



## **Bournemouth and Poole Voluntary and Community Sector Contribution to Health and Wellbeing.**

### **The Survey**

In August 2014 a survey was sent to 754 contacts within 484 organisations held on the databases of Bournemouth CVS and Poole CVS. The survey was web based (using Survey Monkey, see Appendix 1) and was open until 30 September 2014 and received 183 responses. As we had some multiple responses from the larger groups we combined these into a single response. We also removed:

- blank surveys
- those from statutory organisations
- those who do not work in Bournemouth and Poole and,
- those that do not consider they made a positive difference to health and wellbeing (only 2% of respondees).

Overall this has given us 104 surveys for analysis.

### **Where do groups work?**

Of the 104 voluntary and community organisations (VCOs) 1 in 4 works in a particular area or neighbourhood of Bournemouth or Poole, whereas just under half work across Dorset as well as Bournemouth and Poole, and almost 1 in 4 also work outside the county of Dorset.

<b>Area worked in</b>	<b>%</b>
One single area/neighbourhood in Bournemouth or Poole	24
Across Bournemouth	56
Across Poole	47
Across Dorset	45
Outside Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole	23

### **What do groups do?**

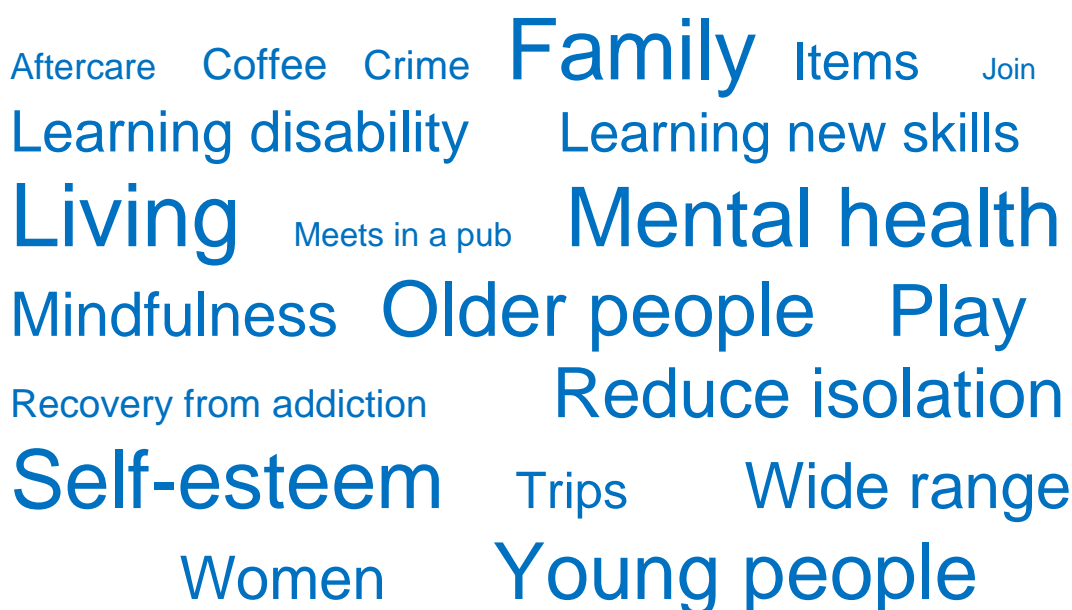
103 VCOs provided a lot of detail of the work they provided revealing a wide range of activities and services. Grouping them by who they worked with is shown below.

<b>Users</b>	<b>% of VCOs</b>
General/local residents	34
Older people	11
Disabled people (physical and learning)	11
Families	8
Children and young people	7
Addiction	6
Specific health conditions (5 conditions)	5

Mental health	3
Cancer	3
Carers	3
Other (9 other user groups)	9

About a third of VCOs are improving health and wellbeing for the general population, either in their local neighbourhood or across the boroughs.

VCOs are undertaking a great variety of activities, even if their user group is very targeted such as those with a heart condition. A 'word cloud' (the more often a word is mentioned the larger the text becomes) of their responses is below.



Analysing the responses:

- Social activities is most commonly mentioned (37% of VCOs) such as coffee mornings and meeting in pubs and 6% offer trips. These are quite often linked to reducing isolation and connecting people with their communities (14.5% of VCOs).
- Advice and information is provided by 27% of VCOs and this is often associated by these VCOs, and by other VCOs, with the important outcome of enabling users to become more independent and empowered to take control of their own lives.
- Activities involving physical exercise is also common (27% of VCOs) and includes play, exercise classes, tandem riding for the blind and exercise with a purpose (e.g. gardening).
- Volunteering was listed by 15.5% and some VCOs link this with increased confidence or employability and so having an impact on health and wellbeing.
- 10% of VCOs are providing what could be seen as basic requirements (e.g. food, clothes, furniture, and money) which are well recognised as determinants of health and wellbeing. Linked with this are the 7% of VCOs that are directly providing food to users (such as luncheon clubs, soup runs, community meals) and, although not often seen as a basic requirement, the

3% of VCOs that provide transport to enable, mostly, housebound people to socialise and access services.

- 8.5% of VCOs also provide activities that improve diet and healthy eating through various cooking and similar classes/groups.
- 8.5% of VCOs are offering activities that allow users to learn new skills and knowledge and 8% activities that encourage mindfulness and self-awareness.
- One charity which is a grant maker to other charities and voluntary organisations emphasise that their work enables direct work to take place and so improving health and wellbeing.
- 21.5% of VCOs classify their activities as increasing confidence and self-esteem, a recognised determinant of individual health and wellbeing.

Although asked to describe the activities VCOs provide, in answer to this question they clearly express that their activities have the result of:

- increasing self-esteem and confidence
- improved mental health
- reducing isolation
- increasing independence and self-determination

Also it is clear from individual VCO responses that they try to provide a wide range of activities to suit the many needs a user may have in a holistic way.

### **Who uses the groups?**

The previous section shows that about a third of VCOs are working with the general population. When asked how many people used their services per month 91 VCOs gave figures ranging from 4 to 30,000, giving a total of 79,000 and average of 868 per organisation. However if we remove the outlier<sup>1</sup> value of 30,000 we obtain an average of 545. Since the distribution in individual responses is so wide the median value of 80 is probably a better representative value. VCOs were asked for all the age groups they worked with and 102 replied as follows:

<b>Age group</b>	<b>% of VCOs</b>
Under 5	27
5-14	44
15-24	74
25-44	78
45-64	75
65 and over	76

75% of groups who responded are working with adults across the age range, with only 1 in 4 working with under 5s.

### **What difference does the groups work make on health and wellbeing?**

95 VCOs responded to a question about the difference their work had on those they worked with. A word cloud of responses is below.

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<sup>1</sup> A value far from most others in a set of data

Connected    Contact    Improves quality of life  
 Local community    Mental health    Relief  
 Remain independent    Safe    Self esteem  
 Stress    Support

Many VCOs stated that their work had an obvious impact on health and wellbeing, in many cases both physically and mentally:

- 33% of VCOs consider that they improve confidence and self-esteem which is often seen as a prerequisite for people looking after themselves better
- The above is closely linked to improved independence, empowerment and feeling in control of their own lives (including better self-management of any health conditions they might have) which is mentioned by 24% of VCOs.
- Improving users' connections with others and the community was mentioned by 33% of VCOs and so an increased sense of belonging and self-worth.
- This is closely linked to the outcomes of reduced isolation (27% of VCOs) and improved relationships (11% of VCOs).
- 25% of VCOs claim that their users feel better supported and so better able to manage their lives, and 9% mention users being more resilient.
- In terms of behaviours prioritised by Public Health to improve health and wellbeing VCOs reported:
  - Increased exercise (11% of VCOs)
  - Improved healthy eating/diet (6% of VCOs)
  - Decreased addiction/consumption of alcohol and drugs (8% of VCOs)
  - Reduced smoking, no one mentioned this.
- 3% of VCOs say that their users have better access to the basics for living (food, furniture, accommodation)
- 11% consider that their users are more likely to be ready for work/training and 9% mentioned improved learning, which may be linked to employment/formal training outcomes or just for the sake of learning itself.
- The words 'safe' and 'relief' was used by 7% of VCOs to express how their users feel safer and so less anxious, worried, etc. and 8% say their work reduces levels of crime and anti-social behaviour.

Overall VCOs are creating a wide range of differences for their users however for some they find it difficult to identify and articulate the differences or outcomes, often describing a service and its activities instead. The most frequent differences VCOs see in their users (which is closely linked to the findings about the activities VCOs are providing) are:

- Improved confidence and self-esteem
- Reduced isolation and increased connectedness to their communities
- Increased independence, empowerment and resilience
- Increase in healthy behaviours
- Improved learning and employability

Very interestingly 11% of VCOs state their work improves users' experience of fun, enjoyment and feel-good factor. This is an often overlooked element, and perhaps evidence, of wellbeing.

### **Are groups measuring the difference they make?**

We asked VCOs if they measured the difference their work made. Just over 33% of 102 VCOs said yes and another 40% said yes but would like to do better. Of the 25% who said no 15% said they wanted to know how. Therefore just over half of all VCOs recognise that they should get better at measuring the difference their work makes.

### **How much are groups spending on health and wellbeing?**

When asked to estimate how much of their annual income was spent on activities that improved health and wellbeing 72 VCOs gave figures between £120 and just over £5 million. This gives a total figure of just under £20 million with an average of £276,409 and a median of £20,000 per VCO.

In response to asking how many hours of volunteer time were given each month 84 VCOs gave figures ranging from 0 to 12,000. This gives a total of 45,548 hours per month and an average of 542 per VCO and median of 100. If these volunteers were paid the minimum wage it would cost £296,062 per month but about £589,000 if the median wage is used as many volunteers will be carrying out quite skilled work.

In response to a similar question about paid staff 79 VCOs responded ranging from 0 to 5,482 hours per week giving a total of 24,432 hours per week. This gives an average of 309 hours per week and a median of 50 hours. However 25% of the VCOs who responded do not use paid staff at all, therefore excluding these gives an average of 414 hours and median of 100.

### **What help, advice and support do groups need?**

When asked which areas VCOs would like help, advice or training in 84 VCOs gave the following responses:

<b>Area of support</b>	<b>% VCOs</b>
Measuring the difference you make	61
Funding advice	54
How to promote your services	51
Recruiting volunteers	44
Bid writing	40
Working in partnership	32
Safeguarding	30
Writing tenders	27
Proving needs	27
Managing volunteers	26
Health and safety	21
Behaviour change	21
Business planning	17
Lone working	13
Managing staff	5

Seventeen organisations made additional comments. Two VCOs wanted advice etc. in being able to show their monetary worth to statutory bodies and one VCO wanted support in the area of developing effective partnership working. 6 VCOs are part of national networks and so access training, advice and support through them but two of these VCOs look to the two local CVSs for advertising volunteering opportunities.

It is very interesting to see that the most popular area of need is in measuring outcomes or the difference made. This mirrors the need shown in the earlier question which revealed that just over half of VCOs recognise a need to get better at this. Not unsurprising income generation (funding advice, bid and tender writing) are popular needs. However half of VCOs also want to improve how they promote their services and it would be interesting to know to whom (i.e. users/clients, funders, statutory bodies). Recruiting volunteers was identified by 44% and their management by 26% (compared to only 5% for management of staff).

## **Future Plans**

VCOs were asked about any plans or hopes for the future to expand or develop their current health and wellbeing services. 87 VCOs responded.

80% of groups gave an indication how they wished to expand:

- 34% want to deliver more of what they currently provide
- 21% want to develop new specific services
- 6% want to start providing services to new geographical areas
- 5% have plans to work with others

It is encouraging that so many groups want to develop, many with quite specific plans in mind, however a significant minority identified the barriers of funding, people (volunteers, staff and trustees) and resources such as premises.

Of the 20% of groups who had no growth plans 7% (a third) were concentrating on maintaining their current services, usually because of uncertain funding.

## **Comments and suggestions.**

A final question asked VCOs for any comments or suggestions about how they could be better supported to improve health and wellbeing. 27 VCOs responded.

Inevitably funding was the most frequent need identified (30% of VCOs), however only a few made a direct ask for funding from statutory bodies. Some VCOs felt that support was needed to prove that the work of the sector did contribute to health, wellbeing and prevention (one VCO suggested employing a health economist to do this) and others asked for a professional bid writer to help bring in external funding. Some VCOs have found it difficult to find out about any funding opportunities from Public Health and the NHS and this is linked to another issue about knowing who to contact generally in health. This is not only in terms of accessing funding but also to promote their services to and develop co-operative and partnership links. Support was also needed to identify other partners and to develop partnership working. Sharing what others are doing (to learn from each other, develop links and refer users) and easily find out what is available was identified by several groups with the idea of a comprehensive database or one stop shop as a possible solution.

## Staying in touch

91 VCOs answered a few questions about staying in touch and 87% want to be kept up to date with this project and 75% might be interested in being part of any database of health and wellbeing activities. 69% (i.e. 63 organisations) said they were willing to take part in further research and will be contacted to take part in one-to-one interviews and further surveys on training needs, referral mechanisms and evaluation tools.

## Summary of findings

- Almost all VCOs consider they improve health and wellbeing
- About 1 in 4 VCOs only operate at the neighbourhood level, but another 1 in 4 work across Dorset and beyond
- About a third of VCOs work with the general public and about one in 5 with those with health related needs
- VCOs tend to offer a wide range of services and activities, even to very specific users, aiming to work holistically and individually with their users often aiming to:
  - increase self-esteem and confidence
  - improve mental health
  - reduce isolation
  - increase independence and self-determination
- Surveyed VCOs benefit a total of 79,000 people per month, an average of 545, however because of a wide range in numbers a better representative value is 80 per month
- The most frequent differences VCOs see in their users are:
  - Improved confidence and self-esteem
  - Reduced isolation and increased connectedness to their communities
  - Increased independence, empowerment and resilience
  - Increase in healthy behaviours
  - Improved learning and employability
- 11% of VCOs state their work improves users' experience of fun, enjoyment and feel-good factor
- Some VCOs find it difficult to identify the difference they make and although a third of VCOs say they are happy with the way they measure the difference they make and a quarter do not measure it at all, just over a half want to get better at it.
- A significant investment is being made each year by the surveyed VCOs in health and wellbeing:
  - Spend just under £20 million
  - 550,000 volunteer hours (replacement value of £7 million)
  - 1,270,000 staffing hours
- At least a third of groups want help, advice and support in:
  - Measuring the difference they make
  - Funding advice
  - How to promote their services
  - Recruiting volunteers
  - Bid writing
  - Working in partnership

- 80% of groups are planning, or would like, to expand their health and wellbeing services
- Other ideas for improving their work on health and wellbeing include:
  - Better recognition (including monetary value) of the work VCOs do
  - Better support of fundraising
  - Improved information on services out there and who provides them (for referrals, peer learning and working together)
  - Clearer signposting to appropriate contacts in health bodies
- 75% of VCOs are interested in being on the Public Health Improvement Hub database.

**December 2014**



## **Appendix 1: Copy of Survey**

### **Bournemouth and Poole VCS Contribution to Health and Wellbeing**

Please do take part in this survey as it will help:

- you, as Public Health will be more aware of what you do, could lead to more people using your services and influence how the Health Hub (see below) will work, and support you, in the future
- us, to make the case for the contribution you make to health and wellbeing.

Bournemouth CVS and Poole CVS are working with Public Health Dorset to identify voluntary and community groups working in Bournemouth and Poole that are contributing to health and wellbeing.

Contributing to health is easy to identify if your work directly relates to a medical condition such as cancers, brain injuries, HIV, mental health, addictions, MS, etc. However your work may prevent people from becoming unwell by encouraging exercise or increasing confidence or self-esteem for example. These activities start to fall into the concept of wellbeing. Wellbeing can be influenced by many things such as income, housing, education, social networks, personal health, etc. Most voluntary and community groups will be contributing to wellbeing which includes individuals feeling good and functioning well.

Your work may be contributing to wellbeing if you help people to:

1. Connect with others, e.g. groupwork, social gatherings, befriending, reducing isolation
2. Be active e.g. sport, play, exercise, walking, anything that will make people more active
3. Take notice e.g. offering new and different experiences, helping people to think about how they are feeling
4. Keep learning e.g. classes and groups learning new skills
5. Give e.g. using volunteers, joining in, befriending, opportunities to donate

Dorset's new health and wellbeing service is designed to support people who want to make long term changes to their health. The Health Hub (for more information go to <http://tinyurl.com/ke4mt4d> ), staffed by people skilled at customer relations, engagement and motivation will provide a simple access point to assess individual needs and refer them to the right health improvement pathway. It is recognised that there are many different organisations in Dorset that support people to improve their health and wellbeing, not just those that provide public health services like stop smoking. By taking part in this survey you will be influencing how the hub develops in partnership with the voluntary and community sector and will broaden the offer of support that the hub provides to you and your users.

This is an initial short survey to identify which, and how, organisations contribute to health and wellbeing in Bournemouth and Poole. We would like you to start the survey as the first question asks if you think you do contribute and if you say No the survey will end. If however you say Yes the rest of the survey should take you about 30 minutes.

Please complete the survey by **Tuesday 30 September 2014**.

1. Do you consider that your organisation makes a positive difference to the physical/mental health and wellbeing of those living in Bournemouth and/or Poole?

- Yes
- No

2. Are you a voluntary or community group operating in Bournemouth and/or Poole? There is no universally accepted definition but Bournemouth CVS and Poole CVS use the following:

- Independent of government and constitutionally self-governing, usually with an unpaid voluntary management committee (or where at least over half are unpaid)
- Value driven, they exist for the good of the community (as understood by a person in the street), to promote social, environmental or cultural objectives in order to benefit society as a whole, or particular groups within it
- Not run for financial gain they reinvest any surpluses to further the 'good' they create for the community and usually have an enforceable 'asset lock' to prevent private profit (e.g. charities and Community Interest Companies have this in law)

This definition will include charities (registered and unregistered), community groups, Community Interest Companies, friendly societies, social clubs, many sports clubs, churches and other faith groups, and voluntary organisations.

- Yes
- No

3. Contact details

- Your name:
- Organisation:
- Postal Code:
- Email Address:
- Phone Number:

4. Where are your services offered? (please tick all that apply, if you work in more than one small area of Bournemouth and Poole do not tick the first option )

- Just one particular area/neighbourhood in Bournemouth or Poole
- Across Bournemouth
- Across Poole
- Across Dorset
- Outside Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole

5. Please tell us what activities you carry out that directly or indirectly improves the physical/mental health and wellbeing of those you work with.

6. Please estimate the number of people who use your services each month

7. Which age groups do you work with? (Please tick all that apply)

- Under 5s
- 5-14
- 15-24
- 25-44
- 45-64
- 65 and over

8. What difference does your work have on those you work with?

9. Do you measure the difference you make?

- Yes
- Yes, but would like to do it better
- No
- No but would like to know how to

10. Please estimate how much of your annual income you spend on activities that improve health and wellbeing.

11. If you use volunteers for your services please estimate how many hours per month they give (please use whole figures).

12. If you use paid staff for your services please estimate how many hours per week they work (please use whole figures)

13. Would you like to receive help/advice/training on the following to improve your work?

- Recruiting volunteers
- Managing volunteers
- Funding advice
- Bid writing
- Writing tenders
- Proving needs
- Measuring the difference you make
- Business planning
- How to promote your services
- Managing staff
- Working in partnership
- Health and safety
- Safeguarding
- Lone working
- Behaviour change
- Other (please specify)

14. Do you have any plans or hopes to expand/develop your current services that would improve health and wellbeing?

15. Please tick if:

- You would like to see the results of this survey
- You would like to be kept in touch about meetings, training, information, advice/support on contributing to health and wellbeing in Bournemouth and Poole
- We can contact you to ask if you would like to take part in further research about your health and wellbeing work
- You might be interested in being included in a database of health and wellbeing activities

16. Do you have any comments/suggestions about how the voluntary and community sector can be better supported to improve health and wellbeing in Bournemouth and Poole?

Many thanks for taking the time to complete this survey, your answers are important and will be extremely valuable to helping the two CVS's make the case about your contribution to health and wellbeing in Bournemouth and Poole.