



Headline analysis of the voluntary & community sector in Kent

January 2025

Executive Summary

The Civil Society strategy for Kent was agreed in 2021, recognising the contribution of charities and voluntary organisations to our local communities.

We have been developing for a number of years, our local data to help us have a greater understanding of all registered charities in Kent, their size, scope and the health of the sector, which will enable us to benchmark against the national picture and understand the significant role charitable organisations play.

This data was collated into our first report launched in 2016 showing headline analysis of the sector and has now been refreshed with some additional trend analysis as a result of the work we have undertaken. This data is helping us to understand how charities are changing over time and the health and diversity of the sector. Our findings provide facts and figures to support the anecdotal evidence that a diverse and vibrant sector exists in Kent.

Size and Scope

There are 2,951 registered charities in Kent with a total income of over £473.0m, up from £455.4m in the previous year (2021/22). There is a slight reduction in the number of active charities in 2022/23. 42 charities registered as new in 2022/23 however 96 were removed from the register. The majority of active organisations are micro and small although the highest proportion of income comes from large organisations. Most charities in Kent are providing services, with the most common beneficiaries the general public, followed by children and young people. Charities are distributed unevenly with concentrations in major urban areas, within individual districts.

Income and growth

A small number of large charities are still responsible for almost half of the sectors income in Kent; this is similar to the national picture although there are very few major and no super major charities in Kent, which nationally hold much of the sectors income.

Income and growth contd.

Registered charities in Kent have seen a real term increase in their income of 2.6% since 2018/19, equating to a £10.3m cash increase. Major and large organisations have seen a cash growth of £30.3m, however medium, small and micro organisations saw an overall cash reduction of £20m. We will continue to monitor this picture as we recognise the financial challenges organisations are facing following Covid 19 and inflationary pressures on the sector.

KCC Funding

KCC spent £153m with registered charities in 2022/23, with £5.7m of this in grants. The majority of grants go to support the general public and are given to large and medium sized charities. £3.9m of the grant spend made by KCC in 2022/23 went to charities based mainly in Kent. In 2022/23 Adult Social Care moved grant funding into strategic contracts. This has resulted in KCC total spend with registered charities increasing from 2021/22 and grant funding reducing.

A significant employer

The charitable sectors contribution to the local economy is significant and charitable organisations over 500K alone employ 8,483 employees and around 16,271 volunteers across major, large and medium organisations.

Next steps....

The data within this report is a welcome reminder of the significance of the charitable sector in Kent and therefore it is intended that this data will continue to be refreshed annually to support our future commissioning and relationship with the sector in Kent.

Produced by:

Kent Analytics & Strategy, Policy, Relationships and Corporate Assurance
Kent County Council
www.kent.gov.uk/research

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Introduction

Kent figures are based on data from the Charity Commission's Register of Charities in England and Wales from 2022/23. The register recorded 2,951 registered charities active in Kent.

The following analysis based on the Charity Commission data uses the "general charities" definition. This definition takes all registered charities as a base but excludes certain categories of charity such as independent schools, faith charities, and those controlled by government and others.

This analysis does not include those regional or national charities that are based outside of Kent area but operate services within it. As accurate information on the exact locations of charitable spending is not available, the figures presented here are likely to underestimate total charitable activity in the area. Similarly large national and international charities that are based in the area have been excluded from the definition, as their activities mainly take place outside the area.

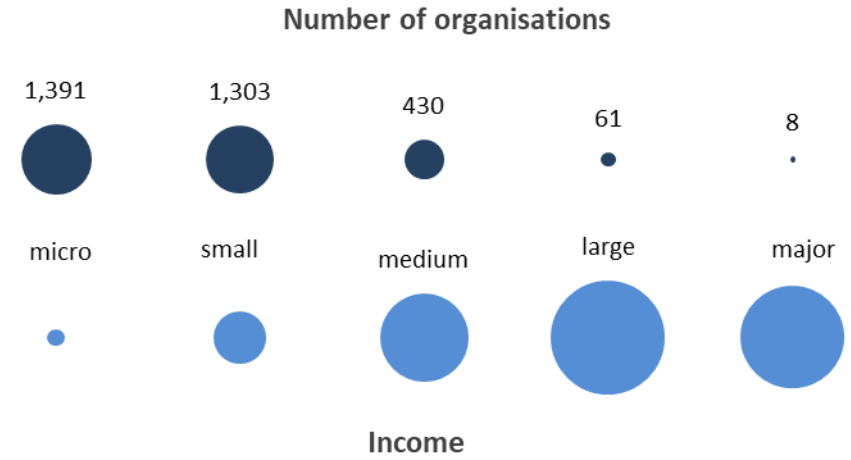
Also note that charities may continue to be registered even if there is no current activity. The analysis below looks at those with current activity in any given year.

Size & Scope

This analysis uses the definition "general charities" (see methodology section).

There are
2,951
active voluntary organisations in Kent

with a total income of over
£473.0m



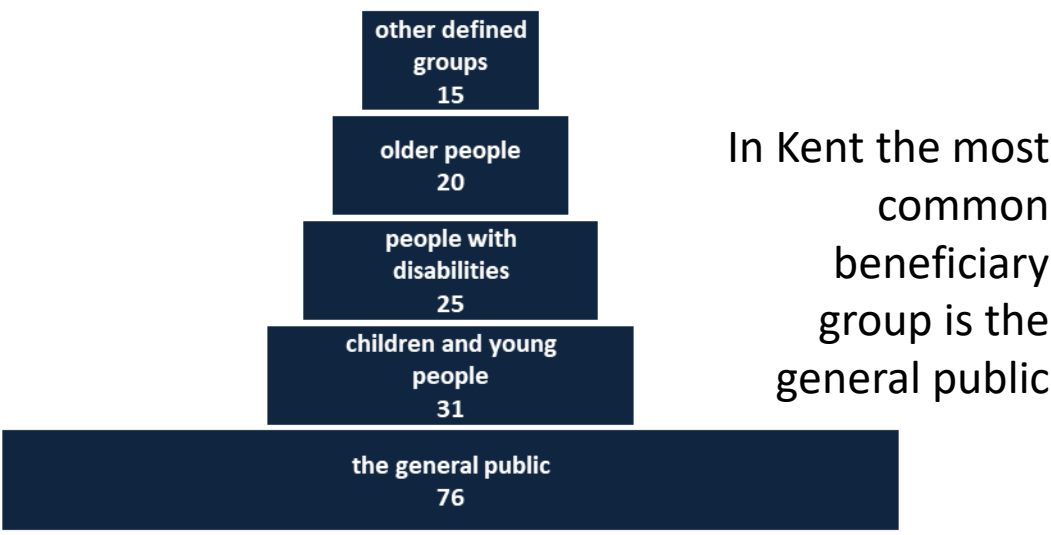
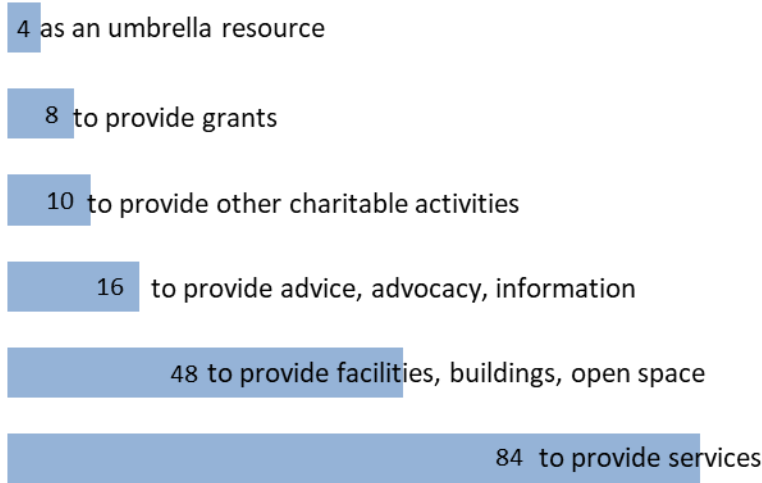
however the majority of income comes from large organisations

42 new charities registered as new organisations in Kent in 2022/23

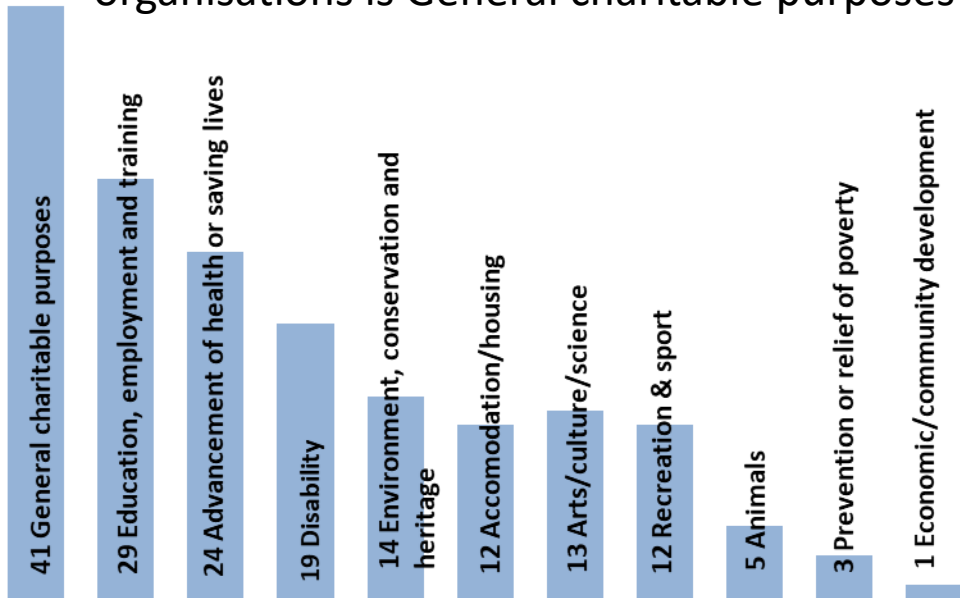
Beneficiaries

The 196 charities in Kent with income over £250k in 2022/23 help a range of clients with a variety of support for a variety of reasons

In Kent the most common activity of voluntary organisations is to provide services

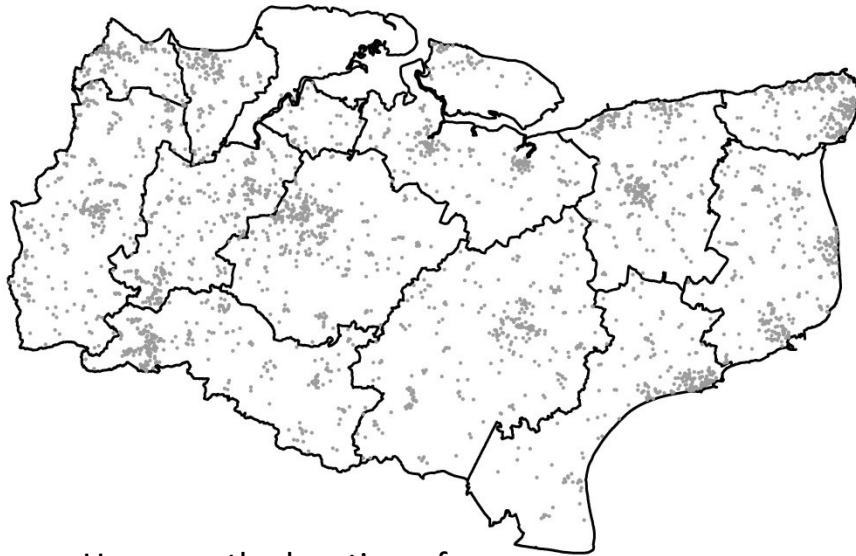


The most common purpose of voluntary organisations is General charitable purposes



Geography

Charities are distributed unevenly across Kent with concentrations in the major urban areas of each district

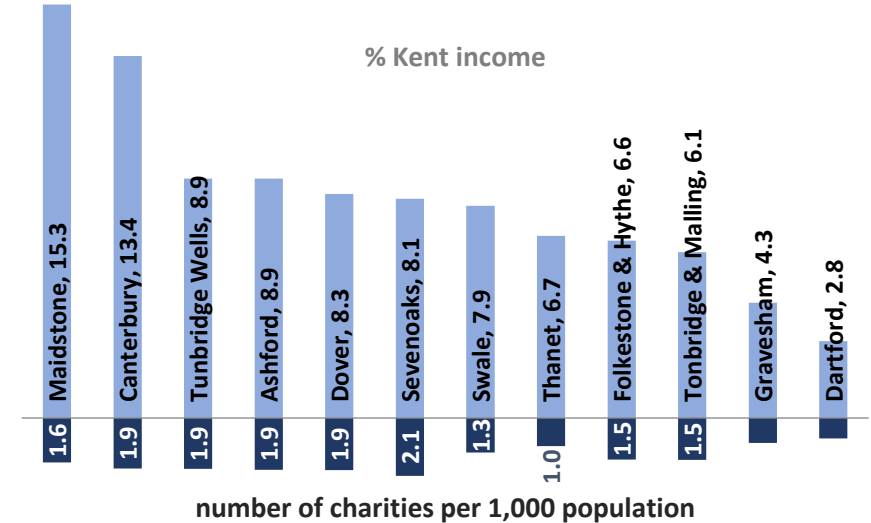


However the location of the charities reflects where they are registered and not necessarily where their main activity is

Sevenoaks has the highest number of registered charities with

2.1
for every 1,000 residents

Excluding those organisations with income of £2m+ Maidstone accounts for the highest % of Kent's voluntary sector income

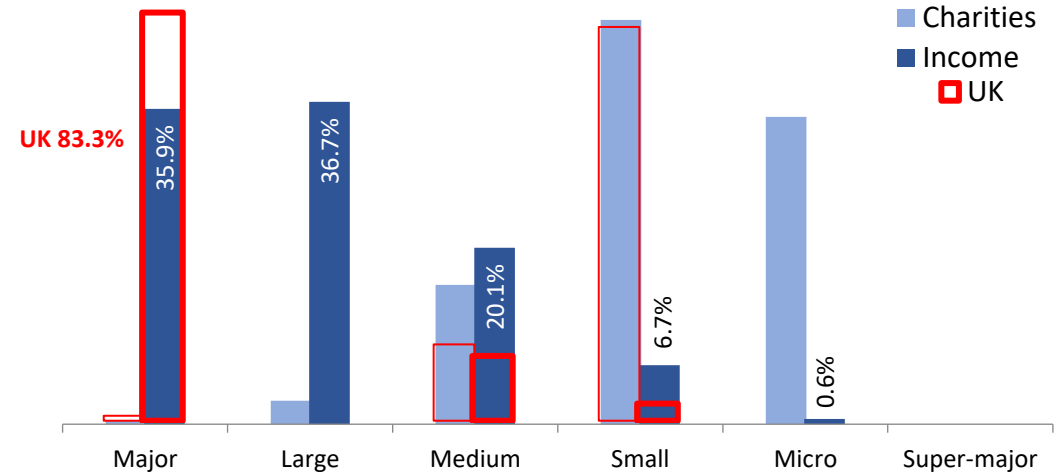


15.3%

of Kent's total voluntary sector income is received in Maidstone

Income

A small number of large charities are responsible for almost half the voluntary sector income in Kent



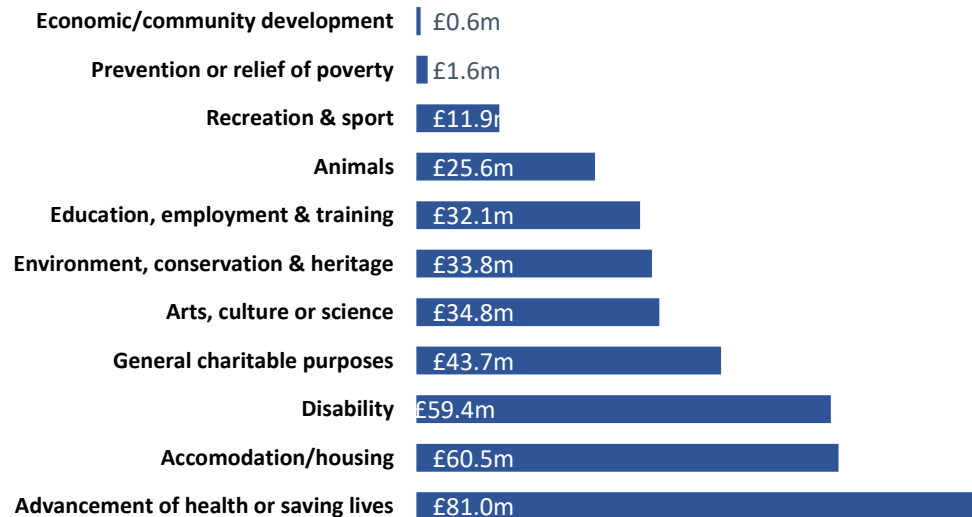
The top 3 organisations in Kent with highest income in 2022/23:

Avante Care and Support Limited

**Air Ambulance Charity
Kent Surrey Sussex**

The Howletts Wild Animal Trust

These are categorised as major sized organisations



Those organisations with income of £250k and above whose purpose is the advancement of health or saving lives account for 21% of the sector income in Kent

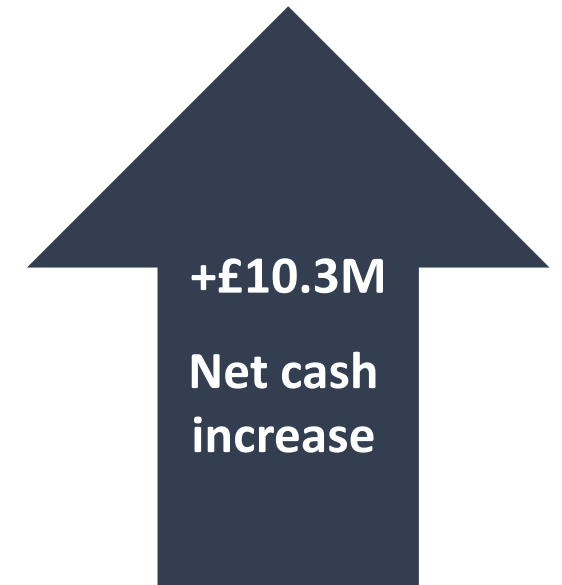
Income Growth

This section shows the **nominal** and the **real** income growth within the sector. The percentage growth shows the **real** growth once an adjustment has been made to reflect inflation. The cash growth reflects the **nominal** cash growth with no adjustment made. This measure only counts those organisations which have been registered for the full 5 years and have submitted financial records for the full 5 years.

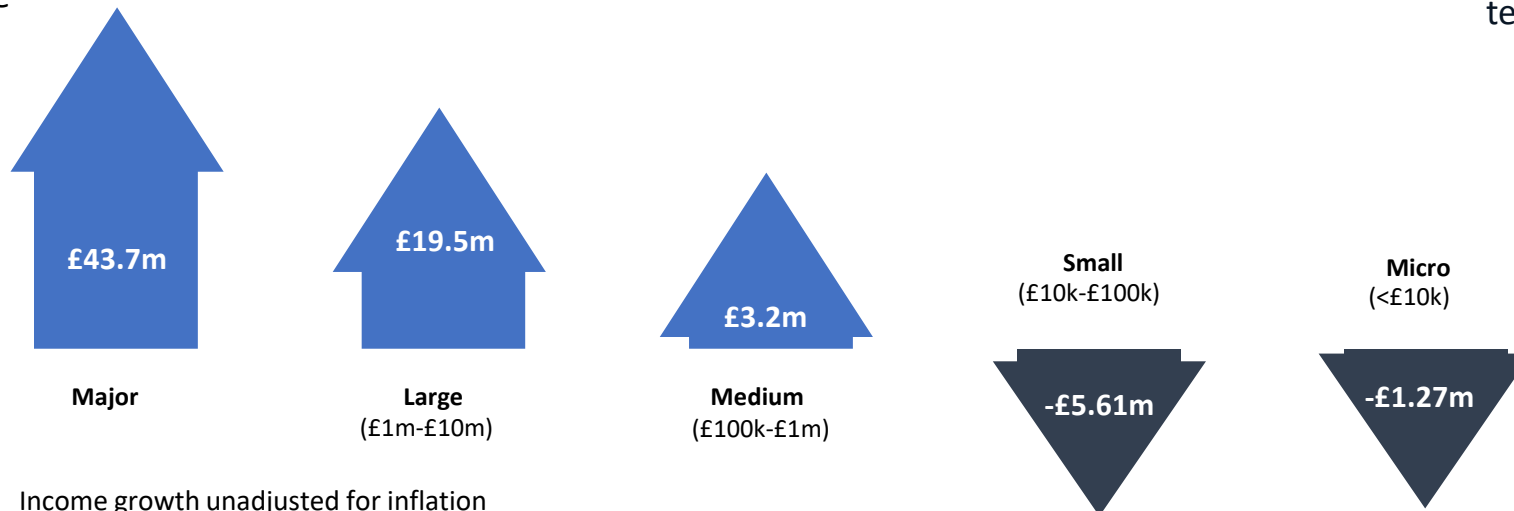
In real terms the Kent voluntary sector saw an income increase of 2.6% since 2018/19

Major organisations saw the biggest cash increase since 2018/19, in real terms this results in an overall 25.2% increase in income

When adjusted for inflation micro, small and medium organisations saw a combined cash decrease of £20.0m while large and major organisations saw a combined increase of £30.3m



Micro organisations saw an overall cash decrease of £1.8m over the last 5 years. In real terms this represents a reduction of 42.2%



Income Growth contd.

Of the 318 medium and large organisations that have been registered & submitted accounts for the full 5 years

21

Organisations saw an increase in income every year.
This equates to £22.1m increase in income overall.

4

Organisations saw a reduction in income every year.
This equates to -£0.4m in total income overall.

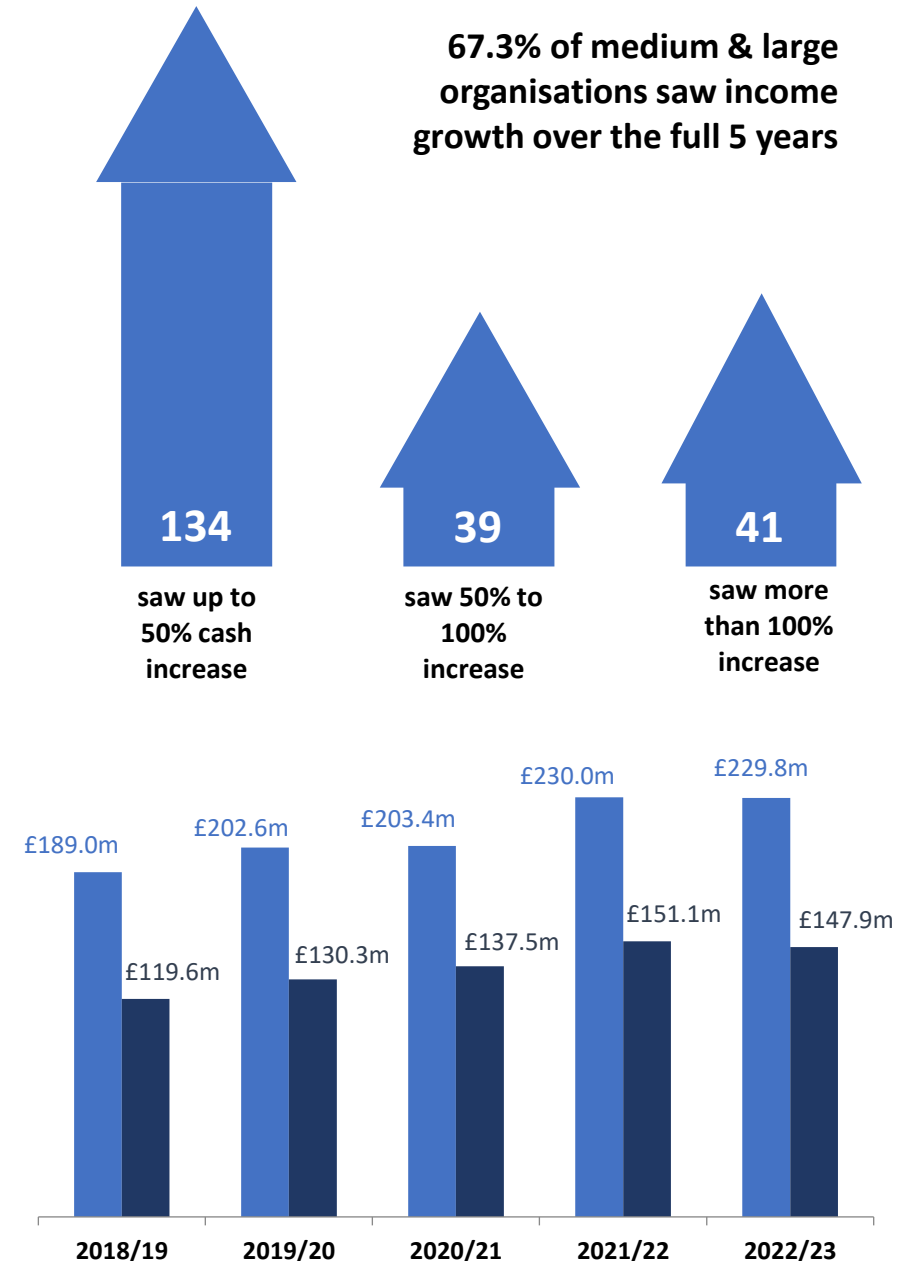
The total income of medium and large organisations registered for the full 5 years

increased to £229.8m
increased by 21.6% over 5 years

The income of the organisations that have received KCC funding in 2022/23

£147.9m
increased by 23.7% over 5 years

67.3% of medium & large organisations saw income growth over the full 5 years



KCC Funding

Grant spend

2021/22
£9.2m

2022/23
£5.7m

In 2022/23 Adult Social Care grants moved to strategic contracts resulting in the total grants figure falling.

£3.9m

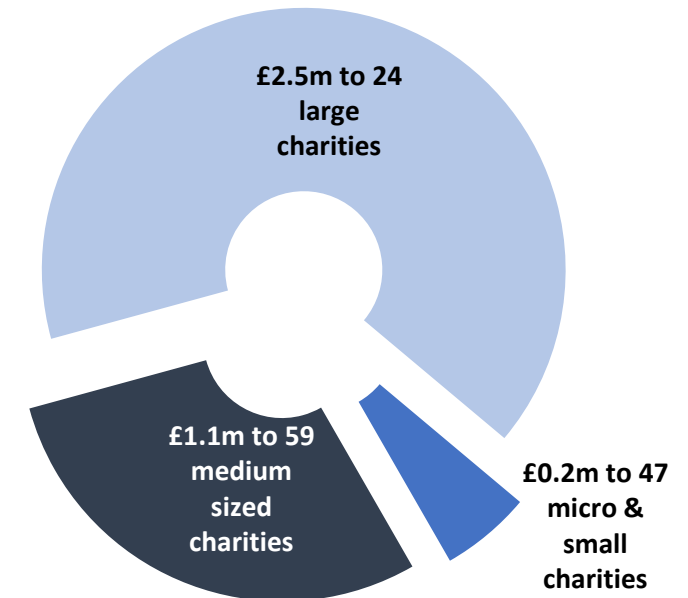
was made by KCC in grants to charities based mainly in Kent in 2022/23

£1.0m

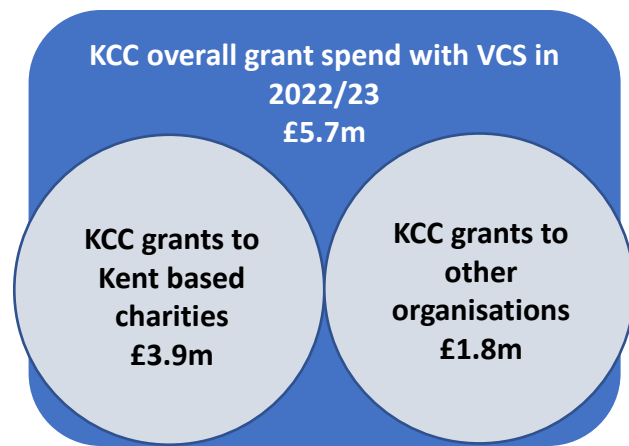
Highest award – Arts, culture & science

£300

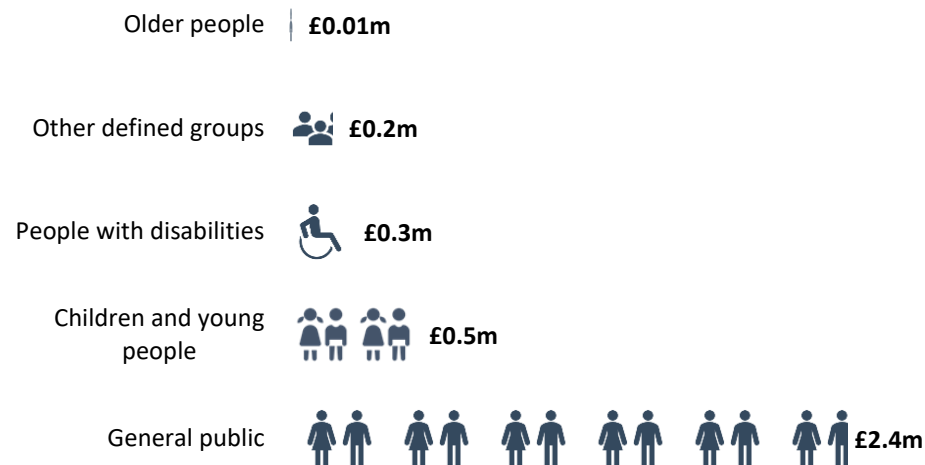
Lowest award - General charitable purposes



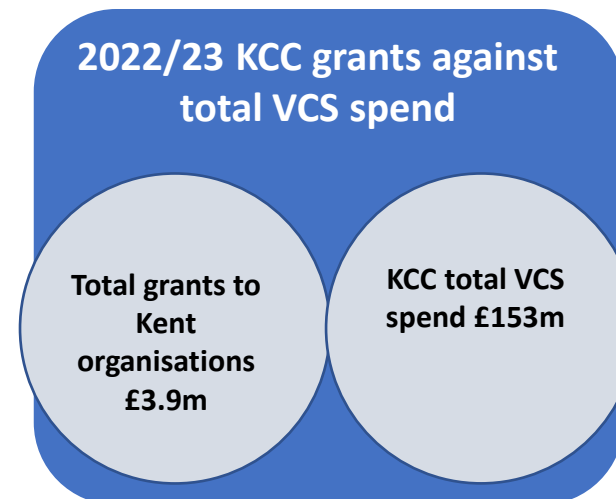
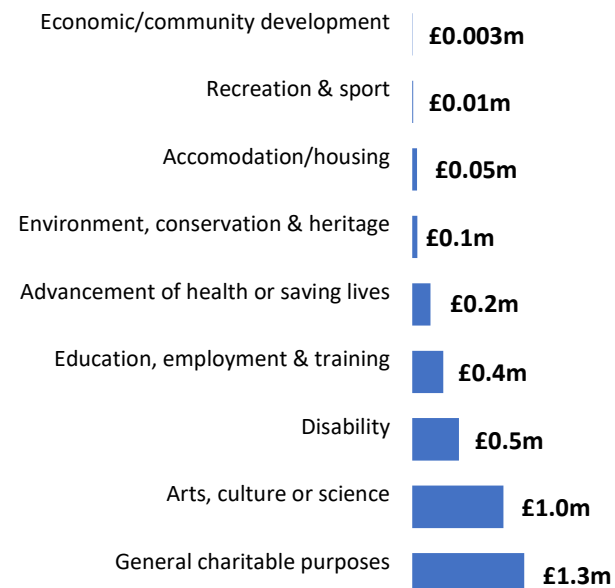
KCC grants



71% of KCC grants to organisations in Kent in 2022/23 went to help the general public.



36.1% of KCC grants in 2022/23 went to Kent organisations whose main purpose was general charitable purposes



Funds

In 2022/23 120 charities in Kent with income of £500k and above had 4.1 months income held in cash. This means they could be considered prudent and better able to meet current obligations using liquid assets

120 charities in Kent that had an annual income of £500k and above, held a combined cash amount of £128m

52.5% of charities in Kent with income of £500k and above in 2022/23 had at least 4 months income held in cash

29 charities	28 charities	63 charities
Less than 2 months cash	2 to 4 months cash	More than 4 months cash



26.7% had more than 6 months income held in cash

These organisations held:

Fixed Assets (incl investments)	£448.4m
Current Assets	£271.6m of which £128m is cash
Creditors	-£65.6m short term -£25.4m long term
Pension liability	-£1.3m
Total Net Assets	£545.2m

Workforce

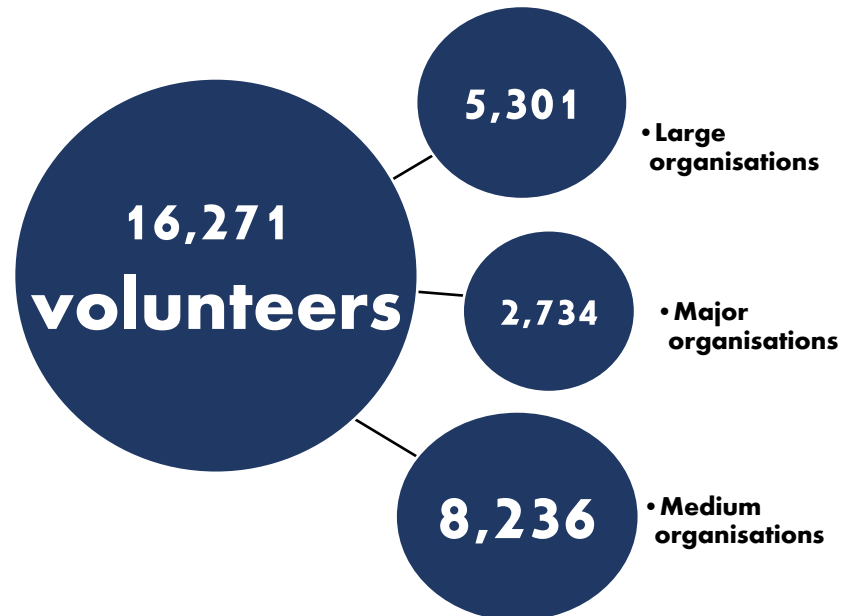
Community Life Survey - National Figures;
UK Civil Society Almanac 2022/23
Kent Figures - Charity Commission data



**Nationally 57.6%
of females took
part in
volunteering
compared to
51.5% of males**



**50% of
volunteers in
Kent are within
medium sized
charitable
organisations**



**2.8% of the UK workforce were employed in the
voluntary sector.**

**Kent organisations with income
£500m+ employ**



**Nationally 67.4%
of voluntary
sector employees
are females**

Methodology

Voluntary sector definition

This analysis uses the Charity Commission "general charities" definition. This definition takes all registered charities as a base but excludes certain categories of charity such as independent schools, faith charities, and those controlled by government and others.

Charity income sizebands are defined as:

Micro - Less than £10,000

Small - £10,000 to £100,000

Medium - £100,000 to £1m

Large - £1m to £10m

Major - £10m to £100m

Super major - more than £100m

Voluntary sector methodology

All data has been through a rigorous cleansing process to exclude records where the area of operation of the charity falls outside the Kent County Council area. Charities based outside Kent may still be included within the count of organisations if their area of operation is mainly within Kent.

Income Growth & Funds

The percentage income growth is calculated using a GDP deflator. The GDP deflator can be viewed as a measure of general inflation in the domestic economy. Therefore, real growth shows the income growth once an adjustment has been made to reflect inflation.

Funds - Only organisations with income of £500k+ provide detailed accounts and account for a small proportion of the charities in Kent.

KCC Funding

The definition of the VCS supported by Kent County Council is much broader than that used elsewhere in this summary.

This definition may include faith charities and charities linked to schools. It may also include social enterprises.

Workforce

Employment figures are based on Labourforce Survey/Annual population Survey data. Civil Society Almanac 2023 - National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO)

Data sources

Register of Charities, Charities Commission
Community Life Survey, The Cabinet Office
Annual Population Survey, Office for National Statistics
Civil Society Almanac 2023 - National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO)
Kent County Council

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