

Nottinghamshire State of the Sector - Executive Summary



2022

INTRODUCTION

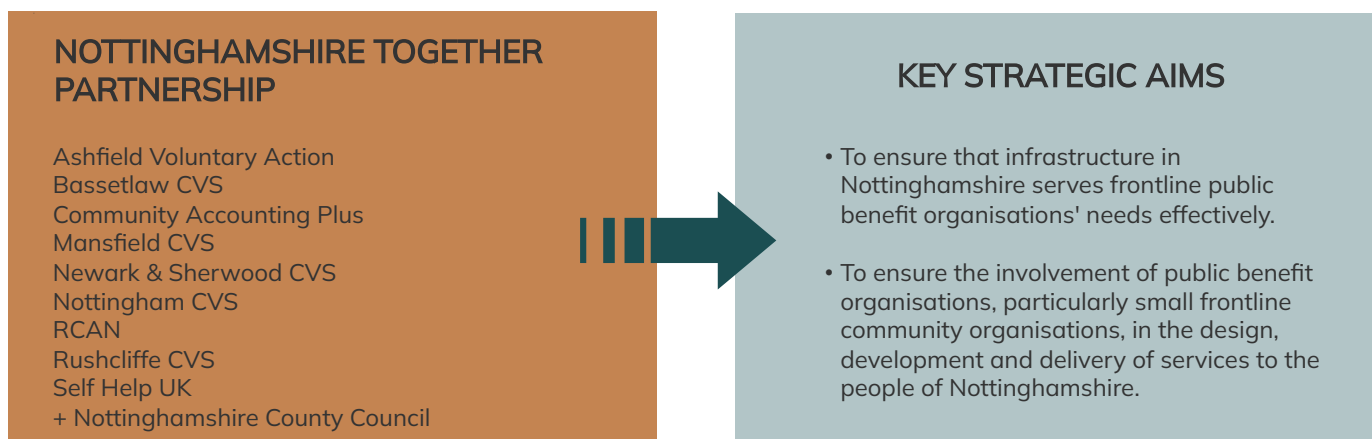
This report has been coordinated through members of the Nottinghamshire Together partnership and seeks to provide an insight into the state of the sector as it emerges from the COVID-19 pandemic. The partners would like to thank all the voluntary groups and organisations who took part in the survey and its wider consultation processes. It is appreciated that groups and organisations responded at a time of competing pressures and wider COVID-19 impact on service users, volunteers and staff. The contribution of the sector is clearly demonstrated throughout this report and enables us to highlight our unique strengths:

- the sector's flexibility.
- how we have adapted as a sector.
- how we recognise the challenges ahead.
- the challenge of structural changes and wider impacts on society that we need to understand and respond to.
- our ability to provide timely insight through our community voice.

The pandemic has highlighted the value of the Voluntary and Community Sector, demonstrating our ability to respond and deliver at a time of unprecedented uncertainty. The insight provided through this report shows that existing organisations 'stepped up' and newcomers 'stepped forward'; this resulted in the sector having an equal 'seat at the table', in many instances for the first time.

The challenge moving forward, at a time of severe financial pressure for many, is to continue to secure funding and capacity to support Nottinghamshire residents.

This report demonstrates the value of the **Voluntary and Community Sector** and moving forward it is hoped that wider stakeholders continue to work with and invest in it.



METHODOLOGY

This analysis involved the distribution, via the Nottinghamshire Together partnership, of a standard survey to VCS organisations. The survey was organised into sections, including a series of questions on the organisation and structure of the sector, finances and funding and understanding the impact of change. Survey questions were a mixture of pre-set choices (e.g. Strongly Agree - Strongly Disagree) and free form questions. COVID-19 was a key line of enquiry running throughout the survey, including gathering evidence on the financial impact and the influence it has had on service delivery.

For the purpose of the report, the main sections have been organised to match the survey structure; however the impact of COVID-19 has been grouped into a standalone section. The survey data was organised to create a single dataset allowing data to be queried as a whole database.

The survey offered over 30 sector areas as options to choose from. For the purposes of reporting on this question, several sectors have been amalgamated into a group area, creating a composite result. These composite sectors are: Health & Wellbeing, Social Activities, Food Provision, Funding and Equalities.

| COMPOSITE SECTOR | SURVEY SECTORS | % OF ORGANISATIONS |
|--------------------|--|--------------------|
| HEALTH & WELLBEING | HEALTH & WELLBEING GENERAL, LONG TERM, MENTAL HEALTH | 16% |
| SOCIAL ACTIVITIES | SOCIAL ACTIVITIES, SPORTS, FITNESS, LEISURE | 13% |
| FOOD PROVISION | FOOD PROVISION, FOOD BANKS, POVERTY, LOW INCOME | 7% |
| FUNDING | FUNDING, GRANTS, INFRASTRUCTURE | 2% |
| EQUALITIES | ADVOCACY, EQUALITIES, HUMAN & CIVIL RIGHTS | 2% |

Executive Summary Highlights

This report features an infographic executive summary, which highlights the key findings from each section of the main report and can be used separately for standalone communications.

Summary District Insights

Nottinghamshire Together partners carried out a number of additional activities in order to gather District or Issue specific feedback as part of the State of the Sector process. In a number of instances, this included focus groups, both online and face to face, which provided the opportunity to discuss issues highlighted in more detail. This also provided the chance for rural communities, including Parish Councils, to highlight their specific challenges.

See [Appendix 1](#) for the District Insight Summaries in the main report.

DEFINITIONS

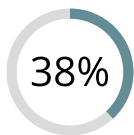
This report covers the 'state of the voluntary and community sector' (VCS) across Nottinghamshire. This definition of the sector includes social enterprises and has been used interchangeably with the 'community and voluntary sector' (CVS), the 'voluntary, community and social enterprise sector' (VCSE) and the Third Sector.

The data excludes Nottingham City, although the survey design and lines of enquiry were developed to maximise the standardisation of the evidence by the Nottinghamshire Together partnership, which includes city and county VCS lead representation. A separate report has therefore also been developed for Nottingham City.

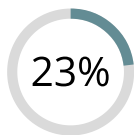
PART ONE - ABOUT THE SECTOR



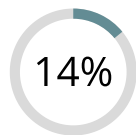
STRUCTURE OF THE SECTOR



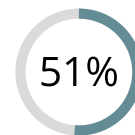
organisations are registered charities.



organisations are registered as a Community Group.

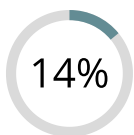


organisations have been operating for less than 4 years.

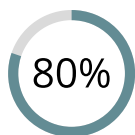


organisations have been operating for over 20 years.

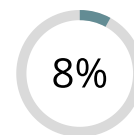
GEOGRAPHIC FOCUS



organisations are operating across all of Nottinghamshire.

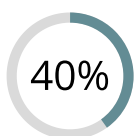


organisations deliver solely across the Nottinghamshire area.

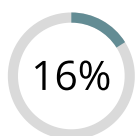


organisations operate regionally.

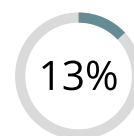
SERVICE FOCUS



organisations' service focus is non client group specific.

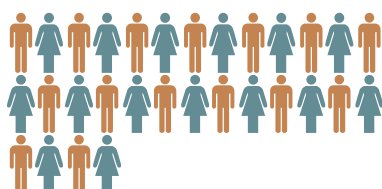


organisations operate in the Health & Wellbeing service sector.

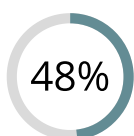


organisations operate in the Social Activities Sector.

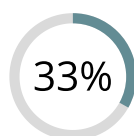
STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS



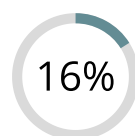
approximately 6,000 volunteers involved across Nottinghamshire.



organisations have no paid staff



organisations have less than 10 paid staff.



organisations have 10-49 paid staff



5% organisations with 50-100 volunteers involved.

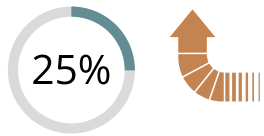


92% organisations with 0-50 volunteers involved.

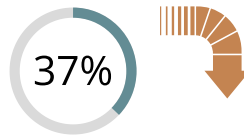
PART TWO - UNDERSTANDING CHANGE



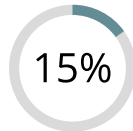
DEMAND FOR SERVICES



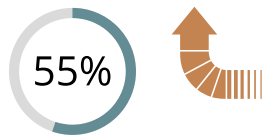
organisations have increased paid staff.



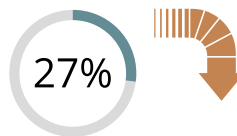
reported a decrease in volunteers.



reported no change in demand for their services and 2% unsure.



organisations confirmed that demand for their services had increased.

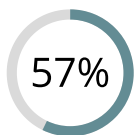


organisations confirmed that demand for their services had decreased.

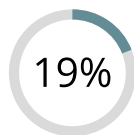


Organisations were asked a series of questions in relation to changes in demand for services. Of those organisations that reported an increase in demand, surprisingly only 57% attributed that to Covid-19, however for those that had seen a decrease in demand, 76% felt that it was directly attributable to the pandemic.

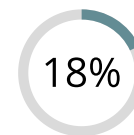
PARTNERSHIP WORKING



sphere of partnership working has not increased.



have worked with Local Authorities in the last 2 years.

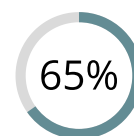


think they will be working with Local Authorities in the next 12 months.

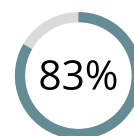
Respondents were asked if their organisation had worked in partnership with other organisations to a greater extent and the impact of COVID-19 on this. For 57% of organisations, their sphere of partnership working had not increased, for 30% it had and for 13% they were unsure. Interestingly, the view was that COVID-19 had not particularly impacted on those who had not extended their partnerships but for those who had, they felt that this was largely attributable to the pandemic.

STRUCTURAL CHANGES

Organisations were asked about the likelihood of closing services, with the positive news that 65% reported that this was not likely. In terms of closing altogether, fortunately the positive news is that a total of 83% of respondents believed that it was either Unlikely or Very Unlikely that they would close. Of the 5% of organisations that cited that they were likely to close in the next 12 months, all are community groups employing no staff or are micro organisations.



are unlikely to close any services in the next 12 months.

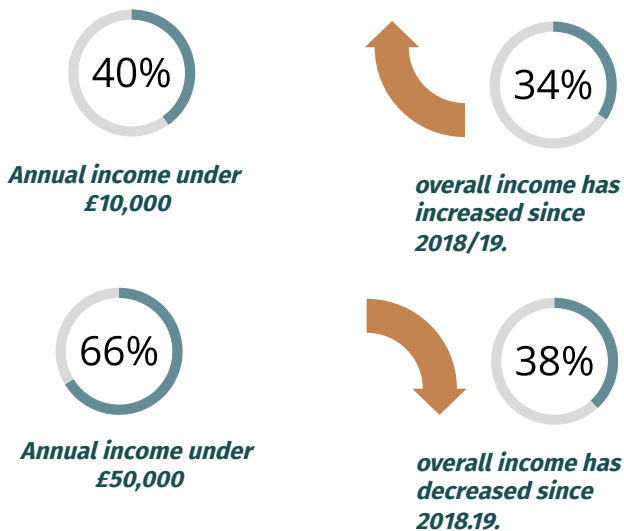


are unlikely to close in the next 12 months.

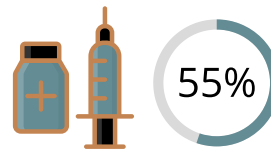
PART THREE- FINANCES & FUNDING



ANNUAL INCOME

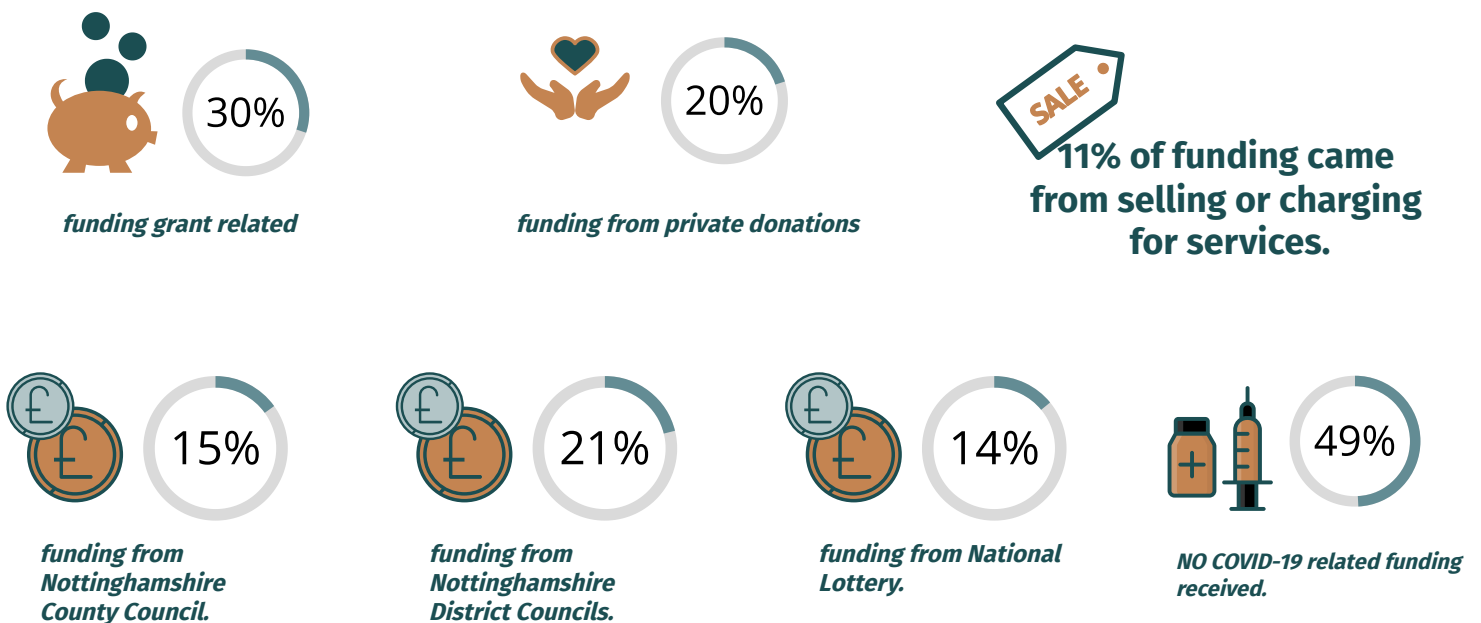


DIRECT IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON INCOME LEVELS



reported that COVID-19 has had a direct impact on income levels, with the majority reporting it has directly caused a decrease.

TYPES OF FUNDING



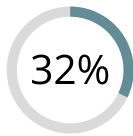
FINANCIAL RESILIENCE



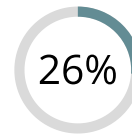
PART FOUR - CHALLENGES & SUPPORT



ABILITY TO INFLUENCE



Agree or strongly agree on the ability to influence local decisions

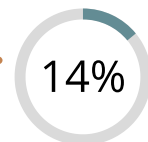
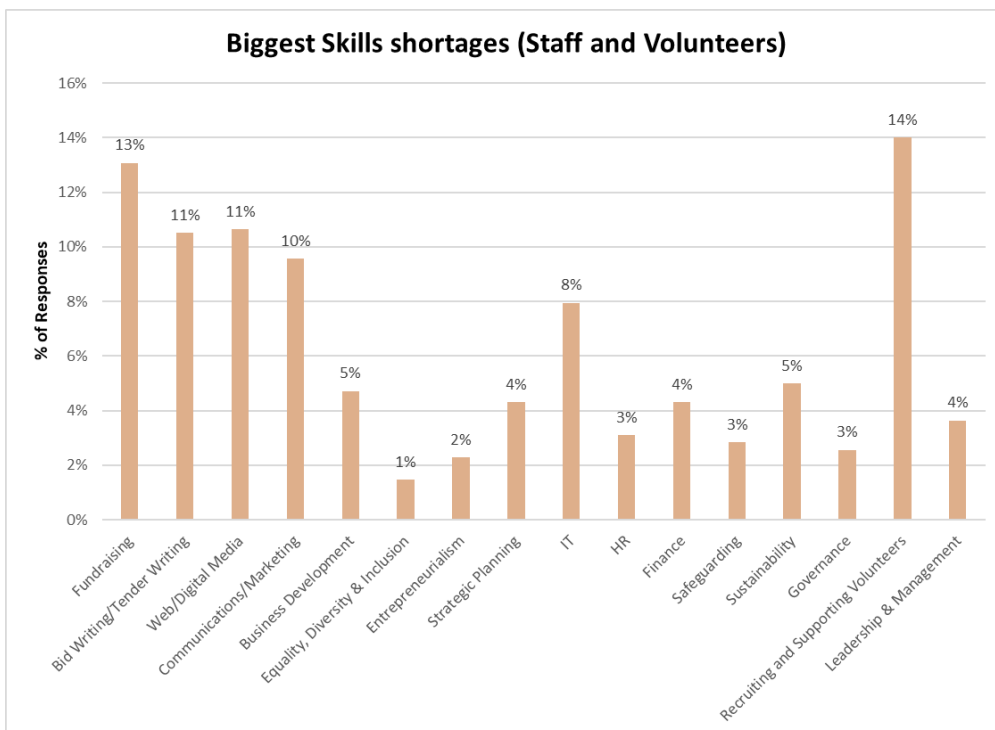


Disagree or strongly disagree on the ability to influence local decisions

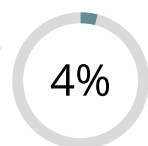
SKILLS CHALLENGES



The survey asked respondents to detail their biggest skills shortages and the issue of recruiting and supporting volunteers was the most frequently cited, with fundraising at a similar level. Interestingly leadership and management skills did not rank highly which could suggest that the sector feels that there is sufficient leadership and management capacity in place.



of all responses cited recruiting and supporting volunteers as the biggest skills shortage.



of all responses cited leadership and management as a skills shortage.

INFRASTRUCTURE SUPPORT

TOP 3 AREAS FOR SUPPORT

Funding Applications, Volunteer Development & Recruitment and Organisational Development.



For those organisations that highlighted training as an area that they needed support with, specific areas included:-

- First aid
- Health and Safety
- IT
- Safeguarding
- Support for Volunteers
- Business Development

PART FIVE - IMPACT OF COVID-19



The quotes below highlight the ongoing impact of COVID-19 on Nottinghamshire residents. Part Five of the report captures a detailed narrative of the impact and issues that the pandemic has caused and/or compounded.

"We are seeing people who have complex multiple issues, some as result a direct result of COVID-19 (relationship breakdown, homelessness, loss of income, employment issues) and some that might have had problems for some time (mental health issues, long term illness, financial problems, benefit problems) and COVID-19 has made the situation worse. We are also seeing people that are struggling with loneliness and acute anxiety as a result of COVID-19."

"We are facing a tsunami of desperate cases due to Universal Credit cuts, energy costs increase."

"More children with complex needs- more disadvantaged children with emotional, social or behavioural issues as a result of COVID-19."

"We are oversubscribed for our mental health services which we run across the County. We are very worried about the next wave of demand due to cost of living and think that this will be worse than COVID-19 as it is now everyone. For many people income stayed stable during COVID-19 – this won't be the case over the next 2 years."

Nottinghamshire State of the Sector - 2022