

Volunteering During COVID-19: Understanding Volunteer Motivations and Experiences



A joint project between Hampshire County Council, University of Winchester and Hampshire CVS Network (led by Community First Wessex).

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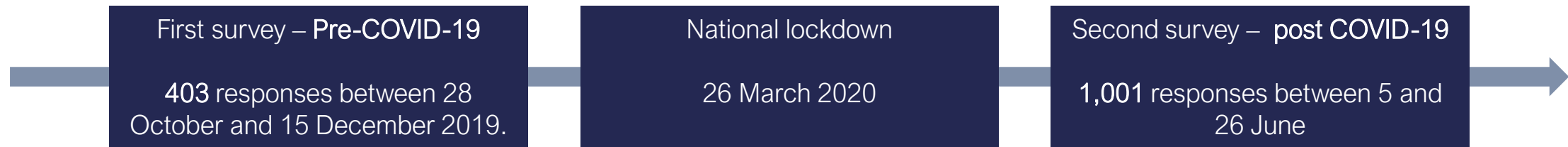


Objectives and outcomes

- **Overall purpose of the project:**
 - To inform and support the 'Recovery' phase of COVID-19 and maximise the availability and skill sets of volunteers.
- **Specific objectives:**
 - understand what actions the County Council and partners could take to sustain increases in volunteering and support COVID-19 Recovery
 - understand how changes in volunteering are affecting the wellbeing (positively or negatively) of volunteers in Hampshire
 - understand how the County Council and partners could best promote wellbeing of volunteers
 - create a profile of new volunteers that have not volunteered before to assist in future recruitment communications
- **Expected outcomes**
 - Recommendations on how to effectively target and communicate with people to support continued volunteering.

Two phase survey

Hampshire County Council, partnered with the University of Winchester and Hampshire CVS Network (led by Community First Wessex), conducted a study on volunteering at the end of 2019, pre COVID-19. With the outbreak and subsequent lockdown it enabled a second, post COVID-19, survey into volunteering and how it has been affected.





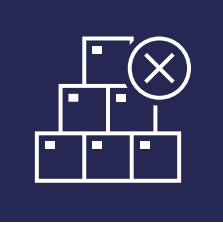
This report focuses on the post COVID-19 results with references to the pre-COVID-19 survey as a comparison.

Throughout this report we refer to encouraging volunteering. HCC and its partners are seeking to facilitate, share knowledge and help people to return to normality safely. We are not looking to encourage people to take actions which are not safe or that make people feel unsafe.

COVID-19 has highlighted opportunities and risks for volunteering

	Insight	Recommendation
	New volunteers who have engaged, felt more connected to their communities and many are willing to continue.	Offer clear paths for new volunteers to join the organisations best able to retain them (ones good at creating strong social links) and make volunteering a new normal for them.
	Volunteering was offering less benefit to the volunteer and is based more on their perception of a community need.	Where it is not possible to keep new volunteers engaged, sign people up for future 'crisis volunteering' where permission to contact establishes routes to re-engage people quickly in a second COVID-19 outbreak or similar event.
	Volunteering has been less voluntary - Some groups increased volunteering/caring out of necessity (notably women 45-54) – many will reduce volunteering as soon as they can.	Re-engaging those who have stopped volunteering and keeping new volunteers is needed to free up those who are struggling to continue. It provides benefits to the volunteers themselves and helps those feeling overwhelmed.
	Getting volunteers who stopped back safely to at least some involvement has risks but also positive wellbeing outcomes.	Wellbeing outcomes are worst for those who have had to stop volunteering. Re-engaging as many people as possible to take on at least 1-2 hours a week of volunteering will give the best outcomes.

COVID-19 has highlighted opportunities and risks for volunteering

	Insight	Recommendation
	Perceived need is declining and will lead to people reducing or stopping volunteering.	Make clear that some volunteers have not been able to return yet so help is still needed. There are also groups that are still (and always) at need.
	Empathy for isolated people will be higher than usual.	There may never be a time when people better understand and sympathise with the socially isolated- promoting help for people who struggle to connect. "For [group at need] every day is like lockdown. You can help them by...".
	New volunteers or people undertaking more demanding volunteering are, in some cases, concerned they may be overwhelmed by complex cases.	New volunteers and those who stepped up will struggle if overwhelmed by amount or complexity of cases. This will lead to less social value in the longer term. Ensuring the most professional/best capacity organisations tackle these cases while volunteers take low/medium difficulty will maximise volunteering.

Recommendations for future crisis events e.g. COVID-19 second wave and beyond

The following actions would benefit Hampshire in the event of a second wave of COVID-19 or other similar event needing mobilisation of volunteers.



Identify the organisations that quickly and effectively reacted to COVID-19 and are viable for the future, linking these to recruitment portals to avoid people signing up to platforms where they aren't called upon.



Link the front end (big attention gaining national platforms) with the back end (local groups who know where the need is). Ensure there are clear streamlined paths from national or countywide websites signing up new volunteers to the best organisations. Pre-written advertisements with a link to a local group (e.g. parish council or VCS group) ready to place and pre-approved could make the process smooth.



Create, support or encourage use of a platform that would enable volunteers to share skills and information (befriending, IT proficiency and training on safe volunteering e.g. HCC trigger tool that already exists). The platform can teach essential skills but also be social e.g. volunteer experience sharing etc.



Prioritise unlocking activities where many people can contribute a little (befriending also fits here). Goal should be as many people as possible contributing at least 1-2 hours.



Try to match willing volunteers and returners with those volunteers struggling to cope eg with caring duties– a sharing of volunteering tasks with new willing volunteers would prevent stopping altogether and both groups would benefit.

Demographics – Who Responded?

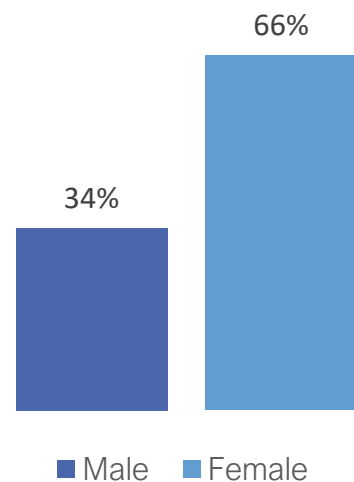
Demographics of responders

What and when:

- Online survey available through HCC comms channels – i.e. website, social media, internally;
- 1,001 responses between 5 and 26 June.

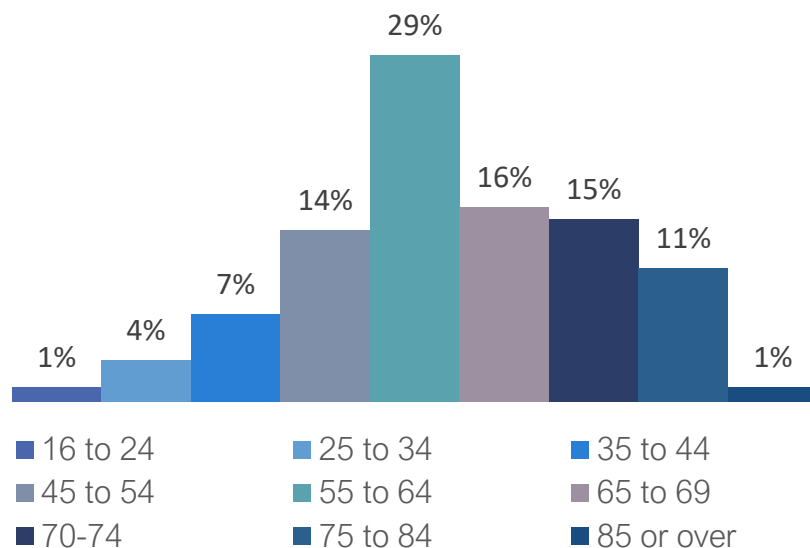
Audience Profile – There was a skew towards older, female and retired audiences and has NOT been weighted to be representative.

Respondents were mainly female



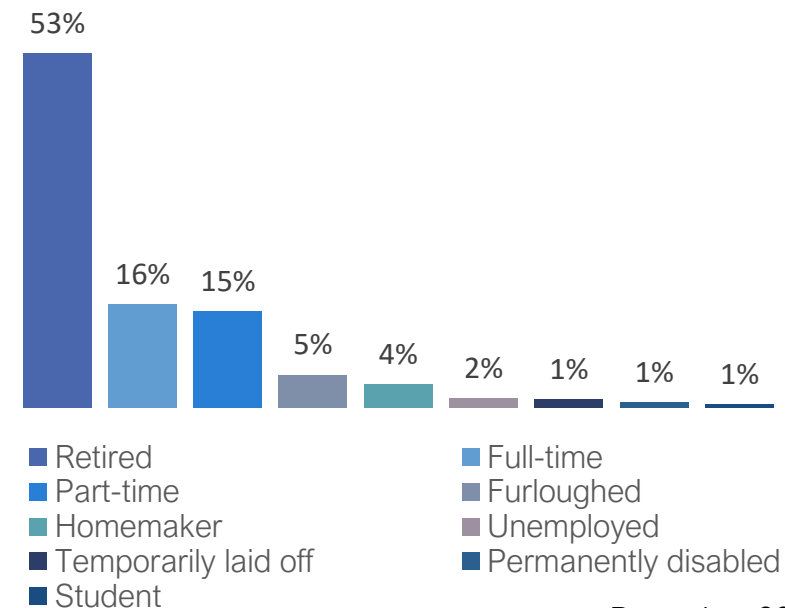
Base size: 987

Respondents average age was 61



Base size: 998

Over half of the respondents were retired

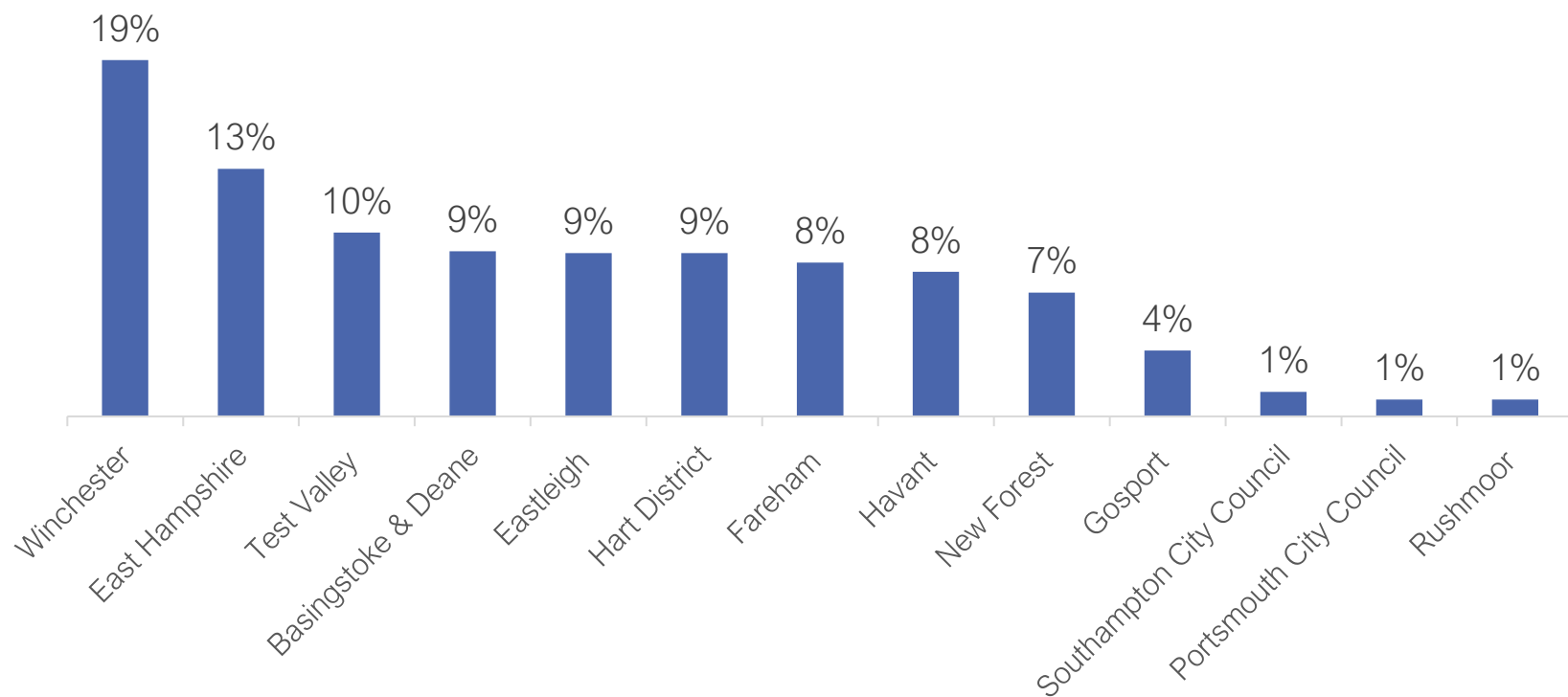


Base size: 994

Demographics of response

Audience Profile – There is a skew towards Winchester residents, and non-disabled respondents. The skew reflects where the survey was taken up e.g. Winchester City Council pushed particularly hard to promote the survey.

Respondents were spread across Hampshire Boroughs. The highest number of respondents are from Winchester



Base size: 997

96% of respondents were white, 2% of respondents make up other ethnic groups.

Base size: 991

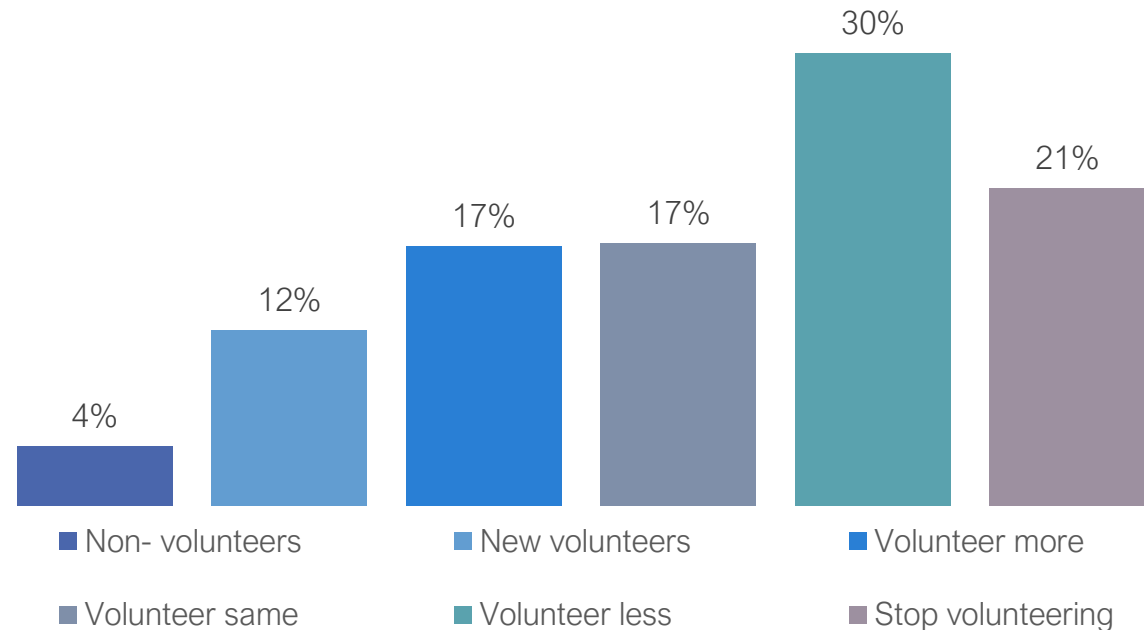
86% of respondents were not limited day to day by a disability, 9% were limited a little and 3% were limited a lot

Base size: 994

Volunteer types

Audience Profile – Most respondents were volunteers before lockdown (84%) and/or after lockdown (75%). Over 50% of respondents have reduced or stopped volunteering since lockdown while nearly 30% have increased or started.

- New volunteers: Respondents who started volunteering after lockdown
- Volunteer more: Respondents who have increased volunteering since lockdown
- Volunteer same: Respondents whose volunteering has not changed since lockdown
- Volunteer less: Respondents who have decreased volunteering since lockdown
- Stop volunteering: Respondents who have stopped volunteering since lockdown
- Non-volunteer: Respondents who did not volunteer before or after lockdown



Base size: 998

Demographics for the volunteer types

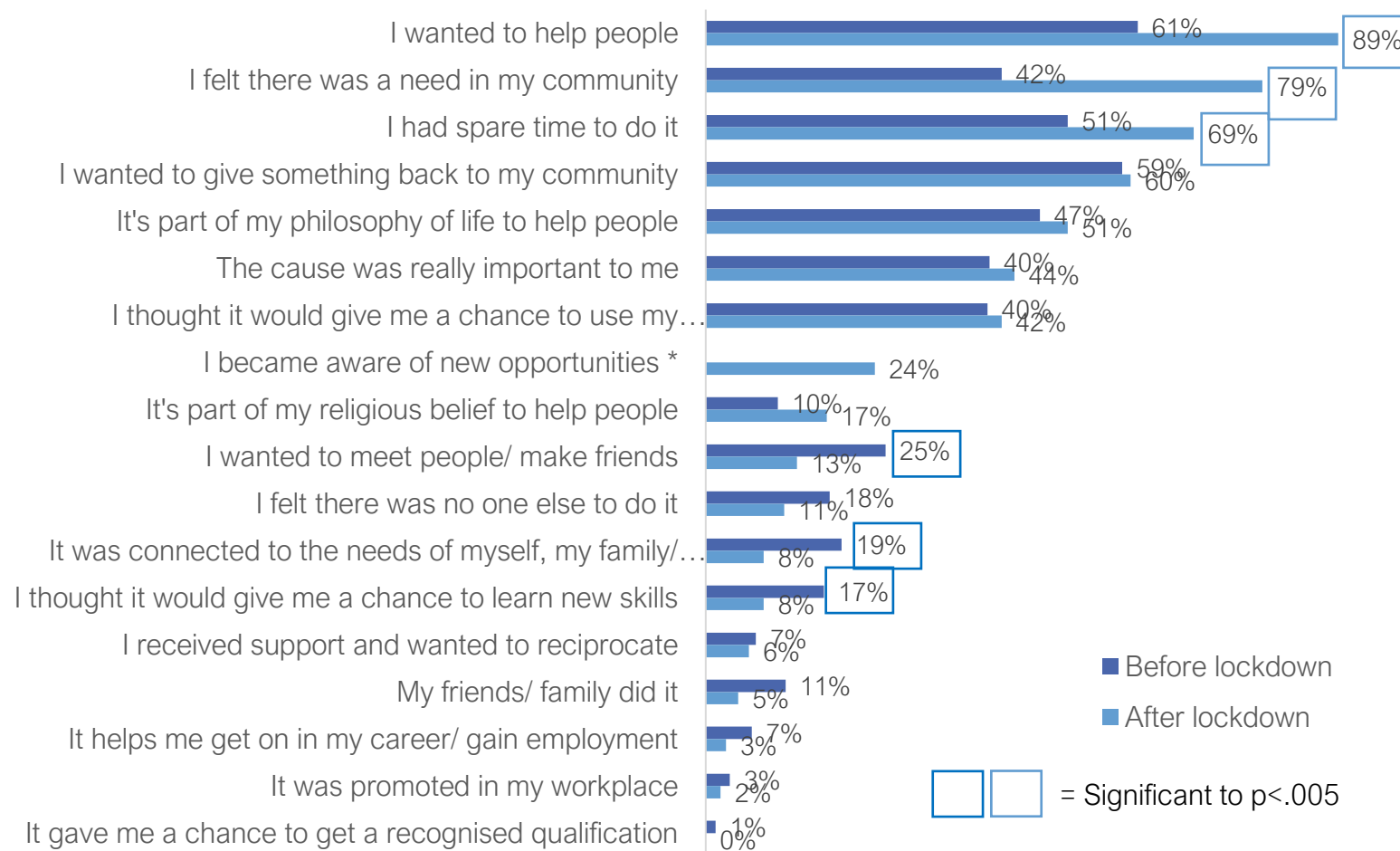
Audience Profile – Respondents who started/increased volunteering after lockdown were more likely to be younger, female, have children under 18, be working and not have a disability compared to those who reduced/ stopped volunteering.

Respondent characteristics	Non- volunteers	New volunteers	Volunteer more	Volunteer same	Volunteer less	Stop volunteering
Average age (years)	56	54	55	60	64	69
Gender	61% female 34% male	72% female 28% male	69% female 30% male	67% female 33% male	61% female 38% male	64% female 36% male
Young people up to the age of 18 living in the household	40%	40%	38%	21%	20%	12%
Employment status	63% working full/part time 24% retired None furloughed	43% working full/part time 26% retired 14% furloughed	48% working full/part time 31% retired 5% furloughed	38% working full/part time 49% retired 4% furloughed	19% working full/part time 66% retired 4% furloughed	12% working full/part time 77% retired 3% furloughed
Limited a lot or a little by a health problem or disability	18%	8%	10%	14%	12%	17%

Motivations for Volunteering

Motivations to volunteer have shifted away from 'personal gain' to 'giving'

Motivations to volunteer before and after lockdown



* Not included in the options before lockdown

Base: 354, 280

After lockdown volunteers had more 'selfless' motivations:

- I wanted to help people
- I felt there was a need in my community

Before lockdown volunteers had more 'selfish' motivations linked to personal gain:

- I wanted to meet people/ make friends
- It was connected to the needs of myself, my family/ friends
- I thought it would give me a chance to learn new skills

N.B – we can only compare the volunteers in our surveys (a self selecting group – this is not a controlled sample)

Key takeout: Messaging that focuses on 'need' motivations will be better at promoting volunteering during crisis

Volunteers are gaining satisfaction that they are making a difference

Both volunteers before and after lockdown feel like they are making a difference.

However, new volunteers after lockdown are less likely to gain the following rewards than before lockdown:

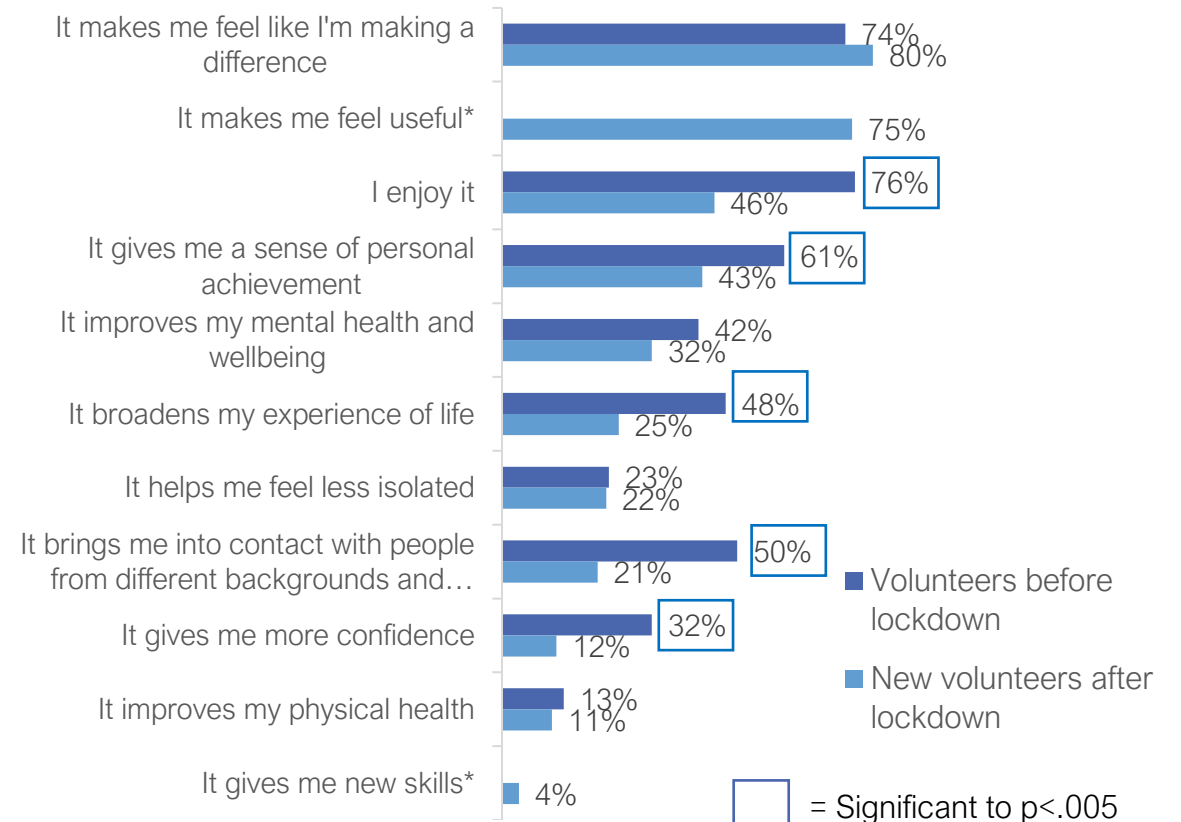
- Enjoyment
- Sense of personal achievement
- To broaden experience of life
- To contact people from different backgrounds and cultures
- Gain confidence

New volunteers are lacking rewards that were reported before lockdown. This could be due to the type of volunteering available at the moment. Before lockdown, those who reported lack of personal gain from volunteering carried out similar roles to what people are doing during lockdown:

- Provided practical support to a neighbour or friend
- Given practical help for a specific task e.g. getting people online, home maintenance

N.B – we can only compare the volunteers in our surveys (a self selecting group – this is not a controlled sample)

What people gain from volunteering before and after lockdown



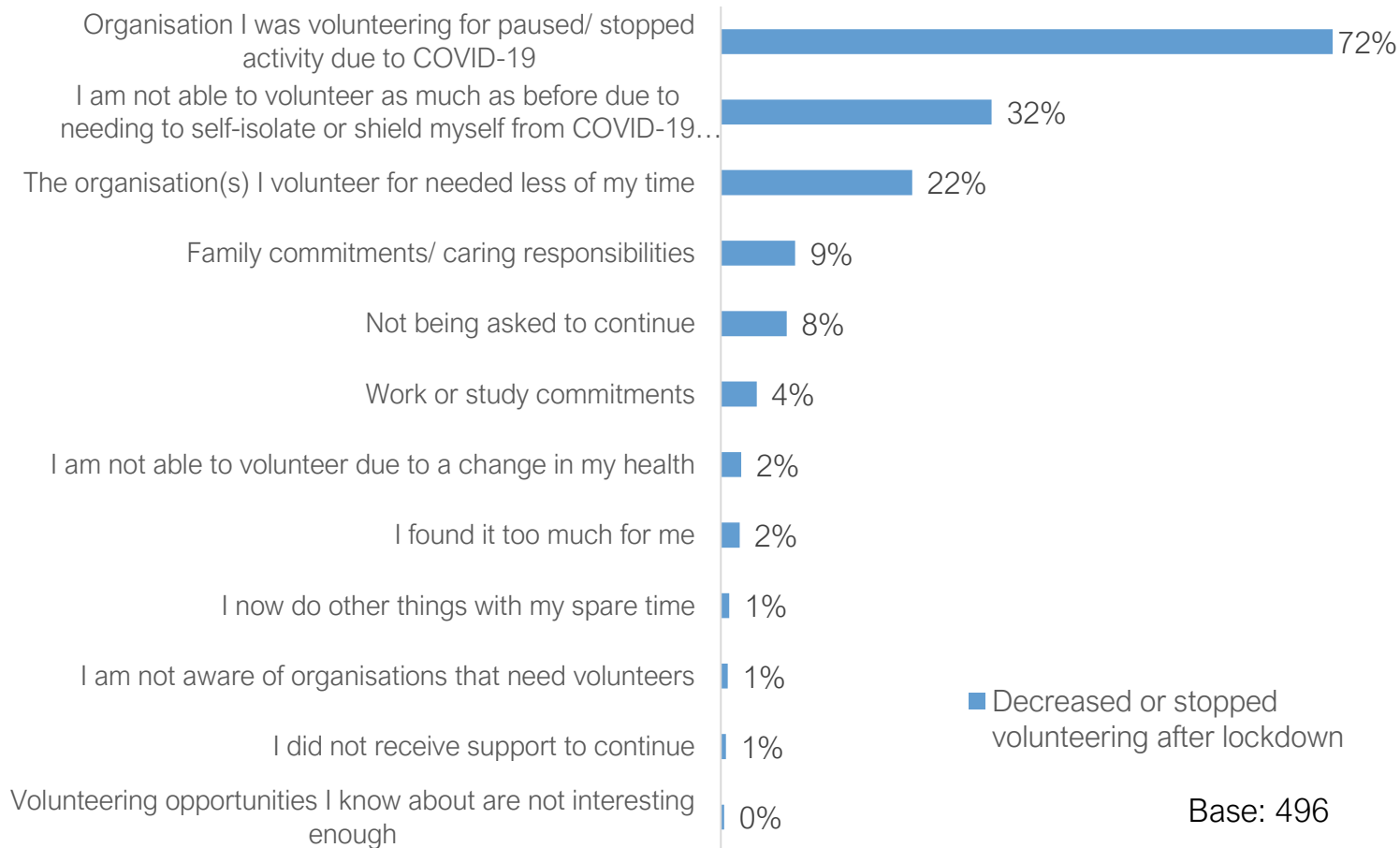
* Not included in the options before lockdown

Base: 349, 112

Key takeout: It is important to promote feelings of enjoyment and connection in new volunteers to ensure they carry on volunteering. Making some investment in this would be justifiable.

Organisational factors are the main reason individuals have reduced volunteering

Reasons people have decreased/stopped volunteering



Decrease vs. stopped

Individuals that need to self-isolate or shield where more likely to have stopped volunteering

Individuals whose organisation needs less of their time were more likely to decrease volunteering

Age

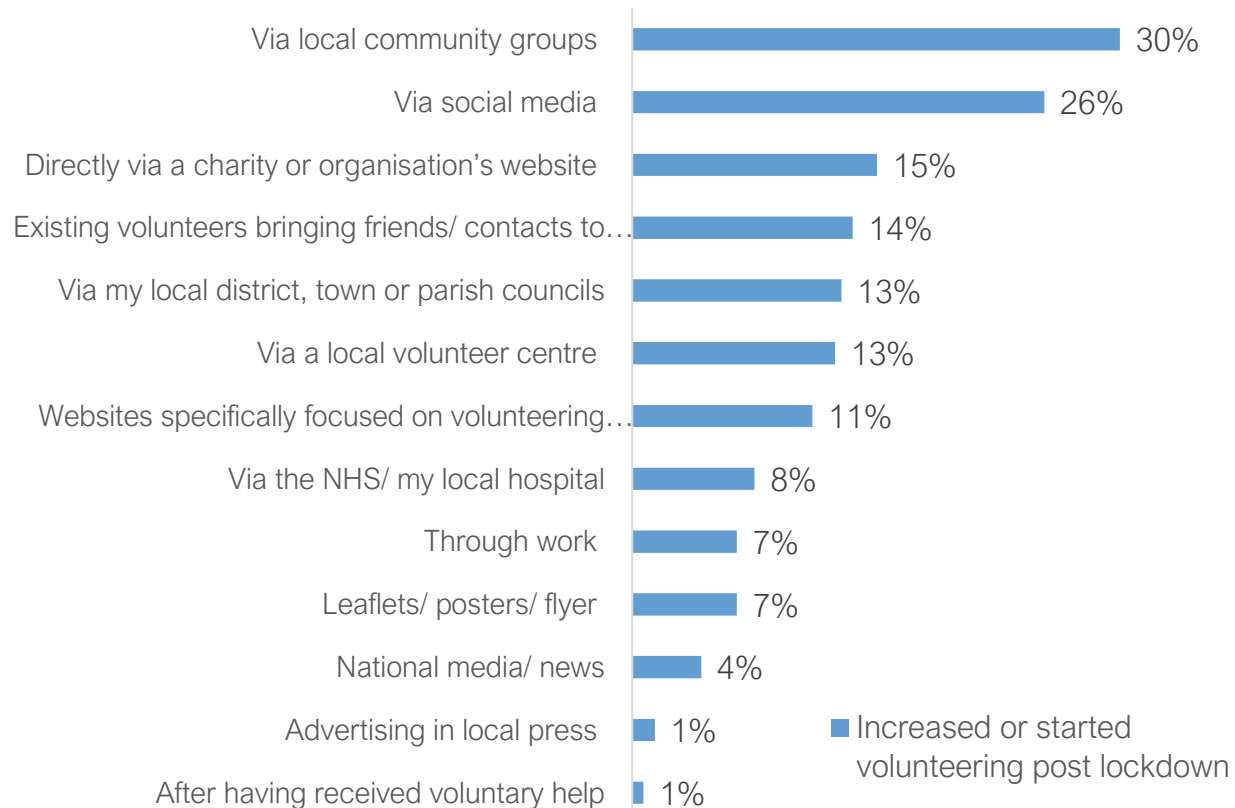
Individuals under 55 were more likely to stop/reduce volunteering as they: had work/study commitments, family/caring responsibilities and found it too much for them.

Individuals 55 and over were more likely to stop/reduce volunteering to shield or self-isolate

Key takeout: Volunteer organisations should direct keen volunteers whose current roles have ended to new opportunities

Volunteers have mainly signed up via community groups and social media

Sign up method for new and existing volunteers after lockdown



Base: 277

Since lockdown there has been a change in how people sign up to volunteer

- ↑ Via local community groups
- ↑ Via social media
- ↑ Existing volunteers bringing friends/ contacts to volunteer
- ↓ After having received voluntary help
- ↓ Through work

New vs. existing volunteers

New volunteers are more likely to use websites specifically focused on volunteering (such as doit.org) and national news media.

Existing volunteers who have increased their volunteering are more likely to be brought in by a friend/ contact.

Key takeout: During future lockdowns, focusing on channels for existing volunteers would be most effective for wellbeing measures

Wellbeing of Volunteers

COVID-19 has disrupted the usual dynamics of volunteering

Pre –COVID-19 survey showed volunteering and community connection reinforce each other leading to personal wellbeing (i.e. 48% of variance in personal wellbeing was explained by volunteering and community connection). Post COVID-19 it has become more complicated reflecting changes in people’s lives (only 21% of variance in personal wellbeing can be explained by volunteering and community connection).

Why is this?

Volunteering is less voluntary – Some groups e.g. Women 45-54) are more likely to have increased care responsibilities and may be experiencing negative wellbeing outcomes (ONS research).

Older people are being forced to sit out – age was a strong predictor of feeling life was worthwhile before COVID-19, this effect is weaker now.

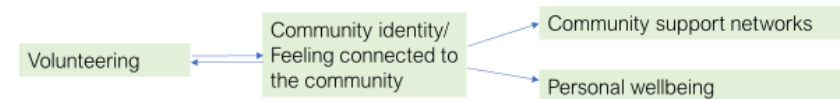
Another way to think of this – COVID-19 has levelled down the volunteering field for many

Before COVID-19, self identified disability was negatively linked to feelings of worth, likely due to isolation and physical exclusion (less ability to get to volunteering, use public transport). At the time of the survey this effect was no longer seen – lockdown made people with or without disabilities experience the same factors – isolation and lower ability to engage with volunteering.

Model of volunteering and wellbeing pre COVID-19

Community identity is essential to gaining and maintaining volunteers

Interviews were carried out with 53 volunteers from a range of volunteering organisations in the South (same sample as previous slide) and West of England. In addition, an online survey was completed by 529 individuals from the West Midlands, 76 of these were current volunteers. The survey investigated the ways in which community identity, volunteering and well-being were connected.

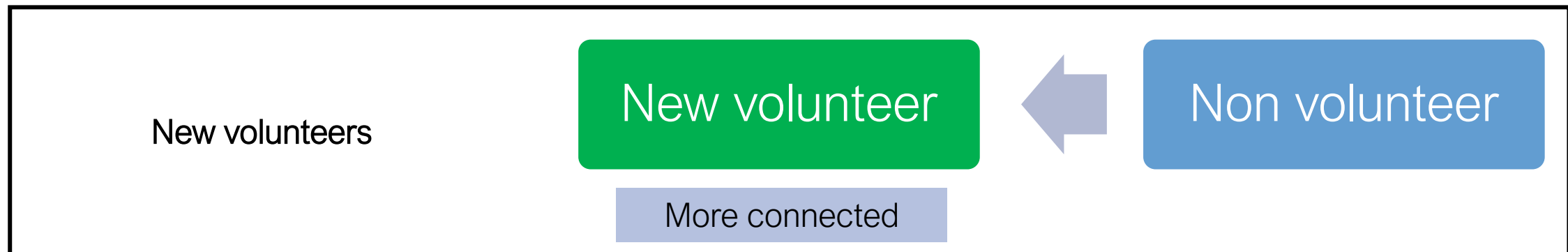
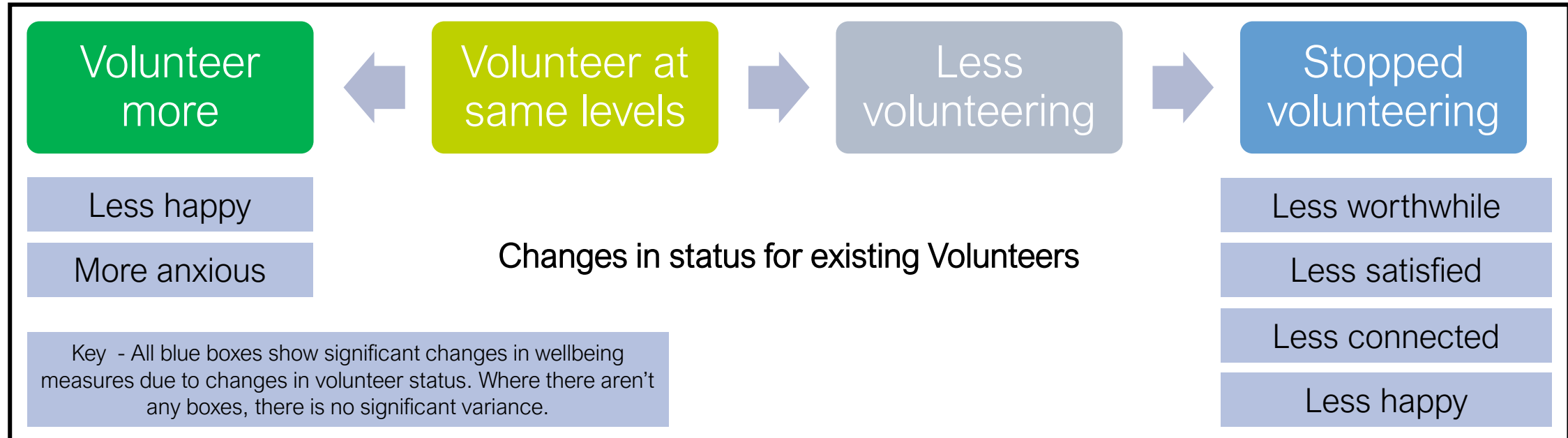


Those who reported more hours of volunteering had a stronger community identity, felt more supported by their community and experienced positive wellbeing

Bowe, M., Gray, D., Stevenson, C., Cleveland, M., McNamara, N., Wakefield, J., Kellezi, B. & Wilson, I. (forthcoming). A social cure in the community: A mixed-methods exploration of the role of social identity in the experiences and well-being of community volunteers. European Journal of Social Psychology.

Key takeout: Community identity is an important motivator in becoming and maintaining commitment to volunteering, leading to positive experiences of community support and personal wellbeing.

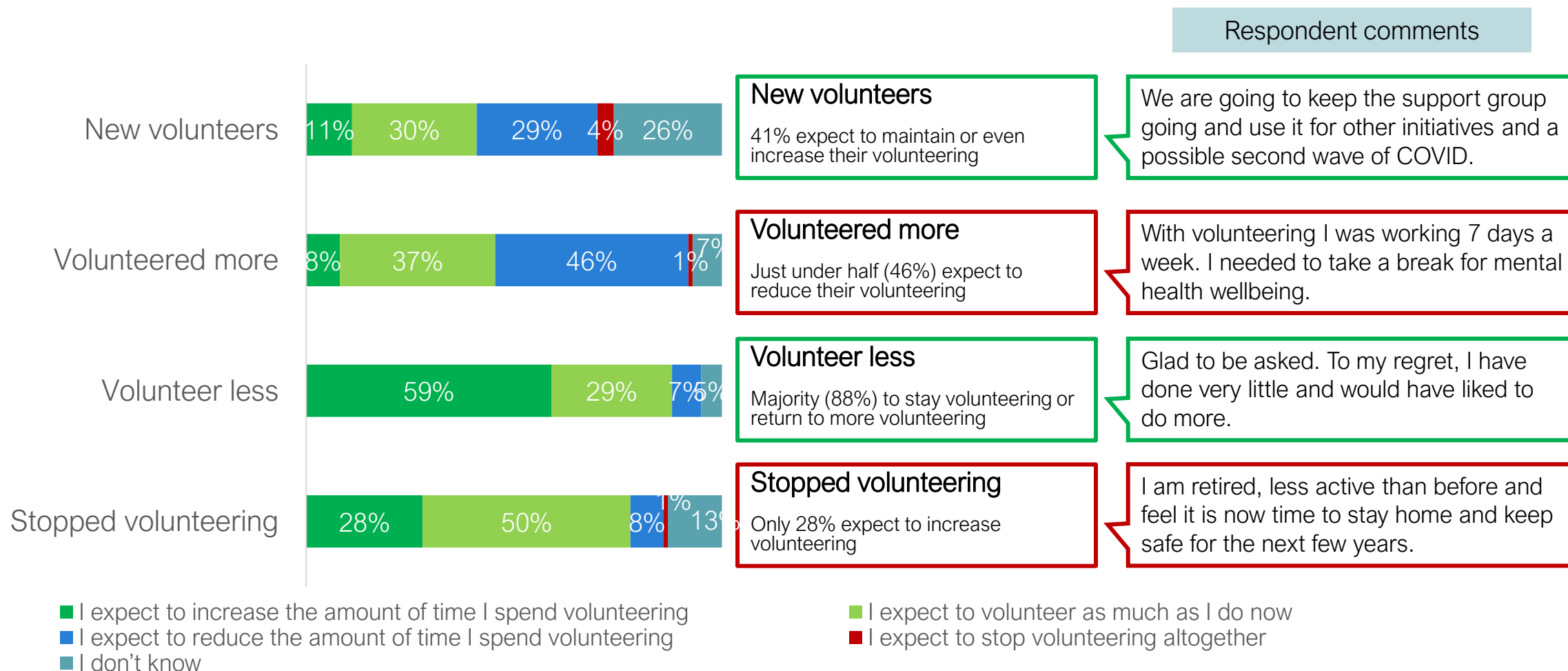
Maintaining volunteering during COVID-19 lockdown had significant benefits



Key takeout: Providing different volunteering opportunities would prevent people stopping volunteering altogether and paying a heavy price in their wellbeing

Maximising Volunteering in the time of COVID-19

New volunteers present an opportunity, stopped volunteers a challenge



Base: New volunteers (113), Volunteered mire (168), Volunteered less (290, Stopped volunteering (182)

Key takeout: Focus support on those stopping volunteering – they are most at risk or permanently losing the benefits of volunteering

Drop out among those forced to stop volunteering is a key challenge

Above all issues the COVID-19 health threat is a key barrier for most people. Below summarises other dynamics at play with respondent comments.

People expect to stop volunteering due to age, feeling overwhelmed and returning to work

I am retired, less active than before and feel it is now time to stay home and keep safe for the next few years.

The system will take over ... hopefully, however, should there be a future need then, if I can, I will assist.

Getting too old. I feel I've done my bit and it's time for the younger volunteers to step up.

Enabling people to stay volunteers involves more home working, perceived need, good use of skills

Flexibility of volunteering opportunities would be essential as I work full time shifts.

If there is a need I want to help! I love meeting people and I get a kick out of seeing people smile.

I will be able to coordinate from an office if I am on my own but can not return to any contact volunteering until a vaccine or treatment is found for COVID -19.

Shopping, prescriptions, befriending and admin are all tasks people believe they could help with

Shopping for isolated people, collecting prescriptions, telephoning vulnerable people. Registered with local community support network but have not been asked to do anything.

Phoning vulnerable/isolating people to check up on them.

I am continuing to complete paperwork for the charity I volunteer with.

Key takeout: Engaging stopped volunteers and offering them online/telephone befriending and other tasks could re-engage people




Summary of challenges and groups affected

	New volunteers i.e. those who started volunteering after lockdown	Continued volunteering during lockdown	Stopped volunteering in lockdown
Motivations	Motivated to help others in their community Felt as though they were making a difference.		Many stopped due to reduction in need by volunteer organisers or need to shield/self-isolate.
Wellbeing	Felt more connected to their community.	Those who increased volunteering felt less worthwhile and scored lower on wellbeing measures.	Felt less connected to their community, less worthwhile and scored lower on wellbeing measures.
Future volunteering	Over 40% expect to maintain or increase volunteering.	Nearly 60% of those who have reduced volunteering want to increase and nearly 50% of those who have increased want to reduce.	Less than 30% wish to increase volunteering.

Summary of challenges and groups affected

	New volunteers	Continued volunteering during lockdown	Stopped volunteering in lockdown
Opportunities and challenges	Volunteers experienced lower enjoyment but more connection whilst volunteering during lockdown. To ensure the best outcome for volunteers, volunteering should be fun and sociable.		Volunteering role pre-lockdown may have changed. However, encouraging individuals to continue volunteering, even as little as 1-2 hours a week will benefit their wellbeing and the community. Volunteering may need to be adapted to reduce contact for at-risk individuals.
	Different motivations in 'normal' and 'crisis' volunteers. Motivations for volunteering in 'normal' times should be promoted amongst new volunteers. For those that do not wish to continue, they should be able to sign up as 'crisis' volunteers.	Enable individuals feeling overwhelmed and struggling to continue to reduce volunteering hours, in order to improve their wellbeing.	
	The need for volunteers may be reducing in their current role. Convey the message that volunteers are needed in other roles. For example, individuals are likely to understand and sympathise with the socially isolated groups post lockdown. "For [group at need] every day is like lockdown. You can help them".		
	As volunteering for neighbours continues out of lockdown ensure volunteers are supported by an appropriate organisation to ensure requests are manageable and appropriate for volunteers.		

Use those with high levels of skills to train/engage/befriend those less capable

Issue	Potential solution
 Local community groups are well placed to re-recruit stopped volunteers e.g. charity shop worker for different tasks	Support community groups to enable stopped volunteers
 People want to help but have barriers to leaving home	Promote online skills sharing – examples given by respondents ranged from counselling, post stroke rehabilitation and befriending. Engage the most skilled and proficient volunteers
 People want to help but lack skills	Engage those with moderate capability to learn training skills and become able to help those with the least capability
 People are forced to care for themselves but lack skills e.g. get online	Continue to support people to learn IT skills or to access on-line support (eg shopping)

Communicate need and re-introduce social aspects to retain new volunteers

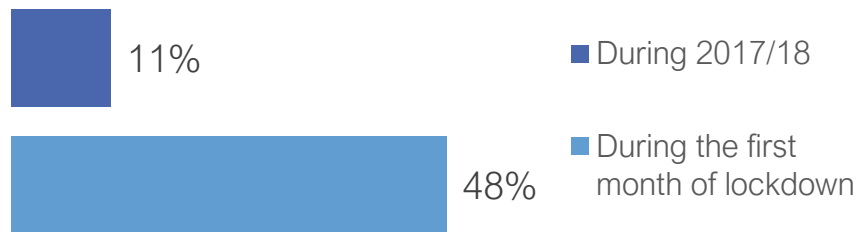
Issue	Potential solution
 People believe 'others' or 'the system' will kick in	Publicise that some volunteers are not free to rejoin – 'we still need your help'
 Volunteering is less social and fun for new volunteers	Try to divert new volunteers into the organisations best able to connect them to a social network – this will increase the likelihood they will continue
 New volunteers are returning to work	Promote home working to free up time for volunteering. Side benefits include reduced CO ² and better work life balance
 If new volunteers do stop, sign them up for future 'crisis' volunteering	Give new volunteers the option to sign up for any future crisis to make sure people are reactivated quickly during a second wave of COVID-19 or similar event

National Research and Local Experience during COVID-19

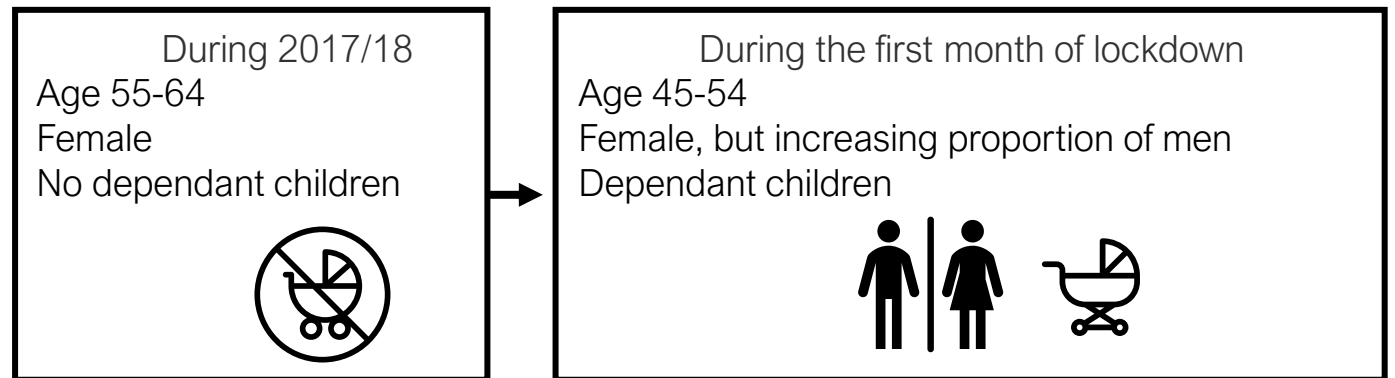
Office of National Statistics (ONS) shows caring during Coronavirus has expanded

The data from three ONS surveys was pooled with approx. 6,500 respondents overall. One survey was conducted in 2017/18 which acts as a baseline, two surveys were conducted in April/May 2020, early on in lockdown.

The percentage of adults providing help or support to someone outside of their household increased by over 300% during lockdown



Characteristics of people providing help or support to others in lockdown



Personal gain from caring

Those who provided help and support were more likely to feel they are playing a **useful role** and reported more enjoyment of day to day activities



Effect of caring on wellbeing

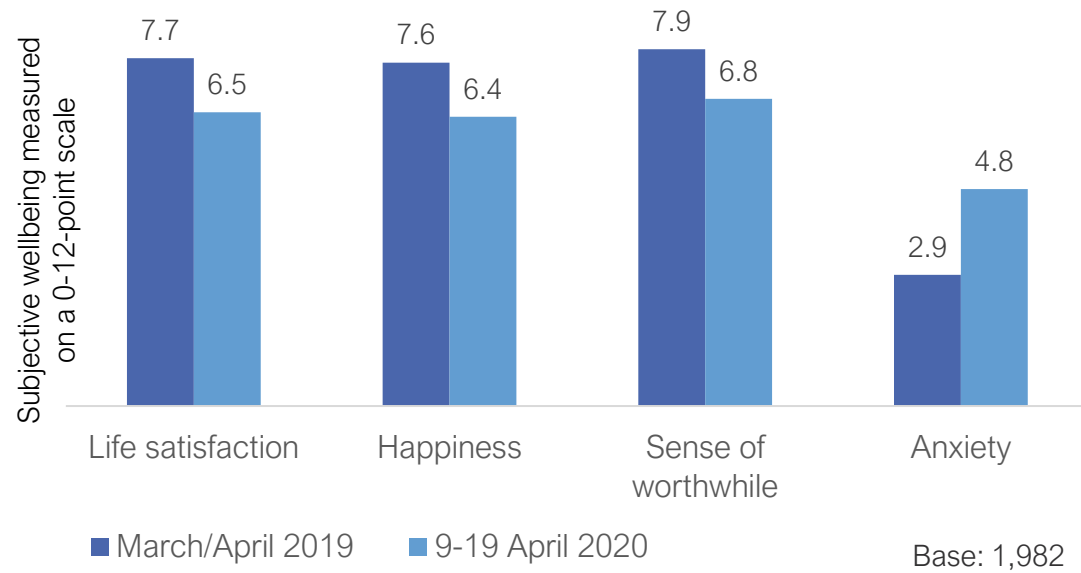
However, people providing help or support were more likely to report feeling **worse on well-being measures** e.g. feeling constantly under strain and losing sleep

Shielding and lockdown measures have prevented some people providing care to others

Over one in ten (11%) said their caring responsibilities had been affected by the pandemic. Almost half (47%) of these were unable to care for someone they usually supported because, for example, they were unable to spend as much time as they would like with them or being unable to travel to them

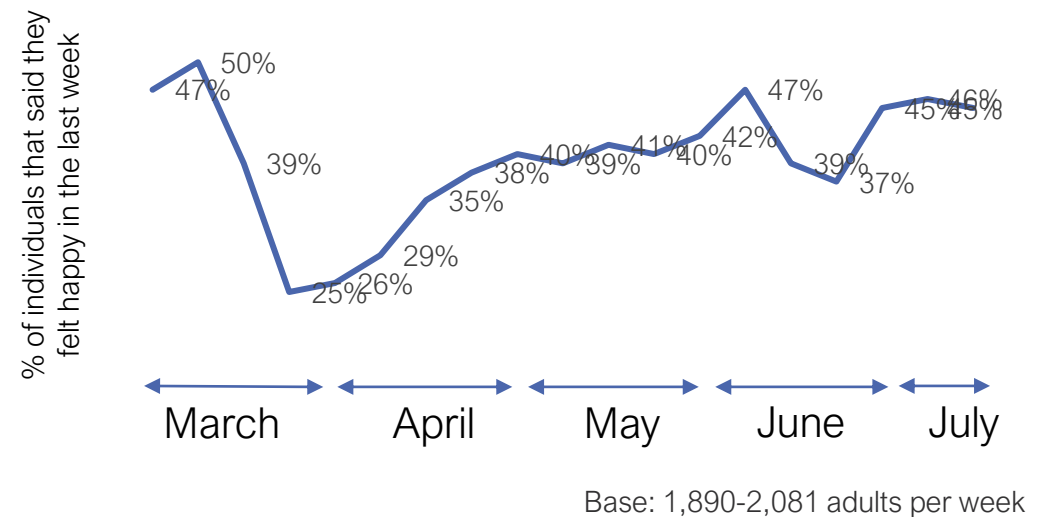
London School of Economics and YouGov show wellbeing decline during lockdown, which is now steadily recovering

Average wellbeing was substantially worse in April 2020 compared to March /April 2019



- Key workers reported higher levels of life satisfaction, happiness and sense of purpose, but also higher levels of anxiety than other workers
- A reduction in life satisfaction was felt more strongly amongst females, younger people and ethnic minorities

As we move away from the peak of the crisis there is a slow recovery in happiness



- The percentage of British people feeling happy dropped from 50% pre-COVID to 25% during the COVID period. There has been a steady recovery with 45% of people feeling happy in early July.

The dynamics described in this report are being seen in Hampshire VCS

Voluntary organisations are seeing pop up groups starting to slow down or stop and reluctant to take on complex cases.



New volunteers may not continue if they do not enjoy volunteering.

We must be careful not to take advantage of new volunteers and give them complex cases. For the first time we are starting to hear people say 'I can't do this anymore'.



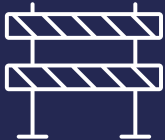
The perceived need is reducing, and people are more discerning of who they help.

Groups feel there is less need and some types of support e.g. shopping for those returning from holiday into quarantine, are provoking resistance.



Local organisations with strong community connections were able to move quickly and identify risk.

Parish councils have come into their own in many places. They often have clear plans, prepared for flooding, and can identify who is vulnerable or elderly and quickly engage local groups. Examples include motorcycle groups delivering prescriptions in Havant and boxing clubs on Hayling Island running errands.



Removing barriers between national and county wide websites and local groups would speed response to a second wave of COVID-19.

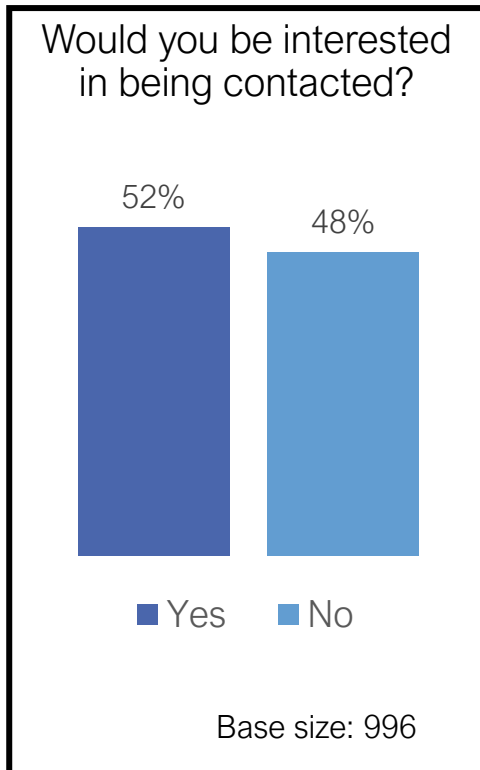
Many areas with strong connections moved quickly whereas many people signed up for national programmes e.g. NHS and were not needed or saw few requests for support.

Qualitative Interview Study Results

There was a really positive willingness to engage in further research

What and when:

- At the end of the survey respondents were asked if they were willing to be contacted by the University of Winchester;
- Just over half (52%) were willing to be contacted.



To date more than 20 qualitative interviews have taken place. The University of Winchester will be sharing results when the process is completed (expected early August 2020).

Qualitative Interview Sample

- 20 volunteers were interviewed. Demographics were as follows:
 - Gender:
 - Female:9 / Male:11
 - Age:
 - Range 20 to 85 years; mean = 52.7 years
 - Ethnicity (self-identified):
 - White = 17 / Multiple Ethnic Groups = 3
 - Employment Status:
 - FT = 3 / PT = 1 / Furloughed = 3 / Retired = 8 / Unemployed = 1 / Student = 1 / Homemaker = 1
Other = 2
 - Activities limited?
 - No = 16 / Yes, a little = 3 / Yes, a lot = 1

The Social Value of Volunteering

- Many volunteers talked about the about the social value of volunteering – both for the volunteers, but also the people they are helping / serving
- Expressed as social/community belonging:
 - Developing a sense of community or community spirit & getting to know local people through volunteering:
 - The notion of 'service' comes up several times in the interviews, e.g. in terms of 'service' to the community.
 - Community resilience: communities helping themselves through helping others.
- This was particularly true for new volunteers, who found the experience transformative in terms of their sense of belonging and role in their local communities.

Facing Social Isolation

- Many participants spoke of how they found it difficult to face loneliness and social isolation in relation to lockdown and social distancing
 - Recognising the levels of loneliness in local communities is hard (particularly if you are volunteering a lot);
 - Volunteers had an enhanced sense of responsibility: may be the only social contact to some of the people they are helping;
 - While they were always welcomed (and thanked) by the people they helped, it was not always clear that they were actually helping;
 - 'What now' was a common theme – what happens once this support goes away?

Volunteering Beyond COVID-19

- Both new and existing volunteers have been doing things during COVID-19 lockdown that they wouldn't ordinarily do because they feel it is the right thing to help those more vulnerable during this crisis period
 - Particular recognition that existing networks of volunteers that have been redeployed & repurposed have been key in the response to COVID-19
- For some this has been transformative, but for most people don't really see themselves doing certain activities longer-term
 - For existing volunteers: need to return to roles that they enjoy and get value out of
 - For new volunteers: need to be matched to opportunities that align with their skills / passions / values
- Young people: often commented that there are no or very few other young people in their voluntary organisations: this lack of 'people like me' can be daunting/off-putting for this group

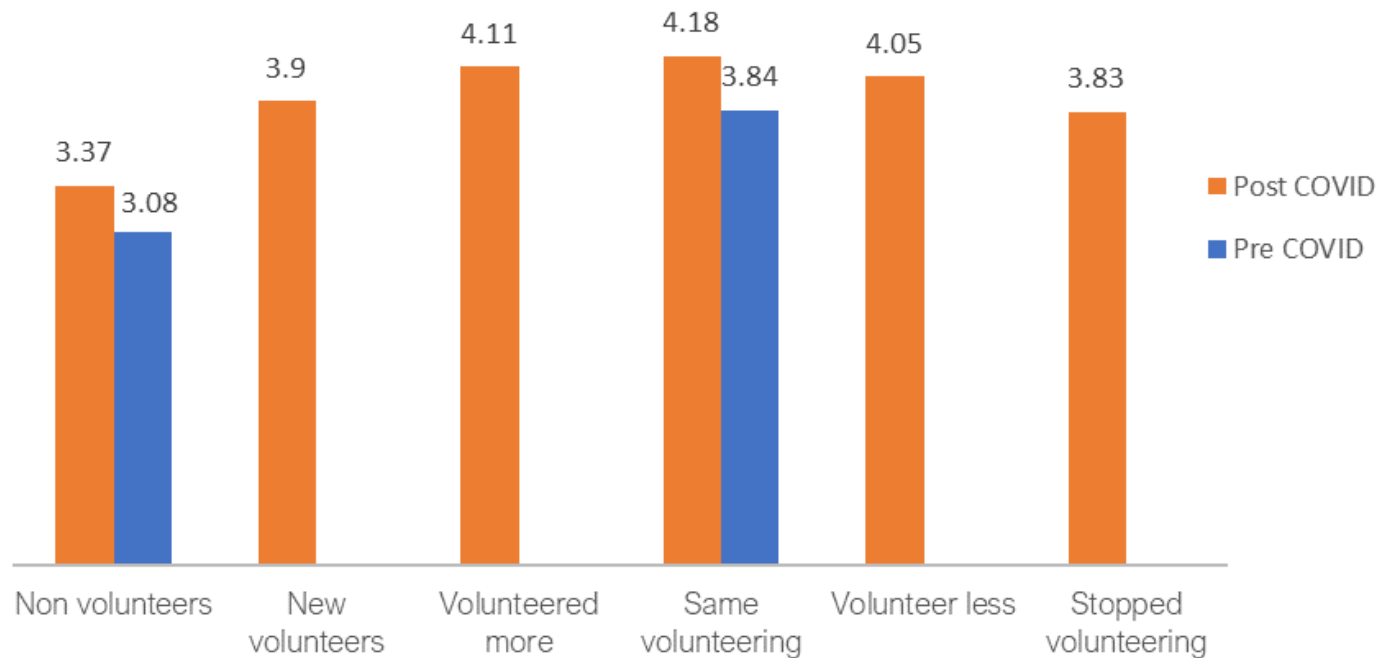
'Organisational Competence'

- Many volunteers, spoke of how organisational competence was important to their volunteering experience during COVID-19.
 - This was most often from existing volunteers who may, for example, have switched roles/organisations during COVID-19, or may have worked with more than one organization
- For most organisational competence was defined as:
 - Has effective communication and organisation
 - Treats volunteers as being as important / integral to the organisation
 - Recognises and values volunteers
 - Distinction / tension between 'professional' and 'amateur'
 - Provides mentorship from other volunteers
 - Is upfront about the nature of the required commitment (in terms of both time and skills)

Appendix

Community connection was lowest in non volunteers and stopped volunteers

I feel like I belong to my local community (1 = Strongly disagree 5 = Strongly agree)



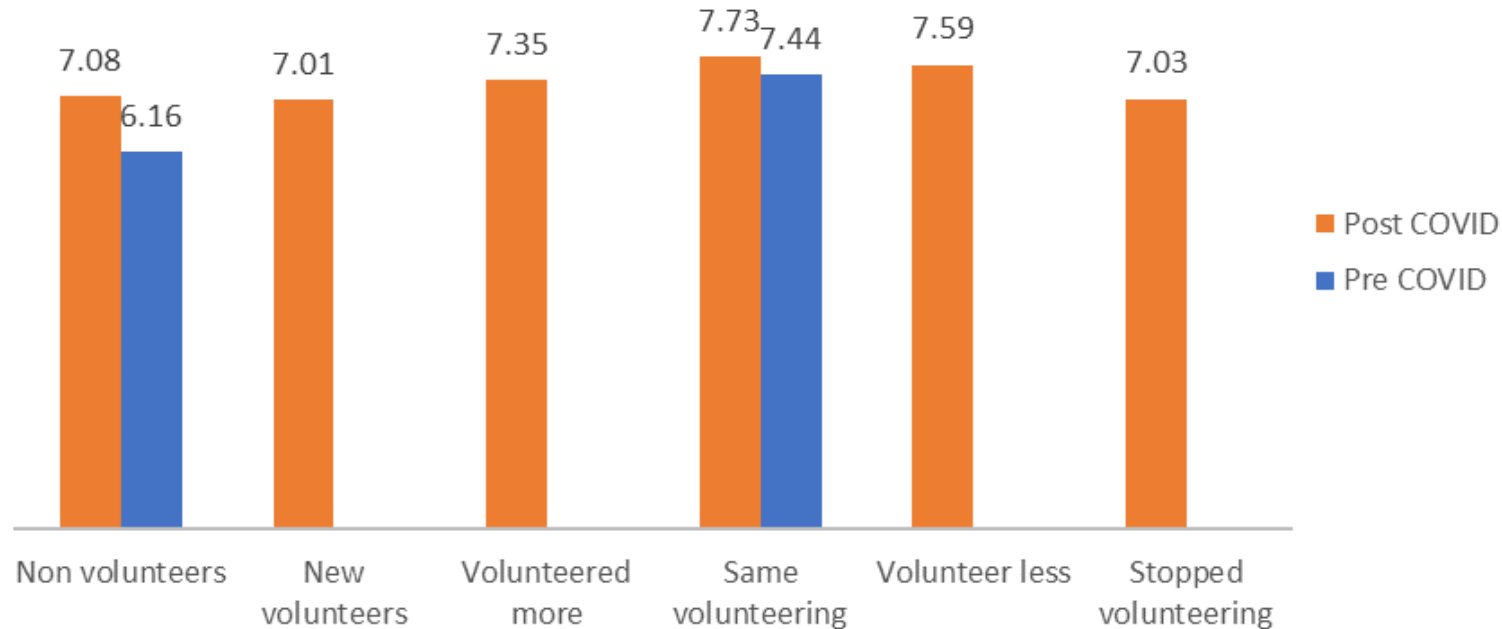
Non volunteers have the lowest level of community both pre and post COVID. New volunteers feel more connected

Base size: 998

Key takeout: New volunteers will feel a greater connection to their communities and will be more open to initiatives to engage them

Life satisfaction stayed highest with volunteers who maintained time commitments

Overall, how satisfied are you with your life nowadays? (0-10 where 0 is “not at all” and 10 is “completely”)

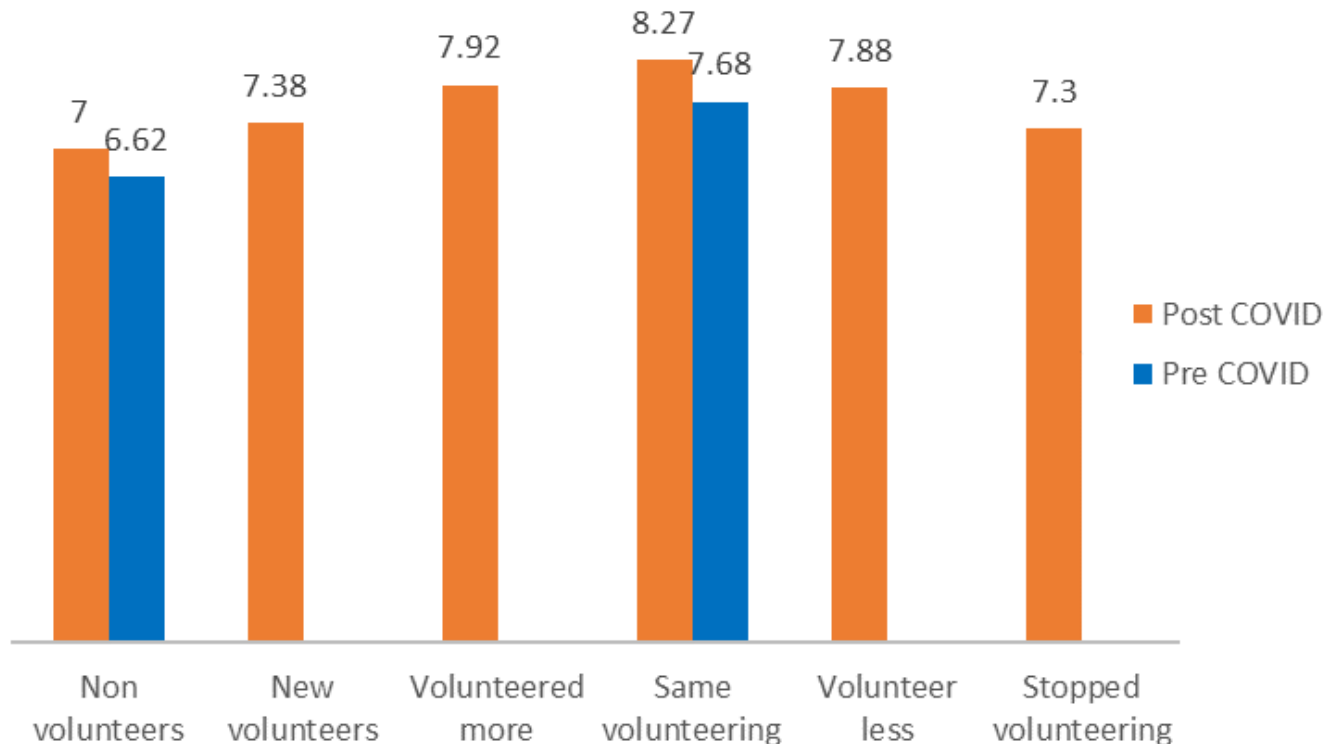


Life satisfaction was significantly lower for those who have stopped volunteering versus those that maintained volunteering at the same level

Key takeout: Stopping volunteering has a big impact of life satisfaction – maintain a minimum of volunteering for as many people as possible

Sense that life is worthwhile was very sensitive to changes in volunteering

Overall, to what extent do you feel that the things you do in your life are worthwhile? (0-10 where 0 is “not at all” and 10 is “completely”)

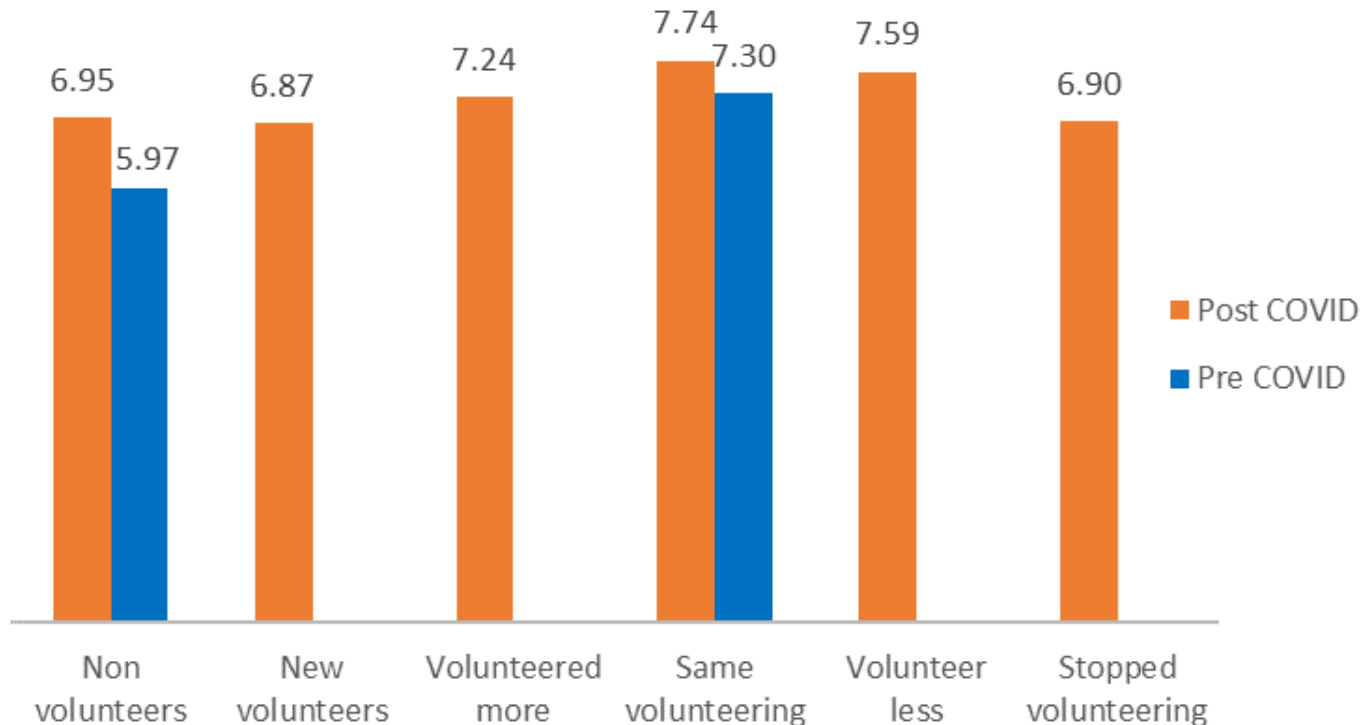


Decreasing, increasing or stopping volunteering are all associated with reduced sense that life is worthwhile compared to maintaining the same level of volunteering.

Key takeout: Volunteering is a key determinant of a sense of worth in life and worth in turn is critical in a range of life outcomes <https://www.pnas.org/content/116/4/1207.short>

Stopping volunteering or increasing volunteering during COVID lowered happiness

Overall, how happy did you feel yesterday? (0-10 where 0 is “not at all” and 10 is “completely”)

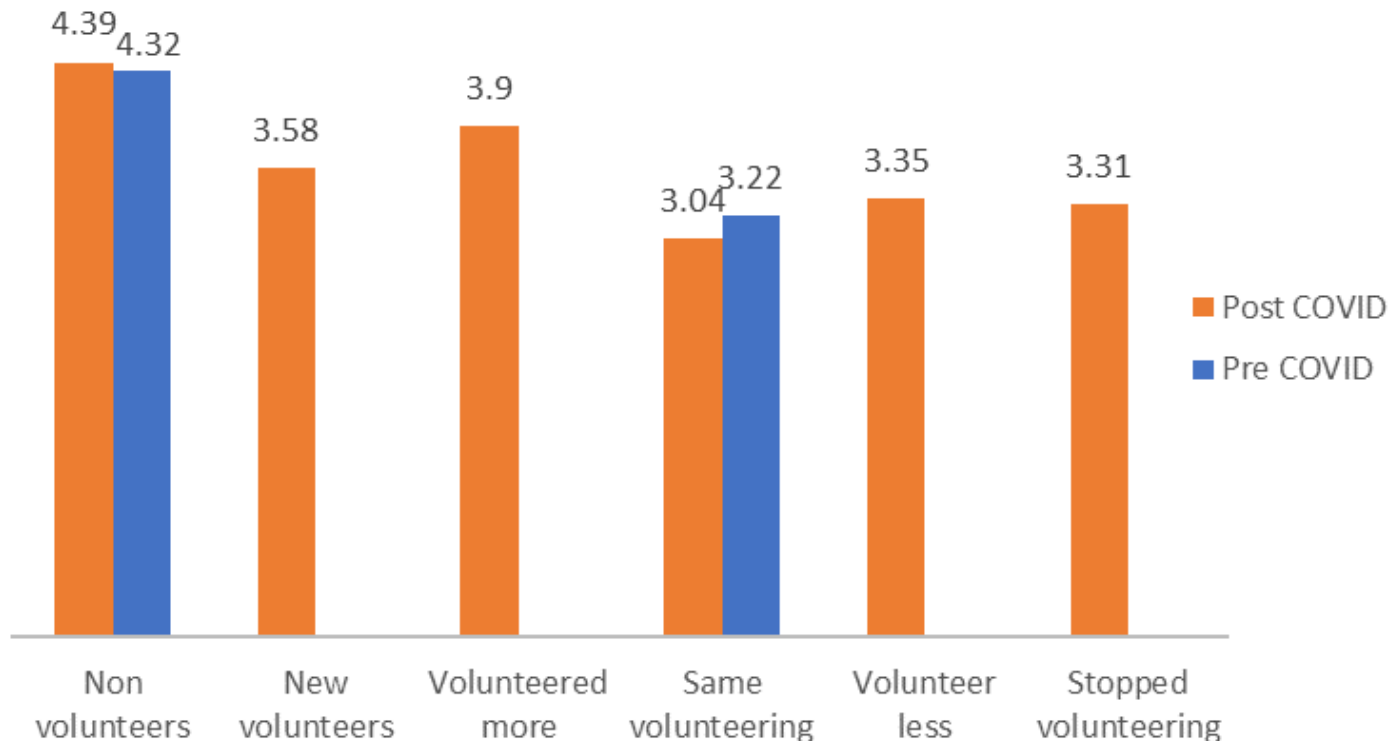


Maintaining or reducing volunteering was associated with higher levels of happiness than stopping or increasing volunteering during COVID-19. New volunteers are no more happy than non-volunteers – potentially an issue for retention.

Key takeout: Reduced happiness was more associated with stopping volunteering than reducing – maintain a minimum of volunteering

Volunteering more increased anxiety compared to maintaining the same pattern

Overall, how anxious did you feel yesterday? (0-10 where 0 is “not at all anxious” and 10 is “completely anxious”)



Increased volunteering was associated with higher anxiety. Non volunteers are still the most anxious group.

Key takeout: Volunteering was still a route to deal with anxiety but reducing the burden on those who have had to step up more could be beneficial for them and those taking back some of the burden.