

Working with the Voluntary and Community Sector

A briefing for Public Sector Officers

Valuing the Voluntary Sector

New research has found that voluntary and community organisations in East Sussex have a combined annual income of £476 million and that the sector is a major employer, employing 7 per cent of the county's working age population.

These were some of the key findings of the new report 'Valuing the Voluntary Sector: The economic impact of voluntary and community organisations in East Sussex'. The report is based on a countywide survey of the voluntary and community sector, undertaken in 2010 by the three Councils for Voluntary Services (CVSs) in East Sussex - 3VA, HVA and RVA.

The research also revealed that 12 per cent of East Sussex residents volunteer, and together they contribute over 130,000 hours of their time every week. Using the average wage for East Sussex, these donated hours are worth £1,599,973.55 every week; which is an annual contribution of nearly £80 million!

The report aims to enable elected members and policy makers to better understand the economic impact of the work and contribution of the voluntary sector. The report is available to download at the East Sussex Strategic Partnership website: [Valuing the Voluntary Sector](#).

National Survey of Charities and Social Enterprises (NSCSE)

This national survey gathered the views of the leaders of voluntary and community organisations, and social enterprises in England.

The survey was carried out twice, first in Autumn/Winter 2008 as the National Survey of Third Sector Organisations, then again in Autumn/Winter 2010. Together, they form the largest ever survey of the sector, and asked about opportunities to influence local decisions, the availability and nature of funding and income, support and guidance, relationships with local statutory bodies, and other factors affecting organisations' success.

Information on the survey is available to download on the [NSCSE survey](#) website. The [overall report for the county](#) shows an increase in the proportion of organisations in East Sussex which consider that statutory bodies have a positive influence on their success. It also shows an increase in the proportion of organisations which consider that local statutory bodies in East Sussex value the work of their organisation.

It needs to be noted that the NSCSE survey is a perception survey.

Using the data

The data from both the Valuing the Voluntary Sector report and the NSCSE survey provide us with a good picture of what the sector is doing and thinking in East Sussex. Some answers may be more revealing than others. Used alongside dialogue within the local sector and infrastructure bodies and local contextual knowledge, this information can be used to understand the local sector, and strengthen relationships with such organisations.

If you would like to discuss these results, or learn more about the sector please feel free to contact Paul Rideout (Third Sector Policy manager), T:01273 482911, E: paul.rideout@eastsussex.gov.uk.