
Engaging and Enabling our Local Communities: Voluntary and Community Sector Support Engagement Report

August 2021



1 Introduction

- 1.1 In recognition of the valuable contribution that the local Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) makes, West Berkshire Council has committed to deliver improved support for the sector. This work supports delivery of the Council's Communications and Engagement Strategy 2020-2023 and Covid Recovery and Renewal Plan 2021. The local VCS makes a significant contribution to delivering the Berkshire West Health and Wellbeing Strategy, as such; Berkshire West Clinical Commissioning Group has partnered with the Council on this project.
- 1.2 To best shape VCS support for West Berkshire, two phases of engagement were undertaken. The first phase commenced in November 2020 and was designed to inform a specification for a 'Voluntary Sector Support Organisation' (VCSSO) that the Council had committed to. Sector feedback led the Council to a decision to delay planned commissioning of this VCSSO to allow wider engagement. There was also a shift in focus to understanding sector need and how best to meet that need; the aim of which was to ensure that the solution(s) for sector support were not pre-determined and instead, need-led.
- 1.3 A further and wider phase (Phase II) of engagement commenced in June 2021. This latter phase of engagement was co-designed alongside sector colleagues.
- 1.4 This report summarises the methodology and approach taken to the engagement. It then draws together feedback from both phases; which will then inform the next steps for West Berkshire Council and Berkshire West Clinical Commissioning Group to respond most effectively.
- 1.5 Thanks are offered and recorded to all those VCS colleagues who took the time to feed in their views, to co-design the second phase of engagement and for promoting the engagement across the sector.

2 Methodology

Phase I

- 2.1 Phase I of engagement commenced in November 2020 and was scheduled to take place to ensure the results could inform a planned commissioning timeline. The following methods were deployed in Phase I of the VCS engagement:
 - Digital survey;
 - One to one interviews;
 - Workshops.
- 2.2 Invitations to participate in the engagement were shared with a representative range of voluntary sector organisations, community groups, statutory organisations, commissioners and strategic partners. A number of organisations declined to participate and the invitation to engage; citing concerns around duplicating the role of existing VCS support provided by the Volunteer Centre West Berkshire (VCWB).

Phase I Survey

- 2.3 The questions for the Phase I survey were compiled by West Berkshire Council and some key partners organisations were offered the opportunity to include questions in the survey eg Volunteer Centre West Berkshire (VCWB), Greenham Trust. The

purpose of the questions were to inform a specification for the commissioning of a Voluntary Sector Support Organisation (VCSO).

2.4 The survey was distributed to:

- Voluntary organisations and community groups listed on the West Berkshire Directory;
- Small groups identified by service leads that may not be otherwise known;
- Known charities in West Berkshire;
- Community Support Hub – COVID-19 Response Groups;
- Parish Councils.

2.5 The survey was directly shared with 494 organisations and individuals and received 76 responses, equating to 15% participation.

2.6 The survey was initially open from 4 to 18 November 2020 and was reopened from 25 November to 8 December 2020 to ensure a number of organisations who wanted to participate could do so. The extended period generated three additional responses.

Phase I workshops and interviews

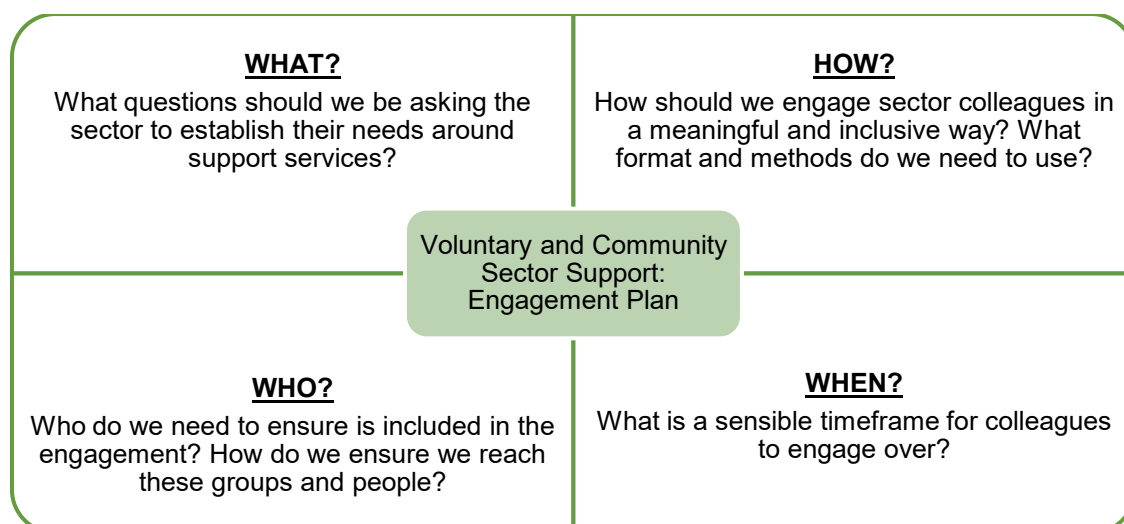
2.7 24 organisations attended one of three peer workshops. Each workshop included organisations or community groups of similar size to support networking and confidence for open conversation and maximum contribution.

2.8 Eight organisations participated in a one to one interview at their convenience.

Phase II

2.9 Following Phase I feedback, it was clear that further engagement was needed to seek the views of all those across the sector, both on their needs and how those needs could be best met.

2.10 To ensure that the second phase of engagement was fit-for-purpose and delivered sector-led results, it was co-designed with 25 VCS organisations in April 2021. Thanks are offered to all colleagues that participated in the co-designing process; representatives took part in online sessions to address:



2.11 The final engagement plan can be seen in Appendix A. In implementing this plan, the following methods of engagement were deployed:

- A one-stop-shop online engagement webpage, hosting:
- Digital survey;
- One to one interviews;
- Workshops;
- Option to send an email;
- Option to send a video;
- Frequently Asked Questions;
- Examples of voluntary sector support from elsewhere.

2.12 Questions for the Phase II survey were compiled according to the co-designed engagement plan. Some of the questions about organisations asked in Phase I were repeated in Phase II to establish a greater insight to the sector itself.

2.13 In addition to the Phase I list of organisations, the invitation to participate was distributed via the newsletters and networks of VCWB, Greenham Trust, Penny Post and Connecting Communities in Berkshire (CCB). Thanks are offered and recorded to the VCWB, Greenham Trust, CCB and Penny Post for their assistance with sharing information about the VCS engagement with their networks.

2.14 Even with wide ranging options to engage, participants chose two routes to engage; 121 responses to the survey were received and four organisations requested and took part in one to one interviews.

3 Survey Results

General

3.1 The Phase I survey generated 76 responses and the Phase II survey generated 121 responses. Many organisations took the time to feedback to us in both phases, so in total there were 161 unique responses to the VCS engagement survey. It is estimated the local VCS sector has approximately 700 organisations within it; the engagement response therefore represents an estimated 23% of the sector.

3.2 Results of Phase I demonstrated the need for wider understanding of the sector and that there were key and valued existing VCS support services which needed to be understood and considered in the overall picture. Existing VCS support services are provided through a number of routes; including the Volunteer Centre West Berkshire, Connecting Communities in Berkshire, faith networks, peer networks, national associations and several online sources.

About the sector

3.3 The results of Phase I showed that the majority of the VCS sector in West Berkshire is not connected with a bigger, national charity or structure. 64% said they were not part of a larger national organisation.

- 3.4 In Phase II, when asked how long an organisation had been running for, 74% responded to say at least six years, only 5% replied to say that they had been going for less than a year. This shows that the sector in West Berkshire is relatively stable, with the majority having been established for a number of years.
- 3.5 The results from Phase I show that the VCS sector in West Berkshire is volunteer-led. In Phase I, 58% of those that responded said their organisation was led by volunteers. It was similarly the case in Phase II, where only 5% of organisations responded to say were run by paid staff only. 36% of organisations from Phase I have no paid staff at all and with a further 36% having up to five paid staff in the organisation.
- 3.6 When asked about the numbers of volunteers in an organisation, 22% of respondents in Phase I indicated they had more than 50 volunteers connected with their organisation. When this number is extrapolated against the number of organisations having 50 or more volunteers (of which there were 16), it means that there are over 800 volunteers connected to these 16 organisations.
- 3.7 With regards to which sections of the community the local VCS support, organisations across phases I and II are serving and supporting all parts of the community. There are comparatively fewer organisations that responded who are supporting diverse communities (36% on average) than are supporting children and young people (56% average), older adults (54% average) or vulnerable adults (52% average) of the West Berkshire Community.

	Phase I	Phase II	Average of PI/PII
Children and young people	51.43%	60.18%	56%
Diverse communities	32.86%	38.94%	36%
Families	50.00%	54.87%	52%
Older adults	55.71%	53.10%	54%
Vulnerable adults	54.29%	49.56%	52%
Other (please specify)	28.57%	27.43%	28%

- 3.8 When asked about the services that groups are providing in West Berkshire, the following table shows the responses against types of services provided by the VCS locally. It illustrates that there are a significant proportion of the VCS sector providing support or services in the health and wellbeing arena (46% of respondents on average) and in running a club or support group (36% of respondents on average). Those undertaking support or services related to interpretation or non-verbal communication and environmental services are comparatively few (an average of 3% and 6% respectively).

Services provided	Phase I	Phase II
Advocacy	14.29%	7.89%
Community buildings and facilities	15.71%	14.91%
Community safety	8.57%	9.65%
Counselling	8.57%	7.02%
Education, training and employment	31.43%	21.93%
Environmental or conservation services	4.29%	8.77%
Health and Wellbeing	51.43%	42.11%
Information, advice and guidance	41.43%	27.19%
Interpretation and non-verbal communication services	4.29%	1.75%

Services provided	Phase I	Phase II
Open spaces	7.14%	12.28%
Play or child care services	11.43%	13.16%
Run a club, social group or support group	37.14%	35.09%
Rural services or transport	14.29%	2.63%
Sport, leisure or arts/culture activities	27.14%	27.19%
Other (please specify)	35.71%	40.35%

3.9 With regards to the above, 'other' services which were identified by the 40% of respondents in Phase II, the following categories were identified:

- Children & young people/families (5.7%);
- Schools support (2.4%);
- Information and advice (2.0%);
- Transport (2.4%);
- Environmental services (3.3%);
- Faith support (4.0%);
- Support for vulnerable people (13.2%);
- General community support (7.35%).

3.10 In Phase I, when respondents were asked which areas across West Berkshire they served, it showed a relatively even spread across the district:

Area	Response
Bucklebury, Bradfield, Aldermaston and surrounding areas	48.53%
Burghfield, Mortimer and surrounding areas	52.94%
Downlands, Ridgeway, Basildon and surrounding areas	39.71%
Hungerford, Kintbury and surrounding areas	60.29%
Lambourn and surrounding area	45.59%
Newbury	66.18%
Pangbourne, Tilehurst, Purley and surrounding areas	50.00%
Thatcham	60.29%

3.11 When respondents were asked in Phase II how ready they felt to support the community following the Covid-19 pandemic, 92% felt somewhat, very or extremely ready to support the community. Only 8% felt as though they were not ready.

3.12 It is recognised that there is huge strength which exists within the local VCS; in its skills, knowledge, experience and capacity. When asked about the things that organisations do well now, respondents from Phase II drew attention to activities which relate to the following:

What the organisation/ group do well	% of respondents
Providing services	37.2%
Providing support	21.5%
Creating social and community connections	15.7%
Communicating	7.4%

What the organisation/ group do well	% of respondents
Partnership working	5.8%
Supporting or delivering environmental improvements	5.8%
Supporting or improving artistic endeavours	4.1%
Managing financial affairs	3.3%
Providing advocacy	1%

3.13 Respondents in Phase II were asked how they currently share what they are doing well and best practice with others. They responded with the following:

How best practice is shared	% of respondents
At meetings	19.8%
Networking	19%
Forums/Groups	14.9%
Not currently sharing with others	11.6%
Informal conversation	10.7%
Social media	10.7%
Newsletters/village magazines/website	6.6%
At events	6.6%
Response to requests for information	2.5%
Email	1.6%

3.14 The responses to this question show that there is an untapped opportunity for almost 12% of respondents to share what they do well with others.

3.15 Those that participated in Phase II were asked how they currently collaborate with others in the voluntary and statutory sector. They indicated this was through the following:

How collaboration takes place	% of respondents
Collaboration with individual partners	28.1%
Attendance at Meetings/ Events/ Networking	14%
Email	6.6%
Personal/ Individual Contacts	5%
Forums	3.4%
Volunteer Participation	1.6%
Referrals	1%
Surveys	1%
Facebook	1%
Data Provision	1%
Zoom	1%
WhatsApp	1%
Good Exchange Platform	1%

3.16 Respondents in Phase II were asked what it was they were focusing efforts on at the moment and what they felt the key issues are for the communities they serve. Of those that responded (105 respondents), they said the following:

How groups/orgs focus their efforts	% of respondents
Returning to face to face /resuming services post Covid	22.3%
Specific / new project	21.5%

Service delivery	18.2%
Attracting new members/users	5.8%
Recruitment	5%
Planning	5%
Surviving	4.1%
Fundraising/addressing finances	2.5%
Updating/reviewing policies	1.6%
Training	1%

3.17 Respondents in Phase II were asked about the issues that were affecting the communities they serve at the moment, respondents said it was:

Issues facing the community	% of respondents
Mental Health issues (anxiety/loneliness/ loss of confidence)	30.6%
COVID	18.2%
Financial hardship/reduced income	14%
ASB/dogs attacks/traffic and similar issues	5.8%
Activities closed/social provision	5.7%
Paperwork and ensuring safety	5%
Suitable facilities/buildings needed	5%
IT Accessibility	4.1%
Manpower	3.3%
Transport	2.5%
Physical health/mobility loss	2.5%
Flood threat	1.7%
Ageing	1.7%
Reduction in clients	1.7%
Food Poverty	1%
Racial discrimination	1%

Accessing support now

3.18 When respondents were asked in Phase I if they currently access VCS support, the majority (58%) responded to say that they do not. Of the 42% accessing VCS support services, the types of support they are accessing are shown in the below table.

Support accessed	Response (PI)
Business administration and/or legal support/advice	21.43%
Communication regarding local and national Volunteer	
Community Sector news, legislation, events, etc.	50.00%
Funding advice/support	32.14%
Operating procedures, health and safety advice for volunteers	28.57%
Peer support and co-working	28.57%
Volunteer/leader training	28.57%
Volunteer recruitment and support	60.71%
Other (please specify)	14.29%

- 3.19 The majority of respondents from Phase I (70%) indicated that where they were accessing VCS support services, this was easy or very easy to access. Only 4% of respondents were finding VCS support difficult to access.
- 3.20 When asked about how responsive services are to their needs, 100% of those that responded said that they felt the VCS support services were either somewhat, very or extremely responsive to their needs. Added to this, 82% of Phase I respondents said they felt some aspects of existing support services were working well. It can be inferred therefore that existing VCS support services are largely working well for those that responded to the survey in Phase I.
- 3.21 There were however some respondents (35% in Phase I) who felt as though some aspects of VCS support were not working for them. The reasons listed for this include:
- A need to be more inclusive (including geographically) and better connect organisations that have a shared interest/purpose;
 - A need for more help with fundraising;
 - A need for the sector-view to be established on issues to feed in to sector-advocacy;
 - A lack of capacity and funding (not willingness or skills) in existing support;
 - A need to have better communication and collaboration with statutory services; it was cited that *“the statutory sector rarely shows much interest in working effectively with the voluntary sector, risking gaps. When the statutory wants the voluntary sector to compromise standards by requiring compliance with SLAs that deters the voluntary sector. ...There should be a focus on creating a better informed statutory sector”*.
- 3.22 The responses to this question demonstrate that there is a need for capacity building within existing support services to help address concerns of inclusivity and level of resource. There is also a need to address how statutory services relate to the VCS.
- 3.23 In Phase II, a more expansive question explored the types of VCS support that organisations were already accessing. The following shows that amongst a long list of support, almost two thirds of respondents are accessing support with funding sources and availability and almost half of the respondents are accessing support for having discussions with local authorities:

Support	Responses
Funding sources and availability	64.86%
Having discussions and a relationship with local authorities, eg the council, CCG	47.30%
Applying for funding	45.95%
Talking to and meeting with other groups or organisations with similar interests	45.95%
Promoting your group or organisation	44.59%
Support with volunteering	32.43%
Knowing about, talking to and meeting with other groups or organisations in general	32.43%
Training	28.38%
Safeguarding	24.32%
Talking to parts of the community who are less well heard	24.32%
New or changes to legislation	21.62%

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Representing the interests of your group, organisation or sector as a whole (advocacy)	21.62%
Demonstrating impact of funding	14.86%
Shared resources or back office functions	13.51%
Other (please specify)	13.51%
Outcome report writing	12.16%
Representing the interests of the people you work with (advocacy)	12.16%
Governance advice	9.46%
Support for managing the 'business' side of your group, eg finance, risk, performance and future planning	8.11%
Providing information in other formats, eg braille/other languages	6.76%

3.24 It is not possible to compare the results of the Phase I and II questions on what sort of support that the sector is accessing now because the answer categories for each question were different. However there are some comparisons which can be drawn. Respondents in different phases were more frequently accessing different types of support services. The majority of Phase I respondents were accessing support for volunteer recruitment, whilst the top service in Phase II were funding sources and availability. The top three in each phase were:

Phase I	Phase II
Volunteer recruitment and support	Funding sources and availability
Communication regarding local and national Volunteer Community Sector news, legislation, events, etc.	Having discussions and a relationship with local authorities, eg the council, CCG
Funding advice/support	Applying for funding

3.25 In Phase II, the survey explored the points of access for VCS support. The results of this showed that the top ways in which respondents were accessing services were the following:

Support accessed	Majority accessed by
Funding sources and availability	Nearly 40% are accessing this through a variety of sources (including the Good Exchange, the National Lottery, national funding streams, national bodies, word of mouth and newsletters)
Having discussions and a relationship with local authorities, eg the council, CCG	Nearly 60% of organisations are getting this support from the Council itself
Applying for funding	Just over 40% are accessing this through a variety of sources (including the Good Exchange, the National Lottery and national bodies)

3.26 When looking at how support services are currently accessed, the respondents to Phase II indicated that they access support in a number of different ways. This is through peer networks, through the Volunteer Centre West Berkshire, directly from the Council but many 'other*' routes too. These include the Good Exchange, the National Lottery, national funding streams, national bodies, word of mouth, newsletters and support services offered beyond West Berkshire (such as Basingstoke Voluntary Action).

3.27 The table below highlights where Phase II respondents are receiving most of their support from;

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Support	Peer support	VCWB	WBC	Online	Other*
Funding sources and availability	15.56%	20.00%	13.33%	13.33%	37.78%
Applying for funding	18.52%	11.11%	3.70%	25.93%	40.74%
Demonstrating impact of funding	50.00%	10.00%	0.00%	10.00%	30.00%
Outcome report writing	33.33%	16.67%	0.00%	16.67%	33.33%
Training	5.00%	0.00%	15.00%	30.00%	50.00%
Governance advice	0.00%	0.00%	14.29%	28.57%	57.14%
Support with volunteering	14.29%	33.33%	9.52%	14.29%	28.57%
Shared resources or back office functions	25.00%	0.00%	12.50%	0.00%	62.50%
Support for managing the 'business' side of your group, eg finance, risk, performance and future planning	40.00%	0.00%	0.00%	20.00%	40.00%
Safeguarding	27.78%	0.00%	16.67%	5.56%	50.00%
New or changes to legislation	14.29%	0.00%	7.14%	42.86%	35.71%
Promoting your group or organisation	20.00%	6.67%	20.00%	26.67%	26.67%
Representing the interests of your group, organisation or sector as a whole (advocacy)	26.67%	0.00%	26.67%	20.00%	26.67%
Representing the interests of the people you work with (advocacy)	12.50%	12.50%	12.50%	12.50%	50.00%
Talking to parts of the community who are less well heard	31.25%	6.25%	18.75%	0.00%	43.75%
Providing information in other formats, eg braille/other languages	25.00%	0.00%	0.00%	25.00%	50.00%
Knowing about, talking to and meeting with other groups or organisations in general	31.82%	18.18%	13.64%	18.18%	18.18%
Talking to and meeting with other groups or organisations with similar interests	35.48%	9.68%	9.68%	16.13%	29.03%
Having discussions and a relationship with local authorities, eg the council, CCG	9.68%	6.45%	58.06%	9.68%	16.13%

3.28 The key messages from the data presented above are;

- Peer networks is key to local VCS organisations for many different aspects of support. They are used by:
 - 50% of respondents for demonstrating the impact of funding
 - 40% for support for managing the 'business' side of their group or organisation (eg finance, risk, performance and future planning)
 - 33% for talking to and meeting with other groups or organisations with similar interests.

- Approximately 30% for a) outcome report writing b) talking to parts of the community who are less well heard and c) knowing about, talking to and meeting with other groups or organisations in general
- Around 25% for a) safeguarding b) representing the interests of a group, organisation or sector as a whole (advocacy) and c) providing information in other formats, eg braille/other languages.
- VCWB services are used by a third of VCS respondents for volunteer recruitment, by 20% for funding sources and availability and almost 20% for talking to and meeting other groups or organisations.
- West Berkshire Council is useful for support to 58% of respondents for having discussions and a relationship with local authorities, and for 27% of respondents to represent the interests of a group, organisation or sector as a whole (advocacy).
- Online support is accessed by 43% of respondents for support with legislative changes and for 25% of respondents in providing information in other formats, eg braille/other languages.
- VCS groups and organisations are using many other support routes for many functions. Where respondents indicated they were getting support from 'other' sources, this was from:

Sources of support	% of respondents
Local businesses/community	34%
National organisation	31%
WBC	9%
CCB	6.25%
Basingstoke Voluntary Action / Basingstoke BC	6.25%
GCT/Good Exchange	6.25%
Berkshire Association of local councils	3.1%
Health	3.1%

Support needs: now and in future

- 3.29 When respondents in Phase II were asked if there was anything their group or organisation found difficult at the moment, two thirds (66%) responded to say that they do. Of those that responded this way, they indicated they found the following difficult:

Difficulty	% of respondents
Funding	28.79%
Face-to-face Contact/ Social Distancing	21.21%
Premises/ Public Space/ Facilities	18.18%
Recruitment and retention	16.67%
Raising Awareness/ Engagement with Service	12.12%
Events	10.61%
Planning	9.09%
Technology	4.55%
Administrative	4.55%
Transport	3.03%
Speeding	3.03%
Support Services	1.5%

Difficulty	% of respondents
Partnerships	1.5%

3.30 When asked about the group or organisation's longer term vision in Phase II, three respondents shared their written vision document with us and others outlined that the following aspects were in their longer term vision:

Vision	% of respondents
Obtain/ Improve Premises/ Facilities	15.70%
Improve service offering	14.05%
Maintain service provision	13.22%
Expand service provision	12.40%
Member support/ engagement	12.40%
Collaboration links with local community/ organisations	9.09%
Service recovery	9.09%
Review/ agree strategy	5.79%
Other recruitment	3.31%
Service accessibility	2.47%
Increase membership/ attendance	2.47%
Volunteer recruitment	1.65%
Raise awareness & recognition	1.65%
Improve systems	1.65%
Secure funding	1.65%
PR/ marketing	1.08%

3.31 68% of respondents in Phase II said told us that they thought barriers exist to them in achieving their long term vision. These barriers included:

Barriers to achieving a vision	% of respondents
Funding/ costs	42.65%
Staffing/recruitment/retention	22.06%
Premises/ public space/ facilities	17.65%
Technology	5.88%
Face-to-face contact/ social distancing	4.41%
Raising awareness/ engagement with service	4.41%
Covid	4.41%
Transport	2.94%
Other organisations	2.94%
External Support	1.47%
Other	1.47%

3.32 When asked about the support that VCS organisations need now and the future, the following table highlights the area in which at least 50% of respondents indicated a support need.

Support needed	Now	Future
Promoting your group or organisation	76.92%	23.08%
Funding sources and availability	71.15%	28.85%
Training	70.59%	29.41%

Support needed	Now	Future
Knowing about, talking to and meeting with other groups or organisations in general	69.57%	30.43%
Talking to parts of the community who are less well heard	68.75%	31.25%
Talking to and meeting with other groups or organisations with similar interests	65.63%	34.38%
Applying for funding	61.90%	38.10%
Representing the interests of your group, organisation or sector as a whole (advocacy)	60.87%	39.13%
Having discussions and a relationship with local authorities, eg the council, CCG	58.82%	41.18%
Support for managing the 'business' side of your group, eg finance, risk, performance and future planning	57.14%	42.86%
Support with volunteering	54.05%	45.95%
Providing information in other formats, eg braille/other languages	53.85%	46.15%
Shared resources or back office functions	53.33%	46.67%
Representing the interests of the people you work with (advocacy)	52.94%	47.06%
Demonstrating impact of funding	52.00%	48.00%
Outcome report writing	50.00%	50.00%
Other (please specify)	50.00%	50.00%
Governance advice	46.15%	53.85%
Safeguarding	44.44%	55.56%
New or changes to legislation	37.50%	62.50%

3.33 The key messages from the answers to the above include:

- At least 50% of all VCS respondents indicated a support need in every category, either now or for the future;
- Over 70% of respondents indicated a need now for support in a) promoting a group or organisation b) funding sources and availability and c) training. Coupled with the responses to a question on the barriers for organisations to achieve their vision; funding is not only a significant need (71%), it is a significant barrier too (43% of groups);
- Over 60% of respondents indicated a need now for support in a) knowing about, talking to and meeting with other groups or organisations in general b) talking to parts of the community who are less well heard c) talking to and meeting with other groups or organisations with similar interests d) applying for funding e) representing the interests of a group, organisation or sector (advocacy);
- Support needs for now and for the future were identified quite differently by respondents. Support needs for the future are not those identified for now and although respondents indicated a future need for support across all categories, fewer respondents identified a future need;
- At least 50% of all respondents indicated a future need for a) outcome report writing b) governance advice c) safeguarding d) changes to legislation and e) other categories of support which includes; demonstrating impact through research and

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audit, legal aspects related to running a community project, reaching diverse communities and assistance with transport issues.

3.34 When respondents in Phase II were asked how they would like to receive the aspects of support they need (either now or in the future). The following table highlights where at least 25% of Phase II respondents would like to receive their support from:

Support	Peer support	VCWB	WBC	Online	Other
Funding sources and availability	8.89%	28.89%	28.89%	24.44%	8.89%
Applying for funding	11.76%	17.65%	29.41%	32.35%	8.82%
Demonstrating impact of funding	13.64%	31.82%	22.73%	22.73%	9.09%
Outcome report writing	16.67%	27.78%	16.67%	22.22%	16.67%
Training	14.29%	14.29%	35.71%	14.29%	21.43%
Governance advice	30.00%	20.00%	30.00%	10.00%	10.00%
Support with volunteering	7.14%	57.14%	17.86%	10.71%	7.14%
Shared resources or back office functions	41.67%	16.67%	8.33%	25.00%	8.33%
Support for managing the 'business' side of your group, eg finance, risk, performance and future planning	33.33%	8.33%	25.00%	25.00%	8.33%
Safeguarding	0.00%	6.25%	56.25%	31.25%	6.25%
New or changes to legislation	15.38%	0.00%	38.46%	38.46%	7.69%
Promoting your group or organisation	6.67%	26.67%	33.33%	20.00%	13.33%
Representing the interests of your group, organisation or sector as a whole (advocacy)	5.56%	27.78%	33.33%	22.22%	11.11%
Representing the interests of the people you work with (advocacy)	28.57%	14.29%	28.57%	14.29%	14.29%
Talking to parts of the community who are less well heard	12.00%	28.00%	24.00%	16.00%	20.00%
Providing information in other formats, eg braille/other languages	9.09%	9.09%	27.27%	27.27%	27.27%
Knowing about, talking to and meeting with other groups or organisations in general	33.33%	28.57%	19.05%	14.29%	4.76%
Talking to and meeting with other groups or organisations with similar interests	29.63%	29.63%	18.52%	14.81%	7.41%
Having discussions and a relationship with local authorities, eg the council, CCG	15.63%	15.63%	43.75%	15.63%	9.38%

3.35 The key messages from this data are;

- Peer support was a preferable route for at least 40% of respondents to get support with shared resources or back office functions. At least 30% would like to receive support from peer networks for managing the 'business' side of a group (eg finance, risk, performance and future planning) and for knowing about, talking to and meeting with other groups or organisations in general. A further nearly 30% would like to use peer networks for talking to and meeting with other groups or organisations with similar interests.
- Almost 60% of respondents wanted to receive support for volunteering from VCWB. Around 30% of respondents want to receive support from VCWB for a) demonstrating impact of funding b) talking to and meeting with other groups or organisations with similar interests c) funding sources and availability and d) knowing about, talking to and meeting with other groups or organisations in general and e) Talking to parts of the community who are less well heard.
- More than 55% of respondents would like to receive support for safeguarding from West Berkshire Council. 44% of respondents would like the Council to provide support for having discussions and a relationship with local authorities, eg the Council, CCG and 38% would like the Council to provide support for new or changes to legislation. At least 30% of respondents would like the Council to support with governance advice, promoting a group or organisation and representing the interests of a group, organisation or sector as a whole (advocacy). A further almost 30% would like the Council to support a) funding sources and availability b) applying for funding c) representing the interests of the people groups work with (advocacy) and d) providing information in other formats, eg braille/other languages.
- 38% of respondents would like to receive support for new or changes to legislation from online sources. A further 32% of respondents would like to have online support for applying for funding and 31% for safeguarding. At least 25% would like to receive online support for a) providing information in other formats, eg braille/other languages b) shared resources or back office functions c) support for managing the 'business' side of your group, (eg finance, risk, performance and future planning).
- With regards to where support would otherwise be accessed, 28% of respondents wanted to access support for providing information in other formats, eg braille/other languages and only 21% wanted to access training from 'other' sources. These other sources include; multiple partners, a local directory and a single umbrella organisation.

3.36 When respondents in Phase II were asked if there was anything else they wanted to say about the support they receive, the support they need or would like to receive, the following were the key messages:

- A desire to develop better contact and closer working with the Council
- They would like to be provided with up to date information and legislation changes
- Groups learn through making mistakes and this learning could be better shared
- Acknowledgement of the value the sector brings to West Berkshire is needed
- A single point of contact for the sector and mentoring would be really helpful.

- 3.37 When respondents in Phase II were asked if there were any further comments they wished to make, there were six respondents who expressed thanks for the opportunity to feed in their view, there were two who expressed dissatisfaction with the survey itself, one who said there was a need for brokerage of opportunity across the sector and one who expressed concerns about the capacity of the sector overall.

4 Workshops and interviews

- 4.1 The following outlines the qualitative feedback gathered throughout the two phases of engagement.

Phase I

- 4.2 During Phase I, three workshop sessions were carried out with a total of 17 representatives of voluntary and community groups. In addition, seven respondents took part in one to one interviews. The guiding questions for each of these sessions can be found in Appendix E. The following outlines the key feedback gathered during this part of the engagement.
- 4.3 Respondents considered VCWB, Healthwatch, Greenham Trust, CCB, the Community Support Hub and Churches as providers of current voluntary and community sector support services. There was very positive feedback for the following services provided by existing providers:
- Volunteer Recruitment Fair;
 - Newsletter - this was considered excellent and an important local resource;
 - Volunteer vacancies and recruitment;
 - Funding opportunities highlighted in the newsletter;
 - Advertising;
 - Administrative support for some local forum groups was seen by these groups as very important;
 - Some respondents who used VCWB saw them as providing all the services needed of a VCS Support Organisation.
- 4.4 Respondents shared that they organise their own networking and felt that there was a lack of commitment by the Council to the sector in terms of funding. Respondents said that there is scope for improvement in the Councils recognition of the significant contribution of the VCS and success in future provision of support services depended on the Council involving the sector in long term planning and a commitment to sustainable funding. This ongoing financial investment was deemed to be essential, given the fluctuations in funding for support in the past.
- 4.5 In Phase I those attending an interview or workshop were asked what features a Voluntary Sector Support Organisation (VCSSO) should have. They replied to say a support service should:
- Have a physical place for access by the public and communities i.e./ Broadway House;
 - Start and build from an asset/strength based approach;

- Be independent and not a service provider as this creates a conflict of interest;
- Not bid or compete for contracts/money that the organisations it serves are bidding for;
- Be approachable and become a trusted name;
- Be a new organisation, not an extension of an existing organisation;
- Not duplicate effort of other organisations;
- Be a strong networker, working collaboratively throughout the district to build robust relationships across the sector;
- Be proactive in gaining local traction to ensure they represent the VCS, have a voice and enable access;
- Encourage growth of the sector, make it easier for organisations to develop and flourish;
- Be accessible to all, including local businesses who want to be involved with corporate volunteering.

4.6 When asked about what a scope of a VCSSO should be, feedback included the following points. Respondents said it should:

- Identify opportunities for organisations to collaborate, especially where they are competing for the same (sometimes small) pots of money;
- Provide and signpost to free training;
- Provide online toolkits and help with development of policies;
- Offer HR support for smaller organisations;
- Work collaboratively with the Local Authority and other statutory partners to identify areas of need;
- Support organisations in achieving a Quality Assurance mark;
- Support with evaluation and evidencing of outcomes;
- Provide a voice at the table for smaller organisations;
- Provide signposting. In addition to a digital platform offer printed material, in easy read and various languages;
- Provide a link to the Small Charities Coalition;
- Support smaller organisations; both to start up (giving mentoring support) and to be successful at accessing funding;
- Disseminate national and local news and information in a way that makes it more accessible;
- Foster networking between organisations. Grouping similar organisations together and making sure there is a forum to work together;

- Help these organisations to save time and resources and overcome barriers;
- Facilitate monthly network meetings for the sector;
- Engage with commissioners, representing the sector and smaller organisations if required.

Phase II

- 4.7 During Phase II, four interviews were carried out with respondents. The guiding questions for this can be found in Appendix F.
- 4.8 The interviews were with organisations and representatives who have extensive history in West Berkshire and also with representatives who are relatively new to the local landscape.
- 4.9 Participants who have had a long history in the VCS in West Berkshire noted that there has been a cycle of investment and disinvestment in the voluntary sector in West Berkshire. Empowering West Berkshire (EWB) was cited to have been the most successful of the historical VCS support organisations. The disinvestment from EWB was a huge disappointment to many across the sector.
- 4.10 VCWB runs good services, which are valued by the sector. They have the skills and experience to support the sector, but sometimes do not have enough capacity. They picked up many VCS support functions when EWB came to an end, but without the same funding.
- 4.11 A comprehensive mapping exercise was stated to be needed of the VCS sector. There is also a need for the Council to better acknowledge and illustrate the true financial benefit of VCS organisations and volunteers locally.

Things now

- 4.12 Strengths in the sector include the people within it; they have the passion and skills to be effective. The sector is full of dedicated people who commit their own time and the relationship between them is strong.
- 4.13 A key challenge for many organisations currently is getting back up and running following the pandemic; many have shifted their delivery to run more online. Some organisations have introduced a blended model of delivery with some face to face services but some online. The pandemic has impacted everyone; but some parts of the community have experienced more significant impacts (for example those with mental health issues and dementia in particular). There is a digital divide which has been exacerbated by Covid.
- 4.14 Fundraising is the top issue for those in the sector; this has been exacerbated by Covid as organisations have not been able to fundraise in the same way. Anything which is grant funded is stretched (Lottery, Good Exchange). Applications take a huge amount of effort and time and the huge variability of information required mean it is difficult to streamline and be efficient in applications. It was estimated that approximately 25% of all effort in running a voluntary sector organisation is taken up with applying for funding. An example was given that an application for the Good Exchange can take 1.5 days to complete. Support would be helpful for which funding pots are applicable, where funding opportunities exist and how to apply. Greenham Trust and the Good Exchange were reported to have made a huge difference in helping organisations with funding. One respondent said *“my charity wouldn’t be going if it weren’t for them”*.

- 4.15 There is a lack of affordable transport options locally, particularly in the rural areas and so there is a serious need to ensure that services do not become focused in Newbury and Thatcham only for statutory support.

Things in future

- 4.16 The role of support in the sector is to bring organisations together, help with sharing and networking and event organisation. There is a need too to link through to statutory organisations such as the Council, CCG and Sovereign so that there is a two way representation for the sector.
- 4.17 A quality assurance function, which used to be run by EWB would be helpful to give quality marks for voluntary sector organisations which then in turn, help them get funding.
- 4.18 What is important for the future is sustainability. It is not about having gold plated services; it's about having something sustainable.

Support needed

- 4.19 Safeguarding will always be a support need in the sector as organisations need to have a policy, a code of conduct, process, assurance and training that needs to be refreshed at least every three years. This is also true of safer recruitment training and assistance with DBS checks. Those just setting out especially need support.
- 4.20 Help and guidance on the following was cited as examples of what is needed by way of support:
- Help with developing / checking policies eg GDPR advice;
 - Legal obligations;
 - Best practice and sharing of experience;
 - Safeguarding training and advice;
 - Skills development for staff;
 - Employment/recruitment and training for staff in VCS organisations;
 - Partnership support;
 - Sharing of information across the sector;
 - Technical assistance eg with setting up a website;
 - Grant monitoring, budgeting and receipts;
 - Some 'how to' and fact sheets would be really helpful;
 - A list of contacts of others in the sector; particularly for those with similar interests to get peer support. A voluntary sector forum would be helpful to coordinate and pull together information for and across the sector;
 - Skills sharing and supporting each other through buddy groups (not about what an organisation does that is in common, about the skill sets available to each other);

- Advocacy for the voice of small groups and harder to reach communities to represent with statutory/Local Authority on their behalf;
- There is a need for support with back office functions for small organisations. Community accountancy would really help organisations understand and manage budgets better;
- A HR portal too would assist with managing back office HR functions for small organisations, this might include support for remote workers, which many are now following Covid;
- A social value exchange would be helpful, whereby those experts within the community who may be recently retired but have significant skills can help and advise VCS groups. This may extend into the brokering of equipment (eg laptops) exchange/donation from businesses to community groups;
- A pool of coaches/mentors for VCS organisations would be helpful, such as surveyors and accountants who can help and support organisations with their objectives and offer inexpensive or free and impartial advice. This could develop as a skills bank for West Berkshire.

4.21 An organisation/person that provides ‘the glue’ in the voluntary sector is needed to connect the right people at the right time. This will need a special kind of person to deliver this role so that the personal and social relationships are fostered and connected.

5 Key messages

5.1 Following two phases of engagement, the views of 161 VCS representatives were captured in quantitative surveys and 27 representatives gave their views in explorative, qualitative interviews or workshops. It is estimated¹ that more than 20% of the local VCS views have been fed in to this work.

5.2 From the sector engagement undertaken and data captured as a result; the following headline messages have been identified.

The local sector

5.3 The majority of the VCS sector in West Berkshire is not connected with a bigger, national charity or structure. In addition, the majority of organisations in the local VCS sector have longevity; having been established for more than six years. Almost 60% of local VCS organisations or groups are led by volunteers. Few local VCS organisations are run by paid staff only and at least 20% of organisations have more than 50 volunteers connected with their organisation. When extrapolated, this indicates that the number of people volunteering in local organisations runs in to several thousands.

5.4 All sections of the community are supported by VCS organisations or groups, although there are comparatively fewer organisations that responded who are supporting diverse communities (36% on average vs 50% or more supporting younger, older or vulnerable adults).

5.5 A significant proportion of the VCS sector are providing support or services in the health and wellbeing arena (46% on average) and in running a club or support group (36% on

¹ Estimation based upon a sector size of 700 organisations.

average). Those undertaking support or services related to interpretation or non-verbal communication and environmental services are comparatively few (an average of 3% and 6% respectively).

- 5.6 Self-assessed strengths in the sector primarily relate to delivering services and support to communities. Best practice is shared through numerous routes, but approximately 11% of organisations or groups do not currently share what they do well with others, representing an untapped opportunity for the sector.
- 5.7 Most local VCS organisations are currently focused on recovering from Covid, and this is a significant issue too for the communities they serve. Communities served by West Berkshire's VCS are reported to be struggling most with mental wellbeing (30%). The vast majority of VCS respondents reported feeling ready to support the community following the Covid-19 pandemic.

Existing support services

- 5.8 There has been a history of investment and disinvestment in the local VCS support which has not been helpful for local organisations. Existing support services, particularly (but not exclusively) those provided by VCWB are highly valued by those in the local sector that use them.
- 5.9 Most VCS organisations are not currently accessing support services; where they are, 100% said current VCS support services were responsive to their needs. Existing VCS support services are therefore largely working well; however services were said to need to be more inclusive, help more with fundraising and have greater capacity, but there also needs to be better understanding of the VCS sector by those in the statutory sector. A key message was that support services have significant skills, knowledge and experience but are restricted by capacity.
- 5.10 The majority of Phase I respondents were accessing support for volunteer recruitment, whilst the top service in Phase II were funding sources and availability. The sector currently accesses a wide range of support through a variety of means. This includes peer networks, through VCWB, directly from the Council but many 'other' routes too. These other routes include local bodies such as CCB, Greenham Trust, faith groups, funding bodies such as the Good Exchange, the National Lottery and national funding streams. National (or parent) bodies are a source of support too; as are word of mouth, newsletters and support services offered beyond West Berkshire (such as Basingstoke Voluntary Action). Peer support is key to local VCS organisations for many different aspects of support.

Support needs

- 5.11 The biggest support need for the sector is related to funding; two thirds found funding difficult now and almost 40% said funding was a barrier to them achieving a long term vision. Aside from help with promoting a group's activity, it was the most significant support need (71%).
- 5.12 At least 50% of the VCS organisations that responded have at least one support need for now or the future. Top needs for now are promoting a group or organisation, funding sources and availability and training. Top needs for the future are outcome report writing, governance advice, safeguarding and understanding changes to legislation.

5.13 Preferred routes for receiving support included the following:

- **Peer support.** This was seen as important for getting support with shared resources or back office functions and managing the 'business' side of a group (eg finance, risk, performance and future planning) and for knowing about, talking to and meeting with other groups or organisations in general.
- **VCWB.** Almost 60% of respondents wanted to receive support for volunteering from VCWB and a third of respondents wanted to receive support from VCWB for a) demonstrating impact of funding b) talking to and meeting with other groups or organisations with similar interests c) funding sources and availability and d) knowing about, talking to and meeting with other groups or organisations in general and e) Talking to parts of the community who are less well heard.
- **WBC.** More than 55% of respondents would like to receive support for safeguarding from West Berkshire Council. The Council was also seen important as a mean of providing governance advice and legislative updates.
- **Online.** 38% of respondents would like to receive support for new or changes to legislation from online sources.

6 Next Steps

6.1 Information from this report will be used in the following ways:

- Disseminated to all those that took part in the engagement;
- Used as the evidence-base upon which West Berkshire Council and Berkshire West CCG will consider options to meet support needs for the local VCS sector within the available financial envelope identified.

APPENDIX A: Co-Produced Engagement Plan for Phase II	
<p>Aims:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Ensure the support needs of the voluntary and community sector are well understood; b) Voluntary and community sector colleagues can co-design solutions to meet the needs identified. 	
WHAT?	HOW?
<p>What questions should we be asking the sector to establish their needs around support services?</p> <p>To support mapping and identify gaps & opportunities to work together</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What service does your organisation provide? • Who does your organisation support? • How well established is your organisation? • What groups and forums are you part of and do these overlap in membership and agenda? • What synergies are there between your organisation and others supporting similar communities? • How interested would you be in meeting with colleagues across the wider sector? Would this need to be themed? • How could mapped information be kept current and accessible? • Would your group/network be well placed to extend any engagement with those you serve? <p>To understand needs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the strengths and challenges in your organisation? • What strengths can you bring to the sector and the community? • What are your immediate priorities and longer term vision? • What are your current and anticipated future challenges? • What would your organisation like to do but cannot currently and what are the barriers you face? • What are the issues which are affecting the community you work with? (eg impact of other service provision on people- bus services and rise in those home educated) 	<p>How should we engage sector colleagues in a meaningful and inclusive way? What format and methods do we need to use?</p> <p>Meaningful and inclusive approach</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operate in a genuine partnership relationship – trust, transparency and ethics • Listen to the sector • Ensure engagement is meaningful • Reach out to every organisation in West Berks – wider VCS sector representation is needed including smaller groups and communities • Step away from corporate / strategic language • Establish clear lines of communication • Cannot over communicate - keep sharing and encourage re-sharing • Hold networking events to find out synergies and encourage peer support, developing a network of skills in the sector • Communicate the impact of work being done within the sector • Use different types of engagement for different communities and groups, taking a multicultural / multifaceted approach • Personalised & targeted approaches - work with existing organisations, groups and forums to engage with those they serve • Go to where the people are, especially for seldom heard or harder to reach communities • Break engagement down into themes, working with groups that have similar interests. Have specialists to facilitate discussions • Have 2 way conversations where the Council feedback what their needs are too of the sector

<p>To understand what support services are needed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do you need to support you in delivering services? • What support do you access already? • How do you access this support? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Funding advice - Training - Governance advice - Group support - Shared administration • What does your group/organisation need specifically to ensure that those you serve are able to participate in engagement and be heard? • What support do you need to promote your service? • What support do you need around safeguarding? • Do you have a need for assistance with interpreters or materials in other formats for those that you serve? • What would enable your organisation to best operate in the world as impacted by COVID? • What support do you need from West Berkshire Council outside of support provided by the VCSE sector? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share what is happening and what the engagement is delivering <p>Formats & Methods</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be mindful of digital inclusion / exclusion, offering alternatives for those not digitally enabled • Community Conversations and Hub Newsletter • One to one conversations • Social Media and What's App groups • Micro-website • Surveys • Email – short, with bullet points and links to further information for those interested • Microsoft Forms (especially for young people) • Focus-group meetings with a clear agenda and benefit • Use as many methods as possible and offer these at different times of the day/week • Events across the district to engage with the wider public as a future step beyond VCSE engagement & when COVID restrictions allow
<u>WHO?</u>	<u>WHEN?</u>
<p>Who do we need to ensure is included in the engagement? Can you help us reach these groups and people?</p> <p>Overarching considerations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be clear about what you mean by 'Voluntary Sector' • Ensure wide approach across the whole of West Berkshire with engagement (not just Newbury) • Cross reference lists to identify gaps and support finding the 	<p>What is a sensible timeframe for colleagues to engage over?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work out the balance between moving at pace to maintain momentum whilst allowing time to develop relationships • Think quickly to capitalise on the COVID groups which exist • Look to prioritise the most needed areas and work backwards • Build a conversation, listening to problem solve. Flex and iterate

<p>groups/organisations that we may not know about</p> <p>Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Charity Commission website • Existing databases/mailling lists - West Berkshire Directory, VCWB, West Berkshire Council <p>Groups/Forums</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forums and VCSE groups who know their community and the way they want / are best able to engage • Berkshire Partners Meeting • SEND Providers Forum • Learning Disability Partnership Board • Children and Young People Forum • Industry leaders • All Faith Groups, Churches Together • Schools & youth organisations / clubs • Family hubs / Mother and Toddler groups / Playgroups • Homeless and rough sleeping groups • Mental Health support groups • Food & Fuel Poverty Groups • Arts & Culture • Active community residents / enthusiasts who aren't established community groups 	<p>approaches as learning develops during the process.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allow enough time to make sure your get to the hardest to reach, a month at least – up to 3 months for a larger organisations • Depends on – The organisation Whether national or local Whether onward engagement is needed within the organisation or those they serve • Respect cultural and religious festivals/holidays • Have and communicate an end date and work flexibly in between • Online surveys – 10-14 days at most with a reminder a few days before close • Understand and respect organisations communications approaches and timelines. Plans may already exist for the year ahead – work together with organisations • Be sensitive to the impact of COVID and the workload this brings to organisations and individuals • Learn from others – what can they share about the do's / don't do?
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APPENDIX B: Phase I and II survey questionnaires

Both surveys requested the name of the organisation or group, the name of the person completing the survey and their role in the organisation or group. These were not mandatory questions, but the majority of respondents provided this information.

Phase I Survey Questions

- Q1 Is your organisation/group a registered charity or Community Interest Company providing services in West Berkshire?
- Q2 Are you a member of a larger national organisation?
- Q3 Are you a volunteer led community group in West Berkshire?
- Q4 How many paid members of staff does your organisation/group have?
- Q5 How many volunteers does your organisation/group have?
- Q6 Which local residents does your organisation/group support?
- Q7 Which of the following services does your organisation/group provide?
- Q8 What areas does your organisation/group serve?
- Q9 Do you currently access a voluntary and community support service?
- Q10 What support services do you access?
- Q11 How easy are the support services to access?
- Q12 How responsive are the support services to your needs?

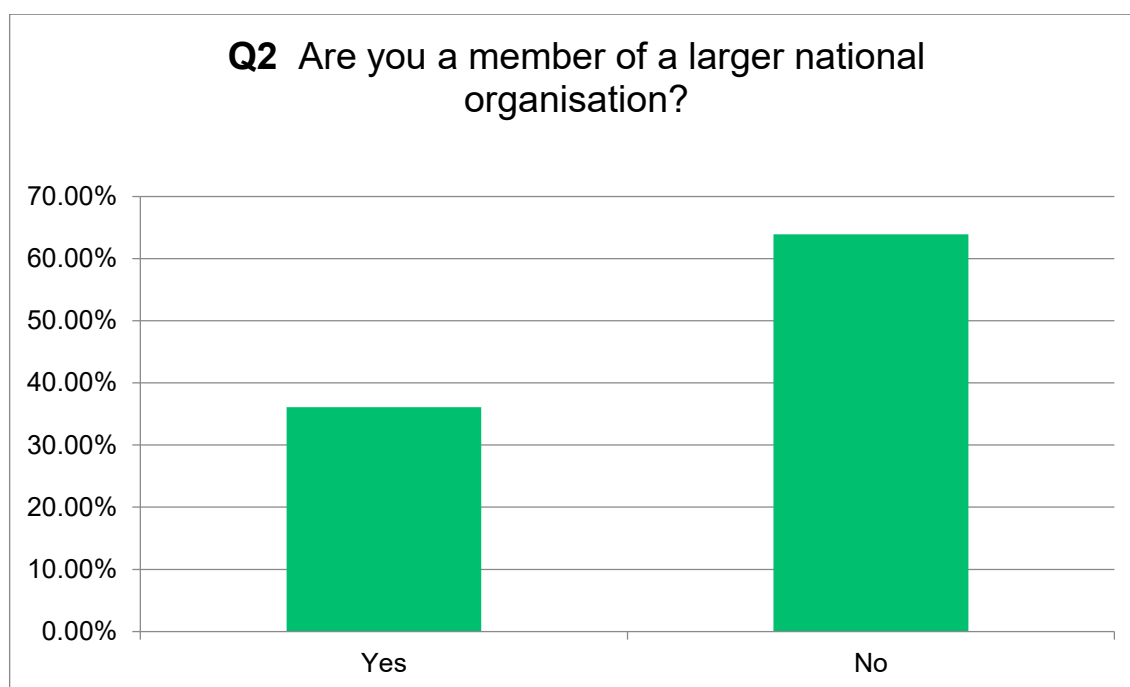
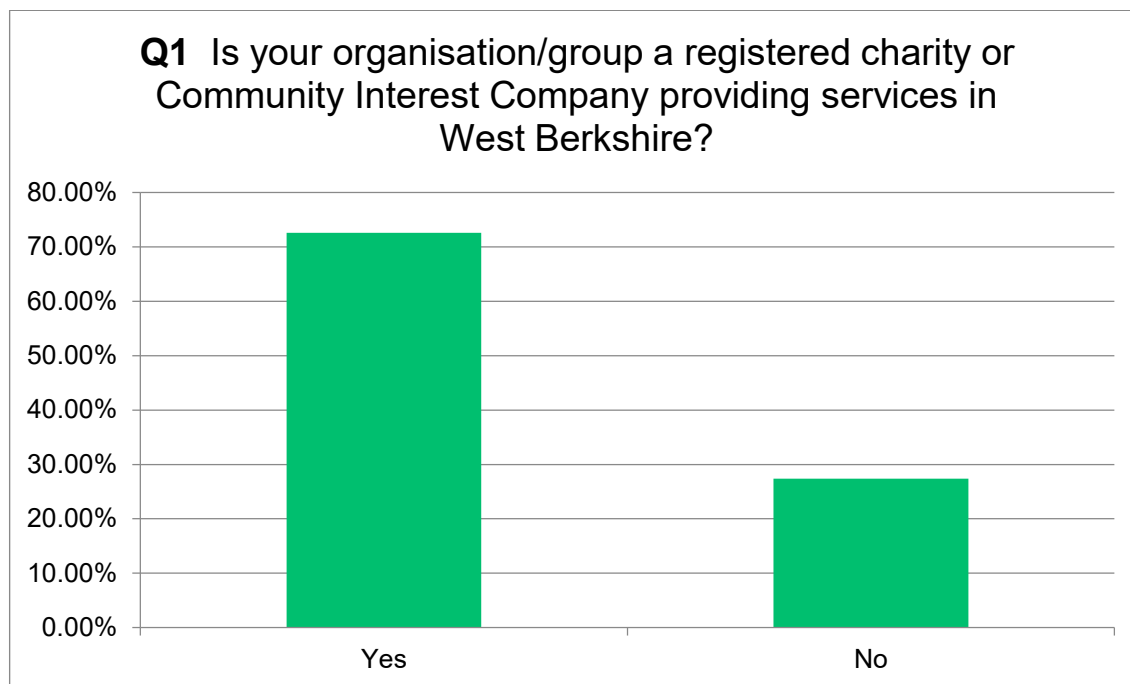
- Q13 Are there any aspects of the current local voluntary and community support services that are working particularly well?
- Q14 Are there any aspects to the current local voluntary and community support services that aren't working particularly well?
- Q15 How important will the following support services be to your organisation/group over the next three years?
- Q16 Do you currently network or participate in peer support with other local voluntary and community organisations/groups in West Berkshire?
- Q17 Do you initiate this networking or is it facilitated by a local voluntary and community sector support organisation (VCSSO)?
- Q18 Any further comments?

Phase II Survey Questions

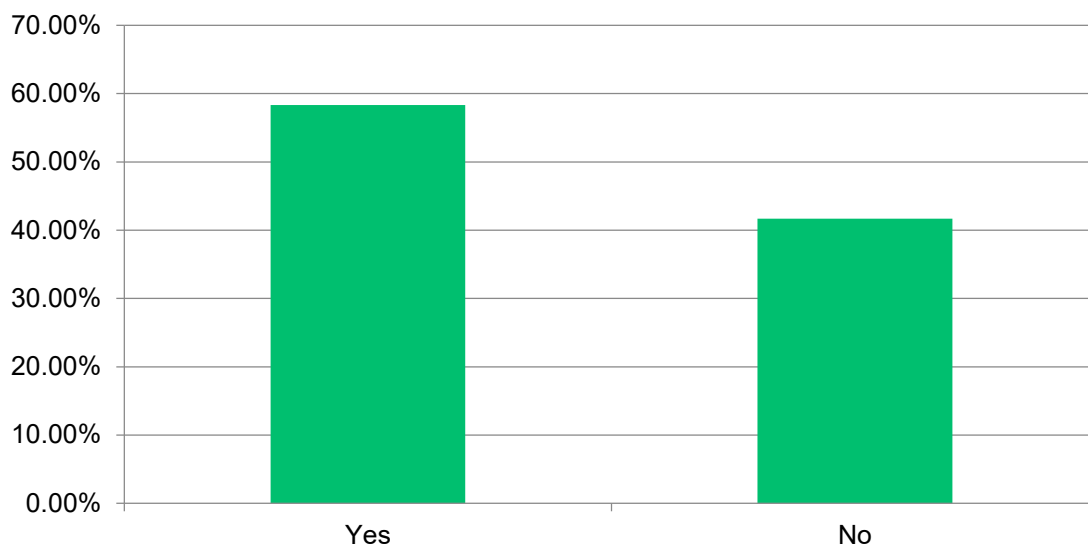
- Q1 How long has your group or organisation been going?
- Q2 Is your group or organisation run by volunteers or paid staff?
- Q3 What services does your group or organisation provide?
- Q4 Who does your group or organisation support in the community?
- Q5 What groups and forums are your group or organisation part of?
- Q6 How ready is your group or organisation to support the community post pandemic?
- Q7 What does your group or organisation do really well now?
- Q8 How do you share best practice or what you are doing well with other groups or organisations?
- Q9 How do you collaborate with voluntary sector and statutory partners?
- Q10 What is your group or organisation focusing on right now?
- Q11 What issues are affecting the community you work with currently?
- Q12 Is there anything your group or organisation find difficult to do at the moment?
- Q13 What is your group or organisation finding difficult at the moment, and why?
- Q14 What are your group or organisation's longer term visions or plans?
- Q15 If you have a published vision or plan you would like to share with us please upload here.
- Q16 Are there any barriers facing your group or organisation which will make it difficult for it to achieve its long term vision or plans?
- Q17 What are the barriers facing your group or organisation?
- Q18 What areas of support does your group or organisation currently access?
- Q19 How does your group or organisation receive support in these areas?
- Q20 What areas, if any, would your group or organisation like support in, either now or in the future?
- Q21 How would your group or organisation like to receive support in these areas?
- Q22 Is there anything else you would like us to know about the support you get already, the support you need, and how you would like to get it?
- Q23 Do you have any other comments/feedback you'd like to share with us?

APPENDIX C: Survey Bar Charts

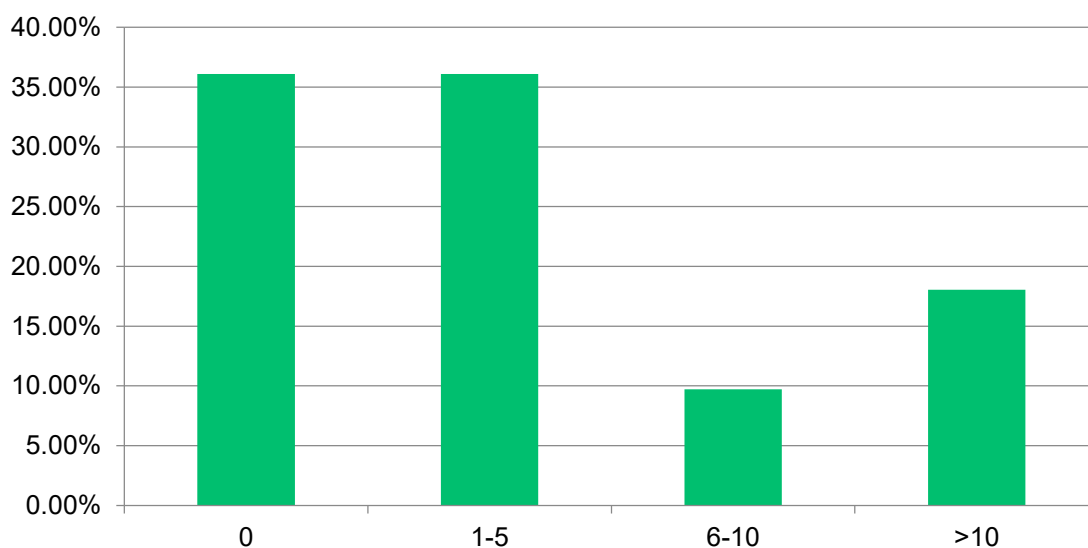
Commissioning a Voluntary & Community Sector Support Service for West Berkshire Phase I Bar charts



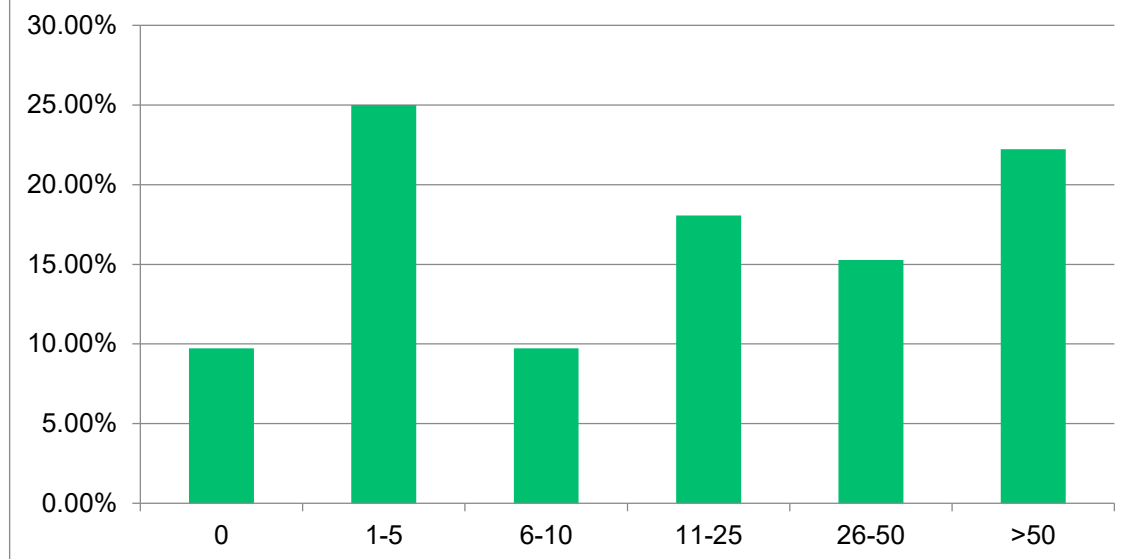
Q3 Are you a volunteer led community group in West Berkshire?



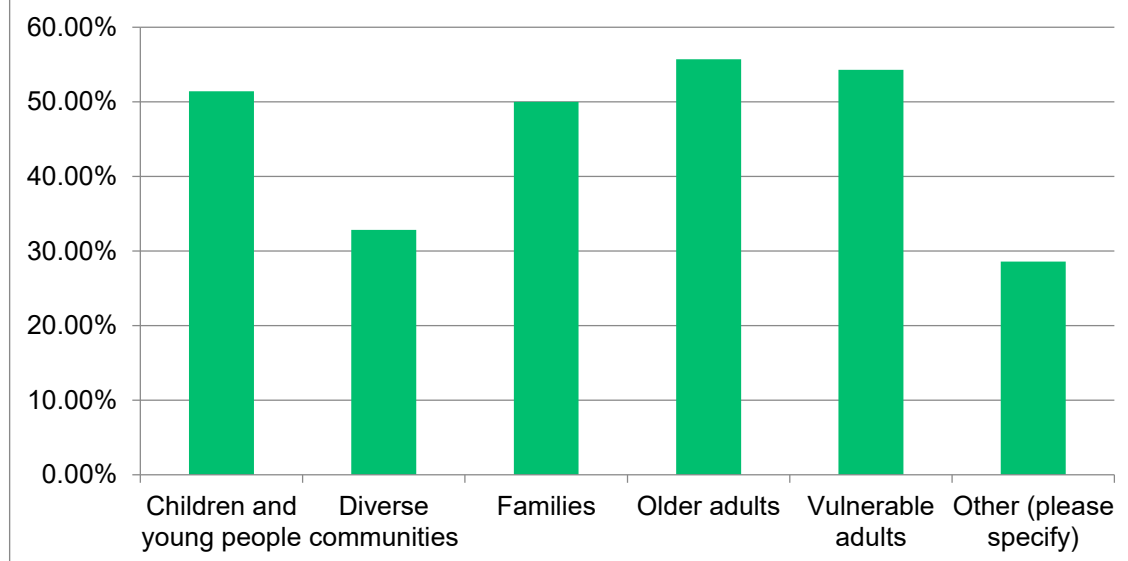
Q4 How many paid members of staff does your organisation/group have?



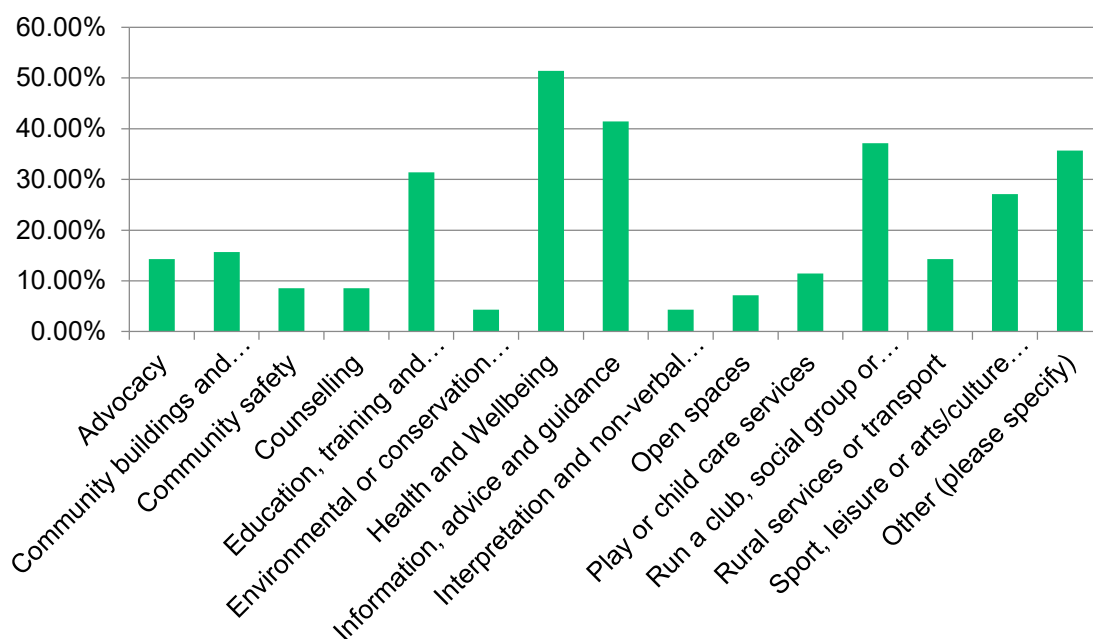
Q5 How many volunteers does your organisation/group have?



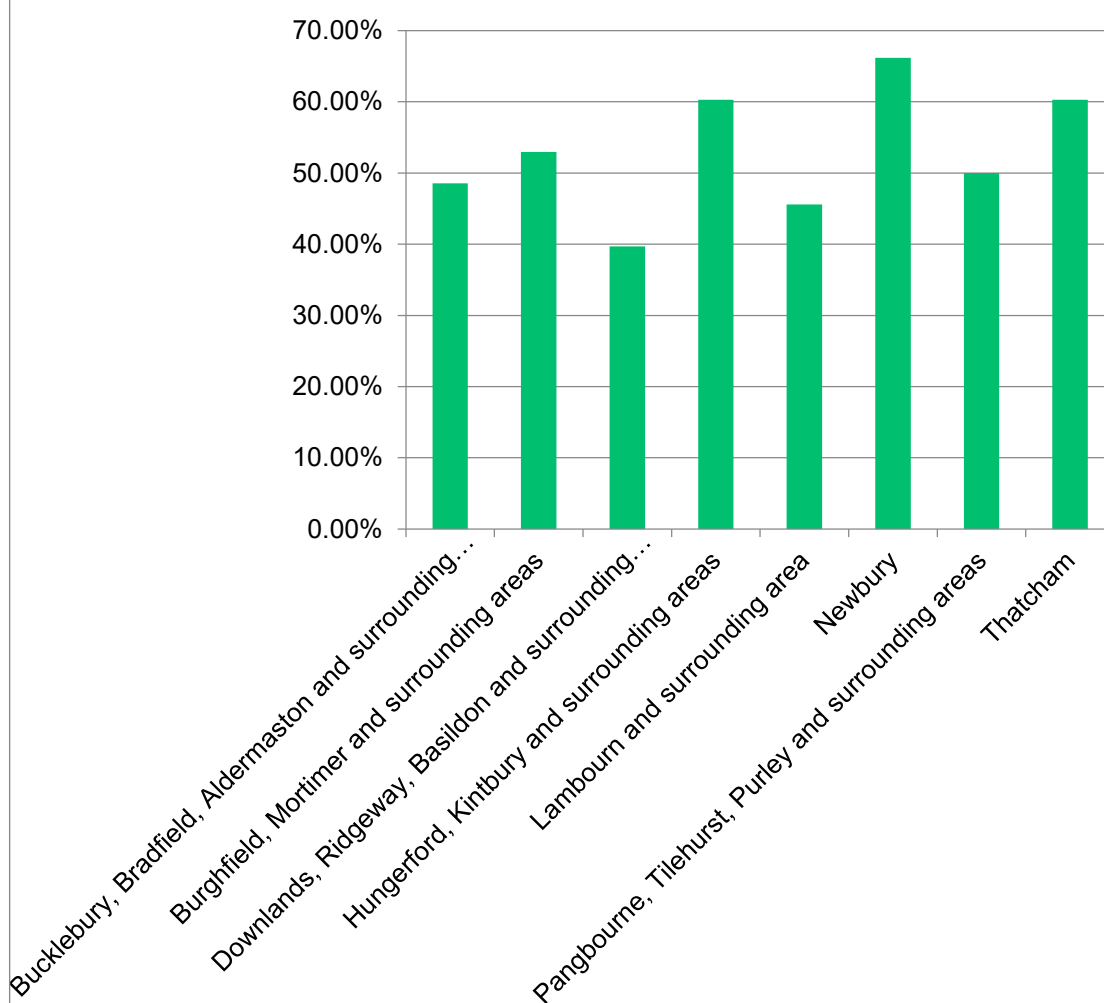
Q6 Which local residents does your organisation/group support? Please tick all that apply



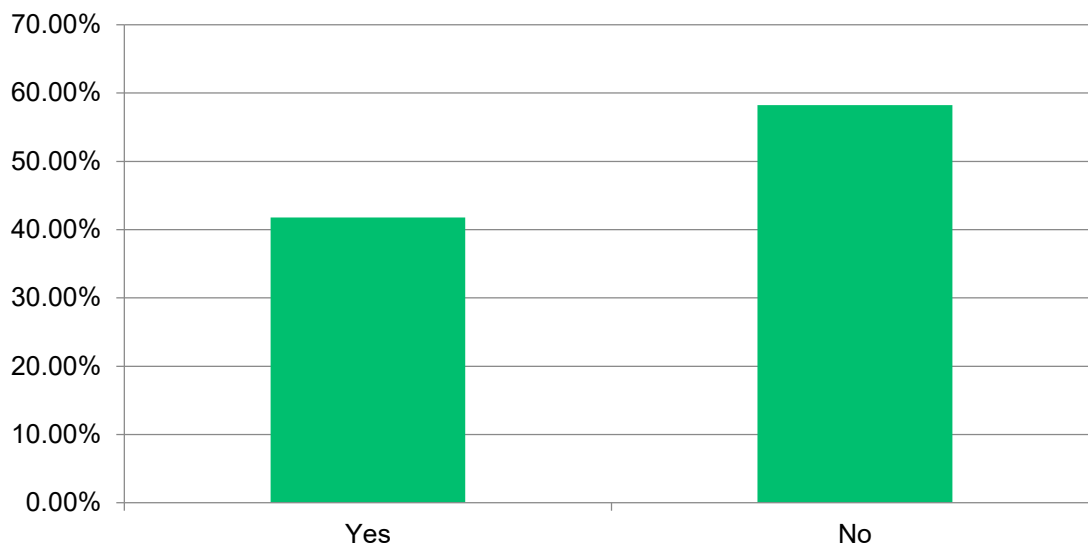
Q7 Which of the following services does your organisation/group provide? Please tick all that apply.



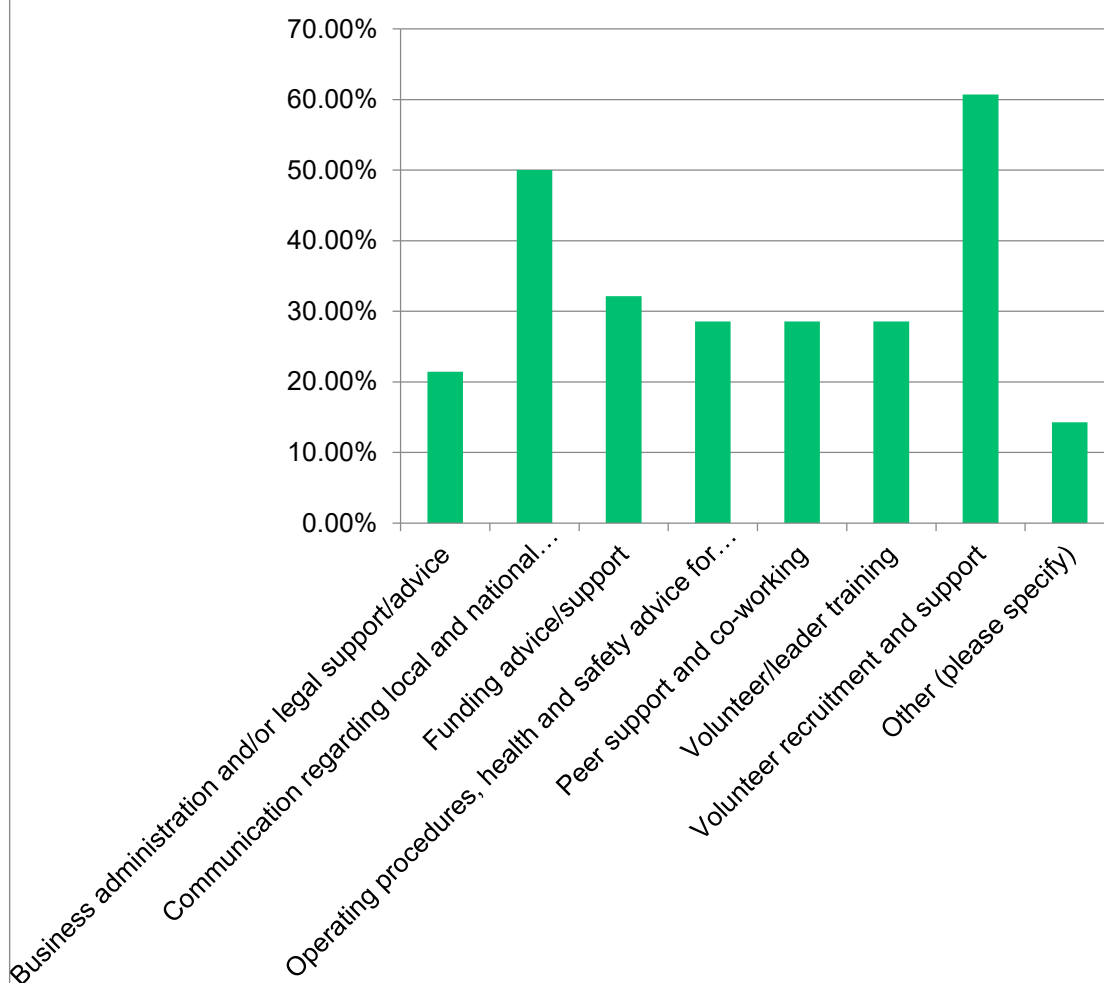
Q8 What areas does your organisation/group serve? Please tick all that apply

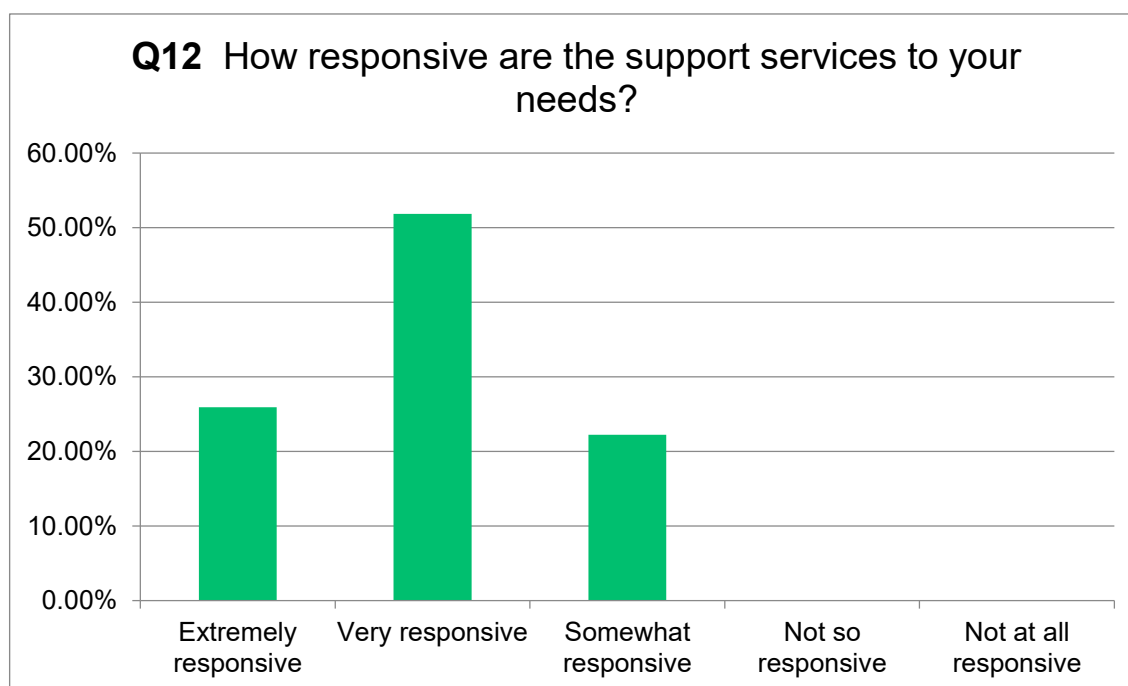
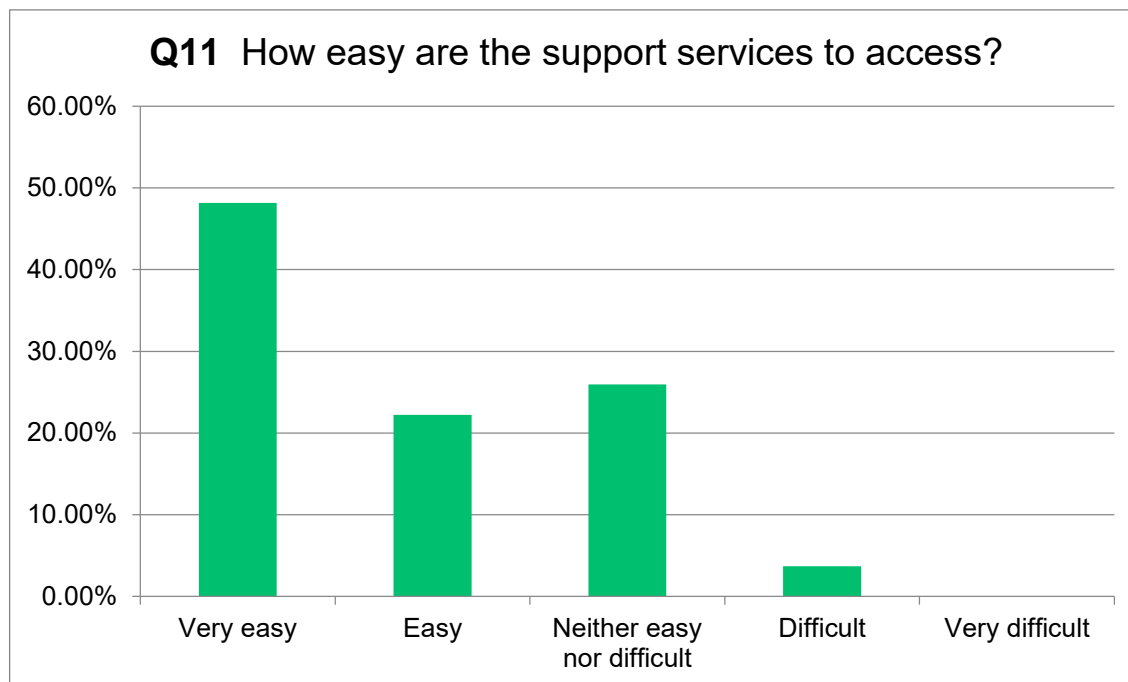


Q9 Do you currently access a voluntary and community support service?

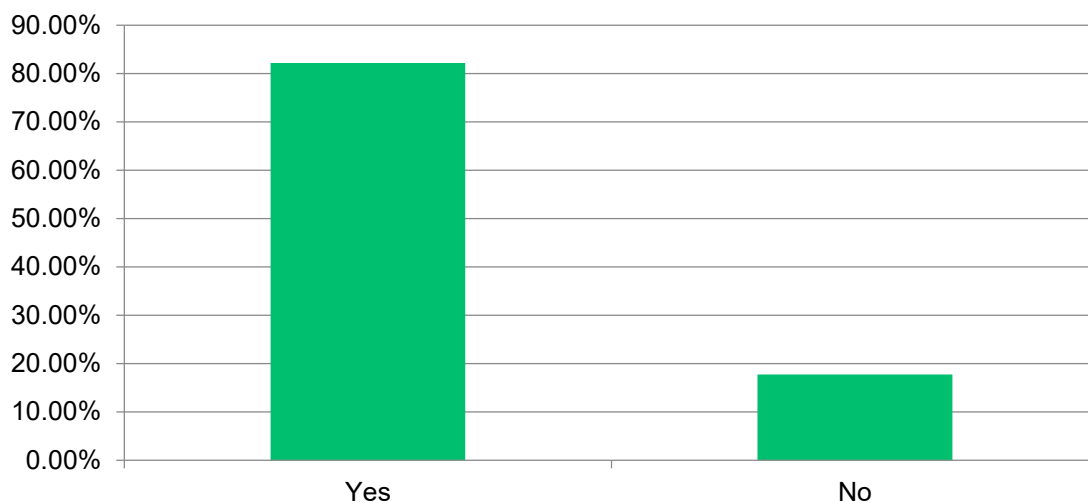


Q10 What support services do you access? Please tick all that apply.

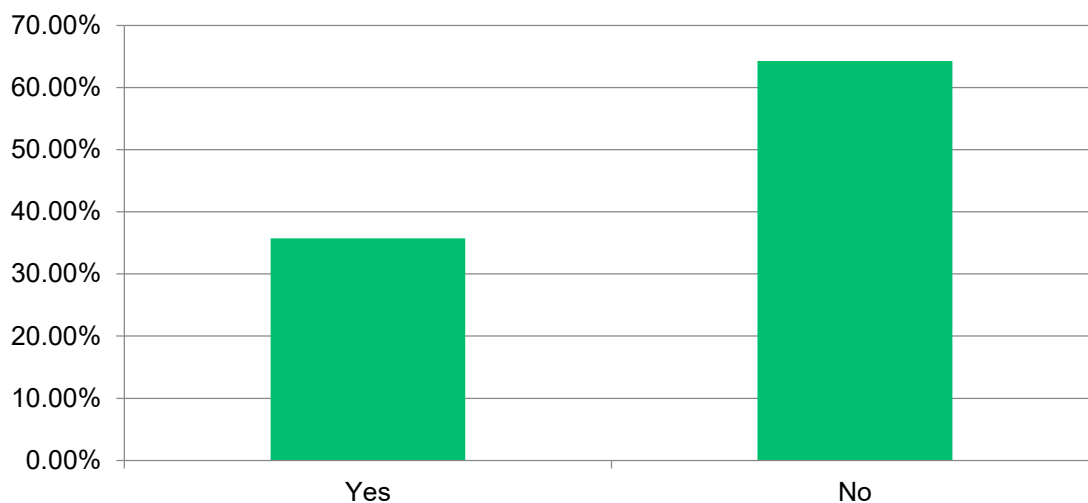




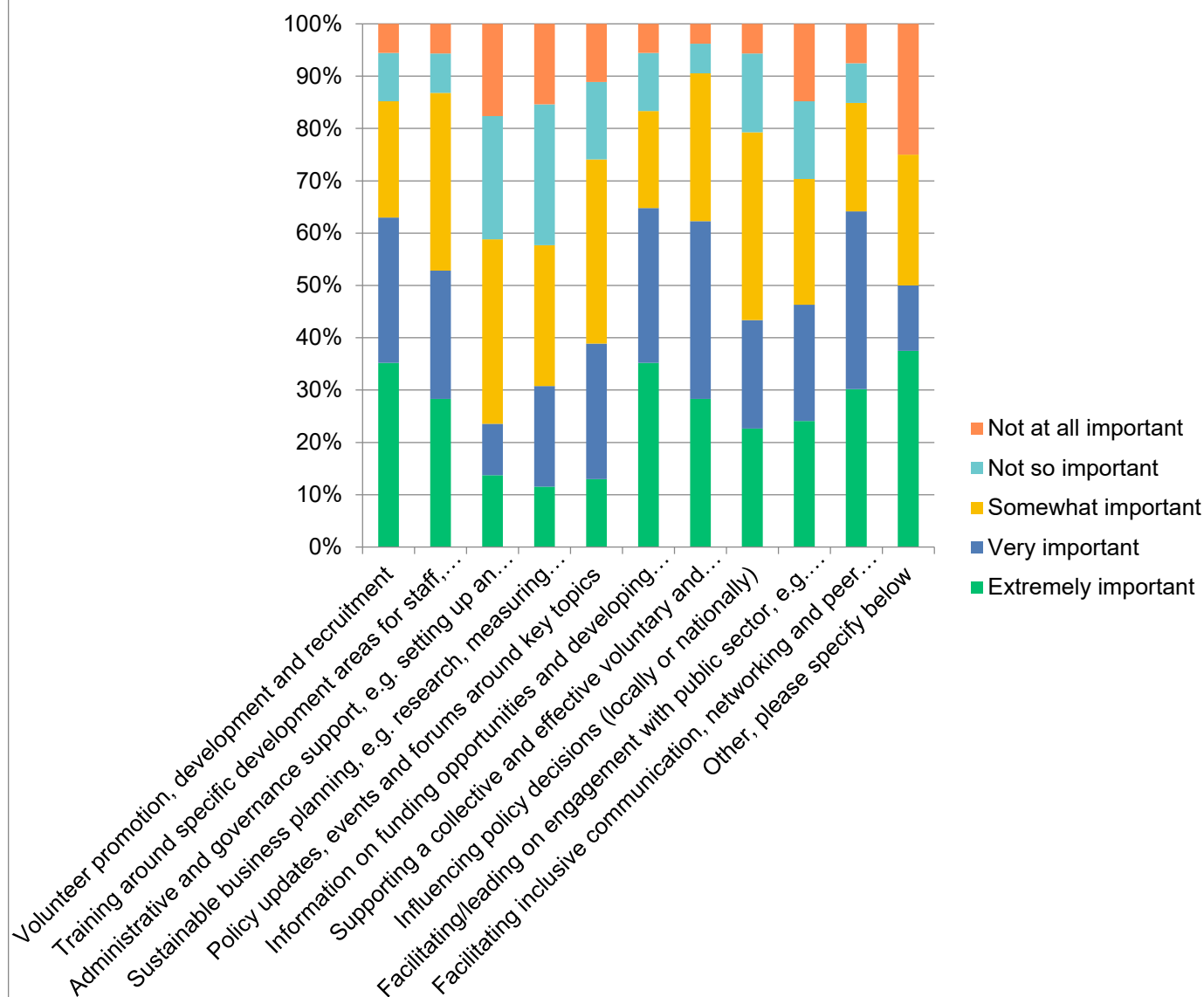
Q13 Are there any aspects of the current local voluntary and community support services that are working particularly well?



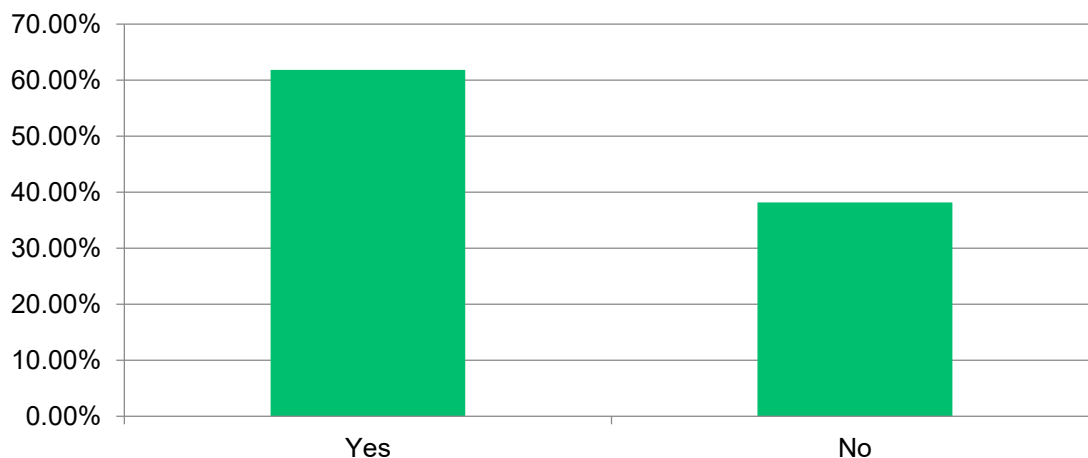
Q14 Are there any aspects to the current local voluntary and community support services that aren't working particularly well?



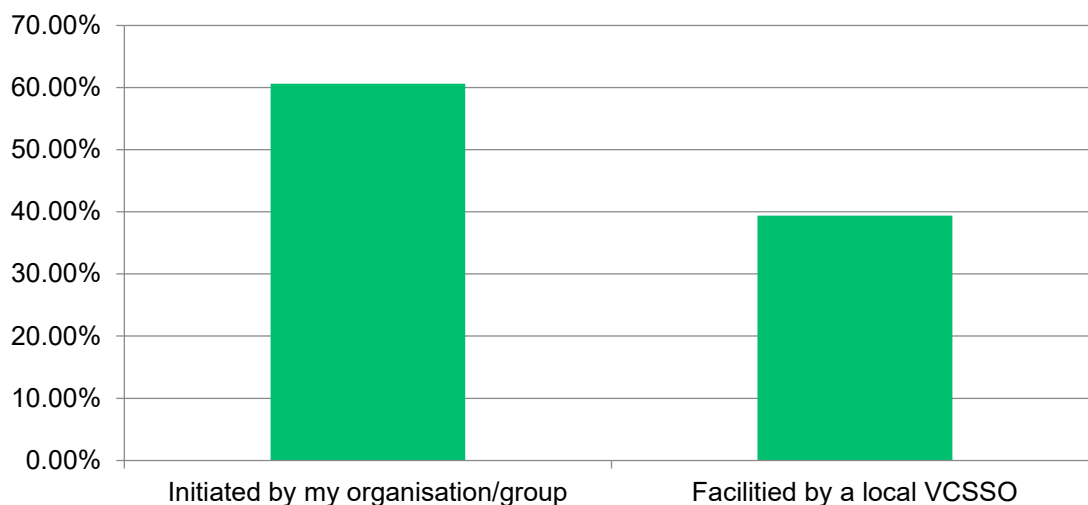
Q15 How important will the following support services be to your organisation/group over the next three years?



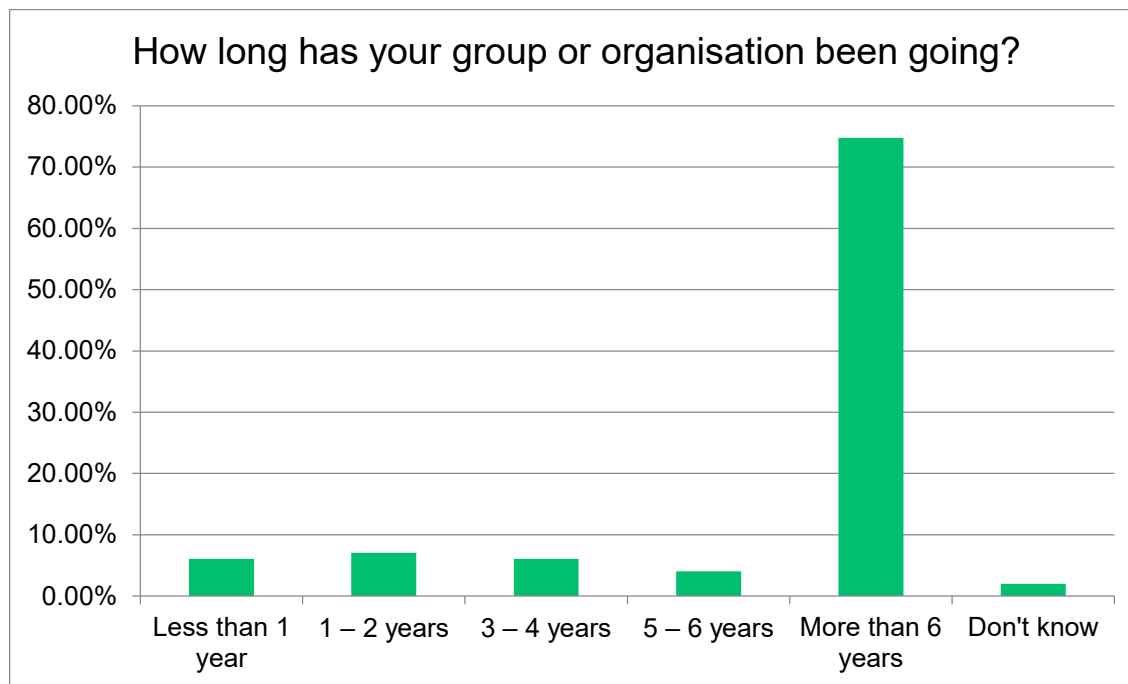
Q16 Do you currently network or participate in peer support with other local voluntary and community organisations/groups in West Berkshire?

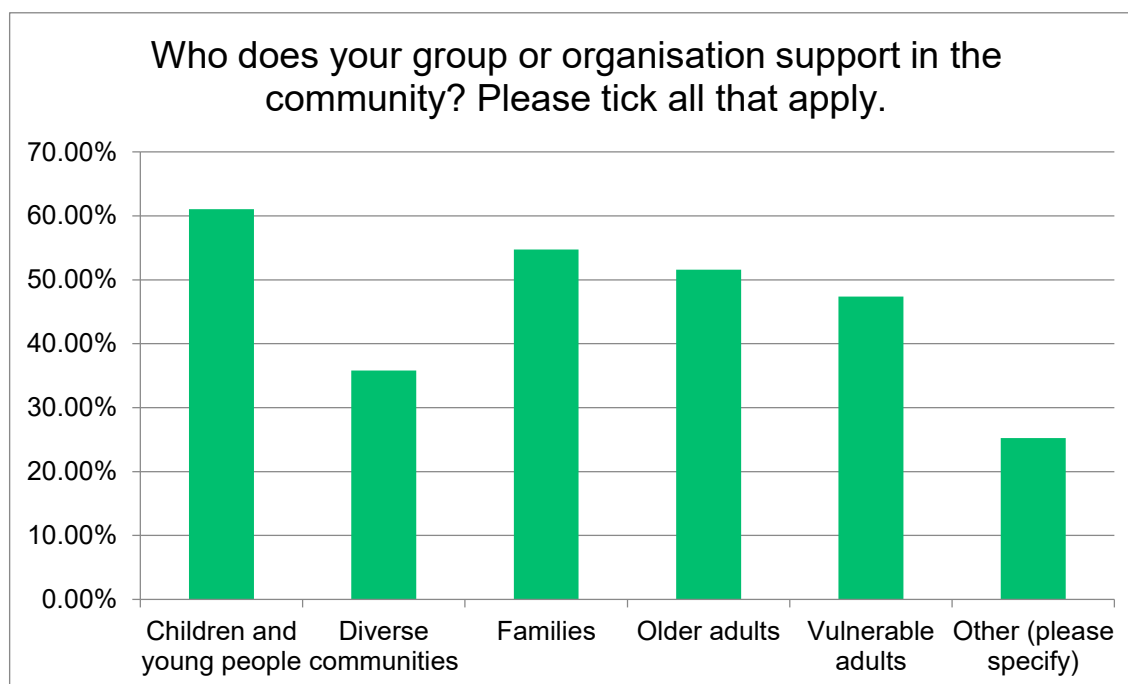
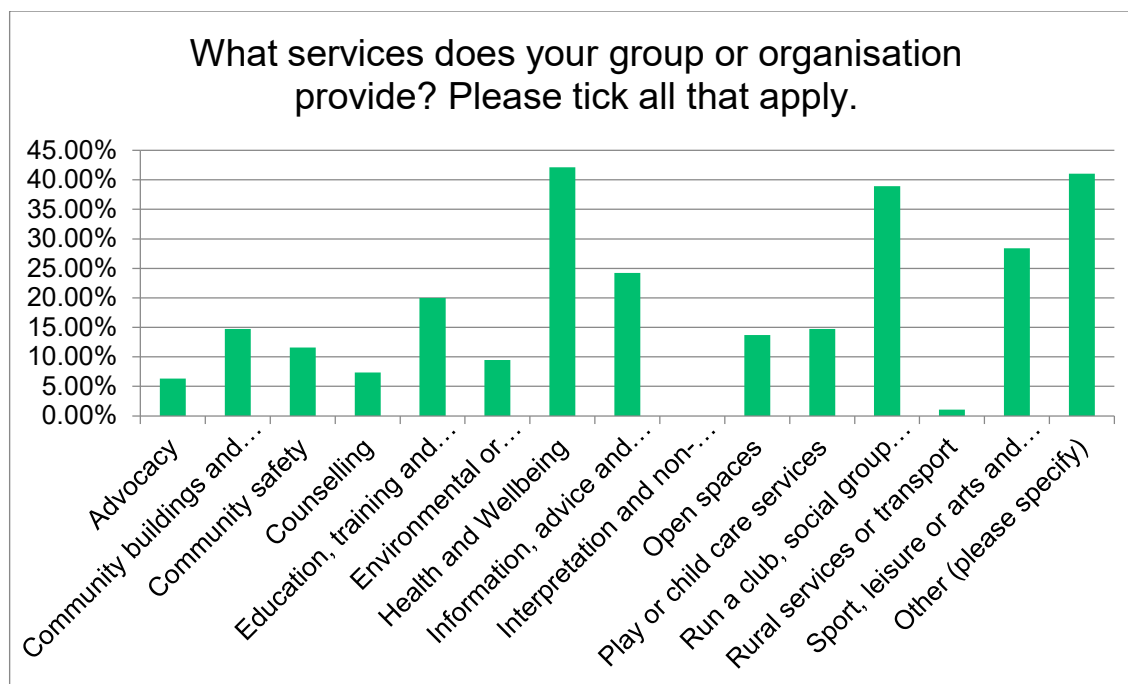


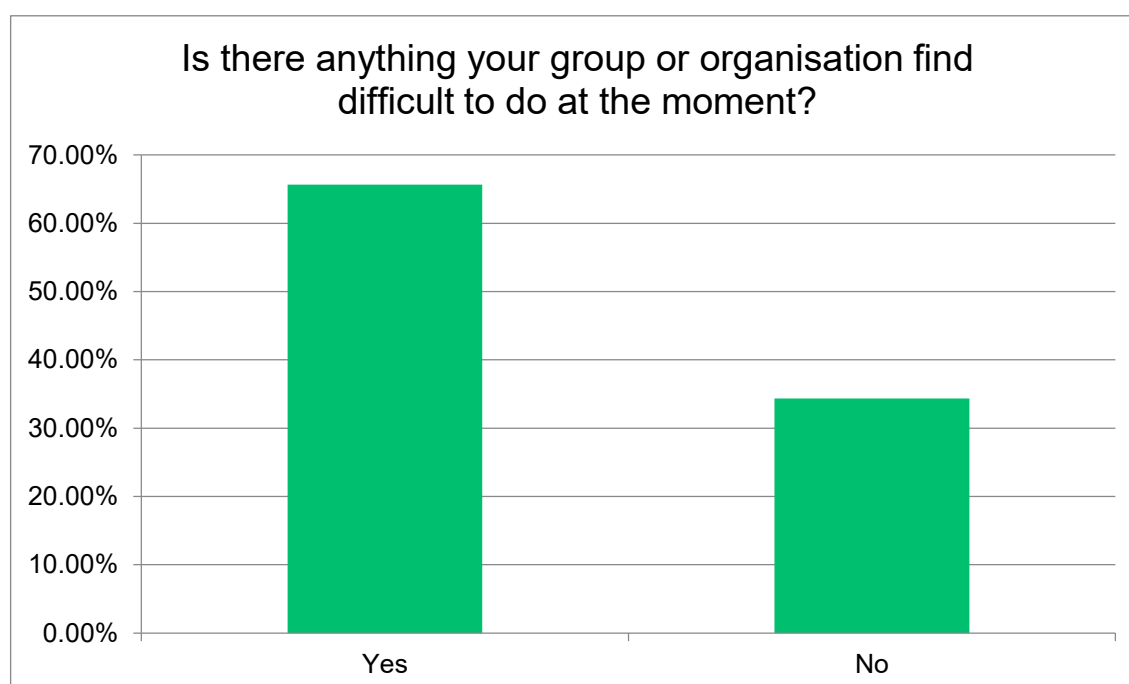
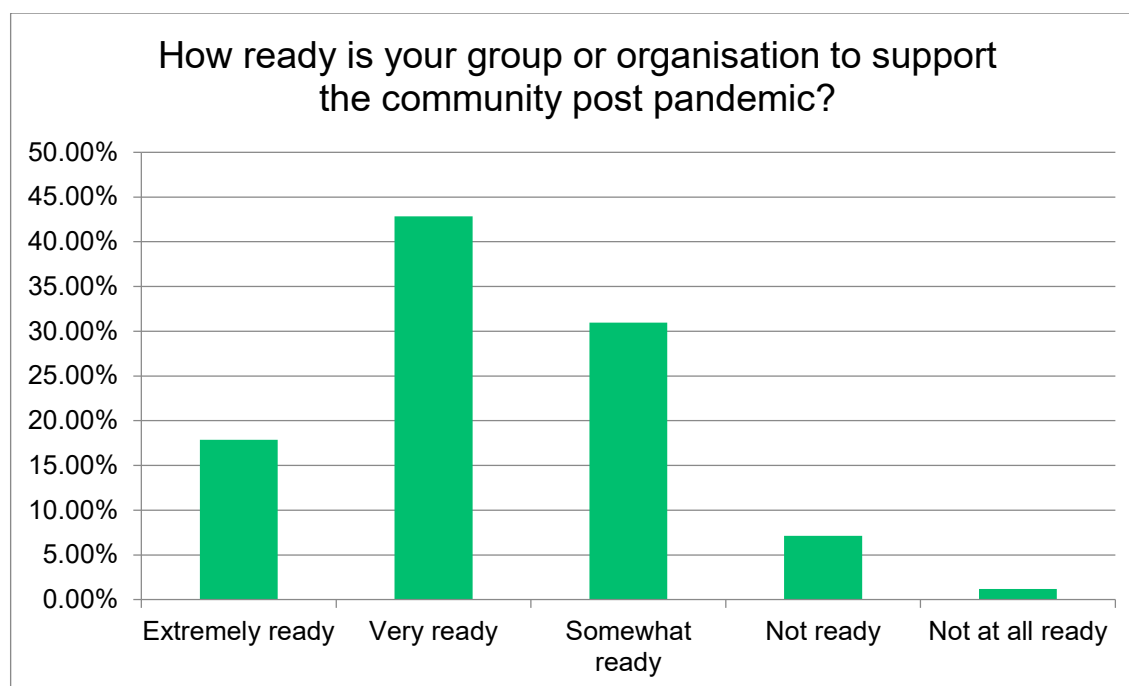
Q17 Do you initiate this networking or is it facilitated by a local voluntary and community sector support organisation (VCSSO)?

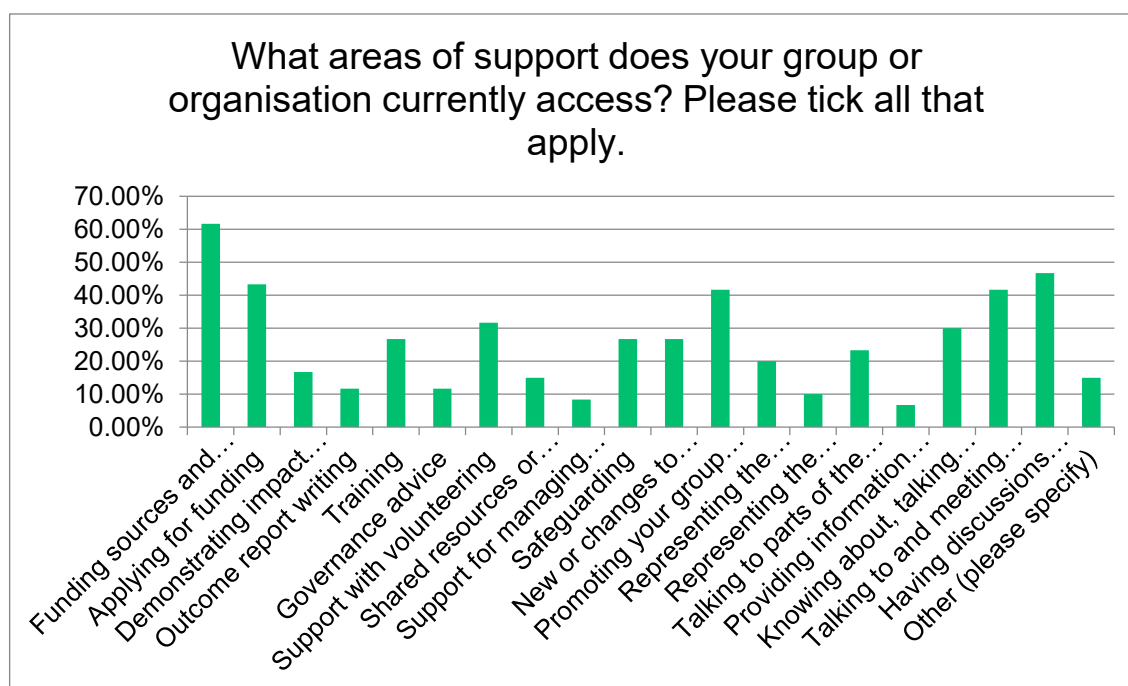
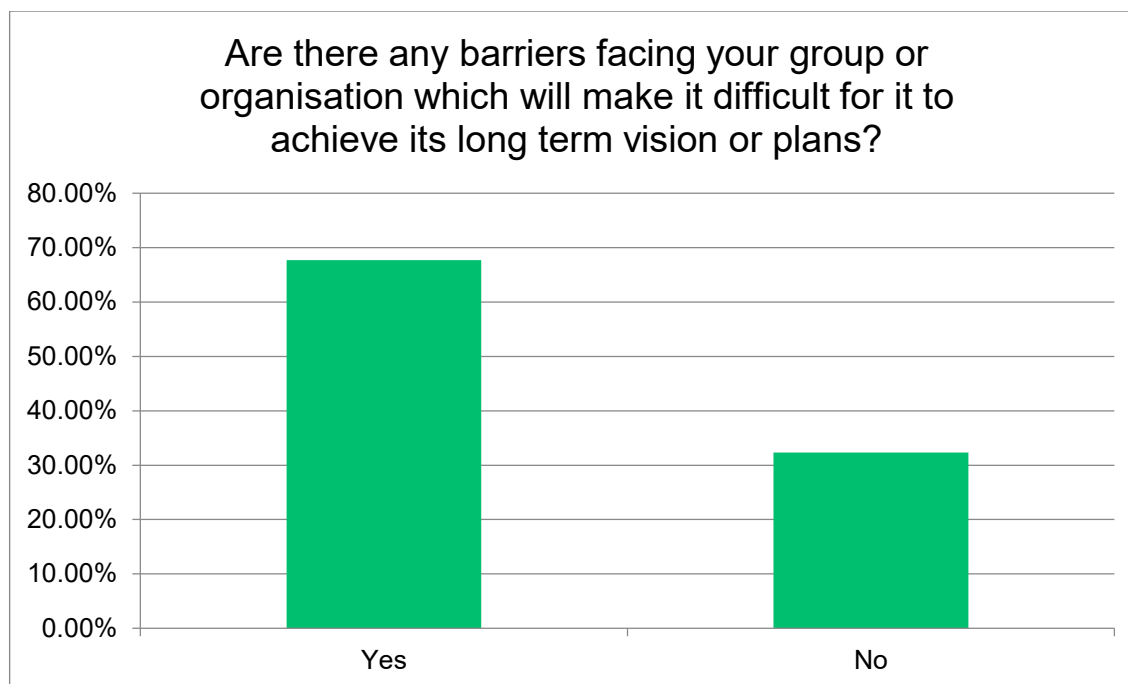


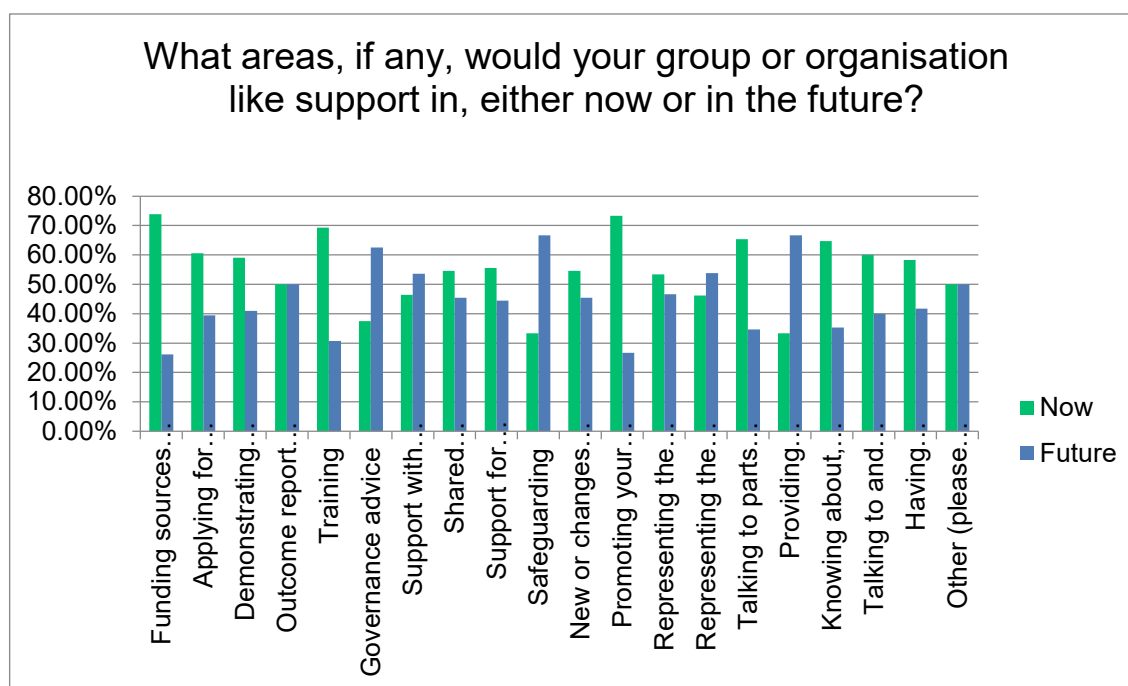
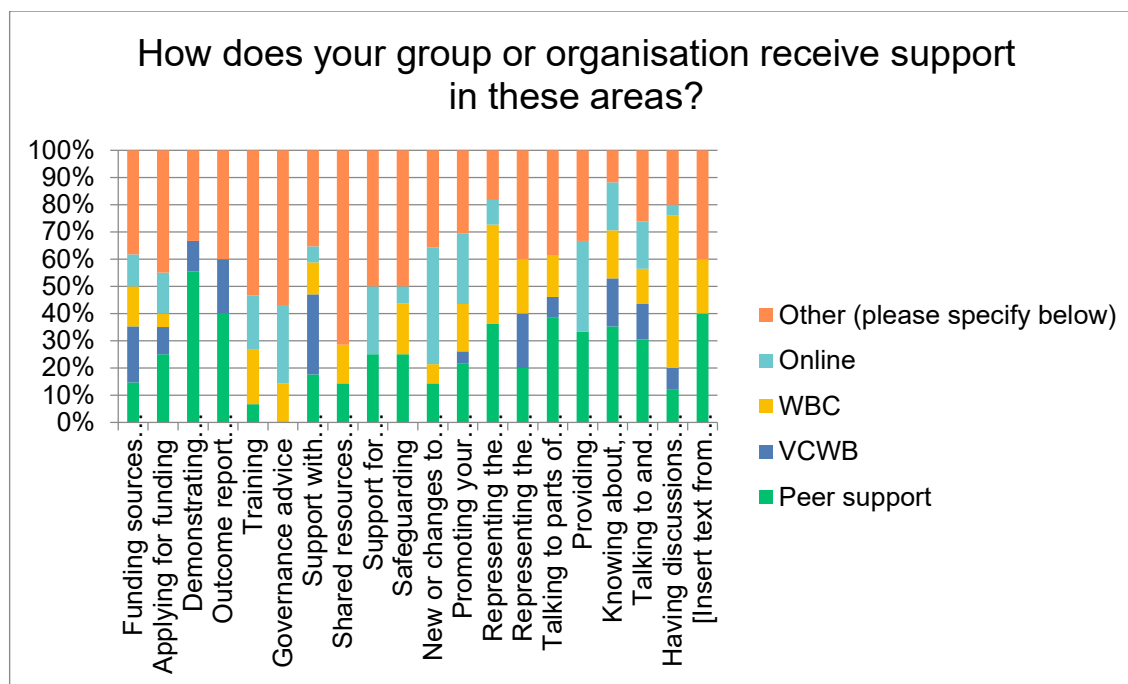
Phase II Survey Bar Charts

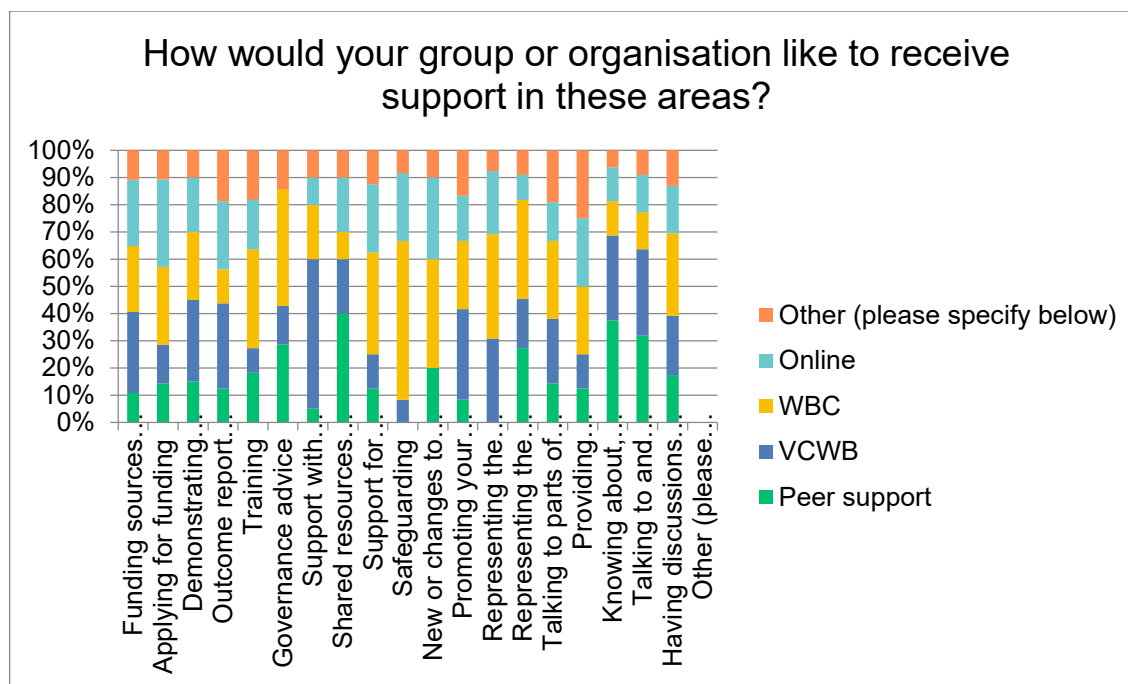












APPENDIX D Phase I Workshop Engagement

Workshop 1 – 24th November 2020 3.30pm – 5pm

Workshop 2 – 25th November 2020 1.30pm – 3pm

Workshop 3 – 26th November 2020 6.00pm – 7.30pm

Guiding Questions for Workshops

1. What would you want a VCSSO to do for you/your organisation? What is important to you?
 - How could a VCSSO support your work and help you to achieve your aims and objectives
 - What services would add value to your work
 - How would it help you be more productive, efficient, innovative
2. What works well / not so well in enabling our VCSE sector in West Berkshire?
 - Are you connected with other organisations that serve the same people as you / other organisation?
 - How easy are they to access?
 - How responsive are the services?
 - Gaps in current service?
3. How could a VCSSO make a difference to:
 - Your community / the people you support?
 - The service you provide?

APPENDIX E. Phase I, 1:1 Interview Engagement

Interviews were conducted with seven organisations

Guiding Questions

1. What key areas are important to your organisation and that you would like a VCSSO to offer?
2. What would that support look like? / How could a VCSSO
 - Support you to achieve your aims and objectives
 - Add value to your work
 - Help you to be more productive, efficient,
 - Support you to develop your services / be more innovative
3. What voluntary and community sector support does your organisation currently engage with / receive support from
 - This could be other charities/groups, VCWB, CCG, WBC, Healthwatch etc.
 - How have you engaged with these?
 - What is working well, what could be improved, are there gaps?
4. How could a VCSSO make a difference to your community / the people you support / service you provide?
 - Peer support / joint working
 - Connect communities /organisations
 - Advocacy / Raise their voice / collective voice
 - Engage at strategic level on their behalf
 - Attract more funding
5. How much opportunity for interaction, peer support and joint working is there with other local VCSE organisations or community groups
 - How could this benefit your organisation? - help achieve common objectives, streamline costs, raise a collective voice
6. Is there anything additional that we haven't discussed today that you would like to share to help inform the VCSSO

APPENDIX F. Phase II, 1:1 Interview Engagement

Interviews were conducted with four organisations

Guiding Questions

ABOUT YOU To help us understand the views and needs across different parts of the community and voluntary	THINGS NOW We would like to understand how things are for your group or organisation at the moment
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Which community group or organisation(s) are you part of?• What is your role in the group or organisation?• How long has your group or organisation been going?• What does your group or organisation do?• Who do you support in the community?• Where in West Berkshire do you deliver your service?• What groups and forums are you part of?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What do you feel your group or organisation does really well now?• How do you help other groups or organisations learn about what you already do well?• What are the things you are focusing on right now?• What are the issues which are affecting the community you work with?• Are there any things you find difficult to do in your group or organisation at the moment & why are they difficult?
THINGS IN THE FUTURE We would like to understand how the future looks for your group or organisation	SUPPORT YOU MIGHT NEED We would like to understand the support that your group or organisation may need to thrive; both now and in the future
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What are your longer term visions or plans?• How could voluntary sector support make a difference to you achieving your vision or plans?• What things might make it difficult to reach your vision or plans?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What support do you already receive and where from?• What support needs do you have that are not met at the moment?• Where you would like future support needs to be provided?

