
Hull Adult Health and Wellbeing Survey Summary: Volunteering in Hull

December 2019

Background

Earlier this year, more than 4,000 Hull residents aged over 16 belonging to groups representative of the local population were surveyed about health and lifestyle behaviours. Between March and June, interviewers knocked on doors and asked residents if they would be willing to take part in the comprehensive survey. Participants were left to complete forms in their own time, with interviewers returning to collect them on an agreed date. The response rate was 76 per cent.

Volunteering and why it matters

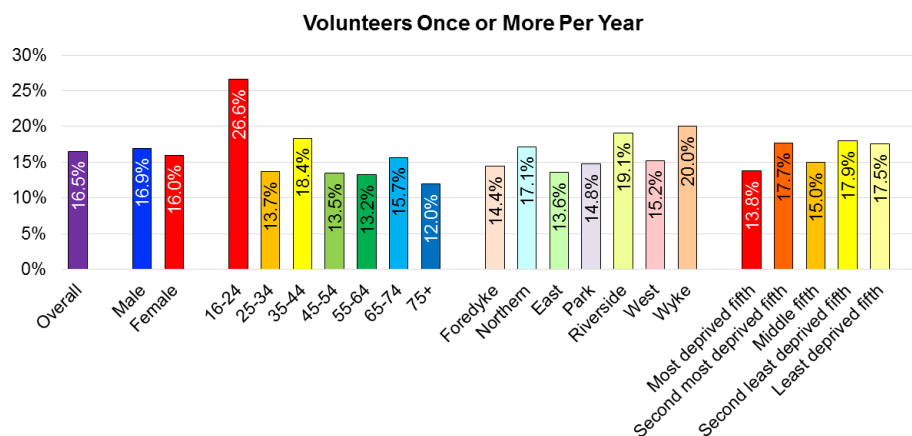
- Depending on the activity, volunteers report feelings of improved health (both physical and mental), improved mood, an increased sense of purpose, lower stress and anxiety levels, improved skills and increased employability and increased levels of self-confidence.¹²
- The value of volunteers and the groups they join is sometimes overlooked as savings are 'hidden' and it can take time for benefits to become apparent.
- Volunteers are a central asset and successful groups do not underestimate the associated demands of volunteering and have realistic expectations.
- Volunteers can sometimes access communities and individuals who are unwilling to engage with officialdom, providing essential help to some of the most vulnerable and inaccessible members of our society.

¹ <http://www.rsvpsuffolk.org/benefits-of-volunteering.php>

² <https://www.volunteeringsolutions.com/blog/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/benefits-of-volunteering-abroad.png>

Key Health and Wellbeing Survey findings

- 16.5% of people said they volunteered - at least once or more over the past year. This equates to approximately 34,500 people.
- Almost half of all volunteers do so on a weekly basis, if not even more often. Whilst 16.5% of people volunteer once a year or more, 7.9% of people volunteer about once per week or even more - equating to 16,500 people in the city.
- Volunteers are almost equally divided between the sexes. 16.9% of males have volunteered in the past 12 months, compared with 16.0% of females.
- Young people are more likely to volunteer - of all those people who said that they volunteered about once per week 26.6% were aged 16-24, whilst 15.7% were aged 65-74.
- The highest percentage of people volunteered is in Avenue ward (23.2%), closely followed by Beverley and Newland (23.1%). The smallest percentages were in Orchard Park ward (7.9%) and Longhill and Bilton Grange (10.8%).
- People from the least deprived areas of the city are more likely to spend more time volunteering. Of all those survey respondents who stated that they volunteered about once per week or more, 18.2% were from the most deprived fifth, 18.6% from the second most deprived fifth, 15.4% from the middle fifth, 23.3% from the second least deprived fifth and 24.5% from the least deprived fifth.
- People not working volunteer more often, but only slightly more so. Of those who are volunteering about once per week or more 54.0% are not working, 39.2% are working for someone else and 6.8% are self-employed. Of those people who volunteer about once per year 35.9% are not working, 60.2% are working for someone else and 3.9% are self-employed.
- Single people aged 65+ and living alone are the least likely to have ever volunteered. Of all those people who recorded themselves as aged 65+ and living alone 62.9% had never volunteered. Households of two adults with three or more children are the most likely to volunteer on a weekly basis. 11.3% said that they volunteered about once per week or more - equating to over 23,000 people volunteering in the city.



What this means for Hull...

- The 2017 Hull UK City of Culture facilitated 2,500 local people volunteering as part of the series of events throughout the year and was the catalyst that led to an ongoing positive approach towards volunteering in the city. The people of Hull have become the change-makers in their own communities.
- More and more companies are recognising the potential of volunteering to improve team skills, loyalty and productivity. Volunteering can help boost the reputation of a business and can also provide networking opportunities.³
- Volunteering allows people to interact with one another, provides a sense of purpose and helps boost confidence. In turn, these factors have a positive effect on Mental Health, prompting increased happiness, worthiness and senses of belonging and achievement.
- Depending on the type of volunteering undertaken, the physical aspects of volunteering may keep people active for longer in later life and help prolong good physical health.

³ <https://companieshouse.blog.gov.uk/2019/06/03/the-benefits-of-employee-volunteering/>