A choice blend

What volunteers want from organisation and management

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The research
Much recent commentary emphasises the changes which volunteering is undergoing and the changing context within which it takes place: globalisation, technological transformation, public policy, social and demographic trends, an evolving civil society, post-modern values, changes in family life, work patterns and support structures (Dekker, 2002; Kearney, 2001; Davis Smith, 2000; Burns, 2001).

In the midst of these changes, some of which are seen to put volunteering under threat, volunteer-involving organisations are seeking the best ways to encourage, attract and retain volunteers. Volunteer management has been the object of recent scrutiny and a variety of models have been proposed[1]. The consensus is that the dominant professional/workplace model is not an adequate response to the diversity of volunteers' characteristics, motivations and needs. In what has become something of a well-used phrase in volunteering research, 'one size does not fit all' (see Rochester, 1999; Zimmeck, 2000; Davis Smith, 1996; Meijs & Hoogstad, 2001).

In considering the 'ideal' volunteering-involving organisation and improvements to the volunteering infrastructure, it is important to take account of volunteers' own views. This paper, commissioned by the Institute for Volunteering Research for the England Volunteering Forum, reports on three focus groups of volunteers[2] and other findings gleaned from the literature. Through investigating what makes for a satisfying and enduring volunteering experience, it proposes a model of progressive volunteer involvement with eight key pressure points which can influence a person's likelihood of becoming and staying a volunteer.

1.2 A model of volunteer involvement
The model starts with the non-volunteer and progresses to the longterm volunteer. Four stages are characterised:

The doubter is outside volunteering, and may have attitudes, characteristics or circumstances which keep them a non-volunteer.
The starter has entered volunteering by making an enquiry or application.
The doer has committed to being a volunteer and begun volunteering.
The stayer persists as a longterm volunteer.

The aim of the volunteering world and the volunteering infrastructure is to aid each transition in the most positive way possible, to transform the doubter into a starter into a doer into a stayer.

The model concentrates on the 'demand side' – what volunteer-involving organisations can do to facilitate and encourage volunteer longevity. This must take full account of the 'supply side' – what volunteers bring to the situation. The huge range of volunteer characteristics, motivations, interests and constraints[3] presents a given which organisations must accommodate but over which they may have

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[1] Appendix 1 gives a brief review of this.
[2] See Appendix 3 for details.
[3] Appendix 2 briefly reviews these.

relatively little control. The evidence suggests, however, that being fully aware of these factors can help organisations to exert positive influence likely to encourage or prolong a volunteering career (Locke et al., nd).

1.3   The eight pressure points

Research suggests that there are millions of people who do not volunteer who have no real objections to doing so. So what can an organisation do to convert non-volunteers into lifelong donors of their time and abilities? The eight points at which an appropriate intervention may achieve this by overcoming or minimising barriers, are:

The image and appeal of volunteering
Methods of recruiting volunteers
Recruitment and application procedures
Induction into volunteering
Training for volunteering
Overall management of the volunteering
The ethos and culture of the organisation
The support and supervision given to volunteers

The following sections review each of these presenting, first, evidence from this research and, second, implications for practice.

2 FROM DOUBTER TO STARTER

The first three pressure points influence this transition.

2.1 The image and appeal of volunteering

The people in the focus groups had either seen volunteering in a positive light and chosen it as an appealing option, or had become 'an accidental volunteer' as one young contributor described it (by 'helping out' at youth and children's clubs at her church). In the latter case, those who stumbled into volunteering agreed they had no pre-existing negative images associated with it.

However, there was some reinforcement of the view that 'volunteering' struggles to rise above its limited image, especially in some sectors of the population. It was noted, nevertheless, that this was a less dominant view in 2003 than previous research experiences have revealed. So perhaps the widening of participation (among young people and BME people, for example) and the raised profile of volunteering are beginning to make an impact.

Of greater concern, however, was the rather strong image that volunteers are overworked:

I wanted to volunteer when the children started school, but I put it off for ages. I thought there would be so much, so many demands, that once I put my name down, it would open the floodgates and my time would no longer be my own. It put me off. (Volunteer in her thirties)

It doesn't matter what group it is they always expect a little bit more than you want to give. (Older volunteer)

The literature appears to confirm that volunteering has great trouble shaking off its dominant image – 'the culprit is the v-word itself, with its inevitable blue-rinse connotations…' (Lukka & Ellis, 2001; Little 2001). Negative or stereotypical images of 'volunteers' and 'volunteering' are a particular deterrent for young people and for BME people, but also affect elderly people, and minority groups such as disabled people and gay people, who feel they do not fit organisations' preferred volunteer profile (Niyazi, 1996; Gaskin, 1998 & 2003; Lukka & Ellis, 2001).

There is one excessively dominant construct of volunteering, which has emerged from a specifically Western setting and has served to marginalise other, minority definitions. As a result.., individuals who are potential volunteers but who do not conform to, or identify with, this dominant construct are inadvertently excluded from 'volunteering'. (Lukka & Ellis, 2001)

People's perceptions of what constitutes voluntary work are often found to be partial, excluding sizeable areas of volunteer activity. The importance of promotion and group-specific outreach is emphasised by volunteers (Hutchison, 1999; Gaskin, 1998; Rochester & Hutchison, 2001).

2.2 Implications

The issue of people's perceptions of 'volunteering', 'volunteer' and voluntary work has been highlighted for some time. Parliamentary hearings in 2001 concluded that 'volunteering needs a new and livelier image' and suggested ways for improving media coverage (Dingle & Heath, 2001). Improving its appeal requires making volunteering in general more visible and more 'normal'. This suggests – and not just for young people - 'a general consciousness-raising which would embed volunteering in (young) people's overall knowledge of the world and give them more sense of their potential relationship with it' (Gaskin, 1998).

Improving the image and appeal of volunteering also involves the promotion of volunteering activities and opportunities through publicity and regular advertising. This should be informative and inclusive, so that people are aware that different backgrounds, interests, motivations and degrees of commitment are catered for.

Many admitted that they did not promote their organisation as offering meaningful opportunities to BME volunteers.. Perception of mainstream organisations as white and middle-class was identified as a major barrier .. organisations had not proactively promoted themselves as anything other than that. (Kamat, 2001)

The leaflet produced by the Black Development Agency offered short-term or long-term, daytime or evening volunteering and international volunteering. It stated that 'Volunteering is ideal for people who are studying, working full-time or part-time, unemployed, returning to work, sixth formers, retired', ie everyone! Translation was available into Bangla, Chinese, Gujarati, Hindi, Punjabi, Somali, Urdu and Vietnamese. (Gaskin, 2003)

Luton Lives (Active Community Demonstration Project) ran poster campaigns highlighting volunteering by particular groups, such as older people, disabled people and lesbian, gay and bisexual people. The posters were eye-catching, with clear messages about volunteering, and posted widely in venues frequented by the target group. (Gaskin, forthcoming)

2.3 Methods of recruiting volunteers

Research repeatedly shows that many people do not know what is on offer nor how to find out about voluntary opportunities (Hutchison, 1999; Gaskin, 1998; CSV, nd) The focus groups reiterated the finding that many people are hampered by the lack of information and access points to route them into volunteering.

The focus groups had experienced most of the usual recruitment methods. Word of mouth was most common among older volunteers, being asked by a neighbour or friend. A number had approached and been placed by the local Volunteer Bureau and found its advice and support invaluable. Advertising – whether by the VB or by individual voluntary organisations – can play an important role. While advertisements for volunteers may not appear to trigger a tide of applicants, many of the focus group participants testified to their value in keeping volunteering in their minds, to be acted upon when the time was right for them.

The young volunteers had entered volunteering through a variety of routes: family links, church connections, Duke of Edinburgh scheme at school, Millennium

Volunteers, joining university student action schemes or by taking the initiative in order to gain work experience. Their awareness of Volunteer Bureaux was limited and several had been given no advice about volunteering at school, by careers advisors or other potential 'gatekeepers'. Even highly motivated computer-literate young people have difficulty finding out what's available.

I've been trying to arrange volunteering for animal charities. It's really hard to find out what's out there. I go on the net and their website is maybe one page and doesn't tell you anything about volunteering opportunities. (Young volunteer/voluntary co-ordinator of student volunteering scheme)

A. I found out by accident. I was looking at Ejobs, for a job, and there was a square on the screen that said Volunteering. By pressing that I found all these links and loads of volunteering opportunities, but I had no idea it was there. It's not very well promoted.
B. I'd love to find another playgroup like mine for new ideas and to give training on different ways to play etc, and it's really hard to find out. I've spent hours on the net.
C. It was only when I went to University that I saw everything you could do as a volunteer. At school there was nothing. (Young volunteers)

Q. What about Volunteer Bureaux?
A. 'Bureau' is a bit of an oldfashioned word, it could put people off.
B. They should combine them with careers advice centres, everyone knows where they are.
C. Careers advisors have no knowledge of volunteering. I've never even had it suggested to me. (Young volunteers)

Since recruitment relies heavily on word of mouth (Britton, 1999; Davis Smith, 1998; Hollway & Mawhinney, 2002) not moving in the 'right' circles nor having volunteer friends or family, reduces the likelihood of encountering opportunities or requests for involvement. Recruitment strategies may not be inclusive and advertisements and leaflets may not present an appealing message or one which counters existing preconceptions and stereotypes. Additionally, many organisations operate upper or lower age limits (the latter more prevalent) which means they do not attempt to attract certain people and would turn them away if they applied (IVR, 1999; Gaskin, 1998; Rochester & Hutchison, 2001).

2.4   Implications
Methods of recruitment can include targeted advertising to particular groups; innovative approaches that go beyond throwaway leaflets; carefully crafted messages and designs that present a modern image for volunteering, publicise its variety and emphasise the benefits for the volunteer; outreach, talks, roadshows, presence at public events, shows etc.; more active promotion of existing websites and databases and, where needed, the creation of new ones; vigorous promotion in schools, colleges, workplaces, retirement schemes etc.; and maximising word of mouth recruitment by equipping and encouraging current volunteers as ambassadors for volunteering.

These publicity and promotion approaches should be backed up with multiple points of access, involving networks of gatekeepers: in education, workplaces, careers advice

offices, exclusion centres, youth groups, cyber cafés, community centres, libraries, jobcentres etc.; and more visible and inviting specialist volunteer centres (bureaux).

Active Community Demonstration Projects tried a huge range of publicity approaches and found these innovative ones worked well: cinema advertising (negotiated free), posters in tube stations and bus shelters, flyers on buses (free), sticks of rock with a volunteering message printed through, a leaflet concertina'd between plastic credit-card sized covers, a regular press column, radio programmes, adverts in theatre programmes, maps, diaries and calendars, used and seen repeatedly. (Gaskin, forthcoming)

Drawing on a framework of the determinants of volunteer participation and decision-making theory, Clary et al. tested empirically the persuasiveness of different messages to promote volunteerism. The research found that concrete messages that present concrete (ie relatively particularistic) reasons for volunteering work better than abstract (relatively value-laden) messages in recruiting volunteers. But abstract reasons are superior to messages of concrete reasons in retaining volunteers. (Clary et al., 1994)

It would be fantastic to have a dedicated volunteering website, especially for people our age, with a contact number or email, so you could navigate through by area of interest, location, etc. and get an idea of what is involved before you commit yourself. It should be very widely publicised so everyone knows about it. (Young volunteer)

The Home Office Older Volunteers Initiative used these recruitment approaches: printed leaflets, posters and bookmarks distributed at targeted venues, through social workers, old people's forums, business pre-retirement groups etc.; the local media; special events, displays and open days; messages that focused on building on people's interests and on the range of voluntary work available; and, essentially, personal contact to back up these approaches. (Rochester & Hutchison, 2001)

2.5 Recruitment and application procedures

Many volunteer applicants appear to go through no formal process, such as a pre-selection interview (86% in the National Survey) (Davis Smith, 1998; Holmes, 1999). Where they exist, procedures may be offputting, too drawn-out, too formal or insufficiently personalised. Volunteers prefer a relaxed approach that is not too bureaucratic. They recognise that vetting is necessary in some volunteering ('children and vulnerable people') but feel 'they go over the top'.

At my first interview, they made me feel very welcome. It was quite informal which put me at my ease. You want them to be informal but efficient. It's that blend. (Older volunteer)

A. One of the things I object to is all this vetting. I have two neighbours who are totally qualified, who do community work professionally and they have to go through all this rigmarole. It's two months before they get started. I know it comes back to 'this is the system' but it needs short-circuiting. It should be rubber-stamped within two days.
B. It's more like applying for a job. It puts me off recommending people.

C. And people drift away because they have to wait so long.
D. There have been a lot of delays with the police and their computers vetting people.
A. It annoys me that people can't take me on trust.
D. It's the lawyers – we've got the American system now – people will sue you. There should be some safeguards but they've got to find a way to make it easier. (Retired volunteers)

Volunteers are nervous at their first enquiry or interview. They want a satisfying personal interaction in which the person representing the organisation takes the time to find out what their interests, capabilities and inclinations are, to explain what is available and what is expected, and to suggest suitable opportunities. Young people had particularly offputting experiences.

A. They are quite snobby about what you have done before. I was lucky that I'd done the MENCAP summer scheme, so I had some experience to offer. But mostly it's 'oh, you're far too young to be doing this, what can you offer?' If you haven't got something to start with, it's very hard, you have to fight.
B. I went trying to find places to volunteer and everywhere I went turned me down – too young, not enough experience, we don't have anything of the sort. A lot of places don't know what volunteering is about. They have work experience places, but then you're just a dogsbody. I don't think it's arrogance, just ignorance, they don't realise what you can do.
(Young volunteers)

It wasn't really an interview, they just gave me a great wad of things to read. You have to wade through all this palaver. (Older volunteer)

Organisations may, firstly, not have an adequate range of types of work or, secondly, may make assumptions about what the recruit is interested in or capable of. Both young and elderly volunteers complain of being given routine, low level tasks that do not take account of their abilities and potential (Hutchison, 1999; Gaskin, 1998). All the focus group participants agreed that they would put up with 'boring' work for a while, but that sooner or later they would say something or leave.

2.6   Implications

Recruitment and application procedures should be welcoming and not intimidating nor inadvertently discriminatory. They should embrace well-staffed reception and walk-in/call-in/email access; a friendly and efficient initial response; attractive handouts (in multiple languages, as appropriate) to be taken away; informal but efficient interview process with attentive personalised treatment; volunteer role descriptions; a volunteer charter and/or clear explanations of rights and responsibilities, procedures and expectations; individualised matching to opportunities; as wide a range of volunteer roles as possible; and referral elsewhere if an appropriate opportunity cannot be found.

The HOOVI report concluded that organisations should be aware that:
1. successful initial contact involves (a) listening to what applicants are interested in doing and (b) letting them know about the full range of possible volunteer roles open to them

2. selection, induction and training appropriate to the role and context of the volunteering activity
3. an informal friendly chat rather than an 'interview' is preferred
4. they could visit potential volunteers in their own homes
5. opportunities should be as diverse as possible and not constrained by preconceptions of 'appropriate' tasks for older volunteers
6. attention should be given to identifying and overcoming any barriers to volunteering
7. an initial induction/training course can be used as a selection procedure.
(Rochester & Hutchison, 2001)

In Northern Ireland befriending services, emphasis was placed on 'keeping volunteers interested during the sometimes lengthy recruitment process of reference checks etc. by getting them involved in other parts of the service, or by shadowing another befriender' (Hollway & Mawhinney, 2000).

When she admitted that they didn't really have the sort of thing I was hoping to do, she suggested several other places I could try and gave me their details. I suppose because they're in competition for volunteers, organisations don't like to do this, but I thought it was really helpful. And it made a positive impression, so I would go back to them in the future if the right thing came up. (Young volunteer)

3   FROM STARTER TO DOER
This involves two pressure points.

3.1   Induction into volunteering
The adequacy of induction and training provided for volunteers continues to fall short of ideal (Davis Smith, 1998; Holmes, 1999; CSV, nd). Induction provides a crucial point which can reinforce their motivation to volunteer and their sense of identifying with the organisation, or raise doubts about the wisdom of proceeding. The psychology of organisational commitment points to this entry point as critical.

A job's psychological benefits are important to motivating and sustaining effective volunteer action. Specifically, volunteer organisational commitment strengthens as individuals become more egoistically identified with their work (high job involvement), experience clear work expectations, encounter fewer inconsistent job demands, share dominant organisational values, and enjoy a greater sense of personal accomplishment. They also experience less emotional exhaustion and depersonalisation. (There is) a strong relationship between job involvement and organisational commitment. (Nelson et al., 1995)

However, induction is often neglected, as the focus groups reported.

We were told there would be an induction meeting when we would meet everyone and get to know how things work. But it's been six months now and we're still waiting. (Young volunteers at a community legal clinic)

A. They explained about what expenses are payable right at the start and made you feel it was perfectly normal to claim them. Every time I come in she says 'are you sure you haven't got any expenses? Do you need any more forms?'
B. They (a large national advice charity) mentioned travel expenses in passing but now I've got to ask, which I don't want to do. It's very awkward. It's been four months now and it will be awfully embarrassing to hand in such a large claim. I wish they would make it clear and ok from the start. (Older volunteers)

We met some volunteers who regretted that they had not been given a clear statement of what was expected, had not been informed about the organisation with which they were involved and had not been introduced to other volunteers. Some of them felt disadvantaged as a result. (Rochester & Hutchison, 2001)

Noting that take-up of induction in Citizen's Service projects was 'sporadic', CSV commented:

Experience shows that volunteers want induction but can't fit it in or don't realise the significant benefits until they are well into the project. (CSV, nd)

3.2   Implications
Induction should cover an introduction to the organisation and a full orientation to the work the volunteers will be doing. They should be told what to expect and what is expected of them (without wading through wads of documents!). They need to know policies and procedures that affect them, especially expenses.

The induction provides a first taste of what it will be like to volunteer with the organisation, so it should convey a balance of informality and efficiency. Noting the role induction plays in 'volunteers identifying themselves with the project', CSV urges care in designing it to make it interesting and appealing. Induction can include opportunities to sample or observe the voluntary work before the volunteers commit themselves.

Citizens' Service projects improved induction by redesigning it, making it 'more flexible and sometimes very individual', involving volunteers in its design; and placing emphasis on 'the importance of the induction pack which projects continually keep up to date' (CSV, nd)

HOOVI's methods included: an induction course that was informal but 'careful and thorough' in giving background information, aims, policies and procedures, a clear statement of what was expected and what the volunteer could expect in terms of individual and group support; an accompanying pack of written materials; and opportunities for new volunteers to shadow a project leader or experienced volunteer. (Rochester & Hutchison, 2001)

3.3   Training for volunteering

Volunteers want to be adequately trained for the tasks they will have to carry out, but many do not need nor feel they need training. The National Survey found that three quarters of volunteers have not received training to do with their voluntary work. Of those who had, the vast majority found it adequate although more than a third of these rated their training only as '*fairly* adequate' (Davis Smith, 1998).

The focus groups had mixed experiences of training, from none (and none needed) to long initial courses and ongoing top-ups. Even extensive training can sometimes be inadequate, though some organisations get it right.

We had to do three months' training, every Saturday and Sunday. We did race relations, equal opportunities, data protection, health and safety – anything but what we actually had to do as a volunteer, like answering the phone, dealing with different documents, who we referred different enquiries to. We were dropped in the deep end. (Community volunteer in a pilot police support scheme)

A. I think you get better training in the big organisations. At (national family support charity) we have ten weeks very intensive training, which is very useful because you're dealing with vulnerable people all the time.
B. At (national welfare charity), we had periodic training when they brought in new regulations. But it was what we were doing anyway, all basic common sense really.
C. When I was working as an assistant shop manager for (national charity for elderly), we got training about merchandise and retail management. The training wasn't about how to deal with other people, like a difficult customer, that was never given. So we got training but not necessarily what I thought would be helpful. (Older volunteers)

A. First off I did mentoring, but when I got into the school, I was just thrown in. I didn't have a clue what I was meant to be doing.

B. When I started (disabled children's project), I didn't have any training and didn't know what to do. What the children's difficulties were, what they were capable of. I was trying to get one little boy to stand up and only realised that he physically couldn't without help. I felt awful. I didn't have first aid training either. That put me off a lot. (Young volunteers)

Volunteers want to receive further training as and when needed and, for many but not all, be given accreditation. The latter applies particularly to young people, BME people and unemployed people, but does not exclude some older people who appreciate the discipline of working towards a target (Rochester & Hutchison, 2001; Hutchison, 1999; IVR, 2002).

3.4   Implications

Effective training not only equips volunteers with confidence and skills, it contributes to high retention by encouraging a sense of commitment to the work and reinforcing the perception that volunteers' role is valuable – to the organisation, the clients and themselves (Britton, 1999).

Training needs to vary greatly: an intensive initial course may be essential to develop particular skills and awareness (advice work, police volunteering, working with vulnerable people); ongoing courses may be required (skills updates, wider policy and regulatory development); or none may be needed (volunteer drivers, community gardening schemes). It is important that organisations judge the content and extent of training very carefully, to serve exactly the volunteer's and the organisation's purposes.

A. FOCUS provided really good training, they make sure you feel comfortable and know what to do. We had extensive training, not just in what to do, but in what we could get out of it, make the most of the volunteering experience. I went there expecting to give as a volunteer
and their training was all about what you can get out of it. I hadn't looked at it like that, and that encourages you to do more.
B. Millennium Volunteers do that really well. (Young volunteers)

Job enrichment and job enlargement programs should be employed to ensure meaningful, realistic and flexible work goals that match changing volunteer skill levels and growth needs to organisational objectives. (Nelson et al., 1995)

Training progression and accreditation options play a crucial role in attracting volunteers who are motivated by the desire to improve and learn skills, which includes young people and those wanting to increase their employability (IVR, 2002; Gaskin, 2003).

4   FROM DOER TO STAYER

This involves the three final pressure points. Ongoing training (see above) is a fourth important factor.

4.1   Overall management of the volunteering

Research consistently shows that the way volunteers are managed and supported is crucially important. The National Survey reveals significant numbers of volunteers (71%) who feel things could be 'much better organised' Further drawbacks identified by sizeable minorities of volunteers indicate a lack of attentive management on the part of the organisation – volunteers get bored, feel overloaded and unappreciated, or are allocated tasks which they don't like or can't always cope with (Davis Smith, 1998; Gay, 2001; Locke et al., nd). Male volunteers and people under 25 years are particularly dissatisfied (Davis Smith, 1998).

Volunteers made judgements about all aspects of the management of the properties, in addition to comments about the management of volunteers. Poor human resource management, both by individual managers and by the organisation as a whole, was seen as a source of dissatisfaction and frustration by some volunteers. (Smith, 2002)

The focus groups confirmed volunteers' view that the organisation of their volunteering is crucial – and falls short in many cases. This encompassed unsatisfactory placements and limited volunteer roles, poor communication and scheduling, and excessive expectations.

Quite a few places I volunteered I ended up being the dogsbody. (Young volunteer)

A. The staff didn't really know what to offer people like me. They would put together a list, like litter picking. I don't mind doing that, but it got a bit repetitive and boring. I was, like, pencilling margins in books and things. You don't really get a lot of return from doing stuff like that! But I was only doing it for the summer. If it had been for longer, I would probably have left.
B. I wanted to work with abused children and I ended up being a receptionist for a year until I said 'this is not exactly what I want to do'. (Young volunteers)

My dad is a JP and it's really hard. He gets messed about a lot. He books the day off work and then they say 'no, we won't need you'. He gets fed up with it. (Young volunteer)

The bad experience is when the people for whom you are volunteering, the organisation, become demanding and forget you are doing it purely voluntarily. The Age Concern shop managers were very good. They'd say 'If I won't do the job, I can't expect my volunteers to do it'. It's when volunteers get the grotty jobs and that's not what they volunteered for, that is bad management by the paid end of the scale. (Older volunteer)

Responsiveness and flexibility are of paramount importance in overall management. These sit uneasily in the increasing professionalisation of volunteer management. Volunteers were well aware of this trend and some found it sufficiently off-putting to stop volunteering with a particular organisation.

A. I was involved with (large national welfare charity) for fifteen years and it gradually became more professional – you had to do this and you had to do that…
B. More bureaucratic.
A. And you think in the end 'I didn't join it to be like this'.
B. I don't want it to be like a job.
C. Most of us do it because you want to be of help to someone and if you have to fill in mounds and mounds of paperwork, you think 'I really don't have to do this'.
A. The voluntary aspect goes out of the window. (Older volunteers)

I was a volunteer at (prison) Visitors' Centre for two and a half years – until it got too bureaucratic. It wasn't what I'd volunteered for. (Retired volunteer)

Overall, (volunteers) acknowledged that some degree of formalisation (was necessary, but) should be done in a low key sort of way and be a compromise between having 'every damned rule written and allowing volunteers to contribute creatively if they wanted'. .. most reluctantly agreed (formalisation) was necessary in the current climate. But .. examples were quoted of volunteers 'voting with their feet'. (Gay, nd)

4.2   Implications

The management of volunteers needs to be well-organised, but flexible. As noted, trends appear to be homogenising volunteer management.

Although varied types of volunteer-involving organisations ought logically to have generated varied models of managing volunteers to suit their portfolios of characteristics, they have not, and any latent potential for diversity has been further undermined by contextual pressures for uniformity, formality and 'professionalism'. (Zimmeck, 2000)

Zimmeck highlights the shortfalls of the two dominant models of volunteer management : the bureaucratic and the 'own brand' models. She urges less 'management' and less conformity to bureaucratic modes of operating, and more attention to people's experiences and views and to making volunteers' work more interesting and rewarding.

Other commentators note the tension between the 'workplace model' of management (in which volunteers are treated as if they are paid staff) and other models suited to more innovative volunteering, such as membership, grassroots or campaigning volunteering (Davis Smith, 1996; Rochester, 1999; Meijs & Hoogstad, 2001; Carroll & Harris, 1999). Each organisation must find the most suitable and sympathetic way of managing its volunteers, aiming for a fine balance:

If it is to prosper in the climate of fierce competition with myriad other organisations, the management face of (organisations) turned to the outside must be one of competence, flair and creativity. The face turned in to the volunteers should be one of informality, a conduit for volunteers' satisfaction: in short, of volunteer-friendliness. (Gay, nd)

One way of achieving more volunteer-friendly management is a commitment to developing volunteers as managers, rather than assuming that they need to be managed by paid staff.

Contemporary trends in voluntarism identified in North America, but familiar too in this country, all point to the need for creative and flexible approaches in volunteer management. These include increasing volunteer burnout, increased competition among organisations for a shrinking number of volunteers, episodic volunteering, and an emphasis on diversity (Safrit & Merrill, 2000).

Flexibility responds both to the practical demands on people – other commitments, lack of time – and also to psychological preferences. Studies have highlighted 'a clear shift' from long-term volunteering to short-term volunteering (Whithear, 1999; Kearney, 2001); or, in relation to recent trends in Dutch volunteering, 'everything has to be shorter, more flexible and more project-orientated' (Meijs & Hoogstad, 2001).

Adopting systems that accommodate this need on the part of many volunteers helps ensure that they stay volunteering (Britton, 1999; Hutchison, 1999; Gaskin, 1998; Locke et al., nd). This affects both the young, with many educational, work, family and social demands to accommodate, and the elderly, to allow for health problems, other activities and family commitments.

'Organisations may need to show greater tolerance of the more self-seeking, fastidious and erratic forms of volunteer commitment' (Hustinx, 2001).

Continuation (in volunteering) is related to organisation that is explicit, developmental, supportive, and appreciative … giving space for some personal autonomy.' (Locke et al., nd)

Successful strategies include organising one-off, short-term or drop-in volunteering, having a pool of volunteers so demands are not unrelenting, and an efficient but flexible rota system that recognises that volunteers can often make only 'a limited commitment' (Britton, 1999; Gaskin, 1998).

Opportunities will need to be created for people to volunteer throughout the day and night. To hope to compete for time that is less available and more highly valued, volunteering organisations will need to become more responsive to the needs of volunteers (including offering) a wide range of opportunities and differing levels of commitment and engagement. (CSV, 2000a)

4.3   The ethos and culture of the organisation
The ethos of the organisation can be a factor distinct from the actual management of the volunteers (although it *should* be encompassed within overall management approaches). This can be particularly evident in the general culture of the organisation and the way other staff treat volunteers.
All volunteers want a welcoming atmosphere, a sense that the people in the organisation value their contribution. The culture is determined by commitment to and understanding of the role of volunteering in the organisation, and includes governance, management and other paid staff.

Paid staff (other than volunteer managers) are a fundamental part of creating a welcoming and friendly atmosphere. .. Being, and feeling, part of a team is an important reward for many volunteers. ..The support of paid staff is therefore crucial to ensuring the longterm viability of a volunteering programme. (Smith, 2002)

One major project experienced serious difficulties and delays because the senior management of the large national organisation concerned had not take their ownership of the project seriously enough (and) had not 'paved the way' .. by ensuring that the key people whose collaboration would be needed at the operational level were well briefed. Lack of commitment from the top could also mean the organisation did not have a clear vision about the purpose of the activity, a recipe for confusion. (Rochester & Hutchison, 2001)

Environments where some paid staff are suspicious or resentful of volunteers, and where attitudes or procedures are experienced as discriminatory on account of volunteers' youth, age, ethnicity, disability or other characteristics, are not conducive to sustained volunteering (Hutchison, 1999; Rochester & Hutchison, 2001; Gaskin, 1998 & 2003). In the focus groups, quite a few negative experiences were reported, especially in public sector bodies but also in voluntary ones.

A. Some organisations, well they just make use of you. And if you feel you're being used, that's the main thing that puts you off. (*general agreement in the group)* I don't mind them asking me to do more as long as I can say 'no'. If you feel things are being palmed off on you, then I would say 'enough'.
B. We all find we are taken for granted but you need to find your own level and be quite specific about what you will do and not be put upon. (Older volunteers)

A. Sometimes people who work there think you are mad for wanting to go in and give up your time 'why are you here? Are you just trying to get something to put on your cv or are you doing it because you are some sort of goody two shoes? This is my *real* job!'
B. The teachers, it's like 'what right do you have to be here? What experience do you have?' Some of them thought I was snobby because I was a student. 'Oh you'll go off and get a good job, and we're stuck here.' You feel they suspect your motives.
C. You'd think they'd appreciate all the help they can get and you are taking the strain off them, so you can't see why they are putting obstacles in your way.
A. The schools found it a hassle sorting out times for volunteers, you'd send them something and there'd be no feedback. They don't make it easy for you.
B. Sometimes I think they feel a bit threatened. (Young volunteers)

A. We never felt welcome. They were hostile really.
B. They thought we were after their jobs.
C. When you go to organisations with paid employees they see you as a bit of a threat.
A. There's often a difference between the upper echelons and the people who are doing the day to day work. The bosses have the big ideas – 'let's get volunteers in' - but they don't tell the people lower down, so there is hostility. (Public sector volunteers)

Volunteers also value 'involvement, genuine or at least apparent, in decision-making processes and the awareness that they were being listened to' (Holmes, 1999; Britton, 1999). This is not so much about large policy decisions but the decisions that affect their volunteering, which are often just announced to them. Indeed museum volunteers tend to rate involvement in decisions affecting their work above the payment of expenses in motivating them to continue (Holmes, 1999). For trustees and management committee members, of course, effective involvement in decision-making is the entire rationale for their role, but depends hugely on the servicing - support, communication and information - they receive from the organisational infrastructure (Cornforth, 1999; Gaskin, 2000)

4.4   Implications

The organisational culture and ethos should be volunteer-orientated, with all personnel levels aware of the role and needs of volunteers. This may require staff training, especially in bodies such as public sector organisations where volunteering is relatively new or where volunteer roles are being expanded, such as hospitals.

HOOVI concluded that organisations need to:
develop and articulate a clear and coherent vision of the rationale for involving older volunteers in the work of the organisation which identifies the expected benefits to the organisation and to the volunteers.
secure the commitment of the organisation as a whole including the governing body, the senior management team and those at operational level whose work will be affected.
consult the people outside the organisation whose co-operation and collaboration will be necessary if older people are to be involved in its work. (Rochester & Hutchison, 2001)

The ethos should be inclusive. Training should be given on working with volunteers 'atypical' for the organisation – young people, black and minority ethnic people, disabled people, older people – so no overt or covert discrimination is experienced. This training should encompass existing volunteers who may be longterm and homogenous.

Training provided by the Sickle Cell Society for the Women's Royal Voluntary Service was hailed as one of the most successful achievements.. 'getting the WRVS group of volunteers to look at attitudes and behaviour and to recognise the need to open up the organisation to BME volunteers and service users'. (Gaskin, 2003)

It is also vital that the volunteer feels part of the organisational culture and identifies with its philosophy, producing 'a congruence of organisation and individual goals.. identification and reciprocity' (Locke at al., nd).

The organization's philosophy.. is the essential inspiring vision that binds the program's character, social role, goals, and objectives to the volunteer's self-image. .. Volunteer managers and trainers must continuously communicate and reinforce these values, not only to promote the integration of personal and organizational goals, but to clarify role expectations, serve as a framework for skills development, combat role stress and strain, prevent inappropriate job emphasis, and reduce volunteer attrition. (Nelson et al., 1995)

Volunteers' loyalty grows as they become psychologically identified with the organisation and feel included in it.

Volunteer program managers must encourage this involvement by promoting intrinsic sources of satisfaction that meet individual needs and agendas. .. this process can be enhanced by encouraging them to participate in planning and problem solving processes and by involving them in the general shaping of the organizational culture. (Nelson et al., 1995)

With this goal in mind, organisations need both to create the conditions in which volunteers can play an influential role and the organisational capacity to respond effectively to what this brings forth.

4.5   The support and supervision given to volunteers
Satisfaction with the support and supervision they receive is a key factor in keeping people volunteering. The National Survey found that a minority of volunteers are unhappy with this aspect of their volunteering (Davis Smith, 1998). This does not have to be 'in your face' support – indeed that can be offputting – but volunteers want to be confident that sources of support are 'accessible and approachable' providing an 'instant and appropriate' response (Britton, 1999).

The focus groups confirmed this. Above all they want to know that there is someone they can go to when they want advice or support, that their role and needs are respected. Some of the older volunteers were used to coping without this.

We didn't really get any support at (two national charities). We just got on with it! We gave each other mutual support, we would sort it out between ourselves. But you do need something, someone to fall back on. (Retired volunteer)

It's important to feel you are part of something. Sometimes when I don't hear from X (paid volunteer manager) for a long time, I wonder if it's worth carrying on. (Volunteer in her thirties)
You need it from the organisation, because you don't always get it from the clients. The people at the top of the organisation are always very caring and they value you. You can ring up the person in charge and you go through the why and how and what, and talk it over with them. (Retired volunteer)

I always try and make the volunteers feel valued. Because that's what made me stay as a volunteer. Sometimes I felt I was a bit of a spare part, that I was in the way more than anything, but the minute I felt that I was valued and was doing something of use, and that they cared what I was feeling, that was it – I stuck around. (Student volunteer/university volunteering committee member)

Some of the volunteers were active in community groups and local help groups, which had no paid staff but were well supported by the local volunteer bureau. The bureau provided driving insurance, paid expenses, advised on policy and constitutions, facilitated training, attended groups' meetings and organised regular

volunteer coffee mornings. It also identified the need for new groups and initiated their development.

Mutual support among volunteers can be an important source. Although the volunteers in the focus groups said it was often difficult to attend volunteer get-togethers or socials, many appreciated them. They felt organisations should arrange them and facilitate informal volunteer networks.

Get togethers become a secret feedback session, you can talk about things. You were thinking 'God, I'm totally out of my depth' and then you find everyone else felt like that! (Young volunteer)

The coffee mornings organised by the Volunteer Bureau are a good chance to meet volunteers in different kinds of work. Refreshments are important. If they say it's a meeting you're less likely to go because it sounds formal but if it's 'come and join us for coffee and biscuits', it makes it more of a social occasion, you know you'll enjoy it. (Older volunteer)[4]

If I had a bad experience with a client, I'd ring one of the other volunteers. They know what it's like and you're not showing yourself up. We know and support each other. (Older volunteer)

… the comradeship between volunteers. This support network is evident in the use of existing volunteers to train new recruits. Volunteers also operate their own informal support systems, particularly for new volunteers. .. When social interaction with other volunteers is not possible during working time, it was seen as important for managers to offer alternative arenas for this contact. (Smith, 2002)

A vital element of volunteer support, referred to already, is the payment of expenses incurred while volunteering. According to the National Survey, more than half of volunteers are not reimbursed for the expenses they incur (although practice has improved since 1991). Nearly one third find it a drawback to be out of pocket and this is clearly a factor influencing some people's decision not to volunteer (Davis Smith, 1998). People on a low income, who may be young, elderly, black, unemployed or in poorly paid jobs, may be deterred if they feel they will not be reimbursed or that claiming will be a lengthy or embarrassing process (Hutchison, 1999; Gaskin, 1998 & 2003).

This exchange between retired volunteers highlights the old and new views of expenses:

A. I'm lucky that I've got a car and I'm lucky enough to be a volunteer and give my time, but I see the money as part of what I'm giving. I think the majority of people in voluntary organisations feel like that.
B. But as petrol goes up more and more, if you are on a limited income, you think 'well, can I do it or can't I?' It can make all the difference.
C. If travel expenses aren't paid, it does put people off. (Retired volunteers)

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[4] Spoken between mouthfuls of chocolate biscuit and cherry cake. No flies on this researcher!

A. They barely want you to volunteer if you want expenses.
B. (A national charity) didn't want to pay expenses, that put me off. It was in London and I couldn't afford the travel.
C. Some charities make you feel guilty if you want your expenses paid.
A. If you bring it up first, they look at you and you feel uncomfortable. (Young volunteers)

At the moment I can afford it, but I'm not always going to be able to afford it. Then I'll have to decide if I can carry on. They pay you from (the town) but not to get there and it's a ten mile round trip from where I live. (Recently retired rural volunteer)

4.6   Implications

The support given to volunteers should combine personal and professional support; a clear individual line of support; light-touch supervision (in most cases); prompt and straightforward payment of expenses; organising volunteer get-togethers and socials; and facilitating volunteer support networks and mentoring. If the volunteer is not working in an organisation but in a free-standing volunteer-run group, it is important that such support is available from an intermediary agency such as a volunteer bureau or 'Community Support Agency' (Chanan, 2000).

An important aspect of support is not just the personal support the volunteer experiences but the underlying structure. Good support includes systems such as databases and supervision that enable the monitoring and progression that contribute to volunteer satisfaction.

'We need to have professional management .. but it needs to be kept at a level that is personal to us … we need to organise professionally, but the volunteers shouldn't see a lot of that'. (volunteer manager quoted in Gay, 2000)

Because job involvement relates to positive work-related self-imagery, perceptions of personal achievement should be the focus of the highest supervisory encouragement and reward. Positive feedback .. and meaningful recognition programs are important to empowering volunteers with a sense of self-efficacy – the best guarantee of future performance. (Nelson et al., 1995)

They assigned someone to you that you had to meet up with at intervals and could go to at any time. There is always someone there you know you can go back to. But you don't want to be heavily supervised. What's important is having someone approachable that you can go to. (Young volunteer)

You had to make sure there was a balance, that everyone was sure what they were doing and were comfortable in their role, but you weren't going 'are you ok?' all the time. You have to know them well, to see it in their face, when not to pressure them but to make sure they get the best out of the experience. (Young volunteer/voluntary co-ordinator of other volunteers in special needs children's project)

Milennium Volunteers were generally satisfied with the variety of support mechanisms including named supervisors both within placements and in the main MV organisation, review meetings, feedback from placements, peer-support and

mentoring, and 'an open-door policy' to support. Many organisations also offered ceremonies, social events, newsletters, away-days and gifts to mark volunteers' achievements. (IVR, 2002)

HOOVI found volunteers were retained because:
1. They were kept busy and active.
2. The intrinsic worth of the activity.
3. There was flexibility in the demands made on their time, to accommodate family commitments and holidays etc.
4. There was flexibility on how their contribution might change over time as their interests, commitment and capacity change.
5. They were given real responsibility and autonomy, not slotted into a preconceived role.
6. There were opportunities to be consulted and become involved in policy making.
7. Opportunities for learning, skills development and personal growth.
8. Opportunities for social interaction.
9. Their contribution was valued, boosting confidence and commitment. (Rochester & Hutchison, 2001)

5 CONCLUSION

5.1 The freedom of volunteering
The literature on motivation, recruitment and management is all about

The balance between empowerment and control in dealing with volunteers. Organisations want enthusiastic volunteers, but they want their energies channelled to serve the organisation's purposes. (Cameron, 1999)

Drawing on Billis and Davis Smith (1993; 1996), Cameron notes that

Volunteers can be seen as occupying an ambiguous zone which contains some of the assumptions of both the world of paid work and the world of membership. (Cameron, 1999)

This pinpoints the crucial point about volunteering – and the error of viewing and treating volunteers entirely as a 'workforce'.[5] The essence, rationale and origin of the term is freedom – 'acting by choice, acting of (his) own free will, done or made without compulsion, freely given' (Chambers Dictionary). Anything that abrogates this spirit endangers the willingness of people to go on doing it.

'I establish before we get going the ground rules and standards of work we expect… it's very hard and you need a lot of tact – they could just walk out'. (Volunteer manager quoted in Gay, 2001)

An interesting perspective is presented by the 'serious leisure' approach (Stebbins, 1996). Since 'all leisure activity is voluntary action' and serious leisure is experienced as a 'substantially favourable balance of costs and rewards, where the second significantly outweigh the first',

The powerful rewards following from the pursuit of activities of this sort are powerful motivators to return for more. Perhaps there is no better way to secure the faithful, punctual fulfilment of associated obligations than to organise volunteer activity so that it pays off in this profound manner. (Stebbins, 1996)

Different approaches – the benefit/cost approach (drawing on psychology and political science as well as sociology) and the functionalist approach - reach essentially the same conclusion:

One potential way to increase participation is to maximize the benefits and minimize the costs volunteers experience as a result of their participation. (Chinman & Wandersman, 1999)

To retain volunteers, organisations need to ensure that they are satisfied, and one way of increasing volunteer satisfaction is to meet their motivations. (Hollway & Mawhinney, 2000)

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[5] However, it should be remembered that 'work' is a neutral term – 'effort directed to an end' (Chambers), a fundamental human need for purposeful activity/action (Marx) and should not always be invisibly prefixed by the word 'paid'.

The volunteers in the focus groups emphasised all those aspects which source the essential freedom at the heart of volunteering. What puts them off is feeling used, taken advantage of, taken for granted, not appreciated and not accommodated (Locke et al., nd).

The key for me is that you can come and go as you please. I could stop it tomorrow if I wanted to. And if I didn't fancy carrying on, I can just stop. I like that. (*general agreement)* (Young mother/dedicated volunteer)

Volunteering is ideal for me because I gave up my job to care for my disabled son. If he needs me I can stop and start again, I can fit it around my priorities. (Male volunteer/painter and decorator)

It mustn't be too much like (paid) work, where you *have* to. I know you have to be reliable and not let them down, but as long as you feel free to choose to do it, that makes it different. (Young volunteer)

Some volunteers .. have expressed concern that flexibility and autonomy which are essential characteristics of volunteering should not be eroded by formalisation and the demands on them. Others have already become demotivated…' (Russell & Scott, 1997)

5.2   Pressure points and actions

Volunteers want to feel welcome, secure, accepted, respected, informed, well-used and well-managed. Since they do not have 'their reward through their pay packet', rewards must be supplied in other ways by the organisation:

Volunteers choose to do what they're doing … they do expect to have satisfaction, respect, information and a place in the scheme of the organisation. .. Volunteer managers must be skilful both in their interpersonal relationships and in creating a climate in which volunteers can flourish. (Gay, 2001)

Table 1 (pages 21-22) summarises the needs and actions associated with each pressure point in encouraging these feelings and enabling the transition from non-volunteer to committed lifelong volunteer. There are, of course, resource implications because effective volunteer management needs people and systems in place to provide it. However, the payoff on this investment is beyond dispute.

Three recent examples illustrate organisations' strategies and use of the pressure points to encourage recruitment and retention of volunteers:

A discourse analysis of volunteer motivations, which identifies three 'orientations', suggests these practical implications for volunteer recruitment and management:
1. Balancing 'the cause' and work skills: 'recruitment literature could provide a balance between helping the cause and providing satisfying, work-like experiences'.
2. Clear goals: matching volunteers' aspirations for a positive impact on their lives with realistic ideas of how and when this can be achieved.

3. Active listening: 'while volunteers do what they do for myriad reasons, it is important to remember than being heard and understood is one of the most powerful reinforcements of self-worth'. (Brooks, 2002)

In research on Home-Start volunteers, commitment is found ultimately to influence the retention of volunteers and therefore ways of influencing volunteer commitment are crucial in management. Commitment is strongly linked to self-esteem and competence, both of which can be aided by effective management The six ways in which management can maximise commitment and hence retention are:
1. Clarity about expectations from the start, conveyed by publicity materials and in interview
2. A volunteer person specification that selects the 'right' sort of volunteer in the first place – taking into account personality, motivation and time available
3. Well-managed relationships that combine the professional and the personal
4. Careful role management that does not overload nor underestimate the volunteer
5. Support structures that combine individualised support, group support and accessible training
6. Evaluation and monitoring of volunteers through continued training, support and supervision. (McCudden, 2000)

The Guide Association overhauled its volunteer systems in response to shortages of volunteers and the feelings of existing volunteers that they are under pressure to do more work, and with more specialist skills. It introduced:
1. new marketing and PR campaigns to encourage Guiders to recruit new volunteers
2. local networks of specialist volunteers to increase the pool of volunteers
3. internal training courses and linking leadership training to national accreditation
4. changing the culture of the organisation to accommodate more limited and short-term volunteering and to attract 'atypical' volunteers ie men.
5. local volunteer teams to take over tasks at district level to free up staff for more volunteer support and recruitment
6. a national database to facilitate volunteer transfer, when people move area (Nichols & King, 1998)

5.3   A choice blend
The task for volunteer management is to find the right blend: for the organisation, combining choice and control, flexibility and organisation, to be experienced by the volunteer as a blend of informality and efficiency, personal and professional support. This must take full account of the blend of characteristics, motivations and needs within the volunteer workforce; and the type of volunteering and context in which it is carried out. For the volunteering infrastructure as a whole, this suggests a blend of different management approaches and structural arrangements, rather than over-dependence on a single model.

Table 1   Volunteer role progression, pressure points and actions

<u>TRANSITION</u>	<u>VOLUNTEER'S NEEDS</u>	<u>PRESSURE POINTS</u>	<u>EFFECTIVE ACTIONS</u>
DOUBTER TO STARTER	Positive image of volunteering Awareness of variety of volunteering Awareness of variety of volunteers	Image and appeal	General publicity and promotion of volunteering Regular advertising – press, posters and leaflets Targeted promotion to sub-groups Innovative approaches and media
	Messages and invitations to volunteer Easily obtained information Easy access to volunteering	Methods of recruitment	Carefully crafted messages Outreach, talks, roadshows, presence at events Active promotion in schools, workplaces etc. Multiple points of access, gatekeeper networks Clear information on literature and websites Greater promotion of websites and databases More visible and more inviting volunteer 'bureaux' Support for volunteer ambassadors
STARTER TO DOER	Positive experience of initial entry Responsive and interested staff Personalised approach Procedures efficient but informal As few delays as possible Being given choices	Recruitment and application procedures	Well-staffed reception, walk-in/call-in/email access Attractive leaflets/handouts to take away Friendly, efficient initial response Informal but efficient interview process Individualised matching to opportunities Volunteer role descriptions and charter Vetting and other delays fully explained Referral to other opportunities/organisations
	Understanding how things work Feeling equipped and confident to begin volunteering	Induction to volunteering	Orientation to the organisation and its personnel Clear explanations of policies and procedures Clear explanation of expenses system Informal and friendly style Taster sessions and shadowing An up to date induction pack
	Having the necessary skills for the role	Training for volunteering	Useful, appropriate, convenient initial training Indication of future training opportunities Certification and accreditation options

TRANSITION	VOLUNTEER'S NEEDS	PRESSURE POINTS	EFFECTIVE ACTIONS
DOER TO STAYER	Relevant training for the role Opportunities for progression and further skills development	Training	Useful, appropriate, convenient ongoing training Certification and accreditation on offer
	Good organisation and communication Degree of commitment respected Personal constraints accommodated	Overall management	Well-organised volunteer systems Efficiency combined with informality Flexibility to accommodate other commitments Respect for cultural or age-related concerns Development of volunteers as managers
	Feeling comfortable and welcome Feeling of making a useful contribution Sense of being part of the organisation	Ethos and culture	Pro-volunteering culture in organisation Staff training at managerial and operational levels An inclusive ethos without discrimination Volunteers help shape organisational culture Ensuring organisational capacity to consult and respond to volunteers
	Not worrying about costs, transport, safety etc. Knowing there are staff to help and support Mutual support among volunteers Not feeling pressured Being allowed flexibility without guilt	Support and supervision	Personal line of support for every volunteer Light-touch supervision Clear and regular reimbursement of expenses Conveying appreciation and value Facilitating volunteer socials and peer support Efficient systems for monitoring and progression An entirely non-exploitative approach to volunteers
STAYER (lifelong)	Ability to transfer to other volunteering opportunities Life cycle changes	Overall management Support and supervision	Referrals, networks and databases that enable geographical transfer Allowing changes of role and degree of commitment within the organisation

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APPENDIX 1

Volunteer management – a brief review

Variation in volunteer management style/organisational context exists on a spectrum from highly bureaucratic (statutory bodies and large, formally organised voluntary agencies) to a very informal, self-help structure, and all points in between (Rochester, 1999; Zimmeck, 2000; Gay, 2001). The former represents the increasing formalisation and professionalisation of volunteer management, a result of UK social policy trends and 'the resulting adoption of the managerial language of effectiveness and efficiency by much of the sector' (Rochester, 1999; IVR, 1999).

This has been described as the workplace model of management in which volunteers are treated as if they are paid staff (Davis Smith, 1996). Davis Smith and others have pointed out that this model 'is by no means adequate for the whole range of settings in which volunteers are involved' (Meijs & Hoogstad, 2001); and the approach can in itself put volunteers off (Holmes, 1999; Whithear, 1999; Z immeck, 2001).

Rochester's identification of four models of volunteer involvement in small voluntary organisations, each with different implications for volunteers' motivations and recruitment, and the organisation and management of their work; and Meijs' proposal of 'membership management' (a Dutch/European model) and 'programme management' (US), suggests the need to develop a volunteering infrastructure to suit all types of volunteers. (Rochester, 1999; Meijs & Hoogstad, 2001) Studies of volunteering in a campaigning context reinforce this (Carroll & Harris, 1999).

There have been several attempts to produce classifications of organisational forms and volunteer management: by sector; by relationship between paid staff and volunteers (volunteer-governed, -supported, and –run), by goal (service delivery, campaigning, mutual support/benefit), by contingency (a four stage progression from a 'simple' volunteer-run local initiative up to a more complex and formal organisational structure with task specialisation etc.); and the dichotomy between programme and membership management (see Zimmeck, 2000 and Meijs & Hoogstad, 2001).

This last classification, for example, varies on a number of structure/culture/ process/environment criteria. On the structural 'flexibility of approach' criterion, the models work completely oppositely: the former has tasks for which it finds volunteers, the latter has volunteers for whom it finds tasks. The former features free-standing programmes with vertical integration, the latter horizontal integration of activities to meet the organisation's goals (Meijs & Hoogstad, 2001).

The literature suggests that just as volunteering is hugely varied, volunteer management must be varied and appropriate to the particular organisation and volunteers. The investigation of different styles of management, and their effect, still requires work:

We know relatively little about .. differences in the management techniques used across domains and their relative effectiveness in meeting the needs of volunteers and promoting effective performance. (Brudney & Kellough, 2000)

APPENDIX 2

Volunteer characteristics – a brief review

Volunteers' characteristics

Volunteers represent every conceivable demographic and socio-economic profile (Davis Smith, 1998). Despite certain prevalences – often hardened into stereotypes – of age, gender, education and occupation in the volunteering workforce, volunteers in this country are a heterogeneous population. Moreover, characteristics under-represented in the volunteer workforce – such as disability, learning difficulties, mental illness, non-Anglo heritage, unemployment and youth – are those particularly targeted for increased recruitment, in accordance with a variety of public policy and organisational agendas. The volunteering infrastructure must therefore be well able to accommodate and include people from these minority groups.

Volunteers' motivations

Aligned to characteristics, and also independent of them, is the vast range of people's reasons for volunteering – why they do it and what they hope to get out of it (Davis Smith, 1998; Horton Smith, 1994; Clary et al., 1996; Brooks, 2002; Zimmeck, 2000; Britton, 1999). As early as 1990, twenty eight different reasons for volunteering had been identified (Rochester, 1999). Motivations have been variously categorised: as intrinsic, extrinsic and self-efficiency; altruistic, social, instrumental and expressive; or related to the six functions of Values, Understanding, Enhancement, Career, Social or Protective (Hollway & Mawhinney, 2000; Clary et al., 1996). Moreover, 'there is abundant evidence that the motivations of volunteers can be a complex mixture' (Rochester, 1999).

Young people, black and minority ethnic people and unemployed people show a prevalence of instrumental, self-advancement motivations (Rochester & Hutchison, 2001; Gaskin, 1998 & 2003; Clary et al., 1996; Britton, 1999). Ethnic identification is also a strong motivation for BME people, though this may be changing in the younger generation (Britton, 1999; Gaskin, 2003; Kamat, 2001). Older people (50+) are motivated more by a desire to contribute to the community, to keep active, to use time productively and to develop social contacts (Rochester & Hutchison, 2001; Hutchison, 1999; CSV, 2001; Granville, 2000).

However, the deconstruction of a single volunteer's motivations is rarely definitive, and in addition each 'motivational "package"' can change over time' (Zimmeck, 2000). Altruism may be self-seeking, in that rewards are experienced by the giver (Stebbins, 1996). Research is still attempting to determine the interplay of motivations ('personal psychology on the one hand and social situation on the other' (Rochester, 1999)), and proposals have been made for constructing 'a motivational profile' associated with different types of volunteering to increase success in recruitment and retention (Clary et al., 1996).

However, what is most obvious is that the volunteering infrastructure must be able to accommodate a whole spectrum of motivations and meet individuals' diverse expectations. Even a single volunteer-involving organisation may have every type of motivation or motivational package represented among its volunteer workforce.

Volunteers' interests

Characteristics, motivations and individual life experiences all tie into volunteers' interests, again hugely variable (Zimmeck, 2000; CSV, 2000a/b). And 'typical' characteristics and expected motivations may be overridden by an individual passion for conservation, for example, or the experience of disability in the family, or by a chance encounter with a particular area of (voluntary) work. Young people, for example, appear to be particularly motivated by concern for a cause (Hustinx, 2001) and by interests related to 'youth culture' (Gaskin, 1998 & 2001). Each potential volunteer brings her or his unique set of interests into the volunteering arena and the system must be able to interpret and satisfy these interests.

Volunteers' constraints

Allied to the above factors are the limits which potential volunteers put on their involvement. These may be determined by external or personal factors. Older people are often most concerned about their external commitments to family or holidays, their physical health and fitness to perform consistently, their finances, their mobility and travel (Hutchison, 1999; Setterlund & Warburton, 2002, Rochester & Hutchison, 2001). Young people frequently have to navigate around their educational or work timetables, anticipated future changes in their circumstances, financial limitations, and also travel problems (Hustinx, 2001; Gaskin, 1998). At each end of the age spectrum, then, flexibility and responsiveness are apposite to the ideal volunteering experience.

Black and minority ethnic people may have cultural orientations and requirements, family commitments and financial constraints (Lukka & Ellis, 2001; Kamat, 2001; Gaskin, 2003). Any potential volunteer may have personal restrictions derived from their preferences or personality. Many potential volunteers, for example, lack confidence and may therefore self-impose restrictions on what they can or will do. The volunteering infrastructure has to be able to deal with these circumscriptions.

APPENDIX 3

The focus groups

Three focus groups were held in February 2003. They involved 26 volunteers, including seven men and two people of black and minority ethnic origin. The groups were (a) ten young people (18-24) (b) five retired people and (c) eleven people of mixed ages (30-65).

The volunteers had a wide range of volunteering experience including in local community groups – transport, gardening, home visiting, advice and support; churches – youth work, children'; national charities – charity shops, meals on wheels, clerical work, ICT, care work, residentials, working with elderly people, disabled children etc.; volunteering schemes – Millennium Volunteers, Duke of Edinburgh, student volunteering; public sector bodies - schools, hospitals and the police. Many of the older volunteers had a long and varied volunteering career.

Discussions of about one and half hours, focused around a topic guide, were taped for analysis. Complete confidentiality and anonymity were guaranteed. Travel expenses or a standard attendance payment (for young people) were paid.