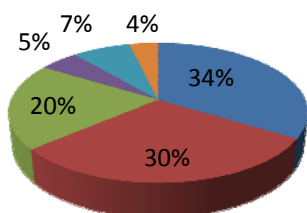


# Consultation with the Third Sector & Stakeholders in Renfrewshire

## About the Consultation

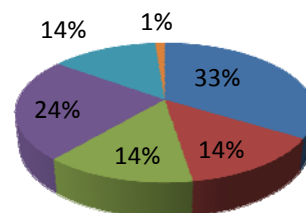
- This summary provides findings from a consultation with third sector organisations and stakeholders with 80 respondents (67% of those respondents work with volunteers) conducted by Catch the Light consultancy on behalf of RCVS and VCR.
- Following this consultation a stakeholders event was held and attended by 71 people. The notes from workshop discussions are detailed below.
- A separate consultation meeting was also conducted by the Volunteer Centre specifically targeting volunteer involving organisations. 14 organisations attended and 9 were interviewed by telephone. Five of these organisations also participated in the joint consultation. 21 of these respondents work with volunteers.
- Findings from both consultations concur on the key challenges and support some form of merger of RCVS/VCR in future.
- On average respondents have around 10 Board Members and 60 paid members of staff. However more than half of the respondents have no paid staff. The numbers of volunteers vary considerably with a range of 20-100 in lower income organisations, rising to 300 in higher income organisations and thousands in exceptional cases. Between them survey respondents have a total of 4,000 employees and 7,000 volunteers.

### Breakdown of respondents by scale



- Small-scale community initiative or project
- Small-medium scale service provider
- Medium-large scale service provider
- Large diversified service provider
- Social enterprise
- Other

### Breakdown of respondents by income



- Less than £5,000 per annum
- £5,001 - £25,000 per annum
- £25,001 - £100,000 per annum
- £100,001 - £1 million per annum
- £1 million - £10 million per annum
- More than £10 million per annum

### Top 5 Challenges - Working With Volunteers

- **Identifying appropriate funding for volunteering**
- **Recruiting volunteers**
- **Access to appropriate training for volunteers**
- **Lack of resources to support volunteers with additional support needs**
- **Marketing and promoting volunteering opportunities**

### Top 5 Challenges - Developing Organisations

- **Identifying and applying for appropriate funding**
- **Building effective partnerships**
- **Marketing and promotion**
- **Improving the quality of activities and services**
- **Maintaining current income**

### Services Accessed Most Often from the Volunteer Centre (VCR)

- Recruitment of volunteers,
- Celebrating and promoting the benefits of volunteering,
- Recognition and promotion of volunteering achievements
- Youth and MV (Millennium Volunteering) services (based on VCR consultation findings)

### Services Accessed Least Often from the Volunteer Centre (VCR)

- Creating and designing appropriate volunteer roles
- Management and development of volunteer programmes

### Services Accessed Most Often from the RCVS

- Getting information via the newsletter, e-bulletin or website
- Funding/fundraising advice
- Engaging with decision-making

### Services Accessed Least Often from the RCVS

- Meeting legal requirements
- Advice and support on improving services or activities

## THE SHAPE OF FUTURE SUPPORT FOR THE THIRD SECTOR AND VOLUNTEERING IN RENFREWSHIRE

By April 2011 Renfrewshire is required to have a 'Single Interface', basically one body that will support voluntary organisations, volunteering and social enterprises as well as provide connections between the Community Planning Partnership and the sector. More than 50% of respondents agree that a merger between RCVS and VCR is their first choice for Renfrewshire. RCVS and VCR have an in principle agreement to form a single organisation and work is underway to achieve this. When balloted, only three representatives attending the Stakeholders event said that they do not support the 'in principle agreement'.

People in Renfrewshire say they prefer a merger/single organisation because:

***"Services are too disaggregated – this is the only solution!"***

***"There is less chance of internal strife in the longer term."***

***"I will create a stronger organisation and a stronger voice at a local level."***

***"All the expertise is in one place."***

***"It minimises duplication, increases effectiveness and provides one point of contact."***

Organisations in Renfrewshire believe that in future they are most likely to need support with:

- **Strategic Issues;**
- **Funding, investment & resources;**
- **Partnership working,**
- **Marketing, and**
- **Recruiting volunteers**

The main findings were presented back to stakeholders at an event in December 2009 and further feedback gathered. Findings are presented below.

## **PRINCIPLES, PRIORITIES AND ACCESSING FUTURE SUPPORT SERVICES IN RENFREWSHIRE**

During the Stakeholders' Event workshops were held to get feedback on the principles for forming a single interface. Feedback from participants suggests that the single interface should be:

- **Independent from the public sector;**
- **Transparent in how it operates;**
- **Based on mutual respect and honesty (throughout the process of its formation);**
- **Committed to providing the best quality and best value services – an example of best practice;**
- **Representing the views and aspirations of local communities;**
- **Promoting partnership working; and**
- **Be empowering, inspiring, optimistic and enterprising.**

Participants believe once it is formed its priorities should focus on:

- **Management and development of volunteer programmes;**
- **Supporting volunteers with additional support needs;**
- **Celebrating and promoting the benefits of volunteering;**
- **Creating and designing appropriate volunteering roles;**
- **Funding and fundraising;**
- **Meeting legal requirements – including charitable accountability;**
- **Financial planning and management;**
- **Learning to become more enterprising;**
- **Engaging with decision-making and Community Planning – representing sector interests;**
- **Business/strategic and action planning;**
- **Growing assets, accommodation and resources;**
- **Providing administration, photocopying and payroll services;**
- **Tendering for public sector contracts, and**
- **Assessing needs, mapping and research.**

In terms of how services are delivered feedback suggests that people want better access to the services via:

- **A central 'prominent' building accessible to all – with good access for public transport;**
- **Website, newsletters, e-bulletins and social networking – interactive on-line services;**
- **Person-centred face-to-face contact;**
- **Making use of existing outreach/satellite resources in different locations (and mobile facilities);**
- **Sharing premises with other providers, and**
- **Having a good telephone service and using texting services.**

Overall there is broad based support for change. There is a need to bring third sector and volunteering support services up to date in Renfrewshire by streamlining them, making them more accessible, efficient and effective and tailoring them to meet the diverse needs of the sector.



Further information is available from RCVS Tel: 0141

587 2487 Email: [info@rcvsweb.co.uk](mailto:info@rcvsweb.co.uk)

A separate report on the VCR consultation is also available on request.

