 16-24 year olds volunteered more frequently than other age cohorts did. This again suggested trustees were not always representative of volunteers as a whole. To an extent perhaps they should not be; controlling an organisation may require professional skills – such as accountancy - younger people may not have.
- 25-49 year olds tend to be preoccupied with building careers and families and it is no surprise they volunteer less frequently than other age cohorts. A fear however is that they lose the 'volunteering habit' and do not 'rejoin' when they reach the '50-64' cohort. They may of course keep in touch with voluntary/community organisations as beneficiaries and / or donors. Additionally, employers may support staff volunteering and voluntary/community organisations may 'keep the cohort warm' with newsletters and family friendly events.
- In figure 1.6 above, we noted that 'older people' was the single client group most commonly identified (18%) and suggested a possible correlation between that and an arguably disproportionate preponderance of older volunteers.

Interestingly, if you add up percentages in figure **1.6** for children under 5, children between 5 and 15 and young people between 16 and 24, you arrive at 24% for a 'new' client group of 'children and young people'. This would make it by far the most commonly identified client group. That, coupled with 18% for 'older people', suggests that, insofar as it focuses on beneficiaries rather than services, the voluntary/community sector operates at either end of the age range, with younger people and older people. Again there is a possible correlation between that and an arguably disproportionate lack of volunteers in the middle of the age range. Nevertheless, volunteers have significant representation in all age cohorts, another example of the sector's diversity and one of the reasons it is well placed to understand beneficiaries and build social cohesion.

Figure 1.12: Average number of paid staff per organisation and the ratio between paid and voluntary staff

| Main activity type	Average number of paid staff	Ratio Paid:volunteer
Economic & Community development	23.6	3:1
Housing / homelessness	18.7	3:1
Welfare or social care	13.7	1:2
Supporting community / voluntary groups	10.8	1:2
Disability	9.3	1:2
Other	9.2	1:2
Emotional / physical support	7.3	1:8
Education / research / training / learning	6.5	1:5
Arts & culture	4.7	1:2
Play / youth work	2.8	1:9
Health	2.4	1:7
Religious	2.0	1:5
Environment & animals	1.8	1:9
Leisure / recreation / sport	0.9	1:8
Total	**8.9**	**1:2**

Key Facts

Having asked about trustees and volunteers generally, we asked responding organisations about paid staff. We discovered each responding organisation had on average 9 members of staff which translates into an estimated 307,000 paid staff working in the sector, approximately 6% of the South East workforce. When the findings were considered by the main activity of responding organisations they showed significant variations, from 'Economic and community development' (an average of 23.6 staff) to 'Leisure/recreation/sport' (0.9). In almost all areas, there were less paid staff than volunteers, with the exception of those mainly involved with 'Economic and community development' or 'Housing and homelessness'.

The average of 9 members of paid staff per organisation appears high and may be due to the fact that large, formal organisations with paid staff were more likely to complete the questionnaire than other types of voluntary/community organisations.

Whilst the level of paid staff within the sector appeared high, the reliance on volunteers was much apparent. Overall, there were two volunteers for every paid member of staff. This mix of paid and unpaid workers was another source of the sector's diversity and one of the key features distinguishing it from the statutory and private sectors.

Why are some types of organisation able to attract a higher proportion of volunteers to paid staff? To what extent is it caused by the type of voluntary and community work it undertakes and if not, are there any lessons that can be learned from organisations in these areas?

*Figure 1.13 Total income by percentage of organisations*
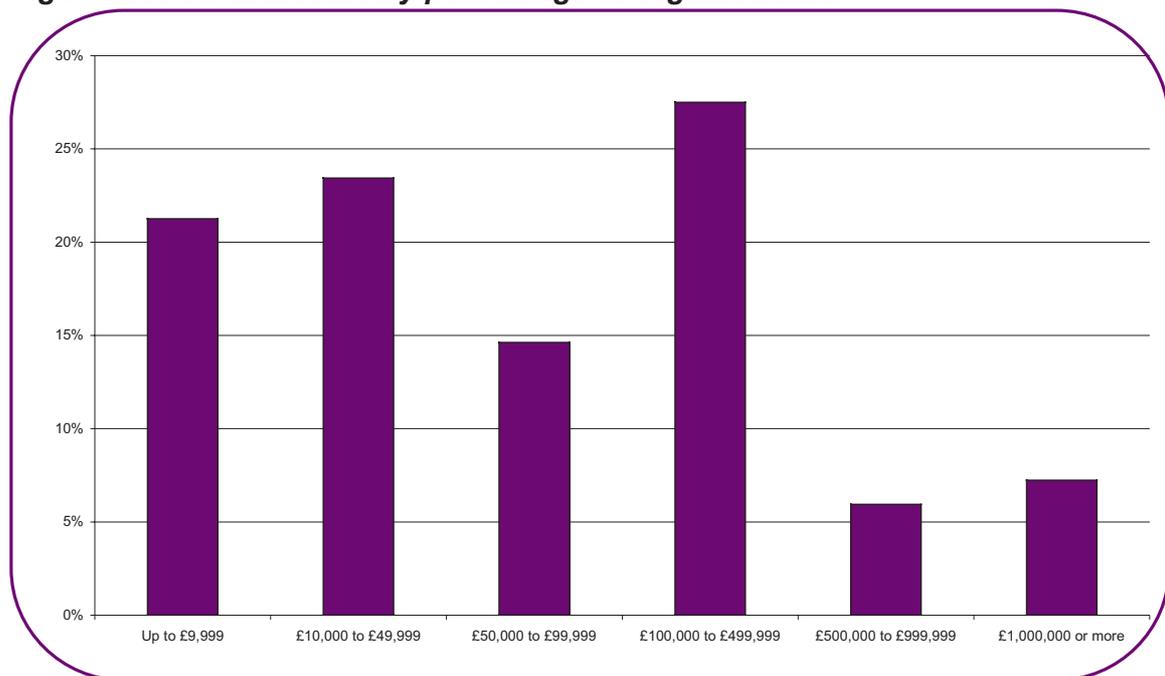
Key Facts

Having looked at the diversity of voluntary/community organisations in terms of numbers of volunteers and paid staff, we looked at their diversity in terms of total income. The responses were placed in options ranging from 'Up to £9,999' to '£1 million or more'. The largest percentage of organisations responding (28%) was in the range '£100,000 to £499,999' although there was a smaller peak at '£10,000 to £49,999' (23%). There was also a significant proportion (21%) whose income was £9,999 or below.

- Given that larger organisations were more likely to respond to the survey, it is likely that the proportion of organisations in the higher income ranges was over-estimated. This assumes that larger and more formal organisations are likely to have greater incomes than other voluntary and community organisations.
- Organisations were asked to estimate the total income from the past financial year. The estimates were then placed into ranges ('Up to £9,999' etc.) to allow clearer analysis.

'The Role of the Voluntary and Community Sector in Service Delivery, a Cross Cutting Review" (HM Treasury September 2002) speaks of 'a diverse [national] sector with a large number of small organisations but dominated, in funding terms, by a subset of large organisations'[9]. That seems very true of the South East where the total income of the lowest earning organisations (those in band '£9,999 or under') was only 0.3% of the total income of the highest earning organisations (those in band '£1 million or more'). It makes policy development around funding the whole sector very difficult.

Figure 1.14 Main type of funding sources
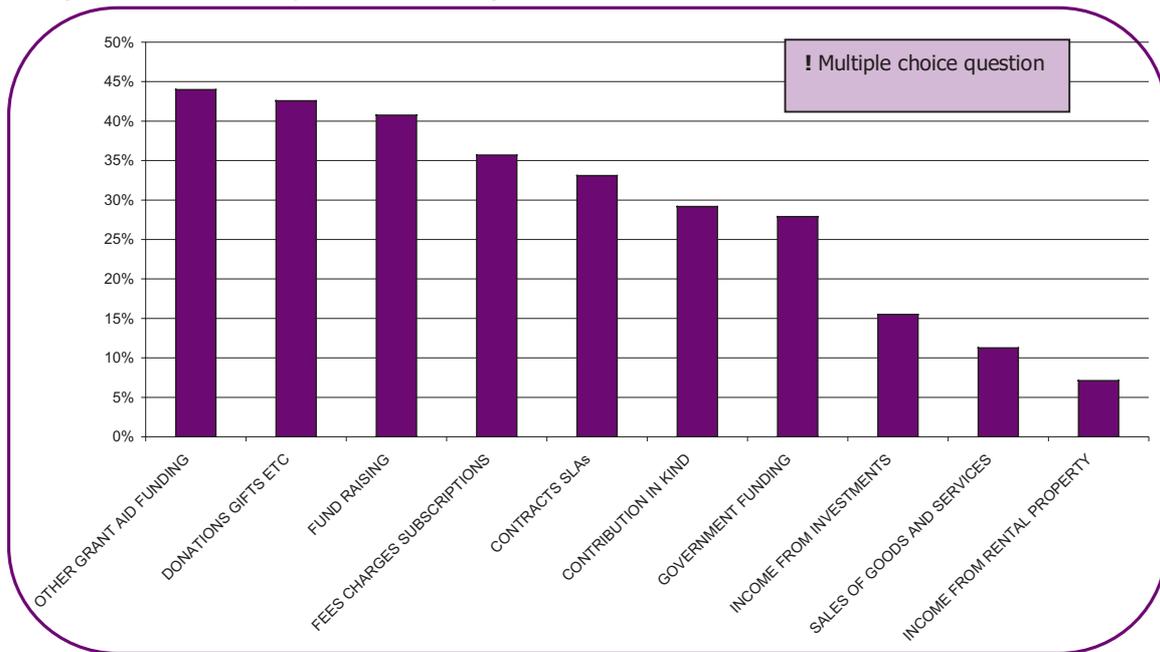
Key Facts

We asked organisations to define the main types of funding they received. We offered 10 options including 'Donations, gifts etc.' and 'Contracts and Service Level Agreements (SLAs)'. The most popular option was 'Other grant aid funding' (44% of responding organisations went for that) with 'Donations, gifts etc.' close behind with 43%. The least common option was 'Income from rental property' (6%).

It is important to understand that this table shows neither where different types of funding come from nor what the most financially significant sources of funding for individual organisations were. 'Other grant aid funding' was the type of funding most frequently mentioned by responding organisations. It may or may not be the most financially important source of funding of responding organisations. It is highly unlikely to be the only type of funding any responding organisation received.

---

[9] p.9, HM Treasury (2002), 'The Role of the Voluntary and Community Sector in Service Delivery: A Cross Cutting Review'.

36% of organisations received funding from fees / charges / subscriptions, 34% from delivering contracts, 11% from the sales of goods and services and 7% income from rental property. We do not know how significant this earned income was to individual organisations. The larger organisations were more likely to respond to the questionnaire, and are more likely to have received it than smaller, community organisations. Nevertheless, the image of a sector passively awaiting handouts is belied by frequent references to 'enterprise funding.'

Figure 1.15 Type of contribution-in-kind
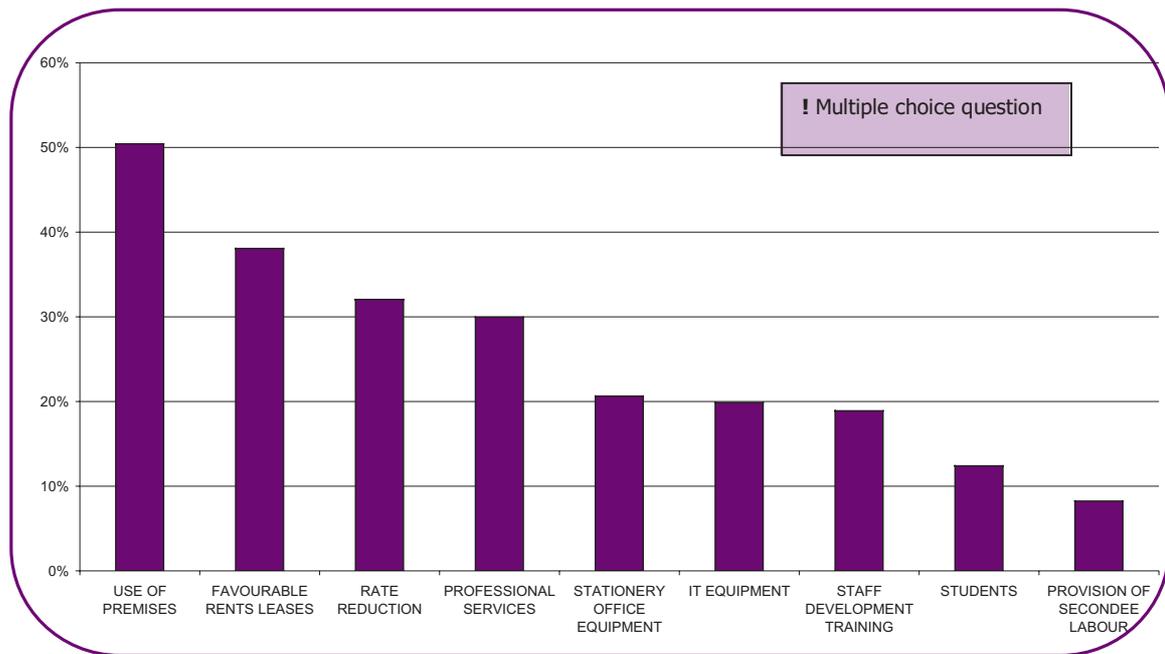
Key Facts

One of the options given in figure 1.14 was 'contribution-in-kind'. Given the number of different non-monetary contributions that can be made, we asked organisations to specify what type of contribution-in-kind they received. There were 9 options ranging from 'Use of premises' to 'The provision of secondee labour'. Of those accepting 'contribution-in-kind' over half the respondents were provided with accommodation.

- The only organisations that responded to this question were those who stated that one of their main types of funding was 'contribution-in-kind' (29% of all organisations).

Almost a third of organisations received 'contribution-in-kind' and the top three areas of aid all related to premises: through free use of a building, favourable rents or a reduction in rates. Given the importance of premises to voluntary/community organisations (see **2.2**) 'contribution-in-kind' is a vital part of the diverse economic support keeping the sector alive.

Figure 1.16 Who provides the voluntary/community sector's main sources of funding

Chart categories (top to bottom):
INDIVIDUALS, DISTRICT COUNCILS, COUNTY COUNCILS, CHARITABLE TRUSTS, UNITARY AUTHORITIES, OTHER VOLUNTARY/ COMMUNITY SECTOR ORGS, CENTRAL GOVERNMENT, HEALTH EG NHS PCT PCG, COMMUNITY FUND, PARISH COUNCILS, BUSINESSES, REGIONAL ORGS EG SEEDA, NEW OPPORTUNITIES FUND, EUROPEAN SOURCES, REGENERATION FUNDING NES, AWARDS FOR ALL, ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND, HERITAGE LOTTERY FUND, MILLENNIUM COMMISSION, SPORT ENGLAND

! Multiple choice question

Key Facts

Having asked what type of funding organisations received, we went on to ask about funding sources. 20 options were available for organisations to choose from, organisations commonly choosing 1 or 2 options. Perhaps surprisingly, the main source of funding most cited was 'Individuals' (40%). 'District councils', 'County councils' and 'Charitable trusts' all came in at between 25% and 30%. Unsurprisingly, the lowest percentages were 'scored' by funders with very specific remits such as 'Sport England'.

- 31% of organisations, many of whom went for additional options too, opted for 'Other' and provided additional information including 'Investments', 'Quangos' 'Sales and 'Hire of halls'. The additional information was too diverse to be represented graphically

The main funding sources most frequently mentioned were not necessarily, of course, the sources which make the biggest financial contribution to the voluntary/community sector overall. Nevertheless, three points in particular seem worth noting:
- The percentage 'score' for 'Individuals' was surprisingly high (40%), the percentage for 'Regional bodies e.g. SEEDA' surprisingly low (7%)
- Relying on 'Individuals' as a main source of funding may well make it incredibly hard for voluntary/community organisations to plan and to recruit and retain staff and volunteers.

The 'Unitary authorities' score (16%) was appreciably lower than the score for 'District councils' (29%) and 'County councils' (28%).

29

- The 'Business' score (9%) is a useful benchmark in mapping Corporate Social Responsibility. Businesses, and indeed local authorities, may of course provide 'Contribution-in –kind' (see 1.14 and 1.15 above) as well as funding.

- **2.1.4** Comments in the Questionnaire on special issues

Although comments were about individual organisations, they coalesced into sector-wide concerns about the lack of diversity in:
- sources of funding and
- the age and background of volunteers, particularly trustees.

Organisations wanted to:

- *identify '… other sources of funding'*

- *generate ' income as opposed to 100% relying on grants, donations etc'*

and to:

- *recruit younger trustees as they noted 'our trustees are very sweet and professional but are in the older age bracket'*

- *attract 'younger volunteers i.e. under 60 yrs'*

- *encourage 'younger people to join our group in order to have new and fresh faces which will keep the group going in the longer term'*

- *'reach groups and people not traditionally involved in volunteering'*

- *attract 'new younger trustees who are able to give more time, expertise to help'.*

2.1.5 Comments From the Focus Groups

These revealed concerns about the diversity of volunteers though not about the diversity of trustees and funding. The gender of volunteers did not emerge as an issue but age and ethnicity certainly did.

Age

Some voluntary/community organisations represented were pessimistic: *[We] would like more young people, although these seem to lack the necessary work experience…'*
Others had better experiences: a youth work organisation had attracted 13 to14 year olds and some 18 to 20 year olds who were volunteering full time. There was a feeling that young students were quite active in volunteering and that voluntary/community organisations in university towns were lucky in that respect. *'Students help a lot in East Oxfordshire.'*
One university paid costs for Criminal Record Bureau checks on behalf of voluntary/community organisations. Another provided a voluntary/community organisation with counselling work placements.
Generally, the focus groups felt that young people needed more awareness of volunteering, that they didn't realise that the sector could be a good pathway into work and that schools could help. A number of focus group attendees now

involved in the sector started volunteering as young people through youth clubs, churches, the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme and Scouts.

Ethnicity

Few focus group attendees working in the sector worked with non-white volunteers and there was a desire to attract hard to reach groups. One volunteer hoped to recruit black minority ethnic ('bme') students as volunteers at a university volunteer fair. One person said bme volunteers were hard to access because they were already acting as carers in self-sufficient communities.

2.1.6 Implications

The incredible diversity of the sector means that 'one size fits all' solutions will not work.' In particular, given the difficulty in accessing data about smaller, less formal groups, policy makers need to be careful 'solutions' are not driven by the needs of larger organisations alone. It is interesting that the qualitative data in **2.1** dovetails with the quantitative data about need in **2.3** below. Both the quantitative and qualitative evidence points to concerns about the disproportion of older trustees, for example. Additionally, **2.1** demonstrates the reliance of organisations on funding from individuals.

2.2 How Much of an Asset is the Voluntary / Community Sector?

'The Role of the Voluntary and Community Sector in Service Delivery, a Cross Cutting Review' (HM Treasury September 2002) explores the 'added value' of the sector. It says that, whereas academic research on the topic yields mixed results, voluntary/community organisations at their best may be better able [than organisations in the statutory and business sectors] to deliver 5 crucial features:

- specialist knowledge, experience and / or skills
- particular ways of involving people in service delivery whether as users or self-help / autonomous groups
- independence from existing and past structures / models of service
- access to the wider community without institutional baggage
- freedom and flexibility from institutional pressures.

There is a major piece of work to be done in the South East fleshing out the sector's added value and its ability to deliver the 5 'crucial features'. But, although *Hidden Asset* hints at the 'crucial features', in its qualitative data and in the context of the sector's diversity, the quantitative data in this part of the report is primarily about 'value', not 'added value'. The economic contribution of the voluntary/community sector is often ignored because this sector, like the statutory sector, has had difficulty defining 'output' in traditional, accounting terms. *Hidden Asset* seeks to address that by looking at the sector's contribution to the region's gross domestic product, to service delivery, as an employer of staff and volunteers, as a training provider and as a purchaser of goods and services.

2.2.1 Summary Quantitative Data

The voluntary/community sector is an asset to the South East in that:

It is a significant contributor to the region's GDP

- total contribution to GDP is estimated at £563.5 million per year, equating to **3.4%** of the regional GDP when converted into market prices.
- A third of the sector's GDP contribution comes from Housing/homelessness' and 'Social care'.
- An estimated **£932 million worth of labour is contributed by volunteers.**

It is a significant contributor of a range of services.

It is a significant employer of staff and volunteers, a significant trainer of its own staff, of volunteers and of beneficiaries.

- **36% of organisations** stated that one of the **main services** they provide was **education, research, learning or training**
- 69% of voluntary /community organisations said they provided training of some sort; of those **84% said they provided training for volunteers.**
- **81% provided training for paid staff**; 67% provided training for trustees
- Organisations' annual training budgets ranged from '£1 to £500' to '£10,000 or above'.

- Of those organisations providing figures, the most frequently mentioned training budgets were £1,001-£2,000' and £2,001 to £5,000'.
- Over half of the voluntary and community sector's budget is spent on staff and core services (36% and 26% respectively)
- 75% of the total spend goes within organisations' local areas with an additional 21% being spent within the South East.

2.2.2 Summary Qualitative Data

Two principal asset themes emerged from the focus groups:
- Volunteering was seen to be a way of building the skills and experience of individuals so they could move into paid employment if they chose.
- More generally, volunteering was seen as a way of building social capital by linking individuals to their communities and giving them some influence in those communities.

2.2.3 Quantitative Data

*Figure 2.1 Share of regional GDP by each area of work*
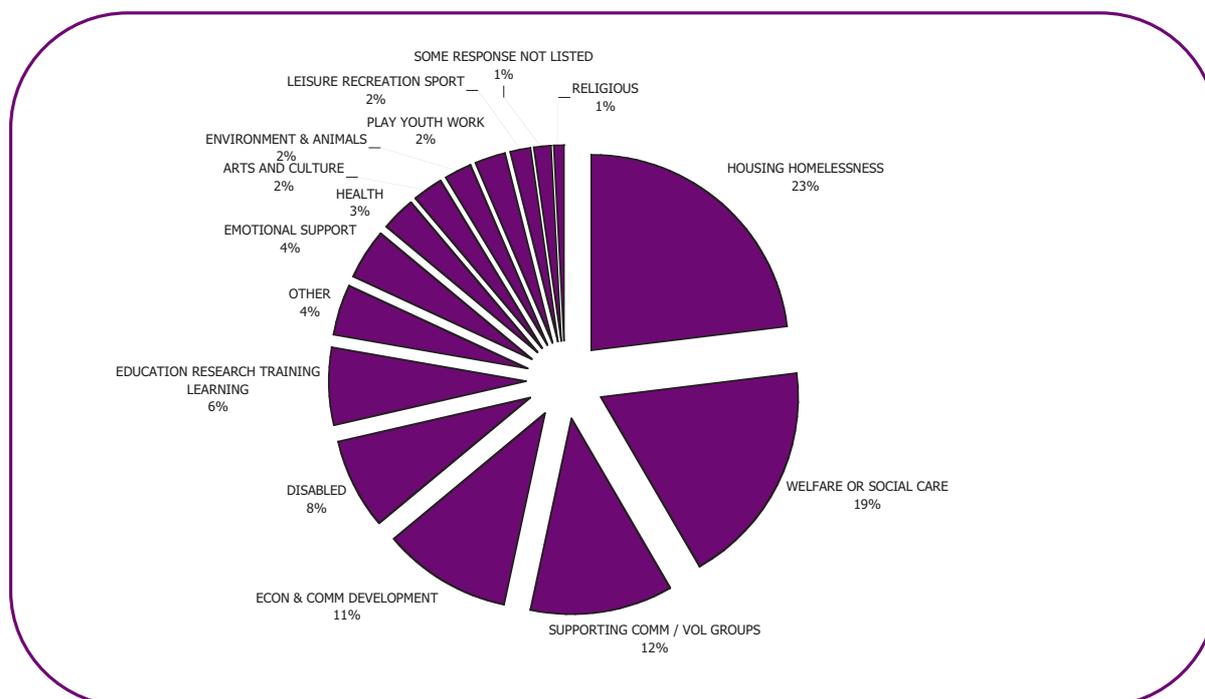
Key Facts

Using information provided by organisations on their most important area of work, their staff numbers (both paid and voluntary) and total salaries we were able to calculate a figure for GDP. Using the approach underlined in appendix 3, the sector was estimated to be worth a little over £4.5 billion. £3.6 billion of this was down to paid staff ('Housing / homelessness' and 'Welfare & social care' between them accounting for over a third of this). Volunteers were estimated to contribute a further £932 million, the resulting total (£4.5 billion), equating to 3.4% of regional GDP.

- The contribution of the sector was calculated using the salaries of paid staff by each area of work. The wages for each area were multiplied by hours worked in that area, resulting totals being aggregated to get a sector wide total for paid staff. Volunteers' contributions were calculated in the same way using an equivalent pro rata market wage rate. For more detail, please see Appendix 3.
- The contribution from volunteers is, of course, notional.
- Where organisations have not specified their most important area of work, their value has been redistributed amongst the other categories using the multiple responses they had provided for main areas of work. A point was allocated to each area chosen from the multiple choices, these points were totalled for each area and these totals were used to proportion out the total GDP of those who did not specify a single category. For example, if 'welfare and social care' was selected by all of the organisations as one of their multiple choice responses, this was allocated a greater proportion of their GDP than if 'environment and animals' had been chosen by only two organisations as one of their responses.

The estimated 3.4% contribution to GDP indicates how important an economic asset the sector is to the region. The percentage compares well with that for other major service industries including public administration and defence (5% in the region) and health and social work (6%) (ONS 2003, estimates for 2000[1]).

Figure 2.2 Amount of training budget (broken down into bands)

<div style="background-color:#E6CCE6; padding:10px;">
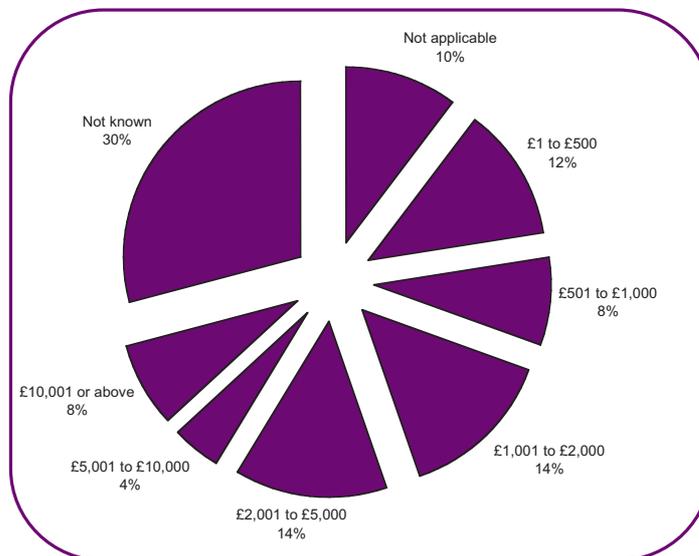
Key Facts

We asked organisations if they provided training. 69% (not represented graphically) said yes. We then asked the 69% the size of their annual training budget, placing responses into 'bands' ranging from '£1 to £500' to '£10,001 or above'. Most budgets (28%) fell into the range £1,001 to £5,000. 30% of the organisations providing training did not know their training budget. This may be due to their having no predetermined budget (training being bought as and when required) or to information being unavailable at the time. A further 10% of organisations said the question was not applicable to them. This may be because they had no predetermined training budget.
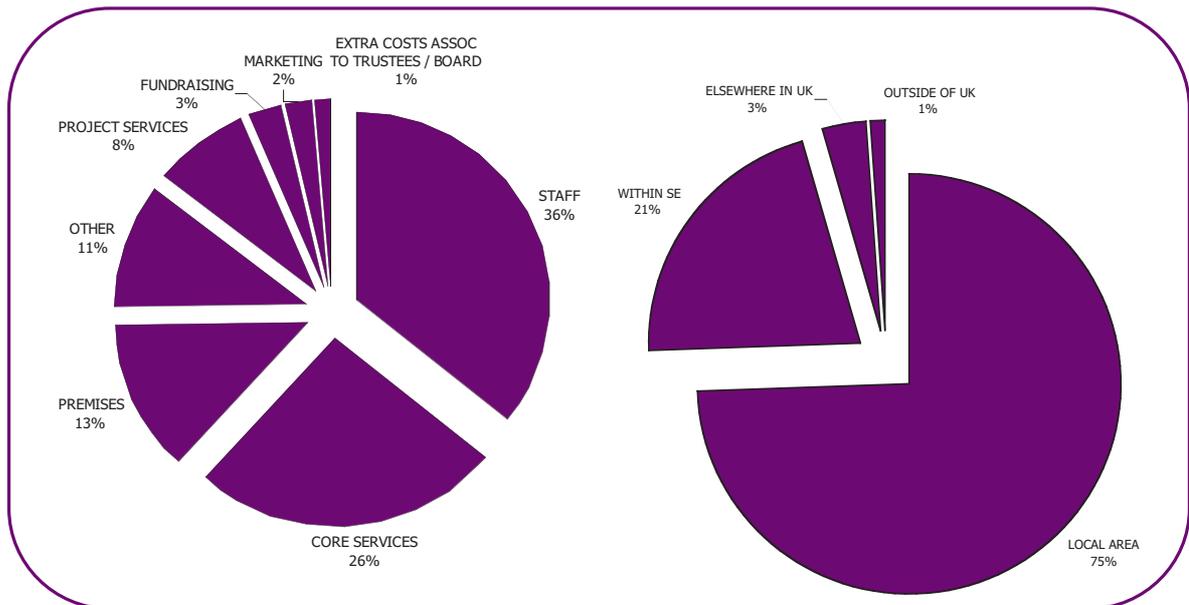
It is probably safe to assume that the 31% of organisations who said they did not provide training had no training budget.

Focus group discussions showed that almost all sector volunteers attending the focus groups felt two relevant things. First, that they had gained skills from their volunteering. Second, that training on the job and mentoring, although time-consuming, was a better way of building skills than formal training.

It may well be that such views were informed by and reinforced those of their organisations and that, in answering this part of the questionnaire, organisations took 'training' to mean 'formal training' and ignored their role in mentoring and training on the job. That would raise a number of interesting questions including:

</div>

Figure 2.3 Type and destination of expenditure

2.2.4 Summary Qualitative Data

Focus Groups

Volunteers in the sector who attended the focus groups explained what they gained from their volunteering. Some mentioned the social life and said volunteering was enjoyable and gave them something to do by linking them into their communities ('*had nothing to do, keeps the mind and body active*' '*…good for those with more time on their hands – the unemployed and elderly…help to build social capital … common interest'*…It's '*more important nowadays given an increase in the diversity of the community and a reduction in the role of the family.*' Some felt volunteering empowered them to improve their communities: '*…the kids would go to playgroup and come back smelling of damp. I went and saw how bad the village hall was. I sorted it out.*' ' *…you feel as if you are contributing to your world'.*

A common theme was volunteering as a way of building skills and experience. Almost all the volunteers who attended the focus groups felt they had gained skills from their volunteering. They mentioned skills including communication, team working, public speaking, leadership, interpersonal and social skills and specialist skills unique to a field of work. Some people volunteered specifically to improve their chances of moving into paid employment. One wanted '*to upgrade CV skills… it was a foot back in the door….*' Another had '*applied to lots (of jobs) and got rejected – needed experience'.* An ex teacher thought volunteering would help with a career change.

Significantly, focus group attendees thought working on the job and mentoring, although time-consuming, was a better way of building skills than formal training. Some older volunteers felt they were too old for formal training and there was a general impression that formal training could be expensive and time wasting: particularly if it was not accredited and could not be recognised elsewhere. Carefully tailored training delivered locally was however felt to have its place.

Some focus group attendees felt the trustees of voluntary/community organisations lacked knowledge and management skills and needed more support. They had legal responsibilities but did '*not know where to go for help'.*

The focus groups discussed improving the quality of formal training. Some attendees suggested networking organisations working in the same field with, presumably, similar training, information and support needs.

The focus groups discussed briefly how people could be persuaded to take up volunteering. Some attendees not involved in the sector were considering taking up volunteering but had not got round to it or did not know what was available in their area or how they could start. Some volunteers said they started purely as a way of socialising or because of leaflet drops.

2.2.5 Implications

So far as we know, this is the first report to focus on how important an economic asset to the region the South East's voluntary/community sector is RAISE's regional partners have, over the last 3 or more years, shared our growing awareness of the sector's potential to help act as the glue holding communities together, to reach and give a voice to people other sectors cannot reach and to help regenerate communities and improve services. Particularly in its quantitative data, this report touches on some of that potential: and on the potential, as an intermediate labour market, to help volunteers in particular, move into employment. The 'added value' is there, at least in part. But in this section in particular comes the 'value': the contribution to GDP, the delivery of diverse services, the role as trainer, the employment of significant numbers of staff and volunteers, the purchase *within the region* of significant goods and services. The implications for those seeking to understand the sector and its current contribution to the region are profound. We need to understand 'value' and 'added value', to support the sector based on its ability to deliver both and, in developing the sector and its ability to contribute to the region, to respect the complex interaction of 'value' and 'added value' and to share good practice between sectors in a way that expands 'value' without diminishing 'added value'.

2.3 What are the Needs of the Voluntary / Community Sector?

If we accept that the voluntary/community sector is an asset already making a significant contribution to the region in terms of both economic 'value' and 'added value', it is worth considering how that contribution could be increased by addressing the current and emerging needs of the sector. This report does that in two stages. First, using comments from the questionnaire and the focus groups, it explores seven main areas of current need. Second, using comments from the questionnaire about the future, it flags up those current needs which will be particularly significant in the future.

Seven main areas of current need

The questionnaire and the focus groups identified seven main areas of current need:
1. Funding
2. Appropriate and affordable premises
3. Appropriate trustees
4. Recruiting and retaining paid staff
5. Recruiting volunteers
6. Raising awareness of the sector and individual voluntary/community organisations
7. Provision of adequate training for staff, trustees and volunteers

2.3.1 Funding

This emerged as by far the most important area of current need. Organisations said much of the funding was project based. What they needed was funding for ongoing costs   related in particular to premises, staff and regulation. Stability around funding would stop the time-waste of endlessly chasing new funding streams and help them concentrate on core activities and plan. There was awareness that, to become financially sustainable, organisations needed guidance on alternatives to grant funding.

Questionnaire Evidence

Planning more than 12 months ahead is impossible '*because of uncertainty of funding'.*
'…a high percentage of time is spent on obtaining the money to do our core business.'
We *'always seem to chase for [funding] which takes one away from the real job.'*
We want ' *reliable… funding from local authority… obtained and monitored through … mutual respect.'*
We want to *'be free from financial constraints to concentrate on our role in the community.'*
We need to 'identify other sources of funding' …'g*enerate income as opposed to 100% relying on grants, donations etc.'*

Concerns raised from focus groups

There was overwhelming concern with the stability and sustainability of the sector and with the need for a sound financial base. That might not be helped by recent

initiatives including 'professionalising' the sector and involving it more in service delivery. Bureaucracy might increase causing volunteers to leave. The sector might shoulder more risk and become more accountable to those receiving services without itself receiving more support.

'… to deliver in quality we need stability.'

'Increasingly there is an emphasis towards greater professionalisation and demands…There needs to be direct support with clear channels and accountability…at the moment government is getting frontline services on the cheap which are exposed to risk.'.

'Government is killing two birds with one stone, it is the democratic ideal but is as much as you can get for nothing.'

2.3.2 Appropriate and affordable premises

We have already seen (see **2.1.3** above) how important premises are to voluntary/community organisations. Comments from the questionnaire underlined the current need for affordable and appropriate premises and raised associated issues including running costs and the need for refurbishment, modernisation and provision of facilities for people with disabilities.

We need 'premises - a place in the community for a 'drop in' facility that is safe, welcoming and supportive / accessible and includes storage space for equipment and office space.'

We need 'appropriate premises to accommodate service delivery, training, admin and disabled access.'

'We need storage and meeting premises - all presently done in management committee's own homes.'

We are 'sometimes working in cramped premises.'

Sometimes the problem was success: increased demand necessitated more space:

'We really need a bigger building space for number of elderly people attending the day centre, we know that more would come if the hall was larger.'

'Premises too small for demand to cater for under 5s.'

2.3.3 Trustees with appropriate skills

We have already seen (see **2.1.3** above) how trustees were a concern to voluntary/community organisations. Comments from the questionnaire underlined the current need to find trustees from a broad age with the time and the skills needed to take on this significant responsibility:

We need 'new younger trustees who are able to give more time, expertise to help scheme.'

The problem is 'recruiting younger trustees, our trustees are very sweet and professional but are in the older age bracket.'

We struggle with 'recruiting volunteers to serve as trustees all unpaid!'

It's hard 'finding suitable trustees - the people who understand our service are usually paid by us and therefore ineligible.'

'Where do we find the next Secretary, Chairman and Treasurer?'

'It is very hard to find volunteers to act as Chairman, Treasurer.'

2.3.4 Recruiting and retaining paid staff

This was seen as a serious current problem in survey comments. The South East's high cost of living, particularly the high cost of housing, made it hard for voluntary/community organisations to recruit and retrain staff when they were unable to match salaries paid in other sectors.

'Due to the low wages it can sometimes be difficult to keep staff … we all have bills to pay.'

It is hard to provide *'salaries matching housing costs in the area.'*

We struggle *'recruiting and retaining sufficient capable staff in a climate of cost reduction and house price inflation.'*

'Government infrastructure… entices staff from organisation (due to) large(r) salaries.'

The small staff teams common in voluntary / community organisations provided additional problems: promotion opportunities were limited, expertise was concentrated in a few people and losing one person had significant impact.

Staff retention suffers sometimes ' due to small size and limited scope for internal promotion.'

'Dealing with 'indispensable' staffing issues too dependent on one person!'

2.3.5 Recruiting volunteers

The survey comments and the focus groups both flagged this up as a significant current problem. Sometimes contracts depended on recruiting and retaining volunteers: so no volunteers, no money.

Survey Evidence

It's hard *'to continue to recruit sufficient volunteers from trustees to helpers and car drivers - without [them] … we could not function."*

The problem's *'recruiting voluntary help and support from body of parents.'*

We struggle *'maintaining a volunteer base in line with our service agency agreement.'*

We need *'volunteers with time to give – especially… [in meeting] needs i.e. more counselling - evening youth work, etc.'*

'… recruitment of volunteers - this is causing problems.'

Focus Groups Evidence

The groups explored barriers stopping people volunteering. Four emerged: limited awareness of the routes into volunteering and the opportunities available; unrealistic expectations of volunteers by voluntary/community organisations; time; a fear that volunteers were drawn in and taken advantage of:

- Routes into volunteering: People generally knew about volunteer bureaus but felt they varied in quality. One complained about visiting a bureau and receiving nothing but a folder with *'loose bits of paper.'* People felt there was a general lack of information, advocating a register of voluntary/community organisations to help prospective volunteers and networking between the organisations themselves (such registers are fairly common but obviously not always well known.) Focus group members, including representatives from voluntary/community groups,

reached few conclusions about recruiting volunteers. They agreed there needed to be active recruiting and, perhaps, targeting of particular groups.

- Unrealistic expectations of volunteers by voluntary/community organisations: One comment summed up what the focus groups felt: '…*organisations are not realistic in what they want from volunteers, rather than accepting what people are prepared to give.'* Some 'unrealistic expectations' concerned paperwork and training. One volunteer didn't pursue an opportunity at a charity shop because its application form put her off and she thought its working hours inflexible. Another volunteer complained *'[I] had to fill out forms and undertook a 12 week training programme in order to work …[and you are] unable to talk about the job, which makes it difficult…'* Some volunteers felt they were giving up their time and should be welcomed with open arms. What emerged was a divide between 'formal' and 'informal' parts of the voluntary/ community sector, the 'formal' part, perhaps delivering contracted services, facing a harder challenge in attracting volunteers. There seemed to be a tension between training volunteers up to a standard and their willingness to participate.

- Time: This is seen to be mainly an issue for those of working age. One suggestion was 'flexitime'. People thought there should be increased awareness of the sector in companies and that staff should be given 'time off' to volunteer.

- A fear that volunteers were drawn in and taken advantage of.: *'I am cross with how much the voluntary/community sector depends on volunteers. You volunteer for a couple of hours but end up doing more.'* Many of those who have volunteered or worked in the sector shared experiences of gradually taking on more and more hours or ending up on committees due to the overall lack of volunteers and trustees.

2.3.6 Raising awareness of the sector and individual voluntary/community organisations

'We need to raise awareness and we need help in doing so.' This was the tenor of many questionnaire comments. Organisations working in the community wanting to get everyone involved were particularly keen to publicise their services.
' …we are a small charity and we need people to know about who we are and what we do.'
We need *'wider awareness among the communities and households we serve.'*
We need *'wider awareness among local potential referral agencies.'*
We need *'help with publicity - possibly through the National Body i.e. a co-ordinated national campaign.'*
We need *'… to keep all members of our scattered community (3 villages, 2 hamlets over a wide geographical area) involved in feeling (& working!) that it is 'their' village hall.'*
Raising awareness in a new generation was seen as a particular problem and tied in with needs to recruit volunteers. There was seen to be 'a*pathy and disinterest …[in a] new generation of ex-urban, now rural dwellers'* and *'continual need for new blood [we] are grateful for whatever talents are offered. Succession is the major problem.'*

National and local government were both seen to have incomplete awareness of the sector's value and its financial constraints. People wanted '*acknowledgement that we can contribute significantly to the government agenda and recognition by statutory authorities of costs of involvement in consultation / strategic planning.*'

2.3.7 Provision of adequate training for staff, trustees and volunteers

This emerged as a common current problem in questionnaire and focus groups.

Survey Evidence

Staff and volunteers who lacked the right skills, staff turnover and changing legislation all necessitated ongoing, adequate training.
We need 'time and resources to meet NVQ qualified staff targets.'
We face 'continual changes in legislation creating extra training needs for staff - we do not have resources to manage this.'

Focus Groups Evidence

There was a general feeling that volunteers sometimes lacked necessary skills and that not enough time was spent finding out what skills volunteers had and developing them. It all came back to capacity in the organisation.
We 'have a number of young people with special needs…we have not had the skills or know how to encourage and be with them…[we] almost need a specific person whose role it is to co-ordinate and be with volunteers".
People felt that, in training as in all else, volunteers were an essential part of the organisation and should be treated like paid staff. Too often they were '*seen as a bolt on rather than part of the jigsaw'.*

2.3.8 How some of the areas of current need are expected to develop

The questionnaire asked voluntary/community organisations what their expectations were with respect to a number of issues over the next 5 years. Organisations were given the options 'Increase', 'Decrease', 'No change' and 'Not applicable.' **2.3.3** sets out in full the questions and percentage responses. The table below summarises expectations regarding some of the 7 main areas of current need explored at **2.3.1** above.

Expectations on Funding

- **35%** of voluntary /community organisations **expected funding from statutory bodies to remain unchanged** over the next 5 years, **30% expecting a decrease.**
- Almost **60%** of organisations **expected funding** specifically **linked to projects to increase** over the next 5 years.
- Over **80%** of voluntary /community organisations **expected the need for sector services to increase** over the next 5 years but only **35% expected** the numbers of **contracts** they held to **increase**.
- **59%** of organisations expected their **overall income to increase** over the next five years.
- **82%** of organisations expected their **overall expenditure to increase** in the next 5 years.

- A majority of organisations expected **an increase in: complexity of ICT** equipment and skills (65%), involvement in **partnerships** (60%), **hidden costs** (56%), **complexity of client based** (53%).

Trustees with appropriate skills

- **45%** of organisations expected the **recruitment of trustees to become harder** in the next five years.

Recruiting and retaining paid staff

- Almost **half** of all organisations did **not expect recruiting paid staff to get** any **easier** over the next 5 years.
- Almost **half** of organisations did **not expect numbers of paid staff to change** over the next 5 years.

Recruiting volunteers

- **45%** of organisations did **not expect the number of volunteers** to increase over the next 5 years.
- **45%** of organisations expected the **recruitment of volunteers** to **become harder** in the next five years.

2.3.9 How do you expect things to change in the next 5 years?

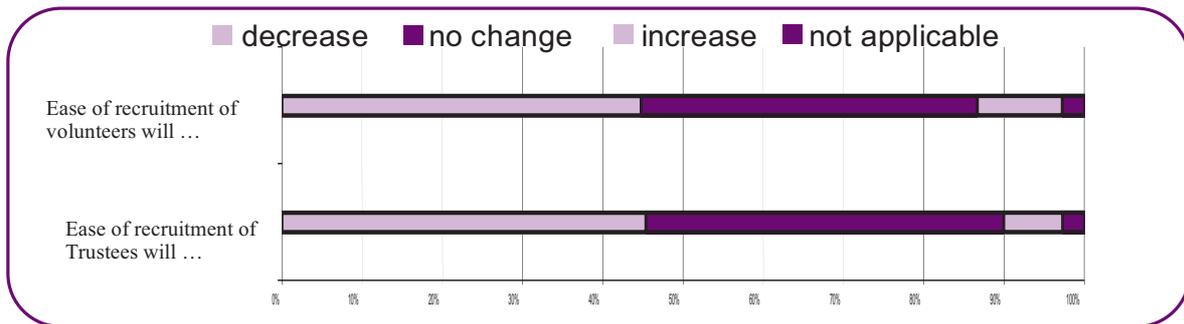*Figure 3.1 Areas where more organisations went for 'increase' than for any other single option*
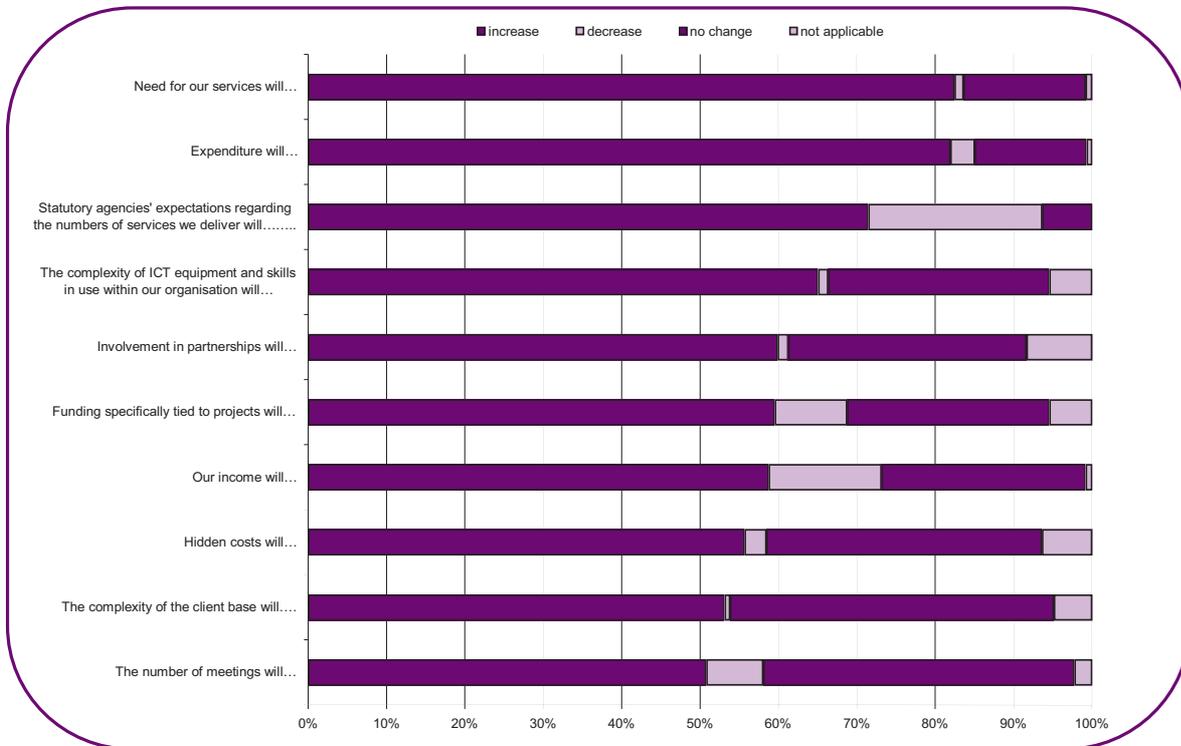
Key Facts

We asked organisations about their expectations regarding a number of issues. Organisations were given the options 'Increase', 'Decrease', 'No change' and 'Not applicable.' It emerged that, overall, the voluntary and community sector anticipated an increase in the need for their services and an increase in expectations of them on issues surrounding service delivery. Along with this the sector expected an increase in income, although funding would probably be tied to projects.

- More organisations expected increases in expenditure and demand for services (both 82%) than expected an increase in income (59%).
- **2.3.1** outlined organisations' concerns that funding tied to projects diverted them from core activities and planning and did not address needs around premises, staff and regulation. But almost 60% of organisations expected funding specifically linked to projects to increase over the next 5 years.

45

Figure 3.2 **Areas where more organisations went for 'decrease' than for any other single option**

Legend: decrease, no change, increase, not applicable

- Ease of recruitment of volunteers will …
- Ease of recruitment of Trustees will …
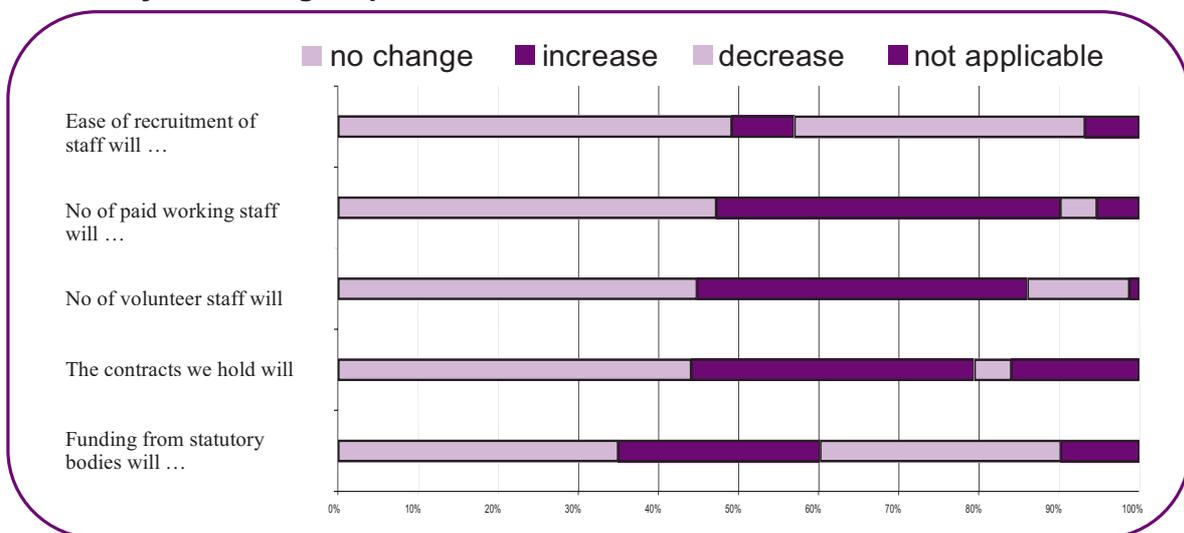
Key Facts

Having been given the options 'Increase', 'Decrease', 'No change' and 'Not applicable', majority of organisations went for 'Decrease' in the recruitment of volunteers and trustees. Effectively, 45% of organisations felt this would get harder.

Due to rounding up and down both the decrease and no change in ease of recruitment of trustees are both 45%. In fact there is just under 1% more organisations who expect ease of recruiting trustees to get harder.

Selecting 'stay the same' can mean organisations already find it hard recruiting volunteers and trustees and do not expect it to get any better or worse.

In section **2.3.10** we outlined organisation and focus group concerns about recruiting volunteers generally and appropriately skilled and representative trustees in particular. More organisations expected recruiting volunteers to get harder (45%) than to stay the same (42%): particularly worrying given the expected increase in demand for services.

Figure 3.3 **Two areas where more organisations went for 'no change' than for any other single option**

Legend: no change, increase, decrease, not applicable

- Ease of recruitment of staff will …
- No of paid working staff will …
- No of volunteer staff will
- The contracts we hold will
- Funding from statutory bodies will …

Key Facts

Having been given the options 'Increase', 'Decrease', 'No change' and 'Not applicable', the majority of organisations went for 'No change'. Most noticeably, the majority of organisations saw numbers of both paid staff (47%) and volunteer staff (45%) remaining the same. Recruitment of paid staff, already flagged up as a problem, was not expected to get any easier. Despite the expected overall increase in income (see figure **3.1**), the proportion of funding coming from statutory bodies was expected to decrease, 35% of organisations expecting no change in the amounts they receive and 30% expecting a decrease in the amount.

In figure 3.2 above, we anticipated an increase in the need for and expectations of voluntary/community sector service delivery. Yet, here, it's anticipated that numbers of paid staff and volunteers will remain the same (and, in figure 3.2 above, that existing difficulties in recruiting volunteers will worsen). There must be a fear that organisations will have to work harder to meet today's demands, let alone to meet increased demands anticipated in the future.

2.3.10 Implications

National, regional and local interest in the voluntary/community is intense. Major initiatives are so frequent that any regional snapshot may quickly date. But, as a snapshot, *Hidden Asset* suggests initiatives are not yet addressing long running sector needs and may indeed be making things worse. Funding remains a core concern and there is a fear more of it will be linked to projects and that organisations in consequence will be diverted from core activities and planning. Public service delivery offers significant opportunities but increasing 'professionalisation' may discourage the volunteers (including trustees) upon whom voluntary/community organisations depend, not least in contributing to social cohesion and civic renewal. Leaving public service delivery aside, there is a risk that the sector will be squeezed between, on the one hand, increased demands (stemming for example, from legislation, increasing complexity in ICT equipment, increased involvement in partnerships and growing complexity in the client base) and, on the other hand, decreased resource in terms of money and people.

SECTION 3: POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Hidden Asset set out to provide research-based answers to three key questions about the South East's voluntary/community sector:
- How diverse is it?
- How much of an asset is it?
- What are its needs?

The research informing the answers in *Hidden Asset* gives only a snapshot: initiatives affecting the sector are too rapid for that. However, We have three main expectations. First, that this research will provide a benchmark and that subsequent research (perhaps including information about ethnicity and funding flow, lacking in *Hidden Asset),* will allow us to gauge direction of travel. Second, that this work focusing on economic value will be augmented by a major piece of work in the South East fleshing out the sector's added value (its contribution to social cohesion, for example). Third, that *Hidden Asset* will not sit on the shelf: with luck, it will be read and, with other research, inform development needed if voluntary/community organisations and, through them the region, are to thrive.

3.1 Sector Diversity.

The diversity of the sector is a strength and not a weakness as it is only through this diversity that the voluntary and community sector is better able to reach some of those hard to reach sections of the community. It is also through this diversity that the sector's capacity and potential to act as the glue holding communities together.

The diversity of the sector also brings with it the potential for the sector to Impact on intermediate labour market, that is, giving volunteers the opportunity to learn new skills or improve their skills in preparation for new employment opportunities in other sectors.

3.2 Hidden Asset

The Voluntary and Community sector contributes to GDP and can deliver five crucial features which can impact immensely on the communities it serves.
- Specialist knowledge, experience and skills
- Particular ways of involving people in service delivery whether as users or self-help/ autonomous groups
- Independence from existing and post structures/models of service.
- Access to the wider community without institutional baggage.
- Freedom and flexibility from institutional pressures.

The capacity of the Voluntary /Community sector to carry out the activities mentioned above, helps the sector to be such a 'Asset', *albeit* hidden which the region needs to acknowledge, celebrate and support.

3.3 The Needs of the Sector

Funding remains a core concern and there is a fear that more of the funding will be linked to projects and that there are chances that organisations will be diverted from core activities and planning. There is obvious danger that the sector could be squeezed between on one hand; increased demands from legislation, increasing complexity in ICT equipment, increased involvement in partnership and growing complexity in the client base, and on the other hand, decreased resources in terms of money and people.

SECTION 4   LIST OF FIGURES

Appendix 1: The Questionnaire

8th October 2003

Dear Colleague,

Hidden Asset:
An Economic and Social Profile of the South East's Voluntary/Community Sector

I am writing to you as Director of RAISE, the South East's voluntary/community sector network.

As you may know, we are working on 'Hidden Asset', an economic and social profile of the voluntary/community sector in the South East (for our purposes, the South East is as defined as at question 12 of the attached questionnaire). Within the Sector we know how important we are in working with volunteers, employing staff, delivering services and being the 'glue' helping hold communities together. But, despite excellent local work collecting information, we lack the regional facts and figures needed to prove our value to others and to help us gain support for Sector development. So we the Sector remain, partly, a hidden asset.

This Project will help reveal that asset and then be used as an instrument to encourage partners to develop the asset. The final report will be aimed at the voluntary/community organisations themselves; regional bodies including SEEDA, GOSE and The Assembly; local authorities and other public bodies. It will demonstrate the value and impact on society of the Sector in the South East and highlight any important unmet needs. At present this information is not available anywhere else – only national studies have been undertaken.

We are carrying out the work with Skills Insight, the Region's not-for-profit skills and economic research unit, and it depends on a good number of voluntary/community organisations in the South East completing and returning a questionnaire. That is particularly true of smaller voluntary / community groups; a key part of the Sector often overlooked in surveys relying on information from, for example, the Charity Commission.

Individual organisations will not be identifiable from the final report and RAISE themselves will not be able to identify individual participants. Skills Insight will be the only ones to view the original information and will remove any identifiable factors of respondents.

The questionnaire is enclosed. We have bent over backwards to make it as short as we can and user friendly but, if the Project is to reveal the Sector as a hidden asset, there are lots of facts and figures it requires. So please bear with its length, it should take approximately 30 minutes, fill it in as far as possible, (if you do not know exact figures, estimates will do) and return it in the FREEPOST envelope provided by **Monday 27th October**. We really do need your help to prove the Sector's value!

Liz Chan at Skills Insight is happy to answer any questions you may have. She's contactable at **Skills Insight, Berkeley House, London Square, Cross Lanes, Guildford, GU1 1UN, liz@skills-insight.org.uk**, tel: 01483 500751, fax: 01483 484247. To find out more about RAISE please visit our website **http://www.raise-networks.org.uk/about/** .

I am very happy to discuss any details Skills Insight cannot deal with. Otherwise, thank you very much for your help. We will of course send everyone that completes the questionnaire a copy of the final published report so they can use it as a tool to show the Sector's value to partners and other potential funders. RAISE needs this report for the Sector not for itself, please help.

Rob Woolley
Director

HIDDEN ASSET: An Economic & Social Profile of the Voluntary / Community Sector in the South East of England

SECTION A: ABOUT YOUR ORGANISATION   Ref:

1. Contact details:

Organisation name_____

Approximate year that organisation was set up_____

Postcode _____   Tel.no. _____

E-mail address_____

Contact name _____   Website_____

2. Is your (national or local) organisation…? *(please tick)*

	Yes	No
Independent in determining its own existence, rules and objectives		
Volunteer-controlled (i.e. where directors and trustees/management board are not paid)		
Not-for-profit (i.e. any surpluses are re-invested)		

*If you answer NO to any part of Question 2 above, please STOP here
and return the questionnaire to Skills Insight in the freepost envelope without continuing further.*

3. What type of voluntary/community organisation are you? *(please tick all that apply)*

Informal neighbourhood or community group, *without* a set of written rules	
Informal neighbourhood or community group, *with* a set of written rules	
Registered charity	
Branch of a national voluntary organisation	
Local voluntary organisation	
Company limited by guarantee	
Registered Friendly Society or Industrial and Provident Society	
Housing association	
Church/faith organisation (please only include in the questionnaire those areas of work which are not part of worship)	
Other (please specify)	

4. Is your organisation an infrastructure group which assists other voluntary / community organisations? *(please tick)*

Yes	
No	

If NO in 4 above, please continue to Question 6 on next page

5. If YES to Question 4, how many voluntary / community organisations are members?
_____*(please insert approximate number)*

6. What are the areas that your organisation deals with?
(*please tick **all** that apply*)

Health		Community safety/criminal justice	
Welfare/social care		Economic development	
Environment		Community development	
Animals		Education/research/training/learning	
Arts/culture		Play/youth work	
Leisure/recreation/sport		Religious	
Housing/homelessness		People with disabilities	
Supporting/working with community/voluntary groups		Emotional/physical support	
		Other (please specify) _____	

7. What is your single most important area from those listed in Question 6?

_____ *(Please write down **one** category from list)*

8. What are the main services that you provide? *(please tick **all** that apply)*

Information/advice		Providing/managing living accommodation	
Advocacy		Providing/running multi-purpose space (e.g. village hall, community center)	
Campaigning			
Representation (e.g. infrastructure group)		Emotional/physical support	
Raising funds other than for your own local organisation		Education/research/training/learning opportunities	
Grant making		Other (please specify)_____	
Providing/managing office space			

9. Which of the following groups are your main service users/clients/members?
 *(please tick **all** that apply)*

Children under 5		People with physical/sensory impairments	
Children 5-15		People with mental health issues	
Young people (16-24)		People with learning difficulties	
Families		Women	
Older people		Homeless / poorly housed	
Unemployed people		No one particular group	
Ethnic minorities		Other (please specify)_____	
Carers			

10. Which one of the groups listed in Question 9 uses your services the most?

_____ *(Please write down **one** group from list)*

11. Please estimate the total number of service users/clients/members who used your services in the last financial year:_____ *(please insert approximate number)*

12. Do you work in any of the following geographical areas? *(please tick **all** that apply)*

	Yes		Yes		Yes
THROUGHOUT THE SOUTH EAST REGION		Isle of Wight		Slough	
		Kent		Southampton	
Bracknell Forest		Medway		Surrey	
Brighton & Hove		Milton Keynes		West Berkshire	
Buckinghamshire		Oxfordshire		West Sussex	
East Sussex		Portsmouth		Windsor & Maidenhead	
Hampshire		Reading		Wokingham	

SECTION B: STAFF RESOURCES – Paid, Volunteers, and Trustees/Management Board

13. How many staff do you have (inc. both paid and voluntary)?

	Men	Women	
Occasional			
Part time			
Full time			Overall Total
TOTAL			

14. Please provide us with an occupational breakdown of your staff.

Please make certain that the overall total matches the overall total provided in Question 13 above.

	Paid staff	Voluntary staff	
Chief Executive/Director/Chief Officer			
Management team			
Finance staff			
Support/admin staff			
Fundraisers			
Community development workers			
Outreach workers			
Project workers			Overall Total
TOTAL			

15. Please tell us your total approximate annual salary costs £_____

16. Please estimate how many hours your unpaid volunteers (excluding trustees/management board) worked last financial year:

	Men	Women	Total
Average number of volunteers			
Estimate of total volunteer hours worked last year			Hrs

17. Please estimate the numbers of volunteers you have by age group and the total number of hours worked last financial year by age group:

Please make certain that the figures you write in the 'Total' column of Question 17 match the totals in Question 16

	16-24 yrs	25-49 yrs	50-64 yrs	65 yrs or over	Total
Average number of volunteers by age group					
Estimate of total volunteer hours worked last year					Hrs

18. Please tell us about the number of trustees/management board members and the total number of hours worked last financial year:

	Men	Women	Total
Number of trustees/management board members			
Estimate of total number of hours worked by all trustees/management board members last year			Hrs

SECTION C: FUNDING

19. What was the total annual income of your organisation for last financial year (2002-2003)?

Revenue £ _____   Capital £_____

Capital – tangible and lasting items such as buildings and equipment, office furniture, computers, materials, vehicles and so on.

Revenue – anything which is not capital income.

20. This year, has your annual income in comparison to last year…?: *(please tick answer)*

Increased	
Decreased	
Stayed the same	

21. How is your main organisation funded (main sources only)? *(please tick **all** that apply)*

Fund raising (collections, events, charity shops etc.)		Income from investments	
Donations/gifts/legacies/sponsorship		Contribution in kind (use of premises, stationery or office equipment etc.)*	
Fees/charges/member subscriptions			
Contracts/service level agreements (SLAs)		Government funding	
Sales of goods and services		Other grant aid/funding	
Income from rental property		Other (please specify) _____	

Volunteer time is not to be included as 'contribution in kind'

If you have not ticked 'contribution in kind' please continue to Question 23

22. If you have ticked 'contribution in kind' in Question 21, please tell us if this includes any of the following: *(please tick **all** that apply)*

Favourable rents or leases		Professional services	
Rate reduction		IT equipment	
Use of premises		Stationery or office equipment	
Provision of secondee labour		Students	
Staff development and training		Other (please specify) _____	

23. Who provides your organisation's main sources of funding? *(please tick **all** that apply)*
Also please give an estimate, as best you can, of how much funding will be received from each funder in the current financial year.

	YES	Amount (if Yes)		YES	Amount (if Yes)
District Councils			Arts Council of England		
County Councils			Community Fund		
Unitary Authorities			Heritage Lottery Fund		
Regional Organisations such as SEEDA			Millennium Commission		
Parish Councils			New Opportunities Fund		
Central Government			Sport England		
European sources			UK Sport		
Businesses			Awards for All		
Individuals (e.g. donations, fees)			Charitable trusts		
Regeneration funding (not elsewhere specified)			Other voluntary / community sector organisations		
Health (e.g. NHS/PCT/PCG)			Other (please specify)_____		

24. Please give an approximate value for your asset base at its present valuation (i.e. for those items which your (local) organisation owns outright such as buildings, office equipment, vehicles, furniture, etc.). £_____ *(please write in)*

25. Please give an approximate value for:
cash reserves   £_____
investments   £_____
other   £_____

SECTION D: EXPENDITURE

26. What is the total expenditure of your organisation for the last financial year?
£_____ *(please write in)*

27. Please provide an estimated percentage of the total expenditure stated above, in Question 26, for the following:

	estimated percentage		estimated percentage
Staff		Project Services	
Premises		Marketing	
Extra costs associated with trustees/management board		Fundraising	
Core Services		Other (please specify)_____	

28. What percentage of your total expenditure goes where?
(Please note that the areas are intended as mutually exclusive – for example, if expenditure is in the 'Local area' do not also allocate it to 'South East'. Also note that the sum of the areas should total to 100%.)

	estimated percentage *(write in)*
Local area	
Within the South East region*	
Outside the SE region but elsewhere in the UK	
Outside of the UK	
TOTAL *(should sum to 100%)*	

* *South East in this context includes the following: Kent, Medway, West Sussex, East Sussex, Brighton & Hove, Hampshire, Isle of Wight, Portsmouth, Southampton, Berkshire, Surrey, Milton Keynes, Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire.*

SECTION E: TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

29. Do you provide training for your own…? *(please tick **all** that apply)*

	YES
Paid Staff	
Volunteers	
Trustees/management board	
Other (please specify)	

30. Is this training…? *(please tick **all** that apply)*

	YES
In house	
Elsewhere	
Distance based learning	

31. How much is your training budget?

Our training budget is *(insert approximate figure)*	£_____
Not known	

32. In which of the following areas does your organisation (including paid staff, volunteers and trustees/management board) require additional training/support to enable it to be more effective ? *(please tick **all** that apply)*

Staff teamwork		Managing change	
Managing staff/volunteers		Specific skills (eg IT - please specify)	
Partnership		Marketing	
Fund raising/bidding		First aid / health & safety	
Strategic management		Recruitment	
Business planning		Diversity/equal opportunities	
Financial management		Other (please specify) _____	
Delivering training for others		_____	

SECTION F: THE FUTURE & UNMET NEEDS OF YOUR ORGANISATION

33. Please list the three most significant unmet needs:

1. _____

_____

2. _____

_____

3. _____

_____

34. Please list the three biggest challenges your organisation faces?

1. _____

_____

2. _____

_____

3. _____

_____

35. Over the next five years, what do you think is most likely to happen to your organisation? *(please tick relevant answers)*

	Increase	Decrease	No change		Increase	Decrease	No change
Our income will…				Ease of recruitment of staff will….			
Expenditure will….				Ease of recruitment of trustees will…..			
Number of paid working staff will				Ease of recruitment of volunteers will……..			
Number of volunteer staff will…				The complexity of ICT equipment and skills in use within our organisation will…			
Involvement in partnerships will…				Funding specifically tied to projects will…			
The contracts we hold will…				The complexity of the client base will….			
Need for our services will…				Hidden costs will…			
The number of meetings will…				Statutory agencies' expectations regarding the numbers of services we deliver will……..			
Funding from statutory bodies will…							

36. Are there any other issues which you consider to be important but which have not been covered?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Thank you very much for your help. Please put the completed questionnaire in the FREEPOST envelope provided (*Skills Insight*, FREEPOST NAT5586, GUILDFORD, GU1 1BR) and return it to Skills Insight by Monday 27th October at the latest.

Skills
insight

Appendix 2: Comparisons with other surveys

STUDY	NO. OF VCOs	Gross Income	CONTRIBUTION TO GDP (inc. Volunteer)	CONTRIBUTION TO GDP (exec Volunteer)	VOLUNTEER CONTRIBUTION	NO OF PAID STAFF	NO OF VOLUNTEERS
NATIONAL							
NCVO UK Almanac 2004 (for period 2001/2)	153,000 general UK charities	£20.8 billion	£7.2 billion (1% GDP)			569,000 (2% of total UK emp'ees)	
NCVO UK Almanac 2002	141,000 registered charities	£15.6 billion		£5.4 billion	£15.4 billion	563,000 (2.2% of total UK emp'ees)	3 million
REGIONAL							
SE RAISE 'Hidden Asset' 2004 (for 2002)	**34,500 (appx 4 per 1000 pop)**	**£11.4 billion**	**£4.6 billion (3.4% SE GDP)**	**£3.6 billion (2.7% SE GDP)**	**£0.9 billion**	**308,000 (6% of workforce)**	**726,000 (1 in 11 pop)**
SE RAISE 'How Many?' 2000	28,000 VCOs (up to 32,000 using 'rule of thumb' 4 per 1000 pop)						
NE VONNE 2000	40,000 (appx 15 per 1000 pop)	£600 million	3.8%		£307 million	40,800, in 23,200 FTEs (4% workforce)	143,600
SUB-REGIONAL							
N Yorks/York 2000	3,000 (appx 2 per 1000)	£109m (revenue income)	1-2.5%			12,000	50,000 (1 in 15 pop)

Appendix 3: Calculation of GDP

The overall yearly contribution of the voluntary/community sector is based on paid and volunteer staff. The approach to measuring the contribution of the voluntary/community sector to the national economy is still in its infancy, the main reason for this being the fact that the output is not clearly defined due to the volunteer component. Unlike in the manufacturing sector where output is easily measurable, in the case of the voluntary/community sector, or indeed public administration, this is not the case. The simplest way of measuring the contribution of the voluntary/community sector to the national economy would be the income-based approach.

Below we firstly deal with the contribution of paid staff in the voluntary/community sector and then the more complex matter of volunteer contribution.

Let: $GDPE_T$ - be the total output of paid staff in the voluntary/community sector that comprises of a number of different sector activities $(i = 1,...n)$ at time period T, where T = 2003,

emp_i - be the total number of paid staff in the sector activity i,

he_i - be the average hours worked per week for paid staff in the sector activity i,

we_i - be the average hourly wage rate for paid staff in sector activity i,

y - be the constant 52 for the number of weeks in a year

Then the contribution of the paid staff in the voluntary/community sector to the national economy can be calculated as follows:

$$GDPE_T = \sum_{i=1}^{n} emp_i he_i we_i y \qquad (1)$$

In our calculations,

he_i - is constant and equals the combined average weekly number of hours for part-time and full-time workers in the industry sector 'community, social/personal services'

we_i - is based on the survey results for total salary costs in sector activity i

The volunteer contribution to GDP is more complex: there are real salary costs available for paid staff but volunteer staff have their own worth which is not accounted for. The contribution of volunteers in the sector can be measured in a similar way to that for employees. To get a more accurate approach we have looked at the occupation volunteers work in and assumed they receive market wages.

Let: $GDPV_T$ - be the total output of volunteers in the voluntary/community sector that comprises of a number of different occupations $(j = 1,...n)$ at time period T, where T = 2003,

vol_j - be the total number of volunteers for the occupation j,

hv_j - be the average hours worked per week by volunteers in occupation j,

wv_j - be the average hourly wage rate of volunteers for occupation j,

Then the contribution of volunteer staff in the voluntary/community sector to the national economy can be calculated as follows:

$$GDPV_T = \sum_{j=1}^{n} vol_j hv_j wv_j y \qquad (2)$$

In our calculations,

hv_j - is based on the total volunteer hours from the survey results and the proportion which volunteers in occupation j work.

wv_j - is based on the pro-rata weekly wage for occupation j taken from the New Earnings Survey (Office for National Statistics)

Therefore the total contribution of the voluntary/community sector to South East GDP is measure (1) and the added value of the volunteer staff is measure (2).

Appendix 4: BIBLIOGRAPHY

BASSAC (2002), 'Wired communities final report'

Beaufort Research (2001), 'Volunteering in Wales 2001', the Welsh Assembly

Community consultants & Greater London Enterprise (2000), 'Skills matter: a skills foresight for the voluntary sector', Voluntary Sector National Training Organisation (VSNTO)

The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) (2003), 'Community capacity building and voluntary sector infrastructure in rural England'

Dowson, Burden, Hamm & Petrie (2000), 'Valuing the voluntary and community sector in North Yorkshire and York', North Yorkshire Forum for Voluntary Organisations

Forster (1997), 'Potential of a lifetime', The Carnegie – TSB

Gaskin & Dobson (1997), 'the economic equation of volunteering: a pilot study', social policy research 110, Centre for research in social policy

Goodall (2000), 'How Many?', RAISE

,HM Treasury (2002), 'The Role of the Voluntary and Community Sector in Service Delivery: A Cross Cutting Review'

The Home Office (2003), 'Voluntary and Community Sector Infrastructure', Active Community Unit

Jermyn, Woodburn & Marshall (1998), 'Local Voluntary Activity Surveys (LOVAS): Gosport, Hants area report 6', Home Office, Research & Statistics Directorate.

Knapp & Smith (1995), 'Who volunteers and why? The key factors which determine volunteering', the Personal Social Services Research Unit (PSSRU), University of Kent and the Volunteer Centre UK

Leonard (1997), 'Britain[TM]: Renewing our identity', Demos

Lewis (2001), 'Mapping the contribution of the voluntary and community sector in Yorkshire and Humber', Yorkshire and Humber regional forum

Marshall (1997), 'Local Voluntary Activity Surveys (LOVAS): Research Manual LOVAS paper 1', Home Office, Research & Statistics Directorate.

O'Donnell (2001), 'Towards an inclusive information society in Europe: The role of voluntary organisations', IST study report, Information Society Technologies (IST)

RAISE and Learning and Skills Council, (2004), 'South East Regional Compact on Learning and Skills'

Research Solutions (2000), 'The contribution of the voluntary and community sector to the economic life of the North East region', Voluntary Organisations' Network North East (VONNE)

Voluntary and community research section (1999), 'Local Voluntary Activity Surveys (LOVAS): Thanet. Area type 6B: Poor urban (low ethnic minority population)', Home Office, Research & Statistics Directorate.

Voluntary and community research section (1999), 'Local Voluntary Activity Surveys (LOVAS): Guildford's eight urban wards. Area type 13: Very prosperous commuter districts', Home Office, Research & Statistics Directorate.

VSNTO (2003), 'Voluntary sector key facts (July 2003)'

Wainwright (2004), 'Agencies fear yawning gap in volunteers', The Guardian 10/01/04

Walker (2002), 'Valuing the voluntary sector in Basildon District', Basildon, Billericay and Wickford Council for voluntary service

Wilding, Collis, Lacey & Mccullough (2003), 'Futureskills 2003: A skills foresight research report on the voluntary sector paid workforce', Voluntary Sector National Training Organisation (VSNTO)

Williams (2003), 'Developing community involvement: Contrasting local and regional participatory cultures in Britain and their implications for policy', Regional Studies Vol. 37.5, Regional Studies Association

Appendix 5: Glossary of terms and acronyms

GOSE sub-regions: Government Office for the South East administrative areas

ICT: Information and Communications Technologies (e.g. computer systems)

Interviewees: are those people that were interviewed and took part in the survey

Local CVS infrastructure organisations: by this we mean voluntary and community organisations that provide both generic and specialist support to voluntary and community sector (VCS) front-line organisations

VCS front-line organisations: by this we mean voluntary or community organisations that deliver services directly to the user group

RAISE: Regional Action and Involvement South East

Respondents: are those people that were interviewed and took part in the survey

GDP: Gross Domestic Product, measure of economic contribution to national income, usually calculated on value of outputs