



in Lancashire

Voluntary, community and faith sector services

Fieldwork 15 October – 28 November 2008

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1 Executive Summary

This wave of the Life in Lancashire panel found out what voluntary, community and faith sector services people use and why, and how people volunteer. The survey was sent to all 3229 members of the panel. In total 2587 questionnaires were returned, giving an overall response rate of 80%.

1.1 Key findings

Usage of voluntary, community or faith sector services

- Three in ten people have used a service provided by the voluntary, community or faith sector in the last year (29%). They are used more by people who have children, are heavy users of county council services, are aged between 25 and 44, and work part-time.
- The most commonly used facilities are religious activities (34%), children's education or schools (31%) and sports or exercise facilities (28%).
- The primary reasons people gave for using the service were that it was local (62%) or provided exactly what they needed (53%).
- Users of voluntary sector services are satisfied with the service they received – most being very satisfied (57%).
- The most common reasons for not using a voluntary sector service was because people hadn't needed any (91%), although younger respondents and those from a BME background were less likely to know about the existence of the service.

Volunteering activities

- A third of people have volunteered in the last year (36%). The type of people more likely to volunteer follows a similar pattern to service usage – part-time workers being the group who volunteer most (47%).
- The services of the organisation they volunteered for mostly were described as religious activities (28%), children's education or schools (25%) or hobbies or social clubs (20%).
- Most people volunteer by organising or running an activity (54%), leading the group or being a committee member (50%), or by raising or handling money (46%).
- Where people do volunteer, they are likely to do so regularly – mostly once a week (44%) or month (22%). The mean number of hours volunteers have given in the last four weeks is 10.19.
- The experience of being a volunteer was rated highly (86% satisfied).
- Work commitments (50%) and doing other things with their spare time (44%) were the main barriers to volunteering.
- By asking someone directly to get involved (57%) or providing more information (39%) people thought they would be more likely to volunteer.

- Informal volunteering is more widespread (45% have volunteered), though people give help less regularly (38% a few times a year) and for shorter amounts of time (mean hours in the last four weeks is 6.13). The most common types of help to give were keeping in touch with someone who has difficulty getting out and about (39%), giving advice (36%), looking after a property or pet for someone who is away (35%), and transporting or escorting someone (33%).

1.2 Recommendations

Most people hadn't used a voluntary, community or faith sector service because they said they hadn't needed to. Therefore, among certain groups, there are only a limited number of things that can be done to increase usage. Targeted promotion of the services can be aimed at BME groups and younger people (those under 45) because they were less aware of the availability of services, and at the type of people who use the services. The promotion needs to explain what services are available and could concentrate on the benefits people mentioned of using the service (eg they are local, and tailored to individual needs).

Further comparisons could be made by looking at the groups of people who are using particular types of service and compare it to the type of people the service was aimed at to see if they match.

Looking at ways of increasing the numbers of volunteers, people said they needed to be aware of the opportunities to volunteer. The most effective means were to ask them directly to get involved, or giving them more information. The promotion could be targeted at the people who already use the services, as these were the people who were more likely to volunteer for these services.

Also the volunteering opportunities themselves could be examined to give people different ways of taking part. Being able to work from home or being able to work with someone who was already involved were good incentives for many.

2 Introduction

Lancashire County Council has used Life in Lancashire regularly since August 2001. A panel of willing participants is recruited and is approached on a regular basis to seek their views on a range of topics and themes. Panel members are voluntary participants in the research they complete and no incentives are given for completion.

The panel has been designed to be a representative cross-section of the county's population. The results for each survey are weighted in order to reflect the demographic profile of the county's population.

The panel provides access to a sufficiently large sample of the population so that reliable results can be reported at a county wide level. It also provides data at a number of sub-area and sub-group levels.

Each Life in Lancashire wave is themed. Firstly, it enables sufficient coverage on a particular topic to be able to provide insight into that topic. And secondly, it comes across better to the residents completing the questionnaires if there is a clear theme (or 2-3 clear themes) within each survey.

The panel is refreshed periodically. New members are recruited to the panel and some current members are retired on a random basis. This means that the panel remains fresh and is not subject to conditioning i.e. the views of panel members become too informed with county council services to be unrepresentative of the population as a whole.

3 Research Objectives

The objectives of this consultation are to find out what voluntary, community and faith sector services people use and why they use them; and to understand how and why people volunteer.

4 Methodology

This wave of Life in Lancashire research was sent to 3229 members of the panel on 15 October. A reminder was sent on the 12 November, and the fieldwork ended on 28 November 2008.

In total 2587 questionnaires were returned, giving an overall response rate of 80%.

All data are weighted by age, ethnicity and district to reflect the Lancashire overall population, and figures are based on all respondents unless otherwise stated. The weighted responses have been scaled to match the effective response of 2188, which is the equivalent size of the data if it had not been weighted and was a perfect random sample.

4.1 Limitations

The table below shows the sample tolerances that apply to the results in this survey. Sampling tolerances vary with the size of the sample as well as the percentage results.

Number of respondents	50/50 + / -	30/70 + / -	10/90 + / -
50	14%	13%	8%
100	10%	9%	6%
200	7%	6%	4%
500	4%	4%	3%
1000	3%	3%	2%
2000	2%	2%	1%

On a question where 50% of the people in a sample of 1000 respond with a particular answer, the chance are 95 out of 100 that the answer would be between 47% and 53% (ie +/- 3%), versus a complete coverage of the entire Lancashire population using the same procedure.

In charts or tables where responses do not add up to 100%, this is due to multiple responses or computer rounding.

5 Main Research Findings

5.1 Usage of services provided by the voluntary, community and faith sector

The first section of the questionnaire looked at residents’ usage services provided by the voluntary, community and faith sector. The first question asked if they had used any of their services or facilities in the last year. Most people haven’t used any services (71%), though three in ten had (29%).

Chart 1 - Have you used a service/facility provided by the voluntary, community or faith sector in the last 12 months?

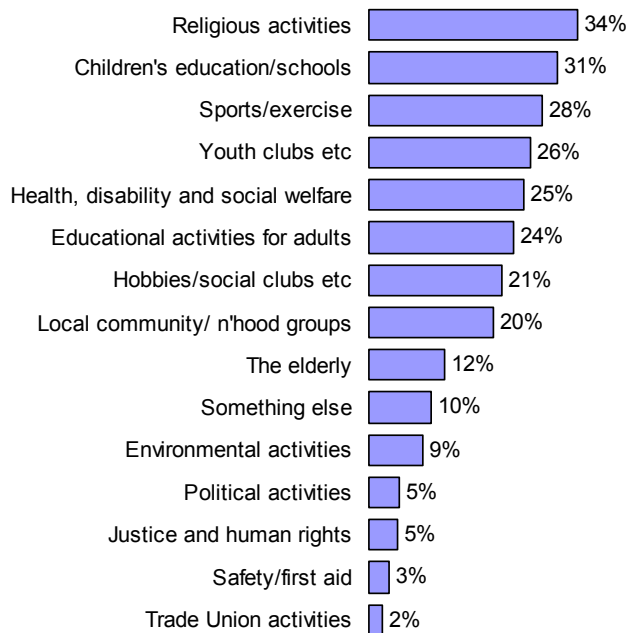


Base: All respondents (Unweighted 2449, Weighted 2078)

There are some differences in the more frequent users of voluntary sector services. The people who were significantly more likely to use them are heavy users of county council services (45%), have children in the household (40%), are aged between 25 and 44 (39%), work part-time (39%), and are women (32%). It is those people in socio-economic group C2 who were least likely to use them (21%).

Respondents were then asked what type of service or facility they used. The most commonly used facilities were religious activities (34%), children’s education or schools (31%), and sports or exercise facilities (28%).

Chart 2 - Which of the following describes the service/facility you used from the voluntary/community/faith organisations?



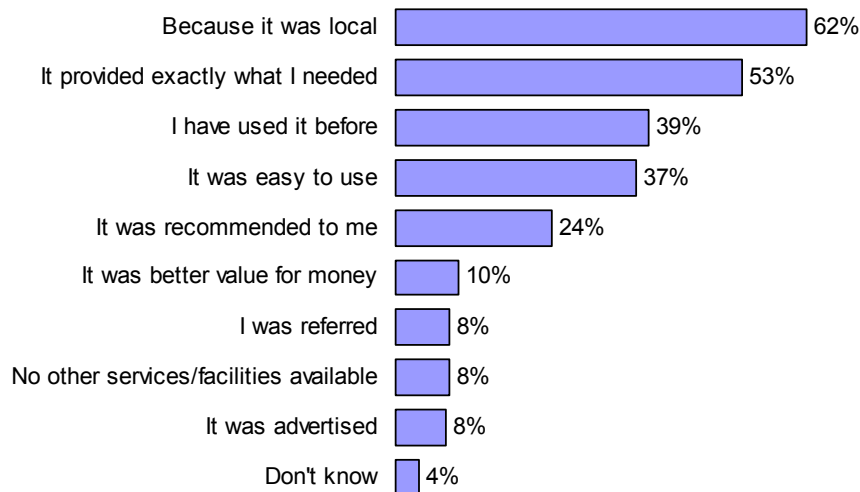
Base: All respondents using a voluntary service (Unweighted 805, Weighted 760)

The type of services used also differed depending on peoples' circumstances.

- **Religious activities** were used more by respondents from a BME background (49%) or from a higher socio-economic group (AB, 46%).
- Services around **children's education or schools** were used significantly more if they have children in the household (65%), by younger respondents (16 to 24 years 60%, 25 to 44 years 48%), where people work part-time (46%), and by women (35%).
- **Sports or exercise facilities** were particularly used by people who have children in the household (40%).
- The usage of **youth clubs and children's activities outside school** was higher among those with children in the household (60%), younger people (16 to 24 years 60%, 25 to 44 years 41%), people who work part-time (41%) and women (30%).
- **Health, disability and social welfare** were particularly important to the over 60s (35%) and those with a disability (44%).
- People from a BME background were more likely to use **adult education** (38%).
- Understandably services for **the elderly** were utilised more by people over 60 (27%).
- The youngest respondents (16-24 year olds) were more likely to use **local community or neighbourhood groups** (60%) or services around **political activities** (20%).

The next question looked at why people used the service provided by the voluntary organisation. Most people used it because it was local (62%) or because it provided exactly what they needed (53%). Two-fifths of respondents had also used the service before (39%) or because it was easy to use (37%).

Chart 3 - Why did you use the service or facility provided by the voluntary organisation?

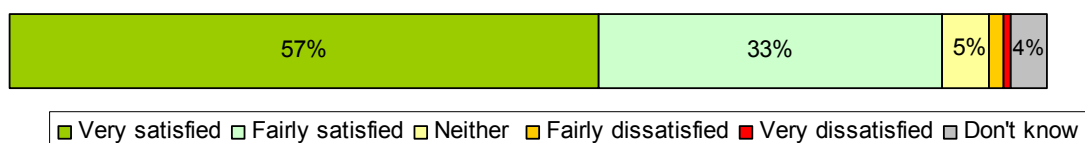


Base: All respondents using a voluntary service (Unweighted 710, Weighted 674)

Peoples' decision to use a service because it was local (74%), it was easier to use (43%) or it was recommended (32%) was greater among respondents with children in the household. The local nature of service was also a greater attraction for people aged 25 to 44 (70%). Women were more likely to say it provided exactly what they needed (56%), and younger people because there were no other services available (16 to 24 years 22%).

People are satisfied with the service or facility they used from a voluntary, community or faith sector organisation, the majority being very satisfied (57%), and a further third fairly satisfied (33%). Very few people were dissatisfied (2%).

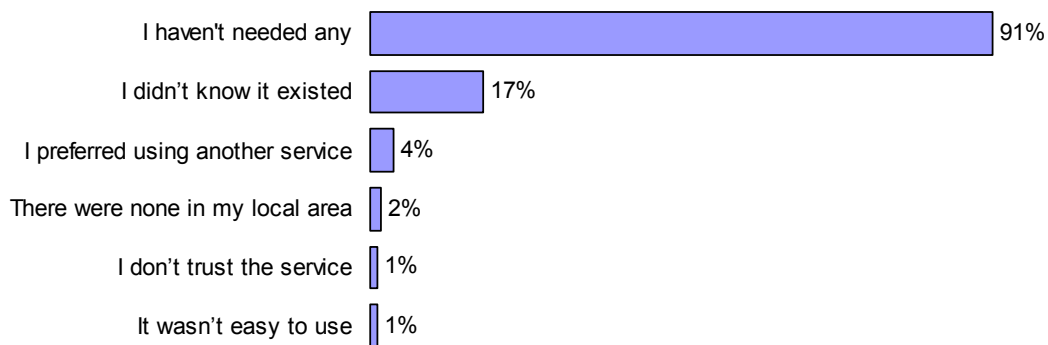
Chart 4 - And how satisfied were you with the last voluntary, community or faith sector organisation service/facility you used?



Base: All respondents using a voluntary service (Unweighted 712, Weighted 680)

Satisfaction with the service was universal among different types of people, only women being more likely to be satisfied (63% very satisfied). The respondents who hadn't used a service or facility provided by the voluntary sector were asked their reasons why. Most people said that they hadn't needed any (91%), and a significant proportion didn't know it existed (17%).

Chart 5 - Please tell us why you haven't used a voluntary, community or faith service/facility in the last 12 months.



Base: All respondents not using a voluntary service (Unweighted 1857, Weighted 1503)

It is the youngest respondents who are most likely to not know about the existence of services (16 to 24 years 56%, 25 to 44 years 21%), and people from a BME background (33%).

5.2 Volunteering activities

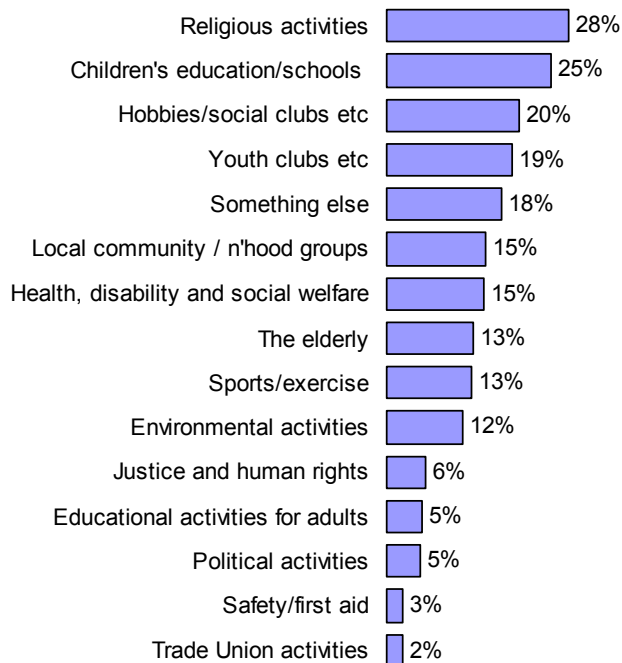
The next section looked at peoples’ volunteering activities. A third of respondents have volunteered in the last year (36%). The services the organisation they volunteered for mostly were described as religious activities (28%), children’s education or schools (25%) or hobbies or social clubs (20%).

Chart 6 - Have you volunteered for a voluntary organisation, community group or club in the last 12 months?



Base: All respondents (Unweighted 2443, Weighted 2083)

Chart 7 - Which of the following describes the service of the organisation you volunteered for?



Base: All respondents volunteering (Unweighted 922, Weighted 811)

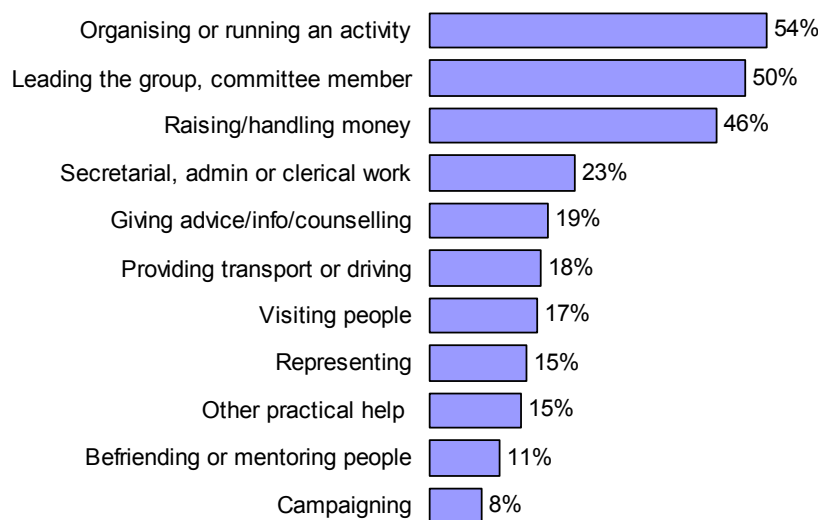
The types of people who are more likely to volunteer follows a similar pattern to service usage. That is people who work part-time (47%), are heavy county council service users (46%), are in the higher socio-economic groups (AB 46%, C1 39%), have children in the household (42%) or are women (38%). Residents of urban areas were less likely to volunteer (32%).

The type of organisations people volunteer also for varies for different people, and again follows a similar pattern as the type of service they use. This suggests people volunteer for the organisations they are most familiar with. These differences are highlighted below.

- People from a BME background volunteer more for services around **religious activities** (49%), **justice and human rights** (19%) and **trade unions** (10%).
- Services relating to **children’s education and schools** have more volunteers among people who have children in the household (48%), part-time workers (44%), people aged 25 to 44 (40%), and women (32%).
- Volunteers for **youth clubs and children’s activities outside school** are greater among people with children (39%) and the 25 to 44 age group (30%).
- Volunteering for services for **the elderly** is significantly lower among the 25 to 44 age group (6%).
- **Sports or exercise** activities attract more male volunteers (20%).

Most people volunteer by organising or running an activity (54%), leading the group or being a committee member (50%), or by raising or handling money (46%).

Chart 8 - In which of the following ways have you volunteered in the last 12 months?



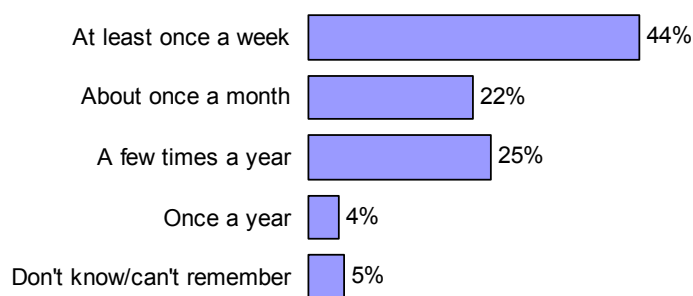
Base: All respondents volunteering (Unweighted 852, Weighted 761)

The ways in which people volunteer also differs by the type of person. Men were more likely to lead a group or be a committee member (56%), give advice, information or counselling (25%), or to represent someone (23%). There are also differences in the type of activities BME people take part in, being more likely to visit (55%) or befriend/mentor someone (22%), and less

likely to provide administrative support (4%), lead a group or be a committee member (30%), or organise/run an event (34%). There is again a difference for people who have children, these people being more likely to help organise or run an event (65%). People who don't work are more likely to visit someone (22%), whereas full-time workers are more likely to represent someone (21%). Residents of rural areas volunteered less for befriending or mentoring people (7%), and those in the lowest socio-economic group (DE) were less likely to give advice (6%) or administrative support (9%).

The people who volunteer tend to do so regularly, mostly once a week (44%) or once a month (22%). Fewer people volunteer less frequently throughout the year (25% a few times a year, 4% once a year). Looking at the number of hours people dedicate to volunteering, the mean number of hours is 10.19 in the last four weeks.

Chart 9 - On average, how often during the last 12 months have you volunteered?

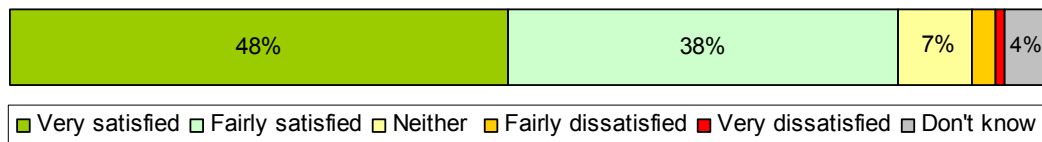


Base: All respondents volunteering (Unweighted 911, Weighted 805)

The only difference in the frequency of volunteering was for full-time workers who volunteered less regularly (32% a few times a year). Whereas for the amount of time people can give to volunteering activities increases if they don't have children (mean 11.2 hours) compared to people who have children (mean 6.1 hours). The number of hours people volunteer for is also higher for the over 60s (mean 13.3 hours) compared to those aged 25 to 44 (mean 7.7 hours).

Six in seven people are satisfied with their experience as a volunteer (86% satisfied), most being very satisfied (48%). Very few people are dissatisfied with the experience (3%). All respondents were equally as satisfied with their experience as a volunteer.

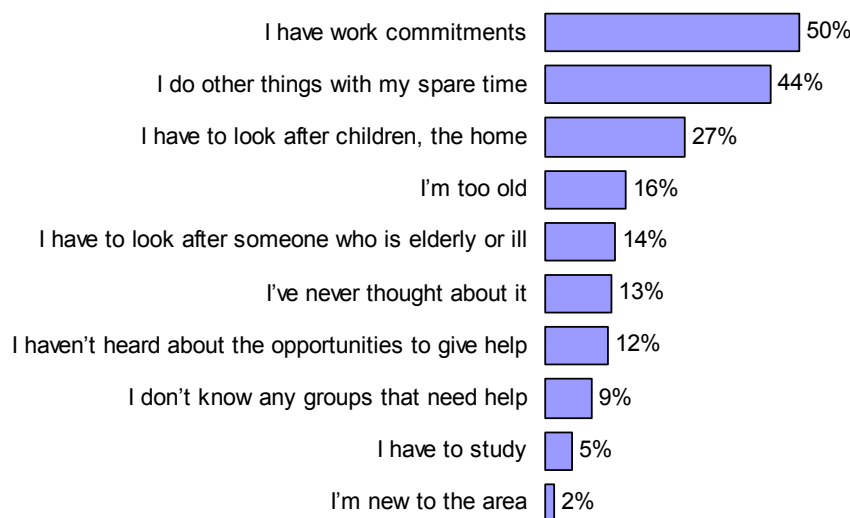
Chart 10 - Overall, how satisfied are you with your experience as a volunteer?



Base: All respondents volunteering (Unweighted 915, Weighted 806)

The main reasons why people don't volunteer are their work commitments (50%) and doing other things with their spare time (44%). Many people also say they have to look after the children or their home (27%).

Chart 11 - Please tell us why you don't volunteer for a voluntary, community or faith organisation?



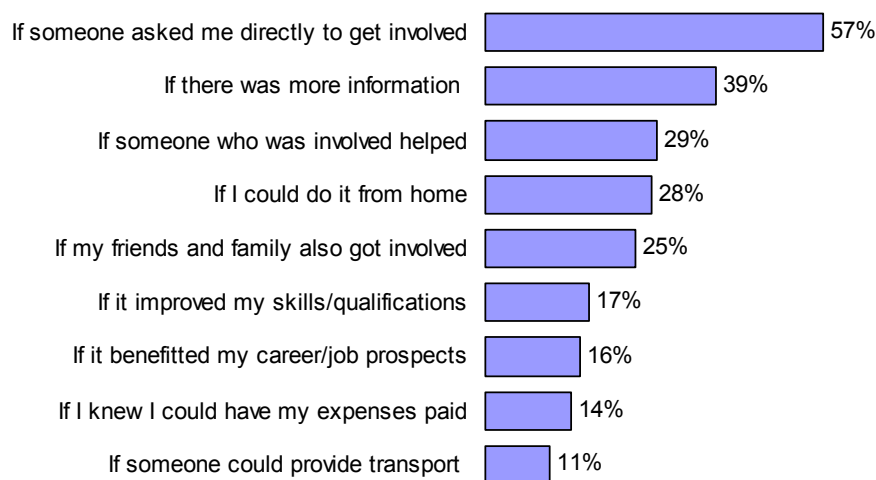
Base: All respondents not volunteering (Unweighted 1658, Weighted 1398)

Peoples' personal circumstances dictate the amount of time they have available for volunteering and shows in their reasons for not volunteering. An individual's type of work and if they have children means affect the time they have for volunteering (full time workers state work commitments more 81%, and those with children are more likely to say they have to look after children 73%). A persons age also affects their ability to volunteer, the over 60s more likely to say they are too old (47%), the 45 to 59 group saying they do other things with their spare time (52%), and the under 25s saying they study (31%). However, it is BME people who were more likely

to be unaware of the opportunities to give help (34%), to never have thought about it (23%), or not to know of groups that need help (19%).

People thought they would be more likely to volunteer for an organisation in the future if someone asked them directly to get involved (57%) or if they had more information (39%). It would also encourage people to get involved if they knew someone involved would help (29%) or if they could do it from home (28%).

Chart 12 - Which of the following would make you more likely to volunteer for an organisation in the future?



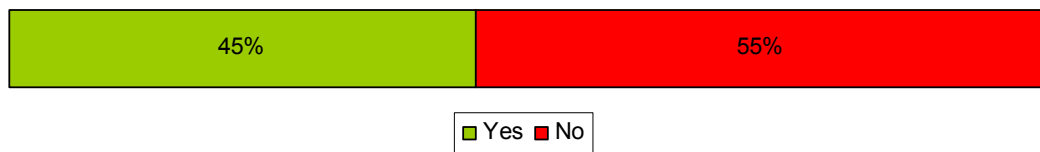
Base: All respondents (Unweighted 1682, Weighted 1516)

The different strategies are more effective among certain groups of people. Most of the approaches would be more effective among the 16 to 44 year old age group and among BME people (most effective being paying expenses and improving their skills or qualifications 43% for both among BME respondents). Approaching people directly worked best for those in the highest social groups (AB 67%). Women were most interested in the elements of personal support through having someone who was already involved helping (32%) and being able to do it from home (31%). People with children in the household were more interested in the opportunities is gives for personal development (improving skills and qualifications 32%, improving career prospects 27%).

5.2.1 Informal volunteering – unpaid help

Respondents were also asked about the informal volunteering they have done in the last year (ie unpaid help to someone who isn't a relative). Less than half of respondents had given unpaid help to someone (45%), the majority not giving help (55%).

Chart 13 - And aside from any formal volunteering, have you given unpaid help to someone who was not a relative in the last 12 months?

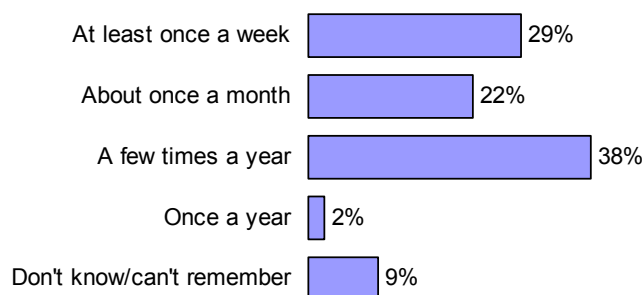


Base: All respondents (Unweighted 2410, Weighted 2074)

The propensity to give unpaid help to someone was significantly lower among socio-economic group DE (37%).

People mostly give unpaid help less regularly (38% a few times a year), although one in three give someone help at least once a week (29%) and 22% help someone once a month. The mean number of hours people have given in the last four weeks to someone who was not a relative is 6.13 hours.

Chart 14 - On average, how often during the last 12 months have you given unpaid help to someone who was not a relative?

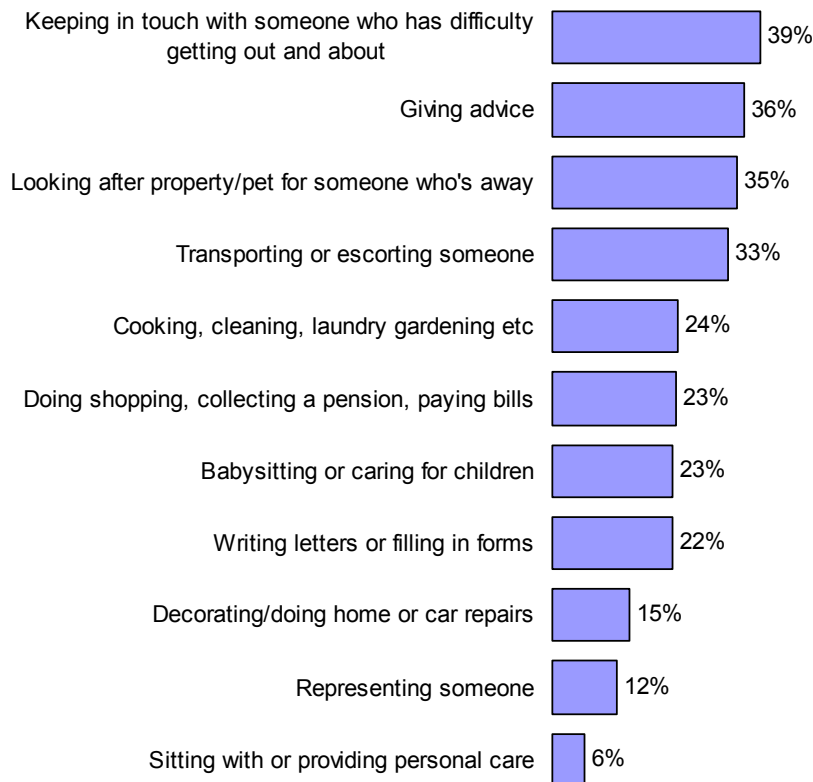


Base: All respondents volunteering informally (Unweighted 1284, Weighted 1065)

People who are over 60 give help more frequently (36% give help at least once a week), but there are no differences in the average number of hours people give.

The most common types of help people give is keeping in touch with someone who has difficulty getting out and about (39%), giving advice (36%), looking after a property or pet for someone who is away (35%), and transporting or escorting someone (33%).

Chart 15 - In which of the following ways have you given unpaid help to someone who was not a relative in the last 12 months?



Base: All respondents volunteering informally (Unweighted 1228, Weighted 1008)

The ways of giving unpaid help differed among the following groups.

- **Babysitting** was more likely when people have their own children (42%), with younger people (16 to 44 years 40%) and among women (30%).
- Men were more likely to help by **decorating or doing home or car repairs** (25%).
- Older people were more likely to **keep in touch** with people (45 to 59 years 42%, over 60s 51%).
- For BME respondents they were more likely to **represent someone** (29%) and less likely to **look after someone's property or pet** while they are away (13%).

6 Appendix

6.1 Socio-Economic-Group Definitions

These groups are based on Market Research Society definitions and on the respondent. They are graded as A, B, C1, C2, D and E.

Group A

- Professional people, very senior managers in business or commerce or top-level civil servants.
- Retired people, previously grade A, and their widows

Group B

- Middle management executives in large organisations, with appropriate qualifications
- Principle officers in local government and civil service
- Top management or owners of small business concerns, educational and service establishments
- Retired people previously grade B, and their widows

Group C1

- Junior management, owners of small establishments, and all others in non-manual positions
- Jobs in this group have very varied responsibilities and educational requirements
- Retired people, previously grade C1, and their widows

Group C2

- All skilled manual workers, and those manual workers for responsibility for other people
- Retired people, previously grade C2, with pensions from their job
- Widows, if receiving pensions from their late partner's job

Group D

- All semi skilled and unskilled manual workers, and apprentices and trainees to skilled workers
- Retired people, previously grade D, with pensions from their late job
- Widows, if receiving pensions from their late partner's job

Group E

- All those entirely dependant on the state long term, through sickness, unemployment, old age or other reasons
- Those unemployed for a period exceeding six months (otherwise classified on previous occupation)
- Casual workers and those without a regular income