



Executive summary

ECONOMIC & SOCIAL AUDIT OF THE COMMUNITY AND VOLUNTARY SECTOR IN BRIGHTON AND HOVE

Research and report by NORTH HARBOUR CONSULTING LIMITED for the BRIGHTON & HOVE DIALOGUE 50/50 GROUP

THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL CONTRIBUTION OF THE COMMUNITY AND VOLUNTARY SECTOR IN BRIGHTON AND HOVE

INTRODUCTION

The economic and social audit of the community and voluntary sector in Brighton and Hove was commissioned by the Brighton and Hove Dialogue 50/50 Group and undertaken by a team of researchers from North Harbour Consulting Limited. It aims to look at the community and voluntary sector's social and economic activities 'in the round', and to relate them to Brighton and Hove's demographic, economic and social trends. The audit will provide a foundation for the development of more comprehensive information about the community and voluntary sector, and a better understanding of its role in the city. The key findings are summarised below.

It is estimated that there are between 1,400 and 1,500 community and voluntary organisations in Brighton and Hove. This is around six organisations for every 1,000 residents. Half of the organisations that responded to the audit have charitable status, a third are unincorporated groups with a constitution, and one in ten are informal associations, clubs and self-help groups.

The main activities in which the two hundred and thirty seven community and voluntary organisations that responded to the audit are involved are: employment, training and education; providing advice and information; advocacy, counselling and rehabilitation; community development; and 'other activities', some of which involve special interests. Two-thirds of these organisations said that they work on a city-wide basis; the remainder work in particular neighbourhoods.

Around one in six respondents to the audit works with children or families, and a further one in twenty organisations works with young people. One in five organisations works with the social groups to which adult social services are targeted – people with mental health needs, people with physical and sensory disabilities, people with learning disabilities, alcohol and substance misusers, and vulnerable single homeless people.

964,600 people have used services and taken part in activities provided by the organisations that took part in the audit in the past year. This is equivalent to almost four times the city's population.

More than 10,000 people are involved in the organisations that responded to the audit. 1,750 people are involved as members of management committees; 6,300 people are involved as volunteers; and 2,200 are involved as paid employees. This is equivalent to one in every twenty adults aged between 16 and 75 living in the city. It is also comparable with the number of people employed in manufacturing industry, hotels and catering and public administration in Brighton and Hove.

In total, management committee members and other volunteers give 37,800 hours of voluntary effort each week. This adds up to a staggering 1.9 million hours of voluntary effort in a year. The in-kind value of their voluntary contribution to the community and voluntary organisations that responded to the audit is around £17.6 million per annum. This represents a large subsidy that is not reflected in the sector's official turnover figures.

If the in-kind value of volunteering is added to employee costs in the organisations that responded to the audit, the total monetary value of the work undertaken by management committee members, other volunteers and employees is £29 million each year.

The turnover reported by the community and voluntary organisations that responded to the audit was £22.9 million in their most recent financial year. If the in-kind value of volunteering is added to turnover, the total is £40.6 million. The Gross Value Added to the local economy (similar to GDP) using government conversion ratios is £20.7 million. For comparison, this is about half of the GDP generated by the engineering and 'other manufacturing' sectors in Brighton and Hove's economy.

22% of the funding reported by the organisations that took part in the audit came from either Brighton and Hove City Council or Brighton and Hove City Primary Care Trust; 27% came from central government programmes and funds, or the European Commission; 14% came from the Lottery and charitable sources; 2% came from business sponsorship; and the remaining 35% was self-generated through fundraising.

85% of all expenditure is activity-related, with employee costs as the largest item of expenditure (£11.4 million, or 58% of all expenditure). 15% of all expenditure is related to core costs.

Merely to cite the financial figures is to look at only part of the picture, however. The community and voluntary sector is being asked to contribute to Brighton and Hove's social and economic development in a number of different ways. The sector is a resource that is drawn upon by individuals, communities, statutory authorities and their agencies, and on occasions by the private sector, to assist them in meeting their own needs. It is an employer of volunteers and paid workers at a level that places it on a par with other significant sectors of the local economy. Its labour force is well qualified, and a large majority of community and voluntary organisations that responded to the audit undertake training for their volunteers and employees.

The community and voluntary sector gives people an opportunity to develop new and usable skills through mentoring and volunteering, although perhaps even more could be achieved in this area of the sector's work. It is making a major contribution towards tackling poor health, poor housing, crime, poor educational attainment, poverty and the welfare needs of vulnerable people. It also plays an important role in recreation and leisure activity, culture and the arts. The sector helps to foster community spirit and 'active citizenship' through its activities and services, its fund-raising and promotional campaigns, its use of volunteers, and the altruism that underlies much of its work.

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OTHER KEY FINDINGS



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Equalities issues

- Compared with the gender balance within the general population in Brighton and Hove, men are slightly over-represented on management committees, whilst women are significantly over-represented among volunteers and employees.
- Black and minority ethnic people are significantly under-represented among committee members, other volunteers and employees compared with the general population in Brighton and Hove.
- 6% of management committee members, 2% of other volunteers and 2% of employees have a disability.
- 7% of management committee members, 2% of other volunteers and 3% of employees are recorded as Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual or Transgender people.
- The 'don't know' and 'non-response' rate for the questions relating to equalities issues is high, indicating that many community and voluntary sector organisations in Brighton and Hove that responded to the audit questionnaire do not collect this information about their committee members, other volunteers and employees.

More about Volunteers

- Almost three quarters of committee members and 57% of other volunteers are aged between 25 and 59; one quarter of each is aged 60 or over. There are very few people aged under 25 on management committees, but 16% of other volunteers are aged under 25.
- 7% of management committee members are devoting almost their entire week (i.e. more than 30 hours) to the organisation that they help to govern. 16% give between half a day and four days a week. The remaining 77% give up to half a day each week to their organisation.
- 17% of other volunteers give between half a day and one day a week of their time. The majority (79%) give half a day or less.
- Members of management committees are involved in three main areas of work – management, service delivery and back-up administration.

- ➔ Other volunteers perform a wider range of work, with provision of personal services to members and service users the most frequently mentioned (one in three of volunteers). Others tasks undertaken include fund-raising and working in charity shops (15%), provision of advice and information (13%), administrative and clerical back-up (8%) and 'other activities' that might include cleaning, serving food, and driving.
- ➔ Almost three quarters of all management committee members in organisations that took part in the audit are educated to degree level or equivalent. That is two and a half times the proportion of graduates found in Brighton and Hove's general population, which itself has a higher level of graduates than the regional average.
- ➔ Almost three quarters of other volunteers are educated either to degree level or to A-level or equivalent. In either case, this is nearly double the proportion found in Brighton and Hove's general population.
- ➔ A relatively small proportion of management committee members (2%) and other volunteers (7%) have no qualifications at all when compared with the city-wide average (22%).
- ➔ Management committee members figure prominently in leadership, general management, people management and project management skills. They score well in intuitive, problem solving or decision-making skills. They also appear to have quite high levels of administrative and basic IT skills.
- ➔ Volunteers in Brighton and Hove have high levels of intuitive, problem-solving or decision-making skills, basic IT skills and customer service skills. They also score well in leadership and administrative skills.

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More about employees

- ➔ The age profile of employees in the organisations that took part in the audit is different from that of committees and volunteers, and of the city's population as a whole. Among community and voluntary sector employees, there is a large preponderance of people in the 25 to 59 age group, far more than in Brighton and Hove's general population. There are smaller proportions of people aged under 25 and over 60 than in the general population. This suggests that people aged under 25 and over 60 are more likely to be volunteers than employees – possibly students and retired people. For people aged between 25 and 59, working for the sector may be a career choice.
- ➔ Part time working is very much more common in the community and voluntary sector in Brighton and Hove than in the city's economy generally. Even allowing for the high proportion of women in the sector's work force, the level of part-time working is higher than for women employees in the city generally.
- ➔ Just under one in five employees is involved in 'higher level management duties' similar to chief officer or departmental head posts. A similar proportion is involved in 'associate professional activities' that might include giving advice. Slightly smaller proportions – about one in six – are involved in 'professional duties' such as counselling or accountancy, provision of 'personal services' such as childcare, sport and leisure activities, and administrative and clerical work.
- ➔ The proportion of graduate employees working in the organisations that responded to the audit is sixty percent higher than in the general population. The proportion of employees educated to Level 3 (A-level and equivalent) is also well above that found in the general population. Even so, the proportion of graduate employees is lower than the proportion of graduates found among management committee members.

OTHER KEY FINDINGS



→ The skills found among employees are broadly similar to those found among management committee members with people management, problem solving and decision-making, customer service, administration and basic IT skills to the fore.

→ The picture that emerges from these results is of a predominantly female work force that is well educated with a range of skills, and with a high proportion working part-time.

Quality issues



→ Eighty-five per cent of the organisations that responded to the Brighton and Hove audit questionnaire said that they undertake some form of training for their committees, volunteers and employees. Most (65%) combine 'training on the job' with training from community and voluntary sector providers and events (54%). One quarter use private training providers, while only 15% use colleges of further and higher education.

→ Almost two thirds of the organisations that responded to the Brighton and Hove audit questionnaire set targets for their work. For those who set targets, the most common methods of monitoring performance are counting the numbers of people and organisations who use the service, and registering feedback from beneficiaries and users.

→ Monitoring is also undertaken through formal supervision of employees and volunteers; monitoring of key performance indicators against benchmarks that relate to business planning targets; annual service evaluations and performance review; and external evaluation by accreditation bodies and funders.

→ Almost one third of the organisations responding to the audit have adopted a quality standard.



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ICT and premises

→ Three quarters of all the community and voluntary organisations that responded to the Brighton and Hove audit said that they have at least one computer, with almost half of them having between one and four computers. Three quarters of them also have access to the Internet.

→ A substantial number of the organisations that do not own computers and cannot gain access to the Internet that way are able to do so by using home computers owned by committee members and volunteers.

→ Almost one in five of the organisations that took part in the audit use a member's home as their base. A quarter of the organisations hire premises as and when they need them, and there is some overlap between this group and the group that use members' homes.

- 42% of the organisations rent or lease their premises, with similar numbers renting on short leases of less than three years, or on longer leases of three years or more.
- About 14% of the organisations that responded to the audit own their own premises. Of these, one third are buying a property on a mortgage, and the remaining two thirds own the property outright. The value of these assets may be considerable.

Safeguarding the environment

- More than half of the organisations responding to the audit are involved in recycling goods and products. Around one third either encourage volunteers and employees to use sustainable transport (public transport or cycling), buy environmentally friendly products, or buy fair trade or organic products.
- Relatively few Brighton and Hove community and voluntary organisations (13%) have an environmental management policy, and only one respondent to the audit has an environmental management certificate.
- Other steps being taken to protect the environment included ethical investments, planting trees from seed to supply local conservation groups, promoting wildlife, buying energy efficient equipment, undertaking environmental audits, and monitoring the local environment and habitats.

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THE COMMUNITY AND VOLUNTARY SECTOR IN ACTION: QUALITY, COST AND VALUE

The Dialogue 50:50 Group commissioned a small number of case studies as part of the audit to demonstrate the economic and social contribution that individual community and voluntary organisations are making in Brighton and Hove. The four activities that are the focus for the case studies are: day services for people with learning disabilities, preventive mental health services, community learning services, and services working with Black and minority ethnic communities. The general findings of these studies were as follows.

- ➔ The services deal with very practical issues – obtaining a disabled adaptation to the bathroom to keep an elderly person at home; arranging for someone from the bus company to speak to people with learning disabilities who had experienced problems when travelling by bus.
- ➔ Volunteers play a central part in the activities of a majority of the organisations that were studied – indeed, many of them have no employees and all their services are provided by volunteers.
- ➔ A significant aspect of the ‘added value’ provided by these organisations lies in their ability to assist people to engage in mainstream activities, overcoming problems of language and culture, reducing social isolation and bridging the gap between specialist provision and normal, everyday life.
- ➔ Much of the work is preventive. These organisations argue that the nature and style of their services mean that they are able to help people at an early stage, and deal effectively with relatively minor problems. The cost savings here are to agencies such as housing providers, education and childcare authorities, as well as mental health, primary care and social care agencies.
- ➔ Most of the services obtain feedback from service users about the services that they receive. However there is little evidence that these organisations have developed more sophisticated measures of ‘quality’ and ‘value’. With regard to the monitoring of outcomes and cost-effectiveness, managers and volunteers stress that a huge amount of time is spent in obtaining the funding to continue their services and accounting to existing funding bodies, each of which asks for different kinds of information.

COMPARISONS WITH SOUTHAMPTON

The Audit also compared the characteristics of the community and voluntary sector in Brighton and Hove with the characteristics of the community and voluntary sector in Southampton, a city with some similarities, but also some differences.

- ➔ There appears to be a higher proportion of community and voluntary organisations engaged in ‘social care’ in Southampton than in Brighton and Hove.
- ➔ The number of hours contributed by committee members and other volunteers in Brighton and Hove was almost three times higher than was reported from a comparable number of organisations in a Southampton survey.
- ➔ More organisations in Brighton and Hove provide training for their committees, volunteers and employees, but more of the training that is provided in Southampton is accredited.

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Primary Care Trust



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