

Shropshire's Voluntary and Community Sector

Understanding more about the VCS and its contribution to Shropshire



The information below is presented in another format within the VCSA Evidence Base 2014.

The voluntary and community sector (VCS) is well placed to meet the challenges ahead and deliver the support required by communities and individuals with the greatest needs. Understanding the VCS and the contribution it makes to the economy and wider society is important alongside gaining an understanding of local needs and the issues service users are highlighting. The size and scale of Shropshire's Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) is significant and its role in promoting economic growth and social value should not be underestimated.

Size and scale of the sector

- There are approximately 1,184 registered voluntary sector organisations in Shropshireⁱ.
- Research suggests that there are a further 1,127 small, informal community groups in operation within Shropshire.ⁱⁱ Those community groups may not offer more formal services and support but play an essential role in forming the social networks and community resilience that help prevent social isolation.
- The Voluntary sector remains an area of growth within the UK. At the national level the Charity Commission registers at least 2,500 organisations every year. In 2011, 5,020 new general charities were registered.ⁱⁱⁱ Despite overall growth in the voluntary sector nationally, the size of the voluntary sector in Shropshire has reduced. Between 2008 and 2010 the estimated number of registered voluntary organisations in Shropshire decreased by 13.5%.^{iv} If this trend continues, levels of need could increase, leaving more individuals and families without the support they require.

The economic contribution of the VCS

Whilst the majority of the voluntary and community sector organisations working in Shropshire may not primarily regard economic development as one of their main or intended outcomes, they do recognise their role in the successful delivery of their services as an engine for economic growth.

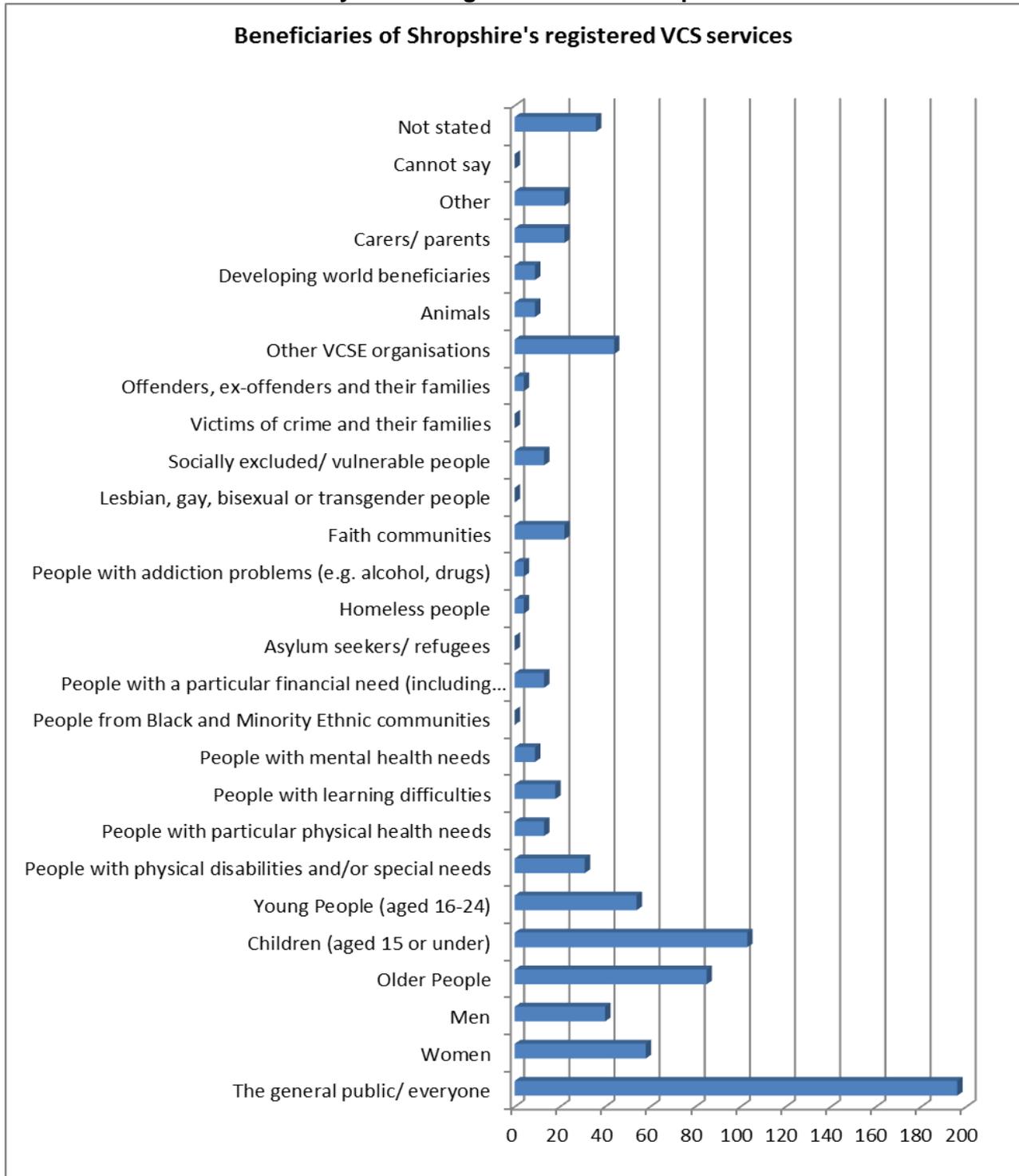
- The voluntary sector contributes £11.1 billion to UK gross value added, equivalent to 0.8% of the whole of the UK GVA (a greater contribution than that made by agriculture standing at £8.3 billion).^v
- The total UK income of voluntary organisations in 2010/11 was £38.3 billion (this figure includes £ 2.0 billion of grants from voluntary organisations which is arguably double counting). The income of the private sector was £1.7 billion.^{vi}
- In Shropshire 19% of voluntary sector organisations have an annual income of £60,001 or over, 8% have an annual income of between £30,001 and £60,000, 17 % have an annual income of between £10,001 and £30,000 and 48% have an annual income of £10,000 or less.
- The Marches voluntary sector also plays an important contribution to the local economy through inward investment. Perhaps the main voluntary sector funder is the National Lottery, which has contributed £30,863,228 Shropshire since 1st April 2011 (a significant proportion of that income coming through the local voluntary sector). This was significantly more than neighbouring local authorities, Telford and Wrekin accessed £3,799,654 and Herefordshire accessed £11,246,250.

VCS services and activity

- In 2010 53% of registered voluntary sector organisations surveyed indicated that they work in a way that fits the model of a social enterprise.^{vii}

- 21% of organisations surveyed deliver activity that supports other voluntary and community groups (VCS infrastructure support).^{viii}
- 30% of Shropshire's VCS organisations work to support the Local Authority Area of Shropshire or a neighbourhood within it.^{ix}
- Registered voluntary sector organisations working in Shropshire offer a diverse range of services and meet the needs of a diversity of different social groups and individuals (see chart below).^x The voluntary sector contains both generic and highly specialist services and groups equipped to deal with many of the mental, physical needs, lifestyles and circumstances that can lead to social exclusion.

Main beneficiaries of Voluntary Sector organisations in Shropshire



Employment and the Voluntary Sector

Although the size of voluntary sector organisations in Shropshire tends to be small and most can be considered micro- enterprises, the volume of micro enterprises the sector provides collectively generates a significant source of employment.

- Nationally the voluntary sector employs 2.6% of the UK workforce.^{xi}
- Shropshire's voluntary sector employs an estimated 2,920 people.^{xii}
- A survey of 446 of Shropshire's voluntary sector organisations showed that 22% of the sector employs between 1 and 5 Full Time Equivalent (FTE employees), 2% employ 6-10 FTE, 2% employ 11-30 people, 3% employ 31 or more people.^{xiii}
- The Voluntary sector provides a skilled workforce with significantly more voluntary sector employees educated to degree level (38% of the workforce) and higher education level (14%) compared to the private sector (23% have degrees and 8% received higher education).^{xiv}
- National research has shown that the majority of voluntary organisations (56%) provide both on-the-job and off-the-job training in their organisation.^{xv}

Volunteering and its contribution

Volunteering is an important contributor to the local economy, and also provides essential unpaid support, often to those most under represented and socially excluded. Volunteering is also a key way of developing the skills, experience and confidence that allow many individuals to move on to find paid employment.

- Shropshire is home to approximately 135,611 formal volunteers and of those 89,380 volunteer regularly (at least once a month).^{xvi}
- Approximately 191,088 people living in Shropshire informally volunteer and of those 110,954 volunteer regularly (at least once a month).^{xvii}
- Every hour worked by Shropshire's army of 221,909 volunteers contributes just under £1.8 million (£1,775,272 million) to the local economy; based on Shropshire's average part time working wage of £8 an hour. (If the full time working wage was used at £10.42 an hour then the value would be £2,312,291).^{xviii}
- A survey of 446 of Shropshire's registered voluntary sector organisations, showed only 4% don't work with volunteers. 43% have between 1 and 10 volunteers, 26% have between 11 and 20 volunteers, 8% have between 21 and 30 volunteers, 13% have 31 or more volunteers.
- Research shows that as many as 1 in 5 volunteers (22%) go on to find paid work after volunteering.^{xix}

Case Study – Information, Advice, Advocacy and Guidance

Six members of Shropshire VCS Assembly recently undertook research to calculate their impact (Age UK, Citizen's Advice Shropshire, A4U, MAYSI, Taking Part and OSCA). The findings showed:

- The full cost recovery of Information, Advice, Advocacy and Guidance (IAAG) came to £1,349,161. Shropshire Council contributed £645,521 to that total. Over 53% comes from other funding streams.
- The 6 organisations employ 62 trained, experienced members of staff.
- Volunteers provide 34,777 hours of IAAG. Worth £347,777 (based on £10 an hour – slightly below Shropshire's average full time working wage).
- 4 of the partners calculated their networks which totalled 1,130 staff and volunteers.
- Paid staff members also undertake voluntary work calculated at 5,318 hours for all 6 partners.
- The 6 partners bring £4 million of benefits revenue into the county through the advice offered.
- Of 2,341 clients supported with debt issues, the savings are thought to total just over £9 million. Savings on homelessness are thought to total just over £2.6 million. (Figures based on national savings figures produced by the national office of Citizens Advice).

Understanding the contribution the voluntary sector makes is important, and will help inform changes in the way Shropshire's Voluntary and Community Sector works in light of changing economic and social circumstances and National Government policy.

References

- ⁱ National Survey of Charities and Social Enterprises 2010 Cabinet Office, Office for Civil Society <http://www.nscsesurvey.com/results2010/download/>
- ⁱⁱ There are approximately 3.66 'below the radar' unregistered community groups per 1,000 population. Mohan et al, Beyond Flat Earth maps of the third sector: enhancing our understanding of the contribution of 'below the radar' organisations. Briefing Paper February 2010, Northern Rock Foundation. <http://www.nr-foundation.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2011/08/NRF-TST-Report-Beyond-Flat-Earth.pdf>
- ⁱⁱⁱ NCVO UK Civil Society Almanac 2013, NCVO 2013. <http://data.ncvo.org.uk/a/almanac13/almanac/voluntary-sector/scope/is-the-number-of-voluntary-organisations-increasing-2/>
- ^{iv} National Survey of Charities and Social Enterprises 2008 and 2010 Cabinet Office, Office for Civil Society <http://www.nscsesurvey.com/results2010/download/>
- ^v NCVO UK Civil Society Almanac 2013, NCVO 2013. <http://data.ncvo.org.uk/a/almanac13/almanac/voluntary-sector/finance-the-big-picture/what-is-the-voluntary-sectors-contribution-to-the-economy/> Based on data from the Office for National Statistics' Blue Book see: <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/naa1-rd/united-kingdom-national-accounts/the-blue-book--2012-edition/index.html>
- ^{vi} NCVO UK Civil Society Almanac 2013, NCVO 2013. <http://data.ncvo.org.uk/a/almanac13/almanac/voluntary-sector/income/what-is-the-voluntary-sectors-income/#/~total-income/private-sector>
- ^{vii} Shropshire report, National Survey of Charities and Social Enterprises 2010 Cabinet Office, Office for Civil Society. <http://www.nscsesurvey.com/results2010/download/>
- ^{viii} Shropshire report, National Survey of Charities and Social Enterprises 2010 Cabinet Office, Office for Civil Society. <http://www.nscsesurvey.com/results2010/download/>
- ^{ix} Shropshire report, National Survey of Charities and Social Enterprises 2010 Cabinet Office, Office for Civil Society. <http://www.nscsesurvey.com/results2010/download/>
- ^x Shropshire report, National Survey of Charities and Social Enterprises 2010 Cabinet Office, Office for Civil Society. <http://www.nscsesurvey.com/results2010/download/>
- ^{xi} NCVO UK Civil Society Almanac 2013, NCVO 2013.
- ^{xii} The NCVO Almanac 2013 suggests that 2.6% of the workforce is employed by the Voluntary Sector. NCVO UK Civil Society Almanac 2013, NCVO 2013. See: <http://data.ncvo.org.uk/> and Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings, 2013 Provisional Results ONS Crown Copyright Reserved [from Nomis on 19 December 2013]. <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/publications/re-reference-tables.html?edition=tcn%3A77-328216>
- ^{xiii} Shropshire report, National Survey of Charities and Social Enterprises 2010 Cabinet Office, Office for Civil Society. <http://www.nscsesurvey.com/results2010/download/>
- ^{xiv} NCVO UK Civil Society Almanac 2013, NCVO 2013 <http://data.ncvo.org.uk/a/almanac13/almanac/voluntary-sector/work/what-skills-are-required-in-the-voluntary-sector-2/>
- ^{xv} NCVO UK Civil Society Almanac 2013, NCVO 2013 <http://data.ncvo.org.uk/a/almanac13/almanac/voluntary-sector/work/what-training-opportunities-are-there-in-the-voluntary-sector-2/>
- ^{xvi} Formal volunteering means giving unpaid help through groups, clubs or organisations to benefit other people or the environment. Cabinet office Findings from the 2012-2013 Community Life Survey, Giving of time and money, TNS BMRB July 2013 <http://communitylife.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/explore-the-data.html>

^{xvii} Informal volunteering means giving unpaid help as an individual to people who are not relatives. Cabinet office Findings from the 2012-2013 Community Life Survey, Giving of time and money, TNS BMRB July 2013 <http://communitylife.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/explore-the-data.html>

^{xviii} Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings, 2013 Provisional Results ONS Crown Copyright Reserved [from Nomis on 19 December 2013].
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^{xix} Nadia Bashir et. al. Final evaluation of the Volunteering for Stronger Communities Project 2012-13, Centre for Regional Economic and Social Research, Sheffield Hallam University, November 2013.