



Newcastle CVS report for Gateshead Corporate Resources OSC 16 April 2018

Introduction

In January 2018, Newcastle CVS carried out a survey of voluntary and community sector organisations in Gateshead and Newcastle. This is the first time we have carried out a joint study across the two local authority areas. However the results can be read with reference Doing Good in Gateshead, the results of our survey of Gateshead’s voluntary and community sector, carried out in 2017.

168 responses to January’s survey were received from directly contacting around seven hundred and fifty organisations. The breakdown of the type of the respondent group illustrates that, as usual, smaller, community organisations are under-represented in the respondents. However the profile of the respondents is similar enough to that of registered charities in Gateshead and Newcastle to be able to draw reasonable assumptions.

Profile of Gateshead’s voluntary and community sector

The voluntary and community sector can be divided into three different groups. The first group is the large number of smaller and community organisations, mainly with an income of under £25,000; the second is the middle group with an income of usually £25,000 - £500,000; the third is the small number of larger registered charities, with an income of over £500,000.

Charity details by size	National by size (%)	Gateshead by size (%)	Newcastle by size (%)	Sample by size (%)
Micro, less than £10,000	48	37	32	24
Small, £10,001 to £100,000	34	36	34	30
Medium £100,001 to £1,000,000	14	22	28	32
Large, £1,000,001 to £10,000,000	3	4	4	9 (£1m - £5m) 5 over £5m *
Major, £10m to £100,000,000	0.4	0.3	1	
Super-major More than £100,000,000	0.003	0	0	

Alongside the survey Newcastle CVS ran a search of the Charity Commission website for registered charities and Charitable Incorporated Organisations listed in Gateshead, however results of the search cannot be considered definitive. There are charities working with Gateshead communities, which will not be registered in Gateshead and therefore don't appear in a search. Also the register changes on a daily basis as the Commission has become more efficient at removing dormant charities.

In addition to searching the Charity Commission website we carried out a similar search of Companies House data to find out how many Community Interest Companies and mutuals are currently registered in Gateshead.

Our estimate of voluntary, community and social enterprises in Gateshead are around

- 321 registered charities based in Gateshead
- 24 mutuals
- 30 CICs
- Between 960 – 1,300 small, local groups, activities and organisations
- 516 local charities that are not based in Gateshead, but cover Gateshead in their activities

Key findings from the survey

Funding and sustainability is the most pressing issue for voluntary and community organisations in Gateshead and Newcastle. This is regardless of whether they are small, medium or large organisations.

Around seven out of ten organisations noted an **increase in demand** for their services in the last year; this has been a consistent figure for a number of years. Many organisations reported year on year growth in demand for several years.

The **recruitment and retention of volunteers** is the second largest area of organisational challenge. This concern was shared across small community organisations, which were totally run by volunteers, as well as medium sized and larger voluntary organisations.

Despite the challenges, the majority of respondents remain **optimistic** about the future of their organisations. Over a third want to increase the number of beneficiaries, nearly half want to increase services, more than a half anticipate more volunteers and a quarter want to increase staff in the next year.

Two thirds of organisations had developed **new areas** of service, projects, initiatives and events during the last year. Innovation was still happening, despite restructures, funding cuts and other challenges.

The key challenge for the people using the services and facilities was the impact of **welfare reform, Universal Credit and personal debt**. There was a noticeable growth of **poverty and austerity** within a growing number of communities.

Growing levels of **mental illness** and the failure of statutory services to support people was having a noticeable impact within and across communities.

The **rate of change** and short term grants and contracts was having a destabilizing effect on medium and larger sized organisations in relation to staffing, accommodation and strategic planning and engagement. This presented greater challenges to **governance**.

Certain groups of people were identified as having additional needs that weren't being met; in particular **refugees and asylum seekers, young people and older people**.

The themes of **loneliness and isolation**, not just around older people, were raised. Sometimes these were referenced to facilities and activities that no longer exist.

The **withdrawal of the public sector** was becoming more noticeable and a number of services were harder to access due to changing criteria, different locations and charges.

Grants from charitable foundations and trusts were the most common form of income for small and medium-sized voluntary organisations, while contracts are the most important source of income for larger organisations.

Just over one in three organisations noted an **increase in income** since the previous year. Income stayed the same for just over one in three organisations and just under a third saw a decrease in income since last year.

There were more comments on general **health and wellbeing** than previous years.

The big challenge remains of greater demand, fewer resources and more clients having more complex needs. The issue of the number of clients with a much higher level of needs, and more problems needing resolution is a major challenge.

The full report, Gan Canny, will be made available in April.