

United Kingdom - Update

[UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND]

RESEARCH PARTNER CENTRE

THE INSTITUTE FOR VOLUNTEERING RESEARCH

VOLUNTEERING ENGLAND

Nick Ockenden

Alan Strickland

Georgina Brewis

Matthew Hill

and Rachel Castle

The Institute for Volunteering Research

Volunteering England

The Institute for Volunteering Research - IVR

[CONTACT]

The Institute for Volunteering Research - IVR
Regent's Wharf
8 All Saints Street
London N1 9RL - United Kingdom
info@ivr.org.uk
www.ivr.org.uk

IVR is a specialist research and consultancy agency focusing on volunteering. IVR is an initiative of Volunteering England in research partnership with Birkbeck College, University of London. It was set up in 1997 in response to the increased demand for research on volunteering. Since then IVR has carried out a wide variety of research, consultancy and evaluation projects on many different aspects of volunteering. It has completed four national surveys of volunteering.

Volunteering England

[CONTACT]

Volunteering England
Regent's Wharf
8 All Saints Street
London N1 9RL - United Kingdom
Tel. +44 2075208900
Fax +44 2075208910
volunteering@volunteering.org.uk
www.volunteering.org.uk

Volunteering England supports volunteering and everyone who works with volunteers by:

- providing information and advice on volunteering through its information team, its website and its publications;
- giving local support to volunteers and volunteer organisations through its network of Volunteer Centres;
- developing and supporting a strong and effective nationwide volunteering infrastructure;
- working at local, regional and national levels;
- making sure that everyone knows how valuable volunteering is to society by its powerful lobbying and campaigning;
- ensuring that volunteering is understood at the heart of government, and in the public, private and third sectors.

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Historical overview

1 A SHORT HISTORY OF VOLUNTEERING POST 1945

VOLUNTEERING ACROSS EUROPE

Volunteering has a long history in the UK. Although some writers see volunteering as being at a low ebb during the immediate post-war period until a so-called 'volunteer boom' in the 1960s, more recent work suggests that volunteering was central to the growth of the welfare state in the 1940s and 1950s. Harrison, for example, points to the example of groups such as the WRVS (formerly known as the Women's Royal Voluntary Service) whose volunteers ran meals-on-wheels services for local authorities from the 1940s¹. However, during the 1960s volunteering was more widely promoted by government and educationalists than it had been previously. Youth was one key group strongly encouraged to take up volunteering as numerous new 'community service' programmes for young people emerged, run by schools, local authorities and voluntary organisations, such as Community Service Volunteers founded in 1962². However in the 1970s several such programmes, including government-funded Young Volunteer Force Foundation changed their aims and methods to adopt a community work approach³.

At the same time university students began to press for more effective involvement of students with community problems, marking a transition from traditional social 'service' to community 'action'⁴. Such shifts to a more politicised understanding of volunteering were reflected both in the formation of new campaigning organisations that emerged as part of the 'rediscovery of poverty'. In common with many other developed nations, the idea of long-term overseas volunteering for development became popular in the 1950s and 1960s. British volunteers were sent out by a number of different sending agencies including Voluntary Service Overseas and International Voluntary Service, operating under the auspices of the British Volunteer Programme from 1962⁵.

¹ Harrison B., *Seeking a Role: The United Kingdom 1951-1970*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 2009.

² Brewis G., 'Youth in action? British young people and voluntary service 1958 – 1970', in *Beveridge and Voluntary Action in Britain and the wider British World*, edited by Oppenheimer M. and Deakin N., Manchester, Manchester University Press, 2011.

³ Sheard J., *The Politics of Volunteering*, London, ADVANCE, 1986.

⁴ Brewis G., 'From service to action? Students, volunteering and community action in mid-twentieth century Britain' in *British Journal of Educational Studies* 58:4 pp. 439 – 449, 2010.

⁵ Brewis G., 2011, op cit.

Legal and policy framework

1 OVERVIEW

VOLUNTEERING ACROSS EUROPE

This section explores the wider policy environment in the UK within which volunteering exists. It discusses the broad structure of volunteering in each of the countries, before examining government support for volunteering and the legislation that impacts on volunteering. It also explores the wider challenges facing volunteering from a policy perspective.

1.1 STRUCTURE OF UK VOLUNTEERING POLICY

The UK has a unitary political structure, with political power formally vested in the UK Parliament in Westminster. Local government and the national governments of Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland exercise substantive functions but do not enjoy any federal separation of powers.

Significant powers are devolved from the UK Parliament to the devolved administrations. Volunteering is an example of a 'devolved issue' in the UK, with the Welsh Assembly Government, Scottish Government and Northern Ireland Executive holding responsibility for volunteering policy in their respective nations.

Local authorities, or local councils as they are often known, are important funders of volunteering in their areas. Council grant funding and the commissioning of services are both important income sources. Councils also control access to the boards of Local Strategic Partnerships and other committees which play an important role in setting local priorities and co-ordinating local policy implementation. Effective partnerships between councils and organisations such as Volunteer Centres, are therefore important if volunteering is to be given a strong local voice in political decision-making.

While government policy and approaches to volunteering are set at a devolved level, some of the wider issues that affect volunteering stem from UK level policy, such as legislation on criminal records checks for volunteers or volunteering visas. The political context for volunteering is therefore a combination of UK wide policy, devolved policy and the priorities of particular local authorities.

1.1.1 ENGLAND

Policy Framework

A wide range of government departments have long provided financial support to volunteering in a number of

ways, but since 1997 two departments have been tasked with co-ordinating government voluntary sector policy. For much of the previous Labour administration, responsibility for the voluntary and community sector sat within the Home Office (the UK interior ministry). Support for the sector was provided by the Voluntary and Community Unit, which later became the Active Communities Directorate.

In 2006, recognising the growing importance of the sector to government policy, and to acknowledge the rise of social enterprise, the Office of the Third Sector was created. Based in the Cabinet Office⁶, the Office brought together the voluntary sector responsibilities of the Home Office and the social enterprise responsibilities of the then Department for Trade and Industry. Headed by a Minister for the Third Sector, the reformed structure created the UK's first minister with sole responsibility for sector issues, including volunteering.

Following the election of a Conservative/Liberal Democrat Coalition government in May 2010, responsibility for the third sector has remained in the Cabinet Office. The Office of the Third Sector has been renamed the Office for Civil Society, but no substantive changes made to its responsibilities. The newly elected Prime Minister has publicly discouraged use of the term 'third sector', preferring instead 'civil society'.

The co-ordination role and leadership role of the Office for Civil Society does not extend to all aspects of volunteering. The Department for Communities and Local Government continues to lead on community empowerment initiatives and civic participation. While such activity would generally be seen as elements of volunteering⁷, current government structures separate the two.

Champions

From June 2007 to May 2009, the work of the Office of the Third Sector on volunteering was supplemented by the appointment of a member of the House of Lords, Baroness Neuberger, as the Prime Minister's 'Volunteering Champion.' Baroness Neuberger reviewed government policy and practice in a number of areas, including health and social care⁸, criminal justice⁹ and employer supported volunteering in the civil service.¹⁰

Strategies

In 2007, the Cabinet Office and HM Treasury published a 'Third Sector Review', setting out the government's overall approach to working with and supporting the third sector, as well as how the sector could contribute to economic and social regeneration. The Review informed the funding priorities for the subsequent Comprehensive Spending Review, the mechanism by which HM Treasury allocates funding to particular departments. This led to the allocation of two funding streams which sought to support the sector overall - 85 million pounds for Capacitybuilders to support third sector infrastructure development and 65 million pounds for Futurebuilders to increase the value of grants and loan for development of public service delivery capacity.

To develop a more co-ordinated approach to third sector support, Third Sector Partnership Boards were established in most government departments. In each department a senior government official has been appointed as a 'third sector champion', supported by a more junior official acting as a third sector liaison officer.

⁶ The Cabinet Office is the UK government department responsible for providing a secretariat for the Prime Minister and Cabinet, including supporting the Prime Minister to co-ordinate policy across government. It has also increasingly been used to house government units which aim to tackle cross-cutting issues, such as the third sector, social exclusion and government communications.

⁷ Davis Smith J., 'Volunteering and Social Development', *Voluntary Action*, 3(1), 2000.

⁸ Neuberger J., *Volunteering in the Public Services: Health & Social Care*, London, Cabinet Office, 2008. Last accessed 17 August 2010 at www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/media/cabinetoffice/third_sector/assets/neuberger.pdf

⁹ Neuberger J., *Volunteering Across the Criminal Justice System*, London, Cabinet Office 2009. Last accessed 17 August 2010 at www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/media/124076/volunteers%20in%20cjs.pdf

¹⁰ Neuberger J., *Employer-supported volunteering in the civil service*, London, Cabinet Office, 2009. Last accessed 17 August 2010 at www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/media/218600/neuberger%20civil%20service.pdf

1.1.2 WALES

Policy framework

In Wales responsibility for the third sector, including volunteering, falls under the Minister for Social Justice and Local Government and there is a Third Sector Unit within the Welsh Assembly Government. Through its 'partnership agreement' the Welsh Assembly Government funds or partly funds an agreed range of volunteering services, which are delivered by the third sector infrastructure: Wales Council for Voluntary Action, County Voluntary Councils and Volunteer Centres. The Welsh Assembly Government also funds other volunteering initiatives, such as GwirVol, which is aimed at young people.

All government departments, in developing their own action plans, are required to consider their own commitment to developing volunteering.

Strategies

The overarching strategic document for the Welsh Assembly Government commitment to volunteering is 'The Voluntary Sector Scheme' which has an action plan. Progress against this plan is monitored by a group comprising government officials and third sector representatives.

The Third Sector Partnership Council, which meets two or three times a year, includes representation from different fields of interest within the third sector, including one representative specifically for volunteering. These meetings are an opportunity for face to face contact between the third sector in Wales and the government minister responsible – the Minister for Social Justice and Local Government.

The Wales Volunteering Policy Network elects and briefs the volunteering representative, contributing indirectly, therefore, to the Third Sector Partnership Council.

Bi-annual ministerial meetings between government departments and third sector representatives can address concerns and developments relating to volunteering.

1.1.3 SCOTLAND

Policy framework

Responsibility for volunteering in Scotland was devolved to the Scottish Parliament when it was established in 1999. Pre-empting a change later made at UK level, volunteering was initially located within the Cabinet Office of the Scottish Executive in recognition of the cross cutting nature of volunteering. Volunteering was then placed within the remit of the Scottish Executive Development Department and was taken forward by the Voluntary Issues Unit until 2006 when it was renamed the Third Sector Team. Both the Voluntary Issues Unit and then the Third Sector Team were responsible for the strategic development of volunteering and both provided funding for national and local volunteering infrastructure bodies. The Scottish Executive is now called the Scottish Government, a change that was implemented when the Scottish National Party formed a coalition in 2007. Currently the Scottish Government Minister for Enterprise, Energy and Tourism has responsibility for volunteering.

Strategies

In 2004 the ruling Labour - Liberal Democrat coalition published the "Scottish Executive's Strategy for Volunteering" which set out four different strands of action on volunteering; making Scotland one of the first administrations to publish its own strategic plan for volunteering. The Strategy ran until 2009 and has yet to be replaced or updated. The Scottish Government acknowledged the importance of volunteers in its top level policy document, the Scottish Government Economic Strategy, which was published in 2007 but has yet to produce a government wide stand alone statement or strategy on volunteering.

In 2010 a number of mainly national voluntary organisations established a Volunteering Roundtable which is now making links with the Scottish Government.

One of the largest Scottish Government departments, the Health Directorates, published a Strategy for Volunteering in NHS Scotland in 2008 which set out an action plan with the aim of improving the effectiveness of volunteers contributions to the wellbeing of NHS Scotland patients and service users.

1.1.4 NORTHERN IRELAND

Policy framework

Volunteering in Northern Ireland is the responsibility of the Voluntary Community Unit of the Department of Social Development (DSD). It is their role to support the volunteering infrastructure and provide a policy framework for it. Since 2009, the department has provided funding to organizations to encourage and support the involvement of volunteers through the Small Grants for Volunteering programme. In 2009/2010 325,000 pounds were awarded to 364 organisations. This award superseded the CVS Small Grant programme which ran from 2006-2009 and disbursed 2.1 million pounds of grant funding.

On 1st April 2010, the shape of the volunteering infrastructure changed substantially with the merger between the Volunteer Development Agency, which was the regional strategic body for volunteering, and 9 Volunteer Centres. The new organisation called 'Volunteer Now' integrates the regional and local infrastructure support for volunteering and seeks to deliver services across Northern Ireland. There are an additional six additional Volunteer Centres which did not become part of the merger.

Strategies

The Northern Ireland Programme for Government, published in 2008 commits the government to developing a new strategy to promote active citizenship and sustain volunteering in Northern Ireland, providing a range of targeted programmes to build capacity in communities targeting need and by 2012 to increase volunteering and active citizenship by 10% compared with the baseline measure in *It's All About Time* (2007)¹¹.

A Volunteering Strategy for Northern Ireland is currently being developed, and will be the first such strategy to be published. This strategy will offer an overarching vision and action plan for how volunteering should develop over the next 5 years. The time frame associated with

the delivery of the strategy offers other strategic opportunities for volunteering such as the European Year of Volunteering 2011, the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games and the 2013 World Police and Fire Games being hosted in Northern Ireland.

1.2 LAWS, REGULATIONS AND PROVISIONS IN SUPPORT OF VOLUNTEERING AND VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS

1.2.1 VOLUNTEERS ENGAGED DIRECTLY BY GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS

As well as providing a range of funding streams and support programmes for volunteering, government departments and agencies directly support and involve volunteers. Volunteer support for the emergency services is one of the most high profile areas. HM Coastguard relies heavily on its volunteer Coastguard Rescue Service, and the UK's lifeboat service is provided by the charity the Royal National Lifeboat Institute (RNLI), whose rescue boats are crewed entirely by volunteers, although the government does not provide any financial support to the RNLI. The UK Mountain and Cave Rescue Service is staffed entirely by 3,500 volunteers.

Volunteers are engaged across government. The Home Office funds the national Neighbourhood Watch scheme, which involves people in local crime prevention activities. Natural England, the government's conservation agency, involves around 2,200 as volunteer wardens on National Nature Reserves.

The criminal justice system involves large numbers of volunteers, with 30,000 people sitting as volunteer Magistrates and 14,000¹² people giving their time as Special Constables in the police force. In addition, thousands of volunteers play a role in ensuring the rights of those detained are respected, by serving as Independent Custody Visitors, Prison Visitors or members of prison monitoring boards. The criminal justice

¹¹ *It's All About Time*, funded by the DSD, provided an evidence base for developing the volunteering strategy.

¹² This figure is for England and Wales only, as Special Constables in Scotland and Northern Ireland receive payment for their work.

system is a prime example of how reliant public services are on the continued involvement of volunteers.

1.3 LEGISLATION AND THE LEGAL STATUS OF VOLUNTEERS

Unlike workers or employees, volunteers in the UK have no special legal status. While many pieces of legislation refer to, and effect volunteers, no single law creates a framework for volunteering or the voluntary sector.

A number of UK-wide Acts of Parliament have had important implications for volunteering:

1.3.1 THE POLICE ACT 1997

The Police Act legislated for the creation of the national Criminal Records Bureau and vetting system. More detailed regulations were set out by the Police Minister in 2002, which provided a rare example of a 'volunteer' being formally defined in a statutory instrument.

According to the regulations, a "volunteer" means a person 'engaged in an activity which involves spending time, unpaid (except for travel and other approved out-of-pocket expenses), doing something which aims to benefit some third party other than or in addition to a close relative.' This is the working definition of a volunteer used by most government departments and agencies as a reference point for their work relating to volunteering.

1.3.2 NATIONAL MINIMUM WAGE ACT 1998

The National Minimum Wage Act created, for the first time in the

UK, a universal right for workers to receive a centrally prescribed national minimum wage. In setting out the exclusions from the minimum wage, the Act created a new category of volunteer, a 'voluntary worker.'

The Act gives all workers the right to receive a minimum wage, with a worker being defined as something working under a contract. During the drafting of the Bill, concern was raised that given the nature of their activity, some volunteers on structured full-time programmes are in effect working under a contract, and may have become entitled to the minimum wage.

To avoid this problem, the 'voluntary worker' category was created, to recognise specific circumstances in which someone may volunteer to work under a contract. In addition to out-of-pocket expenses, voluntary workers are able to receive financial support to cover their subsistence costs and be provided with free accommodation for the duration of their placement. They cannot however receive any financial contribution towards accommodation costs.

While the voluntary worker status offers a sensible exception to the minimum wage for certain types of volunteer, the definition continues to create some confusion in the voluntary sector.

1.3.3 SAFEGUARDING VULNERABLE GROUPS ACT 2006

Following the murders of two children by a school caretaker who had been subject to a CRB check, the independent Bichard Inquiry recommended a more robust vetting system for those working with children and vulnerable adults. This Act created a new organisation, the Independent Safeguarding Authority, which is responsible for maintaining a register of those people deemed fit to work with these groups. People wanting to volunteer or work with children or vulnerable adults¹³ will need to register with the authority.

The proposed system has led to widespread media debate, much

¹³ The Act provides a broad definition of vulnerable adult. A person is a vulnerable adult if they are 18 or over and meet one or more of the following conditions: in residential accommodation, in sheltered housing, receiving domiciliary care, receiving any form of health care, detained in lawful custody, under court imposed supervision, receiving a welfare service of a prescribed description, receives a service or participates in any activity provided specifically for persons who fall within a subsection (the elderly, the disabled, expectant mothers, certain physical or mental problems), in receipt of certain health and social care payments, or requires assistance in the conduct of their own affairs.

of it highlighting concern that the tougher safeguarding regime will deter volunteering. In response to public concern, a review took place in September 2009, which led to some elements of the scheme being relaxed. Following continued anxiety, the programme was frozen by the new coalition government whilst the scheme was reviewed.

1.3.4 OTHER LEGISLATION AND 'VOLUNTEER RIGHTS'

UK law offers no specific protection to volunteers as volunteers. Legal protections provided by the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the Data Protection Act 1998 apply to volunteers in the same way as they do to any other member of the public who is not protected by virtue of being an employee or a worker.

The absence of any specific legal protection or dedicated rights for volunteers has led to growing concern among some volunteering groups. A number of high profile cases of volunteers being mistreated by well-known national charities led to the establishment of a 'Volunteer Rights Inquiry'¹⁴ in England. The Inquiry has published its interim findings, exploring a range of options including the creation of a Volunteering Ombudsman to provide an independent source of redress for volunteers.

2 RELATIONSHIP WITH PUBLIC SECTOR

2.1 THE COMPACT

Relations between the voluntary sector and government in England are governed by the Compact.

The development of a national agreement setting out clear mutual expectations and responsibilities between sector and state was recommended by the Independent Commission on the Future of the Voluntary Sector in England¹⁵, chaired by Professor Nicholas Deakin. This led to the creation of what became known as the Compact, which was launched in 1998 by Deputy Home Secretary Alun Michael MP.

The Compact has been overseen by the 'Compact Partnership' of three organizations – Office for Civil Society, representing the government; Compact Voice, representing the voluntary sector and the Commission for the Compact, an independent agency of government, responsible for overseeing the implementation of the Compact. The Coalition Government has announced that the Commission will be abolished, and in December 2010 a refreshed Compact was launched along with strong monitoring requirements for government.

A single national Compact is underpinned by Local Compacts, agreed by local authorities and representatives of the voluntary sector in particular areas of England. The Compact is not intended to be merely a document, but a basis for building strong partnership working between government departments, agencies and councils and the voluntary sector.

As well as encouraging more constructive relationships, the Compact can also be used by the voluntary sector to seek redress when organizations believe that government has not treated them fairly. For example, the Compact requires government to provide at least three months for consultations and to give fair warning to organizations of cuts in funding. A Compact advocacy service, operated by the National Council for Voluntary Organisations, provides assistance to voluntary sector bodies who believe the government has breached the Compact's requirements in its dealings with them.

¹⁴ Volunteer Rights Inquiry, www.volunteering.org.uk/WhatWeDo/Policy/Volunteer+Rights+Inquiry

¹⁵ A summary report is available from www.jrf.org.uk/publications/future-voluntary-sector

Data Overview

VOLUNTEERING ACROSS EUROPE

While this section sets its boundary of interest as the United Kingdom, it has a particular focus on volunteering within England. The majority of the surveys and research that it draws on as evidence focus specifically on England. Much is based on data from *Helping Out. A national survey of volunteering and charitable giving*¹⁶ which was published in 2007. This section does, however, draw on studies from the other nations wherever possible.

1 LEVELS OF VOLUNTEERING IN THE UK

Today volunteering is a popular activity within the UK. The most up-to-date information is available from the 2008-09 Citizenship Survey, which is currently published by the Department for Communities and Local Government. This survey makes several important distinctions. Firstly, between formal volunteering (which takes place within a group, club or organisation) and informal volunteering (which takes independently of such groups); and secondly, between volunteering by an individual that takes place at least once a month (regular volunteering) and that which takes place at least once a year.

In 2008-09, 26 % of people took part in regular formal volunteering in England (at least once a month), while 41 % volunteered at least once a year (this figure includes the 26 % mentioned above). Volunteering informally is even more popular: in the same period of time, 35 % of people took part regularly and 62 % of people did so at least once a year. The level of formal volunteering has remained relatively stable between 2001 and 2008-09, whereas the rate of informal volunteering has seen a steady but significant decline over the same period. The rest of this chapter refers to formal volunteering.

Figures for the other countries of the UK are recorded in separate surveys. The results show, however, that volunteering is a common activity across the whole of the UK. In Northern Ireland, 21 % of individuals surveyed were formal volunteers in 2007 (in 2001 this was 29 % and in 1995 it was 18 %) ¹⁷. In Scotland, 28 % had volunteered formally within the past 12 months¹⁸. In the 2005 Citizenship Survey figures for Wales were amalgamated with those from England, finding that 44 % of people in the two countries took part in formal volunteering at least once in the past year ¹⁹. The

¹⁶ Low N., Butt S., Ellis Paine A. and Davis Smith J., *Helping Out. A national survey of volunteering and charitable giving*, London, Cabinet Office, 2007.

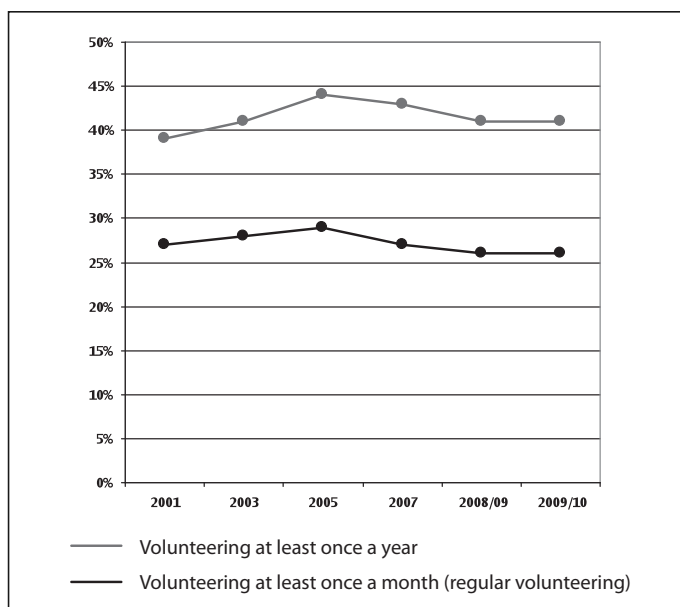
¹⁷ Volunteer Development Agency, *It's All About Time. Volunteering in Northern Ireland, Belfast*, Volunteer Development Agency, 2007.

¹⁸ Scottish Executive, *Scotland's People Annual report: Results from 2009 Scottish Household Survey*, Edinburgh, Scottish Executive, 2009.

¹⁹ Kitchen S., Michealson J., Wood N. and Peter J., *2005 Citizenship Survey: active communities topic report*, London, DCLG, 2006.

figures from the different countries are not directly comparable with each other due to differences in methodology, including the way in which the volunteering question was asked (which can influence the response rate).

Table 1 Levels of volunteering in England 2001 – 2010



Source: *Government Citizenship Surveys 2001 – 2009/10*

National surveys of volunteering often show that levels of volunteering and the type of activity can vary between different demographic groups. In England, the latest Citizenship Survey data shows that ethnic minority groups are less likely to volunteer than non-ethnic minority

groups (34 % compared to 42 % for all formal volunteering). However, deeper analysis of the figures shows that ethnicity is not actually a ‘predictor’ of volunteering rates. Rather, the differences can be explained by other factors which often coincide with ethnicity in England, including level of qualifications, socio-economic classification and income²⁰.

Data within England also shows that levels of volunteering are significantly linked to age: those aged between 35 and 74 years are more likely to undertake regular formal volunteering than other age groups, whereas people aged between 16 and 25 and between 65 and 74 year olds are the most likely to undertake regular informal volunteering compared to other age groups. Gender is also important. Women are more likely to undertake both formal volunteering and informal volunteering than men (42 % compared to 39 % for all formal volunteering).

Many other factors affect volunteering rates including socio-economic classification. Rates of volunteering are higher amongst those people in higher socio-economic classifications, in employment, with higher levels of qualifications, and those people in groups considered not to be at risk of social exclusion.

2 VOLUNTEERING BEHAVIOUR

Helping Out found that regular formal volunteers spent on average 15.9 hours volunteering in the last four weeks, whereas the average of all current volunteers was 10.9 hours²¹. While caution is required when making direct comparisons with other surveys, figures from the 1997 national survey of volunteering showed that all current volunteers contributed 16 hours in the same time period²².

Over the last ten years an increasing proportion of volunteers have been observed to be helping more than one organisation (59 % com-

²⁰ Department of Communities and Local Government, *2008-09 Citizenship Survey. Volunteering and Charitable Giving Topic Report*, London, Department for Communities and Local Government, 2010.

²¹ Low N., Butt S., Ellis Paine A. and Davis Smith J. *Helping Out. A national survey of volunteering and charitable giving*, London, Cabinet Office, 2007.

²² Davis Smith J., *The 1997 National Survey of Volunteering*, London, National Centre for Volunteering, 1998.

pared to 53 % in 1997) with one-third (36 %) volunteering with three organisations or more. This suggests the existence of a highly active and mobile group of volunteers. Indeed, research by the Third Sector Research Centre demonstrates the existence of a 'civic core': two-thirds of the unpaid help recorded in the Citizenship Survey is given by around 7 % of the population²³.

The most popular fields of activity for volunteers in England include education (31 % of current formal volunteers), religion (24 %), sports and exercise (22 %) and health and disability (22 %)²⁴. Most commonly, formal volunteers are involved in raising and handling money (65 %) and organising / helping to run an event (50 %). Many are also involved as trustees or committee members (28 %).

3 MOTIVATIONS AND IMPACT

3.1 MOTIVATIONS FOR VOLUNTEERING

Helping Out showed that people mostly said they started volunteering for reasons which were broadly social and practical. The factor which got greatest support was '*I wanted to improve things, help people*' (53 % of current volunteers), with the cause being important and having time to spare coming joint second (41 %). Meeting people and making friends (30 %), connecting to family and friends' interests (29 %), and a need in the community (29 %) were also strong factors.

These kinds of reasons figured more largely than self-focused and instrumental factors, such as '*help get on in my career*' (7 %) or '*get a recognised qualification*' (2 %). Using their existing skills (27 %) was more important than learning new skills (19 %). Factors which referred to reciprocity also gained less support, such as '*had received voluntary*

help myself' (4 %) and '*give something back*' (1 %). There were some differences among age groups. The 18 – 24 year old age group saw getting on in a career as much more important (27 %) than adults of all ages (7 %), and likewise learning new skills (46 % as against 19 %). For the 65+ age group having time to spare was the largest factor (56%)²⁵.

3.2 BARRIERS TO INVOLVEMENT

Research can provide an insight into the barriers people face to getting involved in volunteering. In *Helping Out*, lack of time was the most frequently cited factor for not volunteering (82 %). Also important was bureaucracy and being worried about risk and liability (49 and 47 % respectively). Large numbers of respondents reported that they did not know how to find out about volunteering opportunities (39 %), were concerned that they didn't have the right skills or experience (39 %) or they were worried that they wouldn't be able to stop once they got involved (36 %).

Information is also available on the reasons that people give for stopping volunteering. Once again, not enough time – this time related to changing home or work circumstances – was the dominant reason provided (41 %). Volunteering losing relevance (cited by 15 % of respondents) and health problems / old age (cited by 14 % of respondents) were also commonly referred to²⁶.

Our knowledge of what happens to volunteers once they stop volunteering can frequently be limited, however, and generally depends on the extent to which an organisation maintains contact with an individual afterwards. We know little about whether or not volunteers re-engage with organisations at a later stage in their lives, whether

²³ Mohan J., 'Big Society threatened by lack of volunteers', 2010, on www.guardian.co.uk 24.08.10

²⁴ Low N. et al, 2007, op cit.

²⁵ Low N. et al, 2007, op cit.

²⁶ Low N. et al, 2007, op cit.

they take on an alternative form of participation such as donating money, or if they choose never to get involved again.

3.3 IMPACT OF INVOLVEMENT

Volunteers report a wide range of personal benefits to their volunteering, many of which match the motivations that are reported. The most commonly cited impacts from *'Helping Out'* were getting personal satisfaction from seeing the results (97 %) and enjoying it (97 %). A sense of personal achievement was also rated highly (88 %) as was the opportunity to meet people and make friends (86 %). Instrumental benefits, such as improving employment prospects or gaining a recognised qualification (24 % and 14 % respectively) did not feature as often²⁷. These benefits were, however, reported much more frequently in the 25 – 34 age group than amongst people over the age of 55.

3.4 VOLUNTEERING AND THE LINK TO EMPLOYABILITY

The recent economic downturn has precipitated an increased

focus upon the link between volunteering and employability from policymakers, practitioners and researchers alike throughout the UK. Evidence suggests that there is a strong perception for the link both from volunteers²⁸ and for many employers²⁹. Research does not, however, wholly back up such perceptions. There is a lack of clear statistical evidence that volunteering leads to hard job outcomes – the three large scale quantitative surveys that have been undertaken in the UK all fail to establish a direct statistical link³⁰. There is, however, some evidence for volunteering-related job outcomes from smaller scale surveys³¹.

The evidence base is much stronger around the contribution of volunteering to an individual's employability through skills development. This includes: hard skills such as media, IT skills and languages³², gathering and analysing information³³ and other job specific skills³⁴; soft skills such as motivating colleagues, managing time³⁵, teamwork and communication³⁶ and organisational skills³⁷. Of perhaps the greatest importance is the role volunteering can play in overcoming the wider barriers to employment such as lack of self-esteem, confidence and purpose³⁸. It is also important to recognise that the link will differ between different types of volunteering and volunteer, and that positive employability effects are not inevitable.

²⁷ Low N. et al, 2007, op cit.

²⁸ See, for example, Hirst A., *Links between volunteering and employability: Research Report RR309*, London, DfES, 2001; *Youth Volunteering: Attitudes and Perceptions*, v, London, 2008; Gay P., 'Getting into work: Volunteering for employability in Voluntary Action 1 (1) pp 55-67, 1998; Ockenden N. et al, *Volunteering Works*, London, IVR, 2007.

²⁹ v, 2008, op cit; Timebank, *Employer Attitude Survey*, Continental Research for Timebank, 2004.

³⁰ Gay P. and Hatch S., *Voluntary Work and Unemployment*, Policy Studies Institute, 1983; Gay P., 1998, op cit; Hirst, A., 2001, op cit.

³¹ Macdonald J., 'Labours of Love: Voluntary Working in a Depressed Local Economy' in *Journal of Social Policy* 25 (1), pp 19-38, 1996; Stopforth S., 'The effects of volunteering on refugees' prospects of getting paid work' in *Voluntary Action* 4 (1), pp.11-27, 2001; Jones A., *Review of Gap Year Provision*, London, Department for Education and Skills Research Report 555, 2004.

³² Rochester C., *A Gateway to Work: The role of Volunteer Centres in supporting the link between volunteering and employability*, London IVR, 2009.

³³ Jastrzab J. et al, *Serving Country and Community: A Longitudinal Study of Service in Americorps*, Abt Associates Inc., 2004.

³⁴ Hirst A., 2001, op cit.

³⁵ Jastrzab J. et al, 2004, op cit.

³⁶ v, 2008, op cit.

³⁷ Rochester C., 2009, op cit.

³⁸ IVR, 2009; Gay P., 1998, op cit.; Hirst A., 2001, op cit.; Davis Smith J., *The 1997 National Survey of Volunteering*, London, National Centre for Volunteering, 1998.

4 VOLUNTEERING AT THE GRASSROOTS LEVEL

4.1 SIZE AND SCOPE

As well as volunteering in larger, more formalised organisations, a huge amount of activity occurs within smaller, more informal groups, many of which will be led and staffed entirely by volunteers. There is a lack of clarity around definitions of volunteer-led groups³⁹ which have often been described as ambiguous in character⁴⁰. They have, however, frequently been described as being grassroots or community-based⁴¹. In this context, they may often have been established to fulfil a local need⁴², such as the achievement of a specific objective⁴³. It is also possible, however, that such groups could have been set up for personal and instrumental reasons, with member associations often aiming to secure member benefits⁴⁴.

There is no accurate figure of the number of volunteer-led groups in existence, although broad estimates suggest that there are a great many. There could be as many as 600,000 to 900,000 'micro social enterprises' in the UK⁴⁵, which meet the characteristics of volunteer-led

groups, and in the US, research suggested that the number of grassroots organisations outnumber tax-registered paid-staff non-profit organisations, which are broadly equivalent to organisations with UK charitable status, by a factor of ten to one⁴⁶.

As a result of the difficulty in identifying and counting these groups, researchers have frequently tended to ignore grassroots organisations and focus instead on larger organisations that are more immediately obvious⁴⁷. Relatively little is known about volunteering within volunteer-led groups. Many of these groups are effectively invisible to government and policy makers⁴⁸, often not being members of support networks or being isolated from the volunteering infrastructure⁴⁹.

4.2 CHALLENGES AT THE GRASSROOTS LEVEL

Comparatively little research is available on the challenges and issues faced by these groups. The Institute for Volunteering Research has, however, carried out several pieces of work with smaller organisations. This includes a recent survey of volunteer management across the sec-

³⁹ Zimmeck M., *The right stuff: new ways of thinking about managing volunteers*, London, IVR, 2001; MacGillivray A., Conaty P. and Wadhams C., *Low flying heroes, micro-social enterprise below the radar screen*, London, New Economics Foundation, 2001.

⁴⁰ Rochester C., 'One size does not fit all: four models of volunteer management', in *Voluntary Action* 1(2) pp.7-20, 1999.

⁴¹ Zimmeck M., 2001, op cit.; Holland L., 'Diversity and connections in community gardens: a contribution to local sustainability' in *Local Environment* 9 (3), pp.285-305, 2004; Berkes F., 'Rethinking community-based conservation' in *Conservation Biology* 18 (3), 2004.

⁴² Jochum V., Pratten B. and Wilding K., *Civil Renewal and Active Citizenship: a Guide to the Debate*, 2005, [Online] www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/asp/uploads/uploadedfiles/1/637/civilrenewalactivecitizenship.pdf

⁴³ Thake S., *Community assets: the benefits and costs of community*, 2006; The Commission on the Future of Volunteering, *Manifesto for Change*, London, The Commission on the Future of Volunteering, 2008.

⁴⁴ Rochester C., 1999, op cit.

⁴⁵ MacGillivray A. et al, 2001, op cit.

⁴⁶ Smith D.H., 'The rest of the nonprofit sector: grassroots associations as the dark matter ignored in prevailing 'flat earth' maps of the sector' in *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly* 26, pp. 114-131, 1997.

⁴⁷ Smith D., 1997, *ibid*.

⁴⁸ MacGillivray A. et al, 2001, op cit.

⁴⁹ Thake S., 2006, op cit.; Dalgleish J., *The opportunities for environmental volunteering to deliver Scottish Executive policies: a discussion paper*, Stirling, BTCV Scotland, 2006.

tor, which included those groups with an annual income of less than 10,000 pounds⁵⁰; a study of leadership within six volunteer-led groups⁵¹; research carried out with the Institute for Voluntary Action Research on the challenges of governance within small organisations⁵²; and a study of volunteering in community-based organisations⁵³.

The structure and functioning of these groups can make them more vulnerable than many larger organisations. They are frequently dependent on a small core of key people who often perform a wide variety of different roles. While these individuals commonly do not view their time commitment negatively, they can nonetheless often be over-burdened or can feel that they are unable to stand-down due to no one being able to take their place⁵⁴. This is often in the context of short-term and limited funding.

Small groups, especially those with low incomes and few or no paid members of staff, can often exist in isolation from other organisations or infrastructure bodies⁵⁵. This can be because they may not feel the

need for support or that they are simply unaware of its availability. It does also raise question about the relevance of volunteer management standards (e.g. the National Occupational Standards) to small, volunteer-led groups and the need for local and national infrastructure to make themselves more accessible to smaller groups and to raise awareness of their services.

These studies, and others, have found the system of volunteer management in such groups to be unique. It may appear somewhat 'chaotic' if viewed through the lens of larger, more formalised organisations, but the systems of mutual and peer support, sharing tasks between different members, and maintaining flexibility allows the groups to function in an effective way which suits their volunteers. Such distinctive features have frequently been cited as the key to the success of these groups, again raising questions about the appropriateness of imposing more formalised structures of volunteer management on smaller organisations⁵⁶.

⁵⁰ Brewis G. et al, 2010, op cit.

⁵¹ Ockenden N. and Hutin M., *Volunteering to Lead: a study of leadership within volunteer-led groups*, London, IVR, 2008.

⁵² Hutchison R. with Buckley E., Moran R. and Ockenden N., *The governance of small organisations*, London, The Institute for Voluntary Action Research and the Institute for Volunteering Research, 2009.

⁵³ Hutchison R. and Ockenden N., *The impact of public policy on volunteering in community-based organisations*, London, Institute for Volunteering Research, 2008.

⁵⁴ Hutchison R. et al, 2009, op cit.; Ockenden N. and Hutin M., 2008, op cit.

⁵⁵ Hutchison R. and Ockenden N., 2008, op cit.; Brewis G. et al, 2010, op cit.

⁵⁶ Ockenden N. and Hutin M., 2008, op cit.

Support Bodies

1 THE DEVELOPMENT OF VOLUNTEERING INFRASTRUCTURE

The infrastructure to support volunteering in the UK dates back to developments in the 1960s and 1970s. The Aves Commission on the Role of the Volunteer in the Social Services, which reported in 1969, recommended the establishment of a new national centre for volunteering⁵⁷. Following a number of other commissions on volunteering in the 1960s, the Conservative government of Edward Heath (1970-1974) was committed to extending state support for voluntary action. A Voluntary Services Unit was formed in the Home Office and Lord Windlesham, Minister of State at the Home Office, was given responsibility for 'co-ordinating the Government's interests in the field of voluntary social services'. Supported by both by government and charitable grants, the work of the new Volunteer Centre started in 1973. The Aves Commission also supported the work of local volunteer bureaux – or Volunteer Centres as they are known today – believing that there was a need for a network of such centres to cover the whole country⁵⁸. With such encouragement the local network experienced rapid growth, from just 23 in 1969 to 110 in 1975 and 180 by the late 1970s⁵⁹.

1.2 STRUCTURE AND EXTENT

The national volunteering infrastructure across the UK is devolved within each country. In Scotland it is provided by Volunteer Development Scotland (www.vds.org.uk), in Northern Ireland by Volunteer Now

(www.volunteernow.org.uk) and in Wales by Wales Council for Voluntary Action (www.wcva.org.uk). The national volunteer development agency for England is Volunteering England (VE) (www.volunteering.org.uk). VE represents all forms of volunteering and its mission is to support an increase in the quality, quantity, impact and accessibility of volunteering throughout England.

2 VOLUNTEER CENTRES

At a local level the generic volunteering infrastructure is primarily provided by a network of 360 Volunteer Centres throughout the country. Many Volunteer Centres are entirely independent organisations, although two-thirds are hosted by other organisations, most commonly by other local infrastructure organisations (Councils for Voluntary Services).

In 2008-09, Volunteer Centres in England reported an average income of 49,000 pounds⁶⁰. Local Government is by far the largest funder, accounting for 37 % of their total funding (plus 9 % which largely comes indirectly from local government through Local Strategic Partnerships and Local Area Agreements).

2.1 THE ACTIVITIES OF VOLUNTEER CENTRES

Volunteer Centres in England deliver six core functions, which are:

⁵⁷ Aves, 1969, op cit.

⁵⁸ Aves, 1969, op cit.

⁵⁹ Mocroft I., 'Volunteers through volunteer bureaux' in *Volunteers: Patterns, Meanings and Motivations*, edited by Hatch S., Berkhamsted, Volunteer Centre, 14-23, 1983.

⁶⁰ Hill M., *Volunteering England Volunteer Development Agency Annual Membership Return 2007/08*, London, IVR, 2009.

1. brokerage;
2. marketing volunteering;
3. good practice development;
4. development of volunteering opportunities;
5. policy response and campaigning; and
6. strategic development of volunteering.

Although the work of Volunteer Centres is organised around the six core functions, brokerage remains the primary role of many and this can be where they have the largest impact. In particular, Volunteer Centres are particularly successful at engaging groups who are traditionally less likely to volunteer. In 2008-09, 29 % of enquires about volunteering to Volunteer Centres came from minority ethnic groups (approximately 12 % of the English population are from minority ethnic groups); 6 % of enquiries came from disabled groups and 44 % came from those who are 'non-employed and not seeking work' or 'unable to work'⁶¹.

All research exploring Volunteer Centres stresses the marked varia-

tion across the network. This can be in terms of funding levels and sources, geographic coverage, relative engagement with all six core functions⁶², the support provided to volunteers⁶³ and the extent of embrace of modernisation agendas⁶⁴. This variety makes generalisation difficult, however, when the network is taken as a whole the picture painted by the existing literature is one of perpetual flux and under-resourcing⁶⁵. Current research also suggests a disconcerting paradox for the network. It needs to expand and diversify its activities in order to expand and diversify its funding sources, yet it needs to expand and diversify its funding in order to resource the expansion and diversification of its activities⁶⁶.

These structural challenges are being exacerbated by the current financial and economic climate in the UK. The recession of 2008-09 and the anticipated 'aftershock' in the form of dramatic cuts in public expenditure between 2011 and 2014 is expected to place increased financial pressure on the national network of Volunteer Centres.

⁶¹ Hill M., *Volunteering England Annual Return for Volunteer Centres 2008/09*, London, IVR, 2010.

⁶² Hill M., 2009, *ibid*.

⁶³ Gaskin K., *Taking steps: The role of Volunteer Centres in Leicestershire in supporting the volunteer journey*, London, IVR, 2009.

⁶⁴ Coombs S., *The Modernisation Agenda: Volunteer Development Agencies and ChangeUp*, London, IVR, 2007.

⁶⁵ Rochester C. et al, *Developing the Tools for Building On Success: Final Report*, London, Roehampton University for Volunteering England, Volunteering England, 2008.

⁶⁶ Rochester, C. et al, 2008, *ibid*.

Development Policies

1 CHALLENGES FOR VOLUNTEERING

VOLUNTEERING ACROSS EUROPE

1.1 RELATIONS BETWEEN VOLUNTEERING AND THE TRADE UNIONS

Tensions between paid staff and volunteers have been a relatively small, but recurring issue in the UK, particularly in heavily unionised sectors such as the health service or the police. In particular circumstances, local trade union branches have opposed the involvement of volunteers in parts of the public sector.

Some local authorities have responded to government funding cuts by seeking to increase the number of volunteers involved in some areas of service delivery, at the expense of paid staff. These moves have proved particularly controversial in some areas, such as Southampton, where the city council has proposed reducing the numbers of librarians employed and replacing them with volunteers. This has led to a number of strikes by library staff.

To pre-empt these difficulties, the UK volunteering bodies have been actively seeking to build stronger and more positive relationships with trade unions. Volunteering England launched a national agreement with the Trades Unions Congress (TUC) in December 2009⁶⁷. Wales Council for Voluntary Action is currently working with the Welsh TUC to agree a similar concordat and Volunteer Now and Volunteering Ireland are discussing the possibility of making a joint approach to the Irish Congress of Trade Unions.

1.2 MOVES TOWARDS MORE FORMALLY INCENTIVISED VOLUNTEERING

One trend in government policy affecting volunteering that has been identified over the last two years⁶⁸ is a move towards offering stronger formal incentives to volunteering. Such incentives have been an element of several recent policy changes.

⁶⁷ A *Charter for Strengthening Relations Between Paid Staff and Volunteers*, available from www.volunteering.org.uk/WhatWeDo/Policy/A+Charter+for+Strengthening+Relations+Between+Paid+Staff+and+Volunteers.htm

⁶⁸ Strickland A., "Latest Developments in Volunteering and Citizenship", in *Voluntary Sector Review*, London, 2010.

The Borders, Immigration and Citizenship Act 2009 included provision for migrants who volunteer for a minimum number of hours to be granted British citizenship two years earlier than would otherwise be available to them. Significant financial benefits, such as much reduced university fees for dependants would have made this a potentially very significant incentive for volunteering. However, the new government in 2010 announced it would not go ahead with this policy.

In local government, Manchester City Council has announced plans for volunteers, along with former armed forces personnel, to be given priority in the allocation of social housing. A number of other public authorities have instigated similar schemes, marking the first time that Government in the UK has directly rewarded those who give their time as volunteers by giving preferential access to government-led services.

1.3 VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT

The case for better co-ordination and support of volunteers has been made repeatedly since at least the Aves Commission report of 1969. The Commission on the Future of Volunteering (2008) called for greater investment in volunteer management and recent efforts have been made to refocus the attention of the volunteering sector and policy makers on volunteer support and management.

Since 1997 there have been important improvements in the organisation of volunteering programmes. In the 1997 National Survey of Volunteering 71 % of volunteers felt that their volunteering could be better organised⁶⁹. This figure was down to 31 % in the 2007 *Helping Out* survey⁷⁰. A new survey of volunteer management skills⁷¹ found a

high incidence of good practice of volunteer management across organisations of all sizes in the voluntary sector. This new survey builds on IVR's earlier study of volunteer management capacity⁷² to explore the skills and development needs of people who manage volunteers.

Key areas for improvement remain, particularly around training and learning both for volunteers and those who manage them. For instance, in 2007 four out of every five volunteers (79 %) did not receive any training in their volunteer role, although 25 % of regular volunteers had received training compared to just 10 % of occasional volunteers (Low et al, 2007). 42 % of people who manage volunteers have not received any training or learning that would help in their work with volunteers⁷³. Moreover, cases of bad management, poor governance, bullying and improper behaviour have been highlighted by the volunteer Rights Enquiry⁷⁴.

Today, volunteer management remains under valued and under funded. In most volunteer-involving organisations it is likely to be a part-time function of a more general manager⁷⁵. Research suggests that involving volunteers as coordinators of other volunteers is a growing trend and that even quite large organisations often involve volunteers as volunteer managers: 13% of people who manage volunteers in organisations with more than 50 staff are unpaid⁷⁶.

2 PLANS FOR A 'BIG SOCIETY'

The UK general election in 2010 resulted in the formation of a Coalition Government between the Conservative party and the Liberal Democrat party. This replaces the Labour administration led by Tony Blair

⁶⁹ Davis Smith et al, 1998, op cit.

⁷⁰ Low N. et al, 2007, op cit.

⁷¹ Brewis G., Hill M., and Stevens D., *Valuing Volunteer Management Skills*, London, Institute for Volunteering Research and Skills Third Sector, 2010.

⁷² Machin J. and Ellis Paine A., *Management Matters: A national survey of volunteering management capacity*, London, Institute for Volunteering Research, 2008.

⁷³ Brewis G. et al, 2010, op cit.

⁷⁴ Volunteering England, *Volunteer rights enquiry. Interim report*, London, Volunteering England, 2010.

⁷⁵ Brewis G. et al, 2010, op cit.; Machin J. and Ellis Paine A., 2008, op cit.

⁷⁶ Brewis G. et al, 2010, ibid.

and then Gordon Brown. The Conservative party gained the most seats in Parliament but decided to work with the Liberal Democrats to gain the overall majority required to form a stable Government. The two parties have published a coalition agreement which set out a number of proposals to promote social action and volunteering. The main strand of policy is characterised by a Conservative party proposal to build what the new Prime Minister has called a 'Big Society'.

The Government is looking to establish a society with much higher levels of personal and social responsibility, where citizens are less reliant on the state. In rolling back the remit of the state, the vision is for a vibrant civil society in which every adult plays an active part. The methods for stimulating this action include: transferring power to communities, neighbourhoods and individuals, making government data available to the public to increase transparency, and providing more finance for community groups. It is clear that volunteering will be crucial in the Government's plans, as citizens are actively encouraged to get involved in their communities.

To encourage social action the Government has announced plans to train 5,000 community organisers to support the creation of neighbourhood groups across the UK, especially in the most deprived areas. This draws on the American community organising tradition pioneered by Saul Alinsky. It is proposed that neighbourhood groups will be given the ability to start new schools, run local amenities such as parks and libraries and make local planning decisions.

The new government is already pressing ahead in creating a 'National Citizen Service'. This voluntary scheme for 16 year olds will involve four to six weeks of full-time team activities and service, followed by

ongoing involvement in community projects over several months.

Plans have also been announced for the launch of a national 'Big Society Day' to encourage people to get involved in their community. Government has also announced its intention to transform the civil service into a 'civic service' by increasing volunteering and community activity by government officials.

As part of the Government's agenda to reform public services, it plans to encourage social enterprises, charities and voluntary groups to play a more substantial role in delivering public services. Funds from dormant bank accounts will be used to establish a 'Big Society Bank', which will provide new finance for charitable organisations, as Government moves towards paying organisations depending on the results they achieve, rather than paying up-front.

Changes to local government policy have made it unclear to what extent central government will be able to ensure volunteering is supported locally by councils. A key element of the new government policy platform is a strong emphasis on localism, with more autonomy for local authorities over their budgets. This is being matched by the scrapping of performance indicators and the abolition of the national Audit Commission which monitored local government in England.

National Performance Indicators were a way for the previous Government to monitor local authorities' progress in supporting volunteering. Without these measurements it is unclear what means central government will have at its disposal to encourage local government to contribute to national priorities. There will undoubtedly be regional variations as local authorities take varying approaches to volunteering.

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www.futurebuilders-england.org.uk

[English]

Institute for Volunteering Research (IVR) Evidence Bank

The Evidence Bank is home to all of IVR's publicly available research. It is an easy-to-use searchable database of IVR's research, reports, bulletins, publications and journal articles. It currently contains over 200 entries and is updated on an ongoing basis.

www.ivr.org.uk/evidence-bank

[English]

Volunteer Development Scotland

Scotland's Centre for Excellence in volunteering, leading the way in informing and modernising approaches to volunteering policy, enhancing practice and improving the quality of the volunteering experience for the people of Scotland.

www.vds.org.uk

[English]

Volunteering England (VE)

An independent charity and membership organisation, committed to supporting, enabling and celebrating volunteering in all its diversity.

www.volunteering.org.uk

[English]

Volunteering England Good Practice Bank

The Good Practice Bank aims to improve information sharing and reduce duplication within the volunteering sector.

www.volunteering.org.uk/managingvolunteers/goodpracticebank

[English]

Volunteer Now

A regional to local organisation that will work to promote, enhance and support volunteering across Northern Ireland.

www.volunteernow.org.uk

[English]

Wales Council for Voluntary Action

The voice of the voluntary sector in Wales, representing and campaigning for voluntary organisations, volunteers and communities.

www.wcva.org.uk

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For publications, initiatives and collaborations please contact:

SPES - Centro di Servizio per il Volontariato del Lazio

Via Liberiana, 17

00185 Rome - Italy

Tel.: +39.06.44702178

Fax: +39.06.45422576

E-mail: europa@spes.lazio.it

Website: www.volontariato.lazio.it