

What were the main reasons why you have volunteered in the last 12 months?

4.92 Respondents who have either provided unpaid help to groups, clubs, organisations or someone who was not a relative were asked to provide reasons of volunteering in the last 12 months. The percentages of responses to these reasons are shown in the table below:

Reasons	Count	%
To make a difference	283	42.3%
Because of an interest or concern for client group or cause	252	37.7%
Because I was asked	143	21.4%
To get involved	132	19.7%
To use and share existing skills	106	15.8%
To gain satisfaction	79	11.8%
To meet people	72	10.8%
Other	71	10.6%
To have fun	55	8.2%
To fill spare time	34	5.1%
To get to know a community/neighbourhood	34	5.1%
To feel better	32	4.8%
To gain new skills	28	4.2%
To be with people different from myself	26	3.9%
To develop new interests	26	3.9%
As an alternative to giving money	23	3.4%
The organisation is nearby/accessible	21	3.1%
To feel valued	18	2.7%
To increase self esteem/self confidence	14	2.1%
A friend/relation is already volunteering	11	1.6%
Guilt	8	1.2%
To be challenged	8	1.2%
To add to my CV	6	0.9%
To help me get a job	6	0.9%
Boredom	3	0.4%
To gain status	2	0.3%

(Base number: 669)

4.93 Over one quarter of respondents who provided other reasons indicated that they volunteered to relieve stress or pressure from friends and neighbours. 10 respondents (14%) volunteered just to help people who were less fortunate. Christian commitment, offering support and giving something back to the community were each mentioned by 8 respondents (11%).

How did you hear about the volunteering opportunities that you were involved with?

4.94 The table below shows the source of information about the volunteering opportunities that the respondents were involved in.

Sources	Count	%
Friends or neighbours	300	44.8%
From someone else already with the group/organisation	163	24.4%
Place of worship	76	11.4%
Other	57	8.5%
Through previously using the service provided by the group	47	7.0%
School or college	46	6.9%
Don't know/can't remember	33	4.9%
Local newspapers	31	4.6%
Local events	19	2.8%
Volunteer Centre	16	2.4%
Promotional events	10	1.5%
Employer's volunteering scheme	8	1.2%
Internet	6	0.9%

(Base number: 669)

4.95 Other sources of information included word of mouth (12), through work (10) and meetings (3).

By area

4.96 The following table shows the differences with the five most frequently mentioned sources analysed across the three areas in terms of how the respondents heard about the volunteering opportunities:

Area	Bedford Borough		Mid Bedfordshire		South Bedfordshire	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Friends or neighbours	146	43.2%	82	56.2%	72	63.2%
From someone else already with the group/organisation	114	33.7%	26	17.8%	23	20.2%
Place of worship	60	17.8%	11	7.5%	5	4.4%
Through previously using the service provided by the group	34	10.1%	7	4.8%	6	5.3%
School or college	30	8.9%	9	6.2%	7	6.1%

What are the main reasons for not volunteering over the last 12 months?

4.97 Respondents who have neither provided unpaid help to groups, clubs, organisations nor someone who was not a relative were also asked to provide reasons of not volunteering in the last 12 months. A lack of time is the main reason that deterred 56% of respondents from volunteering.

Reasons	Count	%
Not enough time to volunteer	240	55.7%
My disability prevents me from volunteering	56	13.0%
Other	44	10.2%
I have never been asked to volunteer	42	9.7%
I am not interested in volunteering	42	9.7%
I was not aware of the need for volunteers	40	9.3%
I had concerns about the level of commitment required	28	6.5%
Lack of money	18	4.2%
Don't Know	18	4.2%
Lack of childcare/caring responsibilities	15	3.5%
I had concerns that I would be asked to take on too much	13	3.0%
There are no volunteering opportunities that interest me	12	2.8%
Transport difficulties	11	2.6%
I wouldn't have the confidence to volunteer	10	2.3%
I didn't have any relevant experience	8	1.9%
I didn't know what was involved	8	1.9%
I didn't have any relevant knowledge	7	1.6%
I didn't know I could volunteer	6	1.4%
I have had a bad volunteering experience in the past	6	1.4%
I didn't have any relevant skills	4	0.9%
Language difficulties	2	0.5%
Peer pressure	1	0.2%

(Base number: 431)

4.98 Other reasons mentioned for not volunteering included 'too old to volunteer' (26) and 'looking after a relative' (6).

What would be the most likely to encourage you to do some form of volunteering in the next 12 months?

4.99 Respondents who have not volunteered in the last 12 months said the following would encourage them to volunteer:

Reasons	Count	%
Other	190	44.1%
Don't know	99	23.0%
If I had more information about organisations/opportunities available	40	9.3%
If I were asked	36	8.4%
If there were more short term or one off opportunities	34	7.9%
If I felt my efforts would be appreciated	17	3.9%
If I had more information about the benefits of volunteering	17	3.9%
If I could see how my contribution would make a difference	17	3.9%
Being paid expenses	16	3.7%
If I was offered the opportunity to gain recognised training qualifications	15	3.5%
If childcare/caring costs or facilities were available	12	2.8%
If there were a wider verity of opportunities	11	2.6%
If I had access to equipment that would support my disability	5	1.2%
If I could access training for volunteer roles	5	1.2%
If I could read about others personal experiences of volunteering	2	0.5%

(Base number: 431)

4.100 A high number of other reasons were given to this question and the main responses included 80 respondents who had not volunteered in the last 12 months but would like to volunteer if they had more time and 74 respondents would not volunteer no matter what because they need help themselves and 12 said they would have volunteered if they had been younger.