

SMALL CHARITIES

An overview of public perceptions

BACKGROUND

To support Small Charity Week, CAF has conducted some research on public perceptions of small charities and the work they do. A nationally representative sample of people were asked a series of questions in order to measure levels of public awareness and their perceived impact.

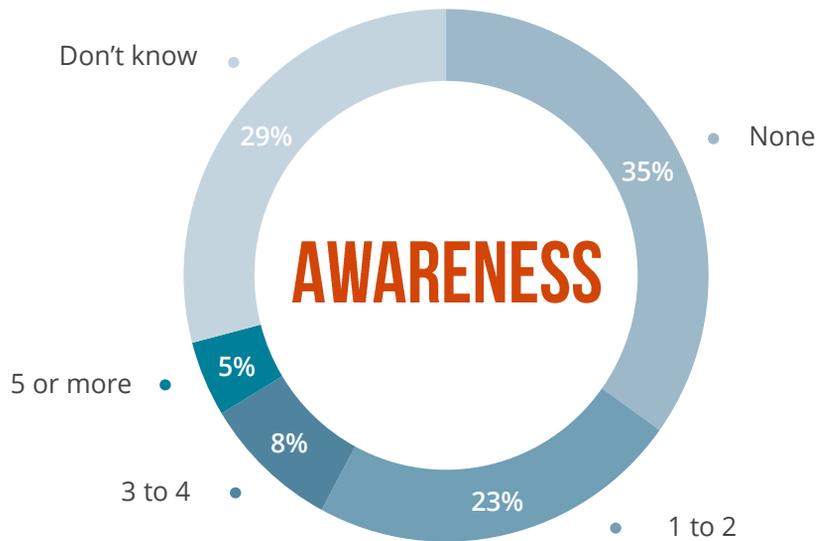
KEY FINDINGS

- Whilst awareness of individual small charities is low – 64% of people said they weren't sure or couldn't name any small charities - more than one in ten people in the UK (12%) say a friend or family member has used the services of a small charity.
- Nearly two thirds of people (63%) think small charities have had a positive impact on their local community and a quarter (24%) say that this impact has been 'very positive'.
- Most (63%) report having done something for a small charity in the past (donating money, giving goods, sponsoring someone, volunteering or helping to fundraise) and a willingness to help out in the future is high, especially through giving goods (64%), donating money (58%) and sponsoring someone (49%).
- Whilst young people are less likely to say that have donated money to a small charity in the past, they are particularly open to the possibility of volunteering for one in the future – 37% of 16-34 year olds saying they are likely to do so.

1.0 Awareness of small charities

Just over a third of people (36%) say that they could name at least one small charity and the most common way of hearing about it was through friends and family – including those whose friends and family had used a small charity's services (12% of people). Fundraising events and social media are other common sources of awareness.

Figure 1. How many small charities could you name?



Base: All respondents. N=1,086

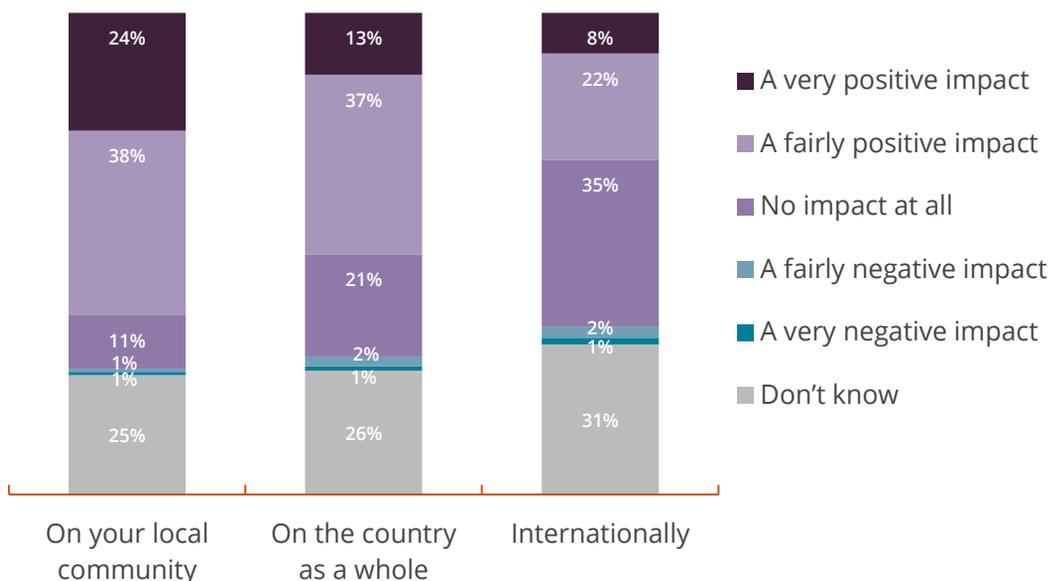
People associate small charities with being local (41%), having a small staff (13%), working within a niche cause (11%), and having a low turnover (10%). 7% define a small charity as either being staffed entirely by volunteers or where 100% of money raised goes to the cause.

Women are more likely than men to associate small charities with being local (44% of women vs. 38% of men), as are those living in rural areas (51% vs. 39% of those living in urban areas). Men are more likely than women to associate them with having a low turnover (12% of men vs. 8% of women).

2.0 Perceptions of small charities' impact

62% of people think that small charities have a positive impact on their local community and a quarter think that this impact is 'very positive' (24%). This is particularly true for women (27% vs. 22% of men).

Figure 2. What impact, if any, do you think small charities have had?



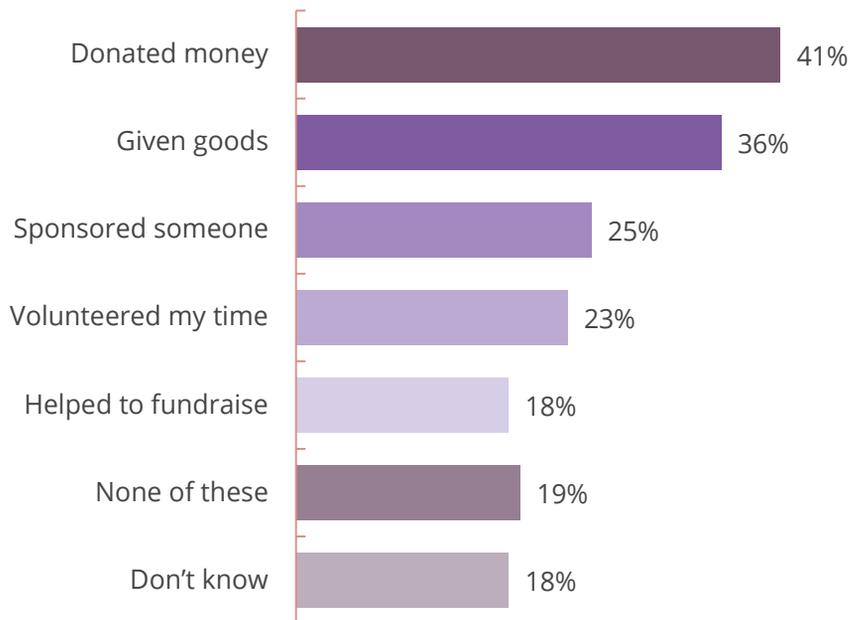
Base: All respondents. N=1,086

The older generations are more likely than the youngest to feel broadly positive about the impact of small charities on their community – 68% of the over 55s said either that the impact was very or fairly positive, compared to 52% of 16-24 year olds who said the same. However, millennials aged 25–34 are nearly twice as likely as the baby boomer generation (aged 55 and over) to say that small charities have a very positive impact internationally (11% vs. 6%).

3.0 Past giving to small charities

Nearly two thirds (63%) of people can recall having done something for a small charity – donating money, giving goods, sponsoring someone, volunteering or helping to fundraise.

Figure 3. Have you ever done any of the following for a small charity?



Base: All respondents. N=1,086

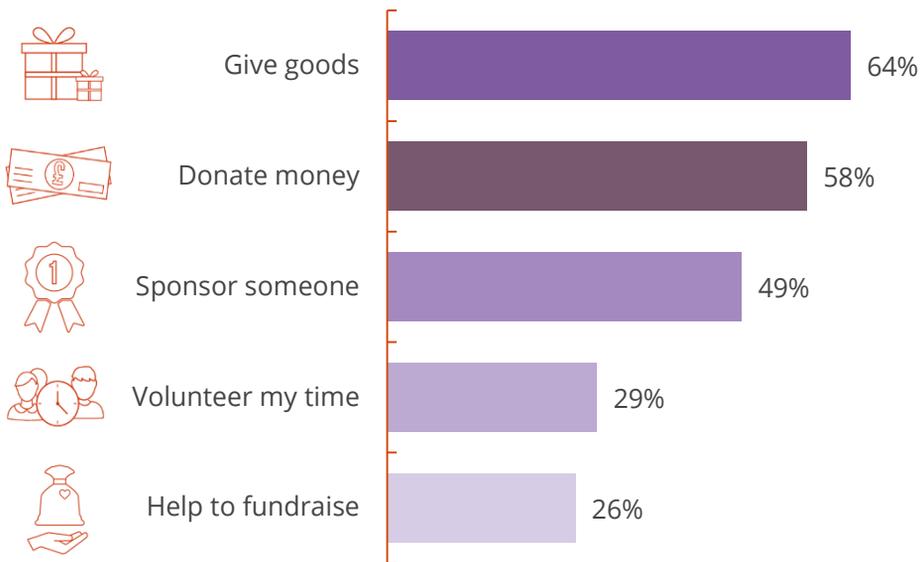
Women are more likely than men to have been involved in multiple different ways, being particularly more likely than men to have given goods to a small charity (42% of women vs. 30% of men), sponsored someone (28% vs. 22% of men) or helped to fundraise (20% vs. 15% of men).

As indicated in other research, giving tends to become more common with age. Our small charities research shows that those aged over 55 are the most likely age group to have contributed to a small charity in multiple ways, and they are significantly more likely than younger people to have given money to a small charity through a donation or sponsorship (59%).

4.0 Consideration of future giving to small charities

Giving goods is the most common way people think they are likely to help a small charity with around two thirds (64%) saying that they are very or fairly likely to do this in the future. The next most common ways people envisage helping small charities in the future are by donating money (58%) and sponsoring someone (49%).

Figure 4. How likely are you to do any of the following for a small charity in the future?



Base: All respondents. N=1,086. Data shows the net of answers for Very likely and Fairly likely.

Younger people in particular are open to the idea of volunteering for a small charity with 37% of 16-34 year olds saying they are likely to do so in the future.

5.0 Method

On behalf of CAF, YouGov polled 1,086 adults aged 16+ between 18 and 29 May 2018. The survey was conducted online and the sample is representative of known demographics including sex, age, region and social grade.