



Wigan Borough
Community Partnership

Wigan Borough VSCE Sector COVID-19 Survey

June 2020

For Circulation



Wigan Borough Community Partnership (WBCP) in partnership with Wigan Council prepared and promoted a VCSE sector survey to better understand how COVID-19 has affected or impacted Wigan Borough organisations activities over the last few months and potentially going forward into the recovery phase and beyond.

The survey was launched on Friday 22nd May and was open for 14 days, closing at 12pm on Friday 5th June. Throughout this time, it was widely promoted to organisations across the borough through the WBCP website, social media channels, newsletters, WBCP members, Community Book and by Wigan Councils PR team and the Deal for Communities team.

The survey received a total of 138 responses from a range of different sized organisations and a widespread geographical reach. An initial data cleanse revealed 5 duplicates, which left 133 responses to analyse.

* The contents of this report provides a summary of the data collected less the full responses to which organisations could be identified individually.

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Survey Response Summary

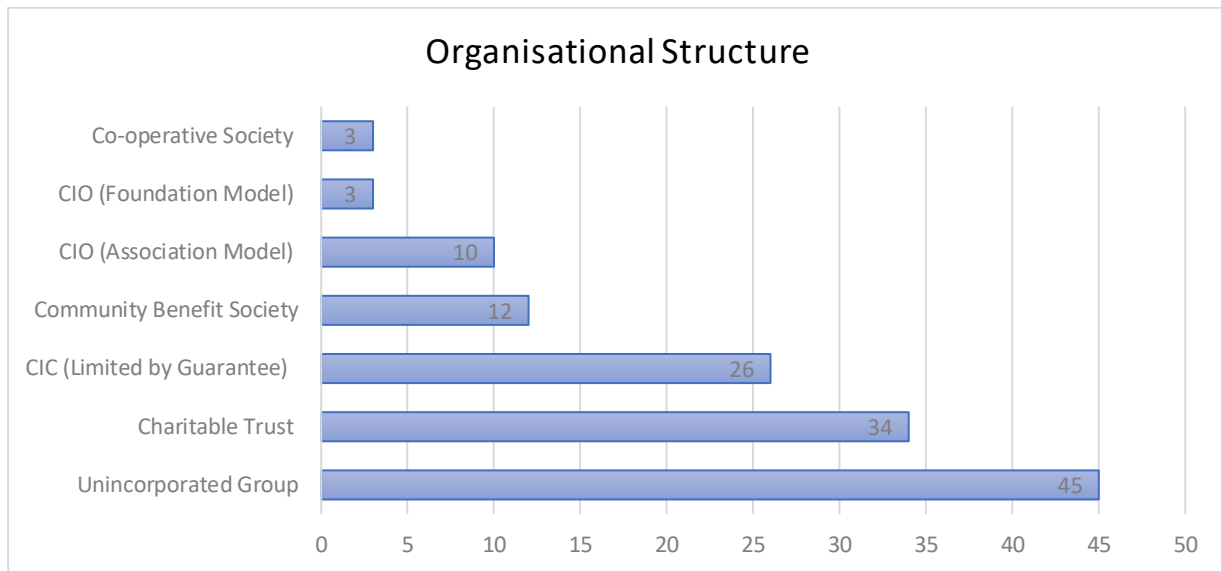
	All Devices	Desktop	Mobile	Tablet
Starts	349	160	166	23
Responses	133	80	44	9
Completion Rate	38.1%	50%	26.5%	39.1%
Average Time to Complete	10.24	10.58	9.22	10.37

VCSE Survey Response Locations

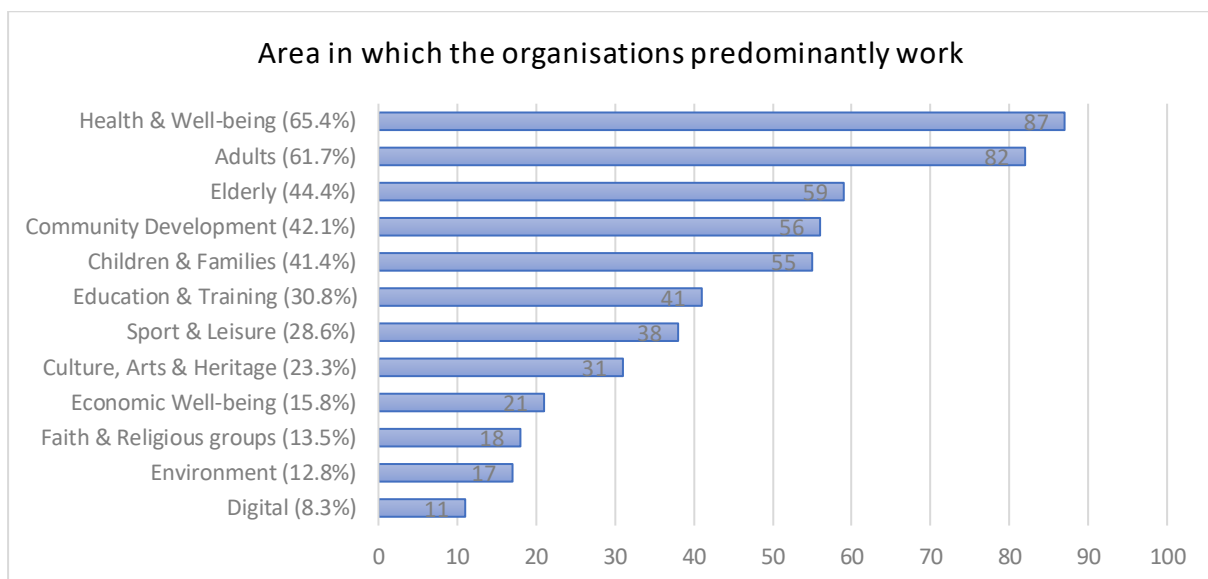


Charitable Trust	Blue
Community Interest Company (CIC)	Green
Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO)	Purple
Unincorporated Constituted Group	Yellow
Co-operative	Red
Community Benefit Society	Red

We asked those surveyed to tell us about the legal structure of their organisations. The survey revealed that (Unincorporated) Constituted Groups made up the greatest percentage of respondents at 33% of the overall total, 25% from Charitable Trusts and 19% from CIC's. The lowest being that of Co-operative Societies and 'Foundation Model' CIO's at just 2%.



From the services organisations offer, we asked them to indicate the areas in which they would usually predominantly work.

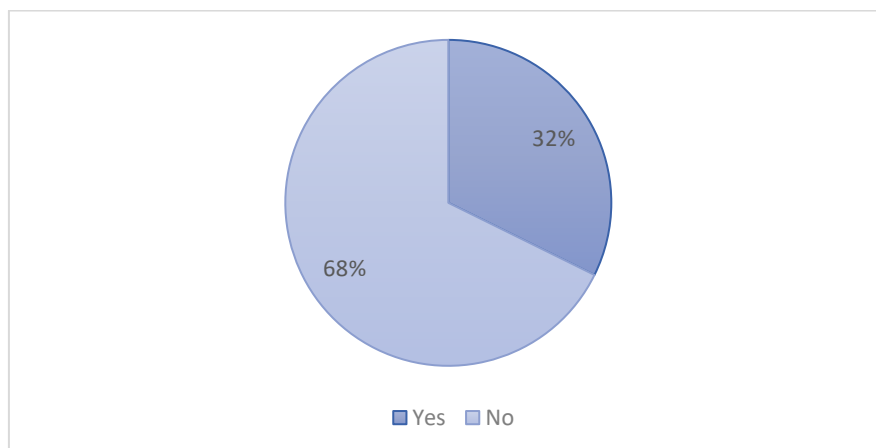


From the collective responses we have categorised them in to low, medium, and high activity of services available across the borough. Health & well-being and support to adults was found to be the greatest whilst economic wellbeing, faith, environment and digital were all at the lowest end of VCSE support services available.

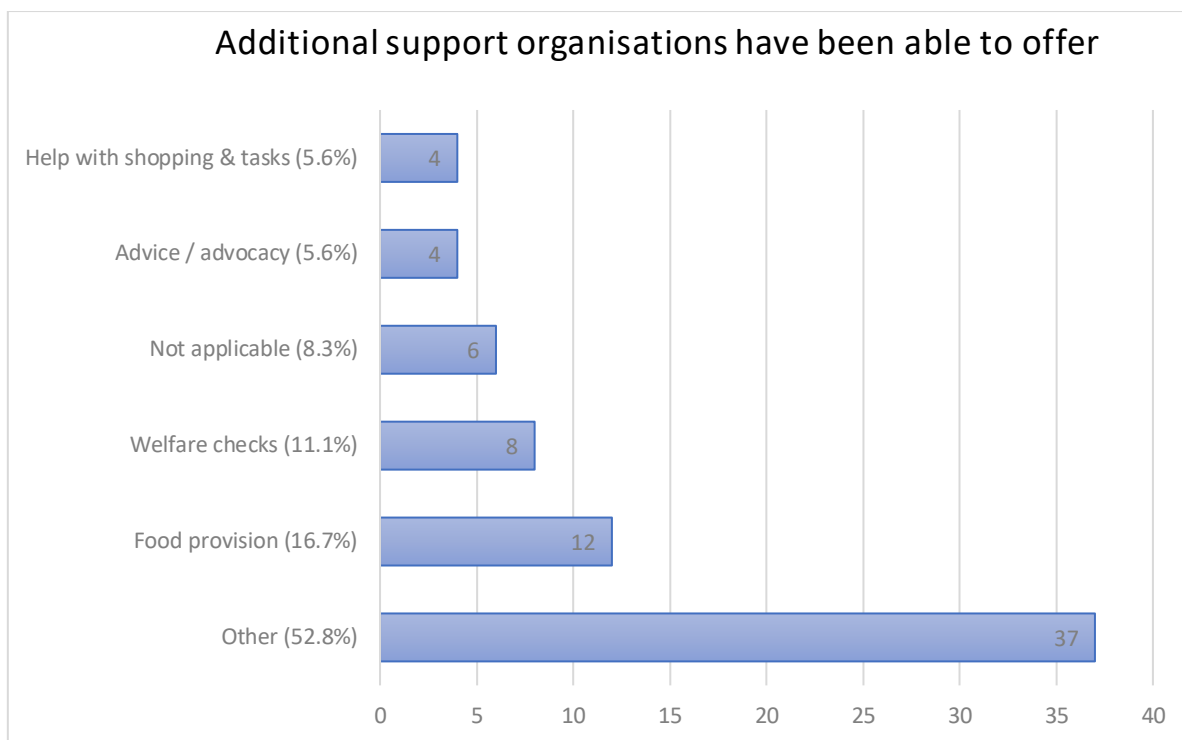
Low		Medium		High	
Digital	11	Culture Arts & Heritage	31	Community Development	56
Environment	17	Sport & Leisure	38	Elderly	59
Faith & Religious	18	Education & Training	41	Adults	82
Economic Wellbeing	21	Children & Families	55	Health & Wellbeing	87

Activities During the COVID-19 Crisis

Respondents to the survey were asked if they have been able to continue pre COVID-19 activities. It revealed that two thirds have been unable to continue throughout the crisis.



From the 133 organisations surveyed over half (73) responded saying that they had changed their offer and were offering additional services or support to residents across the borough; with 70% saying that they intended to continue offering these additional services in the future where needed.



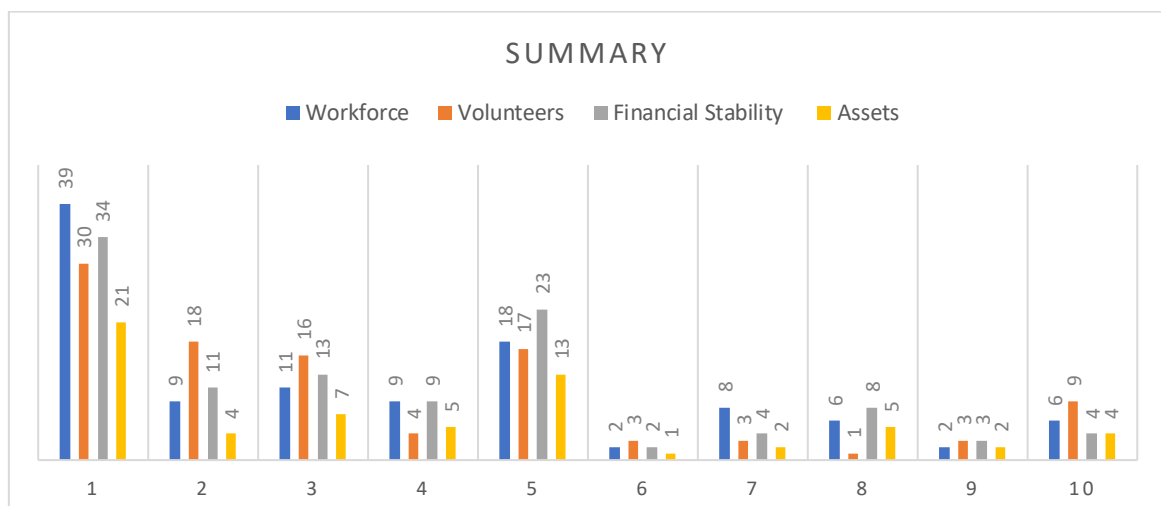
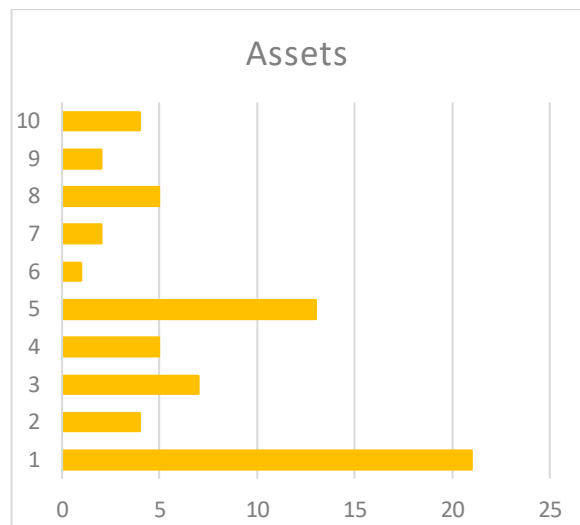
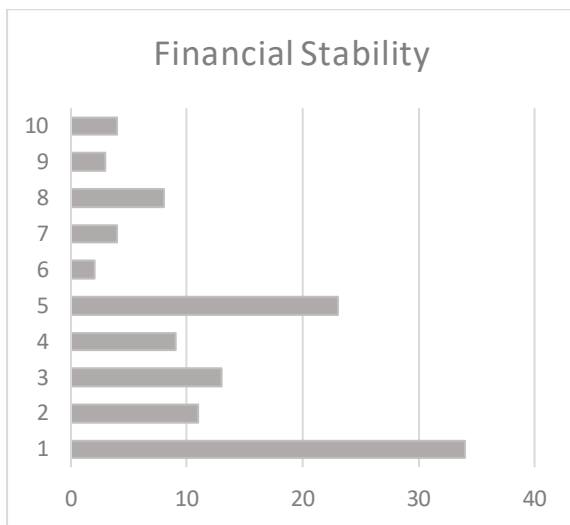
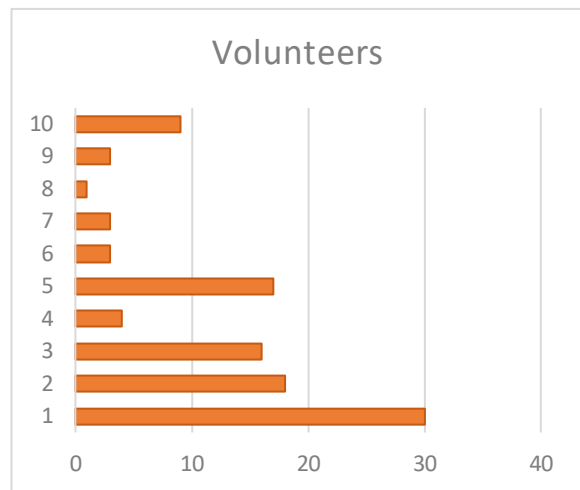
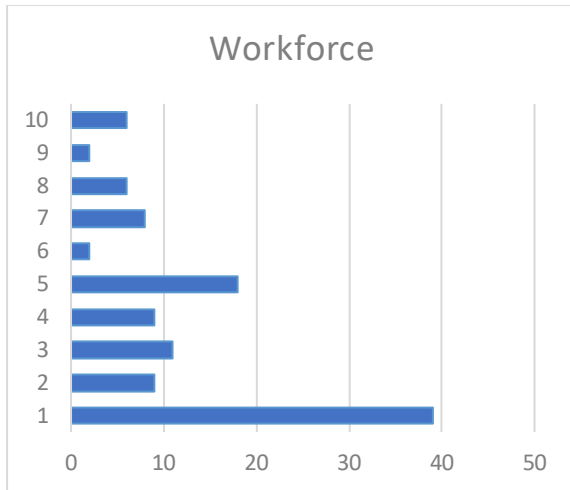
Those that responded to doing 'other' told us a little more about their new services and how they have adapted to new ways of working:

- Online meetings
- Developed virtual social groups
- Developing a digital aspect to our work
- Online quizzes
- Random acts of kindness
- Hospital transport
- Outreach service to our members and their families
- Online activities and suggestions for young people to still be able to develop and learn whilst at home
- Counselling services over the phone
- Meeting remotely rather than at our regular venues
- Keeping in touch with members by email
- Online sessions for young people
- Utilizing Zoom for activities & training
- Re-allocated funds to help more local groups
- Supporting the group via WhatsApp messaging and Zoom meetings
- Zoom to do a weekly singalong
- Organising a garden singer for residents where all were socially distanced or in rooms with windows open.
- Birthday presents when family cannot attend because they are shielding.
- Sending photos to relatives from the care home.

Impact

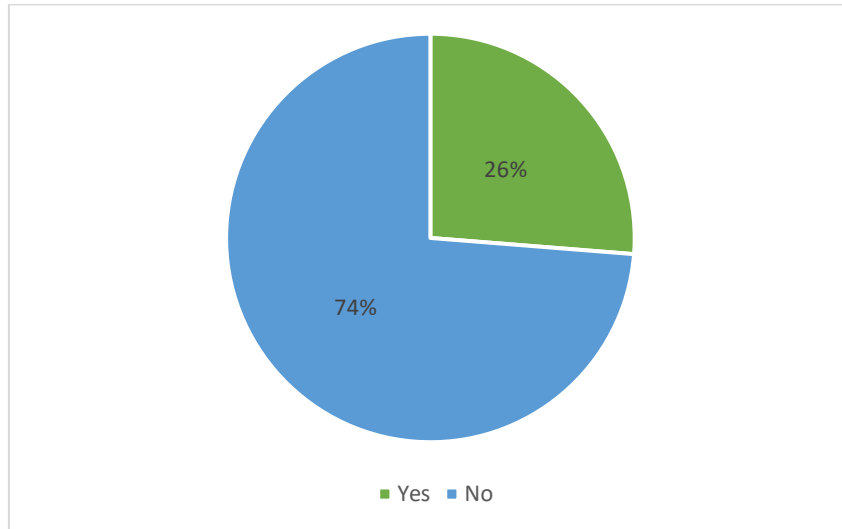
All organisations were asked if they had been impacted in a positive or negative way during the crisis in four separate questions which covered the workforce, volunteers, their financial stability, and assets.

Scale: 1 very negative - 10 very positive



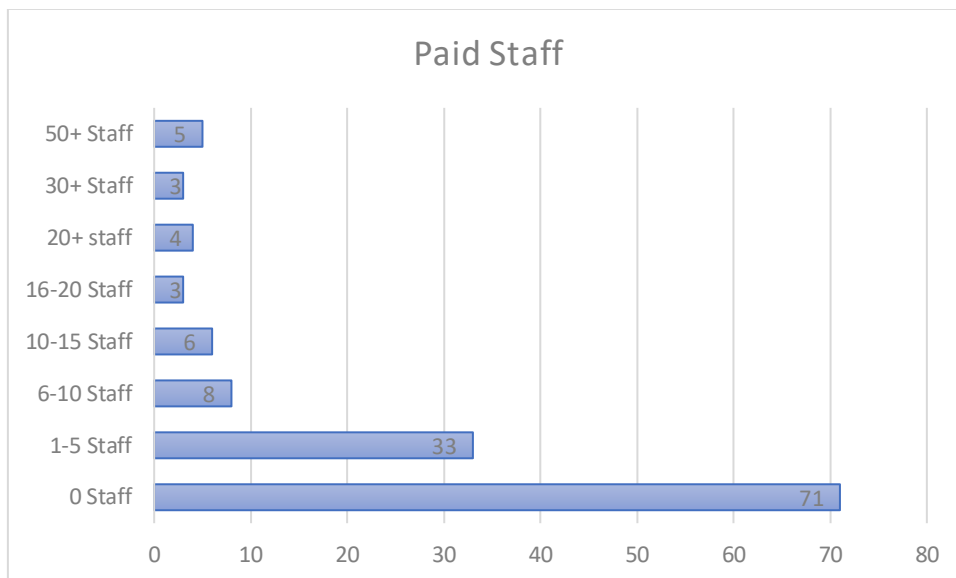
Volunteer support

The survey asked all 133 respondents if they'd had any additional support from volunteers during this crisis with 35 saying 'yes', they have had additional support, whilst 98 responded 'no'.

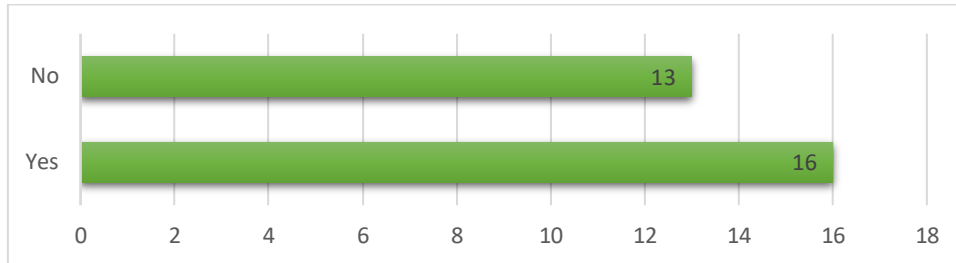


Staff

53% of all VCSE organisations across the borough are run solely by volunteers and 24% with less than 5 paid members of staff.



The organisations that do employ staff, 29 have been forced to furlough staff with 16 opting to top up salary levels above the 80% government funding, whilst 13 have indicated that financially they are unable to do this.



Funding

From the 133 organisations surveyed when asked the question 'Have you been able to access any of the National Grants or GM funds related to supporting the crisis,' 38 responded to having either successfully received a grant or awaiting a decision on their grant application.

A large majority did not find it necessary to apply for funding as it was not required due to their service or activities being postponed during the crisis or being self-funded by its members. Whereas some of the larger organisations have successfully secured funding from multiple funders, these include:

- | | |
|----------------------|----------------------------------|
| Forever Manchester | Alchemy |
| Lottery | Groundwork |
| Morrisons Foundation | Legal & General |
| CAF Emergency Fund | Government Small Business Grants |
| Greggs | Barclays |
| Tesco | B&M's |
| High Sheriff Funding | Police Commissioners |
| Coalfields | |

Future Opportunities

Lastly, we asked all those who took the survey if they thought there would be any new opportunities for their organisations as a result of the crisis. 43 responded "no" but encouragingly 90 said "yes".

Our Observations

This is an ongoing challenge – we do not know when Covid19 will be over – so there are no conclusions. The virus is having a significant impact on the VCSE sector. Wigan Borough Community Partnership will not be able to hold its partnership convention and therefore unable to gain directly the views of our members as to what we are asked to do in providing advice, training and support to our members for the forthcoming year - our members really do set the agenda.

This survey goes some way in filling that void. We are sure that you will be as impressed as we are as to the length and quality of the responses. We are most grateful for the time and energy spent in those responses. The response to two of the questions has been included in full so you can exercise your judgement as to the way forward.

We note that across the board there is no anger shown nor any pity sought by the many and varied organisations in our Borough who are all, without exception trying to continue helping their colleagues and localities. The spread of responses in both geographical and thematic terms is significant for our very large Borough and the numerous types of organisations who have responded means it rates well as regards inclusivity.

It is apparent that there is a major difference when it comes to paid staff. The adverse impact on all organisations is clear but it is much more challenging for those that have wages to pay.

Two particularly dramatic findings are that two thirds of our organisations are unable to continue in the same way and a half have already changed their offer

Several are hanging on in there against the odds and it clearly isn't just about money and grants but also the lack of the usual footfall and income that adds to the worries that nearly two thirds have in just continuing to exist.

Nonetheless at the end of the survey, there is terrific positivity about the future being shown at the same time as demonstrating a realistic overview which flags up worries about perceived increasing mental health problems.

The last part could be summarised as 'if you thought you needed a vibrant set of volunteers before, you're going to need them even more now' especially if public money is going to become tighter.

Gemma Atkinson
Partnership Manager
June 2020