



Annual User Survey 2010 Summary Report

Skye & Lochalsh Council for Voluntary Organisations

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Company Ltd By Guarantee SC177372

Summary Report Skye & Lochalsh CVO Annual User Needs Survey 2010

INTRODUCTION

Each year our Annual User Survey helps us to gather valuable feedback on customer care, an insight into the way YOU value our services and to evaluate your priorities and needs.

This year, facing cuts in our core funding from 2011 and undergoing a network restructuring, the Annual User survey was more crucial than ever in helping us to listen to your comments and plan of our future service provision. It also gives us valuable evidence that we are still meeting the needs of the local community.

This year, for the first time, we used the online Survey Monkey package to give respondents the chance to complete our survey electronically.

- A direct link to the Survey was sent by e-bulletin to the **281** subscribers on our Local E-bulletin Subscriber list - these included 208 of our members
- Hard copies of the survey were also posted directly to our members (along with FREEPOST envelopes) 9 July 2010
- Deadline for response was 2nd August 2010

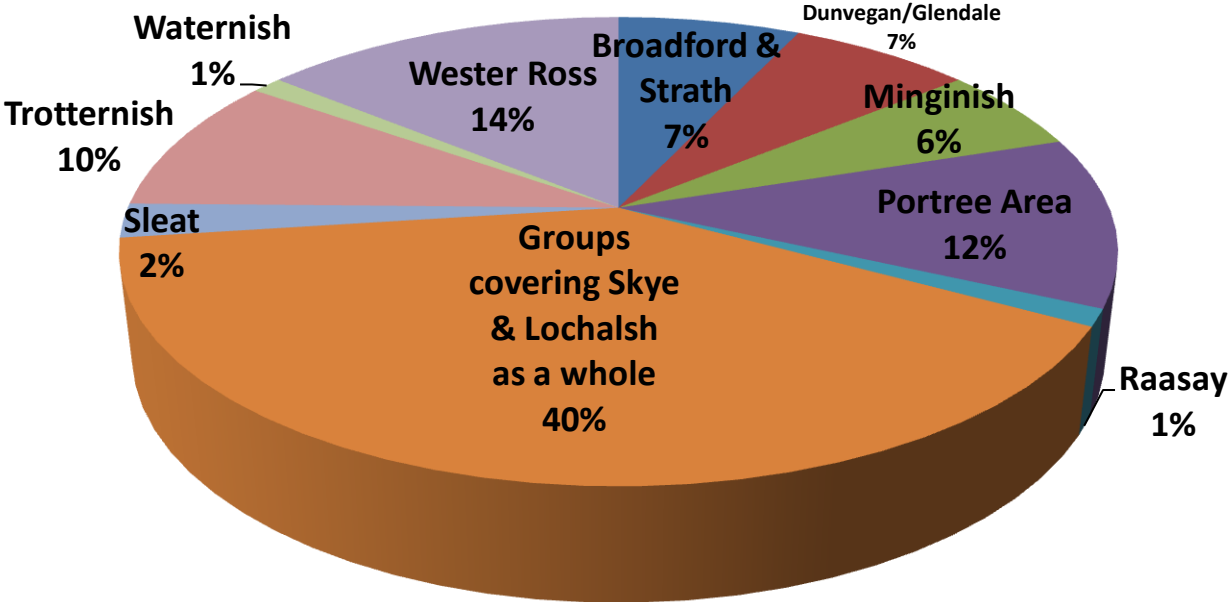
Out of these recipients, a total of 105 surveys were completed. This represents a 37% return rate.

- **60%** of surveys were completed by hand
- **40%** online

Q1 Are you (or the group you are representing) a Member with Skye & Lochalsh CVO?

93% of those people completing the survey are current members with Skye & Lochalsh CVO either as individuals or as representatives of a community group.

Q2. This survey can be completed anonymously but to help us get a clear picture on the geographical spread of respondents, please tell us in which geographical area are you/your group based?



Q3 Please tell us if you are completing this survey as a representative of a group/organisation/agency or as an individual.

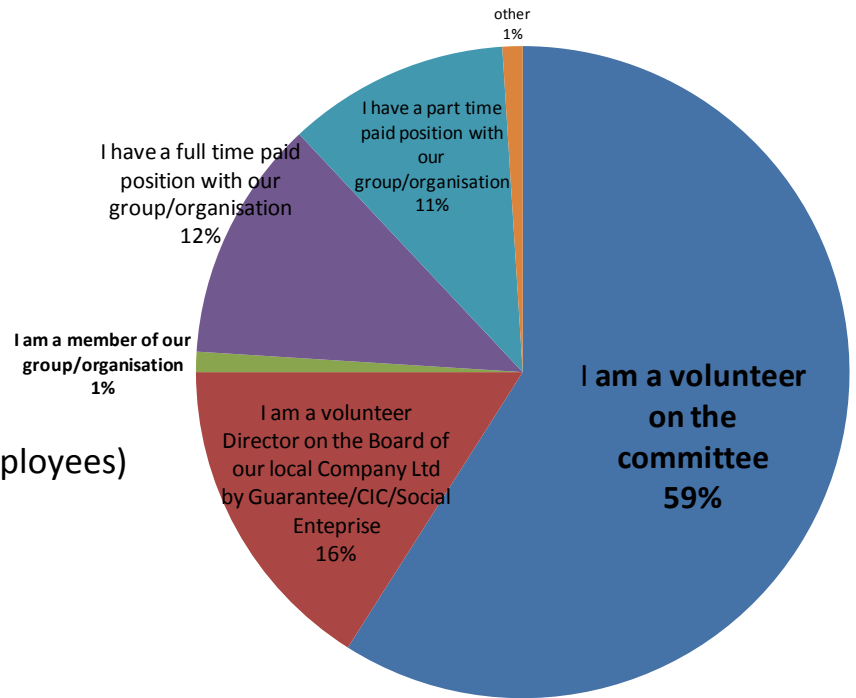
Representatives from 84 different community groups, 1 statutory agency and 20 individuals completed the survey. A full list of participating groups is available at the end of this report.

Q4. Which hat are you wearing? Please choose the option which best describes the capacity in which you are representing your group/organisation.

76% of respondents are unpaid volunteers

16% of these are on the board of either a Company Ltd by Guarantee, CIC or a Social Enterprise

23% are in paid positions (of which 11% are full time paid employees)



Q5 To help us get an overview of the number of people active in the voluntary sector, please tell us approximately how many of each of the following is involved with your group/organisation:-

The breakdown of volunteers, paid staff and members gives us a total equivalent to nearly 8,000 local people. Paid staff make up just 3.7% of this total.

volunteers	1349
paid staff - full time	126
paid staff part time	166
members	6171
total people	7,843

Q6. We are keen to know how the recession has been affecting the local community sector over the last 18 months.

There was good and not to so good news here.

The more positive responses indicated that:-

- **65% said that they had NOT had a funding application turned down**
- **35% had experienced an increase in user/client uptake of their services**
- **84% had NOT experienced a downturn in their service uptake**

The not so positive indicated a less settled picture:-

- **8% said that they had cuts made to their usual core funding and a further 20% said that they were facing this possibility**
- **26% had experienced a stand-still in their funding situation (with no uplift this year) and a further 13% were facing this as a possibility for next year**
- **82% had been forced to make cuts to their service provision**

COMMENTS:-

“We are noticing a down-turn in donations to our organisation due to the financial climate and are finding it more difficult to attract extra funding from Trust Fund applications.”

“Due to Highland Council not increasing funding and with increasing costs we have a bigger deficit every year.”

“some of our staff hours have been cut”

“We are very concerned about how we can find funding to keep our service running and to expand our services.”

“Support needs are increasing and running costs are increasing whilst some core funding stands still. Real anxiety around future funding when existing programmes come to an end...”

“Increased outside pressure on time is meaning that volunteer contribution is facing a downturn.”

“It has been very difficult to access start-up funding of any sort without which makes it very difficult for a voluntary body to provide a useful service.”

“We do not receive funds from any official body. Our funding is from the membership and occasional donations from local charitable bodies. We tailor our activities to fit our funds.”

“we are actively looking at ways of earning money to be sustainable....”

Q7. Please rate the importance of the following Skye & Lochalsh CVO services to you/your group.

Not surprisingly **funding searches**, assistance with **funding applications**, help with **policies & procedures**, **charity issues**, **training/events** and **promotion** were rated consistently high - as either Very Important/Important to the majority of respondents.

TOP 6 services each rated VERY IMPORTANT/IMPORTANT	% of respondents
PROMOTION	72%
FUNDING SEARCHES	69%
TRAINING & EVENTS	69%
CHARITY INFORMATION & ADVICE	62%
Help with POLICIES & PROCEDURES	61%
Help with making FUNDING APPLICATIONS	60%

Full responses:-

	Very Important	Important	Not Important	Don't Know/NA
constitutions	26	29	20	27
legal structures	21	27	19	35
funding searches	42	28	5	26
funding applications	33	28	14	26
policies & procedures	27	35	17	22
employment issues	9	16	33	43
charity issues	30	33	15	24
promotion	34	39	8	21
room hire	14	18	33	37
VC	5	4	46	46
office services	11	14	45	31
photocopying	18	16	40	28
design work	13	21	40	27
training/events	29	41	11	21

COMMENTS:

“SLCVO is undoubtedly the most useful of all the agencies that attempt to help community initiatives.”

“Nothing else provides such a good one stop shop for so many issues affecting small isolated communities.”

“...we are a social enterprise and ... we rely on the networking opportunities SLCVO creates.”

“A lot of ticks in the ‘not important’ column makes it look like we don’t value the SLCVO but WE DO!! The help we get in promotion our activities & services is invaluable. We would make more use of some of the other services if we were closer....” [respondent based in Inverness]

“I think it’s great that you offer help with employment, charity, constitution, funding applications etc and I don’t want to devalue these. We no longer need them because of our size and relative formality, but they are important services to the community. “

Q8. We also need to know how much you/your group value the practical aspects of our services & how we communicate.

	VERY IMPORTANT- IMPORTANT % of respondents	NOT IMPORTANT % of respondents
Members newsletter	90%	10%
Our website	90%	10%
E-bulletins	89%	11%
Face to face advice & information	85%	15%
Networking opportunities	84%	16%
Enquiry handling by direct email	78%	21%
Outreach	58%	42%

COMMENTS

“All these services are important to the community”

“The e-bulletins keep us informed of what is going on and any relevant training.”

“It’s so important to an embryonic project to have local advice available when needed.”

“Since the office is based in Portree it is easy for organisations based in Portree to call into the office.”

“Consistent excellent service, advice and help with some of the most awkward questions!”

At least three of the comments indicated that our survey had acted as a reminder to the group as to the level and range of services offered by SLCVO

- *“We have not used you as much as we could/should. We all seem to be so busy, but the help, services you offer etc look really good & hopefully we will be contacting you in the near future.”*
- *“to date we have not used your services fully. Hope to do more in the near future.”*

A few respondents offered constructive suggestions:-

- *“I think much could be done to target young people so they know you are there.”*
- *“perhaps we communicate too frequently”*

Q9. Please prioritize the 3 services currently provided by Skye & Lochalsh CVO which you/your group benefit most from:

The answers to this survey revealed that the majority of our users prioritise the following:-

- 1. information & advice service** (and in particular the fact that we are here to talk to face to face)
- 2. our online services**
- 3. assistance with fundraising** – including the help we give in identify suitable funding sources and our tips and feedback on draft applications

Full responses:-	1st	2nd	3rd
Advice	11	18	13
Toolkit/website/e-bulletins	14	16	8
Funding	23	13	8
photocopying	12	2	6
promotion	4	4	7
room hire	3	4	5
charity issues	2	2	5
newsletter	4	3	3
networking	4	3	5
strategic lobbying	1	2	0
business plans	1	1	0
training/events/outreach	2	3	6
not answered	17	28	33
total	99	99	99

Q10. We take customer care/quality of service seriously. Please rate your experience of the following:-

Your experience of our Customer Care rated VERY SATISFIED-SATISFIED	% of respondents
The welcome you receive from us (whether by phone or in person)	97%
The quality of services you access from us	99%
The quality of the information we provide	99%
The promptness and efficiency in which we handle your enquiries	96%

As well as gathering feedback on customer experience throughout the year, we also ask you ***How Did We Do?*** in the annual user survey.

User feedback on customer experience is part of our ongoing commitment to customer care, and we are always striving to maintain our high levels of customer satisfaction and to improve on customer care ratings where we can.

Last year staff & board of SLCVO completed Level One of the PQASSO quality standards and next year we will be working on our Commitment to Excellence Award (EFQM) so feedback is an important part of this.

The survey asked for respondents to indicate their level of satisfaction as very satisfied – satisfied- neither satisfied or unsatisfied- unsatisfied. There was also an option to say that these things were not applicable.

100 people answered the question and 30 left comments. No-one indicated that they were dissatisfied with any aspect of our services and ratings were consistently high, averaging 98% very satisfied-satisfied.

COMMENTS

“It’s a fantastic service and customer care and quality of service is five star!”

“always prompt, efficient and friendly” “a great service and a great resource”

“excellent and impossible to replicate at a distance or by internet and phone alone”

“Always friendly and knowledgeable, a great support”

“We couldn’t provide our service without the help of SLCVO”

Q11a. Please indicate how much you agree/disagree with the following statements.

We then gave you a series of neutral statements and for each one asked you to say whether you Strongly Agreed – Agreed – Neither Agreed nor Disagreed (i.e. were neutral) – Disagreed – Strongly Disagreed.

The majority of respondents **STRONGLY AGREED/AGREED**

with the following statements about the accessibility of our services :-

- It is important to me/our group to be able to access a locally based support agency such as SLCVO
- It is important to me/our group that SLCVO staff have local knowledge
- Having the SLCVO office in Portree is very important to me/our group

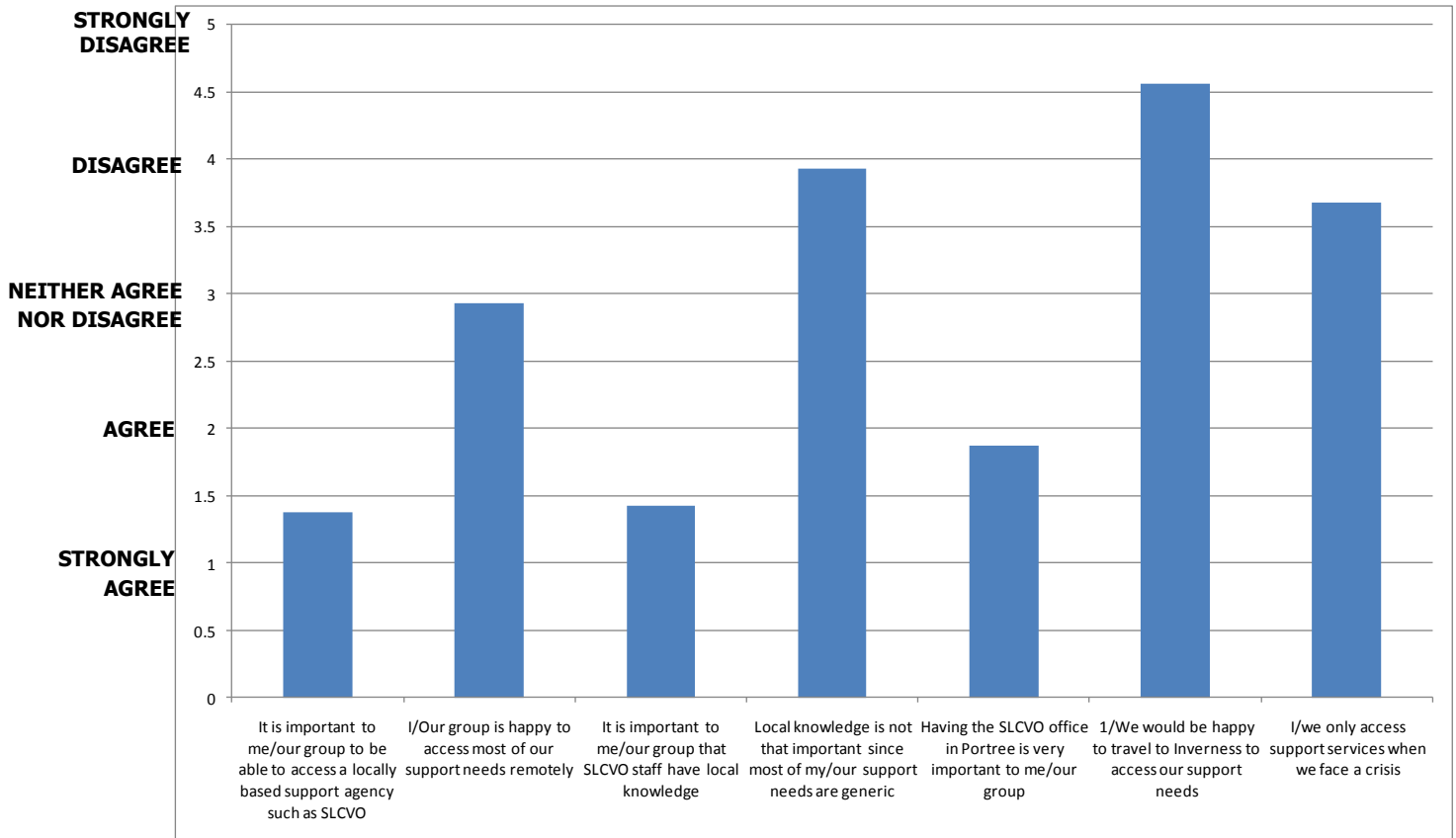
The majority of respondents **STRONGLY DISAGREED/DISAGREED**

with the following statement about the accessibility of our services:-

1. I/We would be happy to travel to Inverness access our support needs

the majority weighting for this was heavily towards Strongly Disagree

These responses are important to us because they show how much you value our local presence and our abilities to understand the issues that are specific to Skye & Lochalsh.



Q11b If Skye & Lochalsh CVO were no longer able to operate – do you know who you would turn to for support?

A total of 66 people answered this part of the question.

Most of these comments indicated that groups would be at a loss who to turn to should SLCVO cease to operate.

“SLCVO have always been the first service to approach, whatever the need for advice and information, as they cover such a wide range of resource. I don’t know where we would turn if they were no longer able to operate.”

“Such a valuable and important service needs to be operated at local level, where staff are aware of the needs of charities and voluntary organisations that are the lifeline to communities in the Highlands & Islands. SLCVO works so well because they are aware of the local issues and difficulties and can respond to them. Please do not let our local services disappear!”

“Don’t know where we would go to access the service we currently enjoy”

“there is no suitable alternative”

“No! everything is being centralised to the detriment of fragile remote communities – it must stop!”

“I have no idea who could give our group the information we require in one place.”

“For charities like SkyeDance with time and financial constraints it is critical to have a service like this at our doorstep.”

“SLCVO is a lifeline here – nobody else can do the job like SLCVO!”

“No-SLCVO has become pivotal in all sorts of activities not just for our group but for all sorts of useful information & guidance geared to our local situation.”

A few respondents made some suggestions for other possible sources of support :-

“the funding agencies themselves, internet support from a central base – however the immediacy of support and resolve of issues would be lost, communicating with non local agencies would not be beneficial.”

- HISEZ – 1
- HIE -1
- Highland Council - 2
- Youth Scotland - 1
- CAB - 1
- OSCR online – 1
- Ross-shire Voluntary Action (Dingwall) - 2
- SCVO were suggested – with reservations - by 3 respondents

“probably SCVO but have not had much direct contact with them so not sure of their local knowledge”

“I suppose SCVO but distant contact will not fill SLCVO’s important place” “National CVO?”

Q12. Do you/your group currently access support services from any other agencies/organisations? *These may be agencies specific to your own area of activity.*

Responses to this were fairly evenly divided

- 51.5% said YES they did access support from another agency/organisation
- 47.5% said NO they didn't

Respondents were asked to tell us more about the agencies/organisations that they use.

The vast majority use agencies specific to their own area of activity/interest, including:- Creative Scotland; PAN; CADIPSA; Care & Learning Alliance; TAIC; Cycling Scotland; Scottish Independent Advocacy Association. Chest Heart & Stroke Scotland.

10% said they use Highland Council.

Q13. Skye & Lochalsh CVO currently charge a nominal membership fee and provide Advisory and Information Services free of charge. However, facing future funding cuts will require a re-assessment of our service provision and we may have to consider charging for some things. Would you/your group be prepared to:-

- 1. Pay a higher membership rate and get free advice/information services included?**
- 2. Pay the same low rate of membership and pay extra for advice/information services?**

This question was answered by 84 people

- **54%** said they would be happy to pay a higher rate of membership with services included

- **46%** said they would rather pay the same low rate of membership and pay extra for services as required

Where respondents thought that neither of these options were suitable they were asked to tell us their own ideas. 18 comments were received including:-

“we have no funds”

“depends on what the rate is”

“whatever it would take to ensure the continuity of SLCVO”

“depends on the rise – we run on very little cash”

“it would depend on the charging structure”

“it depends how much extra, say an extra £5 would be OK. How would you charge for advice could be difficult to be fair.”

Q14. How much would you be prepared to pay for Membership of Skye & Lochalsh CVO?



The majority of respondents would be prepared to pay no higher than £50 a year (5 people suggested £25 was a fair rate and 2 said a maximum of £20) Interestingly the option to base the membership rate on a groups income was the least preferred option.

Q15. How much would you most likely be prepared to pay for our Advice & Information?

47 people answered this question.

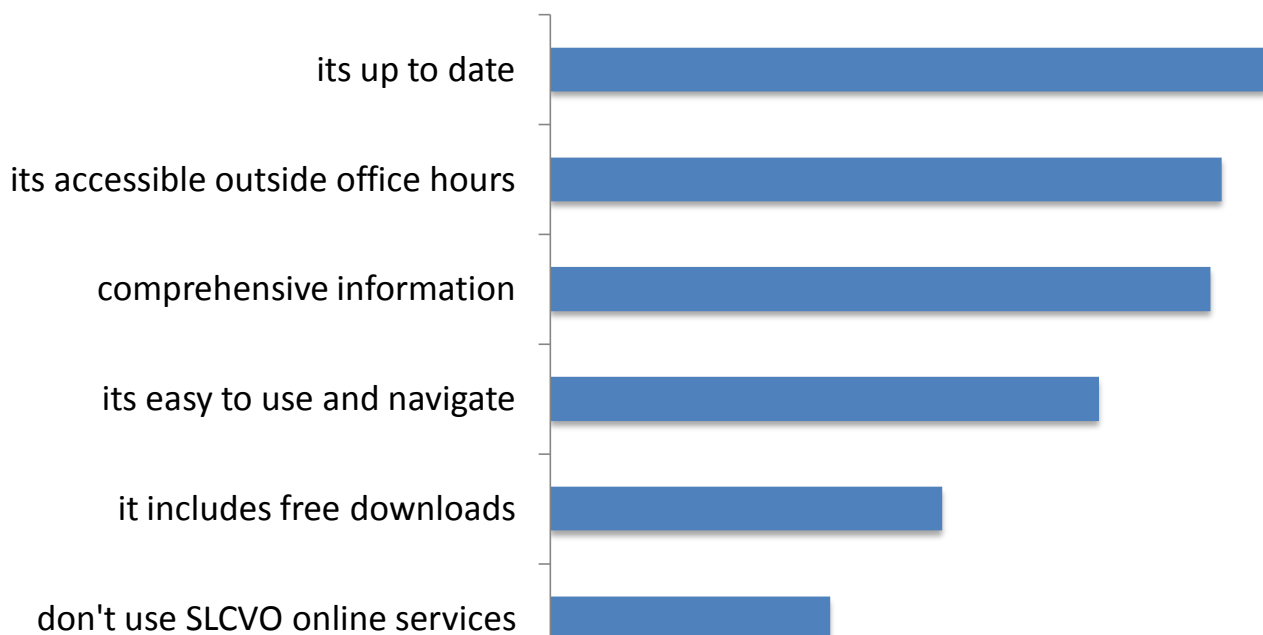
- **85%** said that they were prepared to pay up to £15 an hour for our Advice & Information services.
- **15%** would be prepared to pay between £15-£30 an hour

14 comments were added to this question

4 of these commented that it would depend on the kind of advice etc

- *"It depends on the service and the time spent and manner of communication."*
- *"Depends on what kind of advice it is – if it saves on solicitor's fees, accountants fees – then £30 is cheap."*
- *"We are a charity ourselves and would obviously hope that charges would be levied as reasonably as practically possible but do appreciate the funding issues organisations such as SLCVO are faced with."*

Q16. Do you/your group use Skye & Lochalsh CVO's website www.slcvo.org.uk (including the Community Toolkit resource because....? The survey gave 6 options to choose from.



COMMENTS

“excellent website” “use it when we have a specific project”

“great resource” “excellent for groups a long way from Portree”

“We haven’t recently had cause to use your online services because we have not been undertaking any projects. However, we consider this an important resource to be able to call upon when the need arises.”

Interestingly 25 respondents said that they did not use our online services (25% of total respondents) and a couple of the comments were explanations of this:-

“do not use – no access to the web.”

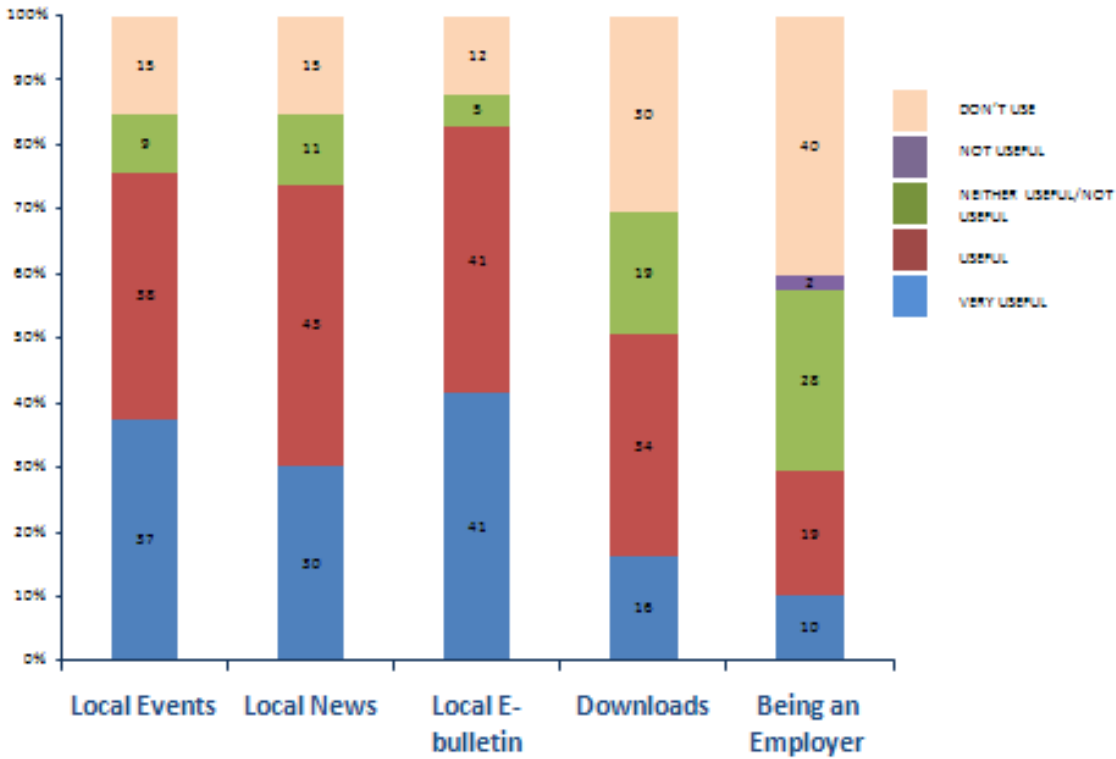
“make only limited use of on line services because of closeness of office.”

Q17. We are particularly keen to hear your feedback on the more recent developments to our online services. Please tell us how useful you/your group has found the following:-

The answers to this final question revealed that the Local Events, Local News and Local E-bulletins are considered very useful-useful by between 75-85% of respondents.

The file Library of downloads is also considered very useful/useful by half the respondents.

Your feedback on the more recent developments to our online services.



Since only 3.5% of the groups responding to the survey have paid staff, it is not surprising that 40% of respondents said that they don't use our Being An Employer section.

10 people added comments to this question - including

- *“use all from time to time”*
- *“noting the above I shall be looking at it”*
- *“not aware of the downloads library”*

At the end of the Survey 39 respondents left a closing comment:

“Without your service many groups would struggle in various areas.”

“There is simply no substitute for local knowledge & networks – voluntary groups almost always operate locally. National or regional issues are not usually that relevant . We would support keeping SLCVO in place.”

“SLCVO provides a vital and informative service and if local government spending cuts threaten its existence then that is a disgrace.”

“Thank you for your support” “A vital organisation”

“Keep it the same – quality advice regularly received.”

“Do not remove this valuable service from our community.”

“As the voluntary sector has more to do, secure core funding for SLCVO essential.”

“KEEP UP THE EXCELLENT WORK THAT YOU PROVIDE TO SKYE & LOCHALSH.”

“Lochalsh Arts Network highly values Skye & Lochalsh CVO and has found the Community Toolkit invaluable.”

“A local service which we can access by visiting is very vital to us, most unlikely to use SLCVO if moved from Portree.”

“Skye & Lochalsh would be poorer without its CVO and its staff.”

“Thank you S&L CVO for your invaluable support and friendly services. Your award-winning Toolkit should go from strength to strength.”

“All community organisations need an organisation like SLCVO to turn to for specialist knowledge and help with forward planning. The SLCVO are in a position to know when there may be duplication of effort and are therefore able to point voluntary organisations in directions where they can make the best possible contribution to community life.”

“we need advice from within the local area as SLCVO appreciate the challenges of the area, and knows all of the local groups.”

“Community groups are being expected to take on more & more. We need more support such as that provided by SLCVO not less.”

“SLCVO provides a vital service to the community sector which in the current climate of cutbacks is more important than ever. More & more responsibility is being placed on volunteers who need support and access to accurate & up to date information and advice.”

This year’s results from our Annual User Survey have given us a very clear picture on the value our members place on our support services, the services which they themselves feel are of most benefit and crucially the importance of having a locally based CVS which provides face to face contact and an understanding of local issues.

We sincerely hope that we can continue to support you in any way we can and to continue targeting our services to meet the changing needs of the local community sector.

Thank you to everyone who took part in our annual user survey 2010

Advocacy Highland
Al Anon
Alzheimer Scotland
Applecross Community Company
Arts Play
Broadford and Strath Community Company
Broadford Youth Club
Carbost Pier Ltd
Crossroads Care - Skye and Lochalsh
Dornie and District Community Hall
Duirinish Youth Club
Dunvegan Community Council
Dunvegan Trust
Edinbane Community Hall
Eilean Ban Trust
Fas Mor
Friends of ARMS
Friends of Budhmor
Friends of Portree Hospital
Glendale Community Hall
Glendale Trust (Communications sub-group)
Highland Community Care Forum
Highland Theological College
Isle of Skye Ferry CIC
Kilmuir Community Council
Kingsburgh Forest Trust
Kyleakin Connections (SLAD)
Kyleakin Environmental Group (KEG)
Kyle Church of Scotland
Lochalsh Arts Network (LOCHAN)
Lochalsh Chest Heart & Stroke (Cairdeas)
Lochalsh Leisure Centre
Lochalsh Trails Club
Lochcarron Camanachd
Lochcarron Sailing Club
Minginish Community Hall Association
NHS Highland
OK State
PCCA
Plockton Historical Society
Plockton Small Boat Sailing Club
Plockton Village Hall
Portree Angling Association
Portree Area Community Trust Ltd
Portree Community Council
Portree Indoor Bowling Club
Portree Local History Society

Portree Nursery Ltd
Portree YMCA
Raasay Community Association
Rag Tag n Textile Ltd
Rionnagan Beaga Dunbheagain
Royal Scottish Country Dance Society - *Isle of Skye Branch*
Sabhal Mor Ostaig
Scottish Crofting Federation
SEALL Events
Skye & Lochalsh Access Panel
Skye & Lochalsh Horticultural CIC
Skye & Lochalsh Friends of ARMS
Skye & Lochalsh Mental Health Association
Skye & Lochalsh Young Carers
Skye District Scottish Community Drama Association
Skye Gardening Society
Skye Permaculture
Skye Talking Newspaper
Skye, Lochalsh & Lochcarron Bowling Association
SkyeDance
SOPW
St Columba's Episcopal Church, Portree
Staffin Community Council
Staffin Community Hall Association
Struan Community Council
Struan Community Trust
Tarskavaig Communities Hall Association.
Torrin Community Association
Uig Community Council
Uig Community Trust
Uig Village Hall
Urras Baile Fhlodaigearraidh
Waternish Village Hall Association
Way Forward Group
Viewfield Garden Collective
Women's Aid - Skye & Lochalsh
Working For Families
Youth Space

...and 20 individuals

Skye & Lochalsh Council for Voluntary Organisations

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