

TIME WELL SPENT 2023  
WHAT ARE THE BARRIERS  
TO VOLUNTEERING?

March 2023  
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Research and Insight  
Manager



# WHAT IS TIME WELL SPENT?

- Time Well Spent was a 2018 survey of 10,000 members of the public. It had questions on volunteering levels, activities, attitudes, and values and more!
- We published **4** thematic reports using mostly qualitative research methods.

## WHAT IS TIME WELL SPENT?

- In 2022 we ran another survey of 7,000 general public respondents plus 1,000 BAME respondents.
- We made one major change: expanding the concept of volunteering to include **informal volunteering**.

# ANALYSIS AND METHODOLOGY

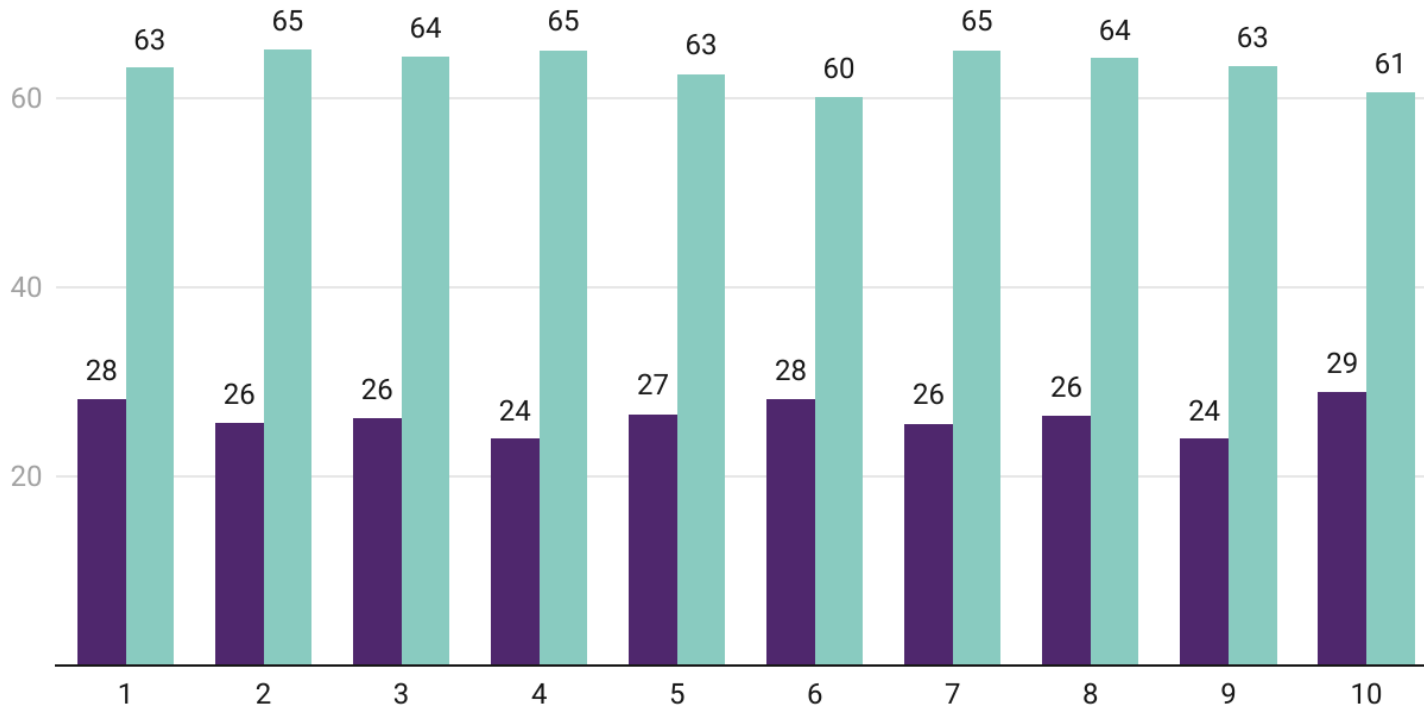
- We divided respondents into 10 groups using indices of deprivation.
- Decile 1 = respondents from the **most** deprived neighbourhoods
- Decile 10 = respondents from the **least** deprived neighbourhoods.

# PARTICIPATION

# PROPORTION OF PEOPLE WHO 'HELP OUT'

Proportion of respondents who provided unpaid help to someone not a relative, 2022

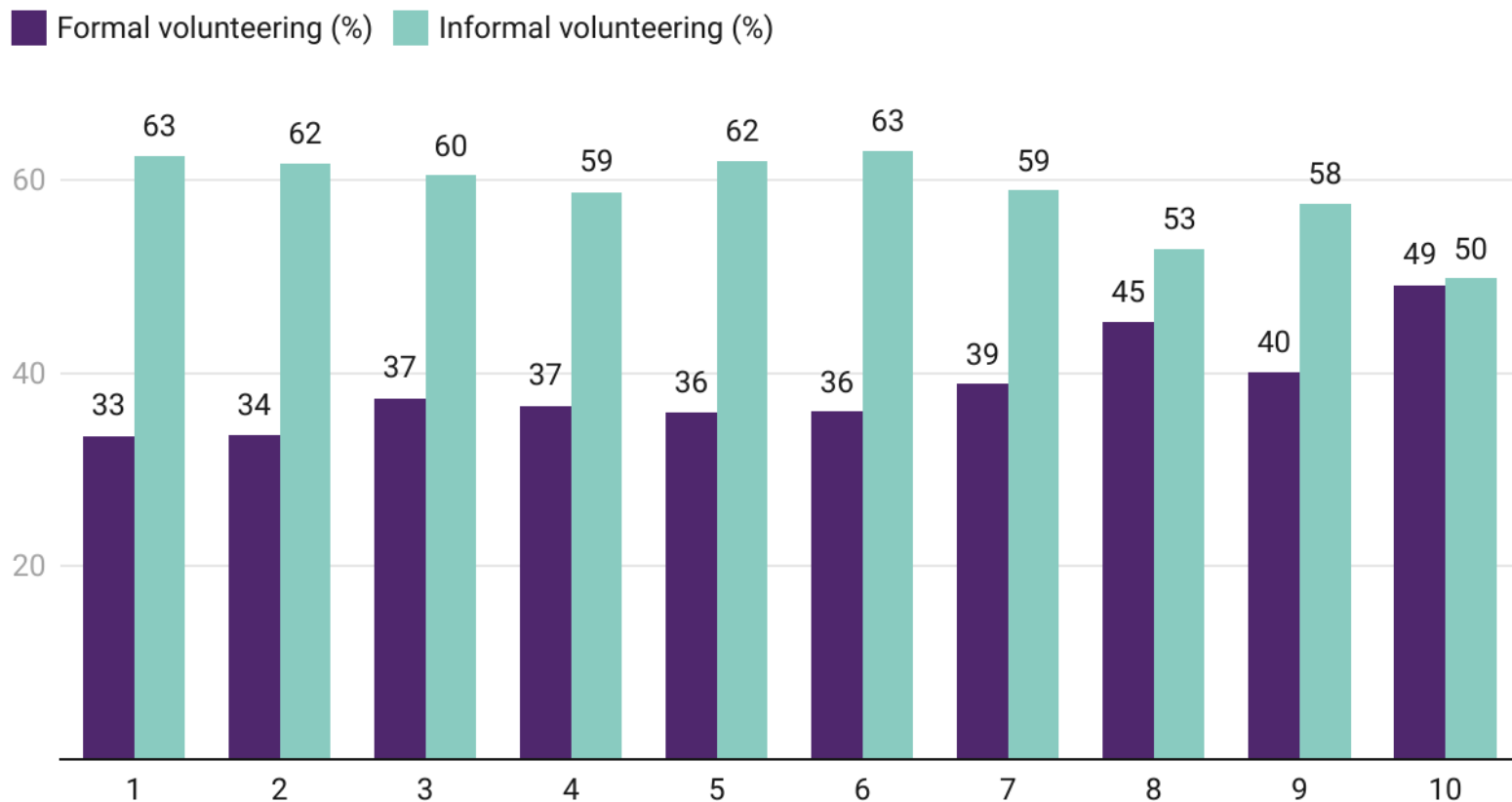
■ No (%) ■ Yes (%)



Source: Time Well Spent, 2022 • Created with Datawrapper

# RATES OF FORMAL VS INFORMAL VOLUNTEERING

Rates of formal and informal volunteering by decile, 2022 (% of those who gave unpaid help in last 12 months)

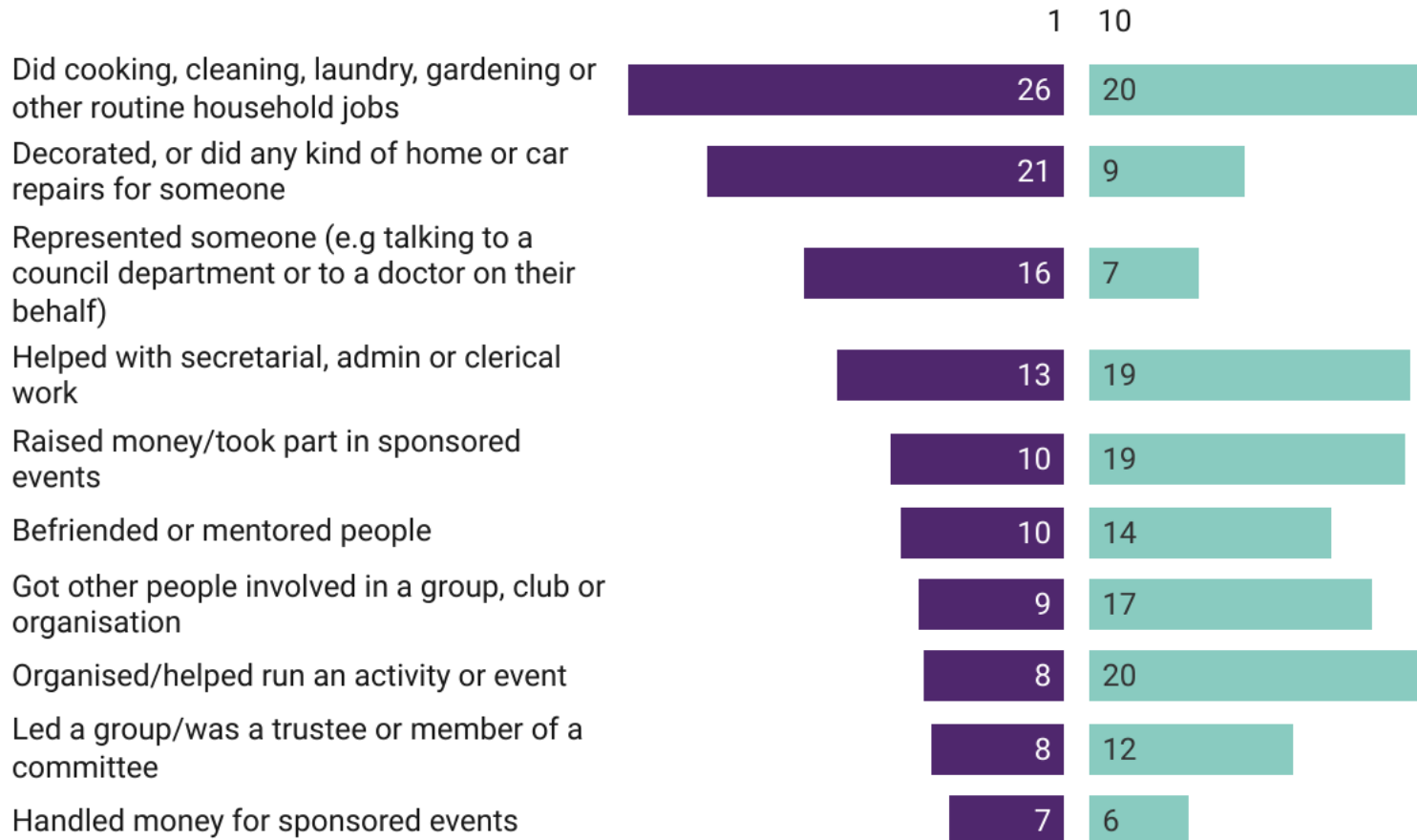


Source: Time Well Spent, 2022 • Created with Datawrapper

# TYPES OF ACTIVITIES

Volunteering activity by decile, 2022 (% of people who gave unpaid help in last three years)

■ Decile 1 ■ Decile 10



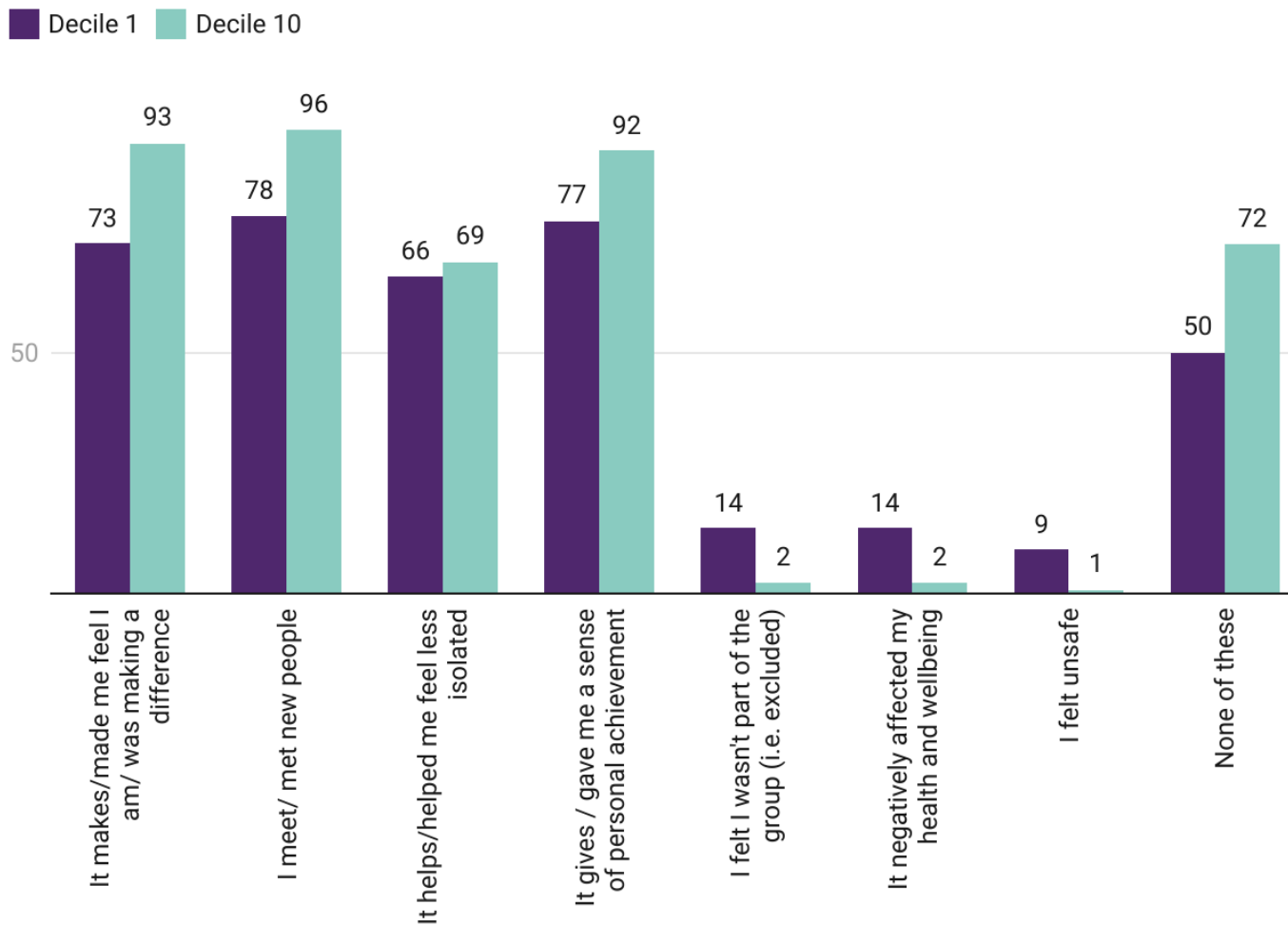
Source: Time Well Spent, 2022 • Created with Datawrapper



# EXPERIENCES

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Benefits and drawbacks of volunteering by decile, 2022 (% of respondents)

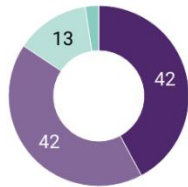


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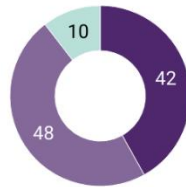
# SATISFACTION WITH VOLUNTEERING EXPERIENCE

Levels of satisfaction with volunteering experiences by decile, 2022 (% of respondents by decile)

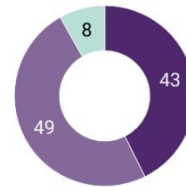
■ Very satisfied  
■ Fairly satisfied  
■ Fairly dissatisfied  
■ Very dissatisfied



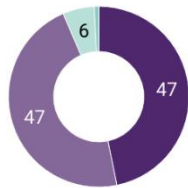
Decile 1



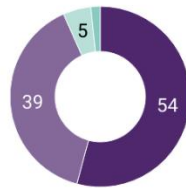
Decile 2



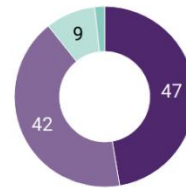
Decile 3



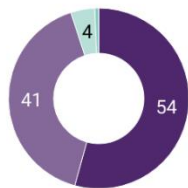
Decile 4



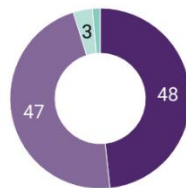
Decile 5



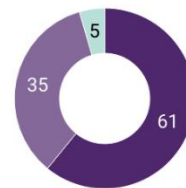
Decile 6



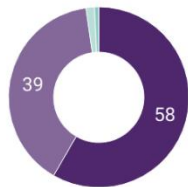
Decile 7



Decile 8



Decile 9

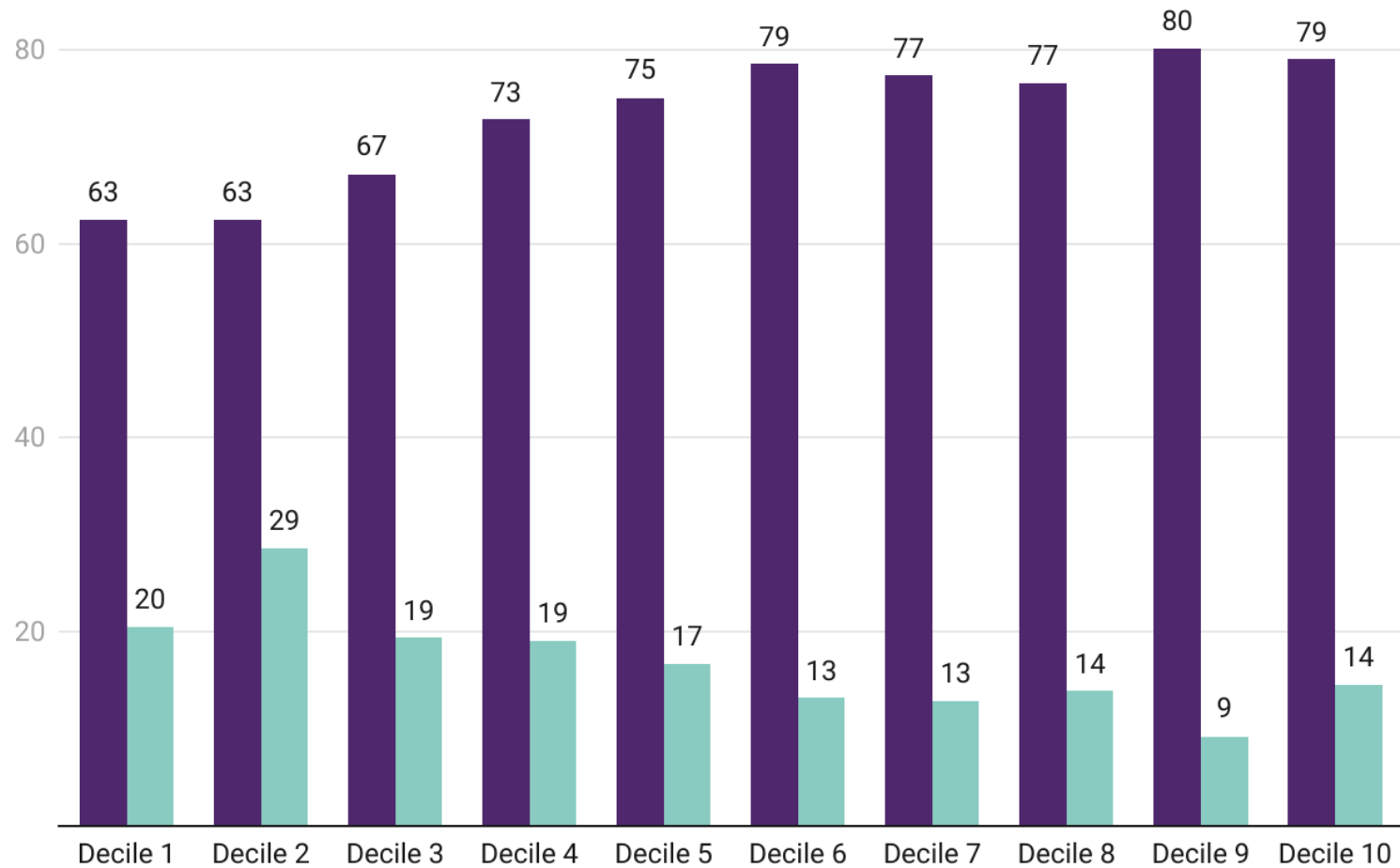


Decile 10

# CONTINUATION

Likelihood of continuing volunteering within the next 12 months, 2022 (% of recent and lapsed respondents)

Likely Unlikely



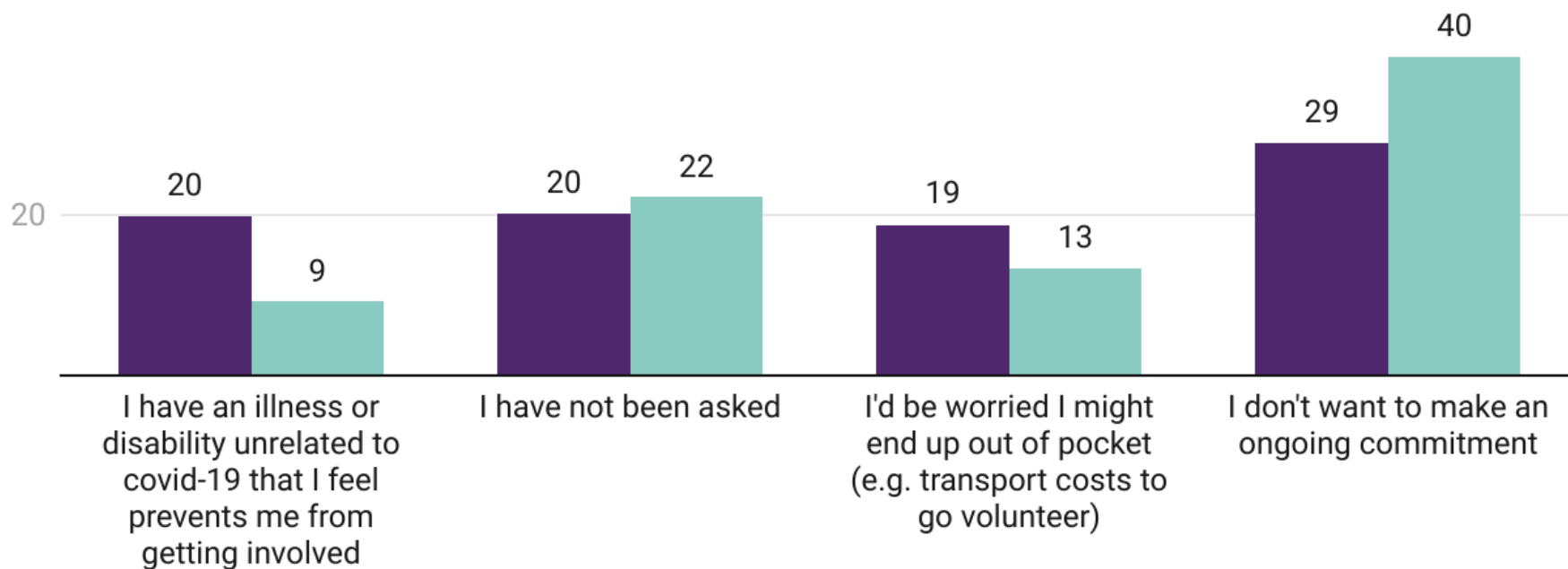
Source: Time Well Spent, 2022 • Created with Datawrapper

# BARRIERS

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Reasons for not volunteering by decile, 2022 (% of lapsed and non-volunteers)

Decile 1 Decile 10

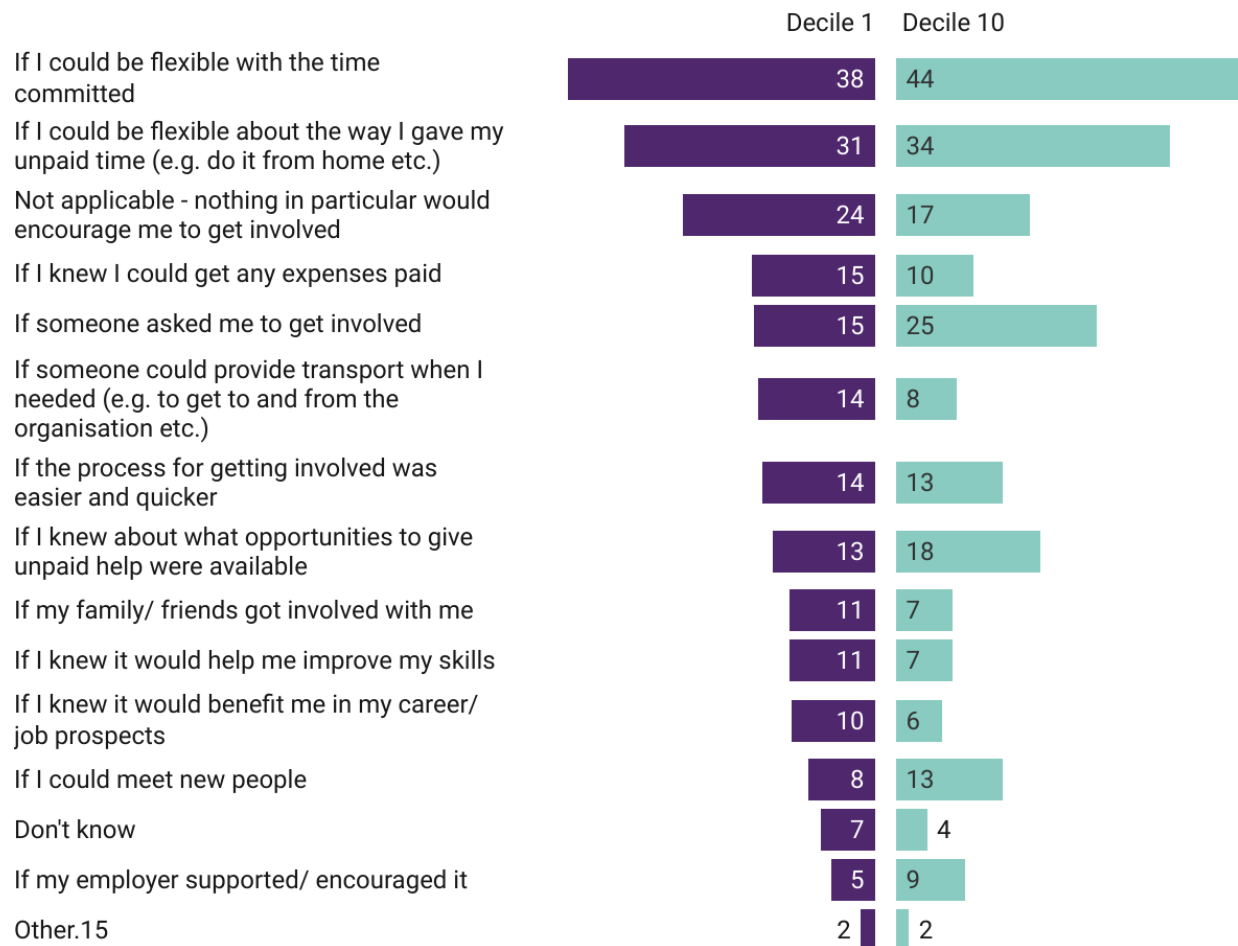


Source: Time Well Spent, 2022 • Created with Datawrapper

# MAKING IT EASIER

Things that would make it easier to get involved in volunteering for non-volunteers by decile, 2022 (% of lapsed and non-volunteers)

■ Decile 1 ■ Decile 10



Source: Time Well Spent, 2022 • Created with Datawrapper

REFLECTING ON THESE  
FINDINGS – WHAT DO THEY  
TELL US ABOUT  
VOLUNTEERING?

March 2023  
Catherine Goodall  
Senior Policy and  
Influencing Advisor

**NCS**  
**CHAMPIONING  
VOLUNTARY  
ACTION**



# LOCAL AND REGIONAL INEQUALITY – WHAT DO WE ALREADY KNOW?

## LOCAL AND REGIONAL INEQUALITY

Inequalities are widespread and worsening.

**Resolution Foundation** found the UK has higher income inequality than any other large European country.

Charities, and therefore many opportunities to volunteer are unequally distributed -**NPC 2020**

# LOCAL AND REGIONAL INEQUALITY

**Marmot Review** – health inequalities are worsening in deprived areas.

**What Works Centre for Wellbeing** -  
Volunteering is shown to have a positive impact on health and wellbeing

# MOBILISING UK VOLUNTARY ACTION

- Voluntary infrastructure, capacity and policy making differs across the UK.
- This has a big impact on how volunteers responded to covid and big national programmes
- Many areas lack voluntary infrastructure and ability to engage volunteers

## LOCAL AND REGIONAL INEQUALITY

**Maslow's hierarchy of needs** - people's basic needs have to be met before they can engage well in society.

What does that mean about how we talk about volunteer rates, when people are experiencing complex life challenges?

## WHAT COULD SOLUTIONS LOOK LIKE?

Evidence shows **centralised programmes to increase volunteering can be ineffective**. This poses questions about how we can address inequality.

What would solutions to inequality look like, how would local areas take ownership, and what resources would they need?

# DEFINITION AND EXPERIENCES

# EVERYBODY HELPS OUT CHALLENGES FOR DEFINITION

There is a long history of challenges for defining what is “volunteering”. Definition is important, not everyone considers what they do as volunteering.

While many people “help out”, the rates change depending on level of deprivation when we talk about “volunteering”.



# CHANGING PATTERNS OF INTEREST LESS TIME, MORE FLEXIBLE AND CAUSE DRIVEN

We saw in the **Vision for Volunteering** an ongoing shift in interest, motivation and desire around volunteering.

People increasingly want flexible, time bound, task based opportunities to fit around lifestyles. The differences across deciles are interesting.

## COLLECTIVE IMPACT - CYCLICAL VIEW

The **What Works Centre for Wellbeing** found volunteering is beneficial to wellbeing, especially when viewed in a cycle.



## EXPERIENCES WHAT'S IT LIKE TO VOLUNTEER? DO YOU KEEP DOING IT?

People in more deprived areas:

- have fewer opportunities to volunteer
- volunteer less in positions of leadership
- have a less positive experience
- see fewer benefits from volunteering

*Is it any wonder they “volunteer” less, but continue to help out?*

# DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

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- Do the research findings resonate with you?
- Do your experiences differ? How?
- What are your main challenges for inclusive volunteering?
- What kind of volunteers do you want to reach and hear from more?