



**OBTAINING AND ENJOYING  
A VOLUNTARY POSITION:  
THE REPORT**

Prepared for:



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## 1. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

### 1.1 Respondent background

- A total of 312 individuals registered with JVN responded to the survey. Of these, three out of four were women and three out of four were 45 years of age or over.
- Half were working (split between full time and part time workers) and one in three was retired. Others were students or unemployed.
- In line with the dispersion of the Jewish population, most respondents lived in London, especially North West and North London

### 1.2 Volunteering Experience

- Four out of five respondents were currently working as volunteers although a small number had stopped volunteering or had never done so. Over half of all respondents worked regularly as a volunteer (51%) and a further three out of ten (29%) did so occasionally. Nearly half volunteered on a weekly basis (44%). Half volunteered for more than 5 hours per week (47%).
- Those no longer volunteering had stopped because they no longer had the time or because the role was no longer necessary (for example because it had been for a specific event). Those who had never worked as a volunteer (although registered with JVN) had mostly been unable to find a role that appealed to them.
- Respondents were working for a wide range of organisations although, unsurprisingly, Jewish organisations dominated the list. The range of roles was equally diverse with organising (20%), visiting (19%) and helping at events (18%) more prevalent than other responsibilities.
- Over one in three (37%) had found a volunteering role directly through JVN. Other sources, used slightly less frequently, were enquiring directly at an organisation, being approached directly or hearing of the opportunity through friends and family. (It should be noted that others may have used the JVN website as a conduit without necessarily registering with JVN although this was not asked directly.)
- The sample included both experienced and new volunteers. At the extremes, one in four had volunteered for no more than 3 years (27%) while (reflecting the

high average age of respondents) one in five (19%) had volunteered for over 25 years.

- Respondents felt strongly that they volunteered in order to give something back to society.
- *“A chance to make a meaningful contribution with acts of unselfishness.”* However, volunteering was generally perceived to be enjoyable and an added bonus was the opportunity to socialise with others.
- Volunteers generally found that their work had a positive impact on them personally, allowing them to gain friends, understand people from different backgrounds and increased their sense of community. For a minority, volunteering had increased confidence and sense of wellbeing.
- Nine out ten were very satisfied (50%) or quite satisfied (41%) with their volunteering role, generally because it was felt to be interesting and useful. The small number who were dissatisfied felt underused and insufficiently involved or informed.

*“I didn’t feel very acknowledged, wasn’t given enough to do and wasn’t informed of new opportunities.”*

- Volunteering was thought to support paid staff by freeing them up to undertake other, more strategic tasks. Some volunteers provided staff with experience and professional expertise while others found that the volunteering role was itself a learning opportunity for them.

*“I do what they ask, when they ask it.”*

*“Help with jobs that require more hours than are available paid. Take pressure off staff who can then concentrate on more skilled tasks”*

- Most found their organisation to be supportive. Where this was not the case, volunteers wanted more appreciation and greater involvement or contact.
- Volunteers were generally received practical support, particularly through training (59%), and support from both staff (58%) and other volunteers (50%). Very few (5%) received no support although it would be relevant to their role.
- Few identified any ways in which JVN could support volunteers more than it does at present. Where additional support was required, this was generally through provision of more opportunities (including more outside of London) and higher levels of contact and feedback.

### 1.3 JVN and Volunteers

- Just under half of all respondents had looked at the JVN website in the past six months with half of this group having looked in the last month. Others were long term volunteers and it can be surmised that they had not needed to consult the website as they were not currently seeking new opportunities
- Although around one in three felt unable to comment on the website, those who did were broadly positive about it. Most features were rated as very good or quite good by just under half with most others neutral. Half (51%) thought the website good or very good overall. Very few thought any feature poor or very poor.
- Very few improvements were suggested. The main problem identified was in locating relevant opportunities.

*“Several pages are lists, a lot of scrolling is required. More links to the appropriate place on the page would be useful.”*

- The preferred frequency for information about volunteering opportunities was clearly once a month.
- Just under half of all respondents (45%) had contacted JVN within the last two years. Of this group, nine out of ten were very satisfied (49%) or quite satisfied (39%) with the service they had received. JVN was perceived to be helpful, well organised and responsive. Some respondents had developed particular rapport with individual members of staff. The small number of dissatisfied respondents would have preferred more contact or follow up and had often been unable to find a volunteering opportunity through JVN.

### 1.4 Conclusions

- JVN is highly thought of by its users although a substantial proportion of those registered have little on-going connection with the organisation.
- While the range of volunteering roles and participants is very diverse, volunteers have in common a desire to put something back into society and helping others less fortunate than themselves. JVN has a key role in this, particularly in helping those who are new to volunteering or the small number who are at risk of dropping out as volunteers as they do not enjoy their current volunteering role. Regular contact and follow-up are important to maximise volunteers' persevering with their role.

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- JVN should ensure that it encourages charities to respond to all applicants as this does not always happen at present.
  - Only a minority of volunteers regularly use the JVN website. Those who do would prefer a more filtered system for opportunities – and more opportunities to choose from.
  - Levels of satisfaction with JVN are very high with both the organisation generally and individuals within it seen as helpful, responsive and proactive.

## **1.5 Recommendations**

- JVN should continue to develop and share good practice regarding volunteering with charities and volunteers. It also has a role to promote relevant training and networking experiences amongst its stakeholders. The survey has shown that such practices are much valued by volunteers and will enhance volunteers' feeling about being valued.
- JVN should continue to liaise with leaders and potential leaders in the community to ensure they understand the full value of volunteering and its role as one of the most effective ways of retaining Jews in the community, helping them feel connected.
- JVN's plans to improve its website will be valued by its users. Particular care should be taken that the new website is user friendly and is effective in filtering opportunities. JVN would also benefit from improved tracking of these opportunities, monitoring both volunteers applying for opportunities and charities promoting such opportunities. This will help JVN to maximise its resources and improve outcomes for all.
- JVN should take a key role in making charities more aware of the need to follow up all volunteer connections. While most charities respond quickly and fully to volunteer applicants, this is not true of all and is a deterrent to potential volunteers.

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## 2 BACKGROUND AND METHODOLOGY

### 2.1 *Introduction and Research Objectives*

The Jewish Volunteering Network (JVN) is a national charity connecting people across the community. The organisation works across the voluntary, public and private sectors to raise the profile of volunteering within the Jewish community. Volunteers can use the website to find suitable opportunities and there is a telephone helpline offering a bespoke matching service for specific projects.

Prior to making some changes to its website, JVN decided to undertake a survey to understand more about the volunteers registered with the organisation. The key requirements were:

- To understand the sources used to find out about volunteering opportunities
- To learn about the volunteering experience of registered users
- To explore how volunteers feel about volunteering and the ways in which they help the organisation for which they volunteer
- To determine whether JVN could do more to help and support volunteers in their search for a post and/or once they are working as volunteers
- To examine satisfaction with the existing web site and identify how it could best be improved to benefit users.

Carol Goldstone Associates (CGA), an independent market research company, was asked to undertake the survey and this document reports the findings of the study.

### 2.2 *Research method*

The survey was undertaken on-line using SurveyMonkey.

An email was sent out on October 24<sup>th</sup> 2013 to 3,338 individuals who were registered with JVN. A reminder email was sent out after ten days. In addition, it was possible to access the survey through a link in the email footer so that there was no guarantee that respondents were all registered users.

A total of 312 people completed the questionnaire and submitted responses, a response rate of 9%. This is typical of surveys of this type.

A copy of the questionnaire is appended to this report. It should be noted that, although respondents were routed to relevant questions, it was not compulsory to respond to any question and some eligible respondents did not answer all questions.

### **2.3 Structure of report**

The questionnaire comprised a mix of closed questions (where respondents selected their answer from a list) and open questions (where they were free to write in their answers).

The report provides tables for each question and, for the open questions, has also quoted verbatim from some responses to provide an indication of typical answers.

Where relevant (and where sample sizes are sufficiently large for meaningful analysis), some differences by age or gender have been noted.



### 3. MAIN FINDINGS

#### 3.1 Classification

##### *Gender and age*

A total of 310 responses were received and the majority of these (74%) were from women.

Respondents tended to be older people - only 14% of respondents were aged under 35 years, split between those who were under 25 years and those aged 25 – 34 years; a further 11% were aged 35 – 44 years. Older age groups were better represented with approximately equal numbers aged 45 -54 years, 55 – 64 years and 65 years or over.<sup>1</sup>

**Table 1: Gender and Age**

<b>Gender:</b>	
<b>Base (All answering):</b>	<b>310</b>
Male	26%
Female	74%
<b>Age</b>	
<b>Base (All answering)</b>	<b>310</b>
Under 25 years	7%
25 – 34 years	7%
35 – 44 years	11%
45 – 54 years	24%
55 -64 years	27%
65 or over	24%
Prefer not to say	2%

##### *Employment status*

Newly half of the volunteers were employed either full time (22%) or part time (26%) and one in three was retired (33%). The remainder were either students (6%) or unemployed (14%).

<sup>1</sup> It should be noted that the responding sample tended to be older than most accepted profiles of volunteers (and therefore also more likely to be retired rather than working).

**Table 2: Employment status**

<b>Base (All answering)</b>	<b>310</b>
Employed full time	22%
Employed part time	26%
Student	6%
Unemployed and looking for work	6%
Unemployed and not looking for work	8%
Retired	33%

*Area of residence*

Around half of all respondents (51%) lived in North West London. Reflecting the spread of the Jewish community, the areas most strongly represented were Stanmore, Edgware, Golders Green and Hendon. A further 21% lived in North London, particularly in the Finchley area.

A minority of respondents lived in other areas including East and South London, outer London (including Bushey, Borehamwood and Radlett). One in ten respondents lived outside of London, most commonly Leeds or Manchester although a small number were in areas with a less dense Jewish population such as Chelmsford or Northampton.

**Table 3: Area of Residence**

<b>Base (All answering)</b>	<b>310</b>
North West London	51%
North London	21%
East London	4%
South and West London	4%
Outer London	10%
Elsewhere	10%

*Synagogue membership*

85% of respondents were members of a synagogue.

## 3.2 Volunteering Experience

### 3.2.1 Whether currently volunteering

Most respondents were working as a volunteer either regularly (51%) or occasionally (29%). A further 11% had previously volunteered although they no longer did so.

One in ten respondents (10%), although registered with JVN, had never worked as a volunteer.

**Table 4: Whether currently working as a volunteer**

<b>Base (All answering)</b>	<b>306</b>
Currently working regularly as a volunteer	51%
Occasionally work as a volunteer (e.g. for one-off events)	29%
Was a volunteer but no longer	11%
Has never worked as a volunteer	10%

Amongst the small group who had stopped volunteering, the most common reason for stopping was that the volunteer no longer had the time. Other reasons given, each mentioned by only a small number, were that the role was no longer necessary; that the position was for a specific event; or that they had not enjoyed the position.

**Table 5: Reasons for stopping volunteering**

<b>Base (All answering)</b>	<b>25*</b>
Now working and no longer have the time	20%
No longer have the time for other reasons	28%
Position/role was for a specific event	20%
Position/role no longer necessary	12%
Didn't enjoy it	20%
* Caution: very low base	

Only a very small number had not worked as a volunteer at all, primarily because none of the opportunities appealed. Other responses were that individuals did not have time or that they had been unable to find a suitable post. This could be

because they did not know what was available, they did not know how they could contribute or that they had not found an organisation interested in them.

**Table 6: Reasons not working as a volunteer**

<b>Base (All answering)</b>	<b>20*</b>
None of the volunteering opportunities available appeal	50%
Don't know how much could contribute as a volunteer	15%
Don't have the time	10%
Don't know what volunteering opportunities are	10%
Can't find an organisation interested in me	10%
Have found a job	5%
* Caution – very low base	

### 3.2.2 Organisations and Volunteers

As shown in the table below, respondents had volunteered at a diverse spread of organisations. Given the respondent base, it is unsurprising that the majority – although by no means all – were Jewish charities. The majority of respondents volunteered at only one organisation but a minority mentioned more than one charity – a very small number mentioned more than four organisations although these usually reflected both current and past volunteering work.

Organisations most frequently mentioned were Jewish Women's Aid, Jewish Care, World Jewish Relief, the JVN, and Norwood as well as mentions for working for the local synagogue and/or local schools.

**Table 7: Current and Past Organisations volunteered for**

Main mentions only

<b>Base (All answering)</b>	<b>188</b>
Jewish Women's Aid	16%
Local Synagogue	10%
Jewish Care	9%
World Jewish Relief	6%
Jewish Volunteering Network	5%
Gift	4%
CST	3%
Local School	3%
Kisharon	3%
Camp Simcha	3%

### 3.2.3 Current role

Volunteers were active across a wide range of roles, as can be seen in the table below. The roles mentioned most frequently were organisation and managing (20%), befriending and caring (19%) and one off help at events (18%).

There were some gender differences in the roles held. Women were more likely to volunteer in befriending roles (men 6%, women 28%) while men were particularly prevalent amongst those on committees or as trustees (men 20%, women 11%).

**Table 8: Current role**

<b>Base (all answering)</b>	<b>180</b>
Organising/coordinating/managing	20%
Befriending/visiting/caring	19%
One-off help at events	18%
Committee/trusteeship	12%
Supervising/mentoring/advising	12%
Driving/delivering	4%
Fundraising	4%
Marketing/PR/social media	3%
Music/arts/sport/drama	3%
Retail	2%
DIY/gardening	1%
Tele-marketing	1%
Internship	1%

### 3.2.4 Frequency of volunteering

Slightly under half of all volunteers (44%) reported that, over the past 12 months, they had volunteered on a weekly basis and a further one in four (27%) had given time one or two days per month. The remainder had been less frequent volunteers (13% a couple of times a year; 16% very occasionally).

**Table 9: Frequency of volunteering**

<b>Base (All answering)</b>	<b>241</b>
On a weekly basis	44%
One or two days per month	27%
A couple of times a year	13%
Very occasionally	16%

Volunteers were asked the average number of hours per week for which they volunteer. There was a wide spread of responses with half working for up to 5 hours per week and the remainder working longer hours. Just 10% worked as a volunteer for over 15 hours per week (i.e. the equivalent of two days per week or more).

**Table 10: Average hours per week working as a volunteer**

<b>Base (All answering)</b>	<b>108</b>
Up to 2 hours	15%
3 hours	15%
4 – 5 hours	20%
6 – 9 hours	16%
10 hours	11%
11 – 15 hours	10%
Over 15 hours	10%

### 3.2.5 Finding volunteering roles

Just over one in three volunteers (37%) had found at least one of their volunteering roles through JVN. A variety of alternative routes were used to find out about opportunities. The most popular option was to enquire directly at the organisation (45%) with slightly fewer hearing about the role from friends and family (39%) or being approached by the organisation (33%)

Men (42%) were more likely to be approached directly than women (21%). Conversely, women (34%) were more likely than men (12%) to learn of opportunities through family and friends.

**Table 11: Ways of finding out about volunteering opportunities**

<b>Base (All answering)</b>	<b>121</b>
Enquired at organisation directly	45%
Was approached directly by the organisation	33%
Heard about it through friends and family	39%
Saw and advert for it	15%
Other	15%

Volunteers were asked for how many years they had been working as a volunteer. This included previous volunteering roles as well as the current position.

The sample included both those new to volunteering and those who had been volunteers for very many years although most were experienced volunteers. At the extremes, one in eight (13%) reported that they had been volunteering for no more than one year while one in five (19%) had been volunteers for over 25 years and a further one in five (20%) had been a volunteer for over 10 years.

**Table 12: Number of years have been volunteering**

<b>Base (All answering)</b>	<b>205</b>
Up to 1 year	13%
2 – 3 years	14%
4 – 5 years	13%
6 – 10 years	20%
11 – 25 years	20%
Over 25 years	19%

### 3.2.6 Volunteers perception of their role

To understand how volunteers perceive their role, they were asked to indicate which of a series of statements applied to them. The results were generally very positive.

Nearly nine out of ten (89%) reported that they volunteer because they want to give something back to society while two out of three (63%) enjoy what they do for the organisation.

At slightly lower levels, between one in two or three looks forward to the time spent as a volunteer (49%); strongly identifies with the organisation they work with (46%) finds that the role keeps them occupied (36%); and likes the opportunity to socialise with other people (36%). A small number reported that the organisation has helped them or a friend or family member (15%). Response to the negative statement in the list was low; only 4% agreed that the organisation could not find anyone else to fill their role.

**Table 13: Volunteers perception of their role**

<b>Base (All answering)</b>	<b>193</b>
I want/wanted to give something back to society/my community.	89%
I enjoy/enjoyed what I do/did for the organisation.	63%
I look/looked forward to the time I spend/spent as a volunteer.	49%
I strongly identify/identified with the organisation I work/worked with.	46%
It keeps/kept me occupied.	36%
I like/liked the opportunity to socialise with other people.	34%
The organisation has helped me, my friend or a family member.	15%
The organisation can't/couldn't find anyone else to fill my position/role.	4%

### 3.2.7 What Volunteers Gain from their Role

Volunteers were asked what impact they personally had felt as a result of being a volunteer. More than half felt that the role had increased their understanding of people from different backgrounds (59%); that that they had gained friends and contacts through volunteering (59%). Other impacts included becoming involved in communal activities (37%); greater confidence or self esteem (38%) and, at a lower level, an increase in health or sense of well-being (23%).



**Table 14: What volunteers gain from their role**

<b>Base (All answering)</b>	<b>193</b>
I have gained friends and contacts through volunteering.	59%
I have become involved in other communal activities because I volunteered.	37%
My sense of community and belonging has increased	55%
My understanding of people from different backgrounds has increased.	59%
I have greater confidence/self-esteem.	33%
My health/sense of wellbeing has increased	23%

### 3.2.8 Satisfaction with current volunteering role

Overall, volunteers were satisfied with their current volunteering role. Nine out of ten were either very satisfied (50%) or quite satisfied (41%). Only a minority expressed dissatisfaction – 6% were not very satisfied and just 3% were not at all satisfied. However, men (17%) were more likely to be dissatisfied than women (6%).

**Table 15: Satisfaction with volunteering role**

<b>Base (All answering)</b>	<b>213</b>
Very satisfied	50%
Quite satisfied	41%
Not very satisfied	6%
Not at all satisfied	3%

The main reason for high levels of satisfaction was that volunteers found the work interesting and rewarding (29%). The other comment made frequently was that volunteers were pleased to be able to use their skills. Other positive aspects of volunteering grouped around the volunteer being able to socialise and get something out of the work and the satisfaction of helping an organisation that does valuable work and making a contribution.

*“I think I am using my time in a worthwhile activity and that others benefit from it directly”*

*“I enjoy the work, the people and the atmosphere and feel I am really helping”*

*“It has helped me in numerous ways developing both personally and professionally.”*

The much smaller number of volunteers who were not satisfied with their volunteering role were most likely to complain that they felt underused or that they were not sufficiently involved with or informed by the organisation leaving them frustrated.

*“I could be used better”*

*“There was a lack of contact and continuity”*

**Table 16: Reasons for satisfaction/dissatisfaction with current role**

<b>Base (All Answering)</b>	<b>172</b>
<i>Satisfied</i>	
Interesting/rewarding/enjoyable	29%
Feel I'm useful able to use my skills	14%
New experiences/learn new skills	2%
Socialising with others	5%
See results from my efforts	5%
Keeps me active/able to grow myself	2%
Organisation does valuable/ important/valuable work	1%
Suitable for me/I get a lot out of it	5%
Make a contribution	2%
<i>Dissatisfied</i>	
Underused	6%
Don't enjoy it	3%
Not sufficiently involved/informed	4%
Too slow getting going	1%
Takes up too much time	1%
No chance to meet others/socialise	2%
Other	20%

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### 3.2.9 Supporting Staff

Volunteers saw their role as supporting staff in a number of ways. The key roles were to do whatever was asked of them; to undertake jobs that staff did not have time for or to release them to do more important or strategic tasks; and to remove some of the workload as staff were often pressed or understaffed.

*“It frees them up to other important objectives.”*

*“I help out as they are understaffed.”*

*“I’ve always done roles that the paid staff do not have the capacity to do so we have added to what the charity or organisation can achieve.”*

There was also a sense that volunteers should be reliable, flexible and professional so that they relieved rather than added to staff burdens.

*“Be flexible and willing to help wherever it is needed.”*

*“Try to be helpful and not too demanding.”*

Some volunteers were used for specific tasks or to organise events and raise money for the organisation. At lower levels of mention, others perceived their role as helping to keep the costs down by giving their time.

*“Continue to keep the organisation going as fund raising is getting more difficult in the current economic climate so that the role of volunteers is increasingly important.”*

Some volunteers saw their role as providing skills and experience – often additional to the expertise of paid staff – and/or to bring new ideas and a fresh perspective to the organisation.

*“Strategic advice away from the coalface.”*

*“Bring external perspective, knowledge and experience.”*

**Table 17: Ways that Volunteers Support Paid Staff**

<b>Base (All Answering)</b>	<b>171</b>
Support where needed/do whatever is asked	18%
Do jobs they don't have time for/let them do important /strategic tasks	16%
Remove some of their workload/help where understaffed	15%
Be reliable/efficient/flexible/professional	12%
Undertake specific tasks	11%
Use my skills/experience	9%
Bring new ideas/perspective	8%
Organise events/PR/raise money	6%
Improve staff morale/motivation	6%
Help keep costs down/give time for free	4%
Teamwork	2%
Other	4%
No paid staff at my organisation	4%
DK/NA	5%

### 3.2.10 How organisation can be more supportive

Many organisations were reported to be supportive to their volunteers. Around half of the respondents were unable to find ways in which the organisation could do more than it currently did. Some thought that the organisation could do nothing more while others commented that it was already supportive.

*"I think they do enough. They send out a yearly thank you which is lovely"*

*"Nothing. The paid organiser continually thanks me for my contribution"*

A further group were unable to think of ways that the organisation could help.

The remaining half suggested a number of ways in which the organisation could do more. In particular, some volunteers would like their organisation to be more appreciative than it is at present.

*"Support and nurture me"*

*"In one organisation they could say thank you occasionally for my efforts! It's very rare and would be nice!"*

Another preference from volunteers was that their organisation should keep them more informed and involved or should contact them more frequently.

*“Involve us in meetings etc so we feel part of the organisation.”*

*“Regular feed back to inform volunteers of how their role has helped women who contact them.”*

*“Keep me involved!”*

More training or supervision was also identified as a way that organisations might support volunteers.

*“Create a system of supervision and thereby manage volunteers effectively by regular monitoring.”*

A number of volunteers suggested that if their organisation were more organised, it would allow volunteers to do their job better.

*“To be clear about what they expect from you and to make sure things are in place when the volunteer arrives.”*

Amongst other forms of support that were mentioned by small numbers of volunteers were a preference for more to do and a suggestion that it would be useful for the organisation to hold occasional volunteer events which would both bond volunteers and help them to feel involved.

**Table 18: How organisation can be more supportive to volunteers**

<b>Base (All Answering)</b>	<b>141</b>
Nothing	26%
Organisation is supportive	16%
Be (more) appreciative	13%
Keep me informed/involved/contact me more	8%
Provide more training/supervision	7%
Be better organised	7%
Give me more to do	3%
Hold volunteer events	2%
Other	10%
DK/NA	8%

### 3.2.11 Help received in volunteering role

Volunteers which of a series of support measures they had received to help them in their volunteering role. Most had enjoyed some support. Training (60%), support from staff (58%) or from other volunteers (50%) and/or recognition for their work (50%) were all available to half or more of volunteers. Supervision (37%) and receipt of a volunteer handbook (37%) were also mentioned by over one in three volunteers. Only 5% reported that they had not had any of these support measures although they would have been relevant. A further 8% felt that none of these supports would have been relevant to them in the role they occupied.

**Table 19: Support measures for volunteering role**

<b>Base (All Answering)</b>	<b>213</b>
Training.	59%
Support from staff.	58%
Support from other volunteers.	50%
Recognition for your work.	50%
Volunteer handbook.	37%
Supervision.	37%
None of the above, but would be relevant	5%
None of the above are relevant.	8%

### 3.2.12 What JVN can do to support volunteers

Fewer than half the volunteers responding to this question were able to identify anything that JVN could do to support volunteers. One in four said that there was nothing that JVN could do and a further 8% commented positively that JVN already does a good job.

*“I found JVN extremely helpful when I approached them.”*

A further one in four did not know what JVN could do.

Of those putting forward suggestions, the most popular request was that there should be increased contact by phone or email (10%).

*“More emails about current vacant positions”*

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*“Regular feedback to remind volunteers who rarely receive calls that working with clients is an ongoing situation.”*

While nearly all respondents were positive about JVN and what it had done for them, there was no room for complacency. One respondent had felt particularly let down over lack of contact:

*“JVN was not at all supportive. Two of my volunteering roles didn't come to me through JVN; the one that did (MDA) I found myself on the website. I had an email offering me an appointment to discuss what I wanted; I replied saying I would like to do that, but I never heard back from you.”*

Other requests related to the opportunities advertised by JVN. There were requests for both more opportunities overall (8%) and for more opportunities outside of London or, specifically, outside of NW London.

*“Information about more volunteering opportunities in Manchester. Always seem to be in London!”*

*“Increase regional activity as I am currently studying away from London where most opportunities are.”*

Another way that it was thought that JVN could do more to support volunteers was by encouraging charities to respond to applicants as this was not always the case at present (5%).

*“Tell people who advertise to respond to people when they apply.”*

**Table 20: How JVN can support volunteers**

<b>Base (All Answering)</b>	<b>119</b>
More contact/calls/emails	10%
More opportunities	8%
More opportunities outside (NW) London/in my area	5%
Encourage charities to respond to applicants	5%
Training opportunities/more seminars	3%
Haven't had any contact from JVN	3%
Arrange meetings of volunteers	3%
Other	9%
Nothing	24%
You do a good job/current contact good	8%
DK/Can't comment.	24%

### 3.2.12 What volunteering means to you

To end this section of the questionnaire, respondents were asked to describe in their own words what volunteering means to them.

The main reasons for volunteering were clearly that individuals wanted to make a contribution and to help or support others who were less fortunate than themselves .

*“Helping others in a world where not enough people do.”*

People were happy to give their time freely.

*“Simply giving of my time - which I have to spare as opposed to money - which I do not have to spare.”*

Respondents enjoyed volunteering and round that it gave them a sense of purpose or fulfilment.

*“Providing support to others with no payment but receive a sense of satisfaction and self worth.”*

*“I really enjoy the fact that I can brighten someone's day and improve it for them. I also fulfil a useful role in that clients can tell me things in confidence that they cannot tell anyone else. It makes them feel better 'getting it off their*



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*chest' and they know it will go no further. I get wonderful feedback from the people I visit and I find that lovely."*

A number specifically mentioned their pleasure at being able to do something within the Jewish community.

*"An opportunity to stay connected to my Jewish community without having to attend religious services or activities."*

Others were pleased to be able to use their existing experience of skills in a good cause.

*"Using my experience of business in running a medium sized company to pass on that experience and help train the next generation."*

Others found that volunteering was able to give them the opportunity to learn new skills.

*"This has given me the ability to be involved in very different areas than I work in and has given me additional skills."*

The youngest and oldest respondents were particularly likely to refer to their age or life stage as relevant to how they perceived volunteering, either seeing it as an opportunity to grow or to keep them young and active.

*"It is a chance to help others whilst also developing myself. Being only 12 there is a lot I want to do and helping others is one of them!"*

*"Keeping me young and active/keep growing"*

Some respondents saw volunteering as a way of life and could not imagine life without it.

*"Volunteering is an important part of who I am."*

Many respondents mentioned several of these attributes, all of which contributed to their perception of volunteering.

*"It enables you to put something back to the community, widen your network, gain new skills and have new experiences"*

The social side of volunteering was sometimes an additional bonus.

*"It gives me the opportunity to use my skills now that I am semi retired from my teaching position which I held for many years. I have met new people. It's good be part of a team now that I work irregularly as a supply teacher. I feel that I am doing something for the community and Jewish people generally."*

**Table 21: What volunteering means to you**

<b>Base (All answering)</b>	<b>253</b>
Giving something back/make a contribution/make a difference	36%
Supporting others/less fortunate/helping	33%
Giving my time freely/unpaid	14%
Enjoy it/makes me happy/valued/sense of purpose/fulfilling	11%
Do something for/within the (Jewish) community	10%
Satisfaction from achievement/love doing it	8%
Using existing experience/skills	8%
Socialising/meeting others/being part of a team	6%
Part of my life/my way of life/a Mitzvah	6%
Getting new skills/experience	6%
Unselfishness	3%
Keeping me active/young/keep growing	3%
Something different from the day job	2%
DK/not stated	2%

### 3.3 JVN and Volunteers

#### 3.3.1 When last looked at the JVN website

Respondents were split between recent and infrequent users of the JVN website. Just under half of all respondents had looked at it at least once over the past six months. Nearly one in four (23%) had last looked at it less than one month previously and a further one in five (20%) had looked at it within the previous three months.

At the other extreme, nearly one in ten had not looked at the website within the past 12 months and a further one in three (32%) could not remember when they last looked at it, suggesting that it was some time since they had last seen it. This seems to reflect the fact that many former users had held their existing volunteering posts for a long time and had not needed to refer to the JVN site.

**Table 22: When Last Looked at JVN Website**

<b>Base (All Answering)</b>	<b>239</b>
Less than one month ago.	23%
1-3 months ago.	20%
4-6 months ago.	11%
7-12 months ago.	5%
More than 12 months ago.	9%
Don't remember	32%

#### 3.3.2 Opinion of the JVN website

Using a five point scale ranging from very good to very poor, respondents were asked to rate the JVN website for a variety of features.

Although around one in three considered themselves unable to rate the feature, each was rated as very good or quite good by around half of all respondents. Most others were neutral with only a small handful of individuals rating any aspect of the website as poor.

For the overall rating, 51% rated the website as very good (13%) or quite good (38%) while 16% thought it neither good nor poor. Only 3% rated it as quite poor and none as very poor.

**Table 23: Opinion of JVN website**

	BASE	Very good	Quite good	Neither good nor poor	Quite poor	Very poor	Not stated
Ease of navigation	217	14%	35%	15%	5%	0%	31%
Range of content	193	13%	35%	15%	1%	1%	35%
Layout	215	12%	33%	20%	3%	0%	32%
Registration process	192	12%	27%	16%	5%	1%	39%
Overall	216	13%	38%	16%	3%	0%	31%

### 3.2.1 Feature of website that needs changing

Respondents were asked to identify features of the website that needed changing. Only a minority of individuals felt that they were sufficiently knowledgeable about the website to offer an opinion but some themes were apparent.

The main problem identified was in locating relevant opportunities. Some respondents felt that too much scrolling was required and others asked whether the filtering mechanisms could be improved so that they were shown only opportunities relevant to them.

*“If you're looking for volunteering opportunities it should be easier to find them.”*

*“When specifying an interest it provides vacancies which do not appear relevant.”*

Small numbers suggested that the navigation processes could be improved to make the site easier to use and others felt that it was dated and/or cluttered and needed to be modernised.

*“Your homepage is extremely jam-packed and slightly confusing.”*

*“Being able to filter causes.”*

*“If you're looking for volunteering opportunities it should be easier to find them.”*

The final complaint related to security issues. Some felt that the registration process was too difficult and others wanted to be able to look at vacancies without registering and/or without having to log in each time.

*“Registration. It's not easy.”*

*“To be able to look at available roles without registering .”*

Not everyone felt that any improvements were required.

*“I enjoy looking at the website - it makes me smile. I think it is well constructed.”*

**Table 24: Features of JVN website that need changing**

<b>BASE (All answering)</b>	<b>96</b>
Needs to be easier to locate opportunities/too much scrolling required	7%
Could be easier to use	6%
Dated/needs modernising/cluttered	6%
Add filters to show only relevant vacancies	6%
Too much security/need to register/log on every time	5%
Finding opportunities/positions difficult	4%
Difficult to register	4%
Need more opportunities outside NW London	3%
Improve navigation/make more user friendly	2%
Improve home page	2%
Hard to post ads	1%
Other	4%
Not looked at/used web site recently	16%
No comment/not applicable	13%
No changes needed/website good	23%

### 3.2.2 Desired frequency for information about volunteering opportunities

It was clear that the most popular frequency for being informed of volunteering opportunities was once a month, selected by 55% of respondents. Small numbers preferred communications to be more frequent (once a week 12 %) or less frequent (less than once a month 20%). One in eight (13%) did not want to be informed of volunteering opportunities at all.

**Table 25: Preferred Frequency for information about volunteering opportunities**

<b>Base (All Answering)</b>	<b>239</b>
Once a week	12%
Once a month	55%
Less often	20%
Never	13%

### 3.2.3 Satisfaction with JVN

Just under half of respondents (45%) had contacted JVN within the last two years. This group were clearly satisfied with the service they had received from the JVN – 49% reported that they were very satisfied and a further 39% were quite satisfied. Only a minority professed themselves to be not very satisfied (7%) or not at all satisfied (5%) with the service that they had received.

**Table 26: Satisfaction with JVN**

<b>Base (All answering)</b>	<b>108</b>
Very satisfied	49%
Quite satisfied	39%
Not very satisfied	7%
Not at all satisfied	5%

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### 3.2.4 Reasons for satisfaction

The main reasons for the high levels of satisfaction were that the JVN was perceived to be helpful, well organised and responsive.

*“My only interaction was the retirement seminar and this was very well organised and workshops were helpful particularly the volunteering session.”*

*“JVN have been very helpful in finding a volunteering role for me.”*

There were also several examples of close rapport with individual members of the JVN team. Several respondents commented positively on the good communication that JVN had with them and found the information provided to be relevant. JVN staff were perceived to be supportive and there was praise for the follow up from volunteers who had found posts through JVN.

*“After service was very good - contacted to make sure I was happy in the position I had attained through JVN.”*

*“They are prompt and helpful with replies.”*

*“Very informative staff who really want to help you out.”*

The main reason for dissatisfaction (although mentioned by only a small number of respondents) was that there was insufficient contact or follow up and the fact that there was nothing suitable for the individual or that used their specific skill set..

*“It was hard to match my skill set to the opportunities on offer at the time.”*

*“I haven't heard from them enough.”*

**Table 25: Reasons for satisfaction/dissatisfaction with JVN**

<b>Base (All answering)</b>	<b>72</b>
<i>Positive</i>	
Helpful/good rapport with specific individual	21%
Well organised/responsive	19%
Good communication/gave me relevant information	9%
Good follow up/supportive	7%
Good networking	6%
No problems	3%
Good range of opportunities	3%
Good lectures/seminars	3%
<i>Negative</i>	
Insufficient contact/no follow up	7%
Nothing suitable for me	6%
Not found voluntary work via JVN	1%
Too little available outside London	1%
Little contact needed	3%
Other	19%



# APPENDIX 1: QUESTIONNAIRE

## Volunteers Survey

### Obtaining and enjoying a Voluntary Position

Thank you for participating in this study. The Jewish Volunteering Network is seeking your views to help us to provide our volunteers with the best possible service and to help you match your skills with volunteering opportunities available.

#### About you

	!	RESPONSE	
1.	Are you	Male Female	
2.	Which age group are you	Under 25 years 25 – 34 years 35 – 44 years 45 – 54 years 55 – 64 years 65 years or over	
3.	Which of these applies to you?	I work full time I work part time I'm a student I'm not working but am looking for work I'm not working and not looking for work I'm retired	
4.	Where do you live? <b>PLEASE ENTER THE FIRST PART OF YOUR POSTCODE E.G. N2, SW19, IG9</b>	<b>(WRITE IN)</b> _____	

#### Your Volunteering Experience

5.	Which of the following applies to you?	I am currently working regularly as a volunteer I occasionally work as a volunteer (e.g. as a one off or for special events) I was a volunteer but not any longer I have never worked as a volunteer	Go to Q8  Go to Q7 Go to Q6
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Report on: **Obtaining and Enjoying a Voluntary Position**

Prepared for: **Jewish Volunteering Network**



6.	<p><b>IF NOT A VOLUNTEER:</b></p> <p>Why have you chosen not to volunteer?</p>	<p>Found a job</p> <p>Don't have the time</p> <p>Don't know what is available</p> <p>Don't like what is available</p> <p>Don't know what I could do</p> <p>Can't find an organisation interested in me</p> <p>Other (<b>WRITE IN</b>) _____</p>	Go to end
7.	<p><b>IF NOT A VOLUNTEER ANY LONGER:</b></p> <p>Why did you stop volunteering?</p>	<p>Position/role no longer required</p> <p>Position was for a specific period or event</p> <p>Am now working so don't have time</p> <p>No longer have time for other reasons</p> <p>Didn't enjoy it</p> <p>Other (<b>WRITE IN</b>) _____</p>	GO TO END
8.	<p><b>ALL WHO DO/HAVE VOLUNTEERED</b></p> <p>Which organisation(s) do you/did you volunteer for?</p> <p><b>WRITE IN</b></p>	<p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>	
9.	<p>What is/was your volunteering role?</p>	<p>Befriending/visiting/caring</p> <p>Committees/trusteeships</p> <p>Driving/Delivering</p> <p>Supervising/mentoring/advising</p> <p>Organising/coordinating/managing</p> <p>Retail</p> <p>Marketing/PR/Social Media</p> <p>Fundraising</p> <p>One off help at events</p> <p>Music/Arts/Sports/Drama</p> <p>DIY/gardening</p> <p>Tele-marketing</p> <p>Internship</p> <p>Other (<b>WRITE IN</b>) _____</p>	

10.	How often have you volunteered in the past 12 months?	Very occasionally A couple of times a year One or two days per month On a weekly basis	
11.	<b>IF ON A WEEKLY BASIS</b> On average, how many hours per week? <b>WRITE IN</b>	_____ hours	
12.	Have you found any of your volunteering opportunities through JVN?	Yes (one or more) No	Go to 13 Go to 12
13.	<b>IFNO:</b> How did you find out about the opportunity?	Applied to organisation direct Was approached directly Heard about it through friends or family Other ( <b>WRITE IN</b> ) _____	
14.	Thinking of all the volunteering you have undertaken, how many years have you been a volunteer?	_____ years	
15.	To help us understand more about how volunteers see their roles, please indicate which of the following apply to you in your role as a volunteer. <b>PLEASE TICK ALL THAT APPLY</b>		
		I want to give something back to society I strongly identify with the organisation I work with This organisation has helped me, a friend or a member of my family I like the opportunity to socialise with other people It keeps me occupied I enjoy what I do for the organisation The organisation can't easily get anyone else to fill my role I look forward to the time I spend as a volunteer	
16.	And which of these applies to you personally as a result of being a volunteer?		
		I have gained friends and contacts through volunteering I have got involved in other communal activities because of volunteering My sense of community and belonging has increased My understanding of people from different backgrounds has increased My confidence, self esteem has increased My health and well being has increased	

17.	How satisfied are you with the volunteering role you currently have?	Very satisfied Quite satisfied Not very satisfied Not at all satisfied	
18.	And why do you say this? <b>WRITE IN</b>		
19.	What do you think are the most important things you do to support paid staff in the organisation where you volunteer? <b>WRITE IN</b>		
20.	What can the organisation where you volunteer do to be more supportive to you as a volunteer? <b>WRITE IN</b>		
21.	Which of the following have you received to help you in your volunteering role?	Supervision Training Volunteer handbook Support from staff Support from other volunteers Recognition for your work None of the above (but would be relevant) None of the above relevant	
22.	And what can JVN do to be more supportive to you as a volunteer? <b>WRITE IN</b>		

23.	And in your own words, what does volunteering mean to you?	

### JVN Website

This section is about the JVN website. JVN is hoping to make some changes to its website but we need to know how best to spend the limited funds we have available for this.

24.	When did you last look at the JVN website?	Less than 1 month ago 1 – 3 months ago 4 – 6 months ago 7 – 12 months ago More than 12 months ago Don't remember					
25.	Please tell us what you think of the following features of the web site?						
		<b>Very good</b>	<b>Quite good</b>	<b>Neither good nor poor</b>	<b>Quite poor</b>	<b>Very poor</b>	<b>Don't know</b>
	Ease of navigation (finding what you are looking for) Range of content Layout Registration process Overall						
26.	What <i>one</i> feature of the website do you think most needs changing and why?						
27.	How frequently would you like to be informed of volunteering opportunities	Once a week Once a month Less often					
28.	Have you contacted JVN at all in the last two years? JVN?	Yes No				Go to Q28 Go to Q31	

**Report on:** Obtaining and Enjoying a Voluntary Position

**Prepared for:** Jewish Volunteering Network



29.	<b>IF YES</b> How satisfied are you with the service you have had from the JVN?	Very satisfied Quite satisfied Not very satisfied Not at all satisfied	
30.	Why do you say that?		
31. Finally, are you a member of a synagogue?			
		Yes	
		No	

**Thank you for your help. Now please press the submit button**