

WELCOME EuroVolNet!



UNIVERSITY OF KENT

2004 Athens Olympic and Paralympic Games







- Introduction
- Data studies from studies on Sport Volunteering in UK (Sport England, 2006 and from SkillsActive, 2006).
- University of Kent: research contribution to EuroVolnet project

Volunteering: something new?

- In pre-industrial societies, and today in, mainly developing nations -mutual self-help was/is vital to the survival of rural communities, e.g. to bring in harvests, to build homes for the aged and disabled, to maintain roads.
- The 19th century, industrialization, the generalization of money as a means of exchange, and anonymity that accompanied urbanization undermined such values as solidarity and mutual assistance.

The new policy idea: The BIG SOCIETY

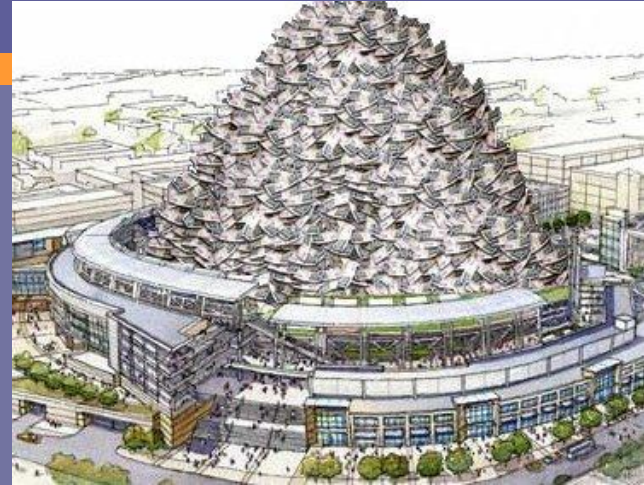
- The Big Society was the flagship policy idea of the 2010 UK Conservative Party general election manifesto. It now forms part of the legislative programme of the Conservative – Liberal Democrat Coalition Agreement.
- The aim: "to create a climate that empowers local people and communities, building a big society that will 'take power away from politicians and give it to people'."
- The Big Society

The Scale of Sport Volunteering in UK



- 6 million people participating as volunteers
- Around 13% and 26 %of the population participate in formal volunteering in sport (Attwood et al., 2003; Low et al., 2007).
- 5% of adults volunteer for sport at least 1 hour a week and 3% volunteer up to 4 hours a week (Sport England, 2006).
- 40% of people involved in coaching, leadership and face-to-face work in community sports are volunteers (SkillsActive, 2006).

Economic Value of Sport Volunteering



- Volunteers **contribute 1.2 billion hours each year to sport** (Sport England's 2002 National Population Survey).
- Value= **over £14 billion and equivalent to 720,000 additional full-time paid workers** (Taylor et al., 2003).

Which sport has the highest volunteering involment?

Football (430,000 volunteers)

Cricket (230,000 volunteers)

Bowls (135,000)

Rugby union (82,000)

Swimming and Motor racing 61,000 volunteers each;

Hockey (57,000)

Golf (43,000)

Equestrian (40,000)

Athletics (30,000)

TOTAL= Over one million volunteers! (Taylor et al., 2003).

ROLES IN SPORT VOLUNTEERING:

President, Chair, Secretary, Treasurer. Club or Team Captains, Team Manager, Membership Secretary, Fixture Secretary, Publicity/Marketing Secretary, Website Manager, Welfare Officer and Child Protection Officer.

- 88% of volunteers were involved in coaching
- 85 % undertook administrative roles
- 82% were officials, referees and umpires (Taylor et al., 2003)

Volunteers are frequently multi-taskers (Welch and Long, 2006).

VOLUNTEER CHARACTERISTICS

- YOUNG: 47% of all youth volunteering takes place in sport (Russell Commission, 2005) , but...
- ... they typically contribute to minor activities' rather than holding key roles. Club committees and officer holders tend to be older people (Taylor et al., 2003)
- HIGH SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS
- LESS ASIAN AND BLACK SPORT VOLUNTEERS

VOLUNTEER MOTIVATIONS

- **Altruistic:** the desire to put something back into a club or sport, often by former players, and *'to help make my organisation successful'*
- **Instrumental factors:** Parents whose children are playing at the club and who want to support their participation (Nichols and Shepherd, 2006). More than half of volunteers in sports clubs initially volunteer because of a child's involvement.
- **Social:** The desire for social benefits like friendship, camaraderie and being part of the club is also a significant motivation (Welch and Long, 2006).

Issues and barriers in sport volunteering

- 3 main problems face sports clubs:
 - - a shortage of volunteers
 - - difficulty in recruiting new volunteers and
 - - the fact that work is increasingly left to fewer people

Attitudes and cultural changes

- A 'consuming not contributing' culture, characterized by a 'pay and play' mentality and a 'childminding' attitude by parents who drop their children off and pick them up afterwards without participating in any way (Taylor et al., 2003).
- Even when parents do volunteer at their children's clubs, this is often time-limited. When the child stops playing the sport or being involved with the club, the parent volunteers move on (Taylor et al., 2003).

Recruiting new volunteers

- Sport England's survey found that there are potentially 1.5 million people who would be interested in volunteering in sport. But of these, more than 200,000 weren't volunteering because they did not know how to get involved, or because no-one had ever asked them (Sport England, 2003).

Volunteer management

- Sports clubs are traditionally ‘mutual support’ or ‘membership’ organisations powered by shared enthusiasm rather than operating on a ‘service delivery’ model, with all its implications of professionalism
- The word “volunteer” was all but non-existent within the world of sport: ‘people giving of their time freely ... do not consider themselves as volunteers...until recently, there was no link between sport and the voluntary sector’ (de Cruz, 2005).

Volunteer management : The INFORMAL club

- Antipathy, or even hostility, towards the concept of 'management' and a culture of 'self-help and contribution' which emphasised informality in the running of the club.
- The 'informal' club is 'socially orientated', emphasising camaraderie, sociability and friendliness in the way volunteers are organised, rather than 'orientated to more formal notions of organisational effectiveness' (Taylor et al., 2007). The prevalent management style is 'characterised by interpersonal control – dependant on personal relationships' and 'the informal network of relations acts as a reward for continued involvement' (Nichols, 2005).

Volunteer management : The FORMAL club

- Managerialist philosophy (volunteer audits, job descriptions, training)
- A more strategic approach to club development and forward planning, and receptiveness to external assistance.
- Organisational effectiveness - and delivering a good service - are important (Nichols, 2006).

The proposal from the Univ. Kent:

« To carry out a Pan-European Survey to explore the impact of volunteering in sport, in order to evaluate the impacts on clubs and impact on the volunteers »

Stages:

- a) Focus group with managers
- b) Survey that will be distributed to the volunteers accross all countries

- *Volunteering comes from Latin from voluntas "will, choice", and as the old proverb says "where there is a will there is a way".*
- *If we want to sustain the European model of grass root sport participation we should find ways to uphold, nourish and reward the willpower of sport volunteers!*