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Employer Skills Survey 2022: charity and voluntary sector summary report for Wales

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Employer Skills Survey 2022: charity and voluntary sector summary report for Wales

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Views expressed in this report are those of the researcher and not necessarily those of the Welsh Government

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Glossary

Establishment (also referred to as workplace, business, employer or site)

A single location of an organisation – for this survey all have at least two people working at that location.

Vacancy density

The number of vacancies as a proportion of all employment.

Hard-to-fill vacancies

Vacancies which are proving difficult to fill, as defined by the establishment (from the question: “Are any of these vacancies proving hard to fill?”).

Skill shortage vacancy (SSV)

A specific type of hard-to-fill vacancy that occurs when an employer cannot find applicants with the required skills, qualification, or experience to do a job.

SSV density

The number of SSVs as a proportion of all vacancies.

Skills gaps

Skills gaps exist when an employer thinks a worker does not have enough skills to perform their job with full proficiency. Skill gaps apply to existing employees.

Skills gaps density

The number of employees that lack full proficiency as a proportion of all employment.

1. Introduction

The Employer Skills Survey (ESS) 2022 is a large-scale survey among employers of different sizes and sectors across the UK, which aims to provide a definitive picture of the extent, nature and impact of skills challenges faced by employers across England, Northern Ireland, Wales and Scotland, both within their existing workforce and when recruiting. ESS has been conducted at a UK level biannually since 2011. Although employers in Scotland were not included in the 2019 ESS survey, they were included in 2022. A [full Wales reporting suite](#) including detailed research report, data tables, slide packs and regional outputs is available.

The [Third Sector Scheme](#) sets out how the Welsh Government engages and works with the voluntary and charitable sector in Wales. The [Third Sector Partnership Council](#) (TSPC) is the main mechanism for engagement. The TSPC helps Welsh Government work with voluntary organisations to develop better policies and services.

The voluntary and charitable sector spans virtually every facet of human interest. It includes community organisations, self-help groups, voluntary organisations, charities, faith-based organisations, social enterprises, community businesses, housing associations, co-operatives, and mutual organisations, and more. Classification of the sector in the survey is outlined in Chapter 2.

To reflect the changing nature of volunteering since the development of the existing volunteering policy the Minister for Social Justice and Chief Whip (on 23 May 2023) made an [oral statement](#) outlining the development of a new approach to volunteering in Wales to better understand and support the future of volunteering in Wales. The approach will be one that is fit for our future generations of volunteers, involving the voluntary, public and private sectors - helping to create an environment in which volunteering is sustainable, strong and flourishing.

There are three parts to the new approach – a vision, framework and implementation plan. The first two parts will be launched at Gofod3 (July 2025). However, it is important to recognise that paid roles should not be replaced by volunteers.

The Employer Skills Survey is one of the few official sources of statistics available to the Welsh Government which contains detailed intelligence from charitable and voluntary organisations on recruitment, skills deficiencies, training, and high performance working practices in the sector. This report presents a summary of findings for the charity and voluntary sector in Wales, predominantly focussing on core ESS measures in these areas. This information can go some way to help develop long-term employment as well as training policies and strategies for the sector, but further work would be required to deepen understanding of the recruitment, skills, and training issues faced by the charity and voluntary sector in Wales.

2. Methodology

Fieldwork for the survey was conducted between June 2022 and March 2023, via telephone. A total of 4,825 interviews were achieved with establishments in Wales, part of 72,918 across the UK. In Wales, 382 interviews were completed with establishments in the charity and voluntary sector.

The population from which the sample was taken is based on all establishments in Wales that had at least two employees (including owners and working proprietors), but not including any workers not on the payroll, like self-employed contractors or agency staff.

The survey encompassed establishments across the whole of the UK, covering all sectors of the economy (the commercial, public, and charitable spheres). The 2022 survey used, for the first time, a Random Probability Sampling approach, where all sample issued is processed according to agreed protocols until all leads are exhausted, meaning that units sampled from given population cells have an equal and known probability of being sampled. A response rate of 57% in Wales was achieved.

Respondents to the survey are asked to classify their establishment into one of the four categories below:

- a charity or voluntary sector organisation or a social enterprise
- an establishment mainly seeking to make a profit
- a local government financed body
- a central government financed body

In this report the latter two categories are combined into local and central government, in line with standard reporting convention for the survey.

The focus of this summary report is on charity or voluntary organisations or social enterprises, hereafter referred to as charity and voluntary sector. The report makes comparisons across the above establishment types and across countries and time. Table 2.1 sets out base sizes for all establishments, Table 2.2 sets out base sizes for all establishments with vacancies and Table 2.3 provides this information by UK country. The establishments with vacancies base is used when looking at vacancy-based measures (i.e. proportion of vacancies that are skill shortage vacancies).

Table 2.1: Base sizes for all establishments in Wales, 2011 to 2022

	2011	2013	2015	2017	2019	2022
Charity and voluntary	426	520	516	478	618	382
Local and central government	789	482	539	532	705	374
Profit seeking	4,716	4,971	4,942	4,889	5,422	4,032
All establishments	5,958	5,996	6,027	5,913	6,773	4,825

Table 2.2: Base sizes for all establishments with vacancies in Wales, 2011 to 2022

	2011	2013	2015	2017	2019	2022
Charity and voluntary	91	114	130	137	172	167
Local and central government	186	129	142	175	210	177
Profit seeking	815	768	1,002	1,084	1,114	1,198
All establishments	1,095	1,016	1,277	1,399	1,503	1,560

Table 2.3: Base sizes for UK countries, charity and voluntary sector, 2022

	Wales	England	Northern Ireland	Scotland
All establishments	382	4,742	405	556
Establishments with vacancies	167	1,902	130	248

Note that High Performing Working questions were only asked to those establishments in Module D of the survey. For those questions the Wales base size is 95 charity and voluntary establishments, 964 profit seeking establishments, and 86 central or local government establishments. High Performance Working practices are practices recognised to ensure employee skills are harnessed, nurtured and used to their best effect. To be classed as a 'High Performance Working employer' an establishment must have adopted 7 or more of the 11 practices covered by the survey.

Weighting is applied based on the Inter-Departmental Business Register. When weighted, the size of the charity and voluntary sector is 6,041 establishments and 134,505 employees.

In ESS, estimates drawn from a base of less than 30 establishments are not reported. Estimates drawn from a base of between 30 and 49 establishments should be interpreted with caution as the margin of error for these results is larger and therefore the results are less statistically reliable. All figures in this report are based on a base size of greater than these categories, except for Annex B – see footnote under Table B.1.

Whilst some measures are based on the number of vacancies, skill shortage vacancies, etc., statistical reliability is determined by the number of establishments the estimate is drawn from (as shown in Table 2.1 and Table 2.2). Whilst these are the number of achieved interviews in each group, the survey is weighted based on data from the 2022 Inter-Departmental Business Register (IDBR).

When focussing on specific establishment types (i.e. charity and voluntary) within geographical locations (i.e. Wales), base sizes will be constrained, which will make estimates less reliable, with wider confidence intervals. For this reason, comparisons within the report (i.e. between establishment types, between countries) may not be statistically significant.

Of the 4,825 establishments in the ESS2022 Wales sample, 4,032 were establishments mainly seeking a profit. As this makes up 84% of the Wales sample, this sector will have a large influence on figures for ‘all establishments’.

To avoid excessive repetition the terms ‘establishment’ and ‘employer’ are used interchangeably in this report.

Results by UK nation for the charity and voluntary sector are presented in Annex A, as Table A.1. Results for charity and voluntary employers in Wales split by industrial sector are presented in Annex B. Note that due to sample size limitations, figures are only available for the Art and other services, Education, and Health and social work industrial sectors.

A more detailed methodology for the survey is available in the [ESS 2022 Wales Report](#) and on the UK government’s [Explore Education Statistics](#) service.

3. Findings

This chapter sets out findings for the charity and voluntary sector in Wales, setting these findings in context against other establishment types, countries, and against previous survey waves.

3.1. Vacancies

Around a fifth (22%) of establishments in Wales had vacancies in the previous 12 months, up from 15% in 2019 (Table 3.1). In the charity and voluntary sector this was 33%, up from 20% in 2019. Previously, the proportion of establishments with vacancies in the sector had remained relatively stable, between 17% and 21%. This sharp increase in vacancies was experienced by all establishment types between 2019 and 2022. Establishments in local and central government were more likely to have had vacancies (40%) than other establishment types with both charity and voluntary and local and central government establishments more likely to have had vacancies than profit seeking employers (21%).

The percentage of establishments with vacancies in Wales was 33% compared with 32% in Scotland, 27% in England, and 23% in Northern Ireland (UK country results are given in Table A.1 in Annex A).

Table 3.1: Percentage of establishments with vacancies in the last 12 months by establishment type, Wales, 2011 to 2022

	2011	2013	2015	2017	2019	2022
Charity and voluntary	17	21	20	21	20	33
Local and central government	19	27	25	29	27	40
Profit seeking	11	12	16	16	14	21
All establishments	12	14	17	17	15	22

Note: Base is all establishments. Base sizes are given in Table 2.1.

Whilst Table 3.1 gave the proportion of establishments with vacancies, Table 3.2 focus on vacancies as a proportion of employment. Vacancies as a proportion of employment in the charity and voluntary sector had increased since previous years, in-line with all establishments (4.7% in both), and was similar to profit seeking establishments (5.1%). Local and central government employers had lower vacancy density than other establishment types.

Table 3.2: Vacancies as a percentage of employment by establishment type, Wales, 2011 to 2022

	2011	2013	2015	2017	2019	2022
Charity and voluntary	2.7	3.4	2.4	2.6	3.2	4.7
Local and central government	1.3	1.4	2.2	2.2	4.8	3.1
Profit seeking	2.1	2.3	3.5	3.2	2.8	5.1
All establishments	1.9	2.2	3.1	3.0	3.2	4.7

Note: Base is all establishments. Base sizes are given in Table 2.1.

Almost half (48%) of establishments across Wales had recruited anyone in the previous 12 months, but this was higher in the charity and voluntary sector at 70%.

Of those charity and voluntary establishments in Wales who had recruited, 52% had recruited anyone aged 16 to 24, 80% had recruited anyone aged 25 to 49, and 39% had recruited anyone aged 50 or over. Charity and voluntary sector employers were less likely than profit seeking employers to have recruited young people aged 16 to 24 (52% compared with 64%). A similar proportion of government employers recruited young people (53%). Recruitment of 25 to 49 year olds and those aged 50 or over was relatively similar across types of employers (range of 77% to 81% and 36% to 41%).

3.2. Hard-to-fill vacancies

Employers will sometimes have difficulty filling their vacancies. Where this is the case, this is known as a hard-to-fill vacancy. One-fifth of employers in the charity and voluntary sector (20%) had hard-to-fill vacancies in 2022, a large increase from 6% in 2019 (Table 3.3). This increase was seen across establishment types. Alongside the charity and voluntary sector, local and central government establishments were most likely to have hard-to-fill vacancies (21%), higher than profit sharing establishments (14%).

One in five (20%) establishments in Wales had hard-to-fill vacancies compared to 17% in Scotland, 15% in England, and 13% in Northern Ireland.

Table 3.3: Percentage of establishments with hard-to-fill vacancies in the last 12 months by establishment type, Wales, 2011 to 2022

	2011	2013	2015	2017	2019	2022
Charity and voluntary	3	3	6	7	6	20
Local and central government	3	6	7	8	7	21
Profit seeking	5	5	7	8	7	14
All establishments	4	5	7	8	7	15

Note: Base is all establishments. Base sizes are given in Table 2.1.

Profit seeking establishments were the establishment type with the highest hard-to-fill vacancy density – 65% of vacancies in such establishments were hard-to-fill vacancies. This was higher than the 55% for the charity and voluntary sector, up from 27% in 2019. The density in local and central government establishments was lower than other establishment types (35%). An increase in hard-to-fill vacancies was seen across all establishment types (Table 3.4).

Table 3.4: Hard-to-fill vacancies as a percentage of all vacancies by establishment type, Wales, 2011 to 2022

	2011	2013	2015	2017	2019	2022
Charity and voluntary	10	14	24	27	27	55
Local and central government	18	15	18	17	18	35
Profit seeking	35	32	37	41	42	65
All establishments	29	28	33	36	34	59

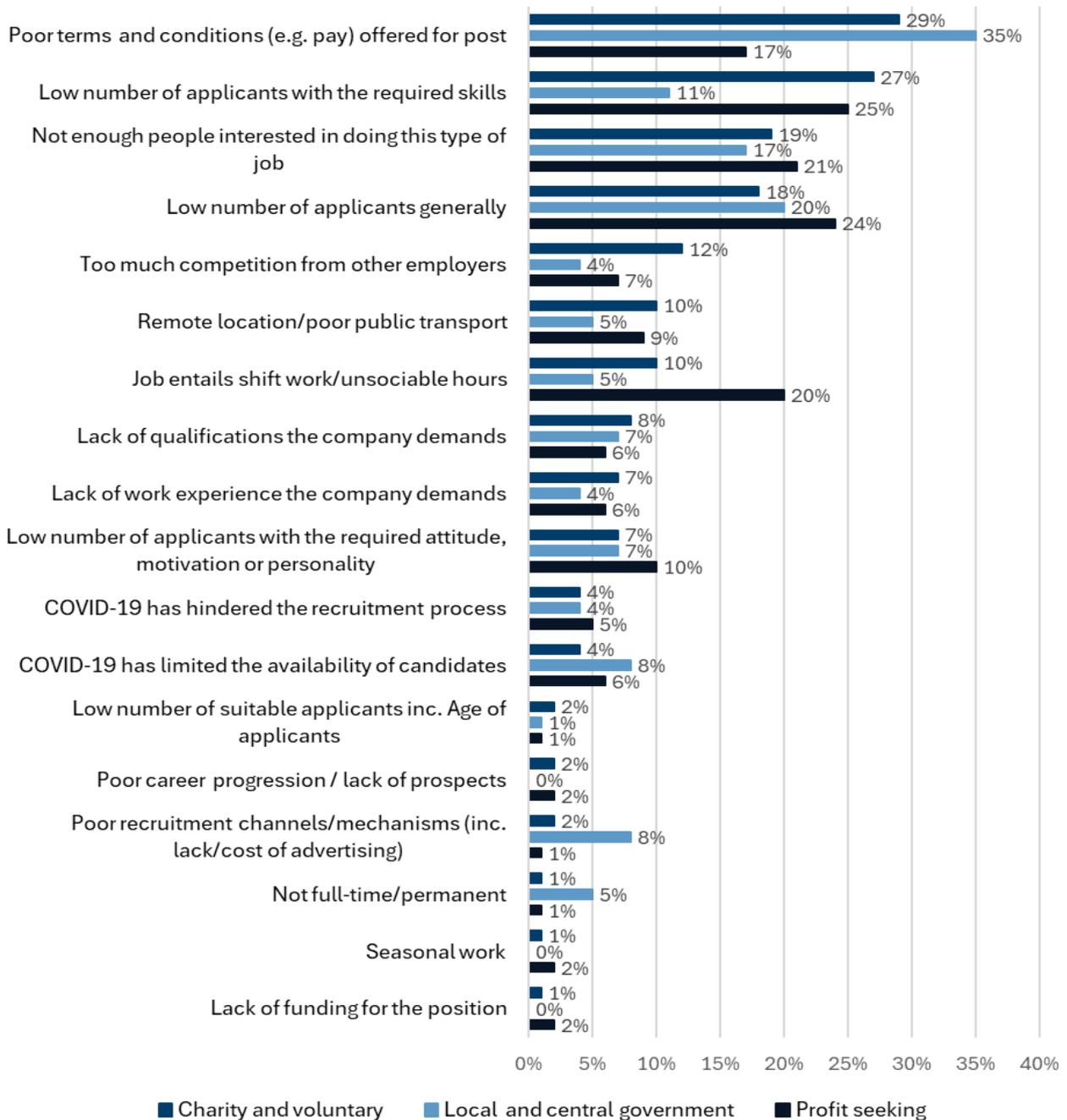
Notes: Base is all establishments with vacancies. Base sizes are given in Table 2.2.

3.2.1. Causes of hard-to-fill vacancies

The causes of hard-to-fill vacancies are various. Those relating to a lack of applicants with the required skills, qualifications or experience are grouped as skill shortage vacancies and are explored in detail in the next section. However, the reasons employers have difficulty filling vacancies goes beyond skills, qualifications, and experience.

In the charity and voluntary sector, the most commonly mentioned cause of hard-to-fill vacancies was poor terms and conditions (e.g. pay) offered for the post. This was cited as a cause, at least in part, in 29% of hard-to-fill vacancies (Figure 3.1). For charity and voluntary sector employers this was then followed by a low number of applicants with the required skills (27%), not enough people interested in doing this type of job (19%), low number of applicants generally (18%), too much competition from other employers (12%), remote location / poor public transport (10%), and job entails shift work / unsociable hours (10%).

Figure 3.1: Causes of hard-to-fill vacancies by establishment type, in Wales, 2022



Description: Bar chart showing the causes of hard-to-fill vacancies by establishment type. It shows the most commonly cited cause of hard-to-fill vacancies amongst charity and voluntary establishments with hard-to-fill vacancies was poor terms and conditions offered for the post.

Note: Base is establishments with hard-to-fill vacancies, although estimates are the proportion of hard-to-fill vacancies caused by each factor. Base sizes (establishments) are 106 – charity and voluntary, 101 – local and central government, and 806 – profit seeking.

3.2.2. Implications of hard-to-fill vacancies

Almost all charity and voluntary employers with hard-to-fill vacancies (98%) reported they had an impact. The most common implication of hard-to-fill vacancies was increased workload for other staff, cited by 90% of charity and voluntary employers with hard-to-fill vacancies. This was followed by experiencing increased operating costs (54%) and having difficulties introducing new working practices (51%), with charity and voluntary sector employers more likely to be affected by this latter reason than all employers across Wales (38%).

Around four-fifths (82%) had acted in response to these hard-to-fill vacancies, with the most common action being increasing advertising / recruitment spend (40% with hard-to-fill vacancies), followed by using new recruitment methods or channels (21%).

3.3. Skill shortage vacancies

Skill shortage vacancies exist where an employer is having difficulty filling a vacancy due to a lack of applicants with the required skills, qualifications, or experience. These are a subset of hard-to-fill vacancies looked at in the previous section.

In 2022, 14% of charity and voluntary employers had skill shortage vacancies, up from 4% in 2019 (Table 3.5). All establishment types had experienced an increase in skill shortage vacancy incidence since 2019, although the rise was smaller in profit seeking establishments, who had the lowest incidence in 2022 (6% in 2019 to 9% in 2022), lower than charity and voluntary. Local and central government was similar to the charity and voluntary sector (12%).

Compared to the 14% of charity and voluntary establishments in Wales with skill shortage vacancies, 11%, 10%, and 7% of charity and voluntary sector employers in Scotland, England and Northern Ireland had skill shortage vacancies.

Table 3.5: Percentage of establishments with skill shortage vacancies in the last 12 months by establishment type, Wales, 2011 to 2022

	2011	2013	2015	2017	2019	2022
Charity and voluntary	1	2	4	5	4	14
Local and central government	2	3	5	6	5	12
Profit seeking	4	4	6	6	6	9
All establishments	3	4	6	6	5	10

Note: Base is all establishments. Base sizes are given in Table 2.1.

The density of skill shortage vacancies (skill shortage vacancies as a proportion of all vacancies) had also increased since 2019 in the charity and voluntary sector, going from 21% to 37% (Table 3.6). Density was similar in profit seeking establishments (38%), which had also seen a rise since 2019, but was lower in local and central government (16%), which was relatively unchanged since 2019.

Table 3.6: Skill shortage vacancies as a percentage of all vacancies by establishment type, Wales, 2011 to 2022

	2011	2013	2015	2017	2019	2022
Charity and voluntary	6	5	15	20	21	37
Local and central government	6	7	13	13	15	16
Profit seeking	22	24	28	30	29	38
All establishments	18	20	24	27	24	35

Notes: Base is all establishments with vacancies. Base sizes are given in Table 2.2.

3.3.1. Skills found difficult to obtain from applicants

The most common skills lacking amongst applicants in the charity and voluntary sector, by some margin, was specialist skills or knowledge, which was lacking in 66% of skill shortage vacancies (Figure 3.2).

Other technical and practical skills which were commonly reported as lacking amongst charity and voluntary sector employers included knowledge of products and services offered (38%), creative and innovative thinking (37%), and knowledge of how the organisation works (34%).

The most common people and personal skill lacking amongst employers in the charity and voluntary sector was the ability to manage own time and prioritise own tasks, cited in 36% of skill shortage vacancies (Figure 3.3).

This was followed by managing own feelings / handling the feelings of others (30%), setting objectives for others / planning resources (27%), and customer handling skills (27%).

Figure 3.2: Technical and practical skills found difficult to obtain from applicants, by establishment type, in Wales, 2022



Description: Bar chart showing the technical and practical skills lacking in skill shortage vacancies by establishment type. It shows the most commonly cited technical and practical skill lacking amongst charity and voluntary establishments with skill shortage vacancies was specialist skills or knowledge.

Note: Base is establishments with skill shortage vacancies, although estimates are the proportion of skill shortage vacancies caused by a lack of each skill. Base sizes (establishments) are 74 – charity and voluntary, 58 – local and central government, and 503 – profit seeking.

Figure 3.3: People and personal skills found difficult to obtain from applicants, by establishment type, in Wales, 2022



Description: Bar chart showing the people and personal skills lacking in skill shortage vacancies by establishment type. It shows the most commonly cited people and personal skill lacking amongst charity and voluntary establishments with skill shortage vacancies was the ability to manage own time and prioritise own tasks.

Note: Base is establishments with skill shortage vacancies, although estimates are the proportion of skill shortage vacancies caused by a lack of each skill. Base sizes (establishments) are 74 – charity and voluntary, 58 – local and central government, and 503 – profit seeking.

3.4. Skills gaps

Whilst this chapter has so far looked at employers’ vacancies and recruitment, the focus now shifts to employers’ existing workforces. Skills gaps exist where staff lack full proficiency in their current job role. Close to a fifth (18%) of charity and voluntary employers had skills gaps in 2022, up from 14% in 2019. The 2022 level is similar to local and central government (19%) but is higher than for profit seeking establishments (13%).

In Wales, 18% of charity and voluntary employers had skills gaps, compared to 17% in Scotland, 15% in England, and 11% in Northern Ireland.

Table 3.7: Percentage of establishments with skills gaps in the last 12 months by establishment type, Wales, 2011 to 2022

	2011	2013	2015	2017	2019	2022
Charity and voluntary	15	16	12	13	14	18
Local and central government	16	17	16	15	14	19
Profit seeking	16	16	14	13	13	13
All establishments	16	16	14	13	13	14

Note: Base is all establishments. Base sizes are given in Table 2.1.

At the all-establishment level in Wales, the proportion of staff who lacked full proficiency (skills gap density) was relatively unchanged between 2019 and 2022 (4.0% and 4.1%). However, this had declined in the charity and voluntary sector, from 4.0% in 2019 to 2.4% in 2022. This represents a continuation of a longer-term trend in the charity and voluntary sector in Wales, where skills gap density was 7.7% in 2011 and between 5.2% and 5.7% between 2013 and 2017. In 2022, the charity and voluntary sector had higher skills gap density than local and central government (1.5%), but lower skills gap density than profit seeking establishments (5.2%).

Table 3.8: Staff with skills gaps as a percentage of all employment by establishment type, Wales, 2011 to 2022

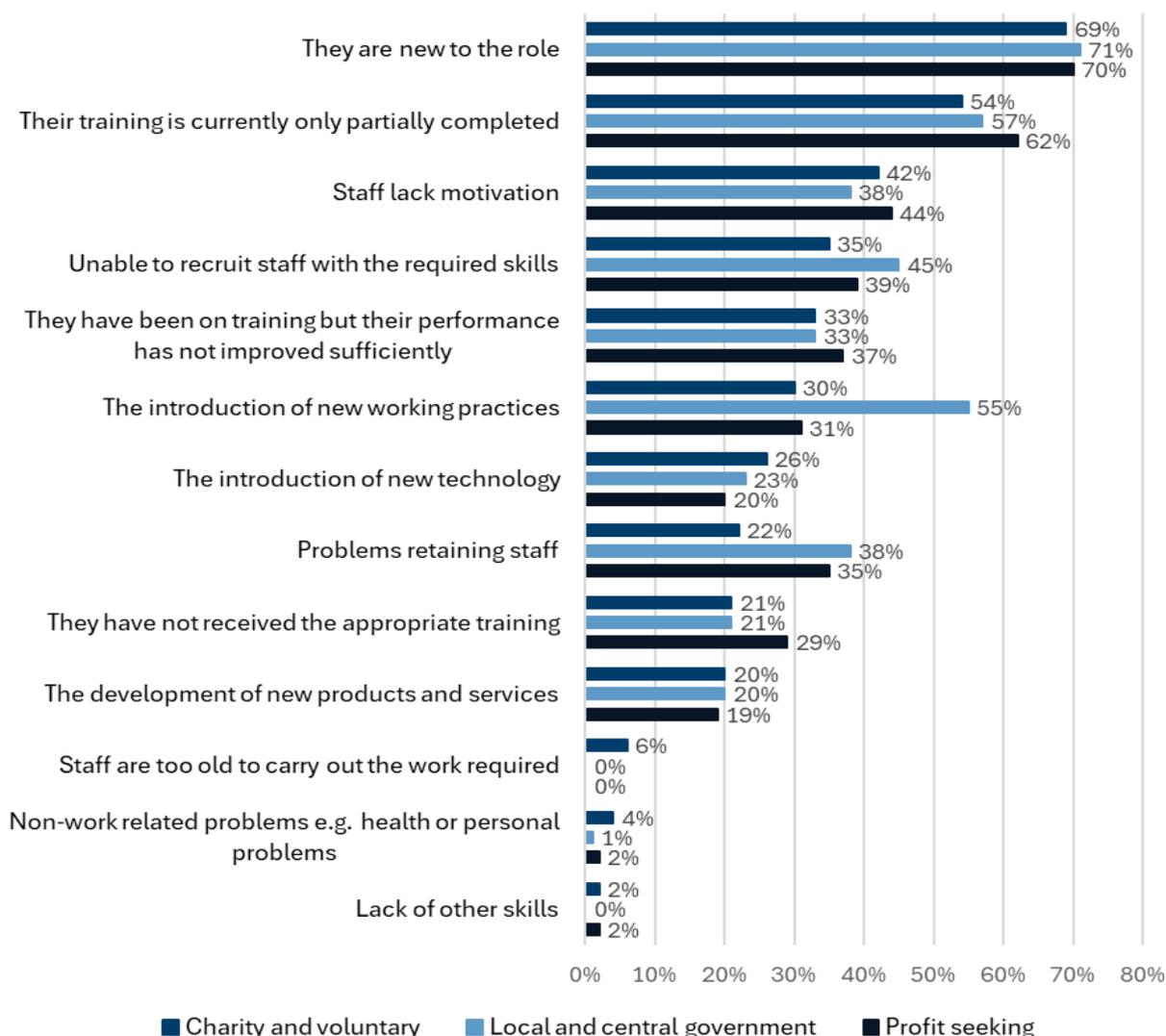
	2011	2013	2015	2017	2019	2022
Charity and voluntary	7.7	5.2	5.5	5.7	4.0	2.4
Local and central government	2.1	3.2	2.2	4.5	1.5	1.5
Profit seeking	5.4	6.5	5.2	4.6	4.7	5.2
All establishments	4.6	5.8	4.5	4.7	4.0	4.1

Note: Base is all establishments. Base sizes are given in Table 2.1.

3.4.1. Causes of skills gaps

The causes of skills gaps are many (Figure 3.4), but the most common causes tend to be transitory, with the most common causes for charity and voluntary sector employers in Wales being that staff are new to the role (69%) and their training is only partially completed (54%). In the case of transitory skills gaps, it can be expected that many will be resolved following undertaking of relevant induction and wider training.

Figure 3.4: Causes of skills gaps by establishment type, in Wales, 2022



Description: Bar chart showing the causes of skills gaps by establishment type. It shows the most commonly cited cause of skills gaps amongst charity and voluntary establishments with skills gaps was staff being new to the role.

Note: Base is establishments with skills gaps, although estimates are the proportion of skills gaps caused by each factor. Base sizes (establishments) are 88 – charity and voluntary, 77 – local and central government, and 751 – profit seeking.

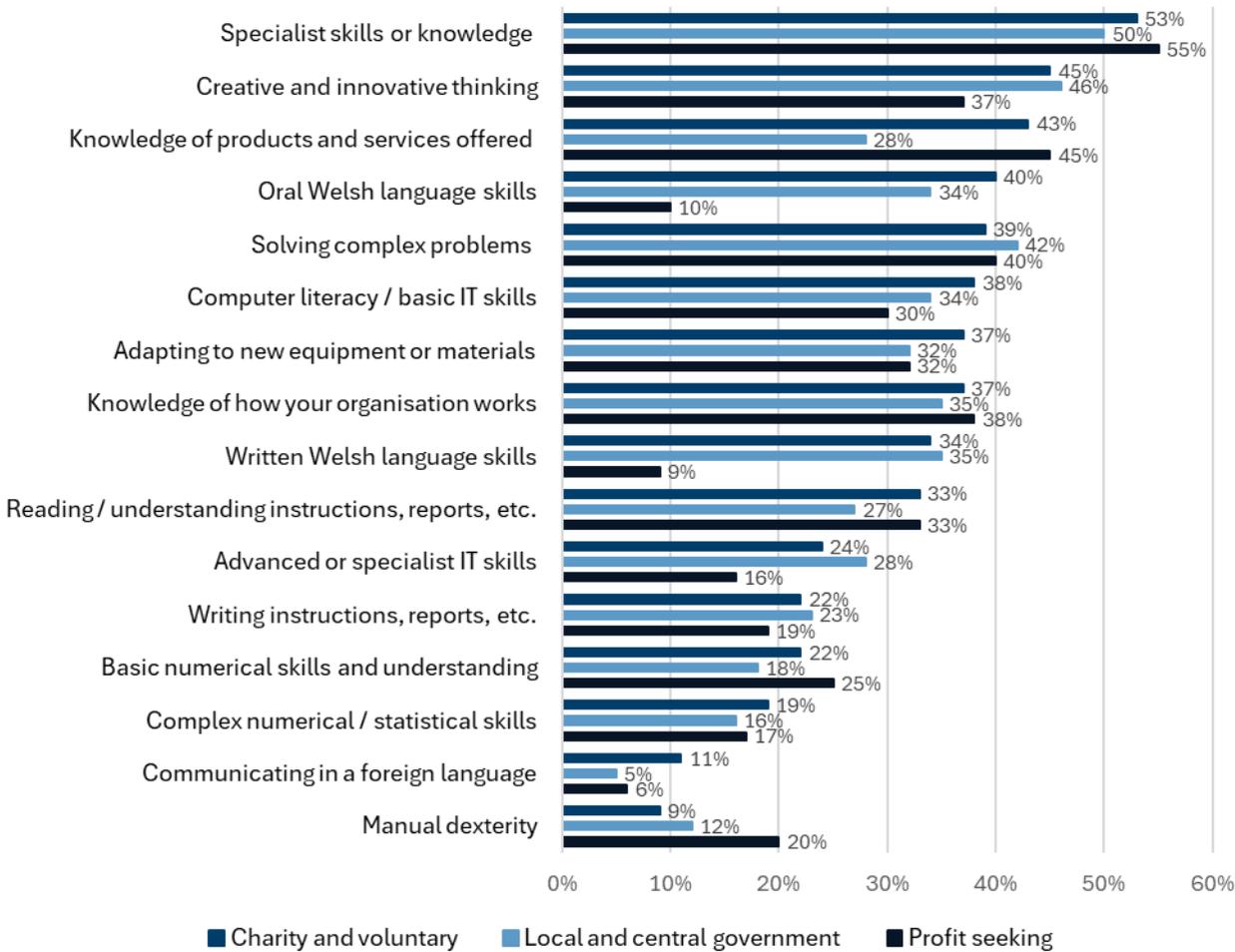
3.4.2. Skills that will need developing among the workforce

Employers in the charity and voluntary sector were most likely to cite the ability to manage own time and prioritise own tasks when asked about skills lacking in their workforce (cited in 58% of skills gaps). This was followed by managing their own feelings / handling the feelings of others (53%), and team working (53%). These are people and personal skills (Figure 3.6).

Also cited by 53% of charity and voluntary employers was specialist skills or knowledge (Figure 3.5). Other commonly cited technical and practical skills included creative and innovative thinking (45%) and knowledge of products and services offered (43%).

The most cited skills lacking were similar for both skill shortage vacancies and skills gaps, with the same three most common technical and practical skills and same two most common people and personal skills (specialist skills or knowledge, creative and innovative thinking, knowledge of products and services offered, ability to manage own time and prioritise own tasks, and managing own feelings / handling feelings of others).

Figure 3.5: Technical and practical skills lacking in employees, by establishment type, in Wales, 2022



Description: Bar chart showing the technical and practical skills lacking in skills gaps by establishment type. It shows the most commonly cited technical and practical skill lacking amongst charity and voluntary establishments with skills gaps was specialist skills or knowledge.

Note: Base is establishments with skills gaps, although estimates are the proportion of skills gaps caused by a lack of each skill. Base sizes (establishments) are 88 – charity and voluntary, 77 – local and central government, and 751 – profit seeking.

Figure 3.6: People and personal skills lacking in employees, by establishment type, in Wales, 2022



Description: Bar chart showing the people and personal skills lacking in skills gaps by establishment type. It shows the most commonly cited people and personal skill lacking amongst charity and voluntary establishments with skills gaps was the ability to manage own time and prioritise own tasks.

Note: Base is establishments with skills gaps, although estimates are the proportion of skills gaps caused by a lack of each skill. Base sizes (establishments) are 88 – charity and voluntary, 77 – local and central government, and 751 – profit seeking.

3.4.3. Implications of skills gaps

Over a fifth (21%) of charity and voluntary employers with skills gaps said they had a major impact on the business, with a further 52% saying they had a minor impact (73% said they had any impact). Of those with skills gaps, the most common implication was increased workload for other staff (reported by 62%).

A large majority (88%) of employers with skills gaps had taken steps to improve proficiency or skills of staff with skills gaps, with a further 10% having plans to, but not having taken action yet.

3.5. Training

Almost four in five (78%) employers in the charity and voluntary sector had funded or arranged training for their staff in the previous 12 months. This was greater than in the private sector where 56% had funded or arranged training, but lower than in local and central government (90%). The figure for the charity and voluntary sector has remained relatively unchanged since the start of the time series in 2011 (ranging between 77% and 83%).

Table 3.9: Percentage of establishments who funded or arranged training in the last 12 months by establishment type, Wales, 2011 to 2022

	2011	2013	2015	2017	2019	2022
Charity and voluntary	79	82	77	83	79	78
Local and central government	93	89	90	91	89	90
Profit seeking	59	59	60	58	59	56
All establishments	63	62	63	62	62	60

Note: Base is all establishments. Base sizes are given in Table 2.1.

Around three-quarters of staff in the charity and voluntary sector received training in the last 12 months (77%). As with the proportion of training establishments, this had remained relatively unchanged since 2011 (ranging between 72% and 77%).

Table 3.10: Percentage of staff who received training in the last 12 months by establishment type, Wales, 2011 to 2022

	2011	2013	2015	2017	2019	2022
Charity and voluntary	73	74	77	72	74	77
Local and central government	55	63	74	62	75	65
Profit seeking	56	60	58	55	61	59
All establishments	56	62	64	58	65	63

Note: Base is all establishments. Base sizes are given in Table 2.1.

3.6. High Performance Working

'High Performance Working' (HPW) practices are practices recognised to ensure employee skills are harnessed, nurtured and used to their best effect. Establishments are classed as HPW employers if they have adopted 7 or more of the 11 HPW practices.

Around a quarter (24%) of charity and voluntary employers in Wales were classed as HPW employers. This was 34% for local and central government establishments and 6% for profit seeking establishments.

These HPW questions were also asked in Northern Ireland and Scotland (but not England), with 9% of charity and voluntary establishments being HPW employers in Northern Ireland and 14% in Scotland.

Note that HPW questions were not asked in the previous survey in 2019, and whilst they were asked in earlier iterations of the survey, this used a different qualifier for classifying HPW employers.

Table 3.11: Proportion of establishments classed as High Performance Working employers and with each individual High Performance Working behaviour, by establishment type, Wales, 2022

	Charity and voluntary	Local and central government	Profit Seeking	All establish ments
HPW Employer (7+ out of 11 HPW practices)	24%	34%	6%	9%
HPW practices:				
On or off job training	71%	93%	57%	60%
Work shadowing / stretching / supervision	18%	3%	25%	23%
Holds ISO9000	18%	13%	15%	15%
Employee consultation	27%	57%	11%	14%
Creates teams to work on projects	17%	34%	6%	8%
Task variety	56%	72%	50%	51%
Task discretion	55%	44%	47%	47%
Flexible working	46%	31%	37%	37%
Equal opportunity policy	91%	98%	80%	82%
Trade union consultation	17%	53%	8%	11%
Training needs assessment	65%	80%	45%	49%
None	1%	0%	3%	3%

Note: Base is all establishments in Module D - 95 charity and voluntary establishments, 86 central or local government establishments, 964 profit seeking establishments, and 1,153 total.

4. Conclusions

Establishments in the charity and voluntary sector in Wales tend to be more likely to have vacancies, hard-to-fill vacancies, skill shortage vacancies, and skills gaps than profit seeking businesses, with the picture more mixed when compared to local and central government establishments.

Regarding recruitment related measures, employers in the charity and voluntary sectors saw sharp increases in the proportion of employers with vacancies, hard-to-fill vacancies, and skill shortage vacancies in 2022 when compared with equivalent figures for 2019. Whilst these effects were widely felt across the labour market, the increase in establishments with hard-to-fill vacancies and skill shortage vacancies was larger for charity and voluntary and local and central government establishments than profit seeking establishments.

Whilst a lack of applicants with the required skills, experience and qualifications was mentioned as the cause of a large proportion of hard-to-fill vacancies, the most commonly cited cause was poor terms and conditions (e.g. pay) being offered for posts. This was also the most common cause for local and central government employers.

Whilst the majority of establishments in the sector with hard-to-fill vacancies reported that they impacted on the business, most were also responding to this, with increasing advertising / recruitment spend being the most common response.

Employers with skill shortage vacancies were most likely to cite specialist skills or knowledge when asked what skills they had difficulty obtaining from applicants.

Turning to skills deficiencies in employers' existing workforces, the proportion of establishments with skills gaps (which exist where staff lack full proficiency) had increased since 2019, although not to the extent of the increase seen on recruitment related measures. Furthermore, the proportion of staff in the charity and voluntary sector lacking full proficiency had decreased.

In line with other establishment types, the majority of skills gaps in the sector were caused by transitory reasons, specifically being new to the role and / or training only being partially completed. Many of these transitory skills gaps may be resolved once relevant induction and wider training is completed. Other reasons included staff lacking motivation and being unable to recruit staff with the required skills (linking back to the issues posed by skill shortage vacancies).

The primary skill lacking in skills gaps was the ability to manage own time and prioritise own tasks. Across both skill shortage vacancies and skills gaps, the most commonly cited skills lacking were similar (for example, specialist skills or knowledge, creative and innovative thinking, knowledge of products and services offered, ability to manage own time and prioritise own tasks, and managing own feelings / handling feelings of others).

Skills gaps also impacted on how the establishment performs, but almost all affected had either taken action to address these or had plans to do so.

The majority of employers in the sector funded or arranged training for staff, at a consistent level over the previous decade. This was highest for local and central government establishments, although more charity and voluntary establishments trained than profit seeking establishments.

Charity and voluntary employers trained the highest proportion of staff.

Around a quarter of employers in the sector were High Performance Working employers, having adopted a range of practices such as having an equal opportunity policy, providing on or off the job training, carrying out training needs assessments, and providing employees with task variety and task discretion.

Whilst charity and voluntary establishments were more likely than profit seeking employers to be High Performance Working employers, they were less likely than local and central government (although this latter difference was not statistically significant).

Wales has a higher proportion of charity and voluntary employers than other UK countries with issues such as hard-to-fill vacancies, skill shortage vacancies, and skills gaps. However, in almost all cases the differences are not statistically significant.

Whilst this paper gives an overview of the recruitment, skills, and training issues faced by the charity and voluntary sector in Wales, it is limited by the relatively small sample size of the sector in the survey (382), which can prevent analysis on all of the content that the Employer Skills Survey offers. To better understand the recruitment, skills and training issues faced by the sector in Wales and the reasons behind them would require further work looking at the sector in greater detail.

5. Annex A: UK country estimates

Table A.1: Results for the charity and voluntary sector by UK country, 2022

	Wales	England	Northern Ireland	Scotland
Percentage of establishments with at least one vacancy ^a	33%	27%	23%	32%
Vacancy density (vacancies as a proportion of employment) ^a	4.7%	4.8%	5.5%	5.0%
Percentage of establishments with at least one hard-to-fill vacancy ^a	20%	15%	13%	17%
Hard-to-fill vacancy density (HtF vacancies as a share of vacancies) ^b	55%	57%	68%	55%
Percentage of establishments with at least one skill-shortage vacancy ^a	14%	10%	7%	11%
Skill-shortage vacancy density (SSVs as a share of vacancies) ^b	37%	38%	25%	27%
Percentage of establishments with at least one skill gap (i.e. not fully proficient) ^a	18%	15%	11%	17%
Skill gap density (the proportion of employees judged not fully proficient) ^a	2.4%	4.4%	4.8%	5.9%
Percentage of establishments that have funded or arranged any training for staff over the past 12 months ^a	78%	72%	80%	82%
Proportion of employees that received any training in the past 12 months ^a	77%	71%	77%	76%
High Performance Working employer ^c	24%	n/a	9%	14%

Note: 'a' denotes base is all establishments. 'b' denotes base is all establishments with vacancies. Base sizes for a and b are given in Table 2.3. 'c' denotes base is establishments in Module D - 95 in Wales, 106 in Northern Ireland, and 127 in Scotland.

6. Annex B: Sectors within the charity and voluntary sector

Table B.1: Headline results for sectors within the charity and voluntary sector, Wales and UK, 2022

	Arts and other services	Education	Health and social work
Percentage of establishments with at least one vacancy ^a	27%	61%*	36%
Vacancy density (vacancies as a proportion of employment) ^a	5.8%	U	5.3%
Percentage of establishments with at least one hard-to-fill vacancy ^a	15%	47%*	22%
Hard-to-fill vacancy density (HtF vacancies as a share of vacancies) ^b	57%*	U	64%
Percentage of establishments with at least one skill-shortage vacancy ^a	12%	33%*	14%
Skill-shortage vacancy density (SSVs as a share of vacancies) ^b	32%*	U	46%
Percentage of establishments with at least one skill gap (i.e. not fully proficient) ^a	19%	28%*	18%
Skill gap density (the proportion of employees judged not fully proficient) ^a	4.1%	2.8%*	2.4%
Percentage of establishments that have funded or arranged any training for staff over the past 12 months ^a	83%	82%*	81%
Proportion of employees that received any training in the past 12 months ^a	72%	71%*	86%

Note: 'a' denotes base is all establishments (Arts and other services - 93, Education - 37, Health and social work - 180). 'b' denotes base is all establishments with vacancies (Arts and other services - 35, Education - 26, Health and social work - 84). '*' denotes that the base size is between 30 and 49 and estimates should be interpreted with caution. 'u' denotes base size is less than 30 and estimate is suppressed. All other sectors within charity and voluntary in Wales have an unweighted base size of less than 30 and are not shown.