

Voluntary and Community Sector Infrastructure support review

Online survey results

Introduction

North Yorkshire County Council (NYCC) and the Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) in North Yorkshire invest in the provision of practical and strategic support (sometimes known as infrastructure support or local support and development) to facilitate a strong, diverse and vibrant voluntary and community sector across North Yorkshire that is equitable, consistent and sustainable. In order to help ensure that any future NYCC and CCG funding of infrastructure support is allocated in the most effective means possible a review was undertaken. This review considered best practice, the views of providers and the views of a sample of voluntary and community organisations with regard to the current services they receive and demand for future support.

The review researched the support needs of the voluntary and community sector organisations within North Yorkshire from their perspective. This included the support which organisations require around volunteering, both in terms of strategic and practical support but did not consider volunteering support from an individual volunteer's perspective.

The review aimed to assess needs, focusing on current and future demand and was not a measure of the quality of the current providers.

Methodology

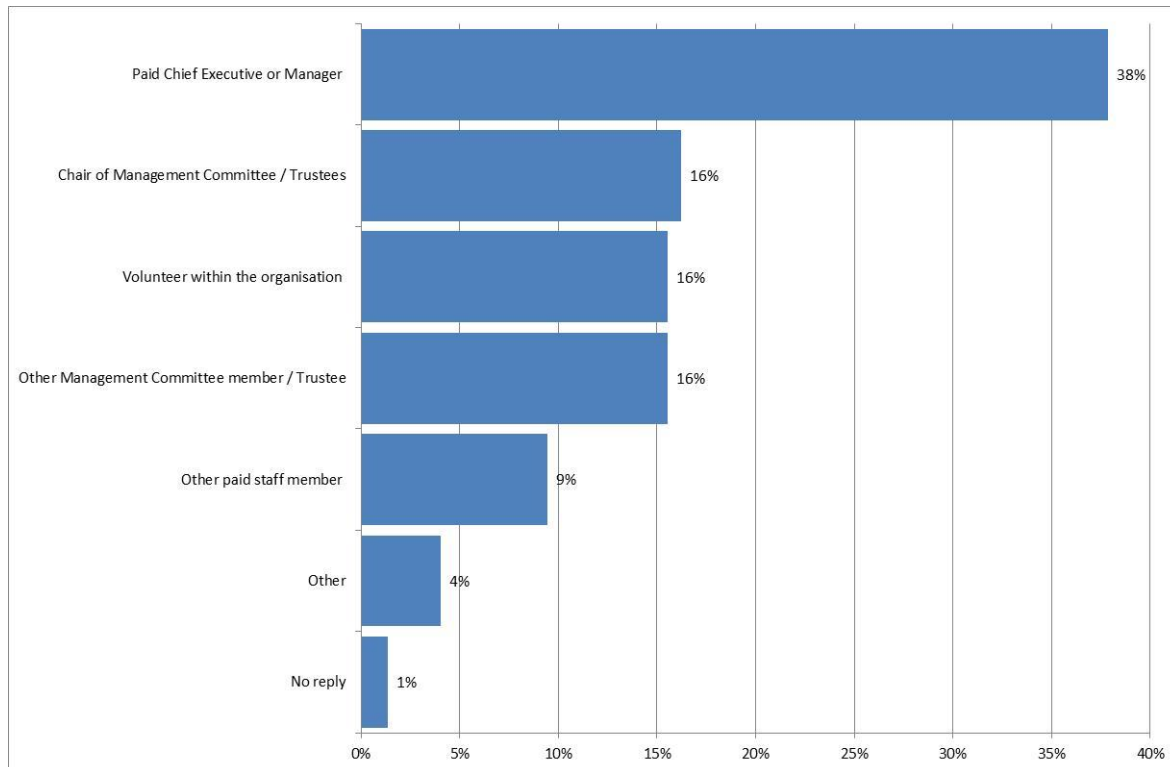
One aspect of the review was an online survey of voluntary and community sector organisations.

The online survey was set up in SNAP and the link was emailed directly to a sample of voluntary sector organisations and was advertised to by the infrastructure organisations to their members / mailing lists. Then survey was available to complete in January and February 2015.

148 responses were received.

Sample achieved

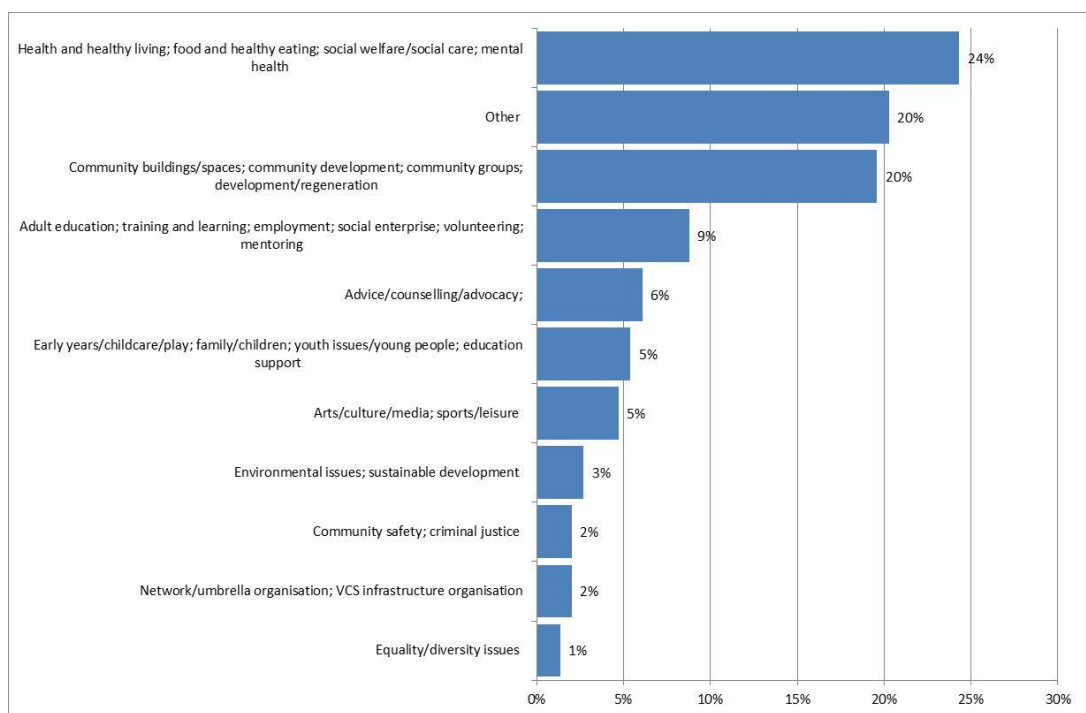
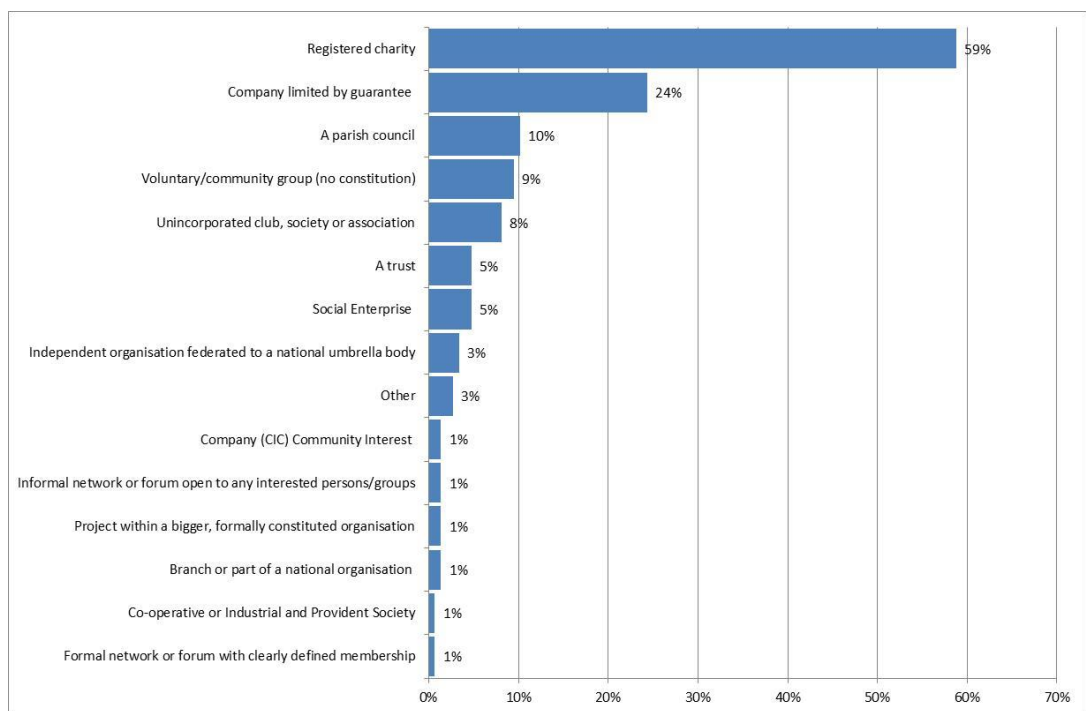
Chart 1: Survey completed by



The questionnaires were completed by a paid chief executive or manager (38%), chair of management committee / trustees (16%), volunteer within the organisation (16%), other management committee / trustee and other paid staff (9%).

Other includes Chair of Parish Council, Parish Councillor, Chair/Co-ordinator of Forum, Secretary Management Committee, team manager and Volunteer coordinator/cook.

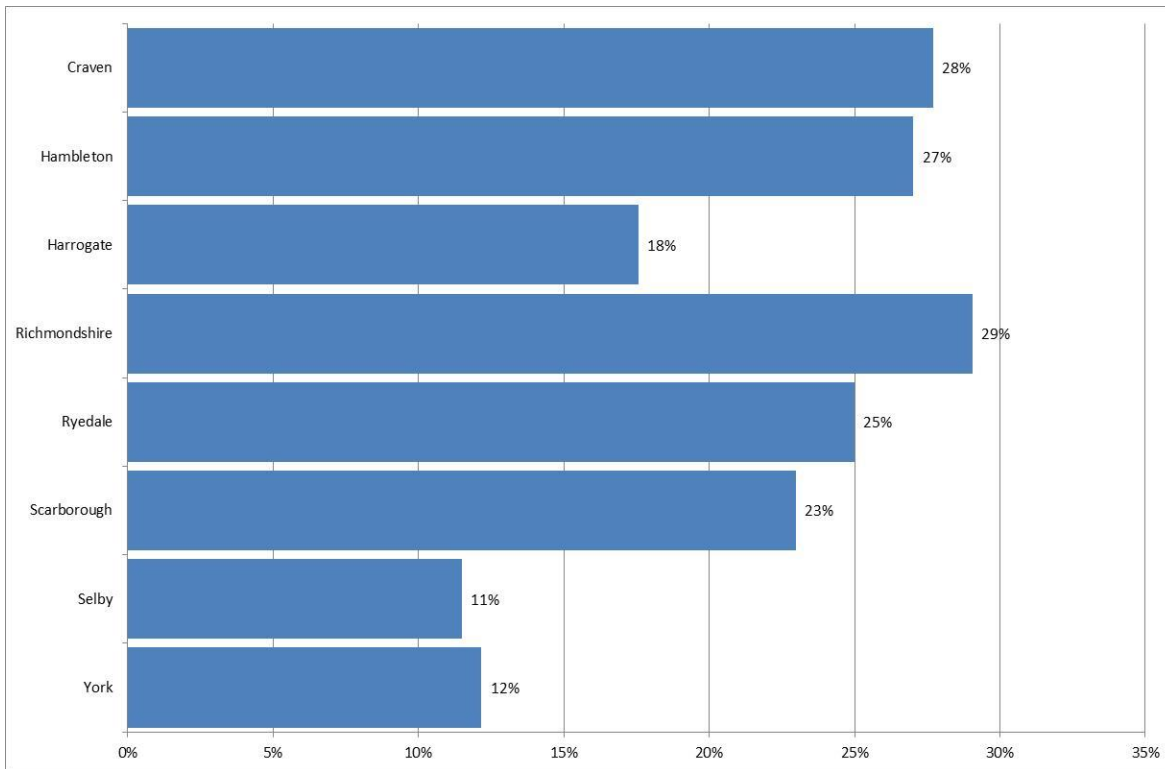
Chart 2 & 3: Type of organisations



The survey has been completed by a variety of types of organisations including registered charities (59%), a company limited by guarantee (24%), parish councils (10%), voluntary/community groups (9%) and unincorporated clubs/associations (8%). Note – some organisations classed themselves in a number of ways.

These organisations operate in a wide variety of areas including health/social care (24%), community buildings/community groups (20%) and adult education / training and learning (9%). The other category included libraries, village halls, parish councils, community transport and religious groups.

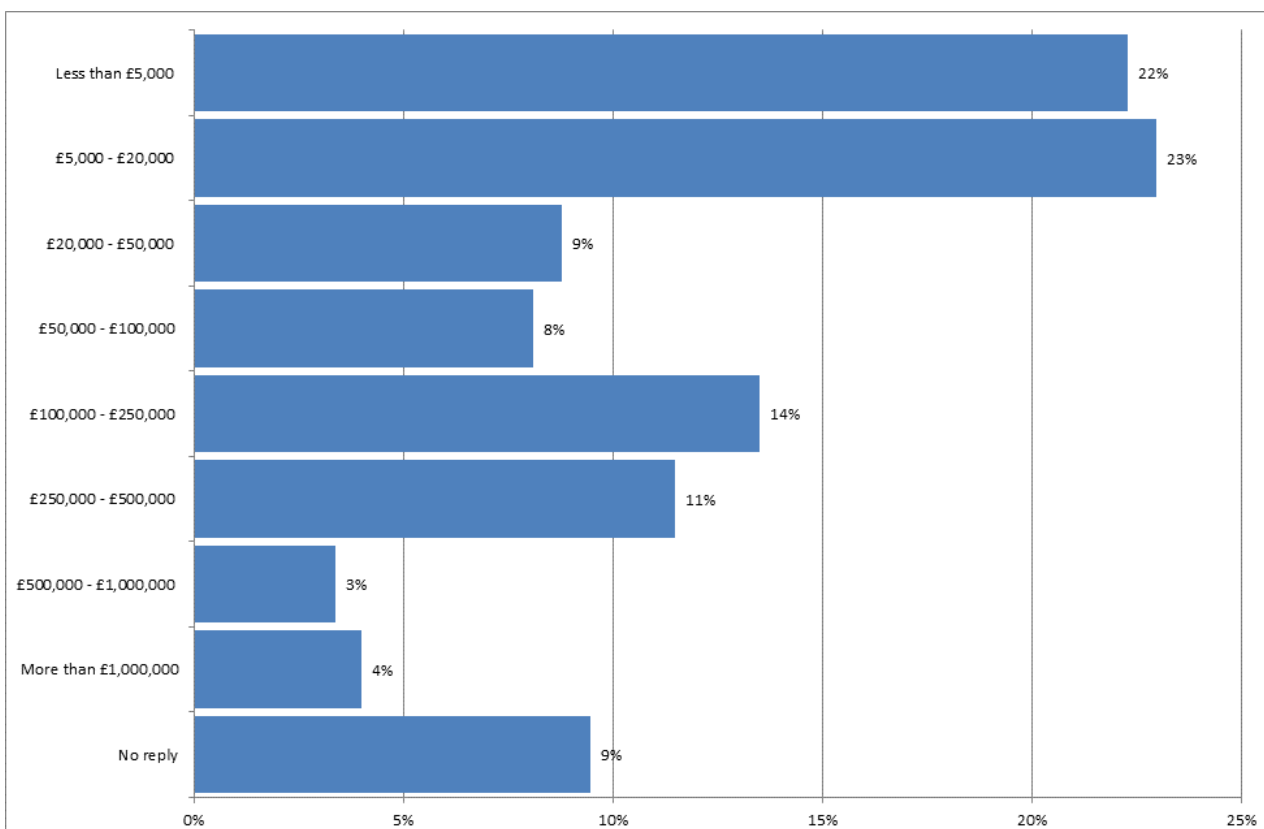
Chart 4: Area of operation



There was not equal coverage of responses from across the districts across the county. Harrogate, Scarborough and Selby are under-represented.

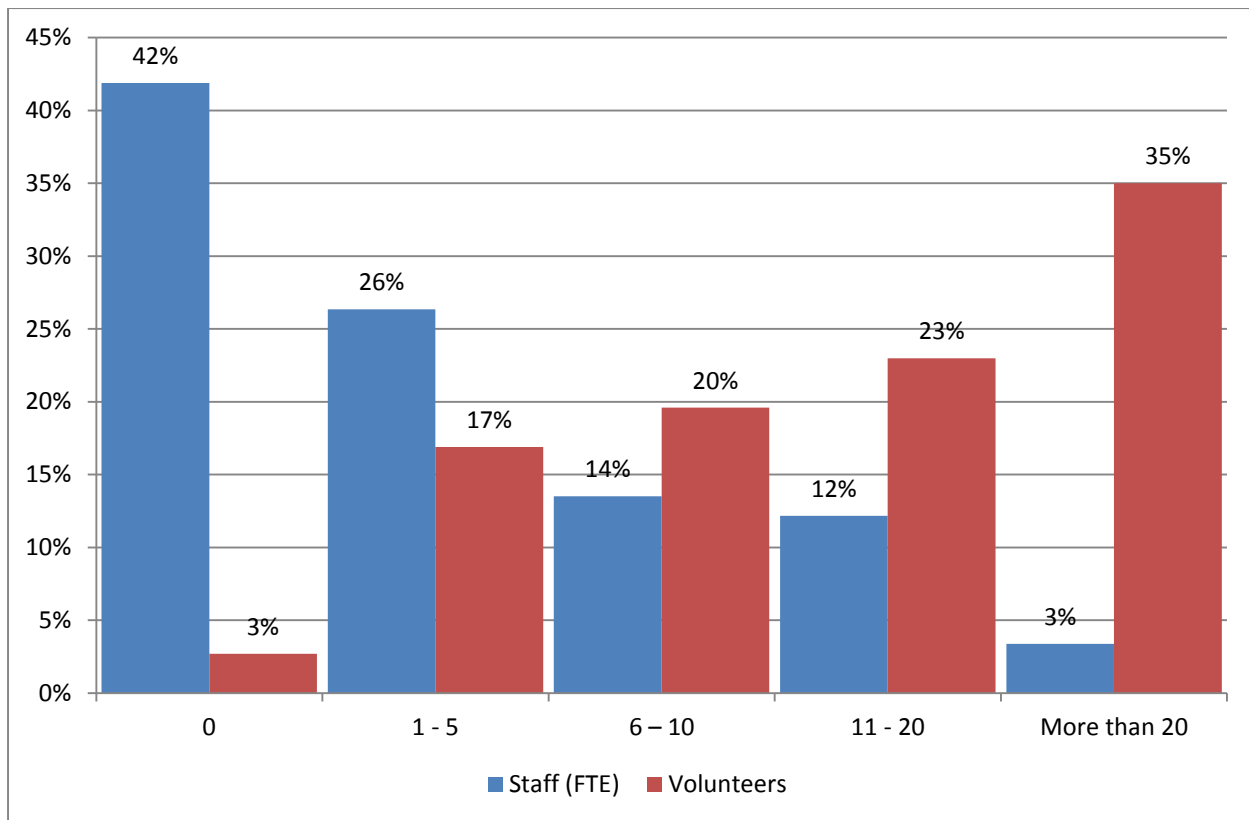
74% of organisations operate in one district only, 11% of organisations cover 2 district areas (including York) and 12% cover 3 or more district areas (including York).

Chart 5: Organisational income



The majority of organisations completing the survey are very small, with 45% having an income of less than £20,000 which could be classed as micro organisations. Those with an income of below £100,000 (17%) could be also be classed as small. The 28% could be classed as medium. Only 4% (6 organisations) had an income of above £1m.

Chart 6: Organisation size – staff and volunteers



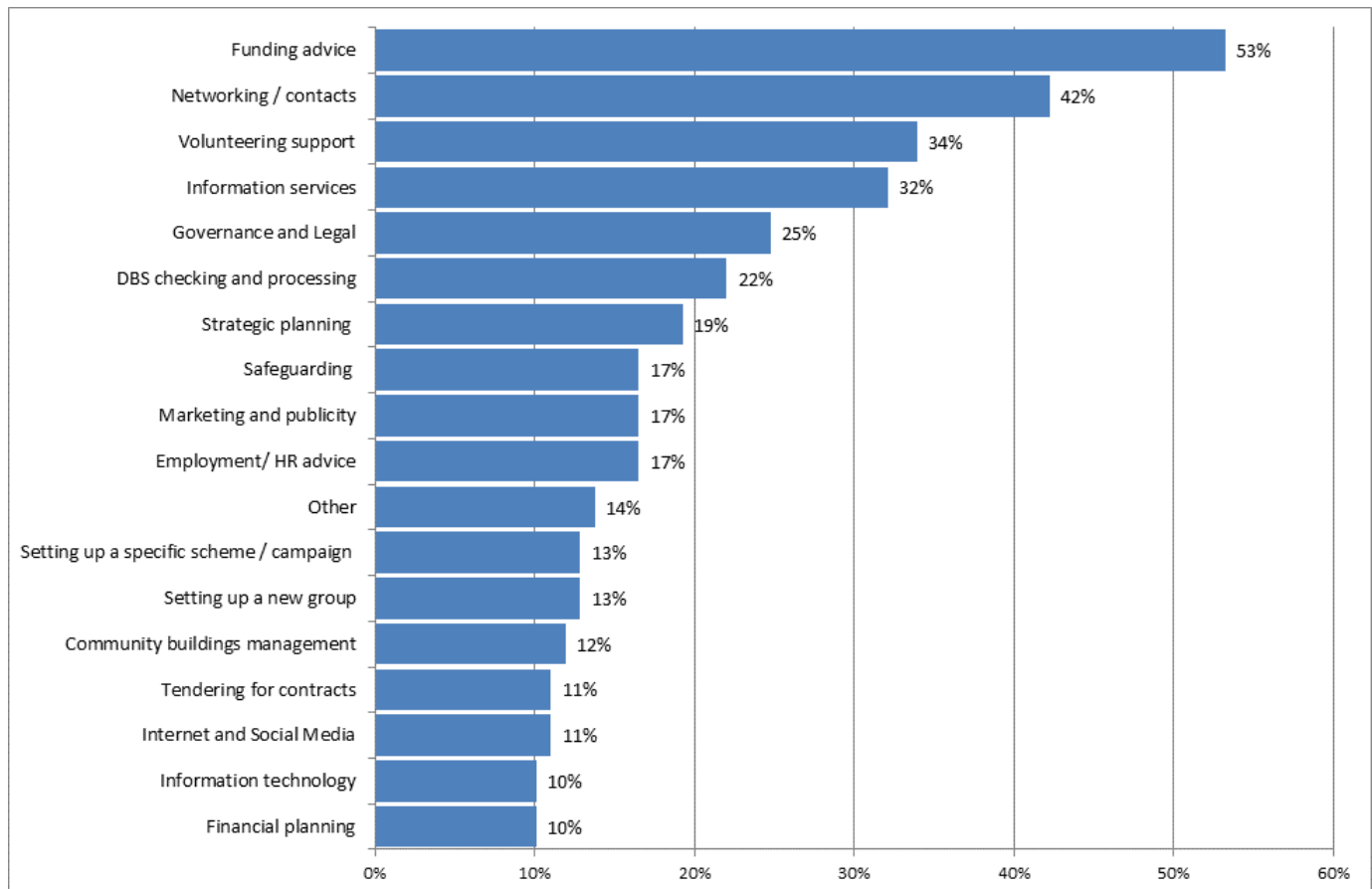
Again the implications are that a large proportion of those replying come from small organisations. A significant number had no staff (42%) and 26% only have 5 or less staff. Most of the organisations appear to depend on volunteers with higher levels of volunteers being reported than staff.

Results

Experience of accessing support

74% of the respondents to the survey had accessed support in the last three years. Organisations with an income of £1m or more were least likely to have access services with only one out of six accessing any support services.

Chart 7: Type of support accessed in the last 3 years

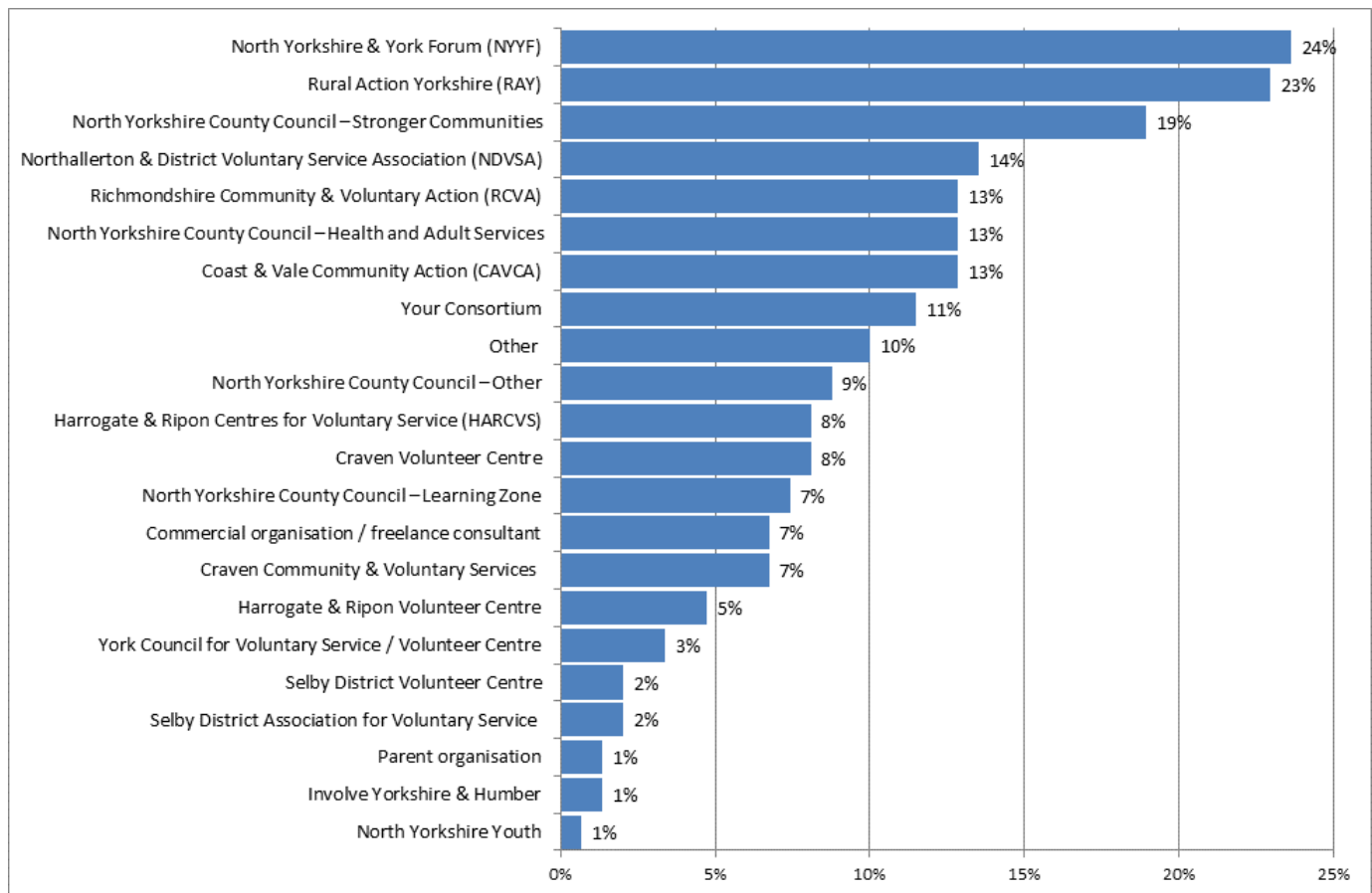


The most used support services by these respondents were funding advice (53%), networking/contacts (42%), volunteering support (34%) and information services (32%).

Other services mentioned were around funding/grants (4), accounts, independent financial examination (audit), loss of community facility, networking, payroll services, practical administration services (2), resilience planning, stronger communities and support for working in a community as a lone worker.

Only smaller organisations (in terms of income) stated that they accessed support for community building management, setting up specific schemes and IT. Tendering for contracts tended to be accessed by organisations with an income over £50,000 pa. The organisations with income over £1m had accessed information, networking and volunteering support.

Chart 8: Organisation support received from in the last 3 years (per respondent – duplicates removed)



Support had been accessed from a wide variety of organisations. The full information can be seen in Chart 9 below. The most used organisations in the sample were those that covered the whole of the county – NYF (24%), RAY (23%), NYCC – Stronger Communities (19%) and NYCC – HAS (13%). The district based services NDVSA (14%), RCVA (13%) and CAVCA (13%) were the next most used organisations. The district based services tend to be used by those organisations operating in their area however there are a few anomalies, Hambleton organisations use RCVA service and Richmondshire organisations use NDVSA, York CVS was used by Selby, Hambleton, Richmondshire and across district organisations.

The organisation used is very dependent on the service accessed. The services for which the largest variety of organisations are used are networking/contacts, information services, funding advice and volunteering support.

There are a number of services where there was a clear majority of respondents using one organisation:

- Community buildings management – RAY (100%)
- DBS checking and processing - NYF (67%)
- Employment/HR advice - NYF (72%)
- Setting up a specific scheme/campaign - RAY (57%)
- Setting up a new group – RAY (42.9%)
- Tendering for contracts – Your Consortium (25%)

Chart 9: Organisation used in last 3 years

	Community buildings management	DBS checking and processing	Employment/HR advice	Financial planning	Funding advice	Governance and legal	Information technology	Information services	Marketing and publicity	Networking/contacts	Safeguarding	Setting up a new group	Setting up a specific scheme/campaign	Strategic planning	Tendering for contracts	Internet and Social Media	Volunteering support	Other
Number of responses	13	24	18	11	58	27	11	35	18	46	18	14	14	21	12	12	37	15
CAVCA	38%			9.1%	24%	15%	9.1%	14.3%		21.7%		7.1%	14.3%	9.5%	8.3%		8.1%	26.7%
Craven Community & Voluntary Services		8.3%		27.3%	5%	19%		5.7%	16.7%	6.5%	5.6%	7.1%	14.3%	9.5%		8.3%	13.5%	13.3%
Craven Volunteer Centre		4.2%						2.9%	27.8%	2.2%			7.1%			8.3%	18.9%	13.3%
HARCVS			5.6%	9.1%	14%	11%	9.1%	11.4%		10.9%			7.1%	4.8%		33.3%	10.8%	13.3%
Harrogate & Ripon Volunteer Centre					2%			5.7%		6.5%							10.8%	6.7%
Involve Yorkshire & Humber					2%			2.9%		2.2%								0.0%
NDVSA	8%	8.3%	5.6%	9.1%	21%		9.1%	22.9%	11.1%	15.2%	11.1%		7.1%				10.8%	13.3%
NYYF		66.7%	72.2%		14%	7%	18.2%	28.6%	5.6%	23.9%	38.9%			9.5%			2.7%	26.7%
NYCC – Stronger Communities	23%	8.3%	5.6%		26%			17.1%	5.6%	13.0%		21.4%	14.3%	9.5%			2.7%	26.7%
NYCC – Health and Adult Services		8.3%			3%		4.2%	20.8%		20.8%	38.9%			4.8%	8.3%			
NYCC – Learning Zone		4.2%	5.6%		2%		9.1%	8.6%		2.2%	22.2%							13.3%
NYCC – Other				9.1%	2%	4%	27.3%	5.7%	5.6%	2.2%	11.1%	14.3%	14.3%		8.3%		2.7%	13.3%
North Yorkshire Youth										2.2%								
RCVA		4.2%	5.6%	9.1%	12%	7%	18.2%	20.0%	11.1%	15.2%	5.6%	7.1%	7.1%	9.5%	8.3%	16.7%	21.6%	20.0%
RAY	100%		5.6%	18.2%	29%	22%	36.4%	40.0%	22.2%	30.4%		42.9%	57.1%	9.5%		8.3%	13.5%	26.7%
Selby District Association for Voluntary Service					2%			2.9%		2.2%							2.7%	
Selby District Volunteer Centre						4%		5.7%									5.4%	
Your Consortium		4.2%		27.3%	10%	7%	9.1%	14.3%	16.7%	8.7%	5.6%			28.6%	25.0%	8.3%		13.3%
York Council for Voluntary Service / Volunteer Centre		4.2%			2%	4%		8.6%		2.2%				4.8%				13.3%
Commercial organisation / freelance consultant			11.1%	18.2%	2%	7%			11.1%	2.2%	5.6%			14.3%	8.3%			6.7%
Parent organisation										2.2%							2.7%	6.7%
Other		8.3%	5.6%		5%	4%	9.1%	2.9%		2.2%	5.6%			4.8%	8.3%	16.7%	10.8%	13.3%

There are a number of services for which respondents were largely using two or more organisations:

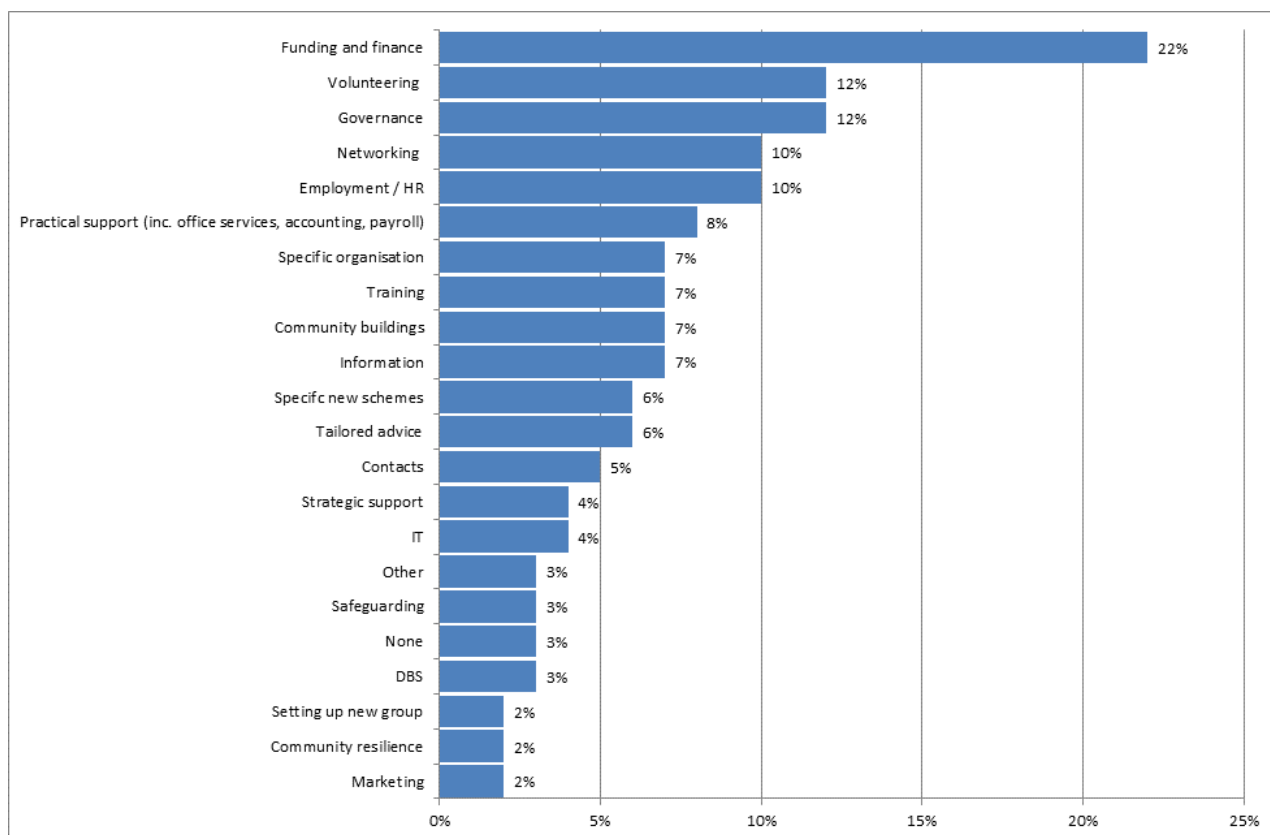
- Financial planning – Your Consortium (27%), Craven Community and Voluntary Services (27%) and commercial organisation / consultant (18%)
- Information technology – RAY (36%) and NYCC (27.3%)
- Safeguarding – NYFF (39%), NYCC – HAS (39%) and NYCC – Learning Zone (22%)
- Strategic planning - Your Consortium (28%) and commercial organisation / consultant (14%)
- Internet and Social Media - HARCVS (33%), RAY (17%) and commercial organisation / consultant (17%)

Commercial organisation / freelance consultants are most likely to be used for financial planning (18%), strategic planning (14%), employment/HR advice (11%), marketing and publicity (11%) and tendering for contracts (8%).

Other organisations mentioned included NYCC – Libraries, NYCC – Emergency Planning, Hambleton Richmondshire and Whitby CCG, Social media surgeons, Via Big Assist (NCVO), NAVCA and Operational Research Society Pro Bono support and free support accessed from commercial company via Business in The Community.

Only 13% of respondents (19) had experienced barriers or problems in accessing support. However, all of these respondents had accessed support. The most usual issues faced were cost (8), not knowing where to go (4), support not suitable for my organisation (4) and being unable to release staff to attend (3).

Chart 10: Most effective support received



When asked what the most effective support they had received 22% of those giving a reply mentioned support and advice around funding, fundraising and finance. Other support mentioned

by a number of respondents includes volunteering (12%), governance (12%), networking (10%) and employment/HR (10%). Some respondents simply expressed a positive view of a specific organisation (7%).

One aspect of effective support that was highlighted was specific advice tailored to the organisations needs (6%) and having a contact / being put into contact with someone who can help (5%).

This is highlighted by some quotes from the survey:

- “Specific face to face advice based on our current services and circumstances”
- “We had questions on our chosen subject which were answered constructively, which is what matters.”
- “On-going support and confidence that people will pass on my details and projects to others.”
- “Providing up to date information in a rapidly changing landscape.”

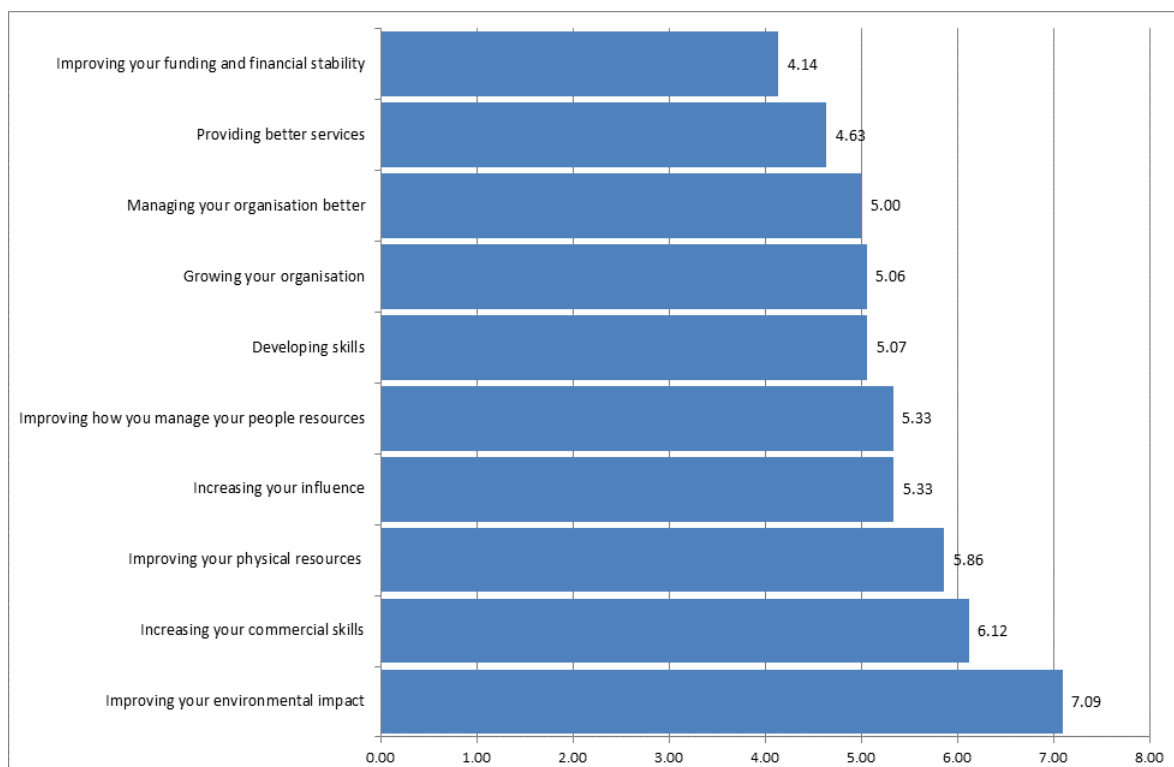
A number of responses also highlighted the impact of this support:

- Saving time and money - “Bespoke advice on individual issues. It is essential to 'get things right' as the consequences of getting it 'wrong' can be both costly and stressful.”
- Clearer future plans - “The support pointed us in the right direction and enabled us to proceed on a more informed basis.”
- “Successful funding bids”

Another interesting quote, which highlights the need to challenge; “Being determined and prepared to push us”

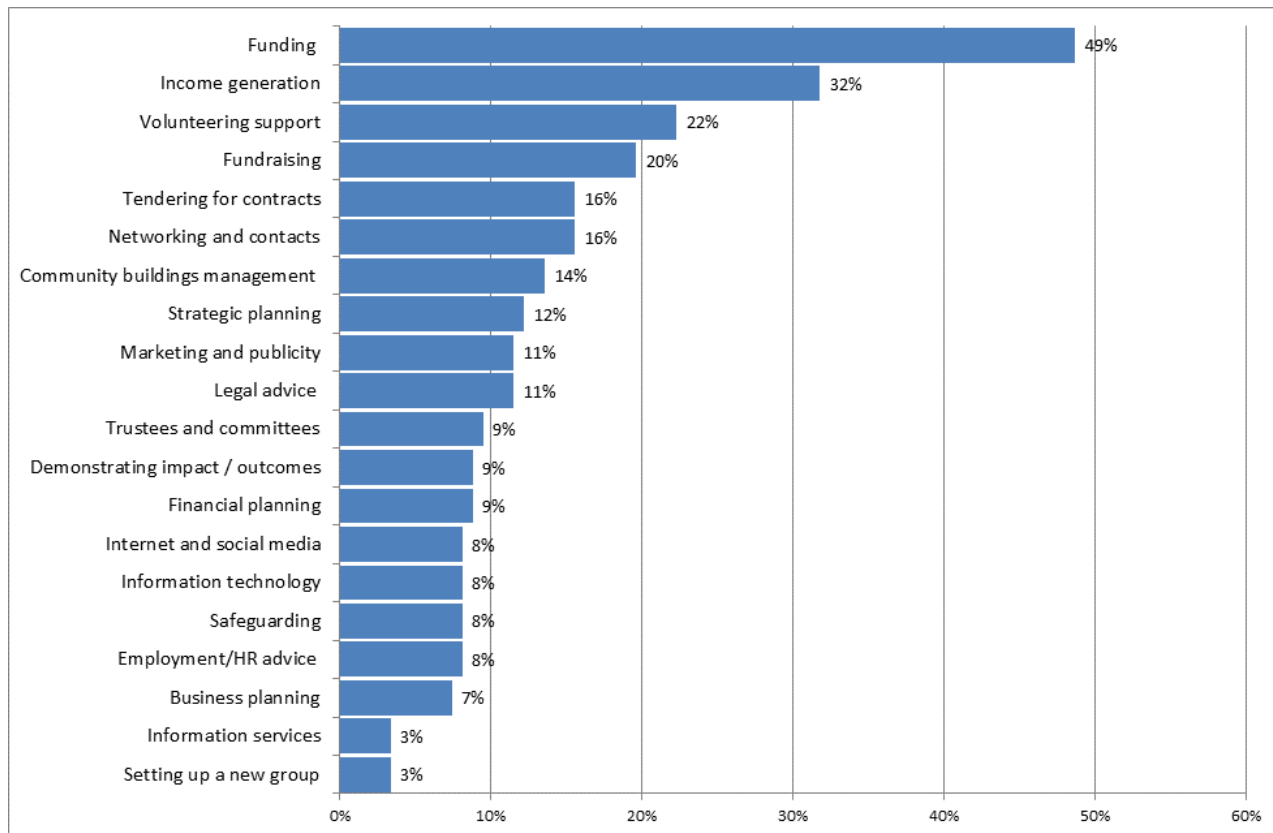
Future needs for support

Chart 11: Support priorities for your organisation/group over the next 3 years – ranked



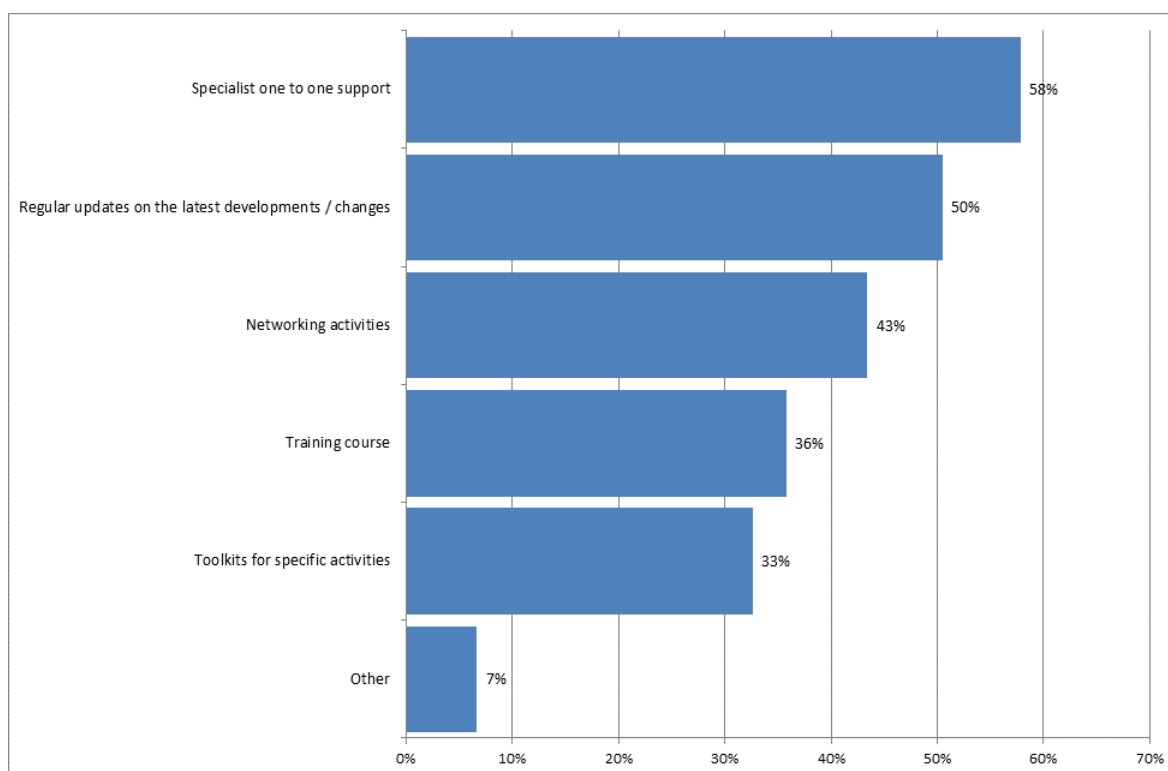
Organisations were asked to rank their support priorities for the next 3 years. The lower the score, the higher the rank. The support priority that was ranked top was “improving your funding and financial stability”. The lowest ranked priority was “improving your environmental impact”.

Chart 12: Areas of advice and information support expected to require in the next 3 years



Organisations were then asked more specifically which 3 areas of advice and information support they expect to access in the next three years. Again funding came out top (49%), then income generation (32%) and volunteering support (22%). Unsurprisingly, given that this was a survey of existing organisations ‘setting up a new group’ was rated lowest (3%).

Chart 13: How would organisations expect to receive support services



When asked about how they would like to have the services delivered 58% expected 'specialist one to one support', 50% expected 'regular update' and 43% networking activities.

The areas for which 'specialist one to one support' was the most popular form of support are setting up a new group (100%), financial planning (85%), business planning (73%), income generation (66%), internet and social media (67%), legal advice (65%), strategic planning (61%), information technology (58%), Tendering for contracts (52%) and employment/HR advice (50%).

Although 'specialist one to one support' overall is the most popular form of support there are a number of areas where the majority of people choose another category:

- Training courses – Safeguarding (75%), Trustees & Committees (71%) and Demonstrating impact / outcomes (69%)
- Regular updates on the latest developments / changes – Fundraising (72%), Funding (69%), and Community buildings management (65%)
- Networking activities - Marketing and publicity (59%) and volunteering support (55%).

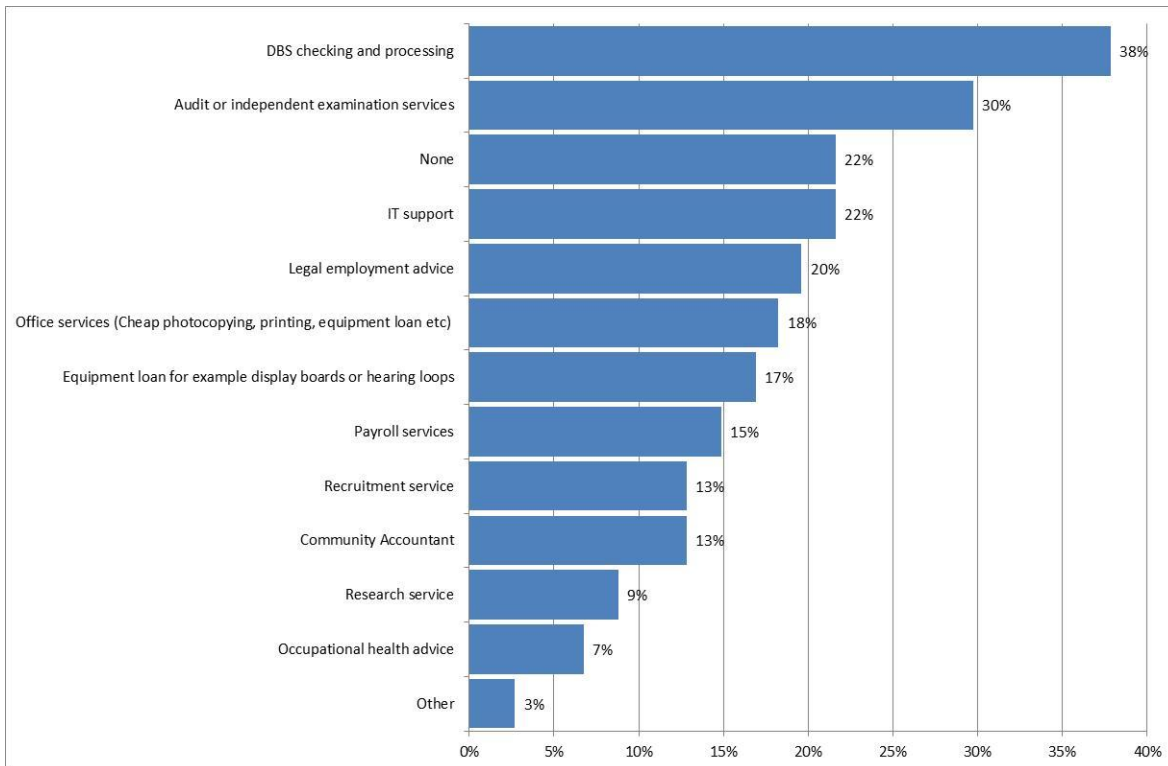
Although toolkits for specific activities are not rated highest for any area, there is a significant level of interest in business planning (64%), Community buildings management (55%), Demonstrating impact / outcomes (54%), fundraising (52%) and internet and social media (50%).

Chart 14: How would organisations expect to receive support services by service area

	Funding	Fundraising	Income generation	Financial planning	Employment/HR advice	Community buildings management	Legal advice	Setting up a new group	Safeguarding
Training course	31%	24%	36%	23%	25%	40%	35%	0%	75%
Specialist one to one support	57%	62%	66%	85%	50%	50%	65%	100%	17%
Regular updates on the latest developments / changes	69%	72%	57%	23%	17%	65%	24%	40%	58%
Toolkits for specific activities	36%	52%	34%	46%	17%	55%	6%	20%	17%
Networking activities	56%	45%	53%	15%	17%	55%	12%	40%	33%
Other	6%	3%	4%	0%	8%	0%	18%	0%	0%

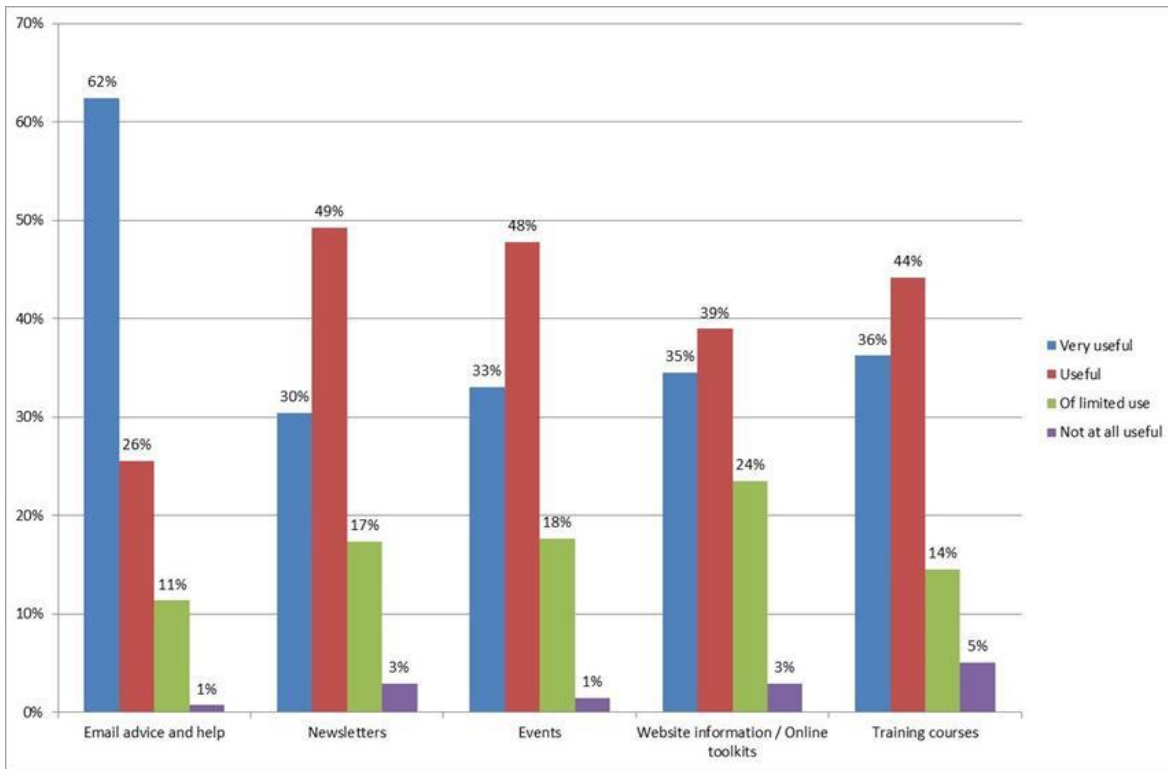
	Trustees & committees	Information technology	Internet and social media	Marketing and publicity	Strategic planning	Business planning	Demonstrating impact / outcomes	Tendering for contracts	Volunteering support
Training course	71%	25%	33%	41%	17%	55%	69%	35%	15%
Specialist one to one support	36%	58%	67%	41%	61%	73%	62%	52%	30%
Regular updates on the latest developments / changes	50%	42%	25%	41%	39%	27%	54%	39%	39%
Toolkits for specific activities	7%	17%	50%	47%	44%	64%	54%	13%	18%
Networking activities	50%	8%	25%	59%	50%	64%	46%	22%	55%
Other	7%	33%	0%	6%	6%	0%	8%	4%	15%

Chart 15: Requirements for practical professional hands on support and or office services



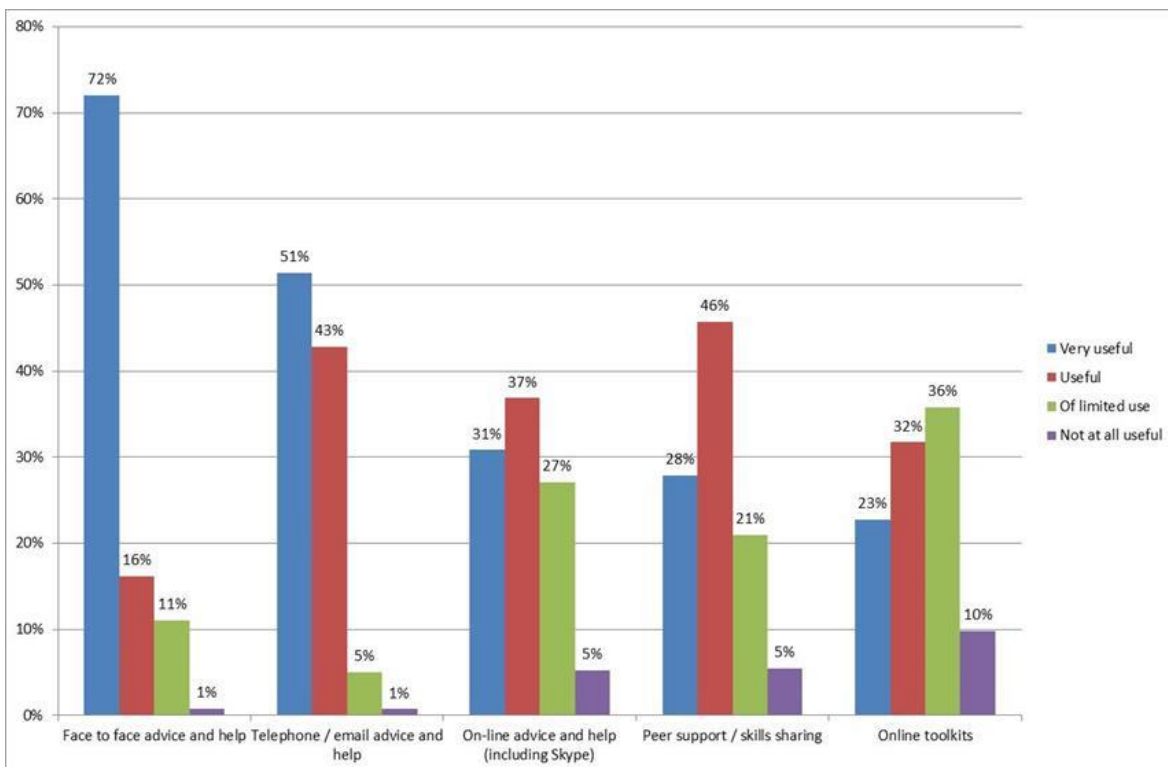
The practical professional hands on support and or office services that the highest number of organisations expect to require in the next 3 years are DBS checking and processing (38%), audit or independent examination services (30%), IT support (22%) and legal employment advice (20%). 22% of organisation expected to not access any such services.

Chart 16: Usefulness of methods for finding out about new areas and keeping in touch with the latest developments



Email advice and help (62%) is seen as the most useful method for finding out about new areas and keeping in touch with the latest developments.

Chart 17: Usefulness of methods for dealing with technical queries

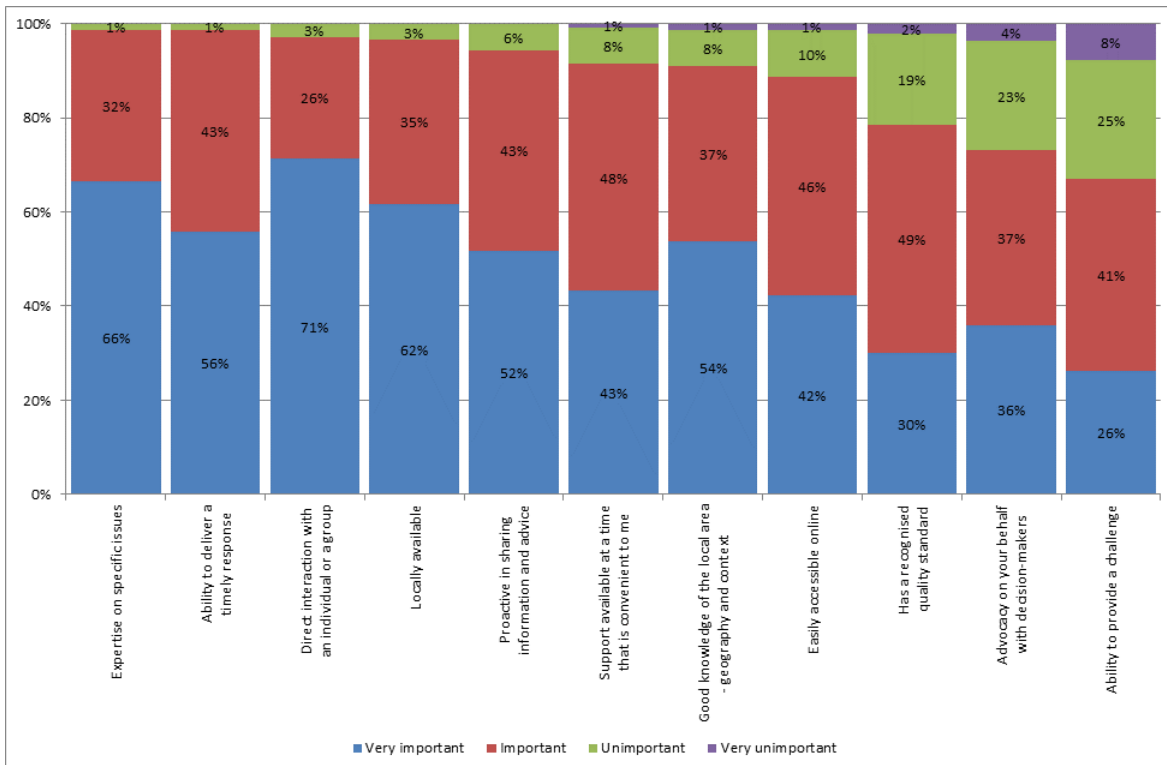


Face to face advice and help (72%) is seen as the most useful method for dealing with technical queries.

When asked for other ways of delivering support the following were suggested:

- coaching / mentoring / buddying (7)
- networking (4) not just within North Yorkshire
- community outreach (3)
- improved promotion of services available (2)
- ability to develop a relationship to gain understanding and trust (2)
- ability to contact 'expert' in a number of ways (2)
- single point of contact in NYCC
- ability to use CVS databases
- forum meetings
- informal drop in events
- skills support
- longer term projects
- strong focus on volunteering and the outcomes for citizens helped and volunteers including annual report

Chart 18: Importance of features in support service



Overall the majority of respondents agreed that all the features were important in a support service.

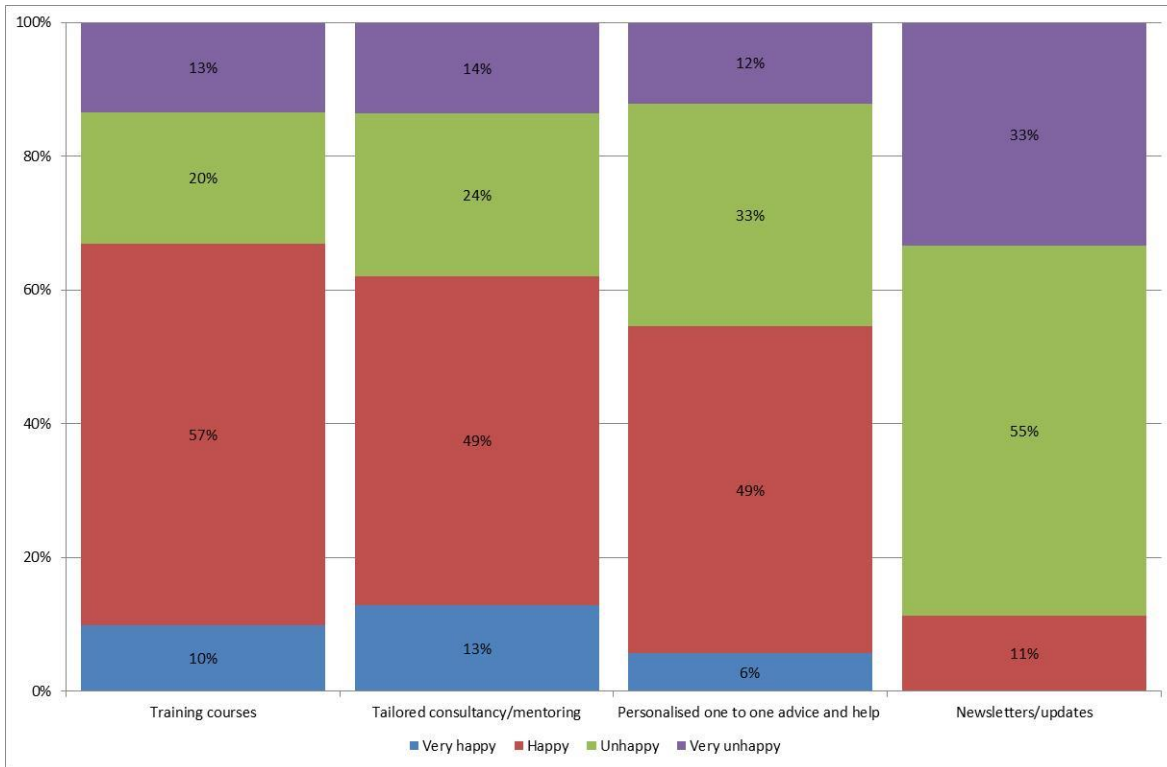
The factors within a support service that respondents felt were most important (very important / important) were:

- Expertise on specific issues
- Ability to deliver a timely response
- Direct interaction with an individual or group
- Locally available

The factors that are seen as least important were:

- Ability to provide a challenge
- Advocacy your behalf with decision-makers
- A recognised quality standard

Chart 19: Willingness to pay for services



Over half of respondents would be happy to pay for training courses (67% happy/very happy), tailored consultancy/mentoring and personalised one to one advice and help. 88% would not be willing to pay for newsletters/updates.

Views on paying are impacted by organisational size:

- For training courses 59% of organisations with an income under £5,000 would be unhappy to pay. For all other income sizes more organisations would be happy to pay than not.
- For tailored consultancy/mentoring 48% or more of organisations with an income up to £50,000 say they would be unhappy to pay. However, for organisations with an income of £500,000 - £1,000,000 views are also split with 40% stating they would be unhappy.
- For personalised one to one advice and help 81% of organisations with an income under £5,000 and 56% of organisations with an income under £20,000 would be unhappy to pay. In all other income groups more people are happy than unhappy.

Respondents were invited to raise anything else about their future support needs. Comments were made around affordability (6), funding (5), volunteering (5) and sharing best practice (3). Funding and volunteering comments were in the main about the importance of this type of support. The affordability comments were prompted by the question on paying for services, with comments around being unable to pay, perhaps being able to pay if grants available, affordability is not just paying for the support but also the cost of the time of the staff/volunteers being supported. Other comments made do not fit into any categories.