

# Stakeholder Survey, 2017

Summary of the survey's findings

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Connecting charities, volunteers and businesses



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## Background to the surveys

As part of our constant drive to develop and improve our services, and to gather evidence on the impact of our work, we run stakeholder surveys every year. In March 2017, we invited our stakeholders to take part in an online survey which asked questions about their:

- group or organisation
- experience of our:
  - advice and support services
  - volunteering services
  - voice and partnership work
  - communications activities
- views on how we can further develop and improve our services

We used our email lists and members e-newsletter to invite our members to complete a members survey. We used our email lists and supporters e-newsletter to invite our supporters to complete a supporters survey. We also emailed over 750 contacts, both members and supporters, from our database that'd used our services since January 2016 to invite them to complete the appropriate survey.

In total, 119 survey responses were analysed. Of these, 97 were responses to our members survey and 22 were responses to our supporters survey. As the questions asked in both surveys were comparable, this summary report provides a summary of both survey responses together. This is to provide as broad an overview as possible of our stakeholders views and experiences of our services. In 2016, 112 survey responses to our stakeholders survey were analysed.

The statistics in this report have been rounded to give whole numbers. Percentages are always shown first, with the total number or respondents in brackets afterwards

## Thank you!

We'd like to say a massive thank you to everyone who took the time to complete our surveys and provide us with their thoughts on how we're doing, the impact of our work on their organisation, and some pearls of wisdom on how we can improve. Your thoughts and reflections will help to ensure we are meeting the needs of our members and our supporters, as well as providing us with invaluable information for our funding bids and monitoring reports, to ensure that we can continue to be here.

If reading this report inspires you with more ideas, or if you have any feedback about our services, get in touch with us on [info@bhcommunityworks.org.uk](mailto:info@bhcommunityworks.org.uk) or 01273 234023

### Alternative formats

If you require this information in a different format, get in touch with us on [info@bhcommunityworks.org.uk](mailto:info@bhcommunityworks.org.uk) or 01273 234023

## Summary analysis of survey results

### Section one: who completed the surveys

Of those who completed our survey:

- 82% (n.97) were from member organisations. This represents 18% of our current membership of 529
- 10% (n.12) were supporters from non-member, voluntary or community organisations
- 8% (n.9) were supporters from public sector organisations



- 4% (n.5) were volunteers
- 19% (n.22 members and n.1 supporter) were chairs, trustees or committee members  
12% (n.13 members and n.1 supporter) were volunteer managers or co-ordinators. This represents approximately 5% of our volunteer co-ordinators network of 286. Although we believe that approximately 20-30 people who manage or co-ordinate volunteers actually completed the survey, but didn't identify their job title as being a volunteer manager or co-ordinator

- 33% (n.32) were members from small organisations with an income of less than £35,000
- 29% (n.28) were members from medium-sized organisations with an income between £35,000 to £500,000
- 29% (n.27) were members from large organisations with an income over £500,000



- 36% (n.35) were from member organisations which work with people with a protected characteristic as defined by the Equalities Act

## Section two: experiences of our services and support

Those who completed our survey said:

- our most used services, over the last 12 months, were: our training courses and our workshops, followed by our members conferences, our network meetings, our members directory and our position statements
- the services most people would consider using in the future include:
  - our one-to-one volunteering development support and volunteering good practice guide, followed by
  - our consultants and governance network, followed by
  - our mentoring programme and volunteer co-ordinators forum, followed by
  - our business volunteers and taking account reports
- The services most people didn't know we offered include: our read a funding bid service and one-to-one volunteering development support, followed by our action learning sets, consultants, and our business volunteers

- 68% (n.67 members and 14 supporters) said it was often or always possible to put the skills, knowledge and experience gained through our services and support to practical use in developing and improving their group or organisation



- 26% (n.17 members and n.5 supporters) told us how their group or organisation had developed or improved as a result of using our services or support, and indicated that this resulted in better services or activities for the people who use their group or organisation's services in the following ways.
  - more and more accessible services for residents
  - more awareness amongst service providers of services for residents
  - more connections between services providers
  - more volunteers, and more individuals benefiting from the positive impacts of volunteering
  - more awareness by residents of what's happening locally
  - more support for vulnerable people and communities
  - more cost effective use of resources
  - improvements in the way services worked with people

This year we also asked our members (n.97) about their support needs. Of those who responded (n.84):

- 68% (n.21 and n.45) said their organisation needed a lot or a little support around fundraising
- 56% (n.16 and n.38) said their organisation needed a lot or a little support around communications and marketing, and partnership and collaboration
- 56% (n.15 and n.39) said their organisation needed a lot or a little support around monitoring, evaluation and impact
- 51% (n.10 and n.39) said their organisation needed a lot or a little support around volunteering development
- 47% (n.14 and n.32) said their organisation needed a lot or a little support around governance and trusteeship

***“Your bid reading service has been very helpful and two successful bids to the Big Lottery were done with your help! You also provided this service at very short notice, gave very thorough and thoughtful feedback and advice. I was so impressed with this service; it helped me feel confident that our bids were as good as could be. Your help with developing partnerships with other local voluntary and community organisations was instrumental in us securing sustainability funding. Your help with funding bids has benefitted LGBTQ communities who are in financial hardship, and will do so for the next 5 years.”*** Helen Jones, MindOut LGBT Mental Health Project

***“You has been very helpful in developing a number of initiatives where the City Council had been supporting community and voluntary sector activity but did not have the capacity or detailed knowledge to advise those trying to get their organisations off the ground. The initiatives you’ve helped with will hopefully lead to improved reporting of hate crime in the city and improved co-ordination of services to refugees in the city.”*** Lucy Bryson, Brighton and Hove City Council

***“We get a fair amount of our volunteers through your site, and as a result we have been offering volunteering places to people of all ages, backgrounds, gender, etc. Your services and support have helped us in our thinking about links with other organisations and communities, addressing local issues, and developing our organisation’s governance, structure and funding. This has made our services more visible, better known about and more accessible to people from diverse communities.”*** Volunteer manager/Co-ordinator



## Section three: volunteering services

Of those who used our volunteering service::

- 72% (n.35 members and n.3 supporters) said that advertising a volunteering opportunity through us greatly helped or helped them to find a volunteer
- 53% (n.27 members and n.1 supporter) said that advertising a volunteering opportunity through us greatly helped or helped them to find a diverse range of volunteers
- 55% (n.28 members and n.1 supporter) said that advertising a volunteering opportunity through us greatly helped or helped them to find volunteers they wouldn't have been able to otherwise
- 64% (n.31 members and n.3 supporters) said that advertising a volunteering opportunity through us greatly helped or helped them to fill their vacant volunteer opportunities

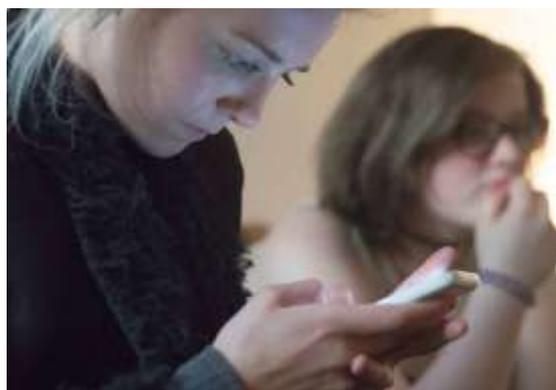
***"It is so great that anyone wanting to volunteer can find such a wealth of opportunities. And if they want to contact us, they can do so easily."***  
Volunteer manager/co-ordinator



- 54% (n.26 members and n. 1 supporter) said the do-it website was very good or good for advertising volunteering opportunities

***"We get fairly regular volunteer enquiries through Do-it, and we find it a useful tool."*** Manager, medium-sized organisation

- 40% (n.13 members and n.1 supporter) said that seeking advice on volunteer recruitment through us greatly helped or helped them to find a volunteer
- 37% (n.11 members and n.1 supporter) said that seeking advice on volunteer recruitment through us greatly helped or helped them to find a diverse range of volunteers
- 40% (n.14 and n.0 supporters) said that seeking advice on volunteer recruitment through us greatly helped or helped them to find volunteers they wouldn't have been able to otherwise
- 40% (n.13 members and n.1 supporter) said that seeking advice on volunteer recruitment through us greatly helped or helped them to fill their vacant volunteer opportunities



***"We have used your excellent standards to review our volunteer policy and procedures here."*** Daniel O'Connell, Brighton Housing Trust

## Section four: voice and partnerships work

Of those who completed our survey:

- 83% (n.75 members and n.13 supporters) said we champion the views of smaller groups and organisations
- 76% (n.69 members and n.12 supporters) said that we champion the experience of less often heard people and groups
- 88% (n.80 members and n.13 supporters) said we champion volunteering in the city
- 86% (n.78 members and n.13 supporters) said we build constructive relationships between the sectors. In comparison to 64% (n.72) in 2016
- 83% (n.80 members and n.8 supporters) said we effectively represent the views of the voluntary and community sector
- 79% (n.75 members and n.9 supporters) said we effectively influence strategies, plans and services

***“Community Works is never afraid to represent the voice of its members and the wider community even when this is not the most welcome voice in the room.”*** Jessica Sumner, Age Uk Brighton and Hove

***“We need Community Works’ professional approach as we don’t have the time, contacts or skill base to do what you all do so well.”*** Clair Barnard, Early Childhood Project

- 58% (n.56 members and n.5 supporters) said our services and support greatly helped or helped their group or organisation to get their voice heard about issues that affect it
- 75% (n.71 members and n.9 supporters) said our services and support greatly helped or helped their group or organisation to have a better understanding of local policies and strategies
- 75% (n.71 members and n.9 supporters) said our services and support greatly helped or helped their group or organisation to share knowledge and information with their peers
- 72% (n.68 members and n.8 supporters) said our services and support greatly helped or helped their group or organisation to develop partnerships with other voluntary and community sector groups and organisations
- 53% (n.52 members and n.4 supporters) said our services and support greatly helped or helped their group or organisation to develop partnerships with public sector services and representatives
- 65% (n.61 members and n.8 supporters) said our services and support greatly helped or helped their group or organisation to develop the skills, knowledge and confidence to get involved



- 50% (n.51 members and n.2 supporters) said our services and support greatly helped or helped their group or organisation to engage in decision making around service delivery
- 52% (n.52 members and n.3 supporters) said our services and support greatly helped or helped their group or organisation to influence local strategies, plans and policies
- 38% (n.37 members and n.8 supporters) of respondents told us their group or organisation has worked in partnership as a result of using our services or support, and indicated that this had resulted in better services or activities for the people who use their group or organisation's services in the following ways:

- more and more relevant services for residents
- more services for different communities
- more residents can access the services they need
- more funding for services
- connect with other organisations
- promoted joint working



***“We've partnered with the Survivors Network to provide garden opportunities for their clients. Who may otherwise not have accessed our garden opportunities. Being a member allows other projects to find and connect with us more easily and can lead to partnership working opportunities like this.”*** Emma Houldsworth, Plot 22

***“Community Works has helped us to create a directory of services for refugees and migrants which has led to greater knowledge in our refugee 'sector' about who is doing what and has promoted joint working.”*** Lucy Bryson, Brighton and Hove City Council

***“Attending your volunteer co-ordinators forum and other events (conferences and training) has enabled us to spread knowledge and information about our services and how we can help and support other organisations. It is a great networking opportunity which means There is a greater chance that potential SIS service users will be signposted to us as a result of networking opportunities with other organisations.”*** Vikki Gimson, Sussex Interpreting Services

## Section five: communications activities

Of those who completed our survey:

- 28% (n.26 members and n.4 supporters) visit our website on a weekly or monthly basis, and 37% (n.41 members and n.7 supporters) visit it less than monthly
- 11% (n.11 members and n.1 supporter) use our page for advertising volunteering opportunities on a weekly or monthly basis, and 21% (n.20 members and n.3 supporters) use it less than monthly
- 51% (n.50 members and n.5 supporters) read our e-newsletter weekly or monthly
- 37% (n.39 members and n.1 supporter) use our email lists weekly or monthly



- 71% (n.61 members and n.12 supporters) said the quality of our website is very good or good
- 66% (n.62 members and n.6 supporters) said the quality of our e-newsletter is very good or good
- 55% (n.54 members and n.3 supporters) said the quality of our email lists are very good or good
- 35% (n.31 members and n.5 supporters) said the quality of our page for advertising volunteering opportunities is very good or good

***“Your email lists are very useful, both for sharing our own information and finding out about other opportunities and groups.”*** Abi Jones, Artspace Brighton

***“I need the newsletter to keep up to date.”*** Clair Barnard, Early Childhood Project

- 36% (n.31 members and n.6 supporters) said the language we use is very easy to understand and 56% (n.48 members and n.10 supporters) said the language we use is easy to understand
- The types of information most of our members and supporters want to hear from us is: changes to local services, opportunities to work in partnership with voluntary and community organisations, updates on issues effecting voluntary and community organisations, funding opportunities, changes to local government policies and plans, member events and local voluntary and community activities
- 78% (n.69 members and n.14 supporters) want to receive information from us via targeted email
- 50% (n.45 members and n.8 supporters) want to receive information from us via a regular e-newsletter
- 47% (n.46 members and n.4 supporters) want to receive information from us via our email-lists

## Section six: developing and improving our services

Those who completed our survey said:

- 87% (n.94 members and supporters) said that the quality of our services and support is very good or good

***“Community Works staff are personable, approachable, professional and highly knowledgeable.”*** Dominique De-Light, Creative Future

***“Very helpful and flexible partners to work with.”*** Lucy Bryson, Brighton and Hove City Council

***“When I need to confer about something I know I can ring your office and speak to someone with knowledge and expertise.”*** Emily Ballantyne, Citizens Advice Bureau

***“The staff have been incredibly helpful and friendly in their approach, they have enabled us to open doors that we didn't realise were there.”***  
Manager, Voluntary and community organisation

- However, respondents also identified two key areas of improvement for us:
  - producing and circulating information about our services and stories about how we support organisations and what we offer
  - communicating and re-iterating our support offer to small voluntary and community groups
- 75% (n.80 members and n.16 supporters) said we are very friendly
- 92% (n.84 members and n.14 supporters) said we are very respectful
- 92% (n.84 members and n.14 supporters) said we are very knowledgeable
- 92% (n.83 members and n.15 supporters) said we are very professional
- 85% (n.76 members and n.14 supporters) said we are very responsive
- 82% (n.72 members and n.15 supporters) said we are very accessible
- 86% (n.78 members and n.13 supporters) said we are very inclusive
- 65% (n.60 members and n.9 supporters) said we are very creative

***“Couldn't be more helpful, professional, relevant or friendly!”*** Volunteer Manager/Co-ordinator, Large community organisation

***“Every city should have a community support group like you!”*** Volunteer Manager/Co-ordinator, Small community organisation

***“It means a great deal to our small charity to have the support of Community Works. Knowing we can seek professional advice on decisions around policy, governance, etc, gives us a feeling of security and confidence.”*** Abi Jones, Artspace Brighton

## Section seven: working with us

Of those who completed our survey:

- 61% (n.59) said what it meant to them and their group or organisation to be a member of ours and the outcomes that this achieves. Some of these include:
  - they're better networked, informed, connected, and knowledgeable
  - they're better able to work in partnership and collaborate
  - they've better access to and an increased number of volunteers
  - they've better access to a wider diversity of people and organisations
  - they're better able to sustain their services and organisation
  - they know how they fit into, and can influence local thinking and policy



- In turn, these outcomes impact on the city the following ways:
  - better relations between sectors and service providers
  - stronger more effective voluntary and community organisations
  - more accessible and better services for residents
  - more volunteers and more individuals benefiting from the positive impacts of volunteering
  - more resilient and communities



***"Its excellent to have a knowledgeable, accessible and supportive umbrella organisation. We're better informed, better connected, more confident and able as a result of being a Community Works member." MindOut has benefitted hugely, as do our beneficiaries.*** Helen Jones, Mind Out LGBT Mental Health Project

***"By being a member we feel part of a bigger whole across the city and we can share more widely than within our local neighbourhood."*** Trustee/Committee Member, small community organisation

**“Connection, collaboration, knowledge – you give us access to wider diversity of people and services for promoting our work and learning from others.”** Emma Houldsworth, Plot 22

**“As the only volunteer coordinator in our service, it helps make me feel part of something larger, and enables me to meet other coordinators and to learn from them.”** Volunteer Manger/Co-ordinator, Large community organisation

**“We are stronger together and Community Works delivers a powerful, co-ordinated voice for the sector. Being a member gives us greater capacity to support our clients, and to develop and sustain the organisation.”** Chief Officer, medium-sized

- 68% (n.15) of supporters said what it meant to them and their organisation to work with us, and the outcomes that this achieves. Some of these include:
  - they’re better networked, informed, connected, and more knowledgeable
  - they’re better able to work in partnership and collaborate
  - they understand communities better
  - they’ve access to a central point of contact on and an expert in the voluntary and community sector
  - they’ve access to the wider community and to volunteers
- In turn, these outcomes impact on the city the following ways:
  - better relations between sectors and service providers
  - better services for residents
  - more successful outcomes for vulnerable residents
  - more resilient communities
  - more volunteers and more individuals benefiting from the positive impacts of volunteering



**“You’re a healthy and fruitful connector to the voluntary and community sector and to health partners. Working with you results in more successful outcomes for the people we work with who don’t have eligible need under the Care Act but for whom their health and wellbeing can be improved and thus prevents deterioration n of health and reduces the likelihood of social car e needs in the future.”** Abbe Boeg, Brighton and Hove City Council

**“You’re central to our team's work and purpose, and it’s very valuable to me to know that I can confidently recommend working with you to other services. It’s also good to get constructive challenge and the 'push' to keep us learning and improving. As a result of working with you we understand the city and its communities better which means we can provide better services in better ways.”** Manager, public sector organisation

## Section eight: you said, we will

We're extremely grateful for all the feedback provided by respondents to the survey. Based on the collective feedback provided, we've identified a number of improvements to make:

### Improvements to the survey

Action	By when	By whom
Find an alternative way of surveying/getting feedback from businesses	December 2017	Libby/Laura
Consider additional mechanisms for seeking feedback from small organisations	December 2017	Libby/Alison
Consider additional mechanisms for seeking feedback from volunteer managers/co-ordinators	December 2017	Libby/Alison
Review Q7 in surveys, options for helped and greatly helped are in the wrong order	December 2017	Libby
Review Q19 & 20, to make clearer it is about our interventions and/or consider dropping Q all together	December 2017	Libby

### Improvements to our services and support

Action	By when	By whom
Promote our read a funding bid service and one-to-one volunteering development support, action learning sets, consultants, and our business volunteers	March 2018	Libby
Provide engaging and accessible ways of explaining what are services are and how they can help our members and supporters	March 2018	Libby
Ensure that our advice and recommendations are appropriate for small organisations	March 2018	Alison
Ensure that our training descriptions are as explicit as possible about the courses and the outcomes participants will gain from attending	October 2017	Alison
Explore ways we can prioritise following up on membership with non-members and new members which includes an explanation of our services and how we can help	March 2018	Laura
Explore ways we can help our members and supporters to better understand and be aware of how our voice and partnership work benefits them	March 2018	Laura
Clarify the purpose and audience of our linked in profile and adjust posts/information as required	October 2017	Libby
Improve website navigation for members services (particularly training), and reduce content of editorial bits so get to the point of the content	October 2017	Libby

quicker		
Continue to reduce content of the newsletter, make the sections clearer, and increase the font size	October 2017	Libby
Share suggestions on ways that members can manage email list overload and any options for reducing emails further emails	October 2017	Libby
Explore ways that we can more easily send targeted emails to both our members and our supporters, and how this is balanced between communication via email-lists and e-newsletter	October 2017	Libby
Produce and circulate information about our services and stories about how we support organisations and what we offer	March 2017	Libby
Communicate and re-iterate our support offer to small organisations	July 2017	Alison/Libby
Review all suggestions under this section for other ideas on how we could improve and embed into our work plans	July 2017	Sally/Alison/Laura/Libby
Consider ways we can embed more creativity into our services and support and embed into our work plans	July 2017	Sally/Alison/Laura/Libby

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Voluntary and community action makes our society and local areas better. We're here to make sure that it does.

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