

# Volunteering in Scottish Charities: Technical Note

## Purpose

Volunteer Development Scotland carried out a survey of local charities in order to explore the levels of volunteering in local charities and the challenges facing these charities to involve and manage volunteers. The survey is intended to better understand:

- Current levels of volunteering and plans/wishes to involve volunteers
- Challenges to volunteer involvement and management
- Use and perceived effectiveness of channels used to engage volunteers

VDS will use these findings to help assess the feasibility of current policy agendas - the success of which relies on increased participation in voluntary activity - and to help inform the design and improvement to services aimed at extending depth and breadth of participation in Scotland.

## Method and sample

- The survey was carried out from 1st December 2011 to 14th February 2012.
- A random, stratified sample of 1000 charities in Scotland, operating in up to two local authority areas and undertaking activities, were invited to participate in the survey. The sample is representative based on income and location.
- The sampling frame for the Charity Survey was derived from the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator's Scottish Charity Register. This register represents all organisations operating in Scotland that are defined as charitable organisations according to Scottish Charity Law. The register is reviewed regularly to ensure it is up to date.
- The register contains a range of information including the charity's: name; postcode; name of parent charity; constitutional form; gross income; charitable purpose; beneficiary group; type of activity and geographic spread. The key information VDS were interested in using to sample was the type of activity and geographical spread.
- The types of activities undertaken by charities are recorded as one or more of:
  - it makes grants, donations, loans, gifts or pensions to individuals;
  - it makes grants, donations or gifts to organisations;
  - it carries out activities or services itself; and/or
  - it does none of these
- The geographic spread describes how local or widespread the work of the charity is. This information is collected and recorded using a number of categories:

Local charities*	Other, non-local charities*
Specific local point, community or neighborhood	One/few bases/facilities serving people from a wide area
Wider but within one local authority area	Operations cover all or most of Scotland

More than one local authority area in Scotland.	Scotland and other parts of the UK
	UK and overseas
	Overseas only

\*VDS defined these charities as local and other, non-local charities in order to sample only those charities operating locally

- Given the current policy context and purpose of the survey, VDS were interested in sampling charities that met specific criteria, rather than all charities on the Register: local charities delivering activities or services. At the time of selecting the survey sample (September 2011), 23,360 charities were on the register and 62% (14,601) of these charities met VDS's criteria.
- These charities comprised the sampling frame from which a random, stratified sample of 1000 charities was selected. Gross income and location of the charities were used as the stratifiers.
- Paper questionnaires were mailed to all selected organisations on 23rd November along with a covering letter outlining the purpose of the survey and encouraging invitees to respond quickly - those charities who responded by 16th December were entered into a prize draw for a £250 donation. Two waves of reminder letters were also sent out on 12th December and 4th January.
- A total of 592 charities responded to the survey – this was a 59.2% response rate. This is a very good response rate in comparison to other similar surveys carried out for OSCR and the Cabinet Office .
- Data from the survey has not been weighted.

## Sample Profile

- The tables below show the breakdown of both the survey responses of charities and the population in relation to the following categories: gross income band, urban/rural and local authority area.
- A chi-square test was carried out to determine whether the charities who responded differed significantly from the key characteristics from those who did not respond. The results (shown in the tables below) suggest that there has been no response bias based on local authority area and urban/rural, but that some larger charities with gross income above £25,000 were more likely to respond (significant at 10% level). This means some care needs to be taken when generalising findings based on charities gross income bands across the population of charities.

### Survey Responses by Gross Income Categories

Gross Income	Population	Sample	Expected Sample
£0 - £1,000	179	87	105.968
£1,000 - £25,000	446	255	264.032
£25,000 - £100,000	209	142	123.728
£100,000 - £500,000	123	83	72.816
£500,000+	43	25	25.456
CHI SQUARE	0.09781		

### Survey Responses by Urban/Rural Categories

Urban/Rural	Population	Sample	Expected Sample
1	252	138	151.4639
2	247	158	148.4586
3	85	49	51.08901
4	60	38	36.06283
5	135	83	81.14136
6	176	108	105.7843
CHI SQUARE	0.836768		

## Survey Responses by Local Authority

Local Authority	Population	Sample	Expected Sample
Aberdeen City	35	16	20.72
Aberdeenshire	67	43	39.664
Angus	26	16	15.392
Argyll and Bute	43	32	25.456
City of Edinburgh	84	47	49.728
Clackmannanshire	8	3	4.736
Dumfries and Galloway	40	21	23.68
Dundee City	24	16	14.208
East Ayrshire	19	10	11.248
East Dunbartonshire	13	7	7.696
East Lothian	20	14	11.84
East Renfrewshire	11	8	6.512
Falkirk	15	8	8.88
Fife	61	32	36.112
Glasgow City	85	46	50.32
Highland	95	56	56.24
Inverclyde	11	6	6.512
Midlothian	19	11	11.248
Moray	23	18	13.616
North Ayrshire	21	9	12.432
North Lanarkshire	30	14	17.76
Orkney Islands	12	6	7.104
Perth and Kinross	37	22	21.904
Renfrewshire	23	16	13.616
Scottish Borders	38	28	22.496
Shetland Islands	14	10	8.288
South Ayrshire	16	10	9.472
South Lanarkshire	33	18	19.536
Stirling	25	16	14.8
West Dunbartonshire	12	6	7.104
West Lothian	23	17	13.616
Western Isles	17	10	10.064
CHI SQUARE	0.998147		

## Definitions and classifications

### Local Charities

The OSCR Scottish Charity Register uses a prescribed list to classify the geographical spread of charities. Using this list, VDS defined 'local charities' as those charities with the following geographical spread:

- Specific local point, community or neighbourhood
- Wider but within one local authority area
- More than one local authority area in Scotland

### Small and Larger Charities

The gross annual income of charities is used as a proxy for classifying small and larger charities:

- Small charities – gross annual income below £25,000
- Larger charities – gross annual income above £25,000

This classification is consistent with the Office of Scottish Charity Regulator and the Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations.

### Volunteer-Involving Charities and Volunteer-Run Charities

Charities with paid staff or no paid staff is used to classify volunteer-involving charities and charities run entirely by volunteers:

- Volunteer-involving – a charity with paid staff and involves volunteers at a board level and/or to deliver activities, services and so on
- Volunteer-run – a charity with no paid staff where the administration, management and delivery of a charity's activities is run and supported entirely by its volunteers.

### Urban and Rural Classification

The Scottish Government 2 fold Urban Rural Classification was used to analyse the results of the Charity Survey:

<b>Scottish Government 2 fold Urban Rural Classification</b>	
1 Urban Areas	Settlements of over 3,000 people
2 Rural Areas	Settlements of less than 3,000 people