

Volunteer Survey 2026



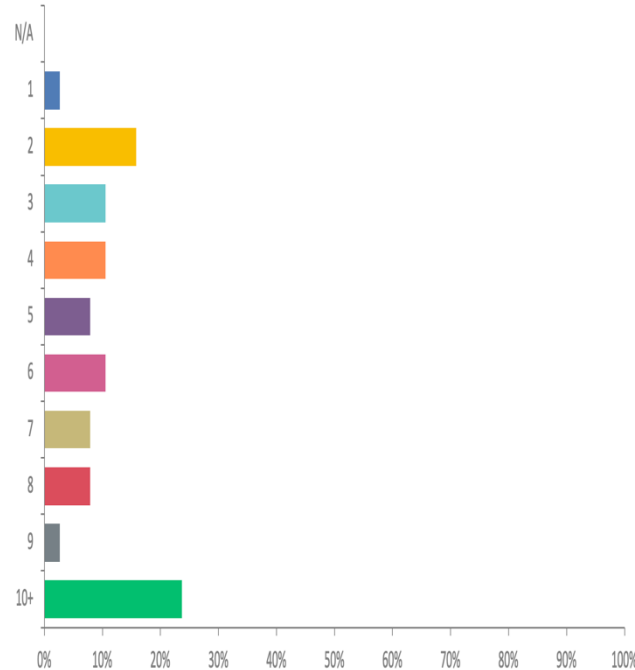
Summary Overview

- ② 39 responses from 180 volunteers – 22%
- ② 10 ACs, 13 AC Assists,
14 Social Media – FB Admin, 14 Online Volunteers,
5 Working Group, 2 Trustees,
3 Other (*several volunteers have more than one role*)
- ② Low participation, but positive and constructive
comments about ideas for improving member experiences

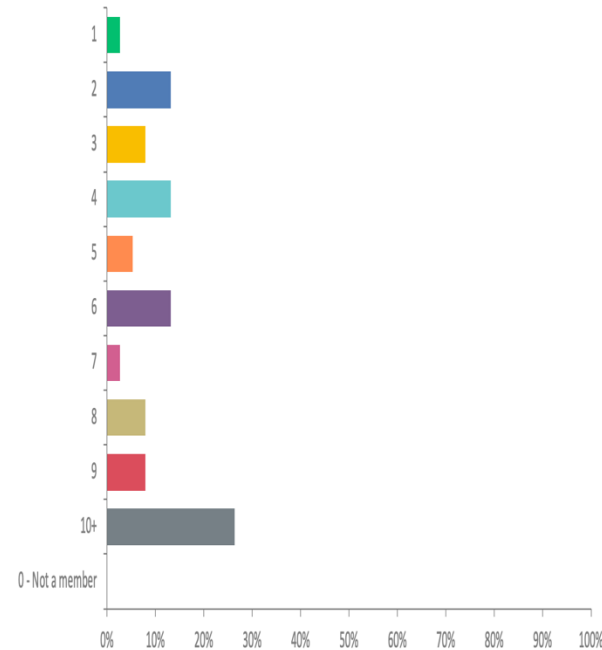


Volunteers' Relationship with WAY

Number of Years in WAY



Number of Years bereaved



Number of Years Volunteering with WAY
(38 responses)

32% had volunteered for WAY for 1 year or less

47% had volunteered for WAY for between 2-5 years

21% had volunteered for WAY for over 5 years.

Area Contact Teams – key roles (28 responses)

- 2 Welcoming and Connecting with New Members – 11 responses
- 2 Organising regular online or in-person events – 20 responses
- 2 Signposting New Members to WAY/external resources – 9 responses
- 2 Supporting local Facebook pages and encouraging community – 13 responses
- 2 Admin of a local Facebook group ensuring only current members join – 15 responses
- 2 Helping members connect locally via the website – 7 responses
- 2 Responding to website messages – 14 responses
- 2 Hosting a Big Picnic – 13 responses

Volunteers Support Members and the charity by....

- ② Welcoming and Connecting with New Members – 17 responses
- ② Organising regular online or in-person events – 17 responses
- ② Signposting New Members to WAY/external resources – 2 responses
- ② Supporting local Facebook pages and encouraging community – 4 responses
- ② Admin of a Facebook group ensuring only current members join – 6 responses
- ② Helping to support members – 20 responses
- ② Supporting charity developments through Working Groups – 2 responses
- ② Promote the charity and its work – 4 responses
- ② Ensuring good finance and governance of the charity – 3 responses

How long do you spend a month volunteering?

Of the 36 responses, the time spent volunteering each week varied from 1 to 10+ hours, but this could also vary.

From the 36 responses, in total, these volunteers spent between 142 and 180 hours per month volunteering for WAY.

From the responses, the average amount of time per volunteer was about 4.5 hours a month, which with 180 volunteers at the time of this survey, amounts to over 800 hours per month or almost 10,000 hours a year.

£127,100

Which Volunteer Resources have you Accessed?

Volunteer Facebook Page

Volunteer Section on Website

Training resources and videos

Update emails

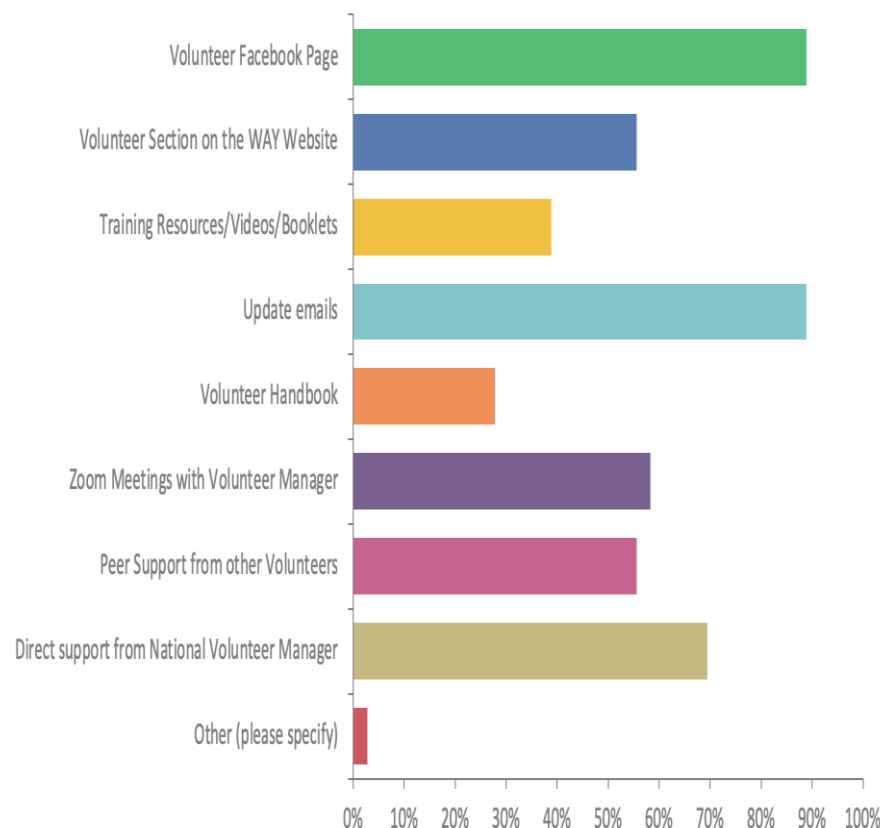
Volunteer Handbook

Zoom Meetings with Volunteer Manager

Peer Support from other volunteers

Direct support from Volunteer Manager

Other



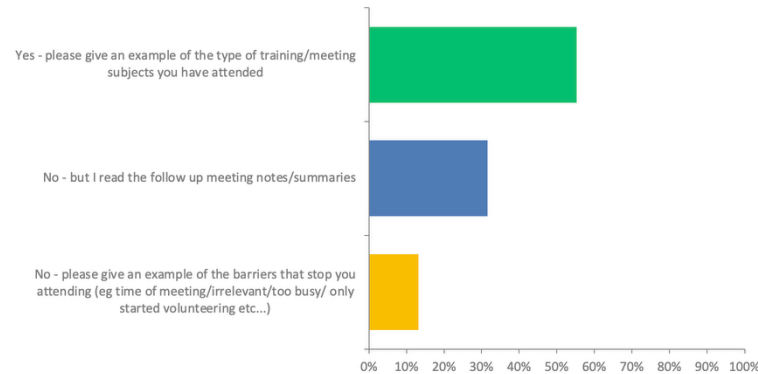
Top 3 Most Useful Resources

1. **Update emails (37/38)**
2. **Volunteer Facebook Page (34/38)**
3. **Volunteer Manager Support (28/38)**

Have you attended training in the past year?

Have you attended Volunteer Meetings/Training in the past year? (There have been 2 x social Zooms, 4 in person meetings, Safeguarding, Big Picnic, AC Teams, Online Volunteers, Facebook Administration plus other drop-in sessions)

Answered: 38 Skipped: 0



55% of respondents said **YES**
45% of respondents said **NO**
(70% of those read the follow up notes/emails)

What training have you attended?

- **In person**
- **Social/networking**
- **Online Volunteer Meetings**
- **Used follow-up notes or peer support if missed a meeting, to keep up to date**
- **Training at the 2025 AGM (Safeguarding)**
- **Volunteer Induction**
- **Big Picnic**
- **Trustee Training**
- **Facebook Admin**

What has stopped you attending training?

- **Availability**
- **Not relevant to my role**
- **Work/prior commitments**

How has training helped?

- Specific knowledge – Safeguarding, Trustee induction, Volunteer induction, Facebook Admin
- Build confidence in signposting for members and knowing the resources that are out there
- Learn about/be reminded of different aspects of WAY's services
- To keep up to date with advice and guidance
- To feel better prepared and confident with the role
- To feel more confident when dealing with tricky situations
- To feel supported through the volunteering process
- Networking, confidence and new ideas
- Volunteer peer support – learning from others – best practice
- Helps build a feeling of community with volunteers
- Increased knowledge and understanding around grief and different types of bereavement, beyond my own
- To understand expectations and boundaries

Which training would be most helpful to have repeated?

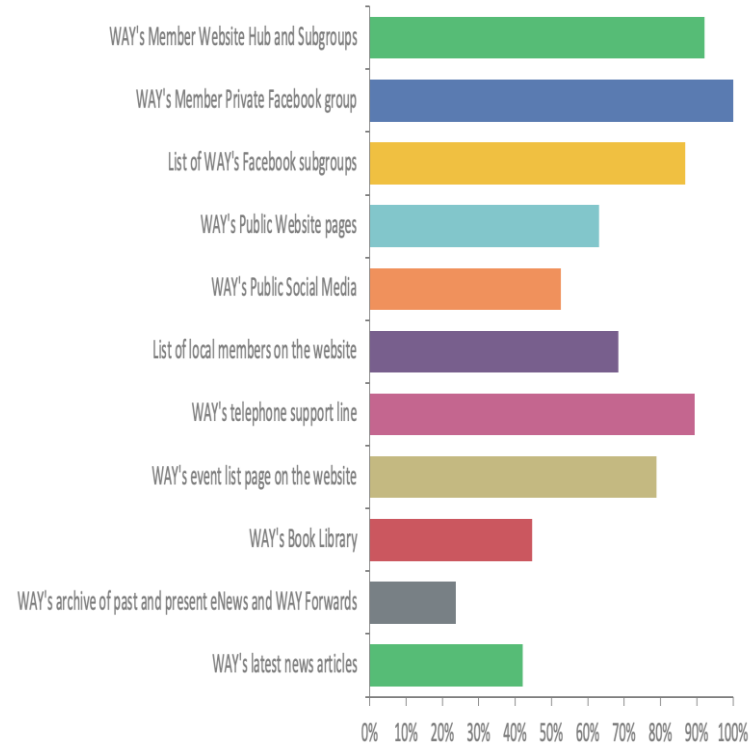
Tick all that apply

- **Safeguarding** – 59%
- **Role specific meetings/training** – 48%
- **Knowledge about WAY's Policies and Procedures** – 48%
- **Diversity and Inclusion** – 38%
- **Website Familiarisation** – 28%
- **Other** – Zoom facilitation, “counselling-informed” training

Confidence in signposting WAY's current services

Most to Least Confident

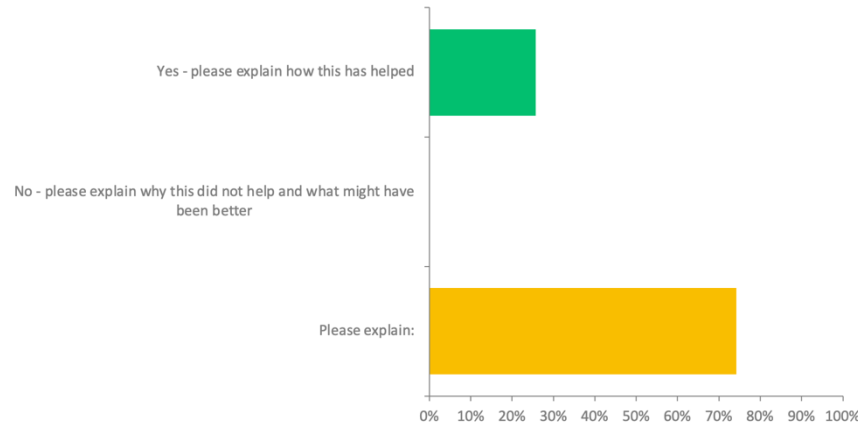
WAY's Main FB Group
Website and Hub groups
WAY's Telephone Support Line
List of WAY Facebook subgroups
WAY's Website Event List page
Local members list on the website
WAY's public website
WAY's Public social media
WAY's Book Library
Latest news articles
Digital archive of past eNews and
WAY Forward magazines



What other services could WAY offer? (no particular order)

- Investment into existing members (in addition to the focus on recruiting new members)
- Encouraging members to attend events
- More WAY organised events – including more adult only events
- Protection/support for volunteers against unhappy members
- Return of Legal/Financial support lines – asap
- Financial support for WoCs to attend WAYWoC events
- More Zooms – link to subgroups?

Do You Feel Valued by WAY?



The top reasons that Volunteers felt that they were valued were:

- Being thanked
- Communication and support from Volunteer Manager
- Celebrating Volunteers publicly

100% of respondents said YES (incl comments/feedback)

0% of respondents said NO

54% of respondents left feedback – almost all was positive

Suggestions for feeling more valued were:

- *WAY rely too heavily on volunteers to deliver WAY's services*
- *Helping members remember that volunteers are members too and are not paid for all they do*

What are the positives and challenges of Volunteering with WAY



Positives (key themes from 32 responses)

- Feeling like we're making a difference to others
- Feeling part of a community/sense of belonging
- Bringing people together – developing friendships
- Seeing people's progression through tough times
- Meeting new people and offering hope
- It helps me to help others
- Feeling valued/contributing and doing good
- Social interaction, friendship and mutual support
- Giving back to WAY

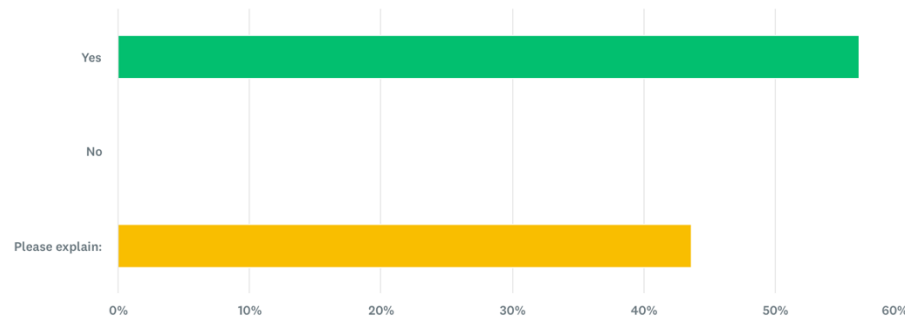


Challenges (key themes from 34 responses)

- Time/personal pressures/Geography/Cost
- Members not engaging/apathy/not turning up to events
- Traveling for events and meetings – cost/geography
- Supporting wide range of members (newly bereaved and longer term)
- Technical challenges/Zoom
- Member expectations/negativity/personalities
- Member/volunteer boundaries – forgetting volunteers are members
- Feeling responsible for member safety
- Wanting to do more
- AC Teams/volunteers not communicating
- Member/group politics (small p)
- Grief and Triggers/ emotionally challenging

Does Volunteering Help You and Your Grief?

WAY hopes that volunteering with the charity is a positive experience. Do you feel that volunteering helps with your own personal bereavement journey?



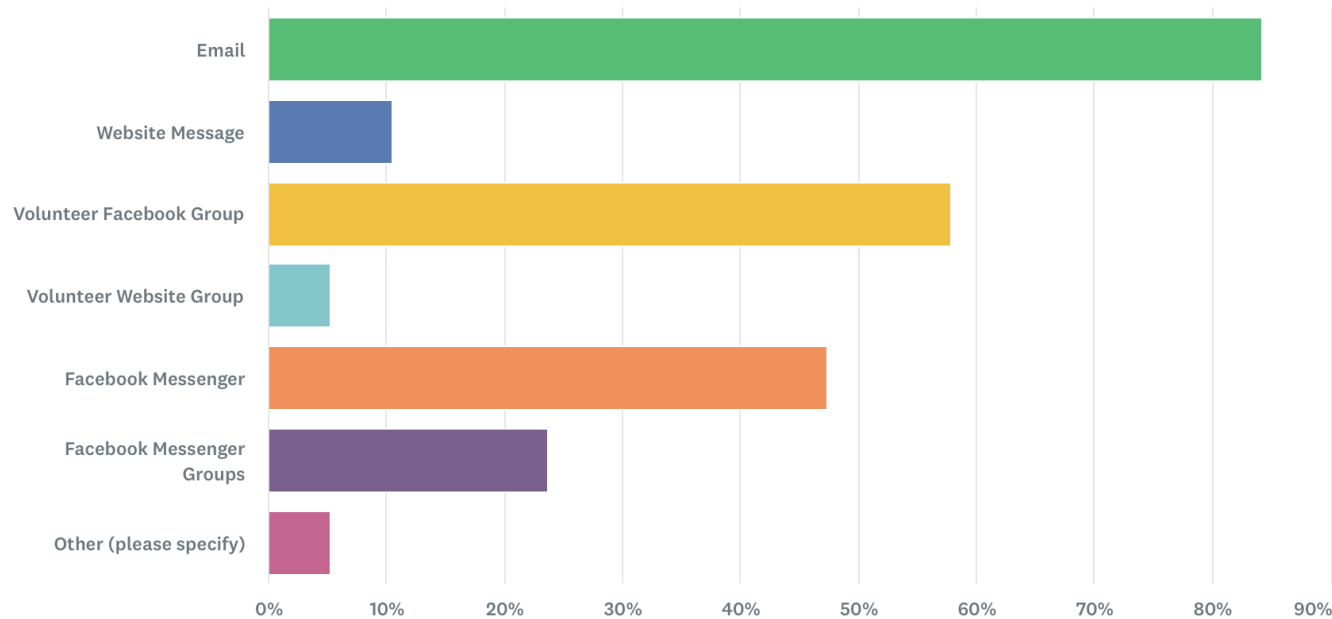
93% of respondents said YES (incl comments/feedback)
7% of respondents said NO (membership rather than volunteering helps with grief, hosting events is about social not grief, members don't always give space for volunteer grief)
43% of respondents left feedback

19 volunteers fed back how they thought WAY could support volunteers with their grief – main themes:

- Buddy System for volunteers
- Debrief Sessions after Zooms
- Mental Health/Bereavement support Training (loss foundation?)
- More volunteers – spread the load
- Face to Face meet ups with volunteers/ volunteer peer support Zooms
- Be able to raise issues/seek advice anonymously
- No more support necessary – FB/hub group helpful and volunteers are kept up to date with developments

Volunteer Communications

Communicating with volunteers is very important - which communication method do you find easiest/most reliable? (please tick all that apply)



In addition – some volunteers suggested:

WhatsApp

What is Peer Support?

“Unlike other forms of support, even those which involve more training and qualifications, peer support works simply on the basis of shared experiences and perspectives.. even though everyone's grief is unique”

“Using your own experience and knowledge gained from that experience to help, support and guide others.”

“WAY members helping each other in a range of ways, mostly by being in contact with each other, face to face, FB or Zoom, to empathise and learn from each other how to cope with life and grieving in the aftermath of such difficult bereavements”

“Sharing our similar experiences and helping each other feel seen in our grief. Giving each other the opportunity to offload and having a chance to gain glimmers of hope as well as keep realistic expectations from those further along. Most importantly developing friendships and support from like minded people fighting the same storm despite our boats sometimes being very different”

understanding others similar
experience peer situation

“Helping each other”

“The power of the shared experience”

supporting Members
bereavement journey
Widows People others Helping
lived experience similar experiences

“We are all in it together, supporting each other. All members have an equal opportunity for input”

“I find WAY to be an excellent proponent of peer support, without the friendships and connections I've made through WAY, I would certainly not have been able to navigate my own experiences anywhere near as well. Members supporting other members through their bereavement and providing support and understanding for each other is an incredibly powerful thing and WAY does this brilliantly.”

sharing experiences



www.widowedandyoung.org.uk

