

Thriving or Surviving Members' Survey 2019



The Voluntary and Community Sector in Mid Sussex.



**334 Member Groups
(March 2019)**

**15% of Member Groups
Responded**



**Top 3 Challenges Facing Member
Groups in 2019 are:**

- Finding funding 61%
- Volunteer recruitment 37%
- Support to grow and develop 34%



**What Support does Your Group
need to Grow?**

- Help with finding funding 64%
- Legal advice 57%
- Support from business 50%



**Top 3 Issues Facing your Local
Community in 2019 are:**

- Ageing population 46%
- Social isolation 42%
- Mental health 22%



Top 3 Services from MSVA are:

- E Bulletin
- Training/networks and forums
- Speaking up for the voluntary sector

**What Could MSVA do in the
Future?**

- Set up a peer mentoring service of experienced individuals to support "start-up" charities
- Set up networking events between businesses and local charities

**Have you used the West Sussex
Crowdfunding Page?**

- No 96%
- Yes 4%



Achievements of the Voluntary and Community Sector in Mid Sussex in 2018/19.



- Reaching over 1,000 volunteer supporters resulting in over 56,664 hours of support. 54% of our new volunteers are under 25. (St Catherine's Hospice)
- Beginning to make positive shifts in diversifying our volunteer group and reaching out to new groups. (National Trust @Standen)



- Running a first class service for the community providing a home cooked meal and social interaction, at very little cost. (Ashurst Wood Community Café)
- 500 Christmas meals served. (Age UK East Grinstead)
- MSDC community award. (HOPE)
- Being able to resolve isolation and loneliness (MSOPC)
- Making a difference in the community. (Bentswood Community Partnership)
- A new climbing frame for the children's playground. (Albourne Parish Council)
- We opened!! And had our first person find a job within 2 weeks of opening. (Hope Job Club)



- Getting registered as a UK charity, recruiting new members, new trustees, strategic plans developed. Our focus is on fundraising now. (Treat Me Kind International)
- Putting £40k into the community. Installing new defibrillators and supporting Burgess Hill Community Radio103.8FM (Burgess Hill and District Lions Club)
- Raised funds to improve accessibility and inclusion within the centre and across all activities. (Hindlead Warren Outdoor Adventure Centre)
- Raising money for Chestnut Tree House, our young members receiving Girl guiding Awards including Gold Duke of Edinburgh (Girl guiding)
- Wonderful theatre performances, successful fundraising and an income over £20,000 (Pericles Theatre Co)



- 55 UK Youth Achievement Awards.
- 20 years of our Sight Care Advisor Service. Reaching 2000 registered members (4 Sight)
- 50 years anniversary (8th Burgess Hill Scout Group)

Comments on how MSVA has helped the Voluntary and Community Sector.

"The staff's welcoming attitude towards helping us has been a real boon in overcoming difficulties in applying for charitable status." EG LAT

"We believe MSVA do a great job and help local charities across the region."

St Catherine's Hospice

"A helpful reference point and source of training. "

Ashurst Wood Community Cafe

"The staff are lovely, very enthusiastic, well informed and always willing to help with whatever and if they don't have the answer, they go and look for it!" MSOPC

"MSVA communicates well. Gives excellent service and is always prepared to go the extra mile"

Burgess Hill and District Lions

"Really appreciate having someone at the end of the phone/email to run things by"

Hope Job Club

"A valued service providing information, co-ordination and support."

Mid Sussex Mencap

"I primarily thought of MSVA for volunteer support but you do so much more"

Borde Hill Gardens

"Love you all. Just keep doing what you are doing. It works."

Age Concern Hassocks and District.

"All the workshops and training courses we have attended have been well organised."

Forest Row Village Hall

"Being able to access MSVA's help, resources and updates is helpful. The network and training events with other charities are helpful too."

Friends of Woodlands Meed

Analysis of Feedback

Within your organisation what is the number of full time staff/part time staff/volunteers/committee members/service users?

We received 54 replies.

Number of full time staff	195
Number of part time staff	549
Number of volunteers	Approximately 4,205 *
Number of committee members/trustees	364
Number of service users	In excess of 60,000 *

*Many of the organisations are small grassroots organisations with between 10 – 50 volunteers, however we also received responses from St Catherine’s Hospice who have over 1,000 volunteers helping them each year, the National Trust at Standen who have over 500 volunteers and 4 Sight who have over 300 volunteers.

The economic value of this volunteering can be calculated as £8,048,370 using the following formula:

$$\textit{The number of volunteers} \times \textit{average number of hours} \times \textit{average hourly wage}$$

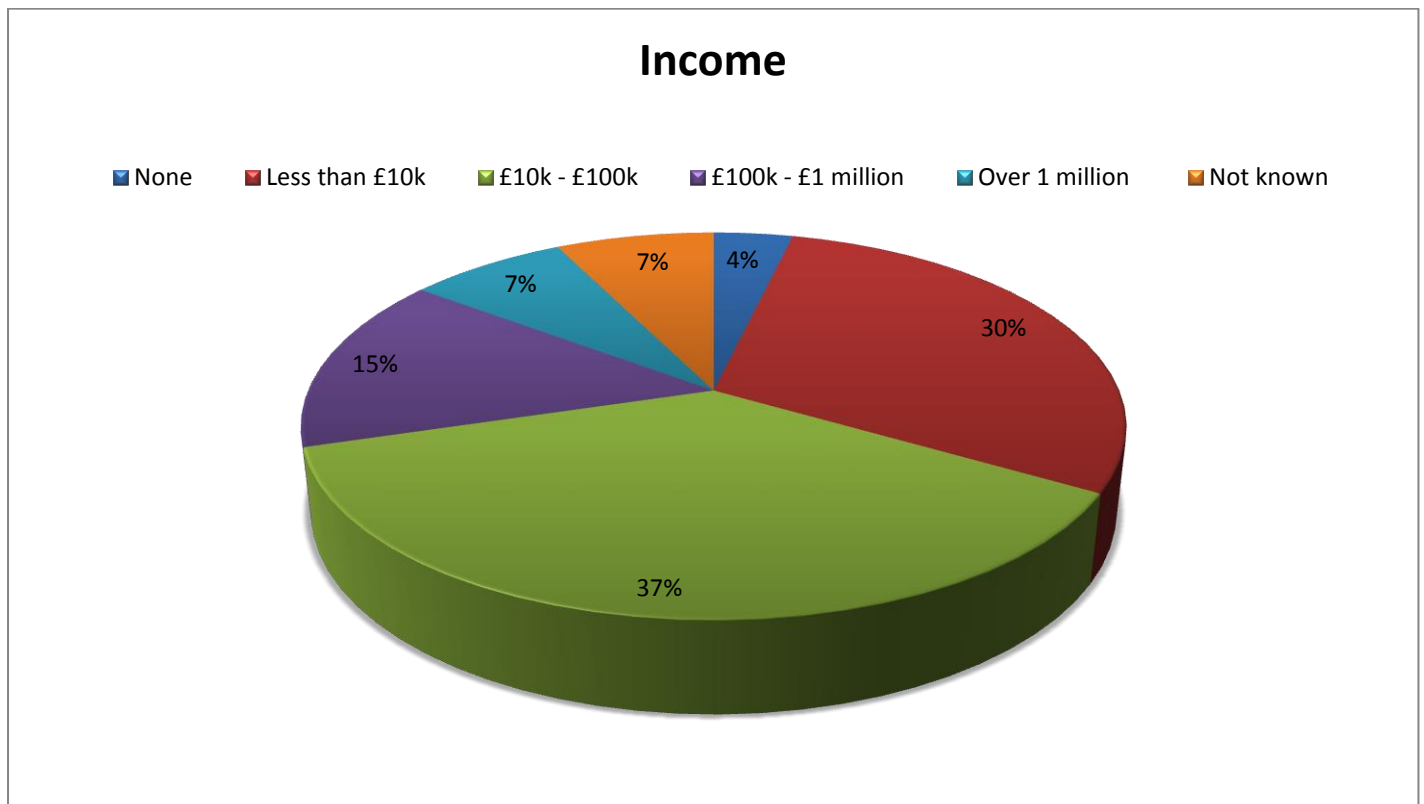
The number of service users is difficult to quantify as some responders did not include a number and one responder was Forest Row Parish Council who serve all the residents of Forest Row and Ashurst Wood.

Compared to last year how have these numbers changed?

We received 56 replies

	Increased	Stayed the Same	Decreased
Number of full time staff	6	35	1
Number of part time staff	12	31	2
Number of volunteers	20	29	5
Number of committee members/trustees	15	33	4
Number of service users	23	19	3

What was the income of your organisation in 2018/19?



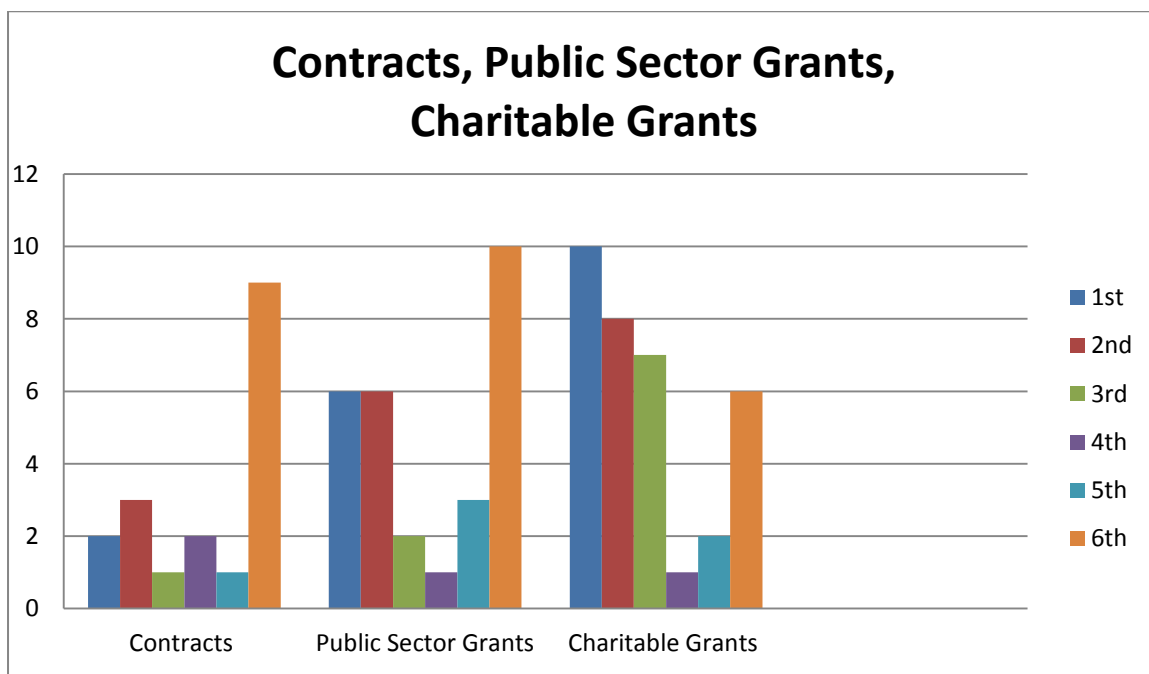
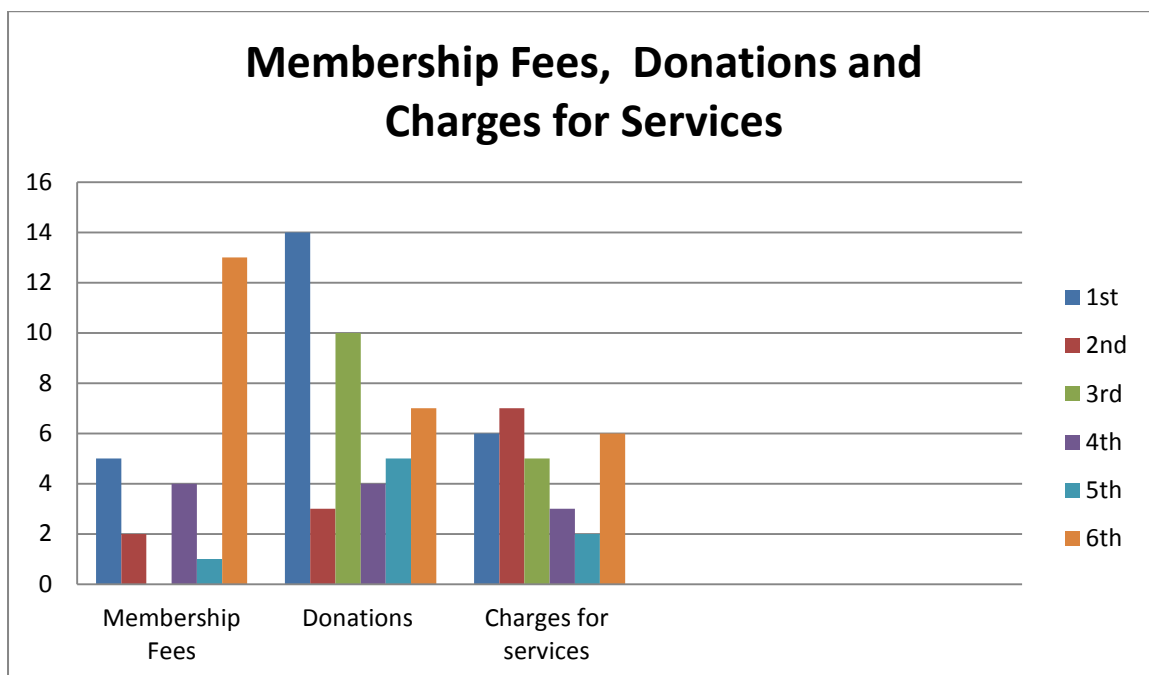
Please tell us how you achieved your income in 2018/19?

Membership fee	25
Donations	43
Charging for services	29
Contracts	18
Public sector grant	28
Charitable grant (eg The Big Lottery, SCF)	34

Other methods of raising income included:

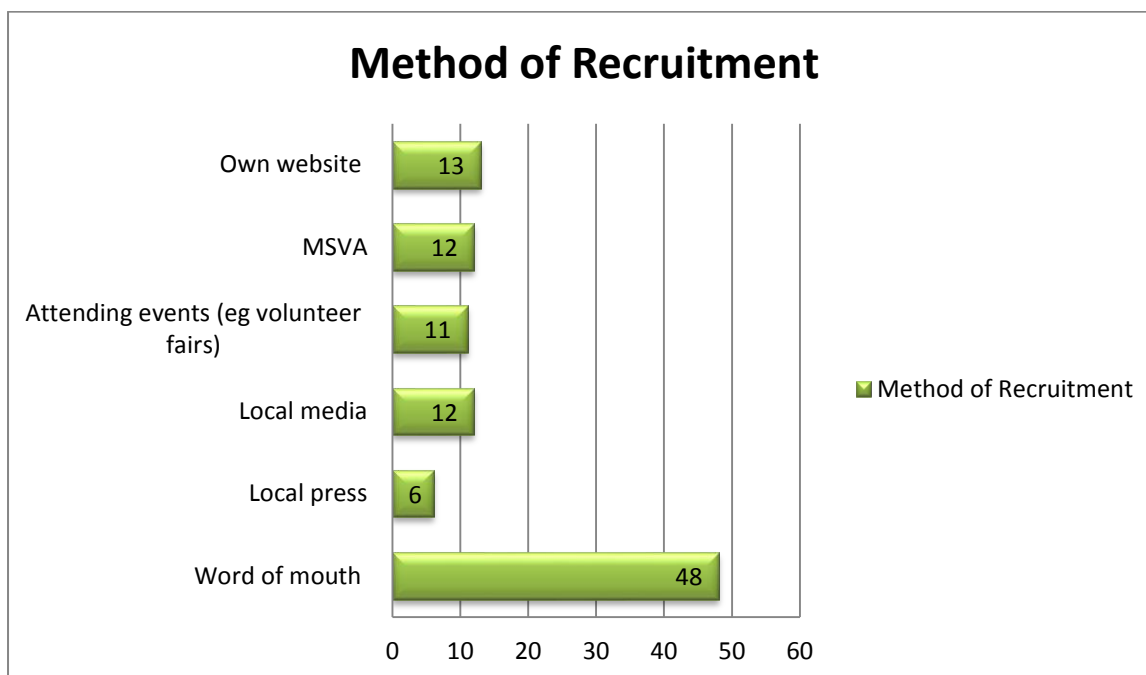
- Legacies
- Investments
- Street collections
- Events such as meals and sponsored tandem rides
- Trading eg: hiring out of building and a town centre book shop
- Precept
- Funding from local council grant

We asked respondents to rank these methods in terms of which ones raised the most income for their organisation, with 1st being the most income raised and 6th being the least.



These graphs show that respondents have a mixed income stream. For many of the groups receiving donations, charging for services and charitable grants were the most successful ways of raising income. Contracts, public sector grants and charging a membership fee were the least successful ways of generating income.

If your organisation recruits volunteers, which methods do you find most successful?



Other methods of recruitment included:

- Own publicity distributed to various places
- Through people who have interaction with the charity
- Specialist websites eg; Do-it.Org and national governor recruitment website
- Social media
- Contact with businesses
- Links with churches
- National recruitment campaigns
- People are encouraged to call in

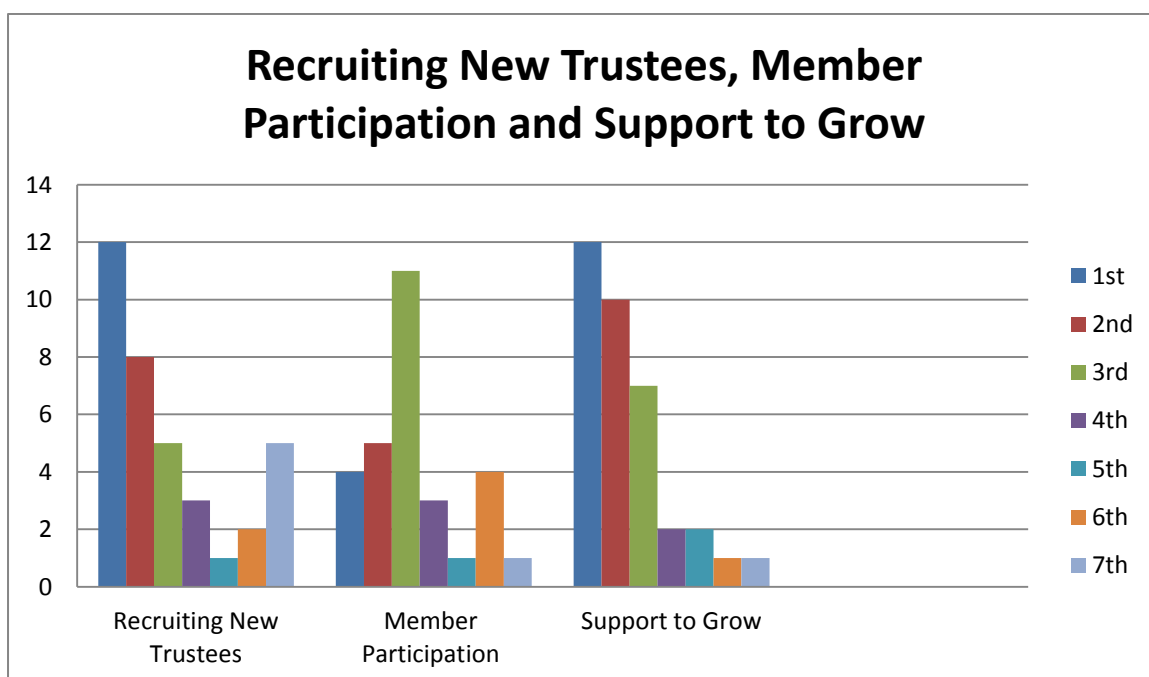
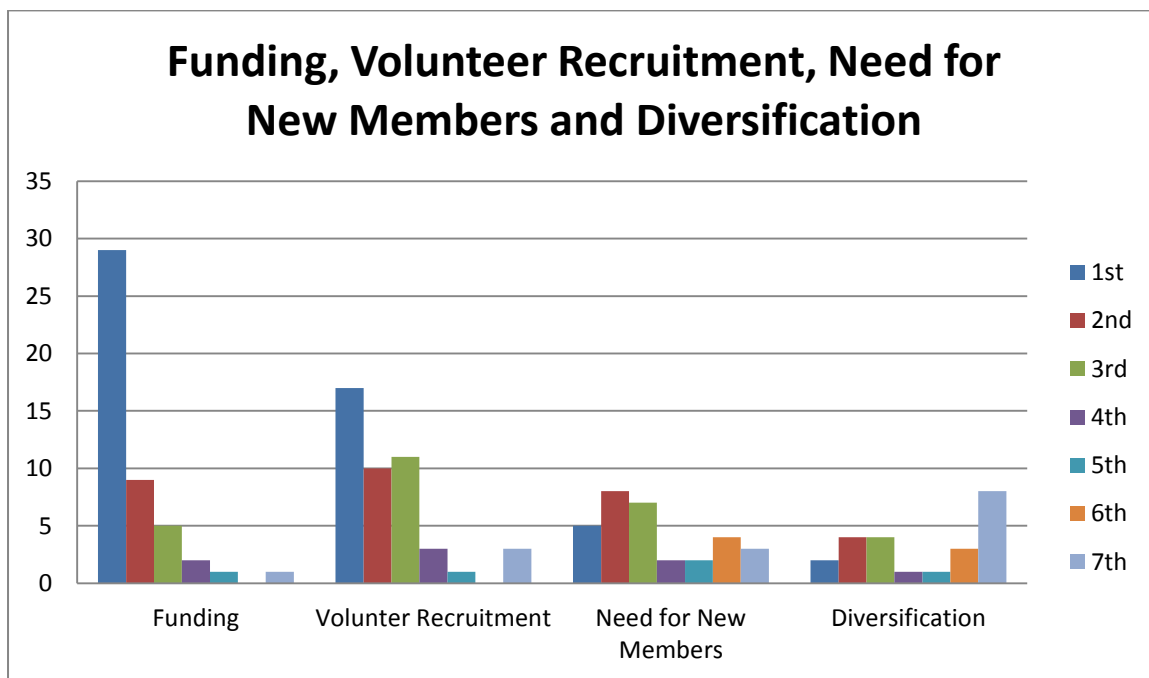
Looking forward, what are the 3 most immediate challenges facing your organisation?

Funding	47
Volunteer recruitment	45
Need for new members/service users	31
Diversification	23
Recruiting new trustees/committee members	36
Member participation	29
Support to grow and develop	35

Other challenges facing organisations were:

- Staffing, especially recruiting experienced part time staff
- Reaching more people in need
- New premises

We asked respondents to rank the challenges they are facing with 1 being the most important and 7 being the least important.

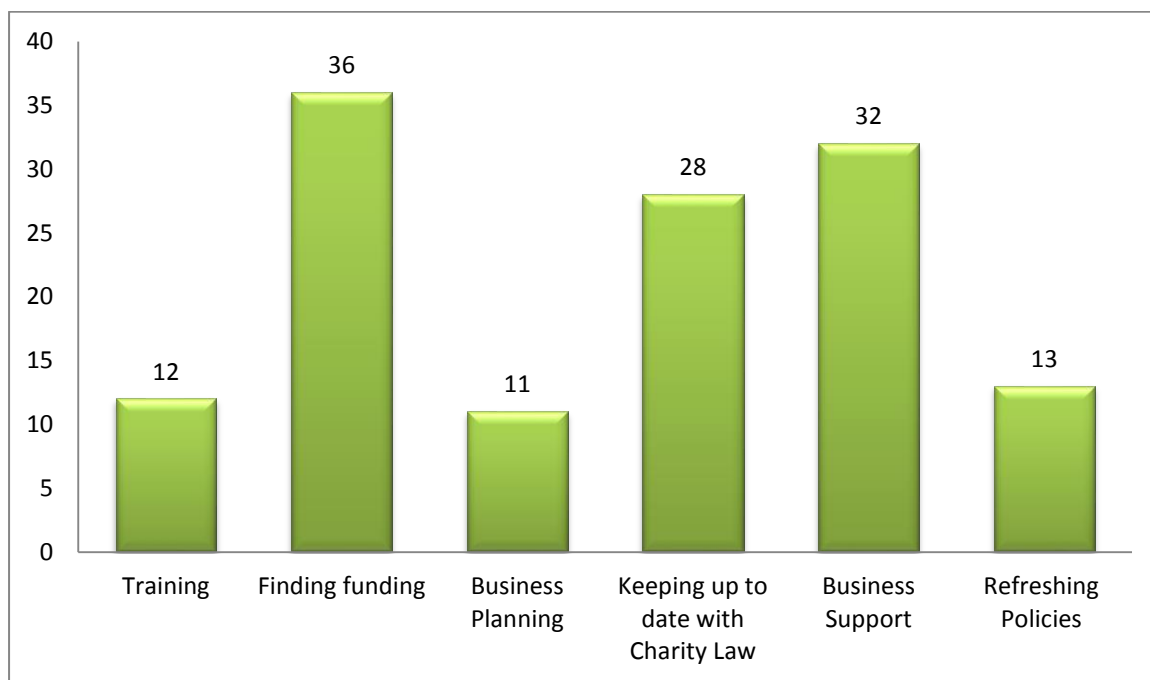


These graphs show a mixture of challenges facing respondents. The 3 most immediate challenges facing groups in 2019 are:

- Funding
- Volunteer recruitment /Trustee recruitment
- Support to grow

Difficulty in recruiting volunteers is a national trend as volunteering demographics change. There are less people retiring early. Those who do retire early are, typically, the “sandwich” generation with caring responsibilities for older parents and/or grandchildren. This means that organisations are often competing with one another for those people who do want to volunteer their time and skills. Recruiting to specialist roles such as trustee/treasurer also reflects a national trend.

What support does your organisation need to grow?



The top 3 areas of support needed to grow are:

- Help with finding funding
- Support from businesses
- Keeping up to date with charity law.

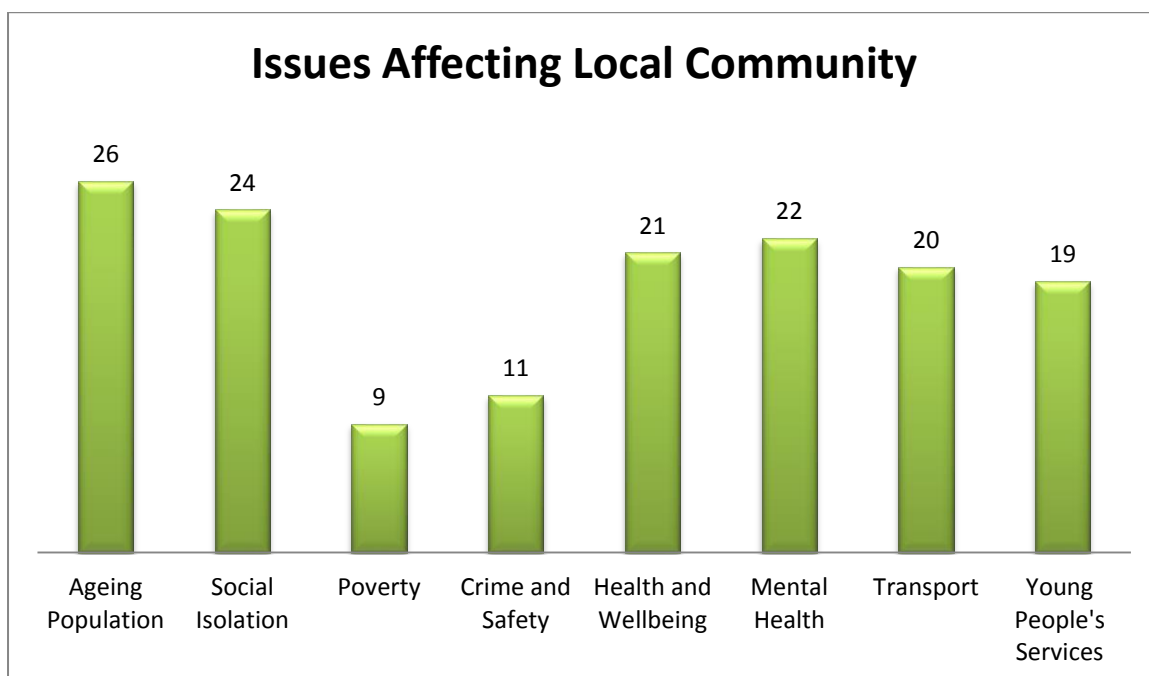
We asked responders to specify what training they would like:

- First Aid
- Governance
- PR
- Fundraising
- Social media
- Food hygiene

We also asked respondents to say what other areas of support they needed in order to grow. These included:

- More volunteers to help with developing work
- More networking opportunities with other local groups
- Help with health and safety
- Fighting against apathy of community
- Building relationships with businesses
- Help with accounts
- Computer training
- New members
- Access to reasonably priced training that is specific to charity needs
- Sustainable levels of funding

What would you say are the top 3 issues facing your local community – town, village or district?



The top 3 issues facing local communities in Mid Sussex are:

- Ageing population
- Social isolation
- Mental health

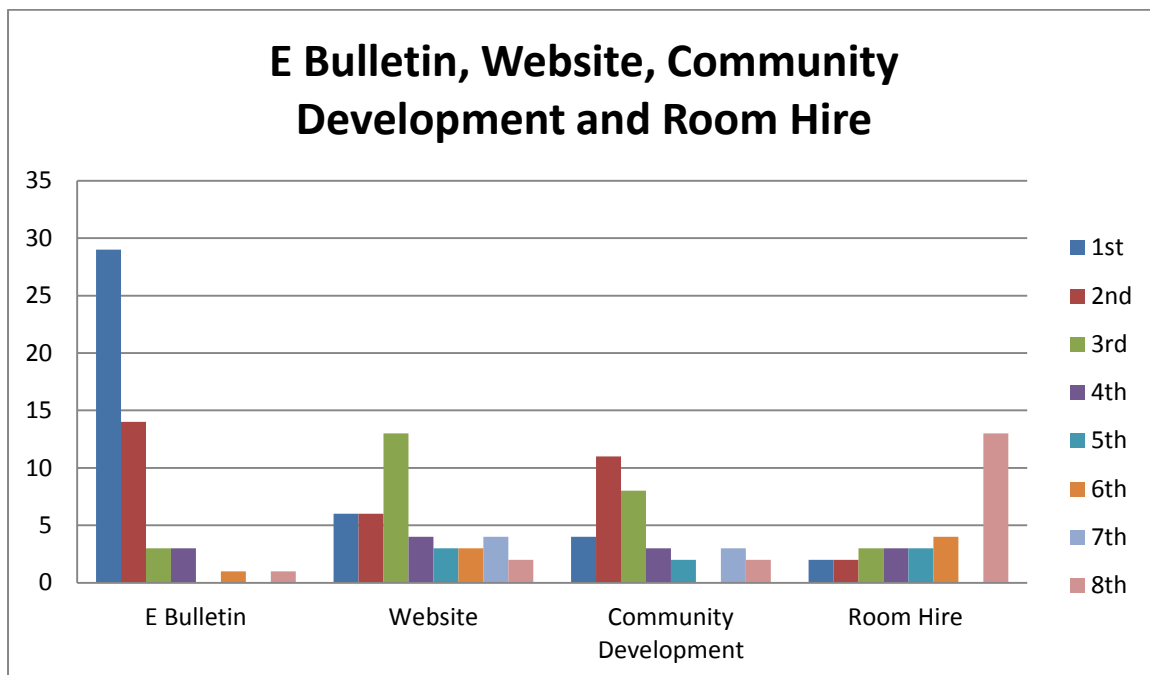
We asked respondents to tell us about other issues affecting their local communities. Some of these were:

- People not being able to access services
- Increasing demand on services due to growth in population of the town
- Neglect of the environment – bins overflowing, weeds and litter
- Shops closing down
- Pockets of people in need

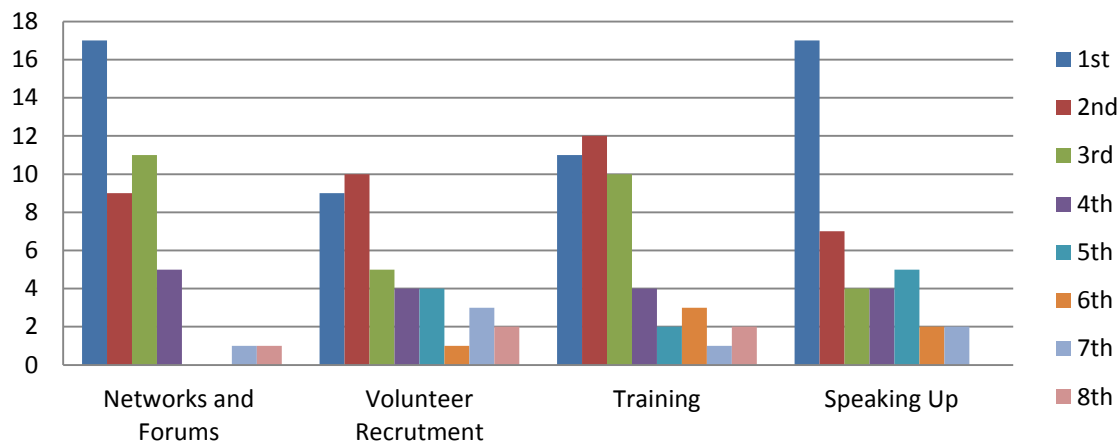
Which of MSVA’s services do you find most useful?

E Bulletin	51
Website	41
Community Development	33
Networking and Forums	44
Room Hire	30
Volunteer Recruitment	38
Training	45
Speaking up for the Voluntary Sector	41

We asked respondents to rank which of MSVA’s services they found the most useful, with 1 being most useful and 8 being least useful.



Networks and Forums, Volunteer Recruitment, Training and Speaking Up for Sector

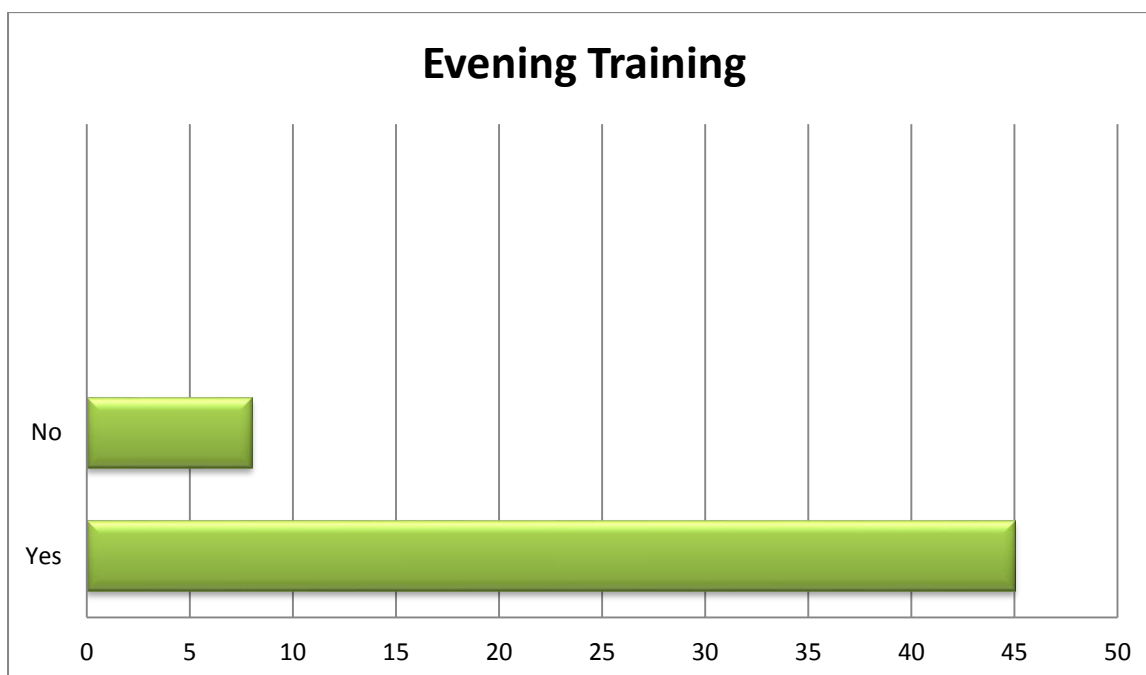


The most useful services provided by MSVA were:

- E bulletin
- Networks and forums/Training
- Speaking up for the voluntary sector

The least useful service was the community room: however this could be because not all respondents are based in Burgess Hill with easy access to the room.

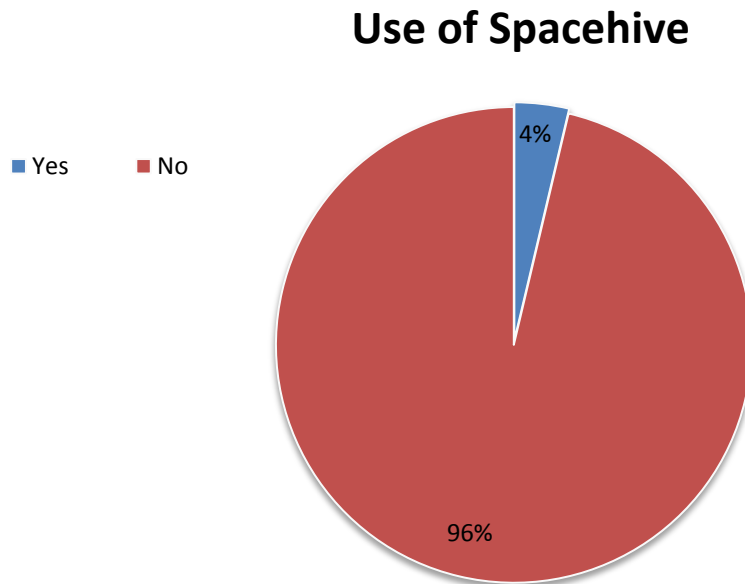
Would you like more of MSVA’s training courses to be held in the evening? If yes, which courses would you like to be evening courses?



Respondents who said yes to evening training made the following comments:

- Useful to have training relevant to trustees in the evenings as some trustees working during the day.
- A lot of your courses are great, however we would like to see them offered over a selection of days as this would help with being able to attend.

Have you ever used the West Sussex Crowd Funding page (Spacehive)?

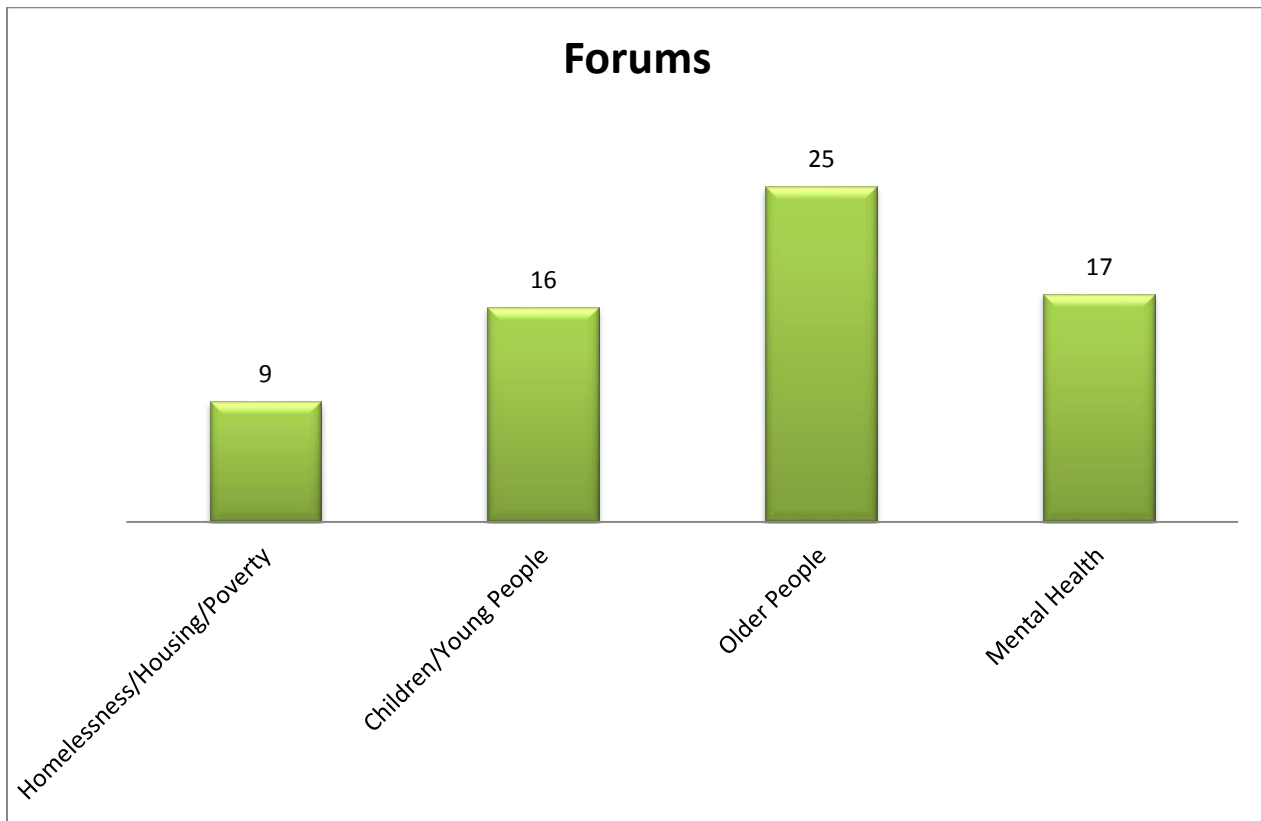


Respondents who replied no were asked their reasons for not using it. Here are their comments:

- Have not needed it
- Not aware of it
- Fear of lack of response to a campaign which would not be good for our organisation
- Anxiety about the process
- Have not heard good things about it
- We raise enough money through our shop and other events
- Long, repetitive and time consuming
- Not sure if it is applicable to our organisation
- We have not developed a social media presence that is needed to help with crowdfunding
- Not sure about the process
- We have not got around to it
- Hoping to run a fundraising campaign later in the and will consider Spacehive
- When we enquired about crowdfunding we were told that if we did not reach our target we would not get any of the money pledged and it was unclear where this money would go. Spacehive promised us that we would reach our target, but we were not convinced so we have not used it yet.
- As a crowd funding tool our "community" is often our member organisations and not a group of local people and we often work to the benefit of those least able to contribute to the service we provide.
- We do not have a dedicated fundraiser who can devote the time needed to run a crowdfunding campaign

- We have not yet had a project that would be appropriate to try to crowd fund for as we really need to fundraise to cover staff and running costs
- Other charities have reported poor experiences of the process
- Not impressed with the process

MSDC is keen to hear the views of the voluntary sector and would like MSVA to set up themed forums. Would you be interested in attending a forum to make the views of your organisation known to MSDC and other key decision makers? Which forums would you be interested in attending?



Conclusions:

MSVA’s services are appreciated by member groups; however we are aware of the need to promote our work more proactively so that we are truly representing the voluntary and community sector in Mid Sussex. The majority of community work in the district is carried out by small charities that are, in the main, volunteer led. Issues of an ageing population and social isolation are putting pressure on many of these groups. As the need for the work of these groups grows, they face the additional pressures of trying to recruit skilled and regular volunteers; ensuring that they are up to date with legal requirements affecting charities and sourcing funding to support their work. The fortnightly e bulletin is the most valued service provided by MSVA as it gives up to date information about all the things charities and community groups need to know - funding, changes in the law, training and other resources. Going forward charities and community groups would like more support from local businesses. MSVA has good links with the 3 local business associations and we need to look at ways of enabling a better working relationship between businesses and the community

In recent months MSVA has set up 3 forums which will be meeting regularly to discuss issues that are facing the different communities across the district and communicating those issues to our statutory sector colleagues. The 3

forums are Children, Young People and Families; 3rd Age; and Health. In February 2020 the participants of these forums will come together at a voluntary sector conference to be held at the Ardingly Showground.

Despite the many issues facing charities and community groups in Mid Sussex, it was good to hear about all that they have to celebrate too.

Thank you for taking the time to participate in this survey. Your input helps us to see the issues that are affecting the local voluntary and community sector and helps us plan how we can respond to those issues. We will be repeating the exercise early in 2020