



Press Release 7/10/2020

## CEO Update

# West of England VCSE Staff Wellbeing Covid-19 Impact Key Findings

**During the period between May and June 2020, our Dialogue team undertook research to investigate the wellbeing of staff from across the VCSE sector, below are our key findings.**

The Care Forum presents a survey to understand how voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) sector staff wellbeing in the West of England were being impacted by working in the context of the coronavirus (COVID-19) epidemic. The purpose of this research was to better inform regional VCSE organisations, local authorities and commissioners about the support needs of the regional sector during this period. After running for six weeks (May – June 2020), this report highlights the key trends found and offers a discussion of the learning we can draw from this.

*We thank all participants for their responses during these challenging times.*

## Key Findings

After the six weeks run-time, the survey results were gathered and the data anonymized. The gathered data has been analysed through a number of processes.

Overall responses to each question – representing indicators of coronavirus (COVID-19) wellbeing impacts on VCSE staff – have been presented in our results section and qualitative data has been thematically analysed to draw out key themes. To understand the wellbeing impact of coronavirus (COVID-19) on staff wellbeing, we coded (1-5) responses to our questions around wellbeing before the epidemic and since the epidemic had started ('over the last two weeks'). We calculated the percentage change for all respondents, alongside respondents across attributes – for instance, local authorities, employment type, and demography. Below we present our findings from this data analysis process.

Overall wellbeing declined by 58.4% for all VCSE staff over this period.

85% of respondents had moved to homeworking over this period.

32% of respondents felt that their working arrangements were having a negative impact on wellbeing, while 33.9% felt they were having a positive impact.

81.7% of respondents felt safe in their present employment arrangements, while 8.5% felt unsafe.

79.6% of respondents felt they had job security, while 9.2% were concerned about job security.

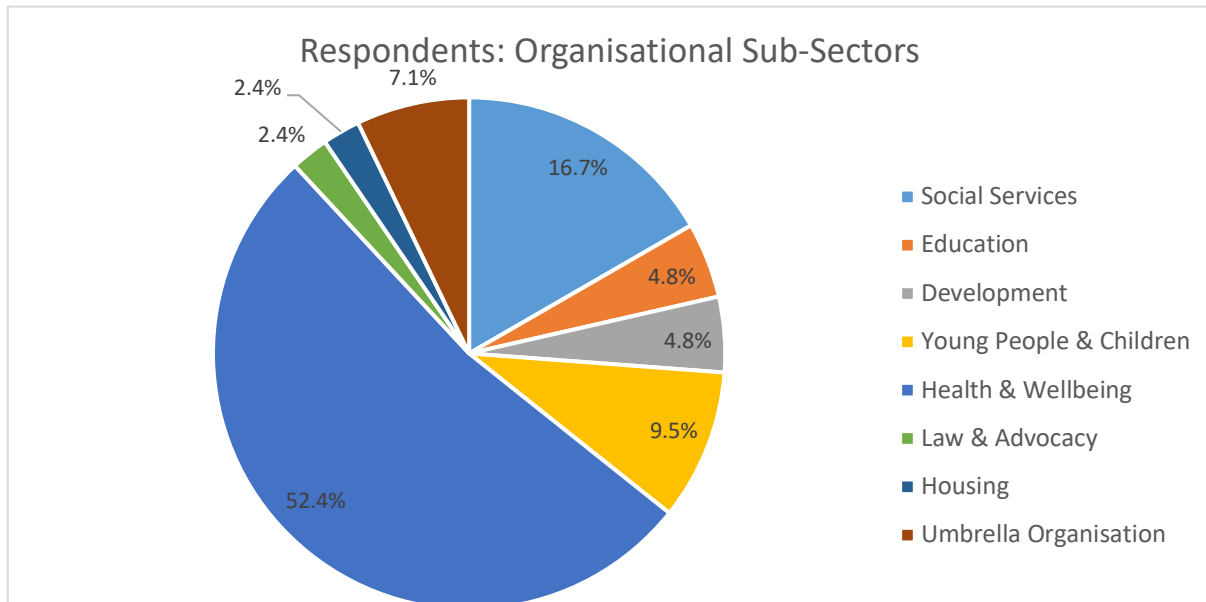
75.6% of respondents felt that support from their employer was good, while 10.5% considered their employer support to be poor.

71.9% of respondents reported social distancing as having a negative impact on their wellbeing.

## Respondents

**Regional Coverage:** Bristol (59.8%), South Gloucestershire (18.9%), Bath & North East Somerset (6.7%), North Somerset (7.9%), Wiltshire (3.7%), Other (3%).

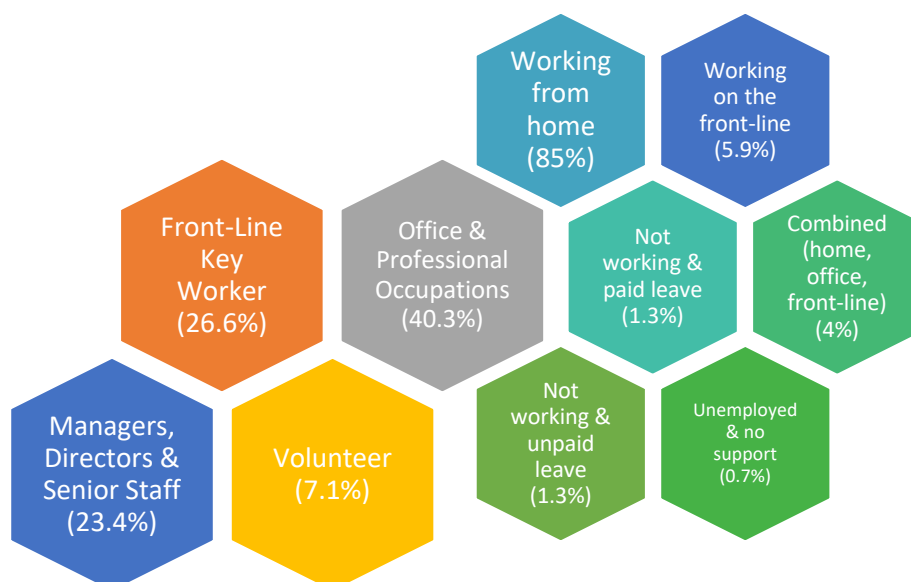
**Size of Organisations:** Micro (0 - 9 employees) (22%), Small (10 – 49 employees) (24%), Medium (50 – 249 employees) (26%), Large (250+ employees) (4%).



**Total Respondents:** 154.

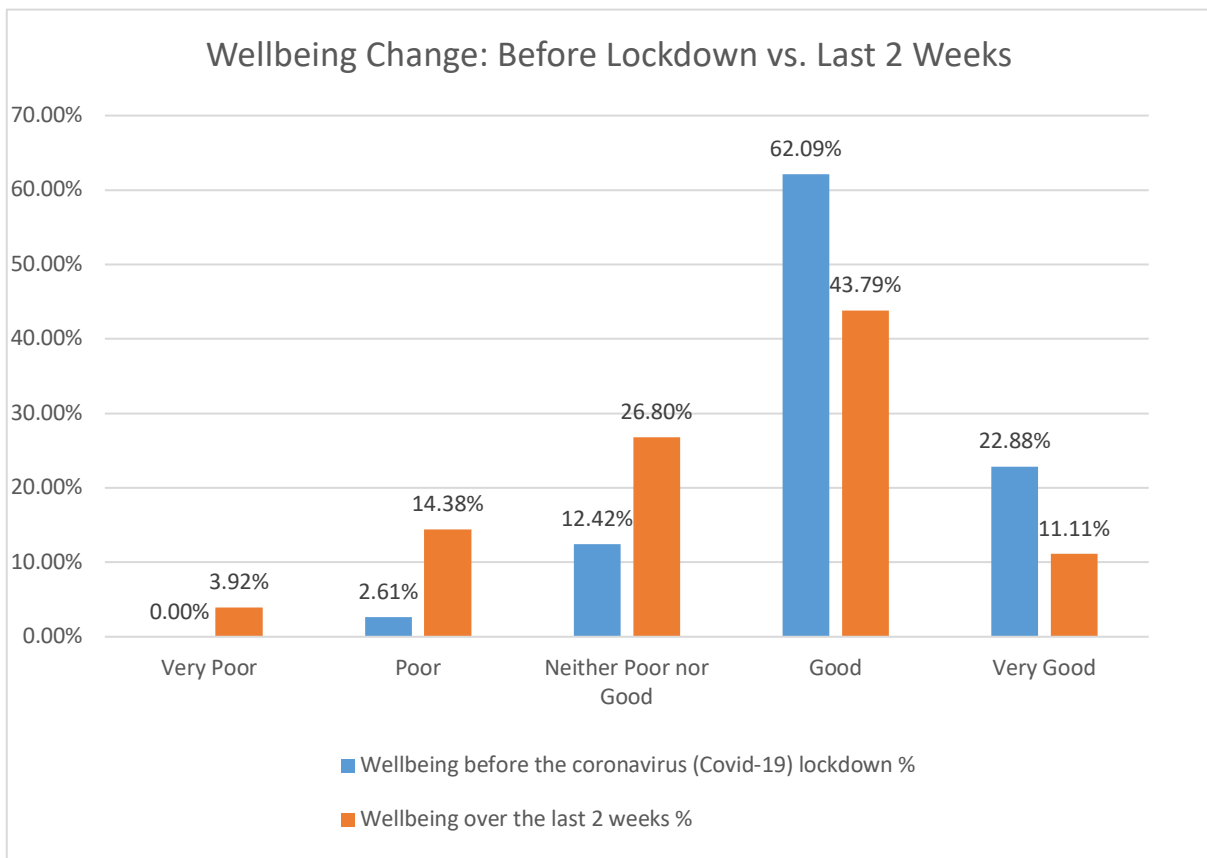
**Time Period:** 6 weeks from May – June 2020.

**Audience:** West of England voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) sector staff.



## Wellbeing Impacts

The graph below shows a comparison of VCSE staff ratings of wellbeing before coronavirus (COVID-19) against wellbeing since the epidemic started, specifically over the last two weeks at the time of responding.



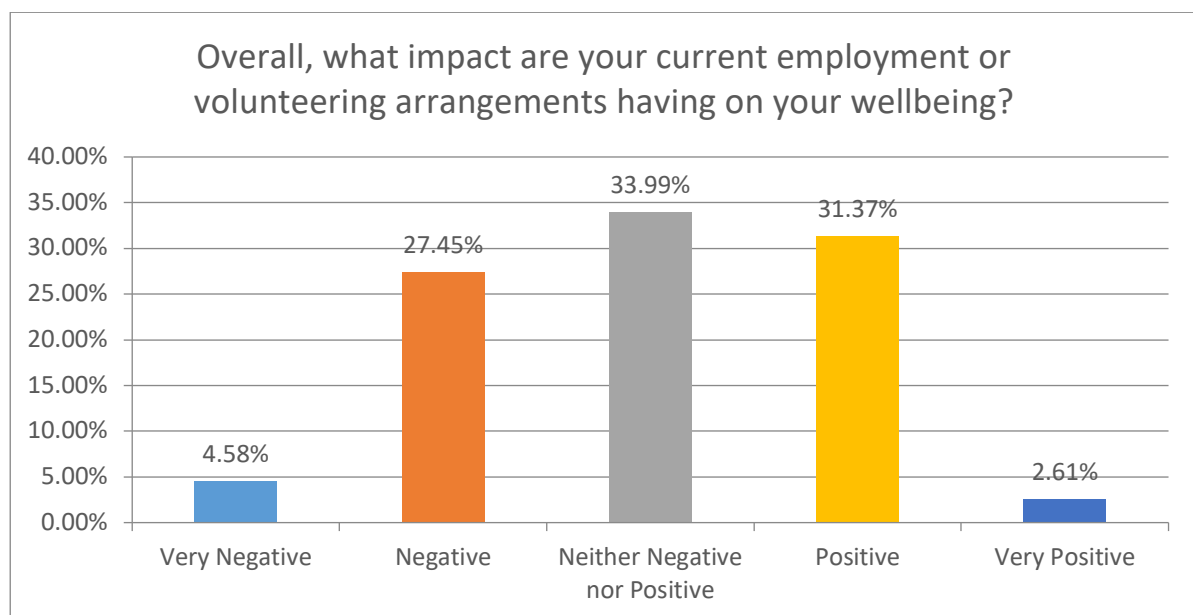
### Employment Arrangements:

Overall, we saw the majority of respondents reporting a shift to homeworking as a result of coronavirus (COVID-19). Specifically:

- 85% of respondents had moved to homeworking.
- 5.9% were working on the front-line.
- 3.9% were working some combination of home, office and front-line.
- 1.3% were on unpaid leave.
- 1.3% were on paid leave.
- 0.7% were were now unemployed and not receiving support

### Overall Employment Impact:

Respondents gave mixed feedback as to how their employment arrangements – as highlighted above – were impacting their wellbeing, shown in the graph below. 32% felt the impact was negative overall, 33.9% felt it had a netrual impact, and 33.9% felt it had a positive impact on their wellbeing. While this shows fairly significant negative impacts from Covid-19 working arrangements, many also felt these changes to be positive too.





## Discussion

This research highlights the scale of impact on wellbeing we are experiencing across the sector. Whilst there is no doubt organisations are working hard to ensure that staff are supported, our research suggests that internal communications, proper home working equipment and job security would positively impact the area of wellbeing.

As part of this work, we also explored whether different demographic, organisational or employment attributes were reflected in overall wellbeing changes. All respondents experienced declining overall wellbeing during this period. However, when looking at the data in more detail, we saw significant variations between groups, with some performing far better than others over this period.

For instance, there was a clear indication based on our data around respondents' age, where the older the respondent, the better their wellbeing change would be relative to younger respondents. This reflects [national findings](#), where in terms of age younger people saw steeper declines in mental health than other groups. Reflecting similar national data, our research showed women experiencing steeper wellbeing declines than men, reporting a decline in wellbeing of 66.3% relative to men's decline of 38.4%.

Other findings, for instance, for those with disabilities, were counter to expectations. While [nationally](#) disabled people are more likely to report declines in mental health in response to the epidemic, in our research those respondents describing themselves as disabled demonstrated smaller declines in overall wellbeing than those who didn't describe themselves as disabled, with a fall of 37.5% relative to 61.7%.

At the same time, in terms of respondent ethnicity, there was a clear pattern in that those respondents describing themselves as White British saw smaller wellbeing declines than other ethnic groups, with a fall of 58.3% relative to an average decline for other groups of 79.5%. There was some variation within this across groups, from the steepest declines of those describing themselves as 'any other ethnic group' experiencing wellbeing declines of 114.2%, followed by Asian / Asian British (-100%) and mixed / Multi-ethnic Group (-100%), to those reporting smaller declines relative to the norm, such as White Irish (-50%) and Black / African / Caribbean / Black British (-33.3%).

In many ways, what such examples point to is that while all groups or communities working in the West of England voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) sector have seen significant declines in wellbeing over this period, these impacts have not been felt evenly by all. As we've shown in our analysis, many of those already living at the sharp end of health or other inequalities – as with every crisis – will be those impacted most. This corresponds to a national picture where [black, Asian and minority ethnic communities](#), people living in [deprived areas](#), those with [lower incomes](#), [women](#), [disabled people](#) and [young people](#) have been disproportionately impacted by the coronavirus (COVID-19) epidemic.



END

**Notes to editors:**

The Care Forum is an organisation built on enabling active citizenship within the health and care sector; be this through aligned organisations or individual memberships. We exist to challenge health inequality and work closely with communities through the delivery of equality based partnerships, engagement teams and strategically with Local Authorities and the NHS.

More information can be found at <http://www.thecareforum.org/>

For enquires please contact [admin@thecareforum.org.uk](mailto:admin@thecareforum.org.uk)