

JUNE 2010

## Causing an Effect?

### Starting Points:

We started the exercise with no pre-conceptions about what we might find, although we were hopeful that there might be clear links between the third sector and good local empowerment results. We were also conscious that other factors could have an even stronger effect on national indicator results, such as poverty, inequality and disadvantage. To this end, we also compared national indicator results against the Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) and the percentage of Super Output Areas (SOAs) in the top and bottom 10% of the national scale. Links to all these sources of data can be found at the end of this briefing.

What the national indicator scores tell us about the Third Sector and empowerment in Yorkshire and the Humber.

Many voluntary and community organisations are based on principles of user involvement and empowerment. The voluntary and community sector (VCS) can therefore offer plenty of examples of excellent empowerment practice. The question is, does this practice affect broader indicators of community and citizen involvement?

The Yorkshire and Humber Regional Forum has collated and compared various data sets relating to citizen involvement and the third sector, to examine whether there are any significant connections between empowerment and the shape, 'health' and size of the sector.

### Key Findings:

- » There is no clear correlation between NI4 and NI7 scores
- » Affluence (particularly) and deprivation are better predictors of achievement against many of the 'perception' indicators (NIs 1 to 7)
- » The overall income and number of VCS organisations per head in an area is a good indicator of how well that area scores for NI7
- » It is not clear whether these factors are causal or just associated: i.e. if an area with an affluent VCS scores well in NI 7, is it a) because a 'wealthy' VCS results in organisations being positive about the environment for the third sector, or conversely b) that a positive environment causes organisations to become wealthy, or c) that neither factor causes the other they are just statistically associated.

### Description of National Indicators 1 - 7

A set of 198 indicators that are used to measure the performance of local authorities working alone or in partnership. They form a key part of the CAA (see p2).

- » **NI 1:** % of people who believe people from different backgrounds get on well together in their local area
- » **NI 2:** % of people who feel they belong to their local neighbourhood
- » **NI 3:** % of residents involved in civic participation in the local area
- » **NI 4:** % of residents who agree that they can influence decisions affecting their local area
- » **NI 5:** overall/general satisfaction with local area
- » **NI 6:** % of residents participating in regular volunteering
- » **NI 7:** environment for a thriving third sector

## Acronym Buster:

### CAA (Comprehensive Area Assessment)

The assessment examines how well councils are working together with other public bodies to meet the needs of the people they serve. It's an annual joint assessment made by a group of six independent watchdogs.

### IMD (Index of Multiple Deprivation)

The Index of Multiple Deprivation is formed by combining seven measures of deprivation. The seven relate to income, employment, education, skills and training, health, crime, living environment and barriers to housing and services. The index is ranked using Super Output Areas.

### NSTSO (National Survey of Third Sector Organisations)

A postal survey, carried out by MORI, which provides statistical information about registered voluntary and community organisations in each local authority area of England.

### SOA (Super Output Area)

A Super Output Area is a geographical area designed for the collection and publication of small area statistics. The units are similar in size of population and are much smaller than electoral wards.

### TSTS (Third Sector Trends Survey)

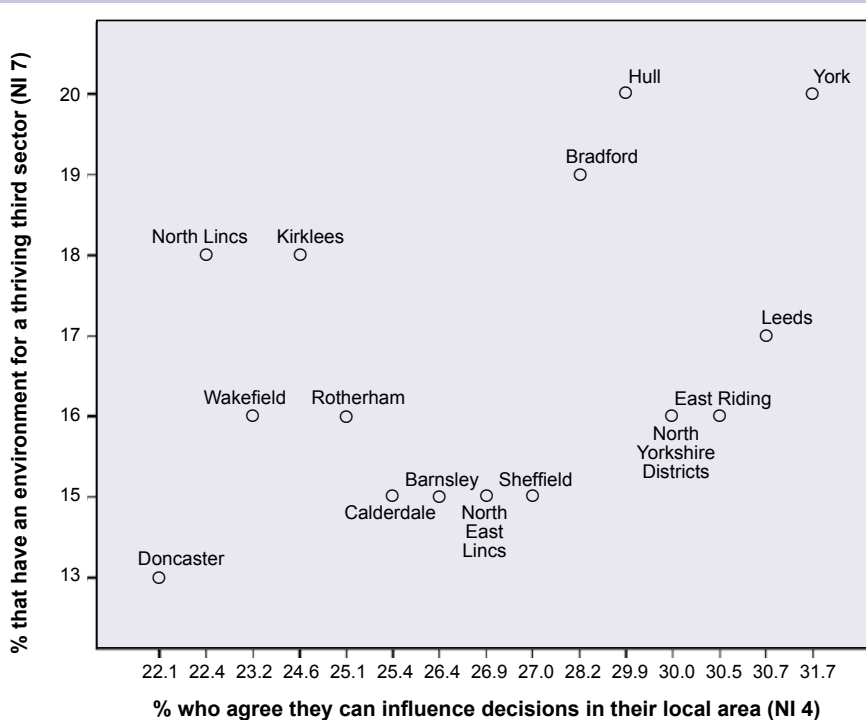
Research carried out by Southampton University and NCVO. The survey provides data on the number, location, size, income and types of registered third sector organisations in Yorkshire and the Humber.

### VCS (voluntary and community sector, also known as the third sector)

A broad term which encompasses all types of registered and unregistered voluntary and community organisations, including charities, faith groups and social enterprises.

## NI4 and the VCS: Findings:

### The relationship between NI4 and NI7



The two key indicators that we were looking at for this briefing were NI4: 'the % of people who feel they can influence decisions in their locality' and NI7: 'environment for a thriving third sector'. There is no obvious direct correlation between the two indicators (see fig 1), although the highest and lowest scoring places are the same for each (York and Doncaster). However, this specific positioning of the two local authority areas is a trend that can be seen in several of the other 'perception indicators' and is more likely to be linked to levels of affluence and statutory agency performance. A recent publication by the Urban Forum confirms a lack of statistical relationship between NI4 and NI7 at national level.

Figure 1: NI7 scores and NI4 scores

### NI4 and the number of VCS organisations

We then looked at other VCS data against NI4, to see if there were any other VCS-related factors that could predict NI4 performance. There is some evidence (see fig 2) that low numbers of registered organisations per head of population are a good predictor of low NI4 score (e.g. Wakefield, Doncaster, Rotherham). Similarly, areas with quite high numbers of organisations per head (e.g. Hull, York and North Yorkshire) do well in NI4. There are no areas with high numbers of VCS organisations per head of population that do badly in NI4.

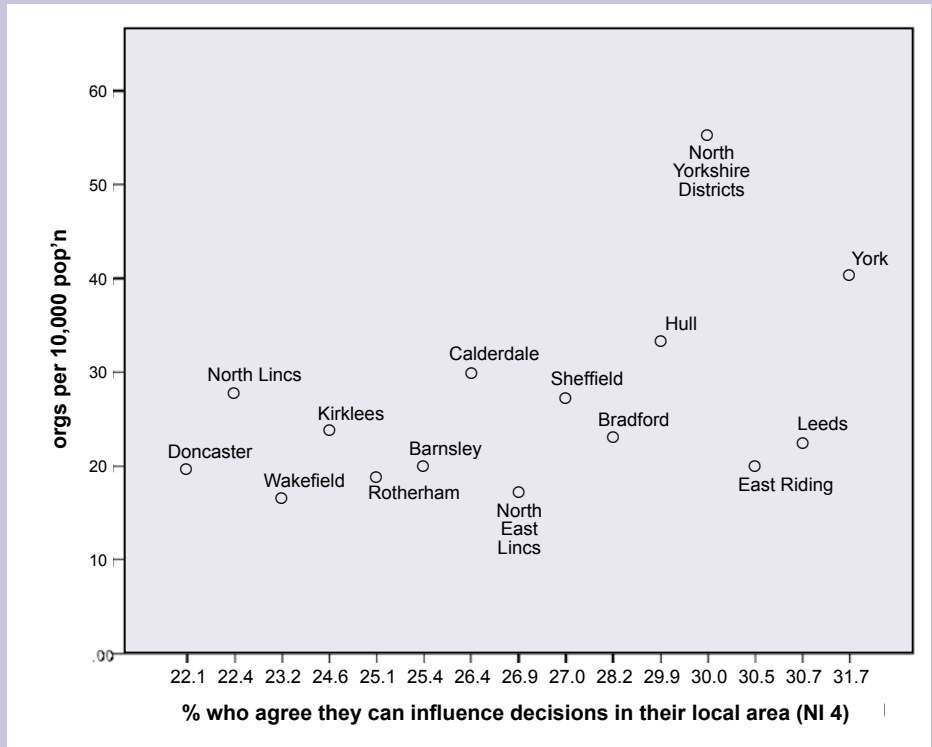


Figure 2: Registered number of third sector organisations per 10,000 people and NI4 scores

### NI4 and the wealth of VCS organisations

Another area that we explored was total income for registered organisations against NI4. This offered much better predictability of NI4 scores. With the exception of 3 areas, we found that the higher the income of the

sector, the better the NI4 score. The exceptions were Doncaster, which fared worse on NI4 than would be expected, and NE Lincolnshire and the East Riding, which did much better.



## NI4 and affluent areas

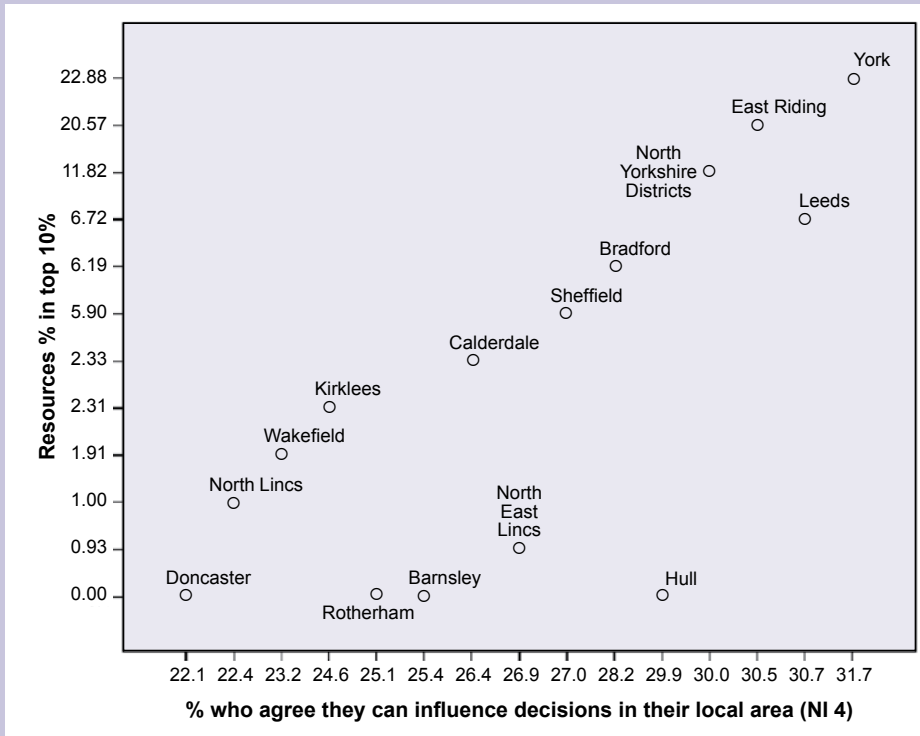


Figure 3: NI4 scores and percentage of Super Output Areas in least deprived 10% in England

The best predictor of NI4 achievement came from data unrelated to the third sector. The factor that correlates most strongly with NI4 score is the percentage of Super Output Areas (SOAs) in the least deprived 10% nationally. Doncaster, which has no SOAs in the top 10%, scores lowest in the region for NI4 whereas York, with the highest number of SOAs in the top 10%, scores best. Most other districts fall neatly in line between these two ends of the scale, however there are four districts that buck the trend: Hull, NE Lincolnshire, Barnsley and Rotherham. All these places achieved better NI4 scores than might be expected; none of them have any SOAs in the top 10% (see fig 3).

## NI4 and VCS perceptions of ability to influence

The final area we explored was whether the NI4 score in a local district bore any comparison to the answer to question 22 in the National Survey of Third Sector Organisations. This question asks registered VCS organisations their level of satisfaction regarding their ability to influence local decisions. It therefore mirrors the question used to score NI4 and which is asked of individuals via the 'Place Survey'. There was a high degree of compatibility in areas where results for NI4 and Q22 were particularly high or low: York, the East Riding, North Yorkshire and Bradford (high NI4 and Q22) and Wakefield and Rotherham (low NI4

and Q22). There were also areas where there were notable differences. Barnsley, for instance, scored relatively poorly for NI4 in the region, but very well for satisfaction under Q22.

There was a stronger correlation between high to low NI4 scores and high to low Q22 dissatisfaction scores, i.e. if organisations in an area felt highly dissatisfied with their influence, this mirrored low NI4 scores and visa versa.

## Findings: Other perception indicators:

In line with the strong positive correlation between affluent SOAs and high NI4 scores, we found that other perception indicators were often influenced by affluence or deprivation. NI3 (civic participation) and NI5 (satisfaction with their local area) were examples of this (although Hull bucked the trend again, having a much higher score in NI5 than might be expected and Bradford fared well in NI3). We have not as yet tested VCS data against these other perception indicators, and are particularly interested to discover whether quantity and 'wealth' of VCS organisations are associated with positive scores, as seems to be the case with NI4.

## NI7 and the wealth of the VCS

The final indicator we examined was NI7, to determine whether IMD rankings or various VCS data could explain the difference in NI7 scores across the region. NI7 scores are based on question 23 in the NSTSO which looks at statutory bodies' influence on third sector organisations' success.

Unsurprisingly, there was a fairly strong correlation between overall VCS income in each district and NI7 scores (see figure 4). Areas such as Hull, York and Bradford have a relatively high income and scored well in NI7. NE Lincolnshire, Calderdale, Barnsley, Wakefield, the East Riding and Rotherham fared

less well and the VCS in those areas is less well resourced. Exceptions to this were places with high income but low NI7 score, notably Sheffield and Doncaster. North Lincolnshire has the lowest VCS income of all districts but a relatively high NI7 score.

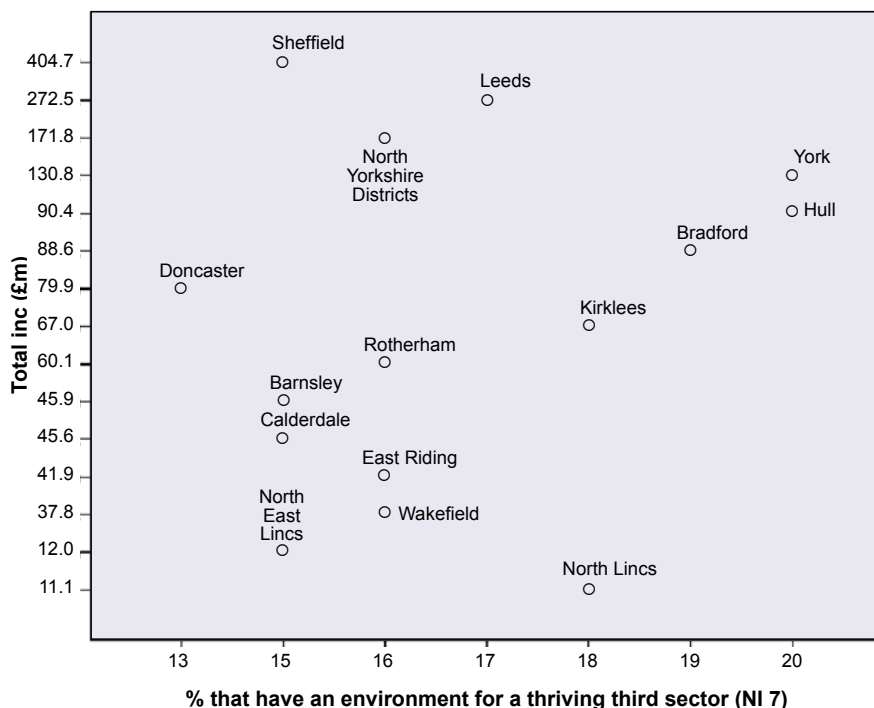
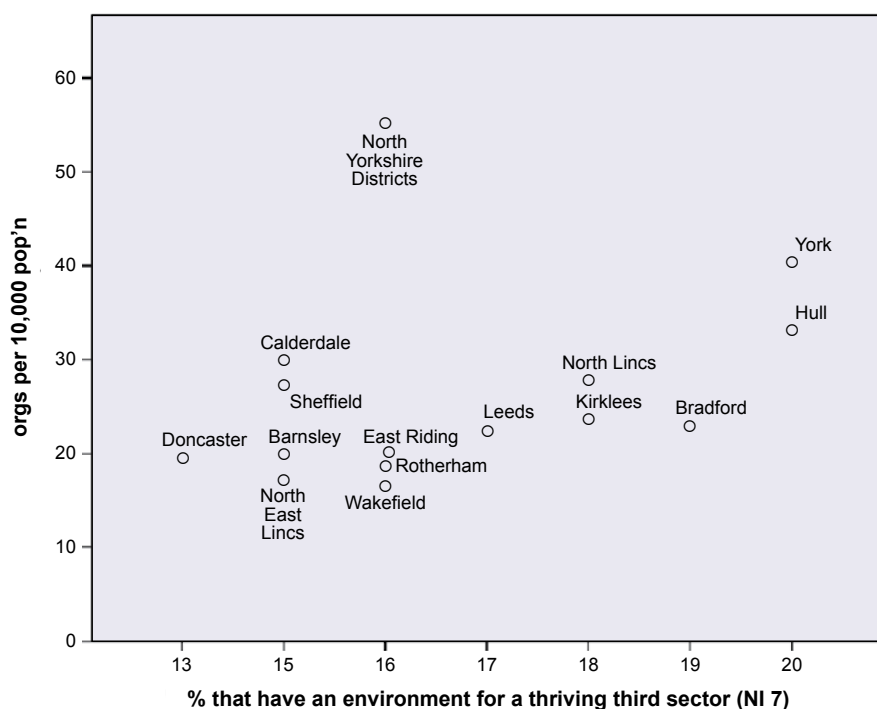


Figure 4: Total VCS income and NI7 score



## NI7 and the number of VCS organisation

High numbers of registered organisations per head of population have a gentle positive effect on NI7 (see figure 5), although North Yorkshire (which has the highest numbers) does not score particularly well. However, this is also the area that has least dealings between the VCS and statutory bodies and so this could be a factor.

Figure 5: Registered number of third sector organisations per 10,000 people and NI7 scores

# Causing an Effect

## NI7 and Indices of Multiple Deprivation

There is quite a strong correlation between the Index of Multiple Deprivation and NI7. Areas that have low levels of deprivation tend to score well in NI7 and visa versa.

The exceptions are Hull and Bradford (high NI7, high deprivation) and the East Riding and North Yorkshire (low IMD, low NI7).

## Conclusions:

It seems clear that affluence and deprivation can predict how well an area will perform in NI4 and other perception indicators, including NI7. However, whether this is symptomatic or causal is more difficult to ascertain. There is less clarity about the link between the VCS and NI4. However, it does seem that VCS data that can be quantified

(income, organisations per head of population) as opposed to perception (statutory bodies' influence) is perhaps a better test of a 'thriving third sector'. Furthermore, that interpretation seems to indicate that people's experience of where and how they live is improved by the existence of a healthy and vibrant voluntary and community sector.

## Yorkshire and Humber Regional Forum

The Regional Forum is the strategic agency that promotes and supports the contribution of voluntary and community organisations in Yorkshire and the Humber. Our members include district-wide and sub-regional VCS support agencies and also voluntary

organisations working in specialist areas such as mental health, children's services, older people's services and advocacy. Through our members, we reach and represent thousands of voluntary organisations across the region.

## How to get more information

- » Contact **Alison Haskins** or **Mark Crowe** at the Regional Forum on **0113 394 2300**
- » Visit the Regional Forum's website **[www.regionalforum.org.uk](http://www.regionalforum.org.uk)**
- » VCS Quarterly Confidence Survey **[http://www.regionalforum.org.uk/publications\\_resources/knowledgebase/500/560/326.pdf](http://www.regionalforum.org.uk/publications_resources/knowledgebase/500/560/326.pdf)**
- » Third Sector Trends Survey **[http://www.regionalforum.org.uk/publications\\_resources/knowledgebase/500/540/318.pdf](http://www.regionalforum.org.uk/publications_resources/knowledgebase/500/540/318.pdf)**
- » National Survey of Third Sector Organisations **[www.nstso.com](http://www.nstso.com)**
- » CAA results **[www.oneplace.directgov.uk](http://www.oneplace.directgov.uk)**
- » IMD information can be found at **[www.communities.gov.uk](http://www.communities.gov.uk)** or **[www.neighbourhoodrenewal.net](http://www.neighbourhoodrenewal.net)**

For the Regional Empowerment Partnership contact COGS, **0114 268 7070**, **[mail@cogs.uk.net](mailto:mail@cogs.uk.net)**. More VOICES are available on the regional empowerment website **[www.yhep.org.uk](http://www.yhep.org.uk)**

