

Support Cambridgeshire

STATE OF THE SECTOR SURVEY 2024

WE GET BACK UP AGAIN

A look at the state of Cambridgeshire Charity Sector in 2024

Introduction

This is the latest survey from Support Cambridgeshire. It was conducted from the end of January to the beginning of March 2024. The sector and the country were still in the clutches of a cost-of-living crisis but there were some signs of interest and inflation rates returning to a more normal level. The sector continued to offer support and services, but the prolonged stress of the pandemic and the ongoing crisis was taking a toll. We have looked at similar questions to previous years so we can compare data where appropriate. The survey falls into four areas:

- Section 1 - Issues and barriers facing groups.
- Section 2 – About the groups responding.
- Section 3 - What services groups want.
- Section 4 – What is needed from, and the impact of, the Support Cambridgeshire partners.

Sections 1 and 2 are reported here and we use section 3 results to look at the support, training and services we provide to the sector. We have also included some elements of section 4 in this report as well, as we believe that what we do is essential to a vibrant and sustainable sector and that we need to be supported.

We have not repeated the analysis of the charity commission and other data this year but plan to do it every two years funding permitted.

Section 1 - Issues and barriers facing groups

We get knocked down, but we get up again, you're never gonna keep us down

The voluntary sector both locally and nationally has taken some hits over the past three or four years and these continue to come. We have been knocked back, but every day we are seeing organisations dust themselves off and get right back up, finding new ways and new resources to continue to offer support, services and activities to local communities.

This year we have repeated the questions about what it is that impact charities, to see how they are. This has allowed us to start to build up trends and to compare across years. We have asked specific questions on fundraising and volunteer recruitment as these were key areas in previous years and had also been common issues in our support work.

The results will show that this year was little different to last year, but this is not something we can be complacent about as we know that organisations are suffering from those issues raised in the NCVO Cost of Giving report. We know that smaller charities are more impacted in the downturn in funding, and we are seeing that things are worse now than they were in the pandemic.

But still charities fight to be there for those that rely on them!

How does the future look?

The good news is that levels of optimism have not altered significantly since 2023. There has been a small decrease in those thinking that 2025 will be better than 2024 and a small drop in those unsure.

What this reflects is that groups have settled into the fact that the current conditions are now are probably with us for the next year. Given the findings from both the survey and our general experience, this level of resigned belief that things will not get better is actually a real issue. We are seeing staff, volunteers and whole organisations struggling and we need to do what we can to support and nurture them.

Barriers

Money and volunteers remain the biggest barriers that groups face to how they continue to offer services and support. The impact is similar regardless of the income of the organisation.

In the comments, funding is mentioned regularly, but we see more organisations citing staff burnout and sickness as being an issue, as is the sectors inability to attract staff due to the inability to offer salaries or other benefits that other employers are offering.

How issues have changed

Comparing the last two years shows us that things have not changed a great deal. This is positive but we know that organisations were hurting in 2023 so we would have liked to see

a marked improvement in the numbers. The best we can say is that things are not significantly worse than they were.

The resilience and the reserves in the sector are finite and there are real signs anecdotally that both are running low, and this will have a significant impact on the number of groups that close unless things improve.

General issues impacting groups

We asked about the issues that respondents felt were important to the work of their organisation.

Increased social isolation and increased demand for services were the biggest issues, closely followed by divisions and inequality in society and uncertain economic outlook.

These external factors are generally part of a national picture, and organisations must find ways to navigate them and to recognise the impact they have on those they work with.

Impact of the cost of living

All areas we asked about were up in 2024 compared to 2023. The comments highlight some of the issues.

- “Electricity costs have increased enormously, despite tight controls on usage.”
- “No uplift in grants but everything is costing us more.”
- “Clients coming to us through our wellbeing drop in, desperate for support having been told there isn't a service out there.”
- “The demand for our service exceeds capacity. Salary increases needs to happen but income is not increasing.”

Fundraising issues

When we look at fundraising issues in more detail, we see that many more groups are finding it harder to raise money than easier. We also see that the issue of raising unrestricted funding or gaining full cost funding that covers all the core costs are the biggest issues.

We hear a lot of issues also about the complexity of funding and the sometimes disproportional application processes. We need to see funding that meets core costs and application processes that enable organisations to apply.

“Some trusts and foundations require lengthy and very detailed applications for relatively small funds. “

(Survey respondent)

Volunteer recruitment issues

Organisations are reporting that it is getting harder rather than easier to recruit volunteers, but many organisations are taking steps to find ways to improve recruitment and retention.

- “We've invested a lot in developing and looking after our volunteers to increase retention and engagement levels.”
- “Made the process easier, more appealing, faster. Simplified the qualifications "required" to do the role and dedicate time to improve training and support internally.”

Section 2 – About the groups responding

The survey is aimed at Cambridgeshire voluntary groups and all others are removed from the data set.

Areas where groups operate (multiple answers possible)

- Fenland – 36%
- Huntingdonshire – 53%
- East Cambridgeshire – 37%
- South Cambridgeshire – 42%
- Cambridge City – 47%

Membership

- CCVS only – 32%
- Hunts Forum only – 22%
- Both – 27%
- Neither 19%

We know that 61% of organisations work in only one district, of these 20% work in Cambridge, 12% work in SCDC, 11% work in ECDC, 41% work in Hunts, and 16% work in

Fenland. 21% of organisations work in all five districts.

Finances of groups responding

“43% of the groups that responded had an income of £50,000 or less. This is in comparison to 52% last year.”

When we asked if income had changed in the past year 36% said it had grown and 26% said it had got smaller, this shows that there are more groups growing than shrinking which is positive. Groups with an income below £10,000 were more likely to have got smaller rather than grown, and this implies they are struggling more to grow in the current funding climate.

40% of groups indicated their reserves had stayed roughly the same, with 20% seeing a growth and 29% a drop in their reserves. Worryingly 11% of groups indicated they had no reserves, including one group with an income between £50K and £100K.

Volunteer numbers

Most groups responding used volunteers in some way with only 6% of those responding stating they did not use any volunteers. 35% had 20 or more volunteers.

When asked if the volunteer count had changed over the last year half (51%) reported no change whilst 24% of groups reported a bigger count and 25% a smaller one.

Nearly half of organisations (45%) have changed how they recruit volunteers with nearly half (48%) of those who have made changes stating they have started using the [Volunteer Cambs website](#).

How groups raise funds

We can see that applying for grants from either trusts and funders or from a local authority, and raising money from supporters or donors remain the most used methods of funding an organisation.

For the first time we asked about ways in which groups might earn income and we can see that there is an even spread across the areas we asked about. It was also not a surprise to find larger organisations were more likely to be earning income than smaller ones. Around a quarter of those earning some income used all three methods.

Section 3 – What services group want

How people would like training delivered

For the first time since the end of the pandemic there is a preference for a move back to in person training for both staff and volunteers. This is a change on previous years where there was a preference for online training.

The question was asked in a different way in previous years but there has been a growth in demand for always available training for trustees and volunteers.

Training undertaken in the last year

Training provision by organisations is roughly the same over the last three years. However, given the issues about recruiting and retaining volunteers we are worryingly seeing a small drop in the training they are offered.

Given that we know the importance on training related to the improvement of volunteer experience it would be good to see this increasing.

Section 4 – What is needed from, and the impact of, the Support Cambridgeshire partners

Support Cambridgeshire through both Hunts Forum and Cambridge Council for Voluntary Service (CCVS) provide services under 4 distinct areas as described by our national body NAVCA

- **Leadership and advocacy:** Local infrastructure organisations are leaders in their communities, strengthening our sector's voice and influence on key decision-makers and funders. They support and empower vulnerable and marginalised communities, working towards a more equal society.
- **Partnerships and collaborations:** Local infrastructure organisations create opportunities for collaborative working by building networks and partnerships between local organisations and strategic partners. Through nurturing these relationships, communities are better equipped in both the development of ongoing projects and times of crisis.
- **Capacity building:** When local voluntary and community organisations have access to

practical support, people and communities become more resilient and able to flourish. Local infrastructure organisations can provide training, resources or advice to facilitate community development.

- **Volunteering:** Volunteering is integral to thriving communities. Local infrastructure organisations encourage and nurture volunteering opportunities, so that people can build connections and work together on things they care about, driving positive change locally.

The survey helps us to demonstrate some of the impact of what we are doing and helps us to understand what groups need from us and what they value.

The importance of representation and voice

Whilst overall levels of those that think voice and representation are extremely or very important remain steady, we are seeing an increase in those that feel this is extremely important. This shows we need to continue to champion and promote the sector as much as we can.

“The sector needs to keep driving home the message at all levels that the voluntary community is extremely important and needs support.”
(comment from respondent)

Networking is important

Networking continues to be an important part of what Support Cambridgeshire can offer. We collect data on the types of network that people want, but how we run them is important. We often hear comments such as:

“Sometimes lack of time creates difficulties in accessing things like this.”

The desire for online networking is reducing, but this has not been replaced by a growth in the desire for in person events, rather that people are happier to be flexible.

We need to harness technology to help to deliver proper hybrid networking, and to find a way to recreate the informal interactions that happen in person at online events.

Where support is needed

We asked groups where they thought support was most needed, the top six areas were the same for both in person support as well as support offered through the website and

newsletters. We also ask about training requirements to help us build our annual programme.

- Fundraising support
 - 62% in-person support and 59% web and news support
- Help with building partnerships with businesses
 - 38% in person support and 39% web and news support
- Help with any aspects of volunteering
 - 33% in person support and 45% web and news support
- Help with policies and procedures
 - 31% in person support and 37% web and news support
- Help with building relationships with other organisations
 - 30% in person support and 35% web and news support
- Help with any aspect of working with volunteers
 - 28% in person support and 32% web and news support

The quality of service you receive

We ask slightly different questions about the satisfaction for the two organisations, these results are aggregated out and combined.

When you look at overall satisfaction for all services for both organisations 87% are either extremely or very satisfied.

How happy are you with the support you receive?

- Extremely satisfied 51%
- Very Satisfied 42%
- Moderately satisfied 5%
- Slightly satisfied 2%

How happy are you with the information received?

- Extremely satisfied 36%
- Very satisfied 51%

- Moderately satisfied 12%
- Slightly satisfied 1%

Conclusions

“Our greatest glory is not in never falling, but in rising every time we fall.”

This quote from Oliver Goldsmith seems an apt quote for where the VCS is currently. Whatever is thrown at groups, staff and volunteers, we are getting back up to ensure we are there for our communities. On the face of it things this year look very similar to last year, which is good. Apart from the fact that we are starting from a low base following a global pandemic. Whilst standing still is not the worst place we could be, we would hope to be seeing improvement and increased optimism.

Much of the sector is becoming a lifeline that is helping keep people going (just). We do this with the well-rehearsed backdrop of less money, less volunteers and higher and more complex demand. We do this with no obvious light at the end of the tunnel. Nationally and locally there are flashes of change for the better but actual, real, meaningful change for communities and those that serve them appears to be missing.

At some stage we will have fallen so often that we can't get back up. For some groups this has happened, and they have closed. We have seen staff burn out and we have seen what happens when we can't meet the demand we face. The VCS was never meant to be the safety net for people or communities, but it is. We must find the courage to keep getting up and the support that Support Cambs partners provides helps build that resilience and strength. At the same time, we need to fight for the changes that mean we will no longer keep being knocked down. The changes that will allow us to concentrate on growth. The changes that will move the sector away from being the safety net and back to providing the services that help people out of that net.

Next steps

We ask about optimism or pessimism, but what we need is activism.

We want everyone to join us in telling those in power what is happening to the sector and those we work with. We want you to tell everyone what needs to change.

For the sector we need:

- Funding to be linked to an organisations vision and not just projects. It has to be multiyear

and include core funding.

- Real power to deliver with communities in a way that is bottom up and person centred.
- To be able to plan and not live hand to mouth.
- To spend less time applying and reporting on pots of money and more time on making a difference.

But we also need everyone in the sector to join us and tell people

- Your stories, what you do, and why it matters.
- What will happen if you aren't there, but the need still is.
- The difficulties you are facing and the difficulties those you are working with are facing.

We need you to become activists on behalf of those you work with, your organisation and the sector as a whole.

Methodology

The survey continues to build on previous versions. We keep as many of the questions the same questions as in previous years in order to help us to map trends but at the same time we are looking at how we can improve the survey both to increase responses and to improve how useful the results are.

We recognise that the survey is quite long and that this can deter people from completing it all. The estimated completion rate is 61% and the estimated time to complete is 21 minutes. We will continue to look at how we improve on these figures and whether two smaller surveys might be better. For now, this survey continues to deliver good results and information across a number of important categories.

The survey was shared widely by Support Cambridgeshire partners and by other organisations we work with. This resulted in 296 responses which was over 10% more than in the last year. We still see most organisations responding to the survey in links in our newsletters and email requests, and this tells us something about how our members and the wider sector hear our messages.

We had a more intense social media campaign this year and this has resulted in responses raising to 16% across all platforms including WhatsApp, this is up from 7% last year.

What are some of the barriers?

- Finding funding pots large enough. Small pots are great but multiply the amount of legwork required for the same amount of money coming from a larger grant.
 - Lack of space - we want to host many events, but space is our number one problem.
 - Getting funding for set up is relatively easy, getting funding for ongoing work is very hard.
- We are in this for the long term, and need to be able to guarantee funding for our salaried staff and activities
- Keeping up with demand
 - The cost of rent for appropriate venues for the number of our projects
 - Not enough hours in a day ;)
 - Skint
 - Staff burnout, morale poor as staff cannot support everybody who needs it, extremely deflating.
 - Lack of understanding of value of services and the wider impact by commissioners
 - Rising costs of living
 - Lack of regular funding impedes development and growth
 - Lack of funding from NHS despite us increasingly covering their shortfalls in provision for CYPMH
 - The rural nature of the county makes engagement difficult for our clients.
 - Long term funding to be able to plan for change over a longer period.
 - A significant rise in the complex needs of the people we support. Challenges working with other agencies that are oversubscribed and stretched themselves. Challenges around managing multiple funding streams within a very small team in particular bridging gaps in expertise
 - Really difficult getting enough funding to offer more to our community.
 - Ideally a location to call home with the facilities to support our group

What are some of the barriers?

- Complex funding requirements with onerous applications and monitoring, for little benefit. Funding for core costs and existing services/projects. Lack of sustainability and longevity in strategic service plans.

- Training / development of staff. Progressing staff enabling them to be seconded to a post or to take on responsibilities to develop.
- Lack of time to run the business and deliver our services
- Access to businesses/business partners; funds for overheads and core costs that aren't project based; lack of equipment like colour printers and personal microphones - not specifically tech, but vital to our work; I would say affordable venues but we've been very lucky so far
- We increasingly need digital infrastructure, and the costs are significantly increasing for us. Reliance of local government and central government gives us no certainty without developing our own income streams.
- Long term strategic funding (multiyear grants). Long term stability of space - nowhere to trade from 2027. Lack of available property to buy to work from.

Greatly increasing demand and less options to support people

- Acquiring level of skills needed for affordable salary
- Real risk of staff burnout. Our margins are so thin - made thinner by inflation as we've not been able to charge more for our services - and we ask a lot of our team. We've had episodes of sickness absence which put a lot of pressure on the remaining staff. I would like to have more of a buffer and allow more time for staff development but it's tough.
- Potential need to find a free to charity physical premises for the charity.
- Lack of space
- Time and Money to improve what we offer as resources are mostly applied to keeping the charity going and providing a good service to our users.
- Utilities and Rent skyrocketing, public and grant funding not keeping up with the cost of living crisis and not helping groups that support frontline services not related to a warm hub.

Increased demand for services – what they said

- We are being asked to provide creative workshops and training especially to young people which we'd love to do, but don't have the money or space to do that.
- We have limited ability to increase our offer and don't intend to so not an issue despite

possible demand.

- I cannot see any lessening in the need for our services
 - Particularly for the services that are not subsidised
 - We have a growing membership because there is not another club like ours in the area.
 - Due to lack of adequate mental health support services
 - Massive rise after Covid is not reducing. Later presentations. Complex cases. Increase in safeguarding work by 140%
 - More people using the nature reserve we manage
 - Demand continues to outstrip supply so Commissioners of services tend to see a reduction in the offering as a solution. Short-term maybe but longer term not.
 - Demand continues to rise. Support services provided by the state seem less and less available.
 - Massive increase in demand due to debts
 - There's a huge need./ demand out there for what we offer. We have proven that we have a positive impact in terms of improved wellbeing. It's very frustrating having the doubts about funding.
 - The tsunami of needs has no end in sight and we are becoming more of blue light service than we should be!
 - We want to reach a lot more young people because we know the need is out there.
- The pandemic and subsequent cost of living crisis has affected children's and family's mental health

Changes to local politics – what they said

- Releasing more funding for arts, culture and creativity in the area isn't going to happen under current government and in turn finances for local authorities.
- District and town councils cutting support to heritage
- The current City Council have been very supportive
- It is helpful if the local authorities share our passion for improving overall wellbeing for communities.

- Local Council could have helped with funding but decided to spend the money on a road rather than the youth community.
- Improved relationships with decision makers would assist us in meeting demand.
- It would help if the local councillors and politicians were more supportive of initiatives like ours that espouse the philosophy of shared economy and the circular economy. These are central to looking after the planet and should feature more prominently.
- Our funding relies largely on the goodwill of local politicians.
- Would like to see local politicians understand the voluntary sector better and use their power for good
- Parish Councils being open to funding youth services
- It feels like local politics are changing in the right direction despite the dire national picture but it's important to us that they continue to change
- Awaiting outcome of general elections and potentially different focuses

Uncertain economic outlook – what they said

- People can't afford the 'luxury' of creativity, learning, or paying for events, which means we're always doing free events with volunteers.
- We have to charge clients, those who are borderline able to afford them don't return after initial free session
- Cost of living has a significant impact on people on fixed incomes with limited opportunity to earn.
- This affects the parents ability to pay subs.
- It affects everything we do - operating, marketing, funding etc.
- People have less time and cash to support charities
- Use of foodbanks at all time high
- Because of the impact on funding pots.
- Uncertainty and cuts make it difficult to plan long term
- This affects our ability to attract support from corporate partners. In an uncertain time they don't commit. Could impact on our ability to get funding.

The move to a cashless society – what they said

- It would be easier if we could just use contactless for payment from our members but not possible for many of them.
- Some clients can only pay by cash
- We use contactless payments for collections now.
- I think a cashless society would cause more problems through lack of options and reliance on technology
- Not everyone is ready to move to a cashless society
- Really starting to become a problem with the move to online
- Makes fundraising at local events more challenging
- Some of our parents only deal in cash as this is the way they manage their budgets.
- This will be very difficult for our Members when we take them on trips the majority can only deal with cash
- We have just purchased a card reader for credit card transactions
- We rely on cash donations to support sponsorship
- It is now very difficult to manage banking even in Cambridge city due to banks closing down, so this is actually positive for us but negative for some of our clients
- We have cashless terminals
- This will impact fundraising
- Most of our members still use cash
- Many of our users don't have access to the Internet or the use of smart phones which makes life difficult
- Some people we support can't access bank account so cash will always have a place
- We have a SUMUP card machine and would recommend to any organisation
- This would be disastrous for most of our elderly members who only use cash and we would also be affected as people donate small amounts of cash to our charity.

Changes in technology and social media– what they said

- How people can access creativity and learn new technology may be useful, if we also include it in our offer.
- Social media is having a negative impact on young people's mental health
- Volunteers and Trustees find this difficult
- Positive effect on marketing and communications.
- We do need to be savvy with changes and keep on top of it!
- How can older adults be supported who do not involve themselves with technology and social media
- Online abuse is on the increase.
- Inability of vulnerable to access benefits made worse by digital divide.
- The challenge is how to keep up
- Important in a positive way enabling us to offer online services
- An additional need for clients that is now central to our provision
- We have people who help us to keep abreast
- Use of social media to reach out to otherwise difficult groups to engage with is becoming more important
- Challenges around cyber security, keeping up to date
- This is our main means of communication - so vital to stay on trend!
- We are seeing an increase in on-line facilitated abuse and harm
- It influences our publicity
- This helps with some aspects of what we do but also risks making the divide greater
- On boarding will speed up and Ai will help
- We are watching developments around AI very closely with its ramifications for employment.
- Our Facebook page has been suspended by Meta and despite several attempts we cannot find out why. We therefore have a love/hate relationship with social media.

- We use social media advertising to promote our group
- Our members are older and don't understand/ use / are up to date on this
- Isolates elderly people

New ways that people volunteer and get involved – what they said

- Relying on our membership to host events and volunteers is how we get by - if more people see the value in it for them and their family it could benefit us.
- We aren't currently looking to increase use of volunteers
- As volunteers need to be church members it is difficult to get the message through to them
- The Volunteers that we have are mostly family members or close friends of each other.
- We see very little change.
- How do you attract and retain volunteers that are of high quality to have an impact
- Retention has been an issue, but we are very aware of it.
- We would not survive without our volunteers
- This takes resources to do right and finding those resources can be hard
- Safer recruitment checks and further need to find the right volunteers
- Volunteers are important - current scheme has very positive feedback
- Request for awards for the future events planned for our Town. Integration with our community to engage and ensure our happy environment platform proves effective and beneficial opportunity for everyone in our Town
- We need engagement to make improvements in our local environment to make the village a more sustainable and healthier place to live
- I'm retired need to attract younger people
- Reviewing volunteering to ensure that we engage effectively with our volunteers
- We have a good supply of volunteers, and people that help.
- I have always said that a volunteer has a reason for volunteering, new ideas for capturing their interest, must include ways of attracting the older generation who are not social media savvy. The younger generation can add volunteering to their CV and may only volunteer for a short period.

- We are heavily reliant on volunteers who serve as role models and mentors to young people. We can't deliver many of our services without them so making it easy for them to volunteer is really important.
- We are constituted to work only in our two villages so are rather restricted as to where we can recruit from.
- Advertising and promoting the group on a variety of platforms is essential
- Struggle to get Trustees
- Volunteers are the lifeblood of our charity, we could not run without them

Increased social isolation – what they said

- Activities at the library are really important to relieve this
- Breaking down the barriers for socialising, whatever they are, is something we'd be keen to address.
- Big problem for local youth
- People without support networks are often less able to access support to improve their circumstances
- Leads to mental health issues which have a big impact on Surgeries workloads
- Some girls struggle to socialise
- This is one of the reasons we exist.
- An ongoing issue for older adults
- People use our garden as a means of interacting with others
- Mental health issues of our visitors increase with social isolation.
- That's what we target and so if people don't get information about us it makes it difficult for people to even try us out.
- Reducing social isolation is an outcome for our work.
- It would be a problem if we did not provide our services
- Lack of income will invoke isolation and MH concerns
- There's more need for our services.
- Young people engage online instead of in person due to anxiety
- Has caused increased service demands

- Loneliness increases demand for our services
- Our local social prescribers direct people who are socially isolated to us, we help them to feel part of the group.
- More people need us
- Since the Covid isolation period, many people are still very nervous about going out, we have also noticed an increase those who have lost a partner becoming more isolated. Those with health problems find it harder to travel, this noted within the older generation.
- This is something that has impacted our beneficiaries and it's a reason why our services are needed more than ever. In the past, teenagers had part-time jobs. They don't anymore and they're more anxious, uncertain and unprepared for the workplace than previously. Our job is to get them ready for work and able to secure employment.
- We combat this by being all inclusive and sharing refreshments together after activities.
- Our members are often single / have mobility issues
- This issue is the main reason we run our charity

Divisions and inequality in society – what they said

- Education resources are hugely lacking in creative subjects, even to GCSE levels where music isn't on offer - also cultural experiences remain in Cambridge and don't come out to the borders.
- We want to be fully inclusive but it is difficult without our own premises
- Attitudes to disabled people and people in receipt of benefits makes people less likely to access what they are entitled to, or the support to access it.
- There are divisions & inequality In all their lives due to their Various Disabilities, also lack of finance due to inefficient & unfair care packages decided by Local Authorities.
- Older adults all too often fall through the cracks when looking at issues of inequality. Assessments need to be more encompassing of demographic needs.
- Very relevant to the client group we work with
- Cambridge one of the most unequal cities regarding disparity between high income earners and low income households.

- Reducing inequality is an outcome for our work. If it no longer existed we would not be needed.
- Fundamental to our work is increasing the understanding that homelessness is often the result of earlier failures in support systems not a lifestyle choice for most people
- Ending individual inequality is paramount to ensure everyone will benefit from our future events planned
- To reduce the impact of climate change, everyone needs to commit to reduce their Carbon footprint but this is much harder for those on lower incomes, the elderly, those who don't own their own homes, etc.
- There's more need for our services.
- Most of our families are aspirational but struggling
- Seeing increased complex referrals as people struggle
- Everything we offer is free to the users, there should be no barriers to people being able to meet others, and the activity sessions we are holding are important for every user, not just those that can afford it. Also, holding classes locally removes the transport barrier too
- More people need us
- Cost living has affect a large scale of residents, families have suddenly found that the breadwinner has lost their job and have found the necessary support mechanism to help them cope.
- Part of our purpose is to increase equity through employment so an unequal society is a driver for us.
- We operate an inclusive policy and our tight knit village community is encouraged to accept all people. I don't see this changing any time soon.
- We are all equal and share the skills we have for the benefit of the community.

Climate change – what they said

- Art is politics. We are keen not to shy away from the most important issues, climate change is something we're keen to help address in our community.
- It is a concern for some clients and stress exacerbates their conditions
- For our young people to understand they can help make changes

- Where climate change impacts cost of living (e.g. food and fuel)
- Climate Change Is a worldwide situation. Which has been ignored for far too many years, not likely to be improved much in our lifetimes Too little Too late
- Potential flooding of venue in 50 Years time
- Climate extremes cause us to cancel activities sometimes.
- We already have Froglife working with our young people successfully and will continue
- Reviewing what we plant
- Collective anxiety around climate change increases the need for mental health support which simply isn't available.
- We cannot be complacent with regards to saving the planet
- This is something we would like to support locally but there are few opportunities to play a positive part
- Even changes in the weather affect our participants and whether they come along to sessions or not. Lack of money has a huge effect on whether they leave their homes or not as worries impacting their mental health.
- Awareness of our impact on the climate is an import factor for ensuring we are sustainable.
- This is a red herring. Stop this Net Zero con now!
- Promoting the clarification on how to move forward accordingly with regards to environmental impact management
- Future planning requires us to respond to the effects of climate change on biodiversity, weather patterns, increasing ambient temperatures, flooding, mental health problems, etc. and to support our young people in adapting to new ways of living if we are to reach the target of +1.5 degrees of warming. There is too little support from central government for the programmes of change that will be needed.
- It impacts us all indirectly e.g. increased fuel costs. And directly - The need to think about how we can operate sustainably. This takes time and effort putting demand on stretched resources.
- It's important more because we want to do the right thing

- We are also working out how to drive uptake of green jobs as a way to address the climate crisis.
- Climate change is major issue for us
- We try to maintain a low carbon footprint. We are trying to create a village transport solution in order to reduce the number of car journeys which will always be high in a rural setting such as ours.
- its largely a myth - please look at the real evidence (I have two science degrees)

Your county, your voice, our support

Support Cambridgeshire helps community groups and organisations to strengthen and grow, providing a range of advice, training and support.

We are a partnership between Hunts Forum and Cambridge Council for Voluntary Service. We recognise the need for greater cross-working and the ability to provide a high-level offer to charities, village halls and parish councils.

We would like to thank all those who have taken the time to complete this survey as well as the funders that make this and all our work possible.

Written by Mark Freeman

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