

**Volunteering:
Strategies and Practice for
Engaging Volunteers in
Countryside Recreation
and Management**

2006 Seminar Proceedings
of the
Countryside Recreation Network

Edited by Melanie Bull
Network Manager

Formatted by Katherine Powell
Network Assistant

**Held at the Priory Rooms, Birmingham
30 March and 28 June 2006**

'Volunteering: Strategies and Practice for Engaging Volunteers in
Countryside Recreation and Management' 30th March and 28th June 2006

Published by CRN Countryside Recreation Network
© 2006CRN Countryside Recreation Network
ISBN: 1 84387 238 2
Copies cost £15 and are available from:
Countryside Recreation Network
Sheffield Hallam University
Unit 10, Sheffield Science Park
Howard Street
Sheffield
S1 1WB
Tel: 0114 225 4494
Fax: 0114 225 2197
E-mail: m.bull@shu.ac.uk
Website: www.countrysiderecreation.org.uk

'Volunteering: Strategies and Practice for Engaging Volunteers in
Countryside Recreation and Management' 30th March and 28th June 2006

CONTENTS

PLENARY PAPERS

Welcome and Introduction <i>(John Watkins, Countryside Council for Wales)</i>	5
Strategic Overview - Government Policy, Scale and Scope of Volunteering <i>(Angela Ellis Paine, Institute for Volunteering Research, Volunteering England)</i>	7
Volunteers - A Blessing or a Curse <i>(Miles Sibley, BTCV)</i>	11
The Volunteers Perspective <i>(Henry Cole, Forestry Commission Volunteer)</i>	14
The Volunteers Perspective <i>(Peter Ward, English Nature/RSPB Volunteer)</i>	17
How to Make Best Use of Volunteers <i>(Sarah Jarvis, Volunteer Development Scotland)</i>	21
Managing Risk with Volunteers <i>(Vicky Myers, Forestry Commission)</i>	27
A Strategy for Volunteering <i>(Sean Prendergast, Peak District National Park Authority)</i>	36

CÁSE STUDIES

Volunteering in Ireland <i>(Bill Murphy, Mountain Meitheal)</i>	39
Involving New Audiences of Volunteers through Groups including Youth Volunteers <i>(Jennie Owen, National Trust)</i>	44
The Worcestershire Wardens Partnership <i>(Andy Maginnis, Countryside Management Association)</i>	48

SUPPORTING PAPERS

Annex A - Programme	52
Annex B - Speaker/Workshop Facilitator Biographies	55
Annex C - Delegate List	61
Annex D - Slide Handouts from Speakers	67

Countryside Recreation Network Seminar

'VOLUNTEERING: STRATEGIES AND PRACTICE FOR ENGAGING VOLUNTEERS IN COUNTRYSIDE RECREATION AND MANAGEMENT'

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

John Watkins, Countryside Council for Wales

For many years, volunteers have played a key role in delivering improved services in outdoor recreation and conservation management.

A constant theme of these proceedings is the range of benefits that await both the volunteer and the host organisation, by pursuing a well-structured approach that keeps alive the "spirit of volunteering". But in this lies the critical tension: finding the right balance between a structured professional approach that takes due regard of an increasing administrative burden, with maintaining this spirit of volunteering.

The public sector is under increasing pressure to demonstrate how its policies and activities are citizen-centred. The Government is placing greater emphasis on volunteers and volunteering as a keystone of supporting and taking pressure off many public services. Understandable when studies reveal that 44% of the population had been involved in formal volunteering in the past 12 months.

The will to volunteer is particularly evident in outdoor recreation and conservation, so the onus is on the host organisation to get itself ready to both welcome, and maintain a good relationship with volunteers. The speakers repeated that critical to this is getting the organisation committed, from the top down, and that the funding assigned to volunteering is an indication of this commitment and value.

Various structures at various scales are presented and discussed. The key message is that it is important that a structure and procedures actually exist; and that it's been thought about, and planned carefully, like all our other work. This provides reassurance and clarity, and provides a platform for developing and maintaining a relationship with volunteers.

The benefits of a good approach to volunteering are shared across all the organisations represented in these proceedings, even if their primary motives varied. For example, the Peak District National Park sees volunteering as a critical tool to get buy-in into their philosophy and objectives. Whilst the National Trust believes they get this same outcome, they've turned the demand to be involved in their work into a commercial activity.

Volunteers value what they are working on, so value them. Prepare. Recognise that volunteers are investing "sweat equity" in your organisation's activities, so they have a right to influence and have their say. Listen.

The event drew out a wealth of useful advice and approaches. These proceedings in themselves make for a useful place to start if one is considering hosting volunteers, or

'Volunteering: Strategies and Practice for Engaging Volunteers in
Countryside Recreation and Management' 30th March and 28th June 2006

have issues needing to be addressed within existing programmes; or just wanting fresh ideas.

In essence, these proceedings make an overwhelming case for the benefits of working with volunteers, but they caution against institutionalising the volunteer. Be careful to ensure that volunteers have a clear and valued position, and are not taken for granted.

Countryside Recreation Network Seminar

**'VOLUNTEERING: STRATEGIES AND PRACTICE FOR ENGAGING VOLUNTEERS
IN COUNTRYSIDE RECREATION AND MANAGEMENT'**

**STRATEGIC OVERVIEW
GOVERNMENT POLICY, SCALE AND
SCOPE OF VOLUNTEERING**

*Angela Ellis Paine
Assistant Director
Institute for Volunteering Research
Volunteering England*

*30th March 06 - presented by Angela Ellis Paine, Institute for Volunteering Research
28th June 06 - presented by Nick Ockenden, Institute for Volunteering Research*

Introduction

On the one hand it could be argued that volunteering is currently on the up. Recent figures from the Home Office Citizenship Survey, for example, show a significant increase in the number of people volunteering over the past four years. Similarly, never before has volunteering received such direct attention or support from government. At the same time, however, there are a number of significant challenges facing the sector. This paper gives a brief summary of the current trends in volunteering, followed by a discussion of relevant government volunteering policies and initiatives, and concludes by outlining a number of emerging issues.

Trends in volunteering

What is volunteering?

Before outlining the trends affecting volunteering, it is important to consider exactly what we mean by 'volunteering'. The Compact: Volunteering 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 in addition to) close relatives.*"

Within this definition there are a number of key principles. Volunteering is: based on free choice; undertaken for no financial reward; mutually beneficial. Beyond this, however, there is considerable debate over what can be counted as volunteering and what not. Many different activities are encompassed within the concept. In the run up to the International Year of Volunteers, 2001, the United Nations provides a useful typology, which recognising four key areas of volunteering: mutual aid and self-help; philanthropy and service to others; governance; and, advocacy and campaigning. Volunteering can also be seen to exist on a spectrum from formal volunteering (unpaid help as part of groups, clubs or organisations) to informal volunteering (unpaid help, provided on an individual basis, to someone who is not a relative).

Who volunteers?

The latest figures on volunteering in England and Wales are provided by the Home Office Citizenship Survey (HOCS), which was conducted in 2001, 2003 and 2005. According to the 2003 HOCS, 42% of the population had taken part in formal volunteering at least once in the previous 12 months – representing 17.9 million people in England and Wales. These formal volunteers gave an average of eight hours each month. Additionally, 62% of the population had taken part in informal volunteering at least once in the previous 12 months (26.4 million people in England and Wales), and they gave an average of 5.4 hours per month.

The data from the consecutive surveys suggests that levels of volunteering rose significantly between 2001 and 2003. For example, the number of people taking part in formal volunteering has risen from 39% in 2001 to 42% in 2003.

Not everyone, however, is equally as likely to volunteer. The 2003 HOCS found that formal volunteering is most likely to occur among people who are:

- White or Black African;
- In a paid job;
- Have qualifications at degree level or above;
- In a managerial or professional group;
- Are aged 35-49
- Living in the South East (outside London) or South West;
- Have a youngest child aged five to nine;
- Born in the UK;
- Actively practicing a religion;
- Looking after a sick, disabled or elderly person;
- Have favourable views about your neighbourhood.

What do volunteers do?

Volunteers are engaged in many different types of activities; indeed, they are involved in most aspects of public life from running the local sports club through to setting up a play scheme, helping in hospitals, chairing a village hall committee, acting as a school governor or managing charity shops. The most common fields of volunteering are: sports; education and social welfare. More specifically, the 2003 HOCS found that the most common volunteering activities were:

- Raising or handling money, or taking part in sponsored events (53% of volunteers did this);
- Organising or helping to run an activity or event (49%);
- Leading a group or being a member of a committee (29%);
- Giving advice, information or counselling (23%);
- Visiting people (20%).

How are volunteers managed?

The ways in which volunteers are managed and supported across organisations varies greatly. However, there is evidence to suggest that volunteer management practices are becoming increasingly structured, formal and professionalised. While this is in general to be welcomed, there are some concerns about a possible over formalisation of volunteer involvement. In terms of what volunteers want from their management, there is no one single model – one size does not fit all. Work by Kathy Gaskin for the Institute for Volunteering Research found that what volunteers want is a *choice blend*. They want to be made to feel welcome, secure, respected, informed, well-used and well-managed. But at the same time, they want that management to be delivered in a way that is flexible and informal. They want a balance of informality and efficiency, personal and professional support. Achieving this balance is crucial for organisations that want to involve volunteers well.

Which policies affect volunteering?

While governments have long since had an interest in volunteering, never before has a UK government taken such an active role in promoting and developing volunteering. Over the past ten years a series of government initiatives on volunteering have been established. For example, 2005 was declared by government to be the UK Year of the Volunteer. During the year the public pledged to contribute over one billion minutes of volunteering time. Following on from programmes such as Millennium Volunteers and Active Citizens in Schools, in 2005 Russell Commission presented proposals for a whole new framework for youth engagement. The framework has been endorsed by government and has received substantial financial backing. The ChangeUp programme is currently running with the aim to developing the voluntary and community sector infrastructure, with a Volunteering Hub established to take this forward in the volunteering infrastructure.

These different initiatives and programmes are just a few of the many that have been developed. They tie into two broader public policy agendas, both with clear implications for volunteering. The government's civil renewal agenda has identified a clear role for volunteering in (re)engaging people in political and civil activities. Meanwhile, the public service delivery agenda has implications for the increased involvement of volunteers in the delivery of those services. Volunteering, however, is also affected by many other areas of policy, from housing through to education and international development.

What issues are currently affecting volunteering

A number of issues can be identified as currently affecting the future development of volunteering. For example, demographic changes, such as the aging population structure, may have an affect on who gets involved in volunteering, what they do, and how much time they give. There is growing evidence to suggest that new volunteers are demanding new types of volunteering opportunities – ones that offer short term placements rather than long term commitments, for example, or ones that engage groups of volunteers rather than individuals. A move towards professionalisation across the voluntary and community sector also has implications for volunteering with a need for organisations to balance these trends with the demands of volunteers to maintain flexibility and informality. Issues of risk and

litigation are also creating challenges for volunteering as we move increasingly towards a risk adverse society.

Conclusions

It is an interesting time for volunteering. More people are engaging in it. It has a growing profile in the public sector. The benefits it can bring are becoming more widely recognised. The support provided for volunteers is improving. At the same time, however, there is a danger that it might become too formalised which may put some people off getting involved. It would seem that organisations that involve volunteers need to make the most current enthusiasm for voluntary action but to do so in a way that balances the provision of professional volunteer management support with the spirit of free will and choice which is at the heart of the volunteering.

Countryside Recreation Network Seminar

'VOLUNTEERING: STRATEGIES AND PRACTICE FOR ENGAGING VOLUNTEERS IN COUNTRYSIDE RECREATION AND MANAGEMENT'

VOLUNTEERS - A BLESSING OR A CURSE

*Miles Sibley
Development Director
BTCV, England*

Introduction

Are volunteers a good thing - or are they more trouble than they're worth? This is an important question because there may be some organisations that are not quite sure whether their volunteer resource is really an asset.

A point worth noting at the outset is that volunteers are people like us. They're ordinary people who want to do something useful, interesting and enjoyable in their spare time. We shouldn't see them as somehow different from ourselves.

Views of volunteering: Professional, personal and objective

My view is that volunteers are a blessing - firstly for professional reasons.

BTCV is an environmental volunteering organisation that supports 130,000 volunteers per year. So perhaps I am bound to say that volunteers are great. But the fact is that volunteers with BTCV - and with other environmental organisations - achieve a huge amount in terms of underpinning countryside quality.

The British countryside didn't come about entirely by accident. Its traditional features were made by rural communities who lived close to the land and close to nature. But now that most communities are urban, and most farmers are working on a larger scale and with more mechanisation, it is volunteers who are playing a huge role in helping to conserve - and in some cases recreate and rebuild - traditional features of the countryside. In doing so, they are playing an important part in the delivery of Local Biodiversity Action Plans, AONB strategies and National Park Plans.

This is nothing new. The environment sector is built on the bedrock of the Victorian amateur naturalists, whose love of the countryside and close observation of nature laid the foundations of much of our modern understanding of biodiversity and biodiversity conservation.

From a personal point of view, too, I think volunteers are a good thing. When I look around the place where I live, I see volunteers as the people who bind my community together. The school, sports clubs, churches, and more all benefit from volunteer involvement. So volunteering is not just the bedrock of the modern environment sector - it's actually the bedrock of society.

So much for my views! We can get a more objective view from lots of research that shows that volunteering is of value to society. One study was carried out by the Economic and Social Research Council in 2004 - entitled "A Health Check for British Democracy: What do we know about participation and its effects in Britain?". It found that communities with high levels of voluntary activity have:

- better health
- fewer burglaries
- better educational performance in schools
- higher satisfaction with quality of life

Not only that, but:

"Even when the class composition and levels of deprivation of communities are taken into account, the relationship between voluntary activity and policy performance persists and continues to be benign."

Difficulties with Volunteers

In spite of all this, not everyone is enamoured with volunteers. Typical comments are:

- Volunteers are unreliable.
- Volunteers are a bit amateurish.
- Volunteering is job substitution.
- Volunteers are a safety risk.

We must acknowledge that people would not say such things if it wasn't genuinely their experience. The point is that people who find volunteers a bit of a curse are people who are struggling with managing volunteers.

Volunteer management is a difficult job because volunteers are people. And managing people is difficult. But we would be foolish to write volunteers off as too hard to handle. A better approach is to think about how we can harness the goodwill that volunteers bring.

Harnessing Goodwill

a) Budget for it.

Many organisations publish statements about the importance of volunteering. But the budget is what indicates the real value that an organisation puts on volunteer involvement. Volunteers become a curse when the staff responsible for supporting volunteers find that they cannot cover the associated costs.

Volunteers are costly because - just like paid staff - they require supervision and support, as well as tools, equipment and training and so on. Unfortunately, some organisations seem to take the view that staff costs are acceptable, but volunteer costs are not.

If you budget for volunteering, you're investing in goodwill. And the returns you get in terms of freely given time and effort will really be worth it.

b) Train and support paid staff.

Volunteer management is not something that can just be bolted on to other kinds of jobs. Staff working with volunteers must feel comfortable in that role. They must feel knowledgeable, skilled and supported. If an organisation, through its paid staff, is comfortable with volunteers - then volunteers will be comfortable with the organisation. Training, procedures and management supervision and support are all an essential part of the mix.

c) Talk to your volunteers

More importantly, let them talk to you - and listen to what they're saying.

As well as asking "What can we use our volunteers for?"; we need to ask "What can our volunteers use us for?" Every volunteer has different interests and different motivations - and it's important to try to work with those motivations and those enthusiasms. Volunteering has to be a two way commitment.

Dialogue with volunteers can also help to flag up instances where the relationship probably isn't going to work. If you can't offer a volunteer the kinds of experience they're looking for, it is good to be clear about that. You don't want a volunteer who is frustrated because they're not really getting what they want from the organisation - and neither do you want staff who are frustrated because they're not really getting what they want from the volunteer.

Volunteers should be an integral part of your organisation or project - not an afterthought. A relationship based on mutual understanding of wants and needs will take you a long way towards you feeling good about your volunteers, and your volunteers feeling good about you and your organisation.

Conclusion

Volunteers are people. They are people like us. They have a huge amount to offer - but they are not just there to be used.

If we want volunteers to be a blessing rather than a curse, we have to look first at our own attitudes and practices, and think about how ready we are to capitalise on the huge asset that is volunteer goodwill. If you look after your volunteers - welcome them, work with them, and invest in them as a valued part of your organisation - you can't fail to be blessed by what they bring.

Countryside Recreation Network Seminar

'VOLUNTEERING: STRATEGIES AND PRACTICE FOR ENGAGING VOLUNTEERS IN COUNTRYSIDE RECREATION AND MANAGEMENT'

THE VOLUNTEERS PERSPECTIVE

Henry Cole

Forestry Commission Volunteer Ranger

When asked to give a volunteer's perspective it seemed obvious - we do it because it's fun! However on examination it is a bit more complex than that!

To start with we ought to put the volunteer in perspective - look through the other end of the telescope and see who we are. It is then easier to understand what we feel we contribute and achieve, which may well be different from how our host organisations view us! Also we do have our expectations which are not necessarily financial

There are about 50 of us making up the FC New Forest District Volunteer Ranger (VR) Service and the majority of us are of a certain age! So why do we do it? There is however one VR in the 20-30 age range and he is quite exceptional. If the bar chart were age against 'knowledge of the natural world' he would be at the top!

We are the latest in a long line of the particularly British tradition of the "Volunteer" whose aim is to maintain and improve our heritage and environment. Our roots go back to the Elizabethan Beacon Lighters and beyond, who were also unpaid volunteers.

We have time to commit. If we have families they will have probably flown the nest. We may be retired or of an age where we have decided that we are not going to be Prime Minister or Chief Executive and are looking for new challenges.

We seem to have had demanding jobs and don't want to switch off - perhaps we fear mortality - we have skills we want to continue using not necessarily directly related to our main volunteering roles. We also tend to be members of local societies and being VRs helps to expand our knowledge base

Collectively we have more skills than you can shake a stick at! Besides the norm of engineers, teachers, salesmen etc. some of us have skills which don't appear at first sight to be of any direct benefit to our volunteering roles. So besides being able to carry out the run of the mill maintenance jobs we have a lady that speaks fluent French. She has been indispensable in improving the links with the ONF (French Forestry Commission). Audrey is fluent in Flemish and yet to be tested, and several of us spout forth gibberish. Wendie is skipper of an Isle of Wight ferry. She knows more about maps and map reading than anyone. With skills like this if probably organised there is not much we can't do!

We use our skills to expand the activities of our parent organisation. Without us many of these activities would not be possible as it would not be realistic for any organisation to take on salaried staff to do these. Conservation events, Rambles and the Reptile Centre are almost totally the domain of VRs under a watching brief of a full time Ranger

We love to learn new skills and learn from the "experts" whether it be ever so simple such as cooking kippers over an open fire or dissecting fox poo! (What did you do today dear? - Have you washed your hands!)

Menial jobs aren't a problem. We have developed litter picking into an art form! It is amazing what you can get into the back of a small Citroen Berlingo van. On several occasions we have scraped up the remains of burnt out cars, now and again a double bed (did that need an incident report?) and the odd fridge. We are sure the 'office staff' live in dread as to what they are going to find in the bin area at Queen's House on Monday mornings follow a week end patrol.

The messier the jobs the better especially pond clearing, perhaps we are entering our second childhood? After these events we take a delight in calling in at the local super market on the way home dripping pondweed. I avoid Spar after an embarrassing incident when I was mistaken for a member of staff. The Spar and FC logos are similar!

Fires are a fascination and water too - I suppose we just haven't grown up. Jan is now an expert eel catcher - and fast too! She dines out on stories of racing to keep ahead of a mad JCB driver. We don't think her 'day job' office colleagues believe her! Lucky the water wasn't very deep as she is just over five feet tall.

Some of us have learnt that we are capable of working with children much to the surprise of our families. A conversation with my daughter (aged 34) went as follows:

Deborah: You are never working with children are you?

Me: Yes - why not?

Deborah: Don't they know you?

Me: Of course they do!

Deborah: But you don't like children

Me: Of course I do!

Deborah: But you never liked us!

Some of us have amazing creative skills - but need to improve in the spells department although the local frog population seems to be increasing!

Halloween is a favourite with the VRs, although the children are scarier.

We have achieved a tremendous social life whether it is a formal dinner or an informal skittles evening. There is something happening most months. Being a VR has increased our entire circle of friends

Integrating with the "full time personnel" is something we are keen to achieve and a bit more about the importance of this later. Without this integration where would our Christmas Party band be? One keeper, one contractor and two VRs?

Weather is a great leveller. Which one of these two drowned rats at a childrens event is FC office staff and which one is a VR?

We are self-motivating as you can see but this does need our host organisation's input - so to maintain our motivation.....

We want to be valued as individuals rather than treated as casual labour. If the attitude was for example - take 10 VRs and do some clearing - it doesn't matter who - we won't stay with you long. We need to be recognised as individuals with our own abilities. However we are not prima donnas! (Well not really!)

To get the best out of us we need to know the purpose of our task. We will do it much better if we understand the background. Is Clive really planting a crop of bamboo or putting in stakes for oak seedlings?

A few words are all that are needed. (They'll never grow Clive - they're upside down!)

For example we were clearing a glade for cicadas. The keeper on whose beat we were working arranged for an expert on these insects to come and talk to us. Realising the importance of what we were doing the team worked through and finished the job during some appalling storms.

We expect to be accountable and responsible for our actions, whether this is working with the public or leading events such as conservation work. We take these tasks seriously

We are aware that we are the public face of our organisation. Visitors to our area are more likely to meet a VR than any other FC staff. We must get it right and if we don't we expect to be told in no uncertain terms! We don't want to hear - "What can you expect - he/she is just a volunteer

In order to get it right we appreciate good training. This is an appreciation rather than an expectation! Whether the training is safety or task related it is also good team building and gives us an opportunity to meet up with VRs who for whatever reason we haven't seen for some time. There is always a social side to these events as for some reason we tend to end up at 'the pub!'

In conclusion I would like to go back to my opening comment - we do it because it is fun! As Admiral Horatio Nelson is reputed to have said

"One volunteer is worth ten pressed men!"

Countryside Recreation Network Seminar

'VOLUNTEERING: STRATEGIES AND PRACTICE FOR ENGAGING VOLUNTEERS IN COUNTRYSIDE RECREATION AND MANAGEMENT'

THE VOLUNTEERS PERSPECTIVE

Peter Ward

English Nature/RSPB Volunteer

I'M ONLY A VOLUNTEER! One of THE most useful phrases I've come across in life!

In the main, this is an account of my experiences volunteering in conservation. By definition, it's very personal, what I say may therefore not be what others have found. There may well be places where none of what I say applies, but I doubt it!!

Having said that, I have an extensive basis upon which to base my comments - if the average volunteering hours per week is around 2, I probably do somewhere in the order of 30, not only for English Nature and the RSPB, but for a number of other organisations as well.

My background is in industry, in manufacturing, and in particular the marketing of consumer products. After over 20 years of doing this, culminating in running a business with 90 staff, an opportunity presented itself to change direction, and as I'd always been interested in wildlife, in particular in birds, I decided to pursue a career in conservation.

I've been volunteering now since Sept 2004. I felt it would be most helpful for you if I concentrated on how I actually feel about the experiences. I know I am down as working for the RSPB and English Nature, as I have already said I'm actually involved with a number of organisations, so my experiences relate not just to those two, indeed not necessarily to either of them!

Here are my "Top 12" comments based on me working as a volunteer and doing some volunteer management, and taking on board one or two views from other volunteers as well.

1. You shouldn't forget that you are offering people like me a wonderful opportunity.

I work on a small bird reserve very close to two motorways, which on a species per acre basis is one of the best in the Country (allegedly). I work in a local nature reserve that's got Bronze Age remnants and medieval water management systems.

I get to go on one of the largest raised peat bogs in Britain, and I've helped to restore it, and helped to prepare the defence case when the local people couldn't understand why we were chopping down all the trees!

And all I had to do was ask.

2. It's been a great way to learn.

I've had loads of free training, and I've learned so much, I'm really genuinely embarrassed now that I thought I knew it all before. There's been research into site histories, producing and running slide shows, producing quizzes for kids, building fences and steps and all manner of other practical work, planting trees, tackling invasive species, running events, and securing funding.

3. It is a great way to meet new people.

A couple of guys I work with discovered one day that they'd been to the same school 50 years ago – they wouldn't do any work for the rest of the morning!

I know another volunteer who specifically volunteers because since he retired, he feels he's short of male company. And the togetherness that can develop within the local community as a result is very heartening. It's been surprising to me how much power these local groups can exert – certain local issues seem to disappear all of a sudden!

Volunteering is hard work at times, and I know that puts some people off, but we do have a lot of fun as well.

4. Being part of something.

For me and for others this is important. It really is a thrill to walk out of the site manager's office, you're something! A responsibility, some authority - the tee-shirt really does help!

5. Making a contribution.

I get a great deal of satisfaction from improving the lot of wildlife – the robin on the spade scenario is just the tip of the iceberg! A few years ago I developed a lake for the benefit of local wildlife – it was so rewarding in my case seeing the arrival of so many bird species in particular, knowing that at a time when so many species are struggling, some had a better chance because of my work.

6. Confidence and health.

Two things I have noticed that build doing voluntary work. Firstly, your confidence, as you become more familiar with your surroundings, and more knowledgeable. I've noticed this particularly with some of the younger volunteers I've been working with. And certainly doing regular practical sessions, I've built up my fitness, and hopefully my health. Some volunteers actually struggle for the first week or two until their fitness builds.

7. Commitment.

This one is something I've come across, in particular in developing friends groups, not something I personally felt. There seems to be a great feeling that by volunteering, you are committed forever. That if you can't make it, you've got to come up with a dam good reason why not! Of course you're not, but we've actually had to add a strap line to a new leaflet - ".....you come and go as you wish", such was the reaction we were hearing.

8. Management?

Conservationists don't seem to be very good at managing people. Clearly this is not the case in every situation, but in my experience people management is no where near the top of the skills list.

Without exception everyone I've met is very amiable and knows a lot more about conservation issues than I do, but what we're actually talking about here is man management, about assessing someone's needs and making the best use of their time and their skills, and dealing with their aspirations.

I prefer to be recognised as someone with skills and abilities that can be used, who at the same time is prepared to learn new ones, rather than as casual labour, a gofer.

I like to be given the responsibility for something. Being a gofer might be right for some, it's not right for me, and I suspect a lot of others too, particularly those who have achieved to any extent in their lives. I personally find that repetitive activities reduce my desire, but that given the responsibility it helps me to develop and motivates me to do more.

9. Motivation.

A word on motivation, and this isn't necessarily an easy one. Yours is probably a full time job, probably with all the hassle that it brings with it, and maybe the enthusiasm wears thin at times. I can understand that. But do remember, that I come once a week, full of enthusiasm and energy that the lack of responsibility brings with it, trying to impress in my case because I'm after a job. If I tell you that I drafted two nature trail documents at the end of 2004, and that they are still being considered, is that how to motivate someone!? I do want to feel that when I come to work, that I am making a useful contribution, and that I am being thought about when I'm not there, as well as when I am, no matter how badly the day is going.

10. Appraisals.

I've only ever had one when I said I wanted one! I really would have expected the impetus for that to come from my manager. For me it doesn't have to be more than a few minutes of informal chat, for my manager I would have thought it absolutely vital - particularly in circumstances where volunteer numbers are quite small, such that the potential loss of one individual, for what ever reason, could have a great impact.

11. Planning and Organising.

I have experienced a lack of planning, and of organising. I know that there are all sorts of reasons why things are a little haphazard at times, but if you're only there on the odd occasion, and that's when there is chaos, its very easy to believe it happens when you're not there i.e. it happens all the time!

Lack of planning has been a problem for me. I can tell you that there have been times when I have had to ask for something to do, or worse than that I've had to say that another

volunteer is standing around and is too embarrassed to say something! And they wonder why some people come and volunteer, and don't last very long!

12. Getting together.

A word about meetings/get togethers. I never thought I'd hear myself saying this, but I've never been to one during my life as a volunteer, and I don't think that's good.

There are times when I turn up and feel slightly left behind, because life obviously goes on without you, and I personally find that a bit deflating!

I am sure the occasional get-together would be useful - a way of getting to know what's going on, given that we are not there all the time, of interacting with other volunteers, and sharing ideas, and another way of helping me really feel part of something.

In summary then, three things:-

1. My volunteering has been a hugely rewarding experience. I now have such an interesting week, I sometimes worry that when the opportunity of a paid position does come up, that it may not provide the same breadth of experience and interest that I get at the moment.
2. Having volunteered myself, I really do feel that I am now very well prepared to handle any volunteers I may be looking after myself. And I'll handle them with great care and respect.
3. I do keep being told that as a volunteer, I'm a valuable commodity – "you're not just a volunteer!" I know it's not easy getting people to volunteer, I am surprised therefore that more time isn't spent looking after them.

Countryside Recreation Network Seminar

'VOLUNTEERING: STRATEGIES AND PRACTICE FOR ENGAGING VOLUNTEERS IN COUNTRYSIDE RECREATION AND MANAGEMENT'

HOW TO MAKE THE BEST USE OF VOLUNTEERS

*Sarah Jarvis
Research Officer
Volunteer Development Scotland*

1. Introduction

The skill of a volunteers manager is to find out what each volunteer wants to get out of volunteering and to help them achieve this while at the same time achieve the aims of the organisation. This requires flexibility in the approach to managing volunteers and will be different for each organisation and for each volunteer.

This paper looks at good practice and motivational theories that influence whether volunteers give their best to your organisation.

2. Strategic management

It is crucial that the management of volunteers starts at the strategic, organisational level. The most fundamental question an organisation has to ask at this stage is "Why do we want to involve volunteers?" and this process can involve thinking about:

- The very basic question, "what is a volunteer?"
- The ethos of the organisation and the role volunteers play in relation to it
- The added value that volunteers bring to the organisation
- The function of volunteers in the organisation – thinking about this may prevent misunderstandings about the function of volunteers compared to that of paid staff.

This discussion and consensus building is vital so that everyone in the organisation agrees on the purpose of volunteer involvement.

The next important task is for an organisation to develop a policy for its involvement of volunteers. This policy should include statements on:

- The role of volunteers
- Recruitment
- Training of volunteers
- Support for volunteers
- Recognition
- Out-of-pocket expenses for volunteers
- Health and safety
- Insurance cover for volunteers
- Grievance procedure for volunteers

Although this sounds formal these aren't black or white issues; the most important thing is to be clear about what decisions the organisation has made. If these decisions are made at this stage in the process, managing volunteers becomes part of the organisation's strategy. It is important to involve key players in the organisation, including volunteers if there are any, in the development of the policy and to communicate this policy across the organisation, to staff at all levels and volunteers.

The type of policy developed and how formal it is will depend on the organisation, particularly its size and the resources available to it. Some small volunteer-led organisations have no formal written policy but they have many good practices in place, for example reimbursement of volunteer expenses, insurance cover and training, and as an organisation they know what decisions they have made about involving volunteers.

3. Volunteer Recruitment

Once an organisation has decided why it wants to involve volunteers and the roles it wants volunteers to undertake, it is time to start recruiting volunteers. The aim of the recruitment process is to identify and reach those volunteers whose motivational needs will be met by the volunteer roles being offered.

Recruitment can be split into 2 different types:

1. When volunteers are being recruited to carry out a role for which no specialist skills are needed. For example, for one-off events such as litter picks. For this type of task the word needs to be spread as widely as possible with posters and local media being good methods to use. It may be appropriate to think about recruiting an existing group of people, for example a local community group, to provide the people-power and who will also have a sense of ownership and purpose over the work and the end result.
2. The second type of recruitment is targeting a specific type of person who would like to do that role or who has specific skills to carry out the role. For this it is important to think about who would want to do that particular role, what their motivations are, and where to find them. The recruitment needs to be specific about what the role entails.

3.1 Recruitment message

60% of adults in Scotland feel that they have never been asked to volunteer (VDS, 2004). To explore this further VDS carried out a qualitative study into 'Asking' (VDS, 2005). The research led to some interesting findings on what should be communicated when recruiting:

- Describe the role. Non-volunteers had some awareness of specific volunteer involving organisations, for example the Scouts, but there was little knowledge of the actual activities undertaken by volunteers. They were also afraid of how many hours they would have to give to volunteering. Recruitment should therefore:
 - give potential volunteers as much information about what's involved as possible, possibly even inviting potential volunteers to a taster session

- use messages that convey what volunteers do
- use messages that convey the amount of time involved
- The need for that volunteer role. Potential volunteers wanted to know how their volunteering would make a difference to others or to the environment. Recruitment should therefore:
 - Use positive messages, for example the difference volunteering makes to the recipient or the community
 - Link the role description to the need for that role
- Highlight what benefits the volunteer will gain. Potential volunteers wanted to know what they would gain from volunteering.
 - Link messages to the motivation of the potential volunteers

The research also found that non-volunteers would like to be asked to volunteer face-to-face by a trusted source.

4. Motivation

We all have needs in life and it is these needs which motivate us to take action to satisfy them. The psychologist McLelland established three main needs that people have:

- Achievement – people need to see that their efforts achieve something worthwhile
- Power / influence – people need control over what they are doing and want to persuade and influence others
- Affiliation – people need others around them with whom they share the same ideas

All volunteers give their time because they are motivated to meet a need. These aren't always conscious needs but they might be obvious to other people or in hindsight. People may be motivated strongly by one need or may have a complex mix of different needs. It is possible to think of volunteers we know in relation to McLelland's needs.

5. Induction

Once volunteers have been recruited it is important that they are able to perform their role effectively in a safe manner. The purpose of induction is to make the volunteer comfortable in the organisation and confident to carry out their role.

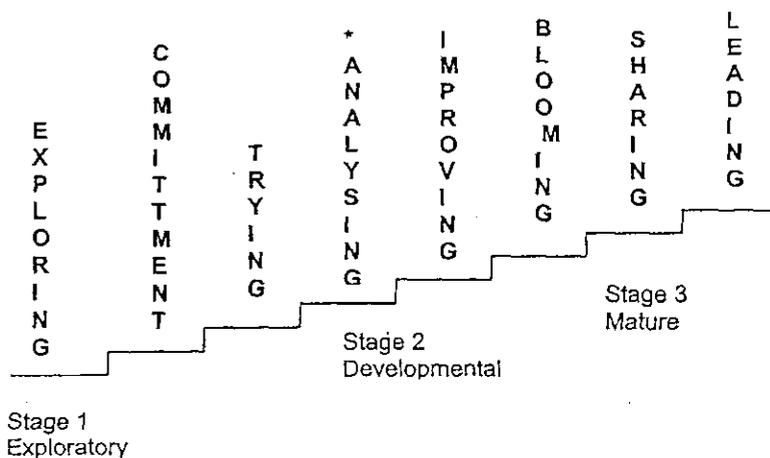
There are four main aspects to induction:

1. Induction to the organisation – an introduction to the ethos of the organisation, the work of the organisation and what volunteers contribute to this.
2. Social induction – an introduction to the staff and current volunteers of the organisation.
3. Induction to the role – this provides volunteers with the ability to carry out a specific task and may be one-off when the volunteer starts with the organisation, or may be required on a weekly or daily basis if the task varies.
4. Induction to health and safety – Induction to the role may cover aspects of this, for example the safe way in which to use a spade, but health and safety training is more about making the volunteers aware of other risks highlighted on the risk

assessment, for example being aware of the public whilst working, identifying local dangers (overhead cables, steep drops) and knowing how to avoid them, how to react to hostile landowners.

6. Volunteer Life Cycle

Paula Beugen (1985) acknowledges that the needs and motivations of volunteers change over their time volunteering for an organisation and proposes that volunteers progress through a motivation life cycle.



1. The first stage is an exploratory stage when the new volunteers are still exploring the possibilities of being a volunteer, trying out their role and, if all goes well, making a commitment to the organisation.
2. In the second stage volunteers are developing themselves and their role by analysing what they are doing and how they are doing it, improving on their performance, and 'blooming'.
3. The third stage is one of maturity where the volunteer is ready to share their skills and knowledge with other volunteers and to support and lead other volunteers.

7. Volunteer Support

As not all volunteers will move through the lifecycle at the same speed, recognising at which stage a volunteer is in their life cycle is the key to giving effective support.

7.1 Stage One

During Stage One of the lifecycle it is important to give assurance to the volunteer, exploring expectations, any uncertainties they may have and their level of need for information.

7.2 Stage Two

Having needed more intensive support during the first stage, the volunteer may be left to get on with it on their own during Stage Two. Although this is a sign of trust and respect, it can also lead to a lack of communication between volunteer and manager. It is therefore important to keep in contact with, and encourage, the volunteer at this stage.

7.2.1 Training

Volunteers may need to develop further during Stage Two of their life cycle and it is therefore important to provide them with on-going training. Training not only equips volunteers with skills, it contributes to high retention by encouraging a sense of commitment.

7.2.2 Decision making

As volunteers start to 'bloom' it is an ideal time to involve them in decision making. 'Blooming' volunteers play a valuable role as they know and understand the organisation and are competent at what they do. Volunteers who are consulted and informed will be more convinced protagonists for the organisation.

7.2.3 Recognition

It is important to recognise volunteers' achievements and to acknowledge the value of their participation. Recognition can be formal (for example certificates, long service badges) or informal (birthday cards, coffee and cakes). Different volunteers will appreciate different types of recognition, so volunteers should be matched with different types. Examples of how differently motivated volunteers can be rewarded are:

- Achievement - Provide regular updates of what volunteer tasks have achieved
- Power / Influence - Ask volunteers for their opinion
- Affiliation - Organise a social event for the volunteers

These aren't necessarily what we would think of as material rewards, but they are all ways in which volunteers will feel that their work is valued and recognised.

7.3 Stage 3

Volunteers will now be ready to share their skills and knowledge. It is important to draw on the qualities and skills the volunteer can now give because otherwise they will begin to lose interest and motivation. The volunteer may also want their role to be expanded or may be ready to move into a new role altogether, particularly in leading other volunteers. It is also important to recognise that the volunteer may wish to move on to another organisation at this stage, either voluntary or paid, and you must help them to do this.

8. Retention of volunteers

Retaining volunteers is about making them feel valued and increasing their self-esteem. Research (McCurley and Lynch, 2001) has shown that people with high self-esteem enjoy a sense of connectedness, a sense of uniqueness, and a sense of effectiveness. These can be achieved by:

- Connectedness
 - Knowing about the standards of the organisation
 - Involve volunteers in the decision-making process
- Uniqueness
 - Recognise the achievements of individual volunteers
 - Ask a volunteer for advice

- Effectiveness
 - Make volunteers responsible for results
 - Use volunteers' ideas

9. Communication

Volunteers' managers need to carry out regular evaluations to find out how volunteers are feeling about their roles and, above all else, be available to communicate with volunteers on a regular basis.

10. References

- Beugen, P. J. 1985. Supporting the volunteer life cycle. Voluntary Action Leadership, Fall 1985. 17-19.*
- McCurley, S. & Lynch R. 2001. Essential Volunteer Management. Directory of Social Change. London.*
- McLelland. www.cultsock.ndirect.co.uk/MUHome/cshtml/index.html*
- VDS. 2004. TNS System Three Opinion Survey, October 2004. VDS.*
- VDS. 2005. The role of asking. Research Findings Scotland, 7.*

Countryside Recreation Network Seminar

'VOLUNTEERING: STRATEGIES AND PRACTICE FOR ENGAGING VOLUNTEERS IN COUNTRYSIDE RECREATION AND MANAGEMENT'

MANAGING RISK WITH VOLUNTEERS

*Vicky Myers
Forestry Commission*

Accepting Responsibility

If you are the land owner or manager, you have a duty to provide a reasonably safe environment for people to visit, even trespassers. If someone has requested to work on your land, they need to have identified what they will be doing, have your permission and you should have established where the blame lies in the event of an accident. They should also have insurance and completed a risk assessment. A template of the permission contract is attached in appendix 1. If you asked the volunteer to carry out work for you, you can assume that their safety is your responsibility and you will need to provide them with a reasonably safe working environment. Be aware that there are other possibilities, for example volunteers leading health walk initiatives, Forestry Commission (FC) 'Eyes and Ears' scheme etc.

If you accept responsibility, your duty to the volunteers may go beyond their safety and can extend to the same responsibilities that you have to someone in your employment.

You need to make sure that you have insurance; carry out a risk assessment; provide guidance for volunteers carrying out the task and provide personal protective equipment where necessary. You also need to be aware of legislation concerning lone working, child protection and disability discrimination, as these may apply.

If volunteers are representing your organisation it is generally appropriate to provide them with uniform. Duties where this is relevant could include leading guided walks, patrolling or enforcing bylaws. If you do issue uniform, it is best to have the volunteer on a formal agreement of some description so that you can terminate their involvement and retrieve their uniform if anything goes wrong. A template of an agreement for services from a volunteer is attached at the end of this piece. Alternatively you can adapt your uniform if you think it is more appropriate.

Taking Precautions to Manage Risk

Managing risk is best achieved by creating procedures and guidance that are appropriate to your situation which makes it clear you have addressed the risks. The FC has national guidance on working with volunteers which is designed to clarify issues of responsibility and liability, this is attached below. Wherever possible it is advisable to ensure there is a paper trail showing every precaution has been taken, for example we have a signed risk assessment for every event we carry out. This system has been adapted and developed so that risk assessment are handed back after every event, with a separate section at the

end of the form asking if any accidents occurred and if there was, asking for details of the accident.

Whenever possible I attend the start of conservation tasks and informally audit how the risks associated with the task are managed. If I have any concerns about how the leaders are leading conservation tasks, I will speak to individual leader first, when necessary issue written reminders or run refresher training days if procedures need updating.

Forestry Commission England Guidance for Working with Volunteers

The Forestry Commission values the contribution that volunteers can bring to managing the national forest estate and the value of volunteering to individuals and society. These are guidelines that are designed to help guide FC staff working with volunteers.

1 Types of volunteer

1.1 Individuals working at the request of the FC

Volunteers can be **called** Volunteer Rangers, Wardens, Wood Wardens, and Conservation Volunteers or by another title if it is more appropriate.

They are our **responsibility** (and may be regarded as similar to an employee in many respects). They do not need to be constantly supervised on site. They must be covered by our risk assessment, receive FC guidance notes as appropriate and we need to provide them with personal protective equipment if it is necessary. There is no need to issue them with waterproof clothes unless working in wet conditions, however we would need to provide them with steel toe capped boots if they are laying dry stone walls. Lone working, child protection and disability discrimination policies apply to them.

Uniform is issued at the discretion of the FC. However, if the volunteers are working where they are representing the FC, it is generally more appropriate to issue them with uniform. Roles where they may be representing the FC include patrolling, leading guided walks or enforcing bylaws. If they are issued with uniform, we must also issue them with an agreement for services that allows us to terminate their involvement and retrieve their FC clothing, should any problems occur. A draft agreement can be found in appendix 2. It may be worth considering a probation period before uniform is issued.

If volunteers are in contact with the public they should be issued with **name badges** (with the FC logo on).

We have a responsibility to provide **training** for volunteers to familiarise them with the work of the FC and prepare them for the tasks they will be undertaking. This will generally be informal training.

Tool use. Hand tools can be used with volunteers, but must be covered by a risk assessment and there must be a health and safety talk, at the start of each event (even if everyone has heard it before!). Use of mechanised tools is generally not appropriate, however it is possible if all the FC paperwork and insurance requirements are complete.

Reward schemes. The contribution of volunteers is recognised by the FC and it is appropriate to reward according to their contribution. Non financial rewards may include car park permits, free Christmas trees and FC caps. Financial rewards may include mileage to and from the office (however the FC need evidence that volunteers are insured for business use of their vehicle before we can pay their mileage), sweets on conservation events, Christmas dinner or drink, etc. Generally an average of £1 per day compensation may be regarded as appropriate payment for volunteers work.

Age Limits. Volunteers must be over 16. If volunteers younger than 18 are appointed, the FC need a specific risk assessment for activities they will be involved with (see <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns>). Having events with parents or guardians present reduces liability issues. There is no upper age limit for volunteers.

Bylaws. It is generally regarded as more appropriate for volunteers to inform (rather than enforce) members of the public about the Forestry Commission bylaws. The decision about whether or not to approach people is always at the discretion of the volunteer, in line with FC guidance on managing conflict and dangerous situations. If appropriately trained, volunteers can enforce bylaws.

Monitoring volunteers work is important to ensure that work is being carried out to an acceptable standard and in a safe manner.

1.2 Groups carrying out work at the request of the FC

These groups work with FC supervision on the day, however they do not need to be constantly supervised. We are responsible for these volunteers, so they must be covered by our risk assessments. As with individuals working under FC direction, we need to provide the volunteers with personal protective equipment if it is necessary. For example, we do need to provide them with steel toe capped boots if they are laying dry stone walls and in certain circumstances it may be appropriate to issue volunteers with waterproof clothing.
e.g. FC led groups of volunteers or groups of conservation volunteers.

1.3 Groups that ask to do work on our land

These groups approach us to carry out tasks on our land. We need to issue these groups with a permission that ensures that we have a copy of their risk assessments and insurance (a draft permission can be found in Appendix 1). On their work days they must provide their own supervision.

1.4 Individuals that do work on our land.

These individuals need to have a permission (as in 1.3).

1.5 'Friends of' Groups

These are generally independent groups working in / association with / support from the FC. It is important that a clear agreement, permission or contract is in place with these groups when they are carrying out work on FC land.

1.6 Other

'Walking the way to health' groups are organised by the Countryside Agency and generally they have no FC responsibility. This situation may be different if an FC staff member is leading the walks. There are also 'Eyes and Ears' schemes where volunteers receive prepaid postcards which they can use to report any problems they see in their woods. These schemes vary, but generally there is no FC responsibility for these types of volunteer.

APPENDIX 1

REFERENCE

FOREST DISTRICT OFFICE NAME

ADDRESS

.....

TELEPHONE NUMBER

PERMISSION FOR CARRYING OUT VOLUNTARY WORK

1. THE PARTIES

The **Forestry Commission**, West Midlands Forest District, Lady Hill, Birches Valley, Rugeley, Staffordshire, WS15 2UQ hereinafter referred to as the **Commission**.

The Permit Holder [insert name and address] hereinafter referred to as the **Permit Holder**.

2. THE RIGHTS GRANTED

Permission is given to the Permit Holder to lead and carry out voluntary work on Commission land, subject to the following conditions.

- All tasks to be agreed with the Commission at least 14 days before the voluntary work is to be undertaken.
- The permit holder is responsible for the safe use and keeping of any tools and personal protective equipment loaned by the Commission.
- The permit holder must ensure the site is left in a safe and tidy condition after any voluntary work.
- The permit holder must keep a record of voluntary work completed or undertaken.
- The permit holder must agree separately with the Commission the use of any mechanised equipment.

3. THE SITE

(a) The area over which the rights are granted is shown edged on the plan attached.

4. THE DURATION

From To

The permission will subsist at the discretion of the Forest District Manager who may withdraw it at any time.

5. THE CHARGE

The charge for the rights granted will be £ 0 payable in advance.

6. CONDITIONS

(a) The voluntary work will be staged in the area edged on the plan attached to this permission. Any deviation from the area and/or the routes must be authorised in writing by the Forest District Manager.

- (b) The responsibility for ensuring that the area is safe and suitable for the voluntary work will rest with the Permit Holder. The Permit Holder will ensure that public rights of way are not impeded.
- (c) The Permit Holder will be responsible for obtaining any planning or other necessary consents
- (d) The Permit Holder will pay compensation or make good to the Forest District Manager's satisfaction all damage to Commission property caused by the exercise of this permission. The Permit Holder will clear all equipment and litter brought onto Commission land by the Permit Holder, participants and spectators, to the satisfaction of the Forest District Manager.
- (e) The Permit Holder will indemnify the Commission against all claims arising from any loss or damage, or injury or death to participants, spectators, Commission employees and any third parties arising from the exercise of this permission and will during the period of this permission maintain an insurance policy with a reputable insurance company to an amount of not less than (£2 or £5 million *delete as appropriate*) in respect of any one claim. The amount of such insurance shall not limit the liability of the Permit Holder to the Commission. The Permit Holder will produce the said insurance certificate and on request a receipt for the premium paid not less than 14 days in advance of the voluntary work.
- (f) The Permit Holder will ensure that adequate and proper arrangements are made to the satisfaction of the Forest District Manager to protect the safety of participants, spectators and all others likely to be within the vicinity of the voluntary work. The arrangements will include:
- Signing to warn of the voluntary work or to exclude access to the area and/or the route(s) by people other than participants
 - Checking the area and/or route(s) before and after the voluntary work
 - Carrying out a Risk Assessment
 - Arrangements for medical assistance
- (g) The Permit Holder will advise the Commission within 24 hours of the end of the voluntary work of any accident to a participant, spectator, or third party which arises as a result of the exercise of this permission.
- (h) If the Commission's tenants and/or landlords or other persons having an interest in the land are likely to be affected by this permission, then the Permit Holder will notify all those persons of the voluntary work not less than 14 days before the work. If their permission is required the Permit Holder will obtain permission. The Commission will give the Permit Holder the names and addresses of those persons likely to be affected.
- (i) The Forest District Manager will ensure that all holders of a contract to provide services to, or purchase goods from, the Commission on the land affected by this permission are notified of the permission, and the approved route or area to be used, and will require them to notify any sub-contractors and their employees.
- (j) The Forest District Manager will ensure that all forest district staff are notified of the permission and the approved route or area to be used.
- (k) The Permit Holder will ensure that no vehicles owned by the Permit Holder, his representatives, participants and spectators may enter Commission land unless with the prior written authority of the Forest District Manager who will specify to the Permit Holder which access routes or areas may be used.

(l) The Permit Holder will ensure that the Forestry Commission Byelaws are observed, except as expressly authorised by this Agreement. A copy of the Byelaws will be supplied on request by the Forest District Manager. In particular the Permit Holder will ensure:

- a speed limit of 15 miles per hour is observed at all times
- there is no smoking or the lighting of fires
- all gates are left in the position as found
- reasonable care is taken to prevent disturbance to wild fauna and flora and to agricultural livestock
- compliance with any instructions issued by the Forest District Manager or his authorised representative
- forest roads are not obstructed

(m) The Commission reserves the right to revoke this permission at any time by notice given to the Permit Holder in writing. If the revocation is to meet Commission requirements a refund of the charge will be made unless a suitable alternative location can be provided. If the revocation is required as a result of default by the Permit Holder or any representative no refund will be made.

(n) As the forest areas subject to this permission are also used by certain other third parties, it is necessary in the interests of management of the forest for such third parties to notify you of events which may affect or restrict your use of the forest. In these circumstances the Forestry Commission will disclose your details to certain other forest users for this purpose only.

By signing this document you agree to such disclosure by the Forestry Commission to other users. In accordance with the terms of this permission the responsibility of ensuring that the route(s) are safe and suitable for the voluntary work rests with the organiser. Any advice given by the Forestry Commission, its representatives, employees or agents is given without prejudice to this. Any advice or information given is given by way of assistance only and should not be relied upon as in any way affecting or limiting your responsibility to ensure the safety of the voluntary work.

In the interests of safety the Forestry Commission strongly recommends that you carry a mobile phone and first aid kit and leave details of the mobile number, route and expected return time with a friend, relative or responsible person.

7. ACCEPTANCE

I accept the foregoing conditions and agree to pay the charge specified in Paragraph 5

Signed
(Permit Holder)

Date

Please sign and return both copies of this permission to the Forest District Manager before

Signed on behalf of the Forestry Commission

Signed
(Forest District Manager)

Date

APPENDIX 2

**AGREEMENT FOR SERVICES
OF
TYPE OF VOLUNTEER, E.G. VOLUNTEER RANGER
AGREEMENT NO:**

Contents

Conditions

Schedule 1 – TYPE OF VOLUNTEER & Forestry Commission Responsibilities

This Agreement is made between the FORESTRY COMMISSION acting by NAME OF YOUR FOREST DISTRICT, (hereinafter called "the Commission"), and VOLUNTEER NAME of VOLUNTEER ADDRESS AND POSTCODE (hereinafter called the "TYPE OF VOLUNTEER").

WHEREBY IT IS AGREED as follows:

1. The TYPE OF VOLUNTEER hereby agrees to carry out the responsibilities specified in the First Schedule attached hereto to the satisfaction of the Commission, subject to the following terms and conditions.
2. The Commission agrees to fulfill its responsibilities specified in the First schedule provided that the TYPE OF VOLUNTEER has carried his responsibilities to the satisfaction of the Commission.
3. For the avoidance of doubt, it is hereby agreed and declared that during the subsistence of this agreement the TYPE OF VOLUNTEER shall not be an employee of the Commission.
4. This agreement shall be personal to the TYPE OF VOLUNTEER. The TYPE OF VOLUNTEER shall not sub-contract the execution of any part of this agreement.
5. If the TYPE OF VOLUNTEER commits a serious breach of any of the terms or conditions of this agreement the Commission shall have the right to require the TYPE OF VOLUNTEER to remedy the matter forthwith, and if the matter is not so remedied the Commission shall have the right to terminate the agreement without further notice.
6. Copyright of all publicity or educational material will rest with the Commission.
7. The TYPE OF VOLUNTEER will provide his own transport and will provide appropriate and adequate insurance.
8. The TYPE OF VOLUNTEER agrees to comply with standard Forestry Commission safety procedures as detailed in various Forestry Commission memorandums and regional instructions and to uphold and support all FC by-laws and policies.
9. The Agreement will run for a period of 12 months from, of which the first six months shall comprise a probationary period. The Commission may but is not obliged to renew the agreement on a 12 month basis. The agreement may be terminated by either party upon giving 1 months' notice in writing or at the completion of the probationary period.

Signed

Date:

..... (For the Forestry Commission)

Signed

..... (TYPE OF VOLUNTEER)

SCHEDULE 1 – TYPE OF VOLUNTEER and Forestry Commission Responsibilities

1 Responsibilities of the TYPE OF VOLUNTEER

The TYPE OF VOLUNTEER agrees to:

- 1.1 undertake a 12 month training period
- 1.2 be available for work for a minimum of
- 1.3 attend a First Aid training course
- 1.4 return any and all corporate clothing, that may from time to time be issued, at the end of service or on request.

2 Responsibilities of the Forestry Commission

The Forestry Commission agrees to:

- 2.1 provide training (be more specific if possible)
- 2.2 any expenses which will be reimbursed – be specific.
- 2.3 provide appropriate corporate clothing at the satisfactory completion of the probationary period
- 2.4 arrange and provide appropriate training
- 2.5 arrange and provide a First Aid course

Countryside Recreation Network Seminar

'VOLUNTEERING: STRATEGIES AND PRACTICE FOR ENGAGING VOLUNTEERS IN COUNTRYSIDE RECREATION AND MANAGEMENT'

CASE STUDY: VOLUNTEERING IN THE PEAK DISTRICT NATIONAL PARK

*Sean Prendergast
Peak District National Park Authority*

Many people working in the field of countryside and recreation management will already have a great deal of experience working with or as volunteers. In the Peak District National Park, we have a history of working with volunteers that goes back more than 50 years.

The Peak District National Park is surrounded by the vast conurbations of Greater Manchester, West and South Yorkshire and the Midlands. It has been estimated that we receive over 22 million day visits per year and half the population of the UK within two hours drive. This potentially places a great deal of pressure in terms of visitor numbers on the very fabric of the park itself, however it also offers a vast resource that mitigates those problems.

There are two main types of volunteer in the Peak District: voluntary rangers and conservation volunteers

The voluntary rangers have been in existence since 1953. To fully understand how they are deployed, we first need to understand why we had rangers in the first place. The answer is closely tied up with the Mass Trespasses and battle for access of the 1930's which are partly responsible for the National Park being established in the first place.

As land was opened up under the 1949 Act there was a generally accepted assumption that there needed to be a 'presence' on land if the public were to be able to have access to it.

Most of the early wardens came from Rambling clubs – they wanted to prove landowners wrong!

Even in early days training was essential and there was a heavy emphasis on hill craft, fitness as well as bylaws and the law of trespass!

Over the course of time, society, values and public perceptions changed. In 1974 the name changed from warden to ranger and the service was spread out across the whole of the park rather than just being concentrated on access land. The role changed as well there was a greater emphasis on advice, assistance and information, a kind of mobile interpretation service also capable of dealing with unexpected situations and acting as a two way conduit between the authority and what was taking place on the ground at weekends, high days and holidays.

Today voluntary rangers spend on Average 12 month training. As well as shadowing existing rangers there are set elements including:

- Pre-training interviews
- Six distinct modules
- Residential training

The standard of training has been independently evaluated as equivalent to NVQ level 2/3. Voluntary rangers (or part-time rangers as they are referred to, even though they are not staff) wear the same uniform as full time staff and they receive an honorarium paid in return for doing a rota post. However whether on a rota or not, they must do a minimum of 10 duties per year in order to retain the status of ranger. This ensures that they are up to date with any changes that take place over time.

The range of duties carried out by volunteer rangers includes:

- Patrols
- Guided Walks
- Events
- Practical works
- Information to visitors and landowners

In short they are ambassadors for the Authority – our 'eyes and ears'

Peak Park Conservation Volunteers (PPCV)

The conservation volunteers developed from the voluntary rangers. PPCV was developed in the early 1970's and sought to offer an opportunity to make a practical contribution to the National Park without the need to undergo a lengthy period of training. The current structure consists of a full-time volunteers organiser, a full-time assistant organiser and six volunteer supervisors, each of whom have first trained as volunteer rangers. They operate from two Bases and workshops, both of which offer basic residential facilities and deliver over 3,500 work days per year. The work of the conservation volunteers includes: fencing; scrub clearance; work on footpaths; and habitat creation (especially on Private Land).

It has been calculated that even allowing for unskilled labour and lower outputs, PPCV still delivers work to the value of 23 full time equivalent employees. However this does not mean that volunteers are a panacea to all resource shortages. There are skills limitations as well as exploitation issues; volunteers cannot be used for every job, they usually require high level of supervision and are NOT a source of cheap labour. In short, volunteers are not a replacement for a well trained and properly resourced work force.

Given all of this it is appropriate to ask why we commit so much time and effort to volunteers.

Ten years ago 80% of PPCV participants were adults and only 20% young people. Today that situation has effectively been turned on its head with almost 80% of PPCV volunteers meeting the definition of young people in the Countryside Agency Diversity Review.

Although the lack of original baseline data means that a 'hard statistic' is not available, there has also been a further marked change in the make up of the PPCV over this same ten year period, with a much higher proportion of groups from black and ethnic minorities, disadvantaged inner urban areas and groups with disabilities. This hasn't simply happened on its own accord, but is a reflection of the emphasis on inclusivity that has taken place over this time.

The Peak District National Park is surrounded by conurbations. Unless we actively engage with the people who live within them we will never engender their understanding and support.

This is not just a reflection of current government thinking and policy, it is simply a question of ensuring that National Parks and the environment in general are on the 'agenda' and not something which is viewed as remote from everyone's normal day to day lives. We in the Peak District are actively using conservation volunteering as a vehicle for greater social inclusion. There are an increasing number of partnerships with agencies working in urban areas and a greater focus on groups and appropriate projects rather than just numbers!

Some of the initiatives we are currently involved in include: the Peak Young Achievers Award which is run in conjunction with Barnsley Youth Outreach Service; Derbyshire Children in care, with DCC Social Services; ARDIC from Handsworth, Birmingham; The Mosaic Project; Home Farm Trust; and many others.

Conclusions

The overarching conclusion from the Peak District Experience can be found in the old adage: You only get out what you are prepared to put in!

In terms of Rangers, we have found over 50 years that high quality training will produce high quality volunteers. If people have invested time and effort in getting trained they tend to stick around which means that retention rates are high and the need to train replacements is reduced. It also means that they give a high quality service which in the end will reflect on you as an organisation.

Conservation Volunteering should be first and foremost about giving a first hand experience with Nature, not a means of getting things done on the cheap! We have taken that a stage further in the Peak District and are actively using it as a means of raising awareness and achieving greater inclusivity, but that doesn't mean that the experience of the individual is in any way diminished. When we engage people from urban areas with the natural environment in a first hand way we are giving them a key which will unlock many doors and enrich their lives as well as engender support and understanding for the natural areas of this country that we, who are privileged to work in it, value so dearly.

Countryside Recreation Network Seminar

'VOLUNTEERING: STRATEGIES AND PRACTICE FOR ENGAGING VOLUNTEERS IN COUNTRYSIDE RECREATION AND MANAGEMENT'

CASE STUDY: VOLUNTEERING IN IRELAND

*Bill Murphy
Chairman
Mountain Meitheal*

30th March 06 - presented by Bill Murphy, Mountain Meitheal

28th June 06 - presented by Shay Walsh, Mountain Meitheal

Mountain Meitheal

This presentation offers a brief overview of volunteering for recreation based activities in Ireland and an introduction to the work of Mountain Meitheal, their objectives, status and ethos. The paper looks at projects and how and why Mountain Meitheal organises as it does. The paper touches on some of the obstacles to greater involvement of volunteers examining it from both the volunteers and the land managers' perspectives. The presentation finishes with a brief consideration on the benefits of volunteering and its contribution to land management and environmental awareness.

Volunteering in Ireland

There is a strong tradition of volunteering in Ireland. In the sporting sector for example, every parish has a club and team turning out to play hurling and football under the code of the Gaelic Athletic Association, an organisation that is still entirely amateur even to its most "professional players". As a sports mad country soccer, rugby, swimming, athletics and all other sports survive and thrive only because of an army of volunteers that provide coaching, funds and even the very playing fields and infrastructure. Similarly schools have a strong voluntary element and other youth services like scouts, guides and youth clubs. Increasingly, however, people are moving away from long term commitments to offering voluntary service on a fixed time commitment. The Special Olympics in 2004 was a case in point run with over 80,000 volunteers across the country offering help.

Environmental Volunteering

Traditional "*environmental volunteering*" is however poorly developed despite the fact that some projects like the Tidy Towns¹ initiative attracted large numbers in urban areas.

There has tended to be some antagonism between the statutory organisations and volunteer groups. This is generated by both sides of the issue with non-governmental

¹ *The Tidy Towns programme attracts huge support across the country and involves local communities working to improve their local urban environment.*

organisations feeling that the state should pay for all recreation developments² while the state organisations fear undue and uninformed interference in land management.

That said, there are some successful voluntary environmental /outdoor recreation focussed organisations. The Irish Raptor Group, Irish Peat lands Conservation Council³, and Bird Watch Ireland are just some of the organisations in this area. However they tend to focus more on advocacy and education or on *semi professional*⁴ projects as opposed to hands-on conservation work. Organisations focussed more on *hands-on* volunteer work include Groundwork, working with the National Park Service on a habitat restoration, Conservation Volunteers Ireland (CVI) similar to BTCV in the UK and Mountain Meitheal a club specialising on upland conservation through trail maintenance.

As the chair and founder of Mountain Meitheal my presentation focussed on the objectives, work and concerns of organisations like Mountain Meitheal in the volunteering sector.

Mountain Meitheal - volunteer trail builders and maintainers

Mountain Meitheal⁵ was established in 2002 "The International Year of the Mountains" integrating a smaller group started in 2000. Mountain Meitheal is modelled on the Maine Appalachian Trail Club (www.matc.org) and inspired by the work of volunteers who maintain the 2160 miles of the Appalachian Trail.

Mountain Meitheal works to protect the mountain environment, to protect the wildness of our mountains, through trail work and by promoting better practice and messages such as Leave No Trace. The club is working to avoid heavily engineered solutions that can change the nature of the mountain experience and that were being examined as solutions in the late 1990s.

"*Meitheal*" is a Gaelic word, used to describe a work party that went from farm to farm helping with the harvest or saving the turf in pre mechanised days. It was a mutual cooperative on an informal basis that contributed significantly to the rural way of life. The concept suited our objectives which was a group of individuals coming together to work cooperatively for the mountain environment.

Mountain Meitheal values and ethos

Mountain Meitheal is entirely voluntary with no paid employees but with over 50 full members and approximately 200 on our mailing list. Members are drawn from other Mountaineering Council of Ireland clubs and individuals. Funding and resources come from a variety of sources – individuals, clubs, NPWS, Coillte, The Heritage Council to name but a few. That said the funding requirements are small with an operating budget of approximately €6,000 per annum.

² Although the National Park and Wildlife Service and Coillte (The Irish Forestry Board) have recreation as a secondary or tertiary objective in their land management.

³ Both these organisations have been involved in successful projects with both the NPWS and Coillte.

⁴ The reintroduction of the golden eagle was sponsored by the Irish Raptor Society but was in effect a professional run project.

⁵ Mountain Meitheal is a constituent club of the Mountaineering Council of Ireland.

Mountain Meitheal has developed values which we believe help with the overall management and running of the organisation.

Independence

Meitheal is entirely independent of other organisations. All decisions on projects⁶, direction of the organisation etc., are taken by a committee composed solely of volunteers. We think this is essential to maintaining a strong volunteer base and **sense of ownership**.

Clear objectives

Meitheal very early in its development created clear objectives (see text box). All projects and initiatives are measured against these objectives which ensure consistency of approach and limits deviation from our core ideals.

Mountain Meitheal Objectives

- To protect and conserve the mountain and forest environment by repairing, maintaining and building mountain and forest trails while, maintaining the challenge for recreational users and striving to preserve a sense of solitude and a 'wilderness' experience.
- To spread an awareness of sustainable recreation
- To provide enjoyable projects and activities for its volunteers

Action over politics

The *access issue* is a contentious issue in Ireland with no agreed approach even amongst recreation users. We believe in action as the major way to gain a say in how our valuable recreation areas are managed and developed and we do this though developing "sweat equity". As such Mountain Meitheal is **the** listed partner on trails in the management plan of Wicklow Mountains National Park.

Activities and Management

An Annual work plan is agreed by the Executive Committee and the landowners. Each project has a project manager responsible for all elements of the project – specification, materials, licences and approvals and liaising with the land owners. Every project now has a specification which ensures continuity of work with different crew leaders. Each crew leader is responsible for site safety talks and hazard identification.

The Club works a minimum of **two work days per month** from February through November. We also hold special "club days" for hiking clubs who may wish to give a day to a specific project. As part of our programme we also run training courses for our members in trail building, crew leading, Leave No Trace Awareness etc.

We encourage "come and try" days and the formation of new "Meitheal" groups. For example this year we have run a trail day for mountain bikers and a workshop at the

⁶ We do of course reach agreement with the landowners on the approach to particular projects on their lands.

Ballyhoura Walking Festival. Finally we encourage our volunteers to stop and chat to passers by to explain our work and the concept of sustainable recreation.

Techniques

We employ low impact over heavily engineered solutions as our objective is to lessen the impact of our work on the landscape. We employ techniques such as:

- Stone steps and tread hardening
- Water bars to limit water damage
- Scree walls, "rip rap" and forest brushings for trail delineation
- Turnpike trails
- Simple bog bridges
- Re-vegetation and landscaping
- Reversal trail.

Meitheal also undertakes mountain path and trail related projects. The **Wicklow Mountain Paths Baseline Survey** covered over 200km of paths. These trails were mapped on the ground and recorded on a data base with each file containing maps, GPS points, measurements, photos and trail and damage descriptions. This study forms a valuable basis for monitoring of upland erosion into the future. In 2003 we undertook a feasibility study on work required to stabilise the Devil's Ladder, the main route up Carrantouhill, Ireland's highest mountain. This is now part of trail improvement plan for these mountains.

Contribution

Mountain Meitheal has **reconstructed** or upgraded over 3.5km of trails in Wicklow since its formation, with an estimated value of circa €120,000. The club has been key to promoting an awareness of the need for sustainable recreation and in creating a sense of ownership amongst users. The work of Mountain Meitheal helps create a valuable bridge between recreation users and land managers.

Each year Mountain Meitheal contributes approximately 1500 to 2000 hours and is developing expertise in sustainable trail construction, raising awareness amongst mountain users and agencies and most importantly, having fun!!

Volunteering – Issues

There are issues that concern Mountain Meitheal.

Insurance is one constant issue. If volunteers work on state lands we believe that the agencies should insure the volunteers while at work. We have suggested⁷ that state agencies examine the UK and US approach to insurance for volunteers.

Interaction between volunteers and major landowners - if agencies and other professionals wish to encourage volunteers then they need to engage more fully with

⁷ In submission to the Countryside Recreation Strategy.

volunteers. Meeting and communications with volunteers should be organised at times and in ways that suit the volunteers.

Respect - there are many talents out there in the volunteering community -- engineers, foresters, surveyors, and skilled people – people who like to work on trails but have day jobs. Professional trail workers and managers sometimes underestimate the level of skills that can and are available in volunteer groups and tend to see volunteers simply as workers “light” with no real part to play.

Training - there is a real need for good training and good manuals particularly in an Irish context.

Volunteers need to examine their own role and performance. Volunteers' perspective groups need to be “business like” in their approach; otherwise they become more trouble than they are worth. They need to understand fully the objectives and constraints that land managers work under. Similarly any volunteer organisation needs just that, ORGANISATION and a clear focus. Finally volunteer groups can sometimes attract those with other objectives. Volunteer organisations should avoid hidden agendas

Do we make a difference?

We like to think we do and our on the ground projects speak for themselves.

Aldo Leopold, Forester, Ecologist and founder of the Wilderness Society in the US once wrote *“Recreation management is not building trails into lovely country, but building receptivity into the yet unloving human mind.”*

We believe through our brand of volunteering we can both build trails and create that receptivity that will love and care for the natural environment – probably more important than building trails.

Mountain Meitheal

Get out, Get dirty, Give back.

www.pathsavers.org

Countryside Recreation Network Seminar

'VOLUNTEERING: STRATEGIES AND PRACTICE FOR ENGAGING VOLUNTEERS IN COUNTRYSIDE RECREATION AND MANAGEMENT'

CASE STUDY: INVOLVING NEW AUDIENCES WITH YOUR ORGANISATION THROUGH GROUP VOLUNTEERING

*Jennie Owen
National Trust*

Involving volunteers in the countryside is rewarding. Involving groups can be much more rewarding both for our organisations and the individual volunteers. The National Trust involves groups of volunteers through a number of programmes. These programmes provide us with opportunities to engage with a wide range of people, many of whom would not be typical visitors to a National Trust property. We therefore have the ideal opportunity to use their involvement to promote the work of the Trust, our management of the countryside and to develop partnerships which will ensure the sustainability of the organisation.

Volunteering Programmes in the National Trust

The National Trust provides a number of programmes for different groups of volunteers. All our programmes are set up to meet the needs of the properties, to carry out agreed tasks and, in addition, to meet the needs of the volunteers taking part.

However, we find that certain features are common to all groups regardless of their numbers, where they come from, why they are offering their time, or their age.

These features are as follows:

- All groups must feel that the task they are carrying out is meaningful. The most 'mundane chore such as ragwort removal takes on a different significance if volunteers are told why it must be eradicated and what the effects on the landscape and wildlife would be if the work was not carried out.
- All volunteers must be provided with the correct clothing and protective equipment. You can make reasonable requests in your introduction letter for example 'wear old, warm work clothing' but any additional task specific protective clothing, such as goggles, must be provided by your organisation.
- All groups must have their own nominated leader. This means that you will have a single point of contact prior to your activities with the group, so that your staff can concentrate on the specific requirements of the task and do not have to worry about getting the group to the work site, making sure they have refreshments (although you can still provide tea and biscuits if you want) and generally ensuring that the group behave appropriately on site;
- There should be first aid provision on site. In the National Trust this is provided by a member of staff.

- Groups need regular breaks, (see above regarding provision of refreshments). The host should ensure that adequate shelter can be provided should the weather demand it (this may also apply to extreme heat as well as cold and damp).
- Groups of volunteers need motivation. This should be engendered by their leader and your member of staff and may be related to the nature of the task or the outcome of completion.

There are also common features which groups bring to the organisation for which they are volunteering. These are:

- Groups of volunteers provide the work force for large-scale projects which do not require any particular skill.
- Most of the groups who volunteer for the National Trust are not our traditional visitors; it is unlikely that under normal circumstances they would choose to visit a Trust property.
- Groups of volunteers provide our staff with the opportunity to 'show off', to demonstrate their skill and knowledge to a wider audience. This also provides the opportunity for environmental organisations such as the National Trust to promote our work and philosophy.
- We find that often, once groups have been involved in a specific task on a site, they are keen to return and bring their families and friend to show their work. Also, having seen what the site has to offer, individuals will come back to enjoy its landscapes and other features.
- Some groups of volunteers may be keen to form partnerships with a site and its staff. This relationship can take the form of regular visits and work parties and there may be lucrative financial partnerships formed through sponsorships and donations.

Having established the similarities amongst groups of volunteers I would now like to share some specifics with you from the National Trust experience.

Working Holidays

The National Trust has an annual programme of around 400 working holidays held on over 100 of our properties. The holidays have space for up to 16 volunteers; numbers are set by the size of accommodation and transport which is provided and to keep the group to a manageable size for a volunteer leader.

We offer a range of types of holiday for specific age groups or interests as well as general conservation tasks.

Most of the group travel independently and the social side of the holiday is very important to the participants. Around half of the volunteers are return bookings. This means that we are able to showcase the Trust to over 2,000 new volunteers every year as well as building on the support we get from continuing volunteers.

The Working Holidays programme requires a level of financial commitment from the Trust. Firstly, we provide accommodation for holiday volunteers and the property provides transport for the group. The accommodation is usually of hostel type with a communal

kitchen. Secondly, we provide a comprehensive training programme for our volunteer leaders. This includes assessing their driving skills through the MIDAS scheme. Volunteer leaders are trained to look after the volunteers on their holiday which includes arranging menus, shopping and social activities. They do not manage the work site but they are briefed in Health and Safety. Work site management is carried out by a member of staff. Volunteers on the holiday greatly appreciate the high level of staff involvement and find that they learn vast amounts from our knowledgeable staff.

Employee Volunteering Partnerships (EVP)

Partnerships with corporate organisations are bringing huge benefits to the Trust. The groups are of varying size, from 5 to several hundred volunteers. The time scales are also quite diverse, either a one-off day or the same team or department may form a long term relationship with a site. The groups will always have a nominated leader or contact that will ensure that volunteers arrive at the site properly equipped. EVP groups usually arrange their own catering for their time with you sometimes this can be quite lavish! EVP groups need close staff supervision as, generally, the participants have no previous experience of outdoor conservation work.

Relationships with a corporate organisation can bring a host of additional benefits apart from completing conservation tasks. These can include donations, which may cover the purchase of tools and materials to assist with the delivery of a task or for other project specific tasks; opportunities for secondees offering professional skills; sponsorship; small groups for project development; or research.

Youth Organisations

Youth organisations are often keen to form partnerships with others which can help them deliver on their own agendas, whether that be service to the community, environmental protection or educational. The groups therefore consist of varying numbers of volunteers and will be prepared to offer varying lengths of time.

These groups nearly always come with their own leaders trained in working with young people and direct involvement should be left to them and not undertaken by your staff. There may however be child protection issues if there is a residential element to the partnership. The nature of the task may require a high level of staff involvement and supervision from your organisation.

We have found that when working with marginalised groups it is beneficial to involve the members in drawing up their own behavioural contract at the start of their task.

Youth Discovery holidays

The National Trust's Working Holidays programme was set up in 1967 to provide conservation opportunities for young people. Over the years the age range has widened to over eighty but in 2003 the Trust's newly introduced Child Protection policy meant that under 18's could not be accommodated on the main programme. Youth Discovery holidays were introduced for 16-18 year olds with CRB checked and specially trained volunteer leaders who provide a programme of activities for the duration of the holiday. Participants

on the holidays are required to sign and agree to a Code of Conduct which covers subjects such as behaviour towards other volunteers and restrictions on drugs and alcohol.

Young people participating in the holiday programme are able to continue their involvement with the Trust through our Young Heritage Leader scheme. This programme is allowing us the opportunity to develop our volunteer leaders for the future and is also providing staff development opportunities through mentoring the young people.

Local NT Volunteer groups

The Trust is fortunate in having groups of committed volunteers who contribute to conservation projects on a regular basis. These groups, most of whom consist of around ten people on a task, will come to our sites on one or two days per month. Each task will have an experienced leader who will require very little, if any, staff supervision.

The groups develop a relationship with their favourite, or local, sites and can be called upon for a variety of tasks in addition to their conservation activities such as stewarding of events.

They also acquire an in depth knowledge of the site(s) they visit frequently and use this to develop their annual programme in consultation with staff.

Other groups

The Trust, as is to be expected of an organisation of its size, has arrangements with many groups and organisations that provide volunteers for our sites.

Some sites provide regular opportunities for prisoner pre-release schemes, others for groups of volunteers with special physical or emotional needs. In both these types of cases there is the need for high levels of supervision from the group leaders as well as high staff input from our staff. It may be necessary to modify some tasks or re-evaluate the time taken for a task.

Some groups will volunteer because of a shared interest or shared objectives e.g. Ramblers group may be keen to assist with footpath maintenance whilst other groups may have a desire to participate in something completely different from their every day existence such as an inner city ethnic minority group experiencing the countryside and its management.

In all these cases there is the potential for great satisfaction both for the volunteers and staff involved.

Conclusion

Involving groups of volunteers in all their guises provides a range of opportunities for engagement with our organisations, our work, and our philosophy and increases our sustainability and that of our environment.

Countryside Recreation Network Seminar

'VOLUNTEERING: STRATEGIES AND PRACTICE FOR ENGAGING VOLUNTEERS IN COUNTRYSIDE RECREATION AND MANAGEMENT'

CASE STUDY: THE WORCESTERSHIRE WARDENS PARTNERSHIP

*Andy Maginnis
Countryside Management Association*

30th March 06 - presented by Andy Maginnis, CMA

28th June 06 - presented by David Manning, Wychavon District Council

Benefits of volunteering

There is a considerable body of evidence that volunteering presents a number of benefits to the individual and the host organisation. These include:

To the individual

- Keeping physically fit or recuperating
- Mental well-being
- Meeting people
- Opportunity to take direct action to improve your environment
- Improving job prospects
- Contributing towards awards such as Duke of Edinburgh
- Opportunity to "put something back"
- Opportunity to influence management decisions

To the organisation

- Can help get things done
- Encourages a positive sense of ownership amongst participants
- Opportunity to get feedback on organisation's management decisions
- Helps develop potential future employees
- Engenders an understanding of the environment
- Contributes towards social inclusion targets

Volunteering in the environmental sector in Worcestershire

Worcestershire has a thriving volunteer community. Organisations that host volunteers include:

- The National Trust
- The Forestry Commission
- BTCV
- The Duckworth Worcestershire Trust
- Worcestershire Wildlife Trust
- The Malvern Hills Conservators
- Redditch Borough Council
- Wyre Forest District Council
- Worcester City Council
- Worcestershire County Council

Between them these organisations offer a wide variety of volunteering opportunities including:

- Physical maintenance and improvement tasks
- Staffing visitor centres
- Carrying out biological and visitor surveys
- Dealing with enquiries
- Serving on committees
- Inspecting recreation and conservation sites and public rights of way

Room for improvement

There is a tendency amongst organisations that work with volunteers to operate in silos. This often leads to:

- Poor sharing of expertise between host organisations
- Limited buying power for tools and equipment
- Inconsistency between host organisations regarding their treatment of volunteers
- Limited opportunities to hold "thank you" events for volunteers
- Limited opportunities for volunteers to try something new or work in a different environment
- Limited buying power to provide training opportunities for volunteers
- Poor communication between volunteers from different organisations

The Worcestershire Wardens Partnership

The ODPM provided funding to enable a Worcestershire Wardens Feasibility Project to be established. This has since led to the formation of the Worcestershire Wardens Partnership. The initial signatories to the Partnership are:

- The National Trust
- Worcestershire Wildlife Trust

- The Malvern Hills Conservators
- Redditch Borough Council
- Wyre Forest District Council
- Worcester City Council
- Worcestershire County Council

The partners have signed the Worcestershire Wardens Partnership Agreement which sets out their commitment to the Partnership. This includes agreeing to:

- Pay £500pa towards running costs
- Abide by the Worcestershire Wardens Charter which sets out their commitment to providing volunteers with appropriate training, support, clothing, insurance cover, expenses, a reasonably healthy and safe environment, information about their role and an undertaking to deal with volunteers in a fair and equitable manner
- Allow volunteers from partner organisations to attend their training events where space permits
- Provide opportunities for volunteers from partner organisations to help out at events on their land e.g. woodland fair
- Make tools and equipment available to other partners where it is convenient to do so
- Share expertise with other partners and with others striving to work with volunteers
- Collaborate to deliver a joint "thank you" event for the volunteers e.g. the first event was hosted by broadcaster and naturalist Bill Oddie
- Attend Worcestershire Wardens Partnership Steering Group meetings

The volunteers continue to owe their first allegiance to their host organisation; however, they also become part of the Worcestershire Warden family. This not only allows them to benefit from the collaborative approach of their host organisation but also means that they receive a Worcestershire Wardens newsletter (provided electronically to the hosts to distribute as they see fit) and will shortly have access to Worcestershire Wardens branded clothing (the host organisation may opt to provide this free or at cost to their volunteers).

Governance

Each partner is entitled to send a voting representative to Worcestershire Wardens Partnership Steering Group meetings. There are also a number of non-voting co-opted members including the Duckworth Worcestershire Trust, BTCV and the Countryside Agency. Meetings are governed in accordance with a simple constitution. The day to day management of the Partnership is carried out by the Worcestershire Wardens Network Officer who is hosted by Worcestershire County Council. The Network Officer is allocated half a day a week to deal with Partnership business and this is funded by the Worcestershire Liveability Partnership for three years.

The key to governance is to keep things simple and, within reason, flexible. This overcomes many of the barriers to potential partners signing up. It is also important that Steering Group members are of the most appropriate level i.e. that they have authority to make decisions yet are not so senior as to be detached from the practical application of the organisation's volunteering strategy.

The future

The Worcestershire Wardens Partnership is seeking to expand its membership to include all organisations that work with volunteers in the environmental sector. It is also hoped to increase the hours of the Network Officer to maximise the post's contribution to the management of the Partnership.

Given the early success of the Worcestershire Wardens Partnership it is hoped that the model will be adopted elsewhere in the UK and Ireland.

Andy Maginnis

- Countryside Estates Manager, Worcestershire County Council
- LGA Countryside Advisor on the Countryside Recreation Network
- Countryside Management Association representative on the Country Parks Delivery Group and LGA Access Advisory Group

Email: amaginnis@worcestershire.gov.uk

Telephone: 01905 766493

APPENDIX A

Volunteering

Strategies and Practice for Engaging Volunteers in Countryside Recreation and Management

PROGRAMME - 30th March 2006

- 9.30 *Registration and refreshments*
- 10.00 **Welcome by Chair** (*John Watkins, Countryside Council for Wales*)
- 10.10 **Strategic Overview - Government policy, scale and scope of volunteering**
(*Angela Ellis Paine, Assistant Director, Volunteering England*)
- 10.35 **Volunteers - a blessing or a curse**
(*Miles Sibley, Development Director, BTCV*)
- 11.00 **The Volunteers Perspective**
(*Peter Ward, English Nature/RSPB*)
- 11.20 **Refreshments**
- 11.40 **How to Make Best Use of Volunteers**
(*Sarah Jarvis, Research Officer, Volunteer Development Scotland*)
- 12.00 **Managing Risk with Volunteers**
(*Vicky Myers, Forestry Commission*)
- 12.20 *Question Time - Panel Session*
- 12.50 **Lunch**
- 13.45 **A Strategy for Volunteering**
(*Sean Prendergast, Peak District National Park*)
- 14.05 **Case Study: Volunteering in Ireland**
(*Shay Walsh, Mountain Meitheal*)
- 14.25 **Case Study: Involving New Audiences of Volunteers through Groups including Youth Volunteers**
(*Jennie Owen, National Trust*)
- 14.45 **Refreshments**
- 15.00 **Case Study: The Worcestershire Wardens Partnership**
(*Andy Maginnis, Countryside Management Association*)
- 15.20 *Question Time - panel session*
- 15.45 **Summary (Chair)**
- 16.00 **CLOSE**

Volunteering

Strategies and Practice for Engaging Volunteers in Countryside Recreation and Management

PROGRAMME - 28th June 2006

- 9.30** *Registration and refreshments*
- 10.00** **Welcome by Chair** (*John Watkins, Countryside Council for Wales*)
- 10.10** **Strategic Overview - Government policy, scale and scope of volunteering**
(*Nick Ockenden, Volunteering England*)
- 10.35** **Volunteers - a blessing or a curse**
(*Miles Sibley, Development Director, BTCV*)
- 11.00** **The Volunteers Perspective**
(*Peter Ward, English Nature/RSPB*)
- 11.20** **Refreshments**
- 11.40** **How to Make Best Use of Volunteers**
(*Sarah Jarvis, Research Officer, Volunteer Development Scotland*)
- 12.00** **Managing Risk with Volunteers**
(*Vicky Myers, Forestry Commission*)
- 12.20** *Question Time - Panel Session*
- 12.50** **Lunch**
- 13.45** **A Strategy for Volunteering**
(*Sean Prendergast, Peak District National Park*)
- 14.05** **Case Study: Volunteering in Ireland**
(*Shay Walsh, Mountain Meitheal*)
- 14.25** **Case Study: Involving New Audiences of Volunteers through Groups including Youth Volunteers**
(*Jennie Owen, National Trust*)
- 14.45** **Refreshments**
- 15.00** **Case Study: The Worcestershire Wardens Partnership**
(*David Manning, Wychavon District Council*)
- 15.20** *Question Time - panel session*
- 15.45** **Summary (Chair)**
- 16.00** **CLOSE**

APPENDIX B

BIOGRAPHIES OF SPEAKERS

'Strategies and Practice for Engaging Volunteers in Countryside Recreation
and Management'
30 March 2006
The Priory Rooms, Bull Street
Birmingham

CHAIR

**JOHN WATKINS
RECREATION AND ACCESS POLICY OFFICER
COUNTRYSIDE COUNCIL FOR WALES**

John Watkins is the Recreation Policy Section Head for the Countryside Council for Wales. He has worked on recreation in the Countryside Policy Directorate for over 5 years, including a two year secondment to the Adfywio tourism grant scheme. Previously he has worked for the Ramblers Association, Denbighshire County Council, and as an outdoor pursuits instructor. John is currently the Vice Chair for the Countryside Recreation Network.

SPEAKERS

**Dr ANGELA ELLIS PAINE
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR
INSTITUTE FOR VOLUNTEERING RESEARCH
VOLUNTEERING ENGLAND**

Dr Angela Ellis Paine is Assistant Director at the Institute for Volunteering Research, Volunteering England. Angela has been involved in the evaluations of several volunteering initiatives, including the Department for Education and Skill's Active Citizens in Schools pilot and the Millennium Volunteers programme. She has written a number of reports, including a discussion document on measuring the impacts of volunteering, a literature review on university-based volunteering, and is co-author of an article on international volunteering. Angela has been involved in a study into social exclusion and volunteering, and has been involved in research consultancies for various volunteer-involving organisations including The Wildlife Trusts, the Association of Colleges, and the Royal Town Planning Institute. Angela completed her PhD on local participation in rural community development initiatives at the University of Wales, Swansea.

**NICK OCKENDEN
RESEARCH OFFICER
INSTITUTE FOR VOLUNTEERING RESEARCH
VOLUNTEERING ENGLAND**

Nick Ockenden is a Research Officer at the Institute for Volunteering Research, an independent body which carries out research and evaluation projects on all aspects of volunteering. The Institute is an initiative of Volunteering England, the national volunteer development agency for England, and the University of East London. Nick is currently working on a project developing a draft volunteering strategy for the prisons and probation service on behalf of the Home Office, as well as a piece of work exploring the factors which affect the retention of volunteers within Further Education college governance. Previous to working at the Institute, Nick worked for four years at GreenSpace, a national charity supporting parks and public spaces. Here he developed a support network for Friends of parks groups and helped groups organise events in their parks as part of the Park It! programme. Nick has a masters degree in environmental management and a degree in geography, both from the University of Nottingham.

**MILES SIBLEY
DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR
BTCV**

Miles Sibley has many years' experience in working with community groups and volunteers. His career started as a full time volunteer with a homelessness charity, and he went on to work with tenants' and residents' associations on a range of housing issues. He spent time in Manchester's inner urban area, helping to set up worker cooperatives and community businesses, and then became Director of a national network of technical aid centres, working on various aspects of community planning and design.

Latterly, Miles has worked with BTCV, a charity that supports 130,000 volunteers working on environmental and sustainable development projects. He is a voluntary and community sector representative on the Defra Compact Group, has worked with DfES on the Gap Year Consultative Group, and has been closely involved in the Russell Commission on Youth Action and Engagement.

**HENRY COLE
FORESTRY COMMISSION VOLUNTEER RANGER**

Henry was born in Birmingham in 1947 and after leaving school completed a 5 year Marine Engineering Apprenticeship before joining the Merchant Navy as a junior engineer officer. He came ashore in 1984 after achieving the rank of Chief Engineer and continued his career in engineering within various departments of Esso Petroleum. Henry took early retirement in 2003 having spent the previous 4 years based in Brussels. He is now in his second year as a Volunteer Ranger and tries to undertake 5 to 6 duty days per month. He

is married with two grown up children and lives to the west of the New Forest. Interests include archaeology, local history and old cars.

**PETER WARD
ENGLISH NATURE/RSPB VOLUNTEER**

Peter Ward is 52, and lives in Wolverhampton, in the West Midlands. He is married to a solicitor, and has two young children.

After leaving University with a business degree, he spent over twenty years in industry, before opting for a change in direction. Whilst gaining an environmental qualification, he renovated a smallholding in Shropshire, and is now looking for a full time opportunity in conservation.

**SARAH JARVIS
RESEARCH OFFICER
VOLUNTEER DEVELOPMENT SCOTLAND**

Sarah works in the Research Unit at Volunteer Development Scotland (VDS) where she undertakes research to develop knowledge and understanding of volunteering in Scotland in a way which is relevant to both practitioners and policy-makers. VDS also undertakes consultancy research and she has just been involved in a big piece of research for Scottish Natural Heritage to explore the scope of natural heritage volunteering in Scotland.

Sarah was previously an Access Officer in the Countryside Service of Stirling Council where she managed a group of 40 volunteers as part of the Stirling Council Adopt-A-Path scheme. Sarah has previously been involved in ecological research in South Africa, where she also did a lot of environmental voluntary work, and have been a Volunteer Officer with BTCV Scotland. Sarah has a masters degree in environmental management and a VDS Award in Volunteers Management.

**VICKY MYERS
VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR
FORESTRY COMMISSION**

Vicky has been working as a Ranger in the New Forest for eight years and has spent the last 4 years developing and managing the region's volunteer program. Prior to this she carried out a research project in Etosha National Park Namibia, which resulted in a PhD in conservation biology. Vicky is currently an appointed Secretary of State member of the New Forest National Park Authority.

**SEAN PRENDERGAST
HEAD OF ACCESS AND RECREATION
PEAK DISTRICT NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY**

Sean has been a Chief Ranger and Head of Access and Recreation in the Peak District National Park for 10 years. Prior to this he was involved with Rights of Way and Access for ten years. He has been involved in various funding initiatives as a Highways Authority officer and as a National Park Chief Ranger working with the NGO's, charities and user groups.

**BILL MURPHY
MANAGER - RECREATION AND LEISURE
COILLTE**

Bill is the founder and current chair of Mountain Meitheal. Mountain Meitheal (*meitheal* a gaelic word meaning work party and in particular used to denote groups of neighbours coming together to assist with the harvest etc.) is a volunteer trail repair and maintenance club. Mountain Meitheal works to *conserve the upland environment by repairing and maintaining trails and promoting sustainable recreation* (through initiatives like the Leave No Trace message). Mountain Meitheal runs a programme of workdays from late February through late November each year providing over 2000 hours of volunteer input per annum. Mountain Meitheal has worked on five major projects over the last five years reconstructing over 3km of trails on private, national park and forest lands. The emphasis is to use indigenous materials and preserve the challenge and sense of wildness of mountain trails.

In his "day job" Bill is the manager of recreation with Coillte, the Irish Forestry Board. Bill joined the Irish Forest Service in 1984 having completed a bachelors degree in forestry and a masters degree in forest recreation economics at University College, Dublin. Bill worked for five years as a district forester in Donegal and Sligo and also spent time working on an exchange programme in the southern US. In 1989 he took up the position as head of Coillte Christmas tree farms and during the next ten years Bill was involved in the developments of all aspects of the Christmas tree sector. In 1999 he returned to the area of recreation and in 2003 initiated a major review of the company's recreation policy and chaired the recreation review group. Bill has also overseen major trail building projects for the National Parks and Wildlife Service and is currently managing a €5.3 million recreation redevelopment programme for Coillte. Bill is a keen hill walker and sailor and his current interest is developing an awareness of the value of wild places in Ireland.

**SHAY WALSH
MOUNTAIN MEITHEAL**

Shay Walsh is the vice-chair of Mountain Meitheal. He is also the 'Leave No Trace' Master Educator, member of Dublin/Wicklow Mountain Rescue Team, A member of the Hillwalkig Committee of the Mountaineering Council of Ireland and member of the Irish Mountain Training Board.

**JENNIE OWEN
VOLUNTEERING PROGRAMMES MANAGER
NATIONAL TRUST**

Jennie has worked in the Trust's Central office for almost two years, following an earlier spell as Volunteers Coordinator in the East Midlands regional office. Prior to this she has been involved in the development and delivery of lottery funded community projects while working with HLF and Sport England.

Jennie and her team are responsible for programmes which provide opportunities for groups of volunteers to take part in countryside management through Working Holidays and Employee Volunteering. The team also work closely with the Youth Involvement team and the Young Heritage Leader programme.

**ANDY MAGINNIS
COUNTRYSIDE MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION**

Andy Maginnis is Countryside Estates Manager for Worcestershire County Council and represents the authority on the Worcestershire Wardens Partnership. A former chair of the Countryside Management Association, he now represents CMA on the Country Parks Delivery Group. Andy is the Local Government Association representative on the Countryside Recreation Network and has a liaison role with the Local Government Association Access Advisory Group.

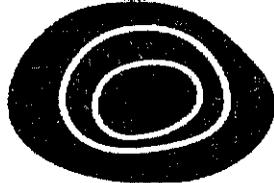
**DAVID MANNING
WYCHAVON DISTRICT COUNCIL**

Trained in Heritage Conservation and then managed a national Conservation Project in the voluntary sector for 5 years. Other experience has included consultancy work for the International Consultancy on Religion, Education and Culture, self-employment as an environmental consultant and the writing of two books.

The last 6 years has been spent in local government, initially working for Worcestershire's Countryside Service fundraising, forward planning and project management, and now as the Programme Manager for the Liveability Pilot in Worcestershire at Wychavon District Council.

He is also an experienced Green Flag Award Judge and the Ecological Advisor to Coventry Diocesan Advisory Committee.

APPENDIX C

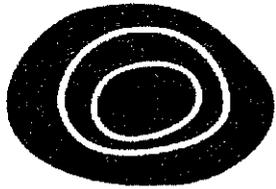


Countryside Recreation Network

Volunteering Seminar
30 March 2006, Birmingham

Delegate List

Tony	Ambrose	Sustrans
Chris	Bagley	Parish Paths - Shropshire County Council
Andrea	Bonacker	Hadrians Wall Heritage Ltd
Glyn	Bradbury	Forestry Commission
Andy	Bridge	Lagan Valley Regional Park
Jim	Burgin	Wychavon District Council
Roger	Butler	British Waterways
Sarah	Clements	The Ramblers' Association
Andy	Coleman	Somerset County Council
Colin	Davies	Swindon Borough Council
Andrew	Davis	Forestry Commission
Clive	Dean	Northern Shropshire Countryside Service
Tim	Duckmanton	Lake District National Park Authority
Amanda	Earnshaw	Countryside Agency
Carrie	Edmonds	East Dorset District Council
Luke	Everitt	Thames Chase
Scott	Ferguson	Scottish Natural Heritage
Deborah	Ferguson	Durham County Council
Oliver	Giles	British Waterways
John	Hemstock	Gateshead Council
Amanda	Hill	Worcestershire County Council
Peter	Hobbs	Hinchingbrooke Country Park
Nicholas	Howells	Groundwork Merthyr & Rhondda Cynon Taff
Mary	Lewis	Northumberland Coast AONB Partnership

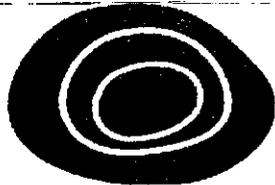


Countryside Recreation Network

Volunteering Seminar
30 March 2006, Blrmingham

Delegate List

Paul	Lewis	Snowdonia Society
Mark	Macgregor	Broads Authority
Rachel	Marrow	Essex Wildlife Trust
Nick	Marsh	Suffolk Coast and Heaths Unit
Lorna	Mcrobie	Heritage Lottery Fund
Alistair	Morris	National Trails
Dave	Morton	National Trust - Divis & Black Mountain
Kate	Mustard	Worcestershire County Council
Caroline	Nolan	Strangford Lough Management Advisory Committee
Brendan	O'Connor	Lagan Valley Regional Park
Vicky	Pannell	East Sussex County Council
Ian	Parsons	Forestry Commission
Richard	Phipps	Groundwork Merthyr & Rhondda Cynon Taff
Anthony	Roberts	Oxford City Council
Paul	Roper	Lee Valley Regional Park
Nick	Sanderson	Broads Authority
Janine	Sargent	Forestry Commission
Patrick	Saunders	National Trail
Tim	Slade	Isle of Wight Council
Rachel	Solomons	East Sussex County Council
Peter	Spear	Hants County Council
Graeme	Stringer	Forestry Commission
Grant	Turner	Somerset County Council
Hans	Visser	Fingal County Council

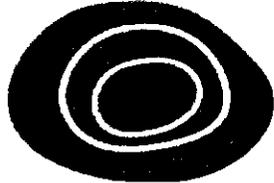


Countryside Recreation Network

Volunteering Seminar
30 March 2006, Birmingham

Delegate List

Martin	Wagner	Thames Water
Caroline	Walsh	AMCAI
Lindsey	West	National Trails
Trevor	Weston	Gateshead Council
Carl	Whitehead	Oxford City Council
Andrew	Wilkinson	British Waterways
Miriam	Woolnough	Bath and North East Somerset Council

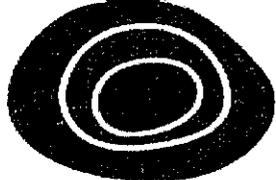


Countryside Recreation Network

Volunteering Seminar
28 June 2006, Birmingham

Delegate List

Len	Blacow	Wyre Borough Council
Alison	Boden	Wyre Borough Council
Janet	Canning	English Nature
Martin	Charlesworth	Forest of Bowland AONB
Fiona	Clark	West Lancashire District Council
Derek	Cochrane	British Waterways
Cheryl	Cooper	Cornwall County Council
Jon	Cripps	Cornwall County Council
Debbie	Davey	Forestry Commission
Charlotte	Fellingham	Essex County Council
Joanne	French	Devon County Council - Grand Western Canal
Jenny	Heskett	Cornwall County Council
Heidi	Hutton	Countryside Management Service
Chris	Jackson	Nottinghamshire County Council
Jim	Langridge	British Waterways
Colin	Lavender	Friends of the Peak District
Jo	Lindsay	Forestry Commission
Michael	Lipsett	Castlereagh Borough Council
Shirley	Lucas	Brentwood Borough Council
Rachel	Northover	Sefton Coast & Countryside Service
Neil	Oxley	Witton Country Park Visitors Centre
Alison	Perry	Stirling Council
Robert	Procter	Groundwork Caerphilly
Dr Jo	Reilly	Heritage Lottery Fund



Countryside Recreation Network

Volunteering Seminar
28 June 2006, Blrmingham

Delegate List

Lloyd	Roberts	Groundwork Caerphilly
Angela	Smith	The Countryside Agency
Ben	Wilson	Environment Agency Wales

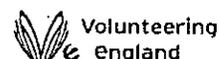
APPENDIX D

Government Policy, Scale and Scope of Volunteering

Angela Ellis Paine
Assistant Director, Institute for Volunteering
Research, Volunteering England

What Is The Current State of Play?

- On the one hand, volunteering is on the up
- But, there are considerable challenges
- Need to build on the enthusiasm for volunteering, but to do so in a way that balances the increased professionalism with the spirit of volunteering



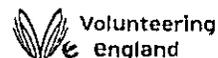
What Is Volunteering?

- Volunteering is:
 - Based on free choice;
 - Undertaken for no financial reward;
 - Beneficial to others, as well as to one's self.
- Volunteering encompasses different forms of engagement:
 - Mutual aid or self-help;
 - Philanthropy or service to others;
 - Governance;
 - Advocacy and campaigning.



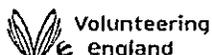
Who Volunteers?

- 2003 HOCS - 42% had taken part in formal volunteering at least once in the previous 12 months, giving an average of 8 hours per month
- 62% had volunteered informally, giving on average 5.4 hours per month
- You are most likely to volunteer if:
 - You are White or Black African ethnic origin;
 - You are in a paid job;
 - You have qualifications at degree level or above;
 - You are in a managerial or professional group;
 - If you are 24 – 35.



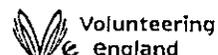
What Do Volunteers Do?

- Volunteers are engaged in most aspects of public life:
 - Sports, education and social welfare are the most common fields of volunteering.
- In 2003, the most common volunteering activities were:
 - Raising or handling money, or taking part in sponsored events (53%);
 - Organising or helping to run an activity or event (49%).
- Also popular was:
 - Leading a group or being a member of a committee (29%);
 - Providing transport or driving (23%);
 - Giving advice, information or counselling (23%);
 - Visiting people (20%).



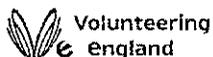
How Are Volunteers Managed?

- Very different practices of volunteer management, and one size does not fit all
- 1997 National Survey of Volunteering - 71% said their volunteering could be better organised
- What volunteers want is a 'choice blend':
 - They want to feel welcome, secure, respected, informed, well-used and well-managed;
 - But, that management should be delivered in flexible and informal way;
 - Balance of informality and efficiency, personal and professional support.



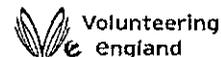
What Policies Affect Volunteering?

- High levels of government support for volunteering
- Specific volunteering policies and initiatives:
 - Year of the Volunteer; Russell Commission; Millennium Volunteers; Change Up.
- Two key policy agendas:
 - Public service delivery and civil renewal.
- Other policy areas with implications for volunteering:
 - Education; Welfare to work; Regeneration; Housing; International development; Social exclusion/inclusion.
- But, what is an appropriate role for government?



What Issues Affect Volunteering?

- Demographic changes:
 - An ageing population.
- Changing forms of volunteering:
 - New volunteers demanding new opportunities;
 - Demand for short term and group based activities.
- Professionalisation:
 - Balance of effective volunteer management systems and flexibility and informality essential to many volunteers.
- Risk aversion:
 - Insurance issues and bureaucratic processes may limit volunteering.



What Is the Impact of Volunteering?

- A range of stakeholders benefit from volunteering:
 - Volunteers;
 - Organisations that involve volunteers;
 - Service users;
 - Community members.
- All stakeholders benefit in a range of ways:
 - Human capital – the development of skills and confidence;
 - Social capital – the creation of networks, trust and reciprocity;
 - Economic capital – the value of volunteer inputs;
 - Cultural capital – understanding of other cultures and heightened sense of identity.



Government Policy, Scale and Scope of Volunteering

Nick Ockenden
Research Officer, Institute for Volunteering
Research, Volunteering England

What Is The Current State of Play?

- On the one hand, volunteering is on the up
- But, there are considerable challenges
- Opportunity to build on the enthusiasm for volunteering
- Balancing professionalism with the spirit of volunteering



What Is Volunteering?

- Volunteering is:
 - Based on free choice
 - Undertaken for no financial reward
 - Beneficial to others, as well as to one's self
- Volunteering includes:
 - Mutual aid or self-help
 - Philanthropy or service to others
 - Governance
 - Advocacy and campaigning



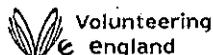
Who Volunteers?

- Formal volunteering
 - 42% of people (at least once in the past 12 months)
 - 8 hours a month on average
 - Informal volunteering
 - 62% of people (at least once in the past 12 months)
 - 5.4 hours a month on average
- (Home Office Citizenship Survey, 2003)



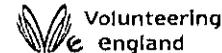
What Do Volunteers Do?

- Volunteers are engaged in most aspects of public life:
 - Sports, education and social welfare
- In 2003, the most common volunteering activities were:
 - Raising or handling money, or taking part in sponsored events (53%);
 - Organising or helping to run an activity or event (49%).



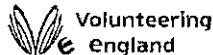
How Are Volunteers Managed?

- One size does not fit all
- Requirement to be better organised
- What volunteers want is a 'choice blend':
 - To feel welcome, secure, respected, informed, well-used and well-managed
 - Flexible and informal management
 - Balance of informality and efficiency, personal and professional support



What Policies Affect Volunteering?

- **Specific volunteering policies and initiatives:**
 - Year of the Volunteer; Russell Commission; Millennium Volunteers; Change Up
- **Two key policy agendas:**
 - Public service delivery and civil renewal
- **Other policy areas with implications for volunteering:**
 - Education; Welfare to work; Regeneration; Housing; International development; Social exclusion/inclusion



What Issues Affect Volunteering?

- **Demographic changes:**
 - An ageing population
- **Changing forms of volunteering:**
 - New volunteers demanding new opportunities
 - Demand for short term and group based activities
- **Professionalisation:**
 - Balance of effective volunteer management systems and flexibility and informality essential to many volunteers
- **Risk aversion:**
 - Insurance issues and bureaucratic processes



What Is the Impact of Volunteering?

- **A range of stakeholders benefit from volunteering:**
 - Volunteers
 - Organisations that involve volunteers
 - Service users
 - Community members
- **All stakeholders benefit in a range of ways:**
 - Human capital -- skills and confidence
 - Social capital -- networks, trust and reciprocity
 - Economic capital -- the value of volunteer inputs
 - Cultural capital -- cultures and identities



BTCV England 

Volunteers: A Blessing or a Curse?

Miles Sibley
Development Director, BTCV

www.btcv.org

BTCV England 



Do we like people like this?

www.btcv.org

BTCV England 



Volunteers are people like us

www.btcv.org

BTCV England 



Volunteers underpin countryside quality

www.btcv.org

BTCV England 



Volunteers underpin communities

www.btcv.org

BTCV England 

A Health Check for British Democracy
Economic and Social Research Council 2004

Communities with high levels of voluntary activity have:

- better health
- fewer burglaries
- better educational performance in schools
- higher satisfaction with quality of life

www.btcv.org

BTCV England



Volunteers - Blessing or Curse?

A Health Check for British Democracy
Economic and Social Research Council 2004

"Even when the class composition and levels of deprivation of communities are taken into account, the relationship between voluntary activity and policy performance persists and continues to be benign."

www.btcv.org

BTCV England



Volunteers - Blessing or Curse?



... but do we like volunteers?

www.btcv.org

BTCV England



Volunteers - Blessing or Curse?



Managing volunteers can be a challenge.

www.btcv.org

BTCV England



Volunteers - Blessing or Curse?



How can we harness goodwill?

www.btcv.org

BTCV England



Volunteers - Blessing or Curse?

Harnessing goodwill - 1

Budget for it.

www.btcv.org

BTCV England



Volunteers - Blessing or Curse?



Tools, equipment, supervision...

www.btcv.org

BTCV England 

Volunteers - Blessing or Curse? www.btcv.org

Harnessing goodwill - 2

Train and support paid staff.

BTCV England 

Volunteers - Blessing or Curse? www.btcv.org



Happy staff = happy volunteers

BTCV England 

Volunteers - Blessing or Curse? www.btcv.org

Harnessing goodwill - 3

Talk to your volunteers.

BTCV England 

Volunteers - Blessing or Curse? www.btcv.org



What is the motivation?

BTCV England 

Volunteers - Blessing or Curse? www.btcv.org



Volunteering is a two-way commitment.

BTCV England 

Volunteers - Blessing or Curse? www.btcv.org



Volunteers are people like us

A Volunteer's Perspective



Henry Cole
Volunteer Ranger

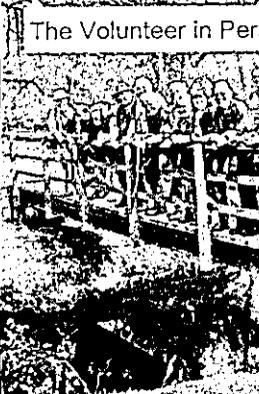
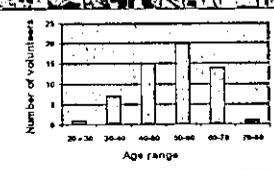
A Volunteer's Perspective

The volunteer in perspective

Our contributions & achievements

What are our expectations?

The Volunteer in Perspective - Who are we?

Age range	Number of volunteers
20-30	0
30-40	5
40-50	20
50-60	15
60-70	10
70-80	5

The Volunteer in Perspective



The latest participants in a particularly British tradition

We are nearly all "of a certain age" with time to commit

We tend to have or have had demanding jobs and don't want to switch off

Members of local interest groups - natural & local history, rambles etc.

Our contributions and achievements

We have skills we can offer

- Bankers
- Historians
- Linguists
- Solicitors
- Builders
- I.T. specialists
- Paramedics
- Photographers
- Teachers & Story Tellers
- Etc. etc..



Interpreting at Fontainebleau



Maintaining cycle routes

Our contributions and achievements

Building on these skills we can expand on the activities of our host organisation



Leading rambles



Conservation



Repile Centre

Our contributions and achievements

We thrive on new challenges & learning new skills



What did the fox have for lunch?



Cooking kippers over an open fire

Our contributions and achievements

The menial jobs aren't a problem!



Litter picking

Our contributions and achievements

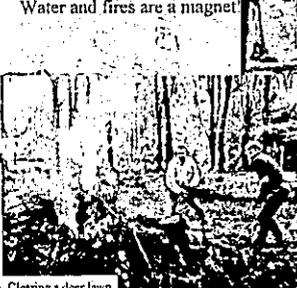
The messier the better!



Yuck!

Our contributions and achievements

Water and fires are a magnet!



Clearing a deer lawn



Fish catching

Our contributions and achievements

We find we have previously unknown talents!



Working with children

Our contributions and achievements



Casting spells!

Our contributions and achievements

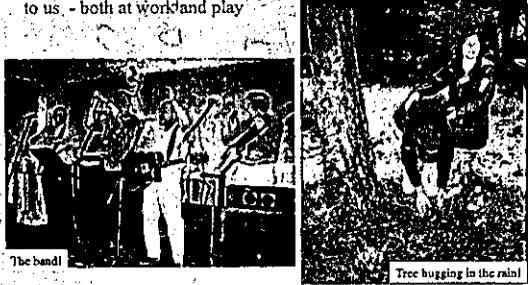
The social side is a big part of our life



The first photograph shows a group of about six people sitting around a table in what appears to be a cafe or meeting room. The second photograph shows a person sitting at a desk with a computer monitor, possibly working or managing a system.

Our contributions and achievements

Integrating with the "full time" staff is an important achievement to us - both at work and play



The first photograph shows a band performing on a stage with various instruments. The second photograph shows a person rappelling down a tree trunk, with the caption "Tree bugging in the rain!" below it.

Our Expectations

We are self-motivating but to maintain this...



The photograph shows two people sitting on the ground in an outdoor setting, possibly engaged in a conversation or a task.

Our Expectations

We want to be valued rather than treated as casual labour



The photograph shows a person working in a field, possibly engaged in agricultural or conservation work.

Our Expectations

It is important that we understand our tasks



The photograph shows a person working in a field, possibly engaged in agricultural or conservation work. A caption at the bottom right of the image asks "is Clive really planting a crop of bamboo?".

Our Expectations

A few words of explanation are all that are needed



The photograph shows a group of people working in a field, possibly engaged in agricultural or conservation work.

Our Expectations

We expect to be accountable and responsible for our actions whether it's leading conservation events or meeting the public



First aid training

Practical skills

Our Expectations

We must be aware that we are the public face of our organisation!



On patrol

Manning the information unit

We must expect to get it right!

Our Expectations

To get the best out of us we appreciate good quality training



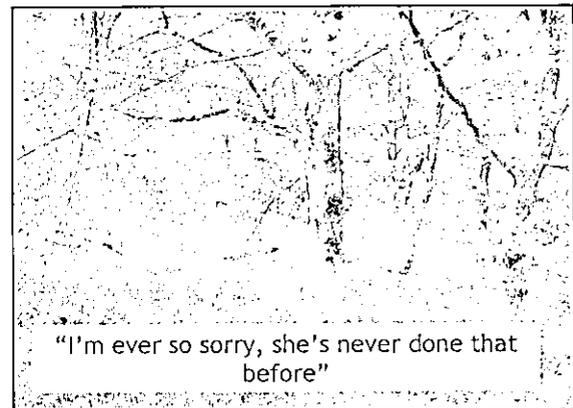
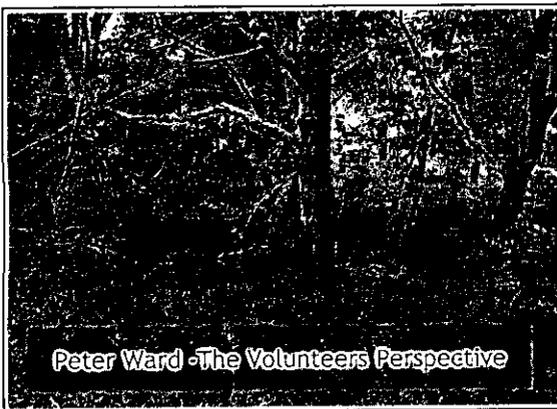
First aid training

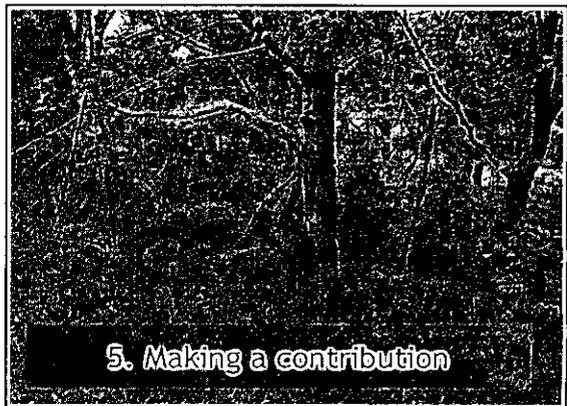
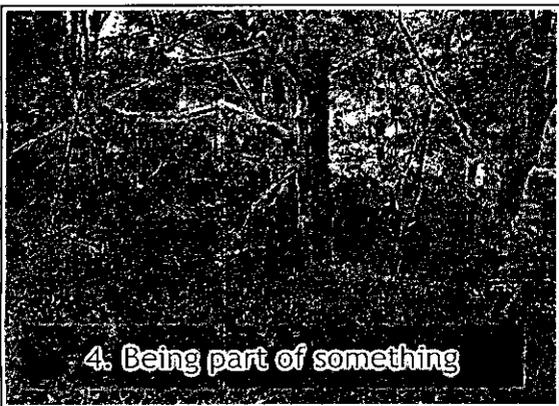
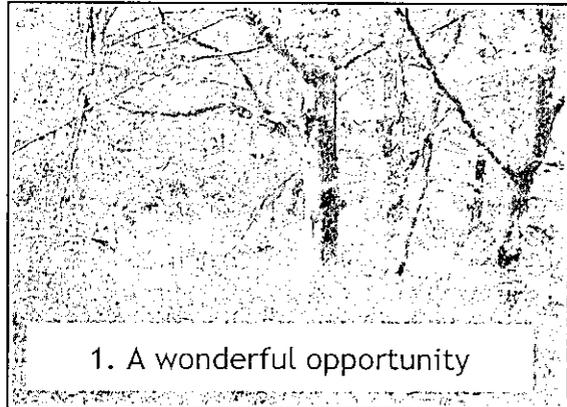
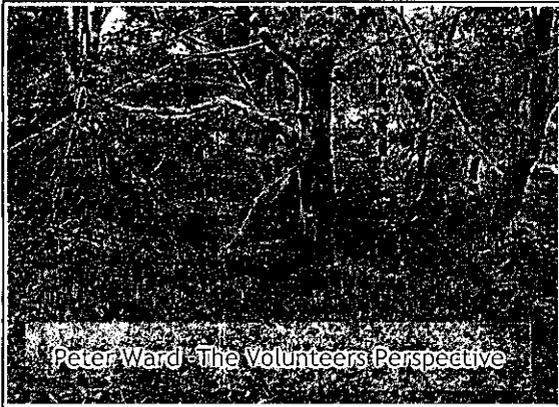
Practical skills

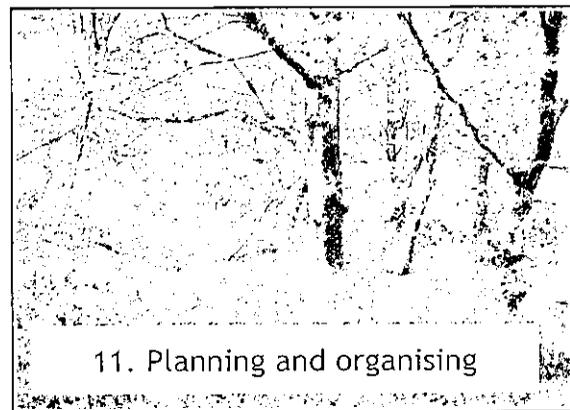
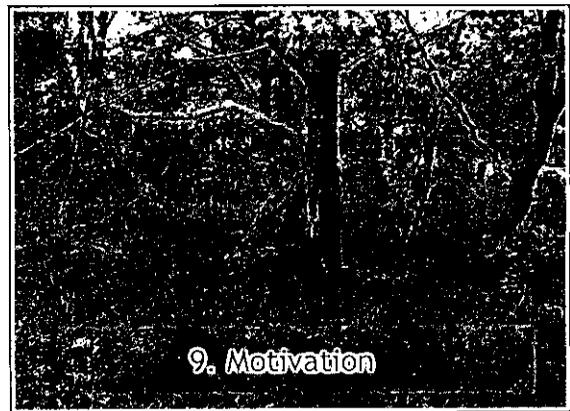
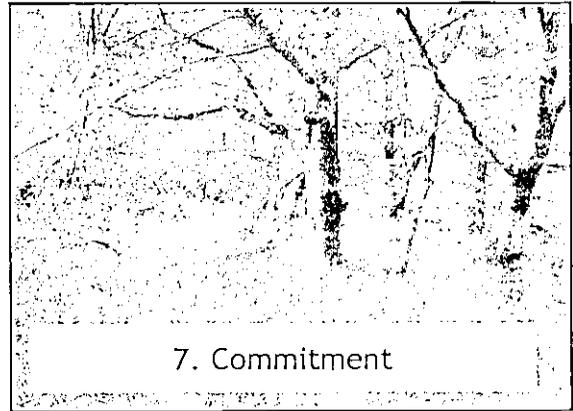
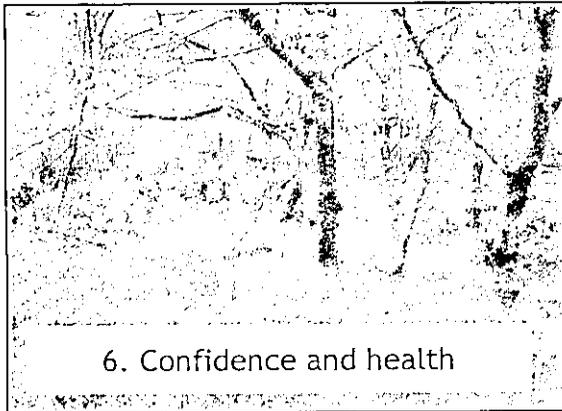


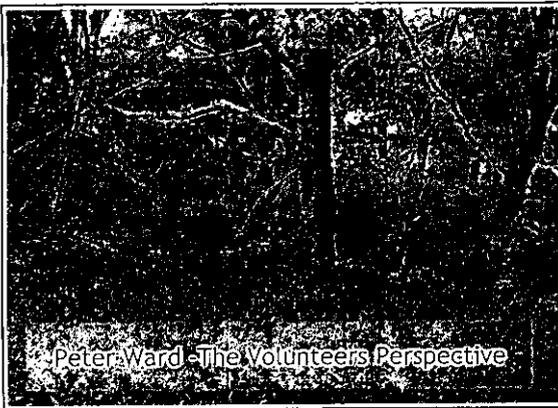
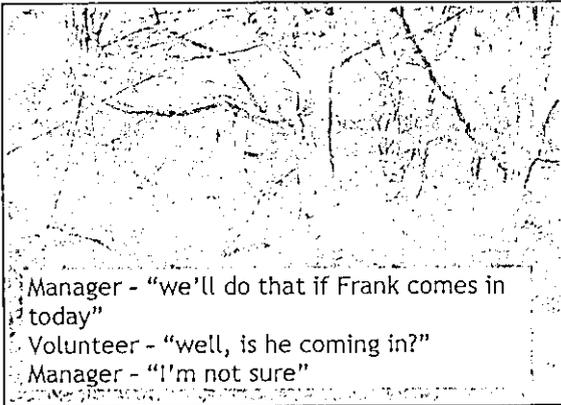
One volunteer is worth ten pressed men!

Attributed to Admiral Horatio Nelson









How to make the best use of volunteers



Sarah Jarvis

Volunteer Development
Scotland

How to make the best use of volunteers



Cigarettes and cake!

Strategic Management



Why do we want to involve volunteers?

- What is a volunteer?
- The ethos of the organisation
- The value of volunteers
- The function of volunteers

Strategic Management



Develop a policy:

- The role of volunteers
- Recruitment
- Training
- Support
- Recognition
- Out-of-pocket expenses
- Health and safety
- Insurance cover
- Grievance procedure

Volunteer Recruitment



Aim:

To identify and reach those potential volunteers whose motivational needs are met by the volunteer roles your organisation is offering

Volunteer Recruitment



Types of recruitment:

- General
- Specific



Volunteer Recruitment



The recruitment message

1. Describe the role
 - give plenty of information
 - invite people to a taster session
 - what do volunteers do?
 - how much time is involved?

Volunteer Recruitment



The recruitment message

2. Describe the need
 - Use positive messages
 - Link the role to the need

Volunteer Recruitment



The recruitment message

3. Describe the benefits
 - Meeting their motivational needs

Volunteer Recruitment



How to recruit

- Ask face-to-face
 - Bring a friend
 - Ask volunteers to describe what they do

Volunteer Recruitment



How to recruit – things to remember

- Other organisations
- Diversity of volunteers



Motivation



McLelland – Motivational needs

1. Achievement

People need to see that their efforts achieve something worthwhile

Motivation



McLelland – Motivational needs

1. Achievement
2. Power / Influence

People need control over what they are doing and want to persuade and influence others

Motivation



McLelland – Motivational needs

1. Achievement
2. Power / Influence
3. Affiliation

People need others around them with whom they share the same ideas

Motivation



McLelland – Motivational needs

1. Achievement



Motivation



McLelland – Motivational needs

2. Power / Influence

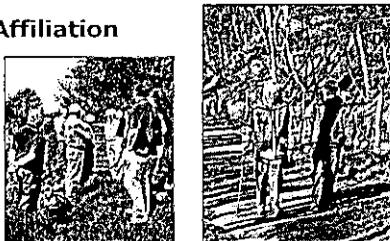


Motivation



McLelland – Motivational needs

3. Affiliation



First Contact



Use needs to place volunteers in a role:

- Volunteers want to negotiate over role
- Volunteers want to negotiate over time
- Volunteers want a warm welcome

Induction



1. Induction to the organisation

- Ethos of the organisation
- Work of the organisation
- What volunteers contribute
- Volunteers' rights and responsibilities
- How to claim expenses
- Support structure



Induction



2. Social induction

- Meet the staff
- Meet other volunteers



Induction



3. Induction to the role

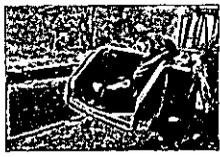
- One-off when volunteers start
- Regular basis



Induction

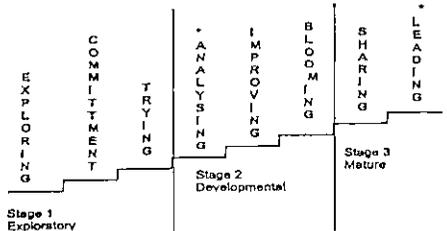


4. Induction to health and safety



Volunteer Life Cycle





Beugen, 1985

Volunteer Support



Stage 1

- Extend a warm welcome
- Information about the organisation
- The role of volunteers
- Information on policies
- Volunteers induction
- Reassure, explain, persuade

Volunteer Support



Stage 2

- Keep in contact
- Give encouragement

Volunteer Support



Stage 2 – Training

- Provide on-going training

Volunteer Support



Stage 2 – Decision making

- Involve volunteers in making decisions within the organisation

Volunteer Support



Stage 2 – Recognition

Achievement

- Regular updates of how many km of path have been surveyed
- Publicity to celebrate work carried out on a right of way

Volunteer Support



Stage 2 – Recognition

Power / Influence

- Give volunteers more responsibility
- Ask their opinion
- Accredited training

Volunteer Support



Stage 2 – Recognition

Affiliation

- Organise a social event
- Organise a social walk

Volunteer Support



Stage 3 – Sharing

- Share knowledge and skills
- Help with volunteer recruitment
- Lead other volunteers on tasks

Take advantage of this stage!

Volunteer Support



Stage 3 – New roles

- Adjust role description
- Move into new role
- Extra responsibilities

Retention



Those with self-esteem have:

- Sense of connectedness
- Sense of uniqueness
- Sense of effectiveness

McCurley and Lynch 2001

Retention



1. Connectedness

- Invite them to meet the staff
- Regular communication
- Volunteer meetings
- Newsletters
- Social events

Retention



2. Uniqueness

- Find out their skills and channel these into a specific task
- Ask for advice
- 1-2-1 support

Retention



3. Effectiveness

- Use their ideas
- Give feedback
- Involve volunteers in decision making

Evaluate!



Can be used to answer questions:

- How can the organisation improve the way in which it supports volunteers?
- How can volunteers improve on the way they carry out tasks?
- Are the volunteers happy?

Evaluate!



To carry out an evaluation:

- Identify key stakeholders
- Evaluation method
- Collect data
- Analyse data and make recommendations
- Report back to stakeholders
- Plan how to take your volunteer programme forward

References



Beugen, P. J. 1985, Supporting the volunteer life cycle, Voluntary Action Leadership, Fall 1985, 17-19.

Institute for Volunteering Research, 2003, A Choice Blend – what volunteers want from organisation and management. IVR, London.

McCurley, S. & Lynch R. 2001, Essential Volunteer Management, Directory of Social Change, London.

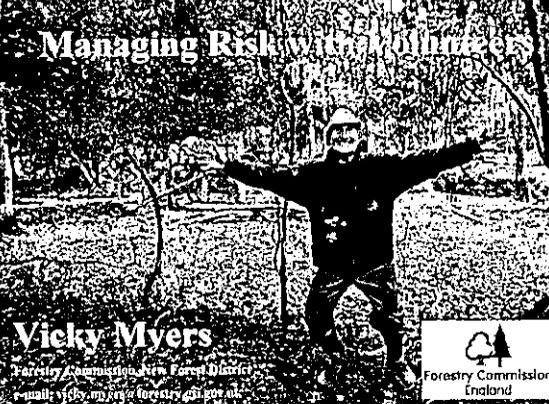
McLelland, www.culbsock.ndirect.co.uk/MUHome/cshtml/index.html

VDS, 2004, TNS System Three Opinion Survey, October 2004, VDS.

VDS, 2006, The role of asking, Research Findings Scotland, 7.

Many thank to Stirling Council Countryside Service for the use of photographs. For more information on the Adept-A-Path scheme – www.stirling.gov.uk/countryside

Managing Risk with Volunteers



Vicky Myers
 Forestry Commission New Forest District
 Email: vicky.myers@forestry.gov.uk



7 Sorting out the Basics

- Are you the land owner, land manager or a visitor?
- Did the volunteer request to do the work on your land?
- Did you ask the volunteer to carry out work for you?
- Other possibilities



Accepting Responsibility




- Make sure you are insured
- Carry out a risk assessment
- Provide guidance
- Where appropriate, provide personal protective equipment
- Be aware of lone working, child protection and discrimination legislation

Optional extras

- Name badges
- Uniform
- Reward schemes




Life's more colourful characters



- Benefits of inclusion to the individual, group and society.
- Keep tough on life's nut cases for safety's sake.
- Contracts and uniform

The New Forest Way Delegation

- Volunteer Ranger Service
- Two Trees Conservation Team



Worst case scenario...

- Crown liability
- Court
- Long term implications



Taking precautions

- Paper trail
- Adapting and developing system
- Informal audits
- Ongoing training



Forestry Commission
Enakind

www.peakdistrict.org

PEAK DISTRICT
NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

Volunteers

Sean Prendergast
Peak District National Park

www.peakdistrict.org

PEAK DISTRICT
NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY



"Not trying to teach my Granny to suck eggs"

www.peakdistrict.org

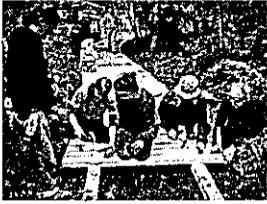
PEAK DISTRICT
NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY



www.peakdistrict.org

PEAK DISTRICT
NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

Volunteers



Volunteer Rangers
Conservation Volunteers

www.peakdistrict.org

PEAK DISTRICT
NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY



www.peakdistrict.org

PEAK DISTRICT
NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

Rangers

- Average 12 month training
 - » Pre-training interviews
 - » Six distinct modules
 - » Residential elements
 - » Equivalent to NVQ level 2/3

www.peakdistrict.org

PEAK DISTRICT
NATIONAL PARK ACTIVITY

Rangers

- Average 12 month training
 - » Pre-training interviews
 - » Six distinct modules
 - » Residential elements
 - » Equivalent to NVQ level 2/3
- Wear same Uniform as Full time staff



www.peakdistrict.org

PEAK DISTRICT
NATIONAL PARK ACTIVITY

Rangers

- Average 12 month training
 - » Pre-training interviews
 - » Six distinct modules
 - » Residential elements
 - » Equivalent to NVQ level 2/3
- Wear same Uniform as Full time staff
- Honorarium paid in return for doing a rota post



www.peakdistrict.org

PEAK DISTRICT
NATIONAL PARK ACTIVITY

Rangers

- Average 12 month training
 - » Pre-training interviews
 - » Six distinct modules
 - » Residential elements
 - » Equivalent to NVQ level 2/3
- Wear same Uniform as Full time staff
- Honorarium paid in return for doing a rota post
- Minimum of 10 duties per year to retain ACA



www.peakdistrict.org

PEAK DISTRICT
NATIONAL PARK ACTIVITY

Rangers

- Average 12 month training
 - » Pre-training interviews
 - » Six distinct modules
 - » Residential elements
 - » Equivalent to NVQ level 2/3
- Wear same Uniform as Full time staff
- Honorarium paid in return for doing a rota post
- Minimum of 10 duties per year to retain ACA



www.peakdistrict.org

PEAK DISTRICT
NATIONAL PARK ACTIVITY

Rangers

- Patrols



www.peakdistrict.org

PEAK DISTRICT
NATIONAL PARK ACTIVITY

Rangers

- Patrols
- Guided Walks



www.peakdistrict.org

PEAK DISTRICT
NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

Rangers



- Patrols
- Guided Walks
- Events

www.peakdistrict.org

PEAK DISTRICT
NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

Rangers



- Patrols
- Guided Walks
- Events
- Practical works

www.peakdistrict.org

PEAK DISTRICT
NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

Rangers



- Patrols
- Guided Walks
- Events
- Practical works
- Information

www.peakdistrict.org

PEAK DISTRICT
NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

Rangers



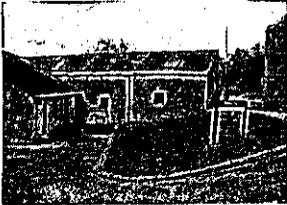
- Patrols
- Guided Walks
- Events
- Practical works
- Information

Ambassadors for the Authority – our 'eyes and ears'

www.peakdistrict.org

PEAK DISTRICT
NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

Conservation Volunteers



- Full-time Vols Organiser
- Full-time Asst Organiser
- 6 Vol Supervisors
- Two Bases and w/shops
- Residential Facilities

Over 3,500 days per year

www.peakdistrict.org

PEAK DISTRICT
NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

Conservation Volunteers



- Carry out work on footpaths
- Habitat Creation (esp. on Private Land)
- Provide work to value of 23 fte's

www.peakdistrict.org

PEAK DISTRICT
NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

Conservation Volunteers



- They can't be used for everything
- Require high level of supervision
- NOT a source of cheap labour

www.peakdistrict.org

PEAK DISTRICT
NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

Conservation Volunteers



Ten years ago.....

- 80% Adults
- 20% Young People

www.peakdistrict.org

PEAK DISTRICT
NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

Conservation Volunteers



Now.....

- 20% Adults
- 80% Young People

www.peakdistrict.org

PEAK DISTRICT
NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

Conservation Volunteers



www.peakdistrict.org

PEAK DISTRICT
NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

Conservation Volunteers



- Vehicle for greater Social Inclusion
- Increasing Partnerships
- Focus on groups and projects rather than just numbers!

www.peakdistrict.org

PEAK DISTRICT
NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

Conservation Volunteers



Some initiatives.....

- Peak Young achievers award
- Derbyshire Children in care
- Referral Unit

www.peakdistrict.org

PEAK DISTRICT
NATIONAL PEAK ALTRUIST

Conclusions.....



Quality training will produce high quality volunteers
that you put

If people have invested time and effort in getting trained they tend to stick around

www.peakdistrict.org

PEAK DISTRICT
NATIONAL PEAK ALTRUIST

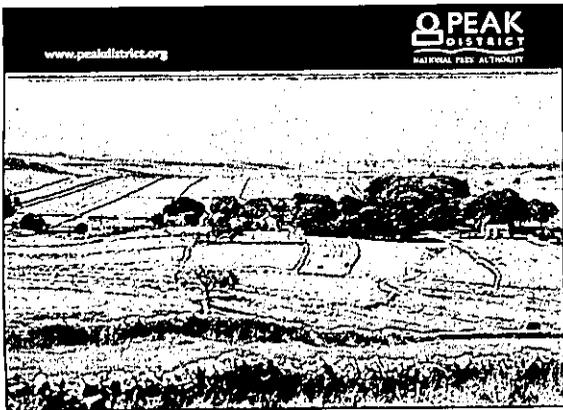
Conclusions.....

Conservation Volunteering



...about giving a first hand experience with Nature

Not a means of getting things done on the cheap!



Volunteering in Ireland

A volunteer trail builders perspective



Volunteering in Ireland

Strong tradition of volunteering in Ireland in...

- Sports
 - Gaelic games -- every parish has a club.
 - Rugby, athletics, swimming etc.
- Schools -- strong voluntary involvement
- Youth Activities -- scouts, guides etc.
- Special events -- Special Olympics -- attracted over 80,000 volunteers
- Tidy Towns Programme

Volunteering in Ireland

- "Environmental" volunteering poorly developed.
- Antagonism by environmental groups to concept
 - State should pay!
- Lack of engagement by state organisations -- fear of loss of control
- Result - Poor connect between the voluntary and statutory groups.

Volunteering in Ireland - Groups

- Seal Sanctuary, Irish Raptor Group, Bird Watch Ireland and Irish peat lands conservation council
- Primarily focussed on education and awareness
- Hands on groups include - Groundwork, Conservation Volunteers Ireland (CVI) and Mountain Meitheal

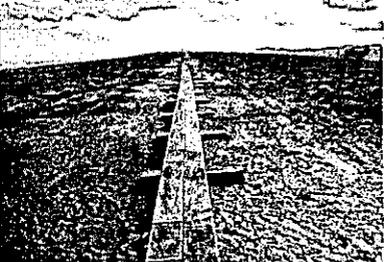
Mountain Meitheal

Volunteer trail builders and maintainers



- Established in 2002 (original group formed in 2000).
- Modelled on the AMC and the Maine Appalachian Trail Club
- Working to protect the mountains, promote better practice and protecting wildness.

Working to avoid this.....



What is Mountain Meitheal

- Meitheal -- from the Gaelic word for "work party" that went from farm to farm to help with the harvest and turf saving.
- MM is a club dedicated upland trail management and promoting sustainable recreation.
- Constituent club of Mountaineering Council of Ireland

Mountain Meitheal - Background

- Entirely Voluntary --no paid employees.
- 50 paid up members (and growing) and over 200 on mailing list.
- Draw members from other clubs and none.
- Funded by a variety of sources -- individuals, clubs, NPWS/Coillte, grants, in kind.



Mountain Meitheal - Values

- Independence
- Clear objectives
- Action over politics
- Develop "sweat equity"



Re-vegetation work

Mountain Meitheal Objectives

- To protect and conserve the mountain and forest environment by repaving, maintaining and building mountain and forest trails while
 - maintaining the challenge for recreational users
 - striving to preserve a sense of solitude and a 'wilderness' experience
- To spread an awareness of sustainable recreation
- To provide enjoyable projects and activities for

Mountain Meitheal - Activities

- Minimum of two work days per month
- February through November
- Also hold special "club days"
- Training courses -- Trail building, crew leading, Leave No Trace Awareness days.



Stone steps with water bar

Mountain Meitheal - Activities

- Encourage "come and try" days and formation of new meitheal groups
 - Example:
 - Mountain Bike Meitheal
 - Ballyhoura Walking Festival
- Encourage volunteers to stop and chat.



Mountain Meitheal - Techniques

- Low Impact solutions
 - Trail delineation - Scree walls and brashing
 - Stone steps and tread hardening
 - Water bars
 - Tumpike trails
 - Simple bog bridges
 - Re-vegetation projects
 - Reversal trail landscaping
 - Rip rap



Tread hardening with brush

Mountain Meitheal - Management

- Annual plan agreed by Exec. and landowners
- Each project has a project manager responsible for all elements.
- Each project has project specification.
- Safety and hazard identification.



Clearing line of new woodland trail

Mountain Meitheal Studies and Surveys

- Wicklow Mountain Paths baseline survey – 200km of paths surveyed
 - Mapped
 - GPS points and photos
 - Measurements and description
- Feasibility study on Carrantouhill (Devil's Ladder)
 - Now part of trail improvement plan
 - Launching Devil's Ladder Fund appeal with MCI.



Volunteers Contribution

- Mountain Meitheal has reconstructed over 3.5km of trails in Wicklow since formation (€120,000).
- Promote awareness and sense of ownership amongst users -- Leave No Trace and MCI environmental policy.
- Creates bridge to land managers

Mountain Meitheal.....

- Contributing approximately 1500 to 2000 hours per annum,
- Developing expertise in sustainable trail construction,
- Raising awareness amongst mountain users and agencies,
- Having Fun!!

Volunteering - Issues

- Insurance – workman's compensation? US clubs enjoy this support.
- Interaction - Agencies and other professionals meeting with volunteers -- Evening?
- Respect - Professional trail builders respecting the skills base.
 - Many talents out there -- engineers, foresters, surveyors, skilled people -- professionals often forget this.
- Training and good manuals
- Volunteers need to be "business like" in approach
- Organisations need clear focus -- avoid hidden agendas

Do we make a difference?



One year on....



mpike
on

"Recreation management

*is not building trails into
lovely country, but building
receptivity into as yet on
loving minds."*

Aldo Leopold, Forester and
Ecologist.

In volunteers we can
plant and nurture that
love.



Mountain Meitheal

Get out, Get dirty, Give back.

Thank you,
Any questions?

Countryside Recreation Network

Involving new audiences (groups of volunteers)

28 June 2006

All groups prefer



- Meaningful task
- Clothing and equipment
- Leadership
- First aid
- Breaks
- Motivation

All groups offer



- Bodies!
- Non-traditional visitors
- Opportunities to show off
- Desire to revisit
- Sources of additional support
- Partnerships

Working Holidays



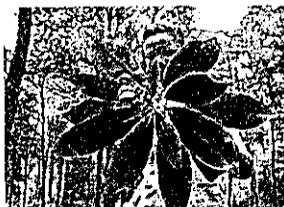
- Up to 16 volunteers
- 2 - 7 days
- Trained volunteer leaders
- Specific age groups/interests/themes
- Accommodation and transport
- Staff involvement

Employee Volunteers



- Variable numbers 5- 100s
- Variable time frame
(opportunities for LT partnership)
- Nominated leader
- Task dependent on group
- Feed themselves
- Staff supervision
- Opportunities for extras

Youth organisations



- Varying group size
- Varying length of involvement
- Group leaders
- Opportunities for developmental projects
(long term involvement) and accreditation
- Child protection
- High staff involvement

Youth Discovery Holidays etc



- YD holidays:
- Specially trained leaders
- Signed code of conduct
- Off work site activities
- Involvement in planning
- Young Heritage leader awards – training and mentoring

Other groups:



- 5 to many
- Half a day upwards
- Limited leadership
- Opportunities to partner educational groups
- Special interest groups – shared objectives
- High staff involvement

Outgoing

Involving groups of volunteers in all their guises provides a range of opportunities for engagement with our organisations, our work, our philosophy and increases our sustainability and that of our environment.

Worcestershire Wardens

- The value of volunteering
- Current volunteering in Worcestershire
- Room for improvement
- The Worcestershire Wardens
- Achievements so far

The value of volunteering

- Gets work done
- Helps keep people fit
- Opportunity to meet other people
- Mental well-being
- Opportunity to learn new skills and gain knowledge
- Improves job prospects
- Contributes towards awards eg Duke of Edinburgh
- Opportunity for organisations to get their message across
- Relaxation, enjoyment and fun
- Opportunity to put something back

Volunteering in Worcestershire's Countryside and Urban Greenspace

- A number of organisations work with volunteers:-
 - Local Authorities
 - Worcestershire Wildlife Trust
 - Malvern Hills Conservators
 - National Trust
 - Duckworth Worcestershire Trust
 - British Waterways
 - Droitwich Canals Trust
 - BTCV

Volunteering in Worcestershire's Countryside and Urban Greenspace

- Volunteers carry out a variety of tasks:-
 - Practical work
 - Leading work parties
 - Leading guided walks
 - Carrying out research
 - Patrolling
 - Surveying
 - Disseminating Information
 - Staffing visitor centre, stalls and events
 - Fundraising
 - Community liaison
 - Championing the countryside and urban greenspace

Room for Improvement

- Lack of clarity regarding status of volunteers and where they fit into the organisation
- Inconsistency with regards to what volunteers can expect from different host organisations
- Limited resources for training
- Limited resources to thank volunteers for all their work
- Poor networking between volunteers from different organisations
- Inflexibility in deployment of the volunteer 'resource'
- Lack of central point where potential volunteers and host organisations can make contact with each other
- Limited opportunities to learn different skills
- Poor sharing of tools and machinery

The Worcestershire Wardens

- Aimed at volunteers who work as unpaid members of staff
- Worcestershire Wardens charter
- Volunteering Agreement
- Access to other organisations' training
- Economies of scale
- Sense of being part of a wider 'family'
- Opportunities for sharing resources including tools, people, knowledge and experience
- Ability to fund and organise a 'thank you' event

Worcestershire Wardens is not...

- A way of replacing paid employees
- Aimed at volunteers who only attend work parties
- About poaching volunteers

Governance

- Worcestershire Wardens Partnership
 - organisations who work with volunteers and have signed the Worcestershire Wardens Partnership Agreement (voting)
 - co-opted members who support the aims of the Worcestershire Wardens Partnership (non-voting)
- Worcestershire Wardens Network Officer

Worcestershire Wardens Partnership

Partners

- Malvern Hills Conservators
- Redditch Borough Council
- Worcester City Council
- Worcestershire County Council
- Worcestershire Wildlife Trust
- Wyre Forest District Council

Co-opted members

- British Waterways
- BTCV
- Countryside Agency
- Duckworth Worcestershire Trust
- National Trust

The Future

- Increasing membership
- Increasing the number of volunteers
- Securing a high profile patron
- Rolling-out the Worcestershire Wardens model on a national scale