

Cohort 4 Shared Volunteer Survey – Summary Report

July 2026

1. Overview

Cohort 4 brings together results from **12 national charities** participating in the Shared Questions programme between **March 2025 and April 2026**.

In total 46,679 volunteers supplied answers on the seven shared questions.

The findings show **strong volunteer satisfaction**, particularly around comfort, flexibility, and well-being. At the same time, the results highlight **clear opportunities for improvement** in communication, training consistency, and volunteer skills development.

Across the seven shared questions, Cohort 4 demonstrates **greater stability** than earlier cohorts, with fewer extreme highs and lows and a more consistent volunteer experience overall.

2. Headline Results (Averages Across Charities Reporting Each Measure)

Question	Cohort 4 Average
Great place to volunteer	84.2%
Flexibility	81.5%
Comfortable being myself	89.5%
Training	80.5%
Communication	74.5%
Skills & Experience	73.5%
Well-being	84.2%

Key takeaway: Volunteers feel welcomed, comfortable, and supported — but want clearer communication and stronger development pathways.

3. Strengths Across Cohort 4

★ Comfort & Well-being

These are the strongest areas across the cohort. Volunteers consistently report feeling comfortable in their roles and supported by their organisations.

★ Flexibility

Most charities score highly on flexibility, reflecting good practice around scheduling, role choice, and accommodating volunteer needs.

★ Overall satisfaction

The “Great place to volunteer” question remains strong across the cohort, with several charities reporting above 80%.

4. Areas of divergence and improvement

⚠ Communication

This is the most variable category, with percentages ranging from **63% to 96%**. Volunteers in some organisations report gaps in clarity, updates, and feedback.

⚠ Training

Training varies significantly, with percentages ranging from **64% to 92%**. Some volunteers are highly trained, while others report limited training; this might reflect the differences in requirements needed for different volunteer roles/activities rather than an indication of the quality/lack of training.

⚠ Skills & Experience

This is the lowest-scoring category overall (**73.5% average**); however most volunteers still tell us that they have developed skills and experience, with percentages ranging from 59% to 91%. Again, this might be linked to the training of volunteers. Some volunteers roles will require more training than others.

5. Variation Between Charities

Cohort 4 shows **greater consistency** than earlier cohorts, but variation remains:

- Some charities deliver **exceptional communication and development**, scoring above 90.
- Others show **persistent challenges**, particularly around training and role clarity.
- A small number of charities have multiple scores below 70, indicating areas requiring targeted support.

This variation highlights the value of shared learning across the cohort.

6. Comparison with Earlier Cohorts

Cohort 4 demonstrates clear progress:

- **Communication** has improved significantly since Cohort 1 (where scores were as low as 52).
- **Well-being** is now consistently strong across all cohorts.
- **Training** remains variable, but the top scores in Cohort 4 match the highest seen in Cohort 3.
- **Skills & Experience** continues to be the weakest category across all cohorts.

Overall, Cohort 4 shows **greater stability and maturity** in volunteer experience compared with earlier cohorts.

7. Demographics

We tested the collection of demographic data. Not everyone had data and there were some inconsistencies in breakdown e.g. age ranges. The general conclusions from what was supplied are:

- **Ethnicity:** Predominantly White (average 88.1%).
- **Disability:** An average of 23.6% report a disability.
- **Age:** The profile skews older: averages were 23.7% aged 55–64, 36.8% aged 65–74 and 16.7% aged 75 and over.
- **Gender:** Women represented an average of 56.8%.