



VCS Emergencies  
Partnership

# VCS EP Pulse Check

Week of 18 January 2021

Results published 25 January 2021

## Summary

- 40% of respondents in the London, 36% in the Midlands & East, 39% in the North, 21% in the South East and 34% in the South West reported significant or major **concerns about unmet needs** in their area in the 7 days prior to data collection
- **Service Delivery/Capacity, Mental Health/Isolation, Health and Hardship** were the most frequently mentioned unmet needs in the 7 days prior to data collection
- 29% of respondents reported significant or major concerns about the **capacity** of the voluntary sector to respond to local needs in the 7 days prior to data collection
- **Service Delivery/Capacity, Funding/Sustainability, Health and Hardship** were the most frequently mentioned issues affecting voluntary sector capacity in the 7 days prior to data collection

## About this survey

This survey was conducted between 18 – 20 January 2021. Of 198 organisations surveyed, 148 responses were received – a response rate of 74%.

Respondents were asked to provide a high-level assessment of unmet needs and voluntary sector capacity in the past 7 days and an indication of priorities in the following 14 days.

Respondents were asked for a general assessment based on existing knowledge of local conditions; responses should be interpreted as a rough indication of where gaps exist.

With this in mind, survey results should be used to highlight areas for further exploration and engagement rather than as a definitive picture of unmet needs in England.

Responses are grouped by VCS EP multi-agency cell (*see map on p.6*).

Contact: [vcsep\\_im@redcross.org.uk](mailto:vcsep_im@redcross.org.uk)

# Concerns about the level of unmet needs in your area in the last 7 days?

	No concerns	Slight concerns	Significant concerns	Major concerns	Not sure
North	8%	54%	36%	3%	0%
Midlands & East	6%	58%	27%	9%	0%
London	0%	60%	35%	5%	0%
South East	7%	72%	21%	0%	0%
South West	0%	67%	30%	4%	0%
England	5%	61%	30%	4%	0%

Areas with major concerns flagged over unmet needs

**London**  
- Kensington & Chelsea

**Midlands & East**  
- Derbyshire  
- Norfolk  
- Nottinghamshire

**North**  
- Lancashire

**South West**  
- Milton Keynes

*Figures are rounded and may exceed 100% in total*

Most frequently mentioned needs concerns\* in the 7 days prior to data collection:

1. SERVICE DELIVERY/ CAPACITY	2. MENTAL HEALTH/ ISOLATION	3. HEALTH	4. HARDSHIP	5. FOOD POVERTY
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\* Ranking of mentions of each issue in open text answers

# Concerns about the capacity of the voluntary sector in your area in the last 7 days?

	No concerns	Slight concerns	Significant concerns	Major concerns	Not sure
North	10%	51%	33%	3%	3%
Midlands & East	9%	61%	21%	9%	0%
London	15%	60%	20%	5%	0%
South East	10%	72%	17%	0%	0%
South West	11%	56%	30%	4%	0%
England	11%	59%	25%	4%	1%

Areas with major concerns flagged over voluntary sector capacity

**London**  
- Kensington & Chelsea

**Midlands & East**  
- Derbyshire  
- Norfolk  
- Nottinghamshire

**North**  
- Halton & St Helens

**South West**  
- Milton Keynes

*Figures are rounded and may exceed 100% in total*

Most frequently mentioned capacity concerns\* in the 7 days prior to data collection:

1. SERVICE DELIVERY/ CAPACITY
2. FUNDING/ SUSTAINABILITY
3. HEALTH
4. HARDSHIP
5. MENTAL HEALTH/ ISOLATION

\* Ranking of mentions of each issue in open text answers

# Priority concerns\* in your area in the next 14 days?

**MENTAL  
HEALTH**

**80%**

**HARDSHIP &  
FINANCIAL  
SUPPORT**

**66%**

**FOOD**

**53%**

**IT ACCESS/  
DIGITAL DIVIDE**

**37%**

Families who were struggling financially are now finding it difficult to keep their homes and children warm during winter home schooling.

The digital divide is widening. Especially for children home schooling without appropriate resources.

Concern for elderly populations and those most clinically at risk, they are finding it challenging to access vaccine sites.

The increase of cases and deaths is having an impact on the VCSE care sector. The mental health of those bereaved will specifically impact carers.

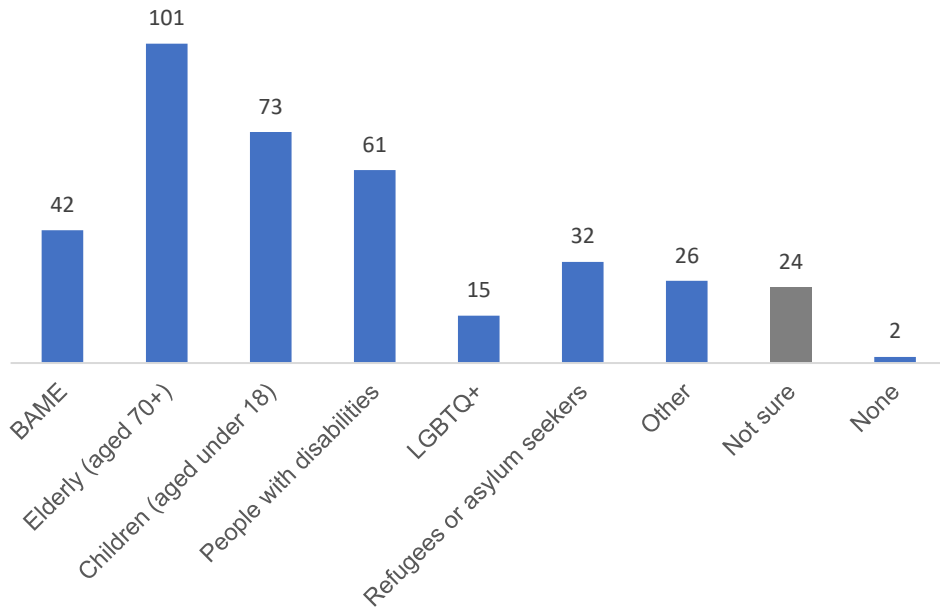
There are discussions with funders about strategic ways to increase the capacity and resilience of local VCSE organisations. The sector needs investment in logistics, planning, organising, co-ordination.

We are seeing reduced levels of volunteers due to shielding/ home schooling/caring/increased numbers with virus/ those isolating and general sector fatigue.

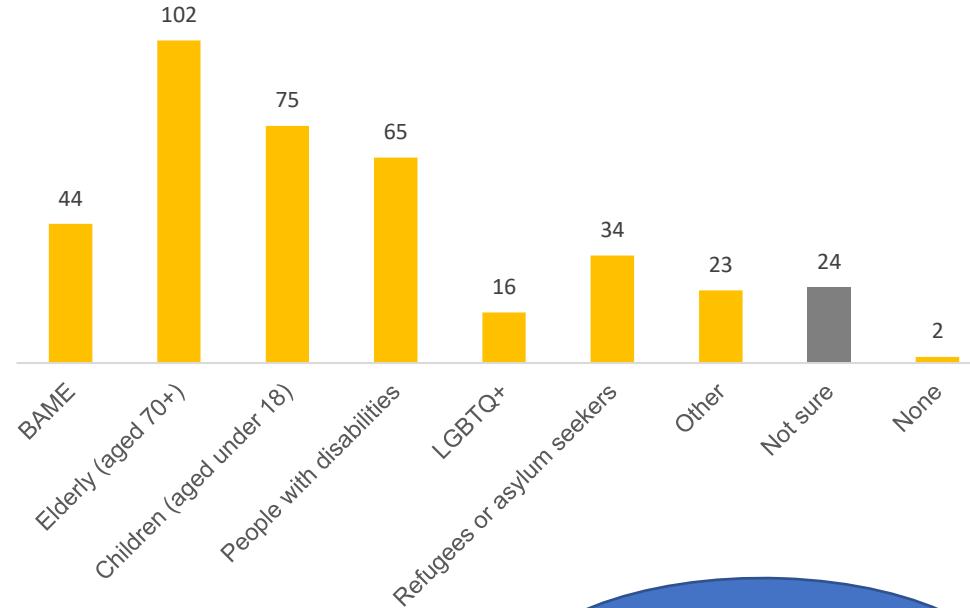
\* Percentage of total respondents that answered this as one of the top three sectors of concern in the next 14 days. The list available to select from was: food, housing/temporary accommodation, mental health, healthcare, hardship & financial support, protection & safeguarding, employment advice & support, IT access/digital divide, fuel poverty, other, none, not sure.

# Vulnerable populations

In the last 7 days, do you think any of these populations groups were in particular need of support?



In the next 14 days, do you think any of these population groups will be in particular need of support?



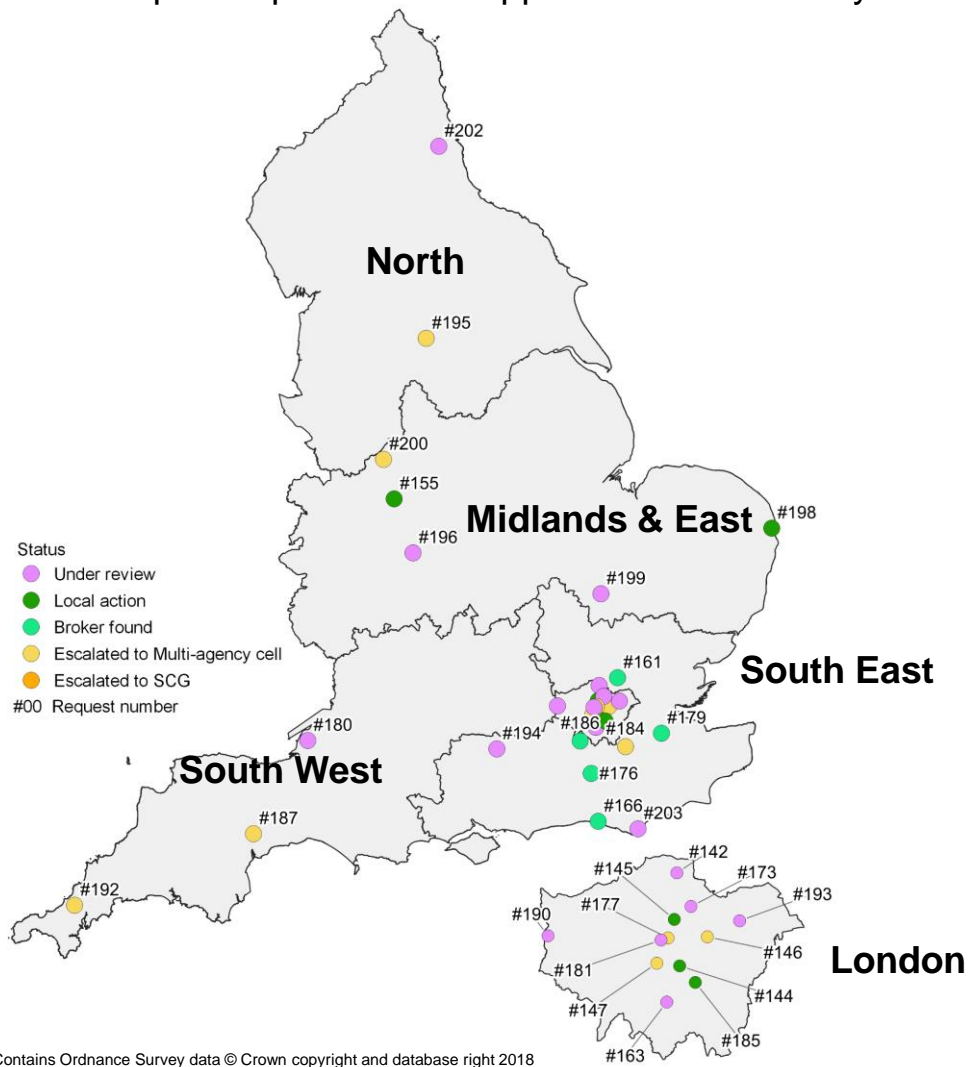
Other groups mentioned:

- People in rural communities
- Domestic abuse
- Home-schooling and working parents
- Free school meals
- Mental health
- Low income families/financial hardship
- Migrant workers
- Carers
- Isolated people
- Those with no recourse to public funds
- Refugees/asylum seekers
- Digitally excluded
- Clinically extremely vulnerable
- Homeless
- Orthodox Jewish Community

Funeral/burial poverty is an issue, support needs to be given to disadvantaged families.

# Requests for support

Status of open requests\*\* for support as of 25 January



VCS EP open requests\*\* for support as of 25 January

By category:

Transportation & delivery	4
Personal protective equipment	5
Funding advice	5
Guidance	2
Specialist training	4
Mental health or well-being	3
Volunteers	24
Other	5

By region:

Midlands & East	6
London	13
North	2
South East	7
South West	4

## RE:ACT unmet needs requests in 30 days to 25 January\*

By category:

Food	1
Strategic planning	2
Testing	1
Welfare	1
Vaccinations	6

By region:

Midlands & East	1
South East	2
South West	7
London	1

\* Requests from England only

\*\* Open requests on the VCS EP request for support sharepoint