

## **Volunteer Impact Survey and Snapshot Survey of Carers 2022**

### **Background**

This report includes a comparison between the Volunteer Impact Survey 2021 results with those collected in 2022. The results of the 2017 survey were used in the application to the Lottery Bid and some data from that survey has been added at the end for comparison. This report focuses on the data as it relates to the outcomes stated in the Lottery Bid 'Caring for Volunteers':

- Volunteers' confidence in supporting local carers will increase.
- Volunteers' overall wellbeing will increase as a result of their volunteering role.
- Volunteers' skills will have increased and improved.

It also includes the data from the 2022 Snapshot Survey of Carers and assesses that in relation to the outcomes of the impact of the work of volunteers on carers stated in the Lottery Bid:

- Carers will feel less isolated because of the volunteers' contributions.
- Carers will be more resilient and knowledgeable/confident in their caring role because of volunteers' work.

We can also compare the carers' feedback to the results collected in 2021.

### **Current Context**

The pattern of volunteer roles has continued to change over the past year due to the ongoing impact of COVID-19. For example, some roles such as Passport Team, Meet and Greet, and Fundraising, have still not been able to carry on. New opportunities have continued to develop such as the requirement for Keep in Touch Volunteers (KIT), out of hours KIT support, and the demand for Bereavement Support. We are actively recruiting for more volunteers across several areas.

We have continued to issue our Volunteer Newsletter monthly in order to keep in touch with all our Volunteers and this is sent both electronically and by post where appropriate. We have continued to offer our Volunteer Network meetings on a monthly basis rather than four times per year and have managed to include three face to face events alongside our monthly Zoom sessions. From April 2022, we will be increasing further our opportunities for volunteers to meet face to face whilst still accommodating those who prefer to meet online.

We remain in touch with volunteers who are not "active" through the Volunteer Newsletter and as activities become more widely available, we hope to welcome them back to active volunteering with Carers in Hertfordshire. We continue to co-produce with volunteers (through the Volunteer Steering Group and Volunteer Network) training plans that meet their needs to increase confidence, skills and wellbeing.

## Volunteers Impact Survey

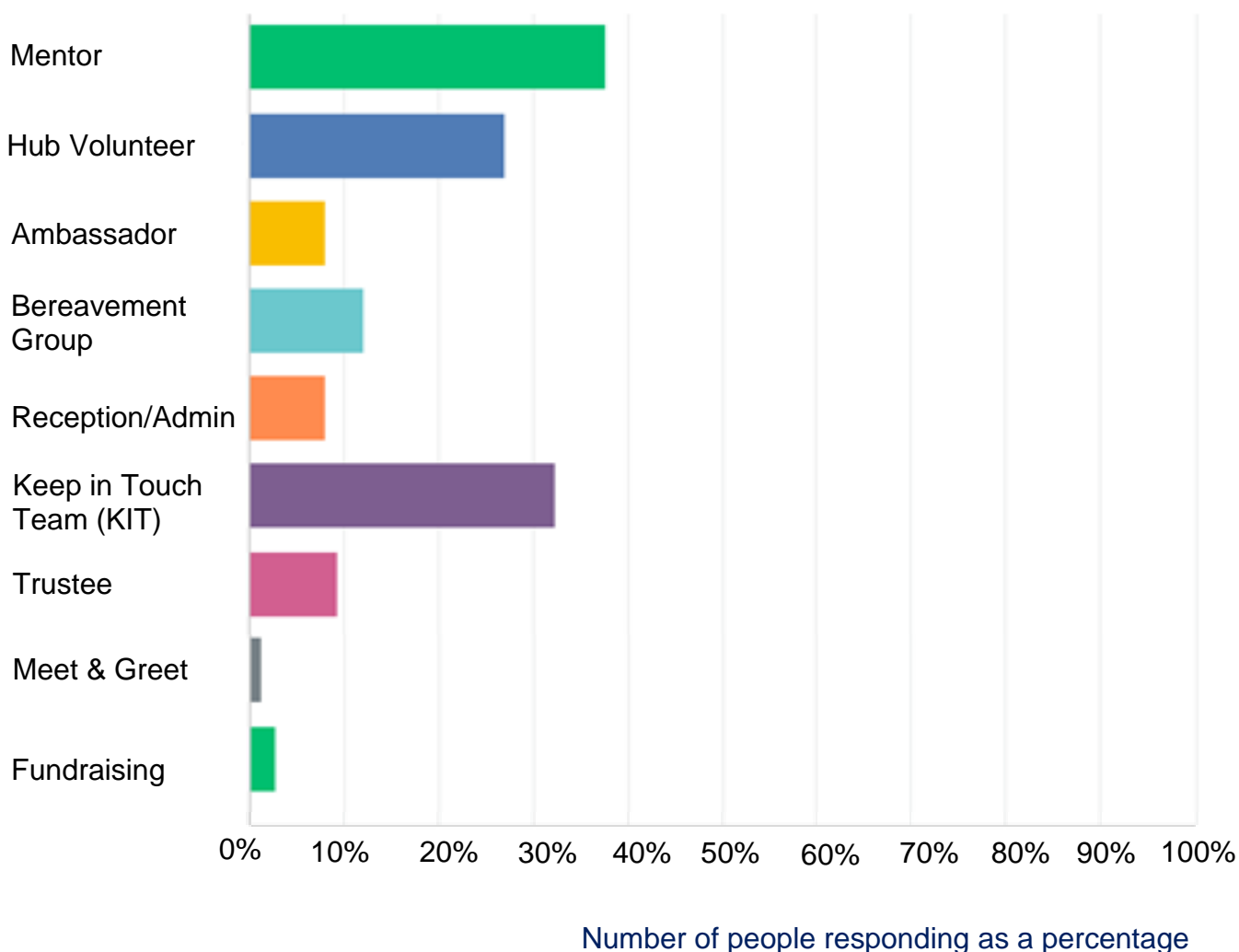
This survey was drawn up using a template provided by the National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO), and then adapted for use for Carers in Hertfordshire following consultation with volunteers. The latest survey was carried out in March 2022. It was sent out for completion in March to 129 active volunteers (by email and hard copy) and 75 complete responses were received – a return of 58% compared to 55% (121 out of 221) in 2021.

### Respondents

A good representation of volunteers responded across Hubs, Mentoring, the Bereavement Service, Reception and Admin, Trustees, and the Keep in Touch team. The following graph shows the response rate across the individual groups. Only four of the 75 respondents volunteer on one or two occasions a year, the rest volunteer more frequently. 40% of the volunteers who responded to the survey can work flexibly across the working week and 13% work out of hours (mainly in the evenings). It should also be noted that of the respondents 39% volunteer over more than one role.

### Volunteer Impact Survey 2022 Response Rate

#### Area of volunteering



## Percentage of volunteers from each area that responded

Area of Work / Volunteering	Percentage of volunteers that responded
Meet and Greet	100%
Trustees	88%
Hubs	80%
Reception and admin	77%
Keep in Touch	59%
Mentor	56%
Bereavement Support	53%
Ambassador	27%
Fundraising	7%

## Results

When reporting on these results the data for satisfied and very satisfied has been added together and scores for 2021 and 2022 compared.

One of the benefits of the Lottery-funded project is that it has allowed us to provide more **training and support** for volunteers. We are pleased that we have managed to increase the skills of several volunteers to be able to continue or take part in more frequent online training. We will be offering a mixture of online and face to face training going forwards.

Volunteers were asked how satisfied they were with training they had been offered. 94% said they were satisfied – slightly up from 2021, which was 91% (106 people). No-one reported that they were not offered training and happily this year no-one responded that they were dissatisfied with the training provided. Some 56% of the volunteers that replied to the survey said they were very satisfied with the training, 3% felt they had no need of training and 3% said they were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.

There were 10 comments from volunteers, these included:

*“The training I did was always excellent. I did the mentor and Keep in Touch Call training and attended some network meetings. I also found the drop-in sessions very supportive.”*

*“There is always training available on at flexible times to suit - they always ask what training would be useful and open to ideas.”*

*“I attended the six-week mentor training course and also the safeguarding course. I receive regular invites to volunteer meet up sessions.”*

Many staff members were again mentioned by name showing the good relationships between staff and volunteers working alongside each other. Comments included:

*“I feel well supported by friendly, able people and feel much valued in the mentor volunteering I do.”*

*“I feel supported in my role. Correspondence is efficient and thorough.”*

*“I can always get the support from my leaders when needed and they go above and beyond to make sure I have what I need.”*

We had a small reduction again in the number of volunteers who are satisfied with the **social opportunities** offered throughout the year – from 71% (82 respondents) in 2021 to 68%. Some 6% of volunteers that took the survey said it was “not applicable” and 26% said they were neither dissatisfied nor satisfied. We expect the drop was due to the COVID-19 restrictions that were in place limiting the numbers of people that could meet up.

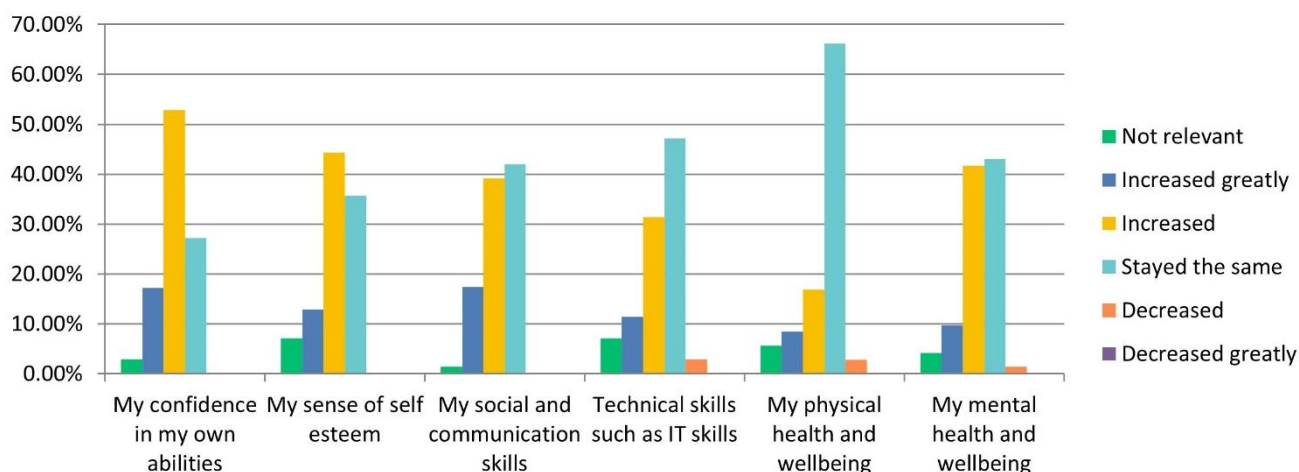
There were 14 comments about social opportunities, which included:

*“Many opportunities are offered, but along with many other carers, and the recent pandemic, it's not always possible to attend.”*

*“The Zoom sessions for drop ins, training and network meetings are good when because of Covid meeting up in person has not been possible.”*

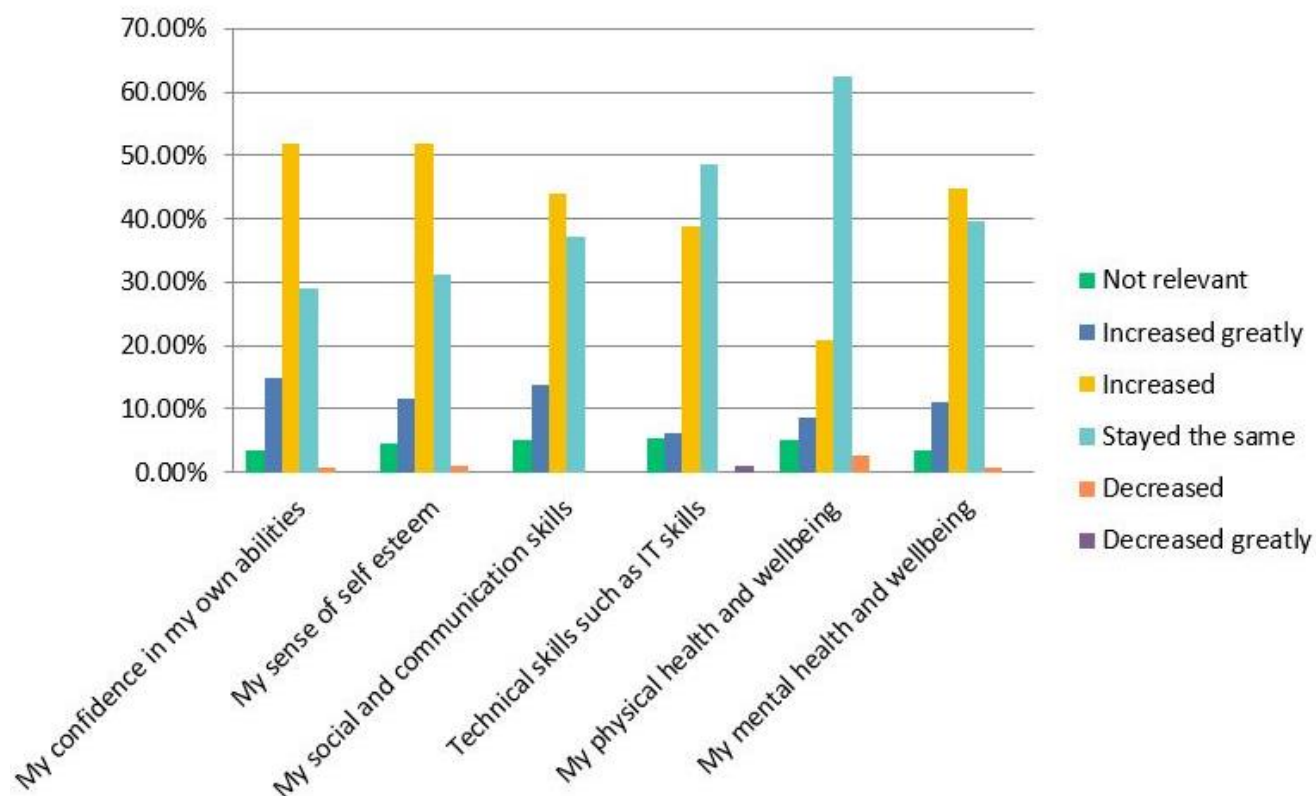
### Personal Impact of Volunteering in 2022

Listed below are some of the ways that people gain from being a volunteer. Have any of the following increased or decreased for you?



### Personal Impact of Volunteering in 2021

Listed below are some of the ways that people gain from being a volunteer. Have any of the following increased or decreased for you?



There has been a slight increase from last year in volunteers' confidence in their abilities. In 2022, 70% (49) of the volunteers reported an increase in confidence compared to 67% (76) in 2021. However, there has been a slight dip in people reporting that their self-esteem had increased with 57% in 2022 compared to 63% in 2021 and 64% in 2020.

A quarter of volunteers who replied to the survey reported an increase in physical wellbeing and 66% said it had stayed the same. Just over half of volunteers (52%) reported an increase in mental wellbeing, although 44% said it stayed the same. Two people reported a decrease in physical wellbeing and one in mental wellbeing. In 2021, the figures were 30% of volunteers reporting an increase in physical wellbeing and 56% in mental wellbeing. 91% reported an increase in their sense that they are making a useful contribution.

Just over half of the volunteers who replied to the survey (56%) reported an increase in social and communication skills and 42% of volunteers reported an increase in technical skills which is in keeping with last year's results. Technical skills was up from 29% in 2020.

It should be noted the data again in 2022 shows 80% of our volunteers are over 55 years and 47% are still undertaking a caring role. It is remarkable to see that the figures for mental wellbeing have remained similar to previous years, despite the impact of COVID-19.

There were 12 comments added in answer to this question, including:

*"I have had physical and mental health challenges as recovering from surgery. Being a Keep in Touch volunteer has helped as lot, particularly my self-confidence."*

*"I'm able to communicate on the phone better than when I started. I've also learnt how to listen attentively."*

*"I have gained a great sense of doing something worthwhile."*

Additionally, we can report that like last year, 85% of volunteers agree that the organisation gives access to further training for free (75% in 2020) and that 64% agree that they have benefitted from these opportunities (69% in 2021).

51% of volunteers reported that they have increased their skills for employment or additional voluntary services and 76 % of volunteers had an increased feeling of being included or not being alone.

We are happy to report that 99% of our volunteers said they would recommend volunteering with Carers in Hertfordshire to others compared to 95% last year. Over 68 people added positive comments to this question. Here are some of the reasons they chose to volunteer with Carers in Hertfordshire and why they would recommend our charity:

*"Carers in Hertfordshire provides a large range of areas of support in a very caring and compassionate way often managed by personnel who are themselves carers. This has given me a great sense of belonging, in a worthwhile and such a necessary organisation, one to which I owe much gratitude for support I have needed as a carer myself."*

*"I was aware of how the organisation helped/supported families/individuals and I wanted to give something back to my community."*

*"They are a helpful charity that really cares for those who are usually not supported by others."*

*"I was a carer for 12 years, looking after my mother, I joined a hub, became a volunteer as I wanted to give something back."*

*“Development of skills; being valued regardless of age or status; awareness of the plight of so many unpaid carers in the county.”*

### **Demographics of Respondents to this Survey**

47% of the volunteers are still carers, 37% are past carers and 16% have never been a carer. In 2021, 41% were still carers.

Gender split: Male 12%: Female 87%, 1% preferred not to say. In 2021, 15% were male.

Age: We have 4% under the age of 25, 16% between 25 years and 54 years, 26% between 55 years and 64 years, 29% aged 65-74 and 25% of volunteers aged over 75 years.

Ethnicity: In 2020, only six non-White British took part in the survey. In 2022, this has improved as 10 people from a non-White British background completed the survey (12.9%) The figures for 2021, were 14 (11 %).

We are constantly looking at ways at which we can increase our diversity, 10% of all our active volunteers are not White British according to our latest complete data count on all active volunteers. This is not as good as last year when it was 20%. The 2011 diversity data for Hertfordshire records 12.4% of the population as not White British – learn more at <https://iao.blob.core.windows.net/publications/reports/f589797e29b14c50a0f7cfdad2c4420/E10000015.html#ethnicmakeupbybroadgroupings>

13 volunteers identified as having a disability of some kind compared to 18 last time.

### **Impact of Volunteers on Carers**

This survey was sent out in March 2022 to a wide range of carers receiving services from volunteers. It was sent by email and post and 137 complete responses were received, providing a snapshot of support provided to carers by volunteers from 1st April 2021 to 31st March 2022. In 2021, we collected 131 complete responses from carers.

The support that carers received from volunteers continued to change due to the coronavirus pandemic. For most of the year hub groups only met on Zoom due to the pandemic, although a few met outdoors or indoors with restricted numbers when rules allowed. The Keep in Touch Service proved extremely beneficial, and we have continued providing it as a permanent service that Carers in Hertfordshire offers. The demand for Bereavement Support also remains high.

During the height of the pandemic Mentors were not able to meet carers face to face but this has been able to resume and carers are offered a choice of in person or telephone mentoring to suit individual needs.

85% of respondents were aware that some of the services or help they receive are from a volunteer. 71% said they were either satisfied or very satisfied. This is similar to 2021. This year we did not receive any reports that carers were dissatisfied and 95% would recommend the volunteers and voluntary service to other people in a similar situation to themselves.

36% reported new friendships had been made and contact with others had increased or increased greatly compared to 39 % in 2021. More carers have reported that their involvement in local activities has increased, which is nice to see – up from 23% in 2021 to 27% in 2022, although not up to pre-pandemic levels of 45%. We feel this is still a direct impact of the enforced closure of many activities and restrictions during the pandemic and highlights just one of the many additional difficulties faced by carers this year.

Nearly two-thirds of carers (62%) reported that their caring role has changed during the COVID-19 pandemic with 23% of these saying that they feel that they need more help.

36% answered that their confidence and personal development (e.g. self-confidence, self-esteem, ability to manage things in my caring role) had increased or increased greatly. 60% answered that their knowledge of where to go for support in my caring role had increased or increased greatly. In 2021, 62% reported an increase in confidence and 72% an increase in knowledge of where to go for support.

Some carers included comments when sharing their feedback, which included:

*“Everyone at the charity has been so helpful and supportive. The carers hub is great, it’s so nice to spend time with people that understand!”*

*“I have really appreciated the help and would not be as able to cope now without the support I have had.”*

*“Hertfordshire has far better voluntary services than other counties that some of my friends live in.”*

*“They respond very positively. Where else would you get good help and good advice if you needed it?”*

*“I volunteer for a different organisation so know commitment when I see it!”*

## **Conclusion**

The data from the Volunteer Impact Survey shows positive increases across the outcomes being measured in the Caring for Volunteers Lottery project despite the additional challenges that everyone has faced this year.

The data from the Snapshot Survey for Carers confirms the impact of the work of volunteers on carers is also positive, appreciated and invaluable. There is evidence in this feedback that both carers and volunteers want face to face services to resume and more interactions with social groups, but there is also a desire to continue support through new platforms such as Zoom.

The fact that carers sense of isolation and confidence has not increased as much this year as in our surveys pre-pandemic is mirrored in the findings of national surveys by Carers UK. Carers UK’s State of Caring Survey in 2021 (November 2021) highlighted that 36% of carers that responded said their financial situation has worsened since the pandemic, 71% of carers said the needs of the person they care for have increased and over a third of carers reported they are ‘often or always’ lonely.

### Volunteer Impact Survey 2022 Comparison with 2017 Baseline and 2020 and 2021 Data

Outcome	2017 (baseline data)	2020	2021	2022
Volunteers' confidence in supporting local carers will increase.	62%	70%	67%	70%
Volunteers' overall wellbeing will increase as a result of their volunteering as an average over physical and mental wellbeing scores.	37%	48.5%	43%	38.5%
Volunteers' skills will have increased and improved.	58%	45.5%	51.5%	49%
Volunteers feeling of being included or feeling not alone will have increased.	N/A	75%	71%	76%

### Carers Snapshot Survey 2022 comparison with 2020 and 2021 Data

Outcome	2020	2021	2022
Carers will feel less isolated because of volunteers' contribution	49%	39%	36%
Carers will be more resilient and knowledgeable / confident in their caring role because of volunteers' work.	65%	62%	36%