



Report by Volunteering Matters

1. SHORT INTRODUCTION ABOUT THE ROLE AND SITUATION OF VOLUNTEERING IN THE UK

Legal framework

There is no specific legal framework for volunteering in the UK. However, there is the Compact Agreement, which is an agreement between government and the voluntary and community sector. It sets out key principles and establishes a way of working that improves their relationship for mutual advantage. It was made in November 1998, and renewed in 2010. It considers areas such as involvement in policy design and consultation, funding arrangements (including grants and contracts), promoting equality, ensuring better involvement in delivering services, and strengthening independence. The Compact agreement plays a key role in cross sector working and ensuring that organisations are better able to influence and deliver services and policies which will have the most positive impact within their community.

Definition of volunteering

There is no official definition of volunteering in the UK. However, we find the definition given by NCVO to be helpful: “any activity that involves spending time, unpaid, doing something that aims to benefit the environment or someone (individuals or groups) other than, or in addition to, close relatives. Central to this definition is the fact that volunteering must be a choice freely made by each individual”.

Trends in volunteer engagement: overview

In August 2012-April 2013, 29% of adults in England said that they had formally volunteered at least once a month in the previous year, and 44% said that they had volunteered at least once in that year, based on data from the Community Life Survey. This equates to an estimate of 12.7 million people volunteering in England once a month, and 19.2 million once a year. If the survey results are applied to the wider UK population as a whole, this would produce an estimate of 15.2 million people volunteering at least once a month in the UK, and 23.1 million volunteering at least once a year.

Rates of formal volunteering peaked in 2005, when 44% of respondents to the annual Citizenship Survey reported that they had volunteered in the past year. This rate declined slowly to 39% by 2010/11. However, the most recent statistics available show a return to the peak level figures, and suggest that the decline may have been halted. Data from future years should tell us whether or not this represents a longer-term trend of increasing rates of volunteering. The Office for National Statistics estimates that the equivalent economic contribution of this volunteering in 2012 was £24 billion – equivalent to 1.5% of GDP.

Trends in volunteer engagement: demographic groups

People of all ages volunteer; despite some variation in the frequency and levels of volunteering across age ranges, between around a quarter (24%) and a third (33%) of people in each age range report volunteering at least once a month (with those aged 65-74 the most likely to volunteer this frequently). The numbers volunteering less frequently, at least once in the last year, are understandably higher, with the proportion rising to between 40-50% of people across most age ranges, except among those aged 75 and over where the proportion drops to around a third (34%).



Amongst younger respondents to the Community Life Survey, there have been a number of changes over time. In common with the trend across all age groups, the most recent data show an increase in volunteering among the 16-25 age group (from 23% in 2010/11 to 28% in 2011/12), after several years of stability.

To explore volunteering in under-16s, other data is available. In the Understanding Society survey pane of 4760 young people aged 10-15 in 2010 and 2011, 52% volunteered at least once per year, of which 19% did so at least once per month or more and 6% at least once per week.

The highest rates of volunteering (those who said that they had volunteered at least once in the previous year) were found in the Southern regions of England (49% in the South East and 50% in the South West). Most regions followed the national picture of an increase in volunteering between 2010/11 and 2012/13, with the largest increases in Yorkshire and The Humber, London, and the East Midlands.

There have also been shifts in volunteering rates by economic status. 38% of people in employment reported volunteering at least once in the last year (up from 42% in 2010/11), along with 40% of those who were economically inactive (defined as those who are not immediately available for work; up from 34%). However among the unemployed, volunteering dropped to 33% (38%).

Trends in volunteer engagement: types of activities and projects

People volunteer in an enormous variety of projects and activities. For some it offers the chance to give something back to the community or make a difference to the people around them. For others it provides an opportunity to develop new skills or build on existing experience and knowledge. There is a diverse range of volunteering opportunities available and of people who give their time.

People can volunteer in: hospitals and care centres, community organisations, social enterprises, local parks and natural reserves, sports and leisure centres, child care centres, family homes, community centres, voluntary organisations, media organisations (local newspapers, radio stations etc), with environmental groups that clean streets, rivers etc, religious organisations, cultural initiatives, organisations and festivals etc.

For some, volunteering can be a route to employment, or a chance to try something new which may lead to a career change. From this perspective, volunteering can be a way of moving into the labour market by being a volunteer with a company or organisation.

Trends in volunteer engagement: duration

Volunteering in the UK is very diverse. Some people volunteer 2 or 3 hours every week or month, while others volunteer several hours a month. Many company employees volunteer once or a few times a year, either through employee volunteering schemes or local or national volunteering days. Volunteering can involve formal selection processes of volunteers or be informal and based on family or neighbourly relations. There are also full time volunteers, especially among the young population, people who volunteer from a few weeks or months to a year.

Young people are more likely to volunteer if their parents also volunteer. Other factors associated with likelihood of volunteering are attendance at extracurricular religious classes, and 'cultural capital' (reflecting a range of cultural activities, such as attending cultural and social events, visiting museums, and discussing literature). Gender is also a factor, with girls



more likely to volunteer, as is ethnicity: young people are more likely to volunteer if they are a member of an ethnic minority group in the UK (Bennet and Parameshwaran, 2013).

Actors supporting volunteering

Income from individuals continues to be the biggest source of income for the voluntary sector, and rose by over £500 million between 2010/11 and 2011/12. This income comes in four forms – voluntary income (donations), fundraised income, legacies and fees for services. The rise was driven by individuals paying for services from charity and fundraising, which together accounted for four-fifths of the rise.

55% of people donated to charitable causes in a typical month in 2011/12, according to data from the UK Giving survey. Women are more likely to donate than men, and people over 45 are more likely to donate than younger people. The Million Pound Donors Report suggests the total value of donations worth more than £1 million was £1.35 billion in 2011/12.

By the final quarter of 2012, 524,000 women and 275,000 men were employed in the voluntary sector, meaning that just under two-thirds (66%) of the voluntary sector workforce were women.

Voluntary sector employees are on average slightly older than those in the private and public sectors. Almost four in ten (37%) of paid staff working in the voluntary sector are aged fifty and over, compared to around a third (34%) of the public sector and just less than three tenths (29%) of the private sector workforce. Fewer than one in ten (8%) voluntary sector employees are from black and minority ethnic groups. A fifth (20%) of the voluntary sector workforce has a disability.

In addition to voluntary organisations, local governments tend to be very supportive of volunteering.

Sources of funding

Voluntary organisations in the UK raise funds from a variety of sources. These can be:

- Individual donations (general public)
- Statutory sources: Government and its agencies in the UK, the European Union and international governments (these can include funding grants, public sector fees and payments for contracted services)
- National lottery distributors
- Voluntary sector (trusts and grant-making foundations)
- Private sector (corporate donations, corporate sponsorship, sub-contracting, research and other services provided under contract)
- Proceeds generated from investments

Income from government totalled £13.7 billion in 2011/12. This includes resources from central and devolved administrations in the UK; local government, international bodies; and overseas governments. Total income from government has increased by 45% in real terms from £9.4 billion in 2000/01. However, it has fallen by £1.3 billion in real terms since 2010/11 and has fallen in cash terms from the previous year for the first time since 2000/01.

The proportion of people donating to charitable causes in a typical month in the UK has decreased over the last year, from 58% to 55%, equivalent to 28.4 million adults. The 58% level of giving in 2010/11 was the joint highest since 2004/05. Giving in 2011/12 seems to have decreased back to a more typical level; apart from the dip in 2008/09, the proportion giving was stable at 56% between 2006/07 and 2009/10.

The percentage of donors giving £100 or more has fallen from 7% in 2010/11 to 6% in 2011/12. This small drop has had a significant impact on the total amount donated by the



population because higher donations generate a large proportion of the amount donated. In 2010/11, donors giving £100 or more accounted for 45% of total donations, but this dropped to 40% in 2011/12.

However, according to the latest Million Pound Donors report, the total value of charitable donations worth £1 million or more rose 9% to £1.35 billion in 2012 from £1.24 billion in 2010/11.

For the first time, 2012 saw higher education replace charitable trusts and foundations as the most popular destination for million pound donations, accounting for 42% of the total value of all million pound donations made in that year.

Legacies can be defined as “an amount of money or property left to someone in a will”. The voluntary sector received £2.0 billion in legacy income in 2011/12, 5.0% of total income. Overall, just 9,525 organisations (6.7%) received legacy income in 2011/12. Recipients received on average £207,000. Over the last decade, legacy income to the sector has fluctuated in real terms between £1.7 billion and £2.3 billion.

Gift Aid is part of a wider system of charitable tax reliefs worth £4.1 billion in 2012/13, the majority of which (£3.0 billion) was claimed by voluntary organisations, through tax repayments, national non-domestic rates, VAT and stamp duty/land tax. The remainder (£1.1 billion) was claimed by people giving to charity.

In 2012/13 64,000 organisations reclaimed Gift Aid, suggesting that over one-third (46%) of all UK voluntary organisations reclaim Gift Aid. In 2012/13 the value of Gift Aid claims (which now include covenants) amounted to £1.1 billion; the value of donations was estimated at £4.1 billion (net) and £5.2 billion (gross).

2. NATIONAL OVERVIEW OF EXISTING TRAINING PROGRAMMES FOR IMPROVING PROFESSIONALISM IN VOLUNTEERING

a) Description of existing training programmes offered by your organisation (goals of the training, themes of the working sessions, duration of the training, main results of training implemented in the past, etc.)

- For volunteers

Volunteers Supporting Families: 3-day training with one session per week. Day 1 is dedicated to introduction to Volunteering Matters, communication, role of volunteer, anti-discrimination and children's wellbeing. Day 2 focuses on boundaries, coping with conflicts, identifying and reporting abuse, confidentiality, risk and personal safety and relationship with the family. Day 3 is focused on understanding the families and their circumstances and behaviours. The training is crucial for volunteers to do the work, they cannot start working with families before the training (which is also part of the selection process). The training has resulted in a more effective selection process and well prepared volunteers.

Support for families with members with life-limiting and life threatening conditions: similar to the training described above for volunteers supporting families. The difference is that this training covers dealing with bereavement and the types of conditions a child might have, among other things. These projects are part of the volunteers supporting families project. As above, volunteers are interviewed before they are offered a place and Volunteering Matters monitors all volunteers throughout the training. In addition Volunteering Matters conducts a post-training interview to give them the



opportunity to ask outstanding questions or, if Volunteering Matters is not going to match them with a family to tell them this face to face.

For all the volunteers supporting families training, feedback from volunteers has been very positive. Approval for the trainers is very high and most volunteers think the training provides them with useful skills and knowledge to carry out their duties.

Full Time Volunteering: Volunteering Matters provides a full day's induction for volunteers within the first 3 months of their placement. This covers communication, maintaining boundaries, conflict resolution/management, confidentiality, safeguarding vulnerable persons, dealing with disclosure and disability awareness. Volunteering Matters also facilitates the volunteers' project-specific training but this is delivered by others (Occupational Therapists, existing carers, family members etc). Volunteering Matters assesses what training is needed through a project Risk Assessment when the project is developed, and ask project supervisors to complete an Induction Checklist in line with this to prove all training has been completed by the volunteer. Volunteering Matters sometimes organises 1 hour Dementia Awareness Training sessions for any volunteers who might be interested. This is run for free by Dementia Friends.

City of London Volunteering (befriending scheme): 2 hour induction for their part-time volunteers covering boundaries, communication, confidentiality, safeguarding and disability awareness.

Employee Volunteering (for reading volunteers in schools): 2.5 hour training at client's offices, covering: background to the programme; role of reading volunteer (including safeguarding); basic understanding of how children learn; practical techniques on how to support the reading partner; building confidence; next steps. The format of the training is part presentation, and part interactive with discussion and group activities. All volunteers provide 2 referees and have a DBS check. After the training they attend an introductory visit to the school before starting their placement. The training ensures all volunteers are at the same starting point, and understand their role and safeguarding issues.

- For volunteer coordinators

Volunteering Matters does not offer formal training for p_Volunteering Matters aid volunteer coordinators; training is delivered on an informal basis by Volunteering Matters managers. Unpaid volunteer coordinators are given an induction, which covers basic information about Volunteering Matters (history, values, objectives, projects). Volunteering Matters plans to develop its training for volunteer coordinators, both paid and unpaid. This training could include some of the following topics: volunteer's rights and responsibilities and what our responsibility is to them as an organization; difference between paid staff and volunteers; law and policy around volunteering to give national context; volunteer motivations; motivating and engaging volunteers; Recruiting and inducting volunteers: volunteer role design, recruiting, inducting and training; managing volunteers: support, supervision and reviewing progress; recognising and rewarding volunteering contributions; volunteers leaving the programme and exit interviews; monitoring and evaluating impact of volunteering; and solving volunteering-related problems.

b) Description of the existing training programmes/opportunities provided by other organisations or public institutions in your country (goals of the training, themes of the



working sessions, duration of the training, main results of training implemented in the past, etc. and organisations delivering these training programmes).

- For volunteers
Home Start: offers all volunteers supporting and befriending families a preparation course which volunteers have to complete before they are matched to their first family. The training offers insight into the issues facing families today. Volunteers report that the training helps to increase their confidence and knowledge.
- For volunteer coordinators
The majority of voluntary organisations (56%) provided both on-the-job and off-the job training in their organisation, however just under one-fifth (18%) provided no training at all. Over half (59%) of all voluntary sector employers that had provided training over the last year train staff of all grades, however managers are significantly more likely to receive training than other staff: 70% of voluntary organisations stated that they trained managers whilst only 17% trained elementary positions. Half of employers reported that on average they provided less than four days training per trainee per year, and only 5% provide more than 20 days per year
Volunteer Solutions provides material and methodologies for organisations or groups that want to train volunteers and staff. The offer material on recruiting volunteers, motivating and retaining volunteers, supervising volunteers etc.

3. PLEASE IDENTIFY ANY CONCRETE OPPORTUNITIES FOR FUTURE IMPLEMENTATION AND DISSEMINATION OF THE FINAL RESULTS OF OUR PROJECT, IN YOUR NATIONAL CONTEXT

Volunteering Matters is a member of NNVA (Network of National Volunteer-Involving Agencies). NNVA has over 70 member organisations mobilising more than 2 million volunteers. Some of the biggest voluntary organisations in the UK are members of NNVA. Members meet every six weeks and collaborate online to influence governmental policy and effect positive changes in the volunteering sector. Volunteering Matters will implement and disseminate the final results of the project through NNVA, by sharing them with the members. Volunteering Matters will also disseminate results with its partners in the UK.

4. Other observations/final comments

Sources/further information

- NCVO Civil Society Almanac: <http://data.ncvo.org.uk/>