

NCVO – Time Well Spent

Scottish Analysis: Volunteer Retention

Debbie Maltman &
Matthew Linning



Contents Page

Section	Slide
<u>1. Summary highlights</u>	<u>3</u>
<u>2. Research Overview</u>	<u>7</u>
<u>3. How likely are volunteers to continue?</u>	<u>14</u>
<u>4. Why do volunteers continue or stop?</u>	<u>16</u>
<u>5. Lapsed volunteers</u>	<u>19</u>
<u>6. Food for thought: What matter most for retaining volunteers</u>	<u>21</u>
<u>Appendix 1. 'Time Well Spent' Survey Questions</u>	<u>24</u>
<u>Appendix 2 – Full correlation matrix – volunteer retention</u>	<u>29</u>

1. Summary Highlights

Summary Highlights

Recent volunteers' likelihood to continue volunteering

The majority (83%) of recent Scottish volunteers say they are likely to continue volunteering with their main organisation over the next 12 months.

Key reasons for continuing are:

- The cause the organisation stands for (55%).
- The organisation itself (50%).
- The difference I am making (39%).

The most common reason for not continuing is :

- Due to health problems (26%).
- I feel I have done my bit (24%).
- I have less time because my circumstances are changing (16%).

Reasons for discontinuing that related to volunteer management or relationships with others were not commonly stated.



83% of recent Scottish volunteers are likely to continue volunteering in the next 12 months.



Key reasons for continuing include volunteers' attachment to the organisation and the cause it stands for; and the difference volunteers feel they are making.



Key reasons for not continuing include health problems, volunteers feeling they have done their bit and a lack of time.

Summary Highlights

Lapsed volunteers' experiences and reasons for stopping

- Lapsed volunteers (who volunteered in the last three years but not in the last year) are mostly positive about their experience of volunteering when looking back (93% are satisfied with their experience of volunteering with their main organisation).
- However, they are slightly less positive than recent volunteers (97%). NCVO's hypothesis is that 'this could be for a range of reasons, including having a different perspective on their experience because of the time that has passed'.
- When asked why they stopped their volunteering, the highest response was that there was no reason in particular (23%). Similar to the GB results, where a reason for stopping was given it most often related to circumstances, it being a one-off activity or event or feeling they had 'done their bit'.



93% of lapsed volunteers are satisfied with their overall volunteer experience.



'There is no reason in particular that I stopped volunteering' was the response most likely to be given by lapsed volunteers.



Change in circumstances, being a one-off activity and feeling that they had done their bit were also popular reasons lapsed volunteers gave for not continuing volunteers,

Summary Highlights

Factors associated with being likely to continue volunteering:

- While health and circumstances are cited as the main reasons for not continuing to volunteer the analysis of a correlation matrix allows the relationship between other aspects of the volunteer experience and volunteer retention to be considered.
- A sense of belonging, a culture of respect and trust and feeling recognised enough have a positive relationship with both volunteer retention and with overall volunteer satisfaction.
- Having skills and experience that volunteers did not have the opportunity to use but would like to use, and feeling pressured to do more, and unpaid work becoming too much like paid work have a negative relationship with volunteer retention. Feeling pressured to do more and unpaid work becoming too much like paid work also have a negative relationship with overall volunteer satisfaction.

Factors positively associated with being likely to continue volunteering and with overall volunteer satisfaction:



Feeling of belonging to the organisation.



A culture of respect and trust.



Being recognised enough.

2. Research Overview

2. Research overview.

- In January 2019, the National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO) published its [Time Well Spent: A national survey on the volunteering experience](#) report. Volunteer Scotland was granted access to the Scottish dataset to enable it to produce volunteering statistics for Scotland only. This presentation is one of a series of presentations produced by Volunteer Scotland which analyses the Scottish volunteer experience using the 2019 Time Well Spent (TWS) Survey :

Presentation Topics
Volunteer context (Section 4 in TWS report)
Volunteer Experience (Section 5 in TWS report)
Volunteer Impacts (Section 6 in TWS report)
Volunteer Retention (Section 7 in TWS report)
Looking Ahead (Section 8 in TWS report)

- Each presentation of the Scottish data mirrors a chapter from NCVO’s Time Well Spent report. This presentation analyses ‘**volunteer retention**’ for Scotland.
- Section 3 in TWS report is not analysed for Scotland as Volunteer Scotland recently completed a time series analysis of volunteer demographics using the Scottish Household Survey (SHS) from 2007 – 2018. The SHS (sample size 7,600) is based on adults 16+ whereas TWS is based on adults 18+, which does not allow for a direct comparison of demographic data from both sources. Focusing on sections 4-8 of TWS provides analysis and insights on the volunteer experience that has not previously been available for Scotland.

2. Research overview.

- In January 2019, the National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO) published its [Time Well Spent: A national survey on the volunteering experience](#) report. Volunteer Scotland was granted access to the Scottish dataset to enable it to produce volunteering statistics for Scotland only. This presentation is one of a series of presentations produced by Volunteer Scotland which analyses the Scottish volunteer experience using the 2019 Time Well Spent (TWS) Survey :

Presentation Topics
Volunteer context (Section 4 in TWS report)
Volunteer Experience (Section 5 in TWS report)
Volunteer Impacts (Section 6 in TWS report)
Volunteer Retention (Section 7 in TWS report)
Looking Forward (Section 8 in TWS report)

- Each presentation of the Scottish data mirrors a chapter from NCVO's Time Well Spent report. This presentation analyses '**volunteer experience** for Scotland.
- Section 3 in TWS report is not analysed for Scotland as Volunteer Scotland recently completed a time series analysis of volunteer demographics using the Scottish Household Survey (SHS) from 2007 – 2019. The SHS (sample size 9,600) is based on adults 16+ whereas TWS is based on adults 18+, which does not allow for a direct comparison of demographic data from both sources. Focusing on sections 4-8 of TWS provides analysis and insights on the volunteer experience that has not previously been available for Scotland.

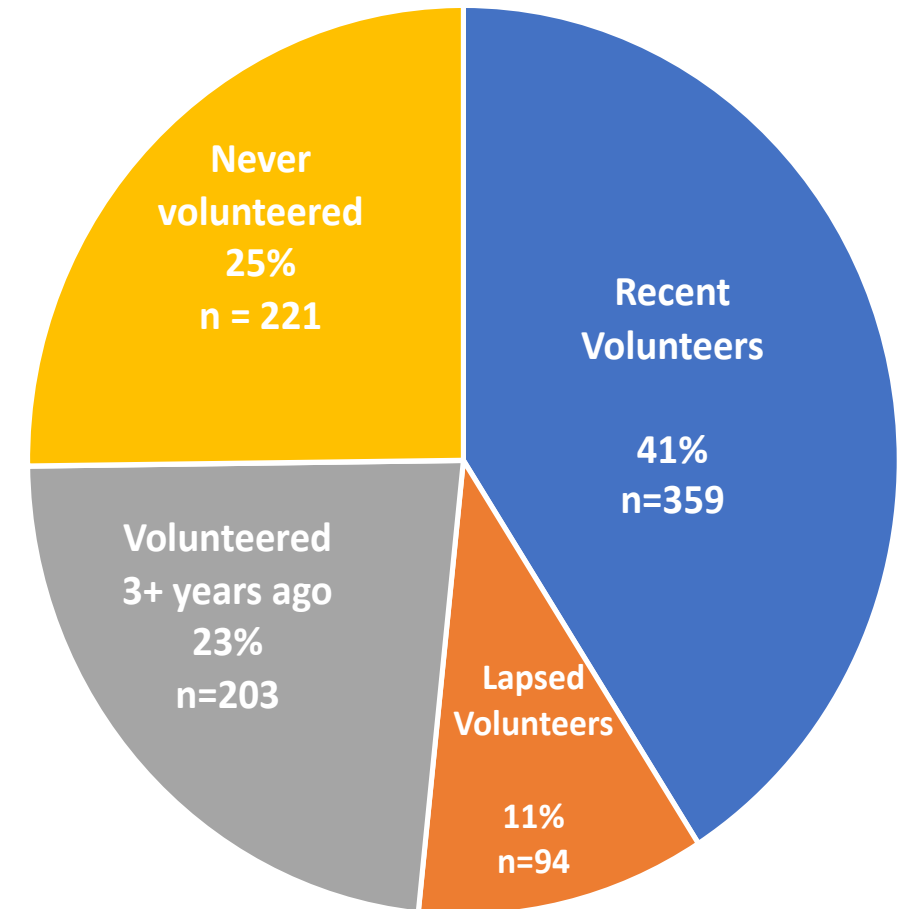
2. Research overview.

- The Time Well Spent Survey is an online survey of adults aged 18+ in Great Britain.
- The survey was conducted through YouGov’s panel, via an online self-completion questionnaire during May 2018
- The total sample size was 10,103, with a Scottish sample size of 877.
- The data was weighted to reflect the national population by key demographics: age, gender, education level and social grade.
- The survey focuses exclusively on **Formal Volunteering** – defined as “..... *Giving up time to help any groups, clubs or organisations in an unpaid capacity*”.
- The survey follows the methodology of the Scottish Household Survey (SHS) and Community Life Survey by asking respondents if they had been involved with any groups, clubs or organisations and then whether they had provided unpaid help to any groups, clubs or organisations, prompted by a list of activities.
- This methodology ensures that respondents’ report volunteer activities that they might not otherwise view as volunteering.
- While the SHS considers volunteering activities undertaken in the past 12 months, Time Well Spent gathers information on any volunteering in the respondent’s past. This provides a unique opportunity to analyse how the volunteer experience differs between current and past volunteers, the reasons why past volunteers stopped volunteering and reasons that non-volunteers have not participated in volunteering.

2. Research overview.

- By considering any volunteering in the respondent's past, Time Well Spent allows analysis of the following groups:
 - Recent volunteers, who have volunteered *at least once in the last 12 months*.
 - Lapsed volunteers, who volunteered *between one and three years ago*.
 - Those who have volunteered *in the past but more than three years ago*.
 - Those who have *never volunteered* through a group, club or organisation.
- Time Well Spent also allows for the analysis of the frequency of volunteering which follows the same definition as the SHS:
 - Frequent volunteers, who volunteered at least once a month (n= 246).
 - Occasional volunteers, who volunteered less frequently than once a month (n=98).

NCVO Time Well Spent - Breakdown of Scottish volunteer types



*n = sample size, number of adults in the category. Frequent and occasional volunteers does not add to the total of recent volunteers as there are 15 recent volunteers who responded don't know to the frequency with which they volunteer.

2. Research overview.

- The dataset also allows for analysis of different groups of volunteers:
 - **Age** - Due to the sample size age is grouped into two: under 55 and over 55.
 - **Socio economic grades** - The socio-economic grades analysed are ABC1 and C2DE.
 - **Gender**- Data is analysed for male and females.
 - **Disability** - Time Well Spent ask all respondents - Are your day-to-day activities limited because of a health problem or disability which has lasted, or is expected to last, at least 12 months? Responses of 'Yes, limited a little' or 'Yes, limited a lot' are classified as disabled while responses of 'No' are classified as non-disabled.
 - **Volunteer coordination** - all respondents are asked how their unpaid help is coordinated. This allows analysis of volunteers organised by a paid coordinator, by an unpaid coordinator and no coordinator.
 - **Sector of volunteering activity** – all respondents are asked the sector in which they volunteer, allowing for analysis of public, private and civil society volunteers.
 - **Employer Supported Volunteering** – all respondents are asked when they carried out their volunteering, including options for volunteering in their work hours or outside of work hours organised by their employer, allowing for a derived Employer Supported Volunteering (ESV) field which allows analysis to be undertaken for volunteers who volunteer as part of ESV and those who volunteer separate to their employment (non-ESV).

2. Research overview.

- This presentation analyses Volunteer Retention which considers how likely recent volunteers are to continue volunteering with their main organisation over the next year and their reasons for continuing or not.
- It also explores the experience of lapsed volunteers and the reasons they stopped volunteering.
- Understanding volunteers' reasons for continuing volunteering or not and the reasons lapsed volunteers stopped volunteering provides valuable insights into an aspect of volunteering that Volunteering Scotland hasn't previously had a comprehensive data source on.
- The results are illustrated with graphs. Detailed data tables are presented in the accompanying data tables workbook.

Volunteer Scotland would like to thank NCVO for providing access to the Time Well Spent Scottish dataset. Their support has enabled this rich dataset to be shared widely across Scotland for the benefit of researchers, policy makers and practitioners.

3. How likely are volunteers to continue?

Over the next 12 months how likely or unlikely are you to continue giving this unpaid help?

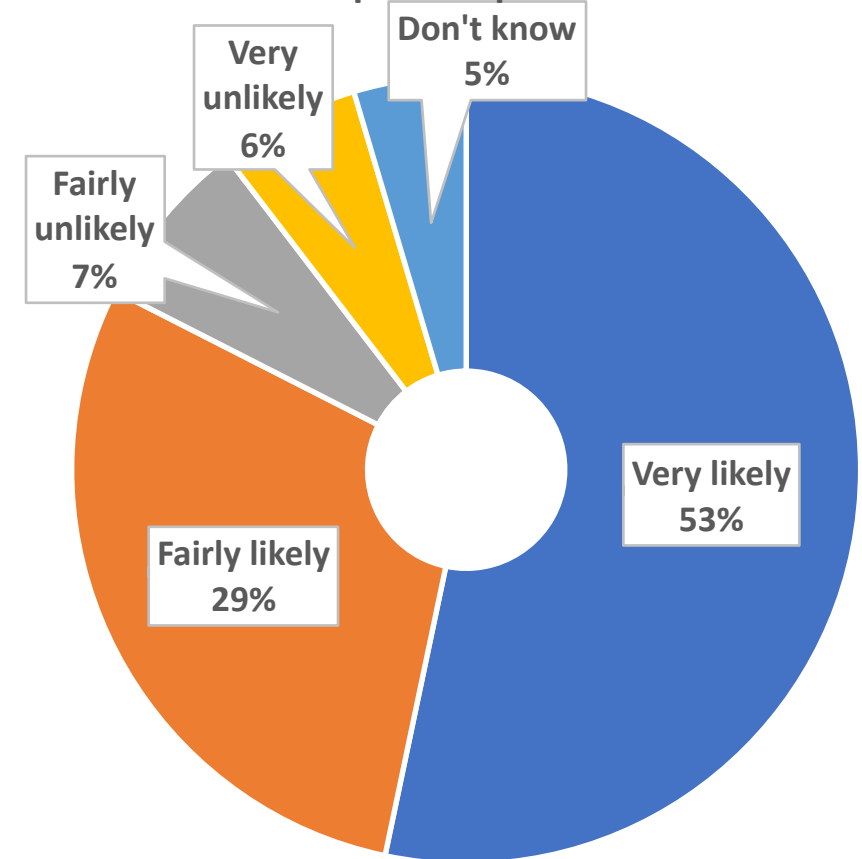
- **83% of Scottish volunteers reported being likely to continue volunteering with their main organisation, with over half (53%) being 'very likely' to do so.**

Some groups of volunteers are more likely to continue to volunteer than others:

- Frequent volunteers (87%) compared to occasional volunteers (78%)
- Older volunteers (85%) compared to younger volunteers (80%).
- Non-disabled volunteers (85%) compared to disabled volunteers (78%).

These findings mirror the GB-wide results, where 81% of recent volunteers reported being likely to continue volunteering, 53% of which are 'very likely' to do so. The same demographic groups in Scotland and Great Britain are most likely to continue volunteering .

Figure 2 - Over the next 12 months how likely or unlikely are you to continue giving this unpaid help?



n = 358 (Recent volunteers)

4. Why do volunteers continue or stop? (recent volunteers)

Which THREE, if any, of the following are the main reasons you are likely to continue giving this unpaid help?

Recent volunteers are most likely to continue volunteering with their main organisation due to:

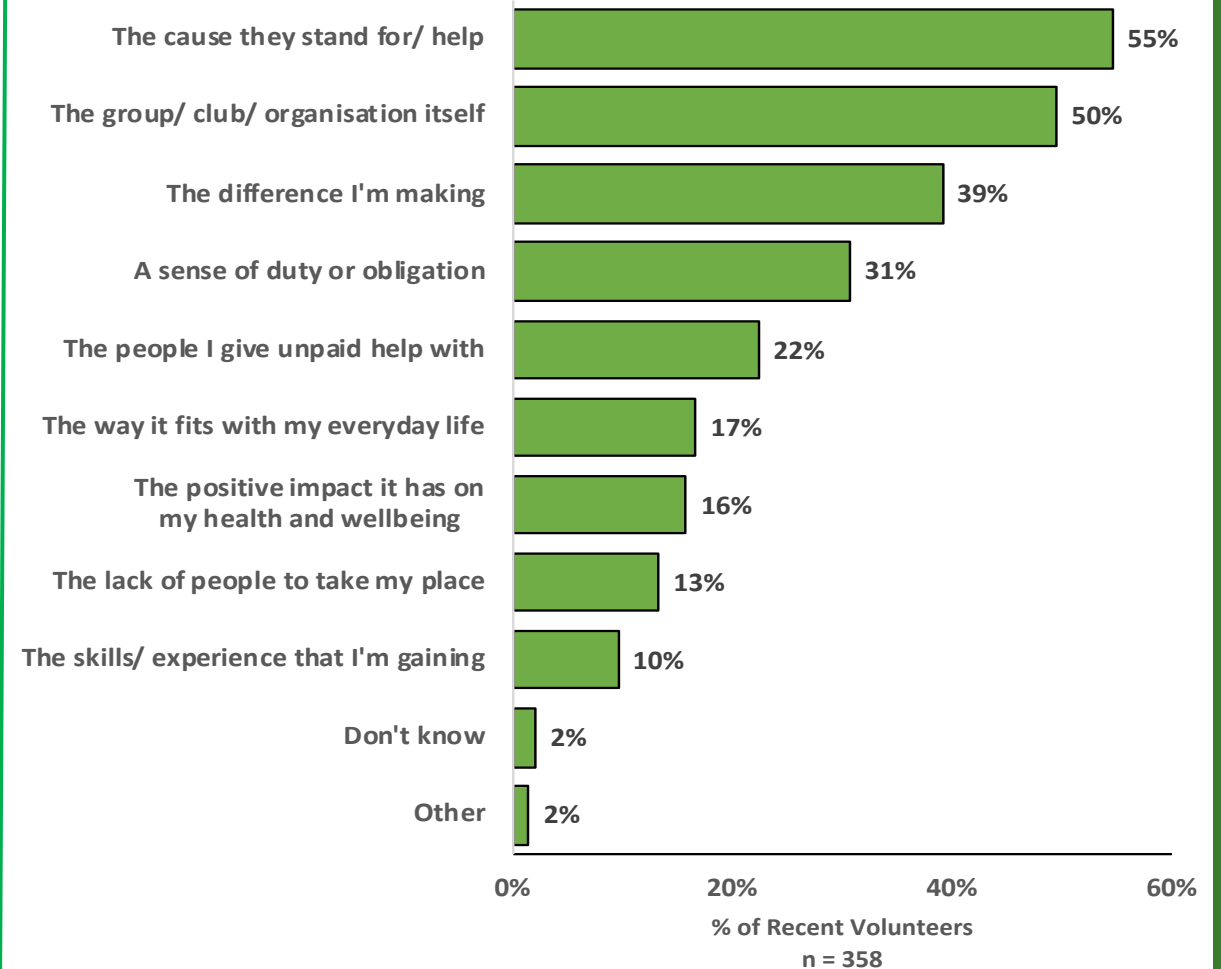
- The cause they stand for / help (55%)**
- The group / club / organisation itself (50%)**
- The difference they are making (39%)**

The top reasons are consistent across all volunteer groups. However, some volunteer groups that are more likely to cite specific reasons for continuing volunteering:

- Younger volunteers (14%) are more likely to report 'the skills and experience that I am gaining' than older volunteers (6%).
- Civil Society volunteers (58%) are more likely to cite 'the cause they stand for' than private sector volunteers (44%).
- Volunteers with no paid coordinator (19%) are most likely to cite 'the lack of people to take my place' than volunteers with a paid coordinator (9%).

These findings mirror the GB-wide results, with the same top reasons being cited, with the same group differences reported.

Figure 3 - Which THREE, if any, of the following are the main reasons you are likely to continue giving this unpaid help?



Which, if any, of the following are reasons you are unlikely to continue giving this help?

The top reasons recent volunteers who are unlikely to continue volunteering with their main organisation gave are:

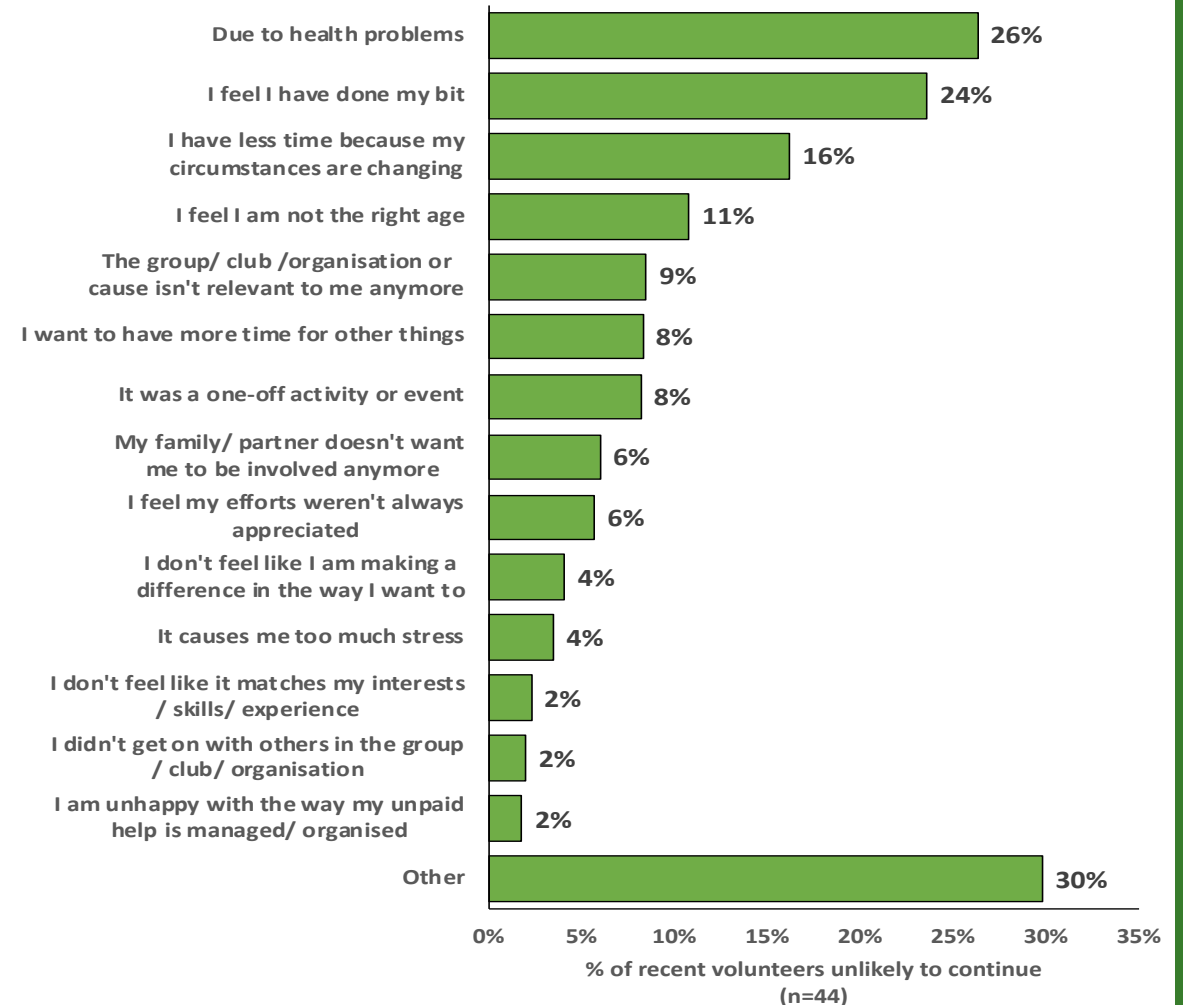
- **Due to health problems (26%)**
- **I feel I have done my bit (24%)**
- **I have less time because my circumstances are changing(16%).**

While the top three reasons are consistent between the Scottish findings and the overall GB finding, they differ in order. The GB overall reasons are:

- **I have less time because my circumstances are changing (33%)**
- **I feel I have done my bit (21%)**
- **Due to health problems (15%).**

Only 2% of recent Scottish volunteers cited being unhappy with the way their unpaid help was managed/organised as the reason for being unlikely to continue volunteering (8% GB overall).

Figure 4- Which, if any, of the following are reasons you are unlikely to continue giving this help?

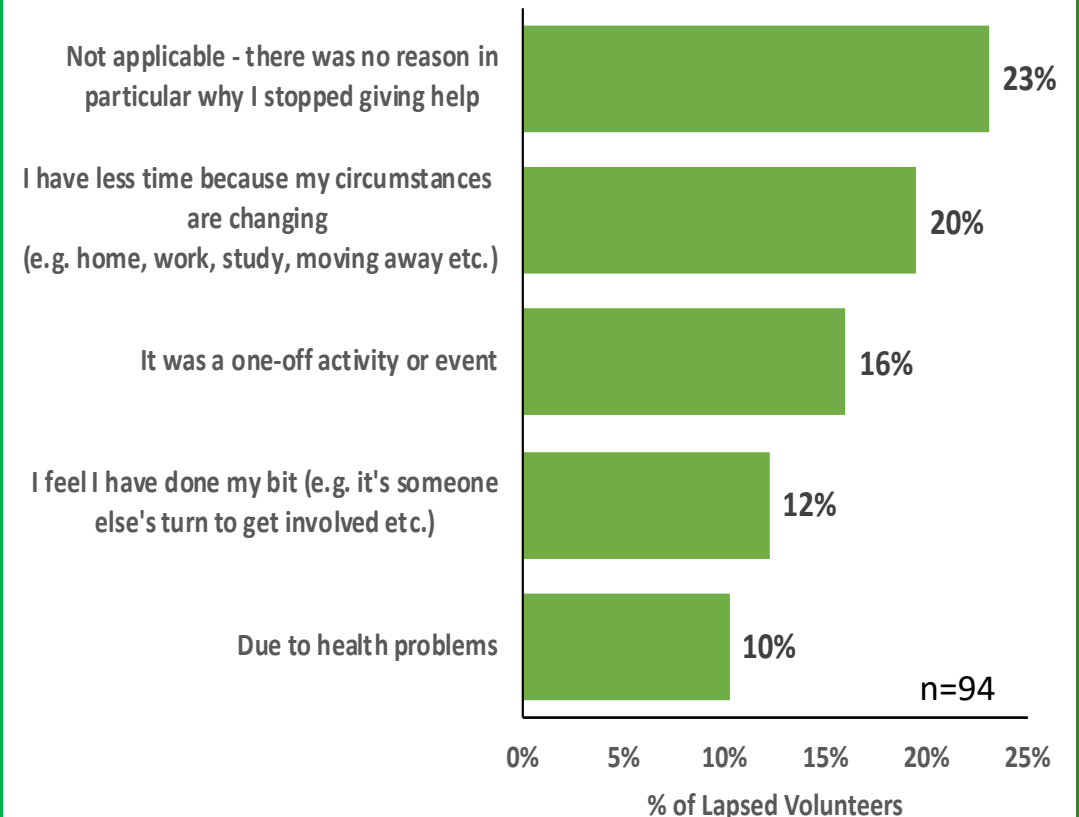


5. Why do volunteers continue or stop? (Lapsed volunteers)

Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied were you with your experience of being involved with this group, club or organisation?

- Lapsed volunteers are generally less positive than recent volunteers:
 - 45% of lapsed volunteers were very satisfied with their overall volunteer experience, compared to 57% of recent volunteers.
 - 30% of lapsed volunteers have not recommended volunteering to friends or family, compared to 22% of recent volunteers.
- Almost a quarter (23%) of lapsed volunteers stated that there was no particular reason why they stopped giving help, while a fifth cited a change in circumstances.
- Lapsed volunteers reported the same benefits as recent volunteers with: 94% of lapsed volunteers reporting that they 'enjoyed it', 90% reporting that 'it makes me feel like I am making a difference' and 88% reporting that 'it gives me a sense of personal achievement'.
- The findings for Scotland mirror those of Great Britain where lapsed volunteers are generally less satisfied than recent volunteers and 28% had no reason in particular for stopping giving help.

Figure 5 - Which, if any, of the following are reasons you are unlikely to continue giving this help?



6. Food for thought: What matters most for retaining volunteers

What matters most for volunteer retention?

- This presentation has analysed volunteer retention which considers how likely recent volunteers are to continue volunteering with their main organisation over the next year and their reasons for continuing or not.
- In the previous two presentations volunteer experience and volunteer impacts were analysed. Each presentation shows which of the variables analysed in each chapter impacts positively and negatively with the overall volunteer experience.
- How do the factors analysed in the previous chapters impact on volunteer retention? Which aspects of volunteer impact and experience are positively and negatively related to volunteer retention? Using a correlation matrix the variables from the previous chapters that have a positive and negative impact on volunteer retention can be identified. A correlation matrix is a statistical technique used to determine if there is a statistically significant relationship between two variables and whether that relationship is positive or negative.
- Statistical significance is the likelihood that a relationship between two or more variables is caused by something other than chance. Statistical significance is used to accept or reject the null hypothesis, which hypothesizes that there is no relationship between measured variables.

What matters most for volunteer retention?

The three variables with the strongest positive relationship (more likely to continue) with volunteer retention are:

- I feel like I belong to the group / club / organisation.
- There was a culture of respect and trust.
- I feel recognised enough for the help I gave.

‘There was a culture of respect and trust’ and ‘I feel I belong to the organisation’ had a strong positive relationship for both Scotland and GB. However, some of the other Scottish findings differ from the GB results. ‘It made me feel I was making a difference’ has a strong relationship for GB volunteers whereas for Scottish volunteers ‘I feel recognized enough for the help I gave’ has a strong relationship.

The three variables with the strongest negative relationship (less likely to continue) with overall volunteer retention are:

- I have skills and experience that I did not use, that I would have liked to.
- I felt pressured by the group/ club/ organisation to do more than I would like / to continue my involvement.
- My unpaid work was becoming to much like paid work.

This differs slightly from the GB wide results, where the variables with the strongest negative relationship were:

- Things could be much better organised.
- I felt pressured to do more/continue.
- Too much of my time taken was taken up.

Table 1: How likely are you to continue giving this unpaid help to this group, club or organisation?	Correlation coefficient
I feel like I belong to the group/ club/ organisation*	0.33
There was a culture of respect and trust*	0.29
I feel recognised enough for the help I gave*	0.244
I have skills and experience that I did not use, that I would have liked to	-0.216
I felt pressured by the group/ club/ organisation to do more than I would like/ to continue my involvement*	-0.189
My unpaid help was becoming too much like paid work*	-0.109
* also statistically significant relationship with overall volunteer satisfaction	

*All statistically significant variables are provided in Appendix 2.

Appendix 1. 'Time Well Spent' Survey Questions

'Time Well Spent' Survey Questions.

The Time Well Spent questions used to analyse 'Volunteer Retention' are detailed below:

Time Well Spent question	Response Categories
Over the next 12 months how likely or unlikely are you to continue giving this unpaid help?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very likely • Fairly likely • Fairly unlikely • Very unlikely • Don't know
Which THREE, if any, of the following are the main reasons you are likely to continue giving this unpaid help?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A sense of duty or obligation • The cause they stand for/ help • The difference I'm making • The group/ club/ organisation itself • The lack of people to take my place • The people I give unpaid help with • The positive impact it has on my health and wellbeing • The skills/ experience that I'm gaining • The way it fits with my everyday life • Don't know • Other

'Time Well Spent' Survey Questions.

The Time Well Spent questions used to analyse 'Volunteer Retention' are detailed below:

Time Well Spent question	Response Categories
<p>Which, if any, of the following are reasons you are unlikely to continue giving this help?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Due to health problems • I am unhappy with the way my unpaid help is managed/ organised • I didn't get on with others in the group/ club/ organization • I don't feel like I am making a difference in the way I want to • I don't feel like it matches my interests/ skills/ experience • I feel I am not the right age • I feel I have done my bit • I feel my efforts weren't always appreciated • I have less time because my circumstances are changing • I want to have more time for other things • It causes me too much stress • It was a one-off activity or event • My family/ partner doesn't want me to be involved anymore • The group/ club/organisation or cause isn't relevant to me anymore • Other

'Time Well Spent' Survey Questions.

The Time Well Spent questions used to analyse 'Volunteer Retention' are detailed below:

Time Well Spent question	Response Categories
Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied were you with your experience of being involved with this group, club or organization?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very satisfied • Fairly satisfied • Fairly dissatisfied • Very dissatisfied
To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about giving unpaid help to this group, club or organisation?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It improves my employment prospects • It improves my physical health • It helps me feel less isolated • It gives me new skills and experience • It gives me more confidence • It improves my mental health and wellbeing • It broadens my experience of life • It brings me into contact with people from different backgrounds and cultures • I meet new people • It gives me a sense of personal achievement • It makes me feel I am making a difference • I enjoy it

'Time Well Spent' Survey Questions.

The Time Well Spent questions used to analyse 'Volunteer Retention' are detailed below:

Time Well Spent question	Response Categories
<p>To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about giving unpaid help to this group, club or organisation?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes, I have • No, I haven't but I am likely to in the future • No, I haven't and I am not likely to in the future • Don't know
<p>Which, if any, of the following are reasons you are unlikely to continue giving this help? Lapsed Volunteers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Due to health problems • I am unhappy with the way my unpaid help is managed/ organized • I didn't get on with others in the group/ club/ organization • I don't feel like I am making a difference in the way I want to • I feel I am not the right age • I feel I have done my bit (e.g. it's someone else's turn to get involved etc.) • I feel my efforts weren't always appreciated • I have less time because my circumstances are changing (e.g. home, work, study, moving away etc.) • I want to have more time for other things (e.g. hobbies etc.) • It causes me too much stress • It was a one-off activity or event • My family/ partner doesn't want me to be involved anymore • The group/ club /organisation or cause isn't relevant to me anymore • Not applicable - there was no reason in particular why I stopped giving help • Other • Don't Know

Appendix 2 – Full correlation matrix – volunteer retention

Appendix 2 – Full correlation matrix– Volunteer retention

Table 2: How likely are you to continue giving this unpaid help to this group, club or organisation?	Correlation coefficient	Statistical Significance
I feel like I belong to the group/ club/ organisation*	0.33	** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
There was a culture of respect and trust*	0.29	** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
I feel recognised enough for the help I gave*	0.244	** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
I have benefited from gaining new skills and knowledge through the training I have received*	0.228	** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
I use other skills and experience (i.e. skills/ experience gained outside of employment)	0.224	** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
I was given the opportunity to influence the development of the group/ club/ organisation*	0.214	** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
I feel well supported*	0.213	** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
The group/ club/ organisation was flexible around the time I give*	0.21	** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
I have received training that has helped me carry out my unpaid activities to the best of my abilities*	0.209	** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
It makes me feel I am making a difference*	0.196	** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
I knew how to raise an issue within the group/ club/ organisation, if needed*	0.188	** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
I use my existing occupational/ professional skills and experience (i.e. skills/ experience gained through employment)	0.177	** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
It gives me a sense of personal achievement*	0.171	** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
My group /club/ organisation would reimburse me for any expenses if I want them to	0.157	** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
It improves my mental health and wellbeing*	0.151	** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
I enjoy it*	0.15	** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
It broadens my experience of life*	0.142	** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
It brings me into contact with people from different backgrounds and cultures*	0.135	** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
I meet new people*	0.121	* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).
It gives me more confidence*	0.107	* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).
I have had skills and experience that I did not use, that I would have liked to	-0.216	** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
I felt pressured by the group/ club/ organisation to do more than I would like/ to continue my involvement*	-0.189	** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
My unpaid help was becoming too much like paid work*	-0.109	* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).
* also statistically significant relationship with overall volunteer satisfaction		