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NATIONAL REPORT – UNITED KINGDOM

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1 GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT VOLUNTEERING IN THE UNITED KINGDOM

This country report is an attempt to present an overview of volunteering in the United Kingdom (UK), in doing so there are a number of points to highlight from the offset. Volunteering is devolved in the UK, with England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales responsible for their own policies.

This report is a reflection of the present situation and is based on current practice and the outcomes of a literature review and series of in-depth interviews. As such, this report attempts to draw on and synthesize the vast amount of information available in a way that is representative and proportionate across the devolved administrations, though in parts the focus is on England or on the UK as a whole. When reading this report it should not be assumed that policies and practices relating to volunteering are consistent across England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales.

1.1 History and contextual background

Kendall and Knapp (1996) report how the history of the voluntary sector in the UK is one of gradual secularisation and formalisation of voluntary action, and of changing roles in relation to the State. Howlett (2008) provides a helpful discussion on how government interest in volunteering has developed and how volunteering and volunteers became deeply involved in many aspects of the welfare state. Here, Howlett takes World War II as a starting point to reflect on the increasing role of the State in influencing, developing and controlling volunteering in the UK. Howlett begins his discussion with the advent of a comprehensive welfare state (Beveridge Report) that assumed the need for charity and volunteering to be removed. However, Beveridge recognised voluntary action was an important component of a healthy democracy and also that voluntary action encompasses much more than the services that were nationalised into the National Health Service and the wider welfare state.

During the 1960's the number of people volunteering and the number of voluntary organisations increased as disillusionment with public services grew and opportunities for people to participate in decision making and in activities of local communities diminished.

The need to safeguard volunteering and voluntary organisations within the social services and to create an agency to support volunteering (which later became Volunteering England) was highlighted in the influential Aves Report – 'The Voluntary Worker in the Social Services' (1969). Further recommendations led to the development of an infrastructure for volunteering which represented the creation of the Voluntary Services Unit within the Home Office in addition to 23 volunteer bureaux.

In the years that followed volunteering was also considered as a way to positively engage young people with society, though it also raised questions about using volunteering as a form of social control (see Sheard, 1986; Howlett, 2008).

Following a change of government in 1979, Conservative Policy brought with it a contract culture designed to encourage organisations to deliver services on behalf of the state. As Howlett (2008) points out, as part of the contract culture thinking, it was assumed volunteering helped to provide a cheaper alternative to state provision. It was also assumed that volunteering could and should be used as a way to encourage civic engagement and social participation amongst young people and to keep the unemployed active where voluntary organisations were perceived to be delivery agents for services and sites of participation.

When the Labour government was elected in 1997, interest in volunteering as a way of actively engaging young people in their communities was reinforced. Since labour came into power there has been a growing interest across the UK in the possibilities of public policy intervention in youth volunteering and to stimulate civil renewal (see also Stanley 2004). Here, the UK most notably focussed its efforts on the creation of two programmes – the Millennium Volunteers programme (introduced with a focus not only on young people but older people and minority ethnic communities) and the Young Volunteer Challenge. These are discussed in more detail below.

The year 2004 was a significantly important year for volunteering in the UK. To accommodate the increasing numbers of people volunteering, an organisation called TimeBank was created to support the volunteering infrastructure. The creation of TimeBank at the time marked a significant and somewhat controversial decision. As Howlett (2008) points out, hard-pressed volunteer centres were of the view TimeBank was allocated funds to do essentially what volunteer centres did.

Shortly after Volunteering England came into existence, *Building on Success* was published in 2004 and the impetus to develop volunteer centres grew. In 2004, the government also introduced the ChangeUp programme that was directed at capacity building infrastructure organisations and set out a vision for the voluntary and community sector. It is reported that by 2004 there were 324 volunteer centres in operation.

As political interest grew in the high numbers of young people not actively engaged in their communities or in education, training or employment, the Russell Commission was established in May 2004 by the Home Secretary and the Chancellor of the Exchequer to develop a new national framework for youth action and engagement.

On 16 March 2005 the Commission published the national framework detailing its recommendations. It was anticipated the framework would deliver the following benefits:

- Young people would develop their skills and contribute in an active way to their local communities;

- The capacity of communities and of voluntary organisations will be enhanced; and

- Society at large will be more cohesive, and through skills development the UK's competitive advantage would increase.

The framework was applicable across the United Kingdom however took account of volunteering being a devolved issue. This meant final decisions on its implementation were taken by the respective administrations of Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. It is important to note that the Russell Commission was not implemented in Northern Ireland.

As interest in volunteering grew, then Chancellor Gordon Brown also declared in 2004 that 2005 would be 'The Year of the Volunteer'. The vision for the Year was to create awareness of, increase the opportunities for, and encourage more people to get involved in volunteering. As volunteering is the responsibility of each of the devolved administrations across the UK, each administration took responsibility for supporting the Year in their own countries.

The Home Office along with CSV, Volunteering England and voluntary sector organisations worked together to create a dynamic year of volunteering opportunities. In 2008, the Commission for the Future of Volunteering which was the body set up to provide a legacy after the 2005 Year of the Volunteer, published its report (The Commission for the Future of Volunteering - Manifesto for Change) in 2008. The government accepted the majority of the Commission's recommendations and provided £6 million new funding.

Within the current policy discourse, volunteering remains deeply embedded within the UK's social policy agenda and has been seen as a key element of strategies to promote social participation and increase individual and collective citizenship, especially among young people (Social Exclusion Unit, 2003). As such, youth volunteering has gained prominence as a policy mechanism for addressing concerns about young people's individual and collective citizenship. Policy initiatives and programmes to support young volunteering are discussed in detail below.

In summary, building on a long history of voluntary action within the UK, it is noted many of the government's policies have influenced, encouraged and enabled volunteering. In turn, it is noted volunteering has had a positive impact on a wide range of government policies and agendas, and throughout society.

The UK is currently in preparation for the European Year of Volunteering 2011. Furthermore, with the impending London Olympics of 2012, one of the five legacy commitment areas is to inspire a new generation of young people to take part in local volunteering, cultural and physical activity. It is anticipated that London 2012 will depend on up to 70,000 volunteers (during games time) plus an additional 30,000 volunteers for the Paralympics carrying out various roles in the fields of sport, medical, spectator services, technology, press operations, transport and accreditation.

To date over 250,000 individuals have registered to volunteer for the 2012 Olympics – 70,000 will volunteer during games time in London and others will volunteer in different locations across the UK – particularly in host cities such as Birmingham, Glasgow, Newcastle, Weymouth, Manchester, Cardiff and Glasgow.

The London Olympics has already generated significant interest in volunteering and is also being used as a catalyst to inspire the whole of the UK to be a part of the Games and ensure as wide a reach as possible through encouraging individuals and organisations to establish or participating in projects as part of the Inspire Programme[1].

1.2   Definitions

There is no statutory definition for volunteering in the UK, however there is a definition of volunteers in the 1997 Police Act '*it is "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'*.

More recently the Volunteering Compact on Relations between Government and the Voluntary and Community Sector in England[2] Code of Good Practice, defines volunteering as 'an activity that involves spending time, unpaid, doing something that aims to benefit the environment or individuals or groups other than (or addition to) close relatives' (Home Office, 2005, p.4).

Volunteering England define volunteering as,

'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'.

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[1] More information on the Inspire Programme can be accessed from http://www.london2012.com/get-involved/inspire-programme/index.php

2 The Compact is the agreement between the government and the voluntary and community sector made in 1998. It is designed to improve their relationship for mutual advantage. There are commitments by both sides. It includes principles such as recognising groups are independent and have the right to campaign. The national Compact's principles have been elaborated in Codes of Practice on Funding, Consultation, Volunteering, Community Groups and Black and Minority Ethnic Community Groups.

Central to this definition is the fact that volunteering must be a choice freely made by each individual. This can include formal activity undertaken through public, private and voluntary organisations as well as informal community participation. This definition is widely used across England and is reinforced in the Compact.

Volunteer Development Scotland defines volunteering as:

'The giving of time and energy for the benefit of individuals, groups, communities, or the environment. It is undertaken by choice, and is the largest single means by which individuals engage actively with their communities. It is intrinsically linked to civic engagement, social justice, lifelong learning, and community regeneration.'

The definition of volunteering used by the Welsh Assembly Government in the Voluntary Sector Scheme is:

'Volunteering is an important expression of citizenship and is an essential component of democracy. It is the commitment of time and energy for the benefit of society and the community and can take many forms. It is undertaken freely and by choice, without concern for financial gain.'

As set out in the June 2009 consultation of a Volunteering Strategy for Northern Ireland, the definition of volunteering referred to in the consultation document is:

"The commitment of time and energy, for the benefit of society and the community, the environment or individuals outside (or in addition to) one's immediate family. It is undertaken freely and by choice, without concern for financial gain."

1.3 Number and profile of volunteers

Over the past decade or so, a number of surveys have been carried out to collect statistics on the number and profile of volunteers and volunteering more generally across the UK – some examples from the UK are provided below. It should however be noted that survey data on volunteering across the UK reveal a complex picture of the number and frequency of volunteering by volunteer profile.

Surveys carried out in England include:

Helping Out Survey (2007)[3] has been described as the most comprehensive survey to date and was carried out by NatCen and the Institute for Volunteering Research, on behalf of the Office of the Third Sector within the Cabinet Office. It was designed as a follow-up study to the 2005 Citizenship Survey, to represent the general (adult) population in England. In total, 2,156 respondents were interviewed for the main sample (a response rate of 62%), and 549 for a separate minority ethnic boost sample (to supplement the numbers of Black and Asian respondents interviewed; a response rate of 51%).

The Citizenship Survey has been undertaken every two years since 2001 and collects information from adults in England and Wales about volunteering, community and citizenship. Statistics on volunteering and factors such as age, ethnicity and deprivation are covered by the survey. In the past the survey was undertaken by the Home Office but now lies with the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) following a transfer of responsibilities on 5 May 2006. At the time of writing, the latest survey was published in July 2009 and covers the period April 2008 – March 2009.

http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/corporate/statistics/citizenshipsurveyq4200809

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3 Helping out (2007) was written by Low, N., Butt, S., Ellis Paine, A. and Davis Smith, J and published by the Cabinet Office.

Almanac Survey The National Council for Voluntary Organisations publishes the Voluntary Sector Almanac every two years. It contains data on voluntary sector income, expenditure, workforce, assets, number of organisations, it can be found on www.ncvo-vol.org.uk

The National Survey of Volunteering was carried out in 1997 (Davis Smith, 1998). A summary of the findings can be downloaded from the Institute of Volunteer Research (IVR) website: http://www.ivr.org.uk/bulletins.htm

Timebank Media Centre has put together some key volunteering statistics from various organisations' research into different aspects of volunteering. These can be accessed from: http://www.timebank.org.uk/mediacentre/research.php

For statistics on volunteering in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, visit:

Volunteer Development Scotland (VDS), http://www.vds.org.uk/tabid/175/Default.aspx. Amongst others, readers are directed to the 2007 Scottish Household Survey Analytical Report: Volunteering published by Hurley, Wilson and Christie (2008) Blake Stevenson Ltd.

Wales Council for Voluntary Action (WCVA)
http://www.wcva.org.uk/main/dsp_home.cfm.

Volunteer Development Agency (VDA), http://www.volunteering-ni.org/ Amongst others, readers are directed to 'It's all about time' carried out by the Volunteer Development Agency in 2007.

One of the difficulties faced when locating numbers and the profile of volunteers across the UK is the variations in the way in which the data has been collected and the terminology used as the basis for defining volunteering. For example some surveys differentiate between informal and formal volunteering, whilst others do not. Whilst it is clear the remit of this study is to focus on formal volunteering, generally speaking, it is not always clear if other survey findings are based on the same distinction or on volunteering as a whole. This is a matter for consideration when attempting to draw on data analysis to identify consistencies in trends for example.

It is also important to note that given the different categories used to profile volunteers (for example in relation to age categories) it is not always possible to make direct comparisons with other surveys – both within the context of England and across the devolved administrations. What follows therefore is an attempt to present trends in the number and profile of volunteers where data exists in each of the four Devolved Administrations.

Total number of volunteers

According to the 1997 National Survey of Volunteering carried out by Davis Smith (1997), approximately 22 million adults took part in some kind of voluntary activity each year. By 2007, research carried out by the Institute indicates that this number has fallen to 17.9 million people volunteering in the past year.

More recently, the Citizenship survey (April-June 2009), 43% of adults volunteered formally at least once in the 12 months prior to interview, with 28 per cent having volunteered formally at least once a month. In the same period, 26% of adults volunteered formally at least once a month. The survey findings also report levels of formal volunteering (at least once a month) fell slightly from 2007-08 (27%) but have fallen since 2005 (29%). The most recent statistics appear to be much lower than latest figures provided by Howlett (2008) who quoted 39% of the adult population volunteered at least once a month compared to 27% in 1981 (Low et all 2007).

Although the figures set out above may not be directly comparable, the trend appears to be a steady increase in the number of people volunteering in the last decade. The UK Civil

Society Almanac (NCVO, 2009) survey reports formal volunteering is slowly increasing (42% of the population in 2003 compared to 39% in 2001).

In Wales, results from the 2005 Home Office Citizenship Survey show that 69% of adults in Wales volunteered in 2004-2005, equivalent to 1.64 million people (WCVA 2007). The 2008 Third Sector in Wales Statistical Resource (Almanac Survey) states 46% of adults formally volunteered at least once a year.

The Scottish Household Survey showed that in 2001 25% of adults in Scotland had volunteered through a group, club or organisation in the previous year. Research commissioned by Volunteer Development Scotland in 2002 showed that 20% of the adult population in Scotland had volunteered in the past year, but a subsequent survey (that used different wording in the questions) reported 38% of the population participated in volunteering.

In Northern Ireland, research carried out by the Volunteer Development Agency – It's all about time *(2007)* reported that formal volunteering has fluctuated since 1995. In 1995, the report states that 18% of the population participated in formal volunteering. By 2001, this figure had increased to 29% but had fallen to 21% by 2007.

Gender

The Helping Out Report (2007) shows that a higher proportion of women (64%) volunteered than men (54%). This position is slightly different to that reported in the 2003 Citizenship Survey that there were no statistically significant differences in volunteering between men and women.

In Scotland, According to the NFO System Three Scottish Opinion Survey of July 2003, also shows that a higher proportion of women (41%) volunteered than men (32%).

In Northern Ireland, 'It's all about time' (2007) reports females are more likely than males to be formal volunteers. As a proportion of all formal volunteers six out of every ten are females (61%).

Age groups

As set out in the Helping Out Report (2007), people in the 35-44 (64%) and 55-64 age groups (64%) volunteered more than other age groups, though the former group were most involved in occasional or one-off activities (28%); the highest proportions of regular volunteers were in the younger 16-24 (43%) and older 55-64 (42%) and 65+ (41%) age groups. Similarly, the Citizenship Report (2008) shows that those aged 35-49 years and those aged 64-74 years were the most active age group involved in volunteering.

In Scotland, the Scottish Household Survey 2007 results show that voluntary activity is more common amongst the 35-44 age group. This was also reflected in the NFO System 3 Poll carried out in Scotland in August 2002.

In Northern Ireland[4], research findings report individuals aged between 35 and 49 years old and those aged between 16 and 24 years old are the most likely to volunteer.

Youth volunteering

Though the evidence points to a sharp decline in rates of youth volunteering in the 1990's, from 55% of 16-24 year olds which had volunteered formally at least once in the previous 12 months in 1991 to 43% in 1997 and 40% in 2001 (Kay and Bradbury 2009). In recent years the evidence suggests the number of young people involved in volunteering has increased. The 2005 Russell reported that 41% of young people volunteered and more

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[4] *It's all about time (2007)*

recently the Helping Out Survey shows 43% of young people were regular volunteers (i.e. more than once a month). These survey findings indicate that this recent upturn has meant that rates of youth volunteering are now broadly comparable to older, middle aged cohorts of adult learners.

The Helping Out survey also found that 57% of all young people surveyed had formally volunteered in some way over the previous year. This relatively high proportion of young people participating in volunteering is likely to have been influenced by recent development in student volunteering – this is discussed in more detail in the policies and programme sections below. Based on the 57% as referenced above, 43% of young people were regular volunteers, helping out more than once a month, while 13% were occasional volunteers, helping out less than once a month.

According to the IVR (2007) volunteers aged 25 to 44 years-old are more likely to be occasional than regular volunteers; while volunteers aged 65 and over are more likely to be regular volunteers (24%) compared with (14%), occasional volunteers.

In Scotland, the 'Being Young' in Scotland survey (MORI-Scotland, 2005) shows that 24% of 17-25 year olds have undertaken voluntary activity in the past six months. Following research carried out by Williamson and Hoskins (2005) into youth volunteering, subsequent research in Scotland sought to explore whether volunteering is sufficiently user-friendly for young people. The study found that while the experience of young volunteers in Scotland is primarily a positive one and levels of satisfaction are high, a number of areas of concern existed and more could be done to encourage young people to volunteer (Volunteer Development Scotland 1999).

Further trends in volunteering

It is helpful to provide some further trends in volunteering as highlighted by the Helping Out Report (2007).The research findings indicate volunteering rates were not significantly different between ethnic groups, ranging for all current volunteers from 66% of people of mixed ethnicity through to 45% of 'other'. Among regular volunteers, the highest percentages were for White (40%) and Black (36%) and the lowest for Asian (29%) and 'other' (23%).

Furthermore, the research findings reveal that people who were 'active' in their faith volunteered more (67%) than people of no religion (55%) and people who identified with a religion but were not active (55%); among faiths, people of 'other' faiths (66%), Hindu (61%) and Christian (59%) volunteered more than Muslim (45%).

15% of respondents said that they were currently volunteering or giving their services or time to 'a voluntary or charitable organisation, local authority or other body' in 2005. In 2006 this was 14%, and by 2007 it was 13%. However the number of respondents who were currently giving their services or time to 'friends, relatives or other members of the community' did not vary as much between 2005 and 2007, with 12% stating this in 2005, 13% in 2006, and 12% in 2007.

Geographical spread of volunteering

Helping Out findings reflect those found by the IVR, where the regions of England with the highest proportion of volunteers were the West Midlands at 67% followed by the South West at 64% and the lowest being Yorkshire and Humberside at 50% and the North East at 41%. As highlighted in the survey findings, regional differences are likely to be affected by other factors related to the structure of the population e.g. age and ethnic group. The research findings suggest the geographic spread has changed very slightly since 2007. As reported by the Institute of Volunteering Research, the regions of England with the highest

proportion of volunteers were the West Midlands at 67% followed by the South West at 64% and the lowest being Yorkshire and Humberside at 50% and the North East at 41%.

Education levels

The Citizenship Survey 2007-2008 reports that despite some efforts those with no qualifications, a limiting lifelong illness/disability, and some minority ethnic groups are still less likely to volunteer than the general population.

The 1997 National Survey of Volunteering (Davis Smith 1998) showed that those who remained in education and obtained higher educational qualifications were more likely to volunteer than those who left the education system at a younger age. In 1997, the research findings also revealed that 40% of those surveyed who left school at 15 volunteering compared to 73% of those who finished their education at 21 or older.

In Northern Ireland, 'It's all about time' (2007), reported one third of all individuals who are in full-time education are formal volunteers. It should be noted that the number of individuals in full-time education was very small in comparison to the other categories.

Volunteer involvement by sectors

The Helping Out Report (2007) shows that the most common sector of interest to volunteers were: education - schools, colleges, universities' (31%); religion (24%); and sports, exercise' and 'Health, disability (both 22%). The majority of volunteers (59%) helped more than one organisation; over a third (36%) helped three or more organisations.

The largest proportions of activities were: 'Raising, handling money' (65%) and 'Organising, helping run an event' (50%). The majority of volunteers (71%) engaged in more than one volunteering activity; over a half (53%) did three or more.

Neighbourhood Watch (concerned with building safer communities) is the largest voluntary movement in the UK, with over 165,000 schemes covering six million households and involving 10 million individual members. It relies on volunteers and the impacts can be notable. In one village in Yorkshire, for example, the establishment of a Neighbourhood Watch scheme led to a reduction in car crime by 44% and burglaries by 24%. It also recreated a community spirit and trust between residents and local agencies (IVR, 2007).

In terms of voluntary and community organisations in Northern Ireland, formal volunteers are most likely to be involved with groups that focus on health and social welfare issues (12.1%), children's education/schools (12.1%), local community, neighbourhood or citizens' groups (7.6%), youth/children's activities (outside school) (7.6%) and older people (7.6%). With the exception of religion (42.1% of formal volunteers involved with churches/religious organisations cited this as the main activity of the organisation), a quarter of all formal volunteers engaged with churches were involved in youth/children's activities (outside school). One in ten formal volunteers involved with churches and religious organisations cite engagement with older people as the main activity the organisation is involved in. For public sector organisations formal volunteers are most likely to be engaged with children's education/schools (36.4%), disability (18.2%) and health and social welfare (18.2%).

When looking at the sectors young people are most likely to volunteer in, according to the Helping Out report (2007) research analysis focused on young people show that educational organisations were the most popular destination for young volunteers (43%), followed by sport and exercise organisations (26%) and religious organisations (25%). Least popular destinations included organisations that help the elderly (2%), safety or first aid organisations (2%) and trade unions (0%). Raising or handling money proved the most popular type of volunteering activity among young volunteers (61%), followed by organising

or helping to run an event (54%). The least popular types of volunteering activity included secretarial, administrative and clerical work (14%), and transporting (6%).

Profile of volunteers by employment status

According to the Helping Out report (2007), people who were employees (62%) volunteered more than people not working (55%), but the latter category ranged from those looking after the home (65%) to sick or disabled (34%).

In Scotland, the Scottish Household Survey Results (2007) report voluntary activity is more common among in those who are self-employed (36%) and those who are working part-time (31%).

According to the results from the Living in Wales Survey (IPSOS MORI, 2007) 27% of respondents reported as working in 'higher managerial and professional occupations' quoted they would like to spend more time helping groups, clubs or organisations, compared to only 15% of respondents classed as working in 'routine occupations'.

It's all about time (2007) reported respondents in part-time employment were the most likely to be formal volunteers. It stated these individuals conceivably have more free time and more flexibility in terms of work to devote to volunteering. However, those not in work at the time the survey was conducted are the least likely group to be a formal volunteer. The report recognised this could be a concern related to jeopardising benefits, or in relation to retirees who may be less inclined to be formal volunteers.

Time dedicated to volunteering

According to the Helping Out report (2007) regular volunteers spent on average 15.9 hours in the last four weeks, whereas the average of all current volunteers was 10.9 hours. According to the UK Civil Society Almanac (2009), the average number of hours spent volunteering per volunteer declined by 30% between 1997 and 2007. Evidence also suggests that there is a trend towards more episodic volunteering.

In Wales, of the 1.64 million people volunteering, on average gave 1.35 hours per week, and equivalent to 115 million hours in a year, equivalent to 63,300 full time workers (WCVA 2007).

1.4 Number and types of organisations engaging volunteers

There is no single or simple route in the UK to the identification of 'types' of voluntary organisations (Salamon and Anheier, 1997). Across the UK voluntary organisations include non-profit organisations, charities and associations for example. This diversity adds to the complexity in understanding the number and types of organisations engaging volunteers.

Milligan and Fyfe (2005) describe a spectrum of voluntary organisations that range from those that are grassroots, i.e., characterised by mutuality, solidarity, and empathy, to those that are corporatist, characterised by a professionalised workforce of paid staff, bureaucratisation, and pressured towards marketisation.

The 2009 Almanac Survey reports there are 170,905 voluntary sector organisations in the UK. This figure represents 6,800 new organisations since 2008. This data represents an increase from 152,696 voluntary sector organisations compared to 120,000 in 1994 and 98,000 in 1991 (Centro di Servizio (2008).

In Wales, there are approximately 30,000 voluntary and community organisations in Wales, of which 26,235 are recorded on the *All Wales Database*, maintained by WCVA.

In 2007 the Northern Ireland Volunteer Development Agency's database contained details of 2,553 voluntary organisations.

There are 45,000 voluntary organisations in Scotland, these are registered in the Scottish Voluntary Sector Database.

Definition of voluntary organisations in the United Kingdom

According to NCVO, a voluntary organisation is defined as an independent, self-governing body of people who have joined together voluntarily to take action for the benefit of the community. A voluntary organisation may employ paid staff or volunteers, but must be established otherwise than for financial gain.

Number of voluntary organisations and distribution per sector

There are currently approximately 324 volunteering centres throughout England providing a range of services, form matching volunteers opportunities, to working with organisations on good practices in volunteer involvement, to engaging with local policy makers to create the conditions that support and sustain volunteering.

In Wales, of the 26,235 voluntary and community organisations recorded on the All Wales Database, maintained by WCVA, distribution per sector includes:

- 24% are sports and recreation bodies

- 17% are involved in community development or are community buildings

- 14% are benevolent organisations

- 13% are involved in health and social care

- 12% are involved with children and families

- 10% are interested in youth

- 10% are involved in the arts, culture or heritage

- 9% are faith groups with wider public benefit

- 7% are involved in gender issues or are gender specific

- 6% are involved with people with physical, sensory or learning disability

- 6% are interested in the natural or built environment

- Other groups include advice and advocacy groups, animal welfare groups, education and training, employment, ethnic minorities, housing, international aid and emergency relief, and volunteer and voluntary sector support.

Types of organisations engaging volunteers

Across the UK voluntary organisations include non-profit organisations, charities, and associations. This diversity adds to the complexity in understanding the number and types of organisations engaging volunteers.

1.5   Main voluntary activities

According to Volunteering Works published by IVR and Volunteering England (September 2007), volunteers themselves undertake a huge range of activities. In an attempt to illustrate the diversity of activities undertaken, IVR use a four-fold typology of volunteering[4]:

1. Mutual aid or self help: people with shared problems, challenges or conditions working together to address them.

2. Philanthropy or service to others: most commonly volunteering through a voluntary or community organisation to provide some form of service to one or more third parties or beneficiaries.

3. Participation: the involvement of individuals in the political, governance or decision-making process at any level.

4. Advocacy and campaigning: collective action in formal or informal groups, or as individuals, to secure or prevent change.

In terms of the types of activities, The Helping Out survey reports that volunteers undertook within the organisations, there is again a great deal of variety.

Most volunteers (71%) undertook more than one type of volunteering activity, whether this was in one or more organisations. Indeed, over one-quarter (27%) of volunteers had been involved in five or more different formal volunteering activities over the past 12 months. Raising and handling money was the most common type of volunteering activity (undertaken by 65% of current volunteers). Organising and helping to run events was the second most common (50%).

Organising or helping to run an event was the next most common type of activity (50%), followed by being a committee member (28%), educating others (which includes coaching, 25%) and administrative activities (21%). Thirty-five per cent of volunteers were involved in practical help other than those activities specifically listed. The least common types of volunteering activity were befriending (15%) and campaigning (14%).

'It's all about time' (2007) reported that the most common type of volunteering activity was raising or handling money (32%).

The five most common volunteering activities identified through the Scottish Household Survey and Volunteer Development Scotland's survey include helping to raise money (68%), organising or helping to run an event (31%), serving on a committee (30%), Providing a service or offering support (24%), helping with sports or recreational activities (19%).

Figure 1-1 Main voluntary activities

	All %	Current volunteers %
Raising, handling money	38	65
Organising, helping run an event	30	50
Committee member	17	28
Educating	14	25
Secretarial, administrative, clerical	12	21
Transporting	11	19
Representing	11	19
Visiting people	10	17
Giving advice, information, counselling	10	16
Befriending	9	15
Campaigning	9	14
Other practical help	21	35
Other help	8	14
No help given	41	N/A

(Source: Helping Out, 2007)

2   INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

Government interest in volunteering and the volunteering infrastructure has been prolific since labour came into office 1997. Here, it is argued the rationale behind elevating the role of the voluntary sector goes beyond reducing the dependence on the state provision of services. As discussed earlier, volunteering has also been recognised by the Labour government as making an important contribution to developing 'civil renewal', especially for adults at risk of social exclusion (HM Treasury 2004). The research findings suggest there can be tensions between the notion of voluntary organisations as agents of civil renewal and as service providers (Commission on the Future of the Voluntary Sector 1996; Lewis, 2005). Debates concerning the relationship between volunteering and service substitution are discussed in more detail below.

In order to strengthen the institutional framework for volunteering, the Commission on the Future of the Voluntary Sector emphasised the importance of recognising the volunteering infrastructure as independent voluntary sector bodies. They further recommended that policies should be adopted to help ensure that specialist volunteering infrastructure can develop realistic sustainable long-term funding. Issues concerning sustainable funding remain on-going challenges for many voluntary organisations and are also discussed in more detail under the economic dimension of volunteering below.

2.1   Main public bodies and other organisations involved in volunteering

Main public body responsible for volunteering

Volunteering is the responsibility of the devolved administrations. In England the government department responsible for voluntary activities is the Office of the Third Sector in the Cabinet Office. The Office of the Third Sector (OTS) works across government to increase volunteering, enable a growth in social enterprise, and support and promote the crucial role that the third sector plays in building cohesive, empowered and active communities. OTS also has a role in promoting best practice in the relationship between government and the third sector.

The OTS has a vision of a society where voluntary activity flourishes and where all individuals and communities are enabled to play a full part in civil society. The OTS is responsible for three key areas:

- Youth volunteering: The implementation of the framework for youth action and engagement through the youth volunteering charity **v**.

- Volunteering guidance and useful resources: Guidance documents and useful resources for organisations involving volunteers, such as advice on Criminal Records Bureau checks, volunteers and the law, and a volunteering risk toolkit.

- Volunteering Champion: Details of the work of Baroness Neuberger, the Government's independent volunteering champion.

The OTS is also responsible for the following programmes (all run from April 2009 – March 2011).

- **Access to Volunteering** – A £2 million pilot fund to reduce barriers to disabled people volunteering and explore the feasibility of access to Volunteering fund. The programme will be delivered by a consortium of Digital Public, Charities Aid Foundation and RNIB and will pilot in North West, West Midlands and London.

- **Volunteer Managers programme** – A £3 million programme that will provide support to volunteer managers to ensure that volunteers are well managed and that

they get the best possible experience from volunteering. This programme is being delivered by Capacitybuilders through three strands:

Strand A – 24 local projects (announced in October 2009) raising awareness of development opportunities in their areas and developing new sources of support where appropriate – £1.45 million budget

Strand B – Strategic activity being carried out by Volunteering England as part of the Modernising Volunteering National Support Service. Includes awareness raising and dissemination of good practice from strand A

Strand C – £1m bursary scheme to subsidise training of volunteer managers to be launched in Spring 2010.

▪ **Generations Together** - A £5.5 million programme to boost intergenerational volunteering through funding to 12 local authority and third sector led demonstrator sites. This is a cross Government programme involving Department of Health, Department for Work and Pensions, Department for Children, Schools and Families and Office of the Third Sector (OTS contribution is £2.5 million). The 12 sites are:

> ➢ Ealing (London)
>
> ➢ Gateshead (North East)
>
> ➢ Hammersmith and Fulham (London)
>
> ➢ Luton (East of England)
>
> ➢ Northamptonshire (East Midlands)
>
> ➢ Manchester (North West)
>
> ➢ Plymouth (South West)
>
> ➢ Portsmouth (South East)
>
> ➢ Reading (South East)
>
> ➢ Somerset (South West)
>
> ➢ Wakefield (Yorkshire and Humber)
>
> ➢ Worcestershire (West Midlands)

▪ A £1.6 million programme that will contribute to building a volunteering legacy for the **London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games**. This will include a new gateway to enable people inspired to volunteer by the Games to find local volunteering opportunities, and a team of development workers to support volunteering organisations. This programme is being managed by Youthnet and Volunteering England and aims to create 100, 000 opportunities for people to volunteer in Olympic inspired activities.

▪ OTS also provides **strategic funding** to organisations that are experts in volunteering, including Volunteering England and the Mentoring and Befriending Foundation.

The Cabinet Office makes strategic grants to a number of organisations promoting youth volunteering, including the youth voluntary organisation 'v' for England, YouthNet, Youth Action Network, the National Youth Agency for England, British Youth Council, and the Citizenship Foundation (predominantly England and Wales). Other government

departments support specific aspects of voluntary activities, including the DCSF (in relation to peer mentoring and volunteering in schools and volunteering in further and higher education), the Department for Communities and Local Government, the Department for Culture, Arts and the Media, and the Department of Health. In 2009, the DWP launched an £8m volunteering brokerage scheme that is being run by environmental charity British Trust for Conservation Volunteers (BTCV), Community Service Volunteers (CSV), Volunteering England and **V** (the youth volunteering charity), it aims to marry 34,000 jobseekers with volunteer placements in the UK by 2011. The scheme is available to people claiming jobseeker's allowance that have been looking for work for more than six months. Concerns have been raised the scheme is struggling to meet its targets.

Nongovernmental actors

There are four national voluntary organisations across the UK (all receiving government funding): volunteering England, Volunteer Development Scotland, Wales Council for Voluntary Action, and Northern Ireland Volunteer Development Agency - each of which supports local and regional voluntary organisations in their respective country.

Organisations across the UK supporting young people's volunteering include '**V**'; Student Volunteering Scotland, Youth Action Network and Changemakers. A range of organisations offer young people full-time volunteering opportunities, with Community Service Volunteers (CSV) as the largest provider. Part-time opportunities are offered by a wide range of local public, voluntary and community, youth and faith organisations.

In addition there is the UK Volunteering Forum[5] (UKVF) that comprises of the four leading umbrella bodies of the UK – Volunteering England, Volunteer Development Scotland, Northern Ireland Volunteer Development Agency and Wales Council for Voluntary Action. The UK Volunteering Forum meets quarterly to share information and identify opportunities for joint initiatives. It has four subgroups focusing on Research, Youth, Volunteer Centre infrastructures and the Investing in Volunteers Quality Award, with a fifth subgroup on Policy to be convened shortly.

Established in April 2007, the Commission for the Compact is an independent public body responsible for overseeing and promoting use of the Compact. As part of its approach to meeting its five targets, the Commission is continuing to develop approaches to assess the Volunteering and the Community Groups Codes against recent legislation. This work will help to clarify the role of the Compact within the current legislative framework, and ensure the Compact and its principles remain relevant.

Organisations that promote volunteering, facilitate cooperation and exchange of information

Community Service Volunteers[6] (CSV) was founded in 1962 and is one of the largest voluntary organisations in the UK. Every year, CSV inspires over 200,000 volunteers to give time to their communities, from one-day projects through to full-time placements. CSV organises a range of campaigns, recent examples include the CSV Make a Difference Day (try volunteering for one day) Action Earth (improving local environment, town or countryside) Get Active Week (voluntary activities for over 50's). The remit of CSV is to involve volunteers for longer, with more impact and in a wider range of opportunities. In order to achieve this, CSV deal with operational issues, funding and training of staff in addition to the recruitment and involvement of over 200,000 volunteers every year.

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[5] http://www.ukvf.org.uk/

[6] http://www.csv.org.uk/?display=volunteering

National Association for Voluntary and Community Action[7] is the voice of local third sector infrastructure in England. We aim to ensure communities are well served by the local third sector by supporting our members and their work with over 160,000 local groups and organisations.

National Council for Voluntary Organisations[8] (NCVO) is a registered charity in England which gives voice and support to civil society. It is a lobbying organisation and represents the views of its members, and the wider voluntary sector to government, the European Union and other bodies. NCVO carries out research into, and analysis of, the voluntary sector.

Volunteering England[9] (VE) is the volunteering development agency for England, committed to supporting, enabling and celebrating volunteering in all its diversity. Volunteering England was formed in April 2004 following a merger between The Consortium on Opportunities for Volunteering, The National Centre for Volunteering and Volunteer Development England. On 1 July 2007 Volunteering England formally merged with Student Volunteering England.

Institute of Volunteering Research[10] is an initiative of Volunteering England in association with the Centre for Institutional Studies at the University of East London. The institute is responsible for conducting and commissioning research on different aspects of volunteering, disseminating findings, developing links with bodies involved in volunteering research and to stimulate and contribute to education and training on volunteering.

v[11] is an independent charity set up to inspire a new generation of young volunteers (aged 16-25) in England and to enable lasting change in the quality, quantity and diversity of youth volunteering activities. Its aim is to create a culture where it is natural for young people to volunteer, and natural for organisations to support them in doing so, because the benefits of volunteering are widely understood and celebrated. Over the next three years, it is anticipated that 75,000 volunteering opportunities will be on offer through 158 innovative projects across the country.

Media Trust[12] was established in 1994 and works in partnership with the media industry to help the voluntary sector build effective communications.

Red Foundation[13] is a social enterprise supporting voluntary action through the provision of consultancy and capacity building services and through piloting new ways to promote volunteerism, with a particular focus on utilising social media. Red Foundation is a delivery partner of the Modernising Volunteering Improving Support programme funded by Capacity Builders. This initiative is a partnership led by Volunteering England, with CSV, Nationwide Foundation and **v**.

RockCorps[14] is an international movement with more than 25 live events, 50,000 volunteers and an audience of millions who have heard the message that "Volunteering is cool."

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[7] http://www.navca.org.uk/

[8] http://www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/

[9] http://www.volunteering.org.uk/

[10] http://www.ivr.org.uk/

[11] http://vinspired.com/

[12] http://www.mediatrust.org/about-us/annual-reviews

[13] http://www.redfoundation.org/

[14] http://www.rockcorps.com/main.asp

YouthNet[15] was launched in 1995 and aims to create a socially inclusive environment where young people living in the UK are engaged, informed and inspired to achieve their ambitions and dreams. We deliver high-quality information, signposting and frontline emotional support primarily through the internet, but increasingly through mobile phones, digital interactive TV and hand-held devices – the tools that are central to the way young people communicate.

TimeBank[16] was launched as an online volunteer promotion and brokerage early in Labour's first term in office. It is a charity inspiring and connecting a new generation of people to volunteer in their communities, and enabling charitable organisations and businesses to develop innovative and effective volunteer recruitment programmes. TimeBank has attracted over 220,000 people into the world of volunteering by creating new ways for people to get involved; connecting people and organisations to each other; and transforming the image of volunteering to reflect its vital role in a healthy society.

Volunteer Centre's

In 2004 there were 324 volunteer centres in England providing a range of services from matching volunteers to opportunities, to working with organisations on best practice and in volunteer involvement to engaging with local policy makers to create and sustain the conditions that support volunteering (Howlett, 2008). There have been continued discussions about the role of volunteer centres in terms of how they are organised in order to fulfil their role, about their independence and the extent to which they are driven by funding opportunities available to them - this has become more pertinent during the economic recession where many volunteer centres are struggling with limited resources together with an increase in the number of volunteers seeking volunteering opportunities.

In the UK there is a strong regional and local network of voluntary organisations together with excellent examples of programmes and initiatives being implemented at regional and local level – discussed in more detail below. An important point to raise here is the relationship between organisations at national level and they support the regional and local infrastructure. Concerns have been raised about the role performed by national infrastructure bodies in representing volunteering to government, suggesting that they are not sufficiently in touch with local concerns, or too closely allied to government or too focused on the promotion of specific volunteering initiatives. It has also been noted that the generic nature of Volunteer Centres and some national volunteering agencies can make it difficult to represent all aspects of volunteering.

Northern Ireland

Voluntary Service Bureau[17] (VSB) is a local development agency with almost 40 years of experience providing the infrastructure to support, encourage and promote citizenship and participation through voluntary activity. As the Volunteer Bureau for Belfast, Castlereagh, North Down and Ards, VSB provides the support mechanisms to match volunteers with the right voluntary placement for them.

The Volunteer Development Agency[18] is committed to producing and disseminating high quality, up to date information about volunteering. The VDA can help you find volunteering

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[15] http://www.youthnet.org/

[16] http://www.timebank.org.uk/

[17] http://www.vsb.org.uk/

[18] http://www.volunteering-ni.org/

opportunities across Northern Ireland, and also provides training in many aspects of volunteering, volunteer management, and related disciplines.

Scotland

Community Service Volunteers - Scotland[19] works to reconnect people to their community through volunteering and training in Scotland.

Volunteer Centre Networks – Scotland[20] are one-stop shops where people interested in volunteering can access information, advice and support on volunteering. Volunteer Centres also provide advice and training to organisations that use volunteers. There is Volunteer Centre coverage in each local authority area in Scotland and each centre is a locally managed independent voluntary organisation.

Wales

Community Service Volunteers - Wales[21] works to reconnect people to their community through volunteering and training in Wales.

Volunteering Wales[22] is a website developed in conjunction with the Welsh Assembly Government to help individual's access information on volunteer opportunities in Wales. It is made up of information provided by the 33 volunteer bureaux based across Wales. Volunteer centres are voluntary organisations that provide information and advice on volunteering. There is a volunteer bureau in each local authority area.

Youth Volunteering

Youth volunteering is supported by an established infrastructure across the UK. Key organisations include:

GwirVol. GwirVol is a partnership formed to implement the recommendations of the Russell Commission in Wales. WCVA is the administrative partner. www. gwirvol.org - goes live on 27 January 2010.

The Council for Wales of Voluntary Youth Services[23] (CWVYS) is the umbrella organisation for the Voluntary Youth Sector in Wales. It aim is to represent, support and give a collective voice to its diverse membership of national and local organisations in their work with over 200,000 young people in Wales.

The National Council for Voluntary Youth Services[24] (NCVYS) is a membership network of around 170 voluntary and community organisations, as well as local and regional networks, who work with young people and operate in England.

Affiliation with European umbrella organisations/networks

NCVO, CSV, WCVA are members of and support the European Volunteer Centre (CEV).

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[19] Op cite 7

[20] http://www.volunteerscotland.org.uk/default.aspx?popupValue=no

[21] Op cite 7

[22] http://www.volunteering-wales.net/index.html

[23] http://www.cwvys.org.uk/

[24] http://www.ncvys.org.uk/

2.2   Policies

National strategy/framework for volunteering

To date there is no one single national strategy for volunteering for the UK, each administration is responsible for developing its approach to volunteering. Northern Ireland is in the process of consulting on a Voluntary Strategy (published in June 2009 by the Department for Social Development) that aims to create the conditions that will enable volunteering to flourish - this includes supporting and strengthening the volunteering infrastructure and organisations that involve volunteers, enhancing accessibility and diversity within volunteering, promoting the value and benefits of volunteering and improving the volunteering experience.

With the exception of Northern Ireland, there are no immediate plans to develop volunteer strategies in England, Wales or Scotland.

In the absence of a national strategy, it is important to add that in 1998 the UK saw the development of a series of Compacts[25], which aim to provide a framework for relations between government and the voluntary and community sector in the country. The Compact is an expression of the commitment of government and the voluntary and community sector to work together for the betterment of society, and to nurture and support voluntary and community activity. The underlying philosophy of the Compact is that voluntary and community activity is fundamental to the development of a democratic, socially inclusive society.

The Compact is a memorandum concerning relations between the Government and the voluntary and community sector. It is not a legally binding document. Its authority is derived from its endorsement by Government and by the voluntary and community sector itself through its consultation process.

The Compact is underpinned by five supplementary codes:

- Volunteering: A Code of Good Practice
- Consultation and Policy Appraisal: A Code of Good Practice
- Black and Ethnic Voluntary and community Organisations: A Code of Good Practice
- Funding: A Code of Good Practice
- Local Compact Guidelines: Getting Local relationships Right Together

In Scotland, the Scottish Compact frames the relations between the voluntary sector and local and central government. The Compact is an agreement between the Voluntary Sector and the Scottish Executive, its Agencies and Non-Departmental Public Bodies (NDPBs) that sets out clear principles for working in partnership. Its aim is to develop robust relationships for the wider public good.

In Wales, the Voluntary Sector Scheme was launched in December 1998 and shares a common background to the English one, in terms of the development of a commitment by both the sector and the Labour Party towards closer co-operation and partnership. The Third Sector Partnership Council and Ministerial meetings are key mechanism for maintaining formal dialogue between the voluntary sector and the Wales National Assembly. The Wales Volunteering Policy Network is a forum for debate and action around volunteering issues. This network feeds into the TSPC and elects a volunteering representative.

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[25] http://www.thecompact.org.uk/homepage/100016/home/

In Northern Ireland, 'Partners for Change', was published, technically, as a consultation document in June 2001. The Compact itself is structured around 3 Common Themes: Capacity Building, Working Together and Resourcing the Sector. The Compact in Northern Ireland is based on the Building Real Partnership publication which is a jointly-prepared, agreed statement of the general principles and the shared values which governs the development of the relationship between Government and the voluntary and community sector in Northern Ireland. The Compact applies to the relationship in Northern Ireland between Government (both central and local, including Departments, non-Departmental Public Bodies (NDPBs), statutory agencies, and District Councils) and the voluntary and community sector (which includes voluntary and community organisations and those who volunteer in those organisations and in other settings).

The research evidence points to a perceived lack of synergy and joined-up thinking in relation to volunteering policy across the UK. Furthermore concerns have been raised that in recent years volunteering is becoming lower on the political agenda, though the recent creation of the Office of the Third sector is a strong indication volunteering remains an important item in political terms.

The research evidence points to an important discussion concerning the policy assumptions underlying volunteering initiatives. This relates to the perception that volunteering is used for other policy objectives such as providing services, skills training and citizenship. Though the benefits of volunteering are widely acknowledged, some concerns have been raised about the relationship between the state and the third sector particularly in relation to government funded programmes where the planning process, continuity between initiatives, consultation and communication with volunteer-involving agencies, funding, timescales, reporting and monitoring timescales and the increased focus on meeting targets raises particular concerns.

National targets and reporting arrangements for volunteering

Soon after Labour came into office in 1997, the Warner Commission called for an increase in volunteering. Targets were later to appear also in the form of Public Service Agreements[26] (PSA) that were introduced in 1998 (see Zimmeck, 2009).

In the case of volunteering the PSA target was measured by the Home Office Citizenship survey. The 2003 Citizenship Survey reported that the target set for England set in 2001 to 'Increase voluntary and community sector activity, including increase community participation, by 5% by 2006', had in fact been reached by 2003 (Home Office 2007).

The Cabinet Office 2004 Spending Review Service Agreement (PSAs) 4, Element 1 was closely aligned to the social inclusion agenda and aimed 'to increase voluntary and community engagement amongst those at risk of exclusion.' The concern related to individuals who belong to certain Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) groups, have a disability or limiting long-term illness (LLI), or have no formal qualifications were seen as at particular risk of social exclusion (Kitchen et al., 2006).

In the 2007 Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) 30 new PSAs were launched. These set out the Government's highest priority outcomes for the CSR 2007 period, 2008/09 to 2010/11. PSA Delivery Agreement 21: Build more cohesive, empowered and active communities set out six indicators. Indictor 5 is concerned with a 'thriving third sector' and amongst other factors includes efforts to promote participation in formal volunteering. The

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[26] Readers interested in the history and background to PSA targets are directed to
http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/about_the_cabinet_office/publicserviceagreements.aspx and
http://www.parliament.uk/commons/lib/research/briefings/snpc-03826.pdf

indicator measures an index of regular formal volunteering (i.e. volunteering at least once a month) and the number of full-time equivalent staff the third sector employs.

To support the delivery of PSA 21, the Office of the Third Sector (OTS) is tasked with investing in '**v**', alongside other programmes to build a culture of volunteering more generally, including intergenerational volunteering, volunteering within the public services and employee volunteering. As described above, the OTS is also tasked with supporting a new combined Volunteering for All and Goldstar programme which aim to reduce barriers to volunteering amongst adults at risk of social exclusion, for instance through awareness work, funding high-quality volunteering opportunities and promoting best practice in volunteering and mentoring.

Delivery agencies charged with delivery of the PSA target are also responsible for reporting on progress made.

There is a new PSA target aiming to build more cohesive, empowered and active communities. The delivery agreement recognises the critical role of the third sector in strengthening communities and includes an indicator to measure a thriving third sector, focusing on levels of formal volunteering and the number of people employed by the sector.

The use of PSA targets to measure performance has been met with some concern, with some commentators arguing targets are more about the numbers of programme participants. In the case of volunteering, it is argued what is more important is the quality of the volunteering experience.

International policies

Since 1958, Voluntary Service Overseas[27] (VSO) has sent more than 30,000 volunteers to developing countries. Typically, these individuals are skilled professionals, from a range of nationalities, backgrounds and ages. At present there are approximately 1,500 VSO volunteers, working in 34 countries.

The Department for International Development (DFID) supports volunteering initiatives through Partnership Programme Arrangements with organisations involved in volunteering and skill-sharing, including VSO, Skillshare International and International Service. DFID stated a commitment to support new opportunities for volunteering in the 2006 White Paper 'Eliminating world poverty: making governance work for the poor'.

2.3 Programmes

Key national programmes that stimulate volunteering at national level

Evident in the policy discourse is a strong focus on youth volunteering across the UK. Here the UK government has mainly focussed its own efforts on the creation of two programmes: Volunteers and Young Volunteer Challenge.

Millennium Volunteers[28] (MV) was an award scheme established in 2000 for young people aged 16 to 24 and was evolved into four unique programmes running in parallel across the four home countries. The programme was designed to promote a commitment to 200 hours of voluntary action within one year. An award of excellence was given to those completing a 200-hour placement which was delivered through non-profit organisations or a self-designed project. Recognition was also given for service of 100 hours. More specifically, the aim was to involve 100,000 young people as MVs in England by 2004 and 820 in Northern Ireland. In Scotland the programme aim was for 1,000 young people to

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[27] http://www.vso.org.uk/volunteer/apply-now/index.asp

[28] http://www.mvonline.gov.uk/

have achieved their 200 hour Awards, a target set up the Scottish Executive. No specific targets were set in Wales.

Reflecting wider devolution trends the responsibility for the programme sat with national government, giving each country the autonomy to develop the programme as they choose, confined only by the nine principles of MV. In England MV ran directly from the MV Unit within the then Department for Education and Skills, through contract managers to the projects. In March 2007 responsibility for MV was transferred to 'v' who in turn was tasked with reaching a target of one million new volunteers by 2010. In England, the MV has since been replaced by the vinvolved programme and continues to be managed by 'v' (discussed in more detail below). In June 2007, '**v**' announced a £75 million new funding programme to build on the success of the MV programme. *vinvolved*, the youth volunteering programme, created a new framework for youth volunteering. The vinvolved programme is split into two strands: vinvolved teams and vinvolved projects. As mentioned above vinvolved has now replaced the MV programme in England.

In contrast, within both Scotland and Wales the programme devolved from government to be administered through a partnership of voluntary and statutory organisations, with the key volunteering development agency taking the lead in programme delivery. In Northern Ireland the Volunteer Development Agency has responsibility for managing and implementing the programme although, in contrast to Scotland and Wales, it is not part of a formal consortium but has established an advisory group to steer the programme. In Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales the MV programme continues to be the main government, youth volunteering programme in each of the devolved administrations.

It is important to note that the four home countries receive vastly differing amounts of funding for MV creating considerable differences in the organisation and delivery of the programme. As illustrated in the 2002 UK-wide evaluation of MV carried out by the IVR, 2002-2003 funding distribution shows that £15,000,000 was allocated to England; £300,000 allocated to Northern Ireland; £695,000 allocated to Scotland and £300,000 allocated to Wales. The funding differences have inevitably influenced the programme design and management, in particular the different levels of funding available for local projects to deliver the programme.

The 2002 UK-wide evaluation of MV reported that MV has largely been successful in delivering experiences that reflected what young people wanted and that it delivered benefits to both volunteers and the communities in which they volunteered. The evaluation found that 84% of volunteers agreed MV had increased their confidence and 65% believed MV had increased their employability. Crucially for engendering civic engagement, 80% reported that they were more aware of the needs of others and 68% agreed that they had become more committed to volunteering, owing to their involvement in MV.

The evaluation reported that MV aims to be inclusive of everyone but particularly those with no previous experience of volunteering and those vulnerable to social exclusion and has had some success in this respect. It attracted people from a variety of ethnic backgrounds and was successful in attracting young people who were unemployed and nearly half had no previous experience of volunteering. However, it was suggested that the focus on targets does not easily take into account the time and financial resources that may be required to involve young people from harder-to-reach groups.

Young Volunteer Challenge (YVC) was another government-designed and funded pilot programme offering opportunities for 18 and 19 year olds from low-income backgrounds to undertake voluntary work on community projects in nine areas.

The programme set out to test the effect of financial incentives on young people's participation in youth action. Young people who received means-tested benefits such as the

Education Maintenance Allowance or were eligible for Income Support whilst undertaking vocational training were eligible to participate. YVC was a full-time experience, lasting up to nine months where participants received a weekly allowance and a lump sum end of experience award.

The project has now completed and the final evaluation carried out in 2006 found that whilst successful in many ways, the project experienced some difficulties in attracting young people to participate and to stay engaged with the programme.

Volunteering for all Programme

Volunteering for All was a three-year programme worth £4.5 million. It was launched in September 2006 and ran until March 2009. The programme aimed to:

- Identify and tackle barriers to volunteering
- Fund high quality 'exemplar' volunteering opportunities
- Fund work to raise positive awareness of voluntary activity

The programme also aimed to address the Public Service Agreement (PSA) 4 target of increasing volunteering by adults (16-plus) at risk of social exclusion in England. The programme also targeted those who volunteer less than others include:

- People with disabilities or limiting long term illness
- People with no formal qualifications
- People from black and minority ethnic communities, with a specific focus on Asian and Chinese communities, particularly those not born in the UK

Examples of other programmes/initiatives

In 2000, the UK Prime Minister pledged that employers should be encouraged to release staff for 1 day a year to undertake volunteering activity. Many and varied programmes are being set up to assist employees to volunteer, whether during work hours or in their own time, most commonly known as Employer Supported Volunteering[29] (ESV).

In addition, the government is also introducing a range of initiatives to boost skills in the workplace, namely that of the Graduate Talent Pool[30] initiative to help employers create and offer graduate internships voluntary opportunities. This initiative is reported as being particularly important for both employers and individuals during the economic down town by providing opportunities for graduates to improve their employability through volunteering.

Programmes promoting/supporting volunteering at regional and local level

As mentioned above, across the UK there are excellent examples of programmes and initiatives being implemented at regional and local levels. For example the North West Network[31] has launched a number of projects designed to support the voluntary and community sector across the North West. Projects include designing programmes for coaching for volunteer managers, a project focusing on self assessment manuals for organisations that involve volunteers. Oldham Local Authority has introduced a number of initiatives designed at promoting volunteering and supporting individuals to participate in volunteering and support for those responsible for managing volunteering. Based on the

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[29] http://www.volunteering.org.uk/WhatWeDo/Projects+and+initiatives/Employer+Supported+Volunteering/

[30] http://graduatetalentpool.direct.gov.uk/cms/ShowPage/Home_page/p!ecaaefg

[31] http://www.nwnetwork.org.uk/

good practice developed by Oldham Council, there is potential for this good practice to be rolled out across other Local Authorities across the North West.

Programmes promoting/supporting volunteering at transnational level

The Department for International Development (DFID) currently runs two volunteering programmes to support international volunteering. These include Platform2 and the Diaspora Volunteering Programme Scheme**.**

Platform2[32] offers young adults from less advantaged backgrounds the chance to spend 10 weeks in Ghana, Peru, India or South Africa working alongside communities on basic health, sanitation and conservation projects in order to give them a better understanding of international development issues.

The **Diaspora Volunteering Programme Scheme**[33] provides funding to help skilled professionals from the UK's diaspora communities volunteer to work in their countries or continents of heritage and for the volunteers to make a meaningful contribution to a development project.

3 REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

3.1 General legal framework

There is no one piece of legislation that refers explicitly to volunteers in the UK, rather general areas of law that apply to all UK citizens as individuals cover volunteers. Employment Law, which guarantees employees a certain set of rights, such as equal opportunities, rules on working hours, holiday, sickness and procedures for grievance and discipline etc. apply to employees only. Nevertheless, it is good practice in the UK to extend such rights and staff policies to volunteers, however there is no legal obligation to do so.

Though there is no law on volunteering in the UK, the Compact Code of Good Practice on Volunteering is in place. The Code of Practice was initially published in 2000 and revised and republished in 2005. Its purpose is to recognise the value of volunteering and sets out undertakings to enable more people to become involved in voluntary activity as well as to influence behaviour to tackle the various barriers to volunteering.

More recently, the IVR carried out a review of the Code of Practice on Volunteering. The review reports that the implementing the Code requires a concerted and consistent act of political support.

Recent evidence points to government programmes and policies that are without intention at odds with volunteering where they imply certain restrictions that prevent people from volunteering. These are explained in more detail below.

- One key issue is in relation to concerns that potential volunteers are being deterred from volunteering because of confusion over the sixteen-hour rule and a misunderstanding that volunteering over sixteen hours a week would affect people's entitlement to Job Seekers Allowance. Though discussed in more detail below, it should be noted that volunteers in receipt of Job Seekers Allowance are not restricted by the number of hours they can volunteer. The issue here is the need to provide clear and consistent advice and information on the legal aspects of volunteering.

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[32] http://www.myplatform2.com/

[33] http://www.dfid.gov.uk/Working-with-DFID/Funding-Schemes/Funding-for-volunteers/DVS/

- A key development in recent years has been the introduction of the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB). The CRB provides access to criminal record and other relevant information to organisations in England and Wales with the aim of helping organisations make more informed decisions when recruiting people to work with children and the vulnerable. Following the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act of 2006, a new Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) was created (due to be operationally by summer 2010). The main policy aim is to centralise the vetting system potential employees and volunteers will need to apply to register with the ISA. Each person will be assessed using data gathered by the CRB, including relevant criminal convictions, cautions, police intelligence and other appropriate sources. Individuals who want to work with vulnerable people you will need to apply to register with the ISA in the same way as an employee. It is proposed that there are no application fees for volunteers.

- The introduction of the ISA and the vetting and barring scheme has been relatively controversial in the UK. In relation to volunteering, concerns have been made that the scheme will lead to more paperwork, less trust and will deter individuals from volunteering. Zimmeck (2009) also notes that the vetting system may place an onerous duty and administration burdens on small volunteer-involving organisations.

- In 2008, the Borders, Immigration and Citizenship Bill (2008) was passed *with an aim to strengthen* border controls by bringing together customs and immigration powers and to ensure that newcomers to the United Kingdom earn the right to stay. It proposes amending immigration rules, making the transition for those seeking British citizenship easier and offering a fast track to those who make an effort to integrate through community activities such as volunteering. Concerns have been made that this notion challenges the definition of volunteering in its use of incentivisation. In addition, extra resources for volunteer-involving organisations may be required to cover management, language support and reimbursement of expenses additional costs. Of particular concern is the more serious issue of risk management regarding the documentation required for CRB checks for example.

- The Equality Bill (2009) aims to harmonise existing anti-discrimination and equalities legislation to cover race, disability, gender, age, sexual orientation, gender reassignment and religion or belief. A key concern in terms of its potential impact on volunteering is that whilst the Bill covers employers and service providers, it does not cover volunteers.

In Wales, there is a Code of Practice for Funding the Third Sector. It sets out the key principles that underpin Assembly funding for the voluntary sector and what the Assembly expects in return. The Code of Practice is described as a 'living' document, maintained on the Assembly's website and will be updated regularly. A group of voluntary sector representatives and Assembly officials meet twice a year to monitor the Code.

Specific legal framework which exists with respect to volunteering

There is no specific legal framework which exists with respect to volunteering.

Self-regulation in relation to volunteering

As mentioned above, the Compact Code of Practice is in place in relation to volunteering, though the research evidence suggests the Code requires further support by government.

3.2   Legal framework for individual volunteers

There is no legal framework for individual volunteers in the UK. As such, volunteers to do have a specific legal status and there are no tax exemptions for volunteers.

Volunteers and State Social Welfare Benefits

Volunteering while in receipt of state welfare benefits is acknowledged as something which can improve people personal circumstances because it increases self-confidence, builds skills and enhances employment prospects. Though volunteers are not restricted by the number of hours they volunteer, they must inform their local benefit office of their intention to volunteer and await written approval before beginning. In September 2009 the Department of Work and Pensions sets out specific guidelines for volunteering whilst on benefits[34]. The guidelines are summarised as follows:

Volunteering and Job Seekers Allowance

As mentioned above, those who are out of work and claiming Job Seekers' Allowance can volunteer without restriction, though there are some basic rules that must be complied with. First of all, unemployed volunteers claiming Job Seekers Allowance must notify JobCentre Plus of any intention to volunteer. Unemployed volunteers can then volunteer as many hours as preferred but must be still looking for paid employment. Unemployed volunteers must be available to attend an interview within 48 hours notice and to be able to start work within one week of notice. Whilst in receipt of Job Seekers Allowance, JobCentre Plus must be informed about expenses (all receipts must be retained), money received in addition to expenses (as this counts as earnings) and anything else that the volunteer receives (that may not necessarily be money).

Volunteering and Employment and Support Allowance, Incapacity Benefit or Income Support

It is possible to volunteer whilst in receipt of Employment and Support Allowance, Incapacity Benefit or Income Support as long as some basic rules are complied with. Similar to that stated above, volunteers in receipt of Employment and Support Allowance, Incapacity Benefit or Income Support must notify JobCentre Plus of any intention to volunteer; be able to attend an interview when required and inform JobCentre Plus of any expenses or monies received.

Volunteering and Housing Benefit or Council Tax Benefit

Similarly, volunteers in receipt of Housing Benefit or Council Tax Benefit (or both) must comply with the basic rules for volunteering set out above and inform the local council about any volunteering carried out or expenses received.

Volunteering away from home and State Welfare Benefits

Those in receipt of Housing Benefit or Council Tax Benefit, or who are in receipt of Income Support for housing costs may be able to live away from home for up to 13 weeks and still receive benefits. If away from home for more than 13 weeks, these benefits will usually stop. However, they can continue for up to 52 weeks in some exceptional circumstances.

Those in receipt of Carer's Allowance and volunteer away from home can still receive benefits but must still be caring for a disabled person for at least 35 hours a week.

Taxation rules on reimbursement of expenses for individual volunteers

Other than tax exemption on the reimbursement of expenses, there are no added tax benefits for volunteers in the UK.

The Helping Out research reports that 25% of volunteers were discouraged from volunteering because they were concerned about being out of pocket. Over half of volunteers said that they had not incurred any expenses from their volunteering. However

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[34] http://www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk/jcp/stellent/groups/jcp/documents/websitecontent/dev_015837.pdf

among those who had, more than three-quarters said their expenses had not been reimbursed.

For volunteer drivers, the Inland Revenue sets tax-free mileage rates under the Fixed Profit Car Scheme. This allows organisations to pay drivers a mileage allowance without the need for detailed record-keeping. However, organisations will wish to set up some system of documentation with their volunteer drivers in order to regulate expenses properly.

Taxation rules on rewards or remuneration for individual volunteers

A key issue in relation to remuneration and rewards is that considerable care needs to be applied to how and why a volunteer would receive remuneration. With regard to tax and national insurance, guidance provided by Volunteering England 'Volunteers and the Law', if volunteers receive nothing more than out-of-pocket expenses, then this reimbursement will not have tax implications. If they receive some form of payment, then this will be taxable. Simply referring to a payment as 'expenses' does not make it exempt, nor does describing it as an honorarium or pocket money.

3.3 Legal framework for organisations engaging volunteers

There is no legal framework for organisations engaging volunteers in the UK - the legal situation is complicated by the existence of different legal frameworks covering England, Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland.

In practice, in England and Wales falls to the Charity Commission to decide whether or not an organisation is charitable in law. The Commission must be satisfied that the purposes or objects are exclusively charitable. Once recognised as a registered charity these bodies are protected by the Crown, the Courts and the Commission for their purpose. A charity is exempt from tax on most forms of income and capital gains if they are applied to charitable purposes.

An organisation is not required to register for VAT until its taxable supplies (business income) reaches £60,000 (this may vary depending on the budget) in a twelve month period, but it may register voluntarily.

3.4 Legal framework for profit-making organisations

There are no legal provisions for private organisations involved in volunteering and there are no specific tax privileges for private companies to accept volunteers or to allow employees to participate in volunteering activity.

3.5 Insurance and protection of volunteers

Volunteers are covered by Section 3 of the "Health & Safety at Work Act" of 1974, which imposes a general duty on every employer 'to ensure, as far as reasonably practical, that persons not in their employment, who may be affected by their undertaking, are not exposed to risks to their health and safety' and 'to give information as might affect their health or safety'.

Organisations with five or more employees must have a written health and safety policy, setting out the organisation's commitment and clarifying procedures. Smaller organisations should also strongly consider writing such a policy. Volunteers should be included in the policy and have access to it.

Employers' Liability Insurance

Advice provided by Volunteering England states that regardless of the legal structure of the organisation, it is important that volunteers are adequately insured. This means checking that existing policies extend to volunteers. Two of the most important insurances are

employers' liability and public liability. Although the law does not compel organisations to insure volunteers under employers' liability, it is clearly advisable for them to do so because otherwise they may be open to negligence claims brought by volunteers. Public liability policies may vary so organisations are advised to check their cover and clarify that it covers volunteers.

Personal Accident Insurance

Personal Accident Insurance is not provided by all organisations to their volunteers and there are often exclusions regarding who can be covered, for example age restrictions and what activities are covered. Age limits for personal accident cover on some insurance policies has led some organisations to set upper age limits for many volunteer roles. In many cases, this has been challenged as arbitrary and discriminatory, and indeed recent challenges to insurance companies on this point have lead to some changes.

Motor Vehicles Insurance

All drivers are required by law in the UK to have motor vehicle insurance. Organisations involving volunteer drivers using their own vehicles should ensure that volunteers have up-to-date insurance cover (and a current driving licence valid for the type of vehicle being driven) and that they have told their insurance company that the vehicle is being used for voluntary activities. It is possible to arrange "contingent motor liability insurance", "which protects the organisation against any legal liability that may arise from a volunteer being involved in an accident during the course of their volunteer work and who has not informed their insurance company. Some organisations add cover for drivers to their public liability policy.

Older volunteer drivers using a vehicle provided by the organisation for which they are volunteering can pose a particular set of difficulties. Insurance companies may impose upper age limits or require volunteers over a certain age to re-take their driving test. In this context, it is therefore easier if the volunteer driver uses his/her own vehicle.

4   ECONOMIC DIMENSION OF VOLUNTEERING

4.1   Funding arrangements for volunteering

National budget allocated to volunteering

Over the period of the spending review (2008-11), the Office of the Third Sector is expected to invest over £515 million in third sector programmes, including:

- An £80 million small grants programme for community action and voice (announced in the 2007 Budget)

- A £50 million local endowment match fund, which will enable local independent foundations to develop community endowments to provide sustainability in future grant making

- £117 million of new resources available for youth volunteering, through the organisation **V** (the Government will also continue to match private sector contributions to **V**)

- Over £85 million for Capacitybuilders, for third sector infrastructure development

- Up to £65 million for Futurebuilders, bringing the total projected value of all loans, grants and loan guarantees under the management of the fund to £215 million by 2011

Sources of funding for voluntary organisations

In a report published by NCVO (2009) reporting on the State and the Voluntary Sector – recent trends in government funding and public sector delivery reveals that income from statutory sources totalled £12 billion in 2006/07. This includes resources from UK central, local and devolved administrations, international bodies, overseas governments and the National Lottery distributors. Of this £12 billion, £4.2 billion was voluntary income (grants) and £7.8 billion was earned income (contracts). The report also shows that income from statutory sources has increased year-on-year since 2000/01.

The voluntary sector in the UK received 1.9% of the sector's total income in 2006 from foreign governments and international agencies.

According to the NCVO (2009) research the sources of funding for voluntary organisations can be summarised as:

- Statutory sources (incl. National Lottery)   36% - contracts (65%)/ grants (35%)
- Individuals   38%
- Internally generated   11%
- Voluntary sector   10%
- Private sector   5%

The report also notes that the level of government funding varies by local authority, from 7% of voluntary organisations receiving state funding through to 76% receiving state funding. It is noted under half of the statutory income of voluntary organisations comes from local authorities.

Social Services of General Interest (SSGI)

There is a rich and powerful body of research in relation voluntary organisations delivering public services, especially through the mechanisms of contracting and the welfare market. Evidence suggests the role of voluntary and community sector organisations in the delivery of public services raises concerns about the impact of public procurement tendering processes on voluntary organisations together with the impact of government funding on the autonomy and special characteristics of voluntary organisations.

As mentioned above, one of the most significant changes in the early 1990's for voluntary organisations followed the introduction of competition for social services contracts. The rationale behind elevating competition continues to be widely debated with concerns that the voluntary sector and voluntary activities runs the risk of being perceived to be less expensive, non paid labour. Here, the Nathan Report clearly identified the dilemma: voluntary organisations might become involved in competition with other voluntary and private agencies. Within this scenario, the report described how value for money might place greatest emphasis on cheapness rather than high-quality services.

To support voluntary organisations NCVO launched a programme of work designed to equip voluntary organisations with the practical tools to meet the challenges associated with public procurement arrangements. Within the context of the education and training system in England, the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) has been working to support the third sector to work with them. Since 2007, the LSC has ensured that all regional commissioning plans specify where the third sector may be able to contribute to LSC's priorities. The LSC has also worked in partnership with the Quality Improvement Agency (since merged and is now the Learning and Improvement Service) to provide one-to-one support on the tendering process of third sector organisations. Further work has been underway to launch a peer mentoring system to help the sector develop the systems required to deliver LSC contracts.

More broadly, concerns were raised in relation to the need for long-term funding to strengthen and sustain volunteering infrastructure. Particular concerns have been raised in relation to funding timescales and difficulties associated with accessing funding to support volunteering.

4.2 Economic value of volunteering

Over the past 10 years in particular, focus has turned to measuring the economic value of volunteering (Foster et al, 2001; Gaskin, 2000) as well as inputs and evaluating performance (Kendall and Knapp, 2000) partly to justify the voluntary sector's existence within a market economy but also to try to understand its financial contribution and the cost of replacing it should it not exist. Such research, however, presents many challenges due to the informal nature of many voluntary organisations, the sheer numbers of people involved and the diversity of volunteering undertaken by individuals.

It is of interest to note that the Commission for the Compact appointed CSV Consulting to conduct a major research study on the costs and benefits of volunteering by groups currently under-represented in what they refer to as the volunteer "workforce". As part of this project, a tool will be designed to help volunteer-supporting organisations and commissioners to have a clearer idea of the ancillary costs of such volunteering. This work is currently underway.

Income generated through volunteering

According to the UK Civil Society Almanac (2009), the net contribution of volunteers to the economy is estimated to be £22.7 billion.

To provide an indication of the trends associated with income generated through volunteering, according to the IVR (2007), volunteering has had a significant impact on the economy in England. As mentioned above, in 2003, 42% of people in England and Wales volunteered through a group, club or organisation at least once, equivalent to approximately 17.9 million people. Each volunteer contributed an estimated 104 hours in the twelve months before the survey and the total contribution was 1.9 billion hours. This was equivalent of one million full-time workers. At the national average wage their contribution was worth around £22.5 billion.

As set out by WCVA (2007) from a survey of voluntary organisations operating in Wales, WCVA estimates that total income in 2005-06 was £1.2 billion (Almanac). The sources were: 32% national and local government, 29% internally generated (mostly rent of housing associations), 28% public giving, 4% from businesses, 3% from the national lottery (all distributors) and 3% from other voluntary organisations (trust funds).

Value of volunteering work as a share of GDP

According to Volunteering England, official figures report the voluntary sector accounts for £7.4 billion of the national GDP.

In Wales the contribution of the voluntary sector is the sum of the value of volunteer time and the staff costs of voluntary organisations. From a survey of voluntary organisations operating in Wales, it is estimated that the total staff costs are £666 million. When added to the estimated value of volunteering (2.4 billion), this amounts to over £3 billion. This is equivalent to 7.3% of Welsh GVA (GDP) in 2003. (Total headline GVA in Wales in 2005 was £40.9 billion,) (WCVA 2007).

Issues of service substitution and job substitution

Issues of service substitution and job substitution are complex. Research published by the IVR presents a discussion around the role of government in volunteering. An important

aspect of the discussion in relation to volunteering and its role in the public services is for volunteering to seen as supplying 'extra' services not 'essential' service. As public services are being cut to reduce costs (e.g. meals on wheels, contact centres, day centres), there is a concern the neediest in society will suffer. The key issue here is that the role of volunteers in public services delivery should be to complement the work of paid staff, or add value, and not to replace paid staff.

IVR research discussed concerns regarding the more extensive involvement of volunteers in the delivery of public services that might lead to volunteers being used as cheap labour or substituting for work considered to be the province of paid staff. There are a number of broader concerns to highlight in that volunteers may run the risk of being exploited by paid staff, and that low paid staff may lose their jobs to volunteers.

5 SOCIAL AND CULTURAL DIMENSION OF VOLUNTEERING

Though there is compelling literature documenting the positive association between the social, cultural and economic dimensions and volunteering in the UK, the extent to which social capital can be generated through participation in volunteering (through the perceived capacity to contribute to greater social cohesion, community neighbourhood regeneration and civic renewal) continues to be debated (see for example Putnam 2000; Forrest and Kearns 2001; Kay and Bradbury 2009).

Generally speaking however there are strong messages in the UK concerning the cultural and social benefits of volunteering, particularly in terms of social inclusion, though recent research (Helping Out, Office of the Third Sector) shows that those deemed at risk of social inclusion are less likely to volunteer. In September 2009, the Office of the Third Sector launched a £2 million pilot fund in London, the West Midlands and the North-West, to support disabled people to volunteer. The fund aims to increase the number of disabled people volunteering in the target regions.

5.1 Key benefits for volunteers, the community and direct beneficiaries

Volunteer perspective

According to Helping Out (2007), the top five benefits of volunteering from an individual perspective are:

- A sense of satisfaction from seeing the results (97%)
- I really enjoy it (96%)
- It gives me a sense of personal achievement (88%)
- Meet people and make friends (86%)
- Gives me the chance to do things that I am good at (83%)

The research findings report some differences among age groups where personal benefits of volunteering varied with age and with sex, although all groups were unanimous in their view that satisfaction and enjoyment were the top two benefits of volunteering. Young people aged 16–34, for example, were the age group most likely to ascribe importance to the benefits of gaining new skills through volunteering, enhancing their employment prospects, gaining a recognised qualification and gaining a position in the community. They were also most likely to say that it was important that volunteering made them feel less stressed. Meanwhile, older volunteers (aged 65 or over) were the age group most likely to stress the importance of volunteering in terms of 'getting out of themselves'.

Women were more likely than men to place importance on feeling less selfish through volunteering, getting out of themselves, feeling needed and enhancing their confidence. In general, volunteers from at-risk groups were more effusive about the benefits of volunteering. In discussing the benefits to the individual it is also important to highlight reasons why people do not volunteer. As stated in the Helping Out report, the most popular reasons include not enough spare time (82%), Put off by bureaucracy (49%) and Worried about risk/liability (47%).

Community perspective

Where the benefits of volunteering on the community perspective have been most noted is in relation to Northern Ireland where the years of the civil unrest saw a significant growth in the number of voluntary and community groups, including groups directly involved in peace and reconciliation and in cross-community work.

Why Not Ask Me? research into volunteering and community relations amongst young people in Belfast published in 2007 shows 78% of respondents are interested in volunteering that are directly aimed at cross-community contact and cooperation.

In Northern Ireland, volunteering is promoted as a positive way of engaging individuals in their local communities and is perceived as generating enormous benefits for communities and contributes to social development, community cohesion, social inclusion and social capital.

5.2   Factors that motivate individuals to volunteer

As set out in the Helping Out report volunteers reported a range of pragmatic and altruistic reasons for starting to volunteer (and many mentioned a number of reasons for their involvement). Just over half of all current formal volunteers (53%) got involved because they wanted to improve things or help people. For two-fifths (41%) it was because the cause was important to them that they got involved, while having spare time on their hands was a motivating factor for two-fifths (41%). Social aspects of volunteering were also important, with 30% getting involved to meet people or to make new friends. Wanting to give something back was the least common motivator (1%).

6   VOLUNTEERING IN THE CONTEXT OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING

While there is no one overall policy for volunteering within the context of the education and training system in the UK, the role of volunteering and the potential contribution it can make to a number of wider policies is well recognised. For example, youth volunteering is recognised as one way of developing transferable skills and contributing towards the Letich agenda.

Volunteering can be a positive way of engaging young people who are not in education, employment or training, or who have other barriers to getting on in life. Furthermore, The Youth PSA (Public Service Agreement) aims to increase the number of children and young people on the path to success. One key objective of the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) is to increase participation in positive activities, such as volunteering, as a way of improving the skills and prospects of young people.

It is also interesting to note the level of volunteering that takes place in the different education sectors across the UK (school, further education and higher education sectors). Evidence shows that in England, student volunteers gave nearly 3.5 million hours to their communities in 2004 and contributed to £42 million to the economy. In universities in

England in 2000, there were also over 180 local Student Community Action Group representing approximately 25,000 student volunteers who together supported over 90,000 people.

6.1 Recognition of volunteers' skills and competences within the national educational and training system

The recognition of volunteers' skills and competences within the education system is implicit within the education and training systems across the UK. This is largely reflected in the arrangements for the accreditation and validation of non-formal and informal learning.

Linked to the recognition of skills and competences within the national education system, a number of awarding bodies offer accredited qualifications relating to volunteering. These qualifications are on the Qualification and Credit Framework (these can be viewed in more detail from the national database of accredited qualifications[35]). For example ASDAN offer Community Volunteering Qualifications at levels 1, 2 and 3 provide a means to recognise and accredit voluntary and community activities and can aid the recruitment and retention of volunteers, as well as rewarding their contributions within particular organisations or projects. ASDAN also run the Community Involvement and Volunteering Award (CIVA). The CIVA accredits up to 60 hours of community involvement and volunteering activity. This Award provides a certificate of achievement and progression into nationally recognised Awards and Qualifications and is linked to the UK Qualifications framework.

Other examples (though by no means limited to) include Business in the Community's Volunteering Plus Award which is accredited through city and Guilds and the ASDAN Certificate in Community Volunteering.

In Northern Ireland, Youth Link is currently the largest provider of accredited training for volunteer and part-time youth workers in Northern Ireland (NI). Plans to expand the work of the organisation to meet the increasing demand are at an advanced stage.

In recent years award ceremonies have been used as an important approach to recognise the contribution volunteers have made and the skills they have developed. Examples include the Whitbread Awards in England and the Wales Volunteer of the Year Awards.

6.2 Education and training opportunities for volunteers

The Helping Out (2007) research findings report on the way in which volunteers were supported and managed where the evidence points to 79% of volunteers not receiving any training for their role. Overall the study suggests that the more frequently individuals volunteered, the more likely they were to receive support, management and training. The research shows that those involved in raising and handling money (the most common volunteering activity) were least likely to receive training.

Generally speaking volunteering management is an important aspect of volunteering across the UK. As a direct result of the Commission's *Manifesto for Change (2008)*, the Cabinet Office announced £3 million investment in volunteering management. Though voluntary organisations raise concerns about the lack of funding available for volunteering management, many initiatives are underway to provide professional development for volunteers. For example, CSV training centres offer a wide range of education and training opportunities to a wide range of learners. These include employability training, adult vocational training, ESOL, health related training, provision for learners with disabilities and difficulties and a range of provision for young people that include NVQs, Apprenticeships

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http://www.accreditedqualifications.org.uk/QualificationSearchResults.aspx?Type=AdvancedQln&Keywords=volunteer&QualificationType=NotSet&Page=1&PageSize=10

and Entry to Employment (16-18 year olds). In addition, CSV has established the Institute for Advanced Volunteer Management and offers a range of provision including Professional Media Training, Volunteer Management Training for individuals who mange volunteers or manage a volunteering programme.

In Wales, In Wales a common training framework is used by the 22 County Voluntary Councils, including four modules on Volunteer Management.

7 EU POLICIES AND VOLUNTEERING

Some concerns were raised that there is no consistency to volunteering at the EU level. Rather than developing a strategy for volunteering at EU level, it was suggested that more debate across Europe at national level about policies and strategies for volunteering is required.

There is a view that the European Year of Volunteering will be a good opportunity to identify issues around diversity in volunteering and to highlight and celebrate the differences between what some local communities believe to be culture, tradition, history and what others believe to be volunteering across Member States.

At EU level it is important European policies and strategies do not have unintended consequences for volunteering. The issue here relates to the need for a joined up approach to volunteering across the EU.

8 CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR VOLUNTEERING

8.1 Challenges for volunteering

The 2007 Helping Out report identified key challenges and barriers that include individuals not having enough spare time (82%), put off by bureaucracy (49%), worried about risk/liability (47%), don't know how to find out about getting involved (39%), not got the right skills/experience (39%).

The research evidence points to specific challenges young people and older adults face in relation to volunteering. Research suggests structural barriers prevent some older adults from volunteering, these include a lack of knowledge about volunteering opportunities, incurring personal expenses, lack of skills and transportation, lack of clarity of expectations, assignment of menial tasks, time constraints, and inadequate volunteer management.

Similarly research undertaken for the Russell Commission identified a range of barriers to young people's volunteering. These barriers resonate with those identified by older adults and also include competing demands on young people's time; negative peer pressure; young people's lack of access to appropriate information on volunteering; voluntary organisations' failure to reach out to young people and to offer them appropriate opportunities; administrative issues affecting voluntary organisations, including legislation, insurance and regulation, benefit arrangements which deter unemployed young people from volunteering, and specific barriers to disabled young people's involvement. Research carried out for v into factors preventing young people from volunteering identified lack of time as the main obstacle, followed by lack of information about how to get involved, and young people feeling that they did not have anything to offer. Transport, childcare and peer pressure were also identified as barriers to involvement.

The research findings point to volunteering becoming more professionalised with increasingly formalised structures involving, for example, selection, appraisal, and training.

However, it is argued that little is known about how these changes are likely to be perceived by volunteers, particularly those who are over the age of retirement. There is some evidence that increased formality can be a deterrent to volunteering for people, particularly older people (Davis Smith and Gay 2005).

A challenge highlighted by Stanley et al (2004) is linked to that of image. The research suggests the term 'volunteering' causes some groups to disassociate themselves from voluntary activities which they might otherwise engage in. This finding was supported by Gaskin (1998) reporting a survey in which two-thirds of young people interviewed said 'volunteering' was not something people in their age group would do. Amongst other barriers to their participation peer pressure was cited and two-thirds of those interviewed said volunteering would be 'uncool'. To address this image problem programmes need a brand that young people can identify with and aspire to is necessary.

The need for extra resources to attract and support volunteers from under-represented groups is a major barrier. This is also linked to the cultural understanding of volunteering that needs to be more inclusive, more flexible, and more expansive in its definitions – this is diversity in volunteering.

Some concerns have been raised about the policy assumptions underlying volunteering and how volunteering has been used to address policy needs. The concern being that it runs the risk of generating a distinction between those that do and do not volunteer. It is unhelpful and over-simplistic to equate volunteering with good citizenship and non-volunteering with poor citizenship. Volunteering can be an expression of citizenship and contribute to activities and qualities associated with citizenship, but many people make an equally valuable contribution to society in many other ways.

A barrier to an effective volunteering infrastructure is reported to be a shortage of resources. The research suggests organisations lack the funds to provide management and support systems at an optimal level. Government funding of volunteer programmes is criticised for a number of aspects, including limitation in planning, continuity and consultation. While benefits of government programmes and initiatives to promote volunteering are acknowledged, there are a number of deficits. These focus on the lack of synergy between volunteering programmes and policies, and programmes and policies in other areas, including legislative barriers such as benefits rules, CRB checks, and health and safety laws.

The introduction of the Compact and Volunteering Code of Practice was generally welcomed however the research evidence suggests implementation and applicability has been limited. As the Compact is not legally concerns have been raised that it inherently lacked authority to ensure compliance.

8.2 Opportunities for volunteering

The need for a national agenda (though not described or required in the form of a national strategy) for volunteering was considered important. This links to concerns that at both UK and EU level, volunteering is widely dispersed across a broad range of policy areas.

The issue of more research (particularly in relation to diversity and the economic value of volunteering) together with a consistent approach to data collection at national level were raised and highlighted as key opportunities for volunteering.

The links between volunteering and the recession is highlighted where the current economic situation is perceived as both a challenge and an opportunity. For example, voluntary organisations are struggling to secure funds not only to continue delivering services but also in their capacity to cope with increasing demands for volunteering during the recession. At a time of high unemployment, volunteering is considered as one way for

individuals to consider diversifying into new professional practices or to maintain and develop new skills. Importantly, the volunteering movement generates a sense of social solidarity keeping people together during tough times, rather than society collapsing.

Benefits of volunteering need to be more widely promoted. Easier access routes, the removal of barriers, more promotion of opportunities, and highlighting the positives that can result from volunteering would enable more people to make an informed choice and to engage with voluntary work.

A key opportunity for volunteering is the strength of marketing, raising awareness and promoting positive images relating to volunteering. This is linked to the increasingly important need to channel practice towards policy makers. The benefits for individuals, organisations and communities need to be publicised and celebrated. Advantages for different groups, such as young people, unemployed people or employees, should be more actively promoted.

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Interviewees

Community Service Volunteers (CSV)

Institute for Volunteering Research

Oldham Local Authority

Office of the Third Sector, Cabinet Office

The Scottish Government

V (the youth volunteering charity)

Volunteering England

Volunteer Development Agency Northern Ireland