Members
Survey
Report
2021

SOCIAL VALUE UK

SOCIAL VALUE UK

SVUK MEMBER SURVEY 2021

Table of Contents

Executive Summary

2020 has been a year of global challenge, and through the crises we are all living through there has been increased visibility of social inequality and injustice, the immediate threats of environmental harm, and the increasing pressures on our collective mental health and wellbeing.

> "**This is a 'moment'. People are valuing 'social value'. But not in that (technical) language. That's the challenge for SVUK, translating what people value into (everyday) management systems**"

Going into the crisis, the UK was in a state of growing inequality with over 14 million people living without enough to meet basic needs.
The whole UK population is facing increasing challenges to our mental health, community connection, and resilience, but as 'The Road Ahead' report outlines, whilst we are all in the same storm, we are not all in the same boat. Vulnerable, underserved communities have now had a year of greatly increased challenges of survival in the face of crisis.

Social Value UK conducted a survey with our members and network at the end of December 2020 to gain greater insight into the affects the global health pandemic has been having across our membership community here in the UK.

Executive Summary

Our members come from across all areas of the country and all sectors. At the start of the crisis, organisations across the country had to change how they were operating overnight, there was a huge voluntary and community based response to the crisis and huge mobilisation to meet the growing and changing needs.

Our members have shown a striking adaptability in this time, with 95% stating they have been able to well adapt their services. Incomes have been challenged, with over 60% reporting a decrease, with decreased demand for services in private sector and rural settings, and increased demand in civil society and urban settings.

Members have unsurprisingly experienced moves to online working and service delivery, and working from home, increased evaluation of how to deliver with enhanced safety measures whilst continuing to service vulnerable communities. Delivery has changed, services have stopped, reduced, changed methods, or something new started. Increase in need has been coupled with reduction and changes to funding.

Working in collaboration with partners and local community has been key to delivery of emergency 'right now' focused responses, and long term objectives in places have been put on hold.

Executive Summary

Interestingly, for our social value community

61% of respondents said social value was important or very important during the crisis,
51% said that they have used social value data in their organisational decision making,
31% of respondents said their organisations have changed their Social Value management practice.

31%
51%
61%
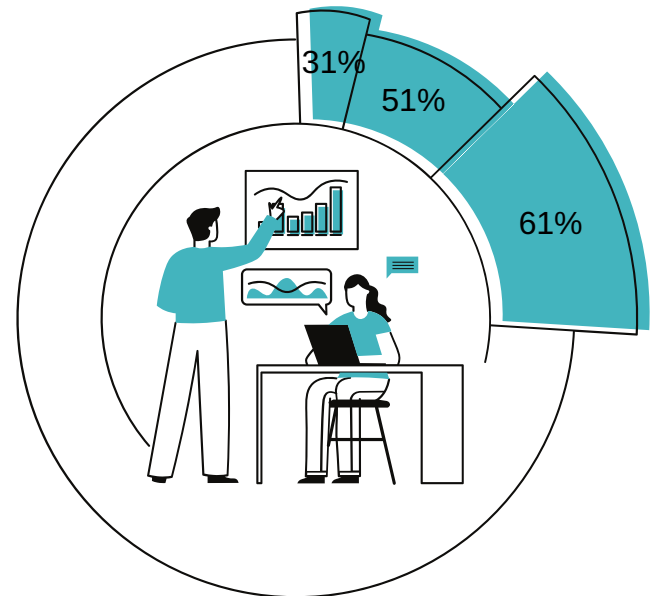
Social Value UK, and our global community led by Social Value International are driving the movement towards better decision making informed by this wider sense of value, and our survey shows our members are putting this into practice.

We have worked with our members to build a stronger, more engaged, more diverse, more vocal community. Our members have appreciated the connection during a time of isolation through the wide range of online webinars, meetings, conferences, workshops and training offered. Members have increased their knowledge of social value, and how to put it into practice, and built connections with others in the community to support their work.

Executive Summary

All of our wellbeing, reducing inequality and reducing environmental harm are core to the Social Value mission. Over half of our respondents have found that their organisations are doing more to improve impact on people's wellbeing, more to positively manage inequality, and more to positively manage impact on the environment. Social Value UK has also had to adapt during this challenging last year.

We are now heading into the new year, 2021, a time that would usually bring reflections on the achievements of the last year and forward planning of hopes of what to achieve. Here we are in the midst of our third lockdown, and a population enduring through the challenges of prioritising health and wellbeing within a system built to prioritise economic growth.

Social Value has never been more important, understanding it, measuring and managing it, and maximising the value we create through our activities for those affected is imperative to meet the ongoing challenges that we are all facing.
"This is a 'moment'.
People are valuing 'social value'."

The challenge for Social Value UK and our membership community is to translate this growing visibility of the importance of social value into our everyday decision making in all organisations, in all sectors, at all levels.

About Social Value UK

Social Value UK is the professional body for social value and impact management in the UK. Social Value UK is a Joint Member Network of Social Value International, the global standard-setting organisation for social value and impact management.

Our shared mission is to change the way the world accounts for value, to account for and be accountable for this wider sense of value, and to change our decision making away from maximising financial returns above all else. Our aim is to reduce environmental degradation and inequality and increase wellbeing for all.

We work with our members to embed the Principles of Social Value into measurement and analysis, to refine and share best practice, and to build a powerful movement of like-minded people to influence practice, policy and decision making. Our goal at Social Value UK is to support, connect, and represent our members through training, knowledge-sharing and networking. Social Value UK is much more than a professional network, we are a community. Together, we are building a movement for change.

SOCIAL VALUE UK

Social Value UK's Membership

Social Value UK is the only membership organisation within the UK that represents those working in the field of Social Value. We support, work with and represent our members across the country, forming a vibrant and active membership community. We help members to prove their commitment to Social Value, improve their practice, and offer unparalleled networking opportunities.

Our membership is drawn from a range of different sectors and backgrounds, holding one thing in common; to change the way society accounts for value. For a taste of who our members are, take a look at our Member Directory and our Social Value Pioneers and our Social Value Partners.

SVUK Impact of Covid-19 Survey

Between 3rd December 2020 and 5th January 2021, Social Value UK conducted a survey of its members to identify the current impact of the COVID-19 crisis for our members and network.

The survey also explored the importance of social value throughout organisations during the crisis, as well as examining the effect membership with Social Value UK has had for those engaging with us during this period.

Methodology

- Online survey of Social Value UK members and network between the 3rd December 2020 and the 4th January 2021.
- Combination of qualitative and quantitative questions.
- Total respondents: 63

The survey provides an overview of the experiences of some of the membership, but this is not representative of all experiences that have occured for our members and network.

Survey Demographics

In total, Social Value UK received 63 responses and of the respondents, 83% were members of Social Value UK, with a fairly even split between Individual (52%) and Organisational (48%) members. The majority of respondents were from either advisory or delivery organisations, with a small percentage of respondents from academia, legislative or funding bodies.
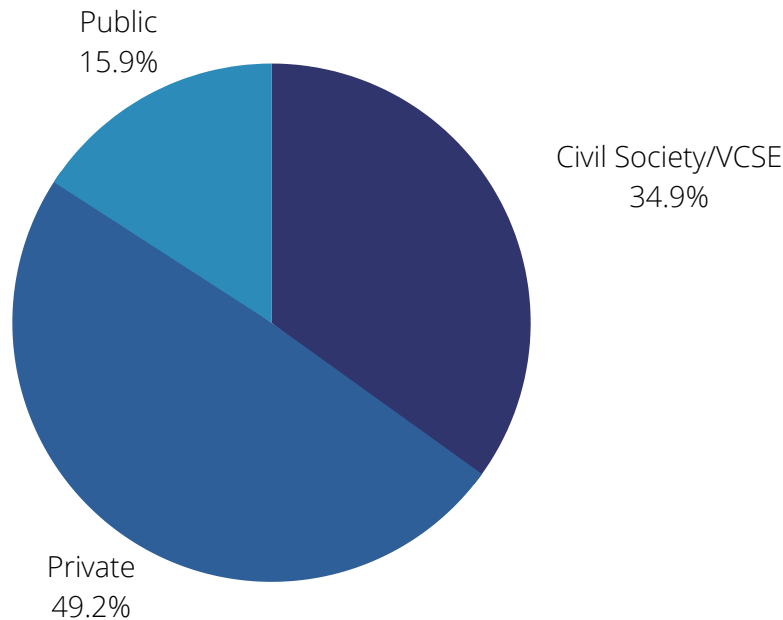
Location of respondents
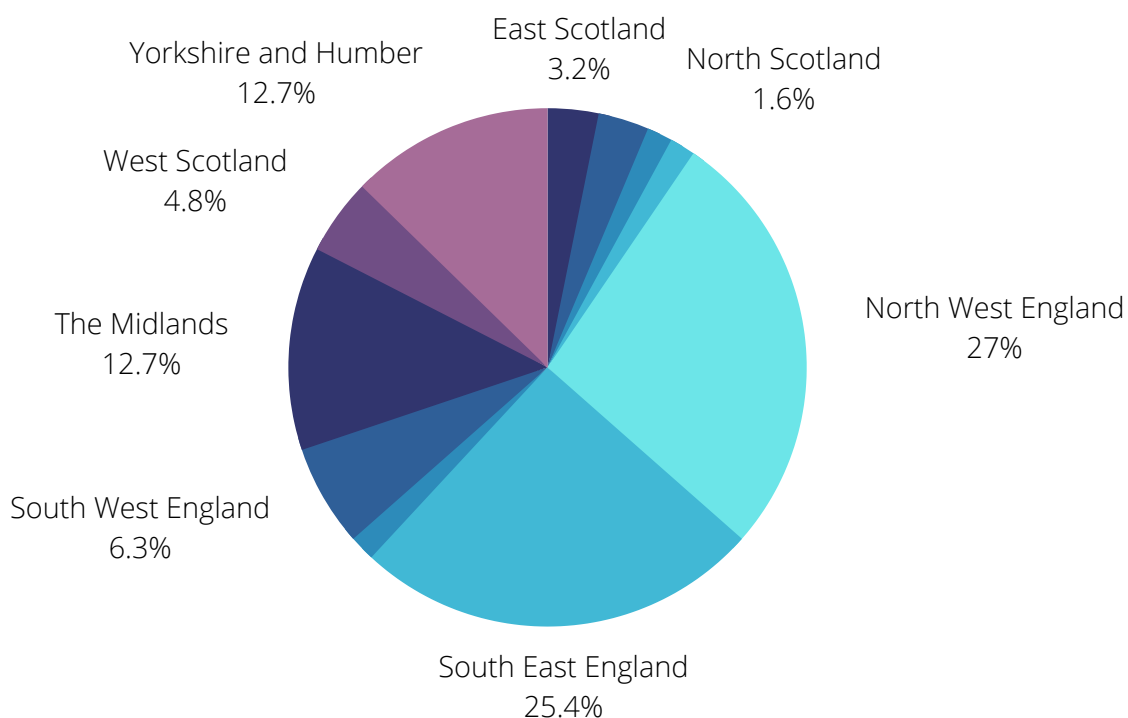
- Over 50% of respondents are based either in the North West of England or the South East of England. This is representative of the spread of Social Value UK members more broadly.
- Approximately 11% of respondents are based in Scotland.
- The remaining 40% of respondents are split across other regions of England, with 13% from the Midlands, and Yorkshire and Humber, and a small proportion from North Wales.
- 2% of Social Value UK's members are based in Northern Ireland, however we received no responses from Northern Ireland in the survey.

Survey Demographics

Sector of respondents

Public
15.9%

Civil Society/VCSE
34.9%

Private
49.2%

Just under half of the respondents of this survey are from the Private Sector. This breakdown of respondents is also fairly representative of the wider Social Value UK membership.

The impact of COVID-19

COVID-19 has affected all of our lives in a multitude of ways. It has meant that many of our members have had to change the way in which they operate organisationally, and live personally. People across the country have been doing this in the face of growing inequality, health and wellbeing challenges, and increasing community needs exacerbated throughout the COVID-19 pandemic based on already increasing levels of poverty and inequality here in the UK. This is an important context for those measuring and managing the social value of their activities, so all of our members and networks, who are adjusting their activities, goods and services, and working practices in the context of this growing and changing societal need.

The impact of COVID-19

Focusing on organisations and working life, we asked a few questions about how COVID-19 has changed what our members do professionally (i.e. in relation to organisational activities).

We asked our members to tell us 'how you have had to adapt your services during 2020 throughout the health pandemic?'

45 people responded to this question. The main themes raised in the responses are:

Moving services online: Unsurprisingly, moving to online working and service delivery has been a core change during the last year, with 60% of respondents referencing moving work online, increased use of online communication and meeting platforms. Also highlighted, is the increased effect of inequalities of digital access made more visible during the pandemic time as members have moved to online service delivery.

Working from home and online with communities and our partners or contractors has been the biggest adaptation, especially difficult when our residents can't afford to be online or don't have the digital skills

all our volunteers were in isolation due to their age/vulnerability

Adapted to home working: Linked to the above point, the second most mentioned adaptation is moving to home working (30%), for those that were in a position to make this change. Those already set up as remote workers were in a good position to continue work pretty much as normal. Those on the front line were still working face to face, and a few people referenced having teams and colleagues on furlough for parts of the year. Those working with volunteers have seen a reduction, or change in the way volunteers can work, and the services/activities they can get involved with.

The impact of COVID-19

Evaluation of HOW to deliver with enhanced safety measures: For those continuing to deliver face to face, increased safety measures, and assessment of how to deliver in light of social distancing measures & group activities have been implemented to ensure operational delivery is Covid safe (18% referenced).

Reduction in staff capacity has meant difficult choices, with one member stating:*'Reduced availability of staff resources means a limiting of our capacity. We have prioritised our most vulnerable customers and maintained a keeping in touch programme for others to ensure continuity.'*

Changed delivery - stopped/ reduced/ started something new: Many stated 'normal' services stopped, or were suspended leading to changing services or starting something new, often specifically related to Covid need. The construction sector was highlighted as core operations continuing throughout at near pre-pandemic levels, although 'other' activities having to reduce: *Our community engagement, schools and work experience programmes have been adversely affected with only a very limited delivery since March this year.*

Changes to and reductions in funding in civil society sector coupled with increased need were also highlighted:
increase in demand for social cohesion and mental health support, reduction in funding

Working in collaboration with partners and local community was highlighted by a few respondents specifically as key to coordinating the response to the crisis. A few people also referenced a move to an **emergency 'right now' focus, with long term objectives put on hold**, and specifically referenced emergency food distribution.
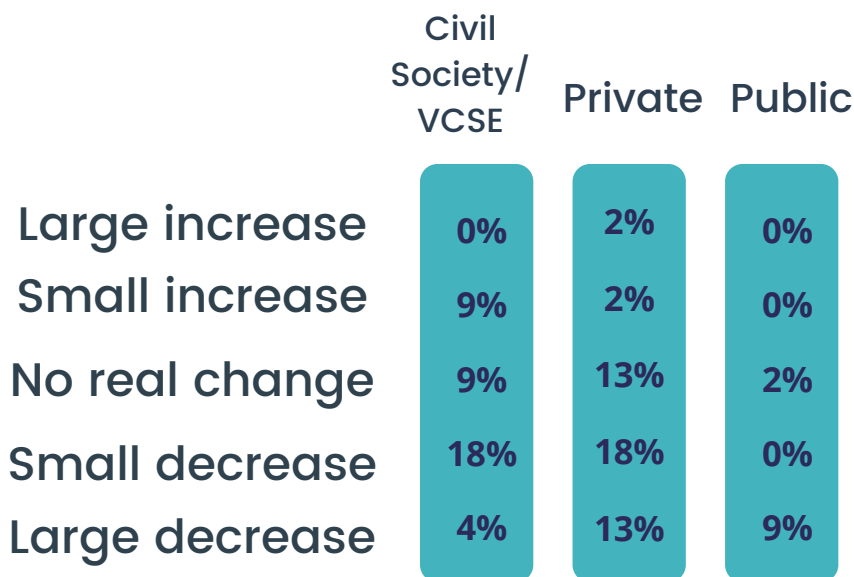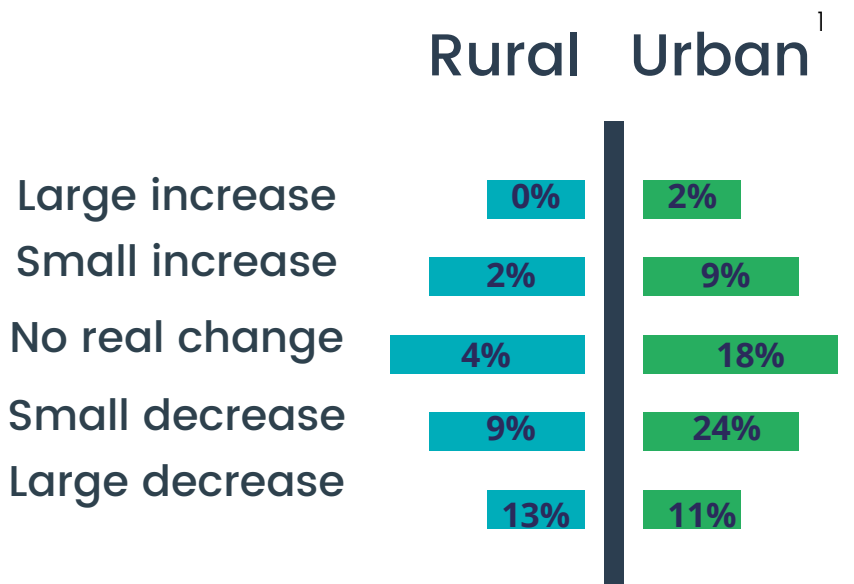
"
Shortening of project work to that which will create more immediate outcomes and impacts that can be counted in weeks by clients, rather than months or years
"

"
We also sent out 96 food parcels to our most vulnerable users, who were in need and shielding.
"

The impact of COVID-19

We asked our members to tell us "Has the crisis had an impact on your organisation's income?"

Over half of respondents (approx 62%) reported a decrease in their organisation's income, with approximately 27% reporting a large decrease.

Rural   Urban [1]

	Rural	Urban
Large increase	0%	2%
Small increase	2%	9%
No real change	4%	18%
Small decrease	9%	24%
Large decrease	13%	11%

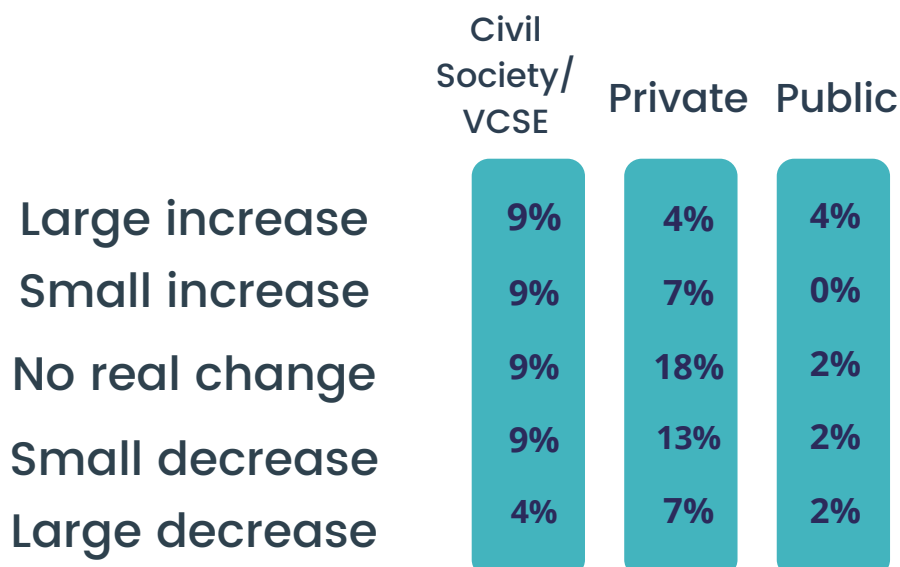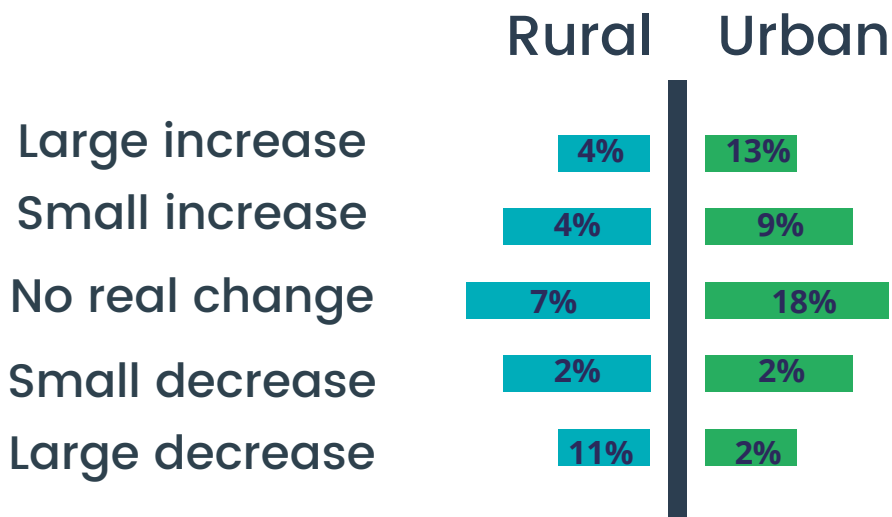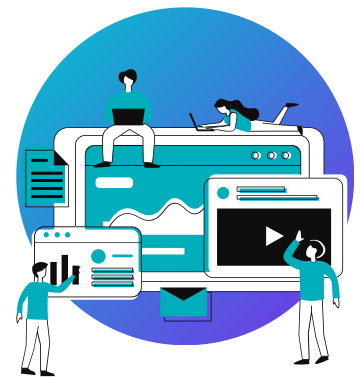|	Civil Society/ VCSE	Private	Public
Large increase	0%	2%	0%
Small increase	9%	2%	0%
No real change	9%	13%	2%
Small decrease	18%	18%	0%
Large decrease	4%	13%	9%

[1] Some respondents answered 'don't know' to the question whether they were based in a 'rural' or 'urban' setting

The impact of COVID-19

We asked our members to tell us "Have you seen a change in demand for your services?"

One third of respondents (approx. 33%) have seen increased demand for their services, while 38% have seen a decrease, with the increased demand skewed more to urban, and Civil Society settings, and decreased need skewed to rural, and Private Sector settings.

	Rural	Urban
Large increase	4%	13%
Small increase	4%	9%
No real change	7%	18%
Small decrease	2%	2%
Large decrease	11%	2%

|	Civil Society/ VCSE	Private	Public
Large increase	9%	4%	4%
Small increase	9%	7%	0%
No real change	9%	18%	2%
Small decrease	9%	13%	2%
Large decrease	4%	7%	2%

The impact of COVID-19

We asked our members to tell us "Have there been changes to the capacity of your teams throughout the crisis?"

- 40% of respondents have team members on furlough, and 24% report that their volunteers have been unable to volunteer

- Respondents reported running more of their services online, changing products and services to create immediate outcomes and focusing more extensively on wellbeing.

Your Social Value/Impact measurement/management practice

Social Value is fundamentally about people's lives. During this period where everyone's lives have changed, been impacted, and disrupted, the importance of social value has gained increased and greater visibility.
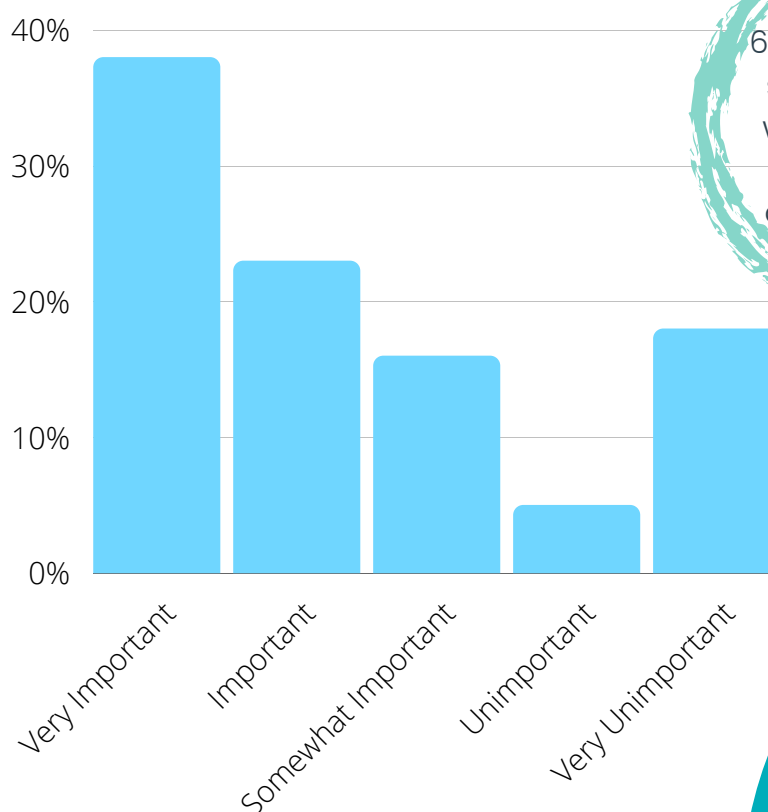
We asked our members to tell us "How important has social value been to your organisation during this period?"

61% of respondents said social value was important or very important during the crisis.

Bar chart showing responses: Very Important ~38%, Important ~23%, Somewhat Important ~16%, Unimportant ~5%, Very Unimportant ~18%. Y-axis 0% to 40%.
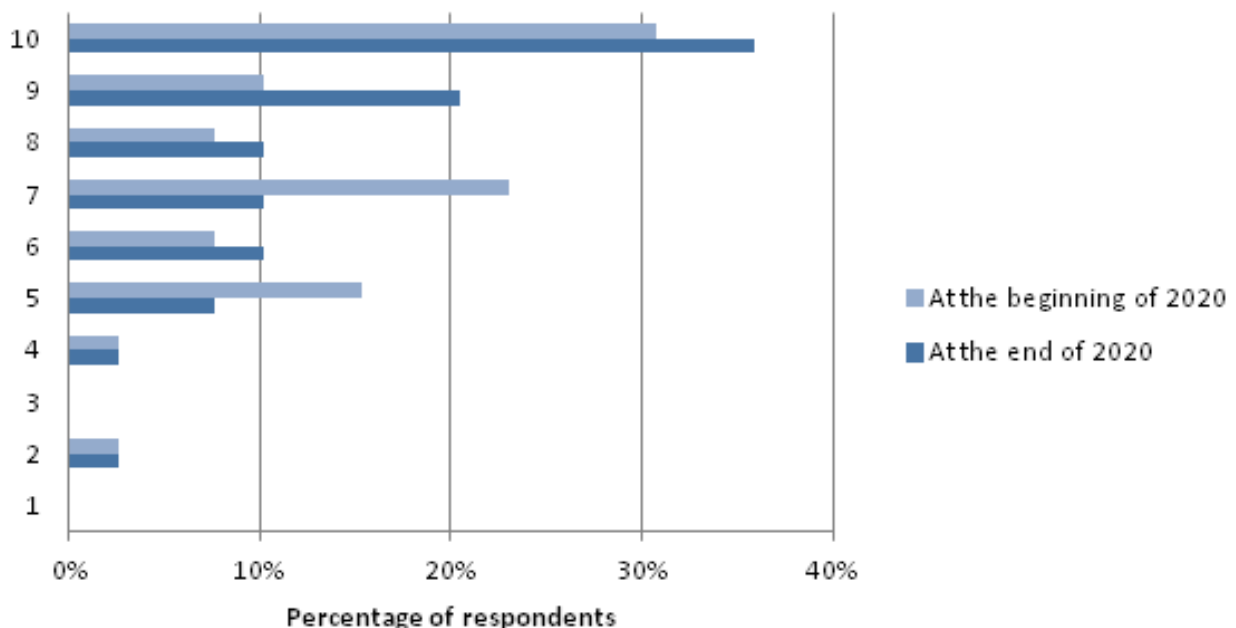
The impact of COVID-19

We asked our members to tell us "On scale of 1-10, with 10 being the highest, how important was Social Value to your organisation pre-Covid/at the beginning of 2020?" and "On scale of 1-10, with 10 being the highest, how important is Social Value to your organisation now [at the end of 2020]?"

- At the beginning of 2020 (pre-Covid), respondents weighted the importance of social value at an average of 7.6 out of 10.
- At the end of 2020, this weighting had risen to an average of 8.1 out of 10. Those rating the importance of social value 8, 9 or 10 increased to 67% by end of 2020, from 49% pre-crisis

On scale of 1-10, with 10 being the highest, how important was Social Value to your organisation?

The impact of COVID-19

We asked our members to tell us "Have you been able to adapt your services well during Covid?"

- 95% of respondents report having been able to adapt services well during the crisis
- 47% felt this was linked to their social value management systems and processes.

We asked our members to tell us "Have your Social Value management systems and processes changed during this time?"

- 31% of respondents have seen their organisation changing their Social Value management processes during this time.
- 69% of respondents did not see their organisations change Social Value management processes during this time.

	Civil Society/ VCSE	Private	Public
Yes	5%	23%	3%
No	33%	28%	8%

For those that said 'Yes' we asked how their Social Value management systems and processes changed

Some of the changes in social value management systems and processes are:
- Changes in data gathering systems to more automated/digital in line with move to online services
- More visibility of social value meaning it is more on people's radar

> *"[Social Value is] now more on the radar of colleagues, contractors and communities, which means we've positively had to adapt how we support teams to manage their processes and systems as well as attitudes for it being at the heart."*

The impact of COVID-19

- Making social value strategic, and expanding business wide

"*We are in the process of establishing a clearer Social Value strategy and measurement approach.*"

- Increasing team skill / expertise in social value

"*...we have had one of our employees study and reach Associate Practitioner Level 1 through the Practitioners Pack, which means that we are even better equipped and confident to perform better SROI and impact analysis for our clients.*"

We asked our members to tell us "Beyond just gathering or reporting on Social Value data, has your organisation been using or including this in your organisational decision making?

Over half of participants (51%) report their organisations have used Social Value data in organisational decision making.

For those that said 'Yes' we asked for some details. Our members said:

- To influence decision on changes: "*Ensuring additional benefits are identified to justify business case for change*"

- To apply for funding: "*Our Coordinator and trustees work together and have used all this [Social Value] information with regards to applying for funding during the pandemic last year.*"

- To be accountable for social purpose:
"*...we see it as an obligation to keep track on how we are performing towards our goals. We quarterly report on our SDG aligned social value data and discuss it at board level. There are also yearly targets in place, broken down to quarterly targets too, so we can put actions in place...*"

- To inform procurement processes:
"*Social Value report on our activity over the last two years has been approved by our board and will be on our social media. Looking to procurement processes now to include social value in practice.*"

The impact of COVID-19

Some also raised some issues:

- **Choice between social value and financial sustainability:**
"It's always a balance between social value and earning an income - with income dropping I may need to consider the balance and move to more income generating rather than social value (for me this means less low bono or free work for small voluntary sector clients"

- **Less resource to prioritise social value systems:**
"We have not been able to give it for focus as we have been busy dealing with the immediate situation"

- **Practice is still not far enough:**
"Is supermarkets returning rates relief a recognition of social value; yes, [but] has it shifted decision-making to leading-edge social value accounting...unlikely"

We asked our members to tell us "Since COVID, my organisation is doing more to improve our impact on people's wellbeing"

Just over half, 54%, of respondents either "agree" or "strongly agree" that their organisation is doing more to improve impact on people's wellbeing since the start of the crisis.

Some specifics people shared are:

"Improved internal communications, mental health first aiders in place, mental health campaigns, tool box talks, promotion of employee assistance programme."

"...programmes to support stress challenges associated with new ways of working. Especially the challenges of Work / Home life overlapping..."

"Greater consideration for mental health, work life balance, keeping in touch with vulnerable colleagues. Greater focus on outputs not hours worked."

The impact of COVID-19

We asked our members to tell us "Since COVID, my organisation is doing more to positively manage inequality"

A similar proportion (56%) of respondents either "agree" or "strongly agree" that their organisation is doing more to positively manage inequality.

Some specifics people shared that their organisations are doing to better manage inequality are:

"Trying to acknowledge the impact on other and/ or hidden groups e.g. BAME/ LGBTQ+/ young people"

"Local work to support minorities and under-represented groups"

"Stats for BAME and women in employment have dropped this year (women more so due to childcare/part time working etc) going forward we will be focussed on recruiting from these cohorts."

We asked our members to tell us "Since COVID, my organisation is doing more to positively manage our impact on the environment"

53% respondents either "agree" or "strongly agree" that their organisation is doing more to positively manage environmental impact.

Members shared some specifics on how their organisations are doing more to manage environmental impact:

"We have improved our systems to be able to improve environmental reporting and impact but this is not specifically related to covid."

"Considering how can imbed the use of zoom so we travel less"

"(Perhaps quite involuntarily) our environmental impact, which is normally predominated by international travel, has reduced to nearly nothing."

83% of respondents are members of Social Value UK, and the following section only applies to those respondents who are members.

50% of the members who responded to this survey have been members of Social Value UK for between 1-3 years, whilst a further 32% have joined the network in the last 12 months.

The remainder of respondents have been members of Social Value for 3+ years.

Social Value UK's member support throughout 2020

The survey also examined the impact membership with Social Value UK has had upon the membership during this period.

What services have been most useful to our members in 2020?

- In 2020, Social Value UK hosted more than 40 webinars - these webinars were the service our members found most useful.
- The monthly newsletters, weekly ideas exchanges, and participation in the Members Exchange and AGM and the Social Value Matters Conference were also services that our members found most helpful to support them throughout the pandemic.

What activities/actions delivered by Social Value UK this year have supported you the most?
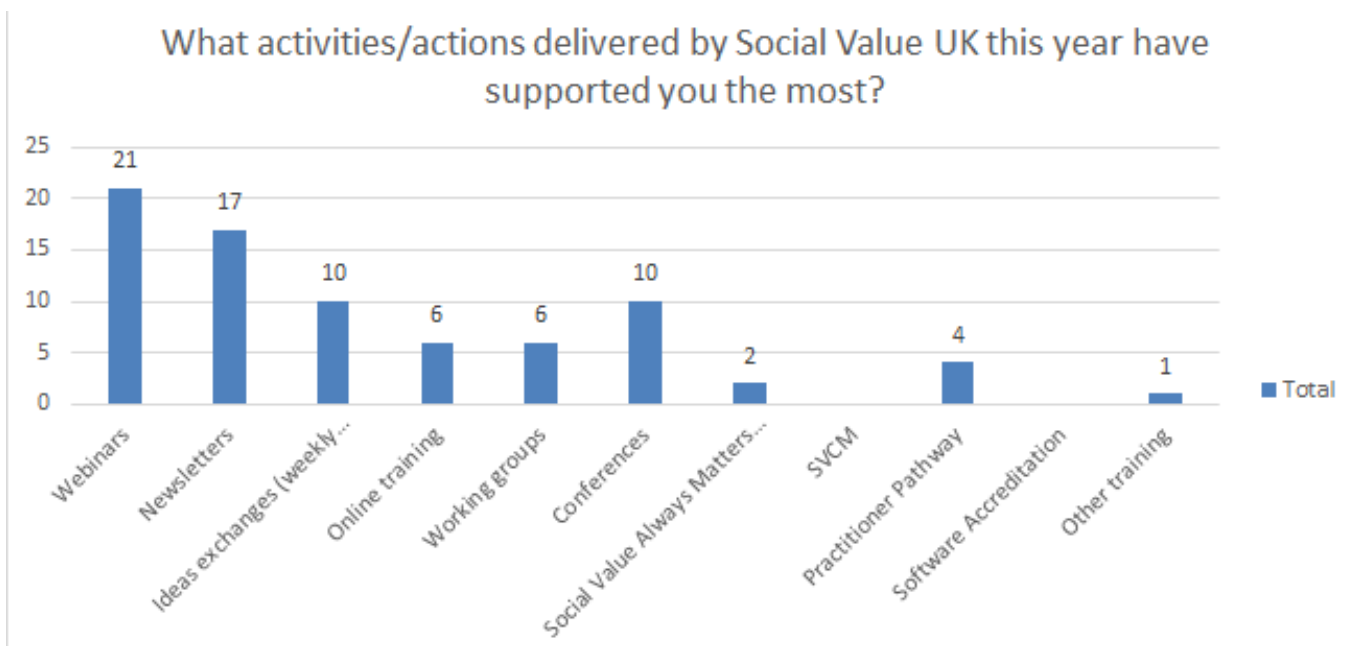
"I think they [SVUK] have adapted and provided good opportunities for engagement & learning."

"The offer has been brilliant. Especially the online conferences & Exchange"

What services have been most useful to our members in 2020?

We also asked our members whether they felt that the support offered by Social Value UK had been more useful than in previous years, due to the change and expansion of services developed as a result of the COVID-19 crisis.

48% of respondents said yes, the services had been more useful to them whilst a further 33% said they had remained the same as previous years.

"Helped to feel part of something. Remote, isolated working was a challenge."

"The organisation quickly amended to online, which further enabled me to attend more than previously."

We were also keen to understand what had changed for our members as a result of being a part of the network. A lot of respondents mentioned that within the last 12 months they were able to:

- Connect with more members
- Engage more with the services
- Understand the role of social value in the "real world"
- Increase their knowledge of social value and how to embed into activities
- More engagement with breadth and diversity of impact management practices.

The biggest impact Social Value UK had this year was making our members feel more connected in a time of social isolation.

"Part of something bigger than the sum of its parts"

"Valued!"

"Included and supported"

"Part of the SV Movement"

Looking Forward to 2021

We were keen to understand from our members what they would like to see in 2021, what more we can do to support them, and things we could improve to make their experience of membership more impactful.

Looking forward, what activities taken by Social Value UK do you think will support you most in 2021?
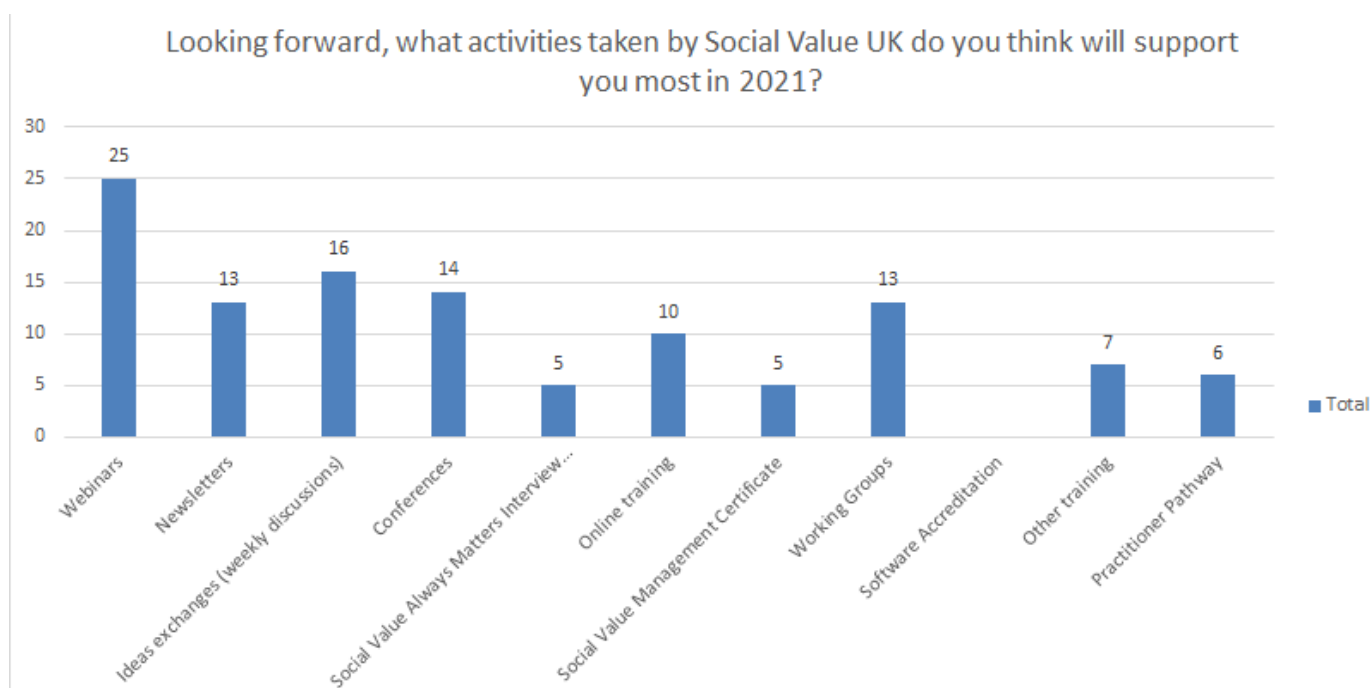
From this we can see that the service our members want to engage with in 2021 is webinars. On top of this our members are hoping to engage with more conferences, working groups, ideas exchanges and discussions, and keep up to date with social value news and updates in our monthly newsletter.

Some suggestions for further services included:

More "activities aimed at those working in the charity sector" and also the public sector:

"The public sector is sometimes under-represented at SVUK events...should we target more toward the public sector?"

"More practical advice on implementing social value tools as well as the high level strategy work."

"More discussions and networking opportunities"

Looking Forward to 2021

Our members also suggested some ways in which Social Value UK could improve our services to maximise the value created. This included:

- Practical advice, and more guidance such as case studies: "the supply of more case studies on development of measurement tools."

- Strengthen some of communications, and focus on quality not quantity "There's a lot of communication from Social Value UK, but sometimes I feel the clear messages are being lost in a wealth of information, and it overwhelms me a bit"

- Flexible pricing options such as a "Reduction in the cost of training for those individual members whose employers will not fund SV training either financially or with time off to complete courses.

- "More opportunities for Professional Development progression - Overall the support has been great - I want to progress on the practitioner but progressing above L1 is difficult to find the opportunities to practice especially now

Final word

There is much to do in 2021. Inequality in the UK has increased greatly in the last year, and continues to do so. Conversely, people are vocally stating they want a greener, fairer, more equal society for all.[2] Social Value has never been more important.

Social Value UK will be continuing to work with our members to support their continued drive to embed social value into all aspects of their work, organisations and sectors.

Our mission remains the same 'to change the way the world accounts for value' through People, Principles, Practice and Power, and we are looking forward to continuing to work with you all to achieve our shared goals of addressing inequality, reducing environmental harm and improving our collective wellbeing. We are incredibly grateful to all of the respondents of our Impact of Covid survey, and will use all of the information shared to help to inform our next steps into 2021.

If you would like to find out more, or to discuss any of the information in this report, do reach out to the team at:

info@socialvalueuk.org

[2] https://reset-uk.org/ Green New Deal Cross Party Parliamentary Group