

# **The structure, dynamics and impact of the VCSE sector in Essex**

**New analysis from Third Sector Trends**

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# Some statistical headlines

- There are about 5,000 registered organisations in Essex.
- 68% are quite small (income below £50,000), fewer than 3% are big (income £1million-£25million).
- Most organisations are registered with the Charities Commission (83%), 9% CICs, 4% Registered societies and 4% CASCs.
- There are about 17,500 full-time equivalent employees.
- 95,000 volunteers produce the equivalent of between £303m (at minimum wage) - £478m of 'work energy' (at 80% employee wage).
- The sector expended about £1.1bn in 'work energy' in 2022 and produced about £3bn in 'added value' from its work.

# Comparing with other areas

We can't understand Essex without comparing with other similar / different places:

- The closest **statistical neighbours** of Essex are: Cheshire, Kent, Lancashire and Hampshire.
- **More affluent statistical strangers** are Cambridgeshire, Devon, Hertfordshire and Surrey.
- **Less affluent statistical strangers** are Merseyside, South Yorkshire, Staffordshire and Tyne and Wear.

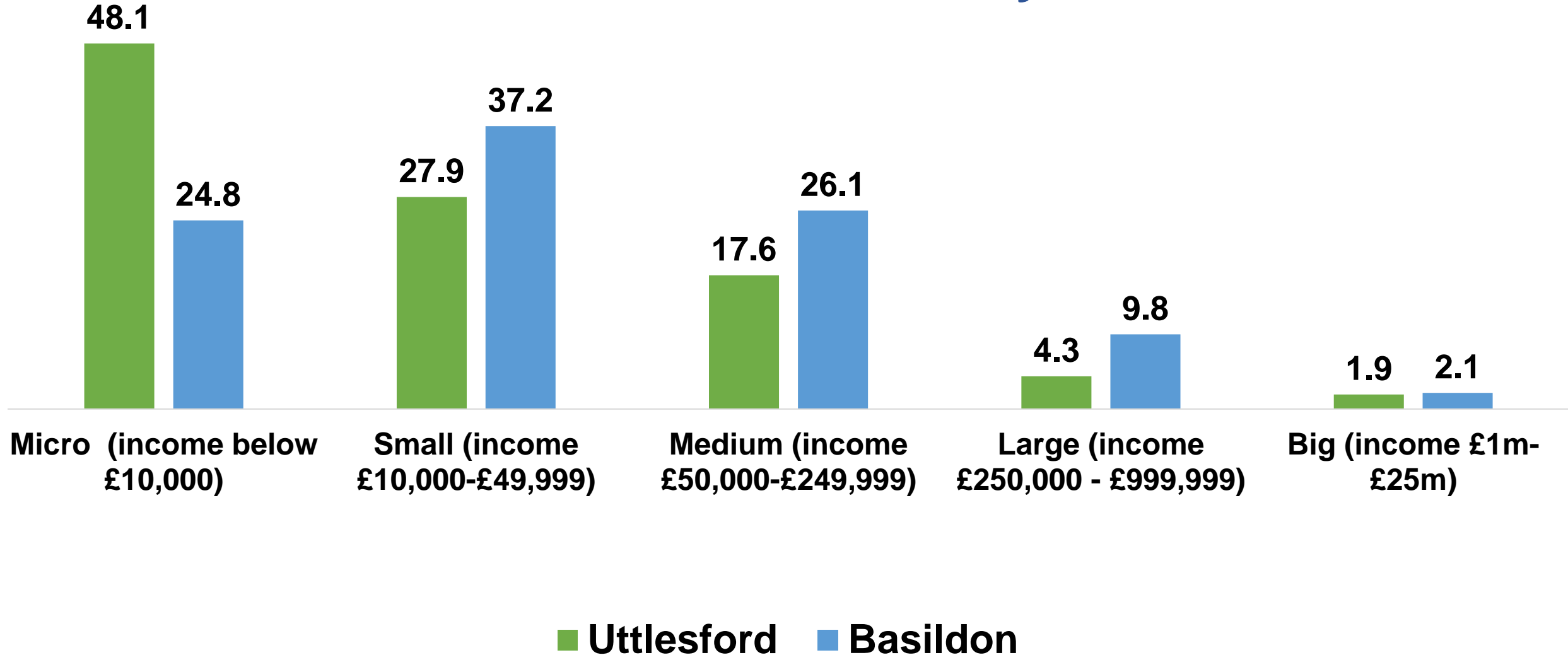
According to *The Economist* (November 2023), Basildon is the UK's most 'typical' town statistically.

# Which 'Essex' are we talking about?

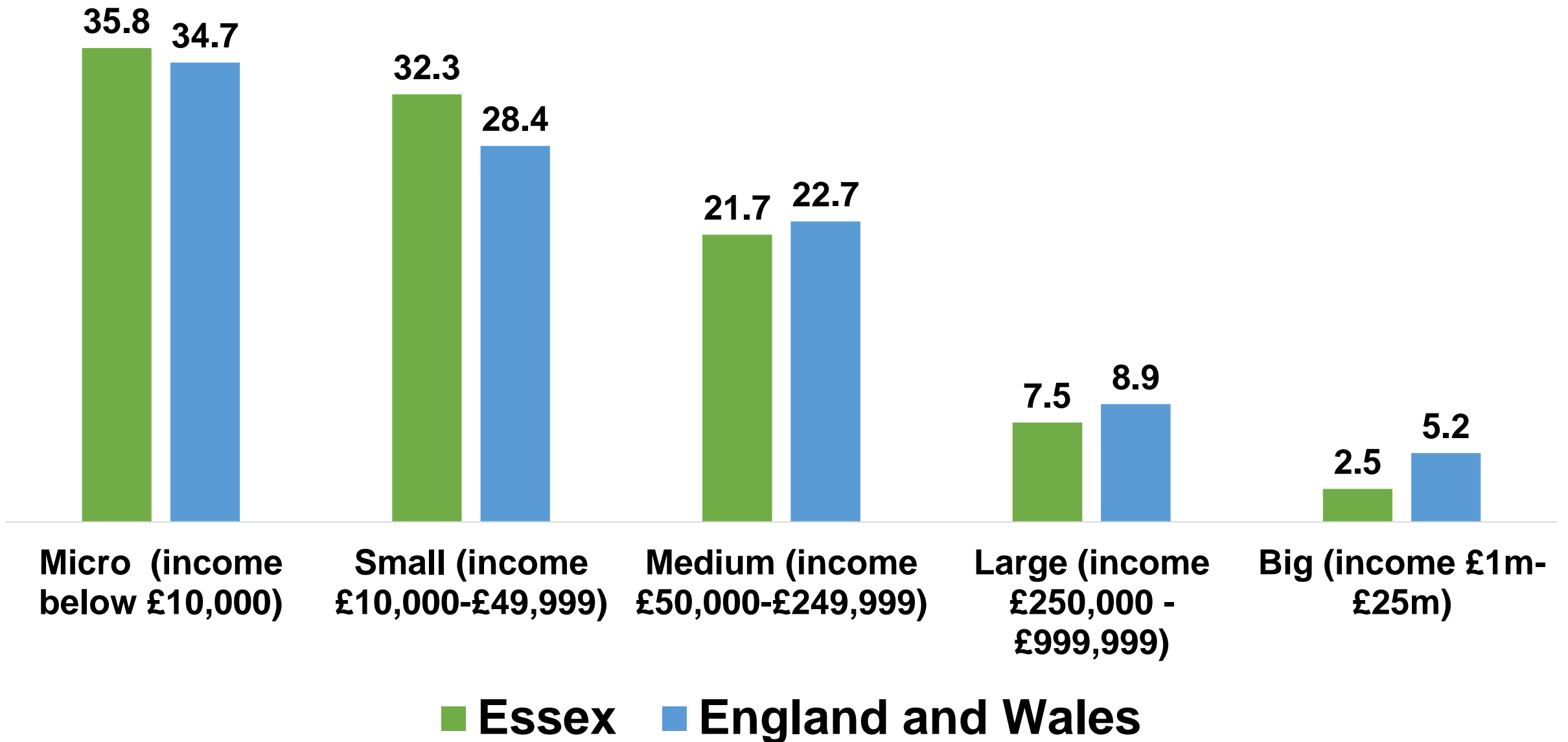
- Wide variations in public health.
- Deprivation is concentrated in specific areas (e.g. Tendring).
- Diversity varies significantly and 'surprisingly' (e.g. Castle Point).
- Labour market conditions and pay vary – many people work outside the county.
- Employment in industrial sectors of Essex does not accurately reflect the jobs of the resident population.
- Area occupational profiles mirror local patterns of affluence /deprivation.

# **Variations within Essex**

# The structure of VCSE sector reflects local area social and economic dynamics

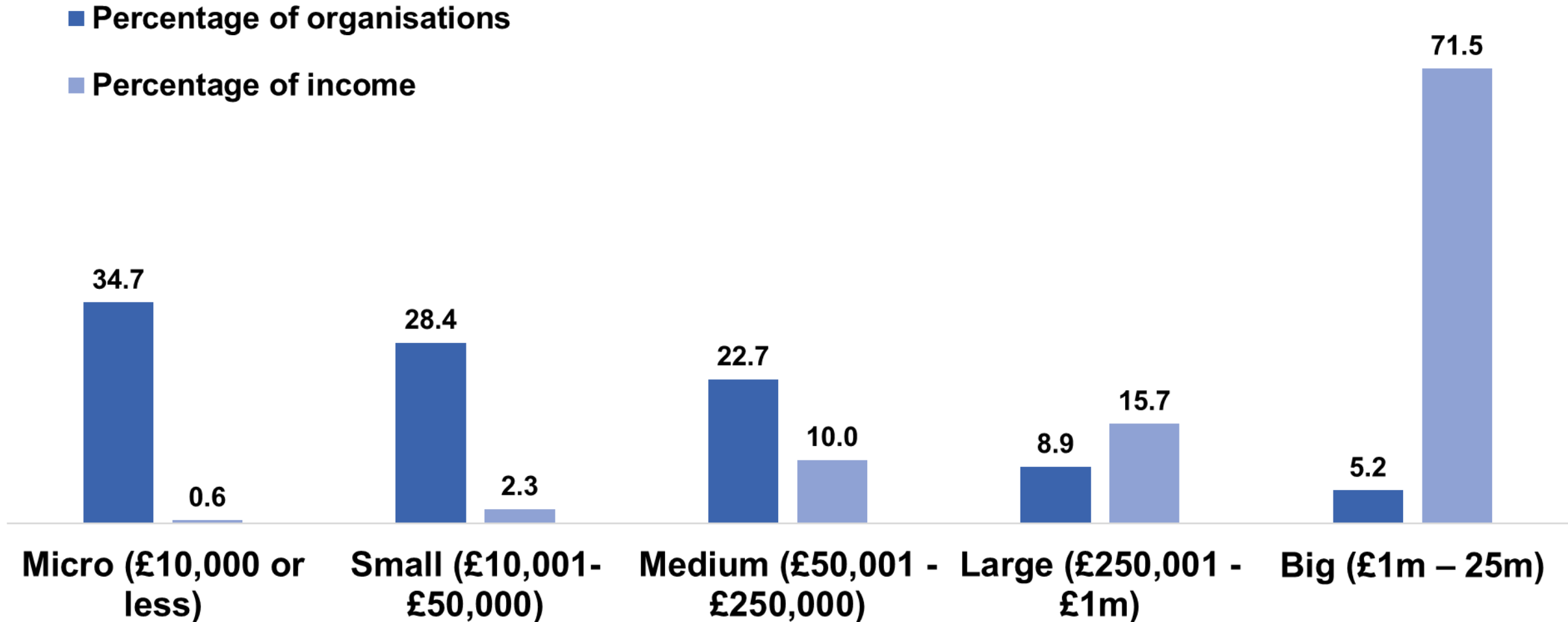


# Is sector structure in Essex 'typical'?



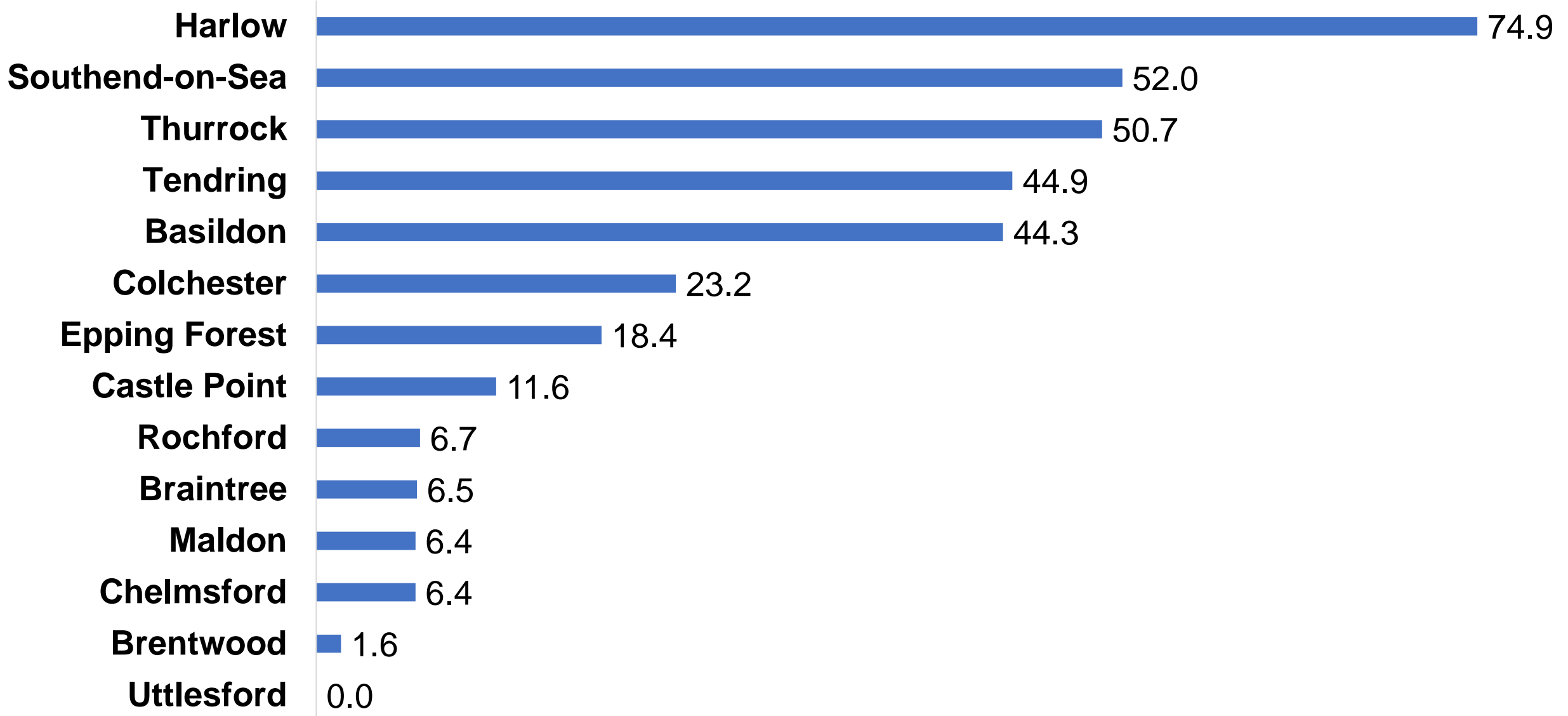
# A note on sector Structure

(England and Wales data)

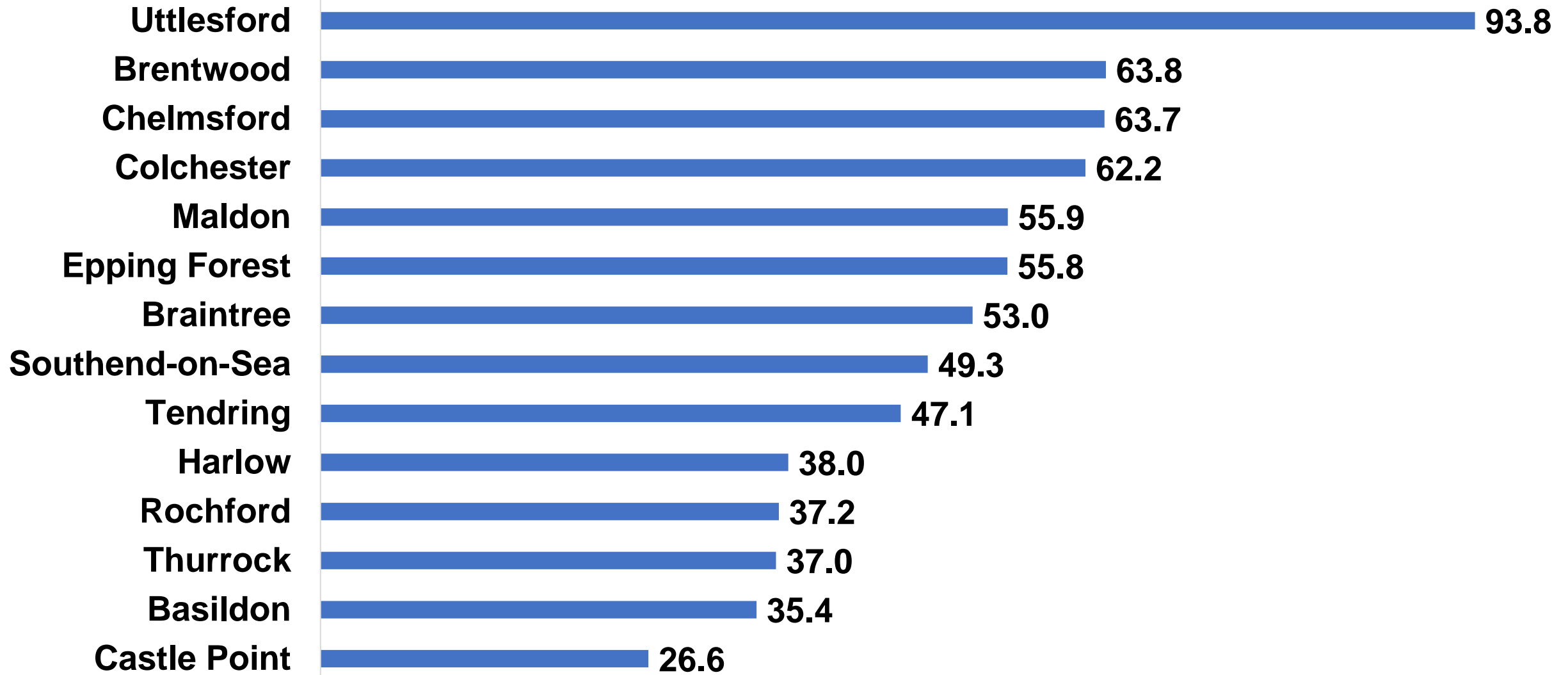




# Percentage of TSOs in less affluent areas (IMD 1-4)



# Estimated regular volunteers per 1,000 population



**How is the sector faring?**

# Sector reliance on volunteers

	We rely mainly on volunteers who commit time on a very regular basis	We rely mainly on volunteers who can work unsupervised	Many of our volunteers are our service users/beneficiaries	We could not keep going as an organisation or group without volunteers	It's been much harder to hold on to our older volunteers	We're losing some of the volunteers who joined us during the pandemic
Statistical neighbours	81.4	72.4	67.8	85.1	43.7	25.9
More affluent statistical strangers	80.5	76.0	67.0	84.3	45.3	20.5
More deprived statistical strangers	79.1	69.4	58.7	79.6	50.8	30.5
Essex	78.3	84.8	68.6	89.3	43.5	25.0
England and Wales	82.3	75.8	67.0	85.1	48.0	26.0

# Employee retention and recruitment

	Holding on to our existing staff			Recruiting new staff		
	It has become quite a lot harder	Stayed about the same	It has become quite a lot easier	It has become quite a lot harder	Stayed about the same	It has become quite a lot easier
Statistical neighbours	19.9	77.5	2.5	42.8	55.3	1.9
More affluent statistical strangers	15.4	81.7	2.9	33.7	61.2	5.1
More deprived statistical strangers	24.5	71.6	3.9	52.1	43.6	4.2
Essex	16.1	82.1	1.8	42.3	55.8	1.9
England and Wales	19.8	77.2	3.0	43.0	53.0	4.0

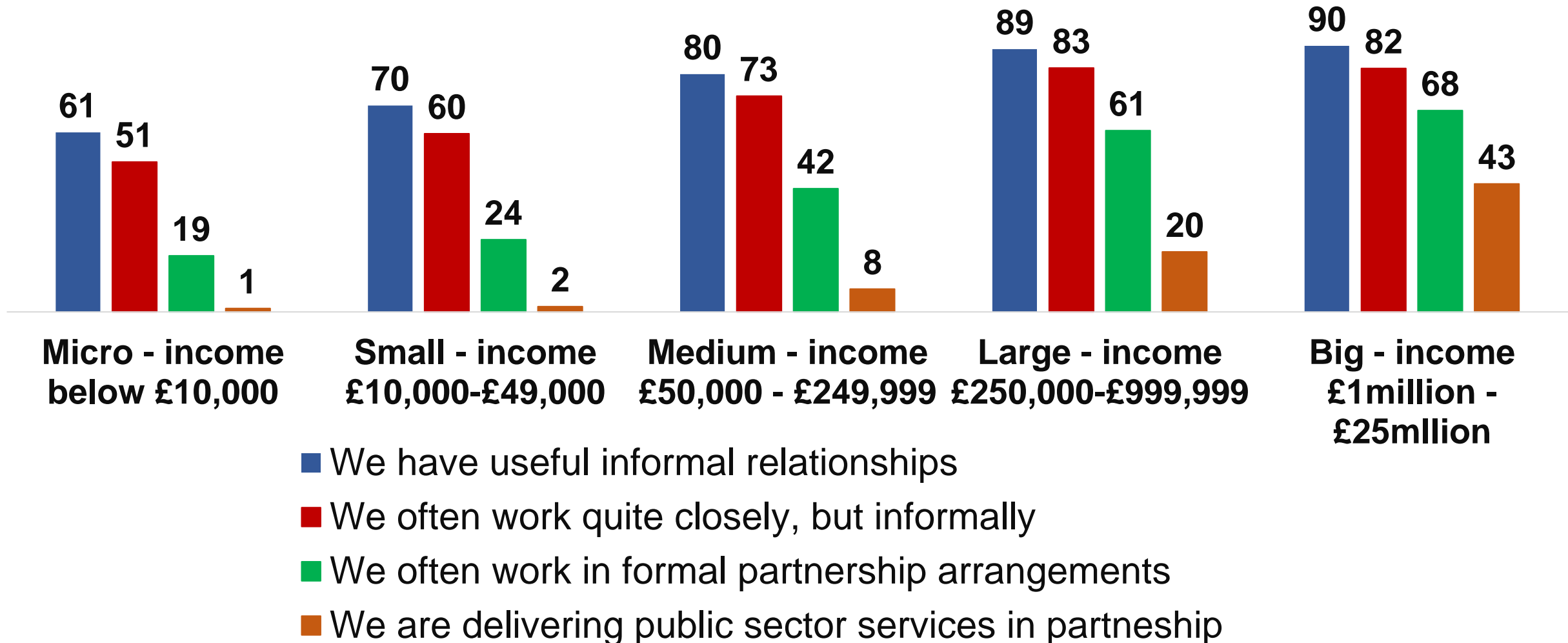
## Financial wellbeing (change in the previous two years)

	<b>Risen significantly</b>	<b>Remained about the same</b>	<b>Fallen significantly</b>
Statistical neighbours	18.4	57.0	24.6
More affluent statistical strangers	13.4	62.6	24.1
More deprived statistical strangers	20.0	53.8	26.2
<b>Essex</b>	<b>12.7</b>	<b>60.9</b>	<b>26.4</b>
England and Wales	18.1	55.7	26.2

# Relationships within the VCSE sector

	We have useful informal relationships with other voluntary organisations and groups	We often work quite closely, but informally, with other voluntary organisations and groups	We often work in formal partnership arrangements with voluntary organisations and groups
Statistical neighbours	70.1	61.2	34.2
More affluent statistical strangers	66.3	57.0	26.7
More deprived statistical strangers	79.6	72.9	36.4
<b>Essex</b>	<b>57.0</b>	<b>57.9</b>	<b>21.7</b>
England and Wales	73.3	64.7	34.3

# Partnership working is affected by size of organisations (England and Wales data)





# Influencing local social and public policy

	<b>We tend to steer well clear of political issues</b>	<b>We try to go to relevant meetings/events which relate to our kind of work</b>	<b>We campaign to further the interests of our beneficiaries</b>	<b>We tend to work behind the scenes to influence policy</b>
<b>Statistical neighbours</b>	<b>75.1</b>	<b>70.5</b>	<b>44.0</b>	<b>40.0</b>
<b>More affluent statistical strangers</b>	<b>78.1</b>	<b>63.4</b>	<b>38.2</b>	<b>38.3</b>
<b>More deprived statistical strangers</b>	<b>66.3</b>	<b>79.2</b>	<b>55.5</b>	<b>49.1</b>
<b>Essex</b>	<b>80.2</b>	<b>61.5</b>	<b>34.0</b>	<b>32.4</b>
<b>England and Wales</b>	<b>72.3</b>	<b>70.9</b>	<b>47.0</b>	<b>42.8</b>

**Looking to the future**

<b>Pessimists</b>	<b>Income will fall</b>	<b>Support from private businesses will fall</b>	<b>Grants from charitable foundations will fall</b>
<b>Statistical neighbours</b>	20.7	16.9	20.5
<b>More affluent statistical strangers</b>	16.8	16.5	20.6
<b>More deprived statistical strangers</b>	19.2	17.8	22.3
<b>Essex</b>	<b>18.1</b>	<b>15.4</b>	<b>21.5</b>
<b>England and Wales</b>	19.1	17.4	21.5

<b>Pessimists</b>	<b>Support from volunteers will fall</b>	<b>Working in partnership will fall</b>	<b>Funding from statutory agencies will fall</b>
<b>Statistical neighbours</b>	<b>13.6</b>	<b>4.4</b>	<b>25.3</b>
<b>More affluent statistical strangers</b>	<b>14.6</b>	<b>2.9</b>	<b>29.4</b>
<b>More deprived statistical strangers</b>	<b>9.8</b>	<b>2.0</b>	<b>22.6</b>
<b>Essex</b>	<b>18.5</b>	<b>3.9</b>	<b>18.0</b>
<b>England and Wales</b>	<b>12.9</b>	<b>3.6</b>	<b>27.0</b>

# Optimists

**Income will rise**

**Support from  
private businesses  
will rise**

**Grants from  
charitable  
foundations will rise**

**Statistical neighbours**

**31.6**

**25.8**

**31.5**

**More affluent statistical  
strangers**

**29.8**

**16.5**

**23.5**

**More deprived statistical  
strangers**

**35.3**

**26.4**

**36.4**

**Essex**

**28.6**

**26.9**

**34.2**

**England and Wales**

**33.0**

**24.9**

**31.8**

# Optimists

Support from  
volunteers will rise

Working in  
partnership will  
rise

Funding from  
statutory  
agencies will  
rise

Statistical neighbours

34.4

46.2

22.8

More affluent statistical  
strangers

27.9

36.8

13.2

More deprived statistical  
strangers

41.0

55.0

25.5

Essex

31.5

30.3

21.3

England and Wales

33.5

46.4

22.6

# A final note on data reliability

- Data on area affluence, demographics, etc. are from reliable national statistical sources.
- Data on VCSE sector structure (number of organisations, size, income, employees and volunteers) is based on register data and is quite reliable.
- Survey data on sector opinion is less reliable due to small sample size – statistical neighbour data may be more accurate?
- We need to build the sample up next time around in 2025! And I'll need your help with that!

**But it's still worth drawing out some 'talking points' based on the survey data...**

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If you would like to see more data from Third Sector Trends, you can find all the reports here:  
<https://www.communityfoundation.org.uk/third-sector-trends/>

Specific reports on health in three types of areas of England can be found here:  
<https://www.stchads.ac.uk/category/research/research-news/>

