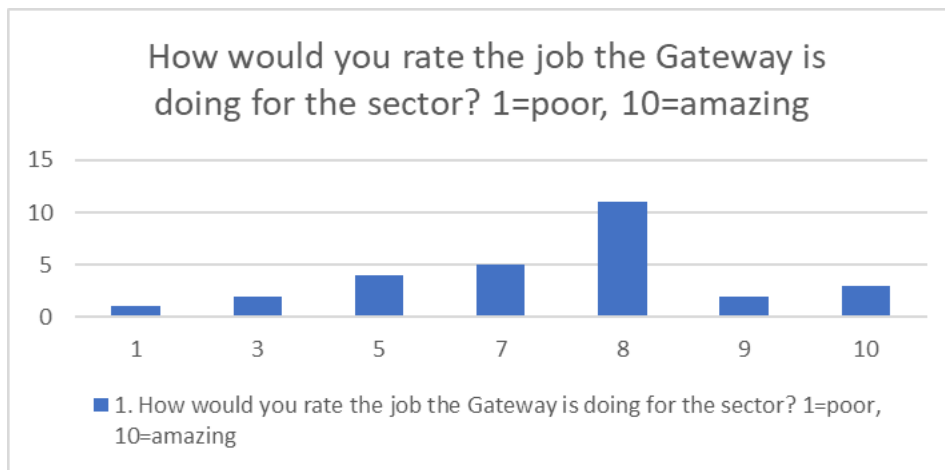


In September this year we embarked on our first members survey with the aim to get a better understanding of the needs of the sector and how we can better serve those needs. Already this year we appointed two staff members to help support the sector, Operations Manager Stuart Barrie and Partnerships officer Tracy Kerr.

This survey is the start of the work that we will be striving to ensure the Third Sector in West Lothian is fully supported in the tremendous work they do in our communities. We had 29 responses to the survey which was completed online in September and October 2022. Whilst we are pleased to see positive responses we fully recognise there are areas we need to develop and strengthen to further serve the sector.



We asked, 'What would you like to see us do more of?'

You said....

- More Training, conferences and campaigning
- Be visible Support charities - visit them.
- Coordinate activities. Network charities so that there is not duplication, opportunities for collaboration.
- Provide up to date information for charities. For a team the size that you have, I do not do what you do. Nor do many of my peers.
- More Training and Networking events
- More work on encouraging more volunteers
- Strategic positioning and representation for and of the sector
- Collaborative working, training for third sector
- More events for knowledge sharing and promoting the sector. More research into the third sector in West Lothian, to then be used to promote sector. How much income is generated? How much support is given? What's areas of growth? Where are the gaps? How do we fill the gaps?
- Very happy with everything that you are doing
- Not sure what you do
- West Lothian feels like it is behind the curve in terms of working between the Third Sector and the Local Authority. It would be good to see the Gateway taking the lead on issues and bringing 'best practice' from other Third Sector interfaces around the country.
- Stronger leadership and standing up to Council

We will / We have

- Aim to provide more training opportunities through our own events and publicising training available
- Through the work our team and development officer we will have and more active role engaging with organisations.
- We will support and encourage collaboration for the sector.
- Working with West Lothian Council we published a report into West Lothian's Third Sector providing an overview of activity and impact.
- We will enhance our communications strategy inform and update more on what we are doing.
- We hosted a hustling to challenge prospective council candidates before the Council election and we will continue to strongly advocate for the sector in our representations.

Thinking about our communications, is it



■ About Right ■ Would like to hear more

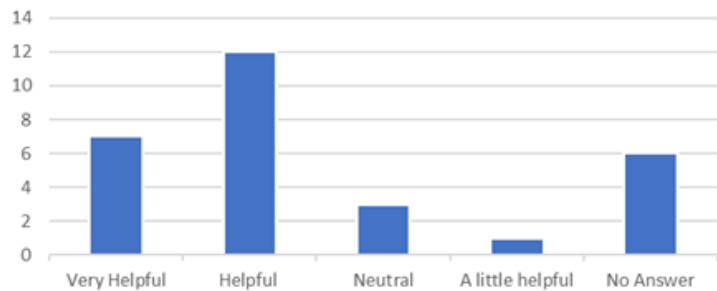
Our communications strategy is under continual review. We have recently changed website providers and will be working on ways we can improve our website. Social Media is our main communication channel and we have worked on developing and incorporating a brand architecture that will help our messaging stand out.

With home working in the first few months, we transitioned through the tiered system of lockdown and back into our office.

We will endeavour to respond to all enquiries in a timely manner.

We also work on being clearer on the best ways to get the team which may not always be through the office number due to hybrid working.

If you have used our services for support or an enquiry, how would you rate it?



Does the Gateway do enough to support Volunteers?

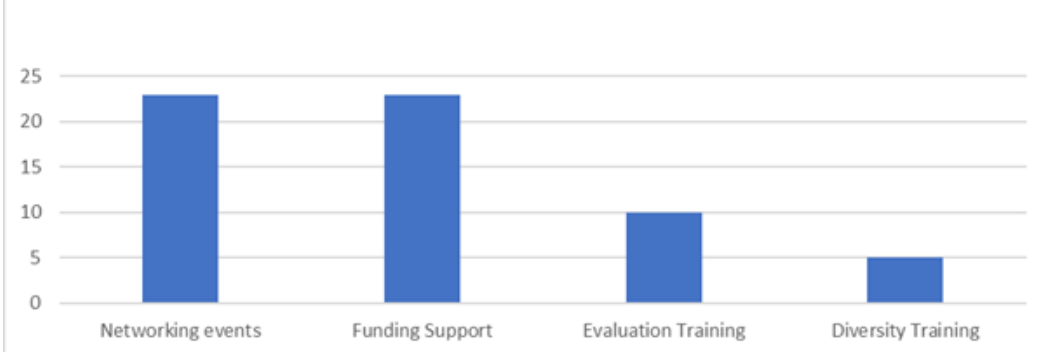


■ Strongly agree ■ Agree ■ Disagree ■ Strongly disagree ■ No answer

Volunteering is at the core of what we do.

In 2023 we will be hosting more panel sessions around volunteering and will be developing how we communicate the latest updates or new best practise recommendations to the sector

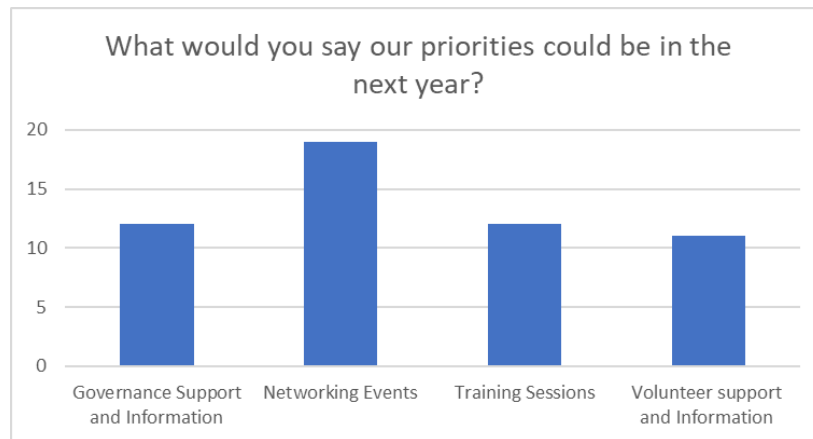
What sessions or events do you think we should be hosting for the sector?



In Autumn 2022 we hosted 3 networking and training panel events for the sector and aim to at least double this for 2023. We will be specifically targeting funding training areas for our members in 2023.

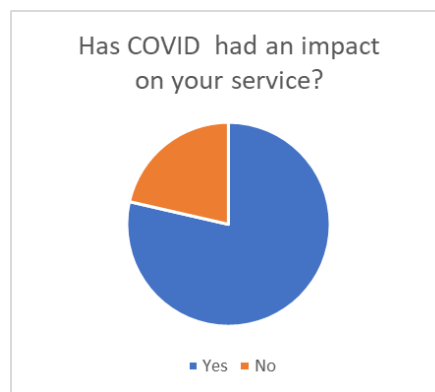
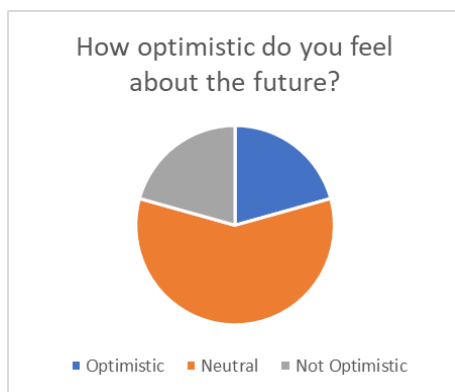
We had a fantastic response to our Diversity Panel and will follow up with another event next year. Our aim is to have our office as a hub for the sector as a place to meet, exchange ideas and offer peer support. In our first year in our office, we have made good strides in making this happen and installed cutting edge Clevertouch technology to facilitate collaboration. We have exciting plans for the year ahead on how we drive forward bring the sector together.

We take on board all of the comments made on our priorities and will feed them directly into our strategies and operations to ensure we are working effectively on our member needs



Other responses included

- Support charities with growth, recruitment of staff and volunteers, Share best practice, Connect charities / facilitate networking / bring charities together who are working in the same area (although this would mean VSG knows what all the charities are doing across WL, which I doubt you do), Best practice templates, information, pro formas to share with charities.
- Devise a strategy for the 3rd sector in West Lothian to create a volunteer bank or help with proactively recruiting volunteers as so many orgs face increased difficulty recruiting volunteers
- Consultation and strategic visioning and porting of the sector
- Strategic work to convince Govt and local authority to deal more fairly with the sector in West Lothian
- Encouraging more joined up thinking, funding and strategic development.
- Leading on a strategy for engaging with Council



What is your biggest concern for your own organisation over the next 12 months?

- Staffing and Funding
- Coping with workload
- Mass increase in referrals and lack of funding
- Continued funding and staffing (recruitment & retention)
- Recruiting and retaining staff and volunteers.
- Funding, accommodation
- Sustainability, keeping the doors open
- Funding at a time when we're facing increased demand for support
- Funding to cover core costs
- Rising costs and demand for services. Lack of resources. uncertainty of funding
- Re-activating volunteers, which is still going slowly. Funding should be more stable.
- Survival
- Funding, funding, funding, staff recruitment and welfare,
- Maintaining the momentum, we have established in recovering from Covid
- Funding and drop in volunteer numbers
- An ageing congregation and declining numbers.
- Not enough donations of products meaning we need to buy with little financial income
- Getting through the funding crisis with as many services still running as possible.
- Recruitment, retention and staff wellbeing.
- "Funding Opportunities to work together"