

Volunteering in Museums, Libraries and Archives

December 2005

Steven Howlett, Joanna Machin and
Gertrud Malmersjo

Institute for Volunteering Research



**Institute for
Volunteering
Research**

Contents

Contents	2
1. Introduction	8
2. Survey findings	11
2.1 Involvement of volunteers in organisations	11
2.1.1 Reasons for involving volunteers	12
2.1.2 Number of volunteers involved in organisations	15
2.2 Profile of volunteers	18
2.2.1 Gender	18
2.2.2 Age	20
2.2.3 Ethnicity	22
2.2.4 Disabled volunteers	24
2.3 Volunteer work	26
2.3.1 Weekly hours committed by volunteers	26
2.3.2 Tasks carried out by volunteers	28
2.3.3 Do you have enough volunteers?	32
2.3.4 Barriers to involving more volunteers	33
2.3.5 Ease/difficulty of recruiting volunteers	35
2.4 Methods of recruitment	38
2.5 Volunteer management	40
2.5.1 Management through other organisations	40
2.5.2 Volunteer management systems and procedures	40
2.5.3 Problems faced by organisations in involving volunteers	44
2.6 Volunteering as a path to paid employment and lifelong learning	48
2.6.1 Paid employment	48
2.6.2 Lifelong learning	49
2.7 Non-involvement of volunteers	50
3. Best practice in volunteer management: Discussion of key findings from the case studies	54
3.1 Managing volunteers: identifying the issues	54
3.2 Volunteers views	55
3.2 Findings from the case studies: Making Good Practice Work	57
3.3 Volunteering in Libraries: Papworth Library	62
3.4 Volunteering in Libraries: St Helen's	65
3.5 Volunteering in Museums: Museum of Costume, Bath	69
3.6 Volunteering in Museums: National Railway Museum, York	73
3.7 Volunteering in Archives: Warwickshire County Record	77
3.8 Volunteering in Archives: Barnsley Archives and Local Studies Department	80
4. Conclusions and recommendations	83
Bibliography	85

Executive Summary

This research was commissioned by the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA) and undertaken by the Institute for Volunteering Research (IVR) to map and evaluate the role and development of volunteers in the museums, libraries and archive sector. The research involved a survey to a random sample of 1,892 organisations across England in June and July 2005 (464 to museums, 952 to libraries and 476 to archives). In total, 585 organisations completed the survey, representing a 31% response rate.

A qualitative study was carried out in the autumn of 2005. Case studies were carried out with six organisations (two libraries, two museums and two archives) to identify good practice in volunteer involvement and management.

Key findings from the survey

Volunteer Involvement

- Eighty-three per cent of organisations involved volunteers compared with 75% in 2001. Ninety-five per cent of museums involved volunteers compared to 79% of archives and 67% of libraries.
- The most common reason identified by organisations for involving volunteers was because it allows them to do things they would not normally be able to do (74%). Promoting user involvement was also important; 47% of organisations identified this as one of the main reasons for volunteer involvement.
- Only 8% of organisations said that they involved volunteers because 'it increases diversity'. This compared to 16% in 2001.
- Thirty-one per cent of organisations reported that that one of the main reasons for involving volunteers was to save money or because they could not afford to pay staff.
- Most organisations involved relatively few volunteers, 54% had between 1 and 20 volunteers. Six per cent of organisations involved over 100 volunteers.

Profile of volunteers

- Consistent with findings from 2001, women were more likely to be involved as volunteers in museums, libraries and archives than men. However, more men were involved in museums compared to libraries and archives - 49% of volunteers in museums were male compared to 32% in libraries and 41% in archives.

- The survey suggested that the age of volunteers is increasing. In 2001, 65% of volunteers were aged 55 and over, in 2005 this was up to 72%.
- Museums and libraries reported that 73% of volunteers were aged 55 years and over, in archives 66% of volunteers were in this age bracket.
- Volunteers across the domains were predominantly white (96% of volunteers involved with responding organisations were white) – but care should be taken with this, Greater London, for example, has many more non-white volunteers.
- Sixty-three per cent of organisations involved disabled volunteers.

Volunteer work

- On average organisations received 62 hours a week of volunteer time - an increase from 55 hours in 2001.
- Museums received a higher number of volunteer hours than libraries or archives.
- Museums were most likely to involve people in organising, helping run an event and giving information and advice; libraries in visiting people and archives in administration and clerical work.

Barriers to involving more volunteers

- Fifty-four per cent of organisations said that they did not have enough volunteers, a similar figure to 2001.
- Museums were more likely to say they did not have enough volunteers (59% compared to 45% of libraries and 49% of archives).
- The main barriers to involving volunteers were a lack of time and a lack of a specific volunteer manager.
- Fifty-five per cent of organisations thought it is getting neither easier nor harder to recruit volunteers, 15% thought it was getting easier or much easier, 30% that it is getting harder or much harder.
- More organisations in 2005 (15%) thought it is getting easier to recruit volunteers than in 2001 (11%).

Methods of recruitment

- Three quarters of organisations said they recruited volunteers through word of mouth and a similar proportion said volunteers approach them, this is consistent with the 2001 findings.

Volunteer management

- Over half (56%) of organisations reported that they had a policy on the involvement of volunteers, an increase from 41% in 2001.
- Forty-eight per cent of organisations offered expenses. In 2001 this was 51%. In the 2005 survey, 16% of organisations said that expenses were offered and claimed, however 32% said expenses were offered but not always claimed.
- The majority of organisations (89%) provided training for their volunteers.
- Two thirds (66%) of organisations provides their volunteers with a formal induction, an increase from 54% in 2001.
- Thirty-eight per cent of organisation said they faced problems or issues with the involvement of volunteers. These issues included lack of time to supervise volunteers, the different skills needed to manage volunteers, lack of capacity to train volunteers properly, health and safety issues, and concern over the commitment of volunteers.

Employment, lifelong learning and volunteering

- Nearly half of all organisations (49%) thought that the skills volunteers developed helped them find paid employment, but 33% said it did not help. Libraries were least likely to think volunteering gave skills for paid employment.
- Seventy-four per cent of organisations indicated that they thought volunteering had help volunteers participate in lifelong learning. Sixteen percent of organisations said that volunteering did not help in this respect at all.

Non-involvement of volunteers

- Sixteen per cent of organisations responding to the survey did not involve volunteers, with libraries the most likely not to have volunteers.
- Thirty-six per cent of organisations cited 'too time consuming' as a reason for not involving volunteers, the same proportion said that they did not need volunteers.
- Of those that did not involve volunteers, 20% said they were considering it, but 80% said they were not.

Issues from the case studies

- The case studies indicated many areas of good practice, in particular the strength of identifying clearly the reason for involving volunteers and the role that they play.
- Each case study emphasised the importance of a key contact – preferably a volunteer manager or co-ordinator.
- Funding was a key issue for the volunteer manager role - where funding for managers posts was uncertain this made planning and programme development difficult.
- Barriers to further volunteering in the case study organisations included a lack of paid staff to manage and supervise volunteers.
- Diversity is still an issue and organisations need to look carefully at how volunteers are recruited.

Acknowledgements

We would like to express our thanks to Val King and staff at MLA for their help in adding knowledge, contents and support for the research, and our thanks especially go to the staff and volunteers who took the time to answer our questions and inform us about their organisations and experiences during our case study visits.

1. Introduction

This research was commissioned by the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA) and undertaken by the Institute for Volunteering Research (IVR) to map and evaluate the role and development of volunteers in the museums, libraries and archive sector.

The research follows a report '*Volunteers in the Cultural Sector in England, 2002*', which used a survey and case study work carried out in 2001 to profile volunteering in museums, libraries and archives and set a benchmark against which volunteering in the sector could be examined. This report assesses how volunteering in museums, libraries and archives has changed since 2001 and draws out some of the key issues for museums, libraries and archives in 2005.

1.1 Methodology

The research was conducted in two phases:

1. A quantitative survey on the involvement and management of volunteers was sent out to a random sample of 1,892 organisations across England in June and July 2005 (464 to museums, 952 to libraries and 476 to archives). This survey largely replicated the 2001 survey with several additional questions. The results were analysed using the statistical software package SPSS.

For the purposes of the survey, a volunteer was broadly taken to mean anyone who carries out any task for the organisation in an unpaid capacity whether a trustee, a service provider or a fundraiser and whether or not they are called something different, such as 'friends' or 'stewards'. This also includes unpaid work on committees.

In total, 585 organisations completed the survey, representing a 31% response rate¹. Seventeen organisations indicated that they could not identify their main area of work as just a museum, library or archive and as such are defined as 'multiples'. These organisations are included in the analysis but not where this is sector specific. Table 1 shows the response rate from each domain.

¹ In 2001, 1500 surveys were sent out to organisations and 498 responded, representing a 33% response rate.

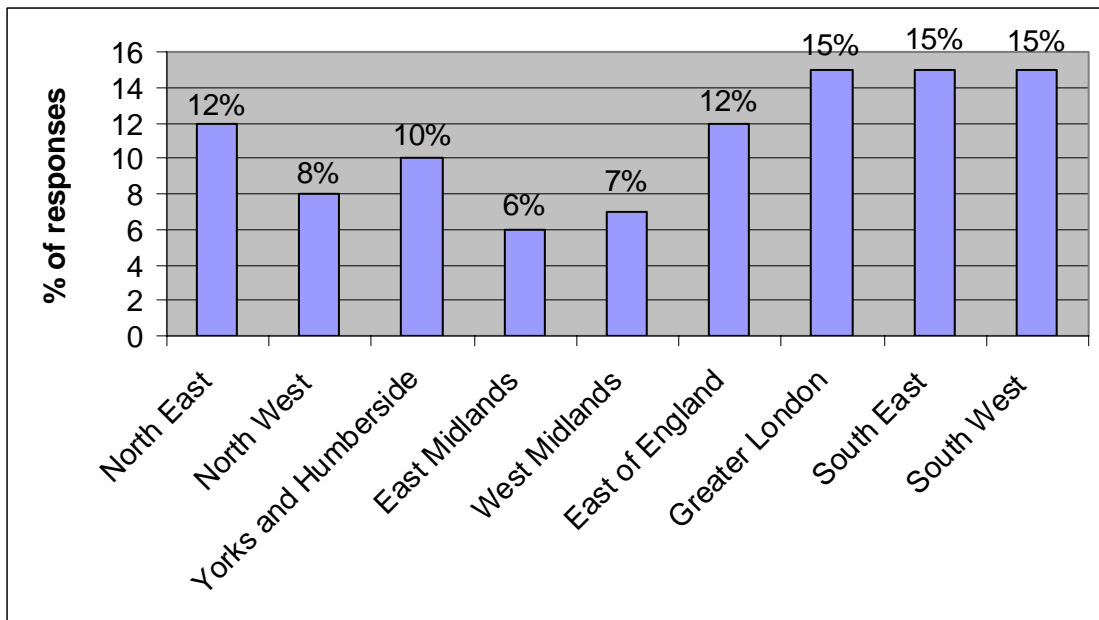
Table 1: Response rate

	Number of returned surveys	% of total response	Response rate for domain
Museums	296	51%	64%
Libraries*	175	30%	18%
Archives	97	17%	20%
Multiples	17	3%	-
Base	585	100%	31%

**Some of the responses for the libraries have been returned from the county level, the central local authority level or from local libraries and this should be borne in mind in the analysis.*

The best represented regions in terms of the proportion of returned surveys were Greater London, South East and South West. Together these account for 45% of responses (see figure 1).

Figure 1: Response by region



The number of surveys returned in each region is likely in part to reflect the number of museums, libraries and archives in each region and the distribution of surveys sent out rather than necessarily a poor response rate. Caution should be taken with the analysis of regions and domains where the sample size is small, in particular in relation to archives (see table 2).

Table 2: Number of organisations responding to survey by domain and region

	Museums	Libraries	Archives	Multiples	Total
North East	40	22	6	1	69
North West	16	16	11	1	44
Yorkshire and the Humber	30	17	10	2	59
East Midlands	13	15	5	0	33
West Midlands	21	8	9	1	39
East of England	41	21	8	2	72
Greater London	37	26	21	5	89
South East	42	31	12	2	87
South West	53	19	12	1	85

2. A qualitative study was carried out in the autumn of 2005. Case studies were carried out with six organisations (two libraries, two museums and two archives) to identify good practice in volunteer involvement and management. Each case study was identified via the returns to the quantitative survey. The criteria for choosing the case study organisations were domain, number of volunteers, geography and self-identified aspects of good practice.

In each case study, interviews were held with volunteer managers and interviews and/or focus groups conducted with volunteers. The purpose was to understand further what constituted good practice in each case, where this coincided with prevailing views of good practice and how it differed. The six organisations included in the case studies were:

- Papworth Library, Papworth;
- St Helen's Library, St Helen's;
- Museum of Costume, Bath;
- National Railway Museum, York;
- Warwickshire County Record Office, Warwickshire; and
- Barnsley Archives and Local Studies Department, Barnsley.

1.2 Structure of the report

The report is organised in two sections. The first section reports on the results from the quantitative survey. The second discusses the findings from the case study research and provides a summary of volunteer involvement and management in the six case study organisations.

2. Survey findings

2.1 Involvement of volunteers in organisations

In total, 83% of the organisations responding to the survey in 2005 involved volunteers. This compares to 75% in 2001. As was found in 2001, volunteers were more likely to be involved in museums (95% of museums said they involved volunteers) compared to libraries (67%) or archives (79%).

Some caution should be taken when comparing the proportions of organisations involving volunteers as it is possible that any differences might reflect the distribution of the surveys or organisations which do not involve volunteers might have been less likely to return the survey.

With this in mind, the results suggest some variation in the involvement of volunteers across the regions (table 3). Libraries in Yorkshire and the Humber and the West Midlands had lower levels of involvement of volunteers with the latter also having the lowest level of volunteer participation in museums.

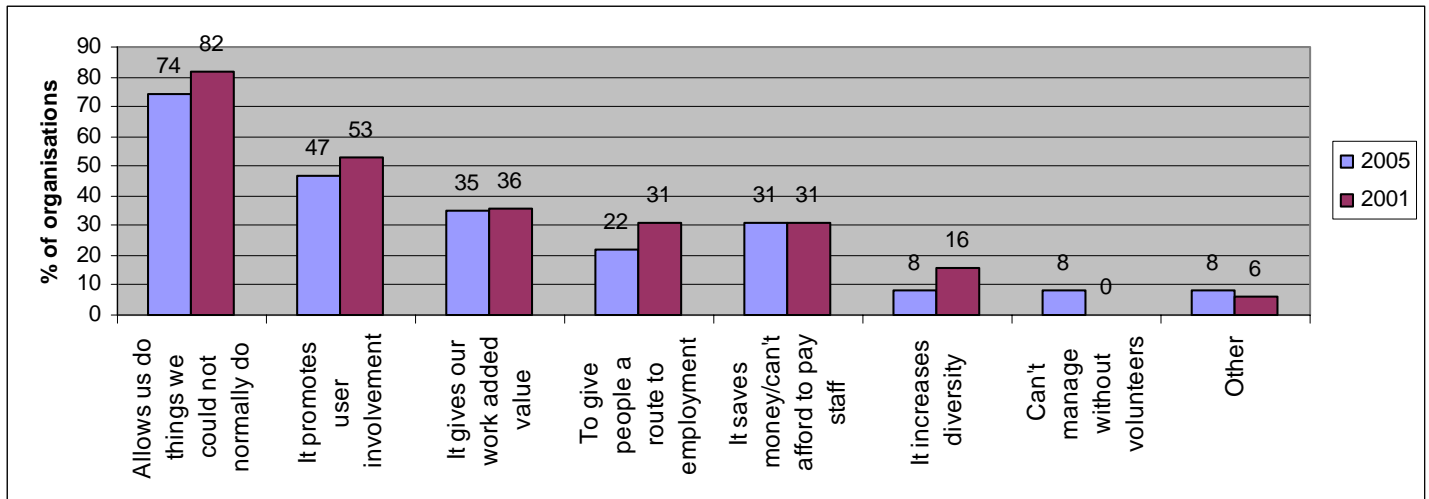
Across all the domains, the East of England had the highest involvement of volunteers (92%) and the North West had the lowest (75%).

Table 3: Percentage of organisations involving volunteers

	All organisations	Museums	Libraries	Archives
North East	86%	98%	64%	83%
North West	75%	94%	63%	64%
Yorkshire and the Humber	78%	93%	35%	100%
East Midlands	85%	92%	73%	100%
West Midlands	80%	86%	50%	89%
East of England	92%	98%	95%	75%
Greater London	80%	95%	70%	71%
South East	83%	98%	68%	67%
South West	88%	94%	74%	83%

2.1.1 Reasons for involving volunteers

Figure 2: Main reasons for involving volunteers (all organisations)



Note: 'Can't manage without volunteers' was not asked in 2001. The category 'it saves money' was merged with 'can't afford to pay staff' in 2005, however, most of the responses in this category refer to 'it saves money'.

As was found in the 2001 survey, most organisations (74%) indicated that they involved volunteers because it allowed them to do things they would not normally do. This was particularly the case for archives, with 85% saying this was one of the main reasons for volunteer involvement (see table 4). 'Promoting user involvement' was the second most cited motivation for involving volunteers, however, the results indicated that this was important for a larger proportion of respondents in 2001 than in 2005.

'It gives our work added value', continued to be the third most cited reason for involving volunteers and 44% of libraries said that this was an important reason for involving volunteers compared to 38% in 2001.

Not only was diversity the least cited reason for involving volunteers, but the proportion of organisations stating this as one of the main reasons has reduced since 2001. In museums, for example, 16% of organisations said that they involved volunteers because 'it increases diversity' in 2001 compared to only 8% in 2005.

Table 4: Main reasons for involving volunteers

	Museums		Libraries		Archives	
	2005	2001	2005	2001	2005	2001
It allows us to do things we would not normally do	70%	81%	77%	80%	85%	88%
It promotes user involvement	44%	54%	50%	46%	50%	63%
It gives our work added value	31%	34%	44%	38%	32%	35%
To give people a route to employment	20%	34%	20%	18%	32%	44%
It saves money/ Can't afford to pay staff	43%	36%	18%	31%	11%	21%
It increases diversity	7%	19%	11%	16%	4%	1%
Could not manage without volunteers	12%	Not asked	1%	Not asked	3%	Not asked
Other	7%	6%	11%	6%	3%	8%
Number of responding organisations	258	152	113	124	72	86

Museums main reasons for involving volunteers varied from libraries and archives. For example, libraries and archives were less likely to cite 'It saves money' as a reason for involving volunteers in 2005 than in 2001, while 43% of museums cited this reason compared to only 36% in 2001. In fact, over twice as many museums said this was a main reason for volunteer involvement compared to libraries and archives.

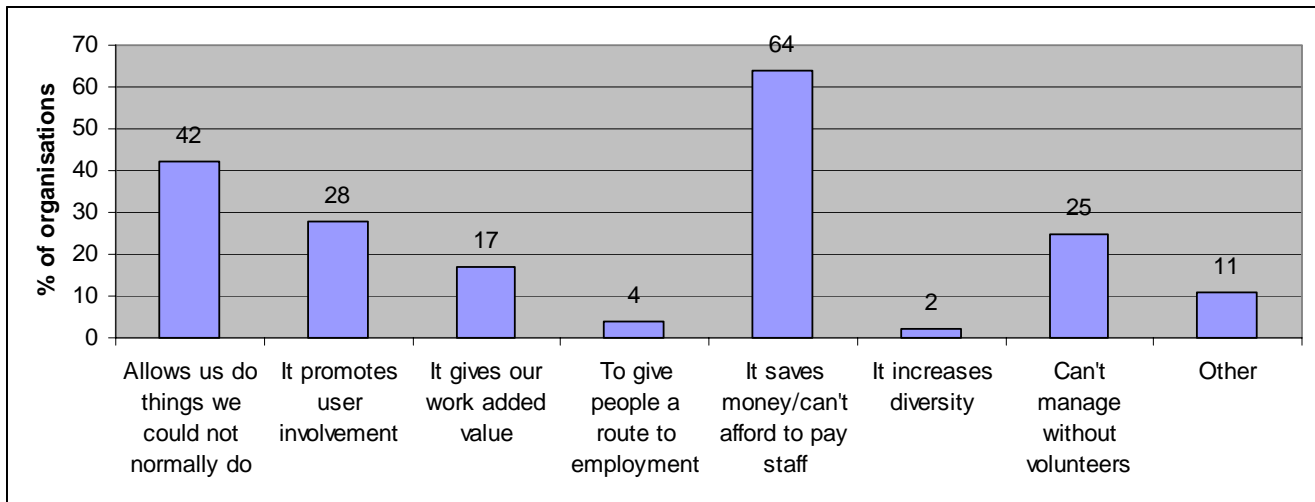
A closer look at these figures, however, revealed an interesting difference. The survey results showed that there had been a significant increase in the number of museums which were totally managed by volunteers (32% in 2005 as compared to 13% in 2001, see table 7). This factor seemed to be influencing the main reasons for recruiting volunteers in museums.

Totally volunteer managed museums

The totally volunteer managed museums cited 'it saves money/can't afford to pay staff' as the main reason to involve volunteers (64% of museums said that this was one of the main reasons for volunteer involvement), but 'can't manage without them' (25%) was also an often cited reason. It would appear that the

priorities for involving volunteers would change in a totally volunteer managed organisation.

Figure 3: Main reasons for involving volunteers in totally volunteer managed museums



*Museums **not** totally managed by volunteers*

Once the responses from the totally volunteer managed organisations were excluded, the main reasons for involving volunteers in museums would change and become more similar to those from 2001. 'Gives added value' was now a more important reason than 'saving money'.

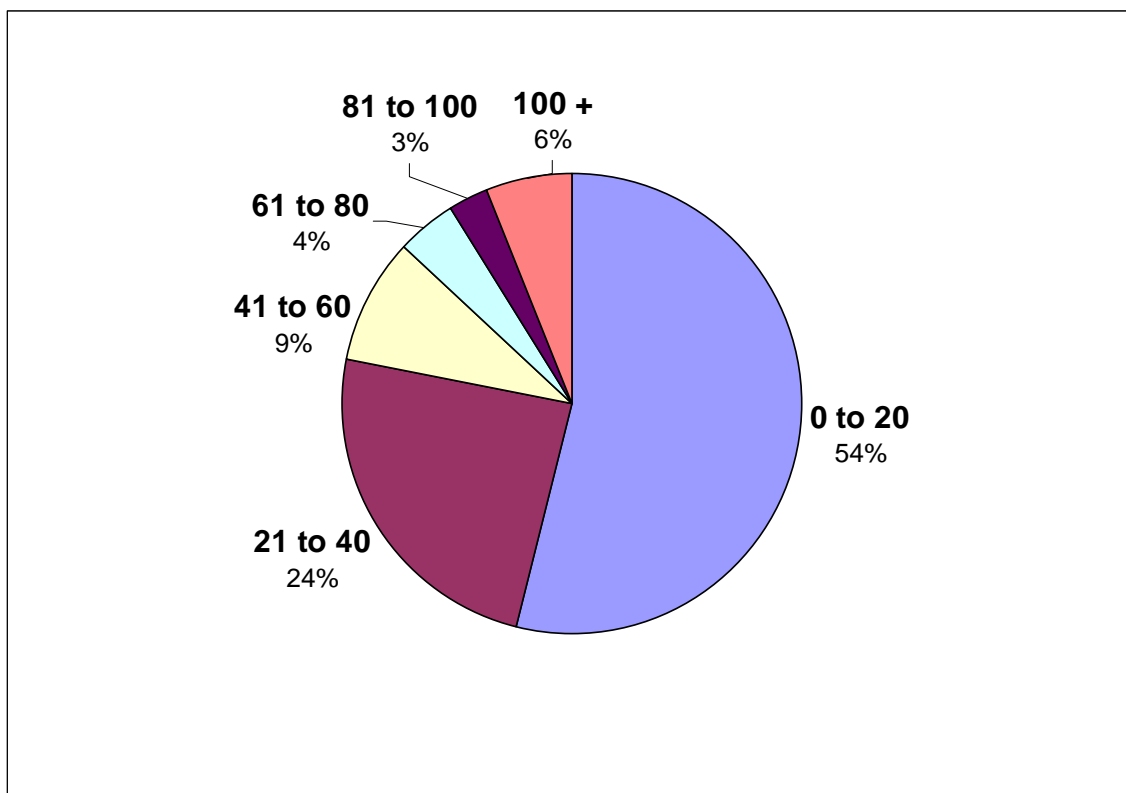
Table 5: Main reasons for involving volunteers in museums

	Totally volunteer managed 2005	Not entirely volunteer managed 2005	All museums 2005	All museums 2001
It allows us to do things we would not normally do	42%	83%	70%	81%
It promotes user involvement	28%	52%	44%	54%
It gives our work added value	17%	38%	31%	34%
To give people a route to employment	4%	28%	20%	34%
It saves money/ Can't afford to pay staff	64%	33%	43%	36%
It increases diversity	2%	8%	7%	19%
Could not manage without volunteers	25%	6%	12%	Not asked
Other	11%	5%	7%	6%
Number of responding organisations	83	174	258	152

2.1.2 Number of volunteers involved in organisations

The majority of organisations (54%) involved between 1 and 20 volunteers with 24% reporting that they involved 21 to 40 (see figure 4).

Figure 4: Number of volunteers involved in organisations



Libraries and archives were more likely to involve smaller number of volunteers (1 to 20) than museums - 81% of the responding archives involved 1 to 20 volunteers compared to 43% of museums (see table 6). In all organisations, 6% involved more than 100 volunteers.

Table 6: Number of volunteers by domain

	All organisations	Museums	Libraries	Archives
1 - 20	54%	43%	65%	81%
21 - 40	24%	30%	18%	11%
41 - 60	9%	12%	7%	1%
61 - 80	4%	7%	2%	1%
81 - 100	3%	3%	0%	3%
100 +	6%	7%	8%	3%
Number of responding organisations	455	261	112	72

Twenty-one percent of all organisations were totally volunteer run. Table 7 shows that a higher percentage of museums were totally volunteer run compared to

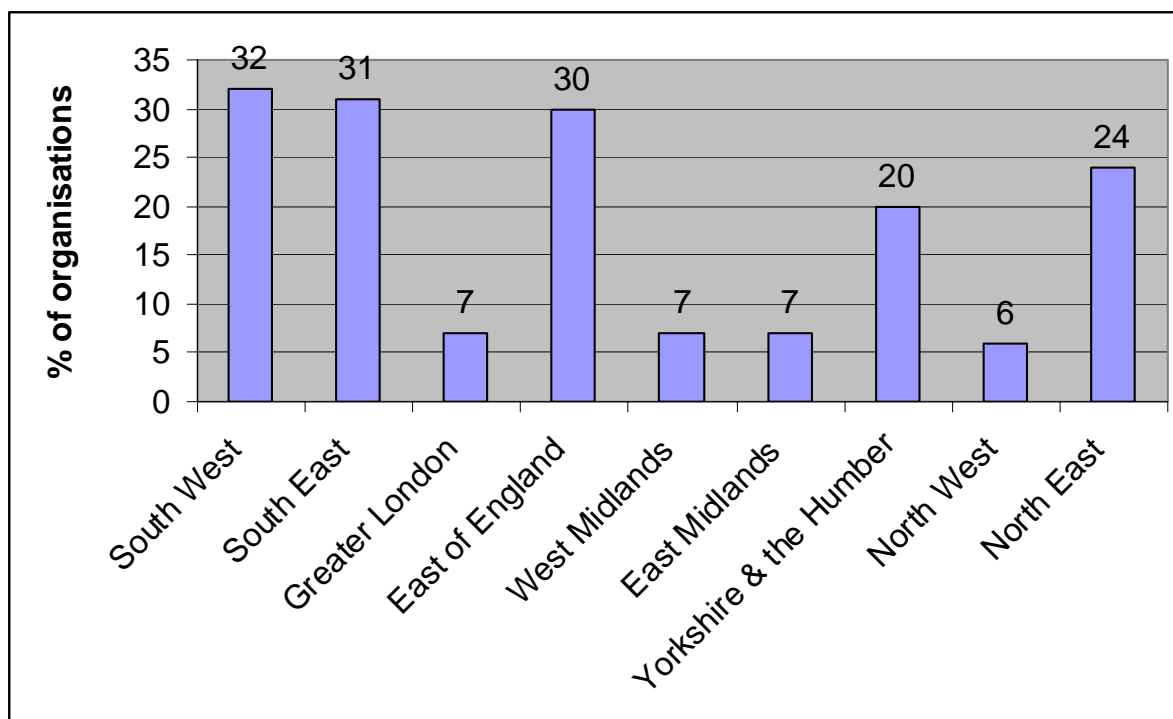
libraries and archives – 32% of museums compared to 3% of libraries and 9% of archives. In all three domains however the proportion of organisations which were volunteer run had increased since 2001.

Table 7: Percentage of organisations totally run by volunteers

	Museums		Libraries		Archives	
	2005	2001	2005	2001	2005	2001
% of organisations totally volunteer run	32%	13%	3%	2%	9%	1%

There was a regional difference in the percentage of totally volunteer run organisations as seen below in figure 5. It should be noted, however, that the South West, South East and East of England were among the regions with the highest response rates to the survey and this might be affecting the results.

Figure 5: Percentage of organisations totally run by volunteers by region



2.2 Profile of volunteers

Survey respondents were asked to indicate in percentage terms the makeup of their volunteers, for example, the percentage of male volunteers versus female volunteers. The percentages provided by organisations were estimates and the figures provided in this section are averages. This means that an organisation with one volunteer carried the same weight as an organisation with 100. The results therefore provide a more general rather than accurate indication of the make up of volunteers amongst the responding organisations.

2.2.1 Gender

Across all of the organisations, 57% of volunteers involved with organisations responding to the survey were female and 43% were male. Consistent with the results in 2001, men were more likely to be involved in museums than in libraries and archives and it is in this domain that the percentage of men increased from 42% in 2001 to 49% in 2005. In libraries and archives the split between male and female participation changed little, 68% of volunteers involved in libraries were female while in archives 59% of volunteers were female in 2005.

Table 8: Gender breakdown by domain

	Number of responding organisations		Male		Female	
	2005	2001	2005	2001	2005	2001
Museums	274	148	49%	42%	51%	58%
Libraries	113	122	32%	31%	68%	69%
Archives	73	85	41%	41%	59%	59%
All organisations	471	369	43%	39%	57%	61%

Table 9 shows that there was some variation in the make up of volunteers in terms of gender in the regions. The North East and Greater London were the regions with the most even split of male and female volunteers, for example, in Greater London, 46% of volunteers were male and 54% were female.

In some of the regions the split between male and female volunteers changed between 2001 and 2005 and in most regions the percentage of male volunteers increased to make the balance of male and female volunteers more equal. This was particularly the case in the North East where the percentage of male volunteers increased from 40% to 55% and in the East Midlands where male participation rose from 25% to 41%. It should be borne in mind however that some of these changes might be exaggerated due to the small sample sizes in 2001, particularly in the North East.

Table 9: Gender breakdown by region

	Number of responding organisations		% Male		% Female	
	2005	2001	2005	2001	2005	2001
North East	54	10	55%	40%	45%	59%
North West	31	33	41%	43%	59%	57%
Yorkshire and the Humber	45	48	38%	38%	62%	62%
East Midlands	26	20	41%	25%	59%	75%
West Midlands	31	61	31%	40%	69%	60%
East of England	66	29	43%	37%	57%	63%
Greater London	69	68	46%	40%	54%	60%
South East	72	60	42%	36%	58%	64%
South West	73	37	42%	41%	58%	59%
All organisations	471	369	43%	39%	57%	61%

Table 10 shows that the male to female ratio of volunteers within organisations was most evenly split in organisations with over 100 volunteers – 47% were male and 53% were female – this is contrary to the findings in 2001 where organisations with over 100 volunteers were most likely to involve female volunteers. In the 2005 survey, organisations with 1 to 20 volunteers had the most uneven split with 42% of volunteers being male and 58% being female.

Table 10: Gender breakdown by number of volunteers involved in organisation

	Number of responding organisations	% Male	% Female
1 - 20	241	42%	58%
21 - 40	107	46%	54%
41 - 60	41	43%	57%
61 - 80	20	35%	65%
81 - 100	11	45%	55%
100 +	27	47%	53%
All organisations	471	43%	57%

2.2.2 Age

Organisations were asked to provide an age breakdown of their volunteers. Seventy-two percent of volunteers involved in organisations taking part in the survey were aged 55 years and over. Only nine percent were 24 years and under. This had changed little from the 2001 survey, although the percentage of older volunteers (those aged 55 and over) had increased from 65% in 2001 to 72% in 2005.

Figure 6: Age breakdown

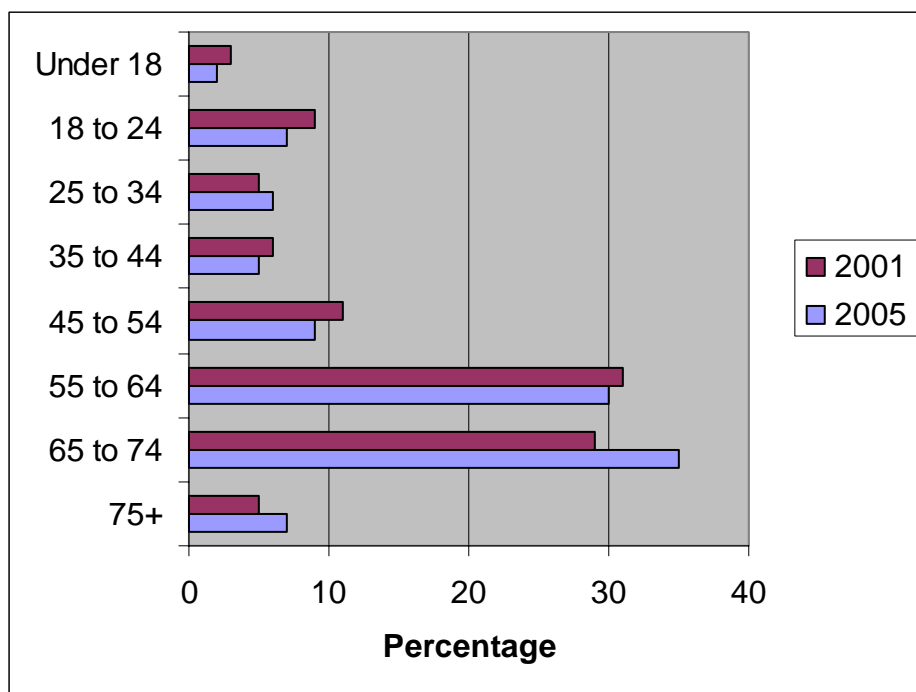


Table 11: Age breakdown

	2005	2001
75 +	7%	5%
65 to 74	35%	29%
55 to 64	30%	31%
45 to 54	9%	11%
35 to 44	5%	6%
25 to 34	6%	5%
18 to 24	7%	9%
Under 18	2%	3%

Table 12: Age breakdown by domain

	Museums		Libraries		Archives	
	2005	2001	2005	2001	2005	2001
75 +	9%	5%	6%	4%	3%	7%
65 to 74	36%	31%	33%	28%	29%	25%
55 to 64	28%	27%	34%	37%	34%	30%
45 to 54	10%	11%	10%	13%	8%	11%
35 to 44	5%	6%	4%	6%	4%	6%
25 to 34	5%	6%	7%	5%	8%	5%
18 to 24	7%	9%	4%	6%	12%	13%
Under 18	1%	4%	4%	2%	3%	3%

Comparing the different domains, museums and libraries had the same proportion of their volunteers aged 55 and over (73%). Archives had a smaller

proportion of volunteers in this age bracket and a larger percentage of volunteers aged 24 years and under (15%) (table 12).

In museums and libraries the proportion of volunteers aged 55 and over increased between 2001 and 2005, from 63% of all volunteers in museums in 2001 to 73% in 2005 and from 69% to 73% in libraries. The proportion of volunteers in this age group decreased, however, in archives (in particular in relation to the proportion of volunteers aged 75 and over).

Table 13: Age breakdown by region

	Number of responding orgs	U 18	18 to 24	25 to 34	35 to 44	45 to 54	55 to 64	65 to 74	75+
North East	52	2%	8%	6%	6%	15%	34%	26%	3%
North West	31	2%	11%	10%	4%	10%	32%	28%	4%
Yorkshire and the Humber	41	2%	5%	5%	5%	7%	28%	40%	9%
East Midlands	26	Neg	7%	3%	2%	14%	37%	32%	5%
West Midlands	28	1%	19%	5%	3%	9%	22%	36%	7%
East of England	61	2%	6%	3%	5%	9%	33%	35%	8%
Greater London	60	5%	11%	12%	7%	10%	24%	27%	7%
South East	65	2%	5%	5%	4%	6%	33%	41%	7%
South West	68	2%	2%	2%	4%	6%	32%	42%	12%
All orgs	436	2%	7%	6%	5%	9%	30%	35%	7%

Neg = negligible

Table 13 shows the proportion of volunteers of different ages in organisations in the regions. Greater London and the North West had two of the wider spreads in terms of the age of volunteers. The former in particular had the lowest proportion of older volunteers (58% of volunteers involved with organisations responding to the survey were aged 55 and over) compared to other regions, for example, 86% in the South West. There was also variation in the proportion of young volunteers involved in organisations across the regions. While in the West Midlands 1 in 5 (20%) of volunteers were aged 24 and under, in the South West 1 in 25 (4%) of volunteers were in this age group.

Table 14: Age breakdown by number of volunteers involved in organisation

	Number of responding orgs	Under 18	18 to 24	25 to 34	35 to 44	45 to 54	55 to 64	65 to 74	75 +
1 – 20	225	3%	10%	8%	5%	8%	31%	31%	6%
21 – 40	100	1%	3%	2%	3%	9%	32%	43%	6%
41 – 60	38	2%	2%	4%	6%	10%	30%	36%	11%
61 – 80	16	2%	9%	3%	4%	9%	27%	34%	12%
81 – 100	10	Neg	5%	5%	7%	13%	22%	40%	9%
100 +	26	1%	5%	6%	8%	12%	29%	33%	7%
All orgs	436	2%	7%	6%	5%	9%	30%	35%	7%

Consistent with the findings in 2001, organisations with between 1 and 20 volunteers had a more diverse spread across age categories with a larger proportion of volunteers aged 44 and under (26%) compared to organisations involving more volunteers. Organisations with 1 to 20 volunteers had a larger proportion of volunteers aged 24 and under (13%) and a smaller proportion of volunteers aged 55 and over (68%) (table 14).

2.2.3 Ethnicity

Table 15: Ethnicity breakdown by domain

	Number of responding orgs	White	Asian or Asian British	Black	Other
Museums	262	96.4%	0.8%	0.7%	1.2%
Libraries	110	93.9%	2.8%	0.5%	3.0%
Archives	70	96.6%	0.1%	2.7%	0.4%
All organisations	452	95.9%	1.1%	1.0%	1.5%

Percentages do not necessarily add up to 100% as the figures provided by organisations are estimates

Table 16: Percentage of organisations who have only white volunteers

	Number of responding organisations	% of orgs who have totally white volunteers
Museums	272	80%
Libraries	114	75%
Archives	71	88%
All organisations	469	80%

Volunteers across museums, libraries and archives were predominantly white. On average, 96% of volunteers involved with organisations responding to the survey were white. This compares to 97% in 2001. Eighty-percent of organisations responding to the survey had only white volunteers (table 16).

The results suggest that libraries were more likely to involve ethnic minority volunteers and had a smaller proportion of organisations with totally white volunteers than museums and archives. This contrasted to the findings in 2001 which found that museums were more likely to involve volunteers from ethnic minority backgrounds. However, it should be noted that organisations provided only estimates of the ethnic background of volunteers and as such it is difficult to make conclusions about the differences between the domains.

Similarly, caution should be taken in making conclusions by comparing organisations in the different regions. However, table 17 does indicate that Greater London had a larger proportion of volunteers who were ethnically diverse and a smaller percentage of organisations had only white volunteers (60%). This is unsurprising considering the ethnic diversity of the city compared to other areas.

Table 17: Ethnicity breakdown per region

	No. of responding orgs	White	Asian or Asian British	Black	Other	% of orgs with only white volunteers
North East	54	99.2%	0.3%	0.2%	0.4%	86%
North West	31	99.3%	0.3%	0.1%	0.3%	87%
Yorkshire and the Humber	43	98.0%	0.7%	0.2%	1.2%	82%
East Midlands	24	94.3%	1.4%	0.3%	1.5%	73%
West Midlands	30	98.9%	0.6%	Neg	0.5%	87%
East of England	62	95.8%	0.3%	0.1%	3.7%	86%
Greater London	63	85.8%	4.4%	5.7%	4.3%	60%
South East	70	96.8%	1.5%	0.2%	0.1%	79%
South West	71	98.3%	Neg	0.1%	0.3%	87%
All organisations	452	95.9%	1.1%	1.0%	1.1%	80%

Neg = percentage is less than 0.1

Percentages do not necessarily add up to 100% as the figures provided by organisations are estimates

2.2.4 Disabled volunteers

The majority of organisations (63%) responding to the survey said that they involved disabled volunteers. Nine-percent of volunteers involved with organisations taking part in the survey were disabled. This compares to 8% in 2001. Table 18 shows that there was not a great deal of variation between domains, although archives were less likely to involve disabled volunteers than museums and libraries.

Table 18: Disabled volunteers by domain

	No. of responding orgs		% of disabled volunteers	
	2005	2001	2005	2001
Museums	258	139	10%	7%
Libraries	99	110	8%	10%
Archives	68	81	6%	6%
All organisations	432	340	9%	8%

Table 19: Disabled volunteers by region

	No. of responding orgs	% of disabled volunteers
North East	50	8%
North West	31	9%
Yorkshire and the Humber	44	8%
East Midlands	23	10%
West Midlands	28	5%
East of England	59	11%
Greater London	65	7%
South East	64	5%
South West	64	12%
All organisations	432	9%

Regionally, organisations in the South West and East of England had the highest proportion of disabled volunteers, 12% and 11% respectively. Organisations in the South East and West Midlands had the lowest participation levels of disabled volunteers (5% of volunteers in each).

Table 20: Disabled volunteers

	Number of responding orgs	% of disabled volunteers
1 to 20	221	8.3%
21 to 40	96	7.8%
41 to 60	38	7.7%
61 to 80	19	7.7%
81 to 100	11	19.5%
100 +	23	8.0%
All organisations	432	9%

Table 20 shows that disabled volunteers were more likely to be involved in organisations with between 81 and 100 volunteers, but this might in part reflect the small sample size. With the exception of this group, there was little variation between organisations involving different numbers of volunteers.

2.3 Volunteer work

2.3.1 Weekly hours committed by volunteers

The survey asked respondents to give a total weekly figure of hours of work for all of their volunteers. On average, organisations received 62 hours of work each week from their volunteers, representing an increase from 55 hours in 2001. Table 20 shows that (consistent with the findings in 2001) the average number of hours in museums was higher than in libraries and archives (table 21).

The results suggest that in museums and archives the number of average hours increased between 2001 and 2005, but in libraries it declined from 50 to 31 hours of volunteers work per week.

Table 21: Average weekly hours by domain

	Number of responding organisations		Average weekly hours	
	2005	2001	2005	2001
Museums	252	137	81	71
Libraries	92	108	31	50
Archives	64	79	32	29
All organisations	419	334	62	55

Due to the influence of organisations which involved a large number of volunteers and received a high number of hours of volunteer work, it is useful to compare domains in organisations with between 1 and 20 volunteers (table 22). Consistent with the previous findings, museums received a higher number of weekly hours than either libraries or archives, however, the difference between the domains was not as stark as is suggested in the above table.

Table 22: Average weekly hours by domain for organisations with 1 to 20 volunteers

	Number of responding organisations		Average weekly hours	
	2005	2001	2005	2001
Museums	105	79	29	23
Libraries	59	59	16	16
Archives	53	64	20	22
All organisations	219	209	23	21

As would be expected, the general trend was for the average number of hours to increase as the number of volunteers involved in organisations increased (see table 23). Those with 41 to 60 volunteers, for example, received on average 108 hours of volunteer work a week, whereas organisations with 1 to 20 volunteers received an average of 23 hours of work. However, the number of hours in organisations with between 61 and 80 volunteers was lower than might be expected. With the exception of this group of organisations the number of hours received by organisations from volunteers increased between 2001 and 2005.

Table 23: Average weekly hours by number of volunteers involved (all organisations)

	Number of responding orgs		Average weekly hours	
	2005	2001	2005	2001
1 – 20	219	209	23	21
21 – 40	94	49	62	49
41 – 60	37	23	108	76
61 – 80	16	12	71	90
81 – 100	9	9	117	77
100+	21	27	385	280
All organisations	419	334	62	55

Analysing the average number of volunteer hours received by organisations with 1 to 20 volunteers across the regions, the results suggested some variation between the regions. The average number of hours varied between 11 and 45 hours with organisations in the North East receiving the most hours per week (48 hours) and those in the East of England receiving the least (11 hours). In five of the regions – the North East, the North West, Yorkshire and the Humber, the West Midlands and Greater London the number of volunteer hours increased between 2001 and 2005 (table 24).

Table 24: Average weekly hours by region (organisations with 1- 20 volunteers)

	Number of responding organisations		Average weekly hours	
	2005	2001	2005	2001
North East	22	4	48	21
North West	16	24	23	11
Yorkshire and the Humber	20	27	25	22
East Midlands	11	9	15	23
West Midlands	23	40	20	18
East of England	23	16	11	24
Greater London	41	45	22	21
South East	35	30	18	24
South West	26	13	26	28
All orgs	219	209	23	21

2.3.2 Tasks carried out by volunteers

Respondents were asked to indicate what general tasks their volunteers were involved in. Table 25 shows that museums were most likely to involve volunteers in 'organising, helping run an event' and 'giving advice and information'. Libraries involved volunteers most in visiting people, while archives were most likely to involve volunteers in administration/clerical work.

It is evident however that museums, libraries and archives were involved in a wider range of tasks than were indicated in the survey with a large proportion saying volunteers were involved in other work or help. Respondents were not asked to specify what form this additional help took, but some added descriptions including: guiding people, repairing and sewing materials, cataloguing objects, stewarding, educational work, archives demonstrating, collections management, costume making, documenting collections, helping with exhibitions and delivering books to those who are housebound.

Table 25: Percentage of organisations who involve their volunteers in activities in their organisation

	All organisations	Museums	Libraries	Archives
Raising, handling money	38%	53%	16%	15%
Committee member	44%	62%	16%	22%
Organising, helping run an event	56%	74%	26%	32%
Visiting people	19%	9%	53%	4%
Giving advice, information	50%	65%	25%	32%
Secretarial, admin, clerical	50%	60%	28%	44%
Transporting	10%	9%	19%	1%
Other direct service	23%	24%	27%	12%
Representing	21%	27%	12%	11%
Other work or help	64%	71%	45%	68%
Number of responding orgs	479	278	116	73

Specific tasks in museums

Table 26 shows that museums were most likely to involve their volunteers in 'display/exhibition' (69% of organisations), 'research' (69%) and 'guiding/interpretation' work (62%). The same three tasks (plus archives work) were found to be most frequently carried out in 2001. Museums also heavily involved volunteers in administration and committee work and archives work. Fundraising and conservation/restoration were also mentioned frequently and other less mentioned activities were work such as stewarding, catering and gardening.

Table 26: Specific tasks carried out by volunteers in museums

Tasks	% of museums
Finds processing/ cataloguing/ documentation	29%
Excavation/fieldwork	6%
Conservation/restoration	53%
Research	69%
Display/exhibition	69%
Sales/information	51%
Guiding/interpretation	62%
Archives work	61%
Library work	30%
Curatorial training	18%
Information and communication technology	35%
Administration	55%
Management	38%
Committee work	57%
Fundraising	47%
Marketing/Events organisation	6%
Education	4%
Other	11%
Number of responding organisations	277

Specific tasks in libraries

Libraries were most likely to involve volunteers in 'library work' (41% of organisations), 'outreach work' (26%) and 'home delivery services' (26%), (see table 27). Promotional activities were also reported as important. Other main activities included indexing and archives work. Volunteers in libraries seemed less likely to be involved in administration and management compared to volunteers in museums (see table 26).

Table 27: Specific tasks carried out by volunteers in libraries

Tasks	% of libraries
Reminiscence sessions	4%
Outreach work	26%
Indexing newspapers/books	17%
Proof reading and editing	2%
Storytime/reading groups	17%
Homework Assistants	5%
Promotional activities	20%
Author events	9%
Archives work	18%
Library work	41%
Stock management/collections	16%
Literacy sessions	1%
Information and communications technology	14%
Management	2%
Administration	14%
Committee work	15%
Fundraising	15%
Home delivery services	26%
Other	8%
Number of responding organisations	117

Specific tasks in archives

Archives were most likely to involve their volunteers in the description of record tasks, with 89% of archives indicating that their volunteers carried out this activity (table 28). Other common tasks for volunteers included ‘conservation and preservation’ and research. Other activities carried out included transcription and indexing work, database management, provision of family history advice, oral history interviewing and helping users of archives.

Table 28: Specific tasks completed by volunteers in archives

Tasks	% of archives
Description of records	89%
Conservation and preservation	43%
Research	41%
Exhibitions/displays	26%
Collections management	18%
Profile raising	17%
Public events	28%
Information and communication technology	26%
Management	8%
Administration	25%
Committee work	17%
Fundraising	18%
Other	9%
Number of responding organisations	76

2.3.3 Do you have enough volunteers?

Of the responding organisations, 54% said they did not have enough volunteers to allow them to do what they want to – a similar figure to the 2001 findings. In the 2005 survey, museums were more likely to indicate that they did not have enough volunteers – 59% of museums compared to 45% of libraries and 49% of archives. A greater proportion of museums said that they did not have enough volunteers in 2005 compared to 2001, but a smaller proportion of libraries and archives thought that this was the case in 2005 compared to 2001 (table 29).

Table 29: Do you have enough volunteers to enable you to do what you want to do?

	Number of responding orgs		% Yes		% No	
	2005	2001	2005	2001	2005	2001
Museums	273	150	41	48	59	52
Libraries	111	123	55	50	45	50
Archives	72	82	51	43	49	57
All organisations	467	368	46	47	54	53

2.3.4 Barriers to involving more volunteers

Those who indicated that they did not have enough volunteers were asked what prevented them involving more volunteers in their organisation.

The most common barrier cited by organisations was ‘not having enough time’ to involve more volunteers (49% of organisations) and a ‘lack of a specific volunteer manager’ (40%) (table 30). Not having enough time was identified as a particular problem for archives (79%). Not having enough funding to involve more volunteers was identified as a problem by 1 in 5 museums, libraries and archives. Only 10% of organisations indicated that they were worried about job substitution issues, however, libraries appeared to be more concerned about this than museums and archives (16% of libraries as compared to 8% of museums and 12% of archives). Many organisations also cited ‘difficult to find and to recruit volunteers’ as a main reason for not involving more volunteers (21% of organisations). ‘Lack of space’ was mentioned by several organisations and appeared to be more of an issue in archives than in museums and libraries (12% of archives) (see table 30 and figure 7).

Table 30: What prevents you involving more volunteers?

	Frequency	% of organisations
Resistance from paid staff	12	5%
Worried about job substitution issues	23	10%
Lack of a specific volunteer manager	95	40%
Don't have enough time	117	49%
Lack of suitable roles	19	8%
Not enough funding	48	20%
No support at local authority level	18	8%
Difficult to find and to recruit volunteers	51	21%
Lack of suitable volunteers	18	8%
Lack of space	12	5%
Other	25	10%
Number of responding organisations	239	

Figure 7: Reasons for not involving more volunteers

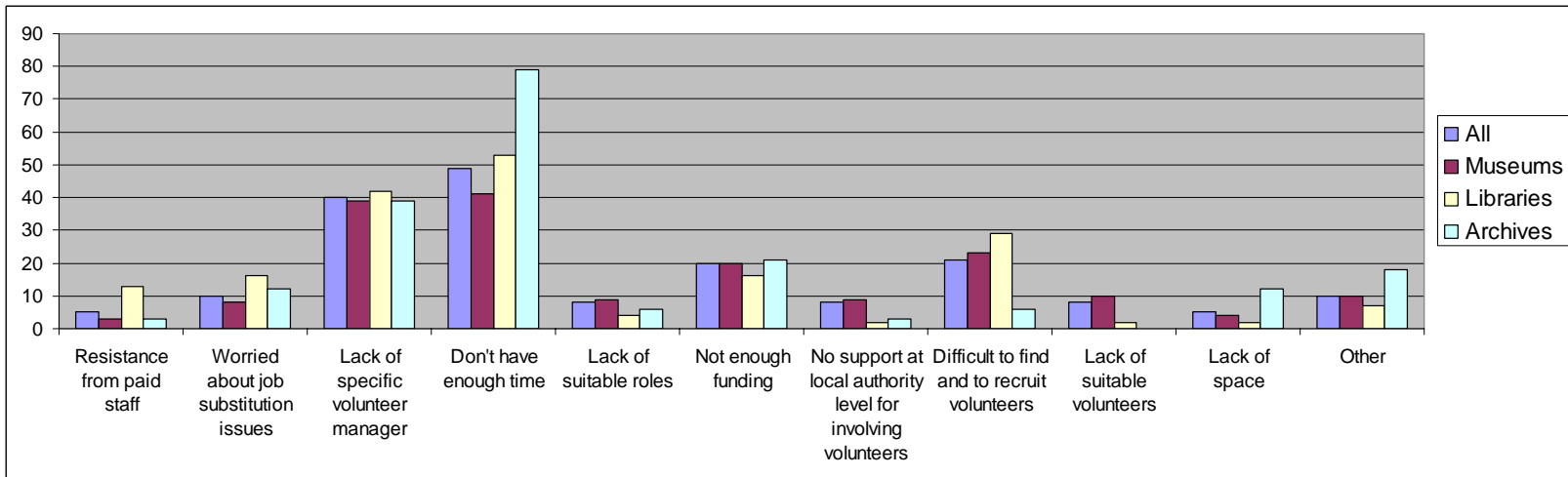
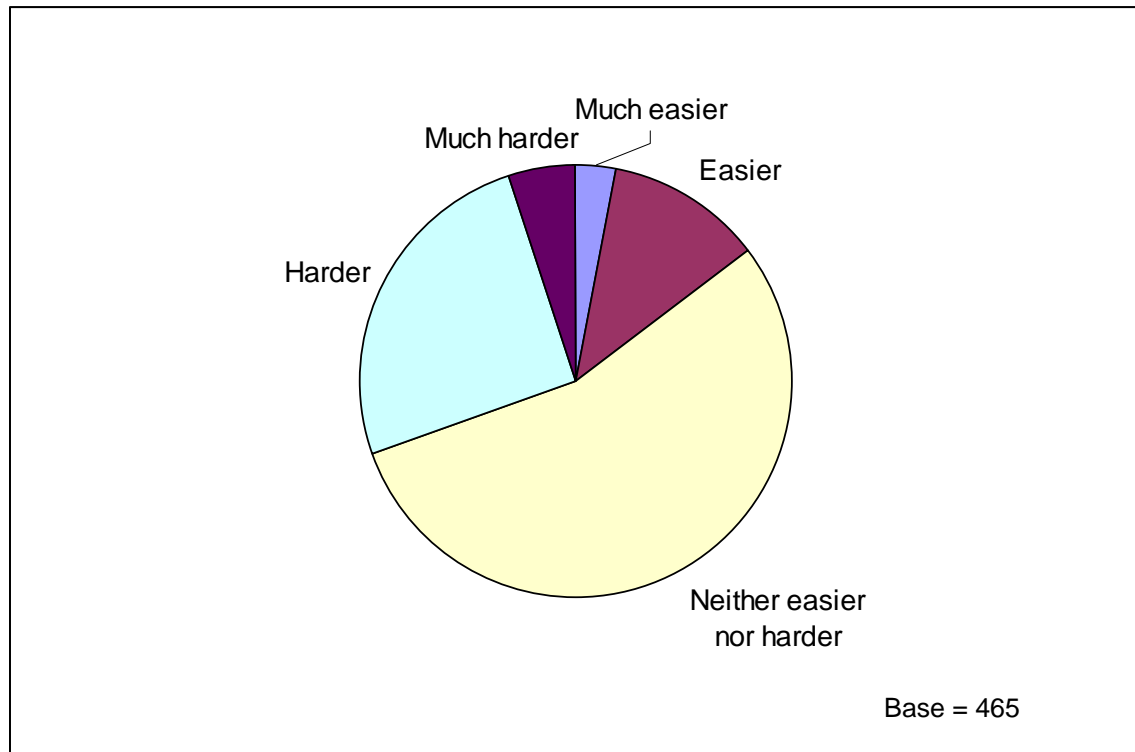


Table 31: What prevents you involving more volunteers?

	Museums		Libraries		Archives	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Resistance from paid staff	5	3%	6	13%	1	3%
Worried about job substitution issues	12	8%	7	16%	4	12%
Lack of a specific volunteer manager	61	39%	19	42 %	13	39%
Don't have enough time	65	41%	24	53%	26	79%
Lack of suitable roles	14	9%	2	4%	2	6%
Not enough funding	32	20%	7	16%	7	21%
No support at local authority level	14	9%	1	2%	1	3%
Difficult to find and to recruit volunteers	36	23%	13	29%	2	6%
Lack of suitable volunteers	16	10%	1	2%	0	0%
Lack of space	7	4%	1	2%	4	12%
Other	16	10%	3	7%	6	18%
Number of responding orgs	157		45		33	

2.3.5 Ease/difficulty of recruiting volunteers

Figure 8: Do you think it is becoming easier or harder to recruit volunteers?



Organisations were asked whether they thought it was becoming easier or harder to recruit volunteers. Fifteen percent of organisations thought that it was getting easier or much easier to recruit volunteers, 30% thought it was getting harder or much harder, with the remaining 55% indicating that they thought it was getting neither easier nor harder. A higher proportion of organisations thought it was getting easier to recruit volunteers in 2005 compared to 2001 (15% in 2005 and 11% in 2001).

Comparing the results across the domains, archives were more likely to indicate that the recruitment of volunteers was getting easier - 26% of archives thought it was getting easier compared to 10% of libraries and 13% of museums.

Table 32 shows that a larger proportion of libraries and archives thought that it was getting easier to recruit volunteers in 2005 compared to 2001. The views of museums have remained relatively static.

Table 32: Do you think it is becoming easier or harder to recruit volunteers?

	Museums		Libraries		Archives	
	2005	2001	2005	2001	2005	2001
Much Easier	3%	3%	1%	-	3%	3%
Easier	10%	13%	9%	4%	23%	6%
Neither Easier nor harder	53%	48%	60%	53%	60%	75%
Harder	28%	29%	28%	32%	14%	15%
Much harder	7%	7%	2%	10%	0%	1%
Base	272	152	109	124	73	86

There was some variation between the regions concerning whether organisations thought it was getting easier or more difficult to recruit volunteers and also indeed within those regions (table 33). For example, in the West Midlands 23% of organisations thought it is was getting easier to recruit volunteers while 37% thought it was getting harder.

Overall, organisations in the North West and Greater London had a more positive view of recruitment with a larger proportion of organisations indicating that they thought it was getting easier to recruit volunteers than those that thought it was getting harder. Organisations in the East of England were more negative about the recruitment situation with only 2% of organisations reporting that they thought it was easier to recruit volunteers while 43% thought it was getting harder.

Table 33: Is it becoming easier or harder to recruit volunteers?

	No. of responding orgs	Much easier	Easier	Neither easier nor harder	Harder	Much Harder
North East	55	6%	13%	55%	24%	4%
North West	30	0%	20%	73%	7%	0%
Yorkshire and the Humber	44	2%	16%	48%	30%	5%
East Midlands	28	0%	18%	57%	18%	7%
West Midlands	30	0%	23%	40%	30%	7%
East of England	62	0%	2%	55%	42%	2%
Greater London	69	6%	17%	61%	15%	1%
South East	69	3%	6%	61%	17%	13%
South West	73	6%	10%	45%	37%	3%
All organisations	465	3%	12%	55%	26%	5%

A number of organisations suggested reasons why they thought that the recruitment of volunteers was getting easier. These included:

- Increased awareness of volunteering and volunteering opportunities;
- Increased awareness and interest in a specific organisation or subject matter. Comments included:

“We are increasingly well known”

“The work in the library and archive is interesting and appeals to a number of volunteers”;

- Enhanced links with other organisations. As one respondent said:

“Many of our volunteers are students wanting experience. We are close to two MA Courses”.

Those who thought that the recruitment of volunteering was getting harder suggested a number of reasons why they thought this was the case. These included:

- Lack of interest and lack of time to volunteer. One respondent said:
“Young people have other interests. Older people no longer willing to return to the community”;
- A smaller pool of volunteers available or willing to volunteer. One comment included:
“More difficult to find long term volunteers. People express an interest then we don’t hear from them again”;
- Competition from other volunteer involving organisations. One respondent said:
“There are so many volunteering opportunities for people”;
- Legal requirements, such as CRB checks discouraging people from volunteering. One of the organisations noted that:
“Increased regulations e.g. CRB checks and health and safety regulations are putting volunteers off”.

2.4 Methods of recruitment

Consistent with the findings in 2001, the majority of organisations reported that they normally recruited volunteers through word of mouth (74%) and volunteers approaching them directly (75%) (figure 9). For museums, Friends were also an important method of recruiting volunteers, more so than for libraries and archives. Where libraries were concerned, recruitment of volunteers through intermediary groups was important with 41% of libraries indicating that this was one of the ways they normally recruited volunteers. For archives, recruitment through links with educational establishments was the third most successful means of recruiting volunteers, with 34% of archives using this method.

Figure 9: How does your organisation normally recruit volunteers?

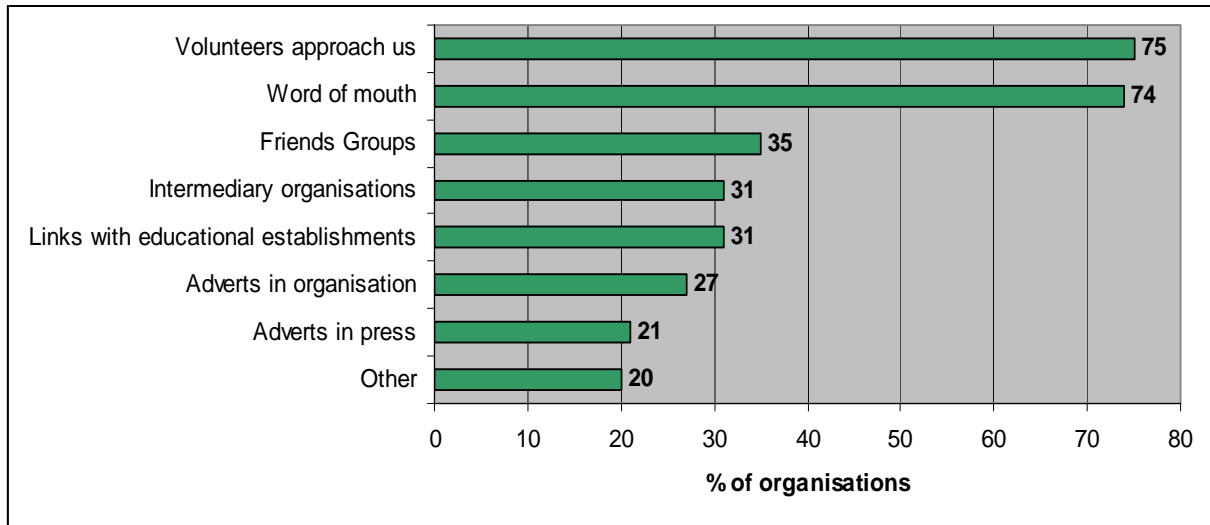


Table 34: How does your organisation normally recruit volunteers?

	Museums		Libraries		Archives	
	2005	2001	2005	2001	2005	2001
Volunteers approach us	77%	77%	65%	56%	78%	79%
Word of mouth	83%	76%	60%	63%	63%	64%
Links with educational establishments	35%	45%	18%	23%	34%	49%
Friends Groups	43%	45%	18%	27%	27%	34%
Intermediary organisations	32%	32%	41%	52%	15%	21%
Adverts in the organisation	24%	20%	38%	42%	19%	13%
Adverts in the press	24%	18%	24%	17%	8%	5%
Other	20%	7%	20%	5%	19%	3%
Number of responding organisations	284	152	120	124	73	86

Organisations indicated that they recruited volunteers in a number of other ways in addition to those listed in figure 9. For museums these included websites, stories in the press, volunteer fairs, local publications and leaflets, radio, personal invitations and recruitment through local history groups.

Libraries indicated that organisational websites, recruitment through outreach, local history groups and WRVS were important. Archives noted the role of websites, links with local history classes and societies and family history fairs in the recruitment of volunteers.

2.5 Volunteer management

2.5.1 Management through other organisations

In total, 5% of organisations said that their volunteers were totally managed through another organisation, for example National Association of Decorative and Fine Arts Societies (NADFAS) or Women’s Royal Voluntary Service (WRVS) - 1% of museums, 1% archives and 17% of libraries.

Table 35 shows the proportion of museums, libraries and archives that had a percentage of their volunteers managed through another organisation. If library volunteers were managed through another organisation they were most likely to manage the majority of their volunteers, whereas with museums, other organisations were most likely to manage a smaller proportion of their volunteers.

Table 35: Percentage of volunteers managed through another organisation

Percentage of volunteers	All organisations	Museums	Libraries	Archives
None	83%	92%	58%	93%
1 to 20	5%	4%	5%	1%
21 to 40	3%	2%	6%	1%
41 to 60	2%	Neg	6%	-
61 to 80	2%	Neg	4%	1%
81 to 100	6%	1%	20%	3%
Number of responding orgs	469	273	114	71

2.5.2 Volunteer management systems and procedures

Policies

Over half of the organisations (56%) responding to the survey said that they had a policy on the involvement of volunteers. This represented an increase on the 41% of organisations who said that they had a policy in 2001. A number of organisations in the 2005 survey indicated that despite not currently having a policy in place they were developing one.

Table 36 shows that there was little difference between museums, archives and libraries in terms of the proportion that had a policy on the involvement of volunteers. There was however some variation regionally with organisations in the South West and West Midlands most likely to have a policy in place, with 62% and 61% of organisations with a policy respectively. Organisations in the North East were least likely to have a policy for the involvement of volunteers (table 37).

Organisations with smaller numbers of volunteers (1 to 20 volunteers) were less likely to have a policy for the involvement of volunteers compared to larger organisations with over eighty volunteers. Organisations with between 61 and 80 volunteers were least likely than all organisations to have a policy however this is likely to reflect the fact that there was a small sample of organisations in this size band.

Expenses

Just under half (48%) of organisations responding to the survey reported offering their volunteers expenses; this had varied little from the 51% in the 2001 survey. In 2005, 16% of organisations said expenses were offered and claimed, while 32% said that they were offered but not always claimed. Table 36 shows that there was some variation between domains with libraries more likely to offer expenses than museums and archives, a similar finding to 2001. However, while the results indicated a slight decline in organisations offering expenses in museums and libraries between 2005 and 2001, the percentage of archives offering expenses to their volunteers increased from 29% in 2001 to 35% in 2005.

Regionally, the percentage of organisations offering expenses varied between 35% and 58%, with organisations in the East Midlands most likely to offer expenses and organisations in Yorkshire and the Humber less likely to.

Table 38 indicates that the proportion of organisations that provided their volunteers with expenses varied with the number of volunteers involved in organisations. Those with between 41 and 80 volunteers were less likely to offer their volunteers with expenses compared to larger and smaller organisations, however those organisations with over 80 volunteers were more likely to provide expenses than those involving fewer volunteers.

Training

The majority of responding organisations provided their volunteers with training (89%). This figure had changed little from the results in 2001 which reported that 91% of organisations offered training. In 2005, museums and libraries were more likely to provide training than archives.

There was some variation between the regions. Organisations in the East Midlands were most likely to offer training (100%), however this might reflect the fact that fewer organisations responded from this region.

Table 38 shows that organisations with a small number of volunteers were less likely to offer their volunteers training - 84% of organisations with between 1 and 20 volunteers offered training compared to, for example, 95% of organisations with 41 to 60 volunteers. The results indicated however, that organisations with over 100 volunteers were less likely to offer training than organisations with between 21 and 100 volunteers.

Induction

Two thirds (66%) of organisations provided their volunteers with a formal induction, an increase from 54% in 2001. The proportion of organisations who offered an induction had increased in museums and libraries but not archives between 2001 and 2005. In 2005, museums were more likely than libraries or archives to provide their volunteers with a formal induction with 77% having induction procedures in place.

Looking at the regional patterns there is some variation in the proportion of organisations that provide formal inductions from 57%, for example, in the South West, to 80% in the North East (table 37).

Organisations with less than 20 volunteers were less likely to provide their volunteers with a formal induction compared to organisations which involved more volunteers. Those with over 100 volunteers were most likely to provide an induction for their volunteers.

Totally volunteer managed organisations

Totally volunteer managed organisations were less likely to have volunteer management systems in place compared to other organisations. For example, 51% of entirely volunteer managed organisations stated that they had a policy on the involvement of volunteers compared to 57% of organisations not totally volunteer managed.

Figure 10: Percentage of organisations with volunteer management systems and procedures in place

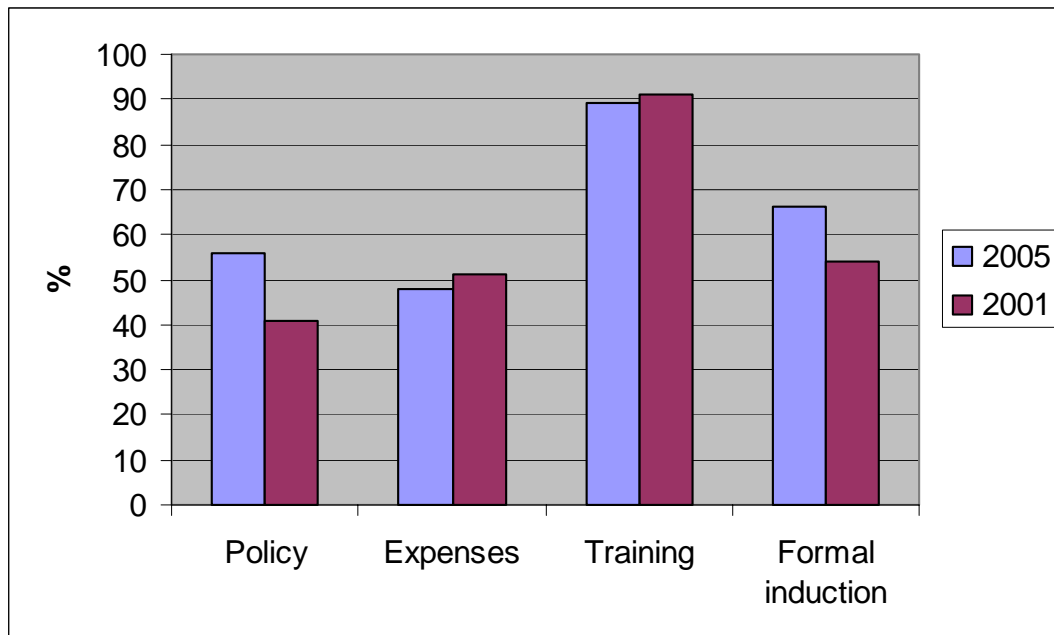


Table 36: Percentage of organisations with volunteer management systems and procedures in place by domain

	Policy		Expenses		Training		Induction	
	2005	2001	2005	2001	2005	2001	2005	2001
Museums	55%	41%	48%	51%	90%	91%	77%	60%
Libraries	57%	47%	54%	65%	88%	91%	56%	50%
Archives	55%	33%	35%	29%	82%	89%	44%	51%
All organisations	56%	41%	48%	51%	89%	91%	66%	54%

Table 37: Percentage of organisations with volunteer management systems and procedures in place by region

	Number of responding orgs	Policy	Expenses	Training	Induction
North East	55	45%	46%	93%	80%
North West	32	49%	43%	81%	59%
Yorkshire and the Humber	45	56%	35%	91%	65%
East Midlands	27	46%	58%	100%	70%
West Midlands	31	61%	45%	90%	70%
East of England	64	57%	46%	89%	63%
Greater London	69	57%	55%	86%	71%
South East	71	60%	51%	88%	61%
South West	73	62%	49%	87%	57%
All organisations	473	56%	48%	89%	66%

Table 38: Volunteer management systems and procedures by organisation

Number of volunteers	No. of responding orgs	Policy	Expenses	Training	Induction
1- 20	237	53	45	84	58
21 - 40	105	62	56	91	73
41 - 60	41	59	34	95	78
61 - 80	19	37	42	100	82
81 - 100	12	75	64	100	75
100+	29	72	62	86	83
All orgs	473	56	48	89	66

2.5.3 Problems faced by organisations in involving volunteers

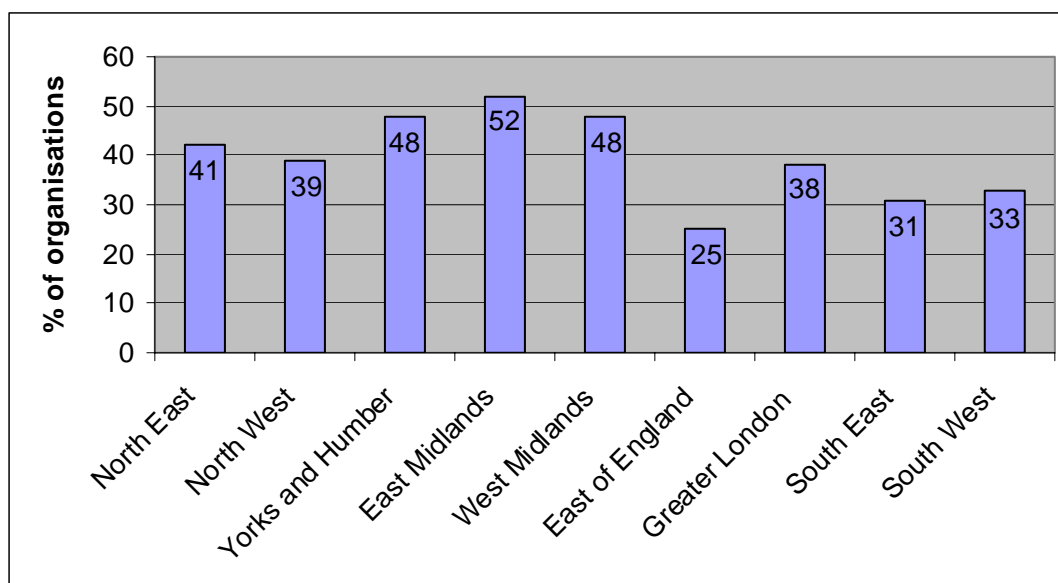
Organisations were asked if they experienced any problems or issues concerning the involvement of volunteers. In total, 38% of organisations said that they experienced problems or issues with the involvement of volunteers. Museums and archives were more likely to indicate that they experienced problems than libraries (table 39).

Table 39: Does your organisation experience any problems or issues concerning the involvement of volunteers?

	Number of responding orgs	'Yes'	'No'
Museums	268	38 %	62 %
Libraries	113	30 %	70 %
Archives	70	41 %	59 %
All organisations	461	38 %	63 %

Figure 11 shows that there was some variation in the proportion of organisations who indicated that they experienced problems with the involvement of volunteers between regions. In the East of England only 25% of organisations said that they experienced problems while, in the East Midlands, over half of organisations reported issues with the involvement of volunteers.

Figure 11: Percentage of organisations who said that they experienced problems or issues with the involvement of volunteers



Organisations highlighted a range of different issues and concerns about the involvement of volunteers. The following issues were the most commonly cited.

Volunteer management and supervision

Above all, organisations raised the management and supervision of volunteers as a specific issue or problem when involving volunteers. These tended to focus in particular on:

- Lack of staff time to supervise and manage volunteers effectively; organisations said this was highly time consuming or that because of time issues they did not supervise and manage all of their volunteers effectively;
- Lack of a specific volunteer manager or staff available to manage volunteers;
- Different skills required for managing volunteers; and
- Appropriately defining the roles of volunteers and matching volunteers to tasks.

Training

- Lack of capacity and staff within organisations to train volunteers appropriately.
- Absence or lack of training for volunteers; and
- Perceived reluctance of volunteers to learn and develop new skills.

Health and safety

- Health and safety concerns, particularly with the involvement of older people and issues over what roles are appropriate for them;
- Concern that changes in legislation are putting people off volunteering;
- Age limits on volunteers imposed from local authority or senior management;
- Insurance costs of involving volunteers; and
- Volunteers opposing new health and safety policies and systems.

Commitment of volunteers

- Concerns with volunteers not completing tasks, quality of work and/or attendance; and
- Volunteers leaving organisations.

Other issues raised by organisations concerning the involvement of volunteers included:

- A lack of volunteers or volunteers with specific skills;
- Conflicting views of volunteers to staff and/or the organisation;

- Concerns amongst staff about the roles of volunteers and the fear of staff being replaced;
- Lack of space and equipment for volunteers; and
- The poor health of volunteers.

Comments from organisations about the problems/issues they experience with the involvement of volunteers

Volunteer management and supervision

“On a small staff of 5 we find supervision of volunteers and balancing work priorities including a public service difficult”

“The supervision of volunteers and volunteer projects is time-consuming for paid staff members (but worth the effort)”

“Managing volunteers requires a different approach to the management of paid staff - this often takes more managerial time”;

“Difficulties in matching volunteers abilities and requirements with the work we need”.

Training

“All volunteers need to be adequately trained. There are often insufficient numbers of paid staff and reward to do this”;

Health and safety

“Increasing regulation and legislation deters potential volunteers - issues such as working with children - corporate liability for health and safety, disability discrimination etc. I didn’t retire from all of that to become a volunteer with even more regulations”.

“The council insurers will not allow us to use volunteers over the age of 75”

“Getting older volunteers to accept the need for current health and safety procedures”

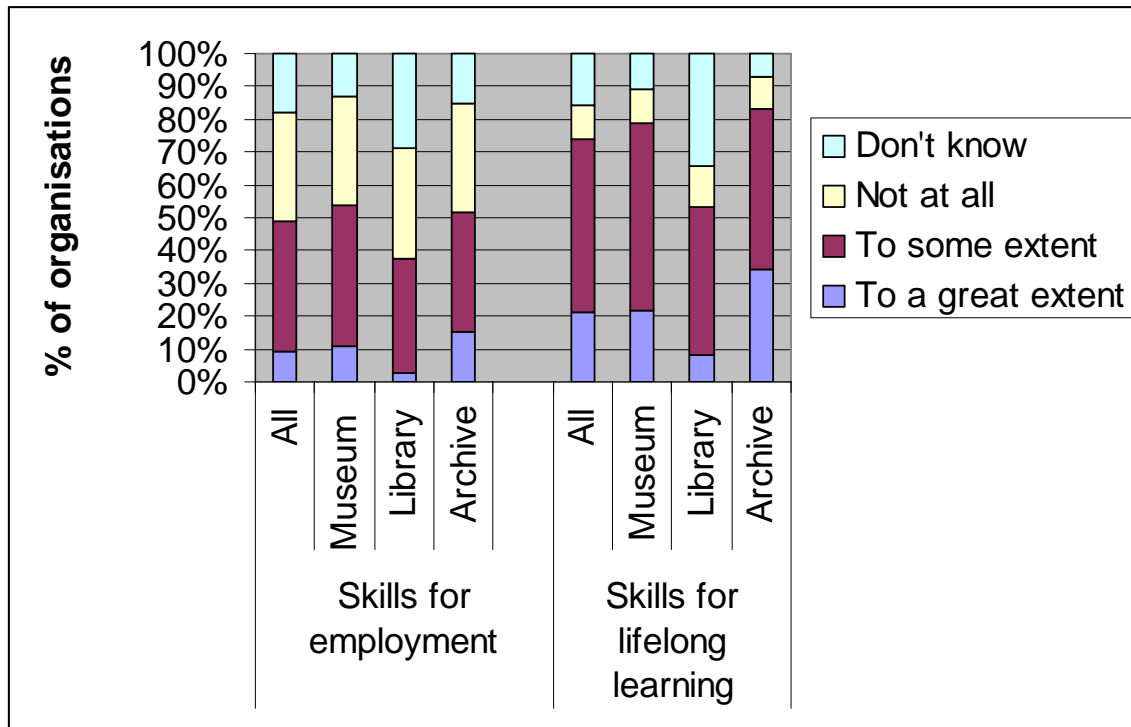
Commitment of volunteers

“Sometimes a lack of commitment or being let down at the last minute (this doesn’t happen very often) but more frequently than with paid staff”

“Some volunteers dropped out of the project because it did not meet their expectations. They found they could not put the time in on a regular basis”

2.6 Volunteering as a path to paid employment and lifelong learning

Figure 12: Percentage of organisations who think that the skills developed through volunteering in their organisation has helped volunteers find paid employment or lifelong learning



2.6.1 Paid employment

Figure 12 shows that nearly half of all organisations responding to the survey (49%) thought that the skills volunteers develop through volunteering had helped them gain employment – 40% thought to some extent and 9% to a great extent. Thirty-three percent thought that volunteering had not helped at all in this respect. Museums and archives were more likely than libraries to say that volunteering helped to gain employment.

Table 40: To what extent has volunteering helped volunteers find paid employment as a direct result of the skills and experience gained in your organisations?

	All organisations	Museums	Libraries	Archives
To a great extent	9%	11%	3%	15%
To some extent	40%	43%	35%	36%
Not at all	33%	33%	34%	33%
Don't know	18%	13%	29%	15%

2.6.2 Lifelong learning

The majority of organisations (74%) indicated that they thought volunteering had helped volunteers participate in lifelong learning – 53% to some extent and 21% to a great extent (see figure 12). Sixteen per cent of organisations said that volunteering did not help volunteers at all in this respect. Table 41 shows that museums and archives were more likely to say that volunteering had helped volunteers participate in lifelong learning – 8% of libraries thought that volunteering had helped volunteers to a great extent in this respect compared to 22% and 34% of museums and archives respectively.

Table 41: To what extent has volunteering helped volunteers participate in lifelong learning as a direct result of the skills and experience gained in your organisations?

	All organisations	Museums	Libraries	Archives
To a great extent	21	22	8	34
To some extent	53	57	45	49
Not at all	10	10	13	10
Don't know	16	11	34	7

2.7 Non-involvement of volunteers

In total, 93 organisations (16%) who responded to the survey did not involve volunteers. This represented 14 museums (5% of responding museums), 54 libraries (31%) and 20 archives (21%) and 5 multi domain organisations.

There was some variation in the proportion of organisations in the different regions who reported not involving volunteers. In the East of England only 8% of respondents said they did not involve volunteers while in North West the figure was 25%. This might suggest that volunteers were more likely to be involved in organisations in the East of England than the North West, however, it might also reflect the type of organisation who responded (more organisations who did not involve volunteers might have responded in the North West) and the fact that fewer organisations responded as a whole from the North West region.

Figure 13: Reasons why organisations do not involve volunteers

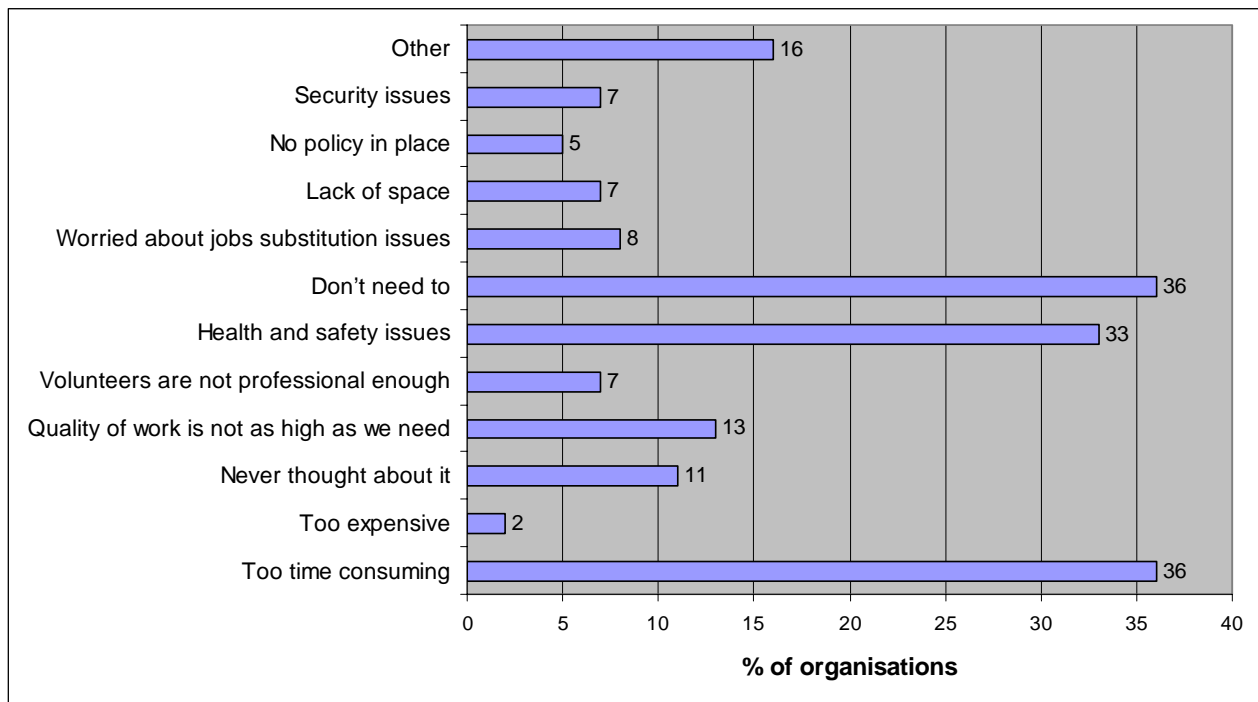


Figure 13 shows that the most common reasons amongst organisations for not involving volunteers were that it was 'too time consuming' (36%) and that they 'did not need them' (36%). 'Health and safety issues' were also a particular concern (33%).

Libraries were most concerned about 'health and safety issues' (41%), more so than museums and archives. As in 2001 (see table 42), museums were more likely than libraries and archives to state that they did not involve volunteers because they thought it would be too time consuming (50%).

In archives and museums a feeling that 'the quality of work is not as high as we need' was cited less frequently as a reason for not involving volunteers in 2005 compared to 2001, and 'volunteers are not professional enough' had also decreased in significance in all domains.

Some of the issues for not involving volunteers were similar to those reasons given by organisations for not involving more volunteers (see figure 7). Issues such as time in particular, was mentioned by both groups (49 % of organisations cited 'do not have enough time' as a reason not to involve more volunteers and 36% stated 'too time consuming' as a reason not to involve volunteers at all.)

Table 42: Reasons why organisations do not involve volunteers

%	Museums		Libraries		Archives	
	2005	2001	2005	2001	2005	2001
Too time consuming	50%	57%	28%	20%	45%	47%
Don't need to	36%	21%	39%	29%	25%	16%
Health and safety issues	36%	14%	41%	22%	10%	26%
Quality of work is not as high as we need	0%	21%	17%	14%	15%	26%
Volunteers are not professional enough	0%	14%	4%	14%	15%	18%
Never thought about it	14%	0%	11%	12%	5%	0%
Too expensive	0%	14%	4%	0%	0%	3%
Worried about jobs substitution issues	0%	Not asked	9%	Not asked	10%	Not asked
Lack of space	0%	Not asked	0%	Not asked	25%	Not asked
No policy in place	0%	Not asked	9%	Not asked	0%	Not asked
Security issues	0%	Not asked	6%	Not asked	15%	Not asked
Other	29%	29%	19%	57%	5%	61%
Number of responding organisations	14	14	54	69	20	38

Note that the number of responding organisations was relatively small for this question and this should be taken into account when considering the percentages presented in this table.

One in five organisations (20%) who did not already do so, said they were considering involving volunteers, however the majority (80%) said they were not. As in 2001, museums were more likely to say that they were considering involving volunteers than libraries or archives - 54% compared to 15% and 11% respectively (see table 43).

Table 43: Are you considering involving volunteers?

	Number of responding organisations	“Yes” %	“No” %
Museums	13	54	46
Libraries	53	15	85
Archives	19	11	90
Total	89	20	80

Of the 19 organisations who indicated when they were thinking about involving volunteers, four (21%) said this would be in the next six months, six (32%) said in six months to a year, three (15%) said they thought they would involve volunteers in one year and the remaining six organisations said they would involve volunteers in one to two years.

Only nine of the organisations (14%) who said that they were not considering involving volunteers said that there was something that would help them involve volunteers. Responses included:

- The need for skilled and/or committed volunteers. One respondent said:

“If we were approached by very experienced individuals with a clear project to work on”;

- The need for effective volunteer management and supervision. One comment included:

“We need a member of staff to supervise and train volunteers. I cannot see the point of inviting people to work with us and then not giving them a worthwhile experience”;

- The need for appropriate policies and practices in place.

3. Best practice in volunteer management: Discussion of key findings from the case studies

3.1 Managing volunteers: identifying the issues

The formalisation of volunteer management has been an increasing trend in recent years. For example, surveys between 1993 and 1995 showed that the number of organisations with written volunteer policies or procedures handbooks had risen from 65 per cent to 85 per cent, while the majority of organisations also had equal opportunities and health and safety policies and made use of application forms and interviews for selecting volunteers (Institute for Volunteering Research, 1998).

This trend shows no sign of abating, with accepted good practice emphasising the need for policies, recruitment procedures, task descriptions and inductions, for example. Good practice literature is abundant and national and local training on volunteer management is increasingly available to organisations. Recently, Volunteering England has launched the *Investing in Volunteers* quality standard to support and improve volunteer management. Building on a successful pilot project in South London, *Investing in Volunteers* is a quality standard that enables organisations to comprehensively review their volunteer management. Gaining the standard publicly demonstrates the organisations commitment to volunteering.

Increasing formalisation can lead to a workplace model of volunteer involvement where volunteering is managed in a similar way to paid work. The rise of the workplace model can be traced to a number of influences. First it reflects the increasingly managerialist approach taken by volunteer-involving organisations, a result of wider influences that introduced private sector management orthodoxies into the public and voluntary sector in the late 1980s, throughout the 1990s and beyond. Critics argue that private sector models do not necessarily translate into volunteer management, but supporters believe that an increased interest has been positive by giving greater attention to volunteers getting the support and recognition they deserve.

Second, the impetus of increased regulation has contributed to greater formalisation as a form of risk management. The spirit of volunteering might be conceptualised as a spontaneous act of giving, but in practice rules concerning issues such as Criminal Record Bureau checks, health and safety legislation and the need to ensure that reimbursement of expenses is legally allowable etc, place greater accountability with volunteer managers and the response has been to develop systems to ensure rules are followed.

Third, there is some evidence that volunteers themselves want an improvement in volunteer management – in the 1997 National Survey of Volunteering, 71 per cent of volunteers questioned said that they would like their volunteering to be

better organised (Davis Smith, 1998). This finding is consistent with the notion that volunteer management needs more attention.

Volunteering however is not the same as paid work and there is research evidence that suggests introducing systems for applications and support can make volunteering harder to access for some groups. For example, volunteering is a good way for people to build confidence before entering paid work, but introducing an interview process may stop people from accessing volunteering. Application processes may work against people for whom English is a second language even though many people want to volunteer to improve their English (Institute for Volunteering Research, 2004).

3.2 Volunteers views

Research into what volunteers want from volunteering indicates a key role for management: *A choice blend - What volunteers want from organisation and management* (Gaskin 2004) investigated volunteers views of management and found that while volunteer needs were consistent, there were four key phases of engagement. This resulted in a four part model being proposed to help organisations facilitate volunteering, starting with the non-volunteer and progressing to the long-term volunteer. The model identifies key stages:

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

The research suggests that organisations (and volunteering infrastructure) can aid each transition to transform the doubter into a starter into a doer into a stayer. It identifies eight points at which an appropriate intervention may help recruit new volunteers or support existing volunteers, all of which have key messages about balancing management systems with flexibility.

The image and appeal of volunteering

The image and appeal of volunteering requires improvement. Volunteering in general needs to be more visible and 'normal'. People need to see the variety of volunteer roles on offer. Promotional materials need to be attractive and inclusive, countering common misconceptions and appealing to people with different backgrounds, interests, motivations and degrees of commitment.

Methods of recruiting volunteers

Lack of information and access points hamper many people from becoming volunteers. Organisations should get their recruitment messages out through targeted advertising to particular groups; innovative media with messages and designs that present a modern image for volunteering and emphasise the benefits for the volunteer; outreach, talks, roadshows, presence at public events; active promotion of websites and databases and maximising word of mouth recruitment by encouraging current volunteers to act as ambassadors for volunteering.

Recruitment and application procedures

People making an enquiry about volunteering or applying to volunteer can be put off by overly bureaucratic procedures. Organisations can overcome this by providing a welcoming and efficient initial response. They should provide applicants with an informal but efficient interview process; clear descriptions of volunteer roles, rights and responsibilities; individual matching to opportunities; as wide a range of opportunities as possible; and referral elsewhere if an appropriate placement cannot be found.

Induction into volunteering

Induction provides a crucial point which can reinforce volunteers' motivation and their sense of identifying with the organisation. Organisations should design induction with a balance between informality and efficiency in mind.

Training for volunteering

Effective training equips volunteers with confidence and skills and contributes to high retention by encouraging a sense of commitment and reinforcing the perception that volunteers are valued. It needs to vary depending on the role and the volunteer. It is important that organisations judge the content and extent of training very carefully, to serve exactly the volunteer's and the organisation's purposes.

Overall management of the volunteering

The way volunteers are managed and supported is crucially important. The growing dominance of the bureaucratic 'workplace model' of management, in which volunteers are treated as if they are paid staff; volunteers can find this off-putting, preferring a balance between efficiency and informality.

Volunteers want their voluntary work to be well-organised but flexible. The current emphasis on flexibility in volunteering is a response to trends towards shorter term volunteering and takes account of the other demands on volunteers'

time, which affects both young and older people. Organisations' strategies include organising one-off, short-term or drop-in volunteering; having a pool of volunteers so demands are not unrelenting; and a flexible rota system that recognises that volunteers can often make only a limited commitment.

The ethos and culture of the organisation

A welcoming atmosphere and a sense that the people in the organisation value their contribution are key to involving volunteers. The organisational culture should be volunteer-orientated, with governance and management structures giving leadership and all personnel levels aware of the role and needs of volunteers.

It is vital that the volunteer feels part of the organisational culture and identifies with its philosophy. Organisations need to create the conditions in which volunteers can play an influential role and the capacity to respond effectively to what this brings forth.

The support and supervision given to volunteers

Satisfaction with the support and supervision volunteers receive is another key factor in keeping people volunteering. All volunteers want to know that there is someone they can go to when they want advice or support.

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

3.2 Findings from the case studies: Making Good Practice Work

Is there a move towards formalisation in museum, libraries and archives? The survey gives evidence of organisations having written policies (56% of organisations said they had a policy on the involvement of volunteers), but is this balanced with what volunteers want? Drawing lessons must take full account of the mix of characteristics, motivations and needs within the volunteer workforce; and the type of volunteering and context in which it is carried out. When looking at museums, libraries and archives, we need to recognise that volunteering is happening in a broad range of settings – large and small organisations, wholly volunteer-led, locally authority owned, and a specialised environment.

Key questions are – what does management look like in each case, is it becoming more formalised, do current conceptions of good practice resonate in the sector, or are some adaptations needed? The following section draws together findings from six case studies; the details of each case follows the next section.

The appeal, image and purpose of volunteering

Organisations need to be clear about the purpose of volunteering, while volunteers want to see they are spending their time on tasks that have a real impact. In each of the case studies managers were clear about how volunteering added something over and above what paid staff could deliver. Indeed, in most cases this clarity was necessary to be able to communicate to paid staff the role of volunteers and how it was distinct from paid work. The purposes of volunteering were expressed as enabling additional service delivery, while some organisations promoted volunteering as a key way of achieving greater community participation.

Where there was a clear purpose for volunteering, it became the bedrock of strategies and policies. Papworth and St Helens libraries were examples of structuring roles and management to increase the service delivery of the libraries, but with a focus of inclusion - Papworth library formed a partnership with the Papworth trust to facilitate the inclusion of disabled volunteers while St Helens located the volunteering programme with an officer whose remit was inclusion. The National Railway Museum provided an example of how the added value of volunteering was communicated to staff and volunteers and provided the basis around which policies and roles were developed. In the Museum of Costume, partnership with local branches of the National Association of Decorative and Fine Arts Societies (NADFAS) and the West of England Costume Society helped to facilitate the involvement of highly interested and skilled volunteers. In archives, volunteers were often identified from regular users to help in areas which would normally not be delivered by staff, such as providing additional help to visitors, time consuming indexing projects, and projects such as the BBC Peoples' War.

Volunteers in our case studies spoke of how volunteering appealed to their needs – whether that was to gain experience, or to pursue personal interests – and how they were able to give something back to the community or organisation through being involved in the museum, library or archive. They were almost unanimously supportive of the way in which management helped them to see how what they were doing benefited themselves and the community. However, volunteers found it difficult to comment on details of volunteer management and this is probably because they often did not notice that they were being managed. We can view this satisfaction as an indicator that the balance between formality and flexibility had been achieved. However, there are aspects of practices that do need attention and we return to this below.

Committing resources and devising appropriate roles

Good practice indicates that organisations should commit appropriate resources to volunteering both in terms of money and staff. We found that in practice

organisations were far more likely to be able to commit staff time than to allocate a budget for volunteering. Many organisations did not, for example, pay expenses to volunteers, something often cited as an example of good practice. In some cases museums simply did not have the resources to do this. In the case of libraries and archives, local authorities did not, or could not allocate volunteer budgets. This is not to say however that resources were not committed. In terms of management time volunteer co-ordinators were able to focus on volunteers. In the case of Papworth Library the partnership with Papworth Trust allocated resources to ensure that the librarian in charge of volunteers had time specifically allocated to give to supporting volunteers. However, we also found that in some cases volunteer management was not included in the job descriptions of those who were carrying out the role.

Having somebody focussing on volunteers is a key issue identified in good practice guides and by volunteers themselves. Specifically, we found that having a volunteer co-ordinator meant that time could be spent ensuring that volunteer roles were appropriate. This happened in two ways, firstly that volunteers were performing tasks appropriate to volunteering and not to paid staff and secondly that tasks could be altered to suit both the organisation and the volunteer. Once volunteers were recruited, it was important to have somebody who could focus on supporting volunteers directly, or on supporting other staff that managed volunteers.

We found that as a matter of routine, volunteer managers acted to match volunteers and roles and this could mean adapting roles to suit volunteers. This kind of flexibility was important to volunteers feeling that the organisation appreciated their input and tried to satisfy their requirements for volunteering.

Methods of recruiting volunteers

The case study organisations had a mixed approach to recruitment. Word of mouth figured largely and there were examples of organisations using websites, the press, outreach work to access local communities, and adverts with other organisations. Of note was partnerships built – Papworth has already been mentioned as an example of diversifying volunteering through partnering with organisations that can provide and help support volunteers.

In most cases however volunteering was not very diverse. This can be explained largely through the subject areas of the case studies (a particular type of person is attracted to, for example, railway museum volunteering), and in many cases our case studies were in locations with low ethnic minority populations.

It was also the case that some of the case studies we visited did not actively recruit volunteers. The explanation for this is that often the organisation did not have the capacity to involve many volunteers (often they were limited by the

number of paid staff available to supervise volunteers), and by the fact that in many cases volunteers directly approached the organisation.

It was evident that volunteers fell largely into two groups – those predominantly older volunteers, who participated out of personal interest, and younger volunteers that wanted specific skills from their volunteering. In other words none of the case studies seemed to appeal to ‘general’ volunteers. This, we suggest, reflects a double image problem – the image people have of volunteering and the image people have of museums, libraries and archives. Although we did not speak to non-volunteers, the volunteers we interviewed often expressed surprise at the number and variety of opportunities and tasks available to them. Museums, libraries and archives are not therefore, we suggest, conveying the range of opportunities they offer.

That said, organisations balanced informality of interviews with the need to have references and CRB checks. The case studies therefore appeared to be aware of the barriers that could prevent potential volunteers. Volunteers expressed satisfaction with recruitment in terms of the formality of processes versus ease of access, but there is little doubt that libraries, museums and archives need to work on recruitment strategies for involving more diverse volunteers.

Induction into volunteering and on-going training

Inductions form an important part of volunteering; a thorough induction is an organisation’s first opportunity to welcome volunteers, it orientates volunteers into the organisation and provides a key way in which volunteers can feel part of the organisation. The degree to which volunteers had inductions varied across the case studies – from ‘being shown around’, to a fuller induction. This range did not seem to be dependent on notions of how formal a welcome should be. That is, the volunteers who were ‘shown around’ did not necessarily receive this form of induction because it was deemed appropriate to the organisation, rather it reflected the availability of staff to focus on the needs of volunteers. Overall, the provision of proper inductions appeared to be an area that could be strengthened within the sector.

A similar picture emerged for training. Volunteer managers noted that volunteers would benefit from training, but provision ranged from structured requirements for attending subject training and general training on health and safety for example, to ‘sitting next to Nellie’ arrangements where volunteers learnt by shadowing other volunteers. Again this did not seem to reflect notions of how appropriate it was to ask volunteers to attend training and was more likely to reflect budget availability.

The support and supervision given to volunteers

Support for volunteers in each of the case studies was good and this was because each of the volunteer managers recognised that volunteers needed support and that this was also a form of recognition for volunteers. The importance of having somebody that volunteers could recognise as being in charge of their interests, as well as someone to whom they could take problems or questions was vital.

Once again however, the form of support was not necessarily thought through in the context of the organisation, rather it was what was possible given staff resources. What must be noted however was that in each case volunteer managers put emphasis on personal contact with volunteers to ensure volunteers were happy and that they got what they wanted from their volunteering.

The recognition of volunteers is extremely important – when pay is not part of the terms of engagement, organisations must find other ways to reward volunteers. In each case two key themes can be drawn out. One is that volunteering can be a reward in itself; the volunteers we spoke to derived much satisfaction from what they did in their volunteering, and their general satisfaction with management suggests that they are well facilitated in this. Second, there was a universal agreement that thanking volunteers was vital. We did find that volunteer managers could struggle with budgets, but that most were able to locate money for social events, for example.

3.3 Volunteering in Libraries: Papworth Library

Case study with Partnership Development Officer and volunteers

Introduction

Cambridgeshire County Council involves a number of volunteers in libraries across the County in a variety of roles that give added value to the work of the library service - examples being translating the cataloguing system into Chinese and story times for children.

As well as adding value to services and helping the library service deliver more services (and a good example of this are a number of entirely volunteer-run libraries in the county); the Council also looks for opportunities to increase participation. Volunteering is a key way to do this. The County Council does not have a central point that facilitates volunteering which may seem a disadvantage from the point of view of co-ordinating how volunteers should be involved in service delivery. A strength of not having a central department however is that service areas can develop their own approach to volunteering. In the library, service volunteering is progressed through working directly with individuals (such as the Library Doorstep Service for housebound customers) and in partnership with other organisations.

The Papworth library is one such partnership set-up between the library service and the Papworth Trust to help deliver the Papworth Trust Progressions Programme through libraries. The aim of the programme is to support people with a physical and/or learning disability to work towards their own goal - be that to live independently in the community, gain work experience or participate in something of personal interest.

The partnership is centred in the library in the village of Papworth Everard which houses the Papworth Progression Centre. The library is part of the new village centre that has other community facilities attached to it to encourage use by Trust clients and the local community. The library is the focus of the building and it is here that Trust clients can choose to volunteer as part of the Progressions Programme.

Currently there are ten volunteers at the Papworth library working alongside paid staff to perform a variety of roles including the return and issue of books, enquiry work and customer assistance, the use of I.T., the administrative side of the library, being involved in story-telling, archive work and stock management. Of the ten volunteers one is between 25 and 34 years of age, three between 35 and 44 and six between 55 and 64. There are five men and five women and currently all volunteers are from a White background, not unusual for rural Cambridgeshire.

Involving Volunteers

Papworth library was designed to facilitate the involvement of Papworth Trust clients as both volunteers and customers, and therefore a lot of time and effort has been put into ensuring that it achieves its aims of being inclusive and of providing volunteers with a structured programme.

Papworth Trust clients are involved in a range of activities, of which community volunteering is one - recognising that volunteering can provide valuable work experience and training opportunities. When Trust clients choose the option of volunteering in the library there is a careful matching of what the volunteer wants with what the library can offer, and as part of their involvement, volunteers have regular meetings with the library supervisor to ensure that their tasks are matched to their needs and aspirations.

There is a Council policy in place for volunteering which guides involvement. This provides the framework for participation. The responsibility for the day to day management of volunteers rests with the library supervisor who has the experience to be able to induct volunteers into their roles in the library. A key recognition by the library service is the fact that volunteer management, like any other management role, needs time allocated to it. In fact, within the Papworth Progression Programme, there is recognition that volunteers may need extra support that demands more management time. The partnership with the Trust means that the resources are available to allow the library supervisor to have time planned as part of her work programme to ensure enough time is given to each volunteer. This time is spent supporting volunteers with tasks and training, and also reviewing the progress of volunteers and helping to plan the next steps of their participation. These next steps may be to move further a field from the Papworth Everard site which is close to Papworth hospital into other County Council libraries.

Another key feature of the partnership is that the Papworth Trust Volunteer Co-ordinator is geographically very close, and visits the library regularly to lend support to the volunteer and the library supervisor, and to ensure that when volunteers start their volunteering they do so in a familiar and safe environment.

The library also has the advantage of being purpose built – this means that all entrances are accessible and all the desks can move up and down to facilitate easier use by wheelchair users.

Appreciation is an extremely important factor in volunteer involvement and the Papworth library staff is aware of this. Being a small library all the volunteers are well-known and part of the support given by staff is to ensure that volunteers are thanked and their contribution to the service acknowledged.

The views of volunteers

Volunteers come to the library through the Progression Programme, but it is the volunteers that choose the library service for their community volunteering and often combine the library role with volunteering elsewhere. Volunteers have a range of motivations: they want to use the programme to work towards gaining skills and independent living, but they also talked of their library roles giving them opportunities they would not otherwise have had and giving them a chance to give something back to the community.

In particular volunteers valued the library as a way of being in contact with the public. Volunteers talked of this giving them the skills and confidence to deal with people and for library goes to see that disabled people can work effectively to provide a service.

Volunteers reported that they chose the library because they recognised that it was a place to further their interests, but they acknowledged that they were surprised by just how many activities they could get involved with. In fact, they suggested that more people would volunteer in libraries if they knew how many opportunities existed to get involved with different roles.

Volunteers also reported that their volunteering was made enjoyable because of the training they received to enable them to do the job and that they felt supported by friendly staff that always had the time to work with them.

Drawing out the good practice and moving forward

The Papworth library service is an example of what can be achieved through working in partnership. It should be noted that volunteering in Papworth is as much about providing opportunities for volunteers as it is about extending the service of the library.

To this end several things can be noted. There is an emphasis on ensuring volunteers are settled in their roles and trained properly. This training looks to equip volunteers with the skills to do the role, with skills that can be built upon during their time as a library volunteer, but also with transferable skills that volunteers can carry forward in their lives outside of their volunteering.

It is vital that volunteers are well supported and this partnership has recognised that time is needed to support volunteers and this has been built into the project through planning (and resourcing) this in the Library Supervisor's role and having the support of the Papworth Trust volunteer co-ordinator.

This project is an example of how library services can be innovative through volunteering partnerships. At the moment, while the Trust helps resource the project, volunteering per se does not have a budget within Cambridgeshire Council, if it did then this type of project could be replicated, ensuring support for other groups within the community to volunteer in libraries.

3.4 Volunteering in Libraries: St Helen's

Case study with Principal Officer and volunteers

Introduction

The St Helens Library and Information Service currently involve approximately 34 volunteers across the service. Volunteers perform a variety of roles including reading schemes, supporting study support and learning courses, being involved in the administrative side of the library, being involved in story-telling and being involved in children's play schemes centred on local neighbourhood libraries. Feedback from volunteers is consistently good with different motivations evident (see below) all of which are satisfied.

In terms of diversity, the service has a very good spread of ages with a third of volunteers aged under 25. There are more female than male volunteers (by a factor of three to one) and currently all volunteers are from a White background. A disabled volunteer has recently been recruited.

Involving Volunteers

The profile of volunteers masks why St Helens is an example of good practice within library volunteering. The focus of the library service for including volunteers is not restricted to how volunteers can add to service delivery (although this of course is important), but rather the drive to look at volunteering comes from a perspective of inclusion. As part of the local authority the library service is deeply committed to making council services open to all, accessible to all and where appropriate, participatory. Volunteering is a key element in this and the lead for volunteer inclusion comes from an officer whose chief remit is inclusion.

The library service recognises that this is work in progress, with a draft policy to be implemented, and that more needs to be done to encourage new users and new volunteers. Nevertheless the work done so far enables a number of points to be drawn out, which reflect the good practice recognised by organisations such as Volunteering England, but also show how these principles need to be appropriate to the context – in this case local authority run libraries.

As stated the starting point for volunteering is inclusion. This means that the roles volunteers perform are arrived at not only from a perspective delivering library services, but also from the perspective of offering roles to progress the needs of individual volunteers and that of the wider community. So, for example, we met volunteers that came to the library to develop general skills that would help them find paid work, volunteers looking for specific skills to help with paid work, volunteers that had come to volunteering to help their self-confidence and self-esteem after traumatic experiences in their lives, volunteers that had become involved through library partnerships with Sure-start and volunteers that had a

long history of work in the community which had been focussed through, and facilitated by, the library.

The library service's inclusion of volunteers therefore starts from a point that looks at the needs of volunteers as much as that of the library service. This is an important point, volunteers can be seen as a means to an end, to deliver a service and this can lead to an interview process that selects the right volunteer for a particular role. Backed by the Council's ethos of inclusion the library service is however able to mediate this and work towards gain for the volunteer and the service.

And this approach is exactly what makes the library a good place for participation for the volunteers we spoke to. Those that wanted to gain experience felt that they were getting this, while those who wanted to work in their community found that the neighbourhood library - a focus for out of school and holiday activities for local children was the right place for them.

None of this would happen if volunteers were not getting what they want – and research shows that volunteers want a meaningful experience and to be managed in a friendly and supportive way. Our case study shows that this is happening, volunteers are known personally to staff and this helps to settle volunteers into roles, to help them feel supported and, very importantly appreciated.

Knowledge of volunteering issues and management is embedded with staff who have worked with volunteers. The structures of volunteer management come from the authority putting policies in place which reflect volunteer good management. These policies developed and agreed by libraries, and to be agreed by the authority, were formulated by working with the local Council for Voluntary Services. As local experts in volunteer management the volunteer centre was able to advise the authority on volunteer involvement and this is reflected in the policies.

As a local authority St Helens has its own demands on issues relevant to volunteering – health and safety, equal opportunities and so on. These are also reflected in the policies. However, the understanding of volunteering at library level ensures that there is an awareness of the dangers of regulation and bureaucracy on recruiting volunteers. Good volunteer management practice of recruitment by interview (the formality of which is judged as what is appropriate for the volunteer), a thorough induction and training all focussed on supporting the volunteer while ensuring they understand what the library is trying to achieve and how important they are in that process.

Appreciation is an extremely important factor and the library service has a variety of ways to show this. All volunteers are thanked as a matter of course and the personal relations between volunteers and library staff and the principal officer is

important. Appreciation is expressed through the training of volunteers, participation in a 100 hour certificate (developed and run by the local Community Voluntary Services), which has helped volunteers as they progress to paid work. Social events are also an important part of thanking volunteers for their work.

The relationship between volunteers and staff was also noted. Libraries do not have the history of volunteer involvement that some areas have and there can be a potential for staff to view volunteers as unpaid members of staff as a threat. The St Helens library service has recognised this as an issue and ensured that communication of policies to involve volunteers – how they are to be involved, why they are being involved and why roles are distinct from paid staff is communicated to staff.

The views of volunteers

Volunteers are recruited from a variety of places, through word of mouth (usually being informed of opportunities by other volunteers), through adverts, through partnerships (for example Sure Start), through other agencies (such as the volunteer centre) and through links with education establishments.

Typically volunteers do not think of their involvement in terms of being managed, but as with other volunteers look for supportive, friendly and flexible roles. They want a chance to develop themselves, and this can mean acquiring paid-work related skills, or softer skills such as self-confidence. The latter comes from feeling that the role they have been given is meaningful and worthwhile. Volunteers spoke of their delight at helping children with homework, at being recognised and greeted by children outside of homework clubs and play schemes, and of feeling that they were doing something worthwhile in communities and helping give others a better experience.

In their work they feel supported by library staff. Some volunteers were also involved in other volunteer organisations and reported that their experience in the library gave them something different, but that their involvement compared favourable with elsewhere. For other volunteers the library experience was their first time volunteering and they reported that it was positive and they hoped to continue or get into paid work.

In terms of encouraging more volunteers, there was a general pessimism that people do not want to get involved in volunteering, but that the library service were doing the right things to encourage more. The message was that people outside libraries probably do not realise all the different aspects volunteers can get involved in.

Drawing out the good practice and moving forward

St Helens library service has been able to draw upon volunteering good practice and implement this in the context of a local authority led library service. The library service differs from other volunteer-involving organisations in that there is

not one identified volunteer manager; rather responsibility for inclusion rests with the principal officer and day to day management with library staff. This model seems to work well due largely to a thorough understanding of volunteering by the principal officer and a team who have been putting volunteering policies in place. There will always be an issue of incorporating volunteer management into the work of library staff, but the St Helens experience suggests that with the right communication and a drive located in the authority that recognises and values volunteer involvement volunteers can become an integral part of the service.

The St Helens library service involvement looks to be going from strength to strength and key in that is how volunteers are part of a service that is about the library as a centre of the community. If there are any issues to point out it is that there is currently no budget line to support volunteers and while this has not hampered paying volunteer expenses and ensuring social events such as a Christmas drinks can take place the recognition by the authority that a key aspiration to include more volunteers should be recognised in budget planning. Following this interview agreement has been reached to explore establishing a headline budget drawing funds from the core budget and external funding.

3.5 Volunteering in Museums: Museum of Costume, Bath

Case study with Documentation Project Supervisor and volunteers

Introduction

The Museum of Costume in Bath, home to an extensive collection of dress and costume-related material, currently involves forty-two volunteers in a range of projects and tasks including documentation, digital photography, storage, housekeeping and maintaining displays. Most of the volunteers work in one of three volunteer teams. Two of these specifically help with documentation tasks (currently costume jewellery and paper collections) and their work contributes to the Museum's Designation Challenge Fund Project (funded by MLA) which is aiming to document eight thousand objects by March 2006. This involves numbering objects, writing basic object descriptions, cross-referencing donor information and recording locations. Digital images are captured and all of these details are added to the Museum's collections database. The third group 'the Care and Access Team' are involved with a range of practical tasks, including making bespoke storage materials (such as padded hangers, calico tray covers and bags for hanging garments), the cleaning of storage areas and the maintenance of objects on display. In addition to these teams there are three volunteers who are involved more on an individual basis in documentation and object storage tasks, and other volunteers who work intensively for short-term periods from time to time.

Responsibility for managing and supporting volunteers is split between two members of staff – the Documentation Project Supervisor and the Museum Assistant who are part of the curatorial team in the museum. The Museum of Costume Manager maintains an overview of the volunteering programme. The Museum of Costume is part of the Heritage Services division of Bath and North East Somerset Council.

Involving volunteers

Volunteers are recognised to play a vital role in the Museum of Costume, carrying out important tasks and projects which simply could not be done without them. The Designation Challenge Fund Project, for example, was built around having a certain degree of volunteer involvement and they are recognised to be a key part of that work.

Partnerships with two local NADFAS (National Association of Decorative and Fine Arts Societies) groups and the West of England Costume Society have enabled interested and often skilled volunteers to be recruited relatively easily. The two documentation teams are members of the local NADFAS branches and tend to have an interest in historical objects and decorative arts. Two volunteer co-ordinators, responsible for rotas each week, have been nominated for the two NADFAS groups and are seen to play an important role in keeping the volunteer programme manageable. The Care and Access Team are members of the West

of England Costume Society and tend to have practical skills such as sewing, which the museum utilises in its more practical projects.

When the museum is interested in involving more volunteers in its formal programme, they tend to be recruited from these two organisations which means that most of the volunteers have specific interests and skills and are older and female – currently around 65% of the volunteers are aged 55 and over and 95% are female. However, the museum does involve some younger volunteers who tend to be those looking for specific work experience and around 30% of the volunteers have disabilities or health issues.

Providing the volunteers with support, training and appropriate supervision is seen as an important part of the volunteer programme. Induction into the organisation, which includes an introduction to the museum and health and safety, is followed by training specific to the tasks the volunteers are involved with. All three teams receive training from professional conservators and curators, for example, on how to handle objects. Additional training is also given where appropriate, for example, on how to use a scanner or digital camera. Volunteers are also provided with guidelines after training sessions, which help to further support volunteers in their activities.

Research tells us that volunteers should be given a clear individual line of support with light touch supervision (in most cases), which combines personal and professional support. The Museum of Costume has adopted this kind of approach where it is made clear who volunteers should go to for help and where supervision is relatively informal but supportive. An important part of this has been monitoring the personal satisfaction of volunteers through evaluation. The two documentation teams in the last year have been given a questionnaire to complete which asks them what they have learned about the work of a museum, the skills they have developed and whether they would like to undertake any further activities. All but one of the volunteers completed the survey that gave the volunteer co-ordinators important feedback on what volunteers had learned through their volunteering experiences and what needed changing.

Organising volunteer socials and get togethers are also recognised as important in examples of good practice in volunteer involvement. At the Museum of Costume volunteer training visits, such as one recently to the Fan Museum in Greenwich, and volunteer parties have been important in helping to show the museum's appreciation for the volunteers and to celebrate achievements. Also training and information sessions have been held with volunteers to review what has been achieved, what activities there were to look forward to and to thank the volunteers for the work they have done for the museum.

The views of volunteers

We met with two groups of volunteers – the first were predominantly involved in the two documentation teams and were recruited through the local NADFAS branches and the second team were primarily working in the Care and Access Team, most of whom were recruited through the West of England Costume Society.

Interest in costume and/or history was at the heart of the volunteers motivations for volunteering, with several speaking of the interest, excitement and fascination of working in the museum and directly with the objects:

I just thought it sounded really fascinating as a place to come....it sounded like a good thing to do

Many of the volunteers were retired and thought of volunteering as a way of being involved in something that was of interest to them which was worthwhile and somewhere where they could use their skills and knowledge and meet and socialise with other people. Others spoke of how volunteering was enabling them to gain experience and knowledge for the workplace:

I find it hugely therapeutic, I have always volunteered for various things and I've really loved it, coming here and doing something worthwhile, it's stimulating

I come to get experience so I can get an entry level job in a museum

My reason for coming here was because I wanted to get behind the scenes but I also saw the possibility of getting into the museum world

Both the discussions we had with the volunteers and the evaluation survey carried out by the Museum illustrated the numerous ways in which volunteering in the Museum helped the volunteers learn and develop skills and knowledge and how highly this was valued. The volunteers spoke, for example, of how they had learnt about museum practice, how to handle delicate objects, how to use a digital camera and scanner, how to describe objects, how to work as part of a team as well as developing knowledge about costume:

I feel I have learnt a lot about museum practice...I have done lots of different jobs...and have learnt rudimentary skills in each of those sections, for example, why things are documented and how things are stored

I've never worked with a group of people like this before and I've learnt what it means really to be part of a team

Volunteers were enthusiastic about the friendly atmosphere in the museum, and the appreciation they received from staff. They also commented that they felt that they were given responsibility and appreciated the trust the museum has in them:

The staff are absolutely wonderful here, all of them are very very friendly and most helpful

I like the fact that they set us a task, tell us what it is and then trust us to go and do it..to use our brains and come and question if we get stuck

Between the groups there were mixed feelings about the role they had as volunteers and the variety of tasks they were involved with. While some volunteers said that they were encouraged to get involved in different tasks, others said that they did not have enough variety to keep their interest going and would like the opportunity to be offered different activities. Concern was also raised by some of the volunteers about how one of the groups had been re-launched to recruit more volunteers and how as a result it had become formalised. While it was thought that the new system did mean that they had more hands-on support from the volunteer coordinator it did mean that the programme had lost some of its flexibility, in terms of the tasks they were involved in and the timings of when they could volunteer. Lack of space, in particular for volunteers to meet and have lunch, was also identified as a problem for some of the volunteers.

Drawing out good practice and moving forward

Volunteers are evidently central to the Museum of Costume and the volunteering programme and the volunteers themselves are seen to enrich the work of the Museum. Providing volunteers with adequate support and learning is an important part of this with training and guidance helping to give volunteers the knowledge and skills they need to fulfil their role. The friendly atmosphere and supportive staff are highly valued by the volunteers and they importantly feel appreciated for the work that they do. The volunteer evaluation also enables volunteers to feedback their experiences and how the programme could be improved.

The Museum of Costume is keen to further develop their volunteer programme and share the good work of volunteers in the Museum more widely. However, the future of the volunteer programme is uncertain and without additional funding there is concern that many of the Museum's activities currently being carried out by the volunteers will have to cease.

3.6 Volunteering in Museums: National Railway Museum, York Case study with the Volunteering Manager and volunteers

Introduction

The National Railway Museum in York is the world's largest railway museum and attracts close to three quarters of a million visitors a year. The museum has a key role conserving historically significant locomotives, rolling stock, railway equipment as well as documents and records from the national collection.

Volunteers are integral to this work and there are currently 251 involved with the museum, a number that exceeds paid staff. Perhaps unsurprisingly, given the subject matter, male volunteers outnumber females by almost ten to one and the majority of volunteers are aged over 55.

Volunteers are involved in a wide range of tasks which include running and driving the miniature railway, listing engineering drawings in the collections department, providing information and answering questions from museum visitors, helping with events and the restoration of locomotives. The Volunteering Manager is responsible for the recruitment, deployment, training and strategic decision-making for volunteers at the museum and volunteers are line managed by supervisors in the department in which they are involved. The Volunteering Manager also provides advice and support on volunteering issues to other museums that comprise the National Museums of Science and Industry (which includes the National Museum of Photography, Film and Television and the Science Museum Wroughton).

Involving volunteers

Volunteers have always been extremely important to the National Railway Museum have been involved from the very beginning when the Museum was first planned. Initially their involvement developed from the Friends of the National Railway Museum, when volunteering and the Friends were virtually synonymous. Now however, an important distinction has been made, and while there is common membership, a Friend needn't be a volunteer and vice versa.

Almost every aspect of the museum's operations involves volunteers, with the volunteer programme very much building on the support for the Museum and enthusiasm for railways. Volunteers are seen to provide a supplementary and supportive service in the museum, enabling the museum to do work they would not normally be able to do. Volunteering promotes user involvement and helps the museum build closer links with the community, making an important contribution to its remit to 'increase public access and broaden its audience'.

The museum has done a great deal of work to formalise and systematise volunteering. Formal procedures and practices, including volunteer agreements, induction, training, supervision and health and safety are an integral part of the volunteer programme. The volunteer policy is the backbone of this and makes clear the museum's policy for involving volunteers and their commitment to the effective involvement of volunteers from recruitment to health and safety. Each volunteer must have a role description, for example, and attend all relevant Health and Safety Training.

Might this formalisation, reflecting very much a 'workplace' model of volunteering, put some people off? The Volunteering Manager recognises that it might, but that in the context of the museum it is the right way to involve and progress volunteers. Agreed good practice in the volunteering sector is emphasising formalisation and the issue is always what is appropriate in an organisational context and whether, for example, systems should be made flexible to encourage more participation.

For the National Railway Museum recruitment is not generally an issue, prospective volunteers approach the museum largely because of their interest in the subject matter so the active recruitment of volunteers is not a high priority. The museum would like to involve more young people in the museum and would like to see more ethnically diverse volunteers, but this does need to be seen in the context of the population of York and surrounding area. The evident gender divide is not uncommon in rail related museums and volunteer groups.

While the museum does not typically actively recruit volunteers, the procedures in place for involving new volunteers, is an important part of the volunteer policy. Specifying roles to ensure that volunteering is fully and effectively integrated alongside paid roles and making the distinction between the work that paid staff do and the work that volunteers do is an integral part of this. It is heavily emphasised in the volunteer policy that "volunteers will supplement and not supplant" the work of employees and that any jobs or elements of paid jobs will not be replaced by tasks being carried out by volunteers. Role descriptions for volunteers reflect consultations with unions (to ensure that staff do not feel threatened by volunteering), and managers (to ensure they are appropriately focussed on what managers want volunteers to do and achieve).

Making staff aware of how to effectively work alongside and manage volunteers is key to progressing volunteering in the museum. It is the number of paid staff and the resources they have that is seen to limit the involvement of volunteers.

The views of volunteers

We spoke to a group of volunteers about their experiences in the museum. Most volunteers cited a passion for railways as the impetus behind getting involved

with the Railway Museum, however they also stressed the value they placed on the social aspects of volunteering:

The reason I came here was because I was a railway nut and they wanted volunteers. I enjoy every minute of it.

I come here for social reasons..... it gives me a break in the routine and it becomes an objective each week and I look forward to coming. I meet up with other people, sometimes we have lunch together.

Volunteers want to feel welcome, secure and respected and without the incentive of a pay packet, organisations need to ensure that volunteers are rewarded in other ways. The museum has an advantage in that so many of the volunteers have a passion for the subject, but the way in which volunteers are managed and supported appears to enhance this in the museum. One volunteer, commenting on the induction process said:

I thought it was part of making you feel like you were part of the organisation.

Some of the volunteers saw the structure as being an important part of the volunteer programme but stressed that volunteers could act with autonomy and independence:

We are left to our own devices. It is good to have trust. Most of us were in a position of trust before we retired – so you are virtually extending that

Volunteers spoke of the “personal satisfaction”, of “pride” and the “sense of achievement” of volunteering for the museum. Some of those who worked directly with visitors noted how interesting it was to meet new people, to answer their questions and to help them.

Volunteers did feel that they learned things while volunteering, through talking to fellow volunteers and staff, through the tasks they do, through answering questions from visitors and through more formal training.

A lot of us have interest in railways so talking amongst ourselves you pick up what is going on, what magazines to read. It all adds to your knowledge and interest.

When I joined the museum I was computer illiterate and they sent me on a course. I can now operate a computer to my own satisfaction

The volunteers provided us with a very positive picture of their experiences of volunteering in the Railway Museum, however some noted that they thought that

there could be better communication about what is happening in the museum and more opportunities to meet with fellow volunteers:

The social side is important and that is the main reason for me coming – there is a set number of people who come in on a Thursday and they are my workmates on a Thursday. This also means though that there is a lack of communication on what is happening on the other days

Drawing out the good practice and moving forward

The National Railway Museum is a high profile museum that has little difficulty in recruiting volunteers. At first glance it appears to have adopted the workplace model that characterises current trends for good practice for volunteering. However, it is important to understand how the museum has adopted good practice and adapted it to be appropriate for the museum.

The nature of the museum means that managing 251 volunteers needs structure. An important element to add to this is how the Volunteering Manager has been able to structure the programme and use this to develop appropriate roles for volunteers in consultation with paid staff and the local unions.

The museum has shown that formalising volunteering can work if somebody is on hand to manage the process. None of this would have been possible if a volunteer manager role was not in place, and it is advantageous that the manager is able to draw on wider support and experience through being involved in forums on volunteering.

3.7 Volunteering in Archives: Warwickshire County Record Office Case study with Archivist and Volunteers

Introduction

Warwickshire County Record Office currently involves 26 volunteers in a range of tasks, from transcribing marriage and parish registers to helping visitors in the archive search room. Volunteers are highly valued and seen to play a vital role in helping to make the archives more accessible to the general public.

As well as enabling the Record Office to achieve more, volunteering is seen as an important way of involving the local community in archives.

The volunteers are managed by one of the full time Archivists working in the Record Office and co-ordinating volunteers is one part of her busy role. The Record Office is part of Warwickshire County Council.

Involving volunteers

Most of the volunteers involved in the Record Office are regular users of the archive service with many involved in researching their family history. The majority of volunteers are over 60 and female which may in part be explained by the levels of interest in archives in these groups. The Record Office also involves however some younger volunteers (approximately 11% are aged between 25 and 44) which include those looking for work experience.

Volunteers tend to approach the Record Office rather than being actively recruited and few people from ethnic minority backgrounds tend to get in touch. Outreach projects which aim to get a broad selection of the community involved in archives may help to encourage people from different backgrounds and ages to get involved in volunteering in the Record Office.

The approach taken towards volunteer management and support is relatively informal as this is thought to best suit the current volunteers and in attracting future ones. Procedures and support mechanisms are in place however to ensure the effective support and management of volunteers, including registration forms for new volunteering, induction and training.

Prospective volunteers are asked to complete a short registration form once they have indicated their interest in volunteering for the Record Office. This identifies how much time they can offer, what voluntary work they are interested in getting involved with and what skills and work experience they have. This is a highly useful tool in helping the volunteer co-ordinator understand the volunteers' interests as well their expectations and can help to effectively match volunteers to projects.

Induction and training is also seen as an important part of involving volunteers in the Record Office. In the induction volunteers are provided with information on

the responsibilities of staff members, introductions to staff members are given and a tour of the Record Office is provided. Such activities can help volunteers understand who they are working alongside, what their roles are and help them feel more part of the organisation. Training is provided where required and can include working with excel and the structure of documents to be transcribed.

Recognising the contribution of volunteers to the Record Office is also identified as important and staff are thought to highly value the work volunteers do. Volunteer badges have been especially made for volunteers to help give them an identity in the Record Office and annual get togethers are held to recognise the work of volunteers and to encourage volunteers to socialise with one another.

The 'friendly relationship' between staff and volunteers was identified as a particular highlight of the volunteer programme by the volunteer co-ordinator who emphasised that 'the work they do for us is really valued'. Ensuring that the role of volunteers are clearly defined and that there is a clear demarcation between what they do and what staff do has helped to avoid any problems or tensions concerning the role of volunteers.

The views of volunteers

The discussions we had with a group of volunteers at the Record Office highlighted in particular how interesting they find working with archives – some describing it as 'very exciting' and 'fascinating'. In addition to this, volunteers indicated that they were motivated to volunteer for the Record Office for a variety of reasons, including wanting 'to give something back', keeping active after retirement or the loss of a loved one, and a 'change of career'. One volunteer got involved because he was concerned that archives were being "lost and thrown away".

In particular, the volunteers valued the '*interesting and varied*' work and the good working environment:

It is a good atmosphere, very helpful and people are nice to work with. It is about the social contact as well as doing the archive

Volunteers felt that staff valued and appreciated their contribution and saw them as particularly helpful and supportive of the volunteers:

I think the staff are conscious that the volunteers are doing work that would not get done by the staff

The important role played by the Volunteer Co-ordinator was in particular highlighted. Volunteers reported that having one member of staff who you can also access for information and help is essential.

Volunteering was seen as an opportunity for volunteers to enjoy doing things that interest them, such as working with old documents, history and old handwriting. Learning new things through volunteering with the Record Office was identified as important and involved developing formal and informal skills and knowledge. Volunteers highlighted that they have opportunities to learn how to use equipment such as digital cameras, printers and computers databases as well as historical knowledge about their local area, people and incidents through working with historical documents.

Drawing out good practice and moving forward

The model of volunteer management and support at the Warwickshire County Record Office shows how volunteer involvement in an archive service can be successful both in terms of helping archives do more than they ordinarily could do and in ensuring volunteers remain interested and enjoy the tasks they are involved in. The friendly and helpful environment of the Record Office it seems is a large part of this.

Volunteer interest in archives, history and/or genealogy is the backbone of volunteering in the archive. Raising awareness of and interest in archives amongst diverse communities is likely to help encourage a wider range of people to get involved in volunteering in the Record Office. Engaging younger people with archives is a particular aim of the Record Office.

As with many organisations, the Record Office would involve more volunteers if they could, and in particular are aware of the value of involving volunteers seeking work experience or a career change in archives. A lack of capacity and equipment, in particular, computers for volunteers means that their scope to currently involve more volunteers is limited.

3.8 Volunteering in Archives: Barnsley Archives and Local Studies Department - Case study with Senior Archives Assistant and volunteers

Introduction

Barnsley Archives and Local Studies Department is home to archival information and records for the Barnsley Metropolitan Borough area, including parish records, local photographs, maps and newspapers.

The department, which is part of Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council, involves 40 volunteers whose tasks include transcribing, indexing and cataloguing documents, research work, helping with public events and committee work. Volunteers also play an important role in the Friends of Barnsley Archives and Local Studies, which was set up by users of the archives to fundraise and improve the facilities available in the Department. On average, volunteers provide the Department with around sixty hours of work every week.

The volunteers are managed and supported by the Archives and Local Studies Officer and the Senior Archives Assistant.

Involving volunteers

The involvement of volunteers in the Barnsley Archives and Local Studies Department was (and continues to be) relatively impromptu and has been largely driven by users of the archives. One of the volunteer groups – the archive project group – got involved through an adult education class. Instead of disbanding once the course was over they asked what volunteering activities they could get involved with in the Department. Another group – the Friday Group – are regular visitors to the archive and similarly asked what volunteering help was needed. Most of the volunteers have therefore not been actively recruited but have approached the Department directly after using the archives and seeing that there is a need for additional help in the service.

The Department readily recognises that volunteers play an important role in enabling them to do activities that they normally wouldn't be able to do:

The things they are doing, for example, the indexing and transcriptions – they know how valuable and useful they are. We would never have been able to do them

The volunteering programme is also seen as an effective way to promote user involvement in the service. The majority of volunteers are however over the age of 55 (80% are over 65) and white but this does tend to reflect the typical user of the service. The Department is keen to do more outreach work to engage more people with archives and would be particularly keen to involve more disabled people in volunteering in their organisation.

Barnsley Archives and Local Studies Department have taken an informal and personal approach to volunteering. The Volunteer Co-ordinators know the volunteers personally and these relationships mean that volunteers feel comfortable when they need help or have problems and vice versa.

This also helps in identifying when a volunteers role needs to be developed as a result of dwindling interest or change in circumstances. The Senior Archive Assistant noted that this was particularly important in ensuring volunteers do not leave. To overcome this problem with one of their groups, for example, the Department started to allow their volunteers to work with original documents rather than photocopies to help sustain the interest of the volunteers.

The Council is moving towards a more formalised approach to volunteer involvement which is being led by the development of a new volunteer policy, currently in draft form. The prospect of a new policy has not been well received by some of the volunteers and the Volunteer Co-ordinators will need to build on the good relationships they have with their volunteers to reassure them of the positive benefits of having such a policy in place.

It has also been recognised that the programme would benefit from a more formal induction programme, for example, where volunteers are introduced more formally to the work of the Department and shown around. Volunteers are however initiated into their role through the support provided by the volunteer co-ordinators. Volunteers are provided with help on a one-to-one basis if needed and are given background and guiding documents to help make the activities they are involved in more interesting and to help them in their role.

The Department however is wary of over formalising the volunteer programme which might put off current volunteers and prospective volunteers. Indeed, as good practice examples have shown, it is important for organisations to strike a balance between efficiency on the one hand and informality on the other.

The views of volunteers

Volunteers highlighted how their interest in archives and history led them to volunteering in the Department. The group we spoke to also talked about how volunteering kept the brain active, gave them an activity to get involved in and gave them flexibility, *“we come when we want”*.

Volunteers spoke of the support they received from staff and seemed to especially value the contact they have with staff and being able to ask staff for help or advice if they encounter problems, *“No one minds you asking questions”*.

Volunteers did think that being involved in volunteering in the Department helped them gain learning and skills. One volunteer said that by volunteering he had developed his computer skills *“it is a learning curve all the time”* and another said that volunteering helped in building confidence.

The value volunteers placed on the social aspects of volunteering - meeting and helping other people and intermingling with the public and staff came out of the discussions as important.

Drawing out the good practice and moving forward

Barnsley Archives and Local Studies Department is an example of an organisation which involves volunteers with limited resources. Volunteers and the work they do are seen to make an important contribution to the archives service but the lack of formalisation and staff resources are seen as barriers to the development of the programme and the recruitment of new volunteers.

The key element of the volunteer programme is the effective working relationship between staff and volunteers and the Volunteer Co-ordinators are keen to build on this and work more closely with staff on communicating the roles and activities of the volunteers. Effective communication will be key in the development of the programme in the forthcoming months with the directive for more formalised procedures coming from the Council.

4. Conclusions and recommendations

The conclusions we draw come from looking at the survey and the case studies together. Overall we found that the involvement of volunteers in libraries, museums and archives remains strong, indeed more organisations replying to the 2005 survey involved volunteers than in the survey of 2001, with more museums involving volunteers than libraries or archives.

Most organisations recognised that involving volunteers allowed them to do things that they would not normally do. Volunteering as a means of promoting user involvement, however, was cited by less organisations in 2005 than in 2001. The proportion of organisations realising that volunteering is a good way to increase diversity was also less in 2005 than 2001. Viewing volunteers as a means to save money remained the same as in 2001 – but for museums 4 out of 10 cited saving money/not having the money to pay staff as the main reason to involve volunteers. Taken together these findings suggest that there is still work to do in explaining the benefits of volunteering, stressing that while volunteering is cost effective it is not cost free and that an investment in volunteering has greater impacts for the volunteer, organisation and community than just saving money.

Diversity of volunteers was also an issue. The survey suggests that the age profile of volunteers has increased since 2001 and volunteers remain predominantly white.

A similar number of organisations in 2005 said that they did not have enough volunteers compared to 2001, with museums the most likely to say this. The reasons for this are complex; certainly our case studies pointed to pessimism among organisations that enough people want to volunteers. However, looking at the results of the survey suggests that museums, libraries and archives have work to do to make volunteering attractive to potential volunteers. The reliance, for example on word of mouth for recruitment is understandable (it is regularly cited as the most successful recruitment method), but it should be acknowledged that other, targeted recruitment methods may be needed to increase diversity. The fact that almost half of organisations responding to the survey do not have a policy on volunteering must also raise questions about how these organisations show a commitment to prospective volunteers.

Other barriers also exist; organisations cited a lack of time (others a lack of space), or a lack of staff resources or trained staff to supervise volunteers. This seems to signify that some organisations find it difficult to invest in volunteers. It is a familiar paradox – volunteers are involved to save money when investing in management and supervision can increase the number of volunteers. A key message from the case studies was that where somebody was responsible for co-ordinating volunteers the programmes worked better. But, in some of the case

studies the volunteer programmes faced uncertainty with co-ordinators unsure of the longevity of their posts. Funding is a key issue and the uncertainty makes planning and developing volunteer programmes difficult. Budgets for volunteering need to be recognised as important in this context. The exact nature of what this covers should be negotiated within organisational budgets, but expenses, training and social events are costs necessary to support volunteering.

Overall, we found many examples of good practice and instances of where managers tempered practice to suit their own organisation in the case studies. In each of the case studies the reasons for volunteering were well thought-out and often formed the basis on which policies were built.

The importance of an induction needs to be recognised and this emerged in the case studies. This can range from 'where to hang your coat' to a more formal organisational induction. Again the exact nature depends on the organisation and who the volunteer is, but the importance of presenting an efficient but friendly face to the volunteer should be noted.

Recommendations

We make the following recommendations arising from the survey and the case studies:

- Museums, libraries and archives need to be encouraged to see volunteering as a means of promoting user involvement and increasing the diversity of users. A good model is the experience of the Tyne and Wear museums (see report for NEMLAC *Volunteering in Museums, Libraries and Archives, 2005*) where volunteer management is sited in the outreach department;
- Advice about recruitment should be given to museums, libraries and archives. This should include emphasising that while word of mouth is a successful recruitment method, other strategies should be considered for attracting people of different ethnic backgrounds, and people that might have considered volunteering but not necessarily in a museum, library or archive. Such strategies must recognise that different audiences will respond to different messages about volunteering;
- Following this point, organisations need to look beyond older (maybe retired) volunteers motivated by interest and younger volunteers motivated by specific skill acquisition to attract more general volunteers. To do this we recommend that organisations are encouraged to look carefully at what opportunities they offer and advertise those widely; many potential volunteers do not realise what opportunities are on offer in museums libraries and archives;
- The value of policies and procedures needs to be emphasised to organisations. Museums, libraries and archives need to be shown that

- having volunteer policies helps to create an environment where volunteering is recognised, supported and rewarded. This, however, needs to be done in such a way that organisations realise that creating policies is done in a manner appropriate to their organisation and should not be a bureaucratic process that acts as a barrier to volunteering. The Investing in Volunteers programme at Volunteering England shows how the important points of volunteer management can be covered flexibly;
- MLA could consider setting a target so that advice given to organisations is measurable, for example, an agreed increase in the number of organisations reporting having volunteer policies by the next survey;
 - MLA might consider using a strap line for advice along the lines of 'Volunteering is cost effective but not cost free' to focus organisations into recognising that while volunteers can save organisations money, volunteer programmes also require some investment;
 - The research has shown the benefits of having somebody focussing on volunteer management. Organisations cited a lack of time (others a lack of space), or a lack of staff resources or trained staff to supervise volunteers as barriers to volunteering and MLA can advise that organisations should think about the resources required to run an effective volunteer programme.

Bibliography

Davis Smith, J (1998) *The 1997 National Survey of Volunteering*. London: Institute for Volunteering Research

Gaskin, K (2003) *A Choice Blend. What Volunteers Want from Organisation and Management*. London: Institute for Volunteering Research

Institute for Volunteering Research (1998) *Issues in Volunteer Management: A Report of a Survey*. Research Bulletin. London Institute for Volunteering Research.

Institute for Volunteering Research (2004) *Volunteering for All? Exploring the link between volunteering and social exclusion*. London Institute for Volunteering Research.