Public policy support to promote volunteering by older people

John Knights- Volunteering policy manager.
Cabinet Office, United Kingdom
Overview of this presentation

1. The Office of the Third Sector.


3. The rationale for supporting volunteering, particularly for older people.

4. Past programmes and lessons that we have learnt.

5. Our future focus.
What is the Office of the Third Sector?

- Set up in May 2006 and based in the Cabinet Office.
- Split into five areas:
  1. Third Sector support.
  2. Public Sector partnerships
  3. Participation
  4. Social Enterprise and Finance
  5. Strategy and Communications.
What is the ‘Third Sector’?

The Third Sector includes: -

- Registered charities.
- Voluntary and community organisations.
- Social enterprises.
- Mutuals.
- Cooperatives.
What do we want to achieve?

Vision

A thriving third sector, enabling people to change society.

Aims

- **Enable campaigning and empowerment**, particularly for those at risk of social exclusion.

- **Strengthen communities**, drawing together people from different sections of society through community participation.

- **Transform public services**, through delivery, design, innovation and campaigning.

- **Enable social enterprise growth and development**, combining business and social goals.
Volunteering in England

Latest figures -

- In April-June 2008, 41 per cent of adults volunteered formally at least once in the 12 months prior to interview, with 26 per cent having volunteered formally at least once a month.

- Levels of formal volunteering (at least once a year and at least once a month) have not changed since 2001, although levels have fallen since 2005.

- In April-June 2008, 64 per cent of adults volunteered informally at least once in the 12 months prior to interview, with 36 per cent having done so at least once a month.

Source: Citizenship Survey
Formal volunteering in England-2001- April- June 2008

Source: Citizenship Survey

Source: Citizenship Survey
Contextual information on older volunteers.

What older volunteers do.

- Those aged 55 and over were the age group least likely to volunteer in organisations for children.

- Most likely to volunteer in organisations supporting elderly people and in local community, neighbourhood and citizens groups.

- Religion was the most common field of activity, rather than education.

Source: 2007 National Survey on volunteering and charitable giving.

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Office of the Third Sector
Contextual information on older volunteers.

What are the motivations for volunteering.

- Most likely to get involved in volunteering in order to meet new people or make friends.

- Least likely to identify the needs or interests of friends and families as a motivation.

- 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’.

Source: 2007 National Survey on volunteering and charitable giving.
Contextual information on older volunteers.

Reasons for not volunteering.

- Not enough spare time - 42%.
- Put off by bureaucracy - 42%.
- Worried about risk and liability – 39%.
- Not got the right skills/ experiences - 35%.
- Would not be able to stop once I got involved - 31%.
- Worried about threat to safety - 31%.

Those aged over 65 were also the least likely to say they wanted to spend more time volunteering.

Source - 2007 National Survey on volunteering and charitable giving.
The rationale for supporting volunteering.

- Community benefits.
  - Cohesion - bringing people together.
  - Reducing isolation
  - Providing support to people

- Individual benefits.
  - Increased self confidence
  - Improving skills
  - Route into training or employment.

- Benefits to public services.
  - Involving people in local services.
  - Helping services relate to service users needs.
  - Reaching those that can be ‘hard to reach’
Government funded programmes

2000-2004

the experience corps
YOU'VE TRAINED FOR IT ALL YOUR LIFE
Government funded programmes

2004 – 2006
Government funded programmes

2005 – 2010
Lessons learnt

1. Some sectors rely on older volunteers.

2. Need to work with existing organisations and infrastructure.

3. There is a big difference between a 50 year old and a 65 year old.

4. Long term investment is the key.

5. Need to have a clear rationale for why people should volunteer.

6. Programmes should be led by older people.
Future focus

Intergenerational Volunteering

Opportunity Age

Department for Work and Pensions

Cabinet Office
Office of the Third Sector
Further information

Citizenship survey - www.communities.gov.uk/communities/racecohesionfaith/research/citizenship_survey/


Volunteering in the Third Age (VITA) - www.wrvs.org.uk/vita/home.htm

The Experience Corps - www.experiencecorps.co.uk/

Retired and Senior Volunteers Programme (RSVP) - www.csv-rsvp.org.uk/site/home.htm

Office of the Third Sector - www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/third_sector.aspx

Commission on the Future of Volunteering - www.volcomm.org.uk/

Department for Work and Pensions, Opportunity Age - www.dwp.gov.uk/opportunity_age/