

Volunteer Satisfaction Survey for 2024



What our volunteers told us
about their time with Health in Mind

Our volunteers rated their
experience with us

4.6 out of 5



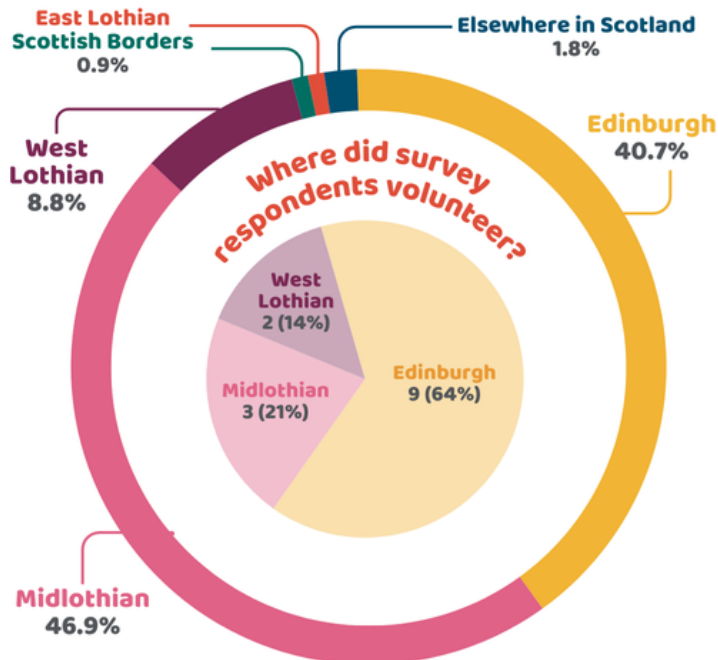


Who are our volunteers?

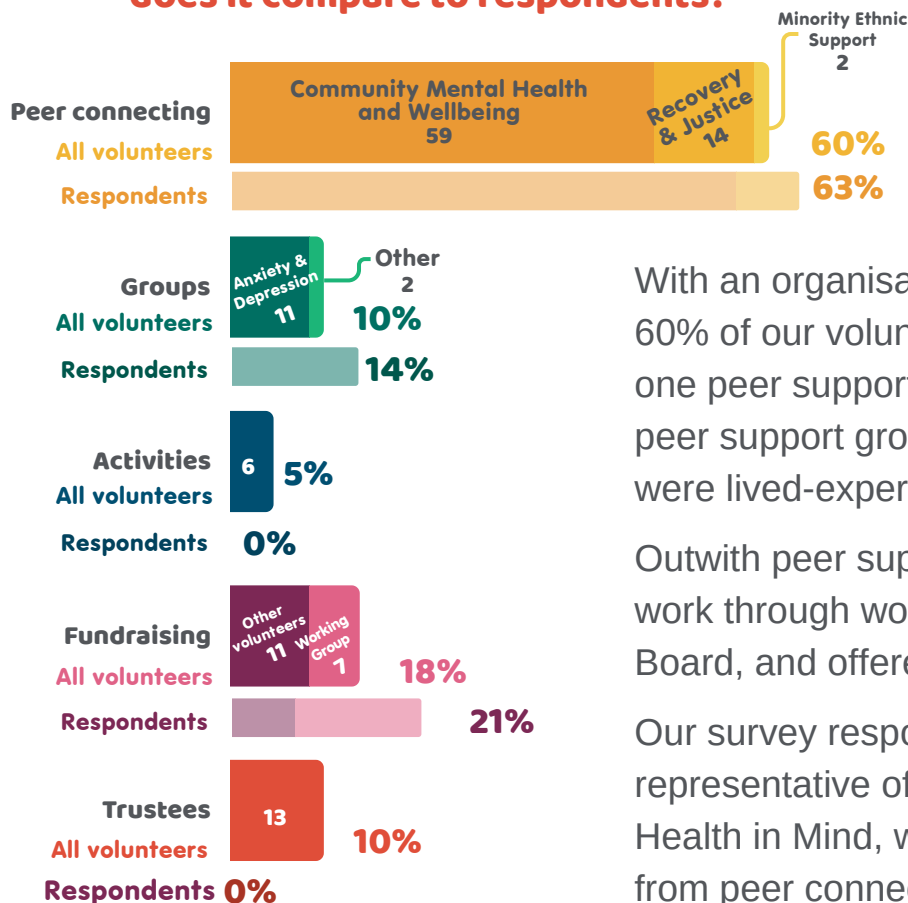
In 2024, we had **135** volunteers operating across 5 regions, with volunteers contributing to service delivery in **Edinburgh, Midlothian, West Lothian** and the **Scottish Borders**, and fundraising volunteers located in East Lothian and elsewhere.

12.5% of those volunteers responded to our 2024 Volunteer Satisfaction Survey, 64% of whom were based in Edinburgh and 21% in Midlothian.

Where did people volunteer overall?



What do volunteers do, and how does it compare to respondents?



Volunteers at Health in Mind are supervised by individual service teams, and have a variety of roles.

With an organisational focus on peer-led services, 60% of our volunteers in 2024 provided one-on-one peer support, and a further 20% facilitated peer support groups, meaning that over 70% were lived-experience peer support volunteers.

Outwith peer support, volunteers also guided our work through working groups and through our Board, and offered admin support.

Our survey respondents were largely representative of the balance of volunteer roles in Health in Mind, with the bulk of responses coming from peer connecting volunteers.



Your volunteer experience

You said...

We asked participants in this year's survey what brought them to Health in Mind, and almost half said they **wanted to give back after receiving support**.

We also asked people what they most enjoyed.

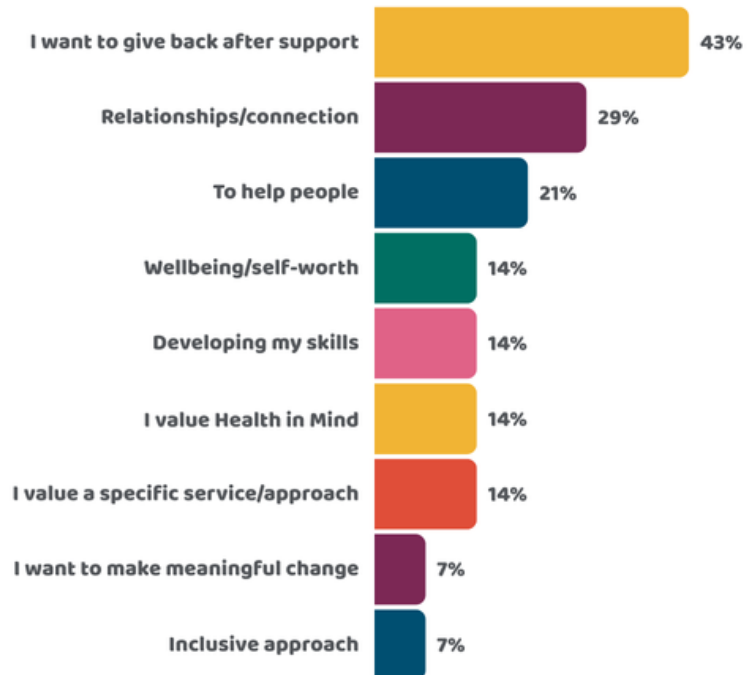
Relationships was one of the strongest throughlines, with almost 3/4 of respondents citing their relationships to staff, service users or both, and 1 in 3 saying that building relationships contributed to their decision to volunteer. Support, trust, and flexibility were also common themes.

'Everyone I have met has more or less the same aim & values which I relate to. I can be myself & feel accepted.'

'I find it such a rewarding and honourable way to support recovery ... I just love doing peer support work.'

'I've been allowed to feel I can be completely myself'

Why do you volunteer with Health in Mind?



What do you like about volunteering with us?



'I'm just grateful to have an opportunity to help others and to learn more about mental health through the peers I support.'



Building collaboration through feedback

You said...

In our 2024 survey, we received 14 responses - a 12.5% return rate. This is a fairly small sample size, without representation from all areas of the organisation.

However, when asked, more people than last year said that they felt comfortable sharing their input with us, with **93%** feeling comfortable and **7%** feeling somewhat comfortable.

'Talk to volunteers and hear them.'

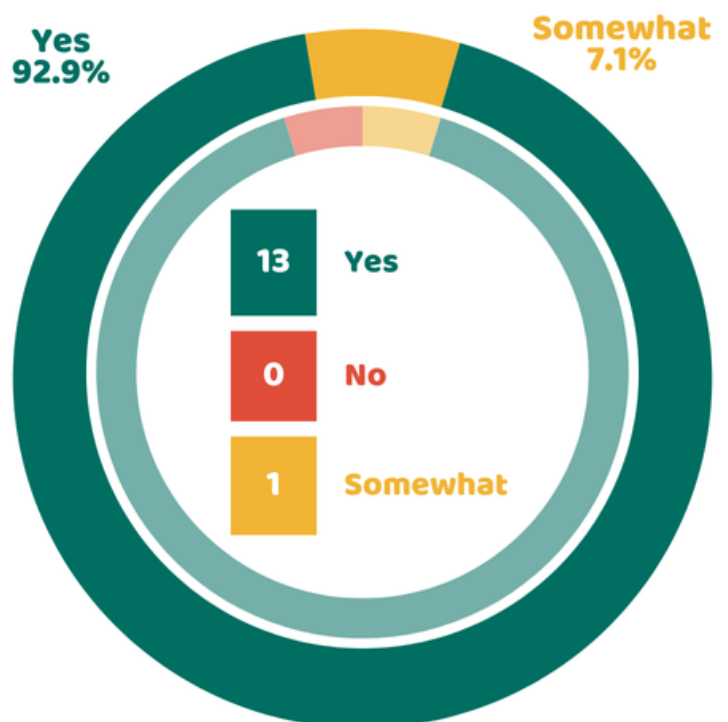
We will...

We aim to build our work around your feedback, which means we need to open up as many avenues as possible for people to give input, and commit to responding honestly and fully.

Therefore, we commit to...

- **Explore ways to offer more opportunities for feedback throughout the volunteer journey, including through supervision and departure.**
- **Bring feedback to our now-active Volunteer Action Group to feed into our ongoing workplan.**

Do you feel comfortable sharing your input or suggestions with us?





Training and events

You said...

Throughout the survey, a running theme was the desire for training tailored to specific volunteer roles.

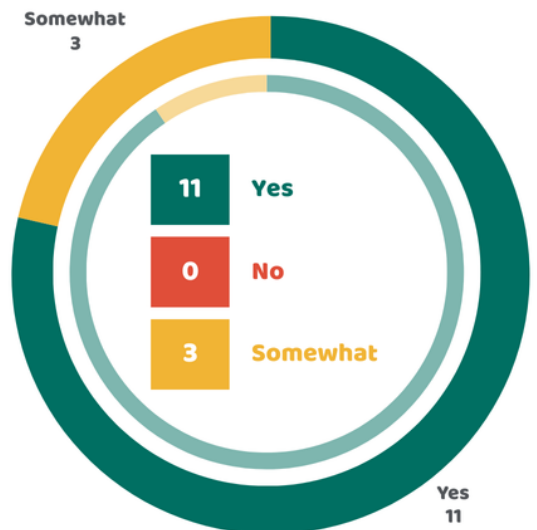
When asked, over 3/4 of participants said they would like to attend training sessions in 2025, and more than half wanted reflective practise sessions, information sharing, and spaces to share their practise.

[I'd like to get training] which involves gaining the theory for practice involving mental illness to mental wellbeing.

I love the training provided and the trust that our supervisors show with the autonomy of being given the match.

The training is amazing

Do you feel that you received enough training and information?



If we arranged volunteer events in 2025, what would you be likely to attend?



We will...

- **Build a training and events calendar for 2025**, incorporating the feedback from this survey and from consultation events to meet social, training and reflective practise needs
- **Review the mandatory training for volunteer roles**, making sure they're consistent and suit everyone's needs.
- **Continue to seek options for online training available to all volunteers.**



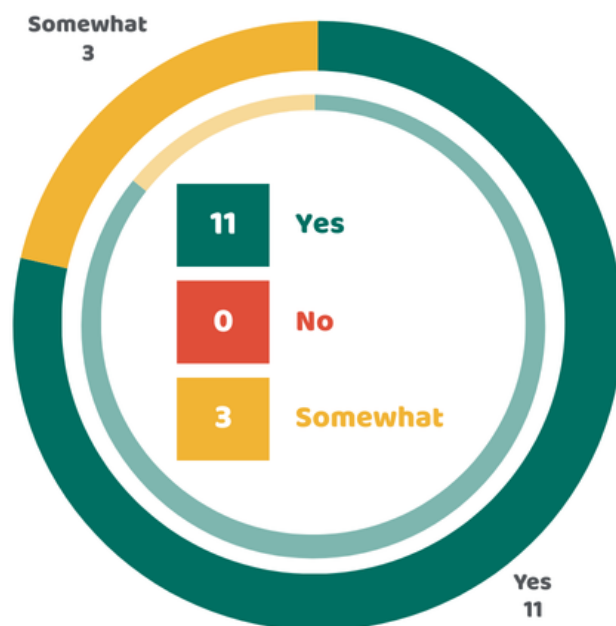
Support and supervision

You said...

All our survey participants said they felt wholly or mostly supported in their roles, with the support and flexibility provided in supervision being many people's favourite thing about their time with Health in Mind.

'I really enjoy the balance between being trusted completely to meet and connect with the person while also being supported really well by my supervisor'

Do you feel supported in your role? (through ongoing contact, supervision and ongoing training etc?)



When asked what we could do to help them feel more supported, most participants said that they were happy with the level of support provided, while a couple expressed a desire for more in-person contact with supervisors.

'I feel that you are such an approachable organisation and extremely understanding, and someone is always available if I need to debrief.'

We will...

- **Commit to regular supervision, proportionate to the role and the hours spent volunteering, and face-to-face where possible** (depending on the needs of the volunteer)
- **Review our Staff Handbook and guidances for volunteer supervisors** to ensure that support is consistent, thorough, and suitable for the role.



Valuing our volunteers

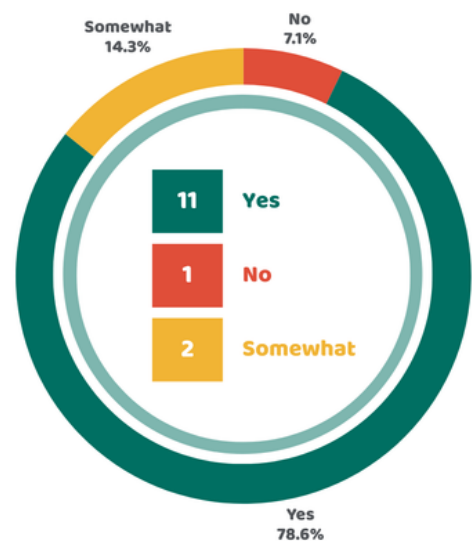
'Being invited to take part in a Q&A during training of new volunteers, and being invited on the interview panel for a recent job vacancy, made me feel valued as a member of the overall team and was a great boost to my self esteem.'

You said...

Although 93% of participants felt wholly or somewhat valued by Health in Mind, we have not achieved the 100% satisfaction that came through in our 2023 survey.

We are keen to address this, and since the 2024 survey closed, we have established a Volunteer Action Group among key managers to help respond to and address volunteers' concerns.

Do you feel valued by Health in Mind?



Volunteers spoke to several ways we could help them feel more valued:

- **Talk to volunteers, and follow up on their input** (see above)
- **Review training and support provision** (see above)
- **Provide visible markers for volunteers while they're acting on behalf of Health in Mind**
- **Be mindful around language used to describe volunteers' contributions, and avoid taking their contribution for granted.**
- **Set clear boundaries between paid and unpaid roles**

We will...

- **Look at options for pins, lanyards, or other visible signifiers of volunteers' roles.**
- **Continue work already underway on developing language guidance** to make sure we accurately reflect the importance of volunteering.
- **Provide clear guidances on appropriate volunteer tasks as part of our upcoming Volunteer Agreement rollout**



Meeting your expectations

You said...

1 in 4 participants felt volunteering with us had not fully met their expectations, which we take seriously.

We asked respondents what we could do differently to make volunteering better meet their expectations, and our participants offered several specific suggestions for improvements within their services, which service managers have committed to following up within their services.

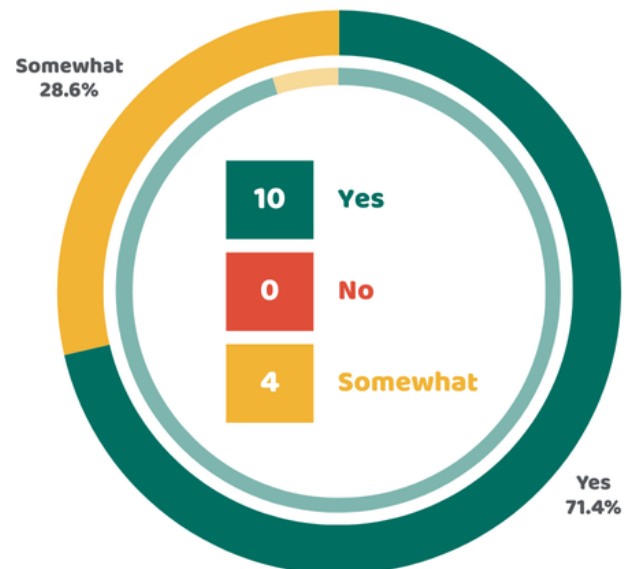
Respondents also spoke to several points, such as training and supervisor contact, which we have looked into elsewhere in this report. There was also a desire to build a stronger awareness of the value of peer-led working, and to recruit more members for key working groups.

'Sometimes there is not enough debate [in the Fundraising group] with only 4 members and 1 staff member...it sometimes feels there is only one person who takes over, even though we all have our say. But I realise you can't make people join groups if they don't want to.'

We will...

- **Develop the organisational Lived Experience Action Group (LEAG)** to centre the voice of lived experience and peer-led working in our planning and delivery
- **Explore options to promote volunteering opportunities more widely**, and to ensure we reach the right people with the right roles.

Has volunteering met your expectations?



Updates from our 2023 commitments

You said...	We did...	We're working on...
Develop new ways to engage with and involve volunteers to ensure all voices are heard and shape how we do things.	Following consultation with volunteers, people accessing our services, trustees and staff, we agreed an organisational statement of approach in May 2024 for 'Our Ambition for Engagement, Involvement and Co-design'. Volunteers have also been active members of our Strategy Learning and Implementation Group (SLIG), helping us reflect on and develop the implementation of our current strategy.	
Continue to build on the success of both digital and in-person engagement as pathways to volunteering	We have continued to strike this balance. In this year's survey, half found out about us through digital platforms (our site and social media) and half through in-person engagement (leaflets, staff, or previous involvement with Health in Mind's services).	We have reviewed the way in which we frame our volunteer offer and the need for pathways and boundaries between roles, and will share more about this in the coming year.
Continue to offer a range of volunteer opportunities which allow different demands on people's time both on a weekly and ongoing basis.	We have been reviewing and revising our Volunteer Handbook to help us clarify how we describe and define the range of opportunities and expectations there are for volunteers, so that differences can be met.	We will continue to work on the Volunteer Handbook. We are developing a new Volunteer Agreement so that we can be clear about what people do and do not want to be involved in, which will roll out over the coming year.
Develop ways to quantify and share the impact and value of volunteering	We have begun work to publish an impact report in October 2025.	We continue to share the Volunteer Satisfaction Survey and be transparent about the actions we are taking as a result of your feedback.
Ensure that we keep in touch with volunteers when they are waiting to get involved, following training	People's experience of waiting to get involved in volunteering can vary across our service areas. We are working with staff to make sure we have a consistent approach and that we give clear guidance.	Our Volunteer Action Group are developing consistent guidances for all staff supporting volunteers.

Updates from our 2023 commitments

You said...	We did...	We're working on...
Ensure all volunteers are aware of training available to them, and that it is available in person, online, during the day and in the evening.	We have training modules which are used across Health in Mind, and we have clarified which are to be delivered locally at service level and which at an organisational level. We have continued to offer training and other opportunities for meeting at a range of times and in different ways.	We are working in consultation with volunteers and our Volunteer Action Group to clarify training needs and ensure that training is planned and delivered in a range of ways throughout the year.
Enable volunteers to access the new SkillsHub online learning platform	Our plans to offer training via the online Skills Hub platform did not come to fruition this year. This is currently under review.	
Consider pathways for formal recognition of all volunteers, particularly long-serving volunteers	We have continued to use our twice-yearly volunteer newsletter to highlight and share the contribution of our volunteers, as well as reflect the gratitude of staff, services and the organisation.	We are working on ways to develop this further in the coming year and will share more when we can.
Enable volunteer involvement, engagement and codesign through developing new structures and opportunities	After much consultation, we agreed our statement of approach for 'Our Ambition for Engagement, Involvement and Co-design'. This shapes all that we do and how we will develop the structures to ensure we are meeting our ambition. This has included setting up a Volunteer Improvement Plan group to improve key areas of our volunteer activity across Health in Mind.	
Continue to ensure supervision includes an opportunity to share views	We have guidance for the level of support and supervision each volunteer should receive, which includes an annual review.	We will always seek to create opportunities for views to be shared. As part of this we will review the template we use for volunteer supervision and support sessions, to make sure we are capturing feedback and comment, and that we are able to use your feedback to better shape our work.